



## Trinity Lutheran Church

2221 North Oak Lane  
State College, PA 16803  
814-238-2024 www.trinitystatecollege.org



The flowers are given by Keith and Diane Smith  
in honor of those who serve or  
have served to protect our country.

January 1

The flowers are given by Ronica Brownson  
to the wonderful church family at Trinity.

### PRAYER LIST

Bette Larson, Jerry Wion, Kris Glad (military), Raymond Petersen (military),  
Theresa Dvorsky (cancer), Stan Lembeck, Moe Gordon, (cancer), Lois Rear-  
ick, James Nash (dementia), Gary Ayres, Basil Costantino (cancer), Amanda  
Sigman (return cancer stage 4) and children, Bill Sherman (return cancer),  
Mary Whitlock (cancer), Jake Petersen (military), Sean Slane and family  
(move), Rosanne Majors and family

### TRINITY EVENTS

#### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24

5:00 pm Family Worship

7:30 pm Gathering Music

8:00 pm Candlelight Worship  
with Communion

#### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25

10:00 am Celebration of the Nativity  
with Holy Communion

#### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31

5:00 pm Worship with Communion

#### SUNDAY, JANUARY 1

10:00 am Worship with Communion

### FROM PASTOR RON

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

The year has passed quickly—once again! Here we are at Christmas. As a pastor, I'm always looking for words to convey the meaning and significance of the Good News of God, the Gospel, and relate it to the season. The story of Christmas is an amazing and mysterious tale of how God comes to us in human flesh and form. Seems a simple, even romantic story. God shows us how much He loves us by coming into our world as one of us! Amazing!

Many may think of Christmas as a day-long holiday, or merely a matter of a few days. The weeks leading up to Christmas—where for many comprise the Season of Advent, a time for waiting and watching, and preparing—for many, many others, the weeks before Christmas is for shopping, and baking—and stress!

Perhaps the marvel of Christmas is how pervasive it is. The significance of Christmas is found in the truth of Easter: how this Child born at Christmas was born to die and did so by way of death on the cross. Now Jesus the Christ-child lives making Christmas an important celebration indeed!

As of December 26, far too many people will resume "life as usual." For followers of Jesus Christmas is a season that lasts for twelve days, and in truth, lasts the year round. This poem captures the significance of Christmas quite well, I think.

### Christmas Is

By Regina Elliott

Christmas is Kindness to a child receiving life blood from a donor,  
a homeless veteran taken in out of the cold,  
Christmas is Patience for a crying baby and a restless toddler,  
Christmas is Happiness in adopting a stray dog  
who looks up at you with his grateful brown eyes,  
Christmas is Politeness in letting an elderly couple take the parking space  
closer to the store,  
Christmas is Wonder and Awe and celebrating our Savior's birth  
in Florida's bright warmth and in Vermont's snow covered pines,  
Christmas is Reconciling no matter how much you think you're right,  
Christmas is Charity in taking boxes of baby food to the food bank,  
Christmas is Joy, not just in December, but the whole year through.

May the joy of this Holy Season abide with you and those most dear to you, not only during Christmas but also the whole year through! The blessings of the Christ-child be yours in abundance!

Yours in Christ,

*Pastor Ron*

On Sunday, December 18, we welcomed Madelynne Grace Zorger into our Trinity family by way of baptism. Madelynne is the daughter of Brian and Jessica Zorger.

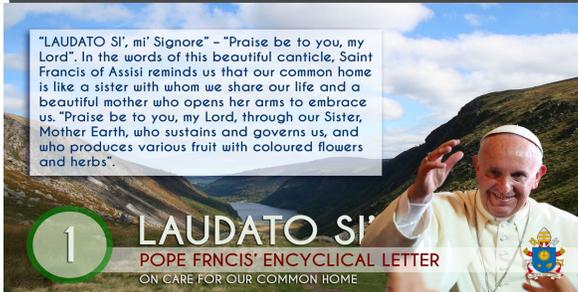


#### WEEKLY READINGS

December 25  
Isaiah 62:6-12  
Titus 3:4-7  
Luke 2:1-20

January 1  
Isaiah 63:7-9  
Hebrews 2:10-18  
Matthew 2:13-23

The church office will be closed December 21 through January 2.



A series of four Prayer/Bible Study/Discussion classes on a **Lutheran Approach to Pope Francis' Letter on Climate Change** will be held at Trinity beginning Saturday, January 7, at 8:30 am with a breakfast.

The four classes will meet on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays of January and February for about 90 minutes. (January 7, January 21, February 4, and February 18). Contact Karl Raynar with any questions.



Christmas Eve/Day 2016

Grace to you and peace on this holy night when we celebrate God's great love for us in Jesus, the Christ child. One word sums up this culmination of Advent: Emmanuel. Emmanuel means 'God with us'. Jesus is the God who came to be with us. Jesus is God's proof that he is with us and will never let us go.

Each of us have had times when we weren't sure God was with us—a hard diagnosis, a difficult relationship, the loss of employment or a host of other circumstances may have caused you to wonder if God really present and there. That is precisely why God gave us that little baby in manger—to show us in a very real way that not only is God with us, but that he is also for us and was willing to die to show us how much he loves us. In Jesus Christ we see a Lord who came to save us and out of his great love for us would rather die on the cross than lose us forever.

Because of the deep love and tender compassion of our God, our Lord became flesh in Jesus Christ. Jesus took on our humanity and was fully human while at the same time was and is always fully God. Even as he lay in the manger that first cold night in Bethlehem, he held all of creation in the palm of his hand—including you and me.

Tonight we celebrate Emmanuel, God who is with us, God who will never leave us alone; God who comes to us in every circumstance of life to remind us that we are his beloved ones; God who empowers us to share his love with others and be a blessing to those to whom he sends us. That is precisely who we meet in the little baby who was born in Bethlehem.

As you follow Jesus I pray that you know his very real presence, not just on this night but always. Jesus loves you, and so do I. I thank God for you and the way our Lord leads you to share Christ's love, share Christ's compassion, and reflect Christ's presence in this world.

Merry Christmas and may the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you always.

+Bishop Michael

I remember my home growing up. It was on the west side of Cleveland... I still dream about it. It was a place where I felt safe, where my family was and it was full of wonderful Christmas memories. My senior year of college, my parents moved to the shores of Lake Erie. It's every west sider's dream in Cleveland to get to the lake, and they finally made it. But my home was gone. In fact, I had to find directions to my parents' home for Christmas break.

I still dream about the home where I grew up. I still miss it and can still remember every feature of it. And I realize that all of us have a deep longing for home. At Christmastime, I think it's especially poignant and deep for people. Many of our Christmas carols talk about being home for Christmas and how hard it is when we're not.

Then I remembered that Mary and Joseph were not home for Christmas that first year. They were far from their home, far from their people. They were way down in Bethlehem, far from Nazareth. How disorienting that must have been for them.

But the truth is, Mary and Joseph were exactly at home for Christmas because with them was the Christ child. Jesus is our true home. That's our hope at Christmastime and our hope the year round. We are never far from home because Christ is as near to us as our own breath or our own pulse. So, wherever you find yourself this year, dear church, remember that Jesus is with you, and you are home for Christmas.

*Merry Christmas!*

*Elizabeth A. Eaton*

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton  
Presiding Bishop  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.



*Merry Christmas*