



# The Trumpet

*A publication of Triumphant Lutheran Church, a congregation of the ELCA*

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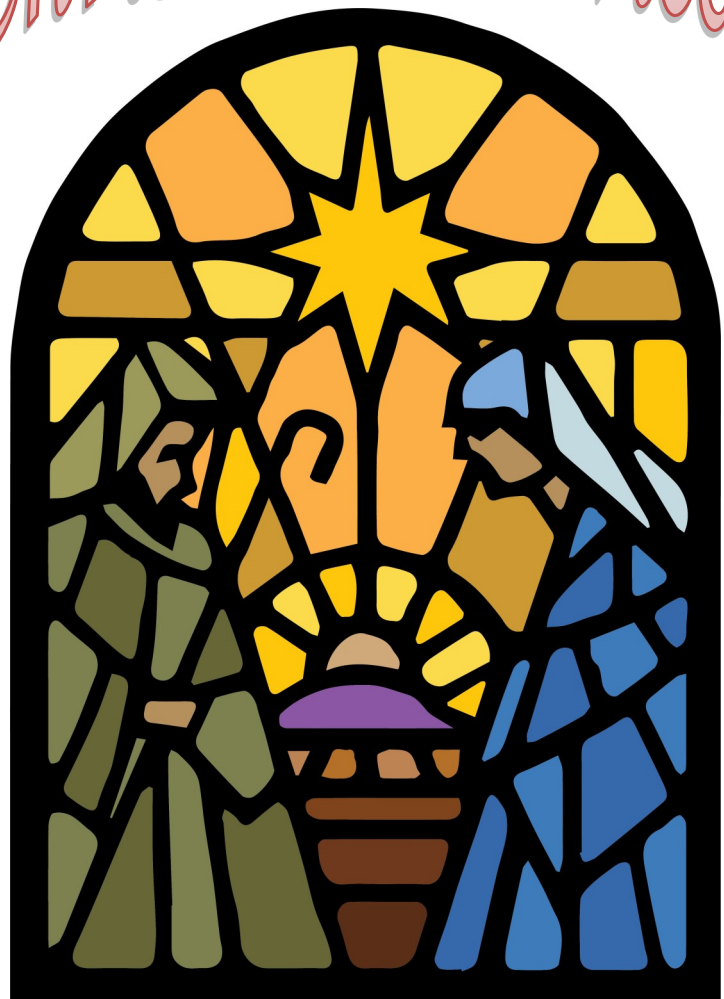
*December 2021*



## In This Issue

Pastor's Christmas Message	2
Christmas in the Trenches	3
Council News	4 - 5
December Readings	6
Assistants & Readers	6
Primetimers	7
Christmas Worship Services	7
Christmas Cantata	7
TLC Christmas Movie, Part II	7
The Good Steward	8
Emmanuel — "God With Us"	9
Financials	10
In Loving Memory	11
Anniversaries	11
Birthdays	11
January Trumpet Deadline	11
Contact Us	12

## Christmas Services



See page 7.



# Pastor Aaron's Message



Dear people of God,

(With my best Andy Williams impression): It's the most wonderful time of the year! With Christmas music playing, and house decorating, it's a time of good cheer!

It's the hap-happiest time of the year! Delicious meals sharing, family and friends all gathering, all is good and no fear! Lively traditions enjoying, fun presents a-wrapping, carols to sing!

It's the most wonderful time of the year!!!

Alright, that's enough of the song. But there is something to this season, isn't there? This is a season of watching movies that we watch every year (ours are *White Christmas* and *Home Alone*). There may be a family gathering or time with friends that adds to excitement and merriment. Even at TLC, we will celebrate this season with cantata music, a Christmas movie, and candles on Christmas Eve. It's a beautiful time of the year!

But that's not the whole picture of this season, is it? This time of year can also be exhausting. With all the added expectations and events, regularly busy schedules can be filled to bursting. For others, this season highlights the loneliness they feel, being isolated from others. For some, this season can feel contentious, as strained relationships with family cause gatherings to become conflicted. And this is also a season that highlights the loss and grief we feel due to the absence of someone we love, as we remember the sharing of these holidays in the past. This season can be difficult, painful, and mournful.



I'm not sure where you find yourself, but I find myself usually with a mix of both joy and grief. I can find incredible joy with the presence of family and friends, and also grieve the loss of loved ones and their presence. I can revel in all the activity, and also feel like I'm racing from one place to another.

When we think about this season, we find at its center the One who has come to be Emmanuel, which means 'God with us.' And this isn't just Emmanuel when things are happy and joyful, but in the midst of our sadness and despair. Jesus meets us wherever we are. Jesus saw crowds of hopeless and broken people, and had compassion. Jesus stood with the mourners at the tomb of Lazarus, and began to weep even though he was going to raise Lazarus from the dead. Over and over, Jesus finds people hurting and struggling, and meets them where they are. This is the very real blessing of having a savior who is born to be Emmanuel, God with us. To have a God who is one with us.

And so, wherever and however you find yourself in this holiday season, **my hope and prayer is that you know that God has promised to go alongside you and is with you. His love, empathy, and compassion stays with us through it all.**

Peace be with you!

*Pastor Aaron Richter*

# Christmas in the Trenches

By John Gallo

## Merry Christmas Members of TLC!

I want to thank everyone who participated and assisted with our Annual Congregational Meeting last month. I want to especially thank my fellow Council members who served this past year under continued trying circumstances. It is a blessing to work with so many talented individuals who work towards making TLC a place of fun, hope, and learning as we minister God's Word to our community. I especially want to thank Jim Moreland, Jessica Anderson, and Doug Hammerstrom whose terms are ending after two years on Council. Thank you for the work you did and your leadership on behalf of our church family!

I also want to thank our new Council Members for stepping into their important roles: Kim Hinze, Charles Beierle, Gordon Hengst, and John Shultz. I am looking forward to another great year leading a Council that will be focusing on ways to strengthen the positive message stated at the annual meeting. The Christmas season always brings a sense of hope each year, no matter what is going on in our crazy world. It is a time for renewal and remembrance all at once as we gather to celebrate the birth of Christ. Throughout history, we can see the impact of that hope in many examples. One in particular that always astounds me is the famous Christmas Truce in 1914 during WWI. Starting on Christmas Eve, many German and British troops fighting in World War I sang Christmas carols to each other across the lines, and at certain points, the Allied soldiers even heard brass bands joining the Germans in their singing. At the first light of dawn on Christmas Day, some German soldiers emerged from their trenches and approached the Allied lines across no-man's-land, calling out "Merry Christmas" in their enemies' native tongues. At first, the Allied soldiers feared it was a trick, but seeing the

Germans unarmed they climbed out of their trenches and shook hands with the enemy soldiers. The men exchanged presents of cigarettes and plum puddings and sang carols and songs. Some Germans lit Christmas trees around their trenches, and there was even a documented case of soldiers from opposing sides playing a game of soccer. The so-called Christmas Truce of 1914 came only five months after the outbreak of war in Europe, and was one of the last examples of the outdated notion of chivalry between enemies in warfare. It was never repeated — future attempts at holiday ceasefires were quashed by officers' threats of disciplinary action — but it served as heartening proof, however brief, that beneath the brutal clash of weapons, the soldiers' essential humanity endured.

**During World War I, the soldiers on the Western Front did not expect to celebrate on the battlefield, but even a world war could not destroy the Christmas spirit.**

This story reminds me that no matter what challenges we face, the miracle that God brought to us cannot be destroyed, and the message of Christ lives in even the most dire of circumstances.

So with the hope of a New Year, I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

**John Gallo** TLC Council President

*"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor."*

— Isaiah 9:6

**"No matter what challenges we face, the miracle that God brought to us cannot be destroyed."**



# Council News



Ken Smith

## Worship and Music



One of the most important ministries for TLC is the Altar Guild. Altar Guilds serve the clergy and the congregation by preparing the Sanctuary for services and sacraments, much in the same way we prepare our homes for family and guests on special days. These awesome volunteers work behind the scenes, but their efforts are critical to the success of our worship services. Here comes the pitch: **We need you! Please prayerfully consider serving TLC as a member of the Altar Guild. It's fun, takes just a few minutes of your time, and you will meet new friends.** [Send an email to Helen Bauer](#) or to [Ken Smith](#) to volunteer or just get more information.



## Servant Outreach

Amy Coronado



### Angel Tree

Our Angel Tree benefits two great organizations, TruLight127 and ELCA Good Gifts. To participate, visit the Angel Tree in the Narthex to choose a gift tag OR donate funds for gifts:

#### [TruLight127](#)

We are providing gifts of toys and pajamas for the foster children at TruLight127. Please choose 1 or more tags of items that you would like to purchase. The gifts for TruLight127 do NOT need to be wrapped. All gifts are due back to church by Wednesday, December 8.

#### [ELCA Good Gifts](#)

We are also be providing monetary donations to purchase farm animals, provide vaccinations, and supply many other needed items through the ELCA Good Gifts program. Please choose 1 or more

ornament tags of items that you would like to purchase through a monetary donation. After choosing an ornament tag, please pick up an envelope on the small table next to the tree, select your giving option, and drop your envelope (with donation) in the box. You may also [CLICK HERE](#) to donate online through our website. You may keep the ornament to hang on your tree at home. Good Gifts donations may be made now through Dec 25.

We hope you enjoy these opportunities to spread Christmas cheer in both our local community and throughout the world!



Jennifer Feutz

## Early Childhood Programs



Don Kurtti

## Ministry Support



Becky Sonnen

## Congregational Life

Things are returning to normal. Fellowship is resuming. [Primetimers](#), our group of those 65 and better, got together in November for the first time in over a year. Let's just say, "It was a huge success." Over 55 people came to enjoy a fabulous Thanksgiving meal. Kenneth Weber cooked turkeys, Marilyn Winters made the dressing, and everyone else brought terrific sides and desserts. Our December 13 Primetimers meal will include a gift exchange. See page 7 for details.

The Annual Congregational Meeting in November included a meal of pork sliders, coleslaw, chips, and cake. Thank you to Kenneth again for the delicious food and to everyone who helped with serving and cleanup. It is a team effort!

# Council News

Coffee Fellowship Schedule: If you'd like to help provide snacks after Sunday services, check the chart for your day (or bring goodies any day that works for you!):

Last Name	Date
A - B	Dec 5
C - E	Dec 12
F - G	Dec 19
H - K	Dec 26
L - M	Jan 2



Our team wishes you all the merriest of Christmases and the happiest of New Years.



## Stewardship

Jessica Anderson



## Discipleship

Aaron Theilengrdes

## Property and Resources

OPEN



## Evangelism

Lori O'Berg

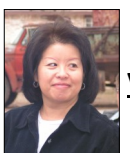
## Council Executive Board



### President:

John Gallo

See page 3.



Vice President: Barbara Wade



### Financial Secretary:

Doug Hammerstrom

Thank you for your continued financial support to the ministries of Triumphant. Anyone planning an End-of-Year gift to the church must keep in mind the requirement to have your donations dated no later than December 31, 2021, for inclusion in your 2021 Annual Giving Statement. If mailed, the donation must be post-marked by December 31 and received at the church no later than Friday, January 7, 2022. Any questions can be directed to me at the contact information above. Thank you!



### Treasurer:

Jim Moreland



### Secretary:

Nicholle Seiler

## TLC Staff Appreciation

It is a TLC tradition to recognize the outstanding support that our staff provides over the course of each year. It is important that we recognize our staff's efforts in maintaining continuity in our worship and music programs this year as 2021 has been another challenging year.



We will be passing out special giving envelopes for the Staff Appreciation Bonus on December 5<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>. To give electronically, use the Tithe.ly app, our [church app](#), or visit the giving page of the [church website](#). The deadline for Staff Appreciation donation is Sunday, December 19. -- TLC Council



- Dec 5:**     [Malachi 3:1 - 4](#)  
                  [Luke 3:1 - 18](#)  
                  John the Baptist's Proclamation
- Dec 12:**   [Zephaniah 3:14 - 20](#)  
                  [Luke 1:5 - 19](#)  
                  The Birth of John the Baptist  
                  Foretold
- Dec 19:**   [Micah 5:2 - 5a](#)  
                  [Luke 1:39 - 55](#)  
                  Mary Visits Elizabeth
- Dec 24:**   [Isaiah 9:2 - 7](#)  
                  [Luke 2:1 - 20](#)  
                  The Birth of Jesus
- Dec 25:**   [John 1:1 - 14](#)  
                  The Word Became Flesh
- Dec 26:**   [Isaiah 9:2-7](#)  
                  [Micah 5:2-5a](#)  
                  [Luke 1:26-35, 38](#)  
                  [Luke 2:1-18](#)  
                  [John 1:1-5,10-14](#)  
                  Lessons of the Birth of Jesus

## December Readers & Assisting Ministers

### December 5

9am Assisting Minister	Jason Gordon
9am Reader	Henderson Family
11am Assisting Minister	Doug Hammerstrom
11am Reader	Henderson Family
5pm Reader/Comm Asst	Mary Gandolfo

### December 12

9am Assisting Minister	Rose-Marie Smith
9am Reader	Becky Sonnen
11am Assisting Minister	James Fuller
11am Reader	Nancy Molter
5pm Communion Asst	OPEN
5pm Reader	Bobbie White

### December 19

9am Assisting Minister	Walter Brown
9am Reader	Paula Salazar
11am Assisting Minister	Amanda Henderson
11am Reader	Dave Brinkman
5pm Reader/Comm Asst	Kathy Beierle

### December 24

3pm Assisting Minister	Jason Gordon
3pm Reader	Paula Salazar
5pm Assisting Minister	Tom O'Berg
5pm Reader	OPEN
7pm Assisting Minister	Rose-Marie Smith
7pm Reader	Mary Gandolfo

### December 26

10am Readers Only	Chris St.Clair
	Brit St.Clair
	John Schultz
	Jim Moreland
	Aaron Theilengerdes

# Church Life

## Primetimers Christmas Party

[Primetimers](#) will enjoy food, fun, and fellowship at noon on Monday, December 13, in the Fellowship Hall. If you want to participate in the Christmas gift exchange, please bring a wrapped gift valued at \$10. For more information, please [send an email to Marilyn Winters](#) or [visit our website](#).

## New Member Info Meeting

Sunday, December 5  
10:15am in the Fellowship Hall

Would you like to learn more about Triumphant? Are you thinking about joining the TLC family? We want to get together with you! Come meet with [Pastor Aaron](#) and [Deacon Chris](#) to learn more about Triumphant and becoming a church member.

## Christmas Cantata

December 12  
9am and 11am

This year's [Christmas Cantata](#) is full of music dedicated to showing our excitement for the coming celebration of Jesus Christ's birth. Join us as we worship the Prince of Peace, the Light of the World, the babe in the manger. Bring your friends, family, and neighbors to this FREE event and share in the joy of the anticipation of Christ's birth!



## Advent Service of Remembrance

December 12 at 5pm



The holiday season can stir up deep emotions within us. Many greet the Christmas season with joy and excitement, whereas those who have lost loved ones may find great sadness in the very same yearly events. Come to [this healing service](#) to find a measure of peace, knowing God is always with us.

## TLC Christmas Movie II

December 19 at 6:30pm

Last year's Christmas movie was so much fun to create, film, and watch that we decided to do another one! The sequel is coming to the Triumphant church parking lot on the evening of December 19th. Bring the whole family and enjoy the movie along with hot chocolate and movie-style snacks.



Watch last year's Christmas movie here!

## Christmas Eve Services

Friday, December 24

[3pm Candlelight Service](#): a family-oriented service, may be outside (TBD later in December)  
[5pm Candlelight Service](#): featuring the Praise Band  
[7pm Candlelight Service](#): featuring the Choir

Bring your family to this beautiful, moving, and joyful service as we look forward to the birth of Christ.

## Christmas Day Service — [Online only](#)

Saturday, December 25

Participate in worshipping the newborn King from the comfort of your home, at a time that works best for you and your family.

## Lessons & Carols Service

Sunday, December 26 at 10am

The [Festival of Lessons and Carols](#) is a service of Scripture and song that dates to the late 19th century. Each lesson is followed by a prayer and a carol or other song that reflects on the lesson's message.

## TLC Office Closed Dec 27 - 31

Merry Christmas!



# The Good Steward

By Mary Gandolfo

**N**obody should seek his own good, but the good of others. — 1 Corinthians 10:24 NIV

My Mom was really smart! I have come to realize this more and more over the years. She didn't really tell me not to do something so much as to think things through. There were times I would have preferred the "don't do" over the "think about it." This meant that I had to think of others and how my actions would affect them before I doing what I wanted to do. Peer pressure dictated one thing and learning to be a better person dictated the other. Those of you who know me understand the choices I made, make, will make better than most. Hopefully, those choices are wise and not foolish, thoughtful and not selfish. I would like to think that I learned that lesson well, but truth be told, I am still learning it — life is a journey!

*Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him.* — Psalm 34:8 NIV

If we are honest with ourselves, our taste generally runs amok when self-gratification kicks in. God wants only the best for us, and that means we have to forgo some of the opportunities we are given. We have been seated at a feast table! What to go after first — that yummy looking roast turkey, some veggies and mashed potatoes, or the pecan pie on the counter? The apostle Paul talks about us being ready for foods that nourish us and not those that are just easy. I think this is what God is telling us, too. The right thing is not always the easiest or fastest thing to do, but in the end, it is the best thing. We need to learn which meals supply us our best health, and which ones we should just leave alone. God is providing us with nourishment for our bodies and for our souls. This is the nourishment that leads us to life and life abundant.

*Those who are happiest are those who do the most for others.* — Booker T. Washington

The Good Steward is a doer. By that I mean, we don't just sit on the sidelines all the time and watch. There is merit in observing what is going on around us, but those observations should lead us to some kind of action. When we are seated at the table, we observe our options and make decisions based on what we see and what we want. The same is true if we are sitting on a park bench, in a parking lot, or in a committee meeting. We are given options every day — it is up to us to make the choices and act on them. We have an advantage because we have a relationship with our Heavenly Father and that makes all the difference in the world. As we approach this year's Advent and Christmas seasons, we can just watch the celebrations or we can join our communities and help others to see the beauty and wonder of the seasons. Through the lens of faith and the leading of the

Holy Spirit, we can choose to impact the lives of those around us in such positive ways!

Join me as I watch, choose, and act out my faith with others in mind first and myself a distant last.

**There is merit in observing what is going on around us, but those observations should lead us to some kind of action.**





# Emmanuel — “God With Us”

By Rose-Marie Smith

**D**uring a recent Stephen Ministry continuing education meeting, we were exploring the numerous attributes of God. Emmanuel (God with us) is one that especially resonates during this season. It implies an awareness of God – in nature via rainbows, celestial bodies, mountains, rivers, the seasons, or even in a newborn baby’s cry at birth. We see Him in compassionate, generous, and selfless acts. His presence is everywhere and in everyday life.

Throughout centuries, Emmanuel has been written in Christmas cards and sung in beloved hymns. It is in Matthew 1:23, “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call Him Emmanuel, which means ‘God with us,’” that the Old Testament hope-filled prophecy came true in Jesus. When Christ came to earth, He literally became “God with us.” Christ’s birth was God ordained and accomplished. He is more than a friend who walks beside us; He lives inside us believers, giving us strength in weakness, courage in fear, and life in places that once felt dead. He meets us where we are.

Christmas isn’t always a joyous occasion for everyone. Some may be dealing with the grief of the death of a loved one, loss of a job, declining health, or other crisis. There is loneliness, pain, and heartache. To them, God may seem distant, uncaring, unresponsive, or even unaware. Psalm 139:7 says, “Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?” and makes it clear that God is everywhere. There is nowhere we can go that God is not already there. As you meditate on this truth, hope should arise in your heart. God is with YOU in every situation, whether good or bad. God is with us! God came to dwell among us and within us forever.

The truth of Christmas is that God put on human flesh and became one of us. His very name, as He lay as a baby in a manger, was — and remains — the message: God With Us. Emmanuel became one of us and suffered as we suffer so He could fully understand our pain – how to comfort and help us. He came to set us right with God. No matter the crisis, we’re not alone because Emmanuel is present. He is with you this very moment. He meets your needs – strength, deliverance, hope, and discernment. While you may feel alone, and it may appear that you’re alone, Christ is there with you. He sees you. He understands your heart. He can and will help you. You have His love, strength, security, provision, and care. Simply rest, knowing He is with you, in you, loves you, and will never leave you.

This Christmas, enjoy fully the gift of Emmanuel. How will you respond afresh to the Christ child this Christmas?

I close with this poem by Mandi Wilding:

## God’s Promise

*God has not promised  
Skies always blue,  
Flower-strewn pathways  
All our lives through;  
God has not promised  
Sun without rain  
Joy without sorrow,  
Peace without pain.*

*But God has promised  
Strength for the day,  
Rest for the labor,  
Light for the way,  
Grace for the trials,  
Help from above,  
Unfailing sympathy,  
Undying love!*

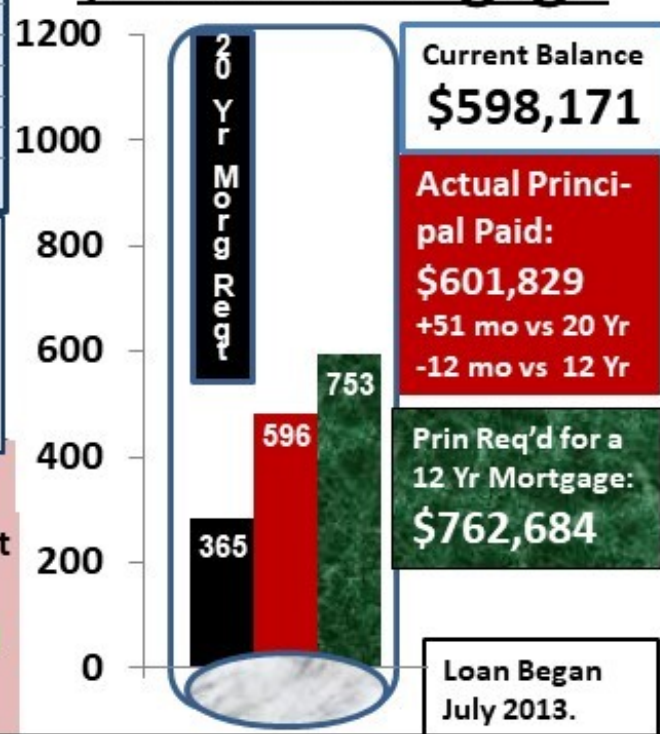
# October 2021 Financials

## KEY POINTS:

- † **Bottom Line:** Operating Net Income for **Oct** was **-\$175**. Operating Net Income **YTD through the end of Oct** was **-\$15K**, actually a great improvement. We have used **\$35K** of our Reserves --- some for Operating Expenses and some for Capital Expenses.
- † **General Offering and Income:** See the next two charts below. Weekly Offering is ahead for the year, thanks to members continued growth in Weekly Offering and greater than usual gifts so far this year. **Total Income** through **Oct** was \$475K, net **-\$96K** against budgeted, as other income sources continue to somewhat lag (but are improving). Total Financial Assets are only down **-\$64K Net** through the end of **Oct** because the council is wisely underspending.
- † **Building Fund:** Bldg Fund Income through **Oct** was \$76,957, net +\$1,037, against our required mortgage. Bldg Fund made it through summer holding its own, and Reserve is good.
- † **Going Forward:** Through end Oct the generosity of our members' Weekly Offering and Gifts has been really good!! Although 2022 will still be a bit of a rebuilding year, we have high hopes that with everybody's continued generosity and our other programs getting caught up, we can be operating on all cylinders by the end of 2022.



## \$1.2M Mortgage



## October 2021 Month End Financial Summary

October	NET INCOME		ANNUAL BUDGET	
	October	Year To Date		
Operating Income	\$53,592	\$475,185	Operating Income	\$695,005
Operating Expenses	\$53,767	\$490,498	Bldg Fund Income	\$91,104
Net Operating Income	(\$175)	(\$15,313)	Other Income	\$4,488
Bldg & Designated Income	\$22,347	\$216,676	<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$790,597</b>
Bldg & Designated Expenses	\$14,943	\$204,423	Operating Expenses	\$729,808
Net Designated Income	\$7,404	\$12,253	Debt Service	\$91,104
<b>TOTAL NET INCOME</b>	<b>\$7,229</b>	<b>(\$3,060)</b>	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$820,912</b>



- 6 Dale & Nicholle Seiler
- 9 Kevin & Kathy Black
- 9 Christopher & Lori Scruggs
- 15 Bennie & Clarine Syamken
- 18 Rebecca & Tommy LeBlanc
- 20 Jim & Allison Moreland
- 23 John & Nadine Schultz
- 29 Chris & Britany St.Clair



- 2 Evelyn Gordon
- 3 Christie Bazaldua, Bob Pfothhauer
- 6 Andrew Feutz
- 7 Val Bazaldua, Nancy Teply
- 12 Lori O'Berg, Feliziti Pena
- 13 Nancy Molter, Debbie Roberts
- 14 Peggy Madison, Bonnie Vordenbaum
- 15 Sandy Arneson
- 16 Renay Boyes, Joseph Fuller
- 17 Casey Lowe
- 19 Lisa Cantwell
- 20 Barb Wade
- 21 Steve Erickson, James Fuller
- 22 Sean DuParc, Arnette Scharf
- 24 Leon Henk
- 25 Kris Halamuda
- 27 David Abraham, Lisa Theilengerdes
- 28 Darren Zipp
- 29 Don Kestler, Jennifer Osborn
- 30 Ruby Hartmann, Les Mude
- 31 Jerry Braden, Monica Howe

## *In Loving Memory*

**Mary Ann Ferro** (Sister of Jim Madison)  
+10-1-2021

**Danny Linscombe** (Brother of Lee Linscombe) +10-2-2021

**Regina Somogyi** (Friend of Cindy Carlile & the Crawfords) +10-18-2021

**Harry Byron** (Friend of Leisa Skinner)  
+10-20-2021

**Wade Cofield** (Friend of Leisa Skinner)  
+10-27-2021

**Kurt Snover** (Brother-in-law of Nancy Patchin) +10-29-2021

**Mervin Rose** (Friend of the Winterses)  
+10-31-2021

**The January Trumpet Deadline**  
**Sunday**  
**December 19, 2021**

Send Submissions to:  
[newsletter@triumphatlutheran.org](mailto:newsletter@triumphatlutheran.org)



# We Grow in Christ to Serve Others

**Triumphant Lutheran Church**  
**21315 Bat Cave Road**  
**San Antonio, TX 78266**



## Church Emails

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## Triumphant Lutheran Worship Services

Sundays at 9am, 11am, and 5pm in the Sanctuary

[Click here for online worship on YouTube.](#)

[Live Stream Worship:](#) Sundays at 9am

[Preschool:](#) Monday - Friday, 9am - 1:45pm

[MDO:](#) Planning to re-open in 2022

Website: [triumphantlutheran.org](http://triumphantlutheran.org)

(210) 651-9090

