

January 2016

Dear Fellow Trinitarians,

As we begin another year filled with possibilities and potential for our congregation we will face many and various challenges, not the least of which is a growing apathy (and even hostility) toward the Gospel of Jesus Christ. As we begin to experience this more and more, don't be disturbed or shocked by it. It isn't even our concern anyway. The Christian Church is called to repent of its own sins, receive the forgiveness that Christ won for us by his passion, death, and resurrection, and then get that message out. We are not called to argue or convince others of the truth of the Gospel message. That is the purview of the Holy Spirit, who calls, gathers, and enlightens the whole Christian Church on Earth and keeps it with Jesus Christ forever.

However, it would be wise and prudent to take steps to learn how to defend our own faith. Resources abound to aid and assist us in this area. I consider myself to be one of those resources, but not the only one. Books, websites, videos, podcasts—these are all helpful in informing ourselves. But perhaps the best way to equip ourselves is engaging each other in “holy conversations”, perhaps around a pot of coffee or maybe even a pitcher of beer (we are Lutherans after all!) and encourage one another in the faith that was once delivered to the saints.

We have the greatest news for our tired and worn out world: God entered it in human flesh to shepherd it to eternal life, and gives us his very self in Word and Sacrament to accomplish this! That's the message that transforms minds and hearts and we get the privilege of speaking it in our own circles.

I pray that the Holy Spirit will equip you to navigate the many obstacles that are thrown in your way that could cause you to stumble in your faith. I also pray that you continue to receive the gifts of Jesus Christ in Divine Service at Trinity each week! Have a very Happy and Blessed New Year!

In Christ,
Pastor Hoag

JANUARY 2016 NEWSLETTER



New Year's Resolution

How about being a reader, a greeter or an usher for one of our services. The Choir is always open to new voices! Try getting involved in one of our ladies groups. These are all great ways to serve the church and get acquainted with fellow church members.

Happy New Year from Church Council!

2015 was an exciting year, and we achieved a lot of things as part of our 75th Anniversary as outlined in the December newsletter. But 2016 brings us to the beginning of a new year with a clean slate and a host of new plans and possibilities. We will see through the completion of the railings for the lift as well as our front steps and new railing there as well. We also plan to have our "lift parking" paved on Elm Street as soon as the weather warms up enough to allow for these last few improvements to be done. We also plan to focus a bit more outwardly in 2016 and we're working on some charitable ideas now that we hope lots of our members will support. We can continue to be the Living Stones of our church by spreading hope and God's love to others, so please do get involved in our mission projects this year when those opportunities arise.

We also welcome two new council members in January. We are very happy to welcome back Jeff Lorenz to the Property Committee. Jeff has served us well over the years and while he was not officially on council in recent years, he has been very involved throughout the course of his membership at Trinity and we welcome him back as Bob Jackman steps down. Our sincere thanks to Bob for all of his efforts over the years. While Bob steps down from council, we suspect he will remain involved in the Property Committee and his expertise in property matters has been of great value to us over the years. We also welcome Tim King to his first council position as Treasurer – taking the reins from one of the longest-serving members of Trinity's church council that we have had in our 75 year history (I believe Janice Prospero is the only one to serve longer and her 'record' is still being set!). We are happy to see Tim assume this role, but we would be remiss if we didn't acknowledge the enormous effort Bruce Hasch has put forth during his impressive tenure as our Treasurer. As I am sure every one of you who has served on council over the years knows, if you have a question you need answered, going to Bruce with it was always a good plan. You not only got the right answer, but you usually got details on the who, what, when, how much and why as well! Bruce has helped to keep our books for more than 20 years and he sets the bar for volunteer work at an impressively high level. Bruce has been working with Tim for more than a year to allow for a seamless transition, but there is no mistaking the fact that Bruce will be missed on council. Please join me in thanking Bruce for his tireless efforts. In fact, you are all encouraged to join us for Bruce's last Annual Congregational Meeting as our Treasurer this January 31st. Our Youth Program is planning to host a chili lunch after the second service, and we will conduct the annual meeting immediately following this lunch. You're welcome to come to lunch and the annual meeting, but if you're only able to make it to lunch, you're welcome to do that as well. This will be one of several ways our youth will be raising funds for the 2016 Youth Gathering in the fall. We have a record 8 youth and 3 adults planning to attend this gathering this year in New Orleans, so we are planning a number of different ways in which our members will be able to support these youth to help defray the costs of attending this event.

This time of year is also a time when many resolutions are made (and most of them are usually broken not long after...). How about resolving to become more involved in Trinity in 2016? We have many active members, but there is always room for more. When you see a sign-up sheet for an event, try to make time to attend.

Fellowship with other members is a great way to strengthen the bond members have with one another and this is the type of thing you really can't overdo. Or maybe you have an idea that you think would improve our collective experience at Trinity. If so, fill out a suggestion form or see a member of church council about it. Trinity belongs to all of us, and the more active we are as a congregation, the better we will be over time. May we individually and collectively prosper in the new year.



The 2016 Church Council officers are as follows: Jeff McDonald, President; Kim Blecke, Secretary; Janice Prospero, Financial Secretary; Tim King, Treasurer; Bob Blecke and Phil MacFarlane, Co-Directors of Outreach; Dan Bay and Jeff Lorenz, Co-Directors of Property; Ed Tatro and Diane Sewing, Co-Directors of Spiritual Life; Jeanine Welsh, Director of Social Ministry; Judi Donovan, Director of Parish Education; Michelle Hoag, Director of Youth Ministry.



SCRIPTURE READERS

We are asking you to become involved in our worship services, without committing too much time! Just read The First and Second Lessons!! To do so, place your name on the Sunday you would like on the sheets in the hallway. The actual readings are available ahead of time and may be acquired by contacting Pastor or Doris at (815) 485-6973.



GEETERS

We come as friends, a family of believers, greeting one another with a warm welcome, thankful for the gifts of a community in which we can live out our relationship with God through our relationships with one another. There are sign-up sheets located on a table near the gym if you would like to extend a warm welcome to your fellow members and visitors.

Sign-up sheets for Readers and Greeters are on the hallway table. Please take a turn and sign up.



Thank You! Christmas services require the work of a lot of people. Some get their names in the bulletin. Many do not. We could try and list them, but inevitably, we would miss someone. So, whether you came and helped set up the tree, folded bulletins, swapped out candles, ushered, set up communion, cleaned up after communion, set up flowers, donated flowers, sang or played an instrument, a very warm and heartfelt THANK YOU! May the love that you showed be reflected back to you a thousand times over in the year to come.



Thanks to the Youth Group, and “their helpers”, for setting up and decorating the Christmas tree in the church. Did you notice the new Christmas wreaths beside the altar and on the balcony, along with the greenery on the sconces? These are new items which the Chancel purchased this year. Thank you to the Chancel Guild for the beautiful Christmas additions.



Thank you to the following people who donated the poinsettia plants which adorned the Chancel for Christmas: Duncan and Allene Bachmann, Denise and Bob Buchanan, Janet DeForest, Edna DeLair, Jack and Lois Dobbs, Bob and Tammy Doerrer, Gail Edgar, Paul and Pat Fuerst, Betty Hopkinson, Tom and Wendy Kaun, Jeff and Sharon Lorenz, Phil and Sharon MacFarlane, Marge Dykstra, Al McCullough, Larry and Debbie Miller, Jennifer Mudrock, Gary and Kay Purnell, Jackie and Rich Rohner, Bob and Ann Romadka, Doug and Jan Schlak, Steve and Cindy Spies, Bob and Chris Stark, Steve and Rita Tinker, Rex and Jan Toepke, Ed and Judy VanderVeen, Betty Dunn, The Wheeler Family.



If you have not purchased a 75th Anniversary Christmas Ornament, you still have time. The cost is \$15.00 each and they are on the counter in the church office. Proceeds will go toward our organ and lift fund.



2016 Offering Envelopes boxes are in the table in the hallway. Please pick yours up to save the church the expense of mailing it! 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 it in Janice Prospero’s church mailbox. You may also contact Janice at 815.485.3558 or call the church office at 815.485.6973. Request forms are on the table in the hallway. Also, members who desire to discontinue use of envelopes, please contact Doris or Janice.



We are looking for someone who knows how to set up the scanner on our copier. If you are able to help us out, please contact Doris or call the office at 815.485.6973.

Annual Congregational Meeting



All members are invited to attend this meeting on Sunday, January 31st which will begin at approximately 12:15 p.m.



The Youth Group will be offering a chili and hot dog lunch starting at 11:30 am, just prior to the Annual Meeting. This is a fundraiser to help them raise money to attend the National Youth Gathering in July. To help them determine how much food to prepare, please sign up on the sign-up sheet on the hallway table.

If you are unable to attend the luncheon, we encourage you to come to the meeting. You do not have to sign up to attend the meeting. The 2016 Budget will be presented as well as highlights and recaps from the various organizations for 2015.



Youth – Junior High and High School Students

Christmas Tree Undecorating - Sunday, January 3, 1:30 p.m. - Junior High and High School students please come to help take down the church Christmas tree. If there's enough time, we'll play the game Romans and Christians afterwards. If you have leftover tissue paper, bring it to help wrap the ornaments for storage. Also bring old towels to wash off the outdoor manger pieces.



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. To request a prayer, please call Pat Fuerst at 815.485.6441. If you are interested in being part of the Prayer Chain, or would like more information please give Pat a call. Please consider being part of this worthwhile endeavor. You can make a difference.

2016 National Youth Gathering Fundraisers



Culver's Night - Tuesday, January 12, 4-8 p.m. - Come out to Culver's in New Lenox (by Walmart) and the youth will help serve your meal and receive a percentage of the proceeds!



Annual Meeting/Chili Lunch - Sunday, January 31, 11:30 a.m. - Youth will be serving a chili and hot dog lunch before the annual meeting on Jan. 31 following the late church service. Come eat with us and then learn what our church has accomplished this past year and what plans we have for the coming year.



Super Bowl Subs - Later this month, youth will be taking orders for sub sandwiches which you can pick up on Super Bowl Sunday, February 7.



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 filling out an order form (located by the youth bulletin board) or by placing your order online at shopwithscrip.com. If interested in placing orders online, you will need an enrollment code. Ask Angie Minett for the code or stop by the church office. Our next deadline for turning in orders along with payments is [Monday Jan. 18th at noon](#). The cards will be ready for pick-up at church the following weekend (Jan 23rd & 24th). Direct any questions you may have to Angie Minett at minett411@yahoo.com or [\(815\)467-2537](tel:8154672537).

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



CHOIR. Thanks to the choir for the beautiful singing and music in our regular church services, as well as the Christmas services. The choir meets on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 p.m. and are always looking for additional voices. The choir will be on a Christmas break for a couple weeks but will resume on Wednesday, January 13th.



Preschool Registration for the school year beginning

September 2016. Trinity members get priority registration and may register now through December 31st. Already enrolled students may register the first two weeks in January. Registration for new students will begin the third week of January. If you know of anyone who falls into one of these categories, please have them call the pre-school at 815.485.6973. There is a non-refundable registration fee of \$60.00 per student. The tuition per month for the school year beginning September 2016, will be \$105 for two day students and \$130 for three day students. Children must have turned 3 by September 1, 2016. For further information, please call Trinity Lutheran Church at 815 485 6973.

The next Prechool Board meeting is **Sunday, January 17th at 11:30 a.m.**



CHANCEL GUILD The next meeting is **Monday, January 4th at 6:30 p.m.** Hostesses are Denise Buchanan and Doris Klemm. All ladies of Trinity are welcome to attend and/or join the Chancel Guild. For more information please contact Denise Buchanan, President at 815.485.2729.



The 2016 Flower Chart is up in the hallway across from the church office with many opportunities for you to place flowers on the altar, if you wish. Just complete the order form which is attached to the charge box, and place it on the Chancel Guild mailbox in the church office or place it on the Secretary's desk. For more information, please contact Christine Stark at 815.478.4069 or email her at candb.stark@gmail.com. The cost is \$17.00 for two vases. Flowers may be picked up after the 10:30 a.m. Sunday service.

WOMEN'S LEAGUE



The next meeting will be **Tuesday, January 26th at 12:30 p.m.** Pastor Hoag will be our speaker. Hostesses will be Karen Dickson and Cheryl Mork. All ladies are invited to join. For more information, please call Pat Fuerst at 815.485.6441.

The annual Cookie Walk, their only fundraiser, was a huge success. Thank you to all the bakers, shoppers and workers. The proceeds will be used for special needs of the Church and local charities.

SOCIAL MINISTRY

MorningStar. What a wonderful, caring congregation Trinity is! Thanks to all the shoppers, who so willingly and carefully selected and wrapped \$80.00 worth of gifts for ten (10) MorningStar children. Thanks, also, for the generous donations at the Giving Tree which has been given to MorningStar. Thanks to Kim Standard and Jen DePolo for chairing the residents' gift project; thanks to Laurie Wajchert for gift shopping, also; and to Sue Kunce and Midge Meents for chairing the tree donation collections.

The next Social Ministry meeting will be **Monday, January 11th at 7:00 p.m. at church.** We will begin working on the Sole Hope project. All ladies of Trinity are invited to join this group. We are always open to new faces and new ideas. If you have any questions please call the church office at 815.485.6973.



SOLE HOPE is Social Ministry's new outreach project. Many African children are infected with jiggers, small sand fleas that enter bare feet and burrow into the skin. If left untreated, jiggers become a huge problem, leading to infections, paralysis, amputation, and in some cases, death. The shoe parts we cut out will be sent to Uganda and made into shoes for children there who are in need. **Sole Hope** also provides work to those who sew the shoe parts together, thereby supporting families. No seamstress experience needed but we will need participants to trace and cut out the shoe parts from old blue denim jeans. You will also have the opportunity to make a small free will donation to cover cost of shipping and to pay the tailors and shoemakers in Uganda a fair wage. For more information on this project please visit www.solehope.org. Please watch the upcoming weekly church bulletins for more details.

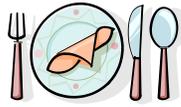


Social Ministry is making plans for another pizza sale. Watch the upcoming bulletins for more details.



Thank you to all the volunteers who have been serving as hosts for the coffee hour after the 8:00 a.m. service each week.

Once again, we are in need of someone, or several people, to host the 4th Sunday of the month. A sign-up sheet for 2016 is on the hallway table. Please sign up for the months that you are able to help.



MorningStar Serving Dates

Our congregation has been helping with the serving at MorningStar for a long time. Thank you to everyone who has helped with this project. New volunteers are always welcome. Serving dates are the 1st and 3rd Mondays of each month at 3:45 p.m. We need 4 volunteers at each serving. **If you plan to go please sign ahead of time, so we know how many people will show up.** The January sign-up sheet is on the hall table. Please contact Jan Falk with any questions at 815.423.6414 or call the church office at 815.485.6973.



BLOOD DRIVE

Thank you to everyone who donated the much needed blood on December 14th. We had a great turnout! Your donation is very much appreciated. Thanks, once again, to Deb Aiken for coordinating this drive.



A couple reminders

Trinity is now wheelchair accessible. The lift is up and running. The fifth pew from the front on the right side has been removed, to allow room for wheelchairs. Anyone who wishes to use the lift should use the entrance on the South side of church.

The weekly bulletin insert lists the upcoming events at Trinity. Be sure to take your insert home with you.

If you have had any changes in your name, address, phone, or email, please complete the Update Form on the table outside the church office. Please place it on the desk in the church office.



There are several tins, trays and baking dishes on the counter in the gym kitchen. Please check and if any of these items are yours, please take them home.

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



Wishing everyone a blessed and healthy 2016!