



TRINITY BUILDER

December 2017
Trinity Lutheran Church, Alameda, CA



A Word from the PASTOR



Waiting....

In this Advent season we wait.... for four Sundays we wait. We wait for the news that the Christ Child is born. In the midst of a world that is filled with life and love and is troubled at the same time.... we wait. We wait for something new and something different that will be a sign of hope.

In my waiting and preparing, I wonder what Mary thought when she had to give birth to her baby in a stable. Did she question the visit from the angel Gabriel who told her she was carrying the Savior of the world? Did she think she may have imagined it? How could the Savior of the world be born in a stable because there was no room at the inn?

We live in an environment where the cost of housing is a major issue. Who is going to be able to live in the Bay Area in the future? Who will be able to work at Trader Joe's or the gas station or Walgreens and live here? It seems as if there is no room at the inn for many people. Today the world is similar to that in the time of Jesus.

After Jesus was born, angels appeared to the shepherds keeping their flocks and said, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all people." And later they said, "Glory to God in the highest heaven and peace on earth to whom God's favor rests." When the angels left, shepherds went and found the baby Jesus lying in a manger. They told Mary and Joseph what they had seen and heard. **Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.** The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

Mary ponders. She received affirmation of the gift of her child for the whole world. The word preparing her for Christ wasn't a dream she had; now others know it too! What love is this? What kind of God is this? What is God up to and what is God doing now? What did Mary ponder?

We are called to ponder... even when we see trouble in the world, even when the good news of the birth of Jesus doesn't seem as strong as it did back in the 50's, 60's, and 70's. The Word is "the light coming into the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it!"

I leave you pondering this as we begin our journey into the Advent season.

Blessings and peace,
Pastor Sharon





DECEMBER CALENDAR

December 03: First Sunday in Advent. We will begin the lighting of the Advent wreath candles. Pastor Diane Bower will preach at both services. Diane has her PhD in systematic theology. She has served congregations in both Fairfax and San Leandro.

Congregational meeting immediately after 10:30 a.m. worship in sanctuary to decide on the funding for roof repairs for the Educational Building.

December 05: Evangelism Committee 7:30 p.m.

December 07: Mission and Service Committee 7:00 p.m.

December 10: Second Sunday in Advent. Worship at 8:00 a.m. with Pastor Sharon preaching. Worship at 10:30 a.m.: Youth Christmas program

Food Bank Sunday: Bring food item(s) to share with Alameda Food Bank.

Caroling at Crown Bay with Lutheran Ministry to Nursing Homes at 2:00 p.m. [See Page 3]. Please contact Pastor Ned or Jessica Fleischman for more information.

December 17: Third Sunday in Advent. Worship at 8:00 a.m. with Pastor Sharon preaching. Worship at 10:30 a.m.: Music Ministry Sunday. Adult choir sings "Christmas Day" by Gustav Holst.

December 24: Sunday worship at 10:30 a.m.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

5:00 p.m.: Youth and family oriented service

9:00 p.m.: Service with adult choir singing



December 31: Worship at 8:00 a.m.

Worship at 10:30 a.m. with singing of Christmas carols



DECEMBER EVENTS

December 3: High school youth group meeting at St. Paul-Oakland. 4:30-6:30 p.m.

December 8: Parent's Night Out fundraiser at St. Paul-Oakland. 6:00-9:00 p.m. (Babysitting event open to all kids ages 2-10 with middle and high school helpers leading.) \$15 per child.

December 9: Pancake breakfast with Santa at St. Paul-Oakland. 9:30-11:00 a.m. (Everyone with children is invited!)

December 10: Middle school youth group meeting at St. Paul-Oakland. 12:30-2:00 p.m.

December 17: Elementary youth group meeting at St. Paul-Oakland. 12:30-2:00 p.m.



Sharing the Joy of the Season
Christmas Caroling & Stuffed Animal Gift-Giving

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10TH AT 2PM

CROWN BAY NURSING & REHABILITATION CENTER
 508 Westline Drive, Alameda

Join with volunteers of the *Lutheran Ministry to Nursing Homes* and other voices from the *Trinity Lutheran Church Choir* in bringing some cheer to the residents and staff at Crown Bay this holiday season.

Bring a few cookies for staff to enjoy and join in singing some of your favorite Christmas Carols. Most importantly, come help warm the hearts of those living and working at Crown Bay.

This year we are collecting new and gently-used small, cuddly stuffed animals to give to the residents of Crown Bay. Look for the basket in the Narthex for you to place your unwrapped gift!

**We are in need of a few "cookie bakers and buyers." Even if you are unable to attend the event, please consider donating a holiday gift of ('soft-ish', no nuts) cookies and/or stuffed animals for our Crown Bay residents and staff. For more information, please speak with or email Jessica Fleischman or Pastor Ned (415-652-0427; pastorned@live.com)*

YOU CAN TRULY
 MAKE A DIFFERENCE
 IN THIS SIMPLE ACT
 OF LIVING OUT
 YOUR FAITH!
 SEE YOU THERE!!!

Note: Please have your stuffed animals (unwrapped) at the church (basket in the entryway) by Dec. 03.

MUSIC MINISTRY

Julie Haydon, Director of Music Ministry

Thank you to everyone who joined us for our “This Little Light of Mine” concert in November. It was so special to see Trinity’s sanctuary filled with new visitors and bursting with the joy that singing in community brings. I am so proud of all of Trinity’s musicians for their beautiful offerings, and particularly our new children’s choir, Joyful Noise!, and our own Kori Lamb. It is inspiring to see how young people share their gifts of enthusiasm and beauty so freely. We’ll be looking at more ways to connect with the community through our Music Ministry in the spring.

This advent season, our Trinity youth and children from Joyful Noise! are preparing special musical offerings for Youth Sunday (**December 10**) and our Family Christmas Eve service. We welcome all youth to participate, join us at Sunday school, or talk to Julie Haydon or Mary James for more information about how to join in on the fun.

Music Ministry Sunday is coming up on **December 17**. The choir and bells are preparing a special morning of worship for the 10:30 service that features carols from England and France, including Gustav Holst’s “Christmas Day.” Please invite family and friends to be with us that morning.

The new year is a great time to get involved in Trinity’s thriving Music Ministry! Choir, bells, and Joyful Noise! all welcome new singers and ringers. As we begin a new batch of music, this is a great time for you to share your gifts with these groups. For more information, contact Julie Haydon (juliehaydon@gmail.com, 510-725-2057). All of our ensembles include all experience levels, even beginners!

As I reflect back on 2017, it is very meaningful to see the way our Music Ministry is growing and reaching new families and community members. I am thankful to the Trinity community for investing in our programs so that we can more freely share the gift of our song.



MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Instead of stressing to find perfect gifts for those who have more than enough, consider giving a gift in their honor to help someone who does not have enough. As little as \$10 given to ELCA Good Gifts can provide someone in need with chicks, a fruit tree seedling, clean water, a mosquito net, blankets, and more. These gifts that equip, nourish, nurture, or heal make a significant impact on ministry areas of our church. (<http://www.elca.org/goodgifts>)

A gift of as little as \$10-\$20 to Heifer International can provide a share of chickens, pigs, sheep, goats, or llamas to help people break the cycle of hunger and poverty. (<http://www.heifer.org/catalog>)



A PRESCRIPTION FOR PEACE

Mary James

A faith friend of this community shared this lovely true story with me.

A woman who was in pain due to a social encounter at her church (not at Trinity) asked her neighbor florist for olive branches. When the florist asked why she wanted olive branches, the woman responded that she knew they were a symbol of peace. The florist gathered some olive branches and tied them with a ribbon. When the woman presented the olive branches to the person who caused her pain, they were received with love and acceptance. The gentle soul who requested the olive branches had been the victim of bullying, but she chose to take the higher road, to make peace.



TRINITY BOOK CLUB

The next meeting of the Trinity Book Club will be at 7:30 p.m. on **Tuesday, January 9**, in the meeting room. Our next book is *When Breath Becomes Air* by Paul Kalanithi. If you are interested in discussing this book, please come to our meeting. (There is no commitment to future meetings/books.)

The following review is from Amazon:

"When Breath Becomes Air is a powerful look at a stage IV lung cancer diagnosis through the eyes of a neurosurgeon. When Paul Kalanithi is given his diagnosis, he is forced to see this disease, and the process of being sick, as a patient rather than a doctor. The result of his experience is not just a look at what living is and how it works from a scientific perspective, but the ins and outs of what makes life matter. This heart-wrenching book will capture you from page one and still have you thinking long after the final sentence." – Penny Mann

NOVEMBER COUNCIL MEETING NOTES

Pastor’s Report

Memorial services were scheduled for Linda Domholt on Nov. 18 and for John Leavitt on Nov. 30.

Bill Pond, who has moved away, is attending church where he lives and is being removed from Trinity’s membership roll.

Committee Reports:

Call Committee: The committee has interviewed all five candidates on the slate received from the synod and has narrowed their choices to two.

Personnel Committee: The committee met on Nov. 13. Don Sherratt was present as a consultant.

Staff reports were reviewed, and some concerns will be addressed. Overall, the staff is happy in their jobs and the Personnel Committee is happy with the work of the staff.

The committee recommended a 3% cost of living salary increase for all paid staff (excluding the pastor.)

Don Sherratt recommended that job descriptions be standardized.

Old/New Business

A special congregational meeting will be called for December 3 to discuss and vote on roof repairs for the education building. The

council decided to create a campaign called “Buy a Square Foot” to invite the congregation to help fund the cost of the roof repair.

The cost for gutter cleaning (roughly \$300) will be paid from the Memorials designated fund.

The final changes to the Constitution were approved by council members via email. The revised Constitution is completed and will be voted on at the January congregational meeting.

A motion passed to add the salary of the Trinity Seniors’ cook to Trinity’s yearly budget. The money collected from the Seniors program each month and donations to the program will remain in the Designated Fund to be used for program needs and food for lunches.

The Audit Committee recommended some IT changes for Trinity, Julie Haydon recommended some website updates, and there are some general IT updates needed. Jessica Fleischman’s brother, who is in the IT business and security/fraud, will work for \$40/hr for Trinity (about half the going rate). Jessica and Pastor Sharon will put together a list of needed projects and details and will invite him to prepare a proposal for phases of the work needed.

The next council meeting will be December 21.



NOVEMBER POTLUCK WAS A WIN-WIN EVENT

The fellowship potluck on November 18 was win-win event for everyone. Participants were able to partake of delicious salmon or ham and a variety of side dishes, and \$788 was raised for the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS), an internationally-recognized organization known for their work with and advocacy for refugees, as they help to provide basic human needs, ensure the safety of refugees, and welcome them to our communities. Special thanks to the Blombergs for providing and preparing the salmon and also for drawing attention to the refugee crisis with their presentation earlier this year on their volunteer work at a refugee camp in Greece. And thanks to all for your monetary support of LIRS.

FOOD BANK SUNDAY

Our next Food Bank Sunday is **December 10**. There is a barrel in the fellowship hall or narthex in which to put your non-perishable food donations. Please continue to help to support the Alameda Food Bank, especially during the holiday season.



THANK YOU

Thanks to all who contributed articles/church information to the *Builder* in 2017. It is only with your help that news of Trinity and its missions gets out.



SECOND-MILE GIVING FOR DECEMBER

Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary

Since 1952, Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary has equipped faithful leaders who enliven the church and care for the world. Today is a new day for theological education in the West. With expanded residential and online learning options, new faculty, and shared teaching resources within Cal Lutheran and the Graduate Theological Union, our students learn, live, and serve in a place that is multi-cultural, economically diverse, and invigorating.

Theological education at PLTS is done in the context of people who are rich and poor, liberal and conservative, and a wide array of human race, religion, sexuality, education, experience, and background. If our theology did not take all people into account, it would be deficient.

Visit www.plts.edu to learn more about our programs and upcoming events, or follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/pltsofclu/>.

Please keep the seminary in your prayers this month and consider an additional offering toward its ministries. The Sierra Pacific Synod is blessed to accompany this organization in mutual ministry as we proclaim God’s creative, redeeming and sanctifying love in our synod.



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 6 Richard Domholt
- 7 Ginny Ostergren

- 31 Ann Kenyon



<p><i>Trinity Builder</i> is a monthly publication of Trinity Lutheran Church 1323 Central Avenue, Alameda, CA 94501 510-522-5220</p> <p>Interim Pastor: Rev. Sharon Stalkfleet Nursing Home Ministry Pastor: Rev. Ned O'Donnell Youth Pastor: Rev. Craig Minich Council President: Anita Burnaford Organist/pianist: Starr Brown Director of Music Ministry: Julie Haydon Custodian: Martin Kelly Groundskeeper: Martin Kelly Office manager: Jessica Fleischman <i>Builder</i> editor: Marilyn Ohm-Smith</p>	<p>Trinity Church Council (Ministry Area Liaisons) President: Anita Burnaford-19 (Stewardship, Worship & Music) Vice President: John Kofranek-19 (Property) Secretary: Mike Luque-19 (EBLP) Recording Secretary: Jessica Fleischman Treasurer: Ann Kenyon Interim Pastor: Rev. Sharon Stalkfleet Susan Bell-20 (Evangelism) Nick Hayes-20 (Mission & Service) Karol Luque-20 (EBLYP, Worship & Music) Elizabeth Madaras-20 (EBLP, Fellowship, Finance) Henry Mills-18 Mark Schoenrock-20 (Green Team) Mary Kay Wentz-19 (Trinity Seniors, Visual Enrichment) Susan Widule-20 (Education)</p>
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