

Trinity Tidings

March 2003

It's All In A Deck Of Cards

A young soldier was in his bunkhouse all alone one Sunday morning over in Afghanistan. It was quiet that day, the guns and the mortars, and land mines for some reason hadn't made a noise. The young soldier knew it was Sunday, the holiest day of the week. As he was sitting there, he got out an old deck of cards and laid them out across his bunk.

Just then an army sergeant came in and said, "Why aren't you with the rest of the platoon?"

The soldier replied, "I thought I would stay behind and spend some time with the Lord."

The sergeant said, "Looks like you're going to play cards."

The soldier said, "No sir, you see, since we are not allowed to have Bibles or other spiritual books in this country, I've decided to talk to the Lord by studying this deck of cards."

The sergeant asked in disbelief, "How will you do that?"

You see the Ace, Sergeant, it reminds that there is only one God.

The Two represents the two parts of the Bible, Old and New Testaments.

The Three represents the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

The Four stands for the Four Apostles: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

The Five is for the five virgins that were ten but only five of them were glorified.

The Six is for the six days it took God to create the Heavens and Earth.

The Seven is for the day God rested after working the six days.

The Eight is for the family of Noah and his wife, their three sons and their wives, in which God saved the eight people from the flood that destroyed the earth for the first time.

The Nine is for the lepers that Jesus cleansed of leprosy. He cleansed ten but nine never thanked Him.

The Ten represents the Ten Commandments that God handed down to Moses on tablets made of stone.

The Jack is a reminder of Satan. One of God's first angels, but he got kicked out of heaven for his sly and wicked ways and is now the joker of eternal hell.

The Queen stands for the Virgin Mary.

The King stands for Jesus, for he is the King of all kings.

When I count the dots on all the cards, I come up with 365 total, one for every day of the year.

There are a total of 52 cards in a deck, each is a week, 52 weeks in a year.

The four suits represents the four seasons: Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter.

Each suit has thirteen cards, there are exactly thirteen weeks in a quarter.

So when I want to talk to God and thank Him, I just pull out this old deck of cards and they remind me of all that I have to be thankful for."

The sergeant just stood there and after a minute, with tears in his eyes and pain in his heart, he said, "Soldier, can I borrow that deck of cards?"

Originator Unknown

Please let this be a reminder and take time to pray for all of our soldiers who are being sent away, putting their lives on the line fighting for us.

God Bless America!

Birthdays

Paul Robinson	March. 1 st
Lori Martin	March. 4 th
Deven Factor	March. 8 th
Bonnie Cooper	March. 9 th
Rachel Ortman	March. 13 th
Nancy Clum	March. 17 th
Katrina Scheuvront	March. 24 th
Tarquin Scheuvront	March. 24 th
Cecelia Folz	March. 27 th
Missy Clum	March. 28 th
Leslie Taylor	March. 29 th
Ronda Kennedy	March 30 th

Practices of Faith in the United Church of Christ: Communion

This is the second of twelve installments of The Practices of Faith Series from the Local Church Ministries, Worship and Education Ministry Team of the United Church of Christ.

Foundation:

In accordance with the teaching of our Lord and the practice prevailing among evangelical Christians, the United Church of Christ recognizes two sacraments: Baptism and the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion. – From the Preamble to the Constitution of the United Church of Christ.

The Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." -- I Corinthians 11:23-25

When Jesus was at table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. – Luke 24:30-31

Here, O my Lord, I see you face to face; here would I touch and handle things unseen. Here grasp with firmer hand the eternal grace, and all my weariness upon you lean. – Horatius Bonar, 1855, alt. The New Century Hymnal

What is a Sacrament in the United Church of Christ?

Sacraments are ritual actions in worship, which, according to Scripture, were instituted by Jesus. In the sacraments of baptism and communion we ask the Holy Spirit to use water, bread, and wine to make visible the grace, forgiveness, and presence of God in Christ.

Origin of Communion

The communion meal recalls the table fellowship Jesus shared with his disciples, and in particular the Last Supper on the night before his death as well as his appearances to the disciples during meals following his resurrection. Throughout its history these biblical events have been central to the Church's worship life.

The Meaning of Communion

In the sacrament of Holy Communion, also known as the Lord's Supper or Eucharist, meaning "thanksgiving", Christians hear, taste, touch and receive the grace of God revealed through Jesus Christ in a unique way. Communion is:

- A joyous act of thanksgiving for all God has done, is doing, and will do for the redeeming of creation;
- A sacred memorial of the crucified and risen Christ, a living and effective sign of Christ's sacrifice in which Christ is truly and rightly present to those who eat and drink;
- An earnest prayer for the presence of the Holy Spirit to unite those who partake with the Risen Christ and with each other, and to restore creation, making all things new;
- An intimate experience of fellowship in which the whole church in every time and place is present and divisions are overcome;
- A hopeful sign of the promised Realm of God marked by justice, love and peace.

The United Church of Christ Book of Worship reminds us that "the invitation and the call [to the supper] celebrate not only the memory of a meal that is past, but an actual meal with the risen Christ that is a foretaste of the heavenly banquet at which Christ will preside at the end of history."

What Elements are Used? What do they Mean?

The broken bread and poured wine represent – present anew—the crucified and risen Christ. The wheat gathered to bake one loaf and the grapes pressed to make one cup remind participants that they are one body in Christ, while the breaking and pouring announce the costliness of Christ’s sacrifice for the forgiveness of sin. Some churches provide non-alcoholic and gluten-free elements. As we grow increasingly aware of the rich cultural diversity of the church, the use of elements other than bread and wine is becoming an issue for global ecumenical reflection. (Trinity uses grape juice and yeast-free homemade bread during communion.)

What Words are Used?

The Book of Worship and The New Century Hymnal contain several liturgies for the celebration of Holy Communion. In addition, many liturgies from ecumenical and global sources are frequently used. At the heart of the service are Jesus’ words about the bread and the cup from the Biblical account of the Last Supper.

How is Communion Served?

A variety of practices are found in the United Church of Christ, including the sharing of a common loaf or the use of individual wafers or cubes of bread and the sharing of a common cup or of individual cups either at the Table or in the pews. Intinction (dipping the bread in the wine) is also an acceptable practice. Care should be taken to ensure that the full meaning of the sacrament is communicated by the way the elements are used and served. The pastor presides at the Table, normally assisted by elders or deacons.

Who may receive Communion?

In most United Church of Christ local churches the communion table is “open to all Christians who wish to know the presence of Christ and to share in the community of God’s people.” (Book of Worship). Some visitors from churches that believe communion should only be celebrated among Christians who are in full doctrinal agreement might not choose to participate. Their decision should be respected.

What about children?

In many Christian churches baptized children and even infants are able to receive communion. Practice in the United Church of Christ varies, but increasingly children are welcomed to the Table at their parents’ discretion following a period of instruction about the sacrament’s meaning.

How often is Communion served?

In the early church communion was served weekly, a practice continued and encouraged by the Protestant Reformers. Gradually the frequency of communion decreased in many Protestant churches. This trend is now being reversed. While no one pattern prevails in the United Church of Christ, many congregations are moving toward monthly or weekly communion.

Currently at Trinity, we serve Communion about 7 times a year.

- First Sunday of Advent
- First Sunday of the New Year
- Ash Wednesday
- Maundy Thursday
- Pentecost Sunday
- World Communion Sunday
- Consecration Sunday
- And other times, as it seems appropriate.

Taylor's TUCC Points

As you receive this issue of Tidings, we have already celebrated Ash Wednesday and the season of Lent has begun. What exactly is this season about and what will happen during the season?

The word "Lent" comes from a Latin word meaning "to lengthen". The name of the season is tied to the lengthening of days in the spring of the year, which coincides with this time in the church year. There are forty days in the season, not counting Sundays. The number forty was determined by the length of time Jesus fasted in the wilderness. Sundays are excluded because they are seen as "little Easters"—a short break in the season each week as we await the joy that is to come.

From its beginnings, Lent focused on several important aspects of faith formation: it was a time to instruct candidates for baptism and to renew vows made by baptized members; to ponder Christ's journey to the cross and what it meant; to seek God's presence through the practice of spiritual disciplines such as prayer, reading Scripture, and fasting; and to seek pardon and healing for those things that were barriers to a relationship with God and others.

The Bible readings for the Sundays in Lent invite such reflection on and growth around the power of covenant with God. The color of the season is purple, symbolizing the sovereignty of Christ, although other colors are used on particular days in the season. Black is used on Ash Wednesday and on Good Friday, a visual reminder of the ashes used for centuries to mark the foreheads of Christians worshipers as well as the color of mourning at Jesus' death. It also serves as a reminder of our own deaths. Red, a symbol of blood, sacrifice, and passion, is often used for Palm/Passion Sunday and the weekdays in Holy Week leading to Maundy Thursday, when white is used.

Come to Trinity during this season (March 5-April 20) and be filled with the promise of God's abiding presence. Allow Christ to speak to you and help you focus on the blessing of the Resurrection!

See you in church!

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Leslie



Epiphany Walk Scheduled for April 4-6

Pastor Leslie will serve as the Spiritual Director for an Epiphany Walk scheduled April 4-6. Please keep the young people (the Stars) and the volunteers assisting in this walk in your prayers. Once again, if you would like to write letters of encouragement to the Stars, please do so and give them to Pastor Leslie. Letters begin with "Dear Star" and should be words of encouragement as these young people grow in their faith and move toward changing their lives. When signing your letter, please use only your first name and last initial. On behalf of the Stars and the Epiphany Team, thank you for your prayers and support.

February Treasurer's Report

Offerings for January	
(average of \$1047 avg. 3 Sundays)	\$ 3148.00
Our Churches Wider Mission	\$ 187.00
Other Income	1538.70
Total February Income	\$4873.70

Expenses	\$3921.36
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Also in February, \$25 was received for the Building Fund, which now totals \$235. The Consistory authorized a donation of \$50 to Shandra Eickelberger who is associated with Campus Crusade for Christ. Shandra, formerly of Thornville, spoke during the Sunday School opening on February 23rd about her work with the organization.

My friend

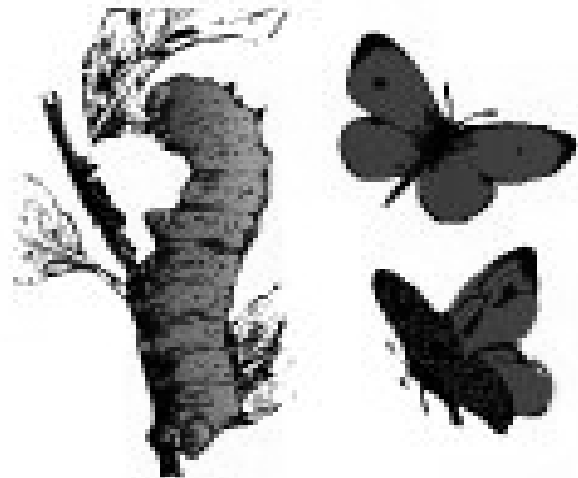
You're My friend,
my companion,
through good times
and bad
my friend,
my buddy,
through happy and sad,
beside me you stand,
beside me you walk,
you're there to listen,
you're there to talk,
with happiness,
with smiles,
with pain and tears,
I know you'll be there,
throughout the years!
You are all good friends to me
and I am grateful to you.

Originator Unknown

Trinity Youth

Trinity youth met on Saturday morning, Feb. 22 at the church. They prepared and enjoyed a breakfast of bacon, scrambled eggs, toast, banana and orange juice.

A devotional reading, "Not always to the sender" was presented. The group then assembled care packages for our college students.



HOLD THIS DATE:

APRIL 12, 2003!

Why? Because the 2003 Trinity UCC Pictorial Directory is in process, and all we need is you! The photographers from Life Touch will be at Trinity UCC on April 12 to take pictures. See Sharon Campbell and Kathy Ortman for sign-up information. Look for more information in the bulletin and posted at church.

www.uccTakeAction.org

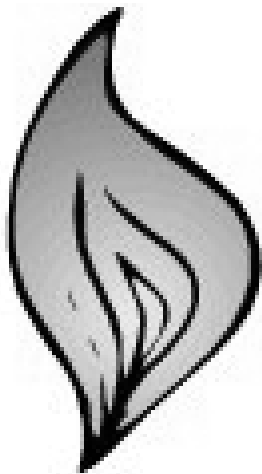
One-click faith-based e-advocacy

Send faxes and e-mails to federal and state officials, newspapers, and corporate executives.

Edit pre-written sample letters or write your own personalized messages.

Learn the pressing issues and take action instantly.

Join the UCC Justice and Peace Action Network and receive regular e-messages on important public policy matters.



New Contact Information:

How wonderful, Pastor Leslie is now a member of the high-speed Internet community. This means she'll be able to answer all of our e-mails twice as fast. However, it also means she has a new e-mail address. She can now be reached via e-mail at leslietaylor@columbus.rr.com or our churches new address at TrinityUCCThornville@columbus.rr.com.

Christian Education:

The Christian Education committee met on Thursday February 20th at 7pm. A field trip to the Franklin Park Conservatory with lunch at Pastor Leslie's house was scheduled for March 16th. The committee will host the annual Easter Party on April 20th from 10-11:30. May 18th please join us for lunch at Black Hand Gorge. This year Crystal Wilson will hold the position of 2003 Thornville Vacation Bible School Assistant Director. Childcare for meetings and special events is now available; committee chairpersons will be given a list of contacts. Pastor Leslie will be hosting two Topical Classes, Wednesday evening from 7:30 to 8:45 and Thursday from 11-12:30. The next Christian Education committee meeting is Thursday April 17th at 6:30pm. Please feel free come by and see what we're up to.

“God is still speaking,”

Youth and Young Adult Programs
Minneapolis, Convention Center
July 11-15, 2003

General Synod is in the planning stages. For the first time, there will be a separate planning group working on youth and young adult programs for General Synod. That planning group is made up of two members of the Executive Council General Synod Program and Planning Committee and representatives from Northern Plains, Missouri-MidSouth, and Minnesota conferences.

Registration and housing will be on-line again this year. Registration for all visitors is \$65 and includes the community meal on Friday night. Youth and young adult groups will need to book reservations in hotels. There are no campus facilities available. Please check with your conference office to see if there are group arrangements being made. It is suggested that the group coordinator register at the \$105 level so that the groups will have advance materials including the detailed schedule for General Synod.

Transportation, lodging, and meals are in addition to the registration fee. You will have to register separately for the youth luncheon.

We will begin with a springboard activity on Friday as an orientation to General Synod. Each youth and young adult visitor and leader will be asked to identify a particular focus at Synod, either a particular piece of business or some limited opportunities in the logistics and support of Synod, such as communications, hospitality, etc. These persons will then form small groups based on their area of interest. It is possible that seminary students will be small group leaders. These small groups will then follow the business item or activity through the entire time we are at Synod including hearings, committee meetings, presentation and voting.

There will be an intentional effort to connect conference or local church youth/young adult groups with their conference delegates caucus so that young people can understand the delegates' role. This way conference delegates and staff would become aware of the young people gathered at Synod and vice versa. Hopfully, this will allow each group to recognize one another and help support young people being a part of the conference leadership.

There will also be specific workshop offerings for youth, young adults and leadership of the se young people. Youth are also invited to join a youth choir that will participate in a General Synod worship service. All young people and leaders will be welcome to participate in the service opportunities in Minneapolis. This requires a separate registration and signed waiver form. There will be a youth luncheon on Sunday hosted by local ministry or nonprofit partner program. There will also be after hours activities for both youth and young adults.

Watch for materials and registration coming soon at www.ucc.org and more information as it becomes available on youth and young adult activities at www.ucc.org/youth.

“Watering Plants in China”

The new stained glass window in the library of Nanjing Union Theological Seminary pictures the risen Christ and traditional Christian symbols in a decidedly Chinese context. Fifty years ago, just as mission funding to China was to be ended, 12 Protestant denominations formed Nanjing Seminary.

This past fall, Global Ministries missionary, Samuel Pearson attended the 50th anniversary celebration in his role as visiting professor at the seminary. He relates, the new library window was installed for the anniversary, and is a magnificent addition.

The church in China is growing very rapidly and there is a terrible shortage of educated clergy. Many serving today are far past (America’s) retirement age and the church recognizes the urgency of educating young leaders. The seminary presently has 170 undergraduates in ministry and 30 seeking the Master of Theology degree. In addition, the seminary has recently begun providing education for Chinese pastors. The first class of 30 pastors received their Master’s degree in October.

“The students are keenly aware of the world-wide Christian community and eager to learn more about Christians everywhere. I am frequently asked about the Church in America, both in class and in the student dining hall.”

In this season of Lent, let us pray for the students and professors at Najing Seminary.

Samuel Person serves with Global Ministries as the Visiting Professor of Church History at the Nanjing Union Theological Seminary.

“They are God’s own”

The first Sunday of every month is visiting day at the Family Village Farm in Vellore, India. On this day, Global Mission Intern, Ellen Tomsett says, “the single parents of those children who are ‘semi-orphans’ are invited to visit their children. Many of the children look forward to this day for the whole month as parents often bring home-cooked food, candy, bangles, and flowers” ...much like an Easter Sunday in America.

The campus is speckled with little groups of men and women sitting with their children under the shade tree, or on the doorstep of one the cottages. Ellen relates, “I was invited to sit with Ruby and his mother. Ruby’s mother offered me a lunch of puri and mutton curry. Despite the fact that she does not speak English, Ruby’s mother made it clear how important it was to her that I eat my fill. Tasting the delicious food, I realized how important food is to a parental visit!”

This is not a happy day for all of the children. Those without parents must sit and watch Ruby and the others visit with their parents. They see the sharing of food and love with a sense of empathy in their hearts. Yet they know of the caring love of their caregivers and of unseen and far away adults, those who are sponsors for them at the village.

Let us pray for the caregivers and sponsors of the Family Village Farm who offer new life to children who are alone.

Ellen Tomsett is a Global Mission Intern teaching English and music at the Family Village Farm.

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The logo for Trinity United Church of Christ, featuring the word "Trinity" in a large, elegant, black serif font. The text is centered within a rectangular box that has a light gray background and a thin black border.

Trinity is a family of faith that welcomes all people to experience and share the love of God through worship, study, nurture and care.

Texts & Titles for March and April 2003

March 2 Transfiguration Sunday
2 Kings 2:1-12
2 Corinthians 4:3-6
Mark 9:2-9*
"A View from the Top"

March 9 Deven Factor's Baptism/ Amistad Sunday
Genesis 9:8-17
Psalm 25:1-10
Mark 1:9-15*
"When the Water Dries"

March 16 Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16
Romans 4:13-25
Mark 8:31-38*
"The Promise of Things to Come"

March 23 Exodus 20:1-17
Psalm 19
John 2:13-22*
"The Promise of Faithfulness"

March 30 Psalm 107:1-3,17-22
Ephesians 2:1-10
John 3:14-21*
"The Promise of Love"

April 6 Jeremiah 31:31-34
Psalm 51:1-12
John 12:20-33
The Rev. Jackie St. Aubin will be our guest preacher

April 13 Palm Sunday
Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29
Philippians 2:5-11
Mark 11:1-11*
"The Promise of Praise"

April 20 Easter Sunday
Acts 10:34-43
I Corinthians 15:1-11
John 20:1-18
"The Promise of New Life"

April 27 Acts 4:32-35
Psalm 133
John 20:19-31
"The Promise Shared"