

November 2012

Dear Friends of Trinity,

I'm writing this as the dreaded Frankenstorm is battering the East Coast. A storm that floods lower Manhattan, NYC is cause to take notice. This is one powerful storm that I imagine will make the history books. We're supposed to feel its effects later on.

Natural disasters have always given me the impression that our planet is trying to kill us all! I know that that isn't true, but it's just something that lingers in the back of my mind. If Earth really wanted all of us dead we would be gone by now, I would think. But we go on. Babies are still being born.

I've been struck recently by the realization of the fragility of life. It's not something I think about often. Unfortunately, things have to happen before I'm startled back to reality. The recent loss of the 9-year-old daughter of a friend really reminded me of how brief and fleeting this life of ours really is.

We have a God who gave up His only Son, Jesus, and suffered loss as His beloved was nailed to a cross and buried in a cave. For three days Jesus' body was left there in the tomb. Three days of grief. But that sad time was temporary. God raised Jesus to life and gave hope to the world!

We really have much to be thankful for. It might not seem like it many times as we go through periods of feeling the weight of tremendous grief and loss. But even in those times there are hidden blessings to be found. In fact, blessings are all around us if we open our eyes to them. And the greatest blessing during dark times is that there's always hope. Let's be thankful for hope!

I wish all of you a very Blessed and Happy Thanksgiving!

In Christ,

Pastor Hoag

NOVEMBER 2012

There were so many activities going on in October, we decided to “hold the presses” so we could bring the updates on those events in this newsletter, rather than in December’s. So, reporting chronologically:

The Salad Luncheon: Chancel wants to thank Women’s League for providing those lovely desserts. They made for a well-balanced meal. ☺ It was, as usual, wildly successful.

The Hayride: Social Ministry yell “THANKS” for all the participation and food donations. In spite of the mud, rain, and horrific winds, 29 persons enjoyed the attractions and hot dog lunch.

Concert for India/ Ice Cream Social: The concert saw 60 concert-goers and 45 stayed on for ice cream and donated “goodies” and drinks.

Mission India itself netted over \$4,000 for this worthwhile cause.

The Craft/Vendor Fair on 10/27: Thank you to everyone who attended and volunteered at the Craft and Vendor Fair. We had another successful year and raised a good portion of the cost for our youth to attend the National Youth Gathering next year in San Antonio. Congratulations to all who won raffle prizes!

Following Women’s League meeting on 10/30, guess what appears? Yep, the cookie walk trays!

More information on some of these items will appear in each group’s area of the newsletter, but for those of you in a hurry, there are your “sound bytes.”

SOCIAL MINISTRY:

MorningStar Christmas Gift Giving: Once again, our congregation will supply Christmas gifts, labeled “needs” and “wishes” for 6 MorningStar patrons. Ginny DeCarlo has names and pertinent information for your choosing this Sunday, **11/6**. All gifts must be marked, wrapped, and returned to the church by **12/2**.

The Holiday Giving Tree will be in place by **11/6**, with all monetary donations to be sent on **12/18**.

MorningStar has submitted a lengthy call for volunteers to help with their various holiday activities, beginning in early November. Please take a moment to peruse the list posted on the office bulletin board to learn if you’ll be able to assist in any activity.

Virgil Switzer’s October greeting card is on its’ way; the November card is on the coffee table, awaiting your notations. Please remember to add Virgil’s name to your Christmas amblings, if possible. His address labels are available on the coffee table.

St. Matthew’s: The food and rummage deliver to St. Matthew’s will be made in mid-November, in time for their Thanksgiving dinner, serving 125-150 patrons. Please add your food donations to the hall collection to help this most needy and worthy charity.

Christmas Party: Our 12th annual Christmas celebration, complete with pizza supper, children’s games and prizes, Dino Jump and caroling will begin at 5:30 on Sunday, **12/2**. Sign-up sheets

for salad, dessert and drink donations, along with a list of those planning to attend will be posted on the hall table. We look forward to seeing you there.

Food collection: During Thanksgiving service, non-perishable foods will be collected for the New Lenox food pantry.

Butter Braids: Orders are being taken now through **11/18** with delivery on **12/4**. Price is \$12 each and order forms are on the sign-up table. If you have never indulged, these are wonderful to have in your freezer to bake up as special treats. Flavor choices: Almond Crème, Apple, Bavarian Crème w/ Chocolate Icing, Blueberry and Cream Cheese, Caramel Roll w/ Caramel Glaze, Cherry, Cinnamon, Cream Cheese, Raspberry and Strawberry and Cream Cheese.

Social Ministry meeting is **11/19** at Midge's at 7 pm. All are welcome.

WOMEN'S LEAGUE:

The Annual Cookie Sale is coming **12/1!!!!** The trays for your comestibles will appear the first weekend in November. There will also be two tables at the back of the gym in which to place your donations for resale. This can be gently used items or decorations. Children love to shop here for inexpensive gifts. Baked goods for the cookie sale can be dropped off Friday, **11/30** or Saturday **12/1**. Watch the bulletin or website for the times, please.

Cookie Walk setup will be on Friday **11/30** with lunch served at noon.

Salem Stocking Stuffers List:

Crossword books	Hats	Socks
Alarm clocks	Markers	Perfumes
Blankets	Tissues	Powder
Calendars	Wallets	Checkers
Pen/pencil sets	Watches	Movies
Electronic Games	Tags	Bibles
Note Cards	Frames	Ribbons
Slippers w/soles	Bows	Lap Desk
Scarves/mittens	Hosiery	

Christmas Luncheon will be on **12/11**.

CHANCEL:

November's Meeting will be held on **11/5** at 6:30 with Hostesses: Sharon MacFarlane and Rita Larson.

11/3-4	Sharon MacFarlane/ Doris Klemm
11/10-11	Doris Klemm/ Kay Purnell
11/17-18	Kay Purnell/Ann Romadka
Thanksgiving	Ann Romadka/ Jeri Sandt
11/24-25	Jeri Sandt/Christine Stark

Chancel wishes to thank the congregation, family and friends that took part in this year's Salad Luncheon. It was a rousing success. Thank you also to the ladies of Women's League for their

generous donations of dessert items. It made for a very balanced meal! Thank you to all the ladies of Chancel who contribute to this delicious event year after year.

SUNDAY SCHOOL/YOUTH NEWS:

Food Pantry Collection - We are asking Sunday School students to bring canned and boxed foods during the month of November to donate to the food pantry.

Fall Harvest Family Event - All Sunday School families are invited to join us for our fall event on Sunday, **November 18, 2:00 p.m.** We will have games, activities, and refreshments for all ages in the gym to mark the finale of our food pantry collection.

Christmas Program - The Christmas Program will be on Sunday, **December 16 @ 10:30 service** this year and we will begin practicing in November. All Sunday School children will be singing and speaking. Also, children who have been playing a band or orchestra instrument for at least one year are invited to play in the program. Please let your child's Sunday School teacher know if they would like to play.

YOUTH NEWS - The junior high and high school youth are invited to a lock-in starting at 7:00 p.m. on Friday, **November 23**. Pick-up will be 7:00 a.m. on Saturday. Sign up on the youth board and pick up a permission form in the church office.

MORNINGSTAR SERVING DATES:

Our MorningStar serving dates for November are **11/5** and **11/19** at 3:45 pm. Once again, we will have the Mugs for MorningStar campaign if you wish to get a head start. Mugs (with change) can be dropped off in the office. We will make weekly runs to the bank beginning in December.

TPCG:

The portable crafting group is going to meet on **11/9** from 5-11 pm. 2 sheets of snow paper will be provided for any snow pictures or snow crafting themes you may have in mind. Pinterest has some interesting ideas: coasters, picture frames, to name a few. Bring your craft, \$2, and a snack to share and come enjoy an evening of fellowship and fun. We will not be meeting in December.

Financial Secretary's and Treasurer's 3rd Quarter Report:

The congregation adopted a 2012 General Fund Budget of \$193,269 at its Annual Meeting on January 29. The Budget is 2.2% higher than contributions made to the General Fund in 2011. The Council deemed the increase warranted to cover expected higher operating costs. A modest salary increase of 2% was granted to Pastor, the Secretary, Organist and Choir Director. Primary support of the General Fund by the congregation is very important to meeting Trinity's ongoing needs.

During the quarter, all due bills were paid. Operating expenses for utilities were considerably lower than budgeted. General Fund receipts were about 3% above those received during the same period last year. A \$5,000 contribution was received from Preschool to be applied toward

ongoing church maintenance and operating expenses. The church is up to date on its pledges for LCMS Missions and LCCF. The condensing unit in one air conditioner was replaced in July, creating an unexpected expense. The balance on the original \$100,000 mortgage, used to finance the new restrooms, was \$23,934.33 at September 30. We want to thank everyone for their support of Trinity Lutheran Church and its missions. If you have any questions, please contact Jan Prospero, Financial Secretary, or Bruce Hasch, Treasurer.

ENVELOPES:

Members who have not received offering envelopes in the past and would like to request them for the year 2013, please, fill out a request with your name, address, and telephone number and give it to Kim, Church Secretary, or place in Janice Prospero's church mailbox. Request sheets will be on the table in the hallway soon. You may also contact Janice at 815 485-3558.

FREE TO BE FAITHFUL FAQs FROM SYNOD:

Q: What is religious liberty?

A: Religious liberty is the right to live, practice and worship according to one's religious beliefs. It is a liberty guaranteed by the First Amendment of the US Constitution.

Q: Is our religious freedom really being threatened?

A: Nearly two centuries ago, the founders of the Missouri Synod came to the US seeking religious freedom. Like immigrants from many nations and many faiths, they found that freedom under the First Amendment of our US Constitution. Today, however, that precious freedom is being eroded, and we must speak out now to preserve the right to live- not just worship – according to the teachings of our faith.

Religious Liberty: Free to be Faithful was created as a response by LCMS leaders to increasing intrusions by government into the realm of the church. Recent examples of such intrusion include requirements that social service agencies with governmental contracts consider same-sex couples as potential foster care and adoptive parents, even if such practices violate church teachings under which the agencies operate.

The tipping point was the inclusion of a provision in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), also known as the health-care reform act, requiring the health plans of many religious employers to cover birth control drugs and procedures, including those that can cause the death of an unborn child. This provision is causing a conflict of conscience for many religious employers and individuals.

It is important to note that the LCMS takes no position on the PPACA as a whole, for that is a matter for the government, not churches, to decide. Our concern as Lutheran Christians and citizens of the US, is to distinguish carefully between responsibilities God entrusts to the church (e.g., Romans 13:1-6; 1 Peter 2:13-14). As a Christian church, our concern at this time is to retain the freedom to put our faith into action, backing up our verbal witness to the Gospel with deeds of love and compassion that are obedient to God's Word. At the same time, as Christian citizens, we accept our responsibility to support with prayer, respect and taxes the work that government seeks to accomplish.

Q: What can I do?

A: Because we are on the cusp of national, state, and local elections, the LCMS encourages all members to follow their consciences and sound reason in supporting candidates, legislation,

and social and political efforts they believe would improve society and safeguard our precious religious liberty.

Here are some things you can do:

Pray for our country, for our president and other officials, for those who serve in the armed forces, and for all those who work to preserve freedom, peace and justice in this and every place. (1 Timothy 2:1-2)

Educate yourself about the many issues that our country is facing and the positions of parties and candidates.

As you gain further knowledge on the issues, participate fully in the political process, and let your representatives know that these issues are important to you.

Engage in informed, respectful discussions with friends and family, always being prepared to give an account for the sure and certain hope of eternal life through faith in Christ Jesus – a hope that no earthly event or power can undermine. (1 Peter 3:15)

Be sure to exercise your right to vote!

Q: Is this something the church should be speaking about? What about the doctrine of the two kingdoms?

A: Lutherans affirm Scripture's teaching that God rules and works in two different ways in different "realms" or "kingdoms." God rules and works in His church through His Word and Sacraments, through which He creates and strengthens faith in Jesus Christ and love for one's neighbor. God rules and works in the world He created and in secular human societies through earthly authorities and laws. Human laws benefit society when they reflect both the law that He inscribed onto the human heart and His gift of human reason.

As Christian citizens, we are called to fulfill the duties of citizenship. It is our responsibility as individual Christians to participate as fully as possible in the political system according to consciences formed by God's Holy Spirit. While the church is not called by God to exercise political authority, it is incumbent for the church to proclaim and bear witness to the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27b ESV) The "whole counsel" includes God's will in such areas as care for the poor, marriage and family, sexuality and the preservation of human life at all stages of development. The discussion of such issues in the public realm offers Christians a unique opportunity for careful reflection on God's will and design as they seek also to be responsible Christian citizens.

Q: I would like to learn more about this. Where can I find more information?

A: Visit www.lcms.org/freetobefaitful to get more information.

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Andrea Farneti	1		
Debbie Aiken	3	Michelle Hoag	24
Nicholas Myers	3	Marge Dykstra	25
Anna Marie Pigney	3	Kayla Baggs	26
Jana King	4	Paul Eichhorn	27
Rob Romadka	4	Amanda Koehler	27
Jaynie Olsen	6	Jennifer Mudrock	27
Stuart Renwick	6	Isabela Opiola	28
Bill Studer	6	Steven Tinker	28
Delaney DePolo	7	John DeForest	30
Ellen Guenther	7	Melissa Gappa	30
Joshua Baxa	9		
Jennifer Paul	9		
Jacqueline Rohner	9		
Garrett Aiken	10		
Cody Grady	10		
Megan Harbin	11		
Layla Teare	11		
Sharon Cundari	12		
Michael Bay	13		
Jeffrey Baxa	13		
Lydia Friedrich	13		
Nick Varju	13		
Daniel Willenborg	13		
Linda Hubrich	15		
Jennifer Pfeifer	16		
Cheryl Baggs	17		
Kim Blecke	17		
Esmeralda Morales	18		
David DeForest	19		
Charles Domico	19		
Sydra Seville	20		
Jennifer Studer	20		
Kip Pavlovich	22		
Hunter Sherman	22		
Karen Lamoureux	23		
Suzanne Jablonski	24		

NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Bill and Sally Jackson	2
Adolf and Katharina Fandl	5
Troy and Christy Schultz	9
Matthew and Tina Taylor	9
Ken and Carol Oldendorf	13
John and Mary Farnetti	16
Dale and Noreen Bormet	20
James and Sandy Jeffries	23
Ed and Judy VanderVeen	25
Bill and Rosemarie Dudeck	28