TRINITY CHURCH
a place for love and grace.

The Messenger

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Event Calendars can be found online at
TrinityChurchLivingston.org

TRINITY CHURCH
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)
Angie Kiehne, Office Manager & Messenger Editor
(TrinityChurchLivingston@gmail.com)
Phone: (973) 992-4044 TrinityChurchLivingston.org

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

FROM THE PASTOR



Welcome to Fall! The season of pumpkin spice and hectic schedules…

I was asked recently what it is that pastors do to "fill their cup" (so to speak). What is it that "feeds" us, or—to continue the metaphor—pours into us so that we can pour into others?

I thought that was a very good question! It's one that I think most pastors have actually thought a lot about. In fact, in seminary (and in other ongoing education classes and denominational gatherings), this is often a topic of conversation. Because the truth is that pastors, just like everybody else, need times of refreshment. And I'm not necessarily talking about vacations, although those can be lovely, but instead about the daily and weekly practices that keep us grounded, healthy, and spiritually present.

However, as I'm sure you're aware, this isn't just a consideration for pastors. This is important for anyone in the position of caring for others, or… really… anyone who needs to be in contact with other human beings (and that would be all of us). So, what do we do?

Perhaps you think that I'm going to say something along the lines of: get up early every morning and before you do anything else (except for maybe coffee or tea) sit down with your Bible, pray, and have a devotional time. That would seem like something a pastor should say. And if you do that, that's wonderful! I sincerely pray that during that time Jesus speaks to your heart, refreshes your spirit, and reminds you of the foundation you are standing on.

But…(and this may surprise you), that wouldn't necessarily be my first suggestion. The reason it wouldn't be my first suggestion is that I know how that's gone in my own life. (And I know this is a safe space ☺).

It seems that every few months I try to get into a morning devotional time. I make sure the chair next to my bed is free of laundry, and I set everything up so that in the morning I can, almost literally, roll out of bed and into my chair (book light all charged so as not to wake a sleeping Marty). And this works for a short while, but usually not longer than a week. By that time, folded laundry has made its way back to the chair, or I've needed that extra hour of sleep, or (honestly) I just didn't feel like reading first thing (and once I'm out of the shower, the day has begun). I've tried this at night too, but then I often fall asleep mid-sentence.

Now, I am not suggesting that time in Scripture isn't important. It is. When I've stopped reading devotionally but rather only for study purposes, I find that when I do finally sit with the intention of meeting God in those pages, how hungry I've been for that time. It's a bit like being too busy all day to eat a decent meal and finally sitting down at the table to discover that you're famished.

But—is this the only way to refill?

No—I don't believe it is (especially if this feels like just one more thing on your "to-do" list that is now not getting done).

And I think the ways we recharge are as individual as each of us.

I, for one, find that being outdoors, even for a short period of time, helps greatly. Recently I took my kayak out for an hour and sat in the middle of a lake. I looked at the trees, let the cool water glide over my hand (as well as a foot that made its way over the side), and had a conversation with God. Hiking, for me, serves the same purpose.

It's during those times I remember to breathe.

But, sadly, much of the time I'm not able to hike or kayak. You may find your schedule doesn't allow for this either. What then?

Well, in those times I try to get out for a walk at lunch—usually trying to find a sunny spot in which to pause for a few minutes or (in the colder weather) a sunny spot found in whatever building I'm in. (Pastor Sue and I both discovered that the stairs in front of the big window at church that faces the parking lot gets a lot of sun around mid-afternoon and is a great place to sit, read, pray, and pause for a bit.)

And sometimes recharging is an episode of whatever I'm currently watching on TV, or a cup of tea and a book, or gardening (indoors or out), or time with family and friends, or so many other things.

But in all of them is the realization that the world can go on without me and that my identity isn't grounded in what I produce, but who I am in Christ. That's a hard one—specifically for this area of the country. That's not how the systems in our world are set up—and yet it's a foundational truth. Perhaps THE foundational truth. That we are not what we do, but who we are. And who we are is the children of God. Dearly beloved children of God.

I confessed to you that I don't practice a pattern of regular devotional time (as perhaps traditionally understood), but the last thing I do at night and the first thing I do in the morning is talk to the God who is holding me—to the God I belong to.

I heard a sermon recently that really resonated (that's another thing I do—I listen to the sermons of other pastors). That pastor preached that Jesus shatters all attempts at our glory. Meaning, that as we follow Christ, we are brought back to the fact (over and over again) that we are not the God of the universe, nor are we meant to be the gods of our own universes. Our position is to be one of surrender, of letting go, of embracing our finitude and our limitations, and to realize that part of being who God created us to be is actually resting in God. We have limitations and were simply not created to continually strive (and neither is anyone else—this is where grace comes in).

Now, I know, I know—we are supposed to go out and "fill the cups" of others. There are plenty of other articles about that. But it's very difficult to do when we are not allowing ourselves to first be filled.

Here is my question to you as this busy Fall season ramps up. What fills your cup? Let me know—I would LOVE to hear from you!

Peace,

Pastor Anne



FROM THE COUNCIL CHAIR



Greetings from the Trinity Council!

We hope that everyone had a great summer. We can't believe we're already in fall.

Throughout the summer, and now into the fall, Trinity's Council has continued to work on your behalf to maintain the Trinity building and grounds thanks to the tireless efforts of Rich H, Jim T, Cyndy T, and many others.

We would also like to thank the Kuo family and the Taiwanese Presbyterian Church. During the spring, a funeral was held in our sanctuary for Mr. Kuo's wife, after which a generous donation was made in her memory. This donation was made specifically for the purchase of a new sanctuary TV/display. Thanks to Rich and Jim's hard work, we were able to make this purchase and install it without exceeding the donation amount. Please let us know what you think of this new piece of technology!

At the end of the summer, we held our Semi-Annual Meeting on August 23, where we updated the congregation on what has happened since our Annual Meeting. Our Treasurer, Cyndy T, reported that as a result of the income from our new building partner, Muslim Community Center, as well as your faithful giving, our current financial report showed a positive result. Thank you for your giving, and do please continue as there is much ministry that needs to take place!

At our September 27 council meeting, we agreed that the Fall Cleanup Day will be on the morning of Saturday, October 17.

Please do consider coming out as many hands make light work!

Also discussed at this meeting was an opportunity Pastor Anne became aware of to show a preview of Episode 1 of Season 6 of *The Chosen,* before it is released to the public in November. This episode highlights the events the night before Jesus' crucifixion. This early viewing is available to churches to encourage dialogue around these difficult hours in Christ's life and what that means for us today.

We agreed that we will show the episode on October 24 at 7 PM and invite other churches in Livingston. Please do consider coming out as this will be a good time to not only see this episode with Trinity folk, but also with our brothers and sisters in the community! Please contact Pastor Anne with any questions you may have.

Finally, as always, we look forward to worshipping together as we share God's word, eat at Christ's Table and are sent out into the world.

Our next council meeting will be on Sunday, October 25.

Please let a council member know if you have an issue we should discuss.

Yours in Christ

Chrystal



He has told you, O mortal, what is good, and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God? Micah 6:8 NRSVUE

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

YOUTH MINISTRIES

Exodus 16:13-17

“That evening quail came and covered the camp, and in the morning, there was a layer of dew around the camp. When the dew was gone, thin flakes like frost on the ground appeared on the desert floor. When the Israelites saw it, they said to each other, “What is it?” For they did not know what it was.

Moses said to them, “It is the bread the Lord has given you to eat. This is what the Lord has commanded: ‘Everyone is to gather as much as they need. Take an omer for each person you have in your tent.’”

The Israelites did as they were told; some gathered much, some little. And when they measured it by the omer, the one who gathered much did not have too much, and the one who gathered little did not have too little. Everyone had gathered just as much as they needed.”

When we say the Lord’s prayer every Sunday we ask God for our daily bread, and it’s easy to think of this as just the food that we are blessed to have on our tables.

I was thinking this week about the manna that falls from the sky for the Israelites and how I used to think of it like communion wafers. A quiet hailstorm of these thin, paper-like discs that basically turn to mush against the moisture of your skin or the ground, that you then have to scoop up into an off-white and bland paste. Mmm delicious.

This isn’t exactly what manna was. From what I read it seems to have almost been like small seed-like instant mashed potato flakes. Not too far off.

The Hebrew word for manna, or man, apparently means something like, “what is it?” It cracks me up to think the Israelites were like, “gather some more of that whazzit-stuff.”

Anyway…

I have a sign up above my desk that says “DAILY,” and below it are a few prompts…

Find God.
Find myself.
Find family.
Find art.
Find nature.
Find love.
Find work.
Find purpose.

These are written specifically in the order that I think I should seek these things out as deliberate aims to find meaning and the right daily path.

But those things are there every day, even if I don’t search for them. They figuratively fall from the sky in abundance. The trick is, when they drop into my life, they aren’t usually in profound ways. They are normal and often small, even “boring.” The things on that list are the daily bread that sustains us. They are made by God and they are good.

Mike



ASK THE PASTOR

Let's play a fun game where we try to stump the pastor…(and succeed in doing so)!!

Several months ago, I asked for questions that I could take back to our Livingston Clergy Association. Each month we get together once for fellowship and once to participate in Clergy Corner, the locally televised TV show produced by Livingston HS. For one of our final episodes last spring, we decided to take questions from our congregations and attempt to answer them in as short a period of time as possible (the entire show is only 20 minutes long). It was a lot of fun, and two of your questions were answered during the segment, with the answers posted in the last edition of The Messenger.

Two other questions, however, did not receive an on-air answer (because we ran out of time), so I will (attempt) to answer one of them here!

How much do you think Jesus' own understanding of himself and the Father informed his understanding of the scriptures vs. how much the impact of reading and studying the scriptures and their message about the Messiah informed his identity as the Son of Man and the Son of God?

Wow—OK then!

The answer is—we don't know. The core question here (if I understand this correctly) is how aware was Jesus of His role as Messiah and His identity as divine? Or, perhaps more accurately, WHEN was Jesus aware of these things, AND how did that come about? about? I'm really not sure, but wouldn't that be a cool thing to ask Him!

My take: Jesus is the image of the invisible God. God incarnate. As such (and this is just my own personal theology, as we have no way of really knowing), I think Jesus always knew. I think he was always aware of both his humanity and his divinity. How does this work when one is growing into a human body and learning all the things new humans need to know (eating, walking, toileting, talking, etc.)? I don't know. Did Jesus need to learn to read? Probably! Did Jesus need to learn Torah (probably), and yet I really do think he knew. I think Jesus knew why he came and how his coming was the fulfillment of the inbreaking of God's restoration that had been promised.

We get the fullest picture of Jesus' divinity in John and the greatest emphasis on the Old Testament (and Jesus' fulfillment of that) in Matthew. I don't get a sense in either account (or in Luke or Mark, for that matter) that Jesus is figuring any of this out.

He seems clearly aware. It's those around him who are working this out (as we watch from our vantage point on this side of the resurrection).

Now, are there scholars who would disagree with me, believing that Jesus' understanding developed over time; that it was revealed to him as he "grew in wisdom and stature." Are they wrong? Who knows, but it is a lot of fun to think about. Thanks for this question!!

Stay tuned for next edition's look at women in ministry.

Do you have a question you would like addressed?

Please email me at: trinitylivpastor@gmail.com

I can't promise an answer to every question (in so many cases we just don't know), BUT we can wonder together!

Peace,

Pastor Anne

CELEBRATIONS!



OCTOBER

BIRTHDAYS

- 4 Elijah Wang
- 12 Tony Wang
- 17 Janice Christofferson
- 17 Susan Gillespie
- 20 Rich Holowczak
- 20 Jimmy Yoo
- 25 Lurlee Shutkin
- 28 Ruth Parrott
- 29 Nancy Ochs

ANNIVERSARIES

- 10/4/1893 The Society was reorganized into the Swedish Free Congregational Church

NOVEMBER

BIRTHDAYS

- 8 Rebecca Weinberg
- 22 Abe Malbrough
- 23 Jim Traverso

ANNIVERSARIES

11/24/1990 Jim & Cyndy Traverso

- We want to celebrate YOU! Please submit your birthday and anniversary dates to TrinityLivPastor@gmail.com to be included in future issues of *The Messenger*!

FALL - FAITH & FELLOWSHIP



- October 7th (Wednesday) - 8 AM Prayer
- October 8th (Thursday) - 6:30 PM Dinner and Bible Study
- October 11th (Sunday) - 10 AM SS all ages, 11 AM Worship
- October 14th (Wednesday) - 8 AM Prayer
- October 15th (Thursday) - 6:30 PM Dinner and Bible Study
- October 17th (Saturday) - 8 AM-12 PM Fall Work Day
- October 18th (Sunday) - 10 AM SS all ages, 11 AM Worship
- October 21st (Wednesday) - 8 AM Prayer and 12 PM Mission Makers
- October 22nd (Thursday) - 6:30 PM Dinner and Bible Study
- October 24th (Saturday) - 7 PM Movie Night: Sneak Peek *The Chosen* Season 6, Episode 1
- October 25th (Sunday) - 10 AM SS all ages, 11 AM Worship, Trunk or Treat after service
- October 28th (Wednesday) - 8 AM Prayer
- October 29th (Thursday) - 6:30 PM Dinner and Bible Study
- November 1st (Sunday) - 10 AM All Saints Day, Intergenerational SS, 11 AM Worship
- November 4th (Wednesday) - 8 AM Prayer
- November 5th (Thursday) - 6:30 PM Dinner and Bible Study
- November 8th (Sunday) - 10 AM SS all ages, 11 AM Worship
- November 11th (Wednesday) - 8 AM Prayer
- November 12th (Thursday) - 6:30 PM Dinner and Bible Study
- November 15th (Sunday) - 10 AM SS all ages, 11 AM Worship
- November 18 (Wednesday) - 8 AM Prayer, 12 PM Mission Makers
- November 19 (Thursday) - 6:30 PM Dinner and Bible Study
- November 22nd (Sunday) - 10 AM SS all ages, 11 AM Worship, Thanksgiving Potluck immediately after service
- November 25th (Wednesday) - 8 AM Prayer
- November 26th and November 27th (Thursday and Friday) - Office Closed for Thanksgiving
- November 29th (Sunday) - 10 AM SS all ages, 11 AM Worship

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 boxes near the kitchen or 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 & cheese or cake mix) because those receiving the food usually do not have access to butter or eggs. Thank you!

SOUP KITCHEN BAGGED MEALS

Please consider donating jars of creamy peanut butter, jam (preferably strawberry or grape), and small individually wrapped snacks. All donations can be left in the food bank donation bin outside Fellowship Hall.

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.

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. 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 to those in need. This is a woman-owned business working to keep landfills free of useable clothing, shoes, toys, and accessories.