

Trinity Times

"Growing in Christ, Sharing in Love"

A publication of Trinity United Church

A joint congregation of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the United Church of Christ

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Elsie Armstrong Rhodes, Pastor

Cyndy Reames, Editor

Volume 7 Issue 4

April 2004

From the Pastor's Pen:

By The Reverend Elsie Armstrong Rhodes

In the days following Easter Sunday - the season known as Eastertide - we can easily become blasé about a risen Christ.

"The tomb is empty. Jesus is out, beyond death's reach, on the loose." These words, spoken by a preacher I know, should make us tremble.

But, do we tremble anymore?

The record in Scripture is full of fear and trembling. In the Easter story, soldiers flee in panic. Mary, standing in the garden near the empty tomb, weeps so deeply and trembles so passionately that she doesn't even recognize Jesus as he stands beside her. Peter is terrified. John is shocked. Many disbelieve.

It's no wonder Easter, for many, has turned into a flower-filled celebration of spring, a rote affirmation of new life. For the reality of Easter - the dramatic in-breaking of God's power is almost too frightening to imagine. It threatens who we are and how we're living. The God of all power and love, who raised Jesus from death to life, may indeed turn all of *our* lives on end!

Inside this Issue

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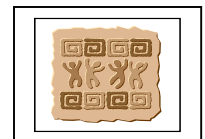
Pg. 5 Denominational News and Events

It's when *God* comes close - when *God's* hand moves close to our hands, when *God's* ways break forth into our ways - that fear grips our lips. When *God* acts as only *God* can act, routines are broken. Complacency is jarred. Certainties are shattered. A deep pause takes hold in our soul.

If the character of *God* is to shape our life - if the ways of *God* are to guide our steps - then we must be ready for the power of the Holy to cause our souls to tremble. Tremble. For *God* *is* active and alive - transforming the world and our lives in ways that go beyond our understanding.

May the reality of the resurrection this Eastertide bring us all to our knees, trembling.

Amen and amen.
Pastor Elsie

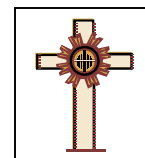


Pastor Elsie Armstrong Rhodes can be reached at home, 732-748-3370, on her cell at 908-304-3605 or via email at thereverend@trinityunitedchurch.org.

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Were you there when they nailed Him to the cross?
Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb?

Were you there when He rose up from the grave?

Oh how it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?



Notes from the Covenant Board

Since TUC "gave up" meetings during the Lenten Season, there are no Covenant Board Notes for this issue. Please check out the May issue of Trinity Times for notes from what promises to be a very full April meeting agenda.

- COMMUNION was served to 46 people on 3/7/04. Elders serving communion were Lorraine Kimsey, Lynn Merrill, and Nancy Irwin.

MEMBERS OF THE COVENANT BOARD – 2004

Rick Bigge	732-356-3613
Sue Coslick	908-719-7515
Bob Hurd	732-560-9209
Karen Kaslusky	908-822-7398
Lorraine Kimsey	908-580-9761
Phil Krieter	908-707-4031
Harry Morgan	732-469-5994
Gary Pratt	908-647-6094
Mildred Waale	908-754-6557

Members of the Pastoral Relations Committee

Greg Hoover	Yun Negri
Phil Krieter	Gary Pratt
Linda Mobus	Cyndy Reames

Financial Report:

Ralph Pratt, Financial Secretary; Carol Krueger, Treasurer

The Total Operating Income received through tithes, pledges, and offerings in March 2004 was \$6057.33.

	February	March	YTD
Receipts	\$15,663.09	\$22,038.24	\$56,903.28
Disbursements	\$19,526.71	\$29,972.81	\$78,193.10

Q. WHO WAS THE GREATEST FINANCIER IN THE BIBLE?

A. NOAH. HE WAS FLOATING HIS STOCK WHILE EVERYONE ELSE WAS IN LIQUIDATION.

Upcoming TUC Meetings and Events:

- Apr. 4 (Palm Sunday 10:30am) – Communion Service
- Apr. 7 (Wednesday 7:00pm) – Choir Rehearsal
- Apr. 8 (Maundy Thursday 6:30pm) – Passover Seder and Tenebrae Service at Christ Presbyterian
- Apr. 10 (Saturday 10am-12pm) – New Members Class
- Apr. 11 (Sunday 9:30am) – No Church School
- Apr. 11 (Sunday 9:30am) – Covenant Board to meet with new members
- Apr. 11 (Sunday 10:30am) – Easter Service
- Apr. 11 (Sunday 11:45am) – Easter Egg Hunt
- Apr. 13 (Tuesday 7:30pm) – Covenant Board Meeting
- Apr. 16 (Friday 1pm) – Mission Group Meeting
- Apr. 17 (Saturday 9am-4pm) – UCC NJ Assoc. Annual Meeting
- Apr. 18 (Sunday 10:30am) – Hunger Offering
- Apr. 18 (Sunday 4pm) – CineMinistry (see pg 4 for details)
- Apr. 25 (Sunday 5-7pm) – Book Club Potluck (see pg. 3 for details)
- Apr. 26 (Monday 7:30pm) – All-Teams Meeting

OUTWARD BOUND – MISSION AT TUC

Kay Hurd, Missions Chairperson

Heifer International Farm Trip

June 6 – 11, 2004

By Merl Coslick

You are invited to join the TUC city slickers as they don overalls and straw hats for their journey to Rutland, MA this summer. This six-day visit (June 6-11) will educate the participants in the dimension of worldwide hunger and the work of the famous Heifer Project program to address it.

As visitors to the farm in Massachusetts, we will share in traditional rural chores, including milking and feeding the animals. Rolling up their sleeves, our folks will help with barn cleaning, fencing, painting, firewood, maple sugaring, and maintaining and building demonstration structures. Are we having fun yet?

TUCers will be divided into "families" representing a Global Village site. Each one will role-play being a Heifer Project partner, whose family received animals from Heifer. The Global Village has international sites representing different areas of the world where Heifer is working. A bamboo house on stilts represents Thailand, a cinder block house with a tin roof represents Guatemala. Other sites are of Peru, China, Uganda and the USA.

We will learn how to make various products using the resources from livestock and our natural resources, such as a dairy products session and a wool products element.

International project partners will present their story of how Heifer International has helped their family.

Our congregation's renowned reputation for cooking and eating will be highlighted when we cook a meal using the methods and supplies traditionally available to people in one of the Global Village sites. We will be given money indigenous to that country and go to market to buy the food. We will build a fire, draw water and cook the meal, discussing the realities of where this food would really have come from in that country, how long it would actually take to prepare it, and how far a family might have to go to get their water and firewood.

There will be presentations on how families qualify to receive animals and how field representatives oversee the process. We will also learn to understand the causes and impact of hunger in the United States, with a presentation of statistics, illustrations and a review of a typical budget for an American family of four on minimum wage.

This first mission trip for our church will undoubtedly be memorable and moving, as we gain a deep understanding of this global problem. Please join us and extend this invitation to friends and family.

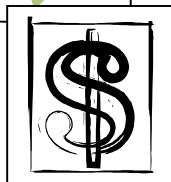
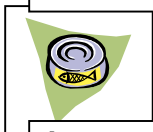
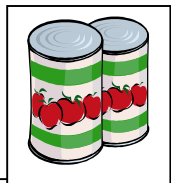
All expenses for the program are covered through our mission budget. Participation limited to 10. **Firm reservations must be received by April 10.** Contact Merl Coslick, 908-719-7515 to secure your reservation.

Our mission responsibilities require us to reach beyond the walls of our church. Step up, reach out, stand tall. Join us, please.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING:

At TUC, our collection for OGHS will be taken on Palm Sunday, April 4. Combined with the collections from other churches taken during the Lent and Easter seasons, our gifts help those in need worldwide, especially in the area of disaster relief. Even if you are unable to be in worship on April 4, you can contribute by mailing your check directly to the church (118 King George Rd, Warren), payable to Trinity United Church, earmarked OGHS.

FOOD BANK NEWS



Sunday, April 18 will be the next **Hunger Offering** for the Food Bank Network of Somerset County. The TUC volunteers, who worked at the Somerville Distribution Center on Saturdays during March, discovered first-hand how limited the supplies of non-perishable items are. Priority staples are stews, soups, tuna, pastas and sauces, rice, cereal, vegetables and fruit, peanut butter, canned meat, and powdered milk. And how much “luxury items” such as coffee, cookies, bar soap, shampoo, are baby food are appreciated and valued.

Please bring your contributions forward on April 18 during the singing of the last hymn and put them in the basket or on the communion table. And remember, you may also write a check to “Trinity United Church,” earmarked “Hunger Offering.”

Many thanks to those who volunteered their time during March and especially to coordinator Kay Hurd who made certain enough “staff” showed up each week.

Words from Worship

Sue Coslick, Elder, Worship Commission

Numbers that Matter: Worship Attendance

March 7	38 Adults	8 Children/Youth
March 14	39 Adults	5 Children/Youth
March 21	58 Adults	9 Children/Youth
March 28	35 Adults	5 Children/Youth

A Passover Celebration

On **Maundy Thursday, April 8**, Christ Presbyterian will again be our hosts, as we participate in a 1st Century style Passover Seder, beginning at 6:30 pm. It was during this type of meal that Jesus first broke the bread and poured the cup that has become our Communion Sacrament. You won't want to miss this opportunity to experience what it was like for the disciples on that night so very long ago.

Lenten Soup Supper and Service

White linen tablecloths, polished silver flatware, and glowing candlelight – the perfect setting at an upscale restaurant. Yet, this wasn't a 4-star restaurant; it was the all-purpose room at TUC, set in preparation for the Lenten Soup Suppers and Services. Each week, members and friends of TUC, including friends from

Christ Presbyterian, gathered around the tables to share in food, fellowship, and a time of worship, led by small group discussion leaders. Whether the topic was meditation, fasting or simplicity, their words helped us to focus on why we were present. A visit by Tom Teel during one meal was cause for celebration, thanksgiving, and rejoicing and reminded us that we serve a God who works miracles, big and small.

Thank you to all those who made this annual event special – the soup makers, the salad/bread/drink makers, the set-up and take-down crews, the behind-the-scene planners, and especially those who participated each week.

WALK TO JERUSALEM

Congratulations to all those who made the effort to develop healthier lifestyle habits during the Lenten Season, even if you didn't make it all the way to Jerusalem. Just because the official Walk to Jerusalem is over, doesn't mean that your efforts need to end, or that those who would like to begin the journey to healthy living can't start now.

For more information on what you can do to live a life of wholeness, contact TUC's parish nurse, Kay Hurd at 732-560-9206 or at KHURD@msn.com.

Journey to Jerusalem

The end or just the beginning

The Lenten Season is drawing to a close. We have “walked with Him, talked with Him”, learned of His temptations and His amazing compassion. We've studied Christian disciplines – fasting, simplicity, solitude, meditation, prayer, and submission – and learned that they are achievable even in our fast-paced 21st century lives. We've experienced the barrenness of the wilderness in the burlap coverings on the pulpit and communion table. We've smelled the perfume of passion poured out by Mary to anoint the feet of Jesus.

But is our journey over or is it only just beginning? Does the beauty of Easter put an end to our Lenten experience or give it new meaning and purpose? Do we end this time of growing, learning, searching or do we use it as a starting point for more in-depth growing, learning, searching?

A Christian Education Minute



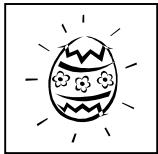
Reading is Fundamental...

And at TUC, we plan to make it fun! The new, once-a-month book club will meet for the first time on April 25 at 5pm (location to be determined). On the table for discussion is our first book

selection, *The DaVinci Code*, an intriguing mystery novel by Dan Brown, with many interesting twists on religious myths, legends, and concepts. A sign-up sheet for those interested in joining us for this potluck is posted on the sanctuary bulletin board or you can contact the church office at 732-469-5044. Future books to be read and discussed will be determined by the group on April 25.

Exploring Membership Class Saturday, April 10, 10 am – Noon

If you are interested in becoming a member of Trinity United Church, or are curious as to just what it means to be a Presbyterian/United Church of Christ congregation, or you would like the opportunity to begin exploring issues of faith ...then please join Pastor Elsie for the Exploring Membership Class on April 10, beginning at 10 am. The morning will include discussion, a video presentation, and refreshments. Your **R.S.V.P.** will help us with our planning. You may phone the church office (732) 469-5044 or e-mail Pastor Elsie: thereverend@trinityunitedchurch.org.



AND THE HUNT IS ON>>>

Once again hundreds of candy-filled Easter eggs have been hidden in the side-yard at Trinity United Church.

Children of all ages are urgently needed on Sunday, April 11, immediately following the worship service to help find them. For more information, contact Nancy Irwin or Lynn Merrill or the TUC office at 732-469-5044.

TUC ALL-CHURCH RETREAT...

in the Planning Stages

Because the elders found their retreat to be such an enlightening and uplifting experience, they wanted to share the experience by having an All Church Retreat. Since retreats are designed as opportunities to *get away* from the normal hustle and bustle of our everyday lives, a location is being researched that will provide the needed space away, yet be close enough to make a weekend feasible. The Task Force who are taking on the challenge of this first-ever TUC All Church Retreat are Gary Pratt, Karen Kaslusky, Lorraine Kimsey, Kay Hurd, Thom Rhodes, Robert Willits and Cyndy Reames (with Pastor Elsie acting as ad hoc member and kibitzer.) Since the task force was formed just prior to the Lenten Season, they have not had an official meeting yet, but have been doing research individually. Watch for details to start coming fast and furious, though once they are able to truly get into gear.

"They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people."

Acts 2:46-47

Visit-A-Church

Instead of our usual Internet "visit" to different Presbyterian and United Church of Christ churches across the country, this month, take time to check out the denominations themselves and discover just what we are a part of. You might be surprised at the many diverse, and wide-reaching ministries that make up the PC/USA and the UCC. There may be an opportunity you never imagined just waiting for you at <http://www.pcusa.org/> and/or <http://www.ucc.org/>.



Admin Team

looks at Maintenance

information submitted by Greg Hoover

In April, a sheet will be posted, listing various tasks YOU can choose from that will help maintain the church properties. These tasks are simple, usually one-time only activities that can be executed to support the church and its many programs. The Admin Team is still working out the logistics, but the tasks can range from making phone calls requesting vendor estimates to actually meeting with the vendors to spreading sand in winter. In other words, something for everybody, even those who are not handy with a hammer and nails! Look for the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board by the rear entrance of the church.

What's happening in and around TUC

"Project Healthy Bones"

This active, joyful, exercise and fitness group meets at 10am each Wednesday and Friday at TUC. If you are interested in joining or for more information, contact leaders, Don and Laura MacGregor at 732-469-2012.

A CapPals

Join voices with others seeking ways to turn their love of a cappella singing into outreach opportunities. The group meets every other Saturday, 10am until 11:30am at the church. For more information on becoming a member or if you have an opportunity for this group to perform, contact Harry Morgan at 732-469-5994.

KNITTERS AND CROCHETERS UNITE

The total is now **three** beautifully handcrafted, colorful sweaters contributed by the knitters and crocheters of TUC. If you knit or crochet, your skills can be put to use in this definitely hands-on mission opportunity, *The Guideposts Sweater Project*. To pick up copies of the patterns or to learn more about this unique project established in 1996, contact Carol Krueger, care of the church at 732-469-5044.

CineMinistry

Bring your favorite movie munchie and join us as *CineMinistry* meets on Sunday April 18 at 4pm at the church. This installment will be primarily a discussion on the movie by Mel Gibson, *The Passion of the Christ*. Clips from other movies in the same genre, such as "Jesus of Nazareth" and "Jesus Christ, Superstar," will be shown throughout the evening to enhance the discussion. For more information on CineMinistry, call Thom Rhodes at 732-748-3370.

One must wait until evening to see how splendid the day has been.



and Events Calendar

A Dramatization of Leonardo DaVinci's The Last Supper

Monday, April 5, 2004 at 7:30pm
First Presbyterian Church
270 Woodbridge Ave., Metuchen, NJ
for information and directions call
732-549-5101

The Seven Last Words

With Jazz Vocalist, 'Tulivu' Donna
Cumberbath,
and her Magnificent Trio
Good Friday, April 9, 2004 7:30 pm
at United Presbyterian Church
525 East Front Street, Plainfield, NJ
Suggested Donation \$10.00

Presbyterian Women Spring Gathering

Tuesday, April 13, 2004
3:00 pm – 9:00 pm
Osceola Presbyterian Church, Clark
(for details see flyer in back of church)

UCC New Jersey Association Annual Meeting

April 17, 2004, 9am – 4pm
Union Congregational Church, Montclair, NJ

Becoming a Church of Growing Vitality & Outreach

Saturday, May 8, 2004, 9 am- 2 pm
First Presbyterian Congregation of Connecticut
Farms
Stuvesant Ave. & Chestnut St., Union, NJ

During March TUC members had opportunities to experience workshop style events sponsored by both Elizabeth Presbytery and the Atlantic Conference of the United Church of Christ. Below are reactions from those who participated in these events –

Xtravaganza 2004:

An extravagant experience

On March 14, a mass exodus took place as Carol Krueger, Sue Coslick, Linda Mobus, Lorraine Kimsey, Lynn Merrill, Harry Morgan, and Pastor Elsie left TUC to participate in the annual Elizabeth Presbytery Xtravaganza hosted by the United Presbyterian Church in Plainfield. This year's keynote speaker was Byron Borger, owner of Heart & Mind Books in Pennsylvania. According to Lynn Merrill, "We should organize a bus trip to go visit his bookstore!" He is proud of the fact that his store is unapologetically CHRISTIAN, focusing on books for, by, and about Christians. Later in his workshop, *Being the People of The Book in a Media*

Age, he spoke on the importance of literature in the history of the church, the value of the written word in keeping the stories and events of the faith alive in an age of visual media. In *The Creative Experience with Music in Worship*, the focus was on the blending of contemporary praise music and traditional hymns in today's worship atmosphere. One attendee felt that TUC does attempt to do this now on a limited basis, but that our members and friends would be open and receptive to more. In *Dynamic Deacons*, Linda Mobus discovered that in a church the size of TUC, we are all Deacons, or at least we all share the responsibilities of deacons as outlined in scripture, while in *Christian Encounters with Muslims*, she learned that her understanding of Muslims was either inaccurate or incomplete, a valuable lesson in a time when we are being bombarded with negative aspects of the Muslim faith and the hatred of Muslim fanatics. Other workshops attended by TUC participants were *How to Share Your Faith Without Losing Your Friends*, *Companions on the Spiritual Journey*, *Church Treasurer and Bookkeeper Workshop*, and *Strategy for Congregational Transformation and Revitalization*.

God Is Still Speaking

Extending an Extravagant Welcome

March 20 found Carol Krueger, Laura MacGregor, and Cyndy Reames traveling to Montclair to attend the conference on communication in the church, sponsored by the Central Atlantic Conference of the UCC. Also attending was Sue Goodwin, in her role as Pastoral Candidate. Not certain what to expect, the three were soon caught up in the enthusiasm of the planners and attendees alike. As Sue Goodwin notes, "The theme of extravagant welcome was beautifully illustrated through the playfulness of the steel drummers. I heard their music as I entered the church and found the gathering hall by following the sound." Skits started the event, demonstrating two diametrically opposite types of greeters: the Rejective-Selective Greeters and the Tie-Them-to-the-Altar Greeters. While the skits were "a hoot" and had those present roaring with laughter, it was all too easy to recognize traits common in many of today's churches.

Ron Buford, the keynote speaker, presented the UCC advertising campaign being tested in various markets across the country. The campaign, which zeros in on the inclusiveness of UCC congregations and on reaching the disenfranchised, is entitled "God is Still Speaking," and will be released nationwide during Advent 2004. Mr. Buford encouraged all of us to be "brand specific," to identify our church with the UCC (and in our case, the PC/USA as well) so that people looking for a congregation will recognize us.

The round-table discussions during lunch proved to be a remarkable source of information. Some of the tidbits Carol, Laura, and Cyndy gleaned are: the availability of

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grant money for advertising as well as church improvements (especially for older churches, like TUC!); the need to include worship service information

in all communications; and various ideas for events that generate community involvement. Some of those events include a food bank drive, bike-a-thon, and fun-themed community dinners. New ways to use local newspapers for FREE publicity both prior to and after an event was also helpful information.

Nurse's Prescription

Kay Hurd R.N., Parish Nurse

Greetings in the name of our Redeemer and great Physician! Looking back on our Lenten Journey, I would like to share some thoughts with you on the health and healing ministry of the church.

During Jesus' life he devoted much of his ministry to healing physical, emotional and spiritual brokenness. In addition, his charge to the "church" included preaching, teaching and healing. (Matt. 28:19-20, Mark 16:18). If we are his church, then the ministry of health and healing are central to the life of our church. Many traditional church activities are rooted in the ministry of healing. God has given us His Word, Baptism and Communion, and Fellowship as gifts of healing. All of God's people are called to live lives of peace, mercy and healing together with kindness, compassion, gentleness and patience.

In order to live the lives we have been given, we must first be grounded in a living relationship with Jesus Christ – meaning, we are to become responsible for our own spiritual journey. Secondly, we must grow in sensitivity to the struggles and sufferings of others. God enables us to live a life of kindness, compassion, gentleness and patience (Col. 3:12). Thirdly, we can make ourselves present to those around us, those who are suffering, those who need a friend, the sick, the homeless, the hungry.

Our charge as Christians is to help others find meaning and peace in their lives. We are all at different places in our journeys. Just as the map in the back of the sanctuary during Lent illustrated that some have already reached Jerusalem while some are still swimming in the Atlantic or in the Mediterranean (and still others stopped off in Rome!), we are all at different points in our Christian walk. But wherever we are, we can be present (a Present) to those around us – demonstrating, kindness, compassion, gentleness and patience – not just asking the question "What would Jesus do?" **but doing what Jesus did.**

Soup makers of TUC lend me your soup! **Take II**

Curried Squash, Spring Pea, Corned Beef and Cabbage, Cauliflower/Broccoli/Cheese Surprise, 16 Bean Soup, Beef Barley with Carrot, Steak Soup, Mexican Chili Soup, Corn Chowder, Clam Chowder, Potato Chowder, Low Sodium Vegetable Medley...and the list goes on. Each week during Lent brought more culinary sensations to tease and tickle the taste buds at the Soup Suppers and Services. But, if you missed out on partaking of these masterpieces from the soup kitchens of TUC members and friends, fear not. Your chance not only to sample a variety of delicious

creations but to try your hand at creating a palate-pleasing treat of your own is coming soon. The coveted Golden Ladle will be back up for grabs as the Annual Soup Contest returns to TUC. Watch for more details on how you can participate in this always tasty, always fun fellowship, to be held after worship service some time this fall. If you are interested in helping with this event, contact co-coordinators, Lynn Merrill and Nancy Irwin.

"Seven Quilts for Seven Sisters"

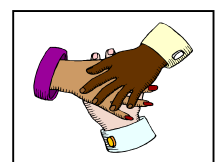
"A Stitch in Time" brings the past to life

On Saturday, March 13, the more than 70 people filling the seats at TUC were mesmerized as the "sisters" transported themselves and their audience to the plantations of the South prior to the Civil War. Dressed in costume, the women told the stories of the slaves who lived, worked, loved, *and* quilted, creating beauty out of lives that were hardly beautiful. Magically, those present no longer saw 21st century women with jobs and families. Instead we saw and heard the struggles of the housemaid, the weariness of the cotton picker, the playfulness of the cakewalk competitor, and the vibrant spirit of them all. With creativity, imagination, laughter, and song, they presented fact and dispelled myths, explaining the unique value of the quilts they created, the hidden meanings within each stitch, block, and pattern. And through it all they shared the sheer joy of life and love of God.

An Education on Modern South Africa

On Sunday, March 14, TUC welcomed The Rev. Dr. Malan Nel, Director of the Centre for Contextual Ministry in South Africa as our guest preacher during worship. His sermon title, "Who are We and Where are We Going?" was based on I Peter 2:4-8. He shared the blessings and challenges of pastors and teachers in South Africa. He explained how many new Christians are so inspired by the change in their own lives, that they begin to preach the Gospel much the same way the Disciples and Apostles did in the early church – with many of the same results. Later, during fellowship time, Professor Nel and his wife, Marlèse, shared more examples of their work training these men and women, and their efforts to bring education to the people of South Africa beginning with the very young, through her work with educational toys, games, and supplies and his work teaching the pastors and teachers. A poignant reminder to those listening and a constant source of inspiration to Dr. Nel is the story of one young Christian-pastor who witnesses and preaches to a congregation of 5000 each and every week, yet who is only now receiving a formal education.

TUC will be supporting Dr. Nel's work as part of our local Mission contributions.



A Look at Holy Week

Submitted by The Reverend Elsie Armstrong Rhodes

Palm Sunday (April 4) ushers in what probably is the most turbulent week of the liturgical year. What begins triumphantly with Jesus' entering Jerusalem, ends in the dark tomb with its door sealed shut. Holy Week encompasses the last days of Jesus' life, and the observance of it has taken place since the early years of the church.

From the beginning, Christians recognized the importance of the events that took place in Jesus' life during the days leading up to the Resurrection. The various gospels have placed within this week the stories of Jesus' cleansing the temple, washing the disciples' feet, weeping over Jerusalem, and infusing the Passover celebration with new symbolism in his last supper. And it is in this week that Jesus is arrested, mocked, and crucified.

The observance of our present-day Holy Week evolved out of the Easter vigil in the early church. The earliest Christians fasted from six o'clock on Saturday evening until three o'clock on Easter morning. Then they broke the fast with the celebration of Communion. Besides fasting, Christians in Jerusalem began retracing the steps Jesus took. As early as 400 CE, (Christian Era), pilgrims traveled to Jerusalem to walk the way of sorrows to the cross, a custom still observed in Jerusalem today.

Today, as we number the days to Holy Week, we recall the extravagant love of a woman for her friend, and we rejoice in the even more extravagant, self-giving love of that friend for all of humankind. (From "A Foretaste of things to Come" in *Seasons of the Spirit*)

"Holy Week"

by Ann Weems (*Kneeling in Jerusalem*)

Holy is the week ...
Holy, consecrated, belonging to God...
We move from hosannas to horror
with the predictable ease
of those who know now what they do.

Our hosannas sung,
our palms waved,
let us go with passion into this week.
It is a time to curse fig trees that do not yield fruit.
It is a time to cleanse our temples of any
blasphemy.
It is a time to greet Jesus as The Lord's Anointed
One,

to lavishly break our alabaster
and pour perfume out for him
without counting the cost.

It is a time for preparation...

The time to give thanks and break bread is upon
us.

The time to give thanks and drink of the cup is
imminent.

Eat, drink, remember:

On this night of nights, each one must ask,
as we dip our bread in the wine,
"Is it I?"

And on that darkest of days, each of us must stand
beneath the tree
And watch the dying
if we are to be there
when the stone is rolled away.

The only road to Easter morning
is through the unrelenting shadows of that
Friday.

Only then will the alleluias be sung;
only then will the dancing begin.

Did you know..?

- ❖ **Carol Krueger** has resigned her position as church secretary (effective April 24) to accept a full-time position as office manager for IndustrySuites. While we are sorry to see her leave her position as church secretary, we are pleased for this opportunity for her.
- ❖ **Piper Miley**, one of our newest TUC family, is costumer for *Les Miserablé* being produced by Franklin High School, April 23, 24, 30, and May 1. Many of the Madrigals who participated in our worship service last December will be performing, including Pastor Elsie's nephew, Ryan. For ticket information contact Piper at 732-873-3872. Pg 7

HOLY WEEK EVENTS

April 4: "Before (and After) the Rooster Crowed"

Luke 22:14-24, 45-62

Palm Sunday

Sue Goodwin, Pastoral Assistant, preaching
Palm Processional; Special choral music

Service of Communion

April 8

Maundy Thursday
1st Century Seder and Communion
6:30pm
Christ Presbyterian Church

April 9

Good Friday
A listing of the various churches
hosting Good Friday services will be available.

Special choral and instrumental music
(No church school for youth or adults)

April 18: "Believing is Seeing"

Revelation 1:4-8 and John 20:19-31
The Rev. Elsie Armstrong Rhodes, preaching
Second Sunday of Easter
Hunger Offering will be received

April 25: "Breakfast on the Beach"

Psalms 30 and John 21:1-19
The Rev. Elsie Armstrong Rhodes, preaching
Third Sunday of Easter

Scriptures listed can be read online at <http://www.blueletterbible.org/index.html>

Trinity United Church

118 King George Road
Warren, NJ 07059

"Growing in Christ,
Sharing in Love"

APRIL 2004



Sunday Sermon Notes
Services begin each week
at 10:30am

April 11: "At Break of Dawn"

Isaiah 65:17-25 and Luke 24:1-12
Easter Sunday
The Rev. Elsie Armstrong Rhodes, preaching