

# Trinity Times

502 Bardshar Road, Sandusky, OH 44870

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

December 2025

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## Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Congregation

Northwestern Ohio Synod · Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
502 Bardshar Road, Sandusky, Ohio 44870 · 419 626-0204 · [www.trinityelca.com](http://www.trinityelca.com)

[trinityelcasandusky@gmail.com](mailto:trinityelcasandusky@gmail.com)

Pastor Jennifer Herrmann

## *A note from Pastor Jen*

Dear Beloved Community of Trinity Lutheran Church,

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas! I'm sure that you sung that in your head just as I did. We have entered the season of Advent as we prepare for Christmas, New Year, and Epiphany.

This Advent, our theme is *Finding AWE in the Ordinary*. Each week invites us to notice God's presence not in grand gestures, but in the small, routine moments that fill our days. In the waiting that tests our patience, in the simple gifts of food and water, in the technology that shapes our lives, and in the relationships we often take for granted—God is already here. Advent calls us to slow down, pay attention, and rediscover the holiness woven into our everyday lives, awakening awe in places we might otherwise overlook. And on Christmas Eve, we will celebrate finding awe in the holy gift of an ordinary child, in the promise of God's incarnation. I hope that you'll be able to join us as we prepare of the coming of God.

Holidays can stir up very mixed emotions. The joys and sorrows seem louder in the darkest time of the year. I invite you to stop in at the church and have a cup of cocoa with me anytime this month if you need a sympathetic ear and/or a heart that will pray with you. Please remember you are not alone. This world needs our mutual aid and kindness!

I pray that your hearts will be filled with wonder and amazement at all that God continues to do. And that you see yourself being the hands and feet of Christ in this world at this time. May we be blessed in order that we may be that blessing upon the world.

Love,  
Pastor Jen



## Youth News

Thanks to everyone who participated in Trunks for Treats! The youth enjoyed all the delicious treats.

The Sunday school children are busy with music for the Christmas program **December 14th** at each service. Sunday school is every Sunday at 9:15am. Come join the fun and enjoy music, Bible lessons, and crafts.

## Community Events

The Christian community of the greater Port Clinton area will be hosting a Christmas musical directed by D. Greg Fox on **Sunday, December 14th at 2pm** at Trinity Methodist Church. The music will feature the Voices of Freedom Choir, a youth choir, and a narration from the gospel of Luke. ALL are welcome and refreshments will be served.

Visit [www.wreathsassamerica.org](http://www.wreathsassamerica.org) to learn about our mission to Remember, Honor, Teach, sponsor a wreath for a veteran at any participating cemetery, or sign up to volunteer.

*A veteran's wreath is a symbol of*  
**HONOR, RESPECT, and VICTORY.**



**10 BALSAM BOUQUETS**  
make up each veteran's wreath, representing the  
**10 SPECIAL QUALITIES**  
that our veterans embody.



Evergreens =  
LONGEVITY  
& ENDURANCE



Red Bow =  
GREAT  
SACRIFICE



Forest Scent =  
PURITY &  
SIMPLICITY



Circular Shape =  
ETERNITY

1. Their **BELIEF** in a greater good
2. Their **LOVE** for each other
3. Their **STRENGTH**, work ethic, & character
4. Their **HONESTY** & integrity
5. Their **HUMILITY**, selflessness, & modesty
6. Their **AMBITIONS** & aspirations
7. Their **OPTIMISM** for America
8. Their **CONCERN** for the future
9. Their **PRIDE** in their duties
10. Their **HOPES & DREAMS** that didn't always come true, but left them with no regrets

Zion Lutheran Church of Sandusky has two exciting Christmas programs:

On **Sunday, December 7th from 3-6pm**, come enjoy a world nativity display by Mike Amstuz. There will also be music performances by local groups. Admission is free.

On **Friday, December 12th and Saturday, December 13th at 7:30pm** is "Jolly Jingle Jam" by the Firelands Chorus, Inc. Free admission, but a freewill offering will be available. Also, wear your ugly sweater for a contest!

Margaretta Township warmly invites the community to attend the Wreaths Across America ceremony on **Saturday, December 13th at 12:00 PM** at Castalia Cemetery.

Together, we will REMEMBER those who gave their lives, HONOR those who serve, and TEACH future generations the importance of freedom.

Join us for a moving tribute featuring a ceremonial flyover (weather permitting), a riderless horse, and the opportunity to honor the 1,042 veterans laid to rest in our township cemeteries.

Our Sunday school students have been working very hard to bring some joyful noise to you during their annual Christmas program on **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14<sup>TH</sup>** during both worship services! Come listen to various instruments such as clarinets, boom whackers, bells, chimes, and even a steel drum. Your support of the students will not go unnoticed!



IT'S CHRISTMAS PICTURE TIME! On **Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup>**, enjoy refreshments in the upstairs gathering room and a chance for you to get your family or single picture taken with an outdoor backdrop. There will also be "Make a Joyful Noise!" costumes and props for your picture, to accompany the youth program theme. Each will receive a 4x6 print and a special Christmas bell to make your own joyful noise at home! Come have fun with your church family and smile for the camera!

GET OUT THOSE UGLY and FUNNY CHRISTMAS garments and join in the fun by wearing them on **Sunday, December 21<sup>st</sup>**. And this year, you'll have no excuse to not participate as Congregational Life will have ties for the men and corsages for the women. We hope you get in the spirit of Christmas with us!

The HELPING HANDS TREE is up and ready for you to help a family in need. As in the past, please wrap your presents and make sure to put the corresponding symbol on the tag. Please have all gifts returned no later than **Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup>** so we have time to get them to the family. Your help is greatly appreciated!



Trinity would like remember Pastor Tim Miller and Pastor Ralph Schibler for their blessed service. They were loyal and loving servants of God, and we rejoice that they answered their call.

**Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Congregation of Sandusky, Ohio - Sandusky OH**  
**Balance Sheet as of November 30, 2025**

Tuesday, November 25, 2025		Page 1 of 1
Account #	Account Name	YTD Balance
<b>Assets</b>		
1.100.102	Checking Account	46,908.98
1.100.104	Petty Cash Fund	20.00
1.100.106	Thrivent Bond Fund Checking	25,900.39
1.200.113	Thrivent Youth Gathering M/M	4,040.82
1.200.114	Thrivent Money Market Account	1,746.36
1.220.116	Endowment Savings Thrivent	97,880.39
1.220.118	Mission Plus Investments (3 CD's)	4,282.86
1.220.120	Edward Jones Mutual Fund	286,421.01
1.400.110	Thrivent Moderate Fund (Reserve)	41,307.54
1.400.112	Thrivent Moderate Fund - Pavement	1,015.02
<b>Total Assets</b>		<b>\$509,523.37</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
2.100.200	Accounts Payable/Vendors	396.54
2.100.216	Ohio Treasurer of St	407.00
2.100.218	R.I.T.A.	228.76
<b>Total Liabilities</b>		<b>\$1,032.30</b>
<b>Fund Balances</b>		
3.100.300	Current Fund Balance	(2,284.58)
3.210.300	Community Mission Fund Balance	3,453.04
3.220.300	Designated Giving Fund Balance	
3.221.300	Memorial Fund Balance	15,223.01
3.222.300	Endowment Fund Balance	101,073.25
3.223.300	Building Improvement Fund Balance	62,282.78
3.225.300	Pavement Fund Balance	1,015.02
3.227.300	Charity Fund Balance	286,421.01
<b>Total Designated Giving Fund Balance</b>		<b>\$466,015.07</b>
3.400.300	Reserve Fund Balance	41,307.54
<b>Total Fund Balances</b>		<b>\$508,491.07</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Fund Balances</b>		<b>\$509,523.37</b>



Attending: Pat Wiedenheft, Jim Bertsch, PR. Jen, Bill Bertsch, Barb Sessler, Nancy Vollmer, Sally Warner, Stephanie Lehr, Carrie Wiedenheft

Meeting called to order by President Carrie Wiedenheft A devotion was given by PR. Jen.

Minutes of previous meeting were reviewed with the following changes: The Lutheran World Relief Kits totaled 157 kits; Carrie Wiedenheft was absent. Jim motioned to approve; Sally 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**Treasurer's report:** Nancy motioned to approve the report as written; Pat 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**President's Report:** No report given.

**Pastor's Report:** PR. Jen has been conducting worship services at Providence, along with a funeral service for Ron Werner and Cora Snyder (Andrews). The confirmation class has been going well, and she is eagerly anticipating the upcoming Bible study on Tuesdays at 10am. There has been no meeting yet regarding amending columbarium guidelines. October 15<sup>th</sup> is the conference meeting. Ruby Marie will have a baptism on October 26<sup>th</sup>, during the first service; it will be a communion service.

**Congregational Life (Sally Warner):** Sally discussed various community events, including a music celebration @ Zion Huron on January 10<sup>th</sup>. Member milestones in the newsletters were discussed. Although it was previously decided to consult milestones/birthdays/anniversaries from previous newsletters to ensure accuracy, Sally argued that member milestones published in the newsletter should be the discretion of council, with consideration of the member's financial and time contribution. Sally proceeded to verbalize the unabridged list of November member milestones, with suggestions of removals.

**Faith Builders (Pat Wiedenheft):** October 26<sup>th</sup> is the "Trunks for Treat" Halloween event. The youth sold approximately 75 apple dumplings.

**Community Mission (Betsy Stierhoff):** Jim & Pat will be traveling to Pemberville, OH for the 157 LWR kits. The van was recently serviced. Wreaths Across America was discussed, costing \$17 per wreath.

**Property:** No update regarding the ping-pong table. Bill proposed replacing the basement window with a quote of \$750. Nancy motioned to accept the project; Bill 2<sup>nd</sup>. The upstairs gathering room quotes were distributed and details were discussed.

**Stewardship and Finance (Jim Bertsch):** It was decided to discuss the annual budget towards the end of the council meeting.

**Worship and Music (Nancy Vollmer/Barb Sessler):**  
No report given.

**Young at Heart (Nancy Vollmer):** Upcoming events were discussed, including assisting Providence nursing home residents w/ bingo and meeting in December for lunch.

**Old Business:** The cookies for December were changed to December 14<sup>th</sup> and will be sponsored by Sunday School.



**New Business:** The annual congregation meeting was discussed and ballots were distributed. Sally motioned to approved; Barb 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The council reviewed the 2025 annual budget and various reductions were proposed by the budget committee, the most considerable being Secretary Stephanie's hours. President Carrie invited Stephanie to depart so council may discuss her cut of income and hours. Before her departure, Stephanie and PR. Jen asserted the infeasibility of completing all job roles within constrained hours. Stephanie especially asserted the infeasibility during Lent and Advent. PR. Jen asserted that a reduction in Stephanie's tasks is necessary, especially those more suited towards a financial secretary. Carrie suggested Stephanie keep a log of daily tasks.

At this point, Stephanie departed the meeting and a lengthy discussion followed. The meeting was later adjourned and was closed with the Lord's Prayer. November meeting is 11/20.

Council Thank-yous: Dave & Sally Warner for end tables, Pat Wiedenheft and Jim Bertsch for taking LWR to Pemberville, Jim Bertsch for fresh produce, Fred Wobser for apples, Pat Wiedenheft for brewing coffee

## 7 Ways to Navigate the Holidays with Grace

The holiday and end-of-year stressors are real, so consider using this checklist to help you focus on the joy of the season.

**Pause and reflect.** What were the highlights of 2025? Identify—and celebrate—any personal milestones or family and friend moments for which you're grateful.

**Set a realistic budget.** Whether you're shopping for the perfect gifts or adding up the costs of food, social activities or travel, your wallet may look a little slim. Create a budget to keep you focused and track your spending to avoid post-holiday regret. Avoid credit cards if you won't pay them off right away.

**Reconsider your gift-giving.** Homemade gifts, experiences or even just a simple gesture, like a handwritten note, can help reduce your holiday spending.

**Prioritize self-care.** Create a family calendar of activities but remember to block some time for self-care and downtime. Reclaim the balance in your life.

**Check your savings.** Do the dollars match your goals? Now may be a good time to set up that vacation or rainy-day fund, or even next year's Christmas fund.

**Focus on connection.** It's not about where you go or what you do. Focus on meaningful conversations, sharing memories and laughing together with family and friends.

**Enjoy the moment.** Let go of any idea of perfection and simply take in the people and events around you. Limit social media and avoid comparing your holidays with others.

*Written by Donna Hein for Thrivent*

*2026 will bring in a new year for Trinity Council. We thank Betsy Stierhoff, Nancy Vollmer, and Barb Sessler for their dedicated service. We welcome Chris Nielsen, Adele Hoffman, and Ann Streat!*

*Also, thank you Sally Warner for serving as Sunday School Superintendent. She will be retiring in 2026 from doing children's messages. We wish her well in her retirement!*





## FAITH Member Ministry

Friends and Family Abiding in Christ In Their  
Homes/Hospitals/Healthcare Center

FAITH Members (as of 12/01/2025)

### **Commons of Providence, 5000 Providence Drive, Sandusky**

Ruth Sieb Apt #107

Birthday: Sept. 19

### **Commons of Providence Memory Care Unit, 4901 Providence Drive, Sandusky**

Ruby Stierhoff Rm #114

Birthday: July 26

### **Parkvue Community, 3800 Boardwalk Blvd, Sandusky OH 44870**

Ray Remy Apt. 112  
Mary Ann Neidler

Birthday: Feb 9

### **Providence Care Center, 2025 Hayes Avenue, Sandusky, Ohio 44870**

Alice Bertsch Rm #43

Birthday: April 25

Patty Swartz Rm #52

Birthday: June 5

### **In their homes:**

Judy Welser 5619 Debra Drive, Castalia 419-684-7232

Laura Allen 2015 Cedar Point Rd, Sandusky

Pat Nielsen 1502 Martins Point Rd, Sandusky

Should you like to join our team in making home visits, where we offer conversation, prayers and communion, please contact Patty Swartz at 419-626-4970.



*Ann Strean*  
*Sally Warner*



Praise  
God  
with  
Music

**JAM!**

**December 14th**

### **Crossroads Meal by Jim Bertsch December 17th**

Shredded pork roast & gravy  
Green beans  
Corn  
Salad  
Rolls  
Dirt pudding



If you would like to support this ministry, please mark your church donation as "Homeless Meals."



# DECEMBER

## birthdays

### BIRTHDAYS

1	Koral Russell	9	Patsy Troike
2	Janis Miller		Lilah Werner
4	Regan Patten	20	Alice Kuns
	Alinor Stephens	21	Rachel Haynes
9	Sharon Swartz		Ryan Patten
11	Edward Grahl		Lincoln Smith
	David Warner		Remy Schenk
14	James Bertsch		Dawn Smith
15	Joshua Miller		Mark Wiedenheft
16	Nancy Vollmer	23	James Yantz
	Larry Velliquette		Douglas Stierhoff
	Connor Swartz	29	Jacob Stierhoff
17	Carrie Lemert	30	Ross Patten
			Mary Ann Neidler

### ANNIVERSARIES

	YEARS
5 Mark & Carrie Wiedenheft	15
6 Russell & Leigh Howard	27
28 Gary & Jody Eckler	40



### MEMORIALS/HONORARIUMS

*In Memory of Pastor Ralph Schibler*  
Larry Wiedenheft, Roy & Joyce Patterson

*In Memory of Pastor Tim Miller*  
Jim Bertsch, Larry Wiedenheft

*In Memory of Barb Miller*  
Larry & Pat Wiedenheft, Jim Bertsch

*In Memory of John Barnes*  
Denny & Barb Sessler, David Wiedenheft, Chuck & Sandy Paseka

*In Memory of Jane Lehrer*  
Karen Berg

*In honor of Wes & Betty Miller's Anniversary*  
Gary Lieb



Merry Christmas! It has been a wonderful year getting to know Pastor Jen and members. I want to thank everyone for their welcoming kindness. This is a wonderful congregation with radiant light. If you have any suggestions for bulletins or newsletters, please don't hesitate to reach out. Or, if you just want to say hi! May you have a very blessed holiday season.  
— Stephanie

On behalf of Trinity, we thank:

- Bill Bertsch for cleaning the gathering room
- Members who passed out candy for "Trunks for Treats"
- Members who purchased buckeye chocolates
- Ann & Pierre VanRaepenbush for donating dessert toppings



# December 2025

S U N	M O N	T U E S	W E D	T H U R S	F R I	S A T
	1 Dartball 7:30pm	2	3 AA 9am NA 7pm	4	5	6 NA 11am
7 2 Advent Communion 8:00 & 10:30am Sunday School 9:15am	8 Dartball 7:30pm	9	10 AA 9am NA 7pm	11	12	13 NA 11am
14 3 Advent Word & Prayer Service 8:00 & 10:30am Jam! 9:15am YOUTH PROGRAM	15 Dartball 7:30pm	16	17 Crossroads AA 9am NA 7pm	18 Council 7pm	19	20 NA 11am
21 4 Advent Communion Service 8:00 & 10:30am Sunday School 9:15am	22 Dartball 7:30pm	23	24 Christmas Eve Communion Service 4:00pm & 10:00pm AA 9am NA 7pm	25 Christmas Day Office Closed	26 Office Closed	27 NA 11am
28 1 Christmas Word & Prayer Service 8:00 & 10:30am Sunday School 9:15am	29	30	31 New Year's Eve			

HELPERS AT WORSHIP - December 2025

8:00 am Service						10:30 am Service			
Date	Alter Flowers	Memorial Flowers	Ushers			Lector		Acolyte	

Alter Care: Ann Strean & Sally Warner      Communion Assistant – 8:00 Sally Warner

December 7	Rhonda & Dean Matus	Ann Strean	Cindy Norman & Rich Miller	Sally Warner	Carlie Wiedenheft	Ken Schenk & Bill Bertsch	Gayle Thompson	Malachi Herrmann
December 14	Pat Wiedenheft		Cindy Norman & Rich Miller	Guy Miller	Mariska Farlow	Ken Schenk & Bill Bertsch	Natalie Thompson	Claire Connor
December 21	Carrie Wiedenheft		Cindy Norman & Rich Miller	Erica Miller	Zane Warner	Ken Schenk & Bill Bertsch	Chrissy Nielsen	Natalie Thompson
December 28	Rex & Charlene Stierhoff		Cindy Norman & Rich Miller	Joyce Patterson	Ryan Wiedenheft	Ken Schenk & Bill Bertsch	Candy Beatty	Malachi Herrmann


# December Prayers. Readings & Psalms

## December 7th: 2 Advent

**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. (Ps. 72:7)

**Romans 15:4-13**

*Live in harmony, welcoming one another*

**Matthew 3:1-12**

*A voice cries: Prepare the way of the Lord*

### Prayer of the Day

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming nurture our growth as people of repentance and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## December 14th: 3 Advent

**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. (Ps. 146:8)

**James 5:7-10**

*Patience until the coming of the Lord*

**Matthew 11:2-11**

*The forerunner of Christ*

### Prayer of the Day

Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## December 21: 4 Advent

**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. (Ps. 80:7)

**Romans 1:1-7**

*Paul's greeting to the church at Rome*

**Matthew 1:18-25**

*A God near at hand*

### Prayer of the Day

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**



December 28th: 1 Christmas

Isaiah 63:7-9

Israel saved by God's own presence

Psalm 148

The splendor of the LORD is over earth and heaven. (Ps. 148:13)

Hebrews 2:10-18

Christ shares flesh and blood to free humankind

Matthew 2:13-23

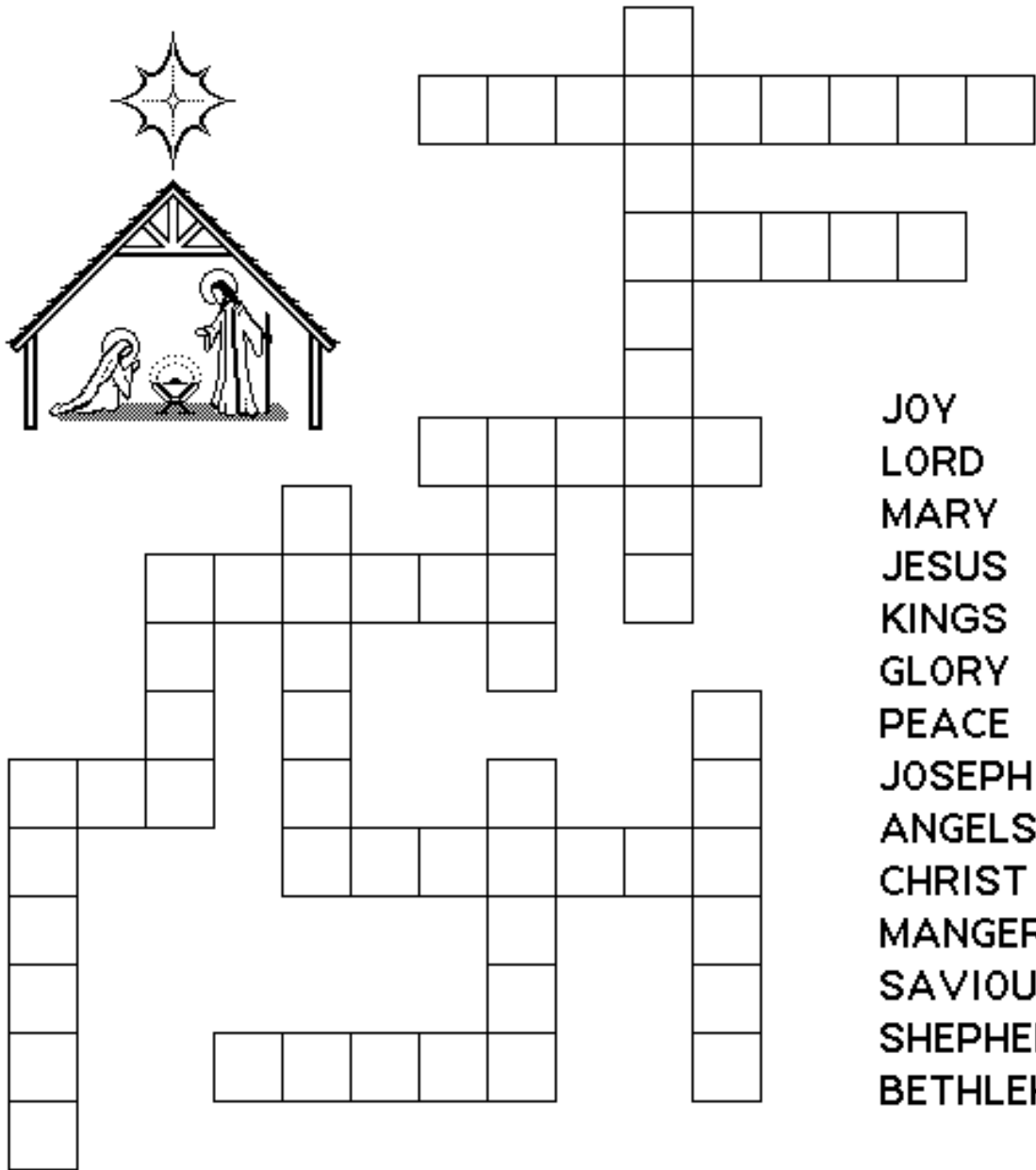
The slaughter of innocent children

Prayer of the Day

O Lord God, you know that we cannot place our trust in our own powers. As you protected the infant Jesus, so defend us and all the needy from harm and adversity, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Christmas Crossword

Make all the words fit into this crossword.  
Each word is only used once.



- JOY
- LORD
- MARY
- JESUS
- KINGS
- GLORY
- PEACE
- JOSEPH
- ANGELS
- CHRIST
- MANGER
- SAVIOUR
- SHEPHERDS
- BETHLEHEM