

Dear Holy Trinity Family,

I'm writing this the day after the opening of Sunday School: whattabeginning! 305 people worshiped the first weekend of this new program year. (Our current goal is 300 worshipers every weekend.) 141 children and youth attended Sunday School and Confirmation Connection. We hosted Luther in a Nutshell for incoming and prospective members (approximately seven people will be joining our Holy Trinity community on Saturday, October 17); we married a happy couple (Ryan Lepree and Rhianon Zilenski); 30 people enjoyed the Road Rally, the first Saints & Sinners event of the new program year, and we baptized the newest member of the family, little Jenna Faith Robinson.

There was a beautiful cameo moment during the 10:30 a.m. service at which we welcomed Jenna through Holy Baptism. After the parents and godparents had gathered at the font, I invited the children to come forward and sit on the carpet for a better view. One little person in a flowered party dress fairly skipped toward us, a look of delight on her face as she looked at the baby in her long white christening gown and bonnet. The pre-schooler spontaneously approached the baby, her arms opened wide, and reached up to touch her in wonder. All of us who watched got a glimpse of God's joy alive in that child.

God loves God's children of **all** ages! The presence of babies, children and youth is particularly encouraging to us, though: families find Holy Trinity a welcoming, nurturing, fun and safe place for sons, daughters, grandchildren. All that young blood both indicates and intensifies the vibrancy of our life together.

Whether or not there are any children living under your roof, I hope you'll feel holy pride in the religious education our youth are receiving. 216 children are enrolled in Sunday School (nursery class through 6th grade), 46 youth are participating in Confirmation Connection, and approximately 30 high schoolers are involved in Breakfast Club. The Sunday School teaching team is composed of 25 teachers and four substitutes. We also have 11 adults serving as Confirmation guides and four high schoolers serving as jr. guides. Chris Jeffray, one of our young adults, is now leading Breakfast Club. Our children and young people's spirits are nourished in the classroom and Breakfast Club space, but also during worship, choir practice, fun and service events.

We are teaching our children and youth that worshiping, singing, serving, learning and playing **in community** are all part of our joyful Life Together. We meet Jesus in His Body, the Church. We serve Him in the needy and hurting. We are strong when we are grafted to the Vine, our Lord Jesus Christ, through Word and Sacrament.

I preached recently (9/12-13) about the fact that all of us are teachers, whether we're conscious of that or not. Others watch us and take their cues from us. Our words and behavior are shaping the attitudes of onlookers, especially the young. May we be faith-filled role models! We thank God for those who formally teach our young **and** for those who informally lead them in the Way of Life by loving and guiding them.

In Christ, who taught us to love as He loved us,

Pastor Mary Virginia Farnham

☞ ARNIE'S CORNER ☞

Many of you know that I am an avid reader, and that I read as many as four books at a time, one of which is pure mindless drivel.

The deadline for the October submission for "The Lamplighter" was September 11. Needless to say, I am two days late and am working towards a submission early tomorrow (Sept. 14).

With that being said, I have been reading a book entitled "mudhouse Sabbath" by Lauren F. Winner. She is a Christian, who has converted from Judaism. The book is a series of essays regarding her experience of Shabbat, the Jewish Sabbath. I found Ms. Winner's essay on "Shabbat/Sabbath" extremely intriguing. She discusses the differences between our way of marking The Sabbath and the Jewish way of marking Shabbat.

She speaks of preparations beginning on Friday afternoon for the next day and how terribly busy the time before sundown on Friday was.

"I'd think how strange it was to be in such a frenzy to get ready for a day of rest," she writes.

She continues to describe the feverish pitch the preparations would reach, and concludes her remembrances with the setting of the sun.

The next phrase stunned me: "Time as we know it does not exist for these 24 hours, and the worries of the week soon fall away. A feeling of joy appears... Shabbat is a meditation of unbelievable beauty."

Well, this drove me to my Bible and a walk through Exodus 20, verse 6 which states the fourth commandment quite plainly: "Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy." It is interesting to note that this commandment is the longest of all the commandments. It continues through verse 11.

Christians also define the Sabbath as a unit of time. It is the day of church; we are meant to devote the

day to reverence of God and as a day of rest from toil. This commandment has a "thou shall" portion and a "thou shall not" portion. We are commanded to "Remember" the day, the thou shall, and "You shall not do any work..." the thou shall not portion. Yet here I sit at my computer composing this submission for our monthly newsletter.

Why don't we keep the Sabbath? There are several answers each of us can come up with. The Hebrew word for "holy" means, quite literally, "set apart." Our Jewish friends do set apart Shabbat from the normal week. We, as Christians, have a dual meaning for Sunday. It is the day of worship, setting time apart to worship and praise God and we celebrate it as the day of Resurrection.

What is the answer? I don't know! But, I have a suggestion that may serve as an answer to some. Start small, consider spending Saturday evening separating ourselves from our weekly world and preparing to meet our God in the morning. I don't know where it will take you; I suspect you will be more relaxed and rested on Sunday morning. Now I need to contemplate my sin in not keeping the Sabbath set apart.

Shalom, *Pastor Arnie*

☞ CHRISTIAN EDUCATION ☞

SUNDAY CHURCH SCHOOL

Pink is the New Black

This year, Sunday School is trying something new. The fourth, fifth, and sixth grades will be attending the 10:30 a.m. service on the second, third, and fourth Sundays of the month, respectively. In order to receive a black check for attendance we're asking that the students fill out a pink attendance card (the ushers will be handing them out) and place it in the offering basket. The cards will be routed to the Sunday School office and students will receive credit for attendance. Attending a service will count towards the students'

perfect or good attendance awards for Sunday School.

Note: if a student can't attend the 10:30 a.m. Sunday service but attends the Saturday or 8:45 a.m. Sunday service he or she will still receive credit.

If you have any questions about this new program, please contact JJ Keelan or Cathy Taft, Sunday School Co-Superintendents.

LUTHERMANIA

'tweens Unplugged

Sign up your 9-12 year-old for some old-fashioned fun and fellowship: no avatars, iPods, or Internet needed!

Once a month we will have fun playing games, sharing yummy food and helping others. This year's events include a game night, a house of cards contest, Earth Day crafts, Christmas caroling and visits to a senior center, pizza and a movie night and our next event – participating in Clean Ocean Actions' Fall 2009 Beach Sweep.

Beach Sweep details:

Date: Saturday, October 24

Place: Main Street Beach, Manasquan

Time: 9 to 10 a.m.

Meet at the entrance of Main Street Beach. We need a few adults to

stay and help tally the litter we collect. For details and to sign up, please see the

flier on the Christian Ed bulletin board in Fellowship Hall or e-mail Liz Stupar at lizstupar@comcast.net.

Watch for Luthermania announcements and fliers, or sign up to be on the Luthermania email list. All children 9 through 12 years old are invited, so bring nieces and nephews, your children's friends, your neighbors, your grandchildren.

If you have any questions, please contact Liz by phone (732-714-8951) or e-mail.

LIBRARY

Book Review

George's Cosmic Treasure Hunt
by Lucy and Stephen Hawking.
Simon and Schuster, 2009.

George's Cosmic Treasure Hunt by Lucy and Stephen Hawking is a great novel. We think that most kids from grades 3-5 would especially enjoy it. It's about two kids who go on a "Treasure Hunt" in space. The children, Annie and George, meet up with Eric and Emmet after they receive a message from aliens! Then they find themselves in space chasing the evil Dr. Giger to solve a mystery. The children's supercomputer Cosmo gets damaged along the way but it still works, sometimes. The book has lots of pictures and cool facts between the chapters. We recommend this book to those who are adventurous or those who like science. The adventure was so real; we practically jumped into space with them! We recommend that you dive right into George's Cosmic Treasure Hunt right away!

~~ Reviewed by
Alex and Maggie Stupar

Be a Star

Review a book from our library for the Lamplighter. Book review forms can be found above the library cart downstairs in Fellowship Hall. You can read and review a book by yourself or with a friend or member of your family, as Maggie and Alex did (above).

Confirmands, did you know you can earn service credits for reviewing a library book related to faith? And every review published in the Lamplighter will be eligible to win a Barnes & Noble gift certificate in a drawing to be held on May 16, 2010, the last day of Sunday School.

For further information, email egreene113@comcast.net or leave a note with your name and telephone number or your email address in Mrs.

Greene's mailbox outside the church office.

Thank you!

Changes Are Coming to Our Church Library

Please note that I am calling it our Church Library instead of our Sunday School Library. Beginning this fall, books housed in the library kiosk in Fellowship Hall will reflect increased borrowing by adults.

Could Pastor Mary's enthusiastic book reviews be the reason? ☺

The library kiosk is divided into four sections. Section 1 contains books of special interest to parents and teachers with emphasis on helping children to grow up to be readers. Closely related in Section 2, Family Sharing, are books that can be enjoyed alone or read aloud within the family, from picture books for the very youngest child to books for boys and girls in Confirmation Connection. Section 3 houses Grace Matters CDs and books about spirituality, poetry and prayer. Section 4 has novels, such as The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society (watch for Pastor Mary's review in the November issue of The Lamplighter) and non-fiction, like Three Cups of Tea and Amish Grace. Many of the books in this section will be familiar to those who attend Weekday Spirituality.

Our Sunday School library collection downstairs has outgrown its space. To solve this "happy problem" the library volunteers, with strong help from the Property Committee, moved the books for older readers - fifth graders to confirmands - to what used to be the Music Room on the upper level. That gives us space to expand the section for the younger children - from infants to fourth graders - in the library in the hallway on the lower level. Class visits to the library for fifth and sixth graders will be held in the former Music Room while class visits for the younger

children will be held in the library area outside the Nursery classroom.

We hope you will enjoy the new arrangement. Warmest thanks to Buzz Goode and his crew for sanding one of the bookcases so the shelves are splinter-proof, securing the new bulletin boards, moving books from the lower to the upper level and for doing it all with such grace. THANK YOU!

~~ *Ellin Greene*

Bookworms Wanted!

Please join us to discuss Amish Grace by Donald B. Kraybill on Sept. 30 and 3 Cups of Tea by Greg Mortenson on Oct. 7.

We'll then engage in a Bible study of St. Luke's Gospel, which we'll begin to hear on Advent I and throughout the new church year. Workbooks are \$20 each. Reserve ahead! (Speak with Pastor Mary if cost is a problem. Four copies of the workbook will be available for anyone who can't afford to buy one.)

All are welcome! Please call and let us know you will join us (732-223-0533). Sign-up sheets are in the church office.

✠ EVANGELISM ✠

We will be welcoming new members into our family of faith at the 5 p.m. service on Saturday, Oct. 17. All worshippers are invited to stay after the service for a wine and cheese reception in honor of our newest members.

The Meet and Greet for incoming members, sponsors and council will be at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, Oct. 4. Thank you to everyone who offers a Holy Trinity-style "warm welcome" to these brothers and sisters in Christ.

For more information please call the church office (732-223-0533), Tina Braender-Shinn (732-528-9036) or Jeanne Schwarz (732-223-2636).

We will offer another opportunity to "join the family" in the spring.

**Attention:
Parents of College Students**

The Evangelism Committee will be preparing our famous college care packages on Sunday, Nov. 1. The goodies will be mailed to our children who attend college away from home.

We are asking all parents who wish their child(ren) who attend college to receive a care package, to contribute a jar of your child's favorite peanut butter and a box of crackers.

Please put these items in a bag with your child's name on it and leave the bag in the church office. Deadline: Monday, Oct. 19.

The current list of student names and addresses is posted on the Evangelism bulletin board in Fellowship Hall. You may update the mailing address or add your child(ren) if they are not on the list. If you prefer, complete the posted take-home sheet and drop off the completed sheet in Tina Braender-Shinn's or Jeanne Schwarz's mailbox (located behind the louver doors outside of the church office).

If members of the congregation would like to contribute, we will be accepting non-perishable donations through Oct. 19. That gives us a little time to inventory items and shop for any additional items we may need to "round out" the packages. See below for ideas.

Should you prefer to make a cash donation and let us do the shopping, please put your donation in an envelope marked "Care Packages" and put it in the offering plate or drop it off in one of the Evangelism co-chairs' mailboxes.

If you would like to bake homemade goodies or have any questions, please contact Pat & Chuck Augustine by phone (732-282-0813) or via email ZPT123@aol.com. Homemade items may be brought in on Saturday, Oct. 31 and left in the church kitchen. They will be included in the packing on Sunday Nov. 1.

Suggestions for items to be donated:

- Home baked cookies & brownies
- Canned fruit or pudding (snack size)
- Cup of Soup
- Popcorn
- Individual packages of chips
- Raisins
- Tuna fish
- Hard candy
- Lifesavers
- Gum
- Peanut butter
- Granola bars
- Crackers
- Juice boxes
- Cookies
- Pretzels

No glass containers or personal items, please.

Thank you for supporting this very special outreach to our college students!

Blanketeers

Fourteen blankets and six infant hats were delivered in September to Project Linus for fragile children. Many thanks to all for their time, effort and beautiful donations.

The Blanketeers will meet on Monday October 12 at 1 p.m. in the classroom behind the church kitchen.

We welcome everyone! Please call Gloria Smith (732) 449-1942 for more information.

WOMEN'S RETREAT

Icon Writing

What on earth is this? Who ever heard of writing an icon? I must say when I signed up to attend the women's retreat this year, what I knew about icons you could stick in the corner of your eye with room left over! I have attended Holy Trinity's women's retreat several times. I have always found this event, held at St. Marguerite's Retreat House in Mendham, New Jersey to be

an AWESOME experience, and I have encouraged a number of other people to attend. But, icon writing? To say I had misgivings was to put it mildly. On the other hand, I hated the thought of missing the retreat.

Meanwhile, my dear friend and choir and canoe companion, Waltraut Buser, said that she and Helga Yarnall, another choir buddy, were going to go. As I had suggested to them many times that they should try this, I couldn't very well not go myself. Besides, Lorraine Brunelle said that she would go if I did!! Waltraut, Lorraine and I all had the same concerns, namely that we are not at all artistic, don't do crafts, and the only thing I ever painted was a house! To top it all off, I didn't realize (not that it wasn't well publicized) that I would have to take Friday off. Nevertheless, it seemed I was going. Helga, on the other hand, is artistic and would, no doubt, have loved this event. At the last minute, however, she was unable to go.

So, what is involved in writing an icon? I had no idea. I figured that you had to come up with some sort of symbolic representation of God and paint it. This was so far beyond any capabilities that I have that it isn't even funny. Give me a tennis racquet or a canoe paddle, and I'm fine, but a paint brush? Fortunately, Waltraut, who had similar misgivings, came up with a totally brilliant idea which she graciously shared with me.

She said, "You know Cynthia, you could always use a geometric representation (she is after all a physicist) for this".

Wow, maybe I could do this; you know, a triangle for the Trinity or an oval for the "all seeing eye" or something along those lines. OK, armed with this plan, I was less worried.

On to Mendham we went. Virtually the minute I got there, Waltraut let me know that the icon we were preparing was of the Virgin Mary. Oops! Can't really think of a shape for that one. As it turned out, it was an amazing

process. First of all, our instructor, Patricia Miranda, was really outstanding and had the patience of Job. She began by teaching us something about icons, which, by the way means image. Also, icons are not of God because, according to orthodox Christianity, you are not supposed to draw Him (might have that a little mixed up!!) We started with a rectangular surface, white on one side (don't know what that was made of - - guess I didn't pay close enough attention) and wood on the other. All my artistic worries ended when I learned that we were all going to trace the same picture of Mary onto this white surface. I negotiated this tracing OK, although somehow I managed to put it crookedly on the surface! Then we made the paint, called tempera (not tempura). You add egg yolk to paint pigment to prepare this. This was fun (and good for Waltraut and I as pipettes were involved). You separate the raw egg and then flip the yolk from hand to hand (without breaking it), then you poke a hole in it and try to grab out the little piece of goo before it falls into the cup. Anyway, we all did this OK. There is no way that I can describe the whole process to you as we literally spent more than 10 hours working on this.

Of course, I don't remember any of the names of the colors, or layers, or processes, etc. It doesn't matter. We all tried to do the same thing, but, of course, different people have different abilities. I was probably best at the gilding. Applying the gold leaf required a lot of hot air. I obviously have an abundance of that, so I did that well enough. In any event after all of this work, we all produced icons. Starting with the same tracing, we created 19 different pictures. The facial expressions of each were completely different. During the process, every other second someone was yelling for Patricia.

"Yikes, Patricia, I ruined all of the paint."

“HELP, Patricia, I put the wrong color on her face” (That was Pastor Mary!)

Fortunately, nothing got Patricia flustered, and nothing that we messed up was irreparable!!

I really could go on and on about this, but the bottom line is that the camaraderie was spectacular. There was still plenty of time to join the Sisters for vespers or lauds (or whatever the other one is called.) There was also plenty of time to reflect, relax, and revitalize.

I must admit, that when I looked at the icon that I had “created,” I really couldn’t believe that I did it. Since I’ve been home, I find that some of the things that Patricia said are coming back to me. Icon writing is a process. Starting from a clean slate and adding layer upon layer of complexity; working our way from earth to heaven – just like life!

~~ Cynthia Mussinan

☞ SOCIAL MINISTRY ☞

Nearly New Clothing Sale Coming this Fall

Social Ministry’s Nearly New Clothing Sale will be from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friday, Oct. 2 and from 9 a.m. to Noon on Saturday, Oct. 3.

Clothing is being collected only until Noon on Sunday, Sept. 27. (Drop items off on the stage in Fellowship Hall.)

Please donate items that are in good condition (such as you would give your best friend). The sale will feature linens and curtains, too. If you can provide help sorting and/or selling on the day of the sale, Social Ministry would appreciate the extra hands. Please contact us! A sign-up sheet for volunteers will be posted in Fellowship Hall. It isn’t necessary to stay throughout the sale. Sign up for an hour or two! Thank you for your anticipated support.

~~ Eleanor Steiner and Connie King,
Co-chairpersons

☞ CHILD OF GOD ☞

During the month of September, Holy Trinity welcomed the following child into the Body of Christ through the Sacrament of Baptism:

Child: Jenna Faith Robinson

Date of Baptism: Sept. 13.

Jenna’s parents are Stacey and Scott Robinson. Her sponsors are Joseph Nolan and Julia Politano. Dot Meredith is her maternal great-grandmother and her maternal grandmother is Nancy Mallow.

☞ WEDDING BLESSINGS ☞

Pastor Mary officiated at the marriage of Ryan Lepree and Rhianon Zalenski on Saturday, Sept. 12 by Pastor Mary.

John Sidway was the best man and Kristina Zalenski was the maid of honor.

Ryan’s maternal grandparents are Gretchen and Walter Anderson.



Pastor Arnie will officiate at the marriage of George Boor and Margaret Sanford Wojciechowski on Sunday, Sept. 27 by Pastor Arnie.

Charles Karcher is their best man and Deborah Letellier is their matron of honor.



☞ BEREAVEMENT MINISTRY ☞

Each month, Holy Trinity offers bereavement support to those grieving a loss or a change of some kind. 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 next meeting will be at 10:15 a.m. Sunday, Oct. 4, in Pastor Mary’s study.

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:

Lost Moorings

I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Matthew 28:20

Suicidal loss is riveting and complicated. It is one of the most devastating losses one can grieve. A death due to suicide makes the grief process that ensues guilt-laden, lengthy, and perplexing. Because suicide is self-inflicted, survivors live with a gnawing thought: What could I have done to prevent it. A haunting notion. Family, friends, and communities left in the aftermath of suicidal loss are numb. For those who have not been impacted by such a loss, it is hard to comprehend its emotional toll. For those who have been, its impact is indelible.

Suicide is a serious reality in America. According to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, over 33,000 people in the United States die by suicide every year. In 2006 (latest available data), there were 33,300 reported suicide deaths, and it is the 11th leading cause of death in the United States. Among youth, suicide is the fifth leading cause of death among those 5-14 years old, and the third leading cause of death among those 15-24 year olds. Every 16 minutes someone dies by suicide. It is estimated that close to one million people make a suicide attempt each year.

At any age, surviving a suicide is wrenching. It robs families and communities. When young people opt for this solution to their problems, the loss is especially difficult. Such acute grief engulfs emotions, distorts thinking, and can wreak physical havoc on those struggling to cope. The youth of our time grapple with the usual challenges that come with this stage of growth. However, our culture offers more personal choices and distractions than ever before; some choices young

people are not mature enough to handle.

There are elements of today's culture that go after our youth for their minds, their spirits, their bodies, their dreams. Our youth are bombarded with choices that can overwhelm and devour their sense of self before it is

defined. At any age, we are a work in progress, morphing from one day to the next. For young people, deceptive elements in the culture—physical and spiritual—attempt to impede and/or sever positive personal development. Life circumstances in general may give a young person a sense that they have lost their moorings and are adrift. Whether lost moorings are real or perceived, it can be enough to open them to harmful distractions. Use of alcohol, drugs, sexual exploration and all its attendant diseases, pregnancy, and emotional strains, are but several rampant activities that distract youth and provide escape from positive living. Inability to cope with the repercussions of participating in these potentially destructive forces, make suicide an option.

Our youth are our future. They are the sons and daughters of tomorrow. We love them and we cherish them. God made them and He loves them more than we ever can. When young people take their lives, as Christians, we know that there is life beyond this one and our dear Lord holds them in His love and care. For the young ones who are with us, we want them to grow and become all that God would have them to be. For this purpose, we need to serve as moorings to help keep them connected to what is hopeful for them for today and their tomorrows. And ours.

It has been said that *suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem*. The choice to commit suicide may seem to be the only answer, the only way out. Past choices by persons

to commit suicide cannot be reversed. However, you have the power to prevent statistics from rising by the choices you make going forward. These may be for someone you know, for persons you will never meet or for yourself. Simple as they are, they can protect someone from that irreversible choice.

Two significant acts are involved. First, prayer; communication with God through Jesus Christ, makes a remarkable difference—whether or not we see the result. The power of prayer cannot be overemphasized. Even the weakest prayer is heard. Believe it. Second, the ability to reach out to speak with others is imperative. Talking to family members, friends, teachers, principals, clergy, calling a help line, or reaching out in an email to connect with someone, is beneficial. The smallest act can prevent suicide. Remember that.

Jesus Christ knows every weakness a human knows for He knows and sees all. Life is filled with peaks and valleys. The value in a faith walk with Jesus is the certainty that He is there in the mountaintop experiences as well as the dark nights of the soul. There is no person stronger or more concerned with one's well being than Jesus Christ. He loves you. He died for you. No sin or sorrow this side of Eternity changes the depth of His love for you. Jesus wants each unique person to thrive and fulfill the personal plan God designed. May the unmatched mooring of Christ's love as proven on the Cross hold you and yours in place for time and for Eternity.

Lord Jesus, You died a death for all sin and sorrow. You prepared a way for people to live in the abundance of Your love and friendship. May anyone who struggles with doubt or grief be touched by Your presence today so that hope is revived and God's plans are fulfilled to His glory. Thank You, dear Lord, Amen

☪ WOMEN OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA (WELCA) ☪

Elisabeth Circle will meet at 10:30 a.m. Monday, Oct. 12 in the church. Gloria Smith will serve as our hostess and Ruth Beers will prepare our devotions.

We assembled 12 health kits for Church World Service at our September meeting.

Treats and Treasures Reorganization Meeting Scheduled

A Treats and Treasures reorganization meeting will follow the second service on Sunday, Sept. 27.

Through this project, WELCA raises funds for outreach into the community and serves women and children.

All WELCA members and any church members who would like to help with this project are asked to be present.

☪ MAIL BAG☪

To Pastor Mary and church members,
For everything you've done,
For being the special people that
you are.

Thank you so very much.

All the families of Muellers