



The Westmorelander

Westmoreland Congregational United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation

Volume 54, No. 8

April 15, 2007

Bishop Riah Abu El-Assal: An Appreciation

Each Sunday as we light our Partnership Candle and reaffirm our relationship with Christ Episcopal Church in Nazareth, Israel, we recite a Prayer for Peace. The original prayer came from the Episcopal liturgy and after some members of the Middle East Committee pointed out that it didn't employ very peaceful language ("sword of righteousness," for example) we asked our friend, The Rt. Rev. Riah Abu El-Assal, the Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem, to compose a new one, which he did, and now we share that prayer with Christ Episcopal. Now Bishop Riah is stepping down, and writes:

"I have a great dream which requires a small step to mushroom in the land. I called it "Integratsia". I see children of the three Abrahamic faiths: Arab Christians, Moslems, and Jews gathered in the warmth of harmony in one educational center co-living and integrating as one. The iceberg that has been separating people on basis of race, color and religion, has got to melt down. Extend a hand. Make this dream come true.

"Nothing is ever completed; but by the grace of God, ever completing. I thank God for the many trials and blessings I have experienced over the last 41 years. Much of what I have been able to accomplish for His glory, would not have been

possible without you. As I prepare to move away from my Diocesan duties, I look forward to rejoining hands so that the impossibilities of today become windows of opportunities for our dear future generations. Together, with faith, no doubt we are twice armed and peace shall prevail."

On Palm Sunday, the Rev. Suheil Dawani began his duties as the new Diocesan bishop of Jerusalem. He will be consecrated at a special service at St. George's Cathedral on Sunday, April 15, and we wish him God's blessings for his ministry.

The Diocese of Jerusalem extends over five countries, including Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Palestine and Israel, and supports 31 parishes and 35 institutions including hospitals, clinics, kindergartens and schools (among them the Bishop Riah High School to which we have contributed), vocational training programs, as well as institutions for the deaf, the disabled and the elderly.

We thank God for Bishop Riah's ministry, and pray God's blessing on Bishop Suheil, as we continue our fervent prayers for peace in the Holy Land.

See you in Church! *Rich*



Worship Topics & Themes

Sunday, April 15
Palm Sunday

"No Doubt About It...
Lessons From Thomas"
John 20:19-31
Doreen Mannion preaching

Sunday, April 22
Earth Day

Green Group and Bluegrass
A special service honoring
an environmental theology
Music by Gospel Grass
Bob Musil preaching

Sunday, April 29

"Happy Birthday to You (and Me)"
The UCC @ 50, Rich @ 56
Ecclesiastes 11:7-10, 12:1-8
Rich Smith preaching

Parking Concerns

Parking at the church has become more restricted due to the "No Parking" zones near the church on both Duvall and Dalecarlia Drives. This has made it particularly difficult for people with mobility limitations to get into the church when the parking lot is full. If you are fully mobile, we are requesting that you park further down on Dalecarlia and Duvall or park in the very back of the Washington Jesus Church (formerly Briggs), on Massachusetts or Western Avenue.

Thank you for your cooperation in making it easier for some of our folks to get into church.

Celebrating Earth Day

On Sunday, April 22nd, Westmoreland will celebrate Earth Day with several events. Bob Musil will deliver the sermon on a topic addressing the event. Music will be provided by our own Gospel Grass. Immediately following the service there will be a flowering tree planted in the Memorial Garden. The Coffee Hour will be held outdoors, weather permitting. There are multiple events planned for the Coffee Hour: information provided on energy efficiencies (EPA's Energy Star Program, a demonstration of "green" building materials such as energy-efficient windows), "earth-friendly" household products, information on improvements and availability of recycling in Montgomery County and the District of Columbia, a demonstration of a model system showing how local run-off of chemicals impacts the Chesapeake watershed, a discussion of legislative initiatives that Westmorelanders can support and several activities for children. The Green Group will distribute energy-efficient fluorescent light bulbs made available with partial support from Costco. Join the celebration!

Westmoreland Begins Recycling

As part of its effort toward "going green," our church is now recycling! Recycling bins – some blue and some green-- are in most rooms. These are for paper (white and colored) and cardboard only. Empty plastic bottles and aluminum cans should be disposed of in the specially designated recycling can in the main kitchen. Please use the recycling containers around the church for recycle items only and do not place other trash in them.

Simple Gifts to Appear at WCUC

Two women plus ten instruments equals one good time when **Simple Gifts** appears at Westmoreland on Saturday, **May 12**. This award-winning band performs on an impressive array of instruments and presents a wide variety of ethnic folk music, blending styles from diverse cultures. **Simple Gifts** has appeared on regional and national stages as well as dozens of colleges and universities, and has recorded six albums.

The band's appearance, sponsored by the Westmoreland Arts Committee, will have three components: a spoons class at 3:30 pm, the concert at 4 pm, and a jam session at 5 pm. Cost is \$10/individual and \$20/family. You won't want to miss this special performance!



On March 13 the Mid-East Committee hosted a successful ecumenical gathering to review progress on American Christian denominations' use of economic leverage to end the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. Speakers included Donald Mead, a U.S. Presbyterian Church leader, John Deckenback, UCC Central Atlantic Conference Coordinator, and Westmoreland's Robert Mertz, a specialist on the Palestinian economy. Besides Westmorelanders, twelve Washington-area UCC, Unitarian, Episcopalian, Methodist, Presbyterian, and other Christian congregations participated.

The meeting focused on the Presbyterian General Assembly and the UCC General Synod resolutions calling for a process which could lead to phased selective divestment of holdings in US companies that support Israel's military occupation. Additionally, both the Presbyterian and UCC churches seek sound Palestinian projects to invest in despite the current difficult economic circumstances. The UCC has issued a catalogue of organizations and projects to support through contributions, product purchases and/or investment.

The Presbyterian Church's next step is to ask the companies identified as actively supporting Israel's military occupation to change their occupation-supporting policies and activities. If not successful, shareholder resolutions would follow; if this is not successful, a divestment of shares could follow. The UCC program similarly encourages the same five companies to end their support of the military occupation or face possible divestment.

Major Protestant churches want to encourage a peaceful and just resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The involvement of so many Washington-area churches demonstrates this sense of responsibility and the need for positive action.

The Mid-East Committee

Come to the Spring Fling

April 21, 7 - 9 pm in the Social Hall. Bring two bottles of wine or hors d'oeuvres to serve ten. Child care available for a small fee. RSVP to:

Mary Grossnick, grossnick@verizon.net,
301-986-7933

Jeanine Derr, jeaninederr@aol.com, 301-654-3057
Leslie Weber, LMWeber@rcn.com, 301-718-7844

Ministries for Children and Youth

Safe-Church Policy

Over the past year, BCE has developed policies for our volunteers and church school called the **Safe-Church Policy**. The UCC denominational offices have asked each church to consider adopting such policies to protect our children and our community. The policy includes definitions of relationships (teaching, ministerial, etc.), guidelines for those relationships to be safe, and procedures for implementing the policies.

Some examples of changes include: keeping confidential records of who our teachers are; asking that no teacher be alone behind closed doors with children; and developing a response plan should any accusation occur. If you would like to read the complete **The Safe-Church Policy**, stop by the church library to check out a paper copy or email Amber for an electronic copy (aneuroth@westmorelaucc.org).

Family Worship Night

The Second Annual Family Worship Night for children preschool – fourth grade and their families will be held May 5, 5 pm. It will feature time in the Sanctuary exploring different aspects of worship through interactive activities at a series of “worship stations”. The learning component will be followed by a potluck dinner in the Social Hall. Each family is asked to bring a main course, salad or dessert to share. If you are interested in helping with the worship stations in the sanctuary, please contact Amber.

Upcoming Events

May 4-5 - 7:30 pm-9 am Middle School Lock-In (6th-9th grade)

May 13 - Celebration for Class of 2007

May 20 - Youth Sunday and BCE Picnic

Concert to Benefit HIV/AIDS Organizations

The 4th Annual Community of Caring Concert “A Musical Quilt: Together in Unity” will be held **April 28**, 7:30 pm at Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church and the Bethesda Jewish Congregation. This HIV/AIDS benefit promises to be a delightful evening that will include music by a locally renowned gospel group, Reverb, the Machaya Klezmer band, a Latin American chamber choir, a muslim Hip Hop group, Master Organist, Jason West, the Walt Whitman Jazz Ensemble and Chamber Choir and the Walter Johnson Jazz Combo.

All the concert proceeds will be divided among: The Dennis Avenue Health Center Client Fund, The Association Francois-Xavier Bagnoud, and The Women's Collective (TWC), Washington, DC. Visit www.bradleyhillchurch.org or pick up a brochure in the Social Hall.

Forum: Immigration

Volunteer Corp member, Rachel Cloud, will talk about her recent trip with a Christian Peacemaker Team to the Arizona border to observe treatment of and resources for migrants. Sunday, **April 15**, 11:30 am in the Parlor.

Parish Notes

Our prayers of condolence are extended to Don & Kay Jansky on the death of **Margaret Siebert Fable**, Don's mother on April 5. A memorial will be held at a time to be announced. Margaret first joined Westmoreland in 1955, transferred to the United Church of Boca Raton in 1970 and rejoined Westmoreland in April 1979. Margaret designed and quilted an intricate Christmas wall-hanging every year for twenty years displaying the collection each Christmas season in the Social Hall.

A memorial service for Winifred “Winnie” Hamilton, who died on March 13, will be held at Westmoreland on **April 28**, 3 pm.

On April 5, the Revs. Rich Smith and Bob Maddox held a Maundy Thursday service at Asbury Methodist Village. It was attended by seven Westmorelanders, several of whom can no longer get to Westmoreland, and who touched us with their appreciation of a continuing connection with our congregation. Please keep them in your hearts and prayers.

Congratulations to **Bunty Ketcham** who marks 50 years as a Westmoreland member on April 21.

Women's Reading Group

Speak Memoir

by Vladimir Nabakov

Wednesday, **May 2**, 7:30 pm

Emma Rose Martin's home

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Wednesday Evening Book Group

The Day the Leader Was Killed

by Naguib Mahfouz

Wednesday, May 9, 7:30 pm

in the Parlor

Saga of an Egyptian family up to the assassination of Anwar Sadat



**Westmoreland Arts
and Crafts Exhibit**

Open through April 30
Mabry Room

*Sponsored by the
WCUCC Arts Committee*

April 15 - 30, 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
15 Tech Committee 8:30 am Worship & Church Sch 10am Forum 11:30 am	16 Ch. Coun. 7 pm Boards 8 pm	17	18 Prime Timers 12 Noon	19 Choir rehearsal Chancel 8-9:30	20	21 Yoga 9 am Spring Fling 7 pm
22 Earth Day Worship 10 am Bluegrass Music Special Events Open House at Smith's 2 - 4 pm	23	24 Sandwich making 10:30 am Mid-East Comm. 7:30 pm	25	26 Choir rehearsal Chancel 8-9:30	27	28 Yoga 9 am Hamilton Memorial 3 pm
29 Worship & Church Sch 10am Child. Choir 11:45	30			Choir rehearsal Chancel 8-9:30		Yoga 9 am

Senior Minister.....Richard L. Smith
 Minister for Children, Youth and
 Families.....Amber Henry Neuroth
 Minister of Discipleship.....Robert
 Maddox
 Director of Music.....Alejandro
 Hernandez-Valdez
 Newsletter Editor.....Janet Moyer
Office Hours: 9 AM - 5 PM

Newsletter Deadlines

Issue Date	Deadline
May 1	Apr 18
May 15	May 4

Articles should be emailed to:
jmoyer@westmorelanducc.org

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