



The Westmorelander

Westmoreland Congregational United Church of Christ

Volume 53, No. 7

An Open and Affirming Congregation

April 1, 2006

Jesus, The Foundation

“Believing that other foundation can no one lay than that which is laid which is Jesus Christ...”

That somewhat awkward phrase near the beginning of our Westmoreland Statement of Purpose is meant to be a reminder of who we are at our core: disciples of Jesus. It is drawn from Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians (3:11) and I don’t think it was ever meant to be interpreted in a narrow or exclusive way, as if to say, Christianity is the only valid religion. When Paul wrote it, Christianity was not one world-class religion among many, but a small and endangered sect of Judaism, finding its way in the Gentile world. It was important for them to know who they were and

whose, and what their center was.

They were also a church that was struggling, not just with the outside world, but also among themselves. Earlier Paul addressed their divisions, their competing loyalties. Some claimed allegiance to Paul himself, others to Apollo, still others to Cephas, each one an important leader in the church. But Paul pointed out that their ultimate loyalty was not to any of them, but to Jesus. Thus, Jesus was the true foundation, the true center of the church.

That’s what we proclaim each time we read our Statement of Purpose. It’s the foundation each of us is asked to build on. It’s what makes us the United Church of Christ!

See you in Church! *Rich*

Special Congregational Meeting

A special congregational meeting of WCUCC was called for March 26 to vote on the following proposal from the Board of Trustees, submitted by Mike Weber, Chair. The proposal passed 140 to 26, with one abstention: As Chair of the Board of Trustees, I propose the acceptance of the revised Trustee budget report, which incorporates the elimination of the position of Associate Minister for Parish Life, and the creation of a Transition Task Force, appointed by the Moderator, in consultation with the Executive Committee, to redefine the duties of the Senior Minister, modify the contract accordingly, and assist the Senior Minister in fulfilling

the pastoral care responsibilities previously assigned to the Associate Minister for Parish Life. The Task Force will establish clear performance standards and expectations for the position of Senior Minister and arrange for both parties to meet at regular intervals between now and January to see if benchmarks have been met. Before the next annual meeting, the Transition Task Force will submit a report to the congregation based on its observations

Daylight Savings Time begins Sunday, April 2.

Set clocks AHEAD 1 hour before retiring Saturday night.

Worship Topics and Themes

Sunday, April 2

“The Cardiac Covenant”

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Holy Communion

Rich Smith preaching

Second Sunday Sundown

Service 6 p.m.

(held on the first Sunday to avoid Spring Break!)

Lent and Easter Services

Palm Sunday, April 9

“The Storm Before the Calm”

Mark 14:1-15:47

Blessing of the Palms

Rich Smith preaching

Maundy Thursday, April 13

Service at Briggs

7 pm Potluck Dinner

8 pm Service

Easter Sunday, April 16

6 a.m. Sunrise Service

Memorial Garden

Music & Communion

Rich Smith, Leader

Bob Maddox, Guest Leader

10 a.m. Festival Service

“Unfinished Business”

Mark 16:1-8

Communion

Rich Smith preaching



Action in Montgomery Update

Ten Westmorelanders joined more than 700 members from 29 other congregations to kick off the new Action in Montgomery (AIM) 2006 agenda. This agenda was created from hundreds of community meetings, including our own January 29th Social Hall meeting. The AIM agenda includes:

1) Increase affordable housing, adding more low and moderate income units to each new development;

2) Create a federal immigration center in Montgomery County so our immigrants do not waste a full day traveling to Baltimore to stand in line for services;

3) Expand County Recreation Centers to better serve youth, elderly, and immigrants;

4) Improve educational opportunities for all, including guaranteed college access for above average students regardless of income, and in-

creasing college counseling in all high schools;

5) Make traffic safer, especially for pedestrians.

AIM volunteers will educate thousands of Montgomery County voters this fall on the position of each candidate on these key community issues. More than twenty-eight elected officials and candidates, including Congressman Chris Van Hollen and Lt. Gov. Michael Steele, attended and expressed a commitment to work with AIM to achieve this agenda.

Thanks to all the Westmorelanders who attended, including **Rich and Pam Smith, Otto Hetzel, Jean Lutterman and Roslyn Bash, Laura Sauder, Frances and Jack Stickles, and Karim Ahmed.** Westmorelanders are invited to meet and discuss these issues with our local candidates **Monday, May 15, 7 pm** at St. Dunstan's Church, just north of our church on Massachusetts Avenue.

UCC's Newest TV Commercial Begins Airing April 3

Written by J. Bennett Guess
Sunday, 26 March 2006

"Ejector seat," the UCC's newest television commercial, will begin airing nationally on April 3, just in time for Easter.

Playing to church's expressed concerns about alienation—first emphasized in the UCC's controversial "bouncer" ad that aired on cable networks in December 2004 and March 2005 — "ejector seat" employs a bit of humor to underscore one of the campaign's central themes, "God doesn't reject people. Neither do we."

During its three-week run this April on multiple cable networks, the \$1.5 million ad buy means that about 60 to 65 percent of the U.S. population is expected to see the ad at least once. Fund-

raising is ongoing with hopes of collecting an additional \$800,000 to keep the ad on the air through Mother's Day.

While multiple cable networks have accepted "ejector seat," all the major broadcast networks—CBS, NBC, ABC, Fox and WB—have thus far rejected it, claiming it's a controversial, issue-advocacy ad. Church leaders, meanwhile, disagree.

The Rev. John H. Thomas, UCC General Minister and President, says that if last year's "bouncer ad" reminded us that God doesn't need gatekeepers, then "ejector seat" reminds us that grace may come in the guise of the stranger, even someone who makes us uncomfortable.

"Ejector seat" continues to challenge

Parish Notes

Congratulations to the following Westmorelanders who are marking very special membership anniversaries this month:

Fifty years: **Kitty Layne** and **Virginia Bogardus** on April 1

Sixty years: **Edith Wilkerson** on April 18. Edith is the longest *continuous* member of Westmoreland!

Library News

The recent after-church seminar on Parables led by Edward Beutner particularly recommended several books. Look for the following in the New Books Section to your left as you enter the library:

Crossan, John Dominic. *The Dark Interval: Toward a Theology of Story.*

Funk, Robert W. *Jesus as Precursor.*

McFague, Sallie. *Speaking in Parables.*

Brandon, Scott Bernard. *Hear Then the Parable: A Commentary on the Parables of Jesus and Re-Imagine the World: An Introduction to the Parables of Jesus.*

the church—all churches — to a more extravagant welcome," Thomas says. "While celebrating the way the UCC has reached wide in that welcome, it also reminds us that many in our communities continue to feel left out and left alone."

"Throughout this campaign, the heart of our focus has been on the experience of the seeker," says Ron Buford, director of The Stillspeaking Initiative. "The issue is not anyone's actual intention to eject people. The issue is whether or not newcomers feel rejected. And we know they do and for a variety of reasons." In addition to television spots, the UCC is purchasing internet ads and blogads as a way to boost the church's exposure during the three-week run.

Gatherings

Wednesday, April 5, 7:30 pm: **Women's Reading Group** meets at the home of Emma Rose Martin to discuss *The Heart of Christianity* by Marcus Borg. RSVP to Emma Rose at 202-537-0118.

Sunday, April 9, 8:30 am: Note the changed date. **Fellowship Breakfast.** Come for breakfast up until 9:30 am. If you like, bring a dish to share.

Wednesday, April 19, 12 noon: **Prime Timers** (members and friends 65 and over) gather for lunch and fellowship. Cost: \$7. RSVP to Nona Cox 301-229-7766 or sign up in the Social Hall.

Wednesday, April 19, 7:30 pm: **Wednesday Evening Book Group** meets in the Parlor to discuss *In Cold Blood* by Truman Capote.

New Photo Directory

You will shortly receive a letter with information about the 2006 Church Photo Directory. The Board of Membership and Fellowship would like everyone – members and non-members – to participate. The directory helps all of us to identify one another. Photo dates are Thursday and Friday, **April 27 and 28, 3:30 – 9:00 pm** and Saturday, **April 29, 10 am – 6 pm.** Every photographic “unit” gets a FREE 8 X 10 photo. Additional photos are available at cost.

Ecclesiastical Council

The Potomac Association will hold an Ecclesiastical Council for Westmorelander, **Tom Lenhart**, on **April 23, 5 pm** in the Social Hall. Tom is a 2005 graduate of Harvard Divinity School and is In-Care with Westmoreland. All interested persons are invited to attend.

Join the Team!

Did you know that Springvale Terrace is a ministry of your congregation? Through the Potomac Association you are a part of this retirement community in Silver Spring that provides affordable housing and services for low-income elderly people. In July, 2005 Springvale Terrace named a new volunteer organization: The Springvale Terrace Service Team. The team comes from lay members and clergy of Potomac Association churches, Springvale Terrace residents and staff and Homewood Terrace. What can you do as part of the “Service Team”? You could volunteer time to assist individuals with special needs. You could contribute funds to support special projects to benefit residents' quality of life. Or you could coordinate with Springvale Terrace's chaplain to bring a special program from your church. We are eager for you to become part of our Team! Questions? Contact Rebecca Motz, Administrator at 301-587-0190 or email her at rfmotz@hmwd.org.

Earth Day Readings

For more than 30 years, April 15 has been celebrated as Earth Day. In honor of this day, we would like to bring five new books to your attention. *Readings from the Perspective of Earth* introduces the ecojustice principles developed by the Earth Bible project team. The four following volumes are *The Earth Story in Genesis*, *The Earth Story in Wisdom Traditions*, *The Earth Story in the Psalms and the Prophets*, and *The Earth Story in the New Testament*. Each of these volumes, edited by Norman C. Habel and others, consists of fairly short essays that are complete in themselves. Readers may, if they wish, profitably sample only a few of the essays.

Music and Arts

Saturday, April 1, 7:30 pm: The Ars Nova Singers from Colorado will present a special concert of music by 16th and 17th century composers. Among the singers will be former Westmorelander, **Lorianne Schwenk**. Admission is free; a \$20 donation is suggested.

Friday, April 21, 7:30 pm: Poetry Reading featuring the work of Donna Denizé, Nan Fry and Anne Sheldon. Free will offering taken to benefit Marie H. Reed Community Learning Center.

Saturday, April 22, 8 pm : Westmoreland hosts the **Marlow Guitar Series** featuring renowned Spanish guitarist, Pepe Romero. Tickets required: 301-654-6310 or www.marlowguitar.org.

Tuesday, April 25: Last call for the trip to Annapolis for sightseeing, lunch and shopping. Depart Westmoreland at 9:30 am, returning approximately 4 pm. Ticket (\$35 each) includes transportation and admission to three historic homes. Sign up with Sanelma at 301-229-7766.

Sunday, April 30, 4 pm: Washington Conservatory of Music faculty member and composer, **Haskell Small**, will perform pieces based on classical art. An art exhibit, based on classical music, opens immediately following the concert. Free.

Youth Celebrate St. Patrick's Day

The Middle School youth had a fun-filled and educational St. Patrick's Day celebration on March 17. They learned about the faith of St. Patrick and celebrated in traditional fashion.



April 1-15, 2006

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Ars Nova Concert 7:30 pm
2 Messiah Class 8:45 am Worship 10 am and 6 pm	3 Acts Class 7:30 pm	4 Staff 10 am and 11 am Qu Theory & Spirit. 7 pm	5 Womens Bk Grp 7:30 pm	6 NO Trble Ch or Pass Tones Chancel 8:00 pm	7 Alanon 12 pm AA 8 pm	8
9 Fellow Break 8:30 am Worship 10 am	10 Acts Class 7:30 pm	11 Staff 10 am and 11 am Qu Theory & Spirit 7 pm	12	13 NO Trble Ch or Pass Tones Chancel 8:00 pm	14	15

Senior Minister.....Richard L. Smith
 Associate Minister
 for Parish Life.....Melinda Reed
 Director of Christian
 EducationAmber Henry Neuroth
 Newsletter Editor.....Janet Moyer

Office Hours: M-F 9am - 4pm

Newsletter Deadlines

Issue Date	Deadline
April 15	April 3
May 1	April 17

Articles should be emailed to:
jmoyer@westmorelanducc.org

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