

Trinity Tidings for Mid December, 2022/January, 2023

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Pastor Julie Osterhout, Deacon Carol Koch, Musician: Carla Seidel, Sexton: Roy Kline

Growing. Growing. Growing. Growing. Growing. Growing. **Growing!**

“Other seed fell into good soil and brought forth grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirty and sixty and a hundredfold.” (Mk. 4:8 NRS)

You all know Jesus’ parable of the sower. The sower (that is, God) is the guy who sowed seeds in all kinds of places. Some seed fell on the path, but birds ate them all up, some seed fell on rocky ground where they sprang up quickly but died from too little soil and burning sun. Some fell in thorns and were choked out, but others fell in good soil, and brought forth grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirty and sixty and a hundredfold.

Did you ever think that this story isn’t just another of Jesus’ parables but a story about us, the church family of Trinity Lutheran Church Wernersville? Well, it is. It is about growth—our growth. You know, faith communities don’t grow simply because the people of the congregation desire it or because there’s the right kind of preacher in the pulpit. It’s so much more than that. It means creating the right kind of soil for people to deeply root themselves.

Imagine Jesus’ parable this way: There was a sower whose church was like the hard path. People would come, but no one said hello or invited them deeper into relationship, so they were picked away by other organizations—other activities. Some people fell into rocky churches. Everything sounded good and exciting at first, but then there was nothing more to sink their roots into and when things got difficult and there was damaging conflict, they left. Some people landed in a congregation where there was nothing but trouble—like seeds in the thorns. There was dysfunction, a fear of new things, interpersonal conflict, and more concern with tradition than mission. It was too overwhelming for the new folks, and they left.

But then some people fell into a church family that was rich in mission and strong in friendship and support. The soil was good. The community of faithful believers were concerned for each other, looked after not only those in their church family, but others everywhere. Their good, rich soil was ready for planting, growing, and harvesting. And they did!

Guess which type of soil Trinity is. I hope you guessed good, rich soil because that is exactly who Trinity is. Over and over, I have heard people say—newcomers and visitors—how friendly Trinity’s church family is. “New seeds” are greeted by people who openly welcome them, invite them to come back the next week, and engage them in conversation that reveal common ground and connect with them in meaningful ways.

It is no mystery that our faith is grounded in relationships. Relationships between Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), relationships between us and Christ—both as the whole people of God and as individuals—and relationships with each other. Relationships are the heart strings for who we are as a loving, dynamic, rich-in-good-soil people of God.

It is because of our rich soil that we are able to provide for each other, our guests and newcomers, and are growing—and will continue to grow. And there are so many ways to grow. Grow in mission, grow in

ministries, grow in financial support, grow in talent and abilities, and grow in people and relationships. It is amid all of this growth that our faith is nurtured and enriched. Together we can fertilize the soil and keep it healthy and fresh for future plantings—future guests and newcomers that is—and each other.

In this Advent season and in the coming preparations for the New Year and Generosity Sunday on February 12th, our focus is “God Gives Growth.” It opens the door to a lot of questions. How is God growing us and what is God planning for us? What seeds will God want us to plant? How much water and fertilizer are we going to need to keep the soil rich and productive, and will we be able to afford the amount of fertilizer and water needed for strong, healthy growth? That is, what kinds of gifts and talents will we need to do the ministry that God wants us to do?

These are all questions we must address as we grow in membership, in ministry, and in faith—and we *are* growing and not just in membership. Our growth has inspired the renovation of our Narthex—a growth project that will strengthen our relationships and our work as the body of Christ. (And give us more space and storage, too).

Please keep our whole church family in prayer as we sink our roots more deeply into the good rich soil of faith and Spirit. Pray that the resources to water, cultivate, and nurture abundantly will grow and grow. Thank you to all who have graciously, generously supported the growth of Trinity Lutheran Church and will continue to do so.

Peace and grace,
Pr. Julie



Christmas Eve candlelight worship services with Holy Communion on Saturday, 12/24 @ 3:30 & 9 PM.
Special music begins at 8:45

How are We Doing?

Trinity's Financial Summary for October

Average Weekly Giving in October, 2022: **\$2,895.13**

Total income to date in 2022: **\$131,541.76**

Total expenses to date in 2022: **\$157,564.34**

Total income in October: **\$14,475.66**

Total expenses in October: **\$15,802.55**

Synod Mission Support for 2022—**\$16,090.80**, 83% of \$19,309.00.

West Berks Mission Support for 2022—**\$500.00**, 83% of \$600.00.

Thank you for your generosity.

The giving records for 2022 will be open through Sunday, January 8th, 2023. Make sure you use your 2022 envelopes and date your check for 2022. Thank you.

Please remember in your prayers:

Members who are homebound or in care facilities: Joan Kava, Diane Klinger, Carolyn Kurtz, Rosalie Putt, Betty Reber, Pat Sickles, and Kay Weatherholtz.

The Military: Rena Butcavage, Natalie Ketner, Justin Klinger and John Kurtz.

Family and Friends: Barry Chapman, Arline G, Shirley Kerchner, Tom Koerner, Danny Kuhn, Michelle Nordstrom, Tom Dick Spittler, and Wendy Wolfe.

Special Ministries: Our missionary in Tanzania-Stephen Friberg and his Family and Bishop Christopher deForest.

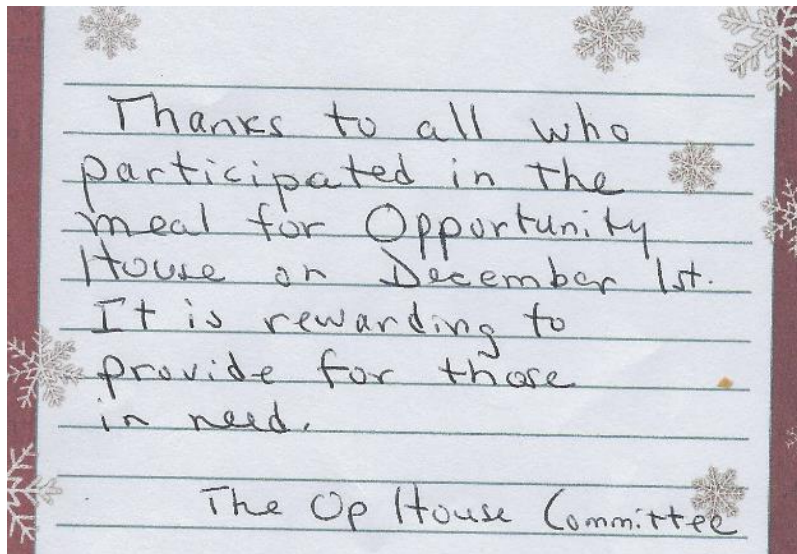
Please let us know when our prayers are answered so we can keep our prayer list current.



Thank you, Helen Hummel and Kathy Lawry for purchasing and serving the meal for our Advent Fun Shop. The food was supplied through a grant from Thrivent. Thanks to all who had a craft table-Izannah & Kathy Bashore, Elaine Briner, Beth Byler & Morgan Enck, Karen Houck, Kurtz Family, Pastor Julie, Lori Shoumlisky and Harmony Wentzel. And thank you to all who attended. (See pictures on following pages)

Thank you to everyone who helped to decorate the church for Advent and Christmas, especially Barbara Debiec, and Anne Marie Rinehimer.

Thank you to Helen Hummel and Charlotte Moyer for helping with the pew decorations.



Welcome to our new members.



**Tony Ludovici and Carol Yachnik
who joined on 10/30/2022**



**Shane Strunk who was baptized
on 10/30/22**



Marilyn Weatherholt, Stefanie Steffey, Ray and Betty Schaeffer who joined on 12/11/22.

Pictures from Advent Fun Shop



Helen Hummel and Kathy Lawry setting up our meal





Flower and Bulletin Sponsorship

The cost of sponsoring the flowers is \$40.00. The cost of sponsoring the bulletins is \$15.00. If you are sponsoring the flowers or bulletins, please note that there are blank envelopes in the narthex below the sign up lists. Please put your check (payable to Trinity) or cash in the envelope (be sure your name is on the envelope) and place in the offering plate. **We need Altar Flower and Bulletin Sponsors for all of January and beyond. Please sign up on the appropriate chart in the narthex. Flower chart has been posted. Bulletin chart will be posted shortly.**

Altar Flower Sponsors for December: 12/18-Shoumlisky Family in honor of Alexis birthday, 12/24 & 12/25-Anne Marie Rineimer in memory of her parents .

Bulletin Sponsors for December: 12/24-Janice Lamm in Honor of the birth of Jesus. 12/25-Shoumlisky family in memory of Lori's dad.

Helpers for December/January

Altar Guild: Anne Marie Rinehimer (December), Laura Krick (January)

Communion Assistants:12/25-Deacon Carol, 1/1-Deacon Carol, 1/8-Jerry Jarsocrak, 1/15-Aislin Glven, 1/22-Jerry Jarsocak, 1/29-no communion, 2/5-Aislin Given.

Acolytes: 12/18-Owen Wentzel, 12/25-Tony Ludovici, 1/1-Tony Ludovici, 1/8-Barbara Debiec, 1/15-Bob Bashore, 1/22-Quentin Light, 1/29-Betty Lou Franzen.

Lay Readers: 12/25-Deacon Carol, 1/1-Deacon Carol, 1/8-Elaine Briner, 1/15-Kathy Lawry, 1/22-Kelly Light, 1/29-Jerry Jarsocrak.

Ushers: 12/25-TBD, 1/1-Bashores, 1/8-Lawrys, 1/15-Kurtzes, 1/22-Givens, 1/29-Shoumliskys.

Sound System: 12/25-Wendell Byler, 1/1-Stephanie Kurtz, 1/8-Scott Franzen, 1/15-Wendell Byler, 1/22-Scott Franzen, 1/29-Stephanie Kurtz.

Counters: 12/25-Hummel/Jarsocrak, 1/1-Debiec/Rinehimer, 1/8-Franzens, 1/15-Rapley/Pirl-Roth, 1/22-Hummel/Jarsocrak, 1/29-Debiec/Rinehimer.

Bulletin Assemblers: 12/21-Mary Jane Evans & Mary Young, 1/4-Tony Ludovice, 1/11-June Rapley, 1/18-Connie Fritz, 1/25-Kathy Lawry, 2/1-Linda Weiss.

Children's Sunday School Teachers: 12/25 & 1/1-No Children's Sunday School, 1/8-Helen Hummel, 1/15-Kathy Lawry, 1/22-Lori Shoumlinsky, 1/29-Kathy Bashore

Newsletter Assembly: Kathy Lawry

Church Council Members

Harmony Wentzel, President 610-390-9986

Glen Given, Vice President 484-955-1780

Izannah Bashore 610-488-0520

Betty Lou Franzen 610-781-8132

Tacy Grippon 484-878-9345

Dawn Hickernell 717-507-3549

Jerry Jarsocrak 610-670-0954

Elwood (Woody) Noll 484-638-2057

Cindy Hassler-Schappell 610-451-6131

Happy Birthday

Birthday Milestones in December/January

Charlotte Moyer will be 84 in December and Mary Jane Evans will be 82 in January. Happy Birthday to both of you.

Church Council Highlights for November

- Additional 2023 Budget Discussion with approval of previous budget submitted.
- Approved reception of 4 new adult members-Ray and Betty Schaeffer, Stefanie Steffey, and Marilyn Weatherholtz. They will be received on 12/11.
- Received C2C Design Group proposal for narthex. Will be discussed and voted on at Congregational Meeting on 12/11.
- Reviewed Comcast bill & Glen will contact for a 3 year contract at a lower rate.
- Next meeting is Tuesday, Dec. 20th @ 7:30 PM