

Trinity Tidings for February, 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



Hearts and Ashes

What an odd confluence of days this year as we begin the season of Lent. Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day are one and the same. I have been joking with others about the opposing emotions one must feel on these two days: happy and sad all at the same time . . .

And yet, that's not necessarily how it goes. For some, Valentine's Day is not a joyous occasion in which to express our feelings to loved ones. For those who are feeling abandoned and are yearning for companionship, Valentine's Day can often be a painful reminder of loneliness. Likewise, Ash Wednesday is not always a day of solemnity and sadness. For many, Ash Wednesday's call to repentance is a reminder of the joyful

presence of God's love and grace in our lives—a reminder that even in the broken frailty of our humanity we are blessed and forgiven.

We know that even as the cross of ashes is marked upon our foreheads, we are also marked with cross of Christ that was sealed upon our foreheads at our baptisms. In this we rejoice with gladness and thanksgiving.

And more. As the words, "You are dust, and to dust you shall return," wash over us, we are reminded of our own mortality and that of those whom we have loved and lost. Images of Christ's promise of everlasting life amid the reality of our finite existence on this earthly journey is a stark reminder that life always comes out of death.

God's heart surrounds us and keeps us. It always has, it does now, and it always will. That's what everlasting life is—the knowledge that our forever relationship with God can never be broken. And on the last day we will join the great high feast dining with those who have gone before us—that great cloud of witnesses. We are forever surrounded by those who love us. That's true love. And it is a love from which we can never be separated. As Marvin Gay and Tammy Terrell put it,

"Ain't no mountain high enough
Ain't no valley low enough
Ain't no river wide enough
To keep me from getting to you, babe . . ."

I can't not think of this love song every time I read the part in Paul's letter to the Romans that says, "[neither] height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:39 NRS). Perhaps that's God's Valentine to us—that we forever belong to the one who shaped us from the dust of the earth and breathed life into us. And even as we return to the dust of the earth, God will still hold us and love us.

So, Happy Valentine's Day Ashes, everyone. Jesus loves you.

Blessings,
Pastor Julie

Lenten Schedule for 2024

February 14, Wednesday:

12:30 Holy Communion and Imposition of Ashes, followed by lunch in the Social Hall
6:00 Soup and Study in the library
7:30 Holy Communion and Imposition of Ashes

February 21, Wednesday:

12:00 Ministerium worship at St. John's Hain's UCC with lunch
6:00 Soup and Study
7:00 Evening Prayer with Holy Communion

February 25, Sunday: First Communion Class #1 following worship

February 28, Wednesday:

12:00 Ministerium worship at St. Daniel's with lunch
6:00 Soup and Study
7:00 Evening Prayer with Holy Communion

March 3, Sunday: First Communion Class #2 following worship

March 6, Wednesday:

12:00 Ministerium worship at UCC of Robesonia with lunch
6:00 Soup and Study
7:00 Evening Prayer with Holy Communion

March 10, Sunday: Lenten Fair following worship

March 13, Wednesday:

12:00 Ministerium worship at Trinity Lutheran Robesonia with lunch
6:00 Soup and Study
7:00 Evening Prayer with Holy Communion

March 17, Sunday: First Communion Class #3 following worship

March 20, Wednesday:

12:00 Ministerium Worship at Trinity Lutheran Wernersville with lunch
6:00 Soup and Study
7:00 Evening Prayer with Holy Communion

March 24, Palm Sunday of the Passion: Holy Communion in the round, First Communion Class #4 following worship

March 25, Monday: 5:30 p.m. Easter Vigil Rehearsal for Faith Formation

March 28, Maundy Thursday: 7:30 Worship and First Communion with stripping of the altar

March 29, Good Friday: 7:30 Tenebrae service with Adoration of the Cross.

March 30, Saturday Easter Vigil

2:00 Faith Formation rehearsal with dinner
5:00 Easter Vigil begins outside with a bonfire

March 31, The Resurrection of Our Lord: 11:00 service of Holy Communion

There will be no 10:30 Holy Communion on Wednesday February 21 or March 20 as the ministerium has services at noon on those two days.

How are We Doing?
Trinity's Financial Summary through December

Average Weekly Giving in 2023: **\$3832.30**
Average Weekly Giving in 2022: **\$3350.91**
Average Weekly Attendance in 2023: **77**
Average Weekly Attendance in 2022: **58**
Total expenses to date in 2023: **\$201,891.79**
Total expenses to date in 2022: **\$189,374.39**
Year to date giving: **\$199,279.48**
Percentage of increase in giving from 2022 to 2023: **15%**
Percentage of Increase in expenses from 2022 to 2023: **7%**
Synod Mission Support to date for 2023—**\$15,016.36**, 78% of \$19,290.00 committed.
West Berks Mission Support to date for 2023—**\$600.00**, 100% 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.

Please note a change in the labeling of offering envelopes. What was once labeled "Maintenance and Repair," is now labeled, "Major Property Expense Fund". Hopefully, this clarifies any confusion as to how this fund is used. Its purpose is not for everyday maintenance but rather extraordinary building expenses such as a new furnace should the need arise.

Thank you for participating in the mission of Jesus Christ through your gifts to Trinity. How gifts may be received:

***Offering plate in the center aisle.**

***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.

Please remember in your prayers:

Members who are sick or recently hospitalized: Beverly James, Diane Klinger, Janice Lamm, Mike Renzo, the Stine Family, and Bob Schappell.

Members who are homebound or in care facilities: Mary DeLong, 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, Connor Long, 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.

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 February 25. We need Bulletin sponsors for Feb.14 (Ash Wednesday) & Feb.25. Please sign up on the appropriate chart in the narthex.**

Altar Flower Sponsors for February: 2/4-Betty Schaeffer in honor of her birthday, 2/11-Barbara Debiec in memory of her mother, Fern Ervin's Birthday, 2/18-Shoumlisky Family in honor of Petunia, 2/25-available.

Bulletin Sponsors for February: 2/4-Betty Schaeffer in honor of her birthday, 2/11- Barbara Debiec in memory of her mother, Fern Ervin's Birthday, 2/18-Pam Guigley, 2/25-available

Helpers for February

Altar Guild: Barbara Debiec

Communion Assistant: Harmony Wentzel-2/4 & 2/18, Kathy Lawry-2/11 & 2/25.

Acolytes: 2/4-Quentin Light, 2/11-Stefanie Steffey, 2/18-Tony Ludovici, 2/25-Kay Stout

Lay Readers: 2/4-Dawn Hickernell, 2/11-Kelly Light, 2/18-Charlotte Moyer, 2/25-Kerri Searfoss.

Ushers: 2/4-Lawry, 2/11-Bashore, 2/18-Kurtz, 2/25-Given.

Sound System: 2/4-Scott Franzen, 2/11-Caidyn Schaeffer, 2/14 (Ash Wednesday)-Scott Franzen, 2/18-Wendell Byler, 2/25-Stephanie Kurtz.

Counters: 2/4-Franzen, 2/22-Hassler-Schappell, 2/18-Rapley/Pirl-Roth, 2/25- Hummel/Jarsocrak.

Snacks: 2/4 Franzen, 2/11-Bashore, 2/18-Stefanie Steffey, 2/25-Byler.

Bulletin Assemblers: 2/7-Amy Strunk, 2/13-Hassler-Schappell, 2/21-Diane Shoumlisky, 2/28-Mary Young

Children's Sunday School Teachers: 2/4-Carol Yachnik, 2/18-Karen Houck

Newsletter Assembly: Kathy Lawry

Church Council Members

Bob Bashore, President 484-336-3638
Betty Lou Franzen, Vice President 610-781-8132
Beth Byler 610-781-2161
Dawn Hickernell 717-507-3549
Helen Hummel 610-678-1377
Kevin Kurtz 610-413-5240
Rick Lawry 610-670-1401
Cindy Hassler-Schappell 610-451-6131
Stefanie Steffey 484-721-1161

Happy Birthday

Birthday Milestones in February

Ruth Rush will be 86. Happy Birthday Ruth.

Church Council Highlights for February

- Elected Officers for the year. Bob Bashore-President, Betty Lou Franzen-Vice President, Wendell Byler-Treasurer, and Anne Marie Reinhimer-Secretary.
- Wendell reported on the Narthex Renovation project & bids and council approved the lower of the 2 bids. It will be brought to the congregation at a meeting following worship on 2/11.
- Approved Endowment budget for 2024.
- 2/18 is the deadline for all reports for the congregational meeting.
- Lenten Fair will be held on 3/10 following worship.
- The annual congregational meeting to receive and review all committee and task force reports plus approval of endowment budget for 2024 will be held on 3/17 following worship.
- A council retreat is planned for 5/11 from 9 AM to 2 PM.