

...a
picture
with

H O P E

JEREMIAH 29:11

SCENTS OF
THE SEASON

NEW WAYS
TO WORSHIP
THIS ADVENT

CHRISTMAS
MEMORIES

WELCOMING
NEW
MEMBERS



TRINITY LONG LAKE ADVENT CALENDAR

2021

Please watch for weekly *Trinity Connect* emails or visit our website for sign-ups, new events & updates.

Trinity Kids Christmas Program

December 5 | 10:30am

Trinity Women Gather+Give: Empowering Women

December 7 | 6-8:30pm

Confirmation Celebration

December 15 | 6pm

Home for Christmas Carol Sing

December 19 | 10:15am

Blue Christmas

December 19 | 6pm

Christmas Eve Services

December 24

Family Worship | 1pm

Candlelight | 3 & 5pm

Christmas at the Stable | 7pm



TrinityLongLake.org
952.473.8577

Blue Christmas

December 19 | 6pm

Trinity Sanctuary

Often lost in the anticipation of Christmas morning, the magic we hope delivers joy and promise, is the darkness of the days leading to it. Our days are full of preparations and distractions, not allowing for space to acknowledge how difficult this season can be despite its hopefulness. The reasons we usually give for loving Christmas are the memories we have associated with the holiday and the loved ones with whom we spent them. When those people and those memories are gone, it can leave a darkness within us to match the days we're in.

*For those who find themselves wandering that darkness, looking for signs of light, we hope you'll join us for our **Blue Christmas** service. This night is intended*



to name the sorrows and the pains we may be feeling during this season and hear the promise of hope that comes with the Christ child. We'll be reminded that we are not alone in these dark days – we have God and one another to help navigate to the light that awaits us.

A special invitation is extended to all families who have lost loved ones since last Christmas as you prepare for this first year without them physically in your midst.

Christmas Eve

We are so excited for Christmas at Trinity this year! We'll share together in familiar traditions and new experiences. We'll remember years past and make lasting memories for the future. Join us this Christmas season for life-giving worship amongst beloved community!

FAMILY WORSHIP | 1pm

Designed specifically for families with Preschool through fifth grade children. This is a wonderful opportunity for parents, grandparents and other caring adults to share in a 30-minute kid-friendly, interactive worship experience centered on the Nativity Story. Music will be provided by the children of Trinity and feature the **Trinity Youth Choir**.

CANDLELIGHT SERVICES | 3 & 5pm

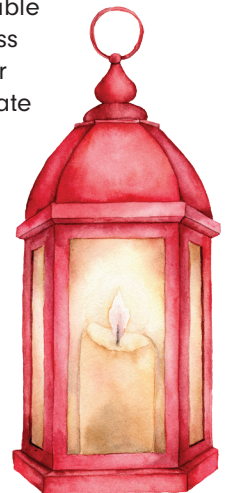
Two services with carols, readings and the lighting of candles.

3pm features the **Trinity Choir**

5pm features the **Chancel Bells**

CHRISTMAS AT THE STABLE | 7pm

This worship includes a 30-minute outdoor experience of carols and readings, lanterns and cresset gathered around our historic stable on the front lawn. Dress warmly and bring your lanterns as we celebrate the light of the world. We hope this might be a new Christmas Eve tradition like no other! The event is weather dependent so check our website for information as the night approaches.



Dear Trinity,



Abundant grace and peace to each of you from God, our Creator, who raises us up just as Jesus was raised from death to new life!

One month and one day.

My time as Trinity's new senior pastor began on October 11th and as I sit down to reflect on and write about all I've experienced since then, it has been one month and one day. We all mark milestones along our way – the first day, one week, one month, one year, and so on they go. It's significant, though, to acknowledge that extra day, the day after the milestone. To me, it reminds me of the promise we are given by God for a new day, the hope of something beyond where we've reached.

I get this sense from the people of Trinity as I've engaged in conversations and Cottage Meetings over the last month and one day. There is hopefulness for the future with an acknowledgement of how far

we've come. We long for newness of life and at the same time long for a return to what we've known. It feels as if together we yearn for the day that will come

after, while not leaving behind the time we've had.

One thing is very clear, though: hopefulness abounds. We are a hopeful people, a hopeful congregation. This place and this community mean so much to so many people, and that meaning has created an equal amount of hope in what's to come.

The other thing that is clear is that God is leading the way. All I've heard and experienced in my time here at Trinity has shown how much God is at work in all we do. We're human beings, so we can get lost in the muck from time to time, centering our own desires over where God is calling us. At the core of what we do and who we are at Trinity, though, is our mission to welcome, worship, grow, and serve, all in Jesus' name.

As we reach more milestones together, let us rejoice in how far we've come. Let us also remember that a new day comes, a new reality into which we're led by the one who makes all things new.

Here we are together – a life well-lived and tomorrow, one more day.



PICTURED

ABOVE: Julie Vanderroom with Rob Wiens. In the background Ray Wallander and Rick Gherardi.

TOP RIGHT: Lori Gherardi talking with Pastor Adam at a Cottage Meeting at Kathi & Bob Tunheim's home.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Judy & Jerry Paulson with Julie Wiens.



Welcome NEW MEMBERS



Ron & Carole Abrahamson moved to Orono Woods from Brooklyn Center. They are the parents of Jim Abrahamson and wife Dawn. Most recently they were introduced to Trinity by other residents of Orono Woods including Susie Rettinger, Lorna Johnston and Shirley Hemmenway. Their son and daughter-in-law are Jim and Dawn Abrahamson.



Cami, Derek, Mya, Peyton and Sydney Dahlstrom. Peyton and Sydney are in youth choir.

Dierck, Simone and Axel Kersten. Kerstens have been around Trinity a few years and decided to join.



Adam, Kayla, Madeline and Simon Butler join us from Paynesville where Adam was Pastor. We are so glad to have Adam serving as Senior Pastor.

Tiffany & Lucian Panait, both work in the medical field and **Michael and Matthew** attend Trinity Preschool. Matthew started Trinity Kids recently.



Matt, Michelle, Havin and Saylor Sagedahl. Michelle is a graduate of Concordia College, Moorhead and is a Registered Dietician at Wayzata Schools. Matt works at Optum. The Sagedahl's were introduced to Trinity by Jake and Kaley Krause.



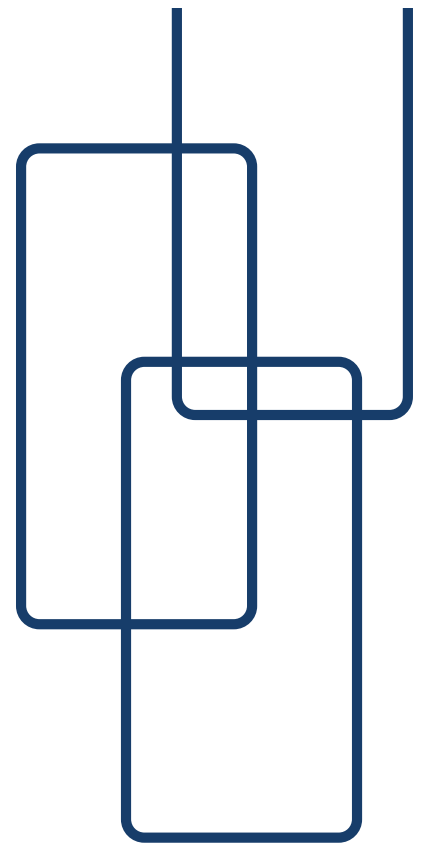
John, Julz, George, Mary and Toby Schwingler
"We were attracted to Trinity originally by the proximity to our house. We were driving past Trinity on our way to Our Lady of the Lake in Mound every Sunday. Julz grew up Lutheran and suggested we try Trinity. Pastor Brian was leading the service we attended and loved his message. A month later our son was hit by a car and one of the first calls I received was from Pastor Brian and he told me heard about George and that the Trinity Family was praying for the Schwinglers. Trinity has since been a big part of our life."

Chelsey, Steve, Aaron, Evert and Kellen Currie. Kellen is in youth choir.



Julie & Steve Tofteland Steve retired from farming in southern Minnesota. Daughter-in-law is Martha and grandchildren Finn and Liv.

Julz helped with Sunday school for the younger kids. *"I have been a confirmation guide as well as a mentor for the past 6 years. George is a VBS guide. I have served on a couple of other committees. We love seeing the Orono and surrounding communities families at Trinity."*



The Smells of Christmas

“It’s Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas,” is a favorite holiday tune written in 1951 by Meredith Willson (composer of *The Music Man*). The lyrics of his delightful song are images meant to evoke warm memories of Christmas; 70 years later, however, the images in the song seem dated and irrelevant.

Now, had Willson wrote, “It’s Beginning to *Smell* a Lot Like Christmas,” why, that’d be a different story! Because our sense of smell has a strong link to memory and emotion, most of us can relate to the array of pleasant aromas during this time of year: pine boughs, cookies baking, eggnog, gingerbread, a roast in the oven—even the distinctive smell of woolen mittens drying. For most of us, the smells associated with Christmas bring comforting memories.

But when we ponder the smells of that *first* Christmas, we see things from a different angle. The stable Mary and Joseph stayed in that night didn’t smell anything like gingerbread or roast beef. Stables were for animals and were neither clean nor fragrant. But something happened in that dirty, smelly stable on the first Christmas that changed the world forever. It was at that stable in Bethlehem where God chose to come to us, hidden in the helplessness of a newborn child asleep in a trough from which the animals ate. This Christ child—this King—was born, not in a royal palace, tended to by servants, but in a place where livestock was housed; the infant was wrapped not in soft royal robes but in swaddling clothes that Joseph put together using whatever material he could find.

But other smells from that Christmas are even *more* noteworthy: The three magi from the East brought with them the usual gifts to honor a king: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Gold and frankincense—a quite aromatic scent—were given in recognition of the divinity of Jesus. Myrrh—a pungent oil—was often used to prepare the dead for burial. Jesus’ crucifixion and death some thirty years later reveals the significance of these gifts from the wise men.

While I love the Christmas-y aromas of cookies and roast beef and eggnog as much as the next person, when we stop to take in the story of Jesus’ birth—smells and all—we can see that from the get-go, his birth was more than just a sweet image for us to remember at Christmastime. Through all these things of that first Christmas, we are reminded that, from the moment he came into this world as Immanuel, God with us, Jesus was already on his way to the cross. And it was on that cross in his suffering and death that we see the depth of God’s love—for in dying on the cross for us, God showed us the lengths to which God is willing to go to find us, to wash us clean of our sin, and to claim us as God’s very own.

God’s great peace to you.



Pastor Ann



Loving our Neighbors

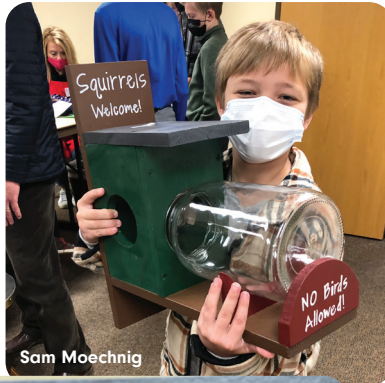
Monthly Community Meal

Enjoy a holiday meal hosted at St. George Catholic Church on December 16, 5:30-6:30pm. Come for conversation and connecting as a community. All are welcome! Free-will donation. Curbside meals will be available for pick up as well.



Ron Van Buren and Chuck Ritchie

talented group of crafters and the fact that they liked all the proceeds going to mission outreach.



Sam Moechnig



Happy AGAPE shoppers

AGAPE Gift Market

What a wonderful market for our church and community! We are grateful to the many people that donated items for the market, made lefse, volunteered their time and shopped the market.



AGAPE
gift market

Customers were lined up waiting before the doors opened on Saturday morning. We heard from customers about our

AGAPE Mini-Markets

in Trinity's Gathering Space

Sunday, Dec 5 & 12 | 10-11:30am

Tuesday, Dec 7 | 5:45-9pm

Wednesday, Dec 8 | 5-7pm

Sharing Our Blessings

Our congregation will have an opportunity to share our blessings once again with our traditional Giving Tree. This has been part of our Outreach Ministry for about

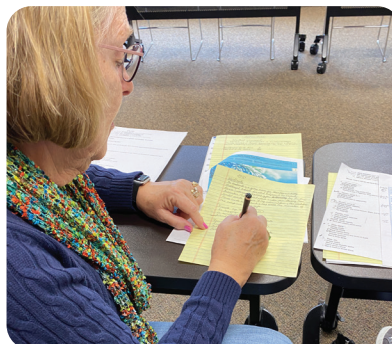
20 years. This year, we can either take tags off the Giving Tree in the Commons Area or sign up online. Please return gifts to the church and place under the tree and take gifts cards to the office. The dates items are due vary and details will be provided on the tags or the online signup form. Organizations we are supporting include **Interfaith Outreach, Families Moving Forward, WeCan, LSS Homeless Youth the Woodlands** (group home next to Trinity), **St. Stephen's Shelter, Simpson Shelter** and **Minneapolis Homeless Encampments.** We are also collecting socks, hats, mittens, waterproof gloves and scarves for shelters through Christmas. All clothing donations may be placed in baskets under the tree.

"It has been a personal blessing to be able to work with enthused volunteers and staff on this initiative knowing it satisfies needs and brings much joy to many."

- Marlys Jenson, who has been involved for many years



Jan Hermanson, Joan Ziemer, Betty Mueller



Marlys Jenson, Mary Meyer, Karen Jackson

*"Daddy hung the lights, we did the ornaments,
and he did the tinsel – ONE STRAND AT A TIME so it looked like icicles."*

Christmas Memories

By Millie Benjamin

My sister Joey and I grew up on farms in the Maple Plain area. We didn't have any real luxuries, but we didn't think we were poor either. We always had good food, clean clothes, a nice place to live and lots of love.

Things that I remember especially about Christmas: we always had new velvet dresses (store bought) usually burgundy colored. Daddy would make several trips to Mound, the best place in the area for trees at that time, to find just the perfect one for us. It was always straight, full and fresh. He was very particular, sometimes it would take him three or four trips, but our tree was always put on the first weekend of December. Daddy hung the lights, we did the ornaments, and he did the tinsel – one strand at a time so it looked like icicles. It was also easier to remove and save for the next Christmas. We helped with the tinsel as we got older—one strand at a time or you didn't hang tinsel! The tree was always kept well-watered. Sometimes, it grew. One year we made a deal with our dad—the tree could stay up until the needles fell. After new growth and no droppage of needles we were told the tree had to go. It was Lincoln's birthday, February 12!

I remember Mom baking all the wonderful cookies, coffee cakes and fruit cake. She was so busy with both outside and inside duties I don't know how she found time. We got to help with some things like cutting out the gingerbread men or sprinkling sugar on the dough, but mostly—we just ate them with tall glasses of milk.

Our Christmas was celebrated Christmas Eve with just our stocking from Santa for opening on Christmas Day. Because we were in the country, it was usually our family of four celebrating Jesus' birth rather than a big family affair. We had supper early — I remember wonderful homemade pork sausage with potatoes and our tree lighted with candles. Then Mom and Dad did the milking while we did the supper dishes and got ready for the big evening. Finally, the moment arrived.

We got beautiful dolls one year from Santa. Then after that we'd get new doll clothes. It was when we found the fabric used in Mom's cupboard that we finally found out who Santa really was. I was eleven and Jo was ten...we used to fight with all the other kids who didn't believe there really was a Santa Claus!

After opening our gifts, Jo and I would put on a program. We might read the Christmas story; always reciting our pieces from the Sunday School program and then singing Christmas carols. Finally, our wonderful evening would end with goodies to eat with milk or maybe even coffee with lots of cream in it. Christmas morning, we would be all excited to see what was in our stockings...some little things, some candy and fruit. You'd think we had gotten the world.

Our Christmas celebrations were so simple, but so full of special memories!



Millie Benjamin is a long-time Trinity member. Her sister, Joey Eastman died in 2020. As we begin our 90th year, we honor our past and look to the future with great hope that comes with the Christ child this time of year.

HIGH SCHOOL MINISTRY CATALYST

Jason Folkerts, Director of Faith Formation & HS Ministries
JasonF@TrinityLongLake.org

For the past eight weeks something exciting has been happening in the Youth Room and Great Hall of Trinity on Sunday nights for high school students. A brand-new gathering called **Catalyst** has launched where students and adult volunteers gather and find an intersection between God and their community. In the short eight weeks its met, **Catalyst** has adjusted and evolved – at first meeting outdoors due to the pandemic and then indoors when the weather turned chillier. **Catalyst** is living out the idea of that spiritual intersection with creative theme nights and a variety of ways to engage faith.

The doors open at 6pm for Open Gym, Youth Room and hanging-out-with-friends time. Then at 6:30pm there is a program that usually involves an organized large group game or mixer and then gathering for a bible study or activity that focuses in on a specific area of the students weekly lives and faith. The program wraps up most nights around 7:45pm.

We would like to get the word out that **Catalyst** is happening – especially to all Trinity High School students and parents. We want to see this become a safe and valuable space for students in our area of the Twin Cities and hope they will invite their friends who may not have a church family and are interested in questions about faith, God and living life with purpose. Right now the numbers have been up and down depending on the week; sometimes we may have fifteen present and other weeks eight. No matter how many show up, we are providing an impactful night that gets them thinking and wanting to grow more, plus it's just flat-out fun. Once **Catalyst** gets to a consistent thirty in attendance weekly, our goal is to introduce a time for contemporary praise music. Music is still one of the most universal ways to connect with others and especially with God, so we are excited for that to eventually happen.

The other big need for this ministry is adult volunteers – if you want information on being a **Catalyst** volunteer please contact me.



Jason Folkerts, Director of Faith Formation and **artist**, puts the finishing touches on a new mural in the Nursery.

MIDDLE SCHOOL MINISTRY CONFIRMATION

Megan Moroff, Middle School Director | MeganM@TrinityLongLake.org



We have been over the moon with gratitude to be in person for **Confirmation** this Fall! Seventy-two students and their small group leaders have been gathering at Trinity on Wednesday nights to grow in their relationship with God as they grow in their relationships with one another. Lesson nights so far have included the Hebrew Bible, Genesis, Martin Luther, the Reformation, and Adiaphora (Don't know what this is? Ask a Confirmation student!). For **FED**, we were joined by the outstanding duo Joe Davis and AGAPE who led us through a night of poetry, music, and storytelling that helped us talk about faith and race in our community. On our **Hands for Change** service night, we made quilt tie quilt blankets for kids spending the holidays in the hospital at the **Ronald McDonald House**. who will spend the holidays in the hospital. Looking ahead we're excited to add **Fellowship Nights** to our Confirmation program this year so our students can deepen their friendships and bond in a different way than they do on lesson nights.

Our schedule for the rest of 2021:

- Dec 1 | Lesson Night #6 – The New Testament
- Dec 8 | Lesson Night #7 – The Gospel of Mark
- Dec 15 | **Christmas Small Group Fellowship Night**
- Dec 22 & 29 | Christmas Break – No Confirmation

Our Confirmation students have brought so much light into my life this year – I know a lot of youth directors who are absolutely wiped after a Wednesday Night at church but I always feel like I could go run a marathon after Confirmation.

Our Middle Schoolers at Trinity are such a gift and you all are invited to walk with them on their faith journey! After the holidays we'll start looking for **Lenten Mentors** and, as previously mentioned, we have 72 students so we'll need 72 mentors. Please consider mentoring a 6th, 7th, or 8th grader in the new year – there's truly no better way to spend your time than with the youth! Email me if you're if you'd like to learn more.



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY SAVE THE DATES

Julie Vagle, Children & Family Director
JulieV@TrinityLongLake.org

JUNE 13-16 | Vacation Bible School at Trinity

JULY 8-10 | Family Camp at Wapo in Amery Wisconsin

All are welcome for a fun weekend with your church friends. Cabins are nice with private bathrooms/showers, activities include beach time, campfires, games, faith activities, and more!

JULY 22-24 | 1st-3rd Grade SEEDS weekend at Camp Wapo

A weekend away at camp full of fun – games, crafts, campfires, cabin activities, canteen, Bible studies, and so much more.



JULY 31-AUG 5 | 4th & 5th grade week at Camp Wapo

Kids will have a wonderful faith-filled week full of fun – Bible studies, cabin activities, all camp games, campfires each night, crafts, chapel, canteen, and making friends.



TRINITY ANNUAL GIVING

Thank you

Thank you for your generosity in supporting the ministry and vision of Trinity! We are grateful for your participation in what is happening here. Each and every person involved in the life of this congregation is a vital part of making this church the meaningful and impactful place it is.

If you haven't had a chance to pledge as part of our **Rise Up** stewardship campaign for the upcoming year, we invite you to do so by **returning your Pledge Card** to the church office or **texting "RISE" to Trinity (952-473-8577)**. Setting up electronic recurring giving allows us to plan our 2022 Ministries.

Please join us in Rising Up and being raised to the new life that awaits us all, sharing and proclaiming God's love and grace in the world.



Each family received a piggy bank at *Just for Kids*. Two piggies 'came all the way home' with monies toward 2022 Ministries.

**KIDS SAY THE DARNDDEST THINGS...
ABOUT CHRISTMAS**



"JESUS IS IN OUR BODIES YOU KNOW. WE CUT DOWN A TREE. I LOVE CHRISTMAS."

"IT'S THE BIRTHDAY OF BABY JESUS AND MAYBE SANTA'S TOO?"



"CHRISTMAS IS MY FAVORITE HOLIDAY BECAUSE OF SANTA AND TOYS."
 "ELVES COME AT NIGHT, I NEVER SEE THEM. SANTA BRINGS PRESENTS AND PUTS THEM IN MY STOCKING."
 "I GOT A REALLY GREAT PURSE FOR CHRISTMAS. WE SIT BY THE FIRE AND SING BUT I NEVER SEE SANTA."
 "WE ARE GOING TO FLORIDA TO VISIT MY GRANDMA."
 "I KNOW ABOUT EASTER. JESUS DIED FOR OUR SINS."

"I LOVE CHRISTMAS BECAUSE WE GO TO MISSISSIPPI."



**COUNCIL PRESIDENT
CORNER**

For me, one of the highlights of fall 2021 has been the joy of seeing everyone at Trinity worship in-person again. While I appreciate how lucky we are to have had the internet to keep us connected over the past 18 months, I am tired of relying on a computer screen for all of my human connection. Not only does the experience seem truly 'flat', I miss looking around to see everyone else worshipping.

Our **YouTube** channel has been a true blessing, but it misses many of the little joys we get from church: the kids coloring patiently (or not) on a bulletin, the friends you haven't seen for ages across the aisle, the couple you don't know well but always see on Sunday morning, and the huge parade of Trinity Kids out into the Narthex after **Just for Kids** time.

I've always loved the description of Advent as a time to 'watch and wait', and this season I'm especially excited to watch the children's program, families lighting the Advent candles, and Trinity's beautiful decorations. These signs of the season are so familiar, it's easy to grow accustomed to their appearance. This season I'm trying to truly look, to mindfully watch and wait, and to enjoy seeing everyone's friendly face on Sunday.

Michelle Edwards, *Council President*

Trinity Lutheran Church
2060 Cty Rd 6, Long Lake MN 55456

TrinityLongLake.org

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Christmas Eve Services

December 24

Family Worship | 1pm
Candlelight | 3 & 5pm
Christmas at the Stable | 7pm

TRINITY LONG LAKE NEWSLETTER / ADVENT EDITION 2021



A PRAYER OF HOPE

God of light, we look to you with the hope of people who have walked in darkness, who long for new life as we wait in exile. As we wait, give us patience. As we welcome you, give us joy. As we move forward with you among us, give us hopeful anticipation for what's to come. In all we do together with you, O God, guide us with your Spirit of gentle grace and send us into a future with newness of life. Let your light shine in us and with that light let your Word be made flesh among all whom you've called your own. In the name of Christ, our Emmanuel, God with us – Amen.



TrinityLongLake.org