



Trinity Topics
THE NEWSLETTER OF TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH
POTTSVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA
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Snatched off the screen.....January-February, 2026

Winter Now: Samuel Longfellow

'Tis winter now; the fallen snow
Has left the heav'ns all coldly clear;
Through leafless boughs the sharp winds blow,
And all the earth lies dead and drear.

And yet God's love is not withdrawn;
His life within the keen air breathes;
His beauty paints the crimson dawn,
And clothes the boughs with glittering
wreaths.

And though abroad the sharp winds blow,
And skies are chill, and frosts are keen,
Home closer draws her circle now,
And warmer glows her light within.

O God! Who giv'st the winter's cold
As well as summer's joyous rays,
Us warmly in Thy love enfold,
And keep us through life's wintry days.

I don't mean to disturb you, but Lent is coming. Yes, I am well aware we have just finished our rush to Christmas, and January will soon ring out Epiphany. And St. Valentine's Day will creep in quickly, preparing us for the season of Lent. Singing "Joy to the World" and pairing it with "In the Bleak Mid-Winter" might be a requirement.

Yet again, maybe I have been overtaken by the commercial rush that is America, 2026. The winter solstice has come and gone, and I rejoice gladly that the days now lengthen despite the breath of winter getting more frigid and danker. But even in the dull, faded light of mornings, there is a hint of the blessings which Epiphany and Lent bring. Epiphany, the mysterious yet known manifestation of the Light which is Christ shining regardless of the darkness that envelopes our world. And Lent, with its call to repent and renew, brings a fresh perspective on where we are called to stand in the confines of that darker world. All this then is preparation for the glory of our redemption, enacted continually in the very frosty breath we see outside. Our recollection of the dust of which we are made will come and go. We will lighten our souls through the practices of Lent, straightening ourselves, filling in those spiritual cracks which pervade our lives, and lowering our mountains and raising our valleys.

Yes, the paths will be easier if we take time to make them so.

Enjoy the pause that winter can bring. Breathe in and exhale the glorious sunrises and sunsets. And be ever watchful for the subtle changes in nature, and in our liturgies, as we move into spring. May the God of all Salvation keep your mind and heart faithful, and warm, and full of the love of Christ Jesus.

Your brother in Christ,

Fr. Kurt

CHRISTMAS CAROL FUNDRAISER



We extend our thanks once again to F. Allen Artz, III for his wonderful afternoon of Christmas music at the organ with audience participation in carol singing. Sounds of rejoicing! The event raised \$1020.00 for Trinity and we are extremely grateful to Allen for his generous support of Trinity.

ADVENT PROJECT 2025



Thank you to all who once again made this extraordinary effort successful! 100 bags were filled and extra items can be saved for the 2026 project. Bags of essential items and special treats bringing smiles to so many were distributed at Green Valley Center in Pottsville and Shenandoah Manor. Some items collected which are not approved by the nursing homes were delivered to Hope House (formerly Schuylkill Women in Crisis) with gratitude for a bit of pampering. God bless all of you for your generosity in bringing joy to those who need it.

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND VESTRY BIOS



Reports from committees are due in the office by January 15th for inclusion in the Annual Meeting booklet. If you are interested in running for a 3-year term on the Vestry, please submit a short biography. If you need a committee form, please ask Kristy in the office. The Annual Meeting is on Sunday, January 25.

JINGLE COLLECTION



In November, Father Kurt announced the beginning of the “Jingle Collection” each Sunday. The Church School children will collect whatever pocket or purse change you may have in their cans after the usual Offering. After Easter they will decide what cause these donations will benefit. Enjoy the happy sound of the children collecting your generosity. And don’t forget there is Children’s Chapel each Sunday at 8:50 am at the Children’s Altar. The children will process down the aisle, then head to Church School and participate in the final blessing with either Father Kurt or Father Tim.

HEALING SERVICE



Join us each Wednesday at 12 noon in St. Luke’s Chapel--all are welcome!

COFFEE HOUR

Coffee hour continues on January 11, 2026 following worship service. Most coffee hours are held on the 2nd Sunday of each month. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board behind the high altar. It can be an individual or family offering a few goodies to share.



ASH WEDNESDAY

Lent begins on Wednesday, February 18. There will be a noon service in St. Luke's Chapel with the distribution of Ashes and Healing. A Eucharist service with the Distribution of Ashes will be held at 7 pm in the sanctuary. Places for Ashes in a Flash will be announced.

COUNTERS NEEDED



We currently have only 4 counters, who are also extremely involved with every committee in the church. If you can sit, count money and open envelopes, we can use you!! Please see Lea Bortner, or Bob Bednar for more details and to be placed on monthly schedule.

ALTAR GUILD-VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



Our Altar Guild needs volunteers. Setting up for Eucharistic service and then cleaning up after Sunday service. It's a very minimal time commitment (less than 30 mins for both setup and clean-up). If you can volunteer your time, please see Karen Portland or Cora Gamelin-Osenbach, and they can place you in the monthly rotation.

SOUPER SUNDAY SOUP SALE



We will be hosting a soup sale on Sunday, February 8th-We are calling all our incredible cooks to help us once again with this fundraiser. We raised \$515 during our last soup sale. Lets see if we can raise even more this time.

CLOTHESLINE OF LOVE



Once again, donations of hats, socks, gloves and scarves are welcome for those in need. This year the donations will be collected at the church (there are boxes at each entrance) and delivered to the Salvation Army for distribution.

BOYER'S KEY TAGS

Do you shop at Boyer's Food Markets? We are part of their give-back program. Simply present your key tag at the time of checkout to have it scanned. and twice a year, they send a check for a percentage to us from all the key tag scans.

And
HYMN SING 🎵🎵

HYMNAL 1982

- 7 — Christ whose glory fills the skies**
8 — Morning has broken
343 — Shepherd of souls
362 — Holy, holy, holy!
376 — Joyful, joyful we adore thee
379 — God is Love
390 — Praise to the Lord
397 — Now thank we all our God
410 — Praise, my soul, the King of heaven
423 — Immortal, invisible, God only wise
427 — When morning gilds the skies
438 — Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord
455 — O Love of God
460 — Alleluia! Sing to Jesus
474 — When I survey the wondrous cross
490 — I want to walk as a child of the Light
493 — O for a thousand tongues to sing
494 — Crown him with many crowns

- 525 —The Church's one foundation
544 —Jesus shall reign
620 — Jerusalem, my happy home
645 —The King of Love my shepherd is
671 — Amazing grace!
680 — O God our help in ages past

LEVAS

- 60 —How great thou art**
111 — Come thou fount of every blessing
184 —Blessed Assurance
189 —Great is his faithfulness

The Lord's Prayer — Franklin M. Osenbach

Other _____

PLEASE RETURN TO TRINTY BY MAY 10, 2026.

Email to episcopalch200@gmail.com or mail to TEC, 200 S. Second St, Pottsville, PA 17901



**CALLING ALL ELEMENTARY-MIDDLE
AGE KIDS**

You're Invited to:

**Sunday
School
Program**

**-SUNDAYS-
CHILDREN'S ALTAR BEGINS AT
8:50 AM**

**GRADES
K-6**

**We'd love to welcome your children to
our Sunday School program!**

**Each week, kids enjoy age-appropriate
lessons, fun activities, and a safe place
to learn about God's love while making
new friends.**



The Christmas Flowers adorning Trinity Church have been given to the Glory of God by:

June & Robert Bednar in Memory of J. Stewart & Phenie Rowlands, James S. Rowlands, Eleanor Roth, William Angelo, Nicholas & Anna Bednar, and in Thanksgiving for Josh Secoges and Nick DelConte, Grandsons.

Nanci & Jeff Billie in Memory of Jack & Nancy Reigle, Mary & George Billie.

Lea, Peter & Tim Bortner in memory of Carol Ford.

The Curtis Family in Memory of Jack Curtis, Marlin & Martha Hain, Bill & Fran Engleman, Dean & Jane Nice, George & Irene Curtis, Susan Starr, and Lawrence Tobin, and Thanksgiving for the Bowler, Burns, and Curtis Families.

Steve, Lisa, Mikey, Ricky, Tina & Juliette Ferguson in Memory of Russell A. Frantz

Carol Field in Memory of George & Emmeline Stone, George Stone III, William & Eva Stone, Peggy Moser, Allen Brennan, and Jerry Field, and in Thanksgiving for Eric Stone & Family, Heather Procacci & Family, Lunch Bunch Friends, and sisters Mary & Annie and their family.

Debra Zyk in Memory of Patrick Moore Sr., Sandra Moore, Jane Moore Myro, Anthony & Lainie Kaminiski

Franklin & Cora Osenbach in Thanksgiving for God's grace, mercy, and love.

Edith Y. Khayatt in Memory of F. Dohrman & Edith Yuengling.

Kathy Polcrack in Memory of Carl & Kay Collier and Norene & Richard Collier.

Edna Rauco & Family in memory of Mark, Irene, & Tony Rauco, George W. & Shirley Barlow, George C. Barlow, Joseph Zagrosky, and Thanksgiving for AJ & Joey Rauco, Nick Lewars, and Ethan & Jake Doyle.

Albert & Karen Portland in Memory of Bertha & Emmett Miller, Mildred & Francis J. Portland, & Francis M. Portland, and in Thanksgiving for our Family, and grandchildren Annabelle, Duncan, Elliot MacLea & Emmett Portland.

Nanci & Jeff Billie in Memory of Nancy & Jack Reigle, and Mary & George Billie

The Simatos Family in Memory of Olive, Jerry & Sally Simatos, Charles & Olive Johns, Robert Johns, Rick Johns, Joe & Reburta Novicenskie, The Jones Family.

Joseph & Leigh Ann Siminitus & Family in Memory of Harry & Jean Ebling, David Frey, Stanley W. & Anna Siminitus and Stanley R. Siminitus.

Jim & Barb Tokarz in Memory of Edmund Florence Perry, Adam & Mary Tokarz, and Wanda Perry.

In Gratitude for all folks from Trinity and all the Blessings of this life by Rev. Dr. Kurt K. Kovalovich

John Pritiskutch in Memory of Michael & Elizabeth Pritiskutch

Bill & Darlene Bowler in Memory of Hain Family, Engleman Family, Shoemaker Family, and Hubler Family, Jack Curtis, Merrick Family, Ed Harris, Lawrence Tobin, Minna Hutchinson, Susan Starr, Joseph Putsavage, Bingo. And in Thanksgiving for Curtis & Burns Families.

Elaine Howe, in Memory of Edward & Anna Harris, Edward Harris Jr., Douglas N. Howe, John L. Spotts, Mara J. Sausser, Nancy Harris, and in Thanksgiving for granddaughter AlanaL. Spotts, Joseph F. and Lori Spotts, Dennis and John Harris.

The flowers adorning the Baptismal Font are given by Evelyn Bacon Barnwell & Family in Loving Memory for Lillie Bacon Allen, Fred, Ann, Marion & Waverly Bacon Jr., Paul B. Barnwell Sr., Paul B. Barnwell Jr., and Alma S. Barnwell.

The flowers adorning the High Altar and Children's Altar are given in Loving Memory of Russ Frantz by his wife Anne, daughter Lisa & Family, and son, Russell and Family

The Bread & Wine Offering for the month of December is given in Loving Memory of Charles Buehler, Harold & Malba Nicholas, Elizabeth Strohecker by Wife, mother & daughter, Nancy Buehler.



Charles Baber Cemetery Preservation Trust

Planning Out the New Year

Jan-Feb 2026

Every January, many of us begin the new year with hopeful resolutions of what we want to accomplish in the upcoming year. For many of us, these resolutions last a couple of weeks or maybe even for a full month, but by mid-year, most of us have forgotten what resolutions we had dreamed up. This hopeful resolution of what is to come for the year is not a dream at the Baber Cemetery; it becomes an accomplished feat for at least our playful and charming trees. While they lay quietly blanketed in snow over the winter months, if we gave them personalities, as I often do, I wonder if they lay planning what epic performance they will accomplish in the new year. Will they give a spring bouquet of many large showy flowers, or wait for summer with massive leaf foliage and bundles of hanging samaras, or show off their majestic colors in their fall foliage, or stand tall and proud in the winter with their caps and cloaks of soft white snow or a frozen glaze of ice glistening in the sun?

As nature has it, our many tree species, while performing year-round to comfort us and distract us from our busy schedules, usually perform with great gusto in one or two seasons only. For instance, the red sunset maple trees that line the paved road from the chapel to the 16th Street entrance and on the north side of the chapel along the one terrace, perform in the early spring with red limbs, red unfurling leaves, and red samaras with yellow stems. Their leaves turn green for the summer months. In the fall, the leaves turn reddish orange, and they lay out a red carpet from the chapel to the 16th Street entrance. As with the sunset maple, some of the dwarf Japanese maples do the same thing with their lacy leaves being red in the spring, then changing to green summer wear, and then to a burgundy color in the fall. Some species, like the red buds, are fuchsia and magenta flower-laden in the spring and then punctuate their dying fall leaves with long brown pods of dried seeds.

One species that entertains year-round is the London planetree along the Market St. wall. In their case, it is not their leaves that they show off, but their bark and their downy, soft brown seed balls. Their outer bark peels off throughout the year to reveal a smooth under bark of long striping of lime green, gray, yellow, and cream. And during the winter, when ice freezes on the bark, it sparkles as the sun reflects off the iced bark. The downy seed balls pull apart as they drizzle to the ground, forming piles of soft down that swirl as the wind blows through it.

Our evergreen species, like the Norway spruce, eastern white pine, yew tree, eastern red cedar, cryptomeria, and the arborvitae, are mundane in appearance and stand silently in the background most of the year. However, once the deciduous trees have lost their leaves and are resting, our evergreens come alive. And they, like the deciduous trees, vie for our attention. Winter is their best time to shine. The dark green needles vary in size and softness or sharpness on the different species. The cones also vary in species in width, length, stickiness, and even sharpness. Some, like the red cedar, are accented by bluish berries. Some of the yew have red berries. Some of the arborvitae have teeny tiny cones that open in a bluish star shape. The pom-pom-shaped needles of the cryptomeria change from green to chocolate brown. All species, no matter how tall or how wide, look spectacular when they are trimmed in new, falling white snow. And what is seldom seen are our evergreens on a foggy morning. They, with their outstretched limbs, appear like spooky apparitions in the fog.

No matter what our personal New Year's resolutions are, our showy trees have a yearlong resolution of comforting us, distracting us from stress, and entertaining us.



Guarded Optimism

There are so many projects and events that may or may not happen in 2026 that we can only approach the year with guarded optimism. First, for the bad news, which will require some thought of how to get the job done, is the many piles of leaves along all the roads and paths that didn't get vacuumed up and taken away by the city. Three factors worked against us: (1) the trees dropped their leaves very late in 2025. They were off by one whole month. (2) The city could only get to us one time to vacuum up the leaves on the upper asphalted road and only partway down the hill on the chapel road. They usually come 3-4 times to vacuum up all the areas. (3) Two early snowfalls and freezing temperatures have now fully covered and frozen the piles of leaves, and they will have to stay that way until spring. The problem is how or when we can get them cleaned up in the spring. In March and April, they will be too wet and heavy to vacuum, and the city only does leaf vacuuming in the fall. We are uncertain of how to get rid of these wet, heavy leaves in the spring.

Storage barn and road asphaltting projects: (1) **The barn-** behind our storage building, an underground stream/spring comes from 16th St and Elk Ave. and opens up to run in a dirt ditch behind the barn. In addition to the year-round running spring, we have water runoff from the hillside by the middle school. The spring and hillside water have eroded the corner of the barn, and water is now lying in large puddles on the crushed stone floor in what is the lower level of the barn. The foundation has to be sealed, the corner crack has to be filled in, new crushed stone has to be poured, and the ditch has to be graded away from the barn to form a trough to run east along the hillside toward the pond area. This cost is \$6,400, and the funds have been raised primarily from one board member to cover this project. (2) **The middle school** hillside water runs in a dirt trough down passed the breast of the pond and then gouges the gravel road into deep gullies. These gullies have to be hand-raked, especially when a funeral is occurring in the lower level. Every 2-3 years, more crushed stone has to be brought in. We have a bid to pour an asphalt trench along the hillside into a catch basin by Section 18, then pipe that water into a shallow retention pond filled with rocks. In addition, the gravel road will be asphalted down to where section 20 begins, which is by the soccer field. We are hoping to also asphalt that dirt road, which runs between sections 16 and 20, if we can raise more money. The cost of the initial project is \$24,500, and we do have most of the funds raised to cover this project, except for the last road asphaltting.

Chapel: The chapel is falling into disrepair, as you have seen, because summer Sunday services could no longer be held there. Repairs and restorations must be addressed before more deterioration occurs. The exterior should be done first, plus the heating system. The immediate work consists of 3 projects: (1) stone pressure washing and pointing - \$24,000; (2) replace the leaning wall that supports the area around the north columbarium - \$15,000; (3) replace the 1978 antique oil burner with a split system, which includes air conditioning and two heat pumps - \$28,000. We have spent \$2,300 on oil burner repairs in 2025, with the money covered by 3 charitable donors. We have raised \$13,000 through the Bid Board concession stand sales, like the one we had in December, and through charitable gifts from 3 plot owners. We have petitioned for financial help from charitable trusts, and we are looking for any grants that we could qualify for.

Trees: Will Thomas, DCNR Forestry Service, is attempting to get state money through a community grant program that would remove dead, deceased, or safety hazard trees on the cemetery property. They have walked the property and identified the trees that may qualify. Several are on the hillside directly above one of the buildings of the 12th Street Housing Development. We may know more about the tree grant by the next *Topics*.

NEWS FROM MARION PRICE TRUST FUND

Happy January! Hope this finds you all well and relaxing after the busyness of the holiday season. After the parties and gatherings with family and friends subside you may find yourself with some extra time on your hands. If this is the case, I have a suggestion for you!

Many of our elderly population are residing in assisted living, personal care, or skilled nursing facilities. This can be a lonely existence for many, but more profound during the winter months. If you find yourself with a little free time, why not visit one of our local nursing facilities? You do not need a special skill or talent, a friendly smile or a kind word will brighten someone's day. There is also the added benefit of brightening your own day as well.

Nursing Homes in Schuylkill County include: Broad Mountain (Frackville), Edenbrook (Pottsville), The Gardens at York Terrace (Pottsville), Green Valley (Pottsville), Greenwood Center (Hometown), Orwigsburg Center (Orwigsburg), Ridgeview (Shenandoah Heights), Rosewood (Schuylkill Haven), Seton Manor (Orwigsburg), Shenandoah Senior Living Community and St Luke's University Health Network Long-Term Care Unit (Coaldale). Personal Care Homes include: Heritage Mill (Tower City), Renaissance Senior Living at Pinebrook (Orwigsburg), Providence Place (Pottsville and Pine Grove), The Birches at Shenandoah Senior Living Community. Assisted Living is offered at Luther Ridge at Seiders Hill (Pottsville).

Some of our own Episcopalian parishioners reside at these facilities and I know they would enjoy a visit. If you are uncomfortable going alone the first time, let me know I will go with you. There are also opportunities to volunteer at most of these facilities on a regular basis. If you like to sing, a choir from the United Methodist Church visits a local nursing facility to sing hymns. The facility activity director would welcome help with bingo or other activities. These facilities would also welcome donations of bingo prizes and seasonal decorations so residents can decorate their rooms.

If you are interested in becoming a regular volunteer, Eileen Barlow -Schuylkill County Ombudsman, would be happy to talk to you. Other volunteer opportunities are available through Senior Volunteer Program, sponsored by the Office of Senior Services. Darla Troutman would love to talk to you about opportunities throughout the county. Please contact me if interested and I will provide contact information for Eileen and Darla. Darla also has a column in the Pottsville paper that provides information on volunteering.

My husband often reminds me that our elderly were also young once and did many interesting things in their lives. I agree with that, I often hear stories of the "old days" and how things used to be. Those times were often much harder than our world is today. Consider speaking with a 90-year-old and all the changes they have seen in the world during their lives. They can remember no electricity, no TV, no indoor plumbing, all things we take for granted. With age comes wisdom and there is a wealth of knowledge sitting in nursing facilities all over the county. If you visit, you may make a friend, hear some wonderful stories, or get some useful advice but I promise you will brighten someone's day.

JANUARY

- THURSDAY, JAN. 1ST- OFFICE CLOSED
- SUNDAY, JAN. 4TH- 8:50 AM-CHILDREN'S CHAPEL
9 AM SERVICE, CHRISTMAS II
- WEDNESDAY, JAN. 7TH- 12 NOON-HEALING SERVICE
- THURSDAY, JAN. 8TH- DEADLINE FOR ANNUAL REPORTS
- SUNDAY, JAN 11TH- 8:50 AM-CHILDREN'S CHAPEL
9 AM SERVICE, EPIPHANY
COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWING
- WEDNESDAY, JAN 14TH- 12 NOON HEALING SERVICE
- SUNDAY, JAN. 18TH- 8:50 AM -CHILDREN'S CHAPEL
9AM SERVICE-EPIPHANY II
- MONDAY, JAN 19TH- MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY-
OFFICE CLOSED 
- WEDNESDAY, JAN 21ST- 12 NOON HEALING SERVICE
- SUNDAY, JAN. 25TH- 8:50 AM CHILDREN'S CHAPEL
 9 AM SERVICE-ANNUAL MEETING
ORGANIZATIONAL VESTRY MEETING
- WEDNESDAY, JAN. 28TH- 12 NOON HEALING SERVICE

MARCH

- SUNDAY, MAR. 1ST —8:50 AM — CHILDREN'S CHAPEL
9 AM SERVICE — LENT II
- WEDNESDAY, MAR 4TH — 12 NOON HEALING SERVICE
- THURSDAY, MAR 5TH — SOUP AND LENTEN SERVICE
5:30 PM AT TRINITY

FEBRUARY

- SUNDAY, FEB. 2ND- 8:50 AM-CHILDREN'S CHAPEL
9 AM SERVICE, EPIPHANY IV
- WEDNESDAY, FEB. 4TH- 12 NOON-HEALING SERVICE
- SUNDAY, FEB. 8TH- 8:50 AM-CHILDREN'S CHAPEL
9 AM SERVICE, EPIPHANY V
 COFFEE HOUR AND SOUP SALE
- WEDNESDAY, FEB. 11TH-12 NOON HEALING SERVICE
- SUNDAY, FEB. 15TH- 8:50 AM-CHILDREN'S CHAPEL
9 AM SERVICE, EPIPHANY VI
- MONDAY, FEB. 16TH-PRESIDENT'S DAY- OFFICE CLOSED
- WEDNESDAY, FEB. 18TH-ASH WEDNESDAY
— ST. JOHN'S, ASHLAND 11 AM TO 1 PM
— ASHES IN A FLASH, 11- 1 PM LOCATIONS TBA
12 NOON —HEALING AND DISTRIBUTION OF ASHES
AT ST. LUKE'S CHAPEL
7 PM — TEC SERVICE WITH ASHES
- THURSDAY, FEB. 19TH — SOUP AND LENTEN SERVICE
5:30 PM AT ST. JAMES
- SUNDAY, FEB. 22ND —8:50 AM — CHILDREN'S CHAPEL
9 AM SERVICE — LENT I
10:30 — VESTRY MEETING
- WEDNESDAY, FEB. 25TH —12 NOON HEALING SERVICE
- THURSDAY, FEB. 26 — SOUP AND LENTEN SERVICE
5:30 PM AT HOLY APOSTLES

Trinity Episcopal Church

200 South Second Street
Pottsville, PA 17901
Phone: 570.622.8720
Return Service Requested

Deadline
For
Mar/Apr "Topics" is
Feb. 16, 2026



January

2-Samantha Simatos
4-Carla Kauffman
7- Courtney Rauco-Lewars, Margie Keyworth
8-Herbert Harris, Jr.
9-Elizabeth Circelli
16-Daniel Hopkins
18-James Snyder
22-Tim Bortner
23-Hank Beaver
26-Karen Portland
27-Cody Lewars
30-Al Portland

February

1-Phyllis Moehrle
4-Kathy Polcrack, Elise Scott
8-Norm Kauffman
10-Shelby Hostetter
16-Brent Burns
20-Erin Banonis
23-Patricia Brennan
24-Sara Wehr
25-John Fehr, Laura Weiner
29-Cassie Kauffman Holm