

ANNUAL REPORT 2015

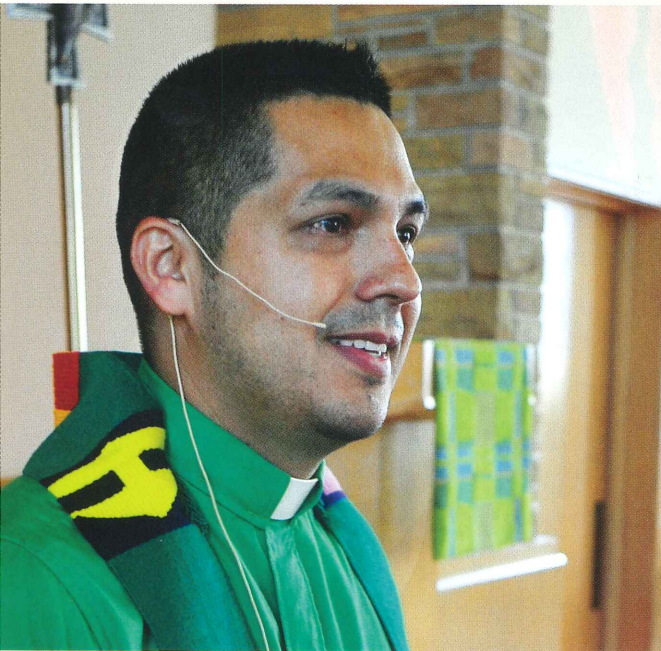


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FRANKLIN ISHIDA



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

A message from the presiding bishop



PHOTO BY MICHAEL WATSON

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is a church with a particular way of understanding the Jesus story. It is not a movement from unbridled freedom to submission, but a story of God redeeming us from sin, death and the devil. This redemption sets us free from our bondage to sin so that, liberated and alive, we may serve God by serving our neighbor. This service is not about our effort or goodness or hard work. It is about God's gracious will to be merciful.

As you review the work you have done this past year and make decisions for the year ahead, remember that we who were dead to sin have now been made alive to who we are: God's people. We engage in dialogue, discernment and action declaring God's work and bringing a clear voice to the public square. We respond to God's deep abiding love by making faithful choices about how to use the generous gifts of time, talent and financial resources entrusted to us.

Whenever you and your leaders engage in planning and decision-making, we are challenged to discern and model a different story from the one culture tells us. It is this much-needed story of love and faithfulness, forgiveness and joy, humility and resolve that shapes the ELCA's role in your community and the world.

Serving together in Christ's name,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Elizabeth A. Eaton". The script is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'E'.

Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Annual congregational meeting opening liturgy

LITANY

The love of God, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

Brothers and sisters, God calls each of us by name.

We are a church that belongs to Christ.

Recognizing the diversity among us, we are grounded in God's love and forgiveness to live and serve here and now.

We are a church whose unity is in Christ.

Young and old together, our life in Christ compels and empowers us to be open and accessible within any community, within any context.

We are a church that believes Jesus is God's "YES" to us.

Recognizing each of us has unique gifts and a unique story, we are part of a larger body and a larger story. Together, we achieve things we could not do alone.

We are a church that believes God is calling us into the world – together.

Skilled and unskilled, we do God's work together, restoring and reconciling communities. We pursue justice and seek peace no matter how long the journey or wide the chasm.

We are a church that rolls up our sleeves and gets to work.

Recognizing the differences of perspectives, personalities and practice, we commit to being a force for connecting people, faiths and organizations. We respect the perspectives and strengths of others and share a common vision to uphold human dignity.

We are a church that is a catalyst, convener and bridge builder.

Outspoken and soft-spoken, we continually strive for a deeper understanding of what the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ means in the world while being in the thick of life.

We are a church that is energized by lively engagement in our faith and life.

Recognizing our roots are in Scripture, tradition and the Lutheran Confessions, as well as the vibrant communities and rich history of our congregation, we are a church guided by the Holy Spirit that is both resilient and always being reformed.

We are a church that is deeply rooted in the gospel – and always being made new.

Let us pray: As we live into the church that we proclaim to be, fill us with hope as we engage in the work of serving you. Guide us that we may honor our missional heritage while opening our eyes to new ways of serving others. Steer our thoughts and words away from distraction and toward your will. In our deliberations keep us close to you and fill us with your Holy Spirit, so that we may serve you in the name of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

2015 Annual Meeting of Trinity Lutheran Church

Trinity Lutheran Church

A Stephen Ministry Church

2700 East Fulton, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506

616 949-2510, www.tlcgr.org

For all the saints who from their labors rest,
all who by faith before the world confessed.
Your name, O Jesus be forever blessed. Alleluia, Alleluia!"

The ministry of this congregation reflected in these reports is dedicated to those Trinity members listed below who entered the church triumphant in 2015:

Charlotte Joy Smith, ~ February 8, 2015

Robert Leslie Meyers, Sr., ~ February 26, 2015

Robert Emil Hanson, ~ March 22, 2015

Margaret Ann Steel, ~ April 5, 2015

Martin Lee Whittemore, ~ June 24, 2015

Laurel Jean Billings, ~ July 9, 2015

Eileen Elizabeth Krug, ~ September 11, 2015

Our Mission: Trinity Lutheran Church is a dynamic family called by God to nurture each other in our daily journeys of faith and to joyfully increase our response to all people in need, sharing God's gifts of love and grace.

**Trinity Lutheran Church
Grand Rapids, Michigan
2015 Annual Meeting Agenda - January 17, 2016**

1. **Call to Order**, Brad Blair, Congregation President
2. **Litany, Hymn, Scripture and Prayer**, Pastor Robert Linstrom
3. **Approval of Agenda**
4. **Approval of the January 18, 2015 Annual Meeting Minutes**
5. **Appointment of Tellers**
6. **Nominating Committee Report**
7. **Ballot for Council**
 - John Basher — second three year term
 - Paul Crist — first three year term
 - Gene Gunderson — first three year term
 - Wendy Johnson — first three year term
 - Emma Hall (youth member) — first one year youth term
8. **Ballot for Synod Assembly Delegates**
 - Sue Coates
 - Jim Coates
 - Jan Palm
 - Norm Palm
9. **Ballot for Nominating Committee for the 2017 Council Candidates**
 - Todd Brandstadt
 - Renee Fisk
 - Roger Marks
 - Bruce Youngman
10. **Review of Reports**
 - Pastors (pages 7-10)
 - President (page 11)
 - Staff and Committee Reports (listed alphabetically by committee name, pages 12-26)

11. Treasurer's Report and Presentation of the 2016 Budget, (pages 27-30), John Basher, Congregation Treasurer

12. New Business

- Proposal for a Capital Campaign in 2016

"I present a motion to spend \$60,000 plus expenses not to exceed \$20,000 to hire Walsh and Associates to conduct pacesetter and capital campaigns during 2016 for the purpose of securing pledges for the Trinity Lutheran Church building campaign."

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13. Announcements, Lord's Prayer and Benediction, Pastors Bob Linstrom and Jonathan Reid

14. Adjournment

The Annual Meeting of Trinity Lutheran Church—January 18, 2015

The meeting was called to order by President, Brad Blair at 1:25pm following a potluck dinner. Angela Davis was recognized for coordinating the luncheon with vigorous applause.

Pastor Bob led the gathered in an opening service of Dialogue & Prayer to celebrate the partnership we have with God in his unfolding promise.

Agenda for 1/18/15: Motion to approve by Michael Mulligan, 2nd by Neil Sendler, passed.

Minutes of January 26, 2014 Annual meeting minutes: Motion to approve by Fred Wilcox, 2nd by Todd Brandstadt, passed.

Appointment of Tellers: Renee Fisk, John Fox, John Basher. Counted 147 voting members present, which exceeds the quorum required for the meeting to take place.

Amendments and addition to the Constitution and Bylaws: Motion to approve by Renee Fisk, 2nd by Michael Mulligan, passed.

Note: this is the second congregational vote on these changes, as required by the constitution.

Nominating Committee: Floor was open to nominations, but none made. **Motion to approve nominated slate of candidates** by Nadene Delana, 2nd by Sheryl VanderBaan, passed.

Council members elected:

Dan Babin – 1st three year term

Brad Blair – 2nd three year term

Mikaela Bradley – 2nd one-year youth term

Brenda Heacock – 1st three year term

Tess Lundgren – 1st three year term

Michael Mason – 1st three year term

Rick Radke – 1st three year term

Synod Assembly Voting Members & Nominating Committee for 2016 Council Candidates: Motion to close nominations and vote for all submitted candidates by Jim Coates, 2nd by Beth O'Connor, passed

Synod Assembly Voting Members: Lynn and Paul Getzin, Michael Mulligan, Marcia Schaner

Nominating Committee (includes current President and Vice President):

Todd Brandstadt, Renee Fisk, Roger Marks, Bruce Youngman

Review of Reports – Pastors, President, Staff & Committee Reports: Received by unanimous vote.

Treasurer's Report & Presentation of 2015 Budget: Motion to approve by Dave Smoes, 2nd Doug Haneline, passed.

Notes from Treasurer Basher: overall revenue increase based on increase year-over-year in pledges received. Stewardship was over budget due to new envelope program and costs of stewardship brunch; Property committee incurred large snow removal costs due to unusually snowy winter; office administration costs were higher due to new time clock, enterprise licensing, and net work support; capital reserves were intentionally increased due to higher than expected revenue; insurance costs for employees is increased by \$16,000 this year; we have a \$57,000 balance in capital reserves, which is not very high for a building our size, but we are attempting to grow it.

Discussion items included: while the day care program was not intended to be revenue-producing, it generated \$5,000 in revenue this year and is expected to generate about \$12,000 in 2015; synod mission support is based on 10% of budgeted revenue; some budget lines (youth and family, for example) were reduced because they have access to designated funds to continue specific programs; leases are for copier and postage machine; health care is currently through Portico through the ELCA – it is not known whether any part of it can be “shopped out” to other carriers; the lantern (stained glass feature above the altar) broken glass is a maintenance issue that we can cover using current property funds so doesn’t need to be part of any fund raising program; difference between “dedicated” funds and “endowment” funds was answered; there is some confusion as to why certain lines are carried as Liabilities on the balance sheet (e.g. value of building) and Basher promised to change that for next year.

New Business:

Proposal to adopt the continuing resolution to establish a mission endowment fund committee. Motion by Cindy Zientarski, 2nd by Peter McKinney, passed.

Presented by Todd Brandstadt, Endowment Fund Steering Committee: Section C5.05 of the constitution details how endowments are to be handled. Committee worked to bring clarity and transparency to endowment fund handling. For 2014, the committee recommended to Congregation Council that \$15,000 be distributed. The Council voted to distribute that amount and give the Outreach Committee the authority to allocate it as part of their budgeted and other designated benevolence distributions.

The continuing resolution would provide for an ongoing Mission Endowment Committee to be comprised of the congregation’s treasurer, finance committee chair, pastor, and three at large members without terms. In addition, there could be “advisory members.” The current endowment balance of \$413,000 comes from gifts from primarily four families. This is very low for a congregation our size and the committee will work to promote this giving option in the future.

Discussion items included: distributions are limited to those outside operating expenses in order for them to extend the mission of the congregation – there is opportunity to set up other endowments, such as capital endowment funds, etc.; there are no term limits on three at-large members in order to provide for continuity since other members do have terms.

Report on the assessment of the Trinity cross tower. No action required.

Notes from Fred Wilcox, Property Committee: presented overview of problem with cross tower. It was designed to “weep” but at some point in the past, it was painted to cover up the stains from the weeping, which sealed it. The result was that that it held water which rusted out the fasteners that held the outer limestone to the concrete and steel structure. The limestone has been crumbling and a temporary protective fence has been installed to keep people from being hit by pieces as they fall and plywood has been applied to the roof below to keep that from being damaged.

Owen Ames Kimball Company (OAK), a local construction management firm, presented the property committee with seven options, including demolishing the tower and several options to reface it. The cost estimates range from \$100,000 (not including scaffolding or damage repair costs) to \$603,000.

There was a lengthy discussion on this topic, which Fred, Pastor Bob and Brad responded to with assistance from other members of the property committee. Owen-Ames-Kimball estimated that a solution involving removal and refacing the tower would take an entire summer; demolition of the tower would most likely do a significant amount of damage to the surrounding area – garden, columbarium, roof, etc.; whatever choice

we make, we need to be prepared for significant periodic maintenance costs; safety is not an issue with the temporary precautions we have made, so nothing needs to be done immediately. Pastor Bob advised that this decision should be part of a larger building project that would include other building changes we want to make in order to meet our growing needs and also rolling into this the outstanding parking lot debt.

Proposal to authorize the search for architectural support for master plan development and for securing the services of a church fund raising consultant: Motion to accept by Peter McKinney, 2nd Jim Coates, Call for Question, passed.

Notes from presenters: Rob Ferguson & Roger Marks presented background for the need to engage planning professionals. Rob presented five points relevant to undertaking steps toward a master plan:

- Understanding who we are and want to be
- Seeing what we have
- Identifying our opportunities
- Aligning our priorities
- Committing to the vision by faith

The initial steps to implement a building plan that would serve TLC into the next 50 years were laid out:

1. Decide to develop a Master Plan for TLC (Architects and engineers will help us understand the current condition of our facilities and develop a master plan to support our mission and vision.)
2. Invite firms to submit a response to an RFP (request for proposal) for master planning and facilities assessment.
3. Review and rank proposals
4. Interview multiple firms based on a successful response to the RFP
5. Select a firm and recommend to the congregation we negotiate/accept their proposal
6. Secure the services of a church fund raising consultant to help us understand TLC's capacity to invest in our facilities

Discussion notes: Plan will probably be for existing footprint (approximately 35,000 square feet). If approved, we could start work on this now, but no contracts will be signed or money expended without further action by congregation; there may be some changes to the "Building for the next 50 years" committee to convert it to a building committee; a 3-part plan will include fund raising for tower solution, building improvements and parking lot debt; the capital consulting firm would be started about 20% of the way into the architectural firm work on the master plan development.

Announcements by Pastor Bob

Lord's Prayer by all; benediction by Isabelle McKinney.

Meeting adjourned at 3:15pm: motion to adjourn by Fred Wilcox, 2nd by Amy Stephan, passed.

Respectfully submitted, Carrie Wygmans, Council Secretary



Report of the Senior Pastor to the Congregation

Trinity Lutheran Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan

January 2016

May the Word that Mary brought to birth carry you into new and abundant life. Amen.

May the Word that Joseph cradled in his arms enfold you with love and strength. Amen.

May the Word that angels proclaimed in song bring harmony to our world. Amen.

*And the blessing of almighty God, the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you always. Amen.*

The Benediction offered during the season of Christmas names the infant Jesus as the very Word of God, evoking the opening verses of John 1. We who gather in worship some two millennia after the birth of the Messiah are called to be those who still bear the Word to an aching world, and those who seek to be the Word to others in our faith lives. Those who mentor children, feed the hungry, house the homeless, raise their voices in songs of praise, visit the sick and bring meals to the homebound are that Word enfleshed in our time, disciples of the Word brought to birth and cradled in his parents' arms long ago. Bearing the Word of God together, we seek to discern our Lord's mission for us as the people of Trinity Lutheran Church in Grand Rapids.

Three years ago on the day of Trinity's Annual Meeting I was introduced to the congregation as your candidate for the call to serve as Senior Pastor. Two months later I was among you in that office and preparing for Holy Week and Easter among the people of Trinity. You are now the church community I know, and pray for, and love.

I continue to be blessed by your warm welcome and by the goodness of a community of members and friends deeply engaged in sharing ministry together. A strong body of lay leaders joined with a committed staff continue to make for a wonderful body of partners with whom to share my ministry among you. It is good to be a pastor serving among the people of Trinity Lutheran Church.

A few highlights of my third year with you:

- continuing to embrace and support the benevolent outreach of this congregation as a mark of Trinity and her ministry; we continue to be a vibrant leader in the Grand Rapids community serving others in Christ's name through financial support and volunteer commitment even as we ponder a building project to care for our church building/mission center; Trinity offered financial benevolence through local agencies and our synod of \$246,976 in 2014
- giving thanks for new outreach/benevolence initiatives in 2015, including the 17,000 meals packed for "Kids Against Hunger," a good offering response to the Kindergarten Nutrition Program in Honduras and a "God's Work. Our Hands." Sunday outreach in September that had teams of Trinity members leaving worship to take on work projects throughout the city of Grand Rapids
- the completion of a Master Plan with the architects and engineers at Progressive AE, with a conceptual dream of how we could house our mission and ministry in the years ahead, followed by a tangible yearend congregational action to launch a building project with the remediation of the Cross Tower in the 2016 construction season

- completion of a Feasibility Study with our capital campaign consultants at Walsh and Associates, laying the groundwork for a capital campaign in the spring and fall of 2016
- continuing to engage in the weekly calendar of a busy parish and finding the rhythm of life at Trinity both challenging and most satisfying, even the in the midst of the four worship service “Sunday morning sprint”
- continuing to lead midweek Bible study and adult forum times on Wednesday mornings and evenings, gathering with as many as 75-80 some weeks in study and reflection in a variety of topical forums, including “Reformation Roots,” emerging theologians, a catechetical study on the Lord’s Prayer and the fall “End of Life” forums, and taking the role of lead teacher in the fall of 2015 with Trinity’s Confirmation ministry
- supporting the launch of a new Men’s Ministry at Trinity, with 45-55 turning out for the first two Men’s Breakfasts in 2015 with Mayor Heartwell and Bishop Satterlee as our inaugural Men’s Breakfast speakers
- helping welcome 49 new members into our life together with spring and fall New Members celebrations, in addition to a wonderful body of 18 newly baptized and 19 newly confirmed; we also gathered to celebrate the lives of 11 members who died in since All Saints Day in 2014, commending them to the peace that passes our understanding and life eternal with the saints who have gone before us
- joining with the people of Trinity in giving thanks for Pastor Sarah Stobie’s faithful ministry among this congregation and commending her to her new call in Pennsylvania, and likewise giving thanks for 17 years of service by our dedicated Facilities Director Jane Barsema as we celebrated her retirement in 2015; as we prepare to welcome a new Associate Pastor in the year ahead, we also give thanks for new members of the Trinity staff — Parish Nurse Linda Hine, Finance Assistant Ashlee Wetherington and Sexton Niki Ferguson along with our Interim Associate Pastor Jonathan Reid
- giving thanks for the music ministry of Dr. Elizabeth West as she stepped down from the organ bench to care for her life in family, and welcoming our own Larry Biser to the bench and to the role of Director of Music
- celebrating the successful first year offering of a June Arts and Music Camp by Larry and Diane Biser with support from Director of Children's Ministries Tim Van Der Bilt
- continuing to grow our with parish family in welcoming young children to Holy Communion, encouraging the renewed practice of fresh bread for Holy Communion and formalizing our open invitation to the sacrament
- continuing to encourage the growth of Trinity’s Mission Endowment Fund, and marking the seed gift to a new Building Endowment Fund
- celebrating with the people of Trinity my 30th ordination anniversary; the very kind and generous marking of that little milestone by the people of this congregation was exceptionally gracious
- growing in my participation with the wider ministerial and other community initiatives in the Grand Rapids area community, including serving with the Kauffman Institute's Year of Interfaith Service, the Professional Advisory Group that is working to support the development of Clinical Pastoral Education in the Spectrum Health community and with a new initiative entitled “Coming Together to be a Welcoming Community,” a 2016 project to provide a counter-narrative to the political news cycle in regard to refugee resettlement, in cooperation with Lutheran Social Services of Michigan and Bethany Christian Services

It is a privilege to serve as your Senior Pastor. I pray that the Christmas blessing I quoted them at the outset of this report provide a foundation for our shared ministry in 2016. Grace and peace to you all.

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Bob Linstrom, Senior Pastor



REPORT TO THE CONGREGATION
The Rev. Jonathan Reid, Interim Associate Pastor
January 17, 2016 – Epiphany II

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.
– Hebrews 13:8

+ + +

These words from the writer of the letter to the Hebrews have had a special place in my heart throughout the last several months. The unchanging nature of God's presence through Jesus Christ has served as a true word of hope and renewal in the midst of significant personal transitions in life. This verse has served as a wakeup on more than one occasion.

Over the last half-year or so, many things have changed for me and my family as I have migrated from one place to another. I pray that God's will always be done, but I confess the thoughts of what the future might bring have been ever-present in my mind. Moments of peace and joy have been interspersed with the fear of the unknown. It has been a ride, that is for sure, but it is the nature of how life works at times.

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As I have pondered these things, I have found comfort that, in many ways, my personal journey parallels that of the Congregation of Trinity at this time its history. In other words, I've been reminded that I am not alone.

Over the last six months, a lot of transition has gone on at Trinity. Pastor Sarah's departure to serve a new congregation has left a void that has been tangibly felt. The discernment of the future of Trinity through the extensive levels of thought, prayer, and discussion brought about by the planning and feasibility studies has brought a level of excitement about the future coupled with the appropriate concerns. Add to this the planning and preparation involved with the Call Committee and their task in preparing for a new Associate Pastor... it has been a ride, has it not?

Yet, this is the nature of life if we're honest. Change happens. We all know of it: whether we speak of anxieties of mind, body or spirit brought by illness, loss, career, family, or other life events; or if we speak of the happier changes in life brought upon by the goodness of a new arrival, the presence of children, or the countless small things that are tangibly good. We know change.

Knowing change, I believe, is one of the marks of a community of faith. Realizing that life is full of ups and downs is a part of who we are. As Christians, however, we have a different perspective. We know we have a constancy in life that surpasses all others – the absolute certainty of the presence of Jesus Christ in our midst always and forever. This binds us together, and it is not a secret. It is something to be told to all, for it is good news to a tired, weary world.

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Sisters and Brothers, this good news can work wonders and miracles! The Holy Spirit's ongoing action through each other can affect people in ways that we do not realize. Our presence can be that one reminder that things will be okay; that the presence of Jesus is real; and that we do have hope even when others do not.

It is foolish to say that having this trust in God is easy. Deeper down, we all have a tendency to place ourselves in God's dominion, believing that we can actually control everything, or perhaps do a better job. You see, managing the totality of life is God's job, not ours. No matter how hard we might try to manipulate things to our will, it is not within our scope to do so. Therefore, letting go and having absolute faith is very hard, perhaps nearly impossible, to do.

Yet, this is precisely why we have each other as a family of God. When we say that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" we speak of the nature of God's constant, unchanging presence in our lives. God has the power to adapt, but it is hard for us. God knows this, so God promises to remain with us.

The greatest wonder and mystery and sign of grace is that God manages to provide this presence through you and me! It is *our* presence in the midst of another's pain, and *our* celebration along with another's that reveals God's everlasting love and presence through Christ. It is this constancy and witness that reveals the action of Holy Spirit, and it is working within our midst, I feel certain of that.

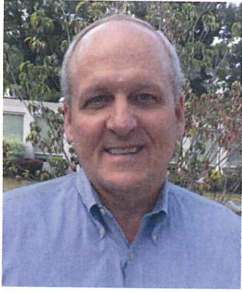
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I feel so blessed to serve amongst you as Interim Associate Pastor, for this community has been a real witness of God's presence to me and my family. Working with Pastor Linstrom and the entire staff and watching the work of the Holy Spirit in worship, music, programs and people is a wondrous thing. It is a healing thing, and it truly is a reminder that God's presence is near in every way. Thank you for allowing me to witness this grace.

The future of Trinity still awaits to unfold. I can say without hesitation, though, that God has it under control, and he is working great things in our midst! Pastor Bob and the entire staff are motivated by the call of Christ and encouraged by the people of Trinity; a competent and caring leadership takes its role with a humble but engaging attitude; and so many people bear witness to God's presence and action. All of this is bound together in Jesus Christ. These are good signs of hope, promise, and future.

It is a privilege to be a part of Christ's work in this place! My prayers remain constant that God's guiding hand shall lead us all individually and as a Church into the future. May our Lord give us the courage and wisdom to pursue that which unfolds ahead.

Servant of Christ,
+ Pastor Jonathan



President's Report 2015 – Trinity Lutheran Church

Brothers and Sisters in Christ –

I continue to request your prayers for God's guidance and His will to be done through the good men and women serving as your Congregation Council members. As current President of your Council, I am overjoyed and sometimes overwhelmed by how active Trinity is. Our congregation continues to demonstrate the love of Christ both within and outside of our walls in numerous ways. And in 2015 we've done so while undergoing substantial transition in our pastoral and professional staff.

Here are listed just some of these many activities:

- Conducted and completed a Master Development Plan for Trinity with Progressive AE
- Conducted and completed a Capital Campaign feasibility study with Walsh & Associates to better understand our ability to raise funds for existing and future building maintenance and potential improvements and expansion
- Established a new Building Endowment Fund to go along with our well-established Mission Endowment Fund
- Held an inaugural Art & Music Camp with 38 youth attending
- Welcomed Parish Nurse, Linda Heine
- Welcomed Mikaela Bradley and Taylor Sytsma as our youth and young adult Congregation Council Members
- Welcomed Nikki Ferguson as our part time Sexton
- Welcomed Ashlee Wetherington as our part time Finance Assistant
- Welcomed interim part-time Pastor Jonathan Reid
- Promoted Larry Biser as our Director of Music and also adding Organist to his list of duties
- Established a "Call Committee" to begin the work of evaluating candidates for our open Associate Pastor position
- Established a "Trinity Men's Group"

As we move into 2016 a major focus will continue to be the on-going care of our building and infrastructure. Whether to move forward on a building expansion and/or renovation project will be an all congregation decision. And if we move forward the subsequent questions will be "how much" and "what" to do initially. In our Congregational meeting on December 13th we took a first step by voting to repair our Cross Tower and to begin this work in 2016. This is the first of many significant decisions before us. As we continue to make these difficult decisions, I pray that we do so for God's glory. And knowing that we may not always completely agree, I also pray that we "agree to disagree" in a positive and loving way as taught by Christ, our Savior.

Your brother in Christ,

Brad Blair

Brad Blair

Congregation Council President

Colossians 3: 12 – 17

¹²Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Trinity Benevolence Preliminary Report - 2015

Praise God for the blessings Trinity members continue to share with others!

Thank you to all of you who so generously made financial contributions as well as gifts-in-kind and too many volunteer hours to count. Trinity is a very giving congregation in so many ways!



From Trinity's Mission Endowment Fund, the 2015 distribution for benevolence totaled \$15,400.00. After careful consideration, the members of the Outreach Committee made the following decisions regarding the organizations that would benefit financially from these one-time gifts:

Michigan CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) - \$5,000.00

Missions India - \$3,000.00

Honduras Health for Life - \$3,000.00

Salvation Army Congregational Partnership Program - \$2,000.00

SECOM (South East Communities Outreach Ministry) - \$2,400.00

Preliminary Report of 2015 Benevolence to Date

Organization	Benevolence
Access of West Michigan	\$17,277.00
Baxter Community Center	\$880.00
Dégagé Ministries	\$6,420.00
Dwelling Place	\$1,180.00
ELCA Disaster Response	\$3,267.00
ELCA Missionary Support	\$1,047.00
ELCA World Hunger	\$11,296.00
Family Promise (IHN)	\$11,781.00
God's Kitchen	\$1,495.00
Habitat for Humanity	\$5,663.00
Health Intervention Services	\$1,180.00
Heartside Ministry	\$748.00
Home Repair Services	\$2,495.00
Hope Community Church	\$914.00
ICCF	\$1,495.00
In the Image	\$2,060.00
Living Water Ministries	\$1,778.00
LSSM - Grand Rapids	\$1,423.00
MapleCreek	\$2,173.00

A total of \$33,800.00 was approved for benevolence as part of Trinity's 2015 budget. That total has been distributed to 17 organizations on a quarterly basis over the past year.

In November of 2015, Trinity received a gift of \$15,000.00 from an anonymous donor specifically for benevolence. That gift, in addition to the budgeted benevolence, was distributed using a percentage formula. The members of the Outreach Committee have made changes to the formula to be used for benevolence during fiscal year 2016. On the left is a summary of some of the gifts that Trinity has been blessed to distribute including two special collections.

Please keep in mind that, since our fiscal year does not end until January 31, this is a preliminary report. The complete report will appear in the March edition



In 2015 we averaged 70 children attending Jesus Club each Sunday being taught God's Word and Bible Stories from a roster of over 40 volunteer teachers.



In February we packed 17,000 meals with 1/3 going to a local food pantry, 1/3 going to storage for U.S. disasters, and 1/3 going globally to third world countries.



In 2015 we had lots of fun at Camp VBS. We climbed Mount Everest and 120 kids attended throughout the week.



In 2015 we hosted our first ever Art and Music Camp. We had 40 kids enjoy several kinds of art including photography, pottery, tie-dying, and lots of music experiences.



In 2015 we hosted Spring Hill Day Camps for the second time. Due to the congregation's generosity we were able to scholarship 38 out of the 125 kids.



In 2015 we raised money for children at a school in Honduras. We were able to raise \$8,300

Other Highlights from 2015...

- As part of VBS, we raised over \$400 help with the earthquake clean in Nepal.
- In the fall semester of Jesus Club, we led the charge and fundraised \$5335 for Kids Against Hunger. This money will purchase the supplies to buy over 20,000 meal bags, which we will get to pack in February 2016.
- In October, for the fourth year, we held Trunk or Treat at Trinity which saw rain but still around 500 people joined us for lots of fun activities and good food.
- In November the 3rd-6th graders went to Springhill Camps for our Fall Retreat. This year we had 10 kids and 2 adults join us for a weekend packed full of fun activities and lots of learning.
- In Fall 2015 we remodeled the old kitchen into "The Club" room for the preteens. We also remodeled the program adding new curriculum and a new format.

A huge thank you to all the volunteers who helped make 2015 a huge success, including all teachers, substitutes teachers, and volunteers who helped with activities like VBS, Day Camp, Trunk or Treat, and others. We would also like to thank those who financially supported the Children's Ministry 2015.

Respectfully submitted by: Tim VanDerBilt (Director of Children's Ministry), Kathy Bush (Council Member), Amy Stephan (Chairperson), and the Children's Ministry Committee Members (Kristine Lang, Rachele Battreall, Chris Becker, Kris Shannon, Beth Hall, Elizabeth Derbin).

Congregational Life Annual Report - 2015

This past year at Trinity has flown by so fast. Our church family has had many changes and transitions this year. My calling to serve Trinity gets deeper and stronger every year I serve.

We strive to accomplish Trinity's mission through various ministries and programs creating opportunities to live out their faith.

Altar Flower Delivery: In the fall, we worked with our florist and switched how our altar flowers are displayed at the traditional worship services. The Trinity members who donate the flowers provide a great blessing to our beloved members who are homebound, hospitalized, and grieving or for special occasions like a baptism. These little touches of love and caring make an impact on the giver and receiver.

Advent by Candlelight: Our yearly tradition continues to be a very special time for the women and teens of Trinity. Venta Norris and her team once again planned a spectacular evening, our numbers continue to grow, and we added two additional tables bring our count to almost 120 guests. Rachel Leep-Williams returned to sing and play the piano. We had speaker, Kristi Huseby who shared with us about "Where's Jesus?" The speaker and musician set the mood and helped the attendees prepare for the coming of the Christ child.

Angels of Advent Tea: This year's Angels of Advent Tea was a huge success. We had 35 mothers/grandmothers and 30 young ladies age 3-12 R.S.V.P. to attend. The afternoon was filled with a time of fellowship, fun and food. As always the chocolate fountain was hit, we had milk and dark chocolate and the new addition of tea sandwiches was enjoyed too.

Celebration of Service: The third Sunday in January where we lift up the volunteers who have served our church family and community over the past year. We come together after the late service filling Centennial Hall for our all church family potluck. Lutherans love to eat! Once the meal is finished we address the business of our church at our annual meeting, such as election of council members, delegates to Synod Assembly, changes to the constitution and any other business which this year included the vote to initiate the hiring of an architectural firm and capital campaign for a future building project.

Dinner Groups: This year our numbers were down slightly, however, we had several new couples participate as well as a prospective couple. These three opportunities to gather with other members of our church family for an evening of food and fellowship are enjoyed by all. Thanks go to Joyce Schlanderer and Toni Petersen who continue to serve as the co-coordinators for the Trinity Dinner Groups.

Helping Hands: The Helping Hands program continues to see increase in needs for meals this year. We continue to have difficulty finding rides for many of our beloved elderly members. In 2015, we served approximately nine families which were over 350 meals provided Trinity members.

Homebound Ministry (Bulletin Mailing and DVD's):

We continue to send bulletin bi-weekly to several members so they can follow along with the service that is broadcast on GRTV channel 25 on Sundays at 11:00 a.m. The DVD ministry also continues. We send DVD's of the 11:15 a.m. Traditional worship service to several members who do not have access to the cable channel.

New Member Program: In 2015, we had 20 new households join Trinity. This breaks down to 23 adults and 15 children for spring 2015 and 9 adults and 3 children for fall 2015, a total of 32 adults and 18 children. This fall it became clear that having the New Member Curiosity Classes on Tuesday evenings is not working for our prospective families. In the New Year we will be reevaluating when we hold these classes.

Poinsettia Delivery: During the Christmas season, we share the holidays with our homebound/shut-in members, some of our elderly Trinity friends with the gift of a poinsettia. This year we had 13 deliverers take a total of 41 poinsettias to our members and friends. These were a wonderful reminder to our members and friends that they are missed and thought of by their Trinity family.

Prayer Ministry: A focus this year was to expand Trinity's prayer ministry. We continue to add members to our electronic prayer chain. Trinity's website now has a form for prayer requests on our new website. In October, a monthly prayer group began to meet and prayer about the needs of Trinity's members, their loved ones and the needs of the church. Another addition was the Prayer Tree; we had parents submit the names of 71 of young people ages 0-18. In the spring we will have a celebration bringing the pray-ers with those they have been praying for.

Start of Summer Celebration: Our annual summer kickoff event was great for all who attended. Trinity sponsored one of Lost and Found's Farewell Concert. We also invited the area Lutheran churches for the cook out and concert. Members from Mamrelund and Hope Community Lutheran Churches attended the meal and concert.

Wednesday Fellowship Supper (formerly Wild Wednesdays) & Advent Meals: In May, we evaluated our weekly Wednesday night meals. Those members who attend decided that in the fall we would do a six week trial and see what happens. The evening of the third meal we convened a gathering of folks to discuss the future of the rest of the meals. It was decided to continue with the meals. At 6:15 p.m. we say a sending blessing and then let folks know how many volunteers are still needed. Clean-up now takes approximately 20-25 minutes a drastic change from previous years. Many hands make light the work. This new system and more volunteers have allowed folks to still attend worship or Bible study and only be a few minutes late.

There were two initiatives that I worked with Linda Heine, Parish Nurse on this year to help benefit many of our Trinity Members.

Medicare Consultation with Trinity Member Jo Murphy, Executive Director of Michigan Medicare

Enrollment program: For eight weeks in the fall, Trinity member Jo Murphy met congregation members to assist them with enrolling in Medicare and Medicaid. This initiative was well received. One member shared that because of their consultation they will be saving \$1,000 on insurance thanks to Jo Murphy volunteering her expertise and services.

Visitation Ministry to Trinity's Older Members: This initiative was a restart of a previous program called "Stephen Friends" a ministry that reach out to Trinity's beloved older members and provided companionship. Visitation Ministry 1) Visit elderly and homebound members regularly 2) Schedule times and make visits. (You set the schedule with your member(s) 3) Unlimited visits 4) approximately once per month.

Memorial Candles of Loved Ones

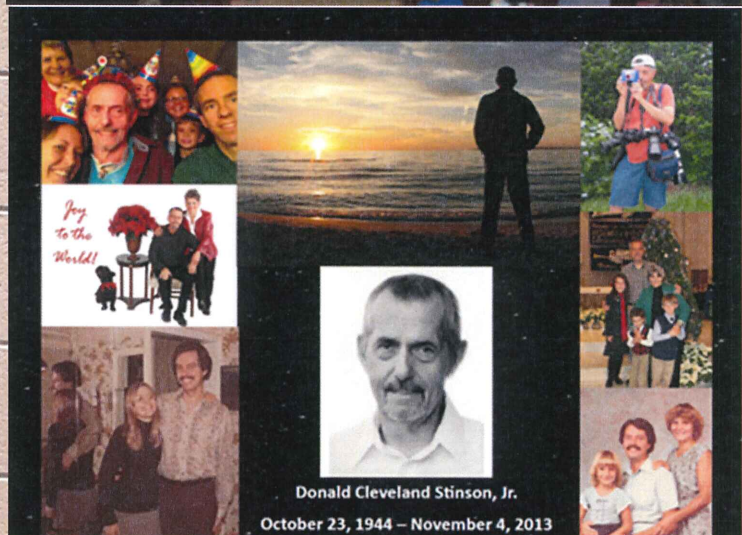
Another new initiative I began this year was a memorial candle of a loved one who has passed away. The funeral home who handled my mother's service provided a memorial candle for purchase. I purchased one for all my siblings plus nieces, nephews and great nephews. This was not an inexpensive under taking. I decided I could make a memorial candle myself and for less than what the funeral home charged. In 2015 I gave away 12 memorial candles.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela G. Davis – Director of Congregational Life

Neil Sendler – Congregational Life Council Liaison

Jo Murphy – Congregational Life Committee member



Donald Cleveland Stinson, Jr.
October 23, 1944 – November 4, 2013



Margaret "Marge" Horning
April 1, 1926 - March 17, 2015



We have a great time when we get together as a church family!

Events that take place through the Fellowship Committee provide a variety of opportunities for members and guests to get to know each other in a fun, relaxed atmosphere while building a sense of Christian family and community within the congregation. For those of you who participate in our Fellowship events, please consider inviting others to join you! And, if you have never participated, you really should do so.

Some of the events that took place in 2015 through Trinity's Fellowship Committee included Trivia Night, Soup Suppers, Spring and Fall JOYful Days, the Richmond Pool Swim Party, Deck the Halls of Trinity, the JOYful Days Holiday Luncheon and the Scandinavian Smorgasbord.

Thank you to the many Trinity members who so faithfully volunteer to help out in the many ways needed for these events to take place.

Respectfully Submitted by

Sylvia Stouten, Director of Discipleship

Brenda Heacock, Council Liaison, Fellowship

Review of Reports - Finance Committee, 2015

I would like to thank the following people for serving on the Finance committee this following year: George Bauer, Chris Engle, Ted Niemeyer, John Basher, John Johnson, Jim Coates, and Pastor Bob.

I would also like to thank Chris Engle for his years of helping out on the finance committee. He has stepped down to help more with the youth and family committee.

We also had an internal audit completed this year and approved by council. Thank you to the members of the Audit Committee: Dick McKenzie, Chuck Schadler.

I also want to thank John Basher for his countless hours on working on this year financials and next year budget.

The finance committee has been meeting the third Monday of every other month this past year to discuss and give guidance to the financials of Trinity. If you have any questions or concerns please contact anybody on the finance committee.

Peter McKinney

Health Advisory Committee Report 2015

The vision of the Health Ministry Team at TLC is to share God's gifts of love and grace to promote spiritual, physical, and emotional well being. The Health Advisory Council (HAC) meets every other month on the first Tuesday. HAC members in 2015 include: Parish Nurse; Linda Heine, Council liaison; Jane Renwick, Chairperson; Sherry Blair, Advisors; Jan Palm, Cindy Zientarski, Pam Gunderson, John Ritch, Petra Rotzell, Janet Chobanian

Health Ministry Programs held in 2015 include:

“God's Grace in Confronting Our Mortality” a 10 week series facilitated by Pastor Bob, Carol Robinson, DNP of Making Choices MI, John Fox, MD Founder of Making Choices MI, Merilynne Rush, Barbara Terrien of Priority Health and Pastor Walt Wangerin via DVD. Take aways included help for caregivers and handouts on discussing end of life issues with family members. Materials for congregation to view are available from Linda Heine, RN.

Quarterly blood drives with an average of 30 pints of blood donated (Sue Babin Coordinator)

Flu vaccinations with 52 participants

A new AED was purchased and is available on the counter outside of the main office.

We celebrated the installation of Linda Heine, RN as Parish Nurse in November.

Thank you for all of the participants who show God's love and grace through this ministry!

God's peace,

Sherry Blair

Perish Nurse Report 2015

Linda completed the Faith Community Nurse Certification from Calvin College in April.

Home/hospital visitation visits averaged 50% including time spent in setting up appointments, driving to and from appointments, assessment, planning, charting, gathering resources and follow up.

Shared information about Stephen Ministry with 24 people.

Collaborated with Pastor Sarah to provide home bound communion instruction to Stephen Ministry Caregivers.

Continue to collaborate with Congregational Life Helping Hands to provide program of ongoing visitors to our most "aging" congregants as well as home bound communion.

Staff received training and certification in CPR.

Linda Heine BSN, RN, FCN

Parish Nurse

Stephen Ministry Report

"Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ (Galatians 6:2, NRSV).

Stephen Ministry is confidential, Christ-centered care for people who are experiencing life's challenges. After 50 hours of training, a Stephen Minister meets one-to-one with a care receiver on a weekly basis to listen, care, encourage, and provide emotional and spiritual support.

In 2015, we had about 20 active Stephen Ministers who have met with and provided Christian support to about 18 care receivers. As some Stephen Ministers have moved or become inactive, we anticipate the need to train a new Stephen Ministry Leader and new Stephen Ministers to add to our current team in 2016.

I thank all active and inactive Stephen Ministers for their commitment to bringing Christ's care and love to people during a time of need. I thank all care receivers who have accepted the care and support of a Stephen Minister. I thank the pastor, council and congregation for the support of and prayers for Stephen Ministry. I thank God, every day, for this caring ministry at Trinity Lutheran Church.

In His Peace,

Brenda Heacock
Stephen Ministry Leader

Review of Reports - Hospitality Committee, 2015

Committee Members: Kathy Bush, Kris Fox, Gayle Kessel, Tess Lundgren

This year the Council determined that it would be helpful for the church to have a Hospitality Committee. The Committee was established and held one organizational meeting to work on goals and direction. The Committee's purpose will be to meet and follow up with visitors and new members to make them welcome to the church and help to assist them in finding where and how they can best join with us in the church's mission. The committee can also serve as a way for greeters, ushers, and others on the front line of interacting with visitors on a weekly basis to have a voice and channel of communication back to Council.

The Committee will hold additional meetings to establish goals, objectives, and to begin its work this year and would welcome expressions of interest from those who feel called to this ministry.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tess Lundgren, Chair

Current Members: Mitchell Noland, Joni Korb, Jan Palm, William Heyne, Stacy Curtiss

Retired in 2015: Nan Treul

General

The Human Resources Committee was assembled in 2014, and tasked with assisting Pastor Linstrom with consultation and support in matters of Human Resources within Trinity. We are fortunate to have the wide depth and breadth of HR expertise and experience within the committee from which to draw from.

Throughout 2015 we have identified areas in HR policy and procedure that can be further developed or improved, which we work towards implementing. Currently we are working with Pastor Linstrom in discerning how to move forward with the youth program, as well as determining some goals for the committee in 2016.

We met monthly with the exception of July and December.

Highlights

Job Descriptions

Towards the beginning of the year, the committee arrived at a standard for job descriptions for Trinity staff. Staff worked individually on their job descriptions. Results were edited and compiled by various members of the committee.

Review of Job Descriptions

In early summer, various committee members were tasked with meeting privately with Trinity staff members, for a general chat about their positions and their experience at Trinity, review of job descriptions, and review goals for the year.

Closing of Daycare

The committee's most challenging task was assisting Pastor Linstrom with concerns about the daycare. The daycare was experiencing some very troubling and significant stresses as far as management and staffing. Bill Heyne played a significant role in an attempt to mentor the daycare director, but little progress was made, and the decision was made to close the daycare, which was completed prior to Thanksgiving.

New Staff

We supported Pastor Linstrom in the decision to source and hire a part-time manager for care and maintenance of the facility, after the retirement of Jane Barsema, as well as the hiring of a part-time book-keeper. Both of which have proved to be successful.

Outreach Committee Annual Report - 2015

Trinity's Outreach Committee focuses on providing opportunities for our members to help address unmet basic needs both locally and globally. This is accomplished through monetary donations, the collection of tangible items, and through our time and spiritual gifts. All members are encouraged to select activities to which they feel called to participate.

Global Issues are addressed through the work of ELCA World Hunger, ELCA Disaster Relief, LWR Quilts (203 were made this year), Operation Christmas Child (97 boxes in 2015), Fair Trade, Kindergarten Nutrition Program for La Canada, Honduras (\$7500 was raised by Jesus Club children and Trinity adults).

Local Issues are addressed through organizations such as ACCESS of West Michigan with our ongoing food collection, county wide food drive and hunger walk. On Super Bowl Sunday coins are collected by the youth for the Souper Bowl of Caring. Members volunteer to read to children with the Schools of Hope program and by tutoring adults at the Literacy Center of West Michigan. Trinity members participated in a Habitat for Humanity build. In the Image, DéGagé, and Family Promise are other missions we support. Trinity families donate food, blankets, coats, bus tickets, items for their Christmas stores, Thanksgiving and Christmas food baskets or monetary donations, cleaning products, underwear and diapers, personal hygiene items. Our Lenten collections went to the Honduras Kindergarten Nutrition Program and our Advent collections went to Kids Against Hunger.

We participate with Family Promise by hosting displaced families for a week, four times a year. They are provided a bed, meals and compassion. We continue to pray that more of our members will become involved in the ministry. In the fall, we participated in the annual Family Promise golf outing...this year in honor of Pastor Sarah.

We are starting a new alliance with the Salvation Army's program – Congregational Partnership Program. It is a program that helps families stay in their home through scaled rental assistance. Our committee has chosen to donate \$3500/year, which is the amount needed for one family. We have received a grant of \$1500 from the Synod's Publicly Engaged Church Committee to help with the funding. We will look into volunteering to work with a family on a personal basis.

"God's Work. Our Hand's. Sunday" on September 13 involved 65 volunteers working on-site at church and off-site throughout the community. Off-site activities took place at: Habitat for Humanity where painting was done; Family Promise New Day Center/Offices where yard work was done; LSSM home services building where sorting, organizing and labeling was done on donated materials; HQ Runaway/Homeless Youth Drop-In Center where deep cleaning was performed. On-Site activities involved meals cooked for the teens at the HQ Center, LWR quilters worked on quilts and children tied a child's quilt; childcare was provided for all families who volunteered. This was a very successful day.

Money for Kids Against Hunger campaign was raised through the Jesus Club and Trinity adults. 17,000 simple nutritious meals were packed via assembly line by numerous volunteers at TLC to be distributed through out the world and to area pantries via Feeding America West Michigan.

In June, committee members and staff members met to develop a calendar to schedule: 1) On Going Year Round campaigns, 2) Additional as needed campaigns, 3) Local campaigns, 4) Regional/National campaigns and 5) International campaigns. Hopefully, this will give all involved a clear picture of our goals and what will transpire through out the year. Our committee is in the process of evaluating the levels of our giving to the various agencies we support and possible reallocation of resources.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Outreach Committee by

Beth Engstrom, committee chair

Sylvia Stouten, Director of Discipleship, staff liaison to the committee

Property Committee Annual Report: 2015

The year proved to be one filled with change: the retirement of our long serving property facility manager, Jane Barsema in May (many thanks again to Jane!); the selection of a professional cleaning service, River City Commercial Cleaning Co.; and the launch of a building feasibility study and master plan. The creation of a new part time staff position, Facility Sexton, was developed and eventually filled in May by Niki Ferguson who, with her family, has been a member at Trinity for more than 10 years. Niki has done an outstanding job and continues to provide much needed care for our church home. She coordinates keeping it in tip top shape and ready for all events and meeting needs.

Not surprising for a building of this age, we also had to address a steady stream of equipment and building components repair or replacement needs, particularly in the kitchen. This has included repairs to the oven, freezer, ice maker and dishwasher.

The screening of local architectural engineering firms with special expertise in church building architecture led to the selection of Progressive AE in early summer. A detailed evaluation of the current building and its mechanical systems and equipment was completed in July. The Master Plan of building expansion and upgrade is now in our hands with the question; can we move this ambitious project forward in the coming months? The Property Committee has continued to encourage and advance the repair needs on our Cross Tower as an urgent need beginning in spring 2016 due to safety and liability concerns. With the potential of a major building project under consideration, the Property Committee has generally approached all repair and upgrade needs with an eye to the future. Thus, repairs are considered with an eye toward keeping our building in good operating shape but not necessarily with upgrades until our building project is better defined.

Here are a few additional items of note:

- The church grounds have not looked this good in a number of years; thanks to many volunteer gardeners and the leadership of Fran Anderson.
- The old kitchen at the far end of our classroom wing lost the remaining 'kitchen look' this summer with the removal of the 3 compartment sink, sliding door and counter. It is more suitable today as a youth gathering space.
- A number of plumbing and roofing repairs were addressed and these led to ceiling plaster repairs as well. We now believe we are in good shape heading into the cold weather months.
- Several lighting upgrades to more efficient LED lighting have further helped to lower our energy bills and at no cost to the church. This is due to the efforts of Interfaith Power and Light, our Vince Schumacher and Consumers Energy Co.

The Property Committee has been well served over this past year by: Jim Coates - Council Liaison, Niki Ferguson-Facility Sexton, Mark Johnson, Myron Pearson, Dale Barkema, Dan Workman, Dick Tedford, Fran Anderson, Dave Mester, Fred Wilcox, Bob Heine, Bill Bruin and Frank Remsburg. In addition, Jim Boles and Robert Ferguson have generously given of their time and expertise in helping to address our cross tower needs. We are very blessed to have this dedicated group focused on the needs and safe upkeep of our beautiful but aging building and grounds.

Respectfully submitted by

Frank Remsburg, Chairman

In 2014, the committee identified three areas of focus, some of which were already in place.

Supporting adult education through small groups, organized studies and retreats.

Ongoing study groups include those led by Pastor Bob and various other TLC members. A new men's group was launched in 2015 with 56 men attending the initial breakfast. A brochure is maintained for members to identify opportunities.

A women's retreat, "Garden Getaway", was held in February and hosted about 25 women. Women were invited to "take time out of our busy lives to relax with friends, share laughter and stories, and spend time with God." We are planning to make this an annual event to be held in January or February.

An exploratory meeting took place in June to determine if there was sufficient interest in the community to start a Michigan chapter of the Evangelical & Ecumenical Women's Caucus. The Reverend Katherine Baker led the conversation. CFT is "an inclusive community which believes that answers to hard questions can be found through careful feminist examination of the Bible" and also maintains an extensive on-line resource at <http://www.eewc.com>. Although fifteen women attended the meeting, there was not sufficient interest for a chapter to form.

Eight members of Trinity attended a Synod-sponsored training event on the "Adult Catechumenate." This event was "designed to empower rostered and congregational leaders in re-tooling their ministries to welcome persons into a community of faith and prepare them for the life-long journey of discipleship beginning with baptism." The group, in conversation with Pastor Bob and the committee, recognizes that there are parts of this training which could be valuable in our spiritual life at TLC and will be implementing some of the rites and Bible Study methods beginning in Lent such as possibly holding an Easter vigil observance in 2016 or 2017.

Providing resources and guidance for Advent and Lenten devotions and groups.

Members again volunteered to submit daily devotions for Advent, which the committee produced and distributed.

A Lenten study resource: *Book of Faith Lenten Journey: Marks of the Christian*, published by Augsburg Fortress, was provided and used by several groups and many individuals.

Arranging for sponsors to support and orient new members as they learn about and navigate their way through the Trinity organization.

This has not been a function that the group performed in 2015, although the door remains open if someone steps forward to organize it.

We look forward to continuing work in these areas in the coming year and pray that TLC members and friends find themselves drawn into a deepening relationship with Christ as a result of taking part in them.

Members: Carrie Wygmans, Committee Chair & Council Liaison
Sylvia Stouten, Staff Liaison Pastor Bob Linstrom
Kim Brock, Note Taker Mark Mattison
Kris Racek Leigh Ann Hunter
Sue Babin

Worship and Music Committee Property Committee Annual Report: 2015

Again, it has been a busy year for the Worship & Music Committee.

Our ongoing mission is to coordinate with our assisting ministers. Those are our sacristans, communion assistants, lectors, greeters and ushers. It is a concentrated effort to make all of our worship services as meaningful as possible.

We said good bye this year to Renee Fisk who has served our committee as council liaison. We thank her for her loyal and dedicated service.

We welcomed Rick Radke to the committee this year as our council liaison. He replaced Renee Fisk whose term on council ended.

Again this year, our committee has attended to several issues as they pertain to our worship together.

We held an Arts and Music camp this summer. Beautiful crafts were created and many children were introduced to music. A special thanks to Larry and Diane Biser and Tim Van Der Bilt for putting this event together.

Sid Hoeksema attended a music conference put on by Augsburg, in Chicago.

Our organist for the past several years Elizabeth West, submitted her resignation on August 23, 2015. We held a celebration that day recognizing her service to Trinity. Larry Biser will take on this role, as well as adding "Music Director" to his responsibilities. Elizabeth will stay on as the associate organist and continue to fill in as necessary, as well as continuing to give organ lessons.

Worship in the Park was again held on July 27, 2015. The morning was beautiful, the service inspiring and the turn out very good with over 300 people attending. It has been suggested that next year we hold the summer worship on site.

The committee also chose to keep alive the Pauline Twedale scholarship for aspiring Trinity musicians.

A liturgical arts committee has been formed with Larry Biser being on the committee.

The Trinity Concert Series has been set for the upcoming year. Concerts will be in October, November, January, February and March.

Nadene Delana ended her role on the Worship and Music Committee and as the Sacristan Scheduler and overall sacristan duties. She will help with the schedule to take us to the end of the year. Many thanks go out to Nadene for her years of involvement on this committee as well as her work as Sacristan Scheduler and Sacristan.

The decision was made this year to change our communion wine from white, to red. Also grape juice is now white. There will be no purple cups for communion, all clear with the red wine along the outside and the white grape juice in the middle.

New communion ware was also purchased this year with a gift from Pastor David Paul's memorial fund. The new ware was dedicated to Pastor David's memory.

On 9/13/15 we welcomed our new interim associate pastor, Jonathan Reid.

In November a call committee was established as we look forward to our next permanent associate pastor.

Thanksgiving worship scheduled for the Wednesday before Thanksgiving was held again this year with 81 in attendance. It is the committees opinion that it should continue in the future.

Due to safety reasons it was determined that the candelabras attached to the end of the pews at the Christmas Eve services should be discontinued. A motion was sent to council and was approved.

The following alternative Sunday Observances were agreed to: January 3, 2016 Epiphany of Our Lord (not the 2nd Sunday of Christmas) October 30, 2016, Reformation Sunday (not the 24th Sunday after Pentecost) November 6, 2016 All Saints Sunday (not the 25th Sunday after Pentecost)

Planning for Lent continued commencing on Ash Wednesday, February 10, 2016 and continuing through Easter Sunday, March 27. Common cup communing will be offered on Ash Wednesday and on Maundy Thursday. Wednesday night lenten services will continue through the season, beginning at 6:30 in the sanctuary.

A Report From Our Rejoice Worship Coordinator, Cheryl Reeve

LIFE in the Rejoice Service

For seventeen years, Trinity's Rejoice service has been providing an alternative to Traditional worship. With humble beginnings of just a handful of musicians, thirty-five worship attendees and paper bulletins with songs and liturgy, the Rejoice service has grown in leaps and bounds—three rotating bands, a Sound Technician, PowerPoint production of the songs and liturgy—not to mention, two very well-attended services each week. Led by Pastor Bob and Pastor Jonathon, as well as numerous lay people, at Rejoice, we witness creativity, artistic gifting and technology harnessed to bring God glory in spirit and in truth.

During 2015, we were blessed with the addition of a new, handmade soundboard desk. The bandleaders continued their adept song selection and organization of band personnel. We were thankful to gain feedback from the congregation via a Rejoice service survey. We are in the process of addressing some of the questions and concerns, which were expressed on those surveys.

We are presently seeking personnel for all of the Rejoice bands. Please prayerfully consider contributing your musical gifts to help lead worship in the Rejoice service. Time commitment is approximately two rehearsals and two Sundays per month.

Please contact Cheryl Reeve (cheryl.l.reeve@gmail.com) for more information and to schedule an audition.

With deepest gratitude to:

Bandleaders: Tom Demmon, Scott Dulecki and Sheryl VanderBaan

The Bands: Beyond Belief, Faceless and Rejoice

Sound Technician: Brooks Alder

PowerPoint Coordinator: Greg Lang

PowerPoint Volunteers

PowerPoint Creator: Jodi VanGorp

And all participating staff, volunteers and congregants, who make possible the Rejoice Service

Finally, thank you to the members of the Worship & Music Committee for their commitment and dedication. We are a marvelous blend of musicians and worship styles. We work together sharing God's gifts of love and grace.

God's Peace,

Gordy Engstrom, Chair, Worship & Music Committee

Cheryl Reeve, Rejoice Worship Coordinator

Rick Radke, Council Liaison

**Worship & Music Committee Members
2014-2015**

Pastor Bob: robert.linstrom@tlcgr.org

Karen Griewahn: kbgriewahn@aol.com

Diane Biser: dtbiser@att.net

Carrie Wygmans: carriestine@comcast.net

Gordy Engstrom: davegordon74@gmail.com,
Chair

Sid Hoeksema: sidhoeks@aol.com

Cheryl Reeve: cheryl.l.reeve@gmail.com

John Racek: jeracek50@comcast.net

Rick Radke radketrac@comcast.net,

Council Liaison

2015 was a year of transition with the calling of our Pastor Sarah Stobie to lead another congregation in Pennsylvania beginning in August. We "hardly skipped a beat" through the very appreciated efforts of the members of this committee, including our Senior Pastor Bob Linstrom and our Interim Pastor Jonathan Reid along with many other adults and youth who volunteered to lead and participate in our most excellent events and programs. We look forward to 2016 in anticipation of the addition of staff to help us grow our Youth & Family ministry!

Pastor Sarah's "Top 3" - "really good" space for youth, program excellence with parental participation & focus on Lutheran theology

Youth & Family Forum - 57 attended on Aug 24 to hear updates and offer their suggestions, led by Pastor Bob.

Confirmation - leadership/teaching has transitioned from Pastor Sarah to Pastor Bob with 60 6-8 graders enrolled. 17 students were confirmed on Oct. 25. Acolyte program has a new volunteer leader in Tess Lundgren.

MS Youth Events- events such as corn maze/bonfire & caroling, with some following confirmation coordinated by Jill McKinney and a new Weds offering by Taylor Sytsma this fall.

MS Summer Camp - 35 youth attended at Stony Lake with Pastor Sarah & Pete. Alaina Dulecki was a youth leader..

HS Mission Trip - 30 youth & 4 adults (including Pastor Sarah) participated in a Group Workcamp in NJ.

HS ELCA National Gathering - 18 youth attended in Detroit, along with 30,000 others as well as Pastor Sarah & Pete and Dawn Brackmann.

HS Youth Events- activities such as Bible study, ArtPrize, euchre, corn maze have been led by youth such as Mikaela Bradley and Emma Hall.

HS Youth Band - Faceless supported music for the Rejoice services monthly with 10 members coordinated by Tom Demmon.

HS Sunday morning education - BASIC (Brothers and Sisters in Christ) meeting weekly with Chris Engle teaching and Ashlee Wetherington assisting.

College Care Packages - Jamie Kuntzman and Karin Moglia led the effort to mail 56 boxes this fall.

2016 MS Youth Quake - March 4-6 in Traverse City, MI is the favorite with Peter McKinney investigating/coordinating

2016 HS Mission Trip - 50 spots reserved for June 26 - July 2 in Somerville, TN with Chris Engle leading. Fundraising began with Christmas wreath sales (153 sold) led by Kristin Bradley and will focus on Easter Breakfast and the Rummage Sale led by Jessica Marks.

Building - numerous interactions with the architectural and financial planners as improved space for our youth is a high priority. A trip to St. Roberts to see their youth space was very interesting and appreciated.

Staff - job descriptions have been written and call committees formed to seek both a Director of YFM and a "youthful" Associate Pastor, who will lead the DYFM.

As evidenced above, we have been blessed to continue, and even grow, our YFM in a time of transition. The only items we decided not to continue include Confirmation meals, the HS MI Youth Gathering and the HS Mission Trip Pancake Supper. Again, much appreciation for our wonderful staff, parents, youth and all volunteers who have stepped up to keep our YFM programs vibrant and meaningful!

Respectfully submitted by Tom Demmon on behalf of the Youth and Family Ministry Committee, January 2015.

*Treasurer's Report—2015 Budget & 2015 Forecast
11 Months Actual (Feb '15—Dec '15) & Jan '16 Forecast*

	2015 Budget	2015 Forecast
Income		
Contributions	998,000	986,178
Total Income	998,000	986,178
Expenses		
Local Benevolence	33,800	33,800
Synod Mission Support	99,800	100,800
Christian Education	11,225	9,993
Music	10,350	9,807
Worship	6,850	6,845
Evangelism	1,660	1,064
Stewardship	8,450	4,405
Youth And Family	9,650	9,140
Fellowship	2,000	1,475
Property	50,904	59,033
Utilities	49,900	51,301
Leases	32,836	31,420
Office And Administration	66,140	82,632
Day Care Allocation in O/A	(12,000)	(9,000)
Payroll	590,390	554,317
Stephen's Ministry	1,000	618
Capital Reserve	12,410	18,660
Parish Nurse-Health Cabinet	2,200	1,357
Outreach	1,000	956
Congregational Life	7,100	5,244
Spiritual Growth	2,025	2,001
Total Expenses	987,690	975,868
Net Operating Income	10,310	10,310
Less Debt Repayment	10,310	10,310
Net Operating Cash Flow	0	0
Day Care Summary		
Day Care Revenue	81,000	61,604
Day Care Center Expenses	81,000	61,604
Net Day Care Income	0	0

	2015 Budget	2016 Proposed Budget
Income		
Contributions	998,000	1,001,000
Total Income	998,000	1,001,000
Expenses		
Local Benevolence	33,800	33,900
Synod Mission Support	99,800	100,100
Christian Education	11,225	9,825
Music	10,350	11,255
Worship	6,850	6,904
Evangelism	1,660	1,660
Stewardship	8,450	8,450
Youth And Family	9,650	10,150
Fellowship	2,000	1,625
Property	50,904	65,864
Utilities	49,900	51,220
Leases	32,836	26,080
Office And Administration	66,140	66,685
Day Care Allocation in O/A	(12,000)	0
Payroll	590,390	566,870
Stephen's Ministry	1,000	4,060
Capital Reserve	12,410	14,071
Parish Nurse-Health Cabinet	2,200	1,700
Outreach	1,000	800
Congregational Life	7,100	6,800
Spiritual Growth	2,025	2,250
Total Expenses	987,690	990,269
Net Operating Income	10,310	10,731
Less Debt Repayment	10,310	10,731
Net Operating Cash Flow	0	0

	\$ Amount	% of Total
Salaries		
Clergy	140,512	24.8%
Non-Clergy	263,574	46.5%
Contract	11,608	2.0%
Total Salaries	415,694	73.3%
Benefits		
Clergy	68,059	12.0%
Non-Clergy	58,484	10.3%
Total Benefits	126,543	22.3%
Other		
Payroll Taxes	24,633	4.3%
Total Other	24,633	4.3%
Grand Total	566,870	100.0%

	As of 12/31/14	As of 12/31/15
Cash / Equivalent Accounts		
Total General Fund	121,574	174,182
Total Dedicated Fund	326,012	338,179
Total Endowment Fund	427,354	414,347
Total Cash / Equivalent Accounts	874,941	926,708
Other Current Assets	12,354	418
Fixed Assets		
Land & Building	5,384,000	5,384,000
Parking Lot Improvement	390,942	390,942
Total Fixed Assets	5,774,942	5,774,942
Total Assets	6,662,237	6,702,069
Liabilities & Equity		
Total Current Liabilities	935	2,590
Long-Term Debt (Parking Lot)	380,238	369,920
Total Liabilities	381,172	372,510
Total Equity	6,281,065	6,329,558
Total Liabilities & Equity	6,662,237	6,702,069

What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine

Leaning on the Everlasting Arms



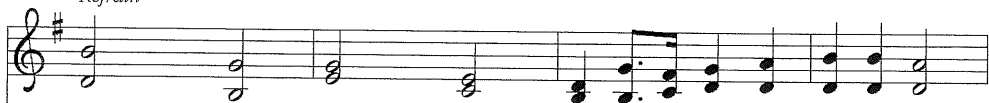
- 1 What a fel - low-ship, what a joy di - vine, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms;
- 2 Oh, how sweet to walk in this pil-grim way, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms;
- 3 What have I to dread, what have I to fear, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms?



what a bless-ed-ness, what a peace is mine, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms.
oh, how bright the path grows from day to day, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms.
I have bless-ed peace with my Lord so near, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms.



Refrain



Lean - ing, lean - ing, safe and se-cure from all a - larms;



Lean - ing on Je - sus, lean - ing on Je - sus,



lean - ing, lean - ing, lean-ing on the ev - er - last-ing arms.



lean - ing on Je - sus, lean - ing on Je - sus,

Text: Elisha A. Hoffman, 1839-1919
Music: SHOWALTER, Anthony J. Showalter, 1858-1924

Do not be conformed to this world, be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect. For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another.

Romans 12:2-5

ELW #774 (Evangelical Lutheran Worship)
TFF #220 (This Far by Faith)
WOV #780 (With One Voice)

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Why participation in the ELCA makes a difference

- We believe we are among God's chosen people – called to make disciples and do God's work. Through this calling we find lives of meaning and purpose. As part of the body of Christ, we discover there are many ways we do this work better together than alone.
- We understand ourselves to have first received from God, and then respond to God. The practice of responding freely is based on recognizing God's grace and our freedom to participate in God's generosity to others.
- We share a living daring confidence in God's grace. We believe our faith comes through the good news of Jesus Christ and gives us the freedom and the courage to wonder, discover and boldly participate in what God is up to in the world.
- We embrace the development of people who are faithful, wise and courageous. Understanding the perspectives of abundance, grace, gratitude and generosity, we express our support for God's work through the sharing of the time, talents and resources entrusted to us.

How our missional partnership makes a difference

- We grow the ELCA in the United States – 350+ new starts in progress.
- We grow the Lutheran church around the world – 220+ missionaries in more than 40 countries.
- We develop current and future leaders – eight seminaries plus 26 colleges and universities.
- We coordinate and support synod and churchwide ministries – strive to connect and collaborate with 3.7 million people within the ELCA.
- We strengthen our Lutheran identity – publications and communications within and beyond our church.
- We provide leadership – organize and coordinate 10,000+ leaders across the church.
- We work for justice – support social ministry organizations reaching 1 in 50 Americans.
- We grow financial resources – promote stewardship education, financial literacy and mission interpretation in 10,000+ locations.
- We engage in research and strategic planning – analyze trends and monitor innovative ministries in a changing world.
- We sustain ecumenical and interfaith relationships – seek unity in faith and life with all Lutherans and six full communion partners.