



Heart of Palms

Good News Letter

Palms Welcomes Visiting Theologian Dr. Cynthia Rigby



In 2005 we welcomed Dr. Walter Brueggemann who spoke to us and enriched us by his thought and presence. This was a wonderful beginning to bringing a noted theologian to Palms each year to spark our imagination with creative thought for the nurture and mission of our community. Since that time we have also hosted Drs. Rodger Nishioka and Tom Long. Each year we have come out of the time even more energized and amazed at how much they were able to speak to us about our ministry.

This year we welcome Dr. Cynthia Rigby, W.C. Brown Professor of Theology at Austin Theological Seminary. Dr. Rigby received the PhD in systematic theology from Princeton Theological Seminary where she was awarded a doctoral fellowship and the Wildrich Award for Excellence in Homiletics.

In an article in the Dallas Morning News, on March 28th, 2006, Rigby was cited as one of the great theologians of our time. In his article, William McKenzie wrote about twelve contemporary theologians who can "span the gap between church and society. Attention to theology, politics and sociology allows these thinkers to shape the world, not just follow in its wake."

Mark your calendars now for Dr. Rigby's speaking engagements the weekend of February 20-22. She will speak Friday night and Saturday morning and then preach in worship on Sunday. Her topic will be, "Deep and Wide: Living Into God's Amazing Grace" and she will ask us to engage the question of what does it mean when we say we are saved "by grace alone?" In these sessions, we will explore what it looks like to participate in God's grace via the metaphor of going for a swim. Why do we hover at the edge of the pool (of God's grace), hesitating to jump in? What hope do we feel as we surface, looking out at the water of grace? And how do we get going on the actual swimming, engaging in spiritual practices that help us feel strong and refreshed? Come and join us in the wonderful opportunity to do some creative imagining around how to be church in today's world.

Topic:

***Deep and Wide:
Living Into God's Amazing Grace***

Friday, February 20 at 7:00 p.m.
in the Sanctuary

Saturday, February 21 at 9:00 a.m.
in the Sanctuary
with a light breakfast in Patten Hall

Sunday, February 22
8:30 and 11:00 a.m. Morning worship

Heart of Palms

February 2009



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Fine Arts Series

Sunday Worship

8:30 a.m.

11:00 a.m.

Sunset at Palms

5:45 p.m.

Senior Pastor

Rev. Dr. Thomas W. Walker

Senior Associate Pastor

Rev. Dr. Carol DiGiusto

Associate Pastor for Discipleship

Rev. Andrew W. Kukla

Associate Pastor for Youth and their Families

Rev. Katie Day

Director of Music and Fine Arts

Dr. Ronn Cummings

Director of Children's Ministries

Rev. Laurie Furr-Vancini

Business Administrator

Jan Redden

Communications Director

Liz Richardson

Parish Associate for Visitation

Rev. Lloyd S. Alamsha

Pastor Emeritus

The Rev. Dr. James W. Tinsley

Pastor Emeritus

The Rev. Dr. John H. Swann

Elder Emeritus

John Hess

Elder Emeritus

Al Bowers

Please Visit

www.palmschurch.org

Please visit Palms website. Check out the many different aspects of the life of Palms all in one place! Feel free to roam through the different pages and learn more about what makes us who we are as the body of Christ. The website will be continually updated with new information, photos and this monthly newsletter, *The Heart of Palms*, which can be downloaded. Please contact: communications@palmschurch.org with any questions.

Heart of Palms

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suggestions.

Call 246-6427 or e-mail:
communications@palmschurch.org

Financial Report - Operating Budget

as of December 31, 2008

Budgeted Y/T/D Actual Y/T/D Over (Under)

Total Income.....	\$1,852,426.....	\$1,829,830.....	\$(22,596)
Total Expenses...	\$1,852,426.....	\$1,805,092.....	\$(47,334)
Net Income.....		\$24,738	

50th Anniversary Campaign

Total Pledges to date: \$3,280,412

Total Paid to date: \$2,508,251

Walking With Palms

A message from our Senior Pastor

Rev. Dr. Thomas W. Walker



I have always had a love for swimming. When my neighbors built a pool in their back yard, they never anticipated that the young boy down the street would constantly be knocking on their door, "Mrs. Adger, can I go swimming?" For me, diving down into the water and swimming underwater were my favorite things to do. Any pool I entered, I would want to get to the deep end and swim under the water. I was not a top water swimmer, but could spend hours under the water, immersed in its buoyant support, surrounded by its cool touch.

Our upcoming theologian-in-residence speaker, Dr. Cindy Rigby, wrote us recently that she was going to reflect with us about swimming in God's grace, enjoying it fully. (Cindy will be with us February 20-22. After each of our other theologians-in-residence, I would hear on Sunday morning people saying, "If I had know he was that good, I would have come on Friday." Cindy is that good, so plan on coming to be with her.) Her idea got me thinking about my love of swimming underwater. What would it mean for us to submerge ourselves into the grace of God? What kind of buoyancy could come to us by trusting God's grace to support us? How might God's grace help us move through life more fluidly?

In the weeks ahead, I invite us all to ruminate on these questions. Our time with Dr. Rigby will certainly be a time to begin that reflection. Also, the activities of the Lenten season here at Palms will be another place to submerge ourselves into God's grace and the costliness of that grace for God, as well as for us. I look forward to our continued journey together in 2009 and for the ways in which God will invite us to swim deeper in our shared faithfulness.

Shalom, *Tom*

Report from the Session

At its January meeting, the Session of Palms Presbyterian Church:

- ▶ Approved 2009 Mission Plan.
- ▶ Heard an update on our Habitat for Humanity Oasis Build.
- ▶ Approved a study of fruitful practices by the ministries of the Session, as well as a study on discipleship.
- ▶ Studied the Barmen Declaration.

At our Annual Congregational Meeting the following members of Palms were elected to serve:

Elder: Richard Abdullah, Chris Douglas, Carolyn Ettlinger, Marc Fields,
Sam Flora, Marilyn Hoener, Sally Paulson

Deacon: Bill Etheredge, Ed Gilpin, Alicia Hamilton, Esther Haywood,
Brenda Keyser, Pam Mann, Ron Parker, Michael Shomers

Nominating Committee: Murray Beard, Al Bowers, Pam Chally, Walt Colvin, Jen Douglas

Outreach

TO SPONSORS OF CHILDREN IN HAITI:

The members of the Haiti Medical Mission Team would be happy to deliver a small gift from you to your students in Haiti. The gift(s) would need to fit in a small gift bag (8" X 6"). Suggested gifts are a small toy such as a Matchbox Car or baby doll or pad of paper and colored pencils; socks; hair ribbons, beads, or barrettes; tee shirt or dress (sizes usually correspond with the child's age). You may also send a card to your student's family with a short note of encouragement and love. You may include a gift of cash in this card for the family.

The Haitian families love to have you include a picture of yourself and your family in your card.. All gifts will be kept in the school office until the parents come for their children at the end of the day. We will take a photo of your sponsored child for you as we deliver your gift. All gifts would need to be delivered to the church by February 15th. Please make sure your name and the student's name are easily visible and that the student's family name is on the envelope of your card. You will love the delight you'll see in the eyes of your student when your gift is delivered. If you have any questions, please contact Bob and FloAnne O'Brien at 819-0031.



Some of the beautiful children of Haiti.



Emily and Trevor Lunghino assist in delivering gifts.

The Shared Love of Christ at Christmas

Palms Church has been blessed to be a blessing. The All for One Food Drive filled the shelves at BEAM and Mission House during the month of November. This Christmas the Angel Tree provided Christmas gifts – toys and specifically requested items -- for over 200 children, 12 military families, and 15 senior citizens living in the Beaches area. In addition twelve families at Finegan Elementary received assistance.

Your gifts to the Compassion Fund made it possible to deliver 95 \$50.00 Publix gift cards to ten schools and the Donner Center for families in need. The gift cards are distributed by guidance counselors to families identified with specific needs. The joy of this season is extended throughout the year by your donations to the Compassion Fund. Your generosity helps the Outreach Ministry anticipate needs in addition to being able to respond quickly when a request comes to our door. In 2008 -- much needed prescriptions were filled; a child's glasses were replaced; lunch at school was provided; rent assistance enabled a family to not become homeless; groceries have been provided; and much more.



Worship Preparation Class

This class is designed to teach our children the basics of the Presbyterian worship service, as well as about Palms and our sanctuary. It includes the opportunity to meet each pastor and our Director of Music.

It is designed for all students in 1st grade, and those in 2nd and 3rd grade who have not previously been part of the class. Parents are strongly encouraged to attend any or all sessions so they may learn how to best help their children be participants in worship, as well as learn a little themselves!

This class meets during the Discipleship Hour (9:40-10:40 a.m.) and continues through May 3rd. At the conclusion of the class, all children without excessive absences will receive a Bible and a certificate, and will be recognized at a worship service on Sunday, May 3rd.

Evie Neal gets more acquainted with her bible during last years Worship Preparation Class.



A New Deacon Ministry Team - Loaves and Fishes

During these uncertain times this ministry team cares for those in the congregation who need assistance with small repairs at home or with their car, who seek support during times of unemployment or job change, and who want guidance with budgeting and household expenses. If you would be interested in using your talents to help with this new outreach, please contact Jim Yoder at 285-0258.



An On-Line Class During Lent

Begins February 25

Have you ever wanted to participate in a church class or study group but couldn't make the time or the day? This year, during Lent, Palms will be joining with five other Presbyterian congregations across the country to offer an on-line class called "Jesus' Words for Anxious Times" which is based on Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Each week, a different pastor (including our own pastor, Dr. Tom Walker) will post the scripture reading along with some thoughts to consider and questions to discuss. The participants will engage in discussion on-line as they explore what Jesus' words mean for our challenging times. All you need to join the class is access to a computer and the internet

and a willing sense of adventure in new ways of learning and sharing ideas! To join the class, please send an e-mail to academy@westminsterpc.org (Westminster Presbyterian in West Chester, PA which is hosting the class) and put On-line Class in the subject line. More specific instruction will be provided.



Making Valentines

Tuesday, February 3, 4:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Preschool and elementary school-aged children are invited to join Mommy & Me in a Valentine's Craft Party on Tuesday, February 3, from 4:00 - 7:00 p.m.

in the Education Building Art Room. Make Valentines for all of your family and friends.

We'll provide the art supplies and you provide the creativity! Pizza and drinks will be provided. This is an open house event, so come when you can and stay as long as you'd like.

Catty Shack Wildlife Sanctuary

Thursday, February 26, 10:30 a.m.

Join us for a special tour of the Catty Shack Ranch, dedicated to the rescue and care of big cats.

Currently, they have 36 cats on the premises: Siberian tigers, lions, cougars, leopards. This is not a petting zoo; it's an educational tour for the young ones. This event is FREE.

For all events, please RSVP at least a week in advance by calling Karen Case at 982-0358, or emailing Katie Colley at kcolley@me.com.



Women's NetWork Book Club

Thursday, February 5

If you are interested in warm fellowship and great conversation, we'd like for you to consider joining our book club! Our selection this new year is with is *Peace Like a River* by Leif Enger, and is available through amazon.com or through local book stores. Enjoy the calm of the after Christmas rush and relax with a great book! We will meet Thursday, February 5th, at 7:00 p.m. at the home of Lucy Miller. RSVP to Lucy at lucysmiller@msn.com or 280-3699.

Walk and Talk at Guana Park

Saturday, March 14

Come out and enjoy God's creation as we walk and have conversation at Guana State park.

For more information, please contact Liz Richardson at 246-6427.

Plan to Attend

A Spectacular Valentine's Gourmet Buffet Dinner

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Fresh Salads | Potatoes Au Gratin |
| Salsa Bar | Peas with Pearl Onions |
| Seafood Salads | Buttered Carrots |
| Fresh Fruit | Shrimp Creole |
| Chilled Mayport Shrimp | Sliced Pork Tenderloin |
| Fresh Crab Claw Fingers | Fresh Breads |
| Rice Pilaf | Desserts |

Saturday, February 14

Fellowship Hall 6:30 p.m.

Special Entertainment by Priscilla Johnson, soprano extraordinaire, accompanied by Don Friedewald and Cathy Fortson, performing a mix of love themed music.

Tickets, \$20.00 per person, are available through the church office.



Thank You Notes...

To Palms,

Thank you so very much for your kindness, prayers, love, peace, and the beautiful flowers.

Mo Timlin

To Palms and Staff,

Thank you for the lovely notes and cards sent at the time of Allen's death. They were greatly appreciated! We are all moving on slowly but for the health problems on my part. I am unable to attend church regularly. I would love a word or two of encouragement and support.

Jean Hairston

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

What a blessing it is to belong to the "Family of God," especially here at Palms! How faithful you all have been to continue to lift me up in prayer for my healing. After three months I am now home permanently and look forward to being able to play the piano again with BOTH hands. With much love and thanksgiving.

Mary Lou Thornton

Palms,

Thanks so much for your thoughts, prayers and flowers. They made my back feel much better. More importantly it made us feel we are part of a "family."

Blessing to All, Roger Punt

Dear Palms,

Thank you for your prayers and concern for me during my recent cornea surgery. Also for the flowers and visit by Holly Jolles. My eyesight is returning gradually and I will soon have the 20/30 vision in that eye. I am blessed to be a member of such a caring church community. Blessings to all of you

Mitzi Taylor

Presbyterian Women Request a Small Donation to Help Rebuild Lives

Only \$5.00 can provide comfort and warmth to victims of disaster at home or around the world. Palms Presbyterian Women and Church Women United are working with Church World Service to provide blankets and tools to those in need.

From the basic help the blankets offer, this program goes on to help with tools, training and resources to help these people rebuild their lives.

Your \$5.00 will help impoverished communities with the basic tools needed to sustain and rebuild life. Make your check payable to Palms Church with a note for "blanket fund", or in worship, look for the gift envelopes in the pew racks.

Your help is greatly appreciated.

Welcome New Members

We welcomed the following new members to our Palms family in December, 2008

Bob and Renata Russell - recently relocated to Ponte Vedra with their children Victoria and Conner. They are excited to be joining Palms and look forward to joyful fellowship.

Jim and Courtney Simmons - are excited to have found a new church home at Palms Presbyterian. Courtney was baptized here as they joined, and they both look forward to participating in the ministries of the church. They celebrated the birth of their son, Ballard, in January.

Chuck and Alison Carlin - are excited to become members of Palms. As they begin their new life together, they look forward to becoming active in the Palms community.

Frank and Cathy Fortson - are glad to become members here at Palms where they have already made a home. Cathy is our organist and Frank has been singing in the choir. They look forward to deepening their relationships within the church.

Plan Ahead

PALMS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Fine Arts Series

Tuesday, March 17 7:30 p.m.

The Baker's Dozen

Men's Vocal Ensemble from Yale University

This entertaining men's vocal ensemble travels from Yale University. Since the group's founding in 1947, the Baker's Dozen has taken its unique blend of traditional and contemporary songs and its spirited camaraderie to audiences across the nation. From school and community auditoriums to private Hollywood parties to the White House, the Baker's Dozen today continues its long tradition of delivering professional and energetic performances while maintaining the highest levels of friendship and musicianship.



Palms Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

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