

HOLY TRINITY NEWS

DECEMBER 2025

Volume 60 – # 12



HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

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FACEBOOK

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DECEMBER 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Office Hours 8am-1pm	Office Hours 8am-1pm Thrift Shop 9am-12:30pm	Office Hours 8am-1pm Bible Study 10:30am			
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Worship Service 9am	Office Hours 8am-1pm	Office Hours 8am-1pm Thrift Shop 9am-12:30pm	Office Hours 8am-1pm Bible Study 10:30am			Children's Christmas Shopping
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Worship Service 9am	Office Hours 8am-1pm	Office Hours 8am-1pm Thrift Shop 9am-12:30pm	Office Hours 8am-1pm Bible Study 10:30am			
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Christmas Pageant 9am	Office Hours 8am-1pm	Office Hours 8am-1pm Thrift Shop 9am-12:30pm	Office Hours 8am-1pm Christmas Service 10pm	Christmas Day		
28	29	30				
Worship Service 9am	Office Hours 8am-1pm	Office Hours 8am-1pm				



“And the Word became flesh and lived among us.” -John 1:14a

As you think about your faith, what are the things that surprise you the most? What are those things that pull on your heart and mind? Amidst the busy season of Advent and Christmas, this half-verse from the beginning of John’s Gospel is always the subject of my devotions because it speaks to one of the things about our Christian faith that always makes me ponder in awe.

The Bible begins with the creation story and the creation of the two first humans – Adam and Eve. A few chapters in and everything goes awry as Adam and Eve give in to the power of sin. A few chapters later has the haunting verse where God looks down at the world and is sorry He ever made people to begin with. Cue generation after generation of people rebelling against God and continuing down pathways of sin.

Put yourself in the place of God for a moment. Let’s say you had a group of friends and all they ever did was spite you and fail to listen to anything you say. Let’s say they ignored your plans and your wisdom. Let’s say that they paid you lip service, but didn’t care about your feelings or care anything about those whom you love. Would you go out of your way to hang out with those people? No! You’d avoid them like the plague.

God could have easily stayed in His heaven, crossed his arms and shook his head at a creation that did the same to Him. Instead, He chose to come to earth, not in judgment and vindication, but as a vulnerable human being. He chose to be born among the very people who would turn on Him, ignore His words, spit on Him, and nail Him to a cross. Why would anyone be that reckless?! Because it is God’s love for us.

That love is what strikes me every single year at Christmas. To stand in the sanctuary after the Christmas Eve service is over and everyone has gone home and to ponder, “God, why would you do such a thing for me? For them?”

Because God’s love for you, for me, for all of us, is greater than any of us will ever be able to imagine on this side of life. For as many times as we have turned from God and gone our own way, there is God – a child in a manger – born to be near to us. God’s love is reckless. For that, I can only thank Him.

Wishing you a blessed Christmas,
Pastor Ken



HOLY TRINITY ACTION MINISTRY

THE BLESSINGS THRIFT SHOP:



Tuesday 9am-12:30pm

ANNIVERSARIES

Glenn & Sherry Bishop 33 Years

It's Your Birthday!

December 11	Patty Kripper
December 11	Kelly Sosik-Hamor
December 12	Victor Jahelka
December 16	Zacary Reif
December 17	William Zeky
December 19	Taylor Keblish
December 19	Kirk LaRose
December 20	Christopher Fredericks
December 25	Ann Eckhart
December 25	LaRae Fink
December 28	Lynn Perone
December 29	Lucy Brown

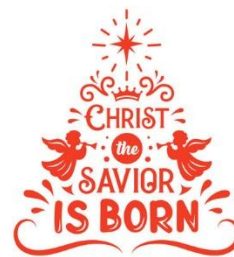
CHURCH OFFICE HOURS
MONDAY – WEDNESDAY 8AM-1PM



COUNCIL MEMBERS

Jon Kistler
Steve Berger
Rich Hyer
Larry Arner
Jim Miller
Krissy Keblish
Ron Keblish
Gerry Dorshimer
Scott Heinrich
Eric Reif
Gordon Walls
Terry Holland

President
Vice-President
Secretary
Treasurer
Asst. Treasurer



FINANCIAL PERSONNEL

Larry Arner
Jessica Hansen

Treasurer
Financial Sec.

COUNCIL MEETING

January 18 6:00 pm

FINANCE & ATTENDANCE

Oct.- Monthly Envelope Offering:	\$4,150
Oct.- Additional Income:	\$13,424
Oct.- Monthly Expenses:	\$25,858
Attendance:	
October 05, 2025	35
October 12, 2025	29
October 19, 2025	35
October 26, 2025	32

SUNDAY WORSHIP – 9:00 AM

DECEMBER 07, 2025

Assisting Minister: Rich Hyer

Ushers: Kelly & Scott Heinrich

Altar Guild: Gerry Dorshimer, Deb & Steve Hansut

Flowers: Nadine Schmidt –

IMO Husband Tom & Son Tommy

Bulletins: In Honor of Taylor Keblish

Communion Bread: Diane & Jim Miller

Times News / Website: Fred & Betsy Masenheimer

DECEMBER 14, 2025

Assisting Minister: Krissy Keblish

Ushers: Terry Holland, Ron Keblish & Taylor Keblish

Altar Guild: Gerry Dorshimer, Deb & Steve Hansut

Flowers: The Sosik Family – IHO Kelly's Birthday

Bulletins: In Honor of Taylor Keblish

Communion Bread: Diane & Jim Miller

Times News / Website: Fred & Betsy Masenheimer

DECEMBER 21, 2025

Assisting Minister: Deb Hansut

Ushers: Loren LaRose & Carol Heffelfinger

Altar Guild: Gerry Dorshimer, Deb & Steve Hansut

Flowers: Taylor Keblish's Birthday

Bulletins: In Honor of Taylor Keblish

Communion Bread: Diane & Jim Miller

Times News / Website: Fred & Betsy Masenheimer

DECEMBER 24, 2025 – 10PM

Assisting Minister: Larry Arner

Ushers:

Altar Guild: Gerry Dorshimer, Deb & Steve Hansut

Flowers: Poinsettia Flowers Sponsors

Bulletins: In Honor of Taylor Keblish

Communion Bread: Barb & Joe Herman –
Christ is Born!

Times News / Website: Fred & Betsy Masenheimer

DECEMBER 28, 2025

Assisting Minister: Lynn Perone

Ushers: Rich & Jeanette Hyer

Altar Guild: Gerry Dorshimer, Deb & Steve Hansut

Flowers: Diane & Jim Miller

Bulletins: In Honor of Taylor Keblish

Communion Bread: Diane & Jim Miller

Times News / Website: Fred & Betsy Masenheimer



CONGREGATIONAL MEETING – DECEMBER 7

An important congregational meeting will be held immediately after the Sunday service.

We will be approving the 2026 budget.

Your attendance is requested.

BIBLE STUDY

The Readings of Advent

Wednesdays through

December 17. 10:30-12:00

HOME VISITS

Home visits and shut-in visits are being planned. If anyone would like to receive communion from

Pastor Ken, please call the office
@ 610-826-2524.

A CHRISTMAS PRAYER

Loving Father, help us to remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and the worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world.

Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting.

Deliver us from the evil by the blessing which Christ brings and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

May the Christmas morning make us happy to be Thy children, and the Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen!

by Robert Lewis Stevenson



CHILDREN'S SHOPPING 2025

The ever-popular Children's shopping will take place on Dec. 13, 2025. From 9:00 to noon. Families can register as they enter the Fellowship Hall. Each family will be given a number in order to keep the 'first come-first served' order. The gifts will still be offered for 25¢ each. Moms and Dads can wrap the gifts before taking them home. There will be refreshments. Hand sanitizer will be readily available in many locations. This shopping day gives children the opportunity to find nice gifts for their families and friends. This shopping day is one of our best community outreach programs. We have been doing this long enough that little trick-or-treaters from the early years are bringing their children to join in on the fun.

So. What can the congregation do to help with this project? We need gifts for men and teenage boys – think after shave, boxes of candy, small tools, earbuds, packs of batteries, etc. Sports memorabilia is always popular. Gifts for teenage girls might include cute purses, hair bands or barrettes, perfume, etc. Coloring books that are still not colored in are good. We have lots of stuffed animals. We do not need wrapping paper, bows, or cards this year. But gift bags will certainly help speed up the wrapping process. The most popular gifts are Christmas decorations and knick-knacks. We also need volunteers to register families, direct traffic, and help our young customers find what they are looking for. Volunteers should be at the Fellowship Hall at 8:30. Please call Connie at 610-509-9873 if you have questions. Once again, shopping will be on Saturday, December 13 from 9:00 to noon. Children from 5-12 years old are welcome. As usual, they may buy one gift for each person on their list for only 25¢.





Growing New Communities of Faith: Updates on SAWCs, SAOMs, and Mission Leadership

Written by: Deacon Kat Tigerman, NEPS Directors for Evangelical Mission



Every year, the Synod Council re-authorizes our Synod-authorized ministries, typically in October. It is also a great opportunity to hear updates from these ministries, the people they are serving, and the stories of their communities. It is always a powerful testament to God among us – often in ways we might consider “non-traditional” – ministries made possible by our NEPA congregations’ mission support and the mission support to the ELCA.

Synod-Authorized Worshipping Communities (SAWCs for short) are communities committed to worshipping together but who may do so outside the normal “walls” of the church. A SAWC may look like a recovery worship service, dinner church, messy

church, or church on the streets. SAWCs are also communities discerning and taking steps to become formal (known as “organized”) ELCA congregations. They are led by a Mission Developer. Our NEPA Synod currently has 3 SAWCs: Common Ground in Wyomissing, Common Ground in Reading, and the Indonesian Lutheran Church of Scranton (which just became a SAWC in September!).

Synod-Authorized Outreach Ministries (SAOMs for short) are ministries committed to evangelism, outreach, and discipleship. A SAOM may look like a food truck ministry, a small group ministry, or a prison ministry. They are led by a SAOM Leader. Our NEPA Synod currently has 2 SAOMs: Free to Be in Bethlehem and Hope’s Table in Reading. Free to Be is a ministry dedicated to reaching out to moms, families, and folks in recovery by building intentional small groups on the road of faith and discipleship. Hope’s Table was initially a SAWC but is in the process of transitioning to a SAOM. While Hope’s Table continues to offer weekly worship, it is a feeding ministry which builds community and creates a safe and welcoming space for all to find the love, grace, and warmth of Jesus.

Each year, to help support these leaders and connect them to one another, the ELCA hosts a Mission Leadership Training Conference for Mission Developers, SAOM Leaders, Strategic Ministry Leaders, and key leaders of various SAWCs and SAOMs. This year Seminarian April Mulvey was invited to attend as a Mission Developer Scholarship recipient along with Deacon Kat Tigerman as DEM. 118 leaders from across



the country attended the 3-day training in Chicago the last weekend of September.

The first week of October, the Region 7 DEMs (Directors for Evangelical Mission) hosted a 2-day retreat for Mission Developers, SAOM Leaders, and other new ministry leaders. There were 35 participants across the 6 Synods of Region 7 who came together to worship, reflect, connect, learn, and pray. The Retreat was facilitated by the ELCA's Organizing for Mission who grounded the time theologically as well as provided practical on-the-ground skills and tools for these leaders are the margins and cutting edges of Church. NEPA Synod participants included:

- Rev. Lauren Applegate, Free to Be
- Seminarian April Mulvey, Hope's Table
- Rev. Tom Scornavacchi, Common Ground
- Deacon Kat Tigerman (DEM)
- Rev. Dr. Jennifer Hope-Tringali (Director for New Ministries).

Region 7 was blessed to receive an ELCA grant to help make this retreat affordable to leaders who are serving ministries on the margins. Our Director of New Ministries will be piloting a learning opportunity in early 2026 to work alongside leaders who have a new ministry idea that they want to develop into a plan of action. Interested leaders are encouraged to email Pr. Jennifer at jennifer@nepa-synod.org.



Thank you for all you and your congregations do to pray for and support these leaders and these ministries across our Synod and across the country!

DID YOU KNOW that your Mission Support helps fund areas of the synod and ELCA like this one and many other important initiatives? Your contributions are making a significant impact and helping others grow in faith, supporting the synod's lanes of Growing Young, Gaining Strength, and Going Beyond Death to Life, along with the directions of loving like Jesus, healing like Jesus, and engaging like Jesus. To learn more, visit godslove.org/missionsupport.

SAWC & SAOM

godslove.org/sawc-saom

Want to learn more about the NEPA Synod's Synod-Authorized Worshipping Communities and Synod-Authorized Outreach Ministries? Visit our website for details.





Joy to the World

DIRECTIONS: Find and circle the vocabulary words in the grid. Look for them in all directions including backwards and diagonally.



ADVENT
ANGEL
BETHLEHEM
BIRTH
BLESSINGS
CAMELS
FRANKINCENSE

INFANT
JESUS
JOSEPH
MAGI
MANGER
MARY
MIRACLE

MYRRH
NATIVITY
REJOICE
STABLE
STAR
THREE KINGS
WISE MEN

DIRECTIONS:
Find and circle the
vocabulary words
in the grid. Look
for them in all
directions including
backwards and
diagonally.

CANDLELIGHT
CAROLING
CHESTNUTS
CHOIR
COZY
DINNER
EGGNOG
EVE
FAMILY
FIREPLACE
GATHERING
MIDNIGHT MASS
MILK AND COOKIES
MISTLETOE
MOVIES
REINDEER
SANTA
SILENT NIGHT
SLEIGH
STOCKINGS
STORIES
TRADITION
TWENTY-FOURTH
WARM

A Cozy Christmas Eve

Word Search



Christmas

Word Scramble



On a snowy Christmas Eve, Santa's excited reindeer knocked over a sack filled with festive words while practicing for their big night. Now, all the holiday magic is jumbled! Can you help untangle the words before Santa takes off?

HCSSAMTRI

SMTEILEOT

APOSETTNII

MOWNASN

HERAWT

RNGBIEADRGE

HAOIDLY

RFYTOS

GHLISE

IPALFEECR

SEERTSPN

CTAODINSERO

LEICCI

ENERERDI

WEKSFALON

NASAT

NIELST

TIEWNR

NNMTAERO

AHKHKUNA

AORCL

EOGGNG

ISOGKCTN

CLADNE

(Answers on the last page)

Scrambled Presents



1. _ _ _ _ O O _ _ _

4. O _ _ O _ _

2. O O _ _ _

5. _ _ _ _ O O _ _ _

3. _ O _ _ _ O _

6. _ _ _ O _

Unscramble the words, then use the circled letters to answer the riddle:

What nationality is Santa Claus?

(Answers on the last page)

A Christmas Prayer – Christmas Eve 1881



It was Christmas Eve 1881. I was fifteen years old and feeling like the world had caved in on me because

there just hadn't been enough money to buy me the rifle that I'd wanted for Christmas. We did the chores early that night for some reason. I just figured Pa wanted a little extra time so we could read in the Bible.

After supper was over I took my boots off and stretched out in front of the fireplace and waited for Pa to get down the old Bible. I was still feeling sorry for myself and, to be honest, I wasn't in much of a mood to read Scriptures. But Pa didn't get the Bible, instead he bundled up again and went outside. I couldn't figure it out because we had already done all the chores. I didn't worry about it long though, I was too busy wallowing in self-pity. Soon Pa came back in. It was a cold clear night out and there was ice in his beard. "Come on, Matt," he said. "Bundle up good, it's cold out tonight." I was really upset then. Not only wasn't I getting the rifle for Christmas, now Pa was dragging me out in the cold, and for no earthly reason that I could see. We'd already done all the chores, and I couldn't think of anything else that needed doing, especially not on a night like this. But I knew Pa was not very patient at one dragging one's feet when he'd told them to do something, so I got up and put my boots back on and got my cap, coat, and mittens. Ma gave me a mysterious smile as I opened the door to leave the house. Something was up, but I didn't know what.

Outside, I became even more dismayed. There in front of the house was the work team, already hitched to the big sled. Whatever it was we were going to do wasn't going to be a short, quick, little job. I could tell. We never hitched up this sled unless we were going to haul a big load. Pa was already up on the seat, reins in hand. I reluctantly climbed up beside him. The cold was already biting at me. I wasn't happy. When I was on, Pa pulled the sled around the house and stopped in front of the woodshed. He got off and I followed. "I think we'll put on the high sideboards," he said. "Here, help me." The high sideboards! It had been a bigger job than I wanted to do with just the low sideboards on, but whatever it was we were going to do would be a lot bigger with the high side boards on.

After we had exchanged the sideboards, Pa went into the woodshed and came out with an armload of wood – the wood I'd spent all summer hauling down from the mountain, and then all Fall sawing into blocks and splitting. What was he doing? Finally I said something. "Pa," I asked, "what are you doing?" You

been by the Widow Jensen's lately?" he asked. The Widow Jensen lived about two miles down the road. Her husband had died a year or so before and left her with three children, the oldest being eight. Sure, I'd been by, but so what?

Yeah," I said, "Why?"

"I rode by just today," Pa said. "Little Jakey was out digging around in the woodpile trying to find a few chips. They're out of wood, Matt." That was all he said and then he turned and went back into the woodshed for another armload of wood. I followed him. We loaded the sled so high that I began to wonder if the horses would be able to pull it. Finally, Pa called a halt to our loading, then we went to the smoke house and Pa took down a big ham and a side of bacon. He handed them to me and told me to put them in the sled and wait. When he returned he was carrying a sack of flour over his right shoulder and a smaller sack of something in his left hand. "What's in the little sack?" I asked. Shoes, they're out of shoes. Little Jakey just had gunny sacks wrapped around his feet when he was out in the woodpile this morning. I got the children a little candy too. It just wouldn't be Christmas without a little candy." We rode the two miles to Widow Jensen's pretty much in silence. I tried to think through what Pa was doing. We didn't have much by worldly standards. Of course, we did have a big woodpile, though most of what was left now was still in the form of logs that I would have to saw into blocks and split before we could use it. We also had meat and flour, so we could spare that, but I knew we didn't have any money, so why was Pa buying them shoes and candy? Really, why was he doing any of this? Widow Jensen had closer neighbors than us; it shouldn't have been our concern.

We came in from the blind side of the Jensen house and unloaded the wood as quietly as possible, then we took the meat and flour and shoes to the door. We knocked. The door opened a crack and a timid voice said, "Who is it?" "Lucas Miles, Ma'am, and my son, Matt, could we come in for a bit?"

Widow Jensen opened the door and let us in. She had a blanket wrapped around her shoulders. The children were wrapped in another and were sitting in front of the fireplace by a very small fire that hardly gave off any heat at all. Widow Jensen fumbled with a match and finally lit the lamp.

"We brought you a few things, Ma'am," Pa said and set down the sack of flour. I put the meat on the table. Then Pa handed her the sack that had the shoes in it. She opened it hesitantly and took the shoes out one pair at a time. There was a pair for her and one for each of the children – sturdy shoes, the best, shoes that would last. I watched her carefully. She bit her lower lip to keep it from trembling and then tears filled her eyes and started running down her cheeks. She looked up at Pa like she wanted to say something, but it wouldn't come out.

"We brought a load of wood too, Ma'am," Pa said. He turned to me and said, "Matt, go bring in enough to last awhile. Let's get that fire up to size and heat this place up." I wasn't the same person when I went back out to bring in the wood. I had a big lump in my throat and as

much as I hate to admit it, there were tears in my eyes too. In my mind I kept seeing those three kids huddled around the fireplace and their mother standing there with tears running down her cheeks with so much gratitude in her heart that she couldn't speak.

My heart swelled within me and a joy that I'd never known before, filled my soul. I had given at Christmas many times before, but never when it had made so much difference. I could see we were literally saving the lives of these people.

I soon had the fire blazing and everyone's spirits soared. The kids started giggling when Pa handed them each a piece of candy and Widow Jensen looked on with a smile that probably hadn't crossed her face for a long time. She finally turned to us. "God bless you," she said. "I know the Lord has sent you. The children and I have been praying that he would send one of his angels to spare us."

In spite of myself, the lump returned to my throat and the tears welled up in my eyes again. I'd never thought of Pa in those exact terms before, but after Widow Jensen mentioned it I could see that it was probably true. I was sure that a better man than Pa had never walked the earth. I started remembering all the times he had gone out of his way for Ma and me, and many others. The list seemed endless as I thought on it.

Pa insisted that everyone try on the shoes before we left. I was amazed when they all fit and I wondered how he had known what sizes to get. Then I guessed that if he was on an errand for the Lord that the Lord would make sure he got the right sizes.

Tears were running down Widow Jensen's face again when we stood up to leave. Pa took each of the kids in his big arms and gave them a hug. They clung to him and didn't want us to go. I could see that they missed their Pa, and I was glad that I still had mine.

At the door Pa turned to Widow Jensen and said, "The Mrs. wanted me to invite you and the children over for Christmas dinner tomorrow. The turkey will be more than the three of us can eat, and a man can get cantankerous if he has to eat turkey for too many meals. We'll be by to get you about eleven. It'll be nice to have some little ones around again. Matt, here, hasn't been little for quite a spell." I was the youngest. My two brothers and two sisters had all married and had moved away.

Widow Jensen nodded and said, "Thank you, Brother Miles. I don't have to say, May the Lord bless you, I know for certain that He will."

Out on the sled I felt a warmth that came from deep within and I didn't even notice the cold. When we had gone a ways, Pa turned to me and said, "Matt, I want you to know something. Your ma and me have been tucking a little money away here and there all year so we could buy that rifle for you, but we didn't have quite enough. Then yesterday a man who owed me a little money from years back came by to make things square. Your ma and me were real excited, thinking that now we could get you that rifle, and I started into town this morning to do just that, but on the way I saw little Jakey out scratching in the woodpile with his feet wrapped in those gunny sacks and I knew what I had to do. Son, I spent the money for shoes and a little candy for those children. I hope you understand."

I understood, and my eyes became wet with tears again. I understood very well, and I was so glad Pa had done it. Now the rifle seemed very low on my list of priorities. Pa had given me a lot more. He had given me the look on Widow Jensen's face and the radiant smiles of her three children.

For the rest of my life, whenever I saw any of the Jensens, or split a block of wood, I remembered, and remembering brought back that same joy I felt riding home beside Pa that night. Pa had given me much more than a rifle that night, he had given me the best Christmas of my life.

(By Rian B. Anderson)

Christmas
Word Scramble

SOLUTION

HCSSAMTRI	CHRISTMAS	LEICCI	ICICLE
SMTEILEOT	MISTLETOE	ENERERDI	REINDEER
APOSETTNII	POINSETTIA	WEKSFALON	SNOWFLAKE
MOWNASN	SNOWMAN	NASAT	SANTA
HERAWT	WREATH	NIELST	TINSEL
RNGBIEADRG	GINGERBREAD	TIEWNR	WINTER
HAOIDLY	HOLIDAY	NNMTAERO	ORNAMENT
RFYTOS	FROSTY	AHKHKUNA	HANUKKAH
GHLISE	SLEIGH	AORCL	CAROL
IPALFEECR	FIREPLACE	EOGGNG	EGGNOG
SEERTSPN	PRESENTS	ISOGKCTN	STOCKING
CTAODINSERO	DECORATIONS	CANDLE	

Scrambled Presents

SOLUTION

- 1. DOLLHOUSE
- 2. TRAIN
- 3. BICYCLE
- 4. SLINKY
- 5. TELEPHONE
- 6. WAGON

Scrambled Letters: H O T R I L S N P H O

Answer: North Polish