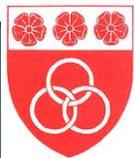


December 2015  
Volume 3, Issue 6

# Trinity Episcopal Church

## Lenox, MA



### *A peak inside:*

- Update on the Food Pantry
- Financial Update
- Vestry Update
- Upcoming Events

## SERVICES

### SUNDAYS

8 a.m. - Holy Eucharist

10:15 a.m. - Holy

Eucharist with Hymns,  
Godly Play

5 p.m. - Evening Prayer

### DAILY

7 a.m. - Morning Prayer (8  
a.m. on first Saturday of  
every month)

## A Message from our Rector

Dear People of Trinity Church,

Happy Advent! At least in our house, it seems as if Advent snuck up on us. We barely looked up from the turkey before we realized we needed to get the wreath out. Over the years, I've found that Advent can be a holy season of the year. It seems as if it is a little easier during Advent to practice our faith during the rest of the week and not just on Sunday morning. As frustrating as it can be that every store gets taken over by Christmas music, all of these experiences can point us to God if we let them. And there are so many traditions that we have that can prompt us to reflect on what we are doing. Advent calendars and wreaths can be a daily opportunity for prayer. Even the simple act of decorating our Christmas trees can be a sign of the gifts that God

has given us in our lives.

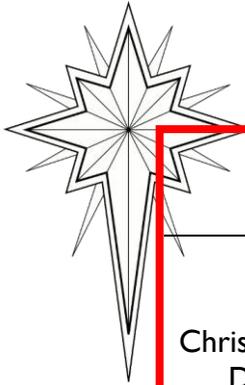
Here at Trinity we will be doing our best to help support our practice of Advent this year. We will have our Advent Quiet day on Saturday, December 12 from 9am – 1pm. This time of year can become overwhelmingly busy, and our Quiet Days provide a way for us to step back and reflect on our lives. Although it seems a little counterintuitive, it is exactly those of us who are most busy who can benefit the most from taking time away. With three kids at home, I deeply appreciate the ways that parents and families are pressed for time. But I would strongly encourage parents especially to try to find a way for at least one parent to come on the 12<sup>th</sup>.

On December 13<sup>th</sup> at 5pm we will be having

our annual service of Lessons and Carols at St. Helena's Chapel. Several people have expressed a small degree of sadness that the service will not be at Trinity this year. Anita and I thought that this could be an interesting place where we could explore collaboration. But of course, if it makes more sense to hold this in the future at Trinity, we will.

There are so many other things happening around our parish, and I want to thank everyone who put in so much time to make our community such a wonderful place. I hope you all have a wonderful and holy Advent, and I hope you have a very merry Christmas.

Your in Christ,



## Services this Advent & Christmastide

### *Throughout Advent*

Christmas Fair & Silver Tea (Saturday, December 5) 10am – 3pm

Advent Quiet Day (Saturday, December 12) 9am – 1pm

Advent Lessons and Carols (Sunday, December 12) 5pm at **St. Helena's Chapel**

### *The Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ*

Christmas Eve (Thursday, December 24)  
5pm *Holy Eucharist with Procession to the Creché*

7pm Holy Eucharist (St. Helena's)

9pm *Carol Sing*

9:30pm *Candlelight Holy Eucharist with the Berkshire String Trio*

Christmas Day (Friday, December 25)  
8:00am *Holy Eucharist in the Chapel*

**NB: the time change this year**

## A reminder about the Lenox Food Pantry

The Lenox Food Pantry has been serving Lenox residents for many years now. It is supported by all the Lenox Churches: St. Ann's, St. Helena's, Church on the Hill, Trinit, United Methodist Church of Lenox, and St. Vincent de Paul. Located at the Methodist Church, the food pantry is open every Saturday morning. Approximately 25 families or individuals are served with about 8-10 coming each Saturday.

The supporting churches provide the volunteers the run the pantry and supply non-perishable food items, as well as paper products and health care items that may not be subsidized through SNAP. Cash donations are also used to buy perishable items such as milk, eggs, and cheese. Price Chopper donated baked goods and Guido's provides fresh produce.

What are Trinity's responsibilities? Two Trinity volunteers cover one Saturday a month. Or course, all parishioners are asked to fill the designated baskets found in the narthex in the back of the church with the needed items. Trinity's special task is to make sure there are always plenty of jars of peanut butter (smooth or plain), cans of tuna, jars of pasta sauce, and juice.

Beryl Wells and her daughter have been long time volunteers for Trinity. After many years of dedicated service, they have decided to retire. Our current volunteers are Virginia Giddens, Emily Kittross, Gail Street, and Anita Stuart.

Ideally, we would like to have three teams of volunteers to cover our Saturdays. Can you help? Please contact Gail Street for more information.

## About our Finances

### Stewardship Season

As of October 31, 2015

Pledge and plate income	\$93,617
Endowment & other income	159,282
Total Income	252,898
Total Expenses	\$223,425
Surplus	\$29,474

*Thank you to everyone who completed your pledge card. If you did not receive a pledge card in the mail, cards and envelopes are available at the back of the church in the narthex. You can also contact the office at 413-637-0073 and we will be happy to send one out to you.*

Coming into the fall, we are in a fairly good financial position. Much of this is due to some generous undesignated gifts that have come in during the year as well as above expected returns on our endowment income. There are several issues that should be noted.

1. It is critical to note that the above information shows our *operating* budget. We completed some significant capital projects this year – most notably the bathroom and floor of the Parish House. So while we show a surplus on our budget, much of those funds were actually used for the Parish House.
2. Pledge and plate income are a little above budget. In order to meet some of our heating costs at the beginning of the year, several of our parishioners graciously prepaid their pledges. So, as anticipated, income and budget are coming into line.
3. Although our finances are in good shape now, winter is when we tend to have the highest costs due especially to heating our buildings.
4. Our endowment did suffer some losses earlier in the summer, but they have recovered in the fall.
5. We anticipate that cash flow will again be a challenge in the winter months.
6. We have been running below budget for Outreach, Administration, and Buildings and Grounds. We expect some costs at the end of the year so our budgets should come into line.

We are in a good position coming into the winter. We have been running a little below budget, and our income has also been slightly above budget. Thank you to everyone who has already filled out a pledge card for 2015. Your support is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions either of the wardens, the treasurer, or the rector would be glad to speak with you.

## OPEN BUDGET MEETING

*There will be an open meeting to discuss Trinity's 2016 budget. The meeting will be held at 7pm on Tuesday, December 8 in the Parish House. Anyone in the parish is welcome to attend to hear about our priorities for the upcoming year.*

## Upcoming Around the Parish



## Advent Quiet Day

Saturday, December 12

9:00am to 1:00pm

### **Spirituality at the End of Life**

For most of us, our days are filled with activity. In fact, they are often so full we don't have time to hear ourselves think, let alone hear what God might be saying to us. The Advent Quiet Day is an opportunity to step outside of our normal busyness. The theme of our Quiet Day this year is Spirituality at the End of Life, a reflection how the time of death can become a holy time. The meditations will be offered by the Reverend Rich Hayes, chaplain at Hospice Care in the Berkshires.

We will begin with prayer at 9am, after which we will begin our silence. Breakfast will follow the service, and there will be two more addresses during the morning. We will conclude with a simple lunch and prayers just before 1pm.

Despite the name, Quiet Days can be a lot of work. Resting in silence in the presence of God can be challenging but it is almost always refreshing as well. I hope you can make this part of your Advent devotions this year. If you would like to come, please let the office know so that we can plan food appropriately.

## This Year's Godly Journey Class



*Our Godly Journey class – on the new furniture in the classroom (Thanks, Claudine for the furniture!)*

### Journey to Adulthood

Our J2A group this year has decided to take a new approach to our studies as well as planning for some future events.

Our studies this year are a combination of the traditional J2A curriculum as well as a curriculum that is a bit more nontraditional. In the traditional program we have started to discuss who we are and who we would like to be. In our nontraditional curriculum called Harry Potter and the Search for Truth, which follows the books of the Harry Potter Series, we have discussed our unique gifts which

God has given us. We look forward to diving into both these curriculums as the year progresses.

Our group has also decided that they would like to go on a Pilgrimage within the next year or so. Father Michael spoke to our group about the many options that we could choose from. We are very excited to decide where we would like to go as well as participating in more fundraising events. We had a very fun time baking 18 pies for Thanksgiving and hope that everyone enjoyed them.

Another big focus of this year's group is bonding, togetherness and community service. We have already had a wonderful bonding evening in which the group spent an overnight in the church. Many laughs and fun times were had in both the parish house and the chapel as well as wonderful Morning Prayer service which Father Michael so graciously did for us at 1:30 am!

- Lynn Chiavacci

## Advent and Christmas Music at Trinity

Sunday, December 13 at 5 PM, the annual Service of Lessons and Carols will be held at St. Helena's Chapel. Please join us.

Every Sunday during Advent, the Children's Choir will participate in the Advent Candlelighting by singing an appropriate verse of "We Light the Advent Candle". The

children will also sing during the 5 PM service on Christmas Eve.

The Chancel Choir will sing two anthems during the Advent IV service on Dec. 20. Recently, many members of the choir participated in the Faure Requiem which was sung at the Requiem Eucharist in honor of All Souls' Day. Thank you to all

who joined us in this wonderful event.

On Christmas Eve at the 9:30 service, the Berkshire String Trio will provide music for both the prelude, postlude, offertory and communion, as well as during our traditional carol sing which precedes the service.

## Outreach Update

Newspapers and television constantly remind us of the many refugees who are forced to flee from their homes because of violence. We are all moved by the conditions of these men, women, and especially, children face and the Outreach Committee wanted to make an immediate response.

At our October meeting, the Outreach Committee voted to send \$1,000 to the International Rescue Committee for their work with Syrian refugees. IRC has been providing humanitarian aid around the world since the 1930's. Currently, they are assisting Syrians both inside Syria and in the four neighboring countries, reaching more than 3.3 million people. The focus is on protection, health care, education, and economic recovery.

IRC has also been working in

Afghanistan for almost 3 decades. They have reached over 4 million people helping with reconstruction and education. They also provide emergency relief to people forced to flee from their homes.

IRC was one of the first organizations to aid the thousands of refugees arriving on the Greek island of Lesbos, a key entry point into Europe from the Middle East. Essential services such as sanitation and water are provided as well as assistance with the transit process. IRC also works in the neighboring European countries.

Our donation to IRC will do double duty. IRC has also partnered with Waka Waka and for every \$25 donated to IRC, Waka Waka (which means bright light in Swahili) will send a solar light to a Syrian family in need. These lights are an emergency essential for these families. Much of the electrical

power grid in Syria has been destroyed and the Waka Waka lights provide a safe source of light for those living inside Syria and for those forced into tents in refugee camps. These WakaWaka can also charge cell phones, enabling families to stay in touch with loved ones.

Let us keep these brothers and sisters in our prayers. If you want to make an individual donation to the International Rescue Committee, you can do this online or Outreach would be happy to forward your donation.

## Vestry Update

To the Parishioners of Trinity Church

During our last meeting vestry members decided each of us would take turns giving you a personal summary of the vestry minutes.

Our last meeting was held on October 25<sup>th</sup> in the Parish House, and the report from the Mutual Ministry Committee was the highlight. Hearing the impressions of our fellow parishioners really invigorated the vestry. Several of us have stressed the importance of transparency. We are, after all, here to serve you and we think it's important you should know how we're doing. To that end, the minutes of all vestry meetings will be available in the narthex. It was pointed out that because of the times in which we live, reference to our children should not be included in the minutes. This was a reasonable concern of our parents and will be respected.

We all agreed that we want to welcome new friends to Trinity.

The question is how do we go about this. The suggestion that we form a Membership Committee was discussed with enthusiasm. Once formed a committee would think of ways to meet and greet new potential members and friends. We thought this might be an extension of Parish Life. Would any of you be interested in this? - if so please talk to Emily Kittross, Virginia Giddens or me. We would very much like to hear from you.

Speaking on behalf of outreach, Jeff Kittross told us that \$1000 will be sent to the International Rescue Committees to assist refugees. It was agreed by the vestry that the Outreach Committee, when deemed appropriate, should be encouraged to help in times of crisis.

Also, the Outreach Committee has asked that the proceeds from the Silver Tea be sent to the Gordon Clem Academy in Kenya. This, being such a worthwhile endeavor, was approved by the vestry.

Parish Life requested we use the proceeds from our Tag Sale to purchase some needed items for the kitchen (grills for pancakes etc. & a couple of crock pots). Other suggestions are welcome (please remember the suggestion box in the narthex).

The financial report given by Eugenie was accepted. Steve Peters reported we will continue to use oil this winter as the economic choice.

Michael will present the 2016 budget this month (Tuesday, December 8<sup>th</sup> at 7pm). All are invited to attend.

It was announced that the Alumni of the Lenox School (presently the home of Shakespeare & Co. on Kemble Street) had graciously given Trinity a gift of \$500.

The meeting ended at 8:30p.m. with a prayer by Michael.

Annee Goodchild

## G & M Machine Donates to Trinity Flower Guild

*Through the good offices of Caroline Church's son, Tom, Glenn Van Orman of G & M Machine in Lenox Dale has given the Flower Guild 6 beautiful, waterproof metal trays to be enjoyed by generations of Trinity Church parishioners. They will be on view for the first time this Christmas Season when they will hold White Poinsettias in the spaces in the rood screen. Glenn and his partner, Jimmy Dunn do fine work and are most generous. We are very grateful to them, and will remember them with gratitude in our Christmas prayers. Many thanks from all of us at Trinity!*