

eCURRENTS

LITTLE RIVER UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Volume 56 Number 11

June 1, 2009

Editor: H.E. Beckwith

Stepping Boldly Forward in Faith

We took a positive step forward May 17 when, in a special meeting of the congregation, we voted unanimously to call a part-time (15 hour/week) Pastor for Youth while reshaping Ginna's responsibilities under the aptly descriptive title of Pastor for Congregational Life. When Ginna and I agreed in December to extend our time at Little River by approximately two years, it was understood Ginna wanted to renegotiate her responsibilities. The May 17 meeting accomplished that goal.

The overriding concern expressed at the congregational meeting was money. In a year when we had to scale back benevolences, programs were limited, and staff received no salary increases, we did not take lightly the prospect of a new staff member. Granted, it's a bit of a stretch financially to hire a part-time pastor for a few years, but as Christians we are called to live by faith rather than fear, undergirded as we are by a gospel that speaks of abundance rather than scarcity.

The bottom line is we understand the importance of nurturing our youth, and a dedicated staff person—supported by the congregation—is a bold way to accomplish that goal. Additional financial pledges since the January 25 annual meeting made this staff initiative possible, and if present giving levels are sustained

throughout the year we also may be able to address the issue of diminished benevolences and no staff raises.

If each of us does our part, I am confident we will look back on our decision of May 17 as one of the best decisions we've made. I am grateful for your continuing generosity and faithfulness.

Verne

Summer Worship, Schedule

Our summer worship schedule has started! From now through the beginning of September, we will worship together at a single 9:30 service. Care is offered for children age two and under. Children age 3-9 will begin in worship, then after the Time with Children either remain in worship or attend class.

Summer office hours: Starting **Monday, June 29**, the church office will close at 2:30. Normal 9:00-4:30 hours resume **Monday, August 24**.

And don't forget that our ministries (and operating expenses) continue, even when you're on vacation. Please arrange to keep your pledges and offerings current while you are away.

Church School Sunday

We will celebrate the end of the academic year when the children of the church school will assist in the leadership of worship **June 7** at the single 9:30 service. This festive service will be followed by the . . .

Post-Pentecost Picnic

On **Sunday, June 7** we celebrate the start of summer season and the birth of the church with our annual Post-Pentecost Picnic. Following the 9:30 service, all are invited to gather for a potluck lunch. Bring your favorite salad, dessert or side dish. The Board of Deacons will provide hot dogs, hamburgers and beverages. Don't miss this great event! Questions? Contact Cici Thompson (*cicithom [at] aol [dot] com*).

Congratulations, Graduates!

Congratulations to our members and friends who graduated from school this season! See the printed edition of *Currents* to see who graduated from which school and who's going where.

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Next deadline: Thu. June 11, 4:30
lrucc.org/Currents/Currents_Schedule.html

NOVA Pride Interfaith Worship

People of Faith for Equality Virginia invites all at Little River to attend an interfaith service on **Friday, June 5** at Clarendon Presbyterian Church to celebrate marriage equality. The church is located at 1305 N. Jackson St. Arlington 22201. The service begins at 7:00 p.m. with a reception to follow at the church.

This Ol' Church Work Day

The Trustees invite all helping hands to an end-of-spring work day on **Saturday, June 6** from 8:00 to noon. A list of projects is available in the social hall. Sign up in advance or just come and pitch in. Coffee and donuts will be provided. If you can't make it, please consider "adopting" a project to do at your convenience. Contact Joanna Knoll ([knollfamily1 \[at\] cox \[dot\] net](mailto:knollfamily1@cox.net)) or Chris Weakley ([chris \[dot\] weakley \[at\] gmail \[dot\] com](mailto:chris [dot] weakley [at] gmail [dot] com)) for more information.

Fair Trade Sale: End of Season

The last Fair Trade shipment of the season has arrived! On **Sunday, June 7**, the end-of-year Fair Trade sale will be held. Plan ahead for your summer enjoyment of coffees (iced, perhaps) and teas (iced, definitely).

Torture Awareness Month

The National Religious Campaign Against Torture is organizing a religious witness at the White House at noon on **Thursday, June 11**. Clergy of many faiths, including the general secretary of the National Council of Churches and UCC president John Thomas, will lead this call for an independent commission to investigate US detention and interrogation policies and practices and make recommendations to ensure that US-sponsored torture never happens again.

During the last week of June, the Torture Abolition and Survivors Support Coalition caps a month-long witness by bringing survivors of torture worldwide to Washington to meet with policymakers. The observance culminates in a 24-hour vigil in Lafayette Square beginning on **Friday, June 26**, the United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. A full list of activities can be found at the Coalition's website (www.tassc.org).

Please consider spending your lunch time on June 11 with other concerned people of faith at the White House, and stop by Lafayette Square on June 26-27 for the vigil.



Elder Care Support Group

The new Elder Caregivers Support Group is off to a good start. The next meeting will be held **Sunday, June 14** from 10:45 to 11:15. Bring a bag lunch if you like.

Caregivers share information and resources at the meetings as well as concerns and challenges of providing care to older adults. Feel free to attend as needed and as your schedule permits. The meetings are led by gerontologist Teresa C. Dunbar. Questions? Please contact Teresa ([tlcd3 \[at\] cox \[dot\] net](mailto:tlcd3@cox.net)).

"Strengthen the Church" Offering

On **Sunday, June 21** Little River will collect the Strengthen the Church offering. This UCC-wide special missions offering provides funds for the Stillspeaking Ministry, new church starts, renewing older and struggling churches, youth and young adult ministries, and lay and pastoral leadership development especially among women and people of color. This year's theme is Spread the Love. Help spread some UCC love to your neighbors with your generous gift to Strengthen the Church.

Regional Annual Meetings

The **Potomac Association** annual meeting took place May 16 at Plymouth Congregational UCC in Washington. Of note was the Associate Conference Minister's report that "nearly 50 percent of the churches in the [Central Atlantic] Conference are seeking to call a minister, and belt-tightening processes are being carried out throughout the Conference." In addition, "the meeting also heard reports on strengthening partnerships within the Association and adopted a resolution relating to a long and heretofore unsuccessful effort to redesign the structure of the denomination at the national level." (For more about this see "Central Atlantic Conference" below).

—adapted and quoted from the May 26 issue of "Keeping In Touch," Pilgrim UCC, Wheaton MD.

Delegates and visitors from the **Central Atlantic Conference's** nearly 200 churches and five associations of the will gather at the University of Delaware the weekend of **June 12-14**. Among the items of business will be opposing resolutions regarding the possible restructuring of the national setting of the UCC. For more information visit the UCC web site (www.ucc.org) or consult Verne's sermon of May 17, "Wider Circles," posted on our website (www.lrucc.org). Our delegates to conference will be Barbara Lowrey (moderator), Julie Holm (Deacons), Chris Weakley (Trustees), Rob Peters (Missions), and Verne and Ginna (pastors). Mark Holm will attend as a visitor.

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 Fidler 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 **Sunday, June 21** at 11:00. *Covenant* may be ordered from Amazon for \$8 plus shipping.

Caring Hands: Schedule Change

The knitters and crocheters of Caring Hands will meet **Sunday, June 14** at 11:00 before breaking for the summer. We are beginning an email group for anyone interested in receiving Caring Hands news. To join, or for more information, please contact Carrie Douglas ([bdouglas1\[at\]cox\[dot\]net](mailto:bdouglas1[at]cox[dot]net)).

Women's Book Group

Ron Suskind's *A Hope in the Unseen: An American Odyssey from the Inner City to the Ivy League* is the moving story of honors student Cedric Jennings, who struggles to maintain hope for a more fulfilling life as he wrestles with taunts and threats in Washington's violence-prone Ballou Senior High School. With the unwavering support of his mother, Cedric wins acceptance at Brown University, where his freshman year is fraught with challenges. His determination to keep hope alive provides a riveting framework for this story of overcoming obstacles to a different life.

Join us on **Sunday, July 19** at 11:00 for a lively and enriching discussion of this thought-provoking book.

Summer Sermon Talkback

Most Sundays during July and August, whoever is preaching will offer an opportunity for "talkback" beginning at 11:00. Grab a cup of coffee or tea, if that's your desire, and engage the preacher with questions, comments, disagreements (surely not!?), or whatever. Feel free to leave when you must; the preacher will stay until the room is empty or until it's noon—whichever comes first.

Treasurer for Shaw Ministry

The Board of Directors of Shaw Community Ministry needs a treasurer. The treasurer attends about nine board meetings a year and spends about two hours a month on other duties. For further information, please

contact Little River's member of the Shaw Board, Ann Olson ([a_aolson\[at\]msn\[dot\]com](mailto:a_aolson[at]msn[dot]com)), or Shirley Bloomquist ([sbloomqu\[at\]aol\[dot\]com](mailto:sbloomqu[at]aol[dot]com)).

First Watch: Last Call

The monthly men's lunch at First Watch restaurant in Fairfax will meet for the last time this season on **Thursday, June 25** at noon. It will resume the Thursday, September 24.

Honors for Our Partners

Our "offspring" Wellspring UCC has received the denomination's Local Church Award, to be presented June 26 at General Synod in Grand Rapids. Its founding pastor, Jerry Foltz, will also be recognized June 15 at the Central Atlantic Conference annual meeting for his ministry, and he will preach at its closing service.

Annandale Cooperative Preschool has been recertified by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). They are the the only co-op preschool in the capital area with this accreditation.

Congratulations to these friends and partners!

Thanks from College Ministries

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your gift of \$2,000.00. Your support and encouragement mean so much to us.

Our alternative Spring Break Mission trip, co-sponsored this year with Lutheran Campus Ministry, yielded not only thousands of pounds of broccoli and citrus (which was delivered the same day it was picked to those in need), but also educated students about hunger issues. Studies show that such service opportunities, when combined with focused reflection, cause students to either change their majors and devote their professional lives to helping others or to incorporate volunteerism into the rest of their lives. . . .

Yours in Christ and mutual ministry,
The Rev. Denise Giacomozzi May
Minister Director

Currents: Submissions, Schedule

If you e-mail notices to *Currents*, be sure to send them to [currents\[at\]lrucc\[dot\]org](mailto:currents[at]lrucc[dot]org). This ensures that your article doesn't get lost if a substitute editor is on duty.

After the next issue (deadline: Thursday, June 11), *Currents* goes monthly for the summer. Thursday deadlines are **July 16** and **August 20**. (Paper submissions must reach the church office by 2:30.) The biweekly schedule will resume with the September 10 deadline.



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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Currents is published usually biweekly (monthly in summer) for the members and friends of Little River United Church of Christ, Annandale, Virginia, and is mailed third class or by e-mail (contact the office for instructions). A public version, *eCurrents*, is posted at www.lrucc.org; click on About Us > Newsletter: *eCurrents*.

Submissions: Include your name and phone or e-mail address (not for publication). Please submit electronically if possible (MS Word, Word Perfect, or plain text; e-mail to [currents \[at\] lrucc \[dot\] org](mailto:currents@lrucc.org)). Submit notices 3 weeks ahead of events if possible.