

Trinity Times

A newsletter for the members and friends of Trinity Episcopal Church

Trinity Episcopal Church
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Advent - Christmas - December 2009

Greetings;

Advent is a time of great anticipation ... a time of preparation for the celebration of the birth of Christ. In our secular world there is also much anticipation and preparation. Unfortunately, the various media sources, the holiday music in the malls (since before Halloween), and a variety of other sources seem to be sending a message that big pretty packages under a tree in a picture perfect house will bring joy to a household.

I must be annoying the person who puts up with me in our home every time I comment on the Lowe's commercial that claims we will all have a happy household this holiday season if we shop at Lowes. There are bright decorations, a dream home and of course smiles everywhere as this perfect family come together for a shopping trip to Lowe's. I'm not picking on Lowe's. It's just one of the many advertisements that promise wonderful things, if we just buy their products. The problem is we get sucked into the suggestion that our lives will somehow be better. It seems we allow the commercial influences in society to cause us to forget the "reason for the season".

As we approach the holidays, it takes effort to focus on the truly important things and not get caught up in the influences that take us off track. All year, every day of the year, there are many people who don't have enough to eat, a place to sleep, have no one to care for them or about them. It seems so wrong to be encouraged to buy, buy, buy, when so many don't have even the basic necessities. Advent is a time to consider our role as Christians. It is a time to anticipate the birth of and also our relationship with Christ. One cannot "quietly anticipate" while waiting in an excruciatingly long line at Toys R Us with an overflowing cart.

In the same homes where country signs hang that read "Simplify" there are huge piles of gifts that will be forgotten by the next year. Stress as we pre-

pare and buy consumes lives for weeks as we struggle to bring "happiness" to the holidays.

Sometimes I listen to it all and I just want to yell at the top of my lungs, "Stop, enough, look at yourselves!" And sometimes I need to speak those words to myself as I start to get off track. Obviously, I haven't got the lung capacity to change others' behaviors to that extent but I do have the ability to gauge my own behavior during this Advent season.

Dorothy Day said, "Advent is a time of waiting, of expectation, of silence. Waiting for our Lord to be born. A pregnant woman is so happy, content. She lives in a garment of silence, and it is as though she were listening to hear the stir of life within her. One always hears that stirring compared to the rustling of a bird in the hand. But the intentness with which one awaits such stirring is like nothing so much as a blanket of silence."

Imagine waiting peacefully for the miracle of the birth of the Christ child. Imagine the hope one would feel in the silent waiting.

Let us wait this Advent season with intentness hoping to hear the life inside us and know that Christ is the life inside us. Let Advent be about listening to that life. It may begin as a slight stir, exciting and revealing and as you realize the stirring of Christ is present and lies within us; there is no end to the possibilities.

The reason for the season? I believe the reason for Advent is hope, peace, anticipation and finally discovery and joy.

Let us bring that hope and peace into the lives of those with whom we share this earth; those who find it difficult to hope.

I pray this Advent season for us all to be happy and content. I pray for peace. Peace in my life and in yours.

God's Peace & Joy,
Mother Trula

Sara is very busy this month with plans to move her family south for the winter. She'll be sending us notes from time to time.

Tax Preparation Training: Reach out to those in need.

The Bradford County Poverty Task Force is sponsoring the VITA program. VITA is the Voluntary Income Tax Preparation program for low-income families. The program will run 8 weeks (February through April) three hours a night, one night a week at the Lackawanna College. The VITA Program NEEDS volunteer tax preparers. The volunteer must attend the

training and pass a test to become certified and give of your time to prepare income taxes and file them electronically. The task force provides training on PA/NY state forms and IRS forms, all materials needed to process forms.

An informational meeting will be held at the Lackawanna College in Towanda at 6 p.m. on December 9th. Please RSVP by Nov. 30, 2009 to Melissa at 570-265-6246 or at msentiff@pfc.org. This is a great opportunity to help a family improve their financial status by obtaining the most earned income tax benefits they are eligible to receive.

The Ministry of the Eucharistic Visitor is a gift to both the visitor and to our shut-ins. It is a time to share the sacrament and to visit with those who cannot join us on Saturdays or Sundays. Please prayerfully consider if you might be called to this ministry. Talk to Mother Trula.

Advent Wreath

Our lovely new Advent Wreath was dedicated at both First Advent services on November 28 and 29, 2009, in memory of The Rev. Canon Edward L. Caum, III ... our beloved Ned. A plaque will be placed on it at a later time.

Our Film Study: *For the Bible Tells me So*

[This article will be sent to the local papers this week. Thanks to Mtr. Trula for writing it]

Trinity Episcopal Church in Athens held a group discussion on Wednesday, November 18th after the showing of the documentary, *For the Bible Tells Me So*. The film was the winner of the Audience Award for Best Documentary at the Seattle International Film Festival, Dan Karlake's provocative, entertaining documentary brilliantly reconciles homosexuality and Biblical scripture, and in the process reveals that Church-sanctioned anti-gay bias is based solely upon a significant (and often malicious) misinterpretation of the Bible.

Through the experience of five very normal, very Christian, American families - including those of former House Majority Leader Richard Gephardt and Episcopalian Bishop Gene Robinson - we discover how insightful people of faith handle the realization of having a gay child. The subject of how families face the issue of homosexuality in their own families is handled in a very revealing and sensitive manner. With commentary by such respected voices as Bishop Desmond Tutu, Harvard's Peter Gomes, Orthodox Rabbi Steve Greenberg and Reverend Jimmy Creech, *For The Bible Tells Me So* offers healing, clarity and understanding to anyone caught in the crosshairs of scripture and sexual identity.

The discussion was an excellent opportunity for those who are confused about scripture and the subject of homosexuality to begin to gain knowledge and understanding. The Reverend Trula Hollywood, Rector of Trinity, is planning another discussion group in the Spring of 2010, which will kick off a book study of Rob Eichberg's *Coming Out: An Act of Love*. For information contact the church office at 570-888-5715.



Trinity Episcopal Church - December 2009

Advent Christmas

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Trinity: Dec. 6: Sean, Donna, Daniel & Savannah Barry; Dec. 13: Don Barton, Jan & Janice Beck; Dec. 20: Barbara Bean, Kay Bennett, Jake Parshall; Dec. 27: Marie Bubniak, Mary Ann Burke		1	2	3	4	5 Toy Giveaway 9 to noon, Parish Hall
6 Advent II 9:00 Holy Eucharist 10:00 Coffee Hour  Barbara Cole	7	8	9 <i>Heather Hunsinger Hazel Hunt Fr. Ben Lentz Ian Bivins</i>	10	<i>Margaret Gerhart Ed Gilbertt</i>	12
13 Advent III 9:00 Holy Eucharist 10:00 Coffee Hour 	14	15 Clergy Bible Study VIII, 4 p.m., Towanda	16	17	18	19
20 Advent IV 9:00 Holy Eucharist 10:00 Coffee Hour Greening of the Church 	21	22	23	24 Christmas Eve 10:45 pm - Carol Sing 11:00 pm - Festival Eucharist <i>Kay Bennett Hana Henty</i>	25 Christmas Day 	26 St. Stephen
27 Christmas I 9:00 Holy Eucharist 10:00 Coffee Hour	28 The Holy Innocents	29	30	31		

The Diocese of Bethlehem: **Dec. 6:** St. Mary's, Reading, The Rev. Nancy M. Packard, rector **Dec. 13:** Holy Cross, Wilkes-Barre, The Rev. Daniel G. Jones, rector **Dec. 20:** The Children's Ministry of our diocesan community **Dec. 27:** St. Joseph's, Pen Argyl, Loretta Santo, senior warden, The Rev. Jane Gaeta, supply pastor

Anglicans around the world: **Dec. 6:** The Diocese of Western Mexico; **Dec. 13:** The Diocese of Willochra (South Australia); **Dec. 20:** The Diocese of Yei (Sudan); **Dec. 27:** The clergy and people of Melanesia

The Diocese of Kajo Keji: **Dec. 6:** Bori Parish, The Rev. Jeneti A'diko; **Dec. 13:** Dwani Parish, The Rev. Estere Kojo; The Rev. Yobo Sunamurye; **Dec. 20:** Gaderu Parish, The Nasona Buli; **Dec. 27:** Gurube Parish, The Rev. Scopas Wani

December Highlights

Saturday December 6th: Toy Giveaway. Thanks to everyone who has donated items for this wonderful project and to Marie Bubniak for spearheading the project. Helpers are needed this week and Saturday from 9 to noon.

Sunday, December 20th: Greening of the Church. After coffee hour we'll gather in the church to take the mittens off the tree to give away and then decorate it for Christmas along with putting up the crèche and put fresh greens and candles in the windows. If you have extra evergreens, please bring them.

Thursday, December 24: Eve of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Carol Sing at 10:45 p.m., Festival Eucharist at 11:00 p.m. with special music.

Trinity's Advent Tree

The last Sunday of Advent is a time for the hanging of the

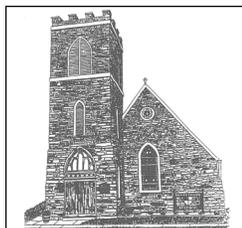


greens, decoration of the church with evergreen wreaths, boughs, or trees that help to symbolize the new and

everlasting life brought through Jesus the Christ. Last year, Trinity started a new tradition on First Advent, an Advent mitten tree. Hats, gloves and mittens were collected to give to children and families in need in Bradford County. The tree has been set up this Advent with plans for it to become as heavy laden with the love and caring of parishioners as it was in '08!

Trinity's Annual Meeting will be on Sunday, January 24, 2010, following coffee hour. Everyone who attends Trinity on a regular basis is invited to join in planning for the coming year. Vestry members and convention delegates will be elected. Ham and coffee will be provided; please bring a dish to pass.

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December at
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