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THE MESSENGER

For the congregation of the Metropolitan Memorial Charge

(A cooperative parish of Metropolitan Memorial and St. Luke's United Methodist Churches)

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Exciting, relevant, multi-cultural, inspiring, challenging, transformational, contemplative, and missional. This is my vision of a community of faith. Of course, there are many others that would fit just fine, but these come to mind when I think about our new worship experience that kicks off on Saturday, February 28, at 5 p.m. in the sanctuary of St. Luke's UMC (3655 Calvert St. NW). The Crossroads worship experience is the fulfillment of many years of visioning of some at Metropolitan. It also represents a year of thought, research, planning, and action from many people.

While we seek to engage our Wesleyan heritage, we will do so not by usual means. We will push boundaries and think outside the box. Our hope is that those who find themselves disenchanted with church will find a home at Crossroads. We also encourage those who already attend Metropolitan to check out Crossroads and support its ministry. It is important for new people to experience energy and the presence of others when they come in the doors.

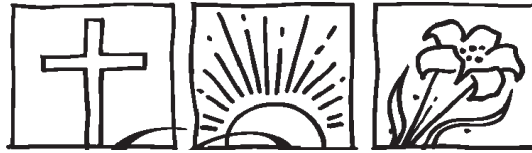
At Crossroads, you will experience a gathering that is diverse in music and word, that is inspiring and relevant, contemplative and missional, and, above all, transformational. We will continue Metropolitan's tradition of strong preaching and worship, but sometimes the preaching will come in the form of a testimony, drama, or guest speaker.

We welcome Tony Small, who is the regional director of the Boys and Girls Club of Washington, D.C., as the leader of the Crossroads Worship Band. He is an accomplished musician who will help us worship using music from various genres including contemporary Christian, contemporary secular, favorite hymns, musical theatre, and music from around the world. We also welcome his wife, Dejuana, who will help provide musical leadership.

Crossroads will fully engage your senses. Through the use of video, we will share the Gospel in a relevant and fresh way. We also will introduce elements of ancient/future worship, which will give you the opportunity to visit a prayer station, light a candle, or experience the mystery of God through quiet contemplation.

As we begin this journey, our prayer is that you will encounter God through testimonies, uplifting music, engaging sermons, and creative use of the arts. We also pray that we will be faithful in our call to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Will you join us on the journey? Besides, Saturday church just sounds cool!

See you at Crossroads on February 28.



The Season of Lent

I will never forget, as a young adult, the first time I saw ashes on the forehead of an acquaintance. Thinking I was saving her from some embarrassment, I leaned over and told her that she had dirt on her face. I still remember the surprised look on her face as she shared with me that it was Ash Wednesday. I was the one who was embarrassed!

Having only a Christmas and Easter upbringing, along with a smattering of Sundays here and there, I was clearly not familiar with the seasons and historical traditions of the church. And being raised as a marginal Methodist at a time when few Protestant churches embraced many of the observances passed down over the centuries, terms like Lent and Maundy Thursday were outside my vocabulary. This changed as I grew into a life of faith and our denomination began to move in a direction of richer participation in the fullness of seasons that make up our liturgical calendar.

Today, many Christians observe Lent, the 40 day period before Easter beginning on Ash Wednesday (this year, February 25th). For those who do the math, Sundays are not counted in the 40 days because, as retired Wesley Theological Seminary professor Dr. Larry Stookey shares, every Sunday is celebrated as a “little Easter.” On Ash Wednesday, Christians focus on their mortality, their life of sin, and the need for God’s redeeming grace through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Ashes are used as a sign of acknowledgement, just as they were used throughout the Hebrew Scriptures as signs of sorrow, mourning, humility, and repentance. “You are dust, and to dust you shall return,” (Genesis 3:19).

Though not biblical, Lent was observed in the first few centuries of the church as a preparatory period for baptism and member rededication which took place on the feast day of Easter. It grew in length to be a 40 day period of learning, soul-searching, repentance and preparation through disciplines such as prayer and fasting. Because the season of Lent is more penitential in nature, you will probably also notice that worship trends towards a little more solemn focus, praise songs using “Alleluias” are often removed from the liturgy, and many churches drape their crosses in purple cloth (purple is the color of the season – representing both penitence

and royalty; you will see the green colors we are using now shift to purple on Ash Wednesday, and then change to black for Good Friday and white for Easter).

The 40 days of Lent are representative of Jesus’ withdrawal into the wilderness, praying, fasting and being tempted before beginning his public ministry. In that same spirit, today many people routinely “give up” something they feel is a distraction in their relationship with God, self, or others. I would encourage you to not only give up something, but to fill the time that you would normally engage in that activity with a focused time of study, prayer, reflection, or service. We will have many opportunities in our church to explore, learn and worship in new ways, as you will find in other articles in this and the next edition of *The Messenger*, on the website, Metro Update, and our Sunday bulletins.

As we journey through the 40 days of Lent, making sacrifices and cultivating new spiritual learning and disciplines, I hope that each of us will deepen our understanding of the gift of grace we have been blessed with in Jesus Christ. As we move into Holy Week from Palm Sunday’s* celebration of Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem, as we reflect upon his example of servant ministry on Maundy Thursday, and his passion and death as observed on Good Friday, I invite you continue to explore the rich traditions of our church so that you come with renewed gratitude to the celebration of Christ’s resurrection on Easter Sunday.

Rev. Sandy Reetz

* Today, the Sunday prior to Easter is most often referred to as Palm/Passion Sunday, and moves scripturally from the triumphal entry through the passion of Jesus’ last days. This has been done, in part, because of the busy lifestyles we lead and the difficulty many have getting to mid-week services. Palm/Passion Sunday ensures that the congregation does not move from the triumphal entry and palm waving to shouts of “He is Risen” without experiencing Jesus’ passion and death. Metropolitan Memorial will be offering special services throughout Holy Week and we encourage you to attend them to experience the fullness of the season.

Upcoming Sermon Series

March Apostles' Creed Sermon Series



In the life of the early church, the season of Lent was the time during which new members of the faith received their training in preparation for baptism at Easter. The primary tool for this education was the set of affirmations that have come down to us as the Apostles' Creed. We will follow this ancient pattern of life in the church by engaging in a sermon series throughout Lent that will explore each phrase in the Creed, and why they continue to be a vital part of our life as a Christian community.

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Creator of Heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
And born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven,
And is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
The holy catholic Church,
The communion of saints,
The forgiveness of sins,
The resurrection of the body,
And the life everlasting.
Amen

March 1, 2009

Sermon Title: Apostles' Creed: "I Believe"

Scriptures: Genesis 15: 1-8; Mark 9: 14-26

Theme: Kicking off the series, we will look at the nature of trust and belief, and why they are so central to our identity as Christians. We will also touch on the history of the Creed, and the role that it has played in the life of the Church.

March 8, 2009

Sermon Title: Apostles' Creed: "The Father Almighty"

Scriptures: Isaiah 40: 21-31; Luke 11: 1-11

Theme: In looking at the first person of the Trinity, we will explore the doctrine of creation, and what God reveals about God's self in the process of creation. We will also look at Jesus' call to experience the deep relationship that God offers us as Father.

March 15, 2009

Sermon Title: Apostles' Creed: "Jesus Christ"

Scriptures: Daniel 7: 13-14; Philippians 2: 5-11; John 1: 1-14

Theme: We will explore the various pieces of Jewish tradition that have been woven together into our picture of Jesus, looking at the variety of understandings that are represented in the New Testament. The mystery of the triune God is at the heart of the Creed, and we will touch on what this means for our life of prayer and action.

March 22, 2009

Sermon Title: Apostles' Creed: "The Holy Ghost"

Scriptures: Ezekiel 36: 24-30; John 14: 15-27

Theme: Western Christians – Protestants in particular – have historically downplayed the role of the Holy Spirit. We will look at reclaiming a vital and dynamic (and Wesleyan!) theology of the Holy Spirit and its role in the church.

March 29, 2009

Sermon Title: Apostles' Creed: "Communion of Saints"

Scriptures: Romans 12: 3-13, Hebrews 11: 29-40

Theme: The sermon will focus on our understanding of the church, its nature and mission. We will explore the importance of Spiritual gifts and the image of the church as Christ's body on earth.

April 5, 2009 (Palm/Passion Sunday)

Sermon Title: Apostles' Creed: "The Forgiveness of Sins"

Scriptures: Isaiah 50: 4-9a; Mark 11: 1-11

Theme: We will use the traditional lectionary texts for the day as a springboard to look at our understanding of the Atonement: the process through which we are reconciled to God through the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross.

Staff Spotlight: Courtney Williams

By Lesli Bales-Sherrod

Metropolitan Memorial members may have recognized a familiar voice during the inauguration of President Barack H. Obama. Just two days after singing two solos from the musical “Les Miserables” at the 9 a.m. worship service, Navy Musician 1st Class Courtney Williams played an even more historic role than Javert – this time, as announcer for the 56th Presidential Inauguration Ceremony.

“It really was kind of weird,” says Courtney, bass section leader for Metropolitan Memorial’s Dayspring choir. “We had so many rehearsals for it, it just didn’t feel like the real thing yet.”

Courtney got the announcing gig through his full-time job as concert narrator and soloist with the United States Navy Band. He has announced many high-level ceremonies for the government, he notes.

As others braved the crowds to be part of history or watched it unfold on TV, Courtney had better than front row seats: he was “right there at the door” where the dignitaries walked onto the platform. Courtney remembers looking out and “seeing this sea of people down the Mall, with flashbulbs going off all the way to the Washington Monument.”

But Courtney wasn’t starstruck.

“I had met all the former presidents,” Courtney explains. “I have been around them my whole career.”

“Not that it wasn’t a big deal,” he quickly adds. “But I got to meet Muhammad Ali, and that was kind of cool.”

On inauguration day, Courtney didn’t have time to get nervous. Discussing the event a couple of weeks later over a cup of Starbucks, Courtney opens his script and shows how “everything is timed out to the second.” The hardest thing turned out to be not the pronunciation of names, but that “the dignitaries were not arriving in the order they were supposed to,” he reveals.

Courtney took it all in stride and when he got home, where he had left his cell phone, he had 35 text messages and 10 voice mails, some from people so far in his past that he “had no idea” how they even knew his number. Even one of his two younger brothers – Courtney is the oldest of three boys – admitted to being proud of him, Courtney laughs.

His parents back home in Tennessee “were thrilled,” of course. Courtney doesn’t get to go home very often – “It’s nice if I get back once a year,” he says – but he’ll get to see his family

(and whoever else his dad has given 100 tickets to!) when the Concert Band stops in Nashville on its Spring Tour, which starts Sunday.

Courtney, 33, was raised in Greenbrier, Tenn., just north of Nashville. He was raised Church of Christ – “no choirs, no instruments” – but started singing with his high school chorus as a sophomore and attended the state’s Governor’s School for the Arts the summer between his sophomore and junior years of high school.



After graduation, Courtney attended the University of Tennessee on an opera scholarship, but later decided he “didn’t like opera that much.” (He’s still a UT fan, though, and those who call Courtney’s cell phone are greeted with the “Pride of the Southland” Marching Band playing “Rocky Top.”)

Courtney enlisted in the Marine Corps, but before he could leave for boot camp, he heard about an opening for a second bass with the Navy Band’s Sea Chanters, the official chorus of the U.S. Navy. Courtney auditioned, was offered the position, and his military future took a different path – from basic training straight to Washington, D.C.

That was in 1996. Courtney sang with the Sea Chanters until 2004, when he was assigned to the Concert Band as its concert narrator and soloist. He also sings with Brethren, a men’s group comprised of members of the Air Force, Army and Navy, as well as civilians.

It was through the Sea Chanters that Courtney was introduced to Metropolitan Memorial. He filled in some for former soloist Chuck Huber, who had been in the Sea Chanters for 20 years, Courtney notes. He also met fellow Sea Chanter and former Dayspring director Reid Williams (no relation), who asked Courtney to join the 9 a.m. worship service’s choir four years ago.

“Casey’s great, and singing here is just fun,” Courtney explains of his decision to stay at Metropolitan Memorial even after Reid left in 2007.

Courtney’s even turned down offers to sing with other churches.

“I love the people,” he says of Metropolitan Memorial. “It’s kind of become a church home for me.”

Our New Care Card Ministry

“Therefore encourage one another and build each other up...” 1Thessalonians 5:11

All of us have experienced the joy of receiving a note of appreciation or encouragement. Knowing that someone is recognizing us and taking the time to write is meaningful. Often our intentions are good, as we sit in church and are inspired or moved by others, to convey our **cheer, appreciation, recognition or encouragement** to them. By the time we go home, the thought is gone. The moment is lost.

The Wellness Committee is giving the congregation Care Cards which can be written on any occasion to let another know they are in our thoughts. These cards can be found in baskets in the side chapels. Please feel free to take one, write a note, sign it, seal the envelope and write the recipient’s name as you would an address. Return it to the basket. Volunteers will finish addressing your card and mail it from the church office. We are a congregation that cares, and expresses our caring to others.

- The Wellness Committee

Study Opportunities at Metropolitan

Upcoming Great Hall Events: Sundays at 10:10 a.m.

Great Hall Lecture: "Thy Kingdom Come" Lecture by Dr. Craig Hill

Sunday, February 22, 10:10 a.m., Great Hall

Ideas about "the second coming of Christ" and the literal arrival of "the kingdom of God" are central to the faith of many Christians. For others, they seem quaint or even offensive. But where did these ideas come from? Are they truly relevant to believers today? Led by guest speaker Dr. Craig Hill, professor of New Testament at Wesley Theological Seminary.

Grounds for Discussion

Led by Rev. Dr. Charles Parker

Join us for a 6-part discussion led by Dr. Charles Parker on the Apostles' Creed sermon series that will take place during Lent. The conversation will be in the Great Hall at 10:10 a.m. each Sunday, March 1 through April 5. Grab a cup of coffee and come up the Great Hall for a deeper exploration of the themes and issues of each week's sermons, either after you've heard it during our 9 a.m. worship service, or as preparation for the 11:15 a.m. service.

Connecting With Others:

Dialogue for the 21st Century

Led by Rev. Dr. Tony Gattis

Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m. - 9 p.m., Conference Room

The Beatles sang about "all the lonely people" in 1966. In 2000, Dr. Robert Putnam documented the collapse of American community in his work, *Bowling Alone*. If not us, all around us people are experiencing loneliness, estrangement, and alienation. Even among the well-connected - people working with others every day - many report unmet needs for an experience of community with mutuality, collaboration, respect, and appreciation. Yet, as soon as we reach out to make connection, we encounter difference, disagreement, and painful misunderstanding. In our competitive society, many viewpoints separate us that arise from differing faiths, world views, political commitments, and basic values. Even the variation in beliefs within the same congregation can separate us. We know we live in an age of profound value differences, but we are not able to engage productively those differences. In this predicament, **dialogue** has become the buzzword or watchword for the 21st century. **Do you know what dialogue is? Do you know when you experience it? Do you know how to practice it? Are you good at it?** Too often an encounter is described as a dialogue when it falls far short. We crave community but we need to practice dialogue in order to create it!

Join Rev. Dr. Tony Gattis for a six-week study of dialogue. Questions or to register contact Tony at tgattis@vzavenue.net or 703.920.3107.

Week One: February 24 Week Four: March 17

Week Two: March 3 Week Five: March 24

Week Three: March 10 Week Six: March 31

Science & Religion Class Welcomes you! In the Parlor

(lower level) at 10:10 a.m.

The Science & Religion Class is now into its second year of discussions. We have had more than 40 different participants, many of whom drop in whenever they can - and we welcome all who would like to explore the interconnections of science and faith in a 21st century context.



In February we are focusing on a different scientist each week. We start off with a discussion of Dr. Lewis Thomas, *The Lives of a Cell*, with the leadership of Dr. Alexandra McPherron. Alex is a member of Metropolitan who took her Ph.D. in the Department of Molecular Biology and Genetics at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, and currently serves as an Investigator for the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. In subsequent weeks we will focus on Ray Kurzweil, Carl Sagan, and Alfred Russell Wallace. The series will continue in March. Each discussion will present some highlights of science and spirituality, and sometimes we can even make connections with John Wesley and our United Methodist heritage. So if you have some "hard questions" of your own - bring them along! We may not have all the answers, but we always have fun on this "adventure of ideas." Need information? Contact Donald Smith at donnancy@verizon.net or Maynard Moore at maynardmoore@onebox.com

New Class - Faith and Film

February 20, 7 p.m., Room 206

Thanks to those who participated in the first Faith and Film Class on January 23 where we watched the entertaining "Oh Brother, Where Art Thou?" followed by discussion questions. The next film to be presented is "The Spitfire Grill" on Friday, February 20, in the new Youth Group room (Room 206). This film tells the story of a woman recently released from prison, who moves to a small town and finds work at the Spitfire Grill, where she develops relationships with town folks, some friendly and some not. Some of the themes we will explore in this movie include grace, healing, and the quest for wholeness, change or transformation. If you have any questions, please call Mary Jean Evans at 202-337-6715 or Debbie Gustowski at 202.298.6222.

Study Opportunities at Metropolitan

The Living Faith Sunday School Sundays, 10:10 a.m., Christie Room

The Living Faith Sunday School Class continues its in-depth study of the New Testament. Please join us in the Christie Room on Sundays at 10:10 a.m.

February 15 - The Book of Hebrews and the Rise of Christian Anti-Semitism

February 22 - First Peter and the Persecution of the Early Christians

March 1 - The Book of Revelation

March 8 - Do We Have the Original New Testament?

Exploring Faith Sundays at 10:10, Fireplace Room

Join us for a new series focused on the 5 major world religions - Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism. Religion is a central feature of human life, and the vast majority of human beings perceive themselves to be religious. We know it when we see it, but religion is surprisingly difficult to define or comprehend. Our new DVD-based series will provide a systematic and comparative framework for understanding the complex and multidimensional nature of religion as it explores the many similarities that link all religions, as well as major differences among many of the world's traditions. Contact Rev. Sandy Rector, 202.363.4900, ext. 19 or srector@mmumc-dc.org for more information.



"Jesus the Rabbi" Sundays at 12:30 p.m.

March 1, 8, 22, 29, & April 5

Join Rabbi Martin Siegal, the "official Rabbi" of the UMC's Baltimore-Washington Conference, on 6 Sundays beginning in March from 12:30 p.m. - 2 p.m. as he presents "Jesus the Rabbi," a course to discuss the Jewish setting, rabbinical thinking, and implications of Jesus' teachings. A light lunch will be provided, and **REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED**. There is a \$50 fee for this class, with scholarships available. Please contact Rev. Sandy Rector at srector@mmumc-dc.org or 202.363.4900, ext. 19 to register.



Library News

Have you read *The Shack* by Wm. Paul Young? It's a best seller that has been out for a while but I heard about only recently when I went to a Christian retreat. So many people were talking about it that I got a copy as soon as I got home. It's a spiritual, mystical, perhaps magical work of fiction that intends to illustrate the deepest Christian experience, encountering God in the midst of great suffering. On vacation, the youngest daughter of a family is kidnapped and appears to have been brutally murdered. Her bloody clothes are found in a shack deep in the Oregon wilderness. Some years later the father receives a note inviting him to come back to that shack. Reluctantly he goes there and finds God waiting for him, along with the Holy Spirit and Jesus. They do not look like what he or any of us would expect of the Trinity but they are there for him. What he learns there with them changes his world forever. *The Shack* would be a great book for a group discussion. Some find it transforming. Some find it heretical because it is not "scriptural." However, it seems to me to be based on what is certainly scriptural, God's love for us and the importance of forgiveness. If you haven't read it, I think you might want to. It would be a great choice for the first meeting of a book club. Let me know if you would like to do that.

We also have a few other new books in our library. We now have a large print copy of the NIV Study Bible and a recent edition of Strong's Concordance. Large or giant print books are hard to find but they are often needed so I will buy them when I see them. We also have two of Obama's books and one for children about his life as a child. They are inspiring and read well. I want to say that we have books about Abraham Lincoln to accompany the current sermon series. We still have a couple for children. However, I am sad to say that our new copy of Carl Sandburg's biography of Lincoln and one of the children's books that I just brought to the library on Sunday were taken during the 11 o'clock service. If the person who took them is reading this, please bring them back and check them out. If you don't want to bring them to the library, just leave them on a pew and they will find their way home. There are so many wonderful books that would be great to have in our library and our budget is small so to lose one is a serious loss. Please check any book out so we know where it is. If, like the Sandburg book, it is so new that we haven't even been able to put our church name in it, just leave a signed note telling us what book you took. We want them available to be read by many.

- Mary Jean Evans, Library Committee Chair

Service & Advocacy at Metropolitan



Reconciling Ministries Network Update

Advocacy Ministry Team requests Church Council endorsement of Two reconciling petitions for Annual Conference

1. Constitutional Amendment - At the 2008 General Conference, delegates passed a petition to amend Paragraph 4, Article IV ("All Means All") of the United Methodist Constitution to extend membership to all persons. Constitutional amendments require a 2/3 vote of the General Conference and a 2/3 vote of all the members of annual conferences to pass. The amendment will be presented to all of the Annual Conferences for vote in 2009. Amend Paragraph 4, Article IV of the Constitution as follows:

The United Methodist Church is a part of the church universal, which is one Body in Christ. The United Methodist Church acknowledges that all persons are of sacred worth **and that we are in ministry to all. All persons shall be eligible to attend its worship services, participate in its programs, receive the sacraments, and upon Baptism, be admitted as baptized members. All persons upon taking vows declaring the Christian faith and relationship in Jesus Christ shall be eligible to become professing members in any local church in the connection.** In the United Methodist Church no conference or other organizational unit of the Church shall be structured so as to exclude any member or any constituent body of the church because of race, color, national origin, status of economic condition.

The Reconciling Ministries Network has requested that each Methodist church sign the following declaration in support of the Constitutional Amendment.

(Declaration) We, the _____ United Methodist Church, together with other congregations of the _____ Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, declare our support for the Constitutional Amendment to Paragraph Four, Article IV of the United Methodist Constitution that includes all people in the life, leadership and rites of the church.

Believing **ALL MEANS ALL**, our congregation welcomes persons of all ages, races, ethnicities, sexual orientations, gender identities, economic conditions, marital status, mental or physical abilities to attend, join, and participate fully in the life of our congregation. Such belief advances our United Methodist mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by applying the three simple rules: Do no harm, Do Good, Stay in love with God.

2. Petition to Annual Conference - The Baltimore Washington Area Reconciling Ministries has asked each congregation to endorse a petition to the 2009 Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference. The petition is for a resolution on human sexuality - to affirm the Majority Report, adopted by the Human Sexuality Sub-Committee and the larger Church & Society II Legislative Committee of the General Conference on April 27, 2008. Download the petition at http://www.bwarm.org/documents/08_petition_for_BWC.doc.

Reconciling Ministries Network to hold Advocacy Training at Wesley Seminary

Please mark your calendars for an advocacy training on **Saturday, February 28, 2009** from 9:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. led by RMN Regional Trainer Sean Delmor, at Wesley Theological Seminary.

The purpose of the training is to engage attendees in advocating for the Constitutional Amendment on *Article IV*. Text of *Article IV* is available on the Web at <http://www.generalconference2008.org/paragraph4.html>.

This year, all annual conferences of the United Methodist Church will vote on a constitutional amendment to ensure that our "Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors" slogan applies to all persons who enter the doors of our churches. This amendment will more fully ensure that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons are not denied membership in our churches.

Reconciling Ministries Network to Celebrate 25th Anniversary

All are invited to attend RMN's 10th Convocation and 25th anniversary, September 4-7, 2009, at the YMCA of the Rockies at Estes Park, Colorado. The theme of the 2009 Convo is Justice and Joy! More information, including instructions on how to register for the event, is available on the Web at <http://www.rmnetwork.org/convo2009staging.asp>. For more information, contact Anne Brown at anne_p_brown@live.com.

Upcoming Events

Scout Sunday is March 8

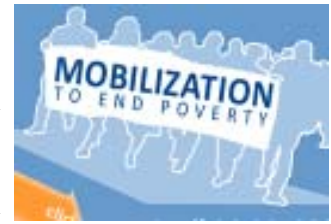
Were you a cub scout, a brownie, a boy scout, or a junior girl scout in your childhood? Do you know what a Daisy is or what a Eagle Scout is? Do you have fond memories of campouts, campfires, and sing-a-longs? Please join us March 8 for a very special celebration, Scouting Sunday, when we'll recognize current and former Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts during both worship services. We'll cap the day with a sing-a-long and luncheon after the 11:15 a.m. service. If you have your old uniform or parts of it, bring it along, and join in on the fun. Sponsored by Metropolitan's UMW. More details to follow.

March AARP Meeting

Please join us on Monday, March 16 in the Vestry. Diana Bui, office manager of H & R Block in the Palisades, and two of her colleagues will give us a tax update and will tell us how to maximize after-tax income in retirement and how to save for the future of our grandchildren or other relatives, along with additional tax-related information. Meeting starts at 1 p.m. with a Social time at 12:30 p.m. Refreshments will be served.



The Mobilization to End Poverty



Christian advocates from around the country will gather for The Mobilization to End Poverty from April 26 - 29. This historic gathering of thousands of anti-poverty advocates in Washington, D.C. is sponsored by Sojourners (sojo.net) and cosponsored by Wesley Theological Seminary. The assembly will call on President-elect Obama and the new Congress to make overcoming poverty a national priority. President Barack Obama has been invited to address The Mobilization and they are working to secure his participation.

Early Bird Registration (through February 23) is \$249 (Regular) and \$140 (Students) with discounts for groups and volunteers. After February 23, Registration is \$299 (Regular) and \$169 (Students). For more information, a complete program, and to register, visit www.sojo.net/mobilization, or call 800.714.7474.

If you are interested in attending this event or learning how Metropolitan church members can support it, please contact Advocacy Chair, Ann Michel, 202.885.8582 or amichel@wesleyseminary.edu.



"Abe Lincoln in Illinois"

**March 27 - 8 p.m., March 28 - 4 p.m.
& March 29 - 2 p.m.**

Following Dr. Parker's sermon series in February, plan to attend this Pulitzer Prize winning play by Robert E. Sherwood which shows in a series of scenes the critical years of Lincoln's early manhood up to the moment of his election as President. We see the back woodsman, a failure at shopkeeping, but a great favorite with friends and neighbors. Slowly groping forward through the troubled years in Springfield, Illinois, he at last begins to realize the great destiny before him. For tickets, contact Patrisha House at pthouse@mmumc-dc.org.

2009 UMW Bazaar



Dear Friends:

Planning for the 2009 UMW Bazaar has not yet begun so please refrain from dropping off contributions to the UMW closet or the Vestry stage until donations are officially opened. Already, donations have been trickling in and despite the good intentions of the donors, we kindly request that no one do so until asked. Thank you for your understanding.

- UMW Executive Board

Youth Connection

Confirmation

In an ongoing effort to be excellent in all we do, we are in the process of reviewing our confirmation program at Metropolitan. Confirmation has traditionally been an important time of exploration and discovery in the faith life of young teenagers. As we seek to be relevant in church, we look for fresh ways to teach youth the foundations of our Christian heritage and United Methodist tradition. In the coming months, we will research best practices and various curricula that are offered as well as exploring the possibility of developing our own unique confirmation program. Because of that, we will not offer a confirmation class this spring. Instead, we will be providing information about next year's class late this summer with specifics regarding an information meeting. If you have ideas you would like the team to consider, please e-mail Jimmy at jsherrod@mmumc-dc.org.

Youth Calendar

Meet at the Connection Cafe in rooms 204 and 206 for Sunday School at 10 a.m. 7th and 8th graders meet in room 204 and 9th-12th grades meet in room 206. Come enjoy refreshments, conversation and spiritual exploration. The curriculum used is Seasons of the Spirit. Then, on most Sundays, we will gather again from 5:30-7:30 for Youth Connection. For the first 30 minutes, play games, share in conversation, read, or just relax in the Connection Cafe.

Following that, we will gather for community building, worship, devotion and small group reflection. Find out more about our youth ministry at www.nationalchurch.org or metropolitanyouth.blogspot.com. Explore your faith at Youth Connection.

Believe in the Youth in Mission

We've got a great group of teens and tweens here at Metropolitan. They are joyful, fun, and exuberant. And, they know the importance of being the hands and feet of God. This summer, they're rolling up their sleeves to work with the Appalachian Service Project and Heifer International. But, as with any young person in our lives they need our support and our love to make it happen.

Our Youth in Mission is holding its annual auction in the Vestry on Sunday, March 15. The kids have come up with some wonderful donations to auction. They will serve as party helpers at your next festive event. They are planning a Wii party in the newly refurbished youth room for families attend. There are desserts, batting lessons, birthday parties, and so much more.

But they can't do it alone. The success of our Youth in Mission auction relies on donations from our congregation. Our donation period runs all of February and we are grateful to the donors who have already stepped forward. We would love your donation of restaurant gift certificates, gift baskets, jewelry, services, parties, vacation homes, tickets to art events, games, and entertainment. Below you'll find a donor form. Please fill it out and return it to Jimmy Sherrod, Minister of Youth and New Worship. The deadline for donations is Sunday, March 1.

Our youth in mission will distribute the auction catalog in church on Sunday, March 8 and a version will be available online. Some donations we are thrilled to announce are a week's stay in a London flat, a week in Costa Rica, stays at houses in Bethany Beach and Cape May. We have four tickets to a Nationals Game, two restaurant certificates, an Italian dinner, Sam Rawling's Texas chili, and the return of the popular Margarita party hosted by Mike and Pat House.

The auction and luncheon will be held Sunday, March 15. The silent auction will begin at 9 a.m. in the Vestry and runs until 12:45 p.m. Then, following the second worship service will be lunch, entertainment, and the live auction, hosted by Kevin Settlege. Please plan on attending so that you can get to know our youth a little better, join in the fun and fellowship with other families from Metropolitan, buy some great items, and, most importantly, show that you believe in our youth in mission.

Youth in Mission Auction Donor Form

The Youth of Metropolitan Memorial will take mission trips on the annual Appalachia Service Project and Heifer International in the coming months. Please help our kids raise money for these life-changing experiences by supporting the annual auction. Donations could include but are not limited to: specialty foods, sporting events, musical entertainment, vacation homes, gift certificates, services, parties, and more.

Item or service to be donated _____

Description of Item _____

VALUE OF ITEM \$ _____

Name _____ Telephone & Email _____

Address _____

I prefer to make a monetary contribution of \$ _____

**Checks payable to MMUMC, Mission Youth in memo line.
Please return this form to the church office no later than March 1.**

AU Campus Ministry

AU Campus Meals

Sunday, February 22, 7 p.m., Kay Spiritual Life Center

As part of our outreach ministry with American University, members of Metropolitan Memorial are providing a meal to students at AU following their worship time at the Kay Spiritual Life Center on Sunday evenings once a month. The February meal includes homemade chili made by some of the excellent cooks in our church family. If you would like to be part of this outreach ministry – provide food, mentor a student, provide temporary housing for AU graduate students, for example – please contact Cody Nielsen, our Associate for Campus Ministry, at cnielsen@mmumc-dc.org.



J. Cody Nielsen

News from the Director of Children's Ministries

King Whitney Jr. once said, "Change has a considerable psychological impact on the human mind. To the fearful it is threatening because it means that things may get worse. To the hopeful it is encouraging because things may get better. To the confident it is inspiring because the challenge exists to make things better."

As many of you have heard, I am making a new change in June of this year. I met with Staff Parish in January and have resigned my position as Director of Children's Ministry at the end of the regular Children's Sunday School year in May. In 2002, I heard a calling to apply for this position and now I am hearing a new call; to slow down and focus

on my own worship experience and my family. I have been extremely blessed these past 6 years, both by the children and also by the entire Metropolitan family. I have grown and learned so much from the children, the future of our church, and I know the program will continue to mature and thrive under new leadership in the future!

I am hopeful and confident, and at times fearful, of the new slower pace my life is being called to follow and I ask that you hold me and the Children's Ministry program in your prayers. Blessings,

Kay Jacobs

Do You Have A Heart for Older Adults?

During our visioning process over the past year, an area that was raised was a desire to strengthen our outreach in the local community, including American University, Wesley Seminary, and Sibley Hospital. One of the opportunities that emerged was the chance to partner with other local congregations to provide a 30 minute worship service one Sunday a month for the residents of Grand Oaks, the assisted living community next to Sibley.

Annette Fletchall, Fred Simpich, Elizabeth Byam and I led our first service at Grand Oaks on Sunday, February 8, and it was extremely well received by the worshipping residents. They enjoyed the hymns (played on a CD player because none of us play piano), the prayers, hearing scripture and a brief devotion, and receiving communion. The joy on their faces at being in worship together was extremely moving to our church team!

Our next service is March 8 at 11 a.m., and then every 2nd Sunday following. I am looking for volunteers (either individual or friends or small groups, strong readers, piano players, or people who simply have a heart for being with older adults) who would be willing to lead worship on a rotating basis. I am willing to provide as much or as little of the liturgy as you would like help with, and bulletins will be prepared and printed here in the office.

If you are interested or want more details, please contact me at srector@mmumc-dc.org or 202.363.4900, ext. 19. This is a great opportunity to serve the local community, and perhaps stretch in a new direction yourself!

Sandy Rector

2009 Pledge Status



The Finance Committee would like to thank Metropolitan for the wonderful way in which you've responded to our 2009 Commitment Campaign. The results thus far are tremendously encouraging, especially in light of these challenging economic times. As of January 31, 30% of our pledgers have increased their pledge relative to last year, and another 34% have kept their pledge the same as 2008. Especially exciting is the fact that we have added 46 new pledgers to the roster this year!

However, there are still 55 members who have not turned in their 2009 pledge card. If every one of these members will continue their pledge from 2008, our total 2009 pledge revenue will have increased by 11.1%! Please prayerfully consider your contribution to Metropolitan and commit to the life and ministries of our church this year. Pledge cards are still available in the pews, or you may contact Dona Collary in the church office, 202.363.4900, ext. 17 or dcollary@mmumc-dc.org.

Children's Ministries



“Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.”

Mark 10:14

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner

The Children's Ministry Department hopes you will join us for our annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake dinner on Tuesday, February 24, from 6 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. The proceeds from the evening will support Children's Ministry with 10% going to support VIM and an additional 10% going to support Metropolitan's Nursery School! So bring your neighbors, your friends, your coworkers and join us for an evening of fellowship, food and fun! If you are also interested in helping with this dinner, Please contact Kay Jacobi, 202.363.4900, ext. 26 or kjacobi@mmumc-dc.org.

Parent Pages

Please remember to pick up a Parent Page each week from EACH of your children's Sunday School classes. Although all 5 of our older Sunday School classes follow the Godly Play curriculum, they do not all hear the same lesson each week. Therefore, I write an individual Parent Pages for each class. The Parent Pages offer you insight into your child's class as well as discussion questions for you and your child about the lesson they heard that day. They are also a good source of information about upcoming events and opportunities at Metropolitan.

Children's Choir

Upcoming dates and reminders...boys are asked to wear khaki pants and white shirts and girls are asked to not wear jeans or tennis shoes on the days of our performances. **Both choirs will sing on**

Palm Sunday, March 16, at both services.

We love our friends!

Valentine's Day is a special day at Metropolitan Nursery School. It is a day when we share our good feelings about special people. This day gives us a chance to talk about the importance of sharing, giving, loving, and friendship. The children are busy making valentines for their families and have learned about the post office and the mail. We will celebrate by sharing Valentine's with all of our friends and "mail" and match our names on envelopes. Happy Valentine's Day!



2nd Annual Children's Lenten Workshop

Sunday, March 22, 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Join us for the Children's Lent Workshop on March 22. We will work on arts and crafts, word finds and puzzles, color Easter Eggs and more! It's a wonderfully fun and energetic morning which helps us all prepare for the Mystery of Easter. We will also spend time eating together before we finish up our 'work' at 12:30 p.m.

Be On the Lookout for Those Bunnies and Chicks! Marshmallow Peeps, That Is!

This year, we will hold our second annual Marshmallow Peeps Diorama Contest! For those of you who may not know - a diorama is a three-dimensional miniature scene (many people use shoe boxes to display their scenes). We'll be asking you to recreate your favorite Bible stories made entirely out of marshmallow Peeps! This is a fun time for the older children to get creative and have fun!

I need adult volunteers! As always, these workshops could not happen without special people like you, so please consider lending a helping hand on the morning of March 22. If you have any questions or are ready to volunteer, please contact Kay Jacobi at kjacobi@mmumc-dc.org or 202.363.4900, ext. 26.



Mark Your Calendars for the Next Family Movie Night Friday, April 3 6 p.m. in the Great Hall.

Bokamoso Sunday

The Children's Choir joined voices with the Bokamoso Youth from South Africa on Sunday, February 1, 2009. Below are some pics!



Pastoral and Administrative Staff

Rev. Dr. Charles Parker — Senior Pastor, ext. 11, cparker@mmumc-dc.org
Rev. Sandy Rector — Minister of Congregational Ministries, ext. 19, srector@mmumc-dc.org
Rev. Jimmy Sherrod — Minister of Youth and New Worship, ext. 24, jsherrod@mmumc-dc.org
Rev. David Young — Deacon for Social Action and Global Outreach, dndweiszyoung@yahoo.com
Kay Jacobi — Director of Children's Ministries, ext. 26, kjacobi@mmumc-dc.org
Patrisha House — Director of Worship, Music and Arts, ext. 23, phouse@mmumc-dc.org
Jeff Clouser — Director of Communications and Outreach, ext. 22, jclouser@mmumc-dc.org
J. Cody Nielsen — Associate for Campus Ministry, ext. 14, cnielsen@mmumc-dc.org
Bruce Caviness — 11 a.m. Organist-Choirmaster, ext. 15, bcaviness@mmumc-dc.org
Casey Elliott — Dayspring Choir Director and 9 a.m. Worship Leader, ext. 12, celliott@mmumc-dc.org
Dona Collary — Director of Church Administration, ext. 17, dcollary@mmumc-dc.org
Helen Simon - Office Manager, ext. 42, hsimon@mmumc-dc.org
Rafael Reyes - Director of Building and Grounds, ext. 20, rreyes@mmumc-dc.org

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