



The Beacon

University Baptist Church

May 2008

TRINITY-GOD IN COMMUNITY

May 18 is Trinity Sunday. It's also the Sunday of Street Fair in the U-District. That means it will be a difficult Sunday to get around on both counts – around the topic and the traffic. The temptation might be to avoid them both by staying home. But I want to encourage you to do something brave – come anyway! And here's why ...



About the topic. I usually avoid conversation about the Trinity. Our Jewish and Unitarian sisters and brothers are right to point out that God as the great Three-in-One presents not only mathematical problems but theological ones. European Unitarians, with whom we share our Anabaptist heritage, rejected the Trinity on biblical grounds. And, while there are analogies – ice, water, and steam are all forms of the same element – these aren't always very compelling. I have been wondering, given the beginning of baseball season, if the rare 'triple-play' might be another analogy – different players and distinct actions that are nonetheless counted together as one continuous play. I wouldn't press this analogy too far if I were standing before the Inquisition but I suspect I would be in trouble long before we got around to analogies for the Trinity anyway.

More to the point, perhaps, I've been thinking about the kinds of testimonies people give about their faith. I've noticed that there are "God people" who tend to focus on the transcendent attributes of the divine and "Jesus people" whose center is more around the human work and humanity of the divine and "Spirit people" who tend to go with the flow. My guess is that the early church was wise enough to include all these people and their testimonies because each one brings an important perspective to our understanding of God. To shut out any one of these people would be to lose something important. So our early spiritual ancestors opted for God-in-community, the short-hand for which is Trinity.

And that's one reason to be in church on May 18 – without you, something important would be missing in our understanding of God.

So what about the traffic? No analogy needed. If the weather is good, it could be tricky. But think about it: all those people right on our doorstep -- some of them looking for a community that would welcome them whether they are "God people" or "Jesus people" or "Spirit people." Perhaps the best way to celebrate Trinity Sunday is as Hospitality Sunday. Let's think together about how to do that on May 18 and see what God-in-community might be up to! See you soon ...

Blessings,
Tim

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Deadline for the June issue is
Sunday, May 25.



HAPPY MAY BIRTHDAY:

5/7 Carol Guthrie;
 5/11 Susan Blais-Wilkerson;
 5/14 Dan Peterson; Gail Rognan;
 5/15 Ethan Carlson, Ralph Haugerud;
 5/16 Lynn Gaertner-Johnston;
 5/18 Ed Myer; 5/20 Marilyn Marston;
 5/24 Ron Bass, Alex Dorman,
 Kevin Peterson;
 5/27 Helen Haugerud; 5/29 John Doty;
 5/30 Lenise Tay

**If you don't find your birthday here, please
 call the office so we can add it to our list.**

OUR MAY SPECIAL OFFERING:

When disaster strikes the need is immediate. The **One Great Hour of Sharing** offering sends needed money immediately to meet the needs of people in crisis.

One Great Hour of Sharing also offers grants to organizations reaching out to people in need across the country. UBC has received such grants for the Saturday Kitchen, and the Transitional Housing Program.

AMONG OURSELVES...

Aaron Burkhalter & Megan Walker traveled to Germany in April to visit Aaron's brother – they returned just in time for Aaron to play and sing at the 6th Annual UBC Chili Fiesta which raised almost \$1500 for the childcare, feeding, and housing programs that are extensions of our good work ... Thanks also to **Matt Paynton, Audrey Smith, and Eva Gaertner-Johnston** for playing at the Fiesta along with **Brooke Rolston and Margie Paynton** – it was a lovely evening with food organized by **Lin Carlson & Carli MacColl** assisted by a whole troop of volunteers – thanks all! ... Lin & Carli also visited daughter **Zandi** in Oklahoma City where she was performing in *12th Night* and got a chance to see son **Ethan** – while there, Carli was able to do a survivor's lap in the city's Relay for Life ... In remembrance of her sister, Kati Raymond Nanstad who died after a long and courageous struggle with lymphoma, **Susan Vaughan** will be creating a team for the June 7 & 8 Shoreline/North Seattle Relay for Life sponsored by NW Hospital and the American Cancer Society – to be part of the team, contact Susan at (206) 353-9953 ... **Patrick Green** was honored in April by the regional Red Cross as a hero for his work with HIV/AIDS education both at the Red Cross and at high schools throughout the region ... **Tim & Patrick** visited family in the Midwest in April and took part in the celebration of the 150th Anniversary of Lake Street Church in Evanston, IL where Tim's ABC ordination is held and where **Joanne Wright's** father was also ordained – the Phillips-Greens and the Wright-Mixes all had a chance to enjoy the festivities together in the Windy City ... Several UBC kayakers weathered the weather

for a kayak trip in the cold of April, including **Lori & Bob Taylor** – Lori's daughter, **Kirsten**, will be married on Sunday, May 18, in the afternoon ... **Gail, Walt & Valerie Foster** are rehearsing for May-June performances in *Beauty & the Beast* at Mountaineers' Kitsap Forest Theater – order tickets online at www.ForestTheater.com or by phone at (206) 284-6310 ... **Priscilla Chong Jue** has returned from her cruise to Hawaii with members of her family ... **Daniel Hannah** had a chance to get away to New Orleans in April – enjoying food and music ... **Suzan Blais Wilkerson & Paul Wilkerson** celebrated time with Suzan's children who were visiting in April ... **John & CoraLea Doty** are celebrating the successful defense of their daughter-in-law's thesis and her counseling work with non-traditional college students ... **Sarah Reed & Xaviera Ortiz** are on their way to their internship rotations beginning in June ... **Marilyn Marston** has been commissioned to write some new adult education curriculum for the American Baptist Churches – thanks to her for trying this out with folks at Soul Soup on Thursday nights in May ... We continue to keep **Carli MacColl, Charles Putnam, and Enid Griswold** in our hearts and prayers!

WE STILL NEED YOUR HELP FOR CAMP BURTON

We are thankful that memorial gifts have been made in honor of Dr. Bill Nielsen and Dr. P.R. Mohan to underwrite furnishing 2 rooms at the new Retreat Center at Camp Burton which will be dedicated at a special program on **Sunday, June 8, at 3:00 p.m.** (See announcement on page 7.) However, we still need your help to complete raising the funds for underwriting a room in honor of our life together at UBC. **We still need \$1500** for this commitment. Your gifts help expand this important work. Please help us complete this fund drive before the dedication date!

From the Moderator

In this month article, there are three items that I would like to address. As they are rather disparate, I'll simply say "first, second, third..." rather than attempt to connect them in a meaningful way.

First, this month we will say good-bye to our Office Manager, Sofia Olson. Sofia's last day with us will be May 30. Sofia has worked hard for us, and we appreciate her efforts. The Finance Team is particularly smitten with Sofia—her diligence and skill in the day-to-day management of our church finances are above par. Sofia is looking for new adventures with hopes of finding work that gets her out-of-doors. We thank Sofia for her work and wish her the best.

Second, the Working Group leads recently met with our realtor, Bryan Mangum. This was a very positive meeting; Bryan heard our eagerness to keep the process moving, and we heard the realities of selling a church building. There are several parties interested in our building and property, but no one has made an offer yet. If you are like me and think that we will quickly sell our building, then we need to adjust our expectations. This isn't like selling a house; it takes time. We need to be patient. And that's OK, we have our own work to do as we prepare for transition.

Third, this month we celebrate Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit. My Pentecost story comes from our April 17 Stewardship Council meeting. We had discussed all of the items on the agenda, and I was about to wrap things up. "Does anyone have anything else?" I asked. "I have something," Brooke said. "I think that it is time that we have a discussion about race." Martha said, "Bev and Angela and I had a conversation about that in February." The council was energized; everyone was eager for such a conversation. "Marilee and I would like to offer a workshop this summer on the topic of aging," said Elizabeth. She and Marilee explained their idea. The council was enthusiastic. I was stunned. What are these people thinking? We have to sell our building! We have to move! How could we have a discussion about anything else? I'm happy to report that my astonishment didn't incapacitate me for long, and I was able to recognize what was going on. These people were seeing visions—visions of relevant ministry to the people of our community and beyond. It reminds me of Peter's Pentecost sermon: "Your young ones will see visions, and your old ones will dream dreams." Now, I'm not making any comment who is young or old, but I am saying that the people of UBC are full of Promise. Despite the change in our housing, you continue with the thought that there is work (ministry) for us to do. You are living that Promise even in the midst of Change. In my mind, that's just what Pentecost and the coming of the Spirit is about. Jesus' followers were not immobilized by the loss of their friend and rabbi. Instead, they were lead by a companioning, empowering Spirit to do work that none of them could have imagined just the day before. Thanks be to God for this Promise of Spirit that continues with us today.

Eric Brown



We have an *active Congregational Care Team* at UBC. If you or someone you know at church is sick, needs pastoral care or has prayer concerns, please contact Jackie Lamont, our Congregational Care Team Coordinator, at 206-985-7927 or jbblamont@mindspring.com **NOTE: this is a new address for Jackie**
If you could help by making a meal, visiting or writing a card please contact Jackie.

STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

APRIL 17, 2008 MEETING MINUTES

Present: Martha Bean, Mary Clare Benson, Eric Brown, Meesh Cobban, Daniel Hannah, Jackie Lamont, Marilee Nielsen, Elizabeth Patrick, Tim Phillips

Gathering and Minutes: Elizabeth opened with prayer. Marilee noted that the funds raised to date for the UBC room at Camp Burton total \$1,034 (not \$1,044 as reported in the minutes). Daniel moved that the March 27th meeting minutes be approved and Brooke seconded the motion. The minutes were approved as corrected.

Pastor's Report: Tim reported that Sofia's last day as our Office Manager will be May 30th. Tim will be traveling in the Midwest from April 21st to May 2nd. Marilyn Marston will be providing the devotions at Soul Soup from April 24th to May 8th. Rhonda Hue has volunteered to host a dinner-and-a-movie night in May to raise funds for the UBC room at Camp Burton; the room will be dedicated on June 6th. Tim suggested that last month's "homework" for the council could be a subject for a congregational conversation—how can we maximize our strengths as a church community? Tim encouraged the council to find ways to open up our building and show hospitality to our neighborhood on May 18th for the University District Street Fair.

Treasurer's Report: Mary Care stated that there is nothing unusual to report. Our pledges are at 90% of budget.

Finance: Marilee reported that Mary Rolston, Financial Secretary, and Sofia are mailing the pledge statements for the first quarter.

Mission Support Peace and Justice: The April 11th Chili Fiesta raised nearly \$1,500.

Pastor Staff Relations: Elizabeth reported that the search for an Office Manager has begun; the position has been posted on two websites. Tim and the PSRT making preparations for Tim to begin a Doctor of Ministry program next year. Tim and the PSRT are also working on health insurance options for Tim, Meesh, and the Office Manager (currently Tim and Sofia are on the University Baptist Children's Center health insurance plan).

Building: Martha will work with Meesh to develop a system to inventory and evaluate UBC's personal property; they would like one or two volunteers to help with this effort. Tenant WPSR has moved out. Overeaters Anonymous will no longer meet in our building.

Seeking the House That God Has For Us: The Working Group leads met with our realtor for an update. Eric will write a "letter of intent" to University Christian Church indicating our interest to begin negotiations for leasing space in their building; Elizabeth will arrange another walk-thru at UCC.

Ideas for Education and Ministry: Brooke and Martha both expressed interest in a discussion on race. Elizabeth and Marilee would like to develop a workshop on aging.

The next Stewardship Council meeting is May 15th.

Submitted by Eric Brown, Moderator

JEFFREY SACHS AT SEATTLE UNIVERSITY

We have been fans of Jeffrey Sachs, director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University and special adviser to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on the Millennium Development Goals, since he published The End of Poverty in 2005. Since then we have traveled with other Global Citizens Network volunteers to learn and share with local communities in Tanzania, Kenya, rural Kentucky, and Mexico.

On April 10th Sachs spoke at a World Affairs Council event. He explained that the world is on a ecological, demographic, and economic trajectory that is unsustainable. He was especially critical of US policies such as rejecting the Kyoto Protocol, trying to eliminate the Millennium Development Goals from international agreements, scrimping on foreign aid, and seeing terrorists and extremists as global problems rather than extreme poverty, unemployment, and scarce resources. He closed with a quote of President Kennedy's famous Peace Address at American University "...if we cannot end now our differences, at least we can help make the world safe for diversity. For, in the final analysis, our most basic common link is that we all inhabit this planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children's future. And we are all mortal."

Sach's new book is called Common Wealth: Economics for a Crowded Planet.

Lin Carlson and Carli MacColl

SEEDS OF COMPASSION IN SEATTLE

A number of UBC folks were able to attend one or more of the April 11-15 Seeds of Compassion Events. We were fortunate to experience the April 12th event at Qwest Field on a beautiful sunny day. In the early afternoon, we stood at the bus stop near our home as two full buses passed without stopping. Fortunately we had time to jump in our car, load up with people waiting for a bus, and drive downtown.

Special moments included watching a large procession across the field of people representing many cultures and a remarkable violin performance by 11 year old Simone Porter. We were transfixed when the Dalai Lama spoke to us, all 50,000, about peace and compassion. He indicated that this century needed to be the century of dialogue and called for an end to nuclear weapons. He spoke about the positive influence of his mother and suggested that more women were needed in leadership positions. At the end of the Dalai Lama's remarks, several young people spoke about their commitment to compassion.

If you want to listen to the Seeds of Compassion events, go to their website at www.seedsofcompassion.org.

Lin Carlson and Carli MacColl

MAY DATES

Soul Soup in May

The first two Thursdays in May will feature conversations with Marilyn Marston using the adult education curriculum she has been commissioned to write for the American Baptist Churches. Join us and participate in the development of this resource for our whole denomination.

Thursday, May 1, Immigration March and Rally

In conjunction with immigration rights groups, the Church Council of Greater Seattle, and the Rauschenbusch Center for Spirit and Action there will be a public event on behalf of immigrants in Seattle. Watch email for details!

Friday & Saturday, May 9 & 10, Opening Doors to Spiritual Freedom

An interfaith retreat lead by the Rev. Dr. Rod Romney, Jamal Rahman, Rabbi Ted Falcon, and the Rev. Catharine Fransson at Seattle First Baptist Church. For more information or to get tickets, see www.SeattleFirstBaptist.org or call (206) 325-6051. Brochures are available in the office and in the narthex.

Sunday, May 11, Pentecost & Mother's Day

Celebrate the Spirit's birthing of the Church and Mothers on the same Sunday with music, message, and a special gift for all moms. The Rev. Bev Spears, who was ordained on Pentecost in 2006, will be preaching. This will also be the Sunday of our Special Offering for One Great Hour of Sharing which provides emergency funds for folks around the country and in our neighborhood. Your gift would make your Mom proud!



Sunday, May 18, University District Street Fair

Help us make this Sunday of Street Fair 'Hospitality Sunday' as we welcome hundreds of folks to the U-District. Worship will, as usual, begin at 10:30 a.m. but will end at 11:00 so that we can invite folks to tour the building, enjoy free coffee and water, listen to music, and get a chance to know who we are. Please plan to help us welcome guests!

Sunday, May 25, Memorial Weekend Sunday: "Mission Accomplished?"

Join us as we honor our veterans, pray for peace, and re-commit ourselves to our mission.

Saturday, May 31, Dinner and a Movie at UBC

Join us for a night out as Rhonda Hue hosts an evening of lasagna and a movie at UBC. Your donation will benefit our commitment to underwrite the furnishing of a room at Camp Burton. Enjoy the evening *and* help us do good work!

GAY MEN'S SPIRITUALITY GROUP

First Friday of the month **beginning on June 6**, 7:00 – 8:30pm in the McAfee Parlor at University Baptist Church.

This is a group for gay men to come and explore their spirituality. We will be invited to journey together to learn different ways of praying and being with God. Often our experience through church has been influenced by a very prescribed way to a relationship with God using a lot of words that can hold different meaning, like devotions, prayer, quiet time, and accountability. This can often make us feel like there is a right way. What this group will offer is space to discover and have your own experience with God.

Facilitated by Dan Woodard. Dan is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor in WA State and a Certified Spiritual Director. He grew up with a very conservative Baptist Church experience in rural Michigan before traveling internationally with a music group for five years from 1994-1999. In 2001 he moved to Seattle for graduate work and to pursue training in Spiritual Direction. After growing up gay in small town Michigan and spending five years committed to the work of Celebrant Singers, the training and experience of the Spiritual Direction program at Mars Hill Graduate School was surprisingly refreshing and life giving. It allowed for space, question, doubt, creativity, reflection, and wonder with God in a way that he had not experienced before. Dan has been on his own journey toward a more meaningful and satisfying experience with God. He has a passion to walk with those who also want to encounter something different, something transforming in following the way of Jesus, but have experienced pain, rejection and disappointment in their own church experience.



WORSHIP IN MAY

RE-IGNITING THE FLAME!

Every Sunday 9:00 a.m. Choir rehearses in the Sanctuary 9:30 a.m. Bible Study in the McAfee Parlor 10:30 a.m. Worship and Children's Program

- Sunday, May 4** (Easter VII) Worship & Communion
The last of the Proof Series: *Jesus is alive in the prayer for unity* (John 17.6-11).
Worship led by Tim Phillips.
- Sunday, May 11** Pentecost & Mother's Day
Celebrate the Spirit's birthing of the Church and Mothers in the story of Acts 1-2.
Worship led by Bev Spears.
- Sunday, May 18** Trinity Sunday
Help us welcome Street Fair guests to UBC as we celebrate God-in-Community.
Worship led by Tim Phillips.
- Sunday, May 25** Memorial Sunday: "Mission Accomplished?"
Honor our veterans, pray for peace, re-commit to our mission in the world.
Worship led by Tim Phillips.

Worship in June will be our annual celebration of our Welcoming & Affirming commitment – join us as we continue the work of justice on behalf of all people regardless of sexual orientation!