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# The Trinitarian



News, Notes and Inspiration from Trinity Church Oxford

December 2011

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## Our Staff

[The Rev. Richard Robyn,](#)

[Rector](#)

Mary Sampson, M.A.,  
Organist/Choirmaster

[Chris Claypoole, Secretary](#)

Michael Pacillio, Sexton



## From the Rector

My Dear People,

A wise priest once warned me about the futility of fighting against the popular culture—especially when it comes to the "holiday" season. In seminary (which is nothing like real life), we had a professor whom we affectionately termed the "Advent Police." The General Seminary is a beautiful place at any

time of year, and since most of us were never there for the actual Christmas season, some wanted to see a little greenery here and there to get us into the spirit of things. The Advent Police would only allow plain wreaths with simple blue bows and nothing else! No tinsel, no lights, no ornaments, and certainly no red or green color combinations.

So there we were with our Charlie Brown wreaths in the middle of Manhattan, while all around us the tough, gritty city transformed itself into a child's Christmas wonderland. (I firmly believe that the only thing in this life that is "just like the movies" is Christmas in New York.)

Looking back on those memories from my "real world" vantage point, what was the lesson? Was our Advent Policeman just spinning his wheels, or was he instilling in us some valuable insight?

The lesson I learned from him is that being a Christian in Advent is a lot like being a Christian at any other time of the year. It involves counter-cultural practice and discipline. Advent comes from the Latin word *adventus*, which means "coming." It is the season of joyfully expectant waiting for the coming Nativity of Jesus Christ at Christmas. Observing the season of Advent and trying to shut out all the noise and commercial

## Our Vestry

[Dorothy Orr, Rector's Warden](#)

Judith Maile, Accounting  
Warden  
John Annand  
Nellie Duddy  
Lynne Geliebter  
Rose McClarin  
Pamela McCracken  
Charles McGee  
Victoria Sayers  
Melinda Weaver  
Judith Williamson

## Website Resources

[Calendar](#)  
[History](#)  
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[Newsletter Archive](#)  
[Photos](#)  
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## Trinity Tidbit

When the St Mark's Frankford Vestry came to Trinity to discuss their gift of a tree for our graveyard, I got talking to Diane DeMar and discovered that she knew some of the Whitakers that are buried at Trinity. The Whitaker mill was located at the intersection of F St and Tabor Road. The Mill made bed ticking for the Civil War and the company held various textile machinery patents. It was sold and transferred to a Massachusetts company in 1974 and demolished soon afterwards. There is an historical marker across the street from where the mill was located, next to the original mill houses. You can see them on Tabor Rd where the Park meets the road.

Mindy Weaver

From Diane:

"The Whitaker mansion was at Tabor & Adams where the shopping center now sits. That was my first experience seeing a home that had an elevator, access to all three

clamor is among the most obviously counter-cultural things we do.

That being said, God is fully aware of our cultural surroundings, and of the frustration that comes from swimming up stream. Far from wanting us to shun our world, God wants us to go bravely out into it, sharing His light and His love, with Him at our side.

With that in mind, take some time this month to be quiet, to pray by yourself or with your family, and to meditate on the coming of our Lord, which we will celebrate gloriously on the 24th. And wherever you go...to your office party...to your child's school concert...to the tree lot...or even (gasp) to the mall...take a bit of the peace of Advent with you in your heart.

Blessings, Father Richard



## All Saints Celebration

On Sunday, November 6, we celebrated the Feast of All Saints with a family service at which the children of the parish served in many capacities and shared with us some interesting facts and drawings about their favorite saints.

Many thanks to the Reverend Donald T. Graff who filled in for Father Richard while he was away at the CREDO conference in North Carolina. Father Don recently retired and has graciously agreed to serve as priest associate. Please welcome him and his wife Betty to the Trinity family!



## Annual Leaf Raking Extravaganza

The property committee and its chair, Chuck McGee, would like to thank everyone who helped with this year's raking of the leaves. 31 parishioners and neighbors filled 281 bags of leaves (19% more than last year). It was a beautiful day and a good time was had by all. Breakfast was served in the morning and we had hot dogs for lunch. Please visit our website to [see pictures](#) of the festivities.



## Blessing of the Animals

Please visit our website to [see pictures recently uploaded of our celebration](#) of the Feast of St. Francis on Sunday, October 9. Many of our parishioners and neighbors brought their dogs to church (we even had a cat!) and Father Richard's chickens were a big hit. It was a wonderful chance to give thanks for all the joy pets bring to our lives.



## Children's Christmas Pageant

Our annual telling of the Christmas Story will take place on Sunday, December 18, at 10am in the Parish House Auditorium (enter on Rising Sun Avenue) and will be

floors in the mansion and a nice size greenhouse off the rear porch. I recall as a young child running past the mansion because we were all scared to death of the unknown rich people that lived there. As a freshman in high school I was introduced to Henrietta Whitaker and asked to befriend her as she was not a social person, to say the least. Many memories came from that meeting. I got to know the mansion intimately and had many a lunch there and learned to love one of Henrietta's uncles, who encouraged me to call him Uncle Chase. I dare say he was the most loving and generous of the family. I recall at Henrietta's wedding reception Uncle Chase taking my son, who was a toddler, from me and saying you and your little girl, who was the flower girl, look way too pretty to be chasing after a toddler. Uncle Chase took him, fed him and entertained my son through the entire reception right up there at the head table. To this day I don't know who enjoyed it more, Uncle Chase, my son, or my ex-husband who didn't have to do anything other than enjoy himself, as the rest of us were at the head table as the wedding party or Uncle Chase's charge for the day."



followed by Eucharist and coffee hour. The theme will be a one-year reunion on the Oprah show of all those involved in the story of Jesus' birth. All are welcome!

The dress rehearsal will take place on Saturday, December 17, at 10am followed by lunch in the parish house. Volunteers are needed to help prepare and serve lunch. Contact Dottie Orr or Lorie Henry if you can help. Please visit our website to [see pictures and video](#) from last year's pageant.



### Christmas at Trinity

For more than 300 years, families have celebrated Christmas at Trinity. This year, be a part of that tradition and invite a friend or neighbor to join you. On Christmas Eve, we will have a family candlelight service at 7pm.

Our junior and bell choirs will sing and ring at this service, there will be a child-oriented sermon, and hymns sung by candlelight. At 10pm on Christmas Eve, the senior choir will offer a concert of Christmas favorites, followed by a traditional "Midnight Mass" at 10:30pm.

On Christmas Day, mass will be said at 9am. If you know of anyone who needs a ride to Christmas services, please contact the church office by [email](#) or phone at (215) 745-6114.



### Christmas Ornament

A few months ago we created a beautiful Christmas ornament featuring our historic church building. It is based on a drawing made by Thomas Wharton for the Historic American Buildings Survey in 1936. The original drawings are held by the Library of Congress in Washington DC. You may purchase one for \$20 after church or by sending a check to the church office for \$25 (which includes shipping & handling). It may also be purchased via the donate button on our [website](#).



### Deacon Update

I am finishing my 200 hours of social service internship. My internships were at the Free Church of St John, Seamen's Church Institute, and St Mark's Frankford. They were each, in their own way, unique and wonderful experiences. I learned a lot and it was an honor to work with so many terrific people.

We finished the year with a two day retreat for all deacon postulants at the Quaker Retreat Center Pendle Hill. We have become a close-knit group as we travel this road together. Next year I will begin 400 hours of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) which will be in a hospital setting and give me experience in pastoral care and chaplaincy work.

I am reading a book for Advent called "It's Not YOUR Birthday". It stresses the fact that we should be celebrating the season of Christ's birth with less consumerism and more giving (worship fully, spend less, give

more, love all). In that vein, I would like to suggest that you check out the [Advent Conspiracy](#) website. I was asked by several people about needs the Simple Way might have. They have asked for help with their Urban Bedroll/Sleeping Bag Project. These are handed out to the homeless and can be easily made by one person (see [link](#) for directions).

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6

May you all have a blessed Advent and Christmas!  
Phil



### Diocesan Convention

On Saturday, November 5, Dottie Orr, Pam McCracken and Vicki Sayers joined more than 600 delegates representing 115 parishes at the 228th Convention of the Diocese of Pennsylvania. At the event, our own Phil Geliebter was introduced as a postulant for the diaconate and Father Richard's appointment to the Commission on Ministry was confirmed.

Please visit the diocesan website for [more information](#) about the meeting. Please also note that Pete Datos has been selected to represent the Pennypack Deanery on Diocesan Council, the group that helps carry on the business of the diocese between conventions.



### Episcopal Community Services

We have adopted 18 children who are 7 or 8 years old for the holidays from [Episcopal Community Services](#) again this year. A board will be located near the font with the name, age and sex of the children with gift suggestions. These gifts will need to be returned to Trinity by December 7.



### ... From One Generation to Another

Bob and Ann Truesdale (center) were married at Trinity Church Oxford on December 15, 1945. Ann remains actively involved with our parish today, especially on the Altar Guild, and we are grateful to her for sharing this

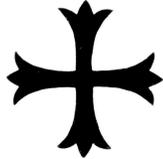
photograph with us. If you have a photo of a special occasion taken at Trinity over the years, please email us a copy or bring it in so that we can scan it and add it to our archives (all photos will be returned). We are especially looking for pictures of Trinity at Christmas over the years - our historian Mindy Weaver is putting together a Christmas at Trinity display for the Buchanan Building. Please visit the [Hall of History](#) on our website

for other special pictures taken at Trinity.



### **Greening the Church**

Join us after the Christmas Pageant on December 18 to help set up the flowers, aisle candles and greenery in the church. The traditional baked potato lunch will follow. Please visit our website to [see photos of last year's fun](#).



### **Memorials**

Each year, friends of Trinity remember loved ones with donations for music and flowers, which fill the church at Christmas. Please give generously so that we can continue this wonderful tradition. Donations may be placed in the offering on Sundays or dropped by the church office during the week. The deadline for recognition in the Christmas bulletin is Sunday, December 18. Please visit our website for a [complete list](#) of last year's memorials.



### **Music Ministry**

December is always a special time at Trinity Church Oxford. We invite you to experience the anticipation and joy of the season with our musical programs this month.

Dec 11 at 10am - Advent Lessons and Carols Music by the Senior Choir and Bella Corda String Ensemble, featuring the music of Bach, Handel, Mendelssohn, and others.

Dec 18 at 10am - Children's Christmas Pageant in the Parish Hall Auditorium (enter on Rising Sun Avenue)

Dec 24 at 7pm - Prelude of Carols by the Bell Choir, followed by Family Eucharist with music by the Junior Choir and Bell Choir.

Dec 24 at 10pm - Christmas Concert with music by the Senior Choir and Soloists followed by Festival Eucharist at 10:30pm

Musical events at Trinity are made possible by the generous donations of our parishioners and friends. Donations of any size make a difference and are greatly appreciated. Our Music Ministry wishes everyone a Happy and Blessed Christmas! Mary G. Sampson, Organist/Choirmaster



### **Philadelphia Protestant Home**

Trinity has requested the names of three residents of the Protestant Home with whom we can share the Christmas Spirit. These residents are those who do not have family close by or anyone at all to remember them at Christmas time. These names will also be placed on the board for Trinity people to take and purchase an item of clothing that has been requested.



## Sermons Online

Have you ever skipped church on a Sunday and wondered what you missed? Have you ever heard such a great sermon that you wished you could share it with a friend or family member? Well, now you can.

We've created a new feature on our website where the [audio recording](#) of each week's sermon is available, along with the readings. If you are not able to attend

church on Sunday, you can go online anytime during the week and get some insight into your faith. Please give it a try!



## Stewardship

Three cheers to the people of Trinity for the success of this year's pledge campaign! 51 pledges were received, of which 6 were new and 12 were increased from last year. In total, pledge support is up 17% over last year. There are a few pledges still outstanding and we hope they will come in soon, as the Vestry is finalizing the budget for the coming year. On behalf of the Faith Building Committee and the Vestry, thank you for your continued support. Mindy Weaver, Stewardship Chair



## Thanksgiving Food Baskets

Thank you to everyone who donated turkeys, fixings, and money for our food baskets. On November 22, the Girls Friendly Society finished shopping and packed 8 baskets in time for them to be delivered to needy families from our neighborhood and the Crossan and Moore Schools. Thanks to your generosity, we were able to provide Thanksgiving dinner for 49 people.



## Vestry Highlights

At the November meeting of the vestry, we approved the minutes and financial statements from the September and October meetings. We also discussed several ongoing property issues such as leaf raking, steeple repair, trim repair and painting on the Parish House, and received the first bid for the removal of a large, unstable tree in the churchyard. The vestry also approved bids for a new copier/printer/scanner from Ricoh and a stormwater charge remediation plan to be submitted to the city through an environmental engineering company. Finally, the vestry affirmed Fr. Richard's appointment of Fr. Don Graff as priest associate. Our next Vestry meeting is on Monday, December 19 at 7pm in the Buchanan Building.



## Women of Trinity

On Tuesday, December 13, the ladies will hold their annual Christmas luncheon in the Buchanan Building at noon. We wish you all a blessed and merry Christmas. For more information concerning the Women of Trinity, please [email Nellie Duddy](#) or call her at (215) 745-3739.

## Calendar and Your Feedback

Please visit the [interactive online calendar](#) on our website that allows you to view events at Trinity by week or month, and in a variety of formats. You can also print out the calendar in a way that works best for you. Please also email any input for the January Trinitarian to me by December 27. Cheers, [Pete](#) (your Trinitarian editor)

## Schedule of Events

Every Sunday (except Christmas Day & New Year's Day), Mass at 8am (spoken) and 10am (with music and church school during the service, followed by coffee hour in the Buchanan Building)

Every Sunday (except Christmas Day & New Year's Day), Senior Choir rehearsal at 8:45am in the Buchanan Building, Junior Choir rehearsal after church in the Choir Room

Thursday, December 1, Bell Choir Rehearsal at 7:30pm in the Church

Saturday, December 3, Leaf-Raking Extravaganza from 9:30am to noon in the Churchyard (rain date: December 10)

Tuesday, December 6, Girls Friendly Society at 7pm in the Children's House

Wednesday, December 7, String Ensemble Rehearsal at 7:30pm in the Church

Thursday, December 8, Bell Choir rehearsal at 7:30pm in the Church

Sunday, December 11, Advent Lessons & Carols at 10am in the Church

Tuesday, December 13, Wardens' Meeting at 9:30am in the Church Office

Tuesday, December 13, Women of Trinity Annual Christmas Luncheon at noon in the Buchanan Building

Tuesday, December 13, Girls Friendly Society at 7pm in the Children's House

Thursday, December 15, Bell Choir rehearsal at 7:30pm in the Church

Saturday, December 17, Pageant Dress Rehearsal at 10am in the Parish House Auditorium with lunch afterward

Sunday, December 18, Christmas Pageant (with Eucharist) at 10am in the Parish House Auditorium (enter on Rising Sun Avenue) followed by Greening of the Church (with baked potato lunch)

Monday, December 19, Vestry Meeting at 7pm in the Buchanan Building

Thursday, December 22, Bell Choir rehearsal at 7:30pm in the Church

Saturday, December 24, Candlelight Family Service at 7pm in the Church (child-oriented service with junior and bell choirs, children's sermon and hymns by candlelight (Bell Choir report time is 6:15pm)

Saturday, December 24, Senior Choir Concert at 10pm in the Church followed by "Midnight Mass" at 10:30pm (traditional liturgy with full choir and strings)

Sunday, December 25, Christmas Day Holy Eucharist (spoken) at 9am in the Church

Sunday, January 1, Holy Name of Jesus, Eucharist (spoken) at 9am in the Church

# Advent Lessons & Carols

December 11, 2011

10:00am

Senior Choir &  
String Ensemble

Music of Bach, Handel, and Mendelssohn

Mary G. Sampson, M.A.  
Organist/Choirmaster

Trinity Church, Oxford  
Oxford Ave. at Longshore  
215-745-6114



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