

Dear Holy Trinity family,

It happens every year: the red flag near Mac's Pond appears in December or January to warn us not to step onto ice that's too thin to support our weight. Then a thaw comes and the flag continues to fly next to a body of water that's as liquid as the sea.

"Do not attempt to walk on water today."

That's the message I read into the red flag. We hear that caution (in not so many words) from many different directions.

"You're going to do what?"

"You want to visit where?"

"You plan to make a living how?"

"Are you crazy?"

Saying that someone walks on water can be a compliment – "Does he walk on water, too?" – or it can suggest someone is overrated – "Yeah, her mother **thinks** she walks on water..."

It's a Biblical image of course, rooted in accounts of Jesus walking on water, and Peter doing the same – briefly ☺. There was a big difference between Jesus and Peter walking on water. Jesus was able to do it because He is the Son of God, able to command nature. Peter was able to do it because the Holy Spirit enabled him to step out in faith, to be buoyed up by God's love and power. When Peter stopped believing, he started sinking. Sounds familiar, doesn't it?

The sight of the red flag at Mac's Pond has made me consider the possibility that the Lord is inviting **all** of us to "walk on water" more often than we realize. Maybe a holy invitation is being drowned out by a voice from within or from without that says, "You've got to be kidding!" Perhaps it is the voice of false "reason" or low self-esteem or defeatism that prevents us from even **trying** to accomplish more than seems humanly possible. Could it even be the voice of the devil/deceiver who is more than happy to convince us that God asks the impossible of us and can safely be ignored?

As this Lenten season marches toward Holy Week, let's remember Peter who walked on water for precious moments before his faith flagged and his body began to sink (Matthew 14.28-33). Is God asking us to do something that is totally new, so challenging that it is scary, so unlike anything we've done before that it will leave people scratching their heads (including us)? Perhaps it's taking the 1-2 a.m. time slot in the prayer vigil between Good Friday night and Holy Saturday morning. Maybe it's following up on a life-giving dream to develop some God-given gift, a vision we shelved because it wasn't "realistic."

Sure, every possible new venture deserves prayerful reflection. Sometimes we're enticed by an idea but don't have the innate gifts or necessary resources or current opportunity to make it fly. That's where our baptismal gift of discernment comes in handy! The Holy Spirit helps us sort out God's will and God's timetable.

When we do a Lenten examination of conscience, we often focus more on what we've **done** that's **wrong** (sins of commission) than on what we've left **undone** that would have been **right** (sins of omission)!

"Do not attempt to walk on water today."

Prayerfully ask, "Why not?" If it's God doing the inviting, go right ahead! As Abraham Lincoln once said, "Without the assistance of that Divine Being ... I cannot succeed. With that assistance I cannot fail."

In Christ, who calls us to step out in faith,

Pastor Mary Virginia Farnham

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## ☞ ARNIE'S CORNER ☞

This issue of the Lamplighter marks 11 days until the end of Lent. If you recall, in the last issue, I said that Lent ends with the Absolution and Peace of the Holy Thursday Liturgy. The time closes rapidly and we will be sitting in the Sanctuary and it will be Holy Week.

Time does fly by swiftly, doesn't it? Our Jewish brothers and sisters are experiencing the rapid approach of Passover, too. They have special preparations to make to celebrate this holy time for them.

Why do I bring this into the Lamplighter and highlight Passover? All four of the gospels speak of the Last Supper. They relate how Jesus acted as host to His disciples in a room loaned by a friend in Jerusalem on the day before He was crucified.

It was at this meal that Jesus followed Jewish custom by giving thanks to God for the meal. He then took the bread and handed it to His disciples saying, "This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." After this, He handed the cup of wine to them, telling them, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Jesus' disciples were very familiar with the idea of a covenant. They were all Jews and would have celebrated the Passover which recalled God's covenant with their ancestors. They remembered the joy of their ancestors in the Exodus from Egypt. This covenant was the fact that God did something for the people as an act of undeserved love.

When Jesus compared His death to the beginning of a "new covenant," He was suggesting that through Him, God was performing a new act of deliverance, and loyalty and devotion would be required from those who would share in the benefits, Paul chides us that as Christians we should regularly be sharing this meal as a reminder of the

new freedom Jesus won for us on the cross.

Scholars differ on what Jesus was doing that evening. Some believe that because of what Jesus and the disciples actually did, it was a Passover meal. The gospel stories give us clues to place ourselves on either side of the discussion.

Let's look at the arguments for: The Last Supper was eaten in Jerusalem. If Jesus was planning to celebrate Passover as a faithful Jew, it would have to have been done in Jerusalem. This would explain why the disciples found a room in a suitably located house. Second, this meal was eaten reclining on couches. This was not the normal custom of the Jews but it was obligatory at the Passover celebration. The meal took place at night, a distinctive custom of Passover, because the events celebrated took place at night. Third, the dipping of pieces of food into a sauce was and is a custom used only at Passover. Fourth, the disciples sang a hymn before they left the room. The singing of the Hallel Psalms was the feature that marked the end of the Passover meal. The Hallel Psalms are Psalms 113 to 118.

If we look at the gospels, three of the four are definite about The Last Supper being a Passover meal. John, however, clearly states that this meal took place the day before the Jewish festival, yet, not every part of John's description of the occasion matches his statement.

All the gospels agree that Jesus was crucified on Friday afternoon. It is highly unlikely that we will ever find a complete explanation of the last supper if we only focus on the Jewish customs. What can be said is that the precise nature of this supper cannot be fitted into any one specific occasion in the Jewish calendar.

It is obvious that the death of Jesus was not meant to be another interpretation of an ancient ritual. His death would usher in something different and very revolutionary. Jesus was offering Himself for His disciples and

for us. He gave us freedom in the bread and wine. That's why these symbols of freedom from sin and its consequences became the churches external symbols of the freedom that Jesus had announced and what his death and resurrection are all about.

(This article is excerpted from John Drane's "Introducing the New Testament.")

~~ Pastor Arnie

## ✠ CHRISTIAN EDUCATION ✠

### **Breakfast Club Cooking Up 'Ziti Dinner Extravaganza'**

The date has been set! The famous Ziti Dinner Extravaganza 2009, sponsored by the Breakfast Club, will be Sunday, April 26, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

The menu features delicious Italian salad, phenomenal baked ziti, fresh bread, mouth watering desserts and thirst quenching beverages. All this for \$10 (adults) and \$4 (children younger than 10-years old). Most of all, don't forget the fun and fellowship with your faith family and friends. Tickets are being sold in Fellowship Hall after the 5 p.m. service on Saturday and during coffee hour on Sunday. **All are welcome.**

Please remember that because of seating constraints tickets will **not** be sold at the door. As in the past, 10 percent of the proceeds will be donated to a local charity chosen by the youth, and the balance will go toward defraying the cost of the July 2009 Youth Gathering in New Orleans.

The Breakfast Club is selling \$20 chances for a \$500 shopping spree at the Jersey Shore Premium Outlet Stores in Tinton Falls. A minimum of 50 tickets and a maximum of 100 tickets will be sold. The winning ticket will be drawn the night of the ziti dinner, as long as the minimum has been met.

Chances are available for purchase in Fellowship Hall after the 5 p.m. service on Saturday and during coffee hour on Sunday. The money

raised will go toward defraying the cost of the July 2009 Youth Gathering in New Orleans.

### **Coins for the Kingdom**

*"Then one of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, 'What will you give me if I betray him to you?' They paid him thirty pieces of silver."*

The Breakfast Club is asking members of all ages to donate 30 pieces of silver toward Coins for the Kingdom at services, Saturday, April 4 and Palm Sunday, April 5. Donations can be any combinations of silver coins.

This is a wonderful opportunity for all of us to realize the sacrifice that was made by Jesus, as well as a way to turn what was a betrayal into a positive event. During this time when there are more and more people struggling to feed their families, the entire amount raised will be donated to the local food bank. We wish to thank you all in advance for your support.

### **Sunday Church School Teachers Wanted**

We are already starting to prepare for the 2009-2010 Sunday School year. We are in need of teachers for Pre-K, 1st grade, 4<sup>th</sup> grade, 5<sup>th</sup> grade and 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Please prayerfully consider if one of these is a position you could fill. Some of the grades already have one or two experienced teachers who will be continuing next year. We try to have three teachers in each class so that while you are making a commitment there is also some flexibility. Below is a testimonial from one of our teachers letting you know what a rewarding experience teaching our youth can be.

"There are not many times in your life when you can see children grow right before you. I teach Third Grade Sunday School and every year I see children grow in their faith as they prepare for their First Communion. They are nervous and excited. To share this

time in their lives is very touching and I also have the opportunity to get to know the parents as well as the children. Now when I come to church I see children and their parents from previous years and I feel very connected. It is wonderful to be part of a church family. But as part of a family, you need to be an active participant so I would encourage anyone who is so inclined to try teaching Sunday School."

If you are interested in any of these positions please contact us. Thank you,

*Cathy Taft (Phone number: 732-223-5785)*

*Sheila Wall (Phone number: 732-223-6635)*

*Sunday School Co-Superintendents*

### **Financial Aid Available for the College-bound**

College-bound Holy Trinity youth are invited to consider applying for financial aid through the Karl, John and Elizabeth Wurffel Memorial Fund of our New Jersey Synod.

The student must plan to attend or enroll in a matriculated program of study in an accredited 4-year or 2-year college or university. Aid is provided on a one-year basis in the form of student loans. Applicants may reapply annually for up to five years. Loans are for undergraduate study only.

Priority consideration is given on the basis of activity in the life of the church, as described by the recommendation letter of the applicant's pastor and on the basis of need. First priority is given to students attending an ELCA Lutheran college or university. For more details, visit the church office and ask for an application.

**Please note:** Requests for a pastoral letter of recommendation must be sent to Pastor Mary before May 11.

### **☞ LIBRARY ☞**

We have wonderful selection of books for the Easter and Passover season. The book titles below are

displayed on the bookcase in the library downstairs. Please stop by and borrow a book so you can share these stories with your children.

*A Tale for Easter*

By Tasha Tudor

*Bagels from Benny*

By Aubrey Davis

*Garson's Monster, a Story for  
The Jewish New Year*

Retold by Eric A. Kimmel

*In the Promised Land, Lives of  
Jewish Americans*

By Doreen Rapport

*Jerusalem Sky – Stars, Crosses,  
and Crescents*

By Mark Powel

*Jewish Holidays All Year Round*

By Ilene Cooper

*Miriam's Cup, A Passover Story*

by Fran Manushkin

*Rachel's Gift*

by Richard Ungar

*Small Gifts in God's Hands*

by Max Lucado

*The Easter Story*

retold by Carol Heyer

*The Easter Story According to  
the Gospels of Matthew, Luke  
& John,*

from the King James Bible

*The Miracles of Jesus and other  
Bible Stories*

retold by Selina Hastings

*The Matzoh That Papa Brought  
Home*

by Fran Manushkin

*The Very First Easter*

by Paul L. Maier

*Wonders and Miracles, A  
Passover Companion*

by Eric A. Kimmel

PS: The Library Committee will host Adopt-A-Book on May 2. Save the date!

### **Holy Trinity Library TRIVIA**

The Holy Trinity Library is holding a contest to see how well you know your library.

Trivia questions will be handed out to Sunday School classes during library volunteer visits. Ask your Sunday School teacher what day the library volunteer is visiting your class. You can also go to the Holy Trinity website and click on the library blog (<http://www.holytrinity-nj.org/libblog/>) to find the questions. Print out the questions, answer them and put your answers in the box on the cart in the library.

The answers will be checked on Sunday, April 19, and everyone who has answered correctly will have their names displayed on the Holy Trinity Library website and on the bulletin board in the library.

All those who have answered correctly will be entered in a drawing for a Barnes & Noble gift certificate to be held during coffee hour on May 3.

Good luck!

-- Courtney Kays

### **Volunteers Needed for Good Morning, Good Friday**

We're looking for volunteers (adults and confirmands) to help with Good Morning, Good Friday on April 10. We need people to make cookie dough (delivery by April 8), bake cookies (April 8), set-up (April 9) and help on Good Friday (set-up, help-out, clean-up).

If you would like to volunteer, please contact JJ Keelan in person, by phone at (732) 256-4020 or by sending an e-mail to [Mary.Keelan@yahoo.com](mailto:Mary.Keelan@yahoo.com).

### **Soup and Scripture**

"Soup and Scripture" is held Wednesdays during Lent in the Christian Education wing of the First Presbyterian Church, Manasquan. The series features six Manasquan Area Ministerium leaders. Each offers reflections based upon the book *Cast of Characters: Common People in the Hands of an Uncommon God* from the writings of Max Lucado.

The closing presentation will be given April 1 by the Rev. Keith Schmitt,

interim pastor, the Church in Brielle. Pastor Schmitt's topic will be Paul.

## **☪ EVANGELISM ☪**

### **Spiritual Nourishment**

Max Lucado's *Cast of Characters: Common People in the Hands of an Uncommon God*, will also be the basis of Holy Trinity's Easter season Weekday Spirituality series.

The conversation begins Wednesday, April 22. Groups will meet from 10 to 11:30 a.m. and from 7:30 to 9 p.m. (Choose the time that best-suits your schedule.) Pastor Mary will lead the discussion.

We have four copies of "*Cast of Characters ...*" in the church office that will be sold on a first come, first served basis (\$19.99 apiece). A recent gift makes it possible for us to provide a free book to those who are interested but cannot afford the cost. (See Pastor Mary.) A copy-to-borrow will also be available in our church library. What's more, the owner of Booktowne, Main St., Manasquan, has *Cast of Characters* in stock and has graciously offered to increase her supply to meet our needs.

Please call the church office (732-223-0533) to register for Weekday Spirituality and/or to purchase a book.

## **☪ REST IN PEACE ☪**

Our love and prayers are with the family of:

Doris C. Hill, who died February 23, 2009

Pastor Mary presided at the memorial service for Doris on Monday, March 2, in the Holy Trinity sanctuary.

## **☪ SOCIAL MINISTRY ☪**

To all who help support Social Ministry through our clothing sale, Mother's Day gift sale, etc., the following is an excerpt from a letter from Lutheran

Social Ministries of New Jersey, to whom we sent a donation:

"Your gift helps Lutheran Social Ministries of New Jersey continue to provide hospitality, healing and hope for those in need. May your gift of compassion and concern bless you and your family as you have blessed the lives of others in the family of God."

Thank you all! God bless!

~~ Eleanor Steiner,  
Social Ministry Co-chairperson

## ☪ BEREAVEMENT MINISTRY ☪

On the first Sunday of each month, Holy Trinity offers bereavement support to those grieving a loss or a change of some kind. The group will meet at 10:15 a.m. on April 5 in Pastor Mary's study. Chris Ann Waters, author and certified bereavement specialist, leads the discussion. Consecutive attendance is not required and people are welcome to attend as needed.

The most recent Transitions, a monthly devotional written by Ms. Waters that addresses matters of grief and change, is printed here for the benefit of Lamplighter readers:

### Remember

*Remember that you are dust,  
and to dust you shall return.  
Genesis 3:19*

Remember. This is what is asked of the Christian on Ash Wednesday when ashes are placed on the forehead in the shape of the cross. Remember. *You are dust, low to the ground, and to dust you shall return.* These are humbling words. Unifying words, as they draw one closer to the Maker. The act itself is one of worship and witness. This annual action is familiar to the Christian as it begins the forty-day walk with Jesus in the wilderness. It is a time to consider the importance of Christ's walk to Calvary and His sacrifice of self on Good Friday. A sacrifice for you and for me. Lent is a somber time. Yet, the ashes are

a penetrating and needful reminder of the weakness of flesh and the power of God.

For those who struggle with loss and grief at this time of year, Lent can be even more challenging. During Lent, Christians are inclined to give up something of interest, something that feeds the flesh. Whatever is forfeited for these forty days is replaced by something that feeds the spirit, and unites a believer more deeply in relationship with Jesus. Treats, going to the movies, and television time (one young man told me) are among items from which people opt to abstain. When one grieves, it may not seem such things are being given up. Grief already does that. Food has little appeal. Movies, and any kind of animated distractions, do little to engage. Life already seems on hold and dim. Although grief is painful and Lent lends to its sorrow, it is helpful to remember that of all the Christian seasons, this one offers the greatest hope and promise.

Belief in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior secures a triumph at the end of the Lenten Season. Easter comes, and with it restoration. But getting to the joy is the challenge. It was hard for Jesus. His love for God, discipline, and obedience were active in the process of the struggle. Then, He proved His love for God, for you, and for me when on Calvary He fully submitted to the Father's will and died a horrible death for the forgiveness of sins. Pain is a part of life, the unwanted part. But for those in Christ, whatever is suffered is not suffered alone. Jesus is with you. Whatever marks an ending also spurs a beginning to know Jesus in a more meaningful way.

God wanted to restore sinful people to Himself. Jesus was the way to do that. During this Lenten journey, it is comforting to remember that no one understands sorrow and grief better than Christ. He lived it and died for it. He lives with sorrows today. The sorrows of His people. He knows how losses come, to

whom, and where it hurts. He walks with us in our pain. He stays, whether we realize His presence or not. Lent is an important time to stay with Jesus, consider His sorrows for our sake, and contemplate our relationship with Him. The Holy Spirit will be with us as we remember.

*Jesus, remember me  
when you come into Your Kingdom.*

### ☞ WOMEN OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA (WELCA) ☞

**Louise Circle** will meet at 7 p.m. Monday, April 20 at the church. Please bring items for the food pantry. If you have any questions, please call Circle Leader Ruth Walsh. Ruth's telephone number is (732) 528-7695.

The WELCA would like to thank everyone for supporting our projects. The Church Christmas Card raised \$945 for the Property Committee flooring renovation project. Your donations on Blanket Sunday totaled \$435, which was earmarked for Church World Service. Our Treats and Treasures sale in November allowed us (with matching funds from Thrivent) to donate \$4300 to the following charities: Interfaith Neighbors, the local Food Pantry, Providence Clinic, Good News Home for Women and Harbor House.

**Elisabeth Circle** will meet at 10:30 a.m. on Monday, April 13 in the back meeting room. Ruth Beers and Lucille Menshik will serve as hostesses and Ruth will also present our devotions.

We have donated \$160 for supplies to be taken to the Mary Jane Enrichment Center, Philadelphia.

**Circle of Hope** will meet on Saturday, April 18 at 9 a. m. Please bring your items for the Starter Baskets for 180 – Turning Lives Around. If you have questions, please call Nancy Smarr. Nancy's telephone number is (732) 681-3369.

Please check upcoming weekly bulletins for the date of the upcoming

Communion Breakfast in May. All are welcome.

### ☞ COMMUNITY NEWS ☞

#### St. Mark Church Observes Holocaust Remembrance Day

St. Mark Catholic Church, Sea Girt, will host a presentation by Isabelle Ungar at 11 a.m. Sunday, April 19, in Father Childs Hall.

Ms. Ungar will share her story, as well as photographs of her family and those who saved her before, during and after World War II.

For more information, call the St. Mark Church office. The telephone number is (732) 449-6364.

### ☞ MAILBAG ☞

Dear Pastor,

I want to thank you and the good people at Holy Trinity for your partnership in the mission of Jesus Christ.

I had the opportunity to review the record of your congregation's Mission Support contributions to the New Jersey Synod in 2008. This record indicates congregational Mission Support contributions of \$59,095.45.

Sharing Mission Support gifts in this most challenging of economic times is an accomplishment that reflects the strong commitment, generous hearts and maturing faith among the people of Holy Trinity. From Manasquan, your faith and generosity touches lives throughout New Jersey, across the nation and across the globe!

Thank you! Together we are changing and shaping God's world. Together we lead the New Jersey Synod in stewardship that: Strengthens Faith, Enacts Justice, Sustains the Planet.

May God bless the stewardship and ministry of Holy Trinity.

Appreciatively,

Pastor Scott C. Schantzenbach  
Asst. to the Bishop, Stewardship Specialist



Dear Children of Holy Trinity,

Pastor Wuchter and I want to thank you for the lovely, decorated bag of delicious goodies – candy, cookies, etc. – and beautiful Valentine’s Day card.

I especially thank you for your thoughtfulness. It certainly brightened our day!

God bless you,  
Pastor and Mrs. Robert Wuchter



Pastor Hansen,

I would like to thank your Sunday School class, specifically Alex, for the wonderful Valentine’s Day card that was made for me. I have the card tacked to the wall of my housing unit above my desk.

Alex, it makes me smile knowing that someone so far away is thinking of the troops here, so far from home. It adds a little ray of sunshine to my day when I look at the card.

My fellow soldiers and I are grateful for your prayers and gestures of kindness. Things like this are exactly what makes the United States such a special place to live and a pleasure for soldiers like me to serve their country for.

I wish you all peace and happiness and, again, thank you for your thoughts and prayers. I’m deeply touched by your support for us.

*Bless you all,  
Ch 4 Darrell Bowen  
B Troop, Task Force ODIN  
COB Speicher, Iraq  
APO AE 09393*



Dear Pastor Hansen,

I received a Valentine card from your fifth grade Sunday School class.

Thanks for remembering all of us over here. It really makes me feel good that people appreciate what we are doing.

Sincerely,

*Christopher Campbell  
CW3 US Army*



Dear Luthermania,

Pastor Arnie stopped by to see me today and surprised me with your very thoughtful gift. I love it and appreciate it so much!

It’s so nice that you get together and do such kind things for people like myself.

*Bless you all,  
Ester Rohner*

PS: I already ate the cookie!



Dear Pastor Mary,

‘just wanted to send you a note thanking you and the church for your support this year – your and Pastor Beth’s support during my father’s bypass surgery; Ned Perwo’s support of Catherine’s vocal aspirations and inspiring Cameron to be an active participant!

You are amazingly thoughtful and really make Holy Trinity a safe and spiritually-nourishing place.

*Russ, Christie,  
Catherine & Cameron McIver*



## ∞ Holy Week Schedule ∞

### **Palm Sunday, April 5**

- 8:45 a.m. Holy Communion with Adult Choir & Choristers
- 10:30 a.m. Holy Communion with Cherub Choir

### **Maundy Thursday, April 9**

- 7:30 p.m. Holy Communion

### **Good Friday, April 10**

- 10 a.m. Good Morning, Good Friday
- 7:30 p.m. Choral Tenebrae Service with Choir, Organ & Orchestra

### **Holy Saturday, April 11**

- 7:30 p.m. Easter Vigil followed by Break the Fast reception

### **Easter Sunday, April 12**

- 8:45 a.m. Festival Liturgy with Choir, Organ & Brass Quintet
- 10:30 a.m. Festival Liturgy with Choir, Organ & Trumpets  
(Hallelujah Chorus sung at both services.)