



Catonsville  
Presbyterian  
Church

THE  
*Messenger*  
April 2023



# The Way of the Cross

By Kenneth E. Kovacs

Cover art: Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Three Crosses*, 1653.

**In our adult education offering in March and April, “Pathos, Empathy, and the Cross,”** we discussed how the New Testament attempts to “make sense” of the cross. It’s important to remember that the New Testament does not speak with one voice regarding the meaning of the cross. Even the creeds are silent. Not silent about the cross, but about what the cross means. Instead, we are given metaphors, such as “sacrifice” or “lamb of God.” Not to be taken literally, they are, nevertheless, revelatory. When held as metaphors, the real, the true, and the beautiful begin to emerge. The metaphors open fresh vistas of meaning before us, and they have the capacity to enlarge our souls.

The fact that we have various metaphors—or images, symbols, different ways, different theologies of the cross—tell us that what occurred that fatal week in Jerusalem long ago was larger than our metaphors. It’s a story that can never be fully known because its meaning exceeds human wisdom. The skill of the historian has its limits. History as a science does not have the ability or the authority to bear such truth or tell us what it means.

The New Testament gives us four gospel witnesses. But there were others, too, who experienced that awful week, who walked with Jesus into Jerusalem and watched him confront the powers that sought to undo God’s way in the world. And so, we must attend to this story gently and carefully because no one has fully figured

out the significance of that week all figured out. We can’t assume we know what it all means – because we don’t. Sometimes, by the grace of God, we are given glimpses of the truth and discover a new angle or perspective that allows us to see things about the story that we never noticed before. Sometimes, by the grace of God, we hear the story with an entirely different ear; we listen to the story with our souls and hear it as if for the first time.

## **Jesus’ life as an artist**

Several years ago, I came across an essay written by the playwright Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), *De Profundis* (Out of the Depths), from 1895. It never published in his lifetime. In this extraordinary

oppression and ‘whose silence is heard only of God,’ he chose as his brothers [and sisters]. He sought to become eyes to the blind, ears to the deaf, and a cry on the lips of those whose tongue had tied... And feeling, with the artistic nature of one to whom Sorrow and Suffering were modes through which he could realize his conception of the Beautiful, that an idea is of no value till it becomes incarnate and is made an image, [Christ] made himself the image of the Man of Sorrows, and as such has fascinated and dominated Art as no Greek god ever succeeded in doing.”

Sometimes, by the grace of God, we are given new metaphors, and new ways to think and imagine and feel our way into the meaning of the cross. And for this, thanks be to God.

**“It’s a story that can never be fully known because its meaning exceeds human wisdom. And history as a science does not have the ability or the authority to bear such truth or tell us what it means.”**

piece, Wilde shares what Christ had come to mean to him, and views Jesus’s life as an artist, that is, one who gives expression to that which one cannot speak.

“To [an artist] what is dumb is dead,” Wilde said. “But to Christ it was not so. With a width and wonder of imagination that fills one almost with awe, [Christ] took the entire world of the inarticulate, the voiceless world of pain as his kingdom, and made of himself its eternal mouthpiece. Those who are dumb under

## Step Into the Balcony

By Keith Glennan

Our worship services are streamed over the internet each week to include people who find it necessary, helpful, or meaningful to worship online. About 20-30 people consistently join us online on Sunday mornings. Another advantage to our streaming is that people who can't join on Sunday morning can participate in worship later, since the service remains available on the church's website, Facebook page, and YouTube channel. Another option is to join via Zoom. Vickie Lord puts the live streamed

service onto Zoom, and some people call in by telephone.

**Worshipping online isn't about convenience. It's about equity and accessibility.**

We have three cameras, and we try to mix a blend of manually-tracked shots from our main camera in the balcony (operated by Kathy) with preselected shots from our remote cameras. This is how we get closeups of Wendy playing the organ and the preacher behind the pulpit. I try to mix in some variety without making the camera shots too distracting. This is all controlled by our streaming software.

The other major aspect of streaming worship is sound. It's challenging to reproduce the sense of being in the sanctuary, although speakers tend to come through very clearly as long as they are close to the microphones. We are investigating alternatives to improving our capture of ambient sound for the live stream. We appreciate everyone's feedback!

Keith and Kathy have served in the balcony nearly every week for several years.





## A Note from Kristy Herring

As we transition from the Lenten season into Easter, we cannot escape the fact that our Savior made the ultimate sacrifice for us. John 15:13 says, “Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” While our sacrifice for our neighbors may not look like Christ’s, we are called to “sacrifice” and give of our abundance—whether it’s time, intercession, or money.

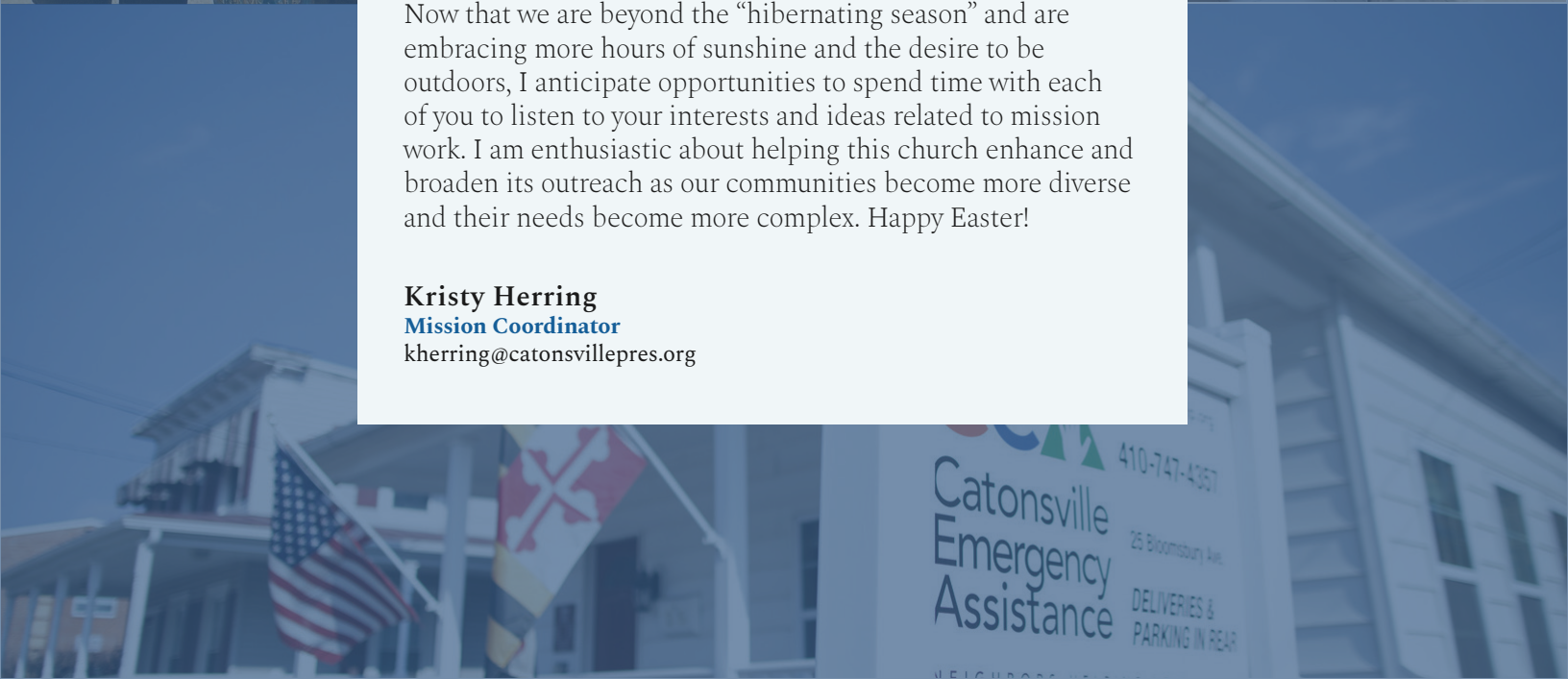
When I accepted this position in November, 2022, I immediately saw that this congregation is full of people who are willing to make sacrifices for others. From feeding clients of the Westside Men’s Shelter to giving toys to children at the McKim Center or supporting Afghan families who have resettled in Maryland, members of this congregation are actively involved in service.

### Partnering together

As I settle into this position, I look forward to supporting each of the committees as they seek to partner with and support residents and organizations in Catonsville and the surrounding communities. Already this year the committees have been actively engaged by hosting an Iftar dinner with Maryland Turkish-American Inhabitants (MARTI), assisting Bridges to Stability in Howard County, and regularly supporting the ongoing outreach of Catonsville Emergency Assistance (CEA), just name a few of the activities.

Now that we are beyond the “hibernating season” and are embracing more hours of sunshine and the desire to be outdoors, I anticipate opportunities to spend time with each of you to listen to your interests and ideas related to mission work. I am enthusiastic about helping this church enhance and broaden its outreach as our communities become more diverse and their needs become more complex. Happy Easter!

**Kristy Herring**  
**Mission Coordinator**  
[kherring@catonsvillepres.org](mailto:kherring@catonsvillepres.org)



# Looking Back At the Winter Clothing Drive

By Charre Symms

**The Deacons would like to thank everyone for their generous contributions of new and gently used winter clothing from November through January for the Westside Men's Shelter.**

The Deacons also hosted a birthday bash at the shelter in early December. We served cupcakes and ice cream bars, led the men in a rousing chorus of carols, and gave each man with a December birthday a card made by our youth with a McDonalds gift card.

The staff and men at the shelter were enthusiastic in their appreciation for CPC's support during the party and each week when the clothing was delivered.

Make no mistake, Jesus is calling us to perform ordinary acts of compassion in daily life. In so doing, we continue Christ's work of proclaiming release to captives and good news to the poor — the good news of God's righteousness, justice and peace for all.

**PRESBYTERIAN MISSION AGENCY**

**24**

Coats

**33**

Hats

**14**

Scarves

**31**

Sweaters  
and shirts

**13**

Pairs of  
pants

**41**

Pairs of  
socks

**7**

Pairs of  
gloves

**30**

Toiletry  
items

**\$50**

Cash  
donations



## Session Highlights

By David Hutton



▲  
Session member Mark Kennedy stands with Bill Henderson, a member of the Dismantling Racism Committee during the Artists4ERA event.

**The Session is a body of fifteen members, elected by the Congregation and ordained as ruling elders, who provide leadership for our congregation.**

**Following are highlights from the Session meeting on March 1, 2023.**

**The Session approved a request by the Concert Board to post a banner** on the church lawn to advertise concerts, which occur approximately monthly between October and April. The banner will only be posted the week before each Sunday concert.

**The Finance Committee reported that for the year to date as of February 28, 2023, the Operating Budget continues to show a surplus of income** versus expenses as some members have paid their annual pledge all at once, while expenses have not yet been incurred. However, a large invoice is anticipated for recent repair work on the church boiler.

**A request was made that the minutes of the Dismantling Racism Committee be submitted to Session**, even though the Committee does not report directly to Session (DRC is a subcommittee of the Peace and Justice Committee). It was agreed that it is desirable for the Session to have visibility of the good work of the DRC.

**A Session retreat is planned for early June on the theme of “flourishing.”** A facilitator will assist the Session in planning our ministry priorities as we transition out of the COVID era.

**Session members discussed the chapter on The Ministry of the Church** from Carlos Wilton’s book, “Principles of Presbyterian Polity.”

The Session recognizes the need to continually communicate with the congregation and we welcome your suggestions for feedback. Contact information for Session members is listed in the church directory. Take a few minutes to send a message to a Session member, the pastors, or the church office to let us know what your thoughts. We want to hear from you!

**“Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.”**

The Equal Rights Amendment

## **Yes, it’s that simple.**

**And 80% of our citizens believe that equal rights based on gender is already part of our constitution,** and although gender equality is part of the constitutions of 165 other countries, it is NOT included in ours. Adding gender equality to our constitution was first proposed 100 years ago.

The Dismantling Racism Committee, working along with other local community organizations, hosted the Artists4ERA reception and art exhibit at the Baltimore County Arts Guild Clubhouse in early March. The vision of Vote Equality—a nonpartisan group fighting for gender equality—and this exhibit is to ensure that the fully-ratified, 28th Equal Rights Amendment is enshrined in the constitution, thereby bringing America one step closer to delivering on its promise of liberty and justice for all.

Black and brown women experience gender discrimination in addition to racism in their daily lives especially when it comes to their earnings, the maternal mortality rate, and the likelihood that they will lose their lives due to murder.

**These intersectional issues between gender and race are why the Dismantling Racism Committee decided to co-sponsor VoteEquality’s exhibit.**



Last year the exhibit traveled from Oakland, California to Oakland, Maryland. Our event in Catonsville featured the works of current artists and their visions of what gender equality could look like here in the U.S.

It was an amazing, and extremely successful event, the culmination of many months' worth of planning with a talented and thoughtful steering committee. We attracted well-known experts on the Equal Rights Amendment who shared their expertise with our audience in addition to generating donations to continue the fight for Equal Rights.

## Rooting the ERA in lived experience

The program included discussions of the history of the ERA, the next steps for moving forward, and two panel discussions on gender equality.

### MERYL STREEP:

"You could make a case that, along with the technological revolution, the most provocative, upending, destabilizing, thrilling change in the course of human history is that we're finally in it... We're here now, women are in the world, and we will not be bullied."

The first panel featured four women: three high-school and college-aged students and one recent college graduate. These panelists spoke about their work as activists and leaders in addition to the challenges they face on account of gender inequality. The second panel consisted of three professional women in the workforce who shared experiences they faced in their careers dealing with sexual harassment, unequal pay, and discrimination, before sharing how they overcame these challenges.



Tracy Lantz presents a signed print to Jerome Stephens, a member of Senator Ben Cardin's office.

## Making an impact here and now

The event consisted of a silent auction of 14 posters created by various artists and a raffle for the chance to win an original art piece by San Francisco artist Chuck Sperry. Despite the wet and rainy evening, the event was very successful with over 130 people in attendance. The silent auction raised \$1,800, and the raffle generated over \$800 with total donations to Vote Equality of over \$3300. We also supported two local women-owned catering businesses while connecting our guests with national and statewide organizations who are working to ensure that the ERA becomes the 28th amendment to the constitution.

**Tracy Lantz**

On behalf of the Dismantling Racism Committee

# Nurturing our Spiritual formation

## Ministry with young people

Youth played games like “blob tag,” and “blind puzzles,” during the lock-in. Spaghetti and marshmallow towers were constructed despite all odds.

### The Lock-In Returns

By your tired and thankful hosts,  
Mark Davis, Debbie Davis, and  
Jenny Hutton



**Oh, what a night!!! (er, and morning too).** It was SO good to spend a night together hanging out and simply having fun. This year’s lock-in was the first since 2019. We were pleased to share the evening and early morning hours with 13 middle and high school youth. We loved watching how everyone worked together to meet challenges: building the tallest spaghetti-marshmallow tower, delicately instructing a blindfolded teammate how to assemble a puzzle, and solving a paper maze in silence. Gym games were popular too. Who doesn’t love “blob tag” and “four corners?!” Of course, nothing tops the classic game “sardines” where you can

hide in countless dark nooks and spaces of a large, spooky old church at night. Sardines was played for a full hour and a half, ending shortly before midnight. But the events were not over then! We ushered in the morning with the cult-classic movie *The Princess Bride*.

We are grateful to have a growing youth group. We look forward to learning more about the youth of our congregation through monthly youth group meetings and “Cocoa and Conversations” on Sunday mornings this winter.



## Dr. Andy Root

Professor of Youth and Family Ministry at Luther Seminary

## Nurturing Our Spiritual Formation

**“In true relationships, the only point is to be together. Once there is another point, the relationship withers under the heat of expectations and obligations.”**



▲ Youth competed to build marshmallow and spaghetti towers



## Next up in “Getting to know our Youth” are the 7th graders!



◀ **Molly Fitzsimmons** attends Catonsville Middle School. Molly enjoys making art, watching movies, swimming, basketball, softball, skateboarding, scouts and hanging out with friends. Molly just finished basketball season and was selected for the end of season all-star team! She is now looking forward to softball season.

**Bat Virago** is a seventh grade student at Sudbrook Magnet Middle School where they are part of the Visual Arts magnet and are the principal violinist in the level three orchestra. Bat participates in cross country and track at Sudbrook, as well as a variety of student service organizations. Outside of school they enjoy drawing, crocheting, and writing.



## Youth and Children’s Ministry Calendar

### Sunday, April 2nd Palm Sunday

Children are invited to process with palms at the beginning of the worship service. Meet in fellowship hall at 10:25 a.m. Parents are welcome to accompany small children.

### Sunday, April 9th Easter

We will be offering child care for infants through age 7 in the Owls Room on Easter morning. Second Sunday multi-age church school and Cocoa and Conversations will not meet but will gather again on Sunday, May 14th.

### Thursday, April 13th

The Christian Education committee will meet by Zoom at 7:00 p.m.

### Sunday, April 16th

Youth group will be held in the Fellowship Hall from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

### Stay tuned...

There are some fun events in the works for youth this spring: family fun day, end of the year pool party, and more!



## Developing relationships through God's creation

By Ron Gunderson

As we head into April, the serious gardening season is upon us!

Over the past few months, we have further developed several exciting relationships that promise to make this season special:

- We continue to value the advice and encouragement of the Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake. This organization was one of our earliest partners as we formed the Creation Care Team in 2016.
- We will increase our partnership with Design With Nature which began last year when they were contracted to mow all of the meadow areas in the Woodland Sanctuary. This season, they will be helping us control several invasive plant varieties that will make it possible for the many native plants to thrive and spread. Early next winter they will do another mowing.
- We will be partnering this season with Howard EcoWorks in a major planting of new native trees. They will be providing a team to deliver, plant, stake, and mulch approximately 35 trees. We will then be tasked with watering them over the coming months as they get established. They also will plant a new pollinator garden in one of the meadow areas, near the woodlands. All of this is funded by a new grant they recently received.
- The administration of Hillcrest Elementary School is excited to be working with us again, post-Covid, to provide further opportunities for educational use of the woodlands. Over the past few years, we have had a great relationship, completing a number of small hands-on learning opportunities for their students which we hope to expand upon.
- We also will be working with the Green Team at Catonsville High School to encourage student use of the native plant gardens and woodlands, both for learning and service projects.
- Last season we worked very hard to develop greater connections within the adjacent Catonsville community. A number of parents, many with children at our Child Care Center or Hillcrest, have signed up to help in various ways.

Of course, our greatest support comes from the friends and members of the congregation! We need you to help us, as you are able. Tasks of various ranges of difficulty need to be done, particularly in the Spring. Stay tuned! We will have several scheduled Saturday workdays.

If you are interested in helping with the church's beautiful outdoor spaces, please let me know by emailing me at [cinron.md@gmail.com](mailto:cinron.md@gmail.com)





▲  
Susan Krehbiel led participants through the context of Ukraine's national, cultural, and political identities.

## **Engaging missions thoughtfully**

During Adult Education, Susan Krehbiel shared about her recent trip to Ukraine and Eastern Europe with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. This time was insightful and revealing, both about the tumult of war and the concrete ways that our mission as the church plays out across the world.

## **Pathos, Empathy, and the Cross: Ken Kovacs (Sunday, April 2)**

Isaiah spoke of a “suffering servant” (Is. 53) by whose “bruises we are healed.” Jesus, talking about himself, said, “the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again” (Mk. 8:31). The suffering that Jesus endured, the early Church believed, brought about something new. The first Christians believed that they could share in Christ’s suffering and, therefore, found meaning in their individual and collective experiences of suffering. What do these beliefs mean for us today? Do they still resonate with us and carry the same meaning? How do we relate to Christ’s suffering on the cross? Did he have to suffer? And what exactly did he suffer?

## **Caring for Creation: Ken Kovacs (Sunday, April 23)**

On this Earth Day weekend, we’ll explore the theological reasons why care for creation and concerns about climate change are integral to our lives as Christians. We’ll explore how a misreading of the word “dominion” in Genesis 1:26 contributed to some of the challenges we are facing today. And we’ll turn to the spirituality of the Celtic Christians. By placing the doctrine of the incarnation at the center of their lives they might have something to teach us how to be more embodied and, thus, more connected to the physical world as the bearer of God’s goodness and glory—and, therefore, worthy of our care and stewardship.

## **Thursday Morning Bible Study**

We bring our study of Philippians to a close on April 6. We’re going to take a break on April 13 but will return on Thursday, April 20, at the usual time, 10:30 a.m. to noon, in the library and online. We’ll continue meeting weekly through the end of May. The next book or theme/issue to explore will be chosen shortly. Watch the weekly eNews for details.



# God often calls the Church to live with open doors and open hearts.

This month, those open doors led to music throughout our village and Scouts providing desperately-needed service to our neighbors.

Left to right: Concert Board members Chuck Gehrman, Chuck Kupferschmidt, Dottie Marshall, Leslie Lindeman, David Hutton, Dick Boulton, and CWGC Grants Committee members Margaret Bowler (front) and Karen Bassarab (back).

## Concert Series Receives Grant from Catonsville Women's Giving Circle

By David Hutton



Members of the Grants Committee of the Catonsville Women's Giving Circle presented a check for \$2,000 to Catonsville Concerts at 3 board members at the concert on Sunday, February 26, 2023. The additional funds will allow our concert series to present a seventh concert in the 2023-2024 season. The Catonsville Women's Giving Circle supports many deserving local community groups with their grant program.



## The annual "Scouting for Food", held on March 12, was a great success!

By Glenda Johnson

Cub Scout Pack 306 necessary 800 pounds of food items in the decorated red truck parked in the CPC large lot. At the end of the day, the truck was nearly filled to capacity. The items were delivered to CEA on Monday March 13.

**In total, our Woodlawn and Catonsville neighbors have access to an additional 1200 pounds of food as a result of Scouting for Food.**

Troop 306 filled a large Toyota van at Christian Temple, in the eastern section of Catonsville. They collected about 400 pounds of food that same day. Their donations were taken to St. Gabriel's Food Pantry in Woodlawn. Community members in both areas added to the respective collection sites.

Thanks for your generous donations during this event. If you missed this event, donations may be brought any Sunday to the Deacons collection bin, located in the entrance area near the ramp.



## Financial Update

Actual Income . . . . .	\$ 201,609
Actual Expense. . . . .	\$ -164,075
<b>Total. . . . .</b>	<b>\$ 37,534</b>
Per Capita . . . . .	1,430

Updated 03/25/2023

## Pastors and Staff

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## Featured upcoming events

### Sunday, April 2: Palm Sunday

10:30 a.m. | Sanctuary

Palm Sunday will begin with a processional of youth and children waving palm branches, celebrating the triumphant entry of Christ. The choir will offer a special anthem during worship along with percussion and a youth and children's choir.

### Thursday, April 6: Maundy Thursday

7:00 p.m. | Sanctuary

Participate in a service of worship with observance of the Lord's Supper. This pensive time looks past at the Lenten journey and ahead towards the darkest hour of the Christian faith: the crucifixion of Christ on Good Friday.

### Friday, April 7: Good Friday

7:00 p.m. | Outdoors or the Fellowship Hall

Weather permitting, we will gather outdoors in worship to fix our eyes on the crucified Christ. The sanctuary will be open for quiet, personal contemplation and prayer throughout the day.

### Sunday, April 9: Resurrection of the Lord

10:30 a.m. | Sanctuary

Worship on Easter Sunday will include a brass quartet, special flower arrangements, and a service celebrating the profoundly good news: Christ is risen, indeed! Childcare will be provided for infants through age 7 beginning at 10:00 a.m.

### Tuesday, April 18: Hillcrest Earth Day Festival

4:00 p.m. | Pavilion and Woodlands

Our congregation will welcome the students, staff, and families of Hillcrest Elementary School for their Earth Day Festival. Volunteers are needed to represent CPC and facilitate a fun craft for students.

THE  
*Messenger*

**Catonsville Presbyterian Church**

1400 Frederick Rd • Catonsville MD

**Church Office**

Tuesday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.  
(410) 747-6180 • [catonsvillepres.org](http://catonsvillepres.org)

