

June 2009

Volume 27, Issue 6

Trinity Times

The Newsletter of the Trinity Presbyterian Church – East Brunswick

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Upcoming Events

- ❖ Trinity Sunday
June 7, 2009
- ❖ Flag Day
June 14, 2009
- ❖ Father's Day and First Day of Summer
June 21, 2009
- ❖ Independence Day
July 4, 2009

I clearly recognize that all good is in God alone, and that in me, without Divine Grace, there is nothing but deficiency. The one sole thing in myself in which I glory, is that I see in myself nothing in which I can glory.

—Catherine of Genoa

Pastor's Message



This past May I was blessed to experience the second of Trinity's TNT evenings (Tuesday Nights at Trinity). It's a brand-new program just beginning, but it's already one of my personal favorites. The evening began with a tasty hoagie dinner for everyone. And after 45 minutes of good food and fellowship, we turned to the program for the night — *A Pickle and a Prayer*.

For this program, the TNT team had set-up 10 prayer stations throughout the church. Each of these stations was something different (sometimes even *very* different) than what we might expect. Yet all were designed to help participants explore prayer a bit more, a bit differently, a bit more intentionally.

There were some of the more "classic" prayer stations that engaged in traditional prayer models, such as the Prayer of Examine (in which one prays through their day in review, seeking to discern God's place within it). But of course, there were some less classical stations, as well, such as the "Braided Lives" station, a "Clay" station, a "Forgiving Enemies" station, and much more.

One of the prayer stations is still up — the Prayer Wall. It's on the exterior wall of Kathy's office as you walk along the outskirts of the sanctuary. Take a look at it if you'd like, and leave your own pray, too!

To be sure, May's *A Pickle and a Prayer* was far, far different than April's *Worship Adventure: Game Shows Galore*. April's was a laugh a minute, and tons of fun. But May's was experiential. For May's TNT was an experience of communion — connection with God and each other.

It was a chance to explore that there is no right or wrong way to pray; that prayer can really be almost anything in which we seek to talk to, listen to, or experience the Lord. We need only to pray (rather than worry about how we're doing it).

What a blessing TNT is proving to be! It's taking a summer-long hiatus from June through September, but will be coming back in October for a full programmatic year! So please plan now to spend every *third* Tuesday evening of the month at Trinity for our TNT nights! What a fun time of faith formation.

Peace,
Rob

Economic woes focus of session

Amid the current economic downturn, many people have either lost jobs or are potentially facing a loss of income.

What does one do amid such a situation? How does one cope with such stress? What does our faith have to do with all of this?

Elder Dick Greenlaw will be leading a two-hour session exploring these questions and much, much more.

The session will be held twice: first on Friday, June 12, from 7-9 p.m., and again on Sunday, June 28, from 7-9 p.m.

What is a father?

Being of the male species does not make a man a father, for a dad is a special blend of hero, disciplinarian, a friend, someone to look up to, someone to model ... someone with a touch of the "mother" in him, someone who is big enough to say, "The fault was mine" ... someone who lives the kind of life that makes you want to say, "I, too, shall follow him!"

—Dr. Alton Kaul

Barbara DeCarlo fills new volunteer role

In April the Session joyfully learned of Barbara DeCarlo's graduation from New Brunswick Theological Seminary's Certificate of Theological Studies, a two-year program designed for developing and equipping disciples for work in Christ's church in various capacities and ministries.

During her two years in the CTS program, Barbara spent every Saturday at NBTS, working her way through a wonderful array of classes and projects. The program's course requirements included classes in both the Old and New Testaments, Biblical hermeneutics, Church history, Christian ethics, and Reformed theology, as well as practicums in both Servant Leadership and Servant Formation, which are tailored to meet each student's focus or sense of call.

The practicum courses also included an internship aspect in which Trinity was blessed to share this past year. As many know, Barbara has been serving as an intern at Trinity since September, working specifically in ministries of adult faith formation, including the Adult Christian Education program, Small Group ministries, and many others. To be sure, her accomplishments are widespread, and all have served to facilitate Trinity's continued growth as a community of disciples.

However, graduation was not

the only news Barbara brought, as she also shared her continued sense of call to serve God in specific ministries here at Trinity, using the gifts she broadened and strengthened through the CTS program. As a result, on Sunday, May 17, Trinity was blessed to commission Barbara to a new, volunteer position in the church — Discipling Ministries Coordinator.

The focus of this position is largely the same as the internship — that of adults' spiritual formation and growth. Thus, Barbara will continue working with SGMAB and Small Groups and Adult Education, but she does so, very generously, as a volunteer staff person now.

Trinity is proud of the work and discernment Barbara has completed these past two years and is grateful for the blessings of God within her continued to call to ministerial service here at Trinity. Let us continue to hold Barbara in prayers as she begins this new position.

As we continue to explore the importance of discipleship for us all, the Session also commends the CTS program to any and all who feel called to further enhance your gifts to follow God's call in your life. To learn more about the CTS program at New Brunswick Theological Seminary, please visit the seminary's online brochure at www.nbts.edu.

Happy birthday

The Trinity Times lists the birthdays of active members each month so you can wish your church family members a happy day.

Celebrating June birthdays are:

- 1 – Cole Biri, Zachary Smith
- 2 – Deborah DeBoer
- 3 – Amie Riepl, Walter Zarsky
- 4 – William Arfken
- 7 – Kris Kadela, Anthony Mastrolia
- 8 – Kimberly Zielinski, David Wolverton
- 10 – Betty Haupin, Carol Schwalje
- 11 – Jacqueline Gustich, Grace Hoenes, Caroline Noppenberger
- 14 – Deborah Sandberg
- 18 – Tom DeCaro
- 19 – Jesse Fyffe
- 20 – Rosemarie Camaroto, Emily Oppong-Dwamena
- 21 – Richard Bush
- 24 – Sharon Haflin, Wayne Tropp
- 26 – Sarah Lindeman
- 27 – Rebecca Biller.

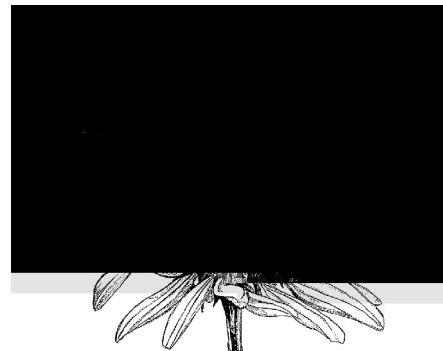
June begins with Sunday School Sunday

June 7 — As June marks the end of the school year, we will be blessed to spend much of this month in celebration of the many ministries that have helped form and shape our worship and discipleship this past year. And what ministry is more impactful on a young person's life than Sunday school?

As such, this week Trinity celebrates Sunday School Sunday! The worship service will be largely created and led by the various Sunday school classes that have blessed Trinity this past year. Moreover, we will take intentional time to give thanks to God for the incredible faith and commitment of Trinity's many Sunday school teachers and leaders. To be sure, their gifts of love and service to the children of God give testimony to the Spirit's power and presence in our midst!

This morning, we will also join together in the celebration of the Lord's Supper and the eternal nourishment of God's love and grace.

June 14 — We talk a lot here at Trinity about "growth." Our mission statement proclaims that we strive to "grow disciples of Christ," and Pastor Rob talks regularly about "growth" along the path of discipleship. But why is this growth so important? And how do we best go about it? And how will we know if and when it's happening? What does



growth look like? Or feel like?

In exploration of these and other questions, we'll spend this morning exploring Jesus' parables of growth in Mark 4.

This morning, we will also celebrate the blessings of Trinity's music ministry. We shall give thanks for the Chancel Choir, which offers its leadership in our weekly Lord's Day services. We shall also celebrate the joyful music of praise in which Trinity's Bell Choir leads us, as well as the invaluable blessings of Trinity's Children's Choir.

June 21 — On Father's Day Sunday, Trinity will celebrate the *Gifts of the Men*, as various men from Trinity will be leading the entirety of this morning's worship.

Please also be sure to remember that on June 21 Trinity's worship service moves to its summer worship hour, beginning at 9:30 a.m.

June 28 — In the fifth chapter of Mark's Gospel, Jesus performs

(Continued on Page 4.)

We cannot help but sin, so we take time to confess

Do you have a question regarding our worship at Trinity? Perhaps you've wondered why we do some of the things we do (or don't do some of the things you may have seen done elsewhere). In a recurring Trinity Times article, the Rev. Carter tackles a question some may be asking about our Sunday morning worship services.

This month, Pastor Rob explores:

Why do we have a prayer of confession and assurance of pardon at each service?

In short, we share both a Prayer of Confession and an Assurance of Pardon during every single Lord's Day (or Sunday morning) worship service because the concepts of sin and grace are pivotal within our Reformed tradition.

While we may or may not feel that we've been as bad (or perhaps worse) than the Prayer of Confession seems to suggest, the truth is that we Reformed Christians believe that sin is much more than just singular acts or doing bad things. Specifically, we believe that sin happens not just every time we do something we shouldn't, but also every time God is not at the center of our actions.

Taken in this light, sin isn't just stealing or lying, sin is living our day without making room for God within it. For God calls us to focus all that we are and all that we have on God. However, it is sin that gets in our way. The ever-so-frustrating reality we all know is that we can't help but sin! Thus, we take time in worship to confess not just our sins, but also *our need for God!*

While it is usually a prayer said together,



confessions can also take place through times of silence, songs, or even scripture readings (the Psalms are particularly full of beautiful prayers of confession).

However, it is also vital to note that, once we've confessed to God, we also are always very sure to remember God's eternal promise of grace — that nothing (not even our sins) can separate us from God's love.

Thus, our prayers of confession are *always* followed by the assurance of God's forgiving grace in Jesus Christ, which not only makes us clean of our sins, but also opens and empowers us to live the lives God intends!

Do you have a question about how we worship at Trinity? If so, and you'd like to have it considered for inclusion in this column, please call Pat Staffa at the church office (732-257-6636).

June worship includes Sunday School Sunday, Father's Day

(Continued from Page 3)

one miracle on purpose and one seemingly by accident. It seems to raise the question: Does faith always need to be intentional, or does faith sometimes just *happen*? The way Jesus lived his life tells us quite a bit of what a full life of faith really requires.

A Few Good Friends sings at Sunrise

A Few Good Friends continues to gather at Sunrise Assisted Living in East Brunswick and has been led by folks from Saint Bart's and Trinity. We'd love to have your voice and smile on Friday, June 19, at 7 p.m.

If you're interested, please call Dotti Spengel at 732-257-6026.

FISH Hospitality Program to return in August

Many volunteers made the FISH Hospitality Program guests feel welcome at Trinity in May. We appreciate your time, talent and stewardship. Don't forget the guests come back again in August!

Mission Commission calling

We're still fishing for additional members! Driven by the fact that the Mission Commission seems better equipped to serve our ever-increasing outreach with 20 members, we'

Trinity's Earth Shepherds June 2009

*"The Earth says much
to those who listen"*

- author unknown

Hi everyone! We will have lots of **exciting news to share** with you over the coming months. So, we have decided to use Trinity Times as our way of spreading the news, We will also be sharing tips, prayers and/or poems with you, as well as interesting info we might have heard in the news that directly relates with Caring for God's Creation. Hope you find this informative and fun.

TES meets the 4th Monday of every month, at 7:30pm in the Youth Lounge. All that are interested, or just have an idea or favorite poem or prayer to share—we welcome you with open arms!

1. Earth Day Service and activities (4/26/09):

- All aspects of the church service focused on Creation care. Pastor Rob preached a beautiful sermon, Hymns used for the service also tied into the environmental theme,
- Flowers were planted in various gardens by TES to celebrate Earth Day. Our tree from last year did not fair well so it was removed and replaced with a new Dogwood Tree.
- Recycled paper for bulletins and flyers was used.
- Sunflower seeds were given to Sunday School students. Congregants were given reusable bags and/or CFL light bulbs (left over from previous events). Seeds left over from Sunday School were also available.
- A banner was placed in front of church and left up the week after earth day. We will reuse the banner in years to come, by removing this years date – that way we are REDUCING.

2. Creation care Library OPEN:

- Christian Education approved TES' request for Library space..
- We received 4 shelves in the library. We placed books and films for the congregation to check out (topic: Caring for Creation, as well as activity books and picture books - with the environmental theme)
- Books have been carded before placing on shelves. We will also be adding relevant periodicals and a notebook of articles and materials that relate to theme. This will be an ongoing project to increase the selections available
- A vinyl banner was placed outside for Earth Day

3. Green Faith Certification Process:

- We have been accepted into the GreenFaith Program. We should be receiving information on our next steps within the next few weeks. Stacey Kennealy will be the Director of the Program. Our group is very familiar with Stacey and look forward to working with her.

4. New Ideas:

- "Carpool or Walk" to Church Sunday
- Rain Barrels
- Reusable cups and coffee mugs for coffee hour and dinners. Recycling must be readdressed as it is not being followed.
- Recycling of other materials are going to be looked into. There are recycling programs for batteries, cork. Sneakers, some food packages, CFLs, etc. We will look into setting up some kind of collection. Will speak to P&F.

*Please be aware that the process of switching over to green products will take a while to become the norm. Part of the concept of greening our Church is to use what is already purchased and as that runs out to begin using the eco-friendly materials. We certainly don't want to add to the landfills, things that we could have used. That would be an awful waste! **So please be patient – we will get there, it just takes time.**

"GREEN glossary" Ethanol: An alternative fuel made from corn in the United States and sugarcane in Brazil. Ethanol is somewhat controversial when its net effect on the environment is taken into account, as a lot of energy is required to fertilized, grow harvest, and process its components, with Carbon Dioxide emissions associated at every step.

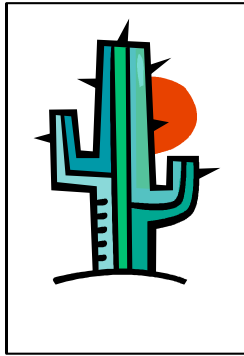
(taken from a 'Page-a-Day Calendar'
focused on the environment)

"Worshiping **GOD**
Loving **His PEOPLE**.
Caring for **His CREATION**."



Evangelical Environmental Network

Share like a supernova
Reflect like a planet
Watch like the moon
Nourish like the Earth
Listen like a mountain
Simplify like water
Thank like a plant
Struggle like an arthropod
Guide like a reptile
Cooperate like a mammal
Walk like a hominid
Smile like a baby
Enjoy like a child
Love like an adult
Trust like a friend
Forgive like a child of God.



"The Richest of Fare – Seeking Spiritual Security
in the Sonoran Dessert" by Phyllis Strupp

*“Growing disciples of Christ who know
God, love God, and serve God.”*

Church School 9 a.m. - 10 a.m.
Adult Education 9 a.m. - 10 a.m.
Sunday Worship 10:15 a.m.

Trinity Presbyterian Church
367 Cranbury Road
East Brunswick, NJ 08816
(732) 257-6636
Fax: (732) 257-0150
Website: www.trinity-pc.org

Church Staff

Pastor: Rev. Robert Carter
Director of Christian Education: Kathy Genus
Organist/Choir Director: Edward Krogstad, Jr.
Administrative Assistant: Pat Staffa
Sexton: Wayne McClinnon

Trinity Times Staff

Editor: Tom DeCaro
Production: Pat Staffa



Call it a clan, call it a network, call it a
tribe, call it a family. Whatever you call
it, whoever you are, you need one.

—Jane Howard



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