



The Messenger

Trinity Re-Entry Plan Underway Since June 1



Safety Protocols while at Trinity

Please enter the church only through the west side office entrance of the building. You will notice the sign below on the concrete as you approach.

We ask that you follow the check-in procedures detailed on the following page.



With Governor Whitmer's announcement on June 1 of the shift to Phase 4 in the Michigan Safe Start Plan, the Trinity Re-Entry Plan has begun to support several significant developments in our parish life in recent weeks. Trinity's first stages of programming in re-entry, as conditions continue to improve in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, have included the following re-entry initiatives:

The church **sanctuary is open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.** for individual prayer and meditation. Check-in protocols have been established and those who wish to come onsite are required to bring a mask and enter by the west side office entrance only. Details of the protocols can be found on page two of this newsletter.

Church staff have begun to transition onsite. Phase 4 includes the directive "safer at home," but we continue to see more of our Trinity leadership team onsite at the church.

The first **outdoor worship service with Holy Communion** (wafer only) on the church lawn in June will be followed by our gathering again on the west lawn on **Sunday morning, July 19 at 11 a.m.** Live streaming of worship at 9:15 a.m. continues weekly, but the plan for a once-a-month outdoor communion service is underway this summer, aligned with the governor's indication that outdoor gatherings of up to 100 are being permitted. This is a brief, spoken service of Holy Communion – plan to bring a lawn chair or blanket, to bring masks for all and to keep distancing between family groups. The rain date will be July 26.

Onsite **small groups and meetings for up to ten inside the building and up to 100 outdoors** are now possible to schedule at Trinity. Call the church office if you would like to schedule your Trinity program onsite – masks, distancing and all other safety protocols will be required and only the west side office entry will be unlocked for access to the building.

Governor Whitmer indicated her goal to transition to **Phase 5 state guidelines, possibly by July 4.** As this newsletter goes to print, we do not have an update on that order, but with that transition **small Sunday worship services will be possible.**

At Trinity, we will be proceeding with abundant caution as we lay the groundwork for that possibility – watch for details in upcoming communications.

Procedures for Checking In at Trinity

As we get more comfortable being out and about in social situations again, we look forward to seeing more of our Trinity members and friends in the building. We know that there are many of us who will not be ready to be in enclosed public spaces for some time yet. There is a lot to consider and we need to be realistic about our individual circumstances and respect the decisions of others that may differ from our own. The safety protocols below are for those members who feel that they are ready to be in the Trinity church building in the near future.

With an abundance of caution, we are asking you to abide by the expectations below in order to do the best we can to ensure everyone's safety and well-being. After you come through the outer doors on the west side office entrance, you are asked to use the hand sanitizer placed in the entryway for your convenience. As you come through the second set of doors you will see a table to your right with the signage below.



You are asked to sign in so that we know who has been in the building during a specific time. But first, you should do a self-screening by answering two questions about your own health.

The poster pictured to the right is leaning against the wall on the table. Please read the questions carefully. It is very important to consider how you have been feeling and also the degree to which you may have had exposure to COVID-19.

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH HEALTH SCREENING

PLEASE READ BEFORE SIGNING IN

1. In the past 14 days, have you been diagnosed with, lived with, or cared for someone with Covid 19?
2. In the past 48 hours, have you had any of the following signs or symptoms?



If you answered **"YES"** to any of the above, please come back to visit another time and consider checking in with your health care provider.



Questions can be directed to
Faith Community Nurse
Kristin Bradley at 616.560.4496



WELCOME TO TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

<p>PLAN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Screening Check In Schedule/appointment Occupancy limits 		<p>COVER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wear a face covering as you enter the building. Cover sneezes and coughs.
<p>CLEAN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sanitize hands as you enter the building. Wash hands. Wipe surfaces 		<p>SPACE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep a 6 ft distance from each other. Follow directional signs and seating guidelines



PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE FOR ASSISTANCE
616.949.2510



You will see information to read on the poster situated on the easel as well as information on the table. Wear your mask and take a sanitizing wipe with you to wipe off areas that you touch as you go through the building. Keep six feet of distance between yourself and other individuals or groups.

It may seem like you are being asked to do a lot just to be in the building! Once you have gone through these simple steps, the next time you visit will be a breeze. And, please keep in mind, that these temporary protocols are for your safety as well as the safety of Trinity members and friends.

A Message from Pastor Bob Linstrom



BLESSING

And I said to him:
Are there answers to all of
this?

And he said:
The answer is in the story
And the story is being told.

And I said:
But there is so much pain
And she answered, plainly:
Pain will happen.

Then I said:
Will I ever find meaning?
And they said:
You will find meaning

Where you give meaning.

The answer is in the story
And the story isn't finished.

– Pádraig Ó Tuama –

What a Difference a Year Makes

"You will find meaning where you give meaning." As we slowly regain our societal footing after months of 'sheltering in place' and economic crisis, augmented with the societal upheaval since the May 25 killing of George Floyd, we join our voices with the poet, seeking meaning amidst the pain of our time. Perhaps we do know that the answers we seek will emanate from our own engagement, positive or negative, life giving or life taking, as we forge a new day together. The "meaning of all of this" has a great deal to do with how we choose to proceed, to live and to potentially redeem this age.

The July 2019 issue of this newsletter profiled an active, busy congregation. The High School Mission Trip to South Dakota, Vacation Bible School and a week at Stony Lake Camp were all on the calendar for our youth and children. We were hosting a Blood Drive and preparing to host homeless guests through our Interfaith Hospitality Network partnership, a Men's Breakfast was scheduled for study and fellowship and groups of members and friends were gathering weekly for Cottage Meeting potlucks to reflect on our congregation's mission and ministry. A first meeting of Trinity's Earth Keepers was scheduled, the "Know Mercy" Trinity softball team was playing weekly, and the "Solo Together," "Life Begins at 60" and the new "Empty Nesters" fellowship groups all planned to gather. The Mulligan family filed a report on the May Synod Assembly, and we had photos and news about the May 19 Dedication Sunday that celebrated the conclusion of our yearlong renovation project.

That July 2019 issue of *The Messenger* profiled an active, engaged congregation seeking to live out its ministry in Christ's name. Fast forward one year and it feels like we have been forced into suspended animation, like a dormant seed or a hibernating animal.

We are beginning to emerge from this time of our dormancy, our hibernation, and perhaps we are more reflective about our place in the world having faced as a global community this pandemic and a month of demonstrations calling for systemic change. As we emerge, we can give a depth of meaning to our re-entry, if we have the discipline to engage such a practice. "The answer is in the story, and the story isn't finished," the poet writes. Will we rush to regain that which we called 'normal life,' or will this time of retreat and renewal lead us to transform our lives, our aspirations, and our work and ministry together? Let us breathe deeply, inviting the very Spirit of God to enter and animate our renewal. The next chapter is ours to write.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Bob Linstrom

"Re-Zooming" Coffee Fellowship Time on Sundays at Trinity!



Be welcome to join us!

You are invited to our virtual Coffee Fellowship time after live streaming of Trinity's worship services. Supply your own coffee and enjoy visiting with Trinity friends as you relax at home. Click on the following link to join us on Sundays at 10:30 a.m.

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://zoom.us/j/96547953581?pwd=MFVOREdwZEtBMDdNeFIFSnU2TjA4UT09>

Meeting ID: 965 4795 3581

Password: 420932

Council Corner

Trinity Congregation Council Members 2020-2021

Standing committees of the Congregation Council coordinate the mission and ministry of Trinity and provide their leadership in developing new programming. Committees have a Council committee person who acts as the liaison between the Council and committee.

If you are interested in contacting a Congregation Council member, please refer to information in the Trinity Directory or call the main office.

Executive Committee members and Committee liaisons are:

Congregation Council Executive Committee

President: Paul Crist

Vice President: Karen Unruh

Treasurer: Chris Engle

Secretary: Carol Butler

Congregation Council Members

Children's Ministry: Karen Unruh

Communications: Nicole Rodammer

Congregational Life: Eric Gohlke

Endowment Fund: Mike Mason

Fellowship: Amy Fox

Finance: Chris Engle

Health Ministries: Carol Butler

Hospitality: Jamie Kuntzman

Human Resources: Steve Heacock

Outreach: John Fox

Property: Mike King

Property: Rick Radke

Spiritual Growth: Brad Kessel

Stewardship: Amelia Crist

Worship and Music: Kate Bredwell

Youth and Family: Tess Lundgren

Youth and Family: Ryleigh Fischer
(Youth Representative)



Last fall, when I signed up to write the July 2020 Council Corner, I imagined writing about all of the wonderful Children's Ministry events of the past year and sharing all of the exciting summer opportunities in store. I began to be disappointed as March turned into April, May, and then June.

But as I sat down to write this column, it occurred to me that despite recent events and programming changes, I can still share about our amazing year and, although it will look quite different, what we have planned for the children of Trinity this summer!

Our Sunday School program continued to thrive this year, with 88 children participating in grades pre-K through 5th. Thank you to all of the teachers and parent volunteers who help spread the word of God on Sunday mornings! In November and March, 40 children and their families enjoyed Pancakes & Playtime, a program specially designed for our youngest children, newborn to 3 years of age, with food, fellowship, Bible stories, and singing. In December, 69(!) children participated in our Christmas Program, sharing the story of Jesus' birth through drama and music. In January, our families came together to pack nearly 26,000(!) meals for Kids Coalition Against Hunger, over 5000 more than last year! Of course our programming faced a dramatic change in March, but our dedicated team came through, and we have continued to provide Sunday School virtually through weekly read-alouds, printed materials, and craft ideas. A huge thanks to our Trinity Sunday School coordinators Ingrid Brang, Sheri Mason, and Andrea Severns for their adaptability!

As we head into summer, we are of course disappointed that many of our usual summer activities cannot happen, including VBS and summer camp at Stony Lake. However, we have committed to continue to serve the spiritual needs of the children of Trinity by extending our virtual Sunday School throughout the summer. Weekly emails with read-alouds and printables continue, and preprinted materials are available for church pick-up or mailing to all interested families; just contact kids@tlcgr.org!

We have also launched a TLCGR Children's Ministry Facebook page. This will serve as a way for Trinity families to keep in touch during this time of physical separation, as well as providing communication about Children's Ministry activities and events now and in the future. We will continue to keep informed of government orders, medical recommendations, and the work of the Trinity Re-entry Planning Committee as we look ahead to the 2020-2021 school year.

Children's Ministry Committee members are Paul Deboer, Steve Feutz, Sarah and Ted Frecka, Cyndi Harrison, Anne Meeuwssen, and Karen Unruh, along with staff members Ingrid Brang, Sheri Mason, Andrea Severns (Sunday School coordinators), James Morin (Family Activity Coordinator), and Rachele Battreall (Director of Family Ministry). Contact us at kids@tlcgr.org. It is our joy to serve the children of Trinity!

Karen Unruh

Children's Ministry Committee Chair and Congregation Council liaison

Endowment Funds continue to grow with recent bequest

Kathryn Elizabeth Christenson died on Valentine’s Day, February 14, 2020, at the age of 104. Trinity’s oldest member, it had been quite a few years since she was able to be in worship with the people of this congregation, but Kathryn continued to receive pastoral care and visitation from Trinity friends in her years of residency at Porter Hills. She often mentioned to Trinity’s pastors that her church would receive a sizable gift upon her passing and she was clearly pleased to share that estate plan.

We recently received the gift from Kathryn’s estate in the amount of \$100,000. Her bequest to care for her church will be a ‘forever gift,’ invested with Trinity’s two Endowment Funds, with annual distributions to provide support for Trinity’s mission beyond our doors and our church facilities for years to come.

Be reminded of such faithful opportunities as you consider planned giving from your financial resources in the years ahead. The Mission Endowment Fund and the Building Endowment Fund of our congregation are very carefully managed by our Endowment Fund Committee with an investment strategy that will provide resources to support our outreach and our care of facilities long after our time as the people of Trinity Lutheran Church. For more information about our Endowment Funds, contact committee chair David Johnson, any member of the Endowment Fund Committee or Pastor Linstrom.



Trinity Lutheran Church Budget vs. Actuals

Month of May 2020

	Budget	Actual	Variance Favorable/ (Unfavorable)	
Total Income	91,341	107,530	16,189	17.7%
Total Expenses	115,065	91,764	23,301	20.3%
Net Income (Loss)	(23,724)	15,766	39,491	



2021 Fiscal Year-to-Date February 2020 to May 2020

	Budget	Actual	Variance Favorable/ (Unfavorable)	
Total Income	377,767	485,994	108,227	28.6%
Total Expenses	385,336	334,723	50,614	13.1%
Net Income (Loss)	(7,569)	151,271	158,840	

A Message from Associate Pastor Dan Schewe

"You shall not kill." Exodus 20:13, Deuteronomy 5:17

I hope you can say with confidence that you haven't killed anyone.

When I talk with people about the Ten Commandments, I frame them not as a list of do's and don'ts, but as an identity document. The people to whom they were given had recently fled from Egypt and were trying to find their way in the desert. They were trying to figure out who they were. Their identity in Egypt was hardship and forced servitude. They knew they didn't want to be defined like that anymore. In their transformational journey, God leads them to a mountain where God gives them the Ten Commandments. God tells them that they are going to be his people, and the commandments illustrate how they should behave. They know how the model of the Egyptians turned out, so instead of following that way and behaving like they did, God gives them another way. All people will know that they are his people because they live according to these things. God gives them their identity as of the people of God, and a prescription for what that looks like.

Jesus and Luther help us understand the full extent of this commandment.

In Matthew 5:21–22, Jesus teaches us that this commandment does not simply apply to the violent act of killing someone, but also to the emotional and mental violence we may have for one another. He instructs us that when we hold onto anger for another or tear them down, we are killing them. We are dehumanizing them and stripping them of the amazing gift of life that God has given them. Jesus guides us into ways of trying to respect and cherish one another.

Martin Luther follows Jesus' lead in helping us understand the expansive meaning of this commandment in his explanation of it in the catechisms. Luther was frustrated after visiting churches in his region and finding that neither the priests nor the people knew the basics of their faith, so he created two catechisms. The Small Catechism was to be used by parents at home to teach the faith to their families. The Large Catechism was to be used by priests to help them teach their congregations the faith. Luther set up the catechisms as a series of statements and explanations, always begging the question 'what does this mean,' seeking to help people understand.

"We are to fear and love God, so that we neither endanger nor harm the lives of our neighbors, but instead help and support them in all of life's needs." – Martin Luther's explanation of the 5th commandment in the Small Catechism.

In his explanation of each commandment, Luther does something wonderful, as he shows us what the commandment is telling us what not to do and what to do. He speaks to the piece of identity the commandment is giving us. In the Fifth Commandment he reminds us that we are called to neither endanger nor harm the lives of our neighbors, in any way. Instead we are called to help and support them in all of life's needs. In the Large Catechism Luther goes on to tell us that if we see our neighbor in need and have the means to help them and do nothing, we have broken this commandment. Here he echoes the teachings of the book of James about how faith and service to our neighbor are connected.

How do we endanger or harm our neighbors? While I'm confident I've not killed my neighbor, I'm not so confident that I've never endangered or harmed or participated in systems that have exploited them. How do we help and support our neighbors in all of their needs? How do we use our resources to help those around us? How are we ensuring that we do not harm them? How does this speak into all the messages we are hearing around us?

These are harder questions to wrestle with than the simple yes or no to killing someone. Yet, this is the kind of life God calls us to.

A prayer – Dearest Lord Jesus, Father God, Spirit, help us to cherish our neighbors. Help us to find ways to help and support them in all of life's needs. Make us attentive to the ways we have endangered and hurt our neighbors and help us change. Help us to love as you love, In your name we pray, amen.

Shalom,
Pastor Dan Schewe



Summer Sunday School Resources

Sunday school!



Every Friday in the summer of 2020, links to the Bible story video, coloring pages, and worship bulletins will be emailed to families and posted to our Facebook group: TLCGR Children's Ministry. If you prefer printed copies, packets are available at the church during office hours, or you may request packets to be mailed to your home. Contact kids@tlcgr.org.

Stay connected with Children's Ministry on Facebook! Our new Facebook page is called "TLCGR Children's Ministry." Our "closed group" is open to Trinity families and staff by invitation. We will use Facebook to stay connected, post weekly Sunday school lessons and videos, updates on events, photos, and faith-related activities.

Gardeners of all ages encouraged to help!



One exciting part of spring is watching the landscape come alive. At Trinity, we have a lovely, diverse landscape surrounding our church and it complements the new addition nicely. Recently, some spring clean-up was completed to remove some worn-out shrubs and new edging was installed in spots. It's going to look so nice this summer!

But, we need of a couple things to keep the gardens looking great:

- We need people to adopt a garden area for the summer to do light weeding and deadheading. There are several areas of various sizes, and you don't have to be a master gardener either! Just give your spot a little TLC 2-3 times a month, and it will look fantastic all summer!
- We also need donations of small ornamental or native bunch grasses to fill in a few bare spots. We're looking for grasses that stay put and don't spread, such as Tufted Hair Grass (*Deschampsia*), Pennisetum, Little Bluestem, or Prairie Dropseed. We're hoping that some of you may have an abundance of these in your yard that you're willing to share.

Can you help us keep Trinity beautiful? Please contact Rebecca Marquardt (rebecca@reverystudio.com) or Lisa Mead (lmead@steelcase.com) if you can help. Thank you!

Elementary, Middle School and High School News



Elementary Camp at Trinity!

Pastor Dan is working with Living Water Ministries to plan a two-and-a-half-day camp experience at Trinity for our elementary school youth. We are planning on camp at Trinity the week we would usually be at Stony Lake, July 22 to 24. Elementary students going into 1st grade and older are invited to join us. We will gather Wednesday night to kick off our experience with a campfire and some fun activities and then have camp at Trinity for the next two days. The campers will sleep at home and come to Trinity for a day camp experience. Camp will go from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. with extra pick up time for those who need it. This time could also be shorter for our younger campers so let Pastor Dan know your preference. Lunch and snacks will be included. We will have the Living Water Ministries staff to help us facilitate this experience. Look for a survey in your email to help Pastor Dan gauge interest. This camp will be dependent on our state's re-entry plans.



Middle School Camp at Trinity!

Pastor Dan is working with Living Water Ministries to plan a two-and-a-half-day camp experience at Trinity for our middle schoolers. We are planning on camp at Trinity the week we would usually be at Stony Lake, July 19 to 21. We will gather Sunday night to kick off our experience with a campfire and some fun activities and then have camp at Trinity for the next two days. The campers will sleep at home and come to Trinity for a day camp experience. Camp would go from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. with extra pick up time for those who need it. Lunch and snacks will be included. We will have the Living Water Ministries staff to help us facilitate this experience. Look for a survey in your email to help Pastor Dan gauge interest. This camp will be dependent on our state's re-entry plans.

Community Service

Local Service Week for Trinity High Schoolers!

Pastor Dan is working with local agencies and organizations to construct a week of service for our senior high students. This will include incoming 9th graders through graduated seniors. We are going to meet from July 27 to 31. The plan for the week is to gather our group at Trinity in the morning for a devotion, then head to service projects in the community. In the afternoon/early evening the groups will reconvene at Trinity for some down time, a meal, and an evening devotional. Participants will sleep at home. We are structuring the experience like the mission trips we go on in the summer. Watch your email for a survey to help Pastor Dan gauge interest. This mission opportunity will be dependent on our state's re-entry plans.

Celebrate our High School Graduates



In the midst of our COVID-19 distancing our high school graduates have been hit hard. Milestone after milestone has been canceled, often without any warning.

We want you to help us celebrate them! Look for the Graduate Bulletin included with your mailing of *The Messenger*. Inside it, look for an address page and send our graduates a card. If you wish to include a gift, please include a gift card or a check.

God as the Caregiver

One of the first tools that Stephen Ministers receive during their training is a book written by Kenneth C. Haugk, the founder of Stephen Ministries, titled Christian Caregiving, a Way of Life. In the chapter “God as the Caregiver,” he explains what it is that makes Stephen Ministry unique.

Quoting from Dr. Haugk: “Farmers teach lessons in hope every day. They toil for days, even weeks, preparing the soil for planting. Tilling, fertilizing, planting seeds, using herbicides and insecticides, and cultivating—all these activities work to prepare, nourish, and protect the crop. And every day, farmers hope—for rain, but not too much, for sun, but not too much, for warmth, but not too much. When the time for harvest arrives, farmers know they are gathering in hopes fulfilled as much as work rewarded.”

“What Christian caregivers do is prepare the ground for the Great Caregiver. Preparing the ground means doing the best possible job to create a therapeutic situation and then waiting on the Lord expectantly. It is God who provides emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual growth according to his will. Understanding what therapy is from a biblical perspective will help you see what makes Christian care distinctive. Like other caregivers, Christians work hard to establish relationships that build up people in need. Christian caregivers, however, rely on God for results. In the broadest sense, what Stephen Ministers are offering in distinctively Christian caring is love. Because Jesus Christ lives in them, they are God’s ambassadors. They carry the news of his unconditional acceptance and hope-filled gospel of forgiveness and life in him. Living out the knowledge that results—cures—belong to God is living in faith. Such faith has beneficial effects on both the caregiver and the person receiving care.”

When the Stephen Minister realizes that God is the Caregiver, he or she is freed from worry and false expectations. Demands to get results are silenced, and so are any demands for the care receiver to shape up or change. Instead, the Stephen Minister can concentrate on creating the best therapeutic situation for growth to occur: developing trust and communicating acceptance and love.

Understanding that God is the Caregiver also benefits the person receiving care. Reliance on God provides tremendous freedom to grow and change through a helping relationship. He or she does not have to push too hard for growth and change. Rather, the person is free to receive God’s love through the caregiver, being able to risk change, realizing that God will provide the cure.

Trinity’s Stephen Ministers are ready to provide Christ-centered care to anyone in need. Please contact our Faith Community Nurse, Kristin Bradley for additional information.



STEPHEN
MINISTRY

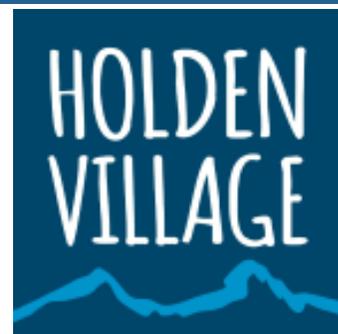
Holden Village 2021 Information Meeting on July 19 at noon

Meeting will take place following Outdoor Worship on July 19

It was during Holy Week in April that we received word that Holden Village would be closed to visitors for the summer of 2020. Like many destinations nationally and globally, the village Board of Directors acted out of an 'abundance of caution' to protect visitors and staff by fully refraining from their summer of 2020 program.

Trinity had a delegation of 52 hoping to make the journey together in late July of this year to Holden Village and that extraordinary mountain valley in the Cascade Mountains of Washington state. As we began to adjust to the cancellation of our plans, quite a few of those 'Trinity Travelers' proposed that we consider rescheduling for the summer of 2021. An information meeting has been scheduled for July 19 at noon to begin that exploration. We will either meet outdoors following that day's 11 a.m. outdoor worship service, or we will enter Centennial Hall, depending on state guidelines for gathering at that time.

All of the 2020 'Trinity Travelers' will be invited to the summertime information meeting on July 19 at noon to consider a 2021 trip to Holden Village. If you would like to join us and learn more about the prospective 2021 trip, contact Pastor Linstrom and he will include you in the invitation to that meeting, or just plan to stop in and learn more about the prospective trip to Holden Village next summer.



June 1 Blood Drive a Success at Trinity!

Thanks to everyone who came out and donated blood during Trinity's first event since the COVID-19 lockdown. We exceeded our goal and had six people who achieved milestones. Here's the awesome breakdown!

Successful Donations: 26 whole blood donations + 2 double reds = 30 units!!

First Time Donor – E. Schmebling

Milestone Achievers:

- B. Blair – 5 gallons
- C. Boer – 1 gallon
- J. Hall – 3 gallons
- S. Lamar – 2 gallons
- G. VonderHeide – 9 gallons
- J. Willman – 2 gallons

Lives saved in our community: 90!

The next Blood Drive at Trinity is September 14. We hope to see you there. Remember the need is constant.



Being Good Stewards of the Earth by Reducing Single-Use Plastic Products

- Written by Trinity member, Carrie Lamb, for our thoughtful consideration

The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; for he founded it on the seas and established it on the waters.

Psalm 24:1-2

According to the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), the world produces 300 million tons of plastic every single year, half of which is made for single-use products. And 91 percent of that plastic ends up in landfills or in our environment, where it takes hundreds of years to break down or doesn't break down at all. We use so many single-use products in our lives. From plastic bags and plastic wrap to paper towels, it feels like we depend on these items for organization, school lunches, storage, and so much more. For years, I have wanted to cut down on my use of these products, but I didn't see a reasonable way to stop using them – and I was too tired to do anything about it. When my kids got a little bit older and I finally started (sort of) sleeping at night again, my mind was able to think about being more environmentally conscious. With the start of kindergarten for my oldest came the onslaught of school lunches and I just couldn't stomach putting zip lock bags in his lunch every single day. So I decided to take action and figure out what I could do to reduce my use of single-use plastic products. And guess what? It was really easy. So easy, in fact, that I wish I would have done it sooner. Admittedly, it does take a little bit of research and a small monetary investment, but over time it turns out to be cheaper than buying single use products – and you're helping the environment to boot.

The number of reusable products on sites like Amazon can actually be pretty overwhelming. The first thing I wanted to replace were my plastic bags – I wanted a bag that could go in the freezer, could be washed in the dishwasher, and that was easy to use. I decided on silicone food-grade storage bags and they have been great. While functional, these bags are not the easiest to open and are kind of bulky, so they are not a great option for younger kids' lunches. To replace zip-top bags in my six-year-old's lunches, I opted for zippered, lined pouches that can be washed in the sink or with a load of laundry. These work for most items and come in sandwich or snack size. I even found a local crafter who makes them and sells them from her home. Even though many of these reusable bags are easy to clean, I wondered how I would dry them all. They don't always come out dry from the dishwasher

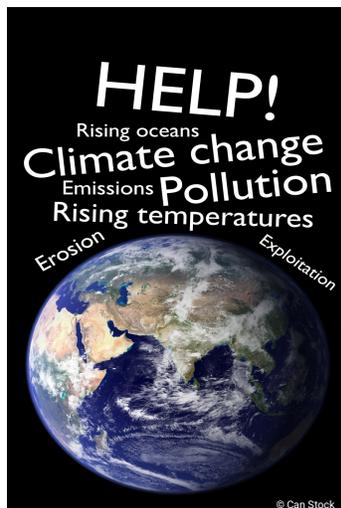
and I imagined them hanging all over the place. My problem was solved when I bought an inexpensive tree-like drying rack. I pull it out occasionally, but when I don't need it, it is easily taken apart and stored.

I also wanted something to take the place of plastic wrap (which I still do have on hand for rare times when nothing else will do – although if I did get rid of it altogether, I would be forced to find something else to use). Two things have really fit the bill for this replacement: reusable silicone covers that cover a bowl and create a seal and bees wax "cloth" covers that effectively wrap around most foods like plastic wrap would. The bees wax covers cannot go in the dishwasher or be warmed, but they are super easy to wash with soap and cool water and last for at least one year.

In my quest to use fewer single-use plastic products, I have learned that training myself to go for a reusable container instead of a baggie is crucial – I still sometimes instinctively reach for a plastic bag when packing lunches or putting away leftovers. I have to remind myself that I can easily use a plastic or glass container and remind my son not to throw it away. The same goes for paper towels – it's my first instinct to grab a paper towel for a floor spill, but it is just as easy to grab a rag or dish towel, wipe it up, and throw it in the load of laundry I am about to do. It's about mindset and discipline. We have to unlearn what we have been doing for years.

I am not perfect and my journey away from single-use plastic products is far from over. I still have many of these products on hand, but most of them I use very rarely. The next step in this journey is to simply eliminate single-use products altogether and force myself to find other solutions. Perhaps a good intermediary step would be to store these items in areas that are not as easily accessible – for example, putting paper towel in your laundry room instead of in a holder on your kitchen counter. And even if we can't eliminate *all* single-use products in our lives, eliminating some is easy to do and can make a huge difference – especially if many of us decide to go for it and continue to find better, more environmentally friendly solutions.

Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions about the products I mentioned or would like help getting started. I am here to help: carrie.m.lamb@gmail.com.



Entering the Narrow Gate 2020-2021

School of Spiritual Formation - Year-long Program “Entering the Narrow Gate” Hosted by Trinity Lutheran Church

This course is open to anyone who would like to explore the classic elements of monastic, spiritual and contemplative life to discover how this ancient wisdom, learning and spiritual practice might be understood and lived in new settings and life today. The program offers a reflective personal and transformative process for all who desire a deeper life in Spirit and more intentional living of the Christian life. The rich and inspiring teaching is centered on the saints, mystics and spiritual teachers of the Christian centuries, personal contemplative prayer practice, lively conversations, and living of a personal Rule of Life.

Required books (may be purchased on Amazon.com at reduced cost) Required editions:

The Wisdom Jesus by Cynthia Bourgeault;

The Rule of Benedict. Ed., Timothy Fry Liturgical Press, 1982;

The Holy Longing: The Search for a Christian Spirituality by Ronald Rolheiser,

The Cloud of Unknowing translated by Carmen Acevedo Butcher, 2009;

The Spiritual Life by Evelyn Underhill;

Joan of Arc by Mark Twain – with trial proceedings included; Publisher: Ignatius Press; 1st edition (September 1, 1989)

Recommended books:

The Deeper Journey by M. Robert Mulholland, Jr

The Universal Christ by Richard Rohr

Course Requirements:

- Attendance at all sessions
- Preparation for each session, required readings (short background and/or readings from the original writings of each spiritual teacher) and journal questions emailed to participants prior to each session. Participation in class discussion is expected.
- Participation in a four-day silent directed retreat during the year is encouraged – Dates TBD
- Participants are encouraged to have a spiritual director during the year
- Those completing this first year may apply for an 18-month Formation Program & Practicum for becoming a Spiritual Director. Program begins September, 2021 at Christ United Church, DeWitt, MI.

Program Schedule for 2020-2021:

9/10/2020 Gospel according to John
Paschal Mystery and Spiritual Journey

10/8 Mothers & Fathers of the Desert
Contemplative Prayer & Approaches to God

11/12 St. Benedict and St. Scholastica
St. Hildegard of Bingen

12/10 St. Francis & St. Clare
Meister Eckhart

1/14/21 Beguine Women’s Movement
St. Catherine of Siena

2/11 Julian of Norwich
Cloud of Unknowing

3/11 St. Teresa of Avila
St. John of the Cross

4/15 St. Ignatius of Loyola
St. Oscar Romero

5/13 St. Joan of Arc
Evelyn Underhill

6/10 Dorothy Day
Thomas Merton

Entering the Narrow Gate 2020-2021

School of Spiritual Formation - Year-long Program "Entering the Narrow Gate" Hosted by Trinity Lutheran Church

We will follow the ELCA Synod Church guidelines for health safety in a time of Covid19 and adjust accordingly. We will proceed with registrations at this time. Participants will be notified in late August if postponement of the program to a later time is necessary.

Tuition: \$600 (50% due with registration and 50% due in February)

Make checks payable to: Dominican Sisters with Narrow Gate on memo line of check)

Mail completed registration form with payment to:

Trinity Lutheran Church

2700 Fulton St. E Grand Rapids, MI 49506

Staff Contact: kris.baker@tlcgr.org 616.949.2510 x 110

Facilitator, Sister Nancy Brousseau, OP

Email: nbrousseau@aol.com Cell: 616.560.4580



Program Facilitator: Sister Nancy Brousseau, OP, D.Min. is a Dominican Sister of Grand Rapids, MI. Nancy served as the Director of the Dominican Center at Marywood in Grand Rapids for five years and was Director of Spirituality Programs there for six years. Prior to those years, she was Director of St. Joseph Educational Center in Des Moines, IA. Sr. Nancy has an MA in Religious Education, a M.Div. from St. John's (now Sacred Heart) Seminary in Detroit and a D.Min. in Spiritual Direction from the Graduate Theological Foundation and the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, MN. She offers retreats, spiritual direction, workshops and programs in prayer, spirituality and spiritual formation.

Ten Thursdays from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; one Thursday per month from September to June
Dates in 2020: 9/10, 10/8, 11/12, 12/10 and Dates in 2021: 1/14, 2/11; 3/11, 4/15; 5/13, 6/10

Coffee available; please bring your lunch/beverage; snack to share if you wish

_____ **Please mail this bottom portion with your check** _____

Registration: Entering the Narrow Gate Trinity Lutheran 2020-2021

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Amount enclosed: _____

Supper Forum series on Race to be scheduled in 2020-2021

Before the tragic deaths of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and George Floyd in the winter and spring of this year, Trinity's Spiritual Growth Committee had identified issues around "Race in America" as the topic for a Sunday evening Supper Forum series in 2020-2021. Although we are not yet able to schedule those forums on the parish calendar, Pastor Linstrom has agreed to facilitate that series, possibly beginning in the fall of 2020. Using a curriculum published by 1517 Media entitled "Dialogues on Race," we will gather on a series of Sunday evenings to read, listen and learn together as we confront issues of race and racism in our world.

The "Dialogues On" series is designed to create a trusting environment for small groups, engage in conversations about local and worldwide issues, turn conflict into community, and build lasting relationships. The curriculum will include reading about a weekly topic, gathering in small groups to discuss what we've learned, watching a video featuring a leading voice, and sharing ideas with the wider group. In this series we will consider topics such as the social construct of race, the Bible and race in America, anti-blackness, the erasure of Native American stories, the intersection of race and gender, and the problem with rushing to reconciliation. Contributors to the curriculum include Rozella Haydée White, Lenny Duncan, and Jim Bear Jacobs.



Watch for more information about this Supper Forum series in the fall of 2020.

Dear Church Book Discussion—Join in the Conversation

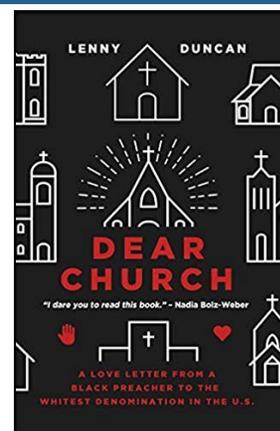
Perhaps you have read in recent Friday eBlasts about a book discussion via Zoom that began on June 24 about this thought-provoking book. There will be additional meetings from 6:30 to 8 p.m. on July 1 and 8.

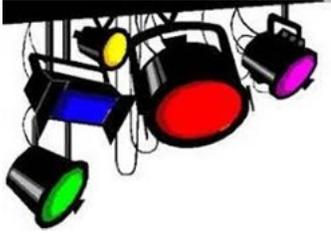
We are discussing [Dear Church: A Love Letter from a Black Preacher to the Whitest Denomination in the U.S.](#) by Lenny Duncan.

Here's a brief description of the book:

Lenny Duncan is the unlikeliest of pastors. Formerly incarcerated, he is now a black preacher in the whitest denomination in the United States: the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Part manifesto, part confession, and all love letter, Dear Church offers a bold new vision for the future of Duncan's denomination and the broader mainline Christian community of faith. Dear Church rejects the narrative of church decline and calls everyone—leaders and laity alike—to the front lines of the church's renewal through racial equality and justice. Duncan gives a blueprint for the way forward and urges us to follow in the revolutionary path of Jesus.

Many members of our Trinity family have already read the book. If you haven't, grab a copy, read it and join in the remaining conversations. If you would like more information or would like to RSVP and receive a link to the Zoom book group, please be in touch with Director of Discipleship Sylvia Stouten.





The “Face” of Trinity: Office Coordinator, Kris Baker

The Trinity Office Coordinator serves a key role at Trinity Lutheran Church. For Kris Baker, this role is a true calling and one that grew exponentially during this pandemic as Kris became the only staff person on site. She dutifully covers her own responsibilities while graciously adding a variety of jobs such as routine building needs to her list! Her previous experience in manufacturing companies and consulting firms as well as her thirst for God through spiritual formation learning and education converged to a skill set that melds calling and ministry. As a result, Kris is able to seamlessly move from service bulletins to guiding questions from Trinity members to encouraging all who come in contact with her.

Kris and her husband, Mark, joined Trinity in 2017. They had met at Wolverine Worldwide, Kris growing up on the west side of Grand Rapids and Mark from the east side of the state. Pastor Bob greeted them with his warm kindness and surprised them by remembering their names at the end of the service. (Honestly, how does he consistently do that?!) They fell in love with the abundance of church activities and readily found places to serve. Kris, especially, was drawn to Stephen Ministry as she had felt a calling to this service for many years.

Kris has actively pursued spiritual calling throughout her life. She grew up in the Catholic faith, attending parochial school in her early life. Kris was drawn to the Lutheran faith in her early 20s. Her spiritual life includes a love for contemporary Christian music, listening to Christian podcasts and growing under the tutelage of a Spiritual Director. She has been a Stephen Minister here since 2018. Annually, Kris attends four-day silent retreats for renewal, reflection and redirection. She states, “I am not who I was; to God be the Glory!”

Life has included loss, loneliness and challenge as she has journeyed through infertility and the death of parents. Kris has found place and purpose here at Trinity and healing through her gift of writing. While attending Aquinas College, Kris found her voice in writing. When her father passed away in 2009, she began a blog as a creative avenue to explore and delve into grief. When her mother passed away in 2019, the blog expanded with nuances of a devotional. The grief in Kris’s life has carved a deeper space for joy which is visible in a recent blog post, “Late Night Visitor—Grief and Joy.”

www.enitsirk24.wordpress.com. May we find comfort in her timely message as we navigate through the uncertainties and challenges we each face.

Kris encourages us to serve with 1 Corinthians 12:27: *Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.* “Take time to discern what you can offer the members of TLC.” There are needs among all age groups from infants to serving our homebound members. She exhorts us to “peruse the church calendar” for inspiration. Kris reminds us that Trinity is bustling with opportunities for service in both “short-term and long-term capacities,” stating, “**no time commitment is ever wasted when being the hands and feet of Jesus.**”

As Parker Palmer states, “Let your life speak.” May this glimpse of Kris’s life inspire you to find a place of service among our community at Trinity Lutheran Church.

Note: The purpose of *Behind the Scenes at Trinity* is to praise God and to encourage others to use their special abilities to serve Him. Although people featured here have been reluctant to be highlighted, they’ve agreed to be published to encourage others to experience the joys of serving.

If you’d like to suggest people to feature in future articles, please contact Cathy Olson (cawolson@gmail.com) or Pastor Karen.

Fitness Update - Tai Chi is resuming outdoors at Trinity!



Look for instructor, Kristina Kuhlmann, outside at Trinity on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m., weather permitting. The group meets in the parking lot on the Robinson Road side on the southwest side of the property. The suggested donation is \$3 per class.

Please call Kristina with any questions at 616.719.6961.

Love Never Ends - Support for Bereaved Parents



"Love Never Ends" started as a private dinner during the holiday season for parents who had lost a child. Realizing that there was a need for support and healing, the group began. They strive to create a safe place for parents to talk about their child, say their name, cry, laugh, or wordlessly sit with arms crossed.

On Saturday, July 11 the group will meet from 2 to 4 p.m., at Social Dance Studio, 925 4 Mile RD. NW, Grand Rapids 49544. A light snack will be provided as well as an opportunity to learn something new.

Come for the whole time or for a few minutes. Taking the first step is the most difficult. For more information, call or text Amanda at 616.308.5177.

Life Begins at 60! Driveway Dining Gatherings



This summer we're trying something new – having safe outdoor Driveway Dining gatherings, each with a limited number of guests and following strict social distancing protocol. You bring your own chairs, supper/snacks, drinks and we supply the driveways.

Registrations have filled up quickly; but If you haven't attended one yet, there's still opportunity to do so on **Friday, July 31, from 6 to 8 p.m. on the driveway of Mary Beth and Joe Iaria, 4852 Summer Ridge Court in Ada.** Contact Pastor Karen to sign up (karen.niemeyer@tlcgr.org). *Reservations are a first-come basis.*

Trinity's New Pictorial Directory for your Smartphone

Trinity members who were not able to participate in the Universal Church Directories can still get the Trinity Pictorial Directory app for your smartphone.

An email was sent to our Trinity members from Angela Davis, Director of Congregational Life, on June 25, giving the instructions and your personal access code for the app. If you did not receive an email, please contact Angela Davis to have the information resent to you.



Summer Bottle and Can Drive Underway at Trinity

Do you have a load of bottles and cans around the house? Our high schoolers would love to take them off your hands now that stores have started taking them back.

You can drop them off at the north door we used during construction, the one to your right as you face the playground. To arrange pick up, please contact Pastor Dan or Christian Blauwkamp. Thank you for supporting our youth ministry!



Please Keep in Touch with us!

Are you expecting or adopting?

The Trinity staff would like to celebrate and share in your happy news of being pregnant or welcoming a new child through adoption. We like to know about it, so we can pray for and support your family. Our ministry to your baby/child begins even before they arrive! Contact Director of Congregational Life Angela Davis with details.



Baptism at Trinity

Are you interested in having your child(ren) or yourself baptized? Contact Pastor Bob with the potential date(s) and service that will work for you and your family.



Supplies being accepted for Congress Elementary School

As a church family, we hope to once again supply much needed items for use by the students and teachers of Congress Elementary School. While it is uncertain at this time just exactly what school will “look like” in the fall, the students will still need to have school supplies. The shopping list below indicates the number of the specific items needed to begin the school year.

Please consider picking up some of these supplies and bringing them to Trinity. Your donations can be placed in the large plastic labeled barrels located in the entryway in the main entrance on the west side of the church building. The collection of supplies will go through August.

- tissues (200 boxes)
- hand sanitizer (50 + large pump bottles)
- glue sticks (200 each)
- crayons (200 boxes)
- pencils (400 each)
- sanitizing wipes (50 + containers)
- healthy dry boxed snacks (crackers, pretzels, granola bars, etc.) for lower grade classes - they do not need to be individually wrapped



Samaritas Fundraising Event—Monday, September 21

Rock Stars, Movie Stars and Classic Cars!

Cruise back in time to the drive-in movies! Join chairs John and Sandy Lowery, Bing and Jean Goei and co-chairs, Dave Shaffer and Renée Williams, on Monday, September 21, 2020. **Be the Rock Under the Stars** will take place in the North Parking Lot at the West Michigan landmark, **Fifth Third Ballpark**, 4500 West River Drive NE, Comstock Park, MI 49321.

This is the not-to-be-missed fundraising event of the summer. Rock and Roll to LIVE entertainment, enjoy an evening filled with inspiration on the big screen, all while you dine on summer classics barbecue, root beer floats, and popcorn all from the comfort of inside your own ride.

Join us for this unforgettable bash to raise **critical funds** during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. If you have questions, contact Mary Cline, Special Events and Corporate Relations Manager at 616.284.5704 or mclin@samaritas.org.

To purchase tickets, please go to: <https://www.samaritas.org/BeTheRock#order>



July Birthday and Anniversary Celebrations!

July 1

Andrew Murray
Jennifer Palm Dwyer
Joy Prusak
Elizabeth and John Derbin

July 2

Ellie Brandstadt
Tristan Derbin
Haley Fisk
Linda Grinstead
Nick Harrison
Joe Rosloniec
Calvin Stekete
Micah Stekete
Daniel Zielinski

July 3

Nanci Guigue
Isaac Johnson
Janet Konen
Yvonne Lynn
John Moglia
Ned Quinn

July 4

Greg Battreall
Oscar Heaford
Donna Linsey
Jeff Ulrich
Linda and John Holm

July 5

Bonnie Brandstadt
Caden Budzyn
William Cannon
Victoria Elliott
Oliver Ruble
Susan and Dave Gutierrez

July 6

Deborah Bambini
Kim Brock
Delia DeBoer
Kristi Flatt
Rachel Gosch
Kristin and John Bradley
Lisa and Dave Reiersen

July 7

Elena Griewahn
Adrienne Hall
Melissa and John Ziech

July 8

Kaitlyn Childers
Margot Frecka
Abigail Lamprich
Matthew Mead
Hudson Proux
Rachel Vigna

July 9

Coreen Beckett
Angie Brace
Hayes Dudley
Annie Hudson
Lisa Mead
David Morrison
Chloe Tesch
Sue and Dave Wait

July 10

Gordon Engstrom
Kevin Henkel
Chris Kutschinski
Karin Moglia
Micki Smokovich
Jonathan Sommers

July 11

Tom Helzer
James Oliver
Fred Ulreich

July 12

Abigail Battreall
Julianna Hahn
Marybeth Iaria
Connor Krupp
Judy Otten
Mae Preston
Colin Sawhill
Andrea and Timothy Dudley
Lisa Wilson and Keith Gohlke

July 13

Brad Burkle, Jr.
Sofia Crist
Donna Erickson
Geoff Larsen
Madison Montgomery
Andrea Salasky
Deb and John Potter

July 14

Sarah Huckstep
Clara Yu
Diane and Larry Biser
Carrie and Sid Hoeksema
Ashley and Erik Perkins

July 15

Laura Fisher
John Idema
Kathryn Langenburg
Mary Wollen
Laura and Steve Cairns (25)
Elaine and Kevin Furmaga

July 16

Brooklyn Breon
Bill Fisk
Katie Grzelak
Kaitlyn Landon
Mae Olson
Karen Smith

(July 16 continued)

Ingrid and Patrick Brang
Jane and Nicholas Claus
Kerry and Jim McKee

July 17

Benjamin Cannon
Samantha McMillan
Tadas Norris
Tom Shannon Jr.
Tom VanderWoude
Peyton Wollen
Beth and Bob O'Connor

July 18

Sue Bakkila
Kendal Thorsen
Kate and Bryan Bredwell
Wendy and Joesy Johnson
Yvonne and Dan Lynn

July 19

Mikaela Bradley
Nancy Krupp
Laura Swain
Connie and Larry Frazier
Kelly and Jason Montgomery

July 20

Jennifer Ackerman-Haywood
Dave Reiersen
Michelle and Tom Albaitis

July 21

Rachel Ahrens
Ken Beld
Benson Beuker
Katelyn Tooley
Kara and Chris Posthumus
Heather and Tom Worsfold

July 22

Jordan Donahue
Paul Kuhlman
Betsy and John McIntyre
Rachel and Brian Vigna (25)

July 23

Fred Wilcox
Jodi Wood
Bonnie and Todd Brandstadt
Liz and Art Schmebling

July 24

Abby Cole
Laura Elliott
Cyndi Harrison
Taylor Montgomery
Ginny Stoll-Tyrrell
Megan Unruh
Maggie VanderWoude
Paul VanderWoude

July 25

Susan Candela
Kyle and John Teichow
Kathy and Dave Young

July 26

Tom Fredrickson
Pam Gunderson
Carrie Hoeksema
Christopher Humphreys
John Kendall
Molly King
Susan Youngren
Ann and Michael Morin

July 27

Peter Bowman
Leo LePow
Emilia LePow
Ivy LePow
Barbara Meyers
Jay Rosloniec
Dale Volkerding
Christine and Richard Duyser
Michelle and Ned Quinn

July 28

Alain Carron
Bruce Hungerford
Beth Olson
Steve Salasky
Joanna and Chris Kutchinski
Jamie and Jason Stevenson

July 29

Peter Larson
Ronald McNally
Elaine Rongey
Jennifer Salasky
Kay Zeaman
Kori and Jeff Grooters

July 30

Zach Budzyn
Grant Greiner
Gene Gunderson
Nancy Lindquist
Kathleen Longstreth
Emily and Roy Black
Sharon and Bill Brandner

July 31

Lyn Allen
Jillian Beld
Brooke Croly
Mary Rasmussen
Kirsten and Omar Zarou

If you have a special milestone birthday or anniversary, please contact the main office at Trinity to let us know!

Trinity is Live Streaming our Rejoice Service - How do I find it?

We are streaming our 9:15 a.m. Sunday "Virtual Worship" service on YouTube. To find it, do the following:

- Follow the home page link to "Virtual Worship" on Trinity's website, select "video" to be connected to the stream.
- OR
- Go to YouTube, either by opening the app on your phone or by visiting the webpage on your computer.
- Search for 'Trinity Lutheran Church Grand Rapids.' The first option should be one with a picture of our cross tower.
- When you click on it you will be brought to our channel. If the service is live (from about 9:10 to 10:20 a.m. on Sunday morning) there will be a video with 'Live Now' on it.
- Simply click on the video and you will be connected to the stream.
- We also save past services in a play list called 'Rejoice Worship,' so you can view a past worship service at any time. (On Sundays it may take a couple of hours from the time worship ends until the time that YouTube makes the video available).

If you have a YouTube account, please subscribe to the Trinity channel. This will allow our videos to show up in your video feed and when we reach enough subscriptions allow us to change our YouTube url.

Please Note: We are on GRTV!

Our Sunday services are being broadcast on GRTV channel 25! Our services air on Sundays from 11 a.m. to noon. The broadcast is a week behind, so this Sunday's service will air next week. Find us wherever you find GRTV!



2700 Fulton Street East
Grand Rapids, MI 49506
616.949.2510 tlcgr.org

Office Hours: 7:30AM - 3:30PM (M-F)



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

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.*

Staff

Direct Dial:
616.949.2510

(then dial extension #)



facebook.com/tlcgr



YouTube.com
Search: Trinity
Lutheran
Church, gr

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Rev. Dan Schewe, Associate Pastor (ext. 124)
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Rev. Karen Niemeyer, Assisting Pastor (ext. 112)
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616.949.2510

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