

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

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February 2004

From the Pastor's Pen:

By The Reverend Elsie Armstrong Rhodes

When the days drew near for him to be taken up, (Jesus) set his face to go to Jerusalem.

Luke 9:51

The 40 days of Lent have carried many meanings and symbols through the years, most of which are more than a little intimidating. Lent is a time when we do without, go inward, get serious. It is a time long cast in the shadow of Christ. Who wouldn't find Lent intimidating? But Lent was created to allow us freedom in Christ to discover the full and divine implications of our humanity, and that is a precious freedom and an opportunity not to be missed.

As a season in the church year, Lent was originally a period of preparation for Easter Baptism. During this time of instruction, the catechumens (those preparing for Baptism) fasted and prayed. It was not only a time of great reflection and introspection, it was also a time of deepened awareness and life changing commitment. It was a time to discover for oneself what it means to be a child of God and a follower of Christ.

This Lent (beginning Ash Wednesday, February 25) we hope to focus on this very opportunity – the opportunity to reflect on and rejoice in what it means to be a beloved child of God and a follower of Christ, as we join with the congregation of Christ Presbyterian Church

(Martinsville) in examining and *celebrating* the spiritual disciplines. A detailed brochure of our Lenten program ("Journey to Jerusalem") will be available February 8.

The hope and prayer of those of us involved in the planning of this season, is that we – as Trinity United Church – would commit to a life together of worship, study, fellowship and service. To that end, it was proposed to (and then blessed by) the Covenant Board that there would be no meetings during Lent (Feb. 25-April 4) – the "business" of the church would take a rest.

As we move through this Lenten season of worship, study and service, may we walk as disciples with Christ on His journey to Jerusalem.

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.



To the families and friends of Trinity United Church:

Thank you, thank you – for your commitment to the ministry and mission of Jesus Christ, for your vision for this church in carrying out Christ's mission, and for your willingness to step out in faith... *for such a time as this.*

On a personal note, thank you for your generous support of me, as your pastor, and of our family. It is a privilege and a joy to serve with and among you!

Now to the One who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to God be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

(Ephesians 3:20-21)

Notes from the Covenant Board

Lorraine Kimsey, Acting Clerk

The following are highlights from the January special meeting, moderated by Pastor Elsie Armstrong Rhodes.

- A motion was made and passed to approve that Carol Krueger attend the Jan. 24 meeting of the Elizabeth Presbytery as delegate.
- A motion was made and passed to approve that Sue Goodwin attend the Feb. 7 meeting of the NJ Association of the UCC as delegate.
- A motion was made and passed to approve, with regret, the resignation of George Curtis as elder.
- A motion was made and passed to approve that the Rev. Dr. Malan Nel, director of the Centre for Contextual Ministry in South Africa, be our guest preacher during worship on March 14. Following worship, Professor Nel and his wife, Marlése, will share stories of their life and ministry during and following the years of apartheid.
- COMMUNION was served to 52 people on 1/4/04.

MEMBERS OF THE COVENANT BOARD – 2004

Returning Elders for 2004

Harry Morgan	732-469-5994
Sue Coslick	908-719-7515
Lorraine Kimsey	908-580-9761
Gary Pratt	908-647-6094

New elders duly elected at the 2004 Annual Meeting of TUC

Bob Hurd	732-560-9209
(to complete 2 year position for retiring elder)	
Rick Bigge	732-356-3613
Karen Kaslusky	908-822-7398
Phil Krieter	908-707-4031

After nominations were completed, another elder also resigned; that position will be filled within the next month.

Members of the Pastoral Relations Committee

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

2004 Annual Meeting: Highlights

The 2004 Annual Meeting was convened on Sunday, January 25, with Pastor Elsie as moderator and Harry Morgan as co-moderator. Time was given for the 24 members and 3 non-members present to read through the notes for the two Congregational Meetings held in 2003 as well as the written reports of the various teams and committees. The reports were thorough and gave a clear picture of the activities and actions carried out by TUC members and friends in 2003.

While most meetings of this type are dry and serious, with little to smile about, the 2004 Annual Meeting was filled with humor and a spirit of anticipation even as the budget for 2004 was presented. The financial situation at TUC is another indication of the faith this community of believers has in the vision God has given and their determination to commit to and fulfill His mission in this place and time.

Ralph Pratt will continue as Financial Secretary and Carol Krueger will continue her duties as Treasurer, both for one-year terms. (Anyone who has ever held either of these positions knows how big a job they can be!)

New elders, Bob Hurd, Rick Bigge, Karen Kaslusky, and Phil Krieter, were elected both to begin new 3-year terms and to complete terms being vacated by resigning elders. (Look for profiles on all the 2004 elders and the positions they will be responsible for in the March issue of Trinity Times.)

The nominating committee for 2004 was also elected: Kit Bebbington, Greg Hoover, Nancy Irwin, and Joyce Pratt.

Pastor Elsie's terms of call were discussed and the vote was unanimous that she continue as Pastor at TUC, with a raise in compensation.

Again, with humor and a sense of anticipation, the meeting was adjourned.

Thanks to all of the Elders who have completed terms or are resigning:

TyraLynn Ceccato, George Curtis, Bonnie Dagnall, Don MacGregor, Bob Hurd (completed a one-year term)

Copies of the 2004 Annual Report of Trinity United Church are available through the church office.

Thank YOU, Carol Krueger, for the hours spent compiling, printing, and assembling the report.

Financial Report:

Ralph Pratt, Financial Secretary; Carol Krueger, Treasurer

The Total Operating Income received through tithes, pledges, and offerings in January 2004 was \$5,556.29.

Upcoming TUC Events & Meetings:

- Feb. 1 (Sunday 10:30am) – Communion Service
- Feb. 7 (Saturday 10am) – Batik Workshop
- Feb. 8 (Sunday 12:15pm) – Pastoral Relations Committee Meeting
- Feb. 8 (Sunday 5:30pm) – Youth Event at Christ Presbyterian Church (see pg. 4 for details)
- Feb. 15 (Sunday 10:30am) – Hunger Offering; Installation and Ordination of Elders
- Feb. 15 (Sunday 12:30am, at the manse) – Lenten Small Group Leader Training
- Feb. 15 (Sunday 5:00pm) – CineMinistry
- Feb. 17 (Tuesday **7:00pm**) – Covenant Board Meeting with guest, The Rev. Chris Taylor from the Committee of Ministry
- Feb. 20-21 (Friday 8:30pm – Saturday 4pm) – Covenant Board Retreat
- Feb. 23 (Monday 7:00pm) – All-Teams Meeting
- Feb. 25 (Wednesday 7:00pm) – Ash Wednesday Service, Christ Presbyterian Church (see pg. 3 for details)
- Feb. 27-28 (Friday 6:00pm – Saturday 6pm) – Youth Retreat/"30 Hour Famine" (see pg. 5 for details)
- Feb. 29 (Sunday 10:30am) – First Sunday in Lent

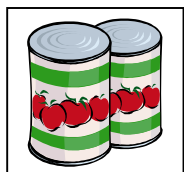
OUTWARD BOUND ~ mission at TUC

Kay Hurd, Missions Chairperson

Saturday, January 24, 2004, the fellowship hall at the Liberty Presbyterian Church, was turned into a Fair Ground as churches and mission organizations throughout the Elizabeth Presbytery showcased ways in which the Great Commission is being carried out. "...And a little church shall lead them" was the theme on TUC's bright blue display, illustrating the amazing mission contributions of this community. Other displays showed the caps, sweaters, and mittens knitted and sent all over the world; the many soup kitchens to be found throughout our Presbytery, including one organized and run entirely by youth; houses built by Habitat for Humanity and Friends of the Carpenter; maps detailing the location and function of missionaries all over the world. If you missed the opportunity to check out this inspiring tribute to mission and the result of what dedicated, committed people can accomplish in the name of Jesus, talk to Kit Bebbington, Carol Krueger, Thom Rhodes, or Pastor Elsie. Do they have stories to tell...!

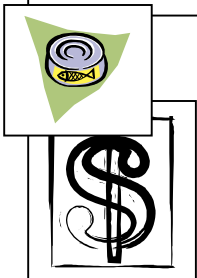
And speaking of hands-on mission, there is still room for others to join the mission trip to the Heifer Project farm in Massachusetts scheduled for June. The cost is minimal, but the rewards are great! As one participant explained, "I may be using vacation time to go *work* on a farm, but it's a lot more rewarding than the work I do day-to-day!" For more details or to volunteer for this exciting opportunity, contact Kay Hurd at 732-560-9206 or Carol Krueger in the church office at 732-469-5044.

FOOD BANK NEWS



The next **Hunger Offering** for the Food Bank Network of Somerset County will be Sunday, **February 15**. Please bring your contribution and put it in the basket or on the communion table.

Non-perishable items, such as stews, soups, tuna, pastas and sauces, rice, cereal, vegetables and fruit, peanut butter, canned meat, and powdered milk are the 'staples' at the Food Bank. You may also write a check to "Trinity United Church," earmarked "Hunger Offering."



In March, TUC will be "manning" the Food Bank Distribution Center in Somerville on Saturdays from 9:30am – 1pm. Each week, at least 5 adults are needed to check in the clients, bag the grocery orders, and hand out the food. A sign up sheet will be posted on the sanctuary bulletin board as of February 8 or you can volunteer by calling the church office at 732-469-5044.

Words from Worship

Sue Coslick, Elder, Worship Commission

Numbers that Matter: Worship Attendance

January 4	45 Adults	7 Children/Youth
January 11	37 Adults	6 Children/Youth
January 18	38 Adults	8 Children/Youth
January 25	31 Adults	4 Children/Youth

Looking ahead to LENT:

Journey to Jerusalem

(Due to the continued hospitalization of Tom Teel, the Shrove Pancake Supper has been postponed for 2004. However, there is plenty more going on that you will want to be a part of. But remember: **No TUC Meetings scheduled during Lent.**)

Lenten Season 2004: a time for reflection, study, and growth as TUC begins its *Journey to Jerusalem*. This year, TUC is joining with Pastor Susan Joseph and the members of Christ Presbyterian Church for many of our services and activities. The season begins with an Ash Wednesday worship service and program hosted by Christ Presbyterian, located on the corner of Washington Valley and Crim Roads in Martinsville, just two miles west of Chimney Rock Road. The service will begin at 7 pm, followed by a brief program describing the weekly study series by Richard Foster, *The Celebration of Discipline*, that both churches will be doing. The books and journals needed for the study will be available for purchase through Carol Krueger in the TUC office beginning February 8, after worship service.

The Annual TUC Soup Supper and Study will be moving to Wednesday nights. Good soup and lively fellowship will still be in abundance and Joyce Pratt will again be coordinating the soups each week; contact her at 908-647-6094 to add your name to her list of soup makers. The format of the evening has changed slightly to include time for the weekly small group discussion portion of *The Celebration of Discipline* study. Each week, Pastors Elsie Armstrong Rhodes and Susan Joseph, and special guest, Pastor Dan Lundquist, will be speaking on the Spiritual Discipline that will be the focus of the next week's study. The schedule for Wednesday's Soup Supper/Services is as follows:

6:30 pm – Soup Supper

7:15 pm – Lenten study

8:30 pm – close w/ prayer or benediction

Please note, the Soup Suppers are for everyone, whether you choose to participate in the Lenten Study or not.

On Maundy Thursday, April 8, Christ Presbyterian will again be host, 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.

Feb. 25 (Ash Wednesday) Christ Presbyterian Church
7 pm – worship including a joint TUC/CPC choir
7:30 – Introduction to *The Celebration of Discipline*,
with focus on the Spiritual Journey, Meditation
*Assignment for week one: Read chapters 1 and 2 in
The Celebration of Discipline and chapters 1 and 2 in
the journal workbook.*

Mar. 3 (Wednesday) Trinity United Church (TUC)
6:30 – Soup Supper
7:10 – Brief Reflection or quote shared
7:15 – Small Groups (sharing re: experiences with
meditation)
8:10 – Plenary Focus: Prayer
8:30 – Benediction
*Assignment for week two: Read chapter 3 in The
Celebration of Discipline and chapter 3 in the journal
workbook.*

Mar. 10 (Wednesday) TUC
6:30 – Soup Supper
7:10 – Brief Reflection or quote shared
7:15 – Small Groups (sharing re: prayer)
8:10 – Plenary Focus: Fasting
8:30 – Benediction
*Assignment for week three: Read chapter 4 in The
Celebration of Discipline and chapter 4 in the journal
workbook.*

Mar. 17 (Wednesday) TUC
6:30 – Soup Supper
7:10 – Brief Reflection or quote shared
7:15 – Small Groups (sharing re: fasting)
8:10 – Plenary Focus: Simplicity
8:30 – Benediction
*Assignment for week four: Read chapter 6 in The
Celebration of Discipline and chapter 6 in the journal
workbook.*

Mar. 24 (Wednesday) TUC
6:30 – Soup Supper
7:10 – Brief Reflection or quote shared
7:15 – Small Groups (sharing re: simplicity)
8:10 – Plenary Focus: Solitude
8:30 – Benediction
*Assignment for week five: Read chapter 7 in The
Celebration of Discipline and chapter 7 in the journal
workbook.*

Mar. 31 (Wednesday) TUC
6:30 – Soup Supper
7:10 – Brief Reflection or quote shared
7:15 – Small Groups (sharing re: solitude)
8:10 – Plenary Focus: Submission
8:30 – Benediction
*Assignment for week six: Read chapter 8 in The
Celebration of Discipline and chapter 8 in the journal
workbook.*

Apr. 8 (Maundy Thursday) Christ Presbyterian Church
6:30 – 1st Century-style Passover Seder and
Communion

WALK TO JERUSALEM

During the Lenten season, which begins February 29, our Lenten study, *The Celebration of Discipline*, will help us to nourish our spirits and grow in our faith. In addition, on February 25, we are encouraging everyone to commit to building his or her body as well, using a program entitled, “**WALK TO JERUSALEM**”. We’re asking each person to commit to an **EXERCISE PROGRAM** or **WEIGHT LOSS PROGRAM** for the 40 days of Lent. If you exercise regularly you may want to emphasize weight loss. If your weight is ok (?), stepping up your exercise program might be your choice. A commitment sheet will be provided to indicate what you are going to do and how much, as well as a log sheet for recording how far you are along the “journey,” each Sunday. An example of how you might state your commitment would be “I will exercise 40 minutes each day for the 40 days of Lent;” that would count for 100 miles each day and enable you to “reach Jerusalem” on Palm Sunday, just in time for the parade. There will be a map showing the 4000 miles to Jerusalem from New York, with each participant represented by a dot on the map. **No names**. This is your commitment with yourself. This is not a race, but rather, it is a time for you to reflect on **your life**: your spiritual life, your physical health, your emotional health, and your relationships. When all are in balance we experience wholeness.

For more information contact Kay Hurd at 732-560-9206 or at KHURD@msn.com

A Christian Education Minute

The Adult Bible Study on Sunday mornings will be wrapping up the Genesis study on February 22. Facilitator, Sue Goodwin, will do a final wrap-up on February 8, setting the stage for the class to view the Genesis series with Bill Moyers during class on February 15 and 22.

Then, on the first Sunday in Lent, February 29, the class will begin a Lenten Bible Study, based on the church-wide theme: JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM. The emphasis will be on discovering how the Lenten experience is described and portrayed in each of the Gospels, presenting us with a faithful account of Christ's path toward the cross.

Attention all TUC Youth!!!

We're joining the youth group at
Christ Presbyterian Church in Martinsville for
Youth Fellowship Program & Pizza!

*Feb. 8, 5:30-7:30 pm
1600 Washington Valley Road*



TUC Youth "Mission" at Home

In a letter from Pastor Susan Joseph, Christ Presbyterian Church

What do your family's video game system and 15 barnyard fowl have in common? Can you find Back to School in Peru in the CD section of Borders? How much does a month's worth of food, shelter, clothing, and medical care for an orphan in Tanzania cost? And why are any of these questions important? Because our youth are going to be making a lot of noise to raise awareness – theirs and ours – about world hunger. But they won't just be raising the roof. They will be raising money that will make a real lasting difference in the lives of some of the poorest kids in the world.

On February 27-28, TUC's Youth (grades 6-12) and the Youth Group from Christ Presbyterian Church will participate in World Vision's **30-HOUR FAMINE**. These eating machines, known as teens, will go for 30 hours without food to get a "taste" of what poverty-stricken children and families experience every day. During their 30-hour fast they will visit a local food pantry and spend time studying and praying about our Christian response to world hunger. Of course, they will also do what they do best – have fun, and all for a good cause, to learn compassion and feed hungry people.

You can support our youth in their mission to feed the hungry as Christ commands, by sponsoring a Famine participant. Smile when they ask you for money! You can also support them with your prayers and by volunteering to help out on February 27-28. If you have an hour or two to spare to hang with some hungry teens, let's talk! Call the church at 732-469-5044.

Our youth have the power to end the suffering of countless starving children and change lives forever. Not just the lives of strangers, but their own lives too. Not only will they be a blessing to families they will never meet, but also, God will richly bless them and us as they practice the compassion of Christ.

Did you know..?

- ❖ Congratulations to **Shirley and Norman LeBoeuf** on the January 8th birth of their newest granddaughters, **Lauren** (weighing in at 1 pound 14) and **Elizabeth** (weighing 2 pounds 7). Proud parents Dawn and Allen LeBoeuf are also doing well.
- ❖ New Addresses for these TUC members:
 - **Bill and Lois Paulus**
2 Point Pleasant Rd, Hopatcong, NJ 08743
973-601-9747 // wpaulus@optonline.net
 - **Bonnie and Morgan Dagnall**
1346 B Johnston Dr, Bethlehem, PA 18017
610-954-8885

Visit-A-Church

Even though it's cold outside, these church websites in California offer plenty of warmth. First, we head to Buena Park for a look at the First Congregational Church at www.mycongregationachurch.net. Then, it's on to Rancho Palos Verdes to visit St. Peter's By the Sea at www.spbts.org (be sure to check out their stained glass windows!).

Nurse's Prescription

Kay Hurd R.N., Parish Nurse

Dear Friends,

As we begin our Lenten Journey we can use this time to reflect upon and prepare our hearts...physically, emotionally, and spiritually. In addition, February is recognized as American Heart Month. **Physically** – The Bible reminds us, "A heart at peace gives life to the body..." (Proverbs 14:30) **Emotionally** – Peter encourages us with these words, "Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have a sincere love for your brothers and sisters, love one another deeply, from the heart." (1 Peter 1:22) Love affirmation in our relationships helps us to celebrate our oneness as children of the Heavenly Father. Learning about all of our emotions assists us in experiencing harmony and wholeness in our lives. **Spiritually** – We can pray these words with the psalmist, "Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me." (Ps. 51:10). We share the good news that it is the Lord who creates purity and wholeness in hearts. At the same time, we understand our need to learn and nourish our spirits; they were not created to live on neglect!

A sampling of 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

The next rehearsal for this fun-loving, talented a cappella vocal group will be Saturday, February 28 at 10am. 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

If you knit or crochet, this mission opportunity, *The Guideposts Sweater Project*, is tailor made for you! To pick up copies of the patterns or to learn more about this unique mission project established in 1996, contact Carol Krueger, care of the church at 732-469-5044.

CineMinistry

Since our first attempt was snowed out, on **Sunday February 15**, beginning at 5pm we'll turn the sanctuary into a mini-movie theater to screen "The Straight Story," starring Richard Farnsworth and Sissy Spacek, followed by conversation and snacks. The idea for CineMinistry is to watch a fun, thoughtful or provocative movie and have a spirited discussion.

For more information, call Thom Rhodes at 732-748-3370.

Sermon Notes

February 1: "Love Actually"

I Corinthians 13; Luke 4: 21-30

The Rev. Elsie Armstrong Rhodes, preaching
Celebration of the Lord's Supper

February 8:

Healing and Wholeness Service
Sue Goodwin, preaching

February 15: "Plain Talk"

Jeremiah 17:5-10; Luke 6:17-26

The Rev. Elsie Armstrong Rhodes, preaching
Hunger Offering will be received

February 22: "...to the Thin Place"

Exodus 34:29-35; Luke 9:28-36

The Rev. Elsie Armstrong Rhodes, preaching

February 29: "In the Wilderness: Tempted and Tested"

Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16; Luke 4:1-13

The Rev. Elsie Armstrong Rhodes, preaching
First Sunday in Lent

Scriptures listed can be read online at

<http://www.blueletterbible.org/index.html>

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