

news

WEST END COLLEGIATE CHURCH

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New York, New York
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NEWSLETTER **for April, A.D. 2009**

QUOTE FOR THE MONTH

“All I have seen teaches me to trust the Creator for all I have not seen.” — *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

CONSISTORY

The full Consistory will meet on Monday, April 6 at 6:00 p.m. at the Marble Collegiate Church.

The local Consistory will meet on Tuesday, April 21 at 6:45 p.m.

ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

In April, we will continue Bibliodramatic study of the life of Jesus as presented in the Gospel of Mark. How does this gospel present Jesus' thoughts about his life, his work, and his society? We welcome back John Snodgrass (dramatist, songwriter, and UTS seminarian) to continue his leadership of the discussion.

Upon completion of the series, we will begin a series on "Visions of Faith, Visions of Church." Our first class, on April 19, will feature a lecture given by Dr. Serene Jones, President of Union Theological Seminary, on the Reformed tradition. Dr. Jones gave this lecture as part of a series at Union on "Christianity's Response to the Deepening U.S. Crisis," and a videotaped version of it is available to us. Her presentation is illuminating and thoughtful about the deepest elements of our faith tradition. Please join us in Room 25.

SERVICE PROGRAMS

Tuesdays - SUPPER CENTER for the hungry and homeless

4:00 p.m. – Bible Study

4:30 p.m. – Supper

Saturdays - SATURDAY CENTER for the mentally and

emotionally healing

12 Noon to 3:00 p.m.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

Will God save Easter? Blood is not just a fluid that keeps the body alive just out of sight beneath the skin. In the Bible blood is a metaphor for God-given life. And death. “The Bible presents physical life as the creation of God; who alone has the source of life, and man [*sic*] has no independent right to shed blood and take life” (F.J. Taylor quoted in Alan Richardson, *Theological Dictionary of the Bible*, Macmillan: 1950, p. 34). Further, “the greatest offering [is] the *giving* of life or blood, the greatest crime to take blood or life, the greatest penalty to have one’s life or blood taken and blood or life being the only adequate atonement for blood or life which man [*sic*] cannot give [because] his own life is already forfeit and he has nothing which is not God’s to give” (ibid.). (Wow, see how scholars wrote 60 years ago!!) Put simply, sacrifice means making holy (sanctifying) the spilling of lifeblood either to glorify God or to condemn the unsanctified slaughter of living creatures.

What Jesus did as “Son of God” (viewing all creation as “the global village” and the holy family as the First Family) was to give his lifeblood by faithfulness to God [the “Father”]. What humans did was to reject that gift and brutally kill the man in whom the Spirit of God was fully alive. God rejected humanity’s rejection by wiping out death as “the final solution.”

What hundreds of years of theology and practice have done is to glorify sacrifice, *i.e.*, slaughter, and call it righteous and just, when over and over it turns out be manipulative, political, unrelentingly lethal. Yet take the relatively few who remain steadfast to a better way of being alive whatever the cost to themselves in terms of scorn, rejection, humiliation, even death. They are the Easter people, not because they are killed, but because they are alive in an exceptional way. The way of faith. Their deaths affirmed the life they believed in. Their lives destroyed the power we have given to death. If God saves Easter from superficiality and “gets under our skin” to the currents of vitality that flow within us, we people of faith will also find faith and life and love renewed in the way of Jesus.

A joyous Easter to all—it’s God’s will, I believe with all my heart. — *Pastor Robert*

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Food for Thought fellowship will meet on Sunday, April 26th following worship to discuss "Worship: A Clue to Meaning in Life." Please join us in Room 25 as we reflect on our personal worship experience and what makes worship authentic and meaningful in our lives. We will be listening to selections from a broadcast by Christian apologist Ravi Zacharias. For more information email April Fisher at jandofish@embarqmail.com.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

Congratulations to **Christophe Pascal Edward Huguenin**, who graduated from Harvard University in January!

LOOKING AHEAD...

The West End Lectures will complete this season's series with Imam Muhammad Ashafa and Pastor James Wuye on May 14, 2009 from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

SAVE THE DATE: Saturday, May 16th (time: TBD) for a Spring Concert by **Tim Mathis** at *Don't Tell Mama* 343 West 46th Street -Restaurant Row - New York City. For reservations and information call: 212-757-0788. 100% of the cover charge will benefit the West End Collegiate Church's Gulf Coast Relief Fund. With this fund we will help send the church's kids to New Orleans and Mississippi to continue rebuilding this devastated area. In August approximately twenty youths and adults will travel to the Gulf for ten days to help where they can. Please join us to support Tim for this important fund-raiser.

West End Collegiate Church is planning a **Lay Service** for Sunday, May 31st, and the Worship Committee is eager for volunteers. Participants are needed for each aspect of the service, from the Call to the Worship to the Readings to the Prayers and more. If you are interested in being part of the service, call or email the church office at 212-787-1566 or churchoffice@westendchurch.org or speak to a member of the Worship Committee: Ken Chase, Julia Turner, Clarice Graham, Sharon Sherrard, or Christa Scott-Reed.

COME ONE, COME ALL

THE 2009 WARWICK RETREAT

West End Collegiate Church's Annual Retreat will take place the weekend of June 12, 13, and 14. We will return to Warwick Conference Center in Warwick, New York. This is a wonderful event when our whole Church Family takes some time away from the city for relaxation and reflection and has a whole lot of FUN. We have programs for adults and children, so come if you are single, come if you are a couple and/or come with the whole family! The facilities are modern (private bath, A/C, etc.) - but in a beautiful setting with lovely woods for hikes and nature walks. There is a pool for fun and playground equipment for the kids. There are plenty of peaceful corners for reading, prayer or quiet conversations. The fee this year will be \$225 per adult (18 and up) and \$25 per child (4 to 17 years old - under 4 years old is free). This includes two nights' lodging and five meals. There are scholarships for those who need them, and transportation is available. If you are a regular - come on back. If you have never come - please consider joining us!

EASTER MEMORIAL FLOWERS

This year, in recognition of the increased need at our Tuesday Supper Center, part of the collection for our Easter Flowers will be used to fund one week's meal. The beautiful display in the sanctuary which inspires us and is given in memory and honor of our loved ones will be maintained. However, we will scale back a bit to offer support in food for our neighbors who increasingly need our help for basic necessities of life. We are currently feeding an average of 130 people per week - up from an average of 90 people per week during the past years.

SANCTUARY FLOWERS

There are several opportunities in the next two months to donate the flowers that decorate our sanctuary during Sunday worship. Available Sundays include April 26 and May 3, 10 and 17. We ask a contribution of \$50.00. If you would like to give flowers in celebration of an event or in memory of loved ones, please sign up on the sheet at the back table, or call Karen at the church office, 787-1566.

THE BOOK CLUB

The West End Collegiate Church Book Club will meet on Friday, April 17, at 7:00 p.m. in The Gorsuch House, 306 West 77th Street. We will discuss *The Young Man* by Irish author Brendan O'Carroll. Because April is National Poetry Month, please bring a poem that you would like to share. If you have questions, email Kay Uysterlinde at uysterlinde@hotmail.com or call 212-787-1285.

CRIME VICTIMS' CANDLELIGHT VIGIL

In recognition of National Crime Victims' Rights Week, West End Collegiate Church will again host New York City's Annual Crime Victims' Candlelight Vigil on Sunday, April 26 from 2:00 to 4:00. This event is sponsored by the New York State Office of the Attorney General and the Downstate Coalition for Crime Victims.

Each year this Vigil brings hundreds of people from throughout our city to fill our beautiful sanctuary with their moving and uplifting testimony for social justice and praise for the strength of our human spirit.

Please join our brothers and sisters for this moving and very special ceremony. Childcare is available during the service, and refreshments will be served after the Vigil.

INTERSECTIONS UPCOMING EVENT

On Thursday, May 14, from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. Imam Muhammad Ashafa and Pastor James Wuye will speak as part of The West End Lecture Series at West End Collegiate Church presented by Intersections.

www.intersectionsinternational.org.

A MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER OF MUSIC

Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Easter Music at West End Collegiate Church

Easter is on its way — the hope of resurrection is palpable as we prepare to emerge from these powerful days of Lenten preparation.

Palm Sunday features anthems by the choir and traditional hymns “All Glory, Laud and Honor”, “Ride On in Majesty”, and of course, “The Palms”. You’re all invited to sing that great chestnut with the choir!

It is written that Jesus and his disciples sang a hymn at the Last Supper. We hope to see you at the **Maundy Thursday** Communion service, April 9 at 7:00 p.m. which reenacts the Last Supper, with music led by the full choir. Hymns and anthems are interspersed throughout this liturgy, which concludes with a service of Tenebrae, or Shadows, with special music and Taizé chants for choir and congregation.

Good Friday will offer contemplative music at the 12:00 Noon service, provided by the Quartet.

And, of course, amidst the magnificent floral decorations and scent of Easter lilies the choirs are preparing special music for **Easter Day**, April 12 at 11:00 a.m. The Adult Choir will offer anthems, one by Gwyneth Walker, “A Hymn of Resurrection” for choir, brass, and tympani, and a setting of “The Strife is O’er, the Battle Done” by Upper West Side composer Bruce Saylor, also for choir, organ and brass. The Children’s Choir, conducted by Timothy Mathis, will sing “Hodie” by Nathalie Sleeth.

See you in church,
Cynthia Powell

APRIL SERVICE THEMES

April 05 11:00 a.m.	PALM/PASSION SUNDAY Palm Walk at 10:30 a.m. The Lord’s Supper Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29; Philippians 2:5-11; John 12:12-16 Message: “Glory in Light of Suffering”
April 08 8:00 a.m.	WEDNESDAY MORNING COMMUNION
April 09 7:00 p.m.	MAUNDY THURSDAY Foot Washing; Communion; Tenebrae Exodus 12:1-14; Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19; I Corinthians 11:23-26; John 13:1-17, 31b-35
April 10 12:00 Noon	GOOD FRIDAY Isaiah 52:13-53:12; Psalm 22; Hebrews 10:16-25; John 18:1-19:42
April 12 11:00 a.m.	EASTER Acts 10:34-43; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24; I Corinthians 15:1-11; Mark 16:1-8 Message: “Alive Without Fear”
April 19 11:00 a.m.	THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER Sacrament of Baptism and Covenant of Membership Acts 4:32-35; Psalm 133; I John 1:1-2:2; John 20:19-31 Message: “Alive With Faith”
April 26 11:00 a.m.	THE THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER Guest Preacher: The Reverend Stephen Pierce Acts 3:12-19; Psalm 4; I John 3:1-7; Luke 24:36b-48.

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