

# Trinity News

## December 2020

Office: 842-6981

Email: office@trinitybenson.org

Web Page:

trinitybenson.org

Pastor:

Art Wiese

Secretary:

Pam Anderson

Council President

Brian McNeill

Custodians:

Karen Nelson

## Mission

### Statement

**Grow Faith,  
Serve God,  
Love Others**



## Inside this issue:

Pastor Column	1
Council Minutes	2
Financial Report	3
Treasurers Report	4
Attendance	5
Statistical change	5
Shout Out	5
Calendar	6
Narrative Lectionary	7
Library Notes	7
Pastor's continued	8
Minutes continued	8
ROCK	9
Sunshine shout out	9
Thank You Notes	9
Birthdays	9

## Dear People of Trinity,

I don't want to get ahead of myself, but I've been thinking a lot about Christmas. I know, we haven't had Thanksgiving yet; but, in this pandemic, I've learned to work further out, so that we can get every-thing prepared in time for all our worship contributors to do their parts. My confirmation students complained when we began classes with the story of Christmas back in October. We haven't had Halloween yet, they said, but that had its reasons as well. Now, I'm thinking ahead.

There is a Christmas carol that we don't sing very much, maybe hardly ever, but it strikes me as particularly relevant for this year. It begins, "'Twas in the moon of wintertime When all the birds had fled, That God, the Lord of all the earth, Sent angel choirs instead..." 'Twas in the moon of wintertime...the time when the earth sleeps, when the trees are bare, when the plants are dormant, when many creatures are absent from the scene and the waters of our lakes freeze over. It is a bleak landscape, that the hymn sets before us. The second verse continues, "The earliest moon of wintertime is no so round and fair..." Everything is distorted, out of shape, not what we hoped it might be.

Is there any better image for us of what this year is like? Covid-19 has put a crimp in everything. In just these past few days, our church council has voted to move back to meeting for worship "online only." We are being urged to stay home for Thanksgiving. I am anticipating the same for Christmas. Many voices from the medical community have spoken up loudly to plead with us to do everything we can to stop the spread of the coronavirus, lest we overwhelm our healthcare facilities and deplete their ability to care for patients. It is a bleak time in our community for sure.

And so, I think it appropriate that we begin the Advent season with the age-honored and now, more relevant than ever, plea from the hymn "Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel." The fourth verse of this musical prayer implores, "Oh, come, blest Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits

...Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight." Will there be cheer in these days of Covid-19? Measured by our past, it may seem difficult. I think about the great joy of leading our Christmas Eve worship last year, the pews filled almost to capacity and 230 people holding lit candles and singing "Silent Night." That won't happen this year.

But that doesn't mean we can't find joy and meaning in what we will do this year. Yesterday, I attended a continuing education event called "Christ/Christmas/Covid." In one of the segments, children were asked what they thought would be good about this year's Christmas celebration. Their comments ranged from the toys they hoped to get from the food and family time they would enjoy. Two of their comments stood out in my mind. 1) "We won't have to get dressed up and go to church for worship. We can stay home and wear our pajamas" [or other comfortable clothing], and 2) "We'll still be able to celebrate that Jesus has come to be with us." Maybe it will even mean more, when we realize that stripping away all the traditions to which we have grown accustomed moves us closer to what the hymnwriter had in mind when he composed "The Hills are Bare at Bethlehem," which continues with the words "no future for the world they show." As a people of faith, we have been here before.

Continued on page 8

# Trinity Lutheran Church Council Minutes November 4, 2020

## *Grow Faith, Serve God, Love Others*

**Welcome** by President Brian McNeill at 7:01 pm. Members present via Zoom were Brian McNeill, Jason Anderson, Diane Schuerman, Adam Kolander, Laura Hulterstrum, Jodee Erickson, Toni Lindstrom, and Becky Woitte. Also present were Pastor Art and Treasurer Bill Hoberg. Absent was Jason Heinzig due to a work conflict.

**Devotions.** We watched a video on the change in how the SW MN Synod election for a new bishop will be done this year. What vision do we have for the future of the SW MN Synod and for our church?

**Pastor's Report.** Pastor Art made 33 parish visits by phone, computer or in-person plus had many text messages and email conversations. There were no hospital visits, teaching sessions, counseling sessions, funerals, weddings, or baptisms. Pastor Art led five Sunday worship services in person and by Zoom with all five being posted on Facebook and recorded for radio broadcast. Our radio broadcasts are funded through January 24, 2021. Pastor Art had a half day of continuing education. He took a half day of vacation and no sick leave. Attendance for in-person worship averaged 10-12, estimate about 40 attending by Zoom, and eight to 10 for drive-through communion after services. There are two scheduled baptisms (November 8 and December 6). Confirmation is scheduled for November 22 for three confirmands who have been waiting since last May. There will be an informational meeting on November 10 from 7 to 8 pm on the new process in place for electing the next bishop of the SW MN Synod. In-person confirmation has been going well. The youth wear their masks and social distance.

**Additions to the Agenda.** None  
**Reports:**

**Secretary Becky Woitte.** The September 30 minutes were reviewed and approved by email.

**Financial Secretary Pam Anderson.** Motion by Laura to approve with a second by Toni. Motion carried.

**Treasurer Bill Hoberg.** Envelope giving was \$9,001.80; total giving with transfers was \$12,696.47. Total expenses were \$14,461.74. The balance on hand is \$20,148.39. Motion by Diane to approve with a second by Adam. Motion carried.

**Committee Reports:**

**Board of Education and Youth.** The committee agreed that we are not ready for in-person Sunday School and will continue emailing the lessons through December. The committee will revisit this in January. The lessons will also be available for members of the congregation who request them. ROCK had 10 students who attended. Sunday School Superintendent Jamie Moe announced in the last SS email that there will not be a Sunday School Christmas program this year.

**Outreach and Community Relations/B.A.C.K. Program.** Did not meet.

**Property and Grounds.** The parsonage furnace needed service. Cost was \$59. Thank you to Darrell and Carol Davidson who repaired the south steel door so that it opens and closes properly. The bell part on one of our candle extinguishers broke off. We will use the other ones we have. There is tree trimming that needs to be done at the parsonage. One broken branch is hanging over the driveway. Brian gave Jason additional ideas for the toolbox.

**Stewardship and Finance.** The

committee received a request from Green Lake Lutheran Ministries for a donation. In their letter, they noted that we had already given them \$500 this year. The Bible camps have operated with no income for this year. Tabled until next month.

We also received a request from Southwestern MN Synod for Gifts of Grace; no specific dollar amount was requested. The request letter stated that donations will enable congregations to be well positioned to address the changing needs of ministry in our area. The Gifts of Grace is for debt reduction for pastors new to ministry; to increase the retirement funds for pastors who had not kept up with pension payments; and, for emergency medical expenses for pastors who were hit with unforeseen medical expenses. The Lily Foundation gives \$250,000 to the Gifts of Grace and the Synod needs to match it. Tabled until next month.

**Worship and Music.** The committee met on October 1 and 29. The committee suggested that Pam develop a master copy of the copyright information for all hymns to save her the time of looking up the same hymns. We need volunteers for lector, Zoom greeters, camera operators, and lectors every Sunday. The committee will purchase a booster for internet service in the balcony and front of the church. Shelly and Marlene will help Pam develop a template for sending out weekly emails. The committee discussed weekly drive-by communion during cold weather and suggested Pastor Art cutback on the number of Sundays it is offered. The committee recommended minimal decorations for Thanksgiving and only the Advent wreath and nativity for Christmas

Continued page 8



## Income & Expense- Budget vs. Actual

### January through October 2020

	Jan - Oct 20	Budget	% of Budget
<b>Income</b>			
Offering	101,243.30	161,000.00	62.9%
Transfers	19,544.42		
Other	23,509.45		
<b>Total Income</b>	<u>144,297.17</u>	<u>161,000.00</u>	<u>89.6%</u>
<b>Expense</b>			
<b>Regular Expenses</b>			
<b>Payroll Expenses</b>			
Organist	3,413.85	4,065.00	84.0%
Secretary	8,570.02	10,600.00	80.8%
Custodian	1,611.43	5,128.00	31.4%
Payroll Taxes Church	975.07	1,514.00	64.4%
Pastor	52,795.00	63,354.00	83.3%
Mileage	232.31	2,400.00	9.7%
Pension and Related	17,116.16	20,717.00	82.6%
Health Savings Account	1,000.00	1,200.00	83.3%
Pulpit Supply	160.00	480.00	33.3%
Continuing Education	560.00	750.00	74.7%
<b>Total Payroll Expenses</b>	<u>86,433.84</u>	<u>110,208.00</u>	<u>78.4%</u>
<b>Utilities</b>			
Light & Water Parsonage	1,013.98	1,300.00	78.0%
Light & Water Church	2,822.24	5,000.00	56.4%
Telephone Church	1,474.06	1,600.00	92.1%
Fuel Parsonage	412.44	750.00	55.0%
Fuel Church	2,515.04	4,500.00	55.9%
Garbage	534.66	800.00	66.8%
<b>Total Utilities</b>	<u>8,772.42</u>	<u>13,950.00</u>	<u>62.9%</u>
<b>Other Expenses</b>			
Conference Dues & Registration	130.00	1,100.00	11.8%
Mowing and Related	1,440.00	1,650.00	87.3%
Snow Removal and Related	625.00	1,750.00	35.7%
<b>Committment</b>			
Bible Camp	500.00	500.00	100.0%
Committment - Other	8,500.00	8,500.00	100.0%
<b>Total Committment</b>	<u>9,000.00</u>	<u>9,000.00</u>	<u>100.0%</u>
Library	180.67	300.00	60.2%
Insurance	5,444.00	5,500.00	99.0%
Workmans Comp Insurance	0.00	1,100.00	0.0%
Church Supplies	4,218.26	7,000.00	60.3%
Sunday School Supplies	0.00	1,800.00	0.0%
Music	0.00	900.00	0.0%
Postage	645.00	950.00	67.9%
Maintenance	8,508.03	6,000.00	141.8%
R.O.C.K. Ministries	47.29	200.00	23.6%
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>	<u>30,238.25</u>	<u>37,250.00</u>	<u>81.2%</u>
<b>Total Regular Expenses</b>	<u>125,444.51</u>	<u>161,408.00</u>	<u>77.7%</u>
<b>Misc Exp (Transfers)</b>			
TEAM PROMISE	3,186.40		
Video System	2,463.42		
Healing Garden	89.56		
Hunger	920.00		
Food Shelf	325.00		
Missions	1,700.00		
Transfer for Flowers	283.70		
Misc	13,593.75		
<b>Total Misc Exp (Transfers)</b>	<u>22,561.83</u>		
<b>Total Expense</b>	<u>148,006.34</u>	<u>161,408.00</u>	<u>91.7%</u>
<b>Net Income</b>	<u><u>-3,709.17</u></u>	<u><u>-408.00</u></u>	<u><u>909.1%</u></u>

Balance 10-31-2020 \$20,148.39

ZOOM ATTENDANCE						
Date	In Person Att	Log in comm	Possible People (in person/drive in)			Communion
10/25	11	8	40		4	12
11/01	13	11	27	54	18	29
11/08	32	21	26		5	26
11/15	11	11	16	27	9	20
11/22	33 (confirmation)		39			

## SHOUT OUT

The Trinity Council would like to recognize members who give of their time and talents to our church. Each month we will feature one or two volunteers and/or groups of volunteers in this area of the newsletter. If there is someone you would like to recognize, please contact Jodee Erickson in person or by email [claypony@hotmail.com](mailto:claypony@hotmail.com) and tell us what they are doing. We are not able to recognize everyone all at once, but you could be next. This month we give a big hardy **Shout Out** to:

**Slide Makers** - Thank you so much to Brenda Wiese, Marlene Giese and Becky Woitte for preparing the slides for our worship services. It takes time and dedication to complete them each week. The background pictures, taken around the area, add to the familiarity. Great job!

**Musicians** - Thank you to Miriam Lindblad, Lorri Pederson and Shelly Mikkelson for your musical talent as you team up to provide for each worship service. We are so grateful that you are willing to share it!

**Special Music** - Thank you to Emmie Grussing, Shelly Mikkelson and Candyce Sowers for sharing your love of music.

Emmie, thank you for your song, "You Raise Me Up". We so enjoyed it and look forward to hearing another song from you again!

Shelly, thank you for sharing "Make Me a Channel of Your Peace". We'll never tire of hearing your beautiful voice!

Also, thank you to Shelly and Candyce for your piano duet "His Eye is on the Sparrow". We enjoy your collaboration very much!

-Team Trinity

## STATISTICAL CHANGE

**Baptism:**  
11/08 Alexander William Rogers

**Weddings:**  
11/20 Austin Aeikens & Madison Schellack at Trinity Lutheran in Sabin MN

**Sympathies to:**  
-Robert Neuman and family on the death of his mother Jackie Reverts. Her funeral service was 11/7 in Beaver Creek MN.  
-Marie Young and family on the death of her brother Allen Landmark. His funeral service was 11/12 at Our Redeemers.








## Announcements

The Council voted to email newsletters starting January 1 and only paper to those who request it or have no email. **Please make sure the church office has your email or let us know if you prefer paper copy.**

Check out the church web page [www.trinitybenson.org](http://www.trinitybenson.org) regularly. Posted on the page are current bulletins, sermons, newsletters and council minutes.

# December 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 5:30-Confirmation 7:00-Council	3 	4	5
6 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Advent 8:30-KBMO AM 1290 9:00-Zoom Worship	7	8 	9 3:00-Rock 5:30-Confirmation	10	11	12
13 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent 8:30-KBMO AM 1290 9:00-Zoom Worship	14 	15	16 5:30-Confirmation	17	18	19
20 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Advent 8:30-KBMO AM 1290 9:00-Zoom Worship	21 January newsletter articles due	22	23	24 5:00-Christmas Zoom Worship	25 	26 
27 8:30-KBMO AM 1290 9:00-Zoom Worship	28 Annual Reports due	29 8:30-volunteers for newsletter	30	31		

# Narrative Lectionary Bible Readings

## Read This Week: (Nov. 29-Dec. 5)

Sunday, *Daniel's Hope in God*, Daniel 6:6-27  
Monday: *Nebuchadnezzar's Dream*, Daniel 2:1-49  
Tuesday: *The Fiery Furnace*, Daniel 3:1-30  
Wednesday: *Belshazzar's Feast*, Daniel 5:1-30  
Thursday: *Visions of Four Beasts*, Daniel 7:1-28  
Friday: *Seventy Weeks*, Daniel 9:20-27  
Saturday: *The Resurrection of the Dead*,  
Daniel 12:1-13

## Read This Week: (Dec. 6-12)

Sunday, *Joel: God's Promised Spirit*,  
Joel 2:12-13, 28-29  
Monday: *End of Babylonian Captivity*, Ezra 1:1-11  
Tuesday: *Lament over the Ruined Country*,  
Joel 1:1-12  
Wednesday: *Call to Repentance and God's Response*,  
Joel 1:13-20  
Thursday: *Dedication of the Temple*, Ezra 6:13-22  
Friday: *Ezra Restores Torah as Law*,  
Nehemiah 8:1-12  
Saturday: *Dedication of Jerusalem's Wall*,  
Nehemiah 12:27-47

## Read This Week: (Dec. 13-19)

Sunday, *Spirit of the Lord Upon Me*, Isaiah 61:1-11  
Monday: *God Is Gracious*, Isaiah 63:7-14  
Tuesday: *Prayer of Repentance*, Isaiah 63:15-64:12  
Wednesday: *New Creation*, Isaiah 65:17-25

Thursday: *Edom's Betrayal and Israel's Restoration*,  
Obadiah 1:1-21  
Friday: *Jerusalem's Victory*, Zechariah 12:1-13:1  
Saturday: *The Coming Messenger*, Malachi 3:1-7

## Read This Week: (Dec. 20-26)

Sunday, *Jesus Birth Announced*,  
Luke 1:26-45 [46-56]  
Monday: *Introduction to Luke*, Luke 1:1-4  
Tuesday: *An Angel Tells Zechariah of John's Birth*,  
Luke 1:5-25  
Wednesday: *Mary's Song*, Luke 1:46-56  
Thursday, *Birth of Jesus (Christmas Eve)*,  
Luke 2:1-14, [15-20]  
Friday: *Shepherds Visit (Christmas Day)*, Luke 2:8-20  
Saturday: *Birth of John the Baptist*, Luke 1:57-66

## Read This Week: (Dec. 27-Jan. 2)

Sunday, *Simeon and Anna*, Luke 2:21-38  
Monday: *Prophecy of Zechariah*, Luke 1:67-80  
Tuesday: *Jesus Grew in Wisdom*, Luke 2:39-40  
Wed.: *Isaiah Brings an Answer to Hezekiah's Prayer*,  
2 Kings 19:20-34  
Thursday: *Purification of a Woman after Childbirth*,  
Leviticus 12:1-8  
Fri: *The Law Concerning Dedication of Firstborns*,  
Exodus 13:1-16  
Saturday: *Levites Become Substitutes for Firstborns*,  
Numbers 3:40-51

## Notes from the Library

New Library Books 2020.

\*Note new books are on top shelf.



Tracie Peterson

"When You are Near"

"Wherever You Go"

"What Comes My Way"

Tracie Peterson

"Out of the /ashes"

"Under the Midnight Sun"

Tracie Peterson

"A Matter of Heart"

"A Moment In Time"

Tracie Peterson

"Cherished Mercy"

Tracie Peterson

"Whispers of Winter"

Francine Rivers

"Her Daughter's Dream"

"Her Mother's Hope"

Janette Oke/Laurel Oke Logan

"Where Hope Prevails"

Susan Anne Manson

"Love's Faithful Promise"

Lauraine Snelling

"A Blessings to Cherish"

Kathleen Fuller

"A Hand to Hold"

## Council Minutes from page 2

The committee recommended Zoom only service for Thanksgiving service. The committee will discuss Christmas services based on current COVID numbers.

**Shout Out** to Slide makers-Brenda Wiese, Marlene Giese and Becky Woitte; Musicians-Miriam Lindblad, Lorri Pederson, and Shelly Mikkelsen; Special Music-Emmie Grussing, Shelly Mikkelsen and Candice Sowers.

**Sunshine Shout Out** to Marlys and Mick Boone; Krysta Connolly, and Irene Heinzig.

### **Old Business:**

-Committee update on People-in-the-Pews Plan. We will remove coat hangers to help avoid the spread of germs. We will put up additional signs to remind people there is no gathering in the narthex before or after church.

-Emergency Fund. Members/

Organizations who may need assistance. There was a fire in Becky Huston's home. Through e-mail on 10-7-2020 a motion to provide Becky Huston with \$500 from the Local Community and Outreach Fund was made by Toni with a second by Jodee. Motion carried. Motion by Diane to give \$500 each to Krysta Connolly and to Karn Brandt for expenses associated with taking care of the siblings of Blakely Koenig with a second by Toni. Motion carried. Money will be taken from the Community Outreach Local fund.

### **New Business:**

-The furnaces at church have not been serviced for 10 years; just the heat pumps. Jason will contact Craig's to do this.

-There is a COVID air purifier system available for the church. Jason will talk with Craig's about this and

discuss at our next meeting.

-Continuing in-person services with the low numbers. Pastor gave his feedback about how he misses visiting with people at the in-person services versus visiting on Zoom. Motion by Becky that Thanksgiving service be Zoom only with a second by Laura. Motion carried.

**Announcements:** The December newsletter articles are due on November 16. Email agenda items to Becky by November 22. The next council meeting is December 2, 2020 at 7 pm.

**Adjourned** by President Brian at 8:24 pm.

**Closed with the Lord's Prayer.**

*Respectfully submitted,  
Rebecca Woitte, Council Secretary*

## Pastor Column continued from page 1

And we can still be together, just in a new and different way. **I'd like your help on this! In the next few weeks, could you make a video of yourself and your family lighting candles in your home. Send me the video by uploading it to a cloud source (like Google Drive) and sharing it with me at [abwiese49@gmail.com](mailto:abwiese49@gmail.com). I'd like to edit them together as the video to run with the singing of "Silent Night" at the end of our Christmas Eve worship!** Together, we'll become a virtual community gathered together digitally to share our devotion and celebration of Jesus' birth!

Lest you still think we may be alone, hear these words from one of my favorite Christmas hymns "Lo, How a Rose Is Growing." It says this, "The prophets had foretold it: a branch of Jesse's race would bear one perfect flow'r here in the cold of winter and darkest midnight hour." Our celebrations will be different. We will do what we can to keep each other safe. But we will not forget that, amid all that seems dismal and bleak in this particular season, Christ will be there with us, born in a lowly stable, but shining brightly to illumine the darkness of our world. A few more words from the hymn tell the story: "This flow'r, so small and tender, with fragrance fills the air; his brightness ends the darkness that kept the earth in fear."

Peace Be with You, **Pastor Art**



# ROCK (Reaching Our Community Kids)

4-6 grade Youth Group

Whew! We had a busy and productive meeting in November. We studied the song, 'I was there to Hear Your Boring Cry'. In October, we had studied 'Amazing Grace'. The kids are doing a good job at thinking about the meanings to the words they sing in songs. They made beautiful note cards for a school mate in the hospital. We finished off the day by packing boxes for Operation Christmas Child. Thank you for all the donations! We were able to fill eight boxes. Our next meeting is December 9 after school. Call Marlene Giese if you need a ride, 320-226-7372 or 320-843-3977.



## Thank you notes

- Dear TLC Council, Thank you very much for your generous donation to the Grand Piano fund. We are very excited about the new PAC and the opportunities it will provide for our students & community. Your gift will ensure there will be a beautiful new instrument on the stage. Thank you for supporting the arts in our community! Brock Duncan
- We are so grateful for all the kindnesses and prayers extended on our behalf as we embark on this medical venture. Your friendship warms our hearts....."Life is great in a small town"... Mick and Marlys
- Trinity Lutheran Church Council, Thank you very much for your very generous monetary donation for expenses for the Koenings. We have purchased pajamas, socks, extra underclothes and mittens for the girls. We have also treated all of us to a pizza and chicken supper. They love their bedtime snacks of popsicles and ice cream too. Thanks again! Karn Brandt "It takes a village to raise a child and we have found out that Benson is a wonderful village".

## SUNSHINE SHOUT OUT to ...



Marlys and Mick Boone; Krysta Connolly, and Irene Heinzig.

*Sending you a little ray of sunshine to let you know we're thinking of you and appreciate all the extra work you are doing to educate children and youth during this difficult time. May the Lord give you patience, courage, and endurance. May He take away your worries and fears.*

~Team Trinity~

## December Birthdays

- 1 Nancy Loen
- 1 Mary Jaeger
- 2 Amelia Solis
- 3 Keagen Pangrac
- 4 Hans Helgenset
- 5 Sherry Moser
- 7 Allison Egenes
- 9 Taelynn Bluhm
- 9 Olivia Moser
- 9 Alexander Rogers
- 10 Alan Grussing
- 10 Irene Lindblad
- 10 Drake Thole
- 10 Alayna Unke
- 12 Kathy Tweten
- 13 McKayla Neuman
- 13 David Peterson
- 14 Adam Gunderson
- 14 Stella Michaelson
- 14 Cora Nichols
- 15 Byron Giese
- 15 Diane Schuerman
- 15 Richard Teske
- 17 Derek Hilleren
- 17 Nicole Hoffman
- 19 Patricia Hagen
- 21 Dell Hilleren
- 23 Wayne Krienke
- 24 Bentley Grussing
- 25 Robert Hoberg
- 26 Stacy Grussing
- 26 Jamey Grussing
- 29 Jackalyn Giese
- 30 Clarice Beyer
- 30 Mark Grussing
- 30 Alexis Hoberg
- 31 Cari Ascherman
- 31 Belinda Sanders
- 31 David Tweten

Trinity Lutheran Church

700 Nevada Ave  
Benson, MN 56215

Phone: 320-842-6981  
Email: [office@trinitybenson.org](mailto:office@trinitybenson.org)  
Web Page: [trinitybenson.org](http://trinitybenson.org)

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Benson, MN  
Permit No. 89

ADDRESS SERVICE  
REQUESTED

