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OUTLOOK

March, 2016

AT BUCC DURING LENT

We are well into the Season of Lent at BUCC and there is a lot going on. An informal book study group will continue its after church discussions of "Gifts of the Dark Wood" that began in February. These discussions take place in the Library after Sunday Worship Services. Bring a brown bag lunch for yourself if possible. They last about an hour, from noon to 1 PM.

March 1st brings the second of four "Meditative Services" that are held, either in the Library or the Parlor. They are designed to be short services of about 30 to 40 minutes, consisting of a short reading, silent meditation and a time for shared reflection and prayer. Other Meditative Services will be held on March 10 and March 16. All three services begin at 7:30 PM.

Also on March 10 you will have the opportunity to walk the Labyrinth in the Sanctuary. The Labyrinth will be set up from 6 to 9 PM. Just because the Labyrinth is open for three hours does not mean that it takes three hours to walk it. It is not a maze or a puzzle, there is only one path. It too, is a meditative experience. One

can come on the 10th and do both the Meditative Service and walk the Labyrinth either before or after the service.

As Palm Sunday approaches, we need to prepare palms for the Sunday service. On Saturday, March 19 at 10 AM there will be a Palm folding session in the Library where Palm leaves will be folded into Palm Crosses to be distributed at the Sunday worship service.

March 24 is Maundy Thursday. We will mark that day with a Communion Service at 7:30 PM. There will be a hand/foot washing opportunity and we will close with a Service of Tenebrae. For Good Friday, March 25 there is usually an ecumenical service with several local churches participating. Outlook has no information about this year's service at this time. Watch for word in the e-vangelism email or Sunday Bulletin.

On Easter, March 27 we free all the Alleluia's that have been put aside since Ash Wednesday and celebrate the Resurrection with song and special music.

ANNUAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS BUCC'S PATH

We finally held our Annual Meeting after the worship service on February 21. When the worship service concluded most of the congregation walked down to the Fellowship Hall where a wonderful Potluck Lunch awaited them. This was based on the theory that good food would attract a quorum. It worked.

After lunch, we got down to the business at hand. We warmed up by approving the minutes of last year's Annual Meeting. After that we moved on to the team reports, all pretty much routine. Art Waidmann described what the Endowment Fund was and ways members could contribute to it.

It wasn't until we got to the Financial and Budget reports that things got interesting. Last year we had projected a deficit of \$42,540, but fortunately when the year ended the deficit was "only" \$27,843, which was taken out of our reserve funds. This year's projected shortfall

is \$48,670. This figure is not really a worst case projection, but it is a realistic, "no rosy assumptions" projection. There are some hopeful signs on the horizon, two other congregations are considering sharing our space. Another interesting proposal is from a cell phone company that would like to construct a tower on our property. None of these possibilities are firm yet, but they could materialize. Rental income from these potential users would go a long way toward closing the budget gap. Another option that was proposed was to remove the Christian Support category from the budget and make the contributions to the organizations by special collections from the congregation or by individual contributions from members. This idea was discussed and voted down as not being consistent with our mission.

Continued on Page 4



There is so much good in the world.

Such a simple statement, but sometimes we need to be reminded. In the midst of Lent, on the road with Jesus to Jerusalem, we know what lies ahead for him, if not exactly for us. We will cry, “Crucify!” and our brightest hope will die on a cross by our own hands. And yet, *there is still so much good in the world*. When the world cries, “crucify!” somebody, somewhere remembers that there is still beauty, truth, reverent awe, and basic goodness in human hearts. And that somebody, somewhere, gets down on her knees and purposefully soaks up and scrubs away the blood spilled on the earth’s floor, like Mary, the mother of Jesus.

Our newspaper is filled with daily crucifixions: character assassinations, mass murders in real time, nastiness in the virtual world, ugly poverty that brutalizes people, scary terrorism, unrelenting racism, eco-disasters, and rampant injustice that injures the souls and dreams of the vulnerable and outcast. In Lent, we learn to walk with Jesus and turn toward these daily crucifixions and sufferings. We look deeply at ourselves and realize the terrible truth that *none* of us leaves this world without adding our own contribution to this world of pain and hurt. And we steady ourselves to address what we can, where we can, when we can, with the resources and well-being that we have.

Given all the pain and suffering that is part of our lives, we need to pause and to remember also: *There is still so much good in the world and in us.*

Some will call it naiveté; some will call it idealism, and some will call it a stubborn refusal to believe otherwise. However, the saying is true: **we are not made for crucifixion; we are made for blessing**. By watching Jesus, our Savior, at his most vulnerable time, we see God’s strength made manifest in weakness at our most vulnerable time. **It was not worldly power that converted people’s hearts in Jesus’ day; it was this mysterious strength revealed in human weakness.**

The danger of our looking at suffering for too long and in too many places simultaneously is that we will become numb, unaffected, and apathetic to it. The danger in seeing so many needs and so many places to begin is that we throw up our hands and never begin at all. That is why we need to remember that there is still so much good in the world. That is why we need to remember that there is so much good, still, in us.

Jesus began his ministry only after he heard the affirmation, “*You are my son, the Beloved, in whom I am well pleased.*” It gives me hope that somewhere, right now, *someone* has heard those words of affirmation and has launched a ministry based on their embodied truth.

What good do you see in the midst of daily strife and turmoil? What good inspires you to take up one of the many crosses in this world? What good emboldens you to alleviate *one small corner* of human misery and pain?

As we watch and wait for resurrection, help us, Jesus, to glimpse the good around us and within us.

Blessings,

Rev. Dee

Bible Reading ... at Home

(Adapted from SeasonsFUSION - *Seasons of the Spirit*@Wood Lake Publishing)

March 6 - Returning to God

Joshua 5:9–12

Psalm 32

2 Corinthians 5:16–21

Luke 15:1–3, 11b–32

God's forgiving love embraces everyone. The youngest, the oldest, the wanderers, the dutiful, the sinful, the just: all are offered a welcome that can make everything new. This week's focus scripture is a story of rebellions and returning, and of a love that reconciles, puts us back together, in spite of ourselves. We are challenged to live generously among those we might consider family.

God's welcome intends to leave no one on the outside looking in. God provides the grace and welcome we need. In what ways have you been the receiving end and the giving end of such love and forgiveness? In what ways might our communities and the world be changed through our own ministries of remembering grace?

March 13 - God's Fresh Ways

Isaiah 43:16–21

Psalm 126

Philippians 3:4b–14

John 12:1–8

In this week's focus story, the one who comes to minister becomes the one ministered to in surprising ways and by surprising ones. The grace revealed suggests the new and fresh ways about which Isaiah speaks, the psalmist's hope of restoration, and Paul's pressing goal.

Isaiah invites us to consider the possibilities of God's new and gracious actions in our midst. The psalmist sounds our continuing hopes and prayers for God's restorative grace. Paul personalizes the priority given to relationship with Christ that empowers ministry. And at the feet of Jesus, and at the table where he eats, Mary and Mary both minister to Jesus. In what ways do we find ourselves recipients, and providers, of God's fresh ways?

How do you feel when someone gives you a lavish gift – appreciative? guilty? motivated to give something in return, or motivated to pass on the generosity to another? something else?

March 20 - Trusting God

Liturgy of the Palms

Luke 19:28–40

Psalm 118:1–2, 19–29

Liturgy of the Passion

Isaiah 50:4–9a

Psalm 31:9–16

Philippians 2:5–11

Luke 22:14–23:56 or Luke 23:1–49

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!" The writer's words in Psalm 118:26 set the scene for our entrance into the events of Holy Week. Today on Palm Sunday we, too, shout our praises. Later, Jesus will move beyond the jubilant crowds toward the true revelation of his identity and purpose on the cross. And we will follow, quieting our voices as we enter into the passion of our God.

Where are the places in our lives where an extra measure of grace, forgiveness, or trust would draw us closer to the servants God calls us to be? Be mindful of moments where these themes emerge during Holy Week and in the lives of the congregation.

March 27 - Easter Day

Acts 10:34–43 or Isaiah 65:17–25

Psalm 118:1–2, 14–24

1 Corinthians 15:19–26 or Acts 10:34–43

John 20:1–18 or Luke 24:1–12

The Easter story is the centre of Christian faith. Like Earth around the sun, our lives orbit the mystery of Jesus alive and the tomb empty. In the Resurrection, the God of new things transforms reality and offers hope and life to all.

Faithful followers of Jesus today continue to tell the good news of Easter. Mary Magdalene was first, and we are invited to continue the message. What still surprises you about Easter? Who in your community needs Easter's promise of new life? With what words or actions might you witness to them?

ANNUAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS BUCC'S PATH

continued

Other uses of our property including the parking area were mentioned. One member pointed out that much of the deficit could be eliminated by increasing our pledges. Just an additional \$4.40 per week per pledging unit would cover what would be cut by eliminating the Christian Support category. After discussing these proposals, it was decided that the Council should set up a group to consider a wide range of options to balance the budget. The budget was then passed as initially proposed.

Jim Smith described the new church website which is coming along and is close to being rolled out for general use within a few weeks. He warned that that is not a solid deadline.

The new officers and Team Leaders were duly elected and installed for the coming year. We closed with a prayer by Rev. Dee and Moderator Martha Knouss used her newly acquired gavel to adjourn the meeting.

BOOK GROUP

The Book Group will meet on **Wednesday, March 9 at 3:30pm** in the church parlor. The Pulitzer Prize winner we will discuss is [All The Light We Cannot See](#) by Anthony Doerr.

"This *New York Times* bestseller is about a blind French girl and a German boy whose paths collide in occupied France as both try to survive the devastation of World War II. ... He illuminates the ways, against all odds, people try to be good to one another." ([Amazon.com](#))

All are welcome to join in on the discussion and fellowship.

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME IS BACK

Sunday morning March 13, is the time we start saving daylight again. Moving daylight is a more accurate term though. In any event, your clocks should be set ahead one hour Saturday night on March 12th. You will lose an hours sleep, but if you don't change your clocks, you will arrive at church an hour late. You will be right on time for coffee hour, however. We will not have to go through this again until November 6th when we move the daylight back.

SEEKERS

Seekers will meet on Thursday, March 17 at 7:15 pm in the parlor to discuss the book, *Befriending Death*: Henri Nouwen and *Spirituality of Dying* by Michelle O'Rourke.

Everyone is invited to join us, even if you haven't read the book.

SUPPORT THE BUCC CHILDREN'S BLESSING BAG PROJECT

As Emily Swanson Kenyon, announced during the service recently, the BUCC children are leading a "blessing bag" distribution project for the homeless as a mission project for lent.

The kids are asking the congregation to donate items that could be helpful to the homeless, like personal hygiene items, comfort items and non-perishable small snacks. These items will be put into gallon size zip lock bags and distributed to the homeless as "blessing bags".

A detailed list of needed supplies and signup sheet is in the Narthex. You can put your donated items in designated boxes that will also be in the Narthex. Thank you in advance for supporting BUCC children with this project. The deadline for donations is Easter Sunday, March 27.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING OFFERING

March 6, 2016

Violent political actions all over the world have created waves of refugees and displaced people, unable to return home for fear of their lives. Natural disasters have disrupted communities, too, displacing people from their homes and livelihoods. If refugees had an opportunity to return to their homes, many could not either because of political situations, or because their homes have been destroyed or are still unsafe places to live.

One Great Hour of Sharing - OGHS - is one of the four Special Mission Offerings of the UCC that funds UCC sustainable development, refugee and disaster ministries, with the focus this year on aiding refugees and displaced persons.

Through the One Great Hour of Sharing offering, we, as the body of Christ, have the opportunity and power to help those who are living in despair as refugees.

This year, as you consider your gift to OGHS just think what it would be like not to have a place to call home. Let us show our generosity in following God's command to love.

Thank You

26th YEAR FOR HABITAT DINNERS

On March 12, the 26th annual Habitat for Humanity, Garrett County Chinese Dinner will be held at Rockville United Church (RUC). The purpose of this dinner is to raise money to support the joint mission of RUC and BUCC volunteers that, each summer, go to Habitat for Humanity to help build houses for people in that region that otherwise could not afford decent shelter. There are three Fund raising events each year for this mission. We have already had one, the Christmas Wreath project. After this dinner we move to the third event, the massive Habitat Yard Sale, which is held in May.

Let's talk dinner. The magnificent Chinese dinner will be held at RUC on Saturday, March 12th at 6:00 PM. The cost is \$16 for adults and youth over 12 years old. Children between 6 and 12 are \$5, under 5 are free. We pay at the door, but RUC would like to know how many of us are coming, so a sign-up sheet will appear in the Narthex soon. Our gracious and longtime friends from the Morning Star Fellowship at RUC will again provide and serve the bounteous Chinese dinner.

There is usually a large BUCC contingent there. Rev. Dee will be giving the invocation. You will also hear from some of the leaders of Garrett County Habitat who usually make the long drive down to Rockville for this event.

TIME TO ORDER EASTER LILIES

Easter is coming up and we would like the Sanctuary to look appropriately festive for Easter morning. If you would like to purchase a lily to help decorate the church, use the order form in this copy of Outlook. As usual, make a check out to BUCC and write Easter Lily on the memo line. After the Easter morning service, you can pick up your lily and take it with you. The lilies are \$9 each.

***Outlook* Submission Deadline:
Monday, March 28, 2016 at 12:00 Noon**

OUTLOOK is published monthly. Please place items for publication in the mailbox in the church office or
Email to dotjerliddel@gamil.com with a copy to admin@BethesdaUCC.org

Dear BUCC Congregation,

It is with profound gratitude and peace in my heart that my family and I THANK YOU to each of you for your prayers and support - especially during Chuck's final struggles. Your cards, quiet conversations and in particularly his memorial service will be with us always. Those who attended from various religious and geographic areas expressed their awe of our beautiful space, the feelings of joy of Chuck's life plus the participatory beauty of the music and remembrance candles.

Thank you to our dedicated staff (Rev Dee, Kathleen, Colleen & Doris) plus our numerous dedicated volunteers.

Phyllis Rumbarger & Family



BUCC TELEPHONE DIRECTORIES

The directory is updated and ready for distribution. This year's directory is available in either print or pdf format. If you are unable to stop by the church to pick up a copy or would like to have a pdf copy sent to you, contact Colleen at the BUCC office either by phone (301)365-3387 or e-mail at admin@BethesdaUCC.org to receive a copy.

AN ELECTRONIC OUTLOOK?

If you would like to receive the Outlook as an electronic copy, simply e-mail Colleen at admin@bethesdaucc.org and request it. Please include the e-mail address where you would like to receive Outlook when you send the request. That way we get a correct address to put on the mailing list. The Outlook will come as a PDF file which you can open, and print if you wish.



Order a lily to help decorate the church on Easter. Following service, take yours home. Cost \$9.00. Make check payable to BUCC and note Easter Lily on the memo line.

Name _____

Phone _____

I/We would like to order _____ Easter Lily (Lilies) @ \$9.00 each. Total _____

*In memory / honor of (circle one):

BUCC — MARCH, 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 3:30 PM Worship Team 7:30 PM Lenten Meditative Service	2 7:00 PM Metro Garden Club	3	4 12:30 PM Islamic Center of Maryland	5
6 ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING OFFERING 8:30 AM Choir Practice 10:30 AM Worship Service, Sunday School 12:00 PM Lenten Bible Study	7	8 3:30 PM BUCC Book Group	9	10 6:00 PM Opportunity to Walk the Labyrinth 7:00 PM Christian Education Team 7:30 PM Lenten Meditative Service	11 12:30 PM Islamic Center of Maryland	12 6:00 PM Habitat Dinner -- Rockville United Church
13 DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS 8:30 AM Choir Practice 10:30 AM Worship Service, Sunday School 12:00 PM Lenten Bible Study	14	15	16 7:30 PM Lenten Meditative Service	17 7:15 PM Seekers	18 12:30 PM Islamic Center of Maryland	19 10:00 AM Palm Folding
20 PALM SUNDAY 8:30 AM Choir Practice 10:30 AM Worship Service, Sunday School 12:00 PM Lenten Bible Study	21	22	23	24 7:30 PM Maundy Thursday Service	25 12:30 PM Islamic Center of Maryland	26
27 EASTER 8:30 AM Choir Practice 10:30 AM Worship Service, Sunday School	28 12:00 PM DEADLINE for OUTLOOK Articles	29	30	31 7:00 PM Sharing Team		

BUCC LEADERSHIP 2016

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OUTLOOK

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