



The Chimes

of Westminster Presbyterian Church

A newsletter of events and opportunities for the members of Westminster

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY SPECIAL OFFERING to be received Sunday, May 23

May 2010

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A \$15 donation to Habitat for Humanity will pay for a box of nails; \$40 will provide a gallon of paint; \$135 pays for one window, and \$470 purchases cabinets and countertops.

Habitat for Humanity volunteers work in partnership with God and people from all walks of life, to develop communities alongside people in need by building and renovating houses. In this way communities are improved, and all God's people can experience his love and can live and grow into all God intends.

Through a special offering on May 23, we have the opportunity to assist Habitat for Humanity. Please consider giving generously to this very worthwhile cause.

For more information, visit www.daytonhabitat.org.



Where Loving God and Neighbor Is Transforming Lives

Among Our People...



Sean and Erin Paquette, children of Cheryl and Greg Paquette, seem to have the "right stuff." **Sean**, a fourth-grader, as part of the U.S. Air Force Art Contest, submitted an entry which is on display at the USAF Museum. His entry will be recognized and judged on May 1. **Erin**, a freshman at the Dayton Regional STEM (Science Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) School, has an art project on display at the Robert & Elaine Stein Galleries on the campus of Wright State University. Her display is part of a "place setting." This project was made to represent her chosen topic: Matilda Dunbar, Paul L. Dunbar's mother. Erin's work has been put on display because her school mates voted her work as one of the best representations.

"I am Culture Works...are you?" is the slogan for this year's Culture Works fund raising campaign. Westminsterites, **Paul and Susie Weaver** are chairpersons for the campaign and their message is featured in the Spring 2010 issue of *The Living Arts*. There are also comments in the publication from member **Judy McCormick**.

On March 14 the Dayton chapter of Sigma Alpha Iota honored Westminster member **Gloria Pugh** as an honorary member and Friend of the Arts for her distinguished service as Director of Education for the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra. In addition to overseeing educational programs reaching over 70,000 area students, the award noted in particular the innovative and nationally recognized SPARK program (School Partners with Artists Reaching Kids) in which individual orchestra members and teachers at area schools work together to connect music directly to the general classroom curriculum.

Sigma Alpha Iota is an international music sorority that supports and encourages women musicians and innovative educational programs in music.

Kay Davis-Dudding, Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care, will be retiring on July 19 after 12 ½ years of ministry at Westminster. Details are coming soon on plans for celebrating Kay's care and loving dedication to our parishioners and their families.

On a different note, **Judy Hamilton**, Executive Assistant, has postponed her retirement, which was scheduled for June 25. A new retirement date has not been set.

Baptism

February 28, 2010

Reese Elizabeth Daniel
daughter of Michelle and Brad Daniel

Deaths

March 22, 2010

Elaine Groner

March 31, 2010

Mary Yingling

April 1, 2010

William "Bill" Cuthbertson

April 2, 2010

Thomas Coleman

April 14, 2010

Bruce Stevens

Did you know???

- **The Library has a new name: Resource Center.** The name has been changed to more accurately reflect the many forms of communication media that are available right here at Westminster. Stop by and check it out!
- It's not too late to donate a few **gently used books** for the children at our partner school, E.J. Brown Elementary. Just drop them off in the yellow "Fun Bus" near the Church Office. We will see that they get to the school.
- Fourteen youth and five adults attended the **Presbytery Spring Youth Retreat** at Kirkmont Center, April 9-11. The theme of the event was "Stories We Live By."
- Our **Youth Fellowship** group prepared and sent 48 care packages to Westminster young adults attending college.
- We sent another **112 hygiene kits to Church World Service/Presbyterian Disaster Assistance**, bringing the total number of kits sent from Westminster to over 300.

Local Mission “Done In a Day”



Saturday, May 22

Would you like to put your faith into action on a mission project, but don't have a lot of time? If so, join us on **Saturday, May 22**, for a “Done in a Day” (DID) project emphasizing local mission needs. **Interested individuals should meet in Fellowship Hall at 8:15 a.m.** After introductory comments and instructions, members head out to a local worksite. Everyone will work at a local agency from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon and then return to the church by 12:15 p.m. for lunch and the opportunity to share mission experiences with members from other worksites.

Participants are asked to contribute \$10.00 in advance (\$5.00 for a Westminster Presbyterian “Faith in Action” t-shirt and \$5.00 for the brown bag lunch which will be prepared for you). Money can be turned into the Church Office.

Confirmed worksites for the DID mission project include:

Daybreak – landscaping, possibly some indoor cleaning (all ages)

E.J. Brown – outdoor basketball court painting (all ages)

Habitat for Humanity – rehab project (older youth/adults)

The House of the People – indoor painting (all ages)

Linda Vista – cleaning out abandoned apartments (older youth/adults)

The Peace Museum – specific project TBD, probably landscaping (all ages)

Westminster – lunch preparation for workers (all ages)

YWCA – indoor painting (all ages)



Contact Becky Bower (434-8889 or rebekah.bower@wright.edu) with your name, contact information, t-shirt size, and worksite preference by Monday, May 17. Directions to each site and opportunities to carpool with other members will be provided.

Habitat Blitz Week Begins May 29

Volunteers needed to build a home



Calling all volunteers! We need your help to build a home for a needy family. This Habitat for Humanity build is sponsored by the **Catch the Building Spirit program and The Presbyterian Coalition**, a collaboration between Catholics and Presbyterians. The build will begin on Saturday, May 29, with a “blitz week” in which the major framing of the house will take place.

Presbyterians have been under-represented in recent years so we hope to reverse this trend. Sign up online to volunteer at: <http://daytonhabitat.volunteerhub.com/Events/Browse.aspx>

Go to Event Groups/ Catch the Building Spirit and choose a date to work. If you do not have internet access, contact the Dayton Habitat Volunteer Services Director, Jennifer Dean, at 937-586-0860, ext. 16. Encourage members of your Presby Group or Small Group to join you!

For more information about Westminster's involvement with Habitat for Humanity, contact Westminster members Jerry Shell (jtshell38@yahoo.com or 513-897-2882) or Karen Clute (karenclute@sbcglobal.net or 937-299-3308).



Parish

Youth Sunday, May 2

The youth of Westminster will lead worship on Sunday, May 2. The theme of the service is "Anatomy of Faith." This year the members of the youth fellowship groups have explored how they are a part of the body of Christ-the Church. They are looking forward to sharing with us how God has called each of us to use the bodies God gave us: our hearts, hands, feet and voices to serve God and neighbor. The Junior High Bell Choir (grades 7-8), Senior High Bell Choir (grades 9-12) and the Knox Choir (grades 7-12) will provide musical leadership for the service. Westminster's 2010 High School Graduates will be recognized during the service. Join us for worship and invite a friend or a family with youth who may be looking for a church home.

Church tour

Are you interested in finding your way around the church and learning more about the beautiful building? Stop by the Welcome Center at 11:20 a.m. on Sunday, May 2, after worship, for a brief tour that will conclude at 12:15 p.m.

Labyrinth open walk

Come walk the Labyrinth, noon-7:00 p.m., Tuesday, May 4, in Fellowship Hall. Invite a friend or two to come along for the walk. All are welcome.

Be a part of one of our Interest Groups

All Interest Groups are open to everyone and provide a great place to bring a guest or two or three! Singles, beginners and all walk-ins are welcome.

- Bell Choir Interest Group on Thursday, May 6, at 5:15 p.m., in Room 300
- Bridge Interest Group #1 on Tuesday, May 11, at 6:30 p.m., in Fellowship Hall
- Bridge Interest Group #2 on Monday, May 24, at 6:30 p.m., in the West Parlor

Softball

The Westminster co-ed softball team is re-forming and starts play the first week of May. Play is on Wednesday nights at 7:00 p.m. at the Rotary Park in Beavercreek. If you are interested in playing or need further information, please contact Dustin Payne (609-6074 or viruslqc@yahoo.com).

Membership recognition program adds new element

We have heard from some of you that you were members of Westminster in the past, relinquished your membership for varying reasons, and then became members of Westminster again. Does that sound like you? We want to recognize you for your total years as a member of our church. **June 6 is Membership Recognition Sunday.** Perhaps your total years of membership qualify you for special recognition! We will be happy to check your records. All you have to do is contact **Carol Porter** at the Church Office (223-7285 or carol@westminsterdayton.org) by May 21 to allow time for tracking your membership. After checking, Carol will inform you of your total years of membership.

Have you changed...

...your contact information? Did you forget to let us know? Please e-mail Carol@westminsterdayton.org with all changes so we can stay in touch!

From the Westminster Resource Center

Numerous biographies and autobiographies are available in the Resource Center (Sanctuary level, east side). In Ann Rice's autobiography *Called Out of Darkness*, she reveals her faith journey of leaving the church as a young woman only to return and live her faith again. Journalist David Oliver Relin tells Greg Mortenson's humanitarian efforts of building 55 schools--mostly for girls--in Pakistan and Afghanistan in the bestseller *Three Cups of Tea*. Some of the older, but still excellent, selections include Thea B. Van Halsema's biography of John Calvin, and Frederick Buechner's memoir, *The Sacred Journey*, which reflects on the key moments of the first half of his life.

Notes

Young Children's End-of-the-Year Picnic

Sunday, May 16, 12:30-3:00 p.m.

If you have a child up to age eight, your entire family is cordially invited to have a fun-filled glorious Sunday afternoon picnic at Orchardly Park in Oakwood with other church families. We'll do all the planning and will provide the food and beverages and tableware. All you have to do is bring your family (and maybe some lawn chairs) and be ready to relax, as well as share in some quality playtime. The park has great play equipment. RSVPs are appreciated. E-mail Katie Brennaman (katiebrennaman@yahoo.com), Elyn Thomas (elynthomas@gmail.com), or Laurie Davis (laurie@westminstedayton.org).



Music Notes



Knox Choir Music-Mission Trip

This summer the Knox Choir (grades 7-12) is looking forward to a tour of the Northeast. They plan to travel by charter bus, leaving Dayton on Tuesday, July 6, and returning on Thursday, July 15. During the trip the choir will do five concerts in small churches, participate in short blitz style mission projects, and explore local points of interest in Western and Northern New York, Maine, Boston, Connecticut and Philadelphia.

Watch your Sunday bulletin and the Web site for more information about the Bon Voyage Concert and Potluck Dessert.

Urban Nights is coming

Friday, May 14

Due to last year's great success, Westminster will participate again this year in *Urban Nights*, an evening event that runs from 5:00 to 10:00 p.m. The night features over 100 creative venues throughout downtown Dayton, the Oregon District and the Wright Dunbar Village that open their doors for public visitation.

Needed... Westminster volunteers to help showcase our beautiful church and important mission during this unique and well-attended downtown event. It is a lot of fun, so come join the fellowship!

Specifically, we need folks to assist with... church tours, the Welcome Center/Information Booth, entertainment, refreshments, decorations, or assisting shoppers at our Mission Arts and Crafts sale. Come, be a parking lot greeter, walk the Labyrinth, drive a church bus, snap some photographs, take charge of logistics, or sell Westminster Choir CDs. Have other ideas? Let us know!

Urban Nights Coordinating Team this year is led by Robin Feather. Joyce Ferguson is handling volunteer recruitment; Dennis Piermont and Vail McGuire are lining up the "main stage" entertainment in the Sanctuary; and Gloria Pugh is heading up the Mission Arts and Crafts sale that evening. Bring a buddy, or come as a family and volunteer for a two-hour shift to help roll out a warm, Westminster welcome, as we open our doors and our hearts to Dayton's *Urban Nights* folks.



Adult Education Opportunities

Let's Learn and Grow Together

Every Sunday

9:15 – 9:45 a.m.

Lectio Divina: Sunday Morning Meditation and Prayer

Room 206

This class experiences the ancient practice of “sacred reading” of the day’s scriptures, seeking a personal word from God through the biblical text. Experienced class members lead the group.

Now through May 23

11:20 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

What Do Buddhists Believe?

West Parlor

Leader: Dr. Sandy McConnel

The number of Buddhists in the world is estimated at between 230 million and 500 million, making it the world’s fourth-largest religion. This seminar will investigate Buddhism—its beliefs, practices and culture. Sandy McConnel will teach the class four of the six Sundays. Practicing Buddhists will be our guest teachers the other two Sundays.

The First to Follow Jesus

203-205

Leader: The Reverend Ray Merz

Twelve ordinary men changed the world. What did Jesus see in them to want them as disciples in a cruel world where he knew that their faith would be tested at every step? What does he see in us to call us to be disciples in these perilous times? Using a book written posthumously from the lectures John Claypool gave at the Chatauqua Institution, this six-week class taught by Rev. Ray Merz will explore the lives of the Twelve.

New School/Church Partnerships Form

Westminster’s model lays foundation

Churches and schools from around the country are utilizing the Westminster/E.J. Brown model to form their own school/church partnerships. After perusing our Web site (www.schoolchurchpartners.org) and contacting us for more information and guidance, churches have established the following collaborations the past three months:



- ◆ Oceanside, California: The Generation Church with one elementary school
- ◆ Peoria, Illinois:
 - ◇ Riverside Community Church with one elementary school
 - ◇ St. Paul Baptist Church with one elementary school
 - ◇ The Gospel Experience Church with one elementary school
- ◆ Rochester, Minnesota: Autumn Ridge Church with two elementary schools
- ◆ One more partnership is pending in Edmonton, Alberta

Thanks to everyone who has assisted in some way over the years to make our partnership with Van Cleve/E.J. Brown viable. Christians are nurturing thousands of children in Dayton and around the country due to your efforts. We are making a difference! What a great mission!

Canoe Float and Cookout is June 13

Don't get left on the dock—sign up now!



Enjoy a leisurely two-to-three hour Canoe Float on the nationally acclaimed, scenic Little Miami River, followed by a cookout dinner on **Sunday, June 13**. We will meet at 1:30 p.m. in the Bellbrook Canoe Livery parking lot, 3234 Washington Mill Road, Bellbrook, and depart by bus at 2:00 p.m. for the Narrows Park launch site. You will need cash (*no checks*), credit or debit cards to rent the canoe(s). You might also want to bring dry clothes and a snack or beverage for the trip down river.

After our relaxing Canoe Float, we will gather for a cookout and fellowship. Please bring your own meat /buns and a side dish to share with the group (salad, vegetable, or dessert). And don't forget your lawn chairs. The

Fellowship Committee is pleased to provide charcoal, beverages, condiments, as well as plates, cups and plastic ware.

With tummies full, we will watch the embers glow on the campfire. Then, as dusk settles in the valley and the river gurgles along, we'll enjoy the perfect end to a perfect day.

To reserve your spot for June 13, contact Fred Dudding (dudfl@msn.com or 294-2228). We need to know how many canoes you plan to rent at \$25 each, as well as how many of you plan to attend the cookout that follows the Canoe Float.



Kirkmont Center's 2010 Summer Camp Programs

Great Opportunities for Faith Formation and Fantastic Fun!

Why choose a church camp for your child? Most summer camps give children a memorable week of adventure, fun and exercise. At Kirkmont, children get all that, and something even more important. Mixed into the fun is the important dimension of faith formation as a primary goal of the program. **This year's theme is, "Be a Hero – Living Like Jesus."**

Every day, campers will hear a story of a biblical hero who followed God in a brave and amazing way. God's heroes act in ways big and small as they welcome, befriend, and include others, as they give, rejoice, and share the good news. Campers will learn that they can live like Jesus in simple ways, with everyday things, as ordinary people. Campers will leave camp ready to use their courage and faith to "Be a Hero" for God. Let this summer be the summer you give your children's spirits the gift of church camp.

The Westminster Presbyterian Women are offering ten, \$100 camperships to the first ten Westminster children registered for any of the week-long camps at Kirkmont this summer. The Reverend Laurie Davis will be volunteering as a counselor there from June 13-19, at the Music, Art, Discovery camp for Grades 3-8, and adults. During that same week two camps for younger children will also be in session: Beginners Camp, for Grades 1-4, from June 13-16; and Kids Kamp from June 17 – 19 for younger children to attend with a parent, grandparent or other adult. Becky Beasley, Chair of the Adult Ministry Team and Treasurer of Westminster Presbyterian Women, is Co-Directing the PYC Conference Music and Service camp for grades 7-12, from June 20-26 this year.

For registration forms and complete information visit the Web site: www.kirkmontcenter.com. If you have any questions, large or small, don't hesitate to call or e-mail Laurie Davis (laurie@westminsterdayton.org), Becky Beasley, or Julie Preisser.



Meet Our New Officers

The following members were elected at the Annual Meeting of our congregation on February 28, 2010, and will be ordained/installed on Pentecost, May 23.

ELDERS Class of 2013

Mel Gillespie and his wife Andrea are lifelong Presbyterians and were married in Pulaski Heights Presbyterian Church (Little Rock, Arkansas) in 1964. They joined Westminster in 1984. Their son, Andrew, grew up in the care of the Westminster youth groups and choirs. Mel and Andrea taught Junior High Sunday school classes. Mel became Deacon at Westminster in the early '90s. He served on various committees within Westminster including Adult Education, Evangelism, Fellowship, and a Pastor Nominating Committee. Mel and Andrea are members of the Omega Presby Group and charter members of Spectrum Presby Group. Mel is retired from the U.S. Air Force as a pilot and logistician and from Goodrich Corporation as an airline sales director.

Ande Han and her husband Dan joined Westminster shortly before they were married here in 2002. After visiting several churches in the Dayton area, Dan and Ande chose Westminster for its welcoming congregation, traditional service and youth programs. They have two children: Joey, age 6, and Adrianna, age 2, who were baptized at Westminster. Ande has served as a Deacon at Westminster, as a member of the Education and Practice committee, as a Sunday school teacher for young children and high school youth, and as a youth advisor. She has also traveled with two Westminster groups to visit our friends in Colombia. Ande is the educational technology coordinator at Miami University's Middletown campus and lives with her family and dog, Romeo, in Beaver Creek.

Mark McCloskey and his wife Kathy have been members of Westminster since 2000. Their children, Meghan and Bryan, are grown and live away from Dayton. Meghan, with son-in-law, Sean, live in Michigan. Bryan is a Second Lieutenant in the Army stationed in Fort Drum, New York. Mark and Kathy are members of the Phyllos Presby Group. Mark has been Chief Perfusionist with Premier Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgeons since 1987. Mark said, "Kathy and I visited Westminster on the recommendation of Andy and Helen Flanagan at a time when we were looking for a new church home. We were both taken by Sandy's sermons and that in a nutshell is why we are at Westminster."

Jennifer Vicarel and her husband David arrived in Dayton in 1994 and joined Westminster in the spring of 1995. Jennifer was drawn to this congregation by the wonderful music program and by the children's education opportunities for their soon-to-be-three children: Megan, Daniel, and Jonathan. Jennifer began singing in the Westminster Choir before she and David joined the church and continues to love it. She has taught and volunteered in the children's education and fellowship programs as her children have grown. She enjoys participation in a small group, in Westminster Presbyterian Women, and in a Presby Group with her husband. Jennifer has served as a Deacon and, at the presbytery level, participates in the Colombian Partnership Network and in Westminster's sister relationship with Primera Iglesia in Barranquilla, Colombia. Jennifer feels that Westminster has truly provided her family with a church home and a church family.

DEACONS Class of 2013

Rogers Butana was born in Rwanda and grew up in neighboring Uganda. He has lived in Dayton since 2006. Back home he has three siblings: two brothers and a sister. Rogers has a BA degree in Public Relations and currently is pursuing a master's degree in business administration at Urbana University. Rogers said, "I look forward to becoming a Deacon because I want to assist the spiritual leaders of my church and the congregation."

Bridget Kay Gladden was born in Palatine, Illinois, on March 19, 1994. She is the daughter of Robert and Jorja Gladden. Her baptism took place in The First United Methodist Church of Palatine. She attended the church until the Gladden family moved to Beaver Creek in 2004. The Gladden family chose Westminster as their church home where Bridget was confirmed just last year. Bridget is an active

member of the youth group, choir, and bells. She is on the Presbyterian Youth Council for Westminster and Kirkmont as well as the Education and Practice Committee as a youth representative. When she is not at church, Bridget is a leader in the Beavercreek Marching Band. Bridget says, "It is both an honor and a joy to be nominated for the Board of Deacons."

Wayne Spalding and his wife Marilyn were married at Hartwell Presbyterian Church in Cincinnati in 1964. Wayne graduated from the University of Cincinnati and later obtained his master's degree from the University of Dayton. They have a son, Keith, and daughter, Cynthia, and three grandchildren. Wayne and Marilyn have been involved in small groups and are currently active in the ETA Presby group. After spending 19 years at NCR, Wayne enjoyed a career in sales and marketing with an Atlanta-based company. He retired last year and currently stays active with business consulting. Wayne and Marilyn enjoy their lake home and boating with friends and family at Lake Cumberland, Kentucky.

Erin Staub has been a member of Westminster for over 10 years. She and her husband Steve were married here in 1999. Erin and both of their children, Madeline (7) and Amelia (4), were baptized at Westminster. The children are active in the choir and worship programs. Before starting a family, Erin and Steve were active in a small group. More recently, they have volunteered as teachers in the pre-school program, served as sponsors for new members, and helped on the clean-up crew for various church events. Erin graduated from Miami University and has enjoyed a variety of roles in her 15 years at Standard Register where she is currently a Senior Marketing Manager. Her community involvement includes serving on the board for CASA GAL of Miami County, a non-profit organization helping abused and neglected children, and volunteering at her children's schools. Her interests include spending quality time with her family, cooking and traveling.

Gardener

by Ann North



Some of the seeds of hope
Planted tentatively in the fall
Have not come up
They lie stillborn and unrealized
Somewhere in the spring soil
Decaying.

The strongest and best ones
Pushed up through leaves
And layers of cold, hard resistance
Right into clear blue air
And stand there nakedly green
Breathing.

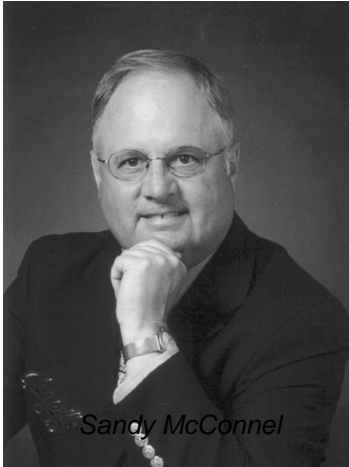
It's always that way with growing things
Never knowing at the start
Which will make it and which will fail
But the thing to hold fast to
Never to lose faith in
Is simply
Sowing.

Peacemaking: The Believer's Calling

7. Peace Be With You

by The Reverend Dr. George H. McConnell

As preached on Easter Sunday, April 4, 2010



Sandy McConnell

Luke 24:13-36

“Peace be with you,” I didn’t hear those words of comfort from Jesus that first Easter day, neither did you. Come to think of it, I didn’t visit the empty tomb that first Easter morning. I didn’t talk with the gardener. I didn’t walk to Emmaus with Cleopas, neither did you. So my question this morning—nearly 2,000 Easters after the first one—is this: “How can we, those of us who have not seen the risen Lord, how can we come to know him? How

can we experience for ourselves the presence of Christ, the peace of Christ?”

Let’s begin to answer that important question by looking at our Easter narrative again. Luke tells us that there’s been some heavy stuff going on. The disciples are overcome by the action-packed week they have just experienced. They are confused and fearful. Their leader has been murdered, and they have not acquitted themselves too nobly in the surrounding tumult. If that weren’t enough to cope with, now there are confusing rumors afoot that their executed leader has risen from the dead.

It’s all a little too much, so two of the disciples decide to take a hike to Emmaus, get out of town for a while and let things cool down. Suddenly the two are aware of footsteps. A stranger catches up to them on the road, a stranger with a face like all faces. He is, of course, the risen Christ, the bright morning star of God’s new day, but in the dimness of their discouragement, they cannot recognize him.

If we jump ahead to the end of the story, however, by the time they have reached Emmaus, their hearts are burning with faith and they are joyfully rushing back to Jerusalem singing the Easter hymn, “The Lord has risen indeed!” Easter has moved from a fearful ripple on the far side of hope, to an exciting reality.

What happened? How did the great and sweeping truth of Easter become real on the road to Emmaus? The crucial clue is found—as crucial clues often are—at the end of the story when they return to Jerusalem. “Then they told what had happened on the road,” Luke narrates, “and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of bread.” (Luke 24:35)

Easter is revealed on the road ... and in the breaking of bread. The first readers of Luke would have smiled at this reminder that Easter became real on the road, for they knew about the road. The “road” was a symbol for them

of the whole Christian life, of the path of mission laid out before them. In fact, these early Christians were called, by friends and enemies alike, “the Way.” In other words, they were nicknamed “people of the road.” (see Acts 9:2.)

The risen Christ became alive to them on the road to Emmaus that first Easter. However, if we truly understand, the truth here is that the resurrection comes alive to us as the church travels down the “Way,” down the road of mission, putting one foot in front of another as it walks every day along the way of obedience to the gospel. The risen Christ becomes real as we work for peace within our families, seek reconciliation in all of our relationships, visit those who are sick, comfort those who are distressed, welcome the stranger, teach the faith to our children, speak the good news to those who do not know it, whisper encouragement to those who doubt, provide food for the hungry, and do the thousands of everyday acts of obedience that make up the Christian life. It is here along “the road” that the risen Lord comes to meet us.

In his book, *The Spiritual Life of Children*, Robert Coles writes about Ginny, a young girl from a poor family who is bright, articulate, imaginative, and has a keenly developed spirituality. Ginny recounts, for example, that her uncle, who was wounded in Vietnam, is still nervous and upset, prone to frequent crying, and she wonders how God must have felt during the violence of that war. “If my uncle cries now,” she reflects, “God must have cried, too. He must have wept. Don’t you think?”

One day, Ginny was walking home and along the way encountered an elderly woman who seemed lost and confused. Ginny asked the woman if she needed help, and the woman, with relief, responded, “If you could, that would be wonderful.” Ginny discovered that the woman had been walking to visit her daughter, but had gotten disoriented. She showed Ginny the written directions she had, and Ginny knew immediately where she had gotten lost and where she needed to go. Although Ginny was now late for her home chores, she sensed that getting this troubled stranger safely to her destination was the chore she most needed to be doing. So she traveled with her, talked gently to her, listened to her as the woman spoke of the pain in her life, and guided her to her daughter’s house.

When they arrived and Ginny started to leave, the woman grasped her arm and announced that God had sent Ginny to her and that later she would pray a prayer of thanks to God for having Ginny there. The woman then gave Ginny a kiss.

On the way home, Ginny wondered - wondered what it would be like to be old, wondered if she were old and in need, if God would send some kid like her to help. “Maybe God puts you here,” Ginny thought, “and ... gives you these hints of what’s ahead, and you should pay

attention to them, because that's him speaking to you."

There on the "road," as a little girl helped a stranger in need, performing the chore she knew most needed to be done, the presence of God came alive.

But, it was not *just* "on the road" that the Emmaus event happened; it was also "in the breaking of bread." The first readers of Luke would have smiled at that, too, for they also knew about "the breaking of bread." This was their way of speaking of worship, especially the Lord's Supper. Indeed, as they read again and again this Emmaus Road story, they would have been amazed to see glimmers of their Sunday worship woven into the narrative: the creed (Luke 24:19-24), the sermon (Luke 24:27), and the Eucharist (Luke 24:30), are all there. When one knows how to look, one can see the Emmaus story as a narrative version of Luke's Sunday bulletin! In sum, Easter becomes alive in worship.

A woman spoke quietly of the death of her father. He had been a proud man, she said, a man who spent all his work days tilling the soil of a Pennsylvania farm and all his Sabbaths praising God for life and seed and family. A final bout with cancer sent him to the hospital never to come home again, and in the last week of his life the disease provided the added indignity of a stroke that robbed him of his speech. As his family visited his bedside, his eyes would moisten with frustration and grief as he tried in vain to speak to these people he loved so dearly. On his last day alive, the attending physician had issued the signal, the family had gathered in his room—the daughter and her two brothers. With strength fading, the father motioned to his son that he wanted a glass of water. The son hastened to the sink and returned with a full water glass, which he held toward his father's lips. But, the old man pushed the glass away and moved his finger from the glass toward his son, as if to say, "You drink it."

Hesitant and uncertain, the son lifted the glass to his lips and drank from it. Then the father motioned toward his daughter, indicating that she should drink some, too.

Sensing what his father wanted, the son passed the glass to his sister, and she drank. Now the father, pointed toward the other son, and the daughter realized what was happening. "He is serving communion," she gasped.

There in the face of death, this father summoned a sacramental water glass to administer the feast of life. There in a wordless act of worship, the promise of the resurrection came home.

On the road and in the place of worship, the great parabola of grace touches the near edge of life, and the Easter message comes alive to us.

Well, that's the story of the walk to Emmaus. I imagine though, some of you are saying, "It is a wonderful story; but is it true?" I don't know if it is true in every detail. By the time Luke was writing his Gospel, belief in the resurrection of Jesus was already at the center of the Church's message. I do not hear Luke's story as a kind of newspaper account of yesterday's events. (Maybe you do, and that's fine.) I hear it as more of a summary of the experience of the early church: despair followed by encounters with Jesus leading to confidence that Jesus walks with us - *confidence that Jesus can be seen or experienced on the road and in worship*.

But, you persist, is the story true? It may be literally true. I certainly don't want to dispute it. I want to tell you. *It is true in the best way of all*. Not just in the sense of "Once upon a time." But, true in that it can be your story, here and now. That's what Easter is all about, you know. We didn't come here today to commemorate the fact that 2000 years ago a few of his disciples met Jesus after he had died. We came here to celebrate the reality of the living Christ. We came to let Christ convert and renew *us* as he did them. "Jesus Christ is risen *today*," we sing.

What Georges Braque once said about art is also true of Easter: "The only thing that matters is the part that can't be explained." *How* it happens, I do not begin to know. *That* it happens, I have not the slightest doubt.

Let us pray:

Blessed Jesus, Risen Christ,

be with us

our morning guest,

our evening rest.

Give us eyes to see,

minds to know,

and hearts to receive

your undying love,

your unfailing strength,

this Easter day and forever more. Amen.

