

Trinity Lutheran Church

A welcoming faith community
living together in God's love to
share the joy of Jesus Christ.

TIDINGS



301 Faith Partners (FP) — Working Together

301 FP QUILTERS The 301 Quilters meet **Fridays from 10am –12 pm** in Room 2. All are welcome - male, female, any age, any skill level, & as often as you are able. Come, meet, and connect with others in the 301 family. All you need to bring is your helpful heart and your favorite coffee mug or water bottle. Hope to see you Fridays.

301 FP FELLOWSHIP GET-TOGETHERS take place the **2nd Thursday of the month, December 9 at 3:30 pm**, the location is picked closer to the date, so check the e-News. All gatherings are informal and no RSVP needed.

301 FP PRAYER GROUP The Spirit continues to be doing something new at Trinity, as St Paul's, Mary of Magdala, & Trinity continue to live out our commitment to the 301 Covenanted Partnership. The 301 Partners Prayer Group meets the **last Monday of the month, December 27 at 10:30 am** in the Fireside Room. If you have questions or comments please email Pat Wiedower: pathw27@gmail.com. The 301 Faith Partners Prayer Group invites all of us to be praying for three intentions:

- 1) To give thanks for how far we have come
- 2) To listen and discern The Spirits plan for our future
- 3) To pray and offer support for our Pastors and those in leadership

301 FP TURKEY ROUND UP A huge Thank You to all who donated a turkey to the Food Bank this year! Some of us even donated 3 or more! We had a total of 65 turkeys- 5 short of our goal and 11 more than last year! Total weight was 935 pounds! A check for \$50.00 was another generous act of thanks! And thank you Jim and Margie Karuzas for helping me today!

301 FP ADVENT WORSHIP & SOUP SUPPERS Join us Wednesdays. December 6, 13, & 20 for Soup Supper at 5:45 pm & Holden Prayer at 6:30 pm. This service will be hybrid, to join via Zoom use the same link that is used for weekend worship services.



Trinity Readers Group

Trinity Readers will read a mystery this month and will discuss it on **Monday, December 4 at 9:30 am**. British author Richard Osman in his novel *The Thursday Murder Club* writes about a group of residents in a senior community in England who gather weekly to try to solve cold cases -- and then they find themselves in the middle of a real one! As well as being a "whodunit," it is a book filled with humor and commentary about aging. Looking ahead to January, we will meet on the second Monday, January 8, at 9:30 am to enjoy brunch together and select our books for 2024. Be thinking about one fiction book and one non-fiction book that you would like to recommend. Join us in person at **9:30 am** in Room 2 in the east wing or on Zoom: us02web.zoom.us/j/85358221885?pwd=RWx6dTEwRzIzc0xuNmtkaWFzZbzZldz09

TGIF in December

December is a busy month, so we will skip TGIF, join us again on January 12! Remember water and some drinks are provided but bring your own beverage and an app/dessert to share. If you have questions and or would like to sign up to Host, please contact Liz Johnson at 402-320-3699 or lizj8485@gmail.com.

Adult Forum

December 3 Tim Snyder will continue discussion on the latest social statement the ELCA is in the process of developing entitled "Government and Civic Engagement in the United States: Discipleship in a Democracy."

December 10 Grace Wilkins from Summitstone Health Partners will update us on the work of one of Trinity's benevolence partners

December 17 Cheryl Backsen has invited Britta Koenen to join us on Zoom and share with us her experience as a YAGUM (Young Adults in Global Mission) in Palestine.

December 24 & December 31 No Forum. Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

Lectors Wanted

If you can read...you can volunteer! It is easy to be a Lector/Scripture reader on Sunday mornings. The readings will be sent to you by Thursday of your assigned week. Sign up by calling or emailing Jill Rose at 307-760-6848 or allegro1351@gmail.com. Thank you so much for volunteering, Trinity could not be a successful, influential, loving congregation without your commitment and involvement.

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH



www.trinitylutheranfc.org

Phone: (970) 482-1226

Preschool: (970) 221-9852

After Hours Emergency:
(970)-400-7252

OFFICE HOURS

MON-THURS 9AM-3PM

WORSHIP TIMES

SAT: 5 PM | SUN: 10:30 AM

Senior Pastor

Rick Reiten

pastorrick@trinitylutheranfc.org

Education & Family Minister

Deacon Katie Kline

katie@trinitylutheranfc.org

Office Administrator

Deana Andrist

office@trinitylutheranfc.org

Financial Manager

Brenda Moore

bmoore@trinitylutheranfc.org

Director of Communications & Volunteer Coordinator

Amanda Backsen

amanda@trinitylutheranfc.org

Director of Chancel Choir

Director of Handbell Choir

Jill Hunt

Saturday Worship Leader

Clinton Ellerbe

clinton1964@gmail.com

Church Musician

Carrie Hansen

carrie@trinitylutheranfc.org

A/V Techician

Claire Pickrel

claire@trinitylutheranfc.org

Sunday School

Jennifer Reeve

childrensminister@stpauls-fc.org

Nursery Coordinator

Tiffany Klijewski

tiffany@trinitylutheranfc.org

TLC Preschool Director

Brenda Harju

bharju@comcast.net

Pastor's Pondering

The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.—John 1:5

Waiting. This is a common theme for Advent, but this year it has a different feel – for me and my family.

Many of you know that the genetic Huntington's Disease (HD) runs in my family. We have known since 2008 that I am gene positive for HD and that my mom, aunt, and grandma all died from HD. You also may remember our joy/struggle story of bearing HD negative kids, which produced one 'perfect' child named Anya. We have done a lot of waiting, but the hardest waiting is not knowing when symptoms will begin.

That waiting is over. My neurologist at Rocky Mountain Movement Center, with whom I have done clinical observation research, recently identified that I am no longer pre-symptomatic. I am showing very subtle yet visible signs of HD. However, this diagnosis has not effected my ability to be or continue to be a pastor, and it won't for awhile. The disease has a slow progression - taking 15 years or longer to fully develop. Instead of waiting around, for the inevitable, we have been presented with a hopeful opportunity. And ironically, a new waiting period has begun.

I have been selected to take part in a gene therapy clinical trial. This opportunity requires brain surgery, a week of medical leave in December, and 5 years of follow up with the researchers. In brief, the hope is that this drug will block the HD protein from replicating, and halt symptoms from developing any further. The risk for me is minimal (except for the vulnerability of my shaved head!). I want the congregation to know because I won't be able to hide the surgery and also want to advocate for HD research. While this gene therapy may or may not directly benefit me, it will give HD experts more knowledge with which to work at finding a treatment for this disease.

I do not know my surgery date (more waiting!) though, it shouldn't effect Christmas Eve worship. However, I didn't want this information to blindside the congregation during the Advent season more than it will already. After the New Year, I will schedule an informal conversation/presentation during fellowship hours on Saturday and Sunday, so that I can share more details with the Trinity community.

This is hopeful news! Like waiting for the Christmas child, we don't know when it will happen or what it completely will mean for us. As we wait, we are expecting the unexpected – trusting that God will continue to surprise us all along the way.

Thank you for celebrating the waiting with us and hearing what God is doing in our lives.

Happy Advent, Pastor Rick

P.S. Want to know more???

- ★ Read the book *Inside the O'Briens* a novel by Lisa Genova.
- ★ Read more about HD in general at www.hdsa.org
- ★ Read more about this specific study at www.uniqueure.com/programs-pipeline/huntingtons-disease

Advent Calendars and Devotionals

There are Advent Calendars and Advent Devotions available digitally through the ELCA. These resources offer a great way to explore and engage ways to end hunger during this Advent season through the ELCA World Hunger. They provide daily inspiration from prayers, Scripture, hymns, stories, and more. To download these resources go to www.elca.org/Resources/ELCA-World-Hunger.

Advent Worship & Soup Suppers

Join us **Wednesdays, December 6, 13, & 20** for **Soup Supper at 5:45 pm** and **Holden Prayer at 6:30 pm**. This service will be hybrid, to join via Zoom click [HERE](#). This is the same link that is used for Saturday and Sunday Worship Services.

Trinity is in charge of providing food on **December 13**, sign up to set up/clean up or donate food and bread <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B054EAFA62DA3FA7-46174435-advent>.

Alternative Christmas Gift Fair

Come to the in-person Alternative Giving Fair on **Sunday, December 3 from 8:30 am-12:30 pm** in the Fellowship Hall. All three Faith Partners cooperate to host more than a dozen charities and fair-trade organizations offering gift items and donations-in-the-name-of as alternatives to usual retail presents. One of the charities offering crafts is Outreach Uganda, which imports beaded jewelry and accessories from women's groups in rural Uganda. They provides marketing for each beader group's craft products so that the group begins to have a regular source of income both for the individual beaders within the group and for the group itself. Your investment in the Ugandan beaders' lives gives hope to their hearts, sparkles to their eyes, and joy to their lives. The group's paper beaded jewelry items are their most popular craft products. In addition, they make many beautiful cloth items out of African batik and kitenge material. For more information and to see the catalog, go to <https://outreachuganda.org>.

Longest Night service at Spirit of Joy

We will also be hosting our Longest Night service on **Monday, December 4 at 6 pm** at Spirit of Joy. This quiet, dark, contemplative service is a worship service with space to acknowledge mourning, lamenting, sadness, and despair in a "jingle bells world." We are told that the holiday season is the "hap-happiest time of the year," but this isn't true for everyone. This service is a time where one can sit and observe, participate as they are able, light a candle for whatever/whomever he/she feels called, and hold space for the full realm of feelings that Christmas can embody.

Beer & Carols

Spirit of Joy is hosting the annual Beer & Carols event at Avogadro's Number on **Sunday, December 17 from 5:30-7:30pm!** Come join the fun, grab a drink while singing Christmas carols together! Zero musical experience required; this event is all about having a good time, enjoying a lot of laughter, and welcoming in the Christmas season!

2023 Christmas Season Services

Saturday, December 23 NO Service

Sunday, December 24

10:30 am Worship - Fourth Sunday of Advent

3 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

5 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Saturday, December 30

5 pm Saturday Praise

Sunday, December 31

10 am Worship

Year End Contributions

Please get your 2023 donations in early! Since December 31 falls on a Sunday, you will be able to put your donations in the offering plate that day and they will count for 2023. For those of you with internet access, you can easily make your donation through our website at trinitylutheranfc.org (until midnight 12/31/23!). Do you use the Venmo platform? We are listed as @Trinity-LutheranFC. Do you prefer mail? As long as your donation is postmarked no later than 12/31/23, that will work also. Thank you!

Open Spots for Easter Pilgrimage to Greece/Ephesus - April 2-13

Dear Community, unfortunately due to the war in Israel/Gaza our plans have changed, and we now have the opportunity to take an Easter Season journey in the Footsteps of Paul. The dates for this experience will be **April 2-13, 2024**. The cost is \$4,390 per person.

Ideally, we need 10-15 people for this trip happen - and currently we have 7. This trip will be offered publicly to get us to that recommended travel number and deadline for new registrations is the first week of January. Though this is short notice, but hope we may find some folks to join us. Please share with friends and family who may be interested, and know that this trip is not limited to those from Trinity, Mary of Magdala, St. Paul's.

Our specific itinerary is coming, but please use this one for reference. Our trip will include 4 nights on a cruise to Ephesus, Patmos, and Rhodes. <https://www.eliastours.com/tours/footsteps-of-paul-tour-pr-michael-stadtmueller-our-saviours-luthrean-church#itinerary>

Please email Pastor Rick pastorrick@trinitylutheranfc.org if you have any questions.

We continue to pray for Israel, Palestine, and all of those facing death due to violence - acknowledging our privileged position to change our plans to something that is safer for us.

Pub Theology

Pub Theologians have agreed that Prost Brewery, just north of Prospect on College is now to be the off-campus, regular meeting place on the **second Tuesday of the month from 6-8 pm**. On **Tuesday, December 12**, using the 1st chapter of *What Christianity is Not*, they will discuss the radical notion that Christianity is certainly not the kind of culture religion which was the spiritual background of Auschwitz. They will also decide which spring Lincoln Center comedy performance they'll study; no kidding. For more info, call James Gearhart at 303-817-2361.

Volunteering at Irish Elementary

Volunteers meet with students once per week to listen to them read in English. Knowledge of Spanish is not necessary. Currently there are 6 volunteers but there is a need for more! - especially on **Tuesday at 9:30 am**. Other volunteer times are on **Wednesdays at 12:40 pm**. Email [Mary Raich](#) for more information .

Yoga

All Levels! A beginner friendly and gentle, stress-relieving yoga class to stretch and strengthen the body gradually. Cost is \$10 per class with professional instructor, Kati Thompson. Classes have now moved to **WEDNESDAYS still from 10-11 am** . December Classes: **Wednesday, December 13 & Wednesday, December 27**. Yoga will be in Room 5, across the hall from the preschool. If you would like, you are welcome to park in the southeast back parking lot and enter the door next to the preschool.

Thursday Bible Study

Thursday Morning Bible Study in Advent will compare the Christmas Stories from each of the Gospels. (Spoiler, not every Gospel has a Christmas story)! Join us at **9:30 am** in Room 2 - **November 30, December 7, 14, & 21**.

Advent Devotional Series

Join us on Zoom for the four **Thursdays of Advent; November 30, December 7, 14, & 21** to explore how a weary world rejoices. We will begin at **6:30 pm** with prayer, followed by a check-in, and will conclude by 8 pm. Christ was born into a weary world, bringing good news of great joy for all people. Our Devotional, from "A Sanctified Art" will help us find ways to discover joy through art, reflections, poetry, and hymns. The world needs your joy, even if you are weary. Please email Sara Mullarkey (sara@theMullarkeys.org) with any questions and/or to join the group.

Spanish Class Update - Coming again in January

Our Fall session for Beginner and Intermediate Spanish students, taught by Margaret Wick and native speaker, Lulu, was well attended and thoroughly enjoyed by all! We averaged about 10 students per time and met for 8 weeks. We learned new Spanish vocabulary, prayers and songs in Spanish and Spanish holiday traditions! At our last session, we all shared some delicious Spanish goodies prepared by Lulu! We are hopeful that we can offer a Winter session of Spanish classes in January.

Reverse Advent Calendar

Traditionally, Advent calendars are used to count down the days of Advent in anticipation of Christmas. In church we celebrate weekly the themes of Hope, Peace, Love, and Joy as we anticipate God's gift of Jesus. The first day of Advent is November 27 this year but most purchased Advent calendars start on December 1 and go until Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. The Advent calendars consist of a series of doors or windows to open, revealing a picture, small chocolate or little gift for each day.

But the Reverse Advent Calendar is different! Instead of receiving a daily gift, those taking part in a reverse calendar DONATE an item each day, thus giving instead of receiving. This year the Social and Eco Justice Ministry is offering a suggestion to participate by following this list of food items to donate to our Little Pantry or the Larimer County Food Bank. Put your food items in a box or bag that can be plain or decorated. You can bring the food items to church weekly or wait until Christmas Eve whichever works best for you. We will have a table in the fellowship room for donations.

You can also do this in a different way. It doesn't have to be food that you are donating. Maybe put \$1 in a basket each day for your reverse advent calendar and then donate the money to our Little Food Pantry. It is also completely fine to add an item every few days or weekly instead of daily. No matter how you choose to participate, consider doing something small for those in need this Advent season. We are blessed to be a blessing to others as we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.

Grab a printed flier in the entry area at church! Thank you for your participation in this Advent ministry.

EACH DAY ADD AN ITEM TO A BOX

- ☐ December 1 - box of cereal or individual oatmeal packages
- ☐ December 2 - peanut butter
- ☐ December 3 - individual snack packages or breakfast bars
- ☐ December 4 - boxed potatoes
- ☐ December 5 - macaroni and cheese
- ☐ December 6 - canned, individual, or dried fruit
- ☐ December 7 - canned tomatoes
- ☐ December 8 - canned meat (tuna, chicken, sausages) or jerky
- ☐ December 9 - dessert mix
- ☐ December 10 - individual servings of applesauce
- ☐ December 11 - individual bags of trail mix or nuts
- ☐ December 12 - shelf stable boxed milk
- ☐ December 13 - canned black, kidney, pinto, or refried beans
- ☐ December 14 - box of or individual packages of crackers
- ☐ December 15 - package of rice or stuffing mix
- ☐ December 16 - can of cream of soup
- ☐ December 17 - package pasta
- ☐ December 18 - can of spaghetti sauce (*no glass jars)
- ☐ December 19 - chicken noodle soup
- ☐ December 20 - tomato soup
- ☐ December 21 - can corn
- ☐ December 22 - can mixed vegetables
- ☐ December 23 - can carrots or sweet potatoes
- ☐ December 24 - can green beans

DECEMBER 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
3 9 am Alt. Gift Fair 9 am Adult Forum 9 am Confirmation 9 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 11:30 am Fellowship	4 9:30am Trinity Readers 12 pm I Love to Tell the Story 6 pm Property	5 7:30 am Men's Breakfast 9:30 am Volunteer @ Irish Elem
10 9 am Adult Forum 9 am Confirmation 9 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 11:30 am Fellowship	11 12 pm I Love to Tell the Story 4:30 pm Executive	12 9:30 am Volunteer @ Irish Elem 4 pm Finance 6 pm Pub Theology
17 9 am Adult Forum 9 am Confirmation 9 am Sunday School 10:30 am Shared Children's Pageant 11:30 am Fellowship	18 10:30 am 301 FP Prayer Group 12 pm I Love to Tell the Story 6 pm Council	19 9:30 am Volunteer @ Irish Elem
24 10:30 am Worship 4 th Adv. 3 pm Christmas Eve Service 5 pm Christmas Eve Service	25 Office Closed	26 Office Closed
31 10:30 am Worship 11:30 am Fellowship		

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 10 am Quilting Grp	2 4 pm Gift of Empathy 5 pm Saturday Praise 5:45 Fellowship
6 12:40 pm Volunteer @ Irish Elem 5:30 pm Bells 5:45 pm Soup Supper 6:30 pm Advent Service 7:15 pm Chancel Choir	7 9:30 am Bible Study 6:15 pm Adv Devotional	8 10 am Quilting Grp	9 5 pm Saturday Praise 5:45 Fellowship
13 10 am Yoga 12:40 pm Volunteer @ Irish Elem 5:30 pm Bells 5:45 pm Soup Supper 6:30 pm Advent Service 7:15 pm Chancel Choir	14 9:30 am Bible Study 3:30pm 301 FP Get Together 6:15 pm Adv Devotional	15 10 am Quilting Grp	16 2 pm Prayer Cards 3 pm Sweet Treats 5 pm Saturday Praise 5:45 Fellowship
20 12:40 pm Volunteer @ Irish Elem 5:30 pm Bells 5:45 pm Soup Supper 6:30 pm Advent Service 7:15 pm Chancel Choir	21 9:30 am Bible Study 6:15 pm Adv Devotional	22	23
27 10 am Yoga	28 9:30 am Bible Study 6 pm Chap 2 Readers 6 pm 301 FP Co-Op 7 pm Immigration	29	30 5 pm Saturday Praise 5:45 Fellowship

ASSISTING IN WORSHIP

December 2/3 Vicki Volbrecht / Alex Peterson Vecchio

December 9/10 / Emma Cleveringa

December 16/17 Vicki Volbrecht / Anya Reiten

December 23/24 / Lindsay Reiten

December 30/31 Vicki Volbrecht / Don Garman

**PULL ME OUT! HANG ME UP!!
PUT ME ON YOUR FRIDGE!**

TLC 2023 Ministry Fund Plan Actuals		
	October	Year-To-Date
Receipts:		
Offerings	\$ 31,683	\$ 307,804
SPE and MoM Building Use Donations	4,436	38,962
Building Use	876	11,153
Benevity Funds Released	1,438	14,037
Total Receipts:	38,433	371,956
Expenditures:		
Operating and Support	\$ 26,948	\$ 283,406
Ministries	6,422	96,463
Benevolence/Gifts (Synod, Sky Ranch, etc)	-	7,583
Total Expenditures:	33,370	387,452
Receipts less Expenditures:	\$ 5,063	\$ (15,496)
Total Checking/Savings as of 10/31/2023		\$ 129,638.00
Total Checking/Savings as of 12/31/2022		\$ 152,887.79
Difference		\$ (23,249.79)

Your Gifts In Action ~ Local Hunger Programs

Food insecurity in Larimer County often goes unnoticed. Hunger hides behind closed doors; it lives in the home of a single mother who skips dinner to make sure her children have enough to eat. It lives in the apartment of the grandfather who has to choose between a meal and taking his medicine. It lives in the bedroom of a young child who has to make it all night without food until the next school day when she knows she will be fed. In Larimer County, almost 10% of the population may be facing food insecurity. That's more than 40,000 people -a number equal to the population of an entire city. The **Food Bank of Larimer County (FBLC)** is a major resource for alleviating local hunger. It has provided enough food for 8.3 million meals this year. 2.1 million lbs. of food were distributed to Nourishing Network, which consists of more than 120 local nonprofits. FBLC helped the organizations save more than \$3.8 million as they worked to distribute food to our communities, reaching 90% of Larimer County's food-insecure people. For more information, see <https://foodbanklarimer.org>.

FBLC provides food for Ft. Collins' **McBackpack** program, which works with schools to deliver food to school children who are food insecure. Believing children are more able to learn when well-nourished, McBackpack provides nutritional food to children and families within the Poudre School District who may otherwise go without food over the weekend.

One year, two days before Thanksgiving, a family of five (grandmother and mother and three children) were forced to give up their hotel room. Three weeks before, they had lost their home. A principal called one of McBackpack's founders and asked, "You told me I could call you if I ever needed to. Can you help this family today? Please." The founder immediately tapped into the network that supports McBackpack and before the day was out food and lodging were provided for a month and the principal was given contacts for the future, if needed. For more such stories, visit www.mcbackpack.org/#stories.

When you give to Trinity, you give to the Food Bank and McBackpack

Crossroads Safehouse

Here is another giving opportunity from Crossroads Safehouse (<https://crossroadssafehouse.org>). Crossroads provides emergency safehousing, advocacy, legal assistance, rapid rehousing, and crisis intervention for victims of domestic violence. New gifts can be brought to 421 Parker St, Fort Collins by **December 14**. If any questions contact Cheryl Backsen at 701-306-1868 or cbacksens@gmail.com. List of items needed:

Shelter Items

- Full-sized toiletries (Conditioner, Shampoo, Body lotion, Body wash)
- Tweezers
- Nail clippers

- New underwear
- New socks
- Winter wear
- Coats
- Gloves
- Sweaters
- Scarves
- Hats

- Boots
- Umbrellas
- \$10, \$20, \$30 gift cards to Walmart/Kohls/King Soopers/Safeway/Walgreens/CVS

Holiday Shop Items

- Bikes
- Board games
- Bath robes
- Puzzles
- Gift cards
- Art supplies

- Fidget toys
- Nail care items
- Legos
- Barbies
- Toy cars



The heart, hands & feet of God

Thank someone who has lived out their faith by sharing their gifts and made a difference in the church OR community, please email Amanda, amanda@trinitylutheranfc.org.



Friends at TLC, thank you so much for your gift or \$142 to ISAAC of Northern Colorado. Since ISAAC began, with modest goals and even more modest resources, it has become a critical resource for immigrant households and communities in Northern Colorado, including significant programming aimed at empowering our immigrant neighbors to better identify and utilize community resources. ~ ISAAC

Hello, I want to offer my thanks to **Trinity** for a special treat for “almost” newcomers. The muffins were a special surprise. I especially want to offer an acknowledgement to the baker of the muffins. They were delicious!! Hope to see y’all again. ~ Barbara Lambert

Trinity, because of our generosity this year, our drivers have been out on the roads providing the transposition that make such a difference in the lives of our clients. Because of you many of our clients were able to stay independent and enjoy their lives. ~ SAINT Volunteer Transportation



Volunteers Needed

Signing up is easier than ever, these links take you to sign up genius websites where you can see what we need help with every week. Thank you SO MUCH for helping to make our church possible!

SATURDAY Sign Up Here—> <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0b4fafa929aaf49-tlcsaturday>

Communion Preparation: Set up and Clean up Elements for Saturday Service

Communion & Assistant: Readings for Service & Help Serve Communion

Fellowship: Prepare treats (i.e. wine, cheese, & crackers), greet attendees after Saturday Service

SUNDAY Sign Up Here—> <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60b054eafa62da3fa7-sunday>

Welcome Table: An usher and a greeter had a baby, that baby became the Welcome Table Host.

Fellowship Host: Make a fresh pot of coffee during postlude, then clean up at 12 pm.



Birthdays



Tiffany Klijewski	12/2	Sonia Nornes	12/9	Scott Makinen	12/20
Gerry Olsen	12/2	Jeni Makinen	12/12	Tom Haukebo	12/21
Jim Frye	12/4	Katie Garman	12/13	Anyia Reiten	12/22
Merry Hulse	12/4	Nadine Hunt	12/13	Jackson Barron	12/24
Shirley Garvin	12/5	Ron Bend	12/19	Paul Johnson	12/24
Clint Borkowski	12/6	Annika Zuniga	12/19	Diann Nygaard	12/24
Craig Haukebo	12/6	Nadine Cain	12/20	Jordan Faulkner	12/25
Gregg Hargis	12/7	Patty Heyse	12/20	Lissa Faulkner	12/25

Anniversaries

Rebecca & James Oscarson 12/20

TLC Preschool

Merry Christmas Trinity! All of the little ones in preschool are getting VERY excited for the upcoming Christmas season! There are so many beautiful craft projects and even special Christmas gifts to make (shhhh!). Sometimes it's hard for them to be patient through Advent and realize that Christmas is about so much more than Santa bringing gifts, but we keep gently reminding the children about the most precious gift we all received from God. We've had a fun fall, with pumpkin field trips, so much outdoor fun and lots of music and silliness with Ms. Lydia from Playcrafter Kids and Trinity's own Ms. Shelley (Aust). We're looking forward to so much more fun as we move into the second half of the school year.

Please consider helping the TLC Preschool ministry by donating to us through the CCCC program. It's a win-win for both those who donate (you) and the recipient program (us!). We always appreciate your support of our mission!

Sending you happy thoughts from smiling faces and wishes for a blessed holiday season!

God's Peace, Brenda Harju, Director

CHILD CARE TAX CREDIT CONTRIBUTION FORM

Colorado Child Care Tax Credit Contribution Form

To: TLC Preschool
Phone: 970-482-1226
301 E. Stuart Street
Fort Collins, CO 80525



Please accept my contribution under the Colorado Child Care Contribution Act.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

The Colorado Tax Credit Certification Form DR1317 will be sent to the above address following the current calendar year. Should you need the form earlier, please contact the office. Make checks out to TLC Preschool.

Highlights from Co-Op Committee Meeting

I serve as the vice-president of the church council and will be providing you with updates on items discussed at the monthly Co-Op Committee meetings. Clergy and lay leaders of each faith community participate in these meetings to discuss the functioning of the faith partnership and financial decisions involving all three faith communities and to provide updates on action items and other items affecting the faith communities. At the 19 Oct 2023 meeting the following items were discussed:

Sharing Church History/Bylaws: Postponed until January when new leadership from faith communities will be in place. Conversation will cover the history of three faith communities as well as the bylaws of the faith communities.

Sign Update: A work in progress.

Responses of MoM & SPE to Joint Letter & Apology Letter: Many members of the two faith communities were unaware how rough the road has been among the faith communities. Some members were discouraged since we are Christians. Many people relieved and a sense that we can move forward.

Update on Trinity Congregation Meeting: Informed MoM & SPE that Deacon Katie will be going to a half-time position. Updated the other two faith communities on Trinity's response to the Joint Letter and the Faith Partners. Informed MoM & SPE of vote by Trinity congregation to have church council draft two-year leases and bring for congregational vote.

Revisit AC/Flooding: MoM budgeted \$2000 for unexpected expenses for their current fiscal year. They gave \$1000 of that budget toward AC and the flooding and only have \$1000 left to contribute to unexpected expenses. It was noted that the sanctuary is quite cold on Sunday mornings and AC needs to be turned off.

Policy on Dogs in the Sanctuary: Members from SPE asked to bring their dog to church since they travel a distance to attend worship service. Determined if the dog was crate trained, it could be placed in a crate in Pastor Felicia's and Mother Roseann's office. Certified service dogs are permitted in the sanctuary.

Midweek Advent Service: Holden Evening Prayer Service will be used for midweek Advent services. Trinity will provide the musicians; clergy from each faith community will lead one of the services; and each faith community will organize one of the soup suppers before the service.

Narthex Proposal: Phase I of the narthex proposal was presented. The proposal comes from a committee composed of members from all three faith communities.

Next Meeting: There will be only one Co-Op meeting for November & December, held on 30 Nov 2023.

If you would like to receive a copy of the minutes of the Coop Meetings, please email your request to Deana at office@trinitylutheranfc.org. Respectfully submitted, Vicki Volbrecht

Highlights from Current Council Minutes

Financial Report:

- The Treasurer reported that receipts to the end of September were \$333,522, with expenditures of \$354,390, for a negative balance of \$20,868 year-to-date. No benevolence was paid in the third quarter.
- Because the October congregational meeting authorized staffing at a full-time pastor and half-time deacon, the MFP that will go to the congregation in November is based on that scenario. It is a budget based on receipts of \$458,000, expenses of 459,400, for a deficit of \$1400. A motion was approved unanimously to approve this budget which includes full benefits for Deacon Katie.

Debriefing of Sunday's Congregational Meeting: Sadness was expressed knowing that approval by only 2/3 of the congregation signals divisions and concerns. There was joy in knowing that Deacon Katie's interim half-time position with the Synod will care for her family for nine months, but it also took away the need for the congregation to struggle with the financial commitment. TLC cannot depend on income from our partner churches to fund our salaries, and we need to improve the revenue stream to support staffing beyond just 2024.

Music salaries/stipends: A stipend was approved for Michele Rose for serving as choir director for four months, and the salary for Clinton Ellerbe (Saturday Praise Service Leader) was established.

Lease for SPE and MOM: A committee of Steve Dugger, Renee Mize, and Rick Aust was suggested to develop a two-year lease for SPE and MOM. Ideally this lease would be brought to the congregation at the November meeting for approval, but it is unlikely that the work can be completed that quickly. The committee will need to research the limits on how much a non-profit organization can "charge" for building use.

Prayer for Congregational Meetings: The Council recommended Paul Johnson, Donna Dauner, and Pat Wiedower to work with Pastor Rick to draft a prayer for congregational and Council meetings per the Partnership "writing" from the retreat.

November 19th Congregational Meeting: The agenda will include: opening prayer; approval of minutes from March 4/5, 2023, and October 15, 2023, congregational meetings; Deacon Katie's job description as a half-time employee; approval of MFP; election of officers; progress on lease with SPE and MOM; closing prayer. Voting will be by paper ballot, with all proposals on the same ballot, but ballot must be designed so that members can vote yea or nay on each candidate and not just one vote on the entire slate.

Committee to change Deacon Katie's Job Description: Names suggested to change Deacon Katie's job description to half-time were Bob Fairbairn, Cheryl Backsen, Dave Karst, Kathy Lipscomb, and Pastor Rick

Pastor's Report: Pastor Rick raised the concern that members of the congregation are coming to him because they are hearing one thing publicly from the Council by means of our letters and communications, and yet they are hearing different things privately in one-on-one conversations with Council members. This is feeding rumors and raising anxiety at a time when we are intentionally trying to minimize that feeling; it is contributing to Pastor Rick's stress and to his ability to do what he is called to do. Council members have committed to support privately what we have said publicly, to let go of past grievances, and to always have a minimum of three people present (congregational member, Council member, & clergy) in any conversation about congregational concerns.

Ministry Reports:

- The plan for revisioning the narthex is ready to go to the Co-op Committee for approval.
- A Vision team just for TLC has been suggested by a congregational member; the chair of S&EJ chair will explore further.

Respectfully submitted, Nadine Hunt, Council Secretary *Complete minutes are available in the Church Office.*

Partnership Questions

Unless the newly elected Council chooses to continue these monthly columns, this will be the final column in the fifteen-month series about the 301 Faith Partnership. Last month we considered the question: **Where are we going with the Partnership?** Let's continue to look at what is ahead, particularly the implications of a vote in early 2024 about a lease for MOM and SPE.

At the recent October meeting, the congregation voted 71-4 to approve the writing of a two-year lease – one for each of our partner churches. In the best of all possible worlds, these leases would have been completed in time for approval at the November congregational meeting – but there was too much work involved to accomplish in a month, and so the leases will be brought to the congregation for review and approval early in 2024. So, what will your vote on the lease mean for the three churches? How should you decide whether to vote “yes” to approve the two-year lease or “no” to indicate that you do not want Trinity to enter into such a lease?

A “yes” vote would give both Mary of Magdala and St. Paul's Episcopal the security of knowing that they have a church home for at least the next two years. For Trinity, the two-year lease provides a period of time for the congregation to discern whether or not we want to continue in partnership with the two churches after the lease has expired. In other words, are we willing to establish terms of a **long-term** relationship with the two congregations? Once again, this decision would be made by a congregational vote. There is no timeline currently established for this second vote. Could we be ready to make that decision at our annual meeting in February 2025? At the very least, the decision would have to be made prior to the expiration of the lease.

The Council has made a commitment that during the term of the two-year lease that we “continue the current ministries with the Faith Partners and explore new ministries that may or may not be hosted at Trinity,” and that we also “commit to healthy and informed communication.” This would not be two years to sit back and relax and to just wait and see what happens, but rather a time to see what new things we might do together.

What, then, would a “no” vote mean? A “no” vote on the two-year lease would indicate that we at Trinity no longer wish to be a part of a Partnership; it would indicate that Trinity's leadership should begin the process of dissolving the relationship and asking our partners to find new church homes. Obviously, this is not a process that would happen overnight, for it may take some time for MOM and SPE to find new places to worship. If the congregation votes “no” on the lease, Trinity would need to study how the departure of the partner churches would impact us financially since we would lose the contributions which they make for the use of the building. It would likely prompt an exploration of how to be good stewards of the large building that we occupy and which we must maintain, as well as to plan how to continue ministries on our own without the help of the partner churches.

Council has affirmed the following prayer to be used as we discern how to move forward:

Gracious and loving God, eternal source of Wisdom, we gather today in Your house, with gratitude for Trinity's past, to discern Your Spirit's calling for our future. In our discussions, help us to listen with open minds and respond in Christian love to all ideas and possibilities; in all our deliberations, remind us to listen to your Spirit, and in the moments of decision, give us bold and courageous hearts to follow you and to love our neighbors. Lift our gaze to the many opportunities before us, and not to that which divides us. Help us to surrender anger and disappointment, and move forward as good stewards of all you have given us. Guide us to welcome with love and compassion all people; to comfort all who grieve; and to build bridges through honest dialogue, reconciliation, forgiveness, & healing. And may the God of hope and possibilities, fill us with joy and peace to serve God and share God's love with all people. Amen

Join your leadership in attempting to discern the “Spirit's calling for our future” as each person decides whether to vote “yes” or “no” on the proposal to provide a two-year lease for our partners.



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