

The Bellringer

March 2009

Newsletter of GOVANS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 5828 York Rd, Baltimore MD 21212

'Peeling bells'— front page, 'hot' and timely news

Usually, "hot off the presses" information is NEWS—that is, it is information that a reader did not know and details of the news will be a surprise.

However, our new "Peeling Bells" section will be a little different in that it will point out "hot" news, but in the sense that the event or news is just around the corner within the first few days of your receiving *Bellringer*.

Let's face it, the nature of newsletters is to put them down to be read at a more leisurely moment, and if we don't find that moment, they may not get read at all. But, if you put the *Bellringer* down before reading this section, you may miss the opportunity, "news," or information you really needed because of the imminent time factor—in addition to the newsworthiness of the event itself. So, from hereon, always take a look—or should we say "listen"—to the "Peeling Bells" section when it first arrives.

Then, you can enjoy the rest of your newsletter at a more leisurely pace, if need be, knowing that you have not missed important happenings in the life of your church because of secular time constraints.

Don't fret if you're wondering about a word from our minister. Tom Harris's "Pastoral Ponderings" standing column will be found easily, henceforth on the inside cover at the top left of page two. This month, Pastor Tom helps us relate sacrifices in Lent to environmental concerns.

With the Season of Lent already in progress, the "bells are peeling" for the Lenten Season activities beginning with our first Lenten concert on Sunday, Mar. 1. See box on this page.

The SnowTubing trip is also imminent. Read the story at right.

Lyndell Smith, editor

Concerts, Midweek Worship Enhance Lent:

Welcome to the MIDWEEK LENTEN WORSHIP SERIES taking place each Wednesday at 7 p.m. in the sanctuary. The half-hour service features acoustic music and congregational singing led by Randy Austin. Pastor Tom Harris leads the services with Lenten Prayers, Scripture and Reflections. (The series began on Feb 25, Ash Wednesday.)

Why not gather yourself or your family and come a little earlier at about six o'clock to rest, de-stress, and join us for our ongoing "BRING ANYTHING POTLUCK" supper. The food and fellowship are invariably good. Everyone pitches in and we are soon all fed and the kitchen straightened.



We are extremely fortunate to have our music director planning a LENTEN CLASSICAL CONCERT SERIES for us and our neighbors. Concerts are free and open to the public, so bring your friends. The concerts are on Sundays in March at 2 p.m. in the Govans sanctuary. (A free-will offering will be taken to benefit the church's music program.)

The first concert, Mar. 1, features **Miles Jaques**, clarinetist, **Eva Mondragon**, violinist, and our own **Clinton Adams** playing music by SCHUBERT, SAINT-SAËNS, ARNOLD, and MOZART.

On Mar. 8th, **Hans Kristian Goldstein**, cellist, with **Clinton Adams** will be playing POPPER, BLOCH, SCHUBERT, and BACH.

Daniel Taylor, tenor and cellist, and **Jorge Ramirez-Sanchez**, baritone, present an ART SONG RECITAL on Mar. 15.

Santiago Osorio, violist, **Joseph Kneer**, violinist, and **Clinton Adams** celebrate J.S. Bach's 324th birthday with an ALL-BACH PROGRAM, Mar. 22.

Govans goes snow tubing at best in East

One of the most popular winter attractions in the region, Avalanche-Xpress snow tubing, is a thrilling downhill experience for teens, adults and kids. The engineering of the hill is widely recognized as the best along the East coast, making for the most thrilling snow tubing experience around.

Govans members and friends with brave hearts, a sense of adventure, and \$25 (\$12 for children under six) will gather at the church on Sun., Mar. 1, at 10:15 a.m. for the auto trek to York, Penn.

Under the guidance of Peggy Winfield, Christian Education Director, the short trip of less than two hours will deliver our adventurers to AvalancheXpress at 2700 Mt. Rose Ave. in York for a full day of snow tubing.

With multiple downhill runs, the

site caters to all levels of experience from "Xtreme" lanes for experienced tubers to two new lanes for little ones. "Xtreme" is strictly for daredevils, but for the rest of us, Xpress provides family tubing lanes, intermediate lanes, a free-style area, a kiddie slope and a toddler area.

Other tubing helps include two powered rope lines to tow tubers to the hilltop and high intensity flood lighting after dusk. Tubers enjoy fast-moving lines and even faster tube rides.

A food buffet is available on most days. Other amenities include picnic tables with outdoor concessions and an indoor bar. See Peggy Winfield (Peggy is available on Sunday, Tuesday, or Wednesday.) or Dianne Sugiuchi for more information.

Pastoral Ponderings

Small personal sacrifices can segue Into success in saving our planet

Lent has already begun and perhaps you are well into whatever spiritual discipline you have undertaken. Perhaps you have given up chocolate or alcohol or TV or teleprompters. Or perhaps you are thinking, “spiritual discipline?” Or—maybe you just haven’t thought about it.

Well, Lent is traditionally a time of spiritual self-examination and renewed commitment to our faith journey. It is a time of sacrifice and self-denial in preparation for the celebration of Easter and our new life in Christ.

Wouldn’t this be an especially appropriate time for each of us to “sacrifice” in terms of beginning to make our home and city a better and less wasteful place to live? “Saving Energy: It Starts At Home,” an excellent article in the February National Geographic, makes the point that quite a bit of energy is used inefficiently or is downright wasted—right around our homes.

For instance, one electric utility in Texas reduced electricity demand in the region by heavily promoting home energy efficiency. The program was so successful they avoided building a 730-megawatt power plant.

If Americans converted only *half* of all light bulbs to compact fluorescents we would reduce carbon dioxide from lighting alone by over 42 million tons a year, or 36 percent.

Much environmental pollution is out of our control, but during Lent we may want to do at least something that is under our control. So, whatever you have or have not done so far for Lent, here are ideas you can implement for this season and beyond:

- ▶ Replace light bulbs in your home with compact fluorescents.
- ▶ Give up three degrees on your thermostat for Lent. Like Jimmy Carter or ‘Mr. Rogers,’ put on a sweater.
- ▶ Turn off your computer and printer when not in use.
- ▶ Turn down your water heater at least one notch. You’ll still have plenty of hot water.
- ▶ One day a week, take public transportation, walk, bike or share a ride to and from work.
- ▶ What else can you or we do to be better stewards of God’s creation, while honoring the sacrificial spirit of Lent?

Making a difference to the earth may start with small steps. And so, in fact, does making a difference in our spiritual life. When we start small, we may be surprised to see how far we can go with the inspiration of God’s spirit and the support and participation of our faith community.

Peace,
Tom

Govans to show ‘For the Bible Tells Me So’

You are invited to attend the film *For the Bible Tells Me So* on Wed., Mar. 11, at 6:30 p.m. in Sharp Hall. This 2007 documentary deals with homosexuality and perceived conflict with religion as well as interpretations of what the Bible says about same-sex sexuality.

It also includes interviews with several parents including former Congressional House Majority Leader Dick Gephardt and his wife Jane, the parents of Bishop V. Gene Robinson, and

interviews with their adult children.

Sponsored by the Govans More Light Committee, an invitation is also being extended to people outside our Church family, so come and make our guests feel welcome.

The film preempts regular Bible Study which resumes the next week.

Preceding the film, feel free to enjoy our Wed. evening “Bring Anything Potluck” supper. Bring a dish; come at six.

The first of two More Light meetings will be on Sun., Mar. 15, at noon.

Save March 14!

Work up a sweat, put on the feedbag

Govans Great Saturday Workday

Whether you call it perspiring or sweating, you can put on those work clothes and help beautify and rejuvenate the church and grounds on Sat., Mar. 14, starting at 9:30 am.

Bring cleaning materials to spruce up the sanctuary, kitchen and other public spaces. (We need a couple of clothes irons and newspapers for removing wax.) Contact Steve Branson for work details.

Great Govans Spaghetti Dinner

Also plan to work up an appetite, because that same Saturday evening, Mar. 14, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. bring your friends and family to the Great Govans Spaghetti Dinner. Enjoy a great meal of pasta, plain or meat spaghetti sauce, garlic bread, salad and beverages for an astonishing low \$7 for adults, \$4 for ages 5 to 12, and kids 4 or under eat free! The max is \$20 per family.

Our truly *homemade* spaghetti sauce is better than what you get in Little Italy—at a fraction of the price. Come let us prove it—bring friends, family and all the neighbors.

We’ll be celebrating the 45th anniversary of *I Want To Hold Your Hand*, topping the charts for an unprecedented seven weeks. It will be great food and Beatles on the juke box all night—Yeah, Yeah, Yeah!

Baltimore Blast Soccer to host Christian Youth Night

How often do we complain there aren’t enough wholesome and interesting activities to keep our young people entertained? Baltimore Blast is hosting Christian Youth Night on Fri., March 6, at 1st Mariner Arena.

The evening will include the Blast soccer game and a great concert by Thousand Foot Krutch. Through Mar. 2nd, tickets can be ordered for only \$16; tickets are \$21 at the box office.

For information, contact Peggy Winfield, Christian Ed. Minister, on Tues or Weds at 410-435-9198; e-mail her at education@govanspres.org

Of Thanks & Praise



Valentine to Epiphany House



VERB youngsters enjoy giving a party!

Dear Tom,

Last evening (Feb. 12), the residents of Epiphany House had a delightful party that was given by the “VERB” student group from Govans Presbyterian Church.

The students walked down from the church full of joy and energy. The residents were treated to Bible Bingo and a Valentine Party. The evening was instructive, engaging, and fun.

Resident turnout for the festivities was very impressive. The children had a wonderful time explaining why they are called “VERB.” They expressed their pride in church and in their faith.

On behalf of GEDCO, including especially the residents of Epiphany House, thank you.

Rosemary Maguire Thompson
Resource Dev Mgr, GEDCO



Moveable Feast Appreciates Recent Gift

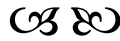
Pastor Harris:

Many, many thanks to you and the members of your congregation for your recent and generous support of Moveable Feast. Your gift and support is deeply appreciated. We aim to do our work and care for as many people as possible, with limited resources. I can see that you’ve been loyal supporters for several years and I was honored to visit your website and find information about our organization and services listed there.

Thank you for all that you do for the community. If you or members of

your congregation are ever interested in visiting us or volunteering here, you are most welcome. Take care,

Ted Blankenship
Dir of Development
MOVEABLE FEAST



Toland Family’s Heartfelt Thanks

Heartfelt thanks to the Govans church family from our family for the good food, cards and letters, kind thoughts and prayers received during Jack’s final illness and death. Particular thanks to Tom Harris and David Harris for their visits and prayers. We are grateful to all of you at this sad time.

Betsy Toland



Much interest shown in Susan Roth’s new book

Illustrator Susan L. Roth gave two colorful and fascinating presentations about her new book, *Listen to the Wind*, on Mar. 3 in Sharp Hall.

Based on the true story and *New York Times* bestseller, *Three Cups of Tea*, Roth began the illustration project several years ago. Her illustrations are detailed collages rather than paintings, and tell of building a school in Korfu.

In Memoriam

To lose three revered members of Govans Presbyterian in less than a month is difficult, not only for their families, but also for our congregation.

Please pray for these saints, for their families, and for our own “communion of saints” here at Govans.

Gladys Wheeler
Jan. 30, 2009

John “Jack” Iverson Toland, Jr.
Jan. 31, 2009

Frank Joseph “Joe” Hamilton
Feb. 19, 2009

From the Choir Loft

How Could We Ask for More

Rehearsals, performances, and teaching schedule all collided recently, resulting in a situation for the Kitty Council that can only be called *Mewsic* Deficit Disorder. I had been out late every night for over a week, and the radio *appur*ntly does not take the place of the real thing—me—practicing. The KKGB showed their displeasure by honing their origami skills on the toilet paper in the bathroom and the paper-towel dispenser in the kitchen. Upon my arrival home I was greeted by three rooms full of white confetti; it was definitely time for a meeting, so I called one.

I *apur*rogized *purr*fusely and their “feathers” all unruffled as they expressed their desire to hear me practice and rehearse at *home*.

They settled right down as soon as I announced my plans for the Lenten Recital Series at Govans:

† MARCH 1ST—**Miles Jaques**, clarinetist; **Eva Mondragon**, violinist; and Clinton Adams playing music by Schubert, Saint-Saëns, Arnold, and Mozart.

† MARCH 8TH—**Hans Kristian Goldstein**, cellist, with Clinton Adams playing Popper, Bloch, Schubert, and Bach.

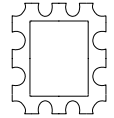
† MARCH 15TH—**Daniel Taylor**, tenor and cellist, and **Jorge Ramirez-Sanchez**, baritone, present an Art Song Recital.

† MARCH 22ND—**Santiago Osorio**, violist, **Joseph Kneer**, violinist, and Clinton Adams shall celebrate Johann Sebastian Bach’s 324th birthday with an All-Bach program.

I promised that I would be practicing and rehearsing these programs at *our home*. The cat hair all over the chairs assured me that I was *furgiven*.

But you can enjoy these great recitals in our sanctuary at two in the afternoon on these Sundays in March. Each concert is free and open to the public; bring your friends.

Govans Presbyterian Church
5828 York Road
Baltimore, MD 21212



Return Service Requested

Find lots of useful information about us at govanspres.org

Venture to volunteer for Hau Kola summer camps short-term missions

For nearly a decade, Presbyterians from the Baltimore area have forged a growing and fulfilling relationship with the peoples and the Presbytery of South Dakota.

Hau Kola Learning Camps are primarily staffed by volunteers from 20 churches in the Baltimore Presbytery.

Planning is underway for this year's camps—and the needs for your help are great! Six weeks of various camps need staff for this summer.

Most individuals work at one camp for a week. For those who have the time, side trips to the wonders of the area are often taken either before or after the week of camp work.

Camp staff represent a diverse inter-generational and multicultural group including high school and college students, and professionals including teachers, social workers, and health care workers.

This year workers are needed for the following camps:

- June 13-20: Porcupine School, K-8 School-based program.
- Jun-Jul: Lake Travers Reserva-

tion, Sisseton, Good Will Presbyterian Church, Elementary School. The Good Will folks eagerly await volunteer arrivals, as this is the newest camp, and they are glad we are returning!

■ July 11-18: Pine Ridge Reservation Presbyterian, Elementary and Middle School.

■ July 17-24: Oglala, Makasan Presbyterian Church, Teen Camp

■ July 24-Aug. 1: Makasan Presbyterian Elementary Camp.

■ Aug 1-7: Makasan Presbyterian Pre-School Camp. This camp particularly needs extra staff for more one-on-one with the young children.

Dakota Presbyterians say, "Come and try a new adventure with us! Your outlook on what is important in life will be challenged and changed!"

Funds are available for staff members with financial need. Go online to haukolalearningcamps.org to learn more and to get an application. Interviews to join the volunteer staff this summer are being held on Mar. 22 from 1 to 4 p.m. and Mar. 25 from 7 to 9 p.m.

Happy Birthdays for March

- 1 Janet Cowern
- 2 Ted Rankin
Ruth Baker
DeAnne Byerly
- 4 Sasha Harris
Burnie Pettie
- 6 Diane Sugiuchi
Chloe Meck
- 9 Becky Vickers
- 10 Charles Elliott
Jeff Walstrum
- 12 Dotty Sharp
- 13 Jill Marquiss
- 14 Bob Vickers, Sr.
- 15 Mary Jane Hardin
- 16 Albert Isteero
- 17 Charlotte Nass
- 18 Charlie Nass
- 20 Mary Beth White
Nick Reed
- 22 Abbie Vickers
- 26 Jon Morgan
- 29 Elizabeth McGiffert