



# Messenger

## TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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May 2013

Have You  
Been Verified?  
  
For the  
membership  
directory, that  
is!  
  
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## Is Religion In Decline?

Diana Butler Bass, PhD, is a widely read and respected author and researcher who focuses on American religion. She holds a PhD in Religious Studies from Duke University. In 2002, she stepped down from her teaching position to devote her time to research and writing, supported by a generous grant from The Lily Endowment. Since then she has provided great insight into the rapidly changing religious landscape in America.

We live in a time of rapidly declining participation in traditional religion. The number of people who identify themselves as unaffiliated with religion has more than doubled since 1990. The era of exponential growth of conservative mega-churches has passed; and they are now also experiencing decline. The big question is "Why?"

Dr. Bass identifies the first decade of this cen-



tury as one of crises for faith and belief. Numerous events exposed the unattractive underside of religious institutions: hypocrisy, prejudice, exclusion and blaming. People saw little that looked like Jesus' message; and they left in droves. At the same time, there is an enormous spiritual hunger that is looking for an experience of the divine.

Churches are now faced with a huge challenge. The time of doctrine and dogma, creeds and church laws may have come to an end. However, there is also a great opening for transformation, for the church to be what it has never been before. This information is clearly important to congregations; and your Vestry and Chairs of the Council of Ministries have decided to read Dr. Bass's most recent book, *Christianity After Religion; The End of the Church and the Birth of a New Spiritual Awakening*. We are looking forward to lively and life-giving conversations.

More about Diana Butler Bass may be found at [www.dianabutlerbass.com](http://www.dianabutlerbass.com).

## From The Rector



Dear Friends,

April was a big month at Trinity, filled with Easter joy, beautiful music, community, and lives celebrated. It was a month of being the church. For all of the evidence that organized religion is losing its place in American culture, you would not know that from life at Trinity. Our Sunday attendance has taken an up-tick, the Sunday School is growing, there is a growing number of young couples who have found a home with us.

I believe that our good fortune is found in all that is good about the Episcopal Church: good liturgy, good outreach, and an embrace of the fact that the world is rarely black and white. We are comfortable with the ambiguity of the grey areas. We do not tell people what they are expected to believe; instead we focus on welcome, and help people find their way into belong-

(Continued on page 2)

## From The Rector

(Continued from page 1)

Submission deadline for the following *Messenger* is the 15<sup>th</sup> of the current month. Please e-mail to **ajfree-man@comcast.net**. Photographs are welcome. It is respectfully requested material not be formatted (no bolds, underlines, bullets, truncated lines, unusual spacing, etc) since graphic design software doesn't know what to do with it!) Articles and event notices will be reviewed by an editor. Editorial rights are reserved for clarity and to fit space constraints.

### Messenger Contributors

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A color issue is on [trinitybranford.org/news](http://trinitybranford.org/news)

### Trinity Leadership

Senior Warden: Mark McElrath

Junior Warden: Rodney Hayes

Parish Clerk: Ellen Shirey

Treasurer: Michael Freeman

Assistant Treasurer: Katherine Rowe

### Vestry

Andy Campbell, Janet Daley, Dru Dodd, Kelley Esposito, Terry Kron, Ed Monico, Peter Otis, Kathy Sanchez, Carol Schaller

### Staff

Parish Administrator: Jane Dougherty

Sexton: Nancy Williams

ing. It's a little messier and harder to get a handle on things like membership numbers; but those are probably not the kind of things that would have concerned Jesus. Our job is to show the world what a community based on hospitality, compassion and love might look like, and trust God will make use of us.

It seems to be working.

Peace,

*Sharon+*

## Worship Ministry

### Welcome to Ministry!

The Worship Ministry welcomes new ushers: **Judie Cavanaugh, Janet Daley, Dave Howell, Cindy Sheppard, and Nancy Wright**.

Even with five new people, we always welcome new people to join us. We do "on-the-job training" until you feel comfortable ushering with a partner. We welcome both couples and singletons, and can use help at both services. Speak with either Sandy Baldwin or Rev. Sharon for more details.

### Calendar Days

The Feast of Pentecost falls on May 19. It is considered the birth-



day of the church, that moment when the Holy Spirit came upon many people and they were changed. It is a day of different languages and the color red for the Spirit as a flame. The day of Pentecost marks the end of the season of Easter, the last day for those final *Alleluias* until next Easter.

Many churches are named for a Saint, we are named for a mystery. The Sunday after Pentecost is Trinity Sunday, May 26, and it is the day on which we celebrate the Three in One and One in Three. *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty.*

## Worship Ministry



Holy Week ran the gammit of emotion on a journey through the Passion Gospel, to remembrance, then the pathos of silence, the guilt of denial, and the dramatic readings of eye-witness accounts of Jesus' last hours that left us drained and full of sorrow.

Resurrection Eggs and snuggly stories was hosted by Godly Play leader, **Jen Zehler**, and a merry band of parents!

*Photo by Rev. Sharon*

Holy Week is a demanding week for the ladies of the Altar Guild, the members of our Choir, Ron our Music Director, and Sharon. In the office it's double duty for Jane and the countesses. It is a labor of love for everyone.



Finally, the uplifting joy of Easter morning: and what joy! As **Ron Baldwin**, Music Director promised, "Pealing bells, roaring organ, trumpet fanfares, soaring choral alleluias, lustily singing congregation."

*"Hallelujah! Christ is Risen!"*

*Photo by Rich Esposito*



## Parish Life Ministry

### Peter H. Hayes, Chair



Parish Life continues to plan for upcoming events. Before you know it, it will be Branford Festival time. Speaking of which....

### Trinity Book Group, May 1st

*The Art of Hearing Heartbeats*, By Jan Philipp-Sendker

A daughter in search of her father, a successful New York lawyer who suddenly disappeared, travels to Burma after finding a love letter that he wrote to a woman unknown to her. In the woman's village, the daughter learns of unimaginable hardship, resilience, and passion that is an inspirational love story. We gather at 7:00 pm. Everyone is welcome!

### First Sunday Breakfast, May 5th

Breakfast is served at 9:00 am in the Undercroft! On the menu is French toast, sausage, juice, tea, coffee or milk. \$3.50 per adult, \$2 per child, \$10 family maximum. Please sign up in the foyer, call the office, or email: [firstsundaybreakfast@trinity-branford.org](mailto:firstsundaybreakfast@trinity-branford.org). Thank you!

### Trinity Lobster Dinner, June 15—Save the Date!

The 4th Annual Trinity Lobster Dinner includes steamed lobster with drawn butter, corn on-the-cob, coleslaw, roll and choice of beverage. Fresh steamer clams can also be purchased separately. Dinner will be served in the Parish Hall between 4:30 pm - 8:00 pm, or take your dinner to the Green and enjoy the concert. Prices will be available mid-May and tickets can be purchased on PayPal thru the Trinity Website, or with cash from Mitch Rucinski (in photo) on Sundays. Buying your tickets ahead of time helps him to plan the order.



Volunteers who would like to help, and anyone who needs more information, can contact Mitch at 203-481-2230, or email [lobsterdinners@trinitybranford.org](mailto:lobsterdinners@trinitybranford.org).

### Trinity Transitions

Denver's gain is Trinity's loss, as **Alison & Leo Barbaro** move out west to take advantage of a job offer. But, we hear it may not be forever, so we'll say "so long" and look forward to the day you return. Vaja con dios!

**Ann Stoddard**, known to many at Trinity, passed away in April. Our condolences go to her family and all who dearly loved her. May her soul, and those of all the departed, rest in peace. Amen.

### First Annual Arts & Crafts Fair, May 18th

Decisions, decisions! What to make? What colors? Which patterns? How many? What supplies do we have? Who knows how to use a Cricut? A crafters life isn't easy—but it's a lot of fun; and Trinity's group is creative and productive! They will be selling their creations at the First Annual Arts & Crafts Fair on the Town Green. Organizers **Dottie Packer** and **Wendy Cowles** have signed up many artisans who will offer a wide variety of crafts, including: mosaic tables, frames and mirrors, Czech and Swarovski crystal jewelry, hand-made baby clothing, cupcake



soaps, appliquéd clothing, fiber stuffed dolls, hand-painted glassware, and more. The Arts & Crafts Fair is the first major event of the 2013 summer fund-raising campaign for Branford Cares. Mark your calendar! Support Trinity's craft group; and help your neighbors at the same time.

Appreciation goes to the Trinity parishioners who donated photo frames and other items on our wish list. (See the entire list in the April 2013 issue, on [trinitybranford.org/news](http://trinitybranford.org/news)). Thank you!

Please join the Trinity craft group on the first and third Mondays of each month. We meet in the Parish Hall at 6:30 pm. There is no commitment; just come when you can! Questions? **Peggy Esposito** at [craftersgroup@trinitybranford.org](mailto:craftersgroup@trinitybranford.org).

## Christian Education



**Martha Monico  
Chair**

**Adult Forum, Sunday, May 19  
(rescheduled from April)**

Dr. John Seibyl will be our Adult Forum speaker, between the services, at 9:00 am. Neurodegenerative brain diseases like Alzheimer's disease (AD) have become endemic with the aging demographics of developed countries. One in eight older Americans has Alzheimer's disease, now the sixth-leading cause of death in the United States. The impact of Alzheimer's extends beyond the patient, affecting families and communities, requiring tremendous family support, social services resources, medical care, and long-term care services. This forum walks through recent advances in the diagnosis and treatment of Alzheimer's dementia, with the aim to extend understanding of the science behind the promising new treatment of this devastating disorder.

John is Executive Director and senior scientist at the Institute for Neurodegenerative Disorders, and Co-founder and President of Molecular NeuroImaging, LLC, in New Haven. He is the former Chief of the Section of Nuclear Medicine at Yale-New Haven Hospital. His research work has involved developing novel brain scanning techniques to support the assessment of new therapies in Alzheimer's disease and other brain disorders.

### Youth Group

The Youth Group has had some amazing conversations lately. They have watched the Brené Brown TED talks on vulnerability and shame, and shared how they have come to understand those feelings in their lives. Understanding how we try to numb vulnerability was an eye-opener for them.

Then we moved onto bullying, beginning with a powerful video called *To this day...* by Shane Koyczan. The kids talked about the anti-bullying programs that they attend in schools, and why they don't seem to be effective. These young people have enormous wisdom, and were willing to share their own experiences of being bullied and what it did to them.

They also pondered the question of power in schools: who has it, do they know they have power, and how might they use it for good. It was an amazing conversation, because they are amazing kids.



## Spirituality Ministry

### Funeral Planning, A Gift To Your Family

As we said good-bye to our dear Ann Stoddard, it would not have surprised us that she took care of her family to the end. Before Ann went into Hospice, she had chosen all of the readings for her funeral, as well as the hymns. She knew that there was to be a Eucharist, so that the celebration of her life would include the bread and wine that had always nourished her.

When Ann's son called the church to make arrangements for her service, he found himself grateful to his mother one more time. She had relieved him of having to make decisions for which he felt ill-equipped. He would not have known what hymns she liked, or which psalm appealed to her. It was just like her.

You are all encouraged to follow Ann's example, and take care of your funeral decisions so your family will not have to. It is a great kindness that only you can make.

### Trinity Health Ministry: Calling all nurses

Spirituality and wellness are so critical to "being our best selves in the world." We are in the process of exploring a Health Ministry for Trinity, a concept initiated by **Janet Constantino, APRN**. It would be based on a nursing model, so nurse health professionals interested in exploring this idea are invited to participate in the discussion. To express your interest, please send an e-mail to the office. If there is sufficient interest, a meeting will be set up. Be a part of this new venture for Trinity.

### Long-time members, long-remembered

We don't see each other these days, but you are warmly remembered. We miss your presence in your regular pew. We ask about you and learn of the change in your life that will prevent you from coming to Trinity. But perhaps you can still worship with us. If you are able to listen to or watch television, catch the 10:00 am service broadcast on BCTV on Sunday evenings, channel 18, at 7:00 pm. You will hear the harmony of the choir, see the beautiful place that Trinity is, be provoked by Rev. Sharon's sermon, and see familiar and new faces greeting each other at the Peace.

Another way to be with us is to read *Messenger*, or have someone read it to you. There's plenty to keep up with!

The people of Trinity won't forget your friendship, your ministry, and your love of Trinity.

God bless!



## Outreach Ministry

### Janet Constantino, Chair



Our mission statement was created and approved at our April 14th meeting.

#### Mission Statement for the Outreach Ministry

The mission of the Outreach Ministry of Trinity Episcopal Church is given to us by Jesus Christ in Matthew 25:31-46;

to feed the hungry, clothe the naked,  
care for the needy and poor among us.

We do this on a local, national and international level.

- A \$7 contribution will provide someone in need with one week of meals, and give hope for a better tomorrow.
- Last year, hundreds of walkers helped raise enough funds to distribute \$1.2 million worth of food at wholesale value!
- In 2012, Connecticut Food Bank distributed 17 million pounds of food, an average of 34 tons every business day.

Our team is called **Trinity Trekkers**. Please walk with us, we'll meet at Trinity at noon. If you can't go for the walk, please consider going to the [www.ctfoodbank.org](http://www.ctfoodbank.org) Website, password is Raja2013, and support our team!

Our next Outreach meeting is on May 12th at 11:30 am in the Guild Room. Please join us in this most important ministry.

## Communication Ministry

### Ann Freeman, Chair

#### The Membership Directory is on its way!

The process to include every member of Trinity in the new online membership directory has begun. Recently, you should have received a letter explaining the steps .



Step 1 is the verification of your contact information. **The key dates are all the Sundays in May—5, 12, 19 and 26.** Our goal is for as many members as possible to verify their contact information, update it and/or fill in the blanks. [The more accurate and complete the information is now, the less time spent on fewer changes once the directory is live.](#)

If you would like a new portrait photo, make sure you have a good hair day on one of those Sundays! We will upload the photo to the directory for you. Otherwise, you may add a photo of your choosing when the directory is live.

See you in the Parish Hall!

We welcomed another new member, **Andrée Pierson**.



Join us at College Woods Pavilion in East Rock Park, as we gather to raise funds to provide groceries, fresh produce and hot meals to hungry children, families, seniors and individuals. Your support enables Ct Food Bank to provide food to

people who are served by approximately 600 food-assistance programs in Fairfield, Litchfield, New Haven, New London, Middlesex and Windham counties.

Every step and every dollar raised make a difference!

My heartfelt thanks go to **Jo-Ann** (backed up by **Dave**) **Pearson**, who have done a marvelous job of editing *Messenger*. They are stepping down, passing the torch to **Bill**



## Parish Life continued

### Music at Trinity

The inaugural Music at Trinity program was a success! **Neal Fitzpatrick**, classical guitarist, and **Mooretet Quartet** (strings), are very gifted musicians who played diverse pieces by a variety of composers.



*Left to right: Shawn Moore, Neal Fitzpatrick, Stanley Moore, Scot Moore and Leah Gastler (photo by Rev. Sharon)*

Following the rousing performance, the Parish Hall was flooded by attendees, eager to meet and thank the performers, and enjoy refreshments. It was simply a delightful evening.

Let's do more! Anyone interested in joining the conversation about what a classical concert series might look like at Trinity, should contact Rev. Sharon.



Many thanks go to all the hands and minds that came together to make such a lovely evening, with extra appreciation to: **Sharon, Ron Baldwin, Dottie Packer, Roz Jones, Taegan and Nancy Williams, Ann Freeman, Jen Zehler, Ken Sause, Mike McGuinness, Wylie Rutledge and Cheryl Hyder,**

## Stewardship

Stewardship is one big idea that we engage through many activities. It is the understanding that everything in our lives is put in our hands by God for us to use, as God would.

On Saturday, May 4th, we will be having a spring cleaning work day. Perhaps we should call it a Stewardship Day, because we are charged with the stewardship of our historic building. It is a treasure, one that we love and that the town adores. We have the responsibility to keep it in good shape, looking well tended. That means being prepared for the big ticket items, like painting and roof work; but it also means cleaning the winter debris from around the building, polishing silver, woodwork and windows, and banishing cobwebs. **Mike McGuinness**, the intrepid chair of the Buildings and Grounds Ministry, will be prepared with a job jar. Please plan to come with your work gloves and favorite tools, and help us take care of our lovely church - make that God's church!



## Leadership

### Mark McElrath, Senior Warden



Vestry and Council of Ministries have worked together to create a Planning and Communications Calendar. The calendar coordinates and highlights key events, ministry activities and administrative responsibilities throughout the year. The goal is to plan ahead, keep our eye on all that is going on, not ask too-much-too-soon of each other or all of you, and for new things to work around what already exists. You will find a copy of the calendar on the bulletin board, and also on the parishioner Website.

### Shepard Fund Scholarship Program Rodney Hayes, Junior Warden



The Shepard Fund will award up to ten scholarships based on the number of worthy applicants. As in the past, the monetary amount of the scholarships will be dependent on the amount of income earned on the Shepard Fund for this year. Along with the application, we are requiring each applicant to submit a 500 words or less essay on what impact Trinity Church has had on my life. The application form is available through the office, and it's on the parishioner site under Minutes & More/Administration. Applications should be submitted to [juniorwarden@trinitybranford.org](mailto:juniorwarden@trinitybranford.org) by **June 1**.

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### ***Worship at Trinity***

#### **Sunday**

8:00 AM Holy Eucharist Rite II  
9:45 AM Sunday School and  
Nursery Care  
10:00 AM Holy Eucharist Rite II  
With music and choir

Televised on Channel 18  
And AT&T Channel 99  
7:00 PM Sundays

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

## May 2013, Special Dates

every day calendar @ [trinitybranford.org/news](http://trinitybranford.org/news)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 7 pm Trinity Book Group	2	3	4 9 am Work Day
5 9 am First Sunday Breakfast Verification & photo Walk for Hunger	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 Verification & photo 11:30 Outreach Mother's Day	13	14 Noon Pastoral Care 7pm NH Deane- try	15	16	17	18 1st Annual Arts & Crafts Fair
19 Feast of Pentecost 9 am Adult Forum Verification & photo 4:30 Youth Group	20	21 7 pm Vestry	22	23	24	25
26 Trinity Sunday Verification & photo	27 Memorial Day, Office closed	28	29	30		