

## God Will 'Walk the Line' With Us Through It All

BY REV. DR. MARK BOYEA

One of the activities which I enjoy most here at First Congregational Church is something called "Cinema Circle." On the third Wednesday evening of each month, anyone who wishes is invited to the church to share in seeing a movie and then discussing it afterwards. So far this year, we have enjoyed, among others, *Crash*, *Hotel Rwanda* and *Million Dollar Baby*. Next Wednesday, our selection is *Walk the Line*.

*Walk the Line*, as you might already know, centers on the early years of the career of Country and Rock and Roll Hall of Fame musician Johnny Cash. Most significantly, it explores the development of his relationship with June Carter - the woman who would eventually become Cash's wife of 35 years.

Besides terrific performances by Joaquin Phoenix as Cash and Academy Award winner Reese Witherspoon as Carter, the movie provides a poignant example of the power of redemption.

Johnny Cash, as the film portrays his early life, was a damaged young man, scarred by both the accidental death of his older brother and best friend, Jack, when they were kids, and a father who was alcoholic and resentful of Johnny for having lived while the "favored son," Jack, had died so young.

Cash would eventually spend decades of his life trying to "escape" from his own troubled soul and that strained relationship with his father by immersing himself deeper and deeper into his beloved music, enlisting in the military, marrying a young woman he hardly knew, and then, once he became a star, a serious addiction to pills.

Along the way, he falls for Carter, a fellow performer on the concert tours they and a number of other musicians (including, at times, Elvis Presley and Jerry Lee Lewis) were frequently embarked on. What then emerges over the remainder of the film is a relationship between Cash and Carter that, through numerous ups and downs, develops into a deep friendship, and then eventually into love.

It is in the character of June Carter that we see a powerful example of the redemption God offers us and calls us to share with each other. Despite Cash's continuously awkward, inappropriate and self-destructive behavior, Carter refuses to give up on him. She refuses to condone his behavior or enable him in any way, but she also never turns away from Cash no matter what he does.

Carter remains faithful to Cash as a friend, to the point of (with the help of her family) essentially moving in to Cash's house and supporting and tending to him as he goes through the difficult withdrawal associated with overcoming his addiction. When Cash asks Carter why she has gone to such great lengths to stay with him throughout such an ordeal, she tells him without fanfare that it's

because, "You're my friend, John."

Shortly after, one of the most powerful scenes of the movie takes place. As Cash begins to emerge from the darkness, he openly admits to having done many bad things and having hurt many people during his life to that point. Carter then responds to Cash's confession by telling him that while he may have done bad things, it doesn't mean that there isn't goodness in him. She then adds, "God's given you a second chance."

Indeed, Cash would use that second chance to come back stronger than ever musically, emotionally and spiritually. Not perfect, but renewed - redeemed. And eventually, the redeeming relationship between Cash and Carter would end in a loving, lasting marriage of 35 years.

As moving as I thought the story of Johnny Cash and June Carter was in *Walk the Line*, though, it's still nowhere near as powerful, moving and inspiring as God's story - the ultimate story of unending faithfulness and total, freely-given redemption. What June Carter offered to Johnny Cash, God offers to each of us every single day. Every single day we are freely offered a relationship with a God who will stay by our side and never turn us away no matter who we are or what we've done. All we have to do is choose to accept it, and then make the most of it.

Reverend Dr. Boyea is Senior Minister at the First Congregational Church of Westfield, located at 125 Elmer Street. He holds a Ph.D. in psychology.



A CARING STYLE... Maria Candida's Hair Forum on Prospect Street in Westfield, recently helped Chloe Bryen give "Locks for Love." Located in Florida, Locks for Love accepts donations of hair 10 inches or longer to help make wigs for children who have cancer. Ms. Candida will take care of filling out the forms and sending them off with the hair via registered mail to make sure it arrives safely. For more information, please call (908) 233-3460.

## Library Reveals Calendar Of Activities For All Ages

WESTFIELD - The Westfield Memorial Library, located at 550 East Broad Street, will sponsor a series of activities designed to promote a love of reading in children.

On Tuesday, April 18, young readers are invited to attend a fun and informal discussion of the Roald Dahl story "The BFG" from 7 to 7:45 p.m. "Tots' Story Time," for those age two-and-a-half to three-and-a-half and a caregiver, will meet on April 18 from 10 to 10:30 a.m. "Preschool Story Time," for those age three-and-a-half to five, will be held on Wednesday, April 19, at 10 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Both programs involve listening to stories and doing an activity.

"Baby Rhyme Time," for babies not yet walking and a caregiver, will take place on Friday, April 21, from 10 to 10:20 a.m. and feature rhymes, lap bounces, songs and clapping.

"Mother Goose Group," for walking toddlers up to two-and-a-half years old with a caregiver, will be offered on Saturday, April 22, from 10 to 10:20 a.m. It will include

rhymes, songs, movement activities and stories.

For adults, the Great Decisions discussion group, sponsored by the Westfield Adult School and the League of Women Voters, will focus on "Turkey" and its new strategic role from 7 to 9 p.m. on Monday, April 17. The fee is \$15 for one session and \$55 for the series, payable to the Westfield Adult School. For more information, please call (908) 233-1035.

"TGIF: Westfield's Colonial Cemetery," nicknamed "the liveliest place in town" because of notable local people interred there, will be featured on Friday, April 21, at 1:30 p.m.

Unless otherwise noted, programs are free and are open to library cardholders. For more information, please call (908) 789-4090, visit [www.wmlnj.org](http://www.wmlnj.org) or stop by the library for a copy of its quarterly newsletter.



**Maundy Thursday**  
April 13, 7:30 p.m.  
*An intimate service of the Lord's Supper*  
Special "Gethsemane" solo and Dramatic recitation of Mark's passion account  
**Good Friday**  
April 14, 12:00 Noon  
*Contemplation on the cross through art slides & organ music*  
**Easter Sunday**  
April 16, 10:20 a.m.  
*Celebrate the Resurrection!*  
Continental Breakfast 9am  
Easter Egg Hunt 11am  
Message by Rev. Turlington on Mark Chapter 16

(Childcare provided for all services.)  
170 Elm St., Westfield  
908-233-2278/[www.fbcwestfield.org](http://www.fbcwestfield.org)

## Presbyterian Church Begins Holy Week Services Tonight

WESTFIELD - Holy Week will be observed at The Presbyterian Church in Westfield with traditional music and services, as well as a new Children's Stations of the Cross service on Good Friday.

A Maundy Thursday service will take place today, April 13, at 7:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. The Chancel Choir and Handbell Choir will provide special music and Holy Communion will be distributed.

The Nails of the Cross Service will begin at noon tomorrow, Good Friday, April 14, in the chapel. Children and families will gather in the sanctuary at 2 p.m. for the Children's Stations of the Cross Service.

At 7:30 p.m., the traditional Good Friday Evening Service will be held in the sanctuary. The evening service of shadows, with the Chancel Choir singing special music by Casals, Haydn, Mozart and Bach, as well as traditional hymns with the congregation, will conclude with a darkened silent recessional.

The Great Vigil of Easter will take place on Saturday, April 15, at 8 p.m. It will include a special service when 20 Confirmants are received into membership in the church.

Easter Sunday services, at 9 and 11 a.m. in the sanctuary, will feature a brass ensemble and the Chancel Choir with music by Gabrieli, Bach, Handel and Vidor. Services

will conclude with the choir singing the "Hallelujah" chorus from Handel's *Messiah*.

Between the two Easter services, the church deacons will host their annual Easter Breakfast in the Assembly Hall. There will be no Sunday school on Easter, but childcare will be provided for both services.

The Presbyterian Church is located at the corner of Broad Street and Mountain Avenue. All are invited to attend each of the services.

### Volunteers Needed For MDA Luncheon

WESTFIELD - The Jolly Trolley in Westfield will host a fundraising luncheon for the Muscular Dystrophy Association on Tuesday, April 18, between 10:15 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Local business and community leaders have agreed to raise money and will be chauffeured to lunch and then chauffeured back to work.

Volunteers are needed to accompany drivers to pick up participants and take photographs at the event. Interested individuals are asked to call Andrea at (732) 750-2333.

See it all on the Web!  
[www.goleader.com](http://www.goleader.com)

### African Violet Group To Meet Next Week

SCOTCH PLAINS - The Union County Chapter of the African Violet Society will hold its monthly meeting on Thursday, April 20, at 1 p.m. in the Scotch Plains Public Library, located at 1927 Bartle Avenue.

Jan Riemer will offer a slide presentation on "Gesneriads - The Cousins." Anyone interested in African violets is invited to attend.

The Easter message of "New Life" means more than eggs and spring flowers. Come to church this Easter Sunday, and find out why!

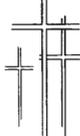
**Calvary Lutheran Church**  
108 Eastman St., Cranford, N.J. • (908) 276-2418  
[www.calvalrylutheran Cranford.com](http://www.calvalrylutheran Cranford.com)

**Maundy Thursday**  
April 13, 7:30 p.m.  
Holy Communion

**Good Friday**  
April 14, 7:30 p.m.  
Service of Lessons & Sacred Music

**Easter Sunday**  
April 16,  
8:30 & 11:00 a.m.  
Festival Services of Holy Communion

The Rev. Carol A. Lindsay, Pastor



### 5th, 6th and 7th Grade Students and Parents

Take this opportunity to meet and speak with Student Representatives and Admissions Personnel from numerous Catholic High Schools

(COOP)  
**Admissions Exam**  
Friday, Nov. 10, 2006  
for Sept. 2007 admission.

Visit our website  
[www.rcan.org/schools](http://www.rcan.org/schools)

Additional info: (973) 497-4258

**Tuesday, April 25**  
South Orange  
Our Lady of Sorrows School  
Gym

**Tuesday, May 2**  
Newark  
Archdiocesan Center  
Auditorium

All Sessions from 7 PM to 9 PM, and no pre-registration is required.

## Spring 2006

### High School Information Nights

Presented by The Catholic High Schools of the Archdiocese of Newark



**Wednesday, April 26**  
Bayonne  
Marist High School  
Gym

**Wednesday, May 3**  
Paramus  
Annunciation Parish  
Parish Hall

**Thursday, April 27**  
Union  
St. Michael School  
Gym

**Thursday, May 4**  
North Arlington  
Queen of Peace School  
Multi-Purpose Room



## SAINT PETER'S PREP

NEW JERSEY'S JESUIT HIGH SCHOOL SINCE 1872

### SPRING OPEN HOUSE

SUNDAY, APRIL 30, 2006

2:00 - 4:00PM

Take a tour of our campus. Talk with faculty, students and parents. Receive information regarding the admissions process, transportation options, financial aid, sports and co-curricular activities.

Join us at our spring Open House and learn why we say, "It is not simply Prep for four years. It is Prep...for life."



144 GRAND STREET, JERSEY CITY, NJ 07302  
201.434.4400 ■ [WWW.SPPREP.ORG](http://WWW.SPPREP.ORG)

## Celebrate Easter

### MAUNDY THURSDAY

Thursday, April 13 at 8:00 P.M.

Choral Eucharist, foot washing, stripping of the Altars & watch

### GOOD FRIDAY

Friday, April 14

Good Friday Service at 12:00 P.M.

with Homily & St. Paul's Parish Choir

Children's Good Friday Service at 3:30 P.M.

### THE GREAT VIGIL OF EASTER

Saturday, April 15

Holy Baptism & Holy Eucharist at 8:00 P.M.

### EASTER DAY

Sunday, April 16

Holy Eucharist (Rite I) at 7:45 A.M.

Children's Holy Eucharist at 9:00 A.M.

with Children's Choirs, Members of The Parish Choir, Brass & Percussion

Holy Eucharist (Rite II) at 11:15 A.M.

with Sermon by the Rector,

The St. Paul's Parish Choir & Choir of Men, Girls & Boys, Brass Quintet & Percussion

The Rev'd Andrew C. Hamersley, rector

## St. Paul's Episcopal Church

414 East Broad Street - Westfield, New Jersey

Information: 908-232-8506, EXT. 10

at St. Paul's