



Trinity Today

Vol. 21, No. 1

January 1, 2019

Houston Bronze Ensemble to Play at Services on January 6

Celebrating 30 years of ringing, the Houston Bronze Ensemble (HBE) is a professional, auditioned handbell ensemble made up of musicians from the greater Houston area. Founded in 1988, the group was started as an avenue for area church music directors to have a place to ring themselves. Since 2006, Trinity has graciously offered space for Houston Bronze to rehearse and store its equipment. It has become a tradition for the ensemble to provide special music on Epiphany as a small “thank you” to us for the use of our facility. This year you will hear HBE perform the contemplative “I Wonder As I Wander” which contains a glimpse of the three kings as they wander in search of the Christ Child. They will also play exciting arrangements of “Good King Wenceslas”, “Carol of the Drum”, and “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” and close the service with “Christmas Eve, Sarajevo”. We are looking forward to having HBE at Trinity on January 6.



Finance Corner - January 1, 2019

The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

2 Corinthians 9:6-7 ESV

In a clear indication that our congregation's financial health continues to improve, I am grateful to report that the response to the 2019 Home Treasury pledge request has been heartwarming. As of December 17th, 128 members and supporters of Trinity have committed to over \$995,000 in Home Treasury pledges. This represents a 19% increase over 2018's pledges and is almost half of the operating budget for 2019. Thanks be to God for your generosity!

In fact, total 2019 pledges received to date certainly represent one of the highest amounts ever received in our history!

Looking at our revenues and expenses through November 30th, tithes and offerings received for the year were \$40k lower than budget, and 5% lower than the same period in 2017. Our ministry-related expenses in November were virtually identical to our monthly budget, but our expenses year to date remain about 3% above plan.

God is clearly working in and through Trinity Downtown, and it is an honor to serve you, and be able to watch the process "up close and personal."

Joyfully joining Jesus alongside you,
Ron Lacy, CFO



amazon smile

You shop. Amazon gives.

How to increase your giving to Trinity without spending any money.

Please remember that you can expand your stewardship by using a program that Trinity has qualified for at Amazon. Amazon will give Trinity a 0.5% rebate for all purchases made by our supporters when making their normal purchases at Amazon. It's very easy—whenever you are shopping on Amazon, go to this web address (instead of www.amazon.com):

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/74-1238451>

Using this service from Amazon won't change the costs of the products you buy, and all of your account settings and preferences will be retained. The only thing that will change is that Trinity will receive a rebate!



Undecorate the Church - January 6

We will be undecorating the church on Sunday, January 6, after the 10:50 service. Please mark your calendars and help us undecorate the church.

Blood Donor Sunday

Our next Blood Donor Sunday will be held January 6, 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the gym. Sign-up sheets will be located in the foyer and the narthex. If you would prefer a special time please sign up either at the church or online at www.giveblood.org and pick Trinity's drive to set an appointment. While scheduling an appointment ahead of time gives us an estimate of how many donors to expect and the Blood Center sends out the appropriate number of workers; an added bonus is we take scheduled appointments prior to walk-ups. Anyone donating will receive a free blood donor hoodie.

We look forward to a very successful drive this winter. Double red cell and combination whole blood and plasma machines will be available for those wishing to donate that way. Both count for two donations.

REMINDER!! The minimum donor age requirement to give blood is 16 years old with a parent's permission. Weight must be 122 lbs. (still 110 lbs. for 17 and older) and in general good health.

REMEMBER: one unit of blood can save as many as three lives as it is broken down into three components – red blood cells, platelets and plasma.

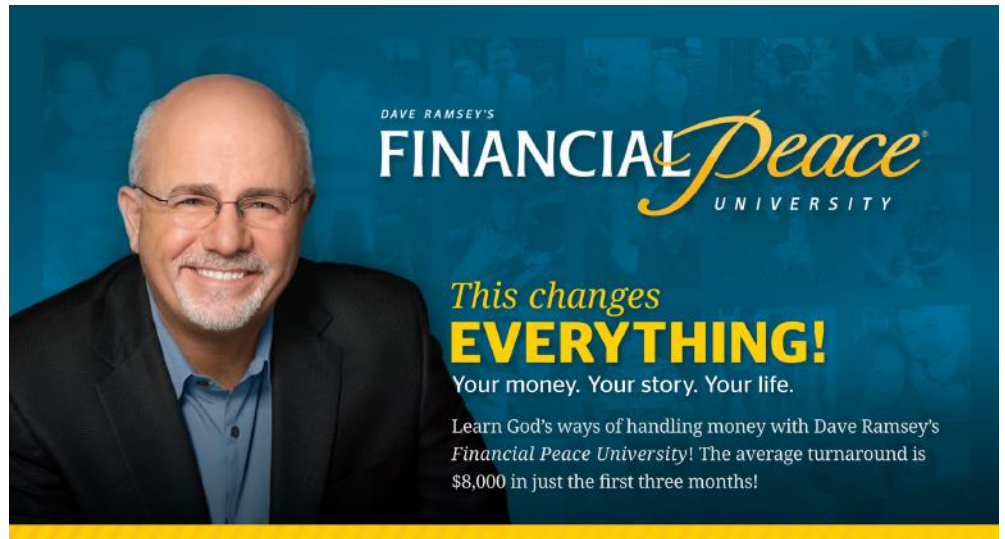
May our Lord keep you healthy so you can continue to contribute the gift of life!



Financial Peace University

Financial Peace University will be offered at Trinity beginning January 13th from 9:30 - 10:30 a.m. in Room 214. The class will be led by John Garrett.

Financial Peace University is a nine-lesson, money-management class taught by America's most trusted financial guru, Dave Ramsey. Dave and his teaching team will walk you through the basics of budgeting, dumping debt, planning for the future, and much more.



Please go to <https://fpu.com/1078609> to register for this class. If this is your first time to attend an FPU class you will need to purchase the class materials from this registration site. For more information about the class, contact John Garrett at 346.254.4943 or johnpatrickgarrett@yahoo.com.

BOARD OF ELDERS - CONTACT INFORMATION

Jim Baccus	jimbaccus@comcast.net	713.956.1899
Delvin Dennis	ddennis@entouch.net	281.415.8787
Dan Krueger	dwkrueger5@yahoo.com	901.258.4029
Steve Maynard	smaynard@durwoodgreene.com	281.799.9600
Joshua Rodriguez	joshrodriguez@hotmail.com	832.527.1957



MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH

Schedule

January 6th- SCREAMO Day 12:30pm-2:30pm

January 20th- Youth Group 12:30pm-2:30pm

February 3rd- Stump The Pastor Day 12:30-2:30pm

February 15th- Lock in (Details TBA)

March 3rd- Youth Group 12:30-2:30pm

March 22nd-23rd- Epicenter Middle School Youth
Gathering @ Salem Tomball (Details TBA)

April 6th- Visit Nursing Home

April 14th- Youth Group 12:30-2:30pm

May 18th- Serve Trinity's Cemetery

May 25th- End of the School Year Party



HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH

Event Schedule

January 13th- SCREAMO/Game night 5-7pm

February 2nd- Football Saturday/Chili Social

March 31st- Bubble Soccer

April 6th- Visit Nursing Home

May 18th- Serve Trinity's Cemetery

June 1st- End of the School Year Party

Be in the Word

Adult Bible Classes - Sundays at 9:30 a.m.

"1 Peter" - Led by Bill Fischer's Team - Room 201

Peter was a man of action, not writing, but he sends this letter to believers encouraging them to keep the faith in troubled times. His words ring true for us today.

"Faith Discovery" - Led by Pastor Michael Dorn - Room 123 (Begins January 13)

Class for those desiring membership at Trinity Downtown.

"Financial Peace University" - Led by John Garrett - Room 214 (Begins January 13)

See description on page 3.

"Making Good Decisions" - Led by Jim Cleary's Team - Room 205

A new year — the perfect time to figure out how to make better decisions. In this class, we'll focus on the trait of wisdom — the ability to make godly choices in life. Discussion-oriented.

"The Kingdom of God Is Here — Good News for All" - Led by Pastor P. Dorn - Room 233

Jesus' mission was/is to bring all people into the kingdom of God. This course will examine a number of events recorded in the Gospel of Luke that reveal Jesus reaching out to all people—people in every need and situation. Through the eyes of Luke we will talk about what it means for us to join Jesus' mission.

"The Lutheran Mind" - Led by Pastor Michael Hofmann - Room 234

Discussion of exegetical and systematic theology from a Lutheran Christian perspective.

Kingdom Quest Sunday School - Sundays at 9:30 a.m.

Grades 1 through 4 meet in Mary/Martha Hall in basement for opening.

Pre-K (ages 3 - 4)/Kindergarten - Room 212

8th and 7th Grade Confirmation - Room 124

1st - 4th Grade - Basement

9th-12th Grade - USC (basement)

5th - 6th Grade - Room 207

Adult Midweek Bible Studies

Tuesday Morning Women's Bible Class

Tuesdays at 10 a.m. - Room 205 – Women's Bible Study led by Audrey Black.

The Tuesday Morning Women's Bible Class will resume on January 8. The study will be based on Jesus' "Parables", using LifeLight materials. For more information, contact Audrey at 713.782.6307 or dgb32@att.net.

Wednesday Women's Bible Study - "Family Trees & Olive Branches (Creating a Culture of Grace in Your Family)"

Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m. - Gathering Space - Women's Bible Study led by Jan Case

Wednesday Night Women's Bible Study - "Gospel of John" (Resumes January 9)

Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. - Room 207 - Women's Bible Study led by Mary Oliver

Sonrise Bible Study

Thursdays at 6:30 a.m. - Room 124 - Led by Pastor Black

Class discusses the Scripture readings assigned for the following Sunday. The class is open to men and women. Coffee is available. For more information, contact Pastor Black at 713.229.2917 or dblack@trinitydt.org.

TnT - 20s and 30s Group Bible Study

Current Study: "1st John, 2nd John and 3rd John" by Rev. Dr. Matthew Richard - Meets 1st and 3rd Fridays at 7:30 p.m. - off site. Contact Rachel and Dag Calafell at rachel.calafell@gmail.com or 832.389.8998 for more information.

Christmas Caroling

Over 30 people participated December 9 in Trinity's caroling outreach. The living rooms and gathering spaces of our homebound members were filled with the enthusiastic chorus of well known Christmas carols, the Christmas story in Bible verse, prayers, and conversation. The group then gathered back at Trinity for a potluck meal and fellowship.



“Eating Out Affects Finances and Waistline”

Do you know that Americans spend more money at restaurants than they do buying groceries to eat meals at home? We do! All you have to do is observe what is ordered and the number of people in the restaurant or the number of people at each table. I have to admit that we eat out more than we should on occasion. “Time and convenience are the two (2) main reasons for eating out more.” The downsides (I bet you can guess and/or know) are additional expenses and potential weight gain.

Increased eating out means what? YEP! We have “less spendable income for other needs and having fewer dollars for retirement savings.” I might also add that many families then have less funds to support their congregation and tithe which should be our first responsibility in spending. Unbelievable, but “eating out costs twice as much as eating the same meal prepared at home.”

Eating out is not good or healthy for our physical bodies either. “Restaurant meals are typically higher in salt, unsaturated fat, sodium and calories while lower in dietary fiber.” This next statement is a rude awakening! For most adults, a meal that is eaten out can “increase daily calorie intake by 158 calories, and overweight adults tend to consume an additional 239 calories.” WHAT “FOOD” FOR THOUGHT! And, get this! These “additional calories may not sound like much, but they can add two (2) extra pounds per year to your weight.” I’m surprised it isn’t more! **WILL YOU EAT AT HOME TODAY?**



SOURCE: “BETTER HEALTH”, CONCORDIA Plan Services, Fall, 2017

MAY THE COMING NEW YEAR ABOUND IN BLESSINGS FOR ALL OF YOU!

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.” Proverbs 3:5-6

Julie Bertrand, Retired R.N.

Greetings from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis!

The semester is now ended and I have a good break ahead of me. The last three weeks of classes felt like a mad dash, but the Lord has been gracious and merciful to bring me through successfully. It was a blessing to discuss eschatology (the study of the last things or the end times) as we began Advent. While this season of preparation is usually seen as a time of preparation looking forward to Christmas, I learned that historically it is primarily focused on the second coming of Christ and only as a secondary application does it point to the birth of Christ. Considering the lectionary readings focusing on the end of Christ's life, this makes sense. Yet, I had it backwards for so long! This may not seem particularly earth-shaking. And I would say that it really isn't – there is value in both functions of the season of Advent. However, I thought it was worth mentioning since this altered view serves to highlight even more strongly the divide between the Church calendar - what we focus on - and what the world chooses to focus on. Rather than simply being a time to delay Christmas while the world rushes to commercialize it and make as much money as possible off of our cultural traditions, Advent becomes a time to look beyond all that the world is offering now and



Chuck Ridley, Seminary Student

look for the coming of our Lord to restore all things to the way they should be. This understanding helps remind us that our hope is not just in an event in the past, but that our Lord, who has come to earth to take on our flesh, bind Himself to us, and dwell with us, is indeed coming again. The world tries to turn our focus inward on ourselves, and our own flesh doesn't help the situation, either! But fighting against this inclination is the Spirit of our God who dwells in the baptized to give them hope and strength for the wait. You who hear the voice of the Good Shepherd hear the word of forgiveness and hope. Encourage one another and do what the Lord has given you to do for this day. Come quickly, Lord!

Another benefit of living in today while keeping our eyes fixed on the coming of Christ is that we don't fall into the trap of finding our identity in this world. As Americans, we often find our identity in our busy-ness. We somehow think that we have to earn our value by our work. Our society has tied our worth to our output. What a terrible mangling of God's truth! Our Lord gives us wonderful things to do - often very simple things – but He doesn't stake our value or our identity on those things. Instead, He gives us our identity in Christ in spite of our tendencies to disobey and seek our own way. But as we live out that identity we've been given, we find great joy in helping other people, knowing that we are doing the good works that God has prepared in advance for us to do.

I was recently listening to an audiobook about minimalism which has some good suggestions on how to let go of things that are unnecessary in life. What I find so fascinating about this book and the mindset that accompanies it is the premise that all people are driven primarily by the desire for happiness. The book is written to help people maximize their happiness by letting go of things. But any Christian should recognize that this is not the main driver in life. God's love for us in Christ Jesus, which overflows in us to become the love of our neighbor, is our focus in life. We have died to ourselves and don't need to be focused on satisfying ourselves to get through this life. Admittedly, the author is Japanese and there may be some cultural differences at play here which add nuance to the argument. However, at one point the author advises giving up things which bring joy in order to serve this greater purpose of minimizing in order to maximize our happiness. What we can learn from this is that sin continues to infect our natures until we die. This isn't just for a particular ethnicity or nationality - this is all people.

On Thanksgiving Day, Pastor Hofmann preached a wonderful sermon on John 9. He spoke of the reversal of blindness and sight with the man born blind and the Jewish leaders. I was reminded that I often need others to come along and point out my blindness to the work of God. This happens in and through the Church, as Christians go about telling those around them the good news of Jesus Christ. Instead of sorting out our own lives by managing the idols we accumulate, as the Japanese author would have us do, Jesus comes to us in the midst of our striving and reconciles us with the

Father. Regardless of how much or how little we have and how happy or dissatisfied we are with the possessions we accumulate, we get to be part of God's mission to restore creation! This is because our Creator is gracious and loving, and this news is what we share with all people. Eliminating an idol is good, but unless we turn to the Lord, those idols we toss out can just as easily be replaced by another idol of the heart.

We explored the minor prophets and Isaiah in my class on the Prophets. As the preachers of Israel, with a few exceptions, the prophets of God were sent to the people of God to proclaim the Word of God. This is often a word of judgment – the people have not kept the covenant they made with God. They have taken on the religious practices of the wicked nations around them. The prophets call them back to justice and mercy. There are pronouncements of consequences for their actions. Because of their disobedience and idolatry, they will be taken from the good land promised to their forefathers. Death and destruction are prevalent images in the preaching of the prophets. But that's not all there is. There is a lot of wonderful Gospel hope presented in their preaching as well. The "day of the Lord" can be a scary thing, but not for us, who are in Christ. Jesus took all of the wrath of God upon Himself on the cross. Despite death resulting from sin, we have hope in Christ who overcame all of our shortcomings and has reconciled us apart from our works.



An early snowfall gave the main quad on campus a nice layer of fluffy snow for a while.

A couple more things I'd like to mention for the past couple of months: It was a great pleasure to have Greg Finke come to campus to give a series of presentations about his books. I think the work he's doing to help Christians live the Christian life is tremendous and it's an honor to say that I have the same home congregation as him. Lastly, I conclude with some thoughts about conducting pre-marital counseling. I had to practice doing this with a couple as an assignment for my Pastoral Care class.

While the participants could simply pretend so that the student could get the experience and reflect on it, I found that I was able to do an assignment which was not just "checking the box". In other words, even though the project could have been done somewhat haphazardly, I found that I was actually helping a couple explore their relationship and better prepare for marriage. By no means was I replacing a proper program prepared by a parish pastor, but I was able to do more than just fulfill a course requirement; I was able to help some friends, which was tremendously satisfying. God's peace and joy be with you in these seasons of Christmas and Epiphany.

In Christ,
Chuck Ridley

"Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid." (John 14:27 ESV)

CHURCH REPORT

November 19 - December 9

MEMBERSHIP - TRANSFERS IN

- Michael Winckler from Trinity LCMS, Fremont, NE
- Rev. Michael & Stacy Hofmann from Hosanna LCMS, Kerrville, TX

MEMBERSHIP - TRANSFERS OUT

- Kevin & Nita Juergen to Resurrection LCMS, Spring, TX

DEATH

- James G. Curtin - December 8

REVENUE UPDATE

Year To Date through 12/09/18
 Actual Receipts \$1,472,631
 Budgeted Receipts . . \$1,538,832

ORGAN FUND UPDATE

Year To Date through 12/09/18
 Total Contributions . . . \$506,581
 Remaining Balance . . . \$85,301

SUNDAY SCHOOL TOTALS

	PK-8	H.S.	Adult	Total
11/25	27	0	91	118
12/02	44	0	122	166
12/09	37	0	120	157

WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

	5:00	8:15	10:50	Total
11/24	36			
11/24		161	105	302
12/01	39			
12/02		198	129	366
12/08	29			
12/09		235	162	426

STAFF DIRECTORY

713.224.0684

- Senior Pastor
Pastor Michael P. Dorn . . 713.229.2940
- Pastor of Missions and Outreach
Pastor Michael Hofmann . .713.229.2905
- Visitation Pastor
Pastor Donald G. Black. . 713.229.2917
- Chief Financial Officer
Ron Lacy 713.229.2970
- Dir. of Administration and Human Resources
Trinity Garrett. 713.229.2937
- Director of Music and Worship
Mary Voigt 713.229.2922
- Director of Discipleship
Matthew Meier 832.301.3105
- Director of Youth Ministries
Michael Winckler 713.229.2910
- Director of Accounting
Roseann Gamez. 713.229.2962
- Communications Coordinator
Pam Schroeder. 713.229.2944
- Contributions Manager
Angela Avant 713.229.2963
- Host
Rollin Cattau 713.229.2950



Joyfully Sharing Christ's Saving Love With All People Now!

Faith Discovery

Class for those interested in membership at Trinity Downtown and those who want a review of Christian doctrine.

Begins January 13
8-Week class
Sundays at 9:30 a.m.
Room 123

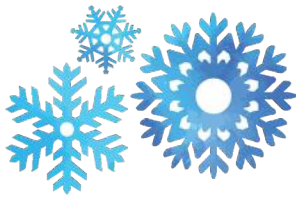
Contact Pastor Dorn for more information:
mdorn@trinitydt.org

2019 GOVERNING BOARD

- Jim Baccus (Elder)
- Kim Davis
- Delvin Dennis (Elder)
- Pastor Michael Dorn
- Bo Hopmann
- Dan Krueger (Elder)
- Steve Maynard (Elder)
- Jean Minsch
- Janet Mueller
- Joshua Rodriguez (Elder)
- Cynthia Roney
- Brad Vieselmeyer

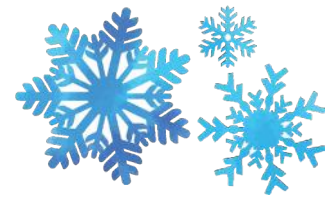
Minutes of the Governing Board are available to our members at the Welcome Center.





January 2019

Trinity Lutheran Church



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																											
		1 9:30 AM New Year's Day Worship (C)	2 10:00 AM Devotions at HPCC	3 6:30 AM Sonrise Bible Study 10:00 AM Ladies Circle Meeting 1:00 PM Peace-Filled Quilters 6:00 PM Houston Bronze Ensemble Rehearsal	4	5 5:00 PM Satellite Service																																																																																											
	6 8:00 AM Blood Drive 8:15 AM Traditional Worship (C) 9:30 AM Bible Study Hour 10:50 AM Traditional Worship (C) 12:30 PM MS Youth - SCREAMO Day 5:00 PM HS Youth Group	7	8 9:00 AM Staff Leadership Team Meeting 10:00 AM Women's Bible Study 6:00 PM Stephen Ministry 7:00 PM Houston Bronze Ensemble Rehearsal	9 9:30 AM Women's Bible Study 5:15 PM Trinity Brass 6:15 PM Trinity Bells 6:30 PM Women's Bible Study 7:15 PM Sanctuary Choir	10 6:30 AM Sonrise Bible Study	11	12 9:00 AM Governing Board Retreat 5:00 PM Satellite Service (C)																																																																																										
13 8:15 AM Traditional Worship 9:30 AM Bible Study Hour 10:50 AM Traditional Worship 12:00 PM 39 Club 5:00 PM HS Youth - SCREAMO/ Game night	14 7:00 PM Houston Camerata Rehearsal	15 9:00 AM Staff Leadership Team Meeting 10:00 AM Women's Bible Study 6:00 PM Stephen Ministry 7:00 PM Houston Bronze Ensemble Rehearsal 7:00 PM Houston Symphony Chorus Rehearsal	16 9:30 AM Women's Bible Study 10:00 AM Ladies Circle HPCC 5:15 PM Trinity Brass 6:15 PM Trinity Bells 6:30 PM Women's Bible Study 7:15 PM Sanctuary Choir	17 6:30 AM Sonrise Bible Study	18	19 5:00 PM Satellite Service																																																																																											
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Ladies Circle Ministries - January 3

The monthly meeting of Trinity Lutheran Ladies Circle Ministries will be held in Room 205 at 10 a.m. on January 3rd. Refreshments, with a time for fellowship, will be available at 9:30 a.m.

A very special program will be presented by one of our own Trinity members, Kathy Long.

She will be sharing with us a video presentation which she entitles "See the Works of the Lord, and His Wonders in the Deep" (Psalm 107:24). Filmed by Kathy herself, the presentation shows God's amazing sense of humor when He created the creatures under the sea. All are welcome.

For additional information, please call Debbie Leonard, president, at (c) 319.431.6804, or email to Debbie.Leonard.TX@gmail.com.



Additional dates to remember:

Wednesday, January 16, 10 a.m. - Devotion at Highland Park Care Center, 8861 Fulton St.
Sunday, February 3 - "Po-Boy Sale"

Po-Boy Sandwiches for Super Bowl Sunday

The Ladies Circle will again be making Po-Boy Sandwiches to take home for your lunch or gathering on Sunday, February 3. Make your plans early because Wednesday, January 30, is the deadline to order those sandwiches. Order forms will be available in the foyer and narthex in mid-January or you may call Lynn Bedner at 713.668.3977 or Ethelene Marshall at 713.849.9266 to place your order. The sandwiches may be picked up in the Mary & Martha Fellowship Hall after worship services or Bible Class on Sunday, February 3.

Net proceeds of this fund-raiser will help provide for various ministries supported by the Ladies Circle. Your participation is greatly appreciated.



The 39 Club



The 39 Club is invited to meet in the foyer following the 10:50 a.m. service on January 13 and plan to meet for an Epiphany luncheon at the home of Pastor and Audrey Black.

In December the group enjoyed food and fellowship at Shanghai River Restaurant.

Those who are single, 39 and over, are invited to join us. For more information, contact Jean at 281.550.4752.

www.trinitydt.org

Trinity Downtown
800 Houston Avenue • Houston, TX 77007

713-224-0684



Article submission deadline **January 10** for articles to be published February 1, 2019.
Submit articles to pschroeder@trinitydt.org.
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