

# Trinity Times

*“Growing in Christ, Sharing in Love”*

A publication of Trinity United Church

A union congregation of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the United Church of Christ  
118 King George Road • Warren, NJ 07059 • Phone (732) 469-5044

[www.trinityunitedchurch.org](http://www.trinityunitedchurch.org)

Elsie Armstrong Rhodes, Pastor

Cyndy Reames, Editor

Volume 12 Issue 1

January 2009

## From the Pastor's Pen –

*By The Reverend Elsie Armstrong Rhodes*

The New Year is a time for taking stock of life: what matters most? To what will we give our attention, our time, our money in the year ahead? Like the wise men from the East who traveled to Bethlehem in search of a child they believed to be savior and king (Matthew 2: 1-12), are we willing to follow where the light of Christ might lead us? What if it means a change of direction in life? What if it means choosing an alternate route “home”? God is constantly surprising us, calling us, leading us, sending us.

God's Word has come in the flesh and lives among us (John 1: 14) ... and the Word-made-flesh is certain to send us on a new journey.

As we consider the year ahead and our use of time, may we resolve to welcome the gift of *kairos* – of God time and God's timing. As we consider our investment of money, may we resolve to *live* our understanding of stewardship. As we reflect on our vocation, may we resolve to listen to our heart as well as our head, in discerning God's dream for us. As we reflect on our relationships, may we resolve to broaden our definition of family and neighbor.

The New Year is a time for letting go and taking hold. May God give us the courage to let go of those things that pass away and diminish life, that we might take hold of what matters most.

With gratitude and hope,

*Pastor Elsie*



## The Work of Christmas

When the song of the angels is stilled,  
When the star in the sky is gone,  
When the kings and princes are home,  
When the shepherds are back with their flock,  
The work of Christmas begins:  
To find the lost,  
To heal the broken,  
To feed the hungry,  
To release the prisoner,  
To rebuild the nations,  
To bring peace among brothers,  
To make music in the heart.

Howard Thurman



## Micah 6:6-8

“With what shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before God on high?  
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old?  
Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil?  
Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?”  
He has told you, O mortal, what is good;  
And what does the Lord require of you but  
to do justice,  
and to love kindness,  
and to walk humbly with your God?

## Notes from the Covenant Board

Catherine Bebbington, Clerk of Session, Pro tem

The following are highlights from the December 16, 2008 stated meeting of the Covenant Board. The next stated meeting will be January 15, 2009.

- A motion was passed to approve the planting of a tree, a gift to TUC, in memory of Ellen Waldstein's father, William Lenz.
- The O&A Commission shared the first draft of the "Open and Affirming" Statement.
- A motion was passed to approve holding the Annual Meeting of the Congregation on Sunday, January 25 at noon.
- Reports were received from Personnel, Worship, Admin. Team, Mission & Vision sub-group.
- A motion was made and passed to accept the report from treasurer, Carol Krueger.
- A second reading of the 2009 Budget was done.

### MEMBERS OF THE 2008 COVENANT BOARD

Larry Armstrong	('11)	908-647-1797
Kit Bebbington	('10)	732-356-3730
Yvette Halpin	('11)	732-469-7858
Kay Hurd	('10)	732-560-9209
Phil Krieter	('10)	908-707-4031
Lynn Merrill	('09)	908-256-1346
Gary Pratt	('09)	ON SABBATICAL
Cyndy Reames	('09)	732-271-1885
Robert Willitts	('11)	732-564-1508

(\*xx) indicates year current term of office expires

### Portrait of Pastoral Ministry – December 2008

- Met with pastoral assistants Joy Klingeman Arroyo and Jared Stephens in supervisory sessions (Dec. 14 and 28)
- Preached (Dec. 7, 14, 21, and 24)
- Moderated CB meeting (Dec. 16)
- Assisted Thom Rhodes in planning the Advent adult education series, "Watching for the Light"
- Attended the Presbytery's Worship and Theology Team (WATT) meeting in Roselle (Dec. 4)
- Made pastoral and hospital visits throughout the month
- Planned the 2009 Adult education program and completed planning for Advent-Christmas-Epiphany worship
- Participated in the Christmas Decorating, Caroling and Soup Supper (Dec. 13) and the Taizé worship (Dec. 14 at 7 pm)

### Financial Report:

Ralph Pratt, Financial Secretary; Carol Krueger, Treasurer

The operating income received in pledges and offerings during **November totaled \$9527**. In addition, \$600 was received for Heifer International.

During **December, \$9794** was received in pledges and offerings toward the operating budget. \$669 was received in the Christmas offering and has been designated to mission projects of the UCC and PC/USA. Another \$3450 was received for Heifer International, making a total of \$4050. (As of this

printing, coordinator Merl Coslick has indicated that additional funds received have put us over \$5000, the amount needed to provide an ark for Heifer International, making 2008 the seventh year TUC family and friends have been able to do so.)

As established by the Constitution of Trinity United Church, the **Annual Meeting of the Congregation** will be held on **Sunday, January 25, 2009** following the morning worship service.

Plan to join your fellow members in this important event of our life together.

### A Christian Education Minute

Kit Bebbington and Lynn Merrill, Elders

Pastor Elsie Armstrong Rhodes, Coordinator: Adult Education

#### Adult Christian Education:

**Sunday Morning Adult Education Class** is held in the church sanctuary from **9:30 am until 10:15 am**.

**Jan. 4:** "The Lands That Have Formed Our Faith"  
The Rev. Dr. Robert Beringer

**Jan. 11:** "The Church in Scotland"

The Rev. Frances Henderson

**Jan. 18:** "Israel-Palestinian Peacemaking Work"  
Carolyn Spoeneman

#### Children's Christian Education:

The teachers for the 2008-2009 **Godly Play** program are Lorraine Kimsey, Lynn Merrill, Kathy Pantalone, Mildred Waale, and Kit Bebbington. Student helpers this year are Scott Pantalone, Glen Pantalone, Mark Pantalone, and A.K. Waale; their role is to assist in greeting the children, age 2 – first grade, when they arrive each week. Classes begin at **9:30 am**. The Godly Play classroom is located behind the nursery downstairs.

**Jan. 4** *Meeting the Christ Child*

Kathy, Teacher; Lorraine and AK, Greeters



#### Child Care Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are needed each Sunday in the nursery during the **10:30 worship service**. Miss

Christina says that it is especially important to have a second adult in the nursery to hold and play with young Aaron, while she or Miss Antonina supervises the play of the other children including Evan, Luke, Conner, and Samuel. A sign-up sheet is in the PNC notebook or for more information, contact volunteer coordinator, Cyndy, at 908-482-9303. If just eight people sign up on a regular basis, they would only miss worship once every two months.

## Hospitality One-on-One ~

Pastoral Assistant, Joy Arroyo, is back from "vacation" and ready to once again spend time one-on-one with TUC members and friends. Sign up in the PNC notebook for your chance to take her to lunch. She has lots of news, since her marriage in mid-December. Jared Stephens will be returning the end of January and will also have lots of news about his travels in Europe over his break. So, even if you've already met them, sign-up again – you won't regret it!

### "Come let us worship together"

Sue Coslick and Cyndy Reames, Co-Chairs



### Numbers that Matter: Worship Attendance

November 30	40 Adults	2 Children/Youth
December 7	43 Adults	7 Children/Youth
December 14	74 Adults	5 Children/Youth
December 21	41 Adults	3 Children/Youth
December 24	57 Adults	5 Children/Youth
December 28	35 Adults	2 Children/Youth

COMMUNION was served to 50 people on December 7 and to 62 people on December 24. Home communion was served to 4 people on December 18.

### Calling all flowers...



The sign-up sheet to **provide** flowers is in the PCN notebook. Choose a week that fits your schedule. Make certain to have your bouquet on the table no later than 15 minutes prior to service (10:15 am September – June). Please remember to bring your flowers in a vase and then to take your vase and flowers home after worship. Thank you.

Join us on **Sunday, January 11, 2009** for a reception celebrating the wedding of Pastoral Assistant Joy Klingeman and Samuel Arroyo Troncoso. The couple was married on December 13 at a small intimate ceremony in the Princeton Seminary chapel.

A love offering is being collected for the couple. See Kit Bebbington to contribute and to sign their card.



*Be yourself, an original  
is always better than a copy.*

## Taizé comes to Trinity



A Taizé worship service includes candlelight, prayers, readings, silence, and soft music with repetitive words, often accompanied by keyboard, flute, violin, or other instruments. The service is very meditative and offers a wonderful opportunity to be silent and commune with God.

Join us on **Sunday, January 11** (and the second Sunday of each month) **at 7 pm**, in a quiet place set apart for this unique worship service at TUC.



### Watching for the Light – Recap of Advent/Christmas/Epiphany 2008

Into our darkness, Lord, send light,  
And show the world your way;  
Remove the shadows from our sight;  
Make clear the path, we pray.  
Transform our wand'ring ways to right,  
And night to brightest day!

*Michael Morgan*

During the past month, we at TUC have:

- Attended seasonal Christian education classes.
- Enjoyed seasonal worship services led by Pastor Elsie, Pastoral Assistant Joy Klingeman, and Musical Director Sue Coslick.
- Decorated the church while singing favorite carols of the season and enjoyed a supper of soup and bread.
- Listened to the sounds of The Madrigals of Franklin High School during worship and a mini-concert immediately following.
- Remembered the reason for the season during a Taizé worship service led by Pastoral Assistant Jared Stephens, with music provided by Iain, Mark, and Chris.
- Enjoyed the debut of the TUC Tone Chime Choir as part of the worship service.
- Joined together to celebrate the birth of Jesus on Christmas Eve, in a service of music by the TUC Adult Choir and guest soloist, Tim Walton, and shared in communion.
- Played "Simeon says," with Thom Rhodes during worship on December 28.
- Shared a meal in celebration of Epiphany and un-trimmed the sanctuary.



### OUTWARD BOUND - MISSION at TUC

*Kay Hurd, Mission Chairperson*

### TUC Website -



The "construction crew" – Shari Altena, Robbyn Prange and Thom Rhodes – continue to make changes to the TUC website. Take a look at [www.trinityunitedchurch.org](http://www.trinityunitedchurch.org).

## FOOD BANK NEWS



TUC collected \$490 in November and \$620 in December for the Food Bank Network of Somerset County. The next **Hunger Offering** will be collected on **Sunday, January 18, 2009**.

Bring your donations of food-stuffs such as stews, soups, tuna, pastas and sauces, rice, cereal, vegetables and fruit, peanut butter, canned meat, and powdered milk, to bring forward during the worship service. Or, drop off your contributions of cash or food to the church anytime during the month. The basket is always kept in the narthex (the little entry way off the sanctuary). Remember, items such as cookies or cake mixes can be a treasured treat, but won't provide the nutrition needed in a low income diet.

Continued thanks go to Ernie Cottrill and Joanna Marston for delivering our food donations to the Food Bank distribution center and to Paul Krueger, for the volunteering he does each week at the center.

## Raritan Valley Habitat for Humanity

Submitted by Phil Krieter



Those who have participated in building a Habitat House on a Saturday (and banged their thumbs with a hammer) know that our labor is useful. Your help can be used in other ways and at other times:

- Individuals can work on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Calling ahead is requested, but you can just show up. (Youth volunteers 16-17 years old need adult supervision).
- Volunteers are needed for the Church Relations Committee to decide on the strategy and focus of the RVHFH church relations program.
- Persons are needed to update congregational information, call congregations to verify contact information, update church e-mail lists, attend events to represent RVHFH (i.e. Mission fairs, alternative giving fairs), speak at church events and meetings, or produce brochures and flyers with graphics.
- Donate your old car that has been giving you so much trouble and isn't worth fixing up to pass inspection.

If you are interested, please contact Phil Krieter (908) 707-4031 or by email at [pakrieter@verizon.net](mailto:pakrieter@verizon.net) or contact Pam Ely, the director of RVHFH, at [director@rvhabit.org](mailto:director@rvhabit.org).

Happiness keeps you sweet  
Trials keep you strong  
Sorrows keep you human  
Failure keeps you humble  
Success keeps you glowing  
But only God keeps you going.

## PEOPLE CARE NETWORK (PCN)

The PCN Notebook has become an invaluable tool for keeping track of the many things happening at TUC – and the many ways we can participate. Check out the notebook (kept on the sanctuary piano) to sign-up for:

- Volunteering for child-care in the nursery on Sundays
- Volunteering for Custodial Duties at TUC
- Providing the Sunday flowers
- Providing Hospitality on Sunday mornings

## Opportunity for Hospitality



Volunteers are needed to provide refreshments after worship on Sundays.

Sign-up in the PNC notebook or contact [thesecretary@trinityunitedchurch.org](mailto:thesecretary@trinityunitedchurch.org). If you don't want to volunteer alone, please consider asking someone to share it with you. If you've never volunteered before and aren't sure what you need to do, I can give you the details.

Thank you in advance!

*Heather,*

Coordinator, Sunday Morning Hospitality  
Please respond to: [hharrisgalgoci@kpmg.com](mailto:hharrisgalgoci@kpmg.com)

## Volunteer Custodians Needed

Our resident TUC Custodian Angel (aka Lynn Merrill) is on "leave" through **January 2009**, following surgery. Volunteers are needed to help cover this vital, but relatively, unnoticed, task. The job is two-fold:

- Saturday - cleaning and setting up worship (vacuuming, emptying trash, arranging the chairs in the congregation and choir loft areas)
- Sunday (after hospitality) – cleaning and setting up for the week (vacuuming, emptying trash and taking bags outside, arranging chairs in circle)

A sign-up sheet is in the front of the PCN notebook. Be sure to choose the date or dates that work best for your schedule before they are all gone!

## FUND-RAISING UPDATE

*Fund-Raising Committee: Ellen Kanarek, Joyce Pratt, Gary Pratt, Peg Mara, Yvette Halpin*

## TUC NOW PARTICIPATES IN THE GREAT LAKES SCRIP PROGRAM

When you and friends purchase scrip through TUC, you're purchasing negotiable gift certificates that are used just like cash. The scrip is issued by the national and local retailers where you and your friends already shop. These merchants want to support non-profit organizations, and in return ask us to support them by shopping with scrip at their stores. You can use scrip to purchase everyday expenses like food, clothing, and other essentials, and with every purchase, you earn revenue for TUC.

In general, orders placed by noon on a Monday will be delivered to you the following Sunday. Please include your check with your order (payable to TUC, with "scrip" in the memo field). Thanks for your support!

## What's happening in and around TUC

### A CapPALS



The next rehearsal for this fun loving singing group will be **Saturday, January 10 at 10 am**. For more information or if you have an opportunity for this group to perform, contact Harry Morgan at 732-469-5994.

### Laugh Out Loud



For information on the next 8-week session scheduled to begin in **February 2009**, contact certified Laughter Instructor, Yvette, at 732-469-7858.

### Project Healthy Bones



This active, joyful, exercise and fitness group meets **each Monday at 9:30 am and Wednesday at 10 am**. For more information on how you can become involved contact the leader for the group, Carole Juth, at (732) 469-5666.

### Yoga: Stretching Into New Territory

The gentle exercise known as Yoga is at TUC. Certified Yoga Instructor, Yvette Halpin leads sessions on **Tuesday mornings at 9:30 am and Tuesday evenings at 7:30 pm**. For more information and/or to register, contact Yvette at 732-469-7858.

### The Trinity Stitches



Every 3rd Saturday of the month, TUC is transformed into an old-fashioned sewing circle as this group of knitters, crocheters, and needle pushers of all kinds gather to "ply" their crafts and visit. Whether you are an "old" hand or want to learn, come join the group. For more information contact coordinator, Carol Krueger at 908-647-5870 or at cakowls@eclipse.net.

### The TUC Mini Art Gallery

Space has been designated in the TUC sanctuary for displaying the work of community artists. Our featured artist for the month of **January 2009** is Christa Holz. Christa's specialty is watercolors. Come meet her on **Sunday, January 18**, following the morning worship service.



Donations received from any sales will be used for TUC restoration projects. If you would like to become a TUC *Artist of the Month*, sign up in the PCN notebook or contact coordinator, Kit Bebbington at 732-356-3730. Kit is delighted that there are artists scheduled through August 2009!

### Scleroderma Support Group

This support group is for those whose lives have been touched by the disease in one way or another. They meet on the **first Wednesday** of each month, downstairs at TUC. Call Ellen Waldstein 908-647-7266 for further information.

### Nurse's Prescription

By Kay Hurd R.N., Parish Nurse



The prescription for our own Parish Nurse is – rest. Kay will be undergoing surgery on Jan. 9 for a heart condition. We pray God's hand of peace and calm be on her and her family during this time.

### Vision and Core Values – A Congregational Conversation

On Sunday, December 7, a meeting was held following morning worship to discuss how we, as TUC family and friends, define our core values. The following are the highlights from that meeting:

Our Vision: **"Growing in Christ, Sharing in Love"**

*What is unique about Trinity United Church? What makes us different from Temple Har Shalom, for example? "Our faith in Jesus Christ."*

**What makes us, us?** (*What do we value as the people who are TUC?*)

- We think outside ourselves
- Our connection with the arts
- UCC/PCUSA
- Commitment to mission
- Open table/inclusiveness
- Bob Hurd and Kay (*in other words, the people of TUC*)
- This is a welcoming church, always faithful
- Stewardship - of all gifts – including the gif of creation (environ)
- Presents – gifts, presence, service, talents
- Reaching out to the community and to the world (What compels us to do this?)
- Passion
- The sense of family
- Feel connected, roots
- It started out as a social connection, now it's more than just a social hub; it's now a spiritual connection
- Dynamic, newness, willing to be "caught by the Spirit"
- Think outside the box
- We share a common (level, degree of) faith that we take with us
- The church is always learning how to help
- Loving, forgiving, nurturing, helping
- FROG (Fully Relying on God)
- We "bribe" with brunch
- Radical hospitality of God in Christ
- Trained ministers
- We have a shared direction that everyone understands and can contribute to
- The spirit of God comes through us like a prism and reaches out to all.
- Teaching church
- Adult Ed

- Pastoral Assistants
- Micah 6:8 "Do justice; love kindness and walk humbly with your God"
- Mistakes are welcome
- "Perfect place for imperfect children"
- Willing to change
- The fresh wind of the Spirit is allowed to blow
- Laughter and tears – welcome
- "Reformed and always being Reformed" [The church reformed, always reforming," according to the Word of God and the call of the Spirit." (G-2.0200, *The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.): Part II, Book of Order*)]
- SAFETY – (because people feel safe, they feel they can be vulnerable)
- Hospitality – *our refreshments are healthy!*



## News of the Wider Church



### THE PRESBYTERY OF ELIZABETH

The Rev. Robert Foltz-Morrison, Executive Presbyter, will return from sabbatical after January 1.

Come see and hear the results of his D. Min. project and the product of his three month sabbatical – "How the Presbytery can be of help to smaller congregations who are struggling to survive in the current economy" – on **Monday, January 12, 2009 at 7:30 p.m.** at the Linden Presbyterian Church, 1506 Linden Terrace, Linden, NJ 07036 908-486-3073.

**Saturday January 10, 2009**, join the Rev. Andy Rudin as he leads a **workshop for congregations on energy conservation at Stony Point Conference Center** in New York. Andy Rudin of the non-profit Interfaith Coalition on Energy is recommended as **the** national expert resource on energy conservation for churches by the ecumenical [Alban Institute](#) and the [U.S. Department of Energy](#). He has consulted with literally [hundreds of congregations](#) on how to tackle energy conservation in their churches.

Cost is \$50 per participant or \$100 per church (for up to three participants) and includes the day-long workshop and lunch. Registration deadline is January 8; send a check, made payable to Stony Point Center – memo line *Jan. 10 Energy Workshop* – by Jan. 5 to Karen Kaufman, 17 Crickettown Rd., Stony Point NY 10980.

### Blessings at Year's End

I remember with gratitude the fruits of the labors of others, which I have shared as a part of the normal experience of daily living.

I remember the beautiful things that I have seen, heard, and felt - some, as a result of definite seeking on my part, and many that came unheralded into my path, warming my heart and rejoicing my spirit.

I remember the moments of distress that proved to be groundless and those that taught me profoundly about the evilness of evil and the goodness of good.

I remember the new people I have met, from whom I have caught glimpses of the meaning of my own life and the true character of human dignity.

I remember the dreams that haunted me during the year, keeping me ever mindful of goals and hopes which I did not realize but from which I drew inspiration to sustain my life and keep steady my purposes.

I remember the awareness of the spirit of God that sought me out in my aloneness and gave to me a sense of assurance that undercut my despair and confirmed my life with new courage and abiding hope.  
Howard Thurman  
(from Kirkrigde Retreat Center)

### Trinity Times Update

Following the publication of the February 2009 issue of *Trinity Times*, I am retiring as editor. The February issue will contain information from the TUC Annual Meeting, to be held January 25, including information on the newly elected Governing Elders.

If you are interested in learning more about possibly becoming the new "editor-in-chief," please contact me, Cyndy Reames, at [cyndyr@hotmail.com](mailto:cyndyr@hotmail.com). Put "*Trinity Times*" in the subject line of your email.



*In everything give thanks  
for this is the will of God  
in Christ Jesus concerning you.*

## Sunday Sermon Notes

Christian Education for all ages begins at 9:30 am

Worship begins at 10:30 am

Pastor Elsie Armstrong Rhodes can be reached at the church at 732-469-5044, on her cell at 908-304-3605, or via email at [thereverend@trinityunitedchurch.org](mailto:thereverend@trinityunitedchurch.org)

### January 4: "Gold, Circumstance, and Mud"

Scripture: Matthew 1:1-12

The Rev. Robert Beringer, preaching

#### *Celebrating Epiphany*

Celebration of Communion; Offering of Stars

*Potluck following worship*

### January 11: "In the Beginning"

Baptism of Christ Sunday

Scripture: Genesis 1:1-5; Mark 1:4-11

The Rev. Elsie Armstrong Rhodes, preaching

Renewal of Baptism Covenant

*Reception for Joy and Samuel Arroyo following worship*



### January 18: "Hearing Voices"

Scripture: 1 Samuel 3:1-10, (11-20); John 1:43-51

The Rev. Elsie Armstrong Rhodes, preaching  
Hunger Offering

### January 25: "A Hard Act to Follow"

Scripture: Jonah 3:1-5; Mark 1:14-20

The Rev. Elsie Armstrong Rhodes, preaching  
*Annual Meeting of the Congregation at Noon*

### January 11, 7 pm

#### Taizé Worship Service

*Start your year with a meditative service of scripture, reflection, and music.*

### Trinity United Church

118 King George Road

Warren, NJ 07059

*"Growing in Christ, Sharing in Love"*

January 2009

Pg 7  
Pg 8

Pg 9