

MARCH 2010

WITNESS

OPEN HEARTS

OPEN MINDS

OPEN DOORS

“Well, I’ll be a monkey’s uncle!”

“So God created humankind² in God’s own image, in the image of God was the human being created; male and female God created them.”

Genesis 1:27, An Inclusive-Language Lectionary

According to multiple sources on the Internet, this phrase originated after Darwin published his work *On the Origin of Species*. Although the phrase is largely unused in current vernacular, Darwin’s work still forms the basis for much of our understanding of the evolution of living things. It is an accepted scientific “theory,” meaning it has been proven to predict correctly the evolution of particular living organisms through experimentation by countless biologists and other scientists over the past century. The fact that it is a “theory” in no way diminishes its significance. After all, we use many scientific theories as the basis for important decisions every day. The “theory” of gravity comes to mind as an example. We don’t understand much about gravity, but the theory of gravity provides a means for making decisions on issues as far ranging as the design of spacecraft to the pitch of a roof.

So, why talk about it in a church newsletter? For reasons defying understanding, Christians throughout the United States (this is largely an issue only in the United States) have decided that Darwin’s theory of evolution is a repudiation of God. The argument seems to go that, if you accept Darwin, you reject the faith belief that God creates us all.

I acknowledge that this is not a controversial issue at West Nashville, but I have been a participant in the Clergy Letter Project for several years. The project is a consortium of pastors who do not believe the Bible was meant to be viewed as a science text. It sponsors an event called Evolution Weekend where churches across the country seek to educate their congregations and the public on issues of science and faith.

Evolution weekend this year coincided with transfiguration Sunday. I did not desire to use that day for this purpose. We at West Nashville will observe Evolution Sunday March 14. My sermon will deal with the controversy in hopes that, if other Christians challenge you about your beliefs, we will have a chance to think through some of those issues as a congregation. In addition, if you have specific questions regarding this or any other faith issue, I invite you to give me a call, drop me an e-mail or see me in my office to discuss it. Peace and Grace.

The Rev. Dennis Meaker



WATCH FOR

AARP Tax Aid:



Saturdays
in March
and early
April: 9 to
noon

West

Nashville Farmers

Market: Begins in May



U.S. Census Bureau

Hiring: 1 PM on Tuesdays

Youth Works: Sending
youth teams to West
Nashville this summer

Love Feast: March 7

Church Ladies: March
21, 6-8:30 PM

Palm Sunday: March 28

Good Friday Service:
April 2, 7 PM

Easter Sunday: April 4

Volunteers Needed

Contact Sherry at
sdcothran@gmail.com
to help with

Thursday night meal

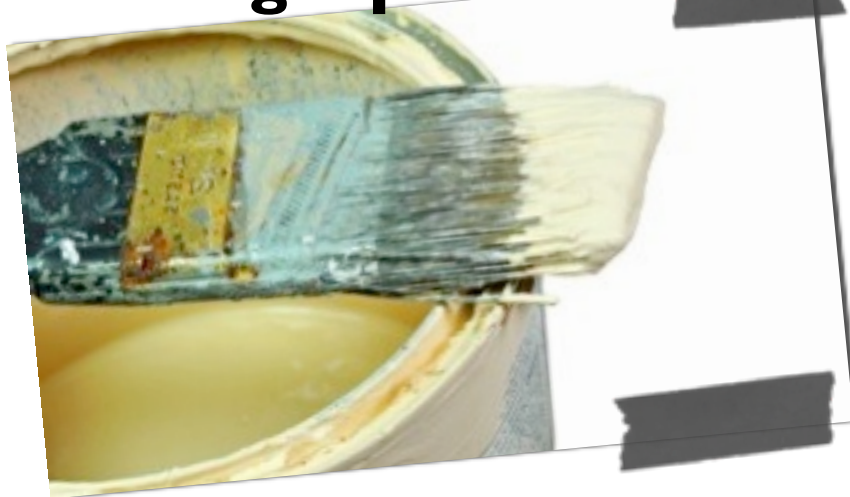
Energy — adults or children

Host/Hostess for Tax Aid

Love Feast setup and cleanup

Childcare for Monday night

Building Updates



Thank you for your patience as we underwent an **office renovation**. Our phone system was temporarily down, so if you tried to contact the office and did not receive a response, we apologize. Everything is back online now, and we invite you to stop by and check out the office. Many thanks to everyone who helped with the moving and renovations. Many hands made for lighter work.

From Harry McMackin: “We replaced the **windows** in the side classroom late last summer. The cost was around \$2,000. The new windows are insulated. It appears we will recoup the \$2,000 in one year, possibly one heating season. For all the bitter cold before Jan. 11, when the meter was read, the usage is far below the usual December–January period. That, along with future air conditioner savings will pay for the windows.”

Van Burgess, member of Boy Scout Troop 87, chose a project at West Nashville UMC for his Eagle Scout project. He, along with members of his family and Troop 87, constructed a **closet in the choir room** where music equipment can be stored securely. In addition to this, they rebuilt and replanted the **Peace Pole**. This was a memorial gift given to West Nashville UMC nearly 20 years ago. The pole is planted by the sidewalk leading to the church office entrance. Thanks to David Norton for coordinating the work with Van. Thanks to Van for his good work!

Thanks, Phil Schmutz, for getting our **dishwasher** up and running. We have a wonderful industrial dishwasher in our kitchen now. It has enabled us to reduce drastically our use of paper goods, helping the environment and our bottom line. If you have not visited our kitchen lately, stop by on Wednesday or Thursday nights. Lots of great food is coming from there with Chef Jonathon and the Good Food crew. Our **food pantry** also underwent a wonderful reorganization. Thanks to all of our community volunteers who continue to make these meals a success.

Watch for more in coming weeks! Look for more improvements in the coming months, including a **facelift for Memorial Hall**.

Community News

AARP Tax Aid will continue through mid-April each Saturday from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. This tax service is free to the community, and clients are served as they arrive. We need people to bring pastries around 9 a.m. Please e-mail Sherry (sdcothran@gmail.com) if you can or sign up on Sunday mornings. A signup sheet is in the narthex.

The **West Nashville Community Coalition** met Feb. 17 to hear a presentation from the Metro Nashville Gang Unit. The 21 people present included metro police and representatives from Sylvan Heights, Sylvan Park and RUN neighborhood associations. Our councilman, Jason Holleman, also stopped by. We discussed plans to begin a Richland Park merchants association. We also discussed community projects for youth groups over the summer.

The **West Nashville Farmers Market** will resume in May in Richland Park, across from the church. Local organic farmers and merchants will sell food. It is always a beautiful day at the farmer's market from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and a great place to meet our neighbors.

The **U.S. Census Bureau** has been using our church facility on Tuesday afternoons to conduct interviews for jobs for the upcoming census. If you know of anyone needing employment, this is a great temporary job. They are here at 1 p.m. on Tuesdays; anyone can apply.

Youth Works

Youth Works chose our church as a mission site to host youth groups from all over the United States for six weeks this summer. Ministries With Young People at the General Board of Discipleship is collaborating this year with Youth Works to host these United Methodist-specific work camps. Teens work with United Methodist churches that partner with community organizations and experience how the church and the community work together.

Youth groups will participate in several community projects in west Nashville: community gardens at local schools, canvassing for neighborhood organizations, graffiti cleanup, working with "at risk" children through the Global Education summer camp and many other projects.

The goal is to help youth take ideas back to their communities about how church and community organizations can work together to address crime, poverty, hunger and other issues.

The youth groups will spend time in various Nashville communities from 9 to 3, Monday through Thursday, beginning in late June and continuing through mid-August. They also will help with our VBS. They will stay downtown at McKendree UMC and have special guest speakers in the evening, along with a guided debriefing about their experience. What a wonderful opportunity! We are so happy to be a part of this.

March Birthdays

4 Bradford Norton
5 Eimy Lara
7 Kathy Chiavola
14 Jim Osborn
31 Michael Cover

Prayer Concerns

- Joan Berg, Barbara Dunlap-Berg's mother
- Mary Ellen Carney, daughter of Helen Dozier
- Myriam Cortes' mother Gloria Cardona
- Helen Dozier
- Danny Flanagan's grandfather, Jack Hudak
- Angela Flanagan's friend, Ginny
- Brown and Elwanda Gray
- Gloria Gutierrez
- Dot Hendrickson
- Robert Hendrickson
- Diana Hynson
- Cherrie Hall
- Mabel Allene Jackson
- Carlos Lara
- Mary McWright
- Family of Ruth McGinnis
- Dennis Meaker's sister Nancy
- Angel Mendes
- Faye Parker's friend Pam
- Phil Schmutz
- Helen Sellers
- Annie Laura Wells, grandmother to Angela Flanagan
- The People of Haiti & Those Giving Aid
- Sympathy to family of Jake Gibbs

Hispanic Ministries

Couples Event

Two couples from our Hispanic ministry celebrated Friday, Feb. 12, the "Night for Couples and the Children's Sleepover" in Clarksville. It was held at New Providence UMC. The adults attended the celebration and brought their children to the sleepover event. We had four additional adults from WNUMC helping with children.

We all had a great time. The children had so much fun. Parents enjoyed a candlelight dinner, watched the movie "Fire Proof," and spent the night at a nearby hotel. The following morning, parents

went to pick up their children and stayed for about two hours playing with them at the church's gym.

These couples asked for the movie to be shown to other couples they know. We started the Bible Study for the same "Fire Proof" movie on February 19.

We hope that when we complete the six-week Bible study, we can host a similar event in Nashville for other couples to have the same quality experience.

This was another "connectional" joint effort. This time was with New Providence UMC Hispanic Ministry (just starting).

Piano Lessons for Kids

Our own Glenna Osborn has started teaching piano lessons on Wednesdays to three of our kids. (One of them prefers singing instead, but so far is taking the piano lessons.) They are José Salas (Francis' son), Lesly Segovia (Blasa's daughter), and Eimy Lara (Carla's daughter). If anyone else is interested, please contact Laura or Glenna.

Welcome to Sean Siple

Sean, our newest WNUMC member, and his wife Carol live near Joelton, and Sean is the proprietor of Good Food for Good People, one of our community partners. Carol is also around quite a bit, helping with food on Wednesday and Thursday nights. Carol is a member at St. Ann's just down the street and a good friend of WNUMC.

Faith Formation at West Nashville

Energy (Wednesday Night program and Community Meal)

We have been inviting our larger West Nashville community to come and participate in our Wednesday night meal and programs. We have had some new faces joining us lately and Chef Jonathon and Good Food for Good People have been helping us out with great food. Soon we will begin our spring children's curriculum called "Spark," story-based activities including art, crafts, music, games, and drama. In addition, Randy Horick has been teaching an adult class. Beginning in March, we will offer a new adult class to build community cohesion and involvement. Guest teachers will include Sherry Cothran Woolsey, Randy Horick, Sean Siple, and others.

The Rev. Dennis Meaker will lead a Lenten Bible Study each Wednesday at 7 p.m. (following the meal for Energy). Lent has always been a time for Christians to devote themselves to spiritual disciplines. You are invited to be a part of intentional study.

Come and join us. Our meal is served from 6 to 7, and our programs run from 7 to 8:15. A great way to regenerate in the middle of the week!

Sunday School

Sunday School is an important opportunity for spiritual growth and development. For those involved in Sunday school, there is time for fellowship, Bible study, discussion and prayer. Our classes are as follows:

Children – for children of all ages
Spanish-Language Adult – meeting in the Gothard Room

English-Language Youth and Adult – meeting in Memorial Hall

Sunday school begins at 9:30. All are welcome.

Church Ladies

Church Ladies Meetin' will be Sunday, March 21, 2010, from 6 to 8:30 p.m. in Memorial Hall. We will share a meal, enjoy fellowship, study and pray. All women of all ages are invited.