



Ebenezer & Tripolis

Lutheran Churches

VOLUME 13 ISSUE #12

DECEMBER 2025

CONNECTION NEWSLETTER

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Our season of Advent includes the lighting of the Advent candles in worship. Each week has a different theme.

We begin in Hope. Don't all beginnings anchor themselves in hope? Even the difficult beginnings?

The second candle represents Peace. Sin and conflict divide us in so many ways. May we seek peace and pursue it, always. (Ps. 34:14)

We pause in the third week for Joy. It's called "**Gaudete**" (gaw DAY tay) Sunday; the Latin word means "Rejoice." I hope the beautiful poem here inspires you to see the joy all around us.

We mark Love as our fourth week of Advent. Advent is the preparation for the coming of Christ, who is God's love in human flesh. Love is "the greatest of these," and God has abundant love for us.

May you be blessed with Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love in these days of waiting and anticipation.

Pastor Sherri

The poem was shared on an excellent website for scripture study: "Journey with Jesus." Brad Reynolds is a photographer and artist in residence at Gonzaga University in Washington.

Gaudete by Brad Reynolds

Because Christmas is almost here
Because dancing fits so well with music
Because inside baby clothes are miracles.
Gaudete
Because some people love you
Because of chocolate
Because pain does not last forever
Because Santa Claus is coming.
Gaudete
Because of laughter
Because there really are angels
Because your fingers fit your hands
Because forgiveness is yours for the asking
Because of children
Because of parents.
Gaudete
Because the blind see.
And the lame walk.
Gaudete
Because lepers are clean
And the deaf hear.
Gaudete
Because the dead will live again
And there is good news for the poor.
Gaudete
Because of Christmas
Because of Jesus
You rejoice.

FIND US ONLINE!

Check out our
updated websites:

tripolischurch.org



Worship Video

ebenezermn.wordpress.com



Worship Video

Both churches are on
Facebook



Remember in our prayers

God is our refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble. Psalm 46:1

- All who are ill, receiving treatment, preparing for or recovering from procedures; all caregivers
- The people of Ukraine and Gaza and many others whose lives are marked with war and unrest
- Those experiencing uncertainty with jobs or food or home insecurity

JANUARY CONNECTION DEADLINE: MONDAY, DECEMBER 22

December 7

Isaiah 11:1-10 From David's line, a ruler bringing justice and peace

Psalms 72:1-7, 18-19 "May the righteous flourish; let there be an abundance of peace."

Romans 15:4-13 Live in harmony, welcoming one another

Matthew 3:1-12 A voice cries: Prepare the way of the Lord

December 14

Isaiah 35:1-10 The desert blooms as God's people return from exile

Psalms 146:5-10 "The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down."

Luke 1:46b-55 "My spirit rejoices in God my Savior."

James 5:7-10 Patience until the coming of the Lord

Matthew 11:2-11 The forerunner of Christ

December 21

Isaiah 7:10-16 The sign of Immanuel

Psalms 80:1-7, 17-19 "Let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved."

Romans 1:1-7 Paul's greeting to the church at Rome

Matthew 1:18-25 A God near at hand

December 24

Isaiah 9:2-7 Light shines: a child is born for us

Psalms 96 "Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad."

Titus 2:11-14 The grace of God has appeared

Luke 2:1-14 [15-20] God with us

December 25

Isaiah 62:6-12 God comes to restore the people

Psalms 97 "Light dawns for the righteous, and joy for the honest of heart."

Titus 3:4-7 Saved through water and the Spirit

Luke 2:[1-7] 8-20 The birth of the Messiah revealed to shepherds

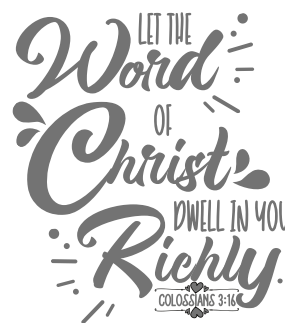
December 28

Isaiah 63:7-9 Israel saved by God's own presence

Psalms 148 "The splendor of the Lord is over earth and heaven."

Hebrews 2:10-18 Christ shares flesh and blood to free humankind

Matthew 2:13-23 The slaughter of innocent children



Advent Wednesdays Supper and Worship

December 3: Tripolis

December 10: Ebenezer

Our worship will include a soup meal beginning at 6:15 followed by worship beginning at 7pm.

See sign-ups in Narthex if you can help with our meal.

December 17: We will help lead worship at Bethesda, Willmar, at 2pm. We will not have an evening service that day.

SPECIAL OFFERINGS

Our churches have special designations for loose offerings during the year. Here are the selected recipients for the remainder of 2025

Tripolis

Thanksgiving: World Hunger

Advent: Food for the Poor

Christmas: Habitat for Humanity

Ebenezer

Thanksgiving: World Hunger

Advent: Lutheran Social Service

Christmas: Bethesda

If you'd still like to give a Thanksgiving offering, either use the specific Thanksgiving envelope or make the intention clear with a note on your check or cash gift.

The church councils review their selections annually. The list for 2026 special offerings will be in the yearbook.

Both women's groups also designate gifts from funds they raise each year to various organizations.



TRIPOLIS CALENDAR

Wednesday, December 3: 6:15 soup supper followed by 7pm worship at Tripolis

Thursday, December 4: 2pm Rachel Bible Study

Sunday, December 7: 9:30am Sunday School

11am Worship at Tripolis

Tuesday, December 9: 7pm Church Council Meeting at Ebenezer

Wednesday, December 10: 6:15 soup supper followed by 7pm

worship at Ebenezer

Thursday, December 11: 9am Quilting

Sunday, December 14: 9:30am Christmas program prep

11am Worship at Tripolis (Children's Christmas Program)

Wednesday, December 17: 2pm Advent worship at Bethesda, Willmar

*No lunch or evening worship at our churches

Sunday, December 21: 11am Worship at Tripolis

(Winter break for Sunday School)

6pm Beer & Hymns at Handle Bar, Atwater

Poinsettia forms due

Monday, December 22: Newsletter Information Due

Wednesday, December 24: 4pm Christmas Eve worship at Ebenezer

Thursday, December 25: 10am Christmas worship at Tripolis

Sunday, December 28: 10am worship at Tripolis

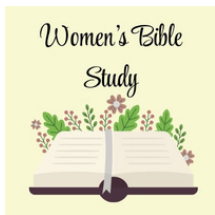
(Winter break for Sunday School)



Poinsettia orders:
Forms will be in the narthex
to order poinsettias to
decorate our space.



Everyone is welcome to post
holiday photos on the bulletin
board! They'll be up until
January 4.



Tripolis Women's
Bible Study will
meet on December
4 at 2pm at Tripolis.



Women's
Meeting on
Saturday,
January, 31
9:15 AM— social
10:00 AM—
short meeting



Tripolis Members on Duty

Council Members

Pam Vruwink & Angela Dahlberg

Ushers

Cal & Barb Freeman

Altar

Ruth Aurand, Angie Dahlberg,
Dawn Fostervold

Tripolis Worship

Leaders

December 7

Musician: Paula Grahm

Lector: Matt Wattnem

Acolyte: Eliza Stegeman

December 14

*Christmas Program, 11am

Students and teachers, please come
for costumes and rehearsal at 9:30

December 21

Musician: Mary Gruis

Lector: Mike & Jeanette Jacobson

Acolyte: Dom Dahline

December 25

Musician: Paula Grahm

Lectors: Gruis & Morrison families

Acolyte:

December 28

Musician: Dana Vruwink

Lectors: Ruth Aurand, Deb Wodash

Acolyte:

What can be recycled?



The ACGC REACH class collected
1000 pounds of plastic for a
playground bench! Collections
continue for a second bench. You
can help by dropping off your clean
plastic items in the bin in the back
room at Tripolis.

EBENEZER CALENDAR

Wednesday, December 3: 6:15 Soup supper followed by 7pm
worship at Tripolis

Sunday, December 7: 9:30am Worship at Ebenezer

Tuesday, December 9: 7pm Church Council Meeting at Ebenezer

Wednesday, December 10: 6:15 Soup supper followed by 7pm
worship at Ebenezer

Sunday, December 14: 9:30am Worship at Ebenezer
*Potluck Lunch to follow

Wednesday, December 17: 2pm Advent worship at Bethesda, Willmar

*No lunch or evening worship at our churches

*Stay tuned for details on a plan to go Caroling afterwards.

Sunday, December 21: 9:30am Worship at Ebenezer

Monday, December 22: Newsletter Information Due

Wednesday, December 24: 4pm Christmas Eve worship at Ebenezer

Thursday, December 25: 10am Christmas worship at Tripolis

Sunday, December 28: 10 Worship at Tripolis

Ebenezer Worship

Leaders

December 7

Musician: Betsy Hallberg

Lector: Karen Oswood

December 14

Musician: Betsy Hallberg

Lector: Nancy Kaehler

December 21

Musician: Kristine Benson

Lector: Andrew Benson

December 24, 4pm

Musician: Kristine Benson

Lector: Dan Hallberg

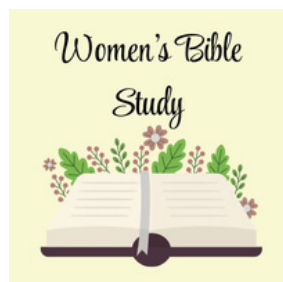
December 28, 10am

Worship is at Tripolis

Lectors: Deb Wodash,
Ruth Aurand



Everyone is welcome to post
holiday photos on the bulletin
board! They'll be up until
January 4.



Ebenezer Women's Bible
Study Group will not have
its monthly Bible Study in
December. Instead, we
will host the Ebenezer
Christmas Potluck on
Sunday, December 14th



Ebenezer Blessing Box

Thank you to Zarnotts for serving as caretakers in November. Redepennings will oversee the supplies in December. See sign-up in narthex to help out in future months.

EBENEZER MEMBERS ON DUTY

Council Member

Karen Deisting

Ushers

Jon Lindstrand

Aaron Peterson

Greeters

Deb & Tom Wodash

Altar

Deb & Tom Wodash

Flowers

Joan Peterson

Thank You

Thank You to all who participated in our
Salvation Army Angel Tree Project! An
assortment of gifts for 20 children was delivered
to the Salvation Army to distribute to children in
the surrounding community. What a great way
to generously sharing God's love!

Potluck Lunch!



Ebenezer Christmas Potluck Lunch will
be held **Sunday, December 14th**

following the worship service. This is
always a wonderful time for delicious
food and great fellowship. The free-will
offering will be designated to the ELCA
World Hunger "Good Gifts." Through the
Good Gifts offering we can purchase
animals for "God's Global Barnyard."

Hopefully, we can donate several
animals to families in need throughout
the world. (If you are unable to be
present on December 14 and would like
to donate, please make a check out to
Ebenezer WELCA and give it to Marilyn.)

Everyone is invited to participate.

December

Happy Birthday

Happy
Anniversary

TRIPOLIS BIRTHDAYS

2 Warren Carlson
4 Odin Larson
5 Tanya Johnson
5 Hunter Sharp
9 Trista Knoll
9 Kendall Swenson
10 Adam Bosch
10 Dana Vruwink
13 Samantha Schliep
16 Hannah Morrison
16 Josiah Holien
16 Brooke Simenson
18 Luke Heaton
20 Cathy Pregler
20 Isaiah Anderson
22 Loren Carlson
23 Diane McClain
24 Kristi Schmidt
26 Austin McClain
27 Robert DeKraai
29 Jesse Lefever
30 Andrew Ziebarth

EBENEZER BIRTHDAYS

4 Mark Latterell
4 Deb Wodash
8 Luke Garvick
8 Sue Johnson
9 Cailey Titrud
9 Brittany VanDerBill
11 Rod Lanners
12 Anthony Stern
13 Devon Titrud
17 Dale Latterell
19 Jan Lambert
20 Larry Eickhoff
20 Leo Wodash
27 Jamie Carlson
27 Ruth Ann Norling
29 Chad Stark
31 Sven Johnson

TRIPOLIS ANNIVERSARIES

13 Mark & Cathy Pregler
18 Rick & Mary Dahline

EBENEZER ANNIVERSARIES

None

Merry
Christmas



Joint Council Minutes
Tripolis and Ebenezer Churches
Tuesday, October 14, 2025

Members: Craig Aurand, Jeanette Jacobson, Frank Ziebarth, Pam Vruwink, David McClain, **Angela Dahlberg**, Jim Oyen, **Wayne Zarnott**, Eric Struck, Karen Deisting, Mary Redepenning, Betsy Hallberg, Karen Oswood, Tom Wodash, Pastor Sherri Larson.
Members absent in **BOLD**.

Ebenezer Vice President, Eric Struck, called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Approval of Agenda: Motion made by Jeanette Jacobson, seconded by Karen Oswood to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Devotions: Tom Wodash led devotions.

Secretary's Report: Reviewed September 9, 2025, joint council minutes with no additions or corrections. Motion to accept by Karen Oswood, seconded by Mary Redepenning. Motion carried.

Pastor's Report: Pastor shared a recap of September's events and activities. The website improvements have been completed.

LYO Report: Ditch cleanup was recently performed with 16 kids participating.

Old Business: None

New Business: Each council will give Pastor their input on the draft funeral policy.

Motion to adjourn by David McClain, seconded by Karen Deisting. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Hallberg, Secretary

Ebenezer Church Council Meeting Minutes
October 14, 2025

Members: **Wayne Zarnott**, Tom Wodash, Eric Struck, Karen Oswood, Betsy Hallberg, Karen Deisting, Mary Redepenning. **Members absent in BOLD**.

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order by Vice President, Eric Struck. The Agenda was approved as written.

Secretary's Report: Minutes from the September 9, 2025, meeting reviewed. Motion to accept as written by Mary Redepenning, seconded by Karen Oswood. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: The finance reports were reviewed. Motion by Mary Redepenning, seconded by Tom Wodash, to approve finance reports as written subject to audit. Motion carried.

Old Business: None

New Business: Pastor explained the "phishing" scam that recently occurred and the steps taken to advise our members of it.

Committee Reports

CR1 - Worship and Music - Mary Redepenning – Next meeting will be towards the end of November.
Communion assist – October Council person on duty – Betsy Hallberg
Communion assist - November Council person on duty – Mary Redepenning

CR2 - Children/Youth Ministries - Tom Wodash – no report

CR3 - Community Building/Outreach and Service Ministries - Karen Oswood – We will serve a noon meal at Campus Ministry on October 21.

CR4 - Memorial Gift Committee - Karen Deisting - no report

CR5 - Property - Betsy Hallberg, Eric Struck – The committee met on October 13 and continue to make updates and repairs as necessary.

CR6 - Policy – We reviewed the draft funeral policy and members were encouraged to share their suggestions with Pastor.

Karen Oswood will provide devotions in December.

Ebenezer minutes continued

Adjournment: Motion by Karen Oswood, seconded by Karen Deisting, to adjourn meeting. Motion carried.

Next Meeting at Tripolis on Tuesday, November 11, 2025.

Respectfully Submitted,
Betsy Hallberg, Secretary

Tripolis Church Council Meeting
October 14, 2025
Location – Ebenezer

Members: Craig Aurand, **Angie Dahlberg**, Jeanette Jacobson, David McClain, Jim Oyen, Pam Vruwink, and Frank Ziebarth

Members absent in **BOLD**

President, Frank Ziebarth, called the meeting to order at 7:15 PM.

Approval of Agenda: A motion was made by David to approve the agenda, seconded by Jeanette. Motion carried.

Secretary's Report: September, 2025 meeting minutes were reviewed with no additions or corrections made. Motion made to approve September meeting minutes by Craig seconded by Jeanette. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report:

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Christian Education – Jeanette Jacobson: Farmer appreciation was held on Sunday, October 12 with Sunday School kids making cards and muffins that were shared with members and neighbors.

Worship/Music – Pam Vruwink: group will be meeting soon to plan the next group of services. Pastor Sherri and Barb are planning a special Reformation/All Saints service.

Community Building – Craig Aurand: Pancake Breakfast was held at the Kandiyohi Civic Center on October 11, serving roughly 125-140 people. Cost was \$341, received donations were in excess of the expenses. A Tripolis banner has been made for future use by all.

Youth – Jim Oyen: Adopt-A-Highway ditch cleanup completed in September with 16 volunteers and a pizza lunch.

Memorial – Angie Dahlberg: no report submitted

Finance/Stewardship – Frank Ziebarth and Craig Aurand: no report submitted

Property – David McClain: all carpet and baseboards are complete with lots of help. Found damp sheetrock in the hallway near the bathrooms- they will look at moving out the downspout on the exterior of the building, Dave will check the gutters. A potluck is scheduled for November 9, this would be a good day for building dedication. Pastor Sherri is checking with Cedar Creek Gospel Band to include in the service.

Old Business

- Need to look at a new congregational meeting date to make a decision regarding the sound system. This will be included in the annual meeting on January 25.
- Frank has confirmed building changes with the church insurance policy.

New Business

- Mike Jacobson received an estimate from Bonnema for a new septic system. Will be pumped sometime this fall, introduced at the annual meeting and can make decisions in the spring at which point another bid should hopefully have been submitted.

Motion to adjourn meeting by Pam, seconded by Jim. Motion carried.

Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,
Pam Vruwink

Connection Newsletter December 2025
Ebenezer/Tripolis Lutheran Parish
PO BOX 356
Kandiyohi, MN 56251

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

DECEMBER

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday, December 7th

- 9:30am worship at Ebenezer
- 9:30am Sunday School at Tripolis
- 11:00am worship at Tripolis

Sunday, December 14th

- 9:30am worship at Ebenezer
- 9:30am Sunday School at Tripolis (Potluck Lunch to follow)
- 11:00am worship at Tripolis

(Children's Christmas Program)

Sunday, December 21st

- 9:30am worship at Ebenezer
- 11:00am worship at Tripolis

Sunday, December 28th

- 10am Worship at Tripolis



Christmas Eve: Wednesday, Dec. 24th

4pm at Ebenezer

Christmas Day: Thursday, Dec. 25th

10am at Tripolis

Advent Services

Wednesday, Dec 3rd

- 6:15 soup supper followed by 7pm worship at Tripolis

Wednesday, Dec 10th

- 6:15 soup supper followed by 7pm worship at Ebenezer

Wednesday, December 17th

- 2pm Advent worship at Bethesda, Willmar. No lunch or evening worship at our churches.