



TRINITY TOPICS

The Newsletter of Trinity Episcopal Church

POTTSVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA

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November/December 2023

Musings from the priest's computer.....

Every day in your life is a special occasion!

(Saying found in a Chinese fortune cookie)

We've heard the phrase "Today is the first day of the rest of your life". Yet that tells nothing about the quality of the day nor of the life. And to toss another cliché: life is what you make it. What we sense or feel often has the ability to make us joyful or angry, happy or depressed. In this Christian faith, St Paul tells us to rejoice always, rejoice! Really, every breath we take is an opportunity to change a poor attitude, and to extend ourselves to joy.

The late autumn-early winter holidays are often fraught with difficulties. Family pushes us like no one else can, and maybe that is a measure of the bond of love between us and them! Beyond the preparations and the gatherings, and the celebrations, these religious holidays present opportunities to extend ourselves in many ways. They also are a perfect time to learn more about the reasons for certain traditions and to discover a new spirituality connected to the liturgies we utilize. The National Church has numerous offerings on its website: episcopalchurch.org. Other interesting resources include the offerings from the Church of England. Though not an Anglican perspective, the writings from "Laughingbird.net" present an interesting collection of writings and prayers. The gatherings for Confirmation instruction and reflection held at Trinity on intermittent Thursdays are available to anyone interested.

Take time to breathe, to rest, and to participate in the life of the Body of Christ. Because the upcoming season presents great opportunities for welcome—really that scary word "Evangelism"—consider inviting your friends and your family members to worship services with you. We would be glad to embrace them into the joy of the Episcopal Church, for special occasions and for ordinary ones too.

May you know the Peace of Christ!

Fr. Kurt

Trinity Church's Mission Statement

"Living, loving, sharing in the name of Jesus Christ"

Vision Statement

"Honoring the past as we build a strong foundation for the future, while sharing our Christian faith through service to the community."



Advent Project

Our Advent Project is underway and boxes are available at each entrance to place travel-size items for nursing home residents in the County. Many times, these residents have very little disposable income to spend on personal items that we take for granted, such as nice soaps, lotions, shampoo, tissues, lip balm, nail files, toothpaste, toothbrushes, combs, hand sanitizer, etc. So please put the TRAVEL SIZE items in the boxes. This project will continue through mid-December and the items placed in gift bags and distributed to the nursing homes before Christmas. Thank you for your generosity!

Soup Sale

Calling all good cooks, we will be holding a soup sale in the church lounge on Sunday Nov. 12 following service. This is a perfect time of year when we are looking for warm and delicious soups, stews and chili to enjoy for lunch and supper. Start looking up your favorite recipes so we have another great selection to sell. The prices for the soup will be \$8.00 quart and \$4.00 pint. Containers will be available in the church lounge on the piano.



Veterans Sunday

Also, on November 12 will be our annual tribute to Veterans with a reception following in the lounge. We are grateful to the Bowler/Burns/Curtis families for providing the reception.

Concert Series

Our second concert in the 2023-24 season will be held on Sunday, November 19 at 4 pm featuring the Beethoven Trio Project. Simon Maurer, violin; Xun Pan, piano and Ai-Lin Hsieh, cello will present three Beethoven trios for this program. Please see the enclosed flyer.



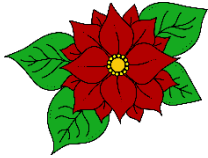
Concert Reception

The sign-up sheets for the concert reception on November 19 will be in the binders behind the organ, at the main entrance and on the bulletin board at the foot of the Second St. stairs. Please let us know what goodies you may be able to provide. Thank you in advance!

Calling All Decorators

On Sunday, December 24, volunteers are needed after the service to help decorate the church for the Christmas Eve service. Advent IV and Christmas Eve are the same day this year, so help will be needed to place poinsettias, the crèche, hang scones and wreaths, fluff bows and change altar hangings, etc. after the 9 am service. Many hands make light work. Thank you to anyone who may be able to help.



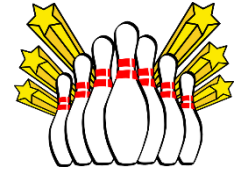


Christmas Flower Memorials

The Christmas Flower form is included in this edition of the TOPICS. Please have your form and donation returned to the office by December 10.

Bowling Party

The Trinity Church School will have a bowling party at the Strike Zone on November 18 from 1–3pm. Everyone is welcome.



Holiday Treat Exchange

On Sunday, December 10, we will have the Annual Treat Exchange. You are invited to join in the fun. Bring a tray of your favorite cookies or some other holiday treats (like spiced nuts or candy) to display in the lounge. After the service, everyone gets a bag to select their favorite treats to take home. No cakes or pies please which are difficult to bag.

If you are not able to bake or create something, please join us for fellowship and sharing goodies to go. There will be plenty for all.

Choral Society Concert

On Saturday, December 2 at 7 pm, the Schuylkill Choral Society will present their Christmas program in our beautiful sanctuary. Tickets are \$15.



Vestry Members Needed

As we begin to think ahead to our holiday celebrations and the end of the year, we must also think about the Annual Meeting on January 28, 2024, and the need for new Vestry members. Vacant spots need to be filled for 3-year terms. The Vestry meets on the fourth Sunday of each month to discuss pertinent issues in the church and make decisions that impact the parish. This is another ministry for people to consider with time and talent. Please contact any Vestry member for more information and with any questions you may have. "Here am I, Lord..."



Committee Reports and Vestry Bios

All committee reports and biographies for those standing for Vestry must be in the office no later than Monday, January 8, 2024, so the Annual meeting report can be prepared for the meeting on Sunday, January 28. If you need a form, please call or email Cora. 570-449-7553 or singfree@mac.com.

Counters Needed

We need counters for Sunday mornings after the service. We still have only 4 counters and when several are away, the counting and subsequent deposit are delayed. Another opportunity for ministry which only takes a couple of hours per month when there are more volunteers. Please speak to any member of the Vestry if you feel called for this ministry. Thank you.





Clothesline of Love

Our outreach ministry of putting hats, gloves, scarves, and socks in front of the church on a line will begin again after Thanksgiving. If you can donate items for this important ministry, please drop them off at the church or call for pickup. Thank you.

Little Food Pantry Items

The Little Food Pantry on W. Market St. outside the cemetery gates is in need of supplies. We will once again be collecting items — there is a bin at the 2nd St. entrance and one at the back of the church. Canned goods are most welcome, but NOT boxes of dried foodstuffs like macaroni and rice. These tend to be targets of vandals. Thank you in advance for sustaining this community ministry.



Summer Reading Camp

Many thanks to all of our parishioners who have supported Summer Reading Camp with donations of their time, books, and financial resources. We had a successful camp and served 28 children from pre-k to grade 3 who enjoyed learning about Sports. The highlights of the camp were the visits from local collegiate athletes and Screwball, the mascot of the Reading Phils.

We are beginning the planning process for Summer Reading Camp 2024 which is scheduled for July 8-12, 2024. This year, our theme will be the Environment, and we will explore water, the sky, plants, animals, and the weather and how they impact our lives and the world we live in. We are planning for some special guests and a field trip so stay tuned for news about our activities.



Christmas Flowers



Donations for Christmas Flowers may be made by completing this form and returning it with your contribution by Sunday, December 10, 2023



Flower donations received after Dec. 10 will go into the general flower fund.

Given by: _____

In memory of: _____

In Thanksgiving for: _____

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY



THE MUSIC CORNER

by Cora A. Gamelin-Osenbach

Our 2023-24 Concert series season began on October 8 with an exciting concert featuring Grammy award nominee, marimba player Greg Giannascoli accompanied by Schuylkill County native, Ron Stabinsky. Next on the schedule is the Beethoven Trio Project featuring well-known Schuylkill County musician Simon Maurer, violin, joined by Xun Pan, piano and Ai-Lin Hsieh, cello. Please see the enclosed flyer for this concert on November 19 at 4 pm. Reception goodies will be needed and a sign-up sheet will be in the binders behind the organ, at the back of the church and on the bulletin board at the base of the 2nd St. stairs. Thank you in advance.

As we look forward to the coming of the Christ Child, the procession to the crèche will once again be a part of the 6 pm Festal Eucharist for Christmas Eve. December 24 will be a very busy day since the Advent IV service will be in the morning. Volunteers will be needed to help take us from Advent to Christmas decorations after the 9 am service.

Once again, Teagan and Elliott Wehr will offer their gifts with piano solos during the Christmas Eve service and Lea Bortner will be rehearsing with the chime players for the beginning of the service. How blessed are we with this musical talent in our parish.

Looking ahead, please put Sunday, February 18, 2024 on your calendars. This will be the dedication concert for the newly refurbished Austin console, Op. 1040. F. Allen Artz, III will present a concert based on "God So Loved the World"— a journey from Lent through Pentecost. The concert will be at 2 pm (please note the time) and \$10 is a suggested donation. All donations will go to the organ fund.

Trinity Episcopal Church Concert Series



Sunday November 19, 2023
at 4 pm

The Beethoven Trio Project

Simon Maurer, violin

Xun Pan, piano

Ai-Lin Hsieh, cello

We are privileged to host the second of this series to present all of the Beethoven Trios. Other venues will feature more of this amazing undertaking over two years. All three artists have impressive teaching and performing credentials here and around the world.



The three Beethoven trios for this program are the Piano Trio in G major; op. 1, no. 2; Variations in G major on “*Ich bin der Schneider Kakadu*”, op. 121a and Piano Trio in D major, op. 70, no. 1 “*Ghost*”.

Come meet the Artists at a post-concert reception.

No Admission Fee - Free Will Offering Taken

For more information, contact Trinity Episcopal Church
200 S. Second Street, Pottsville, PA 570-622-8720
Episcopalch200@gmail.com trinityepiscopalpottsvillepa.org

Trinity is Handicapped Accessible

Upcoming Events

Sunday, February 18, 2024 at 2PM (please note time)

F. Allen Artz, III will present the dedication concert for the newly refurbished Austin Console, Op. 1040. Suggested donation is \$10.00

2023 Diocese of Bethlehem Convention Delegates



Paul Barnwell, Lea Bortner, Bonnie Baker and The Rev. Dr. Kurt Kovalovich

Blessing of the Animals



Trinity Concert Series



Ron Stabinsky, piano



Greg Giannascoli, marimba

News from Marion C. Price

Save the Date!! The annual MPTF Christmas Luncheon will be held Thursday, December 28, 2023, at Holy Apostles Church in Saint Clair. The Eucharist Service will begin at 11 AM, followed by lunch, games, and a Christmas Carol sing-a-long. Please help spread the word! All who are served by MPTF (age 60 and over) and a guest are invited to attend. Please contact Cathy Clouser in the office (570-621-3220) with any questions and to RSVP.

Reminder: Open enrollment for 2024 Medicare plans ends December 7, 2023.

Thankful, Grateful and Blessed

As the Thanksgiving holiday season approaches these words seem to be everywhere. I have seen them in many Fall and Thanksgiving decorations, including on two decorative boards at my home church. The reminders are nestled among two beautiful arrangements of fall flowers, leaves, and pumpkin decorations. I love the fall and its beautiful colorful decorations and this year I feel that I am being reminded to be thankful in more ways than a holiday decoration.

It began a few weeks ago with a video of Joyce Meyer speaking on the power of gratitude. It was a powerful sermon on being grateful and thankful. She was urging us to be thankful at all times, not just when things are going our way. I find that it is easy to give thanks for food – because my cupboards are full; shelter – because I have a home; good health – because I'm healthy; employment – because I love my job; family – because I think mine is pretty great! The harder question is can I give thanks when things are not going my way? Of course, I can....I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.....but do I?

Joyce urges us to have a thankful attitude and stop complaining so much. We need to be thankful when we are having troubles and things are not going our way. Even then, you can always find something to be happy about. Make a list of what you have to be thankful for. In the New Testament Paul encourages us to "give thanks" at least 46 times. Perhaps his most difficult direction is found in 1 Thessalonians 5:18, "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you". Paul was imprisoned, persecuted, and beaten, yet he was full of thanksin **all** circumstances.

In church this past week I read the scripture lesson Philippians 4:6 Do not be anxious about anything, but by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. This is one of my favorite verses. I have this on a bookmark on my desk as a constant reminder. It is okay to pray for your difficult situations but remember to be thankful for your blessings. The definition of thankful is being **conscious** of the benefits received. Being grateful is being **appreciative** of the benefits received.

Gratitude brings peace. Count your blessings. Gratitude helps us see that God's hand is over all our circumstances. Taking a posture of gratitude during a challenging time in life can prove to be a powerful choice. It is almost impossible to dwell on hardships and struggles when you are focusing on the good things you are thankful for. These two opposites can't occupy your mind at the same time.

The art of Thanksgiving is consistent, steadfast, genuine year-round thanksgiving in all things, for God is good. I wish you all a very Happy Thanksgiving and a very Merry Christmas. I am thankful for this job and to have met all of you, I am grateful for the relationships formed, and blessed to have you all in my life.



Charles Baber Preservation Trust

Thankful for the Small Unnoticed Things

by C. Field -Nov. 2023

Have you ever given thought to where your mind wanders when you are taking a shower or a bath? Most children either hate to take a bath\ shower or they go to the opposite extreme of making it an extended playtime process. Adults are variable with some using it as peaceful leisure private time, some planning their schedule for the day or the next day, others are angry or upset about something and rethinking the situation, and a few may even be thinking of the shower\ bath itself and using hair shampoo, conditioner, and maybe shaving. My recent shower was quite a surprise when I found myself thanking God for the simple fact of having hot water and the ability to take a shower. This startling revelation was brought on when my mind was wandering in different directions about what I did for the day, what I failed to do, and what I had to do the next day. I wanted more hot water, and so I turned the lever. The water got cold, and my mind immediately panicked and went to a broken water heater, a service call, and the cost and time to replace the unit. I quickly rinsed off and turned the lever for one last dash of warm water only to find I had turned the lever in the wrong direction to begin with, and I had all the hot water I wanted. That is when I thanked God for the hot water, for the ability to take a shower, and for my ability to even walk into my shower.

As I thought about this simple act taking for granted hot water, a shower and being able to walk, I realized there are so many small acts of kindness and thoughtfulness from people in our lives that go unnoticed. Take the church for instance and all the behind-the-scenes action that we never notice and take for granted. I will not mention names, least I forget someone, but here are some examples: This summer, we had services at the chapel in the cemetery. We do not use prayer books. Someone took the time to type up new service pamphlets for both morning prayer and the regular service and even printed out "large print" pamphlets. Then we have our senior and junior wardens and our vestry, who freely give of their time every day of the week, including the footwork of selling the rectory, balancing a budget, worrying about repairs, resolving issues, preparing for church functions and events, and attending and participating in our many outreach programs and our affiliate organizations and sister churches.

Extending beyond the wardens and vestry, we have our parishioners who volunteer to host morning prayer, serve at the church service as readers or chalice bearers, take communion to the shut-ins, wash the chalice and linens after the service, cook, bake, make soups, coordinate events, bring food for the events, set up and clean-up after the events, compile and assemble our Topics, update our church directory, assemble and stuff mailings, update the website and Facebook, count and record the offerings, run our Zoom sessions, volunteer for the summer reading program, teach our youth with Sunday school and events including Easter egg hunts and Christmas pageantry, make meals and serve at soup kitchen, coordinate and hang articles for the Clothesline of Love, prepare or update and print church visitor pamphlets including the church history, stained glass window history and the Book of Remembrance, and purchase, prepare, and serve Thanksgiving dinners for our needy.

We have our church staff who do the background leg work including cleaning the church for all that happens in the church. And we have **the Rev. Dr. Kurt Kovalovich** who is a true blessing for all the churches he serves and the boards and committees he sits on. He is available most times, always returning emails and texts, participating in or leading our programs, and giving advice and direction when needed. All of this is done while holding down a full-time job in his medical profession.

We also have our hard-working laborers and board members of the Charles Baber Preservation Trust and the Marion Price Trust. Everyone gives of their time, their skills, and their money to keep things working and maintained, and to take care of the people who come to them whether in need or grief.

THANK YOU EVERYONE FOR ALL THE HELP THAT YOU GIVE. And a special thank you for your financial contributions. Have a Blessed Thanksgiving! And if you have nowhere to go and nothing to do for Thanksgiving, visit Dawn and help out, or just come for a free hot meal at Holy Apostle Church.



Learning Life's Lessons From A Tree

People, in general, love stories with a happy ending. We as Christians celebrate December with a happy and joyful year-end through the birth of Christ. At the Charles Baber Cemetery, the wide variety of trees, plants, and flowers celebrate a happy ending through each month of the year. December in particular, because of the celebration of Christ's birth, is especially meaningful because it offers an environment of quietness and a time for reflection. The hustle and bustle of the Christmas season is left at the gates' entrance, as the trees whisper enticements of peace, harmony, acceptance, and love. There is no judgment. They invite each visitor to come and walk the many paths and feel the closeness and beauty of nature that God gifted to the earth.

The trees' evolution of life as it changes each month depending on the weather and the season, provides us with many of life's lessons. The barren trees in winter have to endure the harsh, cold, windy, icy, and snowy weather, and yet their limbs, trunks, barks, and shapes are laid bare for the world to see. It is at this time, without the outer leaf covering, that we evidence the inner soul and beauty of that particular species. The trees in this season teach us about endurance and perseverance and that while we may be exposed and vulnerable at times, it may be our moment when our inner beauty and soul shine forth.

In the months of January, February, and March, the trees teach us about hope and faith, and a promise of more pleasant things to come. Hope for warm weather and fair skies, and faith that the bad weather months eventually end and bring a more promising spring. Hope, faith, and promise for better things to come, is what all humans need to get us through bad times.

April and May are joyful, exciting, and productive months for trees. They come alive. They are rejuvenated, refreshed, and flowering. It is the same thing for us humans, sometimes all we need is a vacation, or a time away from everyday stress and routine, or recovery from surgery or the loss of a loved one. We need to wake up, shake off the mundane life or sadness and come alive, refreshed, and eager to begin again.

The months of June, July, and August are months of high activity, growth, and expansion months for a tree. This is when they grow their leaves, expand their girth, width, and volume, extend their limbs, and maybe peel some of their bark. And yet, they use their massive structure to shade the weary and hot visitor, the birds, and the ground critters from the sun's relentless rays. This lesson is well learned by people as we energize for a day's work, or major project or event, or simply fortify ourselves for the daily grind and toil. And yet we must find the time to consider others and to use our resources to help others.

September, October, and November are when a tree can be most dazzling with its fall foliage coloring. Sometimes, it uses its assets to be an outright showoff about how beautiful it is. And we as humans are just like trees. There are times when we are at our peak performance. We are in the spotlight. We are at our best. We are exceptional. And yet, for some of us, it's hard to resist being smug and arrogant about it. We know we are good, and we want the world to know it too.

And that brings us to December. It is a time when the tree has run its course for the year, it is shutting down. It has had a wonderful year but now must rest and reflect. All of us must do that as well. We must take time to rest and reflect to enjoy the quietness of the moment and to have a happy ending to our day. Many of us do it in prayer at the end of our day.

We board members and cemetery workers, on behalf of our trees and the lessons they teach us, wish everyone a joyful and peaceful Christmas and a healthy and refreshed New Year!

NOVEMBER 2023

Boyer's Caring and Sharing fundraiser program continues.

Advent Project continues (See TOPICS)

- 1 — 12 noon Healing service
- 5 — 9 am service
- 8 — 12 noon Healing service
- 12 — 9 am service — Veterans' Sunday
with reception following
SOUP SALE SUNDAY
- 15 — 12 noon Healing service
- 18 — 1 to 3pm — Bowling at
Strike Zone, Pottsville
- 19 — 9 am service
4 pm Concert series
- 20 — 4 pm — Soup Kitchen
- 22 — 12 noon Healing service
- 23 — THANKSGIVING — OFFICE
CLOSED
- 24 — OFFICE CLOSED
- 26 — 9 am service — Christ the King
10:30 Vestry
- 29 — 12 noon Healing service
- 30 — 7 pm — Schuylkill Choral
Society rehearsal

DECEMBER 2023

Boyer's Caring and Sharing fundraiser program continues.

Advent Project through mid-December

- 2 — 7 pm Schuylkill Choral Society
Concert
- 3 — 9 am service — Advent I
- 6 — 12 noon Healing service
- 10 — 9 am service — Advent II
"Treat Exchange"
- 13 — 12 noon Healing service
- 17 — 9 am service — Advent III
10:30 Vestry
- 18 — 4 pm — Soup Kitchen
- 20 — 12 noon Healing service
- 24 — 9 am service — Advent IV
DECORATE CHURCH
6 pm — Christmas Eve Festal
Eucharist and Procession to the
Crèche.
- 25 — Blessed Christmas — Office
Closed
- 27 — NO HEALING SERVICE
- 28 — 12 noon — MPTF Christmas
party at Holy Apostles
- 31 — 9 am service

January 2024

January 1 — OFFICE CLOSED

January 3 — 12 noon Healing service

Trinity Episcopal Church

200 South Second Street

Pottsville, PA 17901

Phone: 570.622.8720

Fax: 570.621.3221

Return Service Requested

Deadline

For

January/February "Topics"

Friday, December 15, 2023



November Birthdays

1 – Madison Scott
5 – William Bowler
7 – Brad Ross
9 – Quinn Evans
10 – Joseph Siminitus, Nolan Weiner
13 – Edward Hosler
14 – Cole Demcher
15 – Booker Hostetter
17 – Charles Guensch
18 – Norman Kauffman, Andrea Allar
22 – Janet Grabowski
25 – Lorie Kauffman
27 – Nancy Depsky, Lance Reedy
30 – Jonathan Barreiro

December Birthdays

3 – Ryan Wehr
6 – George Stone IV
9 – Carol Stone Field
10 – Olivia Kauffman
18 – Gretchen Frederick
22 – Seraphina Brennan
23 – Carol A. Seitzinger
28 – Eric Stone, Ashley Hopkins, Dallas Petrosky
29 – Lauren Polcrack