

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church and School LCMS



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Pastor Warren Thomason, Vacancy Pastor



From the Vacancy Pastor.....December, 2011

On Sunday November 27, I greeted the congregation by exclaiming “**Happy New Year!**” I know everyone thought I had gone bonkers. But Sunday was the first day of the **New Church Year**. I pointed out that the Church calendar is different from the world’s calendar. If you, like good king Wenceslaus, looked out on the Feast of Stephen—that’s Dec. 26, for the record—you might think Christmas is over. On the Christmas Day evening news, local TV stations are already posting Christmas tree pick-up sites and times. Some trees hang around for a week to give a festive atmosphere to New Year’s Eve and Day, then come down. On January 2 Valentine candy is in the stores. That fits with the world’s Christmas season, but the Church has something a little different going on. December is largely taken up with Advent. The idea is preparation, but not in buying presents and food. It’s about a preparation of repentance for celebrating the coming of God in the flesh, Jesus, who will die to save us from our sins.

The Church’s celebration of Christmas does not begin with December and end on Christmas, with New Year’s Day tacked on the end. In the Western Church, it begins on Christmas and continues until Epiphany. That

day—Jan. 6—is when we celebrate the arrival of the Magi to worship Jesus. By tradition, these twelve days from Christmas through Epiphany comprise the Twelve Days of Christmas.

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How did that happen? Nobody knows. Epiphany is a much older feast than Christmas, but it’s largely forgotten by most, lost in the shuffle by many, and celebrated by a few. Now how did *that* happen?

By the late fourth century, Epiphany was celebrated on Jan. 6. The earliest known reference dates from 361, and in those days the references indicate not just the appearance of the kings—*epiphany* is an English form of a Greek word meaning “appearance” or “manifestation”—but also the appearance or manifestation, the epiphany, of God, including

His birth. It's not that there wasn't Christmas. This is Christmas as well as a celebration of all the other events in the life of the young Jesus up to and including His Baptism and first public miracle at the wedding in Cana. In short, it's a big day!

In the Western Church, events began to spin off from Epiphany. By the sixth century, Dec. 25 had become the celebration of Christ's birth. His Baptism was celebrated after Epiphany, so Epiphany itself focused on the arrival of the kings who, not being Jews, give it the significance of the appearance, or manifestation, of the Messiah to the Gentiles. Divisions cease. Jesus appeared not only as the Chosen One of Israel but the Lord of all nations.

That means that from Christmas Day onward, all the fun and festivities are just beginning! You have twelve more days to celebrate, so leave those decorations up, right on up through Twelfth Night (Jan. 5–6). to commemorate Christ's Incarnation—His coming to earth in the flesh—for your salvation.

Simply put, the appearance or manifestation of God is just too big to contain in one day! That's why the Church doesn't. Instead, it extends the celebration of God's coming among us to twelve days, starting at Christmas. Don't let the world, the mall, or any calendar tell you any differently!

My prayer is that each and every one of you dear children of God at Holy Trinity will again bask in the Light of the King of Kings, this entire Christmas, rekindling your faith toward the opportunities to serve Him in the new calendar year.

December Stewardship Appeal

Dear Brothers and Sisters of Holy Trinity Congregation and School,

Over 2,000 years ago the world received the greatest gift that has ever been given. The angel announced this gift to shepherds who were watching their flocks at night. The message of God's angel explained what a truly remarkable

event this was. The angel said: ***“Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord.”*** Suddenly a great company of heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying: ***“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom His favor rests.”*** (Luke 2:10-12; 14 NIV)

Those shepherds were never the same again. They went to Bethlehem to see for themselves this great happening. After seeing the Christ child with their own eyes they left in great joy and shared this good news with everyone they met.

On that first Christmas God fulfilled His promise to send a Savior who would rescue His people from their sins. What a blessing for the lowly shepherds to be the first people besides Mary and Joseph to hear about and see this great happening!

Years later the Apostle John by inspiration of the Holy Spirit acknowledged this miraculous gift with one of the most memorable verses in the Bible: ***“God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but shall have eternal life.”*** (John 3:16 NIV) This single verse expresses two things that God delights in doing and those two things are ***loving*** and ***giving***.

Children are richly blessed when they have good and godly parents who bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Children are also blessed when they imitate the positive qualities of their Christian parents.

St. John in the third chapter of his first letter stated: ***“How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are.”*** (1 John 3:1 NIV)

What does this say to us as God's stewards of all [including time, money, abilities and much more] that He entrusts to our management? It says this: If we are to grow as children of God we will develop those godly characteristics of our Heavenly Father, namely ***loving*** and ***giving***.

Christmas is in the very best sense a gift that keeps on giving. May the Holy Spirit help us to receive this great gift with joy and thanksgiving and respond with growth in ***loving*** and ***giving*** as God's children! This desire could become an important part of our New Year's resolutions! Wouldn't that make our part of the world so much better?

Have a blessed Christmas and a joy-filled New Year!

Your brother in Christ,
Kurt R. Piepenbrink

From Bob Reed, Head Elder

One Wednesday as I was leaving the church office after the school chapel service, one of the Pre-K4 students called to me from the playground fence. I greeted him and he asked where I was going. I said, "I was going to make some calls on people from the church." He replied; "Be careful, because I like you a lot." I can't tell you how great that comment made me feel for the rest of the day.

I once read an article on business management. The author claimed that some of the most empowering words you can share with someone are, "What you do makes a positive difference!" The little boy I mentioned earlier didn't say those exact words, but his words carried that sentiment and certainly empowered me. Today I want to say to our pastor and church staff that what you do makes a positive difference. I want to say to our elders that when you pray for your people and make yourself accessible to them, you make a positive difference. I want to say to our church leaders and committee chairmen that when you lead the school and congregation and make tough decisions, you make a positive difference. I want to say to the school leaders and staff that when you teach our wonderful children with Christ in your heart and on your lips, you make a positive difference. I want to say to each and every member of the body of Christ at Holy Trinity that when you pray for and support the ministry and mission of your congregation and school, you make a positive difference.

Our precious Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, was born to us, lived among us, died for us, and rose from the dead for us, so we might be empowered to be a positive force of change in the world. I pray this special time of the year revitalizes each of us in our powerful Christian faith. May we reflect the positive difference Christ has made in our lives by empowering those around us with words and actions that give a Christian witness.

May each of you have a Christ-filled Christmas!

God Bless,
Bob Reed, Head Elder



Advent By Candlelight

When: Sunday, Dec, 11

Where: Fellowship Hall

Time: 6:00-8:00pm

This is a special evening to share with fellow women. We will sing songs, taste some decadent desserts and enjoy special entertainment. Sign up on the sign-up sheet in the narthex

The Stars tell the Story!! What in heaven's name do the stars have to do with Christmas? Plenty!! Surely you recall the star that guided the Wise Men to the birthplace of the Savior. Far to the east they looked up on night and saw it brightly beckoning them to Bethlehem. But that's just one star. Stars are scattered throughout the pages of Holy Writ. In fact, you find stars at the very beginning. Our special series of worship services for Advent allows the stars to lead us to Bethlehem - proclaiming, as they do, the story of our Savior, Christ the Lord.



Join us for our series of Advent Vesper Service - 6:00pm pot-luck in Fellowship Hall and at 7:00pm, the service in the sanctuary. The following are the dates and the themes:
November 30th: The Perfect Star - Creation
December 7th: The Fallen Star - Lucifer
December 14th: The Promised Stars - Christians
December 22nd: The Morning Star - Christ

**Poinsettias are now on sale, \$5.00 each plant.
Sign up sheet is in the narthex.**



Happy Birthday to

Ian Higgins – 12/6
 Jeffrey Miron – 12/10
 Carolyn Reed – 12/10

Kurt Piepenbrink - 12/16
 James Milne – 12/17
 Cheryl Hauser – 12/16
 Stephanie Dinkel - 12/17
 Charles Hightower – 12/18
 Erich Borgstede - 12/27
 David Reed – 12/29
 Dorothy Ripper – 12/31

December Events

2	Fri	9:00am	Ladies Bible Study, Church Office
			HTLS Spirit Day
4	Sun	8:55am	Sunday School & Adult Bible Class
		10:00am	Choir
		10:30am	Worship
5	Mon	10:00am	Prayer Shawl Ministry, Church Office
		6:00pm	Beef O'Brady's – Benefit HTLS
		6:00/7:00M	Den Meeting
6	Tues		Pastor Thomason in Church Office
7	Wed	6:00pm	Advent Vespers potluck – Fellowship Hall
		7:00pm	Advent Vespers Service - Sanctuary
10	Fri	9-11:00pm	Work Day
11	Sun	8:55am	Sunday School & Adult Bible Class
		10:00am	Choir
		10:30am	Worship with Communion
		6:00-8:00pm	Advent By Candlelight- Fellowship Hall
12	Mon	6:30-7:30	Pack Meeting – Fellowship Hall
13	Tues		Pastor Thomason in Church Office
14	Wed	6:00pm	Advent Vespers potluck – Fellowship Hall
		7:00pm	Advent Vespers Service - Sanctuary
15	Thurs	7:00pm	HTLS Christmas Service
18	Sun	8:55am	Sunday School & Adult Bible Class
		10:00am	Choir
		10:30am	Worship
Dec 19 until Jan 2			Christmas Break: HTLS
20	Tues		Pastor Thomason in Church Office
21	Wed	6:00pm	Advent Vespers potluck – Fellowship Hall
		7:00pm	Advent Vespers Service - Sanctuary
24	Sat	7:00pm	Christmas Eve. Candlelight Service
25	Sun	10:30am	Christmas Day Worship Service with Communion
27	Tues		Pastor Thomason in Church Office
31	Sat	7:00pm	New Year's Eve Vesper Service



TIGER TIMES

Holy Trinity Lutheran School News

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DECEMBER 2011



Principal's Greeting

Dear Holy Trinity Families,

Christmas is such a wonderful time. Even at my age, I feel like a child inside. I love to look at the decorations on homes and in stores. Their sparkle and shine just make me smile and feel uplifted. I feel like an old friend has returned when I listen to and sing along with Christmas music that seems to be everywhere. I love putting out long-loved ornaments and decorations and shopping for just the right gift for each person on my list. I reflect back on a time when my boys were young, full of wonder, and thrilled by everything associated with Christmas. I am truly blessed to be able to relive a child's vision of Christmas every year with my first graders.

Each year, however, I tell myself that I must not get caught up in the hustle and bustle and forget the true meaning of Christmas. When I slow down and give myself time to think, I am awestruck by the miracle that truly is Christmas. I reflect on how Mary must have felt and wonder if she was frightened or eager, cold or comfortable – just what was going through her

mind. Did she understand what her child would mean to the world?

As parents, you have the special privilege of making Christmas a time for your family. I hope that this Christmas, you will take some time to spend with your children - really sit down and spend time with them. Talk to them. Bake cookies and wrap presents with them. Drive around and look at decorations with them. Watch a Christmas program and read a Christmas story with them. And then, make sure in all the talk about letters to Santa and visits to the mall, that you take time to share with them the true story behind Christmas, the birth of Jesus.

Now, while your children are young, take the time to make special memories with them. Before you know it, they will be grown.

I hope you all have a Blessed and Merry Christmas.

In His Service,
Sherry Lane



Business Manager's Note

Remember our "Refer a Friend" program. Please talk about our mission at Holy Trinity to your friends in the

community. Tell them that HTLS is fully accredited by the National Lutheran School Accreditation Commission.

Lutheran schools make up the largest Protestant school system in the U.S. Every child who attends a Lutheran school is challenged to work and learn at the level of his or her God-given talents and abilities. Teachers are challenged to awaken a child to the value and enjoyment of learning and rejoice when children set educational goals for themselves and achieve them.

With His Blessings,
Mrs. Jacobs



Auction Committee Meetings

The first organized auction committee meeting was held on November 17th in the Church Sanctuary. It was announced that the Chairpersons for Derby Day are sisters Shiziko Carson and Rhonda Estevez. Lisa Hensley and Melissa McCarville will also be playing roles in the auction's organization.

The next meeting will be at Beef O'Brady's on South Dale Mabry on Thursday, December 1st at 6:30 PM.

Mrs. Jacobs



Advent Services

All Holy Trinity families are invited to participate in the Advent potluck dinners and services. They will be held each Wednesday evening during Advent. The first one will be on Wednesday, November 30th. The dinner will be at 6:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall. The service will be in the Sanctuary at 7:00 PM. If you are not able to make it for dinner, you are certainly welcome to come to the service.



Family Nights

Don't forget to show your support for Holy Trinity and have a great meal at the South Dale Mabry Beef O'Brady's. Family Nights are scheduled for December 5th and January 2nd.



Car Wash Tickets

The car wash ticket sale is over. Thank you everyone who participated! It was a great fundraiser for the PTL.



Santa Shop

Santa Shop is on December 9th. The children get to shop for family members, pets, and friends with help from the PTL elves. Santa will be there. Each child gets a picture taken with Santa and some reindeer food for Christmas Eve. Please check your child's backpack for detailed information.



Baptismal Birthday

Jadon Milne was our December baptismal birthday. He will be recognized in Chapel on December 7th.



Migrant Ministries

Mrs. Connie Sikema came to the Chapel services on November 16th. She spoke to the children about helping the children of the migrant workers. The older children helped load bag after bag of donated food and some boxes of clothing from the Holy Trinity students. The Cub Scout troop that meets at Holy Trinity donated many bags of flour and sugar. In addition, the Chapel offerings that have been collected so far this quarter, totaling \$142.00, were sent along so Mrs. Sikema can buy needed items where donations fell short. Thank you so much Holy Trinity students and families. You made the Thanksgiving for many migrant families much better.



Garden Club

Thanks to Michelle James of the Davis Islands Garden Club, students in Kindergarten through 5th grade will be able to participate in Holy Trinity's Junior Garden Club. The first meeting will be on November 28th. The Kindergarten will plant the traditional Kindergarten Garden and beautify the surrounding areas. The students in first through fifth grades will weed and re-plant the area in the front of the school designated as the *Kathy Naumann*

Memorial Garden.



Thanksgiving Program and Meal

The children did so well in the Thanksgiving program. The Tiny Tigers and four-year-old Kindergarteners were adorable under the direction of Mrs. Harris, Mrs. Bannister, Mrs. Douglas, and Mrs. Alfonso. The older children sang and did their parts so well. Many thanks to Mrs. Reed, Miss Kane, Mrs. Piepenbrink, Mrs. Pothier, and Mrs. Gregory.

The Thanksgiving meal was a success. The food was delicious and families and friends enjoyed each other's company. The children's art work added so very much. Thank you to all the volunteers, teachers, and especially Mrs. Dodie Peralta, for all the hard work they put in to the putting the meal together.



A New Stove

The school has been blessed by the church. The Church Council purchased a stove for the Fellowship Hall. It was installed last week by Shawn McCarthy and Mr. Vik.



Brownie Troop

In addition to the second grade Brownie Troop, Holy Trinity will now have a Daisy troop. Most of the girls are from Dale Mabry Elementary, but it is open to any Holy Trinity kindergarteners who would like to take advantage of this wonderful opportunity.



Work Day

The last school/church work day was on November 12th. Thank you to everyone who helped. You made a huge difference!

The next scheduled work day is on December 10th. This is a great way to get volunteer hours as well as beautify the school and get to know church members and other school parents.



Advent by Candlelight

All ladies of the church and school are invited to attend Advent by Candlelight on Sunday evening, December 11th. The event will be from 6:00 – 8:00 PM and will support the food pantry at New Beginning Christian Church.

Please RSVP to Mrs. Douglas.



PTL

The next PTL meeting will be on Tuesday, November 29th from 6 to 7 P.M. A representative from the Tampa Fire Department will speak. Please make sure you attend. The PTL is a very important part of our school and provides so much to enhance your child's education.



Chapel

Please join your child for Chapel on Wednesday mornings as you are able.

Please remember your child's Chapel offerings. The money is donated to specific local causes. The monies collected during the second

quarter are being donated to Migrant Ministries.



Box Tops

Please continue to save Box Tops and turn them into the school. You may send them in your child's backpack, take them to Dodie in the school office, give them to Mrs. Lane, or put them in the box in the Church's narthex. Remember that the money we receive from Box Tops goes to enhance our school programs.



Target's Program

Please remember that Target donates up to 1% to our school when parents, teachers, and other school supporters use the REDcard. More information about the program is on the *Target Take Charge for Education* website.



Butter Braid Fundraiser

The Butter Braid fundraiser was a big success. Look for our second one in the spring just in time for Easter.



Items Needed

Coach Settlemyre is in need of miscellaneous sports equipment. If you are cleaning out your garage and have any to donate, please contact Coach.



Volunteer Hours

Remember to log in your volunteer hours with

Dodie in the school office.



Graduate News

Some of our graduates are involved in a program called Avid. This is a nationwide program that has as its mission to close the achievement gap by preparing all students for college readiness and success in a global society. Shelby Harris (now at RHS) was inducted into Avid while at Monroe Middle School.

Samantha Thornton, now at Robinson, met with her congressman on November the 18th and interviewed with representatives of West Point and the Air Force Academy.

Jon Alfonso, now at Plant, is a member of the elite drum corps. He and the rest of the Plant Band participated in the state finals for band competition at Tropicana Field on November 19th.



News from the Classroom

PreK-3

Happy Thanksgiving! The Tiny Tigers have been learning all about Pilgrims, Native Americans, and how the first Thanksgiving came to be. They have also been busy practicing for their part in the Thanksgiving program. We have also learned the letters G, H, and I. We are finishing up our unit on Teddy Bears. The children enjoyed having their faithful teddy bears in the classroom with them. They have learned how to snuggle and to be gentle. We are going to continue the "gentle" lesson. The children have also been

introduced to the next exciting holiday...Christmas. We have talked about the angel visiting Mary telling her that she will be having a baby boy, and he will be named Jesus! This is a very exciting time for the children.

Mrs. Harris
Mrs. Bannister

Pre-K4

The Pre-K 4 class has been busy learning all we can about Native Americans, Pilgrims, and Thanksgiving. We are happy to learn of the many ways to give praise and thanks to God!

In December, we will “cuddle up and read” with our Christmas stories. The children will learn about the true meaning of Christmas and the amazing story of the birth of Jesus. We will create many wonderful projects that show the glorious spirit of Christmas!

Have a Blessed
Christmas,
God’s Blessings,
Mrs. Douglas
Mrs. Alfonso

Kindergarten

I am thankful for a wonderful class. This autumn they have learned about God's mercy and His ability to love all. Kindergarten has learned the love of Pilgrims, Indians, Eagle Kachina, and animals, especially the turkey (from his point of view). This winter we will be exploring God's love in different countries and learn how they celebrate Jesus.

Miss Kane

First Grade

The children used language arts skills to write about Veteran’s Day Thanksgiving themes. We made a Pilgrim mouse and

wrote stories about it after watching the video *The Mouse on the Mayflower*. Our next non-fiction book study will improve comprehension skills, word study skills, and vocabulary. It will be about animals finding homes for the winter in their habitats.

In math we are beginning “doubles plus 1” in both addition and subtraction. We are also learning to tell time to the hour and half-hour.

In religion, we have started our third book. It is about Old Testament heroes.

The *How to Cook a Turkey* recipe book was printed just in time for Thanksgiving! Our chefs always have a humorous perspective on how a turkey is cooked.

Mrs. Lane

Second Grade

In second grade we continue to be busy and enthusiastic about the upcoming holidays! We have been thinking and writing about what we are thankful for. Consistent in all our writing is the thankfulness for Jesus, family, friends and Holy Trinity Lutheran School. We truly are blessed. We discovered last Thursday that our pea plants have small pods. I think we are convinced that we are real farmers and can hardly wait to taste them. In math, we just took a chapter test and everyone received an A. We would like to congratulate our own Carissa Tedesco for winning the Thanksgiving art contest. Her drawing will be featured on the Thanksgiving Program. From second grade we wish all of you a Happy Thanksgiving.

Mrs. Pothier

Third, Fourth & Fifth Grades

As the holiday approaches, the third, fourth, and fifth grade students are counting their blessings. We are very blessed to be at Holy Trinity Lutheran School and have members of the church donating their time to us. Mrs. Kallaher visited us with her dog, Tony. She showed us some of the tricks Tony has been taught. Each student had a chance to read to Tony. He especially enjoyed listening to passages from the Bible. Later, the students wrote about Tony’s visit. We are looking forward to Mrs. Kallaher and Tony visiting again next month!

In science, children have been learning about the scientific method, and applying their knowledge to their first experiment. We are investigating which molds first: cheese, bread, milk, or a banana. We have done research and stated our hypothesis and are awaiting the results. We will let you know what happens.

The students are learning about God being a mighty fortress. They even made their own fortresses as symbols. They are also reviewing the life of Moses and God’s plan for him. Moses was adopted as we all are adopted by God!

The children are being introduced to persuasive writing and their first activity is to convince others to eat anything other than turkey for Thanksgiving. It will be interesting to see what reasons the children give to save a turkey!

The students are all looking forward to a little extra time to spend with their family and friends. Ms. Gregory

Art

The classes studied Henri Matisse and replicated his famous cut-paper design still life entitled *Vegetables*.

Work done by the students in grades Kindergarten through fifth was on display in the Fellowship Hall during the Thanksgiving meal.

Carissa Tedesco won the art work contest for the front cover of the Thanksgiving program. Honorable mention goes to Chloe McLeod, Cadence Peralta, Erik Jacobs, and Joseph Welbourn. The contest was open to students in second through fifth grades.

There will be a second art contest for the Christmas program.

Mrs. Chesser



Holy Trinity Lutheran School

UPDATED

December 2011

- December 2 – Spirit Day
Early Dismissal 11:30 AM
EC provided
- December 5 - Family Night 6-8 PM
Southdale Beef O'Brady's
- December 7 - Advent Potluck and Service HTLC, 6 PM
- December 9 – Santa Shop
- December 10 - School/Church Workday
9 AM – 11 AM
- December 11 - Advent by Candlelight
6:30 – 8:30 PM
- December 14 - Advent Potluck and Service HTLC, 6 PM
- December 15 – Christmas Service
HTLC 7 PM
Mandatory Participation
- December 16 – Book Exchange /
Class Christmas Parties
Early Dismissal 11:30
- December 19-30 **Christmas Break**
No School; No EC

January 2012

- January 2 - Teachers Return
Family Night 6-8 PM
Southdale Beef O'Brady's
- January 3 - Students Return
- January 6 – Spirit Day
Early Dismissal 11:30 AM
EC provided
- January 13 - End of Quarter 2
(43 days)
- January 16 - MLK, Jr. Day
No School; No EC

Please Note:

There may be additions or deletions to this calendar.
All dates are subject to change.