

Trinity Tidings for Mid December, 2023 thru January, 2024

Trinity Lutheran Church 130 S. Walnut St., Wernersville, PA, 19565, 610.678.1782,

e-mail: tlcworship@aol.com, www.trinitywernersville.org, facebook.com/trinitywernersville

Pastor Julie Osterhout, Deacon Carol Koch, Musician: Carla Seidel, Preschool Teacher/Director: Betty Lou Franzen,
Preschool Aide: Stefanie Steffey, Sexton: Roy Kline

What Do You Want for Christmas?

As I write this, Thanksgiving is four days away and Advent begins in ten more beyond that. And though that's two weeks, it seems like tomorrow. And in reality, it is probably going to be mid-December before you read this. But there it is. Some years I have all my Christmas shopping done before Thanksgiving. This year is not one of those years.

I know what you're thinking, why not just shop online? It's easier. And though I've done it, I don't particularly enjoy online shopping. I really do like the hustle and bustle of the malls and stores. I like hearing the tinny jangle of "Rock Around the Christmas Tree" waft over the airwaves, seeing the silly antlers and hats the sales associates wear and the over-used gold garland wrapped around the service desks. I don't even mind standing in-line to make my purchases.

Once home, I put on my favorite Christmas CDs, lay out my purchases on the bed in the guestroom and begin wrapping presents. I like it. I always will. Sometimes I get a little "help" as both Joe and Irma (our two tuxedo cats) sprawl out on wayward sheets of Christmas wrap as I sort through my messy collection of gift bags, boxes, bows, and tissue paper—all of which is peppered with the remnants of last year's Christmas card glitter tenaciously clinging onto . . . well . . . everything.

But I'll never get to that point if I don't at least send out my annual family text asking people what they want for Christmas. It's good to know what people want. I've always felt their gifts should be something they'd like, but also a surprise. That's why lists are good. And yet, what people want isn't always what people need.

It's true for all of us no matter how old we get. We know what we want. But what we want isn't always what we need. Sometimes we don't even know what we need. But God does. Regardless of what we may ask for in our conversations with God, God is the one who truly knows our hearts and know our needs.

I think that's how it was when God gave us Jesus. When humanity needed a way to abundant life, and freedom from brokenness and sorrow, when we needed a light to show us the way through the darkness and burdens of this world, and give us peace, who would have thought to ask for a tiny baby born into poverty? Who would have asked for a baby at all? But that's exactly what humankind needed—a tiny baby sent from God in heaven to teach us how to love and be loved.

Jesus was the gift we so desperately needed—the gift that would show us a better way to live—a better way to be in relationship with each other. Jesus was the gift God knew we needed. And more. For me, Jesus isn't just the gift I need. Jesus is the gift I want. I want to know how to love better, forgive better—be better. For in Christ, I am liberated from the chains of my own sin and selfish wants. In fact, I am the very thing God wants. I belong to Christ. I am a child of God and I am wanted!

That's a pretty good Christmas present. May the peace and love of Jesus Christ be all you ever need . . . and want.

Blessings,
Pr. Julie



Jonestown, PA – November 17, 2023: Jonestown Bank & Trust Co. (JBT) recently donated \$5,000 to St. Daniel's Lutheran Church's Preschool Program.

Located in Robesonia, PA, St. Daniel's Pre-Kindergarten Scholarship Organization provides scholarship awards to families whose children attend the school under the PA Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program.

A partnership between St. Daniel's Church in Robesonia and **Trinity Lutheran Church in Wernersville, PA** means the funds will go to support scholarships for the preschools at both St. Daniels and **Trinity Lutheran**.

"We appreciate JBT's commitment to quality early learning education and their commitment to the many families in Robesonia, **Wernersville** and other nearby communities that will benefit from these scholarships," said Samuel Thomas, St. Daniel's Preschool Board President.

"We are pleased to have JBT as a partner in providing a quality, affordable preschool program. It is widely accepted that early learning experience provides a strong foundation, both socially and academically, that is vital to a child's success in elementary school and well beyond."

PHOTO CAPTION:

Pictured left to right: (front row) Tyler March, JBT Robesonia Branch Manager; **Rev. Julie Osterhout, Trinity Lutheran Church of Wernersville Pastor**; **Betty Lou Franzen, Trinity Lutheran Preschool Director**; Lorelei Lewis, St. Daniel's Preschool Director; and Ashley Hess, JBT Asst. Vice President (back row) Samuel Thomas, St. Daniel's Preschool Board President; Jan Miller, St. Daniels Preschool Teacher; and Joy Kline, St. Daniel's Church Ministries Coordinator.

Church Council Highlights for November

- Discussed budget billing vs. monthly billing for UGI
- Generosity Sunday is scheduled for 2/4/24.
- Will be trimming pine trees on perimeter of back parking lot.
- Good comprehensive review of other electricity providers showed that there would be minimal to no savings in switching providers so will remain with PPL.
- No meeting in December unless warranted.



Christmas Eve candlelight worship services with Holy Communion on Sunday 12/24 @ 9 PM.



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, Betty Lou Franzen, Karen Houck, Kurtz Family, Lori Shoumlisky, Harmony and Owen Wentzel, plus our Joyful Rhythms leader Carla Seidel who had a workshop for those who wanted to try some drumming. And thank you to all who attended. (Pictures from this event will be in the next newsletter).

Thank you to everyone who helped to decorate the church for Advent and Christmas-Anne Marie Rinehimer, our Faith Formation Class, Helen Hummel and Charlotte Moyer for helping with the pew decorations and Roy Kline for putting the outdoor manger people out week by week.

A heartfelt thank you to all who contributed to the meal for Opportunity House. We appreciate our loyal congregants who enable us to keep this viable outreach of our church.

The Op House Committee

West Berks Shepherding Ministry needs you!

Do you like to drive? Meet new people? Have a few extra hours a month? If so, volunteering for Western Berks Shepherding Ministries might be for you! Becoming a volunteer driver for WBSM is an extremely flexible and rewarding way to serve.

Our volunteers usually drive once a month and can choose when and where they drive. We are looking for new volunteers help drive our clients to their medical appointments.

Please call/email us for more information! 484-294-7394

WesternBerksShepherding@gmail.com

Thank you! Jodi Eisenhauer, Executive Co-Director
Western Berks Shepherding Ministries, Inc.
484-294-7394

Please remember in your prayers:

Members who are sick or recently hospitalized: Beverly James, Janice Lamm, Bob Schappell and Matthew Schwartz.

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

The Military: Natalie Ketner, and John Kurtz.

Family and Friends: Karen, Barry Chapman, Arline G, Delores Hickernell, Shirley Kerchner, Mary Kirkner, Tom Koerner, Vanna Piedras, True Portalatin, & Deena Wiczalkowski.

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

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

Prayer Chain

If someone you know-- or you yourself-- are in need of prayer, allow us to add your prayer request to our daily prayers. Prayers will always remain confidential. Prayer requests may be as detailed or as anonymous as you prefer. Ex. "Pray for my Aunt Nellie who has cancer," or "Pray for healing for a friend." To activate the prayer chain, please call Mary Young at 610-678-4470. If there is no answer, please leave a message or call at a later time if you are not comfortable leaving a message. Your prayer request is important and we do not want to miss it.

How are We Doing?

Trinity's Financial Summary through October

Average Weekly Giving in 2023: **\$3640.60**

Average Weekly Giving in 2022: **\$3059.09**

Average Weekly Attendance in 2023: **77**

Average Weekly Attendance in 2022: **52**

Total expenses to date in 2023: **\$168,906.41**

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

Year to date giving: **\$156,546.31**

Percentage of increase in giving from 2022 to 2023: **16%**

Percentage of Increase in expenses from 2022 to 2023: **7%**

Synod Mission Support to date for 2023--**\$12,394.50**, 64% of \$19,290.00 committed.

West Berks Mission Support to date for 2023--**\$400.00**, 67% of \$600.00 committed.

Thank you. It is your giving that enables Trinity to continue to do ministry as well as provide for the cost of insurance, salaries and benefits, heat, air conditioning, worship and learning opportunities, engage in outreach and evangelism initiatives and missional programs. These are difficult times for everyone--including our church family--as the cost of living, even basic necessities, is rising. So if you are able, please consider how you might give in the weeks ahead.

Thank you for participating in the mission of Jesus Christ through your gifts to Trinity. How gifts may be received: ***Online giving via Trinity's website: www.trinitywernersville.org**



Or scan the QR-code with your phone camera to connect to Trinity's Donate page. There you can securely make a one-time gift or set up recurring donations.

*Regular mail: 130 S. Walnut St., Wernersville 19565

*Vanco Mobile App. using debit or credit.

*To make changes to automatic withdrawal use invite code hpfk34.

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 Sponsors for December 31 and all of January. We need Bulletin sponsors for all of January. Please sign up on the appropriate chart in the narthex.**

Altar Flower Sponsors for mid December thru January: 12/17-Helen Hummel in memory of Dick and to honor everyone in the Christmas Concert, 12/24-Anne Marie Rinehimer in memory of her parents, husband, and brother, 12/31 and all of January available.

Bulletin Sponsors for mid December thru January: 12/17 (AM)- Wendell & Beth Byler in memory of their parents-Ernest and Sadie Byler, and Russell and Janet Kauffman, 12/17 (PM)-Carol Koch in honor and thanks for all the handbell and chime players, 12/24 (AM)-Kathy and Rick Lawry in memory of loved ones, 12/24 (PM)-Carol Yachnik to wish Happy Birthday this week to Michael Jr., Emma, and Sophie Weiler, 12/31-Carol Yachnik in memory of Michael Yachnik, Jr., All of January available.

Helpers for December/January

Altar Guild: Anne Marie Rinehimer & Cheyenne Loring (December), Betty Lou Franzen (January)

Communion Assistant: Kevin Kurtz-12/17 & 12/24(AM), Bob Bashore (12/24(PM) & 12/31, Barbara Debiec-1/7 & 1/14, Kay Stout-1/21 & 1/28

Acolytes: 12/17-Alexis Shoumlisky, 12/24(AM)-Caidyn Schaeffer, 12/24(PM)-Carson Enck, Jocelyn Enck, Quentin Light, & Owen Wentzel, 12/31-Barbara Debiec, 1/7-Kay Stout, 1/14-Bob Bashore, 1/21-Betty Lou Franzen, 1/28-Ariana Sitlinger.

Lay Readers: 12/17-Kay Stout, 12/24(AM)-Cindy Hassler-Schappell, 12/24(PM)-Deacon Carol, 12/31-Bob Bashore & Mary Nace, 1/7-Betty Lou Franzen, 1/14-Ed Evans, 1/21-Jerry Jarsocrak, 1/28-Kelly Light.

Ushers: 12/17-Kurtz, 12/24(AM)-Given, 12/24(PM)-Lawry, 12/31-Shoumlisky, 1/7-Lawry, 1/14-Bashore, 1/21-Kurtz, 1/28-Given.

Sound System: 12/17(AM)-Scott Franzen, 12/17(PM)-Stephanie Kurtz, 12/24(AM)-Wendell Byler, 12/24(PM)-Stephanie Kurtz, 12/31-Wendall Byler, 1/7-Scott Franzen, 1/14-Caidyn Schaeffer, 1/21-Stephanie Kurtz, 1/27-Wendell Byler

Counters: 12/17-Rapley/Pirl-Roth, 12/24(AM)-Hummel/Jarsocrak, 12/24(PM)-Debiec/Rinehimer, 12/31-Hassler-Schappell, 1/7-Franzen, 1/14- Rapley/Pirl-Roth, 1/21- Hummel/Jarsocrak, 1/28-Debiec/Rinehimer.

Snacks:12/17-Agnes Schaeffer, 12/24-Bashore, 12/31-Kurtz, 1/7-TBD, 1/14-TBD, 1/21-Stefanie Steffey, 1/28-TBD.

Bulletin Assemblers: 12/13-Kathy Lawry, 12/20-Kathy Bashore, 12/27-Barb Debiec, 1/3-Jarsocrak, 1/10-Helen Hummel, 1/17-Sharon Black, 1/24-Marilyn Weatherholtz, 1/31-Amy Strunk

Children's Sunday School Teachers: 12/17-Betty Schaeffer, 1/7-Stefanie Steffey, 1/21-Kerri Searfoss

Newsletter Assembly: Kathy Lawry

Church Council Members

Glen Given, President 484-955-1780
Jerry Jarsocrak, Vice President 610-670-0954
Beth Byler 610-781-2161
Betty Lou Franzen 610-781-8132
Tacy Grippon 484-878-9345
Dawn Hickernell 717-507-3549
Helen Hummel 610-678-1377
Cindy Hassler-Schappell 610-451-6131
Harmony Wentzel 610-390-9986

Happy Birthday
Birthday Milestones in January

Mary Jane Evans will be 83. Happy Birthday Mary Jane.