



Metropolitan Sends Forth Three Mission Teams in June

In June, Metropolitan Memorial will be sending out three mission teams. The youth ASP team will be traveling to Saylersville, Kentucky for their home repair mission. The domestic VIM team will return to Pass Christian, Mississippi, and the international VIM team will travel to Nicaragua. Our congregation is blessed to be sending out a total of 39 missionaries through these trips!

On June 14, Reverend Faith Lewis will lead a mission team of ten youth and four adults for a week of home repair ministry in Saylersville, Kentucky. The team will provide vital housing services to low-income families through the a group called Appalachian Service Project, originally founded as a program of the United Methodist Church's General Board of Discipleship. Student team members include Nick Adams, Simon Courtney, Emily House, Ian Lesaar, Katie Mayo, Mariah McGee, Hailey Rector, Justin

Settlage, Sarah Whitehead, and Nick Wood. They are joined by their adult leaders Ned Bachman, Mike House, Kevin Settlage, and Debbie Stevens.

That same week, one of Metropolitan's Volunteers in Mission Teams will travel to Nicaragua where they will work in partnership with UM missionaries Nan McCurdy and Miguel Mariena. Their mission includes helping to renovate a school building and working with several community organizations (for more details, see feature article on pg. 2 of this issue). The Nicaragua team includes Anne Brown, Bob and Suzanne Browning, Sara Jo Emmerich, Geoff Jacobi, Ray Keene, Ann Michel, Charlie Parker, Clark and Austin Rector, Dick Schleicher, and Pam Settlage.

A second Volunteers in Mission Team will return to Pass Christian, Mississippi on the week of June 21. This is the third year that Metropolitan has worked in this area, which is still recovering from Hurricane Katrina. Four team members have participated in all these trips. The group will work with a local non-profit called

the Gray Hut which is building new houses for people who lost their homes to Katrina. The team includes four persons from Good Shepherd UMC in Silver Spring, including their pastor, Joye Jones who served at Metropolitan Memorial in 1995 and 1996. Team members include: James Conley, Mia Bloomfield, Lee Crockett, Kevin Fain, Joye Jones, Earle Knapp, Eliza Hamner-Koenig, Jeremy Koenig, Leilani McConnell, Pat McConnell, Lindsey Scherer, and Carol Tippet.

These teams go forth as ambassadors of Christ and as representatives of our congregation. They will be commissioned during worship on Sunday, June 8. In the coming weeks, please pray for these teams, their leaders, and the communities in which they will be serving. Be sure to check future issues of *The Messenger* to learn about this summer's 4th Mission trip to Heifer International



Congregation Ratifies Reconciling Statement

On Sunday, June 1, 250 members of Metropolitan Memorial participated in the vote to adopt the following reconciling statement. 86% percent supported the statement.

Metropolitan Memorial United Methodist Church affirms that all individuals are of sacred worth without regard to race, ethnicity, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, education, marital circumstances, economic status, physical and mental condition, or criminal history. We declare ourselves in support of the reconciling movement and welcome the full participation in the church of gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered persons and their families, as a reflection of God's unconditional love. At the same time, we recognize differences of opinion on issues of sexuality and seek to journey together in faith toward greater understanding and mutual respect.

The Advocacy Team wishes to thank all who participated in the vote and the dialogue and conversations that preceded it. The statement acknowledges that there are continuing differences of opinion on issues of sexuality and expresses a desire that all members of our church — those who support and those who oppose the statement — will continue to journey together in faith toward greater understanding and mutual respect.

The next Advocacy Team meeting will be on Sunday, June 29, at 12:30 p.m. in Room 101.

Confirmation Class 2008

A warm welcome to our newest church members!



Top Row, left to right: Nick Adams, Simon Courtney, Peyton Kettler, Cole Jenkins, Jake Starke, Brien Comey, Hunter Matthews.

Bottom Row, left to right: Anne Frances Davis, Danielle Whitehead, Marissa Mizroch, Melissa Mattsson, Emily Stone. Not pictured, Marisa Remez.

Nicaragua VIM Team Prepares for June Mission

In June, Metropolitan Memorial will send a VIM team of 12 to Nicaragua, where they will work in partnership with United Methodist missionaries Nan McCurdy and Miguel Mariena. After arriving in Managua, the group will receive an orientation to Nicaraguan culture and history, and then travel to Masaya, a historic city south of the capital. There, the team will work to help renovate a school building and support several community organizations and base Christian communities.

Nicaragua is the second poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, next to Haiti. The nation was devastated by war for a twenty-year period in the 70's and 80's, followed by an eight-year economic blockade. The country also has been plagued by a series of natural disasters, including a massive earthquake that destroyed much of the city of Managua in 1972 and a more recent series of destructive hurricanes. More than 80% of Nicaraguans live in poverty. According to McCurdy, "The hope for the people of Nicaragua depends, in great part, on the many small acts of Christian faith and solidarity expressed through international visits, concrete sharing, and through work done by teams when they return home."

However the team members, most of whom are veterans of other mission trips, know that they will be the ones most blessed by this encounter. Team member Clark Rector says, "It is a blessing to have the opportunity to answer God's call and be His hands in action. While I go with the intention to serve, if past experience proves true, I will receive much more than I give."

The team includes 8 Metropolitan members – co-leaders Anne Brown and Ann Michel; Geoff Jacobi; Charlie Parker; Austin Rector; Clark Rector; Dick Schleicher; and Pam Settlege. The group is grateful to have the participation of four persons from beyond our immediate church family. Sara Jo Emmerich, a student at Wesley Theological Seminary, has studied Central and South American authors and politics and looks forward to becoming involved in the communities she has read so much about. Ray Keene, pastor of William Watters Memorial UMC in Jarrettsville, is a veteran of two mission trips to Nicaragua and three to Mexico. And Bob and Suzanne Browning from Woodside UMC in Silver Spring come to the group with more than two dozen foreign and domestic mission trips under their belts. "Our pastor Rachel Cornwell calls us 'VIM Junkies,'" says Bob, who looks forward to the opportunity to see first hand the work of BWC-sponsored missionary Nan McCurdy. Suzanne says their decade-long involvement in VIM flows from a desire to reach out in service with others. "I have



From left: Ann Michel, Ray Keene, Sara Jo Emmerich, Bob Browning, Suzanne Browning, Charlie Parker, Clark Rector, Dick Schleicher, Pam Settlege, and Geoff Jacobi. Not pictured: Anne Brown and Austin Rector.

felt so privileged and been so humbled to have the opportunity to work with our brothers and sisters here and abroad. These experiences have brought me closer to God and change my way of thinking and living and hopefully have helped others in the process." (Long-time Metropolitan members will remember Suzanne's parents Rev. Clarence and Norma Fossett.)

Recent high school graduate Austin Rector, who has participated in previous youth mission and VIM programs, says that he "is looking forward to the trip to Nicaragua for the same reason I joined the Marines, I want to be the change I want to see in this world. Serving others in need can make a positive change in their lives, and it helps me appreciate how fortunate I am and makes my faith stronger." Anne Brown says that "VIM provides me with a wonderful opportunity to make a difference in the lives of others. Each year I look forward to being in service alongside other church members - to strengthen friendships and to form new bonds; to touch and be touched by the people we serve; and to live my faith with greater understanding."

Team members have been studying third-world perspectives on the Bible and preparing for the trip spiritually. "I want to be aware of the Holy Spirit's movement through our team as we take this journey together," says Pam Settlege, who is making her first mission trip. And Charlie Parker, who visited Nicaragua some years ago as part of a mission to El Salvador, found his trips to Central America to be quite transformative. "I am excited about going back."

"Each of us goes with a profound awareness that we are ambassadors of Christ and representatives of our entire congregation. Our work would not be possible without the prayers and support of the whole church," says Ann Michel. Dick Schleicher sums it up when he states, "I look forward to being part of a great team representing Metropolitan Memorial UMC, Woodside UMC, and William Watters Memorial UMC."

Our Community

New Study Series "The New Testament"



Who wrote the books of the New Testament? Why were they written? Who was the target audience? What was the message? The Living Faith Sunday School Class will answer these questions in a series entitled "The New Testament." It is a video series by Professor Bart D. Ehrman of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He will be examining the New Testament not from a religious or theological perspective, but in an historical context. Please join us in the Christie Room during the study hour between the services.

4th Annual InterFaith Bridge Builders Awards: "Faith and the Arts"

The InterFaith Conference of Metropolitan Washington (IFC) invites you to join them in honoring the 4th InterFaith Bridge Builders Awardees, Joan Gregoryk, Alex Kronemer, SAHARA, Natya Bharati, and Msgr. Ralph Kuehner, recipient of the Second Founders' Award on Thursday, June 19. The evening begins at 6 p.m. with a Dialogue with the awardees (for donors of \$250 or more) with a reception following at 6:45 p.m. and the awards ceremony at 7:45 p.m. The event is being held at the Pope John Paul II Cultural Center, 3900 Harewood Road NE, Washington, DC (across from Catholic University). Tickets are \$50/person including reception. Those who donate \$250 or more are also invited to the Dialogue with awardees. For more information and tickets call 202.234.6300

Stewardship Team Forming

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Matthew 6:21

The Finance Committee knows that stewardship is so much more than matching our pledge income to our budget needs. To that end, we are establishing a Stewardship Team to study the spiritual growth that comes from sacrificial giving, and to help foster the joyful transformation of such generous givers in our congregation. This group will also be instrumental in creating and implementing our annual commitment campaign in October. If you would like to be part of our team, please contact Pam Settlage at 301.765.2091 or pam.settlage@LFG.com.



June AARP Luncheon

Please join us in the Vestry on Monday, June 16 at noon for our annual spring luncheon. In addition to a delicious meal we will have musical entertainment and a sing-along. Checks for \$10, made out to AARP Chapter 2183, should be sent by June 12 to our treasurer, Wanda Van Vliet, at 4901 Connecticut Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20008.



Musicians Needed!

In an effort to fulfill our mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, the worship team, in conjunction with the Church Council, has identified an area of potential growth at Metropolitan Memorial. The Council has agreed to the exciting venture of exploring an additional worship gathering to be held at a time other than Sunday morning. As a part of my new position at Metropolitan, I will be working with a separate worship team to develop this service. This worship gathering, tentatively titled *Alive at Five*, will be at 5 p.m. Saturdays beginning in September. The gathering will include contemporary music, creative preaching of the Word and meaningful opportunities for fellowship

-- providing an essential element in our effort to bring people into a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Strong preaching, inspiring worship and excellent music already are characteristics of Metropolitan. A must-have in any worship gathering, particularly with *Alive at Five*, is excellent music. In keeping with our tradition and our story, we are beginning our search for musicians who will help lead the music for this exciting worship gathering.

We are looking for the following musicians: keyboardist, bass guitarist, rhythm guitarist and drummer. Other instruments may be added at a later date. We would love to find these musicians within our church family or through a connection with our church family. If you are interested, you are invited to send me an e-mail detailing your interests and abilities. I will be in touch with you for a meeting after my arrival in mid-June. If you have any questions, please contact me at jimmysherrod@gmail.com, or at 865.805.5373. On behalf of the worship team and the ministerial staff, I look forward to hearing from you soon. Joy and Peace! - Jimmy Sherrod

Happy Birthday!



*Is your birthday missing?
Let us know!
Contact the office,
202.363.4900.*

**Bess Jones turns
91 this month!
Happy Birthday, Bess!!**

Sang-Hun Han 6/1	Jeremy Bendler 6/16
Yeichi Kuwayama 6/1	Mark Carlson 6/16
Dallas Maxwell 6/1	Scott Hulick 6/16
Clem Gaskill 6/2	Anna Rusch 6/16
John Millian 6/2	Todd Vaughn 6/16
Alex Helsabeck 6/3	Connor Jabs 6/17
Marilyn Baldwin 6/4	Bess S. Jones 6/17
Gayle Bauer 6/4	William Roach 6/17
Richard H. McKey 6/4	William Roberts 6/17
Bill Quick 6/4	Derek Stone 6/17
Troy Russell 6/4	Mary Ann Alford 6/18
Lois Schwoerer 6/4	Anders Benson 6/18
Emma Klick 6/5	Tim Hunter 6/18
Isaac Ligono 6/5	Pyper Imperial 6/18
Kelly Cromwell 6/6	James Whittle 6/19
Ehren Halse-Stumberg 6/6	Robert Allison 6/20
Jeffrey Munk 6/6	Katie Miller 6/20
Elmer Staats 6/6	Sarah Bohlinger 6/21
Hailey Vaughn-Kuntze 6/6	Jan Cecile Bufkin 6/21
Caleb Grim 6/7	Jeffrey Cantrell 6/21
Jeremy Koenig 6/7	Samantha Hale 6/21
Eli Nascimento 6/7	Sheridan Nicole Renzi 6/21
Michael Bartlett 6/8	Andrew Tillman 6/22
Michael Bernardi 6/8	Sharmila Roni Banik 6/23
Sylvie Coll 6/8	Eleanor Grace 6/24
Geoffrey Davis 6/8	Peter Andrews Stifel, Jr. 6/24
Kathryn Markey 6/8	Olivia Ben-Veniste 6/25
Firoze Rao 6/8	Mark Knouse 6/25
Susan Rao 6/8	Christopher Boam 6/26
Richard Gorbutt 6/9	Mariah McGee 6/26
Mary Rynearson 6/9	Benjamin D'Angelo 6/27
Samantha Smith 6/9	Mary S. Esfandiary 6/27
Mary Louise Wood 6/9	Eric Imperial 6/27
Mary Jean Evans 6/10	Marissa Mizroch 6/27
Amy Johnson 6/10	Becky Pugh 6/27
Jael McHenry 6/10	Charles Somerville 6/27
Nicholas Stathis 6/10	Sarah Whitehead 6/27
Marilyn Dickenson 6/11	Dayton Coe 6/28
Nate Kline 6/11	Kathryn Elizabeth Evans 6/28
Louise Redding 6/11	Jessica R. Huff 6/28
Matthew David 6/12	Lara Kline 6/28
Stephanie Pitts 6/12	Obaahemaa Nyanin 6/28
Angela Gildner 6/13	Austin Dunn 6/29
Nancy Jane Smith 6/13	John Gosnell 6/29
William Caudron 6/14	Malinda Lindsay 6/29
Scott Macaulay 6/14	Casey Hanley 6/30
Evan Pawsat 6/14	Karl Spielmann 6/30
Adrianna Kezar 6/15	Charlie Wells 6/30

Rebuilding Together

On Saturday, April 26, a team of volunteers from Metropolitan participated in the Rebuilding Together (formerly Christmas in April) rebuilding day. Rebuilding Together “works to make free



home repairs for low-income homeowners, especially elderly, disabled, and families with children in our Nation’s capital, Washington, DC.” This year, our sixth, we worked on Thelma Jones’ house in the Petworth neighborhood. Thelma is 79 and in poor health, but she has a strong desire to remain in the house that she has owned since the 1960’s.



We engaged in a number of projects including removing and replacing ceilings in second floor bedrooms

that were damaged by a leaking roof that has since been repaired; painting an upstairs bedroom, hallway, stairs, and living room; securing the existing stair railing and adding two additional railings; adding a hand-held shower to the bathroom; reinforcing supports and replacing the railings for the rear deck; repairing the laundry room faucet; and replacing the porch light. We also helped Thelma’s daughter clean out accumulated trash from the basement. Since this was promoted as a party with “adult activities,” we conducted a garbage bag race to the alley, which was won by Jeremy Koenig. However, that result is being challenged because he used Lee’s truck. Jeremy argues that since Geoff got lost driving around the block, the truck did not provide an advantage. The officials have taken this under advisement and we expect an announcement soon. This year’s team consisted of:

Geoff Jacobi, Lee Crockett, Chris McCullough, Kevin Fain, Daniel Hartman, Eliza Hamner-Koenig, David Hogan, Jeremy Koenig, Jamie Lawson, Doug Lewis, Jennifer Sorenson, Alyssa Morrison, Craig Scherer, Joy Plemmons. Thanks to everyone who participated and to the Children’s Ministry which provided lunch!

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Join us for a wonderful time of fellowship and ministry! Questions? Contact Annette Fletchall at 202.363.9231.

- June 15, 12:30 p.m.
- June 17, 1:30 p.m.

These dates we’ll meet in the conference room

Church Council Notes - May 5, 2008

Metropolitan Memorial United Methodist Church Church Council Meeting May 5, 2008

Mike Emery called the meeting to order. The opening prayer was offered by Sandy Rector.

Approval of Minutes. The minutes from the March meeting were approved without any changes.

Visioning Process. Joyce Shields provided an update on the visioning process, with a focus on five Critical Success Factors: Research and Assessment, Structure, Networks, Communications, and Resources. Members of the Church Council discussed these areas in small groups and provided comments to the Visioning Team. The Visioning Team will consider suggestions and report back to the Council at the next meeting.

Report from Church Consultant: Rev. Pete Steinke attended the meeting to discuss his report to Church Council on the non-reappointment of Metropolitan's previous pastor in 2007. To open the discussion, Dr. Parker offered a devotional from Paul, underscoring that we are one body and our health is based on our ability to forgive and look to the future as a body. Mike Emery noted that all meetings of the Church Council are open, and he welcomed visitors to this meeting. Two documents were considered: "The Action Report" prepared by Rev. Steinke, and a memo to the Church Council prepared by Dr. Parker on "lessons from the pastoral transition." Copies of both are available in the church office to members of the congregation.

Rev. Steinke reviewed and discussed his report, including the process that had been followed by the Staff-Parish Relations Committee leading up to its recommendation that the previous pastor not be reappointed, standards for due process, the difference between confidentiality and secrecy, the very difficult balance between maintaining the confidentiality of an evaluation process and keeping members of the church informed, and questions to be addressed going forward. His report noted that when people are not told "why," it is "inevitable that some will not trust the judgment of the decision-makers and will impugn their motives...." He said the actions by SPRC not to request the pastor's reappointment took some by surprise, and the suddenness created distrust of the process; even though a lengthy period, in which SPRC worked with the pastor and gave him an opportunity to address concerns, had preceded the decision. Rev. Steinke observed that "...the conditions for due

process appear to have been met ... (and) ...the SPRC used restraint, patience, and good judgment in handling a delicate matter."

Members of Church Council and guests discussed the report, voiced their views, and also discussed steps that had been taken in the last year to inform the congregation of the steps in the annual evaluation process for clergy. A number of steps have been taken to increase communication and transparency, including continuing the practice of open Church Council meetings, publishing minutes in the Messenger, publishing the names of all church committee members twice annually, publishing SPRC's schedule for annual clergy evaluations and actively soliciting comments from the congregation on all clergy and staff. It was noted that members of SPRC always have been elected by Church Council (as are all other committees), and the way to assure fairness of process is to continue to elect individuals of integrity who are well-known to the congregation. Additionally, leadership assessment tools are being developed that could be utilized for congregational feedback going forward.

Additional suggestions included expanding information in the Website and Messenger about the various church committees and asking clergy who are reappointed each year to announce their reappointment, so that the congregation would understand that it is an annual reappointment only.

Some participants at the meeting spoke of their personal concerns. It was noted that the church has a very effective Stephens Ministry that could be utilized by individuals who still may be struggling with issues. A number of participants expressed their view that the process had been conducted fairly and they were eager to move forward and embrace the positive spirit that exists at Metropolitan under Dr. Parker's leadership. Mike Emery will work with Dr. Parker and members of Church Council to summarize steps taken and steps planned. Suggestions from Church Council were solicited, and Rev. Steinke was thanked for his report.

Update on Reconciling Process: Ann Michel provided an update on the reconciling process over the last several months. The Advocacy team's goal was to expand the discussion church-wide and provide some first person voices. She acknowledged the work of the Advocacy Team including the special edition of the Messenger, three-week preaching series, and Great Hall programs (which were well attended). Some additions to the original process include a session of explaining the

Biblical basis for the position that the United Methodist Church holds, as well as sessions on Sunday, June 1 that will be an open session for people to give comments.

Ann noted that the Church Council has the authority to make the decision to become a Reconciling congregation – either to make the decision directly or to call a church-wide meeting to make the decision. Two different versions of the draft Reconciling statement were reviewed. Ann said the Advocacy team recommends that a congregational meeting be convened so that the decision would be made church-wide. The Church Council approved a proposal that a church-wide vote be held following both worship services on June 1. In addition, by a written ballot vote of 25 in favor and one opposed, Church Council endorsed and recommended for adoption by the congregation the following statement: "Metropolitan Memorial United Methodist Church affirms that all individuals are of sacred worth without regard to race, ethnicity, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, education, marital circumstances, economic status, education, physical and mental condition, or criminal history. We declare ourselves to be a part of the Reconciling Ministries Movement and welcome and include the full participation of gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender persons and their families as a reflection of God's unconditional love. At the same time, we recognize differences of opinion on issues of sexuality and seek to journey together in faith toward greater understanding and mutual respect." It was clarified that the Reconciling Ministries Movement is opposed to the following United Methodist Church policies: prohibition of ordination of self avowed homosexuals, the right of a pastor to exclude a homosexual from membership, prohibition against homosexual unions, and the statement in the UMC Discipline that homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching. This clarification will be included in introductory material with the draft reconciling statement.

Changing the Name of The Greater Metropolitan Parish: As authorized in writing by District Superintendent David Argo, Charlie Parker called a Charge Conference and acted as presiding elder. He presented a proposal to change the name of our church back to Metropolitan Memorial UMC. When MMUMC merged with Eldbrooke, the name was changed to Greater Metropolitan Parish. With the merger complete and the Eldbrooke church building sold, the Church Council unanimously approved changing the name of the church to Metropolitan Memorial United

Children's Ministry

Children's Celebration Sunday was a wonder-full spirit-filled day!

I want to especially lift up those children who participated in the day's services: Hailey Vaughn, Olivia Greene, Kate Peters and Anna Hukill at the 9am service and Owen Brody, Ann Morgan Jacobi, Elena Remez and Perry Ann Brody at the 11:15 service.

I also want to lift up all 5 of our graduating 6th Graders who participated in both services. Josh Mattson read our day's scripture and Emily Vogt, Nathaniel Remez, Lizzy Sartain (thanks Alice for filling in for Lizzy – we hope she is feeling better!) and Adam Settlege shared a personal reflection about the Bible for our day's sermon. If you missed their sermons, I encourage you to take the time to read their inspiring and truly personal words reprinted here.

A huge and heart-felt thank you to all the fabulous volunteers who gave so much of themselves to both me and our

children this past year! They include:

Julie Christopher, Mary Jo Marchant, Karen Strider, Jan Bufkin, Kristin Rommel, Pyper Imperial, Patricia Klick, Craig Hukill, Anne Brooks Rudzki, Perry Brody, Barbara Green, Clark Rector, Janelle Rynes, Beth Peters, Brian Boyle, Caralee Adams, Holly Hukill, Megan Lordos, Kate Vogt, and Nancy Rider

I look forward to seeing all of you again in August after I return from my 2 months of unpaid leave. Have a great summer!

What is Love?

By Lizzy Sartain

After much deciding and thinking I chose to tell you a little about what I think is very important; Love. [Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 13 about what love is.] Those

words, Love is patient, love is kind" are simple words that, mean a lot. When I was smaller, my mother would always be patient and kind if I got into something I wasn't supposed to. What I think "love never fails" means is that no matter what you go through, if you truly love each other, you will always have that person in your heart.

If you don't have love, then what other important values do you have? As it says in the bibi, if you don't have love that you have almost nothing. I realize that I will always have people who love me and everyone will always have people who love them.

In the Bible, Jesus teaches us what love is by his actions and words. Jesus heals the blind, always forgives and never boasts about himself. His kindness and faith have clearly taught us what love is. Thank you.

Church Council Notes - May 5, 2008 *continued*

Methodist Church, the name that will be used in all church materials including materials from the Conference.

Church of the Resurrection Leadership Institute: The Church of the Resurrection in Kansas is having a leadership institute on October 2-3, 2008. Members of MMUMC have attended these leadership programs in the past and found them to be excellent, and members of the Church Council were encouraged to consider attending the next one in the fall.

Reports from Committees: In reports from Committees, John Tate made a report on behalf of Anita Seline, Assistant Lay Leader for Leadership Development: the nomination of Helen Simon to be a delegate to Annual Conference was approved.

The Parsonage Committee was created by the Church Council with representation from all of the ministry teams of the church with the charge to consider and make recommendations on the future of the church's parsonage. This Committee was chaired by Charlie Parker, who made a report to the Church Council. The Parsonage Committee made two recommendations to the Church Council: that the parsonage not be sold and to endorse the recommendation from the SPRC to offer the parsonage as part of a compensation package to Jimmy Sherrod and his wife when he undertakes the newly created position of Minister of Youth and

new worship services. Charlie noted that both of these proposals had been approved unanimously by the Parsonage Committee. Discussion included the assurance that this compensation package had been carefully considered in comparison to other staff positions and could be included in the budget that had been approved for 2008. The motion was made that the recommendations from the Parsonage Committee be approved, with the understanding the parsonage would be available for youth and other outreach events and that the use of the parsonage would be reviewed a year from now. The motion passed by a vote of 17 in favor, 5 opposed, and one abstaining. It was noted in the discussion that this was not the best time to be selling a property in the current real estate climate, the Foundation is very strong, many congregations have regretted selling their parsonages, and the parsonage has been used over the last year by the UMW, VIM, and other groups.

The Worship Ministry Team provided a report that included a review of the many outstanding Holy Week services, plans for new worship services in the summer and beyond, and thanks to Pat House for all her invaluable help in making Holy Week and the Worship Ministry Team so effective and meaningful.

Maynard Moore provided information to the Church Council on the Abrahamic

Family Reunion Program, and he requested that our church would be added to names of supporting churches. This was unanimously endorsed by the Church Council and will be referred to the Study Ministry Team to determine the best ways to implement it. Rev. Tony Gattis will be the liaison/coordinator on this project.

The closing prayer was offered by Faith Lewis. Notes submitted by Helen Simon
Attendees: Mike Emery, Terry Rusch, Charlie Parker, Sandy Rector, Faith Lewis, Bill Roach, Pete Stathis, Anne Brown, Pam Settlege, John Klick, Marti Cochran, Marilu Wood, John Tate, Sue Roach, Lee Crockett, Ann Michel, Janet Fishman, Phil Potter, Eric Imperial, Mary Beth West, Joan Spencer, Lloyd Leonard, Pat Simpich, Nancy Rider, Phyllis Kokus, Dona Collary, Pat House, Bruce Caviness, Kay Jacobi, and Helen Simon. Guests included Joyce Shields, Chuck Cochran, Barbara Morgan, Dick Merriman, Barbara Tate, Andy Hershey, Ken Millian, Alva Millian, Sara Shepherd, Barbara Green, Dick Schleicher, Eugenia Evans, Penny Pagano, and Maynard Moore.

Sermons from June 1 - Children's Celebration

Look for photos from Children's Celebration in the next issue of *The Messenger*

Knowing Both the Old and New Testament God

by Nathaniel Remez

God is very much like a character in a book, he changes over the course of the Bible. In the Old Testament if God was unhappy with a city, he would destroy it. For example, Sodom and Gomorra were two of five cities that God leveled because there were fewer than five faithful people in the cities. God flooded the earth when only Noah and his family were praying and doing daily worship. Jonah felt God's actions were too harsh when he was swallowed by a whale. God in the Old Testament did not have much mercy for sinners.

God's experience in the Old Testament must have triggered him to try a new method. Therefore he sent his son to save us. This was a change in his perspective and his methods of how to rid the world of sin. Instead of using his great power and strength, He uses his words. Through his son He uses His power to teach, to heal, and to save. God did not only use his son, Jesus, He also helps guide others to help the people around them, people such as prophets, such as John the Baptist, and I believe, even inventors who make life easier for us today. God sent his only son to save us. God could have just leveled the whole world and started a new civilization. But instead he sent a savior.

Even after the crucifixion, God can still teach us. He is teaching us right now through me and my peers. He won't destroy the world because we are here and if we sin then when we come here to church, we learn from the Bible, we learn from the pastors, we learn from each other that God finds himself not having to teach us as much any more because he can help us teach one another.

If everyone on earth would follow God's example of using his words to teach, instead of his power and resort to violence, then we would make the world a much better place. But to make this happen, we need to work together and learn and teach, instead of using our strength to control others. I am glad that God changed, because He teaches, helps, and heals, and he doesn't kill. Our God is a loving God. If we are faithful to the God of the New Testament, then God will help us teach others and help us learn.

I've learned that God will forgive if you do what he tells you to do and you go in the direction he points. For me, I feel God is pointing me toward middle school and wants me to be a good student. At Metropolitan, I think he wants me to be a role model for the younger kids and be a faithful young adult, as I go through confirmation and eventually pointing me off to college and a good education. I believe that if I listen to God, I can go far.

Understanding the Bible

by Emily Vogt

I decided to do my sermon on how sometimes in the scriptures and in modern day experiences you can't always find meaning right then. We have to give ourselves time to reflect back and realize what the situation meant to us. I used to have a black Labrador retriever named Bonnie. Unfortunately we had to put her to sleep in March because she had arthritis in her back legs. While Bonnie was living I adored her and I spent as much time with her as I could. When she died, I was devastated. I cried a lot and prayed that she would go up to heaven safely. I realized how just simply coming home from school and not seeing her made me realize that I loved/missed her even more than before. This past month, my babysitter, Becky brought her 8-year-old Jack Russell Betty. As we played with Betty and I remembered how much dogs and Bonnie had been a part of my life. I knew that Betty resembled the happiness that had existed in my life when Bonnie was alive and how that hope was returning. This was similar to the disciples when Jesus resurrected himself on the cross. They did not realize how important Jesus' teachings were until they were the only ones who could continue the teachings and Christian faith. I think that in life meaning does not occur when your living in the moment, meaning occurs when you reflect back on what happened and wish you could say good-bye one last time. I will always remember Bonnie, and people will always remember Jesus and what the scriptures tell us but there will always be a longing to feel that hint of happiness like before one last time.

The Lord's Prayer

by Adam Settlage

When I first heard the Lord's Prayer I didn't

know what it meant. I would get words mixed up and forget it. Fortunately, when I got older I understood it more and could follow along with others. As a result, I use it more in my daily life. I realized that the Lord's Prayer is split up into parts. The first two lines "Our father, Who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name" are worshipping God and preparing us to introduce the Lord's Prayer. The next part is asking for what we want. "Thy kingdom come thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil."

I broke it down into pieces and tried to understand each line. "Give us this day our daily bread." To me this means, please god, please give me enough food to eat and live today. Not only food, but also other needs to get by in today or in days to come. To help myself I would use it in my daily life and think of times when I needed something. For example please God give me enough strength to overcome obstacles and weaknesses, and to ignore bad things to come.

This could be a number of things like mean people, classes in school that aren't my favorite, people I don't like, or to do well in sports or in school, etc. "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." To me this means asking God please forgive us for what we have done wrong and we will forgive the other people who do the same to us. I think we should always forgive others because it is the right thing to do, and we know that God will always forgive us. For example: if any of you have said something mean or bad to someone, God will forgive you if you say you are sorry. On the flip side you should forgive someone who does something wrong.

The final line "For Thine is the kingdom, the power, the glory, for ever and ever. AMEN." is the closing to the whole prayer. This prayer is great because you can say it anytime of the day, even when you don't have something to ask for. All these ideas have helped me understand the Lord's Prayer more and therefore bring me closer to God each time I say it.