

# On the Spiritual Side

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## Caroline Oakes: Mind and Spirit At the table - taking a moment to take a moment in

You may have heard about Mary Haglund, owner of a diner in North Carolina who offers her customers a 15 percent discount off of their bill if they "take a moment to pray" before eating their meal.

Contrary to what we might imagine, it turns out Ms. Haglund is not a Bible-belt religious conservative pushing her preferred form of Christian prayer.

While she believes taking a moment before a meal could be in the form of a traditional prayer, she says, "It could be just a

moment to breathe and push the busyness of the world away — who you talk to or meditate on is your business.

"Prayer, meditation, or just breathing while being grateful, opens the heart chakra. It's good for everyone."

Yes.

Think back to dinners you've had with friends around the table. A kind of shift happens when there is a shared "moment" before beginning a dinner. Even an around-the-table clink of glasses forces us to slow down and be

more aware of the time we are sharing together.

At a friend's house last weekend, the host stood, raised his glass and shared his gratefulness for the beautiful summer evening and for the presence of each of his guests around the table, most of whom had not met each other prior to this gathering.

In contrast, at a restaurant recently with a different group of friends, as the waiters placed our plates of food in front of us, each of us moved right into the busyness of eating our dinner, without

a break in our line of conversation.

I hadn't thought much of it at the time, but in retrospect, the difference in the overall tenor of the two meals was striking.

At the dinner that incorporated a moment of recognition of the shared moment, the group seemed to have a palpable connection, despite not knowing each other well. By taking a moment to take the moment in, the host had sanctified — had set apart in a meaningful, even sacred way — the time, the space, and the peo-

ple of the gathering.

When we practice taking a moment before we eat, whether by ourselves or with others, there is a discernible interior shift. Watch for it.

Who knows, maybe this is what it feels like when the heart chakra opens.

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## Identity is theme of Crossing's Victory Women's Conference

Conference speakers Trisha Frost and Ruth Hendrickson and Christian recording artist Angel Garrett have teamed up for the Victory Women's Conference on Sept. 19 and 20 in Washington Crossing.

The conference runs from 9:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 19, and continues from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 20, at The Crossing, 1895 Wrightstown Road, Washington Crossing.

Discovering your identity and getting to know the "true you" is the focus of the two-day conference, which is open to the public.

Frost is the keynote speaker and co-author of "Unbound: Breaking Free of Life's Entanglements," which she wrote with her husband, Jack Frost. They also co-founded Shiloh Place Ministries in South Myrtle Beach, S.C.



TRICIA FROST

In addition to "powerful talks and inspiring worship," the Victory Conference will feature eight workshops facilitated by local businesswomen and community leaders. "Never Give Up," "Strong Healthy Women" and "Gluten Free: Is It For Me?" are among the workshops offered.

Admission includes the conference, meals and an evening dessert/fruit buffet.

Advance registration is available online only. Sept. 7 is the last day to register online. After Sept. 8, registration will only be available at the conference. Register before Sept. 1, and save \$25 off of the regular conference attendance fees.

Find the registration form, schedule, directions, cost and other event details on the Need Victory conference website, or visit the events page at [crossingumc.org](http://crossingumc.org) for information.

Hendrickson, conference host and member of The Crossing's church staff, is a featured speaker for the Saturday sessions.

Garrett returns this year as the worship leader for the annual conference.

## New Hope parish donates solar lamps to Tanzanian children

St. Philip's in New Hope is helping to light up the lives of the children it supports through the Carpenter's Kids program, which helps educate AIDS orphans and other vulnerable children in Tanzania.

The Episcopal parish recently purchased 40 "Firefly" solar lamps, one for each child it sponsors in the village of Nghulungu.

The lamps will enable the children to study after the sun goes down, the Rev. Michael Ruk, rector of St. Philip's, explained. In Tanzania, as in many other developing countries, rural electrification is a work in progress, and children must often help with chores, such as hauling water or firewood, during daylight hours.

Orphans in rural Tanzania are typically placed with guardians in their home villages, rather than in orphanages. That means that the children's solar lamps will have a broad impact, also benefiting the households that are caring for the children.

"When we talk about inequality in our society, we don't usually think in terms of energy. But for people living in the developing world, lack of access to electricity is often a big component of inequality," Ruk said.

"In fact, so many of the things we take for granted—safe drinking water, heat and light among them—require enormous, individual efforts to secure in energy-

poor countries. That's a huge waste of human energy and resources.

"In this very small way, we hope to contribute to a more energy-just world." Father Ruk added.

The "Firefly" model solar lamps provided to the children of Nghulungu Parish resemble ordinary desk lamps. But there is nothing ordinary about them. Manufactured by Barefoot Power of Australia and distributed by Tanzania-based Watu Na Nuru, the lamps provide clean, renewable lighting energy for up to five years.

Their lithium batteries recharge in four to six hours; users simply place the lamps' solar panels in direct sunlight. Located just south of the equator in East Africa, Tanzania has abundant solar resources.

Watu Na Nuru, which translates as "Light for the People," is a social enterprise of the Anglican Church.

The Carpenter's Kids program, which provides school supplies and a hot breakfast to children in need regardless of religious affiliation, is a partnership of the Anglican Diocese of Central Tanganyika, Tanzania, and the Episcopal Diocese of New York.

For information about St. Philip's outreach programs, or to get involved, contact Michael Ruk at 215-862-5782 or [michael@stphilipsnewhope.org](mailto:michael@stphilipsnewhope.org).

## Deep Run sermon offers "The Gospel According to Nike"

The Gospel According to Nike is from a sermon delivered by congregant Jim Kosza at the Presbyterian Church of Deep Run in Bedminster Township.

Jesus tells us repeatedly that the size of our world, as well as the size of our God, is limited only by our inability to demonstrate our faith in Him.

Some of the most well-known passages from Scripture are about God encouraging us to live outside our comfort zones. Even those who have never opened a Bible can quote Psalm 23.

The Bible, for me, a former technical writer, is an instruction manual for living. Authors of instruction manuals work hard to effectively convey critical information.

So, it doesn't surprise me at all that God keeps hitting us over the head with the importance of living outside our comfort zones — where the growth is. After all, he is our father and, like any father, he wants his children to grow.

Leaving our comfort zone always. I emphasize, always, requires the proverbial leap of faith. But, if our intentions are good, that is, if our will is aligned with God's, that's, pretty much, ALL we need to do to realize a positive outcome.

Oh, it may not appear positive right away. For me, it seldom, if ever, has, but it has, inevitably,

ALWAYS panned out that way.

For example, at age 30, I left a tenured teaching position to enter the business world. My wife, Maureen, was pregnant with our first child and we had a big mortgage at the time.

The entry-level job I took paid less than half of what I was making and required a commute that was four times longer. We were reducing our income by 75 percent!

But it worked out. That first year or so was pretty brutal, but, as the construction signs say, "Temporary inconvenience for permanent improvement." Right?!

I believe that decisions like these work out, not because they represent the smart or logical thing to do, but because, each time, it was the RIGHT thing to do.

It was the right thing to do, for a variety of reasons, but, primarily, because it aligned me with God's "perfect will" of abundance (see Romans 12:2), accessible ONLY outside our comfort zones. THAT'S where the spiritual growth is!

It's no different than physical growth!

In Corinthians, Paul asks "Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies."

We leave the comfort of the couch to hit the gym, track, pool or wherever you go to exercise your body.

To grow more spiritually fit, talk with someone who needs to talk, even though you don't particularly like them, especially, if you really dislike them. Or develop the habit of meditating regularly.

Drawing analogies is another popular technique employed by writers of instruction manuals to clarify critical information.

It took me 60 years to realize that the same discipline required to keep in good physical shape applied to my soul.

Today, I try to constantly be aware of how healthy I am spiritually. I try to cater to my spiritual self the same way I do my physical self. There's no question it can be as, if not more, difficult.

But, I've grown to view conversations with people I don't necessarily agree with as the equivalent of a spiritual run or bike ride, and those with people I really don't like, as racing events.

Life, like the reciprocating and axial compressors I once wrote about, can be pretty complicated. The analogy between physical and spiritual dimensions really helps me in my constant effort to keep it simple.

It also, helps me, when I really, really, really, absolutely DO NOT want to do what I need to do to grow, to JUST DO IT!

## HAPPENINGS

### Carversville Church hosts organ program

Have you ever wondered why the organ plays such a large role in worship services or what all those buttons and pedals do?

How can one musician, on one instrument, make such multi-layered music?

Mark C. Bernazzoli, organist for the Carversville United Church of Christ, will answer those questions during an evening of entertainment, instruction and fellowship at 6:30 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 23, at the church, 3736 Aquetong Road, Carversville.

There is no charge, but free-will offerings would be appreciated. Refreshments will be served after the program.

For information, visit [carversvilleucc.org](http://carversvilleucc.org).

### Golf outing to benefit adult mission trip

Lenape Valley Church hosts a golf outing to benefit the adult mission trip.

The event is set for 1 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 20, at the Limekiln Golf Course. All skill levels are welcome.

A tax-deductible contribution of \$79 per person includes greens fees, a cart, a hot dog and soda before golf, a homemade dinner buffet after golf and prizes. Dinner only is \$19.

Contact Bonnie at 215-997-9311 or e-mail [thbonnie@hotmail.com](mailto:thbonnie@hotmail.com) for reservations and sponsorship information.



## Shul School Clean-up

Volunteers carrying tools and cleaning utensils came to Kehilat Hanahar (KHN), The Little Shul by the River, in New Hope, on Sunday, Aug. 17, to spruce up the classroom spaces in preparation for the new school year. Some of the efforts included moving out old furniture and setting up new classroom chairs and storage units; attaching white boards to the walls; covering bulletin boards with fresh paper and borders; and organizing and distributing classroom library books and materials. Pictured are, back row, left to right, John Frank, Josh Levinson, Schuyler Polin; middle row, left to right, Education Director Stacey Frank, Donna Dubinsky, Charles Gromer; front row, left to right, Sarah Zimov Levinson and Andy Kaufman. To register your child for a Jewish education at KHN's Shul School, contact the office at 215-862-1912 or visit [kehilathanahar.org](http://kehilathanahar.org). Shul School begins Sunday, Sept. 7.

## Worship Directory

**SALEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

**Sunday, August 31, 2014**  
*The Rev. Dr. Tyson Frey, Sr., Pastor*  
**9:30 am Worship**  
**Sermon: "Running the Ninety-five Yard Dash"**

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