



Passing on the Christian faith from one generation to the next is the heart of the life and work of the church. This fundamental task requires more than teaching on bible stories and doctrinal information. Living out our faith to our community and passing on our faith to our children, youth and even to our adult congregation members involves the work of the Holy Spirit who gives birth to trust and provides confidence in the creative, redeeming and renewing power of God. Westminster is committed to enable this journey of learning to every infant, child, youth, and adult, in our congregation.

On this Adult Learning page you will find more information about our Sunday morning programs; the Adult Bible class; our Spiritual Life Sunday morning offerings, and the Case Library Conversation programs. These three programs meet each Sunday from 9:35 am to 10:45 am. For more information or any questions you may have, please contact Debbie Katz, Director of Christian Education at 884-9437, ext. 329.

# Sunday Morning Adult Bible Class

## 2009-2010

Come and join the Adult Bible class on Sunday mornings from 9:35 am to 10:45 am. Our class is located on the balcony above Parish Hall. Take the elevator to the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, or the stairs near the Case Library, our class meets in the first office on the balcony.

The following is the schedule of our series. Please check the monthly newsletter and weekly bulletins for changes to this schedule. While each series examines special themes, each class is self-contained and there is no requirement to attend each class in a series. Please come as your schedule permits.

**September 20 thro October 25:** *Encounters with Jesus: Studies in the Gospel of John* by Frances Taylor Gench

Calvin argued that the gospel of John “is a key to open the door for understanding the rest.” Many people love the gospel of John because it is the most christocentric of the gospels, that is, when we read it, Christ seems more up close and personal. We can find ourselves in direct encounter with him. Join the Sunday morning Adult Bible class as they explore the challenges in this gospel and how it informs our faith and lives.

**November 1 through 15:** *The Thoughtful Christian’s Introduction to the Gospel of Mark*

Who was Mark? What is different about his Gospel from the other three? Why does he spend half the book on the death and resurrection of Jesus? How does his message speak to us today? These and other questions will be examined in this three week introduction to the first gospel.

November 1: Identity of Mark. Why, when and to whom he wrote his gospel.

November 8: What does it mean to call Jesus the Son of God?

How did Mark understand this title?

November 15: Mark’s account of the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Why does Mark’s gospel end strangely compared to the other gospels.

**December 6 through 20:** *The Thoughtful Christian’s Advent Through the Eyes of Those who Waited*

This study by Carol Wehrheim introduces and re-introduces participants to several biblical characters found in the lectionary readings for Advent. First, the prophets in the book of Isaiah present us with the idea of waiting and preparing for the Messiah—our work for Advent. Next we meet John the Baptist who announces the coming of the Messiah. Mary, the mother of Jesus, is the main subject of sessions three and four. Protestants, until recently, have not given her much consideration, but we have much to learn about patience and courage from the mother of Jesus. Finally, we learn from Elizabeth about how to accept a blessing so long in coming that it is no longer expected.

## January Hiatus

*This year the Adult Bible committee has decided to take a hiatus in the month of January because of the travels to Israel and to the Gulf Coast. The committee encourages all Adult Bible class members to attend either Case Library Conversations or the Spiritual Life classes.*

### **February 7 through March 21:** *Exodus, Interpretation Bible Studies*

During February and March, join the Adult Bible class as they study Exodus. This Old Testament book is a compelling narrative of three characters: the God of Israel, who rescues a people in captivity after years of silence; Moses, the leader of Israel, who reluctantly accepts his calling and goes on to become the giver of the Law; and the people of Israel, who struggle to be faithful to God after facing near extinction at the hands of its captors. In the weaving of their stories, Exodus becomes a story for our time – a story of seeking and finding a God who redeems us in our moments of separation and sin.

### **April 11 through May 23:** *The Art of Parables: Reinterpreting the Teaching Stories of Jesus in Word & Sculpture*, Charles McCollough

This study of the parables involves both words and images. For each parable, there is a dvd image of sculpture of the artist's interpretation of the parable. Each lesson begins with a question to which the parable speaks. Jesus himself often started a parable with a question, such as "What do you think?" or "Which one of you...?" These questions are tools to engage a class to struggle with issues raised in the parables — which have implications for us today, even though they were asked 2,000 years ago.

**April 11:** Defining the Parable (The Barren Fig Tree)

**18:** The Samaritan

**25:** The Prodigal and Elder Sons

**May 2:** The Mustard Seed, The Leaven

**9:** The Young Women

**23:** The Last Judgment

## Monthly Bible Study Groups

**WOW Bible study: Joshua**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month**  
**12 Noon in Case Library**

WOW (Women of Westminster) invites all interested women to join our brown bag Bible study. This study begins on October 8<sup>th</sup> at 12 pm and continues on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month and concludes on Thursday, June 10, 2010.

This year our study is Presbyterian Women's Horizons "Joshua: A Journey of Faith." These nine monthly lessons will explore the journey taken by Joshua and the Israelites into the land of Canaan. With each step Joshua and the people made choices to follow God and how to be God's people. This study will explore themes of leadership, the promise land, the concept of holy war,

the process of outsiders becoming insiders, and the covenant God has with all creation. These themes are important to us today as they were to the Israelites then.

Beverages will be provided and participants are encourage to bring a brown bag lunch. Purchase of this year's study is \$6, and a large print copy is \$10. If you're interested in purchasing a study guide and/or attending please sign up in the Holmes Room. For more information about this year's study, go to [www.pcusa.org/horizons](http://www.pcusa.org/horizons).

### **The Third Alternative**

**2nd Tuesday of the month, 6:30 pm – 8pm**

A small, but determined group of people meet on the second Tuesday of the month for Bible study. This class is designed for folks who enjoy reading Bible stories and discussing how the texts illuminate their lives. Our first class is Tuesday, October 13<sup>th</sup> when we begin Helpmates, Harlots and Heroes: Women's Stories in the Hebrew Bible by Alice Bellis. This study will focus on familiar as well as unfamiliar women in the Bible and we will examine their stories through the lens of feminist and womanist interpretations.



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## The Case Library Conversation Series Sunday Morning Offerings 9:35 - 10:45 am in the Case Library

### ***Jewish High Holidays***

#### **September 20**

Presenter: Larry Rubin, the President of Temple Beth Zion

The major holidays of the Jewish year are about to begin. Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, heads up the Days of Awe. They continue with Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. While Rosh Hashanah is a day of celebration and togetherness, it is also a time of reassessment when Jews around the world consider the past year and what could be better in the year to come. For the ten days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur they make amends in their lives and make every effort to right the wrongs of the past year. Yom Kippur is a culmination of atonement when Jews fast, neither eating nor drinking, to draw nearer to God and come out as the best versions of themselves.

### ***The Meaning of Ramadan***

#### **September 27**

Our Muslim friends will help us understand the meaning of Ramadan, the most revered religious observance of the Islamic year, that began, this year, on Friday, August 21 and ended on Saturday, September 19. It is the month in which the Qur'an, according to tradition, was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. Ramadan is the Islamic month of fasting from dawn to sunset and the time when the entire Qur'an is read and special prayers are offered to God. It is a time of deep reflection by Muslims worldwide and can be a period of great inspiration for their Christian and Jewish friends.

### ***The Culture and Historic Rituals of Native American Indians***

#### **October 4**

Leader: Agnes Williams, I.W.I. Peace Institute Coordinator

### **Community Speaker Series**

#### ***Downtown Housing - A Growth Industry?***

#### **October 11**

Mr. Rocco Termini, President, Signature Development

Come and hear one of Buffalo's most famous housing developers tell us about his work to revitalize downtown and preserve our historic architecture.

### ***Reducing Local Government & Increasing Citizens' Voice: Are We On The Right Track?***

#### **October 18**

Presenter: Mr. Kevin Gaughan, Attorney & Civic Leader

Come and hear the prominent civic leader who has visited every city, town and village in Erie County. He is leading a charge to reduce the cost of local government.



***A Health Care Update***

**October 25**

Presenter: Dr. David C. Hohn, former president of Roswell Park Cancer Institute  
Dr. Hohn will discuss health care reform.

***Time To Vote***

**November 1**

Presenter: Robert J. McCarthy, political reporter for The Buffalo News  
Mr. McCarthy will discuss the upcoming general election, including State Senate races.

**Gay, Lesbian, Bi-Sexual and  
Transgender (GLBT) Awareness Series**  
***Coming Out***

**November 8&15**

Presenter: Nancy Hanavan  
Organizer: Peter McNally

Join us as the More Light chapter presents a DVD & discussion on persons and their "coming out" stories and experiences.

***Fond Memories of Westminster House***

**November 22**

Compassion started the Hull House in Chicago in 1889, the Society of Village Work in Warsaw, NY in 1893, and in the same year our own Westminster House.

Please come hear what Beth Schauf Russell has to say about our beloved settlement house graciously built by Westminster Presbyterians to bless the community her great grandparents lived in. She has pictures and memories to share. Her family names are connected with Betz, Schauf, and Kellerman in the 1880s to 1940s. Her talk will be rich in history for our church as well as the City of Buffalo.

**Advent Series**

**November 29, Dec. 6, 13, & 20**

Please join the Spiritual Life group in the Heritage Room for this series.

**Travelogue Series**

**January 3, 10, 17 & 24**

Organizers: Corinne Stuart &  
Louise McClive

Westminsterites will present slide shows and share with us their travel experiences in this 4-week series.

**January 31**

To Be Announced.



**The 9th Annual Understanding Islam Series**

**February 7, 14, 21**

Organizer: Al Ryan & Jerry Kelly

The Case Library Conversation Series is proud to, once again, present this important series. Specific information will follow in the December - January Newsletter.

**Lenten Series**

February 28, March 7, 14, & 21

Please join the Spiritual Life group in the Heritage Room for this series.

**Earth Day Lecture Series**

**April 4, 11, 18 & 25**

Organizer: Janet Kowalski

Did you know that Westminster is a “green” church? We are called to be stewards of creation. Join us for this important series which will offer qualified speakers on timely environmental topics/issues. Specific titles and speakers will be announced.