

The Quest

Trinity Church

Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts

December 2024

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 is available.)

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

Pastor - Benjiman Durfee
Leadership Team Co-chairs:
Beth Martin & Eileen McCusker Rauch
Music Director - Keith Rollinson
Church Secretary - Brook Batteau
Nursery Attendant - Lisa Porter
Facilities Staff- Pat Valeski

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From Pastor Benjiman Durfee

Dear Trinity,

Welcome to Advent, a season of preparation, longing, and hope. Just when the world is asking us to speed up, go shopping, decorate, attend holiday parties, and travel; the Church is calling us to slow down, take a breath, check in with ourselves, and open our hearts to God. Oh, how challenging this can be! Our lives, with work, church, family, and other activities, were full even before we had to start our Christmas shopping, decorating, and holiday events and somewhere in between all of that, we're asked to take more time, to slow down, to be still? Yes. And while I have you here, let's take a quick moment now. Seriously – **stop reading** – the rest of the newsletter will be here waiting for you to finish it later. Just take a moment to close your eyes. Take a deep breath in through your nose, and as you slowly exhale, imagine you're letting go of all of the stress, anxiety, hurt, or fear that you may be carrying. As you inhale again, imagine the peace of Christ filling your body from the tips of your toes to the top of your head. Repeat this breathing activity as many times as you'd like...and then keep reading.

Did you try it? How did it feel? What did you notice? When I do small actions like this, it reminds me that I'm not being asked to stop living life in order to make room for God, but rather it's about inviting God to enter into my life. It's about taking a few moments throughout the day to seek that connection with God. And it's about reminding myself that God is a constant, loving presence

ready to fill an open heart.

If all you did this Advent was read this newsletter article and try the breathing activity I offered you, that would be enough. If you are seeking to devote more time to this Advent journey, the Church is offering several different opportunities for you throughout this season. Below you'll find our full schedule. I pray that this Advent season is a blessing to you and that you're reminded this Christmas of the greatest gift of all – God's love.

With God's peace, love, joy, and hope,

Pastor Ben

ADOPT-A-FAMILY

Thank you for your generosity to help families in Franklin County have a Merry Christmas.



Important information

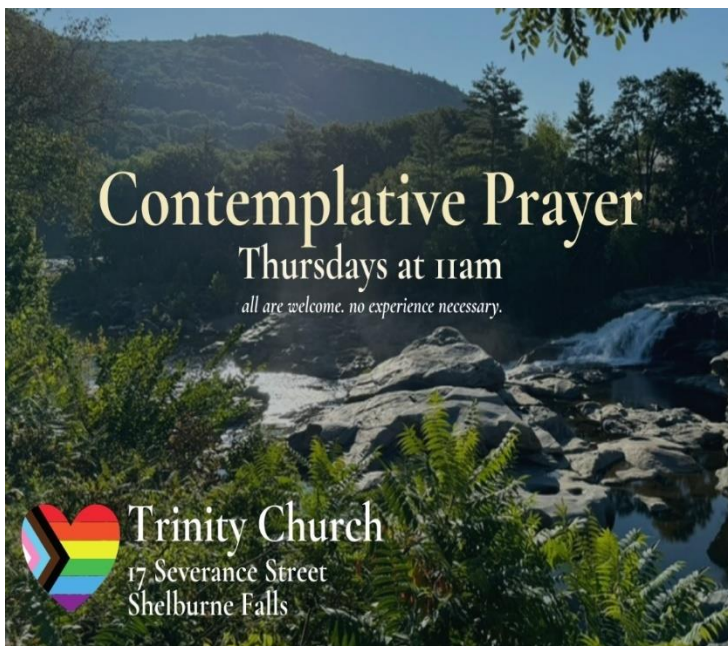
All money donations and gift donations need to be at church by December 15.

Please do not leave gifts in the sanctuary or narthex. They can be dropped off at the church office during open hours during the week or Sunday mornings.

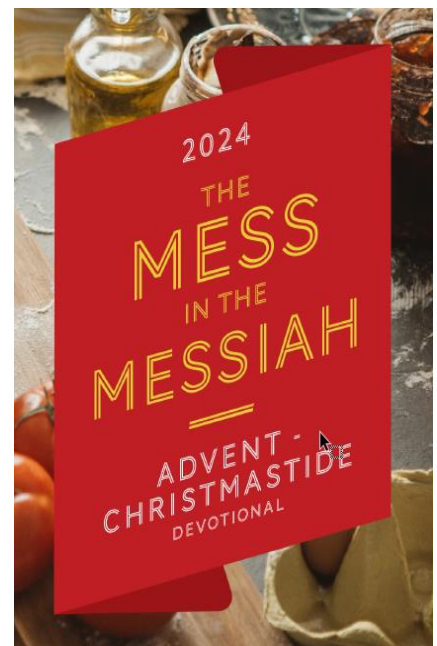
Gifts must be wrapped with the tag attached to the outside of the gift. Please make sure the tag is taped to the gift with the Christmas sticker showing.

If you are donating money for food cards please bring it to the church office or give it directly to me. I will be purchasing all the food cards with the donations because there are specific stores that each family prefers.

If you have any questions please see me at church or call 625-9070. *Sue Mead*



**This
Advent
devotional
is available
from the
back of the
sanctuary**



FROM THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

November has certainly been another busy month for Trinity Church. We have so many reasons to be grateful as a Loving community of God. November was Trinity Church's Stewardship month and Pastor Ben and the Stewardship Team created the theme of "Grounded in Gratitude". The congregation was asked to write down reasons for their gratitude on beautiful fall leaves which were then placed on a gratitude tree. Each week Pastor Ben spoke of different Gratitude practices during Time for All Ages. Al Shippee, Lois Bascom and Sandy Gaffey spoke about their personal reflections in regard to our beloved Trinity Church. Members were also asked to fill out pledge cards and bring them to the Church or mail them by Stewardship Sunday November 24th. Heartfelt thanks to all who participated in the services this month and to all who have made their pledges for Trinity Church's 2025 year.

On November 1st Trinity members hosted the Friday night Community Meal. The menu included pork tenderloins, roasted potatoes, tossed salad rolls with cookies for dessert. We were assisted that night by three hard working members of the Mohawk Key Cub. We hope to assist the faithful Community Meal team on the 3rd Friday every other month in 2025. Look for more information on ways to assist with this moving forward. The Community Meal team and several other volunteers put on another amazing Thanksgiving meal on the Nov. 22d. Fellowship Hall was filled with many who gratefully shared in this delicious holiday spread.

Trinity Women had their annual pre-Thanksgiving Bake Sale on November 23 in front of Keystone Market as well as a craft table at the Autumn Market at BSE on November 24th. Several people at the Autumn Market remarked about how grateful they are for the sense of community at the Thanksgiving community meal. Thanks to Ginny Ray and Sarah Neelon for leading these very successful events as well as Thanks to all of you who baked and or crafted.

Work continues on the development of a fragrance-free Policy for Trinity Church. Look for more information on this soon.

Future Trinity Church events:

- Nov. 29th: We are hosting a table at Moonlight Magic this year. Congregants will man the table throughout the afternoon and night. Our Trinity bookmarks, Trinity pens and informational pamphlets for the Clothes Closet and the Friday night Community Meal will be available.
- Nov. 30th: Advent celebrations begin with the Greening of the Church and building of the creche. Advent booklets will be printed in house this year from the UCC publication *The Mess in the Messiah/2024*. Thanks to Brook for completing this task!
- Dec. 14th 1 p.m.: Nancy Parland will be leading another wonderful Carol sing on the Baptist Lot. Come one come all to enjoy this festive sing-along!
- Dec. 21: 7 p.m. Blue Christmas Service
- Dec. 24th 7 p.m.: Candlelight Christmas Eve service.

With Blessings from The Leadership Team,

Eileen McCusker Rauch, Sarah Neelon, Nancy Parland and Beth Martin.

CHOIR TIME

Attention All Singers!



Please lend us your voice in celebration of the upcoming holidays! If you would like to participate, the Trinity Choir shall perform on Christmas Eve, Tuesday December 24 at 7pm, as well as singing an anthem for the 10am Sunday services on the Dec. 15 & 22. We do require attendance for rehearsals; these will be on Thursday evenings Dec. 5, 12, and 19 from 6-7:30pm, as well as at 9:15 am on the 15th and 22nd. Would you please let me know if you can join in – via email: ktrollinson@gmail.com ?

I look forward to hearing (from) you!

- Keith

CHRISTMAS CAROLING ON THE BAPTIST LOT



**Nancy Parland will lead
Christmas Caroling
on the Baptist Lot!
Saturday, December 14 at 1 p.m.
A fire, songbooks and hot cocoa
will be provided.**



Blue Christmas

a gentle, contemplative service for those who are carrying pain or loss during this season of celebration

Saturday, December 21st
7pm

Trinity Church
17 Severance Street, Shelburne Falls

POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS 2024

If you wish to remember loved ones and help decorate the sanctuary by ordering a live poinsettia plant, please fill in this form and place it in the collection plate or return it to the church office *by Thursday, Dec. 19*. This year poinsettias are \$7/each. Please make checks payable to *Trinity Church* and note "Christmas poinsettia" in memo line. Plants not picked up will be donated to our elder parishioners and others who are not able to attend the worship service.

In memory of _____

Given by _____

In honor of _____

Given by _____



CHRISTMAS EVE
CANDLELIGHT SERVICE



LESSONS AND CAROLS
AND BRINGING OUT THE CHRIST CHILD

DECEMBER 24 AT 7 P.M.
TRINITY CHURCH
17 SEVERANCE ST.
SHELBURNE FALLS, MA

Wandering, Wondering, Waiting
an Advent series to share our longings and to hold our questions

Sundays at 11:30am
December 1st - 22nd

Trinity Church
17 Severance Street, Shelburne Falls

Bring your questions, your faith and your doubts, your longings and your wonderings, as we wander together this Advent and await a world that's about to turn. Each week we'll explore the themes of Advent through the lens of our own questions and experience.

Whoever you are, wherever you are on your life or spiritual journey, no matter how strong your faith or your doubts, whomever you love: you are welcome here at Trinity Church.

CALENDAR FOR DECEMBER 2024

Sunday	1	10 am service
Monday	2	
Tuesday	3	12 pm Recover Project
Wednesday	4	9:30 Playgroup;
Thursday	5	11 am Contemplative Prayer Group; 7 pm AA; Choir rehearsal 6-7:30 pm
Friday	6	10:30 am Kids Movement; 5:30 pm Community Meal.
Saturday	7	
Sunday	8	10 am service
Monday	9	
Tuesday	10	12 pm Recover Project
Wednesday	11	9:30 Playgroup; 11 - 3:30 Clothes Closet
Thursday	12	11 am Contemplative Prayer Group; 7 pm AA; Choir rehearsal 6-7:30
Friday	13	10:30 am Kids Movement; 5:30 pm Community Meal.
Saturday	14	10 am -12 pm Clothes Closet
Sunday	15	9:15 am Choir rehearsal; 10 am service
Monday	16	
Tuesday	17	12 pm Recover Project
Wednesday	18	9:30 Playgroup; 11 - 3:30 Clothes Closet
Thursday	19	11 am Contemplative Prayer Group; 7 pm AA; Choir rehearsal 6-7:30 pm
Friday	20	10:30 am Kids Movement; 5:30 pm Community Meal.
Saturday	21	7 pm Blue Christmas
Sunday	22	9:15 am Choir rehearsal; 10 am service
Monday	23	
Tuesday	24	Candlelight Christmas Eve service
Wednesday	25	Christmas
Thursday	26	11 am Contemplative Prayer Group; 7 pm AA
Friday	27	10:30 am Kids Movement; 5:30 pm Community Meal.
Saturday	28	10 am -12 pm Clothes Closet
Sunday	29	10 am service
Monday	30	
Tuesday	31	New Year's Eve

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December 2024

LECTIONARY FOR SUNDAYS IN DECEMBER

December 1	Jeremiah 33:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13; Luke 21:25-36; Psalm 25:1-9
December 8	Baruch 5:1-9 or Malachi 3:1-4; Philippians 1:3-11; Luke 3:1-6; Canticle 4 or 16
December 15	Zephaniah 3:14-20; Philippians 4:4-7; Luke 3:7-18; Canticle 9
December 22	Micah 5:2-5a; Hebrews 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-45, (46-55); Canticle 15 (or 3) or Psalm 80:1-7
December 29	Isaiah 61:10-62:3; Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7; John 1:1-18; Psalm 147 or 147:13-21