

From our Priest-in-Charge

VOLUME, 2

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Well, I am happy to report that I made it thru Christmas, my move to the rectory and my eye surgery.

The Greening of the Church went well, plenty of people helped and the work was done in record time. It looked beautiful! Barbara, the Sunday school staff, Margaret G. and the children did a great job on the pageant. It was a delightful Service of the Word and culminated with the children pasting the stars they had on their costumes to the wall over the crèche as a symbol of their offering themselves to watch over and protect Jesus.

I thought I was taking a chance when I invited all the little ones to join me around the altar for the Eucharist but they were attentive and seemed entranced. I now know that Fr Bob has done this with them previously. I want to talk to them about what they experienced during both parts of that Christmas Eve Service. I was told that adults would be rushing out afterwards to get to their homes but in fact, members stayed, talked, ate (all of the sandwiches and other platters disappeared) and in general seemed buoyed up by their celebration of the service.

As for other business of our community. In our last newsletter I talked about spreading the work of the ministries of the church and some changes that will be coming because of members moving or changes in their lives or the fact that after many years of a particular ministry it is just time. Some of this shifting of responsibility started with the Eucharistic Visitors and the Shepherds. We now have 5 new volunteers who feel called to visit with our homebound members and help them be connected to Trinity. There already is a vibrant Worship Committee. We need:

- an active Buildings and Grounds Committee and will be recruiting for that and for the Hospitality committee. The vestry suggests that hospitality needs to be clearly defined and we will talk about separating coffee hours from other major food events like Christmas Eve, the Christmas sale, Ash Wednesday, Easter, Baptisms and the Commission on Ministry etc.
- I would love to have an Adult Education Committee.
- We also need to do some fund raising. As part of that, Cathy S. will be selling the used books we have on a continual basis. She will rotate the books from downstairs into the two bookcases in the parish hall. Our budget is tight and we need a fund raising committee.

These are the first areas we are organizing so the weight of the work does not fall on one person and so all of us have opportunity to find and exercise our ministry to each other and Trinity.

When I was interviewed by the Vestry, they made it clear they want to develop more of a connection to the Pocono Mountains community. I hope I made it clear that I can assist with that BUT I am an outsider and most of that has to be done by an insider, that is the members of the Church. To help surface our existing connections, we will be handing out a survey at the annual meeting and through e-mail to find out what kinds of relationships members already have with Mt Pocono and its surrounds: its churches, social services, business and government. In addition, it asks what attracted you to Trinity, what changes would you work for, and what interest is there in Adult Christian Education and at what times. I intend to have a Lenten series. The timing will depend on the feedback from the surveys. These surveys will be seen only by me and will be kept confidential. Please fill them out and return them. Your input is necessary for us to move faithfully forward.

I receive a monthly bulletin from the Episcopal seminary in California. This month they have articles on global warming and their new solar system. I will post the bulletin called Crossings in the bulletin board outside my office, read it if you are interested. In addition Moravian College is offering some lectures. I will post that bulletin also.

We are now living in what is called ordinary time in the Church. Lent will be upon us soon but for now we can take a breather and enjoy our liturgical readings from Isaiah, Micah, First Corinthians and Matthew.

I am looking forward to our 2nd annual meeting and getting to know you more and all of us growing together into our call and calls from the Holy Spirit.

Susan

Words from the Senior Warden

Why do you come to church? What is it that motivates you to get up Sunday mornings and travel to Church especially on cold snowy mornings? I suppose that we each have a somewhat different answer to those questions. My guess is that Worship, God, Jesus, and fellowship would be threaded through most of the answers. But these days I suppose the more relevant question for many people is why don't you go to church? I suspect that we church goers may be in the minority!

All the data, trends, behavioral patterns point toward a decline in church attendance. Indeed, we at Trinity have experienced a decline in our membership. New members have not replaced the losses due to attrition from deaths, moves or other family priorities. This is a mega trend that has had the greatest impact on the temporal side of our Church lives.

As a Church family, we have struggled with this issue. 2016 was a transition year as we attempted to find a formula that would allow us to live within our means and have a sustainable budget that would support our all our programs, bring back programs (i.e. bible study), support our homebound members and build within the community.

I am pleased to report that, as discussed at the Parish meeting last Sunday, we did it! We finished 2016 with our first balanced budget in years. Hurray!!!

And, the Vestry approved the 2017 budget which also anticipates a small surplus to the bottom line!! For the first time in several years we saw a net increase in pledges.

A call for your Time & Talent

The Vestry would like to convene a *Fund-Raising Committee* with the goal of brainstorming ideas for enhancing existing programs (Book Sale & Bazaar) and or new ideas! Separately, we will look for chair people for individual programs. The idea is to organize it so that many hands will make for light work.

Hospitality leadership. Later this year when John & Grace move south, we need help here too. There are many dimensions to Hospitality with John & Grace of skillfully taken care of almost everything. But here too these functions can be broken up into their own separate and less overwhelming activities. These include:

- Coffee hour after Sunday Services
- COM meeting luncheons
- Baptisms
- Easter
- Ash Wednesday Soup Supper (Jan & Carol will continue)
- Annual Church Picnic
- Food at the Bazaar
- Christmas Eve
- Parish Meetings

A little help from many people makes the tasks less onerous, more enjoyable and benefits us all. Will you help? It may become just another reason to come to church!!!

Peter Gonze

Trinity Book Nook

Well, it's here. The cold weather season. The perfect time to snuggle in and do some serious reading. And if you're looking for some new reading material, I've got a deal for you! Trinity Book Nook, located in the parish hall, is an ongoing book sale! Yes, we'll still have our giant annual sale in the spring, but this is a way to expand that event.

A big "Thank You" to Bill and Kathy Herling for donating the bookcase. We've also had an offer of a larger bookcase, so a bigger book selection is coming. The collection will be refreshed periodically so check it out!

Read anything lately that you're really excited about? Want to share that with others? I invite you to do so! Write a short summary and email it to me (csiglin1@gmail.com) for publication in the newsletter.

Currently I'm reading "*The Secret Chord*" by Geraldine Brooks. Brooks is a Pulitzer Prize winning author, her research is extensive, her prose beautiful. *The Secret Chord* is a reinterpretation of the well known episodes in the life of David. It was inspired by biblical references to the lost book of Nathan and tells the story of David's life through the eyes of the courtier who both counseled and admonished him. It's really a saga of faith, desire, family and ambition. I'm enjoying it! Happy reading!

Cathy Siglin

Birthdays & Anniversaries



February Birthdays

6 Deanne Vincent
11 Vernon Yeich
14 Penny Clark
17 Robert Gower, Jr.
19 Nigel VanGronigen
28 Marie Milone



February Anniversaries

O God, our times are in your hand: Look with favor, we pray, on your servants as they begin another year. Grant that they may grow in wisdom and grace, and strengthen their trust in your goodness all the days of their life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen*

February Calendar of Events

Feb. 1 - Trinity at Food Pantry, 8:30 a.m. - Noon

Feb. 12 - Vestry Meeting, 11:30 a.m., Library

Feb. 14 - Worship Committee Meeting, 9:45 a.m., Library
Shepherd's Meeting, 11:30 a.m., Library

Feb. 17 - Newsletter Deadline for Information

Feb. 18 - Popcorn & Movie Night, 5:00 p.m., Library Movie of the Month "Room"

Feb. 19 - 26 - Family Promise Host Week

Feb. 24 - Newsletter Mailing

Food Pantry News

Merry Christmas and Happy and Healthy New Year 2017 Trinity Newsletter

As of today we have served 288 families that include 20 new registered families. They are comprised of 481 Adults, 261 Children and 136 Seniors making the number of people served 878. Donations were received from the Pocono Mountain School District and Operation Santa Claus Tobyhanna Army Depot, Wal-Mart Distribution Center as well as our core founding Churches. I always have those fears that more will come than we can feed yet even as the numbers swell so to the donations and no one leaves empty handed A true Christmas miracle.

If you feel like you need a place to make you forget the long cold Winter please come volunteer you get 2 chances the First Wednesday and First Saturday starting in January. Thank you to all you helpers out there you know who you are and this year I have had to call upon many of you to help me in our families hour of need and you are priceless. Thank you Trinity you are the best. Rest assured we have made a difference in so many families . But one thing I will suggest please add the Pantry in your prayers if you have not that is a power that is capable of wonders .

God's blessings in this holy season.

Lorraine Naiko

Our Prayers have been requested for:

Alex Backora

Mary Banzhof

Randy Criste-Troutman

Victoria Forstein

Wendell & Jutta Moser

Jim Rawson

Fr. Charles Rice

Lois Rothrock

Jennifer Salmon

Ellie Schenck

Katie Scully

Heather

Heavenly Father, giver of life and health: Comfort and relieve your sick servants, and give your power of healing to those who minister to their needs, that those for whom our prayers are offered may be strengthened in their weakness and have confidence in your loving care; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen*