

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

Elsie Armstrong Rhodes, Pastor

Cyndy Reames, Editor

Volume 11 Issue 10

November 2008

From the Pastor's Pen –

By The Reverend Elsie Armstrong Rhodes

For many congregations, the stewardship season falls within the months of October and November. For “TUC” as well – our stewardship season began on Sunday, October 26 and will conclude on Sunday, November 16 with the dedication of our pledges, and a soup contest and lunch following worship. This year's theme: “Make Room for New Blessings.”

In his letter (October 21) pastoral assistant Jared Stephens reminded us that, while we may take a more focused look at the financial element of stewardship, its meaning is much broader than that. (see page 11)

Oikononmos (one of the words for stewardship in Greek) means “household” – it's the word from which “economics” is derived. The overall sense of scripture – both the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament – is that stewardship is caring for all God's household. Indeed, stewardship is about caring for the very gift of life itself, beginning with one's own existence and including ability, time, resources, relationships, as well as the protection of the earth and all that is in it.

Stewardship also concerns how we live out our faith in the very choices we make. Jesus' message to those who would follow him is clear and direct: Give to the poor. Love your neighbor as yourself. Love your enemy. Jesus' scriptures were the Law and the Prophets from the Hebrew bible. The message there is also clear: Care for the widow, the orphan and the foreigner.

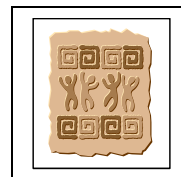
As people of faith, our responsibility is to speak out and act in behalf of those who have no voice, who have no power in the political system – children, the poor, the infirmed, those on the margins of society.

On Tuesday, November 4 we will vote. The opportunities for and responsibilities of Christian citizens and residents do not end, however, when the votes are counted and the results are announced. Our involvement in the political process – the way we order our common life, share the resources God entrusts to us, and seek to address our shared problems – is ongoing. Ongoing participation in the public arena is essential to the well-being of our communities, states, nation, and the world. This involves educating ourselves, engaging in advocacy for policies we support, joining groups to work together on issues of concern, and more.

For followers of Jesus such involvement is never merely politics. It is a matter of faith; it is a matter of stewardship.

May our priorities and concerns reflect those of Jesus, and may our prayer for the world be his: *Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*

With hope and prayer,
Pastor Elsie



Notes from the Covenant Board

Kit Bebbington, Clerk of Session, Pro tem

The following are highlights from the October 21, 2008 stated meeting of the Covenant Board. The next stated meeting will be November 18, 2008.

- A motion was passed to approve and welcome Pastor Bob (Beringer) as Parish Associate for TUC. (see this page for more details)
- A motion was passed to approve asking Harry Morgan and Mary Teel to audit the 2007 TUC financials.
- A motion was made and passed to approve the nomination of Lynn Merrill as elder commissioner to the Oct. 25 Presbytery meeting and the nomination of Cyndy Reames as delegate to the Oct. 25 NJA/UCC fall meeting.
- Reports were received from Christian Ed, Member Care, Personnel, Worship, Stewardship, and the Mission Committee.
- A motion was made and passed to accept the report from treasurer, Carol Krueger.
- Special guests the Rev. Susan Joseph Rack and Sheila Breeding of Christ Presbyterian Church shared their experiences and their innovative approach to becoming "simply a small group of disciples trying to be what Jesus calls them to be and do what Jesus calls them to do."

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)	908-647-6094
Cyndy Reames	('09)	732-271-1885
Robert Willitts	('11)	732-564-1508

('xx) indicates year current term of office expires

Portrait of Pastoral Ministry – September 2008

- Attended the Worship and Theology Team meeting in Perth Amboy (10/2)
- Met with members of the Covenant Board for a time of prayer on St. Francis of Assisi day (10/4)
- Met with staff of the "Our House" Autism Program (10/6)
- Planned and led worship (10/5, 10/12, 10/19)
- Celebrated *Home* Communion (10/11)
- Made pastoral calls and hospital visits
- Traveled to Denver, Colorado (10/12-10/16)
- Met with the Personnel Committee (10/17)
- Moderated CB meeting (10/21)
- Attended Presbytery, along with Elder Commissioner Lynn Merrill (10/25)
- Held supervisory meetings with pastoral assistants, Joy Klingeman and Jared Stephens (10/5, 10/8, 10/12, 10/19, 10/26)
- Attended "Being Whole in the Eyes of God" conference in Stony Point, NY with elder Cyndy Reames (10/27-29)

Financial Report:

Ralph Pratt, Financial Secretary; Carol Krueger, Treasurer

In **October 2008** income received through pledges and offerings towards the operating budget was \$6,023.25. Other income included \$1,611 received toward the Steps Renovation and \$268.25 from building use donations (Family Gathering, Healthy Bones, and Yoga classes).

Welcome, Pastor Bob!

Within the Presbyterian denomination, retired pastors, who may not be ready to be "put out to pasture," volunteer their time to assist solo pastors in whatever way they can as Parish Associates. **The Rev. Robert (Bob) Beringer, Pastor Bob**, was introduced to the TUC family as *our* new Parish Associate on Sunday, October 26 during morning worship. On **November 4**, Pastor Bob will begin his ministry with us, making pastoral calls.

So, when the phone rings or the doorbell chimes on a Tuesday afternoon, be sure to say "Hi" to Pastor Bob!

Admin. Team Highlights – October 2008

Robert Willitts, Chair

- Our church neighbor, Marie Gray (her property backs up on the cemetery, and up to 11 feet of her property, including two trees, is on our side of the fence) is moving the part of the fence that is on her property to the back of her property line. Work has begun. She did contact the church to see if we had any objection before beginning work - she was concerned about being a good neighbor.
- The new back door and screen door has been installed at the manse. It provides better security (it is very sturdy) as well as being air tight.



As of the end of October, we have reached our goal of \$6500 – and more! Thank you, all who contributed \$10, \$20, or \$1,500 to make this project a reality. We are hoping to get the work done before the weather becomes too cold.

Make Room for New Blessings



Members of the 2008 Stewardship Campaign: Peg Mara, Lynn Merrill, Harry Morgan, Thom Rhodes, Jared Stephens, and Pastor Elsie

Stewardship season is usually about money – how much will we have for next year's budget? But, we at TUC know that stewardship is about so much more. It is about resources, monetary as well as time and people. What does it mean to be good stewards of all our resources, to make room for new blessings? Beginning **October 26**, each week during Sunday worship, we will hear from members Harry Morgan, Kristi Flint, Brian Mastrolia, and Tom Teel about what those blessings are for them and how they make room for them.

On **November 16**, we will dedicate our pledges during worship. Then, we will celebrate with a TUC Soup Contest, hosted by Lynn Merrill, Nancy Irwin, and Peg Mara. (Read more about the Soup Contest on page 6.)

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**.

Join us **November 2** for the second in a series entitled, **Faith Matters, Democracy Matters** (*Red, Blue, Green, Purple? The Mix of Faith and Politics and Where to Go from Here*), facilitated by Maarten Altena, M.Div.

Depression: Out of the Shadows

Portions of the PBS program of the same name, aired in 2008, will be the basis of discussion on this complex but treatable disease, affecting millions of people. Join us for this three-week series on **November 9, 16, and 23**, facilitated by Kay Hurd (Parish Nurse), Karen Kaslusky, and the Rev. Elsie Armstrong Rhodes.

And during Advent join us for our series, led by Thom and Elsie Rhodes, **Watching for the Light:**

- ...In Hope (**November 30**)
- ...In Peace (**December 7**)
- ...In Joy (**December 14**)
- ...In Love (**December 21**)

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.

- Nov. 2** *10 Best Ways to Live*
Mildred, Teacher; Kit and Mark, Greeters
- Nov. 9** *The Ark and a Tent for God*
Kit, Teacher; Lynn and Scott, Greeters
- Nov. 16** *The Promised Land*
Lorraine, Teacher; Kathy and Glen, Greeters
- Nov. 23** *The Temple, a House for God*
Kathy, Teacher; Lorraine and Mark, Greeters
- Nov. 30** *Prophets Show the Way*
Mildred, Teacher; Lynn and Scott, Greeters
- Dec. 7** *Mary and Joseph Show the Way*
Kit, Teacher; Mildred and Glen, Greeters

A Thought to Ponder: If we, as a community of faith, participate in a child's baptism, we promise to raise that child in the love and to nurture of God and to teach them about Jesus. This includes providing our children opportunities for education, worship, and participation in the life of the community. Are we keeping our commitments?

Volunteers are needed each Sunday in the nursery during the **10:30 worship service**. This is especially important as new born Aaron joins Evan, Luke, Conner, and Samuel in the nursery. A sign-up sheet is in the PNC notebook or for more information, contact volunteer coordinator, Cyndy, at 732-271-1885.



“Come let us worship together”

Sue Coslick and Cyndy Reames, Co-Chairs

Numbers that Matter: Worship Attendance

October 5	46 Adults	6 Children/Youth
October 12	36 Adults	4 Children/Youth
October 19	32 Adults	3 Children/Youth
October 26	37 Adults	3 Children/Youth

COMMUNION was served to 52 people on October 5 and home communion was served to 4 people on October 11.

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.



Hospitality One-on-One ~

Part of the official compensation package for both of our Pastoral Assistants, Joy Klingeman and Jared Stephens, is “lunch” following worship each Sunday. Two sign-up sheets for providing lunch – one for Joy and one for Jared – are in the PNC notebook in the sanctuary. Make the time to meet these interesting, enthusiastic young people one-on-one over a shared meal. We encourage you to meet them both by taking them out individually. You won't be disappointed!

If you're wondering about the glow shining in the eyes of Pastoral Assistant Joy Klingeman, it could have something to do with her surprise announcement earlier in October – she's getting married! Wedding bells will ring for Joy and her fiancé, Samuel Arroyo Troncoso, also a student at Princeton Theological Seminary, on December 13, in a small, private ceremony. Congratulations to the happy couple as they begin the new year, and their new life together.





Darkness into Light –
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

The December issue of *Trinity Times* will be available on *November 30*, with lots of details on the events and activities scheduled for the Advent/Christmas season. In the meantime, the following is a quick preview of what's to come:

- Sunday, **Nov. 30**: Live tree erected in the sanctuary
- Saturday, **Dec. 13**: Soup/Carol/Decorating Party
- Sunday, **Dec. 14 (A.M.)**: Madrigals from Franklin High
- Sunday, **Dec. 14 (P.M.)**: Evening Taize Worship Service
- Wednesday, **Dec. 24**: Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
- Saturday, **Jan. 3, 2009**: 2nd (Annual?) Mystery Dinner

Taize 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.

Plan now to join Pastoral Assistant Jared Stephens and a circle of planners on December 14, as they facilitate a Taize-style worship service at TUC. Look for more details on the time in the December issue of *Trinity Times*.

"The desire for communion with God has been set within the human heart since the dawn of time. The mystery of that communion touches what is most intimate in us, reaching down to the very depths of our being."

To the wellsprings of joy: Letter for 2004



OUTWARD BOUND - MISSION at TUC

Kay Hurd, Mission Chairperson

World Communion Sunday was the dedication of the wall and trees to Peace in the World. Our wall doesn't divide; it wraps around and holds with strength peacefully. The trees represent the continents - may they grow and may the nations they represent grow in peace. We need to stop the wars in our nations, our churches and other institutions, and in our families. When you see the trees as you enter the church, may they remind you to say a little prayer for peace in our nations,

our institutions, our families and within each of us.

Ongoing Mission Opportunities:

November is the month to begin to think about advent and to think about what it identifies, "Jesus the Prince of Peace." Even in this time of economic crisis we have so much more that many people who are living in sub-survival standards. Children are dying of starvation and malnutrition, families are homeless, treatable illnesses are in epidemic stages in some places in the world, and it's not getting better. Jesus gave us the mandate to feed the hungry, care for the poor, heal the sick; in other words, to take care of each other. Each Christmas season the Mission Team provides opportunities to give to those who have less than we have, to share our gifts.

This year, we will collect *new* gifts for adults and children for the **Elizabethport Center**. The center takes our gifts and makes them available for a small price to those in Elizabeth so that they can give and receive presents on Christmas. Elizabethport was started by our Presbytery as a small mission project and now represents a major social institution in Elizabeth.

We will also be collecting *new toys* for the **Somerset County Jail Chaplaincy**. The chaplains at the jail make these toys available to prisoners to give to their children.

TUC's outreach to the world will once again, be monetary gifts for **Heifer International**. We will have gift cards from Heifer for you to give to your recipients. Giving the gift cards, indicating that you have "given a sheep" (or some other animal), offers an opportunity to talk about how Heifer will give the actual sheep to a family who will then raise it for wool to sell and meat to eat. Then, when they have baby sheep they must pass on the gift to another family in the village, keeping the cycle going.

The bins for the gifts to **Elizabethport Center** and the **Somerset County Jail Chaplaincy** will be in the sanctuary beginning **November 1**. Checks to **Heifer** should be earmarked "Heifer." **All Gifts should be received by November 19.**

TUC Website - Under Construction

In the 21st century, the Internet is a vital communication/evangelism tool. With thanks to Gary Pratt and office manager, Debra Sprague for their work on the website for the past several years, we welcome a new "construction crew" who will take over this awesome, time consuming task. Shari Altena, Robbyn Prange and Thom Rhodes gathered their "tools" and have set to work updating and maintaining the TUC Website. Watch their progress at www.trinityunitedchurch.org.

FOOD BANK NEWS



During **October 2008**, contributions of \$420 along with several bags of “groceries” were given by TUC members and friends for the Food Bank Network of Somerset County as part of our ongoing mission. These funds will be used to purchase 10 times the amount of food we could purchase individually and to help supply the non-perishable food items, such as stews, soups, tuna, pastas and sauces, rice, cereal, vegetables and fruit, peanut butter, canned meat, and powdered milk that are used to fill the bags of those on low incomes. The next **Hunger Offering** at TUC will be **November 16**. A designated basket is always kept in the narthex (the little entry way off the sanctuary) so even if you are not able to attend on the 3rd Sunday of each month, you can add your donations of non-perishable food items.



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.

TAPE MINISTRY – VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



Volunteers are needed to help with the taping of sermons on Sunday mornings. We currently have just one “tech” on our roster. We are delighted that Thom Rhodes has taken on the role of “specialist,” uploading the recorded sermons onto the Trinity United website. In the 21st century, many people surf the Internet looking for a church community, a church home. These tapes of the Sunday sermons are a way for people to hear the Good News – and to learn a little about TUC. The taped sermons are also an invaluable resource for those who are unable to attend worship, whether because of traveling, job responsibilities, illness, or injury.

To help with this ministry by becoming a tech – recording the sermons on Sunday mornings – contact Pastor Elsie. To help support this ministry financially, write your check to Trinity United Church and put “Tape Ministry” in the memo line.

Interfaith Hospitality Network

Tom Hanc, Coordinator



For several years, Trinity United Church has been supporting the Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN) in partnership with the Pluckemin Presbyterian Church. IHN provides temporary food, shelter, and other support to homeless families in participating churches on a rotating basis. Our next opportunity to help out with this ministry will be during the week of **December 14 to December 20**. Contact coordinator Tom Hanc at 908-626-9843 or at tghanc@yahoo.com for more information on how you can participate.

Giving Gardeners' Project

Submitted by Ellen Waldstein



This summer TUC was again responsible for two, 40 foot long plots, out of the many dedicated to growing vegetables for local area food banks at the former Wagner Farm. One was planted in yellow squash the other in green peppers. Unfortunately, this was the summer of **tomatoes**, not these other vegetables, but we certainly did contribute to the over 5000 pounds of vegetables donated, either from these two plots or from our own bounty. Loyal TUC gardeners included our own budding gardener, Pastor Elsie, along with Nancy Parkinson, Peg Mara and Ellen Waldstein.

Next year – and all gardeners practice hope every time they think of *next year* – will be a great improvement since our leader, Ernie Cottrill, has designated two plots close to the gate for our use. This will allow us to work on improving the soil through additions of leaves and any manure we can scrape up, and they will be very convenient to the parking area. Also, we plan to diversify what we plant so that we're sure to have some great successes no matter what the weather! Contact Peg at (908) 647-6304 or Ellen at (908) 647-7266 if you'd like to participate next Spring!

OPEN AND AFFIRMING (ONA) – THE CONVERSATION CONTINUES

The ONA Conversation Committee is pleased to announce that **the Rev. Dr. Harry Taylor** will be joining us at TUC on **Saturday, November 8, at 2 p.m.** to give us ***An Overview of the Biblical Perspective on Homosexuality.***

The Rev. Dr. Taylor has just completed his work as Interim Senior Minister at Stanley Congregational Church in Chatham, New Jersey and has moved to Scarsdale Congregational Church. He has been an active and ordained minister for over thirty-five years.

He is married and has two sons. The Rev. Dr. Taylor received a Master of Divinity from Union Theological Seminary in New York, and obtained a Doctorate from Wesley Theological Seminary.

There will be a time after his talk for questions. We hope that you will be able to join us for this informative discussion.

Remember, copies are still available of a helpful and healing resource, *The Blue Book: What We Wish We Had Known*, compiled by the Presbyterian Church of Mt. Kisco, N.Y.

*ONA is “shorthand” for Open and Affirming, the designation for congregations in the United Church of Christ which make public statements of welcome into their full life and ministry to persons of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

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
- Providing Sunday lunch for Joy and Jared

Opportunity for Hospitality



Volunteers are needed to provide refreshments after worship on Sundays. Sign-up in the PNC notebook or contact

theseecretary@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

Volunteer Custodians Needed

Beginning Saturday, **November 22, 2008**, and continuing through the first of **January 2009**, our resident TUC Custodian Angel (aka Lynn Merrill) will be on "leave." 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, rearranging choir loft area)

A sign-up sheet is in the front of the PCN notebook beginning **November 2**. Be sure to choose the date or dates that work best for your schedule before they are all gone!

Making a Joyful Noise

On Saturday, November 01, TUC "rang" out with the sounds of bells – well, chimes – as the newly formed Tone Chime Choir held their first rehearsal. Members as of publication include organizer Joyce Pratt, Shari Altana, Nancy Irwin, Ellen Kanarek, Lorraine Kimsey, Lynn Merrill, and Gary Pratt. Sue Coslick is director of the group, who will be meeting Sundays from **12-12:30 pm, beginning November 9**. Anyone wishing to join them should contact Joyce at (908) 647-6094 or attend the next rehearsal. They will be using their new found skills as part of worship during the Advent/Christmas season – and beyond.



TUC Soup Contest

Submitted by Nancy Irwin

The TUC Soup Contest is a much loved event. Innovative cooks throughout our faith community concoct kettles (or crockpots) filled with hot or cold soups to be judged by all in attendance.

Our sometimes annual contest will take place this year on **Sunday, November 16**, following the morning worship service as the celebration luncheon concluding our 2008 Stewardship Campaign.

"Competitors" should bring at least two quarts of wonderfully delicious (or creatively innovative) soup, although more than two quarts is OK. Tasters of any age, gender, or political persuasion are welcome / required. Votes will be tallied by our local substitutes for Price-Waterhouse and announced at the end of the meal. The "coveted Golden Ladle" will be awarded to the "winner," although everyone is a winner at this event!

Any questions, comments, or suggestions should be directed to this year's organizers, Peg Mara, Lynn Merrill, and Nancy Irwin.

FUND-RAISING UPDATE

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

We now have over 200 items in our ~~Online Auction~~ catalog, but there's still room for more! Bidding begins **November 10**, but donations will be accepted until 2:00 pm on the day the auction closes, **December 7**. (Adding items to the catalog during the bidding period brings people back to see what's new.) The website is www.tuc.cmarket.com, and *donations are being accepted now*.

Here are some of the items that were popular in past auctions:

- Food (cookies, cakes, breads, soup, holiday items)
- Certificates for manicures, massages, local restaurants
- Toys and children's books
- Services, such as baby-sitting, pet-sitting, gardening help
- Original artwork
- Gift cards (note that these are tax-deductible as cash)

Remember: the theme of the auction is "**A Green Christmas**," and as you might guess from the title, the proceeds will go toward the repair, renovation, and reduction of TUC's carbon footprint – the three R's of responsible stewardship of TUC's property and facilities.

In addition to items in the auction catalog, **we need bidders!** Take a few of the auction business cards that are available and spread them around. Notify your friends and relatives. Alternatively, if you would like to have your friends receive an automatic notice when the bidding begins, send your list of e-mail addresses to Ellen Kanarek (ekanarek@aerweb.com). The more the merrier!

TUC NOW PARTICIPATES IN THE GREAT LAKES SCRIP PROGRAM

How about earning some money for TUC every time you make a purchase – of anything!

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.

One month into the program, orders from TUC members have generated almost \$300 for the church!

For more information on how to participate, contact a member of the Fund-Raising Committee (Ellen K, Yvette, Peg, Gary, Joyce), or visit www.glscrip.com. Placing an order is as simple as deciding which cards you want and sending a check to the church (with "scrip" in the memo).

What's happening in and around TUC

A CapPALS



The next rehearsal of this fun loving a cappella singing group will be **Saturday, November 22**. Join in the fun from 10 am – 12 noon at the church. For more information or if you have an opportunity for this group to perform, contact Harry Morgan at 732-469-5994.

Laugh Out Loud



If "laughter is the best medicine" we owe it to ourselves to try it! The final sessions of this low-impact and high-result exercise class, will meet **Monday, Nov. 3 at 8 pm** and again on **Wednesday, Nov. 5 at 11:30 am**. Come and bring a friend. Just \$5 pays one of these playful classes. Contact certified Laughter Instructor, Yvette, at 732-469-7858 for more information.

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.

Scleroderma Support Group

A rare, chronic autoimmune disease, Scleroderma afflicts an estimated 300,000 Americans. 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. Their next meeting will be **November 5 at 7 pm**. Contact coordinators, Ellen Waldstein 908-647-7266 and Carol Krueger 908-647-5870, for more information.

The TUC Mini Art Gallery

Space has been designated in the TUC sanctuary for displaying the work of community artists. Throughout the month of **November 2008**, the works of **Pat Finn** will be on view. Pat is a teacher at the Pingry School and a member of the A CapPALS.



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!

The Trinity Stitchers

Submitted by Carol Krueger

During our October meeting we discussed our "busy" lives, our constant "rushing" from one activity and event to another, how that makes us feel and what we can do to combat those feelings. We are going to try to practice "Soul Speed," slowing down, eliminating activities where possible, encouraging family members to take on some of our responsibilities when appropriate, and stopping throughout the day to take three deep breaths, maybe while sitting at a red light, or waiting for an appointment.

We blessed two shawls and are presenting two shawls this month. Join us for our next meeting is **Saturday, November 15, 10 am – 12 pm**. We will *not* meet in December; we have been invited by the Bound Brook and Skillman groups to a December Knitting Workshop put on by the founders of the Prayer Shawl Ministry. Contact coordinator, Carol Krueger at 908-647-5870 or at cakowls@eclipse.net for more information on this caring ministry and/or for a reservation to the December event.



An Evening of Spiritual Dance



You are invited to participate in a joyful celebration of Life and Spirit. On **November 6, 2008, at 7:30 p.m.**, Ed Foote, a professional dance instructor, will be at Trinity United Church in Warren, NJ to lead us in an evening of Spiritual Dance.

- **What is Spiritual Dance?** Spiritual Dance is a joyful celebration of movement which unites people in community. It is a physical expression of harmony and prayer which results in a feeling of peace.

- **Spiritual Dance can take many forms.** It can be an individual dance which is quiet and reverent, or upbeat and joyous. Much of Spiritual Dance is done in a circle, which conveys a sense of unity. These circle dances can represent a variety of cultures and ways of life; some are quiet and some are lively.

A session of Spiritual Dance provides physical, mental and spiritual nourishment, and it unites people in harmony, thereby helping to expand peace in the world.

All are welcome. Please join us.

Where: Trinity United Church,

118 King George Road, Warren, NJ 07059

When: **November 6, 2008 - 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.**

Suggested Donation: \$10.00

For further information, please call:

Yvette Halpin - 732-271-8786

Greg or Noelle La Gana - 908-526-0263

Words of Wisdom from the Healing and Wholeness Ministry

Nurse's Prescription

By Kay Hurd R.N., Parish Nurse



I have been reading about getting rid of junk, and looking at a show called "Clean House" on TV. Now, no one needs to "dejunk" her house more than I do. But I must confess that I find it really, really hard to do. What *is* junk? The book "*SHED: When organizing is not enough*" helped me to see what was junk and what was not junk and that things that might be keepers today, may become junk tomorrow. So, the dejunking doesn't have to be done in one fell sweep; just practice **S.H.E.D.**

- **Step 1: Separate the treasures**, the hardest part. Slow down to understand the emotional attachment to the items; sort out, identify and unearth the items that you love, that energize you and have true value for you. That picture your grandmother painted may not have any monetary value and truly isn't very good, but you love it because when you look at it, your memories of a loving relationship come alive. It's part of you and your identity. Don't put it away - hang it. *If you have to put it away, then you can get rid of it.* Look into your heart. Carl Jung said "Your vision will become clear only when you look into your heart. Who looks outward, dreams. Who looks inside, awakens." Save *whatever* for yourself, not for your family. This came to light with my Snow Village. This is *my* Christmas village, demonstrating urban renewal problems. My daughters do not want it; they have their own. "Ok, I'll sell it on Ebay," says I. Sell is the operative word; it's only worth about \$2 a house. Ugh! The market was flooded with them. So what to do? I'm not emotionally attached to these houses, my family is not attached to them, and they only take energy away from me when I put them out. These are

things that I can *shed*. Salvation Army here we come. Also, understand why you need to SHED your "stuff." You may be moving, and downsizing is mandatory. You may be at a crossroads in your life and dejunking may be a good thing to do to clear a way for a new path. Whatever the reason, think before you act and be sure that you love it, it energizes you in some way, and that it has true value for you at this time – maybe not later but now.

- **Step 2: Heave the trash.** Once you have identified those items really worth saving, then completely relinquish that which is no longer relevant. Saving it for "someday because I might need it" doesn't count. This is a radical release, a *heaving* of any activity or object that depletes you rather than energizes you. This step creates openings of time and energy.
- **Step 3: Embrace your identity.** Recognize that you are who you are *without* you stuff. Pull your identity from within. Maybe you're keeping old college papers, **all** of the pictures, brochures, souvenirs and postcards of a trip you've taken. Look into that box. What represents you *now*? Who are you now – aging by becoming crotchety and cranky or aging with joy, grace, and energy. Energy comes from within not from the body. Some of the most energetic folks I've seen were dying from cancer and could not get out of bed. They had identified who they *really* were. There is a poem that states what cancer isn't. One of the things cancer isn't – "IT IS NOT ME!" Trust yourself.
- **Finally Step 4: Drive yourself forward.** Begin to fill your space and schedule activities, experiences, and items related to your future. What lights up your eyes? What are your skills? What makes your blood flow? What is enthusiastic joy for you? When you decide what that is, then make time and energy to **do it**. We all have responsibilities and maybe cannot fly off to an island to paint, but we can find a place in our new space to paint. Is being with your grandchildren joyful? Then make time and space to be with them. Does travel turn you on, but you feel it's hard to afford in this time of economic stress? Take a day trip to some place locally, that you've never been before. Make time to **be** with someone who needs you.

When we've "shed" our stuff and made time, it really comes down to choice. All of life is choice, so look at it all and see what choices you've made in the past and what choices you can make now, even if you only have this day of life left. Make it a healthy, happy, cheerful, enthusiastic, joyful, and beautiful choice. **It's your choice.**

*Grace is always amazing grace.
Grace that can be calculated and
"expected" is no longer grace.*

Eugene Boring



Tents of Hope

A journey of compassion and peace with the refugees of Darfur, Sudan

“Gathering of the Tents”

The National Mall in Washington, DC
November 7-9, 2008

Tents of Hope (www.tentsofhope.org) is a one-year campaign in which people respond as communities to the crisis in Darfur by creating tents that are both unique works of art and focal points for learning about, assisting, and establishing relationships with the people of Sudan. Congregations, schools, and civic groups in over 310 cities in 45 states and 9 countries are painting tents with images of hope, love, freedom, humanity, and peace to create awareness about Darfur and to raise funds for humanitarian relief.

Sponsored by American Jewish World Service, Amnesty International, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, Church World Service, Darfur Peace and Development, Dear Sudan, Dream for Darfur, Eco-Cell, ENOUGH!, Genocide Intervention Network, Genocide Watch, Global Grassroots, Globe for Darfur, i-ACT, Investors Against, Genocide, Lost Boys Rebuilding Southern Sudan, Lutheran World Relief, My Sister's Keeper, National Council of Churches, Physicians for Human Rights, Save Darfur, STAND, Unitarian Universalist Association, United Church of Christ.

For more information, contact Amber at
tentsofhopedarfur@gmail.com
or visit www.tentsofhope.org.

What does Eco-Justice mean? How can you help?

Resources from the Eco-Justice office of the National Council of Churches USA are available in hard copy and online at www.ncccojustice.org.

From the New Jersey Association of the UCC ~~

The theme of the October 25 meeting of the NJA/UCC was Boundaries, both for Pastors and Laypeople. After a musical worship led by the First Congregational Church of Park Ridge, the attendees broke into workshop groups. The Rev. Sherry Taylor led a discussion on Keeping Churches Healthy. Resources she recommended are *Behavioral Covenants in Congregations* by Gil Rendle and *How Your Church Family Works* by Peter Steinke.

Here are just a few of the nuggets gleaned from the session to consider:

- Conflict is two ideas trying to occupy the same space at the same time
- Conflicts occur over preferences; church is a good place to learn how to get along when we don't get our own way

- Churches that don't have conflicts are not necessarily healthy
- A single person is not the problem – the problem is the relationship *between* people
- We sometimes need to enforce rules that are for the health of the whole congregation
- We are the Body of Christ – is that how we treat each other? Do we respect and care for each other despite disagreements and conflicts? Do we *hear* each other?
- Everyone needs to feel safe and needs to feel he/she is being heard and listened to

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Samples of resources available include:

Advent/Christmas	Mission
Bible References	Music
Bible Study	Older Adults
Bible Study: Old Testament	Peacemaking
Bible Study: New Testament	Personal Growth
Children: Bible Aids	Prayer/Meditation
Children: Bible Stories	Puppetry
Children: Non-Bible Stories	Retreat/Conference Centers
Church History	Social Issues
Church Renewal	Special Needs
Clowning	Special Needs: Disabilities
Comparative Religion	Specific Countries
Creative Activities	Stewardship
Celebrate, Covenant People,	Storytelling
Death/Grief	Summer Activities
Drama	Symbols
Evangelism/Church Growth	Theology/Christian Doctrine
Faith Development	Vacation Bible School
Family Ministry: Parenting	Women
Games	Worship
Health	Worship: Children
Human Sexuality	Worship: Sacraments
Hunger	Youth Ministry
Inclusive Language	Whole People of God, Witness
Leadership: Lay Ministry	
Lent/Easter	Let us know your topic or interest!

Reflections From the Being Whole in the Eyes of God Conference / PC(USA)~~



Three days is not nearly long enough to address, let alone resolve, all the possible obstacles to complete inclusiveness in our faith communities. It is enough, however, to shine light on the challenges and resources available in making this inclusiveness a possibility, not merely a "some day" dream. This was the goal of the design team from the Being Whole Community, including our own Gary and Joyce Pratt, who organized the conference.

Trinity United Church, represented by attendees Cyndy Reames and Pastor Elsie Armstrong Rhodes, was chosen as a mentoring partner with members of the Being Whole Community. This means that, over the next few months, we will be given one-on-one guidance and resource help as we choose goals for making our congregation accessible for those with physical, emotional, or mental disabilities. "Accessibility" means restrooms a wheelchair can get into and move around in, classrooms that anyone can reach, a sound system for those with hearing loss or impairment, bulletins and music in large print. And it means more: worship services that are flexible enough to allow for people with varying degrees of ability to participate, an intentional consideration of every ability and finding a task that meets that ability – a way for everyone from youngest to oldest to have a place and a purpose within the faith community.

The goals we will be determining need to be measurable, reachable, affordable. We will be looking at mobility-related goals as well as goals involving worship and participation in the life of our faith community (ushering, lay-leadership, member care).

During the conference, we were reminded that sanctuary is not just a room in a building. Sanctuary means safe haven; a safe place to be exactly who and what we are. We need to reclaim a tradition of hospitality for all. When we welcome the stranger, as Jesus commanded us, we welcome the Spirit into our midst. It is God's call to all people to get out of the role of "receivership" – to redeem the gifts in all of us and put them to use.

In a song by Christopher Grundy, based on John 17:21, "TAMBO" is the reason that Jesus came. Being intentional about inclusiveness, about accessibility for all, is creating a way for TAMBO. What is TAMBO? That **They All Might Be One**.

If you would like to be part of the goal setting process, contact Pastor Elsie (732-469-5044) or Cyndy Reames (732-271-1885) or by email cyndyr@hotmail.com (use TAMBO in the subject line).



The Body of Christ:

My friends let us not be uninformed. We are all members of the body of Christ. We are many members with different talents, gifts and abilities, yet we come together as one body with Christ as our head.

If the foot should say because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body, that does not make it less a part of the body.

If the ear should say because I am not an eye, that does not make it less a part of the body.

If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole body was an ear where would be the smell?

God has arranged all of the members in the body according to his purpose. The eye cannot say to the hand I have no need of you. Nor again the head to the feet I have no need of you.

On the contrary, the parts of the body which seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those parts of the body we think less honorable we invest with great honor.

Let there be no discord in the body for we are one body and individually members of the body. I need you, you need me. We all are a part of Christ's body.

Based on Romans 12:4-6

Trinity Times Update

After 11 years as editor of Trinity Times, I will be capping my pen (or shutting down my computer) after the January 2009 issue. The changes in this monthly newsletter over the past years have been drastic – format, content, and contributors. It has been an exciting and rewarding responsibility that I have enjoyed. But, it is time to let go and move on to other tasks.

As of this publication, no one has stepped forward to take on this job. Thanks to the many people who now contribute articles and information, and to an established publication schedule, the task is more manageable than when it was 11 years ago. It does still take a commitment of time and creativity. If you are interested in learning more about what being "editor" entails, please contact me, Cyndy Reames, at cyndyr@hotmail.com. Put "Trinity Times" in the subject of your email.



Republican or Democratic,
Independent or Green

Remember to Vote
on
November 4, 2008

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

November 2: "Filled with Good Things"

Scripture: Psalm 107:1-9, 43

The Rev. Elsie Armstrong Rhodes, preaching

All Saints Sunday

Celebration of Communion

November 9: "Tending the Light"

Scripture: Isaiah 42:1-9; Matthew 25:1-13

The Rev. Elsie Armstrong Rhodes, preaching

November 16: "Buried Treasure"

Scripture: Psalm 123; Matthew 25:14-30

The Rev. Elsie Armstrong Rhodes, preaching

Hunger Offering

Dedication of Pledges

TUC Soup Contest following worship

November 23:

Thanksgiving/Reign of Christ Sunday

Jared Stephens, Pastoral Assistant, preaching

November 30:

Joy Klingeman, Pastoral Assistant, preaching

First Sunday of Advent – Hope

Trinity United Church

118 King George Road
Warren, NJ 07059

"Growing in Christ, Sharing in Love"

November 2008



Trinity United Church

Founded 1846

A union of United Church of Christ and Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

October 21, 2008

Make Room For New Blessings!

"Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back" (Luke 6:38).

As the seasons change around us from summer to fall, autumn brings a new beauty that we had forgotten. The heat of summer had driven away all but the barest memory of the cool colorful beauty of fall.

We see these changes and mark them as natural and normal. In like manner we too are in such a position for growth and change. The seasons of nature march on in their appointed times and fulfill their great purposes. Our calendar also shifts along presenting us with each human conceived season in its appropriate time.

This is the time for us at TUC to think about the health and growth of the church, for as nature settles into sleep, we are thinking about the life of our congregation.

Stewardship is the term applied to this season of the church. It is the time of year when we ask ourselves what it means to be members of the body of Christ. It is in this time that we have the opportunity to look at what our gifts are, what our strengths are, what our blessings are, and how God is asking us to use these things to build up His kingdom in this place and in the life of this congregation.

Stewardship means appropriately using the gifts that God has given us— like dancing, singing, baking, caring — through our knowledge of who God is through Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit. As we give of ourselves through our gifts we find that instead of being used up, like a well run dry, we begin to see the source of our gifts as a never ending spring— a well of life that only grows more pure and more powerful and satisfying as we use it.

This year's theme is, "Make room for new blessings," because we believe that when we faithfully give of ourselves to God we are opening our hearts to God's will in our lives. When we open our hearts to God's will, we open our hearts to God. It is part of our Christian journey. Obedience is the behavior that Jesus modeled for us, and being faithful Christians, we must also be faithful stewards, for in love Christ calls us, and in love we must respond.

Abundant blessings,

Jared Stephens,

Pastoral Assistant