



the Chronicle

January 19, 2011 - volume 44, number 6

Westminster Presbyterian CHURCH

— worship well —



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From the Pastor's Study

A Message From Casey FitzGerald

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John 1:14)

This year I will be especially focused on the embodying of the Word as I work toward certification as a biblical storyteller. As a student of The Academy for Biblical Storytelling, I will learn what it means to embody a story—not just to memorize biblical texts—but to internalize them and make them as if they were my own. In some sense, the Word will be made flesh in the telling. I am excited about what the future holds for me ... but also for what it might mean in the life of the church. There are many goals for this program: to enhance my skills as a storyteller; to immerse myself in the Word; to begin to see scripture as a *whole story*; to encourage myself and others to see that we are a part of God's story; and to encourage those around me to engage in storytelling. As Eugene Peterson writes in his common-language interpretation of the Bible, *The Message*: "Stories are the most prominent biblical way of helping us see ourselves in 'the God story,' which always gets around to the story of God making and saving us. Stories, in contrast to abstract statements of truth, tease us into becoming participants in what is being said. We find ourselves involved in the action. We may start out as spectators or critics, but if the story is good (and the biblical stories are very good!), we find ourselves no longer just listening to but inhabiting the story." Over the next year, you will be exposed to my storytelling on a number of occasions in and out of worship. It is my hope that it will inspire you to begin to do your own storytelling. Everyone has a story ... everyone is, therefore, a storyteller. This year, may the Word become flesh for us ... full of grace and truth.

With thanksgiving and joy,

Casey FitzGerald

Lenten All-Church Dinners

Wednesdays,
March 16-April 13, 2011
6:00-7:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall

Join Larry, Patrick, and Casey Wednesday nights in Lent for worship through story, conversation, and dinner. Everyone welcome (kids, too)!





We welcome to the Westminster nursery:

- **Rand Liam Cummings**, born December 9, 2011, son of David Cummings and Sara Nickell, and brother of Ayla Cummings.
- **Mary Louise Gunter**, born on December 21, 2011, daughter of David & Katherine Gunter, and sister of Sam & June.
- **Erskine Watkins Wells, IV**, born on December 21, 2011 son of Erskine & Loren Wells

Memorial services:

- A memorial service for **Walter Wendt** will be held on Saturday, January 28 at 10:00 a.m



To Westminster,

Though we have not been able to be at church, we so appreciate staying connected with our church family. Your expressions of care and support through your cards and prayers mean a great deal to us. You bless our lives in many ways.

Sincerely,
Nancy and Ward Lasley

Children and Family Ministry



Ministry at Your Dinner Table: Family Circles Workshop

Sunday, January 29 at 9:45 a.m.

Creation Station

Children's ministry occurs wherever children are ... even at the dinner table!

This class looks at creating intentional time for families to gather together at home in support of mutual spiritual growth. Explore and experience what regularly sharing meals, playing together, talking about and reflecting on Bible stories, and praying together could look like in your setting, and how it can help families grow closer to God. Guest speaker Liz Perraud will lead this exciting workshop. Please register with Casey FitzGerald by January 26.

Family Bingo Night

Saturday, February 4th

Families of children from kindergarten-fifth grade are invited to join us for a night of bingo and prizes in Fellowship Hall from 6-8 pm.

Parent and Teacher Education: The Last Supper

Sunday, February 19 at 9:45 a.m.

Creation Station

Parents, shepherds, and teachers are invited to join in on a Bible study focusing on the story of the Last Supper from John. Led by Casey Fitzgerald and Sarah Hoffman.

Sign up to shepherd in Creation Station!

We need shepherds for 4/15-4/29 and 5/6-5/27. Contact Sarah Hoffman at shoffman@wpc-alex.org if you are interested.

Labeling Belongings

During this time of extra layers, please label your child's coats, hats, and gloves. In addition, parents of young children, please help us identify your child's belongings by labeling diaper bags, sippy cups, and pacifiers. Thank you!

Donations Wanted

Seeking wooden puzzles and toy cars for our one and two year old classrooms. Contact Sarah Hoffman at shoffman@wpc-alex.org.

Mark your calendars for M&M Week!

Held the mornings of **June 25-29th**

For current kindergarten-fifth grade children

Join us for a fun-filled week of singing, Bible stories, and games!

Women's Ministry

Presbyterian Women's Friendship Circles

Women are invited to visit one of our six friendship circles that meet monthly for Bible study, fellowship, and service. Details are on the church website under Fellowship, Presbyterian Women, or in the education lobby literature rack. You may also contact Bonnie Nasr at PW@wpc-alex.org.

Women's Book Groups

Women are invited to read and discuss *The House* at Riverton by Kate Morton on **Monday, Jan. 23**, at 11:00 a.m. or 7:30 p.m. in the Johnson Parlor. In February, we will discuss *Northanger Abbey* by Jane Austen on Monday, **Feb. 27** in the Johnson Parlor. No reservation necessary; contact Clara Beth Van de Water if you want to know more.

Women's Work Day

Come to the Haverkamp Room on **Mon., Feb. 1**, at 9:30 a.m. to help make stuffed toys for children and pillows for heart patients at Alexandria Hospital. No RSVP needed; contact Nancy McIver if you want details.

Women's Shanghai Card Group

Women are invited to play cards on **Monday, Feb. 6**, at 7:15 p.m. in the Haverkamp Room. Learn the game Shanghai and enjoy fellowship. Reservations not necessary: contact Diane French for details.

Women's Winter Gathering

Wednesday, February 1, 2012, 7:30 p.m. in Haverkamp Room

Come find inspiration and unity in a beautiful story of faith, courage, conviction and witness to God's amazing faithfulness. Reverend Lucy Der Garabedian, Major and Chaplain for the U.S. Army, will be speaking to us about her life. Born in Beirut, Lebanon, Lucy reluctantly but faithfully followed God's path for her, to escape civil war and maximize her mission potential as a woman in service to God. She found courage and opportunity to fulfill her dream of becoming a Presbyterian minister, despite the odds against her. Empowered with four languages, an incredible faith journey, and an international advanced education, this unique woman now ministers to war-wounded soldiers of the Warrior Transition Brigade for Ft. Belvoir. We pray that her message will increase our understanding of how each of us is a chosen disciple in Christ's "Full Circle Mission."

Celtic Spirit Pilgrimage Weekend Retreat for Women

Enjoy Celtic traditions, including music and worship, stories and art, and time with nature and sisters in Christ at our weekend pilgrimage retreat, March 16-18.

The Celtic stream of Christianity emphasizes the intimate presence of God in the created world-in nature and people, as well as scripture and church. The Celtic spirit is a living legacy which inspires us today, like Patrick, who was a visionary and courageous man, not just a plaster saint of myth.

The Celtic weekend will be held at the Hollywood Retreat Center, Dickerson, MD, about an hour from Alexandria. The center is comfortable and modern, with hotel style bedrooms: yet it is by a lake in a wooded setting, a "hallowed wood". The leaders will be Nancy Hall Berens, Director of Congregational Life and Singles Ministries, and Clara Beth Van de Water, Director of Adult Education and Women's Ministries. Brochures with registration forms will be available soon; look for an announcement in the Westminster Update.

Contact Clara Beth Van de Water, 703-549-4766, ext. 120 or cvandewater@wpc-alex.org for more information.



Seniors Activities



On behalf of the Personnel Committee, I am pleased to welcome Patty Chamberlain as our new Acting Director of Seniors Activities (formerly the Westminster Travelers) beginning February 1, 2012.

Patty joined Westminster in 1996 and was also a member from 1990-1992. Patty currently serves on the Session as chair of the New Member Committee and her term ends on January 29, 2012. Patty has also served as chair of Congregational Life Committee. Prior to becoming an elder, Patty was a Sunday school teacher, a substitute in the bell choir and a regular usher. Patty is a teacher at our preschool and the wedding coordinator for the church. Patty lives in Alexandria with her husband Rob (an ordained deacon) and her three children, Caroline (current youth elder), Maggie and Grant.

Welcome Patty!

Susan Cloud
Chair, Personnel Committee

All Senior Adults are invited to join Patty for a **kick-off luncheon** for the Seniors Activities on Monday, January 30 at noon in the Haverkamp Room. Come and learn more about our upcoming programs, meet Patty, and enjoy fellowship together. Bus transportation from Goodwin Houses and Washington House available upon request. RSVP to Jessica Thurnes at 703-549-4766 no later than January 27.

Thursday, February 23: The next production at **The Little Theater of Alexandria** is "Heaven Can Wait." The play starts at 8:00 p.m. Please arrive early to get your ticket. For reservations, call Jessica Thurnes in

Many thanks to Elizabeth O'Brien!

Elizabeth has organized the George Mason tutoring program for many years on behalf of Westminster and the Local Mission Committee. Twice a week during the school year for the past eight years, Elizabeth orchestrated a volunteer network that provided tutoring services to children who needed a little extra help outside the classroom. We thank her for her leadership and contribution, and we are also grateful that she has now agreed to give her time and talent to Empowered Women International, the newest Local Missions organization to be supported by Westminster.

Newborn Items Needed at AACH.

One of AACH's Sullivan House residents is expecting a baby very soon, the youngest of three small boys. She left Swaziland because she was not safe in her home community and has struggled to find work because of language barriers and health challenges. AACH is seeking a bassinet and stroller and also welcomes donations of clothing, bottles, blankets, and other necessities. If you can help, please contact Emma Sanchez at esanchez@aachhomeless.org or 703-525-7177.



Focus on Missions

During the Christmas Season, Westminster gave generously to those in our community and around the world!

2011 Alternative Christmas Giving Bazaar

The 2011 Alternative Christmas Giving Bazaar was a great success, raising \$47,636.10 for those organizations supported by our Local, National and International Mission Committees. Amounts are listed below:

Spirit Lake	\$1,146
Community Coalition for Haiti	\$1,113
Senior Services of Alexandria	\$1,085
Carpenter's Shelter	\$1,470
Guest House	\$1,271.50
Arl. Alex. Coalition for the Homeless	\$1,160
Rebuilding Together Alexandria	\$955
Share the Spirit	\$200
Foundation for Peace	\$940
Heifer Project	\$4,450
Medical Benevolence Fund	\$915
ALIVE!	\$2,017
Equal Exchange Products	\$2,940
Empowered Women International	\$1,598.60
Alexandria Neigh Health Services	\$3,055
Bread for the World	\$215
Creation Station sale	\$355
Moi's Bridge Orphan Support	\$12,005
Moi's Bridge Academy	\$3,200
Moi's Bridge Orphanage	\$7,545

This has been a tremendous outpouring of generosity. The Mission Committees wish to thank all of the members of the congregation who participated in the 2011 Alternative Christmas Giving Bazaar. Your donations exemplified the true spirit of the Christmas season.

Christmas Joy Offering

For more than 70 years, Presbyterians have given generously at Christmas to support the unmet needs of families who have devoted their lives to the mission of the PC(USA). This year's Offering brought \$8,977 to the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions, which provides critical assistance to Presbyterian church workers and their families, and Presbyterian-affiliated Racial Ethnic schools and colleges, which enable students to develop their gifts and find their calling.

Share the Spirit

Through the generosity of the Westminster community, we adopted 36 families in our Share the Spirit/ Adopt a Family program with the Child and Family Network Center. Thank you for sharing your blessings with so many children and families this Christmas.

Christmas Flowers Collection

During the Christmas holiday season, we were blessed to have beautiful flowers decorating the sanctuary. These flowers were made possible through the generous donations of members and friends of Westminster Presbyterian Church. Additional funds of \$352.57 are being given to Friends of Guest House.

Recollections from National Missions trip to Appalachia

During this past October, sixteen members of Westminster traveled to Jonesville, Virginia to volunteer with the Appalachia Service Project (ASP). The group was divided into three crews. Led by our most experienced teammates, we worked to improve the living conditions of three families in southern Virginia.

National Missions plans to travel to Appalachia again this year to volunteer with ASP. Please contact Doug Anderson or Erik Johnston at NationaMission@wpc-alex.org if you would like more information.

Below Kyle Smoot wrote about his experience on one of the crews.

This past October, I was fortunate enough to be able to take a break from the daily grind of work and join the mission trip to the Appalachian Service Project (ASP). I was told by the folks that attended last year that the area in which we would be working was quite picturesque. They couldn't have been more right. I saw some of the most beautiful vistas I've ever seen. And that was just on the car ride there!

As gorgeous as the views were, they weren't nearly as inspiring as the family for which we were lucky to help. RJ and his family haven't been blessed with lots of money but what they have is worth much more. The closeness of their family (I'm not kidding, his entire extended family lives on the same plot of land!) is really something special.

When we arrived at their home, a lot of work had already been done to the house. ASP had already built an entire room addition, providing each of the families' children with their own room. As anyone with a sibling knows, this is something to treasure. The only problem was that the window out of the back of the house was used as the door into the addition. This left the front door as the only exit in the home, a serious fire hazard. Our task was to take out a window on the back of the house and replace it with an external door. When we finally got a look at the window, I was not sure we would be able to tackle the job. None of us had ever done anything like this before!

Luckily for us, RJ had no problem staying home and helping us out! A quick two days and not only had we given their family a great-looking, brand new door, but we also finished a drainage ditch started by a previous group and fixed their guttering. We really enjoyed our time getting to know RJ and his wife. They were a blessing to us with their welcoming and joyful spirits. I hope to participate in the ASP trip again next year!



Young Adult Small Groups

Our fall small groups were a great success! Each group participated in study, worship, service and fellowship as a part of their group experience. We look forward to continuing this significant ministry in our church in April! Groups will be formed at the end of March. Each group will run for 6 weeks. The number of groups will depend on the number of registrants. If you are willing to lead a group and/or are interested in learning more about leadership, please contact Casey FitzGerald. More details to come!

Faith on Tap

Upcoming Topics:

- **Tuesday, February 21**, 7:30 p.m. On a Mission from God?
 - **Tuesday, March 20**, 7:30 p.m. Why Did Jesus Die?
 - **Tuesday, April 17**, 7:30 p.m. Giving Unto Caesar: The Church and Government
- Faith on Tap is held at Capitol City Brewing Company in Shirlington.

Continuing Classes

Galatians: Charter of Christian Liberty

Through Feb. 26, Westminster Room
Dr. A. Katherine Grieb, Prof. of New Testament, Virginia Theological Seminary
Join this series on Paul's letter to gentile Christians in Galatia, Asia Minor, where he lambasts threats to their Christian liberty and speaks the real truths of the gospel of Christ unreservedly.

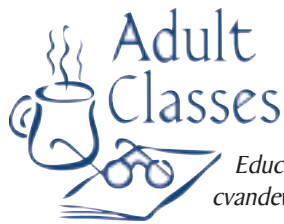
The Windings and Turnings of Humanity: A Series on Pain and Suffering

Through Feb. 5, Haverkamp Room
Mrs. Amey Upton, Wesley Theological Seminary graduate
Join a conversation where WPC member Amey offers wisdom from writers and theologians, and participants are invited to share their own insights.

Reformed Institute Programs

The Reformed Institute presents its annual convocation "**One God: Many Faiths: Reformed Theology Engages Religious Pluralism**" on Sat., Jan. 28, 9:30 a.m. - noon, National Presbyterian Church, Washington, DC. The presenter is Dr. Richard Plantinga, Professor of Religion, Calvin College, Michigan. All adults invited; no fee. Details at www.reformedinstitute.org.

Adults are invited to sign up for a new course, "**A Confessional Church: The Book of Confessions of the PC(USA)**", to be taught by the Reformed Institute's Company of Teachers on five alternate Saturdays beginning Feb. 4. The sessions will meet from 9:45-noon at National Presbyterian Church, Washington, D.C. A brochure with more information and a registration form is available in the education lobby literature rack at WPC, and online at www.reformedinstitute.org. The course fee is \$75; contact Clara Beth Van de Water at WPC to arrange a \$50 reduced fee.



Adult Education

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

New Classes

The Intricacies of Human Communication

Feb. 12-26, Haverkamp Room

Dr. Raja T. Nasr, Prof. of Education, Marymount University

Come to a series of presentations on human communication and its many intricacies by Westminster member Dr. Nasr, who knows much about its variety, having been born in Jerusalem and lived in Lebanon. Dr. Nasr holds a Ph.D. from the University of Michigan. The topics are "Human Communication Revisited" - Feb. 5, "The English Language: A Fascinating Story" - Feb. 19, and "The Communication of Humor" - Feb. 26. Throughout the series, Raja will emphasize this great wonder of God's creation: the human ability to learn and use communication systems. Raja taught a popular course on the Middle East last winter.

Exploring Controversial Issues As Individuals and Groups

March 4-18

Rev. Jacques Hadler, Adjunct Professor, Virginia Theological Seminary

As our American society becomes more polarized, people's tolerance for other viewpoints seems to have diminished. Some studies show this reflected in housing patterns, with more folks congregating in largely red or blue demographic areas. Some churches develop "Big Tent" congregations only by never talking about controversial issues. Yet the Bible itself holds together some conflicting views. These sessions will use the wisdom of scripture, as well as human dynamics, to explore some helpful ways to approach the discussion of controversial issues as individuals and communally. The teacher is Episcopal minister Rev. Jacques Hadler, retired Director of Field Education and Professor in Practical Theology and current adjunct Professor in Cross-Cultural Internships and Doctor of Ministry programs at Virginia Theological Seminary.

Christians and Other Faiths: Theologies of World Religions

March 4-18

Rev. Larry Golemon, Executive Director of the Washington Theological Consortium

There are three basic positions of Christian theology towards world religions. These are Exclusivism, which sees Christianity as the only Way; Inclusivism, which claims other faiths have "anonymous" Christians; and Pluralism, which claims all religions are paths to the same God. Rev. Golemon, a PC(USA) minister, will explore examples of "case studies," such as Christian and Muslim views of Mary and Jesus; as well as models of interfaith dialogue. Rev. Golemon is Executive Director of the Washington Theological Consortium.

Men of Westminster

Men's Annual Retreat News

February 3-5, 2012

Only a short time remains to sign up for the retreat! Registration ends January 22. Registration forms are available after the 11:00 a.m. Sunday worship services at a table in Fellowship Hall. One of our men will be on hand to give you a registration form and to answer any questions that you might have about the retreat. The registration form will also be available on the Westminster Presbyterian Church web site under Men of Westminster.



The retreat will be held the weekend of February 3-5, 2012 at the popular Hallwood Retreat Center, located at the base of Sugarloaf Mountain near Comus, Maryland.

Our leader will be Jeffrey Hensley, the former national director of religious colleges and universities for the Hanover Research Council, a higher education research firm based in Washington, D.C. Prior to that, he served as special assistant to the President of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities and as Assistant Professor of Theology at Virginia Theological Seminary and at Baylor University. Jeffrey Hensley did his graduate work in theology at Yale University, and served as an Erasmus fellow at the University of Notre Dame. His topic will be "Why Are We Here? – Everyday Questions and the Christian Life."

Those of you who have attended past retreats know how enjoyable the program, food, and fellowship have been. Consider not only attending yourself, but personally inviting someone who has not previously attended one of our men's retreats. You do not have to be a member of Westminster to attend. All men are welcome.

2nd Friday Breakfast

February 10, 7:00 – 8:15 am

Fellowship Hall

Dr. Raja T. Nasr, Professor of Education at Marymount University, will present the topic "Survival Through a Fifteen-Year Civil War," a talk about the violent civil war in Lebanon.

Raja was born in Jerusalem to Lebanese parents and studied at the American University in Beirut. He lived in Lebanon for 25 years during very difficult times before coming to the United States. His talk is bound to be interesting and insightful, and will provide a unique perspective of the Lebanese Civil War. He will also enable us to have a more nuanced understanding about the "The Arab Spring" in the Middle East and current events in Syria.

A Conversation About Heaven and Hell

Audio from the Dec. 18th event A Conversation About Heaven and Hell, with Dr. Christopher Morse and Dr. Larry Hayward, is now available online! Also available to read is Dr. Hayward's sermon series, Heaven Today, which drew from Dr. Morse's book The Difference Heaven Makes: Rehearing the Gospel as News. Please visit www.wpc-alex.org/adult, and click on "Listen to Adult Education Lectures Online."

Spotlight on Seniors

Thanks for the good feedback concerning the "Spotlight on Seniors" feature, which was launched in September. From the comments we've received, it appears as though readers of the Chronicle are enjoying it as much as those of us who conduct the interviews. This year we plan to continue the series but run it every other month. So do watch for our next installment in the February issue. And to our senior members: If you would like to be interviewed for an upcoming article, please contact one of the deacons or Eileen Jinks, Coordinator of Pastoral Care, at ejinks@wpc-alex.org or 703.549.4766 x. 132.

Youth Group FUNDRAISER



Youth Dinner And Dessert Auction

Saturday, March 3, 6:00 p.m.

Support our summer mission trips! (Senior High to Appalachia, Middle School to DC)

the Chronicle

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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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Flying Solo (Singles) Ministry

For more information about Flying Solo Singles (40's and above), please contact: Nancy Hall Berens, Director of Congregational Life and Singles Ministry at nhallberens@wpc-alex.org or 703-549-4766 ext. 121 or visit our page on the church website at: www.wpc-alex.org/singles.

Annual Super Bowl Party!

Sunday, February 5

5:30 p.m. at the home of Nancy Harper at 8903
Camden Street, Alexandria

To go along with Nancy's chili; please bring a salad,
bread, appetizer, munchies, drinks, or dessert (no red
wine, please). Go Team!!

4th Tuesday Potluck

January 24

February 28

7:00 p.m. in the Johnson Parlor

Please bring a dish to share! Each month we also
make sandwiches for the Bag Lunch program.

2nd Monday Dine-Out

February 13 – Extra Virgin (modern Italian), 4053
Campbell Ave, Shirlington

Carpool from church at 7:00 p.m. or meet there at 7:15 p.m.

"Chaplains: Providing for Our Own; Caring for All" - Roundtable Lunch and Discussion

Sunday, March 4

12:15 pm after worship

Guest speaker: Margaret Kibben, Chaplain of the
Marine Corps and Deputy Chief of Navy Chaplains

Rear Admiral Kibben will join us for a discussion about her
role as a military chaplain and how a Christian chaplain
reaches out to care for all, including those who do not have a
faith background or who are from another faith.

Lunch provided. No RSVP. All welcome!

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