

NEW BILL SIGNED: Offering New Gifting Opportunities for 2006 & 2007

The President has signed a bill that gives friends and donors of Trinity Counseling a great opportunity. With the passage of the Pension Protection Act of 2006, there is now the option for those age 70½ and older to roll over up to \$100,000 per year from an IRA directly to a qualified charity. This IRA rollover does not qualify for a charitable deduction, **but it does qualify for the *required minimum distribution***. In addition, since gifts to charity will not be included in taxable income, the lower adjusted gross income could simplify tax returns and lead to a modest reduction in income taxes because of various phase-out rules. This gifting opportunity, for the years 2006 and 2007 only, means you can reduce your taxable withdrawals now and completely avoid income taxes later as well as supporting the charitable objectives of Trinity Counseling.

Please discuss this matter with your CPA or attorney, as it will mean a great deal to Trinity Counseling and to your family as well. †

Message from the Board | William T. Wood, Chairman

Trinity Counseling continues to meet the overwhelming needs of people throughout our community. These are unprecedented times that stress not only our own lives but our relationships as well. Because of your gifts, in the first 10 months of 2006 alone, Trinity Counseling has provided over \$80,000 of financial assistance to its clients who would not otherwise have been able to afford counsel. Many of you have seen first hand the healing of lives and relationships through the counseling ministry of Don and his associates at Trinity. They are truly "lights in a dark world". On behalf of the Board of Directors, I urge those who are able to remember Trinity Counseling for your year-end giving and help continue this great work.

We are truly grateful for your continued prayers and support and pray you have a Blessed Holy Season.

Billy Wood
Chairman of the Board

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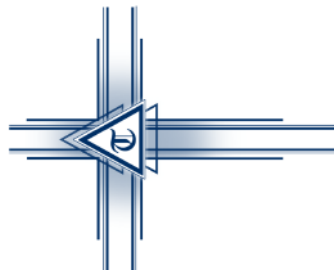
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For more information on services and programs, forward inquiries to:
Trinity Counseling • 1025 Montgomery Highway, Suite 214 • Birmingham, Alabama 35216
Phone: 205.822.2730 Fax: 205.822.2732

Trinity Counseling

1025 Montgomery Highway, Suite 214
Birmingham, Alabama 35216



the COMPASS

A NEWSLETTER OF TRINITY COUNSELING, A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

WINTER 2006

A WORD FROM DON | Don Richards, M. Div., M.S., LPC



Beloved,

Consider the following wonderful and profound words of C. S. Lewis which give us a powerful perspective for good living in these troubled times:

“The golden apple of selfhood, thrown among the false gods, became an apple of discord because they scrambled for it. They did not know the first rule of the holy game, which is that every player must by all means touch the ball and then immediately pass it on. To be found with it in your hands is a fault: to cling to it, death. But when it flies to and fro among the players too swift for eye to follow, and the great master Himself leads the revelry giving Himself eternally to His creatures in the generation, and back to Himself in the sacrifice, of the Word, then indeed the eternal dance ‘makes heaven drowsy with the harmony’. All pains and pleasures we have known on earth are early initiations in the movements of that dance: but the dance itself is strictly incomparable with the sufferings of this present time. As we draw nearer to its uncreated rhythm, pain and pleasure sink almost out of sight. There is joy in the dance, but it does not exist for the sake of joy. It does not even exist for the sake of good, or of love. It is Love Himself, and Good Himself and therefore happy. It does not exist for us, but we for it As our Earth is to all the stars, so doubtless are we men and our concerns to all creation; as all the stars are to space itself, so are all creatures, all thrones and powers and mightiest of the created gods, to the abyss of the self-existing Being, who is to us Father and Redeemer and indwelling Comforter, but of whom no man or angel can say or conceive what he is in and for Himself, or what is the work that He ‘maketh from the beginning to the end’. For they are all derived and unsubstantial things. Their vision fails them and they cover their eyes from the intolerable light of utter actuality, which was and is and shall be, which never could have been otherwise, which has no opposite.”

I trust you all will reflect on these words often. May our Lord continue to bless you throughout this sacred season and into the next year! †

Client Thanks and Reflections

*The scholarships for counseling that Trinity provides, make an authenticated difference in individual lives, relationships and consequently to the community at large. The following are reflections on things learned as well as letters of thanks from some of those who have received the scholarships that **your gifts have enabled!** We pray that as you read them, you will be moved to continue your support of this valuable ministry.*

- You have been such a safe and loving place for me to bring my tears. I'm sure there are no words to adequately thank you, but I hope somehow you know how much I value the gifts of mercy, truth and grace you have helped bring into my life. Thank you for



LETTERS OF THANKS *(continued)*

having vision for me when I could not see anything beyond the pain. I wanted to share something from my journal with you:

“There is no person, no place, no words, nothing in nature, no gift, no discipline that can do what the presence and power of Jesus can do. When we give up control (or the illusion of it) give up our plan, our work our distractions and idols – when there is nothing standing between you – all of your pain, hope, sin, need and desires and Jesus – then healing is possible.”

Thank you for being such a faithful companion on the journey to freedom. ~

- May God richly bless you and your ministry at Trinity Counseling. Thank you for the comfort of your care, for the unconditional acceptance you provide, and for continuously giving me hope and encouragement for a brighter future. ~

- Thanks for helping restore me to my Hope. The journey home is unpredictable and frightening but it feels good to be traveling again. ~



Do you feel led to share your anonymous experience with others? If so please e-mail Arden at: ardentc@bellsouth.net.



Christmas Gift Ideas
Support the Mission of Trinity Counseling

Thanks to your many compliments and requests for another Trinity Counseling Calendar, we are happy to again offer a wonderful collection of NEW photographs taken in two of our beautiful National Parks in Washington and Colorado. Our new 2007 calendar is available now for your personal use and would also make a wonderful gift for family, friends or clients.

- **“For the Beauty of the Earth” 2007 Calendar** - Suggested donation: \$20

ALSO AVAILABLE:

- **“This is My Father's World” Note Cards** *(set of 12)*
- Suggested donation: \$12
- **“Healing Our Image of God & Ourselves”**
- Suggested donation: \$30
This is a boxed set of 4 CD's by Brennan Manning from our 2005 conference.

If you would like to support the ministry by ordering any of the above, please contact Arden at the Trinity Counseling offices by phone (205-822-2730), mail (1025 Montgomery Hwy; #214; Birmingham, AL 35216) or email (ardentc@bellsouth.net).

Meditations by Dr. Sam | Samuel A. Saxon, Ph.D Licensed Clinical Psychologist



“Come Thou long expected Jesus, born to set Thy people free; from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in Thee.” Charles Wesley captured so much of what human experience is all about in this brief verse. He addresses the nature of God, the nature of man and their relationship.

The prophets had foretold of the event of the coming Savior, so wise men who had been in darkness for ages had long expected it and bid him “come”. We bid Him to come but it is only because He had said He was coming. None of us chose our birth or birth date. Yet the Babe in the Blessed Mother Mary appointed His own womb, time of birth and circumstances. While time is our gift from His creatorship, we will remain urgent and demanding creatures until we realize He has the timetable. Then Wesley addresses what we as humans want and need: freedom from our fears and sin. This glorious verse does capture just who is the therapist — the agent of change — in man's relentless effort to come to grips with our continual violation of His laws and our own sense of inferiority and security and guilt. Without God, we with the help of all sorts of counsel, seek and work for the peace and rest that we want.

“We try very hard to cope with these holiday blues often by masking them with giving, taking, eating, and singing”?

We are so aware, at this joyous time in the church calendar, of anniversary grief and sadness. All our defense mechanisms of denial, forgetting, undoing, compensating, and rationalizing seem to lack effect and we go into this season energized only by lights, tinsels, advertisements, and other enticements to get us through. We try very hard to cope with these holiday blues often by masking them with giving, taking, eating, and singing.



Well friends, trying to cope by employing all of our learned defense mechanisms to free ourselves from our own bondages can often simply be harder work causing us to be even more heavily laden. Let me suggest that He who set the timetable for all events release us from our past regrettable events and future fearful events. Perhaps if we are not trying so hard to undo some wrong or exhaust ourselves through worry and anticipation because of how our society has shaped us into Human doers as opposed to Human beings, we can rest. I suggest that you do this by getting a hymn book or sermons and read about and meditate on this long expected One Who trumps all misery. For as surely as the stars disappear when the sun rises, so shall our blues when we meditate on the Savior's appearing.

Here is one meditation that I have enjoyed for three years taken from a sermon sixteen centuries ago by St. Augustine: “And now, with what words shall we praise the love of God? What thanks shall we give? He who loved us that for our sakes He through whom time was made was made in time; and He, older by eternity than the world itself, was younger in age than many of his servants in the world; He, who made man, was made man; He was given existence by a mother whom He brought into existence; He was carried in hands which He formed; He nursed at breasts which He filled; He cried like a babe in the manger in speechless infancy — this Word without which human eloquence is speechless. Have a peaceful Advent and Christmastide!! †

The Mentoring Ministry of Trinity Counseling | Jill McCool, M.A, M.B.C., L.P.C.



Mentoring is an ancient tradition of life-to-life friendship between a mentor and mentoree for the purpose of helping a person grow personally and spiritually. It is a mixture of coaching, teaching, discipling and spiritual direction. It differs from counseling in that it is less formal in structure and focuses more on growth than on healing.

Through conversation and prayer, the mentor and mentoree seek to discover what God is doing in the mentoree's life and how that person's passions, life circumstances and gifts fit together. A mentor doesn't lead as much as he or she enters into the discovery process *with* the person. It is like standing beside another and looking in the same direction.

Two years ago, I joined Trinity Counseling and switched from being a “counselor” to a “mentor.” It is a perfect fit for my gifts and training and has allowed me to be significantly involved in the lives of many. I meet with people over coffee or in small groups in my home to help them grow. I also teach seminars and workshops. Presently, I am writing a book for InterVarsity Press.

I am so thankful to be a part of this ministry! If it were not for Trinity Counseling, my mentoring and writing would not be possible. But through the ministry, I am able to give my gifts to others in a unique way. †

Jill does not charge a specific fee for her services, but is supported through your gifts to Trinity Counseling. If you would like to support her, please note on your check that it is for the Education Ministry.

Addition | About the Staff

Trinity Counseling is thrilled to announce the addition of Bernice (Bernie) Halbur, PhD, to our staff. She received her Ph.D. from Duke University, with specialties in medical sociology and aging, as well as completed a two-year, Gerontology Fellowship from the National Institute on Mental Health and a one-year, Long-Term Care Fellowship with the Gerontological Society of America. In addition, Bernie brings with her 21 years of experience as an educator, a researcher, an author, a program/products/services developer, and a volunteer, primarily in the areas of aging, retiring, care-giving (to older adults), dying/death, and grieving/mourning. Bernie will certainly assist in Trinity's mission to provide experienced education (informally [e.g., one-on-one or in small

groups] and formally [e.g., structured presentations to larger groups]) on the social psychological aspects of aging, retiring, care-giving (to older adults), dying/death, and grieving/mourning. **We are blessed to have a woman with her diverse background join Trinity Counseling. Welcome, Bernie!** †



Points to Ponder

*The first Noel the angel did say...
Noel, Noel,
Born is the King of Israel.
Then let us all with one accord
Sing praises to our heavenly Lord;
That hath made heaven and
earth of naught,
And with His blood mankind hath bought!*