

Trinity Lutheran Church

PO Box 65, Arkdale, WI 54613

Office hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 9:00 am-2:30pm

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From the Pastor's Pen — January 2026

Dear Friends,

A New Year offers a good time to reflect on the past year and perhaps find inspiration for the new one. End your year with a grateful heart - whether last year brought you success, fulfillment, and joy, or you faced grief, setbacks, and or health issues & struggles. As such seek God's guidance for this New Year.



"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come". [2 Corinthians 5:17](#).

Trusting God: *"for I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."*
[Jeremiah 29:11](#).

Prayers for the New Year in 2026 from Christianity.com:

Thanksgiving Prayer: Heavenly Father, as we stand on the threshold of a new year, we want to express our deepest gratitude for the past year's blessings. Thank you for your faithfulness, your love, and your constant presence in our lives. We acknowledge your sovereignty over the days gone by and the days yet to come.

Guidance Prayer: Lord, we look toward you, our hope, our peace, and our comfort in this New Year. As we enter the unknown of the coming year, we ask for your guidance and wisdom. Illuminate our path with your light so that we may walk in your ways and make choices that align with your will. Help us to seek first your kingdom and trust that all other things will be added to us.

Renewal Prayer: Gracious God, we come before you to seek renewal in the new year. Renew our minds, our hearts, and our spirits. May we be transformed by the power of your Holy Spirit, leaving behind the old and embracing the new that you have in store for us.

Strength Prayer: Heavenly Father, as we face both known and unknown challenges of the coming year, grant us strength and courage. Help us to rely on your mighty power and to find refuge in you. May we be steadfast in our faith, knowing that you are our rock and our fortress.

Prayer for Others: Lord, as we embark on this new year, we lift up to you, our loved ones ____, our communities, and the world. May your peace reign in our hearts and in the hearts of all people. Bring healing where there is brokenness and reconciliation where there is division.

My friends, may the New Year bring you joy, less drama - creating more peace; may it bring you new opportunities, good health, and abundant blessings! *Happy New Year!*

Pastor Terri

In February

**February 18th
is Ash
Wednesday.**

**A Soup &
Baked Potato
Supper will be
at 5:30 pm.**

**Ash
Wednesday
Service is at
7:00 pm.**



**Lenten
Wednesday
Services will
continue
through
March 25th
@ 7:00 pm.**

Thank You to all of the Worship and Churchwide Assistants!

Snow Shovelers

Dec. 29-Jan. 4	Hank Sauer, Dean Weibel, & John Stormoen
Jan. 5-11	Kurt Mikolite & Dennis Wright
Jan. 12-18	Tom Guzman & Ray Groskinsky
Jan. 19-25	Glenn Quinnell & Garret Gould
Jan. 26-Feb. 1	Dennis McClyman & Zach Hobbick

January Volunteers

Altar Guild: Dana Henriksen & Mary Jo Meyer
Garbage: Brian & Donna Olson
Food Pantry: Barb Bennett

Acolytes

Jan. 4	Ava Nawrot & Raylee Pavelec
Jan. 11	Connley & Elayna Meyer
Jan. 18	Archer & Asher Ostby
Jan. 25	Owen Amundson & Johnathen Dornacker

Ushers

Crystal M. Nawrot & Marge Edwards
Lloyd & Darlene Hovorka
Ed Heideman & Susan McIntosh
Hank Sauer & John Stormoen

Bulletin Sponsorship

Jan. 4	Linda Bilski
Jan. 11	Steve & Danna Peterson
Jan. 18	Tom & Gretchen Wetzel
Jan. 25	Barb Albrecht

Worship Greeter/s

Amy Franckowiak
Becky Oleson
Barb Bennett
Becky Pease

Counters

Jan. 5	Tom Guzman & Barb Bennett
Jan. 12	Barb Bennett & Sharon Guzman
Jan. 19	Sharon Guzman & Maggie Wahlen
Jan. 26	Maggie Wahlen & John Stormoen

Lector

Jan. 4	Garrett Gould
Jan. 11	Jeff Chase
Jan. 18	Krista Pavelec
Jan. 25	Kurt Mikolite

Camera

Jaxson Nawrot
Brayden Hendricksen
Raylee Pavelec
Izzy Nawrot

Liturgist

Mike Kuss
Tom Guzman
Mike Willis
Roxanne Irey

THANK YOU!!

Look for the sign-up sheet for altar flowers on the narthex table. Donations are welcomed.

Fellowship Hosting Opportunity

A wonderful opportunity will be opening up this spring. Fellowship will need volunteers for the Sundays of March, April and May.

Family groups, friendship groups, and spousal teams will be needed to supply snacks, serve and clean up the tables in the Fellowship Hall and the counters in the kitchen.

Anyone interested should sign up in the narthex, or let Barb Albrecht, Kathy Kuss, or Danna Peterson know. Training for anyone interested will be available any Sunday in February. Join us in the Kitchen.

Thank you to all who supported Christmas services and activities!
 You helped make it a very joyous season indeed!



Abbreviated Unapproved Council Meeting Minutes for December 8, 2025

Present: Sandy Willis, Carrie Easterly, Dana Henricksen, Michael Willis, Pastor Terri Skildum, Garret Gould, Gretchen Wetzel, Cathy Westover, Leif Pedersen, Liz Hendricksen

The meeting was called to order by President Garret Gould at 5:07 p.m.

The agenda was approved.

Opening devotions from Colossians 26:7; making a commitment to a group; followed with prayer.

Approve November Council meeting minutes: Motion to approve by Mike/Carrie. Carried.

Approve Nov. Treasurer's report: After review, motion to approve by Sandy/Liz. Carried.

Pastor's Report: Visits: 13; At rest: 1; At the Altar: 1 in August of 2026; Other: Some interested in becoming members, Christmas cards will be sent this week to shut-ins and others who moved.

Next Council meeting will be January 12, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.

Old Business:

Doorbell/Ring Service: Has been referred to the Property Committee

Outreach Position: has been filled

Budget planning: The proposed budget for 2026 was reviewed and changes made. Cathy/Liz moved to purchase 2 - \$250.00 gift cards from the Ministry Coordinator line item (not used in 2025) for the Worship Techs as a Thank You for their service. Motion carried.

New Business:

Issues: Council moved to Closed Session at 6:00p.m.; returned to open session at 6:30p.m.

Committee Reports:

Education Ministry: SS Christmas Program on Dec. 14; lunch after.

Outreach: meeting pending

Property Committee: No increase in rent of the Parsonage.

Landscape/Ramp Hill Committee: New sign for Christmas

TLCW: Lefse was made; cookie sale will be 12/12 at theatre

Finance Committee: will meet Sunday, December 14.

Meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m., closing with the Lord's Prayer.

Submitted in His Service, Sandy Willis, Sec.

Congregational **Bi-Annual** **Meeting**

will be held in the Fellowship Hall after the 9:00am service on

January 25th

All are encouraged to attend this meeting as we make decisions and approve the 2026 budget.

Potato Cheese Soup

(Shared by Theresa Soley in *Recipes & Memories* Cookbook, p. 33)

2 c. diced potatoes

1 small onion, diced

1 stalk celery, diced

1 Tbsp. chicken bouillon

1 quart water

Place ingredients in large kettle. Boil until potatoes are done. Do NOT drain.

1/4 c. butter or margarine

2 c. milk

1/3 c. flour

1 lb. Velveta cheese

Melt butter. Stir into flour; add milk gradually. Heat until thickened, stirring often.

Add cheese. Let cheese melt before adding potato mixture. Yield: 8 servings.





Interested in membership? Contact Pastor Terri or Danna in the church office. Forms are available on the table in the Narthex. We would love to have you join our mission and service!

A devotional moment of prayer: Lectio Divina is a quiet, thoughtful way of reading the Bible to connect with God. It grew out of early Christian traditions and was shaped by thinkers like Augustine, who believed Scripture speaks to the heart. Augustine didn't invent the practice, but his ideas helped form its spirit—listening deeply and responding with love. Later, others gave it a clear structure, but its roots go back to that longing for God's voice.

LUTHER revised the Lectio Divina into this 3 step method:

Oratio (Prayer): This is the starting point, where one humbly prays for the Holy Spirit's guidance to understand God's Word. Luther emphasized that prayer prepares the heart and mind to receive divine wisdom.



Meditatio (Meditation): This involves deeply engaging with Scripture, not just reading it but reflecting on it repeatedly. Luther encouraged believers to “chew on” the Word, allowing its meaning to sink in and shape their thoughts and actions.

Tentatio (Struggle): Often translated as “trial” or “temptation,” this refers to the challenges and spiritual battles that arise as one seeks to live according to God's Word. Luther saw these struggles as a way God refines faith, making it more resilient and authentic.

For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. Romans 15:4. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. Philipians 4:6



January Food Pantry Donation Ideas—Top 9 Needs

According to moveforhunger.org, these are the top 9 items most needed for food pantries:

- 1. Peanut Butter:** Liked by both kids and adults, and high in protein, it is the most requested item by food banks. Consider donating peanut butter alternatives too!
- 2. Canned Proteins:** Canned chicken is a great way to provide versatile, high-protein items to those in need. Items like canned tuna and salmon also contain vitamins, omega-3 fatty acids, and protein which make a quick and easy meal.
- 3. Canned Beans:** Black beans, garbanzo beans, black-eyed peas, green beans, and pinto beans are high in protein and fiber and provide a nutritious way to fill a hungry tummy.
- 4. Pasta & Pasta Sauce:** Super easy to make and exceptionally filling, pasta and pasta sauce are great items to include in your donation box. Opt for whole grain pasta since it offers more fiber and nutrition than white pasta.
- 5. Pantry Staples:** Imagine having to cook in a kitchen without any flour or sugar! Unfortunately, this is a reality for many food insecure households.
- 6. Canned Vegetables:** Always high in demand, and for good reason. Nutrient-rich, and fiber dense, they tend to last the longest in pantries and are the perfect, easy way to provide healthy options.
- 7. Cooking Essentials:** like olive oil and spices. Stick to the basics, like garlic powder, minced onion, oregano, basil, salt, pepper, and cinnamon.
- 8. Formula:** Many parents are unable to breastfeed but struggle to buy formula due to the high costs.
- 9. Baby Food. Let's fill up the food pantry shelves!**

Stewardship Idea: Consider as part of your New Year planning and goals what your offerings might be this year. Include acts of service, individually/as a family/couple. You can call it your "First Fruits" offering.

Ideas: Volunteer at the local Adams Area Food Pantry (call [608-393-2641](tel:608-393-2641)); Neighborhood meals in Wisconsin Rapids (715-422-2050); Faith In Action of Adams County to help with: friendly visits, shopping assistance, telephone reassurance calls, home repairs, meal preparation, yard work, light housekeeping, transportation, and so on (call 608-339-0504); walk a dog at an animal shelter; visit a shut-in (see Pastor Terri); perhaps talk to someone at the elementary school to see if they need a 'grandparent' to work with kids; look through this newsletter or look to your neighbors - see a need, fill a need. It's a New Year!

In January we are collecting items for inmates of the local jail.

They are in need of all WHITE underwear (male & female), white SPORTS bras, white XL-3XL t-shirts (with sleeves), white socks, cheap ear buds (not headphones), puzzles, puzzle books like word finds & crossword puzzles. Place items in the box in the narthex.



KFC – Kids For Christ

★**THANKS for everyone's help with the Christmas Program!!**

★**6-12th Graders:** Be on the lookout for Ash Wednesday sign-up & pizza news.

★**Sunday classes** continue with new lessons!

★**Bible Verse:** "You are the salt of the earth." Matthew 5:13.

★**Activity:** Salt Painting. Need: salt, thicker paper/paper plate, glue and paintbrush, and paint such as watercolors. Draw something such as a snowman or snowflake. Place picture on 'paint-safe' surface such as on newspaper. Trace design with Glue; while still wet, sprinkle the glue with salt, then gently tap off the excess. Using watercolor paints, gently dab salt with the paint brush or Q-Tip. Watch it fill in. Let dry.



★**Table Talk:** When you eat tomatoes do you flavor it with salt or sugar? Watermelon?

Mashed potatoes? When we help others or say something that blesses someone, we are "flavoring" or "salting" the world with God's love and care.

★**Prayer:** *Heavenly Father, I want to be salt of the earth for you. Help me say kind things and let my actions bring goodness. When the world feels sad, may my faith season it with hope. When someone is feeling low, may I help lift their spirits. Amen.*

Outreach Update

With the Let it Glow event coming to an end on January 4, 2026, many thanks to all who helped with this event! Pat Murphy, Tom Guzman, Tony Forman, and Ray Groskinsky for setting up everything. Thank you to the property committee and snow shovelers/snow blowers for working around the decorations, and their extra time moving snow. Thank you to Barbara Bennett for the nativity donation, and Dean & Shirley Weibel for the large lighted wreath with berries. This event was an outreach to our community to come out and see where our church is, and possibly come to a service. Above all else, to touch people's hearts with the true meaning of Christmas.

The Parade of Trees at the hospital ended December 18. There was a decorated tree representing Trinity. Thanks to all who went to this event.

Spring events coming up are the Kids Fair and Senior Fair. If you are interested in volunteering to help out with these events, please contact Danna in the office or Pastor Terri. May you all have a blessed 2026.

Thank you to Wisco Seamless Gutters in Adams for the donation of labor and materials to install larger downspouts and roof gutters near the ramp hill entrance. This should help resolve our issues with lower level water seepage.



Altar Guild Monthly Assistants for 2026

January—Dana Henriksen & Mary Jo Meyer

February—Danna Peterson, Jill Renner, & Maria Janisch

March—Terri Soley, Barb Albrecht, & Kathy Kuss

April—Darlene & Lloyd Hovorka, Sandy Pheiffer, & Dana Henriksen

May—Penny Ross & Sandy Willis

June—Marge Edwards & Nancy Dix

July—Penny Ross, Meagan Grabarski, & Sandy Willis

August—Gretchen Wetzel & Becky Oleson

September—Kris Peterson, Shelby Hobbick, & Nancy Kubina

November—Roxanne Irey, Kim Bezemek, & Jennie Moore

December—Darlene & Lloyd Hovorka, Ray & Karen Groskinsky

**If you would like to be on Altar Guild, please contact the office.
We would love to have you join us. Many hands make light work...**

Thank you to Altar Guild for serving fellowship for the month of January!

Jan. 4 - Jan., Feb., & Mar. assistants

Jan. 11 - April, May, & June assistants

Jan. 18 - July, Aug., & Sept. assistants

Jan. 25 - Oct., Nov., & December assistants



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Thank You for Serving So Faithfully This Year!

As this year comes to a close, **thank you** for the time, energy, finances, and heart you have poured into Arkdale Trinity Lutheran Church!

Because of your faithfulness—whether you served behind the scenes, in the kitchen, outdoors, within the sanctuary, or out in the community—lives were touched, prayers were answered, and our church family was strengthened. From welcoming others with a smile, to teaching, mentoring, serving, sewing, baking, packaging, giving monies, and caring for one another, your willingness to serve reflects Christ's love in powerful ways.

Volunteering often means giving up personal time; we appreciate that generous donation. Please know how deeply grateful we are for each of you and for the unique gifts you bring to our church community.

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters." (Colossians 3:23)



Thank you for being the hands and feet of Jesus. Looking forward to serving alongside you in the year ahead. With heartfelt gratitude and blessings!