

February 2024

Dear Friends,

The Season of Lent has quickly arrived in this new year. It's earlier than usual this year, with Ash Wednesday falling on February 14, which is also Valentine's Day. It almost never happens that these two observances fall on the same day. I might suggest that you have your celebration of Valentine's Day on Tuesday the 13th. That way you can have your hearts and chocolates along with your paczkis. You can't lose!

I sometimes get asked if giving up something for Lent is an acceptable practice for Lutherans. I always answer that it is. Fasting and other outward expressions of repentance is always a good thing. But something to keep in mind is that you shouldn't make a spectacle of it. It is also important to remember that, while Lenten practices are admissible, they are not required. You don't have to fast. You don't have to give up something. Lent does not negate our firm belief in Christian Liberty (1 Corinthians 10:31). In short, if you want to, go ahead. If you don't want to, then don't. It's neither commanded nor forbidden.

Galatians 5:1 says, "It is for freedom that Christ set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery." This is why we observe Lent. Through the cross of Christ we have the freedom from things that try to keep us in bondage. Jesus' blood and merit has rescued us and has assured us a place in God's everlasting kingdom!

A blessed Lent to you all. May the Lord Jesus' patient endurance give us the strength to withstand all the wiles and temptations of the devil. God's many blessings to you!

Pastor Hoag



Our Lenten Theme for 2024 is Return from Exile

Life is full of journeys—even life itself is a journey. Much takes place between the beginning and the end, and our Lenten journey is no different. As Christians, we embark upon a daily movement from exile—from life under the burden of sin to the joy of the Gospel that is ours in Christ Jesus. As we begin each leg of the journey, do not be surprised to discover that Christ travels with us. He has always been our guide from the beginning, and He will journey with us to the end. We embark on this Lenten journey contemplating the reality of our earthly journey but with eyes fixed on the destination—the empty tomb and the open gates of everlasting life, with the confidence of knowing that we do not walk alone!

The Series begins on Ash Wednesday, February 14, at 7:00pm and will continue each Wednesday evening, preceded by a Lenten Supper at 6:00pm.

All is done in the cross!

Pastor Hoag

FEBRUARY 2024 NEWSLETTER

President's Message:

Pastor installed our Church Council Members during the 1/20/24 and 1/21/24 services. The installations have given me reason to pause and take note of these dedicated church members who will be working diligently to help our church run smoothly this next year. I have been fortunate to have served these last two years with these spiritually moved and motivated individuals. New to the Council this year is Kim Gappa who volunteered to serve as a Director of Outreach. Welcome Kim; we look forward to working with you. Thank you, Bob Jackman, for your valued contributions to Outreach over the years. I would also like to extend a special "Thank You!" to all our returning Council Members, and I encourage you to do the same.

The Annual Congregational Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, February 4, 2024. A potluck luncheon will be served downstairs following the 10:30 service. The meeting will be held in the gym after the luncheon. Please join us as we review results from 2023 and discuss plans for 2024.

Highlights discussed during the January Church Council meeting are as follows:

- General Fund Donations for December were \$8,000 more than last year. Year to date through December are \$8,300 less than the same period in 2022.
- Tim King presented a preliminary budget for 2024.
- Property presented a recap of projects and expenses for 2023. Plans for upgrading exterior lighting are still under consideration.
- Outreach presented ideas to continue to build on Each One Reach One and Back Home with Jesus Sunday. More to come.
- Worship & Spiritual Life presented attendance results. Ushers are needed for the Lenten services.
- Parish Education discussed Christmas VBS results and plans for next year. Plans are being made for a Sunday School picnic in May to include the congregation.
- Parish Education reported we have many members participating in the Bible Recap.
- Social Ministry discussed the schedule for Lenten soup and sandwich sponsors.
- Social Ministry will coordinate the Easter Breakfast. Deb Aiken will take the lead. Thanks Deb! Volunteers are needed.
- The next Church Council meeting is scheduled for Sunday, February 11, 2023, at 7PM.

Stay safe & warm,
Gary

*****Pastor Hoag and members of the Church Council want to remind you that they will never use online methods to solicit money or gift cards out of the blue. If you ever receive a text, email, or social media message asking you to purchase gift cards or to send money, ignore and delete the message and contact Pastor Hoag*****

Adult Instruction Class begins Sunday, February 18 at 7pm in the library. If you are previously from another denomination or if you had no denominational affiliation, and you desire to join our congregation, this class is for you. The class will also be livestreamed and saved on our church Facebook page. Please contact Pastor Hoag by email at douglashoag@gmail.com to join this class.

(Every Sunday @ 7:00pm Beginning on 02/18/24 - Ending on 03/24/24)

the ANNUAL Trinity Lutheran Church Congregational Meeting is:

Sunday 02/04/24

(immediately following the 10:30am Service)

a POTLUCK will be held before the Annual Meeting.

a Sign-Up Sheet is on the Table Next to Pastor's Office

MIDWEEK LENTEN SERVICES:

***6:00pm:** Lenten Supper

followed by

***7:00pm:** Midweek Lenten Services

- Wednesday February 14 **ASH WEDNESDAY**
- Wednesday February 21: ***Host: Sunday School**
- Wednesday February 28: ***Host: Social Ministry**
- Wednesday March 6: ***Host: Junior High and High School Youth Group**
- Wednesday March 13: ***Host: Church Council**
- Wednesday March 20: ***Host: Chancel Guild**
- Thursday March 28 **MAUNDY THURSDAY**
- Friday March 29 **GOOD FRIDAY**
- Saturday March 30 **HOLY SATURDAY**
- Sunday March 31 **EASTER**

What Is Lent All About, and Why Is It Important?

The purpose of the Lenten season is to set aside time for reflection on Jesus Christ and his life, death, burial, and resurrection. Lent is the 40 days (not including Sundays) from Ash Wednesday to the night before Easter Sunday. Lent prepares us for Good Friday and Easter.

Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent. We reflect on our mortality and on the fact that we are but ashes and dust, and to the dust we will return. We lament our sins which have alienated us from God. We receive our Lord Jesus' body and blood for the forgiveness of our sins.

Maundy Thursday is the establishment of Jesus' last will and testament he gives to his disciples for the life of the world as he institutes the Sacrament of the Altar.

Good Friday is the solemn celebration of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, where we see the result of our sinfulness. Jesus died for us and as us, giving his life unto death to save the world from its sinful ways and reconcile it to God once and for all.

Easter Sunday is the joyful celebration of Jesus' rising from death and thereby sealing eternal life for us and for the world. While we still experience death, it is still conquered by Christ. On the Last Day we will be raised from our tombs clothed with immortality and incorruption.

The traditional practices of Lent are Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving (giving to the poor). These are not done to earn anything from God, but instead are kept as the outpouring of the love of Christ first given to us. Attending Lenten worship on Sundays and during the week are wonderful ways of keeping Lent.

It is our prayer that your keeping of Lent will help you be mindful of the gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation through the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

“Revitality” Was a Successful Workshop!!! The Church Council had four meetings. Our focus for this project was: “Engaging Non-Churched People in Our Community”. We have the ball rolling BUT now we need the congregation’s help. Our first outreach project is: Single Parent Family WITH Children. We have many ideas geared towards leading this demographic into our church. We will be talking with all of you in more detail, very soon. Please Remember - We Are Open to Ideas AND The Sky is the Limit!!!”

RE:VITALITY: “Every One His Witness” - MEETINGS FOR THE ENTIRE CONGREGATION
***Additional Information Will Be Discussed During Our Annual Church Meeting Sunday**
02/04/24*

THE CONGREGATION’S HELP IS DESPERATLY NEEDED

The Church Council is Asking for Everyone’s Help Cleaning Our Church on:
Saturday March 9, 2024 beginning at 9:00AM
It is up to us the congregation - this is all our church, and we all need to help.

ALSO Let’s All Make the Church Beautiful to Celebrate Easter!!!

We Will Need Help on the Following:

- All Floors that are Vinyl or Cement Need to be Washed.
- Both Kitchens Scrubbed.
- All Carpeted Areas Vacuumed.
- All Wood Surfaces Dusted. (example the library needs to dusted).
- Pews Vacuumed.
- Radiators Cleaned.
- Remove High Cobwebs.
- Doors/Windows Cleaned Inside and Outside.

a Sign-Up Sheet is on the Table Next to Pastor’s Office



Bible Study:

Wednesday 8:30am

Thursday 7:00pm

Member News!!!



2023 Baptisms:

- Beckett Jeffrey White 05/18/23
- Mattie Nicole Casagrande 07/30/23
- Archie Michael Studer 10/08/23
- Ada Jane O’Sullivan 10/29/23
- Elize Marie Blecke 12/09/23
- Madison Alexandria Longmire 12/10/23

2024 Baptisms:

- Mason Wyatt Pezan 01/20/24



2023 Weddings:

- Sean David Russell and Paige Amber Batinich 11/03/23
- James De Young and Alena Batinich 12/21/23

2024 Weddings:

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A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR CHANCEL GUILD!!!

THANK YOU TO:

Allene Bachmann, Doris Bay, Denise Buchanan, Debbie Crawford, Lois Dobbs, Wendy Kaun, Robin Krol, Rita Larson, Sharon MacFarlane, Jennifer Mudrock, Carol Oldendorf, Beth Parker, Janice Prospero, Kay Purnell, Jan Schlak

A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR CHURCH COUNCIL!!!

THANK YOU TO:

Gary Purnell, Jennifer Kojro-Badziak, Tamara Doerr, Tim King, Michael Gardner, Robert Jackman, Kim Gappa, Michelle Buell, Beth Parker, Dr. Edward A. Tatro, Diane Sewing, Rex Toepke, Steve Tomany, Christina Kipper, Doug Hoag

A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR CHOIR!!!

THANK YOU TO:

Marnean Briese, Michelle Buell, Michelle Hoag, Robin Kroll, Karma Krzysiak, Nancy Minnick, Jennifer Mudrock, Jan Toepke
and Julie Ann Verchimak

A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR ORGANIST!!!

THANK YOU TO:

Lori Hilger

A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR PRESCHOOL BOARD!!!

THANK YOU TO:

Jeanine Welsh, Jennifer DeMaertelaere, Gary Purnell, Jana King, Kristin Wolter, Michelle Buell, Beth Parker, Johna Yeager

A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR SOCIAL MINISTRY!!!

THANK YOU TO:

Deb Aiken, Pam Burke, Jan Clark, Cheryl Koenig, Sharon Lorenz, Jan Toepke

A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL!!!

THANK YOU TO:

Michelle Buell, Beth Parker, Angie Minett, Kim Gappa, Ralph Krauss, Michelle Hoag, Carol Berkey, Trent Berkey, Gunner Kipper

A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR USHERS!!!

THANK YOU TO:

Tom Kaun, Biff Aiken, Brett Carr, Paul Krol, Edward A. Tatro, Tim King, Tom Buell, Bob Blecke, Mike Gardner,
Gary Purnell, Cameron Hoag, Dana Knodel, Steve Tomany, Randy Varju, John Buell, Phil McFarlane, Rex Toepke,
Jeff Lorenz, Paul Krol, Diane Sewing

AND A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR PASTOR!!!

THANK YOU TO:

Pastor Douglas Hoag



Contribution statements for income tax purposes are available for members using the offering envelopes. If you have not received a statement in previous years and would like to request one, please contact the church secretary or Tammy Doerrer @ tammydoerrer@gmail.com . If you received a statement in the past, you are on the list to automatically receive one each year.



BUY RAISERIGHT GIFT CARDS – Do you go to Starbucks, shop at Target or Jewel, etc.? Then, why not purchase a gift card for yourself ahead of time or as a gift! A portion of the proceeds go to our high school youth. It costs you only the face value of the gift card. It's a win, win! There are forms with the full list of participating stores outside of the Pastors office, or you can learn more at www.raiseright.com. Any questions contact Angie at minett411@yahoo.com or 815-228-4902. Thank you so much to all our current and newbie participants, we greatly appreciate your support!

**Take note of the additional order dates for the month of
-Sunday February 4th**

Pickup time the following Sunday.

Thank you to everyone who has been supporting our efforts! Your generosity is greatly appreciated!



Did You Know Pastor Hoag is a Rock Star!!!

the Band Also Includes Our Very Own (former) Property Manager: Dan Bay!

Come See the Band "Side Effects!" on the Following Dates and Locations:

-February 3 -- Quarry Ballroom, Thornton, 7-11pm

-February 17 -- VFW, New Lenox, 7-11pm

-March 9 -- Roc City, Rockdale, 8-12pm

-March 23 -- Gustos, Crest Hill, 9pm-1am

-March 30 -- VFW, New Lenox, 7-11pm

all new dates will be posted in the weekly bulletin.



Trinity Preschool News:

REGISTRATION FOR 2024-2025 IS OPEN

Please Tell Your Friends and Neighbors

There is a non-refundable registration fee of \$70.00 per student. The school year begins September 2024. The tuition per month will be:

-2 Day, 3-Year-Old, Tuesday & Thursday: \$125.00

-3 Day, 4-Year-Old, Monday, Wednesday & Friday: \$160.00

Children must be 3 or 4 by September 1, 2024.

For additional information, please call Trinity Lutheran Church at 815.485.6973.

Next Preschool Board Meetings:

-March 2024 T.B.D.

-May 2024 T.B.D.



Sunday School News:

The Sunday School staff has been busy making plans for wonderful new family and outreach activities! Stay tuned for details about these events! We are also adopting new curriculum updates as we work on continuous improvement in our mission to educate our young people on the Truth that our God shares with us through the Bible! We have so many exciting things ahead, and we encourage you to join us! Bring a friend or family member, too!

This year our focus will be to "Be the Light" as we share the Truth of God to our family, friends, and community!"

Children's Sermon: Every Third Sunday of the Month

The Sunday School will be collecting non-perishable food, and monies, to donate to our New Lenox Food Pantry indefinitely. This is to help those around us during these challenging times. Please bring canned goods and dry boxed items. To see items most needed by New Lenox Township Food Pantry, please visit their website (www.newlenox.org), or Facebook. A donation box is located downstairs by the Sunday School rooms, and upstairs by the library. They have also mentioned to us that they can do the most to help with financial donations – you can donate directly on their website or add an envelope with a note in our offering basket. Thank You!!!

Sunday School is Looking for Volunteers: Teachers and Helpers – High School Age to 101. Please contact Michelle Buell @ mbuell3769@gmail.com or Beth Parker @ elizabethmarie@sbcglobal.net if interested. Thanks!!!

SUNDAY SCHOOL EVENT CALANDER

February

- February 16th, 5-7 pm - Valentine's Day Party

March

- March 24th, 10:30 am - Palm Sunday/Participate in Church & Easter Egg Hunt & *coffee hour at 11:30 am*

April

- Saturday, April 20th 10am-12pm - Pets in the Park
Family Fun Event - Pet Blessing/Comfort Dogs

May

- Sunday, May 12th, 9:00 am - Mothers' Day Tea & Donuts for Dads
- Sunday, May 19th, 11:30 am – Last Day of Sunday School & CHURCH PICNIC



Chancel Guild News!

Attention Ladies of Trinity - Our meetings are at 9 a.m. the first Saturday of January, March, April, May, September, October, November, and December. Ladies of TLC please consider joining our awesome Chancel Guild. For more information, please contact Jennifer Mudrock, Wendy Kaun, Denise Buchanan, or Kay Purnell.

Chancel Schedule for February:

February 3-4 (Congregational Meeting and Potluck: Rita Larson / Jennifer Mudrock
February 10-11: Jennifer Mudrock / Janice Prospero
February 14 (Ash Wednesday): Janice Prospero / Allene Bachmann
February 17-18: Allene Bachmann / Kay Purnell
February 24-25: Kay Purnell / Beth Parker

ALTAR FLOWERS - Fresh flowers are placed on the altar to remind us of the "Garden of Eden" and "Jesus' Garden Tomb." They are part of the beauty of the Creation. Chance Guild very much appreciates the congregation's support and help in keeping fresh flowers on the altar. You can help by sponsoring an available Sunday. A 2024 Altar Flower Calendar is posted in the glass case hanging on the wall outside the general office. **Presently, Chancel Guild is in immediate need of sponsors for a few Sundays in March and April.** If you would like to reserve a Sunday in memory of a loved one or to honor a special occasion, please fill out a sponsor order form and put it along with payment in the Chancel Guild mailbox. The forms are located on a hook attached to the glass case. If you have any questions, contact Kay Purnell at purnellk51@hotmail.com or (815) 485-9017.

February Altar Flower Sponsors:

- Feb. 4 Wendy & Tom Kaun
In Thanksgiving for Their Many Blessings

- Feb. 11 Kay & Gary Purnell
In Memory of Gary's Parents, Elvira & Ray Purnell and
Kay's Father, LaVern Yeske

- Feb. 18 Mr. Bob Bollman
In Loving Memory of Bob's Wife and Mother, Marlen

- Feb. 25 Beth Parker
In Honor of Jake Parker's Birthday
Sharing with:
Jan Falk
In Memory of Jan's Son, Ernie Falk (Jr.)

Social Ministry Announcements:

Coffee Hours: Coffee Hours are hosted every Sunday after the 9:00 service. Additional Coffee Hour Hosts are always needed. If you would like to help, please contact Jennifer in the Office at tlcsecretary508@gmail.com or Jan Toepke at toepkej@gmail.com.

Coffee Hour Schedule:

Feb. 4- Rita Larson and Denise Buchanan
11- Kay Purnell
18- Sharon MacFarlane
25- Sandy Peters
March 3- Rita Larson and Denise Buchanan
10- Liz Benedict and Christina Kipper
17- Kay Purnell
24- Sandy Peters
31- No Coffee – Easter Sunday

Next Social Ministry Meeting: will be **Monday, February 12 at the Church.** This committee sponsors service projects for our congregation and the community. It also directs social programs and events of the congregation. We have a small, dedicated group but would welcome new members to be able to expand our programs. Please consider joining us!

Next Food and Fellowship: will be **Tuesday, February 13.** All adults are welcome to attend! Please join us for lunch and an afternoon activity.

IMPORTANT KITCHEN INFORMATION: To alleviate the accumulation of food and drinks in the kitchen refrigerator/freezer, instructions will be posted. Following an event, if there is leftover food and there is not an event where it could be used in the immediate future, please take it with you. If you would like it used at a future event, please contact the people hosting so they are aware it is there. Labels will be available to date and identify who items belong to. Thank you for your help in this matter!

Dear friend in Christ,

My name is Josh Baggett and I am the Alumni Scholarship Chairman for the Alpha Alumni Chapter of Beta Sigma Psi - National Lutheran Fraternity. I'm contacting you to inform you of scholarship opportunities our organization has to offer Lutheran high school seniors. If you'd like to learn more about our organization, please check out <https://www.betasigmapsi.org/>.

Our Alumni Chapter is offering a \$3,000 scholarship given out to a Lutheran male freshman attending the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in Fall 2024. There is no obligation to join Beta Sigma Psi to receive this award. Runner-ups may be eligible for \$1,000. Our scholarship application may be found online at <https://forms.gle/cDewGziVwUjPdcGG8>. All applications are due March 29th, 2024.

The Beta Sigma Psi Educational Foundation also offers additional scholarships and grant opportunities for members of the Lutheran community. These opportunities can be found here <https://www.betasigmapsi.org/scholarships-for-high-school-students/>

We would greatly appreciate it if you would share this opportunity with your congregation.

Thank you,

Josh Baggett

USHER SCHEDULE 2023/2024

1st Sunday

9:00 AM

-Tom Kaun 815 485 9604 kauntd@gmail.com

-Biff Aiken 815 954 0682 biffdebaiken@gmail.com

10:30 AM

-Brett Carr 815 370 6651 brettdcarr@gmail.com

-Paul Krol 815 575 1315 p.krol@sbcglobal.net

2nd Sunday

9:00 AM

-Edward A. Tatro 815 485 5760 etatro4@aol.com

-Tim King 815 463 0415 tim.king1@comcast.net

10:30 AM

-Tom Buell 815 485 3769 tombuell@sbcglobal.net

-Bob Blecke 815 353 7561 cgm964@comcast.net

3rd Sunday

9:00 AM

-Mike Gardner 815 485 9623 mgardner1453@gmail.com

-Gary Purnell 815 485 9017 gpurnell3@hotmail.com

10:30 AM

-Cameron Hoag 779 279 4223 cam.hoag@gmail.com

-Dana Knodel 708 822 2902 danacowboy1@yahoo.com

4th Sunday

9:00 AM

-Steve Tomany 815 485 3163 tomany@sbcglobal.net

-Randy Varju 815-685-1363 randy.varju@aah.org

10:30 AM

-John Buell 815 726 3601 jan.buell@yahoo.com

-Phil McFarlane 815 806 1219 philmacp40@comcast.net

5th Sunday

9:00AM

-Rex Toepke 815 485 2638 rtoepke@usa.net

-Jeff Lorenz 815 463 0833 jlorenz2367@gmail.com

10:30 AM

-Paul Krol 815 575 1315 p.krol@sbcglobal.net

-Diane Sewing 815 592 3911 dianesewing@hotmail.com

A minimum of two ushers are needed for each service. **Please call the reserve usher to take your place if you are not able to serve on your Sunday, also call your counterpart to make them aware.**

Please plan to arrive 30 minutes before service and follow the procedures noted in the usher's loose-leaf notebook in the narthex. Thanks in advance!

Other Alternates: Zack Horn 630 664 9224 zacharyhorn@gmail.com, *Bob Jackman 815-933-3864*, Robert Stark 708 307 4069

Church Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 9:00am to 2:00pm
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