



TRINITY TIMES

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

January 2016

Epiphany

from Pamela *f*

Verses of two hymns come to mind as the Feast of the Epiphany approaches.

As with gladness men of old this the guiding star behold; as with joy they hailed its light, leading onward, beaming bright; so, most gracious Lord, may we evermore be led to thee. (Hymn 119, vs. 1)

O Jesus while the star of grace impels us on to seek thy face, let not our slothful hearts refuse the guidance of thy light to use. (Hymn 124, vs.4)

The Wise Men, Gentiles, followed a star on a journey that led them to an infant who would change the world. The story implies to me that their lives were changed by the journey. We don't know what



effect the journey had on their remaining days. I can't help but think it continued to make a difference in who they were as human beings. In essence, the journey did not ever end.

So it should be for us. The First Sunday after the Epiphany we remember the baptism of Jesus and at Holy Trinity, if we do not have a baptism, we renew our baptismal vows. We need those continual reminders of the life we are called to live as members of the Body of Christ. Maybe we will have an epiphany of our personal ability to live as a light to the world.

We are called to be open to those "ah ha" moments, those epiphanies that happen, usually when least expected, in the dailiness of our lives. We also need

to be intentional on the journey to grow more fully in mind, body and spirit. We often remember our physical body when we make New Year's resolutions. How many remember that our spiritual life needs help, too?

During Lent we will have a book study again offered both during the day and in the early evening. A signup sheet will be on the bulletin board soon. This would be an excellent way to grow in our faith and your presence might help someone else on their faith journey as well.

The two hymn verses above remind me that God is there to lead and guide me, but I am the one that must take the steps. May your life, the next five weeks, be full of epiphanies.

WELCOME NEW VESTRY MEMBERS

Please thank the following members who have agreed to serve on Holy Trinity's Vestry for the next three years:

- **Dave Mahoney**
- **Carolyn Beddow**
- **Lynn Ruhnke**

And a big "Thank You!" to the three coming off the Vestry this year: **Kitty Norman, Christopher Wolfe, and Norm Gopsill.**

Also, thanks to these folks for serving as our Delegates to the Diocesan Convention:

- **Norm Gopsill**
- **Bruce Pennington**
- **Gail Boys (Alternate)**

News & Notes from Outreach

As the year 2015 ends, the Outreach Ministry extends a mighty hand of gratitude to our congregation for the love and generosity with which you have supported our efforts to reach outside of our own group and touch the lives of others in our community and in the world.



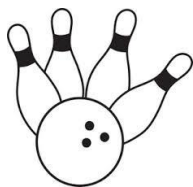
Thank you to everyone who took an angel from the Angel Tree for the most recent project. You helped to provide toys, clothing and food at Christmas for so many struggling families and children. May you receive many blessings in the coming New Year!

Thanks, also, to **Sharon Seago** for stepping up to the chair of this important ministry. Please help her to get to know the ropes of running this ministry and give her the support she will need this coming year. Join the Outreach Ministry at its first meeting in the new year – **Thursday, January 7, at 9 am.** This is a friendly and active ministry. Come join us!

Christie Hawkins, Outreach Ministry

Parish Life

A new year has started and our parish life is going strong! We hope to have many activities on the calendar this year for you to participate in and share camaraderie with your fellow Holy Trinity parishioners.



Join us for the **Second Annual Bowlathon** event on January 31st, at Bowl at the Beach, Market St. near Military Cutoff. We'll bowl at 3 pm and have dinner afterwards. We had so much fun at the last bowling event! More information to follow.

There are still staterooms available for our fabulous **Cruise to the Eastern Caribbean**, on the Emerald Princess, Feb. 20-27. A group of our Holy Trinity members will be sailing to the Bahamas, St. Maarten, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, and Turks & Caicos, departing from Ft. Lauderdale. A great cure for the February blahs! See Pat Gopsill for info.

Upcoming events will include a Saturday afternoon **Game Day**. Bring a game to play or join up with others for a fun afternoon of fellowship.

For all you sports fans, another possibility is to go to see the Seahawks play a baseball game in the spring at UNCW.

Our group seeks to welcome newcomers, build fellowship, and provide opportunities for parishioners to participate in the Holy Trinity community. We believe building genuine friendships is one of the key factors in growing spiritually and in increasing our sense of connectedness as a parish family.

We are always looking for new ideas to help with our mission. Let Pat know if you have any recommendations for activities.

Pat Gopsill, Parish Life Ministry

Stewardship

God calls us to be his instruments to share the Gospel and our resources with others. We are channels through which God seeks to convey his blessings. God wants us to do things for him, and he wants to do things through us.

How can we become the channels God wants us to be? What makes us **channels** through which his blessings freely flow rather than **terminals** which hold everything?

Through God's wisdom and strength, we can change from terminals which hoard the flow of God's gifts to channels open for greater giving. The following are some thoughts as to how we can keep our channels open:

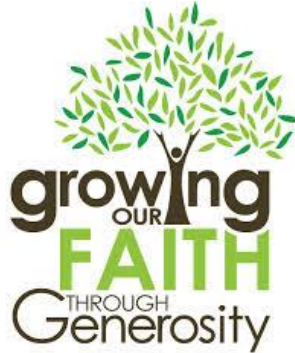
1. **Develop the right perspective.** We need to be mindful that the greatest purpose for our giving is to help people to know Jesus and to receive eternal salvation. What we do with our money will affect our lives as well as others. The things we buy with our money will rust, wear out, or be stolen, but what we give for God's purposes will make an eternal difference in our lives and the lives of those around us.
2. **Spend time in God's Word.** When we are in the Word, we are being filled by the Holy Spirit who helps us break the grip that money and

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Stewardship (cont. from p. 2)

things have over us. We are enabled to be generous, involved, and committed people. The scriptures reveal God's majesty and love, and we respond cheerfully with our giving out of gratitude and thanksgiving for all God does for us. God's grace enables our giving.

3. **Become wise managers of money.** When we manage our money wisely, we increase our potential to be generous givers. If we are not in control of our money, we will no longer be the channels God calls us to be. The question to ask ourselves is, "*Do we control our money or does our money control us?*" When we manage our money wisely, we will be in a financial condition to give as God gives us opportunities to help others in need.



4. **Willingly live a self-imposed lifestyle.** Decisions on what to buy and own don't have to be made solely on the basis of affordability. When we choose to live modestly, we create the potential for greater giving. For example, when John Wesley, founder of the United Methodist Church, earned 28 pounds in salary, he lived on 28 pounds; when he earned 50 pounds, he lived on 28; and when he earned 100 pounds, he lived on 28. Our needs don't have to expand to the amount of income we receive. Living comfortably but modestly can open our channels for more giving.

When God is in control of our hearts and our pocketbooks, then we can truly be God's channels.

Thank You!

Thank you to all who gave to the Christmas monetary gift. I do appreciate your generosity. Thank you, also, to those who left anonymous items on my desk.

Blessings for a healthy, happy and fruitful New Year to all of my Holy Trinity family.

Mother Pam

January Birthdays and Anniversaries



Birthdays:

5 Gretchen Moore
11 Jennifer Starrett
18 Jo Tuplin
20 Stephanie Clinch
22 Betty Sanders
31 Catherine Charles

Anniversaries:

1 Mike and Jennifer Starrett

Christingles

A Christingle is an orange representing the world, with a candle placed in the top of it to symbolize Christ as the light of the world. A red ribbon encircles the orange, symbolizing the blood of Jesus. Four toothpicks pierce the orange representing North, South, East and West, the four corners of the earth, or possibly, the four seasons. Dried fruits (or sweets) are placed on the toothpicks representing the fruits of the earth.

The idea of Christingles came from a Moravian Church in Germany in 1747. The minister, John de Watteville, gave children at the service a lighted candle with a red ribbon around it.

But it wasn't made popular in the UK until 1968 when John Pensom, described in his Church Times obituary as "Mr. Christingle," used it as a fundraising event for the Children's Society charity. Children would bring purses with money and receive an orange pierced with a candle in return.



This simple visual aid vividly represents the purpose behind Christ's coming – to bring light into the darkness and to redeem a broken world by shedding his blood. In John's account of Christ's life, the disciple describes Jesus as the Light of the World. He wrote of Christ: "That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world." Not only did Christ come to penetrate our world's darkness, but he is also "The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world."

Vestry 2015 Review

We continued with our two goals of increasing Sunday attendance and membership by ten percent. Our average attendance for 2015 will exceed our goal but we will not meet the membership goal.

A very aggressive budget was accepted. Early outlook is that we will come close, but achieve our budget goals. Expenses were all in line, but we are going to fall short of pledged income as budgeted.



We continue to repair and maintain our building. The sign was repainted and illuminated. The sign area was landscaped, as well as the church entrance. Thanks to Joan Handy, Bobbi Crawford and Donna Spiers.

Many other repairs were made, most with little or no expense. This was due to the dedicated work done by our Junior Warden, Bruce Pennington, with help from his son, David. Two new flag poles with lighting were installed by the bell tower and the irrigation system was extended and repaired. Both these projects were funded by memorial gifts given.

We received and accepted a request from the Boys and Girls Brigade to use our facility for their summer camp and after school program. The vestry voted to allow this use as a good way to reach out to our community. After a few kinks were worked out it has proven to be a success story for both parties.

We were informed of a method to invest our resources within the Diocese investments. We have taken several CDs and invested in this program. We have our own account and control with the investment through Raymond James.

The parish meeting was held Sunday, December 15. Copies of the minutes and church financials are available in the narthex.

The vestry extends their appreciation to outgoing members Kitty Norman, Chris Wolfe and Norman Gopsill. We welcome their replacements: Lynn Ruhnke, Carolyn Beddow and David Mahoney.

Remember: This is your vestry. Please communicate your views and concern to any member.

Norman Gopsill, Outgoing Senior Warden

Photo Gallery



The Children's Sermon on Christmas Eve.



The church decorations were beautiful! Thanks to all who donated greens, poinsettias, time, talent, and energy!



Mother Pam and Jeanne Rick participated in the Interfaith Candlelight Vigil to End Gun Violence, held in Wilmington.



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



January's Wacky Holiday: January 6: Bean Day

Every once in a while, you come across a special day that just doesn't seem to have any rhyme or reason. Bean Day appears to be one of those days. Bean Day is day of unknown origin, and unknown cause. But, this day gets plenty of recognition from Ecard companies and calendar oriented sites.

There are several ways to celebrate Bean Day:

- Newlyweds can add a few beans to their bean jar today.
- Gardeners can enjoy this day surfing through seed catalogs to select beans to grow in the spring.
- Read the story "Jack and the Beanstalk" to your preschooler/grandchild.
- Teachers can use bean seeds for learning exercises in course material.
- Others can bone up on the history of beans....doesn't that sound like fun!?

Paula Bowen is the originator of Bean Day. She started it because January is so bleak, and there weren't many holidays in January to celebrate. She said we needed a holiday to celebrate Mr. Bean. Also, her dad was a Pinto bean farmer, so she grew up eating a lot of beans.

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

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"Leading, Loving, and Sharing through Christ"