



**October 2017**

400 W. Chesapeake Ave.  
Towson, Maryland 21204  
410-823-6500

[www.towsonpres.org](http://www.towsonpres.org)

**The TPC Staff**

**Rev. Rob Carter**  
Pastor, Senior

**Rev. Joel Strom**  
Pastor, Associate

**Stephen Harouff**  
Director of Music/Organist

**Jeness Hall**  
Director of Children and  
Family Ministry

**Tara Flynn Runge**  
Administrative Coordinator

**Kathryn Bojanowski**  
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**Leslie Foretich**  
Director,  
Towson Presbyterian  
Preschool

**Kyanne Fields**  
Childcare Coordinator

**Walter Austin**  
Sexton

## Towson Presbyterian Church

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

Dear Friends,

Last month, I took a brief pause from describing Session's visioning process to ask one and all to explore the many offerings amid TPC's new Adult Spiritual Formation Program. In case you weren't there on Sept. 10, I also asked the whole congregation to sign-up for one (at least one) Sunday morning or weekday Small Group offering. I reiterate that request here. I'm excited for this new program, and am delighted so many others are, as well. It offers one and all the chance to explore faith intentionally—regardless of where you find yourself on your faith journey (at the very beginning, at a low point or high point, or somewhere else altogether). We hope there is something for everyone. You can read more about it on pages that follow.

This month, however, I return to a topic of Session's desire to explore three pivotal questions with the whole of our church. *Where have we been? Where are we now? Where are we called to be?* 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.

You've likely already read about the three resources Session will be using to explore these questions:

- A *Timeline* of TPC that begins in 1836 and runs through today, noting the significant events and ministries in the church's life along the way.
- A church survey called "Natural Church Development," which seeks to measure what have been identified as "eight quality characteristics of growing churches," and how well TPC lives into each characteristic. 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.
- An *Appreciative Inquiry* process, which entails interviewing individuals and groups of people, seeking to *inquire* what members believe 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.

After taking a break this summer to explore other significant movements in the life of our community (including holding a special Session retreat in July), a schedule is now in place to deploy these resources. Overall, it is estimated that it will take approximately six months to collect all the desired information, analyze the results, and develop recommendations from what is revealed. Session and I recognize that six months is not a short amount of time, but we believe (and hope you'll agree) it's worth it as we seek to uncover TPC's vision and mission for living into the kingdom of God!

As always, if you have any questions, concerns, or would like to touch base about this or any other ministry, please don't hesitate to contact me.

In Peace,  
*Rob*

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## Tending the Flock

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### Rev. Joel's "Office Hours"

You can find me on Wednesday mornings (with the exception of 10/4- when I am away on study leave) at LaCakerie (11 Allegheny Ave. by the Towson circle) from 8:30-10:00 a.m. fueling up for the day with a large cup of coffee in my hand (and I'm also available to meet with you Monday-Thursday). Stop by and join me if you're available. I'd love to hear how you're doing and what you're thinking about these days!

- Joel

### Deaths/Marriages/Baptisms

We extend our Christian sympathies and hope in the resurrection on behalf of our departed members:

Kathy Bredbenner, on September 22 - Service on October 21 in the Sanctuary  
Fran Peterson, on September 24 - Service on Nov. 4 at 11:00 a.m. at Braodmead

### New Member Class

Are you new to TPC? Or perhaps you're not new, but are interested in learning more about what Presbyterians believe, and how we live out our faith here at TPC.



Pastor Rob is leading New Member Classes on Sundays Oct. 8, 15, and 22 at 11:15 a.m. in the Library. These classes are a great chance to meet other newcomers to TPC, as well as an opportunity to explore any and all questions about faith, church, religion, and more.

### Trivia Question:

In the Parable of the Sower (found in Matthew 13, Mark 4 and Luke 8), the farmer went out and sowed his seeds on four different types of terrain.

**Name the four types of terrain.**

*Answer may be found on the back page of this newsletter....*

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## Worship, Music and Arts Ministries

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Oct. 1

This morning we gather with Christians around the world in celebration of “World Communion Sunday.” We will also receive the special Peace & Global Witness Offering. Pastor Joel will offer the morning message, exploring Matthew 21: 23-32, and Jesus’ parable that demonstrates our actions are often more important than even our beliefs. Tom Peasly, a world percussionist, will be playing wide-ranging percussion instruments throughout worship, and will also offer a workshop following worship!



Oct. 8

Time to Make A Difference – Part 4

On the 8<sup>th</sup>, Pastor Rob picks up his “Time to Make A Difference” sermon series, which we began exploring in September. We continue making our way through Paul’s letter to Romans, in which Paul invites the church there to “Wake up,” and behold that salvation is at hand! We’ll also explore Exodus 17: 1-7, wherein the Israelites are in the throes of their Exodus journey, lamenting the hardships of their journey and remembering their slavery in Egypt with nostalgia. They even tell Moses they had it better in Egypt; at least then “we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread.”

Nostalgia can be beautiful, but it can also be dangerous. As the Exodus proves time and again, God calls us to let go of what has been, so that we might fully embrace what is still to come. The journey is rarely easy and sometimes painful, but letting go of our nostalgia can be essential for making a difference in days to come.

Oct. 15

Time to Make A Difference – Part 5

This week, Pastor Rob wraps up his sermon-series on *making a difference* as worshippers explore the story of Israel’s creation of golden calf idol in Exodus 32, and Paul’s concluding charge to the faith community in Philippi (4: 1-9). The first passage reveals what happens when faith communities allow fear to superseded their faith. The latter is a powerful call to trust in God’s faithfulness in all things—something that is essential and yet so hard amid the life of discipleship.



Oct. 22

On the fourth Sunday of the month, we will explore a powerful encounter Jesus has with the religious elites of his day, who try to entrap him with a tricky question. “Is it lawful to pay taxes to the Roman empire?” If Jesus answers “Yes,” he’ll be viewed as a traitor to the Hebrews, who lament their Roman oppressors. If Jesus’ answers “No,” on the other hand, he could be arrested by the Romans on charges of sedition. So what does he answer. “Give to God the things that are God’s.”

This is a question all disciples must explore—what is *ours* and what is *God’s*? For what does God ask? What does God need from us in order to grow God’s kingdom?

Oct. 29

“The Great Commandment” is often the title given to Jesus’ words in Matthew 22: 34-36. Following on the heels of last week’s exploration, this week we hear Jesus call his followers to love God with all that we are and all that we have, and to love our neighbors as ourselves. By connecting our love of God and neighbors, Jesus reveals we cannot do the first without also doing the second. They are essential to each other.



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## Children

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**Children's Church** is off to a roaring start! In September we had 21 children, three adults and two teenagers attend. Our children (age 4-grade 5) will experience Children's Church on the fourth Sunday of every month. After the Children's Message during the 10 am service, children and teachers will move to the Chapel for this special time. During the scheduled time of Church School, Children's Church offers our youngest members the chance to explore and taste worship in deeply meaningful ways. October 22 will be this month's Children Church.

### New Nursery Caregiver

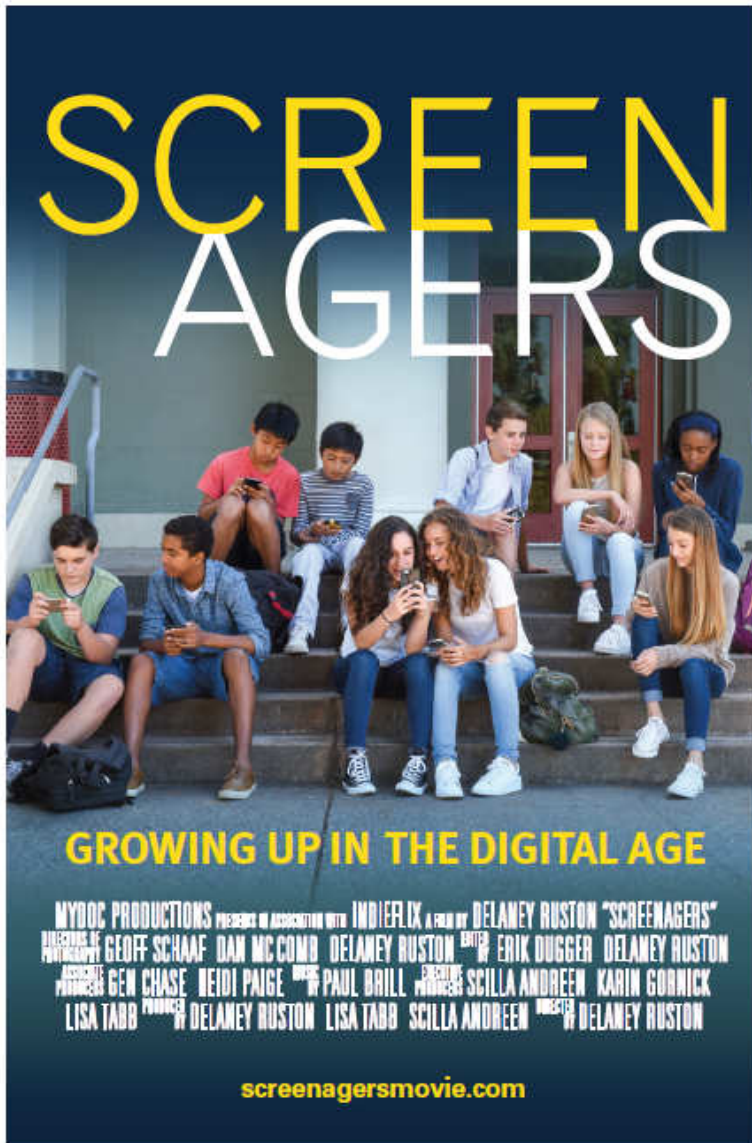
This past month, we said goodbye to one of TPC's two Sunday morning Nursery Caregivers—Katie Krueger. We thank Katie for her service to our community, and wish her much success and joy as she moves on in her professional development.



We are also excited to share that TPC is blessed to welcome Rachel Carnie as a new Nursery Caregiver. Rachel's first day was Sept. 24, so some have already gotten the chance to meet her. Rachel is a graduate student at Towson University and has been serving as a clinician at their Speech and Language Center for two years. She also brings extensive history teaching and working with children in a variety of settings.



Session Highlights from the September 27 meeting will be included in the November newsletter!



## SCREENAGERS Movie

Sunday, Nov. 12 at 6:00 p.m.

Thompson Hall

*“Are you watching kids scroll through life, with their rapid-fire thumbs and a six-second attention span? Physician and filmmaker Delaney Ruston saw that with her own kids and learned that the average kid spends 6.5 hours a day looking at screens. She wondered about the impact of all this time and about the friction occurring in homes and schools around negotiating screen time—friction she knew all too well.*

*In SCREENAGERS, as with her award-winning documentaries on mental health, Delaney takes a deeply personal approach as she probes into the vulnerable corners of family life, including her own, to explore struggles over social media, video games, academics and internet addiction. Through poignant, and unexpectedly funny stories, along with surprising insights from authors, psychologists, and brain scientists, SCREENAGERS reveals how tech time impacts kids’ development and offers solutions on how adults can empower kids to best navigate the digital world and find balance.” –*

[www.screenagersmovie.com](http://www.screenagersmovie.com)

On Sunday, November 12 at 6:00 p.m. TPC’s Youth Ministry and Children’s Ministry are sponsoring a special screening of the

documentary SCREENAGERS, open to teens and parents. Discussion groups will follow the screening to help us process what we’ve just viewed and how we might want to consider moving forward. The digital world in which we live in is here to say; the question in front of us now is how do we plan to live in this digital world? SCREENAGERS offers us some helpful hints for both teens and adults. We hope you can join us, as well as your friends and neighbors outside of TPC.

To watch the trailer for SCREENAGERS, go to [www.screenagersmovie.com](http://www.screenagersmovie.com). To offset the cost of the screening, a ticket to SCREENAGERS on Nov. 12 is \$5.00 per person. There will be no charge for middle and high school teens.

# Welcome to TPC Online!

**TPC Online** is your connection to TPC using your computer or smartphone. It is where you can:

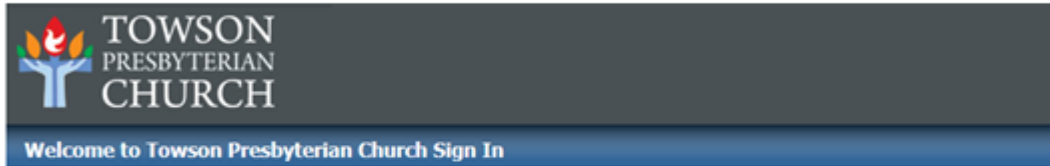
- find a pictorial directory of members,
- update your picture, address, phone, and email,
- find the church calendar of events,
- electronically give to TPC, and
- see your giving history.

And very soon, **TPC Online** will enable you to:

- indicate your mission and ministry interests and
- sign up for small groups and events.

To access **TPC Online** and enjoy all it has to offer, you need to create account.

1. Go to [www.towsonpres.org](http://www.towsonpres.org)
2. Click on "Login" (found on the top right next to "Give to TPC" and "Prayer Request" buttons)
3. You will see this screen:



If this is your first time here, you need to create a login. Click the "Click here" words.

If you already created an account with TPC Online, fill in your email and password here.

Need a login? [Click here](#)

ACS Technologies [Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms of Use](#)

4. Follow the onscreen instructions.

Want all of this on your smartphone, too?

Download the *ChurchLife* App (free!)



## NEED HELP?



During the month of October, visit the **TPC Online** table in Thompson Hall before or after worship.

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## Adult Spiritual Formation

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### Adult Spiritual Formation in October

*Faith isn't one among the many things of life;  
it is the one thing by which we see ALL of life.*

#### Sunday Mornings



#### **Prayer Series**

Oct. 15, 29, Nov. 5 | 9:00 a.m. | Library | Dotsie Bregel, Patty Rath, & Shilpika Simet

10/15 - *Why Pray?* If God knows what we need, why should we ask? In this session, we'll explore prayer from biblical and historical perspectives, while also gaining an understanding of, and confidence in prayer.

10/22 – *What Happens When We Pray?* Does God intervene in the world based on our prayer requests? In this session, we will look at different views Christians have about prayer, particularly whether prayer just changes the one who prays or if God is moved on the basis of our prayer requests.

10/29, 11/5 – *How to Pray?* While prayer may be something we experience in worship, it is often something we do not do in our personal lives unless we are taught. In these two sessions we will explore different types of prayer, and ways of using and enjoying prayer in our daily lives.



#### **Animate: Bible**

Oct. 8, 15, 22, 29, Nov. 5, 12, 19 | 9:00 a.m. | Youth Room | TBA

Please see the description on the following page to explore *Animate: Bible*.

It's a refreshing, accessible approach to exploring what the Bible is, how it came to be, and how we read it today.

7 Sessions (see session descriptions below) | Weeks of Oct. 8 – Nov. 19



#### **Canon** | Mining for the Word | Eric Elnes

How did these 66 cultural history lessons, poems, family trees, allegorical stories, and community letters—all gathered from sources that stretch across time and place—become the Bible?

#### **History** | Parchment to Pixel | Phyllis Tickle

Does the way we access the Bible change the way we interpret it? Tickle believes this question is paramount as technology makes it easier for us to look up a verse online and out of context.

#### **Testaments** | One Story, Two Parts | Rachel Held Evans

How do we make sense of the images of an angry God with the God of love? Rachel's suggestion might surprise you.

#### **Gospels** | Unexpected Good News | Nadia Bolz-Weber

Why are the Gospels called “good news”? Nadia peels away our assumptions about these books and reminds us that Jesus came to upend our ideas about what “good news” really looks like.

*Continued on next page...*

**Genre** | Rhythm of the Text | Jose Morales

Poetry, history, songs, letters, prophecies, dreams—this is the stuff the Bible is made of. Jose suggests we have to know how to dance with all the rhythms we find in this sacred nightclub.

**Interpretation** | Scripture Reads Us | Will Willimon

There are the words on the page and then there are the words behind the words—the history, context, & intention of the author. Willimon gives us tools to move beyond just reading the Bible to make sense of what we find there.

**Grace** | Love Is the Bottom Line | Jay Bakker

Can you love a book that's caused you pain? Jay offers a vision of Scripture for all who've been hurt by well-meaning Christians or doubted there's much worth reading in a book that has brought about so much struggle.

## **Small Group Ministry**

### **What is Small Group Ministry?**

In short, it's all about growing closer to others, *and* growing closer to God. More specifically, Small Groups are safe places to explore an interest, engage a passion, serve a mission, or simply celebrate life with others. As such, Small Group Ministry isn't about being an expert in anything, but simply wanting to do something with others who share a common interest.



Small Groups are also *temporary* in nature, meaning you can sign up for a group without committing years of your life away. You can also be sure that, if you're signing up for a Small Group for the first time, so, too, will others in your group! Finally, all Small Groups begin and end in prayer—whether meeting in the church or a local ballpark.

Anyone can join any small group—all you need to do is sign up by contacting the church office (tpc@towsonpres.org or 410.823.6500). It's simple! It's fun! And it's incredibly meaningful!

### **The Types of Small Groups**

**Fellowship Groups** focus on sharing an activity of common interest or enthusiasm with others who share that interest or enthusiasm. These groups are wonderful ways for both new and long-term members alike to get to know one another, and more about themselves.

Examples: wine tasting, knitting, basketball, hiking, fishing, cooking, bowling



In **Study Groups**, participants explore (or study) a topic of interest (e.g. Scripture, books, beliefs, topical studies), and how their faith shares the way they see the world around them.

Examples: prayer groups, Bible studies, book discussions, topical studies, spiritual disciplines



**Mission Groups** involve participants in activities with a specific purpose of ministry. These groups also help provide partnerships to fulfill mutual callings with similarly gifted and motivated people.

Examples: mission trips, prison ministry, visitation care, social advocacy, environmental stewardship





## ***Current & Upcoming Small Groups Schedule:***

### **Fellowship Groups**

#### **Parents of Young Children**

Time & Place: Sundays at 11:15 a.m. in the Art Room through October 29.

Leaders: Kimberly Light & Alison Peer

Purpose: Find support & friendship among other parents of young children.

#### **Wine Tasting**

Time & Place: Sat. evening, Sept. 30 at Tad & Lenore's home in Hunt Valley

Leaders: Lenore Chapman & Tad Lyon

Purpose: Enjoy & explore the world of wine. Group will entail three gatherings with three wines (white, red, and dessert) with charcuteries to "cleanse the palate," and a modest dessert with the final pairing. Fee of \$15 per participant.

#### **Monday Night Football**

Time & Place: Periodic Monday nights at participants homes.

Leaders: Scott Krugman & Kevin McKenna

Purpose: Gather for fun, fellowship, & football; make new friends

#### **Diners' Club**

Times & Places: TBA

Purpose: Enjoy fellowship and a meal with friends

#### **Running**

Time: Begins Sat., Sept. 30 @ 8:00 a.m.

Place: Loch Raven Reservoir (precise location TBA)

Leader: Brenda Evans

Purpose: Join in for a touch of Heaven on earth. Fresh air, fitness, & fellowship. (Running with time for water & walking breaks.)

### **Discernment & Discovery Small Groups:**

#### **Animate: Bible**

Time & Place: Weeks of Oct. 8 – Nov. 19; specific group times & meeting locations vary by group

Leader: Varies by group

Purpose: Please see description on page 7.

#### **Theology on Tap**

Time: Coming in February

Place: TBA

Leaders: David & Karen Gillis

Purpose: What do we believe? What difference does it make? Join others at a local pub for meaningful conversations about issues, questions, and faith.

### **Mission Small Groups**

#### **Woodbourne-McCabe Mission Team**

Time: Every other Monday evening, from Oct. 16 to Nov. 13

Place: TPC Library - 7:00 p.m.

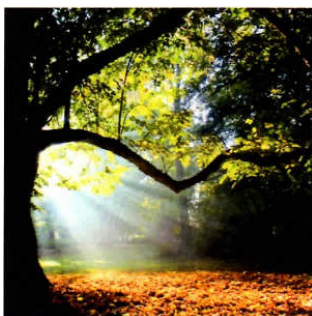
Leader: Lyn Brooks

Purpose: Explore ways to grow in relationship with and serve the needs of our neighbors in an impoverished community.

**\*\*Form A NEW Small Group** – Have an interest you'd like to explore with others? A project you'd like to initiate or participate in? Consider starting a Small Group, by talking with Pastors Rob or Joel.

# Making Meaning at the Time of Death

A Workshop on Green Burial  
and Family Directed End of Life Care –  
*A Growing Movement*

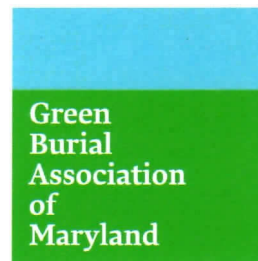


**Saturday, November 4, 2017**

**1-4 pm**

**Towson Presbyterian Church  
400 W. Chesapeake Avenue**

- Financial, Environmental & Emotional Benefits
- Modern Updates to Centuries-old Traditions
- Legalities



**RSVP appreciated to:** [greenburialmd@gmail.com](mailto:greenburialmd@gmail.com)

[www.greenburialmaryland.org](http://www.greenburialmaryland.org)

\$20 Suggested Donation



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## Memorial Committee

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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.

I hate to admit this but my Newsletter last month was lost in my computer, never to be found again. I want to again thank the Rudd family and the Hohl family for the two recently sodded plots in front of the Church. The plot to the west of the front Sanctuary door is given in loving memory of Ann Rudd, and the area to the east of the door is in loving memory of George Hohl. We are grateful to the Rudd family and Hohl family for their designations to make our Church an attractive and restful place to worship.

Now more exciting news. I hope you have noticed the landscaping work on the west side of the Church. A wonderful anonymous gift has been presented to the Church for extensive landscaping and sodding. Currently all of the weeds and ivy have been removed as well as overgrown shrubbery. The soil has been graded so that rain will flow to the drain, liriope has been planted, and brown stones cover the white rocks along the foundation of the Church. Soon the sod will be set in place. Our deep gratitude goes to our benefactor---so that Towson Presbyterian Church will be a well-groomed and welcoming place to worship!

### Memorial and Honor Gift Wish List

1. Funds are needed just to take care of general landscape maintenance for our property - the weeds keep growing, trees need to be pruned or removed - financial help is needed to keep our property well maintained.
2. Wooden benches, flag pole and base for Bee Tree
3. There are several more landscape areas available for renovation-some small and some larger. If you would like more information, please do not hesitate to give me a call!

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. *Susan Hossfeld.*

## TPC Parent Fellowship

**Hosts:** TPC Parents -- Colynn and Darrin Furgason  
410-262-0259

**When:** Saturday, October 21

**Time:** 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

**Where:** Camp Furgason (Colynn & Darrin's Home)  
1515 Cabin Road  
Aberdeen, MD 21001



### Trivia Answer:

*The path (but it was trampled and the birds ate the seeds); rocky soil (but the soil was shallow, plants did not take root and were scorched by the sun); thorns (the plants started to grow but were choked); good soil (which produced a crop - "some multiplying 30, some 60, some 100 times").*

Online Giving is now available!

Online, Mobile, Or Text

Please scan the QR code or visit [www.towsonpres.org](http://www.towsonpres.org)

