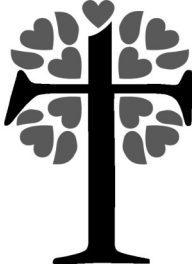


JANUARY 2025



The Leaflet



Congregational Meeting

Sunday, January 26, following worship

Council

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And just like that, another year is behind us and we are welcoming 2025. Last year your Council met and, to the best of their ability, faced the business end of Tree of Life; all the while keeping in mind our Mission to spread the Gospel not only in our worship but in our actions. And, we accomplished quite a bit.

Some decisions were easy and some were difficult. Some things needed updating and others needed to be changed completely. You will all be updated on the goings on in Council at our Annual Congregational meeting following worship on January 26th. Please make every effort to be there.

Your Council has some important information to review with you as well as we need to vote, as a congregation, on some items.

A big hurdle we will need to face together is a new roof for our building. We can no longer patch here and there. It's past time for a whole new roof. This will mean a fundraising campaign and financial help from everyone. We've already had several healthy pledges that will give us a great start.

Another request is for volunteers. You've heard me request this of you over the past few months. But please give it serious consideration. Whether you can help out as an usher, acolyte, setting up the altar for worship, helping with fellowship, counting offering, or serving on the Outreach Committee. Even being on Council. No one says you have to jump in and be an officer—unless that's what you'd like. All of these options and more are opportunities to not only help out at Tree of Life, but we are serving God as we serve others. And each of these options only take an hour or two per month. With all the blessings we have, an hour or two a month to give back isn't asking all that much. Please prayerfully consider serving in some capacity. It is much appreciated, very satisfying, and a great way to help your church.

Wishing you good health and continued blessings in 2025.
Donna Parks on behalf of Nicky Zaiser, Council President.

Pr. Robbie will be in the office Tuesdays & Fridays 10 AM - 1 PM
Sec. Maria will be in the office Mondays and Fridays, 1- 4 PM

All Sunday worship services are live streamed at 10:30 AM and thereafter can be found on YouTube to view at any time. Find the link on our website
www.treeoflifechurchde.com

From the Pastor

Helping Behind the Scenes

My daughter had a small role in a local high school's musical in December – which meant that I had my first experience as a “theater parent.” Although I've always liked theater, I was never involved in school plays growing up, so this was my first time seeing what happens behind the scenes of a school production. And my goodness, there is a lot that happens behind the scenes!

Even for a minor ensemble role, Abby had rehearsals for a couple months. Volunteers made hundreds of costumes, tailored to each child's size. Parents helped build sets and props (my wife and I became quite adept at making “fake books” for a library scene). Teachers and custodians put in extra time and effort. Families gave money and helped with fundraisers, to purchase those things that couldn't be handmade. Everyone's help was needed, and months of time, labor and money were committed. But in the end, it was worth it: Abby loved performing, and all the kids seemed to enjoy the experience of putting on a major musical. And audiences celebrated how well the kids did – and remarked how “everyone made it look so easy!”

A whole lot happens behind the scenes at Tree of Life, too. Whether it's preparing great food for receptions after worship, planning Kingdom Kids

activities, helping fix up the building, taking meals to people at our Feed Your Neighbor monthly dinner, being a smiling face at a special event, serving as a lector or acolyte or musician in worship, planning an OWLS outing, or contributing to the Leaflet or Burning Bush, it takes a lot of hands to carry out the mission God has given us. As Paul wrote to the Corinthians, “there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good” (1 Cor. 12:4-7). I thank God for everyone who uses their Spirit-given gifts to help the common good of Tree of Life and our ministry!

But we continue to need help with all this “behind the scenes” work. If Tree of Life is to continue the important mission God has given us – praising Christ, witnessing to the Gospel in the MOT area, serving those in need, nurturing the faith of all ages, being a community of mutual fellowship and support – we need you. Especially as a smaller congregation, we need everyone to help in ways large and small. We need volunteers to plan and carry out church activities. We need offerings to fund all our ministries, and to

Stewardship 2025

As of this report, 26 pledges have been received as follows;

General Fund - \$109,720
Facility. - \$7,112
Roof repair. - \$16,520 (\$10,000 already paid in 2024, earmarked for
"roof")
Total pledges (2025) \$123,352

We did not ask for your intention to give for benevolences but many of you give to benevolences as it is a Christian core value.

This total compares to the 2024 amount pledged of \$119,610. It is a 3% increase.

Thank you for your Stewardship.
Gene Zaiser, Stewardship Chair



Prayer List



UPDATING THE PRAYER LIST

With the new calendar year, we hope to resume occasional updates to our Sunday prayer list. We've forgotten to do this for several months, so our list is getting a tad lengthy! Under a policy approved in 2023, any parishioners (members and regular "non-member friends") will remain on the prayer list until they ask to be removed. The names of non-members may be removed after two months, unless someone asks for them to remain on the list. If you have any questions, please talk to Pr. Robbie. Thank you!

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER WE DIE?

People have wondered about the afterlife for thousands of years. As Christians, we look to the Bible for insight. But while the Bible and Christian theology make clear that we will always be in God's care, there are actually a variety of insights into just what that means. Starting at 9 a.m. January 12, our Adult Bible Study will explore what the Bible says about the afterlife. We'll also read from some other significant Judeo-Christian theologians on this important topic. Come and join this important conversation!

Treasurer's Report

Our income and expenses were about even at the end of November. Income reflects over \$5,000 of very generous donations towards our new roof campaign. The beginning of December will show this amount increase to over \$10,000. What a wonderful start towards this much needed repair.

We are truly blessed and thankful for everyone's continued support of Tree of Life's mission.

Denise Lindquist

OWLS (Older Wiser Lutheran Seniors)

The OWLS will have their annual planning meeting/brown bag lunch on Thursday, January 9th, at Noon in the fellowship room at TOL. Please bring your ideas of places you'd like to visit, restaurants you'd like to try, or if you had a favorite outing that you'd like to repeat. This is a time to enjoy each other's company and make plans for 2025! Drinks will be provided, so please let Dee or George Matz know if you will be attending.



In December the OWLS enjoyed a holiday luncheon at the Fish Whistle at the Granary, a favorite place to dine. It was a cold and *WINDY* day, but everyone enjoyed the food and festive time.

Order Your 4 Free At-Home COVID-19 Tests

It's that time of year when unwanted germs seem to abound.

Every U.S. household is eligible to order 4 free at-home tests.

COVID-19 testing can help you know if you have COVID-19 so you can decide what to do next, like getting treatment to reduce your risk of severe illness and taking steps to lower your chances of spreading the virus to others.

Your order of COVID tests is completely free – you won't even pay for shipping. [Visit COVIDTests.gov](https://www.covidtests.gov)



A stewardship drive was held in November. Many of you filled out a pledge card for 2025. These pledges will be used to create the church's budget for 2025.

There were two categories: General Fund and Facilities. However, on your offering envelopes, there is no line for Facilities, but a line for Building.

TOL no longer has a building fund but a facilities fund. We are not building a building but are continuing the upkeep our current facility. Therefore, all funds collected under the building fund will be allocated to the facilities fund.

January 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2 10AM WELCA @ Panera	3	4
5 10:30 Worship	6	7 6PM Council Mtg.	8 10 AM Knot Quilters	9 Noon OWLS @ TOL	10	11
12 9AM Bible Sturdy 10:30 Worship	13	14	15	16 10AM Worship & Music Mtg.	17	18
19 9 AM Bible Study 10:30 Worship	20	21	22	23	24	25
26 9AM Bible Study 10:30 Worship 11:45 Congre- gational Meeting	27	28	29	30	31	



VOLUNTEERS

Date	Usher	Worship Assistant	Altar	Fellowship	Offering Counter
Jan. 5	G. Matz	J. Pileggi	G. Zaiser	N. Zaiser	M. Campbell
Jan. 12	B. Lindquist	E. Kruah	S. Vetrano	C. Fiske	E. Kruah
Jan. 19	M. Campbell	G. Zaiser	N. Zaiser	J. Schulze	Joe Schulze
Jan. 26	B. Lindquist	J. Adams	M. Campbell	B. Bullock	G. Zaiser

Want to volunteer? Contact ~Gene Zaiser, Coordinator~

Pastor—Continued from pg 3

raise extra funds for a needed new volunteer in new ways for our work in roof. We need help in those “behind the coming year. I deeply encourage the scenes” areas that might not you to consider how your gifts can seem exciting but are vital: Council help God’s work at Tree of Life this members to ensure our congrega- year. After all, while a lot of work is tion’s ongoing harmony and coordina- needed, it’s all worth it in the end – for tion, money for the monthly utility with our help, the light of Christ will bills, folks to light candles or hand out shine a little brighter in our little corner bulletins or keep the sanctuary tidy. ner of the world!

At our annual meeting on January 26, you’ll get to hear about all the Blessings, amazing ministry that Tree of Life carries out. You’ll also get a chance to Pr. Robbie

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

JANUARY

Dolores Matz	Jan. 6
Pam Nichols	Jan. 19
Irene Soucy	Jan. 20



Do we have your birthday? If not, please let the office know so we are able to acknowledge and celebrate your special day.



Knot Quilters Continue Mission

Tying knots for Lutheran World Relief.

Matt 25:40. "...in as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

The Knot Quilters ("KQs) meet the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 10 AM at TOL.

The KQs recently sent quite a number of quilts to Baltimore to be sent out by Lutheran World Relief. We found out that sometimes those quilts go to people in need much closer to home than we realized. A comforting quilt, hand made with love, can go out into the World near and far and those recipients can feel that love and support.

Sometimes the KQs also work on Project Linus blankets. These fleece blankets go to children in hospitals in New Castle County. We have material to make more blankets so come out and enjoy helping with these two projects,



Come tie some knots or stitch some squares. Want to know more about quilts? Talk with Nicky Zaiser. Want to know more about Project Linus blankets? Contact Janet Adams.



Women of the ELCA (WELCA) Bible Study

Women of the ELCA Bible study meets 10 am Thursday, January 2, 2025 at the Panera restaurant in Middletown. Everyone is welcome to come join us. We explore the story of God's love using the Gather magazine (extras available), and our own stories. See Janet Adams for more information.



Despite the cold and the sheep being late, TOL hosted a great Live Nativity on Saturday, Dec. 21st. Many community members were in attendance to watch the program as well as sing some songs and enjoy homemade hot

chocolate and Christmas cookies.

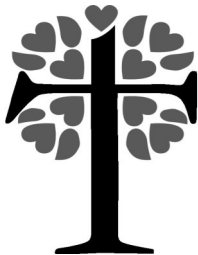
Thank you to everyone who participated both as characters, narrators, fellowship, setting up and cleaning up.

We look forward to continuing this annual event.



Tree of Life Lutheran Church

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book.com/TreeofLifeLutheranChurch/



This is Christ's church. - There is a place for you here.

We are the church that shares a living, daring confidence in God's grace. Liberated by our faith, we embrace you as a whole person--questions, complexities and all. Join us as we do God's work in Christ's name for the life of the world.

STAFF

Rev. Robbie Ketcham
Duane Dillard, Music Director
Maria Gue, Office Manager

COUNCIL

Nicky Zaiser, President
Donna Parks, Vice President
Sylvia Schill, Secretary
Denise Lindquist, Treasurer
Carla Fiske
Dirk Schulze

COUNCIL / COMMITTEE LIAISON

Altar Guild—Sylvia Schill
Christian Ed— Pr. Ketcham
Outreach—Denise Lindquist
Property— Dirk Schulze
Stewardship—
Worship & Music— Sylvia Schill

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Altar Guild—Maxine Campbell
Christian Education— Pam Nichols
Facilities— Dirk Schulze
Fellowship - Carla Fiske
Interior Review—Janet Parks
Kitchen—Carla Fiske
Outreach—Pr. Ketcham
Stewardship—Gene Zaiser
Worship & Music—Sylvia Schill

VOLUNTEER CHAIRS

Burning Bush—Pam Nichols
Financial Secretary— Sylvia Schill
Leaflet Editor—Donna Parks
OWLS—Janet Parks, Dee & George Matz
Quilting Circle—Nicky Zaiser
Volunteer Coordinator—Gene Zaiser
Webmaster— Paul Schuler
Worship Folder—Gail Russell