

# Trinity Steeple Notes

## January 2022 News and Notes

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### A Note from Pastor Alan

Dear Members of Trinity,

As I prepare for retirement at the end of January, I want to thank you for your prayerful support through the 6 ½ years of my ministry at Trinity. Together, we have faced the ravages of a life-altering pandemic and have seen God's faithfulness through circumstances that would have seemed impossible when I came among you in 2015. The commitment and resilience of this congregation and the dedication of those who have given so much in these times have been a witness to the strength and love of God's people.

I am grateful that I can leave you, not only in God's care, but in the hands of our excellent staff and superb lay leaders. The people who work for Trinity are talented in their individual callings and have a heart for the Gospel and the ministry of this congregation. Please hold them in prayer and support them in every way you can.

The process of calling a new pastor, which will be facilitated by the NE Pennsylvania Synod and Associate of the Bishop Pr. Rachael Dietz, will be challenging. This will not be a quick process – there is a shortage of pastors throughout the church and there are many vacancies to be filled. In the meantime, I encourage you to dream, not just about the person who will serve as Trinity's next pastor, but about the mission and possibilities God is opening up before you. With your help and support and by the grace of God, this congregation, which has faced challenges from the Revolutionary War to the Great Depression to the Covid-19 pandemic, will certainly discover new ways of being Christ's Church for the sake of those God loves.

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# Parish News

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*Continued from page 1...*

Phyllis and I are looking forward to this new chapter in our lives, but we will miss the ministry in which we've served for more than 35 years. I will miss you, the people of Trinity, and will hold you in my heart as God leads us all to a new day.

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. Amen.

Yours in Christ,

*Pastor Alan Wolbenhauer*

Pastor Alan

P.S. Thank you for your prayers for our son, Adam. His surgery was successful, and he is now off antibiotics and strong pain relievers. His estimated recovery is 12 weeks, but he is doing well and able to work part-time from home.

## **Chat with Pastor Alan on January 30**

Pastor Alan has faithfully served with us at Trinity for over six years. This informal forum will be an opportunity to reflect on where we have seen God in our journey together. This will be a time for giving thanks and sharing stories and wishing him well as he enters retirement. (Don't forget to bring or mail ahead your cards for the shower to the church office! - see article on page 3.)

# Parish News

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## Card Shower for Pastor Alan

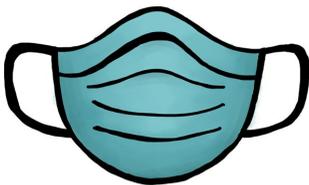
Let's shower Pr. Alan with cards for his retirement at the end of January! It's easy—all you have to do is find and sign a card and drop it in the mail to the church office so that it arrives before Pr. Alan's last Sunday at Trinity, January 30, 2022. We encourage you to include a special memory, a way he inspired you, or a message that stuck with you.



Send all the cards addressed to **Trinity Lutheran Church—Attention: Card Shower, 527 Washington Street, Reading, PA 19601**

We will share all the cards at once (that's the "shower"! ) with Pr. Alan at Sunday Forum, 9:00 AM on Sunday, January 30.

Any questions? Contact Rachel Gambone in the church office at (610) 374-4861 or [rgambone@trinityreading.org](mailto:rgambone@trinityreading.org).



## Pandemic Update

Masks are currently required at all Trinity events. Those attending are also strongly encouraged to be vaccinated against Covid-19 or to test negative prior to joining us in person. If you are not well, please stay home and join us through one our virtual platforms. Thank you for joining us is safeguarding the health of our community.

# Parish News

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## Thank you to Dee Horst

Thank you to Dee Horst for her many years of service to Trinity and to the Trinity Deaf Congregation. In 2010, Dee assumed the position of Trinity's Deaf Ministry Coordinator. More recently, she served as Trinity's Outreach Coordinator for programs such as I Can and Courtyard Café. As these programs have been curtailed during the pandemic and as budget constraints necessitated cutbacks, Vestry determined that a paid position in this area was no longer viable and that these ministries should proceed with volunteers when they are able to be resumed. Dee will be missed as a member of Trinity's staff and we pray for the best for her and her family. Those who have had a chance to work at her side know what a blessing she has been to our congregation and to the people we serve.

## Holiday Office Hours

With Christmas and New Years Day falling on weekends, the church office will be closed on Monday and Tuesday, December 27 & 28 and on Monday, January 3.

## Congregation Meeting of December 19, 2021

*(This is a summary and not official minutes. The complete budget is available from the Church office.)*

Trinity's Congregation budget meeting was held following worship on Sunday, December 19. A 2022 budget of \$716,006 in income (91.83% of 2021 budget) and \$667,448 in expenses (91.17% of 2021 budget) was presented and approved.

# Parish News

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## December Vestry Minutes

*(The following is a brief summary; not official minutes.)*

The Vestry met on December 13, 2021 via Zoom. Minutes of the November meeting were approved with one revision.

In New Business, the Gift Committee recommendation for the disbursement of \$177,086.31 in new bequests was approved. \$6000 each was designated as benevolence for Helping Harvest, Safe Berks, and the NE Pennsylvania Synod. \$18,000 was applied to the General Endowment Fund. \$111,086.31 was added to the HVAC replacement project, bringing the available money in that fund to \$561,086.31. \$30,000 was earmarked for the Auditorium renovation project, with an additional \$42,268.05 released for this project from existing unused bequest funds.

In other New Business, a motion was approved to let Pastor Alan keep his work laptop computer (estimated value \$320) as a retirement gift. Treasurer Jeff Wasmuth was appointed as signer for the Schwab account.

In Old Business, a minor revision was adopted for the budget recommendation to be presented at the December 19 Congregation Meeting.

The Treasurer reported a good month of member giving and continued restraint with expenses, noting that December will be a three-pay period month and that certain property expenses will be paid, likely leaving Trinity close to the income and expenses projected in the 2021 budget,

The next Vestry Meeting will be at 6:00 PM January 10 via Zoom, followed by a 7:00 PM Exit / Godspeed Interview with Pastor Alan, facilitated by WBMD Dean Colleen Cox. The meeting adjourned to Executive Session.

# Parish News

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## Tornado Relief through the ELCA Disaster Relief Program



On the night of Dec. 10, a devastating outbreak of more than 30 tornadoes swept through six states. Kentucky was impacted the most, with more than 70 people reported dead. Homes and businesses were destroyed, including a candle factory in Mayfield, Ky., where first responders are still searching for survivors. More than 330,000 people are without electricity across multiple states. The full extent of the damage is expected to become clear in the coming days.

Lutheran Disaster Response is engaging with partners in the affected areas, including the Indiana-Kentucky Synod, to respond to immediate needs. Given the initial damage assessments, recovery will likely take years, and Lutheran Disaster Response is prepared to accompany survivors until the response is complete.

**Gifts to Lutheran Disaster Response designated for "U.S. tornadoes" will be used entirely (100%) to assist those affected by tornadoes until the response is complete.** Together, we can support those who are on the long road to recovery. Please give today. Give online at: [https://community.elca.org/USTornadoRelief?\\_ga=2.242507522.1096543813.1640013764-1468063713.1639587509](https://community.elca.org/USTornadoRelief?_ga=2.242507522.1096543813.1640013764-1468063713.1639587509)  
[Ws](#)

If you prefer to send a check: Make checks payable to **Lutheran Disaster Response**, Write "U.S. Tornadoes" on your check's memo line and send to:  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, ELCA Gift Processing Center**  
**P.O. Box 1809, Merrifield, VA 22116-8009**

# Parish News

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## Original Art by Kristen Opalinski

Kristen Opalinski received a commission from the Lutheran World Federation to honor Dr. Martin Junge at his retirement as General Secretary of the Lutheran World Federation. The Lutheran World Federation is a worldwide communion of 122 member churches, including the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). The cross reflects Dr. Junge's Chilean and Austrian heritage, as well as milestones in his ministry. Fred Opalinski built the frame.



## Do you have a Drone?

Bill Norton is seeking someone with a drone to help explore Trinity's roof. Please contact Bill at [49comet@gmail.com](mailto:49comet@gmail.com) or (610) 777-4714.

## Prepare for Worship

January 2: Jeremiah 31:7-14; Psalm 147:12-20; Ephesians 1:3-14; John 1:1-18

January 9: Isaiah 43:1-7; Psalm 29; Acts 8:14-17; Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

January 16: Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 36:5-10; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11; John 2:1-11

January 23: Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10; Psalm 19; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a; Luke 4:14-21

January 30: Jeremiah 1:4-10; Psalm 71:1-6; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13; Luke 4:21-30

# Learning Ministries

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## **Intro to Media Ministry**

**Sunday, January 2 at 9:00 a.m.**

**Tour the media studio and check out our new video cameras**

Every week, we share our worship service with others around the corner and around the world: on Facebook, YouTube and on local Comcast Channel 190. Media Director, Matt Mellen, and Media Assistant, Matt Althouse, work hard to make it happen. Yet, they cannot do it alone. Without camera operators, the shots are static.

We will be training (and retraining) camera operators for our new cameras. You will get to see the inner workings of our studio, put on some headphones, and practice zooming in and out. Our goal is to create four consistent media teams so that you only have to volunteer 1x per month!

Join us in the balcony on Jan. 2 to learn more about this ministry. (And if you cannot make the training and are interested in being part of a media team, please contact Matt Mellen at [mmellen@trinityreading.org](mailto:mmellen@trinityreading.org).)

## **Sunday School (Every 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the Month)**

**January 2: Older Kids** - Introduction to Media Ministry – begin in the Media Center

**Younger Kids** – a Little Epiphany in the Balcony (they can learn about Media Ministry, too)

**January 16: All Kids** – Water to Wine in the large Sunday School Room #4

(where our ESL program met)

# Learning Ministries

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## Sunday Forums in the Auditorium:

**Informative--Interesting--Inspirational**

**January 2 – To Conserve or Restore?**

11:15 a.m. AFTER worship (please note later time)

Kathrine Graf, a longtime Trinity member living in Lincoln, England, will share her experiences as a conservator of built heritage currently working on the Medieval Bishop's Palace in Lincoln. <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/lincoln-medieval-bishops-palace/conserving-lincoln-medieval-bishops-palace/>



**January 9 & 16 – In Search of Paul** 9:00 a.m.

In October 2021, Deaconess Deborah finally fulfilled a dream of traveling to places where Paul walked and taught. This two-part series will show the areas the group traveled, and explore how Paul's writings were influenced by the surrounding Roman Empire.

**January 23 - St. Paul and Good News** -- good news, bad news is nothing new. See how St. Paul dealt with situations in Corinth through his correspondence with that community. Some things never change.

**January 30 – Conversation and Card Shower** with Pastor Alan 9:00 a.m.

Join us for an informal time of reflection and conversation as we say thank you to Pastor Alan for his years of ministry at Trinity.

## ChAOS (Catechism And Other Stuff)

Our confirmation students return for learning and fun Sunday, January 9 at 6:30 p.m. in the Hintz Room. Please make sure to wear comfortable clothing for lots of action.

# Parish News

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## Souper Bowl of Caring – February 6

### Tackle Hunger with Us!

Imagine if every person who watched the big game (and those who don't) gave just \$1.00 to local food ministries. On Superbowl Sunday in 1990, 22 youth groups in South Carolina began the movement praying:

*“Lord, as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game,  
help us to be mindful of those without even a bowl of soup to eat.”*

On February 6, look for the youth of Trinity who will be holding big pots and ladles, collecting monetary donations for our Lutheran Pantry. (\$1 can purchase \$20 worth of food!) Be part of this movement that is sharing God’s love with those in great need. Check out <https://tacklehunger.org/> for more information.

## 2022 Guiding Stars and Home Blessing Kits

**Available on January 2:** As the magi were guided to the babe by following a star, each of us will have the opportunity to pick a guiding star for the year to come. Each star will have a word written on it, for example: *Patience; Kindness; Joy; Rest; Adventure; Attention; Imagination;* and more. Some people choose to share their words; others keep it and do not share their guiding word until the next Epiphany when they reflect on the past year.

We also will be offering home blessings kits where you can “chalk your door” along with Christians from all over the world: *“Bless this house and all who inhabit it. Fill us with the light of Christ, that our concern for others may reflect your love.”*

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## In Our Prayers the Week of January 2

### Those who are sick or in need of healing:

Gabriela Shick, Elton Richards, Kathy Eynon, Julia Cherry (friend of Jenn Smith), Doris (friend of Pat McMahan), and Darlene Lupo (family of Dar Unger)

### Ongoing prayer requests for friends and members of Trinity:

Tom Shultz, Linda Motley, Nancy Nagle, Grete Furrow, Janet Clemmer, Luther Route, Darryl Jeffries, Dick Evans, Walter Schur, Ed Harlin, the Sawyer family, Grey Dinsmore (nephew of Rachel Gambone), Kate Cogan (friend of Linda Motley), Barbara & David Regar (friends of Barbara Ketchum), David Unruh (brother of Ralph Unruh), Tina Koch (friend of Jenn Smith), Jacob Unger (grandson of Dar Unger), Cindy Marsh (Anita Dolak's classmate), Celia Cosentino (friend of Jane Zobian), Mark Kummerer (son of Larry Kummerer), and Rich Stewart (friend of Ginny Biniek)

Homebound members: Karin Flatt, Joan Goncher, Sarah Rothermel, Betty & Karl Leuffen, Walter Schur, Noreen Showalter, and Tom Shultz



Trinity households: Mike Faust; Harry Feinauer; Holly, Christopher, Christie, Kyrie, and Jordan Fisher; Collin, Rashi & Millie Flatt; Karin Flatt

# Broadcast Schedule for January

All of our programs listed below can be watched on Comcast Channel 190 (in the Reading Hospital, Channel 80) or online at any time at [www.trinityreading.org](http://www.trinityreading.org) or on our YouTube channel at [www.youtube.com/trinitylutheranchurch](http://www.youtube.com/trinitylutheranchurch). Trinity's Sunday morning worship is also live streamed via Facebook and You Tube. You may log on to either platform on Sunday mornings at 10:00 AM and worship at the same time as the in-person congregation.



## Sundays

6:00 PM - First Friday  
6:30 PM - Music from Trinity  
7:00 PM: Trinity Worship Service

## Wednesdays

4:00 PM: Trinity Worship  
5:00 PM: Music from Trinity  
5:30 PM: First Friday



*Affirmation of Welcome: Trinity Lutheran Church is recognized by Reconciling Works as a "Reconciling in Christ" Congregation which welcomes all LGBTQ+ persons into all facets of congregational life.*

## **TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**527 WASHINGTON STREET, READING, PA 19601**

**(610) 374-4861 [WWW.TRINITYREADING.ORG](http://WWW.TRINITYREADING.ORG)**

*A congregation of Reading Lutheran Parish and West Berks Mission District*