

# TRINITY TIDINGS

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## Plenty of time

I recently came across this post on social media and giggled, especially because of the friend who commented on it.

The stages of  
Christmas shopping:

1. Plenty of time
2. Oh no

For many of us, reminders about the number of shopping days before Christmas, or the number of Saturdays before Christmas (thank you Kim), are just annoying. I know exactly what day it is and know that time is always running out for all I would like to do to get ready for Christmas, all the buying of more stuff and the baking of one more batch of cookies. If I'm not careful, instead of "plenty of time," I will be in the "Oh no" category.

The question, it seems to me, is not about the amount of time (we all have 24 hours in each day), but do I allow time to control me? Do I intentionally make the most of every moment from now until Christmas to be fully ready to greet the Holy Child, *Emmanuel*— God with us?

Friends, there is always enough time to experience God who is always coming to meet us in the present. I hope you will join me in this prayer each day of Advent this season.

It's never too late for you to arrive in my life.  
It's never too late for you to deliver some peace.  
It's never too late for fresh perspective.  
It's never too late for a flicker of hope to spread.

In this one second, let my faith feel like a small candle:  
defying the unknown, casting light where I cannot observe,  
yet vulnerable, and dependent on your spark.  
It is never too late for your goodness.

In this one second,  
let my faith feel like the shadow:  
glimmering with unseen possibility.  
It is never too late to turn toward you.  
Amen

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December 2023



TRINITY  
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
ON MAIN  
“Sharing God’s Love”™



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## A Message from Your Council President



Each December, three council members complete their terms and three new members are elected. Unfortunately, there continues to be a stigma associated with serving on church council. It is true that in the past there were difficult times resulting in disagreements, arguments and harsh words that caused anger and hurt feelings. Understandably, many members wanted to avoid the unpleasantness of these meetings.

Let me assure you, times have changed. I have served on council numerous times and can unequivocally state that this is not the church council of yesteryear. Are there still disagreements? Of course there are, but they are discussed with civility and respect until a resolution is reached. I might add that although discussions regarding the business of the church are important and taken seriously, humor, laughter and a sense of church family permeates these council meetings.

This church belongs to each and every one of us. Each of us has a voice in what goes on and your thoughts, opinions and ideas matter a great deal. For those of you who have been asked to serve but declined, I ask you to reconsider. If you are interested in serving but have questions or concerns, or just want to share your experience as a former council member, please feel free to contact me. This is your opportunity to not only learn more about the church, but to help forge the way ahead for our church's future. It has been, and continues to be, a privilege and an honor for me to serve not only as a member of council, but as your council president.

Yours in Christ,

*Mike Hartman*

Michael (Mike) Hartman  
Council President

## Music Notes



### But wait!...There's MORE (to waiting).

When your child is younger than the age to legally operate a motor vehicle, by necessity you end up at all kinds of appointments, practices and meetings.

As the chauffeur.

And you do a lot of waiting.

But there's often a wonderful camaraderie among the "parental chauffeurs" as we wait. Small talk and stories, ideas and problem-solving, recommendations for things like a good book, new restaurant or a place to find decent, affordable shoes for kids who are *always* outgrowing theirs. Maybe even a shared snack. And always a friendly, familiar atmosphere and a kind of fellowship around waiting.

During Advent, we as church share in a fellowship of waiting with nations of old, the prophets and psalmists (*Let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.* ~ Psalm 80:7).

And we participate together in this sacred experience, yearning for and awaiting God's restoration of all things: our lives, the whole church and our world today (*Center us on your promise to come among us and make all things new.* ~ Sundays and Seasons, Augsburg Fortress).

While we wait this season, may we rejoice, worship, pray, and be bolstered in our faith as the community of Christ. And let us uplift each other and our Trinity neighbors, too.

*Come, thou long-expected Jesus,  
born to set thy people free;  
from our fears and sins  
release us, let us find our rest  
in thee.*  
(#254, Evangelical Lutheran  
Worship)

- Melissa Jacoby,  
Minister of Music



### "And behind 'Door # 1'..."

Typically once or twice each year, experienced, professional technicians from Brunner & Associates visit Trinity on Main to tune and service the organ as needed. They were here just a few weeks ago and I snapped a quick shot from inside the pipe room (the space behind the wall and door on the left as you face the altar). Thought you might appreciate this glimpse if you've ever wondered what's back there.

- Melissa

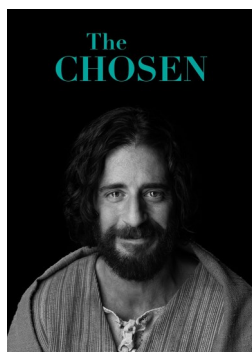
# Christian Education Opportunities

## Snax n Study:

This Advent, we will be using another Adam Hamilton DVD study called, "The Journey, Walking the Road to Bethlehem." Using historical information, archaeological findings, and personal reflections, Hamilton illustrates the birth of Jesus Christ, this most amazing moment in history. We will follow the footsteps of Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, and others, gaining insight into our own journeys with Christ.

Here is our schedule for "The Journey:"

Nov 26 – Mary of Nazareth  
 Dec 3 – Joseph of Bethlehem  
 Dec 10 – Mary's Visit to Elizabeth  
 Dec 17 – From Nazareth to Bethlehem  
 Dec 24 – The Manger



## 2024 – The Chosen, Returns!

We have had many requests to bring back "The Chosen" to Snax n Study! In response, we will begin Season 3 on January 7. Make plans to join us!

## MEN'S BREAKFAST

Join our men on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday morning of each month at 8 am, at [C.C's Kitchen](#), 710 East Main Street, Mechanicsburg, PA. David Durbin usually leads each month with some words of inspiration from scripture followed by lively discussion. All men are welcome!



Last Bible Study of 2023 is November 30, 6:30 pm

During 2023, our lectionary led us through the gospel according to Matthew. Good job friends! In 2024, we will be working through the gospel according to Mark. For our last Bible Study of the year, you will get a preview of the whole book. Take some time to read through the gospel in one sitting, and then join us on November 30 at 6:30 pm. Who knows, there may be special Christmas Advent treats!

Thursday Evening Bible Study will resume in 2024 on January 18, 6:30 pm.

## Bible Study





# **Saturday, Dec 2**

# **Hanging of the Greens**

# **9 am**

The more hands the merrier, so plan to join us!

# ADVENT

## **Wednesday**

## **Vespers**

## **Dec 6 - 20**

## **7 pm**

Meditative Worship  
 Candle Lighting  
 Readings  
 Singing & Prayer

That is the theme of our Christmas bulletin board, and we want to see how YOU light up Christmas! Bring in pictures of your indoor and/or outdoor Advent or Christmas decorations and lights, your favorite creche, or even that inflatable snowman in your neighbor's front yard! Pictures may be posted on the bulletin board outside the Pastor's office.

# Annual Christmas Tea

A red and green striped teapot with a green handle and spout, decorated with green swirls and a red bow on the lid.

# Christmas Week Schedule

December 21 - The Longest Night Worship at 6:30 pm  
 December 24 – Advent 4 Worship at 8 am & 10:15 am  
                     Snax n Study at 8:45 am  
 December 24 – Christmas Eve Worship at 8:30 pm  
 December 31 – New Year’s Eve Worship, one morning  
                     worship at 9 am

**Order today**

Anyone wishing to have a poinsettia in the sanctuary this Christmas season, please fill out the form below. When placing your order, make the check payable to Trinity Lutheran Church,  
**THE DEADLINE TO ORDER IS SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10.**

In memory of \_\_\_\_\_

In honor of \_\_\_\_\_

Given by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Number of Poinsettias** \_\_\_\_\_ **@ \$11.00 =** \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_


Will pick up \_\_\_\_\_

If you will not be able to pick up your flowers after Christmas services, there are some people who will deliver them to your home.

**Red** \_\_\_\_\_

**White** \_\_\_\_\_

**Marble (red with white flecks)** \_\_\_\_\_



**ORDER  
YOUR  
POINSETTIAS**

## Advent Worship

### Out of Time - Advent at Trinity on Main

Advent worship is focused around the theme, "Out of Time."

We will be considering references to time in our Sunday morning lessons. What does it all mean for us at the end of 2023 and into 2024? Advent "time" is always a bit unusual. Starting at the end and skipping backward and forward over Jesus' life can feel disorienting. But God is always intentional in meeting us. God created time for us and exists beyond it. God is active within, around, and beyond our human experience of time. God uses our experience of time to meet us, bless us, shape us, and call us into holy endings and new beginnings. God's infinite being and infinite patience cut through our fear as God enters human time to well with us: *Emmanuel*, God-with-us.

Advent Sunday Worship will include fresh liturgies and prayers to engage our imaginations, the lighting of Advent candles, and a special time for children.

How will "God-with-us" meet you this Advent? Consider going out on a limb this year. Let go of one or two of your usual "busy things" and devote that time to quiet prayer and intentional spiritual renewal.

Consider adding:

- Weekly Advent Vespers, Wednesdays, Dec 3 – Dec 20, 7 – 7:20 pm
- The Longest Night Worship, December 21, 6:30 pm
- A free at home Advent Devotional. (Contact the church office for a copy.)

### WAIT! WHAT TIME IS IT?

It is easy to be overwhelmed or push aside the wonder of the birth of Jesus, and our children miss the whole reason for the season. We may get to Christmas and realize that we ran out of time for the most important reason that we celebrate – the birth of Jesus. It is his birthday after all!

Bring the kids to Advent worship for a special focus for children called: "What time is it?" Children will gather with pastor, watch her large clock, and then light an Advent candle together.



### Longest Night Worship – December 21, 6:30 pm

This Longest Night Worship uses the Northern Hemisphere's lengthening darkness to hold space for those who struggle around the holidays. Just as the secular world ramps up its frenetic merriment in the week before Christmas, Longest Night arrives with a liturgy that protects a window of time for us to set outside the Christmas countdown and acknowledge that we don't and can't always meet the mandate for holiday joy. Sitting in solidarity with others can be a welcome accompaniment to our sadness, grief, or depression -- not to make it go away, but to be together as we wait for God who meets us right where we are.

This year, we are using a reverse Tenebrae liturgy. We begin with unlit candles on the Advent wreath and light them throughout the service. The light will slowly seep into the worship time and space, flowing in and around song and scripture, prayer and lament.

(These services are sometimes called Darkest Night or Blue Christmas.)



**Note:** We are grateful for the good work of our colleagues at "Barn Geese Worship" for continuing to create creative resources for churches.

## Why Do They Do That?

### Why do they do that?

A new feature of our monthly newsletter is "Why do they do that?" People like you may often wonder about our liturgy, the symbols in our sanctuary, or other random things about Trinity Ev Lutheran Church. This feature will attempt to answer some of your pressing questions.



## History Corner

History Corner is what I hope will be a continuing contribution to the Tidings for people to enjoy little known facts about the history of our church. Please don't hesitate to provide feedback or a little bit of historical information you would like to see in the future.

- Mike Hartman

### History Corner

Most people are aware that Mechanicsburg Mayor George Hummel was a member of our church during the Civil War, but *did you know...*

George Hummel's great grandparents, Frederick and Rosina Hummel, were the founders of (you guessed it!) Hummelstown, PA which was established in 1762!

This week's question:

Why do we use blue Advent candles and some other churches use purple?



For a long time, three purple candles were used on Advent wreaths. Purple is a symbol for repentance. Advent, sometimes called a "little Lent," can anticipate Lent, a longer season of penitence, with this color.

Toward the end of the 1900s there was a shift to blue instead of purple. The color blue is associated with hope and royalty, a fitting reflection of a hopeful waiting for the royal birth.

Some churches use four blue candles, and some use three blue and one rose candle. The rose candle was first used as a break in the penitential season of Advent. After the shift to blue, some churches kept the rose-colored candle. At Trinity, we use the rose candle for the third Sunday in Advent -- Gaudete Sunday, meaning "rejoice."



## Community Outreach

# FREE Adult Clothing Saturday, Dec. 9 9-11am



Trinity's Closet on Main  
132 E. Main St.  
Mechanicsburg, PA

New Hope Ministries "Christmas Blessing Express" Gift Donation Drive: Trinity Church will be collecting new, unwrapped gifts for children whose families are struggling during Christmas. Pick up an "ornament" from the table inside the front door and go shopping! Deadline for bringing in gifts is December 3.. Thank you in advance for helping those less fortunate in our community!



### Blessing Box Items Needed

#### Food items:

Cereal  
Boxed Macaroni & Cheese  
Canned Chicken meat  
Canned Vegetables  
Canned Potatoes  
Diced Tomatoes & Tomato Sauce  
Knorr Noodles/Rice Packets



**DO NOT NEGLECT  
TO DO GOOD  
AND TO SHARE  
WHAT YOU HAVE,  
FOR SUCH SACRIFICES  
ARE PLEASING TO GOD.**  
HEBREWS 13:16 ESV

### November Church Council Highlights:

- The light in the sanctuary over the choir loft was recently repaired (and it was no small job!).
- New gutters and downspouts are needed and will be installed this fall.
- Clothing Closet is still very much in need of winter items in men's and women's size small. If you, or a friend or relative, have anything to share, it would be greatly appreciated!
- Volunteers are needed on the Property Committee! Please see Mike Hartman if you are able to help.

### Prayers for Bishop Elizabeth Eaton

On November 9, 2023, Pastor Karen received this notice from the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Let us be in prayer for Bishop Elizabeth Eaton.

"The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's Church Council Executive Committee approved Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton's request for a 4-to-6-month leave of absence. Her leave starts Nov. 17, 2023.

The Church Council appointed former bishop of the Southeastern Iowa Synod, the Rev. Michael Burk, as Presiding Bishop Pro Tem to care for the responsibilities of the presiding bishop during her leave of absence. We give thanks for Bishop Eaton's tireless dedication and leadership and pray for her during this time of rest and rejuvenation."

## Birthdays, Etc.



12/01 Josh Wagenheim  
 12/03 Donald Miller  
 12/08 Carol Pensyl  
 12/14 Brett Lemanski  
 12/15 Bill Snoke  
 12/20 Bob Anderson  
 12/22 Emily Anderson  
 12/25 James Weber  
 12/29 Jordan Leiby  
 12/30 Nadine Ovack  
 12/30 Matt Thomsen

**Is your birthday missing? Please let us know so we can update our database!**



**PLEASE NOTE:** The church office will be closed December 25 - January 1. We will reopen on Tuesday, January 2.

If you have an emergency, please leave a message in the church's voicemail, as we will be checking messages throughout the week.

Have a wonderful and blessed Christmas!

"Enable us, God, to behold meaning in the chaos of life about us and purpose in the chaos of life within us. Deliver us from the sense of futility in our strivings towards life and truth. Give us strength to ride safely through the maelstrom of petty cares and anxieties. May we behold things in their proper proportions and see life in its wholeness and its holiness."

- Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan

### ↓ ↓ ↓ TIDINGS DEADLINE:

**JUST A REMINDER** that the deadline for newsletter items is the 10th of each month for the following month's issue.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The next issue of Tidings will be sent out at the end of January, for February. Deadline for submitting articles is January 10.

**Thank you!**

#### Office Contact Info

Church & Staff Office Hours  
 Mon. – Thurs. 9 AM – 2 PM  
 (other hours as needed)

*Phone:* 717-766-2662

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[www.facebook.com/TLCMech](http://www.facebook.com/TLCMech)

<https://trinity-on-main.org/>

#### Pastor Contact Info

Pastor Karen Durbin

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#### Minister of Music Contact Info

Melissa Jacoby

*Email:* [trinitymburgmusic@gmail.com](mailto:trinitymburgmusic@gmail.com)

#### Parish Administrator Contact Info

Debbie Schue

*Email:* [trinitymburgoffice@gmail.com](mailto:trinitymburgoffice@gmail.com)

# DECEMBER

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 <a href="#">9 am Hanging of the Greens</a>
3 <a href="#">Christmas Blessing Express deadline</a> 8 am Spoken Worship 8:45 am Snax n Study 10:15 am Worship	4 1 pm NHM Gift Bag Assembly	5	6 9 am NHM Senior Christmas Party 6:30 pm Bell Choir <a href="#">7 pm Advent Vespers</a> 7:30 Choir	7 7 pm Church Council	8 4 pm Set up for Trinity's Closet on Main	9 <a href="#">9-11 am Clothing Closet</a>
10 8 am Spoken Worship 8:45 am Snax n Study 10:15 am Worship	11	12	13 6:30 pm Bell Choir 7 pm Advent Vespers 7:30 Choir	14	15	16
17 8 am Spoken Worship 8:45 am Snax n Study 10:15 am Worship with Music <a href="#">11:30 am Annual Christmas Tea</a>	18	19	20 6:30 pm Bell Choir 7 pm Advent Vespers 7:30 Choir	21 <a href="#">6:30 pm Longest Night Worship</a>	22	23
24 8 am Spoken Worship 8:45 am Snax n Study 10:15 am Worship with Music 8:30 pm Christmas Eve Worship	25 <b>Christmas Day</b> Office closed 	26 Office closed	27 Office closed 6:30 pm Bell Choir 7:30 Choir	28 8 am Men's Breakfast Office closed	29 Office closed	30
31 9 am Worship with Holy Communion  New Year's Eve	<b>Jan 1</b> <b>New Year's Day -</b> Office closed					