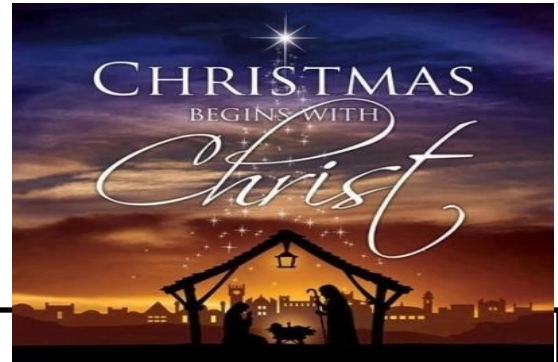


# Trinity Times



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we enter the holiday season once again, many of us will be spending time on the roads or in the air, traveling back home to see friends and family. Airports and rest stops will be packed with people and luggage, as weary passengers make the annual trek to see their relatives. Something seems to be the air this time of year, as we all make great efforts to find our way home to be with loved ones and friends. We drive long distances, we spend hours on planes, and we do whatever it takes, to be with the people we care about in the Christmas season.

With people going to such extremes to be present with friends and family, we can understand the great extremes God goes to be present with us. With people making every effort to find their way home for the holidays, we can understand God making every effort to find God's way toward us. With people of all circumstances moving toward each other around feasts, candles, tables, and trees, we can understand God moving toward us to be where we are.

As we enter the Christmas season, we are ever so poignantly reminded that as Jesus Christ, God has come near to us. As we are ever drawn to Bethlehem this time of year, we are reminded that as Jesus of Nazareth, God moved toward us. As we sing with angels, and ponder with shepherds and worship with magi, we are retold the ancient story that *the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth*. As we enter this joyous time of year, we forgetful people are told anew that God, out of love and with grace and in his freedom, moved toward us as Jesus Christ, to be where we are, because we could not come to him.

Such is the love and character of the Living God, that God so desired to be near us, to bestow life and blessings upon us, to free us from the chains of our own making, that the Word of God emptied himself and took our form, so that where we are, there he might be. Whatever your thoughts are on God, whatever you believe God to be, this is the unavoidable and absolute truth about God; the Living God is Love in Christ Jesus. Love which will not let us go, but love that will seek us out. Love that moves toward us. Love that decides to be with us and to be for us. This is the God revealed to us in Christ and through Christ, the Living God of Love and Grace and Freedom.

Perhaps then, that is why we all try to find our way home this time of year, because we are daily reminded that God found his way to us. Perhaps then, that is why we find it easier to be kind and merciful to one another around the holidays, because we are daily reminded that God showed kindness and mercy to a people who didn't deserve it. Perhaps then that is why the world becomes a better place around Christmas, because after all God made the world a better place by coming into it as Jesus Christ.

So, whether you have plans or not, whether you travel or stay home, whether you enjoy feast or famine, whether you enjoy another's company or you are alone, whether you believe or not, this is the simple but profound truth of Christmas; as Jesus Christ, God is with you and God is for you. Rest in that truth and God will rest in you.

In Christ,

Rev. Mark

# JOY to the world

## Session Update

Trinity, in October and November, received three letters of gratitude. The Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Fund in part said "Thank God, you have not become desensitized by the magnitude of needs arising out of disaster and conflict, but instead you have been filled with a spirit of hope and generosity...making it possible for our church to shelter with compassion those wounded by disaster...Your generous gift of \$1000 helps bring the presence of Christ to a broken and hurting world..."

Locally, Faith Lutheran Church Food Pantry thanked us for our continued generous support.

Pastor Ken Ayers thanked us for supporting Wee Kirk. He and Ruth Ann attend this conference annually.

Trinity, you are a good and generous congregation! Copies of these letters will be posted in our church hallway so that you can read them in their entirety.

It is a joy to work with Rev. Mong. He is guiding, leading, pushing, and pulling us to find our path to doing God's work at Trinity.

We have several projects with which we are moving ahead, including looking at our membership rolls, our Handbook and the way each committee functions, as well as dealing with the monthly business that is brought forward.

Rev. Mark is blessed with incredible organizational skills. Our session meetings are productive and not overly long! His thoughtful, gentle, and yet persistent, leadership makes working together an exciting process.

Your new session will begin in January- finding the committee work best suited for each elder serving. With Rev. Mark's guidance, session will move forward to help Trinity serve God here in Ashtabula.

Blessings,  
Mary Belding  
Clerk of Session

A special token of appreciation will be collected on Christmas Eve. The undesignated offering in the collection plate will be divided among David Adams, Financial Secretary, Lois Fassett, Treasurer, Marjorie Landfried, Organist/Music Director, Lynne Mukina, Secretary.

Thank you for your love and dedication. We appreciate all of you so much.



# CHRISTMAS OFFERING

## Stewardship Committee



Stewardship began Advent with the presentation about the Christmas Joy Offering. The gifts received for this program celebrate the coming of Jesus Christ, the "Wonderful" gift of God.

This offering distributes gifts 50/50 to the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and to Presbyterian related racial ethnic schools and colleges.

Our Pledge Campaign, Abundant Joy, Overflowing Generosity, began in November. As of November 27, there are 41 pledges, giving \$56,480 to current expenses and \$6534.00 to missions.

If you haven't responded to this need PLEASE consider your gift. The figures are needed so the budget for 2017 can be finalized.

As the new year begins, consider Stewardship as an ongoing commitment to your church. We each have our time, our talents or our treasures to give our church. Stewardship is how we use our God-given gifts.

Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year. Keep Jesus in your heart.

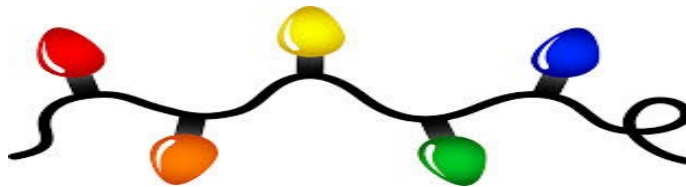
## Trinity Financial Information

### October Financial Report

Income       \$ 9,323.00

Expenses     10,769.04

Difference   - 1,446.04



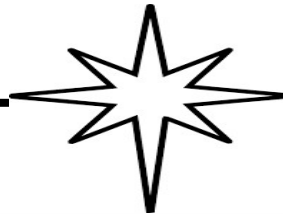
At the time of this report, November 28, the November financials are not complete yet. Since this newsletter is for December and January, you will have a final 2016 report at the Congregational meeting in February. If you have any questions before then, feel free to contact me or the finance committee.

If you have not turned in your 2017 pledge, please turn it in ASAP so your finance committee can present an accurate 2017 budget to Session.

Trinity Church is blessed in so many ways. We have great leadership with Mark Mong and we have wonderful Parishioners who do care about the future of our church. This is such a joyous time for all of us. Enjoy the celebration this Christmas season as we welcome our King and Savior, Jesus Christ.

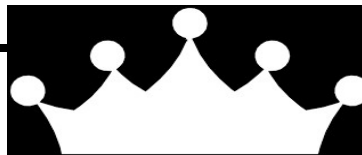
May all of you have a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Lois J. Fassett



## ONE CALL SYSTEM

We as a congregation are looking to use a computerized calling system to convey information to the congregation quickly and accurately. We will be able to record an unlimited number of messages each month concerning anything the congregation needs from prayer concerns, to activities, to church closings. The best part is that a computer will call and deliver the recorded message, so that we as a congregation are no longer required to spend a large portion of time on the phone passing along information. If you are interested in receiving these automated recorded messages from the church, all we need from you is your name and each phone number you want the message to come to. Please call or e-mail the church office to leave your information and you will be included in our system. Please see Lynne or Mark if you have any questions.



## Community Council

We have donated \$120 to the following mission projects: WeeKirk Foundation; G.O. Ministries and Dream Center. The G.O. Ministries and Dream Center donations will assist with their holiday meals.

Living Nativity is scheduled for December 14th and 15th. Sign up sheets will be posted.

Thank you to all who donated for the Woodman Estates Christmas outreach and adopting children through Job and Family Services.

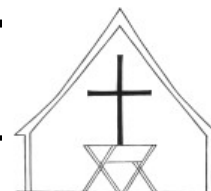
Thanks everyone....I am ever so grateful for an amazing group that gets so much accomplished each year!

Immanuel-God with us!

Pam Bloom



## The Doing of the Deacons



Calling all children!

Please join the Deacons for a day of fellowship, fun and lots of activities. This event will take place on Saturday, December 10, 2016, from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM at Our church.

A lunch will be provided as well as snacks. So bring your appetites!

We are happy to have so many little folks attending church. We want this to be a time to make new memories and enjoy new friendships while working together on a surprise for the rest of our church family!

Hope to see lots of you on Saturday, December 10th!

The Board of Deacons

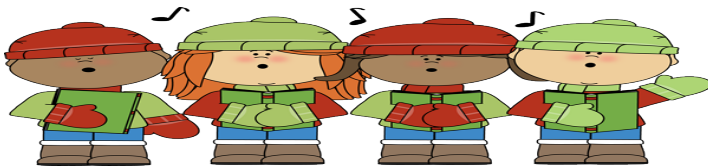
## Happy Holidays and Merry Christmas!

The children are preparing for the birth of Christ through stories, crafts and activities .

We have a Christmas tree in the fellowship hall they will decorate. On Sunday, December 18, the children will perform a song during worship and then enjoy a Christmas party.

We are so grateful for our Trinity children and so look forward to watching them fill with the Christmas spirit.

Wishing you the Merriest of Christmases and the Happiest of New Years!



The Christian Education Committee



If you would like to help in presenting Rev. Mong with a 'gift of gratitude' from the Trinity Family, please give your contribution to Mary Belding or Lynne Mukina before Wednesday, December 14th. Please mark on your envelope "GIFT". This gift will be presented to Rev. Mong during worship on December 18th.

Checks made payable to Trinity Presbyterian Church.

There will be a Congregational Meeting on December 11, 2016 for the purpose of electing the Class of 2019 Deacons.

**Trinity Book Club's** winter schedule includes the following meetings:

- **Tuesday, January 17th**, at 6:00 pm to discuss the play *Noises Off* by Michael Frayn. Fran Wilson will lead the discussion and be hostess.
- **Sunday, February 19, 2017**, 2:00 pm, at the Ashtabula Arts Center to see the performance of *Noises Off*.
- **Tuesday, February 21, 2017**, at 6:00 pm to discuss *Orphan Train* by Christina Baker Kline. Beth Adams will lead the discussion and Meghan Davis will be hostess.

**Tuesday, March 21, 2017** at 7:00 pm to discuss *Olive Kitteridge* by Elizabeth Strout. Melanie Todd will lead the discussion and Beth Jepson will be hostess.

For questions, please contact Meghan Davis at 992-8362.

January 1st 2017 Trinity will welcome the "newly retired" Elder Ken Ayers to the pulpit. He official retired 12/31/2016.

The Rev. Mark Mong will be on vacation from December 26th through January 2nd, 2017. Please call Lynne or Mary Belding incase of an emergency.

## We will not be publishing a February Trinity Times.

The next Trinity Times Newsletter deadline will be February 20th for a March newsletter..

January and February will be busy in the church office, preparing the year end financial report.

*Christmas Luncheon*



There will be a Ladies Christmas Luncheon (for ALL ladies) on Sunday, December 11th, right after Church. We would appreciate it if you would sign up - there is a sign up sheet in the Fellowship Hall - or call either Kathy Fassett at 997-7490 or Karen Reiter at 992-8658, so we know how much food to prepare. Please plan to join us for some excellent food, fun, and fellowship.

# December 2016

Deacon On Call: Maryann Jordan 964-9690

Elder On Call: Susan Hogle 993-8422

Liturgist: Peg LaDu 993-9271

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Prayer Group Thursday Ladies 6:30 Bell Practice	2	3 Santa Shop at Woodman Estates 10:00 am-noon
4 <b>COMMUNION</b> 9:00 Choir Practice 9:15 Adult CE Class 10:30 Worship 10:30 Sunday School 7:00 pm Cluster Advent Service at Trinity	5  5:30 Weight Watchers	6 6:00 Nominating Committee Meeting 6:30 New Members Class 8:00 Al-Anon	7  6:30 Deacons 6:30 Card Ministry	8 Prayer Group Thursday Ladies  6:30 Bell Practice 7:30 Prop./Finance Meeting	9 Poinsettia Pick Up 10:00 Brown Bag Ladies	10 Kids Day out 11:00 am until 3:00 pm
11 <del>24</del> A Meal Collection 9:00 Choir Practice 9:15 Adult CE Class 10:30 Worship 10:30 Sunday School Congregational Meeting after Worship Ladies Luncheon after Worship	12  5:30 Weight Watchers	13 ROMEOS@ Deb's 11:30 Game Day 5:00 Book Club Christmas Party 6:30 New Members Class 8:00 Al-Anon	14  6:30 Card Ministry  <u>Living Nativity</u> 6:00- 8:00 pm	15 Prayer Group Thursday Ladies 6:30 Bell Practice  <u>Living Nativity</u> 6:00-8:00 pm	16	17
18 9:00 Choir Practice 9:15 Adult CE Class 10:30 Worship 10:30 Sunday School	19  5:30 Weight Watchers	20  6:30 New Members Class 8:00 Al-Anon	21  6:00 Comm. Council 6:30 Card Ministry 7:00 Session Meeting	22 Prayer Group Thursday Ladies  No Bell Practice	23	24 <b>CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE 7:00 PM</b>
25 <b>MERRY CHRISTMAS THERE WILL BE NO WORSHIP OR EVENTS TODAY</b>	26 <b>CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED</b>  5:30 Weight Watchers	27 11:30 Game Day 8:00 Al-Anon  <b>Rev. Mong will</b>	28  <b>be on vacation</b> 6:30 Card Ministry	29  <b>12/27- 1/02/2017</b> No Bell Practice	30	31

# January 2017

Deacon On Call: Call the Church Office 993-7111

Elder On Call : Pam Bloom 576-7305

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> Rev. Ken Ayers 9:00 Choir Practice 10:30 Worship No Sunday School	<b>2</b> <b>CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED</b>	<b>3</b>  7:00 Al-Anon	<b>4</b> DEACONS MEETING T.B.D  6:30 Card Ministry	<b>5</b> PRAYER GROUP THURSDAY LADIES  6:30 Bell Practice	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> COMMUNION 2¢ A Meal Collection 9:00 Choir 10:30 Worship 10:30 Sunday School	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> ROMEO'S @ Deb's 11:30 Game Day	<b>11</b>  6:30 Card Ministry	<b>12</b> PRAYER GROUP THURSDAY LADIES  6:30 Bell Practice 7:30 Prop./Finance	<b>13</b> 10:00 Brown Bag Ladies	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> 9:00 Choir 10:30 Worship 10:30 Sunday School Stewardship Meeting after worship	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>  7:00 Al-Anon	<b>18</b>  6:00 Comm. Council 6:30 Card Ministry 7:00 Session	<b>19</b> PRAYER GROUP THURSDAY LADIES 1:30 Worship/Music Meeting 6:30 Bell Practice	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> 9:00 Choir 10:30 Worship 10:30 Sunday School	<b>23</b>  6:30 CE. Meeting	<b>24</b> 11:30 Game Day  7:00 Al-Anon	<b>25</b>  6:30 Card Ministry	<b>26</b> PRAYER GROUP THURSDAY LADIES  6:30 Bell Practice	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> 9:00 Choir 10:30 Worship 10:30 Sunday School	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>  7:00 Al-Anon				