



# THE TRINITY HERALD

Trinity Lutheran Church and School  
8781 Brunswick Road, Minocqua, WI 54548

715-356-2255    [www.trinityminocqua.org](http://www.trinityminocqua.org)    [trinity@trinityminocqua.org](mailto:trinity@trinityminocqua.org)

*Our mission at Trinity Lutheran Church is to teach the Word of God, to train believers for lives of Christian service, and to tell the good news of Jesus Christ to the Northwoods community and to the world.*

## Christmas Unwrapped

I have a challenge for you. Look ahead to Christmas with the eyes of a 4-year old. Are you up to it? Even though I haven't been four years old in well over six decades, I'm going to try! As I pull back the misty curtains of time to December 24, 1959, what do I see?

First our entire extended family is worshipping together in church. There's a huge, live, lit Christmas tree in front. We sing familiar carols and hear the Christmas readings. Then right after worship, we dash home. (Can't we drive any faster?) I'm first out of the car, into the house, and I run into the living room and there--miraculously—are packages under the Christmas tree! How can it be? None were there when we left for worship. I know, because I checked! (In later years, I began to wonder why--after carefully herding me into the car for church, Mom or Dad always had to go back into the house because they "forgot something.")

But now there are gifts nestled under the Christmas tree! Each package neatly wrapped. Crisp, tidy corners. Perfect bows. Bright ribbons. Some with shiny foil. Others covered in paper filled with Victorian-era scenes. Each one with a name tag.

And none of it means a hill of beans to Glenn, the 4-year old. Once I hold a precious package that has my name on it, the last thing on my mind is the wrapping paper. I tear the paper off with reckless abandon and toss it aside. It's what's inside that's important to me! Socks? Ugh. I throw them over my shoulder and reach for another gift.

Maybe 4-year olds can teach us all something about celebrating Christmas. Not the throwing of socks, but the ripping away of the wrapping! What do I mean? Most of us add a lot of wrapping to our Christmas celebrations. Christmas cards or letters dutifully mailed. Christmas potlucks. Parties at work. Last-minute gift-shopping and meticulous wrapping. Listening to Mariah Carey sing "Santa Baby" for the 4,856<sup>th</sup> time. Decorating every inch of our house and yard. And putting up Christmas trees lit with enough lights to force Wisconsin Public Service to fire up additional back-up generators.

Everything I've mentioned, when done with care and Christian love, can be a meaningful and memorable part of our Christmas celebration. But is it possible—at times—that the wrappings overshadow the Gift? And what's the Christmas Gift?

A baby boy, born of a virgin, just as promised by the Prophet Isaiah! *"Therefore the Lord himself will give a sign for all of you. Look! The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and name him Immanuel."* (Isaiah 7:14)

This Christmas Gift came from the line of David, so it makes sense that he would be born in David's home-town, just as promised by the Prophet Micah. *"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, from you, will go out the one who will be the ruler for me in Israel. His goings forth are from the beginning, from the days of eternity."* (Micah 5:2) Micah also makes it clear that David's Son is the "ruler" whose "goings forth are... from the days of eternity!" Our Christmas Gift is God Made Man, *"born of a woman, so that he would be born under the law, in order to redeem those under the law, so that we would be adopted as sons."* (Galatians 4:4-5)

Rip away all the wrappings of Christmas, and we are left with the Christmas miracle—God With Us (Immanuel), our Savior Jesus, *"wrapped... in swaddling cloths, and laid...in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn."* (Luke 2:7)

Privileged to serve,  
Rev. Glenn Schwanke

## PRAYERS

Please remember the following members and friends of Trinity in your prayers and your words of encouragement to them:

Helen Anderson  
Tom Driscoll  
Carolyn Johnson  
Nancy Kremsreiter  
Jan Krueger  
John Kunkel  
Laura Lee  
Sheila Lemke  
Harvey Sadler  
Peggy Schuenemann  
Collette Skon  
Brandon Trapp

If you would like to be included on this prayer list in future newsletters please contact the church office.



## STEWARDSHIP PRAYER

Dear Lord Jesus, you once sat over against the treasury to observe how your people gave. You have caused your presence there in the Temple to be recorded that we might know that you are still concerned. Grant to us the willingness and love that the poor widow manifested who gave all that she had; and grant to us a proper concern like yours, that your children give as you have prospered them, that your coffers may be filled with the means to spread the gospel in the world, to maintain the ordinances of your house among us, and to provide the means whereby the sufferings of many may be alleviated. In your name we ask this. Amen.

## WORSHIP NOTES

**December worship** highlights Jesus' first coming and continuing presence in our lives: "I'm Here for You"

- December 3/4 = John 8:48-59 "**I'm (I AM)** Here For You"
- December 10/11 = Hebrews 2:14-18 "I'm **Here** For You"
- December 17/18 = (Sunday) Children's Christmas service "Sleep in Heavenly Peace"
- December 24 (9 AM) = Luke 2:10-12 "I'm Here **For You**"



### Christmas Worship Opportunities:

- Christmas Eve (4 p.m.) = Titus 2:11-14 "Christmas Brings Self-Control?!?"
- Christmas Day (9 a.m.) Micah 5:2-5a "Sermon Theme: Look to the Town of Bethlehem to Find Your Shepherd!"

**New Year's Worship** – There will be no New Year's Eve service in the evening. Regular 9:00 a.m. worship focus: Luke 2:22-40 "Lord, You Now Dismiss Your Servant in Peace."

## OTHER AREA SERVICES

Zion, Rhinelander  
Services on WCYE 93.7 FM  
at 9:00 am

Christ, Eagle River  
Services on WERL 95.0 AM  
at 10:00 am

Time of Grace—Sundays  
WSAW Wausau 6:30 am  
FYI Network 6:30 am  
Cowboy Channel 8:00 am  
American Forces Network  
10:00 am

## WORSHIP AT TRINITY

Sundays at 9:00 am  
Mondays at 6:30 pm

Online on our YouTube channel, [@trinityminocqua](https://www.youtube.com/@trinityminocqua).



## BIBLE STUDY NOTES

- **Wednesday "Lunch Break" Bible study** (Wednesday, 12-15 – 1:15 p.m.) "Israel in the Crossfire" is wrapping up at the end of Nov/early Dec. Last class of the year will be December 6th.
- **Pastor's "Wednesday Encouragement" blog**, continues to be found on Trinity's Facebook page and on our church website. You can also have this devotion sent to your email each Wednesday.
- **Sunday Bible Study (and Sunday School)** Sunday School is for children PreK3 through 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Adult Bible Study is working through the book of Exodus under the theme, "Deliver Us!"

## Bible Study



## A Christmas Concert by Mike Westendorf



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

**Wednesday, December 13 6:30 pm**

*at Trinity Lutheran Church, Minocqua*

Join us for a special worship concert with Christian recording artist, Mike Westendorf!

May Prophets and Shepherds,  
Mary and Joseph remind us of God's faithfulness  
this Christmas season.

[www.mikewestendorf.com](http://www.mikewestendorf.com)

- **High School Teen Group** – Great turnout (14 teens!) and event at November's Escape Room experience! December meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 6<sup>th</sup>; we'll enjoy a Christmas focus.

- **Trinity Book Club** – New in January! Look for a survey in your church mailbox to offer input on getting this started. Please return survey to Marcia Frederick by December 10<sup>th</sup>.



- **Be sure to follow Trinity on Facebook.** We're putting content on the page several days each week. The Wednesday blog post can be accessed in three ways (church website, Facebook, email from church office). You can follow our "Where's Marty?" campaign on Facebook and on Instagram at... trinitylutheranminocqua.

- **Got gifts?** I've got a gift in mind that you could offer to someone who would appreciate "A Humorous look at Life in the Parish." That's the tagline for a book written by my father, retired Pastor Lyle Luchterhand. It's entitled, *Meet Pastor Goodenough*, and explores church life from the perspective of young Lutheran Pastor Willie B. Goodenough. I've got copies in my office (\$13 each). Let me know if you're interested!



- **Congregational Meeting Summary:** On October 29<sup>th</sup>, our congregation unanimously made these decisions regarding our school:
  - To reduce staff for 2024-2025 from 4.5 to 4 full time teachers due to projected decline in enrollment. Should the Lord bless with a significant number of new students, we'll revisit.
  - To ask the Assignment Committee to make Mr. Habben's upper grade call to Trinity permanent, and for him to begin the mentoring process to become our Principal.
  - To ask our District President for guidance in calling Miss Isabelle Kettler (currently teaching in FL) to serve as PreK/Resource teacher in 2024-2025. Mr. Habben and Miss Kettler are planning summer 2024 nuptials. This Call meeting will take place on Sunday, December 3 at 10:30 am.



- **December is busy, full stop.** It's not our goal to make life busier for anyone, but here are some worship/ fellowship/service opportunities unique to December:
  - ⇒ December 3 (Sunday, 2 p.m.) – Advent By Candlelight (for women)
  - ⇒ December 12 (Tuesday, 1-3 p.m.) – Kickoff of "Monthly Senior Gatherings" (devotion, Christmas carol singing, planning for future gatherings)
  - ⇒ December 13 (Wednesday, 6:30 p.m.) – Mike Westendorf Christmas Concert @ Trinity
  - ⇒ December 16 (Saturday, 9 – 11:30 a.m.) – Christmas for Kids

**FLOWER CHART** for 2024 is now available. You can find it in the binder to the right of the picture window in the Welcome Center. Bouquets are \$30 each.

**OFFERING ENVELOPES** for 2024 will be in your church mailbox by Sunday, December 10. If you have any questions about your envelopes, please contact Pam in the church office.

December is here which means the students are busy memorizing and preparing for the upcoming Children's Christmas Service. The service, Sleep in Heavenly Peace, will be Sunday, December 17 at 9:00 am. The students in PK4—8th grade will be participating.

If you are, or know of someone interested in what Trinity Lutheran School has to offer, please contact the school office at 715-356-2255. We'd be happy to talk to you and give you a tour of the school.

Please continue to keep Trinity School in your prayers. This is **YOUR SCHOOL**. Please feel free to participate in any of the activities at Trinity.

## Upcoming Dates

### Friday, December 1

Trinity Seedlings  
8:30-9:30 am

### Saturday, December 16

Christmas for Kids (ages 3—4th gr.)  
9:00-11:30 am

### Sunday, December 17

Children's Christmas Service  
9:00 am

### Friday, December 22 through Tuesday, January 2

No School—Christmas Break

### Midweek Chapel

December 6, 15, 20

**Midweek Chapel:** Our midweek chapel services are held on Wednesdays at 8:15 am during the school year. You are welcome to join the students for chapel each week. This year, the students will give their chapel offerings to the WELS Campus Ministry.





## Join us for Upcoming Christmas Worship and Events

### Christmas Concert by Mike Westendorf

Wednesday, December 13, 6:30 pm

### Christmas for Kids

Saturday, December 16, 9:00-11:30 am

### Children's Christmas Service

Sunday, December 17, 9:00 am

### Christmas Eve

Sunday, December 24, 4:00 pm

### Christmas Day

Monday, December 25, 9:00 am

There will be no Monday evening worship on December 25 or January 1.



Saturday, December 16

9:00-11:30 am

For children in preschool through 4th grade



Join us for crafts, music, snacks and a special Bible story.

Registration forms are available in the fellowship hall, church/school office, and on our website, [www.trinityminocqua.org](http://www.trinityminocqua.org)



*Planting Jesus in the Hearts of Toddlers*

Next meetings:  
December 1 & January 5

For children ages 1-3

- \* First Friday each month during the school year
- \* 8:30-9:30 am in the school library

There is no cost to attend.  
Children must be accompanied by a parent or caregiver.

Questions?

Call the church office at 715-356-2255 or contact Sue Ziebart.