

THE MESSENGER

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

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CHRISTMAS AT TRINITY

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THE HAPPENINGS OF THE CHURCH!



/ TRINITYMHD

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

HOW DO WE PREPARE?

As I read through our texts for this Advent season, this question kept coming to mind: “How do we prepare for something if we don’t know when it’ll happen?” That is what the season of Advent is all about—a season of waiting and preparing, a season of anticipation and excitement for something that’s coming.

Clearly, when it comes to the celebration of Christmas, the celebration of Christ’s first coming into our world, we know exactly when that’s going to be. In fact, year after year, Christmas comes with such predictability that we even make a habit of counting off the days we have left to shop, and no amount of procrastination or anxiety will alter the fact that in 24 days from now, we will be at Christmas Eve—ready or not! But what of that second dimension to Advent, the celebration of Christ’s coming again “in all power and glory to judge both the living and the dead?” Do you have any idea when that’s going to happen?

Indeed, Advent is something of a dilemma, because it makes us think about getting ready for the end times, while all we’re really thinking about is making sure the cards have been sent and the presents bought. Advent tries to make us think about where we want to spend eternity, while all we’re really thinking about is where we’ll spend the holiday. Getting ready for Christmas is one thing, but getting ready for the “kingdom come”, is quite another! But don’t panic, because there’s a good chance you have more experience than you realize.

Take for example our preparations for marriage and a life-long commitment. Granted, after the engagement, a date is usually set so we know how much time we have to prepare for the ceremony. But, how do we prepare for the life-long commitment part? Well, chances are we were getting ready as we watched how our parents “did”, or “didn’t” express their marriage commitment. Or maybe it has something to do with the way we learned how to relate to others in “sickness or in health”. Or the way in which we learned to make financial decisions that determine how we’ll cope “for richer or for poorer”. The point being, we have been making preparations!

Or, think about how people prepare to become parents in life. Let’s be honest, there’s more preparation given to getting a driver’s license than there is to being a parent. Granted, once again, we usually have the date of arrival all lined up, but the birth date doesn’t prepare you for what comes after. In fact, parenting is more like doing on the job training - you learn as you go, hoping that by the



time your child becomes a teenager, you as a parent have somehow become prepared to meet the challenges that adolescence undoubtedly brings.

Even through something as mundane as a test in school, or a job interview, we can prepare ourselves. For example, your teacher’s assigned a test, but she’s also promised that it’ll be sprung without warning. So, what do you do? Well, you catch up on the reading and get yourself ready! Or, say you’ve decided to change careers. Well it’s probably a good idea to get busy and explore some further education to make you more marketable, or at the very least to work on your resume or get yourself ready for when an interview opens up!

So, yes, perhaps we are better prepared for that great and glorious day than we first thought!

And yet, while we wait...

- without knowing how capable we are at being faithful and loving in marriage, we had better be attending to our relationships in life each & everyday;
- without fear of raising “problem” children”, we had better be about affirming a sense of self-esteem and a sense of values in our kids all the time;
- without an exact date scheduled for a certain task or job that has to be done, we had better be ready at a moment’s notice, in case we get the opportunity to do it today.

This really is what the Season of Advent is about—a time to prepare for God’s kingdom come!

PASTOR SIMON FENSOM
SIMON@TRINITYMHD.ORG
218.236.1333, EXT. 320

“WELCOMING THE COMMUNITY TO WORSHIP AND GROW IN SERVING GOD.”

DECEMBER WORSHIP

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3

8:30 a.m. - 2nd Sunday in Advent - Sanctuary
10:30 a.m. - 2nd Sunday in Advent - Sanctuary
10:30 a.m. - 2nd Sunday in Advent - Christian Life Center

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6

6:30 p.m. - 2nd Week in Advent - Christian Life Center

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10

8:30 a.m. - 3rd Sunday in Advent - Sanctuary
10:30 a.m. - Children's Christmas Worship - Sanctuary
10:30 a.m. - 3rd Sunday in Advent - Christian Life Center

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13

6:30 p.m. - Children's Christmas Worship - Sanctuary

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16

7 p.m. - Lessons & Carols of Kings - Sanctuary

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17

8:30 a.m. - Lessons & Carols of Kings Worship - Sanctuary
10:30 a.m. - 4th Sunday in Advent - Christian Life Center

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20

6:30 p.m. - 4th Week in Advent - Christian Life Center

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24

10 a.m. - 4th Sunday in Advent Worship - Sanctuary
3 p.m. - Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship - Sanctuary
4:15 p.m. - Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship - Sanctuary
5:30 p.m. - Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship - Sanctuary
11 p.m. - Christmas Eve Candlelight & Communion
Worship - Sanctuary

MONDAY, DECEMBER 25

10 a.m. - Christmas Day Communion Worship - Sanctuary

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27

6:30 p.m. - Carol Sing & Worship - Sanctuary

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31

8:30 a.m. - Communion Worship - Sanctuary
10:30 a.m. - Communion Worship - CLC

Christmas Poinsettias

If you would like to purchase a poinsettia to decorate our Sanctuary, please place an order form (available in the church office) with payment in the boxes located in the Narthex & CLC Lobby areas by **Sunday, December 17.**

GIVING TREES AT TRINITY

CHURCHES UNITED GIVING TREE

Select a tag from the Churches United for the Homeless giving tree in the narthex through **Sunday, December 10.** All giving tree gifts will directly benefit children & adults staying at the shelter. Gifts should be returned new, unwrapped and with the tree tag to Trinity's main office by **Wednesday, December 13.** For more information, contact Amanda Peterson at amandajpeterson@gmail.com.

ELCA GOOD GIFTS TREE

This year, there will be an ELCA Good Gifts tree in the CLC and Sanctuary lobbies. You can choose an ornament and purchase something to help someone in need, like a chick, a pair of goats, or even a latrine by using the special envelopes provided on the tables next to the trees. Place your envelope in the offering plate, and take home the ornament as a reminder of your giving! We hope you will

participate in this ministry supporting our global church. Gift cards are also available if you wish to send your gift to someone else this Christmas.

HATS & MITTENS

Please share the gift of hats, mittens, scarves, and gloves with those in need through the New Life Center box in the Narthex.



DOES TRINITY MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Some of the questions that financial consultants often ask a congregation, especially when they're working on developing stewardship, is "Why are you here?" "What difference do you make to your community?" Or, more bluntly perhaps, "If you closed your doors tomorrow, would the community notice?" These are challenging questions—questions that quickly get to the heart of a congregation's mission and ministry.

For Trinity, when we think about our preschool, our Lost & Found recovery ministry, and the number of events that we regularly host in our facility, or when we consider our worship services (which we also offer on the radio, television or online), or our wonderful youth ministry and music ministry, or the educational and fellowship opportunities we provide—not to mention our support of synod ministries, or the wider church, or the ministry and mission we support across the globe—the answer is clear: yes, Trinity does make a difference!

Which is why you are invited to consider making an extra gift to our mission and ministry this month, to help us meet our financial obligations for 2017 and to set us on a firm footing for the coming year.

Trinity makes a difference. Can you make a difference in your gift to Trinity this month?

Thank you for your support.



COUNCIL UPDATE

FINANCIAL REPORT

October 2017

<u>Income</u>	\$ 109,423	<u>Year-to-Date Income</u>	\$ 970,298
<u>Expenses</u>	\$ 116,399	<u>Year-to-Date Expenses</u>	\$ 1,076,485
<u>Balance</u>	\$ (6,977)	<u>Year-to-Date Balances</u>	\$ (106,187)

Thank you for your continued and faithful support of our mission and ministry. Online giving options are available on Trinity's website at www.trinitymhd.org. If you would like information about "Joyful-E-Giving", our electronic contribution program, please contact the church office.

MOBILE GIVING APP

Mobile app giving is available for both iPhones (App Store) and Android (Google Play). Search "GivePlus Church" to download the app to your phone. Please contact the church office with questions.

BUILDING COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Building Committee recommended and the Council approved the firm of Zerr Berg Architects to move forward with evaluation of the facility and creation of capital improvement plans. The Building Committee anticipates presenting a proposal to the congregation at the annual meeting on **Sunday, February 11**, at 6:30 p.m.

SIGNAGE

A motion to purchase and post entrance signs banning firearms from the premises was approved.

EMERGENCY PLAN

A draft of an Emergency Plan was introduced to the Council to be reviewed and presented for approval at the December meeting.

BECAUSE OF YOU...

A number of pledge cards for 2018 have been returned. If you haven't had a chance to return yours, please take a moment to complete your card and return it in the offering plate, drop it in the mail, or bring it to the church office. If you would like try auto-giving for 2018, please contact Trinity's bookkeeper, Ryan George (ryan@trinitymhd.org) to get set-up. Pledged commitments are an essential part of planning for the upcoming year's budget. Thank you for your support of the life and mission of Trinity Lutheran Church. It's all *because of you!*

●●● NEWS & NOTES

CONCORDIA HOLIDAY BRASS CONCERT

Join us on **Friday, December 8**, at 7:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary for a special holiday brass concert performed by brass players of the Concordia Band under the direction of Dr. Peter Haberman. The concert will feature works by Biebl, Gabrieli, Anderson, Susato Vaughn Williams, and Tschesnokoff. Come enjoy a joyful evening full of your favorite holiday songs for free!



BEER & CAROLS

Join us on **Sunday, December 10**, from 7-9 p.m. at Junkyard Brewing Co. in Moorhead for Beer & Carols! You won't want to miss this! All are welcome!

PRAYER CHAIN

For the month of November, the prayer chain will be praying for members whose last names begin with the letters **W-Z**.

SCHOOL OF DISCIPLESHIP: DECEMBER

DECEMBER 3 – Honoring our Neighbor's Faith: Seventh-Day Adventist Church

DECEMBER 10 – No School of Discipleship
(Children's Christmas worship services)

DECEMBER 17 – A Look at the Season of Christmas

DECEMBER 24 – No School of Discipleship

DECEMBER 31 – No School of Discipleship

THE MASTER CHORALE OF F-M

The Master Chorale will present their Christmas Concert at Concordia College on **December 7-10**. The Friday and Saturday presentations are dinner concerts. Visit fmmasterchorale.org/tickets or call 218-287-6312.

OLIVE WOOD CARVINGS

The Global Mission Committee will be selling olive wood carvings in the CLC Lobby from 9:30-10:30 a.m. on **December 10** and **December 17**.

FRIDAY FELLOWSHIP

Friday Fellowship will meet at 2 p.m. on **December 15** in the CLC. Pastor Simon will give devotions for us, and Rachel Horan will direct one of the Moorhead High School Choirs for our program. We will all enjoy a Christmas potluck lunch, so come and join us for a festive afternoon!

●●● BUILDING COMMITTEE UPDATE

Over the past month, the Building Committee has received proposals and viewed presentations from three local architectural firms to provide professional design services to Trinity. The services that Trinity has requested are a Facility Systems Condition Assessment Report, Total Facility Master Planning, and Schematic Designs. After review of the proposals and presentations, the Building Committee recommended and Council voted to retain Zerr Berg Architects (ZBA) to provide professional design services to Trinity. The Building Committee has met and will meet a number of more times with ZBA to steer and guide the design process. The assessment and design work has already begun. Mechanical and electrical systems consultants have been on site and surveyed our building. ZBA has begun information gathering and the master planning process. They have also been on site to survey the building, started informational meetings with staff and user groups, and are in the preliminary stages of a schematic design to solve Trinity's building-related constraints to its ministry & integrate other recommendations from the Dream Team Report.

The goal is for all final documents to be delivered to Council, with recommended actions from the Building Committee, in January 2018. A presentation of all designs and documents is anticipated at the Congregational Meeting on Sunday, February 11, at 6:30 p.m. in the CLC.

TRINITY FOUNDATION BOARD

The Foundation board met on October 26. John Andreasen presented the third quarter financial report as compiled by Foundation accountant, Tom Elliott. It was noted total assets as of September 30, 2017, were at 2.7 million as compared to 2.3 million at the end of third quarter of last year.

Jim Hausmann reported the Foundation's total portfolio is 2.7 million with an analyzed return of 12% to date. Beginning on June 30, Tom Stadum installed an advisory fee of 0.7% for ease of tracking the cost of investing. The board approved the Foundation Investment Committee's recommendation to continue the 5% spending rate for 2018. Jim Hausmann announced he will be resigning from his position on the Foundation Board and Investment Committee at the end of 2017.

Council President Alison Andreasen reported the financial deficit continues to increase and is currently just under \$100,000 at the end of third quarter. Giving is up over 2016. This year's Stewardship emphasis "Because of you..." is underway. The Building Committee continues to meet and has narrowed the field to three firms who will proceed. The Preschool bus has been delivered and is in daily use transporting children after school. Lost and Found may be revived as a result of reGROUP's closure. Pathways will be relocating into the office space in the former insurance building in Trinity's east parking lot in mid-November.

The board approved this year's \$8,000 ELCA Capital Campaign gift to be designated as follows: \$4,000 to Renewing Congregations and \$4,000 to Young Adults in Global Mission.

The board approved the following grants: Bio Girls in the amount of \$1,000 for lesson plan supplies, t-shirts for girls and mentors, and some overhead; \$2,000 to Chira Global for honoraria, printing, and food for meetings; Trinity Lutheran Church in the amount of \$15,840 for non-budgeted maintenance costs; \$3,000 to Trinity Preschool for 6 staff members to attend "Handwriting without Tears" and "Early Pre-K Math" training in Minneapolis; \$2,500 for the purchase of 500 copies of "The Essential Lutheran Handbook" the 500th Anniversary Edition for the congregation (1 per family) and new members. The board also approved \$5049 to Megan Caspar for Tuition to Seminary from the Project Seed Seminary Fund designated for seminary support.

The board received an invitation from Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch to hold the Foundation Board Meeting at their facility and tour their facility. The board accepted their invitation and will meet on **December 7** beginning at 3:30 p.m. to allow time for the tour.

TRINITY FOUNDATION CONCERT SERIES

Mark these dates on your calendar for this season's Trinity Foundation Concert Series:

DECEMBER 16, 2017	Lessons & Carols of Kings presented by Trinity Cathedral Choir	APRIL 21, 2018	Great Plains Harmony in concert
JANUARY 13 & 14, 2018	Rutter's Requiem presented by the FM Choral Artists	JUNE 16, 2018	Minnesota All State Lutheran Choir
FEBRUARY 9, 2018	Hymn Festival featuring organist David Cherwien		

LESSONS & CAROLS OF KINGS



SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16 | 7 P.M. | SANCTUARY

Following in the tradition of King's College, Cambridge, join us for this classic opportunity to prepare hearts & minds for the Christmas season. Community members will share lessons and the Trinity Cathedral Choir will lead us in carols.

Trinity members have enjoyed this tradition for many, many years. Hopefully you'll make this a part of your annual preparations for Christmas too! A free-will offering will be collected in aid of World Hunger.

CHARITABLE ROLLOVER OPTIONS



Recently retired, one of our members now spends a lot of her time volunteering at her local food bank several times a week. Feeling blessed to be financially comfortable at this point in her life, she enjoys giving of her time and money to some of her favorite nonprofit organizations. But when she learned that her taxes were going to increase next year, she wondered how she could continue to make charitable gifts with a lower income.

A financial adviser informed her that because she is going to turn 70½ this year, she would have to begin taking distributions from her individual retirement account (IRA). Because this would increase her income, it meant her tax

rate would increase too. She wanted to find a way to save money and reduce her taxes for the year.

Knowing her church is a trusted resource, she talked with us and learned that through the charitable rollover option she could reduce her income and, in turn, her taxes for the year by transferring money directly from her IRA to Trinity Lutheran Church.

DID YOU KNOW?

Knowing she wouldn't need the money she was required to withdraw from her IRA this year, our member had the distribution directly transferred to Trinity, which allowed her to avoid the tax she would have paid on that income. Since this type of transfer doesn't count as income or a charitable donation, it doesn't interfere with her other charitable deductions.

An individual who is 70½ or older must take a required minimum distribution from his or her IRA every year. With the IRA charitable rollover option, individuals can transfer up to \$100,000 per year directly to charity, which satisfies their required minimum distribution.

To benefit this year, your IRA rollover gift needs to be made before December 31. If you have questions about how an IRA charitable rollover may work for you, contact the church office at 218-236-1333.

PASTORAL ACTS

October 2017

NEW MEMBERS RECEIVED:

Kathy Anderson
James & Angela Bachman
William, Benjamin
Mark Barnhouse and Cindy Urness
Emma Barnhouse
Breck Cogswell
Richard Flieth
Hayden Goethe
Luke & Tiffany Goethe
Jacob, Emily, Jordan
Larry & Hazel Grooters **
Tara Hollenbeck
Richard Kroepflin
Bethany Leadbetter
Roger Lemon
Bobbi Jo Singleton
Rylee
Bob & Mary Stenson
Dalton Swanson

** Associates

CONFIRMED:

Hannah Shirley Babbitt
Gabrielle Louise Bahe
Landon Robert Douglas Berry
Zachary Reid Brusseau
Jordan Renee Carlson
Hunter Andrew Covey
Owen Michael Cullen
Maccoy Jeremy Gregoire
Jonah Samuel William Hanson
Juliana Marie Hanson
Hailey Renee Hedlund
Laura Elizabeth Jensen
Holden David Klinnert
Brookston Lee Knudson
Paige Elizabeth McArthur
Lauren Mary Melton
Taylor Kristen Melton

BAPTISMS:

Veda Jo Nelson
Harvey Oscar Anderson
Louie Hubert Asplin
Jaylen Kansas Kulzer
Grace Alexandra Fisher

Cade Johnson Moilanen
Caleb Benjamin Norris
Chase Christian Olson
Matthew Wayne Pollock
Sarah Elizabeth Ramstad
Sydney Jane Reierson
Destiny Carol Amelia Rock
Angus McCae Wegge Schlick
Jacob Allen Schroeder
Josefine Claire Rock
Kate Elizabeth Stafford
Riley Ann Stallman
Skylar Steven Timmer
Ashanti Selena Valdez
Zachary Michael Wolf
Annika Lynne Yoney
Nathan Riley Zurn

WEDDINGS:

Luke Driscoll & Angela Mott
Tyler Gigstead & Laura Anderson
Matthew Vangerud & Megan Richer

ARTIST SPOTLIGHTS



EVAN BALKO has a great talent in photography and videography. He is employed at Concordia College, Moorhead in the Marketing/Communications department as the photographer and videographer for the college. His major is communications, and he also took some classes from the art department to better hone his skills at capturing the best pictures of people and the hub of activity. He and a friend received a grant to videograph Fargo-Moorhead and all of its activity. If you are interested in seeing it, go to www.youtube.com/watch?v=PDDBI5wpE6k. Evan is a Trinity member and is married to Hannah Balko.



LOIS BALKO has been an artist most of her life. She received her BA in Studio Art, and Apparel and Design from Concordia in 1999. Her preferred choice of work is paints—acrylics and oils, and drawing. Drawn to the color of nature, the focus of many of her paintings is the natural world and the many forms it takes. She has displayed a few items for the spring galas at the Plains Art Museum and has done some work for Concordia College. She is also a Master Gardener and works at Bloomfield Garden Center near Sabin. Lois and her husband Ron are Trinity members. They have three sons, Brendan (Kristen), Colin, and Evan (Hannah), and one granddaughter, Millie.

You can view Lois & Evan's work in the gallery hall near the church office.

BOY SCOUT TROOP 637



HELLO, this is Ethan from Troop 637. Last month, we did some merit badges and some team building activities. We also had our Court of Honor where scouts got the merit badges they earned and sometimes a rank advancement. A rank advancement usually requires the scouts to earn a certain amount of merit badges, complete a certain amount of service hours, and have a position in the troop (like my position is Historian.) After that we meet with our scoutmaster and the other leaders to see if they think that we should earn our rank advancement. We have had several scouts advance and earn the rank of Eagle, so come on down to the board to see our troop's newest Eagles!

In December, we will be having fewer meetings, so we are doing a service project. We are also doing troop elections where scouts can run for positions in the troop, so this might be my last newsletter to you guys.

So, have a merry Christmas and a happy New Year everyone.

Stay warm out there.

ETHAN SCULTHORP, TROOP 637 HISTORIAN

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

To prepare for our children's Christmas worship services, students are practicing each Sunday and Wednesday during the Sunday School hour (9:35-10:25 a.m.) and the Wednesday School hour (4:45-5:30 p.m.). We invite and encourage all children to attend Sunday School or Wednesday School regularly during this time of preparation. This year, all ages will be together! You may have your child sing at either service, or both—parent's choice.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

- December 9:** Dress rehearsal for all at 10 a.m. in the Sanctuary
- December 10:** Sunday service at 10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary
- December 13:** Wednesday service at 6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary

*Due to the Children's Christmas Worship service on **Wednesday, December 13**, we will not be having Wednesday School. Children's choirs will meet at the usual time.*

CHRISTMAS VACATION SCHEDULE

Sunday School will not meet on **December 24 or 31**. Wednesday School will not meet on **December 27**. All children's activities will resume on **January 3**.

KINDERGARTEN FAITH MILESTONE

On November 12, kindergartners received their Spark Story Bibles during the 10:30 a.m. worship service in the CLC. And we had a very special guest—Noah! Yes, he was the Noah who built the ark! Noah helped kindergartners read all about him in their new Spark Story Bibles.



"A BACKWARDS CHRISTMAS"

*presented by the children of
Trinity Lutheran Church*

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10

at 10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13

at 6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary



Top: Our guest Noah reading to the kindergartners!
Middle: Kindergartners receiving their Story Bibles.
Bottom: Children "preparing" for the Christmas service.

FRIENDS IN FAITH

DEAR FIF YOUTH & FAMILIES,

We hope you and your family are enjoying the season and finding time to celebrate Advent in anticipation for Christmas. We are grateful for your support and participation for and with your youth. Any way we can encourage our family and friends and be encouraged ourselves regarding faith is so valuable. Life can really be hard—even heartbreaking. We all need reassurance that God is with us in the joys, and especially in the difficult times. May you continue to know God's presence in your life. We have many wonderful events and opportunities happening in the coming months. We hope you will take time to look at and join the following opportunities.



TRINITY NIGHT AT FARGO FORCE

Trinity members and friends of all ages are invited to join us at the Fargo Force game for a family night out! This is a wonderful event for all ages and a great opportunity to do something fun in our community! The deadline for purchasing tickets is **Wednesday, December 6**, and payment is due when you turn in your ticket request form. Ticket order forms can be picked up in the church office or printed from our website at www.fifstreet.com. Checks can be made to Friends in Faith. The cost is \$13 for ages 3+ (those under the age of 3 and sitting on a parents lap get in for free). Tickets can be picked up the night of the game at will call. This is also a Make-a-Wish night for the Force, so \$3 from every ticket purchased will go to the Make-a-Wish Foundation!

SUNDAY MORNING LIVE

7th – 12th grade youth are invited to gather in the Large Youth Room on Sunday mornings from 9:35-10:20 a.m. Sunday Morning Live creates a space for youth to encounter God on Sunday mornings through speakers, presentations, and devotions. This is an opportunity that is unlike anything offered on Wednesday nights! We hope you will join us!

SOLACE

Solace is a group for young adults who are between the ages of 18-25 years old. We gather each month for a time to meet other young adults, check in on what's happening in our lives, and continue to grow in our faith through a Bible study. The group focuses on a different topic for each meeting. Solace is open to all young adults, not just Trinity members. We hope you will join us **Tuesday, December 5**, from 8-9:30 p.m. at Atomic Coffee in Downtown Fargo.

CONFIRMATION ON FIF STREET (7TH-10TH GRADERS AND FAMILIES)

7TH-9TH GRADE CONFIRMATION

Parents: Remember that **Wednesday, December 5**, is a parent and youth confirmation night! We will have a speaker joining us for the night. Each youth must bring at least one parent or guardian with them. Confirmation begins at 7:15 p.m. in the Christian Life Center, and families are encouraged to join us for worship before confirmation at 6:30 p.m. in the CLC.

PARENT & YOUTH CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION NIGHT

7th-9th Grade Parent & Youth Christmas Celebration Night is **Wednesday, December 20**, from 6:30-8:00 p.m. beginning in the Christian Life Center. With our college mentors busy with finals and leaving for Christmas break, this evening is a fun and meaningful experience in the midst of the Christmas season. Youth are asked to bring at least one parent or one adult with them for the evening. Food, conversation, worship, and thoughtful activities will fill the time. There will be pizza served from 5-6:15 p.m. in the CLC. We will not meet for confirmation again until Wednesday, January 3.

7TH GRADE ACOLYTES & 8TH GRADE HOST FAMILIES

As part of confirmation, we ask that each 7th grader acolyte in the Sanctuary 4 times throughout the year, and that 8th graders and their families host in the CLC 4 times throughout the year. Please go to this link to sign up if you have not already done so: <http://bit.ly/serveternity>. If you have signed up for a service and are no longer able to help, please let us know by calling the main office or emailing Ashley at ashley@trinitymhd.org.

FIF STREET HIGH (9TH-12TH GRADERS AND FAMILIES)

SENIOR HIGH CHRISTMAS PARTY

All Senior High youth and adult leaders are invited to join us on **Wednesday, December 20**, at 6:30 p.m. in the CLC for a Christmas celebration right after worship! There will be snacks, cider, cocoa, and more! Wear your favorite Christmas attire (Santa hats, sweaters, etc.)!

COST & JOY OF DISCIPLESHIP DINNER

The Cost of Joy and Discipleship Dinner will be on **Tuesday, December 12**, from 5-8 p.m. This is a wonderful opportunity for parents and youth to serve together along with other Trinity members and the community. This is a Christmas dinner & celebration for families transitioning out of homelessness. This dinner can count as an in-house service opportunity for 9th grade confirmation students. If you are interested and would like to help, contact Kathy or Ashley.

FRIENDS IN FAITH

SENIOR HIGH SMALL GROUPS

Friends are such an important part of life. Being part of a supportive network of people is essential to dealing with all the situations we face in life. These groups meet two Wednesdays a month from October through April, and the other Wednesday nights are malt nights or large group activities. The groups discuss relevant topics, study scripture, have fun together, eat great food, do service projects, and more. They become another supportive group in your network of relationships. This year we are changing things up: the people in your small group will change each week! There will also be something to collect from each of the small group on-site nights! If you are interested in being a part of small groups, contact Ashley or Kathy so we can get you connected with a group.

SENIOR HIGH YOUTH:
MARK **SUNDAY, JANUARY 21, 2018**
AS **YOUTH SUNDAY.**

FIF STREET TRIPS

SKI & SNOWBOARD TRIP

Senior High youth, join us for the Ski and Snowboard Trip to Bridger Bowl and Big Sky in Bozeman, Montana! We leave **Friday, February 16**, and return by 6 a.m. on **Tuesday, February 20**. We'll spend two days at Bridger and one at Big Sky. This is a fantastic trip for skiers and snowboarders of all abilities. In the evenings, we'll relax, hot tub, swim, and enjoy group time. Check out the brochure on our website or pick one up from the info desk or the youth room. Register by January 10.

HOUSTON YOUTH GATHERING

There is still room for your youth to sign up for this trip! Gatherings happen once every three years. This is a trip that your youth will remember forever. The Gathering Theme, "This Changes Everything", will help us understand how God is at work through all of us in our day-to-day lives. Friends in Faith will be traveling to Houston June 21- July 3, 2018. No one should decide not to participate because of money. Each youth can earn most or all of their trip cost through fundraising. If you have special needs, talk to Kathy or Ashley. Your information will be respected and kept confidential.

FIF STREET HAPPENINGS

SUNDAY, DEC. 3 - Sunday Morning Live (7-12th graders) at 9:35 a.m. in the Large Youth Room

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 6 - Wednesday Dinner at 5:15 p.m. in the CLC; Worship at 6:30 p.m. in the CLC; 7-9th Grade Parent & Youth Confirmation at 6:30 p.m. in the CLC; Sr. High Malts at 8:15 p.m. in the Large Youth Room

SUNDAY, DEC. 10 - Sunday Morning Live (7-12th graders) at 9:35 a.m. in the Large Youth Room

TUESDAY, DEC. 12 - Cost & Joy of Discipleship Christmas Dinner & Celebration at 5 p.m. in the CLC

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 13 - Wednesday Dinner at 5:15 p.m. in the CLC; Jr. High Gathering Meeting at 5:30 p.m. in the Large Youth Room; Worship at 6:30 p.m. in the CLC; 7-9th Grade Confirmation at 6:30 p.m. in the CLC; Sr. High Large Group Christmas Party at 8:15 p.m. in the Large Youth Room

SUNDAY, DEC. 17 - Sunday Morning Live (7-12th graders) at 9:35 a.m. in the Large Youth Room

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 20 - Wednesday Dinner at 5:15 p.m. in the CLC; Jr. High Gathering Meeting at 5:30 p.m. in the Large Youth Room; Worship at 6:30 p.m. in the CLC; 7-9th Grade Confirmation Parent & Youth Christmas Night at 6:30 p.m. in the CLC

SUNDAY, DEC. 24 - No Sunday Morning Live; Worship at 10 a.m. in the Sanctuary

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 27 - No activities; Worship at 6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary



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YOUNG ADULTS IN GLOBAL MISSION

WARRAMBUI RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTRE

Warrambui Retreat and Conference Centre is my new home and workplace. Before I dive in, I want to give a little background information. 'Bui' is located in the town of Murrumbateman, which is 40 km outside of Canberra-Australia's national capital. Because of where it is located, it makes for a wonderful place for school groups to stay while they visit Canberra and learn more about Australia, however Warrambui is much more than a convenient location. I have found that Warrambui is a place for spiritual growth and for a stranger to be welcomed as family. It is a non-profit centre that supports the ministry of the New South Wales Lutheran Church, with a mission to impact the lives of people through the power of the Holy Spirit, by being a loving, vibrant, and growing community with the heart of Jesus.

Now if you would have asked me what I thought this year was going to look like a few months ago, I might have had the courage to tell you that I really was not sure. Questions like "how I would I fit into a community of Christians who have a sound faith? How would I be able to impact the lives of others when I struggled to see how God is using me?" This is when I am reminded of accompaniment. I have found in my time being here that I am more connected to and have a better understanding of my faith than I have ever before. I am surrounded by a community that allows me to ask the tough questions and encourages me to reflect on why I think the way I do.

Warrambui offers a post high school, gap year internship program (ARISE) for young adults that focuses on learning to serve others before ourselves. A part of the program is a weekly study working towards a certificate in Christian ministry and theology. Even though I am not working towards this certificate, I am able to be a part of the Bible study and conversation which has definitely taught me a lot.

For the 2017 year, there are 5 Australian interns from various parts of New South Wales. I truly feel blessed in the ways the interns have welcomed me to be a part of the community and their friend group. I work alongside them daily in the kitchen, and cleaning the site, but outside of work we truly enjoy each others company. We have been able to exchange many stories about our different culture experiences and traditions. I remember the first week I was living at Bui and made peanut butter and jelly toast. Now, from the looks I got and the conversations that started, it is safe to say PB&J together is not a cultural norm here. The interns have definitely helped me realize cultural differences and how things that may seem very normal for me are strange to them.

My work week depends on what size groups are visiting, and currently during this season, most days are busy with



groups coming at all different points in the week. Every morning, the Warrambui staff meets in the office for our daily devotion. Someone new is assigned to lead every day, which gives each one of us the opportunity to share our God sightings for the week and how we feel God is present in our lives. We end devo in prayer, followed by a run through of what each person has on for the day. I find devo to be one of my favorite times of the day and a great way to start the morning. To me, it is a reminder that God is our focus and that he equips us with the skills we need so that we can be the hands and feet at work for his kingdom.

BACK2BASE

Back2Base was a week long Christian camp in early October, for youth grades 7-12 that focused on getting to know Jesus and what he means in our lives. This year's theme was masquerade and looking at our identity in Christ—what does it mean to be a child of God? I was able to be a camp leader and this experience was one that I won't forget. The energy, excitement, passion, and love that the campers brought really helped make this a memorable week. I was able to talk to and learn from many of the campers—from their excitement to tell me about Australian traditions and ask me questions about growing up in the States, to asking the tough questions about God—some that even I struggle to understand. I found it refreshing to be surrounded by Christians who are so engaged with learning about God and who help remind you of God's love and presence.

**NICOLE WESTRUM, YAGM
AUSTRALIA**

TRINITY WOMEN

“IT’S BEGINNING TO LOOK A LOT LIKE CHRISTMAS...”

Everywhere you go, the commercial sounds of Christmas start right with Halloween! Looking ahead to the joy and wonder of our Savior’s birth brings a different kind of hope and anticipation than those sounds of rushing, pushing and anxiety to make this that perfect holiday. But, hopefully we can all step back and revel in the joy and beauty of this Christmas. It can be a lonely time, but know that we are not alone. We are in the family of God, who loves us and is watching over us.

In November, we had our very successful bake sale that added \$1579.25 to our account in baked goods sales and \$185 from our coupon book sales. This totals \$1764.25. Thank you to all of you who contributed with food, donations, time and energy. A special thank you to Lucia Schroeder and her lefse making machine for working so hard and burning the midnight hours. Also, I had an angel in the form of Carla Anderson who appeared Saturday morning with some wonderful jelly. But, more than that, she simply and quietly stepped in to price items, cut bars and support me with her presence for most of the morning. She was the answer to my friend Loraine Kummer’s prayer. You all are a gift and you are very much appreciated.

Unfortunately, **our Christmas Potluck scheduled for Monday, December 4, has been canceled** due to the blizzard warning. Please stay home & stay safe during the dangerous driving conditions!



And, looking further ahead, I am so excited that my friends from Tuckered Out have agreed to perform for us with their fun Americana sound on **Thursday, February 15**. I’m so excited for you to hear these gifted friends!

“And keep those carols singing right within your hearts.”

MARY JOHNSON, TLCW PRESIDENT

TLC CREATIVE COOKS

We’re the Trinity Lutheran Church Creative Cooks! On your behalf, we take contributions of produce from local businesses, consumers and farmers and transform them into a meal for +/- 100 people at Churches United for the Homeless. We serve in the kitchen in even months of the year on the third Tuesday of the month from 3 p.m.-7 p.m.

Our next kitchen shift will be **Tuesday, December 19**.

We can always grab another apron! Come and join us! Call the church office to join the TLCCC crew.



JERUSALEM JOURNAL

I'm warming up some shoreba (soup) while waiting for the Sfiha (Sfiha) to cook. If you don't know, Sfiha is my favorite food item here currently. I'm so obsessed that our friends here know it...and make it for me often.

Im Ahmed (the mother of Ahmed) watches the children a few days a week. She also cleans and cooks. Our life has significantly improved in the time we have known her.

The Sfiha is from the stash in the freezer. The shoreba was made fresh tonight, for my throat.

She arrived at her prayer time, so she used our living room rug as a prayer rug, offering her salats with whispered words. Pausing. Bending. Kneeling. Touching the ground with her face. Repeat. And again.

I had to quick change into my clerics after helping Mo nap. He stayed sleeping until after I left. Jo sat on the couch with Im Ahmed, sorting red lentils. "We have to save some for my mom," she said. She was sleeping when I returned home. She played so hard today with two of her YAGM friends.

On the way to church, tea with lemon and honey in hand, I learned that I couldn't actually sing. My voice was shut up in its box. My game plan was to save my voice for the part of Psalm 46 I was asked to read—and then try to sing A Mighty Fortress. And I could not sing. My voice squeaked to a halt. What is a Lutheran pastor to do, unable to sing on this 500th anniversary?

With a graciousness I could not afford, I got to listen. I listened to a Finnish pastor sing the Swedish words of Du Ar Helig. I listened to the congregation sing A Mighty Fortress in Arabic, German and English. I listened to a beautiful children's choir from Beit Sahour sing hal-lulujah. (This was my absolute favorite part). I noticed too. Noticed the way that German words swish and float in the jowls of native speakers. Noticed Catholic and Orthodox guests sitting in attendance, welcomed to the front. Noticed the inscription on the altar from 1898. I looked up to the walls and wondered what prayers they have held. What faithful they have gathered. What bodies they have seen fed.

While my voice matters, I could see once more that we speak and sing and pray from a community. I was carried by those who have held that space before and those who filled that space now.

But, when it came time for the Nicene Creed, we were all instructed to confess in our mother tongue, but not so loud that our neighbors couldn't also say the Creed in their native tongue. So while the whole congregation had to whisper, I shouted. WE BELIEVE! It was no louder than Colin, sitting next to me.

I fed Mo so he can sleep. He was waiting up for me. I drink the shoreba from the bowl like a cup. Standing in the kitchen. No spoon. Leaning against the counter. I couldn't wait any longer. It's warmth was grace, soothing and unearned.

PASTOR JENI GRANGAARD YAGM COUNTRY COORDINATOR



Above: The Rev Jeni Grangaard taking in some instructions along with the other clergy. Photo courtesy of Ben Gray/ELCJHL.

Below: A choir from Beit Sahour offered music during communion. Photo courtesy of Ben Gray/ELCJHL.

LOST & FOUND RECOVERY CENTER



CLAIMING YOUR PEACE & JOY THIS CHRISTMAS SEASON

Everyone deserves to have peace and joy in their lives. We are especially aware of this during the Christmas season. However, when one's world has been rocked by addiction, peace and joy can be destroyed.

Peace is defined as being free from violence, being safe, or being calm. The calm is understood as internal tranquility or serenity, peace amidst the storm.

Joy is different from happiness. Happiness is something that is more external, relating to situations or other people. Joy comes from deep within. It has to do with who you are, your values, and your purpose. Joy does not disappear because you have a flat tire, bad weather or experience tragedies.

A large part of recovery (for families as well as loved ones) is about building and maintaining those innermost qualities. This involves defining and maintaining your meaning in life, ability to be grateful, personal value system (and living within that), sense of awe, self-acceptance, faith, trust and your relationship with God.

Christmas is also a good time to reach out to others. We can show God how much we appreciate the birth of his Son by spreading his love in the lives of others. We can nurture ourselves on this special day, as we nurture the broken heart of another.

Joy and peace do not happen because one wants or deserves them; rather they are gained through the love of Jesus Christ. Our loving God does not expect us to be flawless. He loves us in our humanity and wants to help us achieve peace, joy and happiness

BETH BRANTNER

WWW.LOSTANDFOUNDRECOVERYCENTER.ORG

LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES



DEAR TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH,

Paul wrote to the Galatians that we are “freed in Christ to serve our neighbors.” As we commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, it is fitting to remember that our freedom in Christ is tied to our freedom to love and serve our neighbors.

As the social ministry arm of the six synods of the ELCA in Minnesota, Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota (LSS) empowers your congregation to service in more ways than you can ever know. LSS touches the lives of

1 out of every 65 Minnesotans, serving on behalf of the faithful in every county in the state. Through these ministries we share, Trinity Lutheran reaches more neighbors across the state than any one congregation could reach alone.

It is unlikely that the members of Trinity Lutheran will meet many of the neighbors we serve together, but know this: you have changed their lives in beautiful ways, empowering and encouraging God's beloved children to lives of independence, well-being, safety and community.

It is a joy and an honor serving Christ with you, and living in the freedom of the Christian for the glory of God and the good of the neighbor. We look forward to visiting with your congregation in 2018!

Thank you,

PASTOR KATHRYN A. TIEDE

Senior Director of Church Partnerships & Philanthropy
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Trinity Handbells
Nat Dickey
Trinity Brass

MISSION

Philip and Lou Marie Knutson
Missionaries in South Africa
Colin and Jeni Grangaard
YAGM Missionaries in Jerusalem



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**
God's work. Our hands.

Trinity Lutheran Church

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