

### **\*\*\*Trinity at a Glance\*\*\***

- As the holiday season approaches, we want to ensure that all families in our congregation have the support they need. **If you or your family are facing challenges this season**, please reach out to Pastor Phil Potaczek or our parish nurse, Carol Wahlstrom. Our Mission and Outreach committees have resources available and are ready to help where possible. You are not alone. Let's walk through this season together!
- **Today, December 14th at Noon, Open Table is hosting a free meal.** 910 Columbus St, Ottawa IL.
- We are decorating the Lounge (Community Room) Christmas tree with Christmas cards. **Please bring one of your Christmas cards or photo postcards to church.** You could also drop cards off at the office during regular business hours. We will announce when the tree has been decorated so that you can stop by to see it!
- Come see **The Prairie Singers, 38th Annual Free Christmas Concert Series "Comfort and Joy" Dec 14, 2 pm** St. Columba Catholic Church, Ottawa IL
- The next **blood drive** at TLC will be on **December 17th, Noon - 5 pm.** Our parish nurse, Carol, needs help hosting the blood drive. Interested volunteers should connect with Carol for more information. Thank you!
- Come join our inter-generational and choral **Christmas program on Sunday, December 21st, during worship, at 10 am.**
- On **Christmas Eve** we are gathering for "**Communion and Carols**" at **5 pm.** All are welcome!
- **Christmas Dinner will be served 11am-1pm at Open Table Ottawa.** Dinner is free and open to all! They will be serving baked ham, potato casserole, cranberry apple sauce, cookies, cheesy corn and fruit.
- Reminder to all committees that annual report information should be sent to the office. You can email it to [diane@trinitylutheranottawa.com](mailto:diane@trinitylutheranottawa.com). Thank you.
- **Sunday January 11th immediately after Service**, we will hold the **Property Committee** Informational meeting.
- ***Why the Christmas Trees Stay Up Through Epiphany***  
*In the Christian tradition, Christmas is not just a day, it is a season that lasts twelve days, from December 25 through January 5. We keep the Christmas trees up through Epiphany (January 6) to celebrate the full season and to mark the day when Christ is revealed as the Light for all nations. If Epiphany falls midweek, many churches will wait until the following Sunday (the Baptism of Our Lord). During this time immediately after Epiphany, the lights on the trees remind us of the star that led the Magi and of Jesus, the Light of the world. By leaving the trees up through Epiphany and the Baptism of Our Lord, we honor the whole story of Christmas: Christ is born, and Christ is revealed to all people as God's Son.*
- **On January 11, 2026**, after the Property Committee Informational meeting, **Trinity will be taking down the decorations and trees** in the Sanctuary. Please come and join us! Help is always appreciated! There is a sign up sheet in Java Junction.
- **Sunday January 18th immediately after Service** we will hold the **Finance Committee** Informational meeting.
- **Freezin' for a Reezin' is a food fundraiser for Ottawa's Community Food Basket.** Each December their volunteers are out on LaSalle & Jackson Streets taking contributions as people drive by. Contributions are taken in from of WCMY radio-they have a radiothon to publicize the event and boost offerings. This year's event was Friday Dec. 4th. **This year Trinity donated \$1,000 to help hungry people! What a positive impact we can have on our community!**

- The tree in Java Junction will be the collection point for **hats, scarves, mittens, gloves, and socks to help out those in need**. All child/youth/adult sizes are accepted. Thank you for your continuing generosity. For more information, contact the Mission/Outreach Team.
- **We have a couple of 2026 calendars left (\$20). Profits go to the Growing Project.** Please contact the office during regular business hours if you would like one. Marj Nelson 815-973-1286 and Kate Reed 815-830-2061 also have copies available.
- Many people in Jamaica and Haiti have been severely impacted by Hurricane Helene. You can give help by giving to Lutheran Disaster Response. At [give.ELCA.org/hurricanes](http://give.ELCA.org/hurricanes), just type in "Lutheran Disaster Response," select Hurricane Helene, make a contribution. Or send a check to: Lutheran Disaster Response, ELCA Gift Processing Center, PO Box 1809, Merrifield VA 22116-8009.
- **TLC Prayer Requests.**
  - . To submit a *public* prayer request to the congregation, please reach out to Diane ([diane@trinitylutheranottawa.com](mailto:diane@trinitylutheranottawa.com)).
  - . To submit a *private* prayer request, connect with Pastor Phil ([pastorphil@trinitylutheranottawa.com](mailto:pastorphil@trinitylutheranottawa.com)).
    - . When you submit a public prayer request, please include only the information you are comfortable having printed in the bulletin. We will publish the request as written, but may shorten it for clarity and privacy. If you wish to remain anonymous, please specify.
    - . Each request will appear in the bulletin once. We will publish updates as you provide them.
    - . Even when a request is no longer printed, our whole church family is encouraged to add these needs to their personal prayer lists.

Thank you for holding these requests before God with such care. - *Pastor Phil*

- In the Bulletin there is **an update on the Khudaverdiiev family** who were sponsored by Ottawa Neighborhood Support Team for whom Open Table managed finances. The letter is going to any previous donor for whom we have contact information. The family is at present financially self-sufficient and stable. However, given the uncertainty of the future, the Team is again raising funds, not for present expenses but for future inevitabilities - just which inevitability remains to be seen and depends primarily upon the current administration's decisions regarding refugees, the (so-called) peace process between Ukraine and Russia, and the workings of immigration law. The prayers of our faith community are welcomed, especially by those who are most connected in knowing, supporting and loving these three people who came with such hopes. (Watch the local paper for a piece on Parvana, who is Student of the Month at OTHS this month!)
- Have you seen the **ELCA Good Gifts Catalogue**? It's full of **ways to help people in developing countries**. You can: Buy animals: \$10 for chicks, \$50 for a goat, \$20 for honeybees, \$30 for a piglet. Support health & nutrition: \$30 for a water filter, \$30 for a child's vaccinations, \$10 for a mosquito net, \$25 for a hygiene kit. Help in times of crisis: \$10 for a blanket, \$50 to feed a refugee family for a week. Agriculture: \$50 for seeds and gardening tools, \$200 for a community vegetable garden, \$150 to start a fruit tree farm, \$10 for a fruit tree seedling. There's much more! The website is <https://goodgifts.elca.org>.
- **CURRENT FINANCIAL REPORT:**
  - Nov Income = \$21,671.17 (Income YTD = \$215,068.81)
  - Nov Expense = \$21,920.12 (Expense YTD = \$222,034.84)
  - Income Less Expense = -\$248.95 (Income Less Expense YTD = -\$6,966.03)
  - Loan Payment = \$2,943.30
  - Principal Payment = \$1,000.00
  - Left On Loan = \$3,341.24
- **PRAYER REQUESTS:**

Please pray for Donetta Spohr, Sue Williamson & family, the Reinert family, and our friend Julie as she proceeds with a health battle.

● **THIS WEEK @ TRINITY:**

- **Monday (12/15):** 10a Staff meeting  
10a Drum Fit (Community Room)
- **Tuesday (12/16):** 10a Sit Fit (Community Room)  
7p TRMS Board Meeting (Community Room)
- **Wednesday (12/17)** Noon Blood Drive (Fellowship Hall)  
1p Bible Study (Community Room)  
6:30p Choir Rehearsal (Choir Room)
- **Thursday (12/18):** 10a Sit Fit (Community Room)  
1p Trinity Stitchers (Sewing Room)  
7p Church Council Meeting (Board Room)
- **Friday (12/19):** 7a Sunrise Rotary (Community Room)  
6p Starved Rock Regional Center Children's Christmas Program (Sanctuary)
- **Saturday (12/20):** *Go Caroling Day!* 🎵 🎄
- **Sunday (12/21)** *Fourth Sunday of Advent*  
9a Sunday Session & Affirmation rehearsal for Christmas Program (Sanctuary)  
10a Holy Communion & Christmas Program

**WORSHIP ASSISTANT SCHEDULE -**

*Please sign up using the binder at the back of the aisle.*

**Sunday, December 14, 2025**

Crucifer/Acolyte: *Anna Reed*  
Ushers:  
Lector: *Anne Lauterjung*  
Communion Assistants: *Anne Lauterjung, Jane Goetz & Sue Williamson*  
Altar Guild: *Kari Castelli & Diane Wahl*  
Advent Wreath Lighters: *The McGrath Family*  
Video Tech: *Keith Goetz*  
Music Directors: *Matt Makeever & Mary Heider*  
Altar Flowers: *In memory of Georgette Wahl from Diane Wahl*

**Sunday, December 21, 2025**

Crucifer/Acolyte: *Reagan Duffield*  
Ushers:  
Lector: *Jane Goetz*  
Communion Assistants: *Jane Goetz*  
Altar Guild: *Anne Lauterjung*  
Advent Wreath Lighters: *The Gross Family*  
Video Tech: *Keith Goetz*  
Music Directors: *Matt Makeever & Mary Heider*  
Altar Flowers: *In memory of Paul & Gert Barron from Anne, Brent & Family*



December 5, 2025

Dear Friends of Ottawa Welcome Team,

I'm writing to you to give you a brief update on the Khudaverdiiev Family and to, again, ask for your help.

Our family has been doing very well, even thriving, in our community. Arif returned to work last May after a devastating accident. Alekber continues to work at a local grocery store and Parvana is in her senior year, as an honor student, at our local high school. The family is financially independent, responsibly paying all of their expenses and has met all the goals of the Neighborhood Support Team (NST), the program that helped us sponsor their relocation to the United States.

Unfortunately, our country offers some very large hurdles at this time for documented immigrants. Our family's visas expire in March and they are facing an uncertain future. The Ottawa Welcome Team (OWT) is doing everything we can to support them in this time of uncertainty. The family is currently working with an immigration lawyer to find their best path forward.

As we navigate this path with the family we are, again, asking for donations and prayers. Open Table United Church of Christ has offered to manage our fund again, allowing us to maintain our 501(c)(3) status so all donations are tax deductible. Because work permits end in March we may use this money to keep the family afloat until their work status is restored. We may also, unfortunately, need money to help with plane tickets and relocation somewhere outside of our country. Whatever funds that are raised will go directly to the family.

Prayers are very much appreciated. This is a very unsettling time for our family and other migrants in our country. We hope that, with these donations, we are able to continue to support the Khudaverdiiev family in making the best decisions for a safe and happy life.

Donations can be mailed or dropped at Open Table UCC, 910 Columbus St, Ottawa, Illinois 61350 (enter through Jackson St. door during church office hours.) Please put "Ottawa Welcome Team" in the check memo. Below is also a PayPal QR code for your convenience.

Thank you for your consideration.

Terri McTaggart  
Ottawa Welcome Team

