

The Quest

Trinity Church

Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts

December

2023

WHO WE ARE



Trinity Church is an ecumenical Open and Affirming (ONA) congregation. We are affiliated with the American Baptist Church, the Episcopal Church, the United Church of Christ and the United Methodist Church.

Sunday service hours:
10 a.m. (Nursery care available)

Office hours:
Monday - Wednesday - 9 a.m.-12 p.m.
Thursday - 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
(413) 625-2341

Pastor - Rev. Kate Stevens
Leadership Team Co-chairs:
Beth Martin & Eileen McCusker Rauch
Music Director - Keith Rollinson
Church Secretary - Brook Batteau
Nursery Attendant - Lisa Porter
Facilities Staff- Lisa Mroczek

Sunday services can be viewed on
Falls Cable, channel 17.
The scheduled broadcasts are:
Tuesday - 10 a.m., Thursday - 10 a.m.
Sunday - 9 a.m.

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From the Pastor

Dear friends

It's a dark time of year and a dark time in the world. Israel and Palestine are at war and countries such as Afghanistan, Ethiopia, South Sudan and Syria are all currently experiencing civil wars. We see mass killings and drug overdoses here in this country. Our nation seems to be more divided than ever before, caring more about politics and parties than people. At the same time the Earth is suffering, perhaps is on hospice, and we don't know what we can do for this beloved Planet that sustains us and that we cherish.

And then in the midst of all of this, we celebrate the sacred seasons of light: **Advent**, the four weeks of waiting and lighting our Advent candles, and **Christmas**, when we recognize the in breaking of light in the birth of a baby; **Hanukkah**, Dec. 7 - 14, the Jewish Festival of Lights, a ritual in which one more candle is lit every night; the **Winter Solstice**, marking the darkest day and celebrating the return of light.

And we are grateful. We pray for peace in the world and we pray for our planet but we need the light, we need the signs of hope.

And we as a church are called to be sources of light. And we are. We are sources of light through our various ministries; through our times of worship together, through our outreach to those in need, through our smiles and greetings of those we meet.

I love this time of year. Why? Not because of the darkness but because of the light. A candle in the summer doesn't make much of a difference; in the dark of winter it makes all the difference in the world. As Eleanor Roosevelt said: "It is better to light a candle than curse the darkness"

Light your candles, inside and out, and the world will give thanks.

Kate

AN ADVENT RETREAT



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS
"CELEBRATING GOD'S ABUNDANCE"

Announcement for the Communications Office



To: All the Faithful
From: Canon for Communications
Re: Advent Online Retreat
Date: November 7, 2023

O love, how deep, how broad, how high: An Advent 2023 Online Retreat
Saturday, December 16
9:30 a.m. – 12 Noon • Online (free)

This year's Advent retreat takes its name from the opening line of a 15th-century hymn attributed to Thomas á Kempis. Guided by the Rev. Dr. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas, we will enjoy a morning of listening, prayer, and conversation as we open ourselves to the presence of Divine Love. Our time together will include presentations, guided meditation, and gathering in small groups. If you like, bring a candle and wear something comfortable for an optional walk outdoors. All are welcome to join our fourth annual Advent retreat.

This free retreat is open to the public and is sponsored by both Episcopal dioceses in Massachusetts, and by Southern New England Conference, United Church of Christ.

[Register for Retreat](https://tinyurl.com/ytnd2v94)

FROM THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Greetings to you all from the Leadership Team. November has come and gone far too quickly. We hope your Thanksgiving Celebrations were Blessed.

We are pleased to announce that Tony Hanna, Trinity Church's Community Meal Coordinator, reported that they have decided to rejoin The Food Bank of Western Mass. as well as The Franklin County Food Council. Trinity Church will pay the annual dues to allow this important program to have access to these additional sources.

The Stewardship team completed formulation of a Stewardship letter that you have received. They asked some members of our church to speak each week about their connections to Trinity Church and Stewardship. This past Sunday members placed their completed forms into the offering plate. Those of you who could not attend on Sunday are encouraged to return your pledge forms to the church office in person or by mail.

The Senior Center representatives have responded to us and are interested in coming to tour our spaces in consideration of Eileen's suggestion of sharing our building. This is certainly an exciting possibility.

The Search Team will continue to await applications for our Designated Minister. Please pray along with us that the right and perfect candidate is going to come forward soon.

ADVENT season is upon us. Advent booklets will be given out by the ushers with extras left on the table in the back of the church. Thanks to Julie Bailey and Janice Hansen, and Hailey and Tucker Martin for completing the greening of the church on Nov. 26th. Advent candles will be lit by church members for the 4 Advent Sundays. Home Advent wreath making supplies will be given out on the 1st Sunday of Advent, Dec 3d. Also during that service the animals and Joseph and Mary and the shepherds will be brought outside to the Crèche. (The Baby Jesus will go out to the manger on Christmas Eve. The Wise Men on Jan. 6th.) We have just organized a Christmas Carol sing at the Baptist Lot (in the church in case of rain) for Saturday, December 23 at 3 p.m. There will be fire pit and hot cocoa. All are invited. Bring your own chair.

We are very grateful to Sue Mead for coordinating the Adopt-A-Family program for our Church again this year. Thank you in advance to all those who will be purchasing items for the two families.

With Prayers for a Blessed Holiday Season keeping Christ in Christmas!

Lois Bascom, Clare Chapman, Karyn Dufresne, Eileen McCusker Rauch, Nancy Parland and Beth Martin: Trinity Church Leadership Team.

ATTENTION ALL SINGERS

Please lend us your voice in celebration of the upcoming holidays!

If we can round up enough singers, the Trinity Choir will perform on Dec. 17 & 24 (at least Christmas Eve, if not also the earlier service on the 24th.)

We will rehearse on Sundays Dec. 10, 17 & 24 at 9am in the Sanctuary, prior to service. Would you let me know if you can join in – via email: ktrollinson@gmail.com

I look forward to hearing (from) you!

Keith



ONE HOME ONE FUTURE



Coffee Fellowship

We have chosen, as our goal, the reduced use of plastic both in our homes and here in the church building. Toward that goal, we would like to propose that we use ceramic coffee cups instead of styrofoam or plastic, beginning right away. They can be put in the dishwasher after coffee hour to clean and sanitize for the next week. We hope you can support this by bringing any extra coffee cups to the church kitchen. We need about 30. We will figure out where to store them.

We also have switched to using glass communion cups instead of the plastic or paper ones. Again, these can be washed, thus saving the planet one more bit.

It is all of us, striving to do as much as we can to reduce the use of plastic and other non-biodegradable items that help restore our beautiful earth to health.

Can you join us in these efforts? What can you do at home?

ONE HOME ONE FUTURE- *Lois Bascom, Robin Glod*

CALENDAR FOR DECEMBER 2023						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 10:30 Kids Movement. 5:30 pm Community Meal.	2
3 10 am Service	4	5	6 9:30 Playgroup 11 – 3:30 Clothes Closet	7 10 am Being and Believing. 7 pm AA	8 10:30 Kids Movement. 5:30 pm Community Meal.	9
10 10 am Service.	11	12	13 9:30 Playgroup	14 6 pm LT meeting. 7 pm AA	15 10:30 Kids Movement. 5:30 pm Community Meal.	16
17 10 am Service.	18	19	20 9:30 Playgroup 11 – 3:30 Clothes Closet.	21 10 am Being and Believing. 7 pm AA	22 10:30 Kids Movement. 5:30 pm Community Meal.	23 3 pm Caroling
24/31 10 am Service. Christmas Eve Service.	25 Christmas	26	27 9:30 Playgroup	28 7 pm AA	29	30

BEING AND BELIEVING (B&B)

Kate Stevens will be leading a group called “Being and Believing” on a bi-monthly basis for the next few months. The group will be held Thursday mornings at 10 a.m. on the first and third Thursdays of the month, beginning December 7.

Each week we will take on one aspect of our own theologies – for example, ‘God’, or ‘Grace’, or ‘what happens when you die?’ or ‘What do you worship’ or whatever topics we want to talk about. Each week we will suggest an idea for the following week.

We will take time each Thursday to hear several short readings on the topics and then take some time to write or just sit in silence to respond ourselves. Then we will use the rest of the time for sharing with one another.

It is a way to help each other articulate our own theologies, which will all be different. Please bring paper and pencil if writing helps your thinking process. We will take 10 or 15 minutes in silence to think and write. There are no wrong answers only right answers for each of us.

All are invited, whether members or attenders of Trinity or not.

Please share this information with others.

Call Kate with questions. (413) 695 - 4367

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Trinity Church

December

Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts

LECTIONARY FOR SUNDAYS IN DECEMBER

December 3	Isaiah 64:1-9; 1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37; Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18
December 10	Isaiah 40:1-11; 2 Peter 3:8-15a; Mark 1:1-8; Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13
December 17	Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24; John 1:6-8, 19-28; Psalm 126 or Canticle 15 (or 3)
December 24	2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16; Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38; Canticle 3 or Canticle 15 or Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26
December 31	Isaiah 61:10-62:3; Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7; John 1:1-18; Psalm 147 or 147:13-21