

# 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 throughout the year in our bounds.

**Why Sept. 20?** The Synod of the Trinity's birthday (the day in which it first gathered in 1717) is Sept. 17. We annually hold Synod Sunday on the Sunday nearest to this anniversary.

## WELCOME, KRISTAL SMITH!



In late May, Kristal Smith was unanimously voted as the Synod's stated clerk during a Special Assembly meeting. She began her new role on June 1.

Most recently, Kristal served as the Presbytery Leader for Governance and Congregational Leadership at the Presbytery of Carlisle, having stepped down from that position at the end of February.

"Rev. Smith is conscientious and thoughtful and cares deeply about the spiritual health of the Church," said Synod Executive the Rev. Forrest Claassen. "In just a few short years, she has won the trust and respect of the stated clerks across the Synod. I am grateful for the wisdom and care she brings to the office of Synod Stated Clerk."

## FIT FOR THE FUTURE GRANTS

In 2024, your Synod began offering Fit for the Future Grants to our presbyteries. This opportunity encourages presbyteries to take concrete steps toward missional and/or ecclesiastical changes that will position them for continued ministry effectiveness over the next 10 years. To date, we have distributed nearly \$100,000 to our presbyteries while more grants have been recently approved.



[www.SynTrinity.org](http://www.SynTrinity.org)

**What is the Synod?** The Synod of the Trinity is a nurturing source of support and resources for its presbyteries as they seek to support the work of congregations, for the purpose of the church throughout its region becoming a community of faith, hope, love and witness.



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## Here's what's happening

There are many great things going on in the Synod of the Trinity! Stories on things like creative outreaches and more can be found on the Synod's website at SynTrinity.org. Here's a quick recap of what you'll find:

### BEING INNOVATIVE

- Washington's Presbyterian Virtual Assistant is an AI program designed to help churches and mid councils with things like researching and rewriting policies. It is a game-changer in that presbytery and one that could quickly impact the larger church.

### MAKING A DIFFERENCE

- Carlos Della Valle spent eight months in detention centers after being acquitted of an illegal re-entry to the U.S. charge. The journey by Central Presbyterian Church and its community to bring him back to his Downingtown, PA, home is an emotional one.
- Bettie Stammerjohn, a member of the Synod's Presbyterian Women, attended the 70th United Nation's Commission on the Status of Women conference in New York City earlier this year. The experience was life changing.
- It's been four years for the Bread of Life congregation in Ukraine since its country was invaded by Russia. Despite being in a war-torn country, this congregation, supported by First Church of Pittsburgh, has increased its outreach to its community.



### GIVING BACK

- Every spring, Huntingdon Presbyterian Church holds an auction that benefits the One Great Hour of Sharing offering, annually collecting thousands of dollars. "There's a dedication and a love for this particular ministry, and that's amazing to see."
- The Synod of the Trinity annually provides Small Church Leadership Development funds for its presbyteries so they can distribute those funds to their smaller congregations that are looking to provide training for their clergy and lay leadership.

## Find it at SynTrinity.org

Some of the things you can find on the Synod website are:

- |                                                           |                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| ➤ Racial justice, financial, communication resource pages | ➤ List of contacts for other denominations in your area |
| ➤ Job opportunities                                       | ➤ Calendar of events for the entire Synod region        |
| ➤ Presbyterian Women of the Synod page                    |                                                         |

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