



A Leap of Faith

So who *are* those crazy people committing to venture out on a journey to Maryland, not sure where they are going, when exactly they will leave, or what precisely they will be doing when they get there? They only know that they are going to help people in need.

You are cordially invited to join Don Wallace and others of Little River who want to make a difference for the growing number of hungry people in our region. Food for Others offers a program that allows us to glean fields about an hour away that farmers have planted for volunteers to harvest this summer. It will allow us of Little River's community of faith to live our tag line: welcoming diversity, independent thought and faithful action.

Food for Others is a non-profit program supported in part by our congregation through the Board of Missions. In 2008 it saw a 40% increase in households requesting its assistance. Compared to last year at this time, the need is now nearly double.

If you can join us this summer on a day trip to glean crops, you'll get a taste of what the disciples must have felt after Easter—and we'll help to make it possible for

the hungry to be fed as Jesus called us to feed.

Please contact Don Wallace or me if you would be interested in such a ministry. And watch for details!

Peace,
Ginna

"A Talk on Race" Continues

Please join the Rev. Dr. Jacqueline Moncrief on two **Sundays, April 26** and **May 3**, at 11:00 for the continuation of the well-attended A Talk on Race series.

For **April 26** Jacque has invited Howard Morland, a renowned nuclear proliferation objector and author of *The Secret That Exploded*, as well as a civil right activist in the 1960s, to lead a discussion of Israel's oppression of the Palestinian people and its parallel to America's historic oppression of African Americans and seizure of Native American lands.

Jacque and Howard were among ten delegates from Dumbarton United Methodist Church in Georgetown who traveled on a 2006 peace mission to Palestine. They met with leaders of peace and education organizations in Israel and Palestine. Traveling throughout the West Bank and staying with Palestinian families, they witnessed Israel's occupation firsthand. Howard's presentation will be preceded by a short documentary that shows vividly how Israel's new separation wall in the West Bank impinges on the rights of another people. A question and comment period will follow.

On **May 3**, discussion will revolve around myths that impede progress, even in the era of an African American president. Well-meaning, educated whites may say:

- "I really think racism is a thing of the past."
- "I don't see color. I treat everyone the same."
- "Racism happened so long ago. It's not my fault."
- "My children and grandchildren won't have to worry about these problems in the future."

These beliefs, says sociologist James Waller in his *Face to Face: The Changing State of Racism Across America*, "however 'sincere,' greatly distort the conversation surrounding race in America. Most dangerously, these myths allow racism to become more entrenched, because they remove any compelling reasons to deal with its causes and consequences. . . . [T]hese myths must be challenged." Jacque aims to do just that, by leading group exercises and discussions.

If you took part in earlier sessions of "A Talk on Race," please bring your series packet, including the discussion questions and glossary of terms. If you did not receive one, extra copies will be available in class.

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Next deadline: Thu. April 30, 4:30
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Elder Caregivers Support Group

The Elder Caregivers Support Group will meet **Sunday, April 26** from 12:15 to 1:45. All who provide care to older adults in some capacity are welcome to attend. There will be an opportunity to share concerns and feelings related to the challenges and joys of caregiving and to discuss information and resources as needed. The group will be led by gerontologist Teresa Dunbar. Feel free to bring a bag lunch. If you have questions about the group, please contact Teresa (*tcd3[at]cox[dot]net*).

Conversations on Membership

If you are considering membership in Little River UCC, you are invited to the Conversation on Membership to be held 7:30-9:00 on two consecutive Wednesdays: **April 29** (Session A) and **May 6** (Session B). Session A deals primarily with Little River UCC while Session B focuses on the United Church of Christ.

Prospective members are encouraged to attend both A and B sessions (in any order or time of their choosing) before joining. Those ready to join will be received **Sunday, May 17**. The next round of Conversation on Membership will be Sundays, July 19 and 26, with new members received on Sunday, August 9.

To find out more, please speak to Verne or Ginna.

Welcome Center Dinner

On **Thursday, April 30**, Little River's young adults will host a dinner for our Welcome Center guests from Northern Virginia Community College. The young adults will set up, host, and clean up after the event, but they are unable to prepare the large amount of food needed to feed the many guests who are expected. They are asking everyone to help by fixing and delivering the food: entrees, side dishes, desserts, bread, beverages.

Please take the food in containers that have your name on them so they can be cleaned and retrieved from the kitchen on the Sunday following—or use recyclable containers. The cooks are not expected to remain for the dinner. Please call or e-mail Ginna (*ginna[at]lrucc.org*) to tell what you plan to offer. Thank you!

Dinner and Silent Auction

You are invited to the Y-GELI silent auction and dinner **Saturday, May 2**, 6:00-8:00 p.m. Bring your friends and neighbors! The theme for the evening is the Fifties—enjoy a musical floor show, and dress appropriately if you want!

This is the sole fundraiser for this summer's Youth Global Experiential Learning Initiative trips. Y-GELI

helps our youth learn about poverty, pollution, hunger and more, and how through work, learning, and faith they can make a difference and make God's love visible.

Your donations for the silent auction are encouraged! Please take a Silent Auction/Dinner flyer, available in the narthex, which includes a donation form. Ideas for new items to donate are limited only by your imagination! The youth will be accepting auction items with completed forms and selling tickets on **April 26** during coffee hour. Tickets are \$10 per adult, \$5 per child, or \$25 per family.

You can also participate by performing Fifties-style music during the entertainment. To volunteer please contact Peg Gianuca (*peg[dot]gianuca[at]lw[dot]com*).

Trustees: Thanks and a Request

The Trustees would like to extend our thanks for some critical work over the last few months by various parishioners:

- Bob Honour, for organizing another successful Eagle project, which added a nature trail to our property;
- Ben Northrup, for all the wonderful landscaping and brush work that we have desperately needed;
- Richard Davidson, for working with the fire marshal and the preschool to ensure our annual inspection went off without a hitch;
- Mark Prell and Allison Prell, for sanding and repainting the cross at the entrance to our drive in time for Easter;
- Jeff Wyatt, for repairing some hinges as well as the ping pong table in the Jubilee Room;
- Steven Howard, for disassembling old equipment and making the ensuing dumpster runs.

Also, the church needs a long extension ladder in good condition. If you or someone you know wishes to donate one, please contact Joanna Knoll (*knollfamily[at]cox.net* — *that's knollfamily "one"*).

Women's Book Group

The women's book group will meet **Sunday, May 10** at 12:15 to discuss *The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls (Scribner, 2006). This memoir is a captivating recital of events in the lives of members of a dysfunctional family. The family is atypical, nomadic, and yet very loyal to family members. The book chronicles many impromptu moves throughout the west, a longer journey to West Virginia, and eventually a move by most of the family to New York. Please join the group for a lively discussion of this best-selling book.

Cathedral Pilgrimage Wait List

Little River's women's retreat **Saturday, May 16** at National Cathedral is now fully subscribed. A waiting list has been created, with four vacancies as of April 16. If you wish to be included if an opening occurs, please call Jane at the church office as soon as possible.

The pilgrimage begins promptly at 10:00 (a carpool will leave Little River at 9:15) and concludes at 3:00. The fee of \$40 for students and seniors and \$45 for other adults, is payable to Washington National Cathedral. To find out more, contact Shirley Bloomquist (*sbloomqu [at] aol [dot] com*).

Welcome - with Abandon!

The joint was jumping on Thursday! That is, the Jubilee Room was vibrant with animated conversation groups, swinging ping pong paddles, and wobbling Jenga towers. How we wish more of you could enjoy this jolly, relaxing time at our Welcome Center with international students from our neighborhood community college. If you have questions, please seek out Richard Davidson, Bill Hartzler, Maggie Duncan, or Lois Wyatt.

Stewardship by Design

The Stewardship Committee needs your help! Remember the attractive drawing that depicted our 2008 theme, *Stewardship is What You Do*, in graffiti-esque letters? We now are looking for a logo or drawing that captures the essence of our 2009 theme:

Little River UCC Matters! To me, my family, my community, and the world.

Please help us convey this theme and brand our campaign graphically. Submit your artwork for consideration by the Stewardship Committee no later than May 3. All entries will be gratefully acknowledged, and the winning entry will have our undying appreciation and extensive exposure throughout the year!

Adventures in India

By remarkable coincidence, several members of our congregation have ties to boarding schools in India. On **Sunday, May 17**, join Owen Thomas and Kenyon Erickson from 11:00-noon as they lead a short discussion about these schools, illustrated with a 30-minute video and slideshow. Come learn about a multi-cultural educational experience of a lifetime.

Woodstock School (*www.woodstock.ac.in*, *www.sageprogram.org*) is perched in the foothills of the Himalayas with spectacular views of the Indian plains and snows of the highest peaks in the world. Kodaikanal International School (*www.kis.in*) is located 7,000 feet

above sea level in some of the world's oldest mountains in south India. Both schools offer programs one semester or longer studying in this unique environment. In addition to K through 12 and International Baccalaureate programs, both schools also offer the Studies Abroad for a Global Education (SAGE) Program which provides grants for a semester or a year study in 11th or 12th grade or a "bridge year" between high school and college. And for teachers in search of adventure, these schools offer job opportunities as well.

If you or anyone you know might enjoy this presentation, or benefit from a semester or year (or more) in India, RSVP to Kenyon (*keeperken [at] aol [dot] com*).

Sharing Stories

Do you have an early memory of someone sitting with you and telling a story? What did you learn about the story? About the person? About life? Was it the storyteller's training that made it special, or was it simply a warm voice, a caring heart, a sharing soul?

We are looking for four storytellers to share their voices and time with our three- to five-year-olds as our church school introduces a teaching approach called Godly Play. They will work in teams of two sharing Bible stories with the children, one team each semester. While it is simple—just telling the story, no complicated activities—it does require spending time with each week's Bible story, learning it for the meaning you get from it, and spending the church school hour sharing it with children as they listen and play with characters and toys to reenact the story.

It's an opportunity to enrich your own spiritual life as well, as you explore wonderful Bible stories that may be familiar, unknown, or even strange to you.

Christian Education will develop support for you too: there will be group sessions for practice and help, plus a field trip to a church that uses this approach.

If spending quiet time sharing stories with small children appeals to you, please contact Mike Craven (*michael_d_craven [at] msn [dot] com*) or Ginna.

Honoring Our Graduates

May 31 is the Sunday we will honor members of our church family who have graduated anytime since last spring from high school, college, or technical or graduate school. If that describes you or a family member, please notify the church office in writing by Monday, May 18, if possible. Include the graduate's name, school and degree, relationship (if not a Little River family member) and, for high school graduates, where they will continue their education, if applicable.

Also, please let the office know about any address changes for graduates listed in the church directory.



United College Ministries

United College Ministries in Northern Virginia offers students at NOVA and George Mason University a listening presence on campus, opportunities for fellowship and discussion, projects for serving the community, and information about opportunities for spiritual and social growth.

Please consider sharing yourself with students at Table Talk and Listening Post events, by coordinating hospitality for international students at Easter, and through financial contributions, including bequests.

For more information contact United College Ministries (703-426-1939, www.gmu.edu/org/ucm).

Summer Book Discussion

Covenant is a central, and often ignored, tenet of the United Church of Christ. This summer's Sunday book discussion with Verne will explore its importance to us as the congregation of Little River UCC as well as in our relationship with the larger UCC.

Jane Fisler Hoffman's *Covenant: A Study for the United Church of Christ* (United Church Press, 2008) is a small 58-page volume on this central topic written by a UCC conference minister. The discussion will take place **June 21** (one Sunday only). *Covenant* may be ordered from Amazon for \$8 plus shipping.

Senior PF Phone Recycling

Thank you to everyone who has already donated used cell phones to support organizations working to end the suffering in Darfur! The Senior PF has collected nearly 20 phones so far, but need about 15 more to meet our quota for free shipping. If you get a new phone and would like to recycle your old one, please place it in the ECO-Cell recycling box in the atrium. Questions? Ask Carrie Douglas ([bdouglas1 \[at\] cox \[dot\] net](mailto:bdouglas1@cox.net)).

Pentecost Puppet People!

Wanted: four more adults and twelve young people to help with some giant puppets—up to ten feet tall! Rich Dodenhoff is making these puppets to tell the Pentecost story on **Sunday, May 31** at both services. Practice is **Saturday, May 30** from 10:00 to noon. Adults will hold the puppets aloft while the young people work their arms. Are you interested? Please contact Patrice Redmiles ([paredmiles \[at\] comcast \[dot\] net](mailto:paredmiles@comcast.net)) or Ginna at church ([ginna \[at\] lrucc \[dot\] org](mailto:ginna@lrucc.org)).

Summer Second Sundays

Several people have shared thoughts about getting young people of various ages together this summer around a variety of activities. To facilitate those gatherings and yearnings, Summer Second Sundays are coming on **June 14, July 12, and August 9**. Girls and guys ages 8 to 11 will gather after church until noon for play, singing, and dreaming of whatever we want to do together. For instance, some of the girls want to work out a routine for Open Mike Night in February. We'll make the most of the summer days and give it a whirl. Let's imagine what fun we can have in the meadow! (Did you know that Little River has a meadow?) Please e-mail or call Ginna to sign up.





Links: Events, People, News

- **Calendar:** Find out about church events at www.lrucc.org by clicking on About Us > Calendar, or pick up a printed copy of *Currents*.
- **Passages:** Pick up a printed copy of *Currents*, or subscribe to the e-mail edition, to share the latest celebrations and concerns in our church family—as well as the latest address, phone, and e-mail updates and changes in our church organizations.
- **UCC news:** Read the latest news from the United Church of Christ and learn about our denomination at www.lrucc.org > About Us > Our Links > The UCC
- **Currents by e-mail:** See the *Currents* web page at www.lrucc.org, > About Us > Newsletter: *Currents*, or write [webteam \[at\] lrucc.org](mailto:webteam@lrucc.org).

LITTLE RIVER UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

*welcoming diversity, independent thought,
& faithful action*

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