

Epiphany of Our Lord



FOR THE BEGINNING
— THE ROAD ISN'T STRAIGHT —

January 4-5, 2025



Trinity Lutheran Church
213 North Pennsylvania Ave. | Mason City, Iowa 50401 | 641-423-0536 | trinity-mc.org

Epiphany of Our Lord

January 4, 2025 - 5:00 p.m.

January 5, 2025 - 9:00 a.m.

Livestream Worship Service/KCMR 97.9

The Road Isn't Straight

Too often, we've been told that a successful life is a linear one. But in reality, our lives unfold with many unexpected twists and turns. The Magi follow a star, embarking on a long journey in a foreign land in order to honor the newborn Christ. Instead of returning to Herod as commanded, they trust their dreams and go home by another way. Their road isn't straight, but God "makes a way in the wilderness" (Isaiah 43:19) as they follow their intuition and diverge from the expected path.

Welcome to Trinity! We are glad you're here. If you are new to Trinity Lutheran, please complete an informational card which can be found in the pews.

We love having small children in worship! Those needing a space to change or feed little ones are welcome to use the **Child Care Room** located next to the nursery. A **unstaffed nursery** is available during the **9:00 and 10:30 services**, located on the 2nd floor just outside the north sanctuary door (door under the stained glass window door).

Toddler Sunday School:

Every 1st and 3rd Sunday from 9:15-10:15am parents are invited to join their 0-2 year old for a time of free play, activities, and Bible stories in the nursery.

Seating for People with Limited Mobility is reserved in the pew located in front of the Technical booth.

Large print bulletins and listening devices are available from the ushers.

Activity Bags are available for children during worship. They are located in the narthex and at the front of the church. Please return them at the end of services.

Serving in Worship This Weekend

Pastor Pastor Dan Gerriets
Pastor Daniel Hanson
Pastor Beverly Butler

Organist Jodi Korth

Cantor Alli Day

Greeters Dan & Nancy Clarke

Coffee Fellowship
Ray and Betty Gogel
Lisa Lorenzen

Scripture Readers
5:00 p.m. Amy Dodge
9:00 a.m. Devin Dettmer

Communion Assistants
5:00 p.m. Amy Dodge
Jim & Nancy Fingalsen
9:00 a.m. Tim & Carol Dettmer

Acolytes
Raina Rattay, Ranger Rattay

Technical Support
9:00 a.m. Maggie Gerriets,
Carter Rockwell

Worship Transportation
9:00 a.m. Dean Graven

Ushers
5:00 p.m.
9:00 a.m.

Custodian
Dave Smith

GATHERING

Prelude

Welcome

Call to Worship

P How did you get here?

C I walked, eyes looking up, following the star.

P I ran, lunging for a love that is bigger than me.

C I tumbled and fell, tender step after tender step.

P I ambled like a river, caught up in God's flow.

C I crawled, kissing the earth below me.

P Tell me again. How did you get here?

C I am here by God's grace and love's pull.

P Welcome home.

C This is God's house.

P There is room for you here.

C Let us worship our gracious God.

Confession and Forgiveness

P Friends, one of the gifts of confession is it allows us to begin again.

For in this moment of prayer,
we name our shortcomings and mistakes.

We receive God's grace,
and we start again.

The slate is wiped clean.

The prayer of confession is an act of beginning again and again and again.

So join me in prayer. For even here, God is already doing something new.

Let us begin again. Let us pray:

C God of new beginnings,

**We admit that we often follow the well-worn path,
simply because others have been there before.**

**Sometimes this is holy and humble,
but there are days when a new path needs to be tread.**

**On those new-beginning days, O God,
give us the courage to follow your star.**

Give us the courage to go home by another way.

**Give us the courage to kick up some dust and walk in a new direction
for the sake of justice, love, and neighbor.**

For when you are doing a new thing, we want to have the courage to follow.

With hope in our hearts we wander, we travel.

Amen.

P Dear travelers,
No matter the roads you've taken,
the steps you've made,
or the paths you've traveled,
there is nowhere you could go
that would land you outside of God's love.
Hear and believe the good news of the Gospel:

**C Regardless of the path we travel,
of how lost we may get,
or the twists and turns along the way,
we do not walk alone.
We are loved.
We are forgiven.
We have every chance to begin again.
Thanks be to God for a love like that!
Amen.**

***Gathering Hymn** *Precious Lord, Take My Hand*

ELW 773

***Greeting**

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C And also with you.

***Prayer of the Day**

P God of starlight, we long to follow you.
Like the Magi, we want to pick up the hems of our robes
and run in your direction.
Like the Magi, we want to kick up dust with our feet
and make a joyful ruckus following your guiding star.
Unfortunately, the stars can be hard to see from here.
Your still, small voice can be hard to hear from here.
So just as you guided the Magi, guide us.
Draw our attention to your Word.
Reveal what it is you want us to hear today,
so that we can follow you.
With hope in our hearts we pray,

C Amen.

Reading: Isaiah 43:16-21

L ¹⁶ Thus says the LORD,
 who makes a way in the sea,
 a path in the mighty waters,
¹⁷ who brings out chariot and horse,
 army and warrior;
 they lie down, they cannot rise,
 they are extinguished, quenched like a wick:
¹⁸ Do not remember the former things,
 or consider the things of old.
¹⁹ I am about to do a new thing;
 now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
 I will make a way in the wilderness
 and rivers in the desert.
²⁰ The wild animals will honor me,
 the jackals and the ostriches;
 for I give water in the wilderness,
 rivers in the desert,
 to give drink to my chosen people,
²¹ the people whom I formed for myself
 so that they might declare my praise.

L The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

***Gospel Acclamation**

Marty Haugen

Congregation:

Al-le-lu - ia, al-le-lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we
 go? You have the words of e - ter - nal
 life. Al - le - lu - ia!

Optional Repeat

P The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the second chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

***Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12**

P ¹In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ² asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.”

³When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

⁶ ‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.’ ”

⁷Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” ⁹When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

Pastor Daniel Hanson

Hymn of the Day

Amazing Grace

ELW 779

***Affirmation of Faith**

C We believe in a with-us God,
a God who is beside us in the mountains and valleys,
holding our hand through every bump and turn.
And in the chaos of our journey,
we believe that God sees
what we cannot always see:
a path home by another way.
Therefore, trusting in this ever-present and guiding God,
we lace up our shoes.
We look for God's fingerprints in the world.
We trust that there are paths still unexplored,
paths that God has only begun to invite us down.
And like the Magi, we dare to follow.
May it be so.
Amen.

***Prayers of the People**

L Lord in your mercy.

C Hear our prayer.

***Peace**

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C And also with you.

The ministers and congregation may greet one another in the name of the Lord.

MEAL

Announcements

Offering

Text to Give is available at Trinity!
Simply text the amount you wish to give to 833-412-0093.
Or scan the QR code with your smartphone.
Please note where your gifts should be directed towards.



***Offertory**

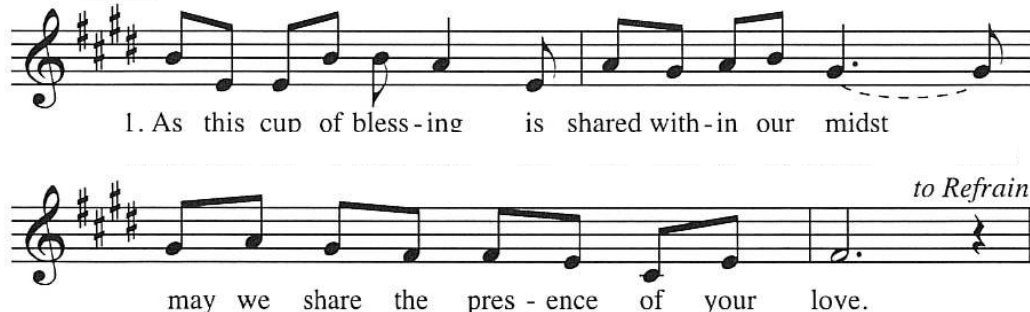
As the Grains of Wheat

Marty Haugen



As the grains of wheat once scat-tered on the hill were
gath-ered in - to one to be - come our bread;
so may all your peo-ple from all the ends of earth be
gath-ered in - to one in you.

Verses



1. As this cup of bless-ing is shared with-in our midst
may we share the pres - ence of your love.

to Refrain

***Offering Prayer**

P God of heaven and earth,
from the beginning, you have called forth life,
in which you take delight.
The trees, the fields, and the seas sing for joy.
Bless now these gifts, received from your bounty,
that we may join the chorus of creation
to tell of your salvation from day to day.

C **Amen.**

***Great Thanksgiving**

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Lift up your hearts.

C We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P God of new beginnings,

As we prepare to come to this Table, pour out your spirit in this room.

Allow this meal to feel like a new beginning.

Allow us to experience welcome here.

Allow for all to be fed here.

Allow for all to sense your presence here.

And may these experiences jumpstart our faith, hope, and love in new ways.

With hope we gather. With hope we begin again.

***Words of Institution**

***Lord's Prayer**

**C Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,
and the power,
and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

***Prayer after Communion**

P Nourishing God,
Sometimes we tell ourselves that too much has taken place to begin again.
We think the world is too far gone.
We think we have made too many mistakes.
We tell ourselves that we couldn't possibly begin again.
But then we come to this Table and we get a glimpse of your kingdom.
We come to this Table and all are welcomed, all are seen, all are fed.
And just like that, we have hope.
Just like that, we begin again.
Thank you for the gift of this fresh start.
Thank you for planting hope deep in our bones.
Thank you for meeting us in ordinary bread and juice to remind us that
it's never too late to build your kingdom here.
We are grateful.
We are so grateful.

C Amen.

SENDING

***Blessing**

P The God of love,
Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,
lavish you with grace,
illumine your path,
and increase your joy,
today and always.

C Amen.

***Sending Hymn**

In the Bleak Midwinter

ELW 294

***Sending**

P Go in peace. The Word of God dwells in you richly.
C Thanks be to God!

Postlude

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The **cover art for the bulletin** is for everyone to have a blessed, happy and healthy New Year given by **Harlan and Marge Baack**.

Bible Study Opportunities

Each Wednesday morning Trinity offers a Bible Study based on that weekend's readings led by the preaching pastor. Men's Bible Study meets in the Fellowship Hall from 7-8am and Women's Bible Study meets in the Library from 8:30-9:30am.

Lydia Bible Study meets on the 2nd Wednesday of the month and will meet on **Wednesday, January 8 at 9:30 a.m. in Rm. 208.** We meet for treats, conversation and then continue with the Bible Study.

WELCA Bible Study meets on the 2nd Thursday of the month and will meet on **Thursday, January 9 at 9:30 a.m. in Rm. 208.** Rev. Dr. Norma Cook Everist will lead the study. We will continue to study the Biblical book of Luke. We hear sermons from the Gospels every week, but rarely do we study one book all the way through continuously. We use interactive discussion. Bring other women with you.

Trinity's Pastoral Care Staff makes regular visits to Mercy One North Iowa hospital. But not everyone who is hospitalized appears on the clergy list. If you are hospitalized and wish to be visited, please contact the church office.

BASES (*Balance-Agility-Strength-Endurance-Socialization*)

This free exercise class for adults age 55 or older is coordinated by RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program) and led by RSVP volunteers. BASES meets every Tuesday and Thursday morning from 8:00 - 9:00 AM. in the Gathering Space.

Sunday Morning Coffee Servers

Volunteering to serve coffee is fun, not too difficult, and it's a wonderful way to meet or catch up with the congregation and visitors. A member of the Ministries Committee is there to assist you. We have ***openings from January to June 2025***, so whether you are new to volunteering for Sunday coffee or you have volunteered in the past, please sign up for a Sunday on the bulletin board by the church office.

The 2025 Flower Calendar and Bulletin Calendar have been posted. If you'd like to honor a loved one, remember a birthday and/or an anniversary while enhancing Trinity's sanctuary for the celebration of worship, please consider donating altar flowers or colored bulletins for a weekend. Both calendars are located on the bulletin board next to the church office. Altar Flowers are \$45 and Bulletins are \$25.

Hygiene Pantry Reminder

Hygiene Pantry items can be brought to Trinity's east entrance on the second weekend each month. *Shampoo; Bath Soap; Toothpaste, Toothbrush; Dish Soap; Laundry Soap; Deodorant; Toilet Tissue; Feminine Hygiene Products; Wipes; Bar of Soap* Questions? Contact us at 641-423-0536.

Wellness Wednesdays in January - Try the YMCA!

1840 S Monroe Avenue, Mason City, IA

The new year offers a fresh start to achieve your physical fitness goals. ***Explore the YMCA on Wednesdays in January for only \$5!*** Purchase a card at Trinity Lutheran Church that can be used **starting January 8th** to enjoy the YMCA any time on Wednesdays on your own or join an available group class such as Tai Chi, aquatic exercise class, lifting class, and many more . Grab a friend or two and make it an outing. This does not apply to people with YMCA memberships. Cards will be available for purchase from the Trinity church office during the week and on weekends in the Gathering Space throughout January.

Book Discussion—Monday, January 13th | 1:00 PM | Gathering Space

Our next book is *The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell* by Robert Dugoni “The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell is a heartwarming novel that celebrates overcoming the unfairnesses of life.” Multiple copies are available to check out from the Trinity Lutheran Church office.

Camp Sunday

January 12 is Camp Sunday and representatives from Riverside Lutheran Bible Camp will be here to share their time and talent with young people during the SS hour as well as sharing thoughts with the congregation at morning services.

Camp Registration is OPEN for Summer 2025! The Earlybird deadline is Feb. 15, so THINK SUMMER! If you have any questions, contact Marty Greder at 641-423-0536.

Puzzle Palooza—Sunday, January 19th | 10am | Fellowship Hall

The Health Cabinet is hosting a puzzle race and exchange on Sunday, January 19th at 10am in the Fellowship Hall. *Bring 1—Get 1 / Bring 2—Get 2 / Bring 3—Get 3.* You may drop off your puzzles any time during the week or bring to church that Sunday. The puzzle race will begin at 10:15am. Create a team of 2-6 people and **sign up by Sunday, January 12th**. Prizes will be awarded. Questions—contact Becky Elsbernd.

Perfect Games in Ames | Saturday, January 18th | 9AM—4:00 PM

For all 5th-8th grade students

Change of Plans for Middle School Students grades 5-8—Instead of *snowtubing*, we will be going to Ames to Perfect Games on January 18. We will gather at Trinity at 9:00am and return about 4:00pm. Cost is \$30 and includes transportation, bowling, laser tag, arcade games, and pizza lunch. Friends are always welcome, and scholarships are available. Please contact Carol Dettmer at carol.dettmer@trinity-mc.org by Jan 9 so we the bus size can be confirmed.

Wednesday Night **ALIVE**

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 8

Meal / 6:00 PM

Menu: Potato & Ham Soup or Chili
Breadstick, Salad & Dessert (*free will offering*)

Programming / 6:30 PM

- **Around the World in Eight Weeks** will be held in the Gathering Space. Explore the world through the lens and stories of Trinity members and friends. Each Wednesday world travelers will share their adventures to faraway lands. Photos of their trips will be highlighted in the Rotating Art Gallery.
Jan. 8th- Italy- Deb Nielsen
Jan. 15th- Ecuador & Peru- Tim & Carol Dettmer
Jan. 22nd- Germany- Tom Dettmer
Jan. 29th- Kenya & Tanzania- Nancy Sweetman
- **Discovering Bonhoeffer**— Dietrich Bonhoeffer was a German Lutheran pastor, neo-orthodox theologian and anti-Nazi dissident who was a key founding member of the Confessing Church. His writings on Christianity's role in the secular world have become widely influential. Learn more as you study Bonhoeffer with Pastor Dan Gerriets in January.
- **KINDERGARTEN - GRADE 6** Students will come to the 2nd floor and learn new things from talented Trinity adults with new activities each week.
- **CHOIR**—Information and details to come.
- **CONFIRMATION GRADES 7-8**
Confirmation students will gather 6:30–7:45 PM in the Fellowship Hall and experience small group and large group learning as they study for their Confirmation.
- **FLAME GRADES 9-12** High School Youth Group meets 6:30-7:45 PM in the Youth Room.
- **NURSERY** The Nursery is **UNSTAFFED** but open to preschoolers and their parents.

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Monday, January 6

9:00 a.m. Centering Prayer (Rm. 322)
9:00 a.m. Trinity Serving at Community Kitchen
7:00 p.m. Boy Scouts (Fellowship Hall)

Tuesday, January 7

8-9:00 a.m. BASES Exercise (Gathering Space)
Noon Staff Meeting
4:15 p.m. NordKor Choir Rehearsal

Wednesday, January 8

Explore the YMCA Day
7:00 a.m. Men's Bible Study
8:30 a.m. Women's Bible Study
9:30 a.m. Lydia Circle
6:00 p.m. WNA Meal
6:30 p.m. WNA Programming

Thursday, January 9

8:00 a.m. BASES Exercise (Gathering Space)
9:30 a.m. WELCA Bible Study (Rm. 208)
7:00 p.m. Una Vocis Rehearsal

Saturday, January 11

5:00 p.m. Worship Service

Sunday, January 12

Camp Sunday
8:00 a.m. Heath Cabinet Mtg. (Rm. 300)
9:00 a.m. Worship Service
9:15 a.m. Sunday School
10:30 a.m. Worship Service

Scholarship Applications

Attention High School seniors and current college students: Scholarship applications and re-applications for the 2024-2025 school year are available to pick up outside the church office. Forms are available on Trinity's website. Applications must be turned in to the church office by **March 1, 2025**.

Lunch and Learn: Elder Law & Financial Preparedness

Thursday, January 23 | Noon- 1:00 PM (Soup and sandwich served for a free-will offering.)
Fellowship Hall

Attorney and Certified Public Accountant, David A. Grooters from The Pappajohn Law Firm will be sharing information about preventing financial disaster when facing long-term care. Be knowledgeable and be prepared by coming to the Lunch & Learn at Trinity Lutheran Church on Jan. 23 at noon. A light lunch of soup and sandwich will be provided for a free-will donation. Please call Trinity Church at 641-423-0536 to get a head count for lunch by Tuesday, Jan. 21.

Kitchen Gadgets Galore—Waffle Iron | Monday, January 27 | 1-3:00 PM

Come and learn some creative uses for those kitchen gadgets you received for Christmas or have been taking up space in your cabinet for years. This workshop offers hands-on participation with every step of the process- preparing, and eating. Supply fee is \$5.00. Space is limited so sign up by the church office or call 641-423-0536.

Think beyond waffles when you consider the humble waffle iron! This class will have you be pulling out your waffle iron for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Before you donate your waffle iron to the thrift store come check it out and be amazed!

Soul Spa | Friday, January 24 | 9:00 AM- 11:00 AM

Soul Spa invites participants to engage in a variety of spiritual practices to nurture body, mind, and spirit. We will start as a group with a guided New Year's meditation and then allow you to wander as desired to stations provided- creative art expression, yoga, Visio Divina, refreshments and seated healing touch sessions. Wear comfortable clothing and come as you are. Register by calling 641-423-0536 or just show up. Start the year off with intentional time to reset and refresh.

