



Skipping Lent - Or Not

Speaking to Haitian Bishop Jean Zache Duracin after seeing firsthand the devastation wrought by the January 12 earthquake, Episcopal Presiding Bishop Katherine Jefferts Schori said: "You should skip Lent this year; you have already had your Good Friday." In addition to the Haitian and Chilean people, I personally am aware of a handful of folks for whom that would be sound advice—they have had quite enough suffering, thank you. Most of us, however, are not in that category, and we would do well to accept the wisdom of nearly two thousand years of Christian tradition by following spiritually in the footsteps of Jesus as he courageously made his way into the holy city of Jerusalem Palm Sunday, washed the feet of his disciples and broke bread with them Thursday, was betrayed, arrested, interrogated, and crucified Friday, and (as the ancient creed asserts) descended into hell Saturday. As distasteful as such a journey can be, it is my conviction that only when we have experienced the worst life has to offer are we able to receive—and enter into—that oneness with creation and the Creator we call Easter. May your Holy Week journey this year be a blessing for yourself and others.

Verne

Footsteps to Mexico

Departing **Wednesday, April 7** and returning Wednesday, April 21, fourteen Little River members and one guest will travel to Mexico City, Puebla, and Cuernavaca

to experience the "Legacy of the Cross and the Sword." They will visit historic monuments and natural and cultural treasures and will explore current religious, social, and economic issues with the help of professional guides, local citizens, church representatives, and the US Embassy.

Bon voyage to our intrepid travelers!

Cutting Budgets, Cutting Care

The second Our Faith in the World look at how proposed drastic cuts to county and state budgets will affect human services programs is set for **Sunday, April 11** at 11:00. The focus will be on the Virginia budget, and the leaders will be Delegate Vivian Watts and John Horesji, who is the founder of Social Action Linking Together and a tireless advocate for social justice programs in Virginia.

Fellowship, Flowers, and Jane!

Sunday, April 11 is the time to say "Thank you" and "Happy birthday" to Jane Hustvedt. She will turn 91 on April 8 (this is the correct date), and she has arranged our sanctuary flowers for 55 of those years—ever since our very first service!

Celebrate Jane by joining her at a special coffee hour at 10:30. Be sure to wear flowers! Live blossoms, floral-print dresses or ties, flower-themed jewelry, an extravagant plastic bouquet, stickers, anything festive or creative. Let's honor our very own perennial bloom!

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Next deadline: Thu. April 8, 4:30

Schedule: lruc.org > About Us > eCurrents

UCC Internet Ad Campaign

"Language of God," a new UCC commercial, will debut **Friday, April 16**. It will invite people to think deeply and broadly about how "God is still speaking."

This ad will not appear on radio or TV. Research shows that its audience does its viewing online, so the UCC will rely on a grass-roots campaign to "spiral" the message across the Internet—via Web ads, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, e-mails, and blogs. In other words, the church will be counting on us to broadcast this ad around the world. We are all being asked, when it is unveiled at 9:00 a.m. Eastern time, to spread the word using all the tools we rely on to connect with others. On April 16 let's all be Still Speaking!

Calls for Art

Little River will celebrate our encounter with spirit through the arts on **Sunday, April 25**. Special worship, displays, and a participatory project will help us focus our on how the arts lead us to experience the extraordinary and confront the inexpressible. You are invited to contribute ahead of time to two Art and Spirit projects:

Young people's bulletin art: Share your talent! The arts group is seeking artwork created by children and youth of the church in response to two stories rich with meaning for the day—Jacob's ladder and Jacob's wrestling with the angel (Genesis 28:10-15 and 32:24-30). All work received in the church office by **Sunday, April 18** will be displayed and/or reproduced on the worship bulletin cover. (To fit on the bulletin cover, art must be on an area 8 inches high by 6.5 inches wide.) Please submit the artist's name along with the image.

Inspiring art for the hallway: What art touches your spirit? You are invited to share one to three hangable pieces—your own creation or other works that inspire, console, or challenge you. Please bring your contributions to the church office by **Sunday, April 18** if possible. Attach your name and the work's title and artist, if known, to the back or the mounting. If you wish, write a brief statement of its significance for inclusion on a guide page for the display.

Questions? Contact Jennifer Atkinson (*jatkins2 [at] gmu [dot] edu*), Hube Beckwith (*hbeckwith [at] cox [dot] net*), or Emily Tuszyńska (*etuszynska [at] gmail [dot] com*). Watch for more about Art and Spirit Sunday!

Engaging the Gospel of John

Perhaps you have avoided the Gospel of John because of its stained-glass language or apparent either-or approach to believing. But many discoveries await the curious person. Join with others for four sessions and find an early church that developed over time, was led equally by women and men, included a variety of disciples from differing backgrounds, and can help us move into deeper relationship with God.

Please come at 11:00 on Sundays **April 18 and 25** and **May 9 and 16** as Janet Parsons Mackey helps participants engage with selected portions of the Gospel through reading texts and guided discussion.

Sing for Haiti Relief

A *Messiah* sing-along to benefit Haiti earthquake relief will be held **Sunday, April 18** at 4:00 at Falls Church Presbyterian Church, 225 E. Broad St., Falls Church. A professional orchestra, soloists, and the director will donate their services and the public is invited to bring scores and sing the chorus sections. Admission is free, but donations will be accepted. For more information, see Kathy Hartzler or the Choralis web site (www.choralis.org).

Silent Auction and Dinner

The Silent Auction is coming **Saturday, April 24!** Our Junior and Senior youth will host this yearly gala to raise funds to support their summer service activities, such as the Senior PF's Habitat for Humanity project.

The theme of this year's event is "Share Your Gifts." The youth are seeking silent auction donations that share your unique talents or passions. Possibilities include homemade items, professional services, or tickets to your favorite cultural or sporting events! Please arrange your donations with Heather Shackley (*heathermarie [at] att [dot] net*). Donation forms are also available outside the sanctuary.

Pillar of Faith Awards

On **Saturday, April 24** a special event in the life of the Potomac Association will take place. The ninth annual Pillar of Faith Awards luncheon to benefit Howard University School of Divinity will be held at Martin's Crosswinds banquet hall in Greenbelt, Maryland. Two of the seven honorees are UCC women: the Rev. Barbara Gerlach, recently retired co-pastor of First Congregational UCC in Washington, and Sheila Helgerson, executive director of Ear's Place homeless shelter in Baltimore. Tickets are \$75; contact Ms Vivian Ortiz at the School of Divinity (202 ~ 806 ~ 0758).

Spring Reflections at Cathedral

Sunday, May 23 is the date when Little River UCC will hold a women's retreat at the Washington Cathedral, beginning with lunch and concluding with Evensong. We expect to leave the church at 12:15 and return to Little River shortly after 5:00. Space is limited, so please mark your calendars now, and watch for further information.

Planned Giving: Planting Seeds

We have made at least a start on discovering the meaning of human life when we plant shade trees under which we know full well we will never sit. —Elton Trueblood

All planned gifts to Little River UCC are a planting of seeds for a future benefit to our church. Bequests and the proceeds of life insurance or IRAs (Individual Retirement Accounts) can be expressions of your desire to be a good steward of your assets. Life-income gifts have the added attraction of increasing spendable income in your retirement years. To learn more, contact a pastor or Brian Payne, Endowment Fund Committee chair (*brianrpayne [at] verizon [dot] net*).



Links: Events, People, News

- **Calendar:** Find out about church events at www.lrucc.org by clicking on the Calendar link on the home page, 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 from the United Church of Christ and learn about our denomination at lrucc.org > About Us > eCurrents > News from the UCC.
- **Currents by e-mail:** See the *Currents* web page at www.lrucc.org > About Us > eCurrents > About eCurrents, or write [webteam \[at\] lrucc \[dot\] 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](mailto:office@lrucc.org)

www.lrucc.org

Senior Pastor

The Rev. Verne E. Arens
703 ~ 239 ~ 0186
[verne \[at\] lrucc \[dot\] org](mailto:verne@lrucc.org)

Pastor for Congregational Life

The Rev. Ginna Minasian Dalton
571 ~ 432 ~ 0395
[ginna \[at\] lrucc \[dot\] org](mailto:ginna@lrucc.org)

Pastor for Youth Ministry

Amanda M. Hopkins
202 ~ 375 ~ 4322
[amanda \[at\] lrucc \[dot\] org](mailto:amanda@lrucc.org)



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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.