



Trinity Topics

The Newsletter of Trinity Lutheran Church, Riverside CA
Sharing God's love, hope and forgiveness since 1893



Trinity Lutheran Church
Since 1893
Kent Tuohino, Pastor
Volume 27, Issue 1, January 2024



Congregational Meeting Sunday, January 28

This year's annual meeting of the congregation will be held in our sanctuary at 10:30 am, immediately after our 9:30 worship service ends (we will have one combined service on this Sunday). You can attend the meeting in person or watch it online.

The meeting will include a presentation of our annual report and proposed budget, and elections of new council members and other leaders.

If you are a ministry leader, please prepare a report on your ministry so that we can include it in the annual report of our congregation. Please send those reports to the church office by Monday, January 15.

If you are interested in serving on our church council or another committee, or would like to nominate someone else, please contact Mary Kantola, Stacy Wheeler, or Pastor Kent.

After the meeting, we will have a baked potato lunch in Heinecken Hall. There will be sign-up sheets available at church soon for the lunch.

Missionary Support

Help support our missionaries in Japan! Rev. Hitoshi and Satoko Adachi are serving Japanese and English-speaking congregations in Kumamoto, Japan. Consider donating \$25/week for one or more weeks to help us reach our annual goal of \$1,300 in support for these ELCA missionaries. When you make your donation to Trinity, please write "Missionary Support" on the memo line of your check or offering envelope.

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations."

Matthew 28:19



Spices Wanted!

This month we are collecting donations for the Hope Pantry of salt, pepper, garlic salt, oregano, chili powder, and cooking oil. These popular ingredients will be distributed along with boxes of food to help families in need prepare nutritious and flavorful meals.



Quilting Bee



Trinity's Quilting Bee will begin meeting again this month. Starting January 6, they will "bee" meeting on the first and third Saturday of each month from 9:00 am to 12 pm in Cooper-Burkhart

House. You are invited to come and join them! There are many different tasks involved in quilt-making, and you don't even need to know how to sew. Contact Kelly Krashin for more information. They are also in need of used sheets, curtains, and large pieces of fabric to use for quilt backs.

Help Support Trinity with Scrip

We sell scrip cards as a way to help support our church. They are the same gift cards you can buy elsewhere, but when you buy them through our church, a percentage of your purchase is returned to the church. Cards are available for over 700 stores and restaurants. Visit raiseright.com to see all of the brands available.

To place an order, talk to Michael Myers or Judy McMichael on Sunday morning, or call or email Michael in the church office on weekdays. You can pay when you order or when you receive your card(s); any checks should be made payable to Trinity Lutheran Church. The weekly scrip order is submitted on Sundays at noon, and we usually receive the cards on Friday, in time for you to get them on Sunday.



One of the decorations in our church every year is a Christmas tree from Parkview Nursery. This year's tree was especially beautiful. Trinity's tree is donated by Sarah Boese in memory of her son Matthew.



Our two "Christmas Sing" concerts in December were a rousing success! The concerts featured the Trinity Choir accompanied by a chamber orchestra and our handbell choir, conducted by Dr. Glenn Pickett.



On December 13, Pastor Kent went to Tijuana to attend a graduation ceremony for Sister Liliana Camacho Angulo, who was awarded a degree in social work. Sister Lili is the founder of the children's home that our congregation has helped support since 2016, and we helped pay for Sister Lili's education. She presented Pastor Kent with a plaque to thank us for our support. You can read the inscription on the plaque on page 5 of this newsletter.



Our 5:00 pm service on Christmas Eve included a visit by the Little Drummer Boy (aka Luke Hamilton). The recording of that service is available to watch on Trinity's YouTube channel.

Thursday Night Bible Study

This weekly Bible study meets online at 7:00 pm each Thursday and discusses the upcoming Sunday Gospel reading. If you'd like to participate, let Pastor Kent know. He will email you the discussion questions along with a link to the Zoom meeting.

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. — Psalm 119:105



Sunday Bible Readings

January 7: Epiphany Sunday

Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14; Matthew 2:1-12

January 14: Baptism of Our Lord

Genesis 1:1-5; Psalm 29; Mark 1:1-11

January 21: Second Sunday after Epiphany

Jonah 3:1-5, 10; Psalm 62:5-12; Mark 1:14-20

January 28: Third Sunday after Epiphany

Deuteronomy 18:15-19; Psalm 111; Mark 1:21-28

February 4: Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 40:21-31; Psalm 147:1-11; Mark 1:29-39



I was glad
when they said to me,
"Let us go to the house
of the Lord!"
Psalm 122:1

Sunday Coffee Hour

Volunteers are needed to help with the coffee hour. If you would like to host and serve a simple treat on a Sunday, please sign up or call the church office.

Altar Flowers

The Flower Chart is posted on the bulletin board outside the church office. Please consider signing up to donate the cost of the altar flowers for a Sunday worship service. The price is \$34 for one bouquet or \$68 for both (make checks payable to Trinity).

This Month's Flower Donors

1/07 Available
1/14 Tuohino Family
1/21 Available
1/28 Karen & Michael Myers



Pastor's Paragraphs

Christians remember the arrival of the wise men on the day of Epiphany, January 6. The word "epiphany" means the revealing or manifestation of something previously hidden. On the Sundays after Epiphany our Gospel readings focus on the ways Jesus was revealed as God's Son — from his baptism, his ministry of teaching, preaching, and healing, through the day of his transfiguration, when his face shone like the sun.

Again and again, Jesus revealed God's light and love. As followers of Christ, God's light is meant to shine on us as well. Like the old song says, "This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine!"

In December, I witnessed many wonderful ways we have let it shine. On December 9 and 10, our choir presented two joyful "Christmas Sing" concerts that brought many new faces to our church. In December we also donated 111 toys to distribute to families in Riverside through Lutheran Social Services and Family Promise. On December 13, I made a day trip to Tijuana in order to attend a graduation ceremony for Sister Liliana Camacho Angulo, whose education we helped pay for so that she could earn a degree in social work. (I talked about that trip in my sermon on December 17.)

At her graduation ceremony, Sister Lili presented me with a plaque to thank us for our support of her ministry as the founder of a children's home we have helped support since 2016 (on page 5 you can read what the plaque says). I was deeply touched by her words and the significance of crossing borders — of geography, language and culture — in order to share the light and love of Christ with children of all ages.

That same light has drawn others to our church who, like the wise men, have travelled far. In this newsletter you can read how a family from Ukraine has come to our church, thanks to the kindness of Larry Dodson and other members of Trinity.

In these and other ways, we are letting the light of Christ shine today!

— Pastor Kent

*Arise, shine;
for your light
has come!*

Isaiah 60:1



Stewardship Report

TRINITY'S GIVING REPORT (1/1/23 through 12/31/23)

Goal for regular offerings to date: \$ 260,004.00
Regular offerings received to date: \$ 281,262.04
Difference: + \$ 21,258.04

Your faithful giving helped us reach our year-end goal!

Scrip income received in 2023: \$ 1,273.24

Century Club donations received in 2023: \$ 1,360.00

A Heartwarming Journey of Kindness and Community

By Brenda S. Lussier

Remember the story I shared on November 26th about Larry Dodson's encounter at the Feeding America food bank? Today, I want to revisit this tale and offer an update on the family involved.

While picking up food at Feeding America on a Tuesday, Larry overheard a conversation between a representative and a young man seeking food for his family. They had immigrated from Ukraine to the US via Germany, losing nearly everything to the war. Larry, driven by empathy, invited the family to follow him back to Trinity Church. He knew the pantry volunteers could assemble a food basket.

Ihor, Hanna, and their three children, Adrian, Darii, and Anrianna, accepted Larry's invitation. At Trinity, they received not just a food basket but also gas money and other essentials. Their story, which I shared on that Sunday, resonated deeply with our church community.

After the service, the family met warm welcomes and embraces from many congregation members. They even received an offer of temporary accommodation from the Husted family. The kindness continued: the Husted's daughter helped enroll the children in school, and other members generously donated food, clothing, and other necessities.

Since their first visit to our church, Ihor, Hanna, and their children have become a part of the Trinity community. They attend services, participate in activities, and feel an increasing sense of belonging. This journey, born from chance and fueled by empathy, exemplifies the true spirit of our church – a spirit of unwavering support and unconditional love.

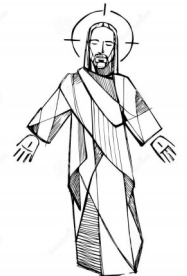
This tale is more than just a heartwarming anecdote. It's a powerful reminder of the immense impact we can make on others through simple acts of kindness. It's a testament to the strength of community in times of need and the power of human connection.

Let's continue to embrace, offer support, and build bridges of compassion. Together, we can create a community where everyone feels welcome and loved.



Joe Ramos entered eternal life on January 2, 2024, following a stroke last October. Please pray for his wife, Helen, and their sons Derek and Mark.

Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live." — John 11:25



Here's the inscription on the plaque presented to Pastor Kent by Sister Liliana at her graduation on December 13.

Pastor Kent Tuohino and Trinity Lutheran Church:
One more goal in my life has been achieved... A thousand words would not be enough to thank you for your support and understanding during difficult times. Thank you for having fostered in me the desire to improve and the desire to triumph in life, for sharing my sorrows and my joys, my small victories and painful failures, always receiving from you the word of encouragement that gave me the strength to continue fighting. Now that I have become a professional, I am ready to conquer new goals and achieve my personal fulfillment. I owe this achievement to God and to you, and I share it with you.

With all my love,

Liliana Camacho Angulo
Licenciatura en Trabajo Social
"Escuela de Trabajo Social de Tijuana"
Tijuana B.C. Diciembre de 2023

From Michael Myers

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Trinity holds a special place in my heart. I have worshipped here for 24 years and worked in the church office for 7 years.

A year ago, I was diagnosed with Myelodysplastic Syndrome (MDS). Basically, over time, my body is manufacturing healthy platelets, red blood cells and white blood cells at a declining rate. This affects my level of energy, my ability to focus, and my balance.

In recognition of this, I have submitted my resignation to the church council, effective July 7th. My prayers and hopes are that a new Administrative Assistant will be found for a seamless transition.

It has been a joy and many blessings for me to work at Trinity, but now it's time for a new chapter in my life. Please join me in praying for Trinity's future.

Blessings always,
Michael Myers

Council Meeting Summary

The Trinity Council met via Zoom Tuesday 12/19/2023. Members present: Pastor Kent, Mary Kantola, Stacy Wheeler, Gary Goldberg, Wes Krashin, Theresa Husted, Karyl Robinson, and Larry Dodson. Pastor Kent led a devotional from the Advent Devotional from Matthew 1 and offered an opening prayer.

Pastor Report Highlights:

- Pastor Kent attended the graduation ceremony for Sister Lili of Casa Hogar Sonrisa de Angeles.
- Trinity has been approved to receive a \$1,000 grant from the Pacifica Synod's Matthew 25 Fund to purchase steel tables and shelving units for the Hope Pantry
- Pastor will be away on Sunday, January 20 the celebrate his brother's 70th birthday party.
- Two Christmas concerts were held December 9 and 10 went very well, attracting about 167 guests. This was a successful outreach to the community, and some new visitors who attended the concerts have come back to attend a worship service.
- The Holy Closure of Grace Lutheran Church will be on January 6, 2024, at 2pm, followed later by a dinner at the nearby VFW.

Treasurers Report:

- November was completed with \$41,206.26 in envelope giving and \$4,569.52 in unrestricted income. For the eleven months of the fiscal year, we have \$249,024.00 in envelope giving. Regular offerings for the eleven months of the fiscal year are \$277,024.90.
- We finished January through November with a net income of \$83,709.71. Please note that this large net is due to the \$30,000.00 from Grace Lutheran and the \$19,000.00 donated in November for replacing the air conditioners for the office and Heineken Hall kitchen.

Old Business

- Christmas concert costs were paid with the donations received at the concerts and funds from Trinity Arts Program. Thoughts are to set a more formal budget going forward.
- Property updates: Discussion of potential space needs for LSS. Carpets need to be cleaned in LSS small office. Sanctuary carpets were cleaned. Heat pump installations have begun, with completion anticipated after Christmas.
- Update on Audit Committee recommendations: additional volunteers are needed for counting the weekly offerings.

New Business:

- Two meeting requests were approved: A beginners Al-Anon group to meet Fridays at 7-8 pm in Heineken Hall. PEO group may meet monthly on the first Thursday in Poat Parlor at 10 am.
- Approval to increase missionary support to \$25 per week for our missionaries serving in Japan.
- Approval of Endowment Grant Recommendations of \$1,000 each to the ELCA Chaplaincy Fund for Leaders, Family Promise, Trinity Arts Program, and Agape Campus Ministry in San Diego.
- Approval of Endowment fund grants in 2024 in the amount of \$1,000 each for Trinity's day camp and for our missionary in China.
- Nominating Committee is seeking nominees for elected positions. The council reviewed a list of elected positions needed for 2024.
- Update on office staff needs going forward.
- Approval of using Trinity as the Ministry in Context for Brenda S. Lussier for Spring Semester 2024
- Brenda S. Lussier, financial secretary, joined the meeting for discussions regarding the 2024 budget.

The next council meeting will be held on January 16, 2024, at 6:30 pm.

Celebrating Birthdays at Trinity

At the beginning of our 9:30 am Sunday worship service, we invite anyone with a birthday that week to come up and let us sing "Happy Birthday" for them. We also have a small coin box that those celebrating their birthdays drop coins into (quarters, dimes, nickels or pennies — one cent for every year of their age). The money we collect is now used to provide birthday cakes for children in Riverside's Family Promise program.

This tradition began many years ago, when it was part of the Sunday School opening ceremony at Trinity. When the contemporary service was begun in 1993, Sunday School students began to attend the beginning of that worship service and then were dismissed to their classes. The birthday recognition was added to the opening announcements for that service, and continues to be part of our gathering ritual today.

January Birthdays

[4] Darren McMichael, Lily Stager; [7] Marilynn Dodson; [9] Mary Nouritabar, Julie Pickett; [10] Kelly Cole; [12] Kelly Krashin; [15] Danial Krashin; [16] Pastor Kent Tuohino; [17] Jerri Mendivel; [19] Elizabeth Lossing; [22] Hayley Moyer; [25] Barbara DeCamp, Kelsey Heublein, Pete Lussier, Andy Perkins; [26] Amanda Dingwall; [27] Tyler Lunde; [29] Marge Bitetti, Debbie Bracey, Michael Myers; [31] Karyl Robinson.

If we missed your birthday, please let us know so that we can add you to our list!



We received several thank-you's from recipients of our Christmas cards. Here's one:

Pastor Kent & the congregation of Trinity,

Thank you so very much for all of the greetings and prayers.

It's wonderful to be remembered. Merry Christmas and a healthy new year!

Sandra Snorek



Join the Choir!

The Trinity Choir will resume weekly rehearsals on Wednesday, January 10, at 7:00 pm in the sanctuary. New singers are welcome to join the choir. The choir generally sings at our worship services twice a month.



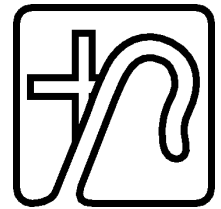
Flower Vases Wanted

If you have any clear glass flower vases that you don't need, please donate them to our Altar Guild to use to send the Sunday altar flowers home. If you have used a vase to take altar flowers home with you, please bring it back to church for others to use. Thank you!



Ordination Service

You are invited to attend the ordination of Rachel Reeder into the ministry of word and sacrament at 3:00 pm on Sunday, January 7, in Hemet. The service will be at Trinity Lutheran Church, 191 Columbia St., Hemet CA. Rachel has been called to be the new pastor of First Lutheran Church in Redlands.



Taizé Service

Several churches in Riverside take turns hosting a Taizé service on the 2nd Monday of the month at 7:00 pm.

It's a contemplative style of worship featuring simple but beautiful songs, inspiring readings, and prayerful silence. On January 8, it will be held at:

Trinity Lutheran Church
5969 Brockton Avenue

The service will also be available to view online. For more information, visit facebook.com/taizeriverside or contact Sandra Soares at fccucc@sbcglobal.net.

Holy Closure Service

On Saturday, January 6, at 2:00 pm, the congregation of Grace Lutheran Church in Jurupa Valley will hold its final worship service. You are invited to join them in celebrating their many years of ministry. The church property has been sold to a local developer to build affordable apartments. Proceeds from that sale have been distributed to several charitable and religious organizations, including a \$30,000 gift to our congregation that was presented in November.

Daily Devotions

Copies of the *Christ in Our Home* daily devotional booklet are available at Trinity. Pick one up at church, or contact the church office and we will be happy to send one to you. A few large-print copies are also available.



Tree of Giving Report

Thank you for your donations of toys in December! We received a total of 111 toys that were distributed by Lutheran Social Services and Family Promise to struggling parents so that they could provide Christmas gifts for their children.

Game Fellowship Group

This monthly fellowship group for adults meets on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 10 am in Cooper-Burkhart House. All are welcome. Contact Karyl Robinson for more information.



Eyeglasses Wanted

We make used eyeglasses available to those who cannot afford them.

If you have readers or prescription reading glasses you do not need, please bring them to church and place them in the donation box in Heinecken Hall.



Hope Food Pantry

The Hope Food Pantry is open at Trinity from 9:00 to 10:30 am every Wednesday. Volunteers are needed to help with the food pick-up on Tuesdays and food distribution on Wednesdays. (You don't need to help every week.) Contact Larry Dodson to volunteer.



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<p>TRINITY TOPICS is published monthly by: Trinity Lutheran Church, 5969 Brockton Avenue, Riverside, CA 92506</p>
<p>Sunday Worship Schedule 9:30 am — Contemporary Service (in person and on YouTube) 9:30 am — Sunday School 11:00 am — Traditional Service Church Office Hours: open 8:00 am to 12:00 pm, Monday-Friday Phone: (951) 682-1350 • Email: office@trinityriverside.org</p>
<p>Ministry Staff Kent Tuohino, <i>Pastor</i> • Mary Kantola, <i>Congregational President</i> Glenn Pickett, <i>Director of Music Ministries</i> • Michael Myers, <i>Administrative Assistant</i> Rev. Hitoshi & Satoko Adachi, <i>ELCA Missionaries in Japan</i></p>
<p>Vision & Mission Statements The vision of Trinity Lutheran Church is to provide a community of faith where all people are challenged to reach their full potential in Christ. Our mission is to <u>represent</u> our Lord Jesus Christ in this time and place. We will do so by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• INVITING people to know God and His message of grace, love, hope and forgiveness.• ASSISTING people to grow in their relationship with God.• EQUIPPING people to serve Christ's church.• ENABLING people to share their faith through what they say and do. <p>KNOW, GROW, SERVE AND SHARE</p>