

NewsBrief

♥For the members and friends of the First Presbyterian Church of Pittsford ♥

November 2005

From the Pastor's Pen-Cell

The Myth of Certainty by Daniel Taylor was written takes its title from a quote by Pascal, "We must know where to doubt, where to feel certain, where to submit." Taylor's book is on the shelf, continually calling out its message as I look across the office and the title seems to speak continually.

At one time I learned that the only thing that was certain was death and taxes. Then, every Easter I think that those who went to the tomb and found it empty had to reassess. That is what we've been doing a lot of these days as we examine the construction progress on the church building – we keep reassessing under the conviction that the certainty of a date is a myth.

So, when are we going to be finished? At the moment the pews are scheduled to be installed at the end of the first week of November. In order to install the pews, the sanctuary will have to be painted, the carpet laid, the major electrical work finalized, and the wainscoting finished. Are we certain that this can be done? Well, no, but we are reasonably sure. We will be in our Sanctuary for the Season of Advent and are working out dates now for a rededication service.

I realize that I am certain about relatively little and like others am in the hunt for "truth" which makes me susceptible to the confusion that one can have truth with certainty. The ruling methodology for reaching truth in our culture reflects the dominance of the scientific model. Essentially, one masses evidence – as analyzed, classified, and approved by reason – guarding at all times against methodological lapses (like subjective bias, logical fallacy, faulty or misinterpreted data), until one reaches something very like certainty, until one has proof.

Professional philosophers generally admit, even insist, that absolute certainty of course is not attainable. Still, the feeling is accepted that if we can simply think clearly and logically enough, we can solve our individual and collective problems and get on with the business of being happy with certainty.

But as one bumbles along one discovers that there are simply too many variables, too much that is incalculable or non-rational, in short too much humanness involved for this method to work conclusively. Unfortunately, we in the church have sold out to the myth of certainty, too. Different theologies have erected elaborate systems of apologetics, group psychology and legalistic rules and rituals in order to preserve the comfort of being "certain." This is unsettling, because most of us don't want to wallow in some vague relativism, either.

We are called to be people of faith. I am not certain that we will be back in the sanctuary for Advent, but I have faith that we will. Indeed, isn't that what we are called to be all along the way – people of faith. We are not certain that all will go well with our children, but we have faith that they have been given good grounding that will sustain them through life. We are not certain that one government will be better than another, but we have faith that freedom holds out amazing possibilities for those who embrace it. We are not certain that God will redeem us, but we have faith that God has a plan through Jesus Christ. This is where we can submit, for in so doing we discover that doubt is rooted in questions of faith and we certainly will have an encounter with God's intentions.

So, this is something on which to ruminate and nibble as you contemplate how you will express your thanks on the 24th of this month. I am not certain about this, but I do think that it is hard to be both thankful and angry at the same time. **Bruce**

Now that our program year is off to a good start we are looking ahead to what the next few exciting months of moving in and returning to our facility will look like.

In the mean time, there are some events to plan ahead for:

1. On Sunday, Evening, November 27 plan to bring a dish to pass, create some Holiday crafts to take home and enjoy a sing-a-long.
2. On Friday, December 16 plan to join the Merry making as we go by bus and caravan to carol to our shut-ins and those of our congregation and others who may not be able to join us for our Christmastide celebrations.
3. On Sunday Afternoon, December 18 plan to join the group of theatre goers from 1st Pres. who will be going to see JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR DREAM COAT at the Auditorium Theatre in Rochester (for tickets or more information, please contact Sandy
4. 586-5688 ext. 30 OR
sandy.pacyga@pittsfordpres.org

This will be followed by our wonderful Annual Ham Dinner prepared by our own Deacons with entertainment by the children of our church.

Attention THEATRE GOERS!!!

We are arranging for tickets to The Auditorium Theatre's presentation Of Joseph and The Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat. These tickets will be for the matinee performance on December 18. Participants will be back in plenty of time for our Children's Christmas musical presentation and our annual Ham Diner. Reserve your tickets NOW through Sandy - 585-5688 Ext. 30.

Tickets are \$48.50 and \$53.50 each. Order must go in by Monday, October 31. Payment in full must be into the office by November 14, 2005. PLAN NOW TO JOIN THE FUN.

LOGOS

from Sylvia Fix

Coming Home – Reaching Out

October 19 – Loving the leaves
The word is *colorful*.

October 26 – Costume cruising
The word is *inventive*

November 2 – Computer construction
The word is *constructive*

November 9 – Proud to be an American
The word is *loyal*

November 16 – V.I.P. – BRING A BUDDY
The word is *friendship*

November 23 – NO LOGOS
HAPPY THANKSGIVING

LIVING LOGOS

November 9 – LASER TAG

Come join us. – Scholarships available



MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR AN EXCITING 3-SESSION ADULT EDUCATION EXPERIENCE as we go “Where Jesus Walked” on October 30, November 13 and 20. Dick and Nancy Sprenkle traveled to Israel in 1997 along with other members of our congregation and visited virtually all of the places mentioned in the DVD we will use as a resource. We will also explore key milestones of our Lord's life. While not the same as traveling to Israel, it will be the next best thing and a lot cheaper! Join us for coffee at 8:30 AM in Room 133 each morning before our 1 hour sessions begin at 8:45 AM.

These are the lectionary texts for the month of November. We welcome you to study in advance of their being incorporated into the Sunday worship services.

Week of Nov 6 – Josh. 24:1-3a, 14-25; Ps. 78:1-7
Thess. 4:13-18; Matt. 25:1-13

Week of Nov 13 – Judges 4:1-7; Ps. 123
1 Thess. 5:1-11; Matt. 25:14-30

Week of Nov 20 – Ezek. 34:11-16, 20-24; Ps. 100
Eph. 1:15-23; Matt. 25:31-46

Week of Nov 27 – Isa. 64:1-9; Ps. 80:1-7, 17-19
1 Cor. 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37



OPTIMISTS

Over 60 members enjoyed our return to Fellowship Hall for our October meeting! If you are over 50, consider joining this group for the meeting on Friday, November 4 at 6:15 PM. The covered-dish supper will be topped off with pie again! If you would like to be placed on the calling list or have questions, please call Sue Suter (381-5297).

Bob Koch will be our speaker on Western New York Authors. The Greater Rochester area has long been a seedbed for productive writers. Several of them are recognizable names with whom you have long been familiar. Others may be more obscure, but still have particular interest. Join us for this fascinating glimpse into their literary achievements.



NEEDED: Either an exercise bike or treadmill to be donated to Bruce Frank, whose family lost their home in New Orleans and have moved to Rochester.

Bruce and his wife (Cheryl) participated in our Worship Service several weeks ago.

If you can help, please call Kay Saxum (385-9807).



Save the DATE!!!

Benefit for The Rochester Area Interfaith Hospitality Network

Shop til You Drop will be held once again on Monday night, Nov. 28th from 6-9 PM.

Where: Pittsford Plaza, Monroe Avenue

Who: Blueground Jewelry
One World Goods
Snow Country
The Lounge
Applebees Restaurant (4-9 PM
Coupon needed)

What: 10-20% of the sales for that evening benefit RAIHN to help homeless families.

Door Prizes: Over \$1000 in gifts will be given away.

Sunday, November 6, 2005

Marcus Borg "A Tale of Two Christianities"

Internationally known author and biblical scholar, Marcus Borg, will give the third annual *The Bible & The World Lecture* at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Rochester, on Sunday, November 6 at 5:00 PM. The afternoon begins with choral Evensong at 4:00 PM, a traditional service of music and scripture readings, followed by the lecture at 5:00 PM. Both events are free and are open to the public.

Borg has been described by *The New York Times* as "a leading figure in his generation of Jesus scholars." A noted author, his *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time* (1994) is the single best-selling book by a contemporary Jesus scholar and *The God We Never Knew* was named "one of the ten best books in religion in 1997" by *Publishers Weekly*. His newest book is *The Heart of Christianity* (2003).



FUNDRAISER FOR SHEPHERD HOME IN PENFIELD

SHEPHERD HOME (www.shepherdhome.org) is a hospice located in Penfield, NY dedicated to providing comfort and compassionate care to members of the community with life-limiting illnesses, in a way that cherishes the dignity of each individual and meets their physical, emotional and spiritual needs.

You are invited to experience "river barging" on the Douro River in Portugal and Spain for this fundraising event. FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION, A DONATION TO SHEPHERD HOME WILL BE MADE IN YOUR NAME.

Vineyards Along the Douro: Lisbon, Portugal to
Porto, Portugal
Departure: June 8, 2006

Here is a truly delightful cruise holiday. It offers a gentle, relaxing journey through breathtaking scenery, quaint villages and towns, and the great cities of Porto and Salamanca. Combined with the three-day pre-cruise Lisbon extension, this is a most comprehensive and enjoyable way to see Portugal and Spain.

For further information, contact the group leader, Diane Robbins, at 377-1764 or dianeinny@yahoo.com.

COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING WORSHIP – Tuesday evening, November 22 at 7:30pm at Linehan Chapel, Nazareth College. The Chaplain’s Office and staff at Nazareth College will host the Interfaith Thanksgiving Service sponsored by Pittsford Area Clergy. You are invited!



PARENTS WHO HOST LOSE THE MOST – Monroe County in collaboration with the communities of Brighton, Fairport-Perinton, Penfield, Pittsford, Webster, and the National Council on Alcoholism & Drug Dependence encourage parents and adults to be responsible. It is against the law to be a party to teenage drinking. You can learn more about this and www.nydas.org/parentswhost.



Worship and Educational Schedule

Time	Option	Description
8:30am	Worship	Traditional Service (Sr. High Room)
8:30am	Adult Education	Topical Study
9:30am	Fellowship Hour	
10:00am	Worship	Traditional Service*
10:00am	Adult Education	Bible Study (Room 21)*
10:00am	Senior High Forum	Grades 9-12 (Sr. High Room)
10:00am	Church School	Nursery-8 th grade
11:00am	Fellowship Hour	
5:00pm	JYF	Grades 7-8 (Sr. High Room)
5:00pm	Adult Education	Bible Study (Room 201)
6:30pm	Worship	Alternative Service (Fellowship Hall)
7:30pm	MTC	Grades 9-12 (Sr. High Room)
7:30pm	Adult Education	Bible Study (Room 201)

*childcare available