

# The Newsletter

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Trinitarian Congregational Church  
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## THE PASTORAL PERSPECTIVE

It seems an unlikely duo to have Wall Street “wizards” and God’s divine messengers in agreement, especially when their immediate agendas may be curiously different. But in times such as these marked by a pervasive sense of angst, anxiety and yes, even fear, the messages of both the above if not identical, are arguably parallel. “Stay calm in the midst of crisis” reads the cover story of a widely circulated financial/investment publication; “fear not” reads the foremost story of this season from one of humanity’s beloved and most respected volumes, the Bible.

Like many reading this reflection, I am a stakeholder in our economic and political institutions as well as being a person of faith. I suffer the same concerns and anxieties as others and experience the same losses and distresses of many. But as a matter of faith I choose to root my life in my belief in a good and gracious God who acts in all the seasons of life to remind me of countless blessings which transcend the chances and changes of daily life, who sustains me in a place certain and in all circumstances even when the world is shifting around me, and who consistently holds before me a future based on hope and promise, fully attested to in Scripture and supported by history.

The Christian faith is bookended at the most critical and consequential points – the birth of Jesus and the Resurrection of the Christ – by identical messages: “fear not.” In both instances, God’s voice is heard through angelic, divine messengers who speak to a waiting, wary and anxious people the one word necessary for darkness to be dispelled and hope to be reborn. It is no accident that during the darkest season of life (as well as the year), God first offers the word of hope to the poorest of the poor, “Shepherds keeping watch over their flocks by night.” It is not a fluke that God encounters the most faithful devotees in their most despairing and discouraging moments, when death has seemingly robbed the world of its greatest hope in Jesus, by words which speak to an abiding reality, “fear not, for He has risen from the dead.”

Whenever fear and uncertainty grip the human spirit, and seemingly rule the day, that is precisely the point where faith holds sway with its greatest promise, portending a better future. These are the times to think more deeply about things that truly matter. These are the days to search our hearts, simplify life, prioritize what is truly important, and cultivate more deeply and celebrate more fully the relationships which bind us together and give our lives meaning. This is the season to draw close to God and one another, reclaiming our faith as an antidote to our fears, and relishing a life far more abundant than any claims or promises rooted in human structures, earthbound institutions and transient strategies.

In Christmas, we Christians celebrate the greatest gift imaginable, the birth of the Christ Child, even as we anticipate in hope and promise Christ’s glorious return in the fullness of God’s time. Why should we fear in the midst of the fullness of life we already enjoy as a matter of faith, and why should we be anxious when we are granted the greatest hope imaginable in a promise already proven true in the birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ?

Blessings of the season,

### *ONE SOLITARY LIFE*

He was born in an obscure village,  
 the child of a peasant woman.  
 He grew up in another obscure village,  
 where He worked in a carpenter shop  
 until He was thirty.  
 Then for three years He was an itinerant preacher.  
 He never had a family or owned a home.  
 He never set foot inside a big city.  
 He never traveled two hundred miles  
 from the place He was born.  
 He never wrote a book, or held an office.  
 He did none of the things  
 that usually accompany greatness.

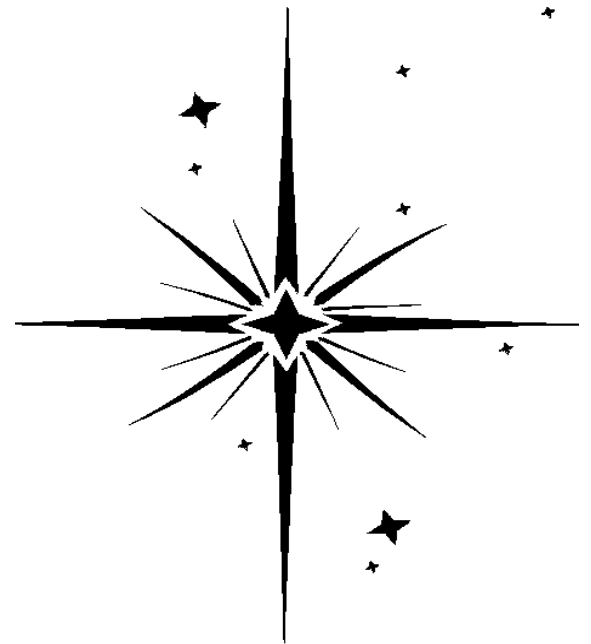
While he was still a young man,  
 the tide of popular opinion turned against Him.  
 His friends deserted Him.

He was turned over to His enemies,  
 and went through the mockery of a trial.  
 He was nailed to a cross between two thieves.  
 While He was dying, His executioners  
 gambled for the only piece of property He had –  
 His coat.

When He was dead, He was taken down  
 and laid in a borrowed grave.

Over two thousand years have passed,  
 and today He is the central figure  
 for much of the human race.  
 All the armies that ever marched  
 and all the navies that ever sailed  
 and all the parliaments that ever sat  
 and all the kings that ever reigned,  
 put together, have not affected the life  
 of man upon this earth as powerfully as this  
*One Solitary Life.*

Adapted from a sermon by Dr. James Allan Francis  
 in "The Real Jesus and Other Sermons" 1926, Judson Press, Philadelphia.



## DECEMBER WORSHIP



### PLEASE NOTE:

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14, there will be services at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.**

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, there will be services at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.**

**Wednesday, Christmas Eve services are at 4:00, 6:00, 8:00 and 11:00 p.m.**

**On SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28, there will be one morning service at 10:00 a.m.**  
(the 8:30 a.m. service will resume on Sunday, January 4)

**DECEMBER 7 Service at 8:30** Prayer and Holy Communion  
**COMMUNION Service at 10:00** Rev. Dr. Karin Case preaching

### SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE

**Sunday, December 7 – 8:30 a.m.**

Rev. Dr. Margaret Crockett will lead the Service of Remembrance which will honor those we miss from this life or from our everyday lives. There will be readings and prayers and time for contemplation, as well as words of comfort and hope. All are welcome.



Music Sunday

**DECEMBER 14 Service at 9:00** Music Program  
**Service at 11:00** (both services)

**DECEMBER 21 Service at 9:00** Rev. Dr. John Lombard preaching  
**Service at 11:00** Rev. Dr. John Lombard preaching

**DECEMBER 28 Service at 10:00** Rev. Dr. Margaret Crockett preaching

**Celebrate Christmas with old friends!**  
Join us for a gathering of Returning College Students  
and Current High School Students  
**Christmas Eve - Wednesday, December 24th**  
**10:00 p.m. Cider & cookies in the parish hall**  
**11:00 p.m. Christmas Eve service in the sanctuary**  
Spread the word!



**Welcome home! Come celebrate! Welcome home! Come celebrate!**


 CHRISTMAS EVE

**December 24, Christmas Eve Services at 4:00, 6:00, 8:00 and 11:00 p.m. \***

- 4:00 p.m. Service** Congregational Carol Sing begins at 3:45 p.m. –  
3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades Christmas tableau
- 6:00 p.m. Service** Congregational Carol Sing begins at 5:45 p.m.  
5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grades Living Crèche; Junior Choir anthems
- 8:00 p.m. Service** Prelude by Senior Choir begins at 7:40 p.m.  
A service of carols and readings
- 11:00 p.m. Service** A service of carols and candles in a quiet worship setting of  
Word and Sacrament. The singing of traditional carols will be  
complemented by a brass group. Communion will be  
celebrated, and the evening will conclude with the lighting of  
individual candles.

\*About the Christmas Eve services – while all ages are welcome at all services, the 4:00 p.m. service is especially designed for the youngest children. The 6:00 p.m. service is most often attended by families with school-age children and the 8:00 p.m. service is a more tranquil service with music provided by the Senior Choir. The late night service starting at 11:00 p.m. and ending shortly after midnight is a traditional candlelight service planned for an adult and young adult congregation.

**December 25: 7:30 a.m.**  
**Christmas Communion Breakfast**  
**Rev. Dr. John Lombard, celebrant**

JOY!!! The traditional Christmas Morning Communion Breakfast will be held at the church from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. Margaret Crockett will be making her famous Belgian waffles. Other food will be provided on a “pot-luck” basis.

Please sign up in the parish hall by Sunday, December 21 for your attendance and food offering. All are warmly welcome – singles, families, extended families and friends.



**Christmas  
Morning Service**

## Living into Our Faith; Faithful and Grateful

The following Call to Stewardship was written and read by fifth-grader, **Gillian Pasley** on October 19<sup>th</sup>. Gillian composed this message entirely by herself and delivered it with great aplomb and sincerity. It is a truly moving expression of what our church means to her and what our church strives to be for all of us.

*Since I only have a few minutes to do this, I'll make it simple. TriCon is like a second home to me, and this community is like a second family. Since I was a baby, it has always been here for me, and I know it always will be.*

*And whether you're here visiting a relative, someone trying out lots of different churches, or a full-time member, TriCon means something to you, too. Here you find comfort in times of sadness, celebration in time of joy, and a helping hand to anyone who needs it.*

*So whether it's the donuts in the parish hall, the wonderful ministry, or just the feeling of community, TriCon will always make room for you in this sanctuary, and we can make room for it in our hearts.*

As we prepare to wrap up our Stewardship drive, let us all take pride that together we are the church of 10 year-old Gillian, 10 week-old Ainsley, 10-decade-old Dan and everyone in-between and that there is room for all of us here.

If you have not yet completed a pledge for 2009, please do so as soon as possible so that we may prepare the budget for the coming year. If you have questions, you may call Stewardship Committee Chairman, Rick Olney at 978-287-0661. If you wish to make a gift of securities, call Judy Walpole at the church office, 978-369-4837. You may also email a confidential pledge to Judy at [triconjw@aol.com](mailto:triconjw@aol.com).

## EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

### HUMAN RIGHTS DAY BREAKFAST

**Tuesday, December 1,  
7:30 a.m. at TriCon**

On December 1<sup>st</sup>, the Concord Chapter of PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) will receive the 7<sup>th</sup> Climate for Freedom Award for their tireless work to promote understanding, dialogue and support for families, respect and a safe environment for the gay community.

Everyone is welcome to attend; free of charge; continental breakfast will be served.

### ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS IS...

**Spiritual Enrichment in December  
Mondays, 9:45 – 11:15 a.m.**

Join us on Mondays, December 1, 8 and 15 for seasonal reflections on the theme, "All I Want for Christmas Is..." Taking our cue from the time-honored question, "What do you want for Christmas this year?" participants will be invited to explore the question on a deeper, more reflective, and faith-filled level. While often there are material things on our minds, might there, in truth, be certain gifts that the Christ Child brings, things for which our hearts dearly yearn on a deeper level? Facilitated by John Lombard, the series is open to everyone. Bring your Christmas wish list to the first session.

**Monday, December 22  
Christmas Carol Sing with Marsha Martin  
10:00 to 11:00 a.m.**

A delightful hour around the piano as Marsha leads us in singing all our favorite Christmas Carols. Everyone is welcome!

### FAREWELL TO REV. DR. KARIN CASE



December 7<sup>th</sup> will be Rev. Karin Case's last Sunday as Associate Minister at Trinitarian Congregational Church. Karin has been called to a new position in interim ministry at First Church, Congregational in

Cambridge. Karin will be preaching at our 10:00 a.m. service on December 7, and, during the service, time will be set aside for Karin and the congregation to speak prayerful words of thanks and farewell.

After the service the Diaconate will host a reception in the parish hall for everyone to wish Karin well. A basket will be available in the parish hall where you may leave notes and cards for her. Please join with our entire congregation that morning as we celebrate Karin's ministry among us.

### DEDICATION OF GIFTS December 7

At the worship service on December 7, we will dedicate the gifts our church has collected for City Mission Society, as well as the gifts which have been provided for the prisoners in Concord. (You will find bookmarks on the table in the parish hall listing items which may be donated for the Concord Prison Outreach holiday bags.) See the Season of Giving catalog that you received in the mail for more information about these causes.





## UNITED HOMES SHELTER MEALS

We provide a hot meal once a month to the 120 homeless men who receive food and lodging through the United Homes Shelter in Dorchester. Cooking takes place in the church kitchen after Sunday coffee hour. Drivers are needed to take the meal to Dorchester at 4:30 p.m. You may drop off the food or you may remain to serve it. Servers return to Concord about 7:30 p.m. (If you are not serving, you may return to Concord immediately after dropping off the meal.)

The upcoming meal schedule is:

- December 7
- January 11
- February 1
- March 1

If you would like to volunteer on a particular Sunday, please be sure to sign up in the parish hall or call the church office ahead of time so we can plan for cooks and drivers.

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Volunteers are needed through December 17 to assist with the sorting of items and filling of gift bags for the Concord Prison Outreach Holiday Gift Project. Workshops takes place weekdays, from 9 - 12:30 at Trinity Episcopal Church, Concord. Some tasks can be performed while seated. There will be an evening session, Tuesday, December 9, from 7 - 9 and a Saturday session, December 13 from 10-12 (high school youth are invited to help). **One must sign up in advance for the evening and Saturday sessions.** Call Carol Miller (978-369-3755) for information and /or to sign up.

## RETIRED MEN'S GROUP

The Retired Men's Group will meet for lunch on Wednesday, December 10 at noon in the parish hall. The speakers will be Ron Johnson, Chairman Emerson Health Care Foundation, and Jack Dresser, Vice President of Development at Emerson Hospital. Come and bring a friend for good food, good fellowship and an interesting program.



MEN'S

LUNCH

If you have not attended these luncheons before and would like to attend on December 10, please call Robert Nelson (978 369-3105) or Charles Davis (978 369-6250) before December 5. The cost of the lunch is \$8.00.

## AN INVITATION TO NEWCOMERS

If you are new to TriCon or have been attending for some time but are not yet a member, please read on! We encourage you to learn more about our congregational mission and ministries, to get involved in a group within the church, and to explore the significance of being a member.

To help you get to know others, you may attend the "**welcoming coffee**" in the church parlor on **Sunday, December 14** between the 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. services.

Our intention is to make you feel welcome, to answer questions you may have, and to help you develop relationships within the church. If you have questions, please call Susan Henderson, Chair of the Membership Committee, at 978-369-4854, or call Mary Lou Esposito, Membership Coordinator, at the church office 978-369-4837.



## MUSIC SUNDAY

**December 14 at the  
9:00 and 11 a.m. services**

In celebration of the birth centennial of German church composer Hugo Distler, the Senior Choir will sing his "A Little Advent Music" at both services. Based on the German Advent hymn "Savior of the Nations Come", this colorful cantata is accompanied by organ, flute, oboe, cello, and violin.

Organist and composer Hugo Distler was only 25 years old when the Nazi Party rose to power. Church musicians then found themselves under intense scrutiny, and Distler himself was proclaimed a "degenerate" because of his musical style. In spite of constant pressure, he remained devoted to church music and rose to the prestigious post of choir director at Berlin's Lutheran Cathedral by 1942. But his anguish over the war had plunged him into a deep depression. That same year, at age 34, Distler died by his own hand.

## TALK TO THE LORD

Talk to the Lord in confidential session with others. The Monday morning prayer group meets every week in Margaret Crockett's office. You may arrive any time between 8:45 and 9:15 a.m. All are welcome to join the group coming once, coming more, making prayer requests.

Place your prayer request in the mailbox for Margaret Crockett in the Reception Office.

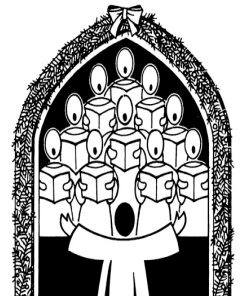


## CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS STORY HOUR

Children of the church are invited to join Rev. Lombard, and our seminarian, Jeremiah Rood, around the fireplace in the parlor for a Children's Christmas Story Hour on Tuesday, December 16, 6:30-7:30 p.m. Designed for children ages 4 to 8, the gathering includes Christmas readings and will conclude with hot cocoa and Christmas cookies. During the story hour waiting parents can enjoy a cup of eggnog and conversation with other parents in the parish hall. Children may come dressed in sleepers and pajamas. Sign-up deadline is Sunday, 12/14 at noon.

## SING WITH THE CHOIR DECEMBER 24

All choral singers are invited to sing with our choir for the 8:00 p.m. Christmas Eve service. High school and college students are especially welcome! There is one rehearsal--Thursday, December 18 at 7:45 p.m. On Christmas Eve there is a rehearsal promptly at 7:00 p.m., and the choir sings only during the prelude to the service (i.e., from 7:40-8:00 p.m.) Those who can't stay for the entire service may depart after the opening hymn. If you would like to participate, please contact Vickie Wagner by e-mail at [vwag@aol.com](mailto:vwag@aol.com) or phone (978-369-4837 x227).



## HOW TO TALK SO OTHERS WILL LISTEN AND LISTEN SO OTHERS WILL TALK

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**Sundays, January 4, 11, 25 and February 1  
11:15 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. in the new parlor**

Learn the skills necessary for better communication with your boss, children, spouse, client, customer, or relatives. Our own Emily Mitchell, a member of the faculty at Cambridge College and a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, will offer training and education in the art of communication skills.

- ❖ Move out of relationship ruts
- ❖ Learn how to “fight fair”
- ❖ Learn win-win conflict resolution
- ❖ Learn how to help others while respecting boundaries
- ❖ Learn how to “draw out” a child’s feelings
- ❖ Learn how to encourage parishioners to “tell their own story” in church groups

All leaders of small groups and church committees are encouraged to attend!

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## EVANGELICALS 101

Wednesdays, January 21 and 28  
7:30 p.m. in the church parlor

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They decided the 2004 election. This year, one of them ran for Vice President on the Republican ticket. You see them all over cable TV. That’s right – Evangelicals!

Just who are these people – right wing fundamentalists or a vibrant, diverse stream of modern Christianity? Come learn about the beliefs, history, and future of a group that includes more than 25% of Americans. Facilitate by Steve Silver. Sign up in the parish hall.

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## WOMEN’S RETREAT AT KRIPALU

January 23 - 25, 2009

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We are planning another Retreat and Renewal weekend at Kripalu in the Berkshires!

- \* Wake, stretch, and stroll down the hall to a morning Kripalu Yoga class.
- \* Participate in a workshop or get outdoors on a guided hiking or skiing excursion.
- \* Spend some quiet time alone, enjoy a meditation walk.
- \* Schedule yourself a Healing Arts (massage, reflexology) appointment.
- \* Use Kripalu amenities: sauna, whirlpool, fitness room, private lakefront beach, walking and hiking trails, and more.
- \* Meet up with the group for delicious, healthy meals in the dining room.
- \* Enjoy the lake and mountain views and comfy chairs in front of sunny windows.

We will arrange carpools closer to the time!

**Accommodations:** We hope to get a room that will hold just our group. Private rooms and rooms with baths also available.

**Cost:** Includes all meals, accommodations, use of facilities, and events and classes. Cost varies depending on accommodations. We should easily have enough attendees to receive a 20% group discount!

**Registration:** Call Kripalu at 1-800-741-7353 and press 1 (program registration). Our group name is "TriCon." They will charge 50% to your credit card now. The remaining will be charged five days prior to our arrival.

**More Info:** For detailed information about activities and accommodations go to: <http://www.kripalu.org/article/118> or contact Kathy Manley at 781-684-0554 or [KathleenManley@verizon.net](mailto:KathleenManley@verizon.net).

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## YOUTH ACTIVITIES

### SUNDAY NIGHT YOUTH GROUP

**Sunday, December 7** 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.  
Youth Group

Come for a goodbye celebration for Karin Case. She has touched all our lives in ways both big and small. We will miss her.

**Sunday, December 14** 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

Youth Group Christmas Party at the Falzers' House, 1055 Old Marlborough Road, Concord. Come for food, friendship, our annual Yankee Swap and more!

**December 21 and 28 - No Youth Group**

Have a great holiday. See you in January!



### SENIOR HIGH MISSION TRIP Appalachian South Folklife Center April 18 - 25, 2009

Schedule of preparatory meetings —  
all participants are required to attend!

**Sunday, January 11** 12:30 - 2:00 p.m.  
Mission Trip Meeting (balance of fee due)

**Sunday, March 1** 12:30 - 2:00 p.m.  
Mission Trip Meeting

**Saturday, March 14** 6:30 - 9:00 p.m.  
SHINDIG AND FUNDRAISER

**Sunday, March 22** 12:30 - 2:00 p.m.  
Mission Trip Meeting

**Sunday, April 5** 11:00 a.m.  
Commissioning of the 2009 Mission Trip  
Team during the 11:00 a.m. service

**Sunday, April 5** 12:30 - 2:30 p.m.  
Mission Trip Meeting

### WEDNESDAY DISCUSSION GROUP

Talk with your YG friends about what's on your mind -- serious or fanciful. Discussion Group meets from 7:30 to 8:30 every Wednesday night in the youth room or the church parlor. All high schoolers are welcome.



### CONFIRMATION CLASS IN DECEMBER

**Sunday, December 7** 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Christmas Dinner at the church  
Mentors & confirmands will share a meal and favorite memories of Christmas. (Dinner to be provided by parents of confirmands.)

### WONDERFUL NEWS!!!

Rev. Karen Doolittle, a UCC minister and member of our church, has agreed to teach Confirmation Class for the remainder of the year, along with David Hart. Currently working as a hospice chaplain, Karen has experience in youth ministry and has taught TriCon's Confirmation Class in the past. We are so pleased to have Karen assume responsibility for this important ministry.

Karen Doolittle will be joining the class on January 11th, our first meeting in 2009!

## LIFE CHANGES

### JUST MARRIED

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Best wishes to Meredith MacSwan and Daniel Harjes who were married by Rev. Dr. John

Lombard on November 15. Meredith is the daughter of Jack MacSwan and Nan Connors.



### HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

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Congratulations to John and Deana Kohl who celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on October 25.



Our sincere condolences to the family of our member, Everett Broughton, who died on October 26. A memorial service was held at TriCon on November 22.

Heartfelt sympathy to Barbara Fivek and her family. Barbara's mother, Celeste Gwinner died on November 5<sup>th</sup> in South Carolina.

The deadline for the  
January Newsletter  
is December 15.

## COMMUNITY EVENTS



### LIVING NATIVITY

**Friday, December 5, 7 – 9 p.m.**  
**Saturday & Sunday, December 6 & 7**  
**6 – 9 p.m.**  
**Faith Evangelical Free Church, Acton**

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Free and open to the public for ages 5 and up. For more information see the bulletin board in the church reception office or contact 978 263-0075, [faithevfree.org/nativity](http://faithevfree.org/nativity).

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**CAROLING**  
**AT THE NORTHEAST**  
**CORRECTIONAL CENTER**  
**Friday, December 5, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.**

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Caroling at the Prison Farm is a twenty year tradition started by Concord Prison Outreach and enjoyed by many Concord citizens and inmates. To join the group you must at least 18 years old and must sign up in advance by calling 978-369-1430. For more information, see the bulletin board in the church reception office.

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**COMMUNITY**  
**MESSIAH SING**  
**at 51 Walden Street**

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**December 21 at 1:30 p.m.**

Conducted by Alan Yost with musicians from the Concord Orchestra and historic figures costumed by The Concord Players. Admission is \$15, \$10 for seniors and students. Scores will be available to borrow.

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## ITEMS OF INTEREST

### ANTIQUÉ SHOW A BIG SUCCESS

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The Antique Show held on November 7 and 8 was a great success. The weather was perfect for antique shopping and we were pleased with the number of people who attended. The dealers were also happy with attendance, several remarking that this is always one of their best shows.



Special thanks to the incredible members of the Antique Show Committee – Bobbi Benson, Bob Clarke, Kathie Falzer, Lauren Huyett, Carl Miller, Hilda Parrot, Diane Payne, Ruth Piper, Hilary Robinson, Dale Ryder, and Judy Walpole.

Thank you to Carol Miller, Cynthia LaMothe, Phyllis Clarke, Louise Johnson and Stephanie Upton and the marvelous kitchen crew who spent days shopping, organizing and cooking the delicious food we all enjoyed during the sale. The café's proceeds have become a large part of the event's revenue.

Many, many thanks to the dozens of volunteers who contributed their time and efforts to make this a special church event. Thank you to those who moved furniture, portered for the dealers, contributed food items and delicious pies and desserts, who sold tickets at the door, decorated the church area so beautifully, spent nights in the church to ensure the security of the antiques and who made phone calls or sent emails to recruit volunteers. We would also like to thank the church staff who were always so happy to help.

And a big thank you to all those who came to the show. We appreciate all that you did to make the 2008 Antique Show a great success!

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### SEASON OF GIVING CATALOG

Our annual **Season of Giving** catalog was recently mailed to members of our church community. If you did not receive one, you may pick one up in the narthex or parish hall. The booklet contains giving options available to you during this holiday season.

### JOIN THE CONSPIRACY

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Join the conspiracy, the Advent Conspiracy ([www.adventconspiracy.org/](http://www.adventconspiracy.org/)). The story of Christ's birth is a story of promise, hope and a revolutionary love. Along the way the power and meaning of that story have been diluted. If you want to join others in recapturing the spirit which can still change the world, then visit the above website. In the meantime, embrace this season as a time to worship fully, spend less, give more, and love all, the hallmarks of the Advent Conspiracy.

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**CROP  
WALK**

400 walkers, from 30 congregations and five schools in ten area towns, raised \$46,000 at the Concord Area CROP Walk for the Hungry in October. Sixteen TriCon walkers raised \$4800 for world and local hunger relief. Many thanks to our TriCon walkers and to all their sponsors. Your contributions will help fund two new wells in rural Kenya that will provide clean drinking water. You also helped the very needy locally through Open Table.

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## DECEMBER PARKING

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The Post Office is very generous in allowing us to park in their lot on Sunday mornings but in December they have workers there on Sunday so **the lot is off-limits on December 14 and 21.**

Please help us to be good neighbors and show our appreciation by respecting their needs and not parking there on those Sundays.

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## STEPHEN MINISTRY CORNER

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Divorce is not something you hear much about in our faith community, which is surprising because, according to some sources, 50% of marriages end in divorce. Maybe our church members have made unusually good matches, maybe they've gone through a divorce but are now on the upswing from that, maybe they just want to keep their divorce private. I am writing this article in the interest of making it okay to have an open conversation about divorce or for anyone in that situation to seek support.

One thing is sure, for any individual experiencing divorce it is a wrenching, not to say a cataclysmic event. A couple who has been together for several years has a shared history – the hopes and dreams with which they started their married life; of raising children; of accommodating to one another's little quirks and habits; of health or financial crises weathered together, etc. To rupture that stream of shared history is to leave

the estranged partners at sea, uncertain as to what comes next in their lives. Moreover, no one lightly seeks a divorce - often a fairly serious breach has occurred – whether it's one partner having an affair, domestic violence or alcohol abuse, constant conflict, or a feeling of being continually undermined or criticized.

And there are a host of issues to be resolved as the divorce takes form: who to choose for a lawyer, what to tell the children and other family members, how to keep the children from being caught in the crossfire, how to settle the custody issue, how to divide the property, etc.

Of course, every step of this process is fraught with emotional highs and lows: feelings of betrayal, rejection, resentment, anger, fear, sadness or grief – or of freedom and hope for a better life.

If you and your spouse have not sought the help of a marriage counselor, do consider that option provided you are both willing to work on your relationship. (I or the church office can give you a referral.) But if the estrangement has gone beyond the point where reconciliation is possible, you might want to consider meeting with a Stephen Minister to share your story and talk about your feelings. Call any of our pastors or one of our Stephen Leaders (myself, Demi Ayres or Leslie Ackles) to request a Stephen Minister to accompany you during this difficult transition.

Carol Gupta

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## DONATE FLOWERS FOR THE ALTAR

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Many dates are available to donate flowers for the altar during 2009. You may sign up in the parish hall or call the church office.

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## "BLUE" CHRISTMAS RESOURCES

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The holidays can be a difficult time for those who are grieving, depressed or dealing with illness. In the parish hall, there is a display case that holds a collection of "CareNotes" booklets on these topics that provide some helpful suggestions. Feel free to take them for yourself or a friend.

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## IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN

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Attention Committee Chairs! Annual Reports are due to Karen Lord on, **December 1.**

If at all possible, submit your report on disk or in typed format. Emails are also fine. If you have any questions or would like to see a copy of prior year reports, please call Karen Lord in the church office.

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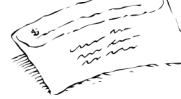


**FYI!** Recently a wallet was stolen from a purse left unattended on a Sunday morning. Please watch your personal property.

## OFFERING ENVELOPES

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### Offering Envelopes



Whether you choose to pay your pledge on a weekly, monthly, quarterly or irregular basis, it is extremely helpful to the folks who count and

record the weekly collection if you use the offering envelopes. Our system of pledge recording depends on envelope numbers so if you do not use the pre-numbered envelope, there is an extra step involved in looking up your envelope number and creating a "dummy" envelope for your donation. If you only need a few envelopes, feel free to use what you need from your box and discard the rest. Your number cannot be used by anyone else.

Offering envelopes for 2009 may be picked up in the parish hall beginning December 7. If you would like to receive envelopes but are unable to pick them up, please call the church office (978 369-4837) and we will make other arrangements for you.

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*Mission as Pilgrimage*  
TRINITARIAN CHURCH, MISSION,  
AND THE KASIISI PROJECT, UGANDA

By Barbara Stevens

In June and July, 2008, my husband and I spent three weeks in rural Uganda at the Kasiisi Project primary and secondary schools. We saw striking changes there since our first trip in 2005, due in large part to your donation of a "green" brick making machine.

Our first trip to this part of the world was with our son and daughter-in-law, a trip that changed our lives. In 2007, we brought six Ugandan educators here for three weeks. When they attended church at TriCon, I experienced a tremendous sense of pride, gratitude, and humility to be able to share my church with them and to introduce them to you. In my mind the Ugandan friends embody the highest Christian standards. They are role models of spiritual "intactness."

In 2007, TriCon, through the Mission Committee, donated \$2000 to the Kasiisi Project to buy a machine that makes bricks out of a combination of sand, earth, cement and water. Later, the church donated an additional \$2500 for training and materials. Working like a giant garlic press, the "Brick Machine" molds interlocking blocks which harden in the sun. This simple idea is transformative in a country where demand for wood is devastating forests at 7% a year and deforestation threatens the environment and its endangered wildlife. This is a land where wetlands are being destroyed because traditional clay bricks, that have to be fired in kilns, are so much in demand. (To see the brick making machine at work go to: <http://youtube.com/watch?v=dFifyZzLj6o&fmt=18>.)

The brick machine was an inspired gift as new buildings are a pressing concern and the local people need work. New classrooms, staff houses, pre-schools, latrines, and libraries use lots of bricks and "Conservation through Community Support" is the philosophy that guides the Kasiisi Project's work with communities around Kibale National Park. By supporting a wide range of programs designed to improve education in government primary schools, the project promotes an improved learning environment for 4000 rural children and their 69 teachers. The hope is that by supporting education, the peoples' futures will include health and prosperity rather than poverty, poaching, and habitat destruction. Kasiisi's initiatives focus on books and scholarships, building infrastructure (classrooms, staff housing, kitchens, latrines), conservation education, sanitary products for girls (so they'll stay in school), cultural exchange, and everything in between.

In a recent interview, Ugandan-born theologian Emmanuel Katagole, from the Divinity School at Duke University compared "mission as aid" with "mission as a joint pilgrimage." The latter teaches and transforms both donor and recipient. Mission as aid, he contends, can bring with it the danger of thinking we can "fix" Africa. He says, "Pilgrimage, on the other hand, is a particular form of journeying, based on a vision of the Christian life as a journey...that gives rise to the church as a unique fellowship of people drawn from different nations, tribes, languages, and races." When I read this, I thought of John Lombard and Jan and Ruthann Hall and the message they have been communicating to us in sermons recently.

We have first hand knowledge of "mission as pilgrimage" through our long friendship and connections with the children and communities of the Kwazulu Natal and with our newer one with the Kasiisi Project Schools. Not everyone can visit South Africa or Uganda but our commitment to bringing these connections here means that the congregation at TriCon can add "mission as pilgrimage" to their generous "mission as aid" gifts. For more information please contact Barbara Stevens at [bstevens@rcn.com](mailto:bstevens@rcn.com) or go to the Kasiisi Project website at <http://www.KasiisiProject.org>

Read Katagole's interview at <http://stonesinuganda.blogspot.com/2008/11/mission-as-aid-ugandan-perspective.html>



### Christmas Flowers

Each year, members of our church family are invited to contribute to the Flower Fund which will be used to decorate our sanctuary for the holidays and to send plants to shut-in members during this Advent Season and at other times during the year. In addition, due to your generosity, the Flower Fund has been able to provide transportation and a few important and appreciated "extras" for elders.

You are invited to take this opportunity to remember or honor a friend, family member or special blessing in your life while helping to make a difference in the lives of others. **All donors will be listed in the bulletin on Christmas Sunday, December 21st.**

Please fill out the form below and return it to the church by **noon on December 15th.**



I/We wish to contribute \$\_\_\_\_\_ to the Flower Fund to decorate the sanctuary and bring cheer to our shut-ins.

(Please write **Flower Fund** on the memo portion of your check.)

Please list our names and message as follows:

Given by: \_\_\_\_\_

In memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

Or

In celebration of: \_\_\_\_\_

Or

In honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

