

Trinity Tidings for March 2024

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

Reforming for the Future

I simply can't imagine what it must have been like to be a member of Trinity Lutheran Church in 1895. I would love to have been a fly on the wall listening to the small group of faithful believers meeting together for the first time as they dreamt and planned the construction of a building in which to hold worship services. Then in 1896 the building we know as Trinity Lutheran Church was raised up. There was no basement—that is Social Hall. Later, Trinity people dug out the “undercroft” by hand—stabilizing the church structure while digging out buckets full of dirt and rock.

Then in 1953 as the church community grew in size and ministry, an addition was added onto the main building that would house a church office and space for Christian Education. This was followed by another renovation in 1964 that bumped out the wall of the chancel area in the Nave to create a larger Sacristy, leveled out the theater floor, knocked out the stained-glass windows and replaced them with windows that tell the story of our faith, purchased a marble altar along with the then popular hammered aluminum railings and accompanying crosses, and vases. The baptismal font was enclosed in wood siding to present a more modern looking font, and the Narthex was reconfigured to create enough space to be used as a crying room. Even the dark wooden pews were swapped out for modern lighter colored cushioned pews.

In addition, a new kitchen was constructed, and the organ was moved to the balcony—both following ELC (Evangelical Lutheran Church) synod recommendations. A picture of the old Nave replete with organ pipes and windows in the chancel can be found in the Narthex.

But there was more. About 12 or so years ago Trinity took another leap of faith as they journeyed forth into another capital campaign that added another parking lot, put in air conditioning, renovated the organ, reconfigured the roof over the addition, and purchased 108/110 South Walnut Street.

Every one of these renovations furthered Trinity's ministry in ways that strengthened community, worship, hospitality, and Christian Education (we even started a preschool in the mid-80s!) and as a result supported the church's mission—that is—to tell the good news of Jesus Christ. Of course, these major renovations are only some of the building and ministry modifications that have been made over the last 127+ years.

But none of this is surprising. Lutherans have a proclivity for renovating, refurbishing, renewing, revamping, remodeling, and reconditioning, you know . . . reforming. It's in our DNA. The story of Martin Luther and the Reformation is ingrained in our hearts and minds. And yet, change can be difficult—it was difficult 500 years ago. But thanks be to God, it was the reforming church from so long ago that made us who we are today.

Even now—in this twenty-first century—we continue to live into that tradition of reformation. As we grow and evolve as a community of faithful believers, we are called to evaluate our ministry and make decisions on how we will move into the future. We must always be asking the question, how do we continue to strengthen in community, worship, hospitality, Christian Education, and relevance to the issues of this world? How does our faith inform how we navigate society and the future?

All of this is to say thank you to the people of Trinity for thinking into the future as we begin our narthex renovation. It may not have the grandeur of past capital projects, but it suits the ministry needs of a growing church in this place and time and into the future—or at least until future years and generations decide to renovate and reform once again.

Blessings, Pr. Julie

Lenten Schedule for March, 2024

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 & congregational meeting

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 March 20 as the ministerium has services at noon on that day.

How are We Doing?

Trinity's Financial Summary through January

Average Weekly Giving in 2024: **\$4,100.00**

Average Weekly Giving in 2023: **\$3,832.30**

Average Weekly Attendance in 2024: **65**

Average Weekly Attendance in 2023: **67**

Total expenses to date in 2024: **\$16,027,12**

Total expenses to date in 2023: **\$16,299.92**

Year to date giving: **\$16,399.96**

Percentage of increase in giving from 2023 to 2024: 11%

Percentage of Increase in expenses from 2023 to 2024: 0%

Synod Mission Support to date for 2024-\$1,243.32, 7% of \$17,100.00 committed.

West Berks Mission Support to date for 2024-**\$50.00**, 8% 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: Kathy Baver, Jocelyn Enck, Janice Lamm, 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: John Kurtz.

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

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.

Upcoming Events to put on your calendar

March 10-Lenten Fair following worship, lunch and crafts. Lunch is provided through a Thrivent action team grant.

March 17-Annual congregational meeting following worship to review reports and adopt 2024 Endowment budget.



Easter Plants/Flower sign up in the narthex. Cost is \$8.00 per plant.

One of our council goals was to use our facility for wider use in the community. The following is a thank you from Berks County Children and Youth Services for allowing them to have a conference here.

Trinity Lutheran Church. 2/20/24
 I thank you so much for allowing us to host our conference at your beautiful church. Thank you for your time. Family Group. - Marlene Lopez

Thanks to everyone who donated to the meal for Opportunity House. We appreciated your generosity.

STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL TASK FORCE -- What's this?

Time to get the Strawberry juices flowing to design, organize, and orchestrate the **June 8, 2024 Trinity Strawberry Festival**. Do you have some suggestions?? new ideas?? old ideas to revive??. We will listen, adapt, and move forward. Please contribute a little time to get us rolling. Monday March 11, 2024 at 7:30 pm in the library here at the church. Contact—BL Franzen 610-781-8132 or BLou-clue@comcast.net with questions or concerns.



Thrivent Choice Dollars

In 2023 Trinity received \$633.00 in Thrivent Choice Dollars. If you have Thrivent products you may be eligible to direct your money to Trinity. This is at no cost to you. You have until the end of March to do this for the previous calendar year. Any choice dollars directed after that will be for 2024. If you aren't sure how to do this, please see Deacon Carol or Pastor Julie.

This is in addition to Thrivent Grants. Thrivent grants are used to fund projects like our Advent and Lenten Fairs, Generosity Sunday Dinner, God's Work Our Hands meal, Strawberry Festival, Lenten Ministerium Luncheon, etc. We have received a minimum of \$2000 in grants last year.

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 Bulletin sponsors for 3/10, 3/17, 3/24, 3/28 (Maundy Thursday) & 3/29 (Good Friday). Please sign up on the appropriate chart in the narthex.**

Altar Flower Sponsors for March: 3/3-True Portalatin in honor of Trinity Lutheran Church & Pastor Julie, 3/10-Amy Strunk in celebration of the birthdays of Cody, Martin, and Shane's this month, 3/17-Scott & Betty Lou Franzen in memory of Lydia Beth, 3/24-Evans Family in honor of our children, 3/31-Terry & Connie Fritz in memory of our parents.

Bulletin Sponsors for March: 3/3-Evans Family in memory of family, 3/10, 3/17, 3/24, 3/28, & 3/29-available, 3/30-Amy Strunk in honor of Shane's Birthday today, 3/31-Terry & Connie Fritz in honor of their grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Helpers for March

Altar Guild: Anne Marie Rinehimer & Cheyenne Loring

Communion Assistant: 3/3 & 3/10-Betty Lou Franzen, 3/17 & 3/28 (Maundy Thursday)-Kay Stout, 3/24 & 3/30 (Easter Vigil)-Cindy Hassler Schappell, 3/24 & 3/31-Bob Bashore, 3/24-Deacon Carol

Acolytes: 3/3-Tedd Hickemell, 3/10-Caidyn Schaeffer, 3/17-Owen Wentzel, 3/24-Sam Shoumlisky, 3/31-Alexis Shoumlisky.

Lay Readers: 3/3-Kathy Lawry, 3/10-Anne Marie Rinehimer, 3/17-Mary Nace, 3/24-Kelly and Quentin Light, 3/28 (Maundy Thursday)-Kay Stout, 3/31-Betty Lou Franzen.

Ushers: 3/3-Lawry, 3/10-Bashore, 3/17-Kurtz, 3/24-Given, 3/31-Shoumlisky.

Sound System: 3/3-Scott Franzen, 3/10-Caidyn Schaeffer, 3/17-Wendell Byler 3/20 (Wednesday Noon)-Scott Franzen, 3/24- Stephanie Kurtz, 3/28 (Maundy Thursday)-Wendell Byler, 3/29 (Good Friday)-Scott Franzen, 3/30 (Easter Vigil)-Stephanie Kurtz, 3/31-Scott Franzen.

Counters: 3/3-Debiec/Rinehimer, 3/10-Franzen, 3/17-Hassler-Schappell, 3/24-Rapley/Pirl-Roth, 3/31-Hummel/Jarsocrak

Snacks: 3/3-Sharon Black, 3/10-Harmony Wentzel, 3/17-Franzens, 3/24-open, 3/31-open.

Bulletin Assemblers: 3/6-Mary Jane Evans, 3/13-Tony Ludovici, 3/20-June Rapley, 3/27-Connie Fritz and Laura Krick.

Children's Sunday School Teachers: 3/3-Kathy Bashore, 3/17-Kelly Light.

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

Church Council Highlights for February

- Insurance Deductible raised to \$5000.00 by our carrier. This is standard for insurance on churches today.
- Our lease on the main copier is expiring. We voted to get a new one but the cost will be about \$100 less per month.
- Need District assembly delegates and synod delegates.
- 2/18 is the deadline for all reports for the congregational meeting.
- On 3/4 Bishop and staff will be meeting with rostered leaders from the area at our church from 2-4 PM, and with lay leaders from the area from 6-8 PM.
- Renewed our Emergency Disaster Relocation Agreement with Conrad Weiser East Elementary.
- Received a total of \$633.00 in Thrivent Choice Dollars in 2023. This money is given to Preschool per council direction.