

The Messenger

December 2024

Volume 89, Issue 12

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From our Pastor

Welcome, Advent: We are counting

O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Grace and peace to you from the One who was, who is and who is to return again.

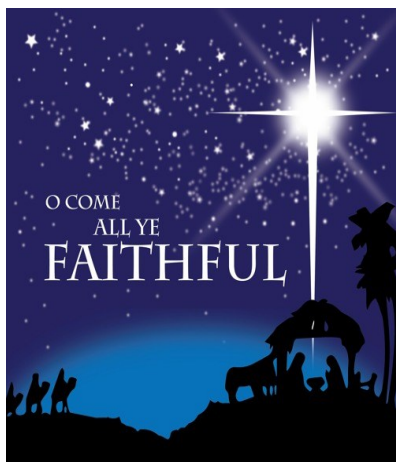
The psalmist cries out in Psalm 90, asking God to “teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart.”

We are about to enter the season of Advent, and we are indeed counting. Some of our children and families, using Advent calendars, count the days until Christmas. Hallmark offers us a Christmas countdown by starting new movies well before Halloween (and I have been watching). We are counting in other ways, as well, during this season. We count the number of presents under the tree, or the number of cookies we bake and put in the freezer, or the number of dollars we'll owe Visa when this holiday season is finally over, or the number of days we still have to work before we can take some time off our jobs.

I have been counting as well, as I just concluded my sixth entire year with you and began a seventh year at the beginning of the month. I have been reflecting on those six years, and I have been counting the ways in which we have been God's hands serving the world that God loves so much.

It has been a holy privilege to live and walk and work among you, to witness your cries of pain surrounding lives that have ended, to lift up the joy we celebrate in the promises of resurrected life, to learn and laugh and work and play in our little corner of God's vast creation.

In all of our counting, we do not lose sight of the most important thing to count among us, the One, the only One, who can save. This is the baby who was born in a manger, the Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace, the Christ, the Savior. He is the



One, born as baby boy yet God, born as human yet divine, born as king yet servant, born to show us who God is.

It is this One whose nativity we are preparing to celebrate.
It is this One who is present even now when we gather to worship.
It is this One whose coming we anticipate again in the fullness of time.

And so we wait, counting our days. As we wait, may the Christ light your world in this holy season and throughout your days.

Emmanuel, God is with us.

Pastor Brenda +

BLUE CHRISTMAS: HOW TO CELEBRATE WHEN YOU DON'T FEEL LIKE IT

December can be a really difficult month for some of us, especially those of us who have experienced a recent loss, or for those of us who experienced a long-ago loss that still dampens our holidays.

Whether the loss is the death of someone you care about, changing life circumstances in relationships or with the economy or with illness, the feeling of an empty nest while remembering holidays past ... all of these things can make it hard to find the joy in the season.

On Sunday, Dec. 15 at 2 p.m., we will be offering a Blue Christmas liturgy to the community as a time to gather in sacred space, sing, hear God's word, light candles, and talk openly about what it feels like to be out-of-step with everyone else at this time of year. There can be healing in the experience.

Our Greenville ministerium will join us in this service, so it will be a true community event.

We invite you to join us, tell friends and family who you think might benefit, and discover how a babe born in a manger can bring wholeness to our sometimes-broken lives. Because Christ was born for this.



ADVENT/CHRISTMAS WORSHIP IN DECEMBER

December is a month filled with worship opportunities at Holy Trinity. Of special note is that we will have only one Christmas Eve service this year at 7 p.m.

We begin the month with our Advent worship, with a calendar full of ways to stop, to listen, to reflect, and to pray in this holy season:

- Morning Prayer will be held every weekday at 8:30 a.m. in the choir pews in the chancel area. Please join us in the mornings as we begin our days with this short service that lasts about 20 minutes.
 - On Wednesdays at 6:15 p.m., we will join in the stillness and dark of evening for Advent Vespers.
 - Our principal weekend Advent services will center around readings that anticipate the coming savior, including the traditional lighting of the Advent wreath.
 - We celebrate the Nativity of our Lord in our Christmas Eve service at 7 p.m.
- We also have a Christmas morning service at 9:30 a.m.

Stewardship: Commitment cards for 2025

If you have not yet returned your commitment card for the new year, please do so before the end of 2024. It is important for us to receive your cards, because we use them to plan the budget for the coming year. If you have not yet returned a card, please return one in the offering plate as soon as possible so that we can plan adequately.

If you need a card, there are some in the narthex, or contact Catherine in the church office.

We thank you for your continued faithfulness in the stewardship of the church.

HANGING OF THE GREENS

We will hang the greens and dress the sanctuary for Christmas on Sunday, December 22, immediately after worship. There will be no Sunday School on that day.

Advent Coin Folders

Advent Coin Folders are available for pick up in the narthex for anyone interested in keeping this tradition. There is a basket in the narthex where you may return your folder.

From Our Directors of Parish Ministry

The Night Before Christmas (Parish Ministry Style)

Tw'as just before Christmas and all through the parish;
Not a creature was stirring, just all the treasures we cherish.
The Parish Ministry duo still had tasks left to attend;
Birthday calls will need making right through the year's end.

What a year it has been for both young and for old;
Magnificent events that were a joy to behold.
We sent our kids to New Orleans what a Herculean feat;
Congregational generosity will be a challenge to repeat.

From pasta dinners prepared so the travelers could serve;
Even a yard sale inside couldn't throw them a curve.
The overnight train ride was so very exciting;
But paled in comparison to the speakers' reciting.

The lessons they gleaned from the songs and the shows;
Will surely last a lifetime as their faithfulness grows.
It was hard for us oldsters not to feel slightly left out;
'Till our Adult VBS gave us reason to shout.

Our new Hospitality Room opened and caused quite a stir;
So many cookies and cakes, it's all still a blur.
Our Friends of Music returned and put on a show;
Especially the scary sounds from Edgar Repasky Poe.

New spots for our Choir and a piano so grand;
Even if we aren't sure where it will ultimately land.
The music for which Holy Trinity is celebrated;
Helps all of our voices be impressively elevated.

Helping Good Shepherd with monthly gifts and a feast;
Helped us to alleviate hunger for one night at least.
With posters and electronics to remind us what's needed;
To know we can do more is a point not to be ceded.

With so many committees and volunteers all so busy;
The work that they do can make the average bloke dizzy.
With a staff so professional and a Pastor so gifted;
We can't imagine a parishioner leaving here not uplifted.

As we come to the conclusion of a most excellent year;
There is something else we would like to make perfectly clear.
We love what we do here and feel it's our mission;
For us our congregation simply has no competition!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from Sue and Don.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR GIVING IN DECEMBER: Bethesda children and ELCA Good Gifts

There are a number of giving opportunities during this month for those who wish to participate.

First, thank you to everyone who took a tag off the Good Shepherd tree for gifts for children whose families receive food from the Good Shepherd Center.

We we are also collecting items for teenagers served by Bethesda Lutheran Services in Meadville. The gifts should be returned, unwrapped, to the church by December 12. See the list of items that we are collecting. You have a lot of options for what to buy!

Also, our Sunday School will be collecting money again this year for the ELCA Good Gifts program, which provides farm animals, school supplies, medical supplies and more for places that need them. A member of the congregation will match whatever is raised, up to \$500. Over five weeks last year, we raised \$1,170.50. With a \$500 match, we were able to purchase \$1,670 worth of items for the ELCA's World Hunger program to disburse to those in need either in the U.S. or globally. We raised enough last year to buy a cow in the Good Gifts catalog. One dairy cow can produce a few gallons of milk each day. Milk provides a calcium-packed source of nutrition for growing children. A family with a cow can also start a small business selling extra milk, cheese, yogurt, butter and more. Thanks to your generosity, we were also able to purchase: school supplies for 10 children, 10 chicks, 5 piglets, 5 goats, school fees and uniforms for 5 girls (in places where education of girls is not a priority), health clinic visits for 10 children, seeds and gardening tools for 2 families, fruit tree seedlings for 3 families. We also stocked a health clinic with supplies such as tests, medicine and vaccines for one week.

**ELCA
GOOD
GIFTS**
C A T A L O G





Bethesda's 2024 Residential Christmas List

- Board Games
 - Skip-Bo (other card games)
 - Uno
 - Apples to Apples
- Hair Straightener or Curling Irons
- Diamond Art
- Feminine Smelling Body Washes
- Shampoo & Conditioner
- Pajamas
- Art Supplies
 - Colored Pencils
 - Crayons
 - Art Canvases
 - Flat backed - no staples
 - Paint
 - Acrylic
 - Washable
 - Loose Leaf Paper
 - Markers
 - Paint
 - Paper
 - Colored Paper
 - Tablets
 - NO Scissors, Pencil Sharpeners
 - NO Spiral Bound Tablets
 - Planners – Pocket planner
 - Journals
 - NO Scissors, Pencil Sharpeners
 - NO Spiral Bound Tablets
- Bras, Socks, Underwear - Women
 - Various Sizes
 - Sports Bras
 - NO Underwires
- Playing Cards
- Adult Coloring Books
- Fidgets
- Chapstick
- Puzzles - 50 - 250 pieces + 3D Puzzles
- Sport Balls
 - Volleyball, Basketball, Soccer Ball
- Non Metal Book Marks
- Squishmellows
- Sketch Books
 - NO Spiral Bound
- Stationary Sets
- African American Hair Care Products
 - Weave / Braiding hair
 - Oil - Coconut or Tea Tree
 - Shining Jam
 - Eco Gel
 - Braiding rubber bands
 - Hair Ties - No Metal Bands/Pieces
 - Scrunchies
 - Edge Comb
- Feminine-smelling Lotions or Sprays
 - NO Aresole Sprays
 - NO Alcohol Based Products
- Face Wash
- Sweatpants & Hoodies - Assorted Sizes
- Slippers
 - NO hard bottom ones
- T-Shirts (Teenage Appropriate)
- Outdoor Games/Equipment
 - Sleds
 - Snow Block Makers
 - Snow Toys
- Snow Pants
- Word Searches
- Sudoku
- Crosswords
- Loofahs
- Stick Deodorant
- Hair Brushes - No Metal
- Combs
- Coco Butter Lotion
- Motivational or Quote Posters
- Poster Tack

Gift Cards are always welcome and extremely helpful as we can receive youth at anytime during the Christmas Season. Having gift cards on hand, allows us to be able to purchase any additional presents if the need arises.

IMPORTANT! Please beware to not purchase anything that could be used to harm oneself or another person!



| | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|---|
| 1 1st of Advent | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8:30 Parish Choir Rehearsal | 8:30 Morning prayer | 8:30 Morning prayer | 8:30 Morning prayer | 8:30 Morning prayer | 8:30 Morning prayer | 5:30 Liturgy of Holy Communion (with prayers for healing) |
| 9:30 Liturgy of Holy Communion | | | Dance Lessons 6-9 | Dance Lessons 6-9 | | |
| 10:45 NO SCS | | | 6:15 Evening Vespers | 7:00 Happy Hour (Zoom) | | |
| 7:00 AA Big book meeting | | | 7:00 Parish Choir Rehearsal | | | |
| THIEL CHOIR FOM 4pm | | | | | | |
| 8 2nd of Advent | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 8:30 Parish Choir Rehearsal | 8:30 Morning prayer | 8:30 Morning prayer | 8:30 Morning prayer | 8:30 Morning prayer | 8:30 Morning prayer | 5:30 Liturgy of Holy Communion (spoken) |
| 9:30 Liturgy of Holy Communion | | 9:00 Flying Quilts | 1:00 Staff Meeting | | | |
| 10:45 SCS/Confirmation Classes | | | 6:15 Evening Vespers | 5:30 Officers' Planning Meeting | | |
| 10:45 SCS for Littles | | | 7:00 Parish Choir Rehearsal | Dance Lessons 6-9 | | |
| 7:00 AA Big book meeting | | 5:15 Worship and Music | Dance Lessons 6-9 | 6:30 Finance Committee | | |
| | | | | 8:00 Happy Hour (Zoom) | | |
| 15 3rd of Advent | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 8:30 Parish Choir Rehearsal | 8:30 Morning prayer | 8:30 Morning prayer | 8:30 Morning prayer | 8:30 Morning prayer | 8:30 Morning prayer | 5:30 Liturgy of Holy Communion (spoken) |
| 9:30 Liturgy of Holy Communion | | | Dance Lessons 6-9 | Dance Lessons 6-9 | | |
| 10:45 SCS/Confirmation Classes | | 7:00 Congregation Council | 6:15 Evening Vespers | | | |
| 2:00 Blue Christmas Service | | | 7:00 Parish Choir Rehearsal | | | |
| 7:00 AA Big book meeting | | | | 7:00 Happy Hour (Zoom) | | |
| 22 4th of Advent | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 8:30 Parish Choir Rehearsal | 8:30 Morning prayer | 8:30 Morning prayer | Council reports due today | | | 5:30 Liturgy of Holy Comm. (spoken) |
| 9:30 Liturgy of Holy Communion | | 9:00 Flying Quilts | 10:45 Liturgy of Holy Communion | 7:00 Happy Hour (Zoom) | | |
| 10:45 Hanging of the Greens | | 6:00 Choir Rehearsal | | | | |
| 7:00 AA Big book meeting | | 7:00 Christmas Eve Service | | <i>Office closed</i> | | |
| NO SCS | | | | | | |
| 29 First of Christmas | 30 | 31 | | | | |
| 8:30 Parish Choir Rehearsal | 8:30 Morning prayer | 9:00 Flying Quilts | Messenger articles due today | Christmas Day | | |
| 9:30 Liturgy of Holy Comm. | | | | | | |
| NO SCS | | | <i>Office closed</i> | | | |

December 2024

Christmas Poinsettias



I would like to:

purchase _____ Poinsettia(s) at **\$12.00** each. (pink, white or red-circle one)

contribute \$ _____ toward decorations (greens, wreaths, swags, etc.)

contribute \$ _____ toward the ELCA "Domestic Disaster Response"

**Deadline for all orders and/or contributions is
Thursday, December 5, 2024**

Envelope #: _____ Total amount enclosed \$ _____.

To the Glory of God and in Memory (deceased) of: _____

To the Glory of God and in Honor (living) of: _____

To the Glory of God and in Celebration (event) of: _____

By: Name of Donor(s): _____

I / We wish to: _____ pick up my / our poinsettia following the liturgy on Christmas Day.

_____ have my / our poinsettia delivered to a shut-in.

If you are interested in any of the following, please call the church office. This is on a first come first served basis.

Altar flowers \$25.00 for each arrangement or a total of \$50.00 for both

Columbarium flowers \$25.00 for each arrangement or a total of \$50.00 for both.

(As with all flower arrangements, you will be billed directly by the florist.)

Two large Christmas Tree Price will not be known until the tree is delivered.

One small Christmas Tree Price will not be known until the tree is delivered.

(When the amount of the tree is known, you will be notified.)

December Birthdays

| | |
|----|---------------------------------|
| 2 | Judy Leary |
| 3 | Jennifer Martin |
| 4 | Dan Spence |
| 8 | Easton Mozes |
| 9 | Catherine Snyder |
| 11 | Tris Hall |
| 12 | Kaitlyn McCann |
| 13 | Garrett Daniello |
| 24 | Patricia Leax |
| 25 | Allen Davis Alyssa Martin |
| 26 | B. J. Mozes Jonathan Schultz |
| 29 | Erin McKinney |



December Anniversaries

The following members of our congregation are celebrating anniversaries this month. Congratulate them when you see them.

| | | |
|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|
| Bill and Judith Bubeck | 65 years | December 5, 1959 |
| Chris and Judi Moinet | 47 years | December 23, 1977 |
| Mike and Mary Beth Bradley | 36 years | December 27, 1988 |
| Ken and Cathy Anderson | 42 years | December 28, 1982 |
| Jim and Jennifer Martin | 35 years | December 29, 1989 |
| Gene and Gretchen Minetti | 65 years | December 30, 1961 |

Altar/ Columbarium Flowers for 2025

The sign up sheet for Altar and/or Columbarium flowers is up in the Narthex if you are interested in signing up for the coming year.

We will not have any flowers during Lent which as noted on the sign-up sheet.

The cost is \$25.00 for one Altar vase or \$50.00 for both. The cost is the same for each Columbarium Vase or a total of \$50.00 for both.

As always, you will be billed direct from the florist.

Good Shepherd December Request

The Good Shepherd Center is our church community social service agency that supports the needs of many in the area. The Good Shepherd Center's request for Holy Trinity for December is **canned soups and crackers**. Donations may be placed in the marked box in the cloister or on the table in the administrative hallway.

Trinity Travelers

If you visit another church, drop off a bulletin from that church, with your name on it, so that you can be a *Trinity Traveler*.

Olivia Martin-Call

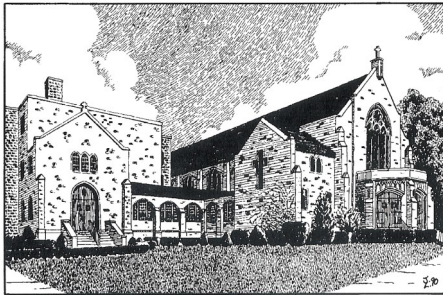
Church Council
Lutheran Chapel



Office Closed for Christmas

The Church Office will be closed **Wednesday, December 25 through Wednesday, January 1** so that the staff may enjoy the Christmas holiday with their families. In case of emergency, please call Catherine, our office administrator, at 724-301-2988. Have a safe and happy holiday!

Evangelical Lutheran Church
of the Holy Trinity
One Trinity Place
Greenville, PA 16125



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Catherine Richardson

Directors of Parish Ministry:

Don and Sue Achenbach

Sexton:

Jennifer Martin

Property Manager:

Ed Pitcher

Officers of the Congregation

Vice-President:

Bob Massing

Secretary:

Barbara Swartz

Treasurer:

Tammy Daniello

Council Members

Linda Armstrong
Mike Bradley
Tammy Daniello
Debbie Faber
Chuck Lanning
Jim Martin
Bob Massing
Matt Morgan
Bob Olson
Barry Oman
Barbara Swartz
Nicole Weaver

Office Hours:

Monday - Thursday
9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Closed Fridays