

# Trinity Steeple Notes

## May 2020 News and Notes

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### Letter from Congregation President Steve Hofmann

To the Many Members of our Trinity Congregation & Family

These last several weeks have been trying for all of us – some of us have faced personal health concerns, or have lost loved ones in a time where grieving and memorializing those we love has been necessarily delayed due to quarantine. Others have had their livelihood suspended – either through layoff or furlough— while others find themselves attempting to work from home while taking on the responsibility of making sure their own children continue their virtual/online learning.



We've had new things added to our vocabulary – Virtual Meetings, Shelter In Place, Curbside Grocery Pick-up, Social Distancing – and many of us have had nights of lost or little sleep as we worry about finances, health, and the future of our families.

The one constant that we've had over the past several weeks is the hard work and dedication of our staff at

Trinity Lutheran. Each week brings us a new, engaging worship service, and for those who are on the internet – a weekly devotional visit with either Pastor Alan or Deaconess Deborah. For those of us starved for interaction with others, or missing our opportunity to worship as a community, these are literally Manna from Heaven.

Our professional and program staff have been diligent in minding the health of themselves, their families, coworkers, and the congregation, all while working in an

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# Parish News

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environment where expectations, state regulations, and our understanding of the dangers of COVID-19 change on a daily basis. At this point, there is no way to properly thank them, but a letter, an email, even a text message to a member of the staff who has particularly touched you and your family would be a nice gesture until we can all be together again in person.

I'm writing to you today to thank you for your continued spiritual and financial support of Trinity Lutheran. Your generosity – whether it is in your continued offering in times of social distancing and financial uncertainty – or whether it is in the prayers I know you're saying each day for the members of our congregation and our staff – is appreciated and acknowledged.



Your Vestry team – Jen Mazur, Jennifer Smith, Nancy Everson, Sue Shellong, Darryl Jeffries, Amy Litvinov, Eric Rosenbaum, Reagan Rosenbaum, Franki Aitken with the guidance and support of Deaconess Deborah and Pastor Alan has been considering some of the issues of reopening the church --- not only when, but how, and in what manner. Our primary concern in doing so will be the long-term health and safety of our congregants, staff, and visitors. Please keep up with the updates that Pastor Alan and his staff provide to the Trinity Congregation, so that when we do finally get to worship together again, we can do so with a sense of ease and comfort that reflect our shared belief.

If you have any concerns, questions, or observations regarding our response to this pandemic, please reach out to me, or to a member of Vestry and let us know how we can help you and your family.

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Steve Hofmann, Vestry President

# Parish News

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## Trinity's Vestry met via Zoom on Monday, April 20

(This is a summary of the meeting and is not official meeting minutes.)

Extensive discussion was held regarding the reopening of public worship. It was determined, in order to ensure the health and safety of members and to establish good protocols for reopening, that we will not plan to gather publicly until at least the first Sunday in June. Staff and Vestry will put in place both safety measures for those returning and continued remote ministry for those who feel they cannot.

Vestry members were very positive about the work of Trinity's staff to continue ministry during this time of social isolation. The broadcasts have been greatly appreciated, as have other initiatives to stay in touch with members. Matt Mellen is to be highly commended for his dedication and skill.



A Paycheck Protection Loan has been granted through Orrstown Bank. A resolution was passed to allow an account to be opened to receive funds; Pastor Alan was given authority to sign the loan and banking documents for Trinity. He will work with Peter and Franki. The loan is forgivable if staffing levels are maintained for 8 weeks.

A double columbarium niche will be given to the Hinkles to honor Don's ministry of music and Joan's faithfulness to Trinity.

Sue Shellong and Nancy Everson were assigned to the Vestry Nominating Committee.

The Synod Assembly has been postponed until October 22-24.

Staff reports were received.

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The treasurer reported a positive cash flow for March, with member giving above budget, partially due to some annual pledges paid in full. April offerings seem to have fallen off and as the economy slows, we need to monitor this situation carefully. We are very grateful to faithful members who are doing what they can to continue to support Trinity's ministry at this critical time.

In Executive Session, Peter Graf was hired as part-time church accountant.

## **Education Assistance Applications Due May 15**

Trinity is able to offer financial assistance to student members, some in the form of specific scholarships, but most through the offer of no-interest student loans. Applications are available to download from the church website at [www.trinityreading.org](http://www.trinityreading.org). Click on 'Ministries' and then on 'Educational Assistance.' No late or incomplete applications will be accepted. Interviews with the Educational Assistance committee will be scheduled for early to mid June.



After vestry consideration of the recommendations, all students will be notified.

Those persons who are offered loans will then receive a repayment document to complete. Once that paperwork and all other requirements are met, a check will be disbursed by mid-August.

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## Common Ground Welcomes More Soap Donations

We at Common Ground are so grateful for the soap donations of Trinity members to help our community care for health and hygiene.

I think right now soap is still our priority. We continue to give out about 20 bars per week. Trinity's donations have kept us in good shape for the past 2 weeks. If soap donations continue to come into Trinity, we will absolutely continue to give them away. You may drop your donation of bars of soap through the mail slot in the Bard House door.



I suspect these are nearly impossible to come by, but if you have a lead on donations of masks (or bandanas) hand sanitizer, gloves, or any of the things that might keep people safe - they would be welcome.

A few Common Ground members are making care packages with homemade masks, soap and instructions for wearing/cleaning to give out on Sunday. Our community is not good at social distancing amongst themselves - so I hope these might provide at least another barrier for the virus. Berks County cases continue to rise - so your prayers for this community would be most appreciated.

Respecting Trinity's shutdown, we plan to continue offering only bagged meals in the Courtyard through May - perhaps longer as needed.

Emily Papke-Larson, Common Ground Pastoral Intern

# Parish News

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**“For baptized Christians, civic engagement is a vital means of discipleship.”**

Over the years Trinity has a history of involvement with the crafting of ELCA Social Statements. Our church is in the process of developing a timely one: “A Draft Social Message on Government and Civic Engagement: Discipleship in a Democracy.”

You are invited to read and comment on the draft if you have the time, energy and inclination. This is a concrete way of participating in the important public work of our church. Click on this link for further information and a copy of the draft: [ELCA Draft Social Message for Civic Engagement](#). If you desire a paper copy of the draft Social Statement, call the church office and leave a message for Rachel Gambone at (610) 374-4861 ext. 23.



## **Art & Craft Show by Trinity Members Planned for Advent 2020**

**Sundays in Advent 2020**

Calling all Trinity artists and crafters! This year, instead of the Fair Trade Fair during Advent we are holding an arts and crafts bazaar of handmade works made by Trinity members. All kinds of arts and crafts are welcome: knitting, crocheting, rug hooking, sewing, cross-stitch, jewelry, photography, pottery, woodwork, etc. We suggest that the price per item not exceed \$100.00. A portion of the sales will be donated to Trinity. There is no limit to the number of pieces you may share. Contact Annie Harlin for more information at (610) 926-5488.

# *Easter Flower/World Hunger Gift Dedications*

## *In loving memory of...*

*Russ & Jeanette Aitken by Franki Aitken*

*Gerry & Jack Darlington and Ann Darlington by John and Jeff  
Darlington and Family*

*Those who hunger by Stanley & Grete Furrow*

*Dana W. Gangewere by the Silverman Family*

*Mr. & Mrs. John H. Kirby II by John H. Kirby III*

*Miriam K. Kochel by her daughters, Frances Frezeman and Barbara Lykens*

*Mr. & Mrs. Francis Kummerer by Larry Kummerer*

*Bonnie Aitken Lavin by Franki Aitken*

*Mickey Silverman by the Silverman Family*

*Michael Silverman by the Silverman Family*

*William H. Sunderland by Mae Sunderland*

## *In honor of....*

*Barbara Grams Gangewere  
by the Silverman Family*

*Karl & Betty Leuffen by the Silverman Family*

*Christ  
is  
Risen!*



# Broadcast Schedule May 2020

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).

## Sundays in May

6:00 PM: First Friday: Religion, Gender, and

Race: A Look at the American Voter

6:30 PM: Music from Trinity:

Christa Beveridge, soprano

7:00 PM: Trinity Worship Service

## Wednesdays in May

4:00 PM: Trinity Worship

5:00 PM: Music from Trinity:

Christa Beveridge, soprano

5:30 PM: First Friday: Religion, Gender, and

Race: A Look at the American Voter

## Other Ways to Stay in Touch Remotely

Sunday	9:30 AM: Zoom Coffee Hour (contact Dcs. Deborah for invitation)
	10:15 AM: Zoom Sunday School (contact Dcs. Deborah for invitation)
Tuesday	Email prayer group (also sent later by US mail to those without email)
Wednesday	Musical reflections with Karen Eddinger (Facebook)
Thursday	Devotional with Pastor Alan (Facebook)
Occasional	Devotional with Dcs. Deborah (Facebook)
	Interactive Activities (Facebook)
	Other communications (email and mail)
	Virtual Youth and Family Activities
Monthly	Steeple Notes newsletter

Watch for other opportunities to share the life of Trinity in this time of isolation and, if you find that something touches you, share it with your friends and family.



**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. Learn more at <https://www.reconcilingworks.org/ric/>.

## TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

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