

THE BEACON of Christ Church, 20 N. American St., Philadelphia, PA 19106

Planning ahead . . .

MAY 2009

- 1 Sages Potluck Dinner
6:00PM
- First Friday Concert 8:00PM
- 3 Equality Forum Annual
Interfaith Service 5:00PM
- 9 Volunteer Gardeners
10:00AM to Noon
- 10 Mother's Day
Bishop's Visitation
- 12 Mikveh Israel & Christ
Church Event 6:00PM
- 16 St. Mary's 350 8:30AM
- 17 Bridge Lunch & Discussion
12:30AM
- 25 Memorial Day (observed)
- 31 Gay & Lesbian Fellowship
Lunch 12:30PM

JUNE 2009

- 5 First Friday Concert 8:00PM
- 7 One Service at 10AM
Celebration of John
Binsfeld's 45 years at CC
- 13 Volunteer Gardeners
10:00AM to Noon
- 20 St. Mary's 350 8:30AM
- 21 Father's Day
Bridge Lunch & Discussion
12:30AM

JULY 2009

- 4 Independence Day
- 5 One Service at 10AM
Independence Day
Celebration

2009 Baptism Schedule

May 31(Pentecost), September 20
(Ministry Sunday), October 25 at
11A.M. (Children's Sabbath),
November 1 at 9A.M. (All Saints'
Day)

EQUAL RIGHTS AND EQUAL RITES

In 1978, as a sophomore in college, I moved into my new, rather small, dorm room with my new roommate. He and I barely knew each other, having ended up as unexpected roomies when our first picks ended up missing. Within hours, he started making me uncomfortable, but it took me weeks to figure out why. He was gay.

I complained to the Dean of Students, and demanded reassignment, or my own room. "Why?" he asked. "Because he's gay (not the word I used)," was my only response. He dismissed me, telling me to "grow up."

A few years later, my roommate stood for me at my wedding and as one of the sponsors at my ordination. We remain close friends.

Right out of college, he settled down with another man and started a life that would make the most boring married couple yawn. When civil unions became a possibility in some parts of the country, I would ask him, "Why not?" He always says, "Because it's not the same as marriage. I don't want 'separate but equal.' That's 'less than.' When I can get married, I will." At a recent dinner discussion of our LGBT group at Christ Church, one of our members shared the same sentiment: "When we (including his partner of many decades) are legal in Pennsylvania, we'll be first in line. It's more important than what the church can do for me."

Of the many political, social and cultural revolutions that have occurred in the 50 years of my life, the one still full of unresolved conflict is the civil rights struggle for homosexual persons. Slowly, that may be changing, with the recent decisions in Iowa and Vermont to make legal marriage between any two persons, regardless of gender. Still, California, the bellwether state, recently made same gender marriage illegal through the ballot initiative, Proposition 8. As a country, we are a long way from consensus.

And the issue continues to strain the bonds of affection and good humor of the Episcopal Church. While our church has held consistently the position that gays and lesbians are "full and equal members of the church," there remains conflict if they have full access to the sacramental rites, specifically ordination and marriage.

I've had development in my own thinking over the past two years. Whereas I believed that both civil society and our Episcopal Church could move forward by defining some separate but equal category like "civil unions" and "blessing ceremonies for same sex couples," I have come to agree that it's a "less than" step. I pray, as a culture we can grow comfortable with marriage for all of our citizens, and as a church, grow to realize that our sacramental rites are accessible to us by our moral nature, not our sexual orientation.

What changed my mind? I was recently asked to speak at a rally in Harrisburg in support of legislation protecting LGBT persons in the workplace. Etched right into the door of that great temple of democracy are these words: We hold these

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Equal Rights and Equal Rites (*continued*)

truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal, endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness. Almost as an epiphany, I realized that those words were not about people by whom we assign initials like “L,” “G,” “B,” and “T,” but women and men with names like Steve, Jackie, Alice, Ed, Joan and Brian.

On Sunday, May 3, at 5 PM, Christ Church hosts again the Equality Forum’s Interfaith Prayer Service at the end of their weeklong festival that advocates and organizes for equal rights. I hope many from the Christ Church community will be present to welcome folks from all over Philadelphia, many whom step into a church with some trepidation. The preacher that evening is the Rev. Susan Russell, a good friend and colleague who was on the front lines in the recent battle over Proposition 8 in California. She will speak at the Rector’s Forum that morning at 10:10 AM. I am sure her offerings on this important day will help us, as a church, find our way into the future.

Timothy Safford

RECTOR’S FORUM 10:10 A.M. on Sundays

May 3 Equal Rites and Equal Rights: The Struggle for Same Sex Marriage.
The Rev. Susan Russell, President, *Integrity*

May 10 Meet the new assisting Bishop for Pennsylvania
The Rt. Rev. Rodney Michel.

May 17 Neighborhood House Construction to Begin: What’s the Plan?

May 24 No Forum

May 31 No Forum

June 7 One Service at 10 AM, festive reception for John Binsfeld follows

June 14 Summer weekly Bible Study begins

OUR LIVING HISTORY

Come and See the Acclaimed “Sarah’s Story”

On Tuesday evening, **May 19** at 5:30 PM, Christ Church Preservation Trust will kick-off the summer tourism program featuring an updated, dramatic presentation of *Sarah’s Story: Slavery in Philadelphia* at Christ Church. This performance will be followed by a discussion in which audience members will have the opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings about what they witnessed and how it relates to the issue of race in this country today. The discussion will be moderated by Tim Safford and Michael Days, editor of the Daily News. The Daily News is sponsoring this event. You are invited to attend the kick-off. If you wish to attend, RSVP by May 15, 2009 to rsvp@christchurchphila.org or call **Anne McLaughlin** at 215-922-1695, x32.

Sarah’s Story is an interpretive drama about slavery and its connection to Christ Church. It is an interaction between a costumed interpreter, “Sarah,” who tells of her daily life as an enslaved person, and a guide who adds perspective and historical overview to the experience. The updated, expanded version features Mr. Edwards, a slaveholder and parishioner who presents his point of view.

Private expanded evening performances followed by a discussion are available for groups. For additional informa-

tion and pricing, please contact Anne McLaughlin.

Construction Scheduled to Begin on Neighborhood House, June 2009

I am excited to announce that major construction will begin on Neighborhood House in June, bringing to the long neglected building an elevator, a new accessible entrance, expanded archives, restrooms, fire protection, a new nursery, classrooms, and an accessible pathway to the church through the North Garden.

Since the cornerstone was laid in 1911, and construction finished in 1925, Neighborhood House has met the needs and served the neighbors in our community as well as being the hub of our parish activities. Today, some 150 community and neighborhood groups use our buildings in the course of a year, and it allows us to serve the 200,000 visitors we receive each year. Long overdue, this construction project will make Neighborhood House accessible, usable and safe for all, assuring the future of this historic building for the next 100 years.



Architect's rendering of Neighborhood House 1910

In 2007 and 2008, several critical construction projects were completed on Neighborhood House, in tandem with the preservation work on the church itself. New electrical systems, structural and masonry work including a new roof, a new stairway, and a safe fire exit were completed at a cost of \$1.2 million.

All of this work has made possible the next phase of work called **ACCESS 2010**. A new glass atrium will be built at the north end, joining both Neighborhood House and Washburn house into one building. In the new atrium will hang Christ Church's famous stained glass window dedicated to religious liberty not on display since the early 1980's. In this new entrance will be the elevator that will serve all floors of the building.

Construction will take about a year, but much of Neighborhood House will remain usable during that time. The cost will be more than \$3 million.

Plans for Neighborhood House are on display in the lobby. On Sunday, May 17, I'll share a review of the project, financing and schedule in the 10:10 Rector's Forum.

Because so much has been entrusted to the people of Christ Church, so much is expected. This ongoing stewardship of another of our historic buildings is not only a part of preserving our historic legacy, but preparing for our future as well.

Timothy Safford

UPCOMING SUNDAY SERVICES & PROGRAMS

May 3 The Fourth Sunday of Easter

- 9:00am Holy Eucharist and Sermon
- 10:10am Rector's Forum
 - Journey to Adulthood – 11 to 17 year olds
 - Atrium 2 Class – 7 to 10 year olds
- 11:00am Holy Eucharist and Sermon
- 5:00pm The 5th Annual Equality Forum Interfaith Service

May 10 The Fifth Sunday of Easter Bishop's Visitation

- 9:00am Holy Eucharist and Sermon
- 10:10am Journey to Adulthood – 11 to 17 year olds
 - Atrium 2 Class – 7 to 10 year olds
- 11:00am Holy Eucharist and Sermon
- 5:00pm Eucharist in the Great Hall

May 17 The Sixth Sunday of Easter

- 9:00am Holy Eucharist and Sermon
- 10:10am Rector's Forum
 - Journey to Adulthood – 11 to 17 year olds
 - Atrium 2 Class – 7 to 10 year olds
- 11:00am Holy Eucharist and Sermon
- 12:30pm Bridge Lunch and Discussion

May 24 The Seventh Sunday of Easter

- 9:00am Holy Eucharist and Sermon
- 10:10am Rector's Forum
 - Journey to Adulthood – 11 to 17 year olds
 - Atrium 2 Class – 7 to 10 year olds
- 11:00am Morning Prayer and Sermon

May 31 The Day of Pentecost: Whitsunday

- 9:00am Holy Baptism, Holy Eucharist and Sermon
- 10:10am Rector's Forum
 - Journey to Adulthood – 11 to 17 year olds
 - Atrium 2 Class – 7 to 10 year olds
- 11:00am Holy Baptism, Holy Eucharist and Sermon
- 12:30pm LGBT Fellowship Lunch

June 7 Trinity Sunday

- 10:00am Holy Eucharist and Sermon
- 11:30pm Festive Reception honoring John Binsfeld's 45 Years as Organist/Choirmaster at Christ Church
- 5:00pm Eucharist in the Great Hall

June 14 The Second Sunday after Pentecost

- 9:00am Holy Eucharist and Sermon
- 11:00am Morning Prayer and Sermon

June 21 The Third Sunday after Pentecost

- 9:00am & 11:00am Holy Eucharist and Sermon

June 28 The Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

- 9:00am Holy Eucharist and Sermon

11:00am
Morning Prayer and
Sermon

EUCHARIST AT 5 – ALL ARE WELCOME

Please join us in the Great Hall of Neighborhood House **May 10 and June 7** with Holy Eucharist at **5P.M.** The worship space is candlelit and quiet beginning at 4:30 for individual prayer or meditation.

INSIGHTS FROM THE ATRIUM

One child said, "You can't see Jesus."
She was asked when do you feel Jesus, and she said, "When I'm warm, because he is the light and it is warm."

Another child said, "I feel him when I pray, in my heart, and when I'm alone."

One child said, "When I see somebody die and they magically disappear, then I think that's when Jesus took him to heaven."

One child asked, "Is Jesus going to be at the front of heaven when we go there? It would be cool if that were really true."

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CHRIST CHURCH

EQUALITY FORUM, CHRIST CHURCH & EPISCOPAL LEADERS

Christ Church is proud to welcome the 5th Annual Equality Forum National Interfaith Service on Sunday, **May 3rd** at 5pm. Based in Philadelphia, Equality Forum is a national and international nonprofit LGBT civil rights organization with an educational focus. This year's sermon will be delivered by the Reverend Susan Russell, president of Integrity, USA and priest at All Saints Church in Pasadena, CA. The interfaith service will feature religious leaders from many traditions, and powerful, transcendent choral music.

The Rt. Rev. Gene Robinson will be the guest speaker at Equality Forum's National Religious Colloquy on Tuesday, **April 28** from 7:00pm – 8:15pm at Prince Music Theater located at 1412 Chestnut Street. Gene Robinson was elected Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire in 2003, making him the first openly gay bishop in the Episcopal Church. His ordination led to international debate about the inclusion of gay clergy in the church hierarchy. The event is free and all are welcome.

CONFIRMED, RECEIVED OR REAFFIRMED

With Bishop Rodney Michel's Visitation scheduled for Sunday, **May 10**, you have the opportunity to be Confirmed, Received or Reaffirmed in your faith. Please contact **Cecilia** at 215.922.1695, ext. 21 or cwagner@christchurchphila.org for more information.

GUATEMALA MISSION TRIP 2009

*O God, whose glory fills the whole creation,
and whose presence we find everywhere we go:*

*Preserve our brothers and sisters; surround them with your loving care;
protect them from every danger; and bring them in safety
to their journey's end; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

On **June 15** a mission team of volunteers from Christ Church and St. Peter's Church will travel to Guatemala to help the community finish the second floor of the Canterbury School in Guatemala City. We will be installing windows and doors and painting the second floor of the school building which currently serves 120 students, pre-school to 6th grade. Completion of the second floor will allow enrollment expansion to 180 children. We will also be spending time at the St. Lucas Toliman Mission where fair trade coffee is produced and distributed. It will be week of literally being the hands and feet of Christ from this faith community. Please keep us and them in your prayers as together we engage in being Christ to each other.

BRIDGE SHELTER DINNERS: LOCAL, GREEN AND GREAT

Restaurant-quality food, homemade with fresh local ingredients bought at the Italian Market, served to you by cool people – and all for about \$2.50 per person. Where in Philadelphia can you get such a deal?! Well, when Bridge members Anne and Joey McAteer and Nick DiPatri set out to plan each month's dinner put on by Christ Church volunteers for the men at the homeless shelter at Old First Reformed Church, that's what they manage to pull off.

"Using fresh, local ingredients is so much better," says Anne McAteer (she and Joey were married at Christ Church last year), "and it lets us keep the price really low for the residents of the shelter and for the Christ Church volunteers." And it's true – the cost of about \$2.50 per person shows how every dollar contributed to the meals really does its work. But great dishes don't make themselves, and Joey – a middle-school teacher and coach, and an ardent chef who aims to be "a trophy husband" – spends time perfecting recipes that are as good as the dishes in your local bistro but that make up easily and plentifully.

A team of Bridge volunteers plans the gatherings, involving parishioners of all ages from throughout the Christ Church community. Some do the shopping on the Sunday before each Monday evening shelter meal; others make desserts in advance. By late Monday afternoon, Christ Church folks are gathering at the homeless shelter at Old First Reformed church at 4th and Race streets, bringing pre-baked goods and the fresh ingredients to complete the meal. The Christ Church cooks get going in the church's kitchen, others set tables and put music on a cd player, and by the time the men arrive around 7 p.m., a dining atmosphere of community and care has been created. After a prayer offered by one of the men, the Christ Church crew serves the men, then fill their own plates and sit down among the shelter denizens to eat, drink, talk about the day, and maybe play a round or two of chess.

And as the Christ Church volunteers leave – often to a standing ovation from the men living at the shelter – it's clear that the greatest gift everyone has gotten is simply sharing a meal and being changed by each other.

SANDWICHES FOR THE HOMELESS

Come join the crew of sandwich makers who once a month cheerfully make 350 bologna sandwiches for St. Mary's. We gather next on Saturday, **May 16 & June 20**, 8:30-9:30A.M. Kids love to help, too! Questions? Please contact **Wayne Christman** at waynechristman@comcast.net.

A TRIBUTE TO JOHN BINSFELD

John Binsfeld retires as Organist Choirmaster on Sunday June 7, after 45 years of faithful and dedicated service. On that day, we will have one Service at 10 AM, with a festive reception, in John's honor, to follow. Please plan to be there. John has asked for no special gifts or tributes as he retires, but there are so many memories. Here is a sample from parishioners new and old. If you have one, please forward it to Cecilia Wagner, and we'll make sure they are all collected for John. I may use some in my sermon on that day, so I look forward to reading them, too.

Timothy Safford

I was Chairman of the Music Committee of the Vestry when our long term organist and choirmaster retired and with that came the end of the volunteer boys' choir. There were just not enough interested boys available.

Dr. McCurdy, head of the organ department at the Curtis Institute, helped us by offering a senior organ student with the idea that he would stay on a few years, move on and be replaced by another one. These men would organize a choir from students and young graduates of the city's musical academies. Walter Hillsman was the first and after two years moved on to do graduate work at Oxford.

John Binsfeld was the second under this plan. To our great benefit he decided to stay on and further develop the musical program. He has done it admirably with excellent choirs and organ music, church member choirs, First Friday programs, visiting organists, and plenty of hard work.

John accomplished all this with an old organ that always seemed to be breaking down and costing a great deal of money. Dr. McCurdy suggested that we give it up and get a new organ; at which point John was going to faint. But with new leathers, a new console and repair of water damage, he kept the old girl going.

John has also been an excellent friend of my family throughout all his years here. I was stunned upon arriving for my wife's funeral service to find that John had brought in the choir and arranged special music for the Service. There are many other examples of his kindness and thoughtfulness.

I am happy to have been involved in his being with us for forty-five years and to have heard his music and had his friendship. All the best to you, John, in your

retirement.

Robert J. Gill, M.D.

"Stronger than the Sword"

It was during Lent 1965. I had just begun singing for John a few months into my first year at Curtis. He and I were walking at dusk along 4th or 5th Street between Locust and Walnut (not a great neighborhood then) on our way to choir rehearsal. A large black four door automobile stopped at the curb in front of us and five tough guys climbed out and grabbed me. Their hobby: finding a couple of fellows to beat up as entertainment. As the taller, heavier prey, they decided to "do" me first. As they turned me to face the punchers, they were obviously a practiced team, there stood John - all 126 pounds of him - between me and the punches. As all Christ Church Choir members know, John can preach spontaneous, purposeful sermons! At that moment of peril he was at his best; David before Goliath with the gift of Pentecost. Standing tall with grand gestures for emphasis, he hit those bullies with a stream of five syllable words that completely diverted them from their depraved enterprise. Disarmed, bewildered, they threw me to the sidewalk and pushing my eloquent friend and choir master against a parked car, they fled, knowing that if they listened a little longer their hearts might be turned to become servants of the living Christ! John's faith and spiritual courage saved me and probably himself from a trip to the Hahnemann Emergency Room.

Guy Rothfuss

It is obvious that JBIII is a very talented organist, musician, choral director and minister of music. This man of many gifts has never asked for fame or fortune. When he heard the question, "Whom shall I send?" to Christ Church for 45 years?, John answered, "Here I am. Send me!" The first time that I came to Christ Church to hear the choir that Bob had joined, I was totally unprepared. I was sitting alone in the pew and John began playing the organ and the choir started to sing. The music that flowed from that loft was without a doubt the most moving sound that had ever touched my soul. I started to cry and was most embarrassed and was simply unable to stop. John has been a true treasure to Christ Church and to all who have ever entered its doors and it will never be the same without him.

John is the epitome of what a friend should be and we are delighted that we can call him our friend--for now--forever.

Colleen (and Bob) Snodgrass

John Binsfeld was the bait that brought me to Christ Church. Weekend house guests from New York were anxious to attend the 11:00 Service, knowing of John's reputation as the organist and choir master. We walked into that extraordinary space with the sun streaming through the Palladian window, only to hear the spine-tingling sounds of trumpets, trombones, kettle drums, the Curtis organ...and that organist! We had happened upon All Saints' Sunday, my husband, Roger's birthday, and what a glorious sound John had created. That sound, a thought-provoking sermon, and John's exceptional musicality were all that it took to bring us back week after week since that Sunday in 1978.

The First Friday concerts that John organized have featured a wide range of excellent musicians. These free concerts have been a welcome addition to Old City's weekend activities and have brought countless listeners into the church.

John's sensitive musicianship, from the interpretation of each verse of each hymn, the integration of major choral works as part of the religious service, the thrilling improvised postludes, all have been integral to my worshipping experience at Christ Church.

Thank you, John, for bringing Christ Church into my life. You were the bait that hooked me into my long-standing and rewarding relationship with Christ Church. As insufficient as it sounds, all I can say is a heartfelt "Thank you John!" **Kate Hall**

When I arrived from Scotland in 1985, a newly-enrolled student at the Academy of Vocal Arts, I needed a job – badly. AVA singers are not ones to hold back and I was told on my first day that the only "gig" in town to look at was "Binsfeld at Christ Church". If you got in there, you were somebody!!! I had no idea that I was going to spend some of the truly happiest years of my life there with an organist of genius talent. To this day, I have never heard improvisation to touch what John can do and absolutely never heard hymns played in a way which is spiritually inspiring and hugely dignified. John was utterly generous to me, giving me countless opportunities to sing great music in an acoustic of which most sopranos could only dream. He had a great group of singers which could definitely produce the goods but, believe me, John put up with A LOT! In my years in the

choir, we were all close friends who spent quite a bit of time opining and critiquing each other's solos, often laughing and even ridiculing musical stupidities – a badly behaved bunch with which John valiantly persevered. The place will never be the same without The Bins on The Bench. Love you, John-John. **Judy Lovat**

I met John Binsfeld in the early part of 1990. I was then a freshman music student at Atlantic Union College in Massachusetts, and we were visiting Christ Church with our choral director, James Bingham and orchestra director, Virginia-Gene Rittenhouse. Although we had travelled to numerous churches, this one church, this organ, and this warm and welcoming man made a big impression on me. I imagined I'd never get the chance to visit ever again, and that made me sad. I remember trying to soak in the visit, the beautiful church, the wonderful organ, and the trip through the pipes so we could watch the bells being played. When Michael (Robinson) and I decided to move here to Philadelphia, a visit to see Christ Church and John Binsfeld was top on my to-do list. I guess neither of us can get enough of it, still! We are going to miss John terribly. I really hope he comes back to visit. Our two little boys, Edwin (3 years old) and Zachary (1 year old) really love to hear John play, and he is so wonderfully welcoming and friendly to them. Thank-you again and again John. Your music is such a treasure, and your friendly and welcoming nature is such a gift to us all. **Donna Dietz**

At the age of fourteen, I trotted myself into the gallery at Christ Church to meet the "new guy" who had been seated on the organ bench just a few days earlier. "Mr Binsfe-e-eld?" I asked. "*auf Deutsch!*" came the reply over some Bach or other. "Binsfeld?" I tried again. "*John!*" came the reply, over some louder Bach. Those six words began the longest and one of the most meaningful friendships of my life, whose myriad parts would fill many pages.

Today, I feel curiously a little like one of a pair of bookends. My father, Robert J. Gill, MD, was on the Vestry Music Committee of Christ Church which, with Rector Ernest Harding, interviewed and hired John Binsfeld as organist/choirmaster in 1964. Now, as a member of the Vestry, and Rector's Warden in 2009, I will get to officially shake Mr Binsfeld's hand as he slides off of the organ bench for the last time as our organist/choirmaster.

"*John*", on behalf of all of the people of Christ Church – those who are here and those who can no

longer be - thank you for filling that shelf (bench) between the bookends with forty-five years of louder Bach, direction in worship, joyful noise, friendship, guidance, and support. And, "John", from my own in-

substantial emotional frame, I will always be grateful that I took the opportunity to trot up those steps to the gallery in 1964. "Denke" (auf Deutsch!). **Bruce Gill**

VOLUNTEER MINISTRIES

CHRIST CHURCH NEEDS YOU!

Volunteering at Christ Church is much more than giving your time to help the Church, a ministry, or an outreach program. By giving your time and talents, you will build relationships with others and strengthen your spiritual life. Watch your *Beacon* and the Sunday Bulletin for new ways to get involved. Christ Church is currently seeking volunteers for...

Beyond the Blue Cards

This is a newly formed group that will reach out to people after they have expressed initial interest in attending Christ Church. We are seeking volunteers to represent specific groups, such as the Bridge, the Sages, Families and Children, GLBT, and so on. For more information, contact Emma Staton (emma.staton@comcast.net).

Gardeners

The North Garden is in full bloom and we need people to help tend the garden. For more information contact George Niedermeyer (niedy711@aol.com).

In-Service Saturdays

The Property Committee has convened a work crew to help address maintenance and property issues. All parishioners are encouraged to volunteer as able for parish workdays. The next one is scheduled for May 30th. For more information contact Andrew Phillips (Andrew@dommertphillips.com).

Outreach

There are always many opportunities to get involved with Christ Church's outreach programs including:

Mission to Guatemala	The Rev. Carol Anthony (canthony@christchurchphila.org)
St. Mary's 350	Wayne Christman (waynechristman@comcast.net)
Old First Reformed Dinners	Anne McAteer (ackoerner@yahoo.com)

Photographers

We are looking for volunteers who will take pictures of congregation members at parish events. These photographers would also be responsible for working with the Parish Administrator to post the photos in the Neighborhood House. For more information contact Charles Moleski (cmoleski@yahoo.com).

Readers

Join our group of volunteers who read either the Lessons or the Prayers of the People at our Sunday morning and special Services. Please contact Cecilia Wagner (cwagner@christchurchphila.org) if you are interested.

Ushers

We always need help greeting people at the door and assisting visitors' worship. In particular, we are interested in some new faces representing younger and more diverse demographic groups. For more information, contact Kevin Kerchner (khkerchner@comcast.net) or Bin Pettit (binpettit1@comcast.net).

Zip Code Groups

Christ Church's members reside in many different geographic areas. Therefore, we are undertaking a new initiative to foster communication among parishioners in their own neighborhoods. We are currently looking for volunteers who will be a point person for each zip code. For more information contact Joan Bedell (joanbedell@verizon.net).

There are many more ways to get involved at Christ Church. For more information about Christ Church's other programs and ministries, please contact Cecilia Wagner at 215.922.1695, ext 21.

"The worship is over. The service begins."

MUSICAL NOTES

FIRST FRIDAY CONCERT SERIES

May 1 at 8:00P.M. we'll continue this concert series with music of Beethoven and Golijov for String Quartet. First Friday concerts are free and are totally funded by the generosity of friends within our community supporting them in memory of loved ones. You can be a patron or a sponsor of these events, too. Contact **John Binsfeld** for more information.

Please join us on **June 5 at 8:00P.M** as we close this season of First Friday Concerts with a musical feast for strings, voice and organ in memory of the Rev. John B & Ruth B Frantz.

THE BRIDGE

LUNCH AND DISCUSSION

Folks in their 20s through early 40s gather at 12:30 for lunch, drinks, music, and some theological conversation, whatever that means. The topic this time: "How We Connect With Our Bodies." Faith isn't much use if it's not connected to how we experience love, life, pain, and growth through the bodies we journey in. And Christianity is, by definition, an incarnate faith. So bring your bodies, faith, and questions – they're all great ways to go deeper together in the connections with each other and ourselves. For more info or to rsvp for dinner, email the **Rev. Susan Richardson**, srichardson@christchurchphila.org. **Upcoming Dates: May 17, June 21**



The Church prepares its buildings for Easter celebrations



CONGREGATION MIKVEH ISRAEL & CHRIST CHURCH

Dear Friends,

I am writing with a special invitation for Tuesday evening, May 12, 2009 when Congregation Mikveh Israel, Philadelphia's oldest synagogue, will join us at Christ Church for an evening of fellowship.

Christ Church and Congregation Mikveh Israel have had an important relationship for centuries, having first come together in 1740. At the end of World War II, our two congregations began an annual dinner as a way of celebrating our common history, but more importantly, for promoting hope and interreligious understanding.

These past few years, as we have been under constant construction, we have not been able to host this important evening, but we are pleased that we will be back on track this May 12th.

We'll gather for a delicious (Kosher, of course!) light supper at 6 PM, and we have a special program at 7 PM, "Following the Civil Rights Trail: An Intergroup Experience" presented by the Greenfield Intercultural Center from UPENN. We'll conclude with coffee, conversation and dessert at 8 PM.

The cost of the evening is modest, \$12.50 per person. As the members of Mikveh Israel are our guests, we ask that you contribute one or two places with your RSVP. If you are unable to attend but can contribute, please receive our thanks.

Faithfully,
Tim Safford, Rector

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_____ Yes, please reserve # _____ places at \$12.50 per person for our Fellowship Evening with Congregation Mikveh Israel on May 12, 2009 at 6 p.m.

_____ Also, I am covering the cost of # _____ Mikveh Israel guests at \$12.50 per person.

_____ No, I cannot join you. Please accept this donation to help make the evening a success.

Check enclosed to Christ Church in the amount of \$ _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Telephone/email _____

Mail registration and payment to:

Christ Church
20 N. American St
Philadelphia, PA 19106

You may also register and pay for this event on-line at www.christchurchphila.org

FELLOWSHIP and FAMILY

SAGES POTLUCK SUPPER

Seasoned members of our congregation will gather on Friday, **May 1** at 6:00PM for a Potluck Supper and then attend the First Friday concert in the church at 8PM. If you are interested, please rsvp to **Jean Bodine** at 215.627.8393.

CHRIST CHURCH GARDENERS

The volunteer gardeners gather monthly for work in the North Garden. Please join us on **May 9 and June 13** at 10:00am. Newcomers are always welcome. We hope to see you there. Questions? Please contact **George Niedermayer** at niedy711@aol.com.

GAY & LESBIAN FELLOWSHIP

As a welcoming church, Christ Church is blessed to have gay and lesbian parishioners involved in every aspect of our life together. The Gay & Lesbian Fellowship provides a way for new folks to meet others who share a similar journey. Make plans to join the LGBT community and friends for lunch in Neighborhood House on Sunday, **May 31** at 12:30pm. \$10 donation per person welcomed. RSVP to the **Rev. Carol Anthony** at canthony@christchurchphila.org by 5/29.

YOUTH GROUP, GRADES 7-12

Bring your questions and feelings and even a friend, and join us for fun and a chance to talk in a different way from anything else in your busy life. *Journey to Adulthood* is a spiritual and educational program for youth ages 11 to 17 years old. **Where:** the 3rd floor of Neighborhood House. **When:** 10AM each Sunday

PARISH BIRTHDAYS

Congratulations to our parish family members celebrating birthdays these months:

May 1, **Lillian Allingham**
May 2, **Peter Eobbi**
May 3, **Aidan Donohue**
May 4, **Ella Rhodes, Deborah Sullivan**
May 5, **Charles Barlow, Gabrielle Eobbi, Sophia Fraga**
May 6, **Bob Karger, Kim Woodkirk**
May 7, **Joan Granauro, Elliot Phillips**
May 9, **Ethan Frohlich, Grace Lincoln**
May 10, **J.C. Gembala, Stephen Walker**
May 11, **Kate Heilman Lawless**
May 12, **Chris Alvarez**
May 14, **John Hopkins, Patricia Troilo, David Wren**
May 15, **Nancy Hatfield, Peter Hearn, William White, III**
May 16, **Alice Dommert, Cleo Knight, Bill Myers, Rowan Wahrenburger**
May 18, **Linda March, Alex Norman**
May 20, **Betty Duckstein, Maggie Soboleski**
May 21, **Ella Burrows**
May 22, **Sandy Karger**
May 23, **Amy Evangelisto, Ruth Haines, Frederick**

LaValley, Elizabeth Smith, Julia Strauss

May 24, **Truman Evans, Hartwell Markham, Andrew Phillips, Andrew White**

May 26, **Kedran Garrison, Vivian Lane**

May 27, **Eliza Vander, Turner Warren**

May 28, **Alexis Adorno, Tom Keagy**

May 29, **Nancy Poland**

May 31, **Claire Phillips**

June 1, **Roger Gasper, Mary Sopka**

June 3, **Megan McCarthy**

June 4, **John Binsfeld, Bob Rogers, Rafaele Rogers**

June 5, **Ken Frantz, Florence Wallis**

June 6, **Harvey Bartle, III; Abigail Frantz**

June 7, **Brendan Boylan**

June 8, **Jennifer Miller**

June 9, **Katie Burke, Jeanne Stuardi**

June 11, **Carolyn Bailey**

June 12, **Ella Parke**

June 13, **The Rev. James Trimble**

June 15, **Enny Cramer**

June 16, **Bert Schwartz**

June 17, **Anne Ehrke**

June 18, **Ethan Bergmann, Polly Fraga, Lily Richardson Graham, Elizabeth Mihalek**

June 19, **Bill Johnson**

June 20, **George Niedermayer**

June 22, **Robert Gill, M.D.**

June 23, **Heather McMeekin**

June 24, **Cindy Landreth**

June 26, **Sarah Peterson, Tobi Walker, Paul Yaros**

June 27, **Stephen Beers**

June 29, **Jim McCardell, Zachary Weldon**

June 30, **Miguel Ruiz**

Did we miss your birthday? Please contact **Cecilia** in the church office.

FAMILY RETREAT – SAVE THE DATE!

The Christ Church Family Retreat will be **September 25-27** at the rustic Quaker retreat center called Camp Dark Waters on the Rancocas Creek in Medford, New Jersey, in the Pine-lands only about 17 miles from Philly. We'll stay in cabins on its 15 acres, cook meals together in its kitchen, and enjoy structured time together (including Eucharist by the creek Sunday morning) as well as plenty of down time with the camp's canoes, rope course, trails, basketball court, ping-pong tables, etc. The cost is \$35 per person for the entire weekend, plus an additional small donation to the cost of meals and facilitators for the canoes and games. Planning is under way; please contact the **Rev. Susan Richardson** with any questions. And please rsvp to **Cecilia Wagner** (cwagner@christchurchphila.org) to reserve a space for the weekend. Plan ahead for this special weekend of fellowship together in the beauty of early autumn.

Christ Church: A user's guide

9:00 AM Eucharist and Sermon

Rite II, celebrated with vocal quartet, organ and hymns.

10:10 AM Christian Education

Adult education each Sunday in Neighborhood House. Education for Children and Youth on the second and third floors of Neighborhood House from September to June.

11:00 AM Eucharist and Sermon (see schedule page 4)

Rite I or II celebrated, with organ and hymns, and vocal leadership from Christ Church Choir

11:00 AM Morning Prayer and Sermon (see schedule on page 4)

Nursery care for infants and toddlers is available from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM each Sunday.

Wednesdays

12:00 Noon Eucharist

Rite II, briefly and informally celebrated with a short homily. About 20 minutes, this liturgy is a perfect addition to relieve "hectic downtown life syndrome."

Visiting/Getting in touch

The Church, located on 2nd Street just north of Market Street in Old City Philadelphia, is open for visiting, prayer and meditation from 9am to 5pm daily.

Mailing address and church office entrance:

20 N. American Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Email: mail@christchurchphila.org

Website: www.christchurchphila.org

Main Phone Number: 215.922.1695

FAX Number: 215.922.3578

Cecilia Wagner - ext. 21 or cwagner@christchurchphila.org

The Rev. Timothy Safford - ext. 22

tsafford@christchurchphila.org

The Rev. Carol Anthony – ext. 23

canthony@christchurchphila.org

The Rev. Susan Richardson – ext. 25

srichardson@christchurchphila.org

The Rev. K. Palmer Hartl – kpheartl@aol.com

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Jeanne Stuardi - ext. 36 or jstuardi@christchurchphila.org

The Beacon is published monthly for members, friends and supporters of Christ Church, the Rev. Timothy B. Safford, Rector. Deadline for the July/August issue is June 10. Please e-mail articles to cwagner@christchurchphila.org

The Beacon

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