

December 2023

Dear Friends,

The birth of our Lord Jesus in Bethlehem could have been an overwhelming event if God had chosen to make it so. He could have sent an angelic army to go all about the empire announcing the birth of the Savior to all the nations. Instead of a lowly stable, God could have had Jesus born in a palatial mansion with servants at his every beckon call. The Lord could have surrounded himself with luxury at his birth. But thank God it didn't happen that way.

Luxury and opulence serves as a mask to hide the downright unpredictability and messiness of life. Not one of us experiences life unscathed, rich or poor or somewhere in between. So Jesus was born into poverty. The God who lives in unapproachable light clothed himself with frail human skin and bones and wore our human vulnerability and weakness.

We don't have to impress or placate Jesus. Come to him poor in spirit and in poverty of soul. Be strikingly honest with Jesus. Take note of his own condition of lack and see all of it as a reflection of the sin that burdens you. He will not cast you off or reject you. Quite the opposite. You will always be welcomed and embraced. You will know the forgiveness of the infant Jesus. He came into our fallen and sinful world to redeem it and to present it as holy by means of his cruel and humiliating death on the cross and his victorious resurrection.

Do not be embarrassed by humble estate but rejoice in the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. He came to redeem and restore you to be holy and righteous in his sight. I pray that you have a very Merry and Joyous Christmas, finding divine comfort and strength in Jesus Christ!

Pastor Hoag

“Revitality” Was a Successful Workshop!!! The Church Council had four meetings. Our focus for this project was: “Engaging Non-Churched People in Our Community”. We have the ball rolling BUT now we need the congregation’s help. Our first outreach project is: Single Parent Family WITH Children. We have many ideas geared towards leading this demographic into our church. We will be talking with all of you in more detail, very soon. Please Remember - We Are Open to Ideas AND The Sky is the Limit!!!”

**RE:VITALITY: “Every One His Witness” - MEETINGS FOR THE ENTIRE CONGREGATION
Additional Detailed Information to Follow**

DECEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

President's Message:

As Christmas approaches, our church organizations are all working hard to help make our celebrations extra special and meaningful. Please read your bulletin inserts and the December Newsletter carefully so you don't miss any of the activities. I think you all would agree with me, we are especially excited to have our choir back in session. I missed the service a few weeks ago when they sang; however, my wife reports they did an amazing job. We look forward to hearing more from them in the future. Thank you Director Julie Verchimak, Accompanist Lori Hilger, and Choir Members!

I'd also like to acknowledge and thank Dan Bay for all he does to see to it that those who cannot make it to church in person are able to watch our services online. For those who take advantage of this service, I'm sure it's invaluable. Thank you, Dan!

I cannot let the year end without mentioning Jennifer Kojro-Badziak, our church secretary. Again, I think I can speak for the whole congregation as I thank her for all she does to keep the church running smoothly. I thank her for representing our church in the professional manner she does, for taking initiative whenever needed, and for keeping us all on our toes, especially me :) Thank you, Jennifer!

Special thanks to Mark Razny and the New Lenox Police Department for the informative training session about how to react to an active shooter.

Highlights discussed during the November Church Council meeting are as follows:

- General Fund Donations year to date through October are \$13,500 less than the same period in 2022.
- Expenses for October were generally in line with the same period last year with the exception of the 2022 Concordia plan payment.
- Property reported repairs to plumbing and cleaning up of the raised gardens. Sprinkler system has been winterized. Annual fire extinguisher inspection was completed. Plans for upgrading exterior lighting are still under consideration.
- Many positive comments were received about the "Back Home with Jesus" Sunday. Plans for a similar event for next year are being discussed.
- Youth and Parish Education are planning a family fun night on November 24. A one day VBS during Christmas vacation will be scheduled.
- Council elections results were discussed. Tim King has volunteered to continue serving as Treasurer. Diane Sewing will continue to serve as Director of Worship/Spiritual Life. Two openings still exist, President and Director of Outreach.
- The Annual Cookie Walk will be on December 2. Helpers and Bakers are needed.
- The Annual meeting will include a Potluck luncheon. Easter Breakfast Plans are being discussed.
- The next Church Council meeting is scheduled for Sunday, December 10, 2023, at 7PM.

Member News!!!



2022 Baptisms:

- Gabriel Wojnarowski Bendoraitis 01/09/22
- Matthew Robert Longmire 02/20/22
- Russell Roy Goebig 04/03/22
- Mary Elizabeth Niemann 05/07/22
- Kanerick Matthew Dobrez 07/02/22
- Alita Sue Hicks 07/03/22
- Landon Paul Ondera 07/10/22
- Everly Jo Youngberg 08/14/22
- Alessi Anastasios Zarnos 08/21/22
- Persephone Mae Sheffer 08/21/22
- Roan Roy Seville's 11/26/22

2023 Baptisms:

- Beckett Jeffrey White 05/18/23
- Mattie Nicole Casagrande 07/30/23
- Archie Michael Studer 10/08/23
- Ada Jane O'Sullivan 10/29/23



2022 Weddings:

- Camden R. Meade & Francesca T. Prospero 06/11/22

2023 Weddings:

- Sean David Russell and Paige Amber Batinich 11/03/23

Exciting News: 2023 Cookie Walk!!!

Cookie Walk: Saturday December 2nd from 8:30am - 11:30am

Cookie Drop Off Day: Friday December 1st from 9:00am - 6:00pm

Proceeds from this fund-raiser have purchased many needed items for our church building. All members of Trinity are encouraged to help bake cookies for this annual event.

Bakers Are Needed! Please sign up if you plan to contribute. Trays are available if you wish to arrange the cookies or they may be brought in containers. Tell your friends, neighbors, and relatives about our sale! Let's make this our best Cookie Walk ever!

- * the trays are out for people to take home, and bring back with their baked goods
- * the baked goods should be brought in on Friday 12/01 anytime between 9:00am – 6:00pm
- * we are still looking for volunteers

*****HELP IS NEEDED ON FRIDAY FOR THE COOKIE DROP OFF, AND SATURDAY AT THE SALE*****

If you are interested, or have any questions, please contact Donna Cuthbert at rusty351@ameritech.net or 815.651.6381 (or Jennifer in the Church Office tlcsecretary508@gmail.com or 815.485.6973)

“The Giving Tree which benefits “Morning Star Mission” is in the hallway. Donations may be placed in envelopes and deposited in the box next to the tree.”

Poinsettias for the Chancel Area:

Advent is a time of anticipation as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus. To honor and celebrate this special time, Chancel Members will be decorating the Chancel Area with Poinsettias. If you would like to help decorate by purchasing a Poinsettia for them to use, please fill out an order form and put it along with payment in the large, labeled envelope in the General Office or in the Chancel Guild mailbox. Turn your order in no later than Sunday, December 17, 2023. The cost for each plant is \$22.50. Your poinsettia may be picked up after the 10:00am Christmas Day service or during the week when our secretary is present. If you have any questions, email or call Kay Purnell at purnellk51@hotmail.com or (815)485-9017.

Blood Drive: Will be held on **Tuesday December 19th** in our church parking lot, between the hours of 3 pm until 7 pm.

***** MORNINGSTAR "STARS OF HOPE" *****

As of 11/28, we had more than half of the Stars of Hope gifts already delivered to Morningstar. The remaining gifts will be delivered by 12/3.

To all who shopped, donated, delivered, or otherwise supported this endeavor:

Thank you!

We will definitely be doing this again next year.

> Watch for a Final Summary after December 3 <



Did You Know Pastor Hoag is a Rock Star!!!

the Band Also Includes Our Very Own (former) Property Manager: Dan Bay!

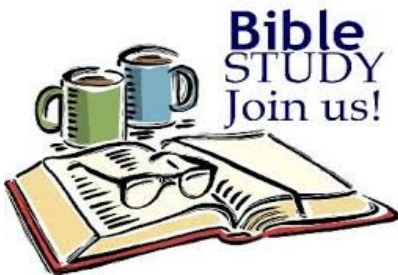
Come See the Band "Side Effects!" on the Following Dates and Locations:

-December 2 - VFW New Lenox 7-11pm

-December 9 - Gusto's 9pm-1am

~~-December 31 - Fireman Ted's Joliet - 8:30pm-12:30am Canceled~~

all new dates will be posted in the weekly bulletin.



Bible Study:

Wednesday 8:30am

Thursday 7:00pm



BUY RAISERIGHT GIFT CARDS – Do you go to Starbucks, shop at Target or Jewel, etc.? Then, why not purchase a gift card for yourself ahead of time or as a gift! A portion of the proceeds go to our high school youth. It costs you only the face value of the gift card. It's a win, win! There are forms with the full list of participating stores outside of the Pastors office, or you can learn more at www.raiseright.com. Any questions contact Angie at minett411@yahoo.com or 815-228-4902. Thank you so much to all our current and newbie participants, we greatly appreciate your support!

*****This is a good time to start thinking about holiday shopping. There are many low denomination cards available perfect for stockings, teacher gifts, coworkers, bus drivers, etc. Consider ordering gift cards to give or to spend when shopping.*****

Take note of the additional order dates for the month of

-Sunday December 3rd

and

-Sunday December 10th

Each of those dates will have a pickup time the following Sunday.

Thank you to everyone who has been supporting our efforts! Your generosity is greatly appreciated!



Trinity Preschool News:

Registration for 2023-2024 Is Open!

Please Tell Your Friends and Neighbors

There is a non-refundable registration fee of \$65.00 per student. The school year beginning September 2023. The tuition per month will be:

-3 Day, 4-Year-Old, Monday, Wednesday & Friday, 9:00-11:30 - \$150.00

Children must be 3 or 4 by September 1, 2023.

for additional information, please call Trinity Lutheran Church at 815.485.6973.

Next Preschool Board Meetings:

-January 2024 T.B.D.

-March 2024 T.B.D.

-May 2024 T.B.D.



Sunday School News:

The Sunday School staff has been busy making plans for wonderful new family and outreach activities! Stay tuned for details about these events! We are also adopting new curriculum updates as we work on continuous improvement in our mission to educate our young people on the Truth that our God shares with us through the Bible! We have so many exciting things ahead, and we encourage you to join us! Bring a friend or family member, too!

This year our focus will be to "Be the Light" as we share the Truth of God to our family, friends, and community!"

Children's Sermon: Every Third Sunday of the Month

GREAT TIME OF YEAR FOR THE FOLLOWING!!!

The Sunday School will be collecting non-perishable food, and monies, to donate to our New Lenox Food Pantry indefinitely. This is to help those around us during these challenging times. Please bring canned goods and dry boxed items. To see items most needed by New Lenox Township Food Pantry, please visit their website (www.newlenox.org), or Facebook. A donation box is located downstairs by the Sunday School rooms, and upstairs by the library. They have also mentioned to us that they can do the most to help with financial donations – you can donate directly on their website or add an envelope with a note in our offering basket. Thank You!!!

Sunday School is Looking for Volunteers: Teachers and Helpers – High School Age to 101. Please contact Michelle Buell @ mbuell3769@gmail.com or Beth Parker @ elizabethmarie@sbcglobal.net if interested. Thanks!!!

SUNDAY SCHOOL EVENT CALANDER

December

- December 16th, 10-11:30 am Children's Christmas Program PRACTICE
- December 17th, 10:30 am - Children's Christmas Program
- December 27th, 5-7pm - Christmas V.B.S.

January

- Jan 19th, 5-7 pm - Family Fun Night
Glow Activities- "Be the Light!"
- January 21st, 9:00 am - Pastries and Praise Sunday
Sunday School Open House-9:45 visit Sunday School Rooms
Followed by pastries/coffee hour

February

- February 16th, 5-7 pm - Valentine's Day Party

March

- March 24th, 10:30 am - Palm Sunday/Participate in Church & Easter Egg Hunt & *coffee hour at 11:30 am*

April

- Saturday, April 20th 10am-12pm - Pets in the Park
Family Fun Event - Pet Blessing/Comfort Dogs

May

- Sunday, May 12th, 9:00 am - Mothers' Day Tea & Donuts for Dads



Chancel Guild News!

Attention Ladies of Trinity - Our meetings are at 9 a.m. the first Saturday of January, March, April, May, September, October, November, and December. Ladies of TLC please consider joining our awesome Chancel Guild. For more information, please contact Jennifer Mudrock, Wendy Kaun, Denise Buchanan, or Kay Purnell.

Chancel Schedule for December:

December 2 / 3: Rita Larson / Sharon MacFarlene

December 9 / 10: Sharon MacFarlene / Debbie Crawford

December 16 / 17: Debbie Crawford / Robin Krol

December 23: Christmas Flowers Set Up @ 9:00 am

December 24 (Christmas Eve):

2:00pm - Robin Krol / Wendy Kaun

7:00pm – Jan Schlak / Janice Prospero

11:00pm – Jennifer Mudrock / Denise Buchanan

December 25 (Christmas Day) 10:00am: Kay Purnell / Sharon MacFarlene

December 30 / 31: Denise Buchanan / Jennifer Mudrock

ALTAR FLOWERS - Chancel Guild Members would like to thank those of you who sponsored a weekend this last year. We appreciate your support in helping us keep fresh flowers on the altar. **Our 2023 Calendar is now complete. A new 2024 Altar Flower Calendar has been posted.** You will find it in the glass case hanging on the wall across the general office. If you would like to reserve a Sunday in **2024** in memory of a loved one, to commemorate a birthday or wedding anniversary, in Thanksgiving of God's Blessings, or for any other special occasion, please fill out a sponsor order form and put it in the Chancel Guild Mailbox. The forms are located on a hook attached to the case housing the calendar. If you have any questions, please contact Kay Purnell at purnellk51@hotmail.com or (815) 485-9017.

December Altar Flower Sponsors:

- Dec. 3 Rita Larson
In Memory of Terry Larson
Sharing with -
Wendy & Tom Kaun
In Thanksgiving For Their Many Blessings
- Dec. 10 Laur Wajchert and Family
In Remembrance of Jim Kollbaum
- Dec. 17 The Dobbs, Dempsey, and Ruhle Families
In Memory of Adelaide Ruhle
- Dec. 24 Beth Parker
Merry Christmas!
- Dec. 31 Sharon & Phil MacFarlane
In Remembrance of Brother Richard MacFarlane on His Birthday

Social Ministry Announcements:

Coffee Hours: Coffee Hours are hosted every Sunday after the 9:00 service. Additional Coffee Hour Hosts are always needed. If you would like to help, please contact Jennifer in the Office at tlcsecretary508@gmail.com or Jan Toepke at toepkej@gmail.com.

Coffee Hour Schedule:

- Dec. 3 Rita Larson and Denise Buchanan
10 Liz Benedict and Christina Kipper
17 Kay Purnell

Next Social Ministry Meeting: will be **Monday, December 11**. This committee sponsors service projects for our congregation and the community. It also directs social programs and events of the congregation. We have a small, dedicated group but would welcome new members to be able to expand our programs. Please consider joining us!

Next Food and Fellowship: will be **Tuesday, December 12**. All adults are welcome to attend! Please join us for lunch and an afternoon activity.

IMPORTANT KITCHEN INFORMATION: To alleviate the accumulation of food and drinks in the kitchen refrigerator/freezer, instructions will be posted. Following an event, if there is leftover food and there is not an event where it could be used in the immediate future, please take it with you. If you would like it used at a future event, please contact the people hosting so they are aware it is there. Labels will be available to date and identify who items belong to. Thank you for your help in this matter!

USHER SCHEDULE

1st Sunday

9:00 AM

-Tom Kaun 815 485 9604 kauntd@gmail.com

-Biff Aiken 815 954 0682 biffdebaiken@gmail.com

10:30 AM

-Brett Carr 815 370 6651 brettdcarr@gmail.com

-Paul Krol 815 575 1315 p.krol@sbcglobal.net

2nd Sunday

9:00 AM

-Edward A. Tatro 815 485 5760 etatro4@aol.com

-Tim King 815 463 0415 tim.king1@comcast.net

10:30 AM

-Tom Buell 815 485 3769 tombuell@sbcglobal.net

-Bob Blecke 815 353 7561 cqm964@comcast.net

3rd Sunday

9:00 AM

-Mike Gardner 815 485 9623 mgardner1453@gmail.com

-Gary Purnell 815 485 9017 gpurnell3@hotmail.com

10:30 AM

-Cameron Hoag 779 279 4223 cam.hoag@gmail.com

-Dana Knodel 708 822 2902 danacowboy1@yahoo.com

4th Sunday

9:00 AM

-Steve Tomany 815 485 3163 tomany@sbcglobal.net

-Randy Varju 815-685-1363 randy.varju@aah.org

10:30 AM

-John Buell 815 726 3601 jan.buell@yahoo.com

-Phil McFarlane 815 806 1219 philmacp40@comcast.net

5th Sunday

9:00AM

-Rex Toepke 815 485 2638 rtoepke@usa.net

-Jeff Lorenz 815 463 0833 jlorenz2367@gmail.com

10:30 AM

-Paul Krol 815 575 1315 p.krol@sbcglobal.net

-Diane Sewing 815-592-3911 dianesewing@hotmail.com

A minimum of two ushers are needed for each service. **Please call the reserve usher to take your place if you are not able to serve on your Sunday, also call your counterpart to make them aware.**

Please plan to arrive 30 minutes before service and follow the procedures noted in the usher's loose-leaf notebook in the narthex. Thanks in advance!

Other Alternates: Zack Horn 630 664 9224 zacharyhorn@gmail.com, *Bob Jackman 815 933-3864*, Robert Stark 708 307 4069



Contribution statements for income tax purposes are available for members using the offering envelopes. If you have not received a statement in previous years and would like to request one, please contact the church secretary or Tammy Doerrer @ tammydoerrer@gmail.com . If you received a statement in the past, you are on the list to automatically receive one each year.

Mini Scripture Cards in Each Pew: you may have noticed in the last couple of months that there is mini-Scripture Cards located on either side of each pew. they are there for you to read and enjoy. if one of them is very meaningful to you personally, please keep it.

Church Office Hours:

Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 9:00am to 2:00pm