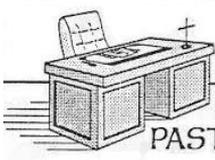


# Grace & Trinity Newsbites

## DECEMBER 2021

## ADVENT & CHRISTMAS



FROM THE  
PASTOR'S DESK

We begin anew the great circle of the church year. Advent praying, Come Lord Jesus, come quickly! Christmas rejoicing, Unto you is born a Savior! Epiphany wondering & wandering,

following a star. How shall we mark this time together? How will each season show itself in our homes? How shall we prepare room in our heart for the Savior to be born? How shall we prepare to meet the Messiah when he comes to us in unexpected places?

In this beginning of the church year, I encourage you to (re)commit to regularly gathering for worship and to a daily *practice* of prayer. If you can't be here physically present, worship where you are; with another faith community or worship with Grace or Trinity via livestream or at another time that works for you and your family. Carve out space every day – to pray, to speak and listen to God. Talk for a bit and then set a timer for listening time. If you've never done this, start with 5 minutes and aim for 15-20. To listen, find a comfortable position, invite God to open your heart and mind, and be still. If you are distracted by concerns, worries, the next thing on your list; be kind to yourself and each time, put the thought aside and be still; and repeat, until the timer goes off.

I use the word practice for a good reason. Being a disciple, a person of prayer, an evangelist, a good neighbor is not necessarily instinctive; that whole sinner/saint dichotomy factors in, right?

So, we have to practice what we preach. By practicing what we believe, we live out of our 'belovedness' and we will reflect the light of Christ and be the good neighbors we are called to become.

And I hope that practicing will be a joy for you. I think the world needs some joy right now. I hope too that the plans we have made and are making for Advent and Christmas will be a source of joy. Times for fellowship, fun, service, worship, singing; all ages together. I hope you will be able to come on Wednesday nights for supper, some learning time, conversation and services led mostly by our children and youth. They will be engaging and thoughtful ways to engage a story we all know well. Here's the thing with the Biblical story, the story of God's amazing love for us, there is always something new to hear, see, learn. The Living Nativity on Main St. is a wonderful way to share the story – the real story of Christmas. Let's tell the Story! There's nothing wrong with Santa, but we get to share Jesus. I hope that you will take part in this. It's one of the most fun, interesting and easy ways to be an evangelist that I know. Don't miss out.

We'll end the Christmas season with the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday in January at Trinity. It's still in the planning stages, but again, this one will be for all ages before we get back on track with Christian Ed classes for our elementary and junior high students.

Then in 2022 we are engaging in a great experiment, a first for us, but not new for congregations around the country. We are going to alternate, by month, where we do which service. So, still 2 services, Saturday evening and Sunday morning. Odd months we will be at Trinity on Saturday and Grace on Sunday. Even months we will be at Grace on Saturday and Trinity on Sunday. When there are 5<sup>th</sup> Saturdays/Sundays there will be different schedules. You will be receiving both an 8 ½ by 11 sheet with the months and times of service and a smaller card to help keep track of where we are when. It's a change, so that's hard; but really, not impossible. If we enter into it with a desire to make it work, it will work.

May a holy Advent lead to a Joyous Christmas. Traveling mercies,

Pr. Priscilla

Here are two resources –

the Great Plains UMC link is for prayer practices;

the NE Synod link is for a Thanksgiving Eve service at 7 PM on November 24.

<https://www.greatplainsumc.org/prayerlife>

<https://nebraskasynod.org/event/thanksgiving-eve-worship-service/>

There will be Advent devotionals available the first week of December as well as a list of online resources.

Two Advent ideas that might be appealing -

1. Acts of kindness - The idea is to set up an empty manger - it could be wood, or a box or even a bowl or plate - in a prominent place in your home. Have some hay available - which could be strips of paper or the real thing. Each day members of your household add 'hay' to the manger - one piece for each act of kindness. By Christmas there will be a bed prepared for Jesus. Add the hay without telling anyone - and by Christmas see how many acts of kindness (good deeds) have been done.

2. Set up a large box or tote somewhere in your home. Each day of Advent place in it a gently used item that you can give away. Clothes, toys, household items that you have but don't use or don't really need. Or each day put a food item in it, maybe items for a Christmas or New Year's dinner. Give to a family in need at Christmas. Or add baby items or choose another category. The idea being to exercise your generosity muscles.

**Advent 1:** Saturday & Sunday, Nov.27 & 28 – Hanging of the Greens  
Wednesday, December 1 – Advent Supper 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. &  
Service 6:15 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. at Grace  
Friday, December 3 – Men’s Breakfast at Grace 6:30 a.m.

**Advent 2:** Saturday & Sunday, Dec. 4 & 5  
Wednesday, December 8 – Advent Supper 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. &  
Service 6:15 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. at Grace  
Friday, December 10 – Men’s Breakfast at Grace 6:30 a.m.

**Advent 3:** Saturday & Sunday, Dec. 11 & 12  
Wednesday, December 15 – Advent Supper 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. &  
Service 6:15 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. at Grace  
Friday, December 17 – Men’s Breakfast at Grace 6:30 a.m.

**Advent 4:** Saturday & Sunday, Dec. 18 & 19  
Wednesday, December 22 – Advent Supper 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. &  
Service 6:15 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. at Grace

**Christmas Eve Services:** Grace – 2:00 p.m.  
Grace (Candlelight) – 5:00 p.m.  
Trinity (Candlelight) – 7:00 p.m.

**Sunday, December 26:** Carols and Communion. Fellowship in the parsonage after service.

**Grace/Trinity are coordinating the Living Nativity on Main St.** that will take place on Tuesday, Dec. 7 from 5p-7p. We are in need of volunteers, young and old, to help bring our nativity to life! The Living Nativity on Main St on December 7 is a great way to put our faith on display. Santa will be across the street, but we get to 'tell' the real story of Christmas. Why not get a few friends, or some extended family and sign up to do a shift together? All ages can participate and only standing or sitting is required. Weather permitting, it would be lovely to have a 'real' baby Jesus. Otherwise a nice life-like newborn baby doll would be useful to have; anyone have one?

**We have 30-minute slots available and are in need of 10 people each session, 5p-5:30p, 5:30p-6p, 6p-6:30p, 6:30p-7p. Please plan to arrive 5-10 minutes early to get set up.**

If you are able to help, please call or email either church office.  
Thank you!!

# The Heavenly Hens

present

A

# Christmas Hallelu

at the  
Wisner-Pilger Fine Arts Theater  
Sunday December 12<sup>th</sup> – 2 pm



Free Will offering to go towards  
Children's boots & mittens

**It's time for the 2021 Salvation Army Bell Campaign.**



This year Grace & Trinity share a weekend and we will need volunteers on Friday, December 17 (Bomgaars & Dollar Fresh) and Saturday, December 18 (Graybeal's & Lincoln Street Market).

Please call and/or leave a message with the church offices to sign-up.

**In Our Prayers this Week:**

**To see an updated list  
please contact the office.**

**Continued Prayer for those who have experienced a death since  
the last newsletter:**

**To see an updated list  
please contact the office.**

**Trinity News**

**December Birthdays & Anniversaries**

**To see an updated list  
please contact the office.**

**Trinity Church UMC/UCC - Council Meeting 10/27/21**

The Leadership Council met on October 27, 2021, at 7 p.m. Present were Pastor Pricilla Hukki, Steve Blocher, Terry Nelson, Barb Schroedter, Jim Summers and Brenda Larson.

Pastor Hukki opened the meeting in prayer and agenda items were reviewed. The minutes of Sept. 15 and Sept. 29, 2021 were reviewed. Barb Schroedter moved to approve the minutes as amended. Jim Summers 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion, the motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report:** The Treasurer's Report was reviewed and discussed.

Jim Summers made a motion to approve the General Fund and the Dewitts Accounts. Brenda Larson 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. The motion carried.

**Presidents Report/Pastors Report:**

Questions/concerns addressed to the council regarding the donation from the annual church dinner to the community playground was discussed. Suggestions on better communication in the future was also discussed.

**Reports/concerns/action items:**

- a. **Maintenance/property-** Pastor will leave a note for missing motion light bulbs. There are excessive flies and wasps in the building. Terry Nelson will get some type of bombing devices to help with this.

**b. Worship**

c. **Education** – kids will lead the advent services starting Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>.

**d. Outreach**

**e. Other**

Discussion was held on Mission moments; most likely held monthly. This is an opportunity for open discussion and is to be held after church services, as part of coffee hour. Any questions can be brought up from the congregation and discussed.

**Old Business:**

- The Annual church dinner grossed approximately \$7325.00, with expenses approximately \$2500.00 with a profit of \$4900.00.
- Other discussions:
  - **Advent Services** – Wednesdays @ 5:30
  - **Men's Breakfast** – Fridays @ Grace 6:30 am
  - **Christmas eve:** 2:00 & 5:00 at Grace 7:00PM @ Trinity
  - **Lent/Easter** – Trinity will host Lenten Services
  - **Continuing Agreement** – Pastor will speak to Chad Englemeier about a formal “yoked parish”

**New Business:**

- Discussion of the Council Members and what positions we will need to fill was discussed. New members will be needed to replace Kathi Sherwood & Jim Summers. A slate of (9) people on the Leadership Council would be ideal. Some names were discussed, and Terry Nelson will approach those individuals.
- The possibility of an intern to assist with both Grace and Trinity was discussed. Applications are online. This will be discussed at the annual meeting after our budget is determined. Discussion was also held to contribute to this from our designated funds.
- The 2021-2022 Budget was discussed in detail. The estimated income of \$65,000 and estimated expenses of \$71,658, with a net loss of \$6660.00.
- Jim Summers moved to accept the proposed budget to present at the annual meeting. Barb Schroedter 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. The motion carried.

- Discussion was held on Apportionments. Jim Summers moved to pay apportionments for 2021 in full. Terry Nelson 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. The motion carried.

The meeting was closed in prayer.

Brenda Larson – Council Secretary

Trinity – Financial Report – General Fund	
October <b>To see an updated list please contact the office.</b>	Jan-October 2021 Year to Date  .

## Grace News

### December Birthdays & Anniversaries

**To see an updated list  
please contact the office.**

Card of Thanks:

The family of Tom Thomas wishes to express our sincere appreciation for all the beautiful cards, the comforting messages, the visits, and most of all for the many prayers on our behalf during Tom's sudden illness and death.

Thank you to Pastor Priscilla for her visits and for choosing scripture readings that offered hope and healing.

Thank you to the church for providing food for our family and desserts for the visitation.

It is times like these that we become more keenly aware of how much we need and depend on our church family. Thank you for all you have done for us. God Bless You.

Sincerely,

Mary Thomas

Tammi & Chad Kurmel, Jensen, and Abbey

Tawni & Randy Erickson, Hannah, and Lindsey

## Grace Quilters are in need of twin, queen, king flat sheets. Any & All Colors.

*No matter what happens,  
always be thankful, for this is  
God's will for you who belong to  
Christ Jesus. 1 Thes 5:18*

Friendship Circle - November 8, 2021

The November meeting of Friendship Circle met in the Parish Hall at 5:30. In attendance were: Linda Lofgren, Nancy Petersen, Sandy Boots, Ruth Maresh, Mary Vander Pol, Pastor Priscilla Hukki, Vicki Furchert and Mary Thomas.

Vicki led the devotion with verses about Thankfulness, Thankful Hearts, Daily Gratitude, and the Family of God. Each of us were provided with a daily devotion sheet listing Bible Verses pertaining to those themes.

When it was time for the business portion of our meeting, we began by discussing our recent Drive Through Lasagna Dinner. Members shared the pros and cons of the event and possible changes for next year. Mary Vander Pol reported that 280 meals were packed and she had collected 268 tickets. Three Thrivent cards had been used for advertising and meal supplies. After expenses, we enjoyed a nice profit. Looking ahead to next year, there were a couple of suggestions made. One was that we might consider raising the price for the meal from \$8 to \$10. The other was that we would look for a different option to take the place of the bread stick. The bread sticks we used did not stay soft so we'll look for an alternative bread roll for next year.

Vicki and Linda had come prepared with Thanksgiving cards for us to sign. We will be sending them out to our special friends and also to those who had volunteered their time to help with our Lasagna Supper.

Mary Thomas brought an example of the ornament that we will be sending out to our special friends in December. With the threat of COVID still in our midst, we will forego caroling and visiting at the nursing homes and assisted care facilities again this year. We will make sure our people are remembered with a special card and gift. Mary will be preparing those for delivery.

To celebrate our shared church life with Trinity, we will be inviting women from both churches to attend a brunch at the Uptown Café on Sunday, December 5 at 10:30. Some of our homebound special friends will be visited that day also.

There will be no December meeting as that is when we will have our Brunch. We do not meet in January or February so our next meeting will be March 14, 2022.

The meeting was adjourned and Mary Vander Pol served a delicious pumpkin roll dessert.

Respectfully submitted, Mary A. Thomas, Secretary



With Christmas drawing near, an invitation is being extended to the women of Grace and Trinity to join in celebrating another year of sharing our church life together. Sunday, December 5, let's gather for Brunch at the Uptown Café at 10:30 am. (breakfast off the menu) Following Brunch, those who would like to go to the Stitch Quilt Guild Christmas Tour of Homes will be welcome to join in on that event.

Stitch Quilt Guild Christmas Tour of Homes Sunday December 5th from 1:30pm to 4pm in West Point & Wisner. Tickets can be purchased for \$15 at Creative Notions or at the door.

We will be remembering our Special Friends in December, too. At this time, it doesn't appear that we will be able to visit those in the nursing homes or assisted care facilities. We will deliver a small gift ornament and card to be put in their mailbox or brought to their room. Our special friends who are homebound or have recently lost a loved one, will have their card and gift delivered to their home.

We hope you will be able to attend. As a courtesy to Renee at the Uptown, we would like to have your RSVP by December 2.

Please RSVP to Mary Thomas:

Grace Lutheran Church

Council Minutes October 19, 2021 (pending council approval)

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm by President Bob Wilson. Other council members present: Kathy Mahannah, Lynn Stofferahn, Melissa Nielsen, Pam Petersen, and Todd Kuxhausen. Pastor Hukki was not in attendance.

Kathy moved and Pam seconded to accept the agenda. Motion carried.

Lynn moved and Kathy seconded to accept the minutes from the September 21, 2021, meeting. Motion carried.

**Pastor report:** (via email) Internship application is in progress. Reformation is October 31 and All Saints is November 7.

**President's report:** no report

**Treasurer Report:** Kathy moved, and Todd seconded to accept the treasurer's report. Motion carried.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Property:** Hugo is finished with the work in Sunday school room.

**Worship & Music:** In 2022 choir will perform at Grace but not Trinity due to lack of pianist. Bells will perform at Trinity and Grace.

**WELCA:** Lasagna dinner is October 20th. 280 tickets have sold. Loading quilts & LWR boxes on October 31.

**Christian Education:** Classes are going well. The kids will be handing out treats on Main Street October 28. They will lead services on Wednesdays each week during Advent. First Communion is scheduled for November 14. Two adult bible studies are scheduled to start next week on Wednesday mornings at Grace and Thursday evenings at Trinity.

**Endowment:** Todd has submitted the council requests for 2022. Endowment meeting on November 14.

**Memorial:** no report

**New Member:** no report

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

· Stained Glass Inspection – inspection was done. Only one minor area of concern and a report will be provided to Bob.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- Other Council Concerns:
  - Additional council members are needed.
  - Budget meeting is scheduled for November 10th
  - Bob will contact Chad from Midwest Music Center to discuss how to update the technology in sanctuary and get screens or monitors.
  - The councils of Grace and Trinity will serve the first advent dinner before service on December 1.

**Announcements:** Next meeting will be November 16, 2021.

Kathy moved and Lynn seconded to adjourn the meeting and it was closed with the Lord's Prayer at 7:15 pm.

Submitted by Melissa Nielsen, Secretary

<b>Grace Lutheran Church - Financial Report – October 2021 General Fund for October</b>	
<b>October To see an updated list please contact the office.</b>	<b>Jan-October 2021 Year to Date</b>



# **ADVENT PROJECT 2021**

**Give your  
neighbors a fish, and they'll eat  
for a day. Give your neighbors a  
community fish farm and they'll  
eat for a lifetime!!**

**Advent Challenge provide**

**FOUR PONDS!!!!  
@ \$250 EACH**



**I would like to donate**

**\$\_\_\_\_\_ to providing a  
community fish pond.**

**NAME**

\_\_\_\_\_

# Poinsettias Needed at Grace Lutheran Church

We will again have a Christmas Garden of lovely Poinsettias for our Christmas Worship Services.

**This year you can order and pay for your Poinsettias direct from the church office if done so by Wednesday, December 15<sup>th</sup>.**

\$16.50 each per Poinsettia for #\_\_\_\_\_ of plants.

Poinsettias given in honor of/in memory of (circle one)

\_\_\_\_\_

From \_\_\_\_\_

Or

**If you bring in your own plant, fill out the following by Wednesday, December 15<sup>th</sup> in order to get your donation listed in the Christmas Bulletin. Do not bring your plant in before Sunday, December 19<sup>th</sup>.**

I would like to bring my own poinsettia plant.

Poinsettia given in honor of/or in memory of (circle one)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

From: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**NEEDED:** A crew of 3 to 4 volunteers to watch over the poinsettias to water them and remove dead leaves. Time to be determined for arranging the plants.