

Trinity Tribune: January

Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church
Paola, Kansas

“Reckoning Time”

Our Lord gave us the celestial bodies by which to tell time: “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years” (Gen 1:14). We use the earth’s rotation around the sun to count our years, and we used to use the moon’s rotation around earth to count our months, until solar reckoning prevailed, and we divided the solar year by months that were relatively the same. (Although, one must love the oddity of February only have 28 days except during Leap Years, which this is one.)

I find it interesting that during the French Revolution, progressives and revolutionaries sought to overturn the seven-day week in favor of a ten-day week. After all, their prescriptions for the decimal system prevailed in many other areas of life, such as measurement of volume, distance, and mass. Why not our time, they thought?

In the end, it was too much for the people to take, and they reverted back to the seven-day week that God has placed in this world.

Nonetheless, there are still differing ways of reckoning time. Cultures have different systems. The Chinese, for example, celebrate their Lunar New Year on February 10th, the Year of the Dragon. The Jews recognize the day as beginning not at midnight, but at dusk the previous day. Religions keep different calendars as well; the Islamic calendar is famously lunar, so their celebration of Ramadan shifts earlier and earlier every year due to the shorter lunar year.

As Christians, we too have a different calendar. Because Western Civilization has been closely tied to Christianity, there is much overlap. However, it is not entirely the same. For example, our new year begins on the First Sunday in Advent, or the Sunday within the dates November 27–December 3. The first half of the year tracks with Jesus’s life. So we celebrate Advent then Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Holy Week, Easter, Ascension, and Pentecost. The second half of the year tracks with the life of the Church. It begins with Trinity Sunday and includes exhortations for the Christian life.

Festivals that overlap between our secular and Christian calendars are some of the big ones: Christmas and Easter. Believe it or not, Thanksgiving was normally not part of the Christian calendar until Abraham Lincoln asked the nation and her churches during the Civil War in 1863 to set apart the fourth Thursday to thank God for his bountiful gifts.

Some of the most recognizable Christian festivals are Transfiguration, Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Ascension, Pentecost, Reformation Day, and All Saints’ Day. These are not the only Festival dates though! There are feast days for the apostles and important individuals in Jesus’ life as well. If you want to see a full overview of the Church Year and our Feasts and Festivals, take a look in *The Lutheran Service Book*, pages x-xi in the preface. You might even see a few that you didn’t know existed, such as Holy Cross Day on September 14th or St. Michael and All Angels on September 29th. When these fall on a Sunday, it is traditional to celebrate them.

One big difference between our calendar and the secular calendar is that we don’t stop celebrating a feast on the day after. The season of Christmas, for example, lasts for twelve days! Consider keeping those decorations up until the day before Epiphany, January 5th. The season of Lent is forty days (not counting the Sundays in it), and the season of Easter lasts for fifty days. You are encouraged to give the traditional Easter greeting throughout it: “Alleluia, Christ is risen! He is risen indeed, alleluia!”

These are all small ways by which we can set ourselves apart from the world around us. Although we share many things with a secular Christmas such as joy, songs, gift-giving, we also have a different message than the world. It is a message that is focused on the Reason for the Season: Jesus Christ’s birth in Bethlehem. Likewise, Easter is about more than the Easter Bunny. We celebrate the bodily resurrection of our Lord from the dead.

I challenge you to consider this church calendar and make it your own in small ways. Keep wishing people a “Merry Christmas” through January 5th! Consider fasting from something for Lent. Attend church more often during Holy Week, and continue to celebrate Easter for many days following.

Perhaps add to your Bible reading or devotions for certain seasons of the Church Year. Consider reading the Passion narratives during Lent, for example, or Jesus’s miracles during Epiphany.

God has given us ways to mark our time, both in our world and in the church. These help us order our mind and lives around His creation and His Word. Pay attention to all these signs, and rejoice in them always.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Woelmer

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

January 1	Bryce Peckman
January 2	Jan Minden
January 2	Anisha O'Barto
January 2	Tara Smith
January 4	Cathy Hieber
January 4	Jessica Parks
January 4	Stan Plummer
January 4	Dustin Prothe
January 5	Levi Alcorn
January 6	Matthew Richardson
January 7	Caylin Garrison
January 7	Sunnye Oswalt
January 8	Mike England
January 8	Cormick Ferrell
January 8	Linda Ferrell
January 8	Michael Kriesel
January 9	Jobie Debrick
January 11	Phyllis Trickett
January 12	Devon Smithisler
January 12	Donna Erwin
January 13	Bill Dillenbeck
January 13	Lorri Jenson
January 14	Paul Deering
January 14	Bruce Nowasell
January 15	Chancie Minden
January 15	Cooper Minden
January 17	Lindsey Hall
January 20	Zachary Donahue
January 21	Jody Burnett
January 22	Rick Holte
January 24	Trent Fleming
January 25	Mike Koelsch
January 25	Webb Oberheide
January 25	Aubry Peckman
January 25	Joel Plummer
January 25	Mike Thompson
January 26	Gregg Hall
January 26	Michael Thoden
January 27	Suzie Prothe
January 28	Jimmy Massey
January 29	Lindsey Holtz
January 30	Elbert Jones
January 30	Mason Kunard
January 30	Mitch Plummer
January 31	Morgan Richards

Anniversaries

January 11 Jeron and Kendra Fuller (21)

COFFEE HOUR

Everyone is invited to stay for Coffee Hour in the Gathering Room following worship. Our thanks to those that provide snacks each Sunday. The signup sheet to provide snacks for Coffee Hour in 2023 is on the counter in the Gathering Room. Consider signing up to honor birthdays, wedding anniversaries, etc.

BIBLE STUDY ON THE JEWS:

"Israelite, Jew, Israeli?"

Jesus was born a Jew, fulfilling all the promises made to the Israelite people. The apostles exhorted the Jews to believe in Jesus as their Messiah, but many did not. How should Christians today regard the Jews and the promises made to them in the Bible?

Join the Adult Bible Class at 9:00 a.m. on Sundays in the Heritage Room to learn more!

NEW MEMBERS

On December 17th, we welcomed Alaric and Schyler Bogle and Lexi Clark through Adult Confirmation. Welcome! Alaric and their two children, Balian and Gideon, were baptized in October. Also, Sam, LeAnn, Samuel, and Abigail Allred have transferred into our congregation from Christ Lutheran, Overland Park.



LUTHERAN RESOURCES

Portals of Prayer: it can't get any more Lutheran than these little booklets, can it? Believe it or not, but this devotional booklet has been around since 1937! It had the title "Standing In His Grace" at that time, but eventually became the famous Portals of Prayer in 1959. The German-language counterpart, *Tägliche Andachten*, was published from 1937 until 1999. The devotions are short, intended to be a great way to start or end the day with a few minutes in God's Word, contemplating His grace.



You can also download the "Portals" app on your phone, but it needs a subscription to access the devotions after a trial period. One upside to the app, though, is that an audio version of the devotions is available for those who have difficult seeing. Keep your eyes out for a new CPH app called "InPrayer," which will combine a number of Lutheran, digital, devotional resources.

The January – March 2024 print versions of Portals of Prayer are, of course, available in the back of our church. Pick one up, and read it daily!

Pictorial Directory Update



We are continuing to take photos for the new pictorial directory in the church basement after services in January. A sign-up sheet can be found at the back of the Gathering Room. We encourage all members to have a photo taken.

If you have had a recent photo taken elsewhere and would like to submit it instead of having one taken at Trinity, please email it to either Susan Schmidt or Kyle Minden. Likewise, if a person or family is away and unable to submit a photo, they may submit a recent photo. If the photo was taken by a professional photographer, please check with the photographer on release of the photo - some are copyrighted.

Contact Cindy Karrow at ckarrow524@yahoo.com with any questions.

NURSING HOME SERVICES

You are invited to help Trinity provide brief worship services for nursing home residents this month. The simple services are approximately 20 minutes in length at each home. This month, we are scheduled for Sunday, **January 28th**. We will begin at 1:30 pm at North Point, and then go to Medicalodge around 2:15 for the second service. The residents really enjoy these services, especially singing their favorite hymns. It's great to have church members there to greet the residents and sing along. We have a few members who help but we could use your help too!

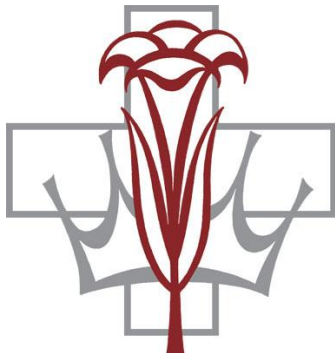
CHRISTMAS EVE PROGRAM



Our Sunday School put on a wonderful Children's Christmas Program, centered on the "Symbols of Salvation"! Many thanks to the students and their parents, Michelle Haley and Kristina Eilts and all the Sunday School teachers, organist Carolyn Enyeart and pianist Becky Stutzman, and Clint Haley, Bill Eilts, and Kyle Minden for working the sound system and broadcasting the livestream. A video of the entire program is available on our congregation's YouTube channel and Facebook page.

Poinsettia Donations

<i>Given By</i>	<i>In Memory or Honor Of</i>
Kristina Eilts	Ross Raabe Lois & Dennis Raabe
Cathy Hieber	Lorene Medlen
Gayle Pummer	John & Bonnie Plummer Leland Gerken
Paul & Kathy Haley	James & Glenadyne Haley Arnold & Lorene Debrick
Autumn Menefee	Arlene & Keith Benedict
Phyllis Trickett	Damon & Ione Bill, Myra, & Dave Trickett
Stan & Sondra Loftiss	Howard & Earline Loftiss Rev. Woodrow & Lucille Kurth
Karl & Cindy Karrow	Diane Karrow
Kynda Harshman	Bob, Twila, & Jim Frye Bruce Harshman Pearl Sims



In Christian Sympathy

John Grother

March 18, 1941–November 23, 2023

“Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.”
Revelation 14:13



Lent Begins February 14

Easter is early this year (March 31st)! That means all the dates for Lent are pushed up as well. Other dates for Lenten services and dinners are February 21 and 28, and March 6, 13, 20. Church services throughout Lent will be at 7:00 p.m., with a Lenten supper before each service.

Pay attention to the bulletin for the theme and opportunities to provide suppers.

Voters Assembly, January 21

The first quarterly meeting of the Voters Assembly for 2019 will be on Sunday, January 21, following the worship service. The Church Council will meet in advance of the Voters Assembly, on Tuesday, January 16 at 7:00 p.m.

Trinity Tribune

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