



## November 2016

### The Pastoral Perspective

Because our parents were longtime friends, most likely that is why Martha and I became early friends. Interestingly, all those photographs of childhood birthday parties featured a bunch of my boy buddies and always there, in the midst of the group, was Martha, the sole female. Growing up, she and I would have occasional play-dates, usually at her home. We took swimming lessons together, overseen by her mother, who, dying from cancer and sitting in the front seat of her car, would take great joy in seeing us paddle away in the outdoor pool of the Shawmut Inn overlooking the beautiful and expansive Atlantic Ocean. During vacation breaks in high school and college, we would often attend a movie or two and sometimes catch a bite to eat. We always kept in touch simply as friends who grew up together and were often there for each other wherever life would take us.

Forty years ago when I was ordained into Christian ministry, Martha gave me as a gift a lovely two-paneled, 8 by 10 inch, "stained glass" piece which has graced my home study throughout my entire ministry and, in a sense, has "overseen" my daily work, ministry, and life. It has constantly served as a silent but powerful reminder, perhaps blessing is more apt, of what, in the final analysis, has been at the core of my life.

The prayer on the stained glass panel is simple albeit central to my life. It reads as follows: "O Thou who has given us so very much, grant us one thing more...a grateful heart." At the end of a truly grace-filled and wonderful career and in the midst of an extraordinarily blessed life filled with love, hope, and promise along with the challenges, possibilities, and the fullness of living a life of purpose and meaning serving God's purposes with God's people, I continue to hold fast to a grateful heart. To God and to God's people, my family, my friends, and to all whose lives I have touched and who have touched mine, I have but two words:

THANK YOU!

Shalom,

## NOVEMBER WORSHIP

**November 6**      **Service at 10:00**      Rev. John Lombard preaching

**November 13**      **Service at 10:00**      Rev. June Cooper preaching

Rev. June Cooper is Executive Director of the City Mission Society in Boston. She has over thirty years of management experience in health and human services and community organizing having managed the Boston Health Start program, and serving as a consultant to nonprofit and governmental sectors locally and nationally. An ordained American Baptist minister with standing in the United Church of Christ, Rev. Cooper graduated from Newton College of the Sacred Heart, holds a Master of Social Planning from Boston College School of Social Work and a Masters degree in Divinity from Andover Newton Theological School.

**There will be a forum with Rev. Cooper in the church parlor immediately following the service.**

**November 20**      **Service at 10:00**      Rev. John Lombard preaching  
Celebrate John's 23 year ministry at TriCon.  
Reception following the service.

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

**November 27**      **Service at 10:00**      Rev. Robert Brown preaching

## Daylight Saving Time Ends



**Sunday, November 6**  
**at 2:00 AM**

## ***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.

**Sunday, November 6**  
**"Joining Sunday"**  
**Receiving new members**  
**during Sunday worship**

### **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](mailto:Lbenema@gmail.com) or 781-608-4765.

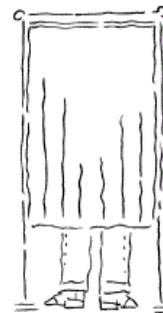
### **ATTENTION MEN OF THE CHURCH** **Join the Anchor Group**

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](mailto:howes2012@gmail.com).

### **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, November 2, 16 and 30 at 10:00 a.m. in the church parlor.** Call the church office (978 369-4837) for more information.



**Be Sure  
 To  
 Vote!**  
**Tuesday, November 8**

## RETIRED MEN'S GROUP

The Retired Men's Group will meet for lunch on Thursday, November 10 at noon. The speaker will be Col. Michael Samarov of the 25<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment at Devens, MA. We will celebrate the birthday of the Marine Corps.

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 November 10, please call Robert Nelson (978 369-3105) or Charles Davis (978 369-6250) by November 5. The cost of the lunch is \$10.00.



### Knitwits

**JOIN US IN THE PARLOR  
Wednesday, November 16 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.

## CITY MISSION SOCIETY CHRISTMAS SHOP

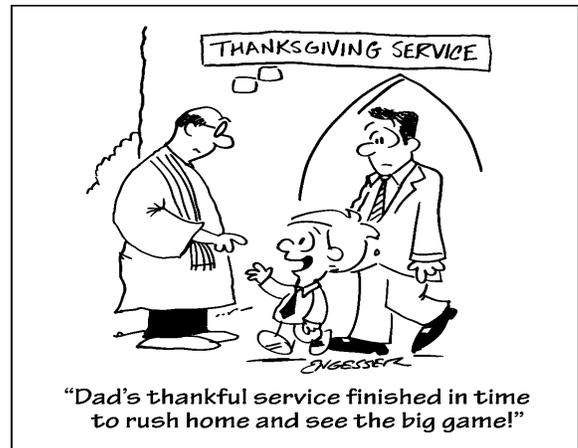
**Completed hand-sewn items  
for the City Mission Society  
should be brought to the church  
by December 1.**

**Gifts for City Mission Society may be  
dropped off until December 4.**

## Volunteers Needed For HOLIDAY GIFT BAG PROJECT

Concord Prison Outreach

Volunteers are needed to sort items and prepare gift bags at Trinity Episcopal Church, Concord, weekday mornings Tuesday, November 29 through Friday, December 9 from 9:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. There will be one evening session on Wednesday, December 7 from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. Please sign up in advance for the evening session: Carol Miller (978-369-3755 or [carolmiller@comcast.com](mailto:carolmiller@comcast.com)).



## DEDICATION OF GIFTS December 4



At the worship service on December 6, we will dedicate the gifts our church has collected for City Mission Society, as well as the gifts that have been provided for the prisoners in Concord. See your Season of Giving catalog, coming in the mail in mid-November, for more information about these causes.

## Open Table - November 2016

### Hearty Soups and Chili



Helping Our Neighbors Locally and Globally

TRICON  
OUTREACH



Serving Over 300 Guests Weekly

Concord  
&  
Maynard

As the days (and nights) get colder, let's collect some hearty soups and chili for our friends and neighbors at Open Table. Items can be left in the food bin in the parish hall.

## LIFE CHANGES

### JUST MARRIED

Best wishes to Lauren Connors and Daniel Boyle who were married in Boston on October 21 with Rev. Dr. John Lombard officiating. Lauren is the daughter of Ed and Evelyn Connors.



Sincere sympathy to Janet and Bob Lawson and their family. Janet's mother, our member Roberta Keydel, died on October 12. A memorial service was held at the Duvall Chapel at Newbury Court on October 29.

Our condolences to the family of our former member, Lois Aldrich, who died in Georgia on October 13. There will be a memorial service for Lois at TriCon on May 6 at 1:00 p.m. with a reception following.

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

**Caroling Night**  
at  
**Northeastern Correctional Center**  
(976 Barretts Mill Road, Concord, MA)



Join us on  
**Friday, December 2, 2016**  
**6:45 pm – 9 pm**

Celebrate the joy of the holiday season at this annual event where incarcerated men, adult community members and prison staff gather together.

### **RSVP by Friday, November 25th**

Email your full legal name, driver's license/state issued ID #, date of birth and phone number to [events@concordprisonoutreach.org](mailto:events@concordprisonoutreach.org) or call 617-286-6728.

Sponsored by Concord Prison Outreach and the prison chaplains

The deadline for the  
December Newsletter  
is November 15.



## 47<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL ANTIQUES SHOW & SALE

Friday, November 4  
10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Saturday, November 5  
10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

100% of Antique Show proceeds goes to support philanthropies identified by our Mission Committee.

The Antique Show requires many, many hands to ensure its success. There are lots of ways that you can help us – volunteering to make baked goods, donating money for the items we need to make the food for the café, helping at the front door or in the café, moving furniture, portering – are all ways that you can contribute to the success of the Show.

Our on-line volunteer sign-up process, The SignUp, is organized by category of volunteer needed, dates, times and available slots. When reviewing the SignUp, scroll down to see all available slots and once you have found what you want to volunteer for, click on the “SignUp” button provided under the Available Slots column. You can volunteer for more than one slot and you can edit your input as well. There is also a feature whereby you can sign up to receive an automated electronic email reminder that can go right into your electronic calendar.

You can also sign up in the parish hall or by calling the church office.

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## THANKSGIVING FOOD OFFERING



As in years past, our Thanksgiving Food Offering will in Dorchester where the minister, Rev. John Odums, parishioners run a neighborhood food pantry for the area’s most needy families, serving 100-150 people a month. While the pantry is able to stock its shelves with staples and free USDA surplus food from the Boston Food Bank such as peanut butter, rice, pasta, canned vegetables and beef stew, it relies on a small grant from the city of Boston (\$1,000 per year) and donations from our church, as well as only seven other Congregational churches in eastern MA, to keep the pantry shelves stocked. There is always a need for what many families have to think of as “extras”: tuna and other canned fish and meats, crackers, cookies, juice, jelly, canned fruit, kid’s cereals, tea, coffee, cocoa, condiments, spices, salt, pepper, mayonnaise, salad dressings, refried beans, baby food and formula, detergent, soap, paper towels, diapers, personal care products, toilet paper, and toothpaste. Also needed are disposable items such as 9” plates, 8 oz. cups, 12 oz. soup bowls, napkins, forks, knives, spoons, plastic wrap, aluminum foil, paper towels, food storage bags, etc.

go to the Pilgrim Church  
and a small group of

Please consider bringing a grocery bag of “extras” by Sunday, November 20 and put it in the marked area in the parish hall. Food will be delivered to Pilgrim Church that afternoon.

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Again this year, we will have a mitten tree in the parish hall during Advent where you may select a mitten providing information about a toy or an article of clothing that you purchase for one of the children at the Transitions Shelter for homeless woman and their children located in Devens, MA.



A special invitation for all the women  
in the church to enjoy fellowship  
and tasty treats at an

## *Advent Tea*

*Friday, December 2nd - 12:30 - 2:00 p.m.*

If you would like, please bring a small gift for one of the moms  
at the Transitions Shelter.

These women, who have so little, would be delighted to receive  
lotion, cologne, shampoo, conditioner, gloves, costume jewelry.

Towels, cooking pots, etc. would also be appreciated.

Watch for a complete list in the weekly Events & Comments  
and on the church website.

Sign up in the parish hall or call the church office.



## WHAT IS THE CARING CONNECTION?

### What is the Caring Connection??

The Caring Connection is a group of people who wants to help members in our community with rides, visits, memorial receptions, and meals.

### How does it work?

Kathy Flynn and Cynthia LaMothe, Caring Connection Coordinators, share the responsibility of coordinating the work. Each week one of them (the CC in charge) consults with the minister or church office and learns who could use some help or a phone call. Calls are made to those people to learn if a ride, visit, or meal is needed. Sometimes just a phone call saying we are holding this person in our thoughts and prayers is all that is needed.

### How does Transportation work?

Either the minister, church office or the CC coordinators are alerted that someone needs a ride to church or to an appointment. The person in charge of Transportation for the month (Demi Ayres, Nancy Hendrie, Thad Jackson, Sue Stumpf) finds a ride for the person from a list of volunteers or drives her/himself.

### How does the Visiting work?

Either the minister, church office or the CC coordinators are alerted that someone would like a visit. The person can be in the hospital, in a nursing home, retirement community, at home or in an apartment. Susan Kluge is in charge of the visiting and has several people who help her with visits.

### What about Memorial Receptions?

Sally Clutter, Weezie Johnson, Carol Miller, Rebecca Purcell, Sally Schnitzer share the responsibility of organizing the receptions after memorial services. Ann Jacobs calls from a list of volunteers to get the needed helpers to set up, serve and clean up. Barbara Stevens writes condolence notes to members who have lost a loved one.

### What about the Meals?

If a meal is needed, the Caring Connection coordinators contact members on our volunteer list to provide one. Also a team of volunteers gets together at least twice a year and makes casseroles to store in the church freezer. These frozen casseroles can be taken to a member. If someone has been in the hospital, meals can be provided for several weeks.

### What about new babies?

Trish Siefer heads the Committee for Families with New Babies. They visit families with a new baby, presenting a book of children's prayers and a hand-knit hat. A meal is also provided to these families.

### How do I volunteer?

If you haven't joined one of these committees and would like to, please call the church office, Kathy Flynn (978-369-6934) or Cynthia LaMothe (978-369-9676)

### ITEMS OF INTEREST

On October 4, 2016, for the second time in just six years, the impoverished country of Haiti suffered a catastrophic natural disaster when Hurricane Mathew struck the island’s southwest coast killing over 1000 people and leaving complete destruction in its wake. In the hurricane’s aftermath, Haiti’s water supply was contaminated resulting in a renewed outbreak of cholera. It is feared that hundreds more will die before the disease is brought under control. The magnitude of the disaster is staggering – more than 1.4 million people are in need of clean water, food and housing.

***In response to this enormous humanitarian need, the Mission Committee unanimously agreed this past week to direct \$10,000 to All Hands Volunteers, a disaster relief organization that TriCon supports, to aid in the clean up of the devastated area.***

Within 48 hours of the disaster, All Hands had volunteers in the area removing rubble, installing a clean water system for community use and clearing away debris from a school to make way for temporary classrooms. As the needs change in the coming weeks from clean up to rebuilding, All Hands will be sending additional volunteers to the area to assist in the recovery efforts. TriCon’s gift of \$10,000 will go directly to support this work.

It is ***your*** generosity – whether it be through annual stewardship giving, your support of the Antiques Show or your donations to the Christmas and Easter offerings – that makes it possible for the Mission Committee to continue to do its work of giving to local and international agencies that help the world’s most needy.

***“Be sure to give to them without any hesitation. When you do this, the Lord our God will bless you in everything you work for and set out to do.” Deuteronomy 15:***



hands.org  
engagement@hands.org  
508.758.8211



Hurricane Mathew first made landfall in Haiti on October 4, 2016, slamming into Haiti’s coastline with 140 mph winds and torrential rain, then pounded the Caribbean as well as the coastal US from Florida to North Carolina. The storm has killed over 1000 in Haiti, 19 in the US. All Hands is now in Haiti and is basing relief operations out of Port Salut, on the southwestern coast. From there, we anticipate branching out to less accessible towns to the north toward Jeremie.

In the once-tourist town of Port Salut we are coordinating with local officials to prioritize needs. Our first activities center on clearing debris from a school that was all but destroyed

from the storm, and setting up temporary classrooms (see below). Not only will this allow kids to get back to normal things like friends and learning, but since the school is the heartbeat of the community, it will help with healing and renewal for the whole town. Part of our work at the school includes installation of a clean water system for the community’s use. This is crucial given the pre-existing cholera epidemic and contamination of water sources since the storm.

This program will be All Hands’ third disaster response in Haiti. Following the 2010 earthquake, our volunteer teams worked in Leogane, Haiti, clearing rubble, building schools and installing water filtration units for two years.



# Thanks!

## THANK YOU ALL~

I am so grateful to the many people who, once again, made the annual *Al Filipov Peace & Justice Forum* a wonderful success. Al's dream of a peaceful world lives on in this forum. I'm blessed to be part of this church.

Thank you all.  
Loretta Filipov

## WITH MANY THANKS

Someone spilled the beans that I was about to turn 90, and a large number of Trinitarians responded with notes and cards - too many to respond to personally. To one and all, thank you, thank you. It was delightful to hear from so many old friends.

Tuck Gilbert  
Greetings from Bobbie, too.

## THANK YOU FROM "FISH"

Thank you so much for letting the FISH group have the use of our Parish Hall to celebrate the 40th anniversary of our voluntary, free driver service called FISH (Friends In Service Helping). TriCon Church was one of several churches in town that helped to start this group with small donations, and has helped us continue by adding drivers and phone arrangers volunteering from our congregation. Some of us who were in the group from the beginning are no longer able to do this work, so we are hoping that it will continue to be carried on by our following generations.

Our phone number is 978-369-2244 if anyone needs our service or would like to volunteer.



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](mailto:jwalpole@triconchurch.org) or Jim Davidian [jdavidian@msn.com](mailto:jdavidian@msn.com).

## OUR CLOSET RUNNETH OVER

The cold weather is upon us and the coat closet in the Narthex has many jackets, sweatshirts, gloves, scarves, umbrellas, etc. left from last year. If you think any of these items may be yours', please check the closet. Items left after December 1 will be given to charity.



## SERMONS ON FACEBOOK

You can HEAR SERMONS  
on line by going to  
[www.triconchurch.org](http://www.triconchurch.org)  
OR

Facebook.com and search  
*Trinitarian Congregational Church*

## THE SEASON OF GIVING CATALOG

Once again this holiday season, we will be publishing our Season of Giving catalog. The catalog contains information for a number of worthwhile causes any of which you may want to include on your Christmas list.

Whether you are interested in purchasing Cambodian bags, giving gifts to City Mission Society, Concord prisoners, or food for the hungry, you will find these and other worthwhile causes in our Season of Giving catalog. Watch for it in your mail.

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## ADVENT RESOURCES

The Advent/Christmas season is not always a joyous time for everyone. Those who are feeling depressed or stressed may find it hard to get into the spirit and it can be particularly difficult for those who have recently lost a loved one.

In the parish hall, we have a collection of Care Notes – small booklets that provide helpful advice on getting through the holidays when you are finding it difficult to feel the joy of the season. Feel free to take them for yourself or to give to a friend or relative.

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## ALTAR FLOWERS

If you would like to donate flowers for a Sunday service in 2017, you may sign up on the flower chart in the parish hall.

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## 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!

## 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.

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## Counting Our Blessings



As we reflect on the blessings that we have in our church and consider our financial contribution to TriCon for the coming year, thoughts that Shirley Huettig shared with us about a year ago resonate.

*"What if everything fell apart tomorrow – if you lost your home, if a family member passed away, if you lost your income, if you or a loved one succumbed to mental illness, if you became unwell, if you just lost your way – where would you turn?"*

*To Starbucks or Dunkin' Donuts? ? Where many of us contribute nearly \$1200 a year - more if we get a muffin with our coffee every weekday?*

*To Nordstrom's? Where some of us might contribute double what we initially pledged each year because we couldn't decide between the red sweater and the green one, so we bought both?*

*To our fitness or country clubs? Where contributions of \$1,000s of dollars are made every year, but where the returns don't ever seem to be quite what was promised?"*

### **If everything fell apart tomorrow, where would you turn? Where could you turn?**

You could turn to this nurturing faith community where you would be welcomed, comforted, supported and embraced, whether you had been attending services faithfully each week, hadn't darkened the door since last Christmas or had drifted away almost completely. The church and the church community would be here for you as long as we, the members and friends of TriCon provide the resources to keep the doors open, maintain staff and empower our mission to do God's work in the world.

We are blessed. Thank you for your support for our church community and your contribution to our lives together.

Your Stewardship Team

Check out our November on-line Church School newsletter for detailed information about calendar programming as well 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](mailto:cobrien@triconchurch.org). Please also visit our church website at [www.triconchurch.org](http://www.triconchurch.org).

**Church School November 2016 Calendar****Sunday, November 6<sup>th</sup>**

10:00AM Children's Chapel followed by Church School

**Sunday, November 13<sup>th</sup>**

10:00AM Church School

5:00PM Voyagers Mission Meeting

**Monday, November 14<sup>th</sup>**

6:00PM SEEKER Mission Meeting

**Sunday, November 20<sup>th</sup>**

8:30AM New Teacher Training

9:00AM All Teacher Training

10:00AM Church School

**Sunday, November 27<sup>th</sup> - First Sunday of Advent**

10:00AM Family Worship

*Church School Morning Routine ... Before the 10:00AM service, nursery age children, up to age three, can be dropped off in the nursery located on the first floor of the Church School wing. Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten children are dropped off in the Blended "Butterfly" classroom on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Church School wing. 1<sup>st</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> graders begin in worship with their families before leaving for Church School classes.*

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

**SENIOR HIGH YOUTH GROUP**

Sundays, November 6, 13, and 20 at 7:00 p.m.

**SENIOR HIGH YOUTH DISCUSSION GROUP**

Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. (NO Discussion Group on Wednesday, November 23)

**YOUTH GROUP MISSION TRIP  
TO BLACK MESA, AZ - APRIL 2017**

Mission Trip fund raising kicks off with a special offering in December.  
Look for the opportunity to support the Mission Trip  
and possibly win a great Christmas gift for a child or grandchild.



Dear TriCon Friends,

I would like to introduce myself as the **NEW MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR** at TriCon taking over for Mary Lou Esposito who retired in August having faithfully served in the job for 15 years. I look forward to building upon all the work that Mary Lou did to encourage and welcome new members to our church.

TriCon is a vibrant, welcoming community because of its people. Young families with children who start at the Church School, and move into the Voyager and Seeker programs in middle school and into the Youth Group in high school, add energy and vitality to our church committees and activities held at the church. Retirees, couples, and singles from other churches or other Christian denominations that have relocated to the Concord area or find themselves seeking what TriCon has to offer, add depth and new ideas to our church community. **We welcome you all!**

**THE PATH** to becoming a member at TriCon is an easy one. If you have already been baptized in another church, you do not need to go through that process again. You do not need to be confirmed to become a member. Please see [FAQs re: Membership](#) elsewhere in this newsletter to learn all about what it means to join TriCon.

**IF INTERESTED IN JOINING**, we ask that you attend a coffee, held several times a year, to meet members of the Membership Committee and have your initial questions answered. There is absolutely no commitment in attending a coffee – we would like to get to know you better and be available to answer any questions you might have. Once you feel ready, the next step is to meet with members of the Membership Committee and a member of the Clergy to learn more formally about the United Church of Christ, our church and the responsibilities of being a church member. We usually host a brunch after church for this meeting but can also arrange to meet with you during the week if that is more convenient for you and your family. This is a required meeting you must attend before you can become a member of the church. Finally, you would participate in a very special celebration held during a Sunday worship service where you become a member of the church in front of the congregation.

#### **OPPORTUNITIES**

This fall, there will be a Joining on Sunday, November 6 during the church service. Please contact me at [dale.r.ryder@gmail.com](mailto:dale.r.ryder@gmail.com) or at 978-549-0238 if you are interested. Membership is also hosting a coffee on November 6<sup>th</sup> and December 11<sup>th</sup> for those who are interested in learning more about TriCon. We will also be hosting several Coffees, a Brunch and two Joining opportunities in the spring if that is a better time frame for you and your family.

This is a time of change and transition for TriCon and a chance for all of us, both long standing and new members, to play a vital role in the future of our church. We will be asked to vote on a new Senior Minister in the coming months and the need for strong, involved leadership on our committees has never been more important. ***In order to vote or serve on a church committee, you must be a member of the church.*** I urge those of you who are not yet members to consider adding your talents, ideas and resources to the voices of our church community to ensure the continued vitality of our church.

*In Faith,*  
Dale Ryder



## *Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Membership*

### **I enjoy attending the church. What does it mean to become a member?**

Membership in our church signifies your commitment to the Christian faith and to this community of faith. In joining the church you are not only affirming your belief in God and Jesus Christ but also declaring your intention to live out the message of Christian love, justice and peace in the context of a community of people.

One of the distinctive characteristics of Christian faith is that it is shared. It occurs in community, in the company of others. As the New Testament tells us, "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." (Matthew 18:20)

In joining the church, you become a member of the body of Christ as manifested in our faith community. You join a long line of people of faith, dating back over 190 years, who have made this commitment to Trinitarian Congregational Church.

You covenant with other members and commit to participate in the life of the church, transmitting the richness of our faith to future generations and furthering the church's life-transforming work and mission. The church and its members commit to support you in periods of need and rejoice with you in times of joy.

As a member, you are eligible to *serve on a church committee and to vote at congregational meetings*. In these ways, you are able to guide and influence the direction of the church and contribute to its vitality and sustenance.

All are welcome at TriCon Church. Although membership of parents is not a requirement for baptism of children or for a child's participation in our Christian education program, by becoming a member, you are demonstrating, by your example, the importance of faith and the church in your life. As an adult, you do not need to be re-baptized or re-confirmed at Tricon to become a member, but you would re-affirm your faith at the Joining Service.

### **What is expected of a church member?**

Members are expected to:

- Affirm their faith in God as known through Jesus Christ
- Share regularly in worship
- Enlist in the work of this congregation as it serves our community and beyond
- Contribute to the church's work and benevolences

### **What does it mean to affirm my faith in God as known through Jesus Christ?**

In affirming your faith, you are stating your belief in God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

### **What is meant by "share regularly in worship"? Am I expected to attend church each week?**

You are not expected to attend church on a weekly basis but you are encouraged to participate regularly in worship, the center of our congregation's life. Most members find that worship in the context of a community of believers is the foundation for the meaning and sustenance it gives their daily lives.

**How do I go about “enlisting in the work of this congregation”?**

There are many ways to enlist in the work of this church. You can serve on a church committee, usher for a Sunday service, sing in the choir, teach a church school class, help prepare a shelter meal, provide a meal or offer transportation through the Caring Connection, to name just a few. You can always speak to the clergy or other members as to how you might use your talents, gifts, and interests in the church.

**What is my obligation to contribute to the church’s work and benevolences?**

Members and non-member participants in our congregation are expected to contribute to the financial support of the church. In contrast to many secular organizations, where dues constitute support for the organization, our church is a community of faith ministering daily around the clock to meet the needs of church members, the larger community and, indeed, the world. It requires substantial commitment of time and resources of caring and supportive individuals.

More than eighty per cent of our church’s annual operating budget comes from gifts and pledges made by members and non-members. Contributions differ due to individual financial resources and circumstances. We hope that you will make your church giving a priority. Each fall, the church undertakes its annual pledge drive.

**What is the process for becoming a member?**

We encourage you first to get to know the congregation by participating in the life of the church; attending worship and joining in the activities that interest you. Study groups, service and outreach projects, music, youth programs, and other fellowship events are some of the many opportunities offered.

At TriCon we offer opportunities for exploring membership several times each year. We have coffees on Sunday mornings and meetings for people interested in becoming members. In addition you might want to arrange a visit with clergy to discuss your interest and find out more about this church.

Following participation in an Exploring Membership meeting, if you decide to join our congregation, you will be received into membership during our regular worship service. New members may join by affirmation of faith, reaffirmation of faith, or transfer from another congregation. We often include adult baptism during the service when we receive new members who have not been baptized.

**What follows becoming a member?**

That is up to you. For most people, the feeling of belonging is enhanced by participating in at least one smaller group in the church. We encourage you to get as involved as you are able and interested in doing.

## NEW IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON THE CLERGY TRANSITION

More than 50 members of the church attended the informational meeting held on Sunday, October 16, 2016. After two hours of thoughtful, respectful and often passionate discussion, a formal request was made by more than 10 members present (the minimum needed to call for a meeting) to convene a Congregational Meeting so that the entire congregation can discuss alternatives and vote on which process we use to select our next Senior Minister.

**A Congregational Meeting will be held after the worship service on Sunday, December 11<sup>th</sup>.**

As required in our by-laws, the meeting will be announced from the pulpit on at least two Sundays and by mail to the congregation.

Please read the summary of the meeting that follows. Complete minutes are available on our website. They provide an overview and list the options that might be taken under consideration at the Congregational Meeting. Rev. Bob Brown, Diaconate Chair, Betsy Swaim, Conference Minister, Rev. Wendy Vander Hart and I will continue together to flesh out the details for each suggested process. I have been in touch with the Interim Search Committee and asked them to put their work on hold until we have determined the next steps.

It's been a bit of a roller coaster these past few weeks but I truly feel that the conversation on 10/16 - in fact, all of our conversations -- are a reflection of our congregation's sincere commitment to the future of TriCon and our dedication to finding the path God calls us to follow.

In Faith, Carol Antos, Moderator

### **10/16/16 meeting:**

After Reverend Brown explained his rationale for withdrawing his candidacy for the Senior Minister position, several expressed their appreciation and support for his seven years of service to the Church and their concerns about the Connecticut process that was approved by the Church Council. Under the Connecticut process, Rev. Brown, as an internal candidate, would be interviewed first for the job, once a profile is developed by the Transition Team. If not selected, he would be obligated to leave the Church within a proscribed timeframe. Rev. Brown indicated that he felt this process would exclude him from helping in developing the Church's long-term mission. He also felt that this process would be divisive and that is why he removed himself from contention.

After some discussion about the processes that were considered and why the Church Council approved the Connecticut process, the majority of those attending felt that other options should be considered and that the congregation should approve the final search process.

There were many expressions of support and appreciation for Rev. Brown and a hope that he would reconsider his candidacy. Several wondered why Rev. Brown could not be the Acting Senior Minister during the transition or be the transition minister. Many felt he should be the shepherd to guide the Church through the transition. Many said that the Church had a known entity and that it didn't seem right to trade that for a period of uncertainty. Above all, most wanted him to remain with TriCon.

Carol Antos summarized the discussion.

1. There was strong support to have Rev. Brown reconsider his candidacy.
2. A meeting of the congregation should be held to present the options for selecting a new Senior Minister and that the congregation should approve which process to be used:
  - a. The traditional process
  - b. TriCon developed process of which there might be two options:
    - An immediate vote to offer the Senior Minister position to Rev. Brown
    - Offering Rev. Brown an "Acting" Senior Minister position for a set period at the end of which there would be a church vote on offering the call to Rev. Brown. This also implies a Transition Team would be formed to work with Rev. Brown during the discernment process.

## Summary of the Results of the TriCon Planning and Assessment Survey

### **Who answered the survey?**

TriCon has just under 400 pledging units. The survey was completed by 191 people, and skewed towards females (2:1) and older members (there was an even spread across three age cohorts: 41-55, 56-70, over 70). Over half have no children at home, 40% do have children at home, and 4% are single. Almost half of the respondents have attended TriCon for more than 20 years.

- As we go through the transition phase, we will delve more fully into the make-up of our membership by age, gender, family demographics, years of membership, etc. and gain insight on whether this demographic breakdown is reflective of our congregation.

### **Why do people come/keep coming to TriCon?**

Above all, parishioners come to/stay at TriCon because of the worship style, theology, and clergy at TriCon (72% \*). Almost half originally came because they were drawn to the children's program; a third because of the youth programs. Two-thirds of us keep coming because we have friends in the congregation and find the staff and volunteers to be friendly and welcoming. Three other areas were mentioned as reasons why they stay by over half the respondents:

- the children's and youth programs
- mission and outreach programs
- music program

### **Is our programming meeting the needs of the parishioners?**

Respondents are 80-90% satisfied with current programming, but three areas were mentioned by almost a third of the respondents as areas for new programs:

- hands-on service/mission opportunities for adults, families
- adult education opportunities and small groups centered on common interests
- more meaningful worship experiences

### **How do people feel about Mission programming and giving?**

- Self-reported level of knowledge of TriCon's mission program
  - 28% very; 67% somewhat; 5% not knowledgeable
- Program
  - 85% satisfied; 7% dissatisfied; 8% don't know
- 20 Percent of pledge income goal
  - 92% feel that the goal is important
- Attention
  - 77% feel we give enough attention to Mission giving; 10% feel it needs less emphasis; 13% feel it needs more

### **Does Tri-Con have a clear vision for the future?**

- 63% agree or strongly agree
- 15% disagree or strongly disagree
- 22% don't know

Answers that pertain specifically to our stewardship campaign, membership involvement, and how we communicate have been forwarded to the appropriate committee chairs and staff members. Copies of the complete survey and results (including a compilation of the anonymous comments) are available in the Church Office for all interested. Many thanks go to Judy Walpole, Russell Sanna, Jon Rennert, Betsy Veidenheimer, Shane Siefer, Amanda Hickman, Jeff Campbell and Breh Feigh who served on the survey committee.

Submitted by Carol Antos, Moderator

BEING  
MAKING  
LIVING

*Peace*

*If we are peaceful, if we are happy,  
We can blossom like a flower,  
And everyone in our family,  
Our entire society,  
Will benefit from our peace.*

Thich Nhat Hanh

There are over 250 Biblical references to the word *peace*. In the Hebrew Scriptures the word is used meaning the absence of war or aggression. But with the birth of Jesus, *peace* takes on an entirely new meaning. *Peace* refers to a state of being that God gives us.

Advent is when we remember God's approaching promise, the coming of the *Prince of Peace*. Peace is what we all desire, inner peace, peace of mind, even peace on earth. Our 3 part Advent Small Groups will engage in discussion about what peace is really all about. Each week we will explore ways to access the peace Jesus said he left us, the deep abiding peace of God that Paul wrote, "surpasses all understanding".

**WEEK ONE:** December 4 **BEING** *Peace* -discovering peace within

**WEEK TWO:** December 11 **MAKING** *Peace* -transforming conflict

**WEEK THREE:** December 18 **LIVING** *Peace* -nurturing daily peace

*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*

**Jesus** (John 14:27)