



The Messenger

Congregation Council Authorizes Re-Entry Study/Advisory Group

At its May 11 meeting, the Trinity Congregation Council authorized a seven-member "Re-Entry Study/Advisory Group" to propose a phased re-entry plan for the ministry of Trinity Lutheran Church in Grand Rapids.

Earlier in May, North/West Lower Michigan Synod Bishop Craig Satterlee hosted a couple of synod-wide Zoom meetings to discuss what re-entry could look like in our congregations. He also referenced several significant planning documents that could help inform a phased re-entry plan, including planning published by Great Lakes Episcopalians, the Wisconsin Council of Churches, and the CDC Guidelines for Community and Faith Based Organizations. Since that time, playbooks for corporate re-entry planning in Michigan and the governor's "Michigan Safe Start" plan have also been published. Trinity's Re-Entry Study/Advisory Group will be considering all these resources as they propose a phased re-entry plan for our congregation.

The Council and staff of Trinity Lutheran church are committed to caring well for one another in our life as a community in this time of COVID-19 pandemic. In alignment with the wider faith community in Michigan, we affirm the following goals:

- offering hope to our communities in this uncertain time,
- continuing to provide our congregation with pastoral care and supportive relationships now and in the months to come, even in our separation,
- providing the continuity of prayer and worship, whether gathered in person or via digital media, and
- protecting the most vulnerable among us by limiting contact and initiating practices to slow the spread of infectious disease.

The development of a multi-phase plan will include practices for how we will undertake re-entry after our current status of closure, pending further recommendations from church judicatories, health officials and our governor. The way forward will not be immediate, and it may not be linear in progression, but it will rely on a faithful balance of good science and pastoral care.

By early June it is hoped that Trinity's re-entry plan will be drafted, but with the recognition that actual re-entry into "in person" worship gathering will still be weeks or even months into our future. The nature of congregational gathering bears some of the same implications as Phase 5 (containment) of the "Michigan Safe Start Plan," when restaurants and bars will reopen, increased size gatherings can occur and K-12 live instruction can resume, or even Phase 6 (post-pandemic), when events and gatherings of all sizes will resume and social distancing will be relaxed. Our re-entry into worship together will intentionally seek to not endanger the public health.

As we shape a vision for the day when we will gather again to celebrate the goodness of being together, please keep our Re-Entry Study/Advisory Group in your prayers: Jim Coates, Chris Engle, Dr. John Fox, Michelle Hall, Jan Jacobson, Pastor Dan Schewe and Pastor Bob Linstrom. May God bless us all in this time of separation.

O God, where hearts are fearful and constricted, grant courage and hope.

Where anxiety is infectious and widening, grant peace and reassurance.

Where impossibilities close every door and window, grant imagination and resistance.

Where distrust twists our thinking, grant healing and illumination.

Where spirits are daunted and weakened, grant soaring wings and strengthened dreams.

All these things we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.



During this Challenging Time...

We are all affected in some way by this pandemic. When 'crisis mode' extends from weeks to months, our bodies, minds and spirits become very taxed. Isolation is draining, lack of activity breeds less activity, and stress related to fear, finances, jobs, family, etc. can make us more susceptible to illness.

These times of uncertainty affect each of us differently. Regardless, it is important for us to care for ourselves. While this is not intended to be a 'to-do list,' prescriptive or exhaustive, it is a way to share a few suggestions to support your mind, body and spirit during this challenging time...

MIND

Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:6-8

- Preserve some sense of routine. Make a daily schedule - be realistic and allow for flexibility and decreased productivity. Take breaks.
- Stay Connected by phone calls, texts, zoom chats, mail, and/or drive-by visits.
- Limit news consumption and stick to reliable sources. Turn to God's word for truth, strength, hope and peace.
- Try something new. Get out a board game. Work a puzzle. Make a craft. Clean out a closet. Listen to a Podcast. Read a book. Take an online class. Play an instrument.
- Seek out professional help if anxiety, depression, addiction or other condition is affecting your daily life.

BODY

Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your bodies.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

- Plan healthy meals. Stay hydrated. Maintain a regular sleep schedule. Avoid excessive alcohol, nicotine and self-medicating.
- Keep up with regular appointments and preventative health care. Telemed is working.
- Move your body! Take a walk, do yoga or Tai Chi, or turn up the music and dance!
- Get fresh air. Open a window, go for a walk, ride your bike, and let the sun shine on your face.
- Wash your hands, but not more than needed!



SPIRIT

For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline. 2 Timothy 1:7

- Focus on what you can do and accept what is out of your control.
- Acknowledge your feelings, even the negative ones.
- Start a gratitude journal and write something you are thankful for every day.
- Join Trinity's worship services through YouTube. Read your Bible. Use the worship notes for daily devotions during the week.
- Share a random act of kindness -- helping others is fuel for the soul!
- Try meditation class, set positive intentions, and practice breath prayers.
- Give yourself grace!

This is a season to nurture kindness, gratitude, love and faith. There isn't room for negativity and divisiveness. As people of God, let's emerge from this with a greater sense of community, compassion and understanding for ourselves and others.

Father, help me to keep my focus on you when the fear, pain and hurt are overwhelming. Help me to be faithful and to see the good and blessings that surround me. Please strengthen my mind, heart and body. May the Holy Spirit guide me in peace and comfort today. Amen.

In His Peace,
Kristin Bradley
Faith Community Nurse

A Message from Pastor Bob Linstrom



So, we missed Easter Sunday, Earth Day, Confirmation, Mother's Day, New Members Weekend, Graduates Sunday . . .

The spring of 2020, with the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic, included the immediate shift from gathering "in person" to social distancing and then the governor's "stay at home" order. Within a couple of weeks, we shifted from midweek Lenten soup suppers, three services of worship on Sundays, coffee hour fellowship and Sunday School to a facility occupied during the week solely by Office Coordinator Kris Baker and worship on Sundays attended by two pastors and two tech support leaders. None of us fully expected the depth of the closure that we have experienced as the spring of 2020 separation evolved in our congregation, or in the experience of our neighbors in the wider human community.

Holy Week and Easter were without our coming together in worship, but our live streaming served to provide an alternative expression of creative love in our distancing. A season of celebrations in worship and parish life also passed without our gathering. But those celebrations, deferred for now, will be awaiting our reunion as a community.

Bishop Satterlee wrote, "We will gather in worship as a community again. We will be fed at God's table again. And we trust that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. Let this time be a Lenten fast from the sacrament, so that our Easter joy may be even greater when we are welcomed again to taste and see that the Lord is good. If we cannot come together on Easter, we will celebrate our Lord's resurrection on the Sunday we can come back together. We will gather again as church around Word and Sacrament."

Lent has passed and the fifty-day season of Easter is passing. We are not satisfied with these times in our life together. But we will gather again as church. Just not yet . . .

Grace and peace,
Pastor Bob Linstrom

Holden Village pilgrimage cancelled; possible rescheduling in 2021



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 will be scheduled in July or August to begin that exploration.

All of the 2020 'Trinity Travelers' will be invited to the summertime information meeting 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 this summer.

Council Corner

Trinity Congregation Council Members 2019-2020

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. Executive Committee members and Committee contacts are:

Congregation Council Executive Committee

President: Paul Crist, 616.813.6150,
pcrist5150@gmail.com

Vice President:

Treasurer: Chris Engle,
616.308.8859, chris@growtrust.com

Secretary: Carol Butler, 616.551.3903,
caroljb43@gmail.com

Congregation Council Members

Children's Ministry: Karen Unruh,
kbunruh@gmail.com, 616.988.9294

Communications: Nicole Rodammer,
616.498.0904,
nicole.rodammer@gmail.com

Congregational Life: Eric Gohlke,
ericgohlke@comcast.net, 616.883.6375

Endowment Fund: Mike Mason,
616.826.8501,
mikemason2005@comcast.net

Finance: Chris Engle, 616.308.8859,
chris@growtrust.com

Health Ministries: Carol Butler,
616.551.3903, caroljb43@gmail.com

Human Resources: Steve Heacock,
616.949.3907, srheacock@gmail

Outreach: John Fox, 616.949.2510,
jklsafox@comcast.net

Property: Mike King, 574.286.6312,
michael.king@spectrumhealth.org

Stewardship: Amelia Crist, 616.340.5914,
amelia.elisabeth.crist@gmail.com

Worship and Music: Rick Radke,
616.682.1198, radketrac@comcast.net

Worship and Music: Kate Bredwell,
616.889.3329,
kate.bredwell@sbcglobal.net

Youth and Family: Tess Lundgren,
616.889.9503, tesslundgren@gmail.com

Youth and Family: Ryleigh Fischer,
Youth Representative, 616.949.2510

New Congregation Council members Ryleigh Fischer, Amy Fox, Brad Kessel and Jamie Kuntzman will begin their terms at the meeting on June 8. Committee assignments will take place at that time.



Trinity's Communications Committee has been hard at work. Our word for 2020 has been

streamline, streamline, streamline

as we focus on the methods in which we receive communications at Trinity Lutheran Church.

What does that mean for you?

It means that we have been looking closely at how we communicate, what is the best method for how we communicate, and how we can best manage overlap, duplications, and development of these communications.

We conducted a survey of the congregation in the fall of 2019 to find out which methods of communication are most used among our members, and what we found was there was no clear front runner. Everyone seems to have their own preferences for the way they want to receive weekly updates, monthly communications, and bulletins. So there really wasn't a communication method that we could eliminate without interrupting someone's preferred method to receive updates. Instead, we decided to focus on the back end of the communications and streamline the process for employees at Trinity who are developing these communications pieces for you throughout the year.

We are currently moving forward with Event Calendar Pro which allows for better integration through our new updated website, a way for people to select the categories of messages they want to receive (ex. youth, music, etc.) and much more. We are currently testing this platform on a test website to make sure everything works the way we want it to before launching it to everyone publicly, and working with staff to make sure we are not adding any more work to them as well.

We will also be working with Mail Chimp to deliver weekly/monthly communications within Event Calendar Pro that won't come directly from an office email.

We are excited about this opportunity to make things more streamlined and focused for everyone here, and we hope this allows for everyone to have a really great experience and be able to find the things/events they are looking for easier and quicker than before. Look for more information being announced this summer!

Nicole Rodammer, Council Liaison - Communications

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" and you will 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 (that is our channel).
- 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!

Trinity Lutheran Church Budget vs. Actuals

Month of March 2020

	Budget	Actual	Variance Favorable/ (Unfavorable)	
Total Income	90,757	98,672	7,915	8.7%
Total Expenses	89,534	83,196	6,338	7.1%
Net Income (Loss)	1,223	15,476	14,253	



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

	Budget	Actual	Variance Favorable/ (Unfavorable)	
Total Income	179,193	243,412	64,219	35.8%
Total Expenses	177,082	162,790	14,292	8.1%
Net Income (Loss)	2,111	80,623	78,511	

A Message from Associate Pastor Dan Schewe

Hindsight is 2020...

How will we tell the tale of this quarantine? On April 29 Tomos Roberts posted a video to his YouTube channel, Probably Tomfoolery, called The Great Realisation. This video gave me a great perspective on how we can frame this experience. If you haven't seen it yet I can't recommend it enough. You can find it here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nw5KQMXDiM4&fbclid=IwAR3-k8axnSOrxYXW8lxfb7qGDx1rAuPqE6uw3QVKtL8SM14GizQs-qXFw2l>

v=Nw5KQMXDiM4&fbclid=IwAR3-

k8axnSOrxYXW8lxfb7qGDx1rAuPqE6uw3QVKtL8SM14GizQs-qXFw2l

In it he is getting his children ready for bed, and they ask him to tell them a bedtime story... their favorite... the one about the virus. He goes on to tell them about how the virus helped us start to see each other again and be less focused on what we can produce and acquire. It is a touching way to view this experience we are all going through.

How will you tell the tale of this quarantine? How will you frame the story?

Much of the Old Testament is an example of a community framing their story. Again and again the Jewish people are conquered, and oppressed, dispossessed of their lands and dragged off into captivity. They could frame their story as a hopeless tale of perpetual defeat and occupation. The message of their story could be that there is always someone stronger who will take what you have because they can.

But that is not the story of the Old Testament. Instead it is a story pregnant with hope and promise, brimming with light breaking into the dark places they find themselves in. It is a story about how light and love win in the end over power and domination. It is a story about finding joy in the most unexpected places and circumstances.

The story is told through a lens of hope and promise.

How will you frame the story of this quarantine?

Yes, it has been long, trying, and difficult. We have had to face things we could not imagine. Yet it is a time ripe with lessons for us to learn about the importance of relationships and community. This time in our lives is ripe with lessons of hope and promise, a time ripe with lessons that speak of our faith.

Summer programming local alternatives

As you have likely heard, both camp at Stony Lake Bible Camp and our Mission Trip with Group Workcamps have been canceled for this summer. I'm still grieving these losses. I am working with our committees and local partners on developing local alternative experiences for our youth. These plans are contingent upon when our stay-at-home orders are relaxed and we are allowed to gather in groups again. We do not know when that will be, so these plans are still very much up in the air. We are grieving these losses and waiting for our hope to become a reality.

Shalom,
Pastor Dan Schewe



A Message from Assisting Pastor Karen Niemeyer



*Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances;
for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18*

*Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition,
with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. Philippians 4:6*

Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever! Psalm 107:1

Looking back over the past couple months, I can't help but think about all the heartbreaking stories due to Covid-19...the isolation imposed on all, especially those who live alone in their homes or in nursing and retirement homes, the fledgling businesses forced to close, the parents struggling to work from home while also being their kids' substitute teachers, the tragic, lonely deaths of loved ones ... and the list goes on and on. And yet, as I read scripture such as the verses listed above (*and over 100 other ones in the Bible!*), I am continually reminded to practice gratitude in spite all of the despair in our world.

In her book, *One Thousand Gifts*, author Ann Voskamp meditates on *giving gratitude in all situations* as she recounts her amazing journey from resenting God after the tragic death of her little sister to embracing an over-the-top thankfulness for all of God's gifts. Ann shares that when she realized that *as Jesus approached death he gave thanks when he instituted Communion on that first Maundy Thursday*, she decided to follow his example by living a lifestyle of gratitude in spite of her sister's death; and she began making a list of 1,000 everyday things she could praise God for. As her new lifestyle of thankfulness replaced the bitterness that had ruled her life, Ann realized that true joy is found only through thankfulness for God's many gifts... no matter what our life circumstances may be.

So I decided to take a lesson from Ann and begin my own list of things to be thankful for, good things that have happened during this extraordinary time of isolation. I'd like to *share just a few of them* with you.

I am thankful ...

- for Trinity's *GriefShare* group, a dedicated band of ten who have boldly continued their weekly gatherings via ZOOM. Ranging in age from mid-thirties to ninety, members have quickly disproved the old adage, "You can't teach an old dog new tricks," as they have helped each other conquer technology on their iPads, cell phones and computers. Since social distancing practices intensify feelings of loneliness common after loss, gathering virtually to share grief stories has gently knit this group into one bonded together by the warmth of friendship.
- for *Facebook*, and the opportunity it gives me to keep in touch with many Trinity families, as I read about the births of new babies Harris Theodore Frecka and Abigail Ann Severns, marvel at Scott Dulecki's creative shelf designs, reminisce over photos of Dave and Mary Smoes' many travels, shake my head in wonder at Nora Lamb's funfetti cake-making demonstration, admire the ingenuity of Amy Fox and other Trinity moms and dads in their daily teaching challenges, smile with Kaitlyn Landon as she awaits her upcoming wedding, worship with Trinity's Office Coordinator Kris Baker as she shares the Lord's Prayer in Trinity's sanctuary, smile at Zoey Bredwell and Vaiva Norris as they *Facetime* together, each watching Pastor Dan's Sunday morning children's talk ... and all the many more Trinity lives I am able to be a part of in *Facebook*.
- for the many growing friendships nurtured in my weekly check-in calls with Trinity members, as well as *the calls I receive from Trinity members* who are so thoughtfully checking in on me.
- and for the timing of the Covid 19 Pandemic, arriving *after* the cold winter months so that in our isolation we can enjoy God's gift of spring as our world comes alive with the feel of gentle breezes, the color of blooming fruit trees, the sounds of singing birds and the smells of fresh-cut grass.

Together in Christ,
Pastor Karen

Children's Ministry



This summer Children's Ministry will offer virtual Sunday School! Our Sunday School leaders will post one video lesson each week, June 7 through September 6. They will read from a storybook Bible and discuss the lesson. Coloring pages and worship bulletins will be available.

What will kids learn in virtual Sunday School? Bible stories from the New Testament focus on the teachings of Jesus that help us grow as disciples. Children will be hearing the same scriptures read during Sunday worship. Materials will include ideas for family discussions and activities.

When should kids watch virtual Sunday School? The short answer is: Anytime! New lessons will be available every Friday, starting June 5. Families might like to have the worksheets ready for kids to do while watching the Trinity Live Stream worship. The Bible story video can be watched before or after. The lesson would also be a good mid-week activity.

How do we sign up? No need to sign-up! Each Friday, links to the video, coloring pages, and worship bulletins will be emailed to Trinity families with kids ages 3 years to 5th grade. All the worksheets will be formatted for easy printing from home. To be added to these emails or to unsubscribe, please contact: kids@tlcgr.org

What if I prefer printed copies of the worksheets? We've got summer packets ready to mail! A survey was sent out late May that helped us gauge how many packets would be needed. If you requested printed packets, they will be mailed to your home soon, one per child. If you need a packet, please let us know! (kids@tlcgr.org)

Facebook! Another way to find all these resources is to sign up for our new Facebook page called TLCGR Children's Ministry. Our "closed group" is only open to Trinity families and staff by invitation. We will use Facebook to stay connected, post weekly lessons, updates, share photos, and faith-related activities. Families with children 5th grade and younger should have received an invitation to join in your email. If not, let us know! (kids@tlcgr.org)

Cancellation of Vacation Bible School: It is with sad hearts that we announce that Trinity will not host VBS this year. Typically we hold this amazing week-long event the third week in July. It is a summer highlight for many kids, youth, and adults. But the health and safety of the children, volunteers, and our community must be the priority.

Trinity is blessed with an abundance of wonderful families. It is an honor to be able to support you, connect with you, and serve God alongside you!

God's peace,

The Children's Ministry Team

Rachele Battreall, Ingrid Brang, Sheri Mason,
James Morin, and Andrea Severns

Middle School and High School News

Middle School Youth Group – Wednesdays at 3 p.m.

Our middle schoolers meet weekly at 3 p.m. on Wednesdays for youth group via Zoom. We play games, catch up on the week, and support each other in these strange times. We would love for you to join us!

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88414887722>
pwd=ek5TUGZ6WnZ6L1ZFpZR2NSb1dLQT09
Meeting ID: 884 1488 7722
Password: TLCGRMSYG



High School Youth Group – Sundays at 6:30 p.m.

All high school youth, and their friends, are invited to join us for youth group.

Our high schoolers are meeting weekly for youth group via Zoom on Sunday nights at 6:30 pm. We catch up on our week, play games, delve into the scriptures, and support each other in these strange times. We would love for you to join us!

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87868956351>
Meeting ID: 878 6895 6351
Password: TLCGR2020

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 a Graduate bulletin in your mail soon. 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.



High School plans for the summer of 2021

Next summer we have a two amazing experiences in store for our high schoolers. In addition to our usual mission trip we will be traveling to Minneapolis, Minnesota, for the 2021 ELCA Youth Gathering!

Every three years over 30,000 youth gather for the ELCA Youth Gathering. It is an amazing time of spiritual growth. Our youth who went to Houston in 2018 have powerful stories to share from their experiences learning about the vastness and diversity of our church. We are excited about this trip in 2021.

In the coming months look for an informational meeting on this trip and our 2021 mission trip. This may take place via Zoom or in person as we learn more about how and if we can gather. Pastor Dan is also working with our youth committee on nailing down our 2021 mission trip location and date.

Registration for the ELCA Youth Gathering opens in September. We want to get our group registered in the first registration window to ensure the best price on our registrations. The ELCA Gathering is from June 28 – July 3.



We have been Zooming! How about you?!

A recent meeting of the Trinity Congregation Council



The Friday morning Women's Book Club



Stephen Leaders



Spiritual Growth Committee



A Grace Group led by Pastor Rothfuss

Zooming fun!

A recent meeting of the Trinity Staff



Grief Share



Friday Morning Women's Bible Study

Stephen Ministry Team



You are invited to join a Grace Group beginning in June

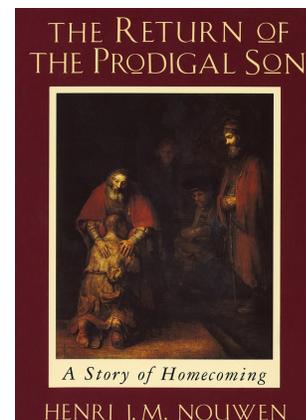
Trinity Grace Groups are short-term small group Bible Studies that meet during the five weeks of Lent, between Ash Wednesday and Holy Week, for weekly study and conversation. Trinity members volunteer to serve as small group facilitators and each Grace Group studies the same topic and uses the same materials. Grace Groups are especially appealing for people who are unable to make the time commitment for long term Bible Studies.

Trinity Grace Group participants studied a book written by well known author Henri Nouwen entitled, [The Return of the Prodigal Son: A Story of Homecoming](#). Most of the 2020 Lenten Grace Groups were cut short because of the "Shelter in Place" order that abruptly began in mid-March. Several groups continued meeting weekly via Zoom.

Because the study based on this book was so popular with Grace Group participants, we are offering an opportunity for Trinity members and friends to meet together via Zoom for five weeks this summer. Pastor Frank Rothfuss will lead the small group for five weekly meetings beginning the week of June 14. The specific day of the week and start time of the gatherings will be determined by the availability of participants.

If you are interested in participating in this summer-time Grace Group, please contact the main office at Trinity or be in touch with Pastor Rothfuss at frothfuss@comcast.net or call him at 616.481.2433. If possible, please RSVP by Wednesday, June 10 so that the most convenient time for participants to meet can be determined in a timely manner.

Copies of the book are available for purchase at your favorite book seller or online.



Stephen Ministry

Stephen Ministry Now and in the Future

Trinity's Stephen Ministry has been well and active, and making some necessary adjustments during the Covid-19 crisis. The emotional and spiritual care our Stephen Ministers provide has been especially valuable due to the heightened stress and anxiety many people are experiencing as a result of the pandemic. Because the health and safety of both the Stephen Minister and care receiver are of the highest priority, we too are adhering to physical distancing guidelines.

Our active Stephen Ministers continue to meet with their care receivers using "virtual" means rather than meeting face-to-face. Stephen Ministers have come up with great ways to connect with their care receivers to show they care. For our twice-a-month Peer Support meetings and our monthly Leaders meetings, we are using Zoom technology. We plan to continue meeting in these ways until we can safely gather again.

As we focus on the future, we plan to grow Trinity's Stephen Ministry. We are delighted that Norm Palm and Sheila Talsma are scheduled to go to Leader Training this summer. Although training has been postponed twice due to Covid-19, they look forward to attending the week-long conference and preparing to become members of our Leader Team.

We also plan to offer a training class for new Stephen Ministers in the fall or as soon as it is safe to do so. Please be watching for a Stephen Ministry Sunday, an Open House and recruitment of potential class members. We are simply waiting to be able to fill out the timeline of events! If you are interested in becoming a Stephen Minister contact Brenda Heacock at 616.915.0717.

Please remember that our Stephen Ministers are always ready to reach out to members of Trinity and the community, especially at times such as we have been experiencing lately. For more information, don't hesitate to speak to Kristin Bradley, our Faith Community Nurse or one of our other Stephen Leaders, Brenda Heacock, Sue Coates, Beth Vanderwall and Kris Racek.



Entering the Narrow Gate 2020-2021



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

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 deeper life in Spirit and more intentional living of the Christian life in Christ. The rich and inspiring teaching is centered on the saints, mystics and spiritual teachers of the Christian centuries, personal contemplative prayer practice, spiritual companion conversations and guidance for living a more integrated spiritually mature life in Christ.

Led by Sister Nancy Brousseau, OP, sessions take place on ten Thursdays, once per month over the course of September 2020 to June 2021 from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Tuition is \$600.

If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity, please be in touch with Trinity's Office Coordinator Kris Baker.

2020-2021 Congregation Council to be installed June 7



The Congregation Council begins a new year in June, with Council members elected at the January 2020 Annual Meeting taking office for the 2020-2021 term.

Reelected to three-year terms on the Congregation Council at the Annual Meeting were Kate Bredwell, Carol Butler, Chris Engle and Steve Heacock. Newly elected Council members were Ryleigh Fischer (youth representative), Amy Fox, Brad Kessel and Jamie Kuntzman. The entire 2020-2021 Congregation Council will be installed into their leadership offices during live streaming of worship on Sunday, June 7.

Kathy Bush, Jim Coates, Carrie Wygmans and youth representative Elizabeth Mulligan were thanked for their leadership as they completed their Council terms at the May 2020 Council meeting. All four have faithfully served Trinity as elected leaders of this congregation.

The people of Trinity are invited to hold their Council leaders in prayer as they seek to lead our ministry in this time of closure and re-entry into shared worship, fellowship and service.

Prayer Tree Celebration



The Fifth Annual Prayer Tree Participants Celebration Pizza Party and Frozen Custard Bar has been postponed until a later date. Once the new date has been chosen, the Prayer Tree children and adults will receive an invitation in the mail with all the specifics of the new celebration.

If your child has not been a part of this ministry, you may want them to have someone from Trinity praying for them specifically. We are always looking for more adults to pray for the youngest members of Trinity. If you are interested in participation for your child or you would like to pray for a child or children, contact Angela Davis, Director of Congregational Life.

Trinity in Touch

Trinity in Touch is a ministry that reaches out to members unable to join in worship by bringing a “touch of Trinity” to them. Bulletins, devotions, conversation and/or communion are provided by fellow members on a monthly basis. Of course, over the past three months, visits have been suspended and we are fasting from communion. Interestingly though, we are now all experiencing some degree of what it’s like to be a homebound member of our congregation.

In mid-March, with the “Shelter in Place” order looming, plans were put forth to rapidly expand *Trinity in Touch* to include people over 80, members living alone, single parents, and anyone with medical challenges. Our desire was to make sure no one would feel alone during this isolating time. Current *Trinity in Touch* friends, Health Ministry members, Stephen Ministers, Helping Hands volunteers and Trinity staff members all joined in to Phone a Friend! Since then, our outreach has extended and our phone calling team has connected with over 250 households, many checking in on a weekly basis. Additional benefits of this ministry have been the identification of new phone numbers, emails and addresses, facilitating Helping Hands referrals and prayer requests, and the creation of new friendships in Christ! Regular support and resources are provided to the callers by our Faith Community Nurse, Kristin Bradley.

These past three months have certainly taught us a lot about the value of ‘in person’ connections. Seeing someone in worship, passing the peace, a quick ‘hello’ in the hallway, a smile while volunteering, holding hands in prayer - these are all interactions we are not likely to take for granted again. In the meantime, friendly voices can provide a ‘touch’ when we can’t be physically connected.

If you, or someone you know, would like to provide or receive calls, please contact Kristin Bradley.

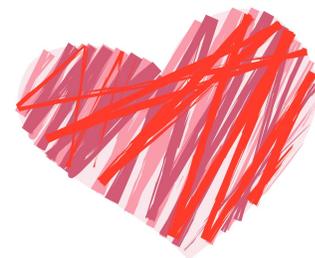


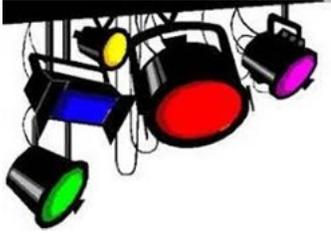
Trinity’s Helping Hands Ministry

Trinity’s Helping Hands Ministry coordinates rides, meals, childcare or other support for Trinity members and friends in their time of need. Our Director of Congregational Life initiates the process when a need is made known (often through one of the pastors or our Faith Community Nurse).

During these uncertain times some of our beloved Trinity members are in need of some assistance. If you are a Trinity member who needs help with shopping for groceries, picking up prescriptions, in need of some meals to be provided due to an illness, surgery, or other reason, please contact one of the pastors, the church office, Kristin Bradley, Faith Community Nurse, or Angela Davis, Director of Congregational Life.

We are also looking for Trinity members who would like to bring a meal, shop for groceries, run errands and/or assist in some other way. Please contact Angela Davis directly if you are interested in being of help in this way.





Under God and Indivisible: Bill Schaefer, Veteran and Chaplain

On any given day within Kent County, Bill Schaefer may be found at a church or along a grave site leading prayer for a fallen soldier. The individual being honored may be of Christian, Jewish, Native American or Islamic faith. Over the past eight years, Bill has been Chaplain for Kent County Honor Guard.

The Kent County Honor Guard was established in 1982 to provide military honors at funeral services for fellow veterans of all faiths. They provide comfort and honor in over 550 funerals per year through the work of the Northern and Southern Kent County units. The members of the Honor Guard represent all divisions of service and include veterans who have served during conflicts to include WWII, Korean, Vietnam, Desert Storm and the War on Terror. These individuals are male and female who provide eulogies, prayers, rifle volley, taps and flag presentations to the grieving family members.

Bill assists in assigning funeral chaplains to all military services and additionally serves on Veterans Day, Memorial Day, and at other events organized to celebrate and honor our Veterans. He is one of a small group of chaplains who can provide duties at our National Cemeteries.

Bill draws strength in this meaningful work through the love and support of his wife, Sharon, his daughters, and his grandchildren. He recognizes the gift of serving families in the midst of their grief and extending honor to those who have committed their lives to service for our country.

In total, we have 30 plus veterans here at Trinity Lutheran Church. As we reflect on Memorial Day 2020, may we humbly stand grateful for those who have served to preserve the tenets of freedom and liberty in the United States of America. Please continue to remember those who served and those who are in active duty during this time when bravery has new dimensions in our lives. Joshua 1:9

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.



Life Begins at 60



When Will We Gather Again?

Like everyone in these days of sheltering in place, we who are "Over 60" are eager to break out of our homes and get together! And yet we know the importance of gathering safely, especially for our age group.

With our safety foremost in mind, we are hoping to gather *outside on Trinity's lawn* some evening(s) in mid-to-late summer (with our own lawn chairs, snacks, and masks, etc.) following social distancing directives as detailed in our Congregation Council's *Trinity Re-entry Plan*. Watch for updated information in the near future. Hope to see you soon!

Neerekshe Bus Appeal Quickly Surpasses Goal



A new opportunity for mission with our partners in South India

Several years ago, the Trinity Bus was sold, and the proceeds of that fund have served for the rental of vehicles for children's and youth programming. A new opportunity to serve our partners in mission and ministry a world away emerged this winter. Our friends in Neerekshe in South India lost one of their two old buses to age and deteriorating condition. Some leaders at Trinity proposed that the now mostly dormant Bus Fund could be a resource to our mission partners in South India.

In February, the Congregation Council authorized not only the disbursement of the entire remaining Bus Fund, \$17,965, to help fund a new bus for the Neerekshe mission, but agreed as well to challenge the Trinity congregation to make up the rest of the \$26,800 purchase price for a new bus during the season of Lent. After two Sundays, the entire \$8,800 challenge was met and exceeded with more than \$10,000 in giving by the end of the first week of Lent.

Congratulations to the people of Trinity! May God bless the faithful hearts of those who responded with such generosity to purchase the new bus for our mission partners.

Interfaith Hospitality Network at Trinity in September



Trinity had been scheduled to provide shelter for several homeless families during the week of June 7 to 14. We received word from Family Promise that we would not be expected to host families in our building at that time. The next time Trinity is scheduled to host families through Interfaith Hospitality Network is the week of September 27 to October 4, 2020.

Since mid-March, Family Promise has been sheltering about 55 families in hotels while prioritizing the safety and well-being of the church volunteers and the families they serve. The staff is providing virtual case management services and bringing food and basic need items to the hotel weekly.

As you can imagine, Family Promise would welcome your prayers, gifts of food and financial assistance during this unusual time. Please go to their website to find out more about how you might be of help: familypromisegr.org.

Start of Summer Celebration



This year's Annual Start of Summer Celebration has been canceled due to the current global pandemic. Mark your calendar for next year's Start of Summer. The fun will start at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, June 16, 2021 when you can meet up with old and new friends on the west side of Trinity. As always we will have:

- Dinner favorites - pulled pork, all beef hot dogs, salad, fruit, chips, Culver's frozen custard with a topping bar and more!
- Bingo, bounce house, sidewalk chalk, face-painting, and more!
- Bring your lawn chair/picnic blanket, and your friends and neighbors!

Summer Kick-Off Blood Drive at Trinity on June 1

In this time of uncertainty regarding the health of our nation, one thing remains true; the need for a strong blood supply remains constant. Especially as elective surgeries resume and summer activities ramp up, the need for blood will increase as well.

We can't all be doctors, nurses or front line fighters of Covid-19, but if we're healthy, we can step up and do our part to protect and save others. Versiti will conduct a blood drive at Trinity on Monday, June 1 from 12:30 to 6:30 p.m. in The Courtyard under current mitigation guidelines. Temperatures will be taken at the door, donors must come alone wearing a mask, children will not be allowed and social distancing will be observed.

Donors are asked to complete their health questionnaire online the morning of the drive to reduce the time spent during the process. **DONORS MUST HAVE AN APPOINTMENT! WALK-INS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.** All donors are asked to enter Trinity at the main entrance on the west side of the building.

You can sign up online at https://donate.michigan.versiti.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/121612. You may also contact Sue Babin at smbabin@yahoo.com or at 267.218.5967 to schedule.



Clothing/Textile Drive

Did you know that more than 15 million tons of used textile waste is generated annually in the U.S.? This amount has doubled in the last 20 years. As well, on average, every American throws away about 80 pounds of clothing per year. Only 15% of consumer clothing is being recycled yet nearly 100% of it can be.



At this year's Rummage Sale we had planned on partnering with the Brooklyn Elias Promise Foundation to reuse all of the extra cloth items. Unfortunately, this year's Rummage Sale was canceled, but we still plan on partnering with them.

The Brooklyn Elias Promise Foundation will recycle our old textiles (clothing, sheet, and towels) to be used locally and internationally. These materials are used in job training programs with at-risk youth and are sent to third world countries to be repurposed into new products. The foundation will pay us 15 cents per pound for our old textiles.

We would love to help you empty your closets of your old clothing, sheets, and towels. We are currently working with the Brooklyn Elias Promise Foundation to schedule a date for a textile drive. Watch your email for more information!

Summer Can Drive

Are your recyclables piling up? Our high schoolers would love to take them off your hands when stores start taking them back. Contact Pastor Dan or Christian to arrange for yours to be picked up. If you are running out of space to store them, please let Pastor Dan know and we can find a spot for them.



Sharing Notes from Trinity Family and Friends

To our Trinity Lutheran family:

Thank you so much for your prayers, flowers, cards and, especially, yummy food you gave us while I recovered from surgery. May God bless you!

From Rebecca Mattison and family



The two notes below would have been in the April newsletter...

Thanks for Julia Bauer's wonderful sendoff!

What a wonderful sendoff for Julia was provided by her dear Trinity family at her February 22 Celebration of Life! As many of you remember, Julia was a classic party animal. The music offered and words spoken at her memorial service, and the beautiful set up (let alone clean up) of the luncheon, all were warmly received and greatly appreciated by family and friends present from near and far and by me!

A great big thank you to our Stephen Ministers who brought companionship and prayer for nine years, and to the many friends at Trinity who provided love and support (and food!) through the last six years of Julia's nine year journey living with ALS. Julia would often type on her eye-gaze speech computer "Thanks for feeding George!" when one of the cadre of cooks dropped off yet another delicious dinner at our house. What a faithful, sustained effort went into keeping us included as part of the great Trinity family, even when Julia could no longer attend Sunday morning services. Thank you all so very much!

In Christ,
George Bauer

And some sad news from former members of Trinity...

Dear members of Trinity Lutheran Church,

It is with great sadness that we inform you that our son Blaise passed away.

(Memorial website: <https://benstem.gemeinsam-trauern.net/Begleiten/blaise-bessette>.)

While we moved away some time ago, the Trinity community played an important role in our life, and many of you may remember Blaise.

Sincerely,

Jean and Anne Marie Bessette and family
am.bessette@yahoo.com

June Birthday and Anniversary Celebrations!

June 1

Kristine Candela
Beverly Heyne
Michael Mason
Karen Nagle
Eric Tooley
Marie and Brad Selleck

June 2

Chas Schaner
Kelli and John Basher
Marge and Jack Greiner

June 3

Tara Anderson
Sue Bailey
Gretchen Flemming
Charmayne Mulligan
Calvin Posthumus
Rebecca & Mark Mattison (25)

June 4

Susan Cothorn
Jacob Hall
CJ Havard
Georgi Hoeksema
Gayl and Brad Kessel

June 5

Megan Hudson
Erin and Aaron Breough

June 6

Jim Bennett
Patrick Brang
Biruta Fessenden
Emily Keller
Theo Marquardt
Dick McKenzie
Elliot Rieth
Sarah and Travis Budzyn
Linda and Terry Zabel

June 7

William Beute
Jane Claus
Lori Law
Jacqueline Murray
Sarah Turnage
Lara Freeburger and Michael Soczek

June 8

Todd Brandstadt
Laurie Freshour
Andy Stekete
Carol and Erick Kind

June 9

Ben Battreall
Darin Estep
Niki Ferguson
William Heyne
Elijah Marvin
Beverly and Kenneth Block
Jennifer Palm and Ryan Dwyer
Krista and Kyle Flack
Chris and Dave Straw

June 10

Matthew Blair
Kim Bradbury
Robert Crossman
Sarah Kuntzman
Alexis Mason
Ethan Mason
Jen and Dave Thamban (25)

June 11

Kim Danielski
Ryan Dwyer
Kevin and Katie Gingras
Amanda and Bruce Hungerford
Nancy and Bob Scott

June 12

Andy Bekker
Lynn Hagenbush
Larry Longstreth
MayEllen Morin
Eli Owens
Jennifer Ackerman-Haywood and Jeff Haywood

June 13

Jackson Brandstadt
Miles Donovan
Tom Malvitz
Lexy Shannon
Lindsey Skalandis
Mike Thorsen
David Young
Caitlin and Robert Oliver

June 14

Debra Petrick
Kris Shannon
Jane and Donald Barsema
Jaci and Morgan Cole
Micki and Michael Smokovich

June 15

Brayden Croly
Russell Lamb
Katie Moga
Ryleigh Owens
Erin Vigna
Anthony Zarou
Linda and Bob Heine

June 16

Marcelyn Anderson
Marilyn Grant
Melissa Haneline
Scott Hansen
Hannah Johnson
Rebecca Linstrom
Carol Schumacher
Meri and Bill Leidel
Venta and Jamie Norris

June 17

CJ Conrad
Sarah Frecka
Sandy Rothfuss

(June 17 continued)

Lynn and Kevin Grzelak
Janine and Bruce Johnson
Kathy and Fred Wilcox

June 18

Lilia Henkel
Gavin Law
Fiona Pardy
Joyce and David Kuecherer

June 19

Ryleigh Fisher
Janet Genow
Joshua Giuliani
Eden Korb
Hannah Parshall
Tami Saum
Tom Williams
Deb and Bill DeWitt
Lisa and Bill Keller

June 20

Janelle Beaudry
Mary Frick
Jacob Johnson
Christophe Muganza
Joshua Price
Sheryl VanderBaan
Tammy and Eric Engblade
Joan and Ed Lohr
Lynda and Doug McCready

June 21

Peter Fisk
Brylee Peters
Tara and Song Anderson
Norma and Stephen Brink
Anna and Mark Bryce
Tess and Tim Lundgren

June 22

Kelsey Becker
Craig Curtiss
Thomas Lee
Alaina Rose Lundgren
Ryan McNally
Valerie Seif
Linda Snow
Cindy and Morrie Fongers
Emily and John Keller
Jamie and Randy Kuntzman

June 23

Steve Archer
Norma Brink
Sam Carlson
Nick Johnson
Brian Mazurek
Mark Rohde
Sue Wait
Donna Wollen
Raija and Jim Boles

June 24

Kris Baker
Phyllis Gehl
Bob Pergler
Edie Pergler
Andrew Sawhill
Sam Thorsen
Ann and Lee Schomberg
Kathleen and Dale Sommers
Kathryn and Scott Stoll

June 25

Carol Kind
Elena Luders
Gavin Van Meter
Lisa and Jeff Postlewaite

June 26

Cohen Barker
Chris Bickel
Alexis Braaten
Jodi Hutchinson
Jon Kelder
Jim Kubicek
John Mielock
Halle Ulreich
Jane and John Ashby
Ginta and Ryan McNally
Judy and Don Otten
Sue and Neil Sandler

June 27

Morgan Black
Jim Coates
JT Hudson
Evan Reiersen
Ruth and Denny Helzer
Debbie and Kenneth Lown
Jessica and Roger Marks
Patti and Bill Patton

June 28

Norah Barker
Vaiva Norris
Parker Proux
Anne Tooley
Jennifer and Scott Hall

June 29

Nick Grooters
Joan Hansen
Wendy Johnson
Roy Lamprich
Melissa Ziech
Corina and Scott Dulecki

June 30

Robert Missman
Emmett Morin
Patrick Murray
Lisa and Matt LaFleur
Elizabeth and Thomas Lee
Gale and Dale Volkerding
Ning Liu and Gary Watson

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

Diapers and Personal Care Items Collected through June

The members of Trinity's Outreach Committee invite you to donate specific items needed more than ever before in our community. Personal care and hygiene items as well as diapers and underwear will be collected at Trinity through June.

Please drop off your donations from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. any weekday in the entryway of the main entrance on the west side of the building. They will be collected daily by Kris Baker, Trinity's Office Coordinator. Kris is the only person at Trinity during this time of closure.

Please consider donating FULL SIZE products such as bar soap, body wash, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, toothbrush, toothpaste, etc.

Diapers of all sizes are appreciated, but especially sizes 3 and 4. Underwear would especially be appreciated for children and larger adults. Thank you in advance for your generosity!



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 #)



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Church, gr

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Rev. Karen Niemeyer, Assisting Pastor (ext. 112)
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