

THE EVANGEL



Battery Park Christian Church

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April 2024

FROM OUR PASTOR

Dear friends,

I write this in the middle of the Richmond Public Schools' spring break. Summer vacation, thanks be to God, finally doesn't feel far off. Thanks be to God!

I did have dinner with one of my closest friends last night- one who has seen me through almost every journey of calling throughout my adult life including three churches and one southside first grade class. As we had dinner, I expressed my excitement regarding the opportunity to sleep in (until 7!) and he asked a very good question. What will I miss?

Much of the job is a gift, a difficult fact to remember with test score anxiety, bureaucracy, and a 10:15 a.m. lunch. I thought immediately of Kwin.

Kwin is an incredibly unique child in the best possible sense of the word. Not only is he my highest reader, almost reading at a fifth-grade level, but he lives a life driven by passions that are atypical of first-graders. He dances, as the saying goes, to the beat of his own drum. Never is this more clear than when Kwin expresses his love for the Home Alone series of movies where a child, on multiple occasions, is left home alone around Christmas time, encounters robbers, sets creative traps, and hilarity ensues.

Kwin tells the plot of the first few Home Alone movies. He acts out Home Alone 4 during recess. He draws pictures of himself (and me!) in Home Alone 5. When he practices writing sentences, he writes about Home Alone 6.

Here's the thing. The Home Alone series stopped at the third installment. When he play acts the fourth, draws the fifth, and writes about the sixth, these are his own creations. Every creative bone in his body is dedicated to continuing his favorite story in ways that no one else has seen before.

Can we take inspiration from Kwin?

Although we often find unfamiliar scripture, we know much of the good news of the Bible. Creation, love, grace, discipleship. The story has been written. The narrative has Genesis to Revelation. We believe, often, within the boundaries of a book.

Yet Christianity as a whole, growing, and changing gospel continues on. We are left to be authors (with innumerable co-authors) of "what comes next". Can we, as Kwin did, act out our vision? Can we draw the next scene and find the first words of the new chapter? Can we commit to a story still guided by the Holy Spirit, one that is still being told well beyond the first century?

Not only do I hope that we can, I believe it. Renewed commitment means new visions. Transforming the church means that the familiar traditions of the Sunday service find new purpose, new meaning, and new life.

This is certainly something to consider as we now bask in the light of Easter. What comes next, and how do we present that vision to the world?

At this point, my knowledge ends and my dependence on faith takes the wheel. I hope you will join me in this endeavor. In prayer, in movement, and in love, may we attempt the next, unseen, but powerful paragraph.



Peace,

Jonah





News from our Education Department

On March 28, we gathered to worship and share a meal in remembrance of Jesus' last supper with his closest friends and the Washing of the Feet. We refer to this day of Holy Week as Maundy Thursday.

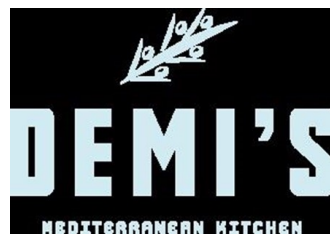
The worship service included prayer, music by our choir and congregation, and a meditation entitled "He Took a Towel" from J. Barrie Shepherd's Faces of the Cross, read aloud by those in attendance, commemorating the Washing of the Feet.

Our meal included foods that would have been served during Jesus' time. We gathered and sat around tables arranged in the shape of The Cross, decorated with purple tablecloths and beautiful floral arrangements of luscious greens and bright yellow daffodils.

We shared the sacrament of the Lord's supper with unleavened bread dipped in wine (grape juice) by blessing the person on our left, one by one around the cross-shaped tables.

Thank you ALL who made this year's Maundy Thursday Worship and Supper a meaningful evening. Many gave their time decorating, cooking, and some made monetary donations. Also, a big Thank You to Demi's Mediterranean Kitchen, located in our neighborhood on MacArthur Avenue, for donating Quinoa Tabbouleh and to Stella's Grocery (7 locations) for donating Lentil Soup. Please visit these two wonderful establishments and let them know how much we appreciated their donations. The evening was made possible by the generosity of donations. We did not have to use any money from the church budget, and were still able to donate \$43 to our general fund.

by Chockie Roberts



Finance and Stewardship Update

BPCC Financial Information for March 31, 2024

Amount of expenditures budgeted for 2024 = \$134,939.00

Income that would offset this budget = \$11,245/month or \$2,595/week

Amount of income for the month of March : \$8,424.71

Year-to-date income received percentage: 78.5%

An annual Community Foundation Grant is included, \$463.88.



The Disciples of Christ denomination has a new website to announce. It's at the same address as previously, but you'll like the new pages which are easy to read. Maybe you'd like to learn more about our denomination.

This is the place. [Disciples.org](https://disciples.org)

From World Outreach:



Each February we feature two Sundays for collecting special offerings to support The Week of Compassion, the Disciples of Christ charity that works with partners around the world to alleviate suffering. Did you know there is a *Circle of Compassion Endowment Fund* which some of our members have supported over the years?

Faithful stewardship of the Endowment means funds will be available to fuel our compassion spending for years to come. Battery Park received a letter recently letting us know, as of the end of 2023, the total value of our own part of the fund is \$23,853.19! Combining the investment returns with all other churches which have donated to the endowment, \$700,000 was available to benefit Week of Compassion.

This money helped to fund health clinics in South Sudan, rebuild homes in western Kentucky, provide severe storm response in Puerto Rico, medical care and shelter in the Middle East, and education for girls in Afghanistan and Pakistan. There is no end to the good work God's people can do together.

Your generosity and faithfulness in continuing to fund the Endowment means Disciples can, and will, continue to respond to crises with help and hope. When you write a check to Battery Park for the Week of Compassion, if you'd like to specifically earmark it for the Endowment Fund, note that on the memo line.

—Patsy Stockdon

BPCC Spring Yard Sale

April 13, 2024



8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

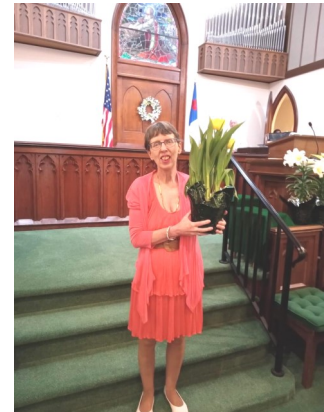


in the BPCC parking lot and fellowship hall

You may reserve a table for \$25, or donate items to be sold at the Church tables,

AND come and shop!

Contact Bob Almond at 804-833-3355



Celebrating Easter with flowers, music and Bible presentation to 4th grader Joshua Ice.



We extend sincere sympathy to family of the late Pat Stewart, former BPCC Church Secretary.

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- 12th Judy Pollard
- 13th Jason Richardson
- 23rd Mandy Williams
- 26th Vivian Palmore
- 28th Tom Huth-Scruggs