

the Westminster CHIMES

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, WILMINGTON, DE
NO. 572 ♦ FEBRUARY 2011

WPC@125
CELEBRATE WESTMINSTER

In Celebration of Westminster's 125th Anniversary
WINTER MUSICAL

Gala
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4, AT 8:00 PM

From Mozart's *Requiem* to Leonard Bernstein's *West Side Story* and lots in between, this promises to be another unforgettable musical evening at Westminster!

No admission charge; offering received. Festive reception following the concert.

Added bonus: Oil paintings by church member Herb Boden on exhibit beginning at 6:30 pm, in conjunction with Wilmington's monthly art loop event, *Art on the Town*. See page 3 for additional information.



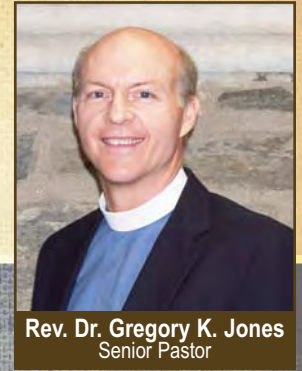
FEATURING:

Diana Milburn, soprano
Ruth Bailis, mezzo-soprano
Justin Gonzalez, tenor
Brian Carter, baritone

The Westminster Choir
Paul Fleckenstein, organ & piano



in
"More Greatest Hits"
from the worlds of church, opera,
and musical theatre



Rev. Dr. Gregory K. Jones
Senior Pastor

THE CLERGY COLUMN

A Milestone Demanding Celebration!

On most days I deal with the immediate – those items of urgency I cannot evade until tomorrow. I dive into my list of things to be accomplished over the next 24 hours and try to take in stride the unforeseen interruptions that land on my desk.

I suspect this is how most of us operate. Whether it is making a business call to a client, taking a parent or child to an appointment, preparing a presentation, running up and down Route 202 on errands, or responding to e-mails, we whittle away at the essentials so that we do not end up overwhelmed by a mountain of “musts” and insufficient time to handle them.

There are, however, moments in life that grab our attention because they supersede the day-to-day. We reach a milestone that beckons us to step out of the rush of our routine to focus on something grand. This year – 2011 – is such a moment for our community of faith. Westminster Presbyterian Church turns 125 this year, and this demands a celebration!

I hope you were in worship on January 16 when we launched our year of events designed to revisit and honor our past, to highlight

the energy and activities of the present, and to listen for God’s call in the midst of our dreams about our future.

Throughout our year of celebration, I hope and I pray that each of us will be awed when we attempt to imagine how many souls have been fed, how many individuals shepherded through tragedy, how many young people inspired to embrace a career focused on helping others, how many relationships reconciled, how many people motivated to work for a just cause, how many peacemakers spawned, and how many people beyond our walls housed, fed, comforted, and clothed by Westminster’s ministry and mission of the past 125 years. Isn’t it overwhelming to try to imagine the countless number of people whose lives have been transformed thanks to Westminster members who faithfully responded to Christ’s call?

During this anniversary year, I challenge you to become more actively engaged in the life of our family of faith. In a world that frequently coaxes us to take the wrong path, it is critical for you to participate in worship as often as you are able so that you may discover the spiritual adventure

God years for you to experience. In addition to active involvement in worship, I hope you will commit to a mission opportunity. Westminster offers a plethora of possibilities for sharing God’s love with others. Perhaps you could serve a meal to the hungry in one of our feeding ministries, drive someone without transportation to a doctor’s appointment, sleep overnight at church when we house homeless families, pound nails for Habitat for Humanity, assist an at-risk child, or become a caregiver for someone who needs someone to walk beside them through a difficult time of life. Opportunities abound for living your faith by extending Christ-like compassion.

Finally, I hope you will be mindful of how our efforts today shape our future. Each of us bears responsibility for keeping Westminster strong and vibrant so that the coming years will not only meet but exceed our past and present. Please do your part to ensure that the corner of Rodney Street and Pennsylvania Avenue will stand as a beacon of light for future generations.

Party on!!!

The Quasquicentennial (125th Anniversary) of Music & the Arts at Westminster

Imagine being transported back 125 years ago, when our church was founded, and hearing some of the same sacred and operatic repertoire enjoyed by our members in that era. On Friday, February 4, at 8:00 pm, our Westminster Choir and four soloists will treat the community to a "Winter Musical Gala," featuring music from the worlds of church, opera, and musical theatre. Excerpts will range from Giacomo Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*, which premiered in 1904, to selections from more recent musicals, such as Rodgers & Hammerstein's *South Pacific* and Leonard Bernstein's *West Side Story*. Throw in some Mozart, a blockbuster from *The Tales of Hoffman* by Jacques Offenbach, written in 1881, and prepare yourself for a time-tested thrilling evening!

The history of outstanding music at Westminster dates back to our early years. In 1910, when Rev. Dr. Charles Candee was pastor, Westminster installed its first pipe organ, which was replaced by the current Austin organ in 1966. Then, as now, music assumed a vital place in worship, with professional singers at each service, regular Sunday afternoon concerts, and famous guest artists.

The choir and soloists will be under the direction of Paul Fleckenstein, organist/director of music at Westminster since 1993. Paul earned his undergraduate degree in organ performance from the University of the Pacific Conservatory of Music and his master's degree in church music from Westminster Choir College.

Diana Milburn, soprano, graduated from the Hartt School of Music and has sung leading roles in opera houses in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, and the United States.

Ruth Bailis, mezzo-soprano, a graduate of West Chester University and the Manhattan School of Music, regularly performs in concert and opera venues throughout the United States. She is also known as a gourmet cook.

The ever-versatile Justin Gonzalez, tenor, not only sings opera, classical, and sacred repertoire, but also plays trombone in a Philadelphia-based band known as "The Business." In certain venues, he can also be seen doing card tricks and balloon sculpting.



Artwork by Herb Boden

Brian Carter, baritone, earned his doctor of musical arts degree from the University of Texas and has sung leading roles in various opera companies, including Opera Delaware's productions of *The Barber of Seville* and *La Traviata*.

The soloists will join Westminster's talented 50-voice choir, which has to its credit two CD recordings and four European tours and

thrills us each week with its choral offerings in worship.

On the same evening, beginning at 6:30 pm, Westminster will be a part of Wilmington's monthly art loop event, *Art on the Town*, featuring oil landscape paintings by Westminster's own long-time member Herb Boden, who has exhibited at the Brandywine Arts Festival, among other notable venues.

Come at 6:30 pm to view the Boden exhibit and enjoy light refreshments, stay on for the 8:00 pm concert, and cap off the evening at a special reception of delicious treats organized by Donna Collins and the 125th Anniversary Committee.

WPC@125
WESTMINSTER CELEBRATES

WPC@125

DID YOU KNOW?

A STORMY, WINTRY NIGHT AND WE BECOME WESTMINSTER

In 1903, Miss Emily P. Bissell wrote a charming and factual early history of the Rodney Street Church, which she read at the worship service on November 29, 1903, to commemorate the 21st year of the church. She began by explaining that very little in the way of notes, minutes, or records remained of the early church, which had begun in 1886, but she was able to rely on letters, old bills, and scraps of memorabilia. The history is a sketch of personalities who, through dedication and financial contribution, were able to help the church through early colonization and even eliminated most of the debt incurred in erecting the buildings. She ended her essay by imploring the officers and elders to address the growing need for a larger building and a proper sanctuary:

“The hopes of the pioneers of Rodney Street Church will not be fulfilled until a great and useful Presbyterian Church rises upon this empty ground and becomes a power for righteousness and for the greater glory of the Head of the Church.”

Indeed this lady spoke with passion! The church already owned the land at Pennsylvania Avenue and Rodney Streets; it had been secured years earlier by forward-thinking elders. There were undoubtedly countless Session meetings and hours spent with ledgers to cause these Presbyterians to take such a leap. To build a sanctuary that would seat twice as many people as were on the rolls seemed ridiculous to some, but Miss Bissell’s pioneers had two distinct advantages: they had a new minister who had tremendous faith in the ability to grow the church, and they had elders and members who were willing to work to that end.

On July 9, 1909, the Rodney Street Presbyterian Church called the Rev. Dr. Charles Candee to be its pastor. The Pastor Nominating Committee explained the desire of the membership to build the larger church and wanted to know if he was up to the task of growing the church. Dr. Candee wrote the following in his own church history: “January

7, 1910 is really a red letter day in the history of this church. It was a

stormy, wintry night, and the attendance was very small, I think less than 30...The proposition was laid before the congregation of proceeding at once to the task of erecting the new building and it was decided to go ahead. In 15 minutes, with less than 30 present, \$26,000 was subscribed...”

Groundbreaking took place on July 31 of that year. Construction lasted just over one year, and the cornerstone was laid on October 15, 1911. In the early summer, as the stones and timbers were forming the structure we all call home today, the congregation voted to change the name of their “new” church to Westminster Presbyterian Church. The contract price of the building was \$84,000, but Rev. Candee stated that, including furniture, organ, windows, and other expenses, the final price was about \$100,000. The Candee years at Westminster saw the installation of the organ as well as the exquisite windows. A bowling alley was installed in the basement to provide a “wholesome” place for the young people. In addition to church school, there were extremely active men’s and women’s clubs, a Pastor’s Aid Group, Boy Scouts, Camp Fire Girls, and missionary support through the presbytery. The church grew and prospered.

Today, as we sit in the beautiful sanctuary, it is important to reflect on this huge accomplishment. We must admire the desire of our early fellow members to build a place of spiritual comfort and strength, to secure necessary funds, to see physical plans take shape, and to know it will stand for centuries (just one so far), providing hope, grace, and all God is about to its people. On November 11, 1911, the prayer of dedication ended with the people saying, “Holy Blessed and Glorious Trinity: three persons in one God: TO THEE WE DEDICATE THIS HOUSE.”



NEW CASTLE PRESBYTERY REPORT

The New Castle Presbytery met for the 808th Stated Meeting of New Castle Presbytery on Saturday, November 20, 2010, at the Presbyterian Church of Chestertown in Chestertown, Maryland. Elders Don Kuespert, Jan Patrick, and Ross Getty attended as commissioners. At the meeting, the presbytery approved amendments to the PC(USA) Constitution. The Confession of Belhar and numerous amendments to the Book of Order were approved as presented. The budget of the presbytery was also unanimously approved. During the meeting, the 25th anniversary of the Speer Trust administered by New Castle Presbytery was celebrated. The Speer Trust is a bequest from the estate of George I. and Lizzie S. Speer of Wilmington, Delaware, received by the New Castle Presbytery in 1985 and earmarked for mission with people who are poor and oppressed. As part of the celebration, awards were presented to churches in New Castle Presbytery to honor the number of Speer Trust projects conducted during the 25-year history of the Speer Trust. Georgetown Presbyterian received the First Place Award for the number of projects in the course of 25 years, and Westminster was awarded Honorable Mention.

THE WESTMINSTER SPEER TRUST TURNS 40

In March 1971, the George I. Speer and Lizzie S. Speer Memorial Trust was funded upon the death of their daughter, Miss Alice Speer, in accordance with her stated intentions. (This trust differs from the Speer Trust administered by New Castle Presbytery, as described in the previous article.) Miss Speer directed that the income from the trust be paid to Westminster at least annually and "shall be expended by the Trustees of said Church...in any manner they may deem desirable." It was her desire that the trustees of Westminster give preference to support of the maintenance of the church's physical properties and to assist members of Westminster in becoming Presbyterian ministers.

Funded with an initial contribution of approximately \$1,000,000, the Speer Trust has generated more than \$3,000,000 in support of property maintenance and seminary education over the course of these 40 years, while retaining a current value of nearly \$1,250,000. Westminster's ongoing stewardship of the Speer Trust is a commendable model of fiduciary responsibility in support of a donor's wishes and the needs of the church.

We are grateful indeed to Alice Speer's dedication to the continuing ministries of Westminster, her foresight in establishing this trust in this manner, and the legacy she created as a loving memorial to her parents.

WESTMINSTER RECEIVES BEQUEST

Our church received a bequest of \$10,000 from the estate of Tom C. Gary, Jr., who died on April 29, 2010. He and his wife, Barbara (who died in 2003), joined Westminster in 1950. He was a graduate of Princeton University, a captain in the U.S. Army during World War II, and an employee of the DuPont Company for 32 years. For the past several years, he was a resident at Millcroft Retirement Home. We appreciate his gift to our church, which has been deposited into our unrestricted endowment fund.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW STEPHEN MINISTERS

Our Stephen Minister trainees, Cathy Higgins, Jeff Lippincott, and Gigi Mueller, have completed their training. The training was sponsored and conducted by Westminster Presbyterian, St. Stephen's Lutheran, St. Barnabas Episcopalian, Aldersgate United Methodist, and Hockessin United Methodist Churches for a combined group of 17. We are very blessed to have our new Stephen Ministers with us. They will join Stephen Ministry at Westminster and St. Stephen's to provide Christian caregiving.



For more information on Stephen Ministry or if you would like to have a Stephen Minister, please call Dr. Anne Ledbetter (302-654-5214).

WESTMINSTER'S BELL CHOIR RINGS IN WASHINGTON, DC



On Wednesday, December 15, the Reverberations Bell Choir traveled to Washington, DC, to provide music for a Christmas reception at the residence of the Vice President and Dr. Jill Biden. Their music provided a festive backdrop for the partygoers, including then-Senator Arlen Specter, Senator Bob Casey, and Supreme Court Justices Elena Kagan and Sonia Sotomayor. The invitation and experience were a highlight of the bell choir's Christmas season, and they were overwhelmed by the warm welcome, gracious hospitality, and genuine appreciation shown to them by the Bidens and their staff.

Prior to the reception, the choir enjoyed a guided tour of the National Cathedral. Pictured with the Vice President and Dr. Jill Biden are (back row, left to right) Craig Checkel, Dick Prugh, Charlie Donaghy, Marcus Mateer, Mary Beth Davis (director), and Bill Farnham and (front row, left to right) Rebekah Derryberry, Betty Crowell, Charlotte Pye, Kris Qualls, Tina Rydgren, Denise Nance, Sue Spilecki, Ruthie Toole, and Marcia Carle.



The 2010 Westminster Woman of the Year

The wonderful Westminster Woman of 2010, the 65th recipient, is a unique blend of compassion, humility, thoughtfulness, organization, and discipleship. She came into this world in Perth Amboy, New Jersey, and was soon baptized at Perth Amboy First Presbyterian Church.

When she was five, her family moved to North Wilmington and joined Concord Presbyterian Church in its earliest days. Her parents were members #74 and #75, and her mother is still an active member there. As the middle of three sisters, she enjoyed outdoor activities, spending warm summer days at the High Point Pool and fall and spring days playing softball and touch football with the neighborhood children. She was known as "Calamity Jane" for her penchant for skinned knees and other injuries as she played enthusiastically.

As a student at Brandywine High School, she was involved in many activities, including the National Honor Society. She received a bachelor of science degree in education from the University of Delaware, graduating with honors, and then a master's degree in education with a concentration in English.

Soon after, she began what would be a 30-year career in public schools in New Castle County, with her final 18 years spent teaching at H. B. DuPont Middle School in Hockessin. While living in Hockessin, she regularly attended Hockessin United Methodist Church.

After meeting her husband, they began to look for a new church and joined Westminster, where they were married in 1993. She immediately began a life of dedicated service to Westminster. She served as deacon for two terms and was their moderator, and she is now an elder, serving on the Nominating and the Worship and Music Committees. She has also trained and served as a Stephen Minister, an usher, a greeter, and an ambassador. Our Woman of the Year has been deeply involved in the Koinonia Circle. As an active member of Women of Westminster, she was moderator for two years and has chaired the silent auction for the bazaar. For the past four years, she has coordinated the volunteer effort to maintain the Memorial Garden.



In addition to all the amazing things she has done at Westminster, she is an avid tennis player, having competed nationally. She also works as a school program guide at Winterthur, teaching young people. We are not sure how she finds time to garden at home, ski, and golf and act as a gracious hostess and chef, but she manages all of it very well. An accomplished flutist, she has played in bands, orchestras, and in a small musical group and for worship services at Westminster. Most importantly, she is known to her six grandchildren as Grandma Ellie, and she very much loves to read with them and share their activities. Please honor our Westminster Woman of 2010, Eleanor Jane Landt Furry.

What's New With the Westminster Session?

As 2010 drew to a close, our Session took action on a number of key issues in the life of our church.

APPROVAL OF TRUSTEES' RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE SPEER TRUST

The Session approved the Westminster trustees' proposal regarding Speer Trust funds (see article on page 5), which includes the following:

- Continuing to withdraw the funds remaining under PNC Bank investment management and consolidating them with the designated Speer funds that are managed as a subset of the Westminster endowment funds invested and managed by the trustees' Portfolio Committee
- Utilizing the 5% annual draw from the balance of the Speer Trust to fund
 - the Westminster Seminary Education Account in support of seminary education for members of Westminster or those closely affiliated with either Westminster members or the church, and
 - the 10-year Property Plan in support of the maintenance of church property and facilities.

TERMINATION OF THE WESTMINSTER PENSION PLAN FOR LAY EMPLOYEES

Westminster's defined benefit pension plan for lay employees was suspended by Session effective January 1, 2008, and replaced by a defined contribution 403(b) plan for lay employees as of that date. After many months of study, the Joint (Session and Trustee) Finance Committee determined that the defined benefit plan could be terminated effective December 1, 2010. The majority of participants in the pension plan elected to receive a lump sum payment or rollover to an IRA, with Westminster assuming the terminated plan's obligation to pay current monthly benefits to those who elected that option.

APPROVAL OF THE 2011 OPERATING BUDGET

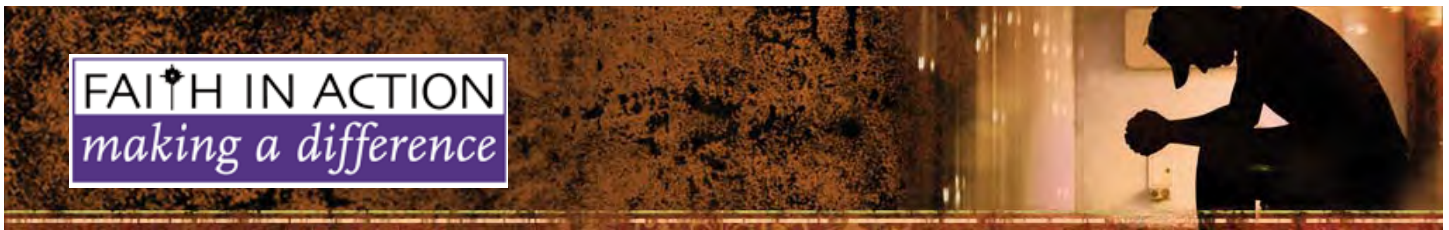
On the recommendation of the Joint Finance Committee, Session approved the 2011 operating budget, which is nearly \$60,000 less than the 2010 budget due to reductions in anticipated pledge income and the contribution from the endowment. The amount of the annual draw is calculated as 5% of the three-year rolling average of the unrestricted endowment value, which was significantly impacted by the performance of the stock market in 2008 and 2009.

CALL FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING

The Session issued a call for the annual congregational and corporate meetings of Westminster Presbyterian Church to be held on Sunday, January 30, 2011, at 10:10 am in Community Hall, followed by a chili lunch for members and friends of the congregation.

PREPARATION OF THE ANNUAL REPORT

The 2010 Westminster Annual Report is to be produced in two parts: (1) the descriptive report of congregational life and ministry during the year and (2) the financial supplement containing specific details of Westminster's financial performance during 2010 and projections for 2011. Both of these reports are to be available one week before the annual meeting on January 30 to give members adequate time to review the information prior to the meeting.



Westminster's February Mission Emphasis is ADDRESSING HOMELESSNESS

Care for the homeless is an essential aspect of our mission outreach to those in need. In November 2006, our Session established a "Task Force for the Homeless," which was charged with discerning how God wanted our community of faith to respond to the homeless people who were sleeping on our church property. The task force, working closely with Bill Perkins of Friendship House, made a series of recommendations that Session adopted in March 2007.

The outgrowth of these recommendations has been a renewed and revitalized commitment on Westminster's part to assisting homeless individuals and families in a variety of ways:

- Maintaining Burton House and Daughtry House, two buildings adjacent to our church parking lot, which serve as supervised transitional housing for homeless men whose next step is a return to independent living (operating cost of \$27,000 a year);
- Supporting Meeting Ground, a ministry to the homeless in Cecil County, Maryland, in the form of financial support (\$6,000 a year); the planting of a vegetable garden at Clairvaux Farms each spring; periodic refurbishing of bedrooms at Wayfarers' House for women and children; and, most recently, the donation of funds by Women of Westminster for a commercial-grade washer and dryer for the Mary Randall Day Center in Elkton;
- Sustaining numerous programs of Friendship House in Wilmington, including the staffing of "Code Purple Winter Evening Sanctuary," a lifesaving refuge on the coldest nights of the year; preparation and sharing of evening meals at Epiphany House, a transitional shelter for women newly released from prison; the "Home at Last" program, which assists women and children in furnishing their residences as they return to independent living; as well as direct financial support (\$15,000 a year);
- Hosting homeless families in our church building for a week at a time, four or more times a year, through the Family Promise of Northern New Castle County network, as well as providing financial support through our operating budget (\$5,000 a year) and our Christmas Eve offering (see article on page 14);
- Supporting the residents of Sojourners' Place by hosting monthly birthday parties and annual Christmas celebrations, as well as a financial contribution of \$5,000 a year.

Although some of us have, at some point in our lives, had the experience of not enough money to make ends meet, insufficient quantity or nutritional value of food, or the inability to buy anything other than the basic necessities of life, very few of us have experienced the utter dislocation of having no place to call home for ourselves or for our children. We are blessed to be able to offer sanctuary and support to those challenged by this most fundamental need and to assist them in regaining a home of their own. If you would like to learn more about these ministries and/or become more directly involved in outreach to the homeless in our community, please contact John Doyle (302-636-9061; jadnldj@aol.com).



New Coordinators for Family Promise



Westminster hosted Family Promise for the fifth time from December 26 to January 2, with Marlys Kerr and Mary Lou McDowell now serving as coordinators. Former Family Promise coordinators Janet and Theo Krapels did such an excellent job starting this new ministry that the week went very smoothly for the new leaders. During this most recent host week, we housed a single mother and her two teenage daughters, a single father and his two young daughters, and a married couple with two- and three-year-old girls. Two of the four adults are currently employed, and the other two are actively looking for work. In addition to the work of the Family Promise coordinators, Carol Bova oversaw the transformation of classrooms to bedrooms for the guest families and WPC members who were overnight hosts, Lynn Stallone arranged for dinners to be prepared each evening by several teams of volunteers, Fred Carspecken and Ralph Lewis prepared a hot breakfast for the families on New Year's Day, and John Richmond handled the laundering of sheets, towels, and blankets at the end of the week.

Family Promise of Northern New Castle County has a careful screening process that aims to choose families with good potential to find jobs and permanent housing within the four months they are permitted to be in the network. These are families who, until recently, had jobs and places to live but, through unforeseen circumstances, have suddenly become homeless. If they are not employed, the families spend their days at the Family Promise Day Center next to St. James Mill Creek Episcopal Church, where they are offered employment counseling and help in locating affordable housing. In the evening, they are transported via van to one of the 13

FAITH IN ACTION
making a difference

churches that are participating in Family Promise. The families, the volunteers who prepare dinner, and the overnights hosts dine together every evening, after which the families spend a couple of quiet hours reading, playing video games, watching DVDs, or resting before an early bedtime. The van leaves before 6:00 am to get families back to the Day Center in time for school buses and work commitments.

Being a Family Promise volunteer is both easy and rewarding. It also brings a renewed appreciation for the many blessings we enjoy on a daily basis. There are currently about eight couples who are rotating duties as overnight hosts, and it would be great to have a few more to call on occasionally. Other volunteers are always needed to prepare dinners, help with room setup and takedown, and drive the van to and from the Day Center. Please contact either Marlys Kerr (302-654-2404; MarlysKerr@aol.com) or Mary Lou McDowell (302-655-8662; MaryMcDowell5@aol.com) if you can lend a hand. Westminster's Family Promise weeks for 2011 begin on March 20, May 29, August 7, and December 4.

We appreciate the love everybody
Show us
GRANT Family thank you for all your support
Love
Faith
Nehemiah
Thank you all for everything
Miss you guys already!
Love Lisa + Christopher

SOUPER BOWL OF CARING

FAITH IN ACTION
making a difference

On Sunday, February 6, 140 million Americans are expected to watch the Super Bowl. There will be football-watching parties with abundant food,

friendship, and fellowship, but at the same time there will be people who worry about staying warm, finding shelter, and eating a warm meal. Please join our youth around the country as they demonstrate God's love by loving their neighbors through the Souper Bowl of Caring. It will be a simple yet significant act of caring for others when you drop \$1 (or more) into a soup pot as you leave worship on February 6. Our youth are developing hearts for giving that will last a lifetime, so please support their efforts. This year's donations will benefit St. Stephen's Food Pantry and the Delaware Food Bank.



Urgent Need - Please Respond

FAITH IN ACTION
making a difference

Each day of the week around the noon hour, hungry and often homeless men, women, and children line the sidewalk at Jackson and 2nd Streets so they can visit Emmanuel Dining Room West for a hearty lunch. Who prepares and serves those meals? On the fourth of every month regardless of the day of the week, Westminster volunteers arrive at 10:30 am to chop, stir, and serve meals to the guests who are so in need of a nutritious meal and stay until 1:00 pm,

when all the guests have been served.

Many of our volunteers have taken this ministry to heart and have served for years, but Westminster now is in need of new faces and new hands to fill the monthly team of four volunteers (48 people a year). Would you consider doing this? At least trying it one day? You will become part of the solution to fixing hunger, and Christ certainly calls us to do just that!

Westminster's Urban Mission budget and Echo Gifts, through your generosity, financially support the feeding ministries of Emmanuel Dining Room, and that commits us to serving there as well.

Please contact Camilla Jones (302-421-9249; camillagreg@yahoo.com) if you want to find out more about this ministry or would like to sign up to serve.

Groundbreaking Ceremony for Chad's House at Habitat's Mill Stone Project

FAITH IN ACTION
making a difference

On December 9, a sparkling cold and sunny Thursday morning, Habitat for Humanity held a groundbreaking ceremony for its newest project, Mill Stone, located at 97 Vandever Avenue in Wilmington. The largest development yet undertaken by the New Castle County organization, Mill Stone will be the site of the home to be built for Darin Thomas and his family. Dedicated to the memory of former Westminster pastor Chad Miller, this house was made possible by funds raised at the "Bike to Build!" event held at Tubman-Garrett Park on June 12, 2010.



The groundbreaking ceremony featured the unveiling of a life-size façade of one of the future townhouses. Attending the event were city officials, Habitat leadership and Greater Brandywine Village Revitalization Group representatives, as well as Dr. Jones, Helen Walker, Fred Nelson, and Sue Linderman on behalf of Westminster. Greg, Helen, Fred, and Sue were delighted to catch up with Darin and his children, Mustafaa, Zaahidah, and Maryum, who are so excited at the prospect of having their own home.

Thanks to all who supported Bike to Build! Look for information on the 2011 event coming soon.



The UrbanPromise After-School Program Needs You!



FAITH IN ACTION
making a difference

UrbanPromise, a Christian school for children in pre-K through sixth grade, was one of two schools that received backpacks and school supplies as a result of our "Blessing of the Backpacks" project in August 2010. An important element of the UrbanPromise education program is a series of summer and after-school "camps" that UrbanPromise operates in various parts of Wilmington. Camp Promise is one such program that supports children who live in the west side of the city.



Kay Johnson reading to youth at Urban Promise.

Camp Promise lost its after-school program facility for the 2010-2011 school year when renovations were required to bring the building up to current code standards. On the recommendation of Westminster's Urban Mission Committee, our Session approved offering space in our church building for Camp Promise to operate during this school year.

Students meet from 4:00 to 6:00 pm each Monday through Thursday for Bible study, games, homework, and dinner—much like a mini-Chapel Club! We need tutors and mentors for these students, and you would be greatly appreciated. If you can offer a bit of your time and talent on one or more of these afternoons at our church, you will be making a significant difference in a child's life—and your own. Please contact Sue Linderman (302-239-7650; srlinder@dca.net) or Vanessa Church (302-425-5502; Vanessa@urbanpromise.org) for more information.

Congo Report

FAITH IN ACTION
making a difference

Westminster's prayers – and its dollars – are being received and used wisely by our brothers and sisters in Kananga, bringing faith in action to this seemingly "forgotten" place. Thanks to WPC members Ralph Lewis and Bill Moore, who made extended summer visits to Congo, we have up-to-date information regarding the ongoing work and challenges of our friends there. Our current mission projects include the following:

- Continuing the successful widows' soap project
- Providing for improvements to the pig breeding program
- Supporting the parish youth and mothers' choir programs
- Enlarging the scope of the parish health program
- Holding a workshop on nutrition and cooking and establishing a food pantry
- Enabling women's studies in

English, literacy, and computer skills to enhance their communication with women at Westminster.

Other ongoing mission support in Congo includes the following:

- Helping to develop a community garden on presbytery land
- Providing more than six large duffel bags of donated medical/surgical supplies for IMCK Hospital and Butoke Clinic
- Supporting teacher education at the 700 Presbyterian schools
- Funding a solar power project, providing electricity for the first time in 22 years to the main, central church office
- Repairing the only standby generator at IMCK's hydropower plant (which has one operating generator)
- Funding six months of care and education for 13 newly arrived children at Butoke in Tshikaji Village, all made orphans in September's

devastating tornado

- Sending funds to help rebuild a church blown away by a storm.

Perhaps the effect of this mission can better be conveyed by telling of the gratitude, pleasure, and hope present in the faces and eyes of so many there: in the orphans, in the family members on our home visits as we prayed at each of their homes, in the women who have small businesses funded by micro-loans, in the parish widows, and in one who said, "Thank you for the soap project – I have something to do now... and I feel useful." Please continue to lift up our sisters and brothers of Congo in your prayers. The Church in the World Committee will introduce ways to deepen our connection to friends in Kananga in the coming year.

See the full *Church in the World* write-up in the 2010 Annual Report.

Women of Westminster End of Year 2010 Benevolence Giving Report

Benevolence giving is made possible by the generosity, compassion, and commitment of our congregation and friends who support our annual bazaar.



Organization	Amount
Brandywine Pastoral Counseling ministry of pastoral counseling and education	\$500
Delaware Futures academic support services for financially challenged students	\$1,000
Family Promise of Northern New Castle County	\$500
Friendship House Christian ministry to homeless men, women, and children of Wilmington	\$2,000
Gilpin Hall permanent residence and day care for elderly	\$500
Hanover Church Food Pantry	\$500
Jefferson Street Child Care, Inc. Hanover Church	\$300
Lutheran Community Services Food Pantry	\$1,500
Meeting Ground Ministry and Shelter to Homeless Families/Delmarva Peninsula	\$2,000
NGO Butoke, in Democratic Republic of Congo	\$750
Sojourners' Place shelter and support for people experiencing crisis/homelessness in Wilmington	\$1,200
UrbanPromise Wilmington Neighborhood and Street Ministry with children and youth	\$1,500
Women/Kamulumba-Ditalala in Congo, WPC sister church in Congo	\$750
WPC youth mission trip support	\$1,000
TOTAL	\$14,000

Additional bazaar sale earnings for the following nonprofit ministries (not included above):

Habitat for Humanity	\$220
Jefferson Street Child Care, Inc. (Becky Arnold's hot dog stand)	\$250
Mission de Micha (Guatemala) (Joyce Ackerman)	\$1,400
SERRV International	\$450
Gambian Women's Initiative	\$700
TOTAL	\$3,020

Total benevolence giving made possible by the 2010 bazaar was \$17,020.

2010 Women of Westminster Benevolence Giving Committee:

Jim and Jeannice Clark, Ruth and Bill Nace, Barbara Clough, Cassandra Piovoso, Leucia Venable, Susan Williamson, Jean Custin, Sue Linderman, Liz Bacon, Kathy Graham, Mary Field, Nancy Gemmell, Ellie Furry, and Jill Getty.



Christmas at Sojourners' Place

By Cynthia H. Kuespert

What was the highlight of your Christmas season? For members of Koinonia Circle, it may well have been the party they hosted for residents of Sojourners' Place, a residential program for 50 homeless men and women. Organized by Marcia Carle, 22 Koinonia members arrived at Sojourners' Place on December 14 with presents, cookies, ice cream, games, and 50 scarves knit by Mary Field.

After serving dessert, the celebration began with an icebreaker, "name the celebrity on your back," which helped create warm, friendly interactions between visitors and residents. Jeannice Clark played Christmas carols, Mary Field gave each resident a chance to choose a scarf in his or her favorite color, circle members distributed Christmas presents, and the games continued. At the end of the evening, a pretty female resident with red hair, who correctly guessed her celebrity person to be Queen Elizabeth, was modeling her new brown vest topped off by a pretty orange scarf. She now looked like Queen Elizabeth, happy, confident, and grateful. Several other residents thanked the members of Koinonia Circle with hugs, "bless yous," and heartfelt appreciation for "coming out in the cold to be with them."

It was an evening when barriers and stereotypes were erased. The residents were no longer just faceless people down on their luck, or homeless men and women struggling to get their lives together. The Koinonia members were no longer white-gloved, distant do-gooders. We were all having fun together, enjoying the magic of Christmas when all of God's children can join together in Christian fellowship. For several days after the party, e-mails flew back and forth among members of Koinonia Circle, as all enjoyed the afterglow of a memorable evening.



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Christmas Eve Offering

Thank you to all who contributed to our 2010 Christmas Eve offering. As a result of the generosity of Westminster members and friends, we received approximately \$18,000, which will be distributed as follows:

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- 25% to Family Promise, our church-hosted ministry to homeless families in our community (see article on page 10);
- 45% to local community food programs, recognizing that one in four Delawareans applied for emergency food assistance in 2010 and the crisis continues;
- 25% to outreach programs in Congo and Guatemala; and
- 5% to peacemaking efforts through Churches for Middle East Peace.

We are fortunate that we can share our blessings in support of peace, social justice, and outreach to those in need.

Christmas Boxes Project Success Report

Thanks to you, our generous church family, the 2010 Christmas Boxes Project distributed 134 boxes serving 411 individuals. You bought gifts, donated and sorted food, helped fill each box with gifts and food, and offered to drive some of our recipient families home with their Christmas box. It takes many hearts and hands to make this project a success. We could not do it without you!

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FRIENDSHIP HOUSE, INC.
 P. O. BOX 1517
 WILMINGTON, DELAWARE 19899
 (302) 652-8133 www.friendship-house.org

CHRISTIAN MINISTRY MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF HOMELESS PEOPLE

Letter From Bill Perkins of Friendship House

Dear Jim and Jeannice,

On behalf of all the men, women and children that have come to the various ministries of Friendship House this year, I wish to thank you for the generous donation of \$2,000 from the Women of Westminster End of Year Giving, made possible by the annual bazaar.

These last three years have tested both our nation and our faith. Hard times seem to bring out the best and the worst in people. In some, it produces a paralyzing fear; they simply cannot deal with pain and suffering. They close their hearts to both stranger and neighbor. Others become bitter and cynical. In their rage, they need scapegoats to blame. They accuse our civil and religious leaders at best of incompetence and at worst of criminal negligence. They rant against the rich for their greed and the poor for their sloth. Worst of all, such times as these make people ashamed and drive them to despair. They have lost something that they thought no one had a right to take: their home or job, their marriage or

family, their health or independence, their sense of fiscal security or social superiority. The world they knew has died and they are not willing to be born again.

The sacred season of Christmas celebrates God's action in hard times. In a world far more brutal than our own, a Jewish maiden dared to believe that one birth could change the world. Without education, wealth, social position or political power, one man committed himself totally to redeeming God's promise of a New Kingdom. To the homeless, the wounded and the outcasts he offered "good news" that was beyond price. With his last breath upon the executioner's cross, he died as he had lived - blessing the condemned, comforting the broken-hearted and forgiving his enemies. In the shadow of the grave, those with eyes to see discovered a light and a life that endures even after death.

In hard times, we taste our poverty and our mortality. We also have the opportunity to view ourselves and

our world in a new light. Standing at the crossroad, we can make new choices - not simply about what we will do for a living, but about who we will be and how we will live. At Friendship House, we stand with people at that crossroad every day. While we cannot work magic pulling jobs or apartments like rabbits out of a hat, our staff and volunteers strive to treat our clients like persons, not problems. They reverently listen to each story, however long it takes to tell. While they cannot always give people what they want, they do offer each person a path forward, often painful, but never hopeless.

Thank you for caring. Thank you for seeing what we see when we serve these wonderful folks whom God has woven into our lives. May the Lord continue to use us in the Lord's service.

Your Friend,
 Bill Perkins
 Director

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Monday, February 7, at 11:00 am
For the March 2011 Issue
Submission guidelines at
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The last issue of *The Chimes* featured an article about Melvin Diaz (page 21), who has an undergraduate degree in civil engineering and is here from Guatemala to study the English language at the University of Delaware. Our congregation and New Castle Presbytery have an ongoing relationship with the Mam Presbytery in the Western Highlands of Guatemala, which is where we first met Melvin in January 2009. Melvin started attending classes on January 5 at the University of Delaware's English Language Institute, and his goal is to gain university-level proficiency in English so he can move on to postgraduate work in geological civil engineering in either Japan or The Netherlands.

When Melvin is at Westminster on Sundays, he will alternate between the 9:00 and 11:15 am worship services. He will also visit other churches and groups in our presbytery.

Melvin is staying with Anne Gunn. If you would like to invite him on a day trip, for a weekend meal, or to a basketball or baseball game, a concert (he likes classical music in addition to pop, rock, and gospel), or the theater, please contact Anne Gunn (302-547-3784; anne_gunn@live.com).



Melvin enjoying his first snow!