



Trinity Topics

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



December

Trinity Lutheran Church
Since 1893
Kent Tuohino, Pastor
Volume 27, Issue 11, December 2024



Christmas Services at Trinity

Join us for these special services of worship. We'll sing beloved carols and read the story of our Savior's birth.

Tuesday, December 24

5:00 pm — Christmas Eve Family Service
10:00 pm — Service of Carols w/Communion
Both the 5 & 10 pm Christmas Eve services will include singing "Silent Night" by candlelight.

Sunday, December 29

One worship service with carols at 9:30 am



Decorate the Church

Help us decorate the church for the Advent and Christmas seasons on Saturday, November 30. We'll start at 9:00 am and we should be done before noon.



That Baby Boy

A Christmas Concert
Presented by the Trinity Choir
& Orchestra



December 14 & 15 at 4:00 pm

You are invited to attend one of our holiday concerts of Christmas music, featuring the Trinity Choir accompanied by a chamber orchestra.

Choral arrangements will alternate with the audience singing Christmas carols along with the choir and orchestra. Our special guest, singer Traivon Williams, will perform several songs as well.

Admission is free, but a freewill offering is encouraged. Invite your friends and family to attend one of these special concerts!

Christmas Tree of Giving

This month we are gathering Christmas gifts for children in need. Gifts are needed for children of all ages! Please take a tag from the tree in the church narthex, buy a gift, then bring it to church. Please leave the gift unwrapped. We will collect gifts through Sunday, Dec. 15.





Ann Herring was honored as “Volunteer of the Year” at the Lutheran Social Services Gala on November 8. She was recognized for leading a team of Trinity volunteers who have faithfully prepared and served a monthly Sunday dinner at the LSS homeless shelter in San Bernardino for many years.



On Friday, November 22, Ramon Corona organized and led a team of volunteers in serving a Thanksgiving meal to nearly 300 people in Lincoln Park. Ramon has been doing this each year for 28 years! He invited Pastor Kent to come and bless the food.

The Advent Wreath

The Advent wreath tradition developed in Germany. The circular shape of the Advent wreath and the evergreens traditionally used to make it symbolize eternal life. One candle is lit each Sunday during the four weeks before Christmas. The meaning given to each candle may vary from place to place, but they usually symbolize hope, peace, joy and love. On Christmas Eve, a white candle in the center of the wreath is lit, symbolizing the light of Christ. The candlelight symbolizes the coming of Jesus as “The Light of the World.”

The Season of Advent

Advent means “coming.” It is a time of longing, watching, and praying for God’s healing, transformative presence to be ever more vibrantly present in the world. In this sense, Advent is a season in which we focus on that key phrase in the Lord’s Prayer, “thy kingdom come.”

As Christians, the good news we strive to live by and declare is that love is stronger than hate, peace more enduring than war, hope more powerful than despair — and the light of God’s love will dispel forever the shadows of shame cast by violence, suffering, sorrow, and contempt. (from saltproject.org)



Poinsettias

If you would like to donate poinsettias to decorate the sanctuary for our Christmas services, there is a sign-up sheet at the church, or you can call the church office. The cost is \$10.00 each.

When you sign up, please use a separate line for each poinsettia plant you want to donate.



Events at Eden Lutheran Church

Our friends at Eden Lutheran Church invite you to attend these special events in December:

Wednesday, December 4, at 7:00 pm: Holden Evening Prayer. During the busy season of Advent, take some time for a contemplative evening of music and prayer.

Saturday, December 7, at 2:00 pm: Organist David Christensen will play arrangements of Advent and Christmas music. This is a free concert; donations accepted. Refreshments will be served afterward.

Eden Lutheran Church is located at 4725 Brockton Ave.

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

December 1: 1st Sunday of Advent

Jeremiah 33:14-16; Psalm 25 1-10; Luke 21:25-36

December 8: 2nd Sunday of Advent

Malachi 3 1-4; Luke 1:68-79; Luke 3:1-6

December 15: 3rd Sunday of Advent

Zephaniah 3:14-19; Isaiah 12:2-6; Luke 3:7-18

December 22: 4th Sunday of Advent

Micah 5:2-5a; Psalm 80:1-7; Luke 3:7-18

December 29: 1st Sunday of Christmas

1 Samuel 2:18-20,26; Psalm 148; Luke 2:41-52



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).

Upcoming Flower Donors

12/01 — Brenda S. Lussier Family

12/08 — Knapik Family

12/15 — Lowell Family

12/22 — Sarah Boese & Kosobucki Family

12/29 — Husteds, celebrating their grandson, Grayson



Pastor's Paragraphs

My family recently adopted a dog from a local shelter. Before that adoption happened, we had to get things ready at home. We had to make sure that we had a dog bed and toys and treats and food and... the list went on and on! For several weeks, my wife searched several different dog adoption websites and visited animal shelters, looking for the "right" dog — one who would be a good fit for our household. One not too big, not too old and not too young, preferably female. It took several weeks, but she finally found a dog that checked all the boxes. After filling out the paperwork and paying the adoption fee, we brought our new dog home to live with us. All the preparation we did to get ready was well worth the effort. She's a wonderful addition to our family.

Now we are approaching the season of Advent. In some ways this season reminds me of the experience of looking for a new dog. Advent is a time to get ready. We need to prepare in order to be ready when the time comes. So, we decorate our home and we search for the right presents. We decorate the church and set up the Advent wreath, counting the weeks until Christmas. We are getting ready to celebrate the arrival of the One who will bring us joy.

But Advent is also more than just getting ready for Christmas. It's about something much bigger than the arrival of a new pet. Advent draws our attention to the future. The season begins with a message of hope — the promise that Christ will return and the earth will be renewed. We do not know when that day will be, so we need to be ready at all times. Remember the words of John the Baptist: "Prepare the way of the Lord!"

The kind of preparation John had in mind involves more than getting our house ready. It means we need to get our heart ready for the One who is coming. We need to get our life in order, too. Then, when that great day finally comes, we will be ready to welcome the joy that it will bring. When that joy comes bounding toward us, it will be a joy greater than any furry friend can provide.

It will be a joy that's eternal.

— Pastor Kent

*In your presence
is fullness of joy.*

Psalm 16:11



Stewardship Report

TRINITY'S GIVING REPORT (1/1/24 through 11/30/24)

Goal for regular offerings to date: \$ 251,849.03

Regular offerings received to date: \$ 260,623.16

Difference: + \$ 8,774.13

Your faithful giving is helping us meet our goal!

Scrip income received in 2024: \$ 815.00

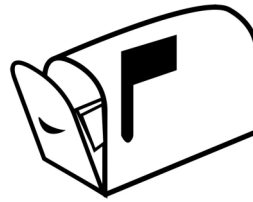
Century Club donations received in 2024: \$ 1,350.00

**“Honoring Mary”
Zoom Discussion for Advent
Tuesday, December 3
6:30 - 8:00 PM**

Martin Luther loved Mary, but she doesn't get much attention in the Lutheran church. Peasant girl, mother of our Lord, radical revolutionary, archetypal image of the Divine Feminine, Queen of Heaven, God-bearer (Theotokos) who shows us how to bear God... She is all of this and more. How do you see Mary? What about her means the most to you?

Join Bishop Dave Nagler and Pastor Stephanie Lape for a conversation about this amazing person and spiritual ancestor. This event is open to all and there's no cost to attend, but pre-registration is required to receive the Zoom link to join the meeting. To register, send an email to terrirobertson@pacificasynod.org.

Address Change



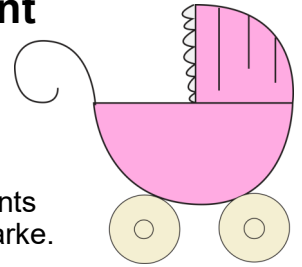
Mim Frantz moved to an apartment in November. Here's her new address:

Mim Frantz
17050 Arnold Drive, Apt. F-306
Riverside, CA 92518

Birth Announcement

Rob and Karen Clarke have a new granddaughter!

Jessa Levi Joy Clarke was born on November 12, and weighed 8 lbs. 9 oz. Her parents are Robert and Samantha Clarke.



Gallons of Love 2024 Update! Amazing News!!!

(One of our projects on our Sunday of service in September was assembling packets of stationery that will be included in the “Gallons of Love” gift bags. Here's a recent update on this ministry to prisoners.)

Gallons of Love – Christmas for Prisoners is proud to announce that more than ten percent of prisoners incarcerated in California prisons will be given a bag of Christmas cheer in 2024!

The Gallons of Love (GOL) Christmas for Prisoners ministry has experienced phenomenal growth in the last three years, due in great part to the active support of ELCA churches of the Pacifica synod. We celebrate the expansion of this ministry, as well as all those who have/will be contributing, putting all the bags together and delivering these packages of love to the dear ones.

GOL provides one-gallon zip lock bags filled with stationery, hygiene items, single serve beverages, a personal message handwritten on a postcard, and two very important mini chocolate bars, to prisoners in Southern California prisons. 1,200 Gallons of Love were distributed in 2022 to the women incarcerated at the California Institution for Women in Chino. Last year that number tripled to 3,500 Gallons of Love as the ministry was expanded to include the California Institution for Men, also in Chino. This year we anticipated expanding to 6,500 Gallons of love with the inclusion of the California Rehabilitation Center in Norco. However, administration staff at California State Prison Los Angeles County (in Lancaster) begged for their 3,200 men to be included also! After a scramble for funds, goods, and laborers, Gallons of Love will now be reaching 9,500 prisoners in 2024, which is more than ten percent of those incarcerated by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

GOL coordinator, Rev. Dr. Linda Barkman, is a Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) social justice pastor who was herself incarcerated for thirty years and personally knows how important it is for a prisoner to receive a token of love and kindness. The humanizing touch of Christ's love in such a dehumanizing place is often life changing. This ministry would not be possible, however, without the ecumenical support of many partners. ELCA churches have been particularly helpful in preparing stationery and gallon bags at their “God's Work/ Our Hands” events as well as in purchasing needed articles through Matthew 25 and Thrivent grants. In addition to the generosity of ELCA Lutheran partners of the Pacific Synod, GOL gratefully acknowledges Disciples of Christ churches in the Pacific Southwest Region, St. Peter's by the Sea Presbyterian Church, Testimony Ministries, friends at the Fullerton Universalist Unitarian congregation, and the Anti-Recidivism Coalition.

Churches and individuals can participate in this amazing ministry in many different ways. GOL needs volunteers to write personal messages of care and love on postcards. Donations of money, stationery supplies, and other goods are always needed and appreciated. GOL is hoping for one to two hundred volunteers to participate in the actual packing of the Gallons of Love on **Saturday, December 7**, from 10 am until finished, at the Fellowship Hall at the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Regional Offices in Fullerton (Wilshire and Harbor Blvds.) where a chili and cornbread lunch will be provided.

For more info or to volunteer, contact Rev. Dr. Linda Barkman at 909.634.6658 or lindabarkman@fuller.edu.



Council Meeting Summary

The meeting was called to order by Gary Goldberg at 6:30 pm on Tuesday, November 19. Members present: Gary Goldberg, Karyl Robinson, Pastor Kent, Cherie Guillow, Wes Krashin, Michael McMichael, Sue Rogers, Brenda S. Lussier, Larry Dodson. Members absent: Peggy Fryc. Guests: Glenn Pickett and Lee Lyons.

Pastor's Report

- The Al-Anon group that had been meeting on Fridays decided to disband as of October 25.
- The holiday rummage sale on November 2 raised a total of \$1,200.61. The proceeds will go to the Hope Food Pantry at Trinity.
- Ann Herring received the Volunteer of the Year award at the Lutheran Social Services Gala, which was held at the Mission Inn on November 8. She and her team of volunteers were recognized for their faithful service of providing monthly Sunday dinners to the LSS homeless shelter in San Bernardino.
- The church will be decorated for Advent and Christmas on November 30.
- We will have two services on Christmas Eve, at 5:00 pm and 10:00 pm.
- The "I Care Shelter Home" has decided to close and sell their property after more than 40 years of ministry in Riverside under the leadership of Rev. Sherry Sweetman.

Treasurer's Report

The church finances are in good shape. Brenda is working on the budget proposal for next year. She should have it done by our next meeting to present to the council.

Old Business

- Property Maintenance: Sanctuary roof and gutter work – Dan's Roofing had 30 days to respond to our lawsuit; ten days remain. No official response from the company yet. If they don't respond in the specified time, they will be in default. We are delaying repair of the gutters until we know what will happen with the roof.
- Sanctuary Lighting: Lee Lyons attended to answer any questions we may have about the lighting proposal. He is a professor at CBU who teaches about theater lighting. This proposed system will not replace our current system but complement and improve the overall lighting. He addressed all questions to everyone's satisfaction.

- Website Update: The individual we had hoped to hire for this is no longer available. We are going to contact other churches about who they used for their websites.

New Business

- Copier Lease: Our current lease is up. We received a quote from a different copier company with a potential cost saving of \$1,200.00 a year. It will take up to 90 days to end our current service after cancelling. Motion approved to change from our present company, Visual Edge, to Valley Office Equipment.
- Carillon Replacement: We need a new electronic system for the bell tower. We received a quote to purchase a Chime Master LX digital carillon for \$4,250.00, plus tax and shipping. Motion approved to purchase this unit.
- Deacon Call Committee: Brenda S. Lussier will finish her seminary studies in December. We need to form a committee to prepare for calling her as a Diaconal Minister for Trinity. A motion to form this call committee was approved. Gary Goldberg volunteered to chair this committee and Karyl Robinson volunteered to serve on it. We want to have a total of four people on this committee – two from the council and two more from the congregation. This committee would be responsible for determining the needs of the church, how the applicant meets those needs, and the salary package. Once a proposal has been prepared, the decision to issue a call would require a congregational vote. The earliest this vote could occur would be in February.
- Annual Meeting Plans: The annual congregational meeting will be on Sunday, January 25, 2025. We will have one service at 9:30 am with the congregational meeting immediately following to approve the budget and elect council and committee members. A baked potato lunch will be served after the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:27 pm. The next council meeting will be on Tuesday, December 17, beginning at 6:30 pm on Zoom.



Good News, Great Joy: Devotions for Advent & Christmas

Pick up a copy at Trinity of this devotional booklet to use at home. Celebrate the joyous good news of Jesus by setting aside time to prepare for the celebration of his birth and to anticipate his return. Each reading is accompanied by an image, a reflection, and a prayer. The Advent season of preparation unfolds into the joy of the twelve days of Christmas and the day of Epiphany.

December Birthdays

[2] Brenda M. Lussier, Peggy Muller; [4] Bambi Moyer, Mary Jane Thompson; [5] Mackenzie Lussier; [6] Leisha Garcia; [7] Bill Wall; [8] Diana Golbaf; [10] Chris Tuohino; [12] Stacy Wheeler; [15] Bill Nicoletti; [18] Jarett Guillow; [19] Nick Baroldi; [21] Stephan Hamilton; [25] Robbin Johnson, Mark Moyer; [26] Linda Bergen, Amytis Nekoonam; [31] Martha Dodson, Cherie Guillow

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





**at First United Methodist Church
4845 Brockton Avenue, Riverside CA**

Riverside's Alternative Gift Fair features vendors selling handmade crafts, with proceeds supporting non-profit causes. The vendors include Heifer International, United Methodist handcrafts, 10,000 Villages, Inlandia Institute, Human Migration Institute, handmade paper flowers, Riverside Food Coop food and jams, Love Riverside, Malia Designs, olive oil from Palestine, and many other beautiful things. Homemade soup, music and community fellowship complete the fair.

This is a Riverside holiday tradition! First United Methodist Church is the host of this event.

Game Fellowship Group

This adult fellowship group 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.



Taizé Service



Several Riverside churches take turns hosting a Taizé service on the second 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 Monday, December 9, it will be held at:
First Congregational Church
3504 Mission Inn Avenue

On Monday, January 13, it will be held at:
Eden Lutheran Church
4725 Brockton Avenue

The services are usually available to view online. For more info, visit facebook.com/taizeriverside or contact Sandra Soares at fccucc@sbcglobal.net.

"Be still and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10)

Rummage Sale Report

The holiday rummage sale on November 2 raised a total of \$1,200.61 for the Hope Food Pantry.

Thank you to everyone who helped make it a successful fundraiser!



ELCA
Good Gifts



The ELCA Good Gifts program offers more than 50 different gifts that will fight hunger, help grow the church, and change lives around the world.

To see the available gift options, pick up a copy of the Good Gifts catalog at church, or go online to ELCA.org/goodgifts.

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 raiserright.com to see all of the brands.

To place an order, see Michael Myers or Judy McMichael on Sunday morning, or contact 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 Sunday at noon, and we usually receive the cards in time to hand out the next Sunday.



RaiseRight™

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.



Christ in Our Home

Copies of the *Christ in Our Home* devotional booklet are available at our church. Pick one up to use for your personal prayer time. If you would like to have one sent to you, contact our church office and we will be happy to mail you a copy or drop one off at your door. A few large-print copies are also available.

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
5969 BROCKTON AVENUE
RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA 92506

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<p>Ministry Staff Kent Tuohino, <i>Pastor</i> • Gary Goldberg, <i>Congregational President</i> Glenn Pickett, <i>Music Ministries</i> • Kathy Newlen, <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>