

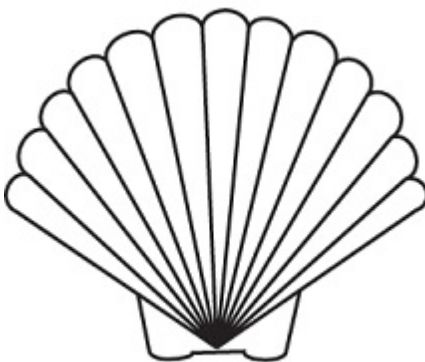


January 11 Baptism Celebration

Don't miss the baptism celebration in worship on Sunday, January 11, and Wednesday, January 14, when we look back at photos of the 45 people baptized at Trinity in 2014! We're going to read about Jesus' baptism and see how it has an important message for our lives today. Come to worship and hear again the news of Jesus' baptism and how it applies to your life!

Pastor Justin Lind-Ayres, Associate Campus Pastor at Augsburg College in Minneapolis, will be our guest preacher.

Justin is the grandson of Ann Ayres. Prior to being called to the college in 2013, he served in the Twin Cities and in Woodstock, Georgia. He holds a BA degree from Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, MN, a Master of Divinity from Luther Seminary, St. Paul; and DMin from Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia. Justin is married to a fellow Gustavus graduate, Melanie Lind-Ayres, who lives out her vocation as a pediatrician in St. Louis Park, and they are parents of Anya (5), Svea (3), and Soren (7 months).



Global Missions Building Benefits Kids

Trinity is dedicated to global missions that make tangible God's love in Christ. This month a team of men will be back at Jabneh Christian Academy in Jamaica January 29–February 3. They will finish a bath/shower facility begun last winter and start a kitchen facility.

The team welcomes your support through providing funds for purchasing toilets, urinals, concrete, blocks, doors, and lumber in Jamaica. Pick up a sponsorship slip in the Lobby of Trinity on Sundays and Wednesday evenings this month or give directly online at Trinity. Be sure to note "Jamaica project." The men pay their own expenses and also contribute toward materials, but your help is key. For more information about Trinity's Global Missions, visit trinity-ec.org or email kurt@trinity-ec.org

Annual Congregational Meeting of Trinity

Join the Annual Meeting of Trinity on Sunday, February 8, in the Worship Center at 10:45 A.M. This constitutionally directed event brings together all confirmed members to hear reports from the staff, review 2014, elect a new council, and adopt the 2015 budget. This meeting will introduce the Pastoral Succession Planning process being led by Dr. James Pence of Walkalong Consulting. The Annual Report will be available at trinity-ec.org by February 1. Please print a copy and bring it to the meeting. Limited printed copies will be available at the meeting.

What's Coming This Year?

Join Pastor Kurt on Sunday, January 18, at 9:05 A.M. and 10:35 A.M. in the Fireside Room as he shares news about what's coming in the life of our congregation in 2015. With Pastoral Succession Planning starting, his sabbatical, outlook for retirement, and more, he has lots to share and wants to hear your questions about what will transpire this year. Plan to join him on January 18.



Epiphany

Matthew 2:10–11 When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.



Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

As the Magi were led to the foot of the manger by the light of the star, I pray that the light of Epiphany strengthens your faith in the one who walks with us in the flesh, Jesus Christ, Immanuel.

Epiphany is a season that is centered on light. Light, as in the star that the wise men followed long ago. Light that we see in the form of God made flesh at Christmas. Epiphany literally means "manifestation," when the glory of God is revealed through the person of Jesus Christ to the nations. We remember the gifts the wise men bring to the Christ Child—gold, frankincense and myrrh—and the fact that these foreigners from far away enter the house to encounter and worship him. During the weeks after Epiphany, we focus on lessons in the Bible that deal with Jesus' expanding ministry in the world.

While the celebration of Epiphany is not as widely known as other Christian celebrations, in many parts of Europe this is a chance to gather and celebrate the presence of Christ in the home. In the home, Christ is met in our family and friends and in visitors and strangers. In the home, faith is shared, nurtured, and put into action. In the home Christ is welcome. Martin Luther wrote his small catechism to be used in the home, as a teaching and devotional tool for families. Our shared and mutual ministry together as the people of Trinity is strengthened through the faith that comes through the home and hospitality that you bring to our community.

An Eastern European tradition involves a blessing of the home on Epiphany. During this blessing, white chalk is used to write an inscription above the main door of the house or church. For this coming year, 2015, we would write 20 + CMB + 15. The numbers represent the year, and the letters CMB have two traditional meanings. The first tradition attributes these letters to the legendary names of the three magi: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar. Second, this represents an ancient Latin blessing, "Christe mansionem benedicat", which means "Christ, bless this house."

May Christ bless your homes this year of 2015! And may Christ's light shine in our shared endeavors and the work of the Gospel we will do together as the people of Trinity! Thank you for your partnership and the important work that we do in the home, in the church, and in our world.

(If any of you want some chalk for your own home blessings, I will have some available in my office as we begin the new year!)

In Christ, Pastor Brahm

Sabbatical Approved

The Trinity Council has approved a sabbatical proposal from Pastor Kurt Jacobson for spring 2015. Since developing a sabbatical policy in 1995, Trinity has offered full-time pastors a thirteen week period of release for renewal after six years of service.

Pastor Kurt's proposal has three foci and includes volunteering with Global Volunteers in an Appalachian coal-mining town and filling in at least one weekend for a pastor in need of respite. Then he'll travel for a period in Eastern Europe, visiting many sites significant in Lutheran history. During the final five weeks, he will document his work responsibilities and major historical events during his long tenure (since 1988) as a pastor of our congregation. These documents will contribute to the succession planning process and transition that will commence upon his retirement anticipated in later 2016.

The sabbatical policy requires that the pastor return and serve for at least one year. Pastor Kurt will be away April 7–July 6, 2015.

Thank You

The staff extends sincere thanks to all who remembered us during the celebration of Christmas. Your cards and delicious goodies were appreciated. Most of all, your thoughtfulness and support touched us richly. We are grateful to God for calling us to serve this congregation and to experience your friendship and goodwill in so many ways throughout the year. God's blessings to you!



January Spice Drive

Myrrh is mentioned in the New Testament as one of the three gifts the three wise men brought to Jesus when he was born (Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh). Myrrh is a spice that has many uses including use as a fragrance and as a flavoring in food products. One of the things rarely donated to food pantries is spices and food seasonings. To mark the arrival of the three wise men and highlight this need in the food pantry, Children's Ministries will be holding a spice drive during the month of January. See the display in the lobby for more information. Please bring UNOPENED spices and food seasonings to donate to the Trinity Food Pantry.



Worried About Taxes?

The US Congress continues to wrestle with taxation. But there's no need to wait to make wise plans for your estate. "Estate Planning Smarts" author Deborah Jacobs says, "Giving is the simplest estate-planning technique." Every dollar you give away to charity now saves on estate taxes and you'll get a break on your income tax while getting a sense of satisfaction." Consider the Trinity Endowment Trust Fund as you make or review your estate plan. Learn more about it at trinity-ec.org

Presentation on Holy Land Tour

Join Pastor Kurt in a presentation about the Holy Land on Tuesday, January 20, at 6:30 P.M. at Trinity. He'll introduce you to the amazing wonders of this fascinating locale and tell you about the October 20–November 2, 2015 tour of it created exclusively for Trinity members and friends. During this once-in-a-lifetime trip, we will see fascinating Biblical sites and experience first-hand how Lutherans across the world are contributing to a better life for many in East Jerusalem and the West Bank. A full tour brochure will be available at the meeting. If you'd like an advance copy, please contact Pastor Kurt at kurt@trinity-ec.org. Bring your friends and relatives with you on January 20. All are welcome to join this tour.

Financial Commitment for 2015

Giving is a sign of one's spiritual health and an avenue for growing in love for God. If you have yet to do so, please complete the 2015 financial commitment card. Please make a decision of what you'll give to God through our church in 2015, and return the card this week or complete it online at trinity-ec.org

If you're not a member, but your life is blessed by this congregation, then please join in this act of faithfulness, too! Thank you.

Make Devotions a 2015 Resolution

While you're making a new year resolution, do two more things! Pick up free devotional booklets in the information rack in the lobby and resolve to make devotions part of every day next year. There are two booklets, so take both! Large-print copies are available, too.

Then, be sure you've made a financial commitment to God. Offerings to Trinity are really offerings to God! Commitment cards are available in the information rack. You may complete the card online at trinity-ec.org Giving page.

Moving or Going South?

If you're heading south for the winter, please inform us of your new address. Let us know when you're leaving and how long you'll be away, and we'll be sure to get Trinity mail to you in a timely fashion. Whenever you change address, please let Trinity know! To change your address, contact Heather at heatherd@trinity-ec.org or 715.832.6601.

Usher in 2015

If you worship at 8:15 A.M., we really need YOU to join an usher team! Teams consist of 8–12 people and serve for a month of Sundays alternating throughout the year. No experience is necessary. Excellent team captains will orient you, and you'll help provide hospitality and service to your church. Sign-up at Clipboard Central to be on an 8:15 A.M. usher team for 2015, and we'll contact you with additional information.



2015 Pastoral Succession Planning

The Trinity Council has secured the services of Walkalong Consulting and Dr. James Pence to lead a Pastoral Succession Planning process this year. Last fall, when Pastor Kurt provided advance notice of his intention to retire within 18–24 months, the council explored options and decided upon this process which is an intentional approach to calling a lead pastor by creating a “strategic bridge” from the past to the future. The process takes into account the history, culture, morale, and governance factors having an impact on the call process and on the integration of the new lead pastor into the life of the congregation. The model of succession planning is a fully evidence-based discernment, a process of discovery and conversation that translates congregational opinions, core values, and priorities into a focused course of action. It puts the focus on health, asset building, transparency, and resilience.

With guidance from the Holy Spirit, the Council's vision for the succession process is a collaborative, inclusive one in which the congregation feels well-informed, confident, and secure that the mission and ministries of Trinity will continue with a new lead pastor whose gifts enliven, complement, challenge, and encourage our growth in faith, service, and outreach to the community.

At this time, the Council invites members of the congregation who possess skills and experience in leadership, management, HR, public speaking, working with large groups, leading focus groups, data collection and surveying, and marketing to apply for one of three teams that lead the process.

The Trinity website trinity-ec.org will have a Transitions page by January 5. There you will find:

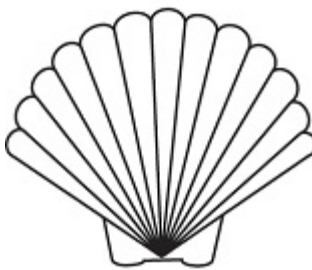
- An overview of the process and timeline
- Information about Dr. Jim Pence
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Application Form for the three key teams (Transition Team, Call Committee, Start-up Team). Application deadline: February 28, 2015. The Council will appoint all teams.

Baptizing Your Children

Our Lutheran understanding of God's grace in baptism is that it is made available to the tiniest children. So we unashamedly baptize babies and people of all ages, too. This year, Trinity offers a new class for parents planning on having a child baptized. The goal of this one session class is threefold:

- To answer practical questions about the baptism day.
- To provide a basic Lutheran understanding of baptism along with resources for fostering faith in the home.
- To help build relationships among parents within the Trinity community.

It is strongly encouraged that parents take this class before their child's baptism. You are even welcome to attend a baptism class before your child is born. The next opportunity for this class is coming up Monday, February 2, from 6:00–7:30 P.M. The upcoming Sundays available for baptism are: January 11, 25; February 8, 22. Contact the church office at 715.832.6601 or sign up for the class and/or baptismal date via Trinity's website: <http://www.trinity-ec.org/baptism.phtml>



Winter Parking Etiquette

As winter continues, parking around Trinity is affected by snowbanks. When you are parking on the residential streets, please be careful to park four feet away from neighbors' driveways. Periodically neighbors call Trinity with concerns about vehicles restricting visibility and driveway access. Please be kind and park appropriately.

We Shared Abundantly This Christmas

Thanks to all who shared the spirit of generosity and love this Christmas. Because of your generosity, we were able to distribute toys, jackets, snowpants, clothing, household products, and food to 29 families in the community. This annual Christmas Sharing Project addresses needs of families with school-age children. Thank you to all who helped by purchasing gifts and food, by donating money, and by sorting and delivering the items to the families. The quantity of care and the expression of love that goes out into our community and the lives of these families by this sharing is unbounded. Trinity makes a difference in people's lives, and you have a part in that mission. Thank you for your generosity.

Friendship Group

The January Friendship Group meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 14, at 10:00 A.M.



Classes for Adults

Embracing Spiritual Awakening

The popular Embracing series continues in January with a five-session study featuring Diana Butler Bass. Join the class to explore what Christianity may look like "beyond religion and beyond the church." Diana is a best-selling author, speaker, scholar, and "cultural observer" and, in this engaging and provocative study, she leads a small group of diverse adults, young adults, and youth in a fascinating discussion of how, both culturally and spiritually, we are in the midst of another of history's "great awakenings." The class begins on Thursday, January 15, at 9:30 A.M., and will run for five weeks. The cost is \$15. To register, sign up at Clipboard Central in the lobby or online (trinity-ec.org) by January 11. For more information, contact Pastor Kurt at kurt@trinity-ec.org



The Greatest Story

Here at the dawn of 2015, you are invited to an inspiring class titled: "The Greatest Story-Part II." Pastor Jim led a six week class titled "The Greatest Story" last Fall with participants learning about highlights of the Old Testament. This second installment of "The Greatest Story" will delve into the intricacies of the New Testament while showing us how God's word continues to guide our living. The class will meet on Monday mornings from 10:00 A.M.–11:15 A.M.

Participant guides are \$15 and can be paid for in the office before the first class session. For those who attended "The Greatest Story—Old Testament," a new participant guide is not needed. Register at Clipboard Central in the church lobby or online via our website (trinity-ec.org). Deadline to register is Friday, January 23. For more information, contact Pastor Jim at jim@trinity-ec.org

Revelation Bible Study During Lent

Join Pastor Brahm for a study of Revelation during the Lenten Season. We will be using a Bible study written by Dr. Barbara Rossing titled "Journeys Through Revelation: Apocalyptic Hope for Today." Do you think Revelation is all about doom and gloom and the rapture? Think again! Dr. Rossing's study will lead us to see Revelation as a vision of God's healing love for the world (and debunk the relatively new construct that is the rapture). Revelation is a book about hope that we receive in Jesus Christ and has beautiful imagery and songs that have formed Christian worship throughout the centuries.

Dr. Rossing is a professor of New Testament at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago and was also Pastor Brahm's advisor during seminary. We will be meeting Thursday Evenings (February 19, 26 and March 5, 12, 19) at 6:00 P.M. The cost is \$9.00. To register, sign up at Clipboard Central in the lobby or online at trinity-ec.org For more information, contact Pastor Brahm at brahm@trinity-ec.org

New Series for Men: "Game Plan"

The Men of Faith invites all men to attend a new series beginning January 10 titled "Game Plan." This ministry meets on Saturday mornings at Trinity from 8:00 A.M.–9:00 A.M. Discovering God's plan for our lives can be frustrating. Some have described it as the most challenging experience of the Christian life. But it shouldn't be. It doesn't have to be. After all, God is the preeminent communicator. God created communication. And as your heavenly Father, God wants you to know his will for your life. Weekly themes include: *The Fundamentals of the Game*, *Calling An Audible*, *The Play Book*, *Traded*, *A Word from the Coach*, and *4th Quarter*. Each session will include a 20 minute DVD presentation followed by group discussion. Come to discover and embrace God's game plan for your life in this six-part series led by Pastor Jim. Be present as your schedule permits; there's no expectation to be present every week. For more information, contact Pastor Jim at jim@trinity-ec.org



Trinity Page Turners Book Club

The Book Club meets on Tuesday, January 20, at 6:30 P.M. to discuss *"The Interestings"* by Meg Wolitzer.

The summer that Nixon resigns, six teenagers at a summer camp for the arts become inseparable. Decades later the bond remains powerful, but so much else has changed. In *The Interestings*, Wolitzer follows these characters from the height of youth through middle age, as their talents, fortunes, and degrees of satisfaction diverge.

Wide in scope, ambitious, and populated by complex characters who come together and apart in a changing New York City, *The Interestings* explores the meaning of talent; the nature of envy; the roles of class, art, money, and power; and how all of it can shift and tilt precipitously over the course of a friendship and a life.

There are no special expectations to participate in this group. You should feel free to come whether you've finished the book or not. You can RSVP online at trinity-ec.org or sign-up at Clipboard Central. For more information, email Cindy Beck at cindy@trinity-ec.org



New Book in the Trinity Library!

The following book has just been added to the library! Read the true story of *Angels In The Fire* by Dann Stadler. It tells about a young couple from Wisconsin on vacation in Florida. They were hit head on by a drunken driver. They were trapped in a burning car, but saved from certain death. Their life changed after this tragic accident. The Stadlers struggled through grueling recoveries and heartbreaking setbacks. The miracles and divine encounters continued in their lives for many years. If you are facing hard times, if you need assurance that God still ministers through his angels, let this true story provide the hope and encouragement you need.

Thank You!

Thank you to everyone who has given memorials to the church library. The monies are used to keep our library current. Over 100 books are checked out every month. Your Library Committee also appreciates suggestions on new books that someone might be interested in reading. Thank you again for your gifts.

Ten Benefits of Reading Why You Should Read Every Day

When was the last time you read a book or a substantial magazine article? Do your daily reading habits center around tweets, Facebook updates, or the directions on your instant oatmeal packet? If you're one of countless people who don't make a habit of reading regularly, you might be missing out. Reading has a significant number of benefits including:

1. Mental Stimulation, 2. Stress Reduction, 3. Knowledge, 4. Vocabulary Expansion, 5. Memory Improvement, 6. Stronger Analytical Thinking Skills, 7. Improved Focus and Concentration, 8. Better Writing Skills, 9. Tranquility, and 10. Free Entertainment.

Circle Listings

DEBORAH

Thursday, January 15, 9:30 A.M.
Trinity
Hostess: Nancee Burbank
Leader: Carol Bartingale

DORCAS

Wednesday, January 21, 1:00 P.M.
Hostess: Dorothy Miller
Leader: Group

MARTHA/MARY

Tuesday, January 20, 7:00 P.M.
Trinity
Hostess: Marilyn Johnson
Leader: Kathy Gjesfjeld

MIRIAM

Wednesday, January 21, 9:30 A.M.
Trinity
Hostess: Sheila Running
Leader: Group

RUTH

Wednesday, 1:30 P.M.
Hostess:
Leader:

Memorials & Gifts

MEMORIAL FUND

- **In memory of Wallace Wheeler:**
Randy & Paula Sparling, Tim & Amy Benedict
- **In memory of Grant Larson:**
Clifford & Jean Christenson
- **In memory of Don Johnson:** Paul & Ann Ganrud

FOOD PANTRY FUND

- **In memory of Mildred McMillan:**
Shirley Freeberg
- **In memory of Laurence Cook:**
Hazel Cook

CHILDREN'S BIBLE FUND

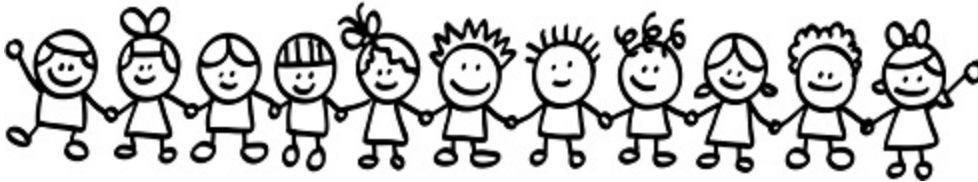
- **In memory of Kjerstie Pressler:**
Mike & Dori Ritland

LIBRARY FUND

- **In memory of Grant Larson:** Ann Johnson



Children's Ministries



Noah's Ark News

Jesus is the Reason for the Season! Happy 2015 to you all.

We are in the 12 days of Christmas! As those "days" come to an end, we give thanks for the blessings of Christmas and the newness of the New Year. God's amazing love abounds, and we begin again and again! Noah's Ark will celebrate!

Noah's Ark looks to the New Year by having a 2015–2016 Open House on Sunday, January 11, at 10:30 A.M. and Monday, January 12, at 6:00 P.M. We welcome families to join the Noah's Ark teaching staff and Preschool Committee in the Noah's Ark classroom for a tour, question and answer time, and a chance to find out about our wonderful program for children 3–6 years old.

We are also launching the NEW Noah's Ark pages at www.trinity-ec.org by January 1. Please check out our website and notice the great work that Heather Day has completed for us. We are thankful to all the families who approved the use of special photos that will enhance the site. It's full of information, but if you notice information not there, please let us know.

January will be the kick-off for outside winter play, our annual Parent Activity Days, some ice "construction" activities, and lots more winter fun! Noah's Ark is a great place to be! Keep us in your prayers as registration for the new year begins in early February. Watch for the new 2015–2016 brochures.

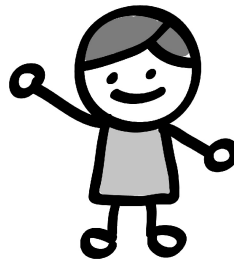
Save the date: Tuesday, February 10, from 4:00–7:00 P.M. This will be the 20th Annual Noah's Ark Pancake Supper. It's a week earlier than usual because of President's Day break. Ash Wednesday is February 18.

For More Information

For more information on any of our Children's Ministry programming, please check out the Trinity Website, www.trinity-ec.org For information about school year Day Camps, contact Julie Lutteke at 715.832.6601 x 218 or julie@trinity-ec.org For information about Sunday School, T.G.I.F., and special events, contact Kristy Casto at 715.832.6601 x 207 or kristy@trinity-ec.org

Reminder

- Sunday School resumes January 4, 2015
- T.G.I.F. and Children's Choirs resumes January 7, 2015



Open Gym Tuesdays

Beginning Tuesday, January 6, from 10:00–11:30 A.M., the Trinity Room will be open for parents/grandparents and their young children (toddlers–preschool) to come in and use our equipment in a large safe space. Marlee Knickerbocker will supervise the area and offer story time and snack during the last half hour. There is a \$3 charge per session, or you may purchase a 5 pass punch card for \$12.50 or a 10 pass punch card for \$25. For children of the same family, the cost is \$5 for two kids and \$7 for three. No registration is required; members, friends of members and non-members are welcome to attend.

Job Openings

Director of Children's Ministries

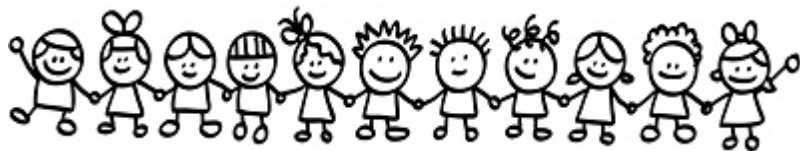
At this time, we are actively seeking applicants for Director of Children's Ministries, and a full description of the position is available at trinity-ec.org. For more information about this ministry position, please contact Pastor Sarah Semmler Smith at sarah@trinity-ec.org

Wednesday Evening Kitchen/M Meal Coordinator

The Kitchen/M Meal Coordinator is responsible for providing dinner service for TGIF and children's choir participants and their adult and youth leaders on Wednesday evenings. This position requires 16–20 hours of work per week from September through April and will begin during the 2015–16 school year. If interested in learning more or to apply for this position, please contact Kristy Casto, Director of Children's Ministries, at 715.832.6601 ext. 207 or kristy@trinity-ec.org



Winter/Spring Day Camps



There are still a few openings in some of our Day Camps that start the first week of January and run through Memorial Day. You can read more about each class online at trinity-ec.org under the Grow tab. To register, call Julie Lutteke at 715.832.6601 x218.

- **NEW CLASS Monday Great Pretenders**—Join an early literacy class for storytelling and drama. This class is for children who turn four by 8.31.2015. The class will run from 12:30–2:30 P.M. on Mondays starting January 5, and the cost is \$230.
- **Music and Movement Mondays**—For children eighteen months–three years of age. This class meets from 9:05–9:50 A.M. or 10:00–10:50 A.M. starting January 5, and the cost is \$105.
- **Tuesday Great Pretenders**—For children age four by 12.31.2014. This class meets from 1:00–3:00 P.M. starting January 6, and the cost is \$255.
- **Come and Play Wednesdays**—For children who turn three by 8.31.2015. This class meets from 12:15–2:15 P.M. starting January 7, and the cost is \$255.
- **Thrilling Thursdays**—For children who turn four by 12.31.2014. This class meets on Thursdays from 9:00–11:00 A.M. or 1:00–3:00 P.M. starting January 8, and the cost is \$255.
- **Friday Friends**—For children who turn three by 2.28.2015. This class meets on Fridays from 9:00–11:15 A.M. starting January 9, and the cost is \$245.

Advent Conspiracy Sunday School Mission Project

As part of the Advent Conspiracy Series in November, Trinity Sunday School children collected money for the ECLA Good Gifts Water Project. As of December 15, \$806.02 has been collected. These monies will go toward providing clean water for drinking and hygiene as well, as for agricultural purposes, around the world. Thank you to our Sunday School children and everyone who has participated in collecting money for this effort.



A Heartfelt Thank You!

The Trinity Children's Ministries Team wishes to extend a huge "thank you" to the many, many people involved in Children's Ministries events and projects this Advent season.

Thank you to everyone who led an activity table and helped with the Advent Workshop on November 30. Approximately 250 people were in attendance for

this special family event.

Thank you to everyone involved with the Angel Breakfast, held on December 6, for children in preschool and kindergarten—from those helping to set up the Trinity Room to those who cooked a delicious breakfast for the children and their special adult guest. A special thank you to our youth who helped serve food and lead activities: Nathan & Olivia Black, Lexi Adkins, Adam Webb, Allison Ezell, Lexi Hansen, Molly Larson, Julia Nelson, Ryan Nelson, Maddy Hager, and Emma Cruciani. A special thank you to Elayne Peterson for the use of her angel collection to decorate the breakfast tables and to Juli Ezell for her beautiful angel cut-out centerpieces. Another special thank you to Alicia Strozinsky for joining us as the Christmas Angel this year.

Thank you to everyone who participated in this year's Christmas Sharing Project which served 29 families in our community: all those Sunday School, Noah's Ark, and TGIF children who brought food for the Wall of Food; those who purchased gifts for families; 6th grade TGIF students, teachers, and parents who shopped for special request toiletries for families as well as fresh fruits and vegetables; Noah's Ark families who contributed to the hat, mitten, and sleeper tree; those who came the day before delivery to sort food and packages and to set up the worship center; those who delivered the packages to families; those from the community who helped to coordinate the identification of families to include in the project; and everyone who helped in countless additional ways to support this important project.

Children's Ministries at Trinity is blessed with so many supportive and dedicated individuals and families. Thank you for Serving in Christ's Love and Sharing the Good News!



Youth Ministries

High School Book Study

High school students are invited to join a three-session book study about the amazing story of Bethany Hamilton. Learn how Bethany, a teenage surfer, who lost her arm in a shark attack but never lost her faith and of her triumphant return to competitive surfing. We meet Wednesday evenings from 7:15–8:30 P.M. on January 7, January 21, and February 4. Contact Cassie Brenden at cassie@trinity-ec.org if you would like to join.



Luther Park Recharge

The Luther Park Recharge, special music with 513FREE, is scheduled for the weekend of January 9–10. Club 78 and Club 9 students are encouraged to come away to Luther Park and engage in Holy Play and RECHARGE their faith through music, workshops, and games. Registration materials and more information are available online at lutherpark.org and at the Tool Bench.

Donuts Fundraiser

Sign up at the Tool Bench to participate in the Donut Fundraiser on Sunday mornings. Youth Ministry serves donuts on Sunday mornings from January through May. This fundraiser allows youth to earn money for their student account. These funds are then available to put towards Trinity sponsored events, retreats, and summer trips.

New Driver Recognition

On Wednesday, January 14, students who are eligible to earn a driver's license in 2015 will be recognized during the Wednesday Evening Worship Service. Students and Parents will receive an AAA Parent-Teen Driving Agreement. AAA has developed this agreement to help families work together to navigate the learning process. Students will also receive a key chain as a gift from the Parish Nurse and the Youth Ministry Team.



Community Table

Food is a basic need of humankind, and it is our privilege to serve those who go without! We will be serving a meal to those in our community at the Community Table on Friday, January 30, from 4:30–7:00 P.M. Both students and parents are needed to provide this service to the community. A sign-up sheet is available at the Tool Bench.

Social Concerns

Homeless Ministry Team: An Invitation

Homelessness is a reality that many do not see in their daily lives, but it is present throughout Eau Claire. There is a team of community leaders whose shared mission is to provide viable housing options for those who are homeless while addressing their basic needs. This team is called PORCH (Progressive OutReach with our Community's Homeless). In addition, Plymouth Street Ministry, led by Mike Henry in conjunction with Plymouth United Church of Christ, gathers volunteers to provide basic essentials for those who are homeless and to promote awareness of the needs of many in our community.

Pastor Jim invites you to be part of a new "Homeless Ministry Team" here at Trinity. This team's mission is to provide support for our homeless ministries (Sojourner House, Beacon House) and lead homeless ministry efforts at Trinity that partner with community organizations. If you would be interested in learning more, please contact Pastor Jim at jim@trinity-ec.org. A sign-up sheet for this ministry will be at Clipboard Central in our lobby on Sundays in January.



Gifts That Give Blesses Many!

Thank you to the many people who gave unique gifts that blessed their loved ones and ministries that serve many through our annual "Gifts That Give!" Funds were given to these following ministries: Soles for Special Souls, the Community Table, Friends of Flynn and Mission Jamaica. With one week remaining until Christmas, the dollars given to these ministries has collectively totaled \$1,490!

Adults Needed to help at the Community Table

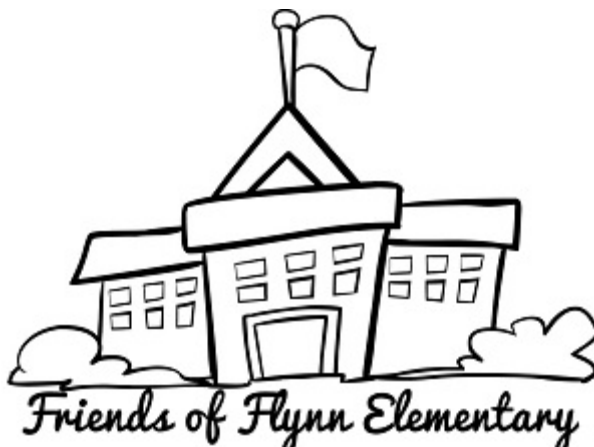
Help serve at The Community Table. We will be serving a meal to those in our community at the Community Table on Friday, January 30, from 4:30–7:00 P.M. Both students and parents are needed to provide this service to the community. A sign-up sheet is available at Clipboard Central.

Friends of Flynn

With your support, Trinity has continued to support the students and teachers at Flynn Elementary. Here are a few of the things we accomplished in 2014:

- Healthy snacks were provided to students twice a week in the spring and fall.
- Weekend meals were delivered each Friday through our partnership with Feed My People.
- School supplies were provided in the fall and throughout the year as needed.
- Numerous pairs of athletic shoes were donated to the school for children to borrow so that they may participate in physical education classes.
- Clothing items including socks, underwear, and sweatpants were donated for students in need of these items.
- Special treats were delivered to the Flynn teachers and staff to thank them for their commitment to the Flynn students.
- Children were allowed to pick out a book to keep before summer break and Christmas break.
- Lots and lots of Campbells® soup labels, General Mills® box tops, milk caps, and pull tabs off soda cans were given to the school. (We will continue to collect these items!)

Thank you for your support of this partnership. We look forward to new, exciting ways to support the students and teachers at Flynn School in 2015.



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Trinity on Facebook

Trinity's Facebook page is an active source of information and inspiration for your faith development. Be sure to "Like" Trinity soon and begin enjoying the benefits of inspiration and news.

Religious Commitment in America

The number of Americans who currently say religion is very important in their lives (58%) has gone down only 3% in five years. The percentage of Americans who say that prayer is an important part of their daily life is 76% and unchanged in the past 25 years.

There is evidence of a gradual decline in religious commitment. In 2003, one-quarter of American adults indicated they seldom or never attend religious services. By 2012, that number had ticked up 4 points to 29%. PewForum.org



Health Ministries

Happy New Year!

It is a New Year and new beginnings; a time to reflect on how we can improve our lives and what we are going to do better this year than last.

What is your New Year's resolution? Or have you just given up because you never follow through any way! Here are a few tips on how to set goals and actually reach them. These recommendations are called SMART goals.

S Specific: Be specific in what you want to do. A specific goal has a much greater chance of being accomplished than a general goal. To set a specific goal you must answer the six "W" questions:

- Who: Who is involved?
- What: What do I want to accomplish?
- Where: Identify a location.
- When: Establish a time frame.
- Which: Identify requirements and constraints.
- Why: Specific reasons, purpose, or benefits of accomplishing the goal.

EXAMPLE: A general goal would be "Get in shape." But a specific goal would say, "Join a health club and work out three days a week."

M Measurable: Establish concrete criteria for measuring progress toward the attainment of each goal you set.

When you measure your progress, you stay on track, reach your target dates, and experience the exhilaration of achievement that spurs you on to continued effort required to reach your goal. To determine if your goal is measurable, ask questions such as:

- How much?
- How many?
- How will I know when it is accomplished?

EXAMPLE: I will lose five pounds by January 31 by walking 15 minutes every day.

A Attainable: When you identify goals that are most important to you, you begin to figure out ways you can make them come true. You develop the attitudes, abilities, skills, and financial capacity to reach them. You begin seeing previously overlooked opportunities to bring yourself closer to the achievement of your goals.

You can attain most any goal you set when you plan your steps wisely and establish a time frame that allows you to carry out those steps. Goals that may have seemed far away and out of reach eventually move closer and become attainable, not because your goals shrink, but because you grow and expand to match them. When you list your goals, you build your self-image. You see yourself as worthy of these goals and develop the traits and personality that allow you to possess them.

Setting a goal of losing 30 pounds in one month is probably not attainable. Losing five pounds is.

R Realistic: To be realistic, a goal must represent an objective toward which you are both willing and able to work. A goal can be both high and realistic; you are the only one who can decide just how high your goal should be. But be sure that every goal represents substantial progress.

A high goal is frequently easier to reach than a low one because a low goal exerts low motivational force. Some of the hardest jobs you ever accomplish actually seem easy simply because they are a labor of love.

Setting a goal of walking 30 minutes five days per week when you haven't walked for a year is not realistic. Setting a goal of walking 10 minutes three days per week is.

T Timely: A goal should be grounded within a time frame.

With no time frame tied to it, there's no sense of urgency. If you want to lose 10 lbs, when do you want to lose it by? "Someday" won't work. But if you anchor it within a timeframe, "by May 1st," then you've set your unconscious mind into motion to begin working on the goal.

Your goal is probably realistic if you truly believe that it can be accomplished. Additional ways to know if your goal is realistic is to determine if you have accomplished anything similar in the past or ask yourself what conditions would have to exist to accomplish this goal.

When you reach the end of your time frame, then re-evaluate how you have done. What worked; what didn't. Then reset your goals to achieve the success you are looking for.

Vicki Dueringer
Parish Nurse
Health Ministries

"Serving in Christ's Love and Sharing the Good News"

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Jeanne Cooper—God's Little Singers	
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World Missions

Maranatha Church in Kingston, Jamaica
Blantyre Lutheran Parish in Malawi, Africa
Jacqueline & Patrick Bencke, Japan

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- Please submit all articles for the Tidings electronically in MS Word, Corel WP format, or in the body of an email. Submit to: cindy@trinity-ec.org
 - All submissions must be your own work. Any copyrighted material (code, images, or otherwise) must include written permission from the original source.
 - Deadline for the February Newsletter is January 21.