

## ENewsNotes



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Time for breathlessness to take a break at CCC. Time for a breather. A Thanksgiving breather. Time to simply sit and give thanks. And if giving thanks is too hard right now, try to simply sit a spell. Thanks may come, and if not, well, then you can sit and breathe. That, at least, is something.

Twelve-steppers I know express their spirituality in simple, direct ways. When they hit a wall, and find their addiction more present than usual, they count their gratitudes. "I'm grateful I got up this morning." "I'm grateful I'm clean right now." "I'm grateful to be here." Mighty stripped down, these gratitudes. Very humble. Glad I'm here, glad I'm alive, glad for this moment. That's it. Not at all presumptuous. In fact, they seem hugely vulnerable to me, these gratitudes. They say, in their own way, that fragility comes with the flesh, uncertainty comes with the times, and inclusivity in the community is no sure thing. Simple truths. Sometimes, simple truths are hard truths, hard enough to break us. Our bodies, our circumstances, our relationships fail us, or we fail them. Gratitude? For what? Who hasn't said: Thanks for nothing. At other times, our bodies, our circumstances, our relationships sustain us, surprise us, surpass our expectations. Gratitude? Absolutely! Who hasn't said: Thanks for everything.

We may find nothing worthy of wonder this Thanksgiving; then again, we may wonder at our amazing worth. We may grumble at so much to eat, or at too little to eat, or marvel at the abundance of a humble table, or the extravagance of a bountiful one. All flesh is grass, it does indeed wither and fade. Vanities do indeed abound, countless bonfires of them light the darkness of our power-shadowed times. And too, there are those who dance with a lightness, who are jill- and jack-o-lantern lit up from within by a luminous delight in a word, the Word, hospitable to a degree miraculous to behold and impossible to describe, that never yields, never imposes, always welcomes, always forgives, and loves, loves, loves. My gratitude? My gratitude is for the love you all (ya'll) have showered on me in my brief tenure here. CCC is gloriously, exasperatingly, ineffably, curiously, unflinchingly, all "which is yes." I give thanks for you.

*Rev. Richard Thayer*

## New Executive Assistant Joins CCC Staff

Aileen Hilliard joined CCC's staff on November 2 as the Executive Assistant. Although Executive Assistant is a new title for CCC, Aileen's duties will largely continue the jobs performed by Ruth Avery and Susan Gray as Office Manager and Support Administrator, respectively.

As one task during her interim ministry, the Rev. Susan Henderson encouraged the Personnel Committee to consider the advantages to CCC of an executive assistant position. Susan believes the Senior Minister of a multi-staff church needs administrative support with a direct reporting line. Although the Executive Assistant will support all of the staff, work closely with the Church Administrator and support lay leadership, she reports directly to the Senior Minister and functions as his primary support.

Aileen brings a wealth of administrative and executive assistant experience to CCC. During the past 12 years, she has worked for small law firms and solo practitioners. In these positions, she interacted with a wide variety of clients and professionals; produced all types of documents under tight deadlines; managed correspondence, calendars, and cases; and prioritized among competing tasks. In addition, Aileen served from 2006-2009 as the volunteer Social Director for a Montgomery County Single Parents group, as well as being Editor of their monthly newsletter. Her references describe her as dependable, intelligent, focused, calm, efficient, thorough and pleasant.

Aileen was selected after a competitive search process. The Search Committee reviewed and rated 57 resumes on the basis of an objective set of job-related criteria. Out of eleven candidates invited to interview, five accepted. Three of those candidates were brought in for conversations with the Rev. Richard Thayer and Dianne Abraham, Church Administrator. Susan Gray administered a writing assignment to draft a thank-you letter from the Senior Minister to a visitor who sent CCC a donation. Richard, Dianne and Susan submitted their responses to meeting the candidates. On the basis of all these factors, the committee recommended Aileen for hiring to the Board of Trustees, which voted to extend her an offer.

Through the end of December, Susan Gray will remain on the staff to orient Aileen to the church and to her duties. Aileen and her daughter, Kara, live in Woodmoor and Kara attends Montgomery Blair High School. In her spare time, Aileen enjoys the outdoors, reading, live music events, and hiking. Aileen currently is in the office from 9 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., Monday-Friday. Please stop by to introduce yourself and welcome her to CCC.

## **New Office Hours Effective Nov. 15**

On Monday, November 15, CCC's weekday office hours will be shortened from 40 hours per week to 27.5 hours per week. The decision was driven by two factors. First, CCC's budget, approved by the congregation at the Annual Meeting, funded the Executive Assistant position at 25 hours per week rather than the 30 hours in recent years. Second, volunteer coverage is only sufficient to staff the office three afternoons a week.

Since Ruth Avery's retirement, the office has not had a full-time staff person. Office Manager Susan Gray was working 30 hours per week, with Wednesday, her day off, staffed by volunteers - this arrangement allowed the office to be open from 9-5, Monday-Friday. With the change to the Executive Assistant position, the Trustees asked that the new Executive Assistant, Aileen Hilliard, work five days a week, five hours per day,

leaving 15 hours a week to be staffed by volunteers if the office were to remain open from 9-5, Monday-Friday.

Aileen will be in the office every day from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. with a half-hour break for lunch. We currently have volunteers covering 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. However, these volunteers have other commitments and will not always be able to be in the office, so please be aware that the office will NOT be open after 2:30 p.m. on Mondays and Fridays, and that coverage after 2:30 p.m. on other days is not guaranteed.

When CCC's *Share in the Future* campaign is successful, the Trustees want to restore the Executive Assistant position to 30 hours a week to support the new Senior Minister.

Other building coverage - evenings and weekends - remains unaffected.

**Material for Sunday's bulletin, including announcements and flower dedications, must be received in the church office by Tuesday afternoon in order to be published the following Sunday.**

Persons interested in volunteering in and for the church office should contact Aileen Hilliard at [cccoffice@cccsilverspring.org](mailto:cccoffice@cccsilverspring.org) or 301-585-8010.

#### **Weekday Office Hours (New!!!!)**

Monday Through Friday - 9 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

**Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday - 9 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
As Allowed by Volunteer Staffing**

### *Zeitoun* Inspires Book Group Donation

Inspired by the true story of one man's courage and commitment to living out his faith's teachings, CCC's Book Group donated \$200.00 to the Zeitoun Foundation. The Foundation's purpose is to aid in the rebuilding of New Orleans and to promote respect for human rights in the United States and around the world.

A well-researched and detailed chronicle of the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina's affect on the city of New Orleans, *Zeitoun* by Dave Eggers recounts the complex motives of those who stayed behind; the tensions between the civil authorities and the citizens whose lives and property they were detailed to protect; and the breakdown of our democracy's basic tenets of law and justice in the name of maintaining civil order.

Through the eyes and hearts of one Muslim American family, headed by a Syrian immigrant, Abdulrahman Zeitoun, and his American-born wife, Kathy, readers are drawn into an experience that chronicles the best ideals and optimism of Zeitoun's adopted country as well as its depths of prejudice and brutality. The evolution of this family's story from tragedy and despair into cautious optimism and hope is an epic of faith, love, and courage that all Americans can find inspiring.

*Jackie Walters, for the CCC Book Group*

## Schedule for Advent and Christmas 2010

*God's Word comes, Christ is born into a real-life context of sin, alienation, and death. The angel of the Lord is already saying to us, "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people."*

### **November 28 First Sunday of Advent - The Candle of Hope** **Candle Lighters: Church Founders**

- 9:00 AM **Adult Education**-Contemporary Theology-Conference Rm  
**Service of Community and Sacrament**  
Childcare for infants and toddlers
- 10:30 AM **Service of Worship**  
Childcare for infants and toddler/two-year-olds  
Church School for 3 year olds through 8<sup>th</sup> graders
- 11:45 AM **Advent Wreath Workshop and Soup Lunch** - in the Social Hall - Join us in the Social Hall to make an advent wreath to use at home throughout the advent season.  
**Youth Groups will not meet tonight.**

### **December 4**

- 10:00 AM **SERRV Bazaar and Bake Sale** - Conference Room and Upstairs Lobby - The bake sale is sponsored by the senior high youth to raise money for a CCC futures share

### **December 5 The Second Sunday of Advent - The Candle of Love** **Sabbath Sunday** **Candle Lighters: Shawn Neidorf and Mark Athitakis**

- 9:00 AM **Adult Education**-Contemporary Theology-Conference Rm  
**Adult Education** - Sabbath as a Faith Practice - Room 206  
**Service of Community and Sacrament**  
Childcare for infants and toddlers
- 10:30 AM **Service of Worship** - Communion  
Childcare for infants and toddler/two-year-olds  
Church School for Lambs, 3, 4 and pre-K 5 year olds  
Communion activity for K- 5<sup>th</sup> graders
- 5:30 PM **Youth Groups**

**Annual Mitten Tree and Coat Collection** Mittens, gloves, hats, scarves and coats will be collected from Sunday December 5 until Sunday December 19 for the children and families of Broad Acres Elementary School and White Oak Middle School. Thank you for your generosity of new and gently used winter clothing.

### **December 8**

- 2:00 PM **Senior Adults Christmas Tea** in the Social Hall

### **December 12 The Third Sunday of Advent - The Candle of Joy** **Candle Lighters: Summer Camp Staff and Campers**

- 9:00 AM **Adult Education** - Contemporary Theology - Conference Room  
**Service of Community and Sacrament**  
Childcare for infants and toddlers
- 10:30 AM **Service of Worship**

Childcare for infants and toddler/two-year-olds  
Church School for 3 year olds - 8<sup>th</sup> graders  
11:45 AM **Fair Trade Coffee Sale and SERRV Sale**  
5:30 PM **Youth Groups**

**December 19 The Fourth Sunday of Advent - The Candle of Peace**  
**Candle Lighters: Board of Social Witness**

9:00 AM **Service of Worship**  
Music in this service will feature the Chancel Choir and Orchestra in familiar Christmas carols with an intergenerational focus. The Chapel (Children's) Choir will sing at this service.  
Childcare for infants and toddlers  
11:00 AM **Service of Worship**  
The Chancel Choir, soloists and Orchestra will present *Magnificat* by John Rutter.  
Childcare for infants and toddlers  
There will be no Church School or Adult Education Classes this morning.  
**Youth Groups will not meet tonight.**

**December 24 Christmas Eve**

5:00 PM **Intergenerational Christmas Eve Service**  
(No infant or childcare - all babies and children are welcome.)  
9:00 PM **Service of Lessons and Carols**  
(No infant or childcare)  
**Reception following 9 PM service.**

**December 26 The First Sunday After Christmas**

10:30 AM **Service of Worship**  
Childcare for infants and toddlers  
There will be no 9:00 AM service of worship and no church school.  
**Youth groups will not meet tonight.**

**December 27** The church office will be closed.

**January 2 The Second Sunday After Christmas**

10:30 AM **Service of Worship - Communion**  
Childcare for infants and toddlers  
There will be no 9:00 AM service of worship and no church school.  
**Youth groups will not meet tonight.**

## Advent Wreath Workshop

Board for Church Life will host our annual advent wreath workshop on Sunday November 28, the first Sunday of Advent. The workshop will take place in the Social Hall, immediately following our 10:30 worship. We appreciate your donations of **greens** - please bring them to the Social Hall stage on the day of the event. As a reminder, you may want to bring garden gloves and clippers. Last but not least, this workshop includes our traditional potluck soup fest - *please bring soup (or dessert) for all to share.*

## Annual Men's Christmas Toast

Don't miss the annual Men's Christmas Toast - Tuesday, December 14 at 7:30 PM at the Royal Mile Pub in Wheaton. Call Bruce Strand for details.

## CE and Youth Ministries Moving Forward

Many CCCers are building on the ministry of Kristen Curlee, maintaining and growing our active CE and youth program. Stephanie Peterson and Jim Stedman provide weekly email information for all CE teachers. Carolyn Hoskinson continues the monthly communion program. Youth groups gather for food, worship, and activities most Sunday evenings. Faith Practices, Our Whole Lives, and Seasons of the Spirit are the three curricula for spiritual formation of our youth and children, who are being taught by more CCCers than room allows to name. Room does allow for thanks: Thank You all for feeding the spirits of our children and youth.

### Contact Information

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Executive Assistant

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