TRINITYnews

DECEMBER 2023

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TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

203 East Main Street • PO Box 188 Spring Grove, MN 55974

507.498.5291 • www.trinitysg.org



Trinity Lutheran Church Spring Grove



Instagram trinitylutheransa trinityyouth203



Trinity Lutheran: Spring Grove

Office hours:

Mon - Fri: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Sundays at Trinity

9:15 a.m. Worship 10:15 a.m. Fellowship 10:30 a.m. Sunday School

Listen live Sundays on KVIK 104.7 FM www.kvikradio.com

and on Facebook Live

Saturday Worship 5:00 p.m. 1st and 3rd Saturdays each month

STAFF

Elizabeth Hermeier, Lead Pastor prelizabeth.trinitysg@gmail.com

Lane Zaffke, Visitation Pastor lane.zaffke@gmail.com

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Nicole Krenzke, Bookkeeper trinity.sgtreasurer@gmail.com

Gary Wilhelmson, Custodian Rachel Storlie, Organist/Pianist Scott Solberg, Choir Director Demitre Ellis, Handbell Director Linda Gjerdrum, Pianist Rachel Udstuen, Pianist Rick Sundet, Technology Lead



Advent and Christmas

Midweek Advent Vespers

Wednesdays • 12/6, 12/13, 12/20 • 6:30 p.m.

Advent Candle lighters

11/26: Josh & Autumn Wiste family 12/3: Chris & Jessi Strinmoen family 12/10: Chris & Rachel Bjerke family 12/17: Chad & Charity Schroeder family

Celebration of the 130th Anniversary of our church building Sunday, December 10 • 9:15 a.m.

Fellowship with Norwegian Treats following worship Luren Concert • 2:00 p.m.

Sunday School Christmas Program • "The Greatest Gift" Sunday, December 17 • 9:15 a.m.

Trinity Christmas Concert

Sunday, December 17 • 7:00 p.m. on KVIK 104.7 FM & Facebook Live

Christmas Eve Worship - Sunday, December 24

3:00 p.m. • on KVIK 104.7 FM & Facebook Live 8:00 p.m. - Candlelight Service

Christmas Day Worship • Monday, December 25

10:00 a.m. • Holy Communion

Lessons & Carols Worship - Sunday, December 31



Looking for a gift that always fits, doesn't need batteries, and makes a difference in someone's life?

Shop our Thankful Gifts Catalog for options in many different price ranges!

Catalogs are available in the office, on our website, and at entrances to the sanctuary.

Questions? Contact David Storlie, david@storlie.org or any member of the Mission in the World Team.



From Pastor Elizabeth

Unexpected and mysterious is the gentle word of grace. Ever-loving and sustaining is the peace of God's embrace. If we falter in our courage and we doubt what we have known, God is faithful to console us as a mother tends her own.

> "Unexpected and Mysterious," (ELW #258) Text by Jeannette M. Lindholm; Music by Calvin Hampton

Dear Family of God,

"Unexpected and Mysterious" is a lesser-known Advent hymn that comforts us and challenges us to "ponder mystery," "embody God's compassion," and "watch with joy and wonder" as God fulfills God's promises in Jesus.

This year we have much to celebrate at Trinity, beginning with the many ways we're taking care of the church buildings. We've made some small improvements to Trinity Center so that activities can occur there once again. We've begun the long-awaited process of restoring our stained-glass windows. We are restoring our steeple with its beautiful copper ornaments. And we're celebrating the 130th Anniversary of this building on December 10. It's still so amazing to recall how the previous church building burned in April (after Easter) and was rebuilt in December (in time for Christmas).

But we haven't only taken care of our buildings! As a result of your generous offerings and our ERC funds, we've also given to the community, here and around the world: to those affected by the fire here in Spring Grove; to those affected by hurricanes and fires in Florida and Hawaii; and to many in our community affected by hunger, joblessness, illness, and the threat of homelessness through our Good Samaritan Fund, our Care Team and many others. Thank you!

As we head into December and toward yearend, we are "behind" some in our General Fund – what we use to "keep the lights on." But we have faith and hope that you will respond as you have so often done with your yearend gifts. Thank you in advance.

It is indeed a mystery. God came to us as a baby, in a stable, worshipped by shepherds and farm animals. We give thanks that whatever turmoil engulfs the world, God loves the world that God created so much that Jesus came to be with us. Immanuel. God with us.

Blessed Advent and Christmas! ~ Pr. Elizabeth





Lonny Tweeten, Jean Ann Tweeten, and Jacque Wennes transported 43 quilts, 100 school kits, and 106 baby care kits to Decorah on Saturday November 4 where they were loaded on a semi-truck to be taken to the Lutheran World Relief warehouse in South St. Paul. From South St Paul they will be taken to Maryland, transferred onto ocean-going cargo container ships and distributed to those in need. On November 3, two residents from Sunrise Care Facility loaded the two pickup trucks to the brim.

WELCA does an extraordinary service preparing these items and many of Trinity's members donate much of the product used in these kits. Thank you all for being hands of service in God's bigger picture.



From Pastor Lane

Hi all, It seems like a fitting greeting from the new youth leader, Pr. Lane Zaffke. I'm just getting my feet wet. So a big thank you to many who have helped with the youth so far — Pastor Elizabeth, the Education Team, Sunday School teachers, Christmas program leaders, people who helped with pies, and others.

For the month of December, we have the **Christmas program** "The Greatest Gift" on December 17. **We still need more children for this event**, so talk to your children, grandchildren, or great-grandchildren so they can be a part of the program. Everyone is welcome!

Reminder — Confirmation students are required to attend **Wednesday night Advent** worship with their mentors.

Monday, December 4 at 6:00 p.m. will be an executive meeting in the Fellowship Hall for the youth going to the ELCA Youth Gathering.

We are continuing with **Release Time**. Besides the lesson on the Lord's Prayer and singing songs for the Christmas program, we have begun memorizing Bible verses, particularly John 3:16 and the 23rd Psalm. **Wednesday Bible School** participants are in the Christmas Program.

We have a number of youth events in the new year...

A youth retreat for the Confirmation youth in Wisconsin Dells, Feb. 16-18.
 Parents — please get your \$50 deposit in as soon as possible for your Confirmation student!



- Confirmation Camp this summer
- Vacation Bible School
- In July, we have a number of high school youth attending the ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans.



We continue to sell **maple syrup** as a fundraiser for youth events. Maple syrup makes wonderful Christmas presents, just saying! You can purchase it in the office or in the Fellowship Hall.

We will also serve a Lenten meal and have a Meatball Dinner in the spring.

We are also restarting the "youth share" fundraiser after the new year with a different twist. If you buy a youth share, you will get a picture of the youth going to the Youth Gathering and a thank you. You will also get correspondence from the youth from New Orleans and be able to access a blog about the trip as well. We may think of a few more enticements to throw in as well!

I continue to visit our homebound people. This month, the devotions we are using are our Advent Gospels. It is an honor to represent the Trinity congregation to people who can no longer attend worship on Sundays.

~ Pastor Lane





On Sunday, October 29, these seven young adults were confirmed at Trinity.

Pictured:

front row: Pr. Elizabeth Hermeier, Jada Strinmoen, Harper Myrah, Kya Deck. Back row: Adelia Gross, Emery Bartell, Merik Allen, Hayden St. Mary.

TRINITYrews

130TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION • DECEMBER 10

December 7, 2023, marks 130 years since Trinity Lutheran Church was dedicated. The first brick church was dedicated on July 11, 1877. On April 3, 1893 a building near where the old creamery stands caught fire and a strong northwest wind blew ashes from that fire to the church causing a fire, which destroyed the church. Three days after the fire the congregation met and decided to rebuild, and eight months later, on December 7, 1893, our current church was dedicated. I'll leave it to your imagination to consider the dedication and determination of those early pioneers who cleaned up the debris from the ruins and from those ruins built a new church in which we worship today. December 7, 1893, was on a Thursday and ironically December 7 this year is also on a Thursday. One hundred and thirty years ago was a cold, snowy day with blustery winds from the northeast. By noon the church was filled with people still arriving for the dedication ceremonies.

Things have changed a lot from December 1893. One hundred and thirty years of use creates a lot of wear and tear. The stained glass windows on the south side have been restored. Shingles are being replaced on the steeple. Soon restoration work will begin on the stained glass windows on the west end. Our ministry and mission continue along with the expense of providing for our ministry.

Let us give thanks to the memory of our forbears in establishing Trinity and its ministry, which continues to this day. Let's celebrate this 130th Anniversary of our building on Sunday, December 10 during worship and stay for a special fellowship of Norwegian treats following worship.

~ Leonard Myrah, Stewardship Team Leader





SHINING BRIGHT AND FLYING HIGH

What a year it has been!

Stained Glass Windows

We completed phase 1 of our stained-glass window restoration in the spring with three prominent windows on the south side of the church. They look magnificent! Now, we are beginning phase 2 with the windows on the west side of the church. Staige Stained-Glass Restoration removed three of the windows earlier this week. They will take some time with these smaller windows before they tackle the large window over the door. Thanks to all our generous donors, as well as a bequest from the Elaine Bergsgaard Nassen estate, we have phase 2 of this project paid for.

Steeple

You have probably noticed that Krause Konstruction has been working on the steeple as well. The old shingles have been removed and a protective lining has been applied to the steeple. The cross and copper ornaments have also been removed. The cross will be refurbished and the ornaments completely recreated. Again, thanks to all our generous donors, including several donations from WELCA and a bequest from the Roger Tollefsrud estate, as well as ERC funds and funds from the sale of the second parsonage five years ago, we have enough to pay for the steeple repair and ALMOST enough to pay for the ornaments.

We still need approximately \$10,000 to pay for the copper ornaments. Enclosed in this newsletter is an envelope you can use to contribute to the steeple fund. Every dollar helps! Thank you!





NOVEMBER 15, 2023 CONGREGATION COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS Updates:

- Church bathroom and lounge windows were changed; they were cracked and old. This cost will be \$800 plus the cost of installation. Tim Ladsten completed the work.
- Trinity Center thermostat: Winona Controls could program it for \$300. Gary Wilhelmson has been monitoring it and has volunteered to continue monitoring vs programing the thermostat.
- Property Team discussed parking lot at Trinity Center. Decided with fall coming that now is not a good time, so will wait until spring to determine what should happen.
- Worship and Communication teams will be planning another simple gathering. Like the bonfire. No date determined yet.
- Graveyard Update: Pastor Elizabeth has contacted with three organizations - one responded with a \$14,000 bid, one did not respond, and the third is a PhD project that would be little to no cost. The PhD project is a student at Mankato State and is from Norway. The project will need to wait until the spring or when the ground has thawed. It will take about three weeks to complete the project.
- The date for the audit is January 21, 2024.
- Pastor Lane is covering Release Time (with Pastor Elizabeth), ELCA Youth Gathering work, Wednesday Bible
 School
- Michelle Jahnke, Laurie Moen, Terry Holland, Lenny Myrah, Bethany Moen are the individuals going off of council after this year. These individuals, along with Gary Wilhelmson, Mary Zaffke, and Saundy Solum will make up the Nominating Committee.
- For stained glass window project: \$35,480.85 will come from Heritage Endowment and \$16,666.67 will come from the Elaine Naasen Bequest. We also still need around \$9,000 to complete the steeple project.
- A budget was presented. The Finance Team took the last three years and averaged those numbers to create the 2024 budget. Amount needed per week to make budget: \$6,574. Some changes or things that are coming: there is \$1,000 set aside for organ repair, Property raised utilities and insurance lines, Marlene is due for a new computer, postage is now located under business/management/finance and a 2% staffing increase, except for pastors. Projected budget: \$341,835.

Motions passed:

- to have Sheri Allen and Autumn Wiste as auditors for the fiscal year of 2023.
- to allow the Luren's singers to hold their concert at the Trinity Lutheran Church on December 10.
- to pay Pastor Lane \$20 per hour (decrease from \$30 per hour, at his request) for his youth work, including youth gathering work, class work, and prep work
- to designate Housing Allowance for 2024 per Synod guidelines at 30% of base salary which is \$14,773.20. Also, fair market value of parsonage will remain at \$12,000 for 2024.
- to move Pastor Elizabeth to level 12, as recommended by the Synod guidelines, and accept her salary of \$49,244 for the year 2024

Next Meeting: Thursday, December 14, 2023, at 6:30 pm Complete minutes are on Trinity's website.



YEAR-END GIVING Trinity so appreciates your giving! For 2023 year-end giving needs to be at the church office by Wednesday December 27th, 2023 in order for it to be deposited and credit posted to your giving statement. Thank you.



ONLINE GIVING

To give online, scan the QR code to go directly to the contributions page. Thank you for your gifts to Trinity!





Mark your calendars and plan to attend our Annual Meeting on Sunday, February 4, 2024 following worship.

HOSPICE ADULT GRIEF SUPPORT GROUPS

If a significant person in your life has died within the past three years, please consider being a part of an upcoming six week in-person or online Zoom grief group. These groups provide a safe way to connect with other people who are grieving, to be understood and to share needs, concerns and feelings. Grief Group participants should be at least three months into their journey with grief after the death of their loved one.

Session dates: January 15-February 19, 2024

Rochester

Mondays, 5:30-7:00 p.m. Tuesdays, 1:30-3:00 p.m. Mayo Clinic Hospice Office, 41st Street Professional Building, 4111 W. Frontage Road

Preston

Tuesdays, 5:30-7:00 p.m. Christ Lutheran Church, 509 Kansas Street NW

Online Zoom

Mondays, 5:30-7:00 p.m.

To register for a group, please contact:

Mayo Clinic Hospice Bereavement Team rsthospicebereavement@mayo.edu 507-284-4002 or 800-679-9084

** Space is limited. People are encouraged to register prior to December 11



KISIMUS CHRISTMAS CHEER Thank you for all of the monetary donations to the Christmas Cheer packages. Fifty packages will be delivered by the Care Team in December. These packages bring food and small gifts to many families helping make their holidays more joyful. Thank you for your heartfelt contributions!



LITTLE FREE PANTRY Our Little Free Pantry is open 24/7 for anyone to use. Many people use this as an opportunity to supply extra food for their families. Donations of food or monetary gifts to purchase food are always welcomed. Thank you for thinking of those who face food insecurity.



RAISING UP HEALTHY WOMEN AND GIRLS SEED GRANT APPLICATIONS OPEN DECEMBER 15

Make a difference in your congregation and community by applying for a Raising Up Healthy Women and Girls Seed Grant. Seed grants enable active Women of the ELCA units to add a project that is focused on health and wellness for women and girls. Award amounts are up to \$2,000.



Application materials for the 2023-2024 Raising Up Healthy Women and Girls seed grants must be postmarked or emailed by April 5, 2024. All applications must be submitted by active units of Women of the ELCA who are familiar with the Raising Up Healthy Women and Girls initiative and the criteria of this program. Download and send completed application to women.elca@elca.org or mail it to Women of the ELCA RUHWG Seed Grants Program, 8765 W. Higgins Road, Chicago IL 60631.

Looking for ideas on health projects and more information? www.womenoftheelca.org/special-initiatives/raising-healthy-women-girls

BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE The virtual Blue Christmas Service offers a safe place to bring grief, fear, and loss. Brief readings. Quiet and reflective music. Prayers. All are welcome. The service takes place at 7:00 p.m. CST on Thursday, December 21, 2023. The service is free.



To register to attend:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN rTF8LCrsSTeMnfEUpImk4w#/registration

TOPSY-TURVY ADVENT EVENT Tired of the commercialized rush toward Christmas? Explore a Sunday afternoon of sabbath rest and inspiration around the Gather Advent devotional, "Topsy-turvy Advent." This fun, spirit-filled Advent devotional event is **Sunday, December 3** from **3 p.m. to 4 p.m. CST.** You'll meet the Women of the ELCA Advent 2023 devotional writer and host, the Rev. Hannah Hawkinson, as she welcomes you to join from wherever you are most comfortable—favorite armchairs, church fellowship rooms or together with family and friends. Pastor Hannah will help us understand the season of Advent and Mary's song of praise (see Luke 1:46b-55) to God for turning the world upside-down—or is it right-side-up? Participants will also have opportunities to discuss faith questions with others in online small groups. You do not need to read the devotion ahead of time to participate.



Pre-registration is required.

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwpce2vrjorGNI6sK5kJEbiv5EjdAjUuoYJ#/registration



THANK YOU

"A note of thanks from Bicycling Around Minnesota. The support of individuals like you + host communities was essential to the success of the 2023 BAM tour. BAM is grateful for your time + talents whether in a professional capacity as a municipal employee or personal capacity as a community volunteer. Best wishes for good health + happiness in the coming holidays + new year!"

Bicycling Around Minnesota/BAM, www.bambiketour.com

TRINITYeus

Noisy Sunday

YOUTH-LED WORSHIP

Thank you to all the Confirmation youth and their mentors for leading different parts of worship.

And also to our great Noisy Offering collectors!







PARTS FROM THE STEEPLE

The cross and one of the brass ornaments from the steeple have been removed for repair.





HAPPY THANKSGIVING!





Thank you to our youth and adult volunteers for helping make and bake Thanksgiving pies. It was another successful year!







DECEMBER HAPPENINGS AT TRINITY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
FH = Fellowship Hall (large room in basement) MR = Middle Room (upstairs by offices) YGR = Youth Gathering Room (in basement near men's bathroom)				1	2 10:30am AA, TC 5:00pm Worship/ Communion	
3 2 nd Sunday of Advent 9:15am Worship/ Holy Communion 10:15am Fellowship 10:30am Sunday School Christmas Program practice; Ed Team meeting	Gathering Adult Leader meeting, MR	5 5:00pm AA, TC	1-3pm Release Time (K, 3 rd), TC 6:30pm Advent Worship 7:00pm Handbells; TrinityU: Catechism Elective, MR 8:00pm Choir	4:00pm Cub Scouts, TC 7:00pm Finance Team, FH	8	10:00am Care Team assembles Christmas Cheer packages 10:30am AA, TC
3 rd Sunday of Advent 130 th Church Building Anniversary Celebration 9:15am Worship 10:15am Fellowship with Norwegian Treats 10:30am Sunday School Christmas Program practice 11:15am Worship at Nursing Home 2:00pm Luren Concert		9:00am Deborah 9:30am Anna, Assisted Living 5:00pm AA, TC	9:30am Adah, Tweeten Apts. 1:00pm Eve, Manor 12-3pm Release Time (2 nd , 2 nd /3 rd), TC 6:30pm Advent Worship 7:00pm Handbells 8:00pm Choir	4:00pm Cub Scouts, TC 7:00pm Hannah, SG Library 6:30pm Council, FH	15	16 10:30am AA, TC 5:00pm Worship/ Communion
4 th Sunday of Advent 9:15am Worship/ Sunday School Christmas program 10:15am Fellowship 7:00pm Christmas Concert & Fellowship	25 Christmas Day	2:00pm Phoebe Circle, FH 5:00pm AA, TC	12-3pm Release Time (1 st , 4 th , 5 th), TC 6:30pm Advent Worship no Handbells no Choir 2:00pm Newsletter assembled	7:00pm Hannah, Library 28 9:30am Worship at	22 2023 Annual Reports due January newsletter info due 29 no Love Day	10:30am AA, TC 30 10:30am AA, TC
(no morning worship) 3:00pm Worship 8:00pm Candlelight Worship 31 9:15am Lessons & Carols Worship 10:15am Fellowship No Sunday School	with Holy Communion	5:00pm AA, TC	no Handbells no Choir Year-End Giving due in the office	Tweeten Apt.		



THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING!

Date	Lector	Acolytes	Communion Servers	Communion Bread Maker	Fellowship Hosts
December 3	Mary Newgaard	Autumn Petersen Braelyn Middendorf			Michelle Jahnke Doris & Kim Sherburne
December 10	Michelle Jahnke	Kolin Betcher Bently Rohland			130 th Celebration— Norwegian Treats
December 17	Danielle Myhre	tbd		Mary Zaffke	Kris Olson Mike & Laurie Moen Connie Strinmoen
Christmas Eve December 24	3pm: David Storlie 8pm: Sheri Allen	tbd		ŕ	
Christmas Day December 25	Mark Schroeder		Carolyn Olson Judy Bratland		
December 31	Janna Myrah	Tyler Turner			Christmas Treat Smorgasbord
December Ushers Gary Jahnke Christian Myrah Jerald Oakes Chris Strinmoen		December Altar Guild Jan Lochner (chair) Jan Kraabel Bev Nelson Cindy Thorson Lori Wilhelmson		498-AMEN November 26-December 9: Nolie Kapplinger December 10-23: Deb Spence December 24-January 6: Lori Wilhelmson **After your last reading, please contact the next person on the list to remind them to begin.	

MEALS ON WHEELS

12/11-12/12: Elaine VanMinsel & Deb Brumm

12/13-12/14: Mary & Howard Deters

12/15, 12/18: Candy Oefstedahl & Erin Konkel

12/19-12/20: Bonnie & Dave Solberg 12/21-12/22: Janna & Len Myrah

Prayer Chain 1	Prayer Chain 2
Joyce Landsom	Karen Gray
Nolie Kapplinger	Bev Nelson
Terry Holland	Janet Wold
Bonnie Solberg	Jan Lochner
Dawn Hewitt	Ruth Johnsrud
Lynn Rostad Anderson	Judy Bratland
Milly Halverson	



WOULD YOU LIKE TO VOLUNTEER FOR ONE OF THE ABOVE TASKS?

We'd be happy to have you!

Please contact us in the office and let us know where you'd like to use your skills!





The ALTAR GUILD is again looking for new members. Our groups are getting smaller and we need your help. There are 6 groups in the Altar Guild, each group is responsible for setting up for Communion Saturdays and Sundays two months out of the year along with festive services. Light cleaning of the sacristy is also another task the Altar Guild does twice a year, usually before Confirmation and festive holidays. Altar Guild members, along with lectors, communion assistants, acolytes, ushers, musicians and worship planners are "assisting ministers" in a broad sense. Please consider joining our altar guild team by calling the church office, 498-5291, or Linda Pierce, 498-5696. Thank you!

Would you like to honor a special loved one with a gift to Trinity?

My gift of \$_____ to





☐ Steeple Project☐ Stained Glass Windows Project

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■ in memory of

in celebration of

in appreciation of

My name:



Please turn this form in by Monday, December 18 in order for the honorary name designation to be listed in the Christmas Eve & Day bulletins. Thank you!

	Cash
Date recv'd:	check #

I will provide one poinsettia (or more!) for the sanctuary.

My poinsettia is....

in honor of

☐ in memory of

in celebration of _

lue in appreciation of lue

My name:

Please turn this form in by Monday, December 18 in order for the honorary name designation to be listed in the Christmas Eve and Day bulletins. Thank you!

Poinsettias may be taken home after worship on Christmas Day.



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Presorted Standard
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A Prayer for Christmas Morning

by Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894)

"Loving Father, help us remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and the worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world. Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting. Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

May the Christmas morning make us happy to be Thy children, and the Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen."

"Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift."
- 2 Corinthians 9:15