

The JOURNEY — Walking Daily with Jesus

WHAT'S INSIDE



In November, we were Blessed to have Payton and Afton Baribeau receive their First Communion, and to have Glen and Chris Cutsforth be baptized.

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An Unexpected Way to Improve Your Health-If you google “Top Ten Mental Health Hacks” or “Best Ways to Boost Your Physical Health,” ... what you almost certainly won’t hear is that weekly church attendance is one of the very best things you can do for both your body and your mind. But that’s what researchers at the Harvard School of Public Health have found. In fact, they have discovered that going to church can add multiple years to your life. Church attendance once a week or more is linked with a 20 to 30 percent lower likelihood of dying in the next fifteen years. Those who attend religious services each week when they are twenty years old live, on average, seven years longer than those who never attend. Weekly church is as good for your health as eating more fruit and vegetables. It’s almost as good for you as quitting smoking or starting to exercise! ...People who go to church each week are 33 percent less likely to get depressed, and substantially more likely to recover from depression than their non-service-attending peers. What’s more, if nonchurchgoers who struggle with depression start attending, they are also more likely to recover. Kids who go to church weekly are less likely to get depressed or take illegal drugs and more likely to become happy, healthy adults.

Regardless of how long, happy, or healthy your life is, the grim reality is that each one of us will die. We can (as it is sometimes put) delay the decay with healthy living. But in the end, our bodies will break down and death will come—regardless of how frequently we exercise, how well we sleep, get health checks, or go to church. One day, a doctor will pronounce us dead. So, what hope can we have when that day comes? The treatment Jesus offers is a great exchange: his life for ours.

Like a trained physician, Jesus diagnoses all of us—both then and now—with spiritual cancer. We are sinners who will face the wrath of God if we don’t turn to Jesus. But thankfully, this doctor has the treatment we all need. It’s not an operation or a pill or even a prescription that we go to church. The treatment Jesus offers is a great exchange: his life for ours. When he died on a Roman cross 2,000 years ago, he took the punishment each one of us deserves for our rejection of the God who made us. If we put our trust in him, his death will count for us, and he will give us a new life—a life that starts now—and will carry us through death to everlasting life with him. The message of the gospel is much more offensive and much more amazing than most people realize.

Church could improve your physical and mental health. But if you do not truly put your trust in Jesus, none of that will matter in the end. Church isn’t just a nice thing you could do on Sunday morning. It’s a gathering of sinners who have recognized ...their need for one doctor who can save them from eternal judgment and give them an everlasting, love-filled life with him. In fact, just like the religious leaders who were shocked that Jesus was spending his time with sinners, we’re in the spiritually dangerous state of not seeing our desperate need for Jesus’s salvation. So, don’t miss out on church. It’s really good for you. But going to church and missing out on Jesus is like going to the ER and just sitting in the waiting room. He is the only doctor who can save us in the end, and all of us need saving. “I am the resurrection and the life,” Jesus declared. “Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?” (John 11:26–27). Rebecca McLaughlin, author of How Church Could (Literally) Save Your Life.

On a personal note, I look forward to coming to church and seeing each of you each Sunday. I love starting the day by joining in the text study group that meets before worship. We even get that early morning cup of joe. I then get my infusion of the Good News and forgiveness for my sin. What a way to start the new week! This will be my last article as President of TLC. My term of office is up. Don’t be surprised if you see one of my articles as a guest Journey writer in the future.

Your brother in Christ, Jim McGraw





DECEMBER-SUNDAY WORSHIP ASSISTANTS



	Dec 7 9:00a	Dec 14 9:00a	Dec 21 9:00a	Dec 24 6:30p	Dec 25 9:00a	Dec 28 9:00a
GREETERS	Terri Freeman	Jackie & Dan Healy	Char Mohns	NEED	NEED	Joanne & Eldon Kvale
USHERS	Rob Freeman Wally Thom	Mike Capra Kevin Ploessl	Wes Mohns Tom Svitak	Janet & John Schieffer	NEED	John Schieffer Need
COMM. ASSTS	Dan Dahl	Ellen Ehrich	Pat Mackey	Lay Assistants	Lay Assistants	Joanne Schilling
READER	Kathy Thom	Sue Capra	Donnarae Carrell	Lay Assistant	Lay Assistant	Eric Anderson



12/5 Stacy Kolodzinski
 12/6 Betty Blanch
 12/6 Victoria Flora
 12/6 Wally Thom
 12/14 Eldon Kvale
 12/15 Amber Beffa
 12/16 Karen Scott
 12/18 Donna Willis
 12/27 Ellen Ehrich
 12/29 Joan Fuller



12/1 Jerry & Susan

SHOP TOPS for the MISSION FIELD

Trinity is offering an opportunity to purchase Lands' End shirts/t-shirts, vests or other tops for men, women and children with the Trinity logo 'Trinity Lutheran Church, LCMC' embroidered on the apparel. Pastor Dan has graciously provided a few of his own shirts with the Trinity logo for some examples of what is available. You can find these displays in the Narthex near the welcome center.

In order to keep shipping costs down, we will place a bulk order after the first of the new year.

To make your selection, you may shop the catalog, (there is one located on the welcome center near the shirt displays) or go online. (see online address below)

Please see Julie with your selection and she will then place the order on the established Trinity account. We are available to assist with any questions regarding location and thread colors of the logo.

Payment will be made to Trinity.

Online site: business.landsend.com

Acts 1:8 says "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Your sister in Christ, Kathy Thom



Meeting

NEXT MEETING OF . . .

Birchwood Food Pantry Open. Dec 1 & 15, 10:30a-12:30p
Trinity Council meeting. No Meeting
Worship & Music Team. Dec 8, 9:00a
Christian Life Meeting. Dec 8, 10:30a
Women of Trinity Dec 13, 10:00a



Thanks to the men Kevin Ploessl, Rob Freeman, Wally Thom and Jim McGraw for helping with the installation of the new hand-rail. Just in time for the winter weather!



Thanks to the decorating crew
Front row Sue Capra, Sue Svitak, Carol Raether, Janet Schieffer and Missing Joann Schilling.
Back row Wally Thom, Jerry Janetski, Jim McGraw and Tom Svitak
Once again the church is decorated beautifully!!



The Lefse Crew this year headed up by Karen Scott: Joanne Schilling, Karen Scott, Sheri & Dan Berekvam, Carol Raether, Janet Schieffer, Sue Capra, Cindy Rubin, Donnarae Carrell, Kevin Ploessl, Bob Scott and Mike Capra.



Joan Kuula donated her mother's nativity scene to Trinity. Her mother painted and decorated each piece. It's ornate and it's beautiful! Thank you Joan!

From Barb Kleven, your Associate Pastor

Several years ago, for our family Christmas gathering at my brother-in-law's home, we were to bring something we created to share as entertainment for the whole family.

My brother-in-law, Arne, decided that he and his family would re-in act the story of Christmas with each of his children taking a part with his oldest son and wife and their newborn baby being Joseph, Mary, and baby Jesus, and his other children being shepherds, with the youngest being a cute little lamb. I decided that I would re-write the lyrics to the song "Rockin Around the Christmas Tree" (sung by Brenda Lee in 1958) with Christian lyrics with printed copies for all to sing:

*Walking around the Christmas Tree
with a happy Christmas grin.
Jesus came in and forgave all my sin,
now there's peace and joy within.
If others could see just how good life can be,
they'd be knockin' at my door.
"Jesus, please show them You're the way to heaven,
They'll have peace forevermore!
It's the right time to BELIEVE Him
To be forgiven and set free!
Celebration, jubilation! All of this he did for you and me.
GLORY TO GOD and good will to all men
Everyone shout AMEN! AMEN!
God came to earth through the Saviors birth,
That's the glory of, the wonderful story of
That's the story of CHRISTMAS!*

Jesus IS the reason for the season! May each and every one of you have a wonderful and blessed Christmas. May we, with reverence, and awe remember with amazement and thankfulness this wonderful gift of salvation given to us through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! May His joy and peace be yours this Christmas season!

Pastor Barb



Trinity Lutheran at Birchwood Christmas Fest

**Coffee, Baked Goods, Chili,
Cornbread and Crafts — OH MY!!**

During the Birchwood Christmas Fest on December 6, Trinity Lutheran Church will be selling coffee and baked goods starting at 9 AM, with chili and cornbread plus desserts starting at 10:30 AM. Crafts will also be available for sale.



Christmas Concert Go Sing It on the Mountain December 14 3:00 PM

Reception to follow

**Trinity Lutheran Church
501 E. Chetac Ave, Birchwood, WI**

Women of Trinity – Happenings

- Lefse Making will be November 20 starting at 9am, and sales will begin November 23rd. Karen Scott will acquire the 50 pounds of potatoes (wow!!) and will organize the volunteers – thanks Karen! This is such a fun time, and there's a job for everyone, especially including those who don't even know what lefse is – so join us for laughter and lefse!

- The Christmas Fest will be on December 6. There is a sign-up for baked goods and workers for the sale. All craft proceeds will go to the charities Women of Trinity support. Setup for the sale will be December 4 at 11am and tear down will be after Snacks and Facts on December 9. Please consider carving out some time to support this great event.

- The Christmas Bake Sale and Cantata will be on December 14th. A signup is available at the Welcome Center desk for workers and appetizers for the Cantata.

- Upcoming Dates:

Lefse Making – November 20.

Christmas Fest Chili & Craft Fair – Dec 6.

Christmas Bake Sale – Dec 14, in conjunction with the Christmas Cantata. Set up on Dec. 13, following the WOT meeting (and pizza lunch!) and filling shut-in cookie boxes.

CALLING ALL WOMEN OF TRINITY! Our next meeting is December 13, 2025, at 10:00am! Please join us for fellowship, support of our sisters and our church, and planning future events!

CHRISTMAS
SERVICE TIMES
6:30 PM * DECEMBER 24
9 AM * DECEMBER 25
Trinity Lutheran Church



STEPHEN MINISTRY

MATCHES SUPER BOWL EXPERIENCE

"Before I retired from coaching, my team was in the Super Bowl six times," says Bill Arnsperger, who coached for 23 seasons in the NFL. "I thought nothing would ever match that. But being a Stephen Minister has been one of the greatest experiences of my life."

During his coaching career, Arnsperger heard about Stephen Ministry at his church several times. "I knew it was important, so I couldn't wait to get involved," he recalls.

So, once he retired, he trained to become a Stephen Minister.

"I find serving as a Stephen Minister very rewarding," Arnsperger says. "The hours I've invested into Stephen Ministry have brought me closer to the Lord and to others in my congregation. It's an opportunity to work with people and really help them. Each care receiver inspires me to build my faith. I always benefit from our time together."

Arnsperger's caring relationships have taught him to trust in God's healing love. "I've learned that I can't always predict



Bill Arnsperger spent 23 seasons as an NFL coach, with stops in Baltimore, Miami, New York, and San Diego. Upon retiring, he became a Stephen Minister at his church in La Jolla, California. He passed away in 2015.

and plan what each visit will be like," he says. "I work to be open to new developments, and I hang in there when new problems come up. I know I can't just make my care receiver feel better. My job is to listen and to care; God takes care of the rest."

Although Stephen Ministry and football might not seem to have much in common, Arnsperger sees similarities between the two. "Stephen Ministry builds confidence, both in the Stephen Ministers and in the care receivers," he says. "Stephen Ministry takes teamwork, too. In supervision, we need to work together to provide the best care possible—to our care receivers and to one another. Each opportunity to care is a new challenge, a new experience, just as each game is."

"Each opportunity to care is a new challenge, a new experience, just as each game is."

Coach Bill Arnsperger
Stephen Minister

December 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 9a Quilters 9a WMMT mtg 10:30 Christian Life mtg 10:30a-12:30p—Food Pantry Open 2:30p Women's Bible Study 7p AA, Fellowship Hall	2	3 6:30a Men's Bible study 8:30a Prayer 1:00p Cantata Choir Reh	4 10:00a Women's Bible Study	5 OFFICE CLOSED	6 9:00a Christmas Fest Chili feed and Crafts
7 8a Text Study 9a Worship w/ communion	8 9a Quilters 2:30p Women's Bible Study 7p AA, Fellowship Hall	9 2:00p Snacks & Facts	10 8:30a Prayer 1:00p Cantata Choir Reh	11 10:00a Women's Bible Study	12 OFFICE CLOSED	13 10a WOT mtg
14 8a Text Study 9a Worship w/ communion 3:00p Christmas Cantata	15 9a Quilters 10:30a-12:30p—Food Pantry Open 2:30p Women's Bible Study 7p AA, Fellowship Hall	16	17 6:30a Men's Bible study 8:30a Prayer 1:00p TLC Choir Reh	18 10:00a Women's Bible Study	19 OFFICE CLOSED	20
21 9a Worship w/ communion Love Fund/Food Pantry Offering	22 9a Quilters 10:30a-12:30p—Food Pantry Open 2:30p Women's Bible Study 7p AA, Fellowship Hall	23 Journey Deadline	24 8:30a Prayer 6:30p Christmas Eve-Service	25 9a Christmas Day Service 10:00a NO Women's Bible Study	26 OFFICE CLOSED	27
28 8a Text Study 9a Worship w/ communion Prayer Shawl Sunday	29 9a Quilters 2:30p Women's Bible Study 7p AA, Fellowship Hall	30	31 8:30a Prayer 1:00p TLC Choir Reh			

Trinity Lutheran Church
501 E. Chetac Ave
PO Box 8
Birchwood, WI 54817

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54817

Snacks & Facts
Dec 9 @ 2:00p
Topic: Food Pantry
Neighbor to Neighbor



The JOURNEY

December 2025

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

Rev. Daniel Tabor—Pastor

Pastor Barb Kleven—Associate Pastor

Julie Sunderland, Parish Administrator

Joanne Schilling, Choir Director

Donnae Carrell, Custodian

501 E. Chetac Ave ♦ PO Box 8 ♦ Birchwood, WI 54817

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Adult Sunday School	8am
Office Hours	8 – 11:30 am, 12:30 - 3:00pm (M-Th)
Bulletin deadline	9 am Tuesdays
JOURNEY deadline	Tuesday - 3 rd week of the month
Pastor's Office Hours	Mondays (8 am—3:00pm)
	Wednesdays (8—11:30 pm) other days by apt.



SUNDAY WORSHIP

Dec 7 — 9:00a worship service w/communion

Dec 14 — 9:00a worship service w/communion

Dec 21 — 9:00a worship service w/communion

Dec 24— 6:30p Christmas Eve Worship w/communion

Dec 25 — 9:00a Christmas worship service w/communion

Dec 28 — 9:00a worship service w/communion

KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS

Debbie Davis	Bill Rice
Andy Hedman	Ro Sackmann
Lora	Carter Sackmann
Sharon Mackey	Timothy Wallace
Tracy Reid	Donna Willis

In the military: Rigil Christensen, and all those serving in the military.