MISSION STATEMENT  “As followers of Jesus Christ, we rejoice in God’s plan for a just, loving, and peaceful world, and we commit ourselves to making it a reality for all people everywhere.”

From the Interim Pastor
The Reverend David D. Prince

M   oving through the season of Lent (so named because the days are lengthening) we look ahead to the Good Friday-Easter event. I say events rather than event because Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection cannot easily be separated and treated individually. The fourth Gospel speaks of Jesus’ being lifted up and being glorified. He was lifted up on a cross, and he was lifted up from death to life—the manifestation of God’s love, which goes to any length to accomplish its purpose and which cannot be defeated by evil or mortality.

Although there will be words spoken in our worship services of Holy Week, we acknowledge that human speech is inadequate for expressing the mystery of God’s self-disclosure in the death and resurrection of Jesus. We hear the Biblical narratives of what happened outside Jerusalem almost two thousand years ago; we resonate with music that amplifies the narratives; and we open our hearts to truth that reaches the innermost chambers of our hearts.

In preparation for observing Holy Week, I invite you to read and re-read chapters 18 through 20 in the Gospel according to John. (Borrow a Bible from the church pews if you don’t have access to one in your home.) Read with the understanding that the Gospels give us the early church’s memory of the ending of Jesus’ life and ministry, which was more a beginning than an ending. Read with openness to realities available to intuition as well as intellect.

I look forward to sharing the special worship services of Holy Week with you: Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Eve Saturday, and Easter Sunday morning. In our worship we will be celebrating the unconditional love of God, which is the foundation of our life as a church and our hope for life and beyond. Alleluia.

Dave Prince

What Do You Think?

1. Which would be more difficult: having to live out your worse nightmare or living the life you have?
2. How do you “converse” with someone?
3. We complain about the dark, gloomy days of fall and winter but he first sunshiny day we put sunglasses on.
4. Hold your head up and rotate your shoulders back a little more than usual/normal and see if your attitude, energy level and self-confidence improve while walking?
5. It’s not easy turning the page on emotions.
6. Do you accomplish your daily routine exactly the same each time?
7. Does grieving time have categories?
8. Are you stubborn or a slow learner?
9. How many back-track and find their lost items?
10. No hugs, no kisses, but always there.

*Till next time,
Jacquelyn M. Carpenter

Please welcome our new officers elected at the 211th Annual Meeting of the Congregation:

Trustees: Don Ridings (class of 2009), Nicole Byrns, Kenneth Starger (both in the class of 2011);
Elders: Andy Achsen, Lynne Morris, Juliet Primer, J. Harris Shultz (all in the class of 2011);
Deacons: Gladys Morris (class of 2010), Bill Bailey, Mary Birchard, Stephen Greer, Sheila Smith, Eric Woodall (all in the class of 2011).

A Special Thanks to outgoing officers:
Elders: Ulla Farmer and Susan Scherer;
Deacons: Pamela Byrd, Kim Hodges, Alice Hudson;
Trustees: Christine Gorman, Valerie Kay;
for their years of service on the church boards and their love, dedication, and support of the Rutgers community through their leadership, time, talents and energy.

Holy Week at Rutgers Presbyterian Church offers multiple opportunities for meaningful worship.

Maundy Thursday, March 20, at 7 p.m. is a service of the Last Supper, with foot-washing and readings that trace Jesus’ journey to the cross.

Good Friday, March 21, at 12 noon - 2:30 p.m. is a series of meditations on the Seven Last Sayings of Jesus by West Side clergy, interspersed with music from the Rutgers Church Choir.

The Vigil of Easter, Saturday, March 22, at 7 p.m. is a service of spiritual preparation for celebrating Jesus’ resurrection on Easter Sunday. Renewal of baptismal vows is part of the service.

Easter Sunday, March 23, there will be an early communion service on the church steps (9 a.m.) followed by breakfast on the fifth floor. The festival service of worship at 11 a.m. includes brass, the sacrament of Holy Communion, and an atmosphere of grateful praise.

Anticipated service time is approximately 1 hr., 15 min.
Under the leadership of seminary intern Carolina Treviño, Presbyterian Welcome has been redesigning and refining its website. One exciting new feature is a devotional blog called Psalm 27:1 — a spot on the website where reflections are posted and readers are invited to respond. In February 18, Trustee Beverly Thompson, member of Rutgers and their official liaison to Presbyterian Welcome, posted this devotional. We have printed it here for those who do not have computers, and to entice web users to visit the site at www.presbyterianwelcome.org.

Traveled So Far — Psalm 27:1
Psalm 27:1

“The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?”

Psalm 121:1

“I will lift up my eyes to the hills – from whence comes my help.”

1972 – Winter
I did it! I graduated, well almost – I was in my second week of student teaching speech and drama and not sure I would make it to week ten. As I traveled back from my morning shift at the school to Montmorency Medical Center for my 3:31 shift, my speedometer crawled along at 40mph.

I had been so excited about my first job as an adjunct recreational therpaist in the Department of Psychology. Unheard of at 22, with only an undergraduate minor in psychology, my passion had always been to work in psychiatry. I almost quit life that day – and I knew we were all feared losing my job. I was scared, not of delinquent students, or manic patients – but of two new patients - a gay man and a lesbian who had come in for depression and were immediately scheduled for ECT, thorazine, and a rigorous treatment plan for “deviant” behavior.

I kept a secret of my family and friends because of our lifestyles – and did. Some permanently – had lost the will to live, and found their way in – and sometimes never out of psych wards.

I knew we were all feared losing jobs, families, and friends because of our lifestyles – and did. Some permanently – had lost the will to live, and found their way in – and sometimes never out of psych wards.

I almost quit that day that day – and both jobs. It was the opened hospital chapel door that pulled me in after my 3:11 shift that day, and every day for another year – to pray – and a letter arriving from my mother telling me if I could make it through student teaching & a new job – I could do anything. She always closed with: “Don’t forget that God holds the key. And – don’t forget God loves you, no matter what.”

2007 – Christmas

We did it! The word “deviant” erased from the Psychiatric Association’s description of us long ago in 1975. The rest – all these years later – is history, or is it?

Just yesterday I once again found my eyes teetering, my fists raised above my desk at work. A colleague and new friend proclaimed that we had to bring down gays and lesbians from the pulpit – that they must not be allowed to serve in any official capacity in the church – and what did I think?

I said, “you may want to rethink your invitation to me to join you for the holidays”.

“What?” she exclaimed. I proudly said, “I am a deacon, a trustee, and a lesbian, and you may want to rethink your invitation.”

On Christmas Day sitting around a festive table with 11 evangelicals each reading Presbyterian reflections from our Advent booklet - was the highlight of my holidays! I had walked where Jesus would have wanted me to walk.

And, yes, Mom, I do pray – most every day. “Oh, Park Ranger’s Coming To Christmas Dinner” – I say. As you and I travel back in time – we realize we have traveled so far. We can’t stop now.

— Beverly Thompson, Prahban

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Visit to the New York African Burial Ground National Monument

On February 24, after a worship service with glorious music and a festive coffee hour in honor of Black History Month, ten of us went downtown to Broadway and Duane Street for a tour of the Monument with our New York Park Ranger. The monument itself was beautiful – with black and green marble and moving inscriptions – but equally important were the stories and history of African Burial Ground as told to us by our guide. We encourage everyone to visit the monument, if possible during a weekday from 9:5 when the visitor’s center is open. Below is a Moment for Mission given by Khalil Hamer on February 3rd about the African Burial Ground:

THE AFRICAN BURIAL GROUND NATIONAL MONUMENT

The African Burial Ground is a seven-acre historic memorial site in Lower Manhattan. The site was named a National Monument in February 2006. The African Burial Ground is estimated to hold about 20,000 skeletal remains of 17th and 18th century Africans and African Americans. It is widely acknowledged as one of the most important discoveries of this century.

The discovery of the African Burial Ground is important because it helps us understand how New York played a critical role in the Trans-Atlantic slave trade. And, it helps us recognize how free and enslaved Africans contributed to building The City of New York.

The African Burial Ground was uncovered in 1991 during the pre-construction phase of a federal office building. During this phase, 419 African remains were excavated. When the public became aware of the remains they

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One Couple’s Spiritual Journey into Protest

By Anne Barlow

When Phil Gates, a Presbyterian elder from Arizona, retired as a school principal, he and his wife Lorie looked forward to becoming fulltime volunteers for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Participating in social protest, however, was not on their minds; it was “not their thing.” When Phil heard about the Colombia Accompaniment Program, he signed up, because he wanted to stand with fellow Presbyterians who were being harassed by their own government. The human suffering that he witnessed in the displaced persons communities in Colombia unsettled him so, however, that on his way home he could not rest. He knew that our government backs the Colombian government. This crisis led him to question how Christians can respond to such injustice. Phil did not rest until he had talked with aides to his Congresspersons, and had spoken in many churches in his area. Even then, he knew he must do more. He asked, “Is it right to do civil disobedience, to break one law in order to honor a higher law?” Phil and Lorie prayed about this throughout a long summer.

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March 2008

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat
2 12:45 p.m. Deacons Meeting
3 6:00 p.m. Men’s ShelterEvery Sun
4 9:00 p.m. Worship Commit-tee
12:15 p.m. Al-Anon
12:15 p.m. Al-Anon
12:15 p.m. Al-Anon
12:15 p.m. Al-Anon
8:00 p.m. Men’s Support Group (HW+ / PLAX)
5 3:30 p.m. AA Meeting
5:00 p.m. Every Wednesday
5:00 p.m. Movie Series
10:30 a.m. Mothers’ Bible Study
12:00 p.m. Good Friday Service
21 12:00 p.m. Good Friday Service
1 11:15 a.m. Worship Service
6:00 p.m. Men’s Shelter
6:00 p.m. Men’s Shelter
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6:00 p.m. Men’s Shelter
6:00 p.m. Men’s Shelter
10 6:30 p.m. Local Benevo-
11 6:30 p.m. Session Meeting
16 12:45 p.m. P&amp;SN Meeting
17 6:30 p.m. International Be-
18 6:30 p.m. International Be-
19 7:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday Service
20 7:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday Service
21 12:00 p.m. Good Friday Service
22 7:00 p.m. Easter Vigil Service
24 Easter Monday Church & Office Building Closed
Preaching Schedule
March 2 ___ 6th Sunday in Lent; David Prince preaching
March 9 ___ 5th Sunday in Lent; Cynthia Campbell preaching
March 16 ___ Palm Sunday; David Prince preaching
March 23 ___ Easter Sunday; David Prince preaching
March 30 ___ 2nd Sunday of Easter; Phil Gates preaching

Sundays
9:45 a.m. Adult Sunday School
9:45 Confirmation Class
11:00 Adult Choir Rehearsal
11:45 Infant & Child Care
1:15 Worship Service
1:15 Sunday School (ages 3-12)
2:15 p.m. Coffee Hour
3:45 Choir Rehearsal
6:00 Men’s Shelter

Birthdays!

23 Phyllis Hill
6 Doris Bryant
12 Mary Birchard & Gillian Kim
14 Kim Hodges & Ian Smith
16 Ethel Knight
17 Atlas Hudson & De’Yan Jervis-McCarthy
18 Umberto Fadani & George Williamson

19 Jack Vasey
20 Mala Golper & Debra Gryte
23 Maria Knepp-Fadani
24 Valerie Key
25 Carole Banninger & Ulla Former
27 Chris Jones
28 Jeremiah Rosario

March 2008 at Rutgers Church, and Beyond

Blood Drive
Sunday, March 2, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.,
West End Synagogue

On Sunday, March 3, Rutgers will be joining with West End Synagogue, Lincoln Square Synagogue, Congregation Har- onim and the New York Blood Center in a drive to gather this life-saving resource for our neighbors. The donation center will be at West End Synagogue, 65th Street and Amsterdam Ave-
ue, beginning at 10:00 a.m. You must be 17 or older, in good health and at least 110 lbs. Medical conditions and risk factors that can prevent one from giving can be obtained at www.nybloodcenter.org/index.jsp?ndt=2 or by calling (800) 688-0900. If you would like to participate, please contact Cheryl Pyrch at the church office.

Ecumenical Advocacy Days in Washington, D.C.
Friday - Monday, March 7 - 10, Hilton Alexandria Mark Center

For the 6th year in a row, nearly 1,000 religious individuals will gather in Washington, D.C., from Friday night thru Sunday for study, worship, conversation and networking around issues of peace and justice. On Monday, groups will be organized to visit Representatives. Rutgers has been represented nearly every year at the conference. The workshop leaders and plenary speakers are first-rate, and you can choose a particular area of interest (Middle East, Eco-Justice, Domestic, Africa, Latin America, Peace and Global Security, etc.). The Peace & Social Justice Network encourages us all to push past our comfort zone on issues of peace and justice. More information can be found at www.advocacydays.org or by contacting Cheryl at (212) 877-8227, x 205 or cheryl@rutgerschurch.com.

Presbyterian Welcome Worship and Response
Monday, March 3, 6:30 p.m., Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church

On February 11, the Permanent Judicial Committee of the General Assembly handed down a ruling that contradicts God’s radically inclusive, affirming, unconditional love and quantities

whom God can call into service. Please join Presbyterian Wel-
come and other concerned Christians on Monday, March 31 at 6:30 p.m. at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church (5th Avenue and 55th Street). A copy of the ruling may be downloaded at www.pcusa.org/policy/decisions/pjc21810.pdf. Please contact Cheryl for more information.

Christian Education Potluck Supper
Friday, April 11, 6:30 p.m., Daniel Russell Room

Rutgers Presbyterian Church

The Mission Review Report has been approved by the Presbytery of New York City’s Committee on Ministry (COM). You may download a copy from our website at www.rutgerschurch.com. Limited copies are available upon request for those individuals who do not have computer access.

Congregational Meeting called
Sunday, March 30, Sanctuary

A Congregational Meeting has been called for Sunday, March 30, immediately following the worship service for the sole purpose of electing a Pastoral Nominating Committee (PNC), which will be charged with the duty of searching for our next installed pastor. All members are encouraged to attend the service and meeting.

One Great Hour of Sharing
Prater sharing changes lives—including our own. Remember your earliest lesson about sharing? As people in community with one another, we have come to realize that all of our gifts come from God, and that sharing enriches us all.

One Great Hour of Sharing offers an opportunity for each of us to share our re-

sources with our global community. More than just a mere handout, through the Pres-
byterian programs and their trusted partners around the world, we can indeed feel confident that the re-

sources we share will change the lives of recipients and provide the tools and training they require to build a sustainable source of income.