



Taking time away from the church this Spring will be good for me, but will it be good for the church? I would like to think so. In that light, the Session has begun to speak of the year 2007 as a “season of discernment.” My sabbatical provides an opportunity not only for me to pursue my own individual pathways of renewal, but for the congregation to step back from life as usual and wonder together, “Where is God leading us at this time?”

As a concrete step in that direction, the Session has asked Ashley to convene a working group to plan for the sabbatical time with the congregation, and to think creatively how best to take advantage of this discernment time. (See her related article on this page.)▶

One of our first opportunities to pursue these questions together will be our Lenten Series, which will begin Monday, February 26, and continue for the next five Mondays. As we have in the past, we will gather for a soup and bread supper at 6:30 p.m., followed by a program that will include worship, prayer, Bible study, time alone and in small groups. Together we will be reflecting on chapters three to five in Paul’s Second Letter to the Corinthians, in which Paul uses such arresting images of the church as “Christ’s letter to the world,” “a treasure in clay jars,” and “ambassadors for Christ.” We will ask questions of ourselves, such as: Where am I struggling in my own life? What is happening in the world around us? How is God speaking to us through the Bible in our own time and place? Who is God calling us to be in response to all of this?

It is my hope that my sabbatical might be a “liminal” time for all of us. *Liminal* comes from the Latin word for “threshold,” and was used extensively by the renowned anthropologist Victor Turner to refer to a transitional moment in one’s life. Adolescence, graduation, moving to a new city, getting married, baptism—all of these are *liminal* moments. They are betwixt and between, between one state of being and another. As such, they are moments when we are most open to transformation.

My prayer is that all of you will join me in this *liminal* moment, as we seek to discern together God’s call for our lives.

In peace,
Jeff †

A Season of Discernment

Instead of just “maintaining” life at Pilgrims while Jeff is gone, the Session wants to engage in an intentional process of discernment with the entire congregation. To help accomplish this, we have formed a Sabbatical Planning Group: Gerry Hender-shot, Jeanne Mayer, Hannah Nutt, Anne Womeldorf and Carol Huls. Together, our responsibility as a group will be to discern and create experiences of reflection and spiritual formation for the entire congregation from mid April until mid July.

Discernment is a process and the sabbatical planning group will be going through its own process of naming and creating experiences of discernment. Even before we gathered for our first meeting, the sabbatical group took time to individually reflect on beliefs and their own meaning of discernment. When we sat down together for the first time, we engaged in additional exercises to name our hopes, dreams and objectives for the sabbatical time.

“Connections and clarity.” These are our two themes for our “season of discernment.” The group is still working on definitions for these words, but together we want to explore these questions: How are we connected as Pilgrims? What binds us together? How do God and Jesus Christ impact how we live out our connections to each other? How are we connected to the city? How are we connected to our global village?

Our vision statement, our definition of discernment that will guide us through this process is: As a sabbatical planning group, we will create a process for Pilgrims to recognize the Spirit’s voice and to know and face the truth of God’s will for us.

Worship will be a key experience in how we recognize the Spirit and face the truth of God’s will for us. When Jeff arrived almost seven years ago, worship felt “wild and wooly.” Now worship feels “normal” and somewhat predictable. How can our sabbatical time help us re-examine our worship practices? The hope of the sabbatical planning group is to ask three different preachers to each preach twice in order to not only fill the pulpit while Jeff is gone but engage us in how scripture speaks to “connections and clarity.”

Look forward to some experiences in the spring and early summer that will bring clarity to our already exciting ministry here at Pilgrims and connect us even more deeply to each other, this city and to God’s creation.

Ashley †



ADULT EDUCATION IN FEBRUARY**“Forgiveness:
A Wrestling Match**

*February 11th, 18th & 25th
Led by Ashley Goff*

What is forgiveness? What does it mean to ask for forgiveness or be forgiven? What do biblical stories have to say about what forgiveness means? Does God only forgive? Can we as humans? What difference does forgiveness mean for us and relationships that have left us broken and betrayed?

Through biblical stories, God-talk, stories of betrayal and rejection, and group sharing, we will explore these questions and begin to name what forgiveness means to us and how this theological concept is part of the fabric of our lives. †

Low Wage Work in the United States

*Feb 4, 11 & 18
Led by Shelly Ver Ploeg*

How does immigration affect native-born workers' wages? Why were young, low-education black males the only major demographic group that did not see gains in employment and wages in the latter half of the 1990s and what policies might help them? What other public policies are geared towards low-wage workers? And what's so bad about Wal-Mart? In this three class series, we'll explore these questions and others surrounding the state of low-wage workers in the United States. In the first class we'll discuss the market and non-market conditions that have affected low-wage workers in the past decade. We'll also consider whether Wal-Mart's low, low prices offset its low, low wages. In the second class we'll contemplate some of the impacts immigration has had on low wage work and we'll discuss the employment conditions of young black males. In the last class, we'll talk about policies geared toward low-wage workers such as cash assistance, the Earned Income Tax Credit, minimum and living wage laws, and job training programs. †

2006 was another great year for The Pilgrimage. We had over 1,000 volunteers log over 11,500 volunteer hours at 13 different service projects. We had a total of 62 groups this year most of which were either Presbyterian or college groups. Between Jen, Emily Presley, our summer intern, and David Harris, our Pilgrimage Poet-in-Residence, we provided 35 educational or reflection workshops. On top of that, 42 of our groups had the “Faces of Homelessness Panel” from the National Coalition for the Homeless. The top three service projects we sent our groups to this year were the Capital Area Food Bank, Christian Community Group Homes, and Zacchaeus Kitchen. Additionally, we sent some of our Service Day participants to the Food Bank and Christian Community Group Homes. We had five groups that came for a comparative World Religions weekend, which entailed

From the Pilgrimage

Jennifer McClurg, Program Manager

them visiting the Islamic Mosque and worshipping at the Washington Hebrew Center on Friday night. (For more details on our 2006 statistics, check out the bulletin board in front of the main office!)

2007 is shaping up to be a busy year, with our reservations through August already surpassing all of 2006! As always, if anyone is interested in participating in service projects or educational workshops, please send Jen an email at pilgrimage.manager@verizon.net or call her at 202-387-6615. You are more than welcome to join our groups in their endeavors!

Please mark the first Saturday in October (October 6th) on your calendar and plan to join us for Service Day. We look forward to you joining us there!

We are also working on an exciting new partnership with the National Coalition for the Homeless: an Urban Plunge Program! An Urban Plunge will put college groups out on the streets to live for two days and two nights as if they were homeless. They will have the opportunity to experience first-hand the infinite struggles people go through on the streets, from eating at soup kitchens to panhandling for money and learning about the community's attitude towards the homeless. In addition to the 48 hour plunge, they will work in soup kitchens and see how life is different on the other side of the serving line. We also hope they will meet with their Congressperson while they are here in DC and discuss what they've learned and their ideas on how to change the world. Stay tuned for more information on this exciting new program! †

PILGRIMS' CORNER

Hugh Carter, Associate Pastor at Church of the Pilgrims from 1963 to 1971, died Wednesday, January 17, beneath the pines and magnolias at his home in Gulf Breeze, Florida, in the company of his family and his dog Tray. He was 87 years old. Hugh attended both Jeff's installation service in 2000 (when former pastor Randy Taylor preached, with whom Hugh served) and our Centennial in 2003, where he spoke movingly about attending the March on Selma with Randy and other clergy from the DC area. Church member Nancy Lee Head also served with Hugh as Christian Educator at the church in Gulf Breeze where he was pastor after leaving Pilgrims.

Rev. Carter was raised in Jacksonville, FL, the only child of the late Hugh B. Carter, Sr. and Earlyne Prichard Carter. He was preceded in death by his wife Myra Greenawalt Carter in 1992.

He is survived by his son Hugh Timothy Carter, Manassas, VA and grandchildren, Lindsay, Stacy and Travis, and by his daughter Myra Carter Therrien and son in-law Bruce of Ballston Spa, NY, and by Vicky Carter.

He followed graduation from Vanderbilt University in 1941 with service in the U.S. Army in Europe during World War II. Returning home, he began ministerial studies at Union Theological Semi-

In Memoriam...



Left to right, front row: Tom Murphy (Assoc. Pastor, 1967-1971), Jeff Krehbiel (Pastor, 2000-present), Mary Speers (Pastor, 1995-1997), George Hardy (Interim, 1998-2000), back row: Hugh, Ed Taylor (Interim, 1994-1995), Herb Meza (Pastor, 1968-1980), Sid Skirvin (Pastor, 1982-1994), Ashley Goff (Director of Education & the Pilgrimage, 1999-present), and Willie Thompson, (Associate Pastor, 1974-1986).

nary finishing in 1949, and was ordained a Presbyterian minister. For the next 35 years he enjoyed assignments with congregations in Charlotte, NC, South Boston, VA, Washington, D.C. at the Church of the Pilgrims, and in Gulf Breeze, FL where he was pastor of Gulf Breeze Presbyterian Church. His concern with social justice included support of The Open Door outreach for the homeless in Atlanta, GA, civil rights as he joined walkers at the Washington Memorial with the late Rev. Martin Luther King, and service on the USS Hope medical ship in 1970. In 1985 after his retirement, Hugh made a decision to become a Roman Catholic and joined St. Ann Parish, Gulf Breeze, FL adding his clarinet to

musical occasions, and his love of scripture and theology to the adult education and RENEW program, teaching through 2005.

Contributions in Hugh Carter's memory made be made to the Hospice of Emerald Coast, 5401 Corporate Woods Drive, Pensacola, FL 32504. †

PRAYER REQUESTS

- Please remember in your prayers: Nancy Lee Head, Jim Carlson, Chuck Dynes, Jean Gilpin, Olive Holbrook, Jack Noble, the Pike family, Jeff and Penny Sandora, the Seppala family, and Virgil Smith. †

...Hungry, and you fed them; Homeless, and you took them in...

Thanks to the warmth and hospitality of our *Pilgrimage*, twelve residents of the rotating winter shelter operated by Georgetown Ministries were comfortably housed- and well fed- during the week of December 10th. This was the 12th year of our partnership with the shelter, and the third time it has been given use of the Pilgrimage quarters.

Those who helped greet and entertain our guests agreed that this year's group was an exceptionally helpful, interesting, and congenial one. All expressed gratitude for the comfort of "real" beds (with mattresses, which most of the other shelters cannot provide). The meals, prepared on some nights by Pilgrim cooks and on others by our co-sponsoring church, Dumbarton Methodist, were delicious and bountiful. We were assisted on the last night by an enthusiastic group of young people from Georgetown Visitation.

Breakfast foods were supplied by Alice Gigax, Pat Goeldner, MaryLib Pate, and Shelley Ver Ploeg. Pilgrim cooks were Tari Gregory, MaryAnn Marks, Peggy Harwood, and Betty Rudolph. As usual, Jack Womeldorf coordinated transfer of luggage to and from the church (assisted by the more robust among us)!

Many thanks to all the busy folk who devoted some of their Christmas-prep hours to helping homeless members of this community. †



Downtown Cluster of Congregations Annual Report, 2006

(The Cluster comprises 43 congregation in downtown DC, including Pilgrims. Pilgrim Jack Womeldorf, who has been secretary of the Cluster for many years, summarized the report for The Pilgrim, and it was further edited by Gerry Hendershot.)



Homeless outreach.

Studies show that homelessness climbed to 16,434 in 2006. Some 4,350 were in shelter-related programs, but 12,000 were not within any support program. About 3,000 of these are chronically homeless and many are unemployed. Children make up as much as a

quarter of DC's homeless people. The Cluster employs three Homeless Outreach Workers who rotate among seven public and congregation-based sites where the homeless are receive shelter and other services. The staff saw 1,530 persons in 2006.

Community Voice Mail. In partnership with the DC Central Kitchen, the Cluster helped to make voice mailboxes available to beneficiaries of employment and social services for homeless people, providing a private number at which messages can be left. The numbers are rotated when users regain their independence.

Church parking. After publicity about Sunday double parking around churches that blocked other cars, the Executive Director led negotiations between residents and churches in Logan Circle that resulted in the addition of over 150 new on-street parking spaces and opened nearby parking facilities.

Streetlights and safety. A Cluster survey found over 150 broken street lights in the central business area. After news of assaults on the Mall was widely reported, the DC government conducted a citywide survey, finding that 2,000 lights were broken and then repaired all of them. However, as parts of the system are more than 100 years old, a comprehensive modernization is needed.

Graffiti cleanup. The Cluster for many years has called upon the US Postal Service, WMATA, the Washington Post, the Washington Times, and pay-phone operators to clean graffiti-scarred property. Hundreds of pieces of equipment were cleaned, primarily of gang-related messages and 'tags.' †

Out of Chaos, Hope: Volunteer Disaster Assistance in New Orleans

Erin Malick

On January 13, Pilgrims Kyrie Dragoo and I [Erin Malick], and eight other young adults from three other DC-area Presbyterian churches ventured to New Orleans for a week of disaster assistance. The group stayed in a Presbyterian Disaster Assistance camp at a Presbyterian church in Luling, Louisiana, a short drive from downtown New Orleans. After worshipping at the host church on Sunday and touring the French Quarter, the group was ready for a week of service.

Our first assignment was to gut a flood-damaged home in the Gentilly neighborhood. The home had been cleared of all contents--furniture, appliances, personal items, carpeting, etc. The next step: strip the home to the studs and exterior walls so that it could be inspected for mold and readied for electrical and plumbing contractors. Armed with sledgehammers, pry bars, hammers, ladders, and wheelbarrows, the group spent two days tearing down mold-covered sheetrock walls and ceilings, scraping up rotted floor tiles, ripping out insulation, and yanking out nails.



Erin Malick guts storm damaged home

On Wednesday and Friday, we did gutting work in a home not far from the first. Thursday we helped to paint a Korean Presbyterian church in another part of New Orleans. It was miraculous to see how far the church had come in its restoration, largely because of one member, John, who is voluntarily serving as the general contractor. We were warned about John's desire for our paint job to be professional, but we were touched as he thanked us profusely for coming and told us that the church would not focus on any imperfections in the finished walls but on the love that had made them.

Upon arrival in the city, it was tempting to feel overwhelmed by the extent of the work that is still needed. And it was tempting to feel appalled and reluctant to touch anything in the moldy, cockroach-infested homes. But as the week wore on, we were more and more able to dive in, ripping one ceiling at a time, carting out one wheelbarrow at a time, getting one house at a time ready for the next steps.

[Editor's note: When she was a teenager, Erin's family home was badly damaged by fire. "We were so blessed," she says, "to have our community rush to our side with support of all kinds--clothing, food, money, emotional, and even helping us to gut our home." That experience motivated Erin to volunteer for her work-week in New Orleans.] †

Buffet Schedule, 2007

Buffet lunch is served in Fellowship Hall once a month following worship, usually on the 1st Sunday of the month. As Elder for Nurture, Nancy Daugherty coordinates the buffet schedule. Geographical clusters of members are assigned responsibility for preparing and serving each of the buffets. Below is the schedule for buffet in calendar year 2007. Persons whose names are bolded and asterisked are designated coordinators for their cluster, responsible for organizing the cluster for its assigned buffets.

Buffet Date	Buffet Team	Team Members
January 7th	Cluster A	Nancy Daugherty, Gigax Family, Karen Garrett, Henderson Family, Lenonard Family, Jeanne Mayer, Bill Moye, Betty Rudolph, Annie & Jon Schwendinger, Steve Van Zandt
February 11th	Cluster B	Mary Josie & Bruce Blanchard, Nikki Felix, Pat Goeldner, Jorgensen/Huebner Family, Krehbiel Family, Bonnie Coe-Noonan, Mary Lib Pate, Minas Roros
March 4th	Cluster C	Dave Balwanz, Michel Datsenko, Tamara Duggleby* , Mary Ester, Jocelyn McCarthy Ryan, Jerry McPike, Charles Van Gorder
April 1st	Cluster D	John Afedu, Mary Elizabeth Drabkin, Jeff Francisco, Tsehai Gemaneh, Carol Huls, Marilyn Lutter* , Joe McCall, Jeff Pittman & Melissa Rosenblatt, Mary Ellen Player, Jean Stewart
May 6th	Cluster E	Benton Family, Briggs Family, Helen Cope, Tari Gregory, Doris & Gerry Hendershot, Shera Collins Jenne, Tilton Family
June 3rd	Cluster F	Mitch Fulton, DeLania Hardy, Jonathan Mertz, Oosterveld-Bruce Family, Zack Wilks, Anne Womeldorf, Jack Womeldorf*
July 1st	Cluster G	Pat Schlueter, Barbara Sherrill* , Smith Family, Eugene Stossel, Wagner Family, Penny Sandora
August 5th	Cluster H	Steve Coxe, Charlotte Floyd, Goff-Glennon Family, Peggy Harwood, Roy & Susan Kim, Howard Kurtz & Howard Jaffee, Calva Leonard, Stan Lou, Seppela Family, Stacks Family, Jackie Smith, Shelly Ver Ploeg*
September 9th	Homecoming Sunday - Potluck	Congregation
October 7th	Cluster A	Nancy Daugherty, Gigax Family, Karen Garrett, Henderson Family, Lenonard Family, Jeanne Mayer, Bill Moye, Betty Rudolph, Annie & Jon Schwendinger, Steve Van Zandt
November 4th	Cluster B	Mary Josie & Bruce Blanchard, Nikki Felix, Pat Goeldner, Jorgensen/Huebner Family, Krehbiel Family, Bonnie Coe-Noonan, Mary Lib Pate, Minas Roros
December 2nd	Cluster C	Dave Balwanz, Michel Datsenko, Tamara Duggleby* , Mary Ester, Jocelyn McCarthy Ryan, Jerry McPike, Charles Van Gorder

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In Photos, Patients Explore Their World St. Elizabeth's Residents' Work Shown in Dupont Gallery

[This story is excerpted from an article by Paul Schwartzman, Washington Post Staff Writer, published on Thursday, February 1, 2007; Page DZ01]

The black-and-white photographs capture moments in the life of a psychiatric ward: a man vanishing through the door at the end of a long, drab hallway; a dark, empty gymnasium strafed by shafts of perforated sunlight; a winding black metal staircase that appears to lead nowhere.

The photographers know their subject well. They are residents of St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Southeast Washington, all of them sent there for committing crimes after being found not guilty by reason of insanity.

Kevin McCain, 50, has been a patient since 1976, filling his days with a routine of phone calls to his mother, classes and Alcoholics Anonymous



meetings. On Fridays, he gets to participate in something a bit different -- a photography workshop with five other residents and a volunteer who coordinates afternoons of taking pictures and talking about their work. "It gives me a chance to see pictures that are more pleasant," he said in a telephone interview.

A high point, McCain said, is when the group's photographs are exhibited, as they are until Feb. 9 at the *Church*

of the Pilgrims, 22nd and P streets NW, in Dupont Circle. Seeing their work on a wall, encased in handsome black frames, makes the patients feel proud and exhilarated. "It was like spring had sprung," McCain said.

Ed Washington, who recently retired as a St. Elizabeth's social worker, conceived of the program eight years ago as a way to encourage patients to forge relationships and exercise their imaginations. The 20 residents in the program are men who range in age from 30 to 60 and suffer from schizophrenia. Their crimes, he said, run the gamut, including attempted murder, attempted rape, arson and assault.

"Here's a group of people who really have talents and aspirations just like anyone else, and they need to be recognized," Washington said. "One of the best ways to open the doors is through engagement in the arts." †