



# Messenger

## TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Published by Trinity Episcopal Church — on the Green in Branford, Connecticut

September, 2012

### Love On The Reservation

#### From Branford to Montana, Helping Crow Children Soar

By Paul Humphrey, Outreach

The newly formed Trinity Church Native American Committee, in conjunction with The Center Pole organization, is actively working to raise funds to help the Crow youth in Montana, as well as Native American youth on other reservations.

One of the committee's founding members, **Loretta Merlone**, has traveled extensively to reservations in both Montana and South Dakota. Loretta met with **Peggy White** and **Susan Kelly**, co-founders of The Center Pole [a 501(c)(3) registered charity], to see firsthand the type of living conditions these Native Americans have been forced to exist in for hundreds of years.



#### The Center Pole

Empowering Youth to Promote a Just Future

*Mission: To teach Crow children, within a cultural context, to have a greater vision for themselves and their community, and become agents of change by being industrious, respecting others and contributing to their community.*

[www.thecenterpole.org](http://www.thecenterpole.org)

History tells us how Native Americans were persecuted and deprived of what was theirs for centuries, and the extreme measures by which it was taken away by our ancestors. Yes, here in CT reservations have beautiful casinos that bring in millions of dollars, but the vast majority of reservations around the US are situated on waste-land

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### From the Rector



Dear Friends,

Summers always seem to zip by, as if time were in a higher gear. The necessary recreation of lazy days and vacations seem all too brief. For me, this summer had an unusual quality because of all of the attention to Branford Cares. Certainly, there hasn't seemed like there was enough time to get it all done, but when I look back at all that was accomplished, it's amazing that so much has happened in just ten weeks.

The Gospel themes that are present in the work of Branford Cares speak loudly to me: taking care of our neighbors, sharing what we have, using our gifts of imagination and creativity, strengthening community. One of my proudest moments this summer was a conversation with a member of the community. He said, "You are bringing the Gospel to the streets." I wanted to jump up and down!

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## From the Rector continued

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All of you have done this—you have brought the Gospel out of the pretty church on the Green and lived it in your organizations and neighborhoods, at your dinner and birthday parties, with every glass of lemonade. Our town is the better for it and so are we.

Next month, on October 11<sup>th</sup>, there will be a Branford Cares Summit to look at all we have done, what we have learned, and how we move ahead. Your voices and ideas are important. Plan to be a part of what comes next.

Peace,

*Sharon+*

## Spirituality and stress relief: Make the connection

Published by staff at The Mayo Clinic

Taking the path less traveled by exploring your spirituality can lead to a clearer life purpose, better personal relationships and enhanced stress management skills.

Some stress relief tools are very tangible: exercising more, eating healthy foods and talking with friends. A less tangible — but no less useful — way to find stress relief is through spirituality.

*“We are not human beings having a  
spiritual experience,*

*We are spiritual beings having a  
human experience.”*

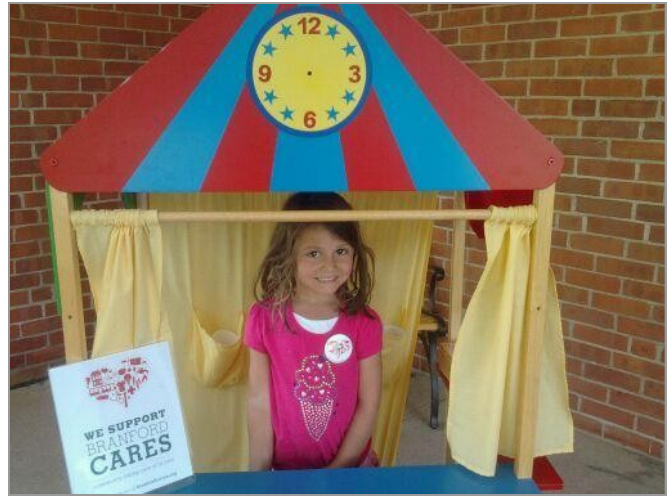
Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

### What is spirituality?

Spirituality has many definitions, but at its core spirituality helps to give our lives context. It's not necessarily connected to a specific belief system or even religious worship. Instead, it arises from your connection with yourself and with others, the development of your personal value system, and your search for meaning in life.

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## Branford Early Learning Center: Little People, Big on Compassion



Submission deadline for the following *Messenger* is the 15<sup>th</sup> of the current month. Please submit hard copy to the office or e-mail [ajfreeman@comcast.net](mailto:ajfreeman@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.

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Ellen Shirey, Clerk of the Parish

**Vestry and Council of Ministry** members, see website.

## Love On The Reservation *continued*

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with poor growing conditions and little or no way for the natives to produce an income for themselves or their families. If, by chance, the tribe does have a casino on their land, often



the money raised never filters back into the community and is, in fact, shared by a few powerful tribesmen at the top of their corporate hierarchy and businessmen who have no interest in helping those living on the reservations. The vast majority of natives have been forced to live in horrid conditions. Some help is given by the US government in the form of food rations for foods that are high in starch and fat, contributing to high rates of obesity, high blood pressure and other weight-related problems among the adults and children alike.

In addition to health problems there's an extremely high rate of unemployment among the men, which has stripped them of their pride, an intrinsic part of who they are as a people. With diminished pride comes abuse of alcohol and drugs, which translates into additional problems within the family including spousal abuse, suicide, crime and, critically, the lack of a strong family structure.

*"Just as the center pole of the sun dance lodge is the place where prayers are answered, The Center Pole is the place for Native American youth to find help, hope, guidance and new possibilities."*

*Peggy White Wellknown Buffalo Founder and Executive Director*

Seeing all the despair on the reservations, Susan and Peggy have dedicated their lives to helping those who can't help themselves the most—the children. The budget is limited

with virtually no funding from State or Federal Government, and there is resistance to offers of help from many of the elder tribesmen, especially when it comes to academics. The elders think if the children are educated and go to college, they will never return to their reservations, further weakening what remains of their culture.

Trinity's Native American Committee has been able to help in a variety of ways. Funds were sent to Susan and Peggy who provided meals and essentials to families who recently made the pilgrimage to Montana. There the sun dance ceremony has been held for the last eight years to benefit Josie Guardipee, a little girl who suffered a rare form of heart disease. Through several days of intense worship to the Creator of all things, along with bodily sacrifices intended to cleanse the soul, they strengthen their beliefs and renew their hopes for the future, and they helped Josie survive her debilitating illness against great odds.

In addition to funds, clothing was collected by **Maureen Shea, Lisa Davis Rucinski, Loretta Merlone and Gayle Calabrese**, and along with many purchased toys, games and educational materials, were shipped to Montana. Much of the clothing was collected from schools' 'lost and found' and was



never claimed by their owners. A total of 14 boxes were shipped. Also, a separate check was sent to Susan and Peggy to support a summer basketball camp for teenagers on the Crow reservation, which promotes physical exercise and character building. Along with plenty of basketballs and games, the children learn the skills of their ancestors, spend time in spiritual reflection, and take field trips that help them to become stronger, more confident adults and to have some "plain old fun."

Moving forward, the Native American Committee is planning an Art Show and Wine Tasting event that will be held on Saturday, November 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Parish Hall to further raise money for heating assistance and warm clothing to help during the brutal winter months they experience on the reservations. Winter months can be so extreme with little or no way to heat trailers or homes.

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## Parish Life Ministry

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### By Peter Hayes, Chair

September marks the end of lemonade on the lawn after worship and a return to our normal coffee hour. **Jen Zehler** and her *Trinity Grounds* youth coffee crew will serve as before. The first coffee hour will be Sept. 9<sup>th</sup> and we will be 'going green' by using coffee mugs! The Outreach Ministry is sponsoring coffee hour on Sept. 23. They will have Native American jewelry to sell.



September also marks the return of our wonderful choir. Finally, keep your calendar open for the return of First Sunday Breakfast starting October 7.

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### Trinity Transitions

We welcome into the Body of Christ through Baptism **Aiden William Pelatowski**, pictured below with mum and dad, **Heather and Keith Pelatowski**, and Heather's parents, **Betsey and Bill Bray**, proud grandparents! Aiden is a fourth generation to be baptized at Trinity. The Pelatowskis are temporarily living in England and flew home to keep the tradition going!



**Debbie Knowlton** and **Paul Bradley** will marry at Trinity on September 1st. Congratulations!

**Sally and Bill Monroe** welcomed their first grandchild, Abigail Minerva Monroe, named for her great grandmother, Minerva Swanson (deceased). Congratulations!!

So long summer visitors! Can't believe summer is over—already. You will be missed.

We remember **Vera Tipping**, a long time Trinity member. May her soul and the souls of all the departed, rest in peace. Amen.

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### Last minute memos to self re: The 105th Annual Fair, September 8th

#### Tag Sale

**Dottie Packer** and **Pam Bold** are working hard selling your donated tag sale items on Craig's List. \$1,300 so far! If you have good or better condition furniture and other large, interesting items for sale, contact Dottie. She will take a look, summon her amazing moving crew, and you will have an empty space to fill with something new! Get this done during the nice weather while Dottie is still using her garage for furniture storage rather than car protection!

Smaller items left in the undercroft will be sold on the day of The Fair, while large items that sell through Craig's List will continue to be sold until October 31.

#### Here Comes the Bake Sale!

By Chris Baird

We're hoping that the baked goods table, always popular, will be absolutely splendid. We need everyone's help to make it so. We are asking faithful hands to once again make their specialty, and we ask newcomers jump into the fold with whatever their heart desires. Apple cake. Shoofly pie. Home-made bread. A pan of brownies. It doesn't matter if the layer cake lists a little, as long as it's made with love.



Not a baker? How about home-canned fruits or jams or pickles, fresh produce like home-grown tomatoes, squash, etc, even small bouquets of fresh flowers.

Contributions are usually brought directly to the bake table at eight o'clock Saturday morning, but other arrangements can be made, too.

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## Christian Education Ministry



**By Martha Monico, Chair**

Church School for our children will start on Sunday, **Sept. 9<sup>th</sup>** with a registration day, meet the teachers, see the rooms, etc. *Please bring your children at 9:45 am to kick off our Sunday School year.*

Children ages three years (potty trained and able to sit in a circle)

through 8<sup>th</sup> grade have classes and teachers ready to explore their faith and bible stories.

A nursery is provided for children three years and under during the worship service, so that parents can concentrate and focus on their own spiritual development.

The alumnae of the *Confirm not Conform* class invite all young people, middle school and high school to join them this fall for monthly gatherings. We will meet on third Sundays at 4:30 to 6:30 pm. We will always include something to think about, something to do, and something to eat ( they are teenagers, after all!). **Rev. Sharon, Jen Zehler** and others will be on hand. We'll start in October. Let us know if you want any further information.

Adult Forums are being planned for one Sunday per month between the services (9:00 am—9:45 am). Starting in October, we hope to have some timely discussions and presentations. More information to come.

Summer Sunday School on the lawn. How nice! On the sidewalk doesn't sound so good, but looks to be equally appealing! Sunday School shortly returns to the Godly Play Worship Centers.



## Love On The Reservation *continued*

*(Continued from page 3)*

Those living on the reservations (especially the elders) have been known to burn their furniture to provide some warmth.

In closing, if you're interested in helping either through a donation or joining our committee, please speak to either **Loretta Merlone, Lisa Davis Rucinski, Maureen Shea, Maryann Allen, Pam Bold, Lynn Aspland**, or contact me (low man on the totem

pole!), **Paul Humphrey** at [phumphrey@imperialgraphics.com](mailto:phumphrey@imperialgraphics.com) or call 203-483-8332. Checks should be made payable to the Trinity Outreach Committee and given to Katherine Rowe.

Our thanks to Susan Kelly of The Center Pole for the photos.



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## Parish Life Ministry

### Trinity Book Group

**By Cynthia Sheppard**

Save the date! Wednesday, September 5th, 7 :00 pm. The Trinity Book Group holds its first meeting of the 2012-13 season where you are welcome to vote on suggested books for this next book club season. The first Wednesday of every month starting in October (we skip January) we'll meet to discuss the books we've chosen. You can join us for the whole season or just for the books you're interested in. Each month, we will post the upcoming book and the meeting date reminder in the Trinity newsletter and Sunday bulletin.

Further, we've kept a record since 2007 of all the books we've read and the overall rating for each book. You can find the list on [trinitybranford.org/ministries/fellowship](http://trinitybranford.org/ministries/fellowship) along with the new reading selection.

Please do come and join us!

## Spirituality *Continued from page 2*



For many, spirituality takes the form of religious observance, prayer, meditation or a belief in a higher power. For others, it can be found in nature, music, art or a secular community. Spirituality is different for everyone.

### **How can spirituality help with stress relief?**

Spirituality has many benefits for stress relief and overall mental health. It can help you:

#### **Feel a sense of purpose.**

Cultivating your spirituality may help uncover what's most meaningful in your life. By clarifying what's most important, you can focus less on the unimportant things and eliminate stress.

#### **Connect to the world.**

The more you feel you have a purpose in the world, the less solitary you feel — even when you're alone. This can lead to a valuable inner peace during difficult times.

#### **Release control.**

When you feel part of a greater whole, you realize that you aren't responsible for everything that happens in life. You can share the burden of tough times as well as the joys of life's blessings with those around you.

#### **Expand your support network.**

Whether you find spirituality in a church, mosque or synagogue, in your family, or in walks with a friend through nature, this sharing of spiritual expression can help build relationships.

#### **Lead a healthier life.**

People who consider themselves spiritual appear to be better able to cope with stress and heal from illness or addiction faster.

### **Discovering your spirituality**

Uncovering your spirituality may take some self-discovery. Here are some questions to ask yourself to discover what experiences and values define you:

What are your important relationships?

What do you most value in your life?

What people give you a sense of community?

What inspires you and gives you hope?

What brings you joy?

What are your proudest achievements?

The answers to such questions help you identify the most important people and experiences in your life. With this information, you can focus your search for spirituality on the relationships and activities in life that have helped define you as a person and those that continue to inspire your personal growth.

### **Cultivating your spirituality**

Spirituality also involves getting in touch with your inner self. A key component is self-reflection. Try these tips:

**Try prayer, meditation and relaxation techniques** to help focus your thoughts and find peace of mind.

**Keep a journal** to help you express your feelings and record your progress.

**Seek out a trusted adviser or friend** who can help you discover what's important to you in life. Others may have insights that you haven't yet discovered.

**Read inspirational stories or essays** to help you evaluate different philosophies of life.

**Talk to others** whose spiritual lives you admire. Ask questions to learn how they found their way to a fulfilling spiritual life.



### **Nurturing your relationships**

Spirituality is also nurtured by your relationships with others. Realizing this, it's essential to foster relationships with the people  
(Continued on page 7)



## Finance Ministry

### Shepard Fund Scholarship Awards



**By Sherry Molaskey, Jr. Warden**

The following students are members of Trinity Church and have been awarded scholarships to assist with their ongoing education. Funds are distributed from the Mabel B. Shepard Education Fund on an annual basis.

Jillian Denhardt	Alyson Humphrey
Shelby McElrath	Patrick Monico
Will Pottenger	Griff Radulski
Jennifer Seibyl	Adam Williams
Sarah Williams	Jen Zehler

All the best with your studies!

*(Continued from page 4)*

### The Fair

#### Dear Trinity Fashionistas!

**By Lisa Davis Rucinski**

Please go through your jewelry boxes and drawers, clean them out and donate your unwanted treasures to the jewelry tables for this year's fair! Contact me at 203-481-2230, or leave them



To Our Trinity Family,  
Please consider joining  
the Legacy Society for  
Trinity now and in the  
world to come!



Joining before December

31, 2012, ensures your name will be listed on a recognition plaque in the Parish Hall foyer as a **founding member**. Names will be listed in the order in which living gifts and pledges are received.

Please remember that we have a generous \$50,000 challenge grant to help the Fund with a good start. Your contributions will be matched, dollar for dollar.

Thank you for your prayerful participation.

The Legacy Fund Trustees

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### Spirituality

who are important to you. This can lead to a deepened sense of your place in life and in the greater good. Make relationships with friends and family a priority. Give more than you receive. See the good in people and in yourself. Accept others as they are, without judgment. Contribute to your community by volunteering. Pursue a spiritual life.

Staying connected to your inner spirit and the lives of those around you can enhance your quality of life, both mentally and physically. Your personal concept of spirituality may change with your age and life experiences, but it always forms the basis of your well-being, helps you cope with stressors large and small, and affirms your purpose in life.



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The Rev. Sharon Gracen, Rector  
Ronald Baldwin, Organ Master &  
Choir Director

Parish Office 203-488-2681

e-mail: trinitychurch@trinitybranford.org

www.trinitybranford.org

### ***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

Trinity Church "Messenger" (USPC 611040) published by Trinity  
Episcopal Church, 1109 Main Street, Branford, CT 06405.

Second Class Postage Paid at Branford CT.

Send address changes to above address.

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

## September 2012, Special Dates

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
	3 Labor Day— holiday!	4	5 7pm Book Group makes their pick for the year.	6	7 4pm on, setup for The Fair	8 7:30 -2pm The 105th Fair
9 Coffee hour inside starts; Sun- day School starts	10	11 12:00 Spirituality	12	13	14	15
16 11:30 Out- reach; Youth Group 4:30-6:30 pm	17	18 7 pm Vestry	19	20	21 International Peace Day	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29 Interna- tional Dinner