



THE CHURCH MOUSE



TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH LCMS

1002 East 13th Street, Vinton, IA 52349-2385
319-472-5571

December 2023

January 2024

Worship Schedule

Sunday Divine Worship
with Holy Communion
9:00 AM

Wednesday Vesper
Worship
6:30 PM

Holy Communion offered
the first Wednesday of
each month

Pastor

Rev Stephen Preus
Home Phone 319-472-2898

Our Staff

Nancy Hughes- Church Secretary
Emily Oldfather - Housekeeper

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1002 E 13th St
Vinton IA 52349
Phone 319-472-5571

Email
trinityvinton@gmail.com

Website
TrinitylcmSVinton.org

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Vinton](https://www.facebook.com/TrinityLutheranChurchVinton)



Children's Christmas Program
Sunday, December 17, 4:00 p.m.
Soup Supper to follow

Christmas Eve Candlelight
Sunday, December 24, 6:30 p.m.

Christmas Day Divine Service
With Holy Communion
Monday, December 25, 9:00 a.m.

New Year's Eve Divine Service
With Holy Communion
Sunday, December 31, 6:30 p.m.



Potluck

>>>> **Soup or Chili** <<<<
Sunday, December 3rd

>>>> **Southern Cooking** <<<<
Sunday, January 7th

Please join us in the Parish Hall after Bible
Class and Sunday School for good food and
good conversation!

ANGEL TREE

Our Angel Tree can be found in the overflow
room. If you would like to bring gifts for families in
our community who need a helping hand, please
see the tags hanging on the tree. We have 5
families this year.

Return your wrapped gift with the tag attached no
later than Sunday evening, December 17th. Thank
you!

Remember those
who are less
fortunate



Join us on Sunday, December
3rd at 1 p.m. in the Parish
Hall, we'll carpool to some
residences of shut-in
members and the Lutheran
Home. Song books provided,
Everyone welcome!



CHILDREN'S



The story of Jesus' birth,
presented by our
Sunday School Children
Sunday, December 17th
4:00 p.m.
Soup Supper to follow

Join us after the Children's Program for Chili, Broccoli
Cheese, and Chicken Noodle Soup, grilled cheese
sandwiches, desserts and drinks. Free will offering,
proceeds will go towards the New Church Roof fund.
Please invite your family and friends!



Join us at Berry's Lanes in Vinton on Saturday, December 9th
from 2 - 4 p.m. for a fun afternoon of **BOWLING!**
Each child will have 2 games paid for;
there will be food and beverages available for purchase.
Be sure to sign up on the bulletin board in the Education Wing.

The People Page



December Birthdays

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Brenda Barkdoll | 15. Andrew Elwick, Charlene Berzinski, Ethan Dedrick |
| 2. Shirley Schwartz | 17. Kaylin Winsor |
| 3. Diana Hall, Jonathan Licht, Lucy Preus | 18. Michael Hammond, Cheryl Thacker |
| 5. Dean Good, Ashley Hesson, Annie Sysouchanh | 19. Mike Burkhardt |
| 6. Jewel Paine, Pam Petersen | 21. Curt Lamont |
| 7. Rachael Sackett | 23. Curstie Ingram, DiAnna Gerdes, Chelsie Lensch, Jack Wayson |
| 8. Mariann Kerkman | 26. Becky Fisher, Cheryl Keil |
| 10. Rick Happel | 27. Judith VanWechel |
| 11. Lily Hesson, Jim Salger | 29. Carilyn Appleby |
| 12. Austin Keil | 30. Michelle Bendickson, Sharon McAvan |
| 13. Nick Schminke | 31. Judy Howe, Bryce Shaw |
| 14. Anne Happel, Linda Hilleshiem, Nancy Scott | |



- | | |
|--|---|
| 2. Jim Hargrave | 15. Mike Bahr, Diem Curfman |
| 4. Caleb Thacker | 17. Rick Gordon, Pete Sauer |
| 5. Larry Moody, Emma Wayson | 18. Dave Bierschenk, Sheavie Reagan, Heather Wilson |
| 6. Mert Alpers, John Preus, Lettie Reagan, Zelda Sackett | 19. Dr Brian Meeker |
| 7. Reagan Salger | 23. Scott Geissinger |
| 8. Sue DeVries, Keaton Gerber, Melody Henkel | 24. Amy Salger |
| 11. Bill Garbers | 25. Austin Lensch |
| 12. Grace Gattman, Eric Petersen, Steve Stulken, Jonathan Wilson | 28. Lori Staab |
| 13. Addyson McGlothlin | 29. Eric Bendickson, Connie Gill |
| | 30. Coen Ober |
| | 31. Noah Hesson |



14. Jim and Rita Fix
31. Kevin and Alex Kistler, Harvey and Beverly Weiss



1. Todd and Diane Gloede
12. Mike and Phyllis Severtsgaard
14. Josh and Ariane Geiger
18. Mark and Sheavie Reagan
26. Dave and Carmie Behrens



MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

Transfer In: Barb Burgy
from Trinity LCMS, Conroy IA

Affirmation of Faith: Rachel Dedrick



Altar Flowers

2024 Flower Chart

is located on the bulletin board across from the secretary's office. If you would like to provide flowers for our altar, please sign up, thank you.

Pastor's Christmas Message



Slandered for Our Salvation

To slander is to speak a false statement that damages a person's reputation. If you write it down and publish such malicious statements, it's called libel. And both slander and libel are alive and well in our day.

I know I have been slandered. Since I became a pastor that has increased a bit. Someone doesn't like what God's Word says and they slander the messenger who preaches it. Someone doesn't like the way I do things as compared to how they and a few friends would like it and they slander God's servant. Whether inside or outside the church, malicious lies go around about me and even my family. It's no fun, to put it lightly. However, it's part of life, especially life in the public eye as a minister of God's Word who seeks to bring the light of Christ to the dark world.

Have you ever been slandered yourself? I know you have. Some of you, I know, have been slandered for standing on God's pure Word too. For siding with what God says in the Bible over what man says. For calling out gossip instead of repeating it. Again, it's no fun to have your name tarnished. But it is part of the Christian life. "Blessed are you," Jesus says to His faithful followers, "when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account" (Mt 5:11). To be slandered is simply a part of the Christian life here in this dark and dreary world.

Mary and Joseph knew this well. Boy, were they slandered! Mary was a virgin (Lk 2:27; cf. Is 7:14). But the Lord graciously chose her to bear the Son of God into this world, conceived not by a man but by the Holy Spirit Himself (Lk 2:28-37). Mary accepted this, saying,

"Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word" (Lk 2:38). But when the angel Gabriel first told Mary this, her question was, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" (Lk 2:34). And after she started showing, everyone else's question was, "How can this be? She must *not* be a virgin!"

Now, in our day, with movies of recent memory like "The 40-Year-Old Virgin," which mock virginity before marriage, that might not sound like an insult. But it is. And it was. And it was also slander. Mary *was* a virgin. She never knew a man. She was a sinner like all of us but she was pure in regard to her sexual relations before marriage; she had none. To this God calls all of us (Heb 13:4). But Mary endured this slander for the sake of bearing our Savior into this world.

So did her soon-to-be husband, Joseph. When Mary was found to be with child, you can only imagine the slanderous rumors! Joseph, being a righteous man, was going to spare her shame and divorce her quietly (Mt 1:19). But as he considered this, an angel appeared to him too and told him that the Child was conceived by the Holy Spirit and not by some other man (Mt 1:20-21). Joseph listened to the messenger from God. He took Mary to be his wife, trusting that this little boy whom they would name Jesus would "save his people from their sins" (Mt 1:21). Joseph suffered the slander of others for the sake of being the guardian of our virgin-born Lord and Savior.

Then, when Jesus was born, He too was slandered. Satan slandered Him as if He were *not* God's Son (Mt 4:1-11). The religious leaders slandered Him by saying He was born of sexual immorality (Jn 8:41), had a demon (Jn 8:48), and was a glutton and drunkard for eating with repentant sinners (Mt 11:19). They even slandered Him in an unjust trial and had him sentenced to death (Mk 14:56, 59). So, Jesus knows what it is like to be slandered. He can sympathize with Mary and Joseph, with you and me.

More than that, though, Jesus also stands up for your name. He was slandered for your salvation! He willingly suffered all of this slander unto death *for our sakes*. And not just for *our sakes* but even for the sakes of those who slandered Him. For the sakes of those who have committed outward sexual sin, unlike His mother. For *all* sinners, He endured the slander unto death. In order to bear our guilt as God's guiltless Son (1 Pt 3:18). In order to take our punishment as the Holy One who did not deserve it, but endured the piercing, the suffering, the wrath, so that we would not have to (Is 53). In order to destroy the devil's power over us to accuse us of sin and rule over us forever (1 Jn 3:8). Yes, Jesus endured slander for our salvation, then rose from the grave victorious for us all (1 Cor 15)!

Now, our crucified and risen Lord comes to us in His Spirit-filled Word and Sacraments to silence the slander of Satan in our hearts. Because Satan *is* a slanderer. That's what the word "devil" means. The devil tells us that our sins need to take us down into hell with him. But that is not true. It's a malicious lie, since Jesus, God's Son made flesh, has won for us forgiveness by His death. His righteous life is now counted as our own through faith, as we repent of our sins. So, when the devil says our sin must damn us, Jesus defends our names and says, "Then why did I die for them? Then why did I baptize them? Then why do I absolve them?"

Then why do I give them My body and blood for their forgiveness? No, devil, you are a liar! Their sins are pardoned. They have peace with God. They are headed for heaven and the resurrection to live in the light of My glory forevermore. You, Satan, are a slanderer and they by faith in Me know that your slithery head is crushed under My feet and they are safe under My protection!"

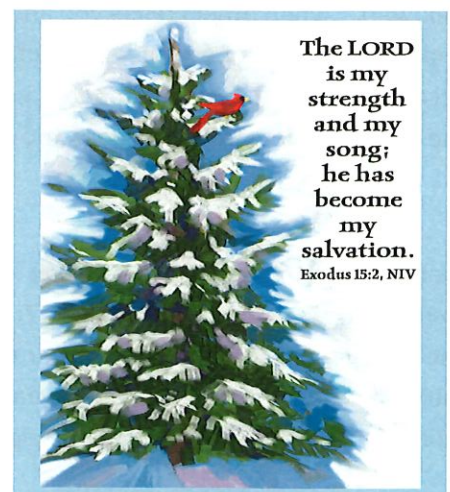
To be slandered is simply part of living a Christian life. It is no fun. But draw strength in the midst of it by considering these things. Contemplate this Advent and Christmas the reason Mary and Joseph endured the slander and you will see why you and your pastor can endure it too. It is because *Jesus* ended up enduring the slander for your salvation. This is why God sent His Son into our flesh, conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary. This is why we contemplate His coming to us in Advent and celebrate that He came on Christmas. He endured the slander of *His* name in order to honor *your* name, calling you a dear child of God through your Baptism into Him.

In Christ,

Pastor Preus



The Annual Voter's Meeting was held on Sunday, November 12th in the Parish Hall. If you would like to read the minutes from the meeting, they are posted on the bulletin board across from the Secretary's office. If you would like a copy emailed to you please call the church.



TLC Preschool



The Savior is coming! In the midst of planning Christmas celebrations, holiday decorating and purchasing gifts, we all must focus on the true meaning of Christmas. As we watch and hear the children learn about Christmas, we feel blessed to be a part of their learning experience. Sharing gifts at our gift exchange teaches the children the feeling of giving to others much like Jesus, coming to give us salvation.

The 4's class will be presenting a Christmas program. The miracle that happened in a small stable will be told in a play and in singing and ringing bells. The program begins at 10:30 a.m. Friday, December 15, with a reception following in the Parish Hall. You are invited to join us for the program and reception.

Showing thanks for Jesus and learning how He helps and heals will be our lessons when we return from Christmas break. We will discuss how caring and powerful Jesus is when feeding five thousand people. The Good Samaritan, healing a blind man, and the story of Jairus' daughter tell of Jesus showing mercy. Health, safety and wellness will be our focus for the month of January using puppet plays, journals and team work as problem solvers.

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men! Luke 2:14

Christmas Blessings
Gail Gerber



ASKING FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Due to low enrollment, the Preschool budget will be running in the red this year. We would appreciate monetary help to make payroll. Please keep the Preschool in your prayers. Thank you.



Voters present at the November 12th Annual Voters Meeting elected the following to serve on the Trinity Church Council for 2024:

Officers:

President	Mikel-Jon Elwick
Vice President	Brian Kreutner
Council Secretary	Lesa Caspers
Treasurer	Betty Cayton
Elders (3 yr term)	Bill Garbers
Education	Arianne Geiger
Trustees- Properties	Josh Geiger

Many thanks to everyone who served on our Board of Directors this year.

2024 Offering Envelopes

- Available soon
- Found in the overflow room
- If you don't see a box with your name, contact Nancy Hughes in the church office and one will be made for you



2023 Offering Statement

By request, call the church office or make note on your church attendance card and one will be sent to you.



October Budget Needs: \$16,097

October Offering Income: \$ 20,586

October Budget Expenses Paid: \$ 16,377

10/31 Year to Date Offering Income: \$ 156,742

10/31 YTD Expenses Paid (Budget items): \$ 197,696



Decorate the Church
Saturday, December 2nd
9:00 a.m.

Un-Decorate the Church
Saturday, January 6th
9:00 a.m.



TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

DECEMBER 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Pastor's Family Day	2 9:00 am Decorate the Church
3 First Sunday in Advent 9:00 am Divine Service with Holy Communion 10:20 am Sunday School/Bible Study 11:30 am Potluck 1:00 pm Caroling 5:00 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal	4	5	6 5:00pm Catechism 6:30 pm Divine Worship with Holy Communion	7 9:00 am Bible Study – Parish Hall	8 Pastor's Family Day	9
10 9:00 am Divine Service with Holy Communion 10:20 am Sunday School/Bible Study 4:00 pm Preschool Board Mtg. 5:00 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal	11	12 6:30 pm Anniversary Committee	13 5:00 pm Catechism 6:30 pm Vespers Service	14 9:00 am Bible Study – Parish Hall	15 Pastor's Family Day 10:30 am Preschool Program	16
17 9:00 am Divine Service with Holy Communion 10:20 am Sunday School and Bible Study 4:00 pm Children's Christmas Program /Soup Supper 5:00 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal	18	19	20 5:00 pm Catechism 6:30 pm Vespers Service	21 9:00 am Bible Study – Parish Hall 7:00 pm Men's Study	22 Pastor's Family Day NO Preschool	23
24 Christmas Eve 9:00 am Divine Service with Holy Communion 10:20 am Bible Study 6:30 pm Candlelight Worship	25 Christmas 9:00 am Divine Service with Holy Communion NO Preschool all week-->	26	27 5:00 pm NO Catechism 6:30 pm Vespers Service	28 NO Bible Study	29 Pastor's Family Day	30
31 New Year's Eve 9:00 am Divine Service with Holy Communion 10:20 am Bible Study 6:30 pm Divine Worship with Holy Communion					<div> <div>Altar Guild</div> <div>Lesa Caspers Gail Gerber Ashley Hesson</div> </div> <div> <div>Offering Counter</div> <div>Connie Gill and others</div> </div>	

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

JANUARY 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 New Year's Day	2 NO Preschool	3 5:00 pm Catechism 6:30 pm Divine Worship with Holy Communion	4 9:00 am Bible Study - Parish Hall	5 Pastor's Family Day	6 Epiphany 9:00 am Un-Decorate the Church
7 9:00 am Divine Service with Holy Communion 10:20 am Sunday School / Bible Study 11:30 am Congregation Potluck 5:00 pm Bell Choir Practice	8	9 6:30 pm Church Council Meeting	10 5:00 pm Catechism 6:30 pm Vespers Service	11 9:00 am Bible Study - Parish Hall	12 Pastor's Family Day	13
14 9:00 am Divine Service with Holy Communion, Installation of Church Council 10:20 am Sunday School / Bible Study 5:00 pm Bell Choir Practice	15	16	17 5:00 pm Catechism 6:30 pm Vespers Service	18 9:00 am Bible Study - Parish Hall	19 Pastor's Family Day	20
21 9:00 am Divine Service with Holy Communion 10:20 am Sunday School / Bible Study 5:00 pm Bell Choir Practice	22	23	24 5:00 pm Catechism 6:30 pm Vespers Service	25 9:00 am Bible Study-Parish Hall	26 Pastor's Family Day	27
28 9:00 am Divine Service with Holy Communion 10:20 am Sunday School / Bible Study 5:00 pm Bell Choir Practice	29	30	31 5:00 pm Catechism 6:30 pm Vespers Service			

Altar Guild

Connie Gill

Joyce Schueler

Offering Counter

Becky Fisher

Scott, Janet Geissinger