

THE HERALD *from the hill*

LENT 2014

A SEASON OF ENCOUNTERS

March 2, 2013

Transfiguration Sunday

Celebration of the Lord's Supper
"The Gift of a Meeting"
Cynthia Jarvis preaching
Exodus 24:12-18; II Peter 1:16-21
Matthew 17:1-9
O Nata Lux - Thomas Tallis

March 9, 2014

First Sunday in Lent

"Choosing to Die: Adam and Christ"
Cynthia Jarvis preaching
Genesis 2:12-17, 3:1-7; Romans 5:12-19
Matthew 4:1-11
Since by Man came Death - G. F. Handel

March 16, 2014

Second Sunday in Lent

"Choosing to Be Born: Nicodemus and Jesus"
Cynthia Jarvis preaching
Genesis:1-4a; Romans 4:1-5
John 3:1-17
Witness - Jack Halloran

March 23, 2014

Third Sunday in Lent

"Choosing to Believe: The Woman at the Well
and Jesus"
Cynthia Jarvis preaching
Exodus 17:1-7; Romans 5:1-11
John 4:5-42
Sicut Cervus - G. P. Palestrina

March 30, 2014

Fourth Sunday in Lent

"Choosing to See: The Blind Man and Jesus"
Brian Russo preaching
I Samuel 16:1-13; Ephesians 5:8-14
John 9:1-41
Jesus said to the Blind Man - Melchoir Vulpius

April 6, 2014

Fifth Sunday in Lent

Celebration of the Lord's Supper
"Choosing to Live: Mary and Jesus"
Cynthia Jarvis preaching
Ezekiel 37:1-14; Romans 8:6-11
Miserere - Giorgio Allegri

April 13, 2014

Palm/Passion Sunday

"Choosing to Follow: Peter and Jesus"
Cynthia Jarvis preaching
Matthew 21:1-11; 26:14-27:66
Christus Factus Est - Anton Bruckner

April 17, 2014

Maunder Thursday

Tenebrae and Celebration
of the Lord's Supper
"Later You Will Understand"
Brian Russo preaching
John 13:1-17, 31b-35
Crucifixus - Antonio Lotti

April 20, 2014

Resurrection of the Lord

"Choosing to Let Go: Mary Magdalene and Jesus"
Cynthia Jarvis preaching
Colossians 3:1-4; John 20:1-18
Magdalen, Cease from Sobs and Sighs - Peter Hurford
Christ the Lord is Risen - Paul Fetler
Angelus Domini - Claudio Casciolini

RE-FORMED FOR FORTY DAYS

While a season of preparation for Holy Week and Easter likely existed as early as the third century—the evidence is in a letter about fasting written by Irenaeus to Pope St. Victor I—the better place to mark the meaning of these forty days for us is 313 A.D. when Constantine legalized Christianity.

In the wake of the emperor’s decree, the church suddenly had a happy problem: how were so many adults to be baptized? At issue were the seriousness of the convert and the substance of the church’s faith. “Baptism was not enough,” writes Reformed theologian John Witvliet:

“More was needed to form these new Christians as disciples of Jesus. So the church developed a 40-day course of preparation for baptism—a time of Bible study, catechism study and spiritual disciplines including prayer and fasting. The idea was that during these forty days believers should either be preparing for their own baptism or encouraging someone who was preparing for baptism ...

In terms of doctrine, this put the emphasis not only on God’s gift of forgiveness (justification), but also on the gift of new life in Christ and the Holy Spirit (sanctification). Lent was a time for new and veteran Christians to live into—to “practice”—the basic moves of the Christian life: to deny oneself, to turn to Jesus, to put off gossip and bitterness, and to put on patience and compassion.

By the time John Calvin came along, the memory of Lent as a season for shaping new Christians had long faded. Adult baptisms were rare. Just about everyone was baptized as an infant. The Lenten disciplines were still practiced, but they were often imposed upon the church in a distorted way as a means of currying favor with God.”

So Calvin said yes to the practice he felt his people needed—teaching built around the catechism. But he said no to the season of Lent as too hopelessly superstitious to be of help to his people.

During my lifetime, Presbyterians have gone from harboring a smug hostility toward the outward and visible signs of Lenten practices (ashes imposed to begin the season, fasting, giving things up) to advocating the discipline of “taking something on” (volunteering at a soup kitchen or performing a random act of kindness every day for forty days) until Easter.

Following the early church and John Calvin, we will fill the forty days (plus Sundays!) with sermons and music about characters whose lives were changed because of their encounter with Jesus; classes on three Biblical characters in particular—Peter, Paul and Mary; and an added Wednesday evening Bible Study on Philippians.

There will be abundant opportunities to encounter Jesus in the life of another as you commit your time and talents to one of the church’s ministries in the community.

No matter how you choose to mark the time, may this be a season when we will be led by God’s Spirit to practice the basic moves of the Christian life together.



Cindy

GIVING GROUNDED IN THE GOSPEL

“Then the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you that are blessed by my Father; inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’” ~ Matthew 25:34-36

As we enter into the season of Lent, I am taking some time to reflect on the ministry carried out by the children of PCCH.

Thanks to the generosity of our entire church family, the children have assembled bags of toiletry items for residents of Dawn’s Place, sorted clothing and food donations and made new fleece blankets for the clients of Germantown Avenue Crisis Ministry (GACM), collected over \$400 for the Souper Bowl of Caring, and donated art supplies to the art therapy program at Broad Street Ministries.

While I am wowed by all that the children have been able to do since the beginning of 2014, I also wonder: How can we help them to make the connection between *what we do* and *why we do it*?

How can we communicate that we give not because we are nice or because it is the right thing to do, but because the God who has claimed us in baptism loves us and calls us to extend that love to others?

In some traditions, it is customary to give something up for Lent in order to redirect one’s attention toward God.

This year, instead of giving something up, I invite you to add a spiritual practice — have a conversation with a child in this church, bring a non-perishable food item each week to donate to GACM, or give your pocket change as an offering to one of the children’s One Great Hour of Sharing fish banks.

When you donate food for our local food bank or money to help end global hunger, share more than

your offering by telling our children the reason why you spend your money, time, and energy helping others.

By sharing your own faith story, you may enable a child to make a connection between the stories of Jesus we read in church school and our practice of loving our neighbors through missions.

— Austin Crenshaw Shelley



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THE YOUTH HOST THE PCCH SPAGHETTI DINNER AND HELP HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Sunday, March 16

The youth will spend a day transforming Widener Hall into an Italian restaurant and preparing a fabulous Italian meal.

Enjoy a meal and fellowship, while supporting the work of the youth.

Tickets will be for sale in Widener Hall: Adults \$12, children \$8, and family maximum \$35. The event will help the youth raise funds for their upcoming summer 2014 mission trip to Oregon.

The youth also will be working with Habitat for Humanity in Philadelphia this spring and early summer. This is such an important ministry within our own city, and the youth are looking forward to building and repairing as many homes for as many families as possible.

THEOLOGY AND PRETZELS

*Mondays March 3, April 7, May 5
6:30-7:30 p.m.*

Theology and Pretzels is a new group for 8th graders and teenagers in High School this year. We will meet on the first Monday of every month for dinner and a more serious/substantive conversation centered around faith, society, current events, life-in-general, psychology, philosophy, etc. It will model the Theology on Tap discussion/debate, minus the tap (of course). The location will be announced.

— Brian Russo

AGAIN I SAY, "REJOICE":
THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE
PHILIPPIANS

*Wednesday evenings at 7:30 p.m.
March 19, 26, April 2, 9*

"Paul is a man who lives ... a radically decentered existence that has been recentered in the Lord whose future will mean the complete transformation of the world. All that has been valuable to him, including his own goodness, he now considers worthless, something to be left behind in order that he might gain Christ.

He is like an athlete who, in running a race, forgets what lies behind and is wholly preoccupied with stretching forth his hands to receive a prize that is not yet his. If we were to be honest, we would have to admit that the Paul of the Epistle of the Philippians is a stranger to us and his Christianity is utterly alien to ours.

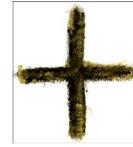
Today many of us would consider such single-mindedness evidence of fanaticism, zealotry... the truth is, if we were not at all tempted in this direction, we would most certainly have misunderstood Philippians."

—From an introduction to Karl Barth's Epistle to the Philippians by Bruce L. McCormack

Join Cindy in a searching conversation about Paul's letter written to a church that is not unlike the Presbyterian Church of Chestnut Hill.

Written from prison, Paul wrestles with the possibility of his own death at the hands of Roman officials. Yet he also explodes with joy in the midst of suffering.

Almost every verse in this four chapter letter will lead us to reflect on life's meaning and purpose as we examine our own faith and discipleship.



ASH WEDNESDAY

March 5, 2014

*Lectionary Bible Study at 11 a.m.
Celebration of the Lord's Supper at 12 noon
Soup and Salad Luncheon at 12:30 p.m.*

Why not mark the season of Lent with a mid-week Bible Study? Join this group every Wednesday in Lent as Cindy leads everyone in a discussion of the biblical passages that will be read and proclaimed on the following Sunday morning.

Or if you cannot come to the Bible Study every Wednesday, join the group around the table at 12 noon for a celebration of the Lord's Supper followed by a simple luncheon in Widener Hall. For a preview of the biblical passages that will be studied, see the first page of the newsletter.



LENTEN ADULT EDUCATION IN THE
SECOND HOUR:
PETER, PAUL AND MARY

March 9, 23, and 30

PCCH member Dr. Edmund Jones will hold three adult classes during Lent on the subject "Peter, Paul and Mary." We will meet in the Harris Room.

The classes will start at 11.40 a.m. and finish by 12:25 p.m.

Come and enjoy the discussion with all subjects on the table.

GUESS WHO'S COMING TO DINNER?

Friday, March 21 and Saturday, March 22

Do you enjoy spending time with friends new and not-so-new? Then Guess Who's Coming to Dinner is for you.

Several times during the year small groups gather for an evening of dining and cheer. You can sign up to host a group or to be a guest. Some gatherings are pot luck. Some dinners are provided by hosts. Some gatherings welcome children and some are evenings out for the adults.

The next opportunity is coming up fast ... sign up to be a host or guest and ask any questions at the What's Brewing table during coffee hour.

MARCH MADNESS POOLS

The season of competitive guessing is upon us—another year of March Madness pools!

All you have to do to join the fun is submit your college basketball brackets to Brian Russo before March 20. Don't miss out on the fun!

THEOLOGY ON TAP

Come out and be a part of this exciting and expanding ministry!

Join Brian at Campbell's Place on Germantown Avenue for drinks, fellowship, and theological discussion—what better way to spend the third Tuesday of every month?

Join us at 7:30 p.m. on **March 18, April 15 and May 20**. Discussion topics will be published in the Sunday bulletin on the Sunday prior to the third Tuesday.

MOVIE NIGHT FOR ADULTS

Come share an award-winning movie, popcorn and fellowship!

The movie starts in the Harris room at 6:45 p.m. On Tuesday, **March 25** we will watch "The White Ribbon," on Tuesday, **April 22** we will watch "Captain Phillips," and on Tuesday, **May 27** we will watch "12 Years a Slave." Contact Brian Russo for more information.

MUSIC OF THE SEASON

Themes of the Lenten and Easter seasons have inspired composers throughout the centuries to write some of their most poignant and lasting music.

This year, the **Gallery Choir** will offer many of these works in our worship services as we explore not only the themes of Lent, the Passion, and Resurrection, but the specific relationships forged by Jesus during his time on earth, and the ways in which we choose to continue those relationships today.

Featured music will include Gregorian chant, motets from the Renaissance and Baroque eras by Tallis, Allegri, and Lotti, and modern works by Bob Chilcott, Claudio Casciolini, and Jack Halloran.

This Lenten season we are delighted to host **The Choir of Merton College**, one of Oxford University's leading mixed-voice choirs.

The Choir of Merton College is embarking on a tour of the eastern United States this spring, in part to premiere composer Gabriel Jackson's *Passion*. In exchange for offering a free concert at our church on Monday, April 14, we have offered to host the

members of the choir for two nights – Monday, April 14 (the night of the concert) and Tuesday, April 15.

The host families are responsible for providing a bed (or beds!) and a light breakfast each morning. As of now, about half of the 30 beds we need are accounted for.

If anyone is willing and able to host a bright, talented college student or faculty member, please email me at danielspratlan@gmail.com.

– Daniel Spratlan

CONCERTS

Piffaro

Saturday, March 29, 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, May 17, 8:00 p.m.

The Choir of Merton College

Monday, April 14, 7:30 p.m.

Pennsylvania Girlchoir

Sunday, April 16, 4:00 p.m.

Temple University Choir

Sunday, May 4, 4 p.m.



NORTHWEST PHILADELPHIA INTERFAITH HOUSING NETWORK

Sunday, March 16, after worship

At the Sharing Our Gifts Sunday “Second Hour” on March 16, NPIHN will join us to speak about their work, the needs their guest and alumni families have, the successes they have achieved, and how our support makes a difference.



NPIHN is our mission partner that houses homeless families in local houses of worship.

For two weeks each year, PCCH “buddies” with the host congregation (where the families live temporarily) by providing dinners, dinnertime fellowship, and an overnight presence in case of emergency.

We also support the youngest children of NPIHN families with back-to-school backpacks and with sponsorships of NPIHN families at Christmastime to give them gifts.

To give you a sense of the need this organization seeks to meet, in 2013 over 21,900 meals were prepared for children and families in NPIHN’s shelter program, including healthy breakfasts and after-school snacks; over 7,300 nights of shelter were provided for 46 adults and children; and over 15,000 volunteer hours were logged by faithful volunteers, including at least 200 by our congregation.



HEEDING GOD’S CALL

Sunday April 6, after worship

At the Sharing Our Gifts Sunday “Second Hour” on April 6, we will be joined by representatives of Heeding God’s Call.

Our Community for the Common Good concentrates on alleviating gun violence. In 2010 we formed a coalition of churches and synagogues in Northwest Philadelphia, calling ourselves Neighborhood Partners to End Gun Violence (abbreviated NPEG). NPEG is one of a growing number of chapters, all of them faith-based, of Heeding God’s Call.

“We live our faith on our feet,” as we say, holding prayer vigils and demonstrations twice monthly, advocating for legislative changes in gun laws, and engaging in numerous educational outreaches (films, talks, adult education programs) to a wide variety of community faith communities and community groups.

We also hold special annual public events. We will hold a special **4:00 p.m. Good Friday Service at Clara Muhammed Park, Lancaster and Girard Avenues**, a park surrounded by diverse houses of worship.

Additionally, we display *Memorial to the Lost*, a tee-shirt exhibit reminiscent of a cemetery, with the shirts giving the names, ages, and dates of deaths of those shot to death in Philadelphia in previous years, and a special section with the names of the twenty children and six adults murdered at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in 2012.

Memorial to the Lost was first exhibited on the front lawn of PCCH and since then has been on display at six additional sites.

SPEAKER ON THE HILL SERIES

Second Thursdays, monthly

Gathering at noon; presentation begins at 12:30 p.m.

**Dr. Kelly Carney: Facing the Tsunami—
Addressing the Needs of People
Affected by Dementia**

Thursday, March 13

With particular expertise in the assessment and management of challenging behaviors associated with dementia, Dr. Carney, Executive Director of the Dementia Center for Excellence, has provided training at the state and national level to professional caregivers on issues related to behavioral health and the aging.

**Derrick Pitts and Dave Heller: Skytalk —
What’s New and Interesting in Astronomy**

Thursday, April 10

Skytalk is a weekly Monday evening discussion of what’s new and interesting in astronomy with Dave Heller, host of WHYY’s *All Things Considered* and *Newsworks*, and Dr. Derrick Pitts, senior scientist and chief astronomer at the Franklin Institute Science Museum.

In this exciting presentation, Derrick Pitts and Dave Heller will shed light on the night sky highlights for the season, offer perspectives on astronomical discoveries and developments (including how out-of-this-world technology has direct down-to-earth application), and discuss the important of astronomy (and science) in school curricula.

**Sam Katz: Philadelphia — The Great
Experiment, a Multi-part
Documentary Series**

Thursday, May 8

Civic entrepreneur Sam Katz will join our Speaker Series on the Hill to discuss his multi-part documentary series *Philadelphia: The Great Experiment*.

This Emmy-Award-winning film project chronicles the city’s historical evolution, and features Philadelphia’s achievements, conflicts, key events, and significant individuals. Sam will screen the series’ most recent episode, *Breakthrough: 1978-1994*, followed by a question and answer session.

MARCH

- 5 – Ash Wednesday Bible Study
- 5 – Ash Wednesday Lord’s Supper
- 9 – Second Hour: Peter, Paul and Mary Study
- 13 – Speaker Series: Dr. Kelly Carney
- 16 – Youth-Sponsored Spaghetti Dinner
- 16 – Sharing Our Gifts Sunday: Northwest Philadelphia Interfaith Housing Network
- 18 – Theology on Tap
- 19 – Philippians Bible Study
- 21 – Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner
- 22 – Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner
- 23 – Second Hour: Peter, Paul and Mary Study
- 25 – Movie Night: *The White Ribbon*
- 26 – Philippians Bible Study
- 29 – Piffaro Concert
- 30 – Second Hour: Peter, Paul and Mary Study

APRIL

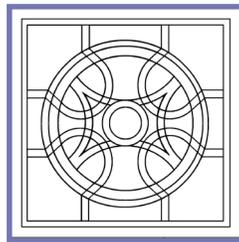
- 2 – Philippians Bible Study
- 6 – Sharing Our Gifts Sunday: Heeding God’s Call
- 7 – Theology and Pretzels
- 9 – Philippians Bible Study
- 10 – Speaker Series: Derrick Pitts and Dave Heller
- 14 – The Choir at Merton College Concert
- 15 – Theology on Tap
- 16 – Pennsylvania Girlchoir
- 18 – Heeding God’s Call Good Friday Service
- 22 – Movie Night: *Captain Phillips*

MAY

- 4 – Temple University Choir
- 5 – Theology and Pretzels
- 8 – Speaker Series: Sam Katz
- 17 – Piffaro Concert
- 20 – Theology on Tap
- 27 – Movie Night: *12 Years a Slave*

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Brian Russo – *Director of Youth and Senior Adults*

Austin Crenshaw Shelley – *Director of Christian Education*

Daniel Spratlan – *Director of Music*

Ken Lovett – *Organist/Associate Director of Music*

Jo Ann West – *Administrator*

Margot Cohn – *Director, Pre-Kindergarten*

Leslie Lefer – *Director, Center on the Hill*

Megan Ritchie – *Communications Coordinator*

Evelyn Carpenter – *Administrative Assistant*

Felix Delgado – *Sexton*

Owintier Charles – *Sunday Sexton*

Icilda James and Debbie Lambeth – *Sunday Child Care Givers*
