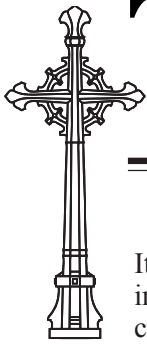


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# THE MESSENGER

For the congregation of the Metropolitan Memorial Charge

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

March 20, 2009

Volume XXIV, No. 3

www.nationalchurch.org

## Receiving the Gift of Easter

It is that wonderful time of year when, while cleaning up the debris in the yard, one comes across tiny crocus buds, raising their heads above the earth. New

life, new hope. Easter, along with Spring, offers us new life as a free gift. It just happens, and there's nothing we can do, or need to do, to make it any more wondrous.

There are things, however, that we can do to prepare ourselves to receive this gift. If we think of ourselves as the garden in which God's miraculous new life will burst forth, it quickly becomes clear that a little preparation work will make the spring even more glorious. Lent is that time of preparation, the time to clear out the dead growth from last year, turn over the soil, and maybe plant a few bulbs.

Clearing out the dead growth is about looking seriously at our patterns of behavior that have developed that impede our spiritual growth. Many of these habits developed for good reasons (the dead growth in our gardens were the flowers from last year!), but they have outlived their usefulness and are now interfering with our ability to move forward.

Turning over the soil is the process of reflection and introspection that lies at the heart of the Lenten experience. It's a slow deliberative process of self-examination to see where the rocks and hard spots are in our spiritual life. We break up the hard bits of soil; we toss out the rocks. But mostly we just keep turning the dirt over and over, digging deeper and deeper in the process. Why do we do the things we do? What motivates

and inspires us? What blocks and inhibits us? Where is God calling us?

The bulb planting is the process of incorporating new disciplines into our lives. Maybe that's a decision to engage in a more regular prayer time, or joining a Bible study. Maybe that's more regular engagement in service to the community. Again, where is God's call to you this Lent and Easter?

As we approach Easter this year, let me also encourage you to find a way to really live into the whole Easter experience. Join us for the bitter sweet celebration of Palm/Passion Sunday. Re-experience Jesus' last night as we celebrate a Seder meal under the guidance of Rabbi Siegel and then enter into our Maundy Thursday service. Consider fasting on Good Friday and join us for a powerful service of preaching on the Seven Last Words from the cross in the afternoon. Return for the traditional Good Friday service of darkness in the evening. Saturday night, we will celebrate the Easter Vigil and provide an opportunity to take some time for prayer in the sanctuary between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m.

All this will heighten the impact of Easter. The light and joy of our Easter celebration is always more powerful when we have taken the time to really live into Holy Week. Take time to prepare yourself for this highest of high holy days.



*Charles*



H O L Y · W E E K

### April 5 - Palm/Passion Sunday

The Sunday before Easter, where Jesus' final and triumphal entry into Jerusalem is observed with the waving of Palm Branches.

*9 a.m. & 11:15 a.m. Worship*

### April 9 - Maundy Thursday

The Thursday before Easter where we remember Jesus' Last Supper with His disciples. The word "Maundy" comes from the Latin for "mandate" and refers to Christ's command to love one another.

*Dinner at 6:30 p.m. - Seder Lesson at 7:15 p.m.*

*Holy Thursday Worship with Eucharist at 8 p.m.*

### April 10 - Good Friday

The day in Holy Week in which we remember Christ's arrest, crucifixion, and death.

*"Seven Last Words" from noon - 3 p.m.*

*Good Friday Services at 8 p.m.*

### April 11 - Saturday Easter Vigil

The church will be open for prayer and reflection on the eve of Easter in preparation for our celebration of the Resurrection

*10 p.m. to 6 a.m.*

### April 12 - Easter Sunday

Festival Choirs, Brass, Timpani, and Handbells

Worship at 9 a.m. and 11:15 a.m. with Easter brunch after each worship service

Rev. Dr. Charles Parker, preaching



## Worship At Metropolitan



Our sanctuary decoration is intended to help us reflect on the meaning of the Christian season of Lent. Lent began on Ash Wednesday (February 25 this year) and continues for seven weeks plus six Sundays, ending at Easter on April 12.

Our observance unites us with many other Christian denominations that have over centuries used visual reminders to mark the Christian year. During Lent, the crosses are draped, reminding us of the austerity of the season and of the sacrifice of Jesus. The color purple used for our Lenten drapes signifies royalty as well as penitence and self-discipline. Color will be removed

from the sanctuary on Good Friday.

In place of flowers decorating the altar are simple greens. Flowers will return to mark the joyful celebration of Easter. Branches in the sanctuary, bare on Ash Wednesday, will gradually display leaves as spring approaches.

The themes that mark observances by Christian churches during this period include repentance and prayer. It is hoped that the sanctuary will aid us all in quiet reflection upon these themes, while holding before us the promise of joy and the realization of the promise of Easter.



You might notice something a little different about Palm/Passion Sunday this year – we have ordered chamaedorea palm fronds, “Eco-Palms” for our processions. Every year, Christian congregations across the nation purchase palm fronds to celebrate Palm Sunday, which commemorates Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem. In that time, the worshiping crowd paved Jesus’ way with palms and shouts of “Hosanna!” Today, palms are paving the way for fair trade and a better ecosystem. For harvesters in Guatemala and Mexico, palms symbolize fair wages through the Eco-Palm project.

The Eco-Palm Project is an effort of the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation and the University of Minnesota Center for Integrated Natural Resources and Agricultural Management. The project helps to sustain forestry, protect local jobs and helps preserve the livelihoods of small-scale farmers.

UMCOR is partnering with the University of Minnesota to build support in the US for the Eco-Palm Project which ensures that palm harvesters in Guatemala and Mexico are earning a fair income for their labor. A typical Eco-Palm is harvested in the forest by men and processed by women in the community. This increases employment opportunities for women in the community and helps them contribute to their family’s financial stability.

Support the Eco-Palm Project by waving an Eco-Palm branch on Palm/Passion Sunday, April 5!



The first three weeks of Crossroads, our new worship experience, has been well received. We’ve had spirit-filled and inspiring worship. We’ve seen new faces each week. A special thanks to folks from Metropolitan and St. Luke’s who have been present to help seed this brand new experience. We still need your presence! Until we build up our own community of worshippers, we still need folks to continue to attend and help create a critical mass that is so important. Check out our blog at [www.xroadsdc.blogspot.com](http://www.xroadsdc.blogspot.com). Crossroads was also featured in the latest edition of the United Methodist Connection. Read Jimmy’s first person account on what it is like starting a new worship experience on their website, [www.bwcumc.org](http://www.bwcumc.org).



# Exciting New Church and Staff Additions - Coming this July!



deep faith, great heart, thoughtful action

Those who were with us for morning worship on Sunday, March 15<sup>th</sup> heard the announcement from Bishop John Schol and the conference cabinet that effective July 1<sup>st</sup>, Wesley UMC, located at 5312 Connecticut Avenue (at the corner of Jennifer St, between Nebraska Ave. and Military Rd.), will be joining our newly-formed cooperative parish with St. Luke's UMC.

Wesley United Methodist Church is a joyful and inclusive community of faith which just marked the beginning of its 180th year this past November. The church has an active Latino Ministry program and serves as a mentor congregation to The Community Council for the Homeless at Friendship Place. Church members also volunteer for McKenna's Wagon, a mobile soup kitchen that feeds more than 1,200 hungry and homeless people at many locations in Washington, D.C., works with the community organization A Wider Circle, and supports The ONE Campaign, Bread for the World, and the Baltimore-Washington Area Reconciling Methodists (BWARM). Currently, services are held Sundays at 11 a.m. with an average attendance of 50 members and guests.

While many of us are just getting used to the idea that we are in a cooperative parish with St. Luke's, those of us on staff and in church leadership are excited by the prospect of bringing some increased diversity and new ministry opportunities to our church. Starting in July and into the fall, we will begin to establish our partnership and explore how we support one another and enhance each other's ministries together.



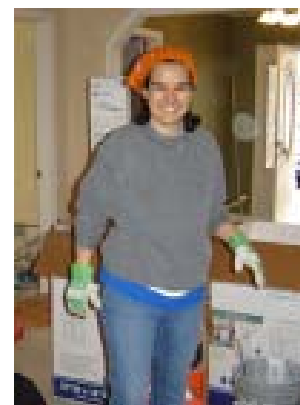
Rev. Kate Murphey

Overwhelming? As a staff member, I can honestly say it's not, because the Baltimore-Washington Conference is supporting this new formation through appointing an additional minister to our staff. Rev. Kate Murphey, the new pastor who will be joining us July 1, brings a great balance of gifts, spirit, and enthusiasm to our team. I knew Kate while we attended Wesley Seminary together, and concur with a colleague who commented we "are getting three pastors in one with Kate" upon hearing of her appointment to Metropolitan.

Until we welcome her in July and you are able to meet her in person, here's a little from Kate in her own words...

"I am currently serving as associate pastor at Grace UMC in Gaithersburg, MD and guide the serving and young adult min-

istries there. In the past three years, we have successfully advocated for a day laborer center, discontinued a local 7-11's liquor license, and begun an ESL program, mission partnership with St. Bernard Parish (New Orleans), and a weekly young adult dinner and Bible Study. One of my ministry high-points here has been baptizing one of our young adults, listening to her story and questions and witnessing her desire and decision to be a part of the family of Christ. Talk about goose bumps!



At the conference-level, I am the secretary for the committee on Hispanic/Latino Ministries and am an avid supporter of the camping program (and not just for the S'mores!). While at Wesley getting my MDiv (2003-2006), I interned with Rev. Kim Capps and the Wesley Foundation at the University of Maryland.

I moved here from Columbus, Ohio—Go Buckeyes!—and have absolutely fallen in love with the DC area. Much of that has to do with me being a food fanatic and ballroom dancer; this city is perfect for those hobbies.

I cannot tell you how excited I am to be joining you all. We have a fantastic opportunity in front of us to create new possibilities for ministry. That will mean new ways to share the joy that is ours in the resurrection power of the Triune God. I say AMEN to that."

Blessings,

*Rev. Smiley Reetz*



Front view of Wesley United Methodist Church, 5312 Connecticut Avenue (at the corner of Jennifer St, between Nebraska Ave. and Military Rd.)

# Life at Metropolitan

## 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



## April AARP Meeting

Please join us on Monday, April 20 for a special tour. We will meet at noon in Stone Hall at the National Presbyterian Church. Following refreshments (bring lunch if you want), Dr. J. Theodore Anderson, director of the library and archives, will give us a guided tour of the library, grounds, gardens, and historic houses on the property. Turn in from Van Ness St., proceed to the parking lot behind the church, and enter through the double doors at the back of the church. (There is a sign for Stone Hall by the doors.)

## The Metro Players Present “Abe Lincoln in Illinois” March 27 - 8 p.m., March 28 - 4 p.m. & March 29 - 2 p.m.

You've heard Charlie's sermons, you've read the stories in the paper celebrating the bicentennial of Lincoln's birth, now join your friends and neighbors to experience another view of Lincoln and his legacy. Fran Cleaver returns once again to direct this Pulitzer Prize winning play with one of our larger casts. Our very own, Jimmy Sherrod (a.k.a. Minister of Youth and New Worship) will be portraying Abe. You won't want to miss John Long as the crotchety Ben Mattling and the politico Crimmin or Kathy Rawlings as Mary Todd and Lesli Bales-Sherrod (yes, Jimmy's real wife) as Ann Rutledge his “love interest.” Many Metro Player regulars are involved (Bill Roach, Sam Rawlings, Kevin Settlege, Mike House, Pat Nicolette, Randy Oberdick, Beverly Fleming, Pam Settlege, Carol Schleicher, and Trish Long.) We welcome some new recruits: Craig Gildner, Phil Potter, Nick Wood, Nathaniel Rees, Joel Walther (from Wesley), and Austin Patterson (Carol Tippet's grandson) AND a special guest appearance by Bruce Caviness. Once again music and sound set-up by Mike House with our new

sound tech Helen Simon, Lighting Design by Eric Mattsson and crew, Set Design and Construction by Carol and Dick Schleicher (with help from the cast) and the amazing support team led by Kris Oberdick as Stage Manager, Carol Bartlett as Assistant Director, Karen Howard as stagehand, Barbara Green on Scripts and Pat House as Producer. And, we welcome Deborah Rhoads as Assistant Stage Manager.

Metropolitan Players is a ministry of Metropolitan that spans the areas of worship, study, and outreach. To be in a play is not just to act but to grow in relationship to God and one another. We invite you to come to one of the three performances and to bring your friends. There will be no charge for tickets but a suggested donation of \$10/person or \$5/student is appreciated. Reservations are preferred, contact Pat House, 202.363.4900, ext. 23 or phouse@mmumc-dc.org.

## Calling All Artists

The Arts Council would like to have a show in September of the artists in our own congregation. That includes all media of art that can be hung on the walls, no free standing sculpture. This will include all areas of painting and photography and sculpture that can be hung safely on the walls of the Great Hall. Please contact Alva Millian at [alvacm@gmail.com](mailto:alvacm@gmail.com) and Carol Schleicher at [rschlei@verizon.net](mailto:rschlei@verizon.net), if you would like to be a part of this show.

## Happy 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday!

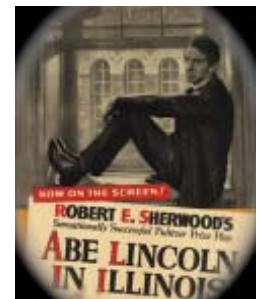
Happy birthday to Grace Hudgins, who celebrates her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on March 25!



Our prayers go out to the family and friends of Roberta B. Holt who died on March 15, 2009. Bobby was a long time member of Metropolitan Memorial, joining us in 1975.

## Wiiiiiiii!

Calling all families. If you're wishing for a night out away from the kids, look at your calendars. Saturday, April 18, from 6:30 p.m. - 9 p.m., Metropolitan's Youth are planning a party for young kids in the Youth Connection rooms. Kids who attend will play a variety of Wii games, air hockey, Guitar Hero, enjoy snacks, and hang out with the big kids of the congregation. Proceeds from the party will support the youth mission projects including the Appalachia Service Project and Heifer International. Best of all, the party only costs \$40/family. There are only 15 slots available - one kid per slot. (Each family can bring up to four kids). Kids up to 6<sup>th</sup> grade are invited to attend. It's also a great time to get a peek at how our youth ministry works. Please contact Jimmy Sherrod, at [jimmy@mmumc-dc.org](mailto:jimmy@mmumc-dc.org), if you want to sign up. Your kids will have a blast, we promise.



## Great Day of Service

### Join in the fun and good works on The Great Day of Service May 2!

Make a difference in our community - and have fun along the way – at Metropolitan Memorial's Great Day of Service, Saturday, May 2 from 9 a.m. -1 p.m. If you like to clean, write, organize or craft, there is an activity for you.



We will gather in the Great Hall, but activities will take place throughout the church. Light snacks will be served in the morning and lunch at noon.

This is a wonderful event for the whole family. Adults, youth and children are welcome. A nursery will be provided.

Projects will include:

- Making sandwiches for the hungry
- Creating cards and writing letters to homebound church members
- Odd jobs in the church and outside on the grounds
- Assembling health and layette kits for UM Committee on Relief
- Writing letters on behalf of Amnesty International
- And much more!

The Great Day of Service is sponsored by Metropolitan's United Methodist Women.

## Reconciling Ministries Network Update

### Church Council Endorses Reconciling Petitions for Annual Conference

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.

The Baltimore Washington Area Reconciling Ministries 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.

### Metropolitan to Celebrate Anniversary as a Reconciled Church

June 1, 2009, marks Metropolitan's one-year anniversary as a reconciled congregation. **In celebration, Metropolitan has designated Sunday, June 7, as Reconciling Sunday. Rev. Dr. Traci West** will be the guest preacher on June 7. Dr. West is Professor of Ethics and African American Studies at Drew University Theological School. She is an ordained elder in the New York Annual Conference and a member of United Methodists of Color for a Fully Inclusive Church.

### Art Exhibit: Shower of Stoles Project



The Advocacy Ministry team will be hosting the Shower of Stoles Project **June 7-28** in the Great Hall. The Shower of Stoles Project is a collection of liturgical stoles representing the lives of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people of faith. These religious leaders have served in twenty-seven denominations and faith traditions, and come from six countries on three continents. The collection celebrates the gifts of GLBT persons who serve God in countless ways, while also lifting up those who have been excluded from service because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

MMUMC's Holy Week services and Reconciling anniversary events will be advertised in the Washington Blade (Spiritual/Religion Edition) on March 27.

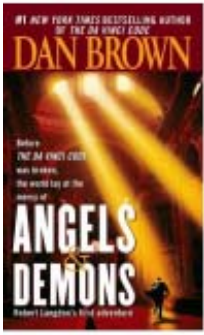
### "For the Bible Tells Me So"

Mount Vernon UMC in Washington, DC has entered into a discernment process on becoming a reconciling church and will be hosting a screening of "For the Bible Tells Me So" on **Sunday, March 29 at 1:30 p.m.** in their Undercroft Theatre. The film is a powerful documentary of gay and lesbian individuals sharing their stories, along with the response of their families, communities, and the church. The film will be followed by a panel discussion. All are welcome.

### Reconciling Ministries Network 2009 Convocation

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! The deadline for early registration is May 1. More information is available at <http://www.rmnetwork.org/convo2009.asp>.

# Study Opportunities at Metropolitan



## Upcoming Sermon Series Angels and Demons!

Before the *The DaVinci Code*, Dan Brown wrote a book called *Angels and Demons*, inspired by the historic conflict between science and religion. The Ron Howard movie starring Tom Hanks is coming out this May, and we will spend the sermons in the weeks following Easter exploring the ways in which science and religion have related and should continue to relate in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Come join us for this intriguing topic!

## Questions of Faith Sunday School Class Sundays, 10:10 am, Conference Room

Join us as we watch lectures on DVD followed by spirited discussions on the subject of the history of Christianity. Presently, we are completing a series entitled "After the New Testament, The Writings of the Apostolic Fathers." Lectures are given on DVD by Professor Bart Ehrman. We encourage you to join us and to help us select a new series for the coming weeks.

## 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 Sunday mornings!

## Exploring Faith

### Sundays at 10:10, Fireplace Room

Join us for a 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 than 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.



## Science & Religion Class

### Sundays, 10:10 a.m., Parlor

Join the Science and Religion class today as they begin a new topic, Science & Human Values which focuses on the work of Jacob

Bronowski, whose book by the same name has become a classic. Bronowski is most well known for his book in the 1950s *The Ascent of Man*, which became the first TV science docu-drama, and which in many respects inspired Carl Sagan to write and produce *Cosmos*. Kent Weaver will lead our discussion. Need information? Contact Donald Smith at donnnancy@verizon.net or Maynard Moore at maynardmoore@onebox.com



## Worship at St. Luke's UMC

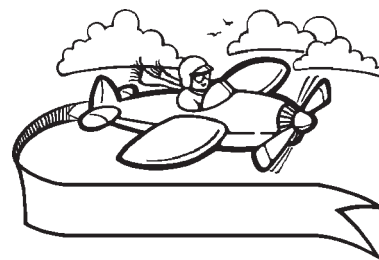
Worship on Sunday Mornings at 11:30 a.m.

J. Cody Nielsen,

Associate for Campus Ministry

Preaching on Sunday, March 22

Join our friends at St. Luke's for worship on Sunday mornings at 11:30 a.m. (3655 Calvert Street N.W.)



## Advertise Your Group Event!

There are many opportunities to advertise your group's events and activities. One of those is the window near our Library. If you or your group are interested in advertising your event in our window near the Library, please send your requests to Jeff Clouser, Director of Communications and Outreach, at jclouser@mmumc-dc.org or 202.363.4900, ext. 22.

# Service & Advocacy at Metropolitan

## **IONA Senior Services Caregivers Support Group A New Program for You at IONA**

Are you concerned about an older relative who is living independently? Do you worry about a senior close by or far away? If so, you are a caregiver.

We know that care giving can be challenging and difficult, but did you know that it can be satisfying too? **It can! We can help! You are not alone!**

- Gain valuable information, helpful hints, insight and support from others who are in living with the same emotions and concerns
- Join in the conversation & share your experiences and frustrations
- Connect with resources, programs and services that will help you navigate through the challenges of care giving.

First and Third Thursday of Every Month at 6:30 p.m. To Register call 202.895.9448. Fee: \$10 (scholarships available). The Group will be led by Donna Tanner, MSW, LGSW & LaTonya Washington, IONA Social Work Intern. IONA Senior Services, 4125 Albemarle Street, NW, Washington DC 20016

## **WIN Rally to Hold DC Council Accountable to Neighborhood Budget Priorities**

The Washington Interfaith Network has been working to assure that the City Council of the District of Columbia maintains affordable housing and neighborhood revitalization as priorities in the face of current budget pressures. On Thursday, April 2, WIN will rally 500 leaders from churches around the city to demonstrate their support for WIN's initiatives. Metropolitan is looking for at least ten committed advocates to attend this event to be held at 7:30 p.m. at First Rock Baptist Church. To car pool, meet in the MMUMC parking lot at 6:30 p.m. For more information, contact Advocacy Team Chair, Ann Michel, 202.885.8582 or amichel@wesleyseminary.edu.

## **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. Registration is \$299/person or \$169/Students. For more information and to register, visit [www.sojo.net/mobilization](http://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.

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## **Community Council for the Homeless at Friendship Place Presents Protecting Our Veterans: Addressing Homelessness Among Our Nation's Protectors Thursday, April 23 from 6:30-8:30 p.m., Metropolitan Memorial United Methodist Church**

### **Panel**

#### **National Policy and Legislation**

Kara Stein, *Legislative Counsel,  
Office of U.S. Senator Jack Reed*

#### **Federal Programs and Service Gaps**

Peter H. Dougherty, *Director, Homeless Veterans Programs,  
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs*

#### **Psychiatric Issues**

Major Lillian Green, *Psychiatric Nurse,  
Walter Reed Army Medical Center*

#### **Local Caseload and Services**

Kevin Morton, — *Co-Chair for Homeless Veterans,  
DC Veterans Affairs Medical Center*

### **Query Panel**

Rev. Dr. Charles Parker, *Senior Pastor, Metropolitan Memorial*  
Don Freeman, *Homeless Veteran and Advocate*  
Laura Osuri, *Executive Director, Street Sense*

### **Moderator**

Harry Jaffe, *Columnist, Washingtonian Magazine*

### **Reception**

6:30 p.m. - 7 p.m.

### **Panel Discussion**

**Exploring the mental, emotional and physical stressors that contribute  
to the unconscionable rates of homelessness among veterans**

7 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

**Free admission - space is limited. RSVP online at [www.cchfp](http://www.cchfp) or call 202.364.1419 ext. 23.**

# Remembering Others at Easter



You can remember friends and family this Easter by donating altar flowers in honor or memory of loved ones.

This year, our altar will be graced with Lilies and Hydrangeas, each given in celebration of someone known and loved by a member of the church.

I wish to donate # \_\_\_\_\_ Easter Lilies at \$25 each  
I wish to donate # \_\_\_\_\_ Hydrangeas at \$25 each

In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

- I will pick up these flowers following 11:15 a.m. worship
- I am donating these flowers to the church for distribution to our members by the Visitor Corps.

OR



You can support our new outreach ministry: Saturday evening worship at St. Luke's. Celebrate and honor someone special by making a donation to help grow this new ministry.

I wish to donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ in support of Crossroads

In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

**All donations will be listed in the Easter Sunday Bulletin.**

**The deadline for gifts is Wednesday, April 1, 2009.**

**Please drop off your form and payment to the church office. Orders cannot be taken by phone.**

My Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## 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.

We have led worship at Grand Oaks in February and March and it was extremely well received by the residents. They enjoyed the hymns, 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!

We will be continuing to lead worship every second Sunday, including Easter (Metropolitan has two identical services that day), at 11 a.m. 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](mailto: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 Recter*

## From the Finance Committee

### 2009 Offering Envelopes



In an effort to continue practicing good stewardship of our resources and of the earth, the Finance Committee has decided to discontinue the use of offering envelopes in 2009. These pre-printed envelopes are costly to order and mail each month, and we have found that very few members actually use them on a regular basis. We will continue to have blank envelopes available in the pews which may be used to make your pledge offering each week. You can help our deposit process by writing your pledge account number in the memo section of your check (this is a good opportunity to learn your account number!) Better yet, why not consider setting up automatic debit/credit payments? Call Dona Collary in the church office at 202.363.4900, ext. 17 or [dcollary@mmumc-dc.org](mailto:dcollary@mmumc-dc.org) to learn how!

## Youth Connection

Thanks to all who helped make this year's Youth-in-Mission auction a great success! We raised nearly \$14,000 to help with the various mission trips and projects that we will be a part of this year. We sincerely thank those who helped with the auction, those who donated items or money to the auction, and those who joined us for lunch and purchased items

at the auction. If you would like to make a monetary donation for our youth-in-mission projects, please contact Rev. Jimmy Sherrod at 202.363.4900, ext. 24 or [jsherrod@mmumc-dc.org](mailto:jsherrod@mmumc-dc.org).

*Jimmy Sherrod*

## AU Campus Ministry

Lent, for students, is a time when they have recently returned from Spring Break. This is a time in the semester I like to call the calm before the storm. As we approach Easter, the church gets busier and the workload for the students becomes intense. Unfortunately for students, this workload will not stop until the Wednesday before Mother's Day, when students, professors, and staff will have a chance to take a deep breath. You may hear it coming from across the street. In order to nurture the individuals of the American University campus during this time, I encourage us all to think of ways we can provide hospitality during this time of the year. In April, there will be a gathering of students and members of

this congregation to make hospitality bags for students. If you would like to be involved in this, or would like to donate cookies, chips, or anything else to this effort, please contact me at [j.cody.nielsen@gmail.com](mailto:j.cody.nielsen@gmail.com) or 319.759.9688.

As we move into the summer months, you will see some new things happening and you may be asked to assist in the development process of the AU outreach. If you would like to be involved, I encourage you to let me know as it will greatly benefit the coming years ministry to have you involved. Take care

*J. Cody Nielsen*

# 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

## I Wonder

During Lent, our children's Sunday School classes are preparing for the Mystery of Easter. Here are a few questions Metropolitan's children have been asking...I encourage you to spend some time with these questions...asking whether you could offer our children an answer?

- I wonder why it takes longer to prepare for the Mystery of Easter than it does to prepare for the Mystery of Christmas?
- I wonder why the disciples didn't think the children were important enough to speak with Jesus?
- I wonder what I would say to Jesus if I met him on the road traveling home?
- I wonder if Jesus would know my name?
- I wonder if I would know it was Jesus?

## A Message For All Parents (newborn – 6<sup>th</sup> graders)

Parents, please remember that at least one parent must stay on church grounds (nope, Starbucks is not on church grounds) at all times that your child is here at Metropolitan. Last week two children were walking around during the 11:15 a.m. worship service and the parents were no where to be found. This is not safe for our children, so please support our policy by staying on church grounds at all times. If you must leave for some reason, you need to speak with Kay Jacobi, Director of Children's Ministries, before you leave and identify another adult who will be responsible for your child in your absence. Thank you for your support of this policy!



## Metropolitan Memorial Nursery School Join us this summer for June Jubilee

June Jubilee is designed to provide a happy, exciting and fun camp experience for children ages 3 - 5. The buzz around Metropolitan is that it will be a fantastic Session I full of wonder and beauty. Discover the insect world and go on a butterfly hunt. We'll create art masterpieces, play games, sing songs, and have bugs on a log for snack. And then jump on in-the water's fine! Grab your beach towels, lawn chairs, buckets, sunglasses, and sandals. We'll be going to the beach during Camp Session II. What a wonderful place to explore, discover, play and make friends. Camp will run from May 26 through July 3 in two three-week sessions. Contact the Nursery School office at 202.362.8746 for more information.



## Family Movie Night Friday, April 3 6 p.m. in the Great Hall.

Join us on April 3 for dinner and a movie! We'll start with dinner at 6 p.m. and watch the movie together as we eat popcorn and curl up on the floor. Don't forget your sleeping bag or at least something comfy to sit on the hard Vestry floor. So put on something cozy, bring something comfy to sit on the floor and spend an evening with your friends at Metropolitan for a family fun event!

## 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, April 5, at both services.**



## Shrove Tuesday

Thanks for everyone's support! We had another great syrupy sweet and fun time! Enjoy the pics below from the event!



## America Becoming Less Christian, Survey Finds

(This article appeared on CNN.com on 3/10/09. It should have us all reflecting upon what our faith means for our lives, and how we can more effectively share that good news with others. How can we, as individuals, and as a church, become a stronger witness to the many who are searching for that “something” that is missing in their lives? Send your thoughts to the clergy staff.)

America is a less Christian nation than it was 20 years ago, and Christianity is not losing out to other religions, but primarily to a rejection of religion altogether, a survey published Monday found.

Seventy-five percent of Americans call themselves Christian, according to the American Religious Identification Survey from Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut. In 1990, the figure was 86 percent.

William Donohue, president of the Catholic League said he thinks a radical shift towards individualism over the last quarter-century has a lot to do it.

“The three most dreaded words are thou shalt not,” he told Lou Dobbs. “Notice they are not atheists — they are saying I don’t want to be told what to do with my life.”

At the same time there has been an increase in the number of people expressing no religious affiliation.

The survey also found that “born-again” or “evangelical” Christianity is on the rise, while the percentage who belong to “mainline” congregations such as the Episcopal or Lutheran churches has fallen.

One in three Americans consider themselves evangelical, and the number of people associated with mega-churches has skyrocketed from less than 200,000 in 1990 to more than 8 million in the latest survey.

The rise in evangelical Christianity is contributing to the rejection of religion altogether by some Americans, said Mark Silk of Trinity College.

“In the 1990s, it really sunk in on the American public generally that there was a long-lasting ‘religious right’ connected to a political party, and that turned a lot of people the other way,” he said of the link between the Republican Party and groups such as the Moral Majority and Focus on the Family.

“In an earlier time, people who would have been content to say, ‘Well, I’m some kind of a Protestant,’ now say ‘Hell no, I won’t go,’” he told CNN.

Silk also said the revelation that some Catholic priests had sexually abused children — and senior figures in the church hierarchy had helped to hide it — drove some Catholics away from religion.

And, he said, it is now more socially acceptable than it once was to admit having no religion.

“You’re not declaring yourself a total pariah. The culture has changed in a way that makes it easier to say, ‘No, I don’t have a religion. Even in the past year, Mitt Romney and Barack Obama feel obliged to talk about ‘those of no faith,’ “ he pointed out. Obama mentioned people without faith in his inaugural address in January, making him the first president to do so.

In the survey, one in five Americans said they have no religious identity or did not answer the question, and more than one in four said they do not expect to have a religious funeral.

The rise in what the survey authors call “nones” is the only trend reflected in every single state in the study, Silk said.

“We don’t see anything else in the survey that is nationwide,” he told CNN.

Still, Tony Perkins, the president of the Family Research Council, remained hopeful that people will return to their faith, noting there was a less dramatic decline in those affiliating themselves with a religion this decade than in the 1990s.

Perkins told Lou Dobbs he sees that decline easing, and he thinks soon religion will be an even greater part of people’s lives.

“If this poll is taken next year will the outcome be different?” he asked. “As the economy goes downward, I think people are going to be driven to religion.”

Other findings include:

- The percentage of Catholics in the United States has remained steady at about one in four since 1990, while the percentage of other Christians has plummeted from 60 percent to 50 percent.
- The percentage of Muslims has doubled since 1990, but remains statistically very small, only 0.3 percent in the original survey and 0.6 percent today.
- Mormons have remained steady as a percentage of the population, even as the number of people in the United States has grown. They make up 1.4 percent of the population.
- The number of Jews in the United States is falling if the category includes only those who define themselves as Jews religiously, but has remained the same if the category includes people who consider themselves ethnically Jewish.

The survey polled 54,461 Americans between February and November of last year. Pollsters conducted the research in both English and Spanish.

The survey is the third in a series, following polls in 1990 and 2001.

“America Becoming Less Christian, Survey Finds.” Available from <http://www.cnn.com/2009/LIVING/wayoflife/03/09/us.religion.less.christian/#cnnSTCText>. Internet; accessed 10, March 2009.

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