



Vol. 27, No. 1

January 1, 2025

## Christmas at Trinity

On Christmas Eve, hundreds of worshipers gathered in our sanctuary to praise God for the indescribable gift of His Son, Jesus Christ. A beautiful live nativity told the story of the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Below are some of the pictures from the joyous afternoon and evening.





Thank you to everyone who helped make our Christmas Eve worship services special. We appreciate the many hours the choir spent in rehearsals with Rebecca Castillo directing, Carla Barrows leading worship on the organ, Pastor Dorn for his message, the ushers/greeters, the expertise of the techs and everybody else working behind the scenes. Thank you to the pageant cast members and readers (listed below). Special thanks to Rebecca Castillo (Director), Haley Zimmerman (Assistant Director), Kelly Menke (Costumes), Bob Davis, Mark Anderson, Steve Kuhlman and Carris Richard (Stable Construction) and Karen Maynard and Mary Voigt (Advisors).

- Mary ..... Sophia Gonzales
- Joseph ..... Jayden Dream Cevallos
- Shepherds .....Robin Black, Lorelei McGarvey, William McGarvey, Kirk Oncken  
Shay Sonneborn, Stephanie Sonneborn, Vivian Yancey
- Donkey Handler .....Sophia Patterson
- Kings ..... Jim Cleary, William Aladid Sandoval, Chris Sonneborn
- Pages to the Kings ..... Clara McGarvey, Marceline Yancey, Kayla Cammack
- Processional Pages ..... Gavin Patterson, Evelyn Yancey, Sophia Oncken
- Angel ..... Elaina Baden
- Readers ..... Brynn Carl, Kim Davis, Trinity Garrett, Mike Gilmore  
Cassie McGarvey, Mary Oliver, Rebecca Potter, Cynthia Roney

# Blood Donor Sunday - January 12<sup>th</sup>

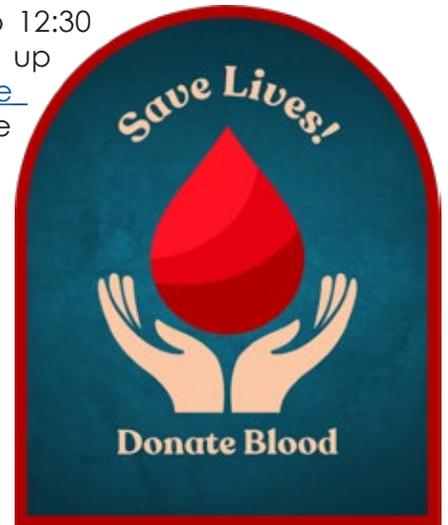
Our next Blood Donor Sunday will be held January 12<sup>th</sup>, 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the gym. If you would prefer a special time, please sign up online at <https://www.commitforlife.org/donor/schedules/drive-schedule/383360> or use the QR code on the bottom right. While scheduling an appointment ahead of time gives us an estimate of how many donors to expect and the Blood Center sends out the appropriate number of workers; an added bonus is we take scheduled appointments prior to walk-ups.

We look forward to a very successful drive. Double red cell and combination whole blood and plasma machines will be available for those wishing to donate that way. Both count for two donations.

Save time with the DIGITAL DONOR APP. The App makes it easy to find a blood drive, schedule your donation and answer the [CFL Express Pass](#) health history interview before you arrive.

REMINDER!! The minimum donor age requirement to give blood is 16 years old with a parent's permission. Weight must be 122 lbs. (still 110 lbs. for 17 and older) and in general good health.

REMEMBER: One unit of blood can save as many as three lives as it is broken down into three components – red blood cells, platelets and plasma.



## *“Un-Decorate” the Church*

**January 5th at 10:15 a.m.  
Snacks will be provided.**

**Sign up at the Welcome  
Desk if you can help.**



## Cold Weather Gear for the Homeless

Please consider donating cold weather gear to be given upon request on cold days to the homeless population who come to Trinity for a sack lunch. Items should be new or clean, slightly worn items. A majority of those coming for a sack lunch are **adult males requiring a large or extra-large size.**

Suggested items to donate include: jackets, stocking caps, gloves, socks (white preferred). Gloves are especially needed. You may place your donated item(s) at the Welcome Desk in the foyer.

Thank you in advance  
for your generosity.



# Orphan Grain Train Hygiene Kits

- Trinity partners with Orphan Grain Train (OGT) to make 250 hygiene kits.
- You can help by donating goods, time or monies.
- See due dates below for opportunities culminating February 2025.



## Trinity Partners with Orphan Grain Train to Make Hygiene Kits

When disaster strikes as it did recently in Asheville, NC, needs become very basic. A Band-Aid, washcloth, toothbrush, or bar of soap makes a world of difference. OGT provides these necessities in humanitarian disasters worldwide.

## OGT's Disaster Relief Efforts Reach Worldwide

Orphan Grain Train provides disaster relief throughout the United States and around the world. Working with the people of the communities affected by various natural disasters, OGT has been able to provide needed aid and help long after the initial devastation. Orphan Grain Train helps families devastated by storms, floods, wildfires and hurricanes. When desperation is felt, OGT offers gifts of hope.



Hygiene is difficult to maintain when everything is destroyed from a natural disaster. Hygiene kits contain basic cleanliness needs and are shipped to help victims of natural disasters and to families in need around the world.

Trinity is an active supporter of OGT and we are offering the opportunity for you to partner with OGT for these basic needs. We hope you will join us in donating goods, monies or service time. **The kit building day will be February 16<sup>th</sup> and is open to individuals and families with all age kids.**



Please have your donations at Trinity by Sunday February 9<sup>th</sup> to allow time for inventory of items. This will allow time to gather additional items as needed to complete the kits.

The goal is to build and donate 250 hygiene kits to our local Orphan Grain Train Distribution Center, located in Pasadena, TX, for distribution when the next disaster strikes.

## Sign-Up

**Sign-up sheets are available in the foyer at the Orphan Grain Train Hygiene Kit display.** One may commit to individual kit items, all items to complete a kit, service time on February 16<sup>th</sup> to build the kits, and/or a financial donation (monies donated may be used for supplies or excess can be used for shipping). It costs an average of \$11 to ship each box of kits.

## When, Where and Who

February 16, 2025

11:30 a.m. until finished. Estimating not later than 2:00 p.m.

Trinity Lutheran Gym

All ages are welcome.

## HYGIENE KIT CONTENTS

- 1 regular size bath towel, dark colored linens recommended. Size 20-30" x 40-50" preferably non-plush nor bulky.
- 1 wash cloth
- 1 bath-size bar of soap
- 1 plastic soap box holder
- 1 sturdy comb
- 6 band-aids (1/2" or 3/4")
- 1 travel-size package facial tissues
- 1 nail clipper
- 1 toothbrush, individual pkg.

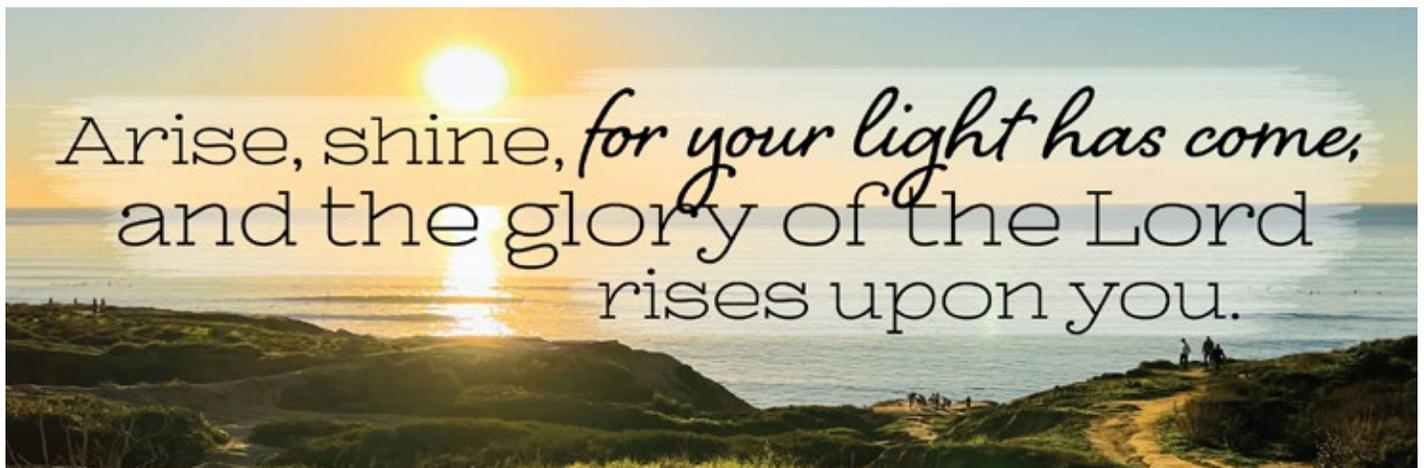
- Dark colored linens are recommended.
- We recommend leaving contents in the original packaging, but it is not required.
- No additions, deletions, or substitutions.
- Do not add money, photos, or personal notes.
- Do not include items with religious, camouflage, patriotic or military symbols.
- Pack only new or gently used items.
- Do not include plastic bags.
- It costs an average of \$11 to ship each box of kits. Please consider a donation to your local OGT branch to help with shipping.

*Although well-meaning variations are tempting, please do not do this. It may result in heavy fines and/or the entire shipment being confiscated by customs officials.*

## OGT Mission Statement

In loving response to Christ, the Servant, the Orphan Grain Train movement encourages and enables God's people to share personal and material resources in bringing Christ's name and character to needy people both far and near. Sometimes that character expresses itself as a word well spoken, sometimes as a bandage well applied, and sometimes as a child well fed.

Orphan Grain Train's mission statement goes hand in hand with Trinity's mission statement. Together our participants are "Joyfully sharing Christ's saving love with all people, Now!"



# Youth and Children's Ministries Update

Hey, Trinity Families!

November and December were a real blast! Our youth had a great time at the Turkey Bowling and Pumpkin painting in November! There also may have been pumpkin smashing!

December was filled with Christmas fun! We decorated the children and youth ministry spaces, had our annual Confirmation Christmas Party at Pastor Dorn's house, our annual Kids Ministry Christmas party, and our annual Youth Christmas Party!

Here are some highlights and favorite memories:

- Several of our middle schoolers and their siblings decorated all of the second floor by themselves!
- Our high schoolers got to decorate the windows of the youth room with spray snow and their design is beautiful!
- The confirmands were outraged by the difficulty of the Christmas Trivia questions but every one of them laughed all night long!
- Veloyce received a french talking wreath ornament that made all the confirmands laugh hysterically.
- Our kids ministry kids made gorgeous coffee filter angels and there were giggles all around!
- We watched "The Star," an animated film telling the story of Jesus from the point of view of the donkey.
- The gingerbread house competition at the youth party was fierce and their designs were incredible.
- The youth Christmas party was fully planned by our youth leadership team!
- We had a massive snowball fight! Fake snow, but still, it was AWESOME!
- Our summer intern, Travis, even came home to visit and volunteer!

Thank you to all the volunteers who made Christmas magical and were a part of sharing the true meaning of Christmas! Check out the pictures to see all the fun we had these past two months!

January looks forward to an awesome event for our teens. We will be doing our first "Youth Olympics" on January 26<sup>th</sup>! It will include races, team challenges, hilarious games and bragging rites to the winning team! Make sure to bring friends! Our next kids event will be in February and I am so looking forward to it!

Thank you all for your continued love, support, encouragement and prayers!

Blessings,  
Haley Zimmerman







↑ Youth Pumpkin Painting Party ↓



↑ Christmas Decorating ↓



↑ Children's Christmas Party ↓





↑ Confirmation Christmas Party ↓



# The Houston Lutheran Chorale Begins New Season

Do you like to sing? The Houston Lutheran Chorale would love for you to join them as they prepare for a new season of spreading the Gospel of Christ. They meet on Sunday afternoons (usually two Sundays a month) from 2:00 - 5:00 p.m. at Trinity Downtown.



The Chorale, under the direction of Jeff Armstrong, is composed of singers from Lutheran churches across Houston and surrounding areas. No auditions are required - just a desire to sing His praises.

Rehearsals start January 19, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. We hope to see you there! For more information, contact September Nelson at 832.584.8242 or [slbn8903@gmail.com](mailto:slbn8903@gmail.com).

## 2025 GOVERNING BOARD

**Deena Buford**

**Lori Dixon**

**Pastor Michael Dorn**

**Mike Gilmore (Elder)**

**Tim Grady (Elder)**

**Philip Kokel**

**Brent Laumen**

**Cassandra McGarvey**

**Mary Oliver**

**Michele Oncken**

**Chris Sonneborn (Elder)**

**Mike Sterling (Elder)**

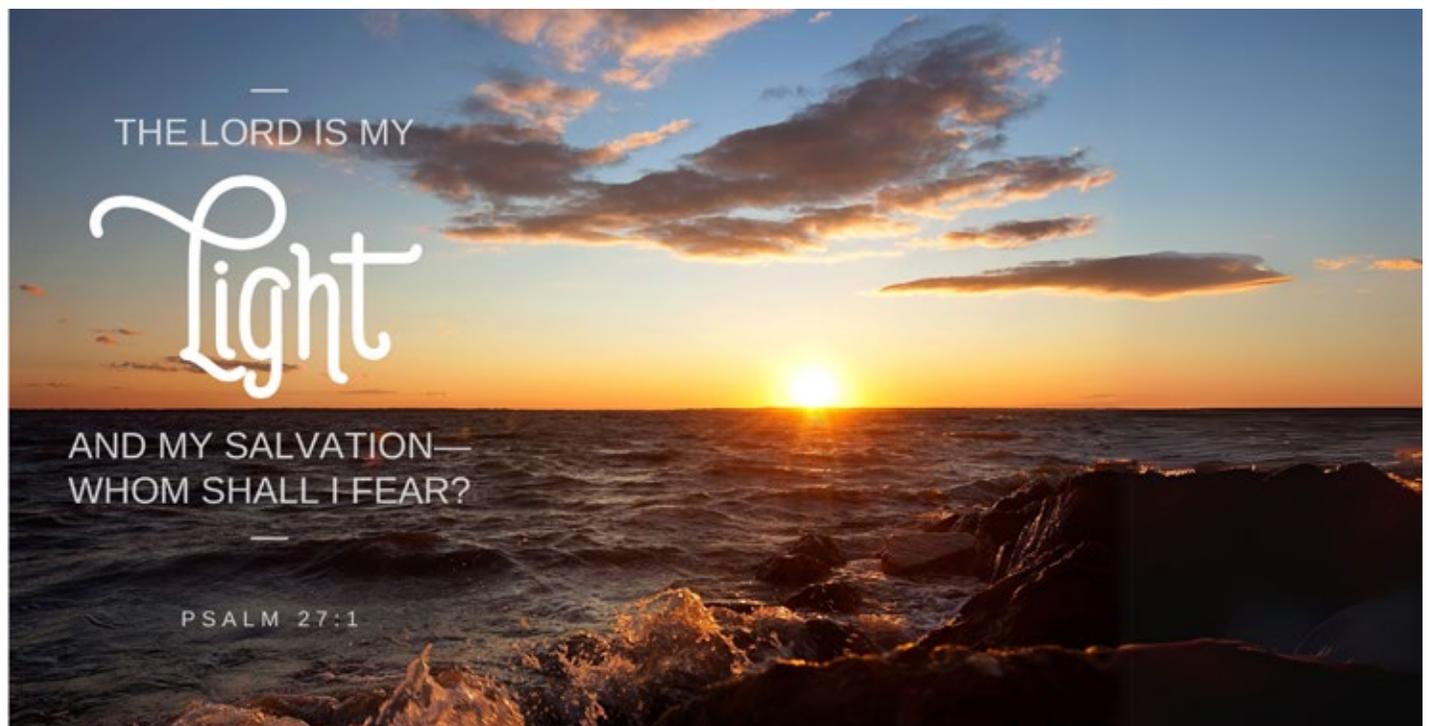
*Minutes of the Governing Board meetings are available to our members at the Welcome Center.*

# Trinity Ladies Circle Ministries

The Ladies Circle meets on the first Thursday of the month, however they will not meet in January.

Please save the date for the next meeting on Thursday, February 6, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. with a time of fellowship beginning at 9:30 a.m.

All ladies are welcome. For more information, feel free to reach out to Trudy Mitchell, President, at [trudyam99@hotmail.com](mailto:trudyam99@hotmail.com).



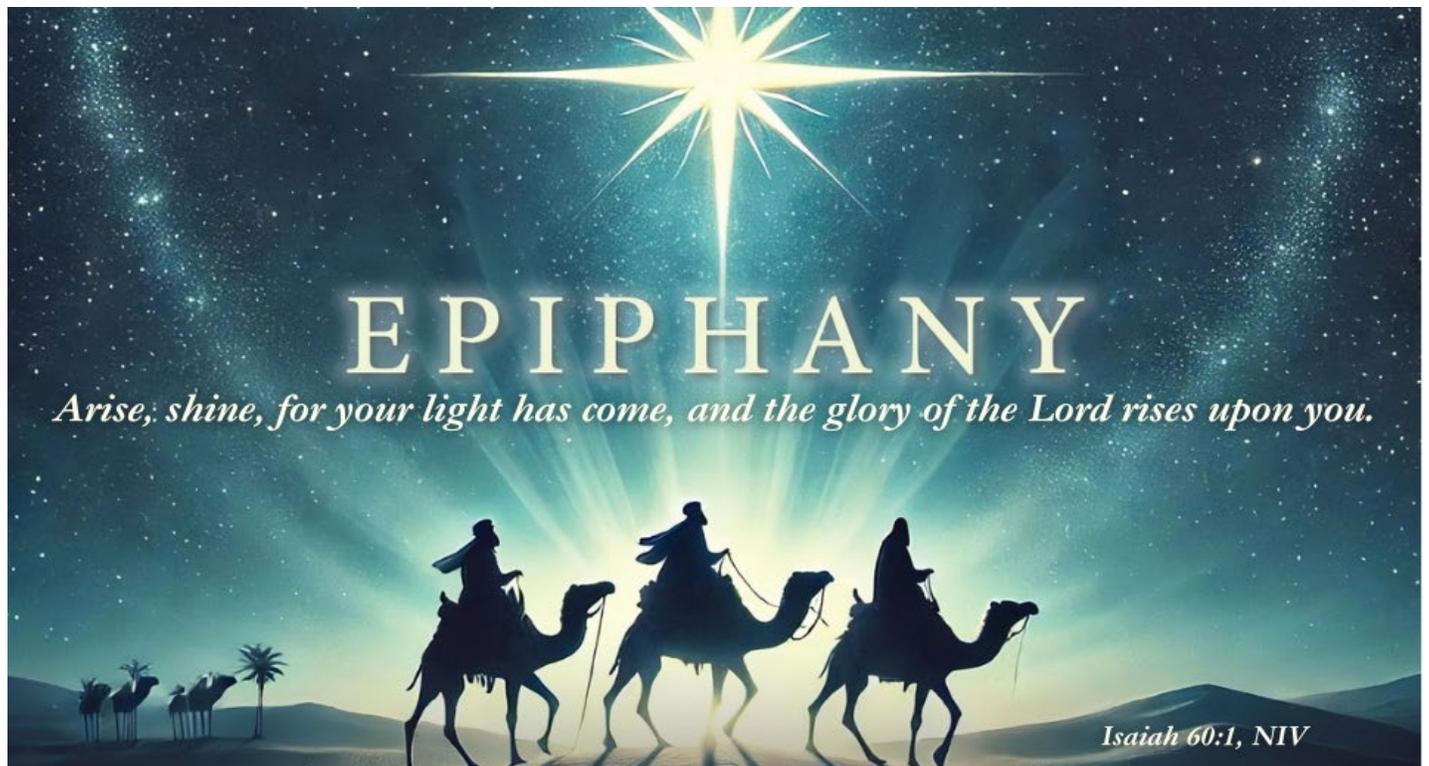
# Trinity Logo Apparel Available Soon

Have you ever wished you could sport the same awesome Trinity logo apparel as the church staff and pastors? Well now you can! Announcing the Trinity Logo Store coming in early 2025. A variety of items with our beautiful Trinity Downtown logo will be available for purchase by advance order. See the pictures below showing some of the options that will be available in men and women's sizes. Stay tuned for more details.



Pictured left: Haley Zimmerman, Director of Youth and Children's Ministries, wearing a black zip-front fleece jacket.

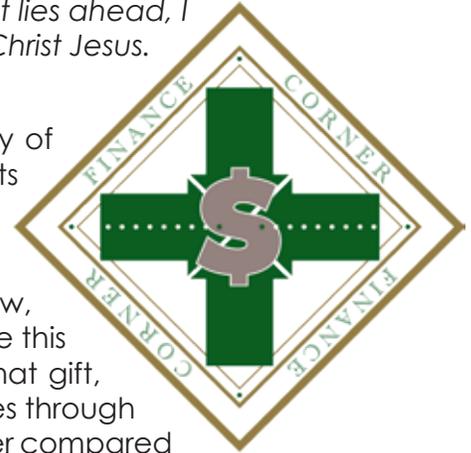
Pictured above (l to r): Roseann Gamez, Director of Accounting, wearing a white pullover fleece jacket; Pastor Lonnie Gonzales, Associate Pastor of Outreach, wearing a black polo and Kim Davis, Executive Director, wearing a white button-down dress shirt.



# Finance Corner - January 2025

*[Paul says] forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Philippians 3:13b-14 (ESV)*

All glory to God our Father for 145 years of doing His will in the city of Houston and beyond. May He continue to bless and guide our efforts to bring more people to Him.



Tithes and offerings for the month of November totaled \$168k and were \$17k higher than our budget for the month. In the totals below, total discretionary giving is \$79k higher than our budget. Please note this figure includes a 150k Estate Gift received early in 2024. Without that gift, we would be 71k behind budget. Year-to-date operational expenses through November totaled ~\$6k higher than budgeted and were ~17% higher compared to spending during the same period in 2023.

Attendance through November has increased by about 40 participants compared to the same time in 2023. The average number of online participants in November was 186 compared to 162 in November 2023.

If you have not yet recorded your 2025 Home Treasury pledge for planned giving this year, we encourage you to prayerfully consider doing so. You can find a commitment card in the pew pocket, or you may use our [online pledge form](#).

Here's a quick summary of "visible results" for November 2024:

<b>November 2024 Summary</b>				
	<b>Total</b>	<b>In-person</b>	<b>Online</b>	<b>Nov. 2023</b>
<b>Average Worship Attendance</b>	429	243	186	408
	<b>Total</b>	<b>Adults</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Oct. 2023</b>
<b>Avg. Discipleship Hour Attendance</b>	156	109	47	167
<b>Contributions</b>		<b>Actual</b>	<b>Budgeted</b>	<b>Last Year</b>
November 2024 tithes and offerings		\$167,704	\$150,000	\$158,498
Total YTD 2024 tithes and offerings		\$1,675,233	\$1,579,716	\$1,437,428

Joining Jesus alongside you,  
Kim Davis, Executive Director

## BOARD OF ELDERS - CONTACT INFORMATION

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 Mike Sterling ..... [nasasterling@gmail.com](mailto:nasasterling@gmail.com) ..... 713.299.7238

# Orphan Grain Train Servant Center Dedication

**SAVE THE DATE! Sunday, March 23, 2025 - 3:00 p.m.**

Join Orphan Grain Train(OGT) for the Dedication and Open House of their new Orphan Grain Train Servant Center located at 5040 E Sam Houston Pkwy S, Pasadena 77505.

The Rev. Dr. Jerry Kieschnick will be the guest speaker. After the dedication, guests will have the opportunity to walk around the facility and enjoy refreshments. Projected completion of the building is early February - they are more than ready to move in!



**Next Packing Day** - Saturday, February 8<sup>th</sup> - 8:00 a.m. - noon. Volunteers, the hands of Jesus, have been faithfully helping process donations as they are received and then distributed.

**Distributions** - Recent aid has been taken to Warriors Refuge, children's shelters, and homeless ministries around Texas and to survivors of hurricane Helene in North Carolina. Your donations of winter clothes, coats, blankets, and hygiene kits have filled a huge need. *"I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you."* John 14:18

Your prayers, encouraging words, and financial support are a gift from God - thank you.

Mike Rathje, Branch Manager - Houston - 281.723.4989

## Membership Report

The following are the changes to membership approved at the December Governing Board meeting.

### MEMBERSHIP IN

#### New Members (11/17/2024)

- Susie Bech
- Jake & Courtney Daily
- Sarah Daily
- Charles & Rose Mary Lyons
- Julia Willis
- Mia Willis

### MEMBERSHIP OUT

#### Transfer

- Casey Pulpan with Jace & Kenna to St. Timothy LCMS - Houston, TX

#### To Glory

- Juanita Alms (12/02/2024)

**WELCOME**

*New Members*

# Children, Youth and Adult Bible Studies

Please consider joining one or more of our Bible studies. It's a wonderful way to begin a new spiritual discipline. Virtual login information is available on Trinity's website [www.trinitydt.org](http://www.trinitydt.org). Children and youth classes are in person unless indicated otherwise. Adult classes are either virtual, in person or hybrid.

## SUNDAYS - CHILDREN (10:15 - 11:15 AM)

**Nursery** (Infants - age 2) - Room 234

**Kingdom Quest 2 & 3 year olds** - Room 233

**Kingdom Quest 4 & 5 year olds** - Room 232

**Kingdom Quest 1st Grade - 4th Grade** - Kingdom Hall (basement)

## SUNDAYS - YOUTH

**Foundations 56** (5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grades) - 10:15-11:15 AM - Room 207

**Confirmation** (7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades) - 10:15-11:15 AM - Room 208

**High School** (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades) - 10:15-11:15 AM - Underground

## SUNDAYS - ADULT

### Discipleship Bible Study - The Whole Story - Creation to Jesus

Led by Group of Members - 10:15-11:15 AM - Room 125 - In Person

This Bible study series covers creation through the redemptive story in the Old Testament. It is perfect for people interested in learning a simple and reproducible model to study Scripture in a group setting. The study is sponsored and facilitated by a committed group of members at Trinity Downtown. Participants can come and go throughout the series.

### Genesis

Led by Pastor Paul Dorn - 7:00-8:00 PM - Virtual

Genesis—a book of the beginnings of God's plan: the beginning of time; the beginning of the universe; the beginning of human beings and family relationships; the beginning of obedience and disobedience; the beginning promise. The wonder, beauty, and mystery of these beginnings will be the focus as we discuss the first chapters of the book of Genesis.

This class meets virtually for an hour every Sunday evening at 7:00 p.m. Please email Paul Dorn ([pbdorn6@gmail.com](mailto:pbdorn6@gmail.com)) and he will send you his class notes and a link to the class session on Zoom. You will need a computer, laptop, or phone.

### Parenting with Purpose - "Habits of the Household"

Led by Mike and Katherine Gilmore - 10:15-11:15 AM - Room 206 - In Person

It definitely takes a village. Come join in a refreshing and engaging Bible study tailored for young families, to help build our community. This study offers a relaxed, interactive environment where parents can come together to explore Scripture, share insights, and grow in faith as a community. We will take a book club/discussion format, rotating a new book every few months. Our first book will be "Habits of the Household" by Justin Whitmel Earley. Materials will be provided, if needed.

### The Bible Alive ... God In Action

Led by John Reisig - 10:15-11:15 AM - Room 124 - In Person

In this study, each Sunday offers a single, stand-alone topic. The material covered each week will provide a meaningful experience for regular participants, visitors to Trinity Downtown, and for those simply looking to get back into a routine of attending Bible study. The single topic format insures that no one will be lost or feel behind during the study, and will feel welcome and encouraged to attend at any time. Bibles will be provided and utilized each week. Providing historical context to the scriptural message, and modern application of His word, the Bible will "Come Alive," and show that God has been working throughout history, and is still working today out of love for His people.



## **The Gospel of Mark**

Led by Bill Fischer - 10:15-11:15 AM - Room 201 - Hybrid

The Gospel of Mark is the shortest of the four Gospels and is thought to be the first one written. It tells the story of Jesus Christ from the foretelling of John the Baptist through Jesus' life, death, resurrection, and ascension into heaven. There is less detail than in the gospels of Matthew, Luke or John and it has a feeling of urgency in telling the good news. The word "immediately" appears many times. Join us either in person at Trinity or remotely through Zoom as Mark introduces Jesus to the world as both God and Man and the salvation for all people.

## **The Sermon on the Mount**

Led by Jim Cleary - 10:15-11:15 AM - Room 205 - Hybrid

How should we live? How should we treat others? How should we handle money? What is the good life? Join us as we explore these questions and plenty of others as we examine Jesus' most important sermon on how His followers should live.

## **Young Adult Bible Study - Psalms**

Led by Class Members - 10:15-11:15 AM - Gathering Space - In Person

The young adults are studying Psalms 90-106. Those Psalms center around the Reign of God and we will focus on looking for His reign in our lives. There will be a heavy emphasis on prayer and learning to pray the Scriptures as we study.

## **TUESDAYS - ADULTS**

### **Tuesday Morning Women's Bible Study - LifeLight: Parables**

Led by Karen Maynard - 10:00-11:30 AM - Room 205 - Hybrid

This study is part of the LifeLight Bible study series of in-depth studies of Bible books. The goal of LifeLight is that through a regular program of in-depth personal and group study of Scripture, more and more Christian adults may grow in their personal faith in Jesus Christ.

## **WEDNESDAYS - ADULTS**

### **Psalms**

Led by Mary Oliver - 6:30-7:45 PM - Virtual

Our group will look at a different Psalm each week. This will allow everyone to participate as they can without getting behind in the study. Please join us. We meet Wednesday evenings on Zoom from 6:30 to 7:45 p.m. and in person the last Wednesday of the month.

### **Virtual Midweek Spiritual Check-in**

Led by Jim Cleary - 7:00-8:00 PM - Virtual

## **THURSDAYS - ADULTS**

### **Sonrise Bible Study**

Led by Bill Fischer, Pastor Black and individual class members - 7:30-8:30 AM - Virtual

This member-led virtual class primarily discusses the Scripture readings assigned for the following Sunday. The class is open to men and women. For more information contact Bill Fischer at 832.459.3241 or the church office.

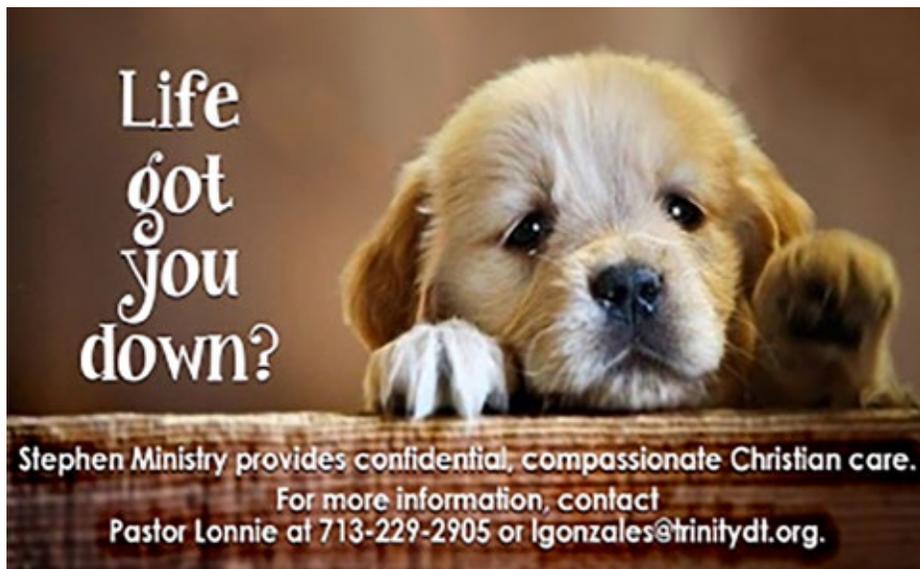
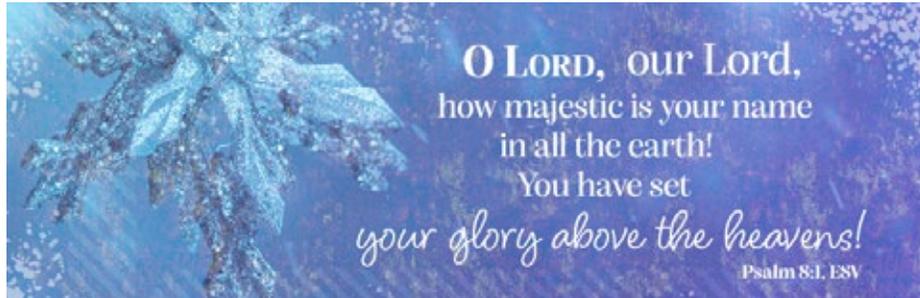
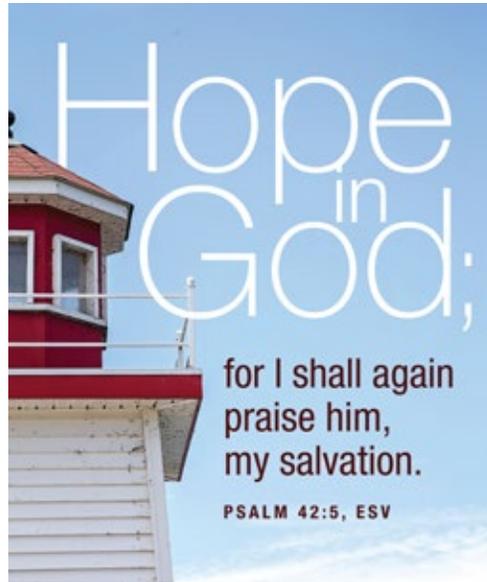


Please note that Sunday Bible classes  
will not meet on January 5th

# Life Quote - January 19

"No amount of scientific progress can defeat death. No political ruler can promise eternal life. Only Jesus can make and keep that promise. The promise of hope and life is ours to proclaim. It is the promise that a world without hope needs to hear. In Jesus we have hope for the future, the living hope of life in His presence forever."

*Dr. Carol Geisler, Lutheran Hour Ministries – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • [lutheransforlife.org](http://lutheransforlife.org)*



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**Trinity Downtown • Joyfully Sharing Christ's Saving Love With All People Now!**

[www.trinitydt.org](http://www.trinitydt.org)

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713-224-0684



Article submission deadline is **January 17<sup>th</sup>** for articles to be published February 1, 2025.  
Submit articles to [pschroeder@trinitydt.org](mailto:pschroeder@trinitydt.org).

Contact Pam Schroeder at 713.229.2944 with any questions about this publication.