

Dear Friends of Trinity,

Almighty God, grant that the birth of Your only-begotten Son in the flesh may set us free from the bondage of sin; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

--Collect of the Day, Christmas Day

You would think that the Collect for Christmas Day would say a bit more than what it does, especially for a day like Christmas. But it doesn't. It's short and gets right to the point. It's as bare and plain as the manger in Bethlehem.

It serves as an antidote for contemporary living. Christmas has become complicated and stressful in American life. It has become as complex as we are. The birth of Jesus was not complex and happened almost without notice. If it wasn't for the shepherds and the Magi, no one would have known. The day and the night passed without much fuss. This simplicity is reflected in the Collect for Christmas Day.

Woven within that simplicity is truth bearing such profundity—a young woman giving birth to divinity, heaven coming to earth, glory clothed in the mundane, sacred rescue from sin's bondage—that it transforms life as we know it. It calls and beckons us to stop in our tracks and participate in its mystery now revealed in the flesh, the Great Reversal now manifested in humble infancy:

Divinity giving birth to a new humanity, earth being swept up to heaven, mortality being clothed with righteousness and immortality, human sin being assumed into the infinite wellspring of divine grace. Forgiveness. Life. Salvation. All encapsulated and communicated in that bare and plain Collect, but more concretely lying in a manger in Bethlehem.

I wish you a very Blessed and Merry Christmas, and a Joyous New Year!

Pastor Hoag

December Newsletter 2014

SOCIAL MINISTRY

The MorningStar Giving Tree, our monetary contribution site for MorningStar Mission, has been set up across from the church office, once again. Please deposit your contribution envelopes in the decorated table box. Thanks to all persons who have accepted the \$80.00 gift purchasing for 10 children on MorningStar's needy rolls. Once again, Trinity congregation will brighten the holiday season for many thankful MorningStar patrons. Kudos to all!

***Congregational Family Christmas Party. Sunday, December 7th from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.** Pizza, desserts, salads and drinks will be served @ 5:45 p.m. Games, supplied & supervised by the Youth Group, will begin shortly thereafter. Please sign the designated sheet on the hall table indicating your dinner donation.*

WOMEN'S LEAGUE:

Cookie Walk: Saturday, December 6th from 8:30 – 11:00 a.m. Baked goods from the congregation are needed and appreciated. Trays for your cookies will be available in the gym. Please put wax paper on the trays before placing the cookies on them. Baked goods for the cookie sale can be dropped off Friday, December 5th from 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. or early Saturday morning. All proceeds will benefit the needs of the church. In addition to the baked goods, a couple of our church members will have a craft table set up, with items for sale.

Women's League Christmas Luncheon will be held on Tuesday, December 9th at 12:30 p.m. in the church basement. The luncheon will be catered by Tom Kelly's. Cost: 410.00 per person. Make your reservations by calling Ginny DeCarlo at 815.485.2001, Pat Fuerst at 815.485.6441, or Judy Wilmsen at 815.462.1473.

CHANCEL GUILD Our next meeting is Monday, **December 1st** at 6:30 p.m. Hostesses will be Kay Purnell and Sharon MacFarlane. We will be cleaning the chancel and decorating the church for the Christmas season. All ladies of the congregation are invited to join us. Chancel members, if at all possible please help the Women's League with their Cookie Walk by making some cookies. These ladies helped us with our luncheon, now it is our turn to help them.

POINSETTIAS FOR THE ALTAR

What a sight with the altar covered in poinsettias! Would you like to place a poinsettia or two in the Chancel for Christmas? Each plant is only \$11.50 and can be picked up after the Christmas Day Service. You can order by completing the green form on the table outside the church office, calling Christine Stark (815.478.4069) or by calling the church office (815.485.6973). Your order needs to be turned in by Sunday, December 14th.

2015 ALTAR FLOWERS: Flowers are placed on our altar every Sunday to enhance and beautify our altar area in memory of a loved one, to commemorate a birthday, wedding anniversary or in celebration of God's blessings. The flower order forms are attached to the cabinet in the hallway outside the church office. If you would like to give altar flowers, complete the form and place it in the Chancel Guild mailbox in the church office. If you have any questions, please call Christine Stark at 815.478.4069 or email her at candb.stark@gmail.com. The cost of the flowers is \$8.50 per vase or \$17.00 for both vases. The flowers may be picked up after the Sunday service.

MORNING STAR

Serving dates are December 1st and December 15th. Time: 3:45 pm. Sign-up sheets are on the hallway table. If you have any questions, please call Judy Wilmsen at 815.462.1374.

Ushers & Greeters Sign-Up sheets for December are on the hall table. Please stop and sign up.

CAUSE AND EFFECT: YOU GIVE. PEOPLE LIVE.

There is a big blood shortage. The next opportunity to save 3 lives with ONE blood donation will be on December 22, 2014 from 4-7 pm. If you have any questions, or would like to schedule an appointment, please call Deb Aiken at 815.462.0687.

YOUTH OF THE CONGREGATION

Church Christmas Party – Sunday December 7th from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. Youth grades 7-12 are invited to come at 5:00 p.m. to help set up the games for the party. They will run the games and crafts for the younger children. Pizza, salad, and dessert are included – please sign up on the youth board if you plan to attend.

The Sunday School Christmas Program will be Sunday, December 21st at the 10:30 a.m. church service. Children should come at the regular 9:15 am time to prepare. The practice will be Saturday, **December 20th from 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.** Pizza will be served during the last 30 minutes.

75th Anniversary A letter was recently mailed to our members regarding the upcoming 75th Anniversary and our organ and lift fund projects. If you did not receive this letter, please contact the church office at 815.485.6973. This letter is attached for your information.

75th Anniversary Ornaments are now available for \$15.00 each. The proceeds of the sale will go toward Trinity's lift and organ fund. Ornaments are for sale after services or through the church office.

CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES

Members who have not received offering envelopes in the past and would like to request them for the year 2015, please fill out a request with your name, address, and telephone number and give it to Doris, Church Secretary, or place in Janice Prospero's church mailbox. You may also contact Janice at 815.485.3558. Request forms are on the table in the hallway. Also, members who desire to discontinue use of envelopes, please contact Doris or Janice.

TRINITY PRAYER CHAIN

Trinity Lutheran has a Prayer Chain that is available to anyone for prayer support by fellow members. These prayers may be for personal, congregational, community, governmental, and all other needs. All requests are kept confidential. Please call Ginny DeCarlo (815) 485-2001 to request a prayer. The Bible says, "The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective." James 5:16b.

If you are interested in being part of the Prayer Chain, or would like more information please give Ginny a call. You can also call the office at (815) 485-6973. We would be happy to provide you with all the information. Please consider being part of this worthwhile endeavor. You can make a difference.

PEOPLE TO REMEMBER DURING THE HOLIDAYS

Evelyn Clancy

123 S Cherry Hill Rd
Joliet, IL 60433

Betty Dunn

263 W. Francis Road
New Lenox, IL 60451

R Lee Hedden

10839 Doral Dr
Frankfort, IL 60423

Mary McElroy

4 Kildare
Joliet, IL 60423

Karin Pecoraro

1338 Spector
New Lenox, IL 60451

Edward J. Tatro

811 Winter Park Drive
New Lenox, IL 60451

January thru March 2015 Portals of Prayer are available in the Narthex and on the hallway table.

Church office hours: Monday, 9-3; Tuesday and Thursday, 1-4; Friday, 9-12.

Christmas Services:

Sunday, December 21st

10:30 am Sunday School Christmas Program

Christmas Eve – December 24th

5:00 p.m. Contemporary Worship Service

7:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. Candlelight Worship Service with communion

Christmas Day Worship Service – December 25th at 10:00 a.m.

Christmas is Joy! Christmas is Peace!

May the peace and joy of this holiday season remain in your heart throughout the New Year.

Remember to keep Christ in your CHRISTmas!

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Gavin Evans	1
Haleigh Ziebell	1
Emily Perkins	2
Raymond Koehler, Jr.	3
Sharon MacFarlane	4
Ali Wasowicz	4
Khloe Stuart	4
Wyatt Grady	5
William Jackson	6
Carol Oldendorf	7
Carrie Ann Welsh	7
Ruth Hucher	9
Kenneth Oldendorf	10
Brett Carr	13
Jake Cook	15
Jim Minett	15
Natalie Briese	16
Melissa Studer	17
Zachary Burke	18
Mason Vallow	18
Bill Walter	18
Jake Carrier	19

Caden O'Connor	19
Kelli Simon	19
Colleen Dampf	20
Brenden Kosel	20
Brock Krohe	20
Mick Lerner	20
Rebecca Johnson	21
Layla Johnson	22
Sheldon Klemm	23
Evelyn Clancy	24
Ronald Molenaar	25
Raymond Miletich	26
Trent Berkey	27
Sharon Molenaar	27
Alan Good	28
Floria Kelderhouse	28
Jeff Lorenz	28
Loretta Renwick	28
Hallie Remm	29
Elissa Delcorio	30
Jacob Standard	30
Linda Whitehead	30
Gabriel Michael Yeager	30
Grace Minett	31
Robert Stark	31

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Keith and Heather Kumlin	11
George & Floria Kelderhouse	29