



Towson Presbyterian Church

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

February 2018

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

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 &
Communications
Coordinator

Kathryn Bojanowski
Business Administrator

Leslie Foretich
Director,
Towson Presbyterian
Preschool

Kyanne Fields
Childcare Coordinator

Walter Austin
Sexton

Dear Friends,

One year—12 months—can go by in the blink of an eye. Then again, a year can also feel like an eternity. It all depends on what transpired throughout the year. What happened? How did you spend your time? What excited you? What drained you? What was the fruit of your labor?

It's with joy that I write to you from the midst of my 13th month here at Towson Presbyterian. In many ways, it's difficult for me to believe it has *already* been a year; I've so enjoyed these past 12 months! You've made it easy to get to know you, to become a part of our community, and to love you, too! But paradoxically, this may be part of the reason why it's just as difficult for me to believe that it has *only* been one year. Strange... but true.

If there's one thing I've become convinced of during these past 12 months, it is this: *Towson Presbyterian is a special community of faith, blessed by an amazing God, called to do amazing things in the name of this amazing God!*

Signs of this abound! The Session continues to discern the ways in which God is calling us to be the community we're called to be—and the months of February and March will entail surveys and interviews to help garner congregational input! What's more: new *small groups* continue to spring to life; the upcoming Women's retreat is full with a wait list; our Sunday Community Lunch just received special attention in the Towson Times; a new confirmation program has just begun; a brand-new communication team is forming; and so much more!

It has been such a joy to find myself in our community of faith, which is so blessed and so eager to grow closer to God, to each other, and to our greater community.

From the bottom of my heart, I thank you for the chance to grow with you.

In Peace,
Rob

Tending the Flock

TPC Welcomes Boy Scout Troop 729

TPC excitedly welcomes Boy Scout Troop 729 to our facility and church organization. The relationship between Troop 729 and TPC began forming this past fall, when troop leaders approached the church in hopes of identifying a new charter organization and location in which they could meet. The troop's previous charter organization (Brown Woodbrook Memorial Presbyterian Church) relocated out of the area.

Troop 729, which has been active in the Towson community for over 45 years, meets most Thursday evenings in the third floor gym and Youth Room, and will also be venturing to Camp BeeTree on occasion. They enjoy a wide variety of activities, including camping, hiking, backpacking, cycling, winter and summer sports. Their program strives to build strong leaders and well rounded citizens by embracing the boy-led troop and the tenets of the scout law. The church will be blessed to more formally welcome the troop on Feb. 11, which is marked as Scout Sunday. As such, members of Troop 729 will be assisting in the service. Help us welcome them.

Contact for the Scoutmaster : Doug Williams - 443-865-0635



TPC celebrates Tara Runge, a new staff role,
and a new ministry team:

Communications Coordinator & Communications Team

Towson Presbyterian Church is excited to announce that Tara Runge is now the *Administrative & Communications Coordinator* of Towson Presbyterian Church. Tara was previously the Administrative Coordinator.

In response to the church's growing communication needs and the ongoing struggle to meet them, Tara, Pastor Rob, and the Personnel Committee began working together this past fall to explore a variety of options. Ultimately, they developed a creative and collaborative approach that, with the hands and skills of others in the congregation, will meet the growing communication needs of our community of faith.

As such, at their special meeting on Jan. 10, Session approved a job change for Tara with increased responsibilities and remuneration, as Tara will now perform a staff role in facilitating the newly formed Communications Team that will seek to develop and carry out a new communication policy for the church. Additionally, the team will create/update/oversee TPC's: website; social media accounts; electronic and print media and promotions; vlogs; app development and more.

As they begin their work in the coming months, more will be shared so please stay tuned!

Worship at TPC in February



Worship at TPC ~ February, 2018

Feb. 4 As we begin the month, the four-part sermon series, “Called by God,” draws to a close as we continue making our way through the first chapter of Mark (1: 29-39). As Mark tells it, Jesus moves from town to town proclaiming the kingdom of God in both word and deed. He heals the sick, cures the lame, casts out demons, and embraces the outcast. But he also refuses to stay anywhere for very long, insisting he must remain on the go in order to “proclaim the message... for that is what I came out to do.” Living our faith requires proclamation—in both words and deeds.

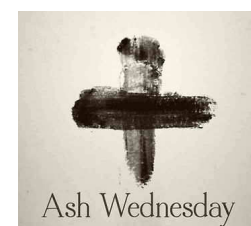
This morning, we will also share in the sacrament of Communion.



Feb. 11 As we begin the transition into Lent, we celebrate “Transfiguration Sunday,” a day on which we explore the story of Jesus’ transfiguration according to Mark 9: 2-9. It’s an admittedly odd story, in which the disciples witness strange things happen to Jesus, who suddenly finds himself standing with Moses and Elijah, and a voice calls out from heaven with the same message that was heard at Jesus’ baptism. But what does that mean? Why was Jesus “transfigured?” And why did he tell his disciples “to tell no one about what they had seen”?

Feb. 14 Whether we are able to admit to ourselves or not, we *all* have those places in our lives—our innermost wounds and shames—that not only shape the way we view our world, but also ourselves. We may be too unwillingly to go to these places ourselves, let alone to let another person in to see and tend to them. However, as we witness in Scripture time and time again, there is no place in life too sinful or shameful for God.

On **Ash Wed.**, we gather at 7 p.m. for a special service in which we recognize not only our sin, but the grace of God that accepts and love us as we are, calling us into a transformational life of discipleship.



Feb. 18 On the first Sunday of Lent, we return to the very beginning of Mark (1: 9-15), and explore Jesus’ time in the wilderness. While Mark doesn’t offer us many details about Jesus’ time there, it still reveals a truth we all learn in this life—no one (not even Jesus) is freed from time in the wilderness where life is just harder, truth is difficult to find, and the light just isn’t quite as bright.



Feb. 25 This morning, TPC will be blessed to celebrate Youth Sunday, as the Jr. & Sr. High youth will lead the worship service they have created!

Children

LENTEN FESTIVAL will be Sunday February 11th for children & MS students!

VOLUNTEERS needed on Sunday 2/11. Volunteers are needed! Interested in helping with crafts and food, please email Jenness at jhall@towsonpres.org

SAVE THE DATE!
Camp BeeTree for 2018 is on the Calendar!!

Camp Bee Tree will be July 9 – 13.

Please mark your calendars.

All 5 days will be up at the camp.

For 5 years old through 5th grade for campers.

MS & HS students ---

Counselor in Training positions available!

If you are interested in volunteering with the planning/the actual camp week, please email Jenness at jhall@towsonpres.org



Youth

Confirmation - 2018



The Confirmation experience is an opportunity for teens to explore what *they* believe and what *our church* believes about God and the life of faith. They learn what it means to be a part of TPC, ask questions about God and faith, and in the end become a member of TPC. At their baptisms our congregation made promises to teach them about Jesus, to help them grow in their faith, to love them, and to help them know that before they had any idea about who God was God loved them. In Confirmation, our Confirmands now have the opportunity to choose whether or not to say, “I believe what my church believes about God.”

Confirmation at TPC kicked off in January for 13 of our teens! Besides exploring what it means to be a *Presbyterian* Christian in class with their teachers (Dotsie Bregel, Jim Kulhman, Linda Lotz and Pastor Joel), our Confirmands attend worship, meet with a Mentor where they explore the Gospel of Mark, and write a Statement of Faith.

Earth Corps

Free Gardening Workshop - "Starting from Seeds..."

Sat. 2/24 10:00am to noon

It's not too soon to start thinking about all the delicious, healthy produce you can grow in your vegetable garden next season. February's a great time to start seedlings inside, which is a great way to get your garden off to a good start, and save \$\$\$. It's also the focus of this year's gardening workshop. The TPC Intergenerational Garden (IGG) is partnering with the Southland Hills Greening Committee to sponsor this informative, hands-on workshop. The workshop is free. Some seeds and starting materials will be available at cost. For more information, or to RSVP (so we have enough handouts and materials available) please contact Carol Appleby or the TPC office (tpc@towsonpres.org). For those of you interested in the "God's Gardener's" small group, plan to bring a bag lunch and stay for our first meeting (lunch and fellowship) after the workshop.



MD Lenten Creation Care Calendar - a special opportunity



Lent is a time for prayer, fasting, and more intentional sharing. This year, TPC is joining with many other people of faith in Maryland in heeding God's call to be stewards of God's Creation. This calendar, created by Interfaith Power & Light, is an aide to help us be more mindful of the ways that our daily habits impact both "our common home" and all of those with whom we share it. Suggestions include opportunities for prayer and reflection, lifestyle changes, advocacy and appreciating nature. All of the suggestions may not speak to you, but we encourage you to strive for 1, 2 or 3 a week throughout the 6 weeks of Lent. Mark the days that

you attempted the action suggested, and turn your marked calendar in on Easter. *Thank-you gifts** will be shared on Earth Sunday with those completing 6, 12 or 18 of the actions listed. Calendars can be downloaded from the TPC website link, or copies picked up in the narthex and Thompson Hall.

Session



Session Highlights from Jan. 10, 2018 Special Meeting

A special meeting of the Session was called for Jan. 10, 2018 for the purpose of reviewing the 2017 year-end financial statements, and receiving the reports of the Finance and Stewardship Committees regarding the formation of the 2018 budget. At this meeting, Session discerned the following:

2017 Budget

- The 2017 Operating deficit of approximately \$39,184 is significantly less than the planned deficit of \$90,615, largely due to savings in Personnel from one unstaffed position for much of the year and ministry teams spending less than budgeted.
- The following motions were approved:
Reduce the 2017 planned 4% draw (\$68,507.28) from the Unrestricted Endowment Fund to an amount equal to the 2017 operating deficit.
- Utilize dividend payments (after allocations to the Carr and Patterson Funds) to pay off the Self Loan the church took for necessary HVAC work several years ago.

2018 Budget

- Session approved the 2018 budget as recommended by the Finance Committee.
- Budget Notes:
 - o 2018's pledges increased over 2017's!
 - o 2018 Expenses as requested from committees have been budgeted with no exceptions.
 - o 2018 Expenses are budgeted to be approximately \$77,788 above total Revenues.
 - Session plans a 4% draw on the Unrestricted Endowment to cover this deficit.
- Session approved a change in job title and responsibilities for the position of Administrative Coordinator (Tara Runge), which will now be titled Administrative & Communications Coordinator. This position change includes the work of facilitating the a newly formed Communications Team that will seek to improve and increase TPC's communications to both members and the community at large.
- Session approved a 10% raise to reflect this new position description and increased responsibilities. Session thanked Elder Cornelia McKenna for her leadership of Stewardship and facilitating the creation of the 2018 Budget.

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Session - continued

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Session Highlights from Jan. 24, 2018 Stated Meeting

Rev. Carter led the Session through a worship-centered agenda, holding our church in prayer while discerning the following:

- Session elected and approved the following to terms through June, 2018, in order to ensure that the Corporate office year mirrors that of the congregational office year.
 - ◊ Bob Waters – Treasurer
 - ◊ Phyllis Gray – Secretary
 - ◊ Kevin McKenna – President
 - ◊ Andy Evans – Vice President

- Session discussed TPC’s Emergency Management Plan, and approved the formation of an Emergency Management Plan Task Force to update TPC’s current plan.
 - ◊Revs. Carter and Strom and Kathryn Bojanowski attended the Baltimore County Active Shooter Preparedness training.
 - ◊Rev. Strom attended a symposium in October entitled, “Reimagining Faith Formation for the 21st Century.”
A key take-away regards the importance of creating online opportunities for faith formation.
 - The Adult Spiritual Formation Committee has set a goal of providing one online opportunity by the fall of 2018.

- Confirmation class has begun, led by Jim Kuhlman, Dotsie Bregel, and Linda Lotz. There are 13 youth in the class.
- Front sidewalks and steps to the chapel and sanctuary doors have been replaced/repared.
- Boy Scout Troop 729 has begun meeting in the gym and youth room on Thursday nights.
- The synagogue that was considering renting space for their services has chosen another location.
- The WMA committee will be inviting one person to offer a testimony (a faith story conveying one way in which they have experienced God at work in their life) during worship once a month for the months February through June.
- Over 80 Waking Up White books have been sold; there are 66 participants in small discussion groups. All of the small groups will be invited to a wrap-up session on February 11th.
- Adult Spiritual Formation has chosen a book for small group study in Lent, Half Truths.
- Children and Family Ministries are beginning to explore curriculum ideas for 2018-2019 year.
- The newly formed Communications Team will begin meeting later this month. Members include: Lyn Brooks, Cornelia McKenna, Dotsie Bregel, Lorene LaBerge, and Sandy Hallameyer.
- Youth Sunday is February 25th. Caroline Miller and Drew Evans will be preaching.



Winter at TPP...

We are all back from our holiday break and busily working on our projects for the Art Show on March 4th! There are also lots of snowmen and penguins around and lots of winter themed work going on. The children are continuing with Spanish twice a month (4s and 5 day 3s), music every week with Mrs. LaBerge, Read Rover from the BCPL and Science Fridays twice a month. We did have to say so long to our new afternoon teacher, Mrs. Ennis, so she could care for her aging parents. We now have Mrs. Lisa Darwin and Ms. Grace Shipman helping us out.

After offering Soccer Shots in the afternoon this past fall we now have Yoga and we will have Karate in the spring. Coming up on February 1st and 2nd we will once again have visits from the Baltimore Zoomobile; by far our favorite visit!! They will bring real animals for us to see and touch and learn about. We have requested their penguin ambassador Winnie again this year since she was such a hit!! On February 21st the 4s will take a field trip to the Maryland Science Center and on Friday, February 23rd we will have our annual Pizza & Movie night for families in Thompson Hall. If you are here for church on Sunday, March 4th, please stay around for the TPP Art Show from 2-4pm; you will be amazed at the wonderful art these kids make!!

We are now accepting registrations for the school year 2018-2019 and if you are a church member you have priority. Registration for the public will begin January 24th. You can get application forms, brochures and so much more from our website at: www.towsonprespreschool.org. Thanks and enjoy these photos!

Leslie Foretich, Director



Penguin shapes



Snowmen art



4s Holiday Show

Mrs. Koehler talks Iditarod



Memorial Commission

Now is the time to begin to think of spring with new ideas to honor a loved one. Many needs of the Church remain available for memorials, and restricted contributions for specific projects are also deeply appreciated. A Memorial List brochure is located in the Narthex and is currently being updated. New ideas are added frequently and may not be included in the current list but are available upon request. You are welcome to take the brochure home to review the memorials. New suggestions are always welcome.

Appreciated Memorial Funds are being received in loving memory of Ken Strout and Katherine Bredbenner.

Some spring related suggestions for memorials:

Intergenerational Garden: bird houses, a bird bath, and shrubbery.

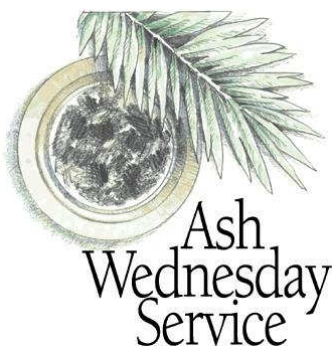
Labyrinth: Mulch. Resetting of bricks and plantings.

General Landscaping-replanting of three areas of the Church property. One area is to the right (east) of the Sanctuary door, the Thompson Hall entrance garden and the area by the parking lot on the Thompson Hall side.

Bee Tree: Flag Pole

For Memorial Gifts, I would like to remind you to send appropriately identified donations directly to Kathryn Bojanowski in the Business Office. If they are 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.



Distribution of Ashes on
Wednesday, February 14 at
7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary.

Property

In addition to the new sidewalks in front of the church and the new Chesapeake Ave entranceway into the Thompson Hall parking lot, which were all installed in December, the steps and landings leading to the main entrance to the church and the chapel entrance have now undergone a resetting and resealing process. All of these upgrades not only provide TPC with some additional “curb appeal”, they also address safety concerns when entering or exiting the church – or when just walking by!

For Advanced Planning
Holy Week Schedule

March 25 - Palm Sunday Service @ 8:30 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.

March 29 - Maundy Thursday Communion & Tenebrae Service @ 7:00 p.m.

March 30 - Good Friday Service @ noon

April 1 - Easter Services @ 9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

Adult Spiritual Formation

Financial Peace University

Time & Place: Tuesdays beginning Feb.13, 7:00-8:30 p.m. in the TPC Library

Purpose: Financial Peace University is a nine-week/lesson, money-management class created by one of America's most trusted financial advisors. Dave Ramsey and his teaching team will walk us through the basics of budgeting, dumping debt, planning for the future, and much more. Cost per participating household – \$109.00. For more information and to sign up, go to the private link for our class-www.fpu.com/1056203.

Leader: Tim Lotz



Winter Walk in the Woods

Time & Place: Saturday Feb. dates TBD. Glen Ellen Trailhead at Loch Raven Reservoir

Purpose: Suitable for adult and kids (-8+). Come & enjoy the outdoors amid winter. Hikes will be at moderate pace with plenty of time to stop and admire God's creation.

Leader: Jen Bolster



God's Gardeners

Time & Place: Sat., 2/24, 3/24, 4/22, 5/19, 6/16 Meets one Sat. a month (9 – 11 a.m.) in the TPC Intergenerational Garden.

Purpose: To learn about gardening, work together in the garden (produce goes to ACTC), and enjoy spending time with each other out in God's creation.

Leader: Carol Appleby

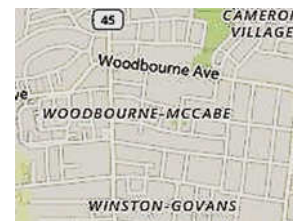


Woodbourne-McCabe

Time & Place: Meets at TPC for four Mondays at 7: 00 p.m.: 2/19, 3/5, 3/19 and 4/2

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

Leader: Lyn Brooks



Running

Time & Place: 8 a.m. Saturdays 4/7, 4/21, 5/5, 5/19, 6/2, & 6/16

@ Loch Raven Reservoir (park and meet at Loch Raven Dr.
& Morgan Mill Rd.

Purpose: We'll stretch and start together... but finish at your own pace.

Leader: Brenda Evans



Half Truths Lenten Study

Time & Place: Small Groups will be held on Sunday morning and throughout the week during Lent at TPC and in leaders' homes.

Purpose: We've all heard these words. Maybe even said them. They're simple phrases that sound Christian. Yet they miss the point in important ways. Join the search for the whole truth by comparing common Christian clichés to the message and ministry of Jesus.

The clichés include:

Everything happens for a reason.

God helps those who help themselves.

God won't give you more than you can handle.

God said it, I believe it, that settles it.

Love the sinner, hate the sin.

