

The Trinity Times

TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH • 430 JULIANA ST., PARKERSBURG, WV 26101 • 304.422.3362 • TRINITY-CHURCH.ORG

*The Mission of Trinity Episcopal Church:
We exist to love God and our neighbors!*

DECEMBER 2024

THE STAFF

The Rev. Geoffrey Mackey
Rector

Marie Mallory,
Dir. of Music Ministry

Julie Rathbone,
Administrator

Bree Fleming,
Dir. of Religious Education

Paul Miller,
Treasurer

Jacob Miller, Sexton

THE VESTRY

2024

Susie Fitcher
Tom Gyongyosi
Scott Ramsay

2025

Jeannie Gallagher
Michael McKibben
Mary Thomas

2026

Anne Deputy
Mickie Richardson
Justin Warren

TRUSTEES

2024

Chad Mildren
Frank Northrup

2025

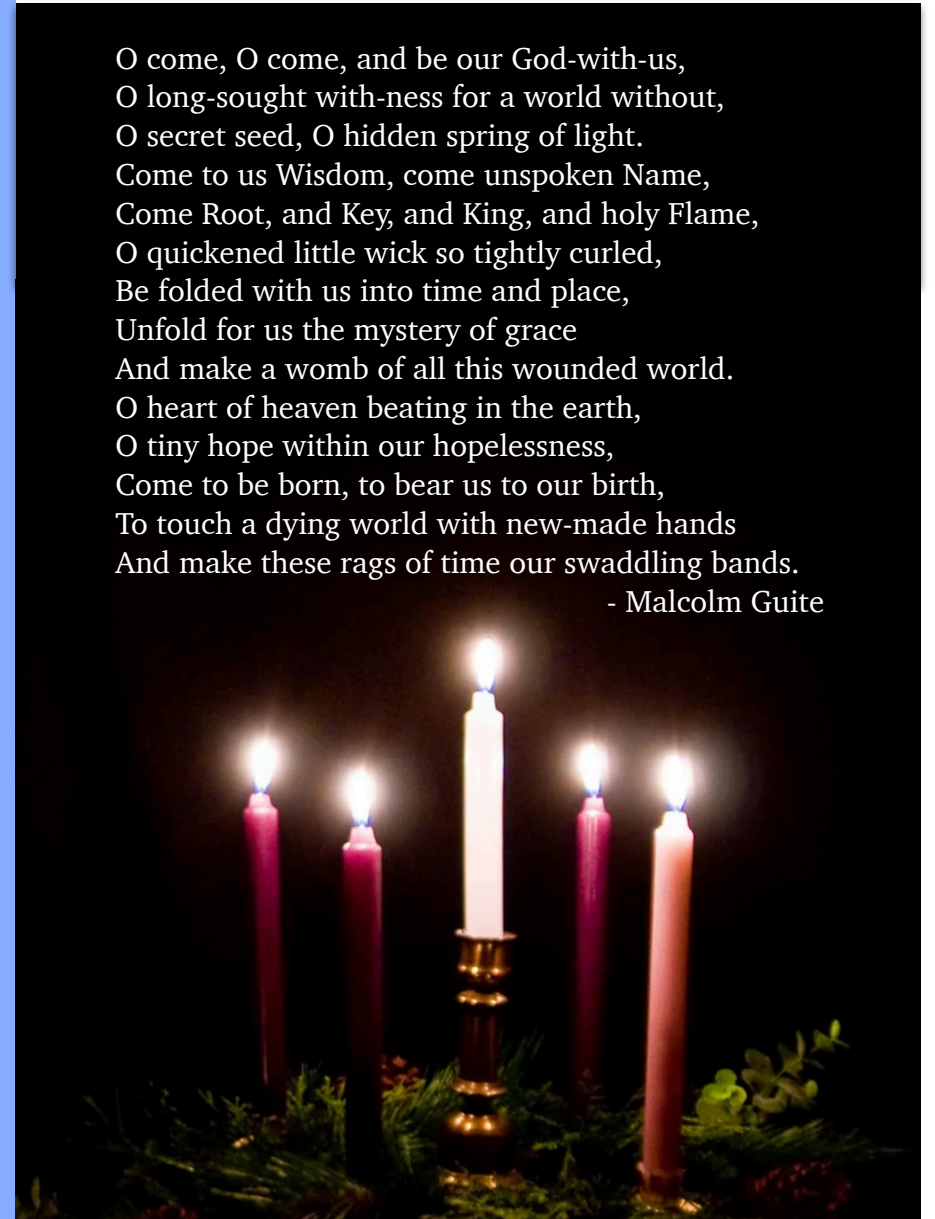
Denny Prather

2026

Paula Sellers

O come, O come, and be our God-with-us,
O long-sought with-ness for a world without,
O secret seed, O hidden spring of light.
Come to us Wisdom, come unspoken Name,
Come Root, and Key, and King, and holy Flame,
O quickened little wick so tightly curled,
Be folded with us into time and place,
Unfold for us the mystery of grace
And make a womb of all this wounded world.
O heart of heaven beating in the earth,
O tiny hope within our hopelessness,
Come to be born, to bear us to our birth,
To touch a dying world with new-made hands
And make these rags of time our swaddling bands.

- Malcolm Guite



A note from Fr. Geoff



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

“What if God was one of us?” sang Joan Osborn on her 1995 album, *Relish*. I think we can say something in answer to her question. The prologue to the Gospel of St. John tells us, **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.”** (John 1.1,14).

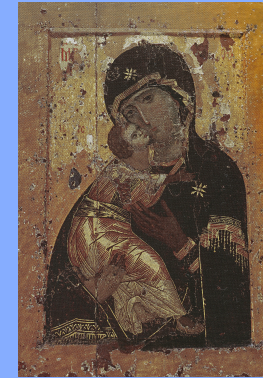
Our society sets about to celebrate Christmas earlier and earlier each year. (This year, I was in a coffee shop the day after Halloween and heard the dulcet tones of Bing Crosby singing, “*Chestnuts roasting on an open fire...*”) We in the Church, however, get an opportunity - if we’ll take it - to step back and prepare. We need not rush into the craze of Christmas thoughtlessly or frenetically. The season of Advent is a season of reflection, a time to contemplate the mystery we are soon to celebrate.

I used to be a liturgical purist. I would get grumpy and judgmental if anyone played Christmas hymns before Christmas Eve. I tried to get our family to put up the Christmas tree as late as possible. I didn’t want to be cheated out of the Advent season. As I’ve gotten older, though, I’ve mellowed a little bit. I still don’t love the idea of Christmas in early November. But I don’t mind when I hear Christmas music out and about - it’s some of my favorite music.

The more important thing, I think, is to *spiritually* prepare ourselves for the coming of Christ - at Christmas, yes; but also for his coming again “in power and great glory.” Our liturgical observances are for the sake of our own spiritual well being. This is much more than simply refusing to sing Christmas songs before December 25. As the days continue to grow darker, we are encouraged to step back and spend time ruminating on the meaning of what this is all about.

The Prophet Isaiah foretold that there would be a time when a Virgin would bring forth a Son who would be “God-with-us,” Emmanuel. Not only does God come among us in a spiritual sense, but we are celebrating that he came to be among us in a very concrete and physical sense. To celebrate the coming of the newborn King is to celebrate something absolutely astounding. Not only does God want to be near us, God went so far as to become one of us. In

Christ, God shares our human frailty, our temptations, our sorrows, our emotional states, and our needs. In Christ, God has not only come close, but he identifies himself with us. God who is our Father is also, in Christ, our brother. God, in Jesus, has a human genealogy.



The coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh 2,000 years ago in a cave/stable in Bethlehem is a world-view-altering event. All of the created order is glorified by the presence of God, now veiled in matter. As Archbishop William Temple wrote, because God took flesh, **“the personality of every man and woman is sacred.”**

As we prepare to celebrate Christmas, I encourage you not to overlook the weeks of Advent leading up to it. Not to simply avoid the consumeristic and materialistic Christmas frenzy (though I recommend avoiding it if possible). And not just to avoid singing Christmas carols before Christmas Eve. But because what we’re celebrating is not simply a nostalgic holiday of togetherness. It is no less than God deciding to become one with us.

May your Advent be a time of peace and blessing, and may your Christmas be a feast of joy!

In the Word-Made-Flesh,
Fr. Geoff

Cover Poem: “O Emmanuel,” from *Sounding the Seasons: Seventy Sonnets for the Christian Year* by Malcolm Guite. Norwich: Canterbury Press. (c) 2012 by Malcolm Guite. Used by permission of the poet.

Image Above: *The Virgin of Vladimir*. 12th century Byzantine icon, tempera on wood.

Christmas Flowers

Please turn in your donation for Christmas flowers to the office by Friday, December 20, along with the form listing names or dedications to be included in the Christmas bulletins.





Upcoming Special Liturgies

Sunday, December 15 at 4:00 PM
 "Blue Christmas"
 Service of Remembrance & Communion

Christmas Eve, December 24
 5:00 PM - Lessons and Carols
 10:30 PM - Prelude Music
 11:00 PM - Festival "Midnight" Mass

Christmas Day, December 25
 9:00 AM - Holy Eucharist with Hymns (Rite I)

Tuesday, December 31 at 6:00 PM
 Holy Eucharist & Hymns for the Holy Name of Jesus

Monday, January 6 at 6:00 PM
 Holy Eucharist & Hymns for Epiphany

Diocesan Noonday Prayer & Compline

The Diocese of West Virginia holds regular Zoom-based services of Noonday Prayer and Compline (prayer at the close of the day). All are welcome to log on and join in prayer. Noonday Prayer is held every weekday at 12:05 pm. Compline is held at 7:00 pm, seven days a week.



Noonday Prayer
 Zoom ID: 894 9007 8519
 Passcode: 343 473

Compline
 813 3859 0497
 966 554

PETERKIN 2025 CAMP DATES

Counselor Training: June 6 - 14
 Junior Camp: June 15 - 21
 Intermediate Camp: June 22 - 28
 Alpha Camp: June 29 - July 2
 Staff Break: July 3 - 5
 Senior Camp: July 6 - 12
 MAD Camp: July 13 - 19
 Family Camp: July 20 - 26



ADVENT OPEN HOUSE



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF WEST VIRGINIA
 WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18 | 5:00PM-7:00PM
 1608 VIRGINIA ST. EAST, CHARLESTON
All are welcome

Trinity by the Numbers October

Weekend Worship Attend.:
 5:30/8:00/10:30
 Oct 5/6: 15/11/52 (78)
 Oct 12/13: 20/12/43 (75)
 Oct 19/20: 19/9/53 (81)
 Oct 26/27: 12/13/48 (73)

Wed. Healing (avg.): 4.75
 Holy Day Masses (avg.): 4
 Community Resources/Thrive:
 Number served - 102
 Utility Assistance - 70 families

It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas

Trinity parishioner Marjorie Thomas created this beautiful Christmas wreath which is on display at the Blennerhasset Hotel as part of the annual Mid Ohio Valley Festival of Trees Auction to benefit the United Way. The auction will be held on December 11. In the meantime, people may cast votes for the "Peoples' Choice Award which will be presented at the auction. Votes can be cast online at www.uwamov.com/festivaloftrees. Each vote costs \$1.00 and proceeds benefit the United Way's annual campaign and various partner organizations.



This year Trinity has sponsored a Christmas Tree in Civitan Park in Belpre, OH. On Saturday, November 23, Trinity parishioners met in the park to decorate the tree with cardinals and angels. It will be lighted and can be seen throughout the month of December. Check it out!

THE GREENING OF THE CHURCH

Join us after the 10:30 Eucharist on December 22 for the "Greening of the Church" as we prepare our church for the Christmas celebrations!



Highlights from November Vestry meeting

- The Treasurer reviewed the October financial reports and reported that the church's financial condition remains strong. He reported that forty-two pledge cards have been received as of November 18, and that all Vestry members have submitted pledges. The budget for 2025 was discussed in executive session.
- The DRE reported that the All Saints' Day children's event was a success. The children will sing at the Family Christmas Eve service.
- The Nominating Committee is still looking for new members for the Vestry and for 2025 Diocesan Convention delegates.
- The Outreach Committee announced that Marjorie Thomas decorated a Christmas wreath for the United Way Festival of Trees at the Blennerhasset Hotel. The committee is also decorating a tree for the Belpre Holiday Lights Festival at Civitan Park. They are also planning to hand out hot chocolate and cookies at the Parkersburg Christmas Parade on December 7.
- The Rector has created an Advent Devotional Booklet for individuals and families to use each day during Advent. They are available in the back of the church. He announced that the Adult/Teen Religious Education Class will not meet in December but will have Saturday sessions on January 25 and February 15.
- The Rector also reviewed and asked for input on a Parish Strategic Plan for 2025 and beyond. The key emphases are (1) excellence in liturgy and music, (2) increased public recognition, (3) improved communication and organizational clarity, (4) increased opportunities for fellowship and improved hospitality, (5) practicality and accessibility of religious education and spiritual growth, and (6) numerical growth in attendance and membership.

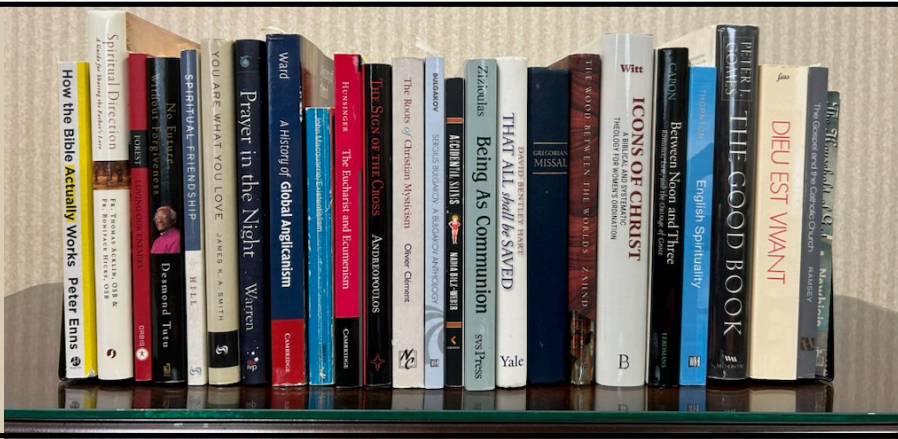
by Julie Rathbone, Registrar

**Smoot Theatre Vocal Ensembles Christmas Concert
at Trinity, Saturday, December 14 at 3:00 pm**

DECEMBER 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY																											
<p>FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT</p> <p>8:00 am — Eucharist, Rite I 9:00 am — Sunday school 9:30 am — Choir Rehearsal 10:30 am - Eucharist, Rite II</p>	<p>2</p> <p>11:00 am — Lunch Ministry</p>	<p>3</p> <p>8:00 am — Men's Breakfast 10:00 am — Clergy Bible study 5:00 pm — Smoot Girls Ensemble (Trinity Hall)</p>	<p>4</p> <p>12:15 — HE & Anointing (St John of Damascus)</p>	<p>5</p> <p>10:00 am — Bible Study</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p> <p>5:30 pm — Vigil Eucharist 7:00 pm — AA</p>																											
<p>SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT</p> <p>8:00 am — Eucharist, Rite I 9:00 am — Sunday school 9:30 am — Choir Rehearsal 10:30 am - Eucharist, Rite II 5:30 pm — Movie Night</p>	<p>9</p> <p>11:00 am — Lunch Ministry</p>	<p>10</p> <p>8:30 am — Men's Breakfast (at First Lutheran Church) 10:00 am — Clergy Bible study 4:00 pm — Smoot Ensemble (Trinity Hall)</p>	<p>11</p> <p>12:15 — HE & Anointing (OL Guadalupe)</p>	<p>12</p> <p>10:00 am — Bible Study 11:00 pm — Knitters 12:30 pm — PEO Christmas Meeting</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p> <p>3:00 pm — Smoot Ensemble Concert 5:30 pm — Vigil Eucharist 7:00 pm — AA</p>																											
<p>5</p> <p>THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT</p> <p>8:00 am — Eucharist, Rite I 9:00 am — Sunday school 9:30 am — Choir Rehearsal 10:30 am - Eucharist, Rite II 4:00 pm — Blue Christmas</p> <p>Discretionary Sunday</p>	<p>16</p> <p>11:00 am — Lunch Ministry 6:30 pm — Vestry</p>	<p>17</p> <p>8:00 am — Men's Breakfast 10:00 am — Clergy Bible study</p>	<p>18</p> <p>12:15 — HE & Anointing (Ember Day)</p>	<p>19</p> <p>10:00 am — Bible Study</p>	<p>20</p> <p>6:00 pm — G.H. Dance Club (Trinity Hall)</p> <p>Trinity Times Deadline</p>	<p>21</p> <p>ST THOMAS</p> <p>5:30 pm — Vigil Eucharist 7:00 pm — AA</p>																											
<p>2</p> <p>FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT</p> <p>8:00 am — Eucharist, Rite I 9:00 am — Sunday school 9:30 am — Choir Rehearsal 10:30 am - Eucharist, Rite II Followed by greening of the church 5:30 pm — Game Night</p>	<p>23</p> <p>11:00 am — Lunch Ministry</p>	<p>24</p> <p>CHRISTMAS EVE</p> <p>5:00 pm — Lessons & Carols 10:30 pm - Prelude Music 11:00 pm - Festival Midnight Mass</p>	<p>25</p> <p>CHRISTMAS DAY</p> <p>9:00 am — Eucharist, Rite I</p> <p>Parish Office Closed</p>	<p>26</p> <p>ST STEPHEN</p> <p>9:00 am — Eucharist</p> <p>Parish Office Closed</p>	<p>27</p> <p>ST JOHN THE APOSTLE</p> <p>9:00 am — Eucharist</p>	<p>28</p> <p>HOLY INNOCENTS</p> <p>9:00 am — Eucharist</p> <p>NO EVENING LITURGY</p>																											
<p>9</p> <p>FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS</p> <p>9:00 am — Sunday school 10:30 am - Eucharist, Rite II</p>	<p>30</p> <p>11:00 am — Lunch Ministry</p>	<p>31</p> <p>EVE OF THE HOLY NAME OF JESUS</p> <p>6:00 pm — Eucharist</p>	<p>BIRTHDAYS</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>1. Peter Benjamin Thomas</td> <td>4. Susie Fitcher</td> <td>8. Quentine Oliphant</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. Caroline Peters Michael Hensley</td> <td>5. Richard Adams</td> <td>9. Lanae Dailey</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. Jamie Couch Linda Tucker</td> <td>6. Jeff Stump</td> <td>10. Maya Grace Parrish</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>7. Isabelle Grace Deem</td> <td>11. Bernard Bookman</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>8. McKenzie Cameron</td> <td>12. JT Thomas</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>13. Dick Bonnet</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>14. Loretta McGregor</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>15. Carty Ramsay</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>16. Larry Nutter</td> </tr> </table>			1. Peter Benjamin Thomas	4. Susie Fitcher	8. Quentine Oliphant	2. Caroline Peters Michael Hensley	5. Richard Adams	9. Lanae Dailey	3. Jamie Couch Linda Tucker	6. Jeff Stump	10. Maya Grace Parrish		7. Isabelle Grace Deem	11. Bernard Bookman		8. McKenzie Cameron	12. JT Thomas			13. Dick Bonnet			14. Loretta McGregor			15. Carty Ramsay			16. Larry Nutter	<p>ANNIVERSARIES</p> <p>9. Rae & Kevin Oliphant 15. Connie & Jim Batten</p>
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The Rector's Bookshelf

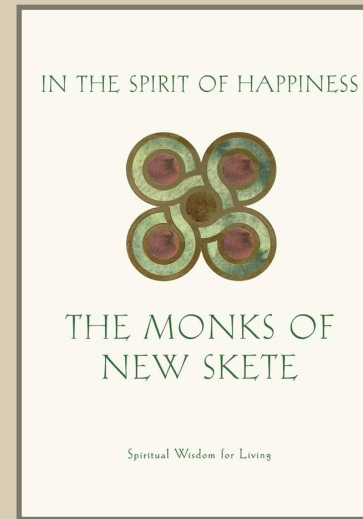


In the Spirit of Happiness

The Monks of New Skete
Little, Brown, and Co., 1999

"If God made us to know, love, and serve him in this world, and to be happy with him in the next, if he made us to become like him, then it must be that we've got to become happy. Because God is absolutely, without a doubt, the happiest being around. You can't find a happier one. He's eternal, everlasting peace and tranquility, inner harmony, full consciousness of everything that is, was, will be, could be, should be. And here we have a hint of where our happiness comes from."

In upstate New York, just about a 45 minute drive from the Albany airport, not too far from the Vermont border, is a monastic community. Here Orthodox monks and nuns pray daily, work, write, and receive guests as monastics have done for thousands of years. But, although steeped in tradition, they live a monastic life adapted to the realities of contemporary America. The Monks of New Skete are perhaps best known as award winning breeders of German Shepherds and trainers of dogs of all sorts. They are the authors of the best selling *How to Be Your Dog's Best Friend* and *The Art of Raising a Puppy*. The associated Nuns of New Skete are known for their gourmet cheesecakes, which have landed them a guest appearance on the *Rachel Ray Show*.



Over two decades ago, the monks wrote a wonderful work of spirituality, *In the Spirit of Happiness*, a book with the kind of title one wouldn't expect from Orthodox monks with their long beards and heavy black robes. But it was timely then and I believe it is timely today. We all desire happiness - for ourselves, for our families and friends. As a nation, our founding documents speak of the right to "the pursuit of happiness." And yet, we are often a very profoundly *unhappy* people.

In this lovely book, the monks take the time to expound what true happiness is and where it is to be found. Telling the story of a composite character, "the Seeker," they use the lens of monastic life to discuss the realities that are part and parcel of *all* spiritual life: things like spiritual dryness, discipline, the changes and chances of life, the life of the heart, prayer, love, trust, mercy, forgiveness, and - that much misunderstood Orthodox concept - *theosis* (becoming like God). Along the way, one learns a bit about Eastern Christian spirituality, worship, and monasticism, but not in a way that excludes those of us from other traditions.

While dealing with profound and sometimes difficult subjects, *In the Spirit of Happiness* is nonetheless a light-hearted read. After all, it is about happiness. And these monks - among the happiest people I've met in my life - are able to write about happiness from their own profound experience of happiness living in the love of God.



The sanctuary in the Temple of Holy Wisdom at New Skete Monastery



Are you interested in Confirmation, Reception, or Reaffirmation?

Confirmation is the Sacramental Rite of the Church in which we express a mature commitment to Christ, and receive strength from the Holy Spirit through prayer and the laying on of hands by the bishop. Those to be confirmed are people who have previously been baptized, are sufficiently instructed in the Christian faith, are penitent for their sins, and are ready to affirm their confession of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

Reception is the Rite by which we welcome into the Anglican Communion those who have been previously confirmed by bishops in the historic episcopate (e.g. Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox). Since their confirmations are recognized by the Anglican Communion, re-confirmation is not administered.

Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows is a rite of our church in which those who have been Confirmed, but who would like to renew their commitment may do so, witnessed by the Bishop.

If you are interested in being Confirmed, Received, or Reaffirming your Baptismal Vows, please make this known to Fr. Geoff. The Bishop's 2025 visitation has not yet been scheduled, but when it is, we will plan to present members for these rites at that time.

Learning the Christian Way

In September and October, several parishioners gathered on Tuesday evenings for a potluck and a class on **The Christian Faith**. We discussed the Scriptures, how we received them, and how we interpret them; the Creeds of the Church and the early ecumenical councils; and the content of the Christian hope.



In the new year, we will continue our study with **The Christian Community** (about the Church and its practices), **The Christian Way** (about the mission and means of the Christian life), and **The Anglican Heritage** (about how we, as Episcopalians, live out the Christian Way). All are welcome, especially those who would like to be Confirmed or Received in the Episcopal Church. The schedule is as follows:

- The Christian Community
Saturday, January 25, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm
- The Christian Way
Saturday, February 15, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm
- The Anglican Heritage
Tuesdays, March 11 - April 1, 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm

Weekly Bible Study continues
Thursdays at 10:00 am
on the **Book of the Revelation**
In the Conference Room or on Zoom: 833 7827 8365
ALL ARE WELCOME



Good Morning Peterkin People!

Giving Tuesday ->> December 3, 2024 ->> is upon us!

Last year, the Diocese set a goal of \$20,000 for Giving Tuesday pledges, and Peterkin alums responded with almost \$35,000!

This year, we're setting a GivingTuesday pledge goal of \$44,000. The good news is that we've already received \$17,000!

Like last year, our plan is to receive your pledges by Giving Tuesday, and then we ask that you make your donation (or, as an alternative, that you establish recurring monthly giving that equals your pledge) by the end of January 2025.

To pledge - It's easy as 1, 2, or 3!

1. Send an email to jcormack@wvdiocese.org and provide your name and the amount that you wish to pledge.

Or ...

2. Make your donation and be done with it by making an online donation at the link below:
<https://give.tithe.ly/peterkin>

Or ...

3. Mail your donation to (by the end of January 2025):
Peterkin Camp and Conference Center
286 Club House Road
Romney WV 26757

GIVING TUESDAY



Thank you for your consideration!!!

Peterkin 2025 Events Calendar

VTS Retreat* - March 20-22	Alpha Camp - June 29-July 2
Work Weekend - March 28-30	Senior Camp - July 6-12
Spring at Peterkin - April 4-6	Music, Art & Drama Camp - July 13-19
Mindfulness Retreat* - April 24-28	Family Camp - July 20-26
Women's Retreat - May 1-4	Mindfulness Retreat* - September 18-24
Gardener's Weekend - May 16-18	Private Wedding* - September 26-28
Counselor Training - June 6-14	Autumn at Peterkin - October 3-5
Junior Camp - June 15-20	Fall Event - Theme TBD - October 17-19
Intermediate Camp - June 22-28	Halloween at Peterkin - November 1

*Private Event



Thanksgiving Outreach

As in previous years, through the generosity of our congregation, we were able to once again provide Parkersburg families with food for Thanksgiving as well as a little extra for Thanksgiving week, while their children are out of school. This year twelve families received three boxes of food. Special thanks to Steve Turner, Linda Bennett, and Mark Edwards.



Thrive Brown Bag Collection



Throughout the November, the parish gathered non-perishable food items in brown bags to support Thrive Community Resources. Over thirty-nine bags were collected by Sunday, Nov. 24 and delivered to Thrive on the 26th.



Advent Words

On the four Sundays of Advent, at 9:30 we will gather in the Conference Room for a study of four words often associated with Advent: **Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love**. We will look at these words in Scripture and discuss their context, usage, application, and more!



Trinity Episcopal Church
430 Juliana Street
Parkersburg, WV 26101

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Dated Material Please Deliver Promptly*

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**MOVIE
NIGHT**



Sunday, December 8 at 5:30 pm in Trinity Hall
(use the St. Francis Courtyard Entrance)