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RUTGERS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

# Renewal

## What Do You Think?

1. How much weight have you lost wishing?
2. What triggers your anxiety?
3. A friend told me, "If I slip on a banana peel it's a tragedy but if someone else does it's funny."
4. When you greet someone, instead of saying "How are you?" say, "Tell me something good."
5. Spontaneity is living in the present.
6. Why ask the waiter/waitress to recommend something when they don't know your taste?
7. If you are a habitual liar how do you know when someone is telling you the truth?
8. Fear vs. command sense.
9. Can you not complain for one day?
10. Patience is under estimated.

11. WAKE-UP! GET UP! REFOCUS!
12. Who makes the schedules for televised sporting events?
13. What percentage of men/women sit/stand doing rush hour on public transportation?
14. Why are grandparents always smiling?
15. When you hear a cell phone conversation and the person is giving wrong information are you tempted to correct them?
16. Remember it's the thought that counts, when someone cooks you an awful meal.
17. No two people have the same degree of sympathy or compassion for one person.
18. How many times do you lose the same items?
19. Your level of self-confidence goes up when/if you like what you see in the mirror.
20. When you see a stranger eating something that looks and smells good, don't you want to ask for a bite/piece?

'Till next time,  
Jacquelyn M. Carpenter

## From the Interim Pastor

The Reverend David D. Prince

On May 11 we celebrated the third of the Christian Church's three major festivals: Pentecost. (The other two are Christmas and Easter.) Pentecost is often observed as "the birthday of the Church," because on what had been a Jewish harvest festival, the first followers of Jesus experienced a phenomenal manifestation of God's Spirit, usually called the Holy Spirit in the Church. At Rutgers this year we celebrated not only the presence of God's living Spirit among us but also the reception into membership of two young people affirming their Christian faith, Isabelle Christine Gale and DeYan Rebecca Jervis-McCarthy. We also commended Khalil Hamer on completing the Confirmation Class work.

Earlier in the month on May 4 our Special Events Committee, chaired by Wellington Jones, presented the annual program of special music generally know as "The Opera" at Rutgers. Proceeds from the sale of tickets help support our ministry through the Christopher Roberts shelter for homeless men. "The Opera" drew a large crowd into our sanctuary for memorable music and fellowship. Thanks to Wellington Jones and his Special Events Committee for all their hard work.

On May 18 we thanked our very capable seminary intern, Jacqui Van Vliet, for her year

of service among us. Jacqui has taught an adult Bible class, preached and assisted in worship leadership, and worked with our young people—all with skill and grace. She has brought a wealth of life experience as well as theological training to her ministry at Rutgers. I have enjoyed working with her, and the response to all she has done has been overwhelmingly positive. She will be a blessing to people wherever she is called in ministry.

That leaves the weekend of May 25—the Memorial Day holiday, when many people leave the city for the beginning of summer. Our Sunday service will include prayers for our nation and for peace in the world.

The Pastoral Nominating Committee has held two meetings and will continue meeting in May, working on our Church Information Form, which will be submitted to Louisville for entrance into the computer system where ministers seeking new calls and churches looking for new pastors are matched. The PNC elected Joan Keener as chair and Lisa Pinto as secretary. We can support the committee with our prayers as they seek God's will in finding Rutgers Church's next installed pastor.

I continue to be grateful for the privilege of being your interim pastor.

Dave Prince

## Getting to Know You: Steve Greer & Harris Shultz

by Elder Jeremiah

Two of our newer members and newly ordained officers, Steve Greer and Harris Shultz shared their stories after the church service. As an "Army Brat," Harris was born in the Panama Canal Zone. Shortly afterward, his father was reassigned to a military base in Izmir, Turkey, the South-East sub-regional headquarters of NATO. Harris' father retired from the Army early and the family settled in Richmond, Virginia. At the age of 8, Harris re-



members, being at a sleep over at a friend's house on a Saturday night. The next morning, the family was preparing to go to church (Southern Baptist), and they called his parents to get their permission to take Harris to church.

The experience left an indelible impression on Harris, and he wanted to attend the following Sunday.

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## Getting to Know You: Steve Greer & Harris Shultz

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Because of his interest, Harris' family began attending church regularly at River Road Presbyterian Church in Richmond, Virginia. At River Road, Harris participated in the youth group and youth choir. Sunday evenings they would do "youthful things," helping out a charitable organization, serving meals at a soup kitchen, or hearing a guest speaker talk about the significance of faith in Christian Rock music.

Steve childhood church experience was not dissimilar. A native son of Springfield, Illinois, Steve attended Hope Presbyterian Church with his family for several years, until the Greers transferred their membership to First Presbyterian Church in Springfield, Illinois, the church home of President and Mrs. Lincoln from 1849 - 1861. Steve was also active with the youth choir. A member of the church's Kirk Singers, Steve sang with them on tour in Canada and Chicago.

As time progressed, Harris attended Virginia Tech and majored in architecture until he found a calling in theater and transferred his major. Steve attended Northwestern University and found his passion in theater. As scholastic life grew, obligations mounted and time became scarce, their pursuit of a religious experience was placed on the back burner. "It was more of a pause," says Harris. "By that time my parents had moved to Kilmarnock, Virginia and had helped found St. Andrews Presbyterian Church there, so it wasn't the church I grew up in, but I would still go to church with my family."

Reflecting on this Steve said: "I think that it is a challenge for people in their 20's. I would go to church most frequently was when I went back to my parent's home to visit, so it wasn't consistent. Sure I would see people, hear

how they are doing and get updates, but it would be months between my visits home. When I think of church I think of community and family. The kids I sang with were also the kids I went to High School with. I only thought of church as that particular building in Springfield. I didn't know that I would find another church which would be able to replace that one."

After graduation, Harris attended NYU Film School, fell in love with New York and never left. Steve moved to Chicago for a few years but realized that if he wanted to make a living in theater, New York was the place to be.

Harris and Steve met through an on-line dating site, each being enthusiastically encouraged, if not arm twisted, by their good friends, Holly and Britt. They credit the internet for bringing them together in such a big city. Even though they only lived 5 blocks from each other, their paths had never crossed. This past September, they celebrated their 5th Anniversary with a Commitment Ceremony, at which David Prince presided. Surrounded by family and friends, "It was the greatest day of our lives."

Among their many interests, Harris and Steve love to host game nights with their friends at their home in Hell's Kitchen. Rumor has it that the game "Celebrity" is taken very seriously at their household. Harris has used his creative talents to renovate and redesign the apartment from top to bottom, with Steve contributing with manual labor.

Harris and Steve found Rutgers much like they found each other: through the internet. "In the growth of our relationship," Harris said, "we both started talking about our spiritual lives and how it had been important to us

[growing up]. We each wanted to find a home for that." "Although it was an easy decision to join Rutgers, emotionally it was a difficult decision to start looking for a church to join," Steve interjected. "We attended First Presbyterian Church on Fifth Avenue a number of times for Christmas and Easter services, especially when our families were in town. But we never really felt at home there. From the moment we walked in Rutgers we felt at home," Harris said. "When we returned, several people, including Dave Prince and Mary Birchard, remembered us," said Steve.

On his experience thus far as a deacon, Steve said; "The thing I love about [the Board of] Deacons is that it puts you out there to meet people. I am loving that. I feel that I am part of the functioning of the church; it is nice to feel like I am helping keep it up and running. You can really feel the vibrancy of the church."

As we look forward in the life of Rutgers, Steve said; "I hope the [Pastoral Nominating] Committee finds someone who is inspiring and can tie up all aspects of our lives together so that church becomes even more meaningful, and that we see how relevant the church is to our daily lives." Harris, who has been elected to the PNC, said he "feels honored to be able to serve on both the Session and the Pastoral Nominating Committee [PNC]. I am encouraged by the number of young families and am hoping, not neglecting our more mature congregants, that we can continue to encourage youthful participation of people in their twenties and thirties, to check us out, to join, to be part of this community as we continue to grow." ω

### Welcome to our Pastoral Nominating Committee Elected at the Congregational meeting on Sunday, March 30

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|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Warwick Busfield             | 6. Harold Manners                  |
| 2. Jennifer Finn                | 7. Lisa Pinto ( <i>secretary</i> ) |
| 3. Joan Keener ( <i>chair</i> ) | 8. Robert Shelton                  |
| 4. Nora Lidell                  | 9. J. Harris Shultz                |
| 5. Carl Lindskoog               |                                    |

## Torture is Wrong: Rutgers Adds its Voice

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Proud of his Greek lineage, imbued with the faith of the Greek Orthodox Church, while currently a worshipping member of the United Church of Christ, Gen. Xenakis is both well informed about military practices and passionate about the values that make torture inadmissible. His lecture will be followed by discussion. It will be an excellent time to ponder the issues involved, and should be helpful to all persons of faith, including any who may be confused or undecided about the topic. We are hoping for a large turnout, not only from Rutgers, but also from other communities of faith and residents in the area. We see the event as a gift to concerned people in Manhattan. Brigadier General Stephen Xenakis is today engaged in clinical practice, research, and consulting on mild traumatic brain injury & mental health in the military.

Meanwhile on April 30, the Metropolitan New York chapter of NRCAT conducted a workshop on how to work against torture, for clergy and church leaders. Rutgers Church was represented.

Anne Barstow and I attended the NRCAT founding conference at Princeton Seminary in January, 2006. From the outstanding lineup of speakers and the lively discussions I learned many things. The most surprising and disturbing to me was that getting people to organize and speak out against torture, or even to discuss it, is more difficult in churches than in other groups. Some studies show that opposition to torture is weaker among churchgoers than others.

I have pondered this a lot because to me there is no justification for torture, and I see it as the duty of Christians to condemn it. Both the dignity of the human person and the love of God for all who suffer make torture unjustifiable. At the Princeton conference, Professor Jeremy Waldron, formerly of Columbia University and now of NYU, whose field is the Philosophy of Law, gave a powerful speech explaining why an absolute ban against torture is fundamental to the very idea of law. But I have had to face the fact that not all Christians are ready to agree, or to speak out.

I have come to think that the question of torture puts many Christians into a severe bind: On the one hand, torture seems a flagrant violation of the Christian gospel of love. On the other hand, the Government seems to think that the use of torture is necessary in order to overcome terrorism. A person could become paralyzed by such a clear conflict of loyalties.

These days I find my mind going back again and again to something that happened when I was a very young man stationed in Germany with the U.S. Army of Occupation in the months after the surrender of Germany that ended World War II in Europe. I was working as a Chaplain's Assistant. The Chaplain and I had become friends with a family consisting of a mother and three grown daughters. Two of the daughters had worked during the war as civilians with the Germany army, one as a secretary, the other as a medical technician. After dinner one evening, they happened to mention that they had been in Warsaw at the time that the Jewish ghetto there was burned, killing all its inhabitants. Our friends said that they had stood on a hill and watched it burn. Chaplain Andy and I were aghast. Together, spontaneously, we exclaimed, "What on earth were

you thinking?" One of the two women answered for both in a soft voice, "They told us it was necessary."

That's the rationale for torture I am hearing from some people these days, even from some church people I know. It convinces me that we in the Christian community need to discuss frankly the world situation that we are in, and the priorities that guide us as members of the Body of Christ. The P&SJM hopes that some of this may happen during Torture Awareness Month in June. Come on June 22, bring your neighbors, and join the discussion!

There are many good resources:

- The Academy Award this year for Best Documentary Film was given to *Taxi to the Dark Side*. This powerful film starts with the true story of an Afghanistan taxi driver who was detained by U.S. forces, imprisoned at Baghram Air Base, and tortured so brutally that he died after 5 days. The film traces the responsibility for this and other torture crimes to the highest reaches of government. Shown last year at Tribeca Film Festival. I hear that HBO has bought the film and will air it in the Fall of 2008.
- *Standard Operating Procedure*, a documentary film by Errol Morris, who previously made *Fog of War*, among other notable films, will be screened this year at the Tribeca Film Festival. Morris has co-authored a book with the same title as the new film. Book and film are said to focus on the question of responsibility, beginning with the "few bad apples" at Abu Ghraib, and following the path of responsibility all the way to the top.
- *Ghosts of Abu Ghraib*, another powerful documentary, shown last fall here at Rutgers. It is being distributed by NRCAT.

Recommended reading:

- Danner, Mark. "Torture and Truth : America, Abu Ghraib, and the War on Terror." *New York: New York Review Books*, 2004. [First-rate investigative reporting.]
- Gushee, David. P. "5 Reasons Torture Is Always Wrong: And Why There Should be no Exceptions." *Christianity Today*, February 2006. [Reasoning from a Christian evangelical point of view.]
- McCoy, Alfred W. *A Question of Torture : CIA Interrogation, from the Cold War to the War on Terror*. New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006. [Perhaps the most widely respected study of the topic.]
- Waldron, Jeremy. "Torture and Positive Law: Jurisprudence for the White House." *Columbia Law Review* v. 105, no. 6 (October 2005).. [Why the prohibition of torture is fundamental to the rule of law. Tom Driver can make you a copy if interested: email <tfd3@columbia.edu>.]
- To add your name to the NRCAT Statement of Conscience, go to: <http://www.nrcat.org/index> and click on "Sign the Statement of Conscience. ω

# May 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 6:00 p.m. Meal Program 7:00 p.m. Movie Series <i>Every Thursday</i>	2 10:30 a.m. Mothers' Bible Study 6:00 p.m. Men's Shelter <i>Every Friday</i> S.K.A.T.E.	3 1:00 p.m. Opera Rehearsal 5:30 p.m. AA Meeting 6:00 p.m. Men's Shelter <i>Every Saturday</i>

4 12:45 p.m. Deacons Meeting 1:00 p.m. CROP Walk 2:30 p.m. Opera 6:00 p.m. Men's Shelter <i>Every Sunday</i>	5 12:15 p.m. Al-Anon 6:00 p.m. Cub Scouts <i>Every Monday</i>	6 9:00 p.m. Worship Committee 12:15 p.m. Al-Anon 6:00 p.m. Cub Scouts 6:00 p.m. Men's Support Group (HIV+/PLWA) 8:00 p.m. Men's Al-Anon <i>Every Tuesday</i>	7 5:30 p.m. AA Meeting <i>Every Wednesday</i>	8
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Sundays	
9:45 a.m.	Adult Sunday School
9:45	Confirmation Class
10:00	Adult Choir Rehearsal
10:45	Infant & Child Care
11:00	Worship Service
11:15	Sunday School (ages 3-12)
12:15 p.m.	Coffee Hour
12:45	Choir Rehearsal
6:00	Men's Shelter

11 Mother's Day & Pentecost Sunday 3:00 p.m. Violin Recital	12	13 6:30 p.m. Session Meeting	14	15
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18 12:45 p.m. P&SJM Meeting	19 6:30 p.m. Christian Education Meeting	20	<h3>Preaching Schedule</h3> <p>May 4 ___ 7th Sunday of Easter; Charles A. Amstein preaching</p> <p>May 11 ___ Pentecost Sunday; David D. Prince preaching</p> <p>May 18 ___ Trinity Sunday; David D. Prince preaching</p> <p>May 25 ___ 8th Sunday in Ordinary time; David D. Prince preaching</p>	
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25 3:00 p.m. Recital Concert	26 Memorial Day Church & Office Building Closed	27
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Birthdays!	
1 Luke Chang & Dina Phelps	26 Eleanor Patrick
10 Juliet Pritner	27 Emmet Smith
15 W. Clifton Fisher	29 Dashiell Krasney
17 Beverly Thompson	30 Elinor Bowles, David Hill & Ruth Munson
19 Bill Bailey	31 Tom Driver & Cynthia Gale
21 Nora Lidell	
22 Doug Grace	

## May 2008 at Rutgers Church, and Beyond

### Safe Sanctuary Discussions

The Christian Education Committee and Session have recently decided to review church policies to see if we are doing all we can to be a "safe sanctuary": a church where children (and adults) are safe from abuse, especially sexual abuse, and where they can also find sanctuary and help if they are facing abuse outside our walls. An ad-hoc group (Lynne Morris, Juliet Pritner, Jeremiah, Jim Ellis and Cheryl Pynch) has begun researching and discussing this complex topic and are discovering there are many aspects to making a church as safe as possible for children and teachers, parents and staff. We have shared our work - which is far from complete - with Session and with parents and teachers at the parent/teacher potluck on April 11th. If you are interested in learning more or being part of this ad-hoc group, please talk to Cheryl.

### Sunday School Teachers

Children need the nurture of many adults in the faith community - not just parents or "experts" in education. The Christian Education Committee has begun recruiting teachers

for the 2008-2009 Season. We provide curriculum and help. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Cheryl Pynch or Jeremiah.

### Welcome to two New Members

On May 4th the Session voted to receive confirmands Isabelle Gale and DeYan Jervis-McCarthy in active membership of the church, and on Pentecost Sunday, May 11, they made a public profession of faith and were welcomed into the congregation. They were also honored, along with classmate Khalil Hamer, for completing the confirmation class. Parents of all three students hosted a wonderful luncheon upstairs after the service.

Khalil, DeYan and Isabelle also presented a framed picture of watercolors they had painted of scenes from the Gospel of Luke. We are now looking for just the right spot to hang it in the church!

## Torture is Wrong: Rutgers Adds its Voice by Reverend Dr. Tom Driver

Never did I think that it would one day be necessary to try to convince Americans of the wrongness of torture; but that day has come. The position of the U.S. Government regarding torture has, in fact, been murky for some time. On March 8 of this year it became both clearer and worse. On that day the President vetoed a bill passed by Congress that would have prohibited the CIA from using interrogation techniques that amount to torture. Such techniques had already been prohibited by a revised edition of the Army Field Manual, which applies to all branches of the military. Congress voted to extend the prohibition to all other Government agencies, including the CIA, but the President would not agree.

That's the bad news, or anyway a piece of it. The really bad news is that torture continues to be practiced in our name.

The good news is that opposition to the use of torture is growing. Concerned Presbyterians have created an organization called "No to Torture," with a very good website:

[www.no2torture.org](http://www.no2torture.org), which held a successful seminar about torture last January at Columbia Theological Seminary in Georgia.

Early this year the Session of Rutgers Presbyterian Church voted unanimously in favor of a request from our Peace and Social Justice Network (P&SJM) to make this church a Participating Member of the National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT). Founded two years earlier at a conference at Princeton Theological Seminary led by theologian George Hunsinger, NRCAT is steadily gaining adherents. More than 188 churches and other organizations have joined. I represent Rutgers on its Participating Member Council. More than 18,000 individuals have signed the NRCAT Statement of Conscience, which is short and to the point:

*Torture violates the basic dignity of the human person that all religions, in their highest ideals, hold dear. It degrades everyone involved -- policy-makers, perpetrators and victims. It contradicts our nation's most cherished ideals. Any*

*policies that permit torture and inhumane treatment are shocking and morally intolerable.*

*Nothing less is at stake in the torture abuse crisis than the soul of our nation. What does it signify if torture is condemned in word but allowed in deed? Let America abolish torture now -- without exceptions.*

Our P&SJM is now planning for Rutgers to participate during the month of June in Torture Awareness Month, which is being organized nationally by NRCAT. Participating churches throughout the nation will hang anti-torture banners outside their buildings. Ours will proclaim: **"NO TO TORTURE."**

On Sunday, June 22, at 2:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary we will present a lecture about torture by Brigadier General Stephen Xenakis. Since retiring from the U.S. Army Medical Corps after a 28-year career, Gen. Xenakis has been traveling widely across the country to speak against the torture and abuse of detainees in US custody. He has called attention to the extensive evidence that psychological torture by US personnel -- including sensory deprivation, sexual humiliation, and forced nudity -- are not isolated to Abu Ghraib.