



The Westmorelander

Westmoreland Congregational United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation

Volume 54, No. 21

December 15, 2007

What Can We Offer?

Has the Offering become obsolete? These days, most people do not pay their pledges to the church weekly, but often monthly or even annually. And with the advent of electronic giving, some may never actually put anything directly into the plate at all. What is the meaning of “the offering” in a time like this?

We have been working on ways to make this part of the service more meaningful for everyone present. One is to have the invitation to the offering given by a lay person, giving them the opportunity to witness to their own faith, or to some aspect of the church’s mission. Another has been to expand the meaning of the offering – it’s not just about money, it’s about offering our whole selves to God, in ways that go even beyond the church.

Since mid-October, we’ve been including a small yellow card in the

worship bulletin, with the heading, “An Offering of My Whole Self.” Two blank spaces invite you to write down prayers for others and service to God and creation that you plan to offer in the coming week. Placed in the offering plates along with pledge envelopes and loose offerings, and carried forward by ushers and placed on the altar, they are dedicated (literal meaning: “given to God”) with our prayers, and thus everyone gets to participate in this act of worship.

In this season of giving, as we celebrate God’s great gift to us in the newborn Christ, and remember those who made their gifts to him, may we all respond by offering our whole selves to God – time, talent, treasure, prayers and service. It’s not obsolete, but central to what worship really is!

See you in church!

Rich

Worship Themes & Topics

Sunday, December 16

Third Sunday of Advent

Music Sunday

Original compositions by

Dr. Alejandro Hernandez-Valdez

“The Holy Way Home”

Isaiah 35

Rev. Rich Smith preaching

Sunday, December 23

Fourth Sunday of Advent

“What About Joseph?”

Matthew 1:18-25

Rev. Rich Smith preaching

Sunday, December 30

“Songs and Stories for

After Christmas”

Isaiah 63:7-9

Hebrews 2:10-18

Matthew 2:13-23

Rev. Rich Smith and Friends

Here We Go A Caroling...

Director of Music, Alejandro Hernandez-Valdez, invites everyone – Westmorelanders, their neighbors and friends, young and old – to a grand carol sing-a-long on **December 23, 4 pm**. We will be led by the Chancel Choir and a brass quintet from the Marine and Navy bands!

Following the sing-a-long, there is a Chili Supper in the Social Hall and Santa Claus will stop by to wish all a wonderful Christmas.

*Wishing You Peace and Joy
in this Blessed Season*



**Rev. Rich Smith Rev. Bob Maddox
Jessica Petersen Janet Moyer
Sanelma Sutton Marilyn Mix
Debbie Parker**

Looking Toward Christmas

Music and Poinsettia Sunday

December 16, 10 am: A group of wonderful instrumentalists will join our Chancel choir in performing choral works composed by Dr. Alejandro Hernandez-Valdez.

3 – 5 pm: Open House: Share holiday cheer with Pam and Rich Smith at their home, 10 Sunnymeade Court, Potomac. Directions are on Westmorelandnet or contact the office.

Christmas Carol Sing-Along

Sunday, December 23, 4 pm: Gala carol sing-a-long with the Westmoreland Chancel Choir and a brass quintet from the Navy and Marine Bands. Chili Supper follows in the Social Hall.

Christmas Eve

Monday, December 24

5 pm: The Christmas story reenacted and read from the Bible. Join the Holy Family, angels and magi at this service for all ages.

11 pm: Lessons and carols tell the story of Jesus' birth at this candlelight service.

Christmas Offering

The annual Christmas offering is one of the sources of funding for the Board of Community Action's benevolences on behalf of Westmoreland. Grants are made to local, national and international non-profit organizations, especially those nominated by Westmorelanders. Please give generously in support of those who are helping others.

Spread the Spirit!

John Hatch

BCA Chair

Olive Oil Makes a Great Gift

Need a last-minute host/hostess gift? Give them something they can use: extra-virgin, first cold-pressed, Palestinian olive oil, \$12.50 for an almost-a-litre bottle. Contact Pam Smith at pam.smith16@verizon.net to arrange for bottles to be left in the office during the week or picked up on a Sunday morning. All proceeds go to help Palestinian farmers and redevelopment projects in Palestine.



Annual Reports and Biographical Forms Due in the Office

Just as surely as the credit card bills arrive in January, so are the Annual Reports from all church officers, board chairs and staff due in the church office. Reports should be brief and emailed to Office Manager, Sanelma Sutton, at: ssutton@westmorelanducc.org by **January 2**. Before Christmas is even better!

Board Chairs, please note: Deadline for all biographical forms for new board members are due in the office **December 20**.

Please observe these deadlines! Sanelma has a great deal of material to pull together for the Annual Meeting.

ANNUAL BUDGET MEETING: JANUARY 20
ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING:
JANUARY 27

Meet our New Members

Please extend a warm welcome to the following people who joined Westmoreland on December 9:

Pamela Henderson is an attorney in the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the General Counsel. She is also currently taking classes at Wesley Seminary. In her leisure time she enjoys travel, touring Gothic cathedrals, cooking and turning wood. Pamela, and her husband, Joe, live in Washington. She joined by letter of transfer.

Julie Fritts is currently a full-time mother at home with Maya, who is 4 months old. **Jonathan**, Julie's husband and Maya's father, is an attorney with Morgan, Lewis and Bockius in Washington. They both joined by reaffirmation of faith.

Jan Stohlman is an attorney mediator and is self-employed. Her interests include running, horseback riding, and civic involvement. **David Girard**, Jan's husband, is an audio engineer with his own business. His interests include reading and current affairs. Jan and David have two children, Davidson, 14 and Elise, 12. The family lives in Chevy Chase. They joined by reaffirmation of faith.

How Much is 3 times 5?

There are 50 students at the Marie Reed Community Learning Center who need math help, and we only have 14 tutors! Some students require one-on-one tutoring. So at the present time, there is a waiting list of students needing tutors. Can you help? Tutoring times have been expanded to make it easier for tutors. Tutors now can come any weekday at lunchtime (from noon to 1 pm). They can come after school on Mondays and/or Wednesdays from 4 to 6 pm. They can serve as in-class teaching assistants from 11 am to noon, and they can come from 1 to 2 pm any day of the week. Just one hour, once a week, will help. You can alternate sessions with another person to provide flexibility. Tutors help students with their homework (how hard can that be?) and with math problems that are provided to you. The school is 15 minutes from Westmoreland, in Adams Morgan, with parking right in front. Interested? Call Kristin Wiener at City Gate 240-381-6038 or Gary McDavid at 301-320-3657.

Saving Jesus Class to Resume in January

Rev. Bob Maddox's class, *Saving Jesus*, a DVD-based exploration of Jesus for the Third Millennium, will resume on **Sunday, January 13** (8:45 am in the Parlor) and **Monday, January 14** (12:30 pm at Carpenter House). There are four sessions remaining. You need not have attended the previous sessions; each stands alone. Join the lively discussions we have!

Post-Christmas Office Hours

The church office will observe the following hours December 26 - 28:

Wednesday, December 26: Closed
Thursday, December 27: 10 am - 1 pm
Friday, December 28: 10 am - 1 pm

The ministers are always available for emergencies via their cell phones: Rev. Rich Smith 301-325-1878 and Rev. Bob Maddox 202-368-0684.

Note: Bob Maddox has a **new home phone:** 301-229-1246.

Getting in Touch with Jessica Petersen

To contact Director of Children's and Youth Ministries, Jessica Petersen: jpetersen@westmorelanducc.org and cell phone 240-672-4692.

Parish Notes

Congratulations to **Hannah Giffin Brown**, 2002-2003 Volunteer Corps member, who was ordained into Christian ministry on November 11 at Wellesley Village Congregational Church, Wellesley, MA. Hannah has been accepted into the Transition to Ministry program at Mayflower UCC, Minneapolis, MN.

Our prayers of sympathy and condolence are extended to the family of **Charlotte Ann Dickinson Moore** on her death on November 30. She was an active and faithful member of Westmoreland since 1959, a member of the Chancel Choir for almost 40 years, a Deacon, Trustee, member of the Arts and Music Committee, Women's Reading Group and the Bazaar committee, among others. A memorial service was held at Westmoreland on December 8. Her ashes were interred in the Memorial Garden.

Harriet Elizabeth Summeril Sheeler, a member of Westmoreland since 1958, died in Batavia, IL on December 2. Harriet moved to Illinois in 2001. A full obituary is posted on the Membership and Fellowship Board in the Social Hall.

Florence Wilcox Perry, a charter member of Westmoreland (1950), died in Annapolis, MD on December 7. A memorial service will be held in Minnesota next summer. Her daughter, Nancy, designated the following for memorial gifts: American Lung Association, The Nature Conservancy or Westmoreland Church. Anyone wishing to contact Nancy may get her address from the church office.

\$100,000 for Iraq

The United Church of Christ is half way towards its goal of raising \$100,000 for Iraqi refugees who have suffered the consequences of war. By January 6, Epiphany, they hope to give Iraqi families access to food, water, health care and education with this gift. Just \$40 could feed a family of four for two weeks. If, in this season of hope and giving, you feel moved to help, visit www.ucc.org and click on "Glory to God in the highest and on earth, PEACE" to see how you can help.

**Never place a
period where God has
placed a comma.**

Gracie Allen





December 15 - 31, 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						15 H.S Youth 11 am Christmas Crafts 4 pm Empty Nesters 7 pm
16 Music Sunday Worship & Ch. School 10 am Smith's Open House 3 - 5 pm	17	18 Sandwich making 10:30 am	19 Prime Timers 12 Noon	20 Chancel Choir 7:45 - 9:45 pm	21	22
23 Worship & Ch. School 10 am Carol Sing & Chili Supper 4 pm <hr/> 30 Worship 10 am	24 Christmas Eve Worship 5 pm 11 pm	25 Christmas	26 Offices Closed	27 Office hours 10 am - 1 pm No Chancel Choir Rehearsal	28 Office hours 10 am - 1 pm	29

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
Jan 1	Dec 16
Jan 15	Jan 4
Articles should be emailed to:	
jmoyer@westmorelanducc.org	

