



The Westmorelander

Westmoreland Congregational United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation

Volume 54, No. 19

November 15, 2007

Jessica's Journey to Westmoreland

As many of you know, I started my work here at Westmoreland at the beginning of September and was officially voted in and welcomed as the Director of Children's and Youth Ministries on September 23. It occurred to me that some of you might be interested in knowing how it was that I came to Westmoreland. Here is a highly abridged version of the lifelong journey that has led me here.

I grew up in the small town of Kingsley, Iowa with my three sisters. Our parents separated and later divorced and were not able to care for us, so our maternal grandmother raised us. She introduced me to the church, taking me to First Congregational UCC when she could get me up in the morning. I went pretty willingly when I was young, but as I reached junior high and high school, it was a more difficult task. I was confirmed and did attend fairly regularly until I left for college.

At the University of Iowa, I met a boy and as a result became involved with Lutheran Campus Ministries (ELCA). It was during this time that I began to really think about my faith and what it was that I believed. It also was during this time that I received my call to ministry, and immediately began to answer it. I became very involved in the campus ministry. I led a Wednesday night service of evening prayer, served as an assisting minister on Sundays, led small groups

and preached several times as a peer minister.

Following graduation, I left the University of Iowa and Lutheran Campus Ministries to begin my seminary studies at Eden Theological Seminary in St. Louis, MO. What an experience that was! There is no way I can convey how meaningful my time at Eden was. It was a time of exploration and discovery. Sure, I took some classes that I found a bit dry, but overall, the experience was life-giving. My theological understandings greatly developed, and I was given opportunities to live them out in the real world of ministry. I served in three different internships while at Eden: CREDO Campus Ministry, St. Paul UCC, and the Positive Family Enterprise, Inc. Through each of these ministry experiences, I gained greater insight into how I was truly being called to serve.

This past summer, my process of discernment continued as I moved to Silver Spring, MD to be close to my boyfriend and began the Clinical Pastoral Education program at Children's National Medical Center in Washington, DC. I had come to find through my experiences at Eden, that I really wanted to work with children, youth, and families as well as engage in justice issues. My experience at Children's helped me to discern that I was being called to serve in those areas in a congregational setting not in an institutional setting as I had previously thought.

Worship Themes & Topics

Sunday, November 18

Thanksgiving/Consecration Sunday

"Awesome Thanks,
Marvelous Giving"

Isaiah 12

Rich Smith, preaching

Sunday, November 25

"Apocalypse, Now?"

Luke 21:5-19

Rich Smith, preaching

One day while I was working at the hospital, I received a phone call from an Eden staff member. I called her back, and she told me of a UCC church just outside of DC that was looking for a Director of Children's and Youth Ministries, and she said that the church was very involved with justice issues. I could not believe it. Just as I had come to discern the place I would best serve, an opportunity to serve in just such a place arose! I made the phone call to a co-chair of the search committee, and off we went.

I have been here at Westmoreland for just over two months, and already I have experienced great opportunities for ministry and the welcoming and faithful community that comes together here.

I look forward to getting to know you all much better as we continue to engage in the work to which God calls us.

Jessica

We are Thankful!

Come to the Tables of Thanksgiving

Consecration Sunday, **November 18**, will be a day to celebrate and give thanks for the great abundance that we have. We will present our pledges during the worship service and then celebrate with the **Tables of Thanksgiving** in the Social Hall after worship. This festive event, includes a full-fledged Thanksgiving luncheon, complete with turkey, stuffing and trimmings provided by the Board of Membership and Fellowship. We request that Westmorelanders bring the side dishes (vegetables and salads) and desserts. If your last name begins **A – J, bring a dessert**; if it starts **K – Z, bring a side dish**. Please bring your dish to the church kitchen before worship.

Share the Blessings

Sunday, **November 18** is the last day to leave your contributions for a dinner for the Shaw Community Thanksgiving Baskets on the Social Hall stage. Get thee to the grocery store!

2 boxes of stuffing mix	2 cans of any vegetable
2 cans of sweet potatoes	2 cans of any fruit
1 can of cranberry sauce	2 boxes of macaroni and cheese
1 box of muffin mix	
1 box of cake mix	1 can of frosting

Nice additions: cranberry juice and canned gravy

Alternatively, you may write a check made out to Shaw Community Ministry and leave in the church office or mail it to SCM representative Barbara McDowell, 3607 Whispering Lane, Falls Church VA 22041.

“Front Page” News

You say you always wanted to run a newspaper? Well, it isn't the **Times** or the **Post**, but you can publish the Westmorelander. We are looking for a new editor. The newsletter is published twice a month from September through July 1. This paid position takes about 20 hours/month, and some of the work can be done at home. Requirements include an ability to write, edit, use a desktop publishing program and email, and willingness to keep up with what is going on at Westmoreland. If you are interested or want to know more, please contact Janet Moyer at 301-229-7766 or jmoyer@westmorelanducc.org.



Sunday, November 4, was sunny and bright, unlike the cold day when the Westmoreland Memorial Garden was originally dedicated in March 1978. Many family members of those whose ashes are interred in the Garden were present to witness the rededication of the Garden on this All Saints Sunday, and to see the newly installed arc of bricks bearing the names of their loved ones. Rev. Rich Smith updated the liturgy from the original dedication to rededicate the Garden.

Return of the Prayer Network

The Prayer Network is a way to deepen our common life of prayer. Members of the Network use an intercessory prayer to lift the names and needs of our community each day. Names and requests are confidential and remain on the list for one month. We need someone to handle the phone calls. For further information and/or to volunteer, contact Pete Davis, pete@daviscap.com or 202-966-3386.

The Personnel Committee Wants to Hear From Everyone!

For two weeks starting at the end of November, the Personnel Committee will ask *all Westmorelanders* to complete an anonymous, online survey appraising aspects of Rev. Rich Smith's ministry at our church. The survey will provide objective and comprehensive data for the Senior Minister's annual evaluation and will guide his goal setting for the next year. On-line participation is preferred so that the data can be compiled easily. However, if you are without access to a computer, a paper version of this survey will be mailed to you. Thank you for taking the time to participate. Questions? Contact the Personnel Committee:

Louise Stoner Crawford	Liz Fritsch
Heidi Hartmann	Kate Mahaffey

It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like...Advent!

Westmoreland is buzzing with plans for social, musical and educational events for all ages. Here are some early December events for your household calendar:

Saturday, December 1, 9:30 am - 12 Noon:

The Gospels of Matthew and Luke provided the Christian world with the classic narratives that have framed two millennia of Christmas celebrations for the western world. The two accounts present fascinating commonalities and striking differences both aimed to underscore the richness of the birth of Jesus. For the most part, however, Christians have not paid attention to the intricate way the gospel writers constructed their stories. This seminar will provide Westmorelanders an opportunity to "meet Jesus again" through chapters 1 and 2 of Matthew and Luke.

Sunday, December 2:

Make a beautiful wreath to grace your front door. The Board of Christian Education invites you to the very popular wreath-making workshop following the worship service. We provide the frames, greens, ribbons and decorations. You bring gardening gloves and pruning shears. A \$12 donation per wreath is requested to defray the cost of materials.

Saturday, December 15

3 pm: Family Christmas Crafts – Children of all ages can come to make Christmas crafts (ornaments, gifts, cards) for a family fellowship time. Snacks will be provided.

7 pm: Empty Nesters Holiday Gathering

If you have a child that has "flown the nest" for college or work, then you are an Empty Nester. You're invited to join the group for potluck holiday fare at Gail and John Edie's home, (6116 Goldtree Way, Bethesda). Please bring a side dish, salad or dessert for 10. RSVP to Gail at gail@johnedie.com.

The Gifts That Keep on Giving

Gifts given through Heifer International in honor our family, friends and neighbors help struggling families around the world become self-reliant by giving them a hand up. So as you begin your Christmas shopping this year, consider a flock of chicks, a sheep, honeybees, a water buffalo, a pig or a "share" in any of these. Gifts range from \$10 - \$1500. Check out the catalog on the What's Happening Table or visit www.heifer.org. And take the kids with you!

Parish Notes

We extend our prayers of condolence to:

Rev. Bob Maddox and his family on the death of his brother, Mike, on October 24 in Pensacola, Florida. Memorial services were held on November 2 and 3 in Florida. Interment was in Arkansas.

Fran Irwin, on the death of her mother, Harriet Hopkins, on November 4 at Ingleside. A memorial service will be held in Ohio on December 30 at the Lakewood Presbyterian Church where she was a member for over 70 years. Fran and Will especially appreciate the many Westmorelanders who included Harriet in their prayers over the last eight years.

Giving Stock Gifts?

It's that time of year when we think about gifts and, for some Westmorelanders, giving stock gifts to the church to pay their pledges. Please remember that when your broker transfers stock to the church account, we are not notified from whom the stock is given. To avoid "mystery gifts" (and a failure of those gifts to appear on your financial statement), please let Treasurer Mike Weber know that you are transferring a stock gift by contacting him at LMWeber@rcn.com or 301-718-7844.

A Note From Rachel

Rachel Cloud, former Westmoreland Volunteer Corps member, now serving with Christian Peacemakers in Colombia, sent a lengthy email on October 27. Copies are on The What's Happening Table in the Social Hall. Rachel is upbeat, learning a lot, not only about the political scene, but about the culture. She would like to hear from any Westmorelanders with their questions and news. You may contact her at rachelcloud@gmail.com.

Palestinian Olive Oil Sold Here!



Buy organic, extra-virgin, first-cold-pressed olive oil, 750 ml (approx 24 oz): \$12.50 per bottle. Available in the church office and at Coffee Hour on Sundays. For further information, contact Pam Smith at pam.smith16@verizon.net



November 15 - November 30, 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				15 Chancel Choir 7:45 - 9:45 pm	16	17 Yoga 9 am Guitar Conc. 8 pm
18 Consec. Sunday Worship & Ch. School 10 am Tables of Thanksgiving 11:30 am	19 Boards Meet 7:30 pm	20	21	22 Thanksgiving	23 Church Offices Closed	24 Yoga 9 am
25 Worship & Ch. School 10 am	26	27 Sandwich making 11 am Ex Comm 7:30 pm	28	29 Chancel Choir 7:45 - 9:45 pm	30	

Senior Minister.....Rev. Richard L. Smith
 Director for Children's & Youth Ministries...Jessica Petersen
 Minister of Discipleship....Rev. Dr. Robert L. Maddox
 Director of Music....Dr. Alejandro Hernandez-Valdez
 Newsletter Editor.....Janet Moyer

Office Hours: 9 AM - 5PM

Newsletter Deadlines

Issue Date	Deadline
Dec 1	Nov 15
Dec 15	Dec 3

Articles should be emailed to:
jmoyer@westmorelanducc.org

