

December 2020

Pastor's Page



TRINITY TIDINGS

Trinity Lutheran Church

Friends in Christ,

I hope and pray that all of you had a safe Thanksgiving! I know that for most of us, this year looked much different than they have in the past. There was no pie at church after the Thanksgiving Eve service. Traditions that we have held to for years were missed this year. Family members that we love and want to spend time with were unable to join us. However, I have to say that this year I have found a deeper sense of gratitude than I have experienced before. I am grateful for a healthy and loving family, a warm home, meaningful work, and friendships that have been instrumental in getting through the past nine months. And I am so grateful for you. The continued love and support that you all have shared with me and each other has been a true light in this darkness.

In addition to Thanksgiving, I think we all realize that Christmas will look quite different this year as well. And even though we will not be able to honor some of our favorite traditions at church this year, we still have some special plans to make the most of our abilities and to stay connected. Please take the time to read about the opportunities for everyone in these Tidings. We are going to try really hard to live-stream our Christmas Eve service. There are still a few technical challenges that we need to work out but we hope to get them resolved in time. We will still have a recorded service available if this falls through.

As Christmas approaches, I have to say that the Christmas story is speaking to me differently this year. When we read about Mary and Joseph and the days leading up to the birth of Jesus, I definitely feel a deeper connection to some of the feelings and emotions they were undoubtedly going through. They were forced to travel by the government to be counted for a census. They found themselves in a lodging situation that wasn't ideal for the birth of their child. Instead of being surrounded by family and friends to help them welcome the baby into the world, they were isolated and alone in the midst of animals and a lowly manger. But they had each other, and they had God with them. I know we can safely say that they wouldn't have chosen for things to go the way that they did, but I am certain they were grateful for food, shelter, and a healthy family. This Christmas will be unlike any we have experienced in the past., but I truly believe that the Gospel of Jesus' birth will resonate with us all in a deeper, fuller, and more personal way. Because we too know what it's like to be in a situation we didn't ask for, but still have a lot to be grateful for. Jesus is indeed the reason for the season!

Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas!

God Bless, Pastor Jon



Council Notes

"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time, we will reap a harvest if we do not (emphasis mine) give up."

Galatians 6:9-10

After 9 months of Covid, (the length of a normal pregnancy) many of us have been afflicted by Covid fatigue in some form or other. **DO NOT** give up! Easier to say than to do I know. I see so many of you persevering in kindness- continuing to volunteer (although socially distanced and masked), calling others to check on them, see if they need anything, bringing a meal, sending a note of encouragement.....the list is endless. Don't discount all the creative ways you have found to **BE** the church! Our staff has done a stellar job between quarantining and actual cases of Covid to continue to keep the building going as it needs to do and providing online worship and fellowship opportunities.

And of course, I am thrilled to see how the faithful continue to give to support the ongoing ministry of Trinity Lutheran Church. When the going gets, tough, the tough have surely kept going. **THANK YOU!** During this Advent season, as we contemplate the events of Mary's pregnancy and Jesus' birth, let us eagerly await what God will birth to in the New Year for Trinity, the community and the world. A blessed Advent to you and yours and a Merry Christmas!

In His Grip, Ann Tanko, Council Chair

Children & Youth Ministry News

Children's Ministry

Sunday School youth and families have received Advent at-home kits with crafts/activities, Advent calendar, Nativity Sticker Set, and Advent lessons. Sunday School families are also making ornaments along with EDGE families to help decorate one of the Christmas trees in the sanctuary at Trinity. We will share photos in December once it's all decorated. We are working on a virtual Christmas program this year where we are putting together a video collage of families reading portions of the Christmas Story from Luke. We wish everyone love, joy, peace, and hope this Christmas season!



EDGE Youth Ministry

EDGE is doing community outreach virtually this season by selecting and shopping for gifts to support foster children in our community through Trinity's partnership with Safe Haven Foster Shoppe. We are also journeying online through an Advent Devotional called "Do Not Be Afraid." We're looking at holding hope, bringing peace, practicing joy, and choosing love. EDGE youth and families are also making ornaments along with Sunday School families to help decorate one of the Christmas trees in the sanctuary at Trinity. We wish everyone love, joy, peace, and hope this Christmas season!



Viking Vittles



Amid all of the challenges of 2020 Viking Vittles continues to serve students that are food insecure. With all North Branch Area Public School students going to distance learning we had to look for new ways to serve these students. Fortunately, with the support of the school, we are able to offer Viking Vittles during the shutdown. Parents will be able to stop by the distance learning site at the mall (#108) and pick up bags of Viking Vittles any day Monday – Friday from 9-3.

In addition to the above we are delivering 56 bags to Sunrise Estates Mobile Home Park in Stacy every week.

Packing has also become more of a challenge this fall. Unfortunately, we are unable to let the community come in and pack as in the past. We have gone to packing at one table each week and the packers must be from the same household. Hopefully, this will minimize any risks. We have also switched from using plastic bags to using paper bags as a way to be better stewards of our environment. We will use up our supply of plastic bags over the summer.

While community members have not been allowed to pack, they have helped with delivering the totes to the schools. In October, Minnco Credit Union delivered the totes every week. Lakes Area EMS has committed to delivering them the first week of each month. Currently, we are only delivering to the mall location as St. John's Lutheran Church in Stacy has once again volunteered to take the deliveries to Sunrise Estates.

We are grateful for the congregation's and community support both in labor and financial assistance. We were blessed with a CARES Grant from the City of North Branch that will be a great assist to continuing to provide this service to our community. In addition, over the past several months we have received grants from East Central Electric Operation Round Up, Great River Energy as well as donations from the American Legion and individuals.

We look forward to the time we can all be back in church and packing before services.

Blessing Bags

60 Christmas Blessing Bags for children have been packed and were delivered to Pathways to be distributed locally. Thank you to Karen, Nan, Vicky & Carol for their hard work on this project!



Treasurer's Report

Statement of Income and Expenses

Month Ending October 31, 2020
Trinity Lutheran Church, North Branch, MN

<u>Income</u>	October Actual	October Budget	YTD Actual	YTD Budget
Unified Giving	\$ 29,624	\$ 30,456	\$ 284,874	\$ 304,559
Loose Offering	\$ -	\$ 708	\$ 3,449	\$ 7,082
Other Income	\$ 10,020	\$ 46	\$ 15,000	\$ 9,959
Rent	\$ -	\$ 292	\$ 2,210	\$ 2,919
Phoenix Operating Reimbursement	\$ 1,460	\$ 1,958	\$ 21,087	\$ 19,582
Special Bequests	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Regular Giving	\$ 41,104	\$ 33,460	\$ 326,620	\$ 344,101
<u>Expenses</u>	October Actual	October Budget	YTD Actual	YTD Budget
<u>General Expenses</u>				
Ministry Support	\$ 26,389	\$ 27,984	\$ 270,874	\$ 279,836
Church Property	\$ 4,663	\$ 4,986	\$ 64,691	\$ 70,463
Stewardship	\$ 173	\$ 108	\$ 840	\$ 1,082
Learning & Youth	\$ 397	\$ 325	\$ 2,312	\$ 5,750
Worship	\$ 308	\$ 492	\$ 1,937	\$ 4,917
Witness & Service	\$ -	\$ 17	\$ -	\$ 168
Sub-total General Expenses	\$ 31,929	\$ 33,912	\$ 340,655	\$ 362,216
<u>Mission Support</u>				
Synod Support	\$ 2,429	\$ 2,429	\$ 24,292	\$ 24,292
Missionaries	\$ 188	\$ 188	\$ 1,875	\$ 1,876
Iringa Church Tanzania	\$ 92	\$ 92	\$ 917	\$ 917
Sub-Total Mission Support	\$ 2,708	\$ 2,708	\$ 27,083	\$ 27,084
Total Regular Expenses	\$ 34,637	\$ 36,620	\$ 367,738	\$ 389,300
Total Net Income - August 2020	\$ 6,466	\$ (3,160)	\$ (41,118)	\$ (45,199)

October Income was \$7,644 over the October Budget
October Expenses was \$1,983 under the October Budget

YTD Income is \$17,481 under the YTD Budget
YTD Expense is \$21,562 under the YTD Budget

Net Income is \$6,466 for the month
Net Income is -\$41,118 for the year

Please consider online giving

YTD Phoenix Rent Received \$142,353
Mortgage Balance as of 10/31/2020 \$297,657

Respectfully Submitted,

Todd J. Fisk

Treasurer

The church office is closed for the 'Stay at Home' order. Staff are working remotely, and can be reached by email or voicemail. See the back page of the Tidings for staff contact information.

See our website www.trinitynorthbranch.org **to give electronically** on a one-time or recurring basis. Select the date and frequency (one time, weekly or monthly) and designate the amount and fund (Unified, Building, Viking Vittles, Memorial or Other.) Changes can easily be made at any time.

Offering can also be mailed to Trinity Lutheran Church, PO Box 447, North Branch, MN 55056.

How do I wish my church family "Merry Christmas..."

If that is a question you've been asking as you won't be able to see fellow members of your Trinity church family this holiday season at worship, we have a solution to that problem! We are inviting you to put on your Christmas "finery," step in front of your holiday nativity scene, Christmas tree, outdoor snow or lights, and then videotape a brief (30 second or less) holiday greeting. It doesn't have to be anything fancy or elaborate—just a quick "Merry Christmas from the ...". We will get a chance to see and hear each other after many months of being apart. These greetings will be shared through a "private" Trinity link. This link will be sent to our membership only. It won't be going out on the "worldwide web" like our Sunday morning worship services.



Here is the information you will need to submit your greeting:

Video Submission Email: trinitylutheranav@gmail.com

Microsoft One Drive Video Submission Link:

<https://1drv.ms/u/s!AtDnuu8RDLffanxe1KRVp0mxccY?e=YGUeEqf>

Google Drive Video Submission link:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1-pFBAQKc6WZpGgLOV3sNaZnr-lQZP-7n?usp=sharing>

Anyone with these links should be able to add files to the shared folders, they will need to sign into their Google or Microsoft account to add files.

These all go to Jaron who is the amazing A/V person who does all the taping and editing for our online worship services. He will ask/answer any questions you may have.

***These "greetings" should be submitted by Tuesday, December 15th, so that we can all get a link to see them on Sunday, December 20th.

***Jaron asks that you please film your greeting horizontally. It looks nicer and makes it easier for him to edit everyone's together.

Thank-you for considering being a part of our holiday greetings to one another in this way!

This year our Giving Tree will look a little different than we're used to, however we still want to support the foster children in our community as we do every year. We are working with Safe Haven Foster Shoppe again this year to distribute gifts to foster children in our community, and in place of tags Safe Haven has created a sign-up genius form for us. Go to <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60b0e4fa5a72fa5f49-giving> to purchase gifts for a child. There is a spot on the form to give a monetary donation as well. Gifts may be dropped off at Trinity, but please call ahead to confirm someone will be there when you drop off. Gifts may also be brought to Safe Haven Foster Shoppe, 12765 Lake Blvd in Lindstrom 9a-4p Wednesday and Thursdays. All donations must be dropped off by Thursday, December 10. Thank you!



"Music of the Season"

A special musical offering for our Sunday, December 20th, online worship service.

While we won't be gathering in person this Advent and Christmas season, there will still be beautiful holiday music to lift our spirits as we await the birth of the Christ child. A number of musicians from "near and far" have enthusiastically said "yes" to sharing their musical gifts during our online worship service on Sunday, December 20th. There will be soloists, families, parents and children and various instrumentalists all "bedecked" for the season from their homes. Your heart will be filled with joy after listening to the "Music of the Season!" Mark your calendars and don't miss it!

Online Worship Services

One of the ways we have tried to stay connected is by including videotapes of a variety of individuals and families from our congregation reading scripture, leading the Lord's Prayer or sharing special music. Getting to "see and hear" other members of our congregational family is a highlight of the online worship service for many.

Please let Deb know if you'd be willing to participate in this way in our online worship services. Email her at: daulich@trinitynorthbranch.org and she will put you in the schedule and help you make your recording happen. Most people record their videos in their own homes/yards using their cell phone. If that isn't possible, we can arrange for another way to enable you to participate.

Thank-you for your continued support of the worship life at Trinity Lutheran!



Memorial/Gratitude gift opportunity for Christmas

For many of you one of the traditions of the holiday season is to give a gift in memory of or in honor of those you love and appreciate. This is often in the form of a financial gift to our Christmas poinsettia garden in the sanctuary. While we will be having a few poinsettia plants in the sanctuary this year for our online worship tapings, we have the cost of those few covered. So, we are offering a different opportunity to remember loved ones this Christmas season and in doing so also help those who are in greatest need. We encourage you to give a gift towards ELCA Good Gifts. <https://goodgifts.elca.org> From backpacks of food for students, to pigs, goats, chicks, honeybees, PPE, water wells, etc. the reach of this program is personal and life-changing for many. You can go to the link to see the various "gift" options and cost. While you can certainly go to <https://goodgifts.elca.org> and make your donation/gift selection directly, you can also fill out the Trinity form below like you have done in the past when donating to the poinsettia garden and make out the check to Trinity Lutheran Church. We will then make out one check to ELCA Good Gifts from Trinity and purchase as many different options as we can to help people.

Just as in the past, we will list all of the names of those donating, and in whose memory/honor they do so, according to the sheets that are filled out and returned to the church office no later than **Tuesday, December 15th**. The church's mailing address is: Trinity Lutheran Church, P.O. Box 447, North Branch, MN 55056

Forms/names received by December 15th will be listed in the online worship bulletin for Christmas eve and in the January Tidings. (If you choose to make your gift directly with goodgifts.elca.org, we will not have the information to include in the bulletin and Tidings. Please let us know if that is what you have done, and in whose memory or honor you gave the gift by emailing the information to jmorgan@trinitynorthbranch.org, so we can include it in the bulletin and Tidings.)

Thank-you for your continued generosity and abundant flexibility in changing "traditions" to carry on the work of God's people in this time and place! Merry Christmas!

Christmas Memorial/Gratitude Form

If you would like to contribute toward ELCA Good Gifts in memory or in gratitude of a loved one, please complete this form and mail it to the church office at PO Box 447, North Branch, MN 55056. In order to be listed in the bulletin, please return no later than Tuesday, December 15. (Please print.)



In memory of _____

In gratitude for _____

From _____

TWIGS 87th Annual Advent Tea

Most of us have experienced a very different Thanksgiving this year and nothing has been traditional or "normal". In appreciation of traditions we have been asked to give up for the greater good, we will be taping a "pseudo" Advent Tea. It will be a bit later in the Advent season. I believe it should be on line by December 8th, and could be viewed multiple times. Jenni Thyng will be our program again this year. It is our prayer that you can gather with others in your family or your "bubble" to watch it while you have your own "tea party" to experience a sliver of our wonderful tradition and an infusion of hope in a topsy turvy Advent season. Many thanks to Deb Aulich and Jaron Roberts for helping make this happen!



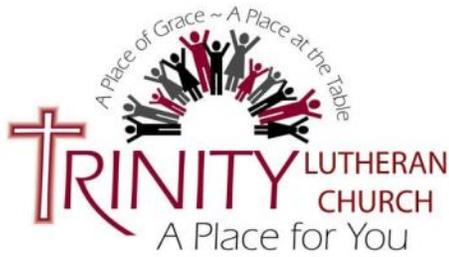
Worship
with us
from
HOME

Our weekly worship services are recorded in advance, and available at 6:00 am each Sunday on our facebook page and YouTube channel. They may be viewed any time, but if you'd like to watch "together" with others, tune in at 9:00 am!

Like Trinity Lutheran Church on facebook, and comment on our posts! Updates, Bible Study and weekly worship videos are posted frequently!



If you do not have email, and would like to receive a bulletin by mail each week, please call the office at 651-674-7047 and leave a message for Julie to add you to the mailing list.



Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
North Branch, MN
Permit 39

38460 Lincoln Trail
PO Box 447
North Branch, MN 55056

Return Service Requested

Mailing Label

December 2020

Partners in Ministry: The People of Trinity

Church Office: 651-674-7047 Church Fax: 651-674-7048
Church Office Hours: no scheduled hours at this time
Sunday Worship: available at 6 am Sunday mornings on our
facebook page and YouTube. See our website for links.
Church email: office@trinitynorthbranch.org
Church website: www.trinitynorthbranch.org
Pastor Jon Yurk Cell: 612-231-2111
pastor@trinitynorthbranch.org ext. 12
Sue Danielzuk, Church Administrator
sdanielzuk@trinitynorthbranch.org ext. 37
Marie Ray, Director of Youth & Family Ministries
mray@trinitynorthbranch.org ext. 13
Sarah Krosschell, Sunday School Coordinator
skrosschell@trinitynorthbranch.org
Deb Aulich, Director of Worship and Arts
daulich@trinitynorthbranch.org ext. 14
Julie Morgan, Church Office Manager
jmorgan@trinitynorthbranch.org ext. 10
Cheryl Immel: Financial Recorder
cimmel1@trinitynorthbranch.org
Tyler Olson: Sr. Choir Director
tolson@trinitynorthbranch.org ext. 15
Outreach Committee: Outreach@trinitynorthbranch.org

Roger Anderson, David Nelson, Rick Olson
Custodial & Cemetery Staff
Todd Fisk, Church Treasurer
Office Help: Judy Weiss 674-2710
Sharon Fairbanks 674-7311
Missionaries: Dr. Stephen Swanson family –
Tanzania
Our Sister Congregation in Tanzania—Pawaga

Church Council Members:
Ann Tanko, Council Chair
Linda Born, Council Vice-Chair
Dennis Aulich, Lucas Edson,
Kristen Johnson, Rosanne Johnson,
Erin Judson, Gary Porath, Vicky Trampe,

