

Trinity Tidings for April 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

Alleluia, Christ is Risen!

The Psalmist writes,

- ¹ Praise the LORD! How good it is to sing praises to our God;
for he is gracious, and a song of praise is fitting.
- ² The LORD builds up Jerusalem; he gathers the outcasts of Israel.
- ³ He heals the brokenhearted, and binds up their wounds.
- ⁴ He determines the number of the stars; he gives to all of them their names.
- ⁵ Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure.
- ⁶ The LORD lifts up the downtrodden; he casts the wicked to the ground.
- ⁷ Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving; make melody to our God on the lyre.
- ⁸ He covers the heavens with clouds, prepares rain for the earth, makes grass grow on the hills.
- ⁹ He gives to the animals their food, and to the young ravens when they cry.
- ¹⁰ His delight is not in the strength of the horse, nor his pleasure in the speed of a runner;
- ¹¹ but the LORD takes pleasure in those who fear him, in those who hope in his steadfast love.
- ¹² Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem! Praise your God, O Zion! (Ps. 147:1-12 NRS)



Praise God, He is risen, indeed! On Easter morning the familiar words that Christ is risen ring out in praise. We are grateful for all God has done for us. And so we praise God in word, song, and sacrament! The cross is empty, yet we are full—full of the richness of new life. This is what we celebrate with thanksgiving every time we come together and share in the meal of bread and wine and hear the splash of water over the heads of the newly baptized.

To the left is one of my favorite icons. It is famously titled, “The Harrowing of Hell.” In it, the resurrected Christ is yanking Adam and Eve out of the depths of hell. Though the picture is small, perhaps you can see that Christ does not have Adam and Eve by the hands. Rather he has them by the wrists. I am reminded of all those times as a young mother I needed my little ones to come with me—now!—and I grabbed their wrists to bring them to safety or away from trouble. I did it, because in those moments, I knew they could not help themselves. Likewise, Christ knows Adam and Eve—you

and me—cannot help *ourselves*. It is only through God’s good grace that comes to us from the crucified and risen Christ that we can break free from our brokenness that holds us in bondage and leaves us for dead.

And so, how good it is to sing praises to the Lord. Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Peace and grace to all as we sing Alleluias throughout this Easter season.

Blessings,
Pastor Julie

Sunday Flowers



How many of you know that on some Sundays the flowers in the chancel area are artificial? They are so wonderful, you would never know it, right? Thank you to Helen Hummel who created these beautiful seasonal designs over the last few years. We use them on those Sundays when there are no flower sponsors signed up. So, thank you to all who have sponsored flowers over the past months and years.

Unfortunately, the cost of flowers has risen to the cost of \$40.00. Fortunately, there are no delivery costs as Barbara Debiec places the orders, picks them up from Royer's herself, and delivers them to church on her own. Thank you Barbara! I'll bet you didn't know how much work goes into something as simple as Sunday morning flowers!

But there is more we can do to lessen costs and labor. Moving forward we would like to give sponsors an opportunity to provide their own flowers. If you choose, *you* may decide how you want to sponsor flowers. There are any number of ways to do that: cut your own when appropriate, provide potted plants or flowers like mums, poinsettias, lilies, etc. . . . You are free to design your own arrangements. As always you may take your arrangements home with you after worship. Or please feel free to purchase them the traditional way: simply sign up, put \$40 in an envelope, and place it in the offering plate.

Most importantly, you must indicate on the flower sign up if you are going to provide flowers yourself so Barbara knows not to order them from Royer's.

So be inspired to share a little bit of God's good creation in various and creative ways.



Pastoral Care

As you know Pastoral Care is an important part of ministry. And as Trinity grows, we want to be sure everyone receives the care they need. So here is a list of things to know about how to best receive the spiritual care you need.

- Tell the Pastor if you need prayer, a listening ear, or other services.
- Only Reading Hospital notifies pastors that someone has been admitted—and only if they have permission to do so. Sometimes charts are flagged in such a way that congregational information cannot be released. So even if the pastor calls and asks if any of their people are there, spiritual care personnel can't tell you. Plus, notifications (when they do happen) only happen Monday through Friday and *if* the Spiritual Care Administrative Assistant is there to send it. In addition, hospital stays are often very, very short. So, if you want Pastor to know you are in the hospital, and/or want a visit, tell her. If you are in the Emergency Department and need immediate pastoral care, someone must call Pastor directly. Someone from hospital chaplaincy can make that call as well. In addition, hospital chaplaincy can also provide needed spiritual care. (I trained there myself.)

- If you are going to have a procedure, surgery, etc . . . and want prayer, a visit, etc . . . let Pastor know.
- Home visits for non-homebound people are rare simply because of schedules, privacy/personal needs, and the availability of alternate modes of communication: phone, text, and e-mail. In-office visits seem to be more popular as it is a neutral space. But if you would like Pastor to visit you at home, ask.
- Know that as pastor, I can listen, pray, and spiritually guide. I can provide pre-marital counseling, but am not a marriage counselor. I can provide a listening ear and pray with people, but I am not a therapist. I *can* provide names and places for services.
- If you are in spiritual crisis, or have theological or spiritual questions, come see me, I've got you!
- And finally, never, ever think pastor is too busy to spend time with you. Together we will find the time.

Peace,
Pastor Julie

Homebound Needs

As long as we're talking about Pastoral Care, a component of Pastoral Care is visiting our homebound. Quarterly home communion visits are the standard, but I find people need more. And in these cases, they don't need the pastor. They need companionship and conversation with friends and family. In general, homebound people miss their church families and the community they used to regularly be a part of. This is where you come in. Please take time to reach out to our homebound whether by phone or in person. A phone call can be huge. A card, note, or letter (sent the old-fashioned way) is invaluable. Our homebound are: Carolyn Kurtz, Betty Reber, Dinae Klinger, Sharon Gring, Mary DeLong, Pat Sickles, Kay Weatherholtz, and Joan Kava. Please see Pastor Julie or Deacon Carol for addresses and phone numbers.

FROM FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Thank you for your weekly donation of snacks for the morning fellowship. The committee has a new request: If you are bringing drinks please plan when fellowship time is over to take the drinks home with you. We appreciate your willingness to leave the drinks but we seem to have so many partial containers left in several refrigerators. Please consider a pitcher of water (no need to buy drinks) if that is more convenient for you.

Thanks again.

Student Loan grants are available this year from the Endowment Fund. Applications are available from Pam Moyer @ 610-670-5896 or the church office. Once an application is completed please return it to Pam Moyer's mail slot or the church office. Applications must be received by June 1st. Thank you.

Pedals, Pipes, and Pizza

Children and youth are invited to a Pedals Pipes and Pizza event on Saturday April 13th 9:00AM - 12:30PM. This event will be held at Trinity!

WHAT IS PEDALS, PIPES, & PIZZA! This is a program designed by the American Guild of Organists to introduce young people to the king of instruments. Young people ages 5 and up are invited to attend. Participants will go behind the scenes to discover the inner workings of the pipe organ and then be given a chance to try their hand at playing the instrument. Students who have had piano lessons are encouraged to bring along a favorite piece of music to try on the organ, but no prior musical experience is required. Our PP&P event will also include Orgelkids! Orgelkids is a real, portable pipe organ that you build and play. It

will capture, excite and engage your imagination! In less than an hour, you will assemble almost 200 individual pieces into a beautiful instrument, then make beautiful music. You'll also learn about science and technology, woodworking and teamwork. And of course, you will have fun! The event concludes with a pizza lunch. Members of the Reading Chapter of the American Guild of Organists will be leading this event along with Pete Gerger, Organ Builder and Vince M. Ryan, Orgelkids.

There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex. Deadline to register is Sunday 4/7. Please see Carla for more information.

Please remember in your prayers:

Members who are sick or recently hospitalized: Janice Lamm.

Members who are homebound or in care facilities: Mary DeLong, Sharon Gring, Joan Kava, Diane Klinger, Bob Kohler, Carolyn Kurtz, Betty Reber, David Schwalm, Pat Sickles, and Kay Weatherholtz.

The Military: John Kurtz.

Family and Friends: Karen, Barry Chapman, Arline G, Delores Hickernell, Shirley Kerchner, 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.

How are We Doing?

Trinity's Financial Summary through February

Average Weekly Giving in 2024: **\$3907.47**

Average Weekly Giving in 2023: **\$3,483.73**

Average Weekly Attendance in 2024: **70**

Average Weekly Attendance in 2023: **80**

Total expenses to date in 2024: **\$32,593.16**

Total expenses to date in 2023: **\$32,782.33**

Year to date giving: **\$31,259.76**

Percentage of increase in giving from 2023 to 2024: 9%

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

Synod Mission Support to date for 2024-\$2,668.32, 16% of \$17,100.00 committed.

West Berks Mission Support to date for 2024-**\$100.00**, 17% 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.

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 4/14 & 4/21. Please sign up on the appropriate chart in the narthex.**

Altar Flower Sponsors for April 4/7-Barbara Debiec in honor of Jim's 33rd birthday, 4/14-Bruce Osterholt in honor of Pastor Julie, 4/21-Carol Koch in memory of her husband, Bob, 4/28-Bob & Kathy Bashore in honor of their 40th wedding anniversary.

Bulletin Sponsors for April: 4/7-Cindy Hassler-Schappell in memory of Heath's 38th birthday, 4/14 & 4/21-available, 4/28-Betty Schaeffer in honor of Harmony Wentzel's birthday.

Helpers for April

Altar Guild: Barbara Debiec & Sharon Black

Communion Assistant: 4/7-Barbara Debiec, 4/14-Kevin Kurtz, 4/21 & 4/28-Jerry Jarsocrak

Acolytes: 4/7-Bob Bashore, 4/14-Barb Debiec, 4/21-Betty Lou Franzen, 4/28-Arianna Sitlinger

Lay Readers: 4/7-Girl Scouts, 4/14-Elaine Briner, 4/21-Mary Nace, 4/28-Ed Evans.

Ushers: 4/7-Lawry, 4/14-Bashore, 4/21-Kurtz, 4/28-Given.

Sound System: TBD

Counters: 4/7-Debiec/Rinehimer, 4/14-Franzen, 4/21-Hassler-Schappell, 4/28-Rapley/Pirl-Roth.

Snacks: 4/7-Girl Scouts, 4/14-Helen Hummel, 4/21-Bashore, 4/28-available.

Bulletin Assemblers: 4/3-Kathy Bashore, 4/10-Barb Debiec, 4/17-Jarsocraks, 4/24-Helen Hummel, 5/1-Kathy Lawry.

Children's Sunday School Teachers: 4/14-Harmony Wentzel, 4/28-Lori Shoumlisky.

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

- Researching what is needed to obtain an AED Defibrillator for the church
- New copier should be here sometime in April. Our monthly lease costs should be \$100.00 less per month.
- Need West Berks Mission District assembly delegates and synod delegates.
- Received \$235.00 in Thrivent Choice Dollars in February. This money is given to Preschool per council direction.
- There will be 3 First Communion and 3 Baptisms during Holy Week/Easter Sunday. 3 New members will be joining Trinity on 4/21.

Happy Birthday

Birthday Milestones in April

Carolyn Kurtz will be 95. Happy Birthday Carolyn.