PJ CHRISTMAS!

This past year Christmas fell on a Sunday, which as we know is the Day of our Lord. Christmas being on a Sunday did not stop the church from having services, after all it was Sunday. However, one difference this year was the people came to church in their pajamas.

The idea for the pajama services came about when a young parent mentioned that her family would be coming to church, but they all would be in pajamas. From there the idea was born, why not allow everyone to wear their pajamas? After all we could not leave this one family alone in pajamas. So that is what we did, and it was a fun way to spend Christmas Sunday morning.

About 35 people showed up to church at the 10:30 service in pajamas. This does not include the other people who still made it to church in their regular Sunday clothes. I do think this was a hit and perhaps will be a new Trinity Church Christmas tradition.

Thank you all who spent a little of your Christmas mornings with your church family.
Our Mission
To proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ by:
Inviting all to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.
Fostering the presence of the Holy Spirit for the equipping of saints to do the work of ministry.
Witnessing to the power of God to heal, transform, and make all things new.
Supporting those who by word and example make Christ’s redemptive work known.

2017 Vestry Retreat

The Vestry conducted their Annual Retreat on January 20th through the 21st. Each year the vestry takes a few days away to spend time in prayer, study and conversation. The focus of the time together is to build team work, discern what God would have them focus on for the coming year and to get to know the new members of the vestry.

Each year the focus is a bit different. Last year the focus was on Servant Leadership. The year prior it was Congregational Development. Each of these prior retreats and the work done during 2015 and 2016 were building blocks for what the vestry and the parish would focus on for 2017. This years retreat was Grasping God’s Holy Vision.

Over the last six years Trinity has been operating based on a Strategic Plan that was developed in 2010 and updated in 2013. The present plan as based on a time table to have all the goals achieved by the close of 2017. At present we have achieved approximately 70% of the goals that were initially set forth in 2010 and updated in 2013.

The vestry this year will be working on setting a Holy Vision to carry the parish forward into the future. Over the next several months the manner in which we will do this will be explained to the parish and we will have several parish meeting to help us move in this direction. This is an exciting time for us and God has a wonderful future in store for His people.
Rector’s Reflection

Dear Beloved in Christ:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

This past month our new president was sworn into office. There is concern by many about what sort of president he will be. Many have already formed their opinion and have already judged him to be a failure. There are also those who have already proclaimed him to be a savior or a savior. There is an old saying that we get the leaders we deserve. There is a degree of truth in that, for our leaders are but a reflection of the people.

Every Christian should be extremely cautious about placing too much faith in any other person. We have but one king and we owe Him our complete fidelity and that king is God alone. Israel often placed their hopes and trusts in their earthly rulers and turned away from God promise. That seems to be a human tendency. Recently I was reading the Book of Ezekiel and read the passage in the side bar several times.

We speak of God all too often in the past tense these days; it is said we are living in the Post-Christian Era, it has been put forward for the last thirty years that God is dead, and if not dead, well, He must have lost interest. One might want to reconsider all that in light of what the Lord says to Ezekiel in chapter 36 verse 23.

In humanities self-centeredness we toss our heads and proclaim this or that about God, as if we the finite can even begin to comprehend the infinite. It makes us feel, perhaps, more than we really are. It also shows the totality of our depravity. It really doesn’t matter, we think of God, in the final analysis, what matters is what does He think of us, His creation. Each of us might want to consider that.

There will indeed be a time when God will declare Himself among the nations. When He will sit in judgment of all men and all countries. Those nations and peoples that have lifted up the Lord will receive His blessing. Those who have turned from Him will receive His curse. In the last fifty years our nation has experienced increasing violence, drug abuse, and a plethora of other cultural signs of decay. Our society seems to be in a never-ending spiral to destruction. What is the cause of this in the midst of one of the most prosperous times in our nation’s history?

We have turned aside as a nation that professed God and His laws as the centrality of our society. We have reached for and adopted a secular humanism. That in reality robs man of any humanity at all. For our humanity is part and parcel to understanding ourselves in light of our relationship to God. Without God in the center, we equate ourselves simply as one more specie on the planet, not better or worse than any other animal. If we view ourselves as simply a specie of animal it is no wonder so many live with an animal spirit guiding them rather than the Holy Spirit.

Come to think of it, the state of our society is indicative of a society that has already been judged. The decline will continue until like so many societies before us we are merely an interesting chapter in a history book. We do have an option. The option is to turn back to the Lord. Ezekiel was speaking not just to the land of Israel, but to us as well. When the Jews turned from the ways of idolatry and turned back to the Lord they were blest. When they failed to do so, they were dispersed. We are not better than the Jews of history. In our disobedience we to will suffer the same fate. It is far more than a matter of God losing patience with us as a people. It is His love calling us back to Himself.

Pax et Bonum,

Fr. John

Ezekiel 36:23

I will show the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, the name you have profaned among them. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the Sovereign LORD, when I show myself holy through you before their eyes. (NIV)
Our Vision:
Our vision for Trinity Episcopal Church includes growing a dynamic youth program. Reaching out to our community outside the walls with the love of Christ. Increasing spiritual and congregational growth for our parish.

WOMEN OF TRINITY
A Women of Trinity "heads up"...time flies and sometimes we can't fit everything into our schedules, so please take heed! Please circle Wednesday, February 15, on your calendar and make your plans to attend the Women of Trinity meeting at 11 a.m. that day. We are so fortunate to have our very own Father John Himes as our speaker for our program. He has a gift as he reaches us and teaches us with God's word, so you can be assured of an uplifting and fulfilling experience. All women of Trinity are invited to attend and you will be welcomed with open arms. If you're not on our calling list, please the church office and we'll see that you're contacted. Be sure to remember to bring your own sandwich or salad and we'll supply dessert, beverage and camaraderie following the meeting. Julie Trexler is the President of WOT and she looks forward to seeing you on Wednesday, February 15, at 11 a.m. in All Saints Hall!

BROTHERHOOD OF ST. ANDREW
The Brotherhood of Saint Andrew’s 2016 Coat Drive was a great success. Between the parish and the school we collected 120 plus coats, sweaters, and jackets for men women and children of all ages. The cold weather clothing was given out on Thursday, December 15th at Martha’s Kitchen. Over the following two weeks all but 11 of the items were distributed. The rest of the items were given out in January of this year. None of this would have been possible without the generosity of the people of the parish and our school. Thank you to all who supported this gift of love. The Annual Coat Drive is just one of the Charitable endeavors of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew. If any of the men of the parish would like to know how they can help our parish reach out through the Brotherhood of St. Andrew, talk to a member of our chapter or with Fr. John.

The Brotherhood of Saint Andrew Schedule for February is as follows:
Bible Study at Jucy’s on Wednesdays February 8th and 22nd at 11:30 (Bible Study begins at 12:00)
Saturday, February 18th at 10:00 am monthly meeting at Golden Corral

What’s a Tripod?
Fr. John need’s a little help. For the last several years He has been trying to find out how our monthly newsletter got the name, “THE TRIPOD”. He has had little success. If you know how the name came about give him a call or drop him an email at fr_john_himes@hotmail.com He would like to solve the mystery.
Birthdays

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Terry Weeks</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Joe Weinberg</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Henry Henderson</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Richard Anderson</td>
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<td>Pat Furrh</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Wanda Fugler</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Pauline Manly</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Frannie Littlejohn</td>
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<td>Barbara Truelove</td>
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<td>Lauren Hicks</td>
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<td>Peyton Brocato</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Mac Abney</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Megan Himes</td>
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<td>Harriet Smith</td>
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<td>Kathryn Brannon</td>
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<td>Jonathan Bray</td>
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<td>Roy McCarroll</td>
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<td>Marcus Briggle</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>Alice Camp</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>Samantha Minchew</td>
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<td>Mary Jane McElroy</td>
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Church Financials and Attendance for December 2016

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<tr>
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<th>2015</th>
<th>Present</th>
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<tr>
<td>Budget Income for 2016</td>
<td>$ 483,196</td>
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<tr>
<td>Budget Expenses for 2016</td>
<td>$ 525,701</td>
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<tr>
<td>Budget Difference for 2016</td>
<td>($ 42,505)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Income Received to Date</td>
<td>$ 450,153</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expenses to Date</td>
<td>$ 489,559</td>
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<tr>
<td>Income for the month</td>
<td>$ 33,891</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expenses for the month</td>
<td>$ 51,737</td>
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<td>Difference for the month</td>
<td>($ 17,845)</td>
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<td>Difference to Date</td>
<td>($ 39,406)</td>
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Average Sunday Attendance

- 2015: 159
- Present: 175

Anniversaries

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Tom Whaley, Jr.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Cecil Portman</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. David Spellings</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Allen Staggers, Jr.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Gary Beavers</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Charles Porter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Charles Manly</td>
</tr>
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LENTEN STUDY GROUP

This Lent join Fr. Andrew and the young families as we explore giving and forgiving, and how that could look like as a Lenten practice in a society when both of these concepts are becoming less prevalent. During Lent we will read *Free of Charge: Giving and Forgiving in a Culture Stripped of Grace* by Miroslav Wolf. This is the same book the former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams used for his Lenten book study in 2006. Join us every Sunday evening throughout Lent at 5:30 in Fry Hall. Childcare will be provided. Please let the office know if you are interested in joining this group so we will know how many books to order.
**BIBLE JOURNALING CLASS**

Who: All Ladies 15-99  
What: Bible Journaling  
When: Beginning March 2, 6 - 7:30pm  
Where: Fry Hall Education Building 2nd floor  
Why: To discover the Bible in a new, creative way, because *Adult Coloring and Journaling* are all the rage and to unleash a new found love of the Bible  

Hosted by: Jodi Beavers and Angela Bray  

PS: You do not have to be an artist to enjoy this class. You will be taught a variety of ways to journal creatively in your Bible that does not require drawing skills. Instead of giving up something this Lenten Season, try adding something. You’ll be glad you did. All supplies will be provided except for your Bible. You can use the Bible you have, purchase a special journaling Bible or use a journaling notebook.  
Please let the church know if you will be attending, so that we know how to prepare.

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**GIRL SCOUT HAPPENINGS**

Father/Daughter Dance - February 25 @ 6:00pm  
All Saint's Hall
Hello Friends,

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. First off I wish to say thank you to all who contributed to the priest’s Christmas purse. I truly appreciate the gracious gift. I also wanted to say thank you to all who helped out giving various families in need a better Christmas. You showed how much you are a giving church.

The last day of this month is Shrove Tuesday, on that day we will be feasting on pancakes before the beginning of Lent. The next day we will be beginning the 40 days of Lent. In that time of fasting many of us will be giving up something in our lives so that we may focus on growing closer to God. Lent is a time where we deny our earthly temptations quite like Jesus did for the 40 days in the wilderness. We are also called to recognize our sin and need for penance. Now if you are like me you may be wondering what to give up this lent. Should you give up soda, chocolate, meat, or Facebook? While those are great things to give up, I have given up those things multiple times. Yet I go back to them.

The purpose of our fasting is that we may focus on growing closer to God. When we give up something we really should be replacing it with a way to do that. Perhaps something we can give up is our desire to have. Perhaps a desire to have what our neighbors have, or have what we want. Or we can give up comparing ourselves to others. Or give up anger, stress, or regret. These things get in the way of our ability to have a relationship with God.

But how about a giving up that requires us to change? This lent the young families will be reading a book about forgiving and giving. This makes me wonder what would it look like if this lent we focus on forgiving others? Reconciling with others? What if we forgive those who wrong us? Forgive those who cut us off in the turn lane, or those who have shown hate? What if we ourselves apologize for our wrongs? In this time of divisiveness looking at reconciliation as a Lenten practice could be what we need. When we can reconcile with our brothers and sisters, we are truly able to reconcile ourselves with God.

Whatever discipline you choose this lent, know that it is being done for a deeper relationship with God. Know that it is a way to remove outside distractions that get in the way of that relationship. It is giving you an opportunity to shed those earthly pursuits and focus on the heavenly pursuits.

Blessings,

Fr. Andrew
III. Of the going down of Christ into Hell. As Christ died for us, and was buried, so also is it to be believed, that he went down into Hell.

Ephesians 4:9-10 (RSV) 9(In saying, “He ascended,” what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He who descended is he who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.)

1 Peter 3:18-20 (RSV) For Christ also died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit; 19 in which he went and preached to the spirits in prison, 20 who formerly did not obey, when God’s patience waited in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water.

Why is this important? It is important because it reflects the complete love and mercy of God. How would those who lived before the Incarnation, life death and resurrection of Jesus Christ know of salvation in Him lest the Good News was proclaimed to them. It reflects the infinite nature of God’s unmerited grace.

Christ’s decent to the dead is part of the earliest Christians Creeds; the Apostles Creed and is also in the Athanasian Creed. The inclusion in the creeds is based primarily by the two passages of Scripture mentioned above. In the early days of the Church there were a number of heresies floating about. One of these was that Jesus didn’t actually die.

There are many affirmations that Jesus was raised from the dead throughout the New Testament. These affirmations presuppose that when Christ died on the cross he sojourned in the realm of the dead prior to his resurrection. This teaching is from the earliest days of the Church as we can see by the passage from 1 Peter 3:18-19. Our Lord, like all men experienced death and his soul join others in the realm of the dead. But, he descend there as Savior proclaiming the Good News to the spirits imprisoned there.

Scripture refers to the place of the dead, to which the dead Christ went down to as “hell”. In Hebrew it is known as “Shoel” and in Greek as “Hades” because those who are there are deprived of the vision of God. This is the case for all the dead, whether they be righteous or evil, for it is there they await the redeemer. This does not mean that the outcome for each is identical. Consider the parable in Luke 16:22-26; Jesus shows us that the poor man Lazarus who was received into “Abraham’s bosom” could not cross the chasm to the rich man who was in torment. It is these holy soul, who awaited their Savior in Abraham’s bosom whom Christ delivered when he descended into hell. Christ did not go down into hell to deliver the damned, nor to destroy the hell of damnation; he did so to free the faithful who had gone before him.

From Abel’s death until the time of Christ’s passion a millions of souls had passed out of this life into the unseen world. These souls were in a place of safekeeping in what might be referred to as an intimate state by which we understand the state of the departed between death and the last judgment. St. Peter describes them as the spirits that are in prison. He goes on to say that Christ visited that place after his death in order that he might declare his victory over Satan. The declaration of Christ’s message of salvation brings the message of the Gospel to complete fulfillment. This is the last phase of Jesus’ messianic mission, a phrase
Holy Scripture seems to indicate that at death the soul goes before God for particular judgment, and is then consigned to await the general judgment in place is reflective of the joy of heaven or the misery of hell. The general judgment is the final judgment at which time all peoples and nations are assembled after the final resurrection at the end of the world. Jesus refers to this in Matthew 25:32-32 when he says, “When the Son of Man shall come in glory … before him shall be gathered all the nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates his sheep from the goats.? It is at the general judgment at the end of the world that the condition of the souls in eternity depend.

Christ went down into the depths of death so that the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. We must remember that Jesus is the author of life not death. By his death he destroyed the one who has the power of death, that is Satan and in that he delivered all those who through fear of death were subject to life long bondage. For that point on the risen Lord holds the keys of death and Hades so that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, in heaven and on earth, and under the earth.

There is an ancient homily for Holy Saturday that brings everything together very succinctly. A key portion reads; “Today a great silence reigns on earth, a great silence and a great stillness. A great silence because the King is asleep. The earth trembled and is still because God has fallen asleep in the flesh and he has raised up all who have slept since the world began, He has gone to search for Adam, or first father, as for a lost sheep. Greatly desiring to visit those who live in darkness and the shadow of death, he has gone to free from sorrow Adam in his bonds and Eve, captive with him. ‘I am your God, who for your sake have become your son. I order you O sleeper, to awake. I did not create you to be a prisoner in death, for I am your God, who for your sake have become your son. I and the life of the dead.”
Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper!

Trinity Episcopal Church is hosting its Annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper on Tuesday, February 28 from 5:30 PM to 6:30 PM. All proceeds go to support Troop 550. Ask our Scouts for tickets.

Adults $7.00 or 4 for $25.00
ASH WEDNESDAY
SERVICE OF
IMPOSITION OF ASHES
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1, 2017
10:00 AM & 6:15 PM

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.
Psalms 51:10
Parish Staff
Fr. John M. Himes, OSF
Rector
Fr. Andrew Ellison
Curate
Rae Minchew
Youth Director
Magdalena Altnau
Children’s Christian Formation Director
Angela Bray
Nursery Director
Jim Johnson
Music Director and Organist
Melissa Hammers
Choir Director
Stacey Shaw
Parish Administrator
Suzie Ward
Administrative Assistant
Melvin Williams
Sexton

Vestry
Ken Kerr
Senior Warden
Joel Truelove
Junior Warden
Angela Bray
Clerk of the Vestry
Julie Trexler
Treasurer
Doug Jager
Cindy Cain
Leana Westergaard
Tony Pierce
Carol Meyer
Bonnie Strauss
Micheal DeSa
Cassie Rhoades

Weekly Schedule

Sunday
Holy Communion - 8:00 AM
Parish Breakfast - 9:00 AM
Christian Formation for all ages - 9:30 AM
Holy Communion - 10:30 AM
After 10:30 Service
Coffee & Cookies In All Saints Hall

Wednesday
Holy Communion - 10:00 AM
Dinner in All Saint’s Hall - 5:30 PM
Contemporary Worship - 6:15 PM

Thursday
Choir practice 5:00 PM
Martha’s Kitchen - 6:00 PM

Trinity Episcopal Church
106 N. Grove Street
Marshall, Texas, 75670
903-938-4246
http://trinityepiscopalmarshall.org

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