

# Annual Report 2024

with documents for the  
Annual Parish Meeting  
January 26, 2025



Growing in love of God and neighbor

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## *ANNUAL MEETING MATERIAL*

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### **AGENDA**

1. Call to Order
2. Opening Prayer
3. Appointment of the Clerk and Parliamentarian
4. Minutes of the previous Annual Meeting
5. Elections
  - a. Qualifications
  - b. Report of the Nominating Committee
  - c. Further Nominations
  - d. Polls open for 30 minutes
6. Treasurer's Report for 2024
7. Presentation of Approved 2025 Budget
8. Results of Election
9. General Organization and Committee Reports
10. Announcements and Thanks
11. Necrology
12. Hymn
13. Benediction
14. Adjournment

# MINUTES OF THE 2024 ANNUAL MEETING

January 28, 2024

**Call to Order:** The Rev. Emily Mellott called the 186th annual meeting to order at 11:30 a.m.

**Opening Prayer:** Mother Emily opened the meeting with a prayer.

**Appointment of the Clerk and Parliamentarian:** Abigail Merk was appointed Clerk, and David Rapuano was appointed Parliamentarian.

**Minutes of the previous Annual Meeting:** Gayle Celentano made a motion to approve the minutes from the 2023 Annual Parish Meeting. Jeanette Peterson seconded this motion. The 2023 Annual Parish Meeting minutes passed unanimously with no abstentions.

## **Elections:**

**Qualifications:** A Vestry person must be a communicant in good standing of Trinity Church 18 years of age or older; a regular attendee during the past year and currently a giver of record; a person who accepts the principle of tithing and agrees to work towards it.

*Report of the Nominating Committee: Please refer to pages 7-10 of the Annual Parish Meeting-Agenda and Documents for biographies of Candidates.*

1. Vestry and Warden Nominees: Jeff Wojcik for a new two-year term as Warden; Julie Bathke, Sandi Rapp, and Jen Shappell for three-year Vestry terms.
2. Nominees for Diocesan Deputies for a one-year term are: Bob Litsinger, Emily Tinkham Provine, and Kristina Van Name. Nominees for Alternate Diocesan Deputies: Nancy Matthews and Bob Winzler.
- 3.

As there were no further nominations, polls officially opened at 11:38 a.m. Polls remained open for 30 minutes. Elections and results were announced at the end of the meeting (see the section titled, Results of Elections)

## **Treasurer's Report for 2023**

Scott Hart, treasurer, reported that 2023 pledges were up by \$3,000 compared to the 2023 budget. Similarly, 2023 plate offerings were up by \$22,000 compared to the 2023 budget, thanks to two exceptional donations. There was an overall income increase of \$32,000 in 2023 compared to the 2023 budget.

Most operating expenses are under budget at this time. Salaries are \$11,000 under budget. However, overall expenses are up by \$10,000.

In 2023, we took \$360,140 out of the endowment for Operations. We took out an additional \$104,822 for Capital Improvements. The total overall draw from the

endowment in 2023 was \$464,962. This was a draw of 18%, which is much higher than the recommended maximum draw of 6%.

**Presentation of Approved 2024 Budget** *Please refer to pages 12-15 of the Annual Parish Meeting-Agenda and Documents for the entire 2024 Vestry Budget Report.*

Nancy Matthews gave a presentation of the 2024 Budget titled, “Toward a Sustainable Budget for Trinity”. This budget was approved by the Vestry in December 2023, as well as plans to improve Trinity’s financial well-being in the coming years.

Per the 2024 Vestry Budget Report, the Vestry “has successfully reduced the budget to the point where expenses are expected to be in line with income by 2025.” And, “the 2024 budget is a *transition year budget*, for a year in which Trinity will implement the program, staffing, and property decisions to move to a sustainably balanced budget in 2025.”

The Vestry defines a sustainably balanced budget as: “withdrawing no more than 6% of the endowment funds to cover operating expenses each year.” For context, the total endowment draw for operations is budgeted at \$233,831 for 2024, vs. \$360,140 in 2023 (a reduction of \$126,309).

Trinity’s congregation size is 60% smaller than in 2009. We had 320 pledging households at that time; in 2024, we have 135 pledging households. “The context in which we are operating has also changed our staffing needs and resources.”

However, there is positive news in this: Trinity is indeed growing as we have 22 new pledging units now. Pledge income is solid. Per the Vestry’s report, “the 2024 pledge budget increased to \$425,000 from \$410,000 last year.”

Additional positive news: Trinity raised about \$10,000 in fundraisers and new forms of income in 2023. This didn’t meet the “stretch goal” of \$25,000 for 2023, but it is a start.

Regarding the endowment and subsequent operating budget changes: Trinity withdrew over \$350,000 from the endowment in both 2022 and 2023. Seeing as this trend cannot continue if we are to sustain our endowment funds, the Vestry had to make extremely hard decisions. This involved accepting that we could not offer the same programs at Trinity in the following budget year.

After making these difficult choices, the Vestry proceeded with reducing the operating budget to \$777,831 for 2024 (from the 2023 actuals of \$923,030). The most significant adjustments to expenses are:

- Compensation: \$144,497 lower;
- Administrative: \$8,829 higher;
- Total Property Expenses: \$7,0467 lower; and,
- Diocesan Contribution: \$9,700 higher.

The following staffing changes will be made:

- There will be no associate or assistant rector.
- Vernon Williams, music director, will go from full-time employment to half-time employment;
- There will be a new 15/hour week youth and children coordinator;
- There will also be a new 15/hour week bookkeeper; and,
- We will no longer have a sexton and will hire a part-time handyman and a cleaning service.

What will it take to succeed?

- Acceptance of change
- Volunteer leadership

At the end of the presentation, Nancy opened the floor for comments, questions, and discussion.

Discussion points:

- Members of the congregation received this presentation well. Some said it was “excellent”, and they appreciated the clarity it provided.
- A member of the congregation asked if there was a plan for the sexton’s property on 2nd street.
  - Answer: This will be rented out as a house for the church’s income.
- Another member of the congregation shared that she was somewhat shocked after first seeing the budget last week.
  - Mother Emily responded to this member of the congregation and shared the following perspective: The congregation did not know about the specifics of the budget or financial situation sooner because the Vestry did not know the specifics, even months ago. Then, the Vestry had to look at resources we have and what could be done without staff. Everything was on the table at that point. After the Vestry made the budget decision, Emily needed to talk to personnel about staffing changes. This was all kept confidential until last week.
- Following this explanation, a member of the congregation inquired as to why we are in the fiscal situation we are in.
  - Nancy Matthews answered: “When it comes down to pledges, no one could have seen the drop coming. Let us remember: We ARE growing. But we are not growing at the same rate we used to. We cannot forecast where we will be in five years. This is where we are likely going to be in the foreseeable future, in terms of income. So we must be at the same place with expenses. The good news is: volunteerism is growing. While we don’t have a documented five-year strategic plan, we have a plan.”
- A member of the congregation then shared this thought: “In terms of a strategic plan, the reason that we lack one right now is because Covid has been so disruptive and we need to work towards that. We are still in transition.”
- Someone else asked the question: “Why couldn’t we use the parish hall to make more money at certain times of year?”
  - Answer: “Well, we do. And the pricing is on the website. Even the chapel was used for a non-Episcopal wedding. There is a lot we need to improve in

the parish hall (ex. we only have one bathroom, the space must be more accessible, there must be an air conditioner installed.) After these renovations, the plan to rent out the parish hall will be more successful.”

- Another comment from the floor: “Even 15 years ago, our church has always taken money out of the endowment. We should replenish it. It’s caught up with us. And we are not putting it back. We need to help the Vestry and help Emily to do this.” This member of the congregation then thanked the Vestry for all their work on the budget. A Vestry member thanked this person and shared that we are trying to replenish the endowment through planned giving. This Vestry member also advised that we “are having lots of discussions about this behind the scenes.”
- A former member of the Vestry spoke up: “The problem wasn’t always that anyone was blind to taking from the endowment. But reality set in. Taking from the endowment is fine to do if you take from it at a sustainable rate. Let’s remember that endowments can be a source of income, as long as it grows. So that our children and younger folks see growth.”
- Another congregation member added: “It is great to see that we can offer the parish hall to the community. This is encouraging. We can get a lot more usage and community out of this church.”
  - To this, Nancy Matthews responded: “Yes, bring your ideas and refer folks to the church office. For the immediate future, we are trying to figure out life without a sexton on campus. But we will figure it out.”
- Someone then asked: What kind of volunteer help do we need?
  - Mother Emily answered: “The specifics are to be determined. But we need folks to take on projects (i.e. we need to run a fundraiser, here is what we have to do).” She advised that we need people who can make a plan for an event, fellowship, fundraising, property committee, finance committee, other activities, etc.
- Then another congregation member asked the question: “What are we doing to alleviate anxiety and bring love/Christ/peace/inspiration to others? This is all about making people run around more...Why?”
  - Mother Emily advised that this is happening because we’re just talking about the budget right now. Community/spiritual growth is different.
- Another member then asked: “What is being cut in the music program?”
  - Mother Emily: “We are working that out with Vernon to see what this is going to look like. We don’t know exactly what is coming. He will be full-time through June. Choirs will stay, Maris’ choirs, section leaders will all stay. The goal is to work with Vernon and to ensure the quality of the music program without overworking a part-time music director.”
  - Vernon: “I’m concerned that everyone is concerned. We are okay with this and we are staying!” (Applause). He then reassured the congregation by reminding them, “I’m at retirement age, and am ‘sort of’ retiring. We will still have a vibrant music program.”
- Mother Emily said that different people in the staff are affected differently with these changes. It will be a continued conversation. Decisions are indefinite right now and Emily will not speak for a staff member. Expect staff changes to occur over the first six months of the year (except for the music and youth program, which happen mid-year). Property changes will start Feb- March; Geri is deciding when to retire.



- A member of the congregation invited us all to be creative about income and growing the congregation and observed that they never saw so many people at an annual meeting.
  - Mother Emily responded that she has been looking forward to the conversation today. All of this care makes us healthy and strong and that we care of one another. That work is happening. Trinity is in great shape: budget isn't pretty, Emily is grieving changes. But we are in such good shape because of the heart of Trinity.

**Results of Election:** the 30 minute waiting period having passed, Carolyn moved to elect by acclamation the slate as presented. Joan Reid seconded. Those present from the congregation voted to elect the slate of officers as presented (Warden, Vestry members, Delegates to the Diocesan Convention, and Alternate Delegates to the Diocesan Convention) unanimously with no abstentions.

**General Organization and Committee Reports** Maris Williams moved to accept the reports by title. Bob Litsinger seconded this motion. The meeting voted to accept the reports by title unanimously with no abstentions.

### **Announcements and Thanks**

- Please come to the youth choirs' Evensong on February 4!
- Mother Emily: You all mean so much to me!
- Liz Louie: Thank you to Barb Benton for chairing the Outreach Commission for the last nine years.
- Emily: Thank you to the outgoing members of the Vestry (Sally, Jeff, and Scott) and warden (Liz)
  - Thank you, Vestry and finance committee;
  - Thank you for the growing volunteer work, especially in the children and youth ministries;
  - Thank you property volunteers;
  - Thank you for showing up and making things happen and just being a part of the congregation!
  - Thank you for the folks who ask questions and who want to help out;
  - "Every person here is important. This is an act of love and care. I am SO grateful. Love builds up and that is what matters."

**Necrology:** Mother Emily read the names of those who have passed away in the last year and led the meeting in prayer.

**Hymn:** Those present from the congregation sang the closing hymn *Hymn to Joy* with Vernon Williams on the piano.

**Benediction:** Mother Emily gave the benediction.

**Adjournment:** Mary Barker made a motion to end the Annual Meeting. Lisa Yeh seconded that motion. The meeting was adjourned unanimously at 1:22 p.m.

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## ***CANDIDATES FOR ELECTION***

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### **WARDEN: 1-YEAR TERM**

#### **Dave Shaw**

Dave and his wife Jane have been attending Trinity for over 5 years now. Since joining, they have been active in choir, outreach, and worship ministries. Dave joined the vestry in 2023. Originally from Canada, Jane and Dave lived for a number of years in both central PA and Minnesota before moving to Collingswood NJ in 2020 to be closer to family. Their grandson George was baptized at Trinity in 2023, and their son and daughter-in-law are expecting their second child in March! Dave's work involves organization effectiveness consulting with a global medical device manufacturer - although he says retirement may be coming soon! Dave and Jane enjoy sailing on the Delaware River, listening to a wide variety of live music, and visiting their daughter who lives in Prince Edward Island Canada. "Wherever life has taken us, church has been an important part of our life – and volunteering in different ministries has allowed us to connect deeply in our parish community. We feel blessed to be part of the Trinity family!"

### **VESTRY: 3-YEAR TERM**

#### **Don Smith**

My name is Don Smith, and I have been an active member of Trinity Church for at least twelve years. I mostly attend the eight AM service. In 2021 I completed one year on the Vestry to fulfill at term for someone who moved away. I am completing my first three-year term in 2024, and I am ready to do my second three-year term. I am one of the regular Sunday Ushers I participate in the Men's Breakfast regularly. I am also the Chairperson of the Property Committee and a member of the Finance Committee. I also have been known to fix a few things around the Church campus. In my free time I enjoy woodworking, fishing, golfing, sailing and can also be found at Strawbridge Lake walking with my wackadoodle dog Noah.

#### **Angela Winterrowd**

Angela and her family joined Trinity in the fall of 2023, after attending the Easter service the prior spring. Angela, her husband Michael, and children Julianna (9) and Norah (7) feel blessed to have found an incredible community and place of faith at Trinity. Both girls attend Sunday School, participated in Welcome to Communion last spring and sing in Carol Choir. The family enjoys hosting coffee hour together. Their family was drawn to Trinity, first and foremost, by the incredibly welcoming and caring community and leadership of Mother Emily, as well as the historic sanctuary and incredible music program.

While Angela was brought up in the Catholic Church, Michael's faith is rooted in the Episcopal Church, as his father, the late Rev. W. Perry Winterrowd, was an Episcopal priest. In fact, Perry served as the assistant priest under the Rev. Canon Bruce Weatherly at Trinity in the late 1960s and Michael's parents were married at Trinity. Early in their

marriage, Michael's parents lived in the apartment just above the church office. It has been a lovely full-circle moment for their family to be a part of the congregation at Trinity now and share this history with their girls.

Angela is a senior nonprofit and fundraising professional with over 20 years of experience in the arts, higher education and independent school sectors. She has worked closely with boards and volunteers and on several comprehensive capital campaigns. She began her career on the administrative side of professional theatre companies, and spent 7 years with Arden Theatre Company in Philadelphia, most recently as Development Director. She was part of the major gifts team at The College of New Jersey (her alma mater) for 8 years before joining Friends Select School in Philadelphia in the fall of 2022 as Director of Leadership Gifts. In her spare time, Angela enjoys seeing theatre and spending time in the family's flower and vegetable gardens. She is honored to be considered for a role on the Vestry and is excited to serve the church in a new way.

### **Lisa Yeh**

I live in Marlton with my daughter, Annika, and have been a member of Trinity since 2009 when Annika was baptized. I have volunteered as a Sunday school teacher for elementary school aged kids initially and later as a J2A teacher for middle school. I served on the Vestry from 2016-2018 and again in 2022-2024. I've always been interested in the financial side and have assisted with Stewardship for many years and Planned Giving more recently. Re-invigorating Coffee Hour after both services on Sunday has been my latest passion and has given me an opportunity to meet many new friends. Professionally, I was a research chemist for ExxonMobil for 30 years working on fuel and lubricant product quality. In my spare time, I enjoy exercising, travel, photography, and doing taxes as a volunteer tax preparer for AARP. (I must be weird-who enjoys doing taxes??) I would be honored to serve on the Trinity Vestry again and hope to help Trinity grow and thrive.

## **VESTRY: 1-YEAR TERM**

### **Jennifer Gotthelf**

Most of you probably don't know me - so let me introduce myself. My name is Jennifer Gotthelf and I've been a member of Trinity Church on and off since 1997. My love for Trinity began from afar. I was getting married and fell in love with the beauty of the church. I got married here (by Father Stowell), baptized all 4 of my children here,, got confirmed here, and most recently got reaffirmed with Mother Emily by my side last May.

I remember countless Sundays when my mom came to church with me and my kids. She would offer them "church candy" to keep them quiet during the service. She loved Trinity, and I loved going to service with her. Unfortunately, life happened and I got divorced in 2010 when my children were still very young. I became a single mom of 4 children and stopped going to church regularly. As my kids grew up and became more independent, I started coming back more regularly. I fell in love with this church all over again.

For the past three years, I've been coming to Sunday service more and more regularly, and it brings me such peace. I look forward to Sunday morning and the time I get to spend at Trinity. I am building friendships with the people around me in my "regular seat" but would love to get to know more parishioners. I would love to be a bigger part of the church, and with my children grown, I feel this is the perfect time to devote more time to my faith and my church. I would love to know more about the behind the scenes part of the church and help it grow bigger and better and stronger than it already is. Trinity church has helped me be a better person, a more peaceful person and a happier person. If building the church up and helping the church reach more people is something I can do, I'd love the opportunity.

## **DIOCESAN DEPUTY – 1-YEAR TERM**

### **Bob Litsinger**

Bob is a graduate of the Swanee Education for Ministry program and has provided leadership in four previous parishes. When Bob and Sandie moved to New Jersey in 2008, they found a church home at Trinity. Sandie and Bob were both very active at Trinity the first few years, but Sandie's health limited and eventually prevent participation. Bob was glad to return to active participation at the end of 2016. Since returning Bob has been a Diocesan Representative, Sunday School teacher, a Discipleship for Episcopalians group coach, active in the RenewalWorks process, filled a short-term vestry role, leads God's Diversity Committee and serves as a Lay Pastoral Care Minister. He served as liaison to the vestry of St. John's Maple Shade on behalf of Trinity and the Diocese, and he has completed study at the New Jersey School for Ministry. He is active in worship serving as a chalice bearer, lay reader, teaching and as part of the tech guild. He continues to provide a weekly Evening Prayer service for Trinity. Prior to his retirement, he worked as a database developer and has prior experience in administration for healthcare and legal firms. Regular personal prayer, family life, cycling, yoga, weight training, jogging, travel and visiting with friends rounds out current activity.

### **Emily Tinkham Provine**

Emily Tinkham Provine is a cradle Episcopalian who has been a member of Trinity since moving to Moorestown in the fall of 2022. Their current major roles at church are positions as a diocesan delegate and as a member of the Trinity Choir, and they have also served in some smaller capacities including helping with the Blueberry festival and lecturing at the Easter Vigil. They feel most connected to their faith through liturgy and music, which is what helps make the Episcopal church a spiritual home, and they also hold a strong respect for Quaker traditions which they experience through their job as a math teacher at Moorestown Friends School.

Emily's favorite Eucharistic Prayer is C, and their favorite hymn is LEVAS 111 (Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing). Outside of church, they dabble in several hobbies, including reading, baking, figure skating, violin, and martial arts.

### **Kristina Van Name**

Kristina Van Name has been a member of Trinity for 23 years. Both her children, Connor and Kaylee, have been an active part of Trinity since their birth. Kristina has served as a deputy for the church five times in the past. Since the spring of 2022, she has facilitated the upper elementary group in exploring God, Jesus, our church, and their own beliefs. She is also a lay reader and chalice bearer. Kristina is excited to be back singing with the Trinity Choir on Thursdays and occasional Sundays. Each week, she looks forward to Monday Basic Bible Study and Reflection in guiding and learning with the group. Kristina loves all the books she has been exposed to with Trinity's Page Brigade, which she facilitates. She is a member of the Growing Young group, which looks at ways to involve and retain young people while breathing life into the whole church. This is Kristina's fourth year as the chair of the Trinity Preschool Board, where both her children attended preschool.

### **Alternate Diocesan Deputies – 1 Year Term:**

Julie Bathke, Nancy Matthews, Lisa Yeh

## ***BUDGET***

### **BUDGET AND ACTUALS REPORT**

	Budget 2025	Actual 2024	Budget 2024	Actual 2023	Budget 2023
<b>R evenues</b>					
<b>Budgeted Income</b>					
Pledge	430,000	432,217	425,000	413,080	410,000
Plate	55,000	58,057	55,000	76,367	54,000
Property Income	56,000	32,550	34,000	27,600	22,000
Budgeted Endowment Draw	167,227	182,000	182,000	150,000	150,000
Graveyard Endowment Income	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Easter & Christmas Offering	7,000	6,670	8,000	8,855	8,000
Fundraisers	10,000	3,586	10,000	4,855	25,000
Other Income	4,000	4,805	2,000	3,993	1,500
Deficit Balance from Endowment	86,335	90,454	74,474	314,961	233,108
<b>Total Budgeted Income</b>	<b>825,562</b>	<b>820,338</b>	<b>800,474</b>	<b>1,009,711</b>	<b>913,608</b>
Non-Budgeted Special Offerings	0	2,428	0	6,870	0
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>825,562</b>	<b>822,767</b>	<b>800,474</b>	<b>1,016,581</b>	<b>913,608</b>
<b>Expens es</b>					
<b>Diocesan</b>					
<b>Compensation</b>					
Wages	324,429	349,279	350,180	429,362	431,492
Benefits	98,638	97,361	105,735	170,454	178,818
Wage Taxes and Insurance	28,823	21,365	14,635	17,029	17,134
Compensation Other	3,750	2,335	3,750	1,475	2,200
<b>Total Compensation</b>	<b>455,640</b>	<b>470,339</b>	<b>474,300</b>	<b>618,320</b>	<b>629,643</b>
New Employee Expenses	0	342	0	0	0
<b>Administration</b>					
Technology Expenses	22,000	21,740	20,400	20,256	19,000
Supplies and Postage	5,800	6,336	7,700	7,026	7,500
Communications	3,500	4,102	4,900	6,887	4,500
Professional and Banking Fees	10,300	9,684	13,966	3,685	3,700
<b>Total Administration</b>	<b>41,600</b>	<b>41,861</b>	<b>46,966</b>	<b>37,853</b>	<b>34,700</b>
<b>Property</b>					
Property Insurance & Gen Liability	49,115	49,030	47,500	54,106	45,500
Property Maintenance	52,197	46,943	30,900	22,647	18,600
Utilities	36,152	33,904	32,600	36,022	39,800
Building Improvements	20,000	26,656	14,300	19,571	14,300
Capital Purchases Building	32,643	27,066	22,643	104,822	5,000
<b>Total Property</b>	<b>190,107</b>	<b>183,600</b>	<b>147,943</b>	<b>237,169</b>	<b>123,200</b>
Education	7,100	2,568	8,500	4,412	10,500
Parish Life and Growth	3,050	1,116	1,500	915	4,000
Worship	4,300	4,083	2,950	2,508	2,950
Music	6,565	7,298	6,115	5,928	6,115
Special Offering Transmittal	0	1,749	0	6,870	0
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,749</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6,870</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Total*</b>	<b>825,562</b>	<b>825,133</b>	<b>800,474</b>	<b>1,016,581</b>	<b>913,608</b>
	0	-2,366	0	0	0

\*Closing of 2024 books delayed by transition to new accounting system; this balance represents items still to be reconciled

## 2024-25 VESTRY BUDGET REPORT

**Summary:** For 2024 the vestry approved a budget and plan to change our operating model by reducing staff and expenses, thereby creating a more sustainable budget for the future. The 2025 budget approved by the vestry reflects the reduction initiated this past year and continued efforts to grow revenue.

### **Revenue:**

The 2025 budget revenues for Trinity continue to grow (4% over 2024).

- 2025 Pledges: The proposed number of \$430,000 is our confident estimate based on a detailed review of the pledges received and still outstanding. We feel there is potential to go higher in 2025.
  - 11 New Pledges , 2025 Total to date = 138 Households
  - 2025 income from Property and Fundraiser income, etc. (+\$50,000)

### **Expenses:**

During 2024 the new operating model was implemented with staff reductions and outsourcing services and increased volunteerism by the congregation

- Overall Expenses in 2023 were \$1,016,581 and going into 2025 Budget expenses \$825,562, we have reduced the overall expenses by \$191,019 (-18.7 %)
- Compensation (Staff): The overall cost for staff compensation has gone down each of the last two years while absorbing marketplace increases in health insurance and cost of living adjustments.

### **Overall Compensation Staff Savings Based (2025):**

- Current staff vs. 1/1/2023 model = \$210,000
- Current staff vs. 1/1/2024 model = \$100,000

*2023 Staff: 2 full time clergy, full time music director, parish admin, sexton; Part time finance, Sunday School, Music assistant & nursery, section Leaders (4)*

*1/1/2024 Staff: 1 full time clergy, full time music director, parish admin, sexton; part-time finance, Sunday School, Music assistant & nursery, section Leaders (4)*

*Current Staff: 1 full-time clergy, full-time parish admin; half-time music director; less than half-time finance, youth & children director, handy person, music assistant, nursery, section leaders (4)*

- Property: Property expenses continue to be a challenge as ongoing maintenance and repairs of the buildings increase. The 2025 budget expenses have increased + \$6,507. (+3.5%) which in today's double digit inflation environment is considered a savings.

## **Endowment (2025)**

The vestry is committed to working towards a 6% goal moving forward. The endowment withdrawal for 2025 budget is \$253,562 (9%). However, the endowment withdrawal has been coming down since 2023 (16%) and 2024 (10%) The Vestry will continue to look for ways to reach that goal with a focus on growing revenue in the coming year.

Additional investment income will also add to the endowment in 2025. As a result of the selling of property 214/216 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, we anticipate a positive impact on the endowment (+\$350K or more) in 2025.

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## ***GENERAL MINISTRY REPORTS***

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### **RECTOR'S REPORT**

Last year, in my Annual Report, I wrote to you:

“I do not look forward to an easy 2024, but I look forward to a year in which our community strength, love, hope, and care for one another will have more and more chances to grow and to shine.”

And that is exactly what I have experienced at Trinity this year. We are a vibrant and growing community with a sense of energy, vitality, and care for one another as we worship together, and work together to strengthen our community and to serve God's people beyond our walls.

What wasn't easy this year was our staff transitions. As we discussed at our last annual meeting, it's been necessary to reduce our staff leadership and increase our volunteer leadership for the long term healthy finances and strong community of our congregation. In early 2024, we said goodbye to our full-time sexton, Kevin Moore. Kevin is now working at another church in South Jersey, and at Trinity, day-to-day property management, repair, and upkeep are in the hands of a volunteer, Don Smith, with a quarter-time handyman to assist. A contract service provides regular cleaning of our buildings. Many members of the congregation pitch in regularly to help set up and break down for events and meetings, and we continue to seek more volunteers for as-needed tasks like snow and leaf removal (let Don know if you're available!)

Next we celebrated with Geri Trost her retirement after 25 years as Trinity's financial manager (with many other duties and roles and friendships along the way). Our staffing plan called for us to outsource our accounting and hire a part-time bookkeeper, but we were fortunate to find a highly qualified candidate, Gia Grosso, to continue keeping all of those functions under our own roof.

We were also fortunate to hire Michelle Seaman to become our Youth and Children's Minister, combining and reinventing the staff support for those ministries that had previously been provided by our assisting clergy and the Sunday School Director. Christine Andonie led and supported our Sunday School through the end of the school year and helped prepare the transition for our new position before her official staff role ended, and we are blessed to have Christine continuing to provide nursery care some



Sundays while she also leads a class at Trinity's Preschool. An expanded group of volunteer teachers, leaders, and subs are a tremendous gift to our youngest Trinity members; and our volunteer "Growing Young" team brings vision, direction, and beyond-the-classroom planning and leadership to help ensure our youth and children are fully integrated members of our Trinity community – and occasionally that adults get an intergenerational opportunity to join some of the fun youth activities and service projects.

Vernon Williams continues to provide excellent musical leadership in our worship services, transitioning from a full-time to half-time position in this role (probably the hardest job transition of all!). Some details of how to make a 50% reduction of responsibilities sustainable remain to be worked out; we know that we will not be able to support the rich calendar of extra musical events beyond the Sunday worship services that we have been used to. Our Trinity Choir is growing; our youth choirs are thriving under Vernon and Maris' leadership; and our Sunday music is excellent, uplifting, and attracts many of our visitors and newcomers to worship.

Kate Stefanko continues as our full time Office and Communications Manager, including picking up several responsibilities previously carried out by other staff, managing several key community service projects, new uses of our buildings, and several new staff support and operational responsibilities. *And* continuing to handle all the communication functions and daily management of our office and operations. Her creativity, capability, and persistence have provided bedrock support for our transitions this year. New volunteer support this year has included Priscilla Knapp and Joan Dighton working with Kate to manage our Household Goods Pantry and welcome and serve our pantry guests. (And many thanks to so many who regularly donate soaps, detergents, paper goods, and more to our neighbors in need.) We're currently seeking several volunteers who can join long time office volunteer Gayle Celantano to help with reception, welcome, and perhaps light admin work to make our office management sustainable.

I'm grateful to Bob Litsinger, who has taken on the volunteer role of Lay Chaplain to assist with pastoral visiting and care, and occasional preaching, as we shift from two clergy to one. My role now includes some increased time focused on administrative, stewardship, and financial clarity work as we make our transitions behind the scenes that shape a healthy congregation, in which I've been ably supported by the Vestry. I take a lot of joy in the ongoing work of worshipping with you all on Sundays and at life's transitions; in the opportunities to support new leadership and creativity that continue to bloom among us, and in the daily work of loving, serving, seeking God and neighbor, in community at Trinity.

In all these transitions, I'm taking ever more joy in seeing our strength, hope, vitality, and mutual care for one another at Trinity grow as we rise to challenges, spot opportunities, welcome new people and perspectives, and deepen relationships. A few things you'll read more about in later pages of this report deserve particular mention here among our joys and strengths.

Our youth and children's programs have seen significantly increasing vitality, energy, consistency, and participation, beginning in 2023 and strengthening through 2024. We've welcomed new leadership and visibility of our youth and children in our worship

services, and the classrooms are buzzing with God's grace and presence as our children learn the Bible and the traditions of the church, and our youth begin to practice how to claim and apply those gifts in their own lives.

Our fellowship, friendship and fundraising events and daily and weekly parish life have gotten significant boosts – and provided significant boosts – with our Blueberry Festival, Bingo and Movie Nights, and revitalized coffee hour. The life and connection and fun of our community shine at these events – and they provide a great opportunity for all of us to invite and welcome new people to our community. Key volunteer leaders in this have been Jeff Wojcik, Lisa Yeh, and Julie Bathke, among others – and a significant number of volunteers for individual events and coffee hour teams.

And our Vestry have worked faithfully, carefully, and generously together in the ongoing work of bringing our finances and operations into sustainable balance. I'm grateful especially for the work of the newly revised Finance Committee who have dug energetically into this challenging work and continue to guide us toward solid sustainability. And for our Property Committee, who have facilitated a gentle and essential task of God's mission in the world. They have led us to ways to use the properties behind the church on Second Street to enable affordable housing and homelessness prevention *and* bring important financial resources to the congregation at the same time.

Outside of Trinity, I have served this year as the Chair of the Board of the Gathering of Leaders, an organization focused on connecting and supporting creative, hope-filled clergy and lay leaders to grow, energize, and transform the Episcopal Church. This work has taken me into conversations with many leaders whose work has inspired several sermons and a number of small practical changes in my own leadership, and offers a great network of resources for navigating changes and growth.

I also served this summer as one of the Diocese of New Jersey's elected representatives to the General Convention of The Episcopal Church in Louisville, KY. Among hundreds of other discussions and decisions there, the church elected a new Presiding Bishop; worked to improve our accountability and disciplinary structures for clergy and bishops; took action to make the denominational health plan for employees more equitable; moved to redress significant past injustices in the relationship of the church and Native Americans, including changing the status of the Church in Navajoland to provide authority to elect their own bishop and take other self-determining actions; and took a number of steps forward in the ongoing work of ensuring our resources for worship stay rooted in our ancient tradition while having sufficient flexibility and adaptability to serve the church well in a changing context. I was honored to serve as the Chair of Dispatch of Business for the House of Deputies, a role which helps shape the priorities and flow of debate and discussion for 800 lay and clergy deputies. I came home exhausted and energized. And, as every time I take a few days or weeks away, I return increasingly grateful to come home to *you*, Trinity, and to the lively, deep, strong, caring, God-filled community we are. I am so very glad to find my home with you, and to serve and worship God, and love our neighbors, together with you!

The Reverend Emily A. Mellott , Rector

## WARDENS' REPORT

As 2024 ends, we are bidding a farewell and 'Thank You' to Nancy Matthews as a Warden at Trinity Church. Nancy has been a vestry member and a warden for 10 years, and it is time for her to take a break from these leadership positions in the church. Nancy's dedication and hard work to make Trinity a warm and welcoming community over the years has been second to none and she will be missed at our leadership meetings. Jeff Wojcik, who became a warden last year, will be working closely with a newly-elected warden to carry on the work Nancy has started, and we look forward to her continued support at Trinity in so many other ways.

Thoughts from Nancy:

Dear friends, we are doing well! The congregation is continuing to rebound after the hard hit of the pandemic, and our finances are stable. A year ago we wondered if we could successfully pivot from primarily paid staffing to more volunteer support, and that is working, thanks to a few key people and many supporting hands. I would like to thank Mother Emily for her hard work and flexibility, both of which have been essential to the transitions this year. The challenge for our future is to try to increase our income in a variety of ways so that we don't have to continue to look for expense reductions. On a personal note, I can assure you it has been a joy and honor to serve Trinity for the past 10 years. I used to wonder how my business knowledge and experience could be used for God's work, and then I joined the vestry and realized how important it is to focus on the church's finances, operations, and growth. This work cannot all be left to the Rector, although in Mother Emily we have a gifted administrative partner. I appreciate all of the times many of you have said "Yes!" when I asked if you could help in a certain way, and all of your kind words and support over the years. What a great community we have at Trinity!

Thoughts from Jeff:

As every year has its challenges, 2024 was one in which we will look back and feel that we did accomplish a lot to move Trinity to a much more sustainable and bright future. The remodeling of the way we will operate has opened our minds to trying new things and shows us that together we can overcome any roadblocks put in front of us. I am especially excited to see more people, both adults & youths in church and even more people involved in various committees and attending our events, Those two indicators alone truly show the character of our congregation. I see all of us working together will make Trinity stronger.

Going forward our focus will be to look at and pray for ways to continue to grow the congregation and maximize our assets. I hope you feel as excited as I do about the direction we are going.

With thanks

Nancy Matthews and Jeff Wojcik, Wardens

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## WORSHIP

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### MUSIC

Trinity's music ministry experienced a major change in 2024 as the music director's position was cut from full-time to half-time. The most significant change is the loss of the special Sunday afternoon services, such as Evensong, Lessons and Carols, and Spring Choir Concert. In the spring the choirs were able to appreciate the end of an era as they sang what could be their last Evensong and concert. The youth choir director position (Maris's position) was not changed, and Trinity's choirs remain intact, with the focus now exclusively on Sunday mornings.

The question we are evaluating throughout the current season is how to maintain our multi-choir program in so few hours. We should have a reliable sense of what is feasible by the end of the season in June.

**Trinity Choir** – The Trinity Choir sings for the 10:00 a.m. service and currently has 15 singers, including 6 sopranos, 5 altos, 2 tenors, and 2 basses. In addition to singing for Ash Wednesday, Holy Week, and Christmas services, the choir sang a service of Choral Evensong in March. In November, the choir joined forces with the choir of the Church of the Redeemer, Bryn Mawr, under the direction of Andrew Senn, to sing Vernon's *Requiem* as part of their annual Service of Remembrance. This was a major undertaking for our choir and, of course, a highlight for Vernon.

**Coventry Choir** – The Coventry Choir, which is composed of the choir section leaders, continues to help the Trinity Choir vocally and musically, as well as singing motets and anthems on its own from time to time. This season we welcomed a new soprano, Jenna Frank, as Abby Merk left the choir to attend seminary. Returning members of the quartet are Caroline Voyack, alto; Benjamin Kirk, tenor; and Joseph Aromando, bass. Ben is graduating with his Master's degree from Westminster Choir College this spring, and we hope he lands a teaching job nearby that would allow him to continue singing with us.

**Chamber Choir** – The Chamber Choir, an expanded version of the Coventry Choir, was formed on an ad hoc basis, usually to sing Choral Evensong. In 2024 the eight-voice Chamber Choir sang a service of Christmas Lessons and Carols on the Sunday morning after Christmas.

**St. Cecilia Choir** – In its third year, the St. Cecilia Choir of older girls in grades 7-12 is currently comprised of two enthusiastic singers. They sing approximately once a month and in February joined with the Carol Choir to sing a service of Choral Evensong, as well as helping to lead the 3:00 p.m. Christmas Eve service.

**Carol Choir** – Maris's thriving nine-member Carol Choir is now composed of choristers in grades 3-6. In February, they joined with the St. Cecilia Choir to sing a service of Choral Evensong for the first time. They also helped to lead the 3:00 p.m. Christmas Eve service.

**Cherub Choir** – Maris’s Cherub Choir, for choristers in grades K-2, has grown to include seven enthusiastic members who sing approximately once a month. This choir is not shy; their singing can be heard in the last pews of the church!

**Choral Librarian** – Susan Wojcik continues to do excellent and dedicated work as our Choral Librarian. Susan makes sure the music is put away in an orderly fashion, and she remains kind and patient with choir members who turn in their music late.

### **Piano Accompanist**

Gina Park continues as accompanist for the Carol Choir. Though still in high school, Gina plays at a high technical level and with great sensitivity. We are lucky to have her on the staff!

### **Lenten Organ Recital and Soup Luncheon Series**

The annual series of five Lenten organ recitals returned in 2024. Reviving a popular tradition, the half-hour recitals were followed by soup luncheons in the Parish Hall, featuring homemade soups and desserts made by parishioners and friends. Many thanks to the ten soup chefs and all the recitalists for making the series a great success.

### **Receptions**

A pleasant feature of our special musical events was the receptions that followed. Many thanks to Maris, Dixie DePietropolo, Alberta Fuller, and the wardens for their dedication to offering these opportunities for fellowship through the years.

### **Friends of Trinity Music**

For years, the Friends of Music fund has received generous support from the parish, enabling us to offer our schedule of special music events including the services of Choral Evensong and Advent Lessons and Carols, as well as the Organ Recital Series and the Choir Concert. Now that these extra events are no longer scheduled, the fund is available for special music on Sunday mornings, such as the Christmas Lessons and Carols in December, and to help fund unusual but inevitable expenses such as instrument repair and choir robes. Current financial details can be found elsewhere in the Annual Report.

### **Thanks**

As always, we are grateful for Mother Emily’s appreciation of the value of music in the life of the parish, and for her support which includes singing in the choir at times! And we are grateful for all who participate in their various ways, especially the choristers and parents who make the choirs possible, and for the Trinity community that supports our efforts in countless ways.

Respectfully submitted,  
Vernon and Maris Williams

## **FRIENDS OF MUSIC**

The Friends of Trinity Music funded all of our special musical events in 2024, as well as some extra musicians for Sunday mornings. This fund will continue to be invaluable to our music ministry, despite the absence of our Sunday afternoon events going forward. It will enable us to enjoy extra instrumentalists and singers from time to time, and make it possible to have services such as the Christmas Lessons and Carols on December 29. In addition, it will be a way of covering unusual and infrequent expenses such as instrument repairs which inevitably arise.

In January 2024, the fund balance was \$34,116. Donations in 2024 came to \$13,213, while expenses were \$18,392, leaving a closing balance of \$28,937.

Events in 2024 included services of Choral Evensong in February and March, the Lenten Organ Recital Series, the spring Choir Concert, a Festive Morning Prayer with brass in May, and Christmas Lessons and Carols in December.

Many thanks to the Friends of Music who over the years have made an enormous difference to the musical life of the parish and the Moorestown community.

Respectfully submitted,  
Vernon Williams

## **LAY READERS & CHALICE BEARERS**

The lay readers and chalice bearers play an important part in parish life as they regularly participate in the Sunday services and special services throughout the year. With the live streaming of church services they are reaching a wider audience than just that in Trinity's building.

The lay reader pool has widened over the past year as youth and adults are now sharing the reading responsibilities at the 10 am service. During last winter and spring there were twelve youth readers. Some readers have taken a break more recently but there are two new youth readers. This past fall Julie Bathke has taken on a coaching role to go through their reading before the service.

New lay readers and chalice bearers are always welcome so if you are interested, do reach out!

Respectfully submitted,  
Joan Dighton

## **ACOLYTES**

We have very dedicated youth who serve as our acolytes at the 10am service. This fall we have 4 youth who are crucifers and 4 who are servers. Three other youth needed to step down this fall due to their busy schedules, but are willing to fill in when they can. We would love to have more youth involved; please contact Kristina Van Name or Mother Emily if you know of a potential interested youth.

Submitted by Kristina Van Name

## **USHERS**

The Trinity ushers help making Trinity a welcoming, organized place of worship. They are the first person you see when entering the church on Sunday, they provide a welcome to all, assistance where needed, and help keep the service flowing smoothly. The Trinity usher team is currently 8 members strong, with one usher serving per service. We typically serve one, occasionally two services per month. This is an important ministry that does not require a large time commitment or particular skills. It requires showing up to church a few minutes early to hand out leaflets, occasional herding of small children, taking collection, and managing the flow of traffic during communion. After service duties include straightening the pews, recycling stray leaflets, and locking up after the 10am service.

Many of us travel throughout the year and it can occasionally be challenging to find coverage for all services. We would love to have a few more people join us in the rotation. We do not have any activities outside of Sunday worship, so it is a good ministry for people with busy weekday schedules. If you can show up on time, smile and say good morning, you may have what it takes! Please speak to an usher or Mother Emily if you are interested in joining us.

## **LAY PASTORAL CARE**

The effort to extend our support to members and others who are unable to come to church due to age, illness and other difficulties as described in the initial report last year was successful.

Full tracking of efforts did not start until the middle of this year, so the statistics constructed from my calendar and estimates by our two active Eucharistic Ministers, Priscilla Knapp and Jeff Wojcik, should only be considered approximately correct. However, it is clear that we have provided almost 100 visits during the year.

What did we achieve for our efforts?

- All of our visits provided some level of support for those we visited. The level depended upon the need.
- About 50% of the visits included prayer with Eucharist.
- About 50% of the visits included prayer without Eucharist.
- Occasionally but rarely, the person we visited was not able to actively pray with us, so we prayed for them.
- In providing pastoral care special needs were addressed beyond general social support and conversation. Examples this year are:
  - Watching the Video of the Sunday service with them.
  - Working on a Memorial Service that enables the person to express their love and thanksgiving to those they leave behind.
  - Helping an individual to work through or find a resource for a spiritually related concern.

In the last of those special needs, the care and support applies to everyone in the church, even those who attend church who have special challenges or concerns. We are available to support everyone.

The number of encounters is not a good measure of the number of people we have helped. Since most of those we visited are confined, we visited monthly, bi-weekly or weekly. Some of our visits provided Eucharist for multiple people. The other thing hidden in those numbers are a few visited Episcopalians not part of Trinity: two from other churches that attend Trinity Evening Prayer, and one encountered during my work as a volunteer Chaplain Aide at Virtua Mount Holly.

This Ministry grew. There are many ways we reached out to others. The ministry we did is a special way that is personal, involving contact with those you are serving. Many feel comfortable simply doing Eucharistic Ministry. We will need more people to do that. Doing more at the Pastoral Care level is more challenging. If you would like to be more engaged with this personal ministry at whatever level, we would love you team up with us.

Respectfully submitted,  
Bob Litsinger

## **TECH GUILD**

The Trinity Tech Guild was established in September 2020 to support the technical live streaming needs during the Trinity services on Sunday and other special service events. This small group of volunteers continues to grow going into 2025.



This small group is behind the scenes providing outreach and fellowship to our home-bound congregation through live streaming primarily the Sunday 10am service and other service that may occur (i.e. Funerals, Evensong, etc.)

Each Sunday a tech support person is assigned to power on the system and operate the camera for the best view of our services. The tech support person also is there to monitor the microphones and make any sound adjustments as needed during the service.

The exposure of the Trinity livestream during 2024 has been broad with reaching individuals in over 43 states within the United States and 9 different counties. We have had 785 unique viewers watch our services via live stream during 2024 with over 2000 service views. The livestream network of viewers has increased by 4% this year with most people continue to watch from their home.

The current members of Tech Guild: (2025)

Nancy Matthews, William Oseiwe-Williams, Bob Litsinger, Bill McBride, Justin Rapuano, Harry Wind, Jeff Wojcik

We are always looking for new members who feel comfortable operating a laptop computer and / iPad.

Any questions or interest in volunteering, please contact Jeff Wojcik.

## **ALTAR GUILD**

The Altar Guild is a special lay ministry that cares for the altar, vestments, vessels, and altar linens of the parish. I often have the feeling that I am preparing for a meal with a welcome and cherished guest. We help welcome babies for baptisms. We set up for weddings welcoming guests and fixing details, and we are present to offer comfort and see to the details at funerals and special services for holy days. Afterward we clean up. Normally we do not have barley loaves or small fish, so we make sure bread wafers, wine and grape juice are available during Communion services.

Current members are Helen Anderson, Wendy Carber, Gayle Celentano, Jasmine Delet, Priscilla Knapp, Inez Tokashiki, Carolyn Weeks, Joan Willett and Cora Williams. New members are always needed and welcome. Usually we work about half an hour on Saturday or Sunday between or after services. Schedules are flexible and we accommodate each other. The Altar Guild hopes our work contributes to making worship at Trinity truly meaningful for the congregation.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gayle Celentano

## **FLOWER GUILD**

“Flowers are arranged in churches to make a more beautiful setting for the acts of worship. They bring life and colour to the church and are a continual reminder of the wonder of the natural world created by God. In this way they inspire worship. Those who arrange flowers in church find that it is a most peaceful and satisfying occupation”. These words are taken from the introduction of Flowers in Church by Jean Taylor. The Flower Guild of Trinity Church is inspired and modeled, after the one at the National Cathedral in Washington DC. It has been in existence for well over 25 years and during that time many volunteers have enjoyed their time of service and fellowship while designing flowers for Trinity’s worship services.

Currently, we are a group of 16 who provides flowers for Sunday services and special arrangements for Christmas and Easter. All are welcome to join us—no experience necessary! You will be paired with a leader who will provide instruction. Your commitment is approximately once every three months and everyone’s help is appreciated at the holidays. Volunteering with the Flower Guild is a wonderful way to feel more connected with Trinity.

## **EVENING PRAYER**

Trinity’s Tuesday Evening Prayer began in December 2019 and been in continuous service except for a short break at the start of COVID as the service was transition for the Chapel to Zoom. In the Chapel the attendance was typically 4 or 5. The attendance was limited by the early evening time and time for transportation to and from the service. During COVID attendance on Zoom was typically 10-12 occasionally below ten or sometimes as high as 15 or 16. However, as we moved away from COVID, the attendance has declined and now is in the same range as the Chapel service. Sometimes, the current attendance is as high as 7 and sometimes 3.

However, the nature of the current attendance has changed. It is predominately attended (though not exclusively) by people who are no longer able to attend in person at the Chapel. Those who cannot attend an in person service benefit from the availability of the service, and it will remain on Zoom for now to meet that need. But to be clear, all are invited to attend.

The service is mostly Evening Prayer, but it usually ends with the conclusion of the Compline service. (During certain seasons or services, the normal Evening Prayer ending is used to recognize such occasions.) The scripture reading is confined to the Gospel in order to keep the short to accommodate the busy lives of many people. For the same reason music is not included within the service. However, there are those that have the time and appreciate the music, so, for those who can stay, I share 3-4 hymns related to the Gospel or church season.

If you have 30 minutes, you are welcome to join the service. If you have an addition 10-15 minutes you can stay for music, but you are welcome sign-off if you do not. Just show you know, partly because I like to encourage participation and partly to accommodate to Zoom, I allow and assign prayers and/or reading to others will are willing, although the group is very accepting of participation and when the attendance is high not everyone could have an assignment.

Meanwhile the two people who covered Evening Prayer if I was not available are now productively involve in a different path for God on Tuesday evening and I am look for someone for that coverage. It requires familiarity with Zoom and a willingness to lead the service. I prepare the service document well ahead of the service date.

Respectfully submitted,  
Bob Litsinger

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## ***SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND FORMATION***

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### **ADULT FORMATION**

We didn't want to stop talking, but we needed to leave so that Jeff could lock up. We had promised to end by 12:20. It was 12:25. That's the thing about a good discussion, you want more. When friends get together to explore the Bible, to ask questions, and try to answer them; you don't want to stop. But Jane had to wrap it up and get us out the door. We were at the end of our Advent/Epiphany study. So, we stopped, put on our coats, and then, as we were leaving, someone asked, "So, what's next?"

As I write this report, I don't have an answer. What's next depends on who might volunteer to lead, or co-lead an adult formation group, and, who might be willing to participate in one. And, what if no one comes forward? Then, there is no adult formation at Trinity.

In the Fall of 2024, a group of sixteen parishioners met to explore ways of approaching adult study at Trinity. We came to four basic conclusions and generated a list of possible topics for classes. The conclusions were:

- In person and remote classes have both advantages and disadvantages. We should try both.
- There is not a "natural" time slot on Sundays that allows for scheduling adult classes. We need to be open to other meeting times and places.
- Adult formation at Trinity is not a part of the church "culture," and historically has not been well-attended.
- Finding people willing to lead, co-lead, and/or organize groups is very difficult.

The last of the two conclusions are the most difficult to address. There is a kind of inertia around lack of participation. Would more, and more frequent opportunities for adult education increase participation? If so, where will the leaders come from? Would more people be involved if we tried different times and places to meet; for example, in someone's home, at the library or a park, a restaurant or diner? Are there night owls or early birds who could do Zoom at 11 pm or 6 am? What would work for a group of parents or retirees? Would finding a group lead to finding a leader for that group? And might a group form with everyone taking a turn as leader?

As we discussed the issues the exploratory group thought maybe reluctance to become involved in adult formation grows out of a fear of not knowing what to do or how to do it. If that is the issue there is help available, user friendly guides to almost any topic, usually with questions and talking points.

I've always been involved in adult Christian education, preferably as a participant, but also as a leader. I believe it is an important ministry, absolutely crucial to the life of the church and its spiritual growth. Adult formation creates friendships, it connects us to each other, to our faith, and to our doubts as well. It is a place to ask questions that have no easy answers. It is a place for many voices and abundant laughter.

On Sundays we take our children to Sunday school. We want them to learn together, enjoying what they can learn. Can you imagine telling your child, "I want you know about Jesus so go to your room and read the Bible." Without access to adult formation, we are telling ourselves just that.

I urge all of us in 2025 to find a way to commit to Adult Christian Formation. You don't have to be a Bible scholar or even very familiar with Scripture. What do kids know when they begin? And yet, they show up.

I don't know what is next. Maybe you can answer that question.

### Some Suggestions for Adult Formation

1. A study centered around Lent or Advent.
2. Bible study combined with a meal.
3. Something "to help me read the Bible . . . and understand it."
4. Something about prayer.
5. Read and discuss books related to the church.
6. Scripture as inspiration for art.
7. Informal discussion of weekly lectionary readings
8. Watch and discuss films and videos related to the church.
9. Share discussions related to podcasts.
10. Women and their stories in the Bible.
11. Something about hymns and church music.

12. Understanding Biblical terms/vocabulary.
13. How do we help our children read and understand the Bible?
14. Something on the Creeds.
15. Meaningful conversations: talking about the issues of “the world” through a Christian lens.
16. Reading scripture “through other eyes”

## **MONDAY BASIC BIBLE STUDY**

Basic Bible Study meets online Mondays from 7 to 8pm. No knowledge or preparation is needed. We continue to use readings chosen from “The Path: A Journey Through The Bible” which uncovers the vast, sweeping story of God's extraordinary love for ordinary people. This year we focused on Jesus’ life. We ended the year with the Holy Spirit being with the disciples as they continue God’s work. Some topics we explored and discussed were:

- Sermon on the Mount (We watched “The Chosen’s” portrayal of the event. We looked at how the sermon is structured into 3 major parts.
- Jesus’ teaching through parables
  - Did you know that Vincent Van Gogh has a painting “The Good Samaritan”? <https://www.vincentvangogh.org/the-good-samaritan.jsp>
- Disciples: Mattias, Peter, John, Stephen, Philip, Saul/Paul

Besides reading the Bible, we enjoy looking at how artists have interpreted these stories and listening to music. We encourage you to look at a current artist we discovered, Yongsung Kim, <https://yongsungkimart.com/>.

Please join us any Monday evening you are free! We would love to have you!

Submitted by Kristina Van Name

## **GROWING YOUNG**

The Growing Young Team has continued its work in strengthening the involvement of our youth in the Parish community, as well as offering more Intergenerational events to foster stronger relationships throughout our membership. Sandy Hay, Patrick Louie, Michelle Seaman, Sarah Senno, Kristina Van Name and Jeff Wojcik make up our team and are committed to involving and retaining young people within our congregation.

We began the 2024-2025 School Year with a Youth Volunteer Fair to help encourage our youth to become more involved in Parish Ministries. As a result, our children’s and youth choirs are growing, each of our Children’s Sunday School classrooms has a youth volunteer every week, and we have several youths who regularly volunteer to serve as acolytes, lectors and ushers. Our younger classes can also be seen in church helping with

the gifts and partaking in communion. In addition, we instituted a Middle School Team Recognition Program, which encourages and incentivizes our Middle School students to volunteer in Parish Ministries and Trinity Service Events.

Our first Intergenerational Service Event of the 2024-2025 School Year was held in October and was a huge success. More than 50 Trinity members of all ages worked together on various service projects for the community. Our next Intergenerational Service Event will be held in February and will feature honoring Trinity Scout members, as well as service projects for the community.

With our youth growing stronger bonds amongst each other and Trinity, we are excited to report that they are requesting that Trinity host a youth retreat. We plan on hosting a local youth retreat this Spring, and we are excited that several youths are also interested in attending an overnight retreat sponsored by the Episcopal Diocese of NJ to St John the Divine in NYC in February. We hope to expand our retreat program even further in the next school year, and that it will become a Trinity tradition for our youth.

There are three continuing initiatives that are still in development. The first is an Intergenerational Bible Study. Our goal is to periodically invite a few adults within the congregation to join the Middle School and High School students during their Sunday Morning Gathering to have a shared Bible Study.

Our second initiative encompasses youth involvement and bringing young people into leadership roles. The Youth Volunteer Fair and the High School and Middle School Recognition Programs have directly contributed to the empowerment of our youth to volunteer in Parish Ministries. While these youths have become leaders amongst their peers, we would also like more youth in leadership roles within Trinity. The addition of Patrick Louie to our team has been enlightening and our goal is to ask additional youths to join the Growing Young Team, and to look for other opportunities for youth leadership roles within the congregation.

Our final initiative is to develop a Mentorship Program. With an initial draft of ideas already in hand, we intend to create a written description for this initiative and to pilot the Mentorship Program in the fall of 2025.

The Growing Young Team is proud of the growing involvement of Trinity Youth and looks forward to continuing to strengthen the bonds formed between our young people and the Trinity community.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Michelle Seaman

## CHILDREN AND YOUTH CHRISTIAN FORMATION

We are excited to report that there have been several enhancements to our Children and Youth Christian Formation Program. In July of 2024, Michelle Seaman accepted the newly created position of Director of Children's and Youth Ministries and immediately started working toward an integrated Children's and Youth Christian Formation Program.

Mother Emily foresaw that to be successful, Trinity's Children and Youth Ministries would need additional volunteers. We are blessed to report that through her efforts, 9 additional Trinity members volunteered to be teachers and substitute teachers. We now have a substitute teacher list, and a leader ensuring that every class has adequate coverage on Sundays.

With the addition of new teachers, we have been able to re-establish a PreK classroom for 3–4-year-olds, which has up to 8 children attending. Ingrid Wolfe, Kerstin Dolan, and Barb McDonnell all serve as teachers to our new PreK class on a rotating schedule. The Nursery, which is led by Lauren Ramirez, does not often have many children in attendance, since the children are now going to the PreK class. We often combine the Nursery and PreK classes to create a more enriching environment for the younger children.

Our Welcome to Communion Class, led by Holly Pearson, is now a two-year program to allow more time for the children to fully understand the sacrament of Communion. Children begin the class in Kindergarten and have their Holy Communion Celebration as a first grader. In May of 2025, we will have 5 first grade students receive Communion, and 4 Kindergarteners who are preparing for next year. The Welcome to Communion Class joins worship service to observe Communion on the first two Sundays of every month. On the second two Sundays, Holly leads Chapel for our PreK – 3rd grade students. In Chapel, the children participate in a mini version of church, where they learn a bible lesson, sing songs, and take turns performing acolyte roles.

Our 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> grade class has up to 12 children attending and is led by Jen Shappell. You will see her class during Church on the first three Sundays of every month presenting the gifts and participating in Communion. On the last Sunday of every month, the 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> grade class attends Chapel with the rest of the Primary Department.

Kristina Van Name leads our upper elementary 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade class, which has up to 6 children in attendance. She leads a dedicated group of kids who participate in Choir, volunteer as classroom assistants, and serve as acolytes and lectors.

Our Middle School class consists of up to 12 students and is led by Jeff Wojcik, Carolyn Weeks and Scott Hart. This school year we created a Middle School Team Recognition

Program, which encourages and incentivizes our Middle School students to attend Morning Gathering and to volunteer in Parish Ministries and Trinity Service Events. Sandy Hay, Joan Dighton, and Dr. Stella Horton lead our High School class. The changes we made to our Confirmation program last school year have been well received. Students now receive the sacrament of Confirmation in 11<sup>th</sup> grade by earning it through attending Morning Gathering and volunteering in Parish Ministries and Trinity Service Events. While all 4 of our active students are currently in 10<sup>th</sup> grade and will not be receiving Confirmation in 2025, one of them has already earned enough points to receive Confirmation next year, and the other 3 students are more than halfway towards earning it.

To improve communication with parents, a monthly Children and Youth Newsletter has been established and is emailed to all parents. This newsletter provides details on upcoming children and youth events, as well as a classroom update on every class that informs parents about the lessons being taught. The Remind App has also been launched to improve communication.

We have organized many enriching events for our Children's and Youth Ministries during the 2024-2025 school year. So far this school year, children and youth have participated in the Blessing of the Backpacks, Intergenerational Service Sunday, and the Christmas Pageant. Our youth also participated in a Youth Volunteer Fair and a Service Sunday to make dog treats for the Blessing of the Animals.

Looking ahead to the rest of this school year, the Primary Department will be given a Black History Presentation in Chapel, and they will participate in a Baptismal Workshop. Trinity youth will soon be choosing a specific service project to complete with the Primary Department. Our youth will also participate in several additional Service Events, and we will host a local Trinity Youth Retreat.

We have seen growth in both the number of volunteers helping in our Children and Youth Ministries, and also in the number of active families. The addition of an online Sunday School Registration Form has made it easier for families to register and has improved communication. Since September of 2024, we have had 3 new families register and regularly attend on Sundays.

All of us involved in Children and Youth Ministries are very excited for the growth we have seen, for the dedication of Trinity's families, and for what the future holds. If you are interested in joining our teacher volunteers in a truly enriching and rewarding ministry, please contact Michelle Seaman at [mseaman@trinitymoorestown.org](mailto:mseaman@trinitymoorestown.org).

Respectfully submitted,  
Michelle Seaman



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## *SERVING GOD IN THE COMMUNITY*

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### **OUTREACH COMMISSION**

This report is to highlight the Outreach Commission's activities in 2024, which was a year of continued support for those in need in our broader community. Trinity continued to support activities such as Project Interaction, the Cathedral Kitchen, and Sacred Heart School in Camden; the Christian Caring Center in Browns Mill; Family Promise in Burlington County. The Commission coordinated sandwich-making on a regular basis for Project Interaction and the Cathedral Kitchen and continued to serve meals to residents in Camden. Finally, the Commission coordinated coat drive in December 2024 and a school supply drive in August 2024.

Before getting to the heart of what the Outreach Commission does, it should be noted that much of the Commission's efforts are related to finding funds to help those in need. 2024 found the Commission challenged to fund its efforts because Outreach funds largely have been limited to the monthly pew envelopes, which income is insufficient to support long-term efforts to help those in need. The Outreach Commission raised only about \$8,000 and needs income from additional sources. Your continued support of our efforts are greatly appreciated We feel so fulfilled by your profound generosity. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

The Outreach Commission contributes to Trinity by providing increasingly limited opportunities for parishioners to volunteer to feed those in need. However, those who participate in the Commission's activities find indisputable joy in helping others and doing so together. As we all know, it is better to give than to receive and those who receive financial and volunteer giving by the Commission end up with food in their belly. They also witness God's love in action. For me, this ministry provides a respite from all the daily bad news and division and a joyful sense of togetherness. The Commission and the church as a whole would benefit from having new members and new ideas to share Trinity's love with those who may not have been as fortunate as we collectively have. All it takes is a couple hours each month or every other month.

In 2025, the Commission hopes to continue its work locally in Burlington County, including helping the homeless in Browns Mill. We also plan to keep feeding and helping those in need in the City of Camden. All of the parishioners' efforts, and new members' help, will provide an opportunity in 2025, to do God's work and receive God's blessings.

Finally, Bruce Velzy stepped down as Outreach Commission chairperson at the end of 2024 and Janet Murray became the new Outreach Commission chair. She is a past Outreach chairperson and will bring her joy and commitment to the less fortunate in 2025 and guide us in those efforts.

Yours in Christ,  
Bruce Velzy

### **GOD'S DIVERSITY COMMITTEE**

During the year the Diversity Committee produces articles and prayers on influential Americans or groups of Americans who are challenged by ancestry or societal issues for publication in the Weekly News from September until May. They sometimes prepare bulletin boards and displays, and work with the Sunday School to promote cultural understanding. One or more times a year we extend our efforts with a Sunday morning event or presentation.

In 2024 we produced 25 articles or prayers for the Weekly News, but the highlight of the year for us was the visit and sermon of Reverend Wenda Clark and the joyous Black History food.

We look forward to this year's Underground Railroad Tour which Maris Williams organized with our blessing, and for which we are very thankful. We have several additional ideas for other Sunday morning experiences in 2025.

Respectfully submitted,  
Bob Litsinger

### **PRESCHOOL**

The first half of 2024 our enrollment was full with seventy students in seven different classes. We were busy with Lunch Bunch every day and a variety of enrichment classes after school. Our Pizza Night in May was packed with fun and the children laughed in delight and were fully engaged with our entertainment: Brian Richard's Magical Show. May was also busy with Mother's Day Teas – the children got very excited about making gifts for their mothers. In June the families were invited to our Steppin' Up Day celebration with songs, skits and certificates for all.

June and July brought five weeks of Summer Fun programs. We held three weeks of Science Fun followed with two weeks of Christian fun. Our shade canopy helped with the hot sun while the children were outside. July and August were also busy with touch up

painting throughout the school and a fresh coat for the blue room bathroom. Thank you, Jim Johnson, for your help with the painting.

September was somewhat discouraging with fewer students enrolled. The other two Christian schools in town were experiencing the same situation. We believe the cause to be more preschool programs starting up in the public schools. Although we brought in more students during the fall, the school enrollment was not full.

After twenty-five years as the Preschool Director, I made it official in November. I submitted my letter to the Preschool Board with the intention to retire June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025. The same letter was submitted to the Vestry in December. I have been blessed to have worked at the church I love so much and develop a loving, Christian environment for young children. It's made my heart happy over the years when I've seen preschool families join our church or attend our services. I thank all Clergy, Preschool Board members as well as Vestry members both past and present that have supported me along the way. This has been a most wonderful journey for me.

Gratefully,  
Nancy M. Johnson, Preschool Director

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## ***GROWING IN RELATIONSHIP***

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### **WELCOME COMMITTEE**

As a member of the Welcoming Committee, I feel that it is important to welcome newcomers. A simple greeting and introduction is all we as a congregation need to do if we notice a new face. Also, remembering their names helps. Inviting a newcomer to coffee hour (even though Emily may mention it in the announcements) can help. If we are lucky enough for them to come back the following week, consider reaching out to them at coffee hour. It has been noticeable that new people tend to stand by themselves during the coffee hour, which can't feel welcoming.

We can work together as a team. During coffee hour, instead of socializing with those we know, perhaps we can spare a few minutes to chat with newcomers. If I am hosting coffee hour, I would be unable to take the time to greet new people. I could sure use the help. Accumulating new parishioners makes me feel that we are moving forward. It helps Trinity grow and last for many years to come. That is what my ministry means to me. I invite anyone interested to join the Welcoming Team.

Respectfully submitted,  
Barb McDonnell

## PARISH LIFE

In 2024 the Trinity community has stepped-up and been amazing. This past year we continue to look for new opportunities and traditions to get together. Many of you have been stepping up with ideas and volunteering to support events at Trinity. We have over +50 people in our congregation that have signed up to volunteer. Your energy is infectious and fuels our efforts to welcome, embrace, nurture and grow our Parish community. However, there are a few individuals that need to be recognized for their volunteer efforts to make Trinity a vibrant community.

Don Smith: Who has consistently been involved in helping support many events at Trinity to ensure we have what we need to run a successful event.

Liz Louie: Who continues to stay active after her wardenship, supporting coffee hour, BB Festival, and various other events where we need volunteers & leaders.

Lisa Yeh/Julie Bathke: These two individuals have re-energized our coffee hour during fellowship by establishing a new team approach, enabling more groups/people to be part of this fellowship offering.

Bill McBride, Joe McDonnell, Priscella Knapp, Barbara Benton who are behind the scenes individuals who have demonstrated the importance of volunteering

Going into 2025, we are excited about the continued activities and events which are planned:

- Monthly Community Service: Sandwich making & Breakfast at St Paul's
- Bingo Nights: Spring (3/29) and Fall (TBD)
- Outdoor Movie Night: May
- Blueberry Festival: 6/20
- Annual Parish Picnic: Sept
- Halloween Tour/Movie: Oct
- Caroling Party: Dec
- Holiday Market Place Events: Nov/Dec
- Holiday Movie Night: Dec
- Sunday's Fellowship & coffee hour between and after services

And ongoing support for various collections/special requests and last-minute activities. We look forward to an exciting Parish life this coming year at Trinity.

Thank You  
Jeff Wojcik

## TRINITY PAGE BRIGADE

The Trinity Page Brigade usually meets on the last Wednesday of the month at 7pm via zoom. We have an optional Facebook group. Information is shared through Facebook, as well as email. We decide as a group what to read each month.

Below is what we read this year. Titles in bold are two of the group's favorite books from the year. Books with stars are other books that left a mark on some members. One of our members reflected that "many of this year's selections opened my eyes to more deeply understand issues I'd known about but not in any detail."

- Take My Hand by Dolen Perkins-Valdez
- The Pull of the Stars by Emma Donoghue
- \*The Watchmaker's Daughter: The True Story of WWII Heroine Corrie ten Boom by Larry Loftis - A woman who saved the lives of Jews - at the cost of losing her family and being sent to a concentration camp, only to survive, forgive her captors, and live the rest of her life as a Christian missionary.
- \*Islands of Abandonment: Nature Rebounding in the Post-Human Landscape by Cal Flyn - a new way of looking at "wastelands."
- **Remarkably Bright Creatures by Shelby Van Pelt** - a charming and witty exploration of friendship, reckoning, and hope that traces a widow's unlikely connection with a giant Pacific octopus.
- \*The Berry Pickers by Amanda Peters - A 4yd old Mi'kmaq girl goes missing from the blueberry fields of Maine, sparking a mystery that will haunt the survivors, unravel a family, and remain unsolved for nearly fifty years.
- Before the Coffee Gets Cold by Toshikazu Kawaguchi
- Great Circle by Maggie Shipstead
- **James by Percival Everett** - A reimagining of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* told from the enslaved Jim's point of view.
- Small Things Like These by Claire Keegan
- Christmas Jars by Jason F. Wright.

There are 5 of us that participate regularly, including a parishioner that moved to Florida and a new member this year. We hope you join us sometime this year and invite a friend or two!

Submitted by Kristina Van Name

## **TRINITY BOOK CLUB**

This Book Club has been meeting on the 3rd Friday of every month throughout the year at 1pm since its founding in 1999. We now meet in the Parish Hall, or outdoors, weather permitting. However, it has undergone numerous changes throughout the years. For various reasons since the end of the pandemic, attendance has decreased to a few committed and faithful members who love to read and enjoy discussing books. Each month, a new book (any author or genre) is chosen for the next meeting. The person recommending the book leads the next month's discussion. We expand our knowledge, interests and enjoy each other's company. If interested, you are welcome to join us. We look forward to seeing you.

Jackie Whitfield

## **MEN'S GROUP**

The Men's Group continues its programs of monthly breakfasts and speakers. Speaker topics in 2024 included a discussion with representatives from the Moorestown Police Department on local policing issues and a crash-course in singing the bass line in our hymnal, led by Trinity Organist Vernon Williams.

Beyond our monthly breakfasts, Men's Group members have been pleased to serve as Coffee Hour hosts on the first Sunday of most months, assisted at other parish events including the Mother's Day Breakfast and the Blueberry Festival, and formulated the plan for installation of a new sign reserving for the disabled the two on-street parking spots in front of the tower on Main Street.

We have had some new members join and have had as many as 17 attendees at the regular breakfasts. We look forward to continued fellowship and strong programming in 2025.

Faithfully yours,

Rafael Declet, Bruce Lovejoy, and Roy Shubert, for the Trinity Men's Group

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## *CARING FOR GOD'S GIFTS*

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### **ENDOWMENT FUND**

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of the Endowment Fund is five-fold:

- To assume financial responsibility for the physical assets of the parish and to provide a permanent source of funds for their maintenance and preservation from Endowment Fund income and appreciation.
- To contribute to the parish programs a portion of the investment income not required for the above objective, as determined by the Vestry.
- To ensure the preservation of the purchasing power of prior gifts to the fund by adherence to a prudent investment policy.
- To provide a source of contingency funds for use in the event of a major financial emergency.
- To recognize and record the terms of grants and bequests that specify the purpose for which principal and/or income may be directed.

#### **Objective:**

To achieve a growth of income and principal on investments that will preserve the real purchasing power of the fund, while providing a predictable and constant cash flow while adhering to sound investment guidelines.

#### **Highlights of Operations:**

For equity holdings, the market was up over 10% by mid-March, 2024 but lost 6% in the ensuing month or so before rebounding to be +18.5% by early July. The roller coaster ride continued as the S&P 500 dipped over the summer only to bounce back to be up almost 30% by Thanksgiving before a mild sell-off the last 4-5 weeks to finish up 25% for the year. On the fixed income front, the Federal Reserve reduced their benchmark rate by ½% in September with two additional ¼% cuts before year-end for a total reduction of 1% to a range of 4.25%-4.5%. However, the Aggregate bond index was very volatile most of the year losing about 3% by mid-April, staging a rebound to +5% by early September and then declining the remainder of the year to finish at a weak +1.3% for the year.

Short-term investments (high-yield money market funds) were among the best options and rates continue to be in the 3.75-4.47% range.

Even with the bit of volatility in the markets over the course of the year coupled with the pending fall elections and a Congress that kept pushing the envelope with the debt ceiling issue, the Endowment Fund did have a reasonable gain net of fees of about 15.7% before distributions. The total equity portion of our portfolio increased slightly to between 69-72% with the allocation to US stocks at about 83% and international stocks at 17% of the equity portion. The higher slant to US equities vs. International equities proved correct again as the S&P 500 index gained 25% vs. the MSCI EAFE index gain of only 4.35%. Our fixed income allocation rose slightly to about 26% and cash dipped to 2%.

Our Endowment income consisted of interest and dividends amounting to about \$56,600, down slightly from the 2023 figure. The net realized and unrealized gain for the entire Endowment Fund was about \$331,000, or 13.8% of our beginning of year portfolio value. The Fund contributed \$282,454, or about 11.8% of our beginning of the year balance, towards the church's ongoing operations and annual diocesan payment. Our normal budgeted support of operations is 6% of the previous rolling 12 quarters which came to about \$172,800.

Following is a summary of the Endowment Fund for 2024:

Balance, 12/31/23	\$ 2,388,914
Additions:	
Interest/dividends	\$ 56,586
Net realized & unrealized gains	\$ 330,944
Withdrawals/deductions:	
Used toward church property/expenses	(\$ 282,454)
Portfolio management expenses	(\$ 17,939)
Balance, 12/31/24	<u>\$ 2,476,051</u>

### **Outlook for 2025**

- Inflation has continued to decline and the year-over-year rate as of December 31 was 2.9%. The Federal Reserve continues to monitor and since the rate did tick up about 22 basis points in December, they are being a bit more cautious in lowering interest rates until they determine the rate is closer to their target range of between 2 & 3%



on a more consistent basis. The recent comments regarding interest rates seem to indicate that there might only be two or possibly three adjustments (down) in 2025 but economic conditions and inflation will be their guide.

- It is unclear at this point as to what the economic horizon will be like once some of the planned cuts in government expenses, the imposition of tariffs (or increases on existing ones) and the possible deportation of undocumented individuals will have on the economy in general.
- Dividends will continue to play a role in the period ahead along with higher interest rates than in the years prior to 2022. The larger increases in the S&P Index the past two years was largely attributed to the “Magnificent Seven” which is comprised of Apple, Broadcom, Nvidia, Facebook (now Meta), Tesla, Google and Amazon. With the new ‘kid’ on the block, “AI”, we could see yet another significant equity return in 2025 but caution signs could become more prominent. We will be keeping close tabs on the events as they occur and make necessary adjustments to protect our Endowment Fund.

Respectfully submitted,  
Roy A. Shubert, Chairman

## **PLANNED GIVING**

The Planned Giving Committee was formed 3 years ago and our initial focus was on updating the Trinity website and educating Trinity parishioners on options for charitable giving, some of which provide tax advantages like Qualified Charitable Distributions if one is over 70 ½, or Donor Advised Funds if one is not, or donations of appreciated securities for any age. Two years ago, we sent out letters to encourage long time parishioners to remember Trinity in their Wills, and this year we brought in an attorney to speak about how to do so. We also formally thanked everyone this year who has let us know that they have remembered Trinity in their estate plans and gave them a small gift. We are very appreciative of the many Trinity parishioners who have remembered Trinity in their Wills or through other estate plans. If you are interested in learning more about tax advantaged giving options (a win for you, and a win for Trinity) or planned gifts to help provide for Trinity’s vitality into the future, please inquire!

Respectfully submitted,  
Lisa Yeh

## STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

The theme for Stewardship this year was the vibrant and energetic Trinity community. Trinity made substantial progress toward a sustainable budget in 2024 by increasing income and decreasing expenses. The decrease in expenditures was largely accomplished through staff reductions which forced a greater reliance on volunteers in order to maintain the Trinity programs we so enjoy. The Trinity community stepped up and Trinity is thriving and energetic and growing. Thanks everyone!

Requests went out to the entire congregation in the middle of October launching the stewardship campaign and recounting the vitality and richness as we gather on a Sunday morning with the bustling Sunday school, strong youth classes, intergenerational leadership in worship, wondrous music, warm conversations at “coffee hour”, and deep prayer. Trinity relies on the stewardship campaign to raise the funds needed to support our operating expenses. Despite the financial challenges, Trinity is thriving and nourishes our joy and gratitude. Pledges were requested to be returned to Trinity by October 27, 2024.

As of December 31, 2024, Trinity has received a total of \$436,034.28 from 138 pledge cards. This is about constant compared to December 31, 2023. 58 of these pledges increased their financial commitment above their last year's amount. This is a 15% increase in giving from these households above last year. 19 households decreased their 2025 pledge. We had 11 new households complete pledge cards, and we have not received pledges from 9 households that had pledged for 2024. Total giving from all households completing a card as of December 31, 2024 is \$436,034.28.

Thank you for all the generous financial commitments made by parishioners for 2025 and the increase in giving from so many families. Welcome to the Trinity community to all the new households. Thank you for being a part of our vibrant and energetic Trinity community!

Thanks also to the volunteers who helped Mother Emily plan this year’s stewardship campaign and shared their stories about the vibrant Trinity community: Molly Wiltshire, William Oseiwe-Williams, Lisa Yeh, David Douglass, Sandi Rapp, and Julie Bathke. We ask you all to continue to support us as we continue on this journey of making Trinity more fiscally responsible while also enabling an even more vibrant and joyful Trinity community.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lisa Yeh

## 2024 PLEDGES

The congregation thanks all of our generous donors throughout 2024. Special thanks goes to all those who made a pledged commitment to help sustain Trinity Church in 2024:

Ferrill Alderfer	Jeffrey Gola and Linda Cecil
Helen Anderson	Jennifer Gotthelf
Thomas and Janet Bader	Christine Hallam
Jeff and Cathy Bailey	Scott Hart and Amy Sprague
Michael and Julia Bathke	Richard and Sandra Hay
Barbara Benton	Susan Hogan
Kevin Berry	Al and Carol Hoinsky
John Bradley and Camille Introcaso	Stella Horton
John and Elizabeth Brennan	Edward Hughes
Patrick and Nancy Brennan	Ronnie and William Hughes
David and Teresa Britton	James and Nancy Johnson
Michael Bulboff and Lauren Marlowe	Jeffrey and Nancy Johnson
Cecilia Campolucci	Priscilla Knapp
Len and Wendy Carber	Peter Knerr
Cathryn Carroll	Mark and Suzanne Leis
Linda Carson	Loretta Johns Lill and Bob Lill
Gayle Celentano	Shelley Lippincott
Donald and Nancy Chambers	Robert Litsinger
Ken and Aimee Chojnacki	Gregory and Elizabeth Louie
Donald and Simone Cochrane	Bruce and Beverly Lovejoy
Gregory and Esther Cole	Mark and Kisha Mann
Robert and Robin Crowl	Edward and Jan Marcinkevich
Rafael and Jasmine Decllet	Chris and Nancy Matthews
Brian and Deb Della Rosa	William and Stacy McBride
Janet DeVry	Joseph and Barbara McDonnell
Joan and John Dighton	Thomas and Cathy McGarry
David and Carol Donachy	Stephen and JoAnna Meader
Sean and Birgitta Donato	Emily Mellott
David and Karen Douglass	Abigail Merk
Mark Kozielec and Charles Doyle	Jean Mervine
Robin and James Dryden	Margaret Mikuta
Wayne and Kathleen Farren	John Miller
Sarah Fawcett-Lee and Jason Lee	Maureen Moorer
Kevin and Elizabeth Field	James Morley and Anne Dalesandro
Peter and Claudia Fletcher	Janet Murray
Richard and Alberta Fuller	Polly Murray
Barbara and James Gattinella	Jayne Oasin
Glenn and Lisa George	William and Yvonne Oseiwe-Williams

Alanna Osterhout  
Elizabeth Park and Timothy Pelletreau  
Edwin and Hollis Pearson  
Esther Pearson  
Anthony and Kathleen Perez  
Jeanette Peterson  
Edward and Linda Pfister  
Thomas Pine  
John and Barbara Potter  
Emily Provie  
Linda Ralls  
Lauren Ramirez  
Richard and Sandi Rapp  
David and Lori Rapuano  
Joan Reid  
Harry and Victoria Rice  
Brian and Helen Richards  
Charles Robinson  
Lorraine Ryan and Joseph Tufaro  
John Salmon Jr.  
Sandra Say  
Edith Scharf  
Williams and Cecilia Schmidt  
Michael and Michelle Seaman  
Todd and Sarah Senno  
David and Jane Shaw  
Roy and Lydia Shubert  
Donald Smith  
Gerri Smith  
Michael and Megan Smith  
Craig and Amy Snodgrass

Matthew and Tammy Solitro  
Joseph and Kathryn Staudenmayer  
Jerry Steinberg  
Beverly Stevenson  
David and Susan Taylor  
Ronald and Norene Taylor  
Elizabeth Thomas  
Jean Thompson  
Joseph and Suzanne Tibbels  
Inez Tokashiki  
Daniel Topolski  
Michael and Kristina Van Name  
Bruce and Sharon Velzy  
Kathleen Veston  
Carolyn Weeks  
Mick and Julie Weeks  
Jackie Whitfield  
Joan Willett  
Cora Williams  
Vernon and Maris Williams  
Molly Wiltshire  
Harry and Diana Wind  
Angela and Michael Winterrowd  
Robert Winzler  
Brian and Alyssa Wojcik  
Jeff and Susan Wojcik  
Ingrid Wolfe  
James Wolfe  
Elsa Wood  
Lisa Yeh  
Steven and Jennifer Yocum

We give thanks to God for all of our generous donors. If you thought you had made a pledged commitment for 2024, but don't see your name above, please contact Gia Grosso at (856) 235-0811 or at [ggrosso@trinitymoorestown.org](mailto:ggrosso@trinitymoorestown.org), so that we can correct our omission. Thanks!

## CAPITAL CAMPAIGN AND PROJECTS COMMITTEE

The Campaign for Trinity began in 2021 with a promise to *Make Trinity Stronger and More Welcoming for All*. As we close out the 4th year of our 5-year campaign, we can celebrate the many ways we have accomplished this goal! We have one year left for fundraising and project expenditures, and several exciting projects coming up in 2025. The upcoming projects may be among the most visible of our projects, but all of the work has been essential to strengthening our buildings and congregation. **Many thanks to all of the donors whose generous support is making this work possible, and if anyone would like to add new support to the campaign that would be great!**

If you were not here when the campaign started and would like to join the campaign now, your donation would be appreciated.

### High-level results:

Total Income Received as of 12/31/2024	\$1,187,267
Total Expenditures as of 12/31/2024	<u>\$974,000</u>
Current Balance	\$213,267
Expenses by category:	
Projects (details at end)	\$761,476
Fundraising	\$108,399
Donations to ECS and Community Grants	\$104,125

### Upcoming Projects for 2025:

- **Improve lighting system in church:** one goal of this project is to eliminate dark areas in the sanctuary so that it is easier for everyone to read by replacing the lights within the current fixtures (no change to appearance of light fixtures). The other goal is to eliminate the need to use 17 (!) switches to control the lights. This project will begin in January 2025.
- **Refinish Parish Hall doors:** Soon the doors from the garden into the parish hall will look as beautiful as the church doors! The doors will be refinished, the leaded windows in the doors will be restored, and the rusted hinges will be replaced. This project is underway and expected to be completed in January or February.
- **Make the parish hall accessible** for people using wheelchairs and walkers: after several years of planning, input from architects, and evaluation of alternative approaches, the vestry decided that the most feasible solution is to adapt the entrance from the parking lot into the school building for wheelchairs. A foldable lift will run up the stairs to transport a person in a wheelchair or a seat. This project is underway and expected to be completed by February or March.

- **Renovate the parish hall and restrooms:** These projects are in the design phase by our architects and we hope construction will start in the Spring of 2025:
  - The single restroom at the top of the parish hall stairs will be replaced with 2 separate restrooms, utilizing the storage room hidden next to the restroom. One restroom will be accessible to people using wheelchairs.
  - A storage room will be created where we currently store the tables and chairs so that they are out of sight yet accessible for use.
  - The “serving kitchen” will be transformed into an attractive and more usable area for buffets and small gatherings, while still meeting our needs for work space.
  - The main parish hall and conference room will be painted and the floors refinished.

### **Deferred Projects:**

There are two projects in our original plans that we may not be able to do with the current campaign funds: **air conditioning the parish hall and refurbishments to the office space**. Our current projection is that we may use up all of the income on the other projects.

We have never had a good estimate of what it will cost to air condition the parish hall. The original budget was \$50,000, whereas an engineering firm gave us an estimate of \$600,000 this year. It is hard to make a convincing argument that we should spend \$600,000 for air conditioning, but we also think we can get it for a lower price. We are still pursuing bids from contractors, and we need to wait and see how the overall budget works out after the current projects. So for now this project is on hold. The upgrades to the office are necessary, so those will be moved to the annual capital budget to be done over time.

**Outreach Projects:**

Ten percent of Capital Campaign proceeds (expected to be \$130,000) is earmarked for outreach, with half supporting Episcopal Community Services and half supporting other local charitable organizations. The Trinity Outreach Commission established a grant process and disbursed \$52,000 in community grants to the following organizations:

- \$17,000 to Christian Caring Center to replace roof and windows on shelter building
- \$12,000 to Food Bank of South Jersey for HVAC system for new Community Training Room
- \$9,500 to MEND for building repairs
- \$8,500 to Cathedral Kitchen for gate motor replacement
- \$5,000 to Fishes and Loaves for a refrigerator

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Matthews, Warden & Don Smith, Property Committee Chair

**Project Expense Details to date:**

Sprinkler & Fire Alarm System	\$161,589
Air Conditioners	\$141,695
212 West 2nd St. Renovations	\$91,072
School Bldg leaking	\$86,620
Accessibility Project	\$59,301
Fire-safe Stairwell	\$46,542
Parish Hall renovations	\$27,200
Landscaping	\$19,569
Refinish doors	\$18,770
Repair Walkways/steps	\$18,201
School A/C & Windows	\$10,802
Church Lighting	\$10,663
Architect & Engineering Costs	\$59,433
Consulting fees - Projects	\$10,018

**PROPERTY COMMITTEE**

With the elimination of the full time Sexton position in February 2024 the Property Committee needed to reorganize many routine operations of the parish. First, we needed to engage a company to keep our facility clean, Next, we searched and hired someone as a Part Time Handyman to help with repair projects around the Campus.

The Committee spent many hours working with and then reviewing information from HBA and Princeton Engineering on the Parish Hall Renovations.

We signed a lease with a Cottage Baker to rent our Kitchen on a part-time basis. We then needed to update some of the electrical service in the kitchen to accommodate the tenants needs.

We then needed to do some repairs and upgrades to the house at 212 W 2<sup>nd</sup> St to enable us to rent the property. We entered into an agreement with Family Promise of Burlington County to lease the house. They help families who are struggling financially to get back on their feet, so it fits with the mission of Trinity. This rental generates \$21,600. of income for our operating budget and reduced our utility expenses that Trinity absorbed while the Sexton resided there.

The building security system was replaced including an electronic lock so we could better control access to the building. We rekeyed and replaced many of the interior door locks to simplify the number of keys necessary and to increase building security. We researched the best option for ADA access into the Parish Hall and entered into an agreement with Mobility One to install a chairlift on the stairs in the school building. The installation should be completed soon. We also had an automatic door opening system installed on the double glass doors into the building.

With the decision to sell the property at 214-16 W2nd St work has been ongoing to have the lot subdivided so we can retain the part of the lot that the school playground occupies. We are scheduled for the February 6<sup>th</sup> Planning Board Meeting and will hopefully be granted the subdivision and can then move forward with the sale of the property.

Research and planning were completed, and we entered into an agreement to upgrade the church lighting. When completed, shadows and dark areas should be eliminated. Lighting of the choir and Altar will be much improved, and controls will be high tech. The work has now started and should be completed soon.

Some improvements and upgrades that have been completed include repairs and repainting of the back wall in the lower level of the school building that were water damaged from the water intrusion problem we repaired in 2022. We completed the replacement of all the stair treads in the school building. In the hallway in the lower level next to the Guild room, the hallway lights have been rewired so you can turn the lights on or off from either end of the hallway.

Respectfully Submitted  
Nancy Matthews, John Dighton, Don Smith



## GARDEN ANGELS

Gardening connects us to life's natural rhythms, the gifts of each season, the wonder of creation and the natural world. 2024 was a joyful year for Trinity's Garden Angels; we weeded, planted, and pruned – and maintained our beautiful outdoor spaces for everyone to enjoy.

Nature's abundance has kept us busy, with Saturday morning gardening sessions held monthly. Only in January and February do we rest. Soon, we will be back in action, tidying up winter debris, cutting back the ornamental grasses, dividing perennials, and pruning plants with loving care.

This winter, you may have noticed that some of our flower beds look “untended.” This is intentional! Leaving parts of our gardens untended provides a habitat for wildlife. By refraining from a full garden cleanup, we can offer birds, insects, and small mammals a safe place to find food, shelter, and overwintering sites. This not only supports local biodiversity but also creates a healthier, more resilient garden come spring.

Fallen leaves create a natural mulch that insulates plant roots, helps retain moisture and provides rich nutrients to the soil. Leaves also provide essential habitat for wildlife. Insects such as moths, butterflies, and beetles often lay their eggs in leaf litter, where the larvae will remain protected throughout the winter. Birds and small mammals also rely on leaf litter to find food. Earthworms and spiders live in the leaves and provide a rich food source for birds. By keeping some leaves on the ground, we are looking after God's creatures and providing a vital source of nourishment for them. We hope you will consider doing the same thing in your own gardens at home.

Soon, we will have a large compost bin (nestled in a hidden corner in the graveyard) where we can recycle garden waste to provide our plants with the essential elements they need. Many thanks to Don Smith and John Dighton for helping to find a solution for our garden waste needs.

In 2024, 8 volunteers were active throughout the year including Ken Chojnacki, Cecelia Schmidt, Bill McBride, Joe and Barbara MacDonald, Dianna Wind, Lois Janney and me. You do not have to be a knowledgeable gardener to join us! In fact, becoming a Garden Angel is a great way to learn about basic gardening and get close to nature. If you'd like to get email alerts about our monthly work sessions, please contact me at 410-350-9075 or [sfawcettlee@gmail.com](mailto:sfawcettlee@gmail.com).

Sarah Fawcett-Lee  
Chief Garden Angel

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## VALEDICTION

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### NECROLOGY

*We offer our prayers for the following members of our community who have died in the past year.*

Jane Acaster  
Helen Henry  
Maricel Herrera

John Murray  
Schuyler Osterhout  
Lois Shamer

Gerri Smith  
Jerry Steinberg  
Elvy Williams

*Father of all, we pray to you for those we love, but see no longer. Grant them your peace; let light perpetual shine upon them; and, in your loving wisdom and almighty power, work in them the good purpose of your perfect will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen***

\* \* \* \* \*

HYMN

Hymn 625

*Darwall's 148th*

1 Ye ho - ly an - gels bright, who wait at God's right hand, or  
 2 Ye bless - ed souls at rest, who ran this earth - ly race and  
 3 Ye saints, who toil be - low, a - dore your heaven - ly King, and  
 4 My soul, bear thou thy part, tri - umph in God a - bove: and

through the realms of light fly at your Lord's com - mand, as - sist our  
 now, from sin re - leased, be - hold the Sa - vior's face, God's prais - es  
 on - ward as ye go some joy - ful an - them sing; take what he  
 with a well-tuned heart sing thou the songs of love! Let all thy

song, for else the theme too high doth seem for mor - tal tongue.  
 sound, as in his sight with sweet de - light ye do a - bound.  
 gives and praise him still, through good or ill, who ev - er lives!  
 days till life shall end, what - e'er he send, be filled with praise.

Words: Richard Baxter (1615-1691); rev. John Hampden Gurney (1802-1862) Music: *Darwall's 148th*, melody and bass John Darwall (1731-1789);  
 harm. William Henry Monk (1823-1889), alt.; desc. Sydney Hugo Nicholson (1875-1947) Copyright © by permission of Hymns Ancient & Modern Limited.  
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## **THE VESTRY OF TRINITY CHURCH**

Nancy Matthews (Warden)

Jeff Wojcik (Warden)

Julie Bathke

John Bradley

David Douglass

Joe McDonnell

Sandi Rapp

Jennifer Shappell

Dave Shaw

Don Smith

Jeff Wojcik

Lisa Yeh

## **TRINITY CHURCH STAFF**

The Reverend Emily A. Mellott, Rector

Mr. Vernon H. Williams, Organist and Choirmaster

Mrs. Kate Stefanko, Office and Communications Manager

Ms. Gia Grosso, Financial Administrator

Mrs. Michelle Seaman, Director of Youth and Children's Ministries

Mr. Ben Jones, Facilities Associate

Mrs. Maris Williams, Director of Cherub and Carol Choirs

Mrs. Nancy Johnson, Preschool Director