



HOLY TRINITY

LUTHERAN CHURCH

650 240th St. North Liberty, IA 52317

Vol. 17, No. 12

December 2025

CONTEMPLATIVE CHRISTMAS

In the midst of
this world,
struggling with
the realities of



war, neighbors who are hurting, fractured relationships, health challenges, loss, and fear, we long for hope.

You're invited to come for a time of quiet amidst the bustling, hectic and sometimes emotionally overwhelming holiday season. Spend an hour with us on Saturday, December 20th at 4:00 p.m. to invite God's presence into these very real places in our lives. In the silence, the prayer and the song, we will hold space together to receive the light and promises of the Christ Child. A time of fellowship will follow.

If you prefer to not drive after dark, rides are available. Questions? Please reach out to Pastor Sarah, Lisa Smith, Diane Baumbach or other members of the Mental Health Advocacy Team

NEW MEMBER FAMILIES WELCOMED ON DECEMBER 21ST

God continues to call men, women, and children into our community of faith. We will be welcoming them into our fellowship formally on December 21st during our worship service. We pray that God will continue to bless them on their journeys as their families join our Church family. A complete list will be available later this month.

OVER 50 FAMILIES HAVE NOW RESPONDED TO COMMITMENT SUNDAY CHALLENGE

Our Stewardship Team offers a huge thank you to all households who have submitted a Faith Promise for 2026 to date! Collectively, over 50 families have already committed over \$240,000 in intentions for the coming year. That's a lot to celebrate! Have you done your part? If not, help us plan for the best ministry we can in the new year by sharing yours prior to Dec. 9th, when our Visioning Council attempts a new budget proposal. Forms are available for on-line submission through our website and hard copies are available in the Fellowship area.

It's going to be a challenging year for many! Still, let's all do our part and put our "best feet forward" so that God can work through us to the best of our ability!



STAFF CHRISTMAS GREETING

As we prepare to celebrate our Savior's birth, along with the promise and practice of love, joy, peace, and hope in this season, our staff wish to offer you and your family our best! May the light of Christ shine brightly within your household this season, and may we each be bold to take up our calling to "doers of the Word" in an often hostile world desperate for the healing Christ alone can bring.

*Pastor Tim
Laurel Hibbard*

*Pastor Sarah
Wonkyung Kim*

*Lila Bowman
Richard Tiegs*

THE CAROLS
THE CANDLES
THE CHRIST CHILD

We pray that all of you have opportunity to attend and invite others to attend this year's celebration of our Savior's birth at one of our two services on Christmas Eve. Join us to honor Jesus' arrival with familiar carols, comforting candles, and great



community at 3:30 and 5:30 p.m. We will maximize available sanctuary seating, and will use the Fellowship area as necessary. We'll sing a host of carols, "pass the flame" of faith, and conclude with a memorable sharing of "Silent Night."

Our entire offering this year will once again be shared with the North Liberty Community Pantry during this season of rising food insecurity. Last year, 1 in 10 North Liberty residents used the pantry. This year, that number was 1 in 7.

The 3:30pm service will be live-streamed on Facebook Live, and recorded for on-demand access later in the day. We hope that you will include us in your family Christmas plans, and that you invite your neighbors to do the same!

There are several open worship assistant positions. Please consider how you might help. The Sign-up Genius is available as is the paper copy on the clipboards near the Welcome Station.

IN THE SPIRIT OF SHARING, we will be sharing the entirety of this year's Christmas Eve offering with North Liberty Community Pantry. Rising food and utility prices and widespread vulnerability to hunger have resulted in more people struggling to make ends meet. We recently blessed yet another shopping cart full for the local food pantry. Let's see what ELSE we can do to extend the "Christmas Spirit" even further!



TP ROLL COMING UP ON DECEMBER 17TH

Pantries have no automatic sources or subsidies for paper goods, diapers, or hygiene products. Thus, our high school youth invite you to help them celebrate the season by repackaging toilet paper for the North Liberty Pantry! We'll be collecting donated rolls in the Fellowship area by constructing a holiday tree comprised entirely of such donations over coming days!

JOIN IN EXTENDED HOLDEN EVENING PRAYER WITH OUR YOUTH GROUPS ON WEDNESDAYS IN DECEMBER

Starting Wednesday Dec. 3rd, join our WYN youth for three Wednesdays featuring Holden Evening Prayer and time for fellowship in between! We'll gather at 6:30 for the first half of the liturgy and then allow time for an hour of youth activities prior to regathering at 7:45 for Mary's Magnificat and closing prayers. All are most welcome to join us!

JOIN US FOR ADULT FORUMS IN DECEMBER

Rich conversations and insights abound each Sunday at 10:15 in Room 4! Whether you come for one, or come for all, grab a coffee and join in!

- December 7: **Microaggressions**: What are they and why are they such a big deal?
- December 14: **Tools for Responding to Microaggressions**

Facilitated by: Kris Frisbie and Cheryl Mohr (Disclaimer: They are NOT experts in this field.)

What to expect: “Microaggression” is a term used for commonplace verbal, behavioral, or environmental slights—whether intentional or unintentional—that communicates hostile, derogatory, or negative attitudes toward members of marginalized groups. December 7, Kris and Cheryl will utilize online resources—videos and other educational resources—to help participants recognize microaggressions (used by others and themselves) and consider how these actions are harmful to members of marginalized groups. Then, on December 14, Kris and Cheryl will facilitate a discussion centering on what to do when you recognize someone (or yourself) using a microaggression.

MANY, MANY THANKS ...

- to **Ryan Bobst** for leading our Adult Forum on Nov. 9th, **Jon Brandt** for leading on Nov. 16th, and **Gail Johnson**, for leading on Nov. 23rd.
- to **Kathy Stickney** for her willingness to facilitate yet another fruitful Bible study series this fall!
- to our **Confirmation and High School youth** for their awesome help in lighting our outdoor trees.
- to all who helped make our Fall Stewardship Emphasis a humbling success to date!

PRAYER PAGES UPDATE

Pray for:

- The people of **Ukraine, Gaza, Yemen, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo** as they struggle to live amid ongoing conflicts.
- **Our Nominating Committee** as they pray over new leadership for the coming year.
- The **people of Ukraine**, as they face a terrible ultimatum.
- **Benjamin John Stammeyer**, newborn son of Tim and Emma, who arrived on Oct. 10th and **Callahan Matthew Pelzer**, newborn son of Kelsi and Matt, who was born Nov. 13th!
- The **Warkentin family**, grieving the recent loss of Gretchen's brother, Jack Gitch.
- **Karen Pregon**, recovering from recent surgery.
- **Tim Stammeyer**, still seeking answers to health challenges.
- **Soon-Hee Choi**, mother of our pianist Wonkyung Kim, undergoing cancer treatment.
- **Evelyn Bollinger**, recovering at home from a recent mini-stroke.
- **Mary Nehring**, following recent hospitalization for an esophageal ulcer.
- **Julie Ostrander**, Pastor Tim's sister, facing cardiac surgery.in December.
- **Matt Baumann**, son of Sue Baumann, recovering from recent chemotherapy.
- **Elym Choun**, being treated for severe aplastic anemia.
- **Susan Palmer**, friend of Nancy Grove, being treated for cancer.
- **Laurel Hibbard**, continuing cancer care.
- **Emy Charlebois**, sister of Clay Peterson, living with metastatic breast cancer.

- **Don Hellem**, father of Dan Hellem, homebound at present with several chronic health issues at present.
- **Harold Meyer** (husband of Twilla Meyer), in care at Crestview in West Branch.
- **Joyce Gruhn**, sister of Larry Kudej, as she faces a long recovery ahead.
- **Jerry Klingbeil**, father of Julie Miller, recovering from recent surgeries.
- **Pastor Tim** as he recovers from recent shoulder surgery.



2026 OFFERING ENVELOPE

BOOKLETS are now available for pick-up in the Fellowship area. If you'd like a booklet and don't typically give through electronic means, please nab one the next time you are here or ask the staff to send one to you!

OCTOBER ENDS WITH A REVERSIBLE FINANCIAL SHORTFALL

As of Nov 1, Holy Trinity received \$288,950.49 toward our ministry budget of \$361,927, or 80% of the total needed. After ten months, we would expect to be at 83% of the budgeted funds to be received. Because this included "annual" gifts, however, it means that we'll need to make up slightly more than the anticipated 20% remaining in the last two months of the fiscal year. November has been encouraging to date, but it is still likely short of the \$30,108 needed each month to meet budget. As a result, it is possible that projected year-end income could fall as much as \$25,000 below our original budget.

If you've perhaps fallen behind in your own giving and are able to help us close the gap, we would dearly appreciate you doing so today! Meanwhile, the Visioning Council will be monitoring and discussing our status in their upcoming meetings and budget conversation on December 9th!

2025 CLOSING OF THE BOOKS

With the end of the year comes a fiscal reminder that the church books will close on December 31st. Any gifts to be included in the 2025 giving statements must be in the office by noon on December 31st, when the final deposit of the year will be made. If you mail, it must be received by December 30th since mail arrives after the final deposit.

Electronic Givers:

- After your final 2025 gift, please enter VANCO and switch your giving line to “Ministry Fund 2026” and enter your new pledged offering.
- If you are not changing your pledge, you still must change the line to which it is recorded.
- Each transaction carries a financial processing fee charged to the church. Logically, monthly gifts cost the church less than weekly gifts. Some people choose to offset the cost to the church by donating Transaction Fees on their contributions.
- All the assistance people give (transaction fees, changing their giving record lines, etc) are appreciated and simplify the tasks associated with keeping your financial gifts straight.
- For assistance contact, Richard in the church office or Lori Donahoe, our Vanco Liaison.

DID YOU KNOW THAT ...

- ...in 2024, 1 in 10 North Liberty residents utilized the Community Food Pantry? In 2025, that percentage rose to 1 in 7.
- ...half of the food donated to our local pantry is routed through Table2Table?
- ...Government subsidies provide 10 times more food than all churches?