

TRINITY NEWS

December, 2006

TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH

MT. POCONO PA

Mission Statement: Share God's unconditional love with everyone.

When in our music God is glorified...

So begins one of the most expressive hymns about our liturgy in the Hymnal 1982. It resounds through my heart and mind as we plan and prepare for Advent and Christmastide here at Trinity. And so I want to take this opportunity to extol the work of our musicians. Under the professional and gentle leadership of Virginia Parry, our organist and choirmaster, the music at this little church in the woods is exceptional.

What a blessing it is to have a choir that has grown beyond the space of the choir loft! Not only that, but the three newest members of the choir are young people - teenagers! That is fantastic! So we need to pray and dream about that space. I have asked Virginia and others to meet with me to think together about how we might reconfigure the area. It will be a challenge to do that and honor the character of this historical building. As we look at such things we must learn to balance that reality with the centrality of worshipping God. There is an old saying in liturgical circles: "The architecture wins." Nonetheless, we need to be open to possibilities as we seek to grow our worship. I doubt that those who sat on the porch in the late 19th century and had a vision for this parish would expect us to do any less.

Not only is our choir growing in numbers, but it is also growing in repertoire. We all have been blessed by that. There is much musical expertise and experience among those who lead us in our music. There is also much dedication to their ministry and to this parish. I am profoundly grateful for that. Our choristers won't toot their own horn, but if you want to know what they have done to prepare them for their ministry among us, please ask them.

On the three Wednesday evenings of Advent, we will have the glorious opportunity of sharing Evensong. This is one of the ancient daily offices of the church, and when it is sung we are transported back to our roots in the Church of England. We will begin at 6:15 in the church. The church will be in semi-darkness, and gradually the lights will be lit. The readings, the prayers, and the music will fill our hearts and soar to heaven. After the service, a simple supper will be shared by all, and we will conclude with some reflection on the daily office. Do plan to participate. This is an exceptional opportunity.

Elsewhere in this newsletter you will find the details for the Service of Lessons and Carols on the first Sunday after Christmas, December 31, 2006. This service comes to us from the tradition of King's College in England. It is found in our Book of Occasional Services. The Ministry of the Word for that Holy Eucharist centers on readings from Scripture and excellent music of the season. From time to time people say that they did not know what was meant by a "Service of Lessons and Carols." I hope that the information in this newsletter will begin to answer that question. I also know that another thing that is meant is hours of work by our musicians in preparation. It is joyful work. They are filled with holy fire for their ministry. And of course it means that we will hear and sing wonderful music dedicated to the Incarnation of God.

That, after all, is what the season is about. We have many ways of telling the story, a story that must be told over and over and over. It is the story of God becoming one of us. That in itself overwhelms me. And with it, with The Story, come all of the implications of the life of the man who was God Incarnate on this earth, the one we declare to be our Lord and Savior, Jesus, the carpenter from Nazareth.

Rejoice, beloved, Rejoice!

Ginny+



DECEMBER, 2006/JANUARY, 2007

- December 1 - Newsletter Mailing
- December 2 - 10am-4pm Christmas Bazaar, Parish Hall
- December 2, 9, 16 - 9-11:30am Confirmation & Inquirer's Class, Library
- December 3, 10, 17 - 11:30am Pageant Rehearsal, Church
- December 6 - 8:30am-12:30pm Trinity at Food Pantry
- December 4, 11, 18 - 7pm Yoga, Parish Hall
- December 12 - 7pm Vestry, Library
- December 24 - 8am & 10am Advent IV Holy Eucharist
7pm Telling the story of the Incarnation with Carols & Holy Eucharist**
- December 25 - 10am Holy Eucharist**
- December 25-January 1 Office Closed Christmas Holiday
- December 29 - Newsletter Deadline
- December 31 - 10am Lessons & Carols
- January 5 - Newsletter Mailing
- January 6, 13, 20, 27 - 9-11am Confirmation & Inquirer's Class, Library
- January 7 - 11:30am Epiphany Dinner, Parish Hall
- January 8, 15, 22, 29 - 7pm Yoga, Parish Hall
- January 9 - 7pm Vestry, Library
- January 18 - 7pm Prayer Beading, Library
- January 19 - Newsletter Deadline
- January 26 - Newsletter Mailing
- February 2 - 7pm Bishop Paul's Visit to Trinity**

DECEMBER CELEBRATIONS

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

- 1 Phyllis Smith
- 2 Connie O'Grady
- 4 Julie Beech
- 8 Edwina Doyle
- 13 Mary Karlson
- 15 Erik Gregory
- 16 Jane Storm
- 19 Jennifer Tolley
- 19 Marianne Ayers
- 20 Virginia Parry
- 21 Dylan Campana
- 23 Shaina Hale
- 27 Torrey Lyn Salmon

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

- 11 Vince & Mary Cole
- 19 Lyle & Jean Hixenbaugh
- 28 John & Kathryn Ritter-Vicich

Memory Book

If anyone has or finds newspaper articles about anyone in the parish, please clip them and put them in Ellie Schenck's mailbox in the parish office. This is for our memory book. Thanks for your help!

Pastoral Care News

I didn't write anything for last month's newsletter because we were away on a trip and I don't really have much to report this month. I'm waiting patiently to hear from my visitors that they've been out on their rounds – sometimes the reporting takes the most time.

It's a good time of year to remember those around us who may be shut in and need some cheering up at holiday time, perhaps someone would like to do some Christmas shopping, or just get out to see the decorations in the malls and stores. Try to think of those near you who don't have a car to get them to all the places we go so easily. And of course, if you know of someone who's going to be alone at the holidays, perhaps you could include them in your plans, either for a meal, or to attend a church service. There are lots of opportunities for us to help our fellow man, if we just think about it for a few minutes.

Have a wonderful holiday season and keep in mind all of our blessings – let's try to share them.

Kathie Herling

Trinity Episcopal Church Mission Statement:

**Share Gods Unconditional Love
With Everyone.**

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Our Prayers have been requested for:

Ed Benintende
Steve Clark
Joyce DeGasperi
Bob Dexter
Al Eisenecker
Theresa Goffreri
Bill Lord
Flora Rinker
Rudy Roscher
Jon Ross
Ester Stein
Allistair Stewart
Rhonda Treible

Marion Braithwaite
Lauren Boyadis
Jacob Gower
Deborah Gower
Mary Baker
Jeff Landi
Raphael Bannister
Stacey
Martin Kilanowski
Richard Backora
Anita Rivera
Natashia Tomala
Alex Boehm
Taylor Ayers
Annie Turner

Presiding Bishop tells Executive Council to 'communicate the Good News'

By Mary Frances Schjonberg

[ENS] In her opening remarks to the meeting of the Episcopal Church's Executive Council November 12, Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori set the group's work in the context of mission and ministry.

Executive Council members must "figure out how to communicate the Good News we know in this body" to the diverse communities in which the Episcopal Church exists, especially to those people who have not been touched by the gospel or who are not yet part of a faith community.

"We have remarkable opportunities to speak and do Good News to people who don't know what that means," she said.

Both she and House of Deputies President Bonnie Anderson said they are committed to what Jefferts Schori called the "deed-based evangelism" personified in the church's commitment to the Millennium Development Goals.

"We've got a long road and the journey begins today, and I am delighted that you're all here," she said.

Anderson, who is also the council's vice president, said that she sees "accountability" as a major challenge to both the House of Deputies during the time between General Conventions and to the Executive Council.

TREASURERS REPORT - OCOTBER, 2006

Total Contributions:	\$11,031.28
Total Expenditure:	\$11,780.06
Net income:	\$-748.78
Budget Pledged Offerings:	\$7,517.00
Monthly Pledges received	\$7,885.50

Michael Goodwin, Treasurer



TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

DECEMBER 2, 2006

10AM - 4PM

TRINITY HILL ROAD

OFF OF ROUTE 611 - ACROSS FROM

CARSON'S RIDING STABLES

HANDMADE ITEMS, ORNAMENTS,

CHRISTMAS GIFTS, WOODEN ITEMS,

BAKED GOODS, AND

HAND-MADE GIFTS

FROM THE MOTHER'S UNION OF KAJO KEJI

BROUGHT TO US BY THE

EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN

BRING THE WHOLE FAMILY FOR

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING, LUNCH,

AND GET INTO THE HOLIDAY SPIRIT!

Social Concerns: Kristallnacht Reflections on the Holocaust

One of the profoundly moving questions asked by Holocaust victims in Elie Weisel's "Night" was "Where was God when this was happening?" Wiesel's answer echoes a basic Christian belief: "God was in the victims, suffering with them." Without disagreeing with that, I'd like to suggest another answer to the question as well.

A recent local tragedy provides perspective for viewing the grim realities of history. Linda and I live on a numbered highway, but it's a pretty quiet street. When our boys were young we used to play touch football in the road, vacating our field about once an hour for a car to go by. Even today, there are few cars outside of the commuting hours.

Therefore, when we suddenly saw a steady stream of traffic passing our house a couple of weeks ago, we realized some accident must have diverted them from 611, the main road several miles away. We turned to the paper the next day to find that a car coming out of Brookdale Road, where our friends the Graces live, trying to turn left across 611 had been hit broadside by a car coming the other way. (We know that stretch of road well - visibility is poor and people drive too fast. Some of the same conditions exist trying to turn left on 611 from Trinity and we are thankful that there has not been a serious accident here so far.) The smashed car was driven by a 17 year old Pocono Mountain High School girl taking her 14 year old sister to school. To us, they could have been our granddaughters Torrey and Rachel, the same ages and involved in the same band-related activities at PMHS. The younger girl, Kaitlyn Smith, survived. Her sister Ashley, the driver, did not. All the promise of the life that lay before her is gone. Where was God?

I tell this story in some detail because those details - the increased traffic by our house; happening at our friends' road; the typical Pocono mixture of poor road design and impatient driving; and the similarity of the girls to our granddaughters - made me feel this tragedy personally. But we shouldn't need all these signs. The old woman who is blown up by a suicide bomber in Israel could be our grandmother. The child who starves to death in Darfur could be our daughter. The 150,000 Iraqi civilians who have died in the present war, the 6,000,000 Jews who died in World War II are big numbers made up of individual people like us who suffered and many more are still suffering. We must not let distance in place or time or the enormity of the numbers numb our senses so we neither care nor act.

Where is God? God has ordained this world as one where his practical work depends on us. He can inspire us to care and provide a vision of the way to proceed, but we must enable what Quakers call "that of God in every person" to act. Where is God? God is in us. In the time of the holocaust, God was in the landing beaches of Normandy, in kids collecting scrap metal and planting victory gardens in the US, in the stirring words of Churchill and, too, in the activities of Quakers who maintained their opposition to all war but won a Nobel Peace Prize for their relief efforts. God was in Elie Weisel, storing up observations that would eventually be shared in the hope of "never again". God is in humankind waiting for each of us to express His love in the world.

How? The first step is to let ourselves care. Caring itself matters: even if we can't do anything in a particular case, that shouldn't stop us from caring and supporting others who can act. And when we can act, we must. You know the list: feed and clothe people, welcome them, take care of the sick, visit those in prison (which could be the prisons of sickness, disability or old age, not necessarily a correctional facility). And we can pray, as I hope we will for the Smith family and so many others.

As we approach another season marking the material advent of God into our lives, surrounded by society's materialistic version of a celebration, it is "good for us to think on these things" and how we may best use our time and resources to help the world answer that plaintive cry, "Where is God?"

Peter Salmon

The Real Christmas Rush

If evangelism is declaring the good news of Jesus Christ, then Christmas is the most exciting, compelling time of year to be lovingly forthright about what this means to us.

The climate is perfect. Everybody is into the spirit of Christmas, Christian or not. It is in the air, the stores, the media, the workplace, and our homes. You cannot escape it. There is no other time in the calendar year which so universally sets the stage for open expression and celebration of our faith. That is evangelism and we are called to do this without hesitation.

Luke tells us, in 2:16, "And they came in haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger". The shepherds came as fast as they possibly could. They knew that some things could wait and that some things could not. Imagine the sight of the angel, bathed in dazzling light, telling of the birth of our Lord. When the image fades away, they know that they have to go to see this Christ child. They could easily have decided that they've spent too much time in the fields and were delirious. They could have gone to sleep and talked about this madness with their rabbi the following Sabbath.

If we were told that the world would end in 24 hours, our communication systems would be overloaded with people trying to be in contact with family and friends to tell of their love for them. We would not want to wait. We all have stories to share of waiting too long to tell of our love for someone. We know that we must rush to tell loved ones of our feelings.

We often become fired up with enthusiasm over a new project and we dream of how we will undertake the task at hand. Too often we are slow to take the initial steps required. Dreams fade away, plans die, and we continue on our way - uneventfully. We say "one of these days I'm going to". But we never do. The clutter in my garage and the unread books in my loft are proof of this. I pause to wonder about the clutter and the unread in my own heart and mind.

In the inescapable glow of Christmas, we must rush to point out another urgent truth - we must be in a rush to find Jesus, just as the shepherds did. We must respond to God's call and share the good news of Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior.

Go tell it on the mountain!

Rob McMahon

Chair, Evangelism Leadership Team

The value of consistent prayer is not that He will hear us, but that we will hear Him. ~ William McGill