



the chronicle

march 19, 2008 - volume 39, number 8

Westminster
Presbyterian
CHURCH
—worship well—

deacons programs are expanding:



The deacons are expanding two of their programs of member-to-member pastoral care.

1] **Transportation Guild:** Westminster members are needed to drive other Westminster members to doctors' appointments. You will be one of many guild members who will be called upon from time to time to help members who need assistance getting to and from a medical office visit.

2] **Visitation Team:** If you are interested in meeting and visiting some of our senior members who are homebound, please let us know. Training will be provided.

If you are interested and available to help with either of these ministries, please contact our Pastoral Care Associate, Jill Ewell, at jewell@wpc-alex.org or 703-731-2507.

From the Pastor's Study

A Message From Rev. Dr. Larry Hayward

Worship Well

a great development

Iwant to share with you my personal excitement about what I am experiencing as a great development in the life of Westminster.

Now that we have moved back in the building and settled in, as you may be aware, we have set up an Envisioning Task Force to really look at where we want to go from here after our massive and positive effort of renovation. Steve Denne and Melynda Wilcox have chaired the group. The task force led our annual Officer Intreat (this year appropriately dubbed "Entreat") on Saturday, March 8.

What a terrific experience it was!

We have a great group of officers and a great staff, clergy and lay. There is terrific energy around Westminster's future. It is great to be part of such a healthy and vibrant church, who wants to do as much as possible to serve God, in the name of Christ, led by the Spirit, in worship, education, fellowship and mission.

The task force is taking the energy and ideas from the Entreat and will be sharing with the officers – and the congregation – as together we shape our ministry in the weeks and months ahead.

I believe we can all be excited about Westminster's future....

Larry

children's music event and congregational dinner

Sunday May 4 Fellowship Hall Stage

5:30 p.m. Performance of

Vivaldi's GLORIA for Young Voices!

A Drama about God's Servant Antonia Vivaldi

6:00 p.m. Dinner for All

The Carol and Alleluia Choir singers

extend a Special Invitation to

"Future Singers" – children ages 0-5 years old,

Dinner will be provided, no need to bring anything!

More details to follow for this fun event for ALL ages!



palm sunday palm crosses and fronds

“On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees and went forth to meet him, and cried, ‘Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.’”

—John 12:12-13, KJV



Over 300 million palm fronds are harvested each year for U. S. consumption, most on Palm Sunday.

The Palm Crosses distributed on Palm Sunday were handmade in South Eastern Tanzania, often by entire families working throughout the year in seven mud villages near Masasi. These Palm Crosses are from the African Palm USA organization with the mission of turning this African product into a source of income and humanitarian aid for Africa.

The Palm Fronds used by the Choir and Children are Eco-Palms. The Eco-Palm Project is a component of the PC(USA)’s Enough for Everyone Program, which works to pave the way for increased wages and a better protected ecosystem for the communities that harvest palms in Guatemala and Mexico. You can read more about the Eco-Palms on the PC(USA) website at: <http://www.pcusa.org/palms/>.



Thursday, April 3. *Lincoln’s Cottage – The Summer White House.* \$14 plus lunch. 9:30 a.m.- 4:30 a.m. Waiting list.

Thursday, April 17. *Enchanted April,* Little Theatre of Alexandria; 7:00 p.m. departure. \$1 trip fee.

Wednesday, April 30. *A Day in the Shenandoah Valley.* 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Journey by church bus and mini-van to the New Market, VA area to see The Yellow Barn at Shenandoah Caverns. Among other displays, we’ll see a Model-T depot hack restored by Helen Olson’s husband, Bud. \$20 covers admission also to the American Celebration on Parade exhibit (parade floats), Main Street of Yester-year (Woodies’ windows) and the Caverns. Lunch is complimentary.

All Westminster Travelers programs are planned with senior adults in mind. However, we accept persons under age 60 when space is available. We welcome friends from outside the Westminster congregation. Reservations are made by calling the church office.

altared states

from Associate Pastor Karen A. Blomberg

Misappropriation of a practice does not necessitate its demise. It may invite reform.

The practice of altaring is ancient. Every culture throughout time is moved to create contexts for conversations with the Other. Historically this often occurs with fire and stone and other elements of nature. Spaces are created for individuals and communities to commune with the gods and goddesses, the Spirits, the Christ, the Other.

As a Lutheran turned Presbyterian, some of my German Lutheran threads remain in my ever reforming tapestry of theology and life. Altars have always drawn me into a place of inner sanctum. In the Presbyterian Church they have been removed physically and theologically. The belief in the Calvinist system is that the sacrifice has already been made (in Christ) so no altar need be constructed. Instead, Presbyterians have a communion table, which some say looks like an altar. It exists as a solid symbol of the Last Supper table around which disciples still gather to reenact Jesus’ final meal. Perhaps the communion table is masquerading as an altar.

The use of an altar in my home invites and enhances my daily spiritual practices.

The items on my altar change as does my life. I mindfully place and replace symbols as representations of significant parts of myself, the community, the world, my God, my callings. Currently on my wooden altar are three candles, four feathers, 10 beads, holy oil, a cross, a red string, two baptism symbols, a Buddha, and a variety of stones. Each of these articles literally holds meaning for me. The object and I have energy exchanges. The symbol holds and emits energy. This for me is not a practice of worshipping my symbols (idolatry), but an example of one way of furthering my conversation with the divine. The objects are conversation starters. Spirit and I take it from there.

I understand some of Calvin’s 16th century objections to the uses and abuses of the altar, and in our tradition, we describe ourselves as “reformed and reforming.” Luther never intended a break with the Roman Catholic Church. He sought reform. Reclaiming some of our ancestors’ practices of faith may be an aspect of our re-forming. Remembering the sacred use of altars may lead us to profound and mundane noticings. Invitations to dialogue with Spirit may result.

From sacrificial killings to offerings of first fruits, altars have received the worst and best of humankind. My altar is such a space, where I dialogue with Spirit and am exposed in all my darkness and light.

personnel committee update

WPC Welcomes Jim Buchanan as Facilities Manager

Westminster member Jim Buchanan, who played a major role in overseeing the church construction project during the past several years, was approved by the Session in February as Westminster's new Facilities Manager. In this part-time position, Jim will keep the church properties in a state of repair and readiness, oversee the security of the buildings, the heating and air conditioning system, and supervise the sextons, among other things.

Personnel Committee member John Woods said about Jim's previous experiences volunteering for Westminster, "Based on working with [Jim] since we started the contractor selection process in early 2006, he has been a diligent and avid learner and producer. He is an engineer by education and career. He is very knowledgeable about our new computer, audio and HVAC/electrical system."

Jim officially starts his job on March 15. Send welcome notes to jbuchanan@wpc-alex.org.

Nedra Trahant Recognition Slated for April 6

Nedra Trahant, long-time member of Westminster and director of Westminster's Preschool for 20 years, will retire at the end of this school year. In order to thank Nedra for her service, we will recognize her many contributions to children and parents in the Westminster family and Alexandria community on Sunday, April 6, during the 11 a.m. service. Please plan to help applaud Nedra's service to the preschool on April 6.

coffee hour hosts needed



We are searching for people to host the 11:00 coffee hour after church on Sundays once or more throughout the year. This is a great way for groups to promote their activities and let the congregation and visitors know more about what their group does. Individuals are invited to host as well. If you and your friends or family or group would be interested, please contact Oraly Spatz in the church office at ospatz@wpc-alex.org to schedule a date. A minimum of 4 people during the year, and 3 during the summer for lemonade on the lawn, works well. We have streamlined the process in order to make it as easy as possible for folks to host. Next available dates are April 27, May 11, 18 and 25. You may also contact Nancy Hall Berens at nhallberens@wpc-alex.org if you have any questions. Thank you for helping us with this ministry of hospitality!

Staff Recognition Day is March 30

The congregation will have an opportunity to recognize and thank our hard-working staff on Sunday, March 30 at the 11 a.m. service. The service will be followed by coffee hour sponsored by the Personnel Committee. Be sure to attend and let the staff know how much you appreciate their tireless efforts!



flying solo (singles) upcoming events

Flying Solo is a group for singles in their prime years (more or less 40 and above) belonging to the life and ministry of Westminster

Presbyterian Church. The group offers single adults the opportunity for Christian fellowship, spiritual and intellectual growth, and service to others. Please let me know if you have any questions or suggestions for singles ministry at Westminster. I would love to hear from you! You can reach me at 703-549-4766, ext. 121, or at nhallberens@wpc-alex.org.

Blessings!

Nancy Hall Berens

Monday, April 14: *Our monthly Dine-Out* in April will take us to Los Tios restaurant in Del Ray at 2615 Mt. Vernon Avenue. We meet the second Monday of each month at a local

restaurant for an evening of food and fellowship. If you want to carpool, meet in the church parking lot by 7:00 pm. Otherwise, we'll meet at the restaurant at 7:15. Please contact Nancy Hall Berens at nhallberens@wpc-alex.org for more details.

Tuesday, April 22: *Our monthly Potluck* will take place in the Johnson Parlor at 7:30 pm. On the fourth Tuesday of each month, we gather at church for a casual potluck dinner and for our monthly mission project (making sandwiches for the Bag Lunch program). Please bring a salad, entrée, or dessert to share. Questions? Contact Nancy at nhallberens@wpc-alex.org.

SAVE THE DATE!

Sunday, May 18, 12:15 pm, Haverkamp Room: *Singles Roundtable Discussion*. Join other singles in the church for lunch and stimulating discussion led by Pastor Larry Hayward. All singles are welcome!

children and family ministry



Mornings for Moms:

Wednesdays from 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m. in Creation Station. All moms are welcome to bring their young children each Wednesday morning for fellowship,

service, and fun with kids! We've already had great turnouts and great fun getting to know each other and hope other moms will join in on the fun! Contact Marcy Crisler at marcy@hockingcounty.com for more information.

Music and More Week, June 16-20

Get ready for another wonderful time for children kindergarten through fifth grade during this year's M&M week! Plans are still being solidified—if you are interested in being involved in the creative process, let Casey FitzGerald, Paul Stetsenko, or Molly Roden know!

Teachers and Shepherds Needed!

It's time to start thinking about our fall programming. Sign-ups will be available in Fellowship Hall for teaching and shepherding in our Creation Station rooms and for the preschool classes. We hope you will consider volunteering for this important ministry in the life of our church. Detailed descriptions of classes will be available so that you can lead the class that suits your interests and gifts!

A Note from Casey

Greetings to all!

As the days of pregnancy come to an end and the days of child-rearing quickly approach, I wanted to say thank you for all the love and support the church has shown Jim and me during this exciting time in our lives. I am blessed to be called to a congregation whose commitment to family is deeply rooted in its Christian faith. I look forward to bringing my son into the Westminster family and to continuing our ministry together when I return from maternity leave. Be prepared for many more occasions to celebrate, worship, learn and serve together!!!

In Christ,
Casey FitzGerald

what's up with our youth?



Each month, our newsletter features important future events and dates. Here, we're going to feature our youth! In this space, we'll take some time to celebrate our wonderful youth in all that they are experiencing and achieving as children

of God. Take a moment to read about them, and when you see them or their families, share your pride and excitement. Youth and parents: if you want to share some news for future newsletters, just email Patrick!

And now, what 's up with our youth!

- **Ellen Livingston** (8th grade, daughter of Debra and David) rocked the stage at the 4th Annual Shakespeare on the Potomac Festival on March 7 with an inspired portrayal of Tom Snout, the Tinker, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.
- **Connor Sullivan** (9th grade at Minnie Howard, son of Rebecca and John), just finished his first year of teaching

young skiers as part of the SkiWee program at Bryce Resort in the Shenandoah Valley. (If your kids need lessons at Bryce, be sure to request Connor!) Connor now plays JV lacrosse at T.C. Williams and is first chair on the tenor saxophone in the Minnie Howard Symphonic Band.

- **Matt Kilby** (10th grade, son of Mike and Sue) made the TC varsity baseball team this year (broken finger & all) and traveled with the team to Orlando over spring break to participate in a tournament.
- **Briggs Davis** (12th grade, son of Randy and Kim) made all Interstate Athletic Conference in ice hockey this year with St. Stephens & St. Agnes.
- **Kristen Folkerts** (7th grade at George Washington, daughter of Brian and Yvonne), was named to the District 10 Honors Choir and performed in February at Hayfield Secondary School.
- **John Todd** (9th grade at Yorktown, son of Nancy and Doug) won second place at the Yorktown Science Fair.

young adults ministry



BRUNCH

first sunday brunches:

The first Sunday of each month, young adults from the congregation gather together following the 11 o'clock service, either in someone's home or in the church building for food and fellowship. Brunches are great opportunities to get to know other young adults. Next Brunch: April 6 at the home of Rob and Mara Winn. RSVP to Rob and Mara at maraandrob@mac.com.

If you are interested hosting a brunch this summer, please contact Casey FitzGerald!

dinner with friends is back!

If you are interested in participating in a small group dinner with folks your age from the church, please sign up today! We will be forming entirely new groups, so even if you've participated in the past, please sign up again! We hope to get things started by June. Cyndi Ziemann will be helping to coordinate this important fellowship ministry while Casey is away. If you are interested in participating, please email Cyndi at czieman@wmata.com.

young adults scavenger hunt adventure!

"The Murder at the National Gallery" Scavenger Hunt Saturday, June 28, 2 to 4:30 p.m.

A murdered curator has left behind a cryptic trail of clues connected with secrets in works of art. As your team gathers answers about the art, you begin to piece together a sordid tale about greed, lust, pride, revenge and treachery, all revolving around the museum's planned multimillion-dollar purchase of a Rembrandt. The murder victim knew too much—and now it's up to you to learn what he knew and discover what drove one of four suspects to commit murder. To find out, you'll have to crack a secret code left in the victim's appointment calendar. Can you figure out who dunnit? Be prepared for a challenging hunt. Price: \$22.50 per person. Please register with Casey FitzGerald by April 4 (before she goes on maternity leave).



Young Adult
Retreat

got time? a retreat for young adults in national capital presbytery

April 18-20, 2008 (Friday evening through Sunday morning)
Camp Meadowkirk

Come away for a time of fellowship, relaxation, worship, and theological reflection, as young adults in their twenties and thirties from around the presbytery gather at Meadowkirk Retreat Center in Middleburg, Virginia. We'll stay in the newly-built cottages, explore how our faith challenges us to think about time, and take ample time to simply enjoy good Christian fellowship, the beauty of nature, and God's gift of time away.

Cost: Only \$25 for the entire weekend (meals included) due to generous support from the Presbytery. WPC also has scholarship money available to those who need it—please contact Casey FitzGerald for information.

Topic: The Stewardship of Time

Leader: Bruce Douglass, Associate Professor, Department of Government, Georgetown University, and Director of the Reformed Institute of Metropolitan Washington

People experience time differently in different cultures. In our culture, it tends to be regarded as a scarce resource to be utilized as each of us sees fit. Many of us are anxious to make sure that we "spend" the time available to us wisely, and feel pressured to get as much "done" as possible. Where does this attitude come from? And what are its implications? What does it mean to "spend" time well, and is this a good way to live our lives? This retreat is designed to provide the participants with an opportunity to consider these issues in the light of the Biblical idea of stewardship.

**For more information, contact Casey FitzGerald
RSVP by March 31, 2008 by mailing your \$25 to
Reformed Institute**

**PO Box 1928
Alexandria, VA 22313-1928**

(include name, email, and church affiliation, if applicable)



news from

united orphanage & academy in moi's bridge, kenya

westminster's relationship to the UO&A

A friend suggested that this would be a good time to briefly recap the relationship between Westminster and the United Orphanage and Academy (UO&A) for those who might not be aware of it.

UO&A was conceived shortly after Thanksgiving of 2000 at a meeting in the living room of Henri and Candace Rush, attended by the Rev. Stephen N. Chege, a pastor of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, and the Rev. Stuart Broberg, then pastor of Westminster. Rev. Chege, who had worked with members of Westminster on prior mission trips to Kenya broached the idea of his contributing land near his home in Moi's Bridge and Westminster providing funds to help construct an Orphanage and Academy on it. The first funding, in the amount of \$2,500, came from Westminster's 2000 Christmas Eve offering. Rev. Broberg and five other members from Westminster attended the dedication of the initial phase of construction in the summer of 2001 while in Kenya on a mission trip. Subsequent funding came from Christmas Eve offerings and members of the Westminster congregation to construct the original residential facility, which opened in July 2004 at a ceremony participated in by two members from Westminster. The initial intake at that time was six young girls. Thereafter construction of other facilities was aided by contributions from Old Presbyterian Meeting House (the Meeting House), Lewinsville Presbyterian Church, and First Presbyterian Church of Marietta Georgia. The facilities now include a well, electricity, boy's and girl's dormitories, an expanded kitchen and dining hall and storage facilities and office space. It is currently home to 48 children (31 girls and 17 boys). Throughout this period operating costs for the Orphanage, roughly \$36,000 per year, or \$750 per child, have

been paid exclusively by the congregation and friends of Westminster. This year we are still in the process of raising funds for operations at the Orphanage and are, as of this date, about \$13,500 short for the calendar year 2008.

The Academy portion of the operation was opened in 2006 and currently provides primary school education for grades from early childhood through fifth for the children at the Orphanage and some children in the community whose parents can afford a \$200 per year tuition and meal fee. Seven teachers are currently employed. Unlike public primary schools in the area where classes range from 90 – 110 students per class, classes at the Academy will be limited to no more than 30 students. Westminster is currently involved with Old Presbyterian Meeting House and with the support of National Capital Presbytery is building a stone three-story Academy building to house all twelve classes that are planned. The estimated cost of the building is \$70,000, of which \$42,000 has been raised. The goal is to have this building completed by August 2009, when a group from Westminster and the Meeting House plan to travel to Moi's Bridge to participate in its dedication.

Chris McAdoo and Henri Rush from Westminster and Rhonda O'Bannon of the Meeting House will be traveling to the UO&A on March 17 to survey the situation on the ground and work with Director Chege in updating current plans for the future. I will report on that trip in the next issue. Also, there will be a concert with a free will offering to support further construction on the Academy building at the Meeting House on Sunday, April 27 at 3 p.m. Following the concert Ronda, Henri and Chris will present a video taken during their recent trip and further discuss affairs at the UO&A. Please plan on attending.



library news

Please stop by the church library to peruse the wide variety of books, videos, tapes, and periodicals available for checkout. New books include *Confessions of a Christian Humanist* by John W. De Gruchy, *A Multitude of Blessings: A Christian Approach to Religious Diversity* by Cynthia M. Campbell, and *Beyond the Worship Wars: Building Vital and Faithful Worship* by Thomas G. Long. Larry Hayward has recommended these books as helpful resources as we seek to shape the future of our church through our Envisioning Task Force.

Now located in a new and welcoming space, the library collection has been maintained and catalogued for more than a decade by WPC member Cathy Hunter. If you have suggestions for other items you would like to see in the library, or if you would like to contribute new books to the library, please contact Cathy at chunter@ngs.org, or leave her a note in the big return box in the library. She can supply you with information about how to make book donations, as well as a list of books that would be useful additions to the library collection.

westminster choir on the musical map of the city



On March 8 and 9, the Westminster Choir was invited to sing with the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra at the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall. For this event, our church choir partnered with the Alexandria Choral Society. The combined chorus performed three musical works:

“Pavane” by Gabriel Fauré, “Elegischer Gesang, op. 118” by Ludwig van Beethoven, and “Coronation Anthem No. 1” by George Frederic Handel. In addition to the orchestra and singers, the three pieces were interpreted by dancers from the Bowen McCauley Dance. This was a wonderful musical opportunity and experience for our Choir members. Many members of Westminster attended the performances.

a little bit about children's choirs at westminster

This year we have a total 23 boys and girls in our three children's choirs – Carol Choir for grades K-2, and Alleluia Choir for grades 3-5, and Children's Bells for grades 3-5. Besides bringing leadership to worship through music, here are some of the things the kids like best about choir at Westminster:

“I like choir because I like the friends that I make in choir and I like music.” – 4th grade boy

“The games!” – 1st grade girl

“Some of my favorite things about choir are singing, learning about music (staccato, legato, etc....), and learning to conduct.” – 3rd grade girl

“I like it when Paul tells me I'm doing a good job.” – 2nd grade boy

“I like learning bells, and learning words to music with bells.” – 5th grade girl

“Because it's cool.” – 3rd grade girl

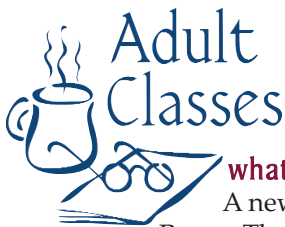
“I like Molly and Paul, and bells are cool.” – 5th grade girl

“You get to sing and I like singing.” – Kindergarten girl

“We sing a lot and learn a lot of songs.” – Kindergarten girl

“Singing in other languages!” “Games!” “Conducting!” “Everything!!”

adult education programs



Classes meet Sundays from 9:45 to 10:45 a.m. (except as noted). All adults are invited. No registration is needed.

we are an easter people:

what happened in the resurrection and why?

A new adult education class for adults will begin on Sunday, March 30, at 9:45 a.m. in the Haverkamp Room. The teacher is Dr. Anthony Tambasco, professor of theology at Georgetown University. All adults are invited to these lectures:

- March 30— Approaches to the resurrection and overview of its meaning
- April 6— Paul's message about the resurrection
- April 13— Mark's theology of the resurrection
- April 20— The meaning of the apparitions of the risen Christ in Matthew
- April 27— Luke's message in the apparitions of the risen Christ
- May 4— John's message in the apparitions of the risen Christ



women's book group

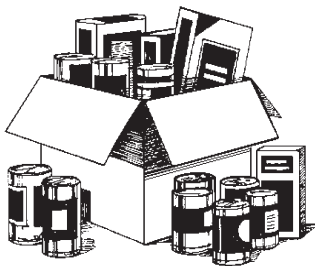
The selection for April is *Flower Confidential: The Good, the Bad, and the Beautiful*, a non-fiction bestseller by Amy Stewart. Discussions will be held on Monday, April 28, at 11:00 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. at places to be announced. All women readers are invited. Call Clara Beth Van de Water (703-549-4766 x120) if you have questions.

focus on missions - alive



Westminster joins with 40 other congregations in Alexandria and Arlington to support ALIVE! Inc. (ALexandrians InVolved Ecumenically). Our involvement in this multi-faceted, ecumenical, volunteer-driven social services program began in 1969. In this, our 39th year as a member congregation, WPC members can continue to contribute our time, talents and resources to help our Alexandria neighbors faced with emergency situations or long-term needs become capable of assuming self-reliant roles in the community. Last fiscal year, ALIVE!'s seven programs – including emergency financial assistance and food, preschool, shelter, donated furniture and housewares, and mentoring support through the ALIVE! House – served over 16,000 persons in need. This issue of the Chronicle will highlight four of these programs and both upcoming and ongoing opportunities for service and support.

The ALIVE! Food Pantry collects donated food and makes an average of 70 deliveries per week of emergency three-day food supplies. Referrals are made to the program from many different agencies such as the Department of Human Services, the Health Department, the Arlington/Alexandria Coalition for the Homeless, member congregations and others.



There are two ways to support the Food Pantry. Please continue to bring bags of non-perishables to Fellowship Hall. Items particularly needed are: canned meats, canned fish, peanut butter, fruits and other nutritious items. The collection point is next to the water fountain.

WPC donations have averaged 3 bags per week; we can do better! Additionally, the food programs purchase surplus perishables at low prices with the generous financial support of individuals, businesses and foundations. WPC will respond to an opportunity in March and April to help ALIVE! qualify for a hunger grant from the Alan S. Feinstein Foundation. The Foundation divides \$1 million proportionately among agencies that qualify. The more food money ALIVE! collects by the end of April, the larger the funding. Be on the lookout for more information on the WPC response to this wonderful opportunity to leverage your donation with grant funds.

The Last-Saturday Food Distribution Program distributes bags of food at three locations in Alexandria to 6000 households that depend on monthly social security and other support checks. Your food and financial donations support both the Food Pantry and Last-Saturday Programs. If you would like to volunteer to work at the Last-

Saturday Program, contact Louise Anderson at 703-820-3568. Volunteers are needed to unload trucks at Cora Kelly on Friday evenings from 6:00 – 8:00 and to distribute food at the three locations on Saturday mornings from 8:30 – noon.

The Furniture Program collects donated beds, dressers, tables, chairs and other basic household necessities and distributes to recipients who have just left a shelter or abusive relationship, graduated from a program that promotes self-sufficiency, or recently immigrated to this country. Often these families gain access to housing but don't have the resources to make their homes reasonably habitable.



On May 10 and 31, Westminster members will take their turn collecting and delivering furniture. This is a great volunteer opportunity for teens or teens and parents together. We are asked to work only 4 Saturdays per year, so don't miss out! Please email Margie Carpenter at mmcrpntr@aol.com if you can help. To donate furniture, call 703-837-9300 (option 3) or go to www.alive-inc.org to arrange a pick-up. ALIVE! collects only in Alexandria or Fairlington east of 395.

While many ALIVE! programs meet emergency food and financial needs, the Child Development Center seeks to support families moving toward full self reliance by providing high quality, yet affordable, full-day preschool. Parents must be working at least 30 hours per week or participating in a training program. Many qualify for government tuition subsidies, and others pay on a sliding scale fee basis. A social worker helps parents with job-related challenges and other family health, social and economic needs.

Step ALIVE!, the CDC's 27th annual walkathon, is scheduled for Sunday afternoon, May 4. Westminster walkers will join teams from churches and temples throughout Alexandria. If you aren't able to walk, you can give your pledge to a walker. Sponsors at the \$200 level will have their names printed on the Walkathon T-shirts. We are looking for individuals and groups who can band together to finance a sponsorship on behalf of Westminster. Up to one-third of Alexandria's children enter kindergarten without preschool experience, putting them at a disadvantage on their first day of school. Please help ALIVE! address these needs. Email or call Margie Carpenter if you are interested in walking or working toward a Westminster sponsorship.

Next month – more on the ALIVE! House, the Family Emergency Program and housewares donations.



YOUth!

Tune up your voice and sing to the Lord a new song!

Do you like to sing? Do you sing along with your 'tunes? You know you do!
Grab this opportunity to grow musically and in your faith!

Come join the new Youth Choral Ensemble
for
Youth Sunday April 20
let's bring some really great music to Youth led worship!

No big time commitment – And food provided at rehearsals!

Ideas? What would you like to sing?

Gospel, Classical?
Something challenging or simple?
Joyful or serious? Rowdy or thoughtful?
Let Paul know that, too.

Interested? – email Paul Stetsenko at pstetsenko@wpc-alex.org

Here's the rehearsal times:

- **Sunday, March 30 6pm-7pm** – a light dinner served before we sing.
- **Sunday, April 6 12:30pm – 1:30pm** – a light lunch served.
- **Sunday, April 13 5pm** – full Youth fellowship rehearsal for Youth Sunday, including the Choral Ensemble. Dinner provided.

session committee service - 2008

The new session members were installed last month and some changes took place in chairmanships of the session committees. Listed below are the current elders serving on each committee. They are good resources for the programs of the church if you have questions or suggestions.

| | |
|--|---|
| Administration and FinanceLanny Griffith, Chair David Hill, Vice-Chair | National/International MissionPaul Neureiter, Chair Linc Cummings, Vice-Chair Cathy Snyles |
| Building and GroundsKen Nieman, Chair Robin McFarland, Vice-Chair | New Member/AssimilationGail Donley, Chair |
| Christian EducationElizabeth O'Brien, Chair Brad Buchanan, Vice-Chair | NominatingCarol Skiba, Chair Don Fowler, Vice-Chair |
| CommunicationsBrian Laubscher, Chair Stephen Moss, Vice-Chair | PersonnelEileen Denne, Chair Karen Olson, Vice-Chair |
| Congregational LifePatty Chamberlain, Chair | StewardshipFrank Fraser, Chair David Gunter, Vice-Chair |
| Local MissionPriscilla Goodwin, Chair | Worship and MusicDavid Roden, Chair Anne Pickett, Vice-Chair |

church staff

Larry HaywardPastor
Karen BlombergAssociate Pastor
Patrick HunnicuttAssociate Pastor
Casey FitzGeraldAssociate Pastor
Paul StetsenkoDirector of Music Ministries
Clara Beth Van de WaterDirector of Adult Education
Sandra CalhounDirector of Seniors' Ministries
Nancy Hall BerensInterim Dir. of Congregational
Life and Singles Ministries
Henri RushCoordinator of Nat'l/Internat'l Missions
VacantCoordinator for Local Missions
Art SauerCoordinator of Volunteer Ministries
Nancy BeaBusiness Administrator
Tara CainAdministrative Assistant
Oraly SpatzProgram Assistant
Larry JohnsonSexton
Marvin JohnsonSexton
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This month I'm going to use this space to talk about something other than volunteering. I'm going to talk about the mission of Westminster. This subject came to mind as I was thinking

about the Envisioning Task Force that is now working to prepare a mission statement for Westminster. A couple of years ago I took a class at the Lay School of Theology at Virginia Theological Seminary. The textbook for that class was "Essentials of Christian Theology" by William C. Placher. The following passage in the foreword struck me as being a guide for developing a church mission statement:

"It is possible, of course, to build a church around friendly community, helpful counseling, social outreach, and good music on Sunday morning without worrying about how we articulate our faith. But social clubs, psychiatrists, political action groups, and choral societies can do all that as well or better. What sets churches apart is that we claim to have challenging but joyous news (after all, gospel just means "good news") about God, ourselves, and the world in which we live. In order to do well what only the church can do, we need to get clear on that news

volunteer corner

in our own minds and figure out how to teach it to our children and explain it to our neighbors."

Westminster certainly has a friendly community and helpful counseling. Our extensive missions program exhibits social outreach and our music program is second to none. But, by focusing on these attributes of Westminster do we blur the distinction between Westminster as "a beacon of God's word in Alexandria" (Westminster Mission Statement) and the many secular organizations that exist in our community?

The Envisioning Task Force has begun an effort to define the nature of Westminster in a statement that will tell the community just who we are. In this busy and complex community people have many options for where they will worship (or even if they will worship at all). It is essential that we as a congregation clearly articulate how Westminster is different from other organizations. How do we tell people the good news?

Yours in Christ,

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