



THE TORCH

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December 2024
Sunday Worship
9:00 AM

Trinity Lutheran Church • 18137 Criswell Street • Bettendorf, Iowa 52722 • 563-332-5188
Pastor Stephen Nilsen 563-332-6432 (office) 319-540-1172 (cell) snilsen@trinitylcpv.com (email)

Greetings Fellow Journeyers,

Every year around the start of Advent, I think about the journey that we have been on for the past year and the journey that lies ahead in the next year to come. While some reflect on that changing of the year on our traditional calendar's New Year's Eve or New Year's Day, I have quickly learned in only a few years as a pastor that the Christmas season feels a bit too busy to reflect on that, so I use this time in the end of November and early December for that reflection.

Just like lots of you, I focus on a lot that we have to be grateful for at this time of year: Thanksgiving meals will be shared among families and friends, and many will give thanks for the blessings they have had in the past year. Others will miss people that have died or moved away in the past year. No matter the feelings around the holiday season, I hope that we can remember Mary's words from the song she sang when the Angel Gabriel comes to inform her she is pregnant in the Gospel according to Luke:

"My soul proclaims your greatness, O God, and my spirit rejoices in you. You have looked with love on your servant here, and blessed me all my life through." (Luke 1:46-48, Holden Evening Prayer translation)

Even with startling news of a pregnancy that was unexpected, the young Mary continues to rejoice in the good news that has come to her and gives thanks to God for what he has done in her life. We are blessed with a variety of bearers of news in our lives: friends who inform us of a new job after a long wait, family who share updates on health progressing into a new reality, and even some strangers who might inform us of the good work of our congregation (ask me about the food pantry story sometime).

Each of us has much to look back on in the journey of the last year: there have been new births in our congregation, several new people have joined, and we gave thanks just a month ago for the saints who have died as well. Through it all, God blesses us with those memories, and shares in the Good News of Jesus Christ that is to come. Each day, we celebrate the closeness of the Kingdom of God in ways that may seem simple (praying, giving thanks for food and other necessities, asking for guidance), but may also seem quite cosmic if we think about it: our God has come close to us in the person of Jesus Christ and understands our humanity in a profound way... the same God who created the universe!

When you think of the blessings this congregation has shared in the past year, I hope you consider the simple ones as well as the more "headline-worthy" ones that we might first jump to. While it is great that we had a successful day camp in the summer, grew produce to feed our neighbors, opened a food pantry, and shared good news of what is happening here at Trinity with our neighbors through a new electronic sign, there are also blessings that go a little less noticed. A small group of volunteers mow the yard from spring through fall, others come to fold bulletins and help send out the Torch newsletter to those who receive it by mail, coffee and fellowship are enjoyed each Sunday after worship, and visitors to worship are welcomed not only by our ushers but by many folks in the pews.

You might be reading this and thinking, "well, Pastor Stephen, these aren't that worth celebrating... these are just the ordinary rhythms of life as a church." I see them as marvelous little joy-filled moments to celebrate and to thank God for each and every day. I thank God for all of you and the blessings you are in our ministry together here at Trinity too! Happy New Year!

With joyful thanksgiving,
Pastor Stephen Nilsen



Trinity Office Hours Tues, Wed, Thurs - 9AM-1PM
Pastor Stephen's Office Hours Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs -10AM - 2PM

COUNCIL NOTES

The Council met November 11th, and discussed a change to an endowment disbursement that was returned. Subsequently endowment had reallocated the money to the new Trinity Food Pantry, with Council approval. A similar issue had come up with a food basket gift card for the holidays. That money will be rolled over into the next round of baskets. Speaking of the food pantry, I (Dane) asked for Council approval to pick up a gently used set of refrigerators and freezers from the closed Presbyterian Church in Princeton. This would allow the food pantry to take advantage of higher value food items as well as to store breads etc. from food rescue for longer periods of time reducing the costs of food gathering. Council approved the request. Property was finalizing the overview of the Fellowship Hall bids for Council to approve in preparation for presentation and voting at the Annual Meeting. Stay tuned, more information will be coming. Pastor has been talking about his plans for using some time off etc. Budgets and financials have been under continuous review as the year end gets closer. Council has been working on filling positions for the upcoming Annual Meeting voting slots for Council and Representative Delegates. As many members left positions mid term, it has left the Nominating Committee shorthanded. We ask that you prayerfully consider what abilities you can bring to filling one of these positions. If interested or if you need more information, ask a Council Member or Pastor Stephen. Preparations for Pie Sunday by H.O.T. Team, as well as plans for Advent and Christmas services by Worship and Music are well underway. The Angel Tree will be starting soon, seeking to help people with requests as listed on the ornaments. There is a lot happening around Trinity this time of year, and as always, we welcome your input at Council Meetings.

Dane Crist

Council Secretary

Angel Tree Giving Opportunities Abound

Now through Sunday, December 8

The Trinity Lutheran Church Angel Tree is back up in the Narthex with numerous tags to pick out for the angels among us to gift something special to those in need in the Bettendorf community. Check out an Angel with Diana Mayes or Debi Goslin after worship. The wrapped gift must be back by December 8. Gifts should be no more than \$50 per child and \$25 gift cards for adults. Please



ADVENT WREATH CANDLE

LIGHTERS NEEDED A sign-up sheet in the Narthex is available for folks to sign up for lighting our Advent wreath and leading a short prayer each Sunday during Advent.

YEAR TO DATE THROUGH OCTOBER 2024

Collections to date	\$149,305.72
Expenses to date	\$144,635.94
Net to date	\$6,669.78

No funds have been transferred from Stewardship Reserves year to date.

ATTENDANCE TOTALS FOR NOVEMBER

November	3	67
November	10	74
November	17	79
November	24	54

BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Rudie Eberlein
- 3 Debra Anderson
- 5 Henry Marquard
- 6 Annabelle Denain
- 11 Ed Kaufmann
- 12 Helen Stubbe
- 13 Debbie Claussen
- 13 Neil Baker
- 16 Paula McIntosh
- 18 Adrienne Picchiotti
- 21 Susan Varilek
- 24 Judy Rutledge



December

TEXTSTUDIO

ANNIVERSARY

- 2 Randy & Claudia Neumann
- 29 Travis & Marcia Brunsvold



Worship & Fellowship Volunteers

	December 1	December 8	December 15	December 22	December 29
<i>Altar Guild</i>	Diana Mayes	Linda Busch	Barb McIlrath	Cathy Newman	No Communion
<i>Communion Assistant</i>	Claudia Neumann	Diane Holst	Michelle Crist	Diane Holst (pending)	No Communion
<i>Lector</i>	Sally Morrow	Jo Ann Hogenson	Claudia Neumann	Henry Marquard	Jo Ann Hogenson
<i>Usher Greeter</i>	Connie Short Diane Cook	Judy Rutledge Deb Anderson	Al McIlrath Ron Morrow	John Newman Judy Rutledge	Don Cordts Al McIlrath
<i>Worship Video Livestream Producer</i>	Mitch Sussex	Justin Paul	Debi Goslin	Debi Goslin	Volunteer Needed
<i>Fellowship</i>	Kris Rupp Rudella Eberlein	Lois Schurr	HOT TEAM	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE—7:00 PM

Altar Guild-Randy Goslin, **Communion Assistant**-Mary Shelton,
Lector-Claudia Neumann, **Ushers**-Diane Cook, Connie Short,
Worship Video-Debi Goslin



CARD CRAFTING MINISTRY MEETING MONTHLY

Trinity's card ministry now meets monthly on the second Thursday of the month at 1:00 pm in the lower level of the church. The next meeting will be *December 12 at 1:00-3:00 PM. All are welcome to join us- no experience necessary!*

Each month we make and deliver cards to the residents of Aspire of Pleasant Valley Nursing and Rehab (Formerly River Manor). We also make and mail greetings to members and friends of Trinity. In addition, the committee has been working to replenish the supply of greeting cards for sale in the Fellowship Hall. All cards are \$2.00.

Thank you for your support of this ministry. If you have any questions, please contact Chris Kaul, Linda Busch, Claudia Neumann, Cathy Newman, Marcia Brunsvold or Pastor Stephen.



POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

If you would like to dedicate a poinsettia for the altar at Christmas Eve, please fill out the order form below and return to the church office by December 10. Cost for each poinsettia is \$12. Poinsettias may be picked up after Christmas Eve Service or the following Sunday. Please note on your check that it is for Poinsettia.

\$12.00 EACH



POINSETTIA \$ _____

NAME _____

**MEMORY/HONOR
OF** _____

Altar Flowers



Do you have a birthday or anniversary you'd like to commemorate? Starting in January, we will have Altar Flowers that you can sign-up to sponsor for any of the worship services throughout the year. The bulletin board will be by the door between the narthex and hallway.

Questions?

Call or Email Paula at
563-332-5188 or
office@trinitylcpv.com

Christmas at Trinity Lutheran

Tuesday, December 24 at 7 PM



Good News of Great Joy



Luther Properties' mission is to provide housing assistance to low-income elderly or disabled persons in Scott County, Iowa.



Did you know...LUTHER PROPERTIES provides affordable, independent housing for seniors? This ELCA organization consists of 5 complexes, 2 in Davenport and 3 in Bettendorf. These apartments provide safe homes for those seniors who struggle financially. Rent is based on income, with electricity and water costs included. If you know of someone who could benefit from such assistance, please contact John Newman (563-949-7375) for information.

Choir Rehearsal Dates for November

The Trinity Lutheran Choir will have practice on Wednesday December 4 and 20, at 6:30 PM. Sunday dates are December 8 and 22 at 10:00 AM. Practices to follow every other Wednesday with a practice and performance every other Sunday.

New singers are always welcome! Make a joyful noise to the Lord!



WEEKLY READINGS

12/01 Jeremiah 33:14-16, Psalm 25:1-10, 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13, Luke 21:25-36

12/08 Malachi 3:1-4, Luke 1:68-79
Philippians 1:3-11, Luke 3:1-6

12/15 Zephaniah 3:14-20, Isaiah 12:2-6, Philippians 4:4-7, Luke 3:7-18

12/22 Micah 5:2-5a, Luke 1:46b-55
Hebrews 10:5-10, Luke 1:39-45

12/24 Isaiah 9:2-7, Psalm 96, Titus 2:11-14, Luke 2:1-20

12/29 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26, Psalm 148, Colossians 3:12-17, Luke 2:41-52



Food Assistance Gift Cards for Families and Seniors in Need
Families in need are most appreciative of the generosity of TLC with our food assistance program. If you would like to contribute, please mail your contribution to the church or place it in the weekly collection plate. Please be sure to note on your check that it is for Food Assistance. Any contribution is appreciated. Questions? Contact [Kathy Naslund](#) or [Pastor Stephen](#).

Trinity Lutheran Church Food Pantry Volunteer Opportunities

A dedicated group of volunteers from around TLC and others in our community has continued meeting and working out some early logistics for our new food pantry. The Trinity Food Pantry will open starting the first week in November, serving the community with dry goods and non-perishables.

The pantry will be open Mondays from 9 AM to 11 AM and Thursdays from 4 PM to 6 PM.

If you are interested in helping with this exciting new ministry opportunity, please contact Dane Crist or Pastor Stephen or email pantry@trinitylcpv.com. There's also a sign-up sheet in the Narthex, full of opportunities to help sort food, help guests, and track the inventory of our pantry in the basement.



Shared Youth Group Diving into Faith and Fun with Food

Sundays, 5:00-6:30 PM

TLC & First Pres. Le Claire will be back after a month off in January. there will be a sign up sheet in the narthex for anyone who wants to help with food for the January Youth Group meetings at TLC on Sundays 5 to 6:30. You can help by buying food or help with cooking on the Sunday evenings. See Pastor Stephen or Deb Goslin if you have any questions.

Fall Scott County Library's Bookmobile Stops

The Scott County Library Bookmobile will stop by the church parking lot again in December on Tuesday afternoons every three weeks. Anyone with a library card from a library in Scott County can check out books and other media. We'll have snacks and drinks available in Fellowship Hall. We will pass along when the upcoming schedule is released, and we hope to see you there!

Tuesday, December 10, 4:40-5:10 PM

For more info, visit: Scottcountyia.gov/library/bookmobile





Trinity Helping with Crafts at Christmas in LeClaire
Saturday, December 7 - 10AM - 2PM

TLC will be partnering with others from our PPALs ministry partnership to help kids make crafts and bring cheer for LeClaire's annual Christmas event.

If you'd be able to help the kids with these great crafts, please contact [Deb Goslin](#).

Our simple crafts are open to kids of all ages, and our craft time will go from 10AM-2PM at the Masonic Lodge in LeClaire.

To see a full list of events happening at Christmas in LeClaire, visit [their website](#).

Pastor Stephen will be Out of the Office

Tuesday, December 25 - Saturday, January 4.

Paula will be in the office during the usual times:
Tues-Thursday, 9am-1pm

If you have a pastoral emergency, please call his

Annual Reports Due December 31

With the end of year approaching quickly, and our annual congregational meeting just around the corner, if you lead a committee or group here at Trinity, please make sure to send your annual report to Paula in the office by December 31!

Email: office@trinitylcpv.com



WANT TO CONNECT THE WITH WEEKLY HAPPENINGS AT TRINITY?

Sign up for our weekly email bulletin that will let you know what's happening in the week ahead and have other great upcoming announcements, as well as the weekly bulletin for worship. Call (332-5188) or email (office@trinitylcpv.com) Paula in the office to sign up!



Southeastern Iowa Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Interested in the Work of the Church More Broadly? Serve as a Voting Member at 2025's Synod Assembly

Each year, our congregation is represented by two voting members at the Southeastern Iowa Synod's Assembly. This upcoming year, the assembly will be held in Des Moines on the campus of Grandview University. The 2025 Assembly will be held Sunday, May 18 from 10 AM to 6 PM. Travel and Hotel Costs would be covered by the congregation, and this is a great opportunity to see what broader ministry our congregation is a part of in our area around Southeastern Iowa. We're seeking interest in this now so that we can try to have these names ready for nomination at January's Annual Congregation Meeting. If you have any questions, you can speak to Pastor Stephen or ask last year's voting members, Dane and Michelle Crist.

Women of the ELCA

Calling all women of the church. Would you like to join a monthly Women's group? Rudie will no longer be leading Amitie, but some women have expressed continuing a women's group at TLC but at a different time or day. You could be a part of a new women's group at TLC. Focus (missions, book study, community outreach, etc.) can be determined at our first meeting. It will be a group to support each other.

WELCA is the Women's Group across the ELCA, and each congregation's group has some flexibility to work within the WELCA purpose statement: "As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society, and the world."

If you are interested in a monthly women's meeting, please indicate the day of the week and times you may be available by circling them below. Comment if you have a suggestion for the group's purpose. Remember, it is only once a month, but we want to have the meeting on the day/at the time most convenient. There will be a box in the narthex to submit your available times and days and suggestions or email them to the church.

WELCA GROUP DATES AND TIMES

Circle your preferences

DAYS AVAILABLE:	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
TIMES AVAILABLE:						
MORNINGS	8	9	10	11		
AFTERNOONS	12	1	2	3	4	5
EVENINGS	6	7				

Comments:



December 2024, LSI Bulletin/Newsletter Article

Dear friends,

I hope this finds you safe and warm. As I am closing in on my first year as President and CEO at LSI, I am filled with gratitude for our generous donors, dedicated staff members, and kind supporters. Thanks to caring people like you, LSI had another incredible year serving our neighbors. Your donations ensured young parents had access to resources and support. Your in-kind items provided comforting beds for immigrants and refugees to rest upon. Your prayers lifted the spirits of our LSI team members and those we serve. As we enjoy this holiday season, I want to thank you for supporting LSI.

If you would like to serve more neighbors in need, please give at LSIowa.org/donate.

Eternally Grateful,

Renee

For more information, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI's Director of Philanthropy and Church Relations, at Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org or 563-676-2065.

LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at LSIowa.org and facebook.com/LSI.iowa.

Now through December 31, Double your Donation!

Consider giving a gift to Lutheran Services in Iowa to support Iowans from all walks of life. Until the end of December, all donations will be doubled! A handful of generous donors agreed to match donations up to \$80,000. Increase your impact by donating today at LSIowa.org/donate. You may be able to increase your gift even more! See if your employer has a matching gift program.

For more information, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI's Senior Director of Philanthropy and Church Relations, at Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org or 563-676-2065.

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Live Nativity

Saturday, December 14th 5-7PM

St. James Lutheran Church
1705 Oak Street. Bettendorf

4 Performances:

5:00PM | 5:30PM | 6:00PM | 6:30PM

Join us for soup and more between performances in our Fellowship Hall

Experience the excitement
of the very first Christmas

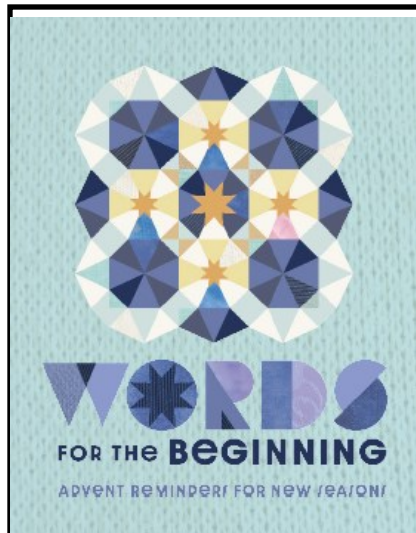


Come see and pet our LIVE animals!

Donations to the Food Pantry & Clothes Closet are welcome!

Find us on Facebook





Words for the Beginning: A Sunday School for All Ages from Advent Through Epiphany

Sundays after worship in the Fellowship Hall

Join Pastor Stephen and others as we see how our stories are part of God's story. There will be simple lessons that provide for intergenerational learning. Whether you've crafted a quilt in the past or not, everyone will be able to join in week-by-week to see God's work in the world.

See Pastor Stephen if you have any questions or would like one of the week's materials sent home to you.



Join ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton for a conversation about God's Love Made Real. This ELCA movement encourages us to create a world experiencing the difference God's grace and love in Christ make for all people and creation.

Tuesday, Dec. 10, 12 p.m. Central time

See Pastor Stephen for the Zoom link if you'd like to join on your own.

What can I expect?

Bishop Eaton will share why God's Love Made Real is meaningful to her and the future of the church. The **Rev. Lorna Halaas**, bishop of the Western Iowa Synod, will host the conversation, and participants will have a chance to ask questions and share stories.

Is this event for me?

This webinar is especially for people who care about the ELCA and live in Region 5, which includes synods in Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Michigan's Upper Peninsula. If you don't live in one of these synods, stay tuned for an upcoming event in your region.

Can I watch the event later?

A recording may be available at some point in the future, but we encourage you to stream the event live on Tuesday, Dec. 10, at 12 p.m. Central time.

What else do I need to know?

Learn more about God's Love Made Real at lovemadereal.elca.org.

We look forward to sharing this time with you!

DECEMBER 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9:00 Worship 10:00 Sunday School 10:00 Property	2 9 AM – 11AM Food Pantry	3 1:30 Education 4:00 Worship & Music	4 10:00 Bible Study 3:30 Social Ministry 6:30 Choir	5 4:00 Endowment 4 PM - 6 PM Food Pantry	6 Pastor's Sabbath	7 10:00-2:00 Service Day for Youth Group Christmas in Le Claire
8 8:00 Choir 9:00 Worship 10:00 Sunday School,	9 9 AM - 11 AM Food Pantry 6:30 Council	10	11 10:00 Bible Study	12 1:00 Card Ministry 4 PM - 6 PM Food Pantry	13 Pastor's Sabbath	14
15 9:00 Worship 10:00 Sunday School	16 9 AM - 11 AM Food Pantry 6:00 Stewardship	17	18 10:00 Bible Study 6:30 Choir	19 4 PM - 6 PM Food Pantry	20 Pastor's Sabbath	21
22 8:00 Choir 9:00 Worship 10:00 Sunday School	23 9 AM - 11 AM Food Pantry	24 7 PM Christmas Eve Worship	25 Christmas Day Office Closed	26 4 PM - 6 PM Food Pantry	27 Pastor's Sabbath	28
29 9:00 Worship	30 9 AM - 11 AM Food Pantry	31				