

January 2017

The whole creation
has been groaning
together in the
pains of childbirth.

Romans 8:22

Birth



The butterfly's journey from the security and warmth of its familiar cocoon into a new transformed delicate beauty mirrors the necessary struggle of birthing anything new. The groaning pains of labor are integral to the process. Whether the birth of something new is chosen or thrust upon you, dramatic transformation brings exciting new opportunities in the midst of unsettled turbulence. William Bridges points out in his book *Transitions* three distinct stages of change: the ending, the neutral zone, and, eventually, a new beginning. We don't simply or easily walk from what was to a new normal. There is always the in-between time, the liminal space, a period of disorientation. This "neutral zone" is uncomfortable for most of us. Emotionally and spiritually we are unsettled and uncertain about what may be ahead.

At TriCon Church, the beginning of 2017 finds us all in the midst of many changes. Soon we'll inaugurate a new President who is markedly different from any other and we can only imagine what changes this new administration will bring. At the same time, our church is in pastoral transition for the first time in 23 years causing us to remember the past while charting a roadmap to what might be. You, personally, might very well be in the middle of significant changes that are testing your balance.

As the calendar flips to *this* New Year, it's interesting to remember that the name of our first month, "January" comes from the ancient Roman deity, Janus, the god of passageways and thresholds. The image of Janus is composed of two faces, one looking back and the other forward. Often, standing at the gateway of change causes us to do just that. We look in both directions, remembering what has gone before and uncertain about what may be ahead.

Even as this mighty river of life sends us speeding into churning rapids of change, we can boldly cling tightly to a ruthless trust in God's direction and presence. God is our river guide, directing us in the way we should go and keeping us safe along the way.

The Lord will
keep your
going out and
your coming in
from this time
on and
forevermore.

Psalm 121:8

The time is upon us to look back and remember the TriCon story with courageous, unvarnished honesty and retell how this exceptional church continues to thrive and evolve while so many others are diminishing. In the months ahead, we will clarify and articulate our purpose as a relevant church in the 21st century, deeply rooted in a rich tradition of vibrant and progressive Christianity. Only then can we clearly look to the future with spiritual eyes that boldly envision how God desires us to embody that purpose and expand our mission as the body of Christ. This is the sacred work of the *ecclesia*, the work of the people. Together we will embrace the adventure of evolving into the new thing that God is even now birthing.

Even with the labor pains of “discernment” and the groaning of “process” and “transition”, we always have a choice in our approach to this task. So, I offer these resolutions of choice as a suggested start to the exciting white water journey ahead. Happy New Year... and buckle up!

In faith and hope,

Bob Brown
Acting Senior Minister



Resolutions for the New Year

- Choose to love—rather than hate.
- Choose to smile—rather than frown.
- Choose to build—rather than destroy.
- Choose to persevere—rather than quit.
- Choose to praise—rather than gossip.
- Choose to heal—rather than wound.
- Choose to give—rather than grasp.
- Choose to act—rather than delay.
- Choose to pray—rather than despair.
- Choose to forgive—rather than curse.

— Author unknown

JANUARY WORSHIP

January 1 Communion	Service at 10:00 a.m.	Nancy Haynes preaching
January 8	Service at 10:00 a.m.	Rev. Robert Brown preaching
January 15 Martin Luther King, Jr. Sunday	Service at 10:00 a.m.	Michele Forinash and Rev. Robert Brown preaching
January 22	Service at 10:00 a.m.	Rev. Robert Brown preaching
January 29	Service at 10:00 a.m.	Rev. Judith Brain preaching*

*As the Interim Search Committee is engaged in the search for additional interim ministerial coverage, we are delighted to report that Rev. Judy Brain has agreed to worship with us and to preach on occasional Sundays. On January 29th, she and Rev. Bob Brown will lead the service together with Rev. Brain preaching that day.

FROM ALL OF US ON THE TRICON STAFF

May you have a blessed and peaceful
New Year

H O P E
P E A C E
Love Joy

EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES



WELCOME TO TRICON!

Whether you are just visiting, looking to find a church home or still feeling your way after several visits, we encourage you to pick up brochures and other information in the parish hall or the church entry, and to come for refreshments in the parish hall following the service.

You are welcome to participate in any of our church programs and activities and to sign your children up for Church School or youth programs. For more information, contact Christian Education Director, Carrie O'Brien or Youth Leader, Nick Bruning. Call the church office if you have any questions.

WELCOMING COFFEE - Sunday, January 8
In the church parlor
following the worship service

ATTENTION MEN OF THE CHURCH **Join the Anchor Group**

The Anchor Group meets on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month at 7:00 a.m. in the church parlor. The Anchor Group is a group for men of all ages who discuss and share issues of religion and spirituality in light of contemporary culture. Any questions, email Greg Howes at howes2012@gmail.com.

The deadline for the
February Newsletter
is January 15.

SILENCE IN THE STORM: A WEEKLY MEDITATION GROUP

When: Mondays, 10 A.M.-11:30 A.M.
in the Church Parlor

Looking for a quiet space for meditation and prayer? We meet weekly in the church parlor. We explore both guided and unguided meditation and prayer with music and occasional speakers. We mainly seek to find and honor the present. It is an exercise in being, rather than doing.

For more information, please contact Liz Crowell at Lbenema@gmail.com or 781-608-4765.

CAREGIVERS GROUP

The TriCon Caregivers Group is an opportunity for parishioners and friends in caregiving roles to come together to share accomplishments and failures, joys and sorrows, laughter and hope, as well as information about caring for others and ourselves.

If the role of caregiver is part of your life, please consider joining the TriCon Caregivers Group. **We will meet on Wednesdays, January 4 and 18 at 10:00 a.m. in the church parlor.** Call the church office (978 369-4837) for more information.

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Baptisms will take place at TriCon on Sunday, January 8, on Mother's Day, May 14, and on Father's Day, June 18. If you would like to have your child baptized on January 8, or you would like to be baptized yourself, please call the church office by January 3.

RETIRED MEN'S GROUP

The Retired Men's Group will meet for lunch on Thursday, January 12 at noon. The speaker will be Alan Cathcart, Water and Sewer Superintendent for the Town of Concord. He will speak about Concord's sewer system and the water system at Nagog.

Come and bring a friend for good food, good fellowship and an interesting program. If you have not attended these luncheons before and would like to attend on January 12, please call Charles Davis (978 369-6250) or Robert Nelson (978 369-3105) by January 7. The cost of the lunch is \$10.00.



Knitwits

**JOIN US IN THE
PARLOR
Wednesday, January
20 AT NOON!**

The Knitting Group meets in the church parlor once a month. Everyone from beginner to expert is welcome. Bring your own project or work on one of ours'. You need not come every month but can join in when it is convenient for you. You may also choose to work on projects at home. Prayer shawls may be left at the church any time.



***Budget Forum
Sunday, January 22
11:15 a.m. - Sanctuary***

***Annual Meeting
Sunday, February 12
11:15 a.m. - Sanctuary***

In preparation for the annual meeting, the Finance Committee will be holding an important **Budget Forum - January 22nd in the sanctuary following the worship service (snow date - January 29th)**. The Finance Committee will present a draft budget for review and comment. Plan to attend and give your input. Everyone is welcome.

The congregation approves and adopts a final budget at the Annual Meeting which will be held in the Sanctuary immediately following the worship service on February 12. All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

LIFE CHANGES

WITH SYMPATHY

Our member, Bill Warren, died on December 8, We extend our heartfelt sympathy to Bill's family. A memorial service will be held at TriCon on Saturday, February 11 with a reception following.

Sincere sympathy to Sandra Suduikis, Otto Judicke and their family. Sandra's father, Victor Suduikis, died on December 11.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Sarah Lawrence, Nancy Damon, and their family. Their mother, our longtime member and dedicated volunteer, Mary Lawrence, died on December 19. Mary's service will be held at TriCon on Tuesday, January 3 at 1:00 p.m. Mary Lawrence was known for her humor and her sparkling personality. She will be missed.

ITEMS OF INTEREST



We are updating our TriCon Directory. If you have a *cell phone number* that you would like added to your name entry, especially if you use your cell phone instead of your land line, please email abruning@triconchurch.org with your number and preference for listing. If you have email address(es) as well to add or change, please let Amy at the church office know.

OPEN TABLE JANUARY

Coffee - Tea - Cereal

All kinds

Instant - Ground - DeCaf - Regular

Cereal - Cocoa Puffs to fare for health buffs

As the cold weather moves in, let's warm the hearts and bodies of our friends and neighbors at Open Table with donations of coffee and tea and cereal, three items particularly appreciated by the recipients.

Annual Reports



NOW DUE

ALL COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

Please submit your report to Karen Lord in the church office (klord@triconchurch.org). Call or email Karen with any questions or for copies of prior year reports.

CANCELLATION

The Oboe and Organ concert scheduled for January 22 has been cancelled. Watch for more news about upcoming performances on our wonderful new organ.

SNOW POLICY

When the Concord Public Schools or the Concord-Carlisle Adult Education classes are canceled, so are our events, classes, meetings. If there is a question, call the chairman or convener. While we hope never to have to cancel a worship service, in the event of severe weather call the church answering machine, check the TriCon website or watch Channel 4 for the latest information.



The church is looking for help shoveling the walks and steps during the winter. \$18 per hour. Living in proximity to the church is helpful but not essential. We can be flexible around school schedules. If you are interested please contact Judy Walpole 978 369-4837, jwalpole@triconchurch.org or Jim Davidian jdavidian@msn.com.

Your Generous Mission Dollars at Work

MONTHLY SPOTLIGHT



Household Goods

Household Goods provides a full range of household items free of charge for people in need. Each year, hundreds of volunteers contribute over 35,000 hours to support more than 2,500 families. Tens of thousands of gently used household items are donated annually.



Learn more at:
triconchurch.org/missions-outreach

THANKS FROM HOUSEHOLD GOODS

Thank you for your gift of \$1,500 to Household Goods...Through your generosity and support, families and individuals in need throughout MA are now able to transform empty living spaces into real homes with basic household items that they could not afford otherwise... We are very grateful for your continuing and generous support!

Barbara and Ira Smith, Founders

ELECTRONIC GIVING UPDATE REMINDER

If you have set up automatic pledge payments thru our website, now is the time to go in and change the pledge year to 2017 and make any needed adjustments to the amount being transferred from your bank account or credit card.

ON-LINE GIVING AVAILABLE AT TRICON

We are able to accept on-line donations and payments via our website – **Triconchurch.org**. On the homepage, you will see “Click here to make donations and pledge payments”. You will have the option of transferring funds from your bank account or using a credit card. You can make a one-time payment or set up recurring ones. If you have any questions, please call or email Judy or Amy at the church office: (jwalpole@triconchurch.org or abruning@triconchurch.org).

TRICON’S QR CODE

This QR code automatically opens a special webpage on mobile devices (phones, iPads, etc.) that’s designed for smaller screens. You can scan the code with your phone to make the process of giving to the church that much simpler.



SERMONS ON FACEBOOK

You can HEAR SERMONS
on line by going to
www.triconchurch.org
OR
Facebook.com and search
Trinitarian Congregational Church



REMINDER: FIND IT ON OUR WEBSITE TRICONCHURCH.ORG

If you have recycled your paper copy of this Newsletter and then remember an article you wanted to save or are looking for a date you forgot to put on your calendar, you can always find it on our website. Past and current newsletters are available there as well as a complete calendar of church events and lots of other important information about the church – check it out!

COMMUNITY EVENTS

MAKE A DIFFERENCE BECOME A HOSPICE VOLUNTEER

Volunteer opportunities available
for all skills and talents.
Training provided.

Hospice Training
Fridays, February 10 – March 31
9:00 a.m. – noon
Care Dimensions
333 Wyman Street, Waltham

For more information or to register, contact
Jane Corrigan 781 373-6574 or
jcorrigan@caresdimensions.org.

Counting Our Blessings



In a recent December worship service, Jeff Campbell, Chair of our Stewardship Committee, gave the following Call to Stewardship offering us a message for moving forward together, embracing the transition that the new year brings.

"Over the past ten weeks, many of you made your way to this pulpit and gave voice to the theme of "Counting Our Blessings"– by sharing what this church means to you and your family. These blessings are as numerous and unique as each one of us. Yet common themes always seem to emerge.

A recent graduate of our youth program, Nick Wilbur, spoke eloquently and for so many of us when he described TriCon as a place where he feels welcomed and included, where he feels right at home. Earlier Elizabeth Rennert, a freshmen in our Youth Group, shared a similar message. What a wonderful thing to hear, and a clear sign of the health and vitality of our youth program.

Earlier this fall, Andrew Thut recalled how on one of his first visits to the church on a communion Sunday, he heard the familiar refrain that has helped to bind his connection with this church ever since, that: "whoever you are, wherever you come from, and wherever you are on your journey of faith, you are welcome here."

What is said most often in these testimonials is that in moments of great joy (a marriage, the birth or baptism of a new child), in times of pain or loss (the death of a loved one, illness, personal transition) and during all the ordinary time in between when we simply seek the fellowship of good friends on our journeys of faith, this church serves as a sanctuary—offering support, encouragement, and unconditional acceptance – even as it challenges us to grow and live out our faith.

As a new calendar year begins and we prepare to convene an annual meeting our church is in a period of transition. Let me humbly suggest that this is a good moment for all of us to regard TriCon Church itself as we would any parishioner facing an uncertain moment or a period of vulnerability. And that we offer it our fullest, most unconditional support. This time of transition is not the time to hold back, to wait and see what unfolds, but rather to give most generously of your talents and material gifts, in the very same way that this church has and will continue to give generously to each one of us when we most need it.

In John Lombard's last sermon on November 20th he discussed the meaning of and urged us to embody the prophet Micah's well known words, that we: "do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God". John said further that "while love is often experienced as a feeling, perhaps of affection or compassion, we ought not forget that it is equally, if not more importantly, an act of the will, a choice we make, or an action we take regardless of the feeling of the moment." Taking these words to heart in the year ahead, let us all make the choice as an act of will to support this church we all love....doing so as fully and faithfully as possible."

REPORT FROM THE DECEMBER 11TH CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Approximately 200 people attended the special Congregational Meeting held following the worship service on December 11, 2016.

Under the first article on the warrant, it was moved and seconded to approve the procedure for choosing our next Senior Minister by appointing Rev. Robert Brown as Acting Senior Minister effective December 11th, 2016 until such time as a 'Church Profile has been completed and approved and, that upon approval of the church profile, pending Rev. Brown's call to be our Senior Minister and a positive recommendation from the Search Committee, the congregation will vote on calling Rev. Brown to be our settled Senior Minister.

Following discussion, the motion passed by a large majority on a show of hands. **Therefore, Rev. Robert Brown has been appointed our ²Acting Senior Minister.**

The timetable going forward is as follows:

December 2016 – early January 2017 - The Search Committee (Mary Jane Knudson, Leslie Mahoney, Hjalmar Pompe van Meerdervoort) that was previously charged with finding an Interim Senior Minister will now work with Rev. Brown on finding interim Associate Minister coverage

December 2016 – May/June 2017 – The Transition Team (Nick Bruning, Jane Turner-Michael, Cynthia Schweppe, Andrew Thut and Charity Tremblay), with guidance from Rev. Brown and input from the congregation, will complete the Church Profile and bring it to a Congregational Meeting for approval.

Late spring 2017 – A ³Search Committee for a Settled Senior Minister will be nominated by the Diaconate and elected at a Congregational Meeting.

Target date - May/June 2017 – If Rev. Brown feels called to be the settled Senior Minister and the Search Committee recommends his candidacy to the congregation, a Congregational Meeting will be called to vote on calling Rev. Brown to be our settled Senior Minister,

(If completion and acceptance of the church profile takes longer than anticipated, then the dates for a vote on a settled Senior Minister will shift accordingly.)

If the vote to call Rev. Brown succeeds by a significant majority (the By-laws call for a 2/3 majority and Rev. Brown has stated that he would not accept the position unless the vote was by a strong majority), then he would become our settled Senior Minister and the Search Committee would seek candidates to fill the Associate Minister role.

If Rev. Brown does not feel called to be the settled Senior Minister or if the Search Committee does not recommend him to the congregation or if the vote to call him fails to achieve a significant majority, then the Search Committee would seek an Interim Senior Minister and the search for a settled Senior Minister would begin. At that time, Rev. Brown could then continue as Associate Minister as long as he and the congregation feel he is called to the role.

Under the second article on the warrant, it was moved and seconded to authorize the sale of the church parsonage at 26 Brook Trail, Concord Massachusetts. Following discussion, the motion was approved by a majority on a show of hands.

Articles 3 and 4 dealt with the mechanics of selling the parsonage and both were moved, seconded and voted. There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 12:30 pm.

*If there are any members of the church who are Massachusetts licensed real estate brokers who would like to consider listing the property, they should contact Judy Walpole at the church no later than January 6th to express interest.

Definitions:

¹**Church Profile:** this is a 30-page document of questions that the church answers including demographic, historical, and programmatic details as well as an identification of issues of conflict and concern. In addition there are three over-arching questions to be discerned:

- Who are we?
- Who are our neighbors?
- Who is God calling us to be?

The Church Profile is the document that informs the job description/call for a settled Senior Minister and is published to attract prospective candidates.

²**Acting Senior Minister:** individual assumes the responsibilities of the Senior Minister position as defined in our By-laws, Article VII.A.1.a-f. In brief:

- preach and teach the Gospel, administer the Sacraments and rites of the church, exercise ministerial care and leadership
- serve as ex officio member of all church boards and committees...without vote
- guide and coordinate the work of the entire staff
- report to the Church Council but is responsible ultimately to the congregation
- shall participate in an annual review
- encouraged to devote part of his or her working hours to personal growth and study, and to participate in ecclesiastical, ecumenical, and community bodies beyond the local congregation

³**Search Committee:** members read ministerial profiles, evaluate the candidates, and make recommendations to the congregation.



CHURCH SCHOOL

Check out our January on-line Church School newsletter for detailed information about calendar programming as well as news, photos and announcements. If you are new and would like information about our Church School program, please contact Church School Director Carrie O'Brien at cobrien@triconchurch.org. Please also visit our church website at www.triconchurch.org.

Church School January 2017 Calendar

Sunday, January 1st

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

10:00 AM Family Worship

Church School Resumes January 8th

Sunday, January 8th

10:00AM Children's Chapel in the Parish Hall followed by Church School

Sunday, January 15th

10:00AM Family Worship

Sunday, January 22nd

10:00AM Church School

Sunday, January 29th

10:00AM Church School

If you wish to receive the Church School on-line newsletter, please contact Carrie O'Brien at cobrien@triconchurch.org.

SENIOR HIGH YOUTH GROUP

Sundays, January 8, 22 and 29 at 7:00 p.m.

SENIOR HIGH YOUTH DISCUSSION GROUP

Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m.

YOUTH GROUP MISSION TRIP TO BLACK MESA, AZ – APRIL 2017

DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE PPRC?

The Pastor-Parish Relations Committee (PPRC) is a small group of committed members of TriCon Church who provide support for the pastors and maintain an ongoing channel of communication between the pastors and the congregation. The PPRC exists to facilitate **constructive and caring communication between the ministers and members** of the congregation, within an atmosphere of confidentiality and trust, so as to enhance the effectiveness and health of the church's ministry.

THE PPRC:

- Seeks to foster understanding among the whole congregation about the role of pastor and congregation within the life of the church.
- Supports and maintains a healthy, transparent relationship between the ministers, staff and the congregation.
- Serves as a catalyst for productively engaging issues within areas of concern that may come to the attention of the committee from the ministers or members of the congregation.
- Actively promotes the transformation of conflicts and reconciliation of differences.

The PPRC is comprised of seven members, who serve for terms of three years. The current members and their contact information are:

Bill Ackles (Chair):	978.371.1655;	bill@acklessteel.com
Mary Ann Ferrell:	508-733-6025;	maryaferrell@comcast.net
Steve Hart:	978.318.0068;	shart0068@gmail.com
Milt Schwenk:	978.371.9049;	mgschwenk@comcast.net
Lisa Soleau:	978.369.2469;	lsoleau@gmail.com
Susan Stumpf:	978.372.4993;	sjstumpf@comcast.net
Fred Williams:	978.461.0765;	frederick.williams3@verizon.net

We encourage you to contact any of the committee members with your thoughts, questions, ideas, concerns, suggestions, etc. regarding our church's ministry. We are here to listen to you.

In faith,

Bill Ackles, Chair

On Sunday, January 8th, following the worship service, we will host a forum in the Gathering Room in the church school wing to talk further about the role of the PPRC, to get your input or set-up a time for you to meet with members of the committee.