

The Messenger

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2026

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

From the Pastor	2-4
Youth Ministries	5-6
From the Council Chair	7
Trinity Reporter	8-12
Thank You From The Staff	13
Faith & Fellowship	14-16
Missions & More	17-18
Trinity Kids Corner	Enclosed

Event Calendars can be found online at
TrinityChurchLivingston.org

FROM THE PASTOR

A LIGHTHOUSE IN ENGLAND



My home office (also lovingly referred to by our family as the 'bonus room') recently got a "low-tech" upgrade: a wall calendar gifted to me by my husband. While most of us no longer use paper calendars anymore, this one features "wild weather." And, true confession, I love wild weather! Having received this before the new year, I had to force myself to wait until New Year's Day to hang it. Now, it sits right above my desk, offering a perfect view of the "storm of the month" while I work.

January's is one of my favorite pictures. It kicks off the new year with a dramatic shot of the Seaham Lighthouse in England. A lighthouse nearly swallowed by a massive, frothy storm surge set against a dark grey blue sky. And the contrast between this seemingly small lighthouse dwarfed by the giant wave was so captivating that I ended up down a research rabbit hole (of sorts) to see who 'won' the standoff. Good news - it was the lighthouse. And it looks like this shot was not un-

(Continued on page 3)

sual. This little lighthouse has seen some weather. Built in 1905, this little structure has withstood over a century of North Sea fury. It's mesmerizing to think about something so small standing its ground against the elements for well over 100 years.

As I've been looking at this picture now for the past 2 weeks, I've realized how appropriate it is. Biblical even. I think of God's voice ordering the chaotic waters of creation, I think of Psalm 46 (my personal favorite)

*God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear, though
the earth should change,
though the mountains shake in
the heart of the sea,
though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble
with its tumult*

I think of Jesus stilling the storm (Mark 4:35-41, Matthew 8:23-27, and Luke 8:22-25) and walking on the waves (Matthew 14:22-33, Mark 6:45-52, and John 6:16-21). And Jesus' teaching about building on rock on a firm foundation instead of 'shifting sand'

(Matthew 7:24-27). Those are the ones off the top of my head, but you may think of others. However, the point of all of these is twofold. The first is that God is in control of the 'storms' of this life. Now, that can be incredibly comforting (God is the stiller of chaos), but it can also lead to more questions: If God is the stiller of chaos, why is not all of the chaos stilled? What about natural disasters (like the flood this past summer that swept through a Christian summer camp for young girls)? What about the 'storms' in our lives that aren't stilled? These are good questions, but, unfortunately, they are questions that don't really have answers. And so what really stands out to me from this calendar picture, and from Scripture, and from my own life, is knowing that even in the storms, we stand with Christ. That each of us individually and communally stands with Christ in all that we face. It is Christ who is our provision, our foundation, and in whom our identity is found, over and above any other identity we may wear. Whatever we've suc-

(Continued on page 4)

ceeded in or failed in pales in comparison to who we are in Jesus. Our true identity, our true foundation, our true home is found in Him, and the gates of hell cannot prevail (let alone wind and rain). And so, like the picture, the seas may rage, and we may feel their tumult, but like the lighthouse we are anchored.

For those of you who know Christian music, and specifically hymns, you may be thinking of at least 2 songs right now (I know I am ☹️). The first is “My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less” which was penned by Edward Mote in 1873- a cabinetmaker who later shared the lyrics with a sick friend as encouragement, “...in every high and stormy gale, my anchor holds within the veil. On Christ the solid rock I stand: all other ground is sinking sand.” The friend was still sick, but the words (the reminder of the ground beneath them) brought comfort.

The other is “It Is Well With My Soul.” This one was written by Horatio G. Spafford, a grieving father who first lost his fortune in 1871 during the Great Chicago Fire and then, just two

years later, his 4 young daughters died in a shipwreck in 1873. “...when sorrows like sea billows roll; whatever my lot you have taught me to say ‘it is well, it is well with my soul.’ ” Some say this was penned as his ship passed over the spot his daughters perished on his way to meet his grieving wife, who survived. Others say it took a few years of wrestling with God before the words came.

These songs don’t mean that the authors (or we) don’t struggle, don’t cry out, don’t, at times, ask God for answers in our pain. But it does mean that even as we’re pounded by the storm, we are still well anchored. We are still standing on, found in, and protected by the One who is above all of it and yet right beside us.

I need that reminder at the beginning of the new year.

Maybe you do too?

Peace to you in 2026 and beyond.

Pastor Anne



YOUTH MINISTRIES

THE WORLD NEEDS



"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them" -
Genesis 1:27

At home this week we read a devotion by Richard Rohr where he expresses how unique the biblical creation story is when compared to others of its kind. Not only is the Genesis account steeped in love, but it expresses the depth of consideration and attention that went into producing us.

We should be grateful that we are so wonderfully and

beautifully made. It is a testament to how loved we are.

Unfortunately, I think as a church we have historically used this concept of "how well we are built" as ego boosting fuel for gate keeping and authoritarian dogmatism that allows us to put on blinders to the brother or sister next to us that most likely has far more in common with us than we do with our Creator.

I suspect, based on how much Jesus talks about humility, sacrifice and giving unto others, that the far more im-

(Continued on page 6)

portant qualities we share with our maker are our capacity for love, forgiveness, and lowering ourselves to raise others up to life.

God makes us into an image of the divine and then gives us the capacity to be His hands and feet in the world, and all too often we deploy ourselves to push away, kick or run.

The world needs believers right now that are willing to use the tools that were given to us to truly love our neighbors.

Mike



FROM THE COUNCIL CHAIR

Happy New Year from the Trinity council. We hope that you had a great Christmas season and were able to enjoy our Sunday services including the Christmas pageant, Christmas Eve service, Epiphany January 4th and Baptism January 11th. We look forward to continuing our mission in 2026 to be a place for love and grace in Livingston, NJ.

In November 2025 Trinity welcomed the Muslim Community Center of Livingston (MCC) as one of our building partners. The MCC members have their daily prayers in Room 8 every week and their weekly service on Friday afternoons in Fellowship Hall.

The Council is preparing for our 2025 Annual Meeting that will be held on Sunday, February 8, 2026. We will have the 2025 annual report book available for your review by February 22nd so that you can review the reports, financials and proposed budget for 2026. We hope that our members and friends will read the annual report and attend the annu-

al meeting. This is your opportunity to have your voice heard. At this meeting members will elect 3 council members and vote on the 2026 proposed budget.

Our next council meeting is March 8, 2026. If you have matters that the council should consider, please contact a council member.

Please continue to pray for Trinity, our missions, and church council that we seek to glorify God in everything we do.

“Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with all of you.”

2 THESSALONIANS 3:16

Yours in Christ,

Chrystal



Trinity Church Council:
Chrystal Veazey-Watson, Chair;
Mary Chu, Vice Chair; Jen Yoo, Secretary; Cyndy Traverso, Treasurer;
Rich Holowczak, Financial Secretary; and Karen Reichey, Missions

Trinity Reporter

NOVEMBER—DECEMBER

It wouldn't be November without our annual pot luck lunch with our building partners. And this year we were fortunate to share the meal with members of the Muslim Community Center of Livingston who have begun meeting in our building for prayer. No one went away hungry and it was a lovely time of fellowshipship.

Pastor Anne brought us Advent messages to focus our worship as we swung into the season with **Jerry V.** leading us joyfully in song every Sunday along with **Mike M** on drums and **Rich H** on guitar. Thank you to **Amelia W** who joined the worship team on guitar and **Elise W** who joined on percussion. **Cyndy T** lent her voice a few Sundays too and **Ruth P** played a piece on her saxophone! What a wonderful fellowship of music!

The Trinity congregation was overjoyed to welcome three new members to our church family, **Kevin P (11/2)**, **Robert L (11/2)**, and **Domenick Z (12/21)** were welcomed with prayer and thanksgiving. We are so happy to have them among our congregation.



TOP: The Council prays for Domenick.
BOTTOM: Robert and Kevin become members.



(Continued on page 9)

Pastor Anne led the Advent dinner and Bible study looking at Isaiah. Thank you to those who brought meals for the study: **Chrystal VW, Dominick Z, Kevin P, and Pastor Anne.**

The Trinity women's Christmas party is always a hoot! Dinner and dessert did not disappoint. **Chrystal VW** made delicious chicken, and **Cyndy T** brought her home-made cookies. This year **Adrienne T** was the most popular person to "steal" from—she just knows how to pick 'em! A basket with goodies was one of the most popular items. **Nancy O** did it again with her adorable hand-knitted gnomes as everyone cheered whenever one was opened. It was great to see **Maureen A** at the party as she was visiting from Florida! It was all good fun and everyone left with smiles.

We heard good news from The Gillespie's...**Isaac G got married...and, Ben G is now engaged!** Along with the news of their human children, **John and Sue** have

a new fur baby! They adopted a puppy. And I think you will agree, Oliver is *most* adorable!



During the November Livingston township board meeting it was announced that the Strahman property, which sits adjacent to Trinity Church, was sold to the township of Livingston. The township is planning a green-space recreational area. The area will be officially known as **Strahman Hill Park**. In 1961, the Strahman family sold part of their land to Trinity Covenant Church for \$1 (what a blessing!) so they could build a new church. Sadly, Richard Strahman passed away on September 11, 2024 and Pauline decided to sell the remaining Strahman proper-

(Continued on page 10)

ty. Trinity Church will forever be grateful to the Strahman family for their generosity and friendship for all of these decades. We look forward to seeing how the township transforms the land into a public park space. If you are curious about plans, there are renderings of ideas for the space on the Livingston website that were presented at the December Livingston planning board meeting.

The Christmas pageant never disappoints and this year was no exception. Thanks to **Mary C, Jennifer Y** for helping to organize the kids and for taking one for the team and acting the part of the magi. The kids were SO adorable in their hand-picked costumes. Thank you to **Abe (Joseph), Joy (Mary), Amelia (Magi and narrator), Ruth (Magi and narrator), Hannah (angel), Elise (Angel), Henry (shepherd), and Elijah (sheep)**. Jerry did a really beautiful rendition of *Mary Did You Know*.

Finding ways to serve others is a backbone of our church and **Karen R** is the oil that keeps the machine running. To all of those who donated to the missions year,

(Continued on page 11)



TOP: Chrystal VW, Page M, and Abby C readers for Christmas Eve. BOTTOM: The kids are ready for the Christmas pageant.



THANK YOU! Our Good Neighbors mission to Orange is a big part of the Christmas season here at Trinity. This year we had the largest group yet of Trinity folks organizing, packing and delivering backpacks and bags to those in need. Thank you to Karen R, **Pastor Anne, Kevin P, Chrystal VW, Cyndy T, Mike M, Rebecca W, Ethan H, Yvette H, Domenick Z, Abe M, Malachi, Beata, and Peter.** Unfortunately, ICE raids in Orange meant that some of those we serve were not able to come out to collect their gifts. We are heartbroken that they will go without this year. **Pastor Anne** was able to reach out to her contacts and helped con-

nect Trinity to the Congregational Church of Short Hills who will be able to distribute the packages to those who need them. Thank you **Pastor Anne!** We continue to pray for safety, health and justice for all people who live, work, and serve our communities. We continue to pray that God will guide us in ways we can best serve our neighbors.

The Christmas Eve service brought us all together in celebration. And, boy-oh-boy was Jesus praised! Thank you to everyone who attended and to our worship team, **Jerry V, Rich H, Mike M, Cyndy T, Megan V, Zoe P, Laurel H** and Rob for

(Continued on page 12)



Cyndy T, Zoe P, Mike M, Chrys H, Rich H, Ethan H and Jerry V practicing before the Christmas Eve service.

sharing your talents and helping to make the service so special. Thank you to **Pastor Anne, Chrystal VW, Page M, and Abby C, and Yvette H** for reading. And we would be remiss to not mention the littlest star **Elliot** who sparkled and delighted everyone!

Our every-busy missions leader **Karen R** has moved. It was a whirlwind move during the busy Christmas season, but she did it. And, thankfully, she remains close by so we get to keep her here at Trinity! Below is her new address and phone number:

Karen Reichey
The Delaney at The Green
110 Park Ave., Apt. #1406
Florham Park, NJ 07932
PHONE: 862-240-2160

We had the parking lot entrance walkway repaired and it looks great and is much easier handicap access as well! A big thank you to **Rich H** for freshening up our parking lot line paint. Half is done and the other half will be done in the

spring. We also designated a few more handicap spots in the parking lot to help meet the needs of our growing building use.

Mark your calendars. Trinity's annual meeting will be Sunday, February 8 after worship. We will meet in fellowship hall, have some sandwiches and hear from our council members with a recap of 2025. Church members will vote on the 2026 budget and elect church council members for the positions of council secretary, council chair, and properties Lead. Trinity members will receive a copy of the annual report to preview by Sunday, January 25. If you have any questions, please email or call the church office.

For up-to-date Trinity event calendars, please check online at TrinityChurchLivingston.org.

Thank You! From the Staff

Dear Trinity Family,

Thank you so very much for the very generous gift. Our family will put this to good use. It is such a deep blessing to serve this congregation and to partner with all of you in life and in ministry.

God's blessings
be upon all.

Anne



Dear Members of the
Congregation,

Thank you is an understatement for your generous gift this Christmas Eve. The service we shared was a wonderful summation of everyone's time, talents, and passion towards Christ. I am so appreciative to always be hearing "yes" towards supporting both the adults and children through music. I look forward to the new year ahead and to celebrate one year as music director in May. From me and Megan, thank you again!

Sincerely,
Jerry



Dear Trinity,

It means so much to receive the Christmas gift from the congregation. I cannot thank you enough for allowing me and my family to be a part of this community and to honor and trust me in the role at Trinity. It is a calling that is all the more fulfilling when I am backed by such love and support!

Thank you so much.

Mike



Dear Trinity,

Thank you so much for the generous Christmas gift. This year marks my 14th year working for the congregation of Trinity and it continues to be a blessing. I look forward to finding new ways to service our community along with you!

Peace & Love,
Yvette



FAITH & FELLOWSHIP



Thursday Night Dinner & Bible Study

All are welcome! We meet in fellowship hall (and online for those far away). Dinner is at 6:30 pm with the Bible study beginning at 7 pm, and closing with prayer at 8 pm. Call or email Pastor Anne if you would like to be on the email list for updates and Zoom links.

A Lenten Bible study series will begin February 19. Watch your email for more information on the Lenten season study.



Game Night: Saturdays: 1/31 (all ages), 2/21 (adults only), 2/28 (all ages)

Let's get together for some light-hearted fun 7pm-9pm. We'll play games and have snacks! Our 1/31 game night will be in fellowship hall. Our 2/21 and 2/28 game nights will be in Room 3.

(Continued on page 15)

Adult Sunday School: 10 am

All adults ages 18 and over are welcome! We meet in the library (Room 2) from 10 am to 10:45 am. This season we will be looking at the prophets with a focus on Isaiah. If you have any questions, please contact the church office or Pastor Anne.

Youth Sunday School: 10 am

All youth are welcome! The youth meet in Room 9 from 10 am to 10:45 am. Our Youth director, Mike M. leads the study. If you have any questions or would like more information, please email Mike at TrinityLivingstonYouth@gmail.com.

Children's Sunday School: 10 am

Kids pre-k through 5th grade can join Sunday School at 10 am—10:55 am in room 7. We will follow the lectionary with fun activities and learning. We have a rotating list of adult volunteers. If you can help, please sign up on the server worksheet. All volunteers for children's church must be background checked.

Teen Nights: Tuesdays & Fridays 6:30 pm

Brawling Hamsters?! God's Monsters?! What's it all about? All youth ages 13-17 are welcome to join the Trinity youth group. We provide a safe space for fellowship, games and fun. Tuesdays we have snacks, Friday nights we serve pizza. Youth ministries director Mike M. supervises. **We are looking for adult volunteers to help supervise on Tuesday and/or Friday nights. If you are interested, contact Mike at TrinityLivingstonYouth@gmail.com. All adult participants are background checked.**



Prayer Meetings (virtual): Wednesdays 8:30 am, and Thursdays 8 pm

Look for a link in your weekly Trinity email for these online prayer meetings. Send your prayer request to Pastor Anne at TrinityLivPastor@gmail.com or give us a call and leave a message.

Youth Bible Study: Tuesdays 8:30 pm-10 pm after youth group

All youth ages 13-17 are welcome to join in! Please email Mike if you would like more information. TrinityLiving-stonYouth@gmail.com



Trinity Annual Congregational Meeting: Sunday, 2/8 after worship

Mark your calendars for Trinity's annual meeting. We will meet in fellowship hall, have some sandwiches and hear from our council members with a recap of 2025. Church members will vote on the 2026 budget and elect church council members for the positions of council secretary, council chair, properties chair, and Auditor.

If you are interested in serving on the church council, please talk with a council member.

MISSIONS & MORE



Trinity is happy to receive donations for its missions. There are several ways to donate. Please reference the lists below. Drop off donations Sundays 10 am—1 pm in the donation boxes near the kitchen or donations can be dropped off any time in the gray outdoor bin near the handicap ramp by the side door.



LIVINGSTON FOOD PANTRY

Please consider donating cooking oil, canned foods, canned tuna, crackers, paper towels, tissues, toilet paper, and boxed milk. The pantry also needs \$50 gift cards to fill in where needed. Please do not donate anything that requires eggs or butter to make (like Macaroni and Cheese boxes or cake mixes), those receiving the food usually do not have access to butter or eggs. Thank you!



FOR MISSION TO MEN

Please consider donating warm gloves (work gloves are best), backpacks (new or gently used).



FOR BABIES

Baby clothing, shoes and coats. New, unwrapped toys. This mission is in partnership with St. Matthews Lillian's Closet in East Orange, a mission to provide new parents in need with baby supplies. For check or PayPal donations, please include "MISSIONS—BABY" in the memo.

(Continued on page 18)

FOR NEW PARENTS

Laundry detergent/pods, toilet paper, toothpaste, and shampoo. These items are not covered under SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) and are greatly needed. This mission is in partnership with Renew Life Center in Paterson, NJ.

FOR CARE AND SHARE FUND

Our Pastor maintains a fund to provide emergency help to Trinity congregation members and friends in emergency need. Recently, we have helped with rent, gas and food. **You can donate with cash or check in a**



Care & Share envelope and place in the offering basket or via PayPal on our website. Please include “CARE & SHARE” on the memo line or as a comment in PayPal or on your check. We can’t “split” checks, so any money donated to Care & Share must be on a separate check with “Care & Share” on the memo line. (keep track of these donations; they are not reported on your year-end letter from the financial secretary).

ADDITIONAL DONATION BINS

All other clothing (women’s, men’s, children and teens), shoes and used (not broken) small toys can be placed in plastic bags and put into the white donation bins in our parking lot near the playground. Trinity receives a donation from Millennium Textiles for the use of the parking lot space. They do not shred clothing, but their goal is to provide inexpensive, good quality clothing and to keep it out of landfills. This is a woman-owned business working to keep landfills free of useable clothing, shoes, toys and accessories.



a place for love and grace.



WE ARE IN-PERSON AND ONLINE AND YOU ARE WELCOME!

Join us at 11 AM at 343 E. Cedar St., Livingston or on Zoom.

Rev. Anne Weinberg, Pastor

(TrinityLivPastor@gmail.com)

Jerry Vargo, Music Director

(TrinityLivingstonMusic@gmail.com)

Mike Malbrough, Youth Ministries Director

(TrinityLivingstonYouth@gmail.com)

Yvette Holowczak, Office Manager & Messenger Editor

(TrinityChurchLivingston@gmail.com)

Phone: (973) 992-4044 TrinityChurchLivingston.org



Apply

*Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all
your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.
Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment
greater than these. Mark 12:30-31*