



Genesis



Messiah's Newsletter

July 2008

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Genesis Editor

Phyllis Tyler

From the Rector...

It is a challenge to write this, my last article for *Genesis* as your rector. Many of you know that I have been in discernment about my next call for over a year now, and I moved very carefully and prayerfully through the process. I looked at many parishes and many looked at me, until I found what I believe to be the right fit. I have accepted a call to Saint Paul's Church in Riverside, Connecticut, and I will begin my ministry as rector there in September.

And so now we find ourselves in this in-between time, a time of saying good-bye, of celebrating our more than five years together, and of wondering what is to come. It is not up to me to determine what will happen next at Messiah. That is in the capable hands of the Senior Warden and the vestry, who by canon are in charge of the parish in the absence of a rector. On Sunday July 6, Mark Gatzka+, the diocesan staff person in charge of congregational transition, will be with you for worship and an Adult Forum. He can answer your questions and address your concerns.

We have so many things to celebrate. This congregation is so different from where we were when I arrived in April 2003. Some of our accomplishments came relatively easily and others have taken years of struggle together, but Messiah is very strong now. The building alone speaks volumes; the garden, the signs, the new concrete, the groups using our space for school and job training. As a faith community, we have changed a great deal in five years, and it is now appropriate for you to begin the work of naming and claiming your identity and dreaming about your future. This is challenging work, but very rewarding and it can be lots of fun, so enjoy it!

God is the God of new beginnings and new life. Those things do not come without endings first, however, and I hope we can do this ending well. I look forward to seeing you between now and July 27, which will be my last day with you. We will gather for one service only, at 9:30 that day, which, blessedly, will include the baptism of two new members. Please know that you have given me many, many gifts, and I am grateful to God and to you for our mutual ministry.

With love,

July Book Group

Join us as we discuss *Gorgeous Lies* by Martha McPhee on Wednesday July 23. We will also make plans for continuing this group without Lee Ann+. All Book Group books are available in paperback and from your local library. Meetings are at Messiah, downstairs in the Family Room from 7:00 to 8:30 PM.

Centering Prayer

Centering Prayer will meet on **Tuesday July 22 at 7PM**. All are welcome to share in this time of silent meditation. We meet in the Family Room, which is downstairs, for one hour. Instruction is provided.

Cafe Questions

On May 18, twenty people gathered for discussion on these five questions:

1. Have you ever been excluded by divisions between ‘us’ and ‘them?’ What was this like?
2. What memberships define your identity? Who do these memberships exclude?
3. Have you had the experience of moving beyond a barrier between ‘us’ and ‘them?’ How did this happen?
4. What would have to change for the world to be less divided into ‘us’ and ‘them?’
5. How do the discussions we’ve had today relate to designating ourselves as a “Welcoming and Affirming” parish?

These questions made people think, meditate, about their past experiences. After rotating several groups, we discussed our feelings. All answers and/or experiences were positive. However, we did not commit to being included on the list of friendly churches for persons of other orientations. So may you reflect on these questions, if you were not present for our exciting adventure. Also if you have anything to add, please relay any feelings, ideas, to the vestry. Finally, a poster with the results of our discussion was placed on the wall in the Lower Hall for you to read.

In Jesus Christ,
Charles Lavezza

The Pilgrim Path

The Pilgrim Path has taken several steps forward. This week, approximately 35 feet of deteriorating sidewalk has been removed and replaced.

To date, orders for 10 bricks have been received. In addition, the Memorial Fund committee has ordered 12 bricks for several parish members. In the past, monies had been received in their names, and it seemed an appropriate remembrance. Those names are: Kenneth & Lillian Keys, Leah & Bob Rogge, Aubrey & Audrey Mann, Ed & Muriel Van Reuth, Ruth & George Claytor, Bill & Annette Patzschke, Jim and Betty Eydelloth, Erle & June Lindsey, Millie Troutman, John & Ginny Roper, Ed & Dorothy Truitt and Harry & Eva Schafer. Our rectors and others will also be added to this list as we move forward on our Pilgrim Path.

The Pilgrim Path is an ongoing project, so there continues to be time for all who wish to participate. Payment arrangements can be made, if necessary, so that all may take part.

Bricks may be purchased as memorials, thanksgivings, dates to remember, or just for yourself. This week, we will begin having the bricks made. When completed, they will be displayed in the back of the church until they are permanently installed outside.

Final installation location has not been finalized. However, a section by the tower door is being considered.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact me. Our goal, obviously, is to replace the sidewalk. However, it is not the only purpose of this project. It is also a time to remember our past, celebrate our current life together, and look forward to what is ahead for the Church of the Messiah and its people.

Vince Vanneman
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Next Genesis Deadline

There will be no August Genesis but the deadline for the September issue will be **Friday, August 22nd**. In this time of transition and change it is more important than ever to communicate with one another. Please have your articles ready for all of our activities so that everyone may be kept informed.

Phyllis Tyler, Editor