

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

---

## A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDING BISHOP ELIZABETH EATON

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

In 2017, Lutherans around the world observed the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. As the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, we are called to foster unity within the church and to live into God's calling together in the years ahead. Through our more than 3.7 million members and friends, we will continue to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ crucified and risen for the life of the world.

We are church together, united by a common vision.

A world experiencing the difference God's grace and love in Christ makes for all people and creation.

We are church for the sake of the world, united by a common purpose.

Together in Jesus Christ, we are freed by grace to live faithfully, witness boldly and serve joyfully.

As we strive to live into this vision and purpose, we face many challenges. In a radically individualistic society, we seek to create and sustain life-giving relationships and communities that connect us to God and one another. In a society that is becoming increasingly secular while facing many tensions, we seek to proclaim the gospel and share the story of Jesus as a source of hope, inclusion, peace and reconciliation. And, in a world that misuses power and authority while struggling with growing inequality, we seek to follow Jesus who spoke publicly for those who were oppressed and marginalized.

As your church family gathers to make decisions about using the gifts God has entrusted to you, may you remember that by the tender love of God, by the ceaseless pursuit of the Spirit, we are members of the body of Christ. We are family. We share our lives. We love each other. By the reconciling expression of God's grace, we can live confidently and generously in this community of faith and in service of others because we are joined in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Living together in community with Christ,



The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton  
Presiding Bishop  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord, and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

1 Corinthians 12:4-7

## **2018 Annual Meeting of Trinity Lutheran Church**

### **Trinity Lutheran Church**

A Stephen Ministry Church

2700 Fulton East, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506

616-949-2510, [www.tlcgr.org](http://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 2017:

**Donald James Stoddard – January 5, 2017**

**Beatrice JoAnne Gauger – May 8, 2017**

**Theodore Anthony Niemeyer – May 19, 2017**

**Jeffrey Robert Schlanderer – June 14, 2017**

**John Michael Ritch – August 4, 2017**

**James Louis VanSkiver – September 25, 2017**

**Thomas George Held – September 30, 2017**

**Dennis L. Snider – October 11, 2017**

**Richard (Dick) Tedford—November 15, 2017**

**Gregory Dean Earhart—November 24, 2017**

**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  
2017 Annual Meeting Agenda - January 21, 2018**

**Call to Order**, Paul Crist, Congregation President

**Opening Devotions**, Pastor Bob Linstrom

**Approval of Agenda**

**Approval of the January 15, 2017 Annual Meeting Minutes**

**Appointment of Tellers**

**Nominating Committee Report**

**Ballot for Council** (pages 8-11)

John Fox – first three-year term

Eric Gohlke — first three-year term

Caroline Kuntzman – one-year term (youth representative)

Tess Lundgren — second three-year term

Mike Mason — second three-year term

Rick Radke — second three-year term

Karen Unruh – first three-year term

Phil Wittry — a one-year term (completing the term of Gene Gunderson)

**Ballot for Synod Assembly Delegates** (page 12)

Jim Coates

Sue Coates

Bill Leidel

Meri Leidel

**Ballot for Nominating Committee for 2019 Candidates** (pages 13-14)

Brad Blair

Beth Hall

Brenda Heacock

Amy Stephan

## **Review of Reports**

Pastors (pages 15-19)

President (page 20)

Committee Reports (listed alphabetically by committee name, pages 21-37)

**Treasurer's Report and Presentation of the 2018 Budget**, (pages 38-42), John Basher, Congregation Treasurer

## **Unfinished Business**

Report on the Building Project

## **New Business**

**Announcements, Lord's Prayer and Benediction**, Pastors Bob Linstrom and Dan Schewe

## **Adjournment**

**Annual Congregation Meeting**

January 15, 2017

The 2017 Annual Meeting of Trinity Lutheran Church was called to order by Brad Blair at 1:20 P.M.

Pastor Bob Linstrom led the church members in prayer, and as partners in the wider Lutheran Church, the opening liturgy, found inside the Annual Report.

**Motion to approve the agenda:** Neil Sendler/Michael Mulligan 2<sup>nd</sup>/ Passed.

**Motion to approve the 2016 Annual Meeting minutes,** as amended on page 5 to the year 2016, Nadene Delana/Michael Mulligan 2<sup>nd</sup>/Passed.

**Appointment of Tellers:** Paul Crist, Wendy Johnson, Neil Sendler, and Rick Radke. The 162 members present exceeded the number required for the meeting to proceed.

**Nominating Committee:** We are thankful for the service given to the church council by retiring members, Neil Sendler and John Fox.

**Ballot for Council Members:**

Kate Bredwell – First three-year term

Kathy Bush – Second three-year term

Carol Butler – First three year term

Jim Coates – Second three-year term

Amelia Crist – A two-year term (completing the term of Taylor Sytsma)

Chris Engle – First three-year term

Julia Kessel, Youth Representative – one-year term

Carrie Wygmans – First three-year term

The floor was opened to additional nominations, but none were received.

Motion to approve the council ballot as presented: Peter McKinney/Deb Bambini 2<sup>nd</sup>/Passed.

**Synod Assembly Delegates**

Trinity may send two male and two female representatives to the Annual Synod meeting. The nominees are Brad and Sherry Blair, and Frank and Annette Remsburg.

- No other nominations received from the floor.
- A motion to approve the nominees was made by Michael Mulligan/ Carrie Hoeksema 2<sup>nd</sup>/Passed.

**Nominating Committee for 2018 Council Candidates**

Nominees are: Janine Johnson, Michael Sytsma and retiring council members, John Fox and Neil Sendler.

- No other nominations were received from the floor.
- A motion to approve the 2018 Nominating Committee: Roger Marks/Dave Johnson 2<sup>nd</sup>/Passed.

**Review of Reports**

Committee reports are found in the Annual Report Packet. Attendees are asked to take time to review them and raise any questions they might have. With no questions from the floor, Michael Mulligan moved that all committee reports be received into the record, Neil Sendler 2<sup>nd</sup>/Passed.

**Treasurer's Report and Presentation of the 2017 Budget**

- The 2016 Budget is based on February 16 – December 16.
- Overall, income and expenses were very close to the budget.
- Medical Leave was significantly higher.
- Work on the heating system is responsible for the overage in the Property category.
- There is a \$6,000 difference in debt payment. Interest only has been paid on the combined Parking Lot & Cross Tower loan.
- No questions from the floor on the 2016 budget.

## 2017 Budget

Treasurer's recommendation is to keep the 2017 budget same as 2016; \$1,001,000.

- The staff and committees were asked to keep their budgets close in line with the previous year.
- The loan for the parking lot, \$767,534.78, will be paid off the week of January 23. This will enhance the reserve funds, and puts the church in good shape to pay its bills. The hope is not to have any debt in the coming year.
- Building Endowment fund has increased by \$158,000.

## Response to Questions from the floor:

- Increases were made to Christian Education to allow for changes to children's education (Milestones).
- Cleaning services are part of the Property Budget.
- Pay raises were within Synod guidelines
- Benefit expenses are down.
- Part-time employees do not receive benefits.
- General Fund is used for general operating expenses.
- Reserved Funds are earmarked for specific purposes, i.e. Music, Summer Camp
- If an account balance is below \$1,000 and has had no activity, it may be rolled into something else.
- When the cross tower is complete, will there be other expenses? Money comes in every week that goes into the Capital Campaign Fund.
- Motion to approve the 2017 Budget: Kelli Basher/ Sheryl Vander Baan 2<sup>nd</sup>/Passed.

## Unfinished Business

### Strengthen to Serve Capital Campaign

Council President, Brad Blair, shared how he and Sherry were personally impacted working on the campaign and by their meetings with Trinity members. Fundraising visits were well received by Trinity members with pledges and gifts totaling more than \$3,760,000.

### Building Project Updates

If everything goes as planned, construction will begin spring, 2018. It is a two-year project, and it is best financially to know exactly what we want to do and be good stewards of our money. It is more expensive to begin work and then add on additional items. Sometime this spring, a congregation meeting will be held to look at the design and authorize the scope of the project.

- A new Building Committee has not been formed, but hopefully within the next month. Roger Marks will continue on as Chairman of the committee, and John Fox will continue to serve as the Capital Campaign representative.
- The Cross Tower repairs have been made, and we are waiting for the limestone from the quarry. We will not be charged additional costs as the price was part of the contract. The contractor was selected from the received bids. The extended use of the scaffolding is not costing additional funds.
- Shop drawings were made of each piece of stone and its dimension; each one is different. Each stone has to be verified and cut from the same block of stone. The cross will first be put in place followed by the stone. As the limestone goes up, the scaffolding will come down.

## Questions:

Can we borrow enough to complete the full building project?

It could be a council recommendation, but it is a decision that will have to be made by the congregation.

If we take a loan, can the payment be determined before making the decision on the loan amount?

Rough estimate on a 1 million dollar loan would be \$140,000 monthly payment over the life of a 20 year loan.

Could signs designating activity locations be included as part of the Schematic Design?

Yes, Way Finding is an important goal for our new facility.

What is the anticipated cost of the remodeling project?

Currently looking at 5.8 million, but we will need more detail to the layout and then stay within the budget.

What is the next step?

Design development followed by a construction contract.

**New Business**

**Proposal to extend a Call to Ministry to Karen Z. Niemeyer as Part-Time Assisting Pastor**

Call Committee chair, Mike Mason, extended this thanks and appreciation to call committee members, Deb Bambini, Emma Hall, Anastasia McRoberts, and Bill Leidel, none of whom knew Karen prior to considering her application. When meeting with Karen, Mike was impressed with Karen's clear vision of what her role would be in Trinity's ministry, and her ability to set boundaries and limitations. Previously, a member of Trinity's staff as Lay Ministry Coordinator, Karen is well known for her leadership of the Tapestry Ministry in Trinity's congregation. Karen completed her Master of Divinity in the spring of 2016 and in the summer of 2016, her two-year internship with Christ Lutheran Church, Wyoming, MI.

On the recommendation of the Call Committee and Council, Council Vice-President, Mike Mason made a motion that Karen Niemeyer of Grand Rapids, Michigan, be called to serve as pastor in ministry of Trinity Lutheran Church. Jo Murphy 2<sup>nd</sup>/Passed.

**Questions:**

How many hours will she be working?

10 hours per week.

Will Karen be preaching?

She will be included in the sermon rotation, possibly every other month, and will provide for increased flexibility and opportunities among the pastors. Karen's desire is to be in and among the congregation.

Voting was done by paper ballot and passed with a majority of votes.

The motion to extend a call as an Assisting Pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church was made by John Fox/Bill Leidel 2<sup>nd</sup>/Passed.

Resolution Two: That the initial annual compensation of the pastor be \$13,700. A voice ballot was taken on this proposal and it too, passed.

Karen spoke to those gathered together for the meeting, expressed her thanks, and said she was looking forward to doing ministry with them.

Benediction: Pastor Dan

Lord's Prayer

Motion to adjourn: Bruce Youngman/Neil Sandler 2<sup>nd</sup>/Passed

The meeting was adjourned at 2:47 P.M. and closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Jacobson

Recording Secretary





**John Fox**

John Fox has been married to Kristine Fox for 30 years. They have three kids and have attended Trinity since 2000. He sings in the choir at the 11:15 a.m. service and has previously served on the Capital Campaign and Congregation Council. A pediatrician by training, he now works at Priority Health. Other activities include serving the Boy Scouts of America and the Land Conservancy of West Michigan.



**Eric Gohlke**

Eric and Diane along with daughter Megan joined Trinity Lutheran in July of 2017. They also have one other daughter Erin Teitsma and her family her husband Josh and two kids Kyler and Aden who reside in Grand Rapids and attend Josh's Church Third Christian Reformed. They usually attend one of the reformed services.

Eric earned his bachelor of arts and masters degrees in education and his educational specialist in administration from Michigan State University. Eric and his wife Diane are both retired.

Before he retired Eric worked as a teacher and administrator for 13 years at Eau Claire Public Schools, 17 years as an Administrator at St. Joseph Public Schools and 11 years as an Athletic Director at Saint Joseph Catholic High School in South Bend.



**Caroline Kuntzman**

Caroline has been a member of Trinity since birth and is a regular member of the 9 a.m. Rejoice service. She was baptized and confirmed at Trinity and is an active member of the Youth Group. She will be attending the National Gathering and Youth Mission Trip this summer.

This will be Caroline's first year on council. She will be the youth representative.

Caroline is currently a junior at Forest Hills Northern High School. She is involved with its Cross Country and Model United Nations teams and is part of National Honors Society. She is also part of Northern's Writer's and Swing clubs.



**Tess Lundgren**

Tess has been a stay at home wife & mother since their move to Grand Rapids in 2002. She & Tim, her husband of 31 years, have 3 beautiful daughters. Abbey is working full time at Hopenetwork, Katarina is in 9th grade at Forest Hills Northern, and Alaina Rose is in 7th grade at Grand Rapids Christian.

Tess is the Director of Forest Hills Girl Scouts with 49 troops and 436 scouts from Kindergarten through 12th grade. She has a Cadet troop she has lead for 8 years now. Tess has spent a great deal of her time volunteering in her daughter's schools.

The Lundgren's started attending Trinity in the summer of 2013 and officially joined Trinity in the Fall of 2013. Since that time Tess has chaperoned youth trips to Springhill, The State Gathering, and our summer High School youth mission trip. She has taught in our Sunday School for several years. Tess is team leader for one of Trinity's Degage service teams. She serves Degage with her husband and girls and other team members. Tess serves on the Worship & Music committee. She is the Council liaison for the Youth & Family committee. Tess is also the committee chair of the Hospitality committee. Tess is in her 4th year of serving as a Confirmation Mentor. She also stepped into the role of acolyte coordinator. Tess is in her 3rd year serving as a Trinity Council member.

When not doing volunteer work Tess enjoys tent camping with her family, spending time in Copper Harbor at the family cabin, agate hunting along the shores of Lake Superior, fishing, hiking & exploring the back roads of Michigan. She is an avid game & card player. She loves all things creative including knitting, crocheting, making jewelry, baking, sewing, crafts and DIY projects.



**Mike Mason**

Mike joined Trinity in the Fall of 2013 with his wife, Sheri, and their 3 children, Tyler, Ethan, and Alexis. They usually attend one of the Rejoice services. Mike earned his bachelors degree in political science from the University of California-Berkeley. He also attended the University of Colorado-Denver where he earned a masters of science in finance and his MBA. Mike currently works for N2 Publishing as Director of Contracts and Legal Affairs.



**Rick Radke**

I have been a member of Trinity since 2001. My daughter, Allison (18), and son, Charlie (13), were both baptized here and have been active in various programs as they have grown older. We continue to live in the Ada area.

For those that don't know me, I am a partner in a Grand Rapids area law firm having worked with the firm for over 30 years. I am a member of the federal, state and local bar associations and participate in several other organizations and groups. I have been a member of the council for the past three years.

This has been an exciting time with the Cross Tower project, the Capital Campaign and now the Renovation Project. At the same time we continue to benefit from wonderful pastors, a great staff, and an active and caring congregation. I have decided to run again for Church Council so as to be in a position to continue to assist in a small way with the collective effort that makes Trinity the remarkable church that it is.



**Karen Unruh**

Karen and her husband Mike have been members of Trinity since moving to Ada in 2011. Raised in California in the PC (USA), she joined the ELCA while living in Mike’s native Minnesota (hotbed of Lutheranism) in 2009. Currently Karen facilitates the Tuesday morning Women’s Bible study, plays in the Resound bell choir, and is on the Children’s Ministry Committee. She also enjoys Trinity’s many social events, especially Trivia Night, which she has helped plan and write several times over the past 6 years. She and Mike have two very active children—Steven (5) and Megan (3).



**Phil Wittry**

Phil and Kelly Wittry joined Trinity in 2015 after moving to Grand Rapids from Cincinnati. They are empty nesters with their son, Andy, in Atlanta working for Turner Broadcasting, and their daughter Gretchen, a junior in college majoring in Strategic Communications. Phil and Kelly worship at the 10 a.m. Rejoice service, where they both volunteer as worship assistants.

Phil joined council in 2017 to fill a vacancy. While on Council, he has been one of the Council liaisons to the Property Committee along with Jim Coates. He is leading the church-wide efforts during construction to ensure that items of value are saved or donated as rooms are demolished for construction, and also coordinating extra people and tools to assist with the temporary relocation of staff and ministry groups that are displaced during construction. He has also been named the committee chair for the new Digital Communications Committee that is being formed to help Trinity’s staff, ministry groups, and program leaders effectively use the ever growing choices of digital communications that are available.

Phil has a BS in Computer Science from Southern Illinois University and an MBA from Xavier University. Phil (Information Technology) and Kelly (Sales) both work for Procter & Gamble, which is headquartered in Cincinnati. After 24 years they moved from their starter home and their church home (Good Shepherd Lutheran, ELCA) to start this next phase of life adventure, just as they were becoming empty nesters. West Michigan, Grand Rapids, and especially Trinity, have made this an amazing adventure that they look forward to continuing.



**Jim & Sue Coates**

Sue and I joined Trinity in 2012 after moving to Grand Rapids. After visiting several Churches we found a wonderful home at Trinity. We are both active in most aspects of our Sunday Worship services, bridge group, dinner group, Dégagé, and all of Pastor Bob's Study Groups. Sue is a Stephen Minister, active in Bible studies and Ladies bridge. Jim serves on Council, Finance & Property Committees and Men's Saturday morning breakfast committee. We are very excited about the future plans at Trinity and look forward to helping whenever and wherever we are able.

Jim Coates  
Carpe' Diem

---



**Bill and Meri Leidel**

Bill earned a bachelor of arts degree in management/accounting from Western New England College in Massachusetts. He worked in the tooling area of the plastics industry for 40+ years before retiring in 2007. During that time he volunteered in a number of business organizations, church councils and choirs, and community organizations principally in Scouting, Kairos Prison Ministry, and Meals on Wheels. He presently continues his association with MOW and volunteers at the KDL/Walker Library and Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park.

Meri earned her master's degree from Adelphi University in New York. After teaching on the high school level for nine years, Meri worked the following 25 years for Northwestern Mutual Life where she earned her CLU and ChFC certificates. During her career years, Meri volunteered on church councils and committees, Via de Cristo, Kairos Prison Ministry, and Meals on Wheels. She presently continues her association with MOW, and volunteers at Paul's Mom's Cookies who raise monies to support Degage Ministries.

Bill and Meri have two sons, one living in Grand Rapids and the other in Virginia Beach, and twelve grandchildren.



**Brad Blair**

Brad Blair has been a member of Trinity Lutheran since 1985. He and wife, Sherry, were married at Trinity in September of 1987 by then Pastor Jim Cobb. Their two adult children, Cal and Chris, were both baptized and confirmed at Trinity.

Brad has served Trinity in many ways over his 30+ years. For the past six years he has served on Trinity's Congregation Council holding the position of President for three of those years. Brad and Sherry are also co-chairs of the Trinity "Strengthen to Serve" Capital Campaign program. He also chaired the "Building for the Next Fifty Years" team which was a precursor for our current building renovation project. In addition Brad has been a member of Trinity's Adult Choir for nearly 20 years. He also serves as a Lector, Communion Assistant, Greeter, "overnight" IHN Host, God's Kitchen servant and Habitat Home Builder.



**Beth Hall**

Beth Hall has been a member at Trinity with her husband John for 13 years. This fall she sent three of her children away to begin college. With only one teen remaining at home, she started a full time position at GVSU as a visiting professor while working on a her masters degree.



**Brenda Heacock**

Brenda Heacock has been a member of Trinity Lutheran Church for 33 years and has served as a Sunday School teacher, congregation council member, Stephen Ministry Leader and on various committees. In addition, she has served on staff at Trinity as Partner In Ministry for Congregational Life. She has enjoyed positions as a travel agent and as a para-pro working with students with special needs. Community activities include helping to start PORT (Pediatric Oncology Resource Team) and the Down Syndrome Association of West Michigan. Brenda and her husband, Steve, love to spend time with their daughters, Sarah and Erica, and their families. Some of their best times are at their log cabin in northern Michigan where they enjoy kayaking, pontooning, cross-country skiing, hiking, bonfires, and very special family gatherings.



**Amy Stephan**

Amy is a lifelong Lutheran, having grown up with a father who is a Lutheran pastor, spending her childhood living at camp Michi-Lu-Ca and attending Wittenberg University. With a Masters in Educational Psychology from MSU, she is in her 30<sup>th</sup> year of teaching. She currently teaches at Grandville Middle School.

Amy has been a member of Trinity since the early 1990s. Her involvement within the church started as a middle school mentor, went on several retreats and Mission Trips and served on the Youth and Family Committee. After her own children were born, she began serving on the Children's Ministry Committee. Currently she chairs the Children's Ministry Committee, teaches Sunday School, volunteers with IHN and is a Confirmation mentor.

She and her husband Steve met at Trinity as middle school mentors. They have three children: Keely (their guardian angel), Charlotte (12) and Isaac (10).



*“Our scriptures have spoken to us, and our lives ought to speak back.”*

*“So herein lies the choice for those of us who are Christians. We can either stay within the Christianity we have mastered with the Jesus we have domesticated, or we can leave Christianity as a destination, embrace Christianity as a way of life, and then journey to reality, where God is present and living in every person, every human community, and all creation.”*

*Samir Selmanovic*

2017 was a year of building bridges in my ministry among the people of Trinity and in the wider community in which we live and serve. Our 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation initiative in the greater Grand Rapids area included intentional and ground-breaking cooperation and planning with the Catholic Diocese of Grand Rapids, culminating in a full house on Reformation Sunday as our two bishops presided over the Service of Common Prayer at the Cathedral of St. Andrew. We had the privilege of welcoming Pastor Orlando Ortiz and a delegation from our partners in the Honduran Lutheran community to lead us in worship at Trinity in August of 2017. Our “Standing Together” partnership between Christians, Jews and Muslims in Grand Rapids has been launched and is growing into a distinct mark of our faith community’s unity counternarrative in a time of growing mistrust and division in our wider culture. We brought these efforts at building bridges to a beautiful conclusion on November 20 as Trinity hosted the Community Interfaith Thanksgiving Service for the first time in that service’s 18-year history. Our sanctuary was full of the diversity of our metropolitan area’s faith community. Our Christian faith was a bit less “domesticated” in our openness to such initiatives as these.

As I mark five years since I was introduced to the people of Trinity at the Annual Meeting in 2013, I am grateful to be a part of a growing and vibrant congregation. We received 64 new members into our congregation in 2017. On All Saints Sunday, we marked the deaths of nine Trinity members and the baptisms of 22. I had the privilege of leading a dozen of our fifth graders in a Holy Communion class during Lent, and then joined Pastor Dan and his fifteen confirmands in a celebration of their faith formation in May, a new date for Confirmation Sunday during the Easter season. At yearend, more than 1300 gathered to proclaim “God with us” in worship on Christmas Eve.

2017 was a good year in strengthening the leadership team at Trinity. It was at the Annual Meeting in January of 2017 that we voted to extend a call to our new Assisting Pastor Karen Niemeyer. Pastor Karen was ordained and installed into that office on February 26. Pastor Dan has been among us for nearly two years as we gather in Annual Meeting, and our new Children, Youth and Family staff team has been serving for most of a year and a half. Joanna Waite joined our staff team as Finance Assistant and Amelia Crist joined us as Trinity’s Wedding Coordinator in the last year. Along with a veteran staff in other areas of our parish ministry, this group is deeply gifted and committed to the mission and ministry we share. I am grateful to be a partner with this team of servant ministers.

We made significant gains in moving toward our building project in 2017. After most of a year of remediation, the cross was raised on the tower on February 20 and the completed Cross Tower was rededicated on June 11. The Cross Tower project and the parking lot debt were paid off as a first wave of capital campaign donations were received and



progress on the main building project progressed through Schematic Design, Design Development and Construction Documents. Owen Ames Kimball (OAK) was contracted to serve as our Construction Manager for the project, a construction loan was procured through the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA, and the September 10 Congregation Meeting authorized the \$4.5 million main facilities project with 95% voting in favor of that project. As this Annual Meeting gathers, OAK is working with us to gather bids from subcontractors and we are beginning to prepare for the first phase of a major project to break ground in April of 2018. Throughout 2017, our offering giving has remained strong and above anticipated receipts, strengthening our sense of mission and ministry even as we assume the daunting stewardship of a major building project.

We began offering the common cup during Holy Communion at every service of worship on Easter Sunday in 2017. We began as well to project a new pattern of worship that will result from the newly renovated Centennial Hall Rejoice worship space. Tentatively, we are hoping to begin an 8 a.m. traditional, 9:15 a.m. Rejoice and 10:45 a.m. traditional worship pattern on Sunday mornings during the building project, a new model that we will carry into the completed project, shifting from four to three worship services on Sundays with intentional time for fellowship added into our rhythm of life together. Meetings with Rejoice worship leaders have been fruitful as we prepare for displacement during the building project and arrival in a newly refurbished space as it concludes. Eleven weddings are on my schedule for 2018, along with, perhaps, a "Blessing of the Animals" as we commemorate St. Francis next October.

I have continued to enjoy the privilege of facilitating adult studies on Wednesdays, with courses on the Church and Homosexuality, Islam, introducing the Lutherans and Luther's Small Catechism, in addition to courses led by Pastor Dan and Pastor Frank Rothfuss during those Wednesday morning and evening time slots. A Bible overview, "Manna and Mercy" is underway in January of 2018, and by the spring I will be leading "The Lutheran Course on Marriage" for those interested in that immersion. Additionally, I have led the Bible studies at the quarterly Men's Breakfasts in 2017, and enjoyed that occasional fellowship as it has begun to mature in our life together.

A new Archives Committee formed in the summer of 2017 to care for our historical records and help us plan for a new historical display in the completed building project. Looking ahead into the new year, I am grateful to see the return of "Grace Groups," small group Bible studies in Lent, and the renewal of "The Young and the Sleepless," a young families fellowship ministry to connect our many young families at Trinity. And I am amazed at the privilege of traveling with my "Standing Together" clergy partners to Israel a bit later this month, visiting the holy sites for Christians, Jews and Muslims, and with the Trinity Travelers to Greece next September as we journey in the footsteps of the Apostle Paul.

It remains my distinct privilege to serve as one of your pastors at Trinity. Grateful for what we have shared, I am enlivened by what our God has in store for our new year together. May our lives in faith "speak back" to the God of our forebears with discipleship living in grace and peace, mercy and forgiveness, in Christ's name.

Respectfully submitted,

Pastor Bob Linstrom, Senior Pastor



## Report of the Associate Pastor to the Congregation

Trinity Lutheran Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan

January 2018

*<sup>7</sup>Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for you reap whatever you sow. <sup>8</sup>If you sow to your own flesh, you will reap corruption from the flesh; but if you sow to the Spirit, you will reap eternal life from the Spirit. <sup>9</sup>So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up. <sup>10</sup>So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith. – Galatians 6:7-9*

It has been my joy to work with you in sowing the work of the Spirit in the greater Grand Rapids area and beyond this past year. This work is never easy, but amazingly beneficial. Let us continue to strive to follow the ways the Lord is leading us. Always remembering the words of Genesis 12:1-3; that we are blessed to be a blessing.

To help all our youth understand and live this we have made significant changes to all our youth programming to help them see how this is possible in their lives. Many of the changes have been alterations of our programming to help better model this life style.

Last summer it was my joy to spend a week with many of our youth at Stony Lake Bible Camp. There we laughed, played, and got to know each other better all while learning more about how God was active in our lives. We also spent time contemplating how we can better live into this rhythm in our daily lives, not just at camp. I look forward to this week next summer.

This past June I traveled to Norristown, Pennsylvania, with twenty-nine youth and seven adults from our congregation on a mission trip. While there we helped renovate homes for residents of the community and shared what God has done for each of us, while learning what God was already doing there. I continue to thank all the chaperones, parents, volunteers, and fund-raising coordinators for their work in making this life changing experience a possibility in the lives of our youth. These mission trips are an amazing way to help our youth see how they can be God's hands and feet.

Last December we also sent three high school youth to the Lansing Gathering. This is a four-day event organized by our friends at Living Water Ministries. It draws youth from all over Michigan and the surrounding states to Lansing to learn from one another about how God is moving now. It is an amazing event I am hoping more of our youth take advantage of.

This fall we altered the flow of our Confirmation classes. The first and second weeks of the month our middle school youth gather for youth group before class. The third week of the month they gather after class for dinner and a fun activity in the community. The fourth week of the month our students venture out into the community to serve instead of class. This schedule has allowed our youth to grow closer to each other, our neighbors, and God through a variety of experiences. This year we have been learning about the Old testament, and the 10 Commandments. We also moved Confirmation Sunday up to the first Sunday in May as a way of helping celebrate with our confirmands.

Sixteen middle schoolers attended Charge last year. This was a three-day conference at the Great Wolf Lodge in Traverse City. This event was organized by our friends at Living Water Ministries. The weekend was specifically organized to impact the lives of middle school youth and help them see God. It was like camp for a weekend in a hotel with a water park. Our middle schoolers had an amazing experience and twenty-one are already signed up to attend this year's Charge!

This fall we also unveiled a new schedule for our senior high ministries. On the first Sunday of every month our senior high youth gather in the youth room for Bible study during the 10 am service. The group also meets monthly to either learn from our

neighbors or head into the community for a variety of activities. We are also excited to participate in a 30-hour famine in March to help us understand hunger across the globe. This new schedule has helped draw our senior high youth together and provided a broad spectrum of experiences for them to see God.

Next summer is a busy one in the lives of our senior high youth. Thirty youth are already confirmed for a mission trip to Troy, Missouri, and fifteen will be headed to Houston, Texas, to participate in the ELCA National Youth Gathering. Both trips promise to be amazing life altering experiences. To fund these experiences, we have five fund raisers planned through the year: selling wreaths in the fall, sponsor a mile in February, Easter breakfast in April, rummage sale in May and a summer competitive can drive. Thank you for how you support the youth of our community. You continue to make a difference in their lives.

We have continued to deepen our relationship with Living Water Ministries. We participate in their weekend events for our middle and high schooler in addition to camp. Additionally, we are giving a tithe of the funds raised for our own camp scholarship fund to the Living Water Ministries scholarship fund, modeling to our youth how we support those beyond our community.

I continue to love worshiping at all our services as we express our adoration to God for all that has been done for us. My family continues to love being a part of our faithing community. I look forward to watching Sam and Ben grow as young men and people of faith with all of you. Thank you for being a blessing to us.

It is my joy and honor to serve as one of your pastors. I look forward to the ministry God continues to lead us into. May we never tire of doing the work God has called us to.

Respectfully submitted,

Pastor Dan Schewe, Associate Pastor



*But now, this is what the Lord says.....“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.”*  
Isaiah 43:1-3

It doesn't seem possible that we have journeyed together *through* an entire year since you called me as your assisting pastor...and ten months since I was ordained and began doing ministry alongside each of you, Pastor Bob, Pastor Dan and the Trinity Staff. Yes, we have journeyed together *through* a lot in this short time; but the wonderful thing has been that as tough as the year has been for the Niemeyers as Ted's health declined and we traveled *through* his heavenly homecoming, it was also a year filled with joy and gratitude for the blessings of your caring for us as fellow Trinity members. Yes, God has helped me *through* this year, sweetening my life *through* your ministry to Ted and me and *through* my ministry among you.

As your assisting pastor, my year has centered on working alongside the other pastors and staff members in pastoral care and visitation of our homebound and hospitalized members, building community with seniors, and periodic worship assistance and preaching and presiding at our sacraments (all of which have taken up the majority of my ten-plus-hour work weeks). However, in the coming months I look forward to creatively planning my time to also include working with our gifted Trinity staff on some volunteer coordination and recruiting and equipping leaders as we share God's love with each other, our community, our nation and our world.

Making pastoral care visits to Trinity homebound and hospitalized members has been especially rewarding to me, as it has been such an honor to be welcomed into your homes and lives to bring a message of God's power and presence during good as well as tough times. I've learned much from these special visits. And along with my visits, it has been a joy to work with Trinity Parish Nurse Linda Heine in beginning the *Trinity in Touch* ministry, in which 25+ Trinity women and men are making monthly visits to our homebound members. Getting this ministry off the ground took a sizable part of my time this year as Linda and I recruited, trained, and made initial visits alongside each of the *Trinity in Touch* visitors.

Another real joy has been working with Carol and Dan Butler to begin our *Life Begins at 60* seniors' group. Truly, this was a group "just waiting to happen." Since its inception we have had full tables of 30+ senior citizens at each monthly event, enjoying one other's company at various Grand Rapids restaurants. We also hope to gather for a potluck sometime this summer, probably at Trinity, where we can *all come together* without the 30-people size restriction.

One thing I've learned through listening to and watching all of you is that Trinity is led by and filled with wonderfully gifted people who know Jesus as their Lord and Savior and who deeply care for each other. You are living proof of what it means to be a family of faith. So as we continue our journey together through another year, I am so thankful to be your assisting pastor; and I look forward to building even closer relationships with each of you as we worship and work together as God's family.

Together in Christ,  
Pastor Karen

I was elected as the Congregation Council President in June of this year and while I served on the Council prior to my election, it has been a great privilege and honor to serve Trinity Lutheran as President and a great pleasure to work with the Council. Your Congregation Council is made up of a diverse group of highly talented, passionate, caring and devoted individuals that consistently show me that God is doing serious, good work through Trinity.

The following are some highlights of the past year:

**Standing Together** - This is a coalition, led by Pastor Bob, off different faith groups in Grand Rapids: Trinity, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Temple Emanuel, and Masjid At-Tawheed Mosand. On the evening of January 26, a group of Trinity members attended an event at the Masjid-Tawheed mosque on East Paris. Guests were of diverse faith backgrounds, but spent time together sharing conversation and a meal. Several other events throughout the year were held to support the coalition's mission to increase interfaith dialogue, foster relationships between congregations, and increase congregant's knowledge of different faiths.

**Ordination/Installation of Pastor Karen Niemeyer** – Pastor Karen's ordination was held February 26 with Bishop Craig Satterlee presiding and Karen's Internship Supervisor, Pastor David Dockweiler of Christ Lutheran Church, Wyoming, preaching. The addition of Pastor Karen is a great blessing for Trinity in that Pastor Niemeyer's work has led to the expansion of ministry and continues to increase the strength of our Pastoral Team.

**Strengthen to Serve Capital Campaign and the Mission Investment Fund Construction Loan** – On September 10 a Congregation Meeting was held with over 150 members in attendance in order to provide an update on the building project and review the proposed building design and financing. At this meeting, the Congregation voted to approve the project. This was a significant day in the life of Trinity; with their votes, Trinity Members overwhelmingly indicated in their investment in our physical house and the continued growth of Trinity's spiritual reach for years to come.

**IHN/Family Promise** – Again this year, the Congregation continued to support this important program to help community families in need our support, compassion and prayers. I want to thank all of the Trinity members that have supported this program and encourage you to consider getting involved if you have not already volunteered. The Congregation Council has staffed one week of IHN each year, and I can personally say that it is a very rewarding experience. A special thanks to Kathy Bush for her leadership of this important program.

**Cross Tower** – This was a difficult project with many unexpected twists and turns, however, due to the focused efforts of many dedicated members, the project was successfully completed and the Cross Tower rededicated on June 11. Additionally, to improve sight lines, trees were cut down and trimmed along the western edge of the church property providing a stunning view of the Cross Tower and allowing the beautiful architecture of Trinity to physically serve as a visual beacon of faith in the Grand Rapids area.

**Trinity Youth** – The Trinity Youth have been well represented on Council this year by Julia Kessel. June 18 was the Send Off Sunday for the mission trip to Norristown, PA. Thirty-one youth and 7 adults participated. Julia also submitted a heartfelt letter to the Council requesting the Church's support in attending the 2018 summer youth mission trip. As this is her last year in high school, she expressed that she couldn't imagine her senior summer without a mission trip while also acknowledging that attending both the National Gathering and a summer mission trip impacts costs. The Council voted unanimously to help fund the 2018 Mission Trip and the National Gathering in large part due to Julia's thoughtful and measured request on behalf of her youth group and church community.

I also want to thank Neil Sandler and Emma Hall whose terms on Council expired this year, and welcome Kate Bredwell, Chris Engle, and Julia Kessel who joined the council in June.

Looking forward to 2018, the actual construction work of the building renovation will be a dominant factor in our day-to-day life at Trinity that will undoubtedly cause some inconvenience. It will be important to be understanding and tolerant when you are inconvenienced by the construction and appreciate that the inconvenience will be short lived; God is at work at Trinity and any short-term inconvenience will certainly be well worth it.

I ask for your prayers for the Congregation Council as we continue to serve Trinity with the health and wellbeing of the Congregation and the faith based mission of Trinity Lutheran as our number one focus.

#### **Thessalonians 1:4-5 NIV**

**4** Therefore, among God's churches we boast about your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and trials you are enduring. **5** All this is evidence that God's judgment is right, and as a result you will be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering.

Grace and peace,

**Paul Crist**

President, Congregation Council

**Trinity Benevolence Preliminary Report - 2017**

**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 2017 distribution for benevolence totaled \$16,500.00. After careful consideration, the members of the Outreach Committee and the Congregation Council made the following decisions regarding the six organizations that would benefit financially from these one-time gifts:

CASA (Court-Appointed Special Advocates), Habitat for Humanity, Home Repair Services, ELCA Seminarian Fund, Living Water Ministries and St. Mark’s Church in Aurora, CO.



In late 2017, Trinity received a gift of \$12,500.00 from an anonymous donor specifically for benevolence. Trinity’s Outreach Committee voted unanimously that the donation be evenly distributed among four organizations: Baxter Community Center, Inner City Christian Federation, The Pantry and Exalta Health.

**Preliminary Report of 2017 Benevolence to Date**

Organization	Benevolence
Access of West Michigan	\$2,820.98
Baxter Community Center	\$564.20
Dégagé Ministries	\$3,385.28
Dwelling Place	\$705.25
Exalta Health	\$1,410.49
Family Promise (IHN)	\$3,949.38
God's Kitchen	\$846.29
Habitat for Humanity	\$3,385.28
Heartside Ministry	\$846.29
Home Repair Services	\$1,410.49
Hope Community Church	\$564.20
ICCF (Inner City Christian Federation)	\$987.35
In the Image	\$2,820.98
Living Water Ministries	\$987.35
Mission India	\$705.25
The Pantry	\$846.29
Samaritas Senior Living	\$1,128.39
SECOM	\$846.29
ELCA Disaster Response	\$1,940.00
ELCA World Hunger	\$8,564.00

As part of Trinity’s 2017 budget, a total of \$34,000.00 was approved for benevolence. That total has been distributed on a quarterly basis to 18 organizations over the past year.

Trinity’s budgeted benevolence is distributed using a percentage formula. On the left is a summary of some of the gifts that Trinity has been blessed to distribute through the third quarter of this fiscal year.

Please keep in mind that, since our fiscal year does not end until January 31, this is a preliminary report. The complete 2017 benevolence report will be published in the March, 2018 edition of Trinity’s monthly newsletter, *The Messenger*.

The Children's Ministry Committee works with ministry and programs that involve our youth from birth through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Current committee members are: Kathy Bush, Elizabeth Derbin, Chris Becker, Karen Unruh, Joanna Waite, Rob Ferguson and Amy Stephan. We work with and support the following part time staff:

Rachele Battreall – Director of Family Ministry  
Brittany Fischer – Sunday School Coordinator  
James Morin – Family Activities Coordinator  
Awilda Diaz – Nursery Coordinator

A HUGE thank you to all church members who have volunteered their time as teachers, teacher assistants and helpers at various activities. None of these programs and events could happen without you!

**Sunday Morning Education** - Continue to use the Lectionary based Spark curriculum. It follows the church calendar, so the children are learning about the same Bible stories that are being read in the Sunday morning services. We are averaging 60 kids each week. This year we were able to take kids on "field trips" within the church to meet with Pastor Bob or Pastor Dan.

Each classroom has a lead teacher and a second adult assistant. We continue to need more volunteers to keep this adult to child ratio. If you are willing to help in either role please contact Brittany Fisher. She'd love to hear from you and answer any questions you may have.

### **Key Events in 2017**

**Kids Against Hunger Meal Packing** – This took place in February and was a multi-generational activity. Over 19,000 meals packed (2,000 more than last year).

**Sock Hop** – Saturday afternoon, 25 attended, milkshakes and popcorn served, Chris Shannon – guest D.J.

**Easter Egg Hunt** – Easter Sunday, 1300 eggs hidden, about 70 kids attended

**Pancakes and Play Time** – June and November, for families with kids 0-4, 50+ attended each event

**Vacation Bible School (VBS)** – 60+ registered, VBS was held in the evenings this year and included a dinner and adult Bible Study.

**Blessing of Backpacks (for kindergarteners)** – students received blessing during services

**Stony Lake Summer Camp** – Pastor Dan and 30+ youth attended camp for a week, scholarships help pay for a bulk of the cost

**Welcome to Preschool Sunday School** – 3 year old's received Storybook Bibles, parents attended class

**Rally Sunday** – A fall kickoff of our Sunday School with time to register students, see classrooms

**Trunk or Treat** – Moved inside because of weather, about 175 attended

**Operation Christmas Child** – youth offering helped fund, children filled 30 boxes during Sunday School time

**Christmas Pageant** – About 50 children read and sang about the Christmas Story during the service

Respectfully Submitted,

Amy Stephan – Children's Ministry Chairperson

2017 has been a busy year, we tried some new programs and retired one that's run its course. I am continually amazed that I get to be a part of this wonderful church family and look to the exciting opportunities for the future of ministry here in this place. It has been an extreme joy doing ministry with Neil Sandler as my council liaison, brother in Christ, friend for the last 5 1/2 years. Brad Blair has taken over as the Congregational Life council liaison. Neil is staying with me and now serves on the Congregational Life committee.

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

**Altar Flowers/Altar Flower Delivery:** Diane Biser has been doing an amazing job handling the altar flowers. The altar flower signup genius has gone okay but we still do not get enough folks to donate so there are flowers every Sunday. Some members feel that during special seasons (Advent/Lent/Special Festival Days) that there should be flowers every Sunday. 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. Since Mrs. Biser has been doing the flowers they truly last a decent amount of time. I am not embarrassed to deliver these flowers to our beloved members. 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. The evening brought together approximately 19 hostesses and their 99 guests. This event coincided with housing our IHN families. Sylvia Stouten met with some of IHN mothers the previous week at the Day Center to invite them to the event. Four of the IHN ladies attended. This is the first event that any IHN families has participated in. Sylvia heard good things about their experience. We once again invited Kristi Huseby back. Kristi's presentation was followed by fabulous desserts and beautiful music performed by some of Trinity's youth Leah Bredwell, Elena Griewahn and Tori Shannon along with some of Trinity's adults Anna Griewahn, Kate Bredwell, Karen Betz-Griewahn and Melissa Haneline. It was a truly blessed night for all who attended.

**Angels of Advent Tea:** Again this year we had a spectacular response to our Angels of Advent Tea. For several girls this was their last one before moving up to being able to participate in Advent by Candlelight. We had 30 mothers/grandmothers/aunts and 34 young ladies age 3-12 R.S.V.P. to attend. The afternoon was filled with a time of fellowship, fun and food. Crafts with lots and lots of **GLITTER**. As always the chocolate fountain was hit, we had milk and dark chocolate and the new addition of tea sandwiches was enjoyed too. We had a great turnout. This event continues to be a wonderful memory maker.

**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 recommendation of Pastor Karen Niemeyer to serve as our Assisting Pastor.

**Car Show and Remote Control Car Races** This year I worked with James Morin, family Activity Coordinator to offer an event for dads/uncles/grandfathers/guardians and sons/nephews/grandsons. The event was attended by approximately 35-40 people. We had five cars on display. Several teenagers brought the remote control cars. We had some difficulty securing cars. The weekend we chose it turned there were other car events this same weekend. For those who attended it was a fun time and an opportunity to catch up and had great fellowship.

**Dinner Groups:** Dinner Groups continue to draw about 50-55 members a year to participate in getting to know other members. We once again had a few new members participate. 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 Meal program has once again increased the number of families and meals we have provided to members in need. Finding rides for our beloved elderly members and others with special needs ride requests continue to go unmet. In 2017, we served approximately 15 families which were over 375 meals provided Trinity members.

**Homebound Ministry (Bulletin Mailing and DVD's):** We continue to send bulletins 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 2017, the new member program continues to evolve and have some continuous improvement to meet the needs of the individuals and families who are finding a church home at Trinity. We had 30 new households join Trinity in 2017, which breaks down to 50 adults and 15 children.

**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 partnered with the new Trinity in Touch ministry to deliver 45 poinsettias. We had 23 Trinity in Touch volunteers deliver poinsettias to their member. Then we had an additional 10 volunteers who delivered the remaining 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. This was also the third year that members who lost loved ones were included in the deliveries this year. Once again the Tuesday morning quilters provided quilts for many of the Poinsettia receivers.

**Prayer Ministry:** The electronic prayer chain continues to be a significant part of the prayer ministry of Trinity. The goal of expanding the electronic prayer chain continues. The prayer request form that was on the website has been removed due to lack of use. The yellow Let's Connect cards and calls/emails to the office are how most of the prayer requests are submitted by our members.

The Prayer Tree is in its third year. This year it was a bit more difficult to find pray-ers, several of the prayers wanted to take a break this year. Our year end party was attended by almost 120 of the pray-ers and prayees. The third year of the Prayer Tree began with an increase of young people in utero-18 being prayed for. We had 92 children signed up. The continuous improvement from 2016 were we had children group in sibling groups and individuals was a wonderful success. In 2017, we continued with this pattern and have not had any children fall through the cracks. We also have Shadrach and Gladys Peter from Neerekshe/Mission India Partners praying for a family. The hope is that next year we can pray for several of the children of Neerekshe and they will pray for several of our children.

**Start of Summer Celebration:** Our annual summer kickoff event was great for all who attended. We actually were able to have the event outside. This year Tom Shannon DJ'd the event and he gained a couple helpers who really enjoyed helping DJ. We had a limbo contest, face painting, bingo. Next year's event will be on Wednesday, June 20, 2018. It is exciting to be collaborating with James Morin, Trinity's Family Activity Coordinator.

**Wednesday Night Suppers:** In Fall of 2017, the Wednesday Night Suppers were retired. This program has run its course. Due to lack of volunteers, meal coordinators/cooks and dwindling attendance the meals did not happen.

**Advent Suppers:**

The Baked Potato Bar for the 2017 Advent Meals returned and continued to be a hit with the members. This year we used Thrivent Action Team funds of \$250 to purchased items for the meals. We were using the free-will offering as a part fundraiser to help with the Kids Coalition Against Hunger. Due to a serve winter storm we had to cancel one of the Wednesday night meals. A **TREMENDOUS** thank you goes to Linda and John Holm, Neil Sandler and Bill and Meri Leidel, members who contributed toppings, and help with cleanup etc., and who helped make these meals a wonderful and come off without a hitch.

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

**Enrollment program:** Trinity member Jo Murphy, once again, offered her expertise and met with congregation members and/or their loved ones to assist them with enrolling in Medicare and Medicaid. Thank you to Jo Murphy volunteering her expertise and services.

**Memorial Candles of Loved Ones**

The Memorial Candle initiative continues and brings peace to the family members of a loved one who has passed away.

In 2017, we gave away 18 memorial candles.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela G. Davis – Director of Congregational Life

Brad Blair – Congregational Life Council Liaison

Neil Sendler – Congregational Life Committee member

Jo Murphy – Congregational Life Committee member

Joyce Bonbrake – Congregational Life Committee member



## *Review of Reports - Fellowship Committee for 2017*

The Fellowship Committee plans and provides 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 fellowship events, please consider inviting others to join you. For those who have never participated, we encourage you to join us. We have a great time together!

Some of the fellowship events at Trinity in 2017 included Trivia Night, Soup Suppers, Spring and Fall JOYful Days, Deck the Halls of Trinity, JOYful Days Holiday Luncheon and the Scandinavian Smorgasbord.

Thank you to the many Trinity members who 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 for 2017*

I would like to thank the following people for serving on the Finance committee during 2017: Gordy Engstrom, John Basher, John Johnson, Jim Coates, Peter McKinney, and Pastor Bob, and TLC's Finance Assistant Joanna Waite. We remember the many years of service to Trinity and the Finance Committee by Ted Niemeyer; Ted's insurance expertise and wry sense of humor will indeed be missed.

We again had an external audit (Review of Agreed Upon Procedures) completed this year and subsequently approved by council. An internal audit is planned for 2018. Thank you to the members of Trinity's Audit Committee.

I also want to thank our hard-working Treasurer John Basher for his reliable flow of understandable monthly financial data to our committee members, and for his collaboration with TLC's committee leaders to help analyze our congregation's priorities and resultant financial needs to determine the 2018 budget. Besides the expenses of ongoing operations and our standing committees, Finance Committee also evaluated the level of borrowing needed (in the form of a Construction Loan) as physical implementation of the Strengthen to Serve campaign breaks ground early in 2018.

The Finance Committee meets the third Monday of every other month to discuss and give guidance to the financials of Trinity. Next meeting is January 22, 2018 at 6:00 PM. If you have any questions or concerns please contact anybody on the Finance Committee.

George Bauer, Chair

## Health Advisory Committee (HAC)

The vision of the Health Advisory Committee at Trinity Lutheran Church is to share God's gifts of love and grace to promote spiritual, physical, and emotional wellbeing.

HAC members in 2017 include: Council Liaison, Carol Butler, Parish Nurse, Linda Heine; Co-chairs Jan Palm and Petra Rotzell, Janet Chobanian, Meri Leidel, and Cindy Zientarski. We would like to remember John Ritch who was our chair. John died after a courageous battle with brain cancer August 4<sup>th</sup>. We have missed him.

Activities this year included:

1. Blood drives held in March, July and November. Thanks so much to Sue Babin who coordinated these blood drives. The blood bank reports that goals were achieved at each event held.
2. Flu Clinic held in October with 50 participants receiving vaccinations.
3. Under Healthy Trinity, *Walking to Wittenberg*' program started April 1. The goal of this program was to encourage walking or any other physical activity and track miles/steps as well as highlighting the Reformation. 20 Trinity members completed the program and collectively walked 7,625 miles.
4. A Chair Yoga experience was led by Susan Duesberry on April 19<sup>th</sup>. 30 people attended this event. Thanks to Cindy Zientarski for coordinating this event.
5. Sherry and Brad Blair offered 2 Bicycle events; one in September & another October 8<sup>th</sup>.
6. On November 19<sup>th</sup> Sister Nancy Brousseau led a session on *Befriending Silence as an Everyday Companion* where attendees experienced an introduction to Centering Prayer and Lectio Divina. This event, coordinated and promoted by Carol Butler, was very well received by about 40 people. We will look at another event in 2018.

## Parish Nurse

### **Parish Nurse visiting ministry:**

Approximately 790 contacts including phone calls, notes/cards; hospital, nursing/rehab, home visits; homebound/private communion, office visits, and referrals from Pastoral Staff as well as referrals to resource agencies and Stephen Ministry.

### **Trinity in Touch**

Trinity in Touch-Pastor Karen's many gifts and talents allowed us to put Trinity in Touch into place. We again identified homebound members and recruited visitors in a more formal program which included tracking visits. Norm Palm has tracked visits with the volunteer visitors reporting to him by text, email or phone. He created a database for Pastor Karen and the Parish Nurse to see how the visiting is going. Currently there are 25 visitors and 26 visitees. Pastor Bob provided training to those visitors who were interested in bringing homebound communion.

Don and Cheryl Bushman generously paid for 10 portable communion sets. Now each person who provides homebound communion is able to take a communion set on the first Sunday of the month when *Sending of Holy Communion* is done during the service.

Gloria VonderHeide continues to fill and place the portable communion sets on the alter the first Sunday of the month. Now she is filling 15-16 sets each month.

We are thankful to all the Trinity in Touch visitors, Norm, and Gloria for their faithful service and ministries.

**Monthly Pastoral/Parish Nurse Visiting schedule was created.**

Hopefully each of our identified homebound receive a pastoral /parish nurse monthly visit along with hospital and hospice visits. (Coupled with Trinity in Touch each homebound visitee receives 2 visits per month.)

**James Morin, Family Activity Coordinator became a CPR instructor** for the American Red Cross. James has agreed to provide CPR training to meet our Trinity needs. The nursery staff was certified in CPR on November 19<sup>th</sup>. We are anticipating a training for Trinity Ushers in January and we will assess CPR needs for other groups.

With James as a CPR instructor, Trinity also entered into an agreement with the American Red Cross designating Trinity to be an Authorized Provider. This agreement allows James to provide CPR instruction at Trinity. This agreement expires 3/21/2020.

**Calvin College**

Calvin College junior nursing students visited on 2 separate occasions to learn about the role of Parish Nursing here at Trinity.

**Grand Rapids Health Ministry Consortium (GRHMC) attended 2 meetings.**

Thank you for the privilege of serving as your Parish Nurse!

Linda Heine, BSN, RN Parish Nurse

**Committee Members:** Kathy Bush, Kris Fox, Gayl Kessel, Tess Lundgren, Carrie Wygmans

**SPECIAL EVENTS:**

This committee is still in its infancy. We are discussing and forming our mission and goals. One area of focus will be special events like the recent Interfaith Thanksgiving Celebration. We, as the committee, will coordinate the hospitality/receptions at special events. To do this effectively we need to identify parishioners who enjoy providing snacks, appetizers, desserts, sides, and entrees. We would like to form a list of such individuals we can reach out to whenever we have an event we are coordinating. Please contact Tess Lundgren, tesslundgren@gmail.com, with your contact information if you are interested.

**INTERFAITH THANKSGIVING CELEBRATION HOSPITALITY:**

The Hospitality Committee coordinated the reception for the 18th Annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Celebration in November. We had over 450 guests and coordinated donations from many of the partner congregations as well as providing food and drinks from Trinity.

**WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS & VISITORS:**

Another area of focus for our committee will be welcoming both visitors and new members. We are exploring the best approaches for welcoming people to and within Trinity. How can we show these new people in our midst that they are welcome and invited into our fellowship beyond the Sunday morning worship? We welcome your ideas.

*Review of Reports - Human Resources Committee, 2017*

The Human Resources Committee members bring a wealth of knowledge and compassion when advising on staff related initiatives. Our committee consists of Joni Korb, Carrie Boer, Jan Palm and Stacey Curtiss.

The cycle continues with reviews and setting of performance goals and objectives with the TLC staff. The committee has also reached out to staff to offer to listen to any concerns they may have.

With the departure of Ashlee Wetherington from the part-time Finance Assistant role, the team put together a plan to recruit, interview and hire a new individual. The interviews resulted in the hiring of Joanna Waite.

Respectfully submitted,

Stacey Curtiss

Committee Chair

This committee provides financial, tangible gifts, and volunteer help to local agencies. We also provide assistance to worldwide agencies to help those in need. This committee is in need of new members. Please see or call Bruce Schlanderer (616-949-4173) for information on joining this committee.

> SECOM and John Knox Food Pantry - The members of TLC donate food to these pantries to help people in need of food.

> Feeding America in West Michigan - FA provides food (canned goods, produce, frozen food and meat) to pantries in West Michigan, Northern Michigan and the Upper Peninsula.

> God's Kitchen provides hot meals to those in need. TLC has provided volunteers to help prepare meals, serve meals, and clean up whenever there is a fifth Saturday in a month.

> Family Promise/Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN) - TLC provides one week of shelter, meals, and hospitality for homeless families four times a year. This is done on a rotating basis with other churches in the GR area. This is a good volunteer opportunity for TLC members.

> Dégagé - Provides shelter and activities for the homeless in GR. TLC provides volunteers to serve food to those in need. Dégagé also provides for purchase \$2 vouchers that people can give to panhandlers.

> Habitat for Humanity - This organization builds homes for homeless families. TLC helps with the build by providing volunteers to help build the home. The people receiving these homes are screened for need and must participate in the building of the home. They receive a mortgage and pay for the home. Many churches and organizations participate in the build.

> ACCESS of West Michigan - This organization coordinates the food pantries in Kent County, and is helping to move the pantries to be Resource Centers providing more than food to those in need. They also provide casework help to congregations.

Trinity Lutheran also helps agencies by collecting socks, underwear, personal care items, diapers, school supplies, bus tickets, coats, blankets and cleaning supplies.

Trinity Lutheran also helps with Lutheran World Relief quilts, Operation Christian Child, Honduras Synod Team, and Neerekshe India Mission.

Partnership with Congress Elementary School - This relationship was started in 2016 and has been successful. Trinity provided reading tutors through the end of the 2016-17 school year but the program for volunteers to help children with reading was discontinued. Trinity continues to collect a variety of requested school supplies in late summer for use when school begins. Interested TLC members could volunteer at Congress Elementary School by coaching various sports teams, supervising recess and/or supervising in the lunch room.

World Hunger and Disaster Response are addressed through the work of the ELCA.

Yours in Christ, Bruce Schlanderer - Committee Chairperson

Over this past year, the Property Committee has overseen the completion of the Cross Tower Rehabilitation work just in time for our Easter celebration. The work was started in June 2016 and a rededication ceremony was held June 11, 2017. With the extensive repairs complete, we expect to have many years of trouble free enjoyment of this church icon.

A number of facility upgrades were completed during the year including installation of a lockable enclosure for our washer/dryer in the education wing and a complete upgrade of parking lot lights to LED technology. Energy savings as well as much better quality lights are now realized. We also renewed a contract for lawn care and snow removal with the same company we have used for years.

The Property Committee, as is typical for many buildings of 50 plus years, had a host of needed equipment and fixture repair needs. These included: dish washer and freezer service calls, numerous roof leaks and associated ceiling repairs, boiler control problems, and gutter heat tape repairs.

This fall, in anticipation of our upcoming building project, we began moving courtyard shrubs and plants that could be salvaged. This included a significant effort from volunteers and we are very grateful for the help by many.

As we anticipate a major building project starting in Spring 2018, planning is underway for the temporary movement, storage and/or gifting of furniture and equipment before the work starts. We also anticipate the need for temporary offices and meeting spaces during this next 12 months and longer.

The Property Committee has been served over this past year by: Jim Coates and Phil Wittry- Council Liaisons, Gene Gunderson, Niki Ferguson-Facility Sexton, Mark Johnson, Dale Barkema, Dan Workman, Fran Anderson, Dave Mester, Fred Wilcox, Bob Heine, Roger Marks, Bill Bruin and Frank Remsburg, Chairman. We are blessed to have this dedicated and committed group working to keep our church and grounds in the best condition possible. Finally, a special remembrance of Dick Tedford, a long serving and faithful member of this Committee who passed away in November.

Respectfully submitted by

Frank Remsburg, Property Chairman



For nineteen 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 Dan, 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.

In June, we bid farewell to one of our Faceless band leaders-Ashlee Wetherington. The Faceless band continued to gift our service with music through September, under the leadership of TJ Turnage. Presently, the band is on sabbatical as we seek to bring on board a new bandleader. The Rejoice Band was pleased to welcome the return of Charles Krug as keyboardist/collaborator. In September, a Gratitude Picnic was hosted by the Worship and Music Team to honor the Rejoice Worship team and all of the volunteer musicians of Trinity. The picnic included an overview of upcoming renovations to our building and how they will affect our music programming. The Rejoice Worship team looks forward with great anticipation to this project that will expand and transform our worship space!!! We are extremely grateful!

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: Ashlee Wetherington, TJ Turnage (Faceless)-Scott Dulecki (Rejoice) and Sheryl Vander Baan (Beyond Belief)

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

To God be the Glory,

Cheryl Reeve

Building community is at the heart of the Spiritual Growth Committee. In 2017, the committee helped build community in these ways by overseeing and encouraging small groups, organized studies, and retreats.

**Ongoing study groups:**

Encouraged and supported by the SG Committee include those led by Pastor Bob and various other TLC members who led men's and women's groups. Most of these groups are self-sustaining and require little to no oversight.

**Pastor Bob's Wednesday Study** 2017 and 2018:

The Church and Homosexuality

An Introduction to Islam - the Five Pillars of Islam, the Prophet Muhammad, the Quranic worldview, paths to God through Islamic law and mysticism, and more.

By Heart: Conversations with Martin Luther's Small Catechism

Manna & Mercy: A Brief History of God's Unfolding Promise to Mend the Entire Universe

**Pastor Dan's Study:**

Seven Days that Changed the World - a 5 week look at Holy Week through the Synoptic Gospels

**Pastor Frank Rothfuss' Study:**

Seven Days that Changed the World: John

Discussion of The Shack

**Tuesday Morning Women's Bible Study:**

One Hope: Remembering the Body of Christ – helping Catholic and Lutheran communities mark the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation

How's Your Soul? Why Everything that Matters Starts with the Inside You

**Friday Morning Women's Bible Study:**

Paul's letter to the Romans - highlighting God's grace, truth, and redemption.

The Rock Speaks

**Weekly Thursday Morning Men's Breakfast Group:**

This group of men met through the spring of 2017 to read and discuss faith based books that relate to current day events, challenges or concerns.

**Men's Breakfast Group – meets quarterly on a Saturday morning:**

Speakers: Dr. Doug Kindschi, the director of the Kaufman Interfaith Institute

Dan Babin, Board Chair for Michigan CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates for Children)

Chris Becker, Kent County Prosecuting Attorney

**Friday morning and Tuesday evening Book Clubs:** Various book selections at their discretion

**Retreats:**

Annual women's retreat planned and hosted by the SG Committee, "Sweet Life Cafe," was held March 11 and hosted about 30 women. Women were invited to "take time to slow down and really enjoy time together" and "...savor time with God and friends." Another retreat is being planned for March 10, 2018 with a theme of "Seaside Escape."

The committee members have considered additional retreat ideas and locations and discussed how to discern interest within the congregation.

**Maintaining the Church library:**

Outdated books were removed from the library, shelves were organized and a checkout system was instituted. Use of the library was encouraged and has been successful. Space for the library in the renovation is being firmed up.

**Providing resources and guidance for Advent and Lenten devotions and groups:**

TLC members volunteered to submit daily devotions for Advent, which the committee produced in booklet form and distributed. Daily devotions via email were also sent to members.

A Lenten study resource: "Free Indeed: Devotions for Lent 2017" was provided and used by several groups and many individuals. The pocket-sized book included daily readings from Luther's Small Catechism with a quote to ponder, a reflection, and a prayer.

Grace Groups for Lent are being reinstated – small groups will study What Does the Lord Require which explores Micah 6:8.

**Standing Together:**

The SG Committee supports Trinity's participation in the Standing Together congregations with Temple Emmanuel, Westminster Presbyterian Church and Masjid At-Tawheed. TLC members are encouraged to attend events and to pray for peace, shalom, salaam.

**Dinner groups:**

The committee encouraged more TLC members to participate in Dinner Groups. Pastor Bob supplied a devotion to be used at the dinners.

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:**

Sue Babin

Kim Brock, Note Taker

Wendy Johnson, Council Liaison

Pastor Bob Linstrom

Kris Racek

Vince Schumacher

Sylvia Stouten, Staff Liaison

Ronnie VanderVen

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

Trinity enrolled in the Stephen Series in 1996, sent three people to leadership training in 1997 and commissioned the first group of 15 Stephen Ministers in 1998. Since that time, we have trained 84 Trinity members to become Stephen Ministers and 17 members have gone to leadership training! This Christ-centered, caring ministry has helped 150 individuals during challenging times, Trinity members and non-members alike.

This past year has been one of growth and strengthening for Trinity’s Stephen Ministry. In January, Beth Vanderwall and Sue Coates spent a week in Orlando for the Stephen Ministry Leadership Training Course. Upon their return, a group of Trinity members was recruited to train to become Stephen Ministers. That 50 hours of training began in September and will conclude in February, with commissioning on Feb. 11, 2018. The faith-filled commitment and energy of these new leaders and trainees have revitalized Trinity’s Stephen Ministry.

This revitalization can be seen in awareness raising through Messenger articles, informational bulletin boards, PowerPoints at Rejoice services, Weekly Connection messages, and adding the SM logo to the email blast. On April 23, Trinity celebrated Stephen Ministry Sunday with commissioning of Sue and Beth as leaders and involvement, at all services, of active and inactive Stephen Ministers. An Open House was held on a Sunday morning in May to share information and answer questions to Trinity members interested in becoming Stephen Ministers.

Stephen Ministry is here for **YOU** ~ the people of Trinity. We all experience difficult times in life, times when someone walking beside you can help to lift the burden. Please, THINK STEPHEN if you or someone you know is going through a challenge. You can contact any of the pastors, a Stephen Leader or Parish Nurse to learn more.

We thank all who have heard and heeded God’s call to become Stephen Ministers and Leaders. We are grateful to care receivers who have accepted the care and support of Stephen Ministers. We thank the pastors, council and congregation for the support and prayers for Stephen Ministry. Every day, we thank God for this and all ministries at Trinity Lutheran Church.

In His Peace,  
Sue Coates, Brenda Heacock  
Kris Racek, Beth Vanderwall, Chris Straw\*  
*Stephen Ministry Leaders*

Active Stephen Ministers: Pam Gotch, Jeanette Sorensen, Marjorie Paul, Linda Hicks, Bill Bush, Kathy Bush, Sheila Talsma, Kim Brock, Kris Racek.

Training Class: Nancy Anderson, Kris Baker, Patty Boer, Carol Eriksen, Susan Knoll, Rebecca Mattison, Patti Mutch, Norm Palm, Bob Pfau, Carol Schumacher, Dale Volkerding, Kelly Wittry.

\*Inactive as of Fall 2017

It has been a busy year for the Worship & Music Committee.

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

We welcomed Kate Bredwell to the committee this year, she is a Council Liaison.

Again this year, our committee attended to many issues as they pertain to our worship together. The issues addressed by the committee were varied; from the 500 - year Celebration of Reformation, to recommending a new worship schedule beginning Memorial Day 2018, to planning for worship during the construction phase of the church renovation.

At Easter the Common Cup was used and then continued as a permanent part of all worship services. Lectors became Common Cup servers.

A wonderful re-dedication of the Cross Tower was held in June.

Worship and Music committee members hosted an Appreciation Picnic for the Trinity musicians that included the Choir, the Resound bell choir, Rejoice bands and Power Point volunteers.

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 for putting this event together.

The Outside Summer Worship was held inside followed by a congregational Pig Roast, and a send-off for our youth going to Stoney Lake Camp.

The Youth Led Service and Trinity Concert Series were held again this year.

With Christmas Eve falling on Sunday this year all of Trinity's staff and volunteers did a wonderful job of making the six services on Christmas Eve a memorable experience for our Trinity family and guests.

I have not listed all of the tasks the Worship and Music volunteers and staff took on this year, hopefully I have highlighted enough for our entire church family to know there are opportunities for anyone who would be interested in joining the committee.

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

God's Peace,

Jo Murphy, Chair  
Worship & Music Committee

### Worship & Music Committee Members

Pastor Bob: [robert.linstrom@tlcgr.org](mailto:robert.linstrom@tlcgr.org)  
Karen Griewahn: [kbriewahn@aol.com](mailto:kbriewahn@aol.com)  
John Racek: [jeracek50@comcast.net](mailto:jeracek50@comcast.net)

Sid Hoeksema: [sidhoeks@aol.com](mailto:sidhoeks@aol.com), Choir Director  
Rick Radke: [radketrac@comcast.net](mailto:radketrac@comcast.net), Council Liaison  
Kate Bredwell: [kate.bredwell@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kate.bredwell@sbcglobal.net), Council Liaison

Tess Lundgren: [tesslundgren@gmail.com](mailto:tesslundgren@gmail.com), Committee Vice-chair

Cheryl Reeve: [cheryl.l.reeve@gmail.com](mailto:cheryl.l.reeve@gmail.com), Rejoice Worship Coordinator

Larry Biser: [lgbiser@att.net](mailto:lgbiser@att.net), Director of Music  
Diane Biser: [dtbiser@att.net](mailto:dtbiser@att.net), Director of Children's Choirs  
Jo Murphy: [Jo@mmapinc.org](mailto:Jo@mmapinc.org), Committee Chair  
Carrie Wygmans: [carriestine@comcast.net](mailto:carriestine@comcast.net)  
Ruth Evans: [revans5295@gmail.com](mailto:revans5295@gmail.com)

Our Youth and Family Ministry Committee started 2017 with Pastor Dan at the helm and a full slate of dedicated volunteers, staff and council members.

Taylor Sytsma continues to serve as our Middle School Ministry Staff. She works closely with Pastor Dan. Together they put on a monthly rotation of events. Confirmation class, youth group, service and fun & fellowship are woven in to each month.

With Ashlee Wetherington's move back to Idaho, it again became a time of transition within High School Ministry. Parents are stepping up and gaps are being filled. Our prayer continues to be for the right person to answer our call as a HS ministry leader.

Emma Hall did a wonderful job serving as our youth Council representative through June 2017 and Julia Kessel has been our spokeswoman since July 2017. We are all exceedingly grateful that our congregation gives a voice to our youth.

Summer 2018 offers the triennial ELCA National Gathering as well as our annual WorkCamp Mission trip for our high schoolers. At this point there are 12+ planning on the National gathering and 25+ planning for mission trip. Since our house is expected to be under construction during 2018, our primary fundraisers (the Easter Breakfast and the Rummage sale) will need to take on a different approach. Wreath sales and Sponsor a Mile will continue and there is a great deal of 'out of the box' brainstorming going on to help facilitate fundraising in efforts to reduce the out of pocket costs of these trips for families of our youth.

Our 2017 in review...

### **Confirmation**

15 Confirmands were welcomed in to our congregation on May 7<sup>th</sup> 2017

Current confirmation classes are going well, with 20-30 students participating each week.

### **MS Youth Events**

CHARGE was attended by 12. There are 20+ registered to attend in 2018. 2 LOCK INS were enjoyed by many.

STONY LAKE CAMP - 25 youth attended

**HS Youth Band, FACELESS** – continued to play monthly until this Fall. With Ashlee leaving, TJ Turnage needs more adult help to continue with regular practices.

**HS Mission Trip** – 25 youth & 7 adults participated in Group's Workcamp in Norristown, PA. They were able to visit Pastor Sarah and spent their free afternoon together.

### **HS Youth Events**

LUNCH & LEARNS are scheduled quarterly throughout the year. The 30hr FAMINE was attended by 12 students and 3 adults. SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY has begun again on the First Sunday's of the month. Pastor Dan is facilitating and 8-12 students attend each session. Trunk or Treat and Homebound Cookie Decorating & Delivery were well supported.

**Graduation Sunday** – Trinity celebrated graduates with special bulletin inserts and a reception in May.

**Youth Council Member** – Julia Kessel transitioned into this position for the 2017-2018 school year. Our committee has submitted Caroline Kuntzman as the nominee for 2018-2019.

**College Care Packages** - Jamie Kuntzman led the effort to mail 48 boxes this fall to our college students.

Respectfully submitted by Kristin Bradley, Chairperson, Youth & Family Ministry Committee.

*Special thanks to past members Chris Engle & Karin Moglia and to current members Pastor Dan, Jamie Kuntzman, Joni Korb, Peter & Jill McKinney, David Beckett, Sarah Turnage, Kris Shannon, Julia Kessel and Tess Lundgren*

*Treasurer's Report - 2017 Budget and 2017 Forecast  
11 Months Actual (Feb '17 - Dec '17) and Jan '18 Forecast*

	<b>2017 Budget</b>	<b>2017 Forecast</b>
<b>Income (Giving)</b>	<b>1,001,000</b>	<b>1,040,714</b>
<b>Expenses (Spending)</b>		
Local Benevolence	34,000	34,000
Synod Mission Support	102,100	106,071
Christian Education	10,325	10,114
Music	12,005	11,817
Worship	6,904	7,456
Evangelism	1,660	1,312
Stewardship	6,000	4,229
Youth and Family	10,150	9,838
Fellowship	1,625	1,237
Property	66,864	67,805
Utilities	51,220	50,632
Leases (copier, printer/fax)	26,830	25,936
Office and Administration	53,904	52,813
Payroll	569,603	553,388
Stephen's Ministry	2,260	1,388
Reserves	24,000	24,000
Parish Nurse-Health Cabinet	1,700	817
Outreach	800	723
Congregational Life	6,800	3,709
Spiritual Growth	2,250	2,525
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>991,000</b>	<b>969,810</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>70,904</b>

	2017 Budget	Proposed 2018 Budget
<b>Income (Giving)</b>	<b>1,001,000</b>	<b>1,078,100</b>
<b>Expenses (Spending)</b>		
Local Benevolence	34,000	34,400
Synod Mission Support	102,100	109,700
Christian Education	10,325	11,345
Music	12,005	12,015
Worship	6,904	6,975
Evangelism	1,660	1,660
Stewardship	6,000	6,000
Youth and Family	10,150	11,300
Fellowship	1,625	1,625
Property	66,864	69,990
Utilities	51,220	53,000
Leases	26,830	28,060
Office and Administration	53,904	53,911
Payroll	569,603	588,229
Stephen's Ministry	2,260	2,750
Reserves	24,000	24,000
Parish Nurse-Health Cabinet	1,700	1,750
Outreach	800	800
Congregational Life	6,800	7,300
Spiritual Growth	2,250	2,425
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>991,000</b>	<b>1,027,235</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>50,865</b>
<b>Less Interest</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>50,865</b>
<b>Net Cash Flow</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>0</b>

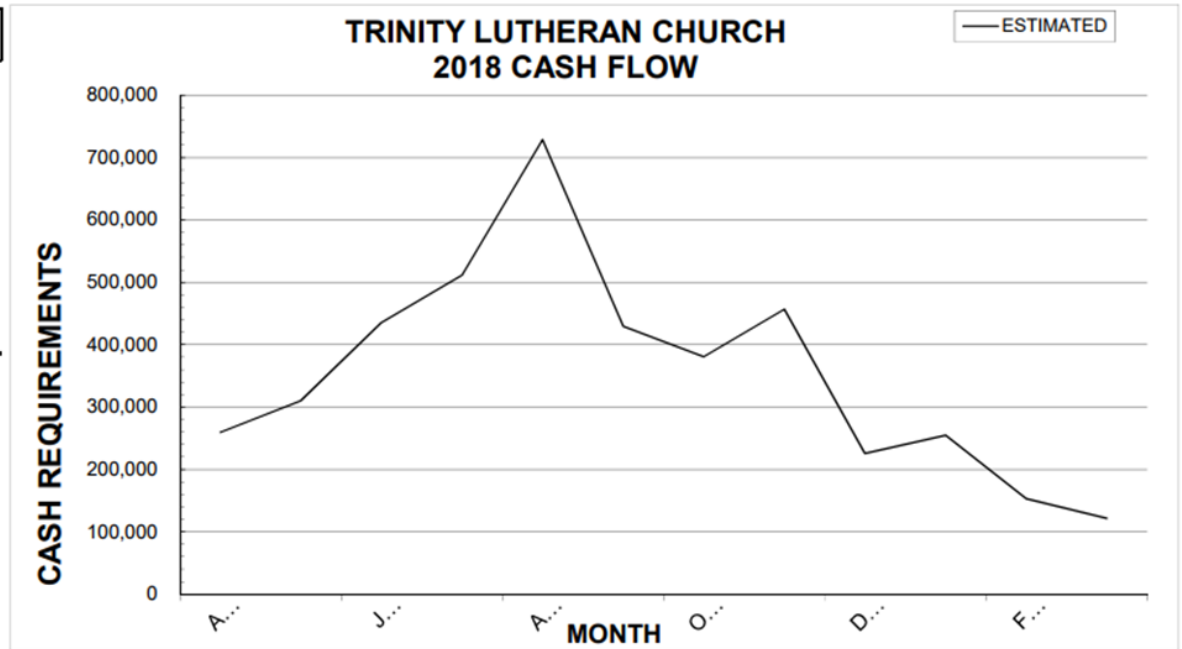


Building Project Starts

04/02/18

OWEN-AMES-KIMBALL CO. CONSTRUCTION MANAGER  
December 13, 2017

DATE	ESTIMATED
Apr-18	259,547
May-18	310,283
Jun-18	435,419
Jul-18	511,539
Aug-18	728,987
Sep-18	429,667
Oct-18	380,915
Nov-18	456,800
Dec-18	225,734
Jan-19	254,852
Feb-19	153,275
Mar-19	121,581
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,268,599</b>



Finance Committee

- \* Projected Capital Campaign Contributions for 2018
- \* Used both projections to generate a Cash Flow for 2018
- \* Based on the Cash Flow, we expect to be Positive through May of 2018
- \* This will generate Interest Income over 4 months of: \$ 1,635
- \* Then we begin to borrow from Mission Investment Fund (MIF) in June 2018
- \* From June '18 to Jan '19 (8 months) we expect an average balance of: \$ 1,800,000
- \* The projected Interest Rate would be at: 4.375%
- \* Resulting in Interest Expense over 8 months of: \$ 52,500
- \* The Net Interest Expense over 12 months of: \$ 50,865

	<b>\$ Amount</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
<b>Salaries</b>		
Clergy	144,171	24.5%
Non-Clergy	279,919	47.6%
Contract	14,245	2.4%
<b>Total Salaries</b>	<b>438,335</b>	<b>74.5%</b>
<b>Benefits</b>		
Clergy	74,302	12.6%
Non-Clergy	52,054	8.8%
<b>Total Benefits</b>	<b>126,356</b>	<b>21.5%</b>
<b>Other</b>		
Payroll Taxes	23,539	4.0%
<b>Total Other</b>	<b>23,539</b>	<b>4.0%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>588,230</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

	<b>As of 12/31/16</b>	<b>As of 12/31/17</b>
<b>Cash / Equivalent Accounts</b>		
Total General/Dedicated Fund	457,365	556,525
Total Mission Endowment Fund	403,103	545,009
Total Building Endowment Fund	162,898	178,373
Total Capital Campaign Fund	1,051,246	1,248,340
<b>Total Cash / Equivalent Accounts</b>	<b>2,074,612</b>	<b>2,528,247</b>
<b>Other Current Assets</b>	619	1,813
<b>Fixed Assets</b>		
Land & Building	5,384,000	5,384,000
Cross Tower/Parking Lot	726,719	789,950
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	<b>6,110,719</b>	<b>6,173,950</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>8,185,949</b>	<b>8,704,010</b>
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	3,552	6,474
<b>Long-Term Debt (Parking Lot &amp; Cross Tower)</b>	<b>701,275</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>704,827</b>	<b>6,474</b>
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>7,481,122</b>	<b>8,697,535</b>
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Equity</b>	<b>8,185,949</b>	<b>8,704,010</b>

**Notes:**

**Notes:**

**Notes:**

## LITANY

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

**Amen.**

God has joined us to one another, in congregations, in our denomination, and with Christians around the world. As church together, we faithfully strive to participate in God's reconciling work, near and far.

**Together, we are partners in ministry.**

We plant new congregations and renew existing ones; we work with ethnic ministries to reach all God's people; we develop and share resources for God's work when we gather.

**Together, we are partners in ministry.**

We support The Lutheran World Federation's global communion of churches and send more than 200 missionaries to more than 40 countries; we facilitate dialogue and common action among communities of other faiths that God's love may spread far and wide.

**Together, we are partners in ministry.**

We equip current and future leaders through our colleges, universities, seminaries and lay ministry schools; we engage in hopeful conversation about current economic, environmental, political, public and social issues.

**Together, we are partners in ministry.**

Christ has freed us *from* sin and death, even from ourselves, so that we can live with and for our neighbors; in worship we cry out to be forgiven, fed and equipped that our faith may be aligned with our lives and our lives with God's good purposes.

**Scattered into the world, we do God's work.**

Sent into the world – in every relationship, in every daily task, in every corner of life – we provide daily bread for our neighbors, nurture hope and faith, and work for a healed, reconciled and just world.

**Scattered into the world, we do God's work.**

On the highway and in the skies, in jails and in offices, in the unemployment line and at the mechanic's shop, in kitchens and in classrooms, shopping for toys or hoping to find our next meal, in nursing homes and in the voting booth, God is at work, providing for our needs and for our neighbors' needs.

**Scattered into the world, we do God's work.**

Gracious God, you call us together, and you send us out. Give us strength to be your people, both when we gather and when we scatter. Deliver us from service of ourselves alone, and deliver us from service to the welfare of our congregations that we may do the work you are calling us to do, alone and together. Whether in our daily lives or in and through our congregation, may we always seek common good. We ask this in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

### Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ



1 Let us tal - ents and tongues em - ploy, reach - ing out with a shout of joy:  
2 Christ is a - ble to make us one, at the ta - ble he sets the tone,  
3 Je - sus calls us in, sends us out bear - ing fruit in a world of doubt,



bread is bro - ken, the wine is poured, Christ is spo - ken and seen and heard.  
teach - ing peo - ple to live to bless, love in word and in deed ex - press.  
gives us love to tell, bread to share: God (Im - man - u - el) ev - 'ry - where!



*Refrain*  
Je - sus lives a - gain, earth can breathe a - gain, pass the Word a - round: loaves a - bound!

Text: Fred Kaan

Music: LINSTEAD, Jamaican folk tune; adapt. Doreen Potter

Text and music © 1975 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved.

Used by permission.

Reprinted under license #78705

---

## REFLECTIONS ON OUR RESPONSE TO GOD'S GRACE AND OUR WORK TOGETHER

Whether we are gathered in our faith community or sent into our daily lives, we remember that we are a new creation through God's living word by the power of the Holy Spirit, and we are to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed. As we live into God's word and deed, we are also reminded to be faithful stewards of God's creation and gifts. Faithful stewardship is about holding to God's purpose and ensuring the responsibilities and resources that God has entrusted to us are used with great care and with accountability to God, to each other and those served by the church.

With the adoption of Strategic Directions 2025 in 2017, the goals and priority areas for the ELCA as a whole church are identified. These goals and priorities are based on a shared trust and hope that the future is in God's hands. As stewards of God's grace, we are responsible for the time, talents and resources that will make these goals and priorities attainable in the many expressions of the church. As you consider your goals, priorities and resources for the years ahead, please consider how the following strategic directions are connected to your ministry.



1

### **A thriving church spreading the gospel and deepening faith for all people**

(Acts 1:8, 1 Peter 2:9-10, Matthew 28:16-20, Romans 1:16)



2

### **A church equipping people for their baptismal vocations in the world and the church**

(Philippians 2:4-11, 1 Corinthians 12:4-7, Romans 6:3-4, Mark 10:13-16)



3

### **An inviting and welcoming church that reflects and embraces the diversity of our communities and the gifts and opportunities that diversity brings**

(1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 2:14-20, Acts 10, Galatians 3:26-28)



4

### **A visible church deeply committed to working ecumenically and with other people of faith for justice, peace and reconciliation in communities and around the world**

(2 Corinthians 5:14-21, John 13:12-15, Isaiah 58:1-11)



5

### **A well-governed, connected and sustainable church**

(1 Corinthians 4:1-2, 2 Corinthians 4:1-2, Micah 6:8, 2 Corinthians 9)