

# eCURRENTS

LITTLE RIVER UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Editor: H.E. Beckwith

## Good at Good-Byes?

Are you any good at good-byes? I don't think I am; I don't think most of us are. We like to pretend it isn't happening until it does happen, and then we're sometimes caught off guard by our unpreparedness, possibly by surges of emotion that can manifest itself as tears, anger, or depression. At the very least, sometime our denial keeps us from expressing adequately how grateful we are that this person touched our lives.

By the time you are reading these words there are roughly fifty days until Ginna's last Sunday: fifty days out of a total of nearly 3,000. The quantity is impressive, surely, but we all know the quantity is not what matters. What really matters is how those days were filled: the relationships that were fostered and developed, the ideas that were explored and savored, the seeds of faith that were planted and nurtured, the ministries that were identified and created. Yes, a heap of living went into the last eight years, and I daresay we are all much better for the gifts Ginna shared with us in that time.

So it's not too early to begin to find the words, the symbols, the gifts that will express our appreciation, and which will send Ginna on her way with a blessing that echoes the blessing she has been to us.

*Verne*

## Faith Practices Presentation

What is *Faith Practices*? How will it address changes in the life of the church?

Two suggestions for finding out: (1) read the article in this issue, and (2) join Potomac Association churches

### What's Current . . .

<i>Faith Practices</i> Curriculum	2
Spring Reflections at Cathedral	2
Youth Volunteer Training	2
Supporting Capital Pride Week	2
<i>The First Paul</i> Discussion	2
Intergenerational Mission Trip	3
Attention Kitchen Users	3
Links: Events, People, News	<i>back page</i>
Calendar	<i>lrucc.org &gt; home page</i>

**Next deadline: Thu. May 20, 4:30**

*Schedule: lrucc.org > About Us > eCurrents*

in welcoming Ken Ostermiller from the UCC offices in Cleveland to learn more about Faith Practices material and the concepts shaping this innovative approach to congregational life. We will gather for dinner and a presentation from 6:00 to 9:00 **Friday, May 14** and will resume the discussion **Saturday, May 15** from 9:00 to 2:00. You are free to attend any portion of the event. Flyers are on the poster in the narthex. Registration is required. If you have any questions please speak to a member of the Board of Christian Education, Amanda, or Ginna.

## Honoring Our Graduates

**May 23** 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 17**. 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.

## End-of-Season Fair Trade Sale

Plan to stock up on your favorite fair trade products, including coffee, tea, chocolate, dried fruits, and nuts, on **Sunday, May 16** after both services outside the social hall. This will be the last sale until September, so grab this opportunity to buy items you love. Your purchases help to ensure that producers get a fair price for their products.

Special thanks, once again, to Mark, Rebeca, and Allison Prell for their continued commitment to bringing this program to Little River UCC.

## Women's Book Group

The Women's Book Group will meet 12:15-1:30 on **Sunday, May 16** to discuss *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide* by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn. Please join us for a lively discussion of this important book.

## Faith Practices Curriculum

Faith is said to be a gift of God. Just as breathing is a gift to all, so is faith a gift to all. You can see in children how easily they show love or compassion without prompting. This is an example of a spontaneous faith practice. As we grow older, our faith evolves, it may fall victim to cynicism or benefit from experience. As we encounter life's events, our relationships with others, the World, and God change. Faith practices deepen faith in God.

A faith practice is something that you do as a result of your faith. Faith practices may be profound or inconsequential acts. Faith practices include prayer and rituals like communion and baptism. Attending church is a faith practice that may be a result of personal discipline or habit. A breath prayer, a spontaneous prayer said under your breath like "Lord have mercy," is a faith practice. Even giving directions to a person who is lost may be a faith practice, whether it occurs spontaneously or in response to a request.

We respond to life events with faith. These responses may be called faith practices. Faith practices are our way of being, learning and living. Some faith practices require learning or validation, as in the *Faith Practices* curriculum developed in the UCC.

The Board of Christian Education has decided to implement this new educational program, which is designed to move from fact- and dogma-based teaching to experiential teaching. Our goal is to begin using *Faith Practices* in September. The UCC is developing this curriculum in three phases, with Phase I beginning this year. A congregation has a choice of four curricula of faith practices. The Board of Christian Education has chosen to start with *Forming Community: Giving and Receiving Hospitality*. As we experience the use of the new curriculum, the board will decide if these hospitality practices will remain the focus for the year or if one of the other three faith practices also should be used.

This new program may be used in Church School only or it may encompass the whole church and even the wider community. Your suggestions and participation are welcome. You may submit suggestions to the Board at [ce \[at\] lrucc \[dot\] org](mailto:ce[at]lrucc[dot]org).

## Spring Reflections at Cathedral

Please remember to sign up for the annual women's retreat to be held at the Washington National Cathedral on **Sunday, May 23**. The deadline is **Sunday, May 16**, space is limited, and guests are welcome.

The leader will be Kathy Spaar, spiritual director at the Cathedral and member of Little River. Our plans are to leave the church at 12:15 (carpools are available) and enjoy a catered lunch in the lovely Cathedral library. Then Kathy will lead us in spring reflections; we will conclude our day with the beautiful 4:00 Evensong

service. Participants may then choose to remain at the Cathedral or return to Little River.

The cost is \$45, and (\$40 for age 65 and over). Call Jane Johnson at the church office to register, or sign up by the sanctuary. Please make checks payable to Washington National Cathedral with memo "LR retreat" and leave them for Jane in the office, or give them to Jackie Shaffer.

## Youth Volunteer Training

Attention, all church school teachers and youth fellowship, First Friday, and Welcome Center volunteers: Our newly adopted Safe Church Policy requires all adults who work with children and youth to receive training concerning appropriate boundaries between adults and young people in the church setting. Ginna will lead this two-Sunday class, which will be offered **May 23 and 30** at 11:00. Please contact Heidi Warrington ([hwarring \[at\] aol \[dot\] com](mailto:hwarring[at]aol[dot]com)) if you have any questions or are unable to attend.

## Supporting Capital Pride Week

Our Open and Affirming Committee is planning a range of activities in support of DC Capital Pride Week, **June 4-13**. Members and friends of Little River are invited to join with other Potomac Association UCC churches in the parade on **Saturday evening, June 12**. Line-up starts at 5:30 for the 6:30 parade. We hope to have our own "Out Outside the Beltway" tee shirts for the event. Please sign up in the narthex starting any Sunday, and indicate your shirt size. We will also be helping to staff the Potomac Association's booth on **Sunday, June 13** between 11:00 and 6:00. Volunteers are welcome! For further information, contact Nathan Groff ([nathangroff \[at\] aol \[dot\] com](mailto:nathangroff[at]aol[dot]com)).

## The First Paul Discussion

Verne will lead a discussion of Marcus J. Borg and John Dominic Crossan's book *The First Paul* (Harper-One, 2009-10) on **Sunday, June 22** from 11:00 to noon. The book's subtitle says it all: "Reclaiming the Radical Visionary Behind the Church's Conservative Icon." Is it possible progressive Christians can embrace Paul with a clear conscience—maybe even with enthusiasm? Read the book and let's discuss. (Note: if parts of the book seem too challenging or technical, skim through those sections and keep exploring. Parts are quite deep and parts are rather easily understood. Don't give up!)



# Intergenerational Mission Trip

Little River's Intergenerational Mission Trip to the coal country of southwestern Virginia is now scheduled for Saturday-Thursday, **August 21-26**. We welcome singles, couples, families, and friends. The primary work is likely to involve painting and carpentry. If you'd like to register, or if you'd simply like more information, please contact Verne. It would be helpful for planning purposes to have an idea of who is going by **Tuesday, June 1**.

## Attention Kitchen Users

The kitchen has gotten lots of use this year and needs some TLC. There is an accumulation of food items, boxes of odds and ends, baskets, plates, etc. etc. on the counters, and open jars, bottles, and packages of food in the refrigerator and freezer. In preparation for a major cleanup session on **Wednesday, June 2**, please take anything that your group plans to keep. *Everything* left will be thrown out, put in Lost and Found, or given to charity, so that some deep cleaning can be done.

Questions? Contact Almuth Payne or Sue Leathers who thank you for your cooperation!



# LITTLE RIVER



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
8410 LITTLE RIVER TURNPIKE  
ANNANDALE, VA 22003-3710



## Links: Events, People, News

- **Calendar:** Find out about church events at [www.lrucc.org](http://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](http://lrucc.org) > About Us > eCurrents > News from the UCC.
- **Currents by e-mail:** See the *Currents* web page at [www.lrucc.org](http://www.lrucc.org) > About Us > eCurrents > About eCurrents, or write [webteam@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](mailto:office@lrucc.org)

[www.lrucc.org](http://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@lrucc.org](mailto:currents@lrucc.org)). Submit notices 3 weeks ahead of events if possible.