

# TRINITY CHURCH TIDINGS

## DECEMBER 2021

Trinity Lutheran Church & School  
146 Reserve Road, West Seneca, New York 14224  
Church: (716) 674-9188, School: (716) 674-5353

Rev. Nycholas Greig, Pastor, 674-9188 / C: (804) 382-6199  
Mrs. Kathleen Fretthold, School Principal, School: 674-5353

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### WORSHIP TIMES

Saturday @ 5:00 pm  
Sunday @ 9:30 am

## “He is Risen! He is Risen Indeed, Hallelujah!”

Now you might be confused. What is pastor talking about? Why is he giving an Easter greeting in the December newsletter? Has he already gone crazy?

Well, let me reassure you that I do recognize what time of the year it is. It is frankly hard to miss all of the Christmas decorations going up around people’s homes, inside stores and even in our sanctuary. They are wonderful reminders of the celebration we experience this time of year. But I was having a conversation with my daughter the other day where she asked, “Why do we celebrate Christmas more than Easter?” And the question kind of caught me off guard. I had to think a little bit more about it. It does seem by all outward appearances that we celebrate Christmas a little bit more than Easter, don’t we? After all, I don’t decorate my house for Easter; if we do give or receive gifts at Easter time, they aren’t as big or as many as at Christmas; and while there is Easter candy (jellybeans are my favorite), there doesn’t seem to be as much going around at Easter as during the Christmas season, let alone Halloween.

Why do I bring this up? I think it is an interesting question. As amazing as the story is around the birth of Jesus, it is still just a birth. We are all born. We all live, and we all die. What truly makes Christmas special and important is that this child, born in a manger, grew up to live a perfect life, die for you and for me, but also, and most importantly, RISE FROM THE DEAD.

As we enjoy all of our Christmas celebrations this time of the year let us remind one another why they truly matter. Let us celebrate not only the birth of the Christ child, but also to keep in mind why it was so important for him to be born, to give us new life in him.

God’s Blessings this Christmas season!

~ Pastor Nyck



## **Holiday Worship Schedule**

<i>December 19<sup>th</sup> @ 9:30am:</i>	<i>Sunday School Christmas Pageant &amp; Service</i>
<i>December 24<sup>th</sup> @ 6:00pm:</i>	<i>Family Christmas Eve Service w/ Communion</i>
<i>10:00pm:</i>	<i>Christmas Eve Candlelight Service w/ Communion</i>
<i>December 25<sup>th</sup> @ 10:00am</i>	<i>Christmas Day Service</i>
<i>December 25<sup>th</sup> Evening:</i>	<b><u>NO</u></b> <i>5:00pm First Sunday After Christmas Service</i>
<i>December 26<sup>th</sup> @ 9:30am:</i>	<i>First Sunday After Christmas Service</i>
<i>December 31<sup>st</sup> @ 7:00pm:</i>	<i>New Year's Eve Service</i>



### **Advent Celebration** Tuesday, November 30, 2021 6:00pm at Trinity School

Looking for a great way to kickoff Advent? All ages are invited to come together for an evening of food, worship and fun that will include a FREE pizza dinner, a brief family friendly worship, and festive activities. All this within an hour and a half to get you back home for your evening. All ages are welcome! Be sure to sign up **by November 26<sup>th</sup>**! Let us know your name, phone #, how many children, and how many teens/adults. Email Youth and Family Coordinator, Mark Willert "[MWillert@thinktrinitychristian.com](mailto:MWillert@thinktrinitychristian.com)" to sign up or use the form included in upcoming worship bulletins. Thanks to Thrivent for sponsoring this event!

#### **Advent Celebration Help Needed:**

We have some great events for families at Trinity and we could use your help for this one. If you would be willing to help run one of the fun centers or crafts — we provide all the materials -- please let Mark Willert know [mwillert@thinktrinitychristian.com](mailto:mwillert@thinktrinitychristian.com). Thanks!



Brothers and sisters in Christ, let us gather together for an Advent Bible study based around our worship theme throughout the month of Advent: Wait Upon the Lord. On Wednesday Evenings we will gather from 7pm-8pm to discuss the theme for that week and examine more closely the scripture lessons related to that idea. This will be a 3-week Bible study, led by Pastor Nyck. Our schedule will need to accommodate the school Christmas pageant, so the schedule will be as follows:

Week 1: Wait Upon the Lord with Faith – Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>  
Week 2: Wait Upon the Lord with Hope – Dec. 8<sup>th</sup>  
Week 3: Wait Upon the Lord with Gratitude – Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup>

We hope that you can join us as we gather to remember and remind one another the true reason for the season!



### **Parent "Drop & Shop" Night** Saturday, December 4<sup>th</sup> 4:00pm - 9:00pm Trinity School Gym

Need a child-free night to get some Christmas shopping done? Drop off your children (ages 4 - grade 5) in the gym for a pizza dinner, Christmas activities, and a Christmas movie! Cost: \$25 first child, \$20 second child, \$15 third child. Pre-registration required; forms can be found in the church narthex. This is a fundraiser to support Trinity youth who will be attending the 2022 LCMS National Youth Gathering in Houston, Texas.



### **Sunday School Pageant**

Our Sunday School children will be leading worship with their annual Christmas pageant on **December 19<sup>th</sup> at the 9:30am service**. Please join us!

## Trinity School News



### From the Principal ...

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

*"A voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight paths for him. Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill be made low. The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth. And all mankind will see God's salvation.' "* Luke 3:4-5 For me, these beautiful words of Isaiah, as quoted by John the Baptist in Luke, are the most powerful reminder of the arrival of Advent. The King is coming! It is such a thrilling and essential message of hope. Teaching the students to treasure Advent as a season of hope in Jesus rather than hope in 'Santa' can be quite a challenge. It is the same challenge that we all face, really... the present vs. the eternal, the secular vs. the sacred. As Christians, we truly have the joy of both - the joys of our life on earth made richer through the promise of eternity. Best gift ever!!

The school children celebrated Thanksgiving with a special student-led chapel service on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving. All grade levels participated, and Pastor Nyck, too. There was lots of excitement! The students are also busy preparing for the annual Christmas Celebration or Pageant. The 3rd-8th graders are presenting on Wednesday evening, 12/15, at 7pm in the church; and K-3 will sing and present a pageant on 12/23 at 9:15am, also in the church. You are cordially invited to both!

Parent/teacher conferences are happening after school 12/8-10, both virtually and in person. The trimester system that we adopted last year (rather than semesters) is working very well for us. Our K-8 parents have been extremely accommodating in helping us get everyone scheduled in a timely manner for a December meeting! PK parents met with teachers earlier in the year.

Katie Willert had the opportunity to travel to Rochester to participate in the annual NYSCATE (NY State Association for Computers and Technology in Education) conference. She heard from and met dozens of experts in the field of educational technology, and how it can be implemented simply and effectively in the classroom. She already does an amazing job of that, along with the rest of the staff, but this information changes so rapidly, ongoing training is always needed. She was able to learn from the best, share that new knowledge with the staff, and take advantage of the many implementation opportunities that attending the conference provided.

The staff of your school wish you a Blessed Advent Season full of hope, and a joyous Christmas full of love!

~ Kathleen Fretthold, Principal

## Ten Ways for Families to Engage Kids in Worship: Tips 5-7

*(Continued from November newsletter)*

*~ Taken from Faith Formation Ministries*

5. **FOLLOW ALONG:** Help your child look up the Scripture passage and follow along in the Bible when it is read. If your child enjoys looking through a children's Bible storybook, bring that along for your child to read as well, but wait to bring it out until the message begins so that your child will participate in the other parts of worship. A great opportunity is the Lord's Prayer. Have them fold their hands and say it along with you and everyone else.
6. **BECOME A "CHURCH WHISPERER":** Help kids stay engaged during worship by whispering questions or making observations. During a song, whisper, "My favorite verse of this song is the third one. Which part do you like the best?" As Scripture is read, ask your child how it would feel to be living in that story, or suggest that they squeeze your hand when they hear Jesus name.
7. **GIVE TOGETHER:** Find out causes the offering will support Pray and learn about that cause together during the week. If your child receives an allowance, build into it money they can give during worship. Consider providing your child with a special envelope designated for that purpose and inviting your child to decorate the envelope with their best drawing as a reminder that we give God our best.

**\*\* See next month's Trinity Tidings newsletter for tips 8-10! \*\***

## Sunday Worship / Meeting Changes

### Effective January 9, 2022

After careful review of our current worship times and education offerings, we have decided to change the time of our Sunday morning schedule to a **9:15am Educational Hour** (Sunday School, Confirmation Class, Sr. High Sunday School, Sunday Adult Bible Study) and **10:30am Contemporary Worship service**. This change will go into effect starting on **January 9<sup>th</sup>**. We feel this new schedule provides us with the opportunity to emphasize our Sunday morning education opportunities and create fellowship on Sunday mornings. This also gives us the freedom to re-evaluate our worship services in the future. We understand any change to the worship schedule directly effects the members of Trinity. We pray that this schedule meets the needs of you and your family as we joyfully worship together and serve at Trinity.

~ Pastor Nyck

## 40 Days of Purpose Revisited

Do you remember the book Purpose Driven Life by Rick Warren? It was all the rage in the early 2000's as it addressed significant questions people had regarding what is the meaning of life, and what is my purpose? Many churches engaged in a congregation wide study together, including Trinity. But even 15 years later these questions still remain just as pertinent as they did back then, and this issue is one that is worthy of being revisited. Starting **January 9<sup>th</sup>** we will be taking another look at this book as a congregation to once more glean understanding for not only what our purpose is, but how we can put it into practice in our daily lives. We are encouraging everyone to read (or re-read) the book over the next 40 days starting on January 9<sup>th</sup>. We will be engaging with the topics presented in the book week by week in our weekly worship services during that time. We will also be asking all members of Trinity to engage in a small group (preferably outside of a small group you are already engaged with). Please be on the lookout for more information in the coming weeks as we gear up for this extraordinary event!



## 65<sup>th</sup> Annual

### Christmas Candlelight Vespers

Sunday, December 5<sup>th</sup> at 4:00pm & 7:00pm

At First Trinity Lutheran Church

(1570 Niagara Falls Blvd.)

A free-will offering will be accepted for the benefit of students attending Valparaiso University. If you can, please offer to give a ride to older members of our congregation who may want to attend but are reluctant to drive at night.



## Angel Tree

We will once again be sponsoring an Angel Tree for the young men and women at the Renaissance House Campus. Please watch for the Angel Tree to be put up and purchase the item listed. Young men will receive basketball shorts and young women will receive lounge pants. The due date for all gifts will be **SUNDAY DECEMBER 19<sup>TH</sup>**. Please place the item in a gift bag only (not wrapped) with the angel tag attached. Thank you!

## Outreach Success!

Thank you to everyone who donated gift filled shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child! Please continue to pray for the children who will receive these boxes.



## 2022 ALTAR FLOWERS & CANDLES / OIL

The 2022 sign-up charts are on the bulletin board in the church coatroom. Sign up for your special occasion today!

**Flowers:** \$10 per vase and you get to take them home after the Sunday service! We are asking that 2 families sign up for each week. Payments should be placed in the **Church Office's message center** - make checks payable to **"Trinity Lutheran Church"** (*memo: Altar Flowers*).

**Altar Candles / Oil:** \$25 per month (per family). Two families should sign-up each month to cover the total cost. Checks should be made payable to: **"Trinity Lutheran Church"** and placed in the Church Office message center.

*\*Please make sure to include your name and \*  
special intentions on the sign-up sheets.*

## Food Pantry

For the month of December, we will be collecting boxes of rice and instant potato mixes. Items can be placed in the red wagon in the church entryway and will be donated to the food pantry at Bread of Life Outreach Center in Colden. Thank you for your support!

# YOUTH SCOOP

## Jr. & Sr. High Youth Gym Night

Our next Jr/Sr High gym night will be **Tuesday, December 14<sup>th</sup> from 6:30pm-8:00pm**. For our November gym night, Katelyn Barnas organized the games and Beverly Nicholas led the devotion! Bev's devotion talked about the history of the candy cane and the connection to Jesus. She actually was helped by her grandmother, Gerri Swart, who gave her information and ideas of what to share. Great job you two! See picture of her sharing with the group!



## LaserTron - Episode 2 Thursday, 12/2 at 6:00pm

For those of you who want to use your 2nd session, or if you want to come for the 1st time, we'll be meeting at LaserTron on Dec. 2 from 6pm-8pm. Don't forget your cards! RSVP to Lisa Lafferty by 11/29 so that she can book the players.

## Movie Night

Jr and Sr High Christmas movie night is planned for **Thursday, December 9 from 5:30pm-8:00pm** in the school gym. Bring \$4 for pizza and drink. Christmas cookies and eggnog too! Extra cookie for those wearing Christmas socks or sweater! Wear them proud and loud!

## Teen Parenting Small Group

Our "Tough Guys and Drama Queens" parenting small group topic we had planned to start the second week of January will be postponed until after our Trinity "40 Days of Purpose".

If you are still interested or haven't let Mark Willert know, please do so [mwillert@thinktrinitychristian.com](mailto:mwillert@thinktrinitychristian.com).



## West Seneca Holiday Events

- December 4 @ 4pm - A Christmas Silver Band concert at St. Nicholas Anglican church which gathers at the former Covenant Methodist church, across from the Police Station on Main Street, WS.
- December 11 - Blue Christmas worship service at St. David's Episcopal Church, 3951 Seneca Street, WS.
- December 19 - A "living" Nativity at Ebenezer UCC.



## Trinity Teen Accomplishment!

Lacey Harris, a teenage member here at Trinity, recently completed her first Thrivent Action Team grant! With the help from Mrs. Anderson's Sunday School class, they packed 50 comfort kits to help the homeless people in NYC. Lacey and her family will distribute these over the Thanksgiving holiday. Awesome work Lacey!

## Pie Baking Appreciated!

40 pies were assembled and baked on November 20<sup>th</sup>. It took only 1.5 hours to assemble them for the 21 youth and 8 adults! The pies were delivered in 7 neighborhoods - Hamburg, OP, WS, Depew, Lancaster, East Aurora, and Buffalo to shut-ins or members and families we haven't seen for a while. Each pie was delivered with a hand written card wishing them a Happy Thanksgiving. Thank you to the adults (you brave souls!), Lisa and Matt Lafferty (organizers), Mary Sirgey, Sarah Gabel, Amy Hunneshagen, Christine Harris, Gerri Swart and Mark Willert. We have seen a variety of thank you notes, Facebook posts and emails appreciating all the hard work! "For truly, I say to you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink (or a pie!) because you belong to Christ will by no means lose his reward." Mark 9:41 Be sure to check out all the fun and hard work in the pics!



## Stephen Ministers: The After People Carrying a Butterfly

*Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other,  
just as in Christ God forgave you. Ephesians 4:32 (NIV)*

A neat thing about living along the Gulf Coast is that every September, I get to see swarms of Gulf fritillaries. We have their host plant, the passion vine, growing along our fence line. As the whimsical purple flower open toward the sun, the butterflies seem to come from north, south, east and west. Then they lay eggs, and a new generation of butterflies is born. I love watching the orange caterpillars, with their menacing black spikes, and the beautiful butterflies they become.

Last week, a cold front came through and brought with it some heavy winds. My son and I were playing outside during a break in the rain, and as we were running, I noticed an old butterfly with worn wings climbing up a tall blade of grass amid the storm. I reached out with care, and it climbed onto my finger. Naturally, I thought about keeping it forever, but instead, I used my other hand to block the wind from its wings while I searched for a better spot in the yard for the butterfly. I settled on a thick bush full of flowers, where it could get nectar and burrow between the leaves as needed between gusts of wind.

The butterfly immediately unrolled its wings and began to drink from the flower, as I stood in awe that for the second time in two weeks, a butterfly had crawled into my hand. I thought about how a similar principle holds true with the people around me. Sometimes, when the winds of life pick up, others who are struggling may be more apt to accept encouragement or help. I hope and pray that I'm able to see them and take the opportunity to block the wind for a little while. May I always remember the difference I can make in other's lives.

*Walk of Faith: Did someone who is hurting come to mind as you read these paragraphs?  
How can you encourage that person amid struggle, depression, or loss?*

*Stephen Ministers are the After People.*

*They are ready to come alongside you—or your friends, neighbors, coworkers,  
or relatives—and provide comfort and support for as long after as needed.*

[www.stephenministries.org](http://www.stephenministries.org)

*By Ashley Clark*

*From: "All God's Creatures"*

## Lutheran Church Extension Society

The Lutheran Church Extension Society of Buffalo (LCES) is one hundred years old. It is a lending institute begun by downtown Lutheran church – Missouri Synod congregations to begin mission starts further out. It continues this financial ministry of loans to twenty-two member congregations and Lutheran agencies. Email president Fred Schmidt at [fschmidt32888@gmail.com](mailto:fschmidt32888@gmail.com) for info. Trinity is a member of the LCES; Dave Sirgey represents our church at the LCES meetings.



## Firewood Available

Dead ash tree wood from the property has been cut into 16-18 inch pieces, split and stacked next to the school and playground. It is for sale for \$90 per cord or \$3 per bundle of 8 pieces. Please place cash or check in an envelope marked "Firewood" in the offering plate.



## Recycle Greeting Cards

If you'd like to recycle your holiday or special occasion cards, please save them and place in my message box at church. Cut off the front cover of your card (NO personal writing allowed on the flip side). NO Hallmark, Disney or American Greetings cards are accepted. They will be sent to St. Jude's Ranch for Children. Thank you.

~ Linda Rowsell

## Portals of Prayer

**Portals of Prayer** (Jan-March 2022) devotion booklets will be available soon. Please take one and use it for home devotions! God bless your devotion and prayer times!

# This Holiday Season, Offer the Gift of Remembering to Those Who Are Grieving

by Rev. Kenneth C. Haugk, Ph.D.

**W**ith the holidays quickly approaching, a season that's normally a time for celebration may have a more somber tone for some—particularly those who have lost loved ones in the past year or so. Someone who would have been there to share the Thanksgiving meal, help hang the Christmas lights, or ring in the New Year is gone, with each event a reminder of their absence. The painful feelings that come as a result, especially when it seems everyone else is celebrating, can make the holidays a very difficult time.

In addition to all this, people often avoid those who are grieving, uncertain what to say or do. But there's a simple, powerful way anyone can offer care: giving the gift of remembering the grieving person's loved one with them.

## Say the Loved One's Name

The gift of remembering begins with being willing to say the loved one's name.

One of the most common misconceptions about grief is that talking about a person's loss or saying the name of the deceased will only cause more pain. But the reality is just the opposite—people *want* to talk about the loved one they've lost. During the research for my book *Don't Sing Songs to a Heavy Heart*, people I spoke with expressed that

sentiment almost universally. One shared, "Mentioning my wife's name after she died was so hard for some people. It was almost as if she never existed. But I want them to remember her."

That's why it's important to say the loved one's name. Doing so acknowledges the loss and communicates that you're safe to talk to, that you won't shy away or abandon them because of their grief. In other words, it lets the grieving person know that you're with them in their grief and invites them to talk about what they're going through.

You don't have to say a lot. Some brief, compassionate words are often enough—for example, "The holidays must be hard for you without [name]" or "I remember the time when [name] . . ."



*"Mentioning my wife's name after she died was so hard for some people. It was almost as if she never existed. But I want them to remember her."*

So, don't be afraid to mention the name of the deceased loved one, because saying



## This Holiday Season, Offer the Gift of Remembering to Those Who Are Grieving

their name opens the door to the gift of remembering.

### Listening to and Sharing Memories

Once you've opened the door to remembering, be ready to listen to the grieving person's memories. Sharing memories is a way for them to express their love for the deceased, feel closer to their lost loved one, and experience comfort.

Although a grieving person can certainly reflect and remember on their own, there's something special about sharing memories with someone who will listen and care. Whether they're sharing happy memories, sad stories about the deceased's final days, funny anecdotes, or somber reflections, your being there to listen sends a clear message: *You are not alone.*

Each conversation is different. Some people may want to talk and talk, while others may be eager to hear *your* recollections about their loved one. It varies by individual, so follow the other person's lead. Stay focused on their needs, and you'll be on the right track to providing meaningful care.

### Embracing Every Emotion

One reason people often hesitate to bring up someone's loss is because they're worried about how the grieving person might respond. Memories of a loved one may bring strong emotions—anger, sadness, loneliness, regret—as well as the tears that often come with such feelings. It can be uncomfortable to encounter these strong feelings because we don't know what to say or do.

But here's a secret: Usually, the best response is simply to listen and embrace whatever emotions might come. You don't have to say exactly the right thing; in fact, trying to find the perfect words often leads to clichés, platitudes, or other unhelpful responses. In contrast, listening to, accepting, and validating a grieving person's emotions brings comfort.

Of course, it isn't always easy to listen as someone cries, expresses anger, or shares how lonely they feel. But when you set aside your discomfort and focus on being present with the other person, you'll be providing exactly the kind of care they need.

### Making the Holidays a Little Easier

Grief has no expiration date. Whether it's been a year, two years, or longer since someone lost a loved one, consider offering the gift of remembering to them, too. No matter how long it's been, listening and reminiscing together is a wonderful way to bring comfort, deepen relationships, offer care, and bring Christ's healing love to those who are hurting during the holidays.

Doing that can make a difficult holiday season a little easier.

Kenneth C. Haugk is the founder and Executive Director of Stephen Ministries, an international Christian educational organization based in St. Louis, Missouri. A pastor and clinical psychologist, Dr. Haugk has authored numerous books on caregiving topics, including *Journeying through Grief* and *Don't Sing Songs to a Heavy Heart*. To learn more about Stephen Ministries, visit [stephenministries.org](http://stephenministries.org) or call (314) 428-2600.

*Happy Birthday*

12/1 Logan Cosandier	12/11 Peter Schueler	12/20 Karen McCoy
12/2 Michele Baun	12/12 Bradley Ringle	12/21 Sandra Gertis
12/3 Helen Boldt Luci Zarbo	12/13 Nancy Stevens	12/22 Kevin Kot Lisa Cislo
12/4 Jordan Paz	12/14 Anna Eising	12/23 Noel Anderson Chris Kotowski
12/5 Jonah LoVullo	12/16 Vince Zarbo Gianna Conti	12/28 Beverly Osberg Judith Boersch Carolyn Lehsten
12/6 Delaney Colson Ella Thompson	12/17 Noell McKernan Katelyn Barnas	12/29 Joy Belasic Nick Gatto
12/7 Joan Sullivan Justin Smith Emma Hope	12/18 Tristan Sullivan Branson Gabel Gavin Courteau	12/30 Eve LoVullo
12/8 Steve Makosy	12/19 Jerry Meissner Evan McCoy	12/31 Donna Yox
12/9 Matthew Wrobel		

*Happy Anniversary*

12/23 Dan & Joan Sullivan

12/27 Brian & Ellen Makey

**Memorial Plaques**

You can remember deceased loved ones who were members of Trinity in a special way by purchasing a small engraved tab plaque to go on our Memorial Plaque located in the church's fellowship area. They're only \$25! Order forms can be obtained from the church office. **Order deadline for this quarter will be January 2<sup>nd</sup>.**



**Cookie Walk & Caroling**

Unfortunately, we will not be holding our annual Cookie Walk and Christmas Caroling again this year. We hope to resume these activities in 2022.

**Ministers: The People of Trinity Church & School**

**Position**

Pastor  
School Principal  
Youth & Family Coordinator  
Church Office Administrator  
School Office Administrator

**Name**

Rev. Nycholas Greig  
Kathleen Fretthold  
Mark Willert  
Teresa Lynch  
Judeen Babcock

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