

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

VOICE OF TRINITY



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trinity4jax.org

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Reverend Carol S. Gates
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Rusty White

Treasurer:

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Lisa Montalchi
Pam Piersall
Dan Retter

Proclaiming Jesus Christ to the World!

From Our Pastor

A Season of Holy Anticipation a Call to Serve Dwane Tyson

Do you remember that feeling of waiting for Christmas morning when you were young? That spark of wonder... the flutter in your chest... the whispered hope that something good—something long-awaited—was about to burst into the world?

For many of us, that sense of holy expectation began the moment the Advent wreath appeared in church—almost magically—as if it arrived on angel wings. Each candle, lit week by week, became its own countdown to joy. And with every verse of “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel,” our hearts grew fuller as we waited for the birth of Jesus.

Those memories remain in us still. As the song tells us, it truly was “the most wonderful time of the year”—a season wrapped in awe, wonder, and the childlike delight of knowing that God was drawing near.

And truth be told, not much has changed. Even now, as a wife, mother, grandmother, and pastor, Advent continues to fill me with that same bright mixture of joy and reverence. Each role carries its own kind of waiting, its own way of preparing, yet all of them are grounded in the same truth: the birth of this child continues to shape our lives and call us to serve.

This year, that sense of anticipation has taken on an even deeper meaning. My heart is full—overflowing, really—as I witness God’s love unfolding in the life of someone we cherish. This Advent, we wait with that same holy wonder as we watch Dwane Tyson step forward in faith, answering a call that has long been stirring within him. It feels, in its own beautiful way, like watching the first light of Christmas morning break open—full of promise, full of God’s unfolding grace.

This year at Trinity, we share in a special, joy-filled anticipation as Dwane enters the discernment process for ordained ministry in the ELCA. His journey reflects the heart of Advent—a time of listening, hoping, wondering, and trusting that God is preparing something new.

Just as children wait with hearts open and glowing with possibility, Dwane waits with courage and humility. He stands at the threshold of God’s unfolding call, carrying both excitement and reverence as he steps forward in faith. His “yes” echoes the quiet expectancy of Christmas Eve: something holy is taking shape, and God is already in it.

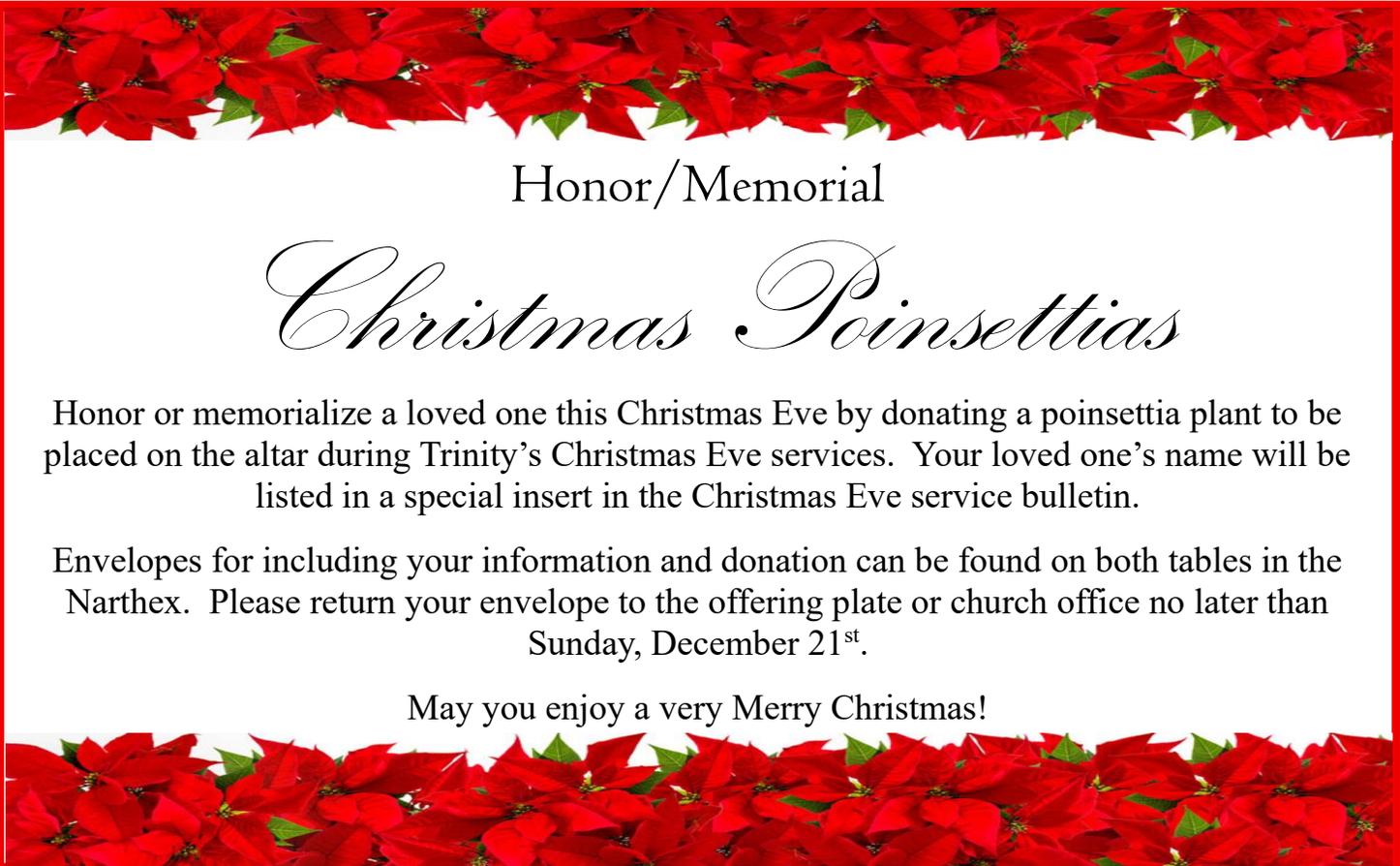
From Our Pastor (continued)

In Dwane's faithful waiting, we glimpse the very essence of Advent— Christ drawing near, the Spirit stirring, and new light ready to break into the world.

Through the years, we have watched Dwane's call blossom. We have witnessed his journey of faith and how that journey has given voice to his "yes" to God's call to serve as an ordained pastor. The Congregation Council responded to Dwane's call with a unanimous and wholehearted recommendation for Dwane to enter the ELCA Candidacy Process. Their decision wasn't simply procedural—it was radiant. It was filled with excitement, pride, gratitude, and deep affection. There was a shared sense of awe, the kind that reminds us we are standing on sacred ground.

Their affirmation became a moment of celebration in itself—a story of a congregation recognizing God's gifts in one of its own, rejoicing in the light he brings, and lifting him up with love and blessing.

May this Advent rekindle in all of us that childlike wonder—the kind that knows Christmas morning is coming, and with it, the promise that God is doing something beautiful among us.



Honor/Memorial

Christmas Poinsettias

Honor or memorialize a loved one this Christmas Eve by donating a poinsettia plant to be placed on the altar during Trinity's Christmas Eve services. Your loved one's name will be listed in a special insert in the Christmas Eve service bulletin.

Envelopes for including your information and donation can be found on both tables in the Narthex. Please return your envelope to the offering plate or church office no later than Sunday, December 21st.

May you enjoy a very Merry Christmas!



Annual Congregational Meeting

Following 10 am Combined Service

Pastor: Carol S. Gates

Sunday December 14th 2025

For the purpose of approving the 2026 budget and voting on Church Council and PEF Committee available seats.



**Children's Christmas
Program**

**Sunday, December 21st
2025**

*during 10 am Combined Service followed by
Potluck*



Angel Giving Tree

Blessing Families with Hope and Joy



As we enter this season of hope, generosity, and light, Trinity will be hosting two Angel Giving Trees — an opportunity to share Christmas joy with families in our community who are facing difficult times. One of the Angel trees is for our CEW students, and the other tree is for two local families who simply want their children to experience joy on Christmas morning.

“My husband recently transitioned out of the Navy and is searching for a stable job as we adjust to civilian life. As we navigate this change, we’re experiencing financial challenges that make it difficult to provide Christmas gifts for our two daughters. Harmony is 7—bright, creative, and imaginative. She loves arts and crafts, dolls, dress-up, anything purple or pink, and characters like Barbie, Bluey, Princess Peach, and My Little Pony. She also enjoys skating, gymnastics, and cozy gifts like hot cocoa sets or comfy clothes. Melody is 1 and loves colorful toys that encourage learning, exploration, and sensory play. Board books are becoming a favorite as she begins to discover words and stories.”

This family, as well as CEW students—and others like them—are part of our extended Trinity story. By choosing an angel from the Giving Trees, you offer more than a gift; you offer hope, encouragement, and a reminder that they are not alone.

How You Can Help

- Select an ornament from the tree and purchase the requested gift(s).
- Please do not wrap gifts. However, feel free to include wrapping paper, bags, tape, or ribbon so parents can wrap the presents themselves.
- Attach the ornament to the gift you have purchased — this is important!
- Return gifts to the church no later than December 15th.

If you have any questions, please contact Lisa Montalchi at 954-297-1325 or email her at: fitlisa71199@gmail.com. Thank you! Your generosity makes Christmas morning brighter for children and families right here in our community. Thank you for being a living expression of God’s love.

In Christ,
Lisa Montalchi



TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

December 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 Choir 10:30am 3pm - Colors Jax (H.O.M)	3	4	5	6
7 <u>Worship</u> – ReSource 9am & Traditional 11am	8 Quilters 9am MOT 8:30 am	9 Choir 10:30am Circle Meeting – 12:00 pm Council Meeting – 6:30 pm	10	11 Food Pantry 4-6pm	12 Food Pantry 10am- 12pm NFAN (H.O.M) – 12pm	13
14 <u>Worship</u> – Combined 10am Service Congregational – 11am	15 Quilters 9am	16 Choir 10:30am	17	18 Food Pantry 4-6pm Lunch Bunch- 11:30am	19 Food Pantry 10am- 12pm Katrina Williams - Kids Christmas	20
21 <u>Worship</u> – Combined 10am Service Children’s Message during service followed by Potluck	22 Quilters 9am	23 Choir 10:30am	24 Christmas Eve <u>Worship</u> – Family Service 5:30 & Traditional 9 pm Office Closed	25 Christmas Day Office Closed	26 Food Pantry 10am- 12pm	27
28 <u>Worship</u> – Combined 10am Service	29 Quilters 9am	30 Choir 10:30am	31 New Year’s Eve Office Closed	1 New Year’s Day Office Closed	2 Food Pantry 10am- 12pm	

Groups, Gatherings, & Announcements



THE TAKEAWAY

Want a space to talk about life and faith in a real way? The Takeaway is a relaxed, community-led Bible study where we can share honest thoughts, ask questions, and explore how the week's Gospel connects to our everyday lives. There's no pressure—just real conversation, open hearts, and a chance to grow in faith together. Come as you are, bring your curiosity, and join the discussion.

Join us each Sunday at 10:10 in the Cecil Poole room!

**If you're interested in leading the lesson, there is a sign-up sheet in the Hall of Memories*



We meet on the second Monday of each month to handle general maintenance, minor repairs, and light clean-up around the church. We start at 8:30 with a light breakfast and good fellowship. All are welcome—no skills needed. Even if you're not handy, come help, hold tools, or just supervise!



The Choir practices on Tuesdays at 10:30 am.

All are welcome!

Trinity Lunch Bunch

DECEMBER'S DESTINATION



Kaika Asian Fusion Restaurant
1012-1 Margaret St.
Jacksonville, FL 32204
(904) 355-5168

December 12, 2025 – 11:30am

**Sign up in the Hall of Memories. *Call Kim with any changes: (904)635-9104*



The December Love Offering will go to Sulzbacher Center

We are excited to announce that Trinity's Website is no longer "under construction."

Check Trinity out at: trinity4jax.org

Scan QR Code to donate!



Heartfelt thank you to Dustin Moore for being Trinity's Construction Manager!

Important Dates & Events...

Sunday December 7th

Second Sunday in Advent – Services at 9am & 11am.

Sunday December 14th

Third Sunday in Advent – Combined Service at 10am followed by Congregational Meeting.

Sunday December 21st

Third Sunday in Advent – Combined Service at 10am. Children's Christmas program during service followed by a potluck.

Wednesday December 24th

Christmas Eve Service – Family Service at 5:30pm – Traditional Service at 9pm. Office will be closed

Sunday December 28th

Fourth Sunday in Advent – Combined Service at 10am - Lessons & Carols.

Wednesday December 31st

New Year's Eve – Office will be closed.

Trinity Food Pantry Highlights



FOOD PANTRY

Here's a recap of activity for November 2025:

We have seen a significant increase in new patrons to the Food Pantry because of funding issues with SNAP benefits and changes in eligibility requirements. 90 New families have come to the pantry the first three weeks of November.

65 Different Volunteers Served at the Community Food Panty during November 2025:

Date	Patrons	Family Members	# of Zip Codes
Nov 6 th – 7 th	243	862	21
Nov 13 th - 14 th	260	844	20
Nov 20 th – 21 st	263	859	22
Nov 28 th (est.)	150	450	20
Total	916	3,015	27

Thank you to all the Trinity Members and neighbors that have volunteered their time and voluntarily donated food and money to the food pantry. We have provided food to an estimated 11,838 Families year to date during 2025. This exceeds the total 10,744 Families that received food during 2024.