

# Trinity Lutheran Church

December 2023

## Newsletter

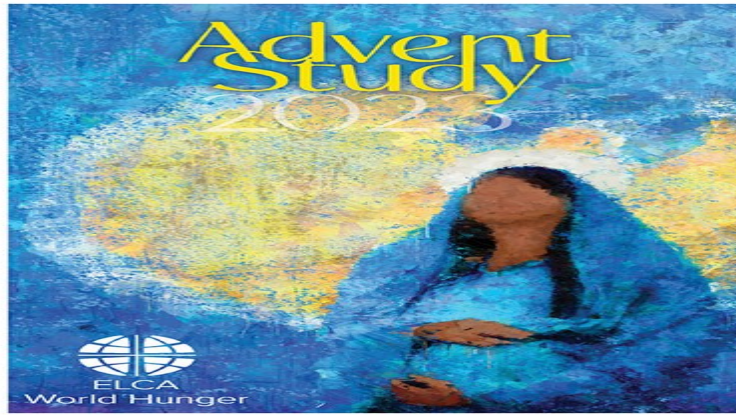
### Worship Services

8:45 AM, Sundays

5:30 PM, Wednesdays

Holy Communion at all services





Our Monday night and Thursday morning Bible Studies will be using the Advent Study from the ELCA World Hunger.

“In this season of Advent, we will reflect on our biblical ancestors, waiting for the coming of the Messiah as they, too, Longed for God to be revealed, ‘to lift up the lowly and fill the hungry with good things’ (Luke 1:52-53). Through reflection on the stories of our biblical past and the stories of ministries responding to hunger and poverty today, we will explore together the many ways “the glory of the Lord” is revealed in communities that have come together to confront deep challenges with strength, hope, and longing for a just world where all are fed.” (from *Advent Study 2023*).

Join us in this season as we explore one way we encounter God, from revelation to proclamation.

Mondays @ 6:15 pm

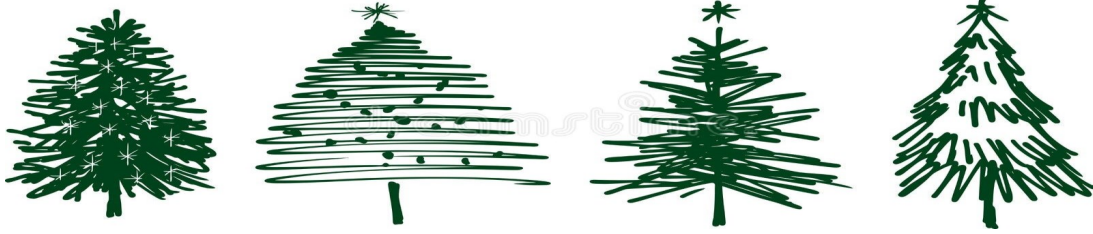
Thursdays @ 9:30 am

### Our Mission Statement

We are a fellowship of believers in Christ, sustained by  
God’s Word, led by the Holy Spirit  
and committed to God’s vision of caring.

Our liturgy during Advent is “**In Light & Darkness**”. The inspiration for our theme comes from the common usage of “light” and “darkness” and exploring how the earth experiences both the very lightest and darkest days with summer and winter solstices. Scripture focusing on God’s light has led to the belief light is the source of goodness and hope. This belief implies darkness is not wanted or needed, it is something to banish or get rid of, or God is not even present in the dark. Barbara Brown Taylor’s book, *Learning to Walk in the Dark*, helps us reimagine our understanding of darkness, primarily how Christianity heavily relies on the binary construct of light as good and darkness as bad. Taylor proposes that the pair of light and dark co-exist in balance, not opposition. She asks, “What can light possibly mean without dark?” We hope our In Light and Darkness-themed materials will help you share conversations about your understanding of light and darkness. We will explore how those understandings influence how you view God, your faith, and the world.

The ***In Light & Darkness Advent Devotional*** will be available as a complement to our weekly liturgy. It is a weekly devotional based on scripture showing how light and darkness exist together. The short reflections explore the theme of light and darkness in Advent scriptures. How we understand these ideas affects how we view God, our faith, and our world. Inspired by Barbara Brown Taylor's book, *Learning to Walk in the Dark*, we re-frame traditional understandings of light as good and darkness as bad or evil. Be sure to pick up a devotional at church.



December Upcoming Events for our Confirmation Students, their Mentors, High School Students and our Sunday School Children.

- Confirmation students and mentors will do their annual Angel Tree shopping Sunday, Dec. 10 at 12:00 in the Confirmation Center. We will do our shopping and then have lunch together at Pizza Ranch.
- Our Confirmation students will celebrate Christmas with a party Friday, Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> from 6:30-8:00. Bring a white elephant gift. There will be fun, food, and games.
- High School students (10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade) will have their Christmas party Sunday, Dec. 17 from 6:30-8:00. Bring a white elephant gift for the fun.
- Our Sunday School children will share the Christmas Pageant “Too Many Shepherds” during worship on Dec. 17. The kids have been working very hard and are excited to share with you the story of Jesus’ birth. There will be a Pancake Breakfast after worship to benefit our youth and their trip to the Youth Gathering.



***Christmas Eve Worship***

***Celebratory Holy Communion with Candlelight***

***First, Glenville—10:30 am***

***Trinity, Albert Lea - 4:30 pm & 7:30 pm***

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DECEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

Wow! Advent and Christmas are already upon us. It seems like only yesterday we were dealing with dry weather and record breaking temperatures. Where did the time go? I often wonder that myself when I count the Christmas seasons I have experienced in my life.

I imagine that all of us have special Christmas memories, both happy and sad. There have been pleasant surprises, and good intentions that somehow did not go according to plan. Christmas may also be the time for new beginnings, understanding, and forgiveness.

This may also be the first Christmas that does not include family and friends who were with us a year ago. Share the memories, and believe that one day we will all be together again for more celebrations. Remembering our loved ones and their impact on our lives may bring tears to our eyes. However, those tears should also remind us of the positive influence we can have on other people.

Christmas is also the time for us to give thanks for the birth of Jesus Christ. He taught us to love, help and respect each other. Good things to practice every day of the year!

Blessings,  
Ron Petersen  
Council President

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## PREMISES COMMITTEE DECEMBER 2023

On November 20 a group got together and decorated the church for Christmas. We decorated seven Christmas trees. There is one more tree decorated by the Altar Guild in Jacobsen Hall. Everything looks so festive and cheerful. A big shoutout and thank you to Shorty Jensen who used his amazing talent to create the wood ornaments that hang on the big Christmas tree and under the windows in the Sanctuary. See if you can find the the eight Christmas trees, and check out all the decorations in the church. The evening was completed with chili and oyster stew.

The forced air furnace for the South Sanctuary stopped, broke down. We had Christensen Heating come in and correct the problem. The combustion air fan and motor needed to be replaced. The bearings were out in the fan and ruined the motor, this is our oldest furnace installed in 1990.

This will be my last article for the newsletter because I have served the limit of six years. Thank you for letting me serve as one of your council person. I will continue my job as custodian so if you have any problems or suggestions contact any council person.

Steve Olson

Custodian

December is here. As I write, the temps are still pretty good, there is no snow on the ground and the turkey is thawing in the fridge for Thanksgiving. Soon the sounds of the season will change with our first blanket of snow. A favorite winter-time change is the acoustical change before all the snow is cleaned up – it always seems so peaceful.

The finance committee has been working on the 2024 budget this fall. It's looking to be very close to the 2023 budget. Our largest increase last year was for gas and electricity – since those look about the same as last year, our budget should be in line with last year.

The finance committee would like to say thank you and congratulations to LeAnn Juveland. She sent a request to Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative for \$500 through their Operation Round Up® program and was awarded the full amount. The request will help fund our Wednesday Night Supper outreach.

As I close this letter I, and the finance committee would like to say “Thank You” or the past year’s financial support. Also, a special thanks to all who donated time and talent this past year. Thank You!!

Please consider setting up for online giving either on our website at [www.tlc-al.org](http://www.tlc-al.org) or at <http://myeoffering.com/>

Merry Christmas and God Bless!

October financial overview:

Total Receipts \$22,633.72

Total Disbursements \$19,586.05

Cushion \$3,047.67

YTD financial overview:

Total Receipts \$223,737.60

Total Disbursements \$228,736.51

(Shortfall) (\$4,998.91)

s/ Chris Skogheim

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One of my favorite devotional writers is Kathleen Norris. Norris was a guest at a Catholic monastery during the week in 1997 when the members of the “Heaven’s Gate” cult all committed suicide based on their strange belief about events connected with the appearance of the Hale–Bopp comet. Norris heard the news in the monastery and noted that the members of that cult had referred to themselves as “monks.”

She later wrote that the Heaven’s Gate devotees didn’t seem much like the monks she knew, for she found the monasteries to be hospitable places, welcoming to guests, whereas the cult did not tolerate outsiders. Norris noted that St. Benedict said, “A monastery is never without guests,” and added, “What Benedict says might be seen as a way to define a monastery—if it regularly exercises enough hospitality so as a way to attract guests, it is a monastery. If it doesn’t, it is not” (Kathleen Norris, *Amazing Grace* [New York: Riverhead Books, 1998], 262-263). And a similar definition could be used as part of what it means to be a church. If it regularly exercises enough hospitality to make newcomers and regular attendees feel welcome, it is a church. If it doesn’t, it is not.

Trinity and First, Glenville Lutheran Church has the gift of Christian hospitality. It is a skill that I have felt ever since we arrived. I hope that everyone who comes through our door either for worship, Bible Study, children and youth programming, or meals feel welcome.

In this season of Advent, we are waiting to invite a little baby—Jesus—Immanuel—God with Us—into our lives. This is also a good time to invite our friends, family, neighbors, etc. to meet this little baby and learn of God’s great love for everyone.

It is a busy time. We have presents to find and wrap, cookies to bake and munch, and many holiday gatherings. We must not forget the “Reason for the Season”—Jesus. It is also busy at church. We have worship and Bible studies. We will celebrate with Christmas Parties. Our children will present the Christmas story (Trinity, Dec. 17 at 8:45 am during worship; First, Dec. 17 at 5:00). We have all the ministries that make us who we are. We Love God and Love Others, as we Serve God and Serve Others.

Someone once asked me, “You know why I came to your church? You invited me.”

There are thousands of people in our community and in our lives who are in need of that invitation. Our hospitality extends not just within our walls but into the world—a world that desperately needs the love of that little baby.

Let us work together to be hospitable to everyone we come in contact with.



**TLCW December 2023 Newsletter**  
**By Linda Olson and LeAnn Juveland**

It is so simple! God is totally trust worthy and I can relax in his plan. And besides that, all he wants is----are you ready for this---for me to be his person. Just be his person! I don't have to be brilliant or have a theology degree. Just be his person, for heaven's sake! From "God Always has a Plan B"

December is already here! a busy, fun and beautiful time of the year. Hope everyone enjoys all of the festivities. Speaking of which, the Albert Lea High School Chorale will again perform a mini concert for us on December 6th at 3pm under the direction of Erik Zinter. There will be a TLCW Meeting at 1:30 with a dessert. Please invite all of your family and friends to join us for the 3pm performance.

**CALENDAR of EVENTS**

December 5th	TLCW Board Meeting	9:30am
5th	Bible Study Leaders	1:00pm
6th	TLCW Dessert/Meeting	1:30pm
12th	Mary Circle Bible Study	1:30pm
20th	Deborah Circle Bible Study	9:30am
20th	Elizabeth Circle Bible Study	9:30am
20th	Eunice Circle Bible Study	2:00pm
20th	Lois Circle Bible Study	2:00pm

**COFFEE HOUR SCHEDULE**

December 3rd	Mary
10th	Deborah
17th	Elizabeth
24th	Eunice
31st	Lois

Pat Goldman has kept track of our donations from "Undie Sunday" for the Salvation Army. We have been doing this since 2012 and we have a very impressive grand total of 5,177 prs! Girls: 3,409 pr, Boys: 1,768 pr, socks: 169 pr, T-shirts 12, girls camis 5 and 2 pair of tights. Way to go Trinity and a Big Thank You to Pat Goldman for Chairing this project. Thank you all!

Wishing everyone a Very Merry Christmas and Many Blessings in 2024, from your TLCW Board  
Linda Olson and Leanne Juveland



We have partnered with United Way of Freeborn County for their Winter Gear Drive. We all know how cold things are going to get this winter. Let's help our neighbors stay warm. Drop off gently used and new coats and new hats, scarves, mittens, and gloves. Donations are for all ages and sizes. Trinity has a Drop Off Box in the lobby by the office.

## Bible Study

*PLEASE JOIN US*



Mon. Evenings in December  
@ 6:15 pm

Thurs. Mornings in  
December @9:30 am

3rd Tues. of the Month of December 19 @6:45  
pm

Saturdays in December @8:15 am

Memorials Given In  
Loving Memory Of

Undesignated

Stuart Kubat

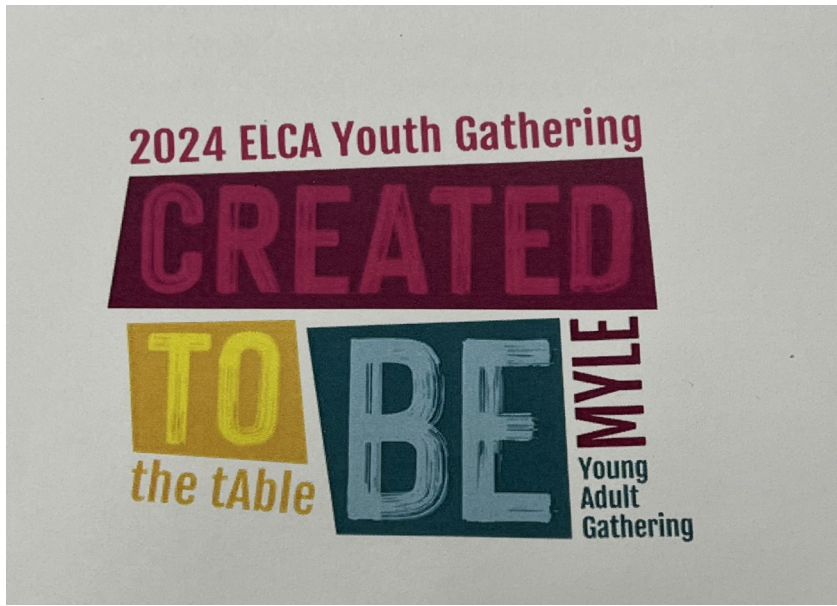
By Carol Johnson

Our Mentor Event for December will be Sunday, December 10th at 12:00 noon at Trinity Lutheran in Trinity Hall.



Some of the responsibilities of mentors are:

To provide guidance, advice, feedback and support to the mentee. As well as serving as their role model, teacher, counselor, advisor, sponsor, advocate and ally. You will provide them with all their tools to be able to become a better version of themselves.



Our youth are planning on going to the ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans the summer of 2024. Please pray for our youth as they prepare.



**Soup & Pie Supper – First Lutheran Glenville**  
**December 6, 2023 – Serving Time 4:00-7:00**

Oyster Stew, Chicken Noodle, Ham and Bean, Chili  
Lots of Pies and Desserts to choose from!



Adults - \$10.00  
Under 16 - \$6.00  
Under 3 - Free

**Ruby's**  
**PANTRY**

*Please follow the signs  
and stay in your  
vehicle*

December 2

Next drive - thru pantry is:  
**Saturday**  
**8:45 am - 10:00 am**

For a \$25 cash donation, people can receive an abundance of food. There are no income or residency requirements.

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF ALBERTLEA  
702 HWY 69 S, ALBERT LEA, MN, 56007

Volunteers Needed: Call 507-373-8233



## Trinity Lutheran Church

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**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/tlc](http://www.facebook.com/tlc)

***Pastor Eileen Woyen***

Non-Profit Organization

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Permit No. 230

Albert Lea, MN