



The Arts in Church

What do you think of when you hear the word “art?” Do you think of paintings? Poetry? Music? Dance? Prose? How about quilts? Crochet and needlework? Of course, there is much more, but perhaps this will get us thinking—particularly about the arts and church.

David “danced before the Lord.” God was worshiped with the harp, the lyre and other stringed instruments. Worship was filled with sounds and smells and much activity.

In many churches worship is “the preacher or liturgist says” and “the congregation responds.” And again “the preacher or liturgist says” and “the congregation responds.” And when worship is over we all “rise and pass out”(!)

That may be true for many churches—but not Little River! We can see the arts all around us: in worship, in the hallways, in the atrium and, most of all, in each other. I sometimes picture each person as God’s unique art work. We are at one and the same time a piece of art and an artist creating our own canvas in life.

Watch over the next few months as a group of Little River members works to make all kinds of artistic expression more visible in our community life. Above all, mark your calendar for **Sunday, October 4**, for the Little River Arts Festival! Laugh, sing, dance and be

happy—let the artist in you shine forth!

Jim

Interfaith Mass Rally for Health

More than thirty national faith organizations have come together to plan the largest faith-inspired mobilization ever to happen around health care reform. With prayerful hope and expectation, thousands will come together for their Interfaith Service of Witness and Prayer to express their strong support for reform. This unprecedented interfaith event will take place on **Wednesday, June 24**, at Washington’s Freedom Plaza (13th & Pennsylvania NW). A health fair will begin at 4:00 p.m. followed by the service at 5:00-7:00. Guest speakers include Rabbi David Saperstein, Director, Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism; Dr. Sayyid Syeed, Executive Director, Islamic Society of North America; and Dr. James A. Forbes, Jr., Pastor Emeritus, Riverside Church, New York and Executive Director, The Healing of the Nations Foundation. You are encouraged to bring signs and banners of support. To learn more or to RSVP, visit www.WeBelieveTogether.com or email [june24 \[at\] healthcarechaplains \[dot\] org](mailto:june24[at]healthcarechaplains[dot]org).

“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.

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.

What’s Current . . .

News from Church Council	2
Communion Bakers Needed	2
Women’s Book Group	2
Little River Matters!	2
First Watch: Last Call	2
Conversations on Membership	3
Local Hymn Writer Makes Good	3
Central Atlantic Conference News	3
General Synod Preview	3
Help Edit <i>Currents</i>	3
Silent Auction: Thanks!	4
<i>Currents</i> : E-Mail Address, Schedule	4
Directory Updates	4
Links: Events, People, News	<i>back page</i>
Calendar	<i>lruc.org > fast links</i>

Next deadline: Thu. July 16, 2:30

lruc.org/Currents/Currents_Schedule.html

News from Church Council

At its meeting on June 10, the Church Council adopted a *Framework for Safe Church Policy Concerning Abuse Prevention* as an interim policy until it can be adopted by the congregation. The ad hoc Safe Space Committee that developed this statement was discharged with effusive thanks. Moderator Barbara Lowrey will appoint a three-person Safe Church Committee to receive comments on the interim policy and to manage its implementation between now and the 2010 annual meeting. A copy of the policy statement is posted at www.lrucc.org (see Fast Links). Members of the ad hoc committee were Harold Price, Carrie Douglas, Kathy Hartzler, Ann Lingo, Ann Olson, Robin Petrusak, and Ginna Minasian Dalton.

The Council approved a proposal from the Board of Missions to sell "mission gift certificates" in increments of \$5 during its fall Missions Fair and—if the Christian Social Action Committee approves—in December in coordination with the SERRV sale. This would allow congregation members to make a contribution to any of nine mission items whose 2009 budgets were cut back for lack of funds. These certificates might make an alternative holiday gift for family members or friends.

Jan Curtis reported for the Communications Advisory Team that a new design and new text for Little River's web site will be completed by the end of June.

Mark Prell reported that the Planning Committee will hold a series of activities in the fall to involve the congregation in discussion of three questions for our future under new pastoral leadership: (1) Who are we? (2) What has God called us to do? (3) Who is our neighbor? Activities may include a congregation-wide brunch, components of worship, presentations as part of Public Policy and Faith, and small-group discussions hosted by members.

Brian Payne
Church Clerk

Communion Bakers Needed

Little River has begun using home-baked challah bread for intinction communion. Our Worship Committee has developed a recipe that produces bread of a good consistency for dipping in grape juice. Now we'd like to invite interested bakers in the community to bake bread for communion Sundays. There are versions of the recipe for use with hands, mixer, or bread machine with dough cycle.

We are currently looking for bakers to make one loaf for communion on July 5 or August 2. If you are interested in baking communion bread, or in learning more about this, contact Julie Holm ([jholm \[at\] dragonholm \[dot\] org](mailto:jholm[at]dragonholm[dot]org)), any other member of the worship committee, or either of the pastors. Recipes are available in the office.

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. His freshman year is fraught with a bewildering array of challenges, both academic and personal. His determination to keep his hope alive provides a riveting framework for this story of a young man who learns to overcome difficult obstacles on his path to a different life.

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

Little River Matters!

Little River matters! To me, my family, my community, and the world. As we explore our stewardship theme this year, we will focus on the many ways in which our church—thanks to our support—makes a difference.

This summer President and First Lady Obama will ask all Americans to make a difference in their communities, and Little River is well-positioned to join in this effort. The White House shortly will announce a national "summer of service" initiative: a campaign that will run for 81 days from **Monday, June 22** through Friday, September 11. In partnership with thousands of nonprofit organizations and faith-based organizations, the campaign will ask every American to answer the call to service by volunteering directly with existing organizations—such as our church—or by volunteering to help with other groups such as the organizations that our church supports or by creating a project to meet an unmet need.

This summer may be a perfect time to reflect on why Little River matters—and on how we can make a difference at church or through our mission-related organizations. Hosting at the Welcome Center? Teaching church school? Volunteering at Food for Others? Mentoring at Shaw Community Ministry? Opportunities are there for all. The church office can put you in touch with the appropriate person.

The Stewardship Committee would love to know how you are ensuring that *Little River matters!*

Bruce Summers

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.



Conversations on Membership

If you are considering membership in Little River UCC, you are invited to the Conversation on Membership to be held 2:00-3:30 on two consecutive Sundays: **July 26** (Session A) and **August 2** (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, August 9**. The next round of Conversation on Membership will take place in the fall.

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

Local Hymn Writer Makes Good

Julie Holm's contribution was one of four winning entries in the Central Atlantic Conference's recent hymn-writing contest. "We Celebrate You, Source of All Creation" was sung (to the tune Finlandia) during the annual meeting by worshipers at the evening service of confession, anointing, and healing on Friday, June 12. Congratulations, Julie!

Central Atlantic Conference News

At its annual meeting June 12-14, the Central Atlantic Conference, like many of the UCC's constituent bodies, grappled with concerns over the proposed unification of our national structure (see "General Synod" below). Conference adjusted its agenda to allow delegates extra time to discuss two competing resolutions: one backing the reorganization and one requesting a pause in the process until after General Synod the last week of June.

It was clear from the hour-long debate that there are valid points and passionate feelings on both sides. Supporters of reorganization seek relief from the inefficiency and expense of the present array of five covenanted ministries. Advocates for racial, ethnic, and other underserved groups claim those groups were excluded from the process and fear they will not be justly represented under the new plan. Concerns were raised about its long, unruly history and the consequences of going forward despite the objection of one covenanted ministry, the Justice and Witness Ministry.

In the end, because of the strong and principled disagreement, and since both resolutions will reach Synod from elsewhere regardless of the Conference's actions, the delegates came to a fairly clear consensus to table both actions and send nothing forward to Synod.

—adapted from notes by Julie Holm

General Synod Preview

The twenty-seventh General Synod of the UCC will meet June 26-30 in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Chief among the issues it will consider is a proposal to transform the five national Covenanted Ministries of the UCC into a unified governing structure. The denomination will also present a plan to further broaden the process for attracting and nurturing new ministers to the circumstances beyond the traditional seminary model. Delegates will also electing church-wide leaders and address the UCC's current financial situation. Some two dozen other resolutions have been submitted for possible consideration, advocating such matters as:

- study and action toward economic justice,
- continuation of the denomination's Sacred Conversations on Race,
- opposition to preemptive war against, and promotion of citizen diplomacy with, Iran,
- examination of possible involvement by our predecessor churches in the eugenics movement,
- witness and action toward global food equity,
- prevention of the spread of HIV infection,
- continued global perspective and involvement,
- using environmentally and socially responsible practices in the UCC's meetings and events,
- support in principle of single-payer universal health care through publicly funded private insurance,
- awareness and action to end trafficking in persons,
- negotiation of a more humane and environmentally aware North American Free Trade Agreement,
- concern for Iraqis displaced by the war,
- reaffirmation of the UCC's commitment to the ecumenical movement,
- immediate action on climate change,
- support of allowing physician assistance in dying,

Rob Peters will participate as a delegate of the Central Atlantic Conference. Julie Holm will attend as a seminarian and Ginny Peters as a visitor.

Help Edit *Currents*!

Currents is looking for a few word-loving and/or computer-loving people who would be available to edit or produce the newsletter on the rare occasion when Hube Beckwith is not able to do so. The job involves several hours on the weekend following a deadline. Production requires enough computer skill to manage the layout you see here.

Currents is normally produced entirely at home and e-mailed Sunday evening to the church office as a "camera-ready" Microsoft Word file. Backup editors will receive the previous edition to use as a template. An editing guide, including detailed MS-Word instructions for the finer formatting tasks, is available.

Are you interested in editing *Currents*, producing it, or both? Want to know more? Contact editor Hube Beckwith ([currents\[at\]lruccl\[dot\]org](mailto:currents[at]lruccl[dot]org)).



Silent Auction: Thanks!

Thank you, all the many people who contributed to the success of the May 2 Y-GELI silent auction and dinner! Much fun was had by all 85 who attended and helped raise \$4,200 for this summer's Y-GELI trips. Ninety items were donated to the auction by members, friends and local businesses. The food was donated and prepared by parents of the PF youth. And a great deal of time was given by the auction committee and PF youth as they planned, requested and organized donations, prepared the catalog, rehearsed for the entertainment portion of the evening, cooked, and set up for the auction. Many, many thanks go to all those involved, including Nancy Huddleston, Mike Ross, Maggie Duncan, "Lucille and Desi," and the Shackley, Erickson, Douglas, Gianucca, Jones, Miwa-Adleson, Richar-Diesselhorst, Redmiles, Kennedy-Christiansen, and Mingus families! If there is anyone we have forgotten here, please know your help was also appreciated! A final thank-you to everyone who donated items and services, came to enjoy the evening, and purchased auction items. Your support of Y-GELI will make a difference!

Directory Updates

A new directory, revised May 20, is available. Contact the church office to get a copy. Updates and corrections:

Boards, Committees, Other Leaders
Arts Committee: *in abeyance—see below*
Nominations & Appts.: vacancy (2011) *not Sue Leathers*
Other Leaders: Arts Task Force: Jim Bell, convenor
Safe Church Cte.: *retired*
Youth Global *Experiential* . . .

Currents: Address, Schedule

From now on, please use currents@lrucc.org when you send e-mail to *Currents*. This ensures that your article doesn't get lost if the editor is out of town and a substitute is on duty.

Currents has now gone monthly for the summer. Thursday deadlines are **July 16** and **August 20**. (Paper submissions to the church office must arrive by 2:30.) The biweekly schedule will resume after the **September 10** deadline. Dates for the rest of 2009 are as follows. Asterisks(*) mark intervals longer than two weeks.

<i>Deadline (Thu. 4:30)</i>	<i>Mailing (Tue.)</i>
July 16, 2:30	July 21
August 20,* 2:30	August 25
September 10*	September 15
September 24	September 29
October 8	October 14 (Wed.)
October 22	October 27
November 5	November 10
November 19	November 24
December 10*	December 15
December 31*	January 5





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, and faithful action ~

Phone: 703-978-3060
Fax: 703-978-3372
E-mail: office [at] lrucc [dot] org

www.lrucc.org

Senior Pastor

The Rev. Verne E. Arens
Verne [at] lrucc [dot] org

Pastor for Congregational Life

The Rev. Ginna Minasian Dalton
ginna [at] lrucc [dot] org

Minister for Community Relations

The Rev. James M. Bell
jim [at] lrucc [dot] org



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.