



TRYON TRUMPET

Tryon Presbyterian Church

A Stephen Ministry Congregation

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Holy Week, Easter services set

Christians from across our area will worship together twice this month. Our Dr. Allan Purtill will help lead both combined services.



Sullivan Meissner takes a picture of mom Brittany and sister Sylvia in 2024.

Holy Week begins with our Palm Sunday service in our sanctuary at 10:30 a.m. April 13. Following that service, we will share a Sunday brunch. This was a popular fellowship event in 2024 and will include an appealing menu this year. Reservation slips are in the pew racks, contact Jacque.headen@gmail.com, or sign up in the Narthex. The cost is \$8 for ages 12 and older. The price is \$1 for children under 12. Reservations are essential.

A community Maundy Thursday service will be held at 7 p.m. April 17 at The Congregational Church, 210 Melrose Avenue in Tryon. Allan will take part in this communion service, which commemorates the Last Supper and the arrest of Jesus.

Our sanctuary will be open on Good Friday from 8 a.m. until noon, with prayer guides available.

A community Easter sunrise service will take place at the Tryon Fine Arts Center amphitheater, 34 Melrose Ave., at 6:30 a.m. April 20. Allan will also participate in this celebration of the Resurrection. A breakfast will be served after this service at Tryon First Baptist just below the amphitheater.

We will again celebrate the Resurrection with a communion service in our sanctuary at 10:30 a.m. Easter Sunday.

Church organizes housing registry for emergencies

Last week's rains helped quell wildfires burning across Polk County, but a need for housing may continue. Pastor Allan Purtille sent this email to our congregation March 26:

For at least a week, wildfires have been burning in our community. As you may have noticed, Polk County government has provided an updated [fire and evacuation map](#) for our area. Some of our church members have had to evacuate, and many live in the potential evacuation areas.

Some of you have already reached out to those affected and offered space in your homes. As we anticipate the evacuations to grow in some areas, I decided to create a form for those interested in offering space to shelter people in need of temporary housing. This way we bring a little organization to the chaos of lives uprooted due to the fires. In all, we hope we will not need this information, but it seems prudent to be prepared.

We will collect the information you provide in the form below and, if a need arises, you will be called to see if the room/space is still available and if you are comfortable housing a guest(s). I understand that not all of us are able to house guests at this time, and there may be other ways to help later.

If you are in a current evacuation zone or potential evacuation zone, please do not fill out the form; however, if you have a need, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at the church office (828) 859-6683.

We continue to pray for those involved in battling this fire and for those whose lives have already been upended. The church campus is safe as the fires are currently contained to the north of I-26 in the Tryon area. We know that God is with us in all the storms of life and pray our efforts will create some peace in the lives of others.

The housing form is [here](#).

Grace and Peace,

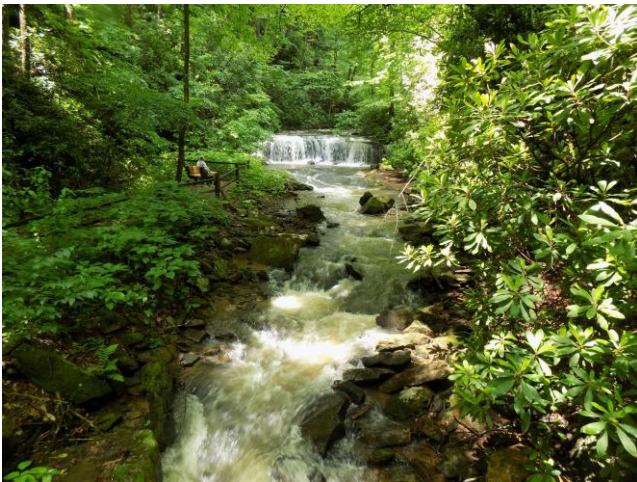
Allan



We must devote quiet time to Jesus

Within the month of April, we have the holiest time of the year. Holy Week gives us the time to reflect on just what it is that Jesus has done for us. We aren't called the Body of Christ for nothing. Every Christian church hopefully understands that what holds us together is Jesus Christ.

As I ponder this month's devotional, I am drawn to Paul's conversations with the church at Philippi. Paul had heard that trivial rivalries had arisen, and he feared the consequences for his first missionary church on the European continent. Paul became aware of disputes within the Philippian congregation and now felt it was very important to explain just how God's people should act and how they needed to be the Body of Christ.



As Easter approaches, this passage of scripture needs to draw our attention to what and who is important in all Christian churches. Any bickering or negative feelings within one's church diminishes our call to follow Jesus and how we are to care for one another. I hope you will find Philippians 2:1-11 and read and meditate on it this month, especially how it pertains to our church family. For every one of us, it is vital to understand our relationship with our Lord. His way is the only way. He wishes all people to come to Him.

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father but by me." It is His way, there is no accommodation. When one reads the Sermon on the Mount, He means for us to follow all He says. It is the way Jesus wishes us to be and how to act. There is no other reason for the Body of Christ. He wishes to be in fellowship with each one of us.

You may ask how one can be in a relationship with Jesus. Prayer helps immensely. If you read the four Gospels, notice how many times Jesus goes off by himself to pray. How else could anyone have a deep relationship with the Lord God, if one never spends time alone with Him?

I often wonder why so many people today are in such a rush. It appears so many of us are too busy, and there seems to be so much noise. We need to remember when Elijah met God at Horeb, God was about to pass by. It wasn't in a great wind, it wasn't in a great earthquake, it wasn't in a great fire, but after the fire there was the sound of sheer silence. Elijah heard God in the silence.

It appears that to have a relationship with Jesus, we need to give Him some quiet time. When we meet new friends and we especially want to get to know someone very well, we spend time with that person and build a relationship. The same is true for building a relationship with God. It is not going to happen if we are on the go and live lives that are hectic.

We all need to ask ourselves what is truly important in our lives. Most of the things we become involved in are not going to prepare us to meet Jesus. Remember, He is the only way to be received by God. I can guarantee you as you grow older, silence and quiet are truly essential.

By Rev. Mary Potter



The search committee for our next music director and organist, from left: Ken Shull, Gayle Casterline, MaryAnn Sloan and Charlie Fisher. Allyson Meyer and ex-officio member Pastor Allan Purtil were not present for this photograph.

Music director search committee wants input from congregation

Our church is looking for a new music director whose role will be to work with the pastor to enhance our worship experience, Ken Shull says.

Ken leads the search committee, whose other members are Gayle Casterline, MaryAnn Sloan, Charlie Fisher and Allyson Meyer. Pastor Allan Purtil is an ex-officio member. Ken spoke to the congregation about the search process Sunday.

The congregation has an important part to play. The committee, which meets weekly, has developed a Google questionnaire that will be emailed as soon as this week. Some printed copies will be available. The committee also will hold two “listening sessions,” one at the church and the other at Tryon Estates. Both are expected to happen this month. These initiatives will give church members the opportunity to share ideas about how the music ministry can help make worship more meaningful to them.

The responses will help define the music program for the future and refine the job description of music director and organist. In turn, that will inform the search for candidates.

While the process of gathering congregation input is expected to happen soon, there isn’t a deadline for having the next music director in place.

“Our timeline is as soon and as long as it takes to find a person who is the right fit for us to enhance our worship experience,” Ken says. His committee is working very hard to make that happen, he adds.

John McCall's service in Taiwan ends

Mission co-worker the Rev. John McCall is leaving his long-time post in Taiwan due to a reduction in force at Presbyterian World Mission, according to the Presbytery of Western North Carolina.

John was pastor of Black Mountain Presbyterian in 1996 when he was called to mission work in Taiwan. "Throughout the years, the mission co-worker made return trips to the North Carolina mountains, keeping us informed of his work," PWNC noted in a recent newsletter.

Our church helped support John's work with an annual contribution of \$3,000, and he preached here in June 2023. Not only that, our members Mark and Chianghua Hereward visited John during a trip to Taiwan earlier this year, having first met him at a conference in Montreat last year. The [March Trumpet](#) included a report by Mark and Chianghua about their experiences in her native Taiwan.

John served in Taiwan for 13 years, then returned to North Carolina as pastor of Westminster Presbyterian Church in Greensboro for two years. A renewed call led him back to Taiwan in 2011.

There, he taught courses on ministry and spiritual formation at three seminaries and met with groups of



John with Mark and Chianghua Hereward in Taiwan.

pastors across Taiwan, offering support and encouragement.

"Even in the face of uncertainty about the future of his work due to changes in PC(USA) funding, he was serene and joyful, embracing each day the Lord gives and humbly offering support to local pastors wherever it is needed," Mark and Chianghua wrote of John.

The changes in funding were severe, with about half of overseas World Mission positions withdrawn. Our Missions chair, Bill Sullivan,

expressed disappointment at the decision, noting John's good work in Taiwan and our church's close relationship with him.

John was gracious in his final newsletter from Taiwan, which concluded:

"It has been a road of grace these past 29 years. And you, who have supported this ministry with your faithful prayers and gifts, have been signs of grace to me. You have welcomed me into your homes and churches when I have been on interpretation throughout the U.S. And you have been open to how the world church can teach and change us. So, as I end my time of service as a PC(USA) mission co-worker, I want to thank you for your partnership on this road of grace."

John will return to Black Mountain by the middle of the year, PWNC reported. We hope to see him again soon.



John will return to Black Mountain.

PW Spring Luncheon features St. Luke's Cathy Rogerson

The Presbyterian Women Spring Luncheon will be Saturday, May 3, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in our Fellowship Hall. The guest speaker will be Cathy Rogerson, Foundation Coordinator for the Foundation for St. Luke's Hospital. She provided a biography:



"Blessed to be born into a large, loving, faith-filled family in South Louisiana, Cathy Rogerson knew early that her life would be focused on service. She attended Louisiana State University, where she studied Communication Disorders and Psychology. After graduating, she flew the coop and began a two-year journey with Americorps in Massachusetts. Living in an intentional healing community supporting adults with mental health conditions opened her eyes to the strength and perseverance of people who live with these medical conditions.

"From there, she moved to Orlando to work with a nonprofit serving people with developmental disabilities. She was fortunate to work as assistant to an amazing mentor who gave her opportunities to lead legislative advocacy initiatives, establish a Kiwanis Aktion Club, and in all ways empower this otherwise marginalized population.

"Cathy moved to Polk County more than 12 years ago to accept the Residential Director role at CooperRiis, where she lived with her husband and raised her two sons, Ryan and Alex, within the therapeutic milieu for more than three years. In 2017, she helped her husband, Kevin, open his own Design and Screenprinting shop, Yetees, in Mill Spring, where she still spends many evenings and weekends working by his side.

"However, her heart was calling her back to service through the nonprofit sector, so in 2023, she joined the team at Outreach, as the Volunteer and Events Manager, where she spent over a year before being invited to work at the Foundation for St. Luke's Hospital. In that role, she coordinates events, grants, board work and relationship-building in support of our local hospital.

"Along the career path, Cathy completed a Master's degree in Nonprofit Management and doctoral coursework in Organizational Leadership. She is working on her dissertation and hopes to graduate with her Ph.D. in 2026.

"I am honored to be invited to speak with the Tryon Presbyterian Women's group next month," she said. "I am excited that our beloved St. Luke's Hospital has joined with AdventHealth to keep rural healthcare strong in Polk County, and I'm grateful to be a part of the Foundation team, ensuring our local resources continue to support our local hospital."

Cathy will be an excellent speaker. Please plan to attend this outstanding spring event.

Adults, not smartphones, must guide young people

On March 27, I attended our Presbytery's annual Youth Leader Forum at Waldensian Presbyterian Church in Valdese. About 20 youth leaders from our Presbytery gathered for fellowship and education, under the leadership of our Presbytery's Associate for Youth, Beth Gunn.

Last year, a therapist led us in a discussion of youth mental health issues, and this year we discussed the book, "The Anxious Generation," by Jonathan Haidt. Haidt's book explores the "Great Rewiring" of young people, as smartphones have become a part of their everyday lives, affecting both their mental health and brain development. The book explores key social and emotional development stages for youth, and how both the access to technology and the influence of social media can interrupt and negatively impact this development.

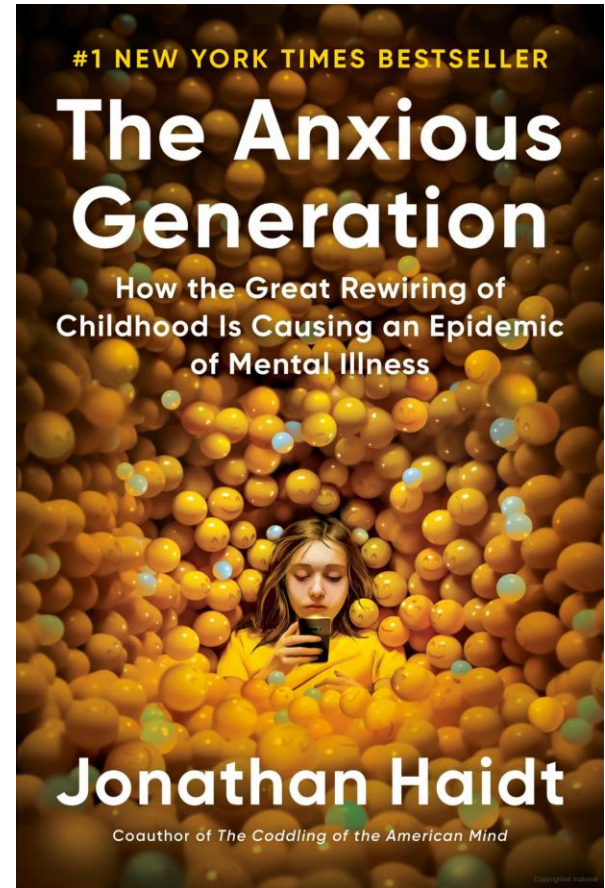
Additionally, the author notes how boys and girls were affected differently by smartphones and technology. While girls tend to experience more negative emotional and mental health effects from social media, boys tend to be drawn more to gaming and to experience losses in self-worth and motivation. Although the subject matter of the book was quite difficult to read, the author ends with words of hope and inspiration for parents, teachers, caregivers and youth leaders. Haidt encourages adults to advocate on behalf of children to lawmakers and corporate leaders for: banning phones in schools, raising the legal age of online "adulthood," and raising the age limit for social media access. He also encourages "free play" and unstructured activities, which play key roles in the social and emotional development of children.

As I listened to the discussion surrounding this book, I could hear frustration, feelings of hopelessness and the general sentiment of "what can you do?" This is not an easy problem to fix, as everyone with young people in their lives knows. How do we protect them from this "great rewiring" while not detaching them from the world of their peers?

I gave up social media more than eight years ago. I felt it drained so much of my time, and I could sense the subconscious comparisons and negative emotions that came with each scroll and swipe. Yet I know social media can create positive experiences for many others. But, can our youth make these decisions for themselves? Or is it our responsibility to protect them?

I know and respect parents and other adults whose views cover the spectrum of children's technology use. But I have not met anyone who has found the perfect solution. Technology is advancing faster than any of us, and the science of understanding how any of it affects us is moving much slower. I like to think of it as drilling for oil: the oil companies want to get in and drill as fast as they can before any regulations come along to slow

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them down. By the time we have figured out what harm has been done, it can be too late.

Most importantly, I feel like technology is not a means to separate our youth from us. We cannot blame them for “always looking at their screens” or “watching too much YouTube” or taking too many “selfies.” This is the world we have created for them. If we want to see something change, we need to stand up for them and be willing to make changes in our own lives. Our young people are worth it, and it’s not too late!

By Amy McGrath, Director of Children’s Ministry

Easter event welcomes church, community children

Our Easter Egg Hunt with a Twist starts at 10 a.m. Saturday, April 12.

Children ages 2 through 10 from our church and community are invited to this popular annual event. But, because space is limited, please register through our website [here](#).

The event begins with the Easter story in our Fellowship Hall. The scramble for eggs follows outside, weather permitting. The twist is that plastic eggs are redeemed inside for prizes and activities. There will be crafts, face-painting and magic. Snacks and drinks will be provided, and there is no cost to attend.

Our Membership Committee sponsors this fun event for our children and neighboring families. Volunteers are welcome to help and bring cookies or cupcakes. Contact Rennie Habel at efhabel@yahoo.com or (828) 674-6902 if you can help.



Children worked on Easter bonnets and other crafts at a past event. More fun is planned for April 12!

History lesson focuses on woman's sacrifice

A Tales of Tryon program about architecture prompted a history lesson in my Sunday school class. And that led me to learn more about Ruth MacGregor.

Ruth died on board the S.S. Vestris in October 1918 as she was sailing to serve with the American Red Cross in France near the end of World War I.

Forty years later, our congregation worshipped in our present sanctuary for the first time. It was built with funds donated by Ruth's brother, Frank S. MacGregor, in her memory. Frank and his wife, Elizabeth, were part-time Tryon residents but not members of our church until many years later.

The Tales of Tryon program by Shields Flynn focused on two Tryon-born architects, Holland Brady Jr. and Ligon Flynn. Brady, with Shannon Meriwether, designed our sanctuary.

The program was March 20. The following Sunday, March 23, the scripture for my Sunday school class lesson looked at God's promises to Abraham. Only two youngsters were in class that morning, John and Jesse McGrath, but we were able to trace the Jewish faith from Abraham, as well as our local Presbyterian heritage from the founding of our church in 1922.

We also covered the construction of our present facility and the story of the MacGregors. But I made a mistake, telling John and Jesse that Ruth's ship had sunk. (The Vestris, a British passenger ship, did sink but not until 1928 when it went down in a storm 300 miles off the Virginia coast with 112 passengers and crew lost.) One of the boys asked what happened to the ship on the 1918 voyage, so I dove into additional research.

One interesting source of information is the New Hampshire History Blog, which makes a Presbyterian connection. Ruth and her brother were direct descendants of Rev. James MacGregor, a Presbyterian minister who emigrated in 1718 from Londonderry, Ireland, to Nutfield, New Hampshire – a town that was later renamed Londonderry.

Ruth was born in 1889 in Lawrence, Massachusetts. She graduated from Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, Massachusetts, in 1910 and became a teacher. In 1918, she joined the American Red Cross and planned to work with its Hospital Hut Service in France. According to a 1919 ARC report, hospital huts "were club-rooms for the convalescents, where entertainment and light refreshments were provided, and where the recovering soldier could rest quietly in pleasant surroundings with books, periodicals, home papers and writing materials at hand. Perhaps the most appreciated element was the opportunity to enjoy the

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Ruth MacGregor



The Tales of Tryon program March 20.

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companionship of the American Red Cross girls by whom the huts were operated.”

The ship sailed on September 29, 1918. The passengers included 130 Red Cross workers, one of whom was Grace Mabel Bacon, a Mount Holyoke graduate, faculty member and writer. She kept a diary, which is preserved by the college.

“Going to Europe now is not a thing for the faint hearted or the nervous,” she wrote, citing storms, seasickness and the threat of enemy attack. The chance of sinking by German submarines required passengers “to wear our heaviest clothing all the time.”



MacGregor Hall at Mount Holyoke College.

She also noted “an epidemic of Spanish influenza on board from the first day. Yesterday 30 were sick with it.”

The Spanish flu pandemic erupted in 1918 with devastating effect. Estimates of deaths worldwide range to as high as 100 million. The disease triggered fatal cases of pneumonia in many of its victims.

Grace’s entry for October 7 includes this: “The nurse has stepped in to say that Ruth MacGregor, Mount Holyoke 1910, has pneumonia.”

And then the next day: “Ruth MacGregor died last night and was buried this morning at six. Only a few of us were present.”

Frank never forgot his younger, and only, sibling. A graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, he was building a successful career by the time Ruth was lost. He eventually became general manager of the Electro-Chemicals Department of the DuPont Company in Wilmington, Delaware, retiring in 1948.

By the 1950s, Frank and Elizabeth had a Tryon residence they used part of the year. When our church launched its new building fund drive, they took a keen interest. In fact, they decided to pay for the entire cost of the sanctuary – \$84,000. The gift was made “principally to the glory of God, and much more humbly as a memorial to my sister,” Frank said.

Frank and Elizabeth joined our church in 1970. He died in 1976 and she in 1978.

Our church is not the only memorial Frank left in Ruth’s name. In June 1965, he gave \$750,000 to Mount Holyoke College, which used the money to build a residence hall for women. MacGregor Hall opened in 1967 and was most recently renovated in 2021. Today, it houses 132 students in the college’s First Year Experience. “Rooms facing Upper Lake have a beautiful view,” the college says.

John and Jesse, thinking about Ruth’s voyage, noticed that our church resembles the bow of a ship. The image conveys movement, just as Ruth set out to cross an ocean to serve others. Her sacrifice so long ago still holds special meaning in our sanctuary.

By Doug Clark

Presbytery news

Microloan Task Force plans Guatemala visit

The Microloan Task Force is planning its next delegation trip to Guatemala for late October or early November.

Previous delegates have found the experience life-changing. This is an opportunity to travel to see how the Microloan Project has provided Guatemalan women opportunities to grow in self-esteem, hope and freedom. Trip participants will spend time with the Guatemalan microloan staff and visit microloan groups and some of their businesses. The group will also spend time learning about Guatemalan history, culture and geography.

The cost is \$1,800 per person, which includes accommodations, transportation, airfare and meals. It does not cover personal preparation expenses, such as passports and immunizations. Some scholarship/financial aid is available. Your home congregation might help with expenses.

A deposit of \$900 is due by July 1. Participants will need a current passport. If you would like more information, contact: Susan Maveety (828-768-5475 or susan.maveety@gmail.com).

Education team reports after meetings in Guatemala

An education team from our presbytery recently returned from Guatemala and reported on meetings with Partner Education Committees from Sur Occidente and Suchtepequez in Guatemala City:

“We reviewed and refreshed our scholarship procedures for K-12 as well as our Church to Church university scholarship, and the Building Hope University Scholarships. We followed the same format as we talked about the Seminaries in both presbyteries and about the process for sending scholarship funds from PWNC to our sister churches in Guatemala. We shared what was working, what needed to be changed or improved, and what our next steps needed to be as we move forward. As we worked together, we strengthened our relationships as brothers and sisters in Christ. We prayed together and sang together and worked hard together to make our partnership stronger.”



Sign up for PWNC newsletter

Would you like to receive news updates every Friday from the Presbytery of Western North Carolina? Sign up for the weekly newsletter [here](#).

In and around Tryon Presbyterian



Clockwise from top left: Skip Taylor was named to the Second Wind Hall of Fame, an honor given to those who contribute greatly to their communities in retirement. He was nominated by the Rotary Club of Tryon, and the award was presented by Carol Browning. Davis Meissner joined his mother Brittany on the chancel before a recent worship service. Charlie Fisher, MaryAnn Sloan, Janet Gilchrist and Lynette Fisher following worship. Linda Schutter and Gloria Underwood lead the choir out.

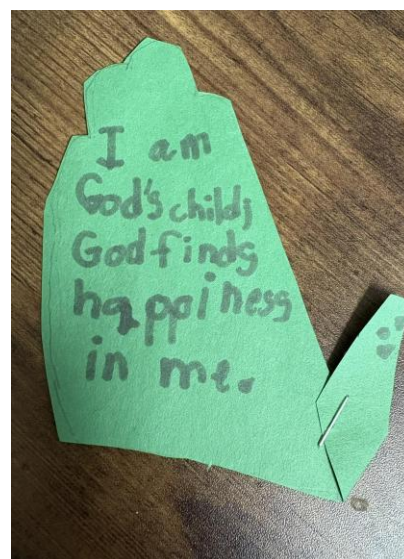


Left and below left: The congregation gathered for lunch following worship March 23. Below: Doug and Margaret Clark's granddaughter Isabel was baptized at Old Town Community Church in Alexandria, Virginia, March 30. Bottom: We are all God's children.



Tryon Trumpet

The Tryon Trumpet is published by Tryon Presbyterian Church and its Membership Committee, chaired by Rennie Habel. Editor is Doug Clark dougclark55@gmail.com. Thanks for help with this edition to Mary Potter, Amy McGrath, MaryAnn Sloan, Kim McPherson, Lee Lindsay, Deanna Bancroft, Wes Elam, Ken Shull, Allan Purtill, Susan Speight, the Rotary Club of High Point and the Presbytery of Western North Carolina.



Our campus in bloom

