



The 182nd Annual Meeting of the members of Trinity Episcopal Church

January 28, 2024, 11 a.m.
Trinity Parish Hall
Athens, Pennsylvania

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I. Supply Priest Report

January, 2024

LONG-TERM SUPPLY PRIEST UNOFFICIAL ANNUAL REPORT

Once again I've titled this report as "unofficial" and that is because I am not required to make a report. Last year I simply reported my deepest thanks to you for the opportunity to celebrate with and for you the great gift of Christ, the Eucharist. I renew those thanks for another year passed.

Aside from showing up on Sunday morning, preaching (hopefully not 'sermonizing'), and flapping my arms behind the altar, I also visit people in the hospital, that is, if I know they are there. Please let me know if you are hospitalized, I lost my psychic ability to perceive hospitalizations when I officially retired back in 2006.

I am also pleased to be offering a weekly Bible Study beginning this January, in fact I expected that we will have a few sessions under our belt by the time of the Annual Meeting. Just as I don't see preaching, celebrating the Eucharist and making hospital visits as 'work,' I am always happy to talk about the Bible and share thoughts about the scriptures.

It also pleases me to see the commitment of this congregation to outreach. It amazes me what such a small congregation, with limited resources, is able to do in striving together to be the presence of God in our community. Again, thank you for the opportunity to share in your ministry. May God continue to bless this congregation and its mission.

Benjamin Lentz

II. Senior Warden's Report to the 2024 Annual Meeting

As I write this I have not yet seen the year end financial numbers on the investment accounts. They can be found elsewhere in this document by the time of the annual meeting. Hopefully they will show an increase over last year, but I expect it will be small.

Overall, we did a good job of living within our budget for 2023. Our income exceeded budget and our expenses were just slightly under budget. This balance was again aided by the fact that we budgeted for a fulltime organist but only had a part time organist; and once again, Fr. Ben donated half of his stipend back to Trinity. Thank you, Fr. Ben.

The only significant non-budgeted expense I can recall for the year was the need to replace the ceiling in portions of the second floor of the Rectory which was falling down due to previous water damage. We managed to cover this repair without withdrawal of assets. I should note that a significant amount of labor by the residents of the Rectory contributed to making this possible.

On a positive note looking forward, Don Barton, through his estate, left us a bequest in the amount of \$10,000 for maintenance and repair of the organ. Some work is definitely required. Hopefully 2024 will be the year to identify a list of issues and establish a budget to make them happen.

Overall our financial picture is reasonably stable so long as there are no major unbudgeted expenses. The last of the money borrowed to repair the bell tower in 2010/2011 has been repaid. At our November Vestry meeting the Vestry voted to continue the withdrawal rate on the Maurice Trust at 7% where it has been for the last five years with the objective of not spending it all and reinvesting the unused portion in the DIT. This will serve a dual purpose of providing a bit of flexibility for unbudgeted expenses and allow us (if successful) to build up a reserve in the DIT for future expenses which may occur. In the long term, it would be financially prudent to reduce this rate to 5.5 percent (where it was for decades) or 6 percent to allow for some hopeful recovery of the Maurice Trust.

The budget for 2024 is included elsewhere in this report. It shows a small positive balance, which it should if we hope to have money left at the end of the year to reinvest in the DIT. The good news is that pledges are up. Note that these increased pledges may have a negative impact on the plate offering category. We will have a better handle on the 2024 budget this time next year. For the time being, it's the best guess we've got.

Several remaining projects remain outstanding and carry forward into 2024. The upper louvers on the bell tower have not been painted since I don't know when. It was my intention to hire a contractor (lift required) for this work but with the ongoing expenses related to the repairs, there was never enough money to budget the work. Also, there is some repair and repointing of stone walls and foundations in the basement which needs to have a budget established and a schedule developed. It is my belief that this work is not critical, but needs to be done, perhaps spread out over multiple years. There are also some interior painting issues which should be resolved. Outreach needs attention as well.

Again, much appreciation goes to Nate for taking care of so many little things and for finding someone when necessary to take care of the not so little things. Special thanks also to Barbara without whom we would be lost. And on top of everything else they provide great music a couple times a month.

Special thanks to Fr. Ben and Paula for the services they provide with dedication and excellence, and thanks to those who serve on the Vestry and those who contribute in so many ways.

It has been a pleasure (and occasionally a challenge) to serve as your Senior Warden. My biggest concern when I took the job was concern over the declining size of the congregation and the increasing costs of operation. Paraphrasing Mother Trula over a number of years, we cannot obsess over being a small congregation, but we cannot be content with becoming smaller and smaller while expenses continue to rise. I think we have done a good job on controlling the expenses, but like many other congregations, we are far from growing. I don't think any of us wish to see the demise of Trinity on our watch. Finally, please give the Vestry members your encouragement and plan to attend a meeting when you can. You are and will be welcome.

Respectfully submitted,
Daniel Z. Gerhart, Senior Warden

III. Parish Administrator's Report

Worship and Music

Music: Our part-time organist, Paula Bacorn, plays the second and fourth Sundays of the month; our resident musicians play the other services on guitar and/or saxophone. Over the years since our guitarists began accompanying worship, I have transposed about 200 hymns, service music selections, and anthems from keyboard to guitar. In most cases, the pitch is lowered a bit, making them easier to sing. We've also introduced unfamiliar hymns by playing them as anthems first since we don't have a choir. At Easter and Christmas we had guest musicians and vocal pieces, which added to our celebrations.

Worship: We have four active licensed Worship Leaders: Barbara Caum, Dan Gerhart, Marny Gerhart, and Doug Plank. Doug is also a licensed Eucharistic Visitor, meaning he can take communion to shut-ins. These four are also licensed Eucharistic Ministers, along with Anna Markevitch, who offer the chalice at Communion. All five had their licenses renewed in 2023. Our lectors were Martha Pierce

2017	13
2018	11
2019	12
2020	15
2021	17
2022	15
2023	16

and Loyd Moreno, who read for us every other week or so. We invite anyone interested in these ministries to volunteer; training is available and volunteers are most welcome.

In our worship life during 2023, there were 53 Sunday services, 5 of which were Morning Prayer while Fr. Ben was on vacation and the rest were Holy Eucharist. There were 25 in attendance on Easter, and 33 on Christmas Eve. Our average Sunday attendance (ASA) for the year was 16.

We celebrated St. Francis Day with three cats in attendance and one photo. There were two funerals, Don Barton and Mary Patterson, and two Holy Day services - Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

Administration

In 2023 I completed my 33rd year as a member of Trinity. While I did many of these things before, I was formally named Parish Administrator sometime in 2006. Daye Moreno retired after serving for two years from doing the record keeping and bank deposits for the Sunday offerings. If anyone would like to learn to do this, I will be happy to train them.

Some of the things I do include publishing the monthly newsletter for both mail and electronic distribution, creating Sunday and special bulletins, authoring the church website and Facebook page, scheduling worship servers, choosing hymns and coordinating with our musicians, doing routine paperwork, sending schedule changes to the newspapers as well as press releases for special events, compiling the parochial report, recording pledges, writing checks for bills and payroll, computing payroll taxes and filing state, local and federal tax reports, preparing W-2 and 1099 forms, balancing the checkbook, creating the monthly financial report for the vestry, taking and writing minutes for the monthly vestry meeting, overseeing other employees and communications with our landlord, creating the budget for the coming year, coordinating with groups that use our facilities, arranging for mowing and snow removal, service calls for various issues, setting the altar on Saturdays, and generally being a presence at the church. I coordinate with our supply clergy, The Rev. Benjamin Lee Lentz.

The church web site has grown considerably since we changed from plain html to using a template. While the design is limited because of the template, we have added parish reports, Bible studies, a photo gallery, and more. We are also listed in Google and Apple maps.

I continued to be the gardener in residence for both the church and rectory. If anyone ever wants some exercise, volunteers are more than welcome. We pay Alan Caum to cut all the lawns during the growing season, and Nate and Alan are taking care of snow removal.

There are no regular office hours; the parish office is in the rectory and is reachable by phone at almost any time. To call me directly, dial 888-8981 or text me at 607.738.0183.

Barbara Cameron Caum
Parish Administrator

IV. Junior Warden's Report - Buildings and Grounds

The junior warden is often given responsibility for the upkeep of the parish buildings and grounds. The senior warden typically presides at vestry meetings in the absence of the rector, and the junior warden presides at vestry meetings if both the rector and the senior warden are absent.

As Junior Warden I over saw some of the following projects:

- The purchase of salt and snow removal.
- The re-caulking of the church windows (interior) by John Paul.
- Varnishing of the church doors.
- Repair of a toilet in the Parish Hall.
- Installation of grab rails at the altar steps.
- Arranged for the Parish House water line repair.
- Constant contact with Elmira Structures about the foundation repair.
- New ceilings in two of the Rectory bedrooms.
- Painting four (4) of the Rectory's five (5) bedrooms.
- Adding a 20 amp service to one of the bedrooms.
- Rewiring for ceiling light in upstairs office.
- Arranged for the piano give away.
- Ongoing projects include spring cleaning, polishing of the brass, altar rail, and any small repairs as they come up.

Respectfully submitted

Jack Strange, Junior Warden
(with Nate Schwartzberg)

V. Outreach and Hospitality Report

I. Outreach

We donate food items each Sunday which are given the Athens United Methodist Church Food Pantry. This is a year-round ministry, the food basket sits at the base of the baptismal font and can be filled with non-perishable grocery items in unbreakable containers. Many thanks to the Morenos, the Kopatzes, and Helen McNeal for delivering our offerings.

We again participated in the annual Souper Bowl—Tackle Hunger event in February. The program was created by a youth group in California and has now gone national. All donated cash is used locally, however. Members of the congregation are asked to place a dollar or more in the soup pot by the baptismal font for each family member. This year we donated \$185, which was given to the Valley Food Pantry. Our United Thank Offering ingathering was held in September; we sent \$138.90 to the national E.C.W., where funds are used for grants to congregations. Over the course of the year the penny jar continues to be filled for the Church Periodical Club, which provides books for seminarians and Christian education nationally and internationally.

The Carol Reed memorial mitten Advent tree was changed to a new project this year. Martha Pierce writes: "On December 17, food collection was delivered to the UMC food pantry as part of our Advent outreach food project. Enough food was collected to feed 30 families. Several members met at Walmart and Dollar General on Elmira Street where a large variety of food and household supplies were purchased. Also ordered and donated was 30 quarts of much needed milk. Trinity hopes to continue the Outreach ministry in the future."

The Eldercare project from 2022 continues through The Bridge of Penn-York Valley Churches. As items are donated, we can take them to Waverly where they will be distributed to the elderly in our area.

We host AA meetings two nights a week; and the Valley Council also meets once a month on the first Wednesday. This is an important part of our Outreach, as we support the good work they do by providing a place with light and heat.

We continue to seek an individual to coordinate these ministries as we mourn the death of our long-time Outreach Coordinator, Marie Bubniak.

II. Hospitality and Parish Life

Many take turns hosting Coffee Hours and never disappoint! There is a sign-up sheet in the parish hall kitchen; the parish is easy to please, so hosts can bring whatever they'd like. Nate sets up the coffee Saturday night; it just needs to be switched on before church.

We held a well attended **Pancake Supper** on February 21st. It was delicious, as usual.

(report compiled by Barbara Caum)

VI. Diocese of Bethlehem Convention Delegate Report

Report on the 152nd Convention - October 13-14, 2023

The 152nd Diocesan Convention for the Episcopal Diocese of Bethlehem kicked off on Friday Night in Center Valley, PA with a beautiful service that incorporated traditional worship with recognition to our diverse cultures. Included in this was a land acknowledgment of the Indigenous peoples of the lands where the Diocese of Bethlehem now occupies, a Prelude of *Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing* by Soloist Kari Holmes and portions of the service read or sung in Spanish, including the first lesson and the Sanctus.

The service included a moving and inspiring sermon by the Rt. Rev. Clarence E. Bester from the Anglican Diocese of Wangaratta in Australia, who grew up in South Africa during Apartheid and whose work has taken him to multiple countries including Germany, France and now Australia. His work now includes a focus on LGBT rights and environmentalism. The evening included a dinner after with delicious food and a question and answer period with Bishop Kevin and Bishop Clarence.

Convention began with opening call and prayer by Bishop Kevin, followed by the bishop's speech which covered some challenges, many successes and the upcoming discernment work. Introducing the discernment work was Bishop Scanlan from the Episcopal Diocese of Central Pennsylvania. The subcommittees of the discernment committees gave reports of their work over the past year and then table discussions were had regarding the work that has been done so far with an opportunity to speak and highlight the responses to the table questions.

Attendees were also able to hear a report from The Reverend Charlie Barebo on Kajo Kaji. After lunch, delegates returned to vote on elections and resolutions for 2023, hear a review of the Diocesan treasurer's report. Resolutions included clergy salary, budget acceptance, closing of Holy Cross in Wilkes-Barre an amendment to the Constitution of the Diocese of Bethlehem and the continued analysis of the discernment committee.

Loyd Moreno
Trinity Delegate

VII. 2023 Financial Report and 2024 Budget

	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Proposed	2023 Actual	2024 Proposed
Budgeted Income							
Balance Forward	10,226	14,660	7,739	12,405	9,525	9,525	9,101
Plate Offerings	4,631	3,441	5,752	8,067	4,000	12,005	5,000
Pledge Payments	19,000	17,160	22,980	21,140	21,725	19,893	26,060
Maurice Trust Interest	19,158	18,801	18,257	18,115	18,000	19,878	25,000
Diocesan Investment Trust Interest	3,569	2,973	2,195	2,310	2,300	2,006	2,090
Special Gifts	685	377	734	441	400	280	250
Rectory Rent	6,600	6,600	6,600	6,600	6,600	6,600	6600
Building Renovation Pledges	2,550	2,700	2,700	2,700	2,700	1,800	0
Transfer of Capital from DIT	7,150	19,739	29,871	0	0	0	0
Total Budgeted Income	73,569	86,451	96,828	71,778	65,250	71,987	74,101
<i>Total without DIT transfers</i>		66712	66,957				
Non-budget General Income	816	461	654	524	450	430	450
Gross Income	74,385	86,912	97,482	72,302	65,700	72,417	74,551
Non-Budgeted Pass Through In- come			67,611				
Designated			1,027	725		821	
Altar Guild*				590		1,150	
Memorials			300	3,125		11,470	
Grants		8,755	5000	6,000			
Total Non-budgeted pass-through		8,755	6,327	10,440		13,441	
Total All Income	74,385	95,667	103,809	82,742		85,858	74,551
Deduct Memorials	-10,246	-5,177	-4,791	-5,343	-5,343	-6,974	-6,974
Total Disposable Income (Note)	64,139	90,490	99,018	77,399	60,357	78,884	67,577
Note: total without memorials							
Budgeted Expenses							
Diocesan Assessment	7,356	8,203	6,853	6,626	7,496	7,496	7,637
Diocesan Acceptance	1,836	2,051	1,784	1,657	1,874	1,874	1,909
Supply Clergy	6,370	1365	3,120	6,450	8,320	8,250	8,320
Auto & Travel	245	48	193	360	350	188	200
Payroll Taxes (@ 19.99%)	3,402	3,538	3,595	3,558	3,871	3,649	3,700
Rector's Education Fund	0	0	0				
Sexton	2,550	2,550	2,600	2,500	2,821	3,130	3,100
Organist	3,750	3,725	1,500	2,600	5,600	2,400	5,600
Parish Administrator	15,300	15,300	15,300	15,300	16,600	16,600	16,600
Payroll Taxes accrual (@ 12.28%)	-2,018	-2,192	-2,198	-2,142	-2,385	-2,240	-2,250
Property, Liability Insurance	4,077	3,956	3,886	4,180	4,400	4,710	5,000

Outreachy/Evangelism	235	300	125	25	300	325	300
Altar Supplies*	0	0	0	463		489	
Organ Maintenance & Music	0	0	0	0	300	0	
Telephone	340	411	384	384	400	388	400
Office and Worship Expense	1,413	1,429	1,202	1,434	1,400	1,190	1,400
Convention Expense	0	0	0	0	250	319	370
Miscellaneous/Coffee Hour	46	0	0	229	200	280	250
Utilities**	3,316	3,149	3,093	3,498	3,500	4,926	5,000
Real Estate Taxes	2,328	2,372	2,372	2,372	2,375	2,416	2,420
Other Property Expense	0	0	0				
Maintenance	2,776	2,993	2,182	2,589	2,500	2,286	2,500
Parish Hall Rent	4,440	4,440	4,440	4,440	4,440	4,440	4,440
Total Budgeted Expenses	57,762	53,638	50,431	56,523	64,612	63,116	66,896
Non-budgeted General Expense							
Major Improvements	9,449	9,343	31,950	2,864		3,250	
Equipment Replacement	301	8153	3,431	6,559			
Total Expenses	67,512	71,134	85,812	65,946	64,612	66,366	66,896
Non-Budgeted Passthrough							
Transfer to DIT		16,405	5,000	6,645		10,000	
Returned to LNS		650					
Total Non-Budgeted Passthrough		17,055	5,000	6,645	0	10,000	
Subtotal All expenses		88,189	90,812	72,591	64,295	76,366	66,896
NET (Income-Expense-Memorials)	-3,373	2,301	8,206	4,808	-3,938	2,518	681

	Beck AG	1063
*Beck memorial fund used	Shearer	581
**Utilities do not include rectory	Lentz	605
	E Kelley	2500
	B Strange	910
	Organ Fund	1150
	Tracey	165
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		6974

Memorials (Designated in Checking)	-10,246	-5,177	-4,791	-5343	-5343	-6974	-6974
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VII. Summary of Assets, 12/31/23

Account	12/31/2022 Balance	12/31/2023 Balance	Change
Bank Accounts			
Checking*	9,524.99	9,100.98	-424.01
DIT 002 Freeborne (Int Only)	10,475.31	11,398.90	923.59
DIT 087 Alvord (Int Only)	4,332.19	4,727.84	395.65
DIT 092 Endowment	9,828.11	10,934.40	1106.29
DIT 096 Bridge (18,250 min)	24,276.36	26,606.24	2329.88
DIT 147 Minor	0	0	0
DIT 209 Tupper	0	0	0
DIT Barton Organ Fund	0	10,000.00	10,000.00
Maurice Trust	336,015.44	346,652.79	10,637.35
TOTAL Bank Accounts	394,452.40	419,421.15	24,968.75
Liability Accounts			
C&N LOC - now loan	-8,333.43	0	
WH Athens	-69.81	-76.59	
WH Federal	0	0	
WH FICA	-277.45	-304.40	
WH FMHI	-64.91	-71.19	
WH LST	0	-12.00	
WH PA	-137.39	-150.73	
TOTAL Liability Accounts	-8,882.99	-614.91	
OVERALL TOTAL	385,569.41	418,806.24	

	2022	2023	2024 Projected
Interest Income			
DIT	2,210	2,006	2,090
Maurice	18,115	19,878	25,000
Total	20,325	20,325	27,090

*Includes memorials \$6974

VII. Minutes of the 2023 Annual Meeting

Trinity Episcopal Church
181st Annual Meeting
Parish Hall
Sunday, January 29, 2023

Present: The Rev. Benjamin Lentz, Martha Pierce, Daye Moreno, Joseph Cama, Laura Cama, Nate Schwartzberg, Margaret Gerhart, Dan Gerhart, Barbara Caum, Alan Caum, Douglas Plank, John Strange, Anna Markevitch, Fanna Proper, Helen McNeal

Fr. Ben Lentz offered a blessing at 11:20 for the brunch and for the meeting.
At 12:05 PM, Senior Warden Dan Gerhart called the meeting to order.

Polls: The polls opened for election/selection of vestry members and a delegate and alternate to diocesan convention. The nominating committee proposed three names for vestry: Jack Strange, Doug Plank, and Loyd Moreno. Laura Cama and Nate Schwartzberg have served two three-year terms and must go off for a year. Marie Bubniak's status has changed to Vestry Member Emeritus.

Ministry Reports

- **Long-Term Supply Priest:** Fr. Ben voiced his appreciation for being able to serve at the altar; the congregation expressed their appreciation for him.
- **Senior Warden:** Dan reported that we ended the year "in good shape for the shape we're in." Investments were down substantially, but are coming back. We live at the mercy of a 150 year old building and whatever may come next is not in the budget. The basement foundation needs work and will be examined by a structural engineer and we'll go from there.
- **Parish Administrator:** The St. Julian Society (prayer chain) should have been added; a Treasurer's duties was discussed as the P.A. does the bookkeeping.
- **Junior Warden:** Nate noted that he tries to fix things before, or after, they break.
- **Hospitality and Outreach:** Marny feels we should do more. Our homebound members appreciate the cards we all sign that she arranges. We offered home communion, but so far, we have had no takers.
- **Diocesan Convention Delegate:** Laura Cama spoke about the proposed reunification with the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania (Harrisburg). At this point the committee has just begun its work. Discussion centered around why this is being proposed and what it may mean for this small diocese.

The above reports were accepted with Doug Plank making the motion and Anna Markevitch seconding.

- **2022 Financial Report and 2023 Budget:** While the budget does not balance, it will as we overestimate the cost of a full-time organist and ours is currently half time. Also, we budget the full amount of a supply priest and Fr. Ben donates half his stipend back to the

church. There was some discussion of our current music situation - half-time organist with Trinity musicians, Barbara Caum, Nate Schwartzberg, and Dan Gerhart providing music the other half of the time. Those present mostly seemed to like the variety, however it was mentioned that we were able to have one of Brian Murphy's students, Hana Henty, play for piano for us for several years and that may be an option again. There was further discussion of Fr. Ben's future plans and how that would affect Trinity; he is not planning on any changes in the near future. The report was accepted as submitted with a motion by Doug Plank seconded by Anna Markevitch.

- **Summary of Assets** - presented for information only
- **Minutes of the 2022 Meeting** were accepted as submitted. Motion by Laura Cama, seconded by Marny Gerhart.

Closing of the Polls and elections

Vestry: As mentioned at the opening of the polls, two members are leaving, three have been proposed by the nominating committee:

Jack Strange - 2 year term

Loyd Moreno - 3 year term

Doug Plank - 3 year term

Barbara Caum moved that the three be nominated by Acclamation - passed

Barbara suggested that the nominations be closed: motion made by Laura Cama, seconded by Martha Pierce. Slate elected by acclamation

Delegate to the Diocese of Bethlehem Convention: Laura Cama served in 2022. It was decided to wait to choose a delegate until the next vestry meeting, February 26.

Old and New Business: The church needs a treasurer. Laura Cama, who has served in that role, suggested that she could continue until such time as the vestry is able to find someone.

Adjournment: Barbara Caum moved to adjourn; Nate Schwartzberg seconded. The meeting was adjourned by acclamation at 1:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Cameron Caum,
Parish Administrator