

TOUCHSTONE

January 2021

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Trinity United Presbyterian Church • 79 W. Fayette Street, Uniontown, PA 15401
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www.facebook.com/trinityupc

Worship | Service | Proclaim | Discipleship | Community

Upcoming Church Trip

What can I say, I'm a sucker for old black and white films! At our weekly Darts and Devotions we often talk about old movies. Jim Williams (better known as Dr. Triple), always has great recommendations of what cinema classics I should watch next. Jim has given me recommendations, many which include Indiana Pennsylvania's own James Stewart. So when things get back to normal we are planning a trip to the Jimmy Stewart Museum. It's a short trip that will be a blast, especially if you enjoy Jimmy Stewart movies. Not to mention there are some great places to eat!

-James V.

*Jimmy Stewart Museum
Church Trip
TBD 2021*



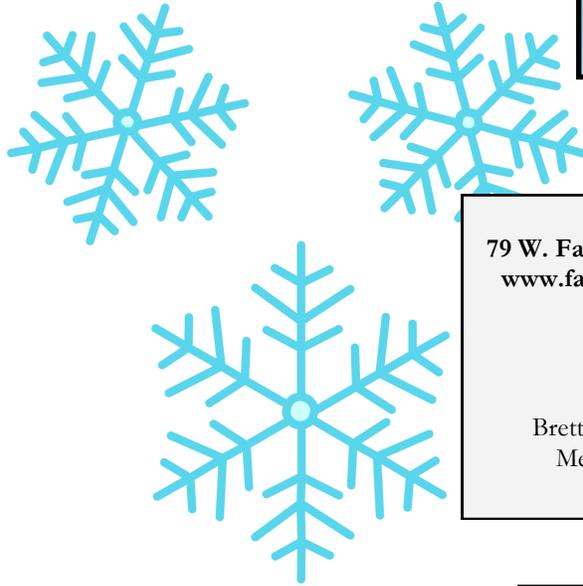
Trinity will be going axe throwing again.

When we know, we'll let you know!

Our Fellowship

Happy Birthday

- 6—John Barnhart
- 6—Kristin Williams
- 6—Doug Yauger
- 7—Sally Franks
- 12—Macy Shaffer
- 14—Wade McMahon
- 15—John Caton
- 15—Brandi Shanaberger
- 16—Jane Walsh
- 17—Tanya Shaffer
- 18—Nathan Maxwell
- 23—Cooper Waligura
- 25—Jacob Cahn
- 25—Melissa Duley
- 27—Jeff Martinec
- 29—Pam Porterfield



Happy Anniversary

January 20
Don & Carol Ashton
59 years

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 Reverend Jim Gear, Pastor
 James Vlosich, Discipleship Coordinator
 Bill Dreucci, Director of Music
 Brett Vanderlaan, Organist/Children's Choir Director
 Meg Grimm, Secretary • Bill Thompson, Sexton
 Ministers: All the Congregation

In Memorium
Antoinette Everett

Visit the church webpage,
www.trinityupc.com, to see the church
 calendar.
**Check your email for updates. Email
 the church office if you need to be put
 on the church email list.**

Prayer List

“Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints.” (Ephesians 6:18)

Please especially pray for these:

Jan 1– 9	Jason & Marua Tran, Bill, Ellen, Anne and Will Ulmer, Jane Updegraff, Jerome & Julie Venick, Rick & Nancy Vernon
Jan 10 –16	James & Caitlin Vlosich, Amanda Walker, Ellie Wallencheck, Jane Walsh, Mary Watson, John & Diane Williams
Jan 17–23	Scott, Jamie and Morgan Williams, Kristin Williams, Jim Williams, Eric and Brooklyn Williams, Wayne, Amanda and Lily Workman
Jan 24–31	Wayne and Elsie Workman, Doug & Patty Yauger, Karen Young

Men's Ministry

Men's Discussion Group

NEXT MEETING: Jan. 20

Continues to meet on the third Wednesdays,
7:30 am at Mark C.'s...*a safe distance maintained!*

Temporarily, through January 2021,

The **Men's Breakfast Group** is meeting with them.



Darts and Devotions

We have no clue when the official Dartball season will start again. But when it does...we'll be ready!
...Maybe.

Every Thursday at 10:00 A.M.

Devotions by Doug Yauger

Join us for a great time of **Devotion, coffee, snacks,**
and **laughs!**

Thursdays 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Photo Credit: Francis Squires



Church News

Wednesday Night Zoom

When we first started doing these Bible discussions in the springtime of 2020, I had no idea that we would still be doing it in 2021! Wednesday Night Zoom has been a blessing in many ways. My favorite part of the hour is the time of prayers and concerns. During this time we share what's closest to our hearts and then pray together. We have also experienced God's blessings as we share the answered prayers that have taken place in our life. If you have been unable to meet with others during this pandemic I encourage you to give Wednesday Night Zoom a try.

Wednesday Night Zoom

Wednesdays 7:00-8:00 p.m.

-James V.

January's hike will be Saturday, January 8

Hess Trail, Forbes State Forest - Farmington, PA

11:00 am - Meet in Trinity Parking lot

11:45 am - Hike

1:30 pm - Lunch at Maywood Grill, Chalk Hill, PA

→ [Maps to Trailhead parking lot in Chapel](#) ←



Youth Group Update

Christmas is over and now we face the unpredictable southwestern Pennsylvania winter. To add to the unpredictable winter is the uncertainty of everything relating to Covid-19. Regardless of what happens we are going to make sure to stay connected with the youth of the community that are coming to us. Whether in person or zoom, Trinity will work hard to make sure to teach the students about Jesus Christ.

-James V.

Sunday School

The 10:00 a.m. Sunday School class has been reading The Problem of Pain since September. We will be finished with the book by February and then we will be doing a study of what the Bible says about anxiety. Many people (including Christians) live with daily anxiety. For five weeks we will be opening God's word and learn about living in an anxiety filled world.

Sundays 10 am

-James V.



Church News



Book Journey

(Book Club—Second Tuesday of Each Month, 7:00pm)

JANUARY IS UPON US, named for the Roman god Janus whose two faces allowed him to look backwards to the old year and forward to the new. He was the god of gates and doorways so January is an appropriate time for contemplation and anticipation as we step into a new year. This is especially true after the year we just endured! I have compiled a short list of books that center on the theme of hope from a faith perspective that might be of interest to you. These are available through the Uniontown Public Library, either in printed or electronic formats, or from your favorite online book vendor.

From the late Chicago broadcaster and author Studs Terkel ~ “Hope Dies Last: Keeping the Faith in Difficult Times” (2003);

From the prolific Anne Lamott ~ “Stitches: A Handbook on Meaning, Hope and Repair” (2013), and “Almost Everything: Notes on Hope” (2018);

From Episcopal priest and theologian Barbara Brown Taylor ~ “Learning to Walk in the Dark” (2014);

Finally, Katherine May’s melancholy but acclaimed memoir “Wintering: The Power of Rest and Retreat in Difficult Times” (2020) comes from a more mystical viewpoint but “offers a hopeful perspective on embracing difficult times” (NY Times).

I would love to hear your thoughts on any of these books, or about what you are reading during these cold, winter days. If you wish, I will share book suggestions in future Touchstones. You can email me at nass81@atlanticbb.net.

Book Journey remains on hiatus until later in the year. In the meantime, happy reading and stay safe.

Jean Nass
Group Leader

Children's Video Message

When I was a kid I had a devotional book that I would look to often during my quiet with God. It’s 2021 and to be honest I’m not sure how many kids still read physical books. Facebook is a tool that the Church has latched onto in the past few years. Like all tools provided by God, the Church wants to make sure we use it effectively. If you have a child or grandchild I encourage

Moment of Devotion Videos

Moment of Devotion videos are Facebook videos that are being released weekly. Life can be very busy and sometimes a pause in our day can be very helpful. When we take a few minutes a day and devote time to God, sometimes it’s just what we need to recharge our batteries.

-James V.

Church News

This is a BIG DEAL!

Bethel Bible Series: Congregational Phase Start-Up

January 25, 2021 at 7 pm

In-person, Westminster Room and on ZOOM

→ Sign Up on Bulletin board in Chapel ←

December and January is already upon us! We have been making many descriptions and announcements concerning the Bethel Bible Series. VERY SOON you will start to be given the opportunity to sign up for the first 8-week class, starting in mid-January: "Old Testament 1".

The hour and 15 minute classes will be laid-out along these lines:



7:00 pm – Gathering, Devotional, Snacks available

7:05 pm – Lecture and Discussion

7:50 pm – Break and Snacks available

8:00 pm – Questions and Discussion

8:15 pm – Dismissal

Friendship \ Fellowship \ Fun \ Bible Understanding \ No-Pressure \ AND Snacks!



Music Department

NOTES FROM THE BENCH

By Brett Vanderlaan

Which Bench? Piano vs. Organ—Friendly Rivals

You may have noticed over the course of multiple worship services that I sometimes move between the organ console and the piano in the sanctuary. You may wonder why certain music literally moves me to play the piano rather than the organ (or vice versa). This column will address those decisions.

Clearly, both instruments have keyboards with a similar arrangement of keys that are played with the fingers (and feet in the case of the organ). Both instruments also have pedals (besides the organ pedal keyboard) that offer some control over the sounds produced. These similarities allow for a fairly easy transition from one instrument to the other, but there are significant differences in the technique, capabilities, and (obviously) sounds of the two instruments.

The organ, especially a pipe organ, is an impressive source for musical sounds. The wide range of sounds, tones, colors, and dynamics makes it incredibly versatile. Different sounds can even be produced simultaneously from the different keyboards, so a single player can essentially become an ensemble. The organ's tremendous power can fill a large space – such as the Trinity sanctuary – with resonant, full sound that can be felt physically and can lead a full congregation in song. More specifically, organ notes can be sustained indefinitely. As long as a key is depressed, the pipe will produce a steady, continuous sound without any decay in volume. The presence of the pedal keyboard (and usually dedicated pipes and stops for the pedals) provides added depth to the sound of the organ. Finally, the placement of the organ “behind” the choir (at least at Trinity, for example) is helpful for supporting choral singing.

However, the piano also brings particular advantages that the organ cannot match. The mechanics of the piano allow the player's touch to have much more control over the attack and volume of each individual

note. The more percussive nature of the piano can bring out the attack of each new note. This feature is especially useful for music that includes repeated notes, fast passages, rhythmic patterns, and arpeggios. The wider range of the physical keyboard (88 keys versus the typical 60 for organ keyboards – and standard 32 for pedals) enables large gestures that encompass sweeps from low to high or high to low. While piano notes begin to decay immediately after the strings are struck by the internal hammers, the sustain pedal can allow the strings to vibrate even after a key is released – something that is not possible on the organ. Finally, the tone of the piano is often desirable for blending when accompanying voices or a solo instrument.

In the end, each instrument has advantages that are beneficial for playing particular styles or types of music. As a result, I make a specific decision (in consultation with Bill Dreucci) about which instrument to use for each hymn, anthem, solo, or voluntary. For some pieces, the composer indicates a desired choice or suggestion for instrument. Certainly, there are times when either instrument will work well, and in those situations I often defer to the bench on which I will be sitting at that point in the service. Regardless of the bench used, I hope that there is always beautiful music to approach God in praise and prayer.

Soli Deo Gloria (Glory to God alone)



A Note From Pastor Jim

Hello-There Church!

10 Year Plan Update for January

Elder/Deacon/Leader Retreat #1 --- January 23

Inquirer's Class resumes late January and then into February

Bethel Bible Series Congregational Phase starts January 25

Firm-up Reach-Out Calling

Pine Spring Camp Spring Mission planning

Discuss Church Dinners and Breakfasts

Planning for upcoming Small Group Ministries

Church Van Discussions and Visioning

Finalize Church Literature and Locations

Jim Gear

Evangelism

Bethel Team

Evangelism

Mission Task Force

Mission Task Force

and Church Family

Christian Education

Mission Task Force

and Youth Ministries

Office

10 Year Plan Update for February

Plans for Nursery Staffing and Updating Nursery

Plans for Fall Sunday School

Plans for Support of Interfaith and Trinity's combined work

Plans for Integrating Intentional Gregariousness, Doug's Fraternity

Rush Model and Reach-Out Calling Training and Integration

Plant Women's Ministries (leaders already contacted and being trained)

Start Developing Public Relations Ministries

Personnel

Christian Education

Jim Gear

Evangelism

Christian Education

Personnel

Again and Again, it is a blessing to serve along with you all.

Genesis 12 – "Blessed to be a Blessing"

- Pastor Jim

Pastor's Article—Transforming Discipleship—Transformative Faith

The Transfiguration

After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus. Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters - one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.” While he was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!”

- Matthew 17:1-5

Spend Time Together – The saints need to spend time together, not in meetings only, but in all kinds of different ways where relationships can be fostered, built and developed...God works through relationships. Jesus, Peter, James and John were out walking up a mountain and the Transfiguration happened. Wammo-Bammo! The truth was not expected to descend so mightily, but there it was, right in front of them, compelling them!

Went up to a High Mountain – why did they have to go to all that work? Why did they have to go so out of their way? Even though God knew they were ready for it, they did not realize it yet. Nothing worth much comes easily. They had to work at it, so they would realize that a big deal was going on there.

Jesus was Transfigured – Jesus knew this was coming, but he very much appreciated the renewal meeting he had with Moses and Elijah (relationships again)! Just imagine, the three Heavy Hitters in the Bible all gathered in one place: with the Disciples there to experience it – **Deliverance (Moses – Exodus) Vision (Elijah – Prophet) Salvation (Jesus – Rescuer)**

“The transfiguration is a sign that Jesus was to fulfill the Law and the prophets. It also assured James, Peter, and John that Jesus was indeed, the Messiah.” – Theol. Review

Scary Times for the Disciples – Peter, in his characteristic fashion, spoke right away and did not even know what he was saying. What *was* he saying? Why would they need three little huts? Jesus recognized his excitement and just left the statement hang there in the air... “I will put up three shelters”. Come on Pete, that is not why they were all together in one place. They were there to witness and then later testify to the complete and total council of God and provide context to God’s words, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. *Listen to him!*” The situation was screaming for them to pay attention to Jesus – he is God – he is Lord and does not need a hut! Relationships Again.

To sum-up: Spend time together, be willing to go out of your way, start to see the Scriptures as declaring a complete and total message (**Deliverance-Vision-Salvation**) and realize that God speaks to us. God is talking, listen to him. He is speaking in all of life, not just while you are in a pew. God has things for you to do – start to figure out what those things are and get to it! Relationships Again! Listen to Jesus!

Pastor Jim, Your friend in Christ

Articles of Interest

Montreat Receives Thriving Congregation Grant from Lilly Endowment Inc.

Special to Presbyterian News Service | edited by Jim Gear



Montreat Conference Center has received a grant of \$995,500 from Lilly Endowment Inc. to help develop new initiatives to support local congregations.

The program, "Reforming Identity and Agency: Vital Practices for 21st Century Congregations," is funded through Lilly Endowment's Thriving Congregations Initiative.

The aim of the national initiative is to strengthen Christian congregations so they can help people deepen their relationships with God, build strong relationships with each other, and contribute to the flourishing of local communities and the world. Lilly Endowment is making nearly \$93 million in grants through the initiative. The grants will support organizations as they work directly with congregations and help them gain clarity about their values and missions, explore and understand better the communities in which they serve, and draw upon their theological traditions as they adapt ministries to meet changing needs. Over the last five years, strengthening congregations has become an increasing focal point of our work," says Richard DuBose, Montreat Conference Center president. "With Lilly Endowment's help, we've imagined a broader program and that gives more local congregations and communities the opportunity to participate. This project is deeply aligned with our mission, and we were thrilled to learn of Lilly Endowment's support." "In the midst of a rapidly changing world, Christian congregations are grappling with how they can best carry forward their ministries," said Christopher Coble, Lilly Endowment's vice president for religion. Lilly Endowment launched the Thriving Congregations Initiative in 2019 as part of its commitment to support efforts that enhance the vitality of Christian congregations.

Find out more at www.montreat.org.

Columbia Seminary Awarded Congregational Development Grant

from Lilly Endowment Inc. will allow the seminary to help congregations do ministry in a post-pandemic world

by Columbia Theological Seminary | edited by Jim Gear

Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia, has received a grant of \$969,528 from Lilly Endowment Inc. to help establish the "reKindle: Congregational Development in a Post COVID-19 Era" program through its Center for Lifelong Learning. The reKindle Impact Grant will help realize the goal of the Thriving Congregation initiative by helping congregations focus on an identified need and chosen priority for ministry and congregational vitality. The initiative will gather local pastors

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Church News

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and church leaders to engage in a theologically informed strategy to rekindle their congregational vitality in a post-COVID-19 era. The reKindle program will resource them with a process to think theologically about their congregation, plan programs or strategies to initiate revitalization, and resource them with capacities and coaches to carry the projects through. The program will provide an Impact Grant to help congregations initiate and complete their programs.

Seminary President Leanne Van Dyk said, "Columbia Seminary is eager to serve congregations who are facing the challenges of ministry in a post-pandemic context. Pastoral leaders know that even after the crisis itself has passed, there will still be significant impacts in the broader culture and in the congregations. We are eager to take up the task of resourcing these churches and are grateful to Lilly Endowment for their generous support."

The program is funded through Lilly Endowment's Thriving Congregations Initiative. The aim of the national initiative is to strengthen Christian congregations so they can help people deepen their relationships with God, build strong relationships with each other and contribute to the flourishing of local communities and the world.

Lilly Endowment is making nearly \$93 million in grants through the initiative. The grants will support organizations as they work directly with congregations and help them gain clarity about their values and missions, explore and understand better the communities in which they serve, and draw upon their theological traditions as they adapt ministries to meet changing needs.



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Worship Themes

January 2021

1/3/2021	Second Sunday after Christmas			
	Theme: God Incarnate – part 7	Hebrews 2:17	Message: "God made Man"	
	Note: The baby born at Bethlehem was God made man			
1/6	Epiphany of the Lord			
1/10	Baptism of the Lord			
	Theme: TBA			
1/17	Second Sunday after Epiphany			
	Criminal Justice Sunday			
	Theme: TBA			
1/24	Third Sunday after Epiphany			
	Theme: You Asked for it! – part 10: Prayer	Matthew 6:9-13		
	Message: "Does Prayer Work? If so, Then How Do We Pray?"			
1/31	Fourth Sunday after Epiphany			
	Theme: Jesus the Shepherd #4	Galatians 1:1-5		
	Message: "The Servant"			

Our Mission is to worship and serve Jesus Christ by proclaiming his Gospel to all persons.
As servants of Christ, we will always be a community of love, hope, service and reconciliation.

Return Service Requested

Trinity United Presbyterian Church
79 West Fayette Street
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