

A Christmas Companion



The Rev. Joan Pritcher,
Rector in the Interim

My dear people of Holy Trinity,

Dewitt Jones is an award winning photojournalist; you may have seen his work in the National Geographic.

Jones states that the lessons he has learned in his practice of photography have also served him in all of life. He has found that creativity is not quick or easy. The images you see in his portfolio are not usually his first efforts. They are what developed after hours of watching and waiting and experimenting for the perfect shot. His best photographs are the result of thousands of snaps of the same scene—from different angles, distances and lenses. And he never knows what treasure he will find until he sees it.

The work of life in a community of faith is like that. Though we might wish that our work be just right from the outset, the reality is that we imagine, design, experiment and evaluate—and then begin the process again. Many times over. Sometimes we don't know a treasure until we see it.

What is important for life in community is a willingness to let that process unfold. To put it in the context of Holy Trinity's mission statement, this means to have open hearts, open doors and open minds.

In this issue of the Trumpet, we take a look back at this year: what we have experimented with, what worked (or didn't work so well), and what we learned from the experience.

Read, enjoy and take the time to share your thoughts with one another.

Open Hearts, Open Doors, Open Minds

Sack Lunches

There are hungry folks in Decatur! Many of them have made their way to Holy Trinity Parish. We learned this year that some of these men and women did not have access to cooking facilities, which meant that they could not make use of foods that required preparation. In addition, they needed something lightweight that they could easily carry. After trial and error (and many suggestions from our customers) Sarah Christian and our Office Volunteers have come up with a great solution. The Rector's Discretionary Fund (which is funded by the Holy Trinity Operating Budget) purchases foods that are healthy and relatively non-perishable: crackers, V-8 juice, canned fruit and hard candy. The men, women and children who come



by and take a lunch can take more than one and as often as they need them. Some come daily.

We quickly learned what foods worked (crackers good—Vienna sausages, not so good) and what gave us the most bang for our buck. Thank Sarah and our Volunteers when you see them—for making this happen every day on your behalf. And keep thinking of ways that we can address the immediate needs of our Decatur community. ■

Assistive Listening Devices (ALDs)

We learned this year that a number of parishioners had difficulty hearing the service of worship. Assistive Listening Devices (ALDs) have made a huge difference to them. ALDs are the individual FM sound units that have a small compact receiver and an earpiece. The receiver is set to tie into our church sound system, so by wearing the unit the hymns, prayers, lessons, and sermons are amplified and delivered directly into the user's ear. Each unit has an adjustable volume control that can be set to a comfortable level for the wearer.

Thanks to the generosity of Mary Van Valkenburgh and Barbara Thompson we have 12 ALDs available for anyone who wishes to access the service without straining to hear. They are easy to use and we have had only positive comments from those who have tried them.

Thanks to Susan Laseck, and Tom Budnik for working on the details to bring this winning technology to us.

And stay tuned for more improvements to sound at HTP. ■



Come and See © Jan Richardson

Blessings

We took time this year to bless many things: book bags, tote bags, purses, golf bags, back packs, leaf bags, toy bags (all kinds of bags); suitcases (for children who do not have the means to move to or from foster homes); and our Animal Companions.

We blessed them by thanking God for them and by acknowledging their importance to us and to God.

Blessing the Animals was celebrated in our customary way, on Sunday afternoon in the DEAM courtyard. In addition, this year, we invited our Animal Companions to worship with us at 10:30 in the Nave. On that day, we were reminded that we are not co-creators with God; we are also the created. Our animals, in addition to being a joy to us, can also be a living reminder of our own creatureliness—and our continuing effort to live with creation respectfully, not abusively.

What in your life do you wish to bless by thanking God? ■

Youth Lectors

Have you noticed that Youth Lectors are serving at both 8:00 and 10:30 services on regular basis? You can thank Larinda Tervelt and Chris Bray for that—as well as the youth who give their time to prepare to read the Epistle on Sunday mornings. Take a moment to acknowledge them the next time they are scheduled to serve. ■

Worship

A transition year is a handy time to try out new services (rather than change existing ones). This year, we experimented with a 3rd service for Easter Day, at which we used some of the musical forms familiar to The Welcome Table. Some of you loved it, though it did not appeal to as many as we had thought it might.

We believe that a third Christmas Eve Service will be helpful in a different way. There are a number of Holy Trinity households who have expressed an interest in a Christmas Eve service held later than the children's service, yet earlier than the 'midnight' mass. The Worship Committee led by Head Verger Pete Withers and including representatives of Altar Guild, Vergers, Flower Guild, Acolytes, Eucharistic Ministers, Choir, Keith Nash, Interpreters, Lectors, Ushers, Greeters, Office Staff, and Clergy have worked to make this service happen for the first time, this year at 7:00 pm, December 24, 2011. ■

*"I'm not funny.
What I am is brave."*

– Lucille Ball

Sacred Conversation

A Sunday morning Sacred Conversation followed the distribution of the Trinity Trumpets this year. They were designed to advance the discussion on the theme of the Trumpet.

Our goal in those Conversations was to provide a place where we could: gently state our own mind and heart and spirit, to gently hear one another's mind and heart and spirit, and to hear how our ideas are similar to and different from one another.

A formal Sacred Conversation is not the only place that we can do this—all conversations can be sacred. I invite you to make the goals of sacred conversation part of all your interactions. ■

Printed Materials

Our Sunday morning printed materials provided lively conversation this year. There were a variety of issues that were important to us: environmental responsibility, newcomer friendliness, the need to pass along parish ministry information, and the use of the Book of Common Prayer along with the many other worship resources available to us. It was a challenge to account for all of them.

Thanks to a blue ribbon committee including: Woody Bartlett, Nancy Boone, Bill Clark, Frank Derrickson, Barbara Hardin, Susan Lascek (chair), Fr. Allan Sandlin, and Howison Hollenberg as consultant, we designed a set of materials that met the criteria that we believed were important. Our new Parish Matters (the yellow sheets distributed each Sunday morning) keeps us all in the loop of Holy Trinity Ministries.

In addition, to make service materials completely paperless for those who wish to experience them in that way, we created a 'barcode' for the worship materials. With that, on Sunday morning, any parishioner can download the service instantly into their personal device. We have learned that guests and newcomers are the worshipers most likely to appreciate this innovation. ■

"Security is mostly superstition. It does not exist in nature, nor do the children of men as a whole experience it. Avoiding danger is no safer in the long run than outright exposure. Life is either a daring adventure, or nothing. To keep our faces toward change and behave like free spirits in the presence of fate is strength undefeatable."

– Helen Keller

Homecoming

This year we held Homecoming Sunday on the last Sunday in August rather than celebrating Rally Day on the Sunday following Labor Day. We did this because of the timing of 9/11. What is usually Rally Day, this year, fell on the 10th anniversary of September 11, and we sensed that some of you might want a more solemn experience that day.

The experiment was successful. Many of you enjoyed a hearty Holy Trinity breakfast that day—thanks to Barbara Hardin and her Parish Life crew. You might want to think of making Homecoming Sunday a tradition for late August—and launch right into Spiritual Formation after Labor Day. ■

Hospitality

Two organizations began to use Holy Trinity Parish facilities this year—The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and L'Arche. NAMI uses rooms in Trinity House—thanks to the efforts of Dawn Diedrich, Bob Howell, Steve Bishop and Sarah Christian. And L'Arche uses the Holy Trinity Computer Lab. Curt Armstrong, a Holy Trinity worshiper, is associated with L'Arche and made the request—and it happened thanks to the coordination of Fr. Allan Sandlin and Sarah Christian.

This insures that Holy Trinity's mission of opening doors to community is still going strong. ■

*“Let nothing disturb thee;
Let nothing dismay thee:
All things pass;
God never changes.
Patience attains
All that it strives for...
He who has God
finds he lacks nothing:
God alone suffices.”*

— Teresa of Avila
The Complete Works of St. Teresa of Jesus



Magnificat © Jan Richardson

Postscript

Autumn was beautiful this year, wasn't it? Fall is my favorite season.

The word 'fall' suggests that leaves drop from trees. But scientists point out that's not the case. Peter Raven, president of the Missouri Botanical Garden and a noted botanist, explains it this way: as days grow shorter and colder, a hormone is triggered which sends a chemical message to every leaf. Cells, which operate like scissors, appear at the point where the leaf stem joins with the branch. There, the leaves develop a bumpy line of cells that slowly push the leaf away. When a breeze comes along, the leaves will drop. Deciduous trees are hard-wired for this process—leaves are 'thrown off' the trees because they are designed to do that.

We are not hard-wired in this way—we are not forced to leave or develop or evolve. But if we want to grow into the persons or communities that we are meant to be, we will find a way.

This year has been a year of experimenting: of leaving some things off, of trying new things out. Discovering what fits and what doesn't. It has been a year of gently exercising our 'change' muscles. They will be important to Holy Trinity's new life with a new Rector and the challenges that new relationships bring.

I have been honored to be part of that process with you. And I urge you to continue the journey—with open hearts, open doors and open minds.

Faithfully,
The Reverend Joan Pritcher

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Merry Christmas from Holy Trinity Parish!

Holy Trinity Parish Clergy & Staff

Rector in the Interim The Reverend Joan Pritcher
Assisting Priest The Reverend Robyn Neville
Assisting Priest The Reverend Pamela Cooper-White
Deacon Deacon Joe Pearson
Minister to Children and Youth Ms. Christina Bray
Music Director / Organist Mr. Keith Nash
Faith Factory Director Ms. Courtney Rinehart-Pemberton
Parish Administrator Ms. Sarah Christian
Director of Electronic Media Mr. Bob Sawyer
Director of Print Media Ms. Howison Hollenberg
Financial Secretary Ms. Kate Anderson
Preschool Director Ms. Kay Watkins
Sexton Mr. Tim Veal
Assistant Sexton Mr. Mardrae Veal
Senior Warden Ms. Dawn Diedrich
Junior Warden Mr. Marc Winn

The Epiphany of Our Lord Jesus Christ

Friday, January 6

5:45 p.m. Potluck Dinner • Tisdale Hall

*6:30 p.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II • Nave
(Choir, Incense)*

In celebration of the Feast of the Epiphany, we will gather for a potluck dinner at 5:45 p.m., followed by Holy Eucharist in the nave at 6:30 p.m. Please join us for dinner and this festive service, which will include incense and the adult choir.