

Trinity's Weekly Connection

Sunday, December 31, 2023 — First Sunday of Christmas

This Week at Trinity Lutheran Church

Sunday, December 31

New Year's Eve

Traditional Worship, 8 a.m.

Rejoice Worship (Rejoice band), 9:15 a.m.

Live Streaming of Worship, 9:15 and 10:45 a.m.

Traditional Worship, 10:45 a.m.

Monday, January 1

New Year's Day, Office Closed

Clean Start Appeal Begins

Tuesday, January 2

LWR Quilters, 9:30 a.m.

Executive Committee Meeting, 7 p.m.

Fit4Baby, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, January 3

Outreach Committee Meeting, noon

Odyssey of the Mind, 6 p.m.

Thursday, January 4

Endowment Fund Committee Meeting, 6 p.m.

Choosing Peace and Serenity AFG, 7 p.m.

Sunday, January 7

Clean Start Appeal

Traditional Worship, 8 a.m.

Rejoice Worship (Beyond Belief band), 9:15 a.m.

Live Streaming of Worship, 9:15 and 10:45 a.m.

High School Bible Study, 9:15 a.m.

Traditional Worship, 10:45 a.m.

Middle School Youth Group, 2 p.m.

Middle School Confirmation Class, 3 p.m.

High School Youth Group, 6:30 p.m.



Flowers for Worship This Morning

Today's Traditional worship flowers are given by Paula R. Tibbe and Todd Osbeck in honor of Phoebe Jean Yu's baptism and in memory of Paula's parents, Ken and Dorothy Tibbe.

Eternal Candle Today

Today's eternal candle is given Beth Krueger in memory of her husband, Robert J. Krueger. The eternal candle is also given for God's protection in the new year.

Assisting in Worship This Morning

8 a.m.

Sacristans: Chris & Beth VanMeter

Lector: Sheila Talsma

Communion Assistants: Carrie Wygmans,
Cindy Zientarski

Ushers: Dale Barkema, Elaine Rongey,
Gloria Von der Heide

Acolytes: TBD

9:15 a.m.

Rejoice band leading worship

Sacristan: Don & Judy Otten

Lector: Steve Heacock

Communion Assistants: Dave & Carrie Boer

Ushers: Mark Baker, Dave & Carrie Boer,
Mark Hagbom & Sally Mahoney,
Jeff Postlewaite

Acolytes: TBD

10:45 a.m.

Cantor: Kai Bredwell

Sacristan: Kristi Flatt

Lector: David Fast

Communion Assistants: Doug & Melissa Haneline

Ushers: Jim & Sue Coates, John Derbin, Don Kishman,
Jamie Norris, Wayne Snyder

Acolytes: TBD

Trinity Members in Our Prayers

We pray for **Trinity members in times of illness,**

hospitalization, rehabilitation and recovery: Sue Bailey, Dale Barkema, Lisa Barkema, Don Barsema, David Benkert, Krysta Billock, Bev Block, Ken Block, Sue Boyse, Pat Bruin, Dan Butler, Mike Danielski, Kim Danielski, Angela Davis, Gordy Engstrom, Diane Field, Diane Flatt, Richard Gehl, Elena Griewahn, Elwyn Griewahn, Bob Heine, Callan Hughes, Carol Huttenga, Mary Johnson, Patricia Johnson, Grace Lanning, John Leese, Marilyn Leese, Bob Leese, Jane Legault, Judy Mallen, Tom Mannisto, Rebecca Mattison, Stephanie McLeod, Laura Norton, Julia Pfeiffle, Jesse Platt, Jacqueline Riegling, Denny Rosen, Marian Schaible, Chris Schomberg, Lee Schomberg, Bob Sielaff, Dave Smoes, Joanna Waite, John Walls, Robert Williams, Rick Wolner, Michelle Wolner, David Young, Kathy Young, Kay Zeaman, and Kathryn Zielinski.

We also lift up **Trinity families mourning the loss of loved**

ones: Albert Asfour, Maria Ashimine, Greg and Rachele Battreall, Carrie and David Boer, Beverly and John Bosserman, Liz and Jason Coles, Jack Danielson, Julie Earhart, David and Pastor Kari Fast, Jon Ferguson, Diane Field, John and Kris Fox, Mary Frick, Josh and Katie Gardner, Brad and Gayl Kessel, Susan and Terry Knoll, Joni and Steve Korb, Beth Krueger, Kristen Lamprich, Kent and Kristin Linkfield, Wendy and Jim Mielock, Dave and Julie Murray, Patrick and Jacquie Murray, Debbie and John Potter, Kathy Sommers, Jonathan and Jennifer Sommers, Sylvia and Bill Stouten, Linda Taffs, Wollen/Billings families and Natalie Yeager.

We also lift up in prayer this week for Father Michael Wernick and the people of Ascension Lutheran Church in Kentwood, partners with us in ministry North/West Lower Michigan Synod, ELCA.

Readings & Hymns for December 31

Isaiah 61:10-62:3

Psalm 148

Galatians 4:4-7

Luke 2:22-40

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| #275 | Angels, from the Realms of Glory (red book) |
| #290 | Go Tell It on the Mountain (red book) |
| #288 | Good Christian Friends, Rejoice (red book) |

DECEMBER 31, 2023
FIRST SUNDAY AFTER
CHRISTMAS



Praise God for salvation and all of creation.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Luke 2:22-40	Jesus presented in the temple
Monday	Isaiah 61:10—63:3	Rejoice in the Lord
Tuesday	Galatians 4:4-7	Adoption as God's children
Wednesday	Psalms 24	Entrance into the temple
Thursday	Romans 8:18-25	Future glory
Friday	Job 12:7-10	If you want to learn
Saturday	Psalms 148	All creation praises God
Sunday	Mark 1:4-11	The baptism of Jesus

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Let them [all parts of creation] praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted; his glory is above earth and heaven.

Psalms 148:13 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Creator God, help us to see how deep and wide your saving work for all creation is, a love that is seen most clearly through Jesus, the one born in Bethlehem. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, with sheep and cattle and all creation, we thank you for feeding us each day with food from the earth and with your saving grace through Jesus. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May God give you and all creation peace through Jesus.



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DECEMBER 31, 2023

HYMN OF THE WEEK



Away in a Manger



WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS



Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- What does creation care mean to you?
- How do you show praise to God for all that God has created?

DEVOTIONS



Read: Psalm 148.

Psalm 148 states that creation belongs to God, and God has promised creation a future forever (v.6). Jesus being born in Bethlehem places creation front and center as part of the saving work of God. From angels to sun and moon to shining stars, from earth to sea monsters, from fire and hail to stormy winds, the list goes on and on to include all of creation as the recipients of God's saving work. God's saving grace is not just for humans. The Apostle Paul names this when he writes in Romans 8:21, "*creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay.*" What God has done in bringing us a Savior far exceeds all that we can imagine, even having all of creation join us in praise to God. When we look through the verses in many Christmas hymns, we are reminded that creation is often part of the Christmas message.

Discuss: How does Psalm 148 help you think anew about God's saving work in Christ?

Pray: **O God, our creator and redeemer, we thank you for your love that extends to all of creation through Jesus Christ, born to us in Bethlehem. Amen.**

SERVICE



Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme for this week, in what way can you show care for God's creation?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



When Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the temple, Simeon and Anna, prophets who had waited all their lives for Jesus, recognized him as the Promised One. Luke 2:29-32 is known as the *Nunc Dimittis*, Latin for "now let depart." This is Simeon's song of praise making it clear that God acted in a way that gives peace for all people. The words of Simeon's song are often used for evening worship. Write a list of words that give you peace.

Pray: **Loving God, we thank you for Simeon, Anna, and all those throughout history who have lifted-up Jesus as the hope and peace for all the world. Amen.**



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: www.milestonesministry.org