

Trinity Times

A newsletter for the members and friends of Trinity Episcopal Church

Trinity Episcopal Church
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Advent - Christmas - December, 2010

THE ADVENT SEASON, the four weeks leading up to Christmas, are perhaps the busiest, most hectic times of the year. In the breathless rush to make the most of the season, it is easy to forget that this is a sacred season. It is less about "holiday cheer" and more about a "holy child." Advent is our opportunity—a gift from God in itself—to reorient ourselves to receive the gift of Jesus. Here are some things to think about during Advent.

Don't forget your rituals:

Be careful not to treat Advent as just another busy time of the year. When we enter the Advent season, life is supposed to be different. Rituals in your personal and/or family life can help you slow down and prayerfully ponder the gift of the Incarnation, the Son of God made flesh. Take time daily to relax, meditate or pray.

Don't try to be perfect for the Holidays:

Believe it or not, it's not the end of the world if the Christmas tree has a bare spot on one side, if all of the house decorations don't get up, or if you can't find the perfect gift for Uncle Joe. The holiday season can be stressful enough without allowing the drive for perfection to overwhelm you.

Try not to overdo your schedule:

Learn to say "no" to some demands or events, however enjoyable or good they may be. Know your limits. As the saying goes, "Too much of a good thing is still too much."

Try not to overdo gifts:

I recently heard of a study that indicates children on average receive 60% more for Christmas than they expect. Very good news for parents right? But it also indicates that while parents need to be very clear with their children about expectations, ever more important is that they themselves need to be consistent with these expectations in their own gift giving.

Remember, the focus is Jesus, God's supreme gift to us, not our gifts to others.

Don't expect the culture to follow your lead:

I don't know how many years I have had discussion after discussion about when Christmas truly begins and it's not as soon as you throw out the turkey carcass from Thanksgiving dinner. A truly Christian approach to the month of December will inevitably be counter-cultural. Christmas does not begin when the Black Friday sales start. Christmas is not about Martha Stewart-quality centerpiece, the gourmet Christmas feast, or getting the "hottest toy of the year." Our spiritual health depends on our resisting the cultural message to "shop till we drop." Jesus did not come into the world to die so we could get the hottest bargain of the season.

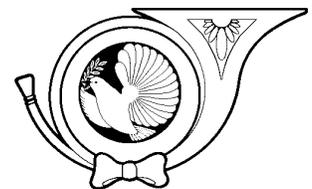
Do not forget the less fortunate:

Remember that the real Christmas story is not set in a warm and cozy house, tastefully decorated and filled with more gifts than can fit under the tree, however wonderful that all may seem. The real Christmas story is set amidst those who know poverty, hunger and danger. Being a loving witness of the Gospel is to reach out to those who are in need.

Don't wait until Christmas Eve to come to Church!

Join us for worship in the weeks leading up to Christmas. Worship in the church is absolutely beautiful this time of year. Join us for Advent worship and allow it to bring back a sense of expectancy and alertness for the coming of God into our world, into all of our lives.

*Happy Holidays
and God's Peace,
Mother Trula*



Blue Christmas Service, Saturday, December 18

The seasons of Advent and Christmas are meant to be full of anticipation, hope and joy. The familiar church services lead us through the season in anticipation of the coming of our savior. Everywhere we go there is joyous Christmas music, holiday lighting and the busyness of the season. Holidays are a time for fellowship and friendship with those you love. However, for many bereaved families, it is also the time of year when they remember the ones in lives who have died.

If you're mourning a loss this Christmas, the holiday glam and seasonal lights can make you feel terrible. Many people will begin their plans for the holiday this year without someone who has been a part of their holiday memories for most, if not all, of their lives. We all find different ways of coping. Some of us grieve at Christmas by keeping extremely busy, so we have less time to think. Others grieve by withdrawing or even getting away for awhile. Whatever the grief process is, we must accept it. Only the individual themselves know what they need to do to "get through" the holidays.

It is difficult for others to realize the depth of the pain when someone is grieving, especially during the holidays. The singing and other things that would have given the person pleasure at Christmas in the past, they no longer want to do.

Trinity will offer a service on November 18, 2010 at 7 p.m. as a "space to bring our sadness to God". The service will include a candle lighting as a Litany of Remembrance and fellowship time after the service.



Tower News

This picture was taken on November 29 when workers from Elmira Structures began removing the crenellations from the tower. A temporary covering is in place to keep moisture off of the existing roof; Hale Roofing will put a semi-permanent covering on to protect it over the winter.

When winter ends, the top of the tower will be taken down to the area just above the top of the highest louvers and the present roof removed. It was built with concrete sometime in the 1930's and the material has been slowly eroding and rotting over the decades as moisture has seeped into it.

The roof will be replaced in the spring and the top of the tower rebuilt. Elmira Structures has managed to salvage some of the original stone from the crenellations and that will be used along with new materials.

This project is being funded, in part, with money from our investments in the Diocesan Investment Trust. The vestry will be exploring other sources of funding.

Vestry meets again on December 12, following coffee hour. All are welcome. If you have questions about the renovation, talk to Dan Gerhart, chair of the building committee, or to a vestry member.



2010 Toy Giveaway

As of press time, we had 15 families (47 children) from both New York and Pennsylvania signed up to receive the toys you have been donating over the past months. The giveaway is scheduled for Saturday morning, December 4th at 9 a.m.

Thanks to all of you, and the many hours Marie Buniak, Patricia Gurney and their elves have put in, Christmas will be a lot brighter for these families.



Trinity Episcopal Church - December 2010

Advent Christmas

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<i>The Diocese of Bethlehem - 12/5:</i> Christ Church, Susquehanna: Todd Moffett, Senior Warden. <i>12/12:</i> Calvary Church, Tamaqua: The Rev. Robert K. Gildersleeve, Supply. <i>12/19:</i> Christ Church, Towanda: The Rev. Maureen AtLee Hipple, Rector, The Rev. Lawrence Holman, Deacon. <i>12/26:</i> St. Paul's Church, Troy: The Rev. Han van den Blink, Priest-in-Charge. The World Mission Committee.			1	2	3	4 Toy Giveaway 9-12 Parish Hall Advent II 5:00 Evening Prayer <i>Margaret Gerhart</i> <i>Ed Gilbert</i>
5 Advent II 9:00 Holy Eucharist 10:00 Coffee Hour	6 	7 <i>Barbara Cole</i>	8	9 <i>Heather Hunsinger</i> <i>Hazel Hunt</i> <i>Fr. Ben Lentz</i> <i>Ian Bivins</i>	10	11 Advent III 5:00 Holy Eucharist <i>Shelley Barry</i>
12 Advent III 9:00 Holy Eucharist 10:00 Coffee Hour ---Vestry Meets---	13 	14	15	16	17	18 Advent IV 5:00 Holy Eucharist 7:00 Blue Christmas
19 Advent IV 9:00 Holy Eucharist 10:00 Coffee Hour Greening of the Church	20 Clergy Bible Study Towanda, 2 	21 St. Thomas the Apostle	22	23	24 Christmas Eve 10:45 pm - Carol Sing 11:00 pm - Festival Eucharist <i>Kay Horton Bennett</i> <i>Hana Henty</i>	25 Christmas Day 
26 Christmas I 9:00 Holy Eucharist 10:00 Coffee Hour	27 St. John, Apostle <i>Jason Barry</i>	28 The Holy Innocents	29	30	31	Trinity's 169th Annual meeting is Sunday, January 23rd, following coffee hour.
<i>Anglicans around the world: 12/5:</i> The Lusitanian Church (Portugal): The Rt. Rev. Fernando Soares. <i>12/12:</i> The Reformed Episcopal Church of Spain: The Rt. Rev. Carlos López-Lozano. <i>12/19:</i> The Falkland Islands: The Rev. Dr. Richard Hines. <i>12/26:</i> The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand & Polynesia: The Most Rev. William Brown Turei.		<i>The Diocese of Kajo Keji: 12/5:</i> SOMA Partners and the Rev. Sadoka Toe. <i>12/12:</i> Trinity Parish Partnership and the Rev. Canon Yoasa Wurube Mogga. <i>12/19:</i> Lino Baba Area School and for peaceful referendum campaigns. <i>12/26:</i> Mother's Union: Jane Poggo, Rev. Mary Basa and Rev. Silivian Kiden.		<i>Trinity Cycle of Prayer</i> 12/5: Norma Duddie 12/12: David and Shelly Fish 12/19: Charles and Virginia Ford 12/26: Robert and Marguerite Franks		

Reaching Out ...

The Hat and Mitten Advent Tree is awaiting your decorations of gloves, hats, scarves and mittens. We'll fill the tree with warmth through Advent IV (December 19th) when we will decorate for Christmas.

The Food Pantry, Catholic Charities and The Bridge are in need of cash donations. There are many people in our area who cannot afford to pay for heating fuel. Share the warmth with a cash donation to The Bridge or Catholic Charities. You may write a check to Trinity with the name of the organization in the *for* line. Please continue to bring in your donations of non-perishable foods in unbreakable containers each Sunday.



This past year has been an amazing adventure for all of us at Trinity. We have initiated many outreach activities. Every week the food basket is filled to capacity and some weeks beyond capacity. Food, clothing and toy drives have been conducted to meet the needs of our neighbors in the valley area and beyond. Whenever a need has been identified, the parishioners of Trinity have responded.

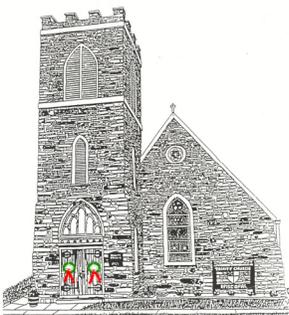
It is difficult to express in words how happy I am to be part of this church community. The outreach and hospitality efforts each and every one of you participated in have been phenomenal. It is also clear how much all of you care about the church as you've cleaned, repaired, decorated and planned for Trinity's future.

Thank you, Mother Trula



The Rector and Vestry of Trinity wish you a holy and joy-filled Advent Season. May you be blessed at Christmas and in the New Year to Come.

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December at Trinity