



TRYON TRUMPET

Tryon Presbyterian Church

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Easter is coming! Alleluia!

Tryon Presbyterian Church is sharing Holy Week activities with fellow Christians in our community.

The Maundy Thursday service, conducted with Congregational United Church of Christ, will take place in our sanctuary at 7 p.m.

Our sanctuary will be open again from noon to 3 p.m. Good Friday for participants who want to visit the Stations of the Cross. Rev. Lynnette Sills has prepared a guided meditation for this exercise that follows Jesus, in spirit, from Pilate's court to the place of crucifixion. All are welcome.



Following our Palm Sunday worship March 29.

Friday is a day for somber reflection and prayer, but the day of joy is coming. Tryon Christians will celebrate the resurrection in an Easter Sunrise Service at 6:45 a.m. at the Tryon Fine Arts Center amphitheater at 34 Melrose Avenue. The service will be led by Rev. Allan Purtill and other ministers. Everyone is invited afterward to breakfast at First Baptist Church of Tryon just below the amphitheater.

The celebration continues at our church for an Easter Sunday Communion Service at 10:30 a.m. Happy Easter!

'Blessed are the pure in heart'

The next Beatitude is "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." It appears to be one of the most inaccessible Beatitudes. It is hard to understand which is more beyond us as mere mortals, having a pure heart or seeing God. But I doubt very much that Jesus would have mentioned this one if it were out of our reach.

Some scholars say the word "heart" in Scripture usually refers to the whole personality, meaning both mind and will.

The word "pure" occurs 28 times in the New Testament, and these ambitious folks discovered it is translated 10 times to mean "clean." They felt there were two meanings, "righteous of mind" and "singleness of motive."



Pure in heart and voice: Our young singers.

Well, right away that makes me nervous, knowing after 82 years how humanity is. Nevertheless, Jesus seemed to feel this purity is possible for some of us.

To be honest, I know what "pure in heart" is and what it is not. I knew a woman in my Vermont church whose name just happened to be Pleasentine Briggs. I am pretty certain her parents, many years earlier, had no idea how children are when they become adults. But if anyone fit her name, it was Pleasentine. If there was ever a pure heart, it was hers. She would never agree with me, but if she had ever said a bad word about anyone, I am not sure when it was. She was the kindest, sweetest, most honest and genuine person I ever met. If she wasn't pure in heart, then I am not certain what Jesus wanted for us.

Once in my New Hampshire church, I was greeting folks at the door after morning worship and this darling little girl came

running to me and said, "Are you God?" Many folks around me chuckled, and I smiled and said, "Mercy, this is tempting," quickly adding, "No, I just work for Him!" Off she went as a 4-year-old does.

I discovered afterward her family was visiting, and she had never been in a church before that day. The problem was I had to play to the crowd, just to get a smile or chuckle. The pure in heart would have knelt before the child, expressed a sweet comment and not made the child perhaps feel stupid for asking such a question. However, I had an audience who heard the question, and I couldn't resist. This minister is not pure in heart. The whole episode was certainly not pure in heart. It may have been cute, even sweet, but it was at the expense of a child's feelings.

As for seeing God, we are told that in the Old Testament God was adamant that no one was to see God. Concerning this Beatitude, one commentator seemed to feel it was more likely Jesus meant the pure in heart see God in this world when others are blind. The pure in heart are aware of God's will in their lives even in the midst of pain, while others are rebellious or despairing. The pure in heart have intuition of God's activity in their lives. To Jesus, God is not an abstract virtue. He is Fact and Life.

By Rev. Mary A. Potter

What's next for children's ministry?

Thanks to Amy McGrath for her service as Director of Children's Ministry! She has worked to create Christian education programs for kids and adults, developed a Vacation Bible School program and led fun activities for entire families. Oh, she also is pretty good at leading the Time With Young Disciples during Sunday worship.



Rev. Lynnette Sills leads Moment With Young Disciples recently.

Fortunately, she and her family – husband Jon and sons John, Jesse and Sullivan – are not moving away. Amy is just leaving for a new position as Wildlife Educator for a local nonprofit, [Champions for Wildlife](#). Amy is a wildlife biologist by training, so that is a perfect role for her.

So, what happens now? We are blessed to have two people here who can help. Our part-time Parish Associate, Rev. Lynnette Sills, will assume Amy's position on an interim basis while our pastor, Session and Christian Growth Committee figure out

future staffing needs. Lynnette has plenty of ministry experience working with children and youth.

Also, our Sunday morning nursery worker, Alyssa Walker, will assume more responsibility as coordinator of children's church operations. She will plan lessons, prepare the classrooms and, importantly, recruit volunteers to help.

Alyssa lives in Campobello and graduated from Landrum High School and the University of South Carolina (with a degree in biology!). She is currently taking classes in software development at Spartanburg Community College, but she has "always loved working with kids." Her regular job is with Miss Tammy's Little learning Center in Boiling Springs.

Our children already love Alyssa, and she says: "I love these kids. They're so sweet!"

The Christian Growth Committee is planning to repeat our one-day Vacation Bible School, on June 22, with Lynnette directing, and the committee is considering other summer events for families. Look for more news about that soon.



Alyssa Walker

Dave Hosick is happy to answer our call

When Allan Purtille decided to take his seventh-year sabbatical this summer, our Session turned to an obvious person to fill our pulpit.

“They didn’t have to ask me twice,” Rev. Dave Hosick says. “I still enjoy preaching.”

Our congregation knows Dave well. He was our pastor from 2002 to 2008 before he was called as senior pastor of First Presbyterian Church in St. Petersburg, Florida. When he retired a few years ago, he and Joanie returned to Tryon. She is again an active member of our church, and he has preached and served at several other churches in our presbytery on a temporary basis.

During Allan’s absence, he will also moderate the Session and act as head of staff, but his main goal, he says, is to make no changes.

We’re fortunate to have this richly experienced minister during Allan’s time away.

“I’m happy to do it,” Dave says.



Rev. Dave Hosick

Pam McNeil joins TPC’s music ministry

Pam McNeil will join our music ministry after Easter.

Pam is a long-time music educator and church musician, who has taught in Polk County Schools and served as Music Director for Tryon United Methodist Church. She is accompanist for the Community Chorus and Musical Director for Tryon Little Theater.



Pam McNeil

“It is with great joy we welcome Pam McNeil to Tryon Presbyterian as the new piano accompanist for our chancel choir,” Music Director and organist Jane Wilson says. “I am so deeply grateful to Session for agreeing to my proposal to add this position to our music program.

“Pam comes to us with a wealth of experience in church music and in music education. She is known and loved in our area for her excellent musicianship and for her generous, beautiful spirit.

“I am thrilled that as Music Director I will now be able to concentrate on directing our growing adult choir with undivided attention to cues and details,” Jane adds. “To God be the glory for all the many wonderful blessings happening here at Tryon Presbyterian. Welcome to our music team, Pam!”

Margaret Clark will continue as volunteer accompanist for the children’s choir.

Rachel Ramsey's Life Story covers the globe

Rachel Ramsey began life in Polk County and lives here now. But in between? Now that's a story!

Rachel shared her Life Story with fellow TPC members over lunch at Calvert's in Columbus March 18. We all needed an atlas to keep up!

Rachel was an Air Force wife. Jerry's military service took her and eventually their two daughters from Texas to Florida, to the Philippines, to South Carolina, to England, to Kansas, to Taiwan and finally back to North Carolina, at Pope Air Force Base. The assignments covered times of peace and war as Jerry flew transport planes in and out of Vietnam from Taiwan during that conflict.

Rachel looked at these travels as an education since "I didn't excel in geography" in school. So, she made it a point to learn and observe as much as she could wherever she was. Many of her reflections revealed a keen sense of humor – for example, her take on the incessant wind in Kansas.

One especially blustery day, "My younger daughter was screaming. She was hanging on to the back bumper of the car, and the wind was blowing her like a flag!"

Rachel took a business course after she graduated from Mill Spring High School, and she used that knowledge in various ways. In Taiwan, she ran a U.S. Embassy store on a Navy base, selling goods she could order from almost anywhere. In Spring Lake, North Carolina, she worked in a bank. These experiences prepared her to serve as the first executive director for the nonprofit Steps to Hope after returning to Polk County.

When the family lived in Myrtle Beach, she wanted to join a Baptist church – but was required to be baptized.

She told them she was baptized, having grown up in the Methodist church. She gave in, but "I was angry with myself because I had compromised my beliefs. That's my story of why I'm a Presbyterian!"

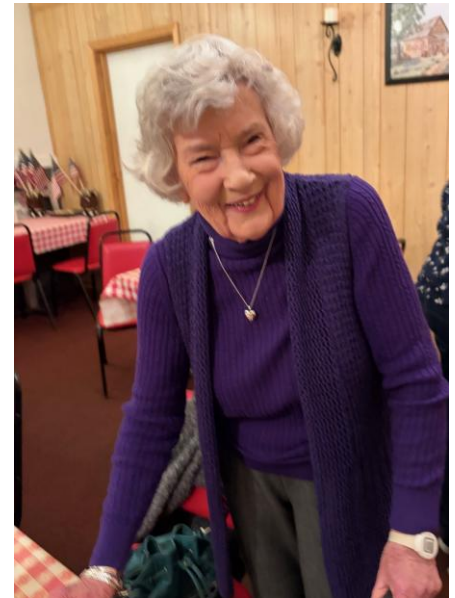
After Jerry retired, the family stayed in Spring Lake for a couple of years but moved to Polk County in 1979. He passed away in 2010.

Rachel worried about her children living such a transitory early life. It was hard on them going from "new school to new school." But, when one of her daughters was asked once where her hometown was, she answered "wherever my mom is." We are glad that is here now, and so is Rachel.

Rachel's Life Story originally was scheduled for February 18, but when she was unable to make it then, Rennie Habel filled in. Here is Janet Gilchrist's report:



Rennie Habel



Rachel Ramsey

"Rennie grew up in Tryon and is probably the longest running active member of Tryon Presbyterian Church, having joined in 1974. She was a singer in Betty Brewer's youth choir and shared stories many attendees

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remembered. Her grandfather's architectural career was mostly spent in Chicago; however, he designed numerous notable buildings in Tryon! For example, he designed the house at the corner of Highway 108 and Harmon Field Road. Many knew her grandmother and mother, and her father was a teacher in the Polk County Schools.



Susan Speight

"Rennie retired a couple of years ago from a career in the medical field. With her biology major, she worked to match blood donors with blood recipients. She and Steve have been married for 26 years. We also learned that as avid bird watchers, Rennie and Steve have traveled to 49 states, Central and South America. They are planning to visit the 50th state this spring and will travel on an African safari soon!

"When asked about Tryon, she said she misses the time when she knew everyone in town and they knew her, but she is happy to have newcomers as long as they do not try to change the Tryon she knows and loves!"

The next Life Story will be Susan Speight's on April 22 at noon at Calvert's. Contact Janet Gilchrist at jsg138@hotmail.com to reserve your place.



Sylvia Meissner collects gifts for our Blessing Box

For her seventh birthday, Sylvia Meissner did not ask for traditional gifts. She requested canned food to help stock our church's Blessing Box and received 40 items.

Additionally, as Sylvia helped put these 40 items in our pantry, she noticed the different types of food already stocked. She stated, "That's a lot of green beans." There are more cans of green beans than a small grocery store may have in stock. I asked her if she knew where this food would be going. Without hesitation she said, "People that need food don't have the money to get it." I explained that may be correct. Sometimes people fall on hard times and may need a helping hand. This is one way we can help.

Brittany and I work on planting little seeds here and there, waiting for the seedlings to blossom. What I didn't know is sometimes there is no waiting for them to blossom. Some blossom now and others later. It's a continuous cycle.

By **Michael Meissner**



Sylvia Meissner

Add these items to Blessing Box during April

The Missions Committee is asking for paper goods, cleaning supplies and personal hygiene items for the Blessing Box during April.

While food assistance programs like North Carolina's Food and Nutrition Services help many families put meals on the table, they don't cover everything a household needs. Many essential items, such as paper goods and cleaning supplies, are not eligible for purchase with food stamps. This leaves a critical gap for families trying to maintain clean, healthy homes. These items are always in high demand.

You can help. Throughout April, the Missions Committee is collecting much-needed non-food essentials for the Blessing Box. They can be placed in the Narthex. Items especially needed include:

- Toilet paper and tissues;
- Paper towels;
- Dish soap and laundry detergent;
- All-purpose cleaners and disinfectants;
- Personal hygiene products (soap, shampoo, toothpaste, deodorant) including feminine products.

Every donation, including monetary donations to purchase supplies, makes a difference in the lives of local families. Thank you for helping us support our neighbors in need with dignity and care.

New prayer ministry begins in May

A new prayer ministry is starting next month, inspired by a “prayers for healing” time during a Sunday worship service last fall.

That initiative offered congregation members an opportunity to share concerns and pray with volunteers stationed around the sanctuary. Many came forward during that time to seek God’s love and healing embrace.

Since then, Pastor Allan Purtill, Parish Associate Lynnette Sills, Music and Worship Committee Chair Susie Bellamy and Susan Speight have discussed creating an ongoing opportunity based on the same idea.

“Galatians 6:2 tells us, ‘Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ,’” Susan explains. “Praying for one another is a powerful way for us to bear one another’s burdens, taking another’s hand. And praying for them is a meaningful blessing that we can give to one another. With prayer, we can remove the isolation we sometimes feel. Sharing our struggles invites someone else into sacred space and can draw us closer in relationship.”

So, beginning in May, clergy and trained volunteers will be available after each worship service to pray with anyone who might need more time to bring their needs to God.

You can participate by giving consideration to and praying about this new opportunity to serve. If you feel called to this ministry, please contact Susan Speight at 803-429-6242 or scspeight@winstream.net or Rev. Lynnette Sills at lrj.sills52@gmail.com.

Volunteers will be given information and training to prepare for this ministry. Once we begin, volunteers will be asked to serve once a month at the end of worship for 20 to 30 minutes. Volunteers will work with a prayer partner on those Sundays.

Look for more announcements and information about this prayer ministry in upcoming Sunday bulletins.



Presbyterian Women

The Presbyterian Women will host their Spring Gathering on Saturday, May 2, at 10 a.m. The program is to be determined. The birthday offering will be collected at the brunch.



TPC welcomes new members

Chrystyna Senkel joins choir, enjoys our cute kids

Chrystyna Senkel and her husband moved to Western North Carolina from Tennessee for a job ... but not really. It was more about finding a good place to ride motorcycles. They have six!



Chrystyna Senkel

Chrystyna, who joined TPC earlier this year and sings in the choir, prefers a three-wheeler these days. They also have a side car attached to a motorcycle, but her husband mostly used it to chauffeur one of their four dogs. Sadly, that pet passed away recently.

Chrystyna had been looking for a church home since moving from Hendersonville to Tryon about four years ago. She visited several churches, including ours, but didn't find one that felt right.

Maybe she caught us on a bad Sunday because, when she gave us a second chance, everything was different. She

liked the music very much and says, "It's lovely what Jane does in integrating music into worship."

She also likes our congregation.

"People have been very kind and welcoming and interested in getting to know me and me getting to know them, and I appreciate that," she says.

She also finds the children's ministry "very sweet." Although she doesn't have children, "I'm a sucker for cute kids," she says.

Yes, our kids are very cute. All of them.

At a previous church, Chrystyna organized a Blessing of the Animals attended by about 200 dogs, so let's imagine how much fun that would be.

Long-time Methodists Bob and Alice Palmer join TPC

Bob and Alice Palmer belonged to Tryon United Methodist Church for 69 years, so it was painful for them when it closed last year. But four factors led them to join TPC:

Accessibility. "We could get in easily," Bob says. (Thank you, Susan Woodcock and TPC's Disability, Accessibility and Inclusion Task Force for improvements!)

Music. (They still have a Methodist hymnal on the piano in their living room.)

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Bob's history with the Presbyterian church. His mother was a Presbyterian, and he and Alice attended First (Scots) Presbyterian Church in Charleston when he was studying at the Medical University of South Carolina.

Ministers. They like Pastor Allan Purtill and, "We're very fond of Lynnette." Rev. Lynnette Sills served as pastor at Tryon Methodist. Lynnette confirmed their granddaughter and will officiate at her wedding in the fall.



Bob and Alice Palmer

Bob and Alice will celebrate 74 years of marriage in June. They also worked together for several years. Bob practiced medicine in Polk County, and Alice managed his office. For 30 years, he delivered babies, then moved into general practice.

They had four babies of their own – two sons and two daughters. They count seven grandchildren and seven great-grands. It's a full house when everyone gathers.

The most trying time for their family came when grandson Adam was severely wounded by a roadside bomb while serving with the Army in Iraq. He was evacuated to Germany, then transferred to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland. He nearly lost an arm and a leg, but surgeries saved both limbs. One procedure took muscle from his thigh to rebuild his arm. Now Adam has a "thorarm," Bob says. After about a year of rehabilitation and much work by Alice's prayer group at church, he's had an "amazing recovery," she says.

Adam wrote a book, called ["All In,"](#) about his experiences and his mission to spread the Gospel. He and his family live in Illinois, where he works with troubled youth. Bob and Alice are very proud of him.

Alice's health has prevented the Palmers from attending worship in-person recently, but they hope to return soon.

Coffee shop connects Richard and Holly McKee with Allan

Allan Purtill does some good ministry work at the Tryon Coffeehouse Co-op.

"I met Allan at the coffee shop and other places and thought he was a great guy," Richard McKee says.

That's one reason why Richard and Holly decided to join TPC after Tryon's Methodist church closed. "We're refugees," Holly jokes.

They had been members there for more than 20 years since moving from Fletcher for Holly's job. She worked as a technology sales representative for a dental supply



Holly and Richard McKee

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company. Her territory covered Upstate South Carolina and Western North Carolina, so Tryon was a better location for her. Richard was an English teacher at East Henderson High School before he retired.

Allan wasn't the only reason the McKees gravitated to TPC. Holly praised "the friendliness of the members from the first time we were there." They liked not only Allan's sermons but Amy McGrath's messages during the Moment with Young Disciples. The music is "absolutely spectacular," Holly adds. They appreciate the many activities and the young families. Also, when they're traveling, they can "pull the service up on the phone."

The McKees live off Hunting Country Road not far from FENCE, where Holly is volunteer coordinator. They keep a few chickens and once had to save their rooster from the clutches of a fox. Welcome, Richard and Holly!

Naomi Circle helps students celebrate birthdays

Everyone deserves a birthday party! This year, the Naomi Circle sisters have generously provided Birthdays in a Bag to more than 25 students at Polk County Middle School. Imagine being that age and feeling like your birthday would not be remembered, let alone celebrated.

I recently read "Theo of Golden," a novel by Allen Levi that emphasizes the power of quiet, intentional and often anonymous actions in making a positive impact. The novel focuses on fostering hope and connection.

The birthday party bags project embodies the same idea as an initiative launched by the Rotary Club of Tryon. The Naomi Circle group organized Birthdays in a Bag for students who, for various reasons, might not have been celebrated. Each bag includes cake mixes, icing, plates, napkins, banners, candles, a card and a small gift to recognize the student's birthday. While the students remain unaware of the origin of the bags, their school counselors have expressed their deep appreciation for this thoughtful gesture.

True service comes from the heart, driven by a dedication to making a difference in God's world. It doesn't require recognition because our actions are known to God.

By Janet Gilchrist



Naomi Circle members include, from left, Cindy Allen, Chianghua Hereward, Carol Turner, Karen McKinnon, Cheryl Spencer and Cindy Stanfield.

Join our Fellowship excursion to Pretty Place

Have you been longing for a day of discovery and soul-stirring views in the company of friends? The Fellowship Committee is delighted to announce a new series of excursions designed to bring us together in some of the region's most unique and fulfilling settings.

Our first destination: The Fred W. Symmes Chapel

On Friday, May 1, we will journey to the Fred W. Symmes Chapel, affectionately known by locals as "Pretty Place." Perched atop Stone Mountain at an elevation of 3,200 feet, this open-air sanctuary offers a breathtaking, panoramic vantage point over the rolling hills and mountains of Upstate South Carolina and Western North Carolina.

Whether you wish to connect with nature, find a quiet moment for prayer and meditation, or simply breathe in the fresh mountain air, Pretty Place provides a truly out-of-this-world experience.



The itinerary

- Morning: A scenic drive to the chapel at YMCA Camp Greenville.
- Lunch: A delicious Dutch Treat meal at Falls Landing in the charming town of Brevard, N.C.
- Travel: Our friend Mike Carruth will serve as our chauffeur for the day.

Trip details and accessibility

To ensure everyone has a comfortable and enjoyable experience, please keep the following in mind:

- Cost: A \$15 travel fee per person (plus the cost of your lunch).
- Atmosphere: As this is a sacred and shared space, we kindly ask for a respectful presence. Please note that alcohol, pets and smoking are not permitted on the property.
- Mobility and comfort: To fully enjoy the natural beauty of the mountain and the chapel surroundings, we recommend wearing your favorite comfortable walking shoes. The terrain includes some uneven surfaces and a fair amount of walking, so being mindful of your steady footing will help you get the most out of this beautiful outdoor setting.

Join Us

Space for this inaugural trip is limited to 10 participants to keep the atmosphere intimate and friendly.

Ready to reserve your spot? Please contact Janet Gilchrist at jsg138@hotmail.com or Cindy Caldwell at cindycaldwell921@gmail.com to sign up today. We look forward to sharing this mountain-top experience with you!

Presbytery news

Pantry receives Saluda church fellowship hall

The transfer of the Saluda Presbyterian Church fellowship hall to the Saluda Pantry was officially concluded last month.

The church closed its doors in December 2024, but its congregation wanted to give the church property to local causes it supported. The sanctuary now belongs to Historic Saluda Inc., which will use the building for its offices and a museum.

The pantry had used the fellowship hall for several years but now has a permanent address. "Located in the heart of downtown Saluda, this humble space radiates warmth and generosity," it says on its website. "Our shelves are filled with both food staples and a rotating selection of various food options. In this small space, neighbors become family, and no one faces hunger alone."

Rev. Dave Hosick was involved in this story in two ways. He was acting moderator of Saluda Presbyterian Church's Session when it made the difficult decision to dissolve because of declining membership. He was also serving on the Presbytery of Western North Carolina committee that had to approve the transfer of property. He is pleased that Saluda Presbyterians could make these gifts that support the community and honor their values.



Historic Saluda Inc. photo

Youth Adventure Day at Camp Grier offers activities and fellowship

Presbytery of Western North Carolina Youth Adventure Day at [Camp Grier](#) is May 2. Middle and high school youngsters are invited to participate in mountain biking, greenhouse gardening, horseback riding, ziplining, canoeing and arts and crafts.

The day begins with group games and singing at 10:30 a.m., followed by a bring-your-own picnic lunch at noon. Various activities run from 1 to 5, and the day concludes with dinner, music and worship from 5 to 6:30. The cost is \$20 per person, which covers programs and dinner. Register by April 26 [here](#).

Camp Grier is in Old Fort, N.C., about an hour and 15 minutes [from TPC](#).



Camp Grier photo

In and around Tryon Presbyterian



Top: Betty Brewer and Ed Harrelson enjoyed chatting after worship March 22. Right: Riley Meyer was inducted into the National Beta Club recently. Above: Rev. Dr. John McCall preached at TPC March 22 and gave a program about Taiwan, where he served the Presbyterian Church for many years.



Above: August Buckmaster serves as one of our new acolytes.

Right: Jamie Graber offers an appreciation for Amy McGrath on Amy's last day as Director of Children's Ministry March 29.

Below left: Amy McGrath and Alyssa Walker.

Below right: Jon, Sully, Jesse and John McGrath.





Top three photos: Ken Shull, Jon Austin, Cinda Austin and Penny Padgett were part of the Missions Committee crew preparing soup for our Souper Bowl lunch, which raised funds for the Black Mountain Home for Children and Families.

Lower left: Our new handbell choir rehearsed with Jane Wilson before worship March 22.

Below right: Ringers Deanna Bancroft, Joanie Hosick and Catherine Lynch play during the Prelude.



Right: Members of our Children’s Choir (not all are pictured here) are Viola Meissner, Analise Yoder, Luna Baughman, Elizabeth Peek, Aubrey Hazelwood, Sullivan Meissner, Sylvia Meissner, Lucy Guerrero, Kensie Guerrero, Arzi Ishwar and Shealyn Macaluso. The choir sang on Palm Sunday.

Below: Ellie Graber enjoys Mike Carruth’s streambed display as mom Jamie watches at Super Saturday in Tryon.

Below right: Former TPC Music Director Lesley Bush dropped by March 31 and let us take his picture with Jane Wilson. Lesley is now Music Director and organist at Trinity Presbyterian Church in Hendersonville.

Opposite page bottom left: A table centerpiece for our Palm Sunday brunch.





The Tryon Trumpet

The Tryon Trumpet is a digital publication of Tryon Presbyterian Church and its Fellowship Committee, moderated by Janet Gilchrist. The editor is Doug Clark, dougclark55@gmail.com. Submissions are welcome. Thanks for help with this edition go to Rev. Mary Potter, MaryAnn Sloan, Rev. Allan Purtil, Janet Gilchrist, Stephanie Greene, Jane Wilson, Michael Meissner, Samantha Hazelwood, Susan Speight, Jon McGrath, Allyson Meyer, Lee Lindsay, Wes Elam, Kim McPherson, Historic Saluda Inc., Camp Grier and the Presbytery of Western North Carolina.

