

# DECEMBER

## From the Pastor's Pen

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*“You know quite well that the day of the Lord’s return will come unexpectedly, like a thief in the night... and you won’t be surprised when the day of the Lord arrives. For you are all children of the light and of the day; we don’t belong to darkness and night.... Let us who live in the light be clearheaded, protected by the armor of faith and love, and wearing as our helmet the hope of our salvation.... So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing.”*

*~1 Thessalonians 5:2,4-5, 8, 11 (NLT)*

Each Advent, we spend time lighting candles, remembering hope, peace, joy and love. It’s like we’re storing up these treasures of faith, taking them out of the drawer for a little while, making sure that we still

*Pastor's Pen cont.*

know their purpose. Sure, it's easy for our treasures to get a little dusty during the ordinary time, but it's important to remember where we kept them for all those months.

When we light the advent candles, we're recognizing more than the barest concept that they represent. Indeed, we're shining that light for others to see, a beacon in the darkness against the shadows of challenge that the world brings. And, yes, those shadows loom large in this time of year, when all the shiny advertisements remind us that we're not perfect without product x or service y.

Honestly, I think the image of these shadows was best captured by J.K. Rowling, in her Harry Potter series. She describes Dementors, which are shaped like dark cloaks floating around, wraith-like, generating feelings of depression and despair in any person nearby. Now, in the books, one can help stave them off by eating chocolate, just as certain foods or experiences can hold depression at bay for a time. But it takes a concerted effort to drive them off for good.

Well, in Advent, we are expectantly waiting for a rebirth – and part of that waiting involves a concerted effort to prepare the way. After all, a single candle may not seem like much, but it holds a lot of hope. Whenever the power goes out, that hope is realized in a startling way – suddenly, that candle, lost at the back of a drawer, or in a ceramic enclosure, or even in the camping supplies from that trip you took months ago – that hope becomes real. Even when you'd forgotten about it for a time.

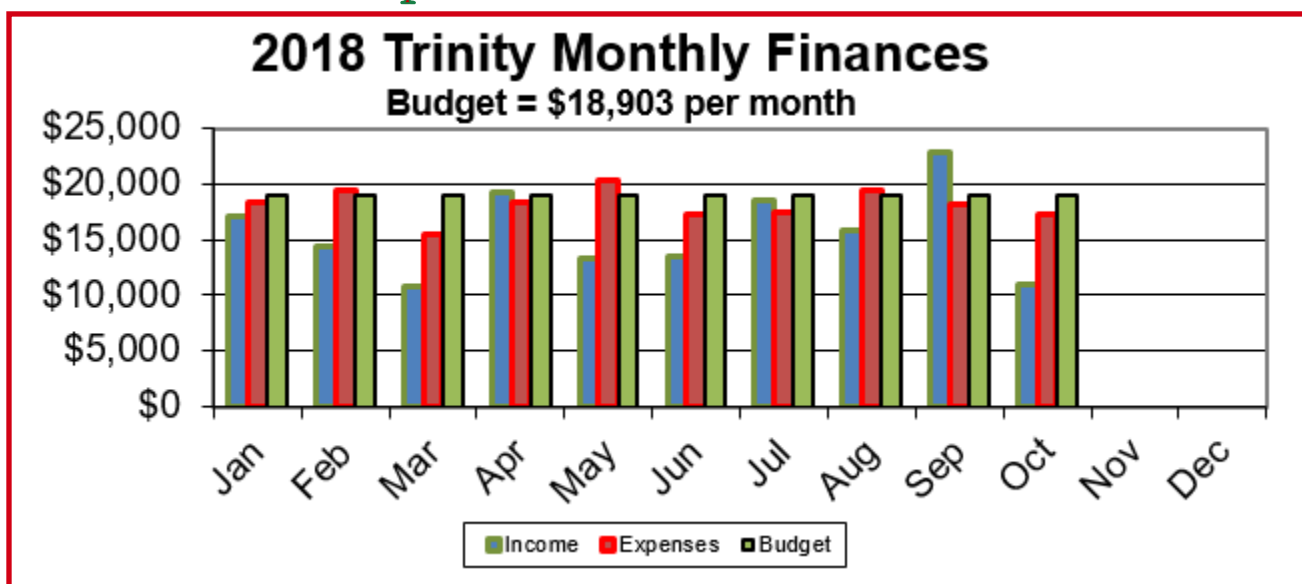
That's the power of the advent candles – to stand up against the Dementors of all of our lives and hold up the light of God to the world. Because, Jesus tells us, one day we won't need to hold up the candles any more. Instead, we'll be constantly in the presence of God's light – indeed, we will be called "children of light," for we will shine with God's light, too. Hope, peace, joy, and love will radiate from all on earth.

And that's worth remembering – celebrating – and even waiting for.

-Pastor Lucas

## Finance/Stewardship

Craig Hanson



2018	Income	Expenses	Budget
YTD	\$ 156,395	\$ 181,677	\$ 189,030

## Christian Education

Sue Chancellor



### Oh Christ, Surround Me

God, be the love to search and keep me;  
God be the prayer to move my voice;  
God be the strength to now uphold me:  
O Christ, surround me; O Christ surround me.

Bind to myself the Name of Holy,  
great cloud of witnesses enfold;  
prophets, apostles, angel's witness:  
O Christ, surround me; O Christ, surround me.

Brightness of sun and clouds of moonlight,  
flashing of lightning, strength of wind;  
depths of the sea to soil of planet:  
oh Christ, surround me; oh Christ, surround me.

Walking behind to hem my journey,  
going ahead to light my way;  
and from beneath, above, and all ways:  
O Christ, surround me; O Christ, surround me.

Christ in the eyes of all who see me,  
Christ in the ears that hear my voice;  
Christ in the hearts of all who know me:  
O Christ, surround me; O Christ, surround me.

Richard Bruxvoort

I sang this song on "The Reign of Christ Sunday," in Aiken, SC, and it spoke volumes to me. I believe if I can internalize these words; they can truly help prepare me for the glorious birth of our savior, Jesus! Let us all genuinely feel Christ's love completely surround and embrace us this beautiful Advent season. May our actions and relationships with all God's people reflect the all embracing inclusive love of Christ.

## Sunday Morning Opportunities

Donna Bridenstine is available on Sunday mornings from 9:00 a.m. through the close of worship for quality, nurturing, and engaging childcare for infants through kindergarten. Preschool and kindergarten children can attend Sunday School, but are welcome to join her any time during worship. Adult volunteers assist Donna during worship whenever needed.



## Multi-grade Sunday School (pre-k through fourth grade)

Kids from preschool through fourth grade...we've got the stories and activities for you...Our Feasting on the Word multiage curriculum is a good springboard for the older elementary kiddos and we adapt the meaning, scriptures, and lessons with younger kid-friendly activities, songs, and stories too. Please come to the Sunday School room by childcare this month and Sunday morning you can. The spiritual fun begins at 9:15!

Dec 2	Katy Orrell	"Strengthened in Faith"
Dec 9	Melinda Carver	"Prepare the Way"
Dec 16	Sarah Rayment	"Joyful News"
Dec 23	<b>Brunch and Pageant</b>	
Dec 30	Sue Chancellor	"A Questioning Jesus"
Jan 6	Millie Spencer	"Following the Light"



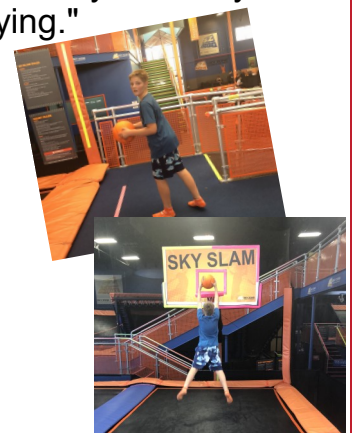
## Adult Sunday School Class

The adult morning Sunday School class, which meets at 9:15 in the classroom off Churchill Hall, has completed "Living the Questions 2" and is now revisiting an exciting DVD study, "God in America." Adults of all ages are warmly invited to join Richard Spencer as he leads invigorating conversations each week. The DVD is an "excellent historical account of how the various Christian religions began in America, how they differed, and how that has affected those same religions over time." As always, Richard prepares timely and thoughtful questions to discuss along with watching excerpts from the DVD.

## The Tween/Youth Class (fifth through twelfth grade)

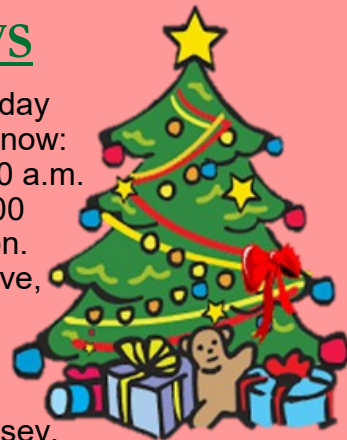
The tween/teen teachers are surely enjoying teaching, Rob Bell's insightful DVD Nooma series, and are hopeful the youth are loving it as much as they are. So, youth, please join us, in the youth lounge where classes begin, any Sunday you can this Advent season at 9:15. This teen/tween study will continue through January 6. And on January 13, the youth will begin compelling honest conversations focused on "Stopping Bullying."

Dec 2	Stephanie Smith	"Open"
Dec 9	Sue Chancellor	"Dust"
Dec 16	John Clawson	"Luggage"
Dec 23	<b>Brunch and Pageant</b>	
Dec 30	Royce Chancellor	"Shells"
Jan 6	Liz Powell	"Trees"





## YOUTH/KIDS/FAMILY NEWS



**Families of pageant participants:** Practice continues at 10:00a.m. on Sunday mornings upstairs in the room by the stairway. Please mark your calendars now: A very important dress rehearsal is planned for Saturday, Dec 22, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30. Please bring your children to the sanctuary between 9:45 and 10:00 where they will get their props, and/or costumes for the pageant presentation. A hearty snack will be served. Plan on coming with your children to the festive, tasty 9:15 Christmas brunch, on the pageant day, December 23.

There will be a cookies and punch reception immediately following worship service and pageant. All are invited to join us in the cafe to thank all the participants, adult volunteers, and our amazing director, Lynnette Kraft-Lindsey, for their commitment and hard work. Thanks to all of you for sharing your wondrous gifts in this year's vibrant pageant, "The Sweetest Story."



Thanks to all the kids, teens, and adults who participated in and/or helped with both the Sky Zone excursion and the "Beautifying Trinity" painting event on November 4 and November 18. Lots of energetic and creative fun were shared with kids, teens, and folks of all ages!!



**Parent's Night Out** on Friday evening, Dec 7 from 5:30 to 9:00: Teens and adult volunteers will be ready with exciting, creative, and engaging activities for kids of all ages. Dinner will be served in the cafe at 6:00 p.m. Parents can enjoy a date night while knowing their kids are enjoying a safe, fun evening of their own!



**Angel Tree Shopping** following worship on Dec 16: Kids, teens, and adults are invited to help complete the shopping for our very special Bixby kids! This is always an enjoyable event as we all search at Target for those final gift requests that will bring joyful delight to great deserving kids! We'll eat lunch close by to ensure that we have plenty of energy for shopping!



**Mark Your Calendars:  
Sunday, December 23 at 10:30  
Trinity Christmas Pageant: "The Sweetest Story"  
Bring Family and Friends to Our  
Uplifting Celebration of Jesus' Birth**

## Midweek Book Study:

Lots of folks are enjoying Brian McLaren's genuine spirit filled book, "Naked Spirituality...A Life with God in 12 Simple Words." Come share in the heart felt honest conversation that is such a trademark of this amazing midweek book study group! We'll be discussing chapters 8 & 9 on December 5 at 11:00 in the cafe. Please come to Churchill Hill Hall at 10:30 every Wednesday, but the second one, to help us pack 55 backpacks for our Bixby families. There will be no book study on December 26 and January 2; then group will resume their conversation on "Naked Spirituality..." on January 9, 2019.

## Fellowship News

Dwayne Strasheim



Many thanks to all who contributed soups, sandwiches, desserts, or kitchen assistance to Fellowship’s potluck after the Hanging of the Greens November 25. What a dedicated, supportive congregation we have here at Trinity!

Thanks also to those who have contributed Sunday treats in the Trinity Café during the past year. Be on the lookout for a new sign-up sheet for the first six months of 2019.

Fellowship’s next holiday event will be a Christmas Brunch at 9:15 a.m., Sunday, December 23. Be on the lookout for that sign-up sheet as well!

2018 has been a good year for the Fellowship Team. All of our members—Ann Frazier, Deanna Jolly, Ed Jolly, Tomye Mainer, Margot Ries, and Millie Spencer—have made significant contributions to our success, and I sincerely appreciate their dedication and hard work.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dwayne Strasheim

## Personnel

Brenda Cunningham



Our number one priority is finding a new Christian Ed person. We have been contacted by two people concerning the position and two members have volunteered to help out in the interim. During the holidays it is tough to find folks with all the hustle and bustle of this time of year.

Our Shepherding Program will begin December 2nd. Trinity members, friends of the church, and frequent visitors will receive a call, an email, or a letter from your Session contact that explains the program.

We are in the midst of the year end process of Staff Reviews and Budget number submission.

Respectively, Brenda Cunningham

# Worship

Erik Collins, Director of Music

## A CELEBRATION OF LESSONS & CAROLS

Sunday, December 9, 2018 - 10:30 AM

The **Celebration of Lessons and Carols** is a format for a service of Christian worship celebrating the birth of Jesus that is traditionally followed at Christmas. The story of the fall of humanity, the promise of the Messiah, and the birth of Jesus is told in nine short Bible readings from Genesis, the prophetic books and the Gospels, interspersed with the singing of Christmas carols, hymns and choir music.

The format was based on an Order drawn up by Edward White Benson, later Archbishop of Canterbury but at that time Bishop of Truro, in Cornwall, for use on Christmas Eve in 1880. Tradition says that he organized a 10 pm service on Christmas Eve in a temporary wooden shed serving as his cathedral and that a key purpose of the service was to keep men out of pubs on Christmas Eve.

The original liturgy has since been adapted and used by other churches all over the world. Lessons and Carols most often occur in Anglican churches, but also in some Roman Catholic, Lutheran parishes, and Presbyterian institutions. However numerous Christian churches have adopted this service, or a variation on this service, as part of their Christmas celebrations. In the UK, the service has become the standard format for schools' Christmas carol services.

The best-known version is broadcast annually from King's College, Cambridge, on Christmas Eve. It features carols sung by the famous Choir of King's College, Cambridge. Groton School of Groton, Massachusetts, has performed the festival longer than any institution other than King's, holding its first Lessons and Carols in 1928. On **Sunday, December 9**, the Trinity Choir will present its biennial service of Lessons and Carols. This year's sacred repertoire will consist of our traditional processional, *Personent Hodie*, along with the music of John Rutter, Norman Luboff, and Philip Kern. Notes and history on the selection of choral carol anthems can be found below.

**Personent Hodie** is a festival procession that is often associated with the Feast of the Holy Innocents. The origin of the text is difficult to trace but there are Latin sources with the text that date during the 12th century and German sources from the 14th century. The first printing occurred in 1582 from the source "Piae Cantiones," a collection of medieval Latin songs that was intended for pupils of cathedral schools. The stately carol begins with youthful voices singing and praising Jesus who was brought forth from a virgin. The second stanza features the women telling of how Jesus was born wrapped in swaddling cloths and placed in a manger in a stable of beasts. The men majestically sing about the wise men bearing gifts in the third stanza and how they came bearing gifts of gold, incense and myrrh. The carol ends with the Gloria in excelsis Deo! (Glory to God in the highest).

**In the Bleak Midwinter** is a Christmas carol based on a poem by the English poet Christina Rossetti. The poem was published, under the title "A Christmas Carol", in January of 1872. In verse one, Rossetti describes the physical circumstances of the Incarnation in Bethlehem. In verse two, Rossetti contrasts Christ's first and second coming. The third verse dwells on Christ's birth and describes the simple surroundings, in a humble stable and watched by beasts of burden. Rossetti achieves another contrast in the fourth verse, this time between the incorporeal angels attendant at Christ's birth with Mary's ability to render Jesus physical affection. The final verse shifts the description to a more introspective thought process.

**Still, Still, Still** is an Austrian Christmas carol and lullaby. The melody is a folk tune (authorship unknown) from the State of Salzburg, appearing for the first time in an 1865 folk song collection. The words, which run to six verses in German, describe the peace of the infant Jesus and his mother as the baby is sung to sleep. The words have changed slightly over the years but the modern Standard German version remains



## Worship

Erik Collins, Director of Music

attributed to Georg Götsch (1895–1956). Lyrics for the English version were written by award-winning American lyricists and songwriters Alan Bergman and Marilyn Bergman. Norman Luboff compiled the 4-part choral arrangement for the song in 1958.

**Angel's Carol** eagerly draws us in with a bright undercurrent supplied by a flowing piano accompaniment and spacious melody. Throughout its duration, we hear the questions: Have we heard the sound? Have we seen the star? Have we heard the news? The answer Rutter provides comes from an outburst from the angels, themselves: "Gloria in excelsis Deo!" ("Glory to God in the highest!") while highlighting historic themes of the season, including peace, love, light, and hope.

**God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen** is an English traditional Christmas carol. It is in the Roxburghe Collection (iii. 452), and is listed as no. 394 in the Roud Folk Song Index. It is also known as Tidings of Comfort and Joy, and by variant incipits as God Rest Ye, Merry Christians or God Rest You Merry People All. It is one of the oldest extant carols, dated to the 16th century or earlier. The earliest known printed edition of the carol is in a broadsheet dated to c. 1760. The traditional English melody is in the minor mode; the earliest printed edition of the melody appears to be in a parody, in the 1829 *Facetiae* of William Hone. It had been traditional and associated with the carol since at least the mid-18th century, when it was recorded by James Nares under the title "The old Christmas Carol". Philip Kern gives a fresh approach to this time-honored melody with a steady piano accompaniment and modal transitions.

The congregational carol and hymns on this Lessons & Carols Sunday will include traditional familiar selections, such as *Once In Royal David's City*, *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*, *Lo, How a Rose E're Blooming*, *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*, *We Three Kings of Orient Are*, and many more. You won't want to miss it!



TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

*A Celebration of  
Lessons & Carols*

Featuring the music of  
John Rutter, Dan Forrest, Norman Luboff

**Sunday, December 9, 2018**  
10:30 AM

Trinity Presbyterian Church  
9303 E. 111th St. S.  
Bixby, OK 74008

(918) 369-3690  
[www.trinitypresbyterianbixby.org](http://www.trinitypresbyterianbixby.org)



## Evangelism

Cindy Strasheim

Evangelism sends cards to visitors and to our church family for birthdays, anniversaries, and sympathy. Tell me of anyone that might desire a message. I use the list in the newsletter for birthdays. The directory update is beginning to move forward. Please be patient as Brenda tries to do at least 3 different jobs.

I am your liaison until a new Evangelism team is formed in 2019. Please consider joining this team!

Cindy Strasheim



## Congregational Care

Brenda Cunningham

### December CC News

Congregational Care exists to come alongside those in the Trinity family in seasons of sorrow, sickness and setbacks. This shows up in a number of areas that are largely unseen, yet significant. These range from hospital and shut-in visits, to fellowship for the retired and elderly, to committed prayer requests submitted on Sundays and during the week. We also take joy in ministering to those who are grieving, joining them in their immediate sorrow and following up with them weeks, and sometimes months, after their loss.

Caring for the congregation is a value rooted in the church's formative years. Because this value continues, many in the Trinity family feel a sense of intimacy and love. So, like any church, we are a work in progress. We will never get to a point where everyone is cared for just right, and there are no more cracks for people to fall through. But we continue to on that path each and every day, month, year. We are thankful to work with so many wonderful people who serve the congregation so well. By God's grace, we will all continue in that vain.

Respectfully,  
Brenda Cunningham

## Many Thanks

Dear Trinity,

Thank you so much for the scholarship! It means so much to me to know that I have my church family supporting my educational pursuits. I can't wait to graduate in May with my Masters!

-Darby Campbell

# TRINITY PHOTO ALBUM





## Monthly Liturgy

### 1st Sunday of Advent— December 2nd

Jeremiah 33:14-16  
*Psalm 25:1-10*  
1 Thessalonians 3:9-13  
Luke 21:35-36

### 2nd Sunday of Advent—December 9th

Malachi 3:1-4  
*Luke 1:68-79*  
Philippians 1:3-11  
Luke 3:1-6

### 3rd Sunday of Advent—December 16th

Zephaniah 3:14-20  
*Isaiah 12:2-6*  
Philippians 4:4-7  
Luke 3:7-18

### 4th Sunday of Advent—December 23rd

Micah 5:2-5a  
*Luke 1:47-55 or Psalm 80:1-7*  
Hebrew 10:5-10  
Luke 1:39-45 (46-55)

### Christmas Eve—December 24th

Isaiah 9:2-7  
*Psalm 96*  
Titus 2:11-14  
Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)

### Nativity of Jesus Christ/Christmas Day— December 25th

<i>Dawn:</i>	<i>Day:</i>
Isaiah 62:6-12	Isaiah 52:7-10
<i>Psalm 97</i>	<i>Psalm 98</i>
Titus 3:4-7	Hebrews 1:1-4 (5-12)
Luke 2:(1-7) 8-20	John 1:1-14

### 1st Sunday after Christmas Day—December 30th

1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26  
*Psalm 148*  
Colossians 3:12-17  
Luke 2:41-52



## Advent Study

### Advent Hymn Reflection and Study

Join Pastor Lucus for an evening study into the meaning and history of four traditional advent hymns.

Together, we will savor a time of waiting and preparation for the arrival of Jesus on Christmas Day. You don't need to be a singer to appreciate the meaning and beauty of these hymns!

### Study Dates and Times

Nov 26, 6:30pm - Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus  
Dec 3, 5:00 pm - Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence  
Dec 10, 6:30pm - O Come, O Come Emmanuel  
Dec 17, 6:30pm - In the Bleak Midwinter

## December Birthdays



Cathie Harper	12/04
Cathy Hanson	12/08
Ann Reed	12/08
Sally Autin	12/11
Hugh Bright	12/14
Seve Smith	12/14
Barry Straabe	12/14
Ed Jolly	12/19
Randy Smith	12/22
Adam Spencer	12/29
Melinda Carver	12/30



# DECEMBER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			Join us at 12:30 on Wednesdays for Sack Lunch Fellowship!			1
2 Acolyte Training after worship	3 Advent Study at 5:00 p.m.	4	5 Pack backpacks at 10:30 a.m.  Book Study at 11:00a.m.	6	7 Parent's Night Out 5:30-9:00 p.m.	8 Final rehearsal for choir at 10:00 a.m.  Choir Christmas party @ 6:00
9 A Celebration of Lessons & Carols	10 Advent Study at 6:30p.m.	11	12 Presbyterian Women @ 9:45 in cafe  Book study at 11:00a.m.  Team Meetings	13	14	15
16 Angel Tree Shopping with the youth	17 Advent Study at 6:30p.m.	18  Session at 6:30	19 Pack backpacks at 10:30 a.m.  Book study at 11:00 a.m.	20	21	22 Pageant Rehearsal at 10:00 a.m.
23 Christmas Brunch at 9:15  Christmas Pageant/ Reception	24  Trinity office	25 closed	26 No backpacks or book study	27	28	29
30	31					

## Upcoming Events



Starts: Sunday, January 6, 2019 at 6:00 p.m.

Ends: Tuesday, January 8, 2019 at noon

Where: Briarwood Retreat Center – Argyle, Texas (near Dallas)

Hosted by Rev. Natalie Bell of Eastern OK Presbytery & Rev. Laura Walters of Mission Presbytery

**BOC**  
BIXBY OUTREACH CENTER  
*Where it's not a hand out, it's a hand up.*

**2018 Holiday  
Food Drive**

Every year the BOC provides a holiday meal to over 400 families in the Bixby and surrounding communities. We need your help to end food insecurity this holiday season!

- 2 cans green beans
- 2 cans corn
- 2 cans fruit
- 2 cans sweet potatoes
- 1 box stuffing
- 1 can cranberry sauce
- 1 packet or jar gravy (packets or cans best – no glass preferably)
- 1 box jello or pudding
- 1 cake mix or pie filling
- 1 can frosting or pie shell

**Oct-December 14**