

December 2023

Volume 33, Issue 12

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Advent Mini Concerts

Trinity's Advent mini-concerts begin December 10 & are immediately following the worship service in our Sanctuary. The programs last approximately 20 minutes and can be enjoyed IN PERSON or ONLINE.

December 10 – "A Jazzy Holiday" – the Trinity Jazz Ensemble
December 17 – "Instrumental Joy" – the Trinity string quartet led by Ellen Ensey, violinist

Cantata Sunday December 17

Our worship service will feature a new cantata "O Holy Light" which carries singers and listeners through a journey of the celebration of The Light of the world. Filled with beloved carols and exciting songs from the inimitable Mary McDonald, this cantata captures the many moods of Christmas with a fresh voice. The narration explores God's Light contrasted with the world's darkness, and how the Holy Light of Jesus will never be quenched. Join us in the Sanctuary or Online at www.trinitytucson.org/watch-live as we enjoy this cantata featuring the Trinity Choir and Orchestra. This joyous presentation will be the perfect time to invite someone to enjoy it with you IN PERSON or ONLINE at trinitytucson.org/watch-live.

Christmas Eve Services December 24

Worship Service 10:20 am

The service will include a special reading of the Christmas story by Dr. Mack during the children's message.

Christmas Café in Fellowship Hall 5:30 pm

Enjoy hot cider, cocoa, sandwich fixings, cookies and fellowship with friends old and new

Please bring holiday goodies, veggies or fruit to share.

Candlelight Christmas Eve 6:30 pm

The service opens with children and youth processing into the Sanctuary dressed up as characters in the nativity story. Traditional lessons and carols will follow with a Christmas message, led by Dr. Mack, along with instrumentalists & vocalists

Bring your family, friends and neighbors as we celebrate our Lord's birth on this holy day! IN PERSON or ONLINE.

PASTORAL LETTER

Christmas is always flooded with nostalgia and sentimentality. It is something that all of us feel because it reminds us of the past. I think some of that emotion has to do with losing our childhood, because the traditions of Christmas are so child-centered. There is within us a yearning to return to the time when we experienced Christmas as children. During the Christmas holiday it is not unusual to read or hear about “the magic of Christmas.” Often that phrase appears in ads to sell products. Retail businesses know that emotions sell, which is one of the reasons why Christmas has the highest amount of retail sales than any other time of the year. The economy is often evaluated on the annual amount spent for Christmas. After Christmas is over, the media outlets will declare whether this has been a “good” year or a “bad” year for our country. But for we who believe in Jesus Christ, there is no such thing as a “retail” Christmas. Christmas is not about magic or even childhood – it is about God’s love for us and the world. This Christmas bears its own irony because of the events that are taking place in the birthplace of Jesus. The city leaders in Bethlehem have removed the traditional Christmas appointments that usually decorate the city for the large number of tourists who travel there. A spokesman for Bethlehem explained the decision: “The reason is the general situation in Palestine; people are not really into any celebration, they are sad, angry and upset... This year the situation in Bethlehem is unprecedented and the mood and vibes are extremely sad, and that is exactly what the world should see, and realize that these are not normal circumstances... Prayers and religious ceremonies will still be allowed to take place.” But when Jesus was born, Bethlehem was also a sad place. In first-century Palestine there was war, there was hunger, there was religious conflict, and the usual problems that plague humanity. The reason God sent the Messiah was not to give the world appealing decorations or magic, but to give hope to humanity amidst the world’s

sorrow. While we may decorate our mantels or tables with a beautiful crèche (some of them being ridiculously expensive) the birth of Christ did not take place to provide humanity with nice decorations. Grace is the only ornament that accurately describes the meaning of Christ’s birth. Grace is something we cannot hang on a Christmas tree or represent in lights or wreathes. Grace is a living ornament within our hearts. We often forget that, according to the gospels, the birth of Jesus Christ was a fearful event for some. Christ’s birth was a threat to King Herod. The declaration of the Messiah’s arrival was a threat to the religious leaders of Israel, including those who ruled the temple in Jerusalem. That is why instead of concentrating on the beginning of Jesus’s life, disciples focus on how it ended. The life that began with stars, angels, and gifts ended with the most humiliating of deaths upon the cross. Our Christmas is not a traditional celebration of the season, but the knowledge of how God saved us – through the death and resurrection of his Son. That is the memory we should celebrate and cherish this time of the year – and the memory that opened the way to giving us lives of purpose and meaning. I hope however you celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ this year, it is a joyful recognition of the grace that floods our hearts and offers hope to the world. Have a Merry Christmas.

Dr. Mack



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

YOUTH CLASSES

GOD'S TRAILBLAZERS (children preschool - 2nd grade)

Teacher: Kathy Moser

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS

We will be having in-person Sunday School downstairs in Room 8 following the children's message.

We will celebrate and learn about Advent and Christmas (Jesus, our Savior's birth) through Bible stories, sticker books and crafts.

CRUSADERS & FAITH ENCOUNTERS (3rd grade & older)

Teacher: Debbie Hobbs & Bonnie Stull

Crusaders (3rd, 4th and 5th graders) Each week we will link our class lessons, activities and songs to the scriptures read in worship. By connecting lessons with the Children's message and scriptures from worship, this will enable families to share insights and reflect upon a common Biblical theme each week.

Faith Encounters (grades 6 and older) This group will be encouraged to bring their faith questions as we "dissect and discuss" the scripture passages and sermon topics presented in worship for that day.

December 10 – Sermon – "Voices in the Wilderness" OT – Psalm 85: 4-13 NT – Mark 1: 1-8

December 24 – Sermon – "The Mystery" OT – Isaiah 9: 2-7 NT – Romans 16: 25-27

December 31 – "Waiting for God" OT – Isaiah 61: 10-11 NT – Luke 2: 22-40

Both classes are led by Debbie Hobbs and Bonnie Stull and meet downstairs in Room 1.

ADULT CLASSES

MACK'S ADVENT CLASS "AN UNLIKELY ADVENT"

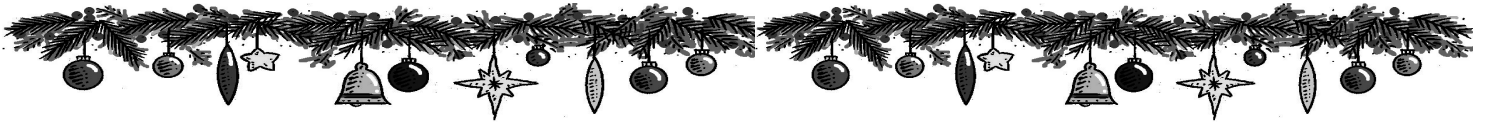
Mack's Advent Study begins December 3 from 9:00 am to 9:45 am in the Chapel. "An Unlikely Advent." Presented by Pastor Rachel Billups, "guides readers through the themes of hope, love, joy and peace by sharing the stories of Elizabeth and Zechariah, Herod, the magi and the shepherds". The class includes a video and a booklet which can either be downloaded or purchased. We have purchased 5 books to have available for the class at \$14.00 each. You may also purchase the book at <https://www.cokesbury.com/an-unlikely-advent-study?pagenumber=1> or Amazon for the book or Kindle version <https://a.co/d/ddeTJir>. Rachel Billups provides an introductory video on You Tube at <https://youtu.be/XSitzUBeeYY>. The class will meet four Sundays.

ADVENT & YEAR ROUND DEVOTIONS



The Christian Education committee recommends the D365 devotional for use during Advent (and year round). Visit <https://d365.org> or download the free D365 app from your app store. It has 5 steps of "pause, listen, think, pray, go" including scripture and music each day.

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS



WHO'S IN YOUR VIRTUAL PEW

Meet Sherry Letson

What did you do for a living?

I worked for the United States Postal Service here in Tucson for 31 years. I retired in 2013.

Where is your hometown?

I was born in Tucson and have lived here my whole life except for 1960-1967 when we lived in Carlsbad, New Mexico.

What do you like to do in your leisure time?

Strolling in nature, watching birds, collecting rocks, taking pictures of God's creation.

What is your favorite food?

It's hard to pick a favorite food, but candied walnut shrimp is delicious.

What are your favorite hymns & Bible verses? My favorite hymn is "Here I Am, Lord." It always opens my heart.

What does this church mean to you?

I was baptized at Trinity in the late 1950's. I grew up in the church, so my ties go way back. I've learned so much and met so many great people (saints all) at Trinity through the years. Trinity is my spiritual home and my spiritual family.

What is something that many people would not know about you?

The doctor that brought me into this world (at TMC) was Dr. George King who was a longtime member here at Trinity.



ORDER YOUR POINSETTIA



A cherished tradition at Trinity, poinsettias adorn the Sanctuary enriching worship during Advent. The cost is \$10 each and you may order as

many as you like. You may pick up your poinsettia after the Christmas Eve services or leave them to be distributed by the Deacons. Order forms are in this VISION or this Sunday December 3's bulletin.



SCRIPTURE READINGS

December 2 Isaiah 64:1-9 & Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; 1 Cor. 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37

December 10 Isaiah 40:1-11 & Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; 2 Peter 3:8-15a; Mark 1:1-8

December 17 Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 & Psalm 126 or Luke 1:46b-55; 1 Thess. 5:16-24; John 1:6-8, 19-28

December 24 Isaiah 9:2-7 & Psalm 96; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14

December 31 Isaiah 61:10-62:3 & Psalm 148; Gal. 4:4-7; Luke 2:22-40

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

Through the Christmas Joy Offering Presbyterian church congregations have long expressed their compassion for others, especially for those who serve the church. This Offering is received for the equal benefit of the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions, which distributes financial assistance to eligible church workers and their families, and racial ethnic schools and colleges of the PC(USA). The offering will be taken in person **Sunday, December 24**. You may also mail in your donation or make it online & designate "Christmas Joy Offering" in your memo throughout the month of December.



CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

Just Coffee For Sale

The Mission Committee sells Just Coffee in Fellowship Hall before and after church each Sunday. The display is near the stained glass window manned by volunteers.

You may pay by cash or check.

Coffee will be \$10 or \$11 and the proceeds benefit Café Justo, a Grower - owned Coffee Cooperative in southern Chiapas Mexico, formed to address the poverty and migration from Mexico to the U.S.A. More information about the cooperative is available at justcoffee.org.



4th Avenue Street Fair Opportunities Saturday 12/9 & Sunday 12/10

Cup of Water is back. During the 4th Ave Street Fair Trinity hands out water to passers-by. Sign up to help Saturday and Sunday from 12-3pm when volunteers are needed. There will be a sign-up sheet at the Narthex Credenza or call Billie Holbrook. Leave your name and phone number; she will call you to confirm the day before.



COLLEGE AGE STUDENTS

Join in the fellowship with Presbyterian Campus Ministry for a meeting, Bible study & dinner

Wednesdays at 6:00 pm at Our Savior Lutheran Church (Campbell north of Speedway).

For more information, check the website pcmarizona.org or contact them at pastor.lcmuofa@gmail.com

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 & monetary donations.

Vouchers for duplicate Arizona ID cards are given out when the Food Pantry is open.

Casa Maria
sandwich making
December 10, 2023
in Fellowship Hall after
the Sanctuary service &
Advent Mini Concert.



A big thank you to everyone who donated, walked, and/or fundraised for this year's Tucson CROP Hunger Walk.

The grand total for this year's Walk was \$8,902 with Trinity's team raising and contributing \$3,517! CWS will put these funds to good use in the fight against hunger around the world and here at home! Thanks to Trinity for your continuing participation, generosity & for being the host location again this year.



Session Notes

Clerk Janet Hooper was away for a grandchildren's holiday, but we managed to have a Session meeting anyway on November 21. Thanks to Janet for preparing the docket, and assisting with a template for the minutes. John Hill was appointed acting clerk while Janet was away.

- Session dissolved the Long-Range Development Team. Thanks to Bucky Lovejoy for his leadership of this group for many years.
- The next meeting of Session will be a joint in-person meeting with the Deacons December 11.
- Liz Barlow and Eileen Lamse were approved as at-large members of the Stewardship & Finance Committee.
- Daphne Madson reported that people for whom DeDe Markin was Deacon have been reassigned to other Deacons.
- We've reached winter attendance levels of 156 (in-person plus online) averaged over the last two weeks.
- We will have a brief Called Congregational Meeting on December 3rd to elect a new class of Elders and Deacons.
- The three quilts in the raffle were won by Marilyn Slagle, Liz Barlow and Randi Windsor. \$380 was raised for the Trinity Food Pantry.
- Session approved job descriptions for Nursery Attendant and Food Ministries Administrator. These positions will be advertised soon.
- Astronomer John Hill will present the Star of Bethlehem talk after worship on January 7th.
- Growth & Outreach Committee has "I Love Trinity's Music" stickers for advertising the Cantata. Sheila Croteau is making exterior banners and posters.
- See many other items in this Vision for all the things Mission Committee is doing to help people in need over the holidays.
- Session approved a new Memorial Service Handbook prepared by the Worship Committee.
- In the first installment of "Meet the Staff", we

had an interesting and informative discussion with Security Monitor Kyle Elliott. We all see Kyle on Sunday morning. He also works 5pm-midnight on Monday-Thursday evenings. Kyle has been working at Trinity for 11.5 years.

Acting Clerk, John Hill

TRINITY WOMEN



The Horizon's Bible Study Dr. Mack leads a new study "*Sacred Encounters: The Power and Presence of Jesus Christ in Luke - Acts*" by Olive Mahabir. The group meets in person in **the Library Tuesday, December 12 at 10:00 am and everyone is welcome.**



This year 86 bears were completed!! After they are blessed December 3 they will be delivered to Arizona Children's Association, Gospel Rescue Mission, Primavera & Our Family Social Services for their Christmas Giving. The bears are dedicated to the memory of Imogene Moser, Leone Mohny and Bunny Mallams who helped make many a bear. We start making bears for Christmas 2024 on **January 16, 2024 and meet at 9:30 AM in Fellowship Hall.** Questions, call Ruth Myers 520-326-6888

TRINITY MILESTONES



HONORING & MEMORIALS

In Memory of DeDe Markin by Melinda Arnold

In Memory of DeDe Markin by Carolyn Maycher

In Memory of Bunny Mallams by Bonnie Stull

In Memory of Bunny Mallams by Tom & Wade Henderson

In Memory of Bunny Mallams by Don & Ruth Myers

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

| | | | |
|----|----------------------|----|-------------------|
| 2 | Ida Wickizer | 17 | Heather Lind |
| 4 | Melinda Arnold | 19 | Ann Butler |
| 5 | Errol Dimenstein | 19 | Janet Jones |
| 6 | Elliott Koeppen - 94 | 22 | Jeremy Roggow |
| | | 22 | Beatrice Spillers |
| 7 | Marilyn Slagle | 25 | Charity Everitt |
| 9 | Bonnie Stull | 29 | Don Myers |
| 12 | Rosalie Goll | 31 | Sherry Letson |
| 13 | John Hill | | |

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS (1-10)

| | | | |
|---|-----------------|---|-----------------|
| 1 | Sanani Mukadesa | 2 | Dr. Mack Sigmon |
| 2 | Dale McCray | 9 | Jeri Ogden |

December Anniversaries

17 Bobby Whipple & Sherry Letson



TPW QUILT RAFFLE

The three quilts were raffled off November 19. The winners were Randi Windsor, Marilyn Slagle and Liz Barlow. Each quilt had had a pillow that matched it. It “takes a church” to successfully raffle off a quilt. Libby Hoffman (d. 1991) made 30 butterfly blocks. She gave them to Mary Wong (d. 2023) a quilter extraordinaire and she passed them on to Ruth Myers. The blocks were sorted into groups of nine each. Bonnie Stull sewed them into quilt tops using fabric from Mary Wong’s stash. Ruth Myers did the machine quilting. A pillow was made from the remaining blocks to match each quilt. \$380 worth of raffle tickets were sold. The money from the raffle will benefit Trinity’s Food Pantry Holiday Giving. Thank you to Mack for drawing the tickets and to everyone else who participated.



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