

The Newsletter

Trinitarian Congregational Church
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The Pastoral Perspective

As it does on a yearly basis, our church will gather for its annual meeting on Sunday, February 6. Given our congregational polity, this meeting is central to our life as a community of faith. As opposed to churches of a hierarchical structure and tradition, ours is a gathering of God's people where each member participates equally by speaking, listening, voting, and simply being present. Our time is taken up in prayerful deliberation of all the ecclesiastical aspects of our institution: budgets, boards, officers, policies, reports, deliberations on issues, matters and concerns facing our collective life, etc. In short, we are concerned with a variety of aspects vitally important to the functioning of the institution. We want not only to maintain the ecclesiastical machinery at its maximum level but we want always to enhance and strengthen our collective work and witness in the most prudent and effective manner possible.

Sometimes, however, if we are not careful, we run the risk of being so drawn in to the immediate needs and life of our own local church that we lose sight of our core identity and purpose as followers of Jesus Christ. Annual meetings are thus great places to ask two fundamental questions:

1. Who we are? (What does it mean to be a disciple?)
2. What are we to do? (How are we to live?)

The designated lectionary text for worship on the Sunday of our annual meeting is Matthew 5:13-20. Of special note is the description of who the followers of Jesus are. They are characterized as the salt of the earth and the light of the world. In short, as followers of Jesus, we are not bound together to be a society of the self-concerned. We are formed into community that we might live, not for ourselves, but for the world. We are summoned in faith to live in the present as if we were already living in the age to come as promised in Jesus Christ. We are to be light-bearers to a darkened and broken world and, like salt, to nurture a distinctive capacity to elicit goodness in the world and humanize life. As participants in God's vision of the world as revealed in Jesus Christ, we are to live into God's reordering of human life seeking justice, serving the cause of peace and being the redemptive, reconciling and beloved community of God's eternal purposes.

So when we gather to consider the work of Trinitarian Congregational Church this month, let us be ever-mindful of the ethical demands Christ places upon us. May we not forget that we have the greatest task in all the world: to be the embodiment of God's boundless love and the beacon of hope and new life for all God's children. And let us wisely and prayerfully consider our mission and ministry in light of that great challenge and blessed calling.

Grace and peace,



February Worship

February 6 **Service at 10:00** Rev. Dr. John Lombard preaching

February 13 **Service at 10:00** Flo Madlala preaching.
 Flo Madlala is the director of the Thembaletu Care Centre, a recipient of TriCon mission giving, located in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal province, South Africa. Serving the needs of the township of Lamontville, programs of the Centre include home-based caregivers for the housebound sick, pre-school breakfast for local children, after-school tutoring and mentoring for struggling students, and life skills workshops for orphans and vulnerable children and youth. **After delivering the sermon for our worship on the 13th, Flo will also lead a forum about Thembaletu.**

Flo is a lay leader in the Lamontville Congregational Church, where she mentored the youth group for decades. She is also a leader in the denomination's provincial women's organization and has been a strong advocate for Sunday School in the churches of the province. Flo is a woman of steadfast and abiding faith, who has been tireless in her efforts for her community and church. Truly, she is one of whom Isaiah wrote:

*"But those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength,
 they shall mount up with wings like eagles,
 they shall run and not be weary,
 they shall walk and not faint."* (Isaiah 40:31)

"FAMILY CHOIR" on February 13

Gather around the sanctuary piano for a 15 minute rehearsal at 9:30 a.m. on Sunday February 13 to learn the morning's anthem, "This Little Light of Mine". Everyone in the Family of God is welcome: children and youth; parents and grandparents and child-free folks; married and single; visitors and regulars; melody singers and harmony singers.

February 20 **Service at 10:00** Rev. Dr. John Lombard preaching

February 27 **Service at 10:00** Rev. Dr. John Lombard preaching

EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES



Spiritual Enrichment

Mondays at 9:45 a.m. in the church parlor
Everyone is welcome.

This Season after the Epiphany, the joyous time we "follow the star," is Ordinary Time. It stands between the Advent-Christmas-Epiphany cycle and the Lent-Easter-Pentecost cycle. Christ's light shines in the darkness and call us to be faithful disciples. We are sent out by God to bring justice, peace and love to the world.

February 7

What we have learned from six years of exchanging prayer requests and spiritual views every week with members of KwaMashu UCC Church of South Africa.

February 14

Flo Madlala of Lamontville, South Africa is Director of Thembaletu Care Center there. She will offer examples of how the clinic meets the outpatient nutritional, nursing and psychological needs of citizens with AIDS, tuberculosis and cancer.

February 21

Church closed for President's Day

February 28

Spiritual Enrichment will meet as usual

Warrant for the Annual Meeting Sunday, February 6, 2011, 11:00 a.m.

To the Members of the
**Trinitarian Congregational Church
in Concord**
County of Middlesex
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

You are hereby notified that the Annual Meeting of said church will be held on Sunday morning, the *sixth of February, 2011, at 11:00 a.m. immediately following the 10:00 a.m. worship service for the following purposes, to wit:

Article 1. To receive and act upon reports of the Church officers and committees

Article 2. To approve a By-Law change to delete the following sentence from the By-Laws of Trinitarian Congregational Church of Concord, Massachusetts, Article 10:A - "Members elected to the Fellowship, Music and Other Arts and Social Concerns Committees will take office on June 1st."

Article 3. To choose all necessary Church officers and committees for the church year 2011.

Article 4. To appropriate money for all Church expenses and to determine the manner of raising same.

Article 5. To authorize the Moderator to appoint a committee to study the sanctuary taking into account: program needs, systems, organ, choir space, capacity and any other considerations relative to its use for worship and to make a recommendation to the congregation no later than the 2012 Annual Meeting.

Article 6. To transact any other business which may legally come before said meeting.

Melanie Zwicker, Clerk
Concord, Massachusetts
January, 2011

*Snow date: Monday, February 7, 7:30 p.m.

RETIREED MEN'S GROUP

The Retired Men's Group will meet for lunch on Wednesday, February 9 at noon. The speaker will be Rod Robison, Environmental Services Program Administrator for the Town of Concord, who will speak about the value of recycling.

Come and bring a friend for good food, good fellowship and an interesting program. If you have not attended these luncheons before and would like to attend on February 9, please call Robert Nelson (978 369-3105) or Charles Davis (978 369-6250) by February 4. The cost of the lunch is \$8.00.

UNITED HOMES SHELTER

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:

- February 13
- March 27
- April 10
- May 15

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.

KNITWITS JOIN US IN THE PARLOR ON February 16 AT NOON!



The TriCon Knitting Group meets in the church parlor once a month. Everyone from beginner to expert is welcome to join the group.

Bring your own project or work on one of ours'. You need not come every month but can join in when it is convenient for you. You may also choose to work on your projects at home.

Our church community remains actively involved in the City Mission Society Christmas Shop and *The Knitwits* efforts contribute hats, baby blankets, gloves and scarves to this organization, in addition to the prayer shawl ministry. Prayer shawls may be left at the church any time.

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM BUDDHISM?

**Mondays, February 28, March 7 and 14
7:00 – 8:30 p.m. in the church parlor**

Can Buddhist concepts provide dimension and clarity to the practice of Christianity? Learn how to contribute to the healing of loved ones and find joy in challenging circumstances. Discover how Buddhist techniques can teach us how to transform our pain and fear into loving kindness for ourselves and others.

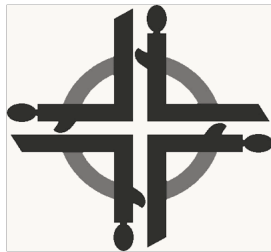
Join a discussion of **The Places That Scare You**, *A Guide to Fearlessness in Difficult Times* by Pema Chodron, American Buddhist nun, best selling author and teacher at Gampo Abbey, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, the first Tibetan monastery for Westerners.

Books available at the Concord Bookshop or on www.amazon.com (new and used) Sign up in the parish hall. Contact Chris Upton 978 807-6202 with questions.

THE EFFECTS OF HOMELESSNESS ON CHILDREN

A forum on *The Effects of Family Homelessness on Children* will be held following the worship service on **Sunday, February 27**. The speaker will relate her personal experiences working with homeless children and a compelling first person video telling the story of a woman who was homeless as a child and her difficulties in school will be shown. A discussion period will include an opportunity to write letters to your local state legislators asking them to support family homelessness prevention. This forum is sponsored by the TriCon Social Concerns Committee.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER



How Many Loaves Have You?

Friday, March 4, 2011, 11:00 a.m.

Holy Family Church

Followed by a luncheon

**This year's service was written
by the women of Chile.**

ENDING HOMELESSNESS: RECENT SUCCESSES AND NEXT STEPS

*7th Annual Interfaith Homelessness Forum
at TriCon
Sunday, March 6, 2011, 3:00-5:00 p.m.,*



Family homelessness remains a severe crisis in Massachusetts with record high foreclosures and layoffs. Over 33,000 families in housing crisis applied for emergency shelter last year, far exceeding the 3,000 families in emergency shelters nightly. Our keynote speaker, Lt. Gov. Tim Murray, will highlight the state's encouraging homelessness prevention initiatives. Tina Brooks, Co-leader of the Mass Commission to End Homelessness, will describe the successes, innovations, and proposed growth plans of the pilot regional network programs that involve preventing homelessness. Tina Close, Co-Convenor of the MetroWest Regional Program, will detail achievements using prevention, diversion, and rapid re-housing. A family that avoided homelessness by using these services will share its first hand account. Hear from area lawmakers and learn how we can help with proven strategies. The forum is free and open to all.

ASH WEDNESDAY

March 9, 7:30 p.m.

This simple and moving service offers a meaningful departure point from which to embark upon a Lenten journey. Communion will be celebrated and ashes distributed to those who wish to receive them.

CHURCH LEADERSHIP FORUM

Church Vitality – Preparing for Growth and Change

The members of all church committees and the church officers are invited to attend this important forum on **Sunday, March 20th following the worship service.**

Come prepared for a lively and engaging discussion. Should we be looking to grow the church in the coming years? What are the implications for growth? What will/or should influence growth? How do we keep the church vital? How do we continue to support the mission and ministry of a vital church?

The forum, which will include lunch, will be facilitated by Rev. Paul Nickerson. Sign up in the parish hall or by contacting the church office.

THE ANCHOR GROUP

The Anchor Group is a spiritually questioning group of men who are interested in connecting experience, strength and hope with one another as they navigate through their lives as fathers, husbands, career men, and concerned citizens. How does our spirituality play into our lives outside the church and how might we access our faith more deliberately in all aspects of our life. Join Associate Minister Bob Brown and the Anchor Group at 7:00 a.m. on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month.

LIFE CHANGES

New Baby

Congratulations to Michael and Sarah Lynch and big brother, Charlie, on the December 26th birth of Benjamin Michael. Proud grandmother is Barbara Lynch.



With Sympathy

Heartfelt condolences to Ed Jones and his family. Ed's wife, Regener, died on December 24 after a long illness. Services were held at TriCon on December 30.

Sincere sympathy to Art and Jeannette Taylor and their family. Art's mother, Emily Taylor, died on December 25 at age 106.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the family of Carolyn Heath who died on January 8 in CO. Until a few months ago, Carolyn was an active newsletter volunteer and member of the Monday Spiritual Enrichment group. She will be missed by all who knew her. A memorial service will be held at TriCon in the spring.

Our sympathy to the family of Dick Green who died on January 14 in Vermont. Dick and his late wife, Bunny, were active members of TriCon for many years.

Sincere condolences to Rebecca Purcell and Allene Kussin and their families. Their brother, Donovan Riley, died on January 17 in Michigan. Services were held in MI.

Heartfelt sympathy to Bill and Rose Mary Crampton and their family. Bill's sister, Marion Crampton, died on January 17 at age 96. Services were held in Arlington.

YOUTH ACTIVITIES



SENIOR HIGH YOUTH GROUP
Come for food, fun, and fellowship

Sunday, February 6 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.
Youth Group

Sunday, February 13 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.
Youth Group

Sunday, February 20 NO Youth Group
Presidents' Day holiday

Sunday, February 27 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.
Youth Group

If you have any questions, please do not
hesitate to contact Nick triconnb@aol.com,
or call or text 978 618-1629.

**WEDNESDAY NIGHT
DISCUSSION GROUP**
7:30 to 8:30(ish) in the Youth Room.

Discussion Group will meet throughout
the month of February. Text Nick at 978
618-1629 to confirm we are meeting on a
particular night. Everyone is welcome.



MISSION TRIP RAFFLE
Tickets go on sale January 30!

MISSION TRIP DINNER
Saturday, April 2



CONFIRMATION

Sunday, February 13 4:00 – 7:30 p.m.
Confirmands and Mentors
Worship at Hope Church
Read: *Words for the Journey*
Chapter 10, Worship

Meet in TriCon parking lot at 4:00 p.m. to
take the bus to Jamaica Plain. Worship is
at 5:30 and we should return to TriCon
about 7:30.



**The deadline for the
March Newsletter
is February 15.**

ITEMS OF INTEREST

Thank You

Concord Prison Outreach's Holiday Gift Bag Project successfully distributed 1700 gift bags to the inmates at MCI-Concord and NECC. Thank you for your donations of items to fill the bags, beautiful handmade cards, financial donations and volunteering in the workshops. Some quotes from the notes we received after the distribution:

"A thank you is all I have to give you.....the kindness of your hearts penetrates us even through the thick walls." "Though we may be in prison, you came to show us, there still is love for humanity."

Read more notes from the inmates in the notebook in the library.

MANY HANDS REALLY DO MAKE LIGHT WORK!

Thanks to Property Committee members: **Bob Clarke, Holly Darzen, Breh Feigh, Don Kamenz and Bill Stumpf** who came to the January 9th workday and special thanks to the other church members who lent a hand: **Bob Brown, Mary Lou Esposito and Chris Upton.**

Projects completed that morning included taking down and storing all the Christmas decorations, repairing the church bell, installing sanitizing liquid dispensers in the narthex and Hubbard Street lobby, cleaning in the sanctuary and painting in the Hubbard entry. Watch for the next "work morning" and plan to join the effort –there are always jobs to suit all abilities and interests!

DONATE FLOWERS FOR THE ALTAR

Dates are still available to donate flowers for the altar in 2011. You may sign up in the parish hall or call the church office.

SNOW POLICY



Let it Snow

When the Concord Public Schools or the Concord-Carlisle Adult Education classes are canceled, so are our events, classes, meetings.

If there is a question, call the chairman or convener. While we hope never to have to cancel a worship service, in the event of severe weather call the church answering machine, the parsonage study line (978 287-0637), check the TriCon website or watch Channel 4 for the latest information.

OFFERING ENVELOPES

Please pick up your offering envelopes in the parish hall. If you would like to receive envelopes but are unable to pick them up, call the church office and we will make other arrangements for you.

TENDING OUR VISION



Have you noticed that when the offering plate is passed at Sunday services, fewer and fewer of us are putting in a pledge envelope or a check or cash contribution? This doesn't mean that fewer people are supporting the church. Many of us choose to make monthly or quarterly or yearly payments or to give electronically by having our bank send an automatic monthly payment or we may choose to donate appreciated stock.

However, are we missing something by not participating in the offering? Are we sending a message to our children or to our neighbors in the pews that we are not part of the collective effort to support the church?

The Stewardship Committee has had some interesting discussions about this. There have been thoughts about putting envelopes or cards in the pews so that those who give other than weekly can place one in the offering plate symbolizing their contribution. It has even been suggested that we have different colors to represent "I give monthly" versus "I give electronically" or "I give by donating securities" but the thought of trying to remember which is which, let alone the confusion for new worshippers, quickly squelched our enthusiasm for that idea!

Another suggestion has been that when you have no check or envelope to put in the offering plate, that you consider just putting in a loose dollar or two. Granted that will not show up on your pledge statement at the end of the year, but will you really miss that small "extra" donation or will you feel more a part of our collective stewardship?

The Committee would love to hear your thoughts, ideas and suggestions on this and any other ways to enhance our stewardship of our wonderful church.

The Stewardship Team

Rick Olney, Chair; Anne Keesler; Annabelle Kellogg; Thad Jackson; Charity Tremblay; Judy Walpole and Tussie Williams

YOU ARE INVITED

to a

Groundhog Day Luncheon
Wednesday, February 2 at noon



Featuring a Scrumptious Winter Menu
Hearty Beef Stew, Rolls and Salad
Yummy “can you see your shadow?” Dessert
with special entertainment
by Rene Pfister

\$5.00 per person

Sign up in the parish hall or call the church office.



WELCOME

WINTER OPPORTUNITIES FOR GETTING ACQUAINTED

Throughout the year, the Membership Committee offers both new people and long-time non-member friends of TriCon Church opportunities to learn more about our congregational mission, and to explore the significance of being a member. In February and March, as listed below, we will offer two “Welcoming Coffees” in the parlor for conversation with the ministers and other church leaders. In March we will have an “Exploring Membership” meeting for people considering membership. Your decision to join TriCon may be made following your participation in this meeting. New members will join during the worship service on March 20. We hope you will join us! If you have any questions, please call Mary Lou Esposito at the church office or Tracy Hoaglund, chair of the Membership Committee at 978 254-5756.

“Welcoming Coffee”: Getting to Know Us

Sunday, February 13

Coffee and conversation with church leaders
11:00 a.m. (after 10:00 a.m. service) in the parlor

“Welcoming Coffee”: Getting to Know Us

Sunday, March 6

Coffee and conversation with church leaders
11:00 a.m. (after 10:00 a.m. service) in the parlor

“Becoming a Member”: meeting and joining

Thursday, March 3

“Exploring Membership” meeting
7:00 – 9:00 p.m. in the parlor

Sunday, March 20

New members join during the 10:00 a.m. worship service