



August 2017

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www.towsonpres.org

The TPC Staff

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Towson Presbyterian Church

*Towson Presbyterian Church is an inclusive community of faith
growing as disciples of Christ.*

Pastor's Thoughts

Dear Friends,

Who have we been? Who are we now? Who are we called to be? For the past few months, I've been sharing that the primary impetus behind these questions is the strong belief that our communal mission will grow as our understanding of who we are and who we're called to be grows. As such, the Session has been exploring three resources that will facilitate our community of faith's discernment of these questions and our congregational calling.

Two months ago, I introduced the first resource Session will seek to create—a timeline that begins in 1836 (the year to which Towson Presbyterian Church traces its roots) and runs through today. To ensure the timeline captures as much of TPC's history as possible, the Session will form a team to study various historical documents and gather members' historical knowledge through personal conversations and interviews. The result, we hope, will be a timeline that not only accurately reflects *who we've been* as a community of faith, but also lifts up recurring values and blessings of TPC's missional life throughout the years.

Last month, I introduced a survey called "Natural Church Development," which seeks to explore *who are we now*. Specifically, these surveys seek to measure what have been identified as "eight quality characteristics of growing churches," and how well local congregations live into each characteristic. In the coming month, these surveys will be distributed to 31 participants (an admittedly low number for a church of our size, but a number that is built upon Natural Church Development's strict demographic guidelines). Through studying how TPC members perceive our community in each of these eight quality characteristics, Session seeks to uncover areas of our church's ministry and mission that require new or additional emphasis.

This month, I introduce the third and final resource Session will employ—Appreciate Inquiry. While its name sounds strange, it really says it all. Appreciative inquiry is a process of intentionally *inquiring* about what we so often overlook—our gifts, our strengths, our values, and the rich potential in ourselves and our community—namely, those things we should most *appreciate!*

How does *appreciative inquiry* work? It begins through a process of interviews and group gatherings, in which members will be asked a set of questions that are designed to *inquire* what they appreciate most about our community, as well as what each one believes to be TPC's *core* ingredients (ingredients without which TPC would simply not be TPC). The process will also explore what the community's greatest hopes are for our church—where they believe TPC is called to do and be in the future.

In the coming months, Session will communicate the schedule and process in which these resources will be employed and explored. As always, I invite anyone who has questions about this community-wide discernment process to contact me.

In Peace,
Rob

Tending the Flock

Richard (Dick) Allchin on July 12, 2017 ---The family will hold a memorial gathering on Friday, August 18, 2017 at 3:00PM at Broadmead, 13801 York Road, Cockeysville, MD 21030. All are welcome.



Rev. Joel's "Office Hours"

Not meeting in August

Due to mission trips, camp BeeTree, and vacation I will not be holding regular Wednesday coffee hours... please email me and we can try to find another time to get together! I'd love to hear how you're doing and what you're thinking about these days! - Joel

Why are we asked to sign the "Friendship Pad" at Sunday Worship?

While worshippers aren't specifically asked to do so each and every week, we sincerely request that everyone please take time amid every worship service to note the offering of your presence on the red "Friendship Pads" located on the inside of each sanctuary pew.

The information provided in these pads helps: the church office keep important demographic information, including attendance, visitor information, and statistics for both Towson Presbyterian Church's membership rolls that we submit to both the Baltimore Presbytery and the PC(USA) on an annual basis. It also facilitates our analysis of our community's worship trends, bulletin needs, and pastoral care needs. And it helps worshippers get to know each other by name, while also affording members the chance to intentionally welcome visitors in our midst.



Still, the primary impetus behind these pads is the discipline of noting our presence in worship, symbolizing the commitment of our lives to the God we worship and the body of Christ we serve.

So please, let us know you were here!

Worship, Music and Arts Ministries



Worship at TPC – August 2017

- Aug. 6 The feeding of the thousands with just a few loaves and a couple fish is the *only* miracle story that all four gospels share. So clearly, this story reveals something imperative to the life of discipleship. The story also serves as foreshadowing of Jesus' last supper, and the nourishment he offers to each and all amid the gifts he came to share. So join us, friends, as we explore this pivotal story of faith and the gifts of God at the Lord's Table.
- Aug. 13 This morning, we explore the story of Jesus walking on water, Matthew 14: 22-23. Peter was the only one among the disciples who had the faith to step out of the boat when Jesus called for them to "come." But as soon as he looked down and realized he was standing on water, he began to sink. Such is often our struggle—God calls us to do that which God knows we *can* do, but we allow our self-imposed limitations to stand in the way between us and God's purpose for us.
- Aug. 20 This morning, TPC will be blessed to welcome a guest preacher to the pulpit, as we continue exploring Jesus' miracle stories according to Matthew.
- Aug.27 Who is Jesus? In Matthew 16, Jesus himself asks his followers who folks say he is. Is he a carpenter? A prophet? A rabble-rouser? A revolutionary? Yes! He's also the Son of God, King of Kings, Emmanuel, God incarnate. What can we learn from the many hats Jesus wears?

Worship, Music and Arts:

Members: Lorene LaBerge (Chair), Rob Carter, Joel Strom, Stephen Harouff, Carol Appleby, Lenore Chapman, Barbara Heinfeldten, Patricia Jackson, Pat Keller (Deacon Rep.) and Judy Rice.

Meeting time and date:

Second Tuesday of each month; 2 p.m.; TPC Library

Mission Statement:

To ensure a rich, inclusive, worship experience for all that praises and glorifies God, encompassing communion and baptism, relevant sermons, joyous music, lay participation and moments with children, enriching member's lives and equipping them to take God's word out into the world.



For Future Planning!!! Camp BeeTree Vacation Bible School July 9-13, 2018

Fun and formation will abound.

To see the fantastic video from this year's camp link below...

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0Byr32wYAKXslZEhnQ1UxVUpHa1k/view?usp=sharing>

Who and What is Highpeake?

In the mid 1980's a group of members of Towson Presbyterian Church met to discuss considering the possibility of providing a group home for intellectual and developmentally disabled adults. This arose from the Heartlights Ministry at Towson Presbyterian Church which began in the late 1950's. Details of the Heartlights ministry was detailed in the July 2017 TPC newsletter.

Many months and years of effort which included meeting with state agencies and exploring resources it became a reality. Highpeake Inc was built on the former manse property at Chesapeake and Highland Aves. Towson Presbyterian Church donated the land and the group home was built in 1992. Since the beginning of the group home it has been managed by Athelas Institute. Athelas Institute has provided programs and services to individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities since 1976.



Highpeake has eight residents: six men and two women. Each day each of the residents attend one of the programs run by Athelas Institute. Each evening and on weekends

many of the residents attend community programs and activities i.e. the Special Olympics; the Towson YMCA; the Towson Library and TPC.

While TPC does not manage the Highpeake there is a Board which includes several members of TPC.

The board is currently seeking new board members due to two members moving out of state. We plan to have a Minute for Mission to discuss this most rewarding and vital ministry of TPC.

Contact Person is Eleanor Macqueen, Current President of Highpeake Board of Directors.

Other Board members are: John Reitz, Patsy Stein, and Carol Barnes who represents Babcock Presbyterian Church.

Youth

Massanetta Springs Middle School Conference

Ten middle school teens and three adults spent June 22-25 at Massanetta Springs' MS Conference in Harrisonburg, Virginia exploring the theme **"All Together Now"** and Galatians 3:28-29 – *"Among us you are all equal. That is, we are all in a common relationship with Jesus Christ."* Our group experienced great worship, relevant workshops and made new friendships with teens from all over the Mid-Atlantic.



High School Mission Trip to Clendenin, West Virginia

Eleven teens and 6 adults spent July 2-7 in Clendenin, West Virginia with Next Step Ministries continuing to respond to the many needs that arose from the last summer's devastating floods.



Half of our teens worked on sub-flooring on a house that will now be repurposed into a kayak rental outfitter.

The other half laid down concrete in a run-down movie theater that is being repurposed into a community theater that will serve the people of Clendenin. And after a week of hard work, we spent Friday whitewater rafting on the New River!



Youth Cookouts in August

MS Cookout @ the Sheggrud's Home – Thursday, August 10 from 6:00-8:00 p.m.
Incoming 6th graders are encouraged to attend!

HS Cookout at the Buchanan's Home – Wednesday, August 23 from 6:00-8:00 p.m.
Incoming 9th graders are encouraged to attend!

MS & HS Youth Group Kick's Off on September 10

Sunday night **Youth Group** gets started again on September 10! Middle School (Grades 6-8) will meet from 4:30-6:00 p.m. and High School (Grades 9-12) from 6:30-8:00 p.m. A delicious meal will be served from 6:00-6:30 p.m. Friends are ALWAYS welcome and encouraged to join us!



What do Wine Tasting, Hiking, Monday Night Football, Bible Study, and Prison Ministry all have in common?



Find out on **Homecoming Sunday, Sept. 10**, when Towson Presbyterian Church unveils a brand-new program designed to bring participants closer to each other and to God!

Property Committee - Kevin McKenna, Chair



Kitchen Update

The Property Committee is pleased to announce that the Thompson Hall kitchen has gotten some much-needed renovations! A new vinyl floor is installed, the walls received a fresh coat of paint, and a new refrigerator (due to arrive on August

14th) and dishwasher is in now. The work is largely completed!!!

Many thanks to the Property Committee and many volunteers who aided this much needed and appreciated project.



Memorial Committee - Susan Hossfeld, Chair

Many needs of the Church remain available for memorials, and restricted contributions for specific projects are also deeply appreciated. The updated Memorial List brochure is located in the Narthex. New ideas are added frequently and may not be included in the current list but are available upon request. You may take the brochure home to review the memorials and new suggestions are always welcome.

The two newly sodded plots, one to the east of the Church entrance walkway and one to the west are lush and green. We are grateful to the Rudd family and Hohl family for their designations to make our Church an attractive and restful place to worship and to Walter, Kathryn and Ross Bregel for watering during the dry spells. Also take a minute to stop by and see the newly planted beautiful, pink dogwood in loving memory of George Hohl, located between the Chapel door and the east parking lot.

Memorial Gift Opportunities:

1. Funds are needed to take care of general landscape maintenance for our property-the weeds keep growing, trees need to be pruned or removed and financial help is needed to keep our property well maintained.
2. Wooden benches, flag pole and base for Bee Tree
3. Additional landscaped plots of various sizes are available for restoration.

For Memorial Gifts, I would like to remind you to send appropriately identified donations directly to Kathryn Bojanowski in the Business Office. If it is placed in the Sunday Offering it may not get credited to the proper Memorial account. If this happens, thank you notes, family notification, and appropriate record keeping of the gift may not occur as the information is not forwarded to the Memorial Chairman.

If you would like further information, you may call Susan Hossfeld 410-683-4357 or by e-mail at shossfeld@comcast.net.



Session retreat

Summary of Session Retreat, July 26, 2017

- I. The evening began with a devotion, led by Rev. Joel Strom, after which participants shared a meal and time of fellowship
- II. Session reviewed the extensive work of TPC's Christian Education Transition Team, which has been guiding TPC's children's ministry since January, 2017, and received and update regarding the search for TPC's next Director of Children & Family Ministries.
- III. Session explored some of the transitions that have occurred within TPC's children's ministries this year, and how these transitions offer a microcosm of the overall transition afoot in the life of TPC at this time.
 - a. As such, Session spent significant time exploring the dynamics of transition and change amid a system (or group) perspective.
- IV. Session explored overarching changes and transitions occurring throughout the universal church and the global culture.
 - a. National Church Trends Between 2007-2014,
 - i. "Unaffiliated" (those who do not belong to any church tradition) grew +6.7%,
 - ii. "Mainline Protestants" shrank -3.4%.
 - iii. Evangelicals shrank -0.9%
 - iv. Catholics shrank -3.1%
 - b. PCUSA Trends
 - i. Membership has declined by almost 1/3 in past 10 years
 - c. Towson Presbyterian Church Trends
 - i. Annual Avg. Worship Attendance has decreased by almost 40% in past 10 years
- V. WHY has the universal Church been in such significant decline?
 - a. Session explored the societal movement from Christendom (when the vast majority of citizens attended church, and to be American was essentially to be a church-going Christian or temple-going Jew) and to Post-Christendom, including this shift's effects on the church, as well as the church's reluctance to recognize and adjust to this shift.
 - b. Session explored the cultural movement from the era of Modernity into Post-Modernity, and how the greater church, which is most familiar with a modern culture, struggles to speak to those living amid a post-modern cultural perspective.

- VI. Session explored current & emerging models of church leadership.
 - a. Size-Based Models
 - i. Family Model (less than 75 members)
 - 1. One-two families hold authority in church matters.
 - 2. Intimate relationships are prioritized above spiritual formation and community outreach.
 - ii. Pastoral Church Model (usually between 75-200 members)
 - 1. Pastoral staff lead and carry out ministries, with some support from members.
 - 2. Pastoral staff's primary job is ministry fulfillment, and developing personal relationships with parishioners
 - iii. Programmatic Model (usually greater than 200 members)
 - 1. Pastoral and programmatic staff do not "do" ministry, but spend their time equipping members to live into their callings to use their gifts in ministry fulfillment.
 - b. Upon reflection, Session voiced consensus that TPC currently has multiple, or mixed models of leadership, which can cause system-wide confusion regarding the forms and focus of ministerial leadership.
 - c. Session explored pathways to unifying the church's leadership model into a singular, cohesive whole that adheres to the programmatic model of leadership.

- VII. Session explored emerging models of church culture and identity
 - a. Consumer Model
 - i. People come to be fed or have a need met
 - ii. Church feels it is called to give people what they want
 - b. Attractional Model
 - i. People are drawn to a church community by marketing/programming
 - ii. Church believes people will come if it offers the "right kind of program"
 - c. Missional Model
 - i. People come to church
 - 1. b/c of relationships they have with others at church
 - 2. to grow closer to God
 - 3. to participate in something bigger than myself
 - 4. to make a difference in the world
 - 5. to be part of the Christ's body and help grow the kingdom
 - ii. Church feels called to be a vessel of transformation unto the Kingdom of God by
 - 1. spreading the kingdom by living out the love and grace of God's kingdom every way it can,
 - 2. and sharing the faith that transforms lives

- VIII. After lengthy discussion on how to mobilize cultural shifts, Session looks forward to the implementation of the three Visioning Tools that Session has been exploring since the Spring (e.g. timeline, Natural Church Development surveys, Appreciative Inquiry process).
 - a. These tools enable leadership to better understand what the congregation views to be the strengths and weaknesses of TPC's culture and ministries, while also giving congregational members a chance of ownership and participation in pending cultural and ministerial evolutions.

- IX. Session concluding the retreat with a closing prayer by Rev. Rob Carter.



The COUNTDOWN to...

**HOME
COMING**

Just Six... More... Sundays...
until **Homecoming Sunday** arrives, **Sept. 10**,
bringing with it the start of a brand new programmatic year
overflowing with potential and possibilities for each and all!!

You will NOT want to miss some of what's unveiled, in addition to an old-fashioned potluck lunch and fellowship following the service.

Homecoming is one of the most celebrated of TPC's traditions and gives us a chance to share summer memories, reconnect with vacationing friends and meet new TPC faces.

A sign-up genius link will be forthcoming for easy sign-up to bring your favorite homestyle dish.

Also look for a picture box in Thompson Hall (in the next couple of weeks) for you to share a favorite photo from your summer vacation, adventure or pictures of TPC from past events such as other homecomings, potluck, weddings, baptisms, etc.. Please write your name on the back so that it can be returned to you. We look forward to making a "memory" board in Thompson Hall so that all can share in summer adventures and our TPC History!

If you have questions, feel free to reach out to Eric Hauer at curtanderic@verizon.net or Jen Sheggrud at jensheg@hotmail.com.

Intergenerational Garden

Have you checked out the IGG lately? Spring crops are mostly gone. Summer crops are producing heavily and Fall crops are in the ground and under cover. For a full record of this and past seasons check out the IGG blog <http://tpcigg.blogspot.com/>. We still need to fill many volunteer slots for the remainder of the season. Either use the Sign-up Genius (add link here) or email Carol (carolappleby@comcast.net) to help.

Mission & Outreach

ACTC is in great need of plastic grocery bags!
Please bring your bags to TPC and place them in the red box outside Thompson Hall
or you may take them directly to ACTC -located behind Calvary Baptist Church - 120
W. Pennsylvania Avenue, Mon - Friday 10-3.



TPC HOSTS MORRIS PLAINS PRESBYTERIAN MISSION TEAM



TPC, once again hosted a mission team staying at The Center in Baltimore, for their week learning about Suburban Food Insecurity. Beginning on Sunday, July 23 we offered them a look at how those in a suburban area, who suffer from food insecurity, function on a daily basis. Ginny Probasco and Dianne Thompson accompanied the group as they: helped with Sunday Community Lunch, went on a tour of Towson led by one of our lunch and ACTC clients, assisted in our community garden, learned about and volunteered at the ACTC, volunteered at Govan's Supper, worked at the CARE Food Pantry, walked to Trader Joe's for their SNAP Challenge food purchases, and built raised beds for

the McCabe Community Garden at the Glenwood Life Center...a busy week! In the evenings, they returned to The Center for debriefings and information gathering.

Thank you to TPC members Ken Pennell, Dotsie Bregel, Linda Lotz, Leslie Strawhand, and Rev. Joel, who graciously led the team during the week. Thank you, too, to the church members who participated in the SNAP Food Challenge during the week. Below you will find comments from those who participated.

For some of the team members, and even for local Towsonites, it is a rude awakening to realize the need for food security in our own neighborhood. Armed with knowledge we are more willing to be God's hands and share with those in our community who may need our helping hands.

Comments from those who took the SNAP Challenge:

I started to look into the meal planning for the evening and found it really takes a weekly meal plan to pull off a \$5.60 dinner for four (luckily our kids are still small!). I found if we planned ahead and planned for multiple meals we could make the best out of the funds...otherwise we may be stuck with pasta and sauce. We did decide one evening to just make a meal out of the leftovers in our refrigerator (since we couldn't get to the store on Tuesday). It ended up being a yummy meal...quesadillas!

It was easy for us...family of five. Sautéed onions and garlic then Swiss chard from the farmers market (\$3.00) along with diced zucchini \$1.50 served over pasta. Delicious!! We have a vegan in the family and often do easy plant based meals! Hope the project will get some folks thinking!!

The hardest part was not adding to the meal from things in the pantry and not snacking. We did add fresh tomatoes from our own garden. It was difficult...planning a nourishing meal for \$2.80 for two. It reminded me that our donations to the food pantry are really needed and appreciated by those having trouble making ends meet. It also showed how important a PLAN is to the budget!

Preparing food wasn't hard, but providing nutrition is a different story. It would be very difficult to do day after day on that kind of budget. **THANKS FOR PARTICIPATING!**



Summer at TPP



Summer at TPP is in full swing and we have had some great sessions, the kids are having a blast! After the Great Outdoors session we had Heroes & Helpers and Ms. Shipman did a great job with that theme. The children did lots of great activities for super heroes the first week like pin the tail on the super hero, making super hero masks and puppets and eating Spiderman strawberries! The next week was community heroes and helpers and the kids made stethoscopes, painted teeth with paint brushes, made chef hats and wrote recipe cards plus we had a real fire truck visit from one the TPP dads!! Next was Imaginary or Mythical Creatures which was a wonderful theme. The children made fairy gardens, unicorns, puffles (from pom poms), wings, mermaids and imaginary pals.

The next week saw them making fire breathing dragons from toilet paper tubes (to blow through, so cute!) and dragon's nests plus Mrs. McIver made a dragon fruit smoothie for them...they ate it!! There were a few days that were too hot to go out but Mrs. Fugate kept them busy with basketball, relay races, hopscotch and hide and seek in the hall! The last two weeks are Space and it should be an awesome way to end our summer at TPP. The last day is August 4th and we will have a truck from Kona Ice visit for a special treat!!



Unfortunately for us Mrs. Fugate is leaving to teach at her son's school where her commute will be halved. We will miss her but we were able to hire a new teacher, Donna Dennis, whose mom attends TPC, to take over the 2s classes. We are excited to welcome her to TPP where I think she will be a great addition to our already wonderful staff. The afternoon teacher replacing Mrs. Riegger will be Mrs. Jackie Ennis, who has some exciting ideas for the afternoon crowd. Plans are in motion to also have her be the "Science Friday" teacher twice a month for the school in the mornings as an added STEM component for our curriculum; something I have had in mind to do for a few years but have been too busy to implement!

TPP was in the Towson 4th of July parade and it was a great success; I am sure it will be a yearly event!

Our enrollment is at 77 with 20 Full Time students but we continue to have tours and have 4 spaces for 4 year olds and some more spaces for 2 day 2 year olds.

Enjoy the photos and the rest of your summer!

Leslie Foretich
Director



"Puffles"



Fourth of July parade



Water Play Friday

Online Giving is now is now available!

Online, Mobile, Or Text

Please visit scan the QR code or visit www.towsonpres.org

