



IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 Pastoral Ponderings
- 2 Calendar, Baptism Sunday, Congregational Meeting Notice
- 3 Birthdays
- 4 Happy New Year from Haiti, Govans Game Night, Lenten Education Series
- 5 Committee for Congregational Care
- 6 Stewardship, Govans at Soul Kitchen
- 7 Mission Partners: Spotlight on GEDCO
- 8 Highlights from Advent & Christmas, Seven Principles
- 9 Mariners, Adult Options
- 10 Creation Care Comm., Lay Leader Training
- 11 Church Works, New Sexton

Rev. Tom Harris,
Pastor

Deborah S. Woods,
Music Director

Randy Austin,
Band Leader

Rev. Jenny Williams
Ministry Associate for
Congregational Care

Pam Wallace,
Office Manager

Andy Wilson,
Administrative Asst.

Sylvia Usher
Stephanie Walton
Sextons

Carolyn Anewich,
Kitchen Manager

Pam Ferguson,
Director of Preschool

Gwen Lloyd,
Program Director, SNNB

PASTORAL PONDERINGS

Dear Friends,

Many thanks to those who took the time to complete the online survey back in October and November. We had a very strong response rate which has given us solid and reliable data about how our members experience our ministry. Hopefully you were able to attend the Adult Options on January 6th where we discussed the survey results, but if you missed it we are continuing the discussion on January 13th.

The good news is we scored very well in the categories of congregational satisfaction and energy. These results put us in a category of churches who have the potential for growth. However, most growing churches are even more satisfied and have even higher energy than we do! So that leads us to the ways we can continue to improve our ministry. The survey results identified four areas that we could improve. These are called "Critical Success Factors," though it should be noted that none were identified as "urgent." They are just areas that would probably bear the most fruit for us, if we focus on them. The four areas are:

- Helping members experience meaning in life as a result of participation.
- Providing excellent worship every Sunday.
- Providing quality pastoral care to members in times of need.
- Including representation of our diverse membership in leadership.

In addition to these, our congregation was more interested than most in:

- Creating more opportunities for people to develop relationships (get to know each other)
- Working as advocates for social and institutional change in the world.

We also expressed very strong interest in reaching out to new people and incorporating them into the life of the church, and making changes to attract families with children. It should be noted that virtually every church in the database identifies these as their top two priorities.

The Session has already begun discussing concrete ways we can move toward these goals. The two Adult Options sessions will help us further flesh things out. One very concrete way that we will focus on very soon is the hiring of a new staff member. At the January Session meeting we will be considering specific options for the ways a new part-time staff person could help us make these goals a reality. Please let me or any Session member know your thoughts.

Peace,
Pastor Tom

CALENDAR

January

- 13**—Baptism Sunday in both services
 12:00 p.m.—Fellowship Comm. & Congregational Care Comm. Mtgs.
14—5:00 p.m. Creation Care Comm. Mtg.
 6:00 p.m. Worship Comm. Mtg.
 6:30 p.m. Facilities Comm. Mtg.
 7:00 p.m. Finance Comm. Mtg.
15—6:30 p.m. Session Mtg.
18—6:30 p.m. Youth Group
21—Martin Luther King Jr., Holiday (office closed)
26—9:30 a.m. Lay Leader Training
27—12:00 p.m. Prospective New Member Class

February

- 1**—6:30 p.m. Youth Group
2—5:00 p.m. Govans Game Night
3—Combined Service at 10:30 a.m. followed by Congregational Mtg.
9—Labyrinth Work Day
11—7:00 p.m. Finance Comm. Mtg.
15—6:30 p.m. Youth Group
18—6:30 p.m. Facilities Comm. Mtg.
19—6:30 p.m. Session Mtg.

BAPTISM SUNDAY



On January 13, in both services, there will be an invitation to respond to the message of John the Baptist and Jesus, as we discuss the meaning of: "Repent! For the Kingdom of God is near."

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING - FEBRUARY 3, 2019

On Sunday, February 3, there will be a combined service at 10:30 a.m. Following the combined service, we will have a Congregational Meeting to receive the annual financial report from 2018 and approve the budget for 2019. We will approve the Pastor's Terms of Call, which is something we have to do every year. Finally, we will elect congregational members for the Elder Nominating Committee for 2019. Usually the meeting lasts 20-30 minutes.



JANUARY

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Chris D'Arezzo | 22 Kaycee McDougall, Anna Crawley |
| 5 Jean Van Buskirk, Robert Wong | 24 Evan Bush |
| 6 Wayne White | 25 Arianna Shaw |
| 7 Jane Wilson, Elizabeth Ceanfaglione | 28 Liz Baer |
| 9 Robbie Kurrus | 30 Caroline Stanka, Katie Field, Jessica Sheeks |
| 12 Drew Andersen, Anne Owens, Justin Conrad | 31 Renate Dombrowski, Courtney Gover |
| 15 Audrey Wilson | |
| 19 Ruth Williams | |
| 21 Jackie Williams | |

FEBRUARY

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| 3 Chris Hoffman, Debby Hughey | 21 Mimi Cooper |
| 4 David Sandles, Scott Wong | 22 Doug Gaede |
| 5 Felicia Traynham | 23 Wendy Smith |
| 8 Lyndell Smith | 27 Loren Western |
| 9 Patricia Short | |
| 10 Chad Koehler, Barb Taber | |
| 11 Karen Wulff | |
| 12 Susie Sutherland | |
| 14 Xavier Henderson | |
| 15 John Laube | |
| 16 George Van Buskirk | |
| 18 Bonnie Thomson | |
| 19 Andrea Cox | |
| 20 David Harris | |

HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM HAITI

Happy New Year's Day from Haiti

In the morning of January 1 of 2019 from the blessed Kay Papa Nou we, David and Danny are wishing you a **HAPPY NEW YEAR!** May God the creator of heaven and earth, our Father God, bless you abundantly and may He surround you with His protective wings this year and forever in Jesus' name.



Youse Odly

GOVANS GAME NIGHT



Join Us on Saturday February 2!

Ever played Qwirkle? Ticket to Ride? Or do you prefer Sorry or Scrabble? Please join us for a game night and soup potluck in Sharp Hall on **Saturday, February 2, from 5:00-7:00 p.m.** Bring a favorite game or two and a soup or loaf of bread to share!

LENTEN EDUCATION SERIES

Announcing a Mid-Week Adult Education Lenten Series!

“Down to Earth: Making Christian Faith Accessible with Seven Principles of Faith and Ministry”

Wednesdays, March 13, 20, 27 and April 3, 10, 17 - from 6:30-8:00 p.m.

How can we use everyday language to understand what faith is all about? How can we talk about faith in a way that helps us apply it to our lives? How can we have meaningful conversations about our diverse faith experiences (or lack of faith experiences) within the church and outside the church? Each session will include a simple meal, some opening thoughts from Pastor Tom, and ample time for reflection and discussion on these topics. The focus of the discussion will be the Seven Principles of Faith and Ministry that Pastor Tom has shared from the pulpit and at Adult Options (see page 8).

THE COMMITTEE FOR CONGREGATIONAL CARE

Helping Us to Care for One Another – the Committee for Congregational Care

Perhaps you have experienced the pleasurable surprise of an unexpected birthday card in your mailbox or a caring inquiry from a church friend just when you needed a lift. Or perhaps you have wondered how you or another might get to church if no longer able to make it there on your own. And what about if you cannot leave your home or even your bed? Would you then be cut off from the fellowship of your church? Here at Govans, members of the Committee for Congregational Care along with other church members reach out to maintain our church connection in fellowship, practical service, and spiritual care. We send those birthday and other cards to celebrate the joys and acknowledge the sorrows of our church friends. We transport or arrange transport for those who need assistance getting to worship and sometimes other places. We visit and bring communion to those who can no longer join us outside their homes.



Congregational care is a fundamental way we express and embody our Christian identity. Caring for one another and encouraging each other in our faith from birth to death is a promise we make in the baptismal covenant. In *Life Together: The Classic Exploration of Christian Community*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer describes Christian fellowship as “a gift of grace” and reminds us that we are the body of Christ. He emphasizes the bodily aspect of care saying “The physical presence of other Christians is a source of incomparable joy and strength to the believer.” In our current age of telephone, email, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc. Physical presence may seem old fashioned or just too much trouble. As the body of Christ, we the church need always remember that, as Bonhoeffer reminds, “Visitor and visited in loneliness recognize in each other the Christ who is present in the body” and we “receive each other as one meets the Lord, in reverence, humility, and joy.”

The Committee for Congregational Care welcomes all to join us in reaching out to members who are away from church for whatever reason. In the coming months we plan to connect with our college students in addition to continuing to visit those who are homebound or ill. To be more involved with the work of our committee or to refer someone for care please contact either:

- Jenny Williams, Ministry Assistant for Congregational Care (410-523-3961, jennywilliams1800@gmail.com)
- Bobbie Cook (410-667-1997, rabocook39@verizon.net) (Co-Chair)
- Beth Bryant (443-370-2068, beth@woodberycrossing.org) (Co-chair)

We hope you will join us in this ministry! Thank you.

2019 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

Building Our Future Together

The formal stewardship campaign has just been concluded. All who made a financial and/or a volunteer pledge should have received an email (or a letter for those without email) thanking you and confirming that the information we have about your 2019 pledge commitment to Govans is accurate. If you made a pledge and did not receive a confirmation, please contact the church office so that we can add you to the final count. The details of the campaign results will be in the annual report at the annual meeting on February 3, 2019.

Thinking about "Building Our Future Together" definitely does not end with the conclusion of the formal campaign. The financial gifts and volunteer activities that all of us, whether pledger or givers, contribute throughout the year is vital to sustaining the ministries and missions of Govans. Sincere thanks to all who are part of our Govans church family and who care. Together we make a difference.

Thank you,
The Stewardship Team

*P.S.—There were two volunteer pledges turned in with no name. If you did not receive confirmation of your volunteer pledge please contact the church office. We would definitely like to include you in our stewardship report.

GOVANS SUNDAY @ SOUL KITCHEN

SUNDAY, February 3 and Sunday, March 3

We now have two other churches volunteering at Soul Kitchen (Roland Park Presbyterian and Ascension Lutheran). To be sure that there will be opportunities for Govans members to volunteer we are reserving the first Sunday of the month for Govans volunteers. This will also be a great time for members to work together and get to know one another better. However, members may still volunteer any Sunday at Soul Kitchen and are encouraged to do so.

If you would like to volunteer on a Govans Sunday, February 3 or March 3, please speak with Kaye Gooch or e-mail her at kaye.gooch@gmail.com.

**SOUL KITCHEN
ROCKS!**



MISSION PARTNERS SPOTLIGHT - GEDCO

During 2019 the Mission Committee would like to feature some of the valuable mission partners we support that serve. The Govans Ecumenical Development Corporation (GEDCO) has a long association with Govans Presbyterian. Back in the mid 1980s, Rev Jack Sharp, pastor of Govans, and six other pastors of churches in the York Road corridor joined together to think about and create reasonable, affordable housing opportunities with services for individuals with disabilities and without other resources. The initial project was Epiphany House (located at Bellona Ave & York Rd). This program was so successful that opportunities to manage and develop other properties arose and in the early 1990s the nonprofit organization known as GEDCO was incorporated.

Today GEDCO provides reasonable affordable housing and supportive services for around 530 low income seniors, older adults with disabilities, individuals with serious health conditions, and individuals with chronic mental illness.

GEDCO has provided real estate development programs that develop and maintain affordable, supportive housing for low and moderate income individual and families, most notably Stadium Place on 33rd Street, the site of the old Orioles stadium.

CARES is an essential component of GEDCO. It offers a food bank located a few blocks south of Govans at St. Mary's Catholic Church. Approximately 4500 individuals needing food, utility payments, and eviction relief were served through this program in the most recent reporting period. When individuals come to Govans looking for food or other emergency services, we refer them to CARES.

CARES Connection is a program through CARES that helps individuals learn the skills to find employment. Volunteer assist clients in preparing resumes and practicing interviewing techniques. Around 115 individuals were helped to secure employment in the most recent reporting period.

How Can I help?

- 1) Govans members help at the holidays annually by being angels to GEDCO residents. It is not possible to value the impact of even a small gift that says "you are worthy" and "someone cares."
- 2) Bringing non-perishable food products and giving them as part of your offering during worship benefits the CARES pantry.
- 3) For artistic folks, contact our Govans member, Bonnie Thomson, and volunteer to help her design Cards for CARES.
- 4) Volunteer with the CARES pantry and/or with CARES Connection.
- 5) Volunteering for one of GEDCO's many committees or Boards. As Govans is a generous financial supporter of GEDCO, we want to have church members in leadership positions there as well. If you might be interested in this level of commitment, please speak with Pastor Tom to learn more.

Want to know more? Go on a Mission in Action Tour. To arrange, contact Melodie Cunningham at 410.433.2442 x 15 or mcunningham@gedco.org

HIGHLIGHTS FROM ADVENT & CHRISTMAS



Bagpiper on Heritage Sunday



Christmas Pageant on Christmas Eve



Govans Hand Bell Choir performing on Music Sunday

SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF FAITH & MINISTRY

1. No one completely knows or understands who or what God is. Everyone has only a general concept of God and our concepts differ.
2. Despite our ignorance, everyone can develop a life-giving, life-changing relationship with God.
3. In a variety of different ways, everyone can receive guidance from God every day.
4. Faith in God means experiencing a life-giving, life-changing relationship with God and following guidance from God even without knowing or understanding what or who God is.
5. Ministry is the daily practice of following God's guidance by helping others. Everyone in a relationship with God is called to ministry.
6. The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus as narrated in the Bible is our model of faith in God and ministry to the world.
7. Our purpose as a church is to encourage one another in faith and ministry studying together the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

Two Goals

1. For every member to have a life-giving, life-changing relationship with God and to daily engage in ministry inspired by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.
2. For every member to be so inspired by their faith and ministry that they enthusiastically

MARINERS



The next Mariners get-together will be Saturday, January 26 at 6:30 p.m. at the home of Loren and Judy Western:

10 Lee St., Apt. 1201
Baltimore, MD 21201.

Hope to see you there!

ADULT OPTIONS

Upcoming Adult Options:

- **January 13:** You filled out the survey, what's next? - You gave us terrific ideas for enhancing mission, worship, and congregational life. Let's review them and discuss what we should do next! Pastor Tom and session members will lead the discussion over two Sundays.
- **January 20:** Martin Luther King Sunday: We will watch and discuss a short PBS video on race and redlining, which focuses on the history and present situation in Baltimore.
- **January 27:** (Tentative) Try out some meditation practices! This will become an additional "option" between services on selected Sundays during the winter and spring.
- **Selected Sundays in January and February** (stay tuned), After the second serve, Woodbrook Players' Jocelyn Taylor and Sherry Peck will lead several dramatic readings workshops where you can practice your skills and have fun! This will be especially useful for reading lessons and announcements in church. Attend one or attend them all!



CREATION CARE COMMITTEE

Creation Care Committee Meeting Monday, January 14, 2019 @ 5:00 p.m.

For the last 10 years Govans has been a supporter of the Community Supported Agriculture movement by sponsoring a drop site location for a local, organic farm. The concept is based on community "members" buying a share in a local farm and in return receive weekly, fresh produce from the farm delivered to our church. We have supported One Straw Farm in Freeland, Maryland for a number of reasons - one reason being that they provide a "tithing" share to us to use as we wish. For every 10 members that sign up and purchase a share the farm will give us one free share. This tithing share has been shared with the CARES food pantry and Soul Kitchen.

Members may purchase a full share [8 items each week for 24 weeks] or a half share [4 items per week for 24 weeks]. There is now an electronic app that allows you to select the produce items you wish to receive each week as well as purchase extra items or delay your order if you are going to be out of town.

Govans delivery day & pick up time is Tuesdays between 4:30 and 6:30 p.m. from early June until the middle of November.

For more information please visit the farm's website: www.onestrawfarm.com

On February 9, there will be a Labyrinth work day with Chesapeake Bay Trust intern Justin Gallardo. We will be working to lay cardboard in the labyrinth to help eradicate invasive weeds.

LAY LEADER TRAINING

****Attention all Lay Leaders or future Lay Leaders****

There will be a Lay Leader training on Saturday morning, January 26 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Lay Leaders of all ages in the first or second service are encouraged to attend.

Topics will include the philosophy and theology behind using Lay Leaders in worship, logistical instructions about different duties of lay leaders, and training in public speaking and scripture reading. This is NOT a mandatory training but participation is encouraged.

Other trainings will be offered in the future.

Please RSVP to Pastor Tom at tom@govanspres.org

CHURCH WORKS

News from Govans' Session

Here are some highlights from the most recent Session meeting on December 18, 2018:

Session approved hiring the architect, F. Carl Schwartz for the Sharp Hall Renovations project. The purpose of the project is to create a theater space in Sharp Hall. The project includes construction of a stage at the south end of the room, removing the architectural arch, installing blackout curtains over the window wall that can be opened and closed, installing a stage curtain, converting current storage into a backstage area, converting the recessed area and folding wall to new storage for tables and chairs, providing permanent access from Sharp Hall to the Senior Center activity room, installing stage lighting, and repainting the hall. The project will allow the Woodbrook Players to offer their theater productions three times a year and provide performance space for the Senior Center, Preschool, and other renters, while maintaining the room as a meeting and activity space for all. The architect will present preliminary plans in Sharp Hall on Wednesday, January 9 at 6:30 p.m. and everyone is invited to come and offer input.

Session also, discussed the congregational assessment survey results. This was a follow up discussion to the initial presentation of the results earlier in December. We started to think about how to address the areas that were recommended for improvement including: worship excellence, member engagement and development, internal community building, missional clarity, and facility access. This discussion continues today and next Sunday in Adult Options and we encourage everyone to participate. If you have any questions, please speak with me, or any elder on the Session, or Pastor Tom.

WELCOME

Please join us in welcoming our new full-time sexton, Stephanie Walton!



Welcome to Stephanie Walton our new Church Sexton. She started on Monday, January 7 and she will work Monday through Friday from 1:00 to 8:00 p.m. A little more than half her time will be spent cleaning the preschool. The rest will be spent cleaning the rest of the church and providing assistance on Sunday morning from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m..

Welcome to Govans, Stephanie!

Attention Amazon and Kindle e-book Shoppers!

Make a painless donation to Govans by navigating
to www.smile.amazon.com and select Govans
Presbyterian Church as your charity.

The website works exactly the same way and
the prices are the same as when you link directly
to AmazonSmile. But this way, you can
GIVE TO GOVANS!



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