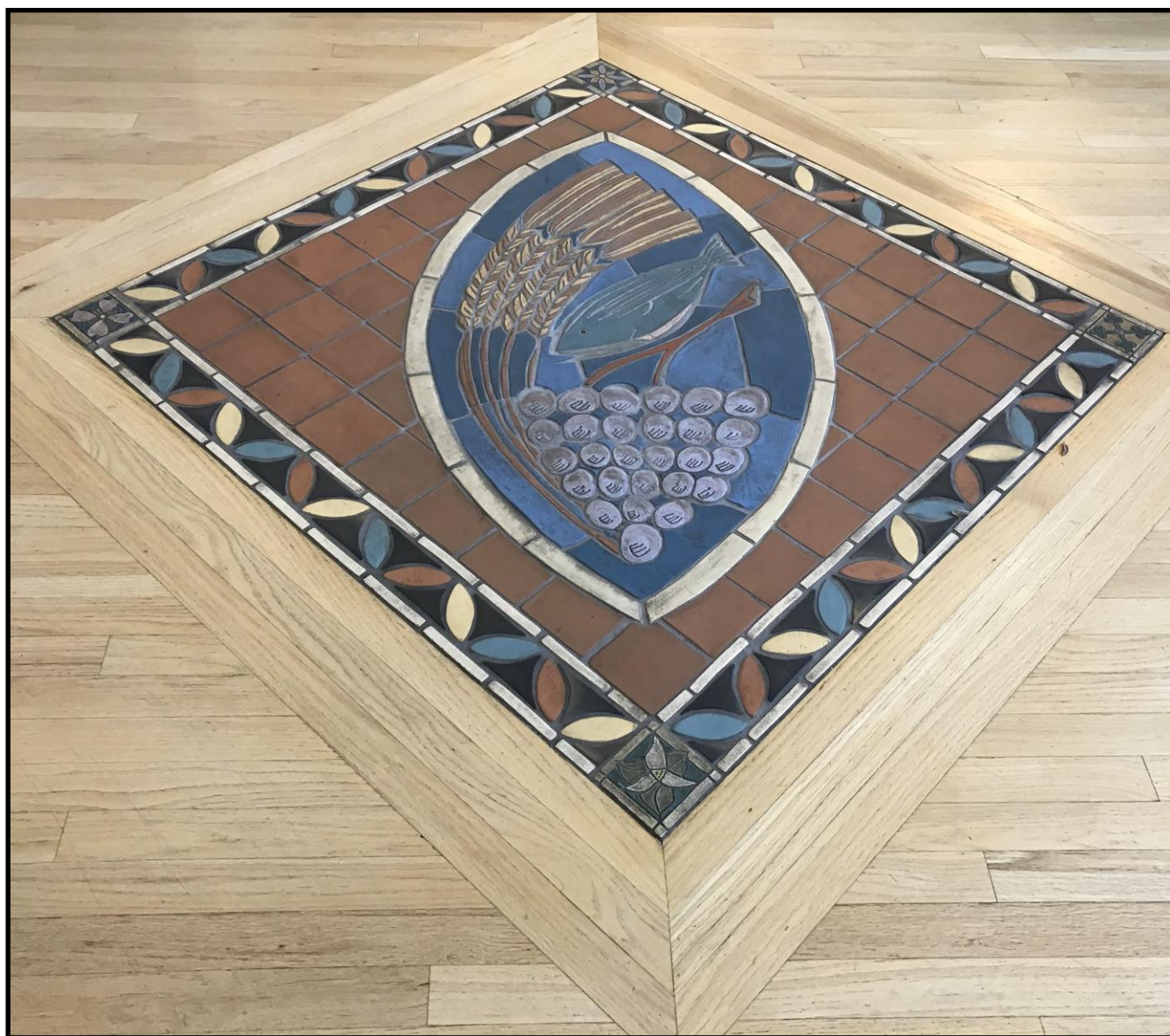


The Symbols and Paraments of Trinity Buckingham Episcopal Church



[Mercer Tile, church lobby]

Jesus fed his people with this trinity of food: fish, bread, and wine

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Divine Seamstress
by Mary Kathleen Spiegel Schmidt

You sew together the fabric
of our transformation.
You design the beautiful virtues
that clothe our soul.
You mend what we have torn
In our carelessness.
You thread your faithful love
Into our relationships.
You tailor our daily endeavors
With details of your goodness.

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Each Season look carefully and closely at these paraments and think of those who spent so much time and effort to plan, design, choose materials, cut out the shapes, and create the stitching to hold it all together.

And then think of the people on the Altar Guild who over the years keep the calendar for making the changes, who pull the banners up into place, take out the wrinkles of all that are stored in drawers and on shelves, who care for the scarves and chasubles and then prepare the worship area to enrich our worship experience.

In John's Gospel Jesus said "...go and bear fruit, fruit that will last..."

And is that not what these people did in planning, designing, creating, and caring for these paraments and gifting them to Trinity Buckingham and you?

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Glossary

altar cloth or *faire linen*: the white cloth that covers the top of the altar embroidered with five crosses for the five wounds of Christ, one in each corner and another in the center.

banners: the 2 long vertical cloth pieces that hang on the stone walls on either side of the altar

chalice veil: a square of material that covers the chalice until it is needed for the eucharist

chancel: the area of the church containing the altar, pulpit, and lectern

chasubles: The sleeveless outer vestment worn by the celebrant at the eucharist and typically reflects the liturgical color of the day

Epistle side: the side of a chancel or sanctuary on the congregation's right, typically having a lectern from which the Epistles are read during services.

frontals: the covering for the front of an altar, often matching the liturgical color of the season of the church year.

Gospel side: The left side of an altar or a chancel as the congregation faces the pulpit.

lectern A bookstand or reading desk that holds the lectionary or book used for reading scripture in public worship

paraments: Cloth or tapestry hangings used to adorn/prepare the space for worship, especially those hangings at the altar, pulpit, and lectern.

pulpit: an elevated platform or high reading desk used in preaching or conducting a worship service

sacristy: The room adjoining a church where vestments, altar hangings and linens, sacred vessels, and liturgical books are kept until needed for use in worship.

scarves/hangings: a decorative cloth over the pulpit and lectern

stoles: A long, thin liturgical vestment worn around the neck and the shoulder by the clergy and typically reflects the liturgical color of the day

Seasons of the Church Year

Trinity Buckingham Paraments: All who enter the sanctuary of Trinity Buckingham Episcopal Church and look at the altar area will see something very special, the unique cloth hangings called paraments that prepare the chancel for worship. These colorful frontals, banners, and scarfs, as well as the vestments (stoles, chasubles) worn by the rector, are a visual representation of the yearly church seasons. Most of these were designed, created, and sewn by Trinity Church members over a period of several years.

Creation of Current Paraments: With the move from historic Trinity to the current building in 1965 and the marked change in size and acoustics in the new worship area, there was a need for new banners and frontals. What is special to Trinity is that almost all of these were not purchased but instead were designed by church members. They were then created by people who selected the materials and colors, then cut the patterns and assembled them on tables and living room floors, machine sewing, hand stitching and embroidering them using a wide variety of special threads, stitches and skills.

Those who sew and/or do other needle and thread handwork know that there is first the pattern/design on paper, and then, finally, there is the finished cloth product made by human hands. All of that requires years of experience and an agility and adaptability to the material and the process. While there is a wide variety of embroidery and needlepoint stitches for different purposes and different fabrics, sometimes it is necessary, as with some of these paraments, for an individual to create new variations of these.

Colors of the Church Seasons: In the northern hemisphere the changing temperatures and colors give us the four seasons of greening new plant growth in spring, the bright colors of summer, the vibrant oranges and reds of autumn, and the whiteness of winter. The Christian Church twelve month calendar, however, has a different color palette to represent the church seasons which uphold the long tradition of arranging the year around the life of Jesus Christ. Therefore this calendar places Sunday as the first day of the week, begins with Advent, the coming of Jesus, and has these five main liturgical seasons and colors: Advent (blue), Christmas/Epiphany (white), Lent (purple), Easter (white), Pentecost (red).

There are also two other seasons that vary in time and length each year since Easter is connected to Passover and, therefore, the lunar calendar. After the Epiphany and After Pentecost are represented by the color green. These seasons are often referred to as Ordinary Time. This name comes from the *ordinal numbers* (first, second, third, etc.) used to name and count the Sundays after Epiphany before Lent begins and, again, after Pentecost before Advent begins. Lacy Clark Ellman, a spiritual director and pilgrimage guide, writes that this is a time for us to look for the sacred hidden in our daily lives. “What so often seems ordinary then has the power to become extraordinary.”

Advent Paraments

The church year begins with the season of Advent. The frontal of blue with purple vertical lines rising up to the cross also contains in the center a Christmas rose. This symbol is associated with love and hope and a reminder that the most precious gifts are those that come from the heart. [See *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming* #81 in



the hymnal and Isaiah 35:1-2]

The banners contain the many names for Jesus Christ. On the Gospel side of the altar hangs the purple and blue **Alpha and Omega** banner (the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, the beginning and the end). Jesus was at the beginning of all things and will be at the close. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." Rev.22:13

On the Epistle side of the altar hangs the **O Antiphons** banner. An antiphon is a verse or song composed for responsive chanting or singing. Each of these antiphons sung in the week before Christmas salutes the coming of the Messiah under one of the many titles ascribed to him in the Holy scriptures and would be considered as titles for the Messiah. You will find each of these in the hymn we sing for Advent, *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*, #56 in the 1983 pew Hymnals.

Listed vertically in Latin they are *O Sappientia* (Wisdom), *O Adonai* (Lord), *O Radix Jesse* (root of Jesses's tree), *O Clavis David* (key of David), *O Oriens* (Dayspring/Morning star), *O Rex Gentium* (King of the Gentiles), *O Emmanuel* (King and Law Giver).

Christmas Frontal

Designed by former Trinity member Robert Yahn, this frontal is comprised of the word “Holy” written in Greek ἅγιος (Hagios) and “Holy” as written in Hebrew קדוש (ko-desh). This design is titled *Thrice Holy*. The first line is Greek then Hebrew; the second line is Hebrew then Greek, the third line is Greek then Hebrew.



This may be connected to Revelation 4:8 *And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and inside. Day and night without ceasing they sing,*

“Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God the Almighty, who was and is and is to come.”



Epiphany Tide Paraments



The season of After the Epiphany and before Lent is also numbered by ordinals and so is also known as Ordinary Time. Therefore the parament color is green and the Gospel banners are hung. [See more detail on these on pages 7 & 15]

The frontal is a quilt pattern known as “Courthouse Steps” which is a center square framed in multiple thin strips of fabric to create an optical illusion of steps. It traditionally has a center square of red representing the image of the hearth once used to heat the building. Four rectangular strips of increasing length surround each of the 4 sides of the square resulting in 16 different patterns of calico fabric being used to complete each square.



These Courthouse square quilt blocks are arranged in a central triangular shape of lighter greens which is surrounded by the two darker green triangles directing the eyes upward to the cross above the altar. Then the side panels are lighter shades of brown and grey to contrast the brighter greens.

The Season After Epiphany — Ordinary Time

Outside the two great seasons and cycles of the faith—Advent and Christmas, Lent and Easter—almost two-thirds of every year, is spent learning about the practices of Christian living. The liturgical year simply calls refers to it as “Ordinary Time”. Joan Chittister (American Benedictine nun, theologian, speaker) writes that Ordinary Time is really “...the extraordinary period of coming to see the world through the eyes of Jesus...” and deciding “...will we take Christmas and Easter seriously or not.” So it is appropriate that the Gospel banners are displayed during this season showing the symbols of the four Evangelists, the authors of the four Gospels in which we, too, see the world through the eyes of Jesus. And these extraordinary figures, with their books, are presented to you on the banners in the order of the Gospels — Matthew and Mark on the Gospel side with Luke and John on the Epistle side.



These striking visual symbols are found in the book of Kells, a lavishly illustrated Gospel edition from around the year 800 AD currently at Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland. Matthew is the winged man (representing Jesus' incarnation), Mark the winged lion, (a figure of courage and monarchy), Luke the winged ox or bull (a figure of sacrifice, service, and strength), and John the eagle (representing Jesus's ascension). These images are from a vision experience described in the beginning of the book of Ezekiel 1:4-11 and also in the book of Revelation 4:6-8. *[see more close up detail of on p.15]*

These extraordinary images are balanced by the ordinary people for whom the Gospels were written who are depicted at the bottom of each banner. There are 21 on each banner, yet in these crowds each individual is clothed in a robe that is different in texture and pattern and color, each head of hair is distinct, and the faces represent all the different skin tones of the world. After church service sometime go up to look closely at these before the change of the church season.



Palm Sunday Paraments



The season of Lent is 40 days long, not counting Sundays which are also feast days. Because the number 40 recalls the Jesus's 40 days of testing in the wilderness, the color for this season is purple which represents penitence and expectation. Some regard this as also being the color of inner reflection, an important preparation for Easter. So the frontal is a magenta material with a Greek cross in the center. This shape with four arms of equal length, which is also on the scarfs, is one of the oldest forms of the cross. Note that in this photo the arrangement of palms by the Altar Guild echoes the Trinity.



On the gospel side of the chancel is a large wreath woven of thorny branches representing the crown of thorns placed on Jesus' head to mock him and cause him pain.

At the end of the service on Maundy Thursday the altar is stripped of all the candles, vessels and decorations, just as Jesus was stripped of his garments when he was nailed to the cross.

The term maundy (mandate) refers to the new commandment that Jesus gave to his disciples at The Last Supper "...that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another."

For the Good Friday service the altar is draped in black.

Easter Paraments



The frontal for the altar is a gold background with 10 white lines outlined in silver: two vertical lines and two sets of curved lines that sweep upwards to the cross above the altar. In the center is a white cross surrounded by a variety of flowers with petals in eight different colors and six different shapes, appliquéd with a satin stitch, each flower's four petals containing the shape of the cross. The lectern and pulpit scarves echo the flower patterns.



The colors were chosen for their symbolism: yellow/gold for sovereignty, red for feast of martyrs, green for hope, blue for eternity or faith or truth, purple for royal majesty, rose pink for Divine love, white as a symbol of God, purity of thought, holiness of life.

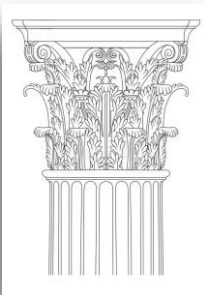


The banner of the oval tree on the gospel side is filled with round stemmed fruits, pomegranates of different shades of red. On the ground under this tree are petaled flowers repeating the colors of the frontal and one ripened fruit which has fallen and cracked open revealing plump red seeds. Look closely to see how this detail is emphasized through the use of beads.

There are over 20 references to this fruit in the Old Testament. The Promised Land is described as a place of plenty. "It's a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates..." (Deut. 8:8)

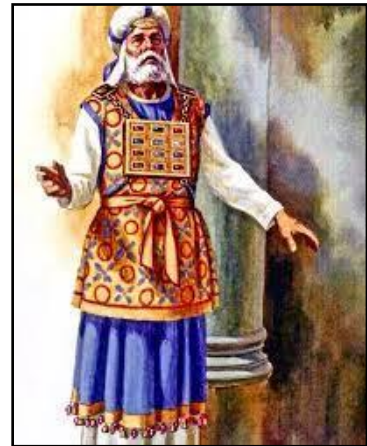


The ceremonial robe, *the Ephod*, that Aaron and the priests wore when entering into God's presence were embroidered with pomegranates representing the riches and beauty of God's provision. (Exodus 28:33-34)



The Temple constructed by King Solomon had columns topped with broad capitals that had "...200 [gold/bronze] pomegranates in rows around both capitals." (I Kings 7:20) "There were 96 pomegranates on all sides of the capitals, 100 total in the lattice work around the top."

(Jeremiah 52:22-23)



The banner of the vertical tree on the lectionary side has a red nest with 2 eggs surrounded by 2 blue birds and the repeated flower pattern from the frontal as well as 3 white flowers on long stems in the ground under the tree.

These lilies represent rebirth and hope, just as the resurrection does in the Christian faith. Known as the "white-robed apostles of hope" fragrant white lilies were believed to symbolize the purity of Christ.



Pentecost and The Coming of the Holy Spirit



Pentecost Sunday marks the start of the early Christian Church. On that day as the Apostles sat together, a sound like the rush of a violent wind filled the house and tongues of fire appeared on each of their heads. Then they spoke the good news of Jesus Christ in the native languages of the peoples gathered together from across the land. (Acts 2:1-13)

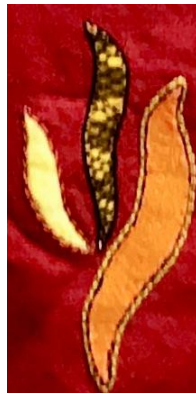
Since red symbolizes fire and blood and spiritual awakening,

this color along with the white of the descending wind of the Holy Spirit/Dove fills these paraments.



The red banners, the chasuble, and the lectionary scarf are all filled with soaring tongues of flames in changing colors and twisting shapes with the white lines of the wind radiating downward as the Holy Spirit in the shape of a dove filled the disciples giving them the ability to speak to all the peoples gathered that day. Each banner, as designed by Elizabeth Kenny in 1974, bears seven flames recalling the traditional seven gifts of the Holy Spirit as based on Isaiah 11 and listed in the former Prayer Book Confirmation Service: *Strengthen them, we beseech thee, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, and daily increase in them thy manifold gifts of grace: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and ghostly strength, the spirit of knowledge and true godliness; and fill them, O Lord, with the spirit of thy holy fear, now and forever. Amen.*

Notice that the flames are a wide variety of sizes and colors, and look closely at the banners with radiating lines of the winds of the Holy Spirit to see that they also are sewn with a variety of stitches. Perhaps these are also emphasizing the diverse languages spoken to reach all the peoples that were present at that moment.

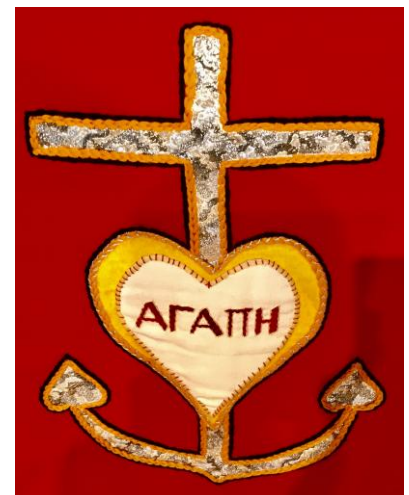


The pulpit scarf illustrates the descending dove encircled by the wind.



With all this motion of swirling flames rising up and the sweeping downward winds of the breath of the Holy Spirit in the banners and the scarves, notice that the center of the frontal is the steadying image of an anchor. This Mariner's Cross has the word AGAPE spelled in Greek letters. In Ecclesiastical use this means the love of God for mankind and mankind for God.

The image is based on the cross and anchor symbol used by the early Christians in the catacombs. [Hebrews 6:19 We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul]. The added heart represents humanity.



Season of After Pentecost/Ordinary Time Paraments

After the day of Pentecost and before the beginning of the the new church year at Advent, the Sundays are numbered with the ordinals 1st, 2nd, etc. and therefore are also known as the second period of Ordinary Time in the church year.



The worship area is again bare of paraments except for the green scarfs on the pulpit and the lectern, and the green chalice veil. The lectern scarf has a form of the “Trinity Knot” that is gold outlined in red. This triquetra is one continuous line interweaving itself around itself symbolizing no beginning or end, an eternal spiritual life. The pulpit scarf is a shepherd’s crook cross echoing the 23rd Psalm.



The altar is bare of a frontal and that allows us to see the symbol of Trinity Buckingham carved on to the front of the altar by a local artist. This is to honor Lindley Elkington Larzelere (1895-1962). Look closely to see a sheaf of wheat and a cluster of grapes enclosed in a pointed oval shape. The curved stem of the grapes and the lower curved line of the wheat imply the elongated oval shape of a fish.



These three items of feeding associated with Jesus’ ministry are repeated in our church banner which hangs to the right of the chancel area. Created by Linda Eichhorn in 2011, the textures and colors clearly emphasize this trinity of shapes.

This symbol is again recreated in the floor of the lobby by the office with a large ceramic tile of the fish, grapes, and wheat created for Trinity Buckingham by Mercer Tile Works in 1996.

Gospel Banners

The Sundays After Pentecost are the second period of Ordinary Time in the church year, and so the Gospel Banners are again displayed/hung until the Advent season begins the new church year. [See p. 7 “After the Epiphany”] Here is a closer view of the symbols for each of the Gospel writers showing the details of the stitching used to recreate images in the Book of Kells into these larger needlework images.



Matthew symbolized by the winged man
(representing Jesus' incarnation)



Luke as the winged ox or bull
(a figure of sacrifice, service and strength)



Mark as the winged lion
(a figure of courage and monarchy)



John as the eagle
(representing Jesus' ascension)



Kneeling Pads: There are eight kneeling pads placed on the curved wooden kneelers in the chancel and one piano bench pad that were needlepointed by the Episcopal Church Women in 1988. Each of the nine pads was designed by Helen Hansen, a local liturgical artist and sister-in-law of Trinity member Lue Hansen. They are filled with the flora and

fauna native to the Buckingham area: goldenrod, trillium, Indian Pipe, teaberry, Queen Anne lace, ox eye daisy, holly, crimson, columbine, trumpet vine, showy lady's slipper, trout lily, iris, acorns and oak leaves, swamp rose mallow, wavy-eared asters, hop clover, strawberries with white flowers, crabapple, jack in the pulpit, birdsfoot, along with the images of stars, a mole, sheep and shepherd's crooks, a rabbit, and an elf.



Designers and Creators

These are some of the people who were involved in the design and creation of Trinity Buckingham's paraments and faire linens and kneelers that are used in worship throughout the church year.

Rev. Nicholas Phelps (initiated the idea of the banners)

Margaret Beegle

Brad Brandsford

Ester Bridell

Delle Curry

Linda Eichhorn (Trinity Church Banner)

Helen Hansen (designer of kneelers)

Lue Hansen

Elizabeth Kenny

Judith Krauss

Amy Lancaster

Dudley Lancaster

Libbie Linson

Vera Larzelere

Violet McCloud

Rebecca Noll

Margaret Perry (Peg)

Margaret Perry (Meg)

Deborah Prendergast

Diane Roberts

Nancy Robinson

Donnie Saunders

Dina Sewell

Sally Swanson

Margaret Wallace

Robert Yahn

Estelle Yelnosky

Other Women of ECW

Acknowledgements

All of this booklet could not have been completed, or even started, without the help and encouragement of so many people who are a part of Trinity Buckingham Church. Nancy Dilliplane suggested this would be a good project for me to research. Cynthia Goode introduced me to the people who know the most about these paraments and how they were created and by whom. She also uncovered materials from the church archives and provided “technical support” and encouragement.

Amy Lancaster was invaluable in recreating the history and the ideas behind the designs and the process and fascinating details of the designs.

Thanks to all those who provided information, editing skills, and encouragement: Elizabeth Crooke, Lauren Gillen, Joan Noveske, Meg Perry, Debra Prendergast, RoseMarie Proctor, Nancy Robinson, Joanne Welker, Natalie Welker-Marx.

With much gratitude,
Diana Martinez

“Piglet noticed that even though he had a Very Small Heart, it could hold a rather large amount of Gratitude.” – A.A. Milne