TRINITYnews

DECEMBER 2019

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TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

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Trinity Lutheran Church Spring Grove



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Office hours:

Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri: 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. **Wed:** Noon – 6:00 p.m.

Sundays at Trinity

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

Listen live on KVIK 104.7 FM

www.kvikradio.com

STAFF

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Kayla Tollefsrud, Custodian Scott Solberg, Choir Director Rachel Storlie, Organist/Pianist Willy Leafblad, Handbell Director Jean Ellingson, Pianist/Organist Linda Gjerdrum, Pianist Mark Udstuen, Praise Band leader

REVERSE ADVENT CALENDARS

We invite you to pick up a Reverse Advent Calendar. The idea behind these calendars is much the same as your childhood calendar...There is a window to open each day in December. But here is the change...each day there will be a suggestion of a way that you can thoughtfully be celebrating Advent with



acts of kindness, hospitality, and generosity. The window message might suggest donating a can of tuna for the food shelf or it might be a pair of socks for the homeless shelter. Or maybe it is a suggestion that you write a Christmas card to someone who has been ill or alone this season.

At the end of the Advent season, your box/basket will be full of great gifts to others, as we look forward to celebrating the gift of the Christ Child. We will have a spot for collecting the gifts at the church between Christmas and Epiphany. On the Sunday that we celebrate Epiphany, we will bring our gifts as an offering. Following that service, the Outreach Team will distribute your gifts to the food shelf, housing shelter, etc.

We hope that you will try this lovely way of celebrating the season.

THANKFUL GIFTS....Give Hope. Create Change. Transform Lives.

Looking for a unique gift and a gift that makes a difference in the life of someone? Check out Trinity's Thankful Gifts catalog and you'll find gifts such as textbooks for nursing students in Vietnam, vaccinations for a child in India, a week of environmental education for a student in Guatemala, straps for a leg brace for a

child in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and many more options!

Catalogs will be available December 1 in the office, at the sanctuary entrances, and on our website. With each gift given, you will receive a card that you can give to the recipient that will tell of the gift you gave in their honor. Thank you! Make Your List. Check It Once.

- ✓ Won't collect dust
- ✓ No batteries required
- No wrong sizes or colors
- Makes a difference in the world

The Perfect Gift.

Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him.

Psalm 37:7a

Dear friends in Christ,

The season of Advent is upon us. Not Christmas. That comes on December 25 and lasts until January 6, when the men from the east came to worship Jesus. No, it's Advent that begins on December 1.

Advent is about the coming of Jesus. Preparing for his arrival. Making plans. But Advent is also about waiting.

"Sometimes it's hard to wait ... in checkout lines when your schedule is tight ... in hospital waiting rooms when a loved one's in surgery or a baby is coming ... for important papers or documents ... for special birthdays or Christmas Day ... for answers to prayer.

"God's people in both the Old and New Testaments were well acquainted with waiting! They waited for deliverance. They waited to enter the Promised Land. They waited for the Messiah to appear. Mary waited for Jesus to be born. His friends waited for Jesus to rise from the dead. God's people still wait for Jesus to return.

"What happens while we wait? God acts. He's at work keeping his promises. So, we don't fret or grow impatient. God's trustworthy so we don't worry. We know something's coming – something good." Donna J. Streufert, "Living the Gospel Life"

Every week during Advent it grows darker outside. But every week during Advent we light another candle. Because we are waiting for the light that shines in the darkness that the darkness cannot overcome. We are waiting for Jesus.

Blessed Advent to you all.

~ Pastor Elizabeth

I was listening to a YouTube interview of a fellow last week. He said that his wife could hear God, but he could not. It was an interesting conversation. He believed he was a person of faith. He studied his Bible, prayed, did meditation, but never felt that God talked to him.

I believe God does communicate with people, but we don't always realize it. I believe God uses various ways to get in touch with us, but we don't realize it at the time or we miss it altogether. The next few months in these articles I am going to be studying when God speaks to people in the scriptures.

There are several Scripture passages where God directly speaks to Bible characters. Perhaps the most famous is God speaking to Moses through the burning bush. The funniest to me is when God speaks to Balaam through



his donkey. God tries to speak directly to the Israelites and it scares them nearly to death to the point where the people tell Moses they don't want God to talk to them. They want Moses to be a mediator. We continue that style in a way when we pray in Jesus Name. I hope you will find the next few months interesting and helpful in your own faith life.



THIRST DAY IS DECEMBER 19 AT 7:30 P.M.: "Our Father" by Pope Francis

"We need courage to pray the Our Father," writes Pope Francis, "to truly believe that God is the Father who accompanies us, forgives us, gives us bread, is attentive to all that we ask, clothes us even better than the flowers of the field. To believe is a big risk." Pope Francis issues a call to "dare ... help one another to dare." There will be five copies of the book available in the church office beginning the first week in December.

Remember Thirst Day is always the third Thursday of the month (during the school year), at 7:30 p.m. and the "B" in "BYOB" stands for ... **B**ible ... **b**ook you'd like to share ... topic that challenges your **b**elief ... or idea that makes you feel **b**lessed. Oh, and you should bring a **b**everage as well.

I know it's a crazy busy time, but if you're thirsty for conversation about the Bible and topics of faith, and you can spare just an hour, I hope to see you at the parsonage for "Thirst Day" in December.

P.S. I know, I know, we're Lutheran, but this is a truly great reflection on the prayer we share. ~Pr. Elizabeth

ANTICIPATING BABY BEAR LEAFBLAD On Sunday, December 22 during Fellowship we will celebrate



the anticipated arrival of Bekah and Willy Leafblad's baby boy. He is expected to arrive about February 11. We invite you to come and share treats and wish them well as they await their firstborn. Have a little parental advice to share? Bring it along....we'll have a place for you to write it down. Like to give them a gift? They are registered on Amazon's baby registry. www.amazon.com/baby-reg/bekah-willy-leafblad-february-2020-springgrove/322XIVNBV7DGQ Your presence and well wishes are wonderful gifts!

CHRISTMAS COOKIE POTLUCK – SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29 Words of wisdom passed on by Martha ("Stewart," not "of Bethany"): "Baking also helps convey messages that aren't always easy to say with words.... sometimes it's just easier to express sympathy, love, and support in the form of casseroles, cakes, and chicken and dumplings."

Christmas Day will host grand displays of great Christmas treats, perhaps made together with family and friends, while wrapping gifts, Christmas tunes intertwined with the sweet aroma of cinnamon and sugar. The days following the 25th may leave us feeling less festive - and let's face it, a bit full! On Sunday, December 29, we invite you to bring your extra goodies for Fellowship as we kick up the joy again, with our Trinity family and friends! We'll put the coffee on and provide empty trays. Each leftover goodie you place on those trays represents the continuing joy we will carry through the year – in celebration of our Savior's birth!

Feel free to drop your treats off in the church kitchen, any time before Sunday, or bring them with you when you come to service on Sunday. We'll all nibble away, sharing stories from 2019 and our hopes for 2020. Merry Christmas to you all, and THANK YOU!

TRINITY U — WHAT IS IT? Trinity U offers people of <u>all ages</u> the opportunity to gather for education, faith development, and mutual growth — youth, parents, grandparents, friends....**EVERYONE is welcome!** The purpose of Trinity U is to create a relational confirmation program where students (and other members) understand that they can live out their faith in everything they do with their lives. Catalogs are available at sanctuary entrances, in the office, and on our website. Please register ahead of time. Registration form is on the website or stop in the office for a paper form. Questions? Contact Bekah.

DECEMBER CLASSES

<u>Spiritual Yoga</u>: December 7 & 14, 10:00 a.m. Center yourself in your faith through a spiritual yoga practice. <u>Christmas Caroling</u>: December 11, 6:00 p.m. Sing Christmas carols for the residents of Assisted Living and the nursing home.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FINANCIAL SUPPORT DURING 2019! Your financial support helps us do great things in God's ministry for the church. Please have any year-end gifts into the office by 4:00 p.m. Monday, December 30, 2019. Thank you for all your support this year! ~ The Finance Team

NEWSWORTHY



TIDBITS

FARMING IN TOUGH TIMES WORKSHOP December 5, Zumbrota VFW, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Emily Wilmes (Director of the Rural Stress Taskforce) will be delivering the keynote address. There will a producer panel/round table and lunch will be provided. Please RSVP by calling the Extension office at (651) 385-3100 or via: https://z.umn.edu/farmingintoughtimeszumbrota.

PARISH NURSE UPDATE Thank you to those who returned a Health Ministry survey. Due to low response from the congregation, we will not be moving forward with a Parish Nurse program. Instead we will focus on the Care Ministry Team and how we can further support their efforts.

POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS Poinsettias will beautify our sanctuary for our Christmas Eve and Christmas Day worship services. If you wish to buy a poinsettia to decorate the sanctuary, please have your plant at the church between Sunday, December 15 and Friday, December 20. Gifts will be acknowledged in the bulletin, if the sheet is turned into the office by Tuesday, December 17. We prefer the poinsettias to be red or white. You may take your poinsettia home after the Christmas Day service. They may be purchased in honor of / in memory of / in appreciation of someone. Forms are available on the office door. Locally, they can be purchased at Turquoise Tomato.

HOSTING FELLOWSHIP IS FUN! Enjoying treats and visiting with friends and neighbors after worship is a favorite way for many to top off a Sunday morning at Trinity! These fun gatherings are possible through the work of volunteers all year long. Did you know it takes more than 250 volunteers each year to provide yummy goodies and beverages for Fellowship Time? Wow! What great teamwork!

Would you like to help and volunteer for one Sunday? It really is pretty simple.....work together with friends and/or family and bring treats (about 2-3 dozen each, homemade or store-bought – both are delicious!), serve treats, coffee, beverage and clean up after, all the while enjoying conversation with friends, neighbors, youth, and children! It's a great opportunity to welcome visitors and connect with members. Give us a jingle in the office, (507) 498-5291, or send us an email, trinity@springgrove.coop. Plenty of Sundays available in 2020... is there one that works best for you? We're grateful for your willingness to help!

WINTER WEATHER IS HERE! Unless weather conditions are so severe around Spring Grove that travel is unsafe, services will be held at 9:15 a.m. each Sunday. Announcements about the Sunday service will be made by 7:30 a.m. that day and broadcast on KVIK 104.7 FM, KQYB 98.3 FM, KTTC Channel 10, and WXOW TV-19. Decisions about the Saturday service will be made by 3:30 p.m. that day and broadcast in the same way. We will also post updates on our Facebook page, Instagram, and website. Remember, our Sunday service is audio streamed on KVIK 104.7 FM. Please stay safe when considering traveling in bad weather.



LOOKING FOR A SWEET CHRISTMAS GIFT? Maple syrup harvested from Zaffke's maple woods makes a delicious gift! It's not just for pancakes and waffles; drizzle it on yogurt, stir it into coffee, make ice cream with it, mix it into oatmeal, make salad dressing; the recipes are endless! A pint is \$10. Syrup is available for purchase in the Fellowship Hall or the church office. Proceeds go to Trinity Youth.

TRINITY HERITAGE ENDOWMENT Due to market increases, it has been a good year for endowment funds. Fund values on November 19, 2019 were \$525,947.34 for the Heritage Endowment, and \$116,022.36 for the Rosendahl Capital Fund. The Heritage Endowment is below the \$600,000 threshold. Thus, there is nothing available for withdrawal. The Rosendahl Capital Fund is available when a qualifying building project is started. Contributions from the congregation to the Heritage Endowment are always welcome.



LISTEN, RESPOND, CARE, SERVE AND PRAY FOR OTHERS. Care Team is celebrating Christ's birth with gifts to our Spring Grove Community. We are packing Christmas Cheer baskets for 10 families and 13 single homes, as well as Sunrise Care facility and the women's Sunrise Care facility. We continue to pack HIP lunches for our kids at Spring Grove Public School. Our Friends in Faith continue to visit our congregation members who are unable to attend worship services. We offer fellowship and God's word and prayer. Thank you for your response to Bag a Buck. Our Houston County Food Shelf can purchase much needed food for their clients. As we respond to our people in the community, we thank you for your gifts and my team wishes everyone a very Merry Christmas.

Milly Halverson and the Care Team

REACHING FURTHER THAN.... Trinity's Outreach Team is a group of seven people.....PLUS you, our congregation! The definition of "outreach" as a verb is to "reach further than." Human nature keeps us within our comfort zone. Stepping out of this comfort zone invites failure, inadequacy, disruption to routine. Why in the world would we welcome such things? BY stepping out of our comfort zone, when we "reach further than," we touch something, we touch someone. None of us are perfect hosts, or perfect spirit guides, or perfect friends, or perfect leaders. We ARE perfect "reach-ers." If we take a chance and reach out — "further than" we think we can, or should — we help, support, empower, comfort, heal. To all who have given time and energy, who have reached further than you thought you could, we THANK YOU! ~ Outreach Team

THANK YOU TO ALL STAFF

The Staffing Committee of the Support Team would like to send special holiday blessings to all the members of the staff that keep Trinity going on a day-to-day basis: Pastor Elizabeth for her enthusiasm and leadership; Pastor Lane for his joyful ministry to our shut-ins; Bekah for her energy and vision in working with our families, youth, and children; Marlene and Stewart for their organization, communication and being the frontline ambassadors for Trinity; Lorilyn for all the work she has done keeping the books; Kayla for her diligence in keeping the building clean; Scott for his humor and joy in leading the choir; Rachel for the way she adds to our worship experience with her amazing keyboard and vocal abilities; and Jean and Linda for their talents on the piano and organ. Thank you for all that you do!

Holiday blessings also to so many volunteers who give of their time and talents to Trinity. Some are out in front where we see them (Mark Udstuen leading the Praise Band and Willy Leafblad conducting the handbell choirs, for example), but so many are behind the scenes, quietly making sure all runs smoothly here at Trinity (Linda Pierce and her Altar Guild folks, the WELCA ladies, the ushers, and Fellowship hosts, for example). A very special recognition needs to go to Rick Sundet, Dana Kjome, and Lee Hoekstra for all the time and effort they have put into maintaining and upgrading both Trinity and Trinity Center. Thank you to all of you! Wishing you a very blessed Advent season and a holy and happy Christmas.

NOVEMBER 13, 2019 CONGREGATION COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Motions approved:

- To accept the PTO policy and the addendum as presented in the written document
- To allow the Mission in the World team to conduct alternative giving sales for four Sundays in December.
- To designate the Thanksgiving offering for support of Christmas Cheer baskets.
- To recommend to the congregation to put the Trinity Center building and its storage facility up for sale.

Updates:

- Pastor Elizabeth was elected to serve on the synod's nominating committee.
- Eight youth and six adults have signed up to go on the Puerto Rico mission trip in the summer of 2020.
- Reminder that Trinity U classes are also for adults. Schedules are in the office and on Trinity's website.
- The chimney is starting to deteriorate and needs to be taken down. Andy Allen submitted the lowest bid of \$3,450. The chimney will be taken down in January.
- Nominating Committee reported that most of the team/endowment slots have been filled for 2020, but a Support Team leader and a Council Secretary are still needed.
- There will be one more reading of the proposed budget in December.

Next Meeting: December 10 at 7:45 p.m. in the Gathering Room. Complete minutes are on Trinity's website, at sanctuary entrances, and in the office.

COUNCIL



SENIOR DINING IS FOR EVERYONE 60+ SEMCAC Senior Dining held weekdays at Spring Grove's American Legion front room is for everyone ages 60 and up. The delicious meals are all made from scratch and follow well-balanced nutritional guidelines. It's a great opportunity to eat and converse with friends and neighbors. Cost is a donation with a recommended amount of \$4-\$7/meal. Meal is served about 11:15 a.m. Please RSVP by noon the day prior by calling Naomi at (563) 202-0925 or 498-3385 (from 10am-1pm weekdays only).

Activities are also offered in addition to the meal. Every Tuesday at 10:30 a.m. is Exercise with Brandon Bergey. Every Thursday after the meal is chair volleyball. Thursday December 5 is a special theme day — Mid-Winter Beach Party...come dressed in your best summer attire. A fundraiser open to all ages will be held Saturday, December 14 from 9am—3pm. There will be a bake and craft sale plus a silent auction.

DID YOU KNOW YOU CAN MAKE TAX DEDUCTIBLE GIFTS TO TRINITY?

Trinity is grateful for the many gifts that enhance our ministry and recognizes that the solicitation and administration of charitable gifts is a process involvoing individual, spiritual, charitable and financial considerations. Ideally, gifts given to Trinity fulfill mutual needs with the donor finding a meaningful way of expressing gratitude, love and remembrance, and the church receiving gifts that support its ministry and mission.

Trinity qualifies as a public charitable organization and meets the requirements of Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3). Gifts to Trinity are deductible at the highest limits allowed for federal income or estate tax purposes.

Possible tax deductible gift options: Outright gifts — securities (stocks, bonds, mutual funds), cash, real estate, in-kind, corporate matching gifts. Deferred or planned gifts — bequests by will or revocable living trust, life income gifts (charitable gift annuity or charitable remainder trust), life insurance, beneficiary or retirement plan, retained life estate. For a copy of Trinity's Gift and memorial Fund Policy, please contact the office.

HOLIDAY CHEER AT TRINITY

- Midweek Advent services: Wednesdays, December 4, 11, and 18 at 7:00 p.m. These will be short (20-25 minutes), contemplative services that help us prepare for Christmas.
- Monday, December 9, 7:00 p.m.: Spring Grove High School Winter Band Concert (at the school).
- ◆ Wednesday, December 11, 8:00 p.m.: 3:16s Youth Group, Christmas-themed gathering
- Friday, December 13, 7:00 p.m.: Middle School Game Night, Christmas-themed gathering
- Sunday, December 15, 9:15 a.m.: Sunday School kids Christmas program
- Monday, December 16, 7:00 p.m.: Spring Grove High School Choir Concert held at Trinity.
- Sunday, December 22, 7:00 p.m.: Trinity Choir Christmas Concert
- ◆ Tuesday, December 24. 3:00 p.m. and a candlelight service at 8:00 p.m.: Christmas Eve services
- Wednesday, December 25 at 10:00 a.m.: Christmas Day service
- Sunday, December 29, 9:15 a.m: Lessons & Carols service, celebrating all that we are thankful for special ones, cherished activities, and bountiful financial support. Bring your extra holiday treats to share with your Trinity family during fellowship hour!



TRINITYews





▲ God Speaks

- ▲ Trick-or-Canning
- ► S'mores and Stars



▼ All Saints Worship on November 3.





SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
union	2	3 10:00am Staffing Team, GR	2:00pm Release Time (K), TC 3:30pm Trinity U: Teen Girl's Survival Guide 5:00pm Youth Handbells 6:00pm Confirmation Core 7:00pm Advent Worship 7:30pm Handbells 7:45pm Finance, MR 8:00pm Choir; 3:16s	5:30pm Education Team, MR	9	7 9:30am Praise Band practice 10:00am Trinity U: Spiritual Yoga, FH 5:00pm Worship/ Communion
8 2 nd Sunday of Advent 9:15am Worship/Praise Band 10:15am Fellowship 10:30am Sunday School, 0utreach, Stewardship 11:30am Worship at Tweeten Care Ctr	6	10 9:00am Deborah Circle 7:00pm Support Team, GR	9:30am Adah Circle 1:00pm Release Time (1 st), TC 3:30pm Trinity U: Teen Girl's Survival Guide 5:00pm Youth Handbells 6:00pm Trinity U: Caroling, Worship Team 7:00pm Advent Worship 7:30pm Handbells 7:45pm Council, GR 8:00pm Choir; 3:16s	7:00pm Finance Team, GR	13 12:00pm Newsletter Info due 7:00pm Middle School Game Night	14 10:00am Trinity U: Spiritual Yoga, FH
nion, pro-	16 7:00pm Hannah Circle	17 9:30am Communion/Apts 10:30am Communion/ Assisted Living 2:30pm Phoebe Circle	19 1:00pm Release Time (2 rd), TC 9:30am Communion at 3:30pm Trinity U: Teen Girl's Survival Guide 7:00pm Advent Worship mailed 8:00pm Choir 7:30pm Thirst Day, parsonage		20	21 5:00pm Worship/ Communion
22 4th Sunday of Advent 9:15am Worship 10:15am Fellowship/ celebrating Baby Leafblad No Sunday School 7:00pm Trinity Choir Christmas Concert and	23	24 Christmas Eve 3:00pm Worship 8:00pm Candlelight Worship	25 Christmas 10:00am Worship/ Communion	26	27	28
29 Servant Sunday 9:15am Worship/Lessons & Carols 10:15am Fellowship/ Cookie Potluck No Sunday School	30	31 FH = Fellowship GR = Gathering	ellowship Hall (large room in basement) Sathering Room (in basement near men's bathroom)	ent) nen's bathroom)	MR = Middle Room (upstairs by offices) TC = Trinity Center	pstairs by offices)

TRINITY News

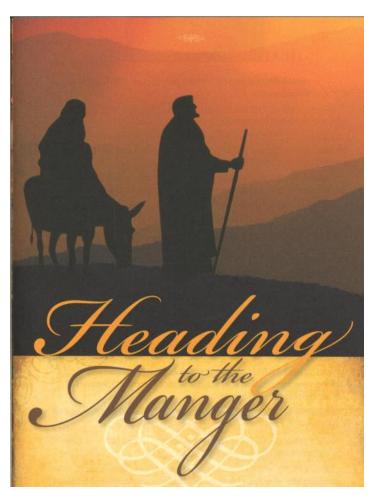
VOLUNTEERS — Thank you for all that you do!

	DECEMBER 1	DECEMBER 8	DECEMBER 15	DECEMBER 22	DECEMBER 24 3:00 pm 8:00 pm	DECEMBER 25 10:00 am	DECEMBER 29
LECTOR	Willy Leafblad	Milly Halverson	Janna Myrah	Lee Hoekstra	3pm: Bev Nelson 8pm: Scott Solberg	Scott Solberg	Jim Gray
ACOLYTE(S)	Caleb Griffin Gavin Ostern	Tysen Grinde	Jordis Neeley Hunter Holland	Brandon Jahnke	3pm: Maggie Lile 8pm: Emerson Ingvalson	Madi Ostern Sydney Holland	Nathan Solberg
ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTERS	Danielle & Jeremy Myhre family	Sheri & Andy Allen family	Jenny & Nathan Stender family	Brett & Anne Scheetz family			
COMMUNION SERVERS	Howard & Mary Deters, Karen Bingham		Jean Ann & Lonnie Tweeten, Jessica Sherburne			Janna & Len Myrah, Al Lochner	
COMMUNION BREAD				Vivien Mathsen			
ALTAR GUILD		Peggy Landsom		atland, Missy Bratla	chair), Judy Bratland, Missy Bratland, Judy Dahle, Rachel Olerud	nel Olerud	
USHERS	Rob Gross (captair	n), Christian Myrah, Chri Stenhoff, Jerald	Rob Gross (captain), Christian Myrah, Chris Strinmoen, Gary Jahnke, Roger Stenhoff, Jerald Oakes		3pm: Mark Udstuen, Bruce Anderson, Jerald Oakes, Steve Landsom 8pm: Rob & Amy Gross family	Kim Kapplinger, Chris Strinmoen, Steve Nelson, Stewart Storlie	Rob Gross (captain), Christian Myrah, Chris Strinmoen, Gary Jahnke, Roger Stenhoff, Jerald Oakes
FELLOWSHIP HOSTS	Cindie & Galen Gunderson, Candy & Bob Oefstedahl, Rachel Olerud	Deb Spence, Doris & Kim Sherburne	Gary & Lori Wilhelmson, Carolyn Olson	Anticipating Baby Bear Party for Leafblads			Christmas Cookie Potluck — everyone bring treats to share!
498-AMEN	December 1-14: Jean Ellingson	: Jean Ellingson		Decen	December 15-28: Deb Spence	nce	
MEALS ON WHEELS	Dec	2-3: Joyce & Justi Dec.	Dec. 2-3: Joyce & Justin Landsom; Dec. 4-5: Bonnie & Dave Solberg; Dec. 6 & 9: Doris & Kim Sherburne; Dec. 10-11: Kathy & David Myrah; Dec. 12-13: Laurie & Mike Moen	: Bonnie & Dave So id Myrah; Dec. 12-:	lberg; Dec. 6 & 9: Dc 13: Laurie & Mike Mc	ris & Kim Sherburr Jen	.er;

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For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6

Immanuel, God with us in our nature, in our sorrow, in our lifework, in our punishment, in our grave, and now with us, or rather we with Him, in resurrection, ascension, triumph, and Second Advent splendor.

~ Charles Spurgeon