

Trinity Tidings for Mid December, 2024 thru January, 2025

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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



⁴⁶ And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord,
⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
⁴⁸ for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.
⁵⁰ His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.
⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.
⁵² He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly;
⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.
⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,
⁵⁵ according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants
forever."
(Lk. 1:46-55 NRS)

These are the words of sweet Mary, mother of Jesus. She sings this song of justice as she stands alongside her cousin, Elizabeth, both having become pregnant in impossible ways. "The Mighty One has done great things for me," Mary proclaims. It is in this time of Advent that we most often remember Mary's prophetic words of justice—words that come tumbling out as John the Baptizer prepares the way of the Lord, and we hear of beginnings and endings, and wait in hope that Jesus will come again. Then somewhere in all of this we retell the story of the birth of the baby Jesus even as we wait for the end of time.

And yet, this talk of end times and Jesus coming again brings with it an element of fear. I know, I know, we don't like to think about the second coming. For many, that kind of talk can bring scary stories of horseman, natural disaster, world destruction, and who knows what all. And it's true there are times when our world feels like a scary place full of violence and destruction that is getting worse every day. We ask ourselves if these things are "The Signs." But, it's hard to tell. Scripture isn't a hundred percent clear on that. For 2000 years people have been waiting and waiting for Jesus to come back and people have been trying to identify "The Signs" for as long.

And though it seems like our society is rapidly deteriorating—you know, the signs are happening right now! In truth, “The Signs” aren’t as dire as you’d think. Pew Research shows the crime rate in the United States is the lowest it has been since the early 1990’s. Still, we look around and see wars in Ukraine and Gaza, and the violence that often erupts in our schools. (Sadly, gun violence is the leading cause of death among our children and youth surpassing car accidents in 2022.)

And more. Natural disasters like hurricanes, flooding, and fires are becoming more frequent, intense, and unexpected. They make it feel like we’re seeing “The Signs,” as well. But are they? I’m pretty sure Jesus would say all these things must happen—in other words—these are the problems that happen in a human world where humans are flawed individuals who often make poor choices that can affect people in catastrophic ways.

I suppose I’m doing a pretty good job of making you feel overwhelmed and depressed. But here’s the truth: though these “things” are the rough, scary, sad parts of life, there is good news. If the bad stuff that happens in this world are of our own making, then we can choose to unmake them, too.

The good news is knowing that we are called through our baptisms and the promise of the risen Christ to change it all. We are called to make good choices, to make a positive difference in our communities, our state—even our nation.

We are called to be bearers of the good news of Jesus Christ through our words and actions. It can be something as small as calling someone to simply see how they’re doing, to bigger things like visiting our state capitol to advocate for those in need. By living into our baptismal calling we can turn what feels like the end of time into new beginnings that will lift up the lowly, fill the hungry with good things, and send the rich away empty. We have the power to make good choices concerning how we live and how we treat one another. And Christ—the Alpha and Omega—Beginning and End—Jesus Christ—Emmanuel—is with us always from beginning to end.

Let us choose to act in love and in ways that extend grace to those who need it. Let us choose to bear the light of Christ into the world. Let us choose to hear Mary’s prophetic words and play a part in filling the hungry with good things and lifting up the lowly. May this time of Advent and Christmas celebration be a blessing to you.

Peace,
Pastor Julie



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

Church Council Highlights for November

- The church will be decorated for Christmas on 12/8.
- Congregational Meeting to approve 2025 budget and elect new council members (2) will be on 12/15 following worship.
- Budget our for review in narthex on 12/1 plus eblasted to everyone.
- Narthex: Inspected and 2 minor violations which will be corrected and we will begin to use.
- Long Range planning team met.



Good Grief

Whether years ago, or most recently, if you or someone you know is experiencing the loneliness and pain of the loss of a loved one, please consider joining us at Trinity Lutheran Church, Wernersville for “Good Grief”

**Mondays from 6 to 7:30 p.m. beginning
January 13.**

We will be using the *Good Grief* Companion Book written by Granger E. Westberg.

This 10-session gathering will discuss the following topics:

1. Shock
2. Expressing Emotion
3. Depression and Loneliness
4. Physical Symptoms
5. Panic
6. Guilt
7. Anger and Resentment
8. Resisting Returning to Regular Activities
9. Hope
10. Affirming Reality

Sign up in the Narthex



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, Betty Lou Franzen, Karen Houck, Kurtz Family, Stefanie Steffey & Cheyenne Loring, and Harmony Wentzel & Betty Schaeffer.

Thank you to everyone who helped to decorate the church for Advent and Christmas-Anne Marie Rinehimer, Barbara Debiec, our Faith Formation Class, and Helen Hummel for helping with the pew decorations and Roy Kline for setting up the outdoor manger.

Thanks to all who contributed to the meal for Opportunity House on December 5. With your help we were able to provide a holiday meal for those in need. They appreciate our efforts.

The Op House Committee

Please remember in your prayers:

Members who are sick or recently hospitalized: Barbara Correll, Lynda Jarsocrak, Cindy Hassler-Schappell.

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

The Military: John Kurtz (deployed to South Korea).

Family and Friends: Rich Campbell, Arline G, Delores Hickernell, Shirley Kerchner, Karen Kline, Mary Long, Karen, Linda, Susan and Karl.

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 2024: **\$3,511.96**

Average Weekly Giving in 2023: **\$3,557.87**

Average Weekly Attendance in 2024: **72**

Average Weekly Attendance in 2023: **72**

Total expenses to date in 2024: **\$157,403.98**

Total expenses to date in 2023: **\$152,493.49**

Year to date giving: **\$151,014.20**

Percentage of decrease in giving from 2023 to 2024: 4%

Percentage of increase in expenses from 2023 to 2024: 3%

Synod Mission Support to date for 2024-\$14067.32, 82% of \$17,100.00 committed.

West Berks Mission Support to date for 2024-\$500, 83% 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. So, if you are able, please consider how you might give in the weeks ahead. **Note:" Major Property Expense Fund" is for large, future, expenses.**

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 \$45.00. The cost of sponsoring the bulletins is \$15.00. 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. You may also request we use our own artificial flowers and donate the \$45 to the general fund. Or please feel free to purchase them the traditional way: simply sign up, put \$45 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.**

We need Altar Flower and Bulletin Sponsors for December 29 and all of January. Please sign up on the appropriate chart in the narthex.

Altar Flower Sponsors for mid December thru 12/24: 12/15-Shoumlisky family in honor of Alexis' birthday, 12/22 & 12/25-Anne Marie Rinehimer in memory of Mae & George Oxenreider.

Bulletin Sponsors for mid December thru 12/24: 12/15-Kay Hassler in honor of her great grandchildren, 12/22-Kay Hassler in honor of her grandchildren, 12/24-Carol Yachnik in memory of her son-in-law, Michael Weiler, Sr.

Helpers for December/January

Altar Guild: Anne Marie Rinehimer & Cheyenne Loring (December), Sharon Black (January)

Communion Assistant: Barbara Debiec-12/22, Bob Bashore- 12/24, Dawn Hickernell-1/5 & 1/12, Alexis Shoumlisky-1/19, Jerry Jarsocrak-1/26.

Acolytes: 12/22-Kay Stout, 12/24-Alexis & Sam Shoumlisky, Caidyn Schaeffer, & Owen Wentzel, 12/29-Barbara Debiec, 1/5-Ariana Sitlinger, 1/12-Owen Wentzel, 1/19-Caidyn Schaeffer, 1/26-Tedd Hickernell.

Lay Readers: 12/22-Cheyenne Loring, 12/24-Deacon Carol, 12/31- Beth Byler, 1/5-Bob Bashore, 1/12-Stefanie Steffey, 1/19-Kathy Lawry, 1/26-Caidyn Schaeffer.

Ushers: 12/22- Given, 12/24-Lawry, 12/29-Shoumlisky, 1/5-Lawry, 1/12-Bashore, 1/19-Kurtz, 1/26-Given.

Sound System: 12/22-Caidyn Schaeffer, 12/24-Stephanie Kurtz, 12/29-Wendell Byler, 1/5-Stephanie Kurtz, 1/12-Scott Franzen, 1/19-Caidyn Schaeffer, 1/26-Wendell Byler

Counters: 12/22-Hassler-Schappell, 12/24-Rapley/Pirl-Roth, 12/29- Hummel/Jarsocrak, 1/5-Debiec/Rinehimer, 1/12-Franzens, 1/19 Hassler-Schappell, 1/26-Rapley/Pirl-Roth.

Snacks:12/22-Bashores, 12/29-Byler, 1/5-TBD, 1/12- Stefanie Steffey, 1/19-TBD, 1/26-TBD.

Bulletin Assemblers: 12/18-Sharon Black & Marilyn Weatherholtz, 12/23-Betty Schaeffer, 1/8-Amy Strunk, 1/15-Diane Shoumlisky, 1/22-Kay Hassler, 1/29-Mary Young

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 Stefanie Steffey 484-721-1161
Cindy Hassler-Schappell 610-451-6131

Happy Birthday

Birthday Milestones from Mid December thru January

Charlotte Moyer will be 86. Mary Jane Evans will be 84. Happy Birthday to both of you.