

NOVEMBER CALENDAR

Thursday, November 1
7:00 AM Men’s Bible Study
8:00 AM Women’s Bible Study
4:00 PM Cherub/ Junior Choir

Friday, November 2
9:00 AM Men’s Bible Study
6:00 PM Crossroads

Saturday, November 3
7:30 AM Men’s Bible Study

Sunday, November 4
8:00 AM **Worship with Communion** ((Chapel)
9:15 AM **Worship with Communion** ((Sanctuary)
11:00 AM **Worship with Communion** ((Sanctuary)
5:00 PM **Worship with Communion** (Chapel)

Tuesday, November 6
9:30 AM Women’s Bible Study
6:30 PM ESL
6:45 PM Battalion

Wednesday, November 7
6:00 AM Men’s Bible Study
6:30 PM Women’s Bible Study
7:00 PM Prayer Meeting, Youth and Men’s Bible Study

Thursday, November 8
7:00 AM Men’s Bible Study
8:00 AM Women’s Bible Study
4:00 PM Cherub/ Junior Choir

Friday, November 9
9:00 AM Men’s Bible Study
6:00 PM Crossroads

Saturday, November 10
7:30 AM Men’s Bible Study

Sunday, November 11
8:00 AM **Worship** (Chapel)
9:15 AM **Worship** (Sanctuary)
11:00 AM **Worship** (Sanctuary)
5:00 PM **Worship with Communion** (Chapel)

Tuesday, November 13
9:30 AM Women’s Bible Study
6:30 PM ESL
6:45 PM Battalion

Wednesday, November 14
6:00 AM Men’s Bible Study
6:30 PM Women’s Bible Study
7:00 PM Prayer Meeting, Youth and Men’s Bible Study

Thursday, November 15
7:00 AM Men’s Bible Study
8:00 AM Women’s Bible Study

4:00 PM Cherub/ Junior Choir

Friday, November 16
9:00 AM Men’s Bible Study
6:00 PM Crossroads

Saturday, November 17
7:30 AM Men’s Bible Study

Sunday, November 18
8:00 AM **Worship** (Chapel)
9:15 AM **Worship** (Sanctuary)
11:00 AM **Worship** (Sanctuary)
5:00 PM **Worship with Communion** (Chapel)

Tuesday, November 20
9:30 AM Women’s Bible Study
6:30 PM ESL
6:45 PM Battalion

Wednesday, November 21
6:00 AM Men’s Bible Study
6:30 PM Women’s Bible Study
7:00 PM Prayer Meeting, Youth and Men’s Bible Study

Thursday, November 22
Thanksgiving Office Closed

Friday, November 23
Office Closed

Saturday, November 24
7:30 AM Men’s Bible Study

Sunday, November 25
8:00 AM **Worship** (Chapel)
9:15 AM **Worship** (Sanctuary)
11:00 AM **Worship** (Sanctuary)
5:00 PM **Worship with Communion** (Chapel)

Tuesday, November 27
9:30 AM Women’s Bible Study
6:30 PM ESL
6:45 PM Battalion

Wednesday, November 28
6:00 AM Men’s Bible Study
6:30 PM Women’s Bible Study
7:00 PM Prayer Meeting, Youth and Men’s Bible Study

Thursday, November 29
7:00 AM Men’s Bible Study
8:00 AM Women’s Bible Study
4:00 PM Cherub/ Junior Choir

Friday, November 30
9:00 AM Men’s Bible Study
6:45 PM Battalion
6:00 PM Crossroads

Epistle

Monthly Publication of Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Annapolis
November 2012



The Gospel and the Civil Marriage Protection Act

by Pastor Bruce O’Neil

In a few weeks Maryland will be asking you to vote on a referendum called “the Civil Marriage Protection Act,” which is commonly called Question 6 on the ballot. Earlier in the year the Maryland legislature approved legisla- tion establishing a “civil marriage” between people of the same gender. The governor signed it into law. Thou- sands of Marylanders signed a petition to place on the ballot this referendum to find out if the people of the state supported its elected leaders in establishing such a law. Some here at EP have asked us to clarify both what the referendum is about as well as what the Bible says about these issues. This is how this referendum, question 6, is before you on November’s ballot.

The Civil Marriage Protection Act establishes civil marriage licenses for people of the same gender (gay and lesbi- an couples) wishing to marry in the state of Maryland, provided they are not otherwise prohibited from marry- ing. The law protects clergy from having to perform any particular marriage ceremony in violation of their reli- gious beliefs. It affirms that each religious faith has exclusive control over its own theological doctrine regarding who may marry within that faith; and provides that religious organizations and certain related entities are not required to provide goods, services, or benefits to an individual related to the celebration of promotion of mar- riage in violation of their religious beliefs.

The ballot will ask you to vote either in favor of the “Referred Law,” which is a vote for the Civil Marriage Pro- tection Act, or to vote against the “Referred Law, which is a vote against the Civil Marriage Protection Act. If the majority of Marylanders vote in favor of the Referred Law, the Civil Marriage Protection Act will go into ef- fect on January 1, 2013. If the majority of Marylanders vote against the Referred Law, the Civil Marriage Protec- tion Act will not become the law of Maryland.

(Continued on page 2)

Sharing Christ’s Love

by Dee Chalfant

Soon the *Angel Tree* will be set up in the Fellowship Hall. This project is done under the auspices of Prison Fellowship Ministries. This year our church will be sponsoring 60 “angels”. These children have either a mom or dad in prison and would like a gift from the one they love but can’t see or hug. We have the opportunity to show them the love and mercy of Jesus Christ. Hopefully, on November 25, our tree will be set up holding tags with the name of each child.



Please talk it over with your family and decide to “adopt” an angel. We realize that there are many requests for your donations particularly at this time of the year. However, this is a community mis- sion right in our own “backyard”. Please think about it and prayerfully consider taking a name—or at least going in with another family. Not only will you get the joy of shopping for a child, you will have the privilege of taking the gift to the family. It is a wonderful minis- try. Hope to see you at our tree in the Fellowship Hall.

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(Continued from page 1)

The leadership of EP has consistently and clearly affirmed the teaching that biblical marriage is between one man and one woman (Genesis 2:24 and Matthew 19:6). It is the desire and design that all marriages to reflect the relationship between Christ and his Church (Ephesians 5:22-33). We also affirm that the Bible teaches that homosexuality is a sin and obscures God's design (Romans 1:26-27 and I Corinthians 6:9).

Having answered your question about our understanding of the Bible with regard to the upcoming referendum, Question 6, please allow me a few more thoughts on this issue. It is obvious that unbiblical marriages already exist. That is, if marriage was designed to reflect the relationship between Christ and His church, there are plenty of marriages that do not do so. We have marriages between two unbelievers, two Muslims, two Hindus, etc. We must also admit that sexual intimacy, which is supposed to be reserved for covenant marriage, is practiced with great frequency outside its design and has led to great harm.

Does this mean we are to throw up our hands and give up? Or does this mean that we need new and better laws to promote abstinence outside of marriage and laws to prohibit marriages between non-Christians? I don't think this will work. It has been tried in the past.

I don't think sin is primarily a behavior problem and therefore, forbidding an undesired behavior will probably not bring about the changes we desire to see. The only way to see real change is for the heart to change. I am advocating that we first get to know those who want this Civil Marriage Protection Act. I mean really get to know them. Ask them why they support the Act. Why is it important to them? What is their thinking behind their choice?

Here is the hard part. I don't think we should correct them or tell them why you are against the Civil Marriage Protection Act in Maryland, unless they ask you. Instead, begin a discussion about the gospel and its implications. Okay, that is my answer to everything ~ I am willing to admit it. The gospel and its implications have much to say to those who are concerned with the dignity of man, equality before the law, love, pain, loss and death. It only seems that we have little in common with those with whom we disagree. The reality is we all want to love and be loved, to see all men treated well and fairly, to be able to say goodbye to dying loved ones and to take care of those we leave behind.

I am not trying to diminish our responsibility to vote on this important question before our state. I am just trying to put it in a larger context. We all decry the decline of our culture. I shudder to think of the world my children and their children will live in. But what are we to do about it? Because we are good citizens we vote, we advocate and we elect leaders that will hunger and thirst for righteousness. But I am not banking on politics to turn our nation, or state, toward God. I do believe the Holy Spirit can change our nation and state as we Christians take up our responsibility as ambassadors of Christ, begging people to be reconciled to God through the gospel (II Corinthians 5:20).

Homeschooling

by Theresa Doolan

Considering homeschooling and wondering if a tutorial might help your family? ACTS is hosting a Drop-In Day on Thursday, November 8 from 8:30-11:30PM. Come by, visit our classes, talk with our teachers, and see if ACTS would be a good fit for your family. For more information, please give us a call 410-266-8091 x 129, send us an email at inquiries@gmail.com, or visit our website [http://www.edline.net/pages/Annapolis Classical Tutorial](http://www.edline.net/pages/Annapolis_Classical_Tutorial). We look forward to meeting you!



ADMINISTRATIVE NOTES

GIVING THRU OCTOBER 14, 2012

Operating Fund:	Year To Date
Budgeted Giving	\$ 1,983,000
Actual Giving	\$ 1,953,000
Surplus or (Deficit)	\$ (30,000)

Missions

by Greg Doty

Would you like the opportunity to be an encouragement to those serving the Lord on the mission field? In the spring of 2013 EP Church will have the opportunity to provide love, encouragement, and support to those who are currently serving on the mission field by serving at Mission to the World's annual area retreat. Each year MTW brings together missionaries and their families from one section of the world for a time of refreshment, encouragement, teaching and training. We are hoping to gather a group of volunteers who will come alongside of these families so that we might encourage them, support them, and minister to them. While our tasks will be many, one of the primary needs of the retreat will be to walk alongside of families, especially ones with young children. There are areas of need for nursery workers, as well as those who will help out in the cafeteria or during afternoon free time so that mom and dad might process the things that God is teaching them. There will also be ample time to sit, listen and engage with many of these families. Next year's area retreat will involve those who are ministering in greater Europe and the retreat will take place at a location in Europe. Participants who go from EP will be asked to raise most of their own support. If you are interested in finding out more (dates, location, costs etc...) about this opportunity please email Pastor Greg @ gdoty@epannapolis.org.

"Therefore encourage one another
and build one another up..."
1 Thessalonians 5:11

The Comfort of Presence

by Carolyn Woodie

Why is it that we are so uncomfortable around grieving people? Is it because we know they are in pain? Is it because we don't know what to say to ease their pain? Is it because we can't fix their tears? Is it because we miss the person too and being around them reminds us of our own pain? Or, maybe we'd like to avoid all discussion of death and loss because it reminds us of our own mortality? What *are* the reasons? Most grieving people don't need *our words*, they need *our presence*. We are often afraid of silence, so we fill the silence with words. Maybe the grieving person just needs us to sit with them in silence, to hand them a tissue as they cry, to allow them to talk if they feel a need to talk, but most of all just to be there.

We feel a need to figure out the person's grief journey and to tell them what they need to do. It was said "Job's friends were a help to him when they came and sat with him. They just got into trouble when they began to *minister* to him." We have a great desire to try to bring our grieving friend back to their "normal" life. When actually, they just need someone to walk alongside while they figure out what their "new normal" life will be without their loved one.

That is what GriefShare is all about. GriefShare won't fix things. It is not a 12-step program and a person's grief journey is not finished in 13 weeks. However, GriefShare provides a safe place to work through struggles and feelings in the light of God's word. GriefShare is a place where, with God's help, a person can understand better what they are experiencing, explore some aspects of their grief journey and begin the small steps towards their new life. EP's GriefShare group started on **Wednesday, October 17th from 7:00-9:00PM in The Parlor**. Please give us a call to pre-register. Brochures are available in the Church Office. For more information, contact Paul & Carolyn Woodie 410-626-8430, carolyn.woodie@verizon.net.

There are also a few GriefShare groups in other churches in the area. So, if Wednesday evening is not a good time for you or you want to find a GriefShare group in another state, go to www.griefshare.org, type in your zipcode and the closest groups will be listed for you.