

December 2023

Little Lutheran/Parent Special Connection Time



Northern Lights Ministry Choir



2W JH Release Service @ Care & Share



Fall Flannel
Fun Sunday



WORSHIP
With US
DECEMBER

Sunday, December 3, 2023—Advent 1

9:00am—Worship at Trinity
10:10am - JAM "Christmas Traditions"
10:45am—Worship at First Presbyterian

Sunday, December 10, 2023—Advent 2

9:00am—Worship at Trinity
10:10am—JAM
10:45am—Worship at First Presbyterian

Sunday, December 17, 2023—Advent 3

9:00am—Advent Celebration Festival at Trinity
10:10am— Children's Christmas Store in Youth Room
10:45am— Worship at First Presbyterian

Sunday, December 24, 2023—Christmas Eve

9:00am—Music and Carols Worship at Trinity, No JAM classes
3:00pm & 5:00pm—Christmas Eve Worship at Trinity
5:00pm—Christmas Eve Worship at First Presbyterian

Sunday, December 31, 2023—First Sunday of Christmas

9:00am—Worship at Trinity, no JAM classes
10:45am—Worship at First Presbyterian

Sunday, January 7, 2024—Epiphany Sunday

9:00am—Worship at Trinity
10:10am—JAM classes resume
10:45am—Worship at First Presbyterian



Pastor Isaacson's Letter



Happy Advent! We begin our time of intentional preparation and eager anticipation of what God is "about to do" even as we are surrounded by the sights and sounds of Christmas merriment. The church season of Advent is meant to bring personal reflection on God's presence in our own lives while, at the same time, having us focus on the things that God will do. In many ways, it is more than about Christmas. It is a time of learning how to look for the things that God is actively engaged with us and our world so we can live in the present moment of "God with us!"

In the hurriedness and chaos that many people find in December activities, we need these Advent reminders to slow down a bit. We need to take time to breathe. We need to hear and to absorb the words and music that is sacred for this time of year. We need to make room in our lives for God to enter in. We need time with family and friends to appreciate and to enjoy all that God gives to us.

So come to church on Sunday mornings. Let the music, scriptures, and the messages return us to the meaning of Christmas. There God will meet us as we are: loving us, encouraging us, and pointing the way for us. When the Christ child is born, we will not only see, but we will also experience the love of God that comes down to us to gift us with a gracious gift of love and salvation.



Northern Lights Ministry Collaborative

Welcome to this first edition of a joint newsletter shared with Trinity Lutheran Church and First Presbyterian Church. We are pleased to have hired Barbara Jorgenson of Digital Diva to create our bulletins and newsletters. We hope to have consistent messaging and branding across our many platforms of communications. Barbara will work primarily remotely but you may have an occasion to meet her.

With our collaborative disruption this summer and our vacancies in Office Administrators, we have not fully pursued our visioning and shared mission discussions as intended. Our hope is to engage that process again in the new year. We will be asking people to participate in a number of forums to identify values, openness to possibilities, and God's call to our future.



The WELCA board would like to thank everyone who participated in our Fall Sweets and Social! It didn't look much like fall that day as we had a nice covering of snow, but it was nice and warm and looking like fall inside of Trinity Lutheran. We thank everyone who brought a dessert, baking for the bake sale, served in the kitchen and to those who came to enjoy a dessert and maybe bought a few yummy items from the bake sale. It takes many helping hands to make an event happen. We treasure everyone's Participation!

Trinity's Women of the ELCA

Feed my Starving Children, Fargo MobilePack January 7th—Fargodome



We hope to bring a group of youth (7th and 12th grades, *families welcome too*) to help turn hunger into hope by packing nutritious meals for hungry children around the world. We will leave after JAM at 11:15am and volunteer from 1-3pm. The group will go out to eat together in Fargo before heading home. Please sign up by Wednesday, December 13 so we can plan transportation. Contact Leah at 289-3250 if you would be willing to transport a group.

Contact Information

Please let us know of any changes in your contact information so we can keep our records current. This includes your phone number and mailing address—new, temporary or "temporarily away" by calling the church at 218-281-4276 or emailing the information to office.tlc@midconetwork.com.



1 **BENILLE IRIZAYAMWIZA** | Girl
4 Years Old

How to Give an Un-sponsored Child a Merry Christmas

- 1 CHOOSE A CHILD AND WRITE A JOY-FILLED CHRISTMAS LETTER. MAKE IT PERSONAL AND HOPEFUL. SEE PAGE 3 FOR TIPS.
- 2 CUT OUT THE STUDENT'S PICTURE AND HANG IT ON YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE TO REMIND YOU TO KEEP PRAYING.
- 3 COMPLETE THE RESPONSE CARD ON PAGE 2.
- 4 TURN IN THE RESPONSE CARD, LETTER TO THE STUDENT, AND \$50 GIFT PAYMENT TO THE CHURCH OFFICE BY DECEMBER 14 (CHECK PAYABLE TO TRINITY LUTHERAN WITH JOY TO RWANDA ON THE MEMO LINE OR GIVE CASH).



Joy to Rwanda!

Christmas Outreach Ministry Project

For our third year in a row, we will continue being connected with our friends of City of Joy. Our hope is to provide Christmas joy to unsponsored children/families of City of Joy through letters/pictures and through monetary donations that will provide gift packages of essential items such as food/clothing. For the past 2 years, the response of love and generosity from Trinity and First Presbyterian Church for the City of Joy was overwhelming. We look forward to sharing in this outreach ministry again this Advent Season. Letters and \$50 donation will be due **Tuesday, December 12.**



Trinity's Ministry Team

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday: Church building closed

Tuesday—Thursday: 8am-Noon & 1-5pm

Friday: 8am-Noon & 1-3pm

Pastors hours vary—please call ahead

Senior Pastor: Rev. Gregory Isaacson
Email: gregoryi279@gmail.com

Associate Pastor: Rev. Michael Ozaki
Email: PastorOzaki@gmail.com
Cell: 951-532-5105

Pastor Michael's Office Hours:
Tuesday & Wednesday @ Trinity
Thursday & Friday @ FPC

Director of Children, Youth & Family Ministry:
Leah Winjum—email: leah@trinitycrookston.org

Office Admin: Anne Kopecky
Email: office.tlc@midconetwork.com

Communications Director: Barb Jorgenson
Email: Barb.digitaldiva@gmail.com or 218-280-3961

Financial Secretary: Tyson Siegle
Email: fs@trinitycrookston.org

Custodian: Tyson Siegle

Organist: George French

Contemporary Worship Director: Adrienne Winger

Phone Numbers:

Church Office: 218-281-4276

Fax: 218-281-5481

Pastoral Emergencies: Please call church office @ 218-281-4276 for on-call phone number.

Please post this number near your home phone or add it to your cell phone contact list.



Christmas Offering for Care and Share Food Shelf

During the month of December, all cash offerings and checks made out to Trinity with "Care and Share" in the memo will go to support the Food Shelf housed at the Care and Share facility. As you know, grocery prices have been moving up and puts the pinch on a lot of household budgets. For those with minimal or no income, the struggle is made ever more real. A lot of fixed income households also are squeezing every dollar to put food on the table.

Your donations to the Food Shelf enable the Care and Share to purchase food and supplies that are in need in our locality. While the North Country Food Bank in East Grand Forks does supply most of the food, there is need for those items that are not always available to meet certain food restrictions in a number of households. Trinity will be receiving your donations through Sunday morning offerings, checks placed in the mail, or our drop box. You can also go to our Vanco giving app and select "Care and Share."

Pastor Ozaki's Letter



I write to you on my 40th birthday, quarantined in my room with COVID-19, hoping the kids don't get it. Clearly, it's not what I expected, but it may be the perfect example of why we still need this season of Advent so badly.

Advent, the season of hope, waiting and preparation is mainly used to settling into the "Christmas Season" today, but when it began (and most of Christian history) the main thing people did was...fasting. Why? Because they understood deeply where God's hope and joy come from. Not learning to grab more of what we want but from getting good at holding the hard stuff we can't avoid. The waiting, the trusting, the wondering if it will come. Advent is God's annual practice run for these skills so that we might "be still and know that God is God" when we're forced to hold it all in real life.

We don't fast for Advent anymore, and that's ok, traditions change. But we could still use the practice, couldn't we?

Alternatively, we have "Advent calendars" with chocolate, jerky, or beer behind the daily doors for that gift opening rush or a program every weekend to give us those Christmas fuzzies. None of which are bad, but what if the rush to avoid waiting until the 25th is keeping us from becoming something more than consumers. Something that kept Christians coming back for 1500 years? Well before there were any toys to open.

Sitting here in my bed, disappointed and waiting for...I don't even know. I see a video of someone ranting because their package was late, another shows a guy screaming insults on a plane when asked to wear a mask, while another talks about how drug abuse in people over 50 is rising sharply due to anxiety.

Then I see one more, a news report with an older woman sitting beside another asleep in a hospital bed. When the reporter asked how she has the patience to come and sit like this for so long, the woman smiles and squeezes her partner's hand. "I've had to wait most of my life, through terrible things, to be able to call her mine. All that made me good at it. Loving means trusting that the wait is worth it."

This season, may we allow Advent to do it's work on us. May we become good at waiting and as a result, may we become as strong as loving as the Christ who comes on Christmas morning.



Hallelujah! After many months of looking and waiting for the right people, we are thrilled to welcome our new Administrative Assistant and Communications Director! Both of which are made possible by being a shared/collaborative position between First Presbyterian and Trinity Lutheran.

Administrative Assistant—Anne Kopecky

A Crookston native, Anne spent over 15 years working as an LPN, "I spent the majority of that time working for Mayo Clinic specializing in hospice and respite care; however, I was lucky to have the opportunity to travel as a nurse where I performed a wide variety of different nursing services all the way from Richmond, VA to Phoenix, AZ. I was forced to leave nursing due to health reasons and embraced my new path." Most recently working as an Administrative Assistant at the University of Minnesota Crookston. Drop in, say hi and get to know Anne between 9:00-3:00 at Trinity and First Presbyterian starting in December.

Communications Director—Barb Jorgenson

Barb was born and raised in a suburb of Philadelphia. In 2011, she moved to her husband's family farm in Fisher, MN. In May 2022, they decided to move to Grand Forks. Farm life was just not for them and are really enjoying the city life again. Most of Barb's career has been in Human Resources and Administrative work. In June 2022, she became the Administrative and Media Assistant at Sharon Lutheran Church. In June 2023, she decided to start her virtual assistant business "Digital Diva" where she helps businesses with their administrative work. She continues to work full-time at Sharon Lutheran while helping businesses on her nights and weekends.

This position is fully remote so Barb will not be in the office but we are delighted to have her and the gifts she brings.



How To Reach Us

FOR PRAYER CHAIN REQUESTS: Please contact a Prayer Chain Coordinator: **Shirley Bakken at 218-687-2107 or Judy Dragseth at 218-281-2550** or the Church Office at 218-281-4276.

PASTORAL EMERGENCIES: Please call church office @ 218-281-4276 for on-call phone number.

HOSPITALIZED? The only way the church knows that you're hospitalized is if you, a loved one, or friend notifies us. Please call the church office at 218-281-4276 and let us know so that Trinity can support you with prayer and with presence.



Trinity Holiday Office Hours:

Closed: December 25th & December 26th

Open: 9:00am—3:00pm on December 27th, December 28th, December 29th

Trinity Drop Box is available anytime for year-end contributions.

As year end approaches, churches, along with most non-profit organizations, are encouraging their members and followers to contribute towards their financial goals. As people of faith, we give from the perspective of a God who daily blesses us with many things and we are called to share those gifts in ways that make Christ known to the larger world. One expression is the presence of a local church where believers gather to worship, learn, and be of service.



YEAR-END GIVING

Trinity and First Presbyterian have strong histories of being a Christian presence in the Crookston community and beyond. We provide ministries that serve both those attending and those beyond the church walls. We gather weekly for worship where we can sing songs of faith, hear God's Word in both scriptures and sermon, lift up prayers both global and local concerns, and share in the Lord's Supper where Jesus meets us as we are. We grow in our Christian journey through learning at every age. We support our local Care and Share outreach to those going through transitions in life: the food shelf, the emergency fund, monthly meals, and housing for both individuals and families. We walk families through grief and illness. We celebrate with baptisms for both children and adults.

Thank you for any contributions you have given, both financial and volunteer. As we approach the end of a fiscal year, would you prayerfully consider giving an additional gift to help us make our budgeted income goals? Our hope is to continue the ministries we have in place as well as planning for our 2024 budget year. Your continued support in prayer, volunteerism, and financial contributions ensures our churches will continue to be places of healing and support, comfort and hope.

**January "New Year" Offering
Care & Share Monthly Meals**

Our special monthly offering to start 2024 will be to help cover the costs of the monthly meals provided to our friends of the Care and Share. The Children, Youth, and Family Team coordinates this 1x/month meal and appreciates your help in making it possible. So, empty out your change jars, make a special offering as a family. Any dollar amount is appreciated. Our goal is \$1,750 to cover the 2024 meals. **Please make checks payable to "Trinity Lutheran Church" and write "Care and Share Monthly Meals" in the memo line.**



Repeating Items:

- Every Sunday: 10:45am—Worship
11:45am—Coffee Fellowship
- First Sunday of Each Month: Communion
- Every Tuesday: 6:00pm—Area Women's Chorus Rehearsal
- Every Wednesday in December: 12:00pm—Pause for Peace Group
- Every Wednesday—All Months: 6:00pm—Bell Choir Rehearsal
- Every Thursday—All Months: 1:00pm—Book Study

Date Specific Items:

- December 12:00pm—Dan & Laurie Wilson Celebration Lunch
3:00pm—Bells of Praise Celebration Concert
Advent Begins!
- December 24 9:00am—Morning Worship @ Trinity (none at FPC)
5:00pm—Christmas Eve Worship
- December 31 Happy New Year!
Don't forget your yearly pledge



- Nov. 26th:** Reader—Lynne Mullins
Usher/Greeter—Craig & Conner Morgan
- Dec. 3rd:** Reader—Sandy Perkins
Usher/Greeter—Dan & Vicki Svedarsky
Communion Servers—Mario & Jill Schisano
Communion Prep—Jeri Melsa
- Dec. 10th:** Reader—Lynne Mullins
Usher/Greeter—Wayne & Lori Folkers
- Dec. 17th:** Reader—Marsha Odom
Usher/Greeter—Bill & Gloria Watro
- Dec. 24th:** Morning Worship @ TLC
Evening Worship @ 5:00pm
Reader—Sandy Perkins
Usher/Greeter—Wally Hoselton & Dale Charais
- Dec. 31st:** Reader—Lynne Mullins
Usher/Greeter—Gary & Lori Hoerner

- Jan. 7th:** Reader—Sandy Perkins
Usher/Greeter—Marlys Mjoen & Lynne Mullins
Communion Servers—Gary & Lori Hoerner/Merrie Nelson
Communion Prep—Marlys Mjoen
- Jan. 14th:** Reader—Marsha Odom
Usher/Greeter—Jon & Marrie Nelson
- Jan. 21st:** Reader—Lynne Mullins
Usher/Greeter—Craig & Connor Morgan
- Jan. 28th:** Reader—Sandy Perkins
Usher/Greeter—Gordy & Monica Terpstra
- Feb. 4th:** Reader—Lynne Mullins
Usher/Greeter—Wally Hoselton & Dale Charais
Communion Servers—Gordy & Monica Terpstra/Marsha Odom
Communion Prep—Gordy
- Feb. 18:** Reader—Lynne Mullins
Usher/Greeter—Dan & Vicki Svedarsky
- Feb. 25th:** Reader—Sandy Perkins
Usher/Greeter—Craig & Conner Morgan

J.A.M. Plus (7th—10th) Cont.

Wednesday, January 17th, 6:30-8:00pm—2024 R.A.Y. Tank Special—Random Acts Youth Event. During J.A.M. Plus, we will brainstorm Random Acts of Kindness projects to be completed in 2024. Each class will present to a panel of Trinity Thrivent Members. These members will select which class to sponsor/work with and utilize their Thrivent Action Team dollars to financially support the project.

ALPHA—9th Graders—Stay tuned for specific dates for ALPHA—A confirmation expectation for your Freshman Year. This will begin sometime in January—dates TBD.



Advent “Pause for Peace”

12:00pm—12:45pm
Wednesdays in Advent @
First Presbyterian Church

“A Mindful Circle”, “Council”, “The Circle Way”, “Pause for Peace”, it goes by many names, but the process remains the same, “To gather in a trusted circle with simple questions and a bit of ritual, trusting that when we share ours and listen to others honest stories and experiences, we will hear and see God in ways we never have before.

Designed to be an easy and intuitive process that anyone can jump into comfortably, “Pause For Peace” invites you to take a break from the rush of the season to breathe deeply, share honesty, listen openly and perhaps experience the “Peace of God that surpasses all understanding” together.

No preparation or registration required. Questions?

Contact pastorozoki@gmail.com or (951) 532-5105.



Celebration Luncheon with Dan & Laurie Wilson



Dear Church Family, Past and Present,

Dan and Laurie would like to invite you to share a lunch with us after church on December 3. We are grateful to be celebrating 50 years of marriage that week and would like to say thank you to our church family, past and present, for being such an important part of the journey thus far.

We want to treat you to lunch, on us, no ‘strings’ attached. Just lunch, together. No need to find a card and definitely no gifts.

If you are a current or past member or attendee of First Presbyterian Church in Crookston, or just a friend of the congregation, you are invited and you should feel free to bring a friend if you wish.

All we ask is that you sign up at church on a sheet that Pastor Mike will put out, or respond to this email by November 26th so that a proper amount of food will be available on December 3.

We hope that this date will work for all.

Best regards and looking forward,
Dan and Laurie



All Generation Advent Celebration
Sunday, December 17th
9:00am Worship

Please join us for this celebratory advent worship service with your church family. There will be a variety of musical performances by all ages and groups.



Youth Sunday
Sunday, January 14th

Please reach out to Leah at 218-289-3250 if your child/youth would be interested to read scripture, sing, help with children’s time, greet, share musical talent, etc. We love to have our children/youth to have an active role in worship.



If you are interested in giving electronically, please check the online giving options through our website www.trinitycrookston.org or use your smartphone to download the “Vanco” app to set up your donation(s). Instructions are listed to the right:

If you have any questions about giving electronically, please contact the church office at 218-281-4276.



Give Using Your Smart Phone!

Along with Trinity’s current on-line electronic giving system, we now offer you an additional way to support Trinity—directly from your smart phone. Download the app “Vanco” from Google Play or the App Store and follow the instructions to find our church and enter your information. Use your existing on-line giving sign-in, or create a new account, and your general fund donation amount. It’s as simple as that!

Advent Book Study- “Holy Disruption”

Thursdays @ 1:00pm at First Presbyterian Church
November 29th—December 20th



The Gospel of Mark doesn’t have a nativity story—so where’s the Advent message? It’s in every aspect of Jesus’ life, to his death and beyond. The Incarnation—God come to earth in human form to be baptized, teach, heal, eat, and die—is what we celebrate at Christmas, and Mark shows us just how radical and celebration—worthy it is! Holy Disruption presents a fresh understanding of the holiness of Christmas grounded, not in a conventional cozy Christmas message, but through Mark’s disquieting gospel which invites its readers to experience God’s disruptive but transforming love for us and our world.

Books available. Suggested \$15 towards book costs.



Youth, Children and Family Ministry



J.A.M. (PreK—6th)

Sunday, December 3 - JAM Mash-Up "Christmas Traditions" 10:10-11:30 (EXTENDED JAM TIME).

Our PreK-6th graders will all be together for a special kick-off to the Advent Season. We will celebrate and experience many cherished *Christmas Traditions*—listening to the Christmas Story, singing Christmas Carols, enjoying cocoa and decorating Christmas cookies, creating ornaments, and viewing a display of Nativity Scenes. We need to extend our regular J.A.M. time to get all the fun in! *(Please let Leah know if you have a Nativity set you would be willing to borrow to have on display for this event—289-3250).*

Sunday, December 17—Christmas Store—during J.A.M. 10:10-??? *(after our All Generation Advent Celebration Worship Service)*

We continue to take new or like new donations, as well as, Christmas bags and tissue paper for the Christmas Store. On the day of the Christmas Store, children will shop with a personal shopper for their parents/grandparents/siblings/etc. They need to bring a shopping list *(name and age of person buying for)* and cash for the gifts *(all items are 50 cents—\$1)*. All gifts will be gift-wrapped before kids take them home. Please note that we will need helpers/volunteers of all ages to make this ministry successful. Any further questions, please contact Kristy Morris Leas at 218-280-6824.

Sunday, December 24 & 31—NO J.A.M. for Christmas Break

Sunday, January 7—J.A.M. Resumes



J.A.M. Plus (7th—10th)

Wednesday, December 6, 6:30-7:30pm - Family Night/Dinner—Christmas Appetizer Potluck—All families, please bring a favorite appetizer to share. We will have a special Christmas Dinner Church around the tables.

Wednesday, December 13—JH Early Release 12:30-3:00pm, J.A.M. Plus 6:30-8:00pm—9th/10th Only—Christmas Celebration

Wednesday, December 20 & 27—No J.A.M. for Christmas Break

Wednesday, January 3—6:30-7:30pm—J.A.M. Plus Resumes—Family Dinner *(Please RSVP to Leah by Sunday, December 31st, regarding your family numbers so we can prepare for the dinner).*

7:30-8:15pm—Summer 2024 Youth Trip Parent/Youth Meeting. Find out interest and plan winter/spring fundraisers.

Wednesday, January 10—JH Early Release 12:30-3:00pm, J.A.M. Plus 6:30-8:00pm—9th/10th Only



Sponsoring Christmas Poinsettias

Each year, we are blessed to have fresh poinsettias to decorate our sanctuary for Christmas, provided by members like you in honor of loved ones or simply to bless the church on this special night. If you wish to sponsor one or more, **please drop off or mail your payment to the office by Christmas Eve. The price of each plant is \$15.** Please include a note for who the plant is in honor of so it can be listed. No order forms are needed this year. Poinsettias will be placed in the sanctuary for Christmas Eve worship and remain until New Years. Then, you are welcome to take yours home.



Stewardship Commitment Reminder

As 2023 draws to an end, please prayerfully consider your year-end financial gifts to the congregation. We are blessed to be a part of this committed family in faith that is made possible by the gifts of each one of us. Please consider how you will share your gifts through your 2024 pledge.

Thank you!

Bells of Praise
40th Anniversary Celebration
Concert

Sunday, December 3rd
3:00pm
First Presbyterian Church
510 N. Broadway
Crookston, MN

Also Performing!
Area Womens Chorus

CHRISTMAS JOY SPECIAL OFFERINGS

The Christmas Joy Offering provides assistance to current and retired church workers and their families in their time of need, and develops our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

WAYS TO GIVE

- Through your congregation
- Directly (credit card online at [givecentral.com](https://www.givecentral.com))
- See CHRISTMASJOY to give or visit [givecentral.com](https://www.givecentral.com)

Every time we echo angels repeating words of peace on earth every time we see as shepherds, tending moments of new births and glory after we see God giving gifts beyond all earthly worth.

In our living in our giving we are here.

CHRISTMAS JOY TO GIVE OR VISIT PLEASE VISIT [GIVECENTRAL.COM](https://www.givecentral.com)

