

January, 2025

Volume 35, Issue 1

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Wednesday Evening Vespers

Dr. Mack hosts a weekly devotional on Zoom called "Wednesday Evening Vespers" **the first Wednesday of each month, at 6:30 pm** for about 30 minutes. This is a brief time of prayer and sharing when Mack shares scripture, a devotional, prayer concerns, and then participants pray as a group. **We will begin again February 5.** The invitation is available at <http://trinitytucson.org/wednesday-evening-vespers/>.

Thank you to everyone who planned & participated in the Cantata, Advent Mini Concerts, & Christmas Eve Services



This Advent Season we were able to enjoy a new cantata complete with a 18 piece orchestra and three Advent Mini concerts to prepare us for Christmas. Christmas Eve night we had a candlelight service with several members participating as readers and musicians. The procession at the beginning of the service was wonderful as a small group of youth and adults dressed as the shepherds, wise men and holy family. We are grateful that we were able to worship in person and have the services available online.

Video recordings of the Cantata, Advent Mini Concerts and Christmas Eve service are available to view anytime at www.trinitytucson.org on the homepage.

CHOIR REHEARSAL is **Thursdays at 7:00 pm** in the Sanctuary. Join the Trinity Choir as they participate weekly in the service and prepare for the Easter Cantata. **We resume January 9.**

HANDBELL REHEARSAL is **Thursdays at 5:30 pm** in the Bell Room upstairs. See Lynn Moser if you want to participate. **We resume January 9.**

PASTORAL LETTER

NEW WINE FOR THE NEW YEAR

“No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old cloak, for the patch pulls away from the cloak, and a worse tear is made. Neither is new wine put into old wineskins; otherwise the skins burst, and the wine is spilled, and the skins are destroyed; but new wine is put into fresh wineskins, so both are preserved.” (Luke 9: 14-17)

When Jesus speaks the words that are quoted above, he is responding to a challenge set before him by the disciples of John the Baptist in regards to fasting: “Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples do not fast?” Jesus responds by describing his followers using two unusual images - “unshrunk cloth” and “new wineskins.” In both cases, Jesus is comparing the new life that he has come to offer to the old life represented by the “old time religion” of his day. The Pharisees totally centered their lives on obedience to the law; the followers of John the Baptist totally centered their lives on John’s baptism of repentance. The problem with both the Pharisees and followers of John is that they saw the law or baptism as the complete embodiment of all God was, is, or will be in the world. The God of the Pharisees and the God of the followers of John was not a living God, a God who could do new and surprising things - a God with whom believers could have a relationship.

Jesus speaks of a new life in regards to those who follow him, a new life that he described as “new wine” in the gospel of Luke. In the John’s gospel, Jesus changes the ritual water of Jewish purification into wine at the wedding of Cana, which illustrates once again the new life that the Messiah brings into the world. God’s law and John’s baptism were stepping stones into the new life of Jesus, but life in Christ could not be categorized, summarized, or organized into something under the total manipulation of the sinful human heart. In Jesus, we are dealing with a living other, one with whom we relate in the same way we relate to the others we

encounter in our lives each day. We never wake up each day saying, “I know exactly how my day will go... I know exactly who I will encounter.” Yet, we often view our Christianity as a static rather than a dynamic part of our lives. Yes, the church does run on a schedule, but we cannot schedule our encounters with Jesus Christ or the movement of the Holy Spirit in our lives. To say that we worship this hour on this day or we celebrate this season or we practice this sacrament does not mean we confine our Christianity to just those days, seasons, and sacraments.

Authentic Christianity is about one’s heart-to-heart encounter with the living God - a relationship more real, more profound, and more effective than the closest relationships we experience in this world, including husband/wife or parent/child. The “new wine” of which Christ speaks is the new life of living with Christ in the same way that the first disciples lived with their Lord - they spoke to him as he spoke to them; they learned from him every day; they observed the miracle of Christ’s love working in the lives of others, then they shared that miracle by living out Christ’s love in their lives.

As we enter the New Year, Christ invites us to become new wineskins, filled with the Holy Spirit and its meaningful life. Repentance is part of this, as is obedience to the law of Christ’s love and the practices of our worship, but both must only serve to lead us to the center of our faith - our living relationship with the Son of God. With Christ we cannot possibly know what to expect, but we can live in expectation, because every day, every moment, is new and different; every moment we are called to be more like our Lord than the moment before. This is a radical change in our way of thinking and our way of living.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

YOUTH CLASSES

GOD'S TRAILBLAZERS (Preschool - 3rd grade)

Teacher: Kathy Moser

EPIPHANY, BIBLE ACTIVITIES AND BIBLE VERSES

We will be having Sunday School downstairs in Room 8 following the children's message. We will begin the year with an Epiphany lesson "The Magi Visit the Messiah" along with a fun "Star search" activity.

Our "Little Helping Hands service project", will be on the second Sunday of the month. We made 44 packs last month! On the last two Sundays of this month, we will have a lesson on Creation including a Bible activity. The Memory Verse for the Creation lesson will be Psalm 24:1.

CRUSADERS & FAITH ENCOUNTERS (4th grade & older)

Teachers: Debbie Hobbs & Bonnie Stull

GRAB YOUR WORSHIP BAG

Children and youth in 4th grade and above are encouraged to pick up an activity packet and WORSHIP BAGS, and to sit with their families during worship. These resources contain activities to enhance their worship experience. Look for the Children in Worship display in the narthex.

LIBRARY NEWS

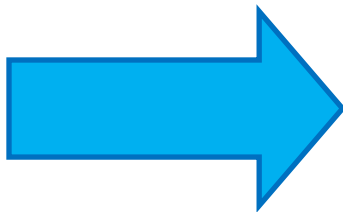
Our theme for January will be "Prayer". There are a variety of books on prayer in our library such as "Praying with Power", "The Only Necessary Thing", "Breaking the Prayer Barrier", and "The Prayers of Kierkegaard" just to name a few. These and other books on prayer will be on the credenza in Fellowship Hall. Instructions for checking out books and the "check out" card basket will be in Fellowship Hall. When returning books, please leave them on the desk in the library. The library is open before and after the worship service. Please contact Kathy Moser, your librarian, if you have any questions. Thank you!



Christmas
Cantata



Blessing &
Delivering
Ryan's Bears



It means that we live to change the lives of others. Are we ready for the radical life of being a Christian in 2025? This community is going to need us more than ever – all of us, in all the ways that Christ calls us to serve. If we make this commitment, it will be so much more than a happy New Year – it will provide a joyous new wine for all the lives we touch.

Dr. Mack

MISSION NEWS

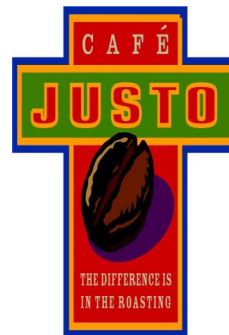
TRINITY FOOD PANTRY

Trinity's Food Pantry is open **Tuesday and Thursday from 12:00 to 3:00 pm** in basement of the Sanctuary building. Thanks for your food and monetary donations.

Casa Maria sandwich making
Every second Sunday in Fellowship Hall after the Sanctuary service.
The next one is **January 12, 2025**

Just Coffee For Sale

The Mission Committee sells Just Coffee before and after church each Sunday in Fellowship Hall . The display is near the stained glass window manned by volunteers. You may pay by cash or check. Coffee will be \$10 and the proceeds benefit Café Justo which is a grower-owned Coffee Cooperative based in southern Chiapas Mexico. For info visit justcoffee.org.



CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

WHO'S IN YOUR PEW Meet Russell & Jessie Hastings

Russell

What did you do for a living? *I worked for the US Army - foreign sales contracts.*

Where is your hometown? *Tucson*

What do you like to do with your leisure time? *I like to play chamber music.*

What is your favorite food? *Roast beef*

What is your favorite hymn or Bible verse? *"If thou shalt suffer God to thee"*

What does this church mean to you? *Our family away from home with a chance for musical expression.*

What is something that people would not know about you? *I play Christmas carols on the accordion.*



Jessie

What did you do for a living?

I was a community college English professor.

Where is your hometown? *Missoula, Montana*

What do you like to do with your leisure time?
Travel, cook and garden

What is your favorite food? *Ice cream*

What is your favorite Bible verse? *Psalm 21 "I shall lift mine eyes unto the hills."*

What does this church mean to you? *Our family away from home with a chance for musical expression.*

What is something that people would not know about you? *I was a cab driver in Texarkana.*



Birthday & Anniversary
Celebration **Sunday, January 19**
in Fellowship Hall after worship

SESSION NOTES

Once again, Session enjoyed hosting the Deacons at their annual joint December dinner and meeting. And once again, the Elders outdid themselves with the cooking while the Deacons cleaned up afterward. And one more time we are reminded of the important work accomplished by the Deaconate as their members care for the special concerns of our congregation. Under the leadership of Daphne Madson, we recognize that Trinity Deacons “Rock.” They claim that they had a quiet year, but they kept up with the congregation with cards, visits and phone calls, delivered prayer shawls and lilies and hosted a picnic at Reid Park. During the dinner we said farewell to Wade Henderson, Ruth Myers, Koffi Seddo and Cheyenne Williams as they “retire” from service as Deacons. We welcomed Karen James and Kuman Tenge into the 2027 Class as they join Derry Dean and Maggie McConnell to serve our Trinity family.

The Elders took a turn to fill in the Deacons about Session work during 2024. Administration & Personnel has taken over staff reviews and learned how extraordinary our staff is as they perform above and beyond their job descriptions. Stewardship & Finance reported that the budget deficit was smaller in 2024 than in 2023. Christian Ed told how the new science and mission lecture series is being well received. Property reported that our insurance will pay for our storm damaged roof. Worship Committee filled in a few details about the state of our organ and plans for sanctuary improvements. Mission Committee has been kept on track by Billie Holbrook and many volunteers after the loss of DeDe Markin. Throughout the reporting there were big shout outs for the unbelievable work done by Sheila Croteau and Peter Holbrook.

After the joint dinner and meeting the Elders held their December meeting in the Upper Room East. Here are the highlights of that meeting:

- Session approved that the Rev. Brad Munroe preach on January 5, 2025.
- Session approved that the Annual Congrega-

tional Meeting to be held on February 9, 2025.

- Session approved the dates for Communion during the year of 2025 – still the first Sunday of each month. Next meeting they will add Communion service for Maundy Thursday.
- Session approved the 2025 budget.
- Session approved waiving the \$20 per day fee for the people helping Trinity with the 4th Avenue Street Fair.
- Session learned that early next year Dr. Mack and Lynn Moser will be visiting churches in El Paso and Austin to see how they redesigned their sanctuaries to tie in more closely with community.
- Session lauded Chuck Sosna and Barbara Pollock as they “retire” from Elder service for a while. We welcomed Carolyn Maycher and Cheyenne Williams for Elder Class 2027 along with John Hill and Janet Jones.

We are so grateful for those who serve as church leaders in our congregation.

Janet Hooper
Clerk of Session



Christmas Cantata



TRINITY MILESTONES

January Birthdays

1	Sanani Mukadesa	22	Karen Sims
2	Emmanuel Alley	23	Hannah Toering
2	Dale McCray	24	David Toering
2	Dr. Mack Sigmon	24	Cindy Toering
2	Barbara Pollack	27	Janet Munson
9	Jeri Ogden	27	Tom Henderson
11	James Hooper	30	Bobby Whipple
15	Peggy Chamberlain	31	Ezra Moyer
19	Matt Kreamer		

February Birthdays (1—10)

8 Emmanuelle Seddo

January Anniversaries

15 Lynn & Kathy Moser



Honoring & Memorials

In Honor of Liz Strong by Annie & Bates Butler

TRINITY WOMEN

The Horizon's Bible Study meets **Tuesday, January 14 at 9:30 am in the Library.** Dr. Mack leads the study "Who Is Jesus? What a Difference a Lens Makes" by Judy Yates Siker. Nine lessons explore the "Who is Jesus?" through a theological lens. Answers are through the lenses of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, Hebrews, the non-canonical gospels, Abrahamic Faiths, & contemporary cultural interpretations.

Ryan's Bears meets **Tuesday, January 21 at 9:30 am in Fellowship Hall**, to begin making Teddy Bears for Christmas 2025. Everyone is always welcomed to help cut them out and to stuff them. Donations of fabric are always needed along with black embroidery thread, ribbon to put around their necks & buttons for their eyes, nickel size with two holes. We made 98 bears this past year which is a record. When we began 25 years ago finishing 30-40 bears was an accomplishment. This year along with the bears 20 lap size quilts and 16 caps were distributed. Any questions call Ruth Myers 520-326-6888. Many thanks to the many hands that created the bears and for Mack's blessing.

NEW ELDERS & DEACONS

New ruling elders & deacons for the Class of 2027 will be training and begin service this month. Thank you to the following people for their willingness to serve our church.
Deacons are Karen James, Kuman Tenge, Derry Dean and Maggie McConnell
Elders are Carolyn Maycher, Cheyenne Williams, John Hill and Janet Jones



SCRIPTURE READINGS

January 5 Jer. 31:7-14 & Psalm 147:12-20; Eph. 1:3-4; John 1:(1-9) 10-18
January 12 Isa. 43:1-7 & Psalm 29; Acts 8:14-17; Luke 3:15-17, 21-22
January 19 Isa. 62:1-5 & Psalm 36:5-10; 1 Cor. 12:1-11; John 2:1-11
January 26 Neh. 8:1-3,5-6, 8-10 & Psalm 19; 1 Cor. 12:12-31a; Luke 4:14-21