

eCURRENTS

LITTLE RIVER UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Editor: H.E. Beckwith

Deepest Thanks to Jim Bell

On August 16, 1998 the Rev. Jim Bell officially joined the staff of Little River UCC. When he and his family moved to Northern Virginia six years earlier, quickly becoming an active part of this congregation, Jim's gifts and faith quickly became evident. Was there not some way we could make use of these gifts in the mission and program life of our church? We decided there was, and the position of Minister of Community Relations was created. Now, eleven years later, circumstances have changed. Financial resources are strained, priorities are reordered, and Jim's position as pastor of Christ UCC in Baltimore limits his Sunday participation here. We will miss Jim's ministry among us, even as we thank God for his leadership this past decade.

Jim's last Sunday as Minister of Community Relations will be **August 30**. He will preach that morning at the single 9:30 service. After the benediction, we will remain in the sanctuary as a few persons will offer reflections and appreciation for Jim's time among us. (There even may be a few jokes at his expense!) By 11:00 we expect to adjourn to the social hall for a North Carolina (sorta) barbecue. Look for a letter the first week of August giving all the details.

In the meantime—and on a personal note—thank you, Jim, for being the kind of colleague who has both encouraged and challenged me to be faithful to my calling as pastor and teacher. Indeed, it is my perception you have encouraged and challenged us all!

Verne

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.

You are encouraged to attend both A and B sessions (in any order or time of your 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, or to arrange for child care at church, please speak to Verne or Ginna.

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. We'd like to invite interested bakers in our community to make bread for communion Sundays. There are versions of the recipe—available in the office—for use with a mixer and your hands, or with a bread machine with a dough cycle. We are now looking for someone to make one loaf for **Sunday, August 2**. To volunteer or find out more, please contact Julie Holm (*jholm[at]dragonsholm[dot]org*), any other member of the Worship Committee, or Verne or Ginna.

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Next deadline: Thu. August 20, 2:30

lrucc.org/Currents/Currents_Schedule.html

Women in Theology Today

On the first Wednesday evening of each month except for July, a group gathers to discuss the writing of today's feminist theologians. The foundation for discussion is the book *Setting the Table: Women in Theological Conversation* edited by Rita Nakashima Brock, Claudia Camp and Serene Jones. It may be purchased on Amazon for little money.

Participation in the conversation is not dependent upon having read the assigned chapter, but it is helpful. On **Wednesday, August 5** the group will discuss chapter 2, "My Friend the Bible: Proposal for Metaphor" by Marti J. Steussy. Please join us from 7:30 to 8:30.

Co-Op Golf Tournament

Annandale Cooperative Preschool would like to invite members and friends of Little River United Church of Christ to participate in The Co-op's first-ever golf fundraiser and picnic. All proceeds beyond the cost of the event will benefit the preschool.

The tournament will take place **Friday, August 21** at General's Ridge golf course, 9701 Manassas Drive, Manassas Park, VA 20111. Registration begins at 7:30, followed by a shotgun start at 8:30. The picnic will start around 2:00, upon completion of the scramble. The cost is \$80 per player, or \$20 per person for the picnic only.

The tournament will be a Best Ball format. Prizes will be awarded for lowest team score, longest ball and closest to the pin. Mulligans and raffle tickets will also be for sale at the event.

If you would like to participate please contact Lissa and John Kenkel (*lhkenkel [at] yahoo [dot] com*). They will send you the registration form and further information. Hope to see you there!

Footsteps: Christianity in Mexico

We now have an attractive brochure describing "Christianity in Mexico: Legacy of the Cross and Sword," the eighth in our highly acclaimed series of Footsteps overseas travel experiences that began in 1996. Look for a copy in the atrium or church office, or ask us to mail you one if you are out of town for the summer. The trip will begin Wednesday, April 7, 2010 with a flight to Mexico City. After five nights there, three in Puebla, and six in Cuernavaca, we will return on Wednesday, April 21. The land-only cost will be a very reasonable \$1,890 per person. Air fare will add \$400-500 at current prices. A single room supplement is available for \$250 extra. The first date for members and their roommates to sign up will be **Monday, September 14** at 9:00 a.m. in the church office. There will be a \$100 per person registration fee, with checks payable to Little River UCC with Footsteps VIII on the memo line. If space remains available, non-members will be able to sign up beginning October 12.

Please join us for this fascinating study tour led by Ann Lutterman of the Center for Global Education at Augsburg College in Minneapolis. Ann lives in Cuernavaca and has spoken twice about Mexico at Little River. She is the daughter of Jean Lutterman, a friend of many of us, who has participated in several Footsteps trips.

An educational series inspired by the theme of this trip will begin in September on selected Sundays at 11:00. See the next issue of *Currents* for details.

Brian Payne

Little River Matters!

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

While we as a congregation think about our annual financial support to Little River, let's reflect on the role Little River plays in the lives of our families. "Family" has so many definitions! At Little River, as in the world, families come in all shapes, sizes, make-ups, and colors. Our congregation is a model of acceptance and inclusiveness—cherished values we want to pass on to the next generation. Our infants and toddlers are well loved and cared for during church school and worship. Our youth can participate in vibrant education, service, and music programs at Little River. Adults can attend challenging, thought-provoking study sessions and seminars, sing in a choir, join the women's book group, or attend a men's luncheon. Families can learn about elder-care issues or join an exercise class. We all can worship together on Sundays. There are so many ways to "plug-in" to the life of Little River—both as individuals and as a family. Building on the ministries of many before us, we have created a supportive and caring community here. Our financial support makes the rich offerings of our church possible. Little River matters, and our support matters, too.

Tracy Lee

Evangelism Committee

Youth Pastor Search Update

Shortly after the congregational meeting on May 17, the Moderator formed a Youth Pastor Search Committee with three members from the Board of Deacons (Bruce Douglas, Robin Petrusak, and me) and two from the Board of Christian Education (Noreen Bania and Ron Griesse). Verne Arens is a member *ex officio* and has been engaged with us from the start. I was asked to chair the Committee.

Our original, ambitious hope, that we might find a Pastor for Youth Ministry in time to accompany our youth on one or more of their trips this summer, did not materialize. The position has been advertised throughout the Potomac Association and in local seminaries. To date, eight people have applied for the position, and we have heard of a few other possible candidates. We have interviewed two candidates and have had preliminary discussions with the others. We are still seriously considering a few of these persons, but have made no offers to any yet. At this point, we are hopeful that we might have a person in place by early September, in time to start the new program year, but that is not assured. In the meantime, our pastors, the Board of Christian Education, and the current youth advisors are maintaining the youth program.

We understand the interest of the congregation in this process and are proceeding as rapidly as possible to fill this vital role in our leadership.

Dave Curtis



Young Adult Events

Little River's young adults are teaming up with other folks for a lively summer of activities!

First, they have free group tickets for two baseball games, which they will attend with Welcome Center folks. The first is at Nationals Park on **Sunday, July 26** (meet at church by 12:15 for carpools); the second is in Baltimore on **Sunday, August 30** (carpools form at church at 11:45, after the celebration for Jim Bell). you must opt into either group by the previous Thursday. Contact Lois Wyatt (*loisesl[at]verizon[dot]net*) by July 23 or Ginna (*ginna[at]lrucc[dot]org*) by August 27.

The ecumenical young adults of Little River UCC, First Baptist of Herndon, and Vienna Baptist church will start their new season **Tuesday, August 25** at 7:00 with a cookout at the home of the Johnsons in Vienna. Dinner and Bible study are scheduled at the Johnsons' on **Tuesdays, September 8 and 22** at 7:00. And the annual retreat at Lost River Retreat Center in West Virginia has been rescheduled for **Friday-Sunday, October 2-4**. For more information on any of these events, contact Ginna. And bring a friend to these events!

Missions in Action

The Board of Missions is responsible for administering our congregation's support of benevolences from the church budget. This year we are financially supporting eight organizations: Fairfax FISH, United College Ministries, Thrive DC (formerly the Dinner Program for Homeless Women), Lancaster Seminary, Food for Others, Northern Virginia Aids Ministry, Shaw Community Ministry, and Homestretch. We also continue our missionary relationship with Dr. Anil Henry in India. Look for information about each on Little River's new website. We also continue to honor our commitment to the broader UCC through Our Church's Wider Mission Basic Support.

The Board thanks the Little River community for its continuing support. Unfortunately, because of budget restraints for this year, we had to reduce the number of mission outreach programs we support. Nevertheless, we solicit your suggestions and comments as to any other local or global missions we should consider supporting, depending on our budget for next year. Please direct your comments and suggestions to Caroline Labbé or any other member of the Board, or leave a note in the Missions mail slot in the office.

Women's Book Group

The Hour I First Believed by Wally Lamb is the selection to be discussed by the Women's Book Group on **Sunday, September 27** at 12:15. Lamb has built his story on the shootings at Columbine High School, the power of chaos to change our lives, and the trauma of survivor guilt. The book deals with many themes:

violence, family, the search for meaning and connection, and questions of faith which lie at the heart of life.

Please join in the discussion of this page-turner—whether you've read it or not!

Thanks from Shaw Campers . . .

Many thanks to Little River donors whose total contributions from the Send a Child to Camp effort totaled \$4,500. Our gift along with those from other metropolitan area UCC churches totaled \$14,600. Thus, we are sending ten Shaw students for a fabulous two-week sleep-away experience at Camp Letts outside of Annapolis. This expansive experience will include swimming, boating, a ropes course, and a celebration of different cultures. A small portion of the money will be used for Camp Friendship day camp in the community center of the Shaw housing complex. The new director of Shaw Community Ministries, the Rev. Anne Troy, has groups of Camp Friendship children (and adults later in the day) coming for classes in yoga, African dance, and healthy eating. Little River continues to make a difference in the lives of Shaw children. Thank you!

Shirley Bloomquist

. . . And from Homestretch

Dear Little River United Church of Christ,

Thank you so much for your generous gift of \$2000.00 that was received this week. On behalf of our staff, Board of Directors and, most especially, our client families, please know that we appreciate your support of our mission.

Without the help of organizations like yours, we simply could not continue our work. Now, more than ever before in our nineteen years of helping homeless families attain self-sufficiency, it is essential that we have the continuing support of friends like you.

That is because while the need for our services is increasing, support from state and local government, as well as foundations, is likely to be decreasing. Nevertheless, we remain committed to our mission of improving the lives of homeless families and will continue to take joy in celebrating their victories and milestones as they work to achieve a measure of hard-won stability. And you deserve a share of the credit!

As we look forward to summer and all its hope and promise, let us resolve to continue making a difference in the lives of our client families and in the well-being of our community.

Sincerely,

Christopher Fay

Executive Director

Homestretch, Falls Church VA 22046





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 ~

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