



the Chronicle

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Westminster Presbyterian CHURCH

— worship well —



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From the Pastor's Study A Message From Casey FitzGerald **Keeping the Conversation Going**

A few weeks ago I preached a sermon on the “then,” “now” and “next” church—categories introduced to me by pastor and author Anthony B. Robinson. That very afternoon, at a friend’s ordination service, the preacher picked up a similar theme—he noted that these are uncertain times for the church. These are times when a person entering the ministry cannot see clearly the future of the church. It is a time of “who knows,” he explained. All through his sermon he referenced Phyllis Tickle’s book *The Great Emergence: How Christianity is Changing and Why ...* a book previously recommended to me by Patrick. I finally got a chance to read it this week—it is a fascinating look at the patterns of Christianity since its inception. Tickle, using the wisdom of Anglican Bishop Mark Dyer, observes that “about every five hundred years the Church feels compelled to hold a giant rummage sale. And, [Dyer] goes on to say, we are living in and through one of those five-hundred-year sales ... that is, as Bishop Dyer observes, about every five hundred years the empowered structures of institutionalized Christianity, whatever they may be at the time, become an intolerable carapace that must be shattered in order that renewal and new growth may occur.” The last great rummage sale was, of course, the Protestant Reformation. Tickle refers to the current rummage sale as “The Great Emergence.” What will the Church look like when this rummage sale is done? That, of course, is the big “who knows.”

So, what happens now? Conversation ... and lots of it. Before a new church “emerges,” there will be many and varied conversations about who God is calling us to be as the body of Christ in the 21st century and beyond. I hope that you will join me in being a part of this exciting and challenging conversation.

With thanksgiving and hope,

Casey FitzGerald

Blessings Brunch

You're Invited to the Blessings Brunch, to celebrate all the blessings your pledges make possible.

Sunday, November 6 in Fellowship Hall following the 11:00 worship service.

Thank you for your support to the annual Stewardship campaign.





Please remember in prayer the family and friends of members who have died recently:

- **Dulcie Davidge “Dee” Webster**, who died on August 2, 2011; her interment at Arlington National Cemetery was on September 16.
- **Wilhelmina Cornelia Thomas**, who died on September 26, 2011; a memorial service was held at Westminster on September 30.
- **Walter Wendt**, who died on October 14, 2011; information about his funeral and memorial service is forthcoming.



Member Involvement News

Regular readers of this column know that it usually addresses the time & talent aspect of member involvement. This month we will be looking at financial involvement. Some may see this as straying from the focus of getting members physically involved in the life of Westminster. It most definitely is not. Financial involvement is integrally connected to time & talent involvement. They are literally two sides of the same coin.

Studies, by both secular and religious organizations, consistently show that those who commit the most time to an activity are also most likely to commit the most financial resources. Whether this is because those who are most involved more readily see the need for financial resources or because those who commit the most financially feel a need to more closely watch over the use of their contributions, is an open question. Regardless, the connection between financial giving and time commitment is very strong.

More importantly for a community of faith, both financial commitment and time commitment are essential to the success of the community. Pick any of our programs (worship, education, mission or, fellowship) and it is clear that it would not function as well as it does without the efforts of countless volunteers. Likewise, they could not function at the same level of excellence without the generous financial support of our congregation.

So, how much should you give? At Westminster this has always been treated as a very private decision. It is a decision that is left to individual members after prayerful consideration of their ability to give and the needs of the church. However, there are guidelines. Our denomination, The Presbyterian Church (USA), encourages members to tithe. That is to give ten percent of their income to the church. We have a few members who tithe but most do not. Nationally, Presbyterians contribute closer to three percent of their after tax income. Because of our privacy policy, it is difficult to say what the level is for Westminster, but it is most likely close to the national average.

Even though our denomination encourages tithing, the stronger admonition is to “disciplined and proportionate” giving as a reminder that what we have is a gift from God. This means giving a set portion of your income to the church on a regular basis.

Making a regular monthly or weekly pledge confirms your commitment to Westminster. Regular disciplined giving establishes the church as a priority in your life and sets an example for children. When you make a pledge you are saying “I believe in the work and witness of Westminster Presbyterian Church and I am pledging my support.” With this pledge of commitment in hand the Session can proceed to plan an active program and support our many volunteers as they nurture God’s work within our congregation, in the Alexandria community, throughout the nation and, throughout the world.

Whatever you can pledge, it will make a difference.

Yours in Christ,
H. Arthur Sauer
Member Involvement Coordinator

Save Your Christmas Shopping for Westminster's Alternative Christmas Giving Bazaar, December 4 and 11

Plan to do your Christmas shopping this year at the Westminster Mission Committees' Alternative Christmas Giving Bazaar on December 4 and 11 in Fellowship Hall following the 8:30 and 11:00 a.m. services. The Bazaar affords you the opportunity to honor friends, neighbors and coworkers by giving gifts in their names to charities supported by the Local, National and International Mission Committees at Westminster. These gifts will make an important difference in the lives of people in our community, nation and around the world. The need has never been greater since perhaps the end of the Second World War. For example you can contribute to Carpenter's Shelter, AACH, Alexandria Neighborhood Health Services, ALIVE, Carpenter's Shelter; our ministry with Heifer International, or the Medical Benevolence Foundation, the Community Coalition for Haiti and Empowered Women International. Cards will be available from Westminster or the organization involved to give to the person you are honoring by your gift.

Also this is the primary time to provide continuing support for Westminster's United Orphanage & Academy in Moi's Bridge Kenya. There are 54 children at the Orphanage that require support. And as the Academy grows and expands, additional funds are needed for school supplies and to provide scholarships to permit local orphans and vulnerable children for whom there is no room at the residential facility to attend the Academy and get a good education and at least one nutritious meal a day.

Finally, as in the past delicious chocolate, tea and coffee from the fair trade group Equal Exchange will be available for purchase. These are gifts that also give twice: once to the recipient and once to the workers, their families and communities around the world.



Westminster Travelers



The next production at The Little Theatre of Alexandria is "Noises Off" on **Thursday, November 3**. Please arrive early to get your ticket. Play starts at 8:00 p.m. Reserve your seat by calling the church office at 703-549-4766.

For more information or to sign up for any Westminster Travelers event, please contact the church office.

Origin of her name. “My mother named me for an old radio program, ‘The Perils of Pauline.’ I think she made a mistake because my maternal great-grandmother’s name was actually Polly – Polly Wilson Sallee. About college age, I started calling myself Polly. But I always felt I had a claim to that name through my great-grandmother.”

Playtime. “My next youngest sister, Ruby, and I played with each other. We had a playhouse. She was Margaret and I was Simmie. I don’t know where we got those names. We had a good imagination. Everything we could get our hands on to go in the playhouse, that was our entertainment. The biggest daring thing we did was walk up the back lane and put our dress tail in our black sateen bloomers.”

Early church life. “My family attended the Methodist church. My mother would get all of us ready. The girls had to have round curls. She’d do our hair up on rags the night before. She practically pulled the hair out of my head trying to get them tight. I remember I always had a blue ribbon because I had blue eyes, and Ruby had black hair and always had a pink ribbon.”

Favorite hymns: “Beautiful Isle of Somewhere” and “God Will Take Care of You.”

Favorite Bible story: “The Book of Ruth was always my favorite. She was a very modern girl.”

Finding Westminster. “I was a widow for 8 years before I married Charlie Banks. George Pera married us in the sanctuary in 1985. Charlie’s daughter, Marcia, grew up in the choirs at Westminster.”

Twin passions. “My cats and my flowers are my two avocations. I feel like I’ve had a cat all my life. I wouldn’t know how to act if I didn’t have a cat. Natasha is my cat now.

My favorite flower? White orchids. I love white flowers.”



Spotlight on Seniors

Part of an ongoing series featuring stories from the lives of our senior members. Seniors are asked to contact Eileen Jinks, Coordinator of Pastoral Care, or one of the deacons to participate.

An Interview with Pauline “Polly” Storey Banks

Eileen Jinks spoke with Polly Banks for this interview.

Growing up in the Midwest. “I was born in southern Indiana in Rego, which is a Latin word meaning ‘I rule.’ It’s just a wide place in the road. I was the oldest of 7 – 3 sisters and 3 brothers. My grandfather drove a stagecoach from Corydon to New Albany, Indiana. My grandmother’s kitchen was the rest and refreshment place for the drivers of the stagecoach, and Rego was where they changed the horses. In 1900, my grandfather built the Rutherford Store.

“The whole family participated in the store. My mother did the cooking for the family, and the whole family participated in massive canning from the big, big garden that Papa Rutherford always had. We canned green beans in half-gallon jars, cold-pack style, where you boil them for 4 hours on top of the stove. My grandmother, Mama Rutherford, had a wood-burning range in the kitchen. In later days, we had a kerosene stove, which was regarded as a big upgrade.”

School days. “We went to a one-room country school. There was great rivalry between Ruby, my next youngest sister, and me. When I was in the 8th grade, I had to take an examination to go to high school. And my dad decided that Ruby would go with me. Ruby took the examination and passed in everything except civics, which she had never had. So she read my civics book, took it over again, and passed. So she went to high school in the same grade, the same teacher, the same class, as I was in.”

Sibling rivalry as motivation. “My dream was to go to college. My mother supported me staunchly in this. She’d say, ‘Now, when you go to college, you’ll need to know this.’ Schoolwork was primary. My inner voice was: ‘Beat her! Beat her!’ – my sister, that is. And I probably have that to thank for the scholarship that I got to Indiana University to get me started in college.

“My vocational advice was from my Aunt Kate. She said, ‘You’re good at cooking and sewing. Take home economics.’ So that’s what I did. After I graduated in 1935, I taught home economics for three years in southern Indiana high schools, and then I said, ‘There must be something else I could do.’ ”

Love in the Capitol. “I heard that there were jobs to be had from your senator in Washington, DC. So I went to my senator’s office, Senator Jenner, and he gave me a job as a guide in the Capitol building. And that’s what I was doing when Don Storey came to visit the Capitol. After we were married, we built a house in Bensenville, Illinois, and he was called back to duty in the Navy and we went to Point Barrow, Alaska. I lived in a Quonset hut. Loved it! And when I came back, I got my job with the school system in Prince George’s County, and I worked there until I earned my pension.”

Travels. “After Charlie Banks and I were married, we took a honeymoon trip around the world. So I have not missed much in my lifetime. The picture I have of my two best friends and myself sitting on a bench – I call that picture: ‘Been there, done that.’ Places that stand out in my travels? South Africa. We were there right after Thanksgiving when all the flowers were in bloom. And then I guess maybe Italy. I had a wonderful cruise in the Adriatic.”

Because 2011 is the 400th anniversary publication of the King James Bible, we are sharing an article from the Reformed Institute about this magnificent rendering of the Bible in English. There is also a wonderful exhibit on the King James Bible at the Folger Shakespeare Library. We hope you enjoy this informative article.

The King James Bible: A 400-year Old Story

May 2, 2011 marked the 400th anniversary of the publication of the King James Bible. While English translations existed before 1611, they were rare and incomplete until John Wycliffe's translation in the 1380s. From the early 1400s, the church sought to secure its own position by forbidding any but the Latin Vulgate to be published, on penalty of death. But English Bibles did appear all along. William Tyndale undertook the task of a complete translation from the original languages in 1525, promptly running afoul of the church, which branded him a heretic.

During the long reign of Elizabeth I, religious differences had been effectively suppressed. With James's ascension to the throne, the way was opened for Catholics to push for a return to the Roman church and Protestants to argue for a more complete break with the liturgies of Rome. Controversy over which version of English Scripture to use blossomed as James I took the throne. Puritans found the Bishop's Bible, authorized by Henry VIII and long in use during the Elizabethan years, completely unacceptable. They preferred the Geneva Bible, compiled by scholars who had fled to Geneva during the reign of Queen Mary (1553-58), where they learned at the feet of John Calvin and Theodore Beza. Elizabeth had allowed for the circulation of the Geneva Bible without endorsing it; it was already the preferred translation among Protestants.

The development of the King James Bible is as fascinating as a political story as it is a religious or linguistic one. James I had had enough of the Presbyterians during his reign as James VI in Scotland. The brutal politics there convinced him that radical Puritan views, well represented in the marginal notes of the Geneva Bible, threatened the monarchy. He preferred the structure of the Anglican church and believed it supported his own preference for the "divine right of kings."

In 1604, James convened the Hampton Court Conference, which decided to authorize a new translation for public worship, one that would use the best existing translations and original sources, and, even more importantly, be free of biased marginalia. Fifty-four premier scholars of the day were appointed for that work. All were clergy but one. No Catholics were among the group, but about half the group were Puritans, all moderates in their thinking. The Translators, as they were called, were divided into six companies, each assigned a portion of Scripture. They worked collaboratively within and between the companies until the translation was completed in 1611. Many English versions have followed, but the King James has profoundly influenced English literature and language. Even many common phrases we can trace to the King James Bible—a fly in the ointment, lamb to the slaughter, a labor of love, in the twinkling of an eye. And many more.

Newly discovered Hebrew and Greek documents have made later translations more accurate, with language more accessible to modern ears. But many would agree with H. L. Mencken's conclusion on contemporary translations. "The Authorized Version," he said, "has never yielded to any of them, for it is palpably and overwhelmingly better than they are."

SUNDAY VESPERS

5:00 p.m.

Vespers at Westminster goes into the very heart of spiritual life - a personal prayer and the message of the Internal Gospel. It is an internal and private—often wordless—prayer that we commune directly and most intensely with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the triune God.

The Fathers of the ancient church taught that we rise up to God on the two wings of prayer—external and internal, communal and private. We need both, or else we will spiritually flop around like a wounded bird.

Vesper worship services are mystical, symbolic, and corporate yet at the same time private. They embrace every part of what it means to be human—soul, mind and body, including all five senses. It is in worship that we grow in our union with God.

Local Missions

Street People Project

On Sunday, November 13, during Fellowship Hour, you are invited to pick up packets to distribute to the Street People in our community. There will be a limited number of packets with bus tokens and information about community services specific to the City of Alexandria, Arlington County and DC. Many thanks to those who donated some of the items for these packets and helped with their assembly.

During this year, approximately 180 care packets have already been distributed and the local mission committee would like to hear back from the congregation about your experiences. Your feedback is important to us. To share your thoughts please contact Carolyn Turner at LocalMission@wpc-alex.org

Energize Alexandria

On Saturday, November 5, join Westminster volunteers and others to help Rebuilding Together Alexandria, which has a grant to weatherize 100 apartments. Depending on the need, volunteers will apply plastic storm windows, stop drafts coming from electrical outlets and switches, replace incandescent light bulbs with energy efficient ones, and more. A sign up sheet with more details will be available at Fellowship Hours. For more information, contact Eric Weiss at LocalMission@wpc-alex.org



Focus on Missions

Local Missions Serving Children:

Westminster members have many opportunities to serve the local community through a wide range of mission programs. The Local Missions Committee has categorized these programs into five areas represented by the acronym CHESS. Westminster-supported programs serve the needs of Children, alleviate Hunger, promote Education, provide and improve Shelter, and help those in need achieve Self-sufficiency. This Chronicle article specifically highlights local missions programs serving children. Westminster contributes money to all of these programs, and many of its members are actively involved with them as volunteers. If you would like to know more about any of these programs, or would like to be a volunteer, please contact localmission@wpc-alex.org

Child Development Center of ALIVE! (Alexandrians InVolved Ecumenically!)

ALIVE! is an organization of several Alexandria faith communities that serve critical needs of low-income families in Alexandria. The program supports a preschool for these families at the First Christian Church on King Street.

Carpenter's Shelter

Many children currently reside at Alexandria's shelter for homeless families. The first Monday of every month, Westminster members provide, deliver, and serve food to shelter residents. Additionally, children at the shelter need tutors, chaperones for trips, and school supplies.

George Mason Tutors

About thirty children at the elementary school adjacent to the church receive consistent academic help and mentoring each year through this thriving afternoon program. Volunteer tutors build relationships with the children they tutor, meeting with them once or twice each week to help them with their homework, play educational games and give them the confidence they need to succeed in school.

Presbyterian Women Work Day

Hospitalized children are given stuffed toys crafted by Presbyterian women. This group meets at 9:30 a.m. on the 1st Wednesday of each month to make handmade articles to give to others in need.

Child and Family Network Center

This neighborhood-based community-supported, free preschool serves approximately 135 children from low-income families at four different locations. The preschool also offers speech therapy, occupational therapy, psychological assessments and social services to the children and their families.

Share the Spirit

In December, Westminster members "adopt" a family through the Child and Family Network Center to provide a brighter holiday for low-income working families.

Arlington-Alexandria Coalition for the Homeless (AACH)

AACH provides shelter, counseling, and employment training to help homeless families rebuild their lives. Volunteers help with mentoring, transportation, child care, and furniture delivery/pick-up.

Erik Johnston, Vice Chair of National Missions recently spoke about our national outreach activities during Stewardship's Minute for Mission.

Good Morning. I come here with the hard job of communicating the deep joy of experiencing first hand Westminster's national mission endeavors. As you know some of the most spirit filled experiences in life are far beyond description and words. I can tell you that our national mission projects have changed my life forever and I've seen it change other Westminster members and the people they've served as well.

Through our national mission work, I've seen fellow members renovate two families' homes in central Appalachia, but more importantly fall in love with these families and receive Christ's love and welcome from these same families. I've experienced the joy of seeing my own 1½ year old son, Liam, experience his first mission trip alongside his 90 year old grandfather and 42 other members of our church as we had a ball picking apples in Winchester, VA this September.

Our church's national mission work is focused on three main areas, church and community building, hunger and home repair:

- *Church and community* building in Spirit Lake, North Dakota through our direct partnership with the Bdecan Presbyterian Church and their Presbytery.
- *Hunger alleviation* through our new involvement with the Society of St. Andrew's gleaned network and Harvest of Hope weekend, where we are providing mission opportunities for all ages.
- *Home repair* for the rural poor of Appalachia through the Appalachian Service Project.

But so far the majority of our commitment to these three main efforts has been time and talent. This year alone, nearly 75 of you will have volunteered in these efforts. However, we want to back up the love and sweat we've poured into these places with financial support as well. Our region is hurting during this economic time, but these regions are far worse off. And we've got a solid plan to expand our church's financial support.

So what does an increased pledge mean this year for national mission? It means more apples, beets and other fresh produce for hungry people in our region, more working poor families in central Appalachia having a safe and dry place to live and the opportunity to help the Bdecan Presbyterian Church in Spirit Lake, North Dakota finance a plan for growth and self-sufficiency. It also means more opportunities for all of us to grow in faith and fellowship through day, weekend long and week-long mission trips in our region and nation.

Weekday Small Groups for EVERYONE!

Casey FitzGerald is still planning to begin two weekday small groups (open to anyone in the congregation) later this fall. Participation in a small group is a wonderful way to connect with those in your church community, deepen your faith experience, and develop your ability to articulate that which you believe. If you might be interested in participating in a 6-8 week small group experience, please email Casey at cfitzgerald@wpc-alex.org.

Stories from Haiti

David Barnhart has a unique role in the Presbyterian Church (USA). If you go on the PC (USA) website, you'll see his title listed as "Director and Producer." But it's also stated more simply: "He's a storyteller," the website says. Or as David puts it: he produces documentaries "within the sacred space of disaster recovery." David's newest project is called the Flip Cam Story Project, and he is currently at work in Haiti. He has interviewed hundreds of people in local communities across the island nation to lift up their personal narratives of recovery and renewal. The lives you'll discover on the website reveal a world far different from ours in the neighborhoods surrounding 2701 Cameron Mills Road in Alexandria, Virginia. Yet through our shared faith in Jesus, and thanks to the work of the church in Haiti, we are connected to the people who are part of David Barnhart's Flip Cam Story Project.

Technology has a special way of transcending boundaries to build relationships, drawing our world increasingly closer each day. Just a little over a decade ago, it would have been impossible to hop on a plane, taking only a couple of flip cams and a few changes of clothes, and develop a global storytelling project like David has done. Yet there's still something missing if we stay behind the safety of our computer screens. No matter how close our neighborhoods become to each other in the Digital Age, or how super-fast the information travels (I did, after all, first learn about David through a message on the @Presbyterian twitter feed), something is surely missing if that's the full extent of our involvement.

I've never felt stronger about this than the first day when we arrived in Port-au-Prince with a dozen Westminster youth and five advisors. Several had never traveled abroad before, much less to a developing country, and especially to a place like Haiti.



Nowhere on earth is like Haiti. It is the only place in the Western Hemisphere to have lost what is now estimated to be more than 300,000 people – all in thirty five seconds. On that horrific day, fifty percent of Haiti’s GDP vanished in just half a minute, and twenty-eight of the twenty-nine ministries of government collapsed. As many have noted, the country was in a state of disaster before the disaster, but when the tranblemanntè struck, it buried an entire city in rubble and left hundreds of thousands of the survivors maimed, homeless, or both.

On our way through Port-au-Prince, we passed row after row of blue tarp tents. Yes, people live there. And they have been living there for over five hundred days now.

We visited the iconic National Palace and its collapsed cupola. We saw what was left of a cathedral that used to be a national treasure. But we also watched as the raw, real life that never made the news appeared outside our bus window, in all of its mundane yet out-of-sorts everyday-ness. We drove past bustling city markets, where life went on, amidst all of the devastation.

Even our well-rehearsed Vacation Bible School lessons felt different, since we knew that the children who ran circles around us and sang the songs we’d taught them came from a camp for disabled and displaced families.

One thing I’ll say about the Westminster youth who went on our trip is that they are a smart, respectful, and inquisitive group. They handled the situation with a level of maturity and thoughtful questioning that I wouldn’t have expected from the college students in my section while I was TA-ing at Duke.

It was an experience of a lifetime. We passed bucket-to-bucket of cement for four straight hours, alongside the local Haitians with whom we laid the foundation for a vocational school outside the rural town of Fond Parisien. We played soccer with the children of a village five miles off the beaten path where we went to distribute hygiene kits filled with “the basics,” which seemed so much harder to take for granted after seeing what life’s really like on less than \$2 a day. And, yes, we saw things that were tough to experience in the midst of the wreckage. At those times, we just absorbed as much as we could take in from the sights, smells, and sounds of the city, among the crumbling concrete of the broken down buildings. For all of these shared experiences, and for individual moments that all seventeen of us felt personally and profoundly, it was an experience of a lifetime.

The days went by quickly, and the next thing we knew, we were back in loved ones’ arms at Reagan National Airport. We were back to our violin lessons, our football practices, our homework, and our daily lives. The life we had lived while we were there seemed so far away – just a story to tell when asked, a memory to hold onto for as long as we can.

But, of course, the whole point about stories is that they have to be shared to be worth anything. So I encourage you to take a moment to visit <http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/global/haiti/> and learn from David Barnhardt and meet the people he interviewed. But, while you are at it, be sure to send an e-mail too. Ask someone who went on this summer’s trip about their stories, then find them at church and follow up. Because in the same way that our stories are based on relationships over there, once we tell them, they also become about relationships over here.

You’ll find in these stories that God is truly at work within the sacred space of disaster recovery. And thanks to the loving support of our congregation, so is Westminster.



2011 Help The Homeless WALK-A-THON

Saturday, November 19th

Our Youth and Families will walk in support of the ALIVE Shelter in Old Town.

For more information, go to: www.helpthehomelessdc.org

Join them, or sign up as a “virtual walker” to support ALIVE!



Children and Family Ministry



Mornings for Moms

EVERY FRIDAY

10:30a.m.-12p.m.

Creation Station 303/305

Moms and kids are invited to join each Friday in Creation Station for fellowship and service. We have decided to reinstate WEEKLY Mornings for Moms. Casey FitzGerald will be in attendance most weeks. We will sometimes do nothing but play, other times have discussion topics. We will also have mission activities throughout the year. Stop by for some or all of the time. (There is a new toy station dedicated solely to Mornings for Moms which we are excited about!)

Spark Story Bible Sale

Spark Story Bibles are still available for \$16. These Bibles are great for kids 0-2nd grade (and even beyond)! Pick up a copy during fellowship time on October 30th.

Nursery Donation Wanted!

We are still looking for a glider that is in very good condition! If you have one you're ready to give up—please email Casey FitzGerald.

Mark Your Calendars!!!

Family Retreat May 19-20

M&M Week June 25-29

Moms' Study

Wednesdays, November 2, 9, 16, 30 (NO CLASS Nov. 23)

10:30-11:45a.m.

In the Sanctuary of Women by Jan Richardson

This unit we will be studying Richardson's chapter:

"The Mysteries of Making: The Book of Harriet Powers." "The life and work of Harriet Powers invites us to ponder the mysteries of making and to discern how the Spirit seeks to create in and through us. Creativity, after all, is God's first language. It is our mother tongue, a way to converse and commune with God and with the world."

Copies still available in the library (\$15). Childcare provided!

Reading Assignments

Nov 2: pp. 215-229

Nov 9: pp. 229-242

Nov 16: pp. 243-253

Nov 30: 254-265

Parent and Teacher Education: The Birth of Christ

Sunday, November 13, 9:45 a.m.

Creation Station

Parents, shepherds, and teachers are invited to join in on a Bible study focusing on the story of Jesus' birth. Our children will be learning all about this story from the New Testament during Advent ... let's prepare for church and family discussions together! Led by Casey FitzGerald and Sarah Hoffman.

Christmas Pageant



2011 Christmas Pageant and Dinner

All children K-5th grade are invited to be in our annual Christmas pageant! Please sign up on our website www.wpc-alex.org/children or fill out the forms available in the Creation Station wing. We will be practicing our Christmas hymns during Creation Station in preparation for the big event!!!

Christmas Pageant Rehearsal December 10, 9:30a.m.
(Sanctuary)

Christmas Pageant and Dinner December 11, 5p.m.

Notes From the Stewardship Committee



“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

This simple biblical verse, drawn from Matthew 22:39, while seemingly easy to comprehend, offers some powerful direction intended for us to follow in our everyday lives:

- To treat others with the same level of respect we expect to receive ourselves,
- To provide support and encouragement to others during difficult times, and
- To give of our time, talents and treasure to those who are less fortunate than we are.

All of these meanings translate to an expression of love for others; however, it is the last interpretation that has led to its selection as the church’s 2012 Stewardship Campaign theme.

As we embark on the 2012 Campaign, let me first say thank you for your 2011 financial commitment to Westminster. The congregation’s pledging supports all of the church’s operations: the maintenance of our church home; the continuance of our numerous education, worship and music programs and the compensation for our tremendously talented church staff. In fact, the congregation’s giving in 2011 enabled the creation of two new staff positions—a Children’s Ministries Coordinator and an Assistant Director of Children’s Music Ministries.

Similar to last year at this time, we find ourselves in an exceedingly uncertain economic situation. We solemnly and sincerely recognize the financial challenges facing the members of the Westminster congregation, and while it is a difficult time for all of us, we are reminded that it is an even harder time for our neighbors who find themselves living below the poverty line. Imagine an income of \$22,000 for a family of 4; \$11,000 for an individual. 46 million Americans (or 15.1% of the Nation’s population) according to the latest census data, fit this description—the highest percentage since 1993.

And so, therein lies the mission for 2012: and the mission is Mission. Local, National and International Mission all require our continued and expanded support if we are to “love our neighbors as ourselves.”

We have set an aggressive goal for this year’s campaign, and that is to increase our annual pledging level by 10%—a significant increase during very difficult times. A 10% increase so that we may give more of ourselves to our neighbors in need. We can meet this goal. It won’t be easy, but in the short time that I have been a member at Westminster, I have been amazed at what this congregation can do when we are faced by adversity. I have no doubt that we will reach even deeper within ourselves this year, when we need to, and rise to the challenge.

Recently, you should have received your pledge packet in the mail and by email. We would respectfully request that you return your pledge cards by November 6th in advance of the Blessings Brunch.

Thank you for your prayerful deliberation as you consider your 2012 pledge, and thank you for taking God’s direction to “love your neighbor as yourself.”

Duncan Campbell

Chair, 2012 Stewardship Committee

Stewardship Letter

With fall upon us it reminds me that the year will soon be coming to a close. However, I see it differently. With children still under my roof I feel fall brings a time of renewal: a new school year, new clothes, a change of sports, etc. Also, after being involved one way or another for the last 20 years in stewardship, it offers an opportunity to renew both my focus and commitment to my church and its stewardship efforts. Susan and I ask ourselves every year, especially now during these tough economic times, how we should dedicate our resources to Christ of our time, talents and treasures. For my family it definitely comes down to sacrifice. Each one of us will have a different meaning of the word "sacrifice" but the first definition that comes to mind is the sacrifice Christ made for us all. It helps remind me that we must rely on our faith in the Lord for security, not outside sources. I hope you will join me in committing to create, or maintain, a relationship with Christ and to trust the Lord by challenging yourself to determine the sacrifice you can make this year to support Westminster and this year's stewardship program. The past three years have been more than challenging for the Cloud House on the giving front, but when Susan and I sit back and reflect on God's intention for us on earth we are comforted and truly at peace with our giving to both help Westminster and to fulfill the mission work of our church at local and international levels.

Steve Cloud



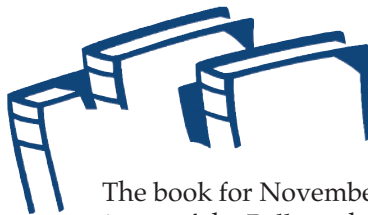
Men of Westminster Men's Retreat News

Our upcoming winter retreat will take place on **February 3-5, 2012**. Our retreat leader, Jeffrey Hensley, has an impressive background in religious thought and comes highly recommended by several members of Westminster. He has also led a recent WPC Single's retreat.

Those men who have attended previous retreats know how enjoyable and rewarding the program, food, and fellowship have been. Mark your calendar to make sure that you keep this weekend open. Sign up will begin in November.

Women's Ministry

All women are invited to participate in fellowship, service and spiritual growth opportunities listed below. Contact Director of Adult Education and Women's Ministries Clara Beth Van de Water for further information at cvandewater@wpc-alex.org or 703-549-4766 extension 120.



Women's Book Group

All women are invited to read *Sacred Hearts* by Sarah Dunant and discuss it on Monday, October 24 at 11:00 a.m. or 7:30 p.m. in the Johnson Parlor. No registration needed.

The book for November discussion is *The Girl Who Fell From the Sky*, winner of the Bellweather Prize for Fiction, by Heidi Durrow. The November discussion date(s) will be decided at the October meetings because of Thanksgiving. Contact discussion leader Clara Beth Van de Water with questions or for more information at cvandewater@wpc-alex.org or 703-549-4766 ext. 120.

Women's Circles

Six friendship circles meet monthly at various times to study the Beatitudes and share fellowship, and you are invited to come to one! See the website under Presbyterian Women or a flyer in the rack in the education wing lobby or contact moderator Bonnie Nasr at PW@wpc-alex.org.



Women's Work Day

All women are invited to come to the Haverkamp Room at 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, November 2 to make stuffed toys and heart patient pillows for Alexandria Hospital. No RSVP needed. Contact Nancy McIver for more details if desired.



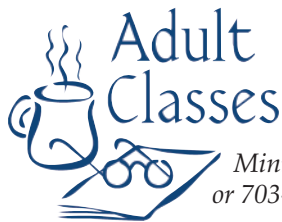
Women's Retreat

All women are invited for a Celtic pilgrimage weekend at the Hallowood Retreat Center in rural MD, an hour away. The dates are March 16-18. Celebrate, commune and contemplate over St. Patrick's Day (March 17). The leaders will be WPC staff members Nancy Hall Berens and Clara Beth Van de Water.

Women's Shanghai Card Group

The Women's Shanghai Card Group, consisting of 30 women, meets in the Haverkamp Room the first Monday of each month from 7:15 p.m. until about 9:30 p.m. Any woman who loves playing cards, friendly competition, and fellowship is invited to attend. Come once and try it – come any month you are free. No experience is necessary – it is easy to learn and we have players who will love to teach you. A light snack is provided. In order for us to know how many tables and how much food to provide each month, please email or call Diane French a few days in advance if you plan to attend.

Adult Education



Programs are held from 9:45-10:45 a.m., except as noted.
All adults are cordially invited; no registration required.
Contact Director of Adult Education and Women's
Ministries Clara Beth Van de Water cvandewater@wpc-alex.org
or 703-549-4766 extension 120.

"Introduction to Romans"

Through November 20, Westminster Room
Elders Kathy Harkness, M.A., and Connie Ring, J.D., DISCIPLE graduates,
Experienced Group Bible Study Leaders

Learn about and discuss the foundational document of ALL Christian theology - Paul's letter, including the relationships between God and Christ and Christians and Jews, as well as later theologians' interpretations - through reading, video, presentation, and discussion. Please note this class begins earlier than the others, at 9:30, and participants may purchase a \$12.00 study guide at the class. New participants are welcome.

"Christianity in China: Reflections on the Missions and Challenges of the Church in a Communist Society"

October 23 and 30, Haverkamp Room
The Rev. Dr. John Yieh, PC(USA), Professor of New Testament, Virginia Theological Seminary

China is now a major global power with one fifth of the world's population, where living under communism presents particular challenges for Christians, including the background of missions, development of Chinese-style Christianity, and the gospel and politics.

"Responding to Cataclysms: Examples from Earth's Past"

November 6, Haverkamp Room
Dr. Victor Zabielski, Geology Department Chair, Northern Virginia Community College

The geologic record shows ancient cataclysms and climate changes, but climate has been relatively stable for 10,000 years. Most scientists believe we are beginning a new phase of climate change. What can we learn from the past to help us with the future of our planet?

"Making Sense of Evolution: Darwin, God, and the Drama of Life"

November 13, Haverkamp Room
Dr. John Haught, Senior Fellow, Science and Religion, Woodstock Theological Center, Georgetown University

Can so-called "evolutionary naturalism" explain the drama of life, or is there a place for theology and religion? Hear Haught discuss this subject of his recent book (copies available to purchase).

"Church Going Is Not a Spectator Sport"

November 20, Haverkamp Room
WPC Foundation Board Members
Learn how our church is enriched by the legacy of the community of saints that preceded and surrounds us.



Faith on Tap Welcomes Young Adults from the Area!!!

Tuesday, **November 8**, 7:30 p.m.
Capitol City Brewing Company
(Shirlington)

Young Adults and the Church

In November, we will be "hosting" a special Faith on Tap event. A number of pastors from the DC area will be bringing their young adults to have a general dialogue about what it means to be a young adult in the 21st century. PLEASE BE SURE TO PUT THIS ON YOUR CALENDAR!!!

Tuesday, December 13, 7:30 p.m.
The Quest for a Relevant Church

Young Adults Christmas Event

Sunday, **December 4th**, 6:30-9p.m.
The FitzGerald's

A light supper, a movie viewing, discussion and dessert!

"What Would Jesus Buy?" follows Reverend Billy and the Church of Stop Shopping Gospel Choir as they go on a cross-country mission to save Christmas from the Shopocalypse: the end of mankind from consumerism, over-consumption and the fires of eternal debt! From producer Morgan Spurlock (*Super Size Me*) and director Rob Van Alkemade comes a serious docu-comedy about the commercialization of the holidays." On that night we will also be collecting gifts for residents of the Ladrey building—a Young Adults' Christmas tradition.

the Chronicle

A publication of Westminster Presbyterian Church
Contributors: Members, Friends, & Staff of Westminster
Dawn Campbell, Production Editor

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

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Casey FitzGeraldAssociate Pastor
Paul StetsenkoDirector of Music Ministries
Clara Beth Van de WaterDirector of Adult Education
and Women's Ministries
Nancy Hall BerensDir. of Congregational
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Jim BuchananFacilities Manager
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Marvin JohnsonHead Sexton
Eddie WatkinsSexton

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Flying Solo (Singles) Ministry

Flying Solo Singles welcomes all single adults ages 40 and above to participate in fellowship, service and educational opportunities. For more information, please contact: Nancy Hall Berens, Director of Congregational Life and Singles Ministry nhallberens@wpc-alex.org or 703-549-4766 ext. 121 or visit our page on the church website at: www.wpc-alex.org/singles.

Singles Fall Activities

Monday Dine-Out

November 14: Yves' Bistro (235 Swamp Fox Rd., Alexandria)
Carpool at 7:00 p.m. or meet there at 7:15.

Tuesday Potlucks

October 25
November 22
7:00 p.m. in the Johnson Parlor
Please bring a dish to share!

Check out our bulletin board in Fellowship Hall to see pictures from our fall retreat to the Bishop Claggett Center in Buckeystown, MD

Fall Roundtable Lunch & Discussion

Sunday, November 13, 12:15 p.m. in Haverkamp Room. Lunch provided.

"R.I.P.: Resting In Paris"

Join us for a "trip" to Paris to visit famous cemeteries in a slideshow by Nancy Hall Berens.

Learn about the graves of celebrated artists, musicians, writers and other historical figures. We'll discover what these monuments tell us about the lives of well-known "permanent Parisians."

Thanksgiving Day Dinner

Thursday, November 24, 12:30 pm

Celebrate Thanksgiving with church friends at the historic Mt. Vernon Inn. Reserve your space for our annual Thanksgiving Dinner at nhallberens@wpc-alex.org. Limited number of reservations available. Cost will be approximately \$34.

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