

THE MESSENGER

For the congregation of Metropolitan Memorial United Methodist Church

November 14, 2008

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As most of you are aware, we are nearing the end of our annual Stewardship campaign. It is a little nerve-racking to be engaged in trying to raise money during an economic crisis; but, of course, that's not what we're doing. If our stewardship campaign was about raising a budget, than right about now we would be hunkered down, paring down spending and hoping to ride out the economic storm. We're not. We're expanding programs and seeking to meet the growing needs of our community.

Stewardship is always about stepping out in faith in response to the call from God. It is about answering God's call, and in that process, finding our lives transformed.

Stewardship is about life transformation; about opening our lives to the power of the Holy Spirit. Churches that are not engaged in healthy giving will never be healthy churches. They will always struggle, not just financially, but spiritually. Healthy giving is at the heart of healthy discipleship, which is why you hear me talk about this first and foremost as a spiritual discipline.

Among the characteristics of a healthy giving discipline are:

- That giving is **sacrificial**: Whenever our giving becomes comfortable, it is usually a sign that God is calling us to grow.
- That we give of our **"first fruits"**: Our giving to God is not what is left over; the spare bills that we have in our pocket. It is a gift that comes right off the top, representing the best that we have to offer.
- That giving is **regular**: Because we give from the "first fruits," our giving does not rise and fall with the economy or the time of year. We give consistently and dependably. Our money is not a weapon to withhold when we are unhappy about something going on in the church.
- Giving is **joyful**: We can not share our resources grudgingly or resentfully. Our giving is one of the ways that we open ourselves to the grace that God is always offering us. By embracing giving as an opportunity, we invite the Spirit of God to guide and empower the process. And God leads the process, there is no telling where we will end!

2008 has been an exciting year for our church, with growth in many areas of our life together. I believe, however, that what we have been doing is laying the groundwork for a tremendous time of expansion and development. Each of us has the opportunity to play an important role in this growth through our prayers, our presence, our gifts, and our service. Let's step out in faith together as we seek to answer God's call.

Blessings,

Simple Gifts – Advent Sermon Series

Our theme during Advent this year will be "Simple Gifts." Our current economic crisis has been caused, at least in part, by excessive borrowing based on the belief that our economy would grow indefinitely. And, ironically, our government's solution to that crisis is an "economic stimulus package" aimed at encouraging greater consumerism! The call of our faith is diametrically opposed to that: a call to simplify and live within our means. It is a call not only to "earn all we can," but to "give all we can," so that we can share with the community around us the blessings that God has shared with us so richly. Simplicity is a social justice issue, as we seek to live in ways that results in healthier living for ourselves and our planet.

Over the weeks of Advent, we will explore simplicity as we look at our care for our environment, the way that we eat, economic justice, and consumerism. The series will culminate on Christmas Eve, with "The Simplest Gift," God's gift of God's self in the infant of Bethlehem. Plan on joining us on this wonderful pilgrimage through Advent!

The Arts at Metropolitan

The Messiah

MESSIAH Rehearsals!

Thursdays, 7:30 p.m. - 8:15 p.m., Music Room

The Metropolitan Oratorio Choir will offer the Christmas portion of Handel's beloved oratorio, *MESSIAH*, on Sunday, December 7 during the 11:15 a.m. worship service. *MESSIAH* will be performed with choir, soprano, alto, tenor, and bass soloists, 10-piece baroque orchestra, and organ. The service will conclude with the glorious Hallelujah Chorus from the end of Part II of the oratorio.

Everyone who desires to be a part of the choir is invited to Thursday evening rehearsals from 7:30 p.m. to 8:15 p.m. in the music room which is located in the Anne D. Dougherty Music Suite on the lower level of the education building. All voice parts will be needed: soprano, alto, tenor, and bass.

There will be a final rehearsal with orchestra and organ on Saturday, December 6 from 10 a.m. until noon in the sanctuary.

If you have any questions or wish to arrangements for childcare, please contact Bruce Caviness, Organist Choirmaster, at 202.363.4900 x 15.



Godly Dancing

Join us in preparation for Advent!

REHEARSALS

For our special Sunday, December 14 contributions to morning worship

Sundays, November 16 – December 7

11:15 a.m. – 12:15 a.m. in the choir room

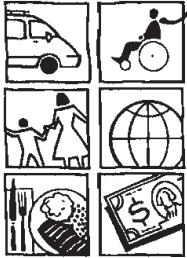
All are welcome and needed!

Boys and girls, men and women, “dancers” and “non-dancers” – *YOU* are encouraged to join in!

Stop by on November 9 if you can, or contact MMUMC's Director of Dance, Barbara Gaskill
202-244-3512 or Barbara@bgaskill.com

Service & Advocacy at Metropolitan

Serving



OTHERS

Service Ministry Retreat Monday, December 1, 6 p.m., Great Hall

The Service Ministry team is holding a retreat on Monday December 1 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. in the Great Hall. The retreat is open to all Metropolitan members and dinner will be provided. The purpose of the retreat is to discuss ways to focus our service ministries and to increase participation. Specifically, we will: 1) Identify common

themes for our service projects based on our current projects, congregational interest, and community needs; 2) Develop criteria for judging new projects and for making budget recommendations; and 3) Discuss ways to increase participation in our service projects. To inform the retreat, we have created a survey that we would like members of the congregation to complete by logging onto our website <http://www.nationalchurch.org>. Please RSVP to Lee Crockett at leecrockett@verizon.net by November 26 so that we order enough food.

Donate Your Minivan or Truck!

The Neighbors First program needs your donated minivan or truck. The minivan will be used by the social workers in our new Neighbors First program to take consumers to social service agencies, clinics, treatment programs, job training programs, etc., and to help them move donated items into their new apartments. Neighbors First has helped 37 homeless men and women move from the streets into apartments in the past six weeks, will help another 28 move in by the end of the year, and will then provide ongoing supportive services to the residents.

The pickup truck will be used by our facilities manager for repairs and deliveries at our drop-in center and our residences. In addition to the 65 people that Neighbors First will serve at full capacity, Friendship Place provides permanent housing to another 38 formerly homeless individuals - a total of 103 people!

Specifics:

- Gently used - 2005 or later, less than 40,000 miles.
- In excellent condition - no major repairs needed.
- Decent gas mileage.

To donate or for more information contact Bill Long, Director of Volunteer and Community Education Services, Community Council for the Homeless at Friendship Place, 202.364.1419, ext. 23.

Upcoming Events

Save The Date

November 23 - Stewardship Sunday

10 a.m. Single Worship Service

11 a.m. Stewardship Luncheon

December 7

9 a.m. Dayspring: A Worship Gathering

10 a.m. Crèche Exhibit

11:15 a.m. *MESSIAH*

12:30 p.m. UMW Recognition Luncheon

December 9

5:30 p.m. All Church Dinner & Carol Sing

December 14 New Member Sunday

9 a.m. Dayspring: A Worship Gathering

10:10 a.m. Carol Sing

11 a.m. Children's Advent Workshop

11:15 a.m. Traditional Worship

December 17

8 p.m. Longest Night Service:
Hope & Healing Through the Holidays

December 21

9 a.m. & 11:15 a.m. Music Celebration Sunday
Blended worship with meditation featuring Adult &
Children's Choirs, Organ, Piano, and Bells

December 24 - Christmas Eve Services

5 p.m. Family Service

7:30 p.m. Candlelight & Communion Service

10:30 p.m. Prelude Music

11 p.m. Traditional Candlelight Service w/music

December 28 - One Service

10 a.m. Service of Lessons & Carols

January Sermon Series

"The Gospel according to *Les Misérables*"
*Victor Hugo's classic tale of our universal
struggle for redemption*



•Congratulations to Chris and Amy Peed who welcomed their new baby girl, Suzanna Hope McCullough on November 3!

•Happy Birthday wishes to Henry Fearnow, long-time member of Eldbrooke, who turns 95 on Nov. 24!

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Join us for fellowship and ministry! Questions? Contact Annette Fletchall at 202.363.9231.

- Sunday, November 16 at 12:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, November 19 at 1:30 p.m.



November AARP Meeting

November 17, 12:30 p.m.

Please join us on Monday, November 17 in the Vestry. We will hear about the library and extensive archives at the National Presbyterian Church and Center from Dr. J. Theodore Anderson, director of the library and archives. Social time is at 12:30 p.m., and the meeting starts at 1:00. Refreshments will be served.

Wesley Theological Seminary

Presents Dr. Lauren Winner

December 5, 2008, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Wesley Theological Seminary welcomes Dr. Lauren Winner, author of *Girl Meets God* and *Mudhouse Sabbath*, for an Advent reflection on the rituals of Sabbath and spiritual practice on Friday December 5, 2008 from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Dr. Winner is Assistant Professor of Christian Spirituality at Duke Divinity School. She has written widely on Christian practices, the history of Christianity in America and Jewish-Christian relations. There is no cost and lunch will be provided. Please RSVP to Sara Sheppard at ssheppard@wesleyseminary.edu or 202.885.8688. Please include your name, church affiliation, and e-mail address. This event is underwritten by the Making Connections Initiative and the Lilly Endowment.



United Methodist Women's

Recognition Luncheon

Sunday, December 7, 12:30 p.m.

We are delighted to announce that four outstanding women have been selected for special recognition at our annual recognition event in December. As always, there are many, many women in our church who contribute in countless ways. The four women we will recognize this year are Rev. Sandy Rector, Pam Settlage, Helen Simon and Martha Turner. Each one of these women has made significant contributions to our church, our community, and beyond. We look forward to hearing much more about each of their achievements and contributions at the Recognition Luncheon on December 7 beginning at 12:30 p.m. in the Vestry. In addition, we will welcome new UMW members, recognize babies born in our church family, as well as honor the lives of women in our church family who passed away within the past year. It promises to be a special day of celebration for all United Methodist Women.

Upcoming Events (cont.)



All Church Dinner & Carol Sing Fun for All Ages!

Tuesday, December 9, 5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Join us for a family style dinner and carol sing in the Great Hall on Tuesday, December 9 at 5:30 p.m. Bring cookies to share!

Upcoming Great Hall Lectures

Sundays at 10:10 a.m.

November 23 - No Great Hall Lecture
One Service at 10 a.m. & Commitment Sunday Brunch

November 30 - Handel's *Messiah*
Lecture by Rev. Barbara Greene

December 7 - Crèche Exhibit

December 14 - Carol Sing



Metropolitan Memorial Christmas Crèche Exhibit Sunday, December 7, 10 a.m.

Share your cherished Nativity Scenes with the congregation by signing up for the Christmas Crèche Exhibit to be held Sunday, December 7, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., in the Great Hall. Setup will be Saturday, December 6, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. We hope to have lots of Crèches! We will be glad to set up your scene for you and take it down. To participate, please email Mary Rynearson at mlrynearson@msn.com, or Marilu Wood at shedelwood@yahoo.com, or call Connie McWorkman at 301.320.4242.

Advertise Your Group Event!

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 jlclouser@mmumc-dc.org or 202.363.4900, ext. 22.



INTERFAITH Conference of Metropolitan Washington

presents

An Evening of Sacred Delights Song! Dance! Chant!

Join us for IFC's 29th Annual InterFaith Concert
Tuesday, November 18, 7:30 p.m.
at The Washington National Cathedral

Honoring

Ambassador Akbar Ahmed & his family and their incredible bridge-building work as Muslims to deepen and spread interfaith understanding.

Some Highlights include: Cambodian Buddhist Dancers, the Washington National Cathedral Girl Choristers...*Nritya Kalpana*- Hindu Devotional Dancers, the Metropolitan Washington Baha'i Chorale, the Choir of Temple Emanuel of Maryland, brothers Satvinder and Harvinder Singh of New Delhi with Sikh Kirtani singers of Washington, the Mormon Choir of Washington, and a combined choir directed by Mr. Robert McCormick of St. Paul's Episcopal Church on K-Street.

For Tickets Log onto <https://tickets.cathedral.org/public/show.asp>.

Order your 2008 Poinsettias and Christmas Greens

Honor friends and family while helping to beautify our Sanctuary by purchasing poinsettias or seasonal greens this Christmas.

During the Christmas season, our church altar is decorated with scores of beautiful poinsettias and the Sanctuary is adorned with wreaths and seasonal greens. All of these seasonal decorations are purchased by the congregation. Poinsettias and seasonal greens are \$40. We ask that you submit your order by December 5. All names will be printed in the bulletin on Sunday, December 21. Poinsettias may be taken home after the 11pm worship service on December 24.



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Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

I/We wish to support Metropolitan with a gift of:



_____ Christmas poinsettias at \$40 each x _____
 _____ Support for seasonal greens at \$40 each x _____
 _____ Total amount enclosed

For those who are not donating their gift, poinsettias may be taken home after the 11 p.m. Christmas Eve Service.

I wish to place this gift(s) in memory of

I wish to place this gift(s) in honor of

<p>_____ I will pick up my flowers after the 11 p.m. Christmas Eve Service</p>	<p>_____ I will donate my flowers to the ministry of Visitors Corps</p>
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Fill out this form and bring to the church or send by mail by December 5. No phone orders, please.

Metropolitan Memorial UMC
 3401 Nebraska Avenue NW Washington DC 20016

Youth Connection - Fall 2008

Youth Connection Christmas Party Sunday, December 7, 2008 5 p.m. - 7 p.m. at the parsonage (3311 Nebraska Ave.)

Deck the Halls at the parsonage. Jimmy and Lesli invite all youth and their parents to join us for a Christmas gathering at our home. We'll have food, drink, music, games and fellowship. Please RSVP to Jimmy by December 7. You can RSVP by e-mailing jsherrod@mmumc-dc.org or text 865.805.5373.



*Metropolitan's Youth
have fun at the Harvest
Festival!*

Youth Calendar



November

23: Youth Connection 5 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
30: No Youth Connection - Happy Thanksgiving!

December

7: Christmas Party at the Parsonage 5 p.m. - 7 p.m.
14: Youth Connection 12:15 p.m. - 2 p.m.
21: No Youth (Merry Christmas)
28: No Youth (Happy New Year)

A look ahead...

January 30-February 1: Rock Retreat in Ocean City, MD
February 1: Football Party (Details TBD)

Advent Mission Project



Operation Swaddling Clothes

This year we will again gather infant items for UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) Layette kits. These kits include items for newborns and are shipped to relief hospitals in Africa. Many women do not have swaddling clothes with which to welcome their child into the world. Layette kits provide basic supplies for their baby's needs. I remember all the special, new items I received after my girls were born and I hope you will help us make a special package for other new moms across the globe! Each kit includes:

- 6 cloth diapers
- 2 receiving blankets
- 2 gowns or sleepers
- 2 diaper pins
- 2 shirts or 2 one-piece body suits
- 2 baby washcloths
- 1 sweater open in the front



Watch your Parent Pages for specific requests from each Sunday School class. In January, we will have a service day to assemble the kits. Of course, your family is welcome to buy more items than is on your list! If you can't find the time to shop this December or if you want to help with the cost of shipping, please consider a monetary gift! Monetary gifts should be made to MMUMC – UMCOR KITS.

Items may be brought to the church throughout Advent and placed in the crib on the 2nd floor of the Education Building or the basket in the Vestry during the study hour on Sunday mornings or you may bring them to the Family Christmas Eve Service :o) Please contact Kay Jacobi with any questions, 202.363.4900, ext. 26 or kjacobi@mmumc-dc.org. Thank You!

Children & Youth Ministries



•Both choirs will sing at our single 10 a.m. commitment Sunday service on November 23. All children are asked to arrive by 9:15 a.m. on the 23rd for rehearsal.

•Both choirs will sing at both worship services on Sunday, December 21.

•Both choirs will sing at the Family Christmas Eve Service, December 24 at 5 p.m.

Advent Workshop Sunday, December 14

11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., Vestry

Join us for our annual Advent Workshop! The children will have time for fellowship and art, fun and learning. We will also share lunch with each other before leaving for the afternoon at 12:30 p.m. This is always a great invite for children of all ages, so mark your calendar and bring a friend! We need 3 or 4 parent helpers this morning for the workshop. If you are available to lend a hand, please contact Kay Jacobi at 202. 363.4900, ext. 26 or kjacobi@mmumc-dc.org.

Family Christmas Eve Service

Can you believe we are already planning for Christmas Eve? This year, we will hold our mandatory rehearsal on Saturday, December 20 from 9:30 a.m. - 11 a.m. in the sanctuary. **Sign-ups begin the Sunday following Thanksgiving, November 30.** The sign-up sheet will be on Kay Jacobi's office door, Room 101A. Spaces tend to fill up fast so be sure to stop by next time you are in church. In addition to the actors, we will also need four child readers (this rehearsal will be on Sunday, December 21 during the study hour).



Choir Rehearsal and Special Performance Saturday, December 20

Following the mandatory Family Christmas Eve Service rehearsal on Saturday, December 20 (9:30 a.m. - 11 a.m.) both choirs will rehearse with Ms. Cartwright and Mrs. Settlege from 11 a.m. - noon. This rehearsal will help them prepare for the music Sunday the following day, the Family Christmas Eve service and our special outing to the Methodist Home today at 12:45 p.m.

Calling All Artists!

Are you interested in creating a piece of art, depicting the manger scene of Jesus' birth? It's time to pull out pencils, pins and paper and create art submissions for the Family Christmas Eve bulletin. As we have done in the past, one piece of art will be selected for the bulletin cover and the other art pieces will be highlighted in the bulletin. All submissions are due by Sunday, December 14 at Noon (this is earlier than in years past!).

Opportunities for Adult Volunteers

Adults! Below are some areas where you can volunteer through the rest of the year!!

•**Sunday, December 14, 11 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.**, at the Advent Workshop – no prep time, simply show up at 11 a.m. with a willingness to help our children with arts and crafts centered around the Advent season.

•**Saturday, December 20, 9:30 a.m. - 11 a.m.**, for the Family Christmas Eve Rehearsal. Ideally, these volunteers will also be the volunteers who help at the Family Christmas Eve service on December 24. Again, no prior work or experience necessary.

•**Saturday, December 20, 12:30 p.m. - 2 p.m.** Drivers and helpers are needed to escort our children's choirs to the Methodist Home as they sing for the people there. Driver's license required.

•**Saturday, December 24** – Family Christmas Eve Service – hopefully the same folks who can help on December 21 will continue to volunteer here. This includes someone to look over the sheep, other animals, star barriers, angels, etc. while they wait to move into position for the service. No actual shepherding experience necessary.

Planting the Seeds of Stewardship

An effort to share the joy of giving with children at Metropolitan

Background

Helping nurture a generous spirit - through encouraging everyday acts of kindness, volunteering and financial stewardship - can be one of the greatest gifts we teach our children. We shortchange our kids if we assume that they don't have the capacity to think outside of their own worlds. When lessons of giving start at a young age, they are more likely to become life-long habits.

New approach to children's offering at MMUMC

•Beginning October 26, offering containers will be in Children's Sunday School classrooms.

•The children's offering is a gift to God. It will not be a public passing of the offering container, but rather a private gesture as they enter with the greeter.

•Each class will decide how money should be used to help others through a well-established charity. (The money will not go into the general church budget.)

•The children will discuss helping people who are homeless, hungry, sick, elderly or young people in need. Then, the teachers will help match their concerns with an appropriate organization.

•The children will also come up with ideas of hands-on projects to further support their cause; perhaps making a meal, sandwiches, or making cards for others.

•The charity will rotate throughout the year, perhaps quarterly, as the children suggest.

Ideas on where money can come from

•Consider giving an allowance with three categories: spending, saving, and sharing. The sharing portion could then be given to the church.

•Provide tasks for children to earn money and then give a portion for their offering.

•Think lemonade stand, cookie stand, etc.

•Found money (just yesterday, I found \$.75 on the ground at the Metro)

•Making the most of the experience:

•At home, reflect about how they felt giving and the larger social problem addressed.

•Discuss who you give money to and why you do.

•Discuss how you decide on the amount to give.

AU Campus Ministry

While the season of Advent is most often associated with a time of joy of the coming holidays, hundreds of thousands of college students across the country can think of only one thing: FINALS. As a veteran of seven fall semesters in a row in a college setting, I realize that every year this is the time when people begin to “freak out.” In addition, there are those students who do not have families to go home to for the holiday season and need a little cheer. So, as you are going through your busy lives in this holiday season, remember to stop and encourage the students you have in your household, in your neighborhood, or right across the street at American University. You might take them for coffee or offer them a hug for all their hard work. And when they are able to make it to church on a Sunday, remind them of our hospitality by welcoming them with open arms, realizing they probably have been up most of the night and they just happened to get up in time to make it.

Sometimes, a little smile is all it takes to bring back to reality a student who is buried in papers and test preparation. Let us all help to remind them just how much God loves them in the midst of the “Finals Season.”

Cody

Supporting the Church with Our Prayers

Susan Anton and Ruben Olmos, blessings on their new marriage; **Henrietta Elliott**, for relief of pain; **Judy Hillow**, for health and healing; **Mary Hinshelwood**, for health and healing; **Alex Haig**, serving in Afghanistan; **Karin Halusa**, for health and healing; **Ben and Nate Hukill**, for continued healing; **Jean King**; **The Lummen Family**, as they mourn the loss of husband and father Craig, uncle of Grace Lewis; **Amy and Chris McCullough**, upon the birth of daughter Suzanna Hope on November 3; **Artem Petrossian**, for health and healing; **Lloyd Pressler**, for health and healing; **Kathryn Rynearson**, mother of Art Rynearson, as she receives hospice care; **Helena Scales**, for health and healing; **Wendy Sopkovich**, for peace as she mourns; 5 month old **Cecilia Grace Stamm**, for health and healing; **Kate Thaxton**, co-worker of Chuck Cochran, for health and healing; **Joe Yalch and Family**, as they mourn the death of Joe’s parents; **Those receiving treatment and those in need of donors at NIH**; **For all our military personnel who are serving in dangerous settings, and for all those who reside in areas where there is conflict and violence**; **For those who need to find peace, balance, and a new focus on God in their life**; **For decency in our country.**

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
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