



## ***Greetings from Our Pastors***

Happy New Year! Wait...what?!? November 27 is the beginning of the church year. November 27 is also the beginning of the Advent Season. I always feel a little “out-of-sync” with the world around me as the church year is slightly different than the regular calendar and the church seasons have a slightly different meaning and rhythm to them.

Advent is a season of anticipation but it is also a season of revolution: “The world is about to turn,” as we sing in the Magnificat (ELW 723). The season of Advent prepares us to receive not only a new baby, but a new world where God’s justice and mercy reign. We will read the texts for the season and hear of a world that is very different from what our eyes see around us.

*“I wait for the Lord, my soul waits,  
and in his Word I hope;*

*My soul waits for the Lord*

*more than those who watch for the morning,*

*more than those who watch for the morning.” - Psalm 130:5-6*

Advent is a time of watching, waiting and wonder. It is a time of anticipation of the day where we will be awed by a babe in a manger. What is God thinking by entrusting us with this fragile gift? Instead, we may experience the season with hurriedness and exhaustion which can leave us cold hearted and empty handed.

Recently, I packed my car trunk in order to leave town for a few days. The night before I left, I put some essential items in first. The next morning, as I looked at the pile of supplies, I realized with chagrin that the biggest item was still sitting on the floor by the car. Filled with alarm, I pulled out the two items already packed and instead started the load with the biggest item. Then I fit everything else around it. To my surprise, everything that I needed fit neatly into the trunk.

What is your “biggest” item for the Advent and Christmas season? Can worship be the most important item on our “to-do list” for the season and then fit everything else around it? Let the Christ child be born again in us so that our lives together may be born anew in God.

*“For a child has been born for us, a son given to us...and he is named  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”*

-Isaiah 9:6

*Pastor Sherri*

(Pastor Kara’s greeting on next page)

Merry Christmas! Happy new year!  
 I know that the holidays often become a time when the chaos threatens to overwhelm with the emphasis on perfection. If you are worried about the perfect meal, may you find peace as God provides daily bread. If you are frustrated with imperfect family and friends, may God give you calm. If you are consumed by the giving or receiving perfect gifts, may your best gifts be the blessings that endure: peace, love and joy.  
 May God bless you during this holy time as we wait and anticipate the arrival of the Son of God who brings light and hope into the dark!

*Pastor Kara*

## Blue Christmas Service

The Season of Christmas can be a very difficult time for those who have lost a loved one. It is a time when everyone is expected to be happily anticipating Christmas. However, for those who are grieving a loved one it is more often a time when sadness and loneliness are the overwhelming feelings.

This service will be a moment where one can spend some time with those thoughts, light a candle, find the moment needed. There will be time to hear words of promise, of companionship, of journeying and of the things that never change.

**Wednesday, December 21**

**First Presbyterian Church in Cooperstown  
 6:30 p.m.**

**A light supper will be served  
 beginning at 5:30.**

## Christmas programs and worship services

### Programs

#### December 11

- \* Grace at 11:15
- \* Trinity at 11:15



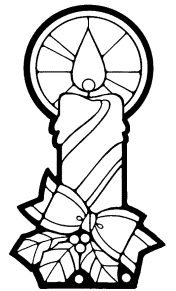
#### December 18

- \* First Presbyterian, 9:45 at Assisted Living
- \* Lutheran Church of McVille at 9:30
- \* Faith at 11:15

### Christmas Worship Services

#### Christmas Eve

- \* 2:30 at Cooperstown Nursing Home (led by First Presbyterian)
- \* 3:00 Our Savior's of McHenry
- \* 4:00 Trinity of Binford
- \* 4:30 Lutheran Church of McVille
- \* 5:30 Grace of Grace City
- \* 8:00 Faith of Hannaford



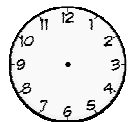
#### Christmas Day

- \* 9:30 Lutheran Church of McVille

## Worship time alerts

### First Presbyterian

- ◆ 9:45 on December 11 & 18
- ◆ 9:45 on January 1, 8, 15, & 29
- ◆ 11:15 December 4 & January 22



### Our Savior's of Kloten

- ◆ Winter break begins December 25. Worship will be held at the regular time of 8:15 on January 15 for the annual meeting.

## Annual meetings

- January 8** Our Savior's of McHenry
- January 15** Our Savior's of Kloten
- January 22** Trinity  
First Presbyterian
- January 29** Lutheran Church of McVille  
Faith
- February 5** Grace

## Biblestick results

***\$1,493.75 donated!***

Thank you to all who gave to this fall mission project for our military and their families!



Each of our seven churches has a Biblestick on hand. If you know of someone who would like to have one, please contact a pastor.

### P.R.A.Y. with Passion

is being postponed due to scheduling conflicts.

Watch for this event in the fall of 2017.

## Advent activity

Churches are cordially invited to decorate a Christmas tree at Griggs County Care Center in Cooperstown. Each church can either decorate one of the center's imitation trees or decorate one of their own and bring it to the center. There will be a grand prize for the most amazing tree, voted on by the residents. Please call the Activity Department (797-2221, ext 7160) to accept the invitation. Tree decorating can be done anytime between November 25 and December 7. Trees should be taken down by January 6. Sunday Schools are encouraged to participate too!



## Stewardship Corner

For 2017, the stewardship column will give us an idea of how to re-frame our giving into a spiritual practice that is faithful to God. In the past, stewardship has been held hostage to yearly budgets, the church's budget and our own. Instead, let's take a different approach that starts from a place of hope, no matter what our circumstances.

Here is an overview of what is to come:

- ◆ **Count Your Blessings**
- ◆ **Count Your Cash**
- ◆ **Learn to Be Content**
- ◆ **Choose a Simpler Lifestyle**
- ◆ **Keep on Giving**
- ◆ **Rebuild Generous Communities**
- ◆ **A Financial Downturn Can Be a Spiritual Upturn**

**TRI-COUNTY MINISTRY STAFF**

Rev. Sherri Frederikson .....676-2762  
(cell) 336-688-2879  
PastorSherri@yahoo.com  
Box 226, Binford ND 58416

Rev. Kara Wiechmann .....322-4926  
(cell) 605-770-4005  
pastorkaraw@gmail.com  
Box 115, McVile ND 58254

TCM Parish Administrator  
Theresa Fiebiger .....676-2761  
trinitybinford@mlgc.com

**TCM CONGREGATIONS**

Faith of Hannaford .....769-2387  
faithl@ictc.com

First Presbyterian of Cooperstown  
797-3112  
jejohnson99@yahoo.com

Grace of Grace City .....674-3112  
kmac@daktel.com

McVile Lutheran Church ....322-4952  
mcvilleparish@gondtc.com

Our Savior's, Kloten.....322-4952  
mcvilleparish@gondtc.com

Our Savior's of McHenry.....785-2117  
trinitybinford@mlgc.com

Trinity of Binford .....676-2761  
trinitybinford@mlgc.com

Tri-County Ministry  
Box 226  
Binford, ND 58416  
Phone 676-2761  
email: trinitybinford@mlgc.com

website: [www.tricountyministry.org](http://www.tricountyministry.org)  
blog: [www.tricountyministry.com](http://www.tricountyministry.com)  
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Tri-County Ministry News is  
published nine times per year:  
January, February, March, April, June,  
August, September, October, and  
November.



*Annual Christmas Cantata*

*Lutheran Church of McVile*

*Sunday, December 18*

*7:30 p.m.*

*Directed by Linda Loe,  
accompanied by Verna  
Lindvall*