



# e- Vigil

Electronic Communication from the International Christian  
Community Church

September Issue

September 1, 2007

The International Christian Community Churches celebrate the diversity of God's people and their mission to bring others to Christ. All of our churches are open, welcoming and accepting.

## The First 7 Words of the Church

Philippians 4:1's3; John 15:1-5

Rev. Emily Bel's sermon on the occasion of Rev. Linda Simonds Installation at Holy Trinity

Have you noticed how important words are to us? We are especially concerned about the first and last words a person utters. Whenever two people argue, whoever gets the last word, generally feels like the winner of the fight. Then there are a baby's first words. It usually takes a great deal of imagination and a bit of stretching, but we try to determine that first word a baby speaks. In fact that first word is often recorded in a baby book. We're also interested in a person's last words. Supposedly the last words a person speaks gives some sort of insight into that person and his or her deepest beliefs. Here are some example I found n the internet: ~~ Thomas à Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, d.1170 "I am ready to die for my Lord, that in my blood the Church may obtain liberty and peace." ~~ Leonardo da Vinci, artist, d. 1519 "I have offended God and mankind because my work did not reach the quality it should have ~~ Ethel Barrymore, actress, d. June 18, 1959 said "Is everybody happy? .I want everybody to be happy. I know I'm happy." ~~Diana (Spencer), Princess of Wales, d. August 31, 1997 "My God. What's happened?" ~~ Malcolm X, Black leader, d. 1966 "Let's cool it brothers . . ." Spoken to his assassins, the 3 men who shot him 16 times. So we hang on to those last words. We treat the last words of Christ in the same manner. In fact, those words taken from the gospel accounts of Jesus' crucifixion have been made the subject of music and countless sermons. On the Friday before Easter, Good Friday, the worship service is built around the last words of Christ. Someone once identified the seven last words of the church as "We never did it that way before."

If those are the seven last words of the church, I want to share with you what I believe to be the seven first words of the church:

“I can do all things through Christ...” There is something noteworthy about these words. 1] They are Positive. Notice that Paul said, “I can...” It is so much easier to say, “I can’t.” I want us to consider saying “I can.” Often when a church looks at ministries, the people emphasize what they don’t have. They look at what they don’t have in the way of budget, or buildings or other resources. Instead, what we all should focus on what we do have in the way of people, possibilities, and the power of the Holy Spirit. Holy Trinity, focus on the resources you have.

You have Jesus You have the Holy Spirit. You have some very dedicated people. You have people with many talents. And you now have a very devoted pastor.

2] These Words Suggest a Pattern. Paul said, “I can do all things...” Lets look at Paul’s life, When he started his ministry---- He went against public opinion, (the Christian Community was afraid of him because they only knew him as the one who was out to hunt them down.) He didn’t have the endorsement of the “right” people, (the leaders of the Christian Community didn’t trust him.)

And he went against the established pattern, (He was more proactive in taking the gospel to people.) With all this against him, the list of Paul’s accomplishments is impressive. He made three missionary trips. He is responsible for the starting of several churches He wrote several letters expressing encouragement to churches and church leaders. When we think of everything we should achieve as Christians, the list seems overwhelming: world hunger, world peace ... world evangelization, world mission, Our first impression is to say: We can’t do all that!

But is that true? Let’s look at Paul’s pattern. Paul traveled to one place and completed one mission. Then he moved on to the next place and completed another mission. This is the pattern Holy Trinity and all of the International Christian Community Churches should follow. In fact, when we look at the ministry of Jesus we note the some pattern. He went to one place, at one time, to one people. No, we can’t do everything, but we must do something. In the book, The Reluctant Witness, the author told of a seminary student who was very sensitive to other people’s needs. When this student finished school he went to serve as pastor of a mission in an impoverished community. He discovered people in need all around him and began to help them. The author asked the young minister if the sheer number of those who had problems and needed help was discouraging to his efforts. The minister seemed surprised by the question and answered, “I’m so busy trying to help people around me who need help that I don’t think too much about all the others. “But I have the feeling that when I reach out to the person in front of me and embrace their need, I have within my arms the whole world.” He helped one person at a time.3] These Words Affirm a Presence. Paul said: “I can do all things through Christ” These words affirm the presence of Jesus. Jesus is here.

You see, Jesus, working through individuals, is what makes it all possible. It’s what makes us able to embrace victorious Christian living

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It's what makes us able to embrace victorious Christian living And it's what enables us to do effective Christian ministry. Paul's entire life and ministry are explained by his dependence on Christ. It can be the explanation for the life of Holy Trinity ICCC.

Jesus is here. Wherever Holy Trinity congregates, Jesus is there. Wherever you and your pastor meet, Jesus is there. There is a story told about an old French peasant. It seems he visited the church in his village for an hour every morning before laboring in the fields and for an hour every night. The village priest asked him what he did in those two hours each day. He said, "I just look at Christ and he looks at me." This man knew something we often forget. He took time out of his day to spend time with God. He knew if he just put himself in God's hands, he'd be OK. Listen again He took TIME out of his day to sit with his Savior.

4] These Words Show Power, I can do all things through Christ Christ alone is our strength, our power. There will be times when it feels that Jesus is ignoring us. But the fact is that God is doing some pruning. Remember our gospel reading, Jesus said: "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." God cuts off every branch that bears no fruit. At the same time, every branch does bear fruit God prunes so it will be even more fruitful." It is Jesus who gives us the strength each day. Jesus is the true vine, and God, the Creator of all, is the gardener. Holy Trinity, never forget, that it is Jesus who enables you. It is Jesus who has set each of you on this mission and built this church. Linda, remember, it is Jesus who has placed a portion of HIS flock in your care. And it is Jesus you equips you and qualifies you to pastor that flock called Holy Trinity. When we pastors stop to think about it, it is an awesome feeling. Jesus, the Savior of our very souls entrusts us with His sheep. Will everything always go smoothly at Holy Trinity --- no? Will Holy Trinity and Rev. Linda agree on everything,----no. There will be pruning. While pruning is good for the vine, ... branches ARE being cut --- so pruning will cause pain. But, without the pruning, the church will stagnate. It is through this pruning, that Jesus gives the power daily to face all obstacles. It is precisely because of the pruning that Holy Trinity and Rev. Linda together, can utter those 7 words. We can do all things through Christ.

*I know that we all wish the best for Linda and the good people of Holy Trinity. Our prayers go with them as they begin this new journey together. Congratulations and blessings!*

### **Seminars Available**

Fall is quickly approaching. Several seminars are available to ICCC Churches. If interested please contact the ICCC National Office and they will forward you a list of available seminars. They range from Church growth to developing leadership. They include Church in a Box to developing a drama ministry. E-mail today and take advantage of the talent pool ICCC can provide. It would be helpful if you could act on this soon so that the presenters can schedule the availability in your area.



## NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

“Taste and See that the Lord is good; blessed are they who take refuge in the Lord.” Psalm 34:8

**The New Day Christian Community Church**  
**Celebrates its Second Home Coming**  
**September 15 and 16**

**Saturday September 15**

**Rev. Sam Samson brings a wide variety of musical styles  
 In a love offering concert at 7 PM**

**Sunday September 16**

**Worship Service with an inspiring message from Rev. Mena Johnson and  
 special music by Rev. Sam Sampson**

Good Shepherd, Atlanta GA

### **End of Summer Celebration**

Come join Good Shepherd as they celebrate with Ice Cream and grill out At the Home of  
 Frank Harrell

**Saturday September 8, 2007**

All our churches are welcome

5PM until ? Call Joann Jensen for details

**770-819-1621**

Please check the church websites, which can be located at  
[www. Intlccc.org](http://www.Intlccc.org) for other activities

## Denominational News

### Governing Board Seats will be up for Election

## INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY CHURCHES

### “A Christ-Centered Faith Community”

Office of the Presiding Minister  
PO Box 161991  
Atlanta GA 30321 -1991  
INTLCCC@AOL.COM  
Phone (404) 766-8998  
July 18, 2007



Office of the Treasurer  
PO Box 40845  
Charleston SC 29423-0845  
Phone (843) 766-0592

**TO:** ICCC Churches  
**FROM:** Governing Board Members  
**RE:** Governing Board Elections

Greetings and blessings to you in the name of Jesus Christ!

The Governing Board conducted its mid-year meeting this past weekend in Atlanta, and the agenda was full of exciting and challenging things. A summary of the official actions can be found in the up-coming E-Vigil. One major agenda item was the 2007 Convocation and all that it entails, including the election for Governing Board positions which expire this year. The following Governing Board positions expire this year:

Presiding Minister (Rev. Jay Neely)  
Treasurer (Milton Blanchett)

Member-at-Large (Rev. Jerry Ethridge)  
Clerk (Rev. Carlene Wood)

Our Articles of Covenant outline the following descriptions of these positions:

**PRESIDING MINISTER:** The Presiding Minister is that person elected to have pastoral oversight among the local faith communities of ICC. He/she shall give vision and direction to the growth, development and maturing of ICC and its leadership at denominational and local levels, and shall represent ICC to the wider community. The Presiding Minister shall act as Moderator at General Convocation and Governing Board business meetings.

**TREASURER:** The Treasurer shall be that person elected to be a good steward of the finances of ICC, to report regularly on financial matters, to give an accurate accounting of all financial transactions. The Treasurer shall, with the Governing Board, present to the General Convocation all financial reports and budgets for determination and vote by the Convocation Assembly.

**CLERK:** The Clerk is that person elected to keep and publish accurate records of all meetings of the Governing Board, and business deliberations of the General Convocation. The Clerk shall report to the local churches and members of the Governing Board within 30 days of any business meeting.

MEMBER-AT-LARGE: Members-at-large shall be those persons elected by the General Convocation and may be given specific tasks at the direction and request of the Governing board or the Presiding Minister.

Candidate applications for these positions can be submitted to the Clerk of the Governing Board until September 8, 2007. Incumbents who wish to re-run for their current positions will need to complete an application as well. The form with instructions is attached.

Please share this announcement with your congregation to prayerfully consider if anyone feels called to this challenging and rewarding service.

Note this form maybe completed on Line

**Deadline: September 8, 2007**

**INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY CHURCHES, INC.  
GOVERNING BOARD CANDIDATE INFORMATION**  
November 2007

<b>General Information</b>	
Name:	Church Affiliation:
Position Sought: <input type="checkbox"/> Presiding Minister	<input type="checkbox"/> Treasurer
<input type="checkbox"/> Clerk	<input type="checkbox"/> At Large
Education/Training:	
Employment and Professional Information:	
<b>Faith Background</b>	
Spiritual Journal/Church History:	
Statement of Faith:	
<b>ICCC-Specific Information</b>	
ICCC History, including denominational activities, positions held, etc.:	
Denominational Vision Statement:	
<b>Other</b>	
Other Information:	
Please complete and return this form to the ICCC Clerk no later than September 8, 2007.	
Snail mail form to: Rev. Carlene Wood, Clerk 626 Fairview Road Asheville, NC 28803	Email form to: <a href="mailto:sricecwood@charter.net">sricecwood@charter.net</a> Indicate "Candidate Form" in subject line
Instructions for completing this form: This is a locked Microsoft Word document. Tab through the items and as one section is completed, tab to the next. There is unlimited space in each section. When completed, save the document and then email it to the above address. If unable to complete this form, use separate pages to answer items and snail mail per above.	

## **The Emmaus Institute: Fall 2007**

### **EMMAUS COURSES TO BEGIN SOON!**

The Emmaus Institute of ICCC will begin its second full series of courses this fall. The following classes will be taught:

**Old Testament Survey (begins in mid to late September)**

**New Testament Survey (begins mid December)**

**Call and Discernment (taught in conjunction with 2007 Convocation)**

Emmaus information has been sent to all the churches, and again specifically to those pastors who have indicated that there are individuals in their congregation who are interested. We have received serious inquiries from 15 people already. Those who are interested in taking courses for credit or in auditing courses should contact Rev. Carlene Wood by phone at 828.216.9546 or by email at [sricecwood@charter.net](mailto:sricecwood@charter.net).

As a reminder, Emmaus courses can be taken for credit by those who are pursuing ministry calls, and by those who are just interested in learning more about our faith! For general information, please check the ICCC website.

**For more information, contact Rev. Carlene Wood at  
EmmausICCC@charter.net**

### **Have we forgotten to plant ?**

Last year at convocation we talked about Planting and Growing? I would like you to consider where you would like to see a church planted. It is important that we continue to grow the ICCC. Is there a community near you or where you have a friend that could use a church community that is open and accepting? Have you visited an area where you believe that an ICCC church could make a difference in people's lives? Starting a faith community may be easier than you think. Starting a Bible Study, a Book Club, A prayer Group, or a Discussion Club could be the first step. We have people in this denomination that can aid you in this project. Let us know what you think today!

**We must Plant before we can harvest!**

## Governing Board

Presiding Minister: Rev. Jay Neely  
 Assistant Presiding Minister: Ms. Sharon Lindenbaum  
 Clerk of the Board: Rev. Carlene Wood  
 Treasurer: Mr. Milton Blanchett  
 At-Large: Rev. David Strong  
 At- Large: Rev. Jerry Ethridge  
 At- Large: Mr. Rob Hagen



## Board of Ministry

Chairperson: Rev. Emily Bel  
 Rev. Mena Johnson  
 Mr. Ray Powell

## Area Leaders

Rev. Jerry Ethridge: GA  
 Rev. Carlene Wood: NC; SC.

## Emmaus Institute

Interim Director: Rev. Carlene Wood  
 Assistant Director: Rev. Linda Veltheim

### Reminder:

- Check your calendar for due dates for articles to be placed in the e-vigil
- Please make copies of this newsletter to be distributed at your church
- Monthly Reports due September 5
- Governing Board Election Applications due September 8, 2007
- Register now for Convocation 2007

### e-Vigil Editor:

Rev. Philip Maniscalco  
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404-906-3294

**Deadline: 25<sup>th</sup> of the month**

***Christ Centered  
 Open and Affirming  
 Inclusive  
 Where the Door  
 is always open***

International Christian Community Church

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