

CHAPTER 5

SEXUALITY AND SPIRITUALITY

Trinity parish has evolved in understanding that we are all God's children and, further, that we are fully human, which means we are sexual beings. We have not come this far without a great deal of prayer and dialogue over the past 30 years. It has not been an easy journey, but our willingness to talk with and listen to each other respectfully has been an essential part of who we are. Continuing the dialogue on sexuality and spirituality has been one way we live our baptismal vows to "seek and serve Christ in all persons" and to "respect the dignity of every human being."

HOMOSEXUALITY

In 1999, the Rt. Rev. Arthur Walmsley, retired Bishop of Connecticut, responded to a letter from Trinity's rector, the Rev. Jennifer Phillips. She had asked him to share memories of being priest-in-charge, then rector at Trinity from 1953-1958. Among other historical notes, Bishop Walmsley wrote: "We even had our own 1950s' version of the blessing of same-sex unions when I was asked to preside at house blessings of a number of parishioners living in committed relationships; it's clearly inappropriate not to bless *all* [emphasis his] the rooms in a house or apartment!"

Trinity's private connection to homosexuality goes back as far as any church's into time immemorial -- into the vestment closets for clergy and into the pews and kitchens for laity. Our public connections correspond with the last 35 years of the nation's struggles in general but were often more *avant garde* than the Episcopal Church-USA.

In 1976, General Convention resolved that "homosexuals are the children of God, entitled to equal protection of the laws with other citizens," and a joint commission of the Church in Human Affairs was sent to study the matter of ordination of homosexual people. In 1979, the Commission reported its decision that it is "not appropriate for this Church to ordain a practicing homosexual." The Resolution on Sexuality encouraged every Diocese to use the report of the Standing Commission on Human Affairs and Health to the 66th General Convention "in developing programs to enhance a mature understanding of Sexuality and our Christian responsibility." Twenty-one Bishops signed a statement saying they could not accept these recommendations or implement them in Dioceses. In 1982, the 67th General Convention reaffirmed the actions taken by the earlier conventions affirming homosexuals as children of God. In 1985, the 68th General Convention urged each Diocese to find an effective way "to foster better understanding of homosexual persons, to dispel myths and prejudices about homosexuality, [and] to provide pastoral support...."

The debates regarding same-sex blessings and ordination of homosexual clergy have been getting only more heated. In the summer of 1998, the Rev. Jennifer Phillips railed against the actions of Anglican Bishops, two-thirds of them from the Southern hemisphere, who voted their disapproval of homosexuality. In an August sermon, she comforted gays and lesbians, who again felt betrayed: "Take heart. Do not be afraid. The Church belongs to all of us and we belong to Christ. It is not in the power of bishops either to alter that truth or to tell us how we shall pray about our lives. The prayer of the Holy Spirit rises up in us and it will be heard. This congregation will continue to bless God for our lives -- gay and straight, black and white, rich and poor, coupled and single, sinners all and all redeemed; and we will not be silent about what

God is accomplishing among us. We are the loved heirs of the promises of God.”

The debates continue in the national church with Trinity participating prayerfully, forcefully, and openly. At the 164th Diocesan Convention in November 2003, resolution (H-164) was introduced from the floor with the ink still wet. It was written by and sponsored by our rector Anne Kelsey and by the Rev. William Luley, rector of St. Luke’s-Manchester. The two priests, one liberal and one conservative, worked together to find a compromise. H-164 commended Bishop George Wayne Smith for beginning a “conversation in which people of different views may be heard with respect.” The resolution also asked the Bishop for more opportunities “to listen to one another and speak the truth in love as we continue the conversation about human sexuality and the nature of Christian marriage.” With only one “nay,” the resolution passed.

Integrity

In the early 1970s, Trinity provided a meeting site, but not a separate worship space, for the Mandrake Society, an early club for homosexual men. The Rev. William D. Chapman was quoted in an article in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch (April 28, 1971) under the headline, “Gay Clubs Fail to Form Own Worship Group.” His quoted response about such an appeal was firmly negative. Bill’s response frustrated the group, but according to his widow, Ellie Chapman, in 2005, “Bill feared their becoming (in their own thinking) marginalized into some sort of separate worshipping group.” Bill’s dream, she explained, was that homosexuals would become so at home in Trinity’s congregation that they would feel no need for separate services. “His gamble paid off,” Ellie said. “Look at us now.”

In 1977, parishioners James F. Ellsworth, Harry Weber, and John (“Jerry”) Martin helped form a chapter of Integrity. Integrity was a national group of Episcopal men similar to Dignity, for Roman Catholic homosexuals, and Lutherans Concerned for gay Lutherans. Correspondence between the group’s leaders and the Team Ministry clergy shows that that the Ad Hoc Committee on Special Communion had misgivings over including communion at the group’s anniversary Evensongs because Holy Eucharist requires a priest’s presence. As noted in February 1977 Vestry minutes, Senior Warden Forbes McCreery declared: “Allowing Integrity to meet at Trinity would have a serious deleterious effect on Trinity’s reputation.”

The Vestry declined Integrity’s request as being “contrary to the Episcopal view of the nature of worship and liturgy to have ‘private’ worship services.” However, in acknowledging the good singing voices of members of Integrity, the Vestry noted that the group’s support would allow Trinity to offer the only Evensong service in town – and, indeed, these Evensongs ran through 1980. In the summer of 1978, Bill wrote the Rev. Richard J. Kirk that he (Bill) would officiate at an ecumenical Eucharist sponsored by members of Integrity, Dignity, and Lutherans Concerned.

In December 1979, the Rt. Rev. William A. Jones came for his annual visit to Trinity. During a meeting before the service, a man who had been attending Trinity but was not a member fiercely questioned the Bishop as to why the Bishop had been among the majority voting against the ordination of homosexuals at General Convention that year. According to a letter of apology from the Board of Directors of Integrity in The Newsletter, this dialogue was cut short by the need to begin the service. The protestor stood through the service -- despite the Bishop’s acknowledging his continuing stance and invitation to speak with him at the reception to follow. The Board’s letter disavowed any connection between Integrity and the protestor and went on, “We are also aware that our parish is part of a larger Church which is having some

difficulty in accepting gay people into full membership. We hope that all members of Trinity will join us in prayers and efforts to heal this division in the Body of the Lord.”

Another incident in 1979 ended with the Team Ministry clergy’s stripping Michael Fleming of his position as a Master of Ceremony. According to a December 4 letter over the Rev. Richard Tombaugh’s signature, Michael’s action included a “public display of affection for Michael Wegs,” which the priest called “offensive to so many parishioners, including members of Integrity.” But the year ended with hopeful words. In “An Open Letter to the Trinity Family,” dated December 5, 1979, Douglas Emory and Daniel Meyer, referring to each other as “spouses,” write of God’s love for all. Their letter concludes: “We will fail occasionally, but we will hopefully not all fail simultaneously. Therein lies our strength and also our salvation.”

AIDS

In the Eighties, the greatest issue concerning Trinity – indeed, America – came with the epidemic of AIDS, an acronym for acquired immune-deficiency syndrome, which results from a retrovirus that affected T-cells. AIDS spread through the homosexual communities in cities like New York and San Francisco, and the syndrome was called the “gay” disease until data were published emphasizing that victims included addicts who shared needles and hemophiliacs who received tainted blood transfusions.

In 1986, the Very Rev. Michael Allen, Dean, Christ Church Cathedral, asked Trinity to co-sponsor an AIDS workshop for the Diocese. On Nov. 9, 1986, during the years when more people died from AIDS than lived with it under medication, Trinity joined with the national church to remember victims of AIDS; at the time, two of our parishioners suffered from the disease.

On January 17, 1988, Trinitarians George Tucker, M.D., and Bill Chapman presented “AIDS and the Churches” at Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Webster Groves. A May 2, 1989, letter Bill wrote Wayne Thomas, general manager of KTVI, praised him for coverage of the death of David DeRaedt from AIDS. To counter what he assumed would be negative criticism, Bill thanked the station for helping to “create awareness,” rather than to ignore the issue.

Because many men were pushed away from their families and home churches, Trinity had to address the issue of whether it could bury AIDS victims who were not members of the parish. In good conscience, Trinity arranged to do so. In April 1989, Bill Chapman reported to the vestry that burials of people not members of Trinity, especially victims of AIDS “isolated from their own churches,” would be performed case by case. Among parishioners we have lost to AIDS are Ronald Ciolli (1952-1994), Byron Davidson (1940-1989), Stefano Serati (1971-1998), and Joe Kennedy (1945-1995).

Gay Pride

Bearing witness to its commitment towards understanding, inclusion, and diversity before the greater St. Louis community, Trinity has taken part in the Pridefest celebrations. These began in Forest Park before moving to Tower Grove Park and have occurred in June most years. We have proudly, and colorfully, marched in the parades and staffed many a booth. The summer of 1989, “a hearty handful” of Trinitarians, to use Bill’s words, marched in the Gay Pride parade with a banner honoring the life of the Rev. Charles Bewick. Trinity’s bells pealed and tolled as nearly 1,000 marchers rounded the corner of Washington at Euclid. In 1990, in announcing

Trinity's participation in the 11th annual St. Louis Gay and Lesbian Pride Celebration, parishioner Cawood K. Bebout noted: "For years Trinity has stood as a beacon of God's love in Jesus Christ to the gay and lesbian community." In the Trinity Times, Woody sought help for creating a banner for the parade with this appeal: "I still have a generous supply of purple and silver glitter from last year!" He preached June 24, 1990, as a man living with AIDS. An attorney, Woody also proposed setting up a program to assist the community of people living with AIDS and the human immuno-deficiency virus that precedes AIDS.

Jeffrey Wunrow served as director of PROMO, an educational lobbying group, for 10 years. He was cited in the August 17, 1999, issue of The Advocate, the national gay newspaper, as "one of the country's best and brightest activists for the gay and Lesbian cause." The article stated: "Thanks largely to the lobbying efforts of Jeff Wunrow and his Privacy Rights Education Project, Missouri is the only state in the union to pass a hate crimes bill so far this year." Almost single-handedly, Jeff lobbied for the inclusion of homosexuals in Missouri's hate crimes bill passed by the legislature in 1999.

In 2003, our rector Anne Kelsey, a member of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (P-FLAG), initiated a Sunday morning Mass on the Grass during Pridefest, celebrated outdoors at the southeast corner of Tower Grove Park. Attendance doubled in 2004. For the past two years, on the Friday evening of the Pridefest weekend, Trinity has hosted a Eucharist, followed by a reception, for Oasis members, Growing American Youth, and other interested and allied organizations.

Holy Unions

In 1987, Bill Chapman began meeting with a "cluster" of other priests -- the Revs. Susan and Robert Skinner, David Fly, Martin Seeley, Bernie Persons and James Fallis -- in the Diocese to study the issue of same-sex blessings. At the same time, the National Church, represented by the Standing Commission on Human Affairs and Health, cautiously studied "the changing patterns of family life and human sexuality." The Rev. Warren Crews, rector of St. Timothy's, in response to a conversation he'd had with Bill about a mid-July meeting, wrote, "My hope for you, should you decide to move ahead in the matter of blessing of gay relationships, is that a kind, supportive, pastoral approach to the needs of parishioners will not result in others taking things out of context by seeing you and the parish as being at the center of the aspirations of the gay community." The Rev. Crews added that if Bill were to proceed with blessings, he (Crews) thought it would be helpful to let other clergy know, "so we can be supportive."

A parishioner wrote Bill a letter in July 1987, putting on paper common concerns of the laity: Trinity would become a predominantly gay parish; straight people would "leave in droves"; and a bad example would be set for "impressionable children." Additional concerns were that "People would misread [same-sex blessing] as a license for any kind of sexual behavior" and that "A rift would be opened between Trinity and the rest of the church by acting outside church custom and canon law." The letter-writer begged that Trinity's "acceptance" extend to parishioners with "moderate or conservative stances." She explained that she'd wept at a Vestry meeting partially from concern that "gays would take what I and others had to say as a total and complete rejection. "

Meanwhile, Bill Chapman sent Bishop Jones a "study document" from the Diocese of California. Bishop Jones mentioned in his response that Bishop George Hunt chaired the Standing Commission on Human Affairs and Health focusing on this matter, following the wish of the Presiding Bishop, the Most Rev. Edmund Browning, that clergy keep an open mind as they study the issues.

On November 6, 1987, Bill Chapman wrote his Bishop that he was "unready to take part in any service of commitment at Trinity" but that he had agreed to participate in such a service elsewhere, at which a Lutheran would preside. He ended his note: "I do not ask your permission, which would be presumptuous. But I do ask for your prayers." On November 13, Bill Chapman reported to the Vestry that he'd agreed to participate in a Eucharistic liturgy that included the lifelong commitment of two gay men, one of them a member of Trinity. "I declined to do this as a public act at Trinity because neither the Bishop, my colleagues, you nor I are of such a mind at this time." Bill Chapman ended his report to the Vestry: "I have been asked, and I have asked myself, Are you doing this to make a statement or to be a pastor? I certainly believe it to be the latter. Such action is clearly not the Mind of the Church. My prayer is that it is the Mind of Christ." Jones' postcard in response carried a rebuke not only for the service planned but also for the way Bill Chapman had decided on his own to participate "and what it reveals about Priest/Bishop relationships." Bill Chapman served as assisting minister in "A Eucharistic Liturgy for Peace and Justice together with the Rite of Commitment" of Trinitarian Jeffrey Bessler and Alan Cramer. The men wrote the liturgy combining Anglican, Lutheran, Methodist, and Roman Catholic traditions. The Rev. Sue Eastes, one of Trinity's associate priests, and parishioner Harry Weber served as readers.

At a July 1990 vestry meeting, Susan Nanny reported entering into the prescribed pastoral counseling process with two women to explore their long-term commitment and their questions regarding recognition of their commitment by the Church. The women requested specifically to have their union blessed at Trinity's altar as heterosexuals' marriages were. At an August 1990 Vestry meeting, Bill reported his eagerness to have the Church "affirm, support and bless committed relationships between two people of the same sex" although he was reluctant to use the word "marriage" because "it centered on procreation in the Prayer Book service." Susan advised the women to wait a year, to give the Parish time for prayer and study to "get used to the idea" before such a ceremony in the sanctuary. Trinity held many forums, including discussions on the "sanctity" of marriage; these forums helped us "adjust," but they also complied with the exhortation from the most recent General Convention for parishes to consider the issue of "Sexuality and Spirituality." In March 1991, parishioner Carol Wesley, who was studying at Aquinas Institute, led a Noon Forum on the struggle to achieve harmony between spiritual and sexual aspects of human nature.

A November 14 letter over Bill's and Susan's signatures suggested a half-hour of the Vestry meeting be spent studying an article from Christianity and Crisis magazine. "It seems wise to step back and reflect together on human sexuality itself." The Vestry had been discussing sexuality with a focus on "its gay and lesbian expression." The priests further suggested that a Vestryperson might want to offer the opportunity to the parish at large for dialogue through a well-planned series in Epiphany. Bill's words: "With some anguish and much squirming, you've been led to give thought to how to provide healthful support and direction."

In July 1991, General Convention met in Phoenix. Susan predicted it would be "a bloody one" because, among the issues to discuss were inclusive-language liturgies, abortion, and racism but also the blessing of gay and lesbian unions and the ordination of priests "without reference to their sexual orientation." Discussion of women's ordination had been spurred by the ordination in Washington, D.C., of a lesbian living in faithful commitment with another woman. Bill noted in his column in the July Trinity Times that the church had been discussing the issues of homosexuality since the Sixties. He added, "practice has always preceded endorsement" in contentious issues, citing the "irregular" ordination of women as priests in 1974 before they were officially endorsed in 1979

In late July, Bill received a letter from a colleague, disagreeing with his stance on same-sex unions. Bill responded by repeating that he had not asked for clergy to alter their views, but that the commitment ceremony planned for the next day was something he had longed for. "It is no longer thinkable not to do it," he wrote his peer. He acknowledged that such a ceremony would not be thinkable in "some, perhaps most, parishes in the Diocese." But, he added, "I'm hoping that we can make room in our hearts for a place like Trinity." He ended with a characteristic tweak: "Didn't I read that the Anglican Communion made room for polygamy at the recent Lambeth Conference?"

Bill decided unilaterally to preside over the first Holy Union at Trinity's altar. He took the decision out of the hands of the Vestry. He excluded Susan from the decision so he alone would bear the brunt, believing that he could withstand censure better at the end of his career than Susan could at the beginning of hers.

On July 27, 1991, Trinity was the site of The Holy Union of Carrie B. Clement and Amy Adams Squire. Susan and Bill celebrated and Susan preached; the beautiful brides wrote their vows, helped with the liturgy, and assumed the surname of Strongheart. Memorabilia from this momentous occasion were displayed at Missouri Historical Society's museum. When Bill retired, the Stronghearts wrote a poem called "How Do You Say Goodbye?," which included this stanza: "You tried to do what was right even when others thought it wrong.... You married the ones no one else would...."

After the Stronghearts' ceremony, more blessings were held in the sanctuary, among them the ceremonies joining James Andris and Stephen Nichols (1993), Catherine Bockmier and Denise Sommers (1991), Teri Smith and Kathy Jones (1996), and Mary Swanson and Ruth Harker (2004). In February 2000, Matthew King and Philip Wilhelm, wearing handsome, matching black suits, celebrated their union as part of the 10:30 Sunday service of Holy Eucharist.

In 1996, tiring of the long process in the national church, Jennifer wrote Bishop Rockwell regarding same-sex unions. She noted that Anglo-Catholic Eucharists "bless and pray for any manner of things and people." "The omission of this one thing – same-sex covenants of relationship – becomes startling and damaging to the fabric of our shared lives of prayer." She ended her letter with an invitation to the Bishop to visit Trinity, where "there is a hunger for holiness and wholeness," to hear "testimony from the congregation about their lives together in Christ and the way such blessings transform and sanctify the community." She ended her letter acknowledging that Trinity was not content "to sneak around" yet did not want to cause damage to him or to Trinity's relationship with him. However, "That protectiveness of you and the Church costs them something in their own relationship with God, in their own understanding of being blessed and blessable, loved by God. I say respectfully that that cost to them is too high."

At workshops of the 1996 Diocesan Convention, Trinitarians spoke movingly about witnessing same-sex blessings. Betty Weber and Valorie Adrio testified at separate workshops about the joy of raising their daughters at an inclusive church like Trinity; along with Keith Welsh, they repeated that living "in the closet" gives secrets a power they should not have. The workshop strategy, remembered Ann Watts, who was senior warden that year, was to build support of Trinity's proposal that a liturgy for a same-sex blessing be written and, therefore, ready when same-sex unions are sanctioned by the national church. "I thought it would take three to five years before we'd be effective, so since I wasn't a delegate, I went home after the workshops," Annie said in a 2005 interview. "If I thought the proposal had had a prayer of passing, I would have stayed."

It passed.

“Bill Chapman called me to say Trinity’s proposal would go on to 1997 General Convention,” Annie said. “He said he’d never seen a convention rise to an occasion like that.”

In June 2003, Trinitarian John Clifford was among Episcopalians attending A Conversation on Blessing, at St. Timothy’s-Creve Coeur. The workshop, sponsored by the Diocese, featured the Rev. Dr. Ralph McMichael, Theologian-in-Residence at the Church of St. Michael and St. George-Clayton. The workshop, which explored the Anglican understanding of what we mean when we ask for God’s blessing on loving commitments, preceded General Convention ’03 where liturgies for same-sex blessings were to be proposed.

Openly Homosexual Clergy

In the mid-Eighties, the Rev. Charles Bewick came to Trinity from St. Michael and St. George, where he had served for a short while after emigrating from England. He was accepted at Trinity as an associate priest and loved unto death.

In 1989, the Rev. Susan K. Nanny interviewed for the position of part-time curate with Bill Chapman. She was soon to graduate from Seabury-Western Seminary and had been job-hunting, she said in an interview in 2004. On the advice of her mentors, she told two prospective parishes she was Lesbian only after she had been offered jobs, whereupon the offers were withdrawn. But when she told Bill about her sexual orientation, he said enthusiastically, “Good, that’s exactly what we’ve been looking for!” Susan was ordained a priest in the Episcopal Church USA at Trinity Parish on January 6, 1990, and served as Trinity’s priest (part-time, full-time, and interim) until June 1994. Among her other offerings, she encouraged the founding of the Women’s Spirituality gatherings.

The issue of approving the election of the Rev. V. Gene Robinson, an openly gay man in a committed relationship, to be Bishop of New Hampshire was on the agenda for General Convention 2003. Prior to his participation in the vote to approve Gene Robinson’s consecration, Bishop George Wayne Smith asked Trinity to host a small gathering of the leaders of the gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, and trans-gendered community. He listened to their stories and welcomed their insights.

Oasis

At the December 1998 Vestry meeting, Vestrywoman Teri Smith requested authorization for Trinity to enter into discussion with other churches in the Diocese about forming Oasis communities. Oasis, as it worked then in the Dioceses in California and Newark, consisted of a Diocesan list of congregations “willing to be identified as open and accepting of difference, especially gays and lesbians.” Even though we met the criterion, an early objection was that our being on such a list would identify Trinity as a “gay church.” Teri asserted that, historically, such a worry waned when the program was Diocesan. She further reported to the Vestry that Church of the Transfiguration-Lake St. Louis and Christ Church-St. Louis appeared to be ready to join in the discussion.

In the spring of 2000 Trinitarians were urged to attend a workshop on “The Oasis, Missouri -- a Diocesan-related Institution of the Episcopal Diocese of Missouri.” Oasis provides educational resources and speakers; Oasis also provides the “Oasis Congregations Program,” a six-session series with the intent of helping congregations decide whether to adopt an affirmation of explicitly welcoming LGBTs and their families.

Later in 2000, after due deliberation, the Vestry voted for Trinity to become an Oasis

community, along with Christ Church, Transfiguration, and St. Mark's-St. Louis. Church of the Advent-Crestwood became an Oasis congregation in 2004 after its second time through the program. Holy Communion-University City attended a series without intending to become an Oasis congregation. Trinity-Kirksville entered the education process in 2005, and the Episcopal Campus Ministries-Rockwell House community plans to begin the series in fall 2005.

Trinitarians Charlie and Ann Watts and the Rev. Bill and Fritzi Baker have served on the Oasis board from the start, manifesting the bumper sticker that says, "We're straight -- not narrow."

Among its activities, Oasis discussed President George W. Bush's proposed Constitutional Amendment against "gay marriage" in the spring of 2004 and the continued "fallout" from the consecration of Bishop Robinson in 2003. The Rev. Susan Nanny returned to Trinity to speak at the Pride Eucharist in 2004. Oasis members fought Missouri Proposition 2, which was on the August '04 ballot; they were unsuccessful: the proposition against "gay marriage" passed.

SPIRITUALITY AND SEXUALITY GROUPS

"Christians should keep talking about sex so that they can learn to speak about it more adequately, that is, more theologically." So wrote Mark Foster in *The Ethics of Sex* in 2001. Trinity has done so -- and continues doing so.

In 1991, we began a series of discussions on spirituality and sexuality. A committee, led by Mary Moore, grew out of the Women's Spirituality Group. According to Vestry minutes for September 1992, the committee formed in response "to a worry that the official questionnaire about sexuality would polarize the parish." We decided to explore how the church supports sex and spirit in liturgy and sacrament. The first meeting in February was a group of men led by Jeff Bessler, who had prepared the study guide for Lutherans entitled "Human Sexuality and the Christian Faith." The goal was to involve more segments of the Parish, especially those in same-sex, committed relationship.

According to the report to the Vestry, the committee found its commonality in talk about relationships, whether same or opposite sex, sexual or celibate, and how to live out being a Christian in relationship. The group wondered how to take these experiences to more of the Parish in order to help people be comfortable in expressing and hearing a variety of experiences. Susan Nanny pointed out how unsure "straights" are about how to talk with gays (What is safe? What invades privacy?). Kris Zapalac noted that, however the committee expanded, it could not assume that opinions would change but could only "provide a comfortable place for opinions to be expressed." Susan noted similar problems in trying to be both Christian and sexual as applied to both single heterosexuals and homosexuals.

In the July 1992 Trinity Times, Susan reported: "We are learning from one another how our sexual lives are intimately connected with God. We are staying hard at it because it is taking the group some time to trust each other; we come from very diverse backgrounds and relationships." She noted that the group's approach added the Methodist's "leg" of experience to the Episcopalian's three-legged stool of Scripture, tradition, and reason. In November 1992, several members attended a Diocesan workshop on sexuality because they knew they needed to prepare and study before offering a workshop to the Parish.

A Jan. 27, 1993, letter from the Spirituality and Sexuality Group to parishioners stated that the last General Convention had charged the churches "to go to the people in their congregations and encourage dialogue about the issues of sexuality in the church today." The Rt. Rev. Hays Rockwell had asked that discussions be concluded by Easter. The group, comprising

nine laypeople and one clergy, offered “other interested parishioners the opportunity to learn, to gain greater understanding, and to have input into the future decisions in the national church about human sexuality.” The letter offered a choice of meeting times. More than 40 people attended a Noon Forum designed to see if anyone would be interested in participating in dialogue. More than 50 people, scattered among six groups, participated in the workshops during February and March. Each group developed a particular identity, according to Susan in the April 1993 Trinity Times. She wrote that group leaders heard “wonderful stories as well as painful accounts of experiences with the church and with our sexuality.”

The Steering Committee summarized the work of the Spirituality and Sexuality Groups in a letter to Bishop Rockwell: “We still as a group find ourselves wanting to avoid the questions posed by the National Church: Shall we ordain openly gay and lesbian people who are called to ordained ministry as priests or deacons to serve in our parishes and dioceses? Shall we bless same-sex relationships?” When Bishop Rockwell visited Trinity in March 1993, he heard a report from Susan Nanny and Chuck McManis on the group’s studies. The Bishop responded: “Only good can come from these studies.” He added that in many churches he visited, he peeked at the bulletin boards and saw notices for sexuality meetings “whispered in tiny print but meetings to discuss II Thessalonians, for example, trumpeted in bold type.” The Spirituality and Sexuality group held its last meeting on March 22, 1993. The May Vestry minutes reported that Trinity’s experience with these seminars would be presented at General Convention in Indianapolis. Apparently, noted the Vestry clerk, “Trinity had a fuller experience than other parishes.”



CHAPTER 6

OUTREACH

When Mayor Francis Slay proclaimed February 11, 2005 to be Trinity Episcopal Church Day, he did so, in part, because of Trinity's 150-year stance, both vocal and visible, in the City of St. Louis. We serve as humanitarians, who set spiritual and political examples as we go into the world rejoicing. Programs have come and gone over the past 30 years as needs, demographics, and "fads" changed, but Trinity remains a committed Episcopal presence in welcoming the stranger, caring for our neighbors, and tending members of the parish.

That presence in the world can be driven by the person in the pulpit -- whether quoted in newspaper reports or leading a charge, whether exhorting the Vestry or writing articles in national church publications. As long as a connection is made to Trinity, that's outreach. The Rev. William Chapman's commitment to social justice made him a one-man outreach program: He was a leader in the Interfaith Partnership of Greater St. Louis, the Task Force on AIDS, the Central West End Association (president in 1987), and the Episcopal Task Force on Hunger. He joined others in vigil on city street corners where murders had been committed. In 1993, the Rev. Susan Nanny encouraged each member of the Vestry to be "actively anti-racist." In 1996, the Rev. Jennifer Phillips worked closely with parishioner and social worker Charles Watts (1937-2004) on The Decency Principles (one of the first applications of the principles was to Trinity's staff salaries). The Rev. Anne Kelsey continued our status as an OASIS parish.

WELCOMING THE STRANGER

Reaching out to the stranger begins with a mission statement. Creating a statement of mission is both simple and complex, for it needs to reflect what the Parish stands for, and because that changes, the statement must be reconsidered at times. Back in the August 1989 issue of the Trinity Times, Bill responded informally to a request for a mission statement: "Trinity Parish is a place where anyone who enters ought to get the notion that heaven and earth have been joined and feel welcome to help us figure out what to do about it for ourselves and how to get the Word around for others." More formally, the Vestry framed a mission statement as part of introducing Trinity to a new rector in 1995: "The mission of Trinity is to be the Body of Christ to each other, for each other, and for all others. Our mission, rooted in scholarship, Scripture and Anglo-Catholic tradition, is nourished by diversity, inclusivity, and personal growth." The 2005 Sesquicentennial motto states simply, "One in Faith, Bold in Love, Strong in Mission."

Welcoming the stranger involves advertising. We've advertised in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, the daily newspaper, and the West End Word, the neighborhood weekly, for special services at Christmas and Easter, and for the past six years, we've been advertising every Saturday in the Post. We've paid for a "boxed" advertisement in the Yellow Pages not only with our address and telephone number but also with "Anglo-Catholic Worship," followed by service times and with the words "diverse" and "inclusive" to emphasize that all are welcome.

Priests have also knocked on neighborhood doors and issued personal invitations, and they have written many a letter to welcome newcomers. As Bill Chapman's "unordained assistant" and the Parish's "sheepdog" (his words), Joan Trunnell addressed envelopes for him to write greetings to visitors who had signed the guest book. In 1999, near the end of Jennifer's rectorate, Lisa Carpenter, a member of the Growth Team, offered to take over corresponding

with newcomers who signed in, and the Team prepared form letters for Lisa to send over Jennifer's name.

Sharing Our Space

Being on this corner of Washington at Euclid signifies as outreach. We serve as a voting site, and we've welcomed political debates by candidates for offices in the City of St. Louis. We open our buildings to groups, and meeting in our halls and sanctuary keeps the groups aware of Trinity's place in the community. Dignity St. Louis, the Roman Catholic homosexuals' group, began holding services on Sunday evenings at Trinity in 1996. In an interview with the West End Word, Jennifer Phillips said, "We understand the banquet table of God's reign as having room for all people and offering a special invitation for those who may be outcast, poor, bereaved, ill, homeless or in need." Dignity and Alcoholics Anonymous give Trinity an offering for sharing our space.

As reported in 1993, groups meeting at Trinity Church ranged from several homosexual rights' groups, such as Privacy Rights Education Project and ActUp, to a once-a-year meeting of League of Women Voters, to Board of Elections Polling Place, and CORO Leadership Conference. In 1986, members of Central Reform Congregation celebrated the Jewish holiday of Succoth, a harvest festival, with a latticework structure on the lawn, and then their congregation and ours shared a lunch with guests of our Hot Lunch program (members of Central Reform donated canned foods to the Trinity Food Ministry in thanks). Meals-on-Wheels began using Trinity's parish hall in 1974: in 1985, for example, 100 volunteers packaged food and delivered it to more than 70 homes in the neighborhood from our kitchen.

Growing the Parish

The 1999 budget allocated a "growth initiative" with a goal of adding 15 new members. A committee to help the church grow began its work by looking at where we come from to get here. As a member of the committee, called the Growth Team, Joe Palacek studied the directory and found that Trinitarians were coming here from more than 20 ZIP codes. The Growth Team, in addition to placing ads in the daily newspaper and phone book, looked at "stumbling blocks" to a welcoming atmosphere, such as a need for more signs for newcomers to find their way around the church and halls or a need for awnings to make arrival at the door to North Parish Hall more hospitable. In addition to placing ads in the newspaper and phone book, the Growth Team, encouraged us to wear name tags (many people swore Trinitarians would never wear them, but we did).

The committee, encouraged by a renewed Diocesan commitment to college students, studied connecting with area universities. We discussed offering meals on Sunday evenings when dormitory cafeterias are closed and moving the Wednesday Eucharist to Saint Louis University. The Rev. Michael Kinman, coordinator of campus ministries for the Diocese, shared with the Growth Team information about what true dedication would cost in time and energy, and the committee decided Trinity could not maintain the commitment called for to make another change at that time.

The Growth Team also recommended adding a Greeter to Trinity's door to help busy ushers at the 10:30 service. In 2000, as preparation for writing the Parish's search brochure, members of the Search Committee aided the Growth Team in writing the text of a rainbow-colored brochure to mail to inquirers. The Growth Team added cups to the pews to hold cards newcomers could fill in. A brochure also provided information about the liturgy -- an update of "The Standing, Sitting, Kneeling, Rising and Bowing Book," the pamphlet prepared by Harry

Weber, Senior Master of Ceremonies, in the late Eighties to help newcomers with “book-juggling.”

Newcomers have been welcomed at quarterly brunches in the library, organized by Joan in the Eighties and early Nineties, where they have met other Trinitarians, especially heads of committees, who explained what they do. Since 2004, they have been welcomed to luncheons at Anne’s home, among other sites.

The 2005 Vestry renewed a commitment to welcoming the stranger in order to “grow” the church. As part of this, Anne and the wardens formalized a process for newcomers. Merely writing their names in the register isn’t enough, Anne wrote in an article for the Trinity Times. “Most of us need some kind of event or process to mark our status as members.” The formal process (separate from Confirmation or Reception) requires a newcomer to attend church regularly for three months and one newcomers’ luncheon and to be acknowledged as a new member in a brief liturgy during a Sunday morning service. The first of these ceremonies occurred Sept. 26, 2004, and Anne expected the official welcome to take place quarterly.

Following Anne’s belief that the front office is often the first place people see at Trinity, it was spiffed up in 2003 to make it look more professional and gracious. The office sported a new carpet, new paint, and new furniture. Long-haired parish administrator Bill Ader got a hair cut.

CARING FOR NEIGHBORS

Outreach also means caring for our neighbors and neighborhood. In the Seventies, with the Team Ministry in place, Trinity’s widespread outreach to the surrounding community, according to the Annual Report for 1975, included a blood-donor program, the Emergency Food Pantry, Midtown West Meals-on-Wheels, Girl Scout and Brownie troops, and Concerned Citizens’ Community Center. For years, Trinity Parish was a viable leader in Block Unit #586, which had been formed during fall of 1964 to address issues of neighborhood improvement -- security, safety and friendship. Block Unit #586 was composed of residents and homeowners within a stone’s throw from the church. In the Eighties, parishioner Orelia Woodson served as its president. For more than 35 years, Joan Dunbar has prepared tax returns for people in the neighborhood.

Joint Community Board

In 1970, when the Team Ministry began, Trinity helped organize the neighborhood’s Joint Community Board along with Second Presbyterian and First Unitarian churches. The Joint Community Board worked within the neighborhood to improve opportunities for housing and education. In conjunction with the St. Louis Board of Education, the Joint Board sponsored after-school tutorial programs, which employed teachers from the public schools as tutors, who were assisted by neighborhood teenagers. Funding came from within the churches themselves; at Trinity that included funds donated by Friends of Trinity, the Diocese of Missouri, and the Mustard Seed Festival. As more public money became available for one-on-one tutoring in the City of St. Louis, the Board’s priorities shifted to offer socializing for pre-school children, to supply the need for outdoor recreation for youth of all ages, to attend to the continuing need for guidance by teenagers and their parents, and to plan for life after high school, whether college or job training.

The Joint Community Board and the neighborhood focused their efforts at Eugene Field School on Olive Street, just east of Taylor Avenue. Many of the programs helped the Central

West End, which had been pretty run down in the Sixties, become viable in the Seventies when the old streets and houses began to appeal to buyers. With gentrification, however, came dissatisfaction from some of the displaced. After adding members from three other neighborhood churches, the Board became the Joint Community Program. Gradually, however, the mission changed, becoming too diffuse according to some; as a result, some supporters offered their aid to other venues. Trinity disassociated from the Joint Community Council in 1985 in order to put its money and people behind the Trinity Food Ministry.

Trinity Food Ministry

Our ministry to feed the hungry, another of the mid-Seventies' outreach projects, remains a part of Trinity's parish life. We called it the Emergency Food Program when we began in 1975. Before then, people waiting for government food stamps gave "food orders" for purchases at a nearby market, which billed the church. When the store closed but we could not meet the growing demand with available funds, the Vestry authorized the Joint Community Board to set up a program that would involve the whole Parish. The Vestry charged the Rev. John Mason with raising funds, stocking the pantry, and training volunteers to interview clients and disperse the food.

In 1978, to cope with needs other than hunger of those availing themselves of the program, the Vestry added the Resource Counseling and Referral Center to this outreach and hired Sister June Gustafson of the Holy Order of Mans to run the program. In the first month, 53 people came through the door of her office at the south end of the narthex (now the Chapel of the Incarnation). Clients sought advice about issues such as food stamps and welfare assistance.

In 1983, the Vestry merged the two parts of the food ministry under director Patricia Sweet, and the pantry closed its doors for a few months to re-evaluate its position. The food program had too many requests (often 3,000 clients a month) but not enough resources -- even with significant financial help from the Diocesan Hunger Task Force and the Food Crisis Network. The Vestry decided to serve residents living only in the four ZIP codes closest to the church and then only with proof of residency and only once a month. Trinity continues to work within this format today.

Trinity began the Sunday Hot Lunch Program to serve individuals once a week in 1981. From 1982 through October 1985, Jessie Spinks, practically by herself, served a hot lunch to 40 to 50 men every Sunday afternoon. In 1985, the Hot Lunch Program fed more than 3,000 people. In 1986, a system of teams of Trinitarians was established with each team taking one Sunday a month. The first group included LoveVell Henderson, Mike Cleary, Bob Barrett, and the Rev. Robert Newyear, rector of the Church of the Good Shepherd-Town and Country. In subsequent years, the teams comprised members of other churches in the Diocese, including Grace-Kirkwood and St. Michael and St. George-Clayton.

As an indication of the contribution by the Trinity Food Ministry (TFM) between 1980 and 1985, the food program's numbers rose from expenses of \$17,000 and 3,700 pounds of food to \$23,000 and 77,000 pounds of food. In 1991, \$25,000 bought food and related supplies, allowing us to distribute 93,353 pounds of food. In addition to donations of food, time, and money, TFM has received grant money from the Diocese, from the United Thank Offering, and from Episcopal Church Women.

Our food program has been confirmed as a Jubilee Ministry Center by the Episcopal Church USA. On March 6, 1989, Trinity received a \$6,000 Jubilee Ministry Grant. The check from the Rt. Rev. William A. Jones covered about six months' supply of fresh produce. In his thank-you note to the Bishop, Bill Chapman noted that in 1988 the Trinity Food Ministry supplied "emergency food" to more than 19,000 people, made possible by another Jubilee

Ministry Grant, the Diocesan Task Force on Hunger and Homelessness, and generous contributions. In 1998, the Rev. Roy Ledbetter, then a parishioner, donated a portion of the profits from the display of his Bethlehem Nativity scene, comprising 200 figures in 18 scenes with sound and light.

In 1985, after Pat Sweet's resignation as director and Carol Rivers' as summer interim, Lucy Hale became head of the program, newly renamed the Trinity Food Ministry; she remained as the director until early 2004. Lucy, with her long hair bound in a barrette, became the face of the food ministry. She truly cared for the hungry, and they loved her. Her cadre of volunteers was equally committed to her and echoed her faithfulness in this outreach.

Lucy made the connections between TFM and sources we still use for food: Operation Food Search, the Metropolitan Pantry Association, the Hunger Task Force, and the Metropolitan St. Louis AIDS Program. Through grant writing and networking, Lucy made connections for donations from a variety of charitable sources. She encouraged Trinitarians to participate year after year, mile after mile in the Food Pantry Association's Walk for Hunger. At times, raising money and donations for the food ministry was a contest with other ("sexier," to use her word) non-profits. Or with Mother Nature -- Lucy noted in the Trinity Times that contributions all but dried up during the Flood of '93.

Afterwards Lucy's tenure, the interim director, Alycia Green, re-organized operations to satisfy regulations of St. Louis City's Department of Health. She also helped train 21 volunteers from the Holy Ground Collaborative to expand the program to Monday evenings to accommodate working families; however, when they did not take advantage of the extended hours, the experiment ended. Sally Martin Weaver, an Eden seminarian, filled in as coordinator during her 2004 summer internship at Trinity. In 2004, in the midst of a search for a new director, Steve Turner, the recently retired Senior Warden, volunteered to become director as part of his time-and-talent contribution to the parish.

In 2003, the Trinity Food Ministry Advisory Board, recommended by Anne and approved by the Vestry, began to address operational and strategic goals for TFM. The board first met in early 2004 to find a new director and to assure the continuation of this outreach program. Under Ron Tompkins' direction, the Board developed job descriptions for the director and Board members and continues to stabilize operations.

In the Seventies, the volunteer staff initially opened the pantry five afternoons a week for several hours; today it is open three afternoons. The program benefits from the sturdy presence of sexton cum security officer, Curtis Thomas.

Feeding the hungry has been only part of the ministry, however. Starting with Sister June, who founded Resource Counseling and Referral Service, Trinity also provided social work connections. Guided by Sister June and by Lucy, Sherman Valley began his work as a volunteer resource counselor in 1979. On Thursday afternoons, Sherman continues to serve the clients he called "human wreckage," principally by referring them to other food pantries. "No one enters that door that I don't have hope to find a cure for what ails them," he said in a 1999 interview. "Of course, that takes patience -- and prayer."

During a time of tight budgets, the Vestry asked the food ministry to help pay a share of the utility bill and other overhead expenses associated with the cost of running the program out of the church's building. Some viewed the policy, although fiscally appropriate, as placing a burden on the food program's income. The Vestry later dropped the idea, except for staff salary expenses directly associated with the outreach program. In 2005, the Trinity Food Program was fully incorporated into the parish budget

Housing and Clothing

Caring for our neighbors has meant building houses and going into city schools. In 2001, Trinity was one of 14 Episcopal churches to help build a Habitat for Humanity house, and the efforts continue each summer. Our efforts with Habitat for Humanity have been organized by Lisa Will-Smith, George and Virginia Benson, and Anne Hennig.

We have also reached out to neighborhood schools to help. In 1996, Trinitarians volunteered to be mentors with Mentor-St. Louis, a collaborative that included faith communities that was administered by a division of the St. Louis Public Schools with the idea "to promote a love of learning within each child." In 2004, we supported the students at Hamilton Elementary School. As part of the project called Blessing of the Backpacks in August 2004, we donated enough school supplies to distribute to two classes of first graders. In October, we collected 63 hats and 63 pairs of mittens to keep those first-graders warm. The Vestry's Outreach Commission, including Cheryl Sharpe and Michael Sampson, oversaw these offerings.

We continue to join with our neighbors in the Central West End. We worked with director Natalie Clapp at West Central Outreach (incorporated in 1998), to care for neighborhood children and teenagers. More recently, after a few years' working with Congregations Allied for Community Improvement (founded in 1993) and, until the dues exceeded the rewards, with Metropolitan Churches United, we have joined a consortium of congregations known as Holy Ground Collaborative: Central Reform Congregation and St. John's United Methodist, Cornerstone Institutional Baptist, and First Unitarian churches. Together, the group supported a "Get the Lead Out" fence painting project at Montessori School in May and the "Get Out the Vote" campaign in November 2004 as well as a blood drive with the American Red Cross. In addition, Anne Kelsey said a blessing at Central Reform's dedication, led by Rabbi Susan Talve, of the "Tikkum Olam" sculpture.

TENDING CHURCH MEMBERS

Outreach also means caring for each other. Retreats used to take place annually in the Eighties and provided a place "off campus" for games and walks, discussions and prayers. The last retreat organizers included Alexah Strongheart, Ann-Mary McLeod and Mary Ann McKay (1999), and Michael Adrio (2000). We provide rides to church: a team of men and women have brought Dee Scott to church ever since she broke her back. Eucharistic Visitors (formerly "Lay Eucharistic Minister") are licensed by the Bishop to take the Sacrament to parishioners unable to come to church. As Lisa Will-Smith promised in the 2005 Annual Report, "We bring hope and friendship with the Sacrament."

From 1988 to 1998, Bill and Mary Russell organized the Prayer Ministry, which had begun in 1984 to offer daily prayers for the needs of the Parish ("The prayer lists are in the chapel," Bill announced each month).

We also care for each other through Pastoral Care committees. During Bill's rectorate, Joan Trunnell was the conduit for information about parishioners' needs, and she helped display photos of parishioners on boards in South Parish Hall. Joan addressed the envelopes, but Bill wrote a personal greeting to each parishioner to honor birthdays, a practice that Jennifer continued alone during her rectorate after Joan retired in 1994. Parishioners Leila Daughaday (1945-1991) also sent birthday cards to countless Trinitarians, and Martha Baker maintains what she calls her "postcard ministry" to church members.

After Joan, the caretaker role fell more heavily on the Pastoral Care committees, chaired by Camilleann Nelson in the late Nineties and by Hazel Kirk in the 2000s, among others.

Spreading the News

Before the Internet made the world smaller, daily news was spread by telephone, and weekly news was printed in the Sunday service leaflets. There, worshippers could find information about the church family -- who was sick or in the hospital, who was celebrating what, why we did what we did during liturgical seasons, etc. "We" was the operative pronoun for these news bulletins within the leaflets.

In May 1978, to keep the congregation -- and its many friends -- apprised of what goes on at Trinity, we began a newsletter called The Newsletter. The first editor was Ellie Chapman, an award-winning writing professor at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. The mimeographed newsletter morphed into a printed, monthly publication in 1985, which Ellie re-titled the Trinity Times. For years, parish secretary William Ader supported Ellie as printer, collator, and mailer, and for about a decade, Mary Jane Halliburton (1909-2001) assisted him by folding and slapping labels on the newsletters. Ellie Chapman and Bill Ader shared the role of nudge to get those stories in. Sometimes, Bill Ader seemed desperate: in June 1994, he begged for news even of meetings that would not be held or of dogs that had learned new tricks. Ellie retired as editor after putting the June 1993 issue to bed, and Bill Ader assumed the green eyeshade and blue pencil until 2004. The printed, nearly monthly edition of the Trinity Times continues, currently under Jeff Wunrow.

Bill Ader's Internet website (trinityepiscopal.net) has become an important and integral part of our parish outreach, inside and outside the church. The website, which is well received and oft-complimented, features a quiz, a message board, and an archive of bulletins and sermons.

Briefly in 1998, at Teri Smith's suggestion, the Vestry considered a system whereby rotating Vestry members would wear pagers to be called in case of emergency, but that didn't work. In 2004 the church started sending a weekly electronic-mail edition of the Trinity Times through the Internet, which is also used to disseminate news quickly.

Today, we reach out from the old "telephone tree" less and less.



CHAPTER 7

EDUCATION

Whatever the topic, wherever the place, classes, forums, and discussion groups provide opportunities for parishioners to know each other better in contexts and settings that permit deeper conversation on matters of religious interest than provided by coffee hours or breakfasts after services.

CHURCH SCHOOL

In the late 1970s, the Church School met in a “decidedly dubious one-story storefront with chain-link-covered windows so filthy you couldn’t see through them,” to quote Kathy van Bakergem, who became a teacher in 1977. “The door itself hung ajar because it was secured by only two rusty hinges.” If the door was open, the air conditioning was “on.” That place, the old “Hells’ Angels Motorcycle Gang” storefront just across the alley from the parking lot, and the Hoppe Funeral Home west on Washington (now the Mahler Ballroom), held Sunday School classes for the older kids. According to teacher Kitty Drescher, the children liked the “spooky atmosphere” cast by the pink light bulbs.

Kathy remembered her first visit with Jan Hotze: “The room was absolutely filthy. Sunlight streamed through a jagged hole in the patterned ceiling tin and cast a golden gleam through the fog of airborne dust motes that’d risen when we’d entered the room. Through the haze, I made out an ancient pool table, its green felt stained, gapped, and mildewed. Six rickety chairs surrounded a graffiti-covered metal folding table, and overhead the light fixture dangled, sans bulb.”

That room taught Kathy an early, continuing lesson: “You don’t need a classroom or furniture or equipment or good lighting or carpeting or even a ceiling that’s intact to hold a good Sunday school class. Sure, heat and air conditioning help, but even when we had to bundle up against the cold and avoid the huge patch of ice that’d turned the cracked-concrete floor treacherous, our classroom was always a place of joyful witness to God’s presence among us.”

The Team Ministry clergy wanted a smooth transition when the children joined the adults at the 10:30 service, but none of the three came up with an effective method. Kathy tried for a while by appointing Welles Chapman or Jamie Duffy as scouts “to run down the street, pop into the narthex, and breathlessly listen behind the massive swinging doors for some clue as to the progress of the liturgy.” After a few miscues, she gave up. She didn’t see much need because children were not allowed to participate in the Eucharist. She became director of the Church School in 1983 on the condition that the children be allowed to take communion. “Baptized or not, confirmed or not, I knew Christ would have welcomed children to His table, and I wasn’t going to listen to any Episcopal rules or regulations to the contrary,” she said in a 2005 interview.

Because she knew that high-church liturgy drew people to Trinity, Kathy’s first act as director was to find a lectionary-based curriculum. She wanted the children to study the readings heard by the grown-ups. She continues to use *Living the Good News* today.

She described Church School teachers over the years as “an eclectic parade.” The rosters of what Kathy calls “dedicated, talented, and committed teachers” have included her husband Dave van Bakergem, Carla Bascom, Clark Cunningham, Kayte Foxworth,

Becky Glenn, Lucy Hale, Bryan Hainline, Jan Harbaugh, Lawrence Holmes, Matt King, Hazel Kirk, Harry Leip, Jill McGuire, Virginia McKeel, Chuck McManis, Elizabeth Merritt, Kathy Orme-Rogers, Jan Parker, David Pinkard, Langdon Thacher, Keith Welsh, and Orelia Woodson.

She cited the Revs. Susan Nanny and Jennifer Phillips as “especially kid-friendly.” Susan held special services for the children when she could be excused from regular preaching or celebrating at the 10:30 service. “They delighted in helping her set up the makeshift altar, choosing her vestments, lighting the candles, etc.,” remembered Kathy. Likewise, Jennifer and the Rev. Richard Valantasis conducted children’s chapels in North Parish Hall in the late Nineties. Jennifer preached quarterly children’s sermons, but the Rev. Anne Kelsey offers a time for children nearly every Sunday during the 10:30 service, sometimes continuing their lesson from Sunday School, sometimes reading a story to them, once using the alphabet for a series on the properties of the church (A is for “alb,” L is for “lavabo”). Anne continues to allow the children to carry baskets of food during the processional of offerings every Sunday, an idea Kathy suggested to Susan in the early Nineties.

About that time, Kathy also started the children’s Prayer Circle. After the Church School lesson but before joining the adults in church as they say the Prayers of the People, the children gather in the library with their teachers. “The Prayer Circle is a means of focusing their attention in a more directed, quiet, and reflective way,” explained Kathy. “It was necessary, especially after they’d had an exciting, busy and noisy class.” The Prayer Circle is “completely unscripted and spontaneous; sometimes it doesn’t involve any praying at all. The children respect each other, and each prayer, no matter what the petitioner’s age, rates a hearty, collective ‘Amen!’”

ADULT EDUCATION

Some people join Trinity knowing nothing about the Episcopal Church. Other parishioners graduated from seminaries. Continuing education for adults comes in many forms -- from informal gatherings in the parking lot to Sunday lunch at Dressel’s, from Inquirers’ Classes to attending Eden or Aquinas seminary.

In 1976, Trinity’s Spiritual Life Committee continued to introduce the new Proposed Book of Common Prayer to the congregation -- sometimes at church services or in discussion groups after church, but a lot of education took place in private homes with 10 to 30 people attending. These “house eucharists” involved not only sharing the body and blood of Christ but also learning each other’s concerns, interests, and hopes. In response to lay needs, the clergy proposed moving the early service to 7:30 to allow time between the services for regular adult Adult Christian Education. The response was favorable: often 30 to 50 people attended meetings where presentations were made, each from a Christian perspective, by resource people from the church and community. The Rev. Richard Tombaugh served as both facilitator and moderator for programs, such as “Parenting in a Rapidly Changing Community,” “Feeling Comfortable with our Sexuality,” “Grace and Psychotherapy,” and “Age and Spiritual Development.”

By 1980, in addition to the Adult Forum, a Bible study group was meeting on Tuesday evenings, an Inquirers’ Class met on Sunday afternoons, and a Marriage Encounter group met once a month. The Cursillo Community, begun the year before, doubled in size to 23 members (Cursillo, now called Paseo con Cristo, is a Christian renewal movement that seeks to teach the good news of the Gospel and espouses a program of Christian discipline, marked by continued study and spiritual growth).

During the Eighties, Sunday Adult Education split: the Lectionary Forum between services continued with lay members of the group taking turns preparing and presenting ideas on the lectionary readings for that day, and a Noon Forum after church took place some Sundays in North Parish Hall. From 1982-84, programs dealt with the RENEW (for Evangelism) course we shared with the Roman Catholics, covering Fundamentalism, Process Theology, and Liberation Theology. We discussed these same issues at House Meetings. On Thursdays, a study group met after the noon service of Eucharist and Unction: each week, a different volunteer -- perhaps Mary Ruhoff, Emily Ann Cramer, or Laura Guy -- chose a subject to explore, made readings available, and led the discussion. In 1987 the Sunday Adult Bible Study (about eight people) met at 9:30 with Brian Hainline and Jan Harbaugh to study the Gospel According to St. Luke.

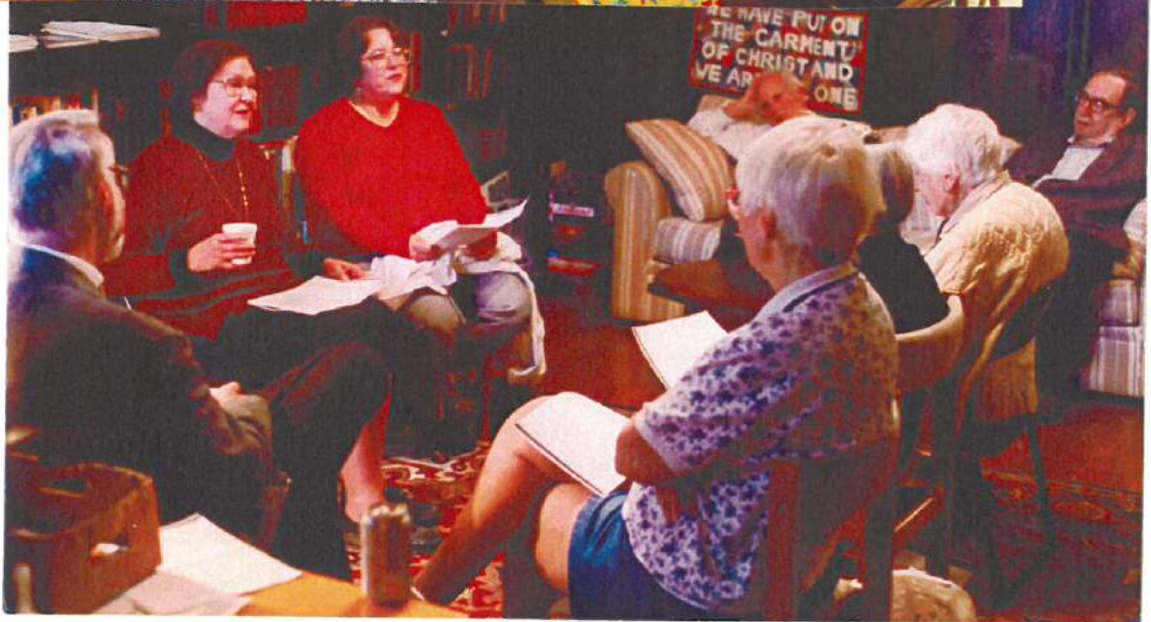
In the late Eighties and for most of the Nineties, Noon Forums occurred the first two Sundays of each month. The Education Committee was responsible for establishing topics, finding speakers from inside or outside the church, and buying bagels and fruit so the speaker could be heard over growling stomachs. When the Nineties were declared the "Decade of Evangelism" by the national church, Trinity's responses included inviting the Rev. Sam Portaro, Episcopal Chaplain to the University of Chicago, to present a series of nine talks March 14-18, 1990. Bill Chapman noted that these presentations were to stimulate "reflection, imagination, and intentionality" in those involved in Trinity's ministries. In the autumn of 1990, we studied Lifetext, a program developed by the Education Center. The Women's Spirituality Group, begun in May 1990, studied issues such as Goddess Religions and Wicca; Sr. Vicki Garvey, professor of Hebrew Bible at Seabury-Western Theological Seminary in Evanston, Ill., introduced women in the Hebrew Scripture in August and women in Christian scripture in September. In response to the success of the women's gatherings, the men convened in 1991; they began with a discussion of the Rev. Bill Moyer's video featuring poet Robert Bly; at another meeting, the men discussed Joseph Campbell's views on myths and the roles of male and female mentors in their lives.

"9:15 Bible Study" met after breakfast during the Eighties and Nineties. In the 1995 Annual Report, Jim Richardson wrote that the group shared personal interpretations and he noted a by-product: attendees at the early service shared regularly with attendees at the later one.

Inquirers' Classes

In 1993 after Bill retired, a re-grouped and re-named Religious Education Committee committed anew to all aspects of education at Trinity. The committee was concerned over "losing" the older teens (Peg Pedersen was guiding the younger teens); the committee sent a memo to chairs of Trinity's other committees, encouraging them to call teens as ushers, breakfast-fixers, recyclers, singers, chalice bearers, etc. The committee also wrestled with young teens' serving as acolytes, which took them out of Sunday School; as a result, the Liturgy Committee agreed that no one under 12 would serve.

The Education Committee surveyed recent confirmands from the past several years; the majority indicated that they wanted to know more than they could learn in the six-week course as it was then constituted. As one parent wrote, "My son spends more than six weeks committed to hockey practice." An Ad Hoc committee, including Camille Wingo and Kay Archer-Newberry, used committee members' experience as educators to revamp the syllabus of Inquirers' Classes. They tried to find curriculum materials, consulting with the Diocesan education liaison and with Ann "Fritzi" Baker of The Education Center, but could not. So the committee developed a model for a practical, not just theoretical, 10- to 12-week course. The new syllabus for the class of 1993-94 included a church tour, led by Jack Foshage; an instructed Eucharist, led by Susan Nanny; lessons on Christian Scripture and the *Book of Common Prayer*, led by Richard Valantasis. Other



sessions covered church music, led by organist David Porkola, and church politics and stewardship, led by trustee John Drescher.

Bill Mayhan coordinated pairing each member of that year's class of inquirers with a sponsor, someone to guide them and pray with them and answer questions. Especially important were sponsors for neighborhood children who attended church without a parent.

The committee was happy with the results of this overhaul of the Inquirers' class. In March 1994, when Bishop Hays Rockwell visited Trinity for confirmation, he seemed impressed, too, as he asked for copies of the materials.

Noon Forums, etc.

Over the past decade, we have shared in Noon Forums, such as ones on Death and Dying in Lent 2005. We've discussed books, such as *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time* by Marcus Borg, led by Anne Kelsey, and films, such as "Harold and Maude." "The First Fact-finding Forum" provided information about parish committees to help parishioners know which service best suits their talents; "A Spiritual Buffet" informed about Anglican Orders, meditation practices, and the Rosary. Lenten programs have included studying Benedictine practices in 1990 with the Rev. Luke Rigby, Abbot, St. Louis Benedictine Abbey; we studied Benedictine Rule again in 2004 with a discussion of *Rule of Benedict: Insights for the Ages* by Joan Chittister, O.S.B. We learned about labyrinths with parishioner Jan Dunlap in 1996. In 1993, she and Dina Davis facilitated a six-week introduction to "A Course in Miracles." In 1994, the Education Committee put on a four-part Lenten series addressing anti-Semitism, which included a presentation by Rabbi Robert Jacobs on the "Jew-hating Words in the Gospels," and an instructed Passover, led by Richard Marcus. As a result, we changed the scripts we'd been using for the Holy Week dramatic readings. In 2005, parishioner Matt Owings led Groundwork: Digging Deep for Change and Growth, a Lenten program of evangelism designed by the national church and tailored for Trinity.

We've learned with our hands by making Advent wreaths with parishioner Valorie Adrio, and we prayed through creative arts, back in the Nineties with the Rev. Gretchen Pickeral helping us mold clay in a session called "God Imaging" and in 2003 when we crafted God's eyes and collages.

We have studied courses, such as The Audacious Act led by the Rev. William Dols from The Educational Center in Clayton. Bible studies have included a series on St. Mark, led by the Rev. Allan Zacher, and weekly ones on the Propers between the services in the Nineties, where Jim Richardson's spirit shone. For one semester at Trinity in 2001, Richard Valantasis offered Historical Introduction to the New Testament, a class he taught at Saint Louis University.

About a dozen parishioners, including Georgia Johnston, Beth Dockery, and Jeanie Ader, have participated in the four-year course, Education for Ministry. The Rev. Stephen Weissman has mentored the course since its inception; parishioner Stephen Nichols, who shares leadership, brought the course to the Trinity site four years ago.

Parishioners read books, keep up with church politics, and study the Bible on their own, and they also come together to keep the dialogue of faith open and wondering. Christian education is continuing education.

CHAPTER 8

PARISH LIFE

On Parish life, the Rev. Barbara Cawthorne Crafton has written: "A community's ongoing life is tough and strong, and the people themselves are the ones who comprise it. It may look like it's the leader, and the leader is a very important person, but it's really the people." Because we're more of a "destination" church than a parish church, Trinity's people come and go. Each one adds shade or hue to Trinity's colors. They come with ideas for raising money and for making merriment or mischief and for continuing education. Each separate life weaves a strand into the tapestry of Parish life.

For proof, we have James Pfaff's photos. In 1987, Jim began his "ministry of the lens," to quote the Rev. William Chapman. He not only takes pictures using his own sense of history (and wearing his signature headkerchief), but he also mounts them on boards that draw people during coffee hour. His record of Parish life is worth a bazillion words.

Parish life comes from the acts of individuals like Vallateen Abington (1907-2004), who never hesitated to remind us of a time when African-Americans were denied communion here; Anne Carpentier, "the candy lady," who provided spiritual sustenance in the form of sweets to a whole generation of Parish children; and Doug Pierson, who taught Tai Chi at Trinity on Saturday mornings in 1989.

Parish life can be defined by whole families, each embodying the church. For example, through the Seventies, Richard and Emily Gordon and their five children wore many Parish hats. Dick served on the Diocese's Standing Committee and as Trinity's Senior Warden; Emily taught Sunday School for years. Dick played his violin before, during, and after services, and sometimes the other musical members of the family would play their stringed instruments as an ensemble.

Parish life is cooked up by chefs. Joan Gregory provided refreshments for coffee hour for 20 years by herself until about eight years ago when she evolved into one of the monthly volunteers; her husband Ron, Minister of the Grill, has been barbecuing for Trinity picnics and homecoming dinners since the Eighties. Jane and John Parks-Clifford stewed tubs of burgoo for the 1986 St. Cecilia dinner, Jim O'Bannon helped produce tons of lasagna for more than 100 dinner guests at "St. Cecilia Remembered" in 2005, and Joyce Daughaday's stew recipe has fed us at the Agapé meals during Holy Week for the last two years. On Sundays after the early service, cooks -- including the Friesens, the Oakeses, the Wrights, and the Emerts -- prepare breakfast, a tradition that began in the Civil Rights era when blacks and whites in St. Louis didn't often sit at table together. Multitudes of people, including Ken Schuler, have flipped pancakes for Shrove Tuesday, and back in Lent 1989, Joe Kennedy and Chuck Havener's un-abstemious supper included bananas Foster for dessert. Etta Taylor has cooked up oceans of soup and kneaded and braided miles of bread for Parish suppers. The Gay and Lesbian potluck suppers ran for nearly a decade starting in 1991 and resuming in Summer 2005. These gatherings -- to which all Trinitarians were cordially invited and fed -- took place in parishioners' homes and often included the bread and wine of communion.

GROUPS

In the Seventies, Trinity hosted a job seekers' group, and in 1989, Peg Pedersen's recycling group accepted parishioners' household glass, paper, and plastic (a few volunteers

today haul the church's pounds of leaflets and communion- wine bottles to recycling sites).

In 1987, Melodie Monroe led a play-reading group, starting with "A Member of the Wedding."

In 1989, encouraged by Bill and Ellie Chapman, George and Dolores Friesen, and Gilbert and Elizabeth Merritt, a book group formed to discuss Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*. That's more than 175 books! The group continues to meet in members' homes once a month where they discuss authors such as Toni Morrison and Robertson Davies while noshing; Christmas stories are traditional in December.

The Trinity Youth Group is composed of teenagers from 13 to 18 who come together for their own activities. Some years, there have been enough teens for both a junior high and a senior high group; some years, there have been fewer than a half-dozen teens in one group. The groups have met weekly to work on several projects at once or monthly just to visit. At times, such as during the mid-Nineties and for the past two years, the Youth Group has not met formally. Roberta Fielder and Lois Pierson (now Nora Pedersen), along with the Rev. Susan Nanny in her first years at Trinity, have led the robust groups.

Parish youth have taken part in Diocesan events. In the Eighties, Diocesan Happenings for high school students aimed, like Cursillo, "to transform through God's love." These quarterly events were staffed entirely by youth, with guidance from adults. In 1983, 10 youths from Trinity, including Kati Adams, Jenny Hessel, Dan McGuire, and Janine Pastard, participated. Since 2000, Heidi Clark, Diocesan Coordinator for Christian Formation and Youth Ministry, has organized semiannual sleepovers at Christ Church Cathedral (in her capacity as education liaison, Heidi has preached a couple of times at Trinity).

In 1986, Trinity's Youth Group, under the direction of triathlete Henry Biggs (Harvard Class of '86) produced "Godspell." Actors in the show, which raised about \$1,000, included Jay Hessel, Paul Trunnell, Suzanne Menkhous, Becky Pierson, and Cathy Yates.

The Youth Group, under the direction of Charles McManis and Lisa Will-Smith, traveled to Washington, D.C., to participate in an AIDS march; they added the panels they'd made with the names of Trinity's own fallen men to the AIDS Memorial Quilt spread on the mall. In July 1992, a group of kids, including Sara Parks-Clifford (and one big "kid," Annie Mae Fielder), traveled to Guatemala to help build a school. In the summer of 1998, the Youth Group held a Trivia Night to raise money for a trip to Puerto Rico. Bess Dotterweich, Jarrett Young, and Lisa traveled to Ponce, then our "companion" parish. As Padre Jorge Rivera told Lisa, "Remember, we are all one church."

In July 1999, the group, led by Lisa and including Elizabeth Ware, Jenny Weber, and Ellen Weber, joined with neighboring Second Presbyterian Church to paint houses and to conduct a Vacation Bible School in Coahoma, Miss. In 2000, Lisa and Chuck chaperoned teens from the two churches to Ludington, Mich., to build a Habitat for Humanity house.

From 2001-2003, the Youth Group comprised Laura Kirk, Christina Krug, the Weber sisters, Emily Gerteis, and Vanessa Gacilos. The young women met monthly in the teen room during the 10:30 service, often taking advantage of being an all-female group by discussing topics dear to churchwomen's hearts. They enjoyed slumber parties at leader Martha Baker's house, where they baked cookies to sell at church or just relaxed.

FUND RAISING

During the time of the Team Ministry, the Diocese provided a significant amount of financial support. That money was supplemented by offerings from groups such as the Friends of Trinity, whose yearly fundraisers were often budgeted to bring in several thousand dollars and a

lot of fun. Derby Days at the Chapmans' home on Westminster starred Tony Stevens as auctioneer. Between about 1975 and 1980, Kitty Drescher and Jeffrey van Sant organized tennis tournaments. They named the tournament for Bishop George Cadigan, "because we all loved him," said Kitty in an interview in 2005. If tennis player Bob Foxworth or one of his athletic daughters did not take home the Cadigan cup, Perry and Carla Bascom did, so when the Cup was retired, it went to Perry in perpetuity. Reuben Rigel and Jill McGuire organized the Run for Fun.

Mor Chiam's concert of African steel drums at Second Baptist Church (Washington at Kingshighway) raised close to \$4,000, remembered Kitty. "The ladies of the 'amen corner' gave us permission to use their space, but they were not happy about the scantily-clad dancers," Kitty said. George and Beverly Tucker organized Mucky Duck (the name came from a restaurant they'd visited on Captiva Island). Mucky Duck was held in our parking lot because it was a fundraiser for the Trinity Food Ministry whereas the Mustard Seed dinners were often held at Second Presbyterian and the flea markets at First Unitarian Church because they raised money for the Joint Community Ministry.

Naturally, Vestry meetings often included discussions concerning whether the cost of these events divided rather than included. Despite that concern, the barbecues, the pool parties, and the dinner affairs as well as our annual participation in Strassenfest, the downtown German street fair, went on into 1990.

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, we threw similar affairs to cover budget shortfalls. In 2001, the Youth Group organized a prom as their fundraiser; the next year, the church borrowed the idea as a fundraiser for the next two years. The Trinity Prom, advertised as "a corrective to the high school prom," featured lighting and flowering by Jim Pfaff, music by Tom Weber, and costumes by re-sell-it shops and rich (and sometimes cross-gendered) imaginations. We held three Last Great Annual Auctions, spearheaded by many "8 o'clockers," especially Denver Wright, Linda Biggs, and Pat Way; Jan Parker chaired the third one. In 2004 and 2005, Joan and Ron Gregory turned their Central West End home into Waikiki Beach for fund-raising luaus, similar to ones they'd hosted 20 years ago, too.

TRADITIONS

True or False: "We've always done it that way." Answer: "Not necessarily."

For example, in 1989, the annual meeting moved to Friday night in South Parish Hall following parishioners' request for more time to exchange information and viewpoints; before that and after 1996, annual meetings were held Sunday after church in the sanctuary; for the last two years, our annual meeting has taken place at 5 p.m. on Saturday. The 8 o'clock service was held at 7:30 in the early Nineties to accommodate the Bible study between services. Traditions come and go, as energy – or need -- comes and goes. Below are a few of the traditions that we have loved and continued, or sadly or happily let go of, or altered to fit the times.

Tree to Cross – about 1985 Jeff Bessler brought a tradition from the North: turning the trunk of the Christmas tree into the branches of the Easter cross. We decorated an evergreen tree during Hanging of the Greens and moved it outdoors during Epiphany, where children hung treats on it for birds and squirrels. For Easter, Val Sinclair stripped the branches, fashioned a cross, and helped the children wrap the cross with spring flowers. Until 2004, Jim Pfaff bedecked the cross from the year before for the children to carry in procession Easter morning.

Our Song – in the early Nineties at a little church in Thomaston, Maine, John Clifford and Martha Baker heard a hymn that had Trinity's name all over it. They showed page 335 of *The Hymnal* to Helen Hendry. She taught "I Am the Bread of Life" to the choir, who introduced

us to Suzanne Toolan's adaptation of John 6. As we sang the words of the chorus, "And I will raise them up on the last day," many of us raised our arms. We sang that song at Charlie Watts' and Michael Sampson's funerals, and we sang that song at the installation of the Rev. Brooke Myers as rector of Holy Communion. And when we sing that song, we are one with the Spirit.

Easter Brunch – during the 1990s, we served festive Easter brunches. Rip van Winkle led the food preparation on Saturday mornings with help from sous-chefs Denise Sommers and Donna Marin, among others. We dressed in pastels, except for John Drescher, who wore Astairean top hat, tails, and spats, and Al Wiman, who wore his Scottish regalia, including pleated, plaid kilt.

The Jesse Tree – Since 1997, we have decorated a Jesse Tree on the second Sunday of Advent (except for Advent 2004 when we celebrated on the third Sunday). The idea came from Amy Fisher, a student in church school. The first "tree" was what Kathy van Bakergem, then a teacher, remembers as "a great weedy thing out of the alley." They parked it in the middle of the pool table. The classes crafted paper symbols from Old Testament stories and decorated the tree with harps and rainbows and water jugs. Welles Chapman enticed his dad, the rector, to come from coffee hour in South Parish Hall to come see the tree in North Parish Hall – and a tradition was born. The next year, the tree, a real deciduous tree harvested by Jim Pfaff, stood in the sanctuary, and Dave van Bakergem hoisted year-old Matt to put on the final touch.

From about 1992-2002, we sang the chorus of James Andris's song "The Jesse Tree" as we processed. Often, Amy Adams Squire strummed her guitar and sang the verses with Tom Weber, Stephen Nichols, and/or Kate Haggans. We all sang the chorus: "Here's a tree to please us. At its top is Jesus. From the stump there shot forth this lovely tree. Mary was its scion and the Crown of Zion. On its branches hangs God's history for you and me."

The Christmas Pageant -- We have measured children's growth by the parts they play, rising from toddler angels to teenage Josephs or narrators. Each pageant drew tears to grown-ups' eyes and/or laughter (usually suppressed but at risk of suffocation) to their lips.

Because Kathy van Bakergem had applied her theater experience to work with the Church School children, she knew they enjoyed putting on skits. Bill Chapman loved the idea of having the children put on a Christmas pageant, Kathy remembered. Her memories of years of pageants are revealed in vignettes.

Sara Parks-Clifford, as the Virgin Mary, reached into the poinsettias banked behind her and enthusiastically hoisted out the baby Jesus right on cue. Chantell Peete, playing the Virgin Mary, wrote out her part on the palm of her hand with a Magic Marker pen before the start of the pageant; when she peeked at her sweaty palm, she wasn't able to read a word amid the purple smears. "Her face registered surprise, confusion, and betrayal," Kathy recalled. Emily Adams as Gabriel arrived at dress rehearsal the day before the pageant on her brand new crutches with her entire leg swathed in a plaster cast. Tommy Kirk, at three months, played the Baby Jesus, when his big sister Laura played Mary in 1994. Emma Ferguson, the last and littlest angel of that year's pageant, slammed the sacristy door (Blam!) after the angels' entrance. Teenager Anne Uhlemann sang "O Holy Night." Cheerful, good-natured Joan Gregory willingly assumed the role of a missing Wise One at the very last minute; Kathy said she picked Joan because Joan wore a gorgeous, gold outfit. Bearded John Clifford and Jim Pfaff were conscripted to play Wise Ones when the number of children didn't equal the number of parts. At a rehearsal, Matt Daughaday insisted on playing his violin solo just days after his mother Leila's funeral, but an ice storm forced Kathy to cancel that year's pageant.

The Epiphany procession replaced the Christmas pageant in 2004 and 2005. The children wear costumes fashioned by Laurie Murphy, one of Alexandra and Ethan Cadenhead's mothers.

Chapmans' Open House – during Bill's rectorship, the Chapmans invited the parish to celebrate the New Year at an Open House at 5132 Westminster Street. No matter what other dishes we laid atop the dining room table, Ellie's Southern heritage was always honored with plenty of pots of hoppin' John.

Trinity Picnic – for years, we celebrated our "Patronal" feast at Site X in Tower Grove Park by making a "disorderly nonparade caravan to the park," according to Bill. The picnic included an intergenerational softball game and way too much delicious, nondietary food. In more recent years, the Trinity picnic has taken place on the south patio and lawn. We scratched the softball game but not the food.

Pentecost – We wear red. Only the stone foundation keeps the church from being lifted up by the helium in red balloons taped in bouquets to the pews. We listen to Acts 2:1-11 proclaimed in as many languages as we can speak. For example, in 1987, Frank Oakes spoke Russian; John Works, Hausa; and Hazel Kirk, Middle English; on Whitsunday 1993, among other languages and readers, Jerry Martin read in French, Anne Uhlemann in German, and Joel Lewis in Greek. When the Rev. Jennifer Phillips came in 1995, she added her native Welsh. Bryce Mouw (1938-2003), droning Chinese alone at the end of the round of tongues, increased the smiles that had begun with our joy and thrill at the babble of the Gospel.

The idea for launching evangelistic balloons came from Kathy van Bakergem. The Church School children slipped papers marked with Scripture, the "good news," into the balloons with a note asking whoever found it to let us know how far we had spread the word of the Lord. A note in a 1986 Trinity Times reported balloons sighted by Trinity Lutheran Church in Red Bud, Ill., and another from a farmer in Donnelson, Ill. "I like to think of the 98 or so ... waiting to go bang in someone's imagination and heart. ... Think and pray about the balloons and about the winds that carry them – and so much else across the whole earth. They're harmless, hopeful and loving," Bill wrote. A squib in the April 1989 Trinity Times reported that a farmer from Frankford, Mo., 100 miles north of St. Louis, returned a "tired red balloon."

We processed out of church to stand on the south lawn as Kathy or a priest said a prayer, and then we released our red balloons, dotting the skies (and sometimes the trees). The sight delighted us but tended to confuse the street people. Because of Anne's concern for the ecology, especially for the lives of birds, the balloons were sadly retired in 2003, and now, we blow bubbles into the blue, blue sky.

Afterwards, we eat strawberries and shortcake in South Parish Hall, thanks to legions of strawberry trimmers, shortcake cutters, and whipped-cream spritzers.

Mardi Gras – In the Seventies and Eighties, the Central West End was the place to be in St. Louis for Mardi Gras. Although those neighborhood celebrations are long over, we usually celebrate Shrove Tuesday with pancakes. Some of us dress up (sometimes in clothes of the opposite gender), and we lace our necks in Mardi Gras beads. Some years, we've added a Hymn Sing with Kate Haggans or Jim Andris at the piano. In 1991, we devoured "crepes with wild toppings," according to Susan Nanny, and John and Barbara Uhlemann led us in folk dancing.

Homecoming Dinner – In 1976, pledged income dropped to \$12,000 from 130 pledgers (a loss of 25 pledging units). Income rose the following year because of a fellowship dinner suggested by the Every-member Canvass Steering Committee. "We need to get ourselves together," George Friesen had written in the Summer 1977 Trinity Times. The first parish Homecoming dinner occurred on September 30, 1977, with Tony and Eloise Stevens in charge. In 1978, the dinner was called the Annual Dinner, and it was held in late October during the Every-member Canvass. Subsequently, the Homecoming Dinner has been an autumnal event.



Annual Meeting Dinner – This dinner has usually been a potluck, but in the last few years, we have been encouraged and led by coordinator Gloria Winston to make this one a Soul Food dinner, so the vittles include grits and spicy greens from the African-Americans and Kraft Macaroni 'n' Cheese, the soul food of one Angla-American.

Homecoming Talent Show – on Sept. 22, 1991, after the Homecoming potluck, we took seats in the sanctuary to applaud our talent, booked by Bill Ader. Kathy van B. served as a sparkling mistress of ceremonies. Jim Andris started with Scott Joplin's "The Rose Leaf Rag" and Mary Ellen Anderson ended by playing "Home on the Range" on her violin as we sang. Among other acts that night, the teenagers, including Matt van Bakergem and Melissa Rathbone-Mouw, pantomimed to "Time Warp" from "The Rocky Horror Show," with Susan Nanny shimmying in a red, fringed dress. Tom Coleman sang, and Reuben Rigel recited Lincoln's Gettysburg Address.

That was the first of a dozen intergenerational talent shows. Memorable acts over the years include Betsey and Elizabeth Gardner and their dancing poodles, a leather-clad quartet (Kate Haggans in drag), Mary Russell's story-telling, Jarrett Young on Sengalese drum, David Pinkard as the devil, and Barbara Bradshaw and Jane Edwards in a comedy shtick based on the exhortation "If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands." Margaret van Bakergem and Emily Gerteis choreographed and performed their own dance numbers (including the Macarena one year); when they capered down the center aisle and tumbled acrobatically back into the chancel, they took our breath away.

Laura Kirk sang "Over the Rainbow" in a Garlandesque pinafore, Tom and Ellen Weber sang Harry Chapin, and Gil Fisher directed his sight-impaired singing group, Visions in Performance. Under the direction of Sister Martha Baker, the Ladies' Cemetery-improvement Sodality Choir (the name came from *Friendship Village* by Zona Gale) sang old-timey hymns such as "Whispering Hope." They wore flowered frocks with hats and gloves (they rebelled against corsetry). At one show, Sister Kate Worland "signed" for "This Little Light of Mine."

One of the most anticipated acts each year was Bill Ader's comedy routine. He often shared secretarial secrets, such as how to answer callers' questions like "What time is the noon service?" He always ended with his slightly irreverent, wittily observed, and rib-cracking funny Top Ten List (à la David Letterman), among them, Top Ten Ways You Know the Search for a New Rector Is Not Going Well, Top Ten Acts That Didn't Make the Cut for This Year's Talent Show, and The Top Ten Lines Heard at a Vestry Meeting ("I thought *you* were bringing the Ouija board").

ST. CECILIA SOCIETY

The St. Cecilia Society was begun in 1957 by organist and choir director Mary Gallatin, among others, and continued its annual festival programs until 1998. The group formed to raise money to move and rebuild the organ. The Society held concerts each year on the Sunday closest to November 22, the feast day of St. Cecilia, a 3rd-century martyr, most famous since the 16th century as the patron of musicians. At first, remembered Trinity's long-time organist Helen Hendry in a 2005 interview, the Evensongs were followed by hors d'oeuvres and wine, which was followed by the concert. The order was switched to Evensong-concert-dinner so that singing no longer followed imbibing, she said.

The concerts built up a reputation in St. Louis. The Society presented programs of poetry, dance, steel drummers, barbershop quartets, sitar players, and Dixieland bands, as well as more traditional instrumental and vocal fare. The Trinity choir often joined with other churches' choirs

as well as with vocal groups from other venues. In 1960, the Society presented the first performance of "The Play of Daniel" outside of New York City, with special permission from ProMusica, the world-renowned early-music performing group. Over the years, members of Trinity's choir were joined by guest artists, such as Trevor Pinnock, British early-music luminary, and Karl Paukert, European organist, who "complained bitterly about our organ," Helen said. St. Louis counter-tenor Willard Cobb has been a frequent guest singer. "The first time he sang with us," recalled Helen, "he had not arrived when Evensong was finished." He did not arrive until minutes before he was to sing, throwing the organizers into a panic. "We learned that was his Standard Operating Procedure," Helen explained. "He always appears at the last minute and always sings like an angel."

In 1975, Music at Trinity started with seed money from the St. Cecilia Society. Music at Trinity began presenting a new series of chamber music and solo recital concerts at the church for a nominal fee. Although presenting concerts in a church setting was new to St. Louis at the time, the idea was soon squeezed out as other churches adopted it, Helen said. Originally given on four Sunday afternoons a year, these concerts served as a platform for already-established performers in the community, several of them members of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra. In a 1983 review in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, music critic Frank Peters wrote, "Trinity Church's acoustics, the best on the chamber music circuit in St. Louis, probably helped the musicians as well as the listeners." Short of operating funds and board members, Music at Trinity presented its last concert in March 1985.

The St. Cecilia Society not only raised money to repair Trinity's organ but also proceeds from concerts paid for Trinity's harpsichord and the Yamaha piano. To honor the contribution the St. Cecilia Society made to Trinity, one of the events of our 150th anniversary was "St. Cecilia Remembered" in April 2005. We celebrated Evensong from the 1928 *Book of Common Prayer* set to profound, inspiring music commissioned from Trinity's organist, Jeffrey L. Nall.

TRINITY MOMENTS

The Rev. Tracey Lind, dean of Trinity Cathedral in Cleveland, Ohio, wrote *Interrupted by God*, a series of essays collected and published in 2005. In her Introduction, Dean Lind defines what she means: "Many people believe that interruptions are a nuisance. Interruptions break into the normal state of affairs and stop the continuity of events ... but Christ happens in the interruptions. I believe that Christ is always standing in the shadows of life, and every now and again, the Risen Christ comes out and is made known to us through some person, action, or event, an interruption into the ordinary realm of possibility."

She might as well have been defining the "Trinity Moment." Yes, sometimes they're messy and unorthodox -- the Paschal candle toppling over into the lilies at a Great Vigil, an incense ember's being swatted by a broom-wielding Susan Adams, a twisted tongue during a reading (Bill accidentally prayed, "...here we present unto thee, O Lord, our souls and bottoms" instead of "our souls and bodies," coincidentally after having fallen on the ice). But these moments are so "us" that we wonder if they could happen anywhere else.

† At the conclusion of The Great Vigil (12:30 a.m., about 1995), thurifer Matthew Haggans took out the thurible with coals still smoking through South Parish Hall. The smoke set off the fire alarm. A few moments later, a fire truck arrived, and half-a-dozen fire fighters marched and clanked up the center aisle of the church in full regalia, looking for a fire to put out. Altar personnel and sacristans took a few minutes to figure out where the "fire" might be.

† Carrie Weber, 2, just LOVED “Joy to the World,” the recessional hymn for Christmas 1992. When she broke free from her parents upon hearing the first strains, got to the middle of the aisle, and danced, she stopped the recessional party. Susan Nanny just waited, smiling broadly at the joyful child.

† John Drescher fainted Thanksgiving Eve, circa 1996. An ambulance came after him while the service continued. As he was being wheeled out on the gurney, he rose up at the crossing of the sanctuary, flashed his great, big smile, and waved like Queen Elizabeth, assuring everyone that he’d be okay. Meanwhile, Kitty moaned in the pew: “I don’t need this. I have 20 people coming for dinner tomorrow and a turkey to defrost.”

† Tom Weber and Chuck McManis remember the men’s spirituality meeting in 1993 when Ron Ciolli told of a dream he’d had the night before: walking on a beach in Puerto Rico, he encountered a figure coming to visit. The man’s face was Ron’s own, and he was quite convinced the man was God coming. (Ron died of AIDS on Feb. 16, Ash Wednesday, 1994.)

† In the mid-Seventies, Joan Dunbar concluded her reading of the Genesis creation story, “This is the word of the Lord – but obviously written by a man.” Bill Chapman laughed. He caught liturgist Dick Tombaugh glaring at Joan and then at him. Bill laughed harder.

† Margaret van Bakergem might be the only child ever baptized at Trinity without actually being named. From the start of the ceremony in 1984, Baby Margaret howled. Her crying was so loud and steady that Bill Chapman simply could not be heard. Laura Kirk was duly named “Laura Anne” and baptized; Jenny Weber was duly named “Mary Jennifer” and baptized, but when it came time to deal with the noisy Margaret, Bill literally screamed, “Please! Name this Child!!” Pat Sweet, her godmother, called out Margaret’s name, but no one could hear.

† About 1999, before the processional one Sunday, while waiting in the library, Jennifer Phillips, said wistfully, “Why doesn’t anyone wear hats to church anymore? I miss them.” Acolyte Gil Fisher heard her and set the telephone tree abuzz. The next Sunday, Trinity looked like Ascot: heads were hatted -- a demure blue velvet derby, a Fifties’ floral designed by St. Louis milliner Gertrude Menczer, the “black whimsy” that had belonged to Betty Weber’s grandmother. Gil himself wore a broad-brimmed straw hat like a real Southern lady. The look on Jennifer’s face as she first entered the sanctuary was priceless: what began as surprise settled into joy.

† On May 23, 1993, Bob Foxworth collapsed as intercessions were being bid. On hand to help were doctors Carlos Daughaday and Bonnie Westrope and priest Susan Nanny. The service continued despite the little commotion until Bill Chapman halted the liturgy to exhort us to pray for Bob. The prayerful silence continued as the paramedics arrived and cared for Bob. After he was wheeled out, the service continued, but we were not the same.

† At a Great Vigil about 1999, we were still in semidarkness and holding our candles when the children lined up to see the baptism up close. A candle got too close to Katie Ferguson’s beautiful hair, and it went up. Before she was aware what was happening, loving (and panicky) hands were beating her about the head and shoulders to put her out.

† Early 1994 -- time for Eli Nanny-Holmes to be baptized. The Rev. Richard Valantasis and his wife Janet Carlson went to the Missouri Butcher Supply Co. across Euclid Avenue to find a large container for a big baby (10 lbs. at birth). This child was not to be sprinkled – he was to be dunked in Greek style. In the showroom, they pantomimed the immersion of the baby, much to the amazement and amusement of the clerks, until they found the right size. When it came time to baptize Eli, he fit perfectly in the tub, which was wrapped in Kente-like cloth. The priests and the boy’s mothers, Susan Nanny and Deb Holmes, performed the service joyfully as Richard coated that bare baby all over in chrism, making him shine as Christ’s own.

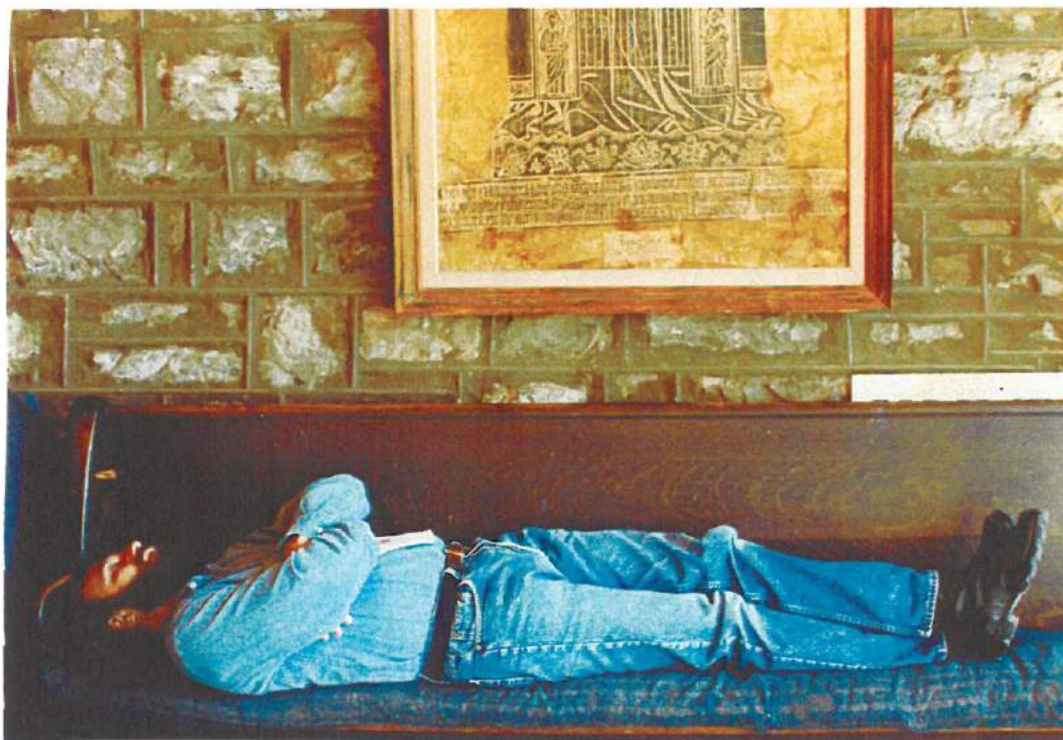
† In 2001, waves of Trinitarians showed up on the Sunday we were picketed by homophobes from Westboro Baptist Church in Topeka, Kan., with their pastor Fred Phelps and their poisonous picket signs (“God Hates Fags”). They were picketing because the Vestry had sent a letter to Missouri Gov. Bob Holden opposing his signing of a bill banning same-sex marriage. Several members of the Vestry met with the protestors outside the church while services were going on and everything ended quietly.

† About 2003, Anne Kelsey was building to the boffo ending of her sermon, the familiar quote from John Donne’s *Devotions*. Just as she recited “...and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls,” someone’s cell phone rang. We tried not to giggle, really we did, but “It tolls for thee” was drowned out in laughter.

† It was not uncommon during the Nineties for the service to be disrupted from one of the street people who sought shelter at Trinity on a Sunday morning; therefore it was also not uncommon to see Carlos Daughaday, M.D., and George Benson, M.D., slide quietly into the pew on either side of a man, often inebriated, to apply their professional and spiritual skills on his behalf. It became common enough that, for a while, whenever anyone else was obstreperous, a mock warning would be issued: “Do you want George and Carlos to come sit by you?”

† One Sunday about 1992, a sacristan had marked the wrong Gospel lesson, and the minister of ceremonies had not checked it. Bill Chapman did not realize the mistake until he reached mid-aisle. Much furrowing of bushy Irish brows. Then he leaned over to ask a congregant to borrow her bulletin with the reading printed on it. As he smoothed out her crumpled sheet and prepared to cense it, he muttered, “Thank God, we’re *laid-back* High Church!” With due dignity, he proceeded to proclaim the Gospel.

AMEN!

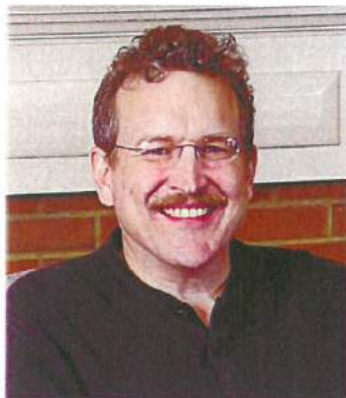




The Rev. Anne H. Kelsey



Jan Parker



David Crawford



Virginia Benson



Gil Fisher



Cheryl Sharpe



Jeff Wunrow



Kate Haggans



Jim Andris



Harry Leip



Nancy Cadenhead



Bill Layher



Kim Corliss

RECTORS OF TRINITY CHURCH 1855-2005

E. Carter Hutchinson		1855-1869
J.D. Easter		1869-1872
Joseph Cross		1872
The Rt. Rev. Charles Robertson		1873-1875
Edwin Coan		1875-1876
George C. Betts		1876-1886
E.C. Alcorn		1886
Edward Benedict		1886-1888
George C. Harris		1888-1890
Willain Bardens		1890-1901
H.C. Sinclair		1901-1908
H. Landon Rice		1908-1909
J. Boyd Coxe		1909-1934
Stephen F. Bayne, Jr.		1934-1938
Richard E. Benson		1939-1946
John H. Richardson		1946-1953
Arthur E. Walmsley	Priest-in-Charge	1953-1955
	Rector	1955-1958
Anthony J. Morley		1958-1965
Andrew G. Kunz, Jr.		1965-1967
Richard F. Tombaugh	Priest-in-Charge	1967
Donald McK. Williamson		1968-1969
Richard F. Tombaugh	Priest-in-Charge	1969-1970
	[Team Ministry Declared]	1970
Richard F. Tombaugh	Priest Associate	1970-1980
William D. Chapman	Priest Associate	1970-1980
Barrie A. Wilson	Priest Associate	1970-1972
John E. Mason	Priest Associate	1974-1980
William D. Chapman	Rector	1980-1993
Susan K. Nanny	Interim Rector	1993-1994
Jennifer M. Phillips	Rector	1995-2000
Lawrence N. Crumb	Interim Rector	2000-2001
Anne H. Kelsey	Rector	2001-

