

COMMUNIQUE

June 2011



The Newsletter of
Westminster Presbyterian Church,
Lancaster, Pennsylvania

Westminster Welcomes Refugee Family

By Elder Jim O'Connor



Sue Reh surprised everyone by reading his greeting in English.

On Sunday, April 10, one hundred Westminster members and friends held a dinner in honor of a family that had traveled thousands of miles to come to Lancaster. It was the official welcome to Westminster's refugee family. Much had taken

place during the previous months to make such a wonderful evening possible.

A group of Westminster members had been meeting for about three months to prepare for the arrival of our first refugee family. Janet Reedy volunteered to be the coordinator of the several dozen volunteers. The group was just beginning to be organized and just grasping the magnitude of responsibility when the staff at Church World Services asked if we would be ready to host a Burmese family that was to arrive in Lancaster within four weeks. After an initial shock, the group all agreed it was time to step out and trust the Lord's leading in this. The next couple of weeks would bring a whirlwind of activity.

Pete Alecxih, Jr., offered an apartment but said it needed a lot of work before it would be ready. Many Westminster people pitched in over the next couple of weeks to clean, repair, and paint the three-bedroom apartment. Pete's carpenter, Shaun McDonald, put in a kitchen and replacement windows and generally made sure that the "do-it-yourselfers" didn't get into too much trouble. New floors were installed and carpet on the stairs. Greg Groff installed ceiling fans in three of the rooms. Many donated beds, couches, chairs, lamps, and other furnishings to turn the apartment into a home. Pictures were hung, the kitchen was set up, the yard cleaned up, grass and a forsythia bush planted. The apartment was transformed. Even Pete was impressed!

Sue Reh and his family—wife Kee Meh, daughters Nga Meh (18) and Soe Meh (7), one son Peh Bue (3) and one grandson

Pae Bue (2½, son of Nga Meh)—arrived at the Lancaster Airport on a very chilly evening on the last day of March. They were greeted by several Westminster people with balloons, smiles, and coats! Sue Reh's niece, who has been living in Lancaster for about eighteen months, was a welcomed face to the family and acted as translator. The family was tired and somewhat dazed, but seemed happy to have arrived in America.

Their experience is very common to the many Burmese refugees who have settled in Lancaster. They fled Myanmar (formerly Burma) on foot to escape the repressive regime, crossed the border into Thailand, and were in a refugee camp for about fifteen years. Their dream was to emigrate to a western country where they would be free and could start a new life.

So it was with real joy that the Westminster family held the dinner. The highlight of the event was when Sue Reh expressed his thanks to our church in English (ten days previous to this he knew no English!) in a statement which Jim Casler (a new Westminster attendee and a certified ESL instructor) had helped him write.

Please pray for the family and for those that will be helping them in their transition. The most pressing need is for the family to learn English, and for Sue Reh to find a job.** Pray as well for Nga Meh, whose second child was born on May 9. Check the missions bulletin board for updates, including things the family may need and for specific prayer requests.



A new little American: meet James Victor

** Update: Sue Reh got a job at Tyson's.

Elizabeth Marsch, Joshua Ormerod Join Youth Ministry as Summer Interns

By Troy DeBruin

Westminster's Youth Ministry is pleased to announce that Elizabeth Marsch and Joshua Ormerod have joined our Youth Ministry team as the summer interns. As such, Elizabeth and Joshua will work alongside Youth Assistant Anna Slothower, Youth Pastor Troy DeBruin, and the volunteer youth staff in leading Bible studies, teaching Sunday school, coordinating youth activities, and building relationships with our students, focusing mainly on the Junior High Ministry.

The purpose of Westminster's summer internship program is to use and train college students who may be considering full-time ministry. The internship helps students gain practical experience in all facets of youth ministry while testing and developing their spiritual gifts. At the same time, the interns have a real and lasting impact on the students with whom they work. The interns also enhance and expand the overall effectiveness of Westminster's youth ministry.



Elizabeth is the daughter of Lenny and Margaret Marsch and will be a sophomore at Wheaton College in the fall, studying Psychology & Spanish. This past year, she began volunteering as an ESL classroom aide with World Relief, working with refugee adults in the greater Chicago area. Through this experience, the

Lord opened her eyes to the realities of the hardships of refugees' lives and the responsibility of Christians to reach out in love, using the resources God has abundantly provided us.

Elizabeth grew up attending Westminster and has been greatly encouraged and shaped by the relationships she formed here, especially through her involvement in the youth group. Her mission trip experiences in New York

City, Mexico, Chattanooga, and Lancaster City have further molded her heart for ministry. During Elizabeth's sophomore year of high school, God used a conference at Westminster to call her to Muslim ministry, which she plans to pursue in the future through missions. Throughout middle school and high school, the Christian community she found in the youth group served to deepen her love for God and her desire to follow his will in her daily life. Elizabeth's prayer for this summer is that the Lord would use her to foster a greater love for Christ in the hearts of the students and a greater awareness of his love for each of them.



Joshua is the son of Amy and Dana Ormerod. He is planning to attend Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology in the fall, studying automotive technology. In the past year he has been working with YWAM in Sydney, Australia, and in Papua New Guinea learning how to live a life of ministry in the mission field.

Joshua was baptized as an infant at Westminster and has been blessed growing up in the Christian environment that Westminster has provided. Joshua has traveled on multiple mission trips from Western Europe to Mexico. He is excited to serve the congregation as the youth intern and looks forward to what God will do.

We are delighted to have Elizabeth and Joshua as members of our youth ministry team and would appreciate your prayers and encouragement for them throughout the summer. Please pray that they would have a Spirit-led ministry to our teens and that God will use this experience to shape them for future ministry.

Congratulations, Graduates — Class of 2011



Becky Camacho
 Manheim Township
 High School
Plans: HACC
Scripture:
 Psalm 103:2-5



Peter Frey
 Home School
Plans: Grove City
 College/Electrical
 Engineering
Scripture: Psalm
 118:1 & 8



Rachael Frey
 Home School
Plans: Lanc. Gen'l
 College of Nursing
 & Health Sciences/
 Associate in Nursing
Scripture: Isaiah
 40:31



Leslie Henny
 Manheim Township
 High School
Plans: Bowling Green
 State Univ. of Ohio
 (soccer scholarship)/
 Occupational Therapy
Scripture: Ephesians
 5:15-17



Elizabeth Hivner
 Hempfield High School
Plans: James Madison
 University/Dance
Scripture: Ephesians
 5:15-17



Jared Humbert
 Home School
Plans: Pursue major
 is business
Scripture: Jeremiah
 29:11



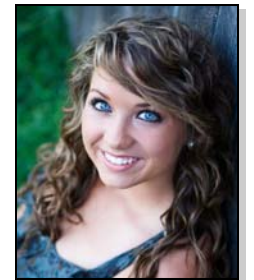
Laura Hungerford
 Garden Spot H.S.
Plans: Grove City
 College/English Edu-
 cation
Scripture: Psalm
 91:11-12



Seth Johnston
(with Fritz)
 Home School
Plans: Grove City
 College/Secondary
 Education in History
Scripture: Book of
 Philippians



Sarah Richin
 Manheim Township
 High School
Plans: James Madi-
 son University/Health
 Sciences Major/
 Occupational Therapy
Scripture: Psalm
 34:14



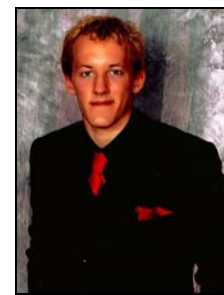
Christina Springer
 Lancaster Mennonite
 High School
Plans: Pennsylvania
 College of Technol-
 ogy/Physical Therapy
Scripture: Jeremiah
 29:11 KJV



Zachariah Spykstra
 Veritas Academy
Plans: P.C. Rossin
 College of Engineer-
 ing at Lehigh Univ.
Scripture: Proverbs
 9:10



Caleb Swarr
 Home School
Plans: Continue ap-
 prenticeship with a
 fanier, with plans of
 becoming a full-time
 partner in the business
Scripture: Psalms

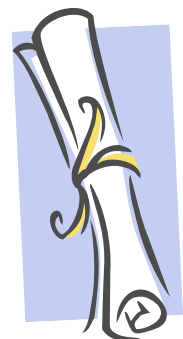


David Witmer
 Ephrata High School
Plans: U.S. Marines,
 then College
Scripture: Book of
 Ecclesiastes



Kaelyn Witwer
 Warwick H.S.
Plans: Lanc. Gen'l
 College of Nursing/
 Bachelor Degree
Scripture:
 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

Not Pictured:
Timothy
Swarr



MEMBERSHIP CLASS – SPRING 2011



CHUCK ARCHIBALD



EMILY ARCHIBALD



DARWIN BEALE



SUE BEALE



DANIEL BLEECKER



BRIAN BLOUGH



CHARLENE BLOUGH



STEVE GENTINO



LINDA GENTINO



MATTHEW HENNY



JACQUELINE HENNY



IAN HENNY



**DIANE
HORNBERGER**



JOHNNY HULGUS



JOYCE HULGUS



SCOTT JOHNSTON*



SANDY JOHNSTON



ANNIE JOHNSTON



SETH JOHNSTON



ALAN LA BELLE



DIANE LA BELLE



MICHELE NEFF



DEB PFAUTZ

***Note: Rev. Scott Johnston is pictured with his family, but he is member of the presbytery.**



VALERIE RESSLER



HELEN STOUCH



JERRY STYER



MARGE STYER



KRISTY THOMAS



MARK THOMAS



CHRIS VALENTIN



CATHERINE WAHU



JEFF ZELL



ABBY ZELL



COMMUNICANTS CLASS – SPRING 2011



Communicants received into membership on Sunday, May 29, are pictured above, starting from bottom row, left to right: Ivy Espenshade, Sarah Hanle, Catie McLain, Ashlee Gregg, Nathan Lachman, Marin Butterworth, Molly De Bruin, Hannah Quimby, Becca Chase, Grace McClenaghan, Michael Lux, Alex Enzman, James Hayward, David Keiser, Caleb Ploutz, Travis Jones, Andrew Davies

The Shepherd's Staff

A Time for Shame in the PCUSA

In September 1980, I officially renounced the ministry oversight of the Presbyterian Church USA (known as PCUSA), the denomination that had ordained me six years earlier. I joined the Presbyterian Church in America as a teaching elder two weeks later. I have never for a moment regretted that change. Today, I have new cause to look upon my former denomination with cold shame and holy outrage, but not with surprise.

Many of you realize that for the last twenty-five years, the dominant topic of discussion in the Presbyterian Church USA—the “elephant in the room”—has been a determined fight to recognize ordination for openly gay church officers. Until recently, moderates who stood for biblical truth had managed to hold the line so that practicing gay or lesbian persons have not been eligible for ordination. In the last five years, quite a few whole congregations departed the PCUSA, most joining the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. Those changes apparently caused a notable erosion of strength among PCUSA moderates.

In May 2011, the last line of defense crumbled and the barbarians have now overrun the main gate. Recently an action from the 2010 PCUSA General Assembly was up before all the regional presbyteries for response. Two thirds of the presbyteries were needed to ratify yet another proposal for ordination to be granted regardless of sexual orientation or practice in the life of ruling and teaching elders or deacons.

A *New York Times* article brought the news in early May that more than two-thirds of the PCUSA presbyteries now have ratified it. This means the action almost certainly will become official policy at the 2011 PCUSA General Assembly, probably around the time you read this.

The PCUSA now joins the United Church of Christ, The Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the Episcopal Church as major Protestant denominations surrendering to organized and well-funded gay lobby groups that have relentlessly imposed their demands, having long ago seized the minds of the liberal majority. (I hear that the United Methodist Church is still resisting, for now.) Fifty years ago, these denominations were termed as the “Mainline” of Protestantism. That

term no longer has meaning. Now they are relegated to the sidelines—setting their faces entirely against the clear teaching of God’s Word.

The *New York Times* article pointed out the difference seen in the Presbyterian Church in America, which does not ordain women as officers, as taught in 1 Timothy 2 and 3, and has never spent five minutes in any major assembly seriously contemplating approval of someone with an active homosexual lifestyle to be an officer of Christ. However, to a wide segment of the American public, including our Lancaster neighbors, “a Presbyterian is a Presbyterian.” So to some extent, we will get tarred with disrepute directed at the PCUSA by those who are not aware of PCA distinctions.

There are, in the pews of PCUSA congregations, individuals who truly know and love Christ as Lord. Tens of thousands will now accelerate the membership departures of recent decades. There may be more whole congregations that will finally awaken from Rip Van Winkle slumbers and vote to leave.

But, sadly, too many will be held fast in the inertia of longstanding tradition, the glue of local friendships, and the fear of change. They would stay rooted in one spot even if the flames of perdition began to melt the soles of their shoes! (Excuse me—I guess I cannot mention *hell* anymore, because a supposedly evangelical pastor named Rob Bell has infamously said Jesus was all wrong on that subject, also.)

2 Timothy 4:3 says: “The time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say whatever their itching ears want to hear.” The foregoing might be read as an arrogant exercise in gloating. If you think that, you do not know me very well. We evangelicals have our own deep needs for repentance and reformation to happen in our midst. May God be merciful to his battle-scarred church!

—Dr. Michael A. Rogers, Senior Pastor

Much has been said and written about the effects of abortion on women who go through it. What is rarely discussed, however, is the effect of abortion on another victim: the father. Yet anyone who may question that fathers of aborted babies suffer need only read the words of rocker Steve Tyler, lead singer of the rock band Aerosmith, in the book Walk this Way: The Autobiography of Aerosmith, recalling his girlfriend's abortion: "I was pretty devastated. In my mind, I'm going, 'Jesus, what have I done?'" Years later, recalling it, he admitted, "The real-life guilt was very traumatic for me. Still hurts." Of the account below, Abigail Kiehl says: "The following, highlighted in Grace, is expressed in my own words, but is based on true accounts of how men may suffer from the effects of abortion, and they are not rare; in fact, millions of men suffer because of abortion. This year I wanted to acknowledge all fathers who have lost a son or daughter by abortion." In this month when we celebrate fathers, remember to pray for those who regret their lost fatherhood.

The Other Victim of Abortion

By Abigail Kiehl

Dear Grace,

While driving home from the abortion clinic with your mother, something inside me snapped, and I wept. In becoming your father, I was challenged like never before to stand strong, as a man, to support your mother and you, and I failed. That night the rain beat hard upon the roof and poured in torrents down my windowpane. It was as if all of heaven wept with me. The day you were aborted my heart broke, and a piece of me died forever.

I regret forever the day your heartbeat was cut off. No one told me that I would mourn your death the rest of my life. You were my little girl, not a choice. The day you needed me most was the day I paid to end your life. My heart breaks from losing you. As your father, I was supposed to be there protecting you, but I wasn't.

After your death, I became a workaholic to bury the pain in my heart. Since working long hours is common for most men, no one knew I was trying to bury my pain. I'm not even sure I understood myself; I felt alone. I was shattered and didn't feel I had the right to live.

I didn't know where to turn, and then God revealed himself to me. I knew I needed to grieve your loss to find healing. I joined a support group, got counseling, and started the painful, yet freeing, path to forgiveness. Through this process I found I was not alone.

Writing a letter to you and having a memorial set up in memory of you has helped me find closure. I have spent many years in bondage because I didn't feel I had the right or courage to grieve my lost fatherhood. I was a forgotten father for many years.

There are times, especially on the anniversary you were aborted and on Father's Day, when my shoulders droop and I cry over losing you. My heart aches to rock you to sleep and sweep you up in my arms. I think about how it would feel to have your small hand in my hand, to hear your laugh and see your eyes sparkle with delight as you call out, "Daddy!"

I have named you Grace because, as someone said, "No sin is greater than the grace of God!" I, like Moses, David, and Paul, have killed a life, and I, like them, have found the grace of God, and he has brought me to himself (Romans 5:20-21). For the first time in many years, I am at peace with God. I have finally been able to forgive myself. Anything less would have been telling God his grace was not enough.

All my love, Dad

Author's note: If you know of a man who has suffered from abortion, use this article to let him know God's message of grace and forgiveness is extended to him, and that Christ came to abolish the barrier of sin and to bring us to himself. For more information or how you can get involved, visit <http://theunchoice.com>.

**Don't
Forget!**

Annual Church Picnic — Saturday, June 18
3:00 PM Until Dusk at Roland Park, Akron
Dinner at 5:00 PM; Festive Sing-a-long to Follow
RSVP Using Your Blue Attendance Slip



Westminster Presbyterian Church
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Lancaster, PA 17601

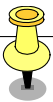
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Check us on the Web:
www.westpca.com/communique



Mark Your Calendars: August 28, 10:05-10:40 AM Westminster's First Fire Drill!

We've never had one before and that is why a fire drill is planned for the second half of our Sunday School hour on the last Sunday of the summer quarter. Instructions will be distributed to classes in advance. We will ring the fire alarm (no trucks responding) and hope to see how quickly we can clear the entire building!



It will be just for "practice"—hoping of course that we never need the real thing.

All teachers should plan on only half of the regular class/lesson time for that day.