

**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

**I**t would be difficult to overstate the significance of Easter in the Christian Church. The resurrection of Jesus is what transformed a group of disillusioned, demoralized women and men into a vital force that turned their world upside down—as attested by people unsympathetic to their cause. People who knew Jesus of Nazareth well during his ministry and people who didn't know him at all experienced his living presence after his crucifixion outside Jerusalem.

For centuries believers, skeptics, and deniers have talked about and written about "what really happened" and have struggled to understand something so clearly outside the boundaries of "the normal." Two thousand years after the event, whatever it was, people are still risking their lives and their reputations in declaring their faith in the risen Lord. In

the time and place where you and I live, faith in the living Christ is not met with civil punishment or social ostracism, more likely with a shrug.

On Easter Sunday we will sing what Christians have been affirming for centuries: "Jesus Christ is risen today." When we do that, we are not necessarily claiming an unquestioning understanding of a simple fact that can be proved scientifically. We are testifying to a reality perceived by faith and known experientially. A gospel song explains it well. "You ask me how I know he lives? He lives within my heart."

I look forward to sharing the events of Holy Week with you this year. They prepare us for proclaiming and experiencing the truth of Easter: Christ is risen. He is risen indeed.

Dave Prince

RUTGERS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

# Renewal

## Holy Week at Rutgers Church

offers multiple opportunities for meaningful worship.

**Maundy Thursday**, April 5, 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**, April 6, at 12 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, April 7, 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.

And on **Easter Sunday**, April 8, 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 and timpani, the sacrament of Holy Communion, and an atmosphere of grateful praise.

### Membership Exploration

Sunday, April 15 at 12:45 p.m. in the Daniel Russell Room

Have you been considering becoming a member of Rutgers Church? Or would you like a chance to get to know others who are (relatively) new to the Rutgers community? Dave Prince will say something about his understanding of membership in a Presbyterian Church, and with Cheryl Pyrch will answer questions about the extensive mission program at Rutgers. There will be time for brief self-introductions and an opportunity to share what has brought you to Rutgers. A light lunch will be provided.

# April 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> 9:45 a.m. Peace & Social Justice Network 12:45 p.m. Board of Deacons	<b>2</b> 12:15 p.m. Alanon 6:00 p.m. Cub Scouts Every Monday	<b>3</b> 12:15 p.m. Alanon 6:00 p.m. Boy Scouts; Men's Support Group (HIV+/ PLWA) 8:00 p.m. Men's Alanon Every Tuesday	<b>4</b> 5:30 p.m. A.A. Meeting Every Wednesday	<b>5</b> 6:00 p.m. Meal Program 7:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday Service	<b>6</b> 12-2:30 p.m. Good Friday Service 6:00 p.m. Men's Overnight Shelter Every Friday	<b>7</b> 5:30 p.m. A.A. Meeting 6:00 p.m. Men's Overnight Shelter Every Saturday 7:00 p.m. The Vigil of Easter
<b>8</b> 9:00 a.m. Brief Communion Service on Steps 9:30 a.m. Easter Breakfast	<b>9</b> All Day Church and office buildings closed	<b>10</b> 12:00 p.m. Pastoral Staff 6:30 p.m. Worship Committee	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> 6:00 p.m. Meal Program 7:00 p.m. Movie: Nature Every Thursday	<b>13</b> 10:30 a.m. Mothers' Bible Study Every Friday	<b>14</b> 1:00 p.m. Opera Rehearsal Every Friday
<b>15</b> 9:45 a.m. Gospel of John Through Jun. 28 12:45 p.m. Membership Exploration	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 6:30 p.m. Session Meeting	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> 6:30 p.m. Mission Review Steering Comm.	<b>20</b> 7-9 p.m. Janie Spahr Retirement Party	<b>21</b> 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Immigration Conference at Fifth Ave. Church
<b>22</b> 12:15 p.m. Coffee Hour with Janie Spahr	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>Birthdays!</b> 1 Hayden Coudal-Jones 2 Laurel Brevoort, Nicole Byrns, Lily & Trey Santiago 4 Mary Beth Coudal 5 Massimo Maglione 6 Muriel Knight 10 Joan Keener 14 Bob Shelton 16 Khitan Galper, Gladly Morris 17 Jennifer Finn 18 Cherise Ou Yang 23 Sophia Graham-Kay 24 Austin Simpson 27 Charles Platt		<b>27</b> 6:30 p.m. Parent/Family/ Teacher Dinner	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> 12:45 p.m. Board of Trustees 2:00 p.m. CROP Walk 4:00 p.m. Faith Esham Recital	<b>30</b>	<b>Sundays</b> 9:45 am Sunday School for Adults 10 & 12:45 Adult Choir Rehearsal 10:15 Children's Choir Rehearsal 10:45 Infant & Child Care 11:00 Worship Service 11:15 Sunday School (ages 3-12) 12:15 pm Coffee Hour		<b>Preaching Schedule</b> April 1 ___ Palm Sunday; The Rev. Cheryl Pynch preaching April 8 ___ Easter; Holy Communion; The Rev. David Prince preaching April 15 ___ 2nd Sunday of Easter; The Rev. David Prince preaching April 22 ___ 3rd Sunday of Easter; The Rev. Janie Spahr preaching April 29 ___ Earth Sunday; The Rev. David Prince preaching		

## More for April 2007 at Rutgers Church, and Beyond

### Easter Breakfast

Sunday, April 8 at 9:30 a.m. on the fifth floor

### Scaffolding in the Sanctuary

A quick update from the Trustees: we are currently scheduling plaster repair work and painting the sanctuary to begin some time after Easter. We expect things to be completed by early May.

### Gospel of John

Sundays, April 15—June 24, 9:45 a.m. in the Session Room

Among Christians, the Gospel of John tends to be the most-loved or least-loved of the four gospels. Different in style, story-line, and theological concerns than the other three, the Gospel of John is especially challenging for liberal Christians. Its emphasis on the importance of right belief, its problematic description of “the Jews,” and its long speeches (“wordy is the Lamb” goes the saying) discourage many. But the Gospel of John is a precious resource for all of us, and together we’ll discover the wonderful stories and theological insights that the Church has valued over the centuries. We’ll be using *Kerygma* study guides, so please let Cheryl Pynch know if you would like to attend.

### Immigration, Justice & Christian Hospitality

Saturday, April 21, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Fifth Ave. Presb. Church

Come to a conference organized by the Immigration Working Group of the Council for Witness to Society and the World of the New York City Presbytery. The featured speaker will be Julia Thorne, PC(USA) Immigration Counsel and Manager for Immigration Issues. There will be a plenary and workshops on: Theology, Church Policy and Migration; the Current Law and Its Application; Federal Legislative Reform; and Resources for Congregations. Cheryl Pynch will be attending; please contact her for more information.

### Parent / Teacher / Family Dinner

Friday, April 27 at 6:30 p.m. in the Daniel Russell Room

The Christian Education Committee invites families and Sunday School teachers to gather for dinner and fellowship. Afterwards, children will enjoy games and other activities while adults share experiences and talk about the Sunday School and other youth programs. All who care about children at Rutgers are welcome! Please bring a dish to share, and RSVP to Cheryl Pynch ([cheryl@rutgerschurch.com](mailto:cheryl@rutgerschurch.com) or x205).

### The 7th Annual NYC CROP Hunger Walk

Sunday, April 29 at 2:00 p.m.

New York city will be one of 2,000 communities across the country that will be holding CROP walks or other fundraisers to fight hunger and bring disaster relief around the world: from NYC food pantries to building houses on the Gulf Coast to helping Pakistanis rebuilding from the devastating earthquake of two years ago. Sponsored by Church World Service, CROP

walks and other events (such as grain canvasses!) have helped fight hunger and poverty since 1947. **This is what we’ll be doing at Rutgers Church this year:**

- Joy Rose, the Rutgers CROP Walk coordinator, will give a Moment for Mission to tell you more on April 15th.
- Joy, SKATE members, and others who are planning to walk will gladly accept pledges and donations at coffee hour (and other places) in the weeks before the walk. Children will make signs in Sunday School.
- After church on April 29th, all planning to walk will travel to 5th Avenue and 90th Street, where we will gather at the Church of the Heavenly Rest. We’ll walk along the park to 55th Street, where we will have a celebratory reception at the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church.
- **How can you help?** Give generously to Rutgers walkers who are collecting pledges, and come with us on April 29th. You do not have to collect money to walk and witness in the fight against hunger and poverty.



### A Recital by Soprano Faith Esham

Sunday, April 29 at 4:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary

The program will focus on “Composers Crossing Borders” featuring the works of Enesco, Griffes, Wolf, Laitman, and Larson. Pianist David Holkeboer and saxophonist Paul Cohen will collaborate in works that champion each composer’s assimilation into new social strata and nationalistic sounds.

### Looking Ahead to May...

There is still room at our **Family Retreat on May 18-19 in Holmes, NY**. Led by the Revs. Susan Wonderland and Cheryl Pynch, families will have a chance to talk, play, and explore in the beautiful camp and conference center in Holmes, New York. This is our third family retreat, and they have been wonderful times for parents and children to connect with others at Rutgers. Please call or write Cheryl Pynch if you would like more information.

### Joint Bible Study with West End Synagogue

Thursday, May 31, 7:30 p.m. at West End Synagogue  
65th and Amsterdam Avenue

Two years ago, West End Synagogue and Rutgers Church began collaborating on social action projects and other activities, including an informative (and fascinating) Bible study. Next month, we offer another chance to study a text together, this time the Book of Job, in a class led by Cheryl Pynch and Aryeh Gold. Come learn and talk about this unusual book of the Bible which has been an inspiration to Jews, Christians, and many others who have puzzled over the power of evil in God’s world.



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## It's a Party!

**Celebrating the Ministry of the Reverend Janie Spahr  
Friday, April 20, 7-9 p.m. on the Church House Roof**

Presbyterian Welcome invites you to a retirement barbecue for the Reverend Janie Spahr, "Traveling Lesbian Evangelist" and Minister Director of That All May Freely Serve (TAMFS). Janie is (unarguably) the best-known lesbian Presbyterian minister in the country, and her exuberance, warmth, and eloquence have made her a wonderful spokesperson and organizer on behalf of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender people who are called serve in ordained ministries of the church. Please join us in celebrating her incredible ministry under the stars and on the roof of the Rutgers Church House. This is a fundraiser for TAMFS and Presbyterian Welcome, so please don't forget your checkbook.

**Show off your cooking (or ability to find good take-out).** The Reverend Charles Amstein is in charge of the food for this festive event so please call him through the church if you are able to be a grillmaster/mistress/mastress (hot dogs and hamburgers) or can bring a salad or dessert. **Please RSVP to Presbyterian Welcome** at (917) 441-8638 or [mieke@presbyterianwelcome.org](mailto:mieke@presbyterianwelcome.org) as space on the roof is limited. Presbyterian Welcome is an affiliate region of TAMFS.

## The Rev. Janie Spahr to Preach at Rutgers Sunday, April 22

When Janie Spahr was called to serve as a minister at the Downtown Presbyterian Church in Rochester, NY, in 1992, she made no secret of the fact she was a lesbian. The church didn't find that a barrier, but the highest court of the Presbyterian Church (USA) *did*, and set aside her pastoral call. In response, Downtown Church created a mission project, That All May Freely Serve (TAMFS), and hired Janie "to visit congregations, pastors, and church members throughout the country telling the stories of LGBT Presbyterians, preaching, educating, and challenging exclusive church structures." In the past 15 years, her work has changed the consciousness and conversation around sexuality in the Presbyterian Church, and she is known and loved by many members of the Rutgers congregation. On Sunday, April 22, she will preach at Rutgers and then share her story after worship in the Daniel Russell Room. We hope you can be there!

