



The Tidings

*Holy Trinity Episcopal
Church and School*

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Fruitland Park, FL 34731
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Rector: Rev. Samuel Nsengiyumva

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The Culture of Invitation



from many of our new members and visitors, Holy Trinity is a welcoming church.

With such a positive reputation, one would expect a lot more people in our pews on Sunday mornings and our other events. The fact that there are only a few of us, suggests that there are other things we may not be doing as well. I believe one of the things we need to be more intentional about is invitation. Being a welcoming church is good but of little help if there are no visitors to welcome; and visitors will not visit unless they are invited.

According to statistics:

- 82% of the un-churched are at least somewhat likely to attend church if invited
- 75 – 90% of new church members started coming because they were invited by someone who attends the church

- 10 – 30% of first-time visitors will eventually become members

Why invite others to Church?

The simple answer is that it is what Christians are called to do. It is very clear that the Christian movement began when Jesus invited two of John the Baptist's disciples to **"Come and See"**. We are told that one of those disciples was Andrew. The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother, Simon Peter, and tell him, "We have found the Messiah." He brought him to Jesus. The next day Jesus found Phillip to whom he said, "Follow Me". Phillip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law ... Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." When Nathanael asked whether anything good could come from Nazareth, Phillip answered, **"Come and See."** (John 1:39-46). This and numerous other examples in the Bible and people's own experiences throughout history, clearly show that the church or any other organization can only exist if members make it a habit to invite others.

While I must admit that inviting others to church is easier said than done, the biggest obstacle has been the loss of "the culture of invitation." Somehow, we have concluded that what is good for us is not necessarily good for others and have decided to keep it to ourselves. Faith, in particular, has become a private matter instead of something beautiful to which everyone is invited and welcome to **"taste and see."**

How to invite someone to Church?

There are certainly many ways to invite someone to church. I personally find the following steps developed over ten years ago by the Rev. Scott Thompson and members of St. James Episcopal Church in Mosinee, Wisconsin, to be very helpful.

1) **Make a list of everyone you know that you could possibly invite to Holy Trinity** (*family, friends, colleagues, neighbors, etc*). Anyone not regularly involved in a church should be invited. Some people have their membership at a church, but seldom (if ever) attend. Obviously, whatever that church has to offer, it is not making an impact on that particular individual. Perhaps God would use you and Holy Trinity to make an impact and bring that person's faith to life! You'll never know until you care enough to extend an invitation.

2) **Work the list and pray.** Go for it. Talk to someone. Give someone a call. And before you talk to people, talk to God about the people he is leading you to invite. Pray that he will give you the right words to say. Pray that he will put your spirit at ease. (Some people get nervous talking to others about church.) Pray that he will open the hearts of those you invite.

3) **Share what Holy Trinity means to you.** No advertisement is as effective as a satisfied "customer." You may want to sit down and think about what Holy Trinity means to you and put it into your own words. Then when it's clear in your own mind, share what you feel with others.

4) **Make a specific invitation.** "Join us *sometime*" is too open ended. That's like saying "Come over to dinner sometime." The invitee doesn't know whether he/she is really being invited or not. So be specific. Example: "I'm going to Holy Trinity this Sunday and I would love for you to join me." If they can't make it, they will say so, and you can invite them again another time. If they say they are already a member at another church, ask them how often they go or how involved they are. If they are really committed to that other church, take them off your list. If they are not really committed, continue to invite them, unless it becomes obvious that they are averse to your asking. Don't give up too easily, but don't be obnoxious. People need the Lord, and some people need a loving friend who will take an interest in their spiritual needs. That's why Holy Trinity exists. And you are Christ's hands to reach out to those people. If you don't reach out, who will?

5) **Provide the transportation.** Include in your invitation your intention to provide the transportation. Example: "I'm going to Holy Trinity this Sunday, and I would love for you to join me... It starts at 10:30; I'll pick you up at 9:45!" If they know you are coming to get them, they will have to be ready, and sleeping in or not going will be less tempting. You yourself might be tempted to think that such an approach is being a little "pushy." Your friend might even think that too. BUT, if they come with you to church and find their faith and the joy that is gained in a new relationship with God through Jesus Christ. they will be forever grateful that you took the time and effort to get them to church. So go ahead, be bold, bold as love, and reach out!

As we approach Holy Week and Easter, this may be a wonderful opportunity for you to invite the friend, neighbor, or relative who has no church connection. It is my hope that as we pray and practice these things, we will one day be known not just for our welcoming but for our invitation as well.

“O let all who thirst, let them to the water...

*Bring the ones who are laden, bring them all to the
Lord*

Bring the children, without might

Easy the load and light

Come to the Lord.”

(Gather Hymnal #502)

By Fr. Samuel Nsengiyumva

Sr. Warden's Report

I want to thank all who were able to join us at the Annual Meeting and luncheon. I want to thank Annette Freeman and Bonnie Hultin for such a wonderful job preparing and serving our meal. It is always pleasant when we get to socialize and “break bread” together.

This month we had our annual Pancake Dinner – our last hurrah before Lent. I thank the Men's Group for doing such a nice job of cooking and serving us that evening.

March promises another evening of eating together; that will be on March 28th, Maundy Thursday. We partake in an Agape Meal again this year. We will meet at the Parish Hall at 5pm for prayers and foot washing. We will dine on a simple meal of bread, soup, wine and fruit. We will proceed to the Church at 6:30 for service and the stripping of the altar. I have always found this to be the most profound service of the year. When the altar is being stripped, it reminds me of the solemn days coming. Good Friday and the Easter Vigil are days I really feel the sacrifice Jesus made on our behalf. Good Friday Stations will be done outside at 12pm and in the Church at 6pm. The Easter Vigil will be at 8pm. Easter Sunday will be the usual 8am and 10:30am services.

March 23rd is Fruitland Park Day. It is held at the Fruitland Park Library parking lot. There are vendors, a barbeque cook off, dunking tank, music and a parade. This year the parade will include the

students of Holy Trinity Episcopal School. So, come and cheer our kids on and visit us at the Holy Trinity Table. The festivities will begin at 10am.

March will be a very active month and, and I am hoping you will be able to join us in as many of them as possible.

Doris Brennan – Senior Warden

Vestry Meeting Highlights February 15, 2024

The Vestry met for their monthly meeting on Thursday, February 15, 2024 to discuss matters of importance to the life and mission of our church.

1. The Vestry reviewed the January meeting minutes and were accepted as amended.
2. The returning Vestry members met for the first time with new Vestry members. It was a time of orientation for both new and old members. Items discussed during this time included:
 1. Legal documents such as the Parish By-laws and the National Canons
 2. The Vestry Resource Guide and other reference resources
 3. An Annual Calendar which would include our Annual Vestry retreat
- 3 Please Note: The Vestry unanimously voted to change the Vestry Meetings from 6:30 PM to 6:00 PM on the third Thursday of each month.
- 4 The Junior Warden reported that:
 - a. The round window, above the church door, should be fixed shortly.
 - b. A Building and Grounds Clean-up Day will take place on March 2, 2024. Remember the old adage, “**Many hands make light work.**”
- 5 Fr. Samuel's Rector's Report included the following:
 - a. The Vestry unanimously approved the **Diocesan Assessment** for 2024.
 - b. The **Parochial Report** was presented and unanimously accepted by the Vestry.
 - c. The Vestry unanimously approved a small gift, in a good faith gesture, for an ad in **Holy Faith's Celebration** brochure.

- 6 The Vestry reviewed and approved the treasurer's report for January. In addition, time was spent explaining each of the types of reports that are issued each month for the Vestry members review and discussion
- 7 The next Vestry Meeting is March 21st.
- 8 The meeting ended with a closing prayer from Fr. Samuel.

Treasurer's Summary Report

January, 2024

Contributions	Actual	Budget
Pledges	\$41,139	\$25,167
Other Income	<u>\$ 3,874</u>	<u>\$ 3,558</u>
Total	\$45,013	\$28,725
Expenses	\$29,150	\$28,725

Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God. *Ephesians 5:2*

Russ Casson, Treasurer

HTEC School Tutor Program

If you or someone you know wants to make a real difference in a child's life and has just one hour a week to work one-on-one with a student as a tutor please call (913) 558-2636 or email jimkelly8143@gmail.com. (No formal academic certification is required and training is provided.)

Salvation Army Food Bank Collection



The Outreach committee is asking you all to contribute to the Salvation Army food bank by making deposits of nonperishable food in the Little Red Wagon at the front of the church on Sundays. Specifically, the

Salvation Army is asking for breakfast cereal, peanut butter, bags/boxes of rice, instant potatoes and canned vegetables. For more information about helping our brothers and sisters in Christ please contact Annette Freeman (352) 406-7608.

HTEC Salvation Breakfast Team

Besides Holy Trinity's contributions to the Salvation Army Food Bank via the Red Wagon we also have a fun loving and hard-working team of volunteers that provides breakfast service at the Salvation Army post in Leesburg to typically 25 to 35 people in need. You can be part of this mission by joining our breakfast team for just 2 hours on second and fifth Tuesdays of the month. For more information about helping our brothers and sisters in Christ please contact Jim Kelly (913) 558-2636.



Salvation Army Bell Ringer Award

Holy Trinity is recognized by the Salvation Army of Leesburg at the Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon on February 7, 2024 as the Top Church Group Bell Ringers for 2023, raising a total of \$2,655.21 in support of our partners in faith, the Salvation Army. Randy Siver, representing Holy Trinity, receiving the award is pictured here with Leesburg Salvation Army Volunteer Coordinator, Major Marie Harris and Post Commander, Lieutenant Jeremy Porter.



Outreach Ministries



Outreach Chair,
Annette Freeman HTEC



We cannot express how grateful we are for the kind words of sympathy and support during this difficult time. Losing our Mama has been the most challenging experience of our lives, and your condolences, prayers, cards, hugs, texts and calls have provided us with a sense of comfort and solace. Your words of encouragement have given us the strength to carry on. We feel blessed to have such a caring and thoughtful Church Family.

Thank You all for this support from the bottom of our hearts.

With Our Many Thanks,
Annette Freeman & Bonnie Hultin

Made in His Image, A Shakespearean Sonnet

How would it feel to tell the stars to flash
Their light across a darkened nighttime sky,
Just talk instead of labile tempers clash,
Around a holy fire on mountain high.
To shower skies with snow or water drops,
Or fill the seas with fish and sparkling sand,
To tell the sun it's time to shine - or not,
Or throw a thunderbolt out of my hand.
To make the devil tremble lasting fear,
Proclaim that death and sinfulness will fall,
To penetrate perdition through eyes clear,
Provide the cross of life to save us all.
God tells us truth to show the path to choose
and find his love and grace for me and you.

Ron Whetsell

See more of Ron's poetry at ronsblogs.blogspot.com



Twenty-two golfers gathered at Pennbrooke Fairways at 10:00 A.M. Saturday February 10th for our February Holy Hackers outing. Once again, the weather was beautiful and the golfing varied from pretty good to very good. We had a tie for first place at 5 under par, by Team #2 Gary Hensley, Arlene

Hanson and Lisa & Les Hall and Team #3 Debbie & Randy Siver and their guests Kathy & Gary Weber. Team #6 Father Ted, Deacon Charlie and Mike Browne finished at 3 under, Team #5 Jackie Murphy, Gail & Jonathon Hole were 2 under, Team #4 Ann & Steve Oakes and Sara & Bruce May were 1 under and Team #1 Naomi & Dave Aldrich and Judy & Gregg Monin were even par. Twelve of us were able to make it afterwards to a very nice lunch at Piesanos Stone Fired Pizza. The restaurant at Pennbrooke Fairways is currently not opening Saturdays. We are playing again on Saturday, March 9th, with a 10:00AM tee off. All are welcome to join us and bring guests, or just join us for lunch. The signup sheet is on the bulletin board in the Parish Hall or you can e-mail, call or text me.

Dave Aldrich

aldrichkp68@gmail.com

Cell phone: 203 258-9643

Parishioner Spotlight



This month our Parishioner Spotlight is on Gay and Bob Hensley. Gay did a terrific job of writing the article that we share below:

We joined Holy Trinity in early 2013. At that time, we lived in Hillsborough. We were here year-round until June, 2022. We sold our home and returned to Arkansas. The last two years, we've rented, in Hillsborough, for Jan.-March.

While in The Villages we were involved with the table tennis club, learned and played pickleball, golf, and belonged to the Mini and the Penn State clubs. We continue with those sports in AR.

We live in the city of Maumelle, near Little Rock. Bob was originally from Conway, AR. and I lived in the Little Rock area since 1979. My two sons were raised there, but I'm originally from PA.

Bob served for 23 years in the Army, so he and his family moved to many different states and Europe during that time. Bob then started a real estate company in Conway. I was an elementary and middle school teacher for many years.

Bob and I met in 2005, in a social club, and were married in 2006. We were both blessed to find a terrific mate later in life. We've been married for 17 years already!

I serve as a lector and LEM. and Bob ushers, at both of our churches. At Holy Trinity, I served two terms on the Vestry, and we both play with the Holy Hackers. I was very involved in the school as a helper, tutor, and was on the school board. When we're here for three months I still tutor. At St. Luke's Episcopal, in North Little Rock, I work in the Clothes Closet, and manage our small food pantry.

Bob and I have done some traveling to states and countries that were new to us. During our three months here, we have enjoyed reconnecting with friends in our neighborhood and at church. It's like the best of both worlds!!

Central Florida Diocesan Altar Guild Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Central Florida Diocesan Altar guild was held February 10. at St. George Episcopal Church. Father Samuel, Holy Trinity Altar Guild Directress, Dianne Casson, and 13 altar guild members attended the meeting.

A continental breakfast and coffee were served with a time for meet and greet, viewing an exchange table and treasurer's table. The business meeting was conducted with an introduction of the Northwest Deanery co-hosts.

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Justin S. Holcomb, Bishop was the celebrant. He spoke of the history and the importance of the ministry of the Altar guild. Holy

Eucharist was conducted in the St. George Episcopal Sanctuary.

After lunch, special guests The Rev. Garcia Barnswell-Schmidt was introduced as the Diocesan Altar Guild Chaplain. Rev. Dr. Porter Taylor, Rector at St. David's by-the-Sea, Cocoa Beach was introduced as the guest speaker.

The Rev. Dr. Porter C. Taylor presented an informative and interesting presentation of "Vesting for the Story of Salvation." He explained that vestment colors, altar hangings, and banners, tell the "Story of Salvation." The Liturgical Year is divided into two cycles: The Cycle of Light and the Cycle of Life. Each cycle has three phases: preparation, celebration, and proclamation. The Cycles tell "The Story of the Life of Jesus" and "The Story of the People of God."

The Diocesan Altar Guild Annual Meeting rotates to a different Deanery each year.

Dianne Casson – Altar Guild



Easter Lilies

The Altar Guild will soon be ordering Easter Lilies to decorate the church for Easter. You may designate your gift: *In Memory Of*, *In Thanksgiving For*, *Or In Honor Of*, on the Lily envelopes on the offering table or in the church pew. The suggested donation is \$15 for each Lily. Please make checks payable to Holy Trinity Altar Guild with Lily or Lilies in memo line.



ENYEART, HELEN



HUNT, Mary Frances

HOLE, Gail

WILCOX, Nancy

BANKS, Terry

HENSLEY, Gay

COTTRILL, Anna

CANNER, John

PORTELL, JoAnn

NICOLOSI, Roy

QUINLAN, Michael

WANG, Carol

ROMER, Sue

BAUER, Parker

HARMON, Paul

STERBIS, Charles

WANG, Jerry

WINER, Lynne

LALLY, Mike

Our United Thank Offering Ministry



Dear Parishioners,
We are now a month into our UTO Ministry. I hope it has opened your eyes, as it has mine, to just how I am blessed by my Lord and Savior. I have always felt blessed, but when thinking about it daily and with Bob, I am really expressing my thanks and add my coins daily to our UTO little blue box and truly feel

the love of my Lord. I hope there are others who are having similar experiences. I would love to hear your thoughts on your walk through this Ministry. Feel free to share when you see me or you could text or email me.

More information will follow on our collecting of little blue boxes after Easter. May we each continue to recognize our daily blessings.

Annette Freeman
Outreach HTEC

Holy Week & Easter Schedule

March 28: Maundy Thursday

- **5:00 pm: Agape Meal in Parish Hall**
- **6:30 pm: Communion & Stripping of the Altar – Sanctuary**

March 29: Good Friday

- **12:00 noon: Stations of the Cross & Prayers**
- **6:00 pm: Good Friday Liturgy**

March 30: Holy Saturday

- **8:00 pm: Great Vigil of Easter**
-

March 31: Easter Sunday

- **8:00 am: HE Rite 1**
- **10:30 am: HE Rite 2**

Around the Parish



Commissioning of Vestry Members



Visitor Shellie Leon from Panama



Visitor Julie Sligh from Virginia

Ladies Fellowship Tea

February 17, 2024

Thank you to Deb Yee, who hosted the event



Parishioner Newsletter Spotlight

Joan Hensley, one of our newest members, has graciously agreed to serve as our Member Spotlight newsletter contributor. This is intended to help in our connection process as we learn more about each other. We hope that as many of you will volunteer your information and help us to know you. Joan has designed a basic format to help you organize the information. Please look at the format below and send your information to joan.hensley95@gmail.com

Parishioner Spotlight Information Form

Name (s): _____

Email Contact (to send proof/review of article):

Phone Contact: _____

How long have you been attending Holy Trinity?

What community do you live in?

Are you here year-round or return north for the summer?

Tell us about your family . . .

Pets. . .

Where were you born/raised? How long in Florida?

What is your occupation (s) (If retired, list prior)

What hobbies or interests keep you busy?

What Social or Civic clubs do you belong to, active in, and how?

What church activities are you involved in, either at Holy Trinity or at the church you previously attended?

What is one thing you would want most people to know about you?

UPCOMING EVENTS

PANCAKE BREAKFAST is hosted by Men's Group the **last Sunday of every month**. Come and join us for a delicious pancake breakfast from 9AM – 9:45am. The cost is \$7.00 and the proceeds benefit the Holy Trinity Episcopal School.

UNITED THANK OFFERING (UTO): The Outreach Ministry Team invites you to participate in the UTO program. The United Thank Offering was founded over 125 years ago to help Episcopalians develop and deepen a personal spiritual discipline of gratitude by noticing the good things that happen daily and then giving thanks to God for the blessing while making a thank offering in your own personal Blue Box. The Blue Boxes for you to put your daily thank offerings are available in the Parish Hall.

SPRING CLEAN UP: March 2, 2024, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm You're invited to bring your garden gloves as we clean-up HTEC grounds. Some light painting is needed around the campus. Lunch will be served. For more information, please email Bob Freeman at **captbob147@gmail.com**.

HTES COOKBOOK: Do you have a fabulous recipe that you would like to share? HTES students will be making and selling cookbooks. If you are interested in sharing your recipe(s), please pick up a recipe card in the Parish Hall or email Tara at **school.htes@gmail.com**.

CONFIRMATION CLASS STILL OPEN: A confirmation class for those who wish to be confirmed or received into the Episcopal Church/Anglican Communion began on February 20 and continues every **Tuesday 10:00 – 11:45am**. The class is also appropriate for those who were confirmed long ago and wish to reaffirm their commitment to follow Jesus. It is not too late to join the class. Just show up and learn with us. For any questions contact Fr. Samuel at rector@holytrinityfp.com.

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL: Join us on **Sunday mornings 9:15am - 10:15am** beginning March 3 for Pastor and Author Andy Stanley's six-week video bible study titled, **Better Decisions - Fewer Regrets**. The critical questions he teaches you to ask are designed to serve as a decision-making filter that will set you up for success in every season of life.

SCHOOL DISCOUNT CARDS: Our school's parents' group has embarked on a major fundraising initiative by producing and selling discount cards to **16 local businesses**. Each card costs \$10 and allows you to get significant discount at the local businesses. You may order your cards by asking Fr. Samuel or filling out a form in the Parish Hall.

PASTORAL CARE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: - A ministry that strives to provide a loving and caring environment to those among us who may be experiencing hardships of many kinds. We need at least 3 more people to volunteer to call other members 3 times a year, to send out cards and to either cook or buy a meal when required. Can you share your gifts and talents with us? **Please call Robin Michell at 352-350-1451** or email me with your interests at **RobinMichell@yahoo.com**.

ELECTRONIC GIVING AT HOLY TRINITY: After some time of exploration, we now have made it possible for those who wish to give electronically in a variety of ways:

1. **Website/Facebook page**
2. **TEXT to Give:** the word "Funds" to 844-527-0098
3. **Mobile App:** Download the **Vanco Mobile** app from mobile store
4. **QR Code:** Scan the QR Code to access our eGiving page.



OPEN POSITION: We are actively searching for a long-term **Head of School** to help carry on the mission of our school beyond the transition. A suitable candidate must be someone with a heart for students who learn differently and guided by our baptismal commitment to seek and serve Christ in all persons, and respect the dignity of every human being. This is a full-time position with benefits. A resume and letter of interest may be sent to: debkhogan@gmail.com

HEARING LOOP: Our sanctuary is now installed with a hearing loop for the benefit of those with hearing difficulties. If your hearing aid has a T-Coll, you should be able to hear clearly. Headphones are also available for those with compatible hearing aids. Talk to the usher if you need headphones.

SUNDAY HOSPITALITY: Those who wish to donate food items or sign-up to help clean-up are encouraged to sign-up on the bulletin board. Thank you!

Holy Trinity Episcopal Church and School

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janice.gordonbarnes@yahoo.com

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charlie-perrin@outlook.com

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rjlubud@gmail.com

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Church Staff:

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Tara Casamasima – School Office Administrator

Kathy Wolfe - Bookkeeper

Sharon Redding – Music Director

Lori Clark - Housekeeping

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Monday – Thursday 9:00am – 2:00pm

In-Person & Livestream Services:

Saturday 4:15pm (Sanctuary)

Sunday 8:00am (Sanctuary)

Sunday 10:30am (Sanctuary)

Wednesday Healing 11:30am (Chapel)

Contact Information:

Email: office@holytrinityfp.com

Website: <https://www.holytrinityfp.com/>

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/holytrinityfruitlandpark

Newsletter Articles:

Please submit by 25th of each month

Sheri Hudson, shudson53202@gmail.com



Vestry:

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