



DECEMBER 2025 CTC CONNECTIONS

Countryside Trinity Church

FROM THE PASTOR ---- REV. NATHANIEL ASPERGER

Greetings to you all in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

We are here in the last month of 2025, and with it has come Advent. The word Advent means “the arrival of a notable person, thing or event”. For Christians, the Advent season is not only an event, it is also the celebration of the arrival of a very important person. Advent is the first season of the Christian year. The Christian calendar starts with Advent and ends with the feast of Christ the King. This season is a special time for Christians. There is the obvious point that Christmas is the start of Jesus' physical presence in the world. Advent becomes a period of time to build up to the entrance of Jesus on Christmas. For most of us, this is not our first Advent. I would, however, like to challenge you to look at this season like a new experience. Consider what it really means to start this new year of your Christian faith. For you, consider what is so special about Advent.

During Advent, we have the opportunity to look at what we understand of the bible as a whole. History is one of the most important things to understand how we got where we are today. It might not surprise you, but I am rather passionate about the Bible. It is, in general, one of the most important things in my world. I also believe that it is one of the most misunderstood documents in the world. There have been many people who have used the bible for their own selfish goals. We can think of people who mistranslated the bible to support their own viewpoint. The King James translation has some very specific edits around worldly authority, for instance. Sometimes it is simply ignorance that leads to misunderstandings about the Word of God. The history of the Word of God, from being written to being available in print and app form today, is a long, tumultuous history.

Why bring this up? The reality is that we can always learn more about the bible. Even if we do not think we need to know more, there are always ways to better understand our faith. As we look towards Advent, as we look down the snowy path towards Christmas, what are we excited to know better? Is it the history of the Messiah in the First Testament? Is it better to understand how Alexander the Great shaped the world Jesus was born into? There is always more to learn, understand and reflect on from the Word of God.

As we continue towards Christmas, may the Lord bless you and keep you, may the Lord make their face to shine upon you, and bring you peace.

-Pastor Nathaniel Asperger



YOUR SESSION AT WORK

November 16, 2025

MINUTES TAKEN BY CAROL VAN ARSDALE, CLERK OF THE SESSION

The Session meeting was opened with a prayer by Pastor and Moderator Nathaniel Asperger at 12:03 P.M in the lounge.

Minutes of Stated Session meeting of October 12, 2025, were approved with corrections.

DEACONS' REPORT: presented by Dan Groom

October 1, 2025, Beginning balance	\$805.54
<u>Income:</u> Coffee Hour	\$57.00
Total Income:	\$862.54
<u>Expenses:</u> Kitchen supplies, paper products	
Eco supplies, etc.	
Total Expenses:	\$50.70
Anonymous donation transfer to general fund	\$200.00
October 31, 2025, Ending Balance	\$611.84
Cake Fund balance	\$135.00

Clerk of the Session: Carol Van Arsdale

Baptisms since beginning of year	1
Deaths since beginning of year:	4
New members in 2025:	4
Current membership:	87
Average Attendance:	39
Communion served in September	34

Presbytery/Denomination report: Per Capita cost per member has been set at \$35.00 for 2026.

The Presbytery office is going virtual. Records will be housed at 1st Presbyterian Church. Any in-person meetings will be held there as well. The current building area will be utilized by the Korean Presbyterian Church that is already in the building.

Building and Grounds: The parking lot has been patched, and the cost was covered by donations.

Finance and Stewardship:

Changes in Equity: January 1, 2025, to October 31, 2025

General Fund		Total Balance of all Funds	
Beginning Balance:	\$ 28,977.52	Beginning Balance:	\$ 399,768.46
Income & Transfers:	\$ 75,196.10	Income & Transfers:	\$ 81,000.07
Expenses:	\$ 111,603.92	Expenses:	\$ 115,542.94
Ending Balance:	\$- 7,430.30	Ending Balance:	\$ 365,225.59

Christian Outreach: The Weiss gift bags were distributed to students on Oct. 31. Enough donations have been made to cover the cost of 11 Thanksgiving gift cards. More donations will be needed for the Christmas gift cards.

Personnel: All Job Descriptions have been revised for presentation at December Session Meeting. An evaluation procedure has been finalized. The tool used to evaluate each position is being developed to align with the job description with the tool. Evaluations should be completed in January.

Spiritual Life: Darren presented the schedule of communion for the 2026 calendar. The number of dates for communion will be increased from 16 to 19.

Nominating: Pastor Nathaniel reported for Sandy Redfield who was absent.

Carol Van Arsdale will take Darren's Session position. All other positions will be filled by current members who have agreed to serve again.

Pastor: Pastor Nathaniel needs to have hip replacement surgery. He hopes to have it done after the Congregational Meeting in January.

New Business: Carol will remind scouts to check all doors, including doors that were not expected to be used during the event/meeting. Kathy will make signs for doors directing users to lock, close and then try to open the door again to be sure it is locked.

M/S/C by Kathy Loviska and seconded by Bethany Scovill to lock all church doors 15 minutes into the church service (10:45 regular Sunday services, 4:45 for special services). Call the church if you are going to be later than that time. Kathy will put this information on the slides and announcements. It will be published in the newsletter. A sign will be placed on the inside of the door reminding users of this new policy. The policy will take effect next Sunday. The church cell phone will be given to the ushers during the service in case anyone calls to get in.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned with prayer from Pastor Nathaniel at 1:35 P.M. Next Session meeting Dec.16, at 6:00 P.M.

IMPORTANT

It has come to our attention that occasionally the doors have been left unlocked at the Church. Sometimes, they just aren't shut tightly, and the lock did not catch. **PLEASE BE SURE** if you are the last one to leave the building that the doors are **ALL** checked to be sure they are locked. When you get outside, give them a tug to be sure the lock has caught and nobody can get back in without a key. **THANKS!**

ADVENT 2025

Soup and bread lunches will be served on November 30th and December 14th. Nathaniel will also hold an Advent program during those same weeks. Hope you can join us!

UPCOMING LECTIONARY READINGS FOR DECEMBER

December 7, 2025 Isaiah 11:1-10 Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19 Romans 15:4-13 Matthew 3:1-12	From Jesse's root, a child will come with the spirit of the Lord. May the king rule with righteousness and defend the poor. Trust God's promises in Scripture; rejoice and live in hope. John calls for repentance prepare the way of the Lord.
December 14, 2025 Isaiah 35:1-10 Psalm 146:5-10 Or Luke 1:46-55 James 5:7-10 Matthew 11:2-11	The desert will blossom; God's people will return with joy. The maker of heaven and earth gives justice and reigns forever. Mary rejoices in God who helps the poor and lifts up the lowly. Be patient; have courage; the coming of the Lord is near. Jesus praises John, the messenger who has prepared the way.
December 21, 2025 Isaiah 7:10-16 Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 Romans 1:1-7 Matthew 1:18-25	The young woman will bear a child and name him Immanuel. Restore us, O God; let your face shine, and save us. Paul greets the saints in Rome; Jesus is the promised Son of God. Mary is with child; an angel visits Joseph; Jesus is "God with us."
December 24, 2025 Isaiah 9:2-7 Psalm 96 Titus 2:11-14 Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)	Light shines on people in darkness; a child has been born for us. Sing a new song to the Lord, all the earth; declare God's glory. The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all. Jesus is born in Bethlehem, angels tell shepherds the good news.
December 25, 2025 Isaiah 52:7-10] Psalm 98] Hebrews 1:1-4 (5-12) John 1:1-14	How beautiful is the messenger who brings good news and peace Make a joyful noise to the Lord; give thanks for God's victory. Now God has spoken to us by a Son, the reflection of God's glory. The Word of God became flesh and lived among us.
December 28, 2025 Isaiah 63:7-9 Psalm 148 Hebrews 2:10-18 Matthew 2:13-23	The people were saved not by an angel, but by the LORS's presence. Let everything in the whole creation praise the name of the Lord. Jesus calls us brothers and sisters; he became human to save us. Joseph and Mary flee to Egypt to escape persecution from Herod.

GET INVOLVED!



Express yourself and your faith by joining the worship, music, or usher team today.

There are so many meaningful and fun ways to get involved, and there is something for everyone to do and **YOU** are needed for CTC to continue to grow and move forward. If you are interested in becoming a worship helper, singing in the choir or have any questions about how you can help, please speak with Darren Woodke or Dan Groom. If you can occasionally usher, talk with Pat Denno or Ron Platt.

CTC CHOIR

TALK WITH DAN GROOM IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN JOINING. WE'D LOVE TO HEAR YOUR VOICE.



SAGINAW COUNTY COMMISSION ON AGING

**SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES:
THERE ARE MANY CENTERS IN THE SAGINAW AREA OFFERING CONTINUING WEEKLY ACTIVITIES FROM DANCING AND EXERCISE TO CARDS. I HAVE PLACED THE DECEMBER NEWSLETTER FOR THE COMMISSION ON AGING ON THE TABLE IN FELLOWSHIP HALL. YOU CAN ALSO GO ONLINE TO VIEW A LIST OF EACH MONTH'S ACTIVITIES.**

**GO TO
WWW.SAGINAWCOUNTY.COM
AND HOVER ON THE TAB "COMMUNITY RESOURCES" AND THEN CLICK ON THE DROP-DOWN ITEM "COMMISSION ON AGING".
LOOK FOR UPCOMING EVENTS AND THERE WILL BE A LINK FOR SENIOR CENTER EVENTS & ACTIVITIES.
CHECK IT OUT - THERE ARE SOME FUN ACTIVITIES THAT CONTINUE THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.**

HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CTC



**MISSIONS SUPPORTED BY
COUNTRYSIDE TRINITY
CHURCH**

**HOW DO I
CHOOSE?**

CHRISTIAN OUTREACH: In the past couple of Newsletters, we have listed most of the Missions we support throughout the year. With what we have already listed and that which was collected in the last couple of weeks, I believe we have given more than \$7,000 this year. All of us at Countryside Trinity Church should be extremely proud of how we take care of God's children. We are not a large congregation, but we definitely are a giving one! Thank you to all who have given to our many missions that we support throughout the year. You are truly special!

PER CAPITA: The Presbytery of Lake Huron has recently set the Per Capita amount for 2026 at \$35.00. Below is a description of what Per Capita means.



WHAT IS PER CAPITA?

Fair question. Let's attempt to answer it.

PER CAPITA has been part of our funding history for over 150 years. When presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly meet, they are conducting the legislative and judicial business of the church and incur necessary expenses. There are also some necessary administrative expenses involved which enable these ecclesiastical, legislative, and judicial functions to be performed. Historically, per capita has been used to fund these. Importantly, per capita funding enables governing councils to make decisions regarding distribution of mission dollars without itself being funded by those same dollars.

HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CTC

PER CAPITA, CONTINUED: The whole church shares in these expenses since everyone who is a member shares in the benefits of this system of church government. Per capita provides for the financial participation of all local churches as part of a connectional and representative church, thus providing for unity and mutual responsibility within the church.

The 2026 Per Capita Apportionment

General Assembly	\$11.26
Synod of the Covenant	\$ 3.40
Presbytery	<u>\$20.34</u>
Total	\$35.00

HOW IS PER CAPITA COMPUTED?

The Per Capita Apportionment in the Presbytery of Lake Huron is based on a portion of certain salaries and expenses which are part of the operating expenses of the Presbytery.

Per Capita is the cost of being a Presbyterian, and if each member pays the per capita amount above his/her pledge or regular giving, pressure on the local budget is reduced.

Paying per capita is similar to:

- contributing one's dish to a potluck meal
- paying to be connected to the internet
- paying for the benefit of utilities, such as electricity, gas, water
- pitching in with others to pay for gasoline on a road trip

In order to keep presbytery's per capita rate from escalating the per capita portion of the budget is subsidized with a distribution from Presbytery's investments.

WHERE DO OUR PER CAPITA DOLLARS GO?

The amount that is set for per capita apportionment is a calculation based on the number of church members and the budget established annually by each governing body. At the presbytery level per capita pays for a number of items including:

- the mortgage payment on the presbytery office
- the office of the Stated Clerk including his salary and that of the Recording Clerk
- salaries of the Financial Secretary, Treasurer and the Administrative Assistant
- insurance coverage, legal counsel, annual audit
- costs associated with operating the presbytery office
- meeting costs for our standing units

HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CTC

THE NEXT CTC **WOMEN'S** **ASSOCIATION** **MEETING**



SATURDAY, DECEMBER
13TH BEGINNING @
11:30 A.M

WE HOPE YOU CAN
ATTEND!

COUNTRYSIDE HISTORIC **COMMISSION**

The Session is considering the formation of a new Historic Commission for the purpose of compiling an up to date "History of CTC". If you would be interested in working on this commission, please let Pastor Nathaniel know.

Thank you.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

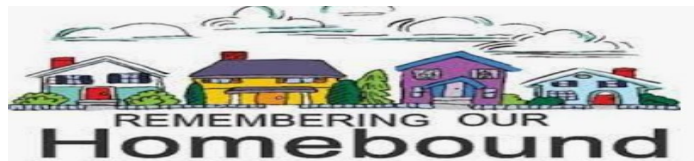
Session has decided that for all Worship Services the doors will be locked fifteen minutes after the start time of the service and will remain locked throughout the service. If you know you are going to be late getting to the church, please call (989) 793-0125 and let us know so we can watch for you.

FOR SUNDAY WORSHIP DOORS WILL BE
LOCKED AT 10:45 A.M.

FOR SERVICES BEGINNING AT 4:30 P.M.,
DOORS WILL BE LOCKED AT 4:45 P.M.

HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CTC

SESSION COUNCIL	DEACONS
Class of 2025 Darren Woodke Becky Pequignot Bethany Scovill	Class of 2025 Pat Denno Ronda Otway Duncan Redfield
Class of 2026 Roger Scovill Kathy Loviska Chuck Davis	Class of 2026 Dan Groom Paige Pequignot Lori Halase
Class of 2027 Sidney Diggs Debbie Davis Sandy Redfield	Class of 2027 Lynne Groom Jackie Williams Ron Platt



John & Leore Bethune Traditions of Saginaw, West, Formerly New Hope Valley	Dawn Curtis @ Home	Lois Krzak @ Home
Avis Leach Roosevelt House/Hemlock	Tom Kennedy Adira Nursing & Rehab	Marilyn Leffler Traditions of Saginaw, West Formerly New Hope Valley
Marie Lemmer Wellspring Assisted Living	Fern Evon Little Swan Haven Manor	Elaine O'Keefe Great Lakes Rehab

Our Homebound members and friends would all love to hear from you. Please drop them a card or give them a call. Their contact information is in the Church Directory.

HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CTC

PERSONAL NEEDS CABINET

We will soon be moving the personal needs cabinet outside. If you wish to contribute, here is a list of items needed:

- Tooth Paste/Tooth Brush
- Mouth Wash
- Hair Comb &/or Brush
- Paper Tissues
- Wet Wipes
- Bandages/First Aid Kit
- Rain Poncho
- Chapstick
- Cotton Swabs
- Ziploc Bags
- Feminine Products
- Shampoo/Conditioner
- Bath Soap
- Hand Sanitizer

The list may change as we understand the needs of our community and weather changes

CTC Women's Association

The last meeting of the Women's Association was called to order on Saturday November 8th at 11:40 a.m. with prayer led by Ronda Otway. Present were Kitty Blehm, Pat Denno, Marcia Lacker, Mary Longstreth, Ronda Otway and Jackie Williams. Minutes were presented from the last meeting. Christmas gifts for the staff were discussed and will be followed up with Sandy Redfield. The video was watched during lunch, and the lesson was discussed. Meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m. Next month's meeting will be held on December 13th at 11:30 a.m.



We will be receiving \$29.72 from Kroger for the last quarter for the Community Rewards Program. If you shop at Krogers for anything, including groceries, prescriptions, gas, etc. please consider making CTC your charity of choice. Costs you nothing, but for anything you buy, a small percentage comes to CTC each quarter. Let Kathy know if you need help signing up.

BIRTHDAY & ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Paige Pequignot
- 3 Sam Nolan
- 8 Duncan Redfield
- 9 Stephanie Plater
- 10 Katherine Asperger
- 12 Jacob Plater
- 16 Pervez Yusaf
- 19 Martin Bethune
- 19 Bethany Scovill
- 21 Ronald Miller
- 22 Jacob Groom
- 22 Lucas Gonzales
- 28 Avis Leach

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 3 Rhashell Hunter
- 5 Tony Asperger
- 12 Melissa Paterson (Shalhoup)
- 16 Alexa Mahan
- 17 Nancy Easlick
- 18 Paula Plater
- 22 Ed Halase
- 25 Brecque Woodke
- 26 Craig Gates
- 30 Kermit Diggs

BIRTHDAYS JANUARY

- 5 Norma Meacham
- 13 Sarah Gonzales
- 13 Kevin Diggs
- 17 Madisen J. Groom
- 24 Chelsea Parker
- 28 Irene Ohmer
- 30 John Bethune

BIRTHDAYS FEBRUARY

- 3 Roger Scovill
- 5 Pastor Jane Young
- 6 Angie Mitchell (Organist)
- 8 Mark VanArsdale
- 9 Matthew Davis
- 9 Aaron Plater II
- 10 Victoria Parker
- 11 John VanArsdale
- 12 Jackie Williams
- 13 MariAnne Vega
- 22 Michelle Martinez
- 26 Leore Bethune

NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

None Known

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 15 Joseph & Doris Ruth

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- 6 Pervez & Ezra Yusaf
- 7 Ron & Brenda Platt
- 11 Robert & Jean Bortner
- 28 Michael & Amanda Groom

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- 11 John & Leore Bethune
- 12 John & Carol VanArsdale
- 25 Sarah & Tony Gonzales

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

- 6 Chad & Karla Parker
- 21 Vincent & Michelle Martinez

Countryside Trinity Church

4690 Weiss Street

Saginaw, Michigan 48603

(989) 793-0125

