



TRINITY TIMES

SEPTEMBER 2022

Vol. 4 No. 3

Trinity moves forward as members share the load

In less than 60 days since the July 31 retirement of Trinity Church rector, the Very Rev. Father William McClure, and our music director, his wife Deb, the church has hired a new music director; lined up weekly supply priests, lectors, and cantors; and begun a “self-study” to assess the new direction of our 158-year-old parish.

Beginning the first Sunday in August, Kat Tomaszewski joined the parish staff as Music Director, serving the now-11 a.m. Sunday worship.

Starting this month, church member Rich Bates heads up a weeks-long parish self-study that will ultimately include input from every parishioner.

On Sept. 18 the Rev. Tracie Little, Canon to the Ordinary for the Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Michigan, will lead worship at 11 a.m. (only one service this Sunday) to discuss our church’s path forward.

In the meantime, Senior Warden Ellen Eagan secures and schedules supply priests – most often retired Episcopal priests Mark and LaRae Rutenbar, one or the other leading worship on alternate Sundays; and retired Rev. Bruce Michaud conducting Wednesday worship at noon.

Per diocesan dictate, the Senior Warden also performs those administrative matters usually reserved

(Continued on Pg. 2)

Self-study opens Sept. 22 with parish-wide meeting

Before a congregation begins searching for a new leader, the diocese recommends a prayerful self-study to assess 1) the church’s present state and 2) future outlook.

Focusing first on the state of the parish, a congregational meeting led by parishioner Dr. Rich Bates is set **Thursday, Sept. 22, 6:30-8 p.m. at the church.** Dr. Bates and his committee – Ellen Eagan, Cathy Meske, Lisa Rhea, Bill Powell, Sonya Titus, Dan Maxwell, and Jerri Cawthra –

(Continued on Page 2)



ALREADY ATTUNED: Without missing a beat, Kat Tomaszewski transitioned in August into her new post as Music Director. *(More on Page 3)*

Sharing the load

(Continued from Pg. 1)

for the rector, overseeing church operation, putting issues before the Vestry, and serving as liaison with the diocese.

Deacon Dr. Dan Maxwell conducts morning prayer and delivers sermons on alternate Sundays or when a supply priest is unavailable.

Bronwyn Woolman and teachers continue to lead the Worship Center children's program during the 11 a.m. service.

Church member Sonya Titus schedules weekly cantors and lectors; MaryAnn Hubbard provides prelude and postlude music; various parishioners step in to provide after-service coffee hour; Charlie Plourd and Dave Melville are ushers; and Lisa Rhea heads up altar care.

Administrative Assistant Peggy Tomaszewski (our new Music Director's mom) sees to just about everything else, her office efficiently serving as the operational and communications hub for the church, its members, and their needs.

The vacancy in the rectorate (and the absence of Deb McClure who, as the pastor's wife, took care of so many behind-the-scenes matters) requires more work from many more church members, but thus far all have proven willing and able.

The parish will likely continue in this mode at least until the end of the year when, the self-study completed, Trinity will have begun its search for its next church leader.



Deacon Maxwell offers a sermon

Self-study meeting Sept. 22

(Continued from Pg. 1)

will explain the self-study process, then lead small groups through questions about the present-day church and church-related activities. Those who cannot attend in person will receive a written questionnaire.

As results are compiled, the self-study committee begins its second task: discerning Trinity Church's future. A second survey on Trinity's mission in the years ahead goes to all parishioners as well as those in the wider community. The timeline is short: Dr. Bates expects to wrap up by Nov. 1, with both surveys returned and distilled into a single document for the Vestry.

The Rev. Tracie Little, Canon to the Ordinary and representative of the Eastern Michigan Episcopal Diocese, will be at Trinity Sunday, Sept. 18 at 11 a.m. to further outline the process.

This may be a good, if pressing, time for a self-study in more ways than one. It provides the pastoral search committee with an up-to-date "parish profile" for prospective priests.

The survey should also give direction to the Vestry and new church leader in terms of serving the broader community's needs.

Beyond that, Dr. Bates notes, Trinity is at a 21st Century, post-covid turning point. For most mainline churches, attendance is dropping and congregations are aging. "It's a good time to assess where we are and where we're going. A time to ask 'Where is God leading?'"

Alpena physician Rich Bates and his wife, Cheryl have been affiliated with Trinity Church for most of the last 12 years. Though he spent the last four years in Midland with MyMidMichigan Health, Dr. Bates, now retired, is back in Alpena. Also a certified spiritual director, he and Cheryl are active members of Trinity Church. Questions on the self-study? Email richbates17@gmail.com.



New young music director brings energy, experience!

If Trinity Church's new Music Director Kat Tomaszewski seemed to easily "pick up" where former Music Director Deb McClure left off, it was no accident.

Kat worked with Deb before

she left, studiously streamed our services, researched our music.

Youth notwithstanding, Kat knows what she's doing. She began as a church pianist and organist in 2011, playing for weddings, funerals, and services in Catholic, Episcopal, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Congregational, and Baptist churches.

"Music ministry is my passion," Kat says, one that began with those first lessons on the pipe organ at Grace Lutheran Church under the direction of Bunny Lyon.

She added to that years of piano lessons from professional musician Loretta Beyer, then majored in music business in college with advanced instruction in music theory and music composition at ACC.

Kat joined First Congrega-

tional Church as music director in 2016 and when Deb McClure retired from Trinity, agreed to share her time with both churches.

Kat plays at First Congregational Sundays from 10-11, then slides across the street for Trinity's 11 a.m. worship. MaryAnn Hubbard continues to enrich Trinity's services with prelude and postlude music.

Kat, who also has a day job at Alpena Sheriff's Department, is unfazed by the challenge of working three jobs and serving two parishes.

"For two years I worked at both Spratt UMC and St. Paul in Hubbard Lake at the same time," she writes. "(And those) churches were 12 miles apart!"



Save Nov. 5 for a souper salute to Ellen Eagan!

In 1997 Ellen Eagan launched Trinity's "Sunday Supper" program

for the needy, and in 25 years has helped serve more than 8,300 meals to our community's hungry.



She doesn't do it alone, of course.

The program has broadened from a Trinity effort to include workers and contributions from at least six other churches and from businesses, area residents, and even old friends.

We're all in this together, and on Saturday, Nov. 5 at 1 p.m., we'll come together to mark Ellen's 25th Sunday Supper anniversary with a humble soup-and-bread luncheon, followed by music, hilarity and a brief presentation.

Sunday Supper is a significant, lasting ministry only through Ellen's dedication and the generous grace of God. Please join us as we salute Ellen for 25 years of faith and service.

Tax collector visits Hebrew Village

Levi the Tax Collector, aka Bill Powell, recently visited the Hebrew Village built by Trinity's Worship Center children. Levi taxed the "homeowners" for living

under Roman rule, for decorations and extensions on their homes, and for fancy front doors! At the end of Worship Center, Levi led the children and Elders up to the Sanctuary where Levi encouraged parishioners to be generous in their giving (to others, not him).



TECW explores project, program ideas for 2022/2023

Exploring “what should we focus on?,” “who should we help?,” and “how should we raise funds to provide help to others?,” Trinity Episcopal Church Women are setting their agenda for 2022/23.

The group meets at the church

the second Saturday of the month at 10 a.m. and all, of whatever gender, are welcome.

Certain projects – providing gifts to area women and children in domestic abuse shelters and contributing to Christmas and Thanks-

giving food baskets for the needy – will continue, but in addition several members had new ideas for outreach and collaboration as well as new possibilities for raising funds.

Those will be discussed and potentially decided in October.

Special thanks to Cindy Baker for providing flowers for the McClures’ farewell reception!

Flowers for the altar

Wish to honor loved ones or mark a special event with flowers on the altar at Trinity? Please call Sonya Titus at (989) 354-6031 to reserve a spot on the calendar!



Trinity Times in transition, too

As our personnel and processes shift during this pastoral transition, so too does Trinity Times, abandoning our usual format in favor of focusing on major developments at hand, i.e. the new music director and parish self-study.

We hope by November/December to be back to our parish profiles, inspirational messages, and features on projects and ministries.



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