

## From the Pastor's Study

A Message From Rev. Dr. Larry Hayward

### Creation, Christ, and Thanksgiving



#### 2008 SCHEDULE

##### Sunday, December 2 1st Sunday in Advent

8:30 a.m. Worship in the Chapel

11:00 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary; Rev. Patrick A Hunnicutt preaching

9:45 a.m. Advent Lecture Series: "Seeing Salvation: Christ In Art – Annunciation and Incarnation"; Jeffrey Hensley  
Alternative Gift Bazaar in Fellowship Hall following worship

##### Sunday, December 9 2nd Sunday in Advent

8:30 a.m. Worship in the Chapel; Rev. Casey FitzGerald preaching

9:45 a.m. Advent Lecture Series: "Seeing Salvation: Christ In Art – Baptism and Ministry"

11:00 a.m. Lessons and Carols Service in the Sanctuary (Readings and Celtic Music)  
Alternative Gift Bazaar in Fellowship Hall following Worship

*Continued on page 2*

As we celebrate Thanksgiving in a few days, we will give thanks for the abundance of life our place on the earth has afforded us. We will join with citizens of our land giving thanks for provision; those of us who are Christian, Jewish, and believers in God through other faiths will give thanks to God for being the source of such provision.

In the Christian faith, we can tie our thanks at Thanksgiving not only to God's provisioning us, but also to that other celebration just around the corner – the birth of Christ. Christmas celebrates the incarnation – the coming of God "in the flesh." Christ's coming fulfills a pattern of God's commitment to his created order which long precedes the birth of Christ at Bethlehem:

In a *Multitude of Blessings: A Christian Approach to Religious Diversity*, Cynthia Campbell, President of McCormick Theological Seminary writes:

- The Psalms and the later prophets all bear witness to the idea that God is Lord of all nations and all creation, that all the earth is full of the glory of God, that all peoples serve God and God's purposes.
- Isaiah's vision of the "end times" is that "all nations" will come to the mount of the Lord (to Zion) and live in peace.
- Paul echoes this vision when he proclaims that "in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself" (2 Cor. 5:19) or "reconcil[ing] to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven (Col 1:20).

When Christ came "in the flesh," it was to the world, *out of love* for the world, indeed, *for the sake of* the world that he came.

So let us this month give thanks for God's abundant provisioning of us, and next month – indeed all months – give thanks for the gift of Jesus Christ to the world.

Larry



THANK-YOU'S  
& MORE



Notes From Associate Pastor  
Karen Blomberg

**WHAT DO DEACONS DO?**

*Dear Friends at Westminster:*

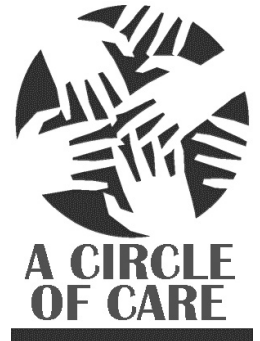
I deeply appreciate the prayers and other support from my Westminster Family during my recovery from surgery. The many phone calls, emails and cards let me know that I was not alone, despite being far away from my actual family. In particular, I have to thank my fellow Flying Solo members for their loving care, which included visits, food, flowers and transportation. I feel especially blessed to be part of such a warm and caring community!

Sincerely,  
Nancy Harper

Welcome Rev. Casey Fitzgerald

Westminster extends a warm welcome to the Rev. Casey Fitzgerald, who has been called by the congregation to be Associate Pastor for children and families, filling the vacancy created by the retirement of Joan Taylor Reid, former Director of Christian Education. Casey has been on our staff for the past year in a non-ordained position as Director of Young Adults and Singles Ministries. She will assume her new duties on November 12, and will be formally installed after the first of the year.

Our Board of Deacons is at work on a regular basis, behind the scenes, quietly and compassionately. One of the ministries of the Deacons is the **Member Response Team**. In partnership with the Local Missions Committee, the MRT responds to special needs of the congregation. MRT has helped Westminster members with job challenges, transition and immigration issues, and financial struggles. MRT partners with church members and Alexandria community resources to help meet these unexpected needs of our members. For more information about MRT, contact Deacon Martha Girard at [mcgirard@pbs.org](mailto:mcgirard@pbs.org) or Elder Louise.Anderson@verizon.com.



Another ministry of the Board of Deacons is The Compassion Guild. The **Compassion Guild** assists church families at the time of the memorial service of a loved one. Members help with receptions before or following the service; assist in ushering; greet families and visitors to the church; assist the officiating pastor with other service logistics. For more information about the Compassion Guild, or if you want to assist with memorial services, please contact Deacon Donna Cramer at [djcramer47@aol.com](mailto:djcramer47@aol.com).

*Karen B*

**ADVENT SCHEDULE**

*Continued from page 1*

5:00 p.m. Children's Pageant  
5:45 p.m. Congregational Dinner

**Sunday, December 16  
3rd Sunday in Advent  
Festival Sunday**

8:30 & 11:00 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary  
10:45 extended prelude, Special Music with the choirs and Commonwealth Brass; Dr. Larry R. Hayward preaching

9:45 a.m. Advent Lecture Series:  
"Seeing Salvation: Christ In Art –  
Passion and Resurrection"

**Sunday, December 23  
4th Sunday in Advent**

8:30 a.m. Worship in the Chapel  
11:00 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary;  
Dr. Larry R Hayward preaching  
No 9:45 church school

**Monday, December 24  
Christmas Eve**

5:00 p.m. Community Christmas Eve Service; Story, Song and Candlelight  
9:30 p.m. Pre-service concert  
10:00 p.m. Candlelight Worship with communion; Westminster Choir with harp and woodwinds; Dr. Larry R. Hayward preaching

## NO MORE CAMPBELL'S SOUP LABELS

The Children's Home of the Highlands is no longer collecting Campbell's soup labels. However, a school on the Home's property is collecting General Foods' "Box Top\$ for Education". They can be mailed to The Minnick School, 425 Grayson Rd., Wytheville, VA 24382. There are no immediate plans to collect the Box Top\$ at the Church.



News from  
*United Orphanage & Academy  
In Moi's Bridge, Kenya*

The United Orphanage & Academy gained well deserved notice. On Nov. 3, 2007 an article entitled Beacon of Hope was published on the Washington Times OpEd page, written by James Martin. Mr. Martin cites statistics from the World Health Organization and United Nations which estimates that in 2006 there were 12 million AIDS orphans living in Sub-Saharan Africa. He recognizes the United Orphanage & Academy as a counterpoint to this suffering and pain. He goes on to say "The vision behind the creation of the UO&A links to the Rev. Stephen N. Chege, a retired schoolteacher and pastor of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, and Henri F. Rush, a retired employee of the federal government and elder of Westminster Presbyterian Church of Alexandria, Va. The two met and become friends in 1999 in Kenya when Mr. Rush was part of a mission work camp housed at Rev. Chege's church in Molo, Kenya.

Their name for the project, United Orphanage & Academy, was chosen to reflect that it would be committed from the outset to accepting, without discrimination, orphans from among all of the tribal groups that inhabit the Moi's Bridge area."

As you may know the Orphanage is currently home to 48 children and 67 children enrolled in classes in the Academy. The vision continues the hope of increasing those numbers over the next year.

Please view the entire article online on the Washington Times website ([www.washingtontimes.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071103/COMMENTARY/111030006](http://www.washingtontimes.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071103/COMMENTARY/111030006)) or pick up a copy in the church office.

## Mark Your Calendars and Plan to do Your Shopping at Westminster's Alternative Christmas Giving Bazaar

The Mission  
Committees'  
Alternative Christmas  
Giving Bazaar will be  
held this year on  
December 2 and 9  
following both the 8:30  
and 11:00 services in  
Fellowship Hall. Use  
this opportunity to  
honor friends, family  
and co-workers by



giving gifts in their names to charities supported by Westminster instead of, or in addition to, the usual gifts this Christmas. The Alternative Christmas Bazaar lets you give gifts to local, national, and international charities that will make an important difference in the lives of people in our community, our nation and around the world. For example, you can contribute locally to the Arlington/Alexandria Coalition for the Homeless (AACH), Alexandria Neighborhood Health Services, Alexandrians Involved Ecumenically (ALIVE), Carpenter's Shelter, or Habitat for Humanity; nationally to Spirit Lake Sioux Indian Reservation in North Dakota or St. John's Sheetrock Ministry in Pascagoula, Mississippi; and internationally to Heifer International or the National Medical Benevolence Foundation. Cards will be available from Westminster or the organization involved to give to the persons you are honoring by your gift.

In addition, as in the past, beautiful handmade gifts will be available from the Bridge of Hope Peru Artisan Group and the Rural Coalition Fair Trade Group. These are gifts that also give twice; once to the recipient and once to the workers, their families and communities in Peru and in rural portions of our country.

Finally, this is the primary time to provide continuing support for Westminster's United Orphanage & Academy in Moi's Bridge, Kenya. Last year support was given or pledged for all 42 of the children in residence at \$750 or \$62.50 per month per child. This year there are 48 children (31 girls and 17 boys) that need your support. And, as the Academy grows and expands increasing support for teacher's salaries at \$900 per year or \$75 per month and additional school supplies will be needed. This year for the first time we are seeking scholarships at \$200 per child per year to permit local orphans and vulnerable children whose guardians cannot afford to pay tuition to attend the academy.

## Westminster's Annual Boxwood Workshop

Plan now to come to the fellowship hall on Tuesday, December 4th or Wednesday, December 5th at either 9:30 a.m. or 7:30 p.m. and make boxwood wreaths, centerpieces, tabletop trees, candlestick arrangements, or kissing balls. This workshop is lots of fun and gets your home decorated for the holidays early to give you more time to enjoy the season. Cost to make projects is: Wreath \$24, Globe Centerpiece \$17, Tabletop Tree \$17, Two Candle Centerpiece \$17, Three Candle Centerpiece \$24, Candlesticks \$16, Kissing Ball \$10. If you have done this workshop before, bring your hardware and redo it for a lower price. You can also buy premade balsam wreaths, pine roping, extra boxwood, or custom made large bows to complete your decorating. To sign up or get more information, call Madeline Ramsey 703-379-7458. A \$5 deposit is due by November 23rd to be sure to hold your place and have materials on hand. After that registrations will be taken if space and materials are available.

## Fused Glass Jewelry Class

Westminster's Craft Group will sponsor a Fused Glass Jewelry class from 7 - 10 p.m. on Wednesday, November 28th, and Thursday, November 29th (a two night class, six hours total). You will make five pieces of jewelry, which can include earrings, pendants, bracelet, ring, bolo tie, pin, and more. Cost will be \$50 for tuition and \$55 for supplies. Please call Madeline Ramsey 703-379-7458 to register or for more information.

### WOMEN'S BOOK GROUP NEWS

All women readers are invited to discuss *Digging to America* by Anne Tyler on Monday, November 26. The morning group will meet at 11:00 A.M. at Goodwin House Bailey's Crossroads. The evening group will meet at 7:30 P.M. in the church's Johnson Parlor.



Contact Clara Beth Van de Water (703-549-4766 X120) for details, or just come.

## Get ready for Christmas WITH DEC. 9 CHILDREN'S PAGEANT AND CONGREGATIONAL DINNER

Get into the holiday spirit by joining WPC members at a congregational dinner directly following the Children's Christmas Pageant on Sunday, December 9, in Fellowship Hall. The Children's Christmas Pageant will begin at 5:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Dinner will be served following the Pageant. The meal will be catered by Tasteful Affairs. Cost will be \$10.00 per adult and \$3.00 for children ages 6 and under. Members will be able to make reservations from November 26 through December 6 by calling the church office or emailing Oraly Spatz: ospatz@wpc-alex.org.



### Community Thanksgiving Worship



*Please Join Us and Invite your Neighbors For Our*

## Annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Service

Wednesday, November 21, 2007  
7:30 p.m.

Westminster Presbyterian Church

Sermon: "A Complaint-Free World"  
Rabbi Jack Moline of Agudas Achim  
Congregation

Musical Arrangements by  
Westminster's Music Director: Dr. Paul Stetsenko  
Westminster and Agudas Achim Choirs

## ADULT EDUCATION

**Sunday Mornings,  
9:45 to 10:45 a.m.**

*All adults are invited to the following programs. No registration is needed. For further information, contact Director of Adult Education Clara Beth Van de Water (703-549-4766 x120).*



### November Classes

**Pentecostalism: A Growing Tradition Born in America, November 18 and 25, Haverkamp Room.**

Modern Pentecostalism began in America around 1900 with charismatic Christian movements emphasizing speaking in tongues, utterances in response to the Holy Spirit. Pentecostalism spread around the world, various denominations arose, and growth continues rapidly. A representative from the Church of God in Christ, the largest Pentecostal denomination, will talk about the excitement and spiritual power of charismatic worship and faith.

**Parenting 101: The Basics of Becoming a Proactive Parent, November 18 and 25, Westminster Room.**

Through videos and discussions, this series will help you become a proactive rather than a reactive parent. It will teach you how to parent with a plan and with God in the center. The series is designed for parents of children and teenagers. Patty Chamberlain—elder-elect, preschool teacher, and mother of three—and other Westminster parents will lead the discussions.

### Advent Series

**Seeing Salvation: Christ in Art, December 2, 9, and 16, Haverkamp Room.**

This three-week course will examine the way visual artists from throughout Christian history have portrayed Christ. Each week will focus on a different period of Christ's life and will compare and contrast the theological visions of artists from the earliest representations of Christ to contemporary art. Come to appreciate how the many images of Jesus Christ reflect his humanity and divinity, and enrich your own vision of Jesus during this Advent season.

The teacher is Jeffrey Hensley, who has taught this course at Virginia Theological Seminary. Hensley holds three masters degrees from Yale University in various subjects and is a consultant in the Episcopal church, in higher education, and in faith and politics.

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## Singles

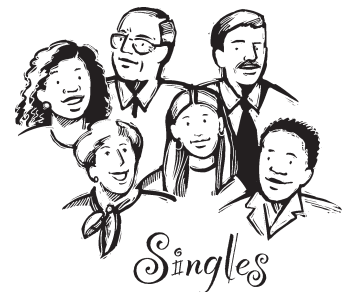
**November 22 - Group Thanksgiving Dinner.**

Singles interested in joining in on this potluck tradition are invited to the home of Ginni Schaeffer for an evening of celebration and fellowship! Please email Casey Fitzgerald at [FlyingSolo@wpc-alex.org](mailto:FlyingSolo@wpc-alex.org) for more details.

**Tuesday, November 27** - Join us for our **monthly potluck** at 7 p.m. in the Johnson Parlor. Bring an entrée, side or dessert to share! We will be preparing sandwiches for the bag lunch program.

**Saturday, December 8-Flying Solo Christmas Party!** Hosted by Judy Curtis, this party is a wonderful opportunity to get to know your fellow singles! Help us make Christmas happier for an adopted family by wrapping presents! Please RSVP to Casey Fitzgerald at [FlyingSolo@wpc-alex.org](mailto:FlyingSolo@wpc-alex.org)

**Monday, December 10-DineOut at Rustico, 827 Slater's Lane, Alexandria, VA.** Take the opportunity to try some moderately-priced local restaurants while enjoying good conversation. Those who want to carpool should meet in the church parking lot by 7:00 p.m. If you prefer, just meet us at the restaurant about 7:15.



*Not on our Flying Solo email list? Please contact Casey FitzGerald at [FlyingSolo@wpc-alex.org](mailto:FlyingSolo@wpc-alex.org) to make sure you're getting the most recent updates on all our wonderful events.*

## Blessed to Be A Blessing

The following messages were shared during the worship service as part of our 2008 Stewardship Campaign.

### I.

Good morning: on behalf of the Stewardship Committee, I welcome you to the kick-off of the 2008 Pledge Campaign. The Campaign is a period of celebration and reflection: we celebrate what Westminster brings to us, and we reflect on our financial responsibilities in that regard. Stewardship is a personal responsibility to take care of God's property. But in doing so, we get to use God-given resources for the accomplishment of God-given objectives.

That exchange is reflected in the theme of this year's campaign: **Blessed to be a Blessing**. Bible students recognize that as God's covenant with Abram in Genesis:

**"I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."**

I recently came across two widely different perspectives which I think help focus our appreciation of Westminster's blessings:

1. Courtesy of the front page of last Friday's Weekend section of the Washington Post, we see this headline: **"The Sunday Blues. You know the feeling: your excitement builds as the weekend approaches, only to be hammered by DREAD when Sunday arrives. Get some tips for actually enjoying [Sunday] ..."** Wow! Hammered by dread! How could you even get out of bed on Sunday morning?

Now, the Stewardship Committee didn't pay the Washington Post to say that, but I for one am extremely grateful!

2. In contrast, is this contemporary interpretation of Proverbs 11:28 which we came across in our Faith Group reading:

**A life devoted to things is a dead life, a stump; a God-shaped life is a flourishing tree.**

As we worship in this gorgeous sanctuary this morning, which of the two reflects our outlook on Sunday: are we "hammered by dread" or are we Blessed to be a flourishing tree. Hmm - "dread" or "blessed."

What do we think? I'm going out on a limb. We are here because Westminster is the Proverbial "flourishing tree," we have been blessed. We have a beautifully renovated building, a great staff, and a congregation with an abundance of creativity, energy, generosity, and faith.

While we refer to this period as the Stewardship Campaign, and while we have definite goals that we want to reach, in a larger sense the word campaign is a misnomer. Stewardship - the use of God-given resources for the accomplishment of God-given objectives - is a year-long process. Westminster is blessed, and touches our lives each and every day. Our pledges ensure that the vital

aspects of our ministry in Worship, Education, Mission, and Fellowship will continue to thrive in the next year.

On Pledge Sunday, which is November 4th, we have the opportunity and the responsibility to renew God's covenant with Abraham. In doing so, our goal is always to move toward a tithe. Our specific goals this year are threefold, to:

- Increase pledging by 6% over last year. This is a smaller increase than in recent years and is needed to provide the additional income needed to meet the projected budget. It will enable us to maintain the current levels of activity, but not much more.

- Increase total pledges from \$1.1M to \$1.2M.
- Increase the number of individuals and families who pledge from 400 to 425. You will be receiving more information in the mail this coming week. Please look at this information carefully, reflect on our blessings as you plan for pledge Sunday on Nov. 4th, and prayerfully consider what you can do to help meet our modest goals for this year.

And please keep this in mind: if we thought that there was a limit to either God's expectations or our own capabilities, there is a real possibility that we would not be "here" today.

Frank Fraser, October 14

### II.

When I moved to this area a little more than a year ago, finding a church was a priority for me. Following the suggestion of a fellow University of Georgia Bulldog graduate, I decided to give Westminster a try. My experience was interesting. The service was held at Agudas Achim because of the renovations here, and my first visit fell on the weekend when Larry was getting married, so Rabbi Jack Moline spoke. I couldn't have picked a better Sunday to attend because of what that service demonstrated to me. For Westminster to share such a special relationship with Agudas Achim-for these two very different places of worship to come together-was the perfect example of the type of church, the type of congregation, that I was looking to be a part of.

As a young adult still figuring out what I want to do, I'm realizing more and more how important it is to turn to the church, to the congregation, to God for guidance. And as I turn to this church for the openness, acceptance and comfort that I feel every Sunday, I realize that I would not feel so accepted-so comforted-if it weren't for your time, your efforts, your contributions. This is why I'm up here today making a pledge to tithe at least 10 percent of my income-I know that Westminster is blessed because of your blessings. Having the chance to speak to you gives me the great opportunity to make this commitment, and to give back to this church that gives so much to all of us. Thank you.

Mary Olsen, October 21

Is Your  
Pledge?  
Up to Date?

# OUR LIFE TOGETHER

I moved here a little over a year ago from San Diego, California and was very set on finding a church home here in the D.C. area. My friend, Mary, told me about Westminster and I began regularly attending services in the fall of last year.

Being a young single person, right out of college, finding a church where you feel comfortable can be somewhat difficult. Westminster, however, made me feel very welcome and I could tell they placed a great deal of importance in ministering to young adults.

I've since become a member of the church and feel very blessed to have found this congregation. By pledging, I know I'm contributing to the future of Westminster, and to those who benefit from all that it has to offer.

**Lee Steuver**, October 21

### III.

Hi, I'm Laurie Chidlow. My husband and I have attended Westminster since we were newlyweds and bought our 1st house on Cameron Mills Rd. We thought we would NEVER be late as we lived so close. We've since joined the church and have a 5 year old son and a 2 year old daughter. Both were baptized here.

Carl: We came to Westminster for the convenience of it. We live very close and can walk to church, so it made sense.

We've stayed for several reasons:

1) The Church Pre-school is fantastic and our son really

enjoyed it and we hope our daughter will to next year.

2) Our Kids love the Sunday school program and we felt very comfortable with the nursery and thought it was a great idea that they had pagers for worried Moms and Dads.

3) Our kids love the treats during the coffee hour and my wife loves it when the other church members make a big deal about our kids

4) We love the music and think the choir and the music director do a wonderful job.

But most importantly, from the pulpit we hear a very open and tolerant, and inclusive message. Our Children rarely join us for the main service, but they will more so as they grow older. We know that our country and our community are becoming more diverse and we all live in a global village now. My son and daughter will live and work with people of all faiths, and ethic backgrounds... people with alternative life styles and different ways of looking at the world. We want our children to worship in a church that does not tell us who to love and who to turn our backs toward.

We appreciate the hopeful and inclusive message delivered from this dias. And that is why we will continue to give our support to the church and will be renewing and increasing our pledge for next year.

**Laurie and Carl Chidlow**, October 28, 2007

## Young Adults

**Christmas Brunch—**  
**December 2** after the 11 o'clock service in the Haverkamp Room. This is a wonderful opportunity to connect with young adults at Westminster. We will be wrapping gifts for our adopted family and celebrating the season!

**Young Adults' Advent Study:** All young adults are welcome to join a special Advent study which will be held on **Thursdays in Advent** (December 6, 13, and 20) at 7:30 p.m. in the Youth Lounge. We will be discussing the Advent devotional book *Reflections of Messiah: Contemporary Advent Meditations Inspired by Handel* by Jim Melchiorre. If you are interested in joining this special series, please email Casey FitzGerald at [YoungAdults@wpc-alex.org](mailto:YoungAdults@wpc-alex.org) so she can be sure to get the appropriate number of books.

**Host a brunch—**If you are interested in hosting a future young adults' first Sunday brunch, let Casey FitzGerald know by phone or email!



## Thank You

A deep thanksgiving goes out to everyone who made our 11/3 Variety Show and Silent Auction fundraiser such a success. Indeed, as Paul writes, "there are a variety of gifts," and a multiplicity of gifted people came together to create a wonderful event. There were the parents and Youth Subcommittee members who hatched the idea and brought it to its beautiful fruition. There were the youth, who served, sang, danced, played, juggled and otherwise shared their energy and enthusiasm to transform Fellowship Hall into a hot Alexandria night-spot. There were advisors who gave their hands and hearts in support, and a jester whose pants kept falling down. Our administrative and building staff did a little bit of everything, including preparing mailings, moving tables and opening both literal and figurative doors. And most importantly, there were the many congregants and guests who donated and shared their material treasures to help our youth build up treasures in heaven that will never rot away. Many, many thanks to all.



## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Though upon writing this article I have not officially begun my time as your Associate Pastor for Children and Families, I have certainly already begun to think about our coming time together. Though this space is normally used for important children's programming updates, I am beginning our relationship with a number of book recommendations for the Advent and Christmas seasons. These are books that vary in their meaning to me, but I have enjoyed them all and hold many of them dear. Whether they are borrowed from the library or purchased for your home—read these stories together! I look forward to growing in ministry with this church family, and feel especially blessed with the gift of a call this holiday season.

In Christ,  
**Casey FitzGerald**  
703-549-4766, ext 131  
cfitzgerald@wpc-alex.org

*A is for Angel: A Christmas Alphabet and Activity Book* by Debbie Trafton O'Neal, illustrated by Jan Bryan-Hunt. Especially good for children learning to read (as it goes through the alphabet), this book includes cute but easy activities for kids in its final pages. Augsburg Books, 2005.

*Adam and Eve's First Sunset: God's New Day* by Sandy Eisenberg Sasso, illustrated by Joani Keller Rothenberg. Adam and Eve are a little concerned about the ending of the first day—what will happen when the sun goes down? This beautifully illustrated and written book helps kids learn that even though we might worry about what comes next, God is always with us. This book is a treasure. Jewish Lights Publishing, 2003.

*The Christmas Troll* by Eugene H. Peterson, illustrated by Will Terry. As Eugene Peterson writes, "Gifts are for giving and receiving, not for grabbing and getting." NavPress, 2004.

*Emma's Gift* by Molly Shaar Idle. This is a great book for elementary-aged children. Emma discovers the true goodness of gifts given and received. Pair this book with a gift from the Alternative Christmas Bazaar to help teach our children the true spirit of giving this season! Abingdon Press, 2003.

*Hope for the Flowers*, by Trina Paulus. A tale for older elementary school children to adults, this book was given to me at the age of 12 by my godmother. Her inscription reads, "This is the kind of book that I hope you will enjoy—perhaps you can read it again in 10 years and see if it has the same meaning." I waited a little longer than ten years, but the meaning was even more powerful as an adult. As Trina Paulus puts it, this is "a tale—partly about life, partly about revolution, and lots about hope for adults and others (including caterpillars who can read)." I suggest reading it together as a family! Paulist Press, 1972.

*That's What Friends are For* by Florence Parry Heide and Sylvia Van Clief, illustrated by Holly Meade. Theodore the elephant has hurt his leg and can't meet his cousin at the end of the forest. What should he do? Of course, the other animals in the forest are more than willing to help Theodore—by giving him plenty of advice. After all, that's what friends are for, isn't it? A simple, satisfying tale about kindness, helpfulness, and true friendship. (Description taken from book—I couldn't put it better!) Candlewick Press, 1968, 2003.

*A World of Prayers*, selected by Jeremy Brooks, illustrated by Elena Gomez. Prayers collected from every corner of the globe expressing the themes of love, forgiveness and hope. There are prayers for day and night, graces for mealtimes, and blessings too. Eerdmans Books for Young Readers, 2004.

### And for adults...

*In the Midst of Chaos: Caring for Children as a Spiritual Practice*, by Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore. This is a book for parents and guardians. Often times, parents feel that there is no time for bringing spiritual practices into their lives—this book does many things, including helping us realize that many of the things we already do with are children are practices of faith. Josey-Bass, 2007.

### CHRISTMAS PAGEANT INFORMATION COMING SOON!

Mark your calendars, the pageant is set for 5:00 p.m. on December 9! Please bear with me—at the writing of this Chronicle, I have not yet begun this position. Hopefully by the time you read it, information will already be dispersed concerning this wonderful tradition. If you are interested in planning or participating, please contact Casey FitzGerald via email—cfitzgerald@wpc-alex.org.

# OUR LIFE TOGETHER

## MEN'S RETREAT UPDATE

Registration for the Westminster Men's Retreat began on Sunday, November 11. Sign-up forms will be available after Sunday worship services and registration will continue through the end of December. A table will be set up in Fellowship Hall after the 11:00 a.m. worship services and someone will be on hand to give you a registration form and answer any questions that you may have about the retreat.

The annual retreat will be held the weekend of February 1-3, 2008 at the popular Hollywood Retreat Center, located at the base of Sugarloaf Mountain, near Comus, Maryland. It will be lead by Dr. Bruce Douglas, associate professor of Government at Georgetown University and Director of the Reformed Institute of Metropolitan Washington. Dr. Douglass will be addressing the relationship between faith and reason in contemporary society. Those of you who attended last year's retreat or prior retreats know how enjoyable the program, food, and fellowship have been.

Consider not only attending yourself, but giving a personal invitation to someone who has not previously attended one of our men's retreats. Although most men attending the retreat are members of Westminster, all men are welcome. Two of our former members who have moved away from the Washington metropolitan area have already made plans to attend the retreat



One of the things that most attracted me to Westminster was the deep commitment to mission

that the members of Westminster exhibited. Clearly, this was a congregation that did not restrict its commitment to within the walls of the church. There were nearly three dozen local mission activities. In addition, the church supported a wide variety of national and international mission activities and sponsored mission trips each year. Over the years of my membership there has been an ebb and flow of congregational activity in missions.

At this point in time we seem to be in a period of ebbing interest. We had to cancel two of our three planned mission trips in the past year due to lack of interest. Our Local Mission Volunteer Coordinator position has been vacant since June. Several of our long-time leaders of local mission activities have had to step down and others are slow in stepping forward to replace them.

When I think back to the vibrant periods of Westminster mission activities one thing stands out. Mission involvement was a community affair. Those involved with mission activities were not just motivated individuals. They were part of a group commitment. While anyone was invited to serve wherever they felt called, the activity was ensured by the committed support of a specific group such as the Women's Circles, the singles groups, the Men of Westminster, or the youth. In this way our mission activities were an integral part of the group's activities

and a steady supply of volunteers was assured.

We are now in the beginning stage of developing a plan for Westminster's future following the renovation of our building. Our mission statement holds out missions as one of our major activities (in addition to worship, education, and fellowship). As we develop this plan for our future I think it would be nice to return to having groups sponsor mission activities.

We have a great opportunity to implement this idea as we enter the season of Advent. For the past several years Westminster has participated with the Network Pre-School in the Adopt-A-Family Christmas gift program. In this program needy families are paired with a sponsor who purchases Christmas presents for the family that they would otherwise not be able to afford. One of our newest members, Christi Davenport, has volunteered to coordinate Westminster's involvement in the program this year. It is important to have groups involved because some of the families are large. Besides, it is a wonderful way to involve all the members of the group in a worthwhile and fulfilling activity. Let's show Christi what a generous group we are at Westminster. She will be available to sign-up your group during Fellowship on Sundays or you can contact her at [gallenc@aol.com](mailto:gallenc@aol.com). Individuals and families are also welcomed to sign-up as sponsors.

Wishing all a blessed Thanksgiving,  
**Art Sauer**  
*Coordinator of Volunteer Ministries*  
[asauer@wpc-alex.org](mailto:asauer@wpc-alex.org)

## CHURCH STAFF

Larry Hayward	Pastor
Karen Blomberg	Associate Pastor
Patrick Hunnicutt	Associate Pastor
Paul Stetsenko	Director of Music Ministries
Nancy Hall Berens	Interim Dir. of Children's Ministries
Clara Beth Van de Water	Director of Adult Education
Sandra Calhoun	Director of Seniors' Ministries
Casey FitzGerald	Dir. of Young Adults and Singles Ministries
Henri Rush	Coordinator of Nat'l/Internat'l Missions
Vacant	Coordinator for Local Missions
Art Sauer	Coordinator of Volunteer Ministries
Nancy Bea	Business Administrator
Tara Cain	Administrative Assistant
Oraly Spatz	Program Assistant
Larry Johnson	Sexton
Marvin Johnson	Sexton
Eddie Watkins	Sexton

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### **The Chronicle**

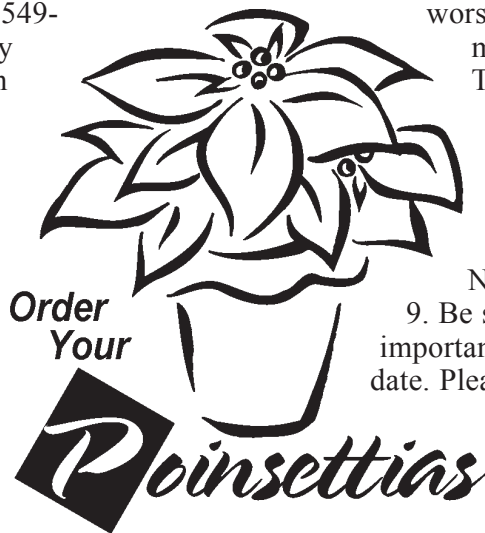
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*Contributors*  
 Members, Friends, & Staff of Westminster  
 Dawn Campbell, *Production Editor*

Sunday Worship 8:30 and 11:00 a.m

Time Sensitive

## Memorial Poinsettias

Memorial Christmas Poinsettias will once again decorate our Sanctuary this Christmas. They may be ordered through the church office (703-549-4766) and placed in honor or in memory of loved ones. The poinsettias will be in the Sanctuary Sunday, December 23 through December 30, and may be taken home after that service or the Christmas Eve service on December 24. You may, if you prefer, make a memorial donation to Carpenter's Shelter for the homeless in Alexandria instead of purchasing a poinsettia. When ordering please state clearly the dedication you wish to be used, and indicate if you have a color preference and if you will be taking the poinsettia on December 24 or December 30. The deadline for ordering is Monday, December 17. The cost of each poinsettia is \$7.00.



## 2008 Worship Flowers

Westminster members and friends are invited to give flowers to beautify our Sunday morning worship. The flowers may be given in memory or in honor of loved ones. Two vase arrangements are available each Sunday of the year. Each vase costs \$55. The 2008 Flower Donation Chart will be available for signing following each worship service on Sunday, November 25 and December 2 and 9. Be sure to sign up early if it is important to you to reserve a particular date. Please clearly designate whether you are donating one or two vase arrangements. If you have any questions, please call David Roden, the Worship and Music Committee chair.