



Vol. 14, No. 12

December 1, 2012



The Christmas Season is just around the corner. Very soon stores will be switching their background music over to Christmas songs and carols. What's amazing is that despite the ongoing secularization of the holiday, the traditional carols which clearly proclaim the true reason for the season are still well known in our society today. These carols tell about Jesus' birth and our salvation. Among Christians, carols are a favorite part of worship during the holidays.

This December, the sermons will be focussed on some of the most beloved carols of the Season. Entitled "Carols," the series will include a look at "O Holy Night," "O Come, All Ye Faithful," "Away in a Manger," "Emmanuel," and "Silent Night." We'll be looking at the background of these carols and the message that they share which is every bit as relevant today as it was when they were written.

In addition to the series a free devotional booklet entitled, "Carols" will be available at both of our worship centers (Gym and Sanctuary). There is a specific devotion written on 25 different carols meant to be used from December 1st through December 25th. You are encouraged to use these devotionals in your home in preparation for the celebration of the birth of Jesus.

The Carols sermon series begins on December 2nd. Invite your friends to join you in learning about the carols they have heard before and their meaning. Note on your calendars that on **Sunday, December 23rd and 30th there will be just one service at each of our worship centers which will begin at 9:30 a.m. (Sanctuary) and 9:31 a.m. (Gym).** Check the holiday schedule listed below for details. The information will also be available on our website at www.TrinityDT.org.

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

Midweek Advent Services

An Advent Supper will be served each Wednesday from 5:00 - 6:15 p.m.
December 5, 12 & 19 - Noon* & 6:30 p.m. (Sanctuary)

Christmas Eve - December 24

Visit the Live Nativity following all services.
5:00 & 7:30 p.m. - Service of Light & Order of Lessons & Carols (Sanctuary)
6:31 p.m. - Modern Christmas Eve Service (Gym)

Christmas Day - December 25

9:30 a.m.* (Sanctuary)

New Year's Eve - December 31

6:30 p.m.* (Sanctuary)

New Year's Day - January 1

9:30 a.m.* (Sanctuary)

* Holy Communion

O Come, All Ye Faithful, It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year!

Each year most of us approach Christmas with some mixture of excitement and exhaustion. We hold fast to some traditions (oranges in the children's stockings, tamales for Christmas Eve dinner, a pickle hung somewhere in the tree) and we let go of others as our children grow up and we grow older. But throughout, we know that some things stay the same: *The steadfast word of the Lord endures forever*, and some things change. As this is true in personal lives, it is also true in the life of Trinity.

Here's a little of what you can expect as we approach the day of our Savior's birth this year.

Leading Up To Christmas

Advent Suppers - Here We Come a Caroling

Advent Suppers are a treasured tradition here at Trinity. You're invited to join together in the Mary Martha Hall from 5:00 – 6:15 on Wednesday nights before Advent services for a light meal and, this year, a little caroling! Here's the schedule:

December 5 – Women's Club is serving legendary Spaghetti Bake and the Trinity Sanctuary Choir is leading carols. The Trinity Wind Ensemble will accompany worship.

December 12 – Trinity HUG2 team is serving chili and the TLS 5-8 Choir is leading carols. TLS 5-8 Grade will present their Christmas program.

December 19 – Ladies Circle is serving Taco Soup and the TLS K-4 Choir is leading carols. TLS K-4 Grade will present their Christmas program. Hope you can join us!

Sundays, December 23 and 30, Trinity will celebrate worship with one service at 9:30 a.m. in the sanctuary and one service at 9:31 a.m. in the gym. There will be no Bible study or Sunday school those Sundays. We encourage everyone to worship with family and friends and to continue to keep the Sabbath. Divisi Strings will be the featured music in the sanctuary service on the 23rd.

It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas...

O LORD, I love the habitation of Your house and the place where Your glory dwells. – Ps 26:8

Once again, Trinity members decorated the church for Christmas the Sunday after Thanksgiving. This year many of the decorations are new, courtesy of several gifts from friends and members of Trinity.

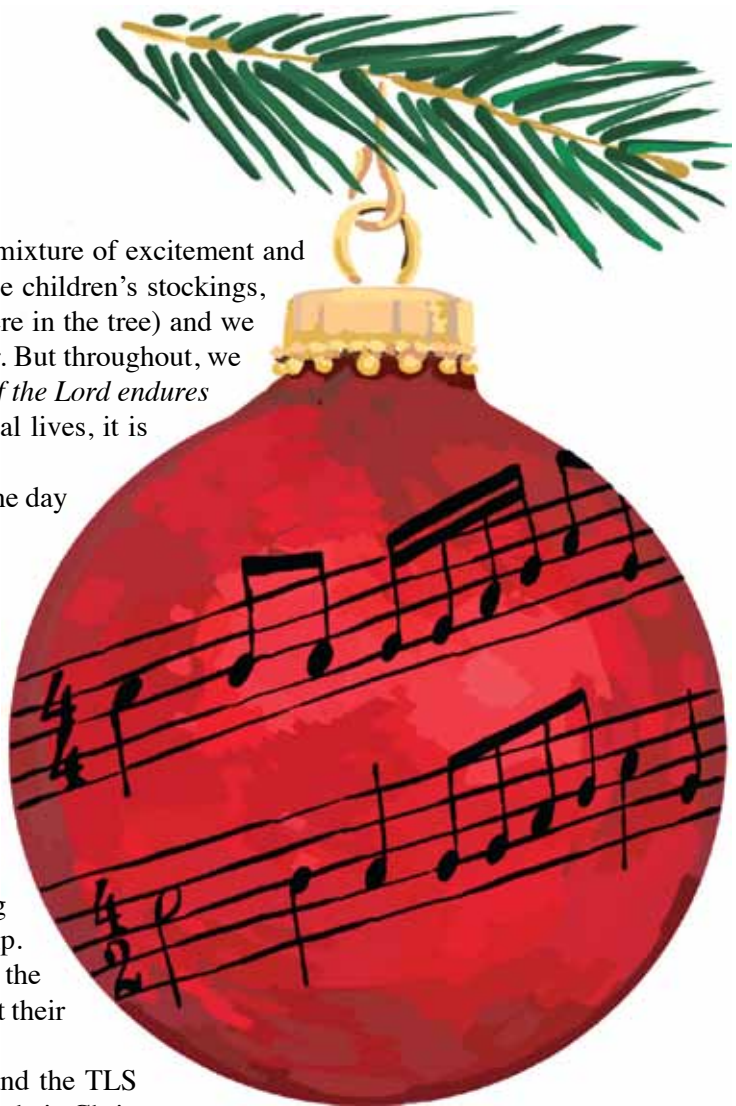
Same:

- Live poinsettias will again grace our worship.
- We'll again have an Angel Tree in the narthex and big trees at the altar.
- We'll still have our beautiful white candles in the windows and wreaths and garlands too.
- There will still be our cherished Chrismon tree in the foyer although the tree itself is new.

Different:

- We have several beautiful new wreaths, window arrangements for the foyer, and this year the halls will be adorned in silk poinsettias in great gold pots.
- We are grateful to the Trinity members and friends who have so graciously donated materials and extensive time into making God's house beautiful for the Advent and Christmas seasons.

Continued on page 5 - see "Christmas"



HOUSTON LUTHERAN CHORALE
presents

Hope
has
Come

Saturday
December 1, 2012
7:00 PM
St. Mark Lutheran
1515 Hillendahl
Houston, TX 77055

Sunday
December 2, 2012
4:00 PM
Trinity-Downtown
800 Houston Avenue
Houston, TX 77007

Tickets: Call 713-229-2952 or Visit www.hlc-tx.org

Texas District LCMS-LSS Partnerships

This holiday season, as we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, we are also celebrating our Texas District LCMS partners in ministry. Over an 18-month period during 2011 and 2012, 116 LCMS congregations and organizations blessed LSS with their prayers and financial support!

Lutheran Social Services of the South

This Is What We Do...not just on "Special Sunday" but every day of the year

Children's Services — 15 foster care and adoption offices, 2 residential treatment centers, and 2 emergency shelter programs for refugee children

Senior Services — 5 retirement communities throughout Texas – full range of care to support individuals and their families through each transition

Friends in Need — Assistance in Lubbock to those in imminent crisis due to poverty and health issues

Charter Schools — Quality education provided on two Texas campuses

Disaster Response — Help, support, case management, and advocacy for survivors of disaster

Spiritual Care — A fundamental component of our services agency-wide, as we provide help, healing, and hope in the name of Jesus Christ

Changing Lives Through Innovative, Quality, Christian Care
For more information: www.LSSS.org; 800-938-5777 or 512-459-1000

Annual Christmas Video Bible Study

Pastor Dorn will be leading his annual Christmas Video Bible Study beginning on December 2nd. *The Polar Express* is the movie the group will be watching.

The Polar Express is about an unnamed boy who has reached an age when he questions whether Santa Claus is real. He has found much evidence to disprove Santa's existence, including a World Book encyclopedia that says that the North Pole is "devoid of life." But on



Christmas Eve the boy is picked up by *The Polar Express*, a magical train that takes select children to the North Pole. The train takes the boy and his new friends on an icy roller coaster ride that, on multiple occasions, nearly ends in disaster.

The Polar Express is a story of faith. The film contains no religious imagery, quotes no Scriptures, and never mentions God, yet *The Polar Express* is a movie that touches the spirit with lessons about belief and friendship. It will undoubtedly prompt discussion on difficult spiritual questions such as, "What does it mean to believe--to truly believe?"

The movie is rated G and the study is open to all ages. Fresh popped popcorn will be served! The study will be held in Room 123 (Pastor Dorn's Office) on December 2, 9, and 16 beginning at 9:30 a.m.

Stewardship Is Faith in Action

I was inspired by a recent *Guideposts* article for this month's HUG2 message. A divorced woman scraping by on disability payments while renting a cramped apartment for herself and two teenage foster daughters prayed for a home of her own. There was no logical reason for Barbara to believe she could afford one. Yet she prayed for God to fulfill a dream she'd held since she was a child. And she looked for ways to stretch her meager budget a little more so she could afford a down payment. One item was off the table, however; her tithing would not be touched.

Her prayer was specific – a bedroom for each girl, a separate family room for entertaining friends, hardwood floors throughout, single story due to her disability, and a backyard for her dog. And that it be located in the girls' school district.

She checked out in new developments and real estate ads but there was nothing she could afford. Finally, she found a beautifully maintained and remodeled mobile home for sale by the owners who were ready to build a permanent home onsite. The Lord had acceded to her persistence and trust! But just as quickly the dream became unreachable. There were no lenders for used mobile homes and she didn't qualify for any other type of loan. She was crushed with sadness, even more so when her grandmother died shortly thereafter. A \$12,000 inheritance was generous, but not enough to purchase the mobile home without a loan. Yet her faith remained strong and she continued to believe the Lord would not abandon her or her dream.

Out of the blue the homeowners called and offered to carry a note on the mobile home at payments she could afford. They wanted to begin building immediately, so all she had to pay for was moving the home. Without hesitation she agreed to the bargain and made the necessary preparations. The cost to move the mobile home? Exactly \$12,000. And she found the last pad site available in the girls' school district. It had a yard for the dog. One final "coincidence" – the homeowners had been considering becoming foster parents for some time and meeting Barbara convinced them to take action.

All of us face challenges in our lives. Some are financial and others deal with our relationships, careers, or health. Do we struggle to find solutions on our own or do we put our full faith and trust in the Lord to answer our prayers in His own way and in His time? Do we then put our faith in action, as Barbara did, by diligently tithing during the tough times? Or do we only believe 30, 40 or 50% of the way, and find excuses that prevent us from giving His work priority over our material comfort and desire for accumulating more? I know that I've been inspired by Barbara's story of faith and will now think of her when I read **Matthew 6:26** – "*Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they?*" Our HUG2 campaign needs your continued support, as do the ongoing ministry programs funded by Trinity's home treasury. Please pray with me that our faith will grow like the mustard seed and take over our lives, smothering out all other worries, so that we may fully trust in the Lord to provide for us as we return His blessings back to His church.



Trinity Cemetery Receives New Benches

Oscar Mireles, Jr. completed his Eagle Scout project on Saturday, October 6. His desire was to give the benches to Trinity to use for outdoor seating. After some discussion it was decided that the Trinity Cemetery could use additional seating. Oscar did a great job on the benches and was recognized on November 4 during the ninethirtyone worship service. The next time you are out at Trinity Cemetery and you sit down on a new bench, give thanks to the Lord for a young man named Oscar!



Christmas Dinner Party for Our Homeless Community

December 9 at 12:30 p.m. in Multi-Purpose Room

Three ways you can be a blessing to our homeless community:

1. Buy a gift, by choosing a card from the small gift wrapped box at the Welcome Center any day of the week and in the gym on Sundays during services. Buy the requested gift for the person on that card. Bring the gift wrapped, with the name on the gift, to church on December 9th, or drop it off in the foyer any day before December 9th.
2. Bring a gently used men's large or extra large coat or adult size blanket. Drop-off boxes will be in both buildings.
3. Volunteer to cook food, or to help at the party. Sign up is easy on "the city" or contact Penny Mickel at 713.825.4562 or pennymickel@att.net.



Christmas *Continued from page 2*

Hark, the Herald Angels Sing

And we'll be joining with the angels in the heavenly chorus this year too. Carols are the theme for worship throughout the Advent season.

Silent Night - Christmas Eve

Same:

- Christmas Eve services are once again at 5:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. in the sanctuary and at 6:31 p.m. in the gym.
- The processional of the Light of the World coming into our midst
- The traditional reading of the Christmas story from the book of Luke
- Carols, Full Orchestra, and Choir
- A profound sense of holiness and hope as Christ is made manifest
- Concluding music will be our traditional Silent Night with candles

Different:

- Processional music – this year the music will be a variation on the traditional vespers service
- Live nativity with donkey, goats and lambs and maybe bunnies will not be in the sanctuary. This year our live nativity will be our gift to our neighbors and will be on the north side of the building facing Washington immediately following each of our services at 5:00, 6:31, and 7:30 p.m. Everyone is invited to come out after the service, see the Holy Family, and share in the beautiful Christmas music.
- There will be some modification in parking on the north side of the building to accommodate the live nativity.
- 6:31 will be a Winter Wonderland service against a beautiful backdrop of snowflakes and white poinsettias.

Joy to the World! – Christmas Day

All Trinity will worship together at 9:30 Christmas morning in the sanctuary. We'll joyfully celebrate accompanied by brass, choir and full organ.

May the blessings of the Christ Child be yours this Christmas and always.

Poinsettia Donations

We have ordered forty-five small (6 in.) poinsettias (\$10) and ten large (8 in.) poinsettias (\$20) to adorn our worship areas throughout the Advent season and on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. If you are interested in donating a plant(s) which may be taken home with you **after the Christmas Day service**, please contact Lisa Velazquez at 713.229.2970 or lvelazquez@trinitydt.org with the number you would like to purchase, the size, and the dedication you would like printed in the Christmas Eve and Day service folders. There is no limit on the number of poinsettias you can order. Deadline to order poinsettias and have dedication included in the Worship Folder is December 12.



New Members

The following were received into membership at Trinity on November 11. Please join us in welcoming our newest members.



Mindy Brown and children,
Benjamin and Alyssa



Adam Deviney and child, Nayeli



Magaly Deviney and child, Nayeli



Rodney Golding



Linda Golding



Matthew Norris



Brian Sandoval and children,
Scarlett and Ruby

Not Pictured:

Daphnee Johnson and son, Sebastian

John Leonard, Sr. and Laura Thompson and children, Jack and John

Katie Mueller

Antoinette Rao-Delgad

George and Lisa Sacaris and children, Lorenz and Gianna

Cathy Winkler

National Youth Gathering

The National Youth Gathering (NYG) is held every three years for the youth (current 8th - 12th grade) and adult youth leaders of the LCMS. The theme for the 2013 NYG is "Live Loved." July 1-5, 2013, approximately 25,000 youth from around the world will gather in San Antonio, Texas, to worship Jesus, do service projects, have lots of fun and make memories that will last a lifetime. The cost for the gathering is approximately \$900. This includes the gathering registration, hotel, transportation, meals while in San Antonio, and a Texas District T-Shirt for "Texas District Day."

A nonrefundable deposit of \$295 is due January 15, 2013. If you are interested in attending the 2013 NYG or getting more information, please contact Ken Rodgers at email: krodgers@trinitydt.org, phone: 713.409.2554 or Stephanie Gomez at email: stephanie.gomez@duchesne.org, phone: 281.660.2664.

National Youth Gathering



Interested Current 8th-12th Graders Contact:
Ken Rodgers @ 713-209-2554 or krodgers@trinitydt.org
Stephanie Gomez @ 281-660-2664 or stephanie.gomez@duchesne.org

2012 Advent Devotions

Christmas ... there's really nothing quite like it. From the falling snow (if you're lucky) to the smell of burning wood to the freshly cut Scotch pine, it's a wonderful time of the year. What says "Christmas" most to you? Is it the family traditions? What about the music and TV specials? Is it the carefully laid-out Christmas village? Whatever it is, there's something about Christmas that goes deep down inside.

A resource to help in preparing for Christmas is the devotional booklets prepared by Lutheran Hour Ministries (LHM) entitled *Christmas Memories*. Written by LHM's Theological Editor and Writer Wayne Palmer, these meditations draw from the biblical account in the first two chapters of Luke's gospel. In particular, they look at Mary's observations and reactions to the awe-inspiring events surrounding the foretelling, birth and infancy of the Christ Child.

"Just as we all have cherished memories of Christmases past, Mary shares her treasured memories of the first Christmas, relating the events to Luke to include in his gospel," Palmer said. "I want to bring alive the events of that first Christmas through the recollections of a very special woman of faith who 'treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart' (Luke 2:19b)," he added.

Printed copies of this devotional booklet are available in the narthex, foyer, and gym. In addition to the printed booklets, online and podcast versions are available. *Christmas Memories* can also be received as an e-mail subscription throughout the Advent season (the days leading up to Christmas). The audio version will begin December 2. Details on the LHM digital resources can be found at www.adventdevotions.net



FUEL Field Trips by Christy Vanderwater

FUEL is a dynamic youth ministry that helps students develop an intimate relationship with God to make them life long disciples for HIM!

Once a month, FUEL takes a field trip. In October we walked to City Hall for reflection and prayer. The November field trip occurred at a nursing home on Memorial, not very far from church. FUEL participants went to the nursing home to serve the residents there. We sang, prayed and talked with the men and women and handed out cards that said things like, "Jesus loves you!" and "The Lord answers your prayers!" The people living in the home were very kind and seemed to be very grateful to see the students. It was a great community outreach experience that I was proud to be a part of. This kind of volunteering is a wonderful opportunity to serve others and share the good news of Jesus. It was also a very personal experience for one of our adult leaders, John Valdez. His mother lives in the home that we visited and it was really cool to see the kids hanging out and talking with her and with the men and women there.



Trinity Adult Studies for December

On December 23 and December 30, the Trinity family will worship together at 9:30 in the sanctuary or 9:31 in the gym. There will be no Bible Study or Sunday School either of these Sundays.

A Praying Life • Krystle Marcis • Room 232 • Sunday • 9:30 a.m. (10/07 -12/30)

A Praying Life – It's what we want, isn't it? A life centered in prayer and guided by God – a life that glorifies Him in all ways at all times. Yet too often we persist in being unmotivated in prayer and our relationship with the Father is distant and formal. This study of Paul Miller's book "A Praying Life" will help us develop a closer relationship with God and then see that relationship as the key to our prayer life. A Praying Life - it's what we want and what He wants for us too.

Daniel • Dave Weinhold • Room 205 • Sunday • 9:30 a.m. (10/15 - 05/26)

On the most famous night of his life, Daniel found himself locked in a lion's den, but at the age of about 70, this wasn't the first time Daniel had been locked up. In his youth, he and three friends had spent a little time in a fiery furnace. In both instances, and in all in between, Daniel showed himself to be a great leader of God's people, a man who devoted himself to God's Word amid many disappointments and temptations. He clearly told the story that God reigns and He works to deliver us from evil, especially through the gift of His Son, Jesus.

Join us to learn more about this God-fearing man and how he is an example to us today.

Making Good Decisions • Jim Cleary • Room 211 • Sunday • 9:30 a.m. (10/14 - 12/09)

Do you sometimes wish that God would just write what He wants you to do in your planner? Donald Baker is familiar with this desire. He writes, "God has given me free will, and while I appreciate His confidence in my ability to choose, there are times when I wish that He would make the decisions for me." God's Word doesn't always provide us with direct answers to each choice, but through careful study we can learn to make decisions wisely, confidently and in harmony with God's will. Come join us as we study and learn together.

The Ministries of Elijah and Elisha • Craig Chancellor • Room 206 • Sunday • 9:30 a.m. (11/18 - 05/26)

Elijah and Elisha – these two Old Testament prophets worked many miracles and pointed the way for the coming of the Christ. Their stories are recorded in the books of 1 and 2 Kings. Elisha succeeded Elijah and asked for "a double portion" of his spirit. Elisha also went on to perform twice as many miracles as Elijah and his ministry was twice as long – just what you'd expect from a God who hears and answers prayer.

The Hurried Family • Lori Roesel and Christina Putman • Room 214 • Sunday • 9:30 a.m. (10/21 - 12/16)

Trinity's ROCK Group (Raising Our Christian Kids) is hosting a new study squarely aimed at all of us: *The Hurried Family*. Our lives blur by us, often leaving us little time for our spouses and children, our friends, our communities, ourselves, our Father. If we don't have a plan to manage the pace of our lives, the hurried lifestyle will manage us and rob us of peace and contentment. As we approach the holiday seasons, come and find out what God intends for us and how to restore calm and rest into our lives and the lives of our families. Look for a new parenting study to begin in January.

The Polar Express • Pastor Michael Dorn • Room 123 • Sunday • 9:30 a.m. (12/02 - 12/16)

Pastor Dorn will lead his annual Christmas Video Bible Study "The Polar Express." For more details see the article on page 3.

The Sermon on the Mount—Christ's Blueprint for Life • Bill Fischer • Chapel • Sunday • 9:30 a.m. (09/16 - 12/30)

Jesus began His famous Sermon on the Mount by declaring His disciples blessed nine times because of what God had in store for them. Then He turns their world upside down by telling them how to live not as the world lives but as their gracious, merciful Father would have them live. His message to His disciples then is His message to us today.

Tuesday Morning Women's Bible Study - 1st & 2nd Thessalonians • Audrey Black • Room 205 • 10:00 a.m. (09/11/12 - 05/28/13)

The Tuesday Morning Women's Bible Study group is studying Paul's New Testament letters of 1 and 2 Thessalonians. These letters to the Thessalonians are encouraging and reassuring. We are reminded early on to give thanks to God in prayer for the work of faith, labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. Christians are urged to go on working quietly and wait in hope for the return of Christ. We are strengthened and inspired to stand firm in faith and to live a life that is pleasing to God.

Advent Blessings • Sarah Williams • Room 232 • Wednesday • 8:00 a.m. (12/05 - 12/12)

Advent is such a gracious time of preparing our hearts for the coming of the Christ child. During December this group will study and share Advent blessings as we make space and time for the baby who'll be here Christmas Eve!

If you've never been in a Bible study this would be a great time to come. We invite all parents to drop off your kids and come join us. It will be a perfect way to get into the right Christmas spirit.

Sonrise Bible Study - Pastor Black • Room 124 • Thursday • 6:30 a.m. (ongoing)

Martin Luther said, "Faith is a living, bold trust in God's grace..." and he encouraged – almost demanded – that we increase our faith through study of the Word. The Sonrise group does just that. This group gathers at 6:30 a.m. every Thursday morning to study God's Word. Most often the text is the Scripture from the lectionary for the following Sunday.

TnT Bible Study - Dag & Rachel Calafell • Offsite • 1st & 3rd Fridays • 7:00 p.m.

This dynamic group of Trinity 20s and 30s, singles and couples, meets the 1st and 3rd Fridays of each month for Bible study and fellowship. Currently the group is studying the prophet Hosea, an incredible story of God's love ("my love will know no bounds" Hosea 14:4) and healing for His sometimes faithless people. The name Hosea means the Lord has saved us.

Please contact Dag and Rachel Calafell, rachel.calafell@gmail.com for more information.

Make Memories That Last

“It’s *The Most Wonderful Time of the Year*,” a popular Christmas song by Andy Williams tells us. While I appreciate the sentiments expressed in the song, I sometimes wonder if a more fitting lyric might be **“It’s the most STRESSFUL time of the year!”** The holidays have become a rapid flurry of activities and a never ending to-do list. At least for me, it is so easy to get caught up in what I need to accomplish that it’s easy to miss out on the real reason for all the celebration—**Christ came to earth and took a human form so that He could ultimately die on the cross to restore our relationship with our heavenly father.** God sent His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him would not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16)! **Our God is a relational God and He calls us to be in relationship with Him and with our fellow man!** This holiday season, I encourage you to take some time out of the holiday rush to intentionally cultivate and grow your relationship with others around you by caring for them. Try some of the following activities with your family or friends and see how your relationships blossom as you make memories that will last well beyond the holiday season!



1. Invite someone to grab a cup of coffee or go out for dessert.
2. Select a cause or charity and donate your time (soup kitchen, animal shelter, etc).
3. Visit a nursing home or assisted living facility. Spend time talking to the residents, asking them to share some of their holiday traditions or treasured memories.
4. Bring a meal to a homebound neighbor, or offer to help them with their decorating or baking.
5. Make some homemade holiday cards and deliver them to a children’s hospital or a cancer center.
6. Have your children go through their toys and pick out a few gently used ones to donate to a charity like Toys for Tots or take them to the store to pick out a new one to give away.
7. Instead of gifts, create coupons for things that you know the person will enjoy.
8. Decorate a gingerbread house together.
9. Assemble a care package for troops overseas.
10. Bake cookies and hand deliver them to friends, neighbors and those who provide a service for you (the mailman, the baby-sitter, the dog walker et al).

Start the New Year with Great Marriage!

Great Marriage! Trinity’s Pre-Marriage Preparation Class starts Thursday, January 24th, from 6 to 9 p.m. and meets for six sessions. This is a great way to celebrate and deepen your love for the special one God has given you to marry.

Great Marriage! is also a great marriage enrichment class especially for those couples who have never done any premarital preparation.

Great Marriage! Class has 6 sessions on Thursday nights in January and February:

January 24th & 31st from 6 to 9 p.m.

February 7th, 14th, 21st & 28th from 6 to 9 p.m.

Great Marriage! consists of:

- Bible Studies on Grace, Agape Love, the challenges to marriage, the one-flesh union of marriage (and more!)
- Developing your prayer and devotional life
- Prepare/Enrich online inventory
- Saving Your Marriage Before It Starts DVD series
- Communication skills training from PREP (Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program)
- The Five Stages of Marriage and The Apprenticeship of Marriage
- Roles, Expectations and Finances
- Brain Research and Gender differences and a whole lot more!

Great Marriage! is packed with interactive discussions, couple communication exercises and opportunities to share and learn together.

Each couple preparing for their great marriage that completes this class receives a certificate that gives them a \$60.00 discount at the Harris County Office when they go to get their Marriage License.

Please contact Suzanne Kurth to register for **Great Marriage!** by e-mail: skurth@trinitydt.org or by telephone: 713.224.0684.



RighTrak Missional Community

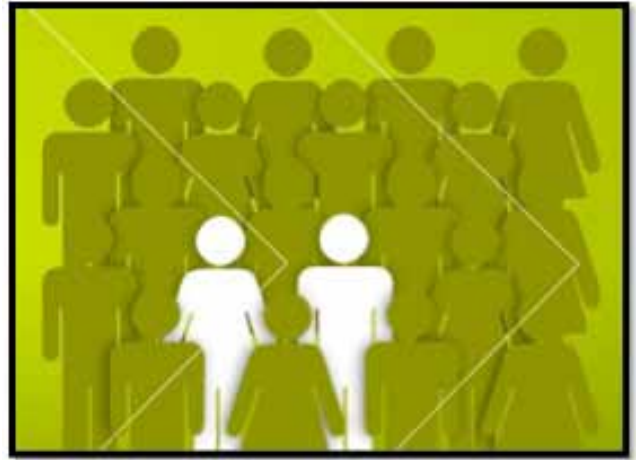
A Quest to Make Disciples, End Poverty and Empower the Least of These

Living Life with the Homeless and Poverty-Stricken

21% of Houston's population is classified as "persons below poverty level." Existing social services are important, but for the most part they are Band-aids. Limited resources and big demands force agencies to go where the least amount of money can have the biggest quantitative impact. Seldom are the underlying issues contributing to their dysfunction addressed; instead, current programs treat symptoms, not causes like the lack of a supportive social network (relationships) or a Christ-centered means of providing reliable income (Luther's doctrine of vocation).

This missional community attempts to fill the gap. It is precisely the kind of thing Mike Breen wrote about: "Small enough to care, but large enough to dare." It gathers people around an effort to help one person or family at a time lift themselves out of poverty. The missional community members and leaders help the person who is object of the mission (the "industrialist") with goal setting, life planning, brainstorming and problem-solving. Where appropriate, the missional community members and leaders may provide direct support and either provide or arrange for goods and services (food, furniture, supplies, counseling, medical care, vocational training, etc.). Over time, members and leaders will develop a relationship with the industrialist, which will give him/her a lasting, stable, supportive social network.

A key component of this missional community is the 3D Ministries curriculum. The industrialist is taught the lifeshapes, the learning circle in particular. (In fact, the first industrialist, Willie, has already read *The Circle: Choosing to Learn from Life* (2006).) The industrialist's desire to change and willingness to let go and let God are critical to success, and 3D Ministries' lifeshapes will play a key role in fostering this. More information about how the RighTrak Industries program works can be found at www.rightrak.org.



Missional Community Structure

A core group of 6 or 8 people, called table members or chairs, are the missional community leaders. Chairs commit to working with the industrialist for 12 months, including weekly meetings with him/her for the first 6 months followed by bi-weekly meetings for the last 6 months. Regular meeting times will be established soon. Chair positions are filled by invitation only. Current chairs include David LeFevre, Kindra LeFevre, Matthew Norris, Michael Teeter, Frank Parrilla (West U Rotary), Manuel Sanchez (Ecclesia) and Samuel (Willie's brother).

Discreet projects or efforts might be led by the chairs with support and involvement from missional community members or they may come from and be directed by missional community members. Community members are more grass-roots. Ideas, resources and man/woman-power come from the missional community members. Missional community members can come to meetings, but aren't required to; they can come and go as the Spirit leads them. Chairs simply make sure that people are held accountable to the things they say they will do. A missional community member's level of involvement is as much or as little as the person wants.

Some events are organized, like the effort held on November 17 to furnish the transitional housing that has been obtained and provide initial basic needs support (toiletries, food, clothes, gift cards to Kroger, bus passes, Target gift cards, etc.). Other things are spontaneous. Everyone is encouraged to be a friend to the industrialist—to spend time with him/her or call or write or play chess or whatever.

Timeline, Goals & Projects

RighTrak Industries' first industrialist, Willie, began the program on November 16. The first missional community event, "From Poverty to Wholeness Housewarming," was held on November 17. Willie spent Thanksgiving week with his brother in North Houston. After that, table meetings begin. The first table meeting is just an introduction of the chairs and missional community members to the industrialist, Willie. The second is Willie's life story. This may be by invitation-only in light of privacy concerns and the need for open and honest communication from Willie. The third meeting is where

Continued on page 11 - see "RighTrak"

Prayers and Promises by Pastor David Leeland

A blessed Adventide to all of you and may your Advent preparation truly lead to joyous Christmas celebrations!

One of our favorite Christmas movies to watch is the original “*Santa Clause*.” There’s the scene where Tim Allen has put on the Santa suit, completed the run delivering presents and they end up at the North Pole. Tim Allen is arguing with Bernard the Elf saying that he’s not Santa Claus and Bernard replies, “You read the card and put on the suit which constitutes a binding contract.” They argue some more and finally Bernard has Tim Allen read the card under a magnifying glass to read the fine print of the “Santa Clause.”

This is just like marriage, Tim Allen put on the suit not having a clue what would really be required of him. People go into marriage, looking beautiful and handsome not really having a clue what life would require of them down the road and through the years.

Melanie and I just had one of those “fine print” moments with Melanie’s Uncle Earl. Earl has always lived his life as a rugged outdoors man, and as a man who was highly independent and as one who always had an opinion on everything and anything. Earl just turned 89 and is experiencing a full-blown case of Alzheimer’s Disease which has required that Melanie become his permanent guardian.

For the last three months, we’ve been driving or flying to Lubbock in an attempt to get a handle on Earl’s situation, see that he’s in an excellent place to be cared for, surrounded by lifelong friends who visit him daily and manage his affairs so that things may go as well and as right as they possibly can for him under these circumstances.

And if you would have asked us 32 years ago on our Wedding Day, “And do you Melanie and David commit to caring for Uncle Earl when there’s no one else to care for him? Then answer, “I do.” We would have responded, “What? What are you talking about? We’re marrying each other, not Uncle Earl!” And yet, here it is, time to step up to the plate, to do the right thing so that a family member is cared for with respect and dignity and not thrown to the mercy of the State. Literally, to see that justice is done for Earl.

I didn’t know that Uncle Earl was part of the fine print when Melanie and I got married! But, I know that somewhere in the words: “To have and to hold from this day forward, for richer or poorer, in sickness and in health, forsaking all others, and I pledge you my faithfulness,” Uncle Earl is covered.

Jesus has a word for this from St. Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians, Chapter 13:8: “*Love never fails.*”

And because our gracious God is love and the Source of all love, we can depend on the love of our Savior, draw from it and let His love fill us up and bless us to be a blessing.

Wherever you are with the “fine print” of your marriage, may Jesus bless you and bless you and bless you with His healing, saving and life-giving love always!

Merry Christmas!



RighTrak *Continued from page 10*

Willie, with the help of the missional community, brainstorms goals and sets a life plan. Subsequent meetings are for assessing progress and problem-solving. They likely will resemble a huddle meeting. The program lasts for 12 months, but perhaps less if the industrialist is making really good progress. The missional community then moves to the next industrialist. (RighTrak Industries already has a source for a second candidate.)

Discipleship

In essence, this missional community huddles a homeless or poverty-stricken person. Introducing discipleship to the industrialist is one of the goals. Also, at every opportunity the chairs/missional community leaders will use the lifeshapes, thus introducing the concepts to the grassroots missional community members as well. The 3D Ministries curriculum is so central to the concept of this missional community that discipleship will rub off on missional community members. (This is an intentional goal; it’s not going to happen by accident.)

- RighTrak Industries -

Learn more at <http://rightrak.iotadevelopmentfoundation.org>.

Questions? Contact David LeFevre, 713.581.1987 or david.l.lefevre@iotadevelopmentfoundation.org

The 39 Club

The 39 Club is invited to the home of Pastor and Audrey Black for lunch following the 11a.m. service on Sunday, December 9. For more information or to RSVP, please contact either Jean Minsch at 281.550.4752, or Pastor and Audrey Black at 713.782.6307. Come and enjoy this annual event.



WORSHIP ONLINE AT
live.ninethirtyone.org



Broadcasts
every Sunday
9:15 & 11:00 a.m. CT

Friendly Folks - Wednesday, December 12



From 9:30 a.m. until noon on Wednesday, December 12, the Friendly Folks are invited to Room 205 to enjoy fun and games - which means dominoes, cards, or checkers and perhaps even some light refreshments. We will attend the Noon Advent Service together and then go out for a barbecue lunch. Come join us. For more information or to sign up, please call Rollin or Eldeen Cattau at 713.682.3549.

Thrivent Members—2013 Chapter Board Election and BBQ - December 2

Please come enjoy delicious BBQ and vote for your 2013 Chapter Board Members anytime from 12 noon to 3 p.m. at County Line BBQ, 13850 Cutten Road.



We know it's a busy time for all, but help Thrivent continue to support Trinity by voting in the 2013 Board Members. Bring your funding requests for 2013 funding along with your appetite. See you there.

2012 GOVERNING BOARD

Jim Baccus (Elder)
Dag Calafell
Pastor Michael Dorn
Bill Gebhardt (Elder)
Michael Kaspar (Elder)
Scott Leitko
Steve Maynard
John Menke (Chairman)
Jean Minsch (Secretary)
Michelle Vanderwater
Charles Volek (Elder)
David Weinhold (Elder)

PEP Club Christmas Caroling - Sunday, December 16

Please join the PEP Club on Sunday, December 16, at 3 p.m. as we reach out to homebound members of Trinity to share the joy of the Christmas season by caroling at their homes on Sunday afternoon. We will meet in the TLS Multi-Purpose Room of the Education Center

After caroling, we will return to Trinity for a potluck dinner. Please RSVP to Bea Uhl at 713.864.4919 (beauhl@sbcglobal.net), Mary Mountford at 713.436.2623 (marymountford@att.net), or Cynthia Roney 281.460.4263 (roneyc10@gmail.com) and we'll coordinate the food selections with you.



Post-Hurricane Isaac, the Real Work Begins

“Slow moving Hurricane Isaac struck southeastern Louisiana in late August, and we now have a clearer picture of what has been left in its wake. Throughout the state, almost 59,000 residences were damaged. Debris cleanup is ongoing in many parishes, and the storm surge associated with “Isaac” has shown us the devastating effects a long, slow hurricane can have.

It will take months for some, and perhaps years for most, to help survivors to recover. Lutheran Social Services Disaster Recovery (LSSDR) remains committed to helping meet the unmet needs of those impacted, as well as aiding in the long-term recovery efforts of the communities that suffered the greatest damage, such as hard-hit Plaquemines Parish.

LSS News- Fall 2012

Ladies Circle Ministries - December 6

The Christmas gathering of the Ladies Circle will be held in the Mary Martha Fellowship Hall at 10 a.m. on Thursday, December 6.

Christmas music will be presented by the Trinity Singers under the direction of Jason Mangels, director of music and worship. Chris Bergsieker will also give a presentation about the Lutheran Hour Rose Bowl Parade Petal Pushers. A covered dish luncheon honoring October, November and December birthdays will be served at noon.

Members are encouraged to bring to the meeting new toys or games for children from infants to 12 years of age, or gift cards for Target or WalMart. Gift wrapping supplies are also needed. These gifts will help the missionaries serving through the Lutheran Inter-City Network Coalition (LINC)-Houston "Toys for Joy" program to help develop relationships and share the Gospel with people through their ministries.

Members and guests are invited to participate in this gathering for inspiration, fellowship, and good food.

For additional information, please contact Linda Banes, president, at 281.450.1517.



STAFF DIRECTORY

CHURCH

Senior Pastor	
Pastor Michael P. Dorn.....	713.229.2940
Director of Caring Ministries	
Pastor David A. Leeland.....	713.229.2916
Visitation Pastor	
Pastor Donald G. Black.....	713.229.2917
Director of Mission & Discipleship	
Pastor Aaron L. Lytle.....	713.229.2903
Director of Ministries	
Sylvia Schmidt.....	713.229.2962
Director of Music and Worship	
Jason Mangels.....	713.229.2937
Director of Finance	
Sue Holeman.....	713.229.2956
Director of Youth Ministries	
Ken Rodgers.....	713.229.2931
Bookkeeper	
Barbie King.....	713.229.2963
Communications Coordinator	
Pam Schroeder.....	713.229.2944
IT Support	
Sean Bowen.....	713.229.2954
Assistant to Director of Caring Ministries	
Suzanne Kurth.....	713.229.2922
Assistant to Director of Mission & Discipleship	
Christina Putman.....	713.229.2905
Host	
Rollin Cattau.....	713.229.2950
Hostess	
Lisa Velazquez.....	713.229.2950

"Life Quotes"

"What are we going to do to care for these people [the cognitively disabled]? We have two choices: We are either going to keep rationalizing/justifying why it's okay to kill people with these types of disabilities or we are going to care and show them the love they deserve."

This "Life Quote" is from Lutherans For Life - Kay L. Meyers

"The Visit"

(The following was written by Pastor Walter Schoedel)

While visiting folks who are homebound or living in a nursing care center, I frequently hear them say, "Thanks for coming. I haven't had a visitor in a long time." That's a hard thing to hear.

Administrators of care centers tell me that 60 percent of their residents have no visitors at all. For some, it's because their family members have died. For others, it's because their relatives are scattered coast to coast, from New York to Los Angeles. Some have family who are unable to travel. And hardest of all, some have family who do not want to see them because of the ravages of time and memory impairments have changed their relationship.

It is tragic that folks who are alone, homebound, or in care centers are forsaken in their later years and ignored by family and friends.

Keith Frndak, president of a retirement community in Pennsylvania, once wrote, "You don't need to study visiting; you need to do visiting. Visit. Visit, for the sake of respecting and honoring our older brothers and sisters in Christ. Visit - it's the gift that gives back."

From "Engaging the Aging" - Summer 2012 issue



SCHOOL/TLEC

Interim Principal	
Dr. Bill Like.....	713.229.2964
TLS Secretary	
Julie May.....	713.229.2901
Director of Early Childhood Program	
Victoria House.....	713.229.2932
Director of Extended Care & Kids Camp	
Jennifer Horn.....	713.229.2967

Joyfully Sharing Christ ☐ Saving Love With All People Now!

CHURCH REPORT
October 15 - November 18

NEW MEMBERS
 See Page 6

DEATH
November 10
 Goldie Dorothy Sue Dutschmann

MARRIAGES
November 10
 James Hahn and Melissa Myers

November 16
 Zachery Boulanger and Jewel Monke

REVENUE UPDATE
Year to Date through 11/18/12
 Total Receipts\$3,363,269
 Budgetary Needs.....\$3,576,022

HUG2 UPDATE
Year to Date through 11/18/12
 Total Contributions \$1,871,524
 Pledged to Date \$2,945,786

SUNDAY SCHOOL TOTALS

	1-8	H.S.	Adult
10/21	49	8	151
10/28	55	7	156
11/04	60	10	134
11/11	63	6	141
11/18	52	8	141
Total Offering.....			\$229.19

SUNDAY WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

	8:15	9:31	11:00	11:15	Online
10/21	223	157	180	90	4
10/28	318	205	181	73	13
11/04	342	247	218	57	12
11/11	230	230	148	72	8
11/18	245	190	142	58	7

Dave Ramsey's **Financial Peace** UNIVERSITY
 Save the Date!
 IMAGINE YOURSELF **DEBT FREE**
 Class begins **January 13, 2013** at 9:30 a.m.

ATSSB All Region Finalists

On November 10, 2012 at the ATSSB (Association of Texas Small School Bands) All Region Band Concert, Trinity was represented by two alumni, Eric Mueller and Tim Cleary. Both Eric and Tim practiced and auditioned by performing two preselected etudes. Tim was awarded first chair for the Euphoniums and Eric placed first chair for Tubas. What an incredible accomplishment!! We congratulate them on their exciting achievement and celebrate with them as they continue to use their God given talents for His glory. You can hear both of these gentlemen on Sunday mornings when our own Trinity Brass help lead worship. We wish them continued success as they prepare and audition for the ATSSB Area Band and ultimately the highest honor, ALL-STATE Band.



Tim Cleary and Eric Mueller

Drills & Skills
DECEMBER 19-21
OVERNIGHT CAMP
\$75 | AGES: 8-14 | CO-ED
REGISTER ONLINE @
drillsskills.youthdt.org
 Question? Contact:
 Ken: 713-409-2554 or krogers@trinitydt.org
 John: 713-427-2306 or valdez34@msn.com
 Sponsored by:

December 2012

Trinity Lutheran Church

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																																	
 <p><i>Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!</i></p>						<p>1</p> <p>8:00 AM Basketball Fellowship Group 10:00 AM 931 Set-up 5:00 PM Kaspar/Recio Wedding 6:30 PM 931 Band Rehearsal</p>																																																																																																	
<p>2</p> <p>8:15 AM WORSHIP (C) 9:30 AM 8th Grade Confirmation Class 9:30 AM SS & Bible Classes 9:31 AM 931 WORSHIP 11:00 AM WORSHIP (C) 11:15 AM The Eleventh Hour WORSHIP 4:00 PM HLC Christmas Concert</p>	<p>3</p> <p>7:00 PM Basketball Fellowship Group</p>	<p>4</p> <p>10:00 AM Women's Bible Study 10:30 AM TLS-EC Chapel 6:00 PM Trinity Winds</p>	<p>5</p> <p>8:00 AM Bible Study 8:15 AM TLS-LS Chapel 8:55 AM TLS-MS Chapel 10:00 AM Women's Club - HPCC 12:00 PM Advent Service (C) 5:00 PM Advent Meal 5:00 PM Trinity Brass 5:30 PM FUEL 6:30 PM Advent Service 6:30 PM IGNITE 7:30 PM Sanctuary Choir</p>	<p>6</p> <p>6:30 AM Sunrise Bible Study 10:00 AM Ladies Circle Meeting & Luncheon 6:30 PM 931 Band Rehearsal</p>	<p>7</p> <p>7:00 AM Middle School Bible Study</p>																																																																																																		
<p>9</p> <p>8:15 AM WORSHIP 9:30 AM 8th Grade Confirmation Class 9:30 AM SS & Bible Classes 9:31 AM 931 WORSHIP (C) 11:00 AM WORSHIP 11:15 AM The Eleventh Hour WORSHIP (C) 12:00 PM 39 Club - Pastor Black's Home 12:30 PM Hearts for the Homeless Christmas Meal</p>	<p>10</p> <p>11:00 AM Crochet Class 7:00 PM Basketball Fellowship Group</p>	<p>11</p> <p>10:00 AM Women's Bible Study 10:30 AM TLS-EC Chapel 6:30 PM Stephen Ministry Training 7:00 PM HLC Board Meeting 7:00 PM Women's Club</p>	<p>12</p> <p>8:00 AM Bible Study 8:15 AM TLS-LS Chapel 8:55 AM TLS-MS Chapel 9:30 AM Friendly Folks Games Party 12:00 PM Advent Service (C) 5:00 PM Advent Meal 5:00 PM Trinity Brass 5:30 PM FUEL 6:00 PM Trinity Winds 6:30 PM Advent Service 6:30 PM IGNITE 7:30 PM Sanctuary Choir</p>	<p>13</p> <p>6:30 AM Sunrise Bible Study</p>	<p>14</p> <p>7:00 AM Middle School Bible Study 3:00 PM TLEC Jingle Bell Mingle 4:00 PM Williams/Vorhees Wedding Rehearsal</p>	<p>15</p> <p>8:00 AM Basketball Fellowship Group 10:00 AM 931 Set-up 5:00 PM Williams/Vorhees Wedding 6:30 PM 931 Band Rehearsal</p>																																																																																																	
<p>16</p> <p>8:15 AM WORSHIP (C) 9:30 AM 8th Grade Confirmation Class 9:30 AM SS & Bible Classes 9:31 AM 931 WORSHIP 11:00 AM WORSHIP (C) 11:15 AM The Eleventh Hour WORSHIP 3:00 PM PEP Club Christmas Caroling</p>	<p>17</p> <p>6:30 PM Board of Directors 7:00 PM Basketball Fellowship Group</p>	<p>18</p> <p>10:00 AM Women's Bible Study 10:30 AM TLS-EC Chapel 6:30 PM Stephen Ministry Training</p>	<p>19</p> <p>8:15 AM TLS-LS Chapel 8:55 AM TLS-MS Chapel 10:00 AM Ladies Circle - HPCC 12:00 PM Advent Service (C) 5:00 PM Advent Meal 6:00 PM Trinity Winds 6:30 PM Advent Service 7:30 PM Sanctuary Choir</p>	<p>20</p> <p>6:30 AM Sunrise Bible Study 6:30 PM 931 Band Rehearsal 7:00 PM Sanctuary Choir</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p> <p>8:00 AM Basketball Fellowship Group 10:00 AM 931 Set-up</p>																																																																																																	
<p>23</p> <p>9:30 AM WORSHIP 9:31 AM 931 WORSHIP (C)</p>	<p>24</p> <p>5:00 PM Christmas Eve Service 6:31 PM Christmas Eve Service 7:30 PM Christmas Eve Service</p> 	<p>25</p> <p>9:30 AM Christmas Day Service (C)</p> 	<p>All Offices Closed</p>																																																																																																				
<p>30</p> <p>9:30 AM WORSHIP (C) 9:31 AM 931 WORSHIP</p>	<p>31</p> <p>6:30 PM New Year's Eve Worship (C)</p>  <p>All Offices Closed</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="7">November 12</th> </tr> <tr> <th>S</th> <th>M</th> <th>T</th> <th>W</th> <th>T</th> <th>F</th> <th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> <td>6</td> <td>7</td> <td>8</td> <td>9</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11</td> <td>12</td> <td>13</td> <td>14</td> <td>15</td> <td>16</td> <td>17</td> </tr> <tr> <td>18</td> <td>19</td> <td>20</td> <td>21</td> <td>22</td> <td>23</td> <td>24</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25</td> <td>26</td> <td>27</td> <td>28</td> <td>29</td> <td>30</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		November 12							S	M	T	W	T	F	S					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30		<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="7">January 13</th> </tr> <tr> <th>S</th> <th>M</th> <th>T</th> <th>W</th> <th>T</th> <th>F</th> <th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> <td>6</td> <td>7</td> <td>8</td> <td>9</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11</td> <td>12</td> <td>13</td> <td>14</td> <td>15</td> <td>16</td> <td>17</td> </tr> <tr> <td>18</td> <td>19</td> <td>20</td> <td>21</td> <td>22</td> <td>23</td> <td>24</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25</td> <td>26</td> <td>27</td> <td>28</td> <td>29</td> <td>30</td> <td>31</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		January 13							S	M	T	W	T	F	S					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
November 12																																																																																																							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S																																																																																																	
				1	2	3																																																																																																	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10																																																																																																	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17																																																																																																	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24																																																																																																	
25	26	27	28	29	30																																																																																																		
January 13																																																																																																							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S																																																																																																	
				1	2	3																																																																																																	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10																																																																																																	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17																																																																																																	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24																																																																																																	
25	26	27	28	29	30	31																																																																																																	

800 Houston Avenue - Houston, Texas 77007 - 713-224-0684

www.trinitydt.org



TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
800 HOUSTON AVENUE
HOUSTON, TX 77007-7792

DATED MATERIAL
DELIVER BY November 30, 2012

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
HOUSTON, TEXAS
PERMIT 6364

Jesus loves:



Article submission deadline **DECEMBER 6TH** for articles to be published
January 1, 2013. Submit articles to pr@trinitydt.org.

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

Joyfully sharing Christ's saving love with all people, Now!



**Family
Fun Night**

December 7

**5:30 PM
Free Pizza**

**6:00 PM
Movie**