



# TIDINGS

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH OF WATERTOWN, MINNESOTA



## Sharing the Light of God

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it. ~ John 1*

Imagine two rooms that are connected by a door, with one room well-lit and the other room dark. If you open the door between the two rooms, the light will spill over from the well-lit room into the darkened room without making the first room any darker at all. It's a Christmas miracle! Well, not exactly. The light simply moves into the dark area and spreads itself around, because that's how light works – it's meant to be shared.

During the season of Advent, we spend the weeks before Christmas lighting candles on the Advent Wreath as we prepare for the light of the world to enter our lives. The true light of the world comes to us from God, and then we share it with others without losing any of that light ourselves. Because that's how the light of God works – it's meant to be shared.

How will you be sharing the light of God this Advent season? Will you be worshiping with your family and friends? Will you be sharing a smile, a hug, or a cup of coffee with someone you know? Will you be making a donation of some kind to help a stranger in need? Whatever you do to share God's light this Advent season, I simply say "Thank You". The light you share may be the only light someone receives this year, and your own light will still shine bright!

~ God's Peace, Pastor Engholm



DECEMBER 2024

### INSIDE:

- Advent & Christmas at Trinity
- December Events
- Children's Ministry Update
- Adopt-a-Family Gift Program
- Council Meeting Highlights
- A Crow River Christmas

**Worship**  
**Sundays 9:00 am**  
**Wednesdays 7:00 pm**  
**Onsite & Online**

### STAFF:

Pastor	Jeffrey M. Engholm
Children's Ministry	Chelsea Farniok
Office Manager	Robyn Behrens
Financial Secretary	Gail Cassidy
Financial Administrator	Mary Jech

### Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Office Hours: Mon - Fri 9:00 am - Noon

# What's Happening AT TRINITY LUTHERAN?



## Midweek Advent Worship

Wednesdays, December 4, 11, 18

Light Supper from 5:30 - 6:30 pm

Worship at 7:00 pm ~ Onsite & Online

Advent is a time of anticipation as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Join us each Wednesday evening in Advent for a light meal served by the Trinity youth in the Fellowship Hall, followed by a "Holden Evening Prayer" worship service.



## Advent Devotional

This Advent, we invite you to reflect on the true meaning of the season with a devotional book from Luther Seminary called "Joy of Heaven, Here on Earth." Through daily scripture, prayer, and reflection, this devotional helps us pause amid the holiday rush to remember Christ's gifts of hope, peace, joy, and love. Printed books are available at Trinity's Welcome Center, outside the church office, or you can download a digital version at [www.trin.org/advent](http://www.trin.org/advent).



## Saint Lucia Tea Open House

Saturday, December 14

10:00 am - 12:00 pm

All are welcome to enjoy traditional Scandinavian refreshments and a festive holiday atmosphere at Trinity's Saint Lucia Tea, a Swedish festival of light.

**Volunteers Needed!** We are looking for volunteers for baking, decorating, serving at the event and more! Please complete a volunteer sign up sheet at the Trinity Welcome Center or sign up to volunteer online at [www.trin.org/lucia](http://www.trin.org/lucia).



## Christmas Eve, December 24

Candlelight Services at

2:00 & 4:00 pm ~ Onsite & Online

# Children's Ministry



## Children's Christmas Worship Service

Sunday, December 15

9:00 am

Join us for a special children-led Christmas worship service as our youngest members share the story of Christ's birth through song and celebration! Rehearsals will happen during Sunday School the first two weeks in December.

## Christmas Extravaganza Family Event

Sunday, December 15

10:00 am

After the children lead worship in the morning, families are invited to a Christmas Extravaganza Event in place of Sunday School. Parents, grandparents and children of all ages are invited to take part in holiday games, crafts and some festive treats. It'll be fun for the whole family. We're excited to see you all there!

## Sunday School in December *at a glance*

- Dec. 1 10:00 am Sunday School (*Christmas Service Practice*)
- Dec. 8 10:00 am Sunday School (*Christmas Service Practice*)
- Dec. 15 9:00 am - Children's Christmas Service  
10:00 am - Christmas Extravaganza Event
- Dec. 22 & 29 Christmas Break! (*No Sunday School*)



## Advent Luncheon

### Golden Agers / OWLS Advent Luncheon

Thursday, December 19 | 11:45 am

Trinity's Golden Agers (members 70+) and OWLS (Older, Wiser Lutherans) and a guest are invited to enjoy lunch in the Fellowship Hall on Thursday, December 19. Join us for food and fellowship to celebrate the Christmas season together.

### Trinity Youth BWCA Interest Survey

Trinity's Youth Group is planning a trip to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area in the summer of 2025, open to incoming 9th graders through graduated seniors (+ any friends!) If you are interested in learning more about the trip and possibly attending, please complete the BWCA interest form at [www.trin.org/youth](http://www.trin.org/youth) by December 15.



### Christmas Blessings Adopt-a-Family

Each year, Trinity partners with the Watertown-Mayer Elementary School to help make Christmas a little brighter for local families in need. Gift requests can be found at [www.trin.org](http://www.trin.org) under **EVENTS**. The deadline to return gifts to the church will be Monday, December 9. Thank you for your generosity this holiday season.

# Congregational NEWS



## BAPTISM

**Cameron Miller Snow**  
son of Austin & Caitlin Snow  
Baptized on November 17, 2024

## FUNERAL

**Mary Ann Kamann**  
January 31, 1939 ~ October 14, 2024  
Memorial Service  
on November 12, 2024

## NEW MEMBERS

**Pam Fales**  
**Bill & Karla Keller**  
**Ryan Vierling**  
**Loren & Libby Bottem**  
Gus and Willow



## FINANCIAL REPORT

### Operating Fund summary October 2024

#### Beginning balance 10/1/2024:

**-\$ 22,621.65**  
Operating Fund income: \$ 21,887.19  
Operating Fund exps: \$ 32,261.94  
Net balance (October): -\$ 10,374.75

#### Operating Fund balance as of 10/31/2024: **-\$ 32,996.40**

### 2024 operating fund EXPENSES exceeded INCOME by \$32,484.48.

#### Building Fund expenses:

Internal loan payment: \$ 5,000.00  
Mortgage loan balance: \$ 20,000.00

#### Cash Summary:

Bremer: \$48,125.13  
*(includes \$1,643.14 for Oct. federal withholding)*

Citizen's Building Fund: \$74,989.78

*M/S/C Nancy Pickering / Corky Ibeling / carried*

## PASTOR'S REPORT

Pastor Engholm highlighted a busy first three months of the program year for Confirmation, Sunday School, and Worship, as well as several successful special events. Trinity and other Watertown area churches worked together to collect food for the Gather and Grow Food Pantry, and our High School Youth and Confirmation students went to "Feed My Starving Children". Upcoming events will include a New Member Sunday, Wednesday Advent services, St. Lucia Tea, River City Theater events, Children's services, and Christmas Eve services.

## OLD BUSINESS

- **River City Theater Company** The rehearsals continue and performances will take place the second weekend in December.
- **Mission Cemetery Restoration** The celebration event held on November 3 was well attended by Trinity and E Free church members. Final restoration work will be completed in the spring.
- **Volunteer Coordinator Updates** Communion Assistant volunteers will now be managed by Trinity Volunteer Coordinator, Nancy Pickering. Thank you to Dave and Mary Sloneker for their faithful service in this role in the past.

## NEW BUSINESS

- **Recommendations from Property Committee** on Trinity's long-term building plan were reviewed and discussed.
- **2025 Spending Plan** The proposed 2025 spending plan was presented by Mary Jech and discussed for inclusion at the Annual Meeting.
- **Appointment of Audit Committee Member** Requests are in process. Nick Neaton plans to circulate vote via email to the Church Council to ensure a timely appointment.
- **Constitutional Amendment Requests** The council agreed to add the constitutional amendment items to the Congregational Annual Meeting Agenda. Mary Jech advised to also mention the Constitutional Amendment items at the Finance Forum.
- **Annual Congregational Meeting** will be held on Sunday, January 26. A Financial Forum will be held on Sunday, January 19. Both to be held in the sanctuary.

**A Crow River Christmas**

*stories and songs of the season*

*Directed by Mark Monfils*

**DECEMBER 13TH & 14TH - 7PM**  
**DECEMBER 15TH - 2PM**

River City Theatre Company  
RCTCMN.ORG

**River City Theatre Company Presents:  
A Crow River Christmas**

Performances at Trinity Lutheran Church

You're invited to a heartwarming celebration of the season with *A Crow River Christmas*! This festive community theater performance features stories and songs performed by Watertown community members, including some from our own Trinity congregation. Performances will take place on December 13, 14, and 15. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for children under 18, or \$25 per family. Come and share the spirit of Christmas—don't miss this festive event!

**Support Gather & Grow Food Pantry**

This Christmas season, you are invited to donate non-perishable food items or financial donations to support the holiday needs of our community. Donated items can be dropped off at Trinity's Donation Station at the main parking lot entrance and financial donations can be given to the church office. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

**THANK YOU  
FOR YOUR YEAR-END GIFTS**

Thank you for all the ways you have been sharing your financial gifts with Trinity, especially your gifts given electronically with online giving. As 2024 comes to a close, we'd like to say a special thank you for your **YEAR END GIFTS** this holiday season!



**Have You Noticed the Colors in Church?**

Have you ever noticed that the banners and paraments—the fabric decorations on the altar, pulpit, and lectern—change color throughout the year? These shifts aren't just decorative; they hold deep meaning tied to the church's liturgical calendar, guiding us through the seasons of faith and worship.


As we approach Advent, which marks the beginning of the church year, the color blue takes center stage. **Blue is a color of hope, anticipation, and waiting.** During Advent, we look forward to the coming of Christ—both in the manger at Christmas and in His eventual return.

Each liturgical season has its own color, symbolizing the mood and focus of that time. So, next time you're in worship, take a moment to notice the colors. What do they tell you about the season we're in and the themes we're exploring together as a community of faith? Stay tuned to the *Trinity Tidings* throughout the upcoming year to learn more about the liturgical seasons of the church and the colors that we use to represent them.

# ➤➤➤➤ Last Month in Pictures

Last month was filled with activity, including Sunday School crafts, OWLS winter-themed Bingo, youth and families volunteering at Feed My Starving Children in Chanhasseen and a fun Paint & Sip event at Trinity.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> <b>Worship</b> 9 am <b>Fellowship</b> 10 am <b>Sunday School</b> 10 am  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Daniel Empting Adam Rowan	<b>2</b> <b>Worship Band</b> 7:00 pm <b>AA Meeting</b> 8 pm  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Daniel Venske Gordon Wandersee	<b>3</b> <b>Quilters</b> 9 am <b>Handbells</b> 5:30 pm  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Cody Hilgers Shiree Hirsch	<b>4</b> <b>Prayer</b> 12:30 pm <b>Advent Meal</b> 5:30 pm <b>Worship Choir</b> 6 pm <b>Worship</b> 7 pm <b>Worship Band</b> 7:45 pm  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Josh Gallus	<b>5</b> <b>Housekeepers</b> 9 am <b>Worship Band</b> 6:30 pm  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Josh Gallus	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>   <i>Happy Birthday</i> Carroll Lambrecht Heidi Sheen
<b>8</b> <b>Worship</b> 9 am <b>Fellowship</b> 10 am <b>Sunday School</b> 10 am  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Colleen Alvig	<b>9</b> <b>Apostles</b> 8:30 am <b>Priscilla Circle</b> 12 pm <b>AA Meeting</b> 8 pm  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Adam Hembroff Brinlee Loehrs	<b>10</b> <b>Quilters</b> 9 am <b>Handbells</b> 5:30 pm  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Kurt Becker Lydia Haller Elliot Maas	<b>11</b> <b>Prayer</b> 12:30 pm <b>Advent Meal</b> 5:30 pm <b>Worship Choir</b> 6 pm <b>Worship</b> 7 pm <b>Worship Band</b> 7:45 pm  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Josh Hoover Danita Kuntz Christi McMahon	<b>12</b> <b>Finance Committee</b> 6:30 pm  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Steve Danielson Monica Fritzke	<b>13</b> <b>"A Crow River Christmas"</b> 7 pm  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Nicole Gersema Christine Huber Dorine Vanderlinde	<b>14</b> <b>Saint Lucia Tea</b> 10 am - 12 pm <b>"A Crow River Christmas"</b> 7 pm  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Nancy Brown Stan Hill
<b>15</b> <b>CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS SERVICE</b> <b>Worship</b> 9 am <b>Fellowship</b> 10 am <b>Family Christmas Extravaganza</b> 10 am <b>"A Crow River Christmas"</b> 2 pm  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Jack Herman Caden Horsman	<b>16</b> <b>AA Meeting</b> 8 pm  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Kelly Graff Leah Kohls Mary Seifert	<b>17</b> <b>Quilters</b> 9 am <b>Council Mtg.</b> 6:30 pm  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Chelsea Farniok Carole Pierson	<b>18</b> <b>FCA Breakfast</b> 7 am <b>Prayer</b> 12:30 pm <b>Advent Meal</b> 5:30 pm <b>Worship Choir</b> 6 pm <b>Worship</b> 7 pm <b>Worship Band</b> 7:45 pm  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Laramee Paradise	<b>19</b> <b>Golden Agers/OWLS Lunch</b> 11:45 am <b>Handbells</b> 5:30 pm  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Natalie Whitehead	<b>20</b>   <i>Happy Birthday</i> Carli Graff Chuck Sandquist Susan Westermann	<b>21</b>   <i>Happy Birthday</i> Destini Bergstrom
<b>22</b> <b>Worship</b> 9 am <b>Fellowship</b> 10 am <i>No Sunday School</i>  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Cassel Danielson Leon Fritzke	<b>23</b> <b>Apostles</b> 8:30 am <b>AA Meeting</b> 8 pm  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Jodi Boylan Jenny Haller	<b>24</b> <b>CHRISTMAS EVE</b> <b>Worship</b> 2 pm <b>Worship</b> 4 pm  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Theresa Thompson	<b>25</b> <b>CHRISTMAS DAY</b> <i>Church Office Closed</i>  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Dan Blakstad Christopher Fautsch	<b>26</b>   <i>Happy Birthday</i> Jodi Maas Roger Nelson	<b>27</b>   <i>Happy Birthday</i> Steve Johnson	<b>28</b>   <i>Happy Birthday</i> Katelyn Haller Elsa Impola Richard Murray Olivia Salonek
<b>29</b> <b>Worship</b> 9 am <b>Fellowship</b> 10 am <i>No Sunday School</i>  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Steve Venske	<b>30</b> <b>AA Meeting</b> 8 pm  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Shirley Domjahn Liz Hirsch Laurie Mann	<b>31</b> <b>Quilters</b> 9 am  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Randy Nichols	 <p><b>HOLIDAY CHURCH OFFICE HOURS</b></p> <p><b>Wednesday, December 25</b>                      Christmas Day ~ Office Closed</p> <p><b>Weekdays, December 26-31</b>                      9:00 am - Noon</p> <p><b>Wednesday, January 1</b>                      New Year's Day ~ Office Closed</p>			

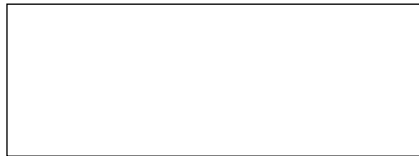


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### Christmas Eve Services

Tuesday, December 24  
Candlelight Services  
2:00 pm & 4:00 pm



Facebook/Trinity Lutheran Church (ELCA) Watertown MN



## That's a {Re}wrap!



The Reintgen family's Christmas took a surprising turn when their 3-year-old son woke his parents up at 3:00 in the morning, asking for scissors to open his new action-figure toy. A quick trip downstairs revealed a mess of unwrapped gifts under the family's Christmas tree. There was not one gift that he left unscathed. The boy, in his defense, said he was just trying to help.

With only hours until their other children awoke, the Reintgens were determined to save Christmas. They raced to rewrap gifts, even managing to get most nametags back on the correct packages. Instead of being angry, the parents found humor in the ordeal. Afterward, they explained to their son the joy that people experience from receiving — and opening — their own presents.

Moral of the story? Remember this 3-year-old when you get overeager for certain parts of the holidays. Don't rush through anything, and let others enjoy Christmas at their own pace too. When something goes wrong, don't panic. Like the Reintgens, find joy in any unexpected glitches and grinsches you encounter throughout the season.