

TRINITY TIMES

The Newsletter of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Hampstead, NC
www.holytrinityhampstead.com

December 2019

All I Want for Christmas

When I was six years old I fell off my skateboard and broke my two front teeth. In the months leading up to Christmas I remember feeling embarrassed and overly conscious by my front teeth. As we approached the month of December, it felt like a continuing chorus of the song my family, friends and classmates were singing to me – “All I want for Christmas is my two front teeth.”

The song made me very uncomfortable. My distress resulted from two distinct feelings. First it made me more self-conscious of my broken teeth. Secondly, and probably more important was that I wanted much more for Christmas than just “two front teeth.”

It was the year I asked for a new bike, a hockey stick, several games and so much more. The last thing I wanted was to be limited by the gifts I was hoping for. In a real sense, my broken teeth unfortunately assisted me in focusing more on me than the true meaning of Christmas.



As an adult when people ask, “What do you want for Christmas?” the answers are radically different. No longer is Christmas about me. It is about the gift of salvation manifested in the Christ Child. It is about helping those less fortunate than myself. It is about health; the health of my family, my nation and my church. It is about giving of oneself from the heart, just as

God gave His heart to us at Bethlehem.

Yes, a few years later I finally got my two front teeth, thanks to the dentist and my parent’s pocketbook. But in the meantime, I received greater gifts. The gift of self-giving, the gift of perspective, the gift of priorities and the gift of Christ love.

My hope for all of us this holy season is that we ask for and receive these gifts. In doing so we will have received the greatest gifts of all.

Faithfully,
Rev. Ron Abrams



Annual Parish Meeting
Sunday, December 15, 11 am
After Worship Service

We will hear reports from parish ministries and vestry officers, including a Treasurer’s Report. We will also elect members to the vestry for a three-year term.

There will be time to ask questions and briefly share any concerns you might have.

It is your parish, so please plan to come, participate and learn what is happening at Holy Trinity.

Stewardship: Look Up!

By Bill Marianes

“LOOK UP!” Everyone has heard that shouted at them at some point when they were playing sports or just having something thrown their way. If you don’t, you will probably end up getting bopped on the head, or in some other body part, by a ball or other thing being thrown at you.

More recently, I found the need to exclaim “LOOK UP!” more frequently in daily life as we all have become fixated with our eyes looking downward at so-called “smart” phones. Think about it. Do you know anybody who does not own a cell or smart phone?



There is a whole lot of “looking down” going on in our society. And these downward looking trends are increasing. In contrast,

only 26 % of Americans said they read their Bible on a regular basis. In other words, we may be looking down more, but perhaps at the wrong things.

My paternal grandmother, an uneducated, immigrant woman of strong faith would frequently admonish me to look upward to the heavens where our Lord resides and where he is waiting for us if we live a righteous and faithful life. And while we clearly bow our heads for many prayers, she reminded me that it was in looking up that we saw the glory of God’s great creation and could be inspired to aim toward the goal of eternal life in one with God.

Are you living your life by looking down or up? The message today is to humbly, inquisitively and prayerfully “LOOK UP!” as we celebrate the glory of God’s creation, the wonder of the world around us, the incredible actions of faith we can pursue in our lives, and the proper living of the stewardship callings each us has been given.

I believe stewardship is what you do with all of the gifts God gave you. So if you want to live the stewardship calling entrusted to you by your Father, ask yourself, “What have I done today to live the stewardship calling given to me through the many gifts of which I am a mere steward on this earth?” In what person or ministry of your church or community have you “invested” your valuable time and talents



GENERAL FUND

	Month Ended Oct. 31, 2019	Year to Date Oct. 31, 2019	Annual Budget 2019
Pledged Offerings	\$10,955.00	\$ 88,182.00	\$,112,000.00
Total Income	\$11,932.00	\$107,046.61 *	\$,131,710.00
Total Expenses	\$ 6,679.61	\$117,397.30	\$,129,092.00
CASH FLOW	\$ 5,255.39	(\$10,350.69)*	\$ 2,618.00

*NOTE: Includes investment income of \$6,025.13.

in hopes of the ultimate “return on that investment” of an eternal life filled with joy, peace and love? You just might be amazed at the wonders of God’s creation available to those who seek, see and hear, and then pursue their stewardship callings.

Message from the Treasurer

At their monthly meeting on November 19, the Vestry of Holy Trinity approved an operating budget for 2020 of \$131,660. The budget includes an increase in our pledge to the Diocese of East Carolina to \$12,000, and a doubling of the outreach budget to \$2,000. Also included are funds to restore our emergency fund to \$10,000, and facility money to tackle some pressing problems with our building. The Vestry thanked both the stewardship committee and the budget committee for their efforts in the creation of this balanced budget. A summary of the 2020 operating budget appears below.

INCOME

Pledges	\$118,000
Non-pledged Donations	8,000
Brigade Cleaning Contribution	2,160
Special Donations	3,000
Miscellaneous	500

Total Income **\$131,660**

EXPENSES

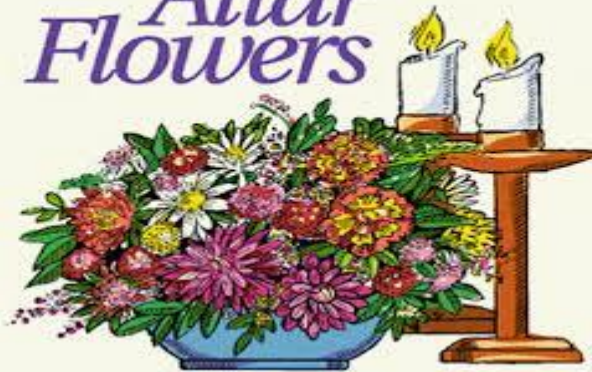
Administration	\$ 7,976
Facilities	38,672
Outreach	14,150
Program	2,550
Staff Salary & Benefits	68,312

Total Expenses **\$131,660**

Net Gain/(Loss) \$0

Roger Rick, Treasurer

Altar Flowers



Are you looking for a way to honor a special occasion like a birthday or anniversary or to remember a departed loved one? Consider sponsoring **Altar Flowers on a weekend in 2020**. Simply sign up for the Sunday you would like to sponsor via the sign-up sheet posted outside of the church offices.

After signing up, simply use a Flower Envelope and drop your donation in the offering on a Sunday or mail it to the church office. Be sure to note Flower Donation on the memo line if giving by check. **Suggested donation is \$55** (the true cost of the arrangement).

Episcopal Church Women News

The ECW met recently, and its treasury shows a balance of \$2,650.92. Profit from the Harvest Game Day was \$1,489.18. Many thanks to all who participated in this successful and fun day.

Planning is underway for additional fundraisers during 2020: **Yard Sale** in the spring and another **Harvest Game Day** in the fall. All church women are invited to attend the next monthly meeting on **December 10** to further discuss plans and ideas. If you are unable to attend but have some creative thoughts, drop a note to one of the ECW Officers (Vivian, Jeanne or Gretchen).

Keep an eye out for an upcoming **Clean Up Day**. A volunteer sheet will be posted on the bulletin board in the Narthex.

Remember, ECW doesn't just stand for Episcopal Church Women. It also stands for Every Church Woman!

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works. (Hebrews 10:24)

December Birthdays & Anniversaries



Birthdays:

2 Kitty Norman
4 Kass Murnock
7 Bruce Pennington
17 Jack Solak
22 George Ball
26 Darrell Markovitch

27 Brady Graham
29 Justin Clinch
30 Pattie Vaughn

Anniversaries:

7 Harry & Gretchen Moore
29 Bob & Joanne Muller

5th Annual Interfaith Prayer Vigil Against Gun Violence

Wilmington Faiths Against Gun Violence, in conjunction with local faith communities and other organizations, will hold the fifth annual prayer vigil for an end to gun violence on **Wednesday, December 4th at 6:00 pm at Warner Temple AME Zion Church** (620 Nixon Street) in downtown Wilmington. All are welcome to come participate.

News & Notes from Outreach

As this newsletter comes to press, Holy Trinity has transitioned **from Turkeys to Angel Tree!** Thank you one and all for your support of the Thanksgiving portion of our Holiday Baskets Project. By plucking Tom Turkey's feathers in the Narthex and purchasing the food written on each feather, you helped feed 5 families with children for the Thanksgiving Day meal and beyond.

The families were so grateful for this extra help as they are struggling each day to put nourishing meals on their tables. Thank you to the volunteers who purchased turkeys and perishable foods and packed the food boxes for distribution.



The **Angel Tree** is standing proudly in our sanctuary and decorated with angels. Each angel has the name of an item of clothing or toy that parents in our 5 Holiday families have said their children need or want for

Christmas. Please take an angel or two, donate the item indicated, and place **unwrapped** under the

Continued page 4

Outreach, continued from page 3

Angel Tree. Include **gift receipts**, when possible, in case an item needs to be exchanged for a different size.

We will be supporting **CHAP (Community Holiday Assistance Program)** again this Christmas. Our Outreach Ministry has supported this community program by donating gift cards which will be included in Christmas boxes and by donating food items.

This community gathering of volunteers from area churches, schools, and local businesses sets aside one day in December, near Christmas Day to allow families to visit a toy store at *All Saints Catholic Church*, make crafts, have gifts wrapped and enjoy holiday treats. Last season 337 total families were served including 784 children.

CHAP needs our volunteer help in the form of wrappers, guides for shopping, baking, playing games with children and other jobs. An email will come to you explaining how to sign up for various necessary jobs. Please consider offering a hand to this community effort to make the holidays joyful for many area children and their families.

Holy Trinity Outreach Ministry wishes all a joyous Christmas Season and the happiness that opening your hearts to the needs of others will most certainly always bring.

Christie Hawkins, Outreach Ministry

Parish Life

The Parish Life Ministry is looking for parish members who like to plan and carry out fun events. Planned events for the coming year include **bowling** (in January or February) and our **Annual Super Bowl Tailgate Potluck, January 26th**, after church services. A **bunco** game will also be organized for the spring.

If you have any ideas for the coming year, please let anyone on the committee know (Pat Gopsill, Vivian Kersey, Jeanne Rick).



Additional assistants are still needed for Sunday School. This is an enjoyable and rewarding activity. Talk to Pat Gopsill or Vivian Kersey if you are interested in helping.



Help make Holy Trinity festive with the holiday spirit by making a flower donation for poinsettias. Envelopes are in the chair pockets.

Vestry News...

The Vestry held its monthly meeting Nov. 19, Tuesday evening. It was a very productive meeting.

We approved the Housing allowance for Ron Abrams as required. A balanced budget was passed for the first time in a long time. This was due to the generosity and number of pledges that were completed. The number of pledges was increased by 2 and the dollar amount also increased. In addition, our Priest in Charge, Ron Abrams, agreed to a salary package that aided in the balanced budget.

We approved a bid to have the HVAC unit that needs repair to be done.

The Vestry has selected two new members for the 2020 Vestry to be nominated at our **Annual Parish Meeting** following our Sunday service on **Dec. 15, 2019**. Please make every effort to attend. If anyone wishes to be nominated for the Vestry, please submit your name to the Senior Warden, Norm Gopsill, no later than December 2. A nominee must meet three criteria: be a confirmed Episcopalian, a member of Holy Trinity attending services regularly, and known to our Treasurer.

We are looking for two delegates and two alternates to represent Holy Trinity at the **Annual Diocesan Convention at the Hotel Ballast in Wilmington on February 6-8, 2020**. There will be no overnight travel required, no long drives, no hotel rooms. If interested, please speak to a Vestry member or Ron Abrams. This is a very interesting experience – seeing how the Diocese works, what items are trending, interacting with delegates from other Dioceses. A **pre-convention Deanery Meeting** will be held Thursday, January 16, at 6 pm at St. James Episcopal Church, 25 3rd Street, Wilmington, NC.

As always, any comments, suggestions, or concerns please see a vestry member. Our next meeting is Tuesday, Dec. 17, 7 pm.

Norm Gopsill, Senior Warden

Photo Gallery...

GAME DAY!



All Saints Day



Father Ron's inaugural service



Marilyn Krummel receives her Birthday Blessing (92 years young!) from Patti Mary.

Each month, we will highlight one of the wild and crazy holidays our nation (and the world) celebrates....just for the fun of it!

December's Wacky Holiday:

December 9th – **Christmas Card Day**



Christmas Card Day, honors Sir Henry Cole (1818 - 1874) of England. Cole created the first commercial Christmas Card in 1843.

Just a few decades ago, sending Christmas cards through the mail was a holiday "must". Sending cards through the mail continues to be very popular. The cost and time for writing and sending cards has caused many people to stop sending them. Free Ecards have surged in popularity. Animated Christmas and seasonal Ecards have made sending and receiving them a lot more fun.

Today is a good day to send out your Christmas cards and holiday greetings. If you have yet to do so, use today to get a start.

Christmas
Blessings

◆◆◆◆◆ Holy Eucharist Begins Sunday at 10:00 a.m. ◆◆◆◆◆

Holy Trinity Episcopal Church
107 Deerfield Road
Hampstead, NC 28443

Listening, Learning, Loving, and Sharing through Christ