



NEWSLETTER



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ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

www.stpaulplankinton.com

605-942-7364

Elders Justin Everson
 Curt Guindon
 Mike Tuschen

President Justin Everson

LWML President ... Marlene Johnson

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

www.trinitywhitelake.com

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605-249-2333

Elders David Bogenhagen
 Dan Guericke
 Scott Meier

President Dean Suelflow

LWML Presidents Diana Kieffer
 Hope Circle
 Brianna Bogenhagen
 Ruth Circle



St. Paul's Lutheran Church and Trinity Lutheran Church are members of the South Dakota District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

January 2024

Joint Divine Worship Service Schedule for January

Sunday, January 7, 2024 — 5 p.m. at St. Paul's
 Sunday, January 14, 2024 — 5 p.m. at Trinity
 Sunday, January 21, 2024 — 5 p.m. at St. Paul's
 Sunday, January 28, 2024 — 5 p.m. at Trinity

Christian Education

Joint Bible Study – No Bible Class in January.

Joint Confirmation Class — same location as the Joint Divine Service, 3:45 p.m.

St. Paul's Sunday School — 3:45 p.m. January 7 and 21.

Trinity Release-Time — Wednesdays, 2:15–3:15 p.m.

Lutheran Women's Missionary League

Trinity Hope Circle – January 2, 2024, 2 p.m.

Trinity Ruth Circle – January 3, 2025, 6:30 p.m.

St. Paul's Dorcas Circle – January 8, 2024, 2 p.m.

January Meetings

St. Paul's Council — January 7, 2024, 6 p.m.

Trinity Lutherans For Life — January 14, 2024, 6 p.m.

St. Paul's Annual Voters Meeting — January 21, 2024, 6 p.m.

Trinity Annual Voters Meeting — January 28, 2024, 6 p.m.

Serving the Lord's Church in JANUARY

TRINITY

Elder Dan Guericke

Ushers Dan Meier

Dean Suelflow

Acolyte Brant Bogenhagen

Altar Jane Guericke

ST. PAUL'S

Elder Justin Everson

Ushers Kieth Albrecht

Josh Kemp

Acolyte Jett Kemp

Altar Sandy Tuschen

Scripture Readings

Jan. 7 Genesis 1:1–5; Romans 6:1–11; Mark 1:4–11

Jan. 14 1 Samuel 3:1–10; 1 Cor. 6:12–20; John 14:43–51

Jan. 21 Jonah 3:1–5, 10; 1 Cor. 7:29–31; Mark 1:14–20

Jan. 28 Deuteronomy 19:15–20; 1 Cor. 8:1–13; Mark 1:21–28

The **February 2024 newsletter** will be available on or after January 28, 2024. Articles are due Thursday, January 25, 2024.

Please send newsletter/bulletin items to Nancy Bogenhagen at trinitywlsd@gmail.com. **Weekly bulletin deadline is Thursday noon.** Please email me if you prefer your newsletter emailed to you. Thank you!



FRIDAY DIGEST - FRIDAY DECEMBER 29, 2023 THE STATUE OF LIBERTY, THE CROSS, AND THE REAL HOPE FOR THE NEW YEAR!

by Gregory Seltz

New Year's Eve is a time when Americans gather to ceremonially put the past behind them and cast their hopes forward for a blessed New Year. As a country, the notion of liberty, life, and the virtuous pursuit of happiness always seems to compel us forward with bold resolutions, or at least bold assertions that the future, the years ahead, will surely be much better than the past.

But what happens to these "New Year's hopes born of Freedom" when they are confronted by a growing barbarism or government abuse to the contrary? What happens when even the law-abiding, "good" citizens, striving to live virtuous lives, accountable to God and in service to neighbor, suddenly become lives threatened by the state? What then? What's going on? Well, this growing darkness is the extension and misuse of "hate speech" laws, using them to label, to silence moral, ethical, kind people. Why would officials do such a thing? Those who are perceived to be on the wrong side of the modern chaos of gender assertions, the "life" side of the abortion debate, or the "God side" of the "faith in God, or absolute faith/dependence in government" debate, they are a threat to the secular empire.

So, what about this "hope in the new year" then? Well, first of all, we have First Amendment protections to prevent some of this nonsense from destroying our country. So, use those protections as long as you have those to use. Yes, celebrate the fact that these are indeed blessings from God, blessings that give us a bit of hope. Remember too that these blessings are purposeful in service to God's people living boldly the life of faith that He has given us to life.

To that end, never forget the most important thing of all. God's light of grace and mercy shines brightest amidst the darkness. And hope rooted in

Jesus can never be extinguished. As believers in the "It-is-finished" Lord Jesus, we are called to be salt and light in this world, and to let His light shine for all to see. We have hope because of the civil, temporal liberties we have, no doubt. But we have an even more certain hope because of the person and work of Jesus on the cross for all.

Being a people who know how to cherish both is the opportunity that we have in the world in which we live today.

I love the song written by Neil Enloe, called "Statue of Liberty." He wrote these words, words we should all cherish anew in 2024:

In New York Harbor stands a lady, with a torch raised to the sky; And all who see her know she stands for Liberty for you and me.

Chorus: I'm so proud to be called an American, to be named with the brave and the free; I will honor our flag and our trust in God, and the Statue of Liberty.

On lonely Golgotha stood a cross, with my Lord raised to the sky; And all who kneel there live forever, as all the saved can testify.

Chorus: I'm so glad to be called a Christian, to be named with the ransomed and whole, As the statue liberate the citizen, So the cross liberates the soul.

On the cross is my statue of Liberty, it was there that my soul was set free, Unashamed I'll proclaim that a rugged cross is my Statue of Liberty.

Defend, protect, and use the liberties that we have in this country, they provide a freedom unlike any other in the world. But defend so as to proclaim what you know to be true in Christ for you and for all. Do that ... and there is real Hope for the New Year — 2024.



MAIN STREET LIVING JANUARY 2024

All programs are interpreted and closed-captioned for the hearing impaired. For more information visit: www.mainstreetliving.com

Broadcast on KDLT (NBC) channels 5.1 / 46.1

January 7, 2024

10 a.m. "The Other Wiseman" Another Magi, making his journey to the Christ child, encounters others and shows kindness along the way.

10:30 a.m. Rev. Corey Aker, pastor at Faith Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls, presents a message titled "Arise, Shine! Your Light Has Come!" This sermon is based on Isaiah 60:1-6.

January 14, 2024

10 a.m. "The Priceless Book" Money and health troubles on the farm lead a father to God's Word for comfort.

10:30 a.m. Rev. Tim Rynearson, pastor at Peace Lutheran Church in Brookings, presents a message based on Psalm 139.

Jan. 21, 2024 (Sanctity of Human Life)

10 a.m. "Live Option" A 15-year-old pregnant daughter and her mother disagree on the future of her child.

10:30 a.m. Rev. Jim Lamb from Lutheran Family Service in Fort Dodge, IA and Sioux Falls, SD, presents a message titled "The Trinitarian Value of Human Life." This sermon is based on Isaiah 43:1.

January 28, 2024

10 a.m. "In Search of Dignity" Two factory workers struggle to find meaning after they are replaced by machines.

10:30 a.m. Rev. Thomas Christopher, pastor at Trinity and St. Martin's Lutheran Churches in Spencer and Alexandria presents a message titled "Why a Fish?" This sermon is based on Jonah 1:1-17.



JANUARY 2024

Merlyn Haak, SP – January 5
Eric & Jessica Olson, TR – January 8
Sandy Titze, SP – January 10
Linc Will, SP – January 10
Richard Meier, TR – January 13
Tracie Anthony, SP – January 14
Mike Tuschen, SP – January 14
John & Kris Kieffer, TR – January 15
Linda Smith, TR – January 16
Jerry Boyd, SP – January 17
Blaire Bogenhagen, TR – January 18
Alexis Hauge, TR – January 18
Charlie Everson, SP – January 18
Dona Steffen, TR – January 20
Corey Baumiller, SP – January 23
Brian Ruden, TR – January 24
Thomas Geyer, TR – January 24
Jeff Johnson, TR – January 24
Ron Steffen, TR – January 28
Diana Kieffer, TR – January 29
Orion Steichen, TR – January 29
Elizabeth Will Thomas – January 30

Trinity Lutherans For Life will hold their Annual Meeting Sunday, January 14, 2024, following the Divine Service. Everyone is welcome!

St. Paul's Council will meet following the Divine Service Sunday, January 7, 2024. **St. Paul's Annual Voters Meeting** will be January 21, 2024, following the Divine Service.

Trinity's Annual Voters Meeting will be held Sunday, January 28, 2024, following the Divine Service.

You're invited to "Prepare, Plan, and Pray"



This event will be hosted by the Immanuel Dimock LWML and Thrivent Action Teams Sunday, **January 21, 2024**. Be our guest at **noon** for lunch at Immanuel Lutheran Church, 40205 270th Street, Dimock, known as the "white church" located at the corner of Dimock and Betts Roads. We will meet in the church basement, so please use the west entrance. If an elevator is needed, use the east entrance.

The afternoon will feature presentations by Kelly Scheetz, Scheetz Mercantile LLC, and

Gina Bialas, 9-12th Life Skills Special Education teacher and Vice President of the LWML Mitchell Zone. The presentations will provide intent as we begin 2024 and are beneficial for teens on up.

Noon lunch will treat us to one of Kelly's recipes. During lunch, Kelly will demonstrate the recipe and share techniques on planning and preparing meals focusing on budget and time saving options.

Gina will share techniques to prioritize our time for those we love. She will provide hands-on tools for intentional daily prayer, schedule planning, and organizing the clutter that takes time away from family and God. (This is the presentation Gina Bialas shared at the LWML Mitchell Zone Fall Rally.)

Our afternoon of learning and fellowship should conclude by 3 p.m.

Please RSVP to Mona Geidel (text/phone 402-304-5819) **by Wednesday, January 17, 2024.**

Share this opportunity with your family and friends!"

STAY IN TOUCH

Pastor Jens Jenson, Vacancy Pastor

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Websites

www.stpaulplankinton.com

www.trinitywhitelake.com

Links for bulletins, printed services, and for the YouTube recordings are updated weekly under the Services tab!

Email

trinitywlsd@gmail.com

- Submit newsletter and bulletin articles.
 - Update a prayer request.
- Request a digital copy of the newsletter.

Just As I Am

In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence (Ephesians 3:12).

Charlotte Elliott was born in Clapham, England, in 1789. In her younger years, Charlotte was a writer and artist, but by age 30 her health began to fail. For the next 50 years, she would live in pain and illness. Because of her constant sickness, she frequently became frustrated and despondent. She would often say, "If God loved me, why would he do this to me?"

One day, a Swiss minister came to the Elliott house for dinner. During the meal, Charlotte, as she was prone to do, burst into a temper tantrum and stormed out of the room, much to the embarrassment of her family.

The minister followed her into the next room and quietly told her that she felt such anger because she had nothing to cling to. Her only hope, he told her, was to turn to the Lord.

But she didn't know how she could do that. "How could I, such an angry and bitter person, turn to God?" she asked.

"You can go to God," the minister told her, "just as you are."

Charlotte Elliott never forgot that pastor's advice and years later she penned what would become one of the most famous hymns of all time. She wrote: "Just as I am, without one plea But that thy blood was shed for me And that thou bidd'st me come to thee, O Lamb of God, I come, I come" (CW 397:1).

For those of us who struggle with self-esteem, who look at ourselves in the mirror and don't like what we see, who feel like nobody who really knows us could love us, there were no more comforting words ever spoken.

God accepts me. God loves me. God receives me just as I am.

It is important, however, that we understand what that means. God accepts you just as you are, but that doesn't mean you are acceptable just as you are.

Acceptance doesn't mean God sees the good in everybody. It doesn't mean you are good enough just the way you are. You are a sinner. You are a liar. You are stubborn. You hold grudges. You worry. You doubt. You have dark and dirty sins no one else knows about. You are not good enough just as you are. You are not acceptable by God's standards.

Yet he still accepts you because he made you acceptable in his eyes. God rejected his Son, Jesus—punished him for your dirty sins—so that he could accept you. You have been washed clean in the blood of Jesus and the waters of Holy Baptism.

God accepts you because of Jesus. He accepts you because of his love. His love and acceptance make you special. You are a dearly loved child of God. You are perfect in God's eyes—not because you are perfect, but because you are washed in Jesus' blood.

It doesn't matter who you are or what you have done, you can go to God ... just as you are.

From the devotional *364 Days of Devotion* by Andrew Schroer © 2021 Northwestern Publishing House. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission. Book available at www.nph.net (Item no. 0600767).





Begin making plans now for the

63rd CONVENTION

of the

**Lutheran Women's Missionary League
South Dakota District**

June 7–8, 2024

**Best Western Ramkota Hotel and Convention Center
Aberdeen, South Dakota**

*Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls
(1 Peter 1:8–9).*

Keynote Speaker

Kay Kreklau, LWML North Dakota District, LWML President 2011–2015







Bible Study Leader

Donna Snow, LWML Texas District, author



January 2024



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2 2 p.m. TR Hope Circle 	3 2:15 p.m. TR Release-Time 6:30 p.m. TR Ruth Circle 	4	5	6
7  The Baptism of Our Lord Events at St. Paul's 3:45 p.m. Confirmation/SS 5 p.m. Joint Divine Service 6 p.m. SP Council Meeting	8 2 p.m. SP Dorcas Circle 	9	10 2:15 p.m. TR Release-Time	11	12	13
14  Second Sunday after Epiphany Events at Trinity 3:45 p.m. Confirmation 5 p.m. Joint Divine Service 6 p.m. TR Lutherans For Life Annual Meeting	15	16	17 2:15 p.m. TR Release-Time	18	19	20
21  Third Sunday after Epiphany Events at St. Paul's 3:45 p.m. Confirmation/SS 5 p.m. Joint Divine Service 6 p.m. SP Annual Meeting	22	23	24 2:15 p.m. TR Release-Time	25	26	27
28  Fourth Sunday after Epiphany Events at Trinity 3:45 p.m. Confirmation 5 p.m. Joint Divine Service 6 p.m. TR Annual Meeting	29	30	31 2:15 p.m. TR Release-Time			