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Trinity Messenger

November 2023 Issue 4

*Alleluia. Abide in me as I abide in you; those who abide
in me bear much fruit. Alleluia. John 15:4, 5*



...and there was no one left to speak for me.

*First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out, Because I was not a Socialist. Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out, Because I was not a Trade Unionist. Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out, Because I was not a Jew. Then they came for me, **and there was no one left to speak for me.***

These words or similar versions of this quote, which may be familiar to you, were written following World War Two by Martin Niemoller, who was a prominent Lutheran pastor in Nazi Germany. Prior to Adolph Hitler's coming to power in 1933, Niemoller sympathized with right-wing political movements in his native Germany but became an outspoken critic of Nazi interference in the Protestant churches that soon followed. For his public protestations against Hitler's government and its persecutions, Niemoller spent the last eight years of the war imprisoned.

Niemoller's words reflected his belief that the German people were complicit in the persecution and murder of millions of Jews and other groups of people, deemed threatening or subhuman during the war, because of their silence as these atrocities took place. He was especially critical of the Protestant churches of Germany (Lutheran, Reformed, and United) and their leaders, for their complacency and cowardice.

This quote reminds us that there is a danger in remaining silent when we see injustice and choose not to speak up, especially when we are not directly affected by what is happening, because silence is safer. Likewise, it should not be a huge leap for our minds to recognize that Niemoller's message, written over seventy years ago, is as relevant today as it was then. The consistent rise and increased activity of hate groups in this country and around the world during the past decade, coupled with the recent increase in anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim violence from both conservative and liberal groups, since the start of the Hamas-Israeli conflict, should clearly signal to God's church that it cannot once more remain silent, safe, and uninvolved because it is not being directly targeted. God's church, which is being called by Jesus through his words and actions to stand up

and speak out against all forms of injustice and prejudice, cannot in good conscience allow its unconscionable mistakes of past to be repeated.

A recent study conducted by The London Centre for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism, in partnership with the Anti-Defamation League and the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago, discovered a startling 85 percent of Americans believe at least one defamatory misrepresentation of Jewish people and Judaism as a whole. This is an increase from 61 percent in 2019, while 20 percent believe six or more misrepresentations, which is an increase from 11 percent in 2019. This study revealed “widespread belief in antisemitic conspiracy theories and tropes...as well as substantially negative anti-Israel sentiment among Americans (*American Defamation League, “Report: Antisemitism Attitudes in America: Topline Findings,”* 12 January 2023). Disturbingly, the 2022 crime report from the FBI showed that ninety percent of the reported hate crimes committed in the United States during that year were anti-Semitic in nature. The hate and violence that is being focused upon our sisters and brothers of the Jewish faith, and on other religions and groups that are not Christian and white, should be horrifying to those of us who follow a savior who was Jewish, as were many of his early disciples, and whose central teaching is to love and protect our neighbor without exception.

At a time when crimes against God’s humanity and atrocities beyond people’s imagination were being carried out in Germany and in its backyard throughout Europe, the Christian church, paralyzed by fear and an all-too-common attitude of not wanting to get involved, remained silent because of prejudice in certain instances and out of fear that the persecution experienced by others might be turned on them. Superficially faithful Christians watched at a distance and chose to say or do nothing as their friends and neighbors, God’s equally beloved children, were brutalized, imprisoned, tortured, and exterminated by their fellow citizens and others who adhered to ideologies of dehumanizing prejudice and hate—ideologies that the world is once again hearing with increased vitriol and seeing acted upon with elevated frequency and intensity.

God’s church in the 21st Century cannot in good conscience remain silent and allow itself to be paralyzed by fear. It cannot, in resistance to following Jesus’ command to love one’s neighbor, choose to ignore it and claim that it’s not its fight. As the church we have been given a clear and uncompromising command by Jesus to call out and address with protesting voices and life-giving action the evil behaviors of others that are antithetical to the Gospel. Allowed to go unchallenged, violence will continue to grow, become acceptable as a normalized part of our discourse and the cultural landscape, and result in increased instances of hate crimes against groups being targeted for simply looking, sounding, or worshiping differently than those who, for whatever reason, cannot see beauty in the diversity by which God created His beloved children.

Make no mistake about it, complacency is complicity, and God’s church, if it is being faithfully true to its mission, must never shrink from its responsibility to walk shoulder to shoulder with those being persecuted no matter the cost. The danger of not acting is far too great and frightening to consider. If we perilously choose the path of least resistance, selfishly turning a blind eye to the problems of others, we risk the real possibility that when “they” come for us, there will be no one left to speak for us.

Faithfully,

Pastor Mark

Congregation Council Meeting Summary

At its meeting November 9, the Congregation Council:

- Approved recommending to the congregation the 2024 Ministry Support Plan in the amount of \$409,112. The Ministry Support Plan will be reviewed as part of the adult forum Sunday, November 19, with the opportunity for questions and discussion. The Ministry Support Plan will be voted on at the Congregational Meeting December 3.
- Approved recommending to the congregation that Ed Quirke and Katherin Baltz be elected for 3-year terms on the Congregation Council.
- Approved recommending to the congregation that Peggy Dean and Adam Doughty be the congregation's voting members to the 2024 conference and synod meetings.
- Discussed contracting with Partners for Sacred Spaces to consult with us about how to use our facilities to better serve the community and generate additional income.
- Discussed a request to return to serving Holy Communion by "tables" at the altar rail. Though the decision was **not** to change our present method of distribution, communicants are reminded that they can kneel at the altar rail and take whatever time they desire after receiving the bread and wine.

Stewardship Special Giving for November: VETERANS

The Veteran Center located in the Greenfield Industrial Park in Lancaster began its programs for Veterans in 1979. The primary mission of the center is to provide quality readjustment service for veterans and their families to civilian life.

Since the month of November includes Veteran's Day, the Stewardship Committee decided to honor Veterans this month.

The center serves all veterans, those who have completed their service but also active-duty veterans. The team that staffs this center has a goal of providing whatever a veteran may need in their lives, including connecting them with services either with the VA or in our community. The help provided is geared to help the veteran readjust to their current situation. Some of the situations can be Post Traumatic Stress, Sexual Trauma, Bereavement, Drug and Alcohol, referral for VA benefits, referral for homeless veterans, or any other barrier to the veteran getting care. Some of these cannot be completed with government funds so donations are very welcome.



Thanksgiving Baskets

Thanksgiving Day Baskets

Thanksgiving is around the corner and once again the Social Ministry Committee will be collecting food items to make Thanksgiving Day Baskets. We were given the names of 20 area families in need from Ephrata Area Social Services. We need your help! Using your donations, we will provide these families with a Thanksgiving Dinner. Please bring in food items according to your last name.

- A-D: canned peas or corn
- E-H: canned sweet potatoes
- I-L: seasoned stuffing
- M-P: instant potatoes

Q-S: jello snack packs (premade jello in containers) or package cookies or applesauce
T-Z: apple juice or orange drink

We are also accepting donations of 10-14 lb turkeys. Contact the church office or Rob Gilbert if you can donate a turkey no later than **November 5th**. Monetary donations to purchase items will be greatly appreciated. Donations can be dropped off at the church and placed in the basket in the Gathering Area.

We have done this with Ephrata Area Social Services for several years and they need our help more than ever. Please let us not disappoint those in need. If you have any questions, please call Rob Gilbert at 721-3822.

Two Important Congregational Meetings

There will be an informational forum about the proposed 2024 Ministry Spending Plan (Budget) and our deficit financial situation Sunday, **November 19**, in the social hall following the worship service. Not only will current and projected financial information be shared at the meeting, but questions will be answered and ideas solicited.

The annual congregational meeting will be held Sunday, **December 3**, in the sanctuary following the worship service. At this meeting the 2024 Ministry Spending Plan will be presented for adoption.

Members are strongly encouraged to attend both meetings because of the financial implications.

Presents for Neighborhood Santa

Christmas will soon be here and this year we will be collecting gifts for the Neighborhood Santa Program which supports area children through EASS. We were given 60 ornaments. Please take an ornament from the display located in the Gathering Area. Place your wrapped gift with the ornament in the Gathering Area by December 3rd. See display for more details. If you have any questions, please call Rob Gilbert at 721-3822.



Revelation Bible Study

Bible Study: *The Revelation to John*

You are invited to join Pastor Mark on Tuesday mornings, from 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM, for a study of the book of *Revelation (The Revelation to John)*. The group will meet in the conference room next to the office. The class will run for six consecutive weeks. **The class will not be meeting on November 21.** You are invited to bring your own Bible to take notes if you wish (yes, writing in your Bible is okay); however, Bibles will be available. You are also invited to bring lunch with you in case you want to hang out afterward for more discussion on any topic or to enjoy fellowship time.

Pickleball News

Holy Trinity now has Pickleball equipment, and a court set up in the multi-purpose room. Anyone who is interested in learning how to play pickleball or who already is a pickleball player may use the court. There are two signup sheets on the table in the gathering area. One for beginners and one for those who already know how to play and want to sign up for times and dates. We need to know this info so we can coordinate the use of the area with other events that might be happening. See Ron Kerschner if you have any questions.



THE ADULT (all adults are welcome) LUNCH BUNCH Will be going to after the liturgy on December 10. We'll meet downstairs after the liturgy. All are welcome. For reservations, please call Cheryl Plummer by December 9 at 625-3187. Plan to join us!



Celebration Choir Schedule for November

Wednesday, November 15 – Celebration Choir rehearsal at 7:15 PM in the church sanctuary
Wednesday, November 22 – Thanksgiving Eve Service – 7:00 PM
Celebration Choir will sing “We Gather Together” at this service.

Senior Choir rehearsals are Wednesdays at 6:45 PM! All are welcome!!!

BELL CHOIR Rehearsals are Tuesdays at 7:00 pm.

Luther Acres Holiday Bazaar and Pancake Breakfast

Saturday, November 18th at Luther Acres Towne Center 250 St. Luke Drive, Lititz
Holiday Bazaar 8AM- 2PM Pancake Breakfast 8-10AM

If you are interested in more info, pick up a flyer on the table in Gathering Area.

November 19-25 Calendar

Sunday, November 19	
9:00am	Worship
10:00am	Coffee Hour After Worship
10:15am	SCS
Monday, November 20	
10:00am	Women's Prayer Group
6:30pm	Yoga
Tuesday, November 21	
3:30pm	Trini Mini
7:00pm	Bell Choir
Wednesday, November 22	
12:00pm	Church office closes at noon
7:00pm	Celebration Choir sings
7:00pm	Thanksgiving Eve service 7PM
Thursday, November 23	
Thanksgiving Day Church office closed	
Friday, November 24	
Church office closed	
Saturday, November 25	
7:30am	Walking Group

[View This Month's Interactive Calendar Here](#)

November 19th Servers

Council: Christy Boos, John Weiss

Assisting Minister: Ed Quirke

Lector: Dan Doremus

Acolyte: CH: Natalie Mull

Ushers: Curtis & Christy Boos,
Bill & Lori Spitzer

Altar Guild: Barb & Steve Sweigart,
Andy Sweigart

Linen: Lori Spitzer

Deliver Flower: Dan Doremus



Office Hours: November 20-24

We recommend you call the office prior to stopping in to ensure hours have not changed.
Office Phone: 717-733-4134 Pastor's Cell: 315-317-8517 Donna's Cell: 717-669-7831

Day	Sue	Pastor
Monday	8:00 AM- 4:00 PM	Vacation
Tuesday	8:00 AM- 4:00 PM	Vacation
Wednesday	8:00AM -12:00 noon	Vacation
Thursday	Church Office Closed	Vacation
Friday	Church Office Closed	Vacation

Make Your Regular Offering Electronically

On the Holy Trinity website (www.holytrinityephrata.org), a tab on the menu bar called "Online Giving" will take you to a secure web site for you to give. You can also give your Regular Offering, your Special Appeal donation, your building fund, or your Homes of Hope fund donation by using your Smart Phone and following the QR code.



CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS & TREES

POINSETTIAS CAN BE ORDERED BY RETURNING THIS FORM VIA MAIL OR DROP OFF TO THE CHURCH OFFICE. **ORDERS WILL NOT BE TAKEN IN CHURCH THIS YEAR.**
DEADLINE FOR ORDERS IS MONDAY, DECEMBER 4

NAME _____

PHONE _____

_____ Poinsettias (\$8.25 each) 6 ½ in. Pot

IN MEMORY/HONOR OF: _____

OR

I WOULD LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS THE PURCHASE OF CHRISTMAS TREES.

\$5.00 _____ \$10.00 _____ \$15.00 _____ \$20.00 _____

IN MEMORY/HONOR OF: _____

Thanks for reading! Have a great week ahead!



