# The Tidings



# 2201 Spring Lake Rd. Fruitland Park, FL 34731

Church Office: 352-787-1500 School Office: 352-787-8855



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# Happy December Anniversary To: (

- 25 David & Pat Fleming
- 30 Rod & Kathy Jones
- 31 Parker & Charlotte Bauer

# Happy December Birthday To:

- 1 Betty Torian
- **2** Rod Jones
- 6 Jean-Baptiste Alcenat
- 10 Madge Brown
- 14 Madeline Panlilio
- 18 Randy Siver

1

In Loving Memory Of: 🗲

# Deborah Harmon

- **22** Patsy Tyler
- 25 Ray D'Auria
- 26 Ted Koelln
- 27 Gary Hess
- 28 Anne Hankwitz

# **Rector's Message** Give Thanks with a Grateful Heart

Fr. Samuel Nsengiyumva



I write this reflection a day after the Feast of Christ the King, three days before Thanksgiving Day, and 6 days before the first Sunday of Advent. As you can imagine, the scripture readings for those special days are ringing in my

ears and filling me with immense gratitude.

At our Christ the King services, we read that Jesus "loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood, and made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God and Father." (Revelation 1:5). At the Thanksgiving service, we will be reading that "The threshing floors shall be full of grain, the vats shall overflow with wine and oil. ... You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, who has dealt wondrously with you. And my people shall never again be put to shame." (Joel 2:26). On the first Sunday in Advent, we will read that "In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land." (Jeremiah 33:15).

All these readings put together affirm a theme of what God has done and what God will do. They reflect a message of hope in a hurting world. Because of what God has done in Christ, we have hope for the future; and for that we give thanks.

Over the years, I have come to believe that gratitude and hope are choices we make

regardless of circumstances. The General Thanksgiving prayer, on page 836 in our Book of Common Prayer, articulates this point by including thanks for "disappointments and failures that lead us to acknowledge our dependence on you [God] alone." The prayer concludes with thanksgiving for "Jesus Christ; for the truth of his Word and the example of his life ...; and for his rising to life again, in which we are raised to the life of your [God's] kingdom."

On this chilly Florida fall afternoon, I am grateful for all of you, my Holy Trinity Church family. I am grateful for your generosity of time, talent, and treasure as most recently manifested through another successful Stewardship Campaign. I am grateful for your resilience through the challenges of your personal lives and those of our shared life and mission. Above all, I am grateful for the grace of God that enables us to face each new day with faith, hope, and love.

As we begin this Advent season, may your heart be filled with gratitude for all the blessings of your life – your family and friends, work and leisure, food and shelter, and above all for Jesus the Christ who came that you may have life in its fullness (John 10:10). Because of Jesus, whose first coming we commemorate, and whose second coming we await, may you gladly sing:

Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One. Give thanks because He's given Jesus

Give thanks because He's given Jesus Christ, His Son.

And now let the weak say, "I am strong." Let the poor say, "I am rich." Because of what the Lord has done for us; Give thanks.

Happy Advent!

# **Vestry Elections 2025**

At our Annual Parish Meeting on Sunday January 26, 2025, we will need to elect three individuals to fill three Vestry positions to be vacated by current members who will have completed their three-year terms and are ineligible for re-election. We are therefore seeking candidates for the above positions that will become vacant in January 2025.

## What is a Vestry?

A Vestry is a body of elected congregational leaders. Congregations that have been granted parish status by their diocese are governed by their rector and the vestry. 'Traditionally, and by canon law, the vestry, consisting of wardens and other members, is the legal representative of the parish "in all matters concerning its corporate property and the relations of the Parish to its Clergy," except as may be provided by state law or diocesan canons (Constitution & Canons of the Episcopal Church, 1.14.2.). The number of vestry members and term of office varies from parish to parish. At Holy Trinity, we have 9 elected members.

## Most vestries have the following officers:

The Presiding Officer is the rector.

There are usually two wardens. The senior warden traditionally chairs the vestry in the absence of the rector and leads the congregation between rectors. In many parishes the senior warden is a support person for the rector. The junior warden often has a particular responsibility for church property and buildings.

A treasurer and secretary or clerk who may or may not be vestry members, may be chosen. The treasurer deposits and disburses funds and oversees financial record keeping. The secretary keeps the minutes, gives notices of meetings to the parish and maintains vestry records.

Some vestries have an Executive Committee of the rector, wardens, treasurer and committee chairs. They oversee implementation of decisions and plan the agenda.

The responsibility of the vestry, like that of the governing body of any organization, is to:

- Help define and articulate the mission of the congregation;
- Support the mission by word and deed;
- Ensure effective organization and planning;
- Ensure adequate resources in leadership and in financial stewardship;
- Manage resources effectively;
- Determine that appropriate programs, policies, and procedures have been developed and are followed;
- Assess its own performance.

Though the vestry has some similarities to a board of directors, it is important to remember that this ministry of leadership is exercised in the church. The success of a congregation is not measured in terms of numbers of members or size of the endowment, but rather in the degree to which it is working toward the fulfillment of the mission of the church.

## **Responsibilities of Individual Members of** the Vestry

- Regularly prepare for, attend, and participate in vestry meetings;
- Learn about the mission, goals, programs, services, activities, strengths, and needs of the congregation, diocese, and national church;
- Maintain confidentiality on sensitive topics;
- Serve the congregation as a whole rather than any specific group;

• Encourage complainants to talk directly with the person(s) involved; avoid taking sides; inform rector or senior warden of serious concerns;

From the Vestry Resource Guide by the Episcopal Church Foundation 1997

## A Suitable Candidate for vestry must be:

- A committed Christian who acknowledges Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior of his or her life.
- A confirmed communicant at least 18 years of age.
- An active voting member of Holy Trinity's parish for at least two years.
- One who understands the vision and mission of Holy Trinity and is willing to promote it in word and action among other members and the community at large.
- One who supports the life and mission of Holy Trinity by sharing his time, talent and treasure
- One who is involved in one or more ministry teams
- One who is willing to commit to one or more monthly vestry meetings and at least one annual training/retreat event
- One who is willing to provide leadership in every other aspect of our church life and mission.

If you or someone you know may be a good candidate, please talk to Fr. Samuel or any Vestry member.

For Pastoral Care we welcome you to contact:

**Robin Mitchell** 

(352)350-1451 | <u>RobinMitchell@yahoo.com</u>

Fr. Samuel Nsengiyumva (902)226-0050 | <u>rector@holytrinityfp.com</u>

OR call the church office Monday-Thursday during office hours.

# Sr. Warden's Report

**Happy Thanksgiving.** As I do every year, I want to note the things I am most Thankful



for with my Holy Trinity Family.

I am thankful for the projects we were able to accomplish this year, especially the new walkway. I am very thankful for the members who do-

nated so generously so it could be accomplished. I am thankful for our Sunday "Coffee Hour Angels". They never fail to deliver the most delightful goodies after services. The volunteers, who maintain the beauty of our property, are the reason we are proud to call Holy Trinity our spiritual home. Most of all I am thankful for the Altar Guild that works so hard to make sure everything runs smoothly during all services, and the altar looks its best at all times.

I am very thankful for the Vestry and their dedication to the stewardship you have

entrusted us with. None of this would run smoothly if not for the wonderful Office Staff we have.

So, this Thursday as I give thanks for my blessings, know my Holy Trinity Family is at the top of my list.

Doris Brennan – Sr. Warden

# Parishioner Spotlight: Mona Merryman

Mona Merryman has been attending Holy Trinity since 2010, so she's a familiar face around the church campus. What some may not know is that stained glass is one of her hobbies, and she worked on the stained glass in the Grace Chapel and the Parish Hall at



Holy Trinity. Mona was born in southern Maryland, grew up in northern Virginia and attended boarding school in Orlando. As a career, she

became an Advance Practice Nurse and college instructor; and co-authorized three nursing textbooks. Now retired, Mona has been a year-round resident of Springdale-Fairlawn Villas since 2004 with her rescue cat, Sasha. "A gentle, social fur baby who loves people and dogs, tolerates cats." Travel has been a constant in Mona's lifetime. She married an Air Force career officer which meant many moves in the future. While living in Thailand, they adopted twins, completing their family of four children. After his death, Mona met Leo Oxberger, and her travels continued on board their boat full time for ten years. One of Mona's hobbies is playing the piano and we all enjoy her talent often at Holy Trinity. She also enjoys reading and continues to be an avid traveler. She begins a 5<sup>th</sup> circumnavigation in mid-December of this year, visiting five continents, 38 countries, and 85 ports.

By Joan Hensley

## Treasurer's Report October 2024

Contributions	Actual	Budget
Pledges	\$27,601	\$25,167
Other Income	<u>\$ 5,712</u>	<u>\$ 3,558</u>
Total	\$33,313	\$28,725
Expenses	\$34,387	\$28,725

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. Matt. 5: 16

Russ Casson, Treasurer

# 2025 Estimate of Giving

Many thanks to all of you who responded to our stewardship campaign and brought in or mailed your Estimate of Giving (pledge) cards to be consecrated (set apart) for God's mission in this place in the coming year. So far we have received the following:

General Operating Fund:	
67 Pledges	\$221,076
Building Fund: 25 pledges	<u>\$19,330</u>
<b>Total Amount pledged:</b>	= \$240,406

If you have not had a chance to return your Estimate of Giving card, please do so as soon as you are able, so we may be able to finalize our budgeting process.

## **SCHOOL UPDATES**

Our school continues to thrive regardless of challenges related to leadership transitions over the past year.

**Golf Benefit:** The Golf Benefit held in October was a big success. We were able to raise over \$28,000 for the school. Many thanks to Judy & Gregg Monin for spearheading the effort and the many who contributed in a variety of ways to make it a success. Donations are always welcome by visiting our school website at htepiscopalschool.org

**Donations:** We have continued to receive donations for the school including a \$10,000 donation from a parishioner. We are eternally grateful to all who continue to give generously to support the work of the school.

New Initiatives: With additional staff, we have been able to introduce new initiatives to help our students succeed. The first month of our Social Emotional Learning (SEL) initiative is complete and we believe it has had significant impact. The theme for the month of November was Empathy. The students the meaning of empathy, examples of empathy, and practiced empathy. Future scheduled themes will include Respect, Communication, Conflict Resolution, Perseverance, Resilience & Personal Best, Friendships, Relationships & Peer Pressure, and Good Citizenship. Our Social Emotional Learning counselor is on campus on Mondays three times a month. Our ESE Teacher in collaboration with the School Counselor is busy developing Individual Learning Plans and Individual Behavior Plans. Our ESE specialist is developing a comprehensive ESE Program and instructions on how it will be implemented. Our Operations coordinator who also serves as our facilities manager is installing a school wide sound system to make

it possible to make announcements to everyone at the same time especially in times of emergency.

**Student Life:** The students elected their peers to the Student Council which immediately went to work by encouraging their fellow students to participate in a food drive to benefit the hungry during this holiday season. Over 400 food and other non-perishable items were collected and delivered to the Salvation Army food pantry. Members of the Student Council were officially commissioned at a Thanksgiving Eucharist held on Thursday November 21.



Some of the food items collected by HTES students.

A field trip is scheduled to the Kennedy Space Center in early December. Preparation for the annual Christmas play and a Christmas Lessons & Carols service are underway. Regardless of ongoing challenges good things are happening at HTES. With your continued support,

**Student Success:** One of our Senior students who is active in our chapel program has been accepted into a Christian college in Jacksonville to pursue a major in Christian Worship. We have recently been hearing stories of our alumni with successful careers in our community and beyond. Our school is truly making a difference.

**New Head of School Search:** The search for a new Head of School has begun. Applicants are being screened for potential interviews. The hope is to have our next Head of School identified by the end of March 2025. Parents Group: Our school parents' group has been busy raising funds to support a variety of causes to benefit the students. The Fundraiser at Fresh Jalapeño Mexican Restaurant raised \$235. The sale of discount cards to local businesses continues. Local businesses offering discounts to holders of the card include Dunkin Doughnuts, Papa Johns, Ruby Tuesday, Denny's, The Honey Baked Ham, Hungry Howie's, Oakwood Restaurant, The Coffee Snob, Advance Landscaping, Fresh Jalapeño Mexican Restaurant, J.P.G. Remodeling, BluSpoon, and several others. For more information on the discount, pick-up an information sheet in the Parish Hall. Discount cards can be purchased from the church office on weekdays.

> Fr. Samuel Nsengiyumva – Acting Head of School

## **138<sup>th</sup> Holy Trinity Anniversary Commemoration**

According to the book "Coming Home: The History of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Fruitland Park" by Ivan Ford, the first worship service for Holy Trinity Mission was held on December 19, 1986. The first service In commemoration of the founding of our beloved church, our worship services on Dec. 7 & 8 will be based on the 1789 Book of Common Praver which we believe was used in those days. The purpose will be to remember, honor, and identify with the faithful who built the foundation on which our shared life and mission stands today. If you are able to dress in a manner that was common in 1886, please feel free to do so. This will be a form of limited rehearsal for what we hope to be a big commemoration of our 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2026.



# Women's Fellowship

All women of Holy Trinity (and their guests!) are invited to a fun Christmas ladies fellowship gathering in the Parish Hall on Saturday, Dec. 7th from 2:00pm -4:00pm.

There will be festive refreshments and a White Elephant Gift Exchange. We'll finish up before the 4:15pm service.

Kindly sign up this Saturday or Sunday in the Parish Hall OR call Gisselle in the church office (352-787-1500) so we may plan food.

What to expect: Everyone brings a wrapped gift. It can be something gently used from home -OR- a purchased gift. A gift limit of  $\sim$ \$15 or less is suggested. We all pick a number and, in order, we choose a wrapped gift from the pile and open it; OR we can take an opened gift from someone and that person gets to choose a gift from the pile, or take. A change this year: The 3rd person to get a gift may keep it, if they wish. That gift is then frozen.

We hope to see you there for fellowship on Saturday the 7th! Hosted by the IWC ministry.

God's peace, Deb Yee | 703-472-1573



# Salvation Army Little Red Wagon Food Bank Collection

The Outreach committee is asking you all to contribute to the Salvation Army food bank by making deposits of nonperishable food in the Little Red Wagon at the front of the church on Sundays. Specifically, the Salvation Army is asking for breakfast cereal, peanut butter, bags/boxes of rice, instant potatoes, canned vegetables and canned meat. For more information about helping our brothers and sisters in Christ, please contact *Annette Freeman (352)406-7608.* 

# **HTEC Salvation Breakfast Team**

Besides Holy Trinity's contributions to the Salvation Army Food Bank via the Red Wagon we also have a fun loving and hardworking team of volunteers that provides breakfast service at the Leesburg Salvation Army post to a growing number of people in need. You can be part of this mission by joining our breakfast team for just 2 hours on the second and fifth Tuesdays of the month. For more information about serving our brothers and sisters in Christ, please contact *Jim Kelly (913) 558-2636*.

## **Salvation Army Bell Ringers**

We are eager to give you an update on our Belk's Salvation Army Bell Ringing coverage for the November - December holiday season. We are pleased to tell you that we are better than half way there with 32 of 56

Bell Ringer slots filled. Please check your calendars and consider taking just a 2hour slot to help those



in need. We have slots available in the following dates in December; 13, 14, 19, 20, and 21st.

What we would also ask you to reflect on is that our participation in Bell Ringing is part of a reciprocal agreement between Holy Trinity Episcopal Church and the Salvation Army post in Leesburg that includes breakfast service, Food Bank contributions, clothing, and Christmas Angels gifts for children.

This arrangement was made a number of years ago when we asked the post commander if we could send families in need to the Leesburg post that come to us when we simply do not have the resources to handle their needs, without hesitation he said "yes". We then asked what we could do in return to help the Salvation Army, his answer was, "pray for us and ring bells".

For Bell Ringer Registration instructions please call (913) 558-2636 or email Jim-Kelly8143@gmail.com.

Peace, HTEC Outreach Team



# **Holy Hackers**

Our Holy Hackers monthly golf scramble and fellowship took place on Saturday, November 9, 2024 with a 9:30 Tee Off and lunch following at 11:00 at The Grille at Pennbrooke Fairways. The weather was beautiful and we had fifteen golfers and observers out on the course. Our low scoring group for the day at three under par was Randy Siver & Mike Browne, with Deb Siver, out of action after major shoulder surgery, observing and advising.



All of our golfers and guests joined us for lunch afterwards. Pat Fleming joined us for

the first time in years, and David Fleming made his golfing debut a very memorable one. He now has his own equipment, has taken a lesson or a few and his enthusiasm is a very welcome addition to our group. We can't wait to see him progress.



Our next outing is scheduled for Sat., December 14th with a 9:30 a.m. tee off time. All are invited to join us for golf, and lunch & fellowship afterwards, or if you are not a golfer please consider joining us for the lunch.

# WELCOME Baby Boy!

Atlas Ludislao William McCartin was born at 12:19AM at Waterman Hospital in

Tavares, FL on November 14th, at a weight of 7 lbs. 8 ounces and length of 20 inches by Lili Panlilio & Haiden McCartin!!! Mom and



baby are healthy!!! And a huge thank you to everyone for all the love and support, and beautiful baby shower by Deb Yee and the thoughtful gifts, and beautiful cards!! Thank you!!! Love you, Blessings to all! *-Mandy Panlilio* 

# **Adult Sunday School**

Our weekly Adult Sunday School resumes this Sunday December 1, 9:15 a.m. - 10:15 am. We will be studying a video series entitled "Light of the World: A Beginner's Guide to Advent" by A.J. Levine. In the DVD series she explores the biblical texts surrounding the story of the birth of Jesus through the stories of Zechariah and Elizabeth, Mary, the journey to Bethlehem, and the visit from the Magi. These stories open conversations around connections of the Gospel stories to the Old Testament, the role of women in firstcentury Jewish culture, the importance of Mary's visitation and the revolutionary implications of Mary's Magnificat, the census and the stable, and the star of Bethlehem and the flight to Egypt.

# Vestry Meeting Highlights November 21, 2024

The Vestry met for their monthly meeting on Thursday, November 21, 2024 to discuss matters of importance to the life and mission of our church. The following are the highlights of the meeting:

- The meeting began with an opening prayer from Fr. Samuel followed by the Vestry prayer said in unison.
- Fr. Samuel announced that the Diocesan Convention to be held January 24 and 25, at Trinity Episcopal Church in Vero Beach Florida. 3 lay delegates are needed to represent Holy Trinity.
- The rector reminded the Vestry of the need to fill the 3 openings on the Vestry beginning January 2025.
- The rector reported on the ongoing work of the Campus Exploration Task Force and the School Separate Incorporation

Task Force. Progress is being made by both task-forces.

- The vestry affirmed the proposed Ladies Holiday Event-December 7<sup>th</sup> 2-4 PM
- The Vestry affirmed the idea of a 138<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration worship service
- The Vestry affirmed the schedule for our Christmas services as follows:

Christmas Eve Services-December 24<sup>th</sup>- 4:00 PM and 8:00 PM

Christmas Day Services-10:30 AM

- The Vestry affirmed Sunday January 26 as the day for our Annual Parish Meeting. There will be one worship service at 9:30 am followed by lunch and business meeting at 11:00 am in the Parish Hall..
- The vestry was updated on the ongoing Stewardship Campaign
- The Vestry reviewed and accepted the treasurer's report for November.
- The Vestry unanimously approved the proposal to repair of the church's historic lych-gate
- The Vestry approved a proposal to host an Organ Concert by Dyanne Awe at Holy Trinity in early January. A free-will offering will be received to benefit Holy Trinity School. Details will be communicated as soon as they are concluded.
- The school continues to grow with a new student enrolling in January.
- The Vestry approved the proposal to send the total amount raised for Hurricane Relief to St. Ann's in Crystal River – a parish in our Deanery that suffered significant damage from Hurricane Helene.
- The Vestry meeting concluded with Compline (late evening prayer).



# Adult Sunday School | Every Sunday

Our weekly Adult Sunday School resumes this **Sunday December 1, 9:15 am - 10:15 am**. We will be studying a video series entitled "Light of the World: A Beginner's Guide to Advent" by A.J. Levine. In the DVD series she explores the biblical texts surrounding the story of the birth of Jesus through the stories of Zechariah and Elizabeth, Mary, the journey to Bethlehem, and the visit from the Magi. These stories open conversations around connections of the Gospel stories to the Old Testament, the role of women in first-century Jewish culture, the importance of Mary's visitation and the revolutionary implications of Mary's Magnificat, the census and the stable, and the star of Bethlehem and the flight to Egypt.

# Women's Fellowship Gathering | DEC. 7

Please join us on Saturday, December 7th from 2pm-4pm for a White Elephant gift exchange and refreshments. Please sign up in Parish Hall or email <u>office@holytrinityfp.com</u>.

# Picture Day | DEC. 1 & Another Dec. Day TBD

We will be taking portrait photos after both services on Sunday, Dec. 1st. All are welcome! If you are satisfied with your existing photo in the 2023 Directory, there is no need to have your photo taken. If you would like to use your own photo, please email the office. This is completely optional; the Directory photos are simply a keepsake of memories & a way to put a face to a name.

# 138th Anniversary Commemoration | DEC. 7/8

We will be commemorating the 138th anniversary of our church's founding on the weekend of December 7/8, 2024. The liturgy will mirror the one used in 1886.

# Holy Hackers | DEC. 14

All are welcome to join us at our next outing for golf and/or lunch on **Saturday, December 14th**, we look forward to seeing you then. The sign-up sheet is in Parish Hall or contact David Aldrich: 203-258-9643 | <u>aldrichkp68@gmail.com</u>

# Christmas at Holy Trinity | Dec. 24 & 25

## **Christmas Eve**

Tuesday Dec. 24, 4:00 pm – Christmas Eve Service Rite 2 8:00 pm - Christmas Eve Service *with Choir &* 

Guest musicians

## <u>Christmas Day</u>

Wednesday Dec. 25, 10:30 am – Christmas day Service Rite 2

# Holy Trinity Episcopal Church and School

2201 Spring Lake Road Fruitland Park FL 34731 Office Phone: 352-787-1500 | School Phone: 352-787-8855

#### Clergy

The Rev. Samuel Nsengiyumva – Rector rector@holytrinityfp.com Cell: 920-226-0050 The Rev. Dr. Janice Gordon-Barnes – Assisting Priest janice.gordonbarnes@yahoo.com The Rev. Dr. James Jones – Assisting Priest jamesjones1454@outlook.com The Rev. Charlie Perrin – Deacon charlie-perrin@outlook.com The Rev. Dick LaBud – Deacon rjlabud@gmail.com

#### **Staff:**

Gisselle Martinez – Office Administrator/ Communications Assistant Kathy Wolfe - Bookkeeper Sharon Redding – Music Director Lori Clark - Housekeeping Seth Trees, HTES Operations Coordinator <u>strees@htespiscopalschool.org</u>

#### **Contact Information:**

Email: <u>office@holytrinityfp.com</u> Website: <u>https://www.holytrinityfp.com/</u> Facebook: <u>www.facebook.com/holytrinityfruit-</u> <u>landpark</u> **Office Hours:** Monday – Thursday 9:00am – 2:00pm

#### **In-Person & Livestream Services:**

Saturday 4:15pm (Sanctuary) Sunday 8:00am (Sanctuary) Sunday 10:30am (Sanctuary) Wednesday Healing 11:30am (Chapel)

#### **Vestry:**

Doris Brennan – Sr. Warden dabmag@hotmail.com | 352-751-5406 Bob Freeman – Jr. Warden Captbob147@gmaiL.com | 352-753-0025 Debbie Lally - Secretary michaellally@comcast.net | 352-561-4961 Pat Fleming Trisha12552@aol.com Judy Gygi Jgygi2876@gmail.com | 407-461-5647 Jim Kelly jimkelly8142@gmail.com | 352-571-5531 Steve Knowles steveli2@yahoo.com | 352-504-8921 **Robin Mitchell** robinmitchell@yahoo.com | 352-350-1451 Mandy Panlilio Mandy0710@yahoo.com | 352-408-7106

# Newsletter Articles: Please submit by 25<sup>th</sup> of each month Gisselle Martinez, <u>office@holytrinityfp.com</u>