



Rev. David E. Klepper, Jr.

Rev. Klepper, at Trinity Lutheran, trained in interpersonal relations

Rev. David E. Klepper, Jr., pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Mount Joy, was born and raised in Hanover, Pa., which, says Rev. Klepper, was then "a small town very much like Mount Joy, with people knowing you and you knowing them."

He was an active Boy Scout at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in Hanover. The scoutmaster was an unusually good one. He was also a good churchman. Rev. Klepper says, "Many Scouts got an appreciation for the church and Christianity through his leadership."

Rev. Klepper as a scout won the "Pro Deo et Patria" ("For God and country") award. In working for that award he became involved in the church. He became an Eagle Scout. Because of the work he had done as a scout in the church, he began to consider the ministry as a career. "It was a growing thing, not sudden," says Rev. Klepper of his decision to become a minister. "Three or four of us Scouts became interested in the ministry."

In high school he was interested in sports and music. He played a French horn in the high school band. It was at Hanover High School that Rev. Klepper met his future wife, Barbara Shilling, who had just moved to Hanover in her senior year.

Young David Klepper went to Gettysburg College, Barabara Shilling to Susquehanna University. After

college they were married.

After college Rev. Klepper attended Gettysburg Seminary. Between his second and third year at the seminary he studied clinical pastoral education at St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington, D.C. Rev. Klepper says his year at St. Elizabeth's had "a profound effect" on him. "The training in counselling I got there and my whole experience at St. Elizabeth's got me in touch with inter-personal relations. You can get too much academic experience. Clinical training got me more in touch with humanity."

While Rev. Klepper was working at St. Elizabeth's, his wife Barbara was working as a social case-worker in York.

During his senior year at the seminary the Kleppers' daughter Susan was born.

After seminary Rev. Klepper was pastor for four and half years for two churches in southern York County, St. Joseph's and St. Luke's churches in the Chanceford Parish. While there, the Kleppers' children, Julia, David, and Kathryn, were born.

While at Chanceford Rev. Klepper also continued his education in the area of personal growth and group processes. He devoted two solid weeks to experiential learning.

The second church served by Rev. Klepper was at Turbotville, near Milton, Pa. He was there for three years.

Then came a position as

assistant to the President of the Central Pennsylvania Synod. In this position which he held for six years he was on call to local parishes to program conflict management, pastoring to pastors and their families, providing resources for pastors, and assisting congregations to find pastors. While working in this diversified position, Rev. Klepper lived in Hummels-town.

When Pastor Koder, who had been at Trinity Lutheran in Mount Joy for 38 years, resigned, Rev. Klepper assisted the congregation in finding a new pastor. The Mount Joy congregation looked over a large number of candidates to be their new pastor, but none was quite satisfactory. Finally, a member of the church told Rev. Klepper they would like someone like himself.

At first Rev. Klepper was not interested in coming to Mount Joy. He liked the varied work of his current position; the president of the Synod did not want him to go. But he had been at his current position for six years, and the Mount Joy pastorate began to appeal to him as a challenge. It was especially challenging to follow Pastor Koder's long and successful pastorate. Pastor Koder now attends Trinity since Rev. Koder became pastor.

The challenge which Rev. Klepper sees is for "the Christian community to fulfill its servanthood, not just to its own members, but to reach out to the

community and the world in the name of Christ. The church has to be a servant, as the Lord was, when he took up the towel and wiped the disciples feet.

"That is tough. There is an actual tendency to hold onto what is ours and protect it, rather than see it as a gift to be used to meet the needs of the community and the world.

"For example, one way this church is growing in its outreach is the way the facilities of the church have been made available to groups like the girl scouts and senior citizens.

"Another way I see this congregation reaching out is by sewing bed pads and layettes and by sponsoring refugees. There are challenges that exist for the entire Christian community, services to be provided, as well as financial giving to local and world-wide missions.

"It seems to me the church is being most true to the nature of the Lord when it is giving itself.

"It is important to spend yourself for others."

Rev. Klepper gives of himself generously, not just in the Trinity parish but in numerous denominational and personal growth activities. Among these activities are the Board of the Tressler Lutheran Service Associates (the social service agency of the Synod), the Board of parish Development, and a variety of committees. He is a member of the board and a "trainer" for the Mid-Atlantic Association for Training and Consulting, a non-profit organization for training in leadership and interpersonal skills.

This fall he started an intensive Bible study group at Trinity, called Word and Witness. It is a one and a half year program with 54 intensive sessions, which has the double function of "better understanding of the word of God," and developing "more skill in witnessing our faith." One skill that is developed is "listening." Another is "better understanding of what you feel and mean, more awareness of how God operates in our lives."

Rev. Klepper is deeply interested in people developing their interpersonal skills so that they can be more effective witnesses in their personal evangelism. "The church is the people's, not the pastor's," he says. "Ownership and ministry is shared by all the people. Outreach is by all the people.

"The broad involvement of all the people of the church is the goal of my ministry."



The Celtic cross that will be put in the Donegal Presbyterian Church this coming Sunday.

Mother church sends cross to church here

A Celtic cross, carved from timbers used in the construction of the mother church in County Donegal, Ireland, 305 years ago, will be dedicated at Donegal Presbyterian Church at the 9:00am worship service Sunday, Oct. 28.

The wood used in the cross is bog oak, from floor joists of the Presbyterian Church at Rathneeny, near Donegal Town. Bog oak is ancient wood found preserved in the peat bogs of Ireland, and thus is much older than the famous Witness Tree at the local church, estimated to be 350 to 400 years old.

The cross was carved by a member of the church in Ireland, whose 300th anniversary services in 1974 were attended by a party

from the church near Mount Joy. The carving was commissioned by Ruth Gantos as a memorial to her husband, George A. Gantos, who served as a trustee of Donegal Church for six years.

The cross will be displayed in the narthex of the church, immediately above the original oak communion table and beneath the portrait of the Rev. Colin McFarquhar, pastor at the time of the Witness Tree incident in 1777.

The Rev. Dr. Victor Baer, pastor, will preside at the dedication service. The making of the cross was arranged by the Rev. Charles Marshall, pastor of the churches at Rathneeny, Donegal and Ballyshannon, Ireland.



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