

# The Newsletter

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## The Pastoral Perspective

Freshly off General Synod 28, representing the interests of the Massachusetts Conference as part of our state's delegation at our denomination's biennial meeting in Tampa, Florida, I am glad to be home feeling refreshed and renewed for the days ahead. I appreciate not only the vision and faithful voice of the United Church of Christ alongside its challenges and concerns, but I am thankful in particular for TriCon and our vital work and witness. Given this season, a few reflections about our life together seem in order.

This is a time of significant disruption and change for the whole Church as we live into a rapidly changing world which will test our mettle as people of faith. Despite our abiding strength as an active and involved community of faith in Concord, we cannot take anything for granted nor rest comfortably on our past. We shall be challenged to develop new ways of being the church and be tested to go beyond our own comfort zones in order to remain a beacon of hope and a haven of peace in a world desperately longing for meaning, purpose, and wholeness. There is at large in our shared life a deepening spiritual hunger and curiosity which seek a word, welcome, and promise that our distinctive brand of the Christian faith offers. Furthermore, the sweeping changes across the religious landscape will demand, if we are to remain a bold, viable, justice-seeking, and compassionate church, an increasingly innovative understanding, engagement, and commitment as to how we embody the Christ we follow.

Although we are truly an ecumenical community of faith, drawing strength and diversity from a wide variety of traditions and faith backgrounds, we still hold true to the fundamental values of the United Church of Christ in offering a continuing testament of faith, an extravagant welcome, and the ongoing reality of revealing God's redemptive power in changing lives. Our church enthusiastically lives up to its radical hospitality when we say, "No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!"

With August upon us and fall beckoning to us, we are blessed at TriCon to have a renewed opportunity to reground ourselves spiritually and regroup our scattered lives around the cause of Christ in our midst. It would be great if everyone who loves our church would become a personal ambassador, might I even say evangelist, in inviting and welcoming visitors and new people into our life together. In fact, for those who know me well or have served in positions of leadership at TriCon over the past couple of decades you are familiar with what I have all-too-pridefully referred to as "Lombard's Law": on Sunday mornings, especially at our fellowship hour, talk only with people you do not know and do not discuss church business. It is interesting to note that, statistically, for every three people personally invited who participate in worship, one will join our church. Additionally, parish experts will tell us that anyone new to our midst will conclude in their first fifteen minutes whether or not our church family is a place for them. Thus, offering warm and gracious hospitality could well be God's opportunity for us to expand our witness, deepen our faith, and provide people a place to feel loved, a safe place to sort out issues and life's complexities and concerns, and a supportive place to grow wherever they are on life's journey.

Secondly, as the Pulitzer Prize columnist, Leonard Pitts, Jr., would remind us, church is about "saving souls and serving the larger world rather than meetings, budgets, etc." Pitts would further observe, "sometimes we obsess over our impediments and forget about possibilities." In short, the church of today must not only "imagine possibilities" but boldly and faithfully live into the future, remembering that "with God, all things are possible."



Thirdly, as adherents to Christianity, an incarnational faith, it is critical to embody in our daily life what we claim to believe. In its essence, Christianity is about transformation and changing lives, our own and others'. What better place to do this than in the safety, security, and sanctuary of TriCon and among friends in faith? To reach deeply within even as we extend widely our reach to the "least of God's people."

Fourthly, we should constantly strive to be a people of prayer, recognizing the centrality of prayer's place in our life together. Through prayer, God woos us into a relationship of love and claims us totally as God's own. By means of prayer we are drawn more fully into the world in such a fashion as to understand the notion that action logically flows from prayer at its fullest. Despite any apparent evidence to the contrary, we trust not only that all prayer is heard by God but responded to as well -- even if the answer is not to our liking, at sometimes beyond our control, or perhaps in a manner, medium, or mode which is revealed only at a later time. Even though some of us might confess either not to know much about prayer or feel inadequate to the task, the truth is that anything and everything in our life can become prayer if held gently, openly, or spiritually before God. Of course, in the end, prayer may be less

about a practice to be perfected than a mystery to be embraced regularly, faithfully, and, hopefully.

Finally, generosity is a core spiritual discipline, the challenge of which should be carefully and caringly nurtured among all of us. Count yourself blessed and step out in faith, knowing that living a generous life and extending extravagant hospitality were core to Jesus' life, the result of which literally changed the world one life at a time. As a wise soul has rightly observed, "I'd rather try to do something great and fail than try to do nothing at all and succeed."

The welcome mat is out at TriCon for any and all who are seeking and searching for a spiritual home and a welcoming people as well as for those who are open, attentive, and available to the sway of God's Spirit! Join us for the great adventure and exhilarating journey.

Grace and peace,



**We will have joint services with West Concord Union at TriCon at 10:00 a.m. on:**

**August 7      Service at 10:00      Rev. Robert Brown preaching  
                         Communion**

**August 14      Service at 10:00      Preacher to be  
announced**

**Our regular summer services will continue on:**

**August 21      Service at 10:00      Rev. Robert Brown preaching**

**August 28      Service at 10:00      Rev. Robert Brown preaching**

## EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

If you are new to TriCon we welcome you! We encourage you to attend summer services, to meet fellow worshippers at Sunday coffee hours. Please pick up church brochures and other information and call the church office if you have any questions.

### THE ANCHOR GROUP

#### Summer Sessions On NOW

This summer the Anchor Group continues discussing life's greater meaning and purpose. We talk about where we find our satisfaction and peace even in the midst of the powerful swirl of parenthood, business, sports, civic responsibilities, coaching, traveling and all the varied and important pulls on our time and energy. Can the presence and wonder of God be carried with us beyond Sunday mornings? Please come when you can to our MEN'S FELLOWSHIP called *The Anchor Group*. Is God relevant in our workplace, family life, sports activities? Are there things we can do differently to increase the tranquility in our lives? Is it even important? Let's hear from you this summer. The group meets on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month (year round) in the church parlor from 7:00 to 8:30 a.m. or call, write or text Bob Brown ([triconbobb@aol.com](mailto:triconbobb@aol.com)) or Greg Howes ([greg@howesinsurance.com](mailto:greg@howesinsurance.com)).

### SEPTEMBER BAPTISM

We will be celebrating the Sacrament of Baptism on Sunday, September 4. If you are interested in having your child baptized or you would like to be baptized yourself, please contact the church office by August 22.

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### SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT

#### JOIN US ON THE JOURNEY OF FAITH

**Do you sometimes have questions about faith?** Do you ever harbor doubts about prayer, about Christian beliefs, even about God? Are you hesitant to voice them because everyone else around you looks like they "have it all together"? **There is a place for you at TriCon.** The Spiritual Enrichment group meets in the church parlor Mondays from 9:45 to 11:15, from September through May, to explore faith questions and more. We meet each other where we are, and respect and honor each individual. **Please join us as we seek to discover.** Contact Jean Cummings with questions 978-254-5051.


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## FALL PREVIEW

### Oasis Interludes

Life today can be stressful and over-scheduled. Sometimes it starts to feel as if there isn't a moment of peace in our days. Leslie Ackles will be leading a series of three evening workshops to provide a place where women can experience a sense of calm in their hectic lives and can start to create that sense of peace, even if for a moment, in their daily routines. Workshops (7:15 – 8:30 p.m.) will be: Mondays, September 26, October 24, and November 28.



*CLOTHING COLLECTION  
FOR MERRIMACK HOUSE*

**August 21 through  
September 18**

The Social Concerns Committee will once again be collecting new or gently used youth, children's and baby fall and winter clothing for the children at the Merrimack House family shelter in

YOU OUGHT  
TO BE IN PICTURES!

## *TRICON PHOTO DIRECTORY*

*October 2011*

In October, we will the opportunity for everyone who attends our church to have professional portraits taken, right in our parlor, for our new church photo directory. You do not have to be a church member to have your picture taken. We want to include everyone!

Immediately following your photo session, you will view and select your portrait for the directory, and have an opportunity to purchase additional photographs if you wish—no pressure to buy, guaranteed! If you choose to purchase photographs, they will be ready for you before the holidays!

There will be no sitting fees and you will receive a complimentary 8 X 10 portrait and the directory. We are anticipating a good experience for everyone and a great update to our current directory (done in 2007!)

Sign-ups for photo sessions (see below) will take place in September. More information will be in coming newsletters.

Wednesday, October 12, 1:30-8

Thursday, October 13, 1:30-8

Friday, October 14, 1:30-8

Saturday, October 15, 9-4

Tuesday, October 18, 1:30-8

Wednesday, October 19, 1:30-8

Thursday, October 20, 1:30-8

Friday, October 21, 1:30-8

Saturday, October 22, 10-5

Thursday, October 27, 1:30-8

Friday, October 28, 1:30-8

Saturday, October 29, 10-5



## WOMEN'S RETREAT

### *Save the Date!*

**Friday, October 28 – 5:00 p.m. to**

**Saturday, October 29 – 5:00 p.m.**

### **Bring on the Joy!**

This women's retreat is an opportunity to be kind, tender and loving to your self and open up to the beauty and joy that is possible in your life. Come unpack a treasure chest filled with precious gifts.

**Friendly Crossways, Harvard, MA**

**Facilitated by Leslie Ackles**

Space is limited. If you are interested, please sign up in the parish hall so we can hold a place for you.

## 42nd ANNUAL ANTIQUE SHOW & SALE

**Friday, November 4**  
10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

**Saturday, November 5**  
10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

### **LIFE CHANGES**

#### NEW BABY

Best wishes to Isabella and Timothy Ehrlich on the birth of their second son, Julian on July 19. Julian joins his big brother, August, at home.

#### WITH SYMPATHY

Sincere sympathy to Teri Stokes and her family. Teri's husband, Peter Yensen, a member of our congregation, died on July 8 in Durham, NC. A burial service at Sleepy Hollow Cemetery was held on July 16.

**CORRECTION:** The memorial service for Ned Perry's sister, Susan Perry of Concord, will be held in the Duvall Chapel of Newbury Court on August 26 at 1:00 p.m.

### **ITEMS OF INTEREST**


#### SUMMER OFFICE HOURS

**Now through Friday, August 26**  
9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Regular office hours will resume on  
Monday, August 29

**The deadline for the  
September Newsletter  
is August 15.**

## IMAGINE THE POSSIBILITIES



Imagine the possibilities for TriCon living into a new and exciting future. The church leadership team, including the moderator, vice-moderator, and clergy, invite everyone who cares about TriCon and loves our church – leaders, committee members, worshippers, friends, and members – to join in an all-church book read over the next two years. The recently released and highly acclaimed book, *Liberating Hope: Daring to Renew the Mainline Church*, will be available for purchase through the church office for \$15.00 with a few copies accessible for loan through the church library. Authored by Michael Piazza and Cameron Trimble of the Center for Progressive Renewal, *Liberating Hope* not only proclaims the urgency of our times in the midst of a rapidly changing world but presents a vision of robust, spiritually vital progressive congregations. In short, Piazza's and Trimble's book provides concrete and tangible 21<sup>st</sup> century insight to churches which care about their life and future and find hope and optimism rooted in the resurrection. It is anticipated that *Liberating Hope* will be used in multiple settings of our church over the next 24 months including committee meetings, study groups, small group conversations, worship, strategic planning, futuring, and a host of other places and occasions. Join us today in our all-church read and be inspired for days ahead of fruitful, renewed and transformative work and witness.

### *Liberating Hope: quotes*

(for prayerful reflection on our life together in the TriCon family of faith)

“Great Awakenings (and the revivals that are part of them) are the results, not of depressions, wars, or epidemics, but of critical disjunctions in our self-understanding. They are not brief outbursts of mass emotionalism by one group or another but profound cultural transformations affecting all Americans and extending over a generation or more. Awakenings begin in periods of cultural distortion and grave personal stress, when we lose faith in the legitimacy of our norms, the viability of our institutions, and the authority of our leaders in church and state. They eventuate in basic restructuring of our institutions and redefinitions of our social goals.” William McLaughlin

“We are living through a major reorientation of Christianity. By reorientation we do not mean to imply that we now have the chance to go back to the “golden age” of the Protestant church. No, today we have the chance to reorient Christianity in a way that may look less like the imperial religion of the state and more like the first-century church.”

Michael Piazza and Cameron Trimble

**To think about:**

- 1) What cultural transformations, distortions and changes have we witnessed over the past 15-20 years? How has life changed for us? How have these changes impacted religious life and the church?
  
- 2) How might we see the church changing relative to its historical shape of the last 50-60 years?



**\*Do you know what Antique Brass, Macaroni and Cheese, Fuzzy Wuzzy, Beaver, Inchworm and Jazzberry Jam all have in common?**

If you do, you've probably been back-to-school shopping recently and it was probably a fun shopping trip but for the homeless children whose parents are struggling to fund the basic necessities, there is no fun back-to-school shopping trip. Here is how we can help!

Our Advocacy Network to End Family Homelessness is teaming up with the Mass Coalition for the Homeless to collect school supplies to be given to the hundreds of homeless children living in temporary housing in Massachusetts.

Any of the following items would be welcomed. **New or gently used backpacks are especially needed.** Please place your donations in the marked box in the parish hall through September. Thank you!

GLUE STICKS	PENS (BLUE, BLACK, AND RED)
SCISSORS	COMPOSITION NOTEBOOKS
BALLPOINT PENS	SHARPIE MARKERS
NO. 2 PENCILS	POST-ITS
COLORED PENCILS	SMALL ASSIGNMENT NOTEBOOKS
PENCIL SHARPENERS	FOLDERS TO FIT INTO BINDERS
LARGE PINK ERASERS	3-RING BINDERS
CRAYONS	WATER COLOR PAINTS
BOTTLE OF WHITE GLUE	HIGHLIGHTERS
NOTEBOOKS	LOOSE-LEAF NOTEBOOK PAPER
POCKET FOLDERS	COMPUTER PRINTER PAPER
CALCULATORS	DRAWING PAPER
CONSTRUCTION PAPER	RULERS
SCHOOL BOXES	SCOTCH TAPE
STAPLERS	KLEENEX
CALENDARS	BINDER DIVIDERS
SMALL BOTTLES OF HAND SANITIZER	

**\*Yes, they are all Crayola crayon colors.**

## SERMONS ON FACEBOOK

You can now HEAR recent SERMONS  
on line by going to  
[www.triconchurch.org](http://www.triconchurch.org)  
OR  
Facebook.com and search  
Trinitarian Congregational Church

## JOIN THE CHOIR!

Rehearsals begin Thursday, September 21,  
from 7:45-9:15 p.m. in the choir loft and on  
Sunday mornings at 9:00 before the service.  
If you have questions or would like to join,  
contact Vickie Wagner (978-369-4837 x227  
or [vwag@aol.com](mailto:vwag@aol.com)).

With summer vacations at hand, please  
notify the church office at 978 369-4837 of  
any pastoral care situations or  
hospitalizations.

Anyone entering a  
hospital who desires  
pastoral care and has  
not notified the church



office (be sure to  
give us your room  
number if you do  
call) must indicate a  
“congregational

affiliation” as part of their hospital  
admission if they would like a pastoral  
visit.



## CONGRATULATIONS

Our former intern, Jeremiah Rood, a  
graduate of Andover Newton Theological  
School, has been named Pastor of South  
Deerfield Congregational Church. Best  
wishes, Jeremiah, from all of us at TriCon.

## STEPHEN MINISTRY CORNER

Please remember that Stephen Ministers will  
be available throughout the summer. Just  
contact Rev. Lombard, Rev. Brown, or Demi  
Ayres for more information or to request a  
Stephen Minister.

## USHER / GREETER POOL



Thank you to all who  
have served as ushers  
and greeters this year.  
Our system of assigning  
dates has been quite  
successful and we hope it  
has worked well for you. We will be putting  
together assignments for next year in mid-  
August so please let us know by August 1st  
if you would prefer not to be included in the  
pool or if you have not ushered but would  
like to be asked in the coming year. Email  
[triconchurch@aol.com](mailto:triconchurch@aol.com) or call the church office  
at 978 369-4837.

## STEWARDSHIP THOUGHTS

**Stewardship is the act by which we care for, sustain and build our church to carry forward the message of Jesus Christ and to care for all His people here in our congregation, our community and in the greater world.**

**What is the church? Here's what some have said:**

- *"The purpose of church is that we might learn to love unconditionally those we wouldn't normally like."*  
Richard Kuehn
- *"There is one grand, all-comprehending church and if I am a Christian, I belong to it and no man can shut me out of it".*  
William Channing
- *"The miracles of the church seem to rest not so much upon faces or voices or healing power coming suddenly near to us from afar off, but upon our perception being made finer so that for a moment our eyes can see and our ears can hear what is there about us always."*  
Willa Cather
- *"The Church is not a gallery for the better exhibition of eminent Christians, but a school for the education of imperfect ones".*  
Henry Ward Beecher
- *"Church isn't where you meet. Church isn't a building. Church is what you do. Church is who you are. Church is the human outworking of the person of Jesus Christ. Let's not go to Church, let's be the Church".*  
Bridget Willard

**How do we define the church? Here's what some of us have said:**

- The Church is a community; it supports and sustains us.
- The Church is God's hands on earth; we are here to minister to others.
- The Church is a place to worship and grow in faith.
- The Church is inclusive; all are welcomed, respected and treated equally here.
- Through the Church we can make a difference!

As we approach our annual Stewardship campaign, we are going to focus on the ways that, through the stewardship and generosity of all of us, we can be:

- **A supportive and sustaining community of faith,**
- **A welcoming and inclusive family of God, and**
- **A vehicle for bettering and changing lives here and in the greater world.**

## Mission 1 - Focus on Hunger

Hunger is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as

- The uneasy or painful sensation caused by want of food
- The want or scarcity of food in a country
- The exhausted condition caused by want of food

Did you know?

- 49 million Americans, including 16.7 million children live in households that are struggling to put food on the table.
- World-wide there were 925 million hungry people in 2010.
- 25,000 people, adults and children, die every day from hunger and related causes.
- Malnutrition is the world's most serious health problem and the single biggest contributor to child mortality.

It is an overwhelming situation and we can chose to be overwhelmed or  
**we can choose to act.**

This fall, we will join with other UCC churches, as a pacesetter, leadership church,  
**and act thru Mission 1.**

**Mission 1** plays on the prevalence of the number 1 in the period 11/1/11 and 11/11/11 and focuses on opportunities to make a difference. You can be part of it in the following ways:

### Feed:

The national goal is to collect more than 1 million items of healthy food and other household items for local food banks and outreach services by 11/11/11.

**Our goal at Trinitarian is to use the 11 Sundays between 9/11/11 and 11/20/11 to collect 1,111 items for Open Table!**

See the reverse of this sheet for more information.

### Walk:

This year's Concord area CROP Walk for hunger and disaster relief will be Sunday, October 16th, starting and finishing at First Parish Church. There will be music, a banner contest, and refreshments plus next year's Tee shirt art contest.

Plan on walking, sponsoring a walker, or volunteering to help the day of the walk. Walk papers and information will be available in the parish hall after church in September.

**Surely Tri-Con can recruit 111 walkers, sponsors, and volunteers or more!**

One quarter of the money raised by the CROP Walk provides substantial assistance for local supper/food pantry programs that assist very needy persons and families, especially single parent families and senior citizens; the remainder supports Church World Service in its world hunger programs in over 70 underdeveloped countries.

**Lobby:**

In October and November, there will be opportunities to lobby Congress for legislation to alleviate hunger in our country and changes to foreign aid assistance that more effectively benefits hungry people worldwide. **The goal is 111 letters!**

**Learn:**

Join Rev. John Lombard for a 4 week *Bible Study on Hunger* beginning on Wednesdays, October 5 and 12 with the last two sessions scheduled at the convenience of the group. **And if 27 people went to all four sessions and one person went to 3 – well, you get it! – 111 opportunities for educating ourselves.**

**September\***

We asked Open Table to tell us the most needed/most desired non-perishable foods they distribute and we've created the following target items.  
(Of course, they are happy to receive any other healthy food items.)

Tear out this list and keep it in your purse or wallet to remind you each week.

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**Shop the week of September 5<sup>th</sup> – to bring to church on September 11<sup>th</sup>**

**Tuna Fish**

Fun Facts about Tuna – Canned tuna is America's most popular fish. Ninety-nine percent of the tuna coming to the market is sold as canned.

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**Shop the week of September 12<sup>th</sup> – to bring to church on September 18<sup>th</sup>**

**Macaroni and Cheese**

Fun Facts about Mac and Cheese –  
Mac and Cheese is one of the top ten favorite foods for children and has been on America's list of favorite comfort foods for decades. The first box recipe appeared in 1802, printed on a sheet inside the box.

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**Shop the week of September 19<sup>th</sup> – to bring to church on September 25<sup>th</sup>**

**Canned Vegetables and Fruits**

Fun Facts about Canned Veggies and Fruits –  
Canned food is packed at its peak, close to the source.  
Almost all canned veggies and fruits are fat free.

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**\* If you miss a Sunday, you can always bring food during the week or another Sunday and all healthy non-perishable food is welcome.**