



Making Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World

December 2017 Newsletter of Trinity United Methodist Church

A message from the high and towering God, who lives in Eternity, whose name is Holy; "I live in the high and holy places, but also with the low-spirited, the spirit-crushed. And what I do is put new spirit in them, get them up and on their feet again." -Isaiah 57:15-16 (The Message)

My guess is we all have our morning rituals. Regardless of when the alarm may or may not go off, we set our routines. For me, it's early. The world is dark. The day is quickly coming. I enjoy just a few minutes of peace and quiet because I know that the world is about to wake up.

I will be caring for dogs, making lunches, getting myself ready and helping Margo wherever she may need my help to get her day started as well. I know there will be the joy of traffic. The calm of the day will be replaced not only with vehicles, but there will also be the race of humanity. We are all trying to accomplish whatever is on our to-do list, or our job telling us we must get done.

For the next 10 plus hours, we are all exposed to the day's demands. It is now that we must make a choice as to how we will live in it. May I suggest that in this season known as Advent and Christmas, we truly try to live the Fruits of the Spirit.

- Choose **Love**: Love what God loves.
- Choose **Joy**: Invite God into all your circumstances.
- Choose **Peace**: Forgive.
- Choose **Patience**: Take the moment to pray.
- Choose **Kindness**: Be kind to all: family, friend, enemy, and stranger.
- Choose **Goodness**: Be who God created us to be.
- Choose **Faithfulness**: Let us keep our promises.
- Choose **Gentleness**: Nothing is won by force.
- Choose **Self Control**: Be influenced by God and Christ.

Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control are all points we should choose to live our lives by daily. If we choose to commit to these daily, we can put our heads on our pillows and call it a good day.

When we choose to live in these virtues on a daily basis, it may be easier in February. This may be a quieter time in your life. December will offer us many opportunities for many things. I know that the church schedule is full, but I believe that we can, and will, make the right choices.

Let me share the Sunday schedule with you for December:

December 3rd-First Sunday in Advent time to order poinsettias

December 10th-Cantata at both services

December 17th-Children's program in between services

(continues on next page)

Trinity United Methodist Church 8009 Q Street Ralston, NE 68127

Phone: 402-331-4054 <http://www.trinityralston.org> [facebook.com/TrinityRalstonUMC](https://www.facebook.com/TrinityRalstonUMC)

Sunday Worship: Services @ 8:30am & 11am, Sunday School @ 9:45am

Pastor: Rev Dr. Matt Fowler **Associate Pastor:** Rev Curt Copple **Pastor of Congregational Development:** Rev Dr. Bob Folkers
Executive Pastor: Rev Dr. Cole Fowler **Children /Youth Director:** Becky McClanathan
Director of Spiritual Development/Accompanist: Vicki Buras **Choir Director:** Dr. David Galant
Media Director/Worship Leader: Matthew Hindley **Controller:** Penny Holzbauer
Administrative Assistant: Vicky Segers **Building Supervisor:** Judy Slavik

Live in the Fruits of the Spirit continued...

December 24th-Regular services at 8:30 and 11am, and Christmas Eve services at 5, 7, and 11pm.

December 31st-We will host a Noon Year's Eve countdown.

Full? Yes, but oh so wonderful!

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Matt, Margo, and our children

Mission Notes

In the Folkers/Dappen Sunday School class we were discussing Moses and how this one ordinary man set into motion a dramatic sequence of events for the Israelite people. God chose Moses to be the one to lead his people away from Egypt's enslavement so that they might enjoy the same kind of freedoms that their enslavers enjoyed. The Moses story is still relevant to our world today.

Judy Slavik and I witnessed another story of how one person got the nudge to begin work in a small food pantry which started over 25 years ago. We helped celebrate Barbara Greshem's 25 years of service in the Living Hope Pantry. It set into motion a ripple effect that encouraged and urged other churches to contribute to this food and clothing pantry. Many thanks to Trinity members who donated food for the Thanksgiving meals. A carload of food was taken as well as a \$200 gift card to buy turkeys.

Although we didn't get as many Christmas boxes as we did last year, we were able to donate 65 boxes for children who might not otherwise receive any kind of gift. Wouldn't it be fun to watch a group of children open their boxes? That would certainly be the WOW in their lives.

Dining for Women will resume their meeting time after the first of the year. We will meet on January 12th at Noon if the weather cooperates. The meal and discussion are always something to look forward to. Since our inception over five years ago, we have donated nearly \$5400. We feel blessed that we do not have to face the challenges that many girls and women are confronted with, and that our donations can help impact the lives of so many.

Judy Dappen
Mission Chair

December Adult Studies and Group Opportunities:

- **Advent Series: Faithful: Christmas Through the Eyes of Joseph**

How do you see the Christmas story and the birth of Jesus? This series by Adam Hamilton will help us understand how Joseph's story is much like our own. In life, we encounter circumstances that we would never have chosen for ourselves. At times it can be tempting just to walk away. Joseph provides us a great example of humbly obeying God even when we don't understand, and faithfully moving forward in the strength that God provides. This promises thought provoking and stimulating conversation. **Begins December 3rd in the Garden Room** (lower level). Current adult study groups will come together for this Advent series. All are welcome!

- **Young Adult Journey Group:** Come and join us as we go beyond learning about a topic and go deeper in faith by doing life with others. In the process, you'll experience fun, friendships, and faith. This group is led by Jim and Vicki Buras and meets the first Wednesday of each month at 7pm downstairs in the Garden Room. Nursery care provided.

Coming in January:

- **Grief Share:** 13 week grief series/support

GriefShare is a friendly, caring group of people who will walk alongside you through one of life's most difficult experiences. You don't have to go through the grieving process alone.

For more information contact Vicki Buras at 402-331-4054 or Vicki.B@trinityralston.org.

Education Notes

The church staff and myself are super excited for December! It's a magical month full of festivities. In December we have two more meetings for the **Kids for Christ** (KFC) class on Wednesday nights, **December 6th and 13th**. Then we will not have classes until January 10th.

December 10th: Youth Gathering; once this month. Location TBD, fun holiday night with games, gift exchange and food. 5:00-7:00pm

December 16th: Kids/Youth Christmas Program Rehearsal in the sanctuary from 3-5pm.

December 17th: Kids/Youth Christmas Program, *The Symbols of Christmas*, at 9:45am in the sanctuary. Juice and cookies to follow.



December 31st: Kids can join me at 9:45am to make “noisemakers” for a fun Noon Years Eve moment. This will be done during our usual Sunday School class time. Then during the 11am service, we will take a moment to do a count down to “NOON” and celebrate the new year. Be ready for a little bit of **NOISE!**



January 4th-5th: Winter JAM (Jesus and Me) VBS. This is just like our summer VBS.

Preschool-5th graders are welcome to register. If you are older and would like to be a teacher assistant, either register online or get ahold of me at Becky.M@trinityralston.org. This will be held on Thursday/Friday from 9:30-11:30am. Lunch is not provided, but snacks are given each day. Sunday, January 7th, the Winter JAM kids are invited to the 11am service to share their songs they've learned and anything else we want to share.

12-2pm will be a luncheon for these families and a few fun games in the gym. (Sunday Fun Day!)

Register now open at trinityralston.org!

Enjoy a few pictures from our Advent Family Crafting Day! We had 13 families/kids attend to create their tree as well as one family created theirs at home. So 14 trees were made!



Let your
light
shine.
Matthew 5:16

Becky McClanathan, Director of Children and Youth

(pictures on this page courtesy of Becky McClanathan.)

Christmas Cantata

The choir invites you to enjoy *Gift of Love* on Sunday, December 10th at the 8:30 and 11am services. This Christmas Worship experience tells of the greatest gift the world has ever been given. We look forward to seeing you there!

The 36th Annual Community Christmas Carol Concert will be held on Sunday, December 10th at 7pm at St. Paul's UMC in Papillion. Enjoy an evening of seasonal music featuring a brass band, bell choirs, and community choirs.

December Birthdays

- 12/2 Connie Folkers
Erin Gonzalez
Joe Hansler
Ron Hein
- 12/3 Aurora Fowler
Michelle Morrissey
- 12/5 Tom Sullivan
Rosemary Whittaker
- 12/7 Joann Krohn
John York
- 12/8 Kris Martinez
Avery Shannon
- 12/9 Maxine Citta
Dayton Conley
Nancy Ramsey
- 12/12 Greg Johnson
Jerry Olson
- 12/13 Casey Craven
- 12/14 Josh Brown
Ruth Heyde
Susan Jasman
- 12/15 Sandy Olson
- 12/18 Verlyn Farrar
Larry Woods
- 12/22 Bette Fink
- 12/25 Carl Citta
- 12/26 Emma Frazee
- 12/27 Pam Brown-Tritsch
Bob Price
- 12/29 Mary Berglund
Angela Gilbert
Josh Hanson



UMW Notes

Sat, Dec 2nd	Christmas Coffee & Carols	10am
Thurs, Dec 7th	Naomi Ruth Circle @ FarmHouse Café	11:30am
Thurs, Dec 7th	Esther Circle @ Beacon Hill	6pm
Tues, Dec 12th	Mary Circle @ Pam Brown's Home	6:30pm
Thurs, Dec 21st	Bingo @ Hillcrest Shadowlake	2pm

Saturday Book Club

Saturday Sisters Book Club will not meet in December. However, our selection for Saturday, January 20th, is *Before the Rain Falls* by Camille Di Maio. We will meet at 9am in Room 205. You are invited to join us even if you have not read the book.

Trinity Methodist Men

The Trinity Men's Group will meet on Saturday, December 30th at 8am. If you are interested in learning more about this group, then contact Steve Gage.

Thank you

I would like to thank everyone for their support and prayers during John's illness and his passing. A "special thank you" to Pastor Matt for the beautiful service, and for his visits to our house. Very much appreciated. Also, a huge thank you to the church ladies for serving the lunch and making desserts! Thanks to everyone, I so appreciated it!
-Barb Jensen

New Members

We welcomed as baptized members Andrea and Harlow Gonzalez on Sunday, November 12th.

Christmas Eve Services

This year Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday. It also happens to be the Fourth Sunday of Advent. What this means is that during the morning, we will hear a message of Advent during the 8:30 and 11am services. Then, we will hold candle-light Christmas Eve Services at 5, 7, and 11pm in the evening. We look forward to celebrating this special day with each of you in worship of the Jesus Christ the Newborn King!

A Security

The time has come for us to take some steps toward a more secure building. Therefore, the west door into Fellowship Hall will be kept locked and visitors directed to the front door during the week. Of course there will be some exceptions, especially Sunday mornings, and during other events.

Calendar insert

You will find inserted in this month's Beacon a copy of the current calendar for December. Please check the website (trinityralston.org) for the most up-to-date calendar available. Call the church office at 402-331-4054 for more information, or to schedule your event today.