

# Synod Sunday!

**What is Synod Sunday?** On this day, we invite the congregations and presbyteries in the Synod of the Trinity region to celebrate the gifts and blessings that take place in our bounds throughout the year.

**Why Sept. 18?** The Synod of the Trinity gathered for the very first time on Sept. 17, 1717. We hold Synod Sunday on the Sunday closest to Sept. 17 each year.

**What is the Synod of the Trinity?** We are a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) mid council that serves 16 presbyteries in a region that encompasses Pennsylvania, all of West Virginia except for the eastern panhandle, and the counties of eastern Ohio (with West Virginia's northern panhandle) generally known as the Upper Ohio Valley.

**What does the Synod do?** Great question. Quoting our primary end (goal), *"As part of the Body of Christ, the Synod of the Trinity, through the responsible use of shared resources, supports and challenges member Presbyteries to be vital, innovative and faithful in their collaborative and distinctive callings."* We work hand-in-hand with the ministry and mission of our presbyteries as they seek to support the witness of congregations, to the end that the church throughout its region becomes a community of faith, hope, love and witness.

**How do we do that?** Another good question. The Synod supports presbytery leadership by offering training, networking and continuing education opportunities. We also annually award grants for peacemaking, mission travel and new initiatives in ministry. *More at [SynTrinity.org/Grants](http://SynTrinity.org/Grants).*

How can I learn more? [www.SynTrinity.org](http://www.SynTrinity.org)

## What's new in the Synod?

- Rev. Forrest Claassen begins tenure as new Synod executive
- Synod raises \$300K for humanitarian response to Ukraine
- War in Ukraine is personal for many in Synod region
- Philadelphia's Ruth Santana-Grace elected GA co-moderator

See reverse side for more details



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Rev. Forrest Claassen, former co-executive and stated clerk of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos, was unanimously voted to become the Synod's new executive last fall and began serving in 2022.

“One of my goals is to think about what it means that this is still the church and not just an institution that’s meant to support the church. It’s not a congregation, it’s not the fundamental unit of ministry. But it is a community that is defined by the call of Christ.”



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## Region answers call for Ukraine

In early March, the Synod of the Trinity invited the presbyteries, congregations and individuals in the region to donate money to assist Presbyterian Disaster Assistance in its humanitarian response to the war in Ukraine. We agreed to match incoming dollars to support those affected by the war.



Because your enthusiasm was so powerful, the Synod increased the matching figure twice. We received more than \$200,000 in donations and have matched \$100,000 of those funds, bringing the **total donation figure to more than \$300,000!**

- Many area Presbyterians have also responded in their own ways to help with those affected by the war in Ukraine. Find these stories on the Synod website detailing how your neighbors have helped:
  - At First Church of Pittsburgh, war in Ukraine is ‘very personal’
  - Ukraine war hits close to home for the Rev. Dr. John Burgess
  - Lehigh Presbytery follows Jack Ferlino’s lead to help Ukraine
  - Ukraine war 'not rational' for PCUSA co-worker Ellen Smith

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## Philly executive presbyter elected General Assembly co-moderator

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