

# FAITH FORMATION at HOLY TRINITY

Winter/Spring 2009



## food4thought

*Come for a meal (free-will donation) and a stimulating topic following the 10:30 am worship on occasional Sundays. We will conclude by 1:00 p.m.*

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 11:45 a.m.

### ***Peace Not Walls: Making a Difference in the Holy Land***

Leader: Carol LaHurd

We begin watching a 28-minute video that introduces the Israeli-Palestine conflict and the ELCA's efforts to work with ecumenical and interfaith partners toward a permanent peace solution that will be just for both Israelis and Palestinians. Carol LaHurd, adjunct professor at LSTC and coordinator of the ELCA Peace Not Walls campaign, will lead a discussion of current strategies and of the bishops' January 2009 visit to the Holy Land.

SUNDAY, MARCH 29, 11:45 a.m.

### ***stories4thetable***

Three Holy Trinity members will share their stories of faith. How was their faith shaped, who and what influenced them? And how in the world did they find themselves in this wonderful community of faith? Come hear the stories of struggle and joy from those seated near you at worship. You just might be surprised!

SUNDAY, MAY 3, 11:45 a.m.

### ***The Bible, Sexuality, and Homosexuality***

Leader: Dr. Ralph Klein, professor of Old Testament emeritus, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago.

In biblical times, people regularly married at 14 to spouses chosen by their parents. In our vastly different culture, what guidance does the Bible offer about sexuality? How does it offer freedom for people of differing sexual orientations?

This is part of our annual *Seminary Sampler* in which we invite faculty from Lutheran School of Theology to be with us for a doubleheader at 9:30 am and noon. Come early for Dr. Klein's presentation at 9:30 am on *Reading the Bible: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*

## HOLY TRINITY'S 2009 BOOK FOR LENT

***Receiving the Day: Christian Practices for Opening the Gift of Time*** (by Dorothy Bass, director of the Valparaiso Project on the Education and Formation of People in Faith)

Time is a gift to be savored, not a tempest to be tamed. Our lives can seem to revolve around ever-decreasing time slots. The timeless perspective and message in this book invite us to receive each day as a gift from God. Dorothy Bass invites us to structure our lives with flexible regularity and to use our time for things that matter. Other themes include keeping the Sabbath (on the actual day or not), observing the Christian year, and counting days and moments with an eye on eternity.

*Books available for \$10 at the back of the church in mid-February.*

## SPECIAL SATURDAY OFFERINGS

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 9:30 a.m. - Noon

### ***The Sacred Feminine***

Leader: Pr. Craig M. Mueller

From *sophia* in biblical wisdom literature to the role of Mary in Christian tradition we will explore the sacred feminine as it relates to worship, devotion, spirituality and one's sense of balance and wholeness. This *right brain* workshop will include experiences to help us become more aware of the feminine and discuss how the sacred feminine might be nurtured through spiritual practices and intentionality in worship planning. Led by Pastor Craig Mueller. Sign-up at the back of the church or e-mail the church office.

SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

***Lenten Breadbaking Retreat***

Leaders: Karol Weigelt (spiritual director and baker) and Pr. Craig M. Mueller

Lent is a traditional time for fasting and reflection. In our busy lives of instant gratification the process of baking bread invites us to gain strength from engaging in a communal and prayerful process of mixing ingredients, kneading and waiting. The breadbaking retreat begins with tea and introductions and the fast is broken with a eucharist and a simple meal of vegetarian soup and fresh bread. In the spirit of the Lenten fast you are invited to fast during the day as you are able. A simple bread recipe will be provided and no previous experience is needed. You will go home with a fragrant, nutritious loaf of bread into which you have added your prayers and hopes. There will be reflection and discussion as the dough rises and later bakes. Please bring a mixing bowl and wooden spoon and an apron if you wish. Suggested donation: \$5.00. Sign-up at the back of the church or e-mail the church office.



SATURDAY, MARCH 21, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

***Being TWOgether***

Leaders: Dan and Meg Haycraft from TWOgether

A one day retreat for couples who are committed to staying or getting more connected. Now more than ever, couples desire a relationship built on deeper understanding and acceptance of one another; an ongoing pursuit of pleasure and enjoyment; and the ability to solve problems by reaching mutually shared agreements. Normally the base fee is \$250/couple, but thanks to a generous donation by Holy Trinity members who have experienced the benefits of the TWOgether workshops, the cost per couple is only \$50. Couples must preregister by March 1st. Please speak with Pastor Michelle Miller for more information or check out the TWOgether website [www.together.org](http://www.together.org)

## SUNDAY FORUM

**Sunday mornings, 9:30 – 10:15 a.m.**

**St. Mark's Room**

Some sessions will be based on chapters of the book *To Do Justice: A Guide for Progressive Christians*. You do not need to read the chapter before attending the sessions, but books are available at the forum for \$13 for those interested.

JANUARY 4

***The Epiphany Story***

Leader: Joel Cruz

JANUARY 11

***For Families*** (based on chapter 2 of *To Do Justice*)

JANUARY 18

***Public Education That Practices and Promotes Peace***

Leader: Ryan LaHurd

A democracy depends upon a strong educational system to socialize its children to be active citizens and to prepare them to secure their fair share of the country's wealth. Currently America's educational system does not accomplish these goals for all. This forum will discuss how issues of race, gender, economic status, and disability affect the justice of our educational system. (based on chapter 5 of *To Do Justice*)

JANUARY 25

***For All Creation***

Leader: Ann Sanders

A discussion of the ways that we, our families, and our church communities would change our lifestyles or patterns of consumption if we began to view all of creation—not just humans—as intrinsically valuable and standing in a covenantal relationship with God. (based on chapter 10 of *To Do Justice*)

FEBRUARY 1

***The World of the Bible - Archeological Insights***

Leader: Seminarian Katy Harder

Understanding and engaging in the "world of the Bible" involves looking at both ancient biblical sites and history as well as current struggles. So what role can or does archeology play in helping us understand and interpret biblical texts and events? Come examine and discuss several archeological sites of the Holy Land and their connections to biblical texts.

FEBRUARY 8

***The Holy Land: Recent History and the Quest for Peace***

Leader: Seminarian Katy Harder

Newspaper headlines and CNN news flashes report daily on the conflict that rages in Israel-Palestine and we think "Why is this happening? What started all of this? Will there ever be peace?" Understanding the historical construct of this long-standing conflict is essential to framing its current context. This week we'll take a look at the recent history of the conflict and also some of the current struggles faced by Israelis and Palestinians.

FEBRUARY 15

***Who are the Palestinians—and why are some of them Christians?***

Leader: Carol LaHurd, adjunct professor at LSTC and coordinator of the ELCA Middle East peace efforts.

This session will include a history of Christians in Palestine, stories from the lives of Palestinian Lutherans experiencing the stresses of occupation, and examples of their educational and health ministries that serve all Palestinians. You are invited to also attend the **food4thought** session after worship on *Peace Not Walls: Making a Difference in the Holy Land*.

FEBRUARY 22

***For Immigrants***

Leader: Laury Rinker

We'll discuss what it means to be an immigrant or refugee living in the United States and discover ways to become involved here in Chicago. How does the biblical mandate to care for aliens in our midst guide us as we approach this issue? (based on chapter 8 in *To Do Justice*)

MARCH 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

***Have the Time?***

Leader: Pr. Craig M. Mueller

Our Lenten forums will be a discussion of time from a Christian spiritual perspective. Those reading Holy Trinity's book for Lent, *Receiving the Day: Christian Practices for Opening the Gift of Time*, will have an opportunity to reflect further on the themes of our relationship with time, especially the day, the Sabbath, and the church year. Even if you choose not to read the book you will find the discussion relevant and timely. Amid the pressures and limits of our time-obsessed society we will seek wisdom from religious practices. Joining our discussion will be four adults preparing for baptism at the Easter Vigil.

APRIL 5

***Preparing for the Easter Vigil***

Leader: Pr. Craig Mueller

The Easter Vigil is the pinnacle of the church year and this year we will have four adult baptisms at the service. This forum will be a primer on the rituals, texts and symbols of the liturgy.

APRIL 12 – No Forum (Easter Sunday)

APRIL 19

***Faith and Doubt***

Leader: Seminarian Carolyn Brostrom

We live in a time where questions about God are alive, and many of us have questions of our own. What are the challenges in using "God" language? Do you have to believe in God to be religious? Christian? Lutheran? We'll discuss thinkers, some of them Lutheran, who will (hopefully) push us to see that the atheism/theism "divide" may not be as clear cut of a "divide" as we think.

APRIL 26

***Listening to Bach's Erschallet, ihr Lieder***

Leader: Jonathan De Souza

Come explore J.S. Bach's cantata, *Erschallet, ihr Lieder (Ring out, you songs)*, which will be performed during worship at Holy Trinity on May 10. Jonathan De Souza, a doctoral student in music theory at the University of Chicago, will introduce the work, discussing its musical features and their meaning.

MAY 3

***Reading the Bible: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow***

Leader: Dr. Ralph Klein, professor of Old Testament emeritus, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago.

In the last 2,000 years Christians have read the Bible in drastically different and yet faithful ways. Today faithful interpreters read the Bible "critically," fully conscious of their social location. What did the Bible mean back then? What might it mean today?

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MAY 10 – No Forum (Bach Cantata rehearsal for 10:30 a.m. service)