

The Trinity Window

TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, 903 FOREST AVENUE, HENRICO, VA 23229
804-288-6056

December 2024

Pastor's Pen



'Tis the season! Just in case you haven't looked at the calendar, we are rapidly approaching the Advent/Christmas season and the end of the year. I'll have more about the end of the year in next month's message.

While we are all very familiar with Christmas, we tend to be less versed on what Advent really is. Advent is preparation for the second-most important event on our Christian calendar, with Easter being the primary and faith-defining event. According to the United Methodist Book of Worship, "Advent is a season of four weeks including four Sundays. Advent derives from the Latin *adventus*, which means "coming." The season proclaims the comings of the Christ – whose birth we prepare to celebrate again, who comes continually in Word and Spirit, and whose return in final victory we anticipate. Each year Advent calls the community of faith to prepare for these comings; historically, the season is marked by fasts of preparation. Each Sunday of Advent has its distinctive theme: Christ's coming in final victory (First Sunday), John the Baptist (Second and Third Sundays), and the events immediately preceding the birth of Jesus Christ (Fourth Sunday)."

As we barrel towards Christmas, let us remember to prepare our hearts, minds, and spirits for the Advent of the One who came to save us all. Take time to be with family, to sing songs, to remember what's important in our lives. Then, armed with our season of preparation, celebrate fully the entirety of the Christmas season, which begins on Christmas Day and lasts to Epiphany on January 6 (the 12 Days of Christmas).

Let us celebrate, together. This issue of the Window highlights our Advent events through Christmas Eve. Pay attention to them, put them on your calendar, and sign up! Most importantly, come, and invite others with you to experience how we at Trinity UMC celebrate the season. Also check out the article about our Christmas offering that, again this year, will go to support United Methodist Family Services.

Yours in Christ,

Christmas Eve Worship

Celebrate Christ's birth at Trinity. We will have four worship services on **Tuesday, December 24**, for you and your family.

4:00 PM Family Service with Instant Kids Pageant

We are so excited to share with you a reimagined Christmas pageant that focuses on telling the Christmas Story and all voices singing our favorite Christmas carols! The pageant will take place during the 4 PM Christmas Eve Family Service in the sanctuary.

6:00 PM Modern Christmas Eve Worship Service (also [online](#))

During this service, we will sing carols led by our modern worship band, share communion, and celebrate the joy and peace Christ brings. Our service will culminate in a traditional candlelight vigil. We hope you and your family will join us for this most meaningful celebration!

8:00 PM Christmas Eve Worship Service (also [online](#))

A traditional format service with choir and organ, special Christmas Communion, and Candlelight vigil. Come celebrate together this meaningful celebration of this most holy night.

11:00 PM Christmas Eve Worship Service (also [online](#))

A traditional Christmas Eve worship service. This late night service is a more intimate format, featuring Christmas music, a special Christmas Communion, and candlelight vigil. Come, celebrate, as we bring in Christmas Day together.

Advent Sunday Evenings

Advent will feature three weeks of being together for a meal and activities. All activities are family-friendly, and we encourage you to bring friends and neighbors with you as well.

Week 1, December 8:

“Lessons and Carols” This year’s program will feature several guest musicians and vocalists. A reception will follow. The program will start at 4:00 PM

Week 2, December 15

“Create and Celebrate” returns with family-friendly Christmas crafts. There will be four crafts for adults and four for children. A covered-dish dinner will take place at 6:00 PM followed by the crafts. Be sure to bring your favorite dish to share.

Week 3, December 22

“Community Christmas Party” with guests of all ages from Home Again shelters and other Trinity folks for a special dinner and evening together! We will have a catered meal from Global Fusion catering company followed by activities for us to interact with and form relationships with our guests. You’re invited! Party is from 6 –8 PM.

TRINITY UMC PRESENTS:

COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS DINNER

JOIN GUESTS FROM HOME AGAIN SHELTER FOR A SPECIAL EVENING!



CATERED BY GLOBAL FUSION RVA

Crafts for Create & Celebrate



Lessons & Carols Choir

The service of Lessons & Carols will take place **Sunday, December 8** at 4:00 PM. We hope you, your friends, neighbors, and loved ones will join us. There will be a reception in Trinity Hall after the event!



Community Christmas Party

On Sunday, December 22, Trinity will host guests from Home Again for a Christmas celebration in Trinity Hall. For over forty years, Home Again has been working to help people who experiences homelessness in the Richmond area. In 2023, Home Again assisted over 400 men, women, children, and Veterans who were struggling with their housing. Through the Home Again staff and volunteers, this organization works to get people back into safe, decent, and affordable housing.

At the Dillard Day of Learning in September, Kim Bobo and her team from Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy focused on four themes Advocacy, Health Equity, Affordable Housing, and Criminal Justice. This Christmas celebration for our Home Again guests is a gentle reminder about the needs of the people in our community as presented by Kim Bobo and her staff.

The celebration starts at 6 PM in Trinity Hall, and we will need your help. Supplies will be given to Home Again that are collected from Trinity members. A list of items we would like to collect can be found on the link below. We also need volunteers to assist with activities, and to help with clean up after. Working to be good stewards of our resources, we ask that Trinity members who would like to attend and eat with our guests sign up at trinityumc.net/event/n6ft3gp/Christmas-party.

We want our guests to feel comfortable and welcomed during their time with us. Home Again will provide us with guidance for interacting with our guests along with a few conversation starters for each table.

If you have questions, reach out to Daniel Guenther or Bill Pike.



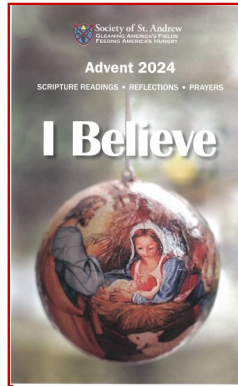
Pub Theology: Christmas Carols

Join us on **Tuesday, December 10** at WayGone Brewery on Patterson Avenue at 6 PM for an evening of singing Christmas carols. Our church organist, Laura Candler-White, will be leading us in this festive session. The church will provide pizza, and we ask all attendees to make a \$5.00 donation to offset the cost of the pizza. Beverage purchases are the responsibility of each person. We hope to see you there!



Student Christmas Party

Students Christmas Party will be **December 8 from 6-8 PM!** We'll have a great night of food, fun, and fellowship, featuring Secret Santa and only the tackiest of Christmas Sweaters! It'll be a great night together!



Advent Devotional

As the Advent season quickly draws near, it is easy to feel anxiety about all the upcoming festive preparations, but Advent is a season for reflection as well as preparation. Let us stay grounded this season as we prepare with **I Believe** — The Society of St. Andrew's seasonal devotional booklet.

This year's theme is a reminder to us all as we prepare for the celebration of the coming of the Christ child that we reflect and know why we believe. Why, you ask? So we can share our beliefs and faith stories with others. As we enter this busy, but reflective season, may we be filled to overflowing with faith, trust, and understanding only God provides.

Twenty-five daily devotions – all new for 2024 – include the stories and experiences of people of faith, both pastors and laypersons, from all walks of life, sharing why they believe. An annual fundraiser, these free Advent resources, used by hundreds of congregations of all denominations across the United States, provide a powerful opportunity for your congregation to feed their spiritual hunger and to support The Society of St. Andrew's feeding ministries, showing Jesus' concern for the least, the last, and the lost.

There are copies of the devotional in the Welcome Center and in the Narthex. You can get a copy of the devotion downloaded to your computer or request that a daily email of the devotion be sent to you by going to <https://endhunger.org/advent/>.

Merry Christmas from the Staff at Trinity!

Juanita Dodson
 Kay Sgo
 Phil Sisk
 Bill Piche
 Paul Cadden
 Andy Osine
 Nancy Bergman
 Don Johnson
 Dan Greuter
 Jen Williams
 Kenzel Pugh



Advent/Christmas Offering

Our Trinity Christmas offering this year goes to United Methodist Family Services. We have a long history of being one of UMFS's greatest church financial supporters.

Unwavering champions for children and families. United Methodist Family Services is an unwavering champion for high-risk children and families in Virginia. UMFS serves children in foster care and children struggling with mental health and behavioral challenges. They provide foster care and adoption programs, specialized education schools, and mental health programs.

Your support of the UMFS offering will help children in foster care like Damonte. Damonte's mother was not able to care for him after his father died. At UMFS, Damonte was matched with a loving foster mother who helped nurture his kind-hearted spirit. He was able to learn the skills he'll need to become a productive adult. Damonte recently celebrated his high school graduation and is looking forward to the next step in his journey.

Your support of UMFS will also help children struggling with mental health challenges like Mackenzie. Mackenzie experienced severe trauma as a young child. Her behavioral and mental health challenges continued to escalate. When she was 13, Mackenzie came to UMFS and began a healing journey that would change her life. Today she has a stable home and a job she enjoys. Mackenzie shared that "I never would have thought I'd be where I am today."

Your offering gift will also support students who need specialized education like Sophia. Sophia struggled with developmental challenges. She was easily distracted and overstimulated in a traditional classroom. That led to increasing behavioral challenges. The small class sizes and trauma-informed, therapeutic support at UMFS helped Sophia thrive. As her parents shared, "Sophia's growth has been tremendous."

Your gift to UMFS will help children and families in crisis, providing them with much-needed resources and tools for success. Together we can help create a brighter future for high-risk children across Virginia.

Trinity Foundation Matching Advent/Christmas Offering Again

As the year draws to a close, the Trinity Foundation is thankful for our congregation and the many ways we serve the community. One important opportunity to do this is through the church's annual Advent/Christmas offering, which will once again support United Methodist Family Services. The congregation has responded very well over the past few years, and the Trinity Foundation will again match all gifts by the congregation up to \$7,500. This is just one example of how we can come together to do God's work.

The Trinity Foundation was started in 1971 and supports items outside of the church's budget, including mission projects, church initiatives, scholarships, and programs such as the Dillard Forum. Please keep the Trinity Foundation in mind if you are considering year-end giving from an IRA account or Planned Giving and contact the church office to learn more.

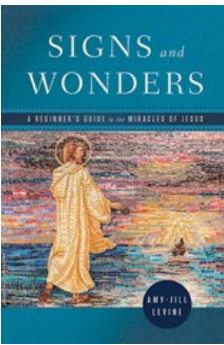


Upcoming Events

Tuesday, January 2 Peggy Watson will present a program on OSHER. An OSHER membership has benefits well beyond their phenomenal programs! We will be in the Welcome Center from 2:00 – 3:30 PM.

Tuesday, February 25 Celebrate Heart Month! We will have a program by Denis Popp of The Mended Hearts, Inc., Central Virginia Chapter. Come hear how to keep our hearts healthier! Program time is 2:00 – 3:30 PM in the Welcome Center. Refreshments will be provided.

Young at Heart programs are open to everyone. Come and bring a friend!



3M Study to Study “Signs and Wonders”

Our Wednesday Night Study Group, “3M” will study “Signs and Wonders” by Amy-Jill Levine starting **Wednesday, January 8**. This study looks at six miracles of Jesus. We gather in person as well as by Zoom, 6 – 7:30 PM. Contact Judy Oguich for the Zoom link. The book is avail-

able from Amazon and from Cokesbury. We always welcome new members!! Contact Judy Oguich for any questions.



Winter Weather Decisions

Decisions for closing our building related to winter weather are tricky. Basically, we follow the closing announcements from Henrico County Public Schools. For example, if schools close early or are on a delayed opening, Trinity’s opening and closing times are adjusted. If Henrico schools are closed, Trinity will be closed, and this would include all day and evening events. Our ability to re-open the building after a winter weather event depends upon how quickly we can clear our sidewalks and parking lots. If we can safely get people on to our grounds and into our building, then Trinity might return to normal operations quicker than the school system. Decisions related to closing the building on Saturdays and Sundays will be made based upon weather conditions at that time. Questions contact Bill Pike



Confirmation

Students in 7th Grade and above, you are invited to participate in the process of Confirmation this coming spring. Confirmation is the means by which you will begin to explore and understand who God is for you, and what it means to be a part of a church. This process culminates with you joining the church as members on **Confirmation Sunday**, which is scheduled for **March 23!**

We will have a Confirmation Orientation on **January 12 from 12:30-1:30 PM in the Students Center**. All Confirmation sessions will be on **Sundays from 12:30 -2:00 PM beginning on January 26**. Lunch will be provided, and it is acceptable to miss a session or two due to scheduling conflicts. All those who wish to go through confirmation this year, or have questions about the process, should contact Daniel Guenther by **December 8**.

We look forward to sharing in this transformative time!



Mail Call for Honduras!

Our Medical Mission Team to Honduras takes place January 18 - 25. One of the highlights of our mission team’s day is receiving mail. We invite you to consider writing a note of support to each of our team members – whether you know them or not. A note of encouragement goes a long way! Please have notes to Judy Oguich by **Tuesday, January 14**.

Thank you in advance for supporting our Medical Team to Honduras!!

Matthew Andrako
Linda Hart
Hannah Hayes
Wendy Mallory
Kristen Powell
Mark Shreve
Virginia Thompson Guidry

Diana Hernandez
Roger Hart
Susan Hayes
Chris Morris
Virginia Rhines
Ginny Witman
Joseph Thompson





What's Happening in Trinity KIDS Ministry?

Kids Discipleship during the 10am hour occurs in these locations:

Nursery: Birth – 3 year olds
Room 208: Preschoolers (3-5 year olds)
Room 302: Elementary schoolers

Here's what we're learning this month!



At Christmas, gifts are all around us, but we know the holiday isn't about the toys—it's about the joy of Jesus' birth. We might experience joy from opening up gifts, but God gives us even greater joy through Jesus. In this 5-week series, kids will learn all about the joy Jesus brought into the world. They'll learn that Jesus is the savior God promised, how God sent Jesus at the perfect time, that everyone is invited to worship Jesus because Jesus brings joy to the world, and what it means to say Jesus is God's greatest gift.



Join us at the 4pm Christmas Eve service for our Instant Kids Christmas Pageant! We will have costumes ready for your kids! Show up a little before 4pm and your kids can dress up as an angel, shepherd, or an animal! Kids remain seated with their parents until their character is called forward to join the pageant scene.



Join us for our Family Christmas Event at 10am on Sunday, December 8th! Families will travel to five stations and participate in activities that tell the Christmas story! Sign up here to register:

<https://tinyurl.com/ms86fwb2>



United Women in Faith

Christmas Service Day

December 12 - 9:00am - Trinity Hall

President's Message

Dear Trinity Women,

Harvest Day was a great success thanks to Rosemary McCullough and Bonnie Andrews and their innovative and fresh ideas! The many food offerings were perfect, thanks to all who shared a dish. Well done, ladies!



Moving on, we are preparing for our December Service Day. Remember to bring any wrapping paper you can spare, tape, scissors and your precious servant hearts. Watch for a list of items we can bring for Covenant Woods, the Hermitage and CrossOver Clinic. Come join in the fun as we send some joy out to our neighbors.

At this busy time, let's remember Jesus is The Reason for The Season! His love and mine,
Jo

Circle Events in December

Plans for holiday gatherings:

- **Circle 1** – Tuesday December 17, 10am at Bonnie Andrews' home
- **Circle 4** – Thursday December 5, 11am at Carol Wampler's home
- **Circle 6** – Tuesday December 3, 11:30am at the Hermitage Country Club
- **Circle 7** – Thursday December 19, meet at church at 6:30pm to take the van to Meadow Event Park in Doswell for the Illuminate Light Show
- **Circle 10** – Thursday December 5, 7pm at home of Carolyn Simpson
- **Circle 11** - meet to make candy cane mice for Service Day. Contact Gail Clelland for details.

District UWF Advent Service

December 7 – 10:00am

Zion UMC, 1674 Zion Road, Troy VA

Guest Speaker: Raymond Klein Exec. Dir, Love INC

Save the Date: January 9

Program: UMFS Auxiliary Work
10:00am in Room 324

Service Day Projects and Events

Everyone is invited – we have lots of activities planned. We will pause at 11am for a devotion by Jen Williams, Director of Kids Ministry, and for the presentation of the Harvest Day offering checks which will go to musical instruments for the Anna Julia Cooper School and to purchase a monitor for Trinity's nursery. Thank you to all who already contributed! **You can still contribute to these worthy recipients** – write your check to Trinity UMW, note 'Harvest Day' on the memo line, and place in the UMW Treasurer's box in the office by noon **December 8**.

Projects and leaders

- Prepare stockings for UMFS residents, Lauren McMullen
- Make Christmas poppers for Sherbourne UMC, Circle 10
- Create Christmas centerpieces, Bonnie Andrews
- Write birthday cards for Oak Grove ES, led by Stacey Campbell & Circle 1
- Wrap the mini loaves for delivery to Oak Grove ES staff, led by Karen Adams & Pam Carnahan
- Create felt dove ornaments, Gail Clelland & Trinity Stitchers
- Write notes of encouragement for Caring Closet, Ann Vaughan
- Assemble cookie treats for AA meetings at TUMC, Circle 6
- Write cards to send with Advent books to TUMC homebound members, Circle 10
- Collections for Covenant Woods, Hermitage & CrossOver Clinics – list in Welcome Center

Projects Completed in Advance

- Candy cane mice and coloring books for Sherbourne, Circles 11 and 4
- Gifts for TUMC staff, Circle 7

Mini Loaves for Oak Grove

Don't forget to bring the loaves of bread to Trinity Hall on Service Day, December 12

From Trustees New Security System

As a part of the renovation project, the Trustees opted to make two safety improvements for the building.

First, the fire alarm system was upgraded and expanded into the education wing for all three floors. This included an upgrade for the core of the system.

Second, the security system for the building has been replaced and upgraded. The previous system was old and failed parts were becoming difficult to locate for repair.

The new system makes improvements for our interior and exterior security of the building. For the interior, the most significant difference is being able to lock-down the Preschool when classes are in session.

With the new security system, there will be a learning curve for the staff and congregation.

For example, most exterior doors will not be able to be propped open without generating a call from the monitoring company. Key fobs are a part of this new system, replacing the exterior door keys we currently use. We respectfully request that you return to Bill Pike any exterior door key in your possession as soon as convenient.

Exterior doors have been programmed to give you time to enter/exit the building. We do ask that you do not stand and hold the door open while having a conversation. Also, if you are attending a 7 PM meeting, and you arrive at 7:16, you will need to telephone a friend in the meeting to meet you at the entry point to get you into the building.

The new system is now fully activated.

We ask for your patience as we work to implement and learn this new system.

Joys and Concerns

Our sympathies to...

*The family of Ann Staples who died November 15
Steve McPhail whose mother Mary McPhail died
October 30*

The family of Harold Thaxton who died October 27



Thanksgiving Bags for Sherbourne

Many thanks to everyone who donated a Thanksgiving bag for the families serviced by the Sherbourne Food Pantry. We appreciate Karen Adams leadership with this project, and her goal of filling one hundred bags was met. Thanks also to Joe and Sue Toler, and Dave and Becky

Henderson who delivered the bags to Sherbourne.

Veterans Pancake Breakfast

A special thanks to the Outreach class, and everyone who attended the Veterans Pancake Breakfast. Our guest speaker retired U. S. Army Major General Mari K. Eder was outstanding. Her presentation about her book, *The Girls Who Stepped Out of Line* was full of heartfelt stories about the women who served out country during World War II.



NewsLetter
DEADLINE

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for the next Window is **Monday, December 9 at 4 PM for events taking place in January.** Articles may be submitted prior to the deadline, and we encourage early submissions. Articles must be submitted in writing to Kim Tingler, ktingler@trinityumc.net.