

Newsletter of  
**TRINITY EVANGELICAL  
COVENANT CHURCH**

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### December

#### **Ushers**

Kellie Lee – Captain  
Kevin McGrath  
Kristine Schroeder  
Pat Lee

#### **Greeters**

6 Mel & Arline Mueller  
13 Pat, Kellie, Shannon & Justin Lee  
20 Jim & Carol Strickland  
27 Clarence & Dolores Rosengren

#### **Nursery**

6 Grace Persson, Megan McShane  
13 Kristine Schroeder, Virginia Fulton  
20 Kari Devine, Rebecca Hanson  
27 Dawn Hanson, Cody Hanson

#### **Counters**

John Weszely  
Robert Karlson  
Tom Dorl  
Gary Kozak

#### Birthdays

1 Kenneth Johnson  
2 Dolores Rosengren  
3 Tom Klutcharch  
5 Jo Ann Bergwall  
5 Ray Lewis  
5 Linnea Wimpenny  
9 Nancy Keller  
12 Kristine Schroeder  
13 James Byland  
15 Carol Strickland  
15 Nancy Mondry  
16 Melissa Panush  
17 Joyce Karlson  
17 William R. Hutchinson  
19 Katie Krefl-Mondry  
19 Keith Mondry  
20 David Raines  
25 Matt Mateer  
26 Carol Latimer  
31 Joyce Nyberg

If we missed your birthday, please let the office know so that it will be listed in the future.

# *The Messenger* December 2015

## **Over the Pastor's Shoulder**

<sup>23</sup>Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful.

**(Hebrews 10:23)**

There are lots of people out there who seldom come to church on a Sunday morning, yet frequently attend worship on Christmas Eve. Why do they show up on the 24<sup>th</sup> of December? Some come because of pressure from family members. Grandma is in town, and she says, "Okay everybody, it's Christmas Eve, and we're going to church!"

Some come because it's a habit to do so. They're like the little boy who was asked by his Sunday School teacher why he believed in God. He replied, "I guess it just runs in the family." Some people come to church on Christmas Eve because it runs in the family.

But many come – I'm quite convinced after more than 35 years of observation – because the church is a sign of hope in their lives and in the world.

Isn't that a crucial part of the work and ministry Jesus has given us to do? Be a sign of hope in a fragmented world. Hold fast without wavering. Yes, that's a large part of what it means to be a disciple this Christmas season.

I believe the following story is quite telling.

One day, very close to Christmas, a child was coming down the hall at church on the last day of a special weekday Bible school. He had in his hand a little ceramic tray that he had made for his mother. As he ran down the hall, he tripped and fell. The tray broke into several pieces. The child was devastated. He began to cry loudly and uncontrollably.

People tried to comfort him with all kinds of counsel: "It was just a tray." "You can make another one." "It was nothing." "You can give your mother something else." The child was inconsolable.

Finally, his mother arrived on the scene. She immediately realized what had happened. Bending down beside her son and his broken gift, she said, "Well, now, let's pick up the pieces and take it all home. We'll put it together and see what we can make of it."

Isn't that exactly what the Christmas message is about? The world is broken into many fragments, as are our lives. God stoops down beside us. "Well, now," he says. "Let me help you pick up the pieces. We'll put it back together and see what we can make of it."

Men and women! Youth! Boys and Girls! Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promises is steadfastly faithful.

Merry Christmas,  
*Pastor Jim*

*Christmas Eve, December 24  
Service of Carols and Candles  
5:30 P.M.*



## Sunday School MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Professor of Communications and Biblical Interpretation at North Park Theological Seminary and a member of North Park's gospel bluegrass band, The Lonesome Theologians. His subject will be: "Heart Movement in the Psalms". "Our hearts are restless until they find rest in you," said Augustine, and the songs and prayers of the Psalms show us the way. Starting with Psalm 1-2 and their use in Handel's Messiah, we will look at Psalm pairs that trace our inner movements from despair to praise, doubt to faith, and weakness to strength.

Come join us at 11:15 A.M. after the morning worship service. In the Overflow Room, Rich Hood is teaching a 7 week study on the Book of Ephesians now through December 20.

In the Fireside Room, Paul Koptak is our teacher during the month of December. Paul is the Paul and Bernice Brandel

### Altar Flowers

If you would like to celebrate or honor someone on a given special date, please see the sign-up sheet on the table in the narthex. Flowers are \$40 and you are invited to take them home following morning worship.



We extend our sympathy to the family of Mitzi Maquet who entered the life eternal on Wednesday, November 4. A memorial service was held on Saturday, November 14 at Northwest Assembly of God in Mt. Prospect, IL.

Jeanette Young died suddenly on Monday, October 26. A memorial service was held on Tuesday, November 17 at Bjorklund House. Peace be to her memory.

### Thank You

Dear Extended Family,

Thank you so much for sharing birthday cake and coffee with me for my special birthday. Thank you for all the beautiful cards and special messages.

Special thanks to Denise Sullivan for the beautiful, delicious cakes. Thank you to Denise Sullivan and Jay Hanson for doing the serving.

You are all so special to me.

Love, Rhea Maurer

### Stewardship Moment

In order to balance our budget every year we rely heavily on the generous gifts that come to us through the

Thanksgiving offering, along with your generous giving throughout the month of December. We obviously appreciate your gifts each and every week of the year. It is your year end gifts that are so crucial to our fiscal well-being. It seems every December we find ourselves striving to erase the deficit, while scrambling to remain current with our mission obligations and day-to-day operating expenses. Soon we will be paying higher heating bills. This year Christ Hospital will no longer take care of snow removal; that will be another added expense. Please note also that Christ Hospital will no longer be using our parking lot. That translates into a \$24,000 loss of revenue. For these reasons we are asking you to please be as generous as possible with your December giving. We need to be in a good financial position as we enter 2016. We've met this challenge in previous years. We will meet it again with your gracious and generous giving. Thank you for your support year round.

The Stewardship Committee

### *Advent at Trinity*

**November 29**

**"God is Coming"**

Luke 21:25-36

**December 6**

**"Repent! Repent!"**

Luke 3:7-18

**December 13**

**Sunday School Christmas Program**

10 A.M.

**Trinity Christmas Concert**

**with Stuart Seale and Nate Van Der Male,  
and Heather Van Der Male**

4 P.M.

**Dinner in Peterson Hall**

5 P.M.

**December 20**

**"Mary's Song"**

Luke 1:46-55

**December 24, Christmas Eve  
Service of Carols and Candles**

**"Reckless Love"**

Luke 2:1-20

5:30 P.M.

**December 27**

**"Jesus Goes to School"**

Luke 2:41-52

## The Season of Advent of Trinity

### Jul Fest Celebration

Presented by  
Miriam Circle/  
Covenant Women Ministries

Saturday,  
December 5, 2015

10:15 A.M. Craft shopping  
11:00 A.M. Program  
12:00 P.M. Swedish  
Smorgasbord



### Making Christmas Brighter

Together We Cope 'Adopt a Child' program is an annual program for area youngsters in need. Their program brightens Christmas morning for nearly 1,500 south suburban youngsters. A paper ornament with the child's gender and age written on the ornament has been placed on the Christmas wreaths in the narthex. You can choose an ornament, purchase a gift and then place the gift beneath the tree. With your help, these children will share the wonderful generosity from supporters of this program. Please bring your donations by Sunday, December 13.

Here are some suggested gifts for Together We Cope 'Adopt a Child' program:

#### Young Children

board games  
stuffed animals  
cars and trucks  
dolls and doll clothes  
story books  
super hero action figures  
Play-doh  
coloring books  
Fisher-Price preschool toys  
art set  
Legos  
Basketballs / Footballs  
craft kits

#### Teens

flannel sleep pants  
Axe toiletries  
wallet/purse  
makeup  
fashion scarves  
costume jewelry  
nail care kits  
t-shirts  
hats  
gloves  
body wash, lotion  
hair accessories

#### Gift Cards

iTunes	Subway
Movie theaters	McDonald's
Simon Mall	Portillo's
Game Stop	Buffalo Wild Wings
Wing Stop	Wendy's
Target	
Walmart	

### Jul Fest Craft Tables and Decorations

The Craft Room will be open at 10 A.M. and after the luncheon. If interested in selling items, reserve a table with Lorraine Weszely. The youth will be selling coffee cakes in the craft room. We will also have a "New or Gently Used regifting table".

If you have something to donate, it must be at church by Thursday, December 3. The Miriam Ladies will be setting up decorations and discussing Jul Fest procedures. We will meet at 1 P.M. in Peterson Hall. Many hands will make the job easier.

If you have any Swedish decorations for the tables, such as: Swedish Table Squares for the centerpieces, Tomte Gnome/Santa Elf, Dala Horse or any Swedish Christmas decoration, please bring with your name on them to assure its return to the owner. We appreciate all the volunteer help which will make this annual tradition continue.



### Trinity Men's Christmas Cards

Trinity Men want to help you by lending a hand with your Christmas card chores. Take advantage of this annual church fundraiser. For a donation, the men will purchase, address, stamp and mail the cards to all church members. Each card will include a list of donors' names.

Along with the convenience of this service, the money raised will help to defray the costs of our young people going to Covenant Harbor and Covenant Point this summer.

Donation envelopes can be obtained by calling the church office or from the table in the narthex. The deadline is Sunday, December 13.

### Winter Coat and Outer Wear Project

Covenant Women will once again sponsor the annual Coat and Outer Wear Project for Worth Township. New and gently-used clean coats/jackets and new outer wear such as scarves, mittens, gloves, hats and boots for children are needed. Items can be brought to the narthex and placed in the box below the tree now through Sunday, January 24. Your donation will surely bring warmth and joy this holiday to all of those less fortunate. We thank you for your support.



## Mitch's Musings

It's been a really busy month here at Trinity and I'm so blessed to be getting to know some of you more each week! It's been a joy to work and learn alongside Pastor Jim and I'm very grateful for this ministry opportunity. It's been challenging to balance school and this internship, but the reality is that full time ministry will be a constant ebb and flow of balancing engagements and relationships in hopes of fostering a unified, Christ-centered community someday. I'm excited for the growth that is happening in the lives of the youth here at Trinity. Their eagerness for truth and biblical perspective is awesome! We've been spending a good deal of time learning some worship songs and that's been a great relationship building platform for me.

I look forward to this semester transitioning into spring, which should include a winter retreat among other exciting events!

### Upcoming Events:

November 29 - Worship @ 10am

(Mitch will go home) Confirmation @ 11:15am (7th & 8th)  
Sunday School @ 11:15am (9th-12th)  
Youth Lunch @ Subway @ 12:00pm  
NO Youth Group

December 6 - Worship @ 10am

Confirmation @ 11:15am (7th & 8th)  
Sunday School @ 11:15am (9th-12th)  
Youth Lunch @ Chipotle @ 12:00pm  
Youth Group TBD - Possible Service Project

December 13 - Worship/Sunday School Christmas Program @ 10am

Open House for Program Children & Families @ 11:15  
Adult Sunday School @ 11:15 - Open to All Guests  
Youth Lunch @ Taco Bell @ 12:00pm  
Youth Group @ Trinity @ 1:00pm

December 20 - Worship @ Trinity @ 10am

(Mitch will go home) Confirmation @ 11:15am (7th & 8th)  
Sunday School @ 11:15am (9th-12th)  
Lunch @ Portillo's @ 12:00pm  
NO Youth Group

December 27 - Worship @ Trinity @ 10am

(Mitch will go home) Confirmation @ 11:15am (7th & 8th)  
Sunday School @ 11:15am (9th-12th)  
Lunch @ Portillo's @ 12:00pm  
Youth Group TBD



## Christmas Concert

**Sunday, December 13  
4:00 P.M.**

**Trinity Evangelical  
Covenant Church**

Join Stuart Seale and Nate Van Der Male as they accompany the audience in singing your favorite Christmas carols. In addition, Heather Van Der Male will be leading the singing of your favorite Christmas songs, such as "White Christmas."

Join us in Peterson Hall after the concert for a dinner catered from Chi-Tung Restaurant. Cost: \$5/adults, \$1/child.

Please RSVP to the church office if you plan to attend.

## Pacesetters New Year's Eve Dinner



Pacesetters New Year's Eve Dinner will be at Palermo's Restaurant, 4849 W. 95<sup>th</sup> Street, Oak Lawn, at 5:00 P.M. (enter in the front door). We have made arrangements to have a private room (north room) and a delicious dinner. The cost is \$20 per person. Payment and reservations must be received by John Weszely by December 13. After dinner we are going to Rhea Maurer's for devotions, fellowship and dessert. What better way to spend New Year's Eve than with our church friends.

## Pryme Tymers

Pryme Tymers will meet only once in December :

**December 10, 11 A.M.**

Entrée: Ham

Program: Christmas with Organist Mark Noller. Mark's novel presentation of carols on the organ, a silent film comedy and community singing, make this holiday show NOT TO MISS. Noel, Sing We Now of Christmas!

Make your reservation by Friday, December 4. The cost per meeting is \$7. Be sure to bring two canned goods for the Salvation Army Christmas Food Pantry. There is always a great need.



## Tuesday Morning Women's Bible Study

The true and simple message concerning the holiday season gives special meaning to the year ahead as we fast forward our involvement into days and months of 2016 and ----.

The message from Jesus is this, "My Kingdom is not about earning and deserving; it's about believing and receiving." Simple, straight forward, uncomplicated, right on, attainable, doable, necessary - a claim. Jesus continues, "My pleasure in giving and your pleasure in receiving flow together in joyous harmony." What a mountain top claim! A free gift given in His timing to all who respond and are willing to accept His richest gift – salvation. Not to be earned nor deserved but a gift which opens up eternity and gives glimpses of Glory - a promise and guarantee.

As we recognize and celebrate His coming to us as God's Son, Son of Man, let us treasure His boundless storehouse of blessings and gifts – new every morning for our benefit.

1. "Your needs and My riches are a perfect fit."
2. "My glorious riches are a more-than-adequate supply."
3. "Together we can make it."
4. "I know the plans I have for you, and they are good."
5. "Receive today's gift gratefully and find Me."
6. "I freely offer abundant life to everyone who turns to Me."
7. "I do my greatest works through people with grateful, trusting hearts."
8. "I am a God who gives and gives and gives."
9. "I am with you and for you – always."
10. "Receive my gifts, my abundance, living by faith, not by sight."

The following paragraphs are from Robert Strand who gives a fitting culmination to our Autumn study, "The Historical and Spiritual Jesus."

### A FINAL TRIBUTE

SOCRATES philosophized for 40 years. Plato for 50, Aristotle for 40, and Jesus Christ for only 3! Yet those 3 years infinitely transcend in influence the combined 130 years of the teachings of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle.

Jesus painted no pictures nor created no art work, yet the works of Raphael, Michelangelo, and da Vinci received their inspiration from Him. Jesus wrote no poetry nor prose, yet Dante, Milton, and scores of others were inspired by Him. Jesus composed no music, yet Haydn, Handel, Beethoven, Bach, and Mendelssohn reached their highest level of perfection in compositions when written to His praise.

Every area of human achievement and greatness has been incomparably enriched by the humble carpenter of Nazareth. His most unique and wonderful contribution to humanity is the changing of the human soul. Not philosophy, art, literature, nor music can do that. Only Jesus can break the power of sin and set the captive free! The world admires Him from afar but all need to invite Him in to be a personal Savior.

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This months study:

December 1 and 8 --- Denise Krueger will present a two-part study based on two great theological positions: divine sovereignty and human free will and attempt to relate them in a balanced way. Properly understood, knowing that an all-good and all-powerful God is in charge of all that happens can lead to a sense of security and tranquility. Don't miss learning about this intriguing and sometimes mysterious subject.

December 15 Christmas Brunch  
Join us January 5, 2016 for our Winter Study  
Trinity Fireside Room  
Bakery and fellowship: 9 A.M.  
Study: 9:30-10:45

P.S. This final tribute has been written by Phillips Brooks and is a most eloquent and fitting conclusion to this compilation of facts about Jesus Christ. It is entitled...

### ONE SOLITARY LIFE

I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, and all the navies that ever were built, and all the parliaments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth as powerfully as has that one solitary life...the LIFE OF CHRIST!

Barbara Johnson  
rejoice/celebrate



## Congratulations to....

Sandy and Bill Hutchinson on the birth of their grandchildren, twins Jackson William and Kali Rose born Thursday, November 5. Proud parents Stacie and Billy are doing well.

Matt and Barbara Mateer on the engagement of their son, Jon-Anders Mateer to Karissa VanBuskirk. Wedding plans are pending.

**Thought to Ponder:  
Give and forget;  
receive and remember.**

MAY THE BLESSINGS OF GOD  
BE WITH YOU,  
MAY THE CHRIST CHILD  
LIGHT YOUR WAY,  
MAY THE HOLY SPIRIT   
GUIDE YOU  
TO KEEP YOU SAFE EACH DAY.



*In Loving Memory*



*Jeanette Susan  
Young*

*1/27/1950 - 10/26/2015*



**Remembered Joy**  
 Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free!  
 I follow the plan God laid for me.  
 I saw His face, I heard His call,  
 I took His hand and left it all...  
 I could not stay another day,  
 To love, to laugh, to work or play;  
 Tasks left undone must stay that way.  
 And if my parting has left a void,  
 Then fill it with remembered joy.  
 A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss...  
 Ah yes, these things I, too, shall miss.  
 My life's been full, I've savored much:  
 Good times, good friends, a loved-one's touch.  
 Perhaps my time seemed all too brief -  
 Don't shorten yours with undue grief.  
 Be not burdened with tears of sorrow,  
 Enjoy the sunshine of the morrow.

# December 2015

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24 	25 	26
27	28	29	30	31	Jan 1	

## On-going Ministry

### Sunday Mornings

10:00 AM Worship

10:00 AM Nursery for Infants and Toddlers

11:15 AM Sunday School for all ages

11:15 AM Confirmation

Noah's Ark Preschool – Mon – Fri, 9 AM – 12 PM

Women's Bible Study – Dec. 1, 8, 9:30 AM, Fireside Room

Pryme Tymers – Thursday, Dec. 10, 11 AM

## Notes:

1: Women's Bible Study, Fireside Room (9:30 AM)  
Ronald McDonald House supper (4:30 PM)

3: JulFest setup (1 PM)

5: Men's Prayer Breakfast, Jedi Garden (8 AM)  
JulFest (10 AM – 1 PM)

6: Together We Cope retiring offering  
Youth Group lunch @ Chipotle (12 PM)  
Youth Group possible Service Project

8: Women's Bible Study, Fireside Room (9:30 AM)  
Trustees & CE Board meetings (7 PM)

10: Pryme Tymers (11 AM)

13: Sunday School Christmas Program (10 AM)  
Open House for Program Children and Families,  
Peterson Hall (11:15 AM)

Youth Group lunch @ Taco Bell (12 PM)

Youth Group @ Trinity (1 PM)

Christmas Concert, Sanctuary (4 PM) and  
Dinner, Peterson Hall (5 PM)

### Christmas Card Greeting due

15: Women's Bible Study Christmas Brunch, Peterson Hall (10:30 AM)  
Deacons meeting (6:30 PM)

18: Noah's Ark Preschool Holiday Party - Cookies with Santa,  
Peterson Hall (10:45 AM-12 PM)

20: Youth Group lunch @ Portillo's (12 PM)

### Articles for January Messenger due

21: Noah's Ark Preschool Winter Break through January 1  
(resumes January 4)

24: Christmas Eve Service "Candles and Carols" (5:30 PM)

25: Merry Christmas

27: Youth Group lunch @ Portillo's (12 PM)

31: Pacesetters New Year's Eve Dinner, Palermo's Restaurant (5 PM)

January 1: Happy New Year



# December Newsletter 2015



## Dates to Remember

**Tuesday, December 1**  
School Resumes

**Sunday, December 13**  
Christmas Program  
More information to come

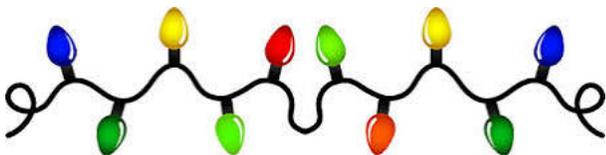
**Friday, December 18**  
Holiday Party  
Cookies with Santa  
More information to come

**Monday, December 21- Friday, January 1**  
Winter Break

**Friday, December 25**  
Merry Christmas

**Friday, January 1**  
Happy New Year

**Monday, January 4**  
School Resumes



## A Note of Thanks!

Thank you to our wonderful readers who have shared their time reading to our preschoolers.

Pastor Jim, thank you for sharing the wonderful story about Amber Lamb. The children enjoyed learning about Amber and her classroom.

Thank you for joining us at our Thanksgiving Day Feast!

Thank you for attending parent conferences! It was a pleasure speaking with you.

**For the month of December we will focus on...**

~The story of Christmas

**Math-** How many candy canes long are you?

## Pre-K Classroom

During the month of December the children will focus on the letters Mm, Hh and Ss and numbers 0-10.

## 3's - 4's Classroom

During the month, the children will focus on letters Aa-Jj and numbers 0-5.



## A NOTE FROM...

Mrs. Palazzolo & Mrs. Wojcik

Dear Parents/ Guardians,

December brings families together, homemade cookies and Christmas tidings. It is also a very busy and exciting time for our preschoolers.

Thank you for meeting with your teachers during Parent/Teacher Conferences. It is a pleasure to work with you and your children.

The children have been doing a great job with letter recognition and sounds. During circle time, we are continuing to introduce our blend ladders. As we progress through the month of December, the children will continue to work on letter sounds and recognition. Each day we sing our alphabet songs to help the children remember letter sounds. Ask your child about Larry Lion, Nicky Narwhal, or Betsy Bee! We will continue to focus on the vowels and past letters learned and introducing letters Mm, Hh & Ss.

Please continue working with your child daily on letter sounds and recognition, numbers 1-20 and printing.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us.

Wishing you and your family a Wonderful Holiday Season & a Happy New Year!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Palazzolo & Mrs. Wojcik



A NOTE FROM...

Ms. Amanda & Mrs. Dryier



Dear Parents/Guardians,

December is the busiest seasons of the year! Preschool will be a very busy place as well. Christmas is one of our favorite times of the year. We are excited to hear about all of your family traditions you share!

The children are doing so well and we are proud each one of them! Keep up the good work!

This month we will review our letters A through J, continue practicing numbers 1-15 and recognizing numbers 1-5. We will continue to work on basic shapes and colors as well.

We will learn some new songs and poems this season! Please ask them to sing them for you at home!

If at any time you have questions or concerns, please feel free to speak with us.

We would like to wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas!

Sincerely,

Ms. Amanda and Mrs. Dryier



# December



**Love and share, a time to care.**

**My favorite gift to give is...**



\_\_\_\_\_.

**Trinity Evangelical Covenant Church**  
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**Reverend Dr. James R. Sandberg**

*Senior Pastor*

**Mitch Haaby**

*Pastoral Intern*

**Nate VanDerMale**

*Interim Director of Music and Worship*

**Betty Aardema**

*Organist*

**Stuart Seale**

*Pianist*

**Christina Palazzolo**

*Director – Noah's Ark Preschool*

**Karen Christakos**

*Secretary*

**Joe Michalowicz**

*Custodian*

Articles for the  
January Messenger  
are due December 20