

We are a community of Christian people seeking to love God with all of our hearts, souls, minds, and strength and to love our neighbors as ourselves.

The Chimes of Trinity Church

April/May 2005

God is Depending on You!

Dear Friends:

I have just returned from a conference called "Walking with Jesus: Open Eyes, Eager Hearts and Changed Lives." It was a conference on Stewardship, Evangelism and Congregational Development sponsored by Province I of the Episcopal Church. (Province I is basically the New England dioceses, our diocese is in Province III)

I was challenged by one speaker who said to each of us: "God is depending on you!" God is depending on me? I thought maybe he could find someone a little more reliable than me! The truth is that God is depending on you and on me. We are the body of Christ. We are the outward and visible sign of God to a world. A world that is looking high and low for God.

Spirituality is hot in the market place. The bookstore shelves are filled with all sorts and conditions of books on spirituality. The problem is for the most part, we the body of Christ, have convinced the folks who are seeking God that the last place they should look for life is in the church! Spiritual seekers aren't sure that they would find life in the church because they have been there and they didn't find it!

It has been said that the church is a community that exists purely for the benefit of non-members. The mission of the church is to connect the seekers to God.

As we continue to work out our Plan for Ministry, I need to remember something: It's not about us; it's about them; the seekers, those who don't know God's love. I need to ask of myself could a seeker find God through my life? Could a seeker find God in this church?

I hope you will join me in praying this simple prayer:

Lord, help me to be the one who helps
connect another to you.
Amen.

In God's love,

Father Dave †



**See Carnival Inserts
Inside**

Summary of Congregational Meeting on Adding a 3rd Service by Donnette Staas

On Sunday February 27, in lieu of a sermon at both the 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. services, Father Dave led the congregation in an exercise to initiate the process of adding a third worship service. Parishioners were asked to provide written answers to four questions (each on a different color slip of paper): What do you like most about the service you currently attend? What do you like least about the service you currently attend? What ideas do you have for a third service? What concerns do you have about adding a third service?

The brightly colored slips were then collected at the Offertory. John Dziel kindly compiled the responses using bar charts as a visual aid. On Sunday March 13 at 9 a.m. (in-between the two services), Father Dave met with the congregation (a fair number of people showed up early or stayed behind after the 8 a.m. service to attend this meeting) and shared the results of the survey.

Highlights of the Responses:

Father Dave provided a printed summary of the responses (in addition to mounting boards around the room which displayed the actual slips of paper for perusal at our leisure), so that information will not be duplicated in this report.

Amongst the things that people listed as liking most were Fr. Dave's sermons, the Liturgy and the sense of community in the parish. Even when asked what they liked least, the most popular response was that they were "happy" with things as they are. However, some key issues included that the service started late, parking is difficult (no surprise there!) and, surprisingly, that some people would like to have hymns at the 8 a.m. service (it was always assumed that within the Episcopal tradition, people expected the early service to be a simple Rite I service and would have no interest in further "bells and whistles.")

As for what kind of service to add, people were equally in favor of an evening service and a "contemporary" service. Trinity treasures our sense of community and is concerned about the effect that adding a new service might have on that strong sense of community we now share. Father Dave also took some time to review with everyone the rationale behind our needing another ser-

vice, and factors to consider when deciding whether to add a new service.

Once this data had been presented, a healthy discussion ensued where people voiced their concerns/ideas about the process. Below is a selection of some things that people expressed (by no means exhaustive – I tried to write down everything I could remember after the meeting):

The Musings of the People of Trinity...

Parking: People expressed ideas of parking on Bethlehem Pike and Highland Avenue. As we have discussed at vestry meetings, Father Dave reminded us that this would involve additional expense of snow removal, plus the installation of a walkway from those external parking spaces. One person suggested that families car-pool (i.e. one family pick up another family on the way to church) to reduce the number of cars; however, others felt that might not be a practical solution, and Father Dave countered with the idea that all members of a family come to church together in one car, instead of using multiple cars per family. Some clarification of parking rules would probably also need to be solicited from the borough (though there are currently no "No Parking" signs along Bethlehem Pike).

Crowding/Seating Issues: A suggestion was made to place extra seats in the chapel, and to have existing members volunteer to sit there to start, in order to free up the pews for visitors/larger families who'd like to sit together. I also overheard a few people commenting about encouraging people to sit in the front pews, which are often empty. Along the lines of members initiating the new seating arrangement, it was also suggested that this could be applied to parking too, whereby members could take the charge of parking outside the walls (i.e. along Bethlehem Pike and Highland Avenue) to make room for newcomers in the main parking lot.

What about altering our existing services to address items 1 and 2 above? Several opinions were voiced along this thread. People wondered whether we could change the 8 a.m. service in such a way as to encourage more of the "ten-o'clockers" to switch to the earlier service, but without losing the people who prefer the early service now (format and time are some characteristics which may play into their preference). One person saw this as a more cost-effective approach to addressing these issues, rather than incurring the added financial concerns with adding a new service (see item below). Since five of the nineteen people who

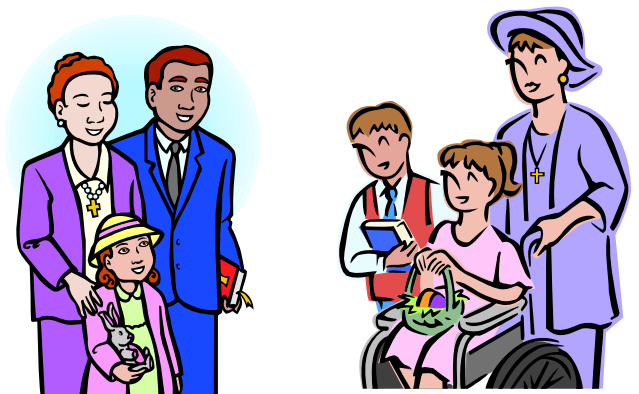
were present at the 8 a.m. service when the survey was conducted expressed an interest in adding hymns, this could be a plausible scenario. Father Dave suggested that perhaps it would be a matter of asking the core 8 a.m. attendees what, if any changes they would like to see/would tolerate. (I'd interject here that it might also help to ask the 10 a.m. worshippers what it would take to get them to consider switching to 8 a.m., and, as was suggested for adding a new service, to try to get a core group of people to commit to switching to that service as their primary service once a mutually acceptable format for the service was agreed upon). One person mentioned that she liked being able to attend an early service when she has to work the rest of the day, but at her previous church, the time of the early service was changed from 8 a.m. to 7:30 in order to accommodate the addition of a third service on Sunday morning and that earlier time proved to be too early for her.

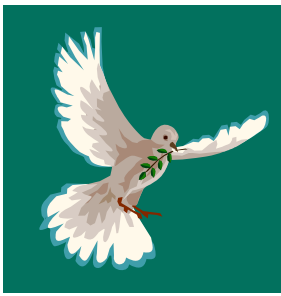
What about staffing issues when we need to support a third service? In addition to the possibility of needing a curate (especially if the service were placed on a Saturday), people also recognized the impact on the (volunteer) lay ministers (chaliceists, readers, acolytes, etc). Father Dave also mentioned that should the third service take on a significantly different format from the ones we have now, the sermon he prepares for use at the 8 and 10 a.m. services might not be appropriate for that third service. Of course, funding for additional paid staff would also be an issue. Father Dave mentioned that the Diocese does provide some nominal support for curates, but those funds would not be sufficient to cover the full cost of employing one.

Remember that one of our duties as a Christian community is to reach the unchurched: Father Dave periodically reminded us of that charge throughout the conversation. People shared their experiences while they were members at other churches which added new services to their schedule. One person spoke of a Saturday evening service that used to be held at Trinity some years ago. It was called a "Joy Mass," and it tended to attract mainly non-Episcopalians. Another spoke of how a Saturday evening service allowed an elderly arthritic woman to start coming to church again. Painful joints had made it extremely difficult for her to get moving early enough in order to make it to traditional morning services, so that communion had to be taken to her at home. The evening service, taking place later in the day, gave her joints enough time to become functional after rising so that she was able to join the rest of her church family in regular worship. So what happens to our sense of community? It

seemed clear to me that the ruminations of the people present accurately reflected this issue being a primary area of concern in the survey results. What was also striking about this was that the data presented by Father Dave indicated that "when the highest value of the congregation is community," that's when not to add a service. People generally agreed that it would take some effort on all our parts to maintain that sense of community (more social outreach, etc.). Of course, in order to fund the level of ministry to reach out to (and retain) our current membership (and to reach out to the larger community of the unchurched), we need to grow. If we grow, we need to provide room for those new people. One other statistic presented by Father Dave that is also very relevant to the situation we're in, is that typically when you have your main service being 60-80% full (which is where we are now), chances are that the addition of a new service will cause that main service to drop to the 40-60% full level, and unfortunately that level is one at which we're least likely to grow (see Father Dave's summary for complete comments on factors affecting the process of adding a new service). One person made the comment that it would be better for us to try to grow from the plateau we're on now, rather than to find ourselves in the position of having to climb back up to this plateau from the level of a dying church (he had some experience of that in the church from which he came, and said that it was extremely difficult).

So, what do we do?!! We pray! Father Dave has called the church to prayer about this very critical issue, from now until May 8, 2005 (the Ascension). People also suggested that in the meantime we try out a few of the suggestions such as the ones mentioned in items 1-3 above and see whether they alleviate some of the current issues while we contemplate how best to achieve our longer term goals. Father Dave certainly led the charge in that regard - in response to the comments about church starting late, he promised to start the service right on time from now on, whether we had one acolyte or all present, and even if the choir had to race down the aisle to catch up! And so the meeting ended at 9:46 a.m., with Father Dave announcing, "Church starts in fourteen minutes!" (And it did!)





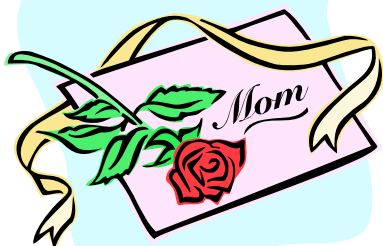
Thanks for all the ministry

Holy Week and Easter were meaningful experiences thanks to the ministry of many.

We give thanks for the ministry of:

- + John, Sheila, and Eddie in the office.
- + Steve Schreiber and the Youth Choir and the fabulous Trinity Choir for all the music of the season
- + Donnette Staas for organizing the Paschal supper liturgy
- + For all the participants in the Paschal supper
- + Skip and Scotti Kershner and Jane Saunders and their helpers for preparing the supper and cleaning up.
- + The healing prayer teams' ministry throughout Lent
- + The Altar Guild, Ushers, Greeters, and Acolytes extra duty
- + Jim and Amanda Hayden and their artistic flower ministry
- + Sue Adair, Fr. Dave and Anne Canan, Jill Leiby, Janet Himes and all those made the Agape Breakfast after the Great Vigil So wonderful.
- + Jenny Gregg, Chris Canan and all his helpers for making the Easter Egg hunt fun for the children.
- + For every person who participated in the worship of this church during the season.

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY



March Vestry Highlights

- + Reviewed the Plan for Ministry; set deadlines
- + Amended the strategy for adding a third service, deciding first to make more room at the 10 a.m. service
- + Decided to survey the congregation about some ideas for beefing up the 8 a.m. service
- + Authorized the Worship Committee to get bids for chairs for south transept
- + Authorized the Property Committee to get bids and necessary approvals for parking along the Church Street wall.
- + Received draft copy of Personnel Manual for review and discussion at April meeting
- + Decided to allow use of Sexton Cottage for meetings until more permanent plan for building use evolves

Strategy One of The Plan for Ministry: Revised

The first article of the Plan for Ministry called for the addition of a third service and for the appointment of a task force that was to be charged with the planning and implementation of the service. Because of the input from the congregational meeting held on Sunday March 13 that strategy has been revised. (That meeting is described in great detail in another article in the Chimes)

The New Strategy One: Make room for new members at the 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. services.

Increase parking. Provide additional parking along the church street wall and reline the present parking lot to gain about 18 spaces.

Increase seating capacity of the church by providing permanent seating, better lighting, and improved sound in the south transept. This will provide 40 extra seats.

Conduct an additional survey of the 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. services to determine if 8 o'clockers would like music and if 10 o'clockers would make the 8 a.m. service their regular service.

The survey was conducted and much to our surprise the majority of the 8 a.m. worshipers would like to have music as long as it is kept simple and doesn't make the service longer! The 10 a.m. survey showed about 20 folks who would make the switch from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. if music were added. Fr. Dave will be meeting with Steve Schreiber and the Worship Committee to begin planning for the changes which will start in September.

Trinity Open

Web Address Changes

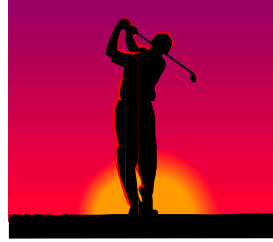
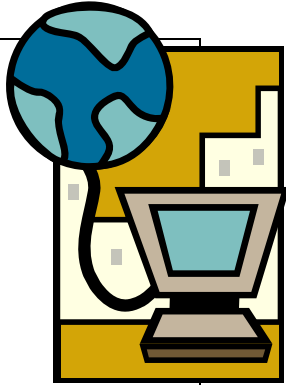
Please note our web address change to:

www.trinityambler.com

The next change will be e-mail:

office@trinityambler.com

Next month, May, the rest of the addresses will be changed to dot com.



Spring is coming! Forget snow and ice. Think positive! Think GOLF !!!!

When: June 11th
Time: 10 a.m.

Where: Mainland Golf Club
Fee: \$65.00 per person

Golf, fun, prizes and a get-together after the round at the Gergens (bring a salad, desert or other goodies)

Sponsor a hole for just \$25.00, get your name or company name in lights! (or maybe just on a poster)

This is a great day of fun and friendship and all proceeds benefit the College Scholarship Fund.

Look for sign-up sheets in the Narthex or see Dennis Reid or Roy Irvin for more details.

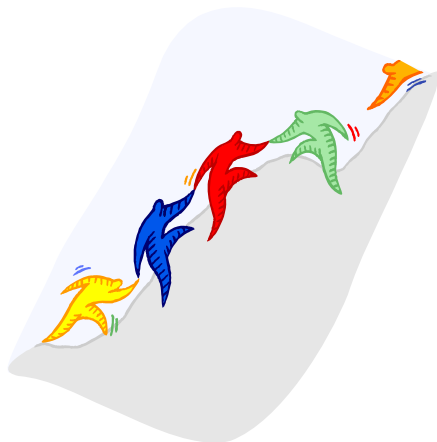


Trinity Church welcomes eight new members to the Anam Cara Chapter of Daughters of the King: Jane Struse, Lynda Basham, Leslie Vacante, Janet McLemore, Annette Irvin, Denise Elliot, Suzy Maynard and Marianne Randall

PASTORAL CARE CORNER

Your Pastoral Care Corner is here to serve you and others in your life or in our parish.

The "Pastoral Care Corner" is located in the entrance to the Parish Hall, located on the wall across from the restrooms. Look for information that may be helpful to you and your family.



PASTORAL CARE COMMITTEE

Committee Chairperson

Sue Adair

Flowers to the Homebound

MaryAnn Miller

Prayer Chain

Requests to church office

Andrea Gallagher

Sacraments to the Homebound

Fr. David Canan

Friendly Meals

Eleanor Sypher

"Got Wheels" Transportation

MaryAnn Miller

Special Needs (hearing devices)

Deborah Groeber

Parish Nurse

Jennifer Prater, RN

Assistant to the Rector for Pastoral Care

Al Mathis

Consultants to the Rector:

John and Kathy Guerin

Pastoral Care Corner

Phyllis Handley

Taped Worship Service

Brit Gergen



**THANKS TO ALL WHO SERVED
OUR
INTERFAITH FAMILIES!!**



'TO LOVE GOD WITH OUR WHOLE HEART - AND OUR NEIGHBORS AS OURSELVES'

THANK YOU...THANK YOU...THANK YOU!!!

How do we adequately say thank you for the generosity and caring of the many volunteers who cooked, shopped, took care of children, stayed overnight, did laundry, moved and transported our families in the hospitality network during the month of April. We are very grateful to our buddy churches, St. John's Lutheran, Ambler and St. Thomas' Episcopal, Whitmarsh and more than 50 Trinity families who helped in this effort.

A very special vote of thanks to Annette Irvin and the Trinity coordinators: Barbara Shields (suppers), Maureen McCauley (overnights), Roy Irvin (transportation), Laura Gergen (child care), Kathie Evans and Judy Grieve (supplies), and Pat Saunders (laundry), who did a typically wonderful job.

How gratifying it has been to see the enormous response of our Trinity family coming to the aid of the Interfaith families during a difficult time of transition in their lives.

10 Things You Never Hear in Church

1. Hey! It's my turn to sit in the front pew!
2. I was so enthralled, I never noticed your sermon went 25 minutes over time.
3. Personally I find witnessing much more enjoyable than golf.
4. I've decided to give our church the \$500 a month I used to send to TV evangelists.
5. I volunteer to be the permanent teacher for the Junior High Sunday School class.
6. Forget the denominational minimum salary. Let's pay our pastor so he can live like we do.
7. I love it when we sing hymns I've never heard before!
8. Since we're all here, let's start the service early.
9. Pastor, we'd like to send you to this Bible seminar in the Bahamas.
10. Nothing inspires me and strengthens my commitment like our annual stewardship campaign!

The Chair by C.E.B.

I live in what is called an "assisted living home." It assists me in doing everything I would normally do for myself like getting dressed in the morning, eating during the day and getting undressed in the evening. And so it goes.

Yesterday I noticed one chair in particular. It stood in a somewhat empty space where two open corridors meet. Just the place to sit down, get your breath before you start climbing the stairs again.

I flopped on that chair. How really remarkable an invention was the chair. It was very very stable. One piece of flat planking with a leg on each corner. Four legged and useful if the legs are of equal length. That is called a stool. But a chair also has a back to keep the "sitter" upright. Also the sides of the back are curved forward so the "sitter" will not fall forward and off. This brings me to a very interesting point.

If the shape of the chair is not square but 8 feet oblong, we have a seat which we call a pew. *So if you have a seat which is designed for you, why on earth are you not sitting on it on Sunday mornings.*

C.E.B. is a retired priest, scholar, and member of Trinity Church. He'll be sharing his musings with us in each issue of the Chimes.



WORSHIP AT TRINITY

8:00 and 10:00 a.m. on Sundays

9:00 a.m. on Wednesdays

7:00 p.m. on Thursday

See calendar inside for
additional service times

Office Information

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Email: office@trinityambler.com

Web: www.trinityambler.com

The Staff

Rev. David A. Canan, *Rector*: rector@trinityambler.com

Stephen Schreiber, *Musical Director*: rns89@aol.com

Carole Allsop, *Christian Education Dir.*: fcallsop@yahoo.com

Eddie Black, *Baptismal Vocations*: CED@trinityambler.com

John Dziel, *Financial Admin*: accounting@trinityambler.com

Sheila Bistany, *Office Admin*: office@trinityambler.com

Leigh Irvin, *Chimes*: leigh.irvin@juno.com

Morgan Beam, *Nursery*: morganbeam@hotmail.com



2005/2006 VESTRY

Sue Adair, Pastoral Care

Tim Bauder, Communications

Steve Blodgett, Rector's Warden/Finance Committee

Robin Chambers-Dixon, Human Resources

Bill Davis, Property

Laura Gergen, Spiritual Formation

Jill Leiby, Parish Life/Hospitality

Piers Prater, Mission & Outreach

Dennis Reid, Accounting Warden

Jane Saunders, Stewardship

Donnette Staas, Worship

Heather Lee Whipple, Vestry Secretary

milestones!

April Birthdays:

Kristen Blodgett 04/01

William Chester 04/02

Claire Gober 04/02

Mary DeViso 04/02

Katherine Driggs 04/02

Bryan Dingley 04/05

Anthony Lozzi 04/06

Sue Adair 04/06

Francis Griffith 04/07

Donna Edwards 04/09

Clayton McLemore 04/10

Olivia Ehmann 04/10

Carolyn Lozzi 04/11

Annette Irvin 04/11

Reita Detweiler 04/11

Maureen McCauley 04/12

Cheryl Bayard 04/12

Mary Ann Miller 04/13

Suzu Maynard 04/14

Paul Franson 04/16

Josephine Dixon 04/17

Sara Dingley 04/17

Ian Stancato 04/18

Lara Gober 04/18

Collin Pritz 04/18

Lynda Basham 04/19

Janet McLemore 04/22

William Wilson, IV 04/24

Skip Kershner 04/26

Harriet Hessler 04/28

Becky Brown 04/29

Samantha Guzzie 04/30

May Birthdays

Alex Barlow 05/01

Ed Mahler 05/03

John Dziel 05/05

Jill Marsceill 05/05

Meredith Dixon 05/05

Robert Wintermute 05/06

Robin Stancato 05/06

Alvin Fries 05/09

Glenda Ellis 05/10

Charlie Rudalavage 05/10

Larissa Milne 05/14

Bruce Raffensperger 05/14

Jonathan Truitt 05/15

Jacob Lawrence 05/16

Eddie Black 05/16

Margaret Manchester 05/17

Denise Elliott 05/18

Edward Wintermute 05/19

Elizabeth Canan 05/19

Heather Lee Whipple 05/19

Steve Schreiber 05/21

Ryan Gober 05/25

Dennis Reid 05/25

Diane Powell 05/25

Kimberly Blodgett 05/27

Pam Guzzie 05/28

Sarah Black 05/28

Leigh DeTato 05/30

Anniversaries:

Peter & Amy Williamson 04/28

M. Ernest Dixon & Robin

Chambers-Dixon 04/28

Stewart & Juanita Wagoner

05/17

Steve & Juliet Brown 05/20

Bill & Beverly Bleil 05/23

Jim & Dolores Revels 05/23

Earl & Heather Lee Whipple

05/24

We remember:

Patricia W. Gray who died on February 25, 2005.

Hazel Risley who died on March 28, 2005

Janet Dundore who died on March 31, 2005

Wedding:

Frederic Claghorn, III & Jessica Carter were married on March 12, 2005.

Transfers In:

Andrew, Gretchen, Elizabeth & Gabriel Pendleton from Christ Church, Pottstown on April 7, 2005.

Transfer Out:

Jeff Leister & Lauren Leister to St. Thomas' Church, White-marsh, on April 5, 2005

Baptism:

Holly Page Higgins McGee was baptized on March 27, 2005