

THE TRUMPET

A PUBLICATION OF CHRIST THE KING LUTHERAN CHURCH
1660 BIRCH LAKE AVENUE, WHITE BEAR LAKE, MN 55110

PASTOR'S CORNER

*“When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy.”
– Matthew 2:10*

Dear Siblings in Christ,

We will be celebrating the Epiphany of Our Lord on Sunday, January 4. Epiphany actually takes place on January 6, the end of the twelve days of Christmas. For those attending worship, I'll be distributing star words. Each person will receive a card with a word on it that can serve as a guiding word for the year ahead. No one gets to pick out which word they will receive; they are handed out randomly.

Last year I received the word “enthusiasm.” I was less than enthusiastic to receive it as I felt like it meant I would have to be a cheerleader. To show enthusiasm in an inauthentic way. But over the course of the year, I began to see enthusiasm through a different light. To see the word as allowing me to find an authentic enthusiasm. I began to see enthusiasm as not a forced emotion, but that which was genuine and grew out of an eager interest. I found my enthusiasm growing as the Council read through the book “Leading Faithful Innovation” as I considered the ways we might work on listening to our community and try ministry experiments to follow God’s leading. The word that I received for 2025 was not the one I would have selected for myself, but it did end up opening my eyes to the ways that God is at work in my life and here at CTK.

What was your experience like with your star word for 2025? When you reflect back over the course of the year, what did that word reveal to you? How did God speak to you through the gift of a word? I'd love to hear reflections from anyone – please talk to me during the fellowship hour, send me an email, or schedule a coffee.

As we enter into a new year, I hope that receiving a star word for 2026 will serve as an invitation to keep your eyes open as you look for how this word might impact your life. The star word can also serve as a reminder to keep reflecting on God’s presence in your life and the ways that God continues to show up and surprise you.

During the season of Advent, I continued to ask the question “Where has God shown up and surprised you this week?” The answers varied, from experiencing the beauty of God in nature, experiencing a surprise at school, hearing a repeated nudging from an unexpected source, or the birth of a grandchild. I won't be asking the question throughout the season of Epiphany, but you can still reflect upon the question. God will always continue to show up and surprise us. And like the Magi who followed the star to find Jesus, we are invited to look up and pay attention.

We can continue to look for the ways that God shows up in our lives in this new year. God is always surprising us, guiding us (and sometimes even dragging us) in directions that we do not expect. The gift of a star word in 2026 can allow us to have a starting point. This word can serve as a way to reflect upon the ways that God is present in our lives – and even if we do not have an initial positive reaction to our word, what might God be leading us to consider? God continues to show up in unexpected ways – we just need to keep our eyes open and our faces looking outward.

Blessings on the new year!

Peace,
Pastor Rebecca

JOIN US

PLEASE JOIN US IN PERSON, WATCH US VIAL LIVESTREAM OR WATCH A RECORDING LATER AT CTKWBL.ONLINE.CHURCH. YOU CAN ACCESS THE BULLETIN BY CLICKING AT THE TOP OF THE LIVESTREAM PAGE.

JANUARY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

JANUARY 4

Epiphany
of Our Lord

Isaiah 60:1-6
Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14
Matthew 2:1-12

*God's glory is revealed
in the person of
Jesus Christ.*

9am Worship
Organ / Communion

JANUARY 11

Baptism
of Our Lord

Isaiah 42:1-9
Psalm 29
Matthew 3:13-17

*Jesus is revealed
as the beloved
Son of God.*

9am Worship
KHB / Communion

JANUARY 18

CTK Core Values:
Worship

1 Corinthians 1:1-9
Psalm 40:1-11
John 1:29-42

*Jesus
is the Lamb of God.*

9am Worship
Organ / Communion

JANUARY 25

CTK Core Values:
Spiritual Formation

1 Corinthians 1:10-18
Psalm 27:1, 4-9
Matthew 4:12-23

*In Jesus,
the kingdom of God
has come near.*

9am Worship
KHB / Communion

THURSDAY

JANUARY 15

Women's
Bible Study

"Now Let Us Pray:
Praying with Our Bodies"

9:30am
in the library.

Worship Notes

After celebrating Epiphany, we mark another important date on the church calendar: the Baptism of Our Lord. Jesus is baptized by his cousin John the Baptist in the Jordan River. As Jesus comes up from the waters, he is revealed to all as the beloved Son of God. The epiphany – an aha! moment – shows Jesus to be the servant of God who will bring forth justice and be a light to the nations.

During the time after Epiphany at CTK, our worship together will focus on our core values. We'll spend five weeks exploring the values in worship, one value each week. You will be invited to consider the ways that these values might spark an epiphany in you – an aha! moment – that invites us to participate in God's work here at CTK.



| | AV | ALTAR GUILD | LAM | READER | USHERS | COMMUNION |
|------|-------------------|-------------------|---------|--------|------------------|-----------------|
| 1.4 | Joe / Michael | Cathy / Stephanie | Lee | Polly | Michele / Howard | Julie / Karen |
| 1.11 | Jason / Julia | Lori / Lori | Michael | Cyndi | Scott / Mike | Peggy / Kathy |
| 1.18 | Janelle / Michael | Karen / Becky | Julie | Peggy | Michele / Howard | Sally / Wayne |
| 1.25 | Janelle / Michael | Connie / Peggy | Cyndi | Cyndi | Scott / Mike | Polly / Michele |

Hospitality: Corrine Erlandson, Matt & Laura Schleede, Sally Hesse

If you are faced with a conflict, please attempt to trade with one another and let the office know. Thank you!

DEVOTION

Goodwill Toward All: Our Example of Generosity

At this wonderful time of the year, the gospel reminds us that “the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14.) The pristine generosity of this gift is stunning. James echoes this sentiment: “Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.” (James 1:17.)

Growing up, I was an actual shepherd, entrusted with the care of a large flock of Suffolk sheep, on my family’s farm. With some frequency, ewes would reject lambs born to them. If I could not get the ewes to accept the lambs as their own, they would become “Michael’s lambs,” in the words of my late father – bottle-fed lambs. In an instant, I became their mother and father. I remember how quickly the lambs looked up to me ... as their very source of life “from above,” in James’ words. I was their treasured parent, and actual source of life. I will treasure those days forever. I believe, in some certain measure, that my vocation was inspired by bottle lambs. I remember cold nights in the barn, the damp breath of the flock in the air -

their sticking together for warmth and safety, and the flock’s acceptance of me as a good, and my bottle lambs quietly nursing from their bottles, looking up and right through me with those thankful eyes, for the life-sustaining nourishment I was providing them. Often, I thought of that holy night when Jesus was born, and how the Holy Family found shelter in a manger. Those bottle lambs were a precious, endearing gift in my life, although at the time, I didn’t completely appreciate why. Now I appreciate that, because of Christ Jesus, the Lamb of God, we are recipients of the most precious gift imaginable: redemption. We have much for which to be thankful, gracious, and generous. May we always look up to God to sustain us.

Let us pray. Holy God, loving parent, through your generosity in the Incarnation and the sacrifice of Christ Jesus, we are grateful for the perfect gift of sustaining life. Guide us with your Holy Spirit in all that we accomplish, that we might reflect your generosity through goodwill toward all and graciousness in our lives. We pray this in the name of Jesus, Emmanuel, God With Us. Amen.

Prayerfully in Christ,
Michael Stepan

COMING SOON

YOUTH & FAMILY



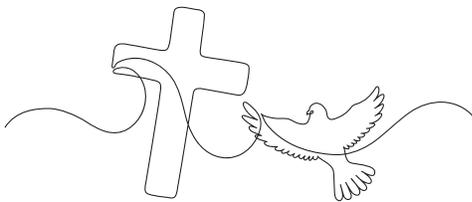
Sunday School

Epiphany Fair on **January 4 at 10:15 am**
Sunday School room

Prepare to celebrate Epiphany on January 6 with a fun morning learn more about Epiphany traditions, such as chalking the door, creating a star, and enjoying a king cake to celebrate. Who will find the baby Jesus? You have to come to find out! All ages welcome.

Youth Bible Study

All middle school and high school students (6th-12th grade) are invited to join Hannah on January 11th and 25th at 10:15 am for Bible Study in the Youth Room. Together you'll keep working through the Gospel of Mark to learn more about the Bible.



Blessing for the New Year

O God, you have been our help in ages past, our hope for years to come. As we welcome this new year, bless us with peace. Fill our days with the light of Christ and lead us on the path of life until we see you in our heavenly home. You live and reign forever and ever. Amen.

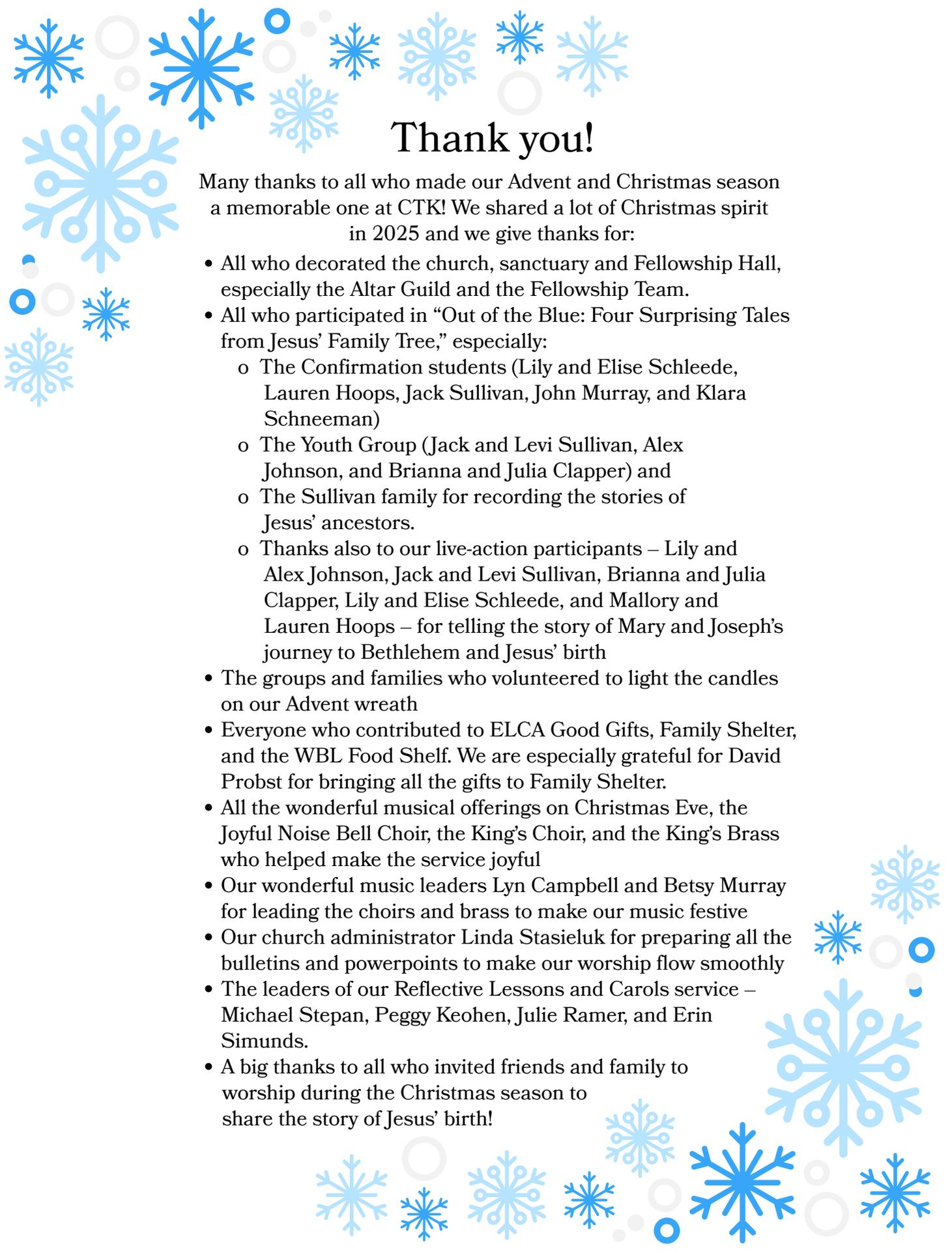
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Equipping Storytellers: Practical Tools for Storytelling in Your Church **Saturday, Jan. 31 - 9 a.m.-2 p.m.** Gustavus Adolphus, St. Paul

Stories shape faith, build connection, and help the gospel come alive. Join pastor, speaker, comedian, and award-winning storyteller Nathan Mugaas for a playful and practical day designed to help leaders discover, shape, and share meaningful stories in worship. Through live examples, simple frameworks, and hands-on practice, participants will learn how to craft compelling stories, tell them with confidence, and explore how storytelling can be woven into congregational life—especially in the Lenten season.

This encouraging, low-pressure workshop invites first drafts (perfection not required!) and offers practical tools for equipping lay leaders and preachers alike. Participants will leave with a clear storytelling framework, a story outline to continue developing, and ideas for cultivating a joyful, supportive storytelling culture in their congregations. The cost is \$25 and includes lunch. Let Pastor Rebecca know if you are interested in attending.



Thank you!

Many thanks to all who made our Advent and Christmas season a memorable one at CTK! We shared a lot of Christmas spirit in 2025 and we give thanks for:

- All who decorated the church, sanctuary and Fellowship Hall, especially the Altar Guild and the Fellowship Team.
- All who participated in “Out of the Blue: Four Surprising Tales from Jesus’ Family Tree,” especially:
 - The Confirmation students (Lily and Elise Schleede, Lauren Hoops, Jack Sullivan, John Murray, and Klara Schneeman)
 - The Youth Group (Jack and Levi Sullivan, Alex Johnson, and Brianna and Julia Clapper) and
 - The Sullivan family for recording the stories of Jesus’ ancestors.
 - Thanks also to our live-action participants – Lily and Alex Johnson, Jack and Levi Sullivan, Brianna and Julia Clapper, Lily and Elise Schleede, and Mallory and Lauren Hoops – for telling the story of Mary and Joseph’s journey to Bethlehem and Jesus’ birth
- The groups and families who volunteered to light the candles on our Advent wreath
- Everyone who contributed to ELCA Good Gifts, Family Shelter, and the WBL Food Shelf. We are especially grateful for David Probst for bringing all the gifts to Family Shelter.
- All the wonderful musical offerings on Christmas Eve, the Joyful Noise Bell Choir, the King’s Choir, and the King’s Brass who helped make the service joyful
- Our wonderful music leaders Lyn Campbell and Betsy Murray for leading the choirs and brass to make our music festive
- Our church administrator Linda Stasieluk for preparing all the bulletins and powerpoints to make our worship flow smoothly
- The leaders of our Reflective Lessons and Carols service – Michael Stepan, Peggy Keohen, Julie Ramer, and Erin Simunds.
- A big thanks to all who invited friends and family to worship during the Christmas season to share the story of Jesus’ birth!

UPDATES

CHURCH COUNCIL

CONGREGATION

Greetings,

The generosity of this congregation warms my heart. It has truly been an honor to serve the congregation as your Council President.

Work on the sanctuary continues to be a work in progress. I have a couple of contractors I'm working with to coordinate schedules for a walk through for estimates. Your kind words, understanding and encouragement during the project have really been appreciated.

There will be an announcement soon with the date for the Annual Congregational Meeting. We are planning for the meeting at the end of January.

As always, the CTK Council welcomes feedback and input from congregation members. Please feel free to share your thoughts with me or any other Council members. We are also always looking for leaders to serve at CTK in a variety of capacities. There is currently an opportunity to join the Endowment Team. If you feel called to serve at CTK, please let any Council member know.

In Christ's service,
Michele Murray

ADMIN & FINANCE

December Financial Report

Envelope and online offerings monthly comparison:

01/01/25 through 11/30/25 = \$250,700

01/01/24 through 11/30/24 = \$255,964

Expenses Year-To-Date:

01/01/25 through 11/30/25 = \$267,360

01/01/24 through 11/30/24 = \$251,604

Cash account balances as of November 30, 2025

North Star Bank:

Checking = \$17,324

Savings = \$13,322

Memorial Savings = \$26,049

ELCA Mission Investment Fund = \$60,937

Endowment Fund = \$93,065

Mortgage Balance = \$94,981

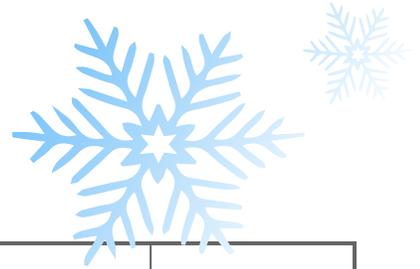
CTK Core Values

The Council developed these core values with input from your one-to-one listening sessions. Please read through the descriptions of these values and consider answering the questions below via the QR code or by writing out your answers with your name.

- We begin our life together in Christ with worship in a variety of expressions. There is a place for you in the worship services at CTK. Worship is where we experience God proclaimed in word, sacraments, and music.
- We value spiritual formation for all ages, believing that everyone has something to learn from one another about faith. We seek to model our life together after Jesus, truly loving one another. We are committed to growing in faith and being transformed into true disciples of Jesus Christ.
- We respond with generosity for all of God's blessings. Living as stewards of all that God has given us, we answer with open hearts to the call of the Holy Spirit. We desire to give freely of our love, time, and resources in service to God at CTK, in our community, and around the world.
- We act with compassion as Christians centered in the life-giving love of Jesus. We seek to care for one another and our community, through prayer and by welcoming all.
- We commit to outreach in our neighborhood, our community, and our world. Through sharing our gifts, we love our neighbor and become more rooted in our community, by truly knowing them.
- 1) Of the five core values, which one are you most excited about? Why does it resonate with you personally right now?
- 2) Which core value inspires you with a specific, new idea for action or ministry that CTK could implement this year? Please describe your idea and explain how it connects to a particular value.

JANUARY

2026



| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT | |
|--|---|--|---|--|-----|---|--|
| | <div style="background-color: #003366; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> Office Hours Monday - Thursday 9am-3pm </div> | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 7am Bread Ministry KHB 9am |
| 4 Worship 9am Sunday School 10:15am | 5 6:30pm WMA | 6 | 7 Bells 6:30pm Choir 7:45pm Confirmation 7-8:30pm | 8 7pm Property Team | 9 | 10 7am Bread Ministry KHB 9am | |
| 11 Worship 9am YG Bible Study 10:15am | 12 | 13 7pm Admin Team | 14 Bells 6:30pm Choir 7:45pm Youth Group 7-8:30pm | 15  Women's Bible Study 9:30am | 16 | 17 7am Bread Ministry KHB 9am | |
| 18 Worship 9am | 19 | 20 7pm Church Council | 21 Bells 6:30pm Choir 7:45pm Confirmation 7-8:30pm | 22 | 23 | 24 7am Bread Ministry KHB 9am | |
| 25 Worship 9am Annual Meeting 10:15am YG Bible Study 10:15am |  Trumpet Deadline |  Family Shelter Meal 4:30pm | 28 Bells 6:30pm Choir 7:45pm Youth Group 7-8:30pm | 29 | 30 | 31 7am Bread Ministry KHB 9am | |