



November 2018

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

www.towsonpres.org

The TPC Staff

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Preschool

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Towson Presbyterian Church

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

Dear Friends,

Gratitude is an essential element of faith. The word itself shares the same root word in Greek as grace. So grace and gratitude are intertwined—they go together. To experience God's grace fully, we need to live out our gratitude for God's rich blessings.

While it's not always easy to be grateful in the midst of stress, pain, or the rush of busy days, in truth there are always blessings around us to be thankful for; and it helps us grow in grace if we look for them! This means making gratitude a *discipline*—something we practice each day—by picking out small to large blessings in our life/day and giving thanks to God. And what better month to start such a discipline than the one we're entering?

To share some of the blessings I'm grateful for right now, here are:

10 Things I'm Thankful For at TPC

10. The Job sermon series is over. I suspect you might be thankful for this, too! It's certainly not a fun book to explore, but I pray the series was meaningful.
9. The worship music this fall—phenomenal!
8. Two new choirs in action: an elementary-age choir that meets after worship in the choir room; the youth group singing after dinner each Sunday night!
7. Our great start to church school. The teachers are wonderful, the brand-new curricula are getting rave reviews, and attendance has been A+.
6. TPC's heart for mission and outreach. This November alone we will celebrate the 2018 InterGenerational Garden's harvest (all of which went to ACTC), give Thanksgiving Dinners to ACTC clients, send money to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance for relief work in hurricane-struck regions, begin the Alternative Christmas Gift shop that supports fair trade and impoverished communities, and set the stage for a 2019 mission trip to Honduras.
5. While I wish it wasn't needed, I'm regularly grateful for the special way our community members uphold one another in moments of deep pain or need. Thank you, TPC, for the way you care for one another.
4. Our willingness to have tough conversations. I know it's not easy to explore things like systemic racism or gun violence. But I'm grateful our community understands the importance of having these conversations as we seek to explore all the ways God calls us to be peacemakers.
3. Session's visioning work this year. I've written about that work here (in the newsletter) many-a-time, but I haven't shared my gratitude for their' time, study, prayer, and leadership as they explore the call of God within our community of faith.
2. A great staff!
1. You. Seriously. I give thanks for you. No smoke. I'm grateful for the blessing you are, and the gifts you share that make this church the special place it is. Thank you.

In Peace,
Rob

Tending the Flock

Jayne Nuttle: a Memorial service will be held in the sanctuary on Saturday, November 17 at 11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary.

John “Jack” Mier- on October 24, a memorial service will be held on Saturday, November 17 at 11:00 a.m. at Mercy Ridge.

Christmas wreath fundraiser

November 18, 25 and December 2 after the 10:00 a.m. worship service

To help offset the cost of their trip to the 2019 Presbyterian Youth Triennium next summer, our high school teens will sell Christmas Wreaths in Thompson Hall.



PRESBYTERIAN YOUTH TRIENNIUM 2019
July 16-20, 2019 · Purdue University

Come on down and peruse the options or purchase a wreath yourself through this link:

<https://www.lcffundraising.com/f/811682>

Thank you for your support!



Children and Family Ministries

ADVENT FESTIVAL

Sunday, December 2nd will be a busy day in Thompson Hall. The Advent Festival – for all ages – will be held from 10:30 am – 11:30 am. Please plan to join us for holiday craft making – intergenerational -- and sharing fellowship & laughter. The Alternative Gift Market will also be held on December 2nd. It will be a joyous occasion.

ANGEL TREE for the McKim Center

As is the tradition at TPC, we will have the Angel Tree decorated in late November with **60 Gift Tags** for children ages 4 – 18. We partner with the **McKim Center** which is located just blocks away from Johns Hopkins Hospital in the historic Jonestown neighborhood. The McKim Center offers after school care and tutoring as well as summer camp, wrestling and track & field sports programs for neighborhood children. These children would have very little at Christmas without donations such as our church make. *Taking a Gift Tag = Loving a Child.* Please be as generous as always!

CHRISTMAS CAROLING & CHILI

Mark your calendar for **Sunday, December 16th** for Christmas Caroling with TPC members! We rent a bus and visit a retirement community and some TPC members who are home bound. It's a wonderful tradition, we give joy and cheer to some of our own, then we return to Thompson Hall and have a chili supper together! We begin at 4:30 pm and will wrap up supper no later than 7:30 pm. It's a wonderful event and if for some reason you're a little grumpy, the singing and fellowship will put you in the holiday mood. We want a busload of all generations to join us!

November Worship Schedule



November Worship Schedule

“Appearances Can Be Deceiving”

Nov. 4 – *What Does Love Look Like?*

Nov. 11 – *What Does Righteousness Look Like?*

Things aren't always as they seem. As marketers constantly try to commercialize what love, beauty, and success might “look” like, the true appearance of such things can easily get lost amid the noise.

Throughout the first two weeks of November, Pastor Rob will explore the book of Ruth and Mark 12: 23-44 to catch a glimpse of the picture Scripture paints when it comes to two of the most important commodities we have in this world: love and righteousness.

50-year Member Celebration - On Nov. 11, TPC will give special thanks in worship for the rich blessing of all those who've been members of TPC for 50+ years.

On Nov. 18, TPC celebrates Harvest Sunday; we dedicate the InterGenerational Garden's 2018 harvest, and look forward to a weekend spent in giving gratitude to the God who gives us all good things. Pastor Joel will offer the morning's meditation; and we will be blessed with the gift of a testimony of God's activity at work in our life.



SESSION MEETING

Officers of the Corporation: A motion was made and approved to extend the term of the following officers to June 30, 2019. President: Kevin McKenna, VP: Andy Evans, Treasurer: Robert Water, and Secretary: Phyllis Gray

Mission Outreach: The Session approved a motion to allowing visiting minister, Rev. James Atwood, to have his book, *Gundamentalism*, available for sale at the education Session after church on October 28th.

Emergency Response Task Force: Session completed a review of recommendations from the ERTF. Session approved a motion to append the ERTF report. Session approved a motion to amend the previous motion regarding payment for the defibrillators. The payment for the AED will be taken out of the Member Care line in the 2018 budget. CPR Training: Session approved a request by the Deacons to allocate the \$500 in their budget to offset the cost of CPR training for church staff and officers, this will also be paid out of the Member Care budget.

Finance Ministries: Session approved the amendment of the following motion: To pay for communications expenses out of the Communications expense line in the 2018 budget. (Professional Services - \$9500, and Equipment - \$3700)

Communications Task Force: A motion was made and approved to make the Communication Task Force the Communications Committee. Session also approved a motion to charge this committee to develop and maintain platforms and processes to improve internal and external church communications.

Visioning Report: The Session reviewed the report. A motion was made and approved to form and Evangelical Committee that will develop a plan to Share the Good News of Jesus Christ within and outside TPC.

All Committee Meeting Session will **not be** held on November 4th. All committee members will be invited to attend. It will be scheduled after the New Year.

ACTC Thanksgiving Baskets



ACTC Thanksgiving Baskets: You may buy the items individually for the baskets, provide monetary donations, or purchase pre-packed Thanksgiving Baskets from several supermarkets in the area. See below.

Please drop off your bags on the stage in Thompson Hall by Sunday, November 11, 2018.

Pre-Packed Thanksgiving Baskets

This year we have 4 grocery stores participating in the ACTC Thanksgiving Basket Drive. We hope this will make it easier for more people to participate. All bags will be packed in advance at each of the stores listed and can be picked up at the respective customer service counter (See Below). This also includes a re-usable bag. If you are picking up multiple bags, please call in advance.

Giant Supermarket Timonium (across from the Fairgrounds)
2145 York Road
Timonium, MD 21093
410 308-3868
Rob Eickhoff, Manager \$23.00

Giant Supermarket Baltimore (across from the Drumcastle Center)
6340 York RD
Baltimore, MD 21212
410-377-2673
Amy Steinbrook, Manager \$23.00

Giant Supermarket Towson (near Loch Raven & Taylor Avenues)
8100 Loch Raven Boulevard
Towson, MD 21286
410-377-2673
Lekeita Sedgwick, Manager \$23.00

ShopRite
37 Aylesbury, Rd., Timonium, MD 21093
410-308-8700
Steve Starzynski, Manager \$24.75



Bags will be available as of November 1, 2018.

Monetary donations should be made payable to, *Towson Presbyterian Church* and add *ACTC Thanksgiving* in the memo line. They may be placed online or in the offering plate or mailed to the Church office.

Adult Spiritual Formation

Adult Spiritual Formation Playlists

Taking intentional time on our own to grow in faith can be difficult, can't it? Common roadblocks include trying to set aside a specific time during the day for a spiritual practice, and maybe the biggest question of them all...what do I actually do during this time? Read the Bible? If so, where do I start? Pray? What does a time set aside for prayer look like? Sometimes we're left with this question: I'd like to take time to grow in my faith on my own, but where do I begin?

Starting this month, TPC's Adult Spiritual Formation program introduces "**Spiritual Formation Playlists.**" Playlists are a spiritual formation experience that is available to you at your convenience. They're meant to be accessible (on-line) so you can experience it when your schedule allows. And they're also meant to be time-sensitive – the following Playlist should not take you more than 12-15 minutes to complete. Playlists are ready-made for you to experience on your own and when you have the available time.

Each Playlist will have a theme. November's is Gratitude and next month, December, we'll explore the season of Advent. Click on the link below for November's Playlists. It can also be found at www.towsonpres.org on the Home page.

Adult Spiritual Formation Playlists

November - Gratitude

<https://jstrom73.wixsite.com/tpcffplaylist>

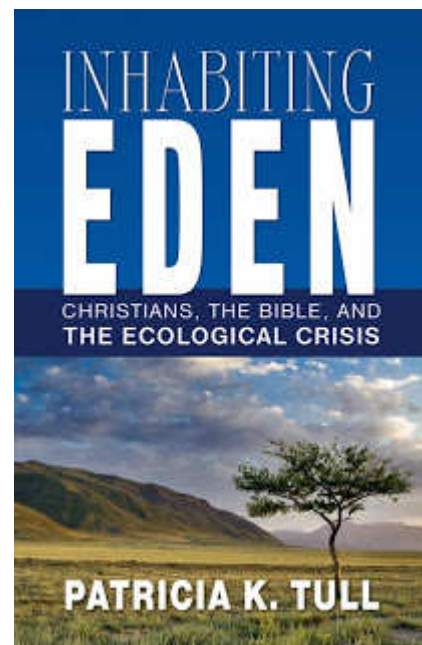
Advent Prayer Partners

As we enter into the season of Advent, Adult Spiritual Formation invites you to be a Prayer Partner this December. The concept for Advent Prayer Partners is simple – starting on November 11 sign up in Thompson Hall or at www.towsonpres.org. Our Adult Spiritual Formation Committee will then connect you with your Prayer Partner. From there you and your Prayer Partner commit to talking on the phone or in person once a week throughout Advent (sorry, no texting or email!). The goal is to talk about things in your life that matter and what you'd like your prayer partner to pray for you that week. Then, you actually pray together, or if you're not comfortable doing that, promise to offer your partner's prayers later in the week. The concept is really simple, but at the same has the opportunity to be very impactful! Registration begins on November 11!

Winter church-wide small group book study - "Inhabiting Eden"

Genesis 2:15 (NIV) “The Lord God took the human and put the human in the garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.” In the beginning, Genesis, the creation story, the first thing that God asked us to do was to *serve and preserve* the amazing creation that God had just created. This is our first call, our first charge, our first responsibility as Christians.

But that message doesn't come to us just in Genesis, it's woven all throughout the Old and New Testaments. And that's what we'll explore together in “Inhabiting Eden: Christians, the Bible and the Ecological Crisis”. Rev. Dr. Patricia Tull, Presbyterian Pastor, noted Old Testament Scholar, and Professor Emerita at Louisville Presbyterian Seminary, lays out the Biblical foundation for our call to Care for Creation, and challenges us to think about what that means in our world today, and in our own lives. How are we responding to God's first call to us – to serve and preserve God's Creation? This is a great follow-up to the September sermon series “People of Faith = People of Action”, for it calls us to both deepen our faith and increase our actions.



So join a small group to read, discuss and explore how you as a person of faith, and we as a church, can respond to God's first call, and better serve and preserve God's amazing Creation. Small group sign-ups and book sales will begin November 11th. The study will run 5 weeks, starting the week of January 13th. <https://inhabitingeden.blogspot.com>.

Ecumenical Prayer Service on Wednesday, November 14 at 7 p.m.

*Please Join Us in Prayer and
Support ACTC's Thanksgiving Basket Project*

To coincide with Assistance Center of Towson Churches (ACTC) Thanksgiving food drive, **Immaculate Conception Church will host an Ecumenical Prayer Service on Wednesday, November 14th at 7.**



ACTC Member Church pastors from various denominations will participate in this prayer service
~ a celebration of gratitude in our lives ~ by giving thanks to God.

Although Immaculate will not have the life-size statue of “Homeless Jesus” as last year, we have a small replica to remind us that Christ is with the most marginalized in our society, and is concerned with providing for our hungry neighbors.

We come together to provide a holiday meal to over 2,000 families in our community.

We look forward to this wonderful opportunity for our community to grow in prayer together.

Children and Family Ministries



Holy Moly!

*“Not Sisters!”
but the same great
fashion sense!*



Frolic – Ages 4 & 5 – class member has her eyes closed as she tries to figure out what she has in her hand. Is it rough? Smooth? Long? Short?



Holy Moly!
Grade 2-3



Connect Class
Grade 4-5



TPC member, Seth Burdine
helps in the *Heartlights Class*

Why you *should* sit in the same pew every Sunday

– in memory of Jim Hyde

Why do we sit where we sit? Do you have a habit of picking the same pew (and the exact same spot in that pew) each week or do you move around? I make no judgement about your choice of seat. In memory of my friend and fellow TPC member, Jim Hyde, I propose to open the debate and declare why you *should* sit in the same pew every Sunday.

My guess is that most of the TPC “regulars” knew where Jim Hyde sat each week. He usually arrived by 9:45 for the 10:00 worship service, so upon entering a nearly empty Sanctuary, his seat was always ready for him.

We, the McKennas, are also habitual seat choosers. By luck or by God’s hand, we always sat in the pew behind the Hyde family. Each Sunday gave us the chance to connect for a few minutes before and after worship. I also give credit to the multiple committees and Session terms Jim and I served together, but there is no doubt that the proximity of our worship seats helped solidify our friendship.

Sitting right behind Jim, it was easy to take notice if Jim wasn’t in his seat on a Sunday morning. He knew that he would get an email or a phone call at some point later that week. The reason? I usually had some question or idea that I had planned on discussing with Jim either before or after the service. I also knew that Jim would want to know what he missed that week. These conversations might not have happened if we weren’t all habitual seat choosers.

If you set a pattern of sitting in the same seat or pew each week, take notice of those habitual seat choosers around you. Notice if one of your neighbors doesn’t show up on Sunday. Perhaps just the simple recognition the following week letting that person know they were missed would make their day. Perhaps they would want to know what they missed last Sunday.

I cannot guarantee that the people you get to know around you will become your best friends, but I can guarantee that your TPC community will become stronger and your worship experience even more meaningful. So, go ahead. Sit in the same pew. When a visitor usurps your favored seat, then introduce yourself, smile, and thank God for another worshipper in our community of faith. Then, plan to get to church earlier next week!

By: Cornelia McKenna



A Member's Testimony - Patty Rath

I first learned about God through my mom—listening to her and watching her. She was a woman of faith for sure. She loved both God and the Church. And she struggled with them both. I believed in God and God's love for me, because she did. I believe God reached out to me through her and then I reached back to God. Mom also feared God in ways that caused us both some problems. I emerged from childhood with the uncomfortable sense that God, not unlike Santa Claus, was keeping a list and checking it far more than twice. God loved me—but if I screwed up... well, that's where faith seemed to get dicey, and my experience of God and God's love for me felt pretty conditional.

Fast forward a couple decades. I'm married with children. Still a believer. Still praying and still going to church. I had decided along the way that God, while still loving, was occupied with the big issues—war, famine, poverty—and I was expected to be responsible for myself, my life, my loved ones, etc.

At some point my then-husband and I embarked on a new-church search that ultimately landed us in a Presbyterian congregation up in Bel Air. It was there that I heard about Grace. What a revelation! What a relief! God used the pastor, his sermons and our conversations, and even the sanctuary itself—to reveal a whole new understanding of God and how God operates. It was as if God popped the lid off my spirit. The List faded. God was big enough to handle all the wars and pestilences AND STILL have time and passion for me and my small life.

At that same time, my mom was aging and relying increasingly on me both emotionally and financially. As she declined, she leaned on me such that I thought I would suffocate. Her need had an overwhelming depth. It seemed I could not possibly meet my responsibility to her. I found myself back in that place where I feared God was checking God's list—and I wasn't measuring up.

By then, I was meeting regularly with my pastor for what I now understand was spiritual direction. Each time, we talked about God and prayer and faith and life... and each time my angst around my mom worked its way into the conversation. Then two things happened.

First, my pastor offered me an image of the artist's Canvas as a metaphor for my relationship with my mom. Before painting on a canvas, the artist decides its size and dimensions. Then she paints the finest picture she can on *that particular canvas*. Likewise with relationships. I might discern in conversation with God, what the size and dimension of my relationship with my mother would be. Another revelation! More Grace!

The second thing: Around that time I had a dream. It's the only one of its kind I ever had. I feel awkward telling you about it. On the couch one evening, I was thinking/praying about all this—my mom, her aging, her unquenchable need, the Canvas—and wondering where God was in it all. What did God want of me in this? I dozed off. And I was in my mom's house in Cape May, standing in her kitchen looking into the living room where she lay asleep on the couch (as she often did in the evenings). Through the front door came Jesus—the childhood storybook Jesus with white skin, blue eyes, long hair, and a long white robe (silly really). He walked to my mom and bent over and kissed her on the forehead. As he did, he turned his head and looked straight into me. The Message: "I'm taking care of her."

That's it. I awoke dumbfounded. Of course! Of course, God loved her and was taking care of her! God was not wanting me to be God for her. God wanted me to get in on what God was *ALREADY* doing with and in and for my mother. God wanted me to get to work on my new Canvas—to *HELP* care for her *AND* to experience God's love and amazing grace in the process.

Some years later, I sat with my mom, as she took her last breath in the early hours of that day. She had lived her worst nightmare—dementia and ultimately nursing-home care. She had been in a coma for 10 long days—tenacious to the last. A nurse came in. "She's gone!" I said, while both laughing and crying. I know she thought I was nuts! But I knew I was not. I was just basking in the knowledge that God was there in that room with us—had been in the thick of it with us all along. And Mom now knew it too. It was all pure Grace. Amen.

Memorial

The Holidays are fast approaching which presents us with many opportunities to remember a loved one or to honor a friend or family member with a memorial gift. Some members would welcome a donation in their honor to Towson Presbyterian Church instead of presents. It would go to the General Memorial Fund for the much needed maintenance of the Church in many areas. Another possibility would be to “think spring” and donate to the Intergenerational Garden to produce healthy food for providing sustenance to families in need. Each of your honorees would receive notification of the gift.

Memorial Funds this month have been received for Jayne Nuttle and Timothy Mascari. An exciting addition to the Church property has been the restoration of the Landscaped Plot between the Sanctuary doors and the Chapel doors. The weeds and distressed shrubs have been removed and replaced with new shrubs and beautiful lush, green grass. Some of the original perennials have been retained. This change, which adds to the peacefulness and tranquility of the Church, was made possible by memorial gifts in honor of Ken Strout. We have been blessed with these many wonderful memorial gifts.

For Memorial Gifts, I would like to remind you to send appropriately identified donations directly to Kathryn Bojanowski in the Business Office and not placed in the Sunday Offering. This way, the appropriate information will be forwarded to the Memorial Chairman who will then be able to send thank you notes, notify families of donations and generate accurate gift records.

**If you would like further information, please contact: Susan Hossfeld 410-683-4357,
e-mail: shossfeld@comcast.net.**

TPC's Annual Alternative Gift Market (AGM)

TPC presents the Alternative Gift Market!!

We will provide a fabulous alternative for your honey, your family, friends and colleagues this Christmas season!! Buy animals, ornaments, eco-stoves, dental sealants, seedlings and mulch, food for ACTC, jewelry from Guatemala and THE LIST GOES ON!!

Sundays: November 25, December 2 & 9th
visit the Alternative Gift Market in Thompson Hall from 9-12!!

We accept Cash, Checks and CCs!!

You get to GIVE fabulous gifts and benefit great mission organizations at the same time!!!!

Honduras Mission Trip 2018

Donations needed

Eyeglasses (prescription and reading)
Sunglasses
Hats (especially men's or baseball hats)

Medical Kit Items needed:



Complete Multivitamin for Adults - 130 count

Redness Reliever Eye Drops - .5 fl oz



Triple antibiotic ointment - .33 oz



Ibuprofen tablets or caplets – 200 mg, 100 count per bottle

Hydrocortisone cream 1 oz tube



Antacid Tablets – 750 mg, 60 tablets



Children's Complete Multivitamin chewables - 60 count

Do not get gummies - they are full of sugar and weigh much more



Please note the bottle count. We cannot accept donations of larger bottles due to Honduras regulations. Walmart has the lowest prices, but we will of course accept other brands if the same size.

If you prefer to donate money, please make checks out to *Towson Presbyterian Church* with Honduras Medical Kits in the memo area of the check. \$25 for 2 full kits.

Please do not donate clothes at this time. We have not yet determined what is needed.

Please leave donations marked “Honduras” on the right side of Thompson Hall stage.

**To learn more about the
TPC Honduras Mission Trip
March 8 – 15, 2019
please visit the church website www.towsonpres.org.**