

# JANUARY

From the Pastor's Pen

### Inside this issue:

Pastor's Pen & Lectionary .....	1-2
Christian Education .....	3-5
Fellowship & Birthdays .....	6
Congregational Care .....	7-8
Photo Album .....	8-9
Calendar .....	10-11

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## Where's the Love?



("Lion Cubs Playing in the Serengeti" by David Dennis, Tanzania)

*"Now large crowds were traveling with Jesus; and he turned and said to them, 'Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple.'"*

*-Luke 14:25-26*

There's nothing quite like the rush of a Christmas celebration. We spend all that time running around, planning, working hard – and then the day finally arrives. Sure, sometimes things go wrong. Sometimes fights break out. Sometimes we face hard circumstances that distance us from Christmas joy. But even in those times, we can dwell in bittersweet memories of the past and remember how great Christmas can be. Jesus has come – let the earth be glad! There's new life and new hope for all.

But Jesus doesn't remain a little baby for our "oohs" and "aahs." Some of his teachings are astounding, confounding – and I mean confusing! We know how often the Bible talks about God as a God of love, about Jesus

*Pastor's Pen cont.*

sent into the world because, "God so loved the world." So where does this talk of hate come from all of a sudden? I don't know about you, but I'm certainly not prepared to hate myself, my parents, or my brother. (If we had kids, I'm thinking we wouldn't hate them either.)

On the other hand, we all want to be faithful disciples, right? Otherwise we wouldn't be here – working hard, trying every day to serve the Lord. So, what is Jesus telling us? When we think of "hate," we usually think of intense negative feelings toward a person or an idea or an institution. Often, these feelings lead us to want to attack, destroy, or devalue whatever it is that we hate. You will likely be relieved to know that that is not what Jesus is saying in this passage.

In Greek, the word used for "hate" is less about a fiery feeling and more about moral choice. When we look at our lives and our actions, we put more weight and value on some things than on other things. Jesus isn't advising us to be filled with unqualified rage towards our loved ones. He's saying that to be his disciple, we need to elevate Jesus— even before our own lives and family connections. What he's really saying is, "don't make me an afterthought, pushed behind every other concern in your life. Seek me first."

Jesus is preaching to people whose views are becoming transformed and, yes, sometimes that put them in conflict with their families – with those they loved more than anything. Yet, he encourages them to stay the course, to keep following the light of God, to trust that the Spirit is holding us all together. In Matthew 19:29, Jesus tells his followers, "everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold, and will inherit eternal life."

When we look to Jesus, when we offer our lives to him and entrust them to his care, we find that we have not lost what we have offered. Rather, Jesus turns our offering into a blessing of love for us and for the world. As we head into the new year, remember that God's blessings flow steadily – even when times are hardest. Remember that God is working in your life, giving you strength for the new day, preparing you for an inheritance in glory. The love is there and, in Christ, it keeps on growing. Thanks be to God!

Pastor Elana



## Monthly Liturgy

### Epiphany of the Lord—January 6th

Isaiah 60:1-6

*Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14*

Ephesians 3:1-12

Matthew 2:1-12

### 2nd Sunday after Epiphany—January 20th

Isaiah 62:1-5

*Psalm 36:5-10*

1 Corinthians 12:1-11

John 2:1-11

### Baptism of the Lord—January 13th

Isaiah 43:1-7

*Psalm 29*

Acts 8:14-17

Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

### 3rd Sunday after Epiphany—January 27th

Nehemiah 8:1-6, 5-6, 8-10

*Psalm 19*

1 Corinthians 12:12-31a

Luke 4:14-21

## Christian Education

Sue Chancellor

**"If God created all the beauty and majesty that resides  
on this extraordinary earth, imagine the talents and  
abilities He placed inside you!  
And while many of those gifts and talents have been  
revealed and put into action,  
there are others yet waiting to flourish.  
Ask God for revelation. For Confidence.  
Be open to learning.  
Walk a new path of discovery and possibility.  
Celebrate your gifts and give the glory to God."**

Cheryl Karpen

**O Give Thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his steadfast love endures forever.**

Psalm 107:1

Dear Trinity Family,

I celebrate each of you and thank you for making my eight and a half years as Trinity's Christian Educator such joyful ones. It's been pure delight working with such positive giving, and fun individuals I as yourselves. I've had a blast working with all of you (from the youngest to all the way up :) and will miss you greatly! I know there are bright and beautiful ventures ahead on the horizon for Trinity! Blessings from the bottom of my heart go out to each and every one of you amazing folks!



## Sunday Morning Opportunities

**Attention All Infants through Kindergarten:** Donna Bridenstine is ready to warmly greet you in the childcare room every Sunday from 9:00 through the close of worship. Preschoolers and kindergarteners can go to 9:15 Sunday School and then return to childcare. We are grateful to Donna for providing such nurturing caring attention and fun happy activities for our youngest folks. Teen and/or adult volunteers helpers are available to help her during worship.

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

It's an exciting New Year and all of Trinity's wonderful teachers are ready! Please welcome Kate Hanson to the kids' team and both Pastor Lucus and John Rayment to the tween/teen team. We are fortunate to have them on board with the rest of our talented teachers. Classes begin at 8:15 and ends by 10:15.

Jump right in and have fun as you learn how much God cherishes you! Everyone will discover more exciting stories from the bible in lots of active engaging ways.

<b>Jan 6</b>	<b>Millie Spencer</b>	<b>"Following the Light"</b>
<b>Jan 13</b>	<b>Valerie Wagner</b>	<b>"Beloved"</b>
<b>Jan 20</b>	<b>Katy Orrell</b>	<b>"In One Spirit"</b>
<b>Jan 27</b>	<b>Melinda Carver</b>	<b>"God's Will and Ways"</b>
<b>Feb 3</b>	<b>Sarah Rayment</b>	<b>"A Prophet of God"</b>
<b>Feb 10</b>	<b>Kate Hanson</b>	<b>"Fishing for People"</b>



## Adult Sunday School Class

All Adults have begun their dynamic DVD series, "God in America," in the room off of Churchill Hall. Please join them for interesting and invigorating conversation any Sunday you are able. Richard Spencer always provides excellent stimulating, challenging questions that all kinds of fine folks can chew on and grapple with!

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

There are two remaining thought-provoking Rob Bell DVD discussions the first half of January. So meet in the youth lounge on Jan 6 and Jan 13. And, beginning Jan 20, you'll be back upstairs for a compelling studies such as: "Stop Bullying," "Thou Shall Not Bully," and "Love Your Enemy."

<b>Jan 6</b>	<b>Liz Powell</b>	<b>Rob Bell DVD "Trees"</b>
<b>Jan 13</b>	<b>Stephanie Smith</b>	<b>Rob Bell DVD "Open"</b>
<b>Jan 20</b>	<b>Pastor Lucus</b>	<b>Intro to "Stop Bullying"</b>
<b>Jan 27</b>	<b>Stephanie Smith</b>	<b>"Stop Bullying" (New DVD study)</b>
<b>Feb 3</b>	<b>John Clawson</b>	<b>"Stop Bullying"</b>
<b>Feb 10</b>	<b>John Rayment</b>	<b>"Stop Bullying"</b>



## YOUTH/KIDS/FAMILY NEWS

A huge hearty thank you to Lynette, the kids/teens and all adult volunteers who helped with this year's pageant, "The Sweetest Story!" It was immensely enjoyed by ALL!



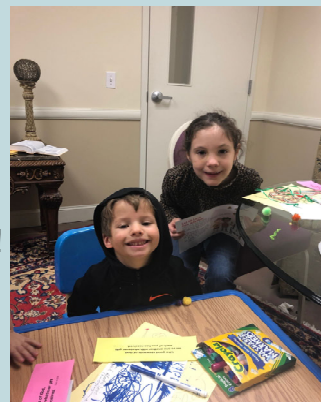
And yay..."Youth Sunday Planning" begins this Sunday, January 6th following worship! All youth, please plan on meeting with your ready adult volunteers to cook up another uplifting exciting Youth Sunday!



Be ready for a fun, exciting event for all ages! More information will be available soon about an intergenerational game night.



Dear Kids, Teens, and a few "Older kids" too,  
Thanks so much for my most beautiful heart collage that you created together! It's indeed a stunning masterpiece and I'll treasure it forever! And of course, I hope you know, I'll treasure each one of you forever too!  
-Sue



## Midweek Book Study:

On Wednesday, January 9, Midweek Book Study resumes their interesting spiritual conversation on Brian McLaren's book, "Naked Spirituality...A Life with God in 12 Simple Words." The marvelous teaching team composed of Pastors Lucus, Pastor Elana, and Cindy Strasheim, invite all interested adults to join them in the cafe from 11:00 am until noon. Lunch fellowship for all who can bring a lunch and stay for friendly conversation follows book study.



Remember that this terrific group packs backpacks every Wednesday in Churchill Hall at 10:30, except for the second Wednesday of the month. You are invited, then, to come to the cafe at 9:45 for Presbyterian Women's Group, led by our very gifted, Sally Bright.

# Fellowship News

Dwayne Strasheim

The Fellowship Team hosted its final event of 2018 with the Christmas Brunch on December 23. Many thanks to those who contributed breakfast casseroles, breads, pastries, fruits, beverages, and/or manual labor in the kitchen! The team appreciates your dedication and support.

Thanks also to those who have contributed Sunday Treats in the Trinity Café during the past year. The first Sunday (January 6) of 2019 is covered, but as of this writing (December 26), all remaining Sundays of 2019 are still open. There is a sign-up sheet on the counter between the kitchen and the Café.

Best wishes to all for a happy and blessed New Year!

Respectfully submitted,  
Dwayne Strasheim

## Parent's Night Out



- |                |       |
|----------------|-------|
| John Rayment   | 01/04 |
| Barbara Swayze | 01/19 |
| Jim Vaughan    | 01/22 |
| David Frazier  | 01/25 |



## Many Thanks

Thank you for all of your generous support to the BOC. We could not do what we do without wonderful community partners like you. Thank you for being such a blessing to us!

-Missy Brumley

Dear Trinity Family,

Wow! I opened my cool Dr. Seuss card and out plops a Visa gift card with my name on it! Thank you tons for your thoughtful generosity! I really appreciate it!

And...Royce and I sincerely thank you for your kind and loving send off this weekend. First, with the Saturday Open House hosted by Liz Powell and her husband, Eric! The food was delicious (thanks Cathie and Nancy too) and, as always, the warm fun fellowship was perfect! Sunday's "Litany of Sending" was perfect too! It's impossible to express all our gratitude to our Trinity family. We can't thank you enough for your love, kindness, and support these past nine years! You are truly the best!

-Sue

For the Evangelism Team and all members of Trinity,

I very much appreciate the card and prayers you sent at my birthday. My delayed response, I think, must be an indication of my unwillingness to acknowledge growing old(er). Please give my enclosed continuing contribution to the treasurer for me. With tremendous fond memories, Brad Byers

## Congregational Care

Brenda Cunningham



## Hello 2019!

As I close out the year and my time on session, I want to say thank you to all that have been part of this Team. Whether it has been as a Team Member or helping along side these folks in times of Trinity family distress.

### Congregational Care Team Members for 2018 were:

**Evelyn Fenton, Jackie Ballew, Cathy Harper, Ruby Morain, Dorothy Block, Bess Guthrie, Jean Righter and the late Barbara Higgins.**

I can personally say that Trinity has a wonderful support system for its congregation with loving and giving pouring from its church family.

Respectfully,  
Brenda Cunningham



# TRINITY PHOTO ALBUM







# TRINITY PHOTO ALBUM



# January

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1  Trinity office closed	2 Join us Wednesdays at 12:00 for Sack Lunch Fellowship!	3	4	5
6 Youth Sunday planning meeting after worship	7	8	9 Presbyterian women at 9:45 a.m. Book Study at 11:00a.m. Team Meetings	10	11	12 Half-day meeting about EOP-Malawi partnership (more info on next page)
13	14	15 Session at 6:30	16 Pack backpacks at 10:30 a.m. Book study at 11:00a.m.	17	18	19
20 Winter Jubilee at Trinity at 3:30 (more info on next page)	21  Trinity office closed	22	23 Pack backpacks at 10:30 a.m. Book study at 11:00 a.m.	24	25	26
27	28	29	30 Pack backpacks at 10:30 a.m. Book Study at 11:00a.m.	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

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### **EOP-Malawi Partnership**

Our next step is to review our goals for the partnership and work out a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Synod of Livingstonia. To that end, we would like to have ALL of our partner congregations and interested people attend a half-day meeting on **Saturday, January 12th, from 10:00am to 2:00pm, at First Presbyterian Church in Tulsa.** Lunch will be provided.

What do we want the partnership to look like in 2019? What are the funding priorities? Where do our passions and their greatest needs overlap? Come and be part of the conversation.

We will need an RSVP, so we know how many lunches to order (and what size room to reserve). Let us know if you are coming by calling the presbytery office at 918-582-3077 or by sending an email to [greg@eokpresbytery.org](mailto:greg@eokpresbytery.org).

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### **“Winter Jubilee”**

Can you juggle, stand on your head, play the guitar? This year we are going to share our hidden talents by co-hosting a talent show with Bristow Presbyterian Church. Join us January 20th at 3:30pm for our winter celebration. If you are interested in being a part of the jubilee, please let the pastors know. All ages and all skill levels are welcome!