

December 2015

Dear Fellow Trinitarians,

God has a backside. Did you know that? It is the only part of his being that he allowed Moses to see. You can read about this in Exodus 33:18-23. Moses asked to see God's glory. God told Moses that He will show him all of His goodness but not show His face. In this way, God was being merciful to Moses. If Moses had seen the face of God it would have been the death of Moses! To see God in all of His glory is deadly to mortal eyes. So God tones it down a bit so that mortals may live.

The infant Jesus is God toned down a bit—His backside, if you will. Jesus is the very image of God (Colossians 1:15), and yet God's glory is not seen in Jesus' backside but in Jesus' face (1 Corinthians 4:4). To see the face of Jesus is to see the backside of God!

Jesus shows us, not only his face, but his whole self in Word and Sacrament. The bread and wine of the Lord's Supper is Jesus' glory toned down and given to us for the forgiveness of our sin. God's immortal Word is read in mortal voice for mortal ears. The whole point in God becoming man is God giving Himself unto suffering and death for the life of the world. It's why we celebrate Christmas in the first place. It's all about Jesus!

I wish all of you a very Merry and Blessed Christmas, and a Joyous and Happy New Year!

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Hoag



December Newsletter 2015



what's
new?

Updates

Update from our Church Council President, Jeff McDonald

We have encountered what we hope will prove to be the final delay in the approval of the lift. Our state inspection revealed that all doors to the lift (not just the ground level door as is required by the Village) must be automated in order to pass the inspection. We have ordered automated doors for the upper and lower levels and await their installation. We anticipate this being done in the first half of the month of December. While not 100% complete, the lift does work and we will be instructing the ushers on how to use the lift. Other items that are part of this project that remain unfinished as of this writing include the following:

- Railings along the ramp leading up to the lift have been approved by the Village – we await the final cost and delivery time frame from the installer
- Paving on Elm Street – we have been on the paving company's calendar for several weeks now and hope to see that completed very soon
- Front steps –we just learned that the concrete work is not going to be done this year. I am incredibly disappointed with this news, but the early snow caused the Village to cut off the concrete work sooner than they normally do, and that means our project is not going to be finished until April of next year. The last thing we want is to pour concrete that cracks due to the cold and then has to be re-poured next year. This is costing enough as it is!

The final cost of the lift and related projects is still to be determined as we await final quotes and bills, but it does appear this will exceed what we had budgeted. This is principally due to some unexpected changes to comply with both the Village and the state code requirements, as well as the fact that the side walls for our front steps were not load bearing, meaning we had to start that project basically from scratch. We will not be making a dedicated appeal to raise these additional funds – I think we have begged enough this year and your response has been remarkable! But if you're moved to help cover the cost overruns, any help would certainly be appreciated. As before, simply write "Lift project" in the memo line of your check to designate a donation to this project. I am anticipating the final tally will be approximately \$10,000-\$15,000 over what we budgeted. Whatever we don't raise, we will likely use our savings to cover. Recall this was the initial plan, but that was scrapped in response to the tremendously generous donations we received for this project.

As I reflect on our 75th anniversary year, I take considerable pride in the fact that we leave our church at the end of this year in much better shape than it was in at the start of the year. Considering that we

started the year in good shape, the improvements made this year are all the better in my view. Some highlights include:

- purchase and installation of a new church organ, including all new speakers
- Resurfacing of all interior stairs in a new epoxy finish that is easy to clean and a marked improvement over the old stairs
- A well-attended 75th Anniversary celebration with approximately 150 attendees, including several former members (thanks again to our anniversary committee and all others who lent their hand to help with this celebration)
- Outside improvements include the installation of a new fence (courtesy of Trinity Pre-School), the removal of five trees (thanks to Rex Toepke, Sheldon Klemm and others who pitched in), and the replacement of several shrubs on our property (thanks to our expert gardeners Pat Czerwinski and Pat Fuerst, along with their team of volunteers)
- “Stem to stern” cleaning of the church, spearheaded principally by Virgil Switzer
- The installation and *near* completion of our long-awaited lift

While I would love to remove the word “near” from that last point above, I am very happy with the collective efforts the Living Stones of our congregation made this year. I look forward to the upcoming holiday season and to a productive 2016 with all Trinitarians.

SOCIAL MINISTRY

MorningStar



“**Giving Tree**” - our monetary contribution site for MorningStar Mission, has been set up across from the church office, once again. Please deposit your contribution envelopes in the decorated table box.



“**Stars of Hope**”. Members are encouraged to select one of the 10 stars and either purchase, or fund the purchase (by donating to the Giving Tree) of Christmas presents for needy families who are served by this local mission. Once again, Trinity congregation will brighten the holiday season for many thankful MorningStar patrons. Thanks for supporting this mission.

Thanks to our new volunteers, Kim Standard and Jen DePolo, who have taken over this project from Ginny Decarlo. Thanks to Ginny for getting this project started and for continuing to help Kim and Jen. If you have any questions, please call the church office at 815.485.6973.

Congregational Family Christmas Party.
Sunday, December 6th from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.



This is for all members - not just the children. Pizza, desserts, salads and drinks will be served at 5:15 p.m. Games, supplied & supervised by the Youth Group, will begin shortly thereafter. While the children are playing games in the gym, the adults are invited to join us in the church to sing some Christmas Carols. . **Sign up today!** The sheet is on the hallway table. You may also call the church office to register. 815.485.6973.

Junior High and High School Youth - We are leading the games at the church Christmas party on **Sunday, December 6.** Arrive at 4 p.m. to help set up the games. We'll eat pizza, lead the games, then clean up. We should be done shortly after 7 p.m. Sign up on the youth bulletin board if you can help.

In conjunction with our 75th Anniversary Celebration, Social Ministry hosted a "mini-continental breakfast" on Sunday, November 22nd. Rev. Rob Rogers, Pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Villa Park and the Regional Vice-President of the English District was our guest Pastor for the weekend, and also spoke in between services about the "What's Going on in the English District". Thank you to everyone who attended and a special thanks to those who donated some food items. Social Ministry appreciates your support of our church.

WOMEN'S LEAGUE:



Cookie Walk: Saturday, December 5th from 8:30 – 11:00 a.m.

Baked goods from the congregation are needed and appreciated. Trays for your cookies will be available on the hallway table. Please put wax paper on the trays before placing the cookies on them. Baked goods for the cookie sale can be dropped off Friday, December 4th from 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. or early Saturday morning. All proceeds will benefit the needs of the church.



Women's League Christmas Luncheon will be held on Tuesday, December 15th at 12:30 p.m. in the church basement. This will be a catered luncheon with a cost of \$10.00 per person. Make your reservations by calling Ginny DeCarlo at 815.485.2001, Pat Fuerst at 815.485.6441, or Judy Wilmsen at 815.462.1473. Hostesses: Ginny DeCarlo, Pat Fuerst.



The Women's League is looking for card tables. If you have one that you would like to donate to Trinity, the Women's League could use it at the cookie walk next weekend. Card tables come in handy for all our church organizations.



CHANCEL GUILD Our next meeting is Monday, **December 7th** at 6:30 p.m. Hostesses will be Allene Bachmann and Doris Bay. We will be decorating the church for the Christmas season. All ladies of the congregation are invited to join us.

Chancel members, if at all possible please help the Women's League with their Cookie Walk by making some cookies. These ladies helped us with our luncheon, now it is our turn to help them.



POINSETTIAS FOR THE ALTAR

What a sight with the altar covered in poinsettias! Would you like to place a poinsettia or two in the Chancel for Christmas? Each plant is \$11.75 and can be picked up after the Christmas Day Service. You can order by completing the yellow form on the table outside the church office, calling Christine Stark (815.478.4069) or by calling the church office (815.485.6973). ***Your order needs to be turned in by Sunday, December 13th.***



ALTAR FLOWERS: The 2016 Flower Chart is up. This is a good time to select your special date(s). Order forms are attached to the side of the cabinet in the hallway outside the church office. Flowers are placed on our altar every Sunday to enhance and beautify our altar area in memory of a loved one, to commemorate a birthday, wedding anniversary or in celebration of God's blessings. The flower order forms are attached to the cabinet in the hallway outside the church office. If you would like to give altar flowers, complete the form and place it in the Chancel Guild mailbox in the church office. If you have any questions, please call Christine Stark at 815.478.4069 or email her at candb.stark@gmail.com. The cost of the flowers is \$8.50 per vase or \$17.00 for both vases. The flowers may be picked up after the late Sunday service.



CAUSE AND EFFECT: YOU GIVE. PEOPLE LIVE.

There is a big blood shortage. The next opportunity to save 3 lives with ONE blood donation will be on December 14, 2015 from 3-7 pm. If you have any questions, or would like to schedule an appointment, please call Deb Aiken at 815.462.0687.



The Sunday School Christmas Program will be Sunday, December 20th at the 10:30 a.m. church service. Refreshments will follow. Children should come at the regular 9:15 am time to prepare. The practice will be Saturday, **December 19th from 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 Noon.** A pizza lunch will be served after the rehearsal.



St. Matthew's.

We are continuing to support St. Matthew's Lutheran church in Chicago by collecting donations of non-perishable food items, as well as household goods. Please place the food items in the collection box by the parking lot door. The household items should be placed in the storage closet area at the far North end of the church basement. Please place items carefully so they do not block the aisle to the boiler room. ***Thanks to Ed Tatro and Bob Romadka for hauling food, clothing and household items to St. Matthew's.***



If anyone is interested in helping with the hauling of these items to St. Matthew's, please contact the church office. Extra help is always appreciated.



2016 National Youth Gathering

We have one of the biggest groups in a long time registered to attend the youth gathering in July 2016 - 8 youth and 3 chaperones. In order to help fund the trip, the youth will be doing fundraisers throughout the coming year.

Youth Gathering Fundraisers in December

Christmas Carols and Coffee - During the December coffee hours after early church, various youth will be playing Christmas music to add to the holiday cheer. Much like street musicians, you can make donations in their music cases to help send them to New Orleans.

Scrip Fundraiser - This is a gift card fundraiser - they are the same gift cards you can purchase from retailers, including over 300 brand-name grocery, department stores, restaurants, gas stations, hotels, home improvement, etc. We order the gift cards at a discount, and you pay face value for the gift cards. (For example, you pay \$25 for a \$25 Speedway gift card - the youth group obtains the card at a discount and keeps the difference.) You can purchase gift cards by ordering at church or you can purchase online. We will have a table after church each Sunday to help explain the program and to take your orders, or you can e-mail Angie Minett at minett411@yahoo.com to register online. Do some of your Christmas shopping with us!



75th Anniversary Christmas ornaments are for sale after services and through the church office. Cost is \$15.00 with proceeds going to our lift and organ fund.



CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES

Members, who have not received offering envelopes in the past and would like to request them for the year 2016, please, fill out a request with your name, address, and telephone number and give it to Doris, Church Secretary or place in Janice Prospero's, Financial Secretary, church mailbox. Request forms are on the table in the hallway.

Also, members who desire to discontinue use of envelopes, please contact Doris or Janice.



MORNING STAR

Serving dates are December 7th and December 21st. Time: 3:45 pm. Sign-up sheets are on the hallway table. If you have any questions, please call the church office at 815.485.6973.



Readers & Greeters Sign-Up sheets for December are on the hall table. Please stop and sign up.

Confirmation class is held each Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Hoag or call the church office at 815.485.6973.

Wednesday Morning Bible Class is held at 8:30 a.m. Please join this very interesting rroup.

Choir Practice – each Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. New voices are always welcome. If you have questions, please call the church office at 815.485.6973.



Coffee Hour A new yellow sign-up sheet is on the hallway table for volunteers for the 4th Sunday of each month in 2016. Please take a turn. *If you have any questions, please call the church office at 815.485.6973.*



Several weeks ago we requested the donation of wrench sets to be used around the church. We received several sets and some were left without donor names. Thank you to everyone who donated these items. These tools will be put to good use.



VOLUNTEER WANTED! Our website could benefit from a makeover. We are looking for ideas to improve the layout and readability of our site. If you are interest in helping us to revamp our current website, please see Pastor Hoag or a member of church council.



TRINITY PRAYER CHAIN

Trinity Lutheran has a Prayer Chain that is available to anyone for prayer support by fellow members. These prayers may be for personal, congregational, community, governmental, and all other needs. All requests are kept confidential. Please call Ginny DeCarlo (815) 485-2001 to request a prayer. The Bible says, "The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective." James 5:16b.

If you are interested in being part of the Prayer Chain, or would like more information please give Ginny a call. You can also call the office at (815) 485-6973. We would be happy to provide you with all the information. Please consider being part of this worthwhile endeavor. You can make a difference.



Thanks from Doris Klemm.

I would like to thank everyone for their prayers, cards, phone calls, emails and also those who brought us some meals. Your caring sure helped with my recovery following my recent surgery.

Thanks to Denise Buchanan for filling in at the church office during my recovery time.



The Rotary Club of New Lenox proudly presents a professional production of Israel -Horovitz's Adaptation of Charles Dickens' - "A Christmas Carol = Scrooge and Marley" Performances will take place in the Rosenquest Auditorium at Lincoln Way Central High School in New Lenox on Friday, December 4th at 7:30 p.m., Saturday, December 5th at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, December 6th at 4:00 p.m. Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$12 for seniors & students; \$10 for groups of 10 or more. You can see Pastor Hoag for tickets or you can purchase tickets online at www.nlrotary.tix.com What a great way to get into the holiday spirit.



Congratulation to Deb Koehler! Deb recently received the 2015 Presence Health HOPE Award. Deb received the organization's HOPE Award for demonstrating its values of honesty, oneness, people and excellence in her everyday work as department secretary for Cardiac Services at Presence. She has served in that position for about 10 years. You may read the complete article form New Lenox Patriot on the bulletin board outside the church office.

January thru March 2016 Portals of Prayer are available in the Narthex and on the hallway table.

Church office hours: Monday and Thursday, 9-3; Tuesday and Friday, 9-12.



Christmas Services

Sunday, December 20th

10:30 am Sunday School Christmas Program

Christmas Eve – December 24th

5:00 p.m. Contemporary Worship Service

7:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. Candlelight Worship Service with communion

Christmas Day Worship Service – December 25th at 10:00 a.m.

Christmas is Joy! Christmas is Peace! May the peace and joy of this holiday season remain in your heart throughout the New Year. ***Remember to keep Christ in your CHRISTmas!***