

The Highlands

The Church in the Highlands

Volume 1 Issue 2

October 2009



A HUGE THANK YOU

to everyone who helped with our Tag Sale! Your contributions ensured an enormously successful fundraiser. As of today our total is \$5,721. We have posted the remaining furniture on craigslist and hope to exceed our \$6000 goal! Bravo!!

Inside this issue:

Lifeline screenings	2
From the Pastor's desk	3
Westchester senior law day	4
Community and World Service	5
Spotlight on our members	6
Congratulations to our softball team	7
Calendar	8

A Blessing of the Animals

October 18, 10:00 a.m.

Bring your furry friends! Everyone Welcome!

Join us at The Church in the Highlands for a very special family worship service. Bring your dog, your cat, your fish, your ferret, your gerbil or guinea pig, your horse, your lizard and any other creature of God's that you love! We will celebrate the unconditional love they bring to our lives, thank God for their friendship and ask a special blessing for each of them. We will gather outside on the church lawn, weather permitting. If your pet does not appreciate a crowd, please call Melanie and she will come to your home to bless your pet.

World Communion Sunday—October 4th

Join us on October 4th for a special communion service. The Rev. Carter Via, founder and executive director of *Cross Cultural Thresholds* will join us and share the work being done in Kenya. Come and hear about The Green Belt Movement's tree planting & the Drug Fighters' school construction project in Kibera, the slum outside of Nairobi. He will invite us to join the adventure, summer 2010. Come learn how you can help! visit www.crossculturalthresholds.org

BIBLE STUDY - TWO OPTIONS!

New This Fall! Tuesday Evening Bible Study, 7:30-8:30.

Evenings don't work? Join our ongoing Tuesday morning session at 10:00!

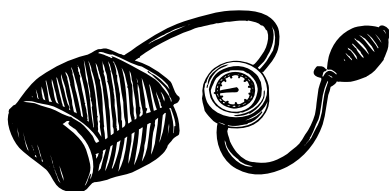
We will explore the exciting study, The Bible Workbench. One of the texts from the Revised Common Lectionary is chosen each week. The study begins with a discussion of what is happening in the biblical text. The focus then shifts to how this story is happening in the world around us. Finally the questions turn toward how the story is an event in the lives of the people in the group. The journey through the text seeks life-giving questions that wait to be lived. We hope you'll join us!

CHURCH LEAGUE COOKBOOK

The church league needs your recipes for their community garden companion cookbook. They are accepting “green” all natural, seasonal and organic recipes.

LIFE LINE SCREENINGS

The Church in the Highlands is pleased to offer a preventive health event. Life Line Screening Radiology, the nation’s leading provider of community-based preventive health screenings, will support their affordable, non-invasive, painless health screenings on October 29, 2009 from 9.00a.m.-5.00 p.m. Five screenings will be offered. Register for a Wellness Package with Heart Rhythm. All five screenings take 60-90 minutes to complete. Your Health is in Your Hands, so call 1-888-653-6441 for more information or to register for this event.



HARVEST FESTIVAL

Mark your calendars to volunteer at the HARVEST FESTIVAL - Sat. Nov 21 - featuring a pancake breakfast and bake sale!

PUB THEOLOGY

Melanie has been enjoying ecumenical community organizing with St. Bartholomew’s Episcopal Church! The most imaginative project has been Pub Theology.

Join us Wednesday, October 7, 7 PM at The Lazy Boy Saloon, 154 Mamaroneck Avenue, White Plains, as we seek an intelligent and intelligible way of talking about the transcendent over a pint of beer.

All friends of God’s creation are welcome to participate in the conversation.

FROM THE PASTOR’S DESK

Living with Fear

People react to fear, not love—they don’t teach that in Sunday School, but it’s true.

-Richard M. Nixon (1913–94), U.S. Republican politician, president.

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear: for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love.

-1John 4:18

I used to be terribly afraid of the dark. I don’t just mean a little uncomfortable. I mean paralyzing fear. I must have been about eight or nine years old when bedtime became a struggle. Dad would tuck me into bed each night, we would say our prayers, several times, and then he would leave my bedroom, go downstairs and I would remain motionless until I found sleep. Those motionless minutes

were eternities. I can't explain what I was afraid of or maybe I just don't remember. I do remember the fear, though; I'll never forget it.

I don't fear much now. I'm not afraid of spiders or bugs, I'm not afraid of the past or the future and I am not afraid of the dark anymore. One thing I do fear is dying in a car accident. I imagine it being a very unfriendly way to die; the cold hard metal meeting soft flesh. And yet, I get into my car everyday, happily turn up the radio and drive, much too quickly, to work and play. The fear of dying at high speeds doesn't prevent me from crawling in my car.

I once heard a man suggest we should listen to our fear. He said that fear is useful. For example, he said, studies show that most women who had been assaulted were fearful before they were in actual danger. If they had listened to their fear, if they had allowed their fear to influence their behavior, many assaults might have been avoided. Instead of trying to talk yourself out of being afraid, realize that you may be more intuitive than you think. Trust your instincts and listen to our fear.

There have been times I've listened to my fear. I went hiking on the Appalachian Trail with my dog a few years ago. A hike like I'd done so many other Saturdays. But that day was different. About a half of a mile into the woods I began to feel very uncomfortable. I couldn't shake the feeling and I couldn't imagine why it was there. I sat down on a rock and tried to figure out my bizarre feelings. After about three minutes of quiet, I realized the effect was opposite of what I had anticipated. I was feeling more and more anxious with each passing minute. I quickly stood up, turned around and headed out of the woods. My car was in a park and so I decided to hike around the lake, there, where the path was highly populated. I'll never know what caused my fear. I'll never know if there was something

real to that fear. But I know I did the right thing. I returned to the trail the next week and have hiked regularly since, with no fear, no anxiety.

For many folks fear is a daily reality. For some of us only a memory, like my fear of the dark. Having just passed the September 11th anniversary many of us remember that paralyzing fear of eight years ago. A fear that cannot be so easily relieved or ignored. A fear that wakes us at night, and pulls us down the hall to watch our children sleeping.

While our fears are real and must be acknowledged, we must also acknowledge how our fears have been politicized and caused us to lose sight of our best selves. The fear of swine flu. The fear of our dark skinned brothers and sisters. The fear of losing "good" healthcare. And in the midst of it all, Jesus' words are more meaningful than ever, "Fear not. I have come that you might have life and have it more abundantly." Our challenge is to embrace the life and the circumstances we have been given and to let no fear inhibit us from living and loving, laughing and sharing. May the peace of God be real to each of us in the coming months.

Peace,
Melanie



AN EVENING OF MUSIC

Dr. Mareda Graves, soloist and Warren George Wilson at the Steinway piano. When: Saturday October 24th at 8.00 p.m. in the Merkin Concert Hall at Kaufman Center, Goodman House, 129 West 67th Street, New York City. Tickets \$25 (students and seniors \$20) call 212-501-3330 or online www.kaufman-center.org

VIEWS FROM THE PEWS

Every Sunday and Thursday evening you may see Views From the Pews at 7:00 p.m. on cable channel 76 and on FIOS channel 45.

FROM THE ALTAR GUILD

If you would like to order flowers to beautify the sanctuary for a particular Sunday, please call our Altar Guild chair, Debbie Oleson at (914) 328-8453.

SUBMIT AN ARTICLE TO THE HIGHLANDS

Send or e-mail (info@churchinhighlands.org) your article to the church office marked "For Highlands." Be sure to include your name and phone number. Any articles submitted after the 15th of the month will appear in the next issue of the Highlands.

WESTCHESTER SENIOR LAW DAY

Legal and financial experts will give free advice on topics ranging from elder law to wills vs. trusts, smart gifting to children and grandchildren and age discrimination in the workplace at the 10th annual Senior law day in Westchester on October 15th.

The program will take place at the Westchester County Center in White Plains from 9.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. and is open to seniors, adult children, caregivers and professionals who work with mature adults.

Pre-registration is required for the workshops and pro bono sessions by Oct. 6. Call (914) 813-6400 to sign up. Individuals who enroll in the pro bono sessions must also confirm their reservations on the day of the event.

A continental breakfast and parking will be free.



COMMUNITY AND WORLD SERVICE

Our meeting was held on September 6th.

We are now beginning to distribute the money allotted us. Many organizations look for donations. With some, however, all that is needed is to guide them to the proper resources. For that, we have looked to Lorraine Buonocunto for her experience and knowledge.

We did not discuss this but if anyone in our congregation knows of someone or some family that is in need of help, please let me know and it will be discussed by members of the board.

Other news:

The church has received information from the Bereavement Center of Westchester. This Center offers a variety of support programs to members of our community who have experienced a death in their lives. More information on support groups and when they meet can be found on the bulletin board.

Westchester Medical Center. When one becomes a volunteer, one does not know who one will meet, what new information one will acquire and how this could impact one's life or career in the future. Volunteers provide an important and often invaluable service to their community. At WMC, there are many opportunities to become involved: Offer support to newly admitted patients. Help with communication between families and clinical staff during stressful times. Help with clerical responsibilities.

If you would like to learn more, contact Carol Forrest at 914-493-7850 or at www.worldclassmedicine.com/volunteers.

On March 7th, the Affordable Housing EXPO 2009 was held at the Westchester County Center. Homeseekers attended the seminars

and gained information about becoming successful homeowners.

Since 2006, Westchester Residential Opportunities (WRO) has received over 300 inquiries, successfully completed more than 25 home modifications with 11 projects under construction. Homeowners and renters may qualify for grants up to \$25,000 to assist with certain modifications to their structures. For those who meet the restrictions, the grant is free. For more info: www.wroinc.org

Foster Care Network is looking for people to become foster parents. They would like our help to recruit qualified, loving families who have room in their homes and hearts. For more information, call 1-800-454-3727 or visit www.fostercarenetwork.org

NURSERY SCHOOL

We would like to extend a huge thank you to Tony Casinelli and Rafael Carpio for their hard work to get the nursery school rooms ready for our new year. We have fully refurbished the three year old room, including new furniture, paint and flooring. Our parents are happy with the new look. Additionally, we have purchased new toys to update the old ones that have served us so well. Our walls have been updated and the old photographs have been placed into an online scrapbook for former parents and students to enjoy. Our new website should be up and running very soon!

We have new teachers this year: Maureen (Mimi) Amodio is assisting in the 2 year old class, replacing Joanie Bivas who will now be assisting full time in the office. Sharon Watson will work with the Inclusion class in the afternoons. A BIG congratulations goes to Allyson Dougherty, who is our new site coordinator and replaces Gerri Friedman.

Thanks to all of our friends at the Highlands, and particularly the R.E. Board for their support. We look forward to a wonderful school year.

Amy O'Donnell, Director

SPOTLIGHT ON OUR MEMBERS

In 1963, black civil rights activists just couldn't get a break on local TV in Jackson, Mississippi. WLBT, run by local whites, refused to provide fair coverage of black leaders and growing civil unrest. Martin Luther King asked Rev. Everett Parker if the United Church of Christ could help break through the media whiteout, and Parker's response changed history. After organizing local residents to monitor WLBT broadcasts and document their biased coverage, Parker charged the station owners with misusing the public airwaves. The FCC at first showed no interest. But after a protracted court battle, Parker and the UCC won, establishing for the first time that the public has standing to demand fair treatment from broadcasters. The racist station owners lost their license in 1969. The UCC's [Office of Communication](#) remains deeply involved in issues of media empowerment and social justice.

Reclaim the Media is honoring some of its [media heroes](#) by publishing a deck of trading cards recognizing the accomplishments of twenty-one praiseworthy journalists, media activists, and educators.

The honored media heroes include historical figures such as legendary anti-lynching reporter Ida B. Wells, Newspaper Guild founder Heywood Broun, and Elias Boudinot, founder/editor of the first Native American newspaper, the Cherokee Phoenix. Also recognized are contemporary media movers and shakers, including intrepid PBS producer Bill Moyers, Paper Tiger TV co-founder DeeDee Halleck, Puerto Rican community activist Richie Pérez, and others. Organizations or collaborations singled out for hero status include news program Democracy Now!, media watch group FAIR, and the Children's Television Workshop, creators of Sesame

Street.

RTM executive director Jonathan Lawson said of the cards: "We're proud to honor just a small handful of our heroes - media activists, journalists and teachers who have worked passionately and creatively to promote justice and civic engagement. We hope that these educational cards will inspire more people to follow the examples of our heroes – expanding critical conversations about journalism, and ensuring the health of media that supports democratic values and communications rights."

Each 'Media Heroes' card features original artwork by Seattle artist Michael Leavitt and a brief biographical profile. The cards, set to make a national debut this week at the National Conference on Media Reform in Minneapolis, are also available as a deck from [Reclaim the Media's website](#) www.reclaimthedia.org. The website also invites visitors to submit their own media heroes. Source: reclaimthedia.org.



COMMUNITY GARDEN

If you haven't seen our community garden yet, be sure to come take a look! We have been selling the produce on Sundays after worship services. Thanks to all who have purchased so far!

**IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS
& EMAIL ADDRESSES**

Pastor — Melanie Miller

(914) 428-4215 (home)

(914) 671-5390 (cell)

mmiller@churchinhighlands.org

Moderator — Tony Casinelli

(914) 997-1506

Vice Moderator — Gary Vaughan

(914) 328-0687

Treasurer — Veda Szkolar

(914) 682-4728

Director of Music — Dr. Robert A. Chase

(914) 946-8126

Altar Guild — Debbie Oleson

(914) 328-8453

Church Office

(914) 949-2023

Church Office Fax —

(914) 686-2816

Church e-mail —

Info@churchinhighlands.org

Web Site — www.churchinhighlands.org

www.churchinhighlands.com

Early Childhood Center (Nursery School) —

Amy O'Donnell

(914) 946-6132

Ecc@churchinhighlands.org

**CONGRATULATIONS TO THE
DISCIPLES OF JOBU SOFTBALL TEAM**

Congratulations to the Highlands/St. Bart's Softball Team, The Disciples of Jobu for placing 2nd in the White Plains Industrial Co-ed B league!

A Note from Wendy Busch: Many thanks to all the FAITHFUL fans. You were all wonderful to support the team throughout the season. There's nothing like a cheering section! A huge thanks to Bill, aka Coach, aka Gump, for his great idea to put together a co-ed team to play in league and for his boundless optimism, energy, and efforts in bringing the great idea to fruition. ... the real payoff was the camaraderie. A rag-tag group from here and there thrown together with the end result of new friendships, and a lot of fun (most of the time) on the field and off.

Kudos, Disciples of Jobu, for a job well done and a great season!

**A HEARTFELT THANK YOU TO THE
CONGREGATION**

My heartfelt thanks to the members of the church for their cards, phone calls and prayers during this past summer when I was so sick. Between my church family and my biological family, I was truly blessed, but three months away from Sunday services was much too long. I am very glad to be back with my friends once more. From Marty Lent

**CHOIR REHEARSAL
NOTE THE CHANGE IN TIME**

The choir will begin meeting every Sunday at 9.00 a.m. instead of 8.30 a.m. We invite all who would like to share their talents to join us. From Bob Chase.

The Church in the Highlands
United Church of Christ—Congregational
35 Bryant Avenue
White Plains NY 10605-1692
Phone: 914-949-2023
Fax: 914-686-2816
E-mail: info@churchinhighlands.com

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 300
WHITE PLAINS N.Y

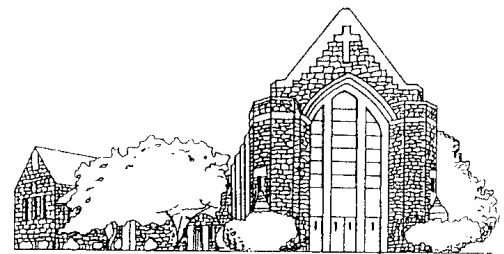
www.churchinhighlands.com

This publication:

— Editorial, Financial Contributions,
Address Changes, Comments &
Suggestions —

Rev. Melanie Miller
The Church in the Highlands
35 Bryant Avenue

Follow us on Twitter



CABLE TV

"Views From the Pews"

A stimulating TV program shown
Sunday and Thursday evenings at
7.00 p.m. on cable channel TV 76 and
on FIOS channel 45

Westchester County HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING DAYS

Drop off your household waste that cannot be set out for curbside collection or recycling.

Fall Drop Off Dates:

Sept. 12 (Saturday) 9am to 3pm County Recycling Center, Yonkers

October 16 (Friday) 1 to 3pm **October 17** (Saturday) 9am to 3pm Croton Point Park, Croton-on-Hudson

Nov. 6 (Friday) 1 to 3pm **Nov. 7** (Saturday) 9am to 3pm Playland Park, Rye

Nov. 20 (Friday) 1 to 3pm **Nov. 21** (Saturday) 9am to 3pm Glen Island Park, New Rochelle

What's Accepted:

Properly labeled household chemicals, including:

Most Automotive Fluids – antifreeze, brake fluid, gasoline

Flammable Liquids – kerosene, butane, charcoal fluid,
turpentine

Metal, Jewelry & Furniture Polishes, Wood Preservatives

Pesticides, Insecticides, Herbicides

Photographic & Swimming Pool Chemicals

Other Items, including:

Fluorescent Light Bulbs

Fire Extinguishers

Propane Tanks (2, 5, 10 & 20 lb.)

Batteries - Auto, Alkaline, Rechargeable & Button Cell

Cell Phones

Car Tires (maximum 10)

Mercury Thermometers and Thermostats

E-WASTE – Computer monitors, TV's, computer towers, accessories, printers, faxes, phones, cell phones and small appliances, i.e. toasters, blenders, radios, stereos, speakers, lamps

White Waste – washers, dryers, freezers, stoves, refrigerators

Air Conditioners

Expired or Unused Pharmaceuticals – Both prescription and over the counter

Plastic Grocery Bags – Bring in 20 bags or more and get a free reusable shopping bag – while supplies last.



The Mobile Shredder will be available for residents only. Bring your personal papers to be shredded on-the-spot at no charge.

QUESTIONS?

Call the Household Recycling Info Line 211
or visit www.westchestergov.com/recycling