



Monthly Monitor

December 2025

Every Heart Prepare

As we enter this holy season of Advent, our hearts are drawn to the words of the hymn: *"Let every heart prepare Him room."* Advent is a time of waiting, watching, and preparing—not only for the celebration of Christ's birth, but also for His promised return. We will be further exploring this theme of preparing our hearts for our Savior, Jesus throughout the season in our Midweek services and Children's Christmas program.

One thing we must acknowledge is that the Christmas Season is the ultimate season of giving. Why? Because God Himself has given His very best gift to us—His Son, Jesus Christ. In the manger at Bethlehem, wrapped not in fine linens but in humility and love, we see the fullness of God's generosity. Through Jesus, we receive forgiveness, life, and salvation. Truly, no gift could ever compare.

As recipients of such grace, we are called to embody that same spirit of giving. This year, our congregation and school face a budget shortfall. Yet even in this challenge, we see an opportunity: to give our best gifts back to the Lord in support of the ministry He has entrusted to us.

Here at Trinity Monitor, we understand that since the second week of our inception 145

years ago, our day school has been a daily mission field. When the Lord Jesus says, "Go and make disciples"... many Christians meet that call by sending their support to the ends of the earth. For us, supporting the Great Commission begins across the parking lot in our school. Here, children learn not only reading and math, but also the good news of Jesus Christ. They are nurtured in faith, taught to pray, and encouraged to live as disciples on a daily basis. What greater privilege could we have than to be chosen by the Lord to carry out this work for the next generation?

We invite you, during this season of giving, to prayerfully consider how you might help close the gap. Your gift—whether large or small—becomes part of the joyful offering that sustains our ministry. Together, we prepare every heart, young and old, to receive Christ with gladness.

May the Lord bless your Advent preparations, and may your heart be filled with joy as you give thanks for His greatest gift: Jesus, our Savior.



*"Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!"
(2 Corinthians 9:15)*

Merry Christmas!

-Pastor Kaiser

TRINITY MONITOR

LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL 20 E. SALZBURG RD BAY CITY, MI 48706 (989)662-6093/(989)662-4891



Stewardship Corner

Time . Talent . Treasure

December 2025

His Ways Are Not Our Ways

Here we are, ready to celebrate the birth of Christ – a major event, even for those who don't believe in Him. Today this celebration is heralded back in October, or at least November, by merchants filling their shelves with enticing gifts, decorations, cards, and all the trappings of Christmas.

How different from the first Christmas! Mary and Joseph settled down in an inn. There were no photographers waiting outside to snap the first picture of the new king. No one knew what was happening! No one, that is, except for the parents and the host of Heaven who made the announcement. But to whom was this announcement made? To the powerful who would speed through the towns and villages, spreading the news? No, to shepherds who were outcasts, hired hands who were so low on the social scale that they weren't even allowed to give testimony in a court of law. They weren't even allowed to come into the Temple.

Yet these were the ones chosen by God to tell the good news. These wretched creatures saw the angels with “. . . *the glory of the Lord [shining] around them . . .*” They heard the message the angels brought: “*Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord . . . You will find a baby . . . lying in a manger*” (Luke 2:9,10). They saw, they listened, and then they went to see for themselves. After receiving the Good News, they spread it. “*When they had seen Him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them*” (Luke 2:17-18).

If lowly shepherds could tell the story, can't we as well? “*All who heard it were amazed,*” Luke writes, but he doesn't say all believed. All we're asked to do is tell the story. How could fear,



uncertainty, or apathy hold us back? This is the biggest news mankind has ever received! As stewards of the Gospel, we have no choice but to follow the example of the shepherds and “*spread the word concerning what has been told [us] about this child.*”

God wants all believers to be willing to tell others what He is doing in their lives. He exhorts us to proclaim the Gospel in our homes, neighborhoods, communities, and throughout the world.



In the Christmas story, we are told that the Magi followed the brilliant star in the sky to find Jesus. These noblemen were seeking the “*King of the Jews*” (Matthew 2:2). The star led them to Bethlehem and “*going into the house, they saw the child with His Mary His mother, and they fell down and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered Him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh*” (Matthew 2:11). When the Magi entered the house and saw the baby Jesus, they immediately “*bowled down and worshiped Him.*” Before they gave their gifts, they first showed their reverence. In essence, they gave themselves. Their hearts were filled with joy to be in the presence of the King. After they had shown Jesus their adoration, they gave their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.



Trinity Lutheran School

The Classroom Chronicles

December 2025

*Grace and peace be with you
as we prepare our hearts
for the joyous season of
Advent and Christmas!*

On behalf of the students, faculty, and staff of Trinity Lutheran School, I want to express our deepest **gratitude** for your unwavering support—both in your dedicated **prayers** and your generous **financial contributions**. It is your commitment that allows us to fulfill our mission daily: nurturing faithful, dedicated, and academically strong young Christian leaders. Our students are **your students** and your support is greatly appreciated.

As the end of the calendar year approaches, we are already looking forward to planning for the next school year and we ask that you would play an active part in growing the mission of Trinity - this school. Your school has room to grow and we would love for you to help by sharing the blessing of Lutheran education with your family, friends and neighbors. We have heard several times recently that “we never knew there was a school here”. Let’s change the narrative and make sure everyone knows there is a school with our beautiful church and it is a school open to the community. Thank you in advance for your help in spreading the word.

It is that time of year when the teachers and students are pouring their hearts, time and talents into the children’s Christmas program - “Every Heart Prepare”. The schedule is a little different this year as we try to accommodate those students who also have programs at their home congregation. Our Cherubs (preschool and kindergarteners) will present their message at the evening Advent worship on December 3rd. Our 1st through 8th grade program will also be presented during an evening Advent service on December 17th. In addition to that presentation, the students will do a second presentation on Friday, December 19th in the morning before we break for Christmas vacation.



★★★★★ Veterans Day Celebration-2025 ★★★★★
THANK YOU VETERANS





The Classroom Chronicles

We are excited to announce the upcoming formation of a **LEGO Club** for our students, fostering creativity, teamwork, and engineering skills.

We are currently **collecting LEGO bricks** of all shapes and sizes! If you have any unused or outgrown sets at home, please consider donating them.

Donation Box Location: You will find a clearly marked donation box in the **back of the church sanctuary**. You can also drop donations at the school office. Your donations are greatly appreciated!



Thank you to the congregation members who have volunteered to be Classroom Prayer Angels this school year. We have Angels for each classroom now and we are beyond grateful.

As always, we ask that you continue to hold our/your students, teachers, and staff in your daily prayers for health, safety, and continued focus on Christ as the reason for the season.

May God bless you this Advent season!

In Christ's Service,
Mrs. Karen Friebe
Principal

Let's
Make
a Joyful
Noise **2025-26**



Make a joyful noise to Lord,
all the earth! -Psalm 100:1

We invite you to participate in or pray for the success of these special December events:



Date/Time	Event	Details
Wed., Dec. 3	Advent Service	Our youngest learners, the Cherubs class , will be presenting a special song during this service. <i>(All are welcome to join us!)</i>
Wed., Dec. 17 6:00pm	Children's Christmas Program (Evening)	Join us as our students present the story of Christ's birth through scripture and song.
Thursday, Dec 18	Trinity Tiny Treasures Gift Shop	At Trinity's Tiny Treasures Gift Shop, students get to experience the joy of giving as they shop for affordable gifts for family.
Fri., Dec. 19 8:30am	Children's Christmas Program (Morning)	A repeat performance of the program as a special closing chapel service before Christmas.
Fri., Dec. 19	Start of Christmas Break	Half-day of school, last day before the break.
Mon., Jan. 5, 2026	Classes Resume	Students return to school after the holiday break.

Announcements

TRINITY'S TREASURES CHRISTMAS SHOP: The students of Trinity will once again have the opportunity to shop for affordable Christmas gifts for family members at the Trinity's Treasures Christmas Shop. The Shop will be open during school hours on Thursday, December 18th.

To make this a memorable event, we need your help! We're seeking donations of small, new (or unused) items suitable for family members—parents, grandparents, siblings and friends! Consider items like ornaments, cooking utensils, candles, mugs with treats, golf balls, fidget toys, or hand-knit mittens and scarves. We'd also love donations of gift bags or wrapping supplies! Donations can be dropped off to the office during school hours. Thank you for your support!



NEED FREE PREK FOR YOUR 4-YEAR-OLD, or know someone that does? The Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) is Michigan's free PreK program for eligible four-year-olds. Trinity now has openings in their GSRP program. Students must turn four by December 1st to be eligible.

Enrollment is open to all families regardless of income. For more information scan the QR code or email Rebecca Setula at rsteffey@trinitymonitor.org.

FOOD BAGS FOR CHRISTMAS: Trinity is working with Auburn Area Food Bank to donate 100 bags for Christmas Dinner for the needy in the area. Pick up a bag along with a list of items needed at the back of the church, and return it to Trinity by December 17th. Thank you so much. —Stewardship Committee

Worship With Us 2025 Holiday Worship Schedule

Thanksgiving Eve

Wednesday, November 26
6:00pm

Advent Services

Wednesday, December 3rd & 10th
6:30pm

Advent Dinners

5:30-6:15pm

Children's Christmas Service

Wednesday, December 17th
6:00pm

Christmas Eve

Wednesday, December 24th
4:30pm

Candlelight

Wednesday, December 24th
10:00pm

Christmas Day w/Communion

Thursday, December 25th
10:00am

New Year's Eve w/Communion

Wednesday, December 31st
4:30pm



ST. PAUL, FRANKENLUST

BAKE SALE

December 6th
9:30-11:00am



Fresh Homemade donuts & German Goodies, Sauerkraut, Jam, Cookies, and Bread



Wild Game DINNER & AUCTION

March 7, 2026

at the
GREAT HALL
Banquet & Convention
Center-Midland



Valley Lutheran
HIGH SCHOOL

NEWS FROM VLHS: Stay in the know with everything going on at Valley! The December Valley Vision highlighting our fall sports successes and students' March for Life and Michigan Career Quest experiences is now available at www.vlhs.com/vvdec2025.

Did you order fruit from the annual Fruit Sale? Pick up day is Saturday, December 6 from 7:30 am - 2 pm at the outside concession stand at Valley Lutheran! Interested in purchasing fruit but didn't get in an order? Stop by during pick up times as extra fruit was ordered and can be purchased on the spot. Thanks for your support of VL Boosters!

We invite you to celebrate the coming of the Savior with us - Behold: A Savior is Born! This **Christmas Choral Concert** will be held on Sunday December 7 at 3 pm at Trinity Lutheran Church in Reese. All are invited to bring a canned fruit or vegetable donation to support Trinity's community partner, the United Christian Community Service (UCCS) food pantry.

Visit the Holy Land in 2027 with Valley Lutheran High School! Walk in the footsteps of Abraham and King David. See where Jesus preached to the crowds. Ride a boat on the Sea of Galilee. Visit Jerusalem and the site of the temple. Visit the sites that will make the Bible come alive! Mr. Patrick Winningham, a Valley Lutheran High School teacher, will lead a trip to Israel (with an optional extension to Jordan) in June of 2027. Any current or former VLHS student, their families, friends, and members from area churches are invited! There will be an informational meeting on Monday, December 1 (7PM) at VLHS in the RC. Please consider attending for more information about this exciting opportunity. Contact Patrick Winningham (pwinningham@vlhs.com) for additional information.



**RETURNING
JANUARY 7, 2026**

WOW @ 6:00PM

**ADULT BIBLE STUDY
@ 7:00PM**

Pastor Kaiser opened with devotion and prayer
Meeting called to order by Dave Friebe at 7:03 PM

Secretary's Report – Katie Wohlfeil

- Motion made, supported, and approved to approve of minutes until our next meeting

Treasurer's Report – Jerry Rivet

- Financial Report provided for meeting attendees

	Checking Balance	Outstanding Items	Designated Items	Line of Credit Loan Balance	Overall Debt	Increase in Balance Month over Month
October 31, 2025	\$46,215	\$23,719	\$33,805	\$6,312	\$11,309	\$29,811

- Contributions:

October 2025 YTD	October 2024 YTD	Contributions from School 2025	Contributions from School 2024
\$835,894	\$919,537	\$125,000	\$142,000
\$74,294 decrease		\$20,000 decrease	

- Expenses:

October 2025 YTD	October 2024 YTD
\$901,417	\$942,122
\$40,705 decrease	

- Motion made, supported, and approved to accept report

Budget Committee- Paul Reinsch

- Continually working on budget and capital improvement plan for 2026
 - Will meet monthly until December when the budget is presented for approval to the congregation
 - Capital Improvement plan for church and school for approximately five years presented to meeting attendees
 - ◆ Proposed projects for 2026
- Church ongoing plaster repair - \$10,000
- Church boiler replacement - \$50,000
- Church entry door seals - \$1000
- HVAC unit replacement - \$25,000
- Motion made, supported, and approved to accept report

Elder's Report – Paul Reinsch

- 6 pm Thanksgiving Eve Service
- Advent services one and two will be at 6:30 with dinner beginning at 5:30
- Children's service will be at 6 pm on Wednesday, December 17 with light refreshments to follow
- Christmas Eve services will be at 4:30 pm and Candle Light service at 10 pm
- Christmas Day service at 10 am with communion
- New Year's Eve service at 4:30 pm with Communion
- Acolytes will be expected to start in December
- Motion made, supported and approved to accept report

Pastor's Report – Pastor Kaiser

- Designated gifts have covered the costs of all the new oil candles and advent wreath
- 2030 is our 150th anniversary year
 - Should start talking about planning events and activities to celebrate and commemorate
- Motion made, supported, and approved to accept report

Trustee's Report – Dave Friebe

- Steve Rivet has agreed to be the head trustee in charge of the church
 - Motion made, supported and approved to accept nomination
- Snow removal bids
 - Reder - \$531 per removal and \$399 for salt
 - Desired lawn care - \$550 per removal and \$350 for salt
 - ◆ Motion made, supported and approved to approve the bid from Desired Lawn Care

- Carpet in office is coming up from the floor and needs to be replaced
- Flooring in historical room is crumbling and is asbestos
- Great Lakes fixed leak in roof above the meeting room
- Sidewalk on the north side of the school has a dip and should be repaired
- Thank you to John Mrozinski for helping out and taking on so many projects around the school
- Discussion regarding replacement of boiler
 - Update to zoned heating
 - Replace single boiler with multiple high efficiency boilers
 - Estimate for parts and labor would be \$50,000
 - \$15,000 has been earmarked from the 2025 WGD and \$10,000 from the Harvest Dinner to help cover costs
 - Project would plan to begin in the Spring, after heating season
- Motion made, supported and approved to spend up to \$50,000 on boiler replacement

Board of Christian Education – Katie Wohlfeil

- Carrollton has not been able to find a Spanish teacher, out middle school teachers will take over teaching classes during the Spanish block
- Classroom aides have been hired for GSRP classroom, until Rebecca Setula returns, and to assist Kelli Dent in the 2nd and 3rd grade classroom
- GSRP has been approved for 18 students
- Accreditation steering committee has begun meeting with their respective members
- Motion made, supported, and approved to accept report

Principal's Report – Karen Friebe

- Veteran's Day breakfast will be held on Tuesday, November 11th
- 96 total enrolled preschool through 8th grade
 - 16 enrolled in preschool programs combined
 - 80 enrolled in K-8
- Motion made, supported, and approved to accept report

Stewardship Report – Sandy Herzberger

- Thanksgiving Tree for Foster Families Navigation is up
- Planning to do food bags at Christmas
- Could be our last year as the current organizer is retiring and no one has taken her place

Athletic Club – Rich Kernstock

- Fall clean up was completed last Saturday
- Motion made, supported and approved to accept report

Wild Game Dinner – Deadra Hurley

- Kick off meeting was held on Sunday, November 2 at 6:30 pm
- March 7th, 2026 at the Great Hall in Midland
- Looking for people to help with:
 - Create Amazon wish list for auction items
 - Sponsorship opportunities
 - Volunteer coordinator
- Tickets will be offered at a reduced rate of \$90 if purchased between Black Friday and Cyber Monday
- Donation packets available to give to supporting businesses

Endowment Fund – Lugene McGuire

- Amount available - \$70,200.38 as of
- Balance : \$1,714,117.03
- Requests - none

Valley Lutheran Report – Amy Samborn

- All fall sports were Tri Valley Conference champions
- Several coaching positions available
- Fall play "Fools" will be showing November 6-8 at 7 pm
- Valley Lutheran Auction will be on February 28th, 2026 – theme is "The 90's Remix"

Minutes-Continued

- Fall bazaar will be held on November 15th from 9-3
- Fall instrumental concert will be held on November 23 at 3 pm
- Motion made, supported, and approved to accept report

Harvest Dinner Report – Amy Samborn

- 657 meals served
- \$1100 will be sent to Auburn Area Food Bank
- \$10,000 to go to boiler project
- Thank you to everyone who made this year's dinner another success!

Old Business

- By Law Committee update
 - Continue to meet approximately every 3 weeks
 - Council would still meet every month with published meeting minutes if we go to quarterly Voter's Meetings

New Business

- Salary study will be held on November 11th
- Motion made, supported and approved to remove Henry Pickelmann, David Sherry and Wayne Smith as approved signers
- Motion made, supported and approved to add Amy Samborn, Karen Friebe, Jerome Rivet on Fundraising account, PTO account, Technology account, Hot lunch account and School Account
- Motion made, supported and approved to add Rebecca Setula, Karen Friebe, Amy Samborn and Jerome Rivet to preschool account
- Motion made, supported and approved to add Amy Kunderling, Karen Friebe, and Jerome Rivet to the Church checking account
- Motion made, supported and approved to add Jerome Rivet and Seth Kaiser to the Benevolent Account
- Ushers and Finance committee elections
 - Brad Feinauer- head Usher
 - Art Klawuhn and Kevin Kunderling – Usher captains
 - Sarah Gibbs - Finance committee
- Motion made, supported and approved to approve the slate as presented
- Motion made, supported and approved to accept Matthew Messing as a voting member
- Motion made, supported, and approved to adjourn the meeting at 8:08 PM by Dave Friebe.
- Meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

Attendance

- Eligible Voting Members: 539 Voting Members: 157 Voting Members Present: 28



JANUARY VOTER'S MEETING

The January 2026 regular Voter's Meeting will be held on SUNDAY, JANUARY 11 at 11:45AM. The meeting will be held in the Church Sanctuary following second service. We are trying out a different day and time based on recent discussions at the By-Laws Committee and Voter's Meetings in an attempt to improve attendance and participation.



TRINITY MONITOR

December-2025

Greeters	1st Service	2nd Service
7th	Mary Ann Korman & Bernieda Kernstock	Alan McCartney & Debbie Dambro
14th	Terri Scheuerlein	Eileen Loesel & Rosemary Hoff
21st	Brian Berkobien	Virgil & Lugene McGuire
28th	Jury & Ettalea Carpenter	Kurt & Laurie Arnold

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Prayer Chain Nancy Klaus 280-4913	1	2	3 <u>8:15am</u> Chapel <u>5:30-6:15pm</u> Advent Dinner Soup & Salad <u>6:30pm</u> Advent Worship Pre-K Christmas Program	4 <u>5:00pm</u> Elders <u>6:00pm</u> Church Council	5	6 <u>10:00am</u> Decorate the Church for Christmas
7 <u>8:30 & 10:30am</u> Communion <u>9:40am</u> Bible Study & Sunday School <u>2:00pm</u> Public School Confirmation <i>Mite Box Sunday</i>	8 <u>7:00pm</u> Voter's Meeting <u>3:00pm</u> VLHS Christmas Concert @ Trinity-Reese	9 <u>7:00pm</u> Athletic Club	10 <u>8:15am</u> Chapel <u>12:00pm</u> Friendship Guild Christmas Party @ Risers <u>5:30-6:15pm</u> Advent Dinner Lasagna & Salad <u>6:30pm</u> Advent Worship	11	12	13
14 <u>8:30 & 10:30am</u> Worship <u>9:40am</u> Bible Study & Sunday School <u>12:00pm</u> YSC @ Grace <u>12:15pm</u> The GATE @ Trinity <u>2:00pm</u> Public School Confirmation	15 <u>6:00pm</u> Board of Christian Education	16 <u>9:00am</u> Piecemakers	17 <u>8:15am</u> Chapel <u>6:00pm</u> Children's Christmas Program <i>Last Day to Return Food Bags for Christmas</i>	18	19 <u>8:15am</u> Children's Christmas Program <i>Half Day of School</i> <i>Office Closes @ 11:30</i>	20
21 <u>8:30 & 10:30am</u> Communion <u>9:40am</u> Bible Study & Sunday School <u>2:00pm</u> Public School Confirmation	22	23	24 <u>4:30pm</u> Christmas Eve Worship <u>10:00pm</u> Candlelight Worship	25 <u>10:00am</u> Christmas Day Worship w/ Communion	26	27
Christmas Break December 22-January 2						
28 <u>8:30 & 10:30am</u> Worship <i>No Bible Study, Sunday School YSC, The GATE, or Public School Confirmation</i>	29	30	31 <u>4:30pm</u> New Year's Eve Worship w/ Communion	<u>Altar Guild</u> Rosalie Schmidt Judy Miller	<u>Ushers</u> 4 & 2	<u>Elders</u> Steve Rivet Dave Arnold



December



December 1	<i>Nathan Wuerfel</i>	December 19	Scott Reno
December 2	Daisy Leinberger	December 20	<i>Archie Amthor</i>
December 4	<i>Everett Feinauer</i>	December 21	Donna Bennett
	Carla Kernstock		Susan Meinhard
December 7	James Polzin	December 22	<i>Brady Giffel</i>
	Matthew Priem		<i>Landon Marter</i>
December 9	Ruth Peil	December 24	Judy Schlicker
	Brenda Priem		Sarah Bannerman
December 10	<i>Maximus Damore</i>	December 25	Tommy Weiss
	Larry Miller	December 26	Brian Berkobien
December 13	Kenneth Ruff		Angela Gushow
	Albert Steffey		Glenn Schlicker
December 14	Karen Brubaker		Noah Simon
	Peyton Fitzgerald	December 27	Mary Ann Korman
December 15	Joseph Gasta		Gene Leinberger
December 16	Courtney French		Grant Pashak
	Carley Leinberger	December 28	Jay Giffel
December 17	Eldor Wegener		Karen Hoff
December 18	Alexander Friebe		Pamela Reinhardt
	Adam Hanson		Kirsten Vogel
	Dennis Trudell	December 29	Eric Pfundt

HAPPY
BIRTHDAY!