

The JOURNEY — Walking Daily with Jesus

From the Pastor’s Desk:

It is difficult to believe that 2024 is just around the corner! But first, we are blessed to celebrate the season of Advent, which is the four-week preparation period before Christmas. The timing for this time of preparation is based on the last Sunday before Christmas, which means that Advent will begin on December 3rd this year, about the time that you will be receiving this issue of the *Journey*.

Advent, which means “coming,” originally focused on the birth of Jesus. However, around the 6th century A.D., the church’s focus on the Season of Advent changed toward that anticipation of Jesus’ in His return to gather His Church on the Last Day.

Today we tend to celebrate the four “comings,” or “advents” of Jesus. In the first week we look to the prophecies of Jesus’ coming as His birth is foretold throughout the Old Testament. In the second week we look to His actual “coming” in His birth as the God/Man in Bethlehem over 2000 years ago. In week three, our focus is on Jesus’ coming to us individually through God’s means of grace found in the Word and Sacraments. Finally, in the fourth week of Advent we look forward to Jesus “coming” to gather all believers unto Himself at the end of the world.

Advent is a joyous time of preparation for all Christians. I want to take this opportunity to invite each of you to our Mid-week Advent services, which will be held each Wednesday during Advent, December 6th through December 20th. We will meet at 6:30 in the Sanctuary where we will be trying to answer some of the difficult questions about the Advent of Jesus.

May God richly bless your Advent season as you wait for Jesus to “come.”

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Letter from Trinity President

At the Trinity Lutheran Church Annual Meeting, Pastor Dan Tabor announced his retirement date on May 2025. I am sure there was mixed emotions at that announcement. We are all glad for Pastor Dan and Gelene who will finally be able to spend more time with their families and enjoy some leisure time together in their retirement. Like we all do. But retirement means different things to different people. Pastor Dan laid out scenarios that could play out at his retirement. 1. He would assist TLC making a call to a full-time pastor if that is our desire. He would also be willing to be interim pastor at a 3/4-time basis until a full - time pastor is called. 2. He would agree to take a 3/4-time pastoral position. That is, he would do pastoral duties for 3 weeks a month and TLC would have to fill in the other week or weeks. He has been gracious enough to give us plenty of time to decide on a course of action.

TLC's Executive Team received Pastor Dan's retirement notice at an October meeting. The ET team which includes Pastor Dan, TLC President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Financial Secretary has already started researching the availability of Full-Time pastors and how other congregations have been successful delivering ministries with a part - time pastor. FYI, ET is the Executive Team not Extra Terrestrial. We will be working on the Roadmap to the Future Plan. This long- range strategic plan will do more than fill a pastoral position. Its goal is to have a plan to better deliver ministries to our congregation and our communities. Our ultimate goal is to fulfill Jesus' plan for this church. SME Strategy, a strategy consulting firm wrote an article entitled "The Who, What, Where, Why and When of Strategic Planning." Those are questions we need to answer. The Great Commission as stated in Matthew 28: 18-20 and as it appears on our outdoor sign gives us the direction on **what** to do.

"And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Notice all the actions that Jesus gives us on **what** we should do.

The Great Commission given by Jesus is the church's mission. We do not do this on our own. Jesus said He will be with us in this journey. He sent us the helper, the Holy Spirit to guide, empower us and show us how we should fulfill this mission through prayer and Bible study. TLC's mission statement and

vision both came from the Great Commission. So, we have a starting point.

We now know what we are to do and where the mission field is, we just have to answer **how** and **who**. The Bible tells us **who**.

"But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light." 1 Peter 2:9. This is telling us all of us make up the church. We are chosen people, a royal priesthood that declares God's light to the world. Pastor Don Brandt (LCMC), Director-Lutheran Coalition for Renewal wrote "Remember one of the most important lessons from early church history: The Body of Christ need not rise or fall based solely on the presence or absence of ordained pastors to lead a congregation's ministry. The Apostolic church thrived — often under persecution — without the benefit of a professional clergy class. This is about the priesthood of all believers, not a priesthood limited to the ordained. Or to put it another way: Sometimes the life and ministry of Christ's church is simply too important to be left solely to the "professionals." Mike Bradley, the Service Coordinator for the LCMC, just revealed that over 500 LCMC churches in the U.S. have 100 or fewer members. (This out of a total of 786 LCMC churches in the United States.) It is my conviction that with the combination of your congregation's size and the clergy supply crisis, it is time for your lay leaders to consider and plan for a future ... So, assuming your church leaders are ready to address this possible future scenario — a future where you are unable to find a competent, ordained pastor — what then? Well then it will be time to identify one or two active members whom you can convince to become ministers-in-training; ministers who will eventually serve your congregation. "The ET will continue work on the Roadmap to The Future. When we have a long-range plan with options, we will call a special congregational meeting to discuss and vote on the path God is leading us. At the Annual Meeting, I made the analogy of when we are trying to get to our destination, we use a roadmap or nowadays GPS. The Holy Spirit is our GPS showing us individual directions on how to get to our final destination. Our Roadmap to the Future. As a congregation may we all pray that through prayer and Bible Study, TLC, the Council and ET will receive revelation on what TLC will look like in the future. Do you feel the Holy Spirit moving in this congregation. I do.

"Listen carefully, I am about to do a new thing, now it will spring forth; Will you not be aware of it? Isaiah 43:19

Jim McGraw

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December WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

	Dec 3 10:00a	Dec 6 Midweek 6:30p	Dec 10 10:00a	Dec 13 Midweek 6:30p	Dec 17 10:00a	Dec 20 Midweek 6:30p	Dec 24 10:00a	Dec 24 Candlelight 6:30p	Dec 25 9:00a <i>Christmas Day</i>	Dec 31 10:00a
GREETERS	Terri Freeman		Char Mohns		Brenda Mackey		Joanne Eldon Kvale	NEED	NEED	Alyce Tracey
USHERS	Rob Freeman Wally Thom	LeRoy Brensel	Wes Mohns Tom Svitak	Wally Janet John	Mike Capra LeRoy Brensel	Wally Janet John	John & Janet Schieffer	John & Janet Schieffer	LeRoy Brensel NEED	Wally Thom Steve Tracey
COMM. ASSTS	Dan Dahl		Ellen Ehrich		Pat Mackey		Joanne Schilling	Barb & Rolf Kleven	Ellen Ehrich	June Bibeau
READER	Kathy Thom	Gloria Widiker	Gloria Widiker	Jim McGraw	Sue Capra	Kolodzinski	NEED	Karen Hayes	NEED	Ellen Ehrich
Advent Candle	Wally & Kathy Thom		Dan & Jackie Healy		Pat & Brenda Mackey		Jim & Cyndi McGraw			



Kevin Kotel 12/02
 Tyler Marcinske 12/03
 Bob Skar 12/03
 Jason Ivers 12/04
 Stacy Kolodzinski 12/05
 Anne Gilbertson 12/06
 Lauren Gustafson 12/06
 Betty Blanch 12/06
 Wally Thom 12/06
 LeRoy Brensel 12/08

Logan Saldana 12/10
 Eldon Kvale 12/14
 Cody Rurup 12/15
 Karen Scott 12/16
 Donna Willis 12/18
 Ellen Ehrich 12/24
 Pete Baribeau 12/24
 John Will 12/26
 Joan Fuller 12/29
 Brody Rurup 12/30



Come join us for a very special Christmas Cantata event on Sunday, December 17, at 2 pm. The TLC Cantata Choir will be presenting *Tidings of Joy* by Joseph M. Martin. Inspired by Celtic music traditions and time-honored carols, this musical work overflows with seasonal spirit. From prophecy to Epiphany, the cantata covers the entire Christmas story and wraps it in jubilant and approachable music. A reception with appetizers and refreshments will follow the cantata.



NEXT MEETING OF . . .

- Birchwood Food Pantry Open.Dec 4, 18-10:30-12:30pm**
- Worship & Music Team.Dec 4, 10:00am**
- Women of TrinityDec 9, 10:00 am**
- Trinity Council MeetingDec 19, 6:30p**
- Men's Ministry of TrinityDec 14, 6:30 pm**

A letter from our Associate Pastor, Barb

“Prepare Him room!”

The words to Paul Balochi’s Christmas song, “Prepare Him Room” are so appropriate to read during this Christmas season where life seems busier than normal with extra shopping, decorating, wrapping gifts, and gathering with loved ones.

Who is man that you would care for us-

You clothed yourself in flesh to draw us near.

In sinful man You've made our hearts your home to make your glory known.

Let every heart prepare him room

For nothing else compares with you!

Restore the joy of our salvation Lord.

Prepare our hearts for more of you.

No greater love has anyone than this

To sacrifice the gift of your only Son.

So, we lay aside all the earthly things and all that comes between this great divide.

As we prepare for Christmas, let us also take time to “prepare Him room”.

How?

Reflect on God’s love and sacrifice.

Gather & Celebrate Jesus! - Read the Christmas story. Light a candle and share John 1:5 *“Light shine in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it,”* or sing a Christmas carol- *“Joy to the world”!*

Hospitality- Bake cookies, send a card, or go caroling.

Simplify- unclutter the season from the unnecessary.

Gratitude- Thank God for all the ways He has taken care of you.

Focus- on the true meaning of Christmas. Remember that Jesus is the reason for the season, our eternal treasure.

Visit- Call or visit someone who is lonely.

Prayer: “Oh come to us, abide with us our Lord Emmanuel!”
God bless you and your family this Christmas season and New Year with good health, peace, and joy.
– love and prayers, Pastor Barb



Lefse making was again underway at Trinity. A good time was shared by all. The Lefse was sold after service on Sunday Just in time for Thanksgiving!



Mission and Outreach

October and part of November we collected canned goods for the Birchwood Food Pantry. Thanks to Sue Janetski working with Thrivent, our canned goods donations were matched with a gift of \$500 for the Food Pantry.

We have started collecting gifts for the Adopt-a-Family Tree that provides gifts for students to brighten their Christmas. This year we have four families. Along with the gift tags on the tree we are also continuing the family baskets.

If you would like to purchase a gift from the tree:

Pick a tag.

Purchase the gift.

Wrap the gift.

Attach the tag to the gift.

Have the gift to the church by 12/10.

If you would like to purchase items for the family basket:

Pick items the family can use together.

Cozy blanket, hot chocolate, popcorn, stories, a movie, games, craft items, etc.

Place the items in the baskets by 12/10.

Thank you very much for helping to make Christmas special for Birchwood families.

Elaine



Women of Trinity



Women of Trinity

We're moving into all things Advent and Christmas! Please join us in the various events and enjoy the fellowship, camaraderie, and ultimately the celebration of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ!

December 2nd is the Birchwood Christmas Fest and WOT will provide a Continental breakfast, chili and cornbread meal for lunch and homemade treats! Trinity Lutheran will also have a table at the Fest to answer any questions about TLC or receive prayer requests. At the table will be a door prize giveaway with a \$50 certificate to The Butcher Shop! Please see the sign-up sheet on the Welcome Center for ways to get involved!

December 16th is our prep for the December 17th Bake Sale with a potluck starting it off at 11am. Get those ovens fired up and bring in cookies to share with shut-ins as well as for the Bake Sale!

The Bake Sale is December 17th before and after the church service and before the afternoon's Christmas Cantata. All proceeds go toward the various mission and outreach programs that Women of Trinity support!

The Christmas Cantata is December 17th at 2pm. It is called "Tidings of Joy, a Celtic Christmas Celebration." Following the Cantata will be a reception in the Fellowship Hall with savory and sweet treats! A sign-up to assist with the reception will be on the Welcome Center desk. Please join us for a truly wonderful afternoon of music and fellowship!

Calling ALL Women of Trinity! Our next meeting is December 9th, 2023, at 10:00am! Please join us for fellowship, support of our sisters and our church, and planning future events!



A BIG THANK YOU to all who helped reach our goal by donating food to the Food Pantry!!

Holiday Giving

As we approach the Advent Season, our thoughts turn to celebrating the birth of Christ. It is a happy time. We celebrate by giving gifts to our loved ones. We share the season with old and young.

Many of us have been so blessed in our lives. We have our wonderful church family here at Trinity.

This year we at Trinity were blessed to have a good year with great church activities, including our wonderful services for each segment of our church year, with pot lucks, bible studies and events such as the rummage sale and putting up the new garage. Many people give their time and talents to our teams that do worship, AV, grounds, serve as ushers, readers and many other aspects of our activities.

Going forward into 2024 we look at the challenges coming up. Our men's and women's groups will continue their service projects. We will begin planning for repairs and upgrades to the physical church. We will decide how to address our Missions and Outreach activities.

Entering this season, think of giving to meet real needs and giving where it will be much appreciated. With so many disadvantaged people in the world, at least some of our Christmas budget would be well spent helping our needy neighbors and Christians around the area.

If you are buying gifts for a loved one who has everything, perhaps consider instead giving a monetary donation in their honor to a worthy activity here that helps those in need. Think of helping keep our church in good condition and safe.

Merry Christmas!
Mike Rubin - Stewardship



We Welcomed New Members into our Trinity Family with cake and fellowship. Welcome Amber Beffa JoAnn & Steve Miner Carol & Ken Raether

Men's Ministry is busy at it again....

This deck modification was a result of safety and health issues. It was especially dangerous in the winter months. We cut the deck in half, disassembled that and jacked up the remaining portion. We also installed a new door she had, as the existing one was rotted on the bottom. She is now weather proofed and secure.



December 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 OFFICE CLOSED	2
3 10:00 am Worship	4 9:00a Quilters 10:30a-12:30p—Food Pantry Open 3:30 Women's Bible Study 7p—AA, Fellowship Hall	5	6 6:30a Men's Bible Study 6:30p Midweek Advent Service	7 10:00 Women's Bible Study	8 OFFICE CLOSED	9 10a WOT Mtg
10 10:00 am Worship	11 9:00a Quilters 3:30p Women's Bible Study 7p—AA, Fellowship Hall	12	13 6:30a Men's Bible Study 11:30a Mission & Outreach mtg 6:30p Midweek Advent Service	14 6:30p Men's Ministry Mtg 10:00 Women's Bible Study 6:30p Men's Ministry Mtg	15 OFFICE CLOSED	16
17 10:00 am Worship Love Fund/Food Pantry Offering	18 9:00a Quilters 10:30a-12:30p—Food Pantry Open 3:30p Women's Bible Study 7p—AA, Fellowship Hall	19 Journey Deadline	20 6:30a Men's Bible Study 6:30p Midweek Advent Service	21 10:00 Women's Bible Study 6:30p Service of the Longest Night	22 OFFICE CLOSED	23
24 10:00 am Worship 6:30p Candlelight Christmas Eve Service Prayer Shawl Sunday	25 9:00a Christmas Worship 7p—AA, Fellowship Hall	26	27 6:30a Men's Bible Study 6:30p Midweek Advent Service	28 10:00 Women's Bible Study	29 OFFICE CLOSED	30
31 10:00a Worship						

Trinity Lutheran Church
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The JOURNEY

Dec 2023

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
Rev. Daniel Tabor—Pastor
Pastor Barb Kleven—Associate Pastor
Julie Sunderland, Parish Administrator
Joanne Schilling, Choir Director
Betty Blanch & Donnarae Carrell, Custodians
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Sunday School	10 am (Sept - May)
Office Hours	8 - 11:30 am, 12:30 - 3:00pm (M-Th)
Bulletin deadline	9 am Tuesdays
JOURNEY deadline	Monday - 3 rd week of the month
Pastor's Office Hours	Mondays (8 am—3:00pm) Wednesdays (8—11:30 pm) other days by apt.

Sunday Worship Services

Dec 3 — Worship w/communion @ 10 am
Dec 6 - Midweek Advent Service @6:30p
Dec 10—Worship w/communion @ 10 am
Dec 13 Midweek Advent Service @6:30p
Dec 17 —Worship w/communion @ 10 am
Dec 20 -Midweek Advent Service @ 6:30 pm
Dec 21 - Service of the Longest Night 6:30pm
Dec 24 — Worship w/communion @ 10 am
Dec 24 - Candlelight Service @ 6:30pm

KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS

Debbie Davis	Tracy Reid
Andy Hedman	Bill Rice
Barb Hinderman	Ro Sackmann
Ed Leader	Carter Sackmann
Lora	Timothy Wallace
Sharon Mackey	Donna Willis

In the military: Rigil Christensen, and all those serving in the military.