

The Messenger

April 2007



Dear Friends,

When I met my husband, Paul, he was a student at Union Theological Seminary in New York City. One of the first gifts I received from him was a copy of the book, Life Together, by Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Bonhoeffer was widely read by students at Union because he had studied at the seminary in the 1930's. Several faculty members could recall having encouraged him to remain in New York rather than returning to Nazi Germany. Bonhoeffer did return to Germany where he participated in a failed attempt to assassinate Adolf Hitler. Bonhoeffer died by hanging at Flossenburg concentration camp on April 9, 1945 at the age of 39.

While visiting my son in Berlin last year, I discovered that Alex's apartment was only two blocks from the church that Bonhoeffer had served as a young Lutheran pastor. The church is run down and is not open to tourists. However, one evening as we were walking by, we noticed that a meeting was being held there and that the doors were not locked. We walked into the sanctuary, which was massive in size but in serious disrepair. I took several photographs of the large marble pulpit and the scarlet brocade that hung from the altar.

This past week I reread Life Together in preparation for my sabbatical. It is one of the many books I am reading as I anticipate using part of my sabbatical time to reflect upon how we order our lives as Christian people around issues of study, prayer, work, solitude and leisure. One of Bonhoeffer's many significant insights has to do with how the need for community must always be held in balance with need for solitude.

I have excerpted several lines from Life Together for this newsletter. I hope you find his words helpful as we continue to journey together as a people of faith.

Yours in Christ,

Vicki

From Life Together by Dietrich Bonhoeffer:

Whoever cannot be alone should beware of community. Such people will only do harm to themselves and to the community. Alone you stood before God when God called you. Alone you had to obey God's voice. Alone you had to take up your cross, struggle, and pray, and alone you will die and give an account to God. You cannot avoid yourself, for it is precisely God who has singled you out. If you do not want to be alone, you are rejecting Christ's call to you, and you can have no part in the community of those who are called - - -

But the reverse is also true. Whoever cannot stand being in community should beware of being alone. You are called into the community of faith; the call was not meant for you alone. You carry your cross, you struggle, and you pray in the community of faith, the community of those who are called. You are not alone even when you die, and to the day of judgment you will only be one member of the great community of faith of Jesus Christ. If you neglect the community of other Christians, you reject the call of Jesus Christ, and thus your being alone can only become harmful for you.

FROM THE SABBATICAL COMMITTEE

To all parishioners at the Church of the Incarnation

Your Sabbatical committee continues to meet in preparation of Vicki's departure. Vicki, along with others of the church leadership; remain heavily involved in trying to assure a smooth transition into and out of her leave. Her last Sunday with us will be April 29th and she won't return to the church until August 13th. We were informed beforehand of the critical shortage of supply clergy for that timeframe but still were fortunate enough to secure worship coverage for almost every Sunday in question. We have a plan and a process for most any situation you could anticipate in Vicki's absence. This information will be available to anyone who wishes to view it or who may need direction on where to turn with a particular problem or issue. The leadership is and will be present to assist wherever necessary. We also know through our history that minor disruptions of the norm are just one of the situations that allow this church family to shine. The leadership, Rector Vicki Prescott, and the congregation will grow and enjoy our sabbatical journey and enter our reunion better for having taken it.

Thanks in advance and may God bless.

Gary Omphroy
Sabbatical committee chair

SUPPLY CLERGY FOR SABBATICAL

We are very fortunate to have secured three priests to cover the entire sabbatical. We are also happy to say we only need to have Morning Prayer (no communion) for two Sunday mornings during this time. For those interested, here is the schedule of supply clergy lined up for the sabbatical:

May The Rev. Miriam Owens

June The Rev. Sandra Arrington

July 1,15,22 The Rev. Bill Petersen

July 8,29 Morning Prayer

Aug. The Rev. Miriam Owens

Members of Incarnation's Sabbatical Committee:

Rev. Vicki Prescott, Gary Omphroy (chair), Peter Melnick, Judy Masten, Roger Quinn, Tod Timmel, Mary Lyn Miraglia, Dorothy Wojnowski, Ron Simmons, Wendy Walmsley, Lyn Omphroy

CHURCH CONCERT ON MAY 20TH!

For those in the congregation who haven't signed up to be in our big concert on *Sunday, May 20th*, I very much hope you're able to come and show your support. It's at 3:00 in the afternoon, and will feature a large proportion of the church (both kids and adults) singing, ringing, and playing instruments.

There will be a freewill offering taken (part of the concert's purpose is to raise money for 50th-anniversary events), with a suggested \$5 donation per person. Our church has very nice acoustics, and this will be a chance to show off our new windows as well as our considerable pool of talent, so please bring along as many friends and family as you can muster - I think we'll make you proud to be a member.

David McCarthy
Director of Music

FROM THE
SEMINARY
STUDENT



Dear friends,

Let go and let God.

I don't know where I first heard this saying, but it has come up over and over again for me in the last few years and I thought I'd share it with all of you. It seems to be one of those aphorisms that is universally applicable. For those of us like myself who like to have ordered schedules and plans, life can throw us curveballs sometimes and God can call us in new directions we hadn't expected. In those times it's been helpful to remember that God is God and I am not - to remember to trust our Almighty Lord to hold my life in the palm of his hand.

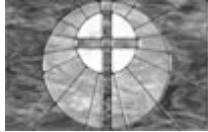
Sometimes we hold our lives too tightly. We keep our grip firm so as not to let something go wrong - to keep our families safe, our health good and life plans on track. When I begin to hold too tightly though, when my knuckles turn white, my hands start to ache and feel like I can't hold on anymore that's when I remember to "let go and let God" because in holding too tightly I might just be squeezing God right out. As part of my spiritual formation, each month I visit a convent/Catholic retreat center on the Connecticut shore to meet with a spiritual director and as I was sitting by the ocean recently I thought of an image I have enjoyed and wanted to share with all of you. It is that of opening my hands and myself, imagining relaxing my grip and opening my arms to embrace the wideness of the ocean as if it were the very wideness of God's mercy. It gave me a different perspective to see that where I thought I had squeezed God out, He was standing right in the middle of my life. If we let go, God can embrace us even more tightly in His grace and peace that passes all understanding. In this Easter season, I pray that you and I might know that presence of the risen Christ exactly in the middle of our lives embracing us in peace even amid the busyness and all the joyful and painful curveballs of life. Alleluia, He is Risen!

Now for a quick update: In March, it was such a pleasure to visit Incarnation and see you all again. I was in town for my candidacy interviews for ordination. This is the second official "step" at the diocesan level in the process towards ordination which included interviews with Incarnation's vestry, Bishop McKelvey and the Commission on Ministry. All the interviews went well I think and I will know if I was made a candidate sometime in the next month

or so. Let me thank you all again for the lovely brunch that accompanied the vestry meeting and your warm welcome to my visit. I am now back in CT for the final six weeks of school and I will be spending my summer moving apartments and working in New Haven and I just found out that next year I will be interning at Zion Church in North Branford - a small, but vibrant church in rural New Haven, so that will be very exciting!

Blessings during this Easter Season!

Jen



ASK THE RECTOR

Q Why is the day of the crucifixion called "Good Friday"? What does the word "Maundy Thursday" mean?

A The Friday before Easter is the day on which Jesus died on the cross. It is called "Good Friday" because new life is brought about by his victory on the cross.

The name "Maundy Thursday" comes from the Latin word *mandatum*, which means "command". It refers to words recorded in the Gospel of John at the Last Supper, when Jesus said "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another." (John 13:34)

Symbols of the Church

Have you noticed the letters **IHS** that appear on the front of the altar and wondered what they meant? These are letters that refer to Christ. There are several interpretations given to the specific symbolism of these letters. The one that is most historically accurate is as follows:

The letters are formed from the Greek word for Jesus, which is IHCOYC. As knowledge of Greek became rare, the Greek 'C' was changed to the Latin 'S'. Another explanation is that is in the initials for the words *Iesus Hominum Salvator* (Jesus, Savior of Men).

You may have also seen the letters **INRI**. This refers to the title "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews" which in Latin is *Iesus Nazareth Rex Iudaeorum*.

IMPORTANT PARISH DATES:



- Apr 1 Palm Sunday
Children meet at 9:45 for procession
- April 8 12-4pm: Strategic Planning Session
- April 22 Family Service
- April 29 ONE SERVICE at 10am
Dedication of Stained Glass Windows
Vicki's Farewell send-off

PARISH AND COMMUNITY NOTES



- ✓ A big thank you to the **Rev. Miriam Owens** for her Lenten Study on Henri Nouwen's *The Return of the Prodigal Son*. The people who attended her program gave her nothing but rave reviews!
- ✓ **June Harvey** would like to thank everyone for their cards, thoughts and well-wishes during her recent recovery.
- ✓ Thank you to **Sara Cegelski** for leading the Leadership Sabbatical Planning Meeting on March 18, and for making what could have been a very long, drawn-out meeting a very productive one instead.
- ✓ Congratulations to **Megan Miraglia** for being named to the dean's list for the fall 2006 semester at SUNY Oswego.
- ✓ A very big thank you to **Sue Houppert** and **Pauline Mitchell** for helping out in the office over the past five weeks while June had surgery and Linda and Pam each took much needed (and well deserved!!) breaks. I'm SO glad to have my old crew back, but also glad to know we've added a few "subs" to our list. ☺
- ✓ **Bob Dobbin** will be doing the MS Walk again this year after a time away from it. The Walk is scheduled for *Sunday, May 6th*. Bob would appreciate any sponsorship donations. Donors can see him in church or drop a donation to him in the mail – 55 Meadow View Dr., Penfield, 14526. Any checks should be made out to the *National MS Society*.
- ✓ Congratulations to **Andy Johnson** on being accepted as a postulant for the Diaconate. Look for more information in the May newsletter about Andy's next steps.

SHEPHERD HOME

Invitations will soon be in the mail for the annual Shepherd Home Gala to be held on *April 28th* at the Penfield Country Club. Dinner, dancing and a live auction will contribute to the evening's enjoyment. If you would like to receive an invitation or if you would like information about the Gala, please contact Betty Quinn at 377 1538.

STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

Our church is boarded up! We have nice looking plywood in the window wells, but not for long. Pike Stained Glass Windows has all the glass and they are busy assembling, and leading it in place, for our new windows. The schedule is for them to be complete by mid-April and installed shortly thereafter in time for our dedication on April 29.

PHOTO SITTINGS FOR NEW DIRECTORY

Appointments are now being made for sittings for the new pictorial directory. Sittings are available on the following days:

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| March 27 | Tuesday | 5pm-9pm |
| March 29 | Thursday | 5pm-9pm |
| March 31 | Saturday | 9am-6pm |
| April 10 | Tuesday | 5pm-9pm |
| April 12 | Thursday | 5pm-9pm |
| April 21 | Saturday | 9am-6pm |

Sign up sheets will be located on the tables by the coat racks after each service for the next few weeks. If you are unable to be at church but would still like to be included in the directory, please contact Diana Manchester at 586-7731 or dwm Manch@aol.com.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Out of the mouths of babes

A little boy opened the big, old family Bible with fascination, looking at the old pages as he turned them. Then something fell out of the Bible. He picked it up and looked at it closely. It was an old leaf from a tree that has been pressed in between the pages. "Mama, look what I found," the boy called out. "What have you got there, dear?" his mother asked. With astonishment in the young boy's voice he answered, "It's Adam's suit!"

Six-year old Angie, and her four-year old brother, Joel, were sitting together in church. Joel giggled, sang and talked out loud. Finally, his big sister had had enough. "You're not supposed to talk out loud in church!" "Why? Who's going to stop me?" Joel asked. Angie pointed to the back of the church and said, "See those two men standing by the door? They're hushers."

A little boy was in a relative's wedding. As he was coming down the aisle, he would take two steps, stop, and turn to the crowd. While facing the crowd, he would put his hands up like claws and roar. So it went, step, step, ROAR, step, step, ROAR, all the way down the aisle. As you can imagine, the crowd was near tears from laughing so hard by the time he reached the pulpit. When asked what he was doing, the child sniffed and said, "I was being the Ring Bear."

50th Anniversary Events 1957 – 2007

Sunday, May 20th
Church Concert
3:00 p.m.

Friday, September 28th
Gala 50th Anniversary Dinner
Penfield Country Club
Cash bar 6:30 – 7:30
Dinner at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, October 20th
Commemorative Grand Procession
From Braman American Legion Post
(where it all started)
to the church

Sunday, October 21st
Anniversary of our First Service
and reception
Bishop McKelvey's last visitation

Spring 2008
Anniversary Flower Show

Watch for Incarnation 50th Anniversary
T-Shirts and Sweatshirts – Available Soon!!