TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH DECEMBER 2023 Pastor Mike's Mash

"Emmanuel. God with us. Hundreds of years before Jesus' birth, this is the name the prophet Isaiah gives as the identity and essence of the long-awaited Messiah (7:14). Whoever this eventual Savior will be... Whatever his actual mission... the significance of his arrival will be an assurance that God IS indeed WITH those who look to this God for hope in whatever hopelessness they find themselves. It is THIS name that Matthew the Gospel writer recalls in his story of Joseph's dream in which Joseph is commanded and assured that whatever doubts and misgivings he has about this situation in which he finds himself, God is in the midst of it all: "...You are to give him the name Jesus," the angel Gabriel commands (Matt. 1:21). And Matthew remembers the ancient words, "All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet, 'The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Emmanuel—which means, 'God with us'" (1:22-23).

For us as followers of this same Jesus, Emmanuel, God With Us, the clearest fulfillment of God's promise in and through this Messiah comes to us through the cross. Which is not a promise of smooth sailing and everything working out just so. Rather, we are promised in the midst of the crosses we bear, God will be present nonetheless, and there is more to come beyond the crosses we bear; these lives we live; and the deaths we die. Which is not the way we often remember and celebrate the seasons of Advent and Christmas. Though I have often invited you to note that it IS the way the best of our carols of this season remember and celebrate:

"Hail the heav'n-born Prince of peace! \ Hail the Sun of righteousness! \ Light and life to all he brings, \ ris'n with healing in his wings. \ Mild he lays his glory by, \ born that we no more may die, \ born to raise each child of earth, \ born to give us second birth." –ELW #270, "Hark! The Hearld Angels Sing"

"How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is giv'n! \ So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heav'n. \ No ear may hear his coming; but in this world of sin, \ where meek souls will receive him, still, the dear Christ enters in."—ELW #279, "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

"And you, beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending low, \ who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow: \ Look now, for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing; \ oh, rest beside the weary road and hear the angels sing!" –ELW #282, "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"

See? These carols, which can become only a soundtrack piped into the stores to put us in a mood for buying more, proclaim something more wondrous, more promising, and more hopeful than merely fulfilling our kids' and grandkids' wish lists! Here is the expression of the ancient prophets, of the burdened Mary and Joseph, of any of us who have been around the block a time or two and know that life ain't all wine and roses. Or silver bells and Santa Claus coming to town. The hope of Advent and the promise of Christmas is that God is with us in the midst of all of it.

The privilege of my position as your pastor is knowing that among our fellowship that are any number of you longing for that "ris'n healing in Christ's wings," who toil "beneath life's crushing load." There are those among us waiting for a biopsies and diagnoses. There are those among us struggling with the potential of life and death health issues. You know the walk that my family and I have been on with aging parents, dementia, and Alzheimer's, a walk that many of you know all too well. And in the midst of this, the garish consumption of Christmas as the world offers can really seem quite silly. It is powerful moment to know these things, to share these things with you, to walk alongside you to assure you God's presence in the midst of hell, to press into your hands a flavorless morsel of bread and a tiny sip of wine with the promise and assurance, "This IS the body of Christ, the blood of Christ, Jesus WITH and FOR you." That moment can be so missed as we chase after other things in life and so drowned out by the noise of the Advent and Christmas the world offers.

Our Advent theme this year is "God With Us." Each Sunday of Advent (Dec. 3, 10, 17, and 24) will unpack the faith-filled possibilities God's coming to us in the flesh and blood of Jesus offers. Each week we will light candles, as

followers of Jesus have done for generations, recalling the Light of the World, the Light NO Darkness can overcome, the Light that shines HOPE into Hopeless (Dec. 3); that illuminates PEACE in the midst of Chaos (Dec. 10); that flashes JOY in the midst of Despair (Dec. 17); that gleams with LOVE in the midst division. We will sing the ageless carols that proclaim these things. We will seek to be together in joy-filled, fun fellowship. We will seek to share these things with others,



even those whom we do not know, through service and care. It is my hope and prayer, that wherever you are in life, in whatever busy-ness to which you find yourselves shackled, under whatever burdens and loads you find yourselves bearing, that you will also seek the refuge of hope, peace, joy, and love that God offers us in Christ Jesus.

Of course, in a scheduled and planned way, these things will be offered throughout the season here at the church. But life and what it throws at us, of course, doesn't necessarily follow a nice, planned schedule. And so to that end I want to encourage you find and create moments with your family and in your home where you can find that same refuge of hope, peace, joy, and love over these seasons of Advent and Christmas.

There are any number of resources we have here at the church to help you do that, two that are specific to our weekly worship theme—God With Us: *An Illustrated Devotional*, geared toward adults or families with older kids and God With Us: *An Illustrated Advent for Families*, geared toward families with younger kids. (Take a look and see what fits for you.) BOTH offer <u>weekly</u> devotions, meditations, conversation starters, and activities that invite the faith-filled proclamation of



God With Us, whatever your life situation. Even if you live alone, perhaps this Advent could be different for you by covenanting with a close friend to find some time to be together for Advent devotions. The booklets are laid out in a WEEKLY format—but they could be very easily done in part and drawn out over the season, even just 15 to 20 minutes at a time if you can only get to them "as you are able."

This might not fit your house, but at ours, during Advent, we keep what we have called "Advent Parties"—something that Kari and I will have to figure out anew this year with an empty house! We figure out when will be an opportune moment for us to stop what we're doing and celebrate Advent. In those moments, we prepare yummy snacks; we dim the house lights and light a fire in the fire place. We have an Advent wreath we light. We sing carols-some years we have made it a goal to memorize one, "Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah," for example, from our wreath-lighting from Sunday worship. We spend 15 to 20 minutes doing some sort of "canned" devotion and prayer. Sometimes we include watching a shorter Christmas video—A Charlie Brown Christmas or Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer (a story about grace and forgiveness!) It ain't fancy. Sometimes it's only "as we are able." It's pretty simple. And the bulk of our time is simply being together and being cozy. (The Norwegians call it "Koselig," the Danes, "Hygge," and the Swedes, "Mysa.")

Dear friends, my beloved in Christ, one more carol to close: "Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice! \ now ye need not fear the grave; Jesus Christ was born to save! \ Calls you one and calls you all to gain the everlasting hall! \ Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!"—ELW #288, "Good Christian Friends, Rejoice"

Christmas Schedule 2023

Sunday, December 24 - Christmas Eve with Holy Communion

9am Worship service

3pm Christmas Eve Service - Geared towards families with children 5pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Monday, December 25 - Christmas Day

9am Christmas Day - Pajama Service with Pot Luck brunch to follow in fellowship hall



Find us on Facebook or youtube.com/@trinitylutheranchurchprinc7558

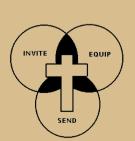
PLEASE NOTE: because Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday, the 4th Sunday of Advent, we **WILL** gather at our usual 9am time for worship. This service will be the completion of the Advent season—it will be "Christmasy," but it won't be Christmas Eve with candlelight or anything you would expect from those services.

Christmas Day Service: Pajama Service with Brunch This service will be held in the Fellowship Hall with a potluck brunch and Holy Communion. Of course, you don't have to come in your pajamas—but the point of this service is being to together in joy, fellowship, and lightness! After all our celebrations, just roll out of bed and join us for brunch, carols, and the celebration of our Jesus' birth!

Council Updates & Communication

- Our Finances this month—October saw an income of \$35K and expenses of \$36K. BUT our overall giving is up more than \$16K compared to the same time frame in 2022! Thank you!!
- **Sale of Trinity Crossing**—The sale of Trinity Crossing is closed, and we are happy to announce that we have sold the property to Bright Child on an 11-month contract for deed for \$600,000, which will provide for the payment of our monthly mortgage payment on Crossing thru the end of the contract. On or before the end date of the contract for deed, Bright Child will complete their loan process, and at that time, pay off the contract for deed, which will pay off in full our loan with Thrivent, as well as providing a small profit.
- **Purchase of the South Parking Lot**—This is done and is ours. We acquired the lot—basically everything in line with our building. We are currently lining up how snow removal will happen and what insurance needs will be.
- **Budgeting Time**—We're ahead of the game compared to years past in getting the budget for 2024-25 done. Included in that are some goals both for staffing and ongoing building improvements. But much of that will only be possible through your response to our stewardship drive. Those goals are included in the materials that have been sent out in a variety of ways—both regular mail and digitally. Please use those materials for your planned and intentional generosity for next year! We want to have as many of our pledge cards as we can gather in by Sunday, Dec. 3. Thank you!!
- **Heads' up for Advent & Christmas**—It's time to be planning for Advent and Christmas. Please see all our announcements for Uffda Sunday (Sun., Dec. 3), Poinsettias (deadline is Sun., Dec. 10), Giving Tree (starting NOW), Sunday School Program (Sun., Dec. 17), Congregational Caroling (Sun., Dec. 17), and our Christmas Eve & Day worship schedule. (See our Advent & Christmas announcements.) Thanks!

Our Mission/Vision Statements:



Our Mission: INVITE * EQUIP * SEND

Our Vision (the ways we seek to make our Mission visible)

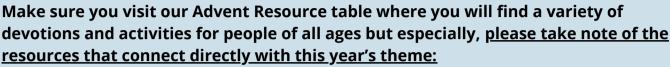
Invite: Trinity is a bright, shining light that provides a warm, welcoming environment to all.

Equip: Trinity seeks to provide the tools and resources to strengthen its participants' faith and faith response by offering invitation, instruction, examples, coaching, modeling, and assistance.

Send: Trinity looks to impact our community, world, and whole creation with the love of Christ by sending from this place every day followers of Jesus equipped through their faith and faith response to reflect the Light of Christ to anyone they encounter in their every day lives.

THE BEGINNING OF ADVENT—SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3.

Our Advent theme this year is "God With Us." The stories of Advent are stories for hard times. Jesus was born amid upheaval and historical change and among people who seemed powerless. But when the world feels hopeless, Advent reminds us God is with us. God is with us in chaos; in suffering; in uncertainty; and in whatever our families endure. This God With Us theme invites us to explore the ways in which Emmanuel—God-with-us—brings hope (Week 1), peace (Week 2), joy (Week 3), and love (Week 4) to your home and community, especially during hard times.



<u>God With Us Illustrated Advent Devotional:</u> This one is directed more for adults and families with older kids. It features a WEEKLY reading and some questions that can be discussed, journaled, or even doodled as part of one's Advent devotions.

<u>God With Us: An illustrated Advent for Families:</u> This is the one keyed more for families with younger children, and it too features a WEEKLY reading, along with family-friendly activities like games and coloring sheets.

Both of these resources correspond exactly with the

When we say things like, "Let's keep Christ in Christmas," our daily and weekly faith-based practices are THE BEST WAY of making those words real!



the infamous UFFDA Sunday!!! With a multitude of members comes some deep roots of heritage!
Please bring a dish to share that makes you think of your family traditions on this day.

Poinsettia Christmas Garden

Larry & Patty Jo Budeau—In memory of our parents, brothers, brother in-law & sister-in-law; In honor of our sons,

daughter in-laws & grandchildren.

Tad & Darcee Larsen—In honor of all of our family members.

Jan Wittnebel—In Memory of her husband Larry Wittnebel

Char & Wally Kramersmeier—In honor of our homebound members

Becky Porter—In memory of Joe Porter; In honor of God's love & forgiveness

June Kunkel—In memory of her husband Ken Kunkel

Heidi, Fred & Molly Street; Hilary, Joe, Sydney & Marsie Scott—In memory of mom & great grandma Shirley Bosch

Joan Heinen—In memory of her dad Harlan Herman

Deb Anderson—In honor of friends & family

Adolph Hamann & Brenda McDonald—Glory to God

Scott & Janet Angstman—In memory of Marvin & Rachel Siewert; In memory of Helen Siewert

The Gunderson Family—In memory of Tyler Gunderson, Wayne Gunderson and Anne Jacobson

Arnett & Ardis Alferness—In honor of their family

** Please Note: these are not all of the orders as the order deadline has not passed yet **



Thank you!

A big thank you to the everyone who helped with the hanging of the greens and the efforts that went forth! A sincere thank you to the hospitality committee for the lunch that followed!

A huge thank you to the Schroeder Family—Arlan, Sharon & Loren for donating the tree in the sanctuary; The Bowen family—John & Jean for the Giving Tree; and Wolcyn's Tree Farm for their green thumb! Merry Advent to all!



FAITH IN LIFE SERIES—RALPH EGBERT

Our next Faith in Life Series for Living IT is **THIS WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6** at Immanuel and will feature our own Ralph Egbert as our speaker. The Faith in Life Series offers stories and testimonies about how "faith" and "life" have gone together in the lives of those who share their stories. All are encouraged and welcomed to come and hear Ralph's story— "That's his story, and he's sticking to it!" Our schedule for the evening is

as follows: **5:30pm Supper; 6:30pm Worship; 7:15pm Faith in Life Series— featuring Ralph Egbert.**

Cookies for Christmas



to spread Holiday cheer!

Cookies for Christmas to spread Holiday cheer! Brightened someone's day by bringing in your favorite cookie or treat to the church no later then Sunday, December 10. We will be packing goodies boxes and delivering them to our members who receive the bulletin mailing. Join us in packing on Tuesday, December 12th after bible study at 11:30am!

Sign Up Here:

www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0E4EAEAF 2EA7FF2-46285373-cookies#/



Join us Sunday, December 17



Our Sunday School program put on by our kids will be during our 9am service on Sunday, December 17. They will present the Christmas Gospel to us in the way that only kids can!

AND THEN after worship and coffee hour, we will gather for a chili lunch (Pastor Mike will provide the chili but would like some help with the sides and fixings) and Christmas caroling for our elderly, homebound, and nursing homes. We do need you to sign-up so that we can determine how many homes we can visit! You can find that sign-up BOTH in the Narthex AND on-line. Buddy the Elf is right, you know— "The best way of spreading Christmas cheer is singing loud for all to hear!"

The Princeton Pantry



Families that have been clients at the Princeton Pantry
will be able to receive a Thanksgiving or Christmas
Basket! We invite you to partner in the season of giving!

DROP SITE TIMES:

MONDAYS & WEDNESDAYS 1-3PM

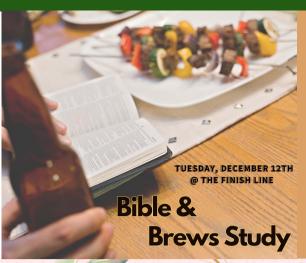
FRIDAYS 9-11AM

MONEY & FOOD DONATIONS CAN ALSO

BE GIVEN THRU YOUR CHURCH,

SCHOOLS, AND CIVIC GROUPS

The Princeton Pantry will be giving out Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets to families that have been clients at the food shelf site! Last year they gave away 117 baskets!! We invite you to be a partner in the season of giving. Ways to give: Mail or Drop off at our drop sites, Food can be dropped off Monday & Wednesday 1-3pm or Friday 9-11am. You can also give food to your local church school or civic group.



Bible & Brews Study—Our next gathering is: Tuesday, Dec. 12.

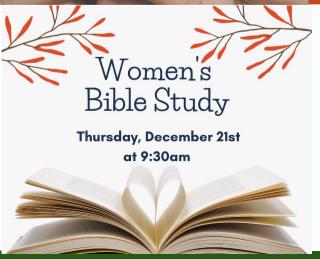
Under our main topic of "EVERYTHING YOU'VE EVER WANTED TO ASK ABOUT GOD, JESUS, OR THE BIBLE," our December topic, fittingly enough with Advent and Christmas, will orbit around the question, "Did God create the angels?", as well as other topical material around angels—what are they? What do they look like? Etc. etc. We will continue to field your questions, which you can submit by email or in writing, either to Pastor Mike (pastormike@trinity-princeton.org) or to Pastor Paul (pastor@immanuelprinceton.org).



Wednesday Evening Women's Study—This group meets on the second Wednesday of the month. The next meeting will be December 13th at 5:30pm. We will have started a new book. "The Well-Watered woman" by Gretchen Saffles. It can be found on Amazon If you have any questions please contact Jeanette Priess at jeanette.priess@yahoo.com



Men's Breakfast—Usually, the LAST SATURDAY of each month, due to the Christmas holiday, we'll be meeting on Saturday, December 16th, 8am here at the church. We are watching the FANTASTIC made-for-television miniseries "The Chosen."



Thursday Morning Women's Study—We meet on the 3rd Thursday of each month—our next gathering will be Thursday, **December 21st, 9:30am**. We use the Gather Magazine resource published by Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

2023 December

Trinity Lutheran Church Princeton MN

				Notes	Jan 1	9:00 AM Worship Service 9:30 AM NO Sunday School 10:00 AM Coffee Hour
						5:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight
			Group			Candlelight Service
***		3	© Immanuel	12:30 PM Princeton Area ELCA Ministerial Gathering	9:00 AM Ciristinas Day Fajama Service w pot luck brunch (in Fellowship Hall)	10:00 AM No Coffee Hour
*		7:00 PM AA	ving IT Dirner	10:00 AM NO Tuesday Morring Bible Study	Pastor Mike's day off 8:00 AM NO WWW	9:00 AM Worship Service 9:30 AM NO Sunday School After
8:00 AM NO Men's Breakfast	29		27 Bulletin Deadline	8:00 AM StaffMeeting	Christmas Day	Christmas Eve
		*	7:15 PM Living IT High School Group			10:00 AM Coffee Hour
	*	9:30 AM Women's Bible Study 7:00 PM AA				9:30 AM Sunday School After Kids
		Gathering		Study	6:00 PM District 5 AA	School Christmas Program
		Trumpet Deadline 9-30 AM Hearfland Conference Pastors		8:00 AM StaffMeeting	Pastor Mike's day off 8:00 AM WWW	0-00 AM Worship Service & Sunday
23	22	*	20	19	18	17
		X	7:15 PM Living IT High School Group			
		X	6:30 PM Worship on Wednesday@ Immanuel	6:30 PM Bible & Brews @ the Finish Line	7:00 PM Council Meeting	10:00 AM Coffee Hour
nom the last sat of Dec.)			5:30 PM Living IT Dirner 5:30 PM Womerl's Bible Study	Study	5:00 PM Laundry Love 6:00 PM Finance Meeting	9:30 AM Sunday School After Kids
8:00 AM Men's Breakfast (Rescheduled		7:00 PM AA		8:00 AM StaffMeeting	Pastor Mike's day off 8:00 AM WWW	POINSETTIA ORDER DEADLINE 9:00 AM Worship Service
16	15		13	12	11	10
			7:15 FM LIVING II High School Group	0:00 PM Eagle Scours		
				10:30 AM Emm Home/Catey House Lutheran Worship & Communion	у	10:00 AM Coffee Hour - Uffda Sunday
		7:00 PM AA 7:00 PM Troop 96		Study		9:30 AM Sunday School After Kids Time
		11:30 AM Princeton Area Ministerial Association	Bulletin Deadline 9:00 AM TOPS	8:00 AM StaffMeeting 10:00 AM Tuesday Morning Bible	Pastor Mike's day off 8:00 AM WWW	Uffda Sunday 9:00 AM Worship Service
9 *	8	7	6	5	4	3
-*						
*						
2	1 1:00 PM Sterling Point Communion	06 AON		28	27	26
Saturday	Friday	Thursday	Wednesday	Tuesday	Monday	Sunday

Located on Lake Shakopee, Camp Onomia provides a yearround experience where all people are welcome to encounter Christ through **Creation and Community**



 NOVEMBER 3RD-5TH: WOMEN'S REFRESH (A **WEEKEND AWAY JUST FOR THE LADIES)**

• DECEMBER 9TH-10TH: PLUNGE (HIGH SCHOOL RETREAT)







• JANUARY 26TH-28TH: ELEMENTARY CHILL

(GRADES 3-6 RETREAT)



- FEBRUARY 23RD-25TH: MIDDLE SCHOOL BLAST! (GRADES 6-9 RETREAT)
- MARCH TBD: BIBLE & BREW (BREWS AND BIBLE TALKS WITH THE BISHOP)
- APRIL 8TH-9TH: CHURCH OFFICE WORKERS **RETREAT**



www.CampOnomia.org CampOnomia@gmail.com V 320-532-3767



If you are interested in attending, Pastor Mike is planning to go and would LOVE not to go alone. Please be in touch with him if you have interest

www.CampOnomia.org | 320.532.3767

MEN'S WINTER WEEKEND

"Behold, I Make All Things New"

January 12th (7pm) -14th (11am)

Men of all ages are welcome to join us for our Men's Winter Weekend as we gather together to talk about how Christ makes everything new.

Good food, good fellowship, and enjoying winter up north at camp!

Thank you for supporting Trinity in 2023 and sharing your time and talents! If you have any questions please email the office or our bookkeeper Scott Hendrickson at swh008@msn.com

There are multiple ways for you to give:

- By Mail
- **On-line** This is THE most efficient way of signing up for Simply Giving, which is administered by Vanco, one of the most secure e-commerce companies in the industry.
- Automatic Withdrawal—Contact your bank.
- **By App**—Both the Apple and Google Play app stores have a free app called "GivePlus." Once downloaded to your device, simply search for "Trinity Lutheran Church, Princeton, MN"; follow the directions for registering; and set-up your giving in whatever way works for your faithful generosity, one time, recurring, or whatever.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!!

Council Members 2023



Linda Baumann Council Member Imbaumann@msn.com (612)390-2771



Jacob Calvert
Education
calveryjc53@gmail.com
(715)554-3719



Ralph Egbert
Council member
egbertstill48@gmail.com
(763)389-5860



Tiffany Elness
Living IT Youth
tiffanyelness@gmail.com
(651)235-7442



Char Kramersmeier Council President charsweb@q.com (763)639-2220



Becky Porter
Council Member
becky.porter1959@gmail.com
(612)747-0204



Gene Reierson

Property
grreierson@gmail.com
(612)735-0604



Jan Wittnebel
Council VP/Music & Worship
wittnebel@msn.com
(763)389-5071

Prayer List The family & friends of Arlis Bastvs Margaret Braun Jeri Ann Bredemus **leanne Bromberg** Jan Dery Jim Dery Katey Donais **Bob Duncan** Marlys Hanson Bill Hilliard Eldon Johnson Bruce Lacher Del Liestman Donna Liestman Eric Lukkari Helen Lundgren Chellis Matz **Jean Miller** Curt Moe Mary Newton LaDonna Olson Ed Peterson **Bev Reed** Warren Reed **Todd Reineccius** Dina Scandinato Arlan Schroeder Carol Skare Brenda Smith Anne Stevenson **Curtis Strombeck** Joyce Tessmer Marie Torgerson Ardy Tourville **Barb Wicktor Russ Wicktor Dean Winslow**

Ginny Winslow

Prayer List

Family Members & Friends

Peter Berry (Mary Berry's son)

Jan Gale's daughter Jamie
Jan Gerth's daughter
Joan Gessar (Courtney Hoppe's mother in-law)
Johnathan Gillette (Friend of Liz Christensen)
Debbie Hanna (Bev Reed's grand daughter-in-law)

Pastor Karl Jacobson (friend of the Pancoast family)

Evelyn Kingma (June Kunkel's sister in-law) Esther Neussendorfer (Danette Scepurek's grandmother)

Elliott Pancoast (Pastor Mike's dad)

Tracy Pidde(Princeton 3rd grade teacher)
Rob Savage (Friend of the Keller family)
Roy Schmidt (Jan Gerth's son in-law)
Mauricio Trujillo (friend of the Patnode and Miller families)

Scott Wallin (Char Kramersmeier's son)

Ronda Wetzel (daughter of Andrea & Ron Sandusky)

Serving in the Military

Andrew Anderson Eden Betzler Lacee Broding **Riley Broding** Ronald Duresky Riley Forland Derek Hanson **Hunter Lestrud Anthony Mandt** David McCarney John McCarney **Zachary Morisset** Ben Noard Mike Tolerico Benjamin Roth laden Thimmesch