

Old Presbyterian Meeting House

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The Old Presbyterian Meeting House is a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the National Capital Presbytery: www.pcusa.org

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Dear Friends,

The snow stopped us in our tracks. It is one of my favorite things about a snowfall heavy enough so that you don't have to agonize over whether we should or shouldn't cancel, we should or shouldn't drive. On Saturday, and then again on Wednesday, we simply stopped in our tracks, stayed at home, and watched the snow come down.*

And then, after the snow, we saw everything a little differently. There was, of course, the beauty of the world transformed; the urban landscape smoothed out into a winter wonderland. There was the almost giddy wonder of stepping into a snow drift and sinking to mid-thigh; of ordinary hillsides transformed into sledding delights. There was the physical satisfaction of clearing a path; the sense of camaraderie shared among strangers; the visiting with neighbors who so often we see just in passing or not at all. There was new awareness of our surroundings, and of the physical properties of snow and ice, as trees bent and broke, and snow packs slid off roofs, and we all realized just how many streets there are to be cleared. For me, the usually boring 10-minute drive to work was transformed into an hour walk – a chance to be out in the sunshine and get some exercise, to see my community at a slower pace, to exchange pleasantries, and to feel the satisfaction of an adventurer discovering a clear path.

After so many days, the snow is certainly an inconvenience and a frustration, and yet I can't help but think there is much in it that is good for us, as we are stopped in our tracks and forced to look at the world a bit differently.

In some sense, this is what the liturgical calendar will be asking us to do over the next forty days. With its disciplines of prayer and fasting, Lent calls us to stop in our tracks, and look at the world in a different way. It asks us to stop and think seriously about God's love poured out for us. It asks us to stop and think about our lives, and the ways we honor or reject that love. It asks us to be honest about our sin, and to reflect on what it truly means to follow Jesus.

At its heart, the practice of "giving something up for Lent" is intended to do just this -- to stop us in our tracks, and help us look at the world a little differently. But whether or not we give something up, this Lent I encourage us all to find some way of shifting our lives so that we see the world differently; see it more intentionally through Christian eyes. Corporately, I ask you to make it a priority to attend the worship services of Lent and Holy Week, including the Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services. I urge you to join us for a special Taizé service of prayer, silence, and meditative music on Friday, March 5 (the World Day of Prayer). I urge you to consider participating in one of the Lenten neighborhood studies, a new experiment for the Meeting House this year. And I urge you to find a practice

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MARCH 5

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER & TAIZÉ PRAYER SERVICE
6:30 PM

PALM SUNDAY SERVICES
SUNDAY, MARCH, 28.

SERVICES AT 8:30 AND 11 AM
COMMUNION AT 8:30 AM

MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE
THURSDAY, APRIL 1, 7 PM

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE
FRIDAY, APRIL 2, NOON

EASTER SERVICES
SUNDAY, APRIL 4
SERVICES AT 8:30 AND 11 AM
NO CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CLASSES. COMMUNION WILL BE SERVED AT BOTH SERVICES.

OPMH STAFF

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or discipline in your own life, whether it be giving something up or taking something on, that will help you stop in your tracks and see the world in a new way.**

The snow made us do it. But it has also shown us it can be done. So let's stop in our tracks, and look at the world in a new way.

Ann

*Except, of course, for those who are emergency workers, or work in snow removal, or in health care, or any of those others whose vocations called them out while most of us stayed snug at home. Thank you!

**Maybe you'll set aside 30 minutes to an hour a day for prayer and Scripture reading.

Maybe you'll spend time in conversation with someone whose faith you admire. Maybe you'll begin a "carbon fast", or spend some intentional time in God's creation, or take on a volunteer commitment that brings you into relationship with people in need.

New Youth Elders and Deacons

On January 24, for the first time in OPMH history, four youth were ordained to serve the roles of Elder and Deacon. Matt Comey and Nell McKeown were installed as Elders and Katherine Gardner and Eleanor Kenimer were installed as Deacons. They all have already leaped into their new callings joining ministry teams, serving the congregation, and continuing to help with the youth ministry. Here's a bit about our newly elected officers!

Matt Comey has been part of the Meeting House family his whole life, and made his public profession of faith (confirmation) in April of 2008. He has been an active participant in the church's youth program, and serves on the Youth Subcommittee. He has attended both the Massanetta Middle School Conference and the Montreat Youth Conference and is a regular contributor to the Youth Praise Band. Matt is a junior at T.C. Williams High School. He is a co-captain of T.C.'s Swim Team, rows Crew for T.C., plays in the Jazz band and participates in several other clubs and service organizations.

Katherine Gardner has been part of the Meeting House family her entire 15 years, and made her public profession of faith (confirmation) in 2008. She is member of the OPMH Youth Subcommittee and youth group; has participated in the Mexico mission trip, Massanetta and Montreat youth conferences; and served as a VBS assistant. Katherine is a sophomore at The Madeira School, and enjoys writing, softball, and theater.

Eleanor Kenimer has been part of the Meeting House family since 1993, and made her public profession of faith (confirmation) in April of 2008. She is active in the youth group, serves on the Youth Subcommittee, and sings in the youth praise band. She has also attended the Montreat Youth Conference. Eleanor is a junior at T.C. Williams, and enjoys pole vaulting, swimming, and art.

Nell McKeown has been part of the Meeting House family since 1995, and made her public profession of faith last May. She has been a member of the Youth Subcommittee, an assistant at VBS, an usher, a host and volunteer for Children of Chernobyl, and attended the Massanetta and Montreat Youth Conferences. Nell is a sophomore at West Potomac High School, and enjoys rowing crew and acting.

(L-R) Eleanor Kenimer, Matt Comey, Nell McKeown, and Katherine Gardner.

You're Invited... **OPMH Annual Dinner 2010**

An evening of dinner, dancing, fellowship & fun

Join us for dinner, dancing, and a silent auction on Sunday, March 7, 2010 at the Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria. This fun-filled evening will begin with a reception at 5:30, followed by dinner at 6:30, and dancing until 9:00 or so.

When: Sunday, March 7, 2010

Time: 5:30 p.m. - 9 p.m.

What: Silent auction to benefit the Missions Ministry
(If you are interested in donating an item or service to be auctioned, please contact Mary Myers at (703) 765-4040 or marymyers@gmail.com)
Reception followed by Dinner & special performance by:
OPMH's Youth Praise Band
Dancing to DJ "Buff" MacDonald

Where: Virginia Theological Seminary
3737 Seminary Road
Alexandria, VA 22304
Located at North Quaker Lane & Seminary Road

Cost: \$28 adults, \$12 children (ages 4 to 12)

Four ways to reserve your tickets:
Visit www.OPMH.org and fill out the online form
Call the church office (703) 549-6670
Call Gloria Cooper at (703) 837-0281
Reserve your tickets after church February 21 or 28



Mission Brunch

Join us as we kick off the workcamp season with a Mission Brunch on March 21st following the 11:00 service in Fellowship Hall! Try food from around the world and learn how you can get involved. We will be accepting applications for our summer mission trips as well as sharing the current needs of our mission partners all over the world. See you there! For more information about upcoming workcamps see Mission section of this newsletter.

World Day of Prayer and Taizé Prayer Service

Friday, March 5 is the World Day of Prayer, and the Meeting House will be offering a special evening Taizé Prayer Service. Taizé is a meditative form of worship, which incorporates simple, melodious music, repetitive song and chant, silent prayer, and scripture readings in a setting of peace and soft light that fosters closer communion with God. Taizé prayer, which originated at a monastery in Taizé, France, is an ecumenical form of common prayer meant to foster reconciliation and peace among all people. Gathered in the presence of Christ, we are led in uncomplicated song and uplifted by instrumental music, uncluttered by too many words, allowing the mystery of God to become tangible through the beauty of simplicity, as our community joins a needy world in prayer.

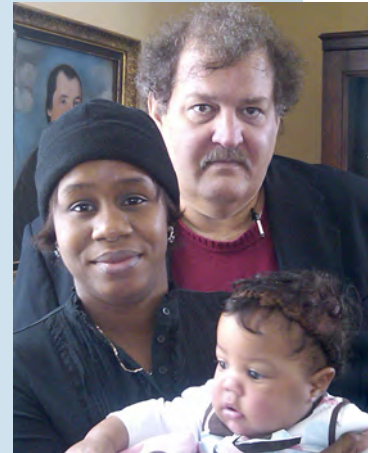
This special Lenten Service will be held on a Friday at 6:30 PM to allow for an evening out following the service. Childcare will be available, as a youth group fundraiser, during and after this service to allow for a "date night" dinner in Old Town or a gathering of Meeting House friends.



Welcome to our newest members

Melissa and Scott Burnison

Melissa and Scott joined by Reaffirmation of Faith. Melissa works for Rep. Wamp of the US House of Representatives and enjoys home remodeling projects. Scott works in government affairs for Lockheed Martin and also enjoys home remodeling projects and cooking.



Sushanna and George Darley

Sushanna will join by Profession of Faith and Baptism and George joined by Reaffirmation of Faith. George is a police officer. Sushanna, who goes by "Sushi", is a stay-at-home mom who likes computers and books. They have a daughter, Samara, who is seven months old.

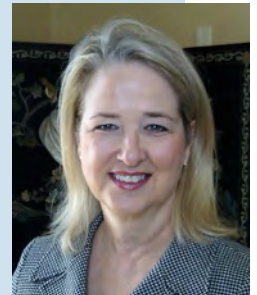


Herbert "Herbs" Ewert

Herbs joined by Letter of Transfer from Mt. Vernon Presbyterian Church in Alexandria. He is retired from the army and enjoys writing, music and painting.

Gwen Mayes

Gwen joined by Reaffirmation of Faith. She is an attorney working in government relations with ABIOMED, who enjoys yoga, writing, kayaking and entertaining.



Lisa and Donald Thomas

Lisa joined by Reaffirmation of Faith and Donald will join by Profession of Faith and Baptism. Lisa is an Editor for National Geographic and enjoys hiking and reading. Donald is a consultant for Dell and enjoys sports and hiking. They have two children, Patrick who is 2 ½ and Madeline who is four months old.

Update From Session

At its January Stated Meeting, Session was joined by the current confirmation class and the Board of Deacons for its annual joint meeting. Session introduced the various ministries to the confirmands and shared a report of activities and fellowship with the Board of Deacons. After a period of prayerful deliberation and consideration of the impact on the various missions of the church, Session approved the 2010 budget, reflecting a reduction from the 2009 budget consistent with economic realities.



The Children's Choir will sing at the 11:00 AM Worship Service on March 14, 2010.



Joys and Concerns

Birthdays

Abigail Adams, Paloma Alcalá, Mary Lee Anderson, Skip Bea, Sofia Bea, Lisa Bearman, Isabella Berkman, Eleanor Boese, Mara Boggess, Stephanie Boright, Emily Bourke, Lynne Boyle, Chris Brady, Maddie Brightbill, Steven Brown, Kip Brunk, Margaret Carr, Ashley Chamberlain, Doris Cobun, Brian Comey, Mark Comey, Matthew Comey, Alex Conkey, Tony Costello, Tom Dabney, Nicholas Dahmann, Madeleine Davidson, Meredith Davidson, Peter Davidson, Amber Dean, Albie Dickson, Campbell Dickson, Alex Dorrier, Carol Duke, Nicholas Duvall, Debbie Farmer, Mick Fleming, Meg Gallagher, Anna Gilbert, Amy Gill, Pattie Grainger, Will Griffin, Art Guarinello, Ed Hall, Michael Hannam, Dorte Hardage, John Hardage, Jack Hardage, Betty Heiby, Brian Hoover, Maria Hopper, Amy Kavelman, Erica Kicak-Vanderhoeven, Katie Kosanovich, Matthew Kosanovich, Peter Kosanovich, Michael Kroeger, Judy Lampley, Molly Landis, Sean Landis, Robin Lehman, Cameron Luther, Abraham Mailander, William Mannen, Geoff Marin, Audrey May, Lydia May, Priscilla McAndrews, Megan McCabe, Kyle McKernan, Sarah McPartlin, Pam Mengel, Leslie Milner, Laura Neitz, Eugene Olmi, Caroline Otteni, Elizabeth Owens, Mac Page, Marina Pharis, Eva Phelps, Ashley Rath, Harper Rath, Catherine Regen, Billy Richards, Margaret Rizzi, Elizabeth Roberts, Kim Rozelle, Thomas Ryan, Len Sanderson, Nash Sanderson, Cathy Schroeder, Allen Shriver, Brady Simpson, Thacher Smith, Jay Spurr, Alexander Steinitz, Rob Thormeyer, Reagen Tucker, Kate Tuttle, Nancy Van Gulick, Hugh Van Horn, Cecily Wainstein, Brendan Walsh, Gillian Warner, Alexis Waters, Mary Ann Way, Bill Weber, Casey Weir, Lynne Weir, Jennifer White, Ian Whitson, Bob Wiles, Elizabeth Wilson, Shane Winslow, and Bill Wollam.

Our Congratulations are offered on...

The birth of...

Nathaniel "Nate" George Hanbury, son of Trey Hanbury and Suzanna Kang, on December 14, 2009.

Elizabeth Caroline McCaskill, daughter of Kelly and Duncan, on December 18, 2009;

Our sympathy goes to...

Mark Warner on the death of his mother, Marjorie Warner, on January 23;

Cleve Lisecki and family on the death of his cousin, Sean Hanofee, on January 23;

Marsha Rhea on the death of her uncle;

Priscilla Andre-Colton and her family on the death of her father, Melvin Colton, on January 31;

Howard Clark on the death of his sister, Sally Dennis, on February 1;

Baird and Marcia Smith on the death of their friend, Bill Drewer;

Dave Heiby and the Jones' family on the death of Dave's friend, Mike Jones;
and Robin Muthig's friend, Starr Whitten, on the death of her husband Dan.

Children's Ministry

Sermon on the Mount

Our Journey in March will take our 1st through 5th graders to the "Sermon on the Mount". If you would like to volunteer to be a shepherd or a workshop leader, please email Allyson Hassard at ahazzard@comcast.net.

Club 3-4-5 Begins March 5

Who: All children in grades 3, 4, & 5

What: Scavenger Hunt

When: Friday, March 5, 2010, 5:00-6:30 pm

Where: In Fellowship Hall

Why: To enjoy a scavenger hunt and have some fun

The Fish Banks are Here!

Throughout Lent, please collect coins in your fish bank, and then bring your fish banks to dedicate in worship on Palm Sunday (March 28) or Easter Sunday (April 4).

Club 3-4-5 is a new initiative of the Children's Ministry committee. It is intended to give our older elementary children an opportunity for fellowship and relationship-building as they grow into youth fellowship at the Meeting House. Since the first planned meeting in February was cancelled because of the snow, March 5th will be the Club 3-4-5 kick-off meeting. Please RSVP to Margaret Rizzi (rizzifamily1@cox.net) by March 3 if your child will attend. Snacks will be available. If you plan to attend the Taize service at 6:30 pm that evening, your child can stay after Club 3-4-5 and enjoy pizza and a movie with the youth group, which is offering sitting during and after the Taize service from 5 to 9 pm.

March Adult Ed Classes Sundays at 9:40 AM

In Fellowship Hall continuing to March 28, *Troubling Texts in the Bible*

Please join us as we wrestle difficult passages to see how they can provide us with important spiritual lessons.

Each Sunday, the class will consider a different passage and engage in thought-provoking discussion.

Facilitators: Lee Posey, Tom Roberts, Hal Collums

In Heritage Hall, March 7 & 14

Where is God in our Suffering? And How Do We Respond?

The Lenten season often brings up our own sense of loss and grief as we focus on the cross, and we are left wondering what to do. The Stephen Ministers will host two sessions to help guide us through this part of our lives.

Sessions will address spiritual practices and practical matters surrounding grief and loss (what to say, do).

Nancy Scott, LCSW, from the Center for Pastoral Counseling of Virginia, will lead this class. Nancy is a Presbyterian lay person and has completed Virginia Theological Seminary's Education for Ministry program.

In Heritage Hall, March 21 & 28

Christian Understanding and Other Religions: Lessons from the Conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina

A number of high profile attacks over recent years have

caused many in the Muslim community to struggle with a difficult question: how can religious understanding contribute to unspeakable acts of violence? This question resonates with other religious traditions, and Christianity is no exception. The conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina during the 1990s provided disturbing examples of brutality justified in the language of Christianity. What aspects of religious understanding, and Christian understanding in particular, can lead to such tragic results? Using the Bosnian conflict as a contextual case study, we will examine this question, touching on how Christians can interact with people of other faiths in a meaningful and constructive manner. Alan Matney, OPMH member and PhD student in comparative theology at Georgetown University, will lead this class.

In Westminster Hall, March 7, 14, 21, & 28

Resurrection

The most startling claim of Christianity is that Jesus rose from the dead after being brutally executed on a Roman cross two thousand years ago. Could it possibly be true? And if it were, what difference could it make to us today? In this four session, video-based class, N.T. Wright explores the political, historical and theological issues at stake in Jesus' day and today. Facilitators TBA.

Lenten Neighborhood Studies:

During Lent this year, we are inviting congregation members to participate in a three or four-week Bible study in March, hosted in member's homes. Please sign up for the time and location that works best for you. In order to help our hosts plan, we ask you to RSVP to the church office by February 28 (703-549-6670, x129; susan@opmh.org), or register online.

The study will be "Gospel Portraits of Jesus," which will explore what we can learn about Jesus through the various names and titles he is described by in the New Testament.

If you are unable to attend a study, but would like to engage the material on your own, please contact the church office, and we will email you the participant guide / study sheets.

Study A (3 weeks)

Hosts: Mary Hill & Craig Powell

Location: 424 N. Peyton St., 22314

Date / Time: Sundays, 6-7:30pm

(Feb. 28; March 14, 21)

Special Notes: Children are welcome; please contact the host. (They will be accommodated in a separate area of the house).

Study B (3 weeks)

Hosts: Ronda and Randy Drucker

Location: 1913 Earldale Ct, 22306

Date / Time: Mondays, 7:30-8:30pm

(March 8, 15, 22)

Study C (4 weeks)

Host: Emily Asmus

Location: 211 N. Payne St., 22314

Date / Time: Tuesdays, 7:30 –

8:30pm (March 2, 9, 16, 23)

Special Notes: This study is especially for people in their 20s and 30s.

Study D (4 weeks)

Hosts: Jeff & Anne Irving

Location: 311 Mansion Dr., 22302

Date / Time: Wednesdays, 7:30 –

8:30 pm (March 3, 10, 17, 24)

Study E (4 weeks)

Hosts: Jan and Bob Jones

Location: 6119 Woodmont Rd, 22307

Date / Time: Thursdays, 7:00 – 8:00

pm (March 4, 11, 18, 25)

Youth Fellowship

In February, we are rocked by snow, and more snow. But, we were also rocked by great and very flexible volunteers. Thank you to everyone who stepped up to help with the Souper Bowl of Caring collection and the Valentine's Day babysitting fundraiser. And a VERY special thanks to our Middle and High School Sunday School teachers who stepped up to teach on some snowy days! We are still looking for a few more steady and/or fill in Middle School teachers for this calendar year.

February also brought us to the beginning of Lent, starting with Ash Wednesday on Feb 17th. During Lent as we follow Jesus Christ from 40 days of temptation in the desert to the cross, we will make an intentional effort to examine the stressors that hinder us from being disciples and part of a community bound in love.

In youth group, on Feb 21 and Feb 28, we will have "Stress Out" days where identify our stressors and then play with ideas to reduce them and even possibly turn them to good. Wear comfortable clothes as we will be moving around!

For further calendar information, please see our on-line calendar. It is the most up to date.

Here a few special items to note:

- The PRAISE BAND will have a special two hour rehearsal on February 28th from 4-6 pm to prepare for the performance at the congregational dinner on March 7th and the musical offering at the Heritage Luncheon on March 14th. Please RSVP to Alice.
- Fundraising Opportunity! On March 5, Youth will provide child-care for OPMH members and raise

money for summer youth camps. If you are going on a summer trip, you must help with fundraising!

- Still looking for more parents and other adults to provide dinner for youth group. Talk to Alice if you are interested in helping out.
- Montreat and Massanetta! High Schoolers -- Despite emails that said Feb. 5th was the deadline to sign up for Montreat, because Montreat's ability to welcome us into the dorms, we are able to extend the deadline to March 2nd. We will go to Montreat, August 1-7. Middle Schoolers -- Now is the time to sign up for the TERRIFICALLY FUN Middle School Conference at Massanetta, July 13-16. For details on both opportunities, talk to Alice.

Hope to see you at church!
Blessings,
Alice

Mission

Summer Workcamp/ Mission Trips

THE SHACK NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE PURSGLOVE, WV • JULY 11-16, 2010
Itching to put all those home repair skills to use? Or to discover ones you didn't know you had? Join us for a week in West Virginia this summer, as we engage in light home repair projects for low-income and elderly families. Past projects have included painting, installing a handicap-accessible shower, building a wheelchair ramp, installing railings, repairing roofs, hanging siding, and working on The Shack community center itself. No skills necessary, although any skills you have will be put to good use!

Location: Approximately four hours by car from Alexandria

Lodging: Dorms at West Virginia University

Estimated Cost Per Person: \$250 double occupancy (\$300 single), plus meals

Ages: Children may participate in The Shack's daycamp program. Adults, high and middle schoolers may work on the projects.

For more information, please contact Ann Herlin

FAITH MINISTRIES REYNOSA, MEXICO • JULY 25-31, 2010

The Meeting House's enduring partnership with Faith Ministries continues as we prepare to return to Reynosa, Mexico for our fifteenth year! We will be working with volunteers from Faith Ministries and a Mexican family to build a 12' x 14' concrete block house. There may also be opportunities for some members of our group to provide assistance in the community Clinic if we have qualified medical personnel participate in this mission trip. Should there be interest by some of our workcamp participants, we will again offer an art program for the children of Faith Ministries.

Travel from Alexandria: Air travel to McAllen, Texas, and then local travel to Reynosa, Mexico (about one hour by car from McAllen).

Estimated Cost Per Person: Approximately \$700 (includes airfare, meals for 5 days, lodging for 6 nights, local travel costs, building materials)

Living Arrangements: Hotel Virrey in Reynosa, Mexico.

Ages: Recommended minimum age is 13.

Ability to speak Spanish is not necessary, but always welcome!

For more information, or if you are interested in donating frequent flyer miles or financial support contact Randy Drucker (R2JMD@aol.com), Tim Elmore (twelmore@alumni.gwu.edu) or Alice Tewell (Alice@opmh.org).

CCH Update

The following are excerpts from letters from Community Coalition for Haiti members to their supporters. Please pray for John Klousia and his team who will be travelling to Haiti on February 19th.

Dear CCH Family and Friends,

We can't thank you enough for your prayers and support which have been almost physically felt. Thank you for lifting up our medical teams, relief efforts, and most importantly the people of Haiti whom you have touched so profoundly during this desperate time of need. For those of us who have just arrived home, we bear hearts of hope and hearts of sadness. Sadness for the pain we've seen our brothers and sisters carry, and hope as we join together to heal the hurts this world has brought. As of January 29th, CCH had provided emergency medical care to over 1,500 people through 5 medical teams in Jacmel, Port-au-Prince, Leogane, Cay Jacmel, and Pignon, distributed medical supplies to 7 hospitals and clinics, provided 1,200 lbs. of food and water to Jacmel, provided emergency diesel fuel for Hospital Bienfaisance de Pignon, shipped in 9 pallets of medical supplies to St. Daimen's in Port-au-Prince, coordinated relief efforts with numerous organizations working in Haiti, and help run Hospital Saint Michel in Jacmel. God has blessed us tremendously as we've cared for those He loves.

Karen Carr

I returned home late Saturday evening after spending 4 days in Jacmel, Haiti. Jacmel, along with Port au Prince, was one of the worst hit areas, being only 8 miles from the epicenter of the earthquake.

My job was to safely bring in my team of 4 physicians, 3 nurses, and an OR tech. We joined the rest of our team that had arrived the day before. We set up our "tent city" in a Catholic convent, and then went to St. Michelle's Hospital in downtown Jacmel. Of the 6 buildings on the hospital grounds, 2 were destroyed and one was partially destroyed. Patients were everywhere outside, in makeshift wards. Our full team now consisted of the above folks that I brought in, plus an orthopedic surgeon, and ED doc, and two ED nurses.

The next day we set up 2 triage stations, one at the soccer stadium in town, and one in the front section of the hospital. The OR was in the intact half of the building that had been partially destroyed. Literally, within minutes of getting everything set up, and getting our first patients into the minor room, we had a 6.1 aftershock. I can personally attest that the floor does move up and down in an earthquake! Everyone got out without any

injuries, but one of the intact buildings partially crumbled, and clearly we couldn't go back inside the "OR" building to do cases anymore as it was not safe.

Over the course of our stay, we treated over 800 patients, did countless amputations, witnessed the miracle of a baby being found alive in the rubble of a collapsed building after 8 days, and saw the pain and anguish of a family when they found their young husband / father dead in another crushed building.

One cannot try to figure these things out, as only God knows the purpose and reason for all of His actions, and we have to accept them as best we can. The horrors that we saw and faced were balanced by the fact that we could and did make a difference. I am immensely proud of my team, for their courage, their faith, and their ability to serve others above self. All of us on the team know that our lives have been forever changed. We knew that going in. And to a person, each and every one, we know that every second we were there was worth it.

Thank you for your prayers and your friendship.

Your friend in Christ, Rod Huebbers, CCH Board member

For pictures of Jacmel by a National Geographic Reporter volunteering with CCH, go to www.camerondavidson.com/blog.

Benefit Concert for Haiti – SAVE THE DATE!

Join us at Westminster Presbyterian Church on Saturday, March 20 at 7:00 p.m. for a concert to benefit the Community Coalition for Haiti. Lively music and dancing will be provided by the Irish Breakfast Band and Boyle School of Irish Dance. CCH continues to provide medical treatment and supplies to thousands of people injured in the earthquake. This is yet another opportunity to show our dedication to our mission in Haiti, and also to fellowship with another congregation. www.wpc-alex.org.

Thank you from OPMH Youth

Thank you for your generous contribution to OPMH Souper Bowl of Caring Drive! This year we collected \$598.70 to go to Family to Family and about 230 cans to go to ALIVE's food pantry. A special thank you to the Meeting House Cooperative Preschool for their extra effort bringing in cans!

Thank you for your contributions to the Making Gift of Heart Baby Kits to support those in Haiti. We are still putting together kits and compiling our total. If you still have supplies to bring in, but were delayed by the snow, you can still drop the items by.

VOICE Presses for Adult Dental Care, Respectful Relocations for Bland Public Housing Residents

VOICE is demonstrating creativity and faithful persistence in getting the state to put some money toward dental care for low income adults. Working with key state leaders and other allies, we are trying to get a portion of the state's federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) committed to this priority. If we are successful, as many as 7,000 Virginians who need urgent dental care could be helped between now and this September. Even a short-term win like this can help us keep awareness high on this issue and move us closer to a long-term solution in the state budget when the economy recovers. At this newsletter's deadline, at least 10 OPMH members were making plans to attend a March 2 public action in Richmond to secure this agreement.

Locally, VOICE leaders have been in meetings with Alexandria city leaders to press for just treatment for the residents of the James Bland public housing development during the relocation and redevelopment of this property. VOICE first organized with public housing residents over maintenance problems and electricity bills one year ago. We stayed in relationship with the residents as the relocations for the first 32 units began and monitored the Alexandria Housing and Redevelopment Authority's poor execution of its own plans and promises. We want the remaining issues for the first-phase residents resolved and ARHA to execute all future relocations with appropriate respect for the rights and needs of the residents. We also want assurance that those who have lived there, often for many years, have the first right to return to their community once the new homes are built. If you have any questions about these state and local VOICE actions and want to know how you can get involved, please contact Marsha Rhea, VOICE OPMH Core Team, marsharhea@verizon.net, 703-299-9717 or Rev. Ann Herlin, ann@opmh.org, 703-549-6670.

First Night Love and Essentials for Alexandria's Foster Children

One of our mission partners, The Fund for Alexandria's Child, has asked us to provide "first night" essentials for children moving to foster care families, especially in emergency situations.

On February 28, OPMH will be kicking our off our First Night Love and Essentials project, and we hope you will be excited about participating. Each Sunday from February 28 to March 28, and at the Congregational Dinner on March 7, we will be collecting new pajamas, toothbrush and toothpaste, underwear, socks, stuffed animals, toiletries and other first night essentials to welcome a foster child to their new home. Lists will be provided to

congregants each Sunday, and a large decorated bin will be housed in Fellowship Hall to collect the items during Coffee Hour. Project representatives will also be available at that time to answer any questions; youth will help prepare the items for delivery after Spring break.

Our "goal" is to be able to provide as many "complete" First Night welcome bags as possible, so you may want to share this project with another family or 2. There are 5-6 children taken into foster care each month, so 30 bags will cover half a year of children, and 60 bags will cover a full year. We will accept gift cards to help complete someone else's welcome bagor to provide families with assistance for children with special needs. You will be interested to know that 75% of all children going into foster care are teenagers, so that age group is an important priority for us - but we will provide lists for other age children as well.

This project is a creative way to supplement the decreased funds in our budget for mission this year and to bring the Alexandria community inside the walls of the Meeting House. We hope you enjoy participating in it as much as we enjoyed planning it!

Dona deLeon, Lindsey Merchant, Nancy Van Gulick, Margaret Rizzi and Priscilla Andre-Colton, Planning Committee.

Carpenter's Shelter

OPMH prepares and serves dinners at Carpenter's Shelter on the 4th Sunday of each month. For information about volunteering contact Atilla Kocsis at atilla@digitalphenom.com.

When I was in college, I gave of my time, talent and energy to a homeless shelter in Worcester, MA. I found satisfaction in helping the city's hungry and homeless. It sometimes was overwhelming as I grew up in a small rural town with no visible homelessness. I wanted to provide a human service, and be a steward for my community while I was away from my previous life and reality.

When I settled in Alexandria I found a new community for service and fellowship at the Old Presbyterian Meeting House. Together with other volunteers at Carpenters Shelter, I have experienced a sense of fulfillment by making a difference in the lives of others. Even during a difficult semester of studying for my Masters exams, I have continued to make an effort to volunteer at the shelter. I feel so humbled by this, and give thanks and praise to God, for giving me opportunities to continue to do what I feel passionate about.

Amanda Asmus

City of Alexandria
**Department of Human Services
Division of Social Services
COMMUNITY RESOURCES PROGRAM
2525 Mount Vernon Avenue
Alexandria, VA 22301**

January 26, 2010

Dear Friends at the Old Presbyterian Meeting House:

It seems that every time I turn around, your congregation is helping provide comfort and services for people in need through programs at the Alexandria Department of Human Services. As the new year progresses, I am moved to thank you from the bottom of the collective heart of our staff members for the many ways you have made an impact.

Holiday Sharing: Kerri Stevens and the OPMH Mission Ministry took care of 25 families, 1 foster child and 5 senior/disabled citizens providing gifts and grocery gift cards for 111 individuals. It is hard to calculate the value of your effort and caring, but it is HUGE.

Mission Donation: Each quarter, *The Fund for Alexandria's Child* receives a financial donation as a result of the OPMH Mission Committee budget. This is always a surprise when it arrives, but is always an affirmation of the good work we do courtesy of the "good works" of the church.

Pentecost Donation: An additional amount was unexpectedly received not long ago for *The Fund for Alexandria's Child*. Fundraising is an on-going, labor-intensive and "iffy" function and this special infusion was indeed very special and gratifying.

First Night Baskets Project: Margaret Rizzi and Dona deLeon (and others I may not have met) are carefully thinking through the difficult entry into foster care of our community's most vulnerable children and are gathering the tangible items that might ease their way. Value = priceless.

Chairperson: For many years, OPMH Nancy Van Gulick has been a leader cum worker in the effort to provide care and safety for children in foster care and for *The Fund for Alexandria's Child*. Not only has she been on the front line as a foster parent, but also as a messenger for our special cause.

Emergency Funding through Family-to-Family: it goes without saying that the Meeting House provides incredible and generous support for Alexandria families' emergency needs through the Office of Community Services.

Who can possibly assess the value of your contributions to this community? Again, thank you for the blessings you have brought to others.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Kratzok
Coordinator of Community Resources

MARCH 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28 8:30 AM Worship/Communion 9:30 AM Children's Music/Heaven/RM 22 9:40 AM Education 11:00 AM Worship 12:00 PM Coffee Hour/FH 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM VOICE Meeting/FL 1b 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM Youth Praise Band 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM Middle/High School Youth/FH 7:00 PM AA Mtg/WH 8:30 PM AA Mtg/WH	1 7:00 PM Leadership Council/C 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Piano Recital/S 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM VOICE Training/FH	2 7:00 PM Deacons Meeting/HH	3 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM SPIRIT meeting/L 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM Yoga/Pilates with Banna/FH 7:30 PM Bible Study/FL 1b 8:30 PM AA Meeting/WH	4 7:00 PM AA Meeting/WH 8:30 PM AA Meeting/WH	5 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM Club 3-4-5/FH 5:00 PM - 9:00 PM Youth Fundraiser/Babysitting/HH 6:30 PM Taizé Prayer Service/S 7:30 PM AA Mtg/WH	6 12:00 PM AA Mtg/WH 8:30 PM AA Meeting/WH
7 NO YOUTH GROUP/Praise Band performs at dinner 8:30 AM Worship/Communion 9:30 AM Children's Music/Heaven/RM 22 9:40 AM Education 11:00 AM Worship 12:00 PM Coffee Hour/FH 12:00 PM Stephen Ministers/P 1:30 PM - 3:00 PM Reformed Institute/C 5:30 PM - 9:00 PM Congregational Dinner/VA Theological Seminary 7:00 PM AA Mtg/WH 8:30 PM AA Mtg/WH	8 7:00 PM Committee Meeting Night	9 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM Union PSCE Alumni Luncheon/HH	10 Bag Lunch/HH 12:15 PM - 1:30 PM Preschool Staff Meeting/FL 1b 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM Yoga/Pilates with Banna/FH 4:30 PM - 6:30 PM ATC Board Meeting/FL 1b 7:30 PM Bible Study/FL 1b 8:30 PM AA Meeting/WH	11 Bag Lunch/HH 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Circle 5 Meeting/P 7:00 PM AA Meeting/WH 8:30 PM AA Meeting/WH	12 7:30 PM AA Mtg/WH	13 12:00 PM AA Mtg/WH 8:30 PM AA Meeting/WH
14 8:30 AM Worship/Communion 9:30 AM Children's Music/Heaven/RM 22 9:40 AM Education 11:00 AM Worship/Children's Choir 12:00 PM Coffee Hour/FH 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM Luncheon-Praise Band will perform/HH 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM Middle/High School Youth/FH 7:00 PM AA Mtg/WH 8:00 PM Youth Advisor's Meeting/FH 8:30 PM AA Mtg/WH	15 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	16 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM Stephen Ministers/P	17 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM Yoga/Pilates with Banna/FH 1:30 PM - 3:00 PM Reformed Institute Meeting/C 7:30 PM Bible Study/FL 1b 8:30 PM AA Meeting/WH	18 7:00 PM AA Meeting/WH 8:30 PM AA Meeting/WH	19 7:30 PM AA Mtg/WH	20 12:00 PM AA Mtg/WH 8:30 PM AA Meeting/WH
21 8:30 AM Worship/Communion 9:30 AM Children's Music/Heaven/RM 22 9:40 AM Education 11:00 AM Worship 12:00 PM Work Camp Kickoff Brunch/FH 12:30 PM - 4:30 PM Youth Service Afternoon/TBA 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM Praise Band Rehearsal/FH 7:00 PM AA Mtg/WH 8:30 PM AA Mtg/WH	22 7:00 PM Session Meeting/HH	23	24 Bag Lunch/HH 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM Yoga/Pilates with Banna/FH 7:30 PM Bible Study/FL 1b 8:30 PM AA Meeting/WH	25 Bag Lunch/HH 7:00 PM AA Meeting/WH 8:30 PM AA Meeting/WH	26 7:30 PM AA Mtg/WH	27 12:00 PM AA Mtg/WH 8:30 PM AA Meeting/WH
28 PASSION/PALM SUNDAY 8:30 AM Worship/Communion 9:30 AM Children's Music/Heaven/RM 22 9:40 AM Education 11:00 AM Worship 12:00 PM Coffee Hour/FH 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM Praise Band Rehearsal/FH 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM Middle/High School Youth/FH 7:00 PM AA Mtg/WH 8:30 PM AA Mtg/WH	29	30	31 8:30 PM AA Meeting/WH	1 Maundy Thursday 7:00 PM AA Meeting/WH 7:00 PM Maundy Thursday Service 8:30 PM AA Meeting/WH	2 Good Friday 12:00 PM Good Friday Worship Service 7:30 PM AA Mtg/WH	3 12:00 PM AA Mtg/WH 8:30 PM AA Meeting/WH

Courtyard: CY
 Fellowship Hall: FH
 Flounder: FL 1a, FL 2b
 Heritage Hall: HH
 Westminster Hall: WH
 Sanctuary: S
 Conference Room: CR
 Library: L
 Parlor: P

Congregational Life & Community Events

Celebration in honor of Reverend John Yieh

You are cordially invited to join Virginia Theological Seminary in celebrating the promotion of The Reverend John Yieh, Ph.D. to Full Professor of New Testament at a lecture "Receiving Christ: Reading the Bible across Time and Culture" on Wednesday, March 3, 2010, at 7:00 PM, Lettie Pate Evans Auditorium, Addison Academic Center, Virginia Theological Seminary, 3737 Seminary Road.



RETHINKING THE EDUCATIONAL MISSION OF THE CHURCH – the next step

PASSING ON THE FAITH: THE CHALLENGE TO YOUR CONGREGATION an event for lay and professional church leaders designed to facilitate fresh strategic thinking about the church's educational ministry

Stephen Prothero, Boston University

"Religious Illiteracy: Is It Really a Problem?"

Michael Jinkins, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary

"The Life of the Mind in the Service of the Church – A Reformed Perspective"

Virginia Theological Seminary, Alexandria, Virginia

Saturday, April 17 (9:30 a.m.--3:30 p.m.)

Registration at www.reformedinstitute.org or 703-518-5125.

Old Presbyterian Meeting House

323 South Fairfax Street
Alexandria, VA 22314-3716