

TIDINGS

December 2023

Homepage: htlc.church

724.863.7350

E-Mail Address: office@htlc.church

“A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him— the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD— and he will delight in the fear of the LORD.”
Isaiah 11: 1-3

On Christmas we celebrate the coming of Jesus into the world as a human- the incarnation of God. Isaiah 11 foretells this and connects Jesus to Jesse. Jesse was the father of King David, and Jesus is descended from the line of David. He is the branch God promised would grow from Jesse’s family tree.

We all have a family tree—branches filled with mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, grandparents, aunts, and uncles. Some of us know our tree back through a thousand years or more. Some of us only know a few generations. Some of us are adopted and don’t know our tree. No matter what our personal tree looks like, in baptism we are claimed by God and become part of God’s family tree.

The Jesse Tree is a way we remember God’s family line and our own place in it. Isaiah talked about the connection from Jesse to Jesus, but the tree goes back farther- all the way to the beginning in the Garden of Eden.

The Jesse Tree is a way of telling the story of God’s plan from the beginning of time to save us through Jesus- by becoming human. It follows the lineage of Christ’s family and key people in the Old Testament that God uses to tell the story from Creation, culminating in Jesus becoming human. It is a countdown daily to Christmas with the telling of a story, and an ornament that acts as a symbol and visual reminder of the story.

Some of our ancestors had this tradition. Jesse trees became popular in the Middle Ages as a way to tell the story of Christ and to connect us all through seeing and hearing of the story. They sometimes weren’t actually trees but other forms of art, like stained-glass windows in churches, tapestries, and carvings. By participating in the Jesse tree, we are connected to all of those who have gone before us in faith.

If you have not received a Jesse tree packet, please pick one up at the church or let us know if you need one. I pray that this advent we are all connected in faith.

Yours in Faith,

Pastor Sarah

Coming Events 2023

Articles:	Pg:
Pastor's Letter	1
Coming Events	2
Council Briefs	3
Finances/ Food Pantry	4
Our Church Family/Prayers/ Sympathy	5
Director of Outreach report	6
Announcements	7-11
Duties	12
Calendar	13

- Dec. 8 Irwin Cookie Tour 5:00pm – 8:00pm, stop by Holy Trinity!
- Dec. 10 Chrismon making at 9:30 in the Fellowship Hall
- Dec. 17 New Member Class at NOON in the Miller Parlor
- Dec. 19 Women's Faith and Friendship @ 7:00PM
- Dec. 21 Blue Christmas Service at 6:00pm
- Dec. 24 Christmas Eve Sunday morning ONE service: 10:00AM
 Christmas Eve Services at
 4:00PM Children's service with Candle lighting
 8:00PM Candle lighting and bell Choir
- Dec. 31 ONE Service at 10:00AM
- January 28, 2023 - Annual Congregational Meeting, one service that day at 10:00AM

³²And we bring you the good Tidings that what God promised to our ancestors³³he has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising Jesus;



There will be a **NEW MEMBER CLASS** on **Sunday, December 17th at Noon**. If you plan to attend, please let Pastor Sarah or Pastor John know or call the church office.

PLEASE PICK UP YOUR 2024 OFFERING ENVELOPES IN THE NARTHEX

COUNCIL BRIEFS- November 2023

Reports of Congregational and Standing Committees

Christian Education

- The Chrismon Event will be held on December 10 from 9:30-10:30am (between services)

Youth Ministry

- Pastor will spend time with youth and what they want to do (one on one if it works that way, or in groups)

Finance Committee

- meeting on November 21 to work on the proposed budget. provided all committee council leads budget sheets to review.

Nominating Committee

- Jocelyn, Jim, and Maria will comprise the nominating committee.

Property Committee

- A leak in the bell tower was found and patched by Likar.
- Motion made and passed from the Property committee to approve the sanctuary roof replacement proposal from Likar Roofing for \$87,495.

Reports of Special Committees

Technology

- Computers were purchased (for Danielle, Pastor John, and Bob) and are being set up this month.

150th Anniversary

- Committee plans to request \$2500 in next year's budget. Event is planned for May 19, 2024.

New Business

- Pastor noted that she is looking into offering online Bible study again.

Next Meeting will be: December 06, 2023 / 7:00 PM.



Join us for Sunday School!

Our classes are divided into four groups:
ages 3-1st grade, 2nd -3rd grade, 4th -6th grade, 7th - 8th grade
(Confirmation class), and high school.
All classes meet from 9:30 – 10:30 AM.

We also offer a Sunday School class for adults. All are welcome!!

Church Finances

CONGREGATIONAL AVERAGE OFFERING OCTOBER 2023

2023 BUDGET

\$368,322.31

BUDGET NEEDS WEEKLY

\$7,083.12

AVERAGE WEEKLY OFFERING

\$5,295.50

2023 IMPROVEMENT FUND

\$24,000.00

WEEKLY GOAL

\$461.00

AVERAGE WEEKLY OFFERING

\$110.60

2023 NEW CHURCH ROOF FUND

\$20,000.00

WEEKLY GOAL

\$385.00

AVERAGE WEEKLY OFFERING

\$1,083.60

Online TithingThe church has set up online giving through **Tithe.ly**. (the church incurs approximately a 3% fee or you may add the fee into your donation to cover that 3%). To donate through online giving please visit: <https://tithe.ly/give?c=1399928>

Food Pantry

2023 Distribution Date remaining: Dec. 9th

2024 Dates: February 10, April 13, June 8, August 10, October 12, December 14

Items always needed:

Mac & cheese/pasta

Canned fruit

Pasta Sauce

Peanut butter & Jelly

Applesauce

Canned tuna

Oatmeal

Potato/rice mix

Baked beans

Cereal

Paper towels

Pudding Cups

Cake/muffin/brownie mix

Granola bars

Toilet paper

Dog and cat toys and treats

Special Requests for December distribution:

Items needed specifically for the December distribution:

Pancake mix

Syrup

Sugar cookie mix

Frosting

Christmas candy

Toilet paper

Laundry detergent

Many thanks for the generous donations to date! If you would like to donate, please mark "food pantry" in the subject line on your check or you may use one of the pew envelopes if you would like to donate cash. Food pantry contact: Jodi Waugaman at 724-516-9680 or waugawoman86@comast.net

Trinity Lutheran Care Fund (TLC) is a ministry of the church that offers assistance to members of the congregation experiencing financial need, due to extreme, unusual and/or medical circumstances. If you'd like to request help, please contact Pastor Sarah, Julie Kuhn, or Jodi Waugaman.

Stewardship and Giving – letters were mailed to our members on November 28th. They were mailed later than expected, but please read the information enclosed and consider your annual giving for 2024.

We will dedicate the *Commitments for 2024* on a Sunday in December.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

IN OUR PRAYERS IN NOVEMBER:

DYLAN KUNKEL	MICHAEL TOMASELLO	NANCY BOYD	JOHN MARTINCHECK
MICHAEL SHOTTS	RACHEL FAULKNER	MARIE HOWELL	JOANNE CAMPBELL
TIM PAUL	CLYDE SIMMERS	RUTH PORTER	DOROTHY PETERMAN
PAT GRANNY	RONI BARRY	LETTIE BLASIOLI	ANN DRURY
KARL KUNKLE	GENEVIEVE FIX	BILL & DENISE FLEMING	SONNIE FREED
DEBBIE & JERRY GILKEY	VICKIE GEARY	CATON & MARINA GOODMAN	RUSS HEYZ
JOE & LINDA HECKERT	BONNIE HILLIER	DANNY & JANE HELLMANN	DIANE HARKER
RON HANKO	JEFFREY HORVATH	DOUG AND VICKIE HILLIER	MARIE HOWELL
JOE & PEG HERTZOG	DEBBIE HUNT	JIM AND JUDY HOGUE	BOB JACKSON
ELEANOR JOHNSON	JOHN HOWELL	JOHN & LISA JANIRO	CAROL JACOBS
MIKE AND JOYCE HOLLICK			

WE LIFT UP IN PRAYER THE FOLLOWING MILITARY PERSONNEL:

TYLER HUFFER SHANNON DAWSON ZACHARY ZEHNER



God Bless Lily Morrow. She Affirmed her Baptism on November 26th.



Happy 105th Birthday to Dorothy Peterman! (Dec. 1st)

Thank You

The well wishes, support, and cards were appreciated so very much. Your caring and big hearts are always a blessing. Thank you very much! ~Linda West



Thank you to everyone who donated!
Operation Christmas Child collected 24 boxes this year!

Thank you to the volunteers who decorated the church (inside and outside) so beautifully for the Christmas season!



Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and friends of Suzanne Resetar. She passed to life triumphant on November 12.

GREETINGS FROM PASTOR JOHN, DIRECTOR OF CONGREGATIONAL OUTREACH

Dear Friends in Christ,

Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,

For those that I may not have had the opportunity to meet yet, I am Holy Trinity's Director of Congregational Outreach. I was raised and confirmed in this church as I attended Sunday School and church, youth group, sang in the choir, and even served as one of the janitors for 5 years. After serving churches as pastor in Ford City, Hampstead, Maryland, and Lancaster, Pennsylvania, I returned to serve as Senior Pastor of a church in Greensburg. I retired the first time in October, 2020, but that lasted only 3 weeks. I served as the part-time pastor of a church in Blairsville, from which I retired in July, 2023, after 3 years of ministry there. In September of 2023, I began serving in this new position in Holy Trinity. I look forward to meeting you as we serve together in this wonderful community.

For those that I know and may have known for many years, it sure is good to see you again. Whether I knew you from this church, school, was your paper boy, or spent summers as a child in our neighborhood playgrounds, I find so much joy to reconnect. I find that I love this church now as much as I did growing up here.

I am blessed to work with Pastor Sarah. We have known each other for several years and I find her to be a blessing and am grateful to be a part of this church's wonderful staff.

I have already completed three months of ministry here. I find that I truly love the various parts of this position. Over the months, you will hear from me, see me, and read articles in the bulletin and newsletter that tell us how we can walk and serve together in this church and community.

But for this newsletter, I want to say this –

MERRY CHRISTMAS!!

May the Christ Child bring you peace. May his coming bring you hope. May his love fill you with joy.

In Christ,

Pastor John Smaligo

We're making Chrismons!

(gold and white Christmas ornament with Christian symbols ☺)

On December 10th 9:30 in the Fellowship Hall

Please join us! All are Welcome!

Donuts, Coffee, Juice provided!



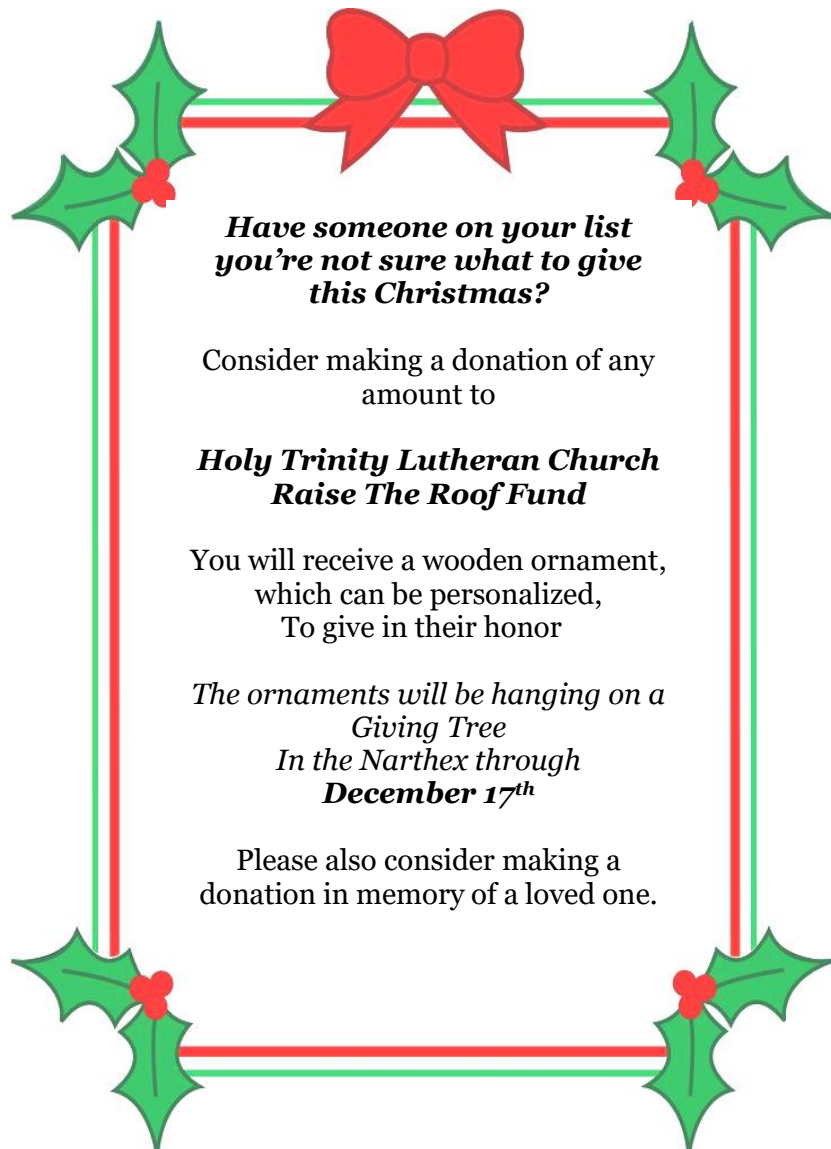
BIBLE STUDYS CONTINUE.....JOIN at ANY TIME

BIBLE STUDY on THURSDAYS at Noon in the Miller Parlor.

All are welcome!

BIBLE STUDY on MONDAY Evenings at 7:00PM in the Miller Parlor. Please join us!

All are invited Mondays at 6:00pm for PRAYER



Women's Faith and Friendship:

Our next meeting is **Tuesday, December 19 @ 7pm** (please note the date change and update your calendars). We will have our annual Christmas party with a gift exchange and yummy snacks.

- Our gift exchange theme will be "your favorite thing"...your \$10 gift should be something that you love and want to share with somebody. It can be something that you love to use in your house, your favorite book, your favorite candle, your favorite lotion, your favorite...you get the idea. Please wrap your gift and we will play a fun game to choose the gift you take home.
- And if you like (but not necessary), bring an appetizer, snack or treat to share. And to make it more fun, be sure your item starts with the letter of your last name.

HOLY TRINITY'S MEN'S GROUP TAKE ON A NEW LOOK



The men's group at Holy Trinity is preparing to reach out and take a new look. We have extended invitations to the pastors of Immanuel Lutheran Church in Irwin, Paintertown Lutheran Church in Paintertown, and Lutheran Church of Our Savior in North Huntingdon, to have the men of their congregation join us as a united men's group. The pastors of the churches found this to be wonderful idea or, as one pastor said, "We are better together".

Our first gathering of this men's group will be Saturday, January 6, at 8:30 AM, as we join for breakfast. Watch the upcoming bulletins and next newsletter for all the specifics. In the meantime, we ask the men of Holy Trinity to join us that morning in welcoming those men from the other churches that may be with us. To help us get a count, we ask all those who plan to attend to sign up on the list on the bulletin board in the narthex.

WE HOPE TO SEE MANY OF YOU THERE FOR THIS EXCITING TIME IN THE LIFE OF OUR CHURCHES. QUESTIONS? PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTACT PASTOR JOHN.

LOOK AT WHAT'S HAPPENING DURING THE HOLIDAYS and THE WONDERFUL ACTIVITIES AT OUR TWO CLOSE-BY LUTHERAN CHURCH CAMPS?

We are blessed by having two Lutheran Church camps close-by. Lutherlyn is in our synod and is up near Butler. Sequanota is in the Allegheny Synod but is up in Jennerstown (on the other side of Ligonier).

Pastor John loves church camp and their activities and will be seen frequently at both of these camps. He has served as camp pastor and loves to go to Camp Blast at Lutherlyn. At Sequanota, he went with his grandson last summer for mini-camp, attends the Mother's Day luncheon, and used their facility for retreats.

Consider going to an event at one of our church camps. These are great places and times of faithful learning. Questions? See Pastor John

SEQUANOTA

Breakfast with Santa

December 2, 2023 from 9 AM - 11 AM
Main Camp Dining Hall

Cost: Free will donation

This intergenerational family event will share the story of St. Nicholas and explore what it means to live in generosity as Christians at 10:00 AM. Families can enjoy breakfast and an opportunity to talk with Santa. Kids can play games, color picture, frost cookies, or decorate a craft while waiting for their turn with Santa. Parents may bring a camera and take their own pictures.



TAKE A HIKE

New Year's Day Hike

January 1, 2024 at 10 AM - Main Camp Dining Hall

As the new year begins reduce your stress with a beautiful walk in the woods at camp. Meet at the Dining Hall, there will be Hot Cocoa following the hike.

SUSTAIN – AN ADULT RETREAT

February 9-11, 2024 – Bowersox Center

This weekend retreat to help adults engage their faith for the journey of life. The church we grew up in is shrinking. This causes us to question “*Where is God and what is happening.*” We all need to be sustained in our love and trust of God. This weekend is for all adults. A book study will include “*When the Church Stops Working*” by Andrew Root and Blair Bertrand. Please register on line or call the Church Office at 814-629-6627.

MORE CAMPING.....

LUTHERLYN

Quilting/Crafting Retreat

January 9-14, 2024

This is a fun-filled weekend of quilting, crafting, relaxing, and creating. It's a great time of fun and fellowship that's very popular with quilters, scrapbookers, and other crafters. Registration required.

Fathers and Sons Retreat

February 16-18

A weekend that is a favorite among fathers and sons now has a winter twist! It will be a weekend of fun, faith, and relationship building.

Grown-Up Winter Retreat

February 23-25

A fun weekend at camp just for grown-ups. Campfire, tree-tapping and maple sugaring, Agape Worship, games, conversation by a fire, crafts, and lots of camp fun just for adults. Registration required.

Pastor John will provide updates of church camp activities in future newsletters.



2023 Christmas Poinsettia (6.5" flower) Order.

Please turn in your order **by December 3rd for flowers**
No FLOWER orders can be taken after the 4th!

The price is \$12.00 per flower (red, white, or jinglebell)

Donations in any amount may be made to World Hunger.

2023 Advent Coin Folder- Please return to the box in the Narthex. Thank you!!

The Endowment committee is now accepting requests for the distribution of funds for the year ending 2023.

By constitution, the funds are to be distributed **as follows**:

-Capital Improvements 30 to 50%

(capital improvements, debt reduction of building projects)

-Scholarships up to 33%

(members of Holy Trinity for the purpose of attending college, seminary, nursing or medical school, church related camps and conferences)

-Community Outreach up to 33%

(grants to ELCA colleges, camps, social services and agencies for those persons in our parish area)

-ELCA Missions up to 33%

(ELCA missions at home and overseas, new mission development in the USA, professional leadership, educational ministries, world mission and TV evangelism)

All requests for funds must be **in writing** and mailed/emailed to the church office no later than **January 13, 2024**. Please call Danielle in the office with any questions.



All Saints remembered on Nov. 5, 2023

Richard Critchfield

Ed Singer

Norma Wolfgang

Elaine Shoaf

Bill Hadbavny

Doris Chadima

June Stitely

Ron Coiner

Bruce Stewart

God Bless those added to the Communion of Saints through **Baptism in 2023**:

Jackson Marshall

Nadea Scheideman

Teagan Duffy

<u>DUTIES for December</u>		Assisting Minister	Communion Assistants	Acolyte	Lector	Altar Flowers
Sunday, Dec. 3	8:15AM	Rick Bavolek Glenda Wendling	Julie Kuhn	John Sheleheda	Lori Pheil	Eric Walt
	10:45PM	Jen Fitzgerald	Diane Kowalski Mike Stark	OPEN	Karly Kunkle	
Sunday, Dec. 10	8:15AM	Chris Karpinsky	Lois Brown Debbie Gilkey	Jaden Brittingham	Maria Clark	
	10:45AM	Jodi Waugaman	Joe Thomas Eric Walt	Ty Cessna	Colleen Cochenour	
Sunday, Dec. 17	8:15AM	Tracy McNelly	Glenda Wendling Jodi Smith	Justin McNelly	Dave Smith	Howells
	10:45AM	Dannon Johnson	Anne Coiner Susan Siems	Grant Darby	Jen Fitzgerald	
Sunday, Dec. 24	10:00AM	Jerry Kuhn	Julie Kuhn Eric Walt	Grace Darby	Carol Schlotter	Choirs
	4:00PM	John Smaligo	Jaden Brittingham Chris Karpinsky	Jaden Brittingham	Pastor Sarah	
	8:00PM	John Smaligo	Maria Clark Debbie Gilkey	Ty Cessna	Heather Newell	
Sunday, Dec. 31	10:00AM	John Howell	Joe Thomas Rochelle Belak	Joy Snyder	Michele Klingensmith	Pat Walt

Altar Guild

Dec. 2 Set Up Lois Brown and Vickie Geary
 Dec. 3 8:15 Debbie Reed
 10:45 Andrea and Brian Smith
 Dec. 9 Set Up Nina Saccamano and Debbie Curtis
 Dec. 10 8:15 Lois Brown and Vickie Geary
 10:45 Nina Saccamano and Debbie Curtis
 Dec. 16 Set Up Debbie Reed and Lori Thomas
 Dec. 17 8:15 Debbie Reed
 10:45 Nina Saccamano and Debbie Curtis
 Dec. 21 6:00pm Lori Thomas
 Dec. 23 Set Up Lori Tomas
 Dec. 24 10am Lois Brown and Vickie Geary
 4pm Debbie Reed
 8pm Debbie Curtis and Lori Thomas
 Dec. 30 Set Up Lori Tomas
 Dec. 31 clean up Lori Thomas

10:45 Greeters
Dec. 2 Clyde & Carrie Ellen Stewart
Dec. 10 Bob and Carol Schlotter
Dec. 17 Marcia and Susan Kramer
Dec. 24 at 10am Sandy Tomko & Dee Withrow
Dec. 24 at 4:00pm Zack & Samantha Tinsley
Dec. 24 at 8:00pm Brian and Andrea Smith
Dec. 31 at 10am Debbie Kunkle and Mike Stark

DECEMBER 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 Advent 2 8:15 Worship 9:30am Sunday School 10:45am Worship 12:15 150 th Meeting	4 POINSETTIA ORDER DUE Prayer Meeting 6:00PM Bible Study 7:00PM	5 Property Meeting 7pm	6 Christian Education Meeting 7pm Boy Scouts Fellow. Hall 6:30-9	7 Bible Study- Visiting the WWII Monument in Pittsburgh- see Pastor Sarah for details. Leaving the church at 11:15am Choir Rehearsal 7:00PM Girl Scouts Fellow. Hall 6-7:30	8 Irwin Cookie Tour- Stop by Holy Trinity 5-8PM Girl Scouts Fellow. Hall 6-7:30	9 Food Pantry Distribution 9AM
10 Advent 3 8:15am Worship 9:30am CHRISMONS In the Fellowship hall 10:45am Worship F.H. Rsvd. Noon-6	11 Prayer Meeting 6:00PM Bible Study 7:00PM	12 Men's Group 7:00PM Girl Scouts Fellow. Hall 5:45-9	13 COUNCIL 7:00PM Boy Scouts Fellow. Hall 6:30-9	14 Bible Study- Noon Fellowship Hall Reserved 5-7pm Choir Rehearsal 7:00PM	15	16
17 Advent 4 8:15 Worship 9:30am Sunday School 10:45am Worship- Baptism Noon-New Member Class in the Miller Parlor F.H. Rsvd. Noon-6	18 Prayer Meeting 6:00PM Bible Study 7:00PM	19 Women's Faith and Friendship at 7:00PM	20 Boy Scouts Fellow. Hall 6:30-9	21 Bible Study- Noon Blue Christmas Service 6:00PM Choir Rehearsal 7:00PM	22 Girl Scouts Fellow. Hall 6-7:30	23
24 Christmas Eve 10:00am Worship 4:00PM Children's Service with Candlelight 8:00PM Service with Handbells and Candlelight	25 Have a Blessed Christmas! Office Closed	26 Office Closed	27 Dinner with College Students and Pastor Sarah 6:00PM Boy Scouts Fellow. Hall 6:30-9	28 Bible Study- Noon	29	30
31 Christmas 1 10:00am Worship						

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church
502 Main Street
Irwin, PA 15642

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
IRWIN, PA

PERMIT NO. 353

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

DECEMBER



UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Dec. 8 Irwin Cookie Tour 5:00pm – 8:00pm, stop by Holy Trinity!
- Dec. 10 Chrismon making at 9:30 in the Fellowship Hall
- Dec. 17 New Member Class at NOON in the Miller Parlor
- Dec. 19 Women's Faith and Friendship @ 7:00PM
- Dec. 21 Blue Christmas Service at 6:00pm
- Dec. 24 Christmas Eve Sunday morning ONE service: 10:00AM
Christmas Eve Services at
4:00PM Children's service with Candle lighting
8:00PM Candle lighting and Bell Choir
- Dec. 31 ONE Service at 10:00AM