From the Rector
My Dear People,

This time of year we find ourselves preoccupied with preparations. We prepare for trips to visit loved ones by making reservations and other arrangements; we prepare lists of needed items—food, decorations, gifts; we prepare our homes and churches for our many expected guests. We do all this, even as we are exhorted to be slow, deliberate and quiet. I don't know about you, but despite my best intention to slow down, I often feel like one of the penguin waiters in "Mary Poppins," running in frantic circles, trying to hurry up and get things done.

When it comes to Advent and Christmas, how do we live at the intersection of ancient Christian practice and the expectations of 21st century America? Instead of engaging in a Quixotic crusade against the windmills of popular culture, let's take a step back and look at what we do this time of year. Let's ask ourselves, "How can we frame our cultural situation with scripture?" As we prepare to receive holiday guests, we can also prepare to receive the greatest guest of all, Jesus Christ. In Luke 3, St. John Baptist exhorts the crowds who have come to see him in the wilderness to prepare themselves to receive the One whose sandals he is unworthy to untie. If you have more food or clothing than you need, he says, share it with those who have none. Be honest in your dealings with others, and do not abuse power for your own gain. In other words, if you want to receive Him, you must first be like Him: generous, honest, and humble. In so doing, we open our hearts and minds to the will of God, as did St. Mary, when she willingly became the vessel of God's grace in bearing His Son. As St. Elizabeth said in Luke 1, "Blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

In the midst of the season's preparations, let also prepare our hearts by heeding the examples of St. John Baptist and St. Mary, as through our acts of humble service, we make the love of the Word made flesh known to all.

May God bless you,
Father Richard

Annual Leaf Raking Extravaganza
Please join us in our historic churchyard on Saturday, December 8 from 9am to 1pm (rain date: December 15) for the annual raking of the leaves. All are welcome! Hot chocolate and coffee will be served in the morning, with lunch

Our Staff
around noon. We are very much in need of paper leaf bags - please bring them to church between now and the big day. Please visit our website to see pictures of last year's festivities.

Birth Announcement
John and Mary Sampson welcomed a new granddaughter, Grace Lillian Ehke, into their family on October 12. She is the daughter of Anne (Sampson) and Norman Ehke and joins her big sisters Cadence and Claire. She will be baptized at Christ Church on January 6. Congratulations!

Bishop Bennison to Retire
Bishop Bennison has announced his retirement at the end of this year and there will be a service of thanksgiving for his ministry at 3pm on Saturday, December 15, at the Philadelphia Cathedral. Please visit the diocesan website for more information about the service as well as an update from the Standing Committee about the transition process in the coming months.

Children's Christmas Pageant
Our annual telling of the Christmas Story will take place on Sunday, December 16, at 10am in the Church and will be followed by Eucharist and coffee hour. The theme, "Angels on Assignment", tells the story of the events that led up to the virgin birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It tells of the excitement and participation that the angels of heaven might have felt about this holy event. All are welcome! The dress rehearsal will take place on Saturday, December 15, at 10am followed by lunch in the Buchanan Building. Volunteers are needed to help prepare and serve lunch. Contact Dottie Orr or Lorie Henry if you can help. Please visit our website to see pictures and video from last year's pageant.

Christmas at Trinity
For more than 300 years, families have celebrated Christmas at Trinity. This year, be a part of that tradition and invite a friend or neighbor to join you. On Christmas Eve, we will have a family candelight service at 7pm. Our bell choir will ring at this service, there will be a child-oriented sermon, and hymns sung by candlelight. At 10pm on Christmas Eve, the senior choir will offer a concert of Christmas favorites, followed by a traditional "Midnight Mass" at 10:30pm. On Christmas Day, mass will be said at 9am. If you know of anyone who needs a ride to Christmas services, please contact the church office by email or phone at (215) 745-6114. Please visit our website to see pictures from last Christmas.
Christmas Ornament

Please consider giving a beautiful Trinity Christmas Ornament to your loved ones this year. The ornament is based on a drawing of the church made by Thomas Wharton for the Historic American Buildings Survey in 1936. The original drawings are held by the Library of Congress in Washington DC. You may purchase one for $20 after church or by sending a check to the church office for $25 (which includes shipping & handling).

Diocesan Convention

On Saturday, November 10, Judy Maile, Vicki Sayers, Father Richard, Dottie Orr, and Father Don joined with more than 600 delegates representing 115 parishes at the 229th Convention of the Diocese of Pennsylvania. It was held at the Philadelphia Cathedral and a special resolution was passed in recognition of Bishop Bennison’s many years of service. Please visit the diocesan website for more information about convention. Please note that Pete Datos continues to represent the Pennypack Deanery on Diocesan Council, the group that helps carry on the business of the diocese between conventions, so please don’t hesitate to discuss with him any matters of interest.

Episcopal Community Services

We adopted 14 children for the holidays from Episcopal Community Services foster care program again this year. Many thanks to everyone who gave Christmas gifts to help make the season bright for these children.

Greening of the Church

Join us after Lessons & Carols on December 23 to help set up the flowers, aisle candles and greenery in the church. The traditional baked potato lunch will follow. Please visit our website to see photos of last year’s fun.

Hispanic Ministry

In recognition of the increasing Hispanic population in our neighborhood, the Vestry has authorized Father Richard to form a committee to explore how best we can serve this growing segment of our community. If you would like to help with this effort, please see Father Richard.

Memorials

Each year, friends of Trinity remember loved ones with donations for music and flowers, which fill the church at
Donations for music and flowers, which fill the church at Christmas. Please give generously so that we can continue this wonderful tradition. Donations may be placed in the offering on Sundays or dropped by the church office during the week. The deadline for recognition in the Christmas bulletin is Wednesday, December 19. Please visit our website for a complete list of last year’s memorials.

**Music Ministry**

December is an exciting and busy month for the choirs at Trinity. Our Bell Choir began rehearsing in November to prepare for the 7pm Family Service on Christmas Eve. We were very happy to welcome two new members to our Bell Choir: Patricia McGee and Genni Anderson.

The Senior Choir will be presenting our traditional "Lessons and Carols" service on December 23 at 10am. They will be joined by the Bella Corda String Ensemble for this occasion. This beautiful service will feature seasonal hymns and anthems for the choir and congregation. Included will be the music of J.S. Bach, Boris Ord, and David Willcocks.

On Christmas Eve, the Senior Choir will present a concert of Christmas music at 10pm, followed by traditional "Midnight Mass" at 10:30pm. We invite you to join us for these beautiful services as we celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Venite adoremus! Mary Sampson, Organist/Choirmaster

**Philadelphia Protestant Home**

We are providing Christmas gifts for residents of the Philadelphia Protestant Home again this year through their Adopt-A-Resident program. Instead of adopting specific residents we are asking for donations that the home can give to those in need. These items should be brought to Trinity no later than December 9 and should not be wrapped. Suggested gifts include: packs of cotton garments such as socks, v-neck undershirts, sweaters, or sweat pants in sizes M-XL. Gifts of Dove soap, gentle shampoo or unscented hand lotion are also accepted. Monetary gifts can be given for a variety of needs, including haircuts and personal products. Please make checks out to Trinity Church Oxford and note PPH in the memo line. Thank you for your generosity and care for our elderly neighbors.

**Rector's Christmas Open House**

All friends of Trinity are welcome to celebrate the season at the Rectory (1708 Old Welsh Rd, Huntingdon Valley) on Friday, December 28, from 4pm to 8pm. The annual party will once again feature the musical stylings of Jonathan Bowen at the piano, who is back by popular demand. For more information, please see Father Richard or call the church office at (215) 745-6114.

**Stewardship**

At the end of October, we gathered the pledges for the year during our Harvest Thanksgiving celebration. If you haven't turned in your pledge card yet, please bring it to
have\n't turned in your pledge card yet, please bring it to church or mail it in to the church office using the pre-addressed envelope. Thank you to all who give so generously so that we can continue our mission of preaching the Gospel of Christ, helping our community, and celebrating the Sacraments so beautifully in our national treasure church. If you have any questions, please see Lorie Henry or Susan McConomy, Stewardship Chairs.

**Thanksgiving Food Baskets**

Thank you to everyone who donated turkeys, fixings, and money for our food baskets. Just before Thanksgiving, the [Girls Friendly Society](#) and Church School children finished shopping and packed 9 baskets in time for them to be delivered to needy families from our neighborhood and the Crossan and Moore Schools. Thanks to your generosity, we were able to provide Thanksgiving dinner for more than 50 people.

**Vestry Highlights**

At the last Vestry meeting, we reviewed the parish finances and a number of ongoing property issues, including the tree which must be cut down between the Buchanan Building and the Children's House, leaf raking day, and the day care center doors. We discussed the many upcoming events in December and how best to involve everyone. The Vestry also authorized Father Richard to investigate increased ministry to our Hispanic neighbors (see related article). Please note: due to the Christmas holidays, our next meeting will be held on Sunday, December 16, after coffee hour.

**Women of Trinity**

On Tuesday, December 11, the ladies will hold their annual Christmas luncheon in the Buchanan Building at noon. We wish you all a blessed and merry Christmas! For more information concerning the Women of Trinity, please email Nellie Duddy or call her at (215) 745-3739.

**Calendar and Your Feedback**

Please visit our new [interactive online calendar](#) on our website that allows you to view events at Trinity by week or month, and in a variety of formats. You can also print out the calendar in a way that works best for you. Please also email any input for the January Trinitarian to me before December 27.

Cheers, [Pete](#) (your Trinitarian editor)

**Schedule of Events**

Every Sunday, Mass at 8am (spoken) and 10am (with music and church school during the service, followed by coffee hour in the Buchanan Building)

Sunday, December 2, First Sunday of Advent

Tuesday, December 4, Girls Friendly Society at 7pm in the Children's House
Thursday, December 6, Bell Choir Rehearsal at 7:30pm in the Church

Saturday, December 8, Leaf-Raking Extravaganza from 9am to 1pm in the Churchyard (rain date: December 15)

Sunday, December 9, Second Sunday of Advent

Tuesday, December 11, Women of Trinity Annual Christmas Luncheon at noon in the Buchanan Building

Thursday, December 13, Bell Choir Rehearsal at 7:30pm in the Church

Saturday, December 15, Pageant Dress Rehearsal at 10am in the Church with lunch afterward

Sunday, December 16, Christmas Pageant (with Eucharist) at 10am in the Church followed by coffee hour

Sunday, December 16, Vestry Meeting after coffee hour

Wednesday, December 19, String Ensemble rehearsal at 7pm in the Church

Thursday, December 20, Bell Choir Rehearsal at 7:30pm in the Church

Sunday, December 23, Lessons & Carols at 10am in the Church followed by Greening of the Church (with famous baked potato lunch)

Monday, December 24, Candlelight Family Service at 7pm in the Church (bell choir report time is 6:15pm)

Monday, December 24, Senior Choir Concert at 10pm in the Church followed by traditional "Midnight Mass" at 10:30pm

Tuesday, December 25, Christmas Day Holy Eucharist (spoken) at 9am in the Church

Friday, December 28, Rector's Christmas Open House from 4pm to 8pm

Forward email