

Trinity Connections

To Know Christ. To Share
Christ.

December 1, 2020

FROM THE PASTOR

"I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ." Philippians 1:6

I have only been your pastor for a very short time, a truly unexpected gift for me and I hope also for you. I have learned so much about many of you, how gifted you all are, your love for each other and the love you have given me. Currently, we are going through a time none of us were prepared for that has taxed our notions of ministry and worship. Yet you have responded with grace, patience and love for this ministry we call Trinity.

I am so thankful for the gifted ministry teams that made it possible for us to discover new ways to provide worship to a new and wider audience. These teams are truly awesome. We don't know how many people see our services, but from the statistics from Facebook at Foothill, there are many people tuning in that we don't see in church, yet they come back every week. I am positive and the same is happening on YouTube here at Trinity.

As of December 31, 2020, I am retiring from active ministry after 47+ years. I know that you, along with Foothill Presbyterian, will continue to move forward as we go through this time and into the future as churches where people will find Christ's gospel of Grace, Love, and Faith being authentically taught and lived out in the community God has called you to serve.

You will continue to be in my prayers, and I look forward to seeing you around the community. My home is in Porterville, and that will not change.

I look forward to what God has in store for you as you move into the future He has prepared.

In Grace and Peace,
Pastor Jim

Here Comes the President!

Holiday greetings everyone! There are all kinds of things going on in front of and behind the scenes at our church.

At this time of year, we usually put a box out in the entryway for staff gifts, but you can mail any holiday cards to the church and they will be distributed (see below for the address).

There is a committee that has been formed between Foothill Presbyterian and our church to choose between the two interim pastors proposed by the two various denominations. Hopefully, our interim will be in place when Pastor Jim retires on the 31st of December.

Speaking of which, if you would like to send a card to send off the pastor with good wishes, we are going to put together all the cards in one place. Please mail the cards to the office to Jim Rogers, c/o Trinity Lutheran Church, 764 W. Henderson, Porterville, CA 93257. Pastor Jim and Cindi are hoping to travel in retirement. If you feel led, you could include a check written out to Jim Rogers to wish them on their way (please do not make checks out to the church).

Along with the weekly services, during Advent, there will be three Wednesday Advent services (12/2, 12/9, 12/16). The services will consist of observance of the Holden Evening Prayer service with reflections by Pastor Jim. Julie McIntosh and Jill Stokes are leading the Holden Evening Prayer songs played by Jan Gibson. The services will be available at 6 o'clock on each Wednesday and can be found on our website, on Trinity's Facebook page, or by searching for Trinity Lutheran Church of Porterville in YouTube.

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(cont.) In support of all these digital services, Trinity received a grant from the Sierra Pacific Synod for \$600. That money was spent on an iPad and tools needed to produce the services for the church. Currently, they are being done on a borrowed computer.

The last walk-through communion was very lovely. Participants took communion in the sanctuary while Jan, Dave, and Alice played music. We will let you know when another one is coming.

I still need two individuals or families to participate in the readings and lighting of the advent wreath. Please contact me or the church office to volunteer.

Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and God be with you.

Julie McIntosh, Council President

Bibles, Books and Beyond

Building a Biblical Library in Your Home (Ann Marie Wagstaff)

This Christmas I will be giving several families on my shopping list a book that I hope will become a biblical resource in their homes. In an era when many have digital readers or do much of their reading online, some may overlook the importance of having physical books in our homes. But the Reformation demonstrated the power of the presence of physical books in the home long ago—and that power has not diminished.

Most adults still prefer to read books they can hold in their hands—and many children, teenagers, and young adults also prefer “hard copy” books. In fact, despite the ubiquitous use of digital texts in education—from the primary grades through college—research has shown repeatedly that we read differently and with more comprehension and retention when we read physical books. And those who study literacy among children continue to promote having physical books and magazines in the home as the best way to develop “readers,” particularly readers who read for their own benefit and pleasure.

So if we want people (including ourselves) to read the Bible—and to continue to read it across a lifetime—one of the best ways to do that is to put the Bible and a few biblical resources on home bookshelves. Here are the three biblical resources that I find indispensable: a Bible atlas, a Bible dictionary, and *The Dictionary of Biblical Images*. There are many good Bible atlases, and there are many good Bible dictionaries—and perhaps I will write an introduction to those in the future. But there is only one *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*—and for the sake of biblical literacy now and in the next generation, every home biblical library should have one. The *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* (Intervarsity Press) was the *Christianity Today* Book of the Year in 1999. If you search for the book online, here is an excerpt of the description you will frequently find:

“Every reader of the Bible has encountered the powerful, comforting and sometimes puzzling imagery of Scripture. These concrete pictures with their hidden force have struck sharp and lasting impressions on our minds. Their imprint has etched itself on the language and grammar of Christian faith and Western culture. ...The *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* is the first contemporary reference work dedicated to exploring the images, symbols, motifs, metaphors and literary patterns found in the Bible. ...This unique dictionary explores the dazzling variety in which the Word of God comes dressed in clothes of everyday life. It traces the trail of images from Eden to the New Jerusalem. It captures the plotted patterns of biblical narrative. It surveys the imaged texture of each book of the Bible. In short, *The Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* is an inviting, enlightening and indispensable companion to the reading, study, contemplation and enjoyment of the Bible.”

This Christmas, or at any time, I encourage you to invest in biblical literacy by placing this book—as well as the Bible and other biblical reference books on as many bookshelves as possible. And start with your own!

Ann Marie Wagstaff
Education Ministry Chair

Advent Wednesdays

The Worship Team has put together a special Advent Holden Evening service that will be pre-recorded and posted on our YouTube Channel. The dates are:

December 2

December 9

December 16

Please tune in after 6:00pm each Wednesday and celebrate the coming of our Lord and Savior!



New Prayer Concerns

Muriel Josten - for healing from a severe shin bone break

Continuing Prayer Concern

Debbie Rodriguez - for continued healing

Gloria Miller - for continued healing

Peggy Holt - for healing and comfort due to health problems

Julie Elston - for continued health concerns

Brian Nelson - for continuing health concerns

La Vida Nueva UMC - for God to prosper our partnership in the gospel

The Sierra-Pacific Synod - for wisdom and a spirit of true fellowship in our shared ministries

Those unable to worship with us:

June Mowles - Sierra Hills

Avis Lindroos - North Dakota

Phyllis Rengstorf - Kaweah Manor, Visalia

December's Giving Opportunity: **CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates)**

CASA continues its crucial work providing a voice to foster children even during the COVID-19 Pandemic. This is how CASA describes their organization:

CASA of Tulare County is a non-profit organization focused on the safety, health, and growth of foster children. We deploy Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs) who spend time with children in the foster care system, look for the signs of numerous forms of abuse, and allow the otherwise lost voice of the child to pierce into their court appointments to ensure they have what they need, when they need it. CASA's are ordinary people who give their time and attention to children and help make our community stronger and more secure in its future. Visit our website to learn more!

And here are three ways that you can give to CASA now:

- Become a volunteer advocate. (You may remember that Pastor Krista was a volunteer while she served our congregation.)
- Visit CASA's website and make an online donation.
- Buy a "link" to the Barn Theater's online performance of "The CASA Project: Stand Up for a Child" (A Dramatic Reading in One Act). This online performance runs from December 11 to December 13. Proceeds will benefit CASA, Lighthouse Royal Family Kids (serves foster children), and the Barn Theater. "Links" are \$20 and can be purchased online from the Barn Theater's web page.

Each month the Trinity newsletter will include information about a local non-profit group who could use our help in fulfilling its unique service. In October we featured Valley Adult Day Services. In November we featured the Porterville Family Crisis Center. If you would like to recommend a non-profit to be featured, please contact Ann Marie Wagstaff or Lisa Duncan (church office).



ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Pastor Jim's last day - December 31
- Office will be OPEN December 24 & 31

Pastor Jim has given permission to publish his home address for those who wish to keep in touch:

**Jim & Cindi Rogers
2036 W. Nancy Avenue
Porterville, CA 93257**

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Marga Schaefer	12/5
Jay Warnke	12/13
Barbara Morris	12/15
Jan Gibson	12/27
Carolyn Sharp	12/30

No anniversaries this month

**Office Hours:
M-Th 9:00am-1:00pm
Tues: 9:00am - 12:00pm**

**Office Phone:
(559) 784-4202**