

Trinity Steeple Notes

November 2020 News and Notes Part 1



Indoor Worship Returns November 1

After being away from our Sanctuary for more than seven months, Trinity's Vestry is happy to announce that, beginning November 1, brief spoken services will resume in the Nave each **Sunday at 8:30 and 10:30 AM**. The process will be the same as it has been for Courtyard

Worship, with pre-registration required by contacting Pastor Alan at (610) 374-4861 ext. 22 or (pastor@trinityreading.org). Signups are currently being taken through the Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 20.

Every precaution has been taken to safeguard the health and safety of worshipers, including:

- No one should attend worship who may be sick or who suspects they may have been exposed to the virus. If symptoms develop in the ten days following worship, or if positive test results are received, contact Pastor Alan immediately so that others in worship may be notified.
- Masks will be worn at all times. Masks will be available on the prayer table for those who need them.
- Entrance and exit will be through the portico double doors unless the elevator is required.
- Touchless hand sanitizers have been installed throughout the church.
- Households will be distanced from one another by at least 6 feet.
- Pews have been designated and will rotate between services.

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- Increased ventilation through open windows and doors (this will affect the temperature, so dress accordingly).
- Electrostatic cleaning will follow each service.
- Records will be kept of attendees for contact tracing.
- Offering will be received at the entrance, by mail or online.
- Communion will be touchless.
- There will be no bulletins or hymnals.
- There will be no singing and limited corporate speaking.
- The water fountain will be out of service and bathroom use will be limited to one member at a time (with assistance if necessary); please use paper towels rather than the blow dryer.



We look forward to again hearing the organ and beautiful special music and being together in this holy space. Depending on the progress of the pandemic, restrictions may be lifted or reinstated as appropriate.

If you could help with limited ushering duties, please contact the church office at (610) 374-4861.

Steeple Notes is coming to you in two volumes this month so that we can share the news of the bishop's election and some information about special celebrations for Thanksgiving and Advent.

Vestry Notes

(The following is a summary of the meeting and not official minutes, which may be obtained from the Church Office.)

The Vestry meeting was held via Zoom October 12, 2020. After reviewing recommendations from the Reopening Committee, it was determined to resume limited indoor worship November 1.

A new carrier was approved for Trinity's liability and property insurance; we are now covered by Brotherhood Mutual. PTO time taken by certain support staff employees to avoid furlough has been reinstated in accordance with the purpose of our PPP loan. The crumbling plaster on the building facing Trinity's parking lot has been removed by the building owner.

A lengthy budget discussion of the uncertainty caused by the current pandemic culminated in the decision to request 25% budget reductions and a six-month budget from all programs of the church, other than contracts, salaries and benefits. Budgets for the second six months of the fiscal year will be reviewed in the spring.

VIST Bank was approved as our new bank and the line of credit will be transferred to VIST with the same collateral arrangement (from Property Endowment) we had established with our previous bank. Reports were received from committees and staff.

The treasurer reported that the budget in August is still net positive but in September the pledge income is at a deficit year to date. This is cause for concern as we enter the winter months and contemplate reopening. The next regular meeting of Vestry in November 9 at 7:00 PM via Zoom.



Parish News



All Saints Day

All Saints Day is Sunday, November 1. Our broadcast service will feature a beautiful litany and a photo montage of God's saints – biblical, historical, and those who are dear to us. Be sure to tune in for this moving tribute of thanksgiving for those who have touched our world with God's grace. The live services will also include a litany as names are read and God's saints are remembered.

Common Ground Amazon Wish List

Common Ground is a compassionate, spiritual community that embraces the worthiness and brokenness of all people. Many, but not all of us, are part of recovery communities and together we are exploring the "common ground" that lies beneath the 12-steps and inclusive Christian faith.

[Common Ground](#) has created an [Amazon Wishlist](#) for needy individuals and families in the Reading, PA area. As we head into colder weather, the community need is even greater. Your kind gift directly helps someone in need and is greatly appreciated. After you've selected your gift, choose the Tom Scornavacchi option as the shipping address. Blessings!

Daylight Savings Time ends Sunday, November 1 at 2:00 A.M. On Saturday night, set your clocks back one hour to "fall back."



Mission & Service

Mission & Service Projects Update

This is your Mission & Service Committee reporting for duty! Even though we are not meeting in the “normal fashion,” we are in contact through email and the telephone. We still receive requests for contributions. This fall, we contributed to these organizations:



- Café Esperanza at Hope Lutheran Church
- Safe Berks (formerly Berks Women in Crisis)
- Opportunity House and
- Helping Harvest (formerly Berks Food Bank)

In addition, we sent a check to our 10th and Penn Elementary school. The children are at home now and receive instruction through the computer. They needed headphones in order to hear their instructors. Many of the children do not have headphones and are unable to hear their teachers. Thank you for allowing us to do these things.



We are planning some projects for Christmas so there will be further notices as we get nearer to the holidays.

-Marian Jameson, chair

Northeastern PA Synod News

Election of a Bishop

At the 2020 Synod Assembly the order of business includes electing a new bishop. At this time there are seven candidates in the running:

Charles Grube (Dallas, PA)
Christopher deForest (Kutztown)
Susan Ruggles (Easton)
Nelson Quiñones (Fogelsville)
Rebecca Middeke-Conlin (Easton)
Ryan Hersch (Wyomissing)
Martha Sipe (Whitehall)



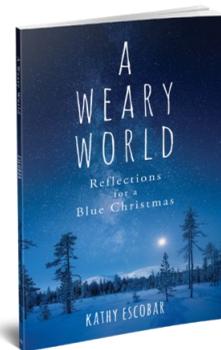
You can watch these candidates answering a series of questions in a pre-recorded session available on YouTube at 8:00 AM on Friday, October 23. The election will take place the voting for bishop will take place on Saturday.

Please keep the bishop candidates, their families, and their current congregation in prayer as they contemplate major changes. Also pray for the Assembly that they discern God's will, and for Bishop Zeiser and the current staff (including our own John Richter), as they prepare for transition.

Advent Book Discussion

Advent Tuesday Evening Discussion/ Prayer Group

A Weary World: Reflections for a Blue Christmas by Kathy Escobar



Let's face it. This year is different. For so many of us during the holidays, the magnitude of our weary world weighs on our hearts and minds. We wrestle with chronic pain, broken relationships, shattered dreams, fragile faith, and unexpected losses. Our grief and sorrow feel stark against the backdrop of festivity and joy that everyone else seems to be feeling. Observing Advent and Christmas in a world still struggling with pandemic illness means that grief, trauma, depression, and more are compounded by added anxiety and uncertainty.

For those who would like to go deeper, Trinity is offering a time for discussion and prayer on **4 Tuesday evenings in December at 7:00 p.m.** The goal will be to enact in our lives the four central themes of the book: **honoring reality, practicing honesty, embracing paradox, and borrowing hope.**

We will meet via Zoom (which is accessible by computer and telephone.) Please speak to Deaconess Deborah if you are interested in participating.

If you would like a copy of this devotional, please contact Deaconess Deborah by November 10. (The book is free; donations are welcome to offset the cost.)

Broadcast Schedule November 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 or on our YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/trinitylutheranchurch.



Sundays in November

6:00 PM: First Friday—Retrospect and Prospect of the Institute

6:30 PM: In-person Holy Eucharist

7:00 PM: Pre-recorded Trinity Worship Service

Wednesdays in November

4:00 PM: Pre-recorded Trinity Worship

5:00 PM: Music from Trinity—
Christa Beveridge, soprano

5:30 PM: First Friday—Retrospect and Prospect of the Institute



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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