

December 2020

Dear Friends,

Now that we are in the season of Advent, a season of waiting and eager anticipation, we place all of our hopes and confidences in our Lord and what He is doing to save us from our sins. It's quite elaborate in its details but very simple in its execution—the infinite God clothed Himself with finite flesh in ultimate humility and in love for humanity. The glory He had before the creation of the world was laid aside in exchange for mundane human existence.

And the world wasn't ready.

But that didn't stop God in His tracks. There was nothing that was going to be a successful obstacle for our salvation. Honestly, anything that normally shows itself as “in the way”, God used to work redemption into the world.

The coronavirus has, in a sense, stopped us in our tracks. We weren't ready for it. But it did not, and will not, stop God from loving and saving us. Christmas arrives every year and this year will be no different. Our celebration of the birth of Jesus will certainly be affected as we take steps to curb exposure to the virus for ourselves and others. But it doesn't change the glorious truth that Christ the Lord is born to us. God came to save us.

I pray that you all have a very Merry Christmas, rejoicing that our Lord Jesus has made us His own!

In Christ's Love,
Pastor Hoag



December Newsletter 2020



Update from our Church Council President, Jeff McDonald

As I prepare to step down from my current role as President of Church Council, I want to convey a message of thanks to the congregation for the tremendous support that I have received over the last decade in my service on this council. We've achieved quite a bit over this time period but that was made possible not only through your generous financial support of your church but through your unwavering support of the members of church council as well. I don't take this for granted and I know none of my colleagues on council do either.

I also want to encourage anyone in our congregation who has not served on council to give thoughtful consideration to doing so. I have said before that my membership at Trinity has only been enhanced by taking a more active role in the 'business' of running a church, and I truly do believe I see things at Trinity more clearly as a result of this. We have a tremendous group of volunteers on council now, but looking back over time, we have always had great volunteers pitching in to serve on council. None of these positions are permanent, though, and all of them will eventually require someone new to serve in this capacity. Whether you know this is something you want to do or you're just curious about what it might involve, we depend and rely on our members to volunteer for these council positions and I encourage you to consider serving your church in this way.

Like those who have stepped down from council before me, I am leaving you in exceedingly capable hands. We have long benefited as a church from the generous donation of resources of our members, whether that was financial support or volunteering either on council or in one of our many organizations. We are stronger together, and we benefit most when each member considers an active role in the church. While I will no longer be on council, I will continue - as so many have before me - to seek out ways to stay involved at Trinity. In a building as old as ours, there is literally always something in need of attention and I hope to be able to continue to actively contribute as a member of this congregation. I hope to be involved in our church for a long time to come. But for now, thank you for your overwhelming support and please continue to offer it as you have before.



CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES

Members, who have not received offering envelopes in the past and would like to request them for the year 2020, please, fill out a request with your name, address, and telephone number and give it to Judi, the church secretary, or place in Tammy Doerrers', Financial Secretary, church mailbox. Request forms are on the table in the hallway.

Also, members who desire to discontinue use of envelopes, please contact Judi or Tammy.

Members using church envelopes may pick up their 2020 envelope boxes on the table in the hallway. Envelope boxes not picked up in December will be mailed the 2nd week of January.

Great appreciation to members who pick up their envelopes rather than having them mailed!

Questions – contact Tammy, 815 485-3558 or Judi, Church Secretary

Thanks! Tammy, Financial Secretary

SOCIAL MINISTRY



MorningStar Christmas Activities

The MorningStar Giving Tree is on the hall table, complete with envelopes for monetary donations, to be forwarded for this most charitable mission's works. While we know it is hard to use the envelopes at this time, you can still make a donation if you choose to do so by either mailing in the donation or making the donation on line but please mark it for MorningStar. Please remember to make any checks payable to Trinity so all donations can be recorded and then distributed to MorningStar. Thank you, in advance, for your gifts in any amount.

"Stars of Hope" - All "Stars" have been taken. Thank you to all. If you are interest in helping with this project.

All purchased, wrapped, and tagged gifts must be returned to Trinity by Wednesday, December 2nd , so they can be delivered to MorningStar. Your continued support of this project is very much appreciated.

Sole Hope

Thank you to everyone for your support of Sole Hope. Through your donations and help in cutting, we were able to send 160 pairs of shoes. We are also donating leftover fabric to an organization that recycles jeans.

Kitchen

Also, thank you to all of the volunteers from Chancel and Social Ministry who helped with the kitchen clean-up and organization.

Visit us on the web at www.trinitynewlenox.org



Cookies

Are you missing the annual Cookie Walk? If you are in need of holiday cookies, please contact Jan Toepke. She has been baking cookies for people as part of her cake business for several years. Cookies offered include Spritz, Peppermint Balls, Melting Moments, Butterballs, Holiday Snowballs, Peanut Butter Blossoms, Chocolate Turtle, and sugar. If interested or for more information call (815) 485-2638 or email toepkej@gmail.com. Order forms can be emailed.



Blood Drive – Will be held on December 8, 2020 in the church parking lot from 2 – 7pm. Please remember to social distance and wear a mask. Upon arrival at church, go directly to the mobile unit in the parking lot.

Usher Information

Trinity Lutheran COVID Usher and Duty Schedule:

Our previous schedule with two Sunday services provided for two ushers per service. Having adapted one service per Sunday during COVID precautions we will alternate the usher schedule until conditions change as we continue to pray the pandemic improves.

Usher duties during COVID Include:

1. Encouraging mask and social distance as congregants enter, get seated and proceed to communion. [One Usher at parking lot entrance and one usher in narthex before the service.] 2.
2. Pastor will safely administer communion. One usher should walk down the center aisle to let congregants know when it is safe for them to proceed to communion socially distanced. [Avoid a long line]
3. Count and record attendance and communion participants noting the numbers in the usher notebook.
4. Assist with safe exiting, pastor will dismiss beginning with the back pews
5. After dismissal check that all windows and doors are closed, the lift locked up and lights are off.

December Usher Schedule:

1st Sunday: Tom Kaun and Larry Wennlund

2nd Sunday: Tim King and Ed Tatro

3rd Sunday: Mike Gardner and Gary Purnell

4th Sunday: Steve Tomany and Randy Varju

As previously practiced, if you cannot attend on your Sunday please contact an usher on the list. We also have alternates who have assisted in the past: Biff Aiken, Robert Stark, Bob Jackman, Duncan Bachman and Bill Jackson.

Respectfully submitted, Ed Tatro and Diane Sewing, Worship and Spiritual Life Directors.



SCRIP GIFT CARDS – An easy way to shop and earn money for our church. Scrip cards are the same gift cards that you can purchase from retailers, including grocery & department stores, restaurants, gas stations, hotels, home improvement stores, etc. In addition to giving them as gifts, they can be used for daily or holiday shopping. We order the gift cards at a discount and you pay face value so there is no additional cost. We have decided to add another order date for the holidays. **The due dates are set for Sunday Dec 6 and also Sunday Dec 13 both at noon.** These orders will be available for pick-up the weekend following the order date. There is an order form attached to the newsletter in addition to some on the hallway table below the Youth bulletin board. You may place your order online, email it to Angie, or place it in the gold envelope which is next to the mail boxes in the old church office. Checks should be made out to *Trinity Lutheran Youth*. To make special arrangements for payment and pick-up or to get the enrollment code for online orders, contact Angie at minett411@yahoo.com or [815-228-4902](tel:815-228-4902). You can also learn more online at shopwithscrip.com. Thank you for your support!



Religious Humor:

MN Lutheran Airlines.

WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE LUTHERAN AIRLINES IS NOW OPERATING IN MINNYSOTA!

ALSO SERVING VISCONSIN, NORDERN MITCHIGEN, NORT & SOUT DAKOTA

If you are travelin soon, consider Lutran Air, the no-frills airline. You're all in da same boat on Lutran Air, here flyin is a upliftin experience:

- Dair is no first class on any Lutran Air flight.
- Meals are potluck. Rows 1 tru 6, bring rolls; 7 tru 15, bring a salad; 16 tru 21, a hot dish, and 22-30, a dessert.
- Basses and tenors please sit in da rear of da aircraft.
- Everyone is responsible for his or her own baggage.
- All fares are by free will offering, and da plane will not land til da budget is met.
- Pay attention to your flight attendant, who vill acquaint you wit da safety system aboard dis Lutran Air. Okay den, listen up; I'm only gonna say dis vonce: In da event of a sudden loss of cabin pressure, I am frankly gonna be real surprised and so vill Captain Olson, because ve fly right around two tousand feet, so loss of cabin pressure would probably mean da Second Coming or someting of dat nature, and I wouldn't bodder with doze liddle masks on da rubber tubes--you're gonna have bigger tings to worry about den dat. Just stuff doze back up in dair liddle holes.

Probably da masks fell out because of turbulence which, to be honest wit you, we're gonna have quite a bit of at two thousand feet, sorta like driving across a plowed field, but after a while you get used to it. In da event of a water landing, I'd say forget it.

Start saying da Lord's Prayer and just hope you get to da part about forgive us our sins as we forgive dose who sin against us, which some people say 'trespass against us,' which isn't right, but what can you do?

Da use of cell phones on da plane is strictly forbidden, not because day may confuse da plane's navigation system, which is by da pants all da way. No, it's because cell phones are a pain in da wazoo, and if God had meant you to use a cell phone, He wudda put your mout on da side of your head.

We start lunch right about noon and it's buffet style wit da coffeepot up front. Den we'll have da hymn sing; hymnals are in da seat pockets in front of you. Don't take yours wit you when you go or I am gonna be real upset and I am NOT kiddin!

Right now I'll say Grace: Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest and let deze gifts to us be blessed. Fader, Son, and Holy Ghost, May we land in Dulut or pretty close.



ALTAR FLOWERS: Chancel Guild members would like to thank those who sponsored a weekend this last year. We thank you for your flexibility considering the impact Covid-19 restrictions had on church attendance and our flower orders. We pray life will return back to normal in 2021. **A new 2021 Altar Flower Calendar has been posted.** You can find it in the glass case hanging on the wall across the old office. If you would like to reserve a weekend for **2021** in memory of a loved one, to commemorate a birthday, wedding anniversary, or in celebration of God's blessings, please fill out a sponsor sheet. Sponsor sheets are located on a hook attached to the glass case housing the calendar. If you have any questions, please contact Kay Purnell at purnellk51@hotmail.com or (815) 485-9017

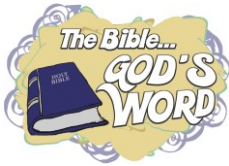


POINSETTIAS FOR THE ALTAR

Chancel Guild will be decorating the chancel area with poinsettias for the Christmas services this year whether the services are **in-person or on-line**. If you would like to help decorate the chancel area by purchasing a poinsettia for them to use, please fill out the attached order form. Turn it into the office along with payment or mail it to the church by Sunday, December 13, 2020. The cost of each plant is \$21.50. Make checks payable to **Trinity Lutheran Chancel Guild**. If you have any questions, you may contact Kay Purnell at purnellk51@hotmail.com or **(815) 485-9017**. Your plant may be picked up any time after the Christmas Day service or during the week when the office is open. Thank you!

Thank You 

We would like to thank Chuck and Sandy Peters and Ed Tatro for varnishing all the new doors and trim in the kitchen. A job well done!



Wednesday Morning Bible Class is held at 8:30 a.m. Please join us.

Thursday Evening Bible Class is held at 7:00 p.m. Please join us.

Both groups are in person or online so please contact Pastor Hoag if you wish to join the online group and he will get you the link.



Choir Practice – Has been cancelled until further notice.



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 feel free to contact Ginny DeCarlo or Pat Fuerst if you have a prayer request. You may call Ginny at 815.485.2001 (or email at vdecarlo1952@gmail.com) or Pat at 815.485.6441.

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 or Pat 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.

Church office hours: Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 9-2 pm



Christmas Services



When Christmas Services have been finalized, we will send out an email and post it on the church's website. We appreciate your patience during these unusual times.

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!***

