

Trinity Today

Vol. 26, No. 1

January 1, 2024

Christmas Eve Pageant Brings Joy to Those Attending

Thank you to everyone who helped make our Christmas Eve worship services special. We appreciate the many hours the choir spent in rehearsals with Mary Voigt directing, Carla Barrows leading worship on the organ, Pastor Dorn for his message, the ushers/greeters, the expertise of the techs and everybody else working behind the scenes. Thank you to the pageant cast members and readers (listed below). Special thanks to Karen Maynard who directed the pageant and to Pat Cleary and Haley Davisson who assisted.



Holy FamilyDillon Davis, Gwen Thompson
Donkey HandlerSophia Patterson
Shepherds

Braydon Abby, Brody Abby, Steve Bell, Zach Bell
Robin Black, Kirk Oncken, Lenin Rodriguez
Shay Sonneborn, Stephanie Sonneborn, Vivian Yancey

Lantern Carrier. Carys Rodriguez

Kings Michael Gilmore, Joshua Rodriguez, Alex Zimmerman

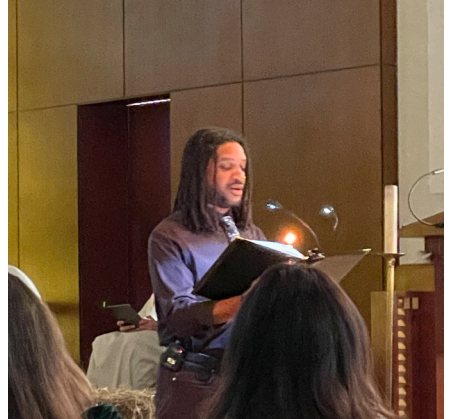
Pages to the Kings Grayson Gilmore, Lincoln Gilmore, Clara McGarvey
Evelyn Yancey, Lorelei McGarvey, William McGarvey

Processional Pages Brooke Abby, Elaina Baden, Abigail Flaviani, Jocelyn Rodriguez

Readers Jim Cleary, Kim Davis, Trinity Garrett, Laura Gunn
Jadon Hill, Jim Hill, Matthew Hill, Bo Hopmann
Elizabeth Oliver, Mary Oliver, Michelle Oncken
Sophia Oncken, Cynthia Roney, Chris Sonneborn

Set Design Bob Davis, Mark Anderson, Steve Kuhlmann

See more pictures on pages 2-3.





Blood Donor Sunday

Our next Blood Donor Sunday will be held January 14, 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the gym. If you would prefer a special time, please sign up online at <https://www.commitforlife.org/donor/schedules/drive-schedule/371892>. 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. Donors will receive a free hoodie.

We look forward to a very successful drive. 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.

Save time with the DIGITAL DONOR APP. The App makes it easy to find a blood drive, schedule your donation and answer the CFL Express Pass health history interview before you arrive.

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.



Trinity Ladies Ministries

Thank you for your support of the Christmas Bazaar, bake sale and teddy bear donations. We were able to donate 552 bears to Breaking Boundaries Ministries so that children can get much needed hugs.

Just a reminder there is **no** regularly scheduled meeting on January 4th, 2024.

Meetings are held the first Thursday of the month. Our next meeting will be on February 1st.

Contact Trinity Garrett, president, at (c) 281.300.5660 or trinitygarrett@hotmail.com for more information. All ladies are welcome.



Connecting Our Families with a New Pictorial Directory!

We have had a great response of Trinity members coming to have their picture taken for the directory. We want to make sure everyone has had a chance to have their picture taken so **we will have one more photography day on Sunday, January 7th.**

Our photographer, Dag Calafell, will be available to take your picture from 8:30 - 11:30 a.m. in the Gym. No reservation is needed.

The process is quick and easy. Everything is done in-house so you won't be asked to purchase anything and each household who participates will receive a printed directory in January or February. Non-participants may purchase a printed directory for \$10.00.

If you would like to submit your own photo, please email your picture to pschroeder@trinitydt.org. Please include names of family members, address, phone number and email address. Pictures should be landscape and JPG format.

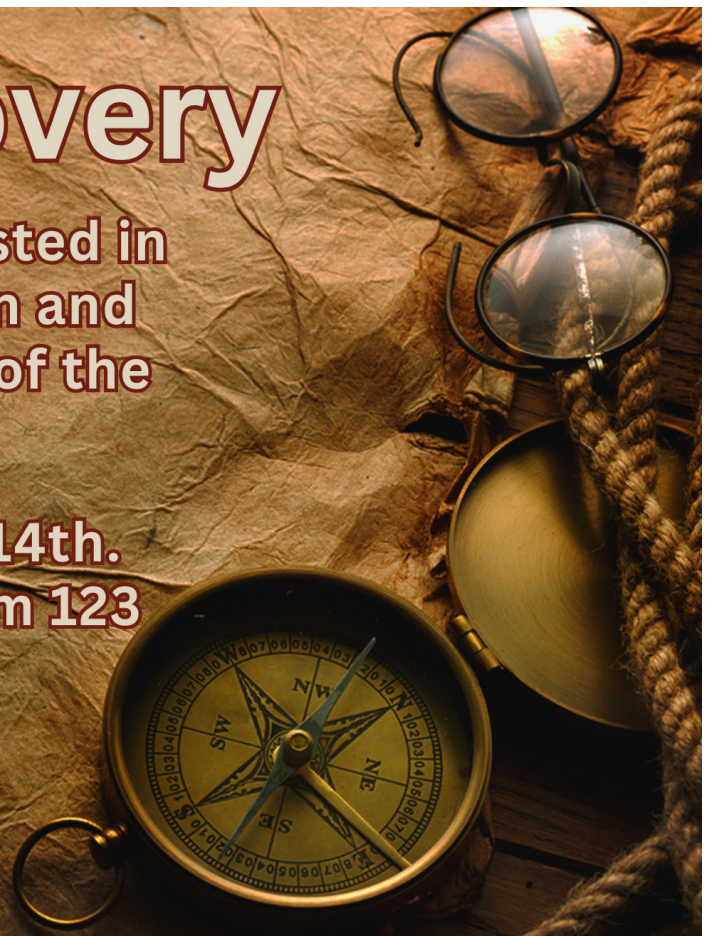


Faith Discovery

Class for persons interested in joining Trinity Downtown and those wanting a refresh of the Christian faith.

Class starts on January 14th.
10:15 - 11:15 a.m. in Room 123

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



Hey, Trinity Families!

December was JAM-PACKED with fun! First we had a mission trip meeting, and we are all excited about the trips this summer! We will be announcing our Shareholders fundraiser in January, so be on the lookout for information about how to support these trips!

On the 10th we had our youth Christmas party which was filled with white elephant gifts (lots of giggling), gingerbread houses and Bible Jeopardy! It was a blast! Take a look at some pictures below!



Then on the 17th we had our second annual Kids Christmas party! We had a blast! It was filled with crafts, cookie decorating, caroling, making bags for the homeless ministry, and a movie! We even had some teens help out! It is such a blessing to make memories like this with students young and old! Here are some pictures!



January will be exciting too, just less busy! Our youth leadership team decided that January's event would be a service project at the end of the month. They will be planning the event from start to finish and I am so proud of them for choosing to serve!

January also begins our First Communion preparation for students 5th grade and up. More details will be sent out in an email, so please be on the lookout! If your student is in 8th grade and will be confirmed this spring, please make sure to sign up for this class if they have not taken it.

Our next Children's Ministry event will be in February. Be on the lookout because it will be a blast and you don't want to miss it!

Finally, in January I am attending a National DCE conference here in Houston. Please pray that this conference is edifying and brings joy as I get to spend time with others in ministry and old friends!

Blessings,

Haley Davisson, Director of Youth and Children's Ministries

Finance Corner - January 2024

[Paul says] forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Philippians 3:13b-14 ESV

This time last year we were gearing up for the Sanctuary refresh and anticipating the relocation of our worship services to the gym. The Magnify campaign had only been running for a few months and we were awaiting the disruption that would be the inevitable result from our renovation project.

We can now look back and recall the joy we experienced on Palm Sunday as we worshiped for the first time in the refreshed Sanctuary. Watch the [time-lapse video](#) of the construction process.



Preliminary financial results for 2023

Our congregation is comprised of generous givers, and I am thrilled to report that gifts to the Magnify campaign through the end of 2023 now total over \$780,000, which is \$30,000 over our original goal!

Watch a short ["thank you" video](#) from Pastor Dorn about our Magnify campaign that was recorded in August of 2023.

I am also happy to report that as of the writing of this article on January 1, 2024, tithes and offerings for the entire year of 2023 were approximately \$1,781,000. This is 98.6% of the budget approved by the Congregation, and just \$3,000 less than our offerings in 2022. Stay tuned for a final accounting of our 2023 financial results in next month's *Finance Corner*.

Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow!

If you have not yet recorded your 2024 Home Treasury pledge for planned giving next year, you can find a commitment card in the pew pocket, or you may use our online pledge form [here](#).

Here's a quick summary of "visible results" for November 2023:

November 2023 Summary			
	In-person	Online	Nov. 2022
Average Worship Attendance	248	150	407
	Adults	Students	Nov. 2022
Avg. Discipleship Hour Attendance	131	55	187
Contributions	Actual	Budgeted	Last Year
November 2023 tithes and offerings	\$158,498	\$150,000	\$170,973
Year-to-date 2023 tithes and offerings	\$1,437,428	\$1,607,489	\$1,498,727
	Received	Pledged	Last Year
Magnify Campaign gifts thru 11/30/2023	\$756,168	\$762,426	N/A

The year that is ahead of us is full of promise for those that "strain forward" in their faith, and it is also full of promise for our congregation. More than ever, our community needs to hear our witness of Jesus' saving grace and see the love that He has placed in our hearts.

Joyfully joining Jesus alongside you,
Ron Lacy, CFO

Stephen Ministry

Once upon a time, in a land that's not so very far from Houston, there was a young woman named Lily. She was going through a difficult time in her life following the death of her father and felt like she had no one that would truly just listen to her. One day at church she heard about Stephen Ministry from a friend and decided to give it a try.

At first, Lily was hesitant to open up to a friendly stranger, but her Stephen Minister was kind and patient. She listened to Lily's problems without judgment and offered her support and encouragement. She didn't try to "fix" Lily because only God can tackle that chore.

Over time, Lily began to feel more comfortable and started to trust her Stephen Minister, and, in turn, her faith was strengthened, and she saw her life from a different perspective. Lily felt confident that the inner struggles she discussed with her Stephen Minister would remain totally confidential.

With the help of the Stephen Ministry, Lily was able to work through her issues and find hope for a positive future. She learned that she was not alone and that God had placed people who cared about her in her church. Her Stephen Minister helped her to see that she was capable of overcoming any obstacle by depending on Jesus.

Thanks to Stephen Ministry, Lily was able to turn her life around and become a happier and more confident person. She will always be grateful for the positive impact that Stephen Ministry had on her life.

If you have feelings of loneliness, experiencing a crisis, facing a challenge or simply going through a tough time, Stephen Ministers are commissioned members of our congregation who have received specialized training to equip them to provide Christ-focused, empathetic, highly confidential care and prayer support.

If you'd like to learn more about how our Stephen Ministry could provide a listening ear and caring heart for yourself, a loved one, friend, neighbor or co-worker (inside or outside our congregation) please speak with one of our pastors, or reach out to Pastor Lonnie Gonzales at lgonzales@trinitydt.org.



Orphan Grain Train Fundraiser

Saturday, January 27, 2024 starting at 4:00 p.m.

Social hour, Silent Auction, catered Tex-Mex dinner and presentation of OGT's ministry and update on the Servant Center project.

Location: 5050 E Sam Houston Parkway S (Zion Lutheran church) - Pasadena, TX 77505

Tickets may be purchased using the QR code to the right, this link [OGT Fundraiser Tickets](#), or by calling OGT Board member Holly at 713.890.2633.

If you are moved to be an underwriter for the event contact Board member, Erika Adams at 713.240.5999 or eadamsOGT@gmail.com.





Membership Report

The following are the changes to membership approved at the November 2023 Governing Board meeting.

MEMBERSHIP IN

Baptism

- Collins Eloise Mercer (11/12/2023)

MEMBERSHIP OUT

Transfer

- Howard and Ginny Kappler to Bethel LCMS - Bryan, TX (10/31/2023)



Un-Decorate the Church

January 7th
11:15 a.m.

Sign up at the Welcome Desk if you can help.



2024 GOVERNING BOARD

Jim Baccus (Elder)
Lori Dixon
Pastor Michael Dorn
Mike Gilmore (Elder)
Tim Grady (Elder)
Ross Krueger
Brent Laumen
Cassandra McGarvey
Marie Munier
Mary Oliver
Chris Sonneborn (Elder)

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

Magnify Campaign Update

- Thanks to your generosity, through November 30th, **pledges** to the Magnify campaign total \$762,426, which exceeded our goal. Actual gifts received total \$756,168, which is over 100% of our \$750,000 goal.
- The Magnify campaign officially ended on December 31st. Any future donations will be used to offset the construction costs that were paid for out of the church's cash reserves. If you have not yet had a chance to contribute, please prayerfully consider how you might participate in this effort to bring the grace and love of Jesus to our community.
- The campaign is the first step in our plan to revitalize our facilities and, through these improvements, carry out the Lord's Great Commission to bring others into our Trinity community, both through worship services and other community outreach events, such as performances and concerts.



We have three videos that highlight how the funds from the Magnify campaign were used to refresh our Sanctuary. You may view them using these links:

[5 minute "looking back" video](#)

[1 minute giving opportunity video](#)

[1 minute thank you video](#)

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The Houston Lutheran Chorale Begins New Season

Like to sing? The Houston Lutheran Chorale would love for you to join them as they prepare for a new season of spreading the Gospel of Christ. They meet on Sunday afternoons (usually two Sundays a month) from 2:00 - 5:00 p.m. at Trinity Downtown.

Jeff Armstrong is their new Director and he has some new ideas and some great music that will help spread the Word in song! No auditions are required - just a desire to sing His praises.

Rehearsals start January 21, 2024 at 2:00 p.m. We hope to see you there!! For more information, contact September Nelson at 832.584.8242 or slbn8903@gmail.com.



*As we bid farewell to 2023 and welcome 2024,
let's join our hearts in prayer for our beloved
families. May the coming year bring abundant
blessings, health and joy to every one of them.*

Children, Youth and Adult Bible Studies

Please consider joining one or more of our Bible studies. It's a wonderful way to begin a new spiritual discipline. Virtual login information is available on Trinity's website www.trinitydt.org. Children and youth classes are in person unless indicated otherwise. Adult classes are either virtual, in person or hybrid.

SUNDAYS - CHILDREN (10:15 - 11:15 AM)

Nursery (Infants - age 2) - Room 234

Kingdom Quest 2 & 3 year olds - Room 233

Kingdom Quest 4 & 5 year olds - Room 232

Kingdom Quest 1st Grade - 4th Grade - Kingdom Hall (basement)

Casa 'de Oracion Spanish (all grades) - Room 209



SUNDAYS - YOUTH

Foundations 56 (5th-6th grades) - 10:15-11:15 AM - Room 207

Confirmation (7th-8th grades) - 10:15-11:15 AM - Room 208

High School (7th-12th grades) - 10:15-11:15 AM - Underground

SUNDAYS - ADULT

Discipleship Bible Study - The Whole Story - Creation to Jesus

Led by Group of Members - 10:15-11:15 AM - Room 125 - In Person

This Bible study series covers creation through the redemptive story in the Old Testament. It is perfect for people interested in learning a simple and reproducible model to study Scripture in a group setting. The study is sponsored and facilitated by a committed group of members at Trinity Downtown. Participants can come and go throughout the series.

Ephesians

Led by Jim Cleary - 10:15-11:15 AM - Room 205 - Hybrid

Start your new year off right by studying Paul's letter to the Ephesians. In this class, we'll get heavenly glimpses as to how things really are, and get a better understanding of God's plan to unite everyone and everything in Christ. You will renew your hope! Discussion-oriented.

Faith Discovery

Led by Pastor Michael Dorn - 10:15-11:15 AM - Room 123 - In Person (Begins January 14th)

Class for persons interested in joining Trinity Downtown and those wanting a refresh of the Christian faith.

History of Church Controversies

Led by Thomas DeVries and Anthony Flaviani - 10:15-11:15 AM - Room 206 - In Person

The Church is Christ's perfect bride, until you involve people. As soon as Christ left the Earth, that's what happened and over the next 2,000 years we have jumped from one controversy or heresy to the next; dividing ourselves along the way. Each week will be a stand-alone lesson on a controversy starting with the book of Acts and moving towards the present day. Learn from their mistakes not only as a church, but as individuals in our own lives and our own controversies.

Isaiah - The Herald of the Messiah

Led by Bill Fischer - 10:15-11:15 AM - Room 201 - Hybrid

Isaiah is the Old Testament prophet who is quoted more than any other in the New Testament. Many, and probably most of these quotations, point to the birth of Jesus, the Messiah which we celebrate at Christmas. Isaiah's writings go beyond the promise of salvation for his first audience. His words also prophesy the growth of God's church until the second coming of Jesus on Judgment Day. At that time we will see the new heaven and new earth promised by God. Our class is not a detailed verse by verse study, but rather a look at selected passages that highlight God's promises of our Savior through Isaiah.

Prayer and Praise: Psalms and Hymns

Led by Pastor Paul Dorn - 7:00-8:00 PM - Virtual

Psalms are often quoted by the New Testament writers. The psalms were the prayer and song book of God's people both in Old and New Testament times. Class members will discuss psalms and hymns that have been meaningful to them. We will be looking at what the psalms mean for us now as we pray them. At the same time the class will discuss hymns and songs written in our times. The class will meet each Sunday evening at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. Please email Pastor Paul Dorn at pbdorn6@gmail.com if you wish to be part of this study and he will send you a link for the Zoom meeting.

The Bible Alive ... God In Action

Led by John Reisig - 10:15-11:15 AM - Room 124 - In Person

In this study, each Sunday offers a single stand alone topic. The material covered each week will provide a meaningful experience for regular participants, visitors to Trinity Downtown, and for those simply looking to get back into a routine of attending Bible study. The single topic format insures that no one will be lost or feel behind during the study, and will feel welcome and encouraged to attend at any time. Bibles will be provided and utilized each week. Providing historical context to the scriptural message, and modern application of His word, the Bible will "Come Alive," and show that God has been working throughout history, and is still working today out of love for His people.

The Spiritual Life - A Study on 1st Corinthians

Led by Pastor Jose Flores of Casa 'de Oracion - 10:15-11:15 AM - Room 211 - In Person (Spanish Speaking)

Paul writes to the Church in Corinth instructing them regarding spiritual life in the context of the local church. The Church is called to live a life empowered by the Spirit of God.

TUESDAYS - ADULTS

Tuesday Morning Women's Bible Study - LifeLight: Acts, Part II (Resumes January 9th)

Led by Karen Maynard - 10:00-11:30 AM - Room 205 - Hybrid

This study is part of the LifeLight Bible study series of in-depth studies of Bible books. The goal of LifeLight is that through a regular program of in-depth personal and group study of Scripture, more and more Christian adults may grow in their personal faith in Jesus Christ.

Young Adult Bible Study

Led by Maddie Meier - 7:15 PM on 1st & 3rd Tuesdays - Virtual via Zoom
(Meeting ID: 870 6099 1252, Passcode: 694814)

Young adults are encouraged to join this virtual fellowship hour diving into the Lord's word, celebrating one another's accomplishments, supporting each other through the trials of young adulthood, and praying over one another.

Who is welcome: Age is but a number. This Bible study is geared towards anyone that would consider themselves a "young adult". Whether you are a seeker, a new Christian, or a seasoned disciple this space is for you.

WEDNESDAYS - ADULTS

Ephesians

Led by Mary Oliver - 6:30-7:45 PM - Virtual (Begins January 10th)

This winter Women's Wednesday Night Bible Study will dig into the book of Ephesians. We would love for you to become a part of this small but joyful group.

In Ephesians, the Apostle Paul describes followers of Jesus with words such as as predestined, sealed, made alive, brought near, reconciled, citizens, equipped, mature, one body, and children of light. Then, he describes the tools God graciously gives us to live this life.

Please join us January 10, 2024. We meet Wednesday evenings on Zoom from 6:30 to 7:45 p.m. and in person the last Wednesday of the month.

Virtual Midweek Spiritual Check-in

Led by Jim Cleary - 7:00-8:00 PM - Virtual

THURSDAYS - ADULTS

Sonrise Bible Study

Led by Bill Fischer, Pastor Black and individual class members - 7:30-8:30 AM - Virtual

This member-led virtual class primarily discusses the Scripture readings assigned for the following Sunday. The class is open to men and women. For more information contact Bill Fischer at 832.459.3241 or the church office.



DEPART FROM EVIL, AND DO GOOD;
SEEK PEACE,
»—AND—«
PURSUE IT.

PSALM 34:14, KJV



Life Quotes 2024 - January 7

"What is it that is essential for your life this New Year? What gifts do you cherish? Certainly, Jesus is the most precious gift we have! Let Him shine through your whole life this year. Take Him with you everywhere. Remember whose family you belong to!



Cling to Jesus, our Father's Son this New Year! Our Father goes with you and promises His blessings, now and forever!"

Rev. Darren Green, St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church, Redwood Falls, Minnesota – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org

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Love With All People Now!*

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Article submission deadline is **January 15th** for articles to be published February 1, 2024.
Submit articles to pschroeder@trinitydt.org.

Contact Pam Schroeder at 713.229.2944 with any questions about this publication.