



The Westmorelander

Westmoreland Congregational United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation

Volume 55, No. 8

May 2008

A Sacred Conversation

By the time this is published, the Rev. Jeremiah Wright will have broken the silence he has kept since his retirement and some of his more provocative (some say “inflammatory”) statements that have been continuously broadcast by the news media. I doubt that anything he will have said will put the matter to rest, given the connection with the presidential campaign, but I do hope that those willing to look will have seen another side of him, the deeply caring side that is entwined with the prophetic one.

And while I regret what Wright and the good people of Trinity UCC have had to endure, I welcome the opportunities that have come from this – the chance to tell our UCC story to a nation that may be ready to listen – and the chance to engage in what our UCC President John Thomas invites us to, “A Sacred Conversation about Race.” As he said, at a press conference held at Trinity church, "Sacred conversations are never easy. This is especially true when honest talk about race confronts us with a painful past and won't let us ignore the troubles of our present day. That's why sacred conversations require a readiness to see one another as sacred despite our differences, and why the sacred places where these conversations take place need to be respected."

He is asking our churches to set aside **May 18** to have this important conversation. As I will be away on a long-standing commitment, Bob Maddox has enthusiastically agreed to take this up, and in fact plans to extend the conversation over two weeks, with a special guest preacher, Rev. Art Waidmann, on **May 25**. In a way, I already began the conversation with my sermon on April 6, marking the 40th anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King’s death. (It’s on the website, in case you missed it.)

I trust we will all welcome these conversations, and, as always, that we will keep our ears attuned to the Still Speaking God in our midst.

See you in Church!

Rich

Worship Themes & Topics

Sunday, May 4

Deacon Recognition - Holy Communion
Acts 6:1-7, 1 Timothy 3:8-13, John 13:3-5, 12-15
“Servants of the Servants of the Servant”
Rev. Rich Smith preaching

Sunday, May 11

Pentecost - Confirmation - Mothers Day
1 Corinthians 12:4-13
“How to Return a Gift”
Rev. Rich Smith preaching

Sunday, May 18

Genesis 1:27
“In the Image of God”
Rev. Dr. Bob Maddox preaching
Special Music: “Moses” - Ken Medema
Recognition of 2008 Graduates

Sunday, May 25

Matthew 15: 21-28
“Can We Talk?”
Rev. Art Waidmann, Guest Preacher
11:30 am: Forum with Rev. Art Waidmann
Sponsored by BCA

On Mother’s Day, May 11...

...honor your mother by contributing infant layette items for babies of low income mothers in Montgomery County served by Interfaith Works. Bring any of the following items listed below to church on Mother's Day, and place them in the white basket in the Narthex or on the stage of the Social Hall. **Items needed:** baby towels and washcloths, bibs, crib sheets and blankets, receiving blankets, bibs, burp cloths, one-piece sleepers, t-shirts, sacques, and cloth or disposable diapers.

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

May is a Month for Music

Mozart Fest - Saturday May 3, 7 pm

The Chancel and Adult Choirs of Westmoreland Congregational UCC and St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church and the Washington Conservatory of Music present **A Mozart Fest!** They join an orchestra comprised of Washington Conservatory faculty and students under the direction of Dr. Alejandro Hernandez-Valdez in an all-Mozart program. The concert includes the Coronation Mass, Ave Verum, Laudate Dominum and the Piano Quartet in G minor. A Westmoreland Artists exhibit follows.

Benefit: Bethesda Cares

A Festival of Choirs - Saturday, May 17, 7:30 pm

In continuing celebration of the UCC's 50th Anniversary, several UCC Potomac Association choirs, including Westmoreland's Chancel Choir, are presenting a joint concert at University Baptist Church, 3515 Campus Drive, College Park, MD. A piece commissioned by Pilgrim Church and an original composition by Westmoreland's Director of Music, Alejandro Hernandez-Valdez, are among the works scheduled to be performed.

Benefit: Shaw Community Ministry.

Marietta College Concert Choir - May 24, 4 pm

The Marietta College Concert Choir (Ohio), under the direction of Dr. Daniel Monek, will be giving a concert at Westmoreland.

In addition to performances around the US, this group of 45 students has also performed at the Beijing Conservatory, St. Mark's Cathedral in Venice and St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. The program features a variety of works representing a selection of classic and contemporary composers: William Averitt (Shenandoah Conservatory), William Buelow (professor emeritus of Marietta College), Mendelssohn, Fauré, Brahms and Dorsey. **Free.**

Let's Be Good Neighbors

Our church neighbors have requested that we please take care when parking on the residential streets near the church. If you turn around in driveways, be careful not to run over the lawns and don't park so close to driveways that it is difficult for residents to get their cars out onto the street. Thanks!

Church Retreat

Drink from the Well of Fellowship & Friendship

Registration packets have been mailed for the church retreat, **October 3 - 5**. Additional forms are available in the Social Hall. Rooms will be allotted on a first come-first served basis so register early! Questions? Contact Lisa Alexander at 301-495-5676 or lk_alexander@hotmail.com. *If cost might prohibit you from attending the retreat, please let a minister know. We can help you attend.*

Adult Education Discussions

Rev. Bob Maddox continues his series of discussions on **When We Talk About God, Let's Be Honest** by R. Kirby Godsey. Copies are available in the church office for \$16 each. The discussion sessions will be held at three different times:

- Sunday mornings, 8:30 am, April 13 - May 19 (Parlor)
- Mondays, April 14 - May 19, 12:30 pm (Carp Hse)
- Mondays, April 14 - May 19, 7:30 pm (Carp Hse)

Parish Notes

Hats off and warmest wishes are extended to Director for Children's and Youth Ministries, **Jessica Petersen**, as she graduates from Eden Theological Seminary in Saint Louis on Friday, May 16.

God bless **Maya Annabelle Fritts**, daughter of Jonathan and Julie Fritts, who was baptized at Westmoreland on March 30.

Congratulations to:

Lorrie Lynch whose textbook, **Exploring Journalism for the Media**, was recently published by South Western Educational Publishing.

Jean Lutterman whose two songs, "Frost Trees", and "Red Jazz" (settings of her sister Kay Wehners' poetry) will be presented by The Alexandria Philomela Women's Ensemble at the North Chevy Chase Christian Church on Sunday, May 18, at 2 pm.

Katelyn Macrae, a 2006-07 Volunteer Corps member, who will be attending Yale Divinity School beginning in September. Katelyn extends her thanks to all in the Westmoreland community who helped to nurture and guide her during the two years she spent in the area.

Building a House, Building Community

Youth Mission Trip March 25 – 29, Edisto Island, SC

Do you know what it is like to live with six teenagers for an entire week? Thanks to our recent youth mission trip, I can raise my hand and say “yes.” And, I would add that I loved it.

Confirmands Ben Clayton, Max Light, Max Barnhart, Caitlin DePorter, Susannah Derr and Sarah Tyson, seminarian, Amy Porterfield, and I traveled to Edisto and joined Gretchen Alexander (Ben’s grandmother) and members from her church, First Congregational UCC of Wilmette, IL, for a building project.

On our arrival, Steve Austin, founder of the Edisto Island Outreach Center, told us that we would be building a new house for Versie, a local woman whose house had burned down a year ago and whose mother had died in the fire. The foundation for the new house was already laid. Because we had almost no house-building experience, half of us worked at the new building site carrying wood, building floor joists, and burning the brush that had been cleared away from the site. The rest of us, using hammers and crowbars, carefully removed the floorboards and their nails from a old, donated beach house so that they could be re-used in the new house.

By the fourth, and final day, enough progress had been made at the new house that we all were able to work at the building site. We had various jobs: changing the washers so that they met the county’s requirements, hammering nails in order to make the house hurricane-resistant, reinforcing wall frames, and, of course, carrying wood. However, one task sticks out in my mind: raising the walls. In order to raise the walls, we all had to work together and keep our focus on the job at hand. It was an amazing feeling. After we had raised the walls on all four sides of the house, we could really see what it was we had accomplished: we were instrumental in rebuilding a woman’s home and in helping a woman rebuild her life! Where there had once been destruction and despair, there was now growth and renewed hope. As we left that day, each one of us wrote Versie a message of hope and blessings for her and her new home.

During our time on Edisto, we worked to build a house for a woman in need and as a result grew closer together as a community. The experience was remarkable, and one that our youth and I would most definitely seek out again.

Jessica Petersen, Dir. for Children’s and Youth Ministries

Westmoreland Environmental Action: A Challenge to Make a Difference

On Earth Day, the Westmoreland Green Group challenged Westmorelanders to make a commitment to take action to reduce their impact on the environment by taking a number of concrete actions between **April 20 and May 31**. They developed a checklist of steps to take that includes links to information everyone needs. The checklist is designed so that people can also use it to report their accomplishments at the end of the challenge period.

To determine what actions you will take during the challenge period in these areas -- reducing energy consumption, switching to clean power for your home, protecting the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, saving trees, and reducing plastic in landfills -- go to the Westmoreland website, download the checklist and the information resources. Those of you who have made progress in the areas listed on the checklist since Earth Day 2007 are also welcome to participate. After May 31, complete the checklist and follow the instructions on the Website for submitting your report.

If you do not have access to the internet, you can get the needed information by asking someone to print out information on the actions you are most interested in taking. Checklists are in the Narthex and Social Hall and, when completed, can be mailed to the church.

After May 31, the data everyone reports will be compiled and summarized and will serve as a measurement of our commitment as a community to improving the environment.

Gatherings

Prime Timers - Westmorelanders of the AARP Generation meet for lunch and fellowship Wednesday, **May 21**, 12 noon. Cost: \$7. RSVP to Nona Cox: 301-229-6334 or sign up in the Social Hall at the What’s Happening Table.

Millennial Parents - Stacey and Casey Fannon invite all parents (members, friends and visitors) of children ages newborn through elementary school age to a “Parents’ Night Out” potluck dinner at their home, Saturday, **May 17**, 6:30 pm. Plan to bring a bottle of wine (or other beverage) and a food item to share. RSVP to 301-564-4330 or csfannon@comcast.net.

Deadline for the June Westmorelander: May 15. Email articles to Janet Moyer: jmoyer@westmorelanducc.org.

The Westmorelander
Westmoreland Congregational UCC
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www.westmorelanducc.org



May 2008

Church Office Closed: May 26

Friday, May 2		Sunday, May 18	
Middle School Youth Night	7:30 pm	Maddox class	8:30 am
		BCA	8:30 am
Saturday, May 3		Tech Committee	8:30 am
Yoga	9 am	Worship, Church School, Nursery	10 am
🎵 Mozart Fest!	7 pm	Recognition of 2008 Graduates	
Sunday, May 4		Monday, May 19	
Fellowship Breakfast	8:30 am	Boards: Trustees, BCE, BMF	7:30 pm
Worship, Children's Church, Nursery,	10 am		
Communion		Wednesday, May 21	
Marlow Guitar Concert: 301-654-6403	4 pm	Prime Timers	12 Noon
Saturday, May 10		Thursday, May 22	
🎵 WCM Piano Concert: Alexander Paley	8 pm	Chancel Choir	7:45
Sunday, May 11 - Mother's Day		Saturday, May 24	
Maddox Class	8:30 am	Yoga	9 am
Worship, Church School, Nursery	10 am	🎵 Marietta College Choir Concert	4 pm
Confirmation 2007-08 class		Sunday, May 25	
🎵 Fessenden Concert: 202-362-2390	4 pm	Worship, Church School, Nursery	10 am
Tuesday, May 13		Tuesday, May 27	
Middle East Committee	4 pm	Sandwich making for Martha's Table	10:30 am
Thursday, May 15		Executive Committee	7:30 pm
Chancel Choir Rehearsal	7:45 pm	Thursday, May 29	
Saturday, May 17		Chancel Choir	7:45 pm
Yoga	9 am	Saturday, May 31	
Millennial Parents Potluck	6:30 pm	Yoga	9 am
🎵 Festival of Choirs (Univ. Baptist Church)	7:30 pm		