



The Messenger

Lenten Grace Groups Return for Lent 2021



Graphic by Olivia Bradley

Grace Groups are Trinity's short term small group Bible Studies that take place 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 typically studies the same topic and uses the same materials. The groups are scheduled on a variety of days of the week, times and locations. Grace Groups are especially appealing for people who are unable to make the time commitment for long term Bible Studies.

Everyone is invited and encouraged to join a small group that will meet weekly to read and reflect on the same topic. Because of the current restrictions to safely meet together in person, Lenten Grace Groups in 2021 will take place via Zoom at least initially.

We are using a lectionary-based study published by the ELCA entitled "Daily Discipleship." The free study can be emailed to participants or printed copies can be picked up in the office at Trinity. Ideally our Trinity members will join a small group to meet together weekly via Zoom. One of our Grace Groups will record their weekly Zoom discussions and they will be available on Trinity's YouTube channel for viewing at your convenience. If it is not possible for you to join a small group, please consider using the materials for individual study and reflection and view the YouTube video of the recorded Grace Group.

Groups will begin meeting during the week of February 22. Look for a link to the SignUp Genius in our recent Trinity Friday eBlasts. The dates listed for each small group are the dates of their first weekly session together.

Lent begins in Worship on Ash Wednesday, February 17

"Drive through" Imposition of Ashes to be offered

The traditional journey "from ashes to Easter" begins with worship on Ash Wednesday, February 17.

Lent begins with a solemn call to fasting and repentance as we begin our journey to the baptismal waters of Easter. As we hear in the Ash Wednesday readings, now is the acceptable time to return to the Lord. During Lent the people of God will reflect on the meaning of their baptism into Christ's death and resurrection. The sign of ashes suggests our human mortality and frailty. What seems like an ending is really an invitation to make each day a new beginning, in which we are washed in God's mercy and forgiveness. With the cross on our brow, we long for the spiritual renewal that flows from the springtime Easter feast to come.

At Trinity, Ash Wednesday will look different in 2021. Like Christmas Eve, the service for Ash Wednesday will be recorded and available via Trinity's YouTube channel. Worshippers will be invited to tune in to the worship service from their home televisions or other devices at a time that is convenient. Additionally, for those who wish to receive **the imposition of ashes**, the pastors will be offering that act of solemn contrition **at the drive through canopy entrance to the sanctuary, on Ash Wednesday, February 17**. The imposition of ashes will be offered in two blocks of time, **from 1 to 3 p.m. and from 5 to 7 p.m.** on February 17.

We continue to give thanks for the flexibility of the people of Trinity as we seek to mark our journey from ashes to Easter in worship in 2021.

What's Happening at Trinity in February?

Weekly at a Glance

Sundays

Virtual Sunday School

Live Streaming of Worship, 9:15 a.m.

Zoom Fellowship Time, 10:30 a.m.

High School Youth Group, 7 p.m.

Thursdays

Good Night Trinity

Daily Calendar

Monday, February 1

Property Committee Meeting, 6 p.m.

Tuesday, February 2

Spiritual Growth Committee Meeting,
5:30 p.m.

Executive Committee Meeting, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, February 3

Adult Forum with Pastor Bob
via Zoom, 10:30 a.m.

Sunday, February 7

High School Bible Study, 9:15 a.m.

Stephen Ministry Peer Support,
12:30 p.m.

Middle School Youth Group, 2 p.m.

Confirmation Class, 3 p.m.

Monday, February 8

Messenger Submissions Due
Congregation Council, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, February 10

Adult Forum with Pastor Bob
via Zoom, 10:30 a.m.

Youth & Family Committee, 7 p.m.

Thursday, February 11

Entering the Narrow Gate, 9:30 a.m.

Friday, February 12

Friday Morning Women's Book Club,
9:30 a.m.

Sunday, February 14

Middle School Youth Group, 2 p.m.

Confirmation Class, 3 p.m.

Tuesday, February 16

Worship and Music Committee
Meeting, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, February 17

Drive Through Imposition of Ashes,
1 to 3 p.m.

Ash Wednesday Worship, 4 p.m.

Drive Through Imposition of Ashes,
5 to 7 p.m.

Ash Wednesday Worship, 7 p.m.

Thursday, February 18

Pandemic Prayer Group, 11 a.m.

Friday, February 19

Friday Morning Women's Bible Study,
9:30 a.m.

Sunday, February 21

Fifth Grade Holy Communion Class,
2 p.m.

Middle School Youth Group, 2 p.m.

Confirmation Class, 3 p.m.

Middle School Event, 5:00 p.m.

Monday, February 22

Outreach Committee Meeting, 6 p.m.

Walk & Talk Zoom Gathering, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, February 23

Tuesday Morning Women's Bible
Study, 9:30 a.m.

Stephen Ministry Peer Support,
6:30 p.m.

Tuesday Evening Women's Book
Club, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, February 24

Adult Forum with Pastor Bob
via Zoom, 10:30 a.m.

Lenten Midweek Worship, 6:30 p.m.

Sunday, February 28

Fifth Grade Holy Communion Class,
2 p.m.

Confirmation Service Projects, 3 p.m.

A Message from Pastor Bob Linstrom



2021 – Embracing the Year of Interfaith Healing

On January 5, the day before the storming of the U.S. Capitol complex, my friend Doug Kindschi, Director of the Kaufman Interfaith Institute, rolled out the new theme for our local interfaith efforts. “The Year of Interfaith Healing” is to be that theme after emphases on interfaith understanding, service and friendship in 2012, 2015 and 2018. Every three years the Kaufman Institute has launched an initiative to further and deepen dialogue among peoples of diverse faith traditions.

After bidding farewell to the deeply challenging year of 2020, I share Kaufman’s aspirations of healing for our 2021 human sojourn. The Kaufman Institute identified healing for our bodies as the pandemic rages across our nation and throughout the world, healing for our political divisiveness as we still reel from the long election season, healing for racial disparity after a year when the systems of deep racial injustice have been exposed, and healing of the earth as massive swings in extreme climate events wreak havoc around the world. Aspirations of societal and global healing are daunting as we seek to turn the page and begin a new chapter on our human journey. And we confess that it’s not as easy as simply turning the page on the calendar – it will take more than time to heal.

*... do not fear, for I am with you, do not be afraid, for I am your God;
I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you . . .*

Isaiah 41:10

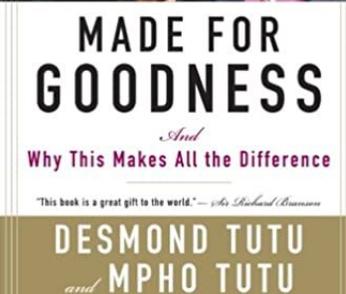
We are those who have been called to know the very presence of God in our world to strengthen, help and uphold us, and we are called to know a holy hope in the face of the most daunting challenges. We know the significance of the need for healing in our time, but it’s hard to muster the will to engage the breadth of the healing for which we pray. But together we are stronger than we ever can be as floundering individuals.

Kindschi wrote: “We have concluded a very challenging year, and we now face the long, difficult effort to address those issues that have been exposed. Let us come together in the faith that we can have a better world by working together to seek justice, love and mercy as we walk humbly into a better future.”

My sisters and brothers in Christ, let us together pursue the healing of the world.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Bob Linstrom

Made for Goodness – a Wednesday Adult Forum



The people of Trinity are invited to join Pastor Linstrom in the winter of 2021 for a Wednesday morning Adult Forum study based on Desmond Tutu’s Made for Goodness: And Why This Makes All the Difference. This multi-week study began in mid-January and will be offered weekly on Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. via Zoom meetings and recordings posted on our YouTube channel through the end of March.

The series is using Tutu’s book as source material and seeks to explore what it means that “we are made for goodness and it is up to us to live up to our destiny.” Copies of Tutu’s text are available in the church office and online via Amazon or other book sellers, but you are welcome to join us even if you are not reading along.

With his daughter Mpho Tutu, we are being encouraged to engage the work of Desmond Tutu, and the call to hope, joy and the claim to the goodness we were made for. The themes for the sessions in the weeks ahead are as follows:

January 27	Chapter 3 – “An Invitation to Wholeness”
February 3	Chapter 4 – “Free to Choose”
February 10	Chapter 5 – “The Habit of Wrongness”
February 17	Ash Wednesday – no forum today
February 24	Chapter 6 – “Where Is God When We Suffer?”
March 3	Chapter 7 – “Where is God When We Fail?”

Join us on Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. via Zoom this winter for study and conversation!

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)



When I wrote last year's President's Report for the annual meeting report it started this way:

"As we enter the new decade, it is easy to get wrapped up in all the bad news coming at us from around the world daily."

Little did we know that bad news was going to continue and further dominate the world with the coming of the pandemic. Little did we know we would soon be experiencing extended isolation from each other, remote virtual Sunday services, and Trinity Lutheran closed for most of the year. It's still hard to believe how 2020

unfolded, and harder still to ring in the new year in our more socially distanced world.

It reminds me, as my father told me, that everything is relative. While this year has been a hard struggle for us all, the Trinity Lutheran congregation has put its faith in God and his plan for us. We've demonstrated the capacity to face new challenges and have grown as a church, a congregation, and as a light of hope in our community.

We must first thank the tireless work and dedication of our amazing pastoral team: Pastor Bob, Pastor Dan, and Pastor Karen. They have adapted to, and embraced, many challenges while continuing to lead, nourish, and shepherd us in our faith, our belief, and love for God and his son Jesus Christ.

We also need to thank the amazing church staff that has adapted to working remotely and continued to help the church run without a hitch. It has not been an easy task, but they have done it with a zeal and commitment that is a testament to their devotion to Trinity and its congregation. God bless your work and thank you.

Special thanks are also due to the team that made virtual service happen every week. Not only did they quickly pivot to a virtual format, but also consistently delivered a professional, high quality experience that has been so important in bringing God's word and teachings to us each week, amazing work that will benefit Trinity for years to come.

I would also like to thank the Congregation Council and their critical work as the voice of the congregation. It has been a privilege to work with this team. Though Zoom can never replace gathering in-person, our virtual council meetings have been a fun, often entertaining, way to stay connected. The 2020 quote of the year is, "you are still on mute."

Trinity Lutheran has weathered the storm of the pandemic. It is a strong, vibrant, loving and financially secure church that is positioned to grow and flourish in the coming year. We will get through the pandemic and return to in-person services again, and I look forward to being with all of you in the very near future.

Thank you for your loving, caring, commitment to Trinity Lutheran Church.

God's peace to you all,

Paul Crist

Trinity Lutheran Church Congregation Council President

Stony Lake Camp and Building Endowment Fund Appeals

Both major campaigns conclude with great success!

In the early days of 2020, Living Water Ministries Director C. J. Clark met with Trinity's pastors to describe a major campaign for capital improvements at our synod's Stony Lake Camp. The multi-million-dollar project was going to need lead donors and C.J. challenged Trinity Lutheran Church to be among them with a \$50,000 capital gift. It was a daunting new challenge less than a year after dedicating the Trinity building project, but our pastors were confident that it was attainable. Then came the pandemic shutdown.

In the summer of 2020 Pastor Linstrom approached the Congregation Council to solicit their support for launching our \$50,000 campaign for Stony Lake. Eric and Marcy Larson made one of the first major gifts to the campaign and offered to take the lead in encouraging folks to help them achieve an even larger goal of \$100,000 with the possibility that Trinity's gift could include a memorial to their 14-year old son Andy who had died two years before in a tragic interstate accident. Momentum was building.

Late in 2020 one of Trinity's member families approached Pastor Bob with another challenge. They were prepared to make a gift of up to \$100,000 to the Building Endowment Fund, Trinity's "forever gift" fund that makes annual distributions to provide for the care and upkeep of our facilities. They wanted to challenge the people of Trinity to match, dollar for dollar, gifts up to that \$100,000 threshold. In the midst of the Stony Lake appeal, would the people of Trinity be able to weather another major gift challenge?

The two major capital campaigns concluded at yearend. The Stony Lake Camp Capital Appeal received gifts of **\$125,767.76** and the matching Gift Challenge to the Trinity Building Endowment Fund received gifts of **\$165,187.00**. Congratulations to the people of Trinity! The courage, vision and deep generosity of this community provided tremendous support to our church camp with a lead capital gift and to the ongoing care of our church facilities through the Building Endowment fund in a year when such challenges seemed most daunting. We are also on track to end fiscal year 2020 on January 31 well in the black in meeting our operating budget with offering giving. Let us give thanks for the wonderful stewards of our ministry together!

Trinity Lutheran Church Budget vs. Actuals

Month of December 2020

	Budget	Actual	Variance Favorable/ (Unfavorable)	
Total Income	148,227	124,306	(23,921)	- 16.1%
Total Expenses	94,942	89,611	5,331	5.6%
Net Income (Loss)	53,285	34,695	(18,590)	



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

	Budget	Actual	Variance Favorable/ (Unfavorable)	
Total Income	1,071,130	1,173,634	102,504	9.6%
Total Expenses	1,027,577	908,080	119,497	11.6%
Net Income (Loss)	43,553	265,554	222,001	

A Message from Associate Pastor Dan Schewe

"I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ." Philippians 1:3-6

Paul begins his letter to the Philippians like he starts many of his letters, with a word of thanks. He thanks them for their support and for what they are doing. He also tells them that he longs to be with them again and that he misses them. These are communities with whom he spent time, shed tears, and he longs to reconnect with them. Paul writes to help them in their journey of faith, but instead of starting his letter with a word of teaching, he starts with a word of thanks. He thanks them for what they have done and what they are doing.

On behalf of our youth, thank you for your generosity. Thank you for investing in their lives, for what God is doing through them and calling them toward. Thank you for modeling what a generous life looks like. Thank you for how you have supported and continue to support them in their faith journeys. Our youth are blessed by your generosity.

This summer we are planning on a trip to Hazlet, New Jersey, for our annual mission trip. There we will work on the homes of residents while God is working on our hearts. If that trip falls apart due to COVID, we will plan a week of local service in Grand Rapids with our neighbors. I love being a part of our youth being transformed by serving others. These experiences are possible largely because of your generosity.

We usually have five fund raisers for our trip, but with last year's and this year's COVID-19 changes, things will look different.

- In the fall we sold Christmas wreaths grown at a local farm.
- This year we are taking a break from Sponsor-a-Mile.
- In April, or whenever we celebrate Easter this year, our youth will host a breakfast for the community.
- In May we are hoping we can transform our building with the annual rummage sale.
- In June we hold a competitive can drive where the participants in the trip can compete against each other to raise the most money, while tending to the environment.

Because last year's trip was canceled and we still have the funds raised, we will be donating a large portion of each fund raiser to the general scholarship fund of Living Water Ministries. Our youth chose this as a way of helping those in our larger community.

Thank you for your generosity. It makes this life changing experience a reality for many of our youth. Thank you for your partnership and support. Thank you for your generosity and commitment to our community.

Shalom,
Pastor Dan Schewe





February and March Confirmation Class Schedule

The current plan is to continue Confirmation Classes and Middle School Youth Group via Zoom. The sessions are being recorded and saved to an unlisted YouTube playlist that families can access with a link from Pastor Dan. Watch your email for changes.

February 7, 14, and 21: Youth group from 2 to 3 p.m. and class from 3 to 4:30 p.m.

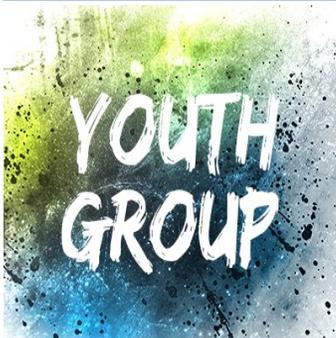
February 28: Possibly service from 3 to 5 p.m. instead of class. Watch for updates.

March 7, 14, and 21: Youth group from 2 to 3 p.m. and class from 3 to 4:30 p.m.

March 28: Possibly service from 3 to 5 p.m. instead of class. Watch for updates.

Stay connected with our middle school ministries via Remind: text @66afab to the number 81010 and follow the prompts.

High School News



Be sure to check our YouTube channel and look for my weekly emails for current updates. As we all know too well, plans can change quickly these days!

First Sunday of the Month Bible Study – February 7

All high school youth, and their friends, are invited to join Pastor Dan for Bible study during the 9:15 a.m. service on February 7. We are planning on meeting via Zoom. Watch our *Remind* messages and YouTube updates if things change. We will be exploring the scriptures and how they connect and guide our lives. Get your donuts and join Pastor Dan!

High School Youth Group – Sundays at 7 p.m.

All high schoolers and their friends are invited to join us for our weekly youth group on Sunday evenings at 7 p.m. We are continuing to explore who our neighbors are and how we can care for one another in these strange times. We are currently meeting on Zoom. For updates check your weekly emails from Pastor Dan and our weekly YouTube updates.

Mission Trip

Next summer we are going to Hazlet, New Jersey, from July 10–17 to help rebuild homes and lives. Along the way we will experience God in transformational ways! We are currently accepting \$100 deposits to reserve your spot on this trip. Please reach out to Pastor Dan if you have any questions.

Stay connected with our high school ministries via Remind: text @2ehkd8 to the number 81010.

Stay connected with our mission trip via Remind: text @a289cd to the number 81010.

Children's Ministry

Winter Sunday School

We encourage all kids ages 3 years through grade 5 to participate in Bible learning with us this winter! If you previously registered your children for 2020/2021 Sunday School, you will continue to receive weekly emails. If your child is new to the program please take a minute to [register](#) them for Sunday School. The link can be found on Trinity's website. Go to the Ministries tab and click on Children's Ministry.

By registering for Sunday School, you will automatically be sent a weekly email with links to the Sunday School resources. Links can also be found on the TLCGR Children's Ministry Facebook page. All worksheets are formatted for easy printing at home, or [printed copies of the winter packet and craft pack can also be picked up at church during office hours.](#) The winter packet will give you the worksheets for each week, from January 17 through March 28.

Our resource table at Trinity is located in the hallway just past the copy room.
Enter through Trinity's Main West Entry.

We use the *Spark Activate Faith* curriculum, which follows the Revised Common Lectionary. Your children will be studying some of the same scriptures heard in worship each week.



Trinity's Virtual Sunday School includes:

Videos: To get the most out of each lesson, we recommend that children watch the weekly video. Videos are published every Friday and the link can be found in your email or on the TLCGR Children's Ministry Facebook page. Sunday School leaders will be reading aloud from the Spark Story Bible, teaching the Bible lesson, guiding children in an activity, and closing with a prayer.

Activity/Craft Bag: A simple activity or craft accompanies each lesson. The supply bag contains most items you'll need for all the lessons this winter. It's suggested that these materials be kept together so they are easy to grab during the video lesson. Activities and crafts are explained each week in the video and written directions are in the lesson packet.

Worship Bulletins offer the choice of a "Pre-reader" version, recommended for children in 1st grade and younger, and a "Reader" version, suitable for 2nd through 5th graders. Bulletins are a single page and can be folded in half to make a booklet. This may be a good activity for your child to work on during or after worship.

The Family Page is a resource that families can use together. The "Read It" section reviews the Bible story; the "Talk About It" section has prompts for conversations about faith; and the "Live It" section gives families suggestions on how to put faith into action.

Illustrated Ministry coloring pages are included for each week. Each page is a beautiful illustration related to the church season, in some cases it is the same scripture as in the Bible lesson. Parents, feel free to make a copy for yourself and indulge in some meditative coloring along with your children!

Children's Ministry

Good Night Trinity continues into 2021!

Trinity's story tellers are sharing their love for books with our children! Video read-a-longs hosted by Trinity members are made available each Thursday. These videos include 10 to 20 minutes of faith based and positive message stories, and a good night prayer. Links to the videos are being sent to member households with young children and also can be found on the TLCGR Children's Ministry Facebook page.

There is a wealth of research supporting that daily reading to children has many benefits, including increased literacy and listening skills. Reading helps children understand the world around them. The books chosen for Good Night Trinity encourage positive attitudes and help broaden children's understanding of Christianity.

Are you interested in being a Good Night Trinity storyteller? We are seeking volunteers to fill spots in March and beyond. Choose your own books or select from our collection. Contact Sheri Mason for details.



Fifth Grade Holy Communion Class meeting during Lent



Pastor Linstrom is leading a Fifth Grade Communion class for Trinity kids on Sunday afternoons at 2 p.m. via the Zoom video platform during the season of Lent. All our fifth graders will be presented with the Study Bible they will use in sixth, seventh and eighth grade Confirmation classes at the end of the four-session Sunday class, with that presentation and an order of blessing in worship on the Fifth Sunday in Lent, March 21. (If we have not yet returned to "in person" worship, the blessing will occur in a virtual format with the Bible presentation scheduled later in the year.)

The four-session class will be meeting on Sunday afternoons via Zoom on February 21 and 28, and on March 7 and 14. Be in touch with Pastor Bob with questions or for more information.

Is God calling you to become a Stephen Minister?

Stephen Ministry is one tool we use to realize the mission of Trinity Lutheran Church. Consider these words from our mission statement: "...to nurture each other in our daily journeys of faith ... to increase our response to all people in need" In the past 25 years, Stephen Ministry has touched hundreds of lives in our congregation, fostering healing, friendship, and faith.

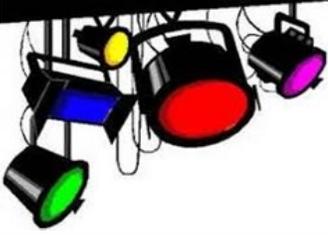
In Stephen Ministry, members of our congregation are trained and equipped to meet once a week, one to one, with someone going through a difficult time. Stephen Ministers provide a caring presence, a listening ear, and comforting words—supporting care receivers throughout their journey. There are many reasons people become Stephen Ministers.

As a Stephen Minister, you will ...

- **Make a real difference in the lives of people who are hurting.**
Stephen Ministers walk alongside people going through life challenges like grief, divorce, a medical crisis, job loss, and more. They offer care, support, and encouragement, connecting hurting people with Christ's healing love during some of the hardest times in their lives.
 - **Help our congregation ensure that no one suffers alone.**
Caring for one another is a hallmark of the Christian faith. As a Stephen Minister, you will play a crucial role in helping our congregation carry out that mission so that, even if we can't take away their pain, those who are suffering know our church truly cares.
 - **Learn what to say and do (and what not to) to care effectively for people who are suffering.**
Stephen Minister training teaches highly practical caregiving and relational skills that equip and empower you with everything you need to effectively care for others. In addition to preparing you for caring ministry, these skills can help you deepen and enhance relationships in all facets of your life—with family, friends, coworkers, and others.
- Be involved in meaningful ministry that uses your spiritual gifts.**
Serving as a Stephen Minister gives people an opportunity to put their spiritual gifts into action—gifts such as faith, mercy, compassion, and encouragement. Ministry that draws on your gifts is personally fulfilling and touches people's lives in powerful ways.
- **Deepen your faith as you see God at work through your ministry.**
Providing care while trusting in God is at the core of Stephen Ministry. Stephen Ministers often say how their faith is strengthened as they witness God at work in the lives of care receivers.
 - **Be part of a group of caring Christians who support each other as they care for those who are hurting.**
As a Stephen Minister you will be part of a community of people who care, all of whom lift one another up. The strong relationships formed are both rewarding and a great source of support.

We will train a new class of Stephen Ministers this fall. Please prayerfully consider whether Stephen Ministry is the right place for you to serve. Look for more information in the months ahead!





A Heart for Healthy Food with Dignity: Debbie Lown

During her GVSU research project that studied the nutrient content of meals served at Grand Rapids soup kitchens, Trinity member Debbie Lown met Lisa Sisson, the director of Heartside Gleaning. Debbie subsequently joined the board and became involved with the mission of Heartside Gleaning.

The Mission of Heartside Gleaning

Heartside Gleaning empowers Heartside and surrounding communities to become healthier through increased access to healthy food and nutrition education. One way they do this is by collecting excess produce from the Fulton Street Farmers Market and transporting it to neighborhoods with limited access to fresh food for distribution to individuals, food pantries and free or low-cost meal programs. Focusing on neighborhoods in the near downtown area populated by people faced with racial and economic disparities, Heartside Gleaning works to directly combat common health conditions (e.g. obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes, etc.) and food waste. It also provides education to the general community about healthy lifestyles and food waste as well as hosting free healthy cooking and canning classes for members of the communities served.



A Community of Volunteers and Neighbors

The organization is almost 100% volunteer. Each Wednesday afternoon throughout the year and Saturdays in the summer, volunteers work on tasks such as setting up, packing and labeling boxes with produce. From June through December volunteers also work at the Fulton Street Farmers Market filling crates of produce from vendors. Once the produce is loaded into the van, volunteers travel to the Heartside and Roosevelt Park neighborhoods to set up free Street Markets that distribute food to neighbors. Debbie encourages those who have a heart for giving underprivileged people access to healthy food to sign up at United Way.

Debbie especially enjoys getting to know clients at the free farmers' market, where they are able to select foods they want rather than just being given "handed out" free food. She comments, "It brings me joy to watch the children excited to eat the fruit at the market while their moms select food." As a dietitian and member of the public health community with a strong belief in access to healthy food with dignity, Debbie also appreciates the purchasing of food from local farmers to help them maintain their small farms and the gleaning of produce to decrease food waste and methane gases.

Pointing out the close ties between the neighborhoods and the Heartside Gleaning volunteers, Debbie shares the following story:

This summer when we were distributing food in the Roosevelt parking lot, my car registered 94 degrees. A woman who had just received food returned with cold water bottles for the volunteers. Just think about this—despite her financial burden she thought of others. This happened twice on the hottest days with different women returning with cold beverages—a community taking care of each other!

Debbie, her husband Ken and children Patrick and Katherine joined Trinity in 2000. Throughout the years Lowns have taken part in various church ministries, and presently Debbie is a member of Trinity's Health Ministry Team.

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.

Health Ministries



February Focus: Healthy Hearts

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. - Psalm 51:10

This month we will focus on developing healthy hearts in body and spirit. We will explore the possibility that heart health can be an expression of faith. Our God is a God of clean hearts. This month we will work to experience that first hand.

We've been adding more people each month! We'd love to have you join us. Combining scripture, devotion and physical activity - in whatever ways work best for you - we are caring well for our minds, bodies and spirits. Each week you'll receive an email with a brief message, weekly devotion and the monthly zoom link.

Sign up here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a0a44a4a92aa5fb6-walk> or connect with Rebecca Ulrich or Kristin Bradley.



Let's stay SMART!

Along with these social distancing guidelines, please make sure you are getting a well-balanced diet, good sleep, daily activity and immunizations (when able) so we can all get to the other side of this pandemic safely!

- S**  Space: Keep your distance from other people.
- M**  Masks: Keep your nose and mouth covered.
- A**  Air: Keep it fresh.
- R**  Restrict: Keep your circle small.
- T**  Time: Keep your interactions brief.

Pandemic Prayer Group



Please consider joining fellow Trinity members for focused prayer time on the Third Thursdays of the month at 11 a.m. through Zoom. Together we will seek God's strength, hope, understanding and peace during this pandemic season.

Contact Faith Community Nurse Kristin Bradley with any questions and/or specific prayer requests.

<https://zoom.us/j/93322681488>

Meeting ID: 933 2268 1488

Passcode: 091483

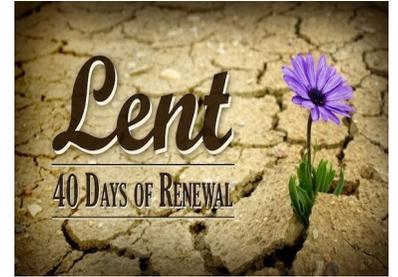
Lent Begins in Worship on Ash Wednesday - February 17

Mark Your Calendars for the Journey from Ashes to Easter

Lent arrives on February 17 in 2021, with our observance of Ash Wednesday. Mark your calendar now for the journey through Lent to Easter at Trinity in 2021:

- **Ash Wednesday**, February 17 (Drive through Imposition of Ashes from 1-3 p.m. and 5-7 p.m.)
- **Wednesdays in Lent** (February 24, March 3, 10, 17 and 24)
- **Sunday of the Passion / Palm Sunday**, March 28
- **Maundy Thursday**, April 1
- **Good Friday**, April 2
- **Easter Sunday, the Resurrection of Our Lord** – April 4

Make plans now to be with us as we get “to the heart of the story” during Lent and Easter in 2021!



Wednesdays in Lent will look different too . . .

Our time-honored tradition of gathering on Wednesdays for Soup Suppers and then worship in the sanctuary will be curtailed in Lent of 2021. Meal fellowship will likely not occur at Trinity until we have achieved a post-pandemic reality in west Michigan, but there will be an offering of Compline, the Service of Prayer at the Close of the Day weekly on Lenten Wednesdays in February and March.



Wednesday
Lenten Services

Much like the Advent Vespers services, Lenten Midweek Worship will be recorded and available via Trinity's YouTube channel. Pastor Bob will serve as cantor and Pastor Dan will offer a Wednesday preaching series during Lent of 2021. You will be invited via congregational emails each Wednesday to follow the link to our Lenten Compline services.

Will we be back together in worship by Holy Week in 2021? Stay tuned . . .

Altar Flowers and Eternal Light



Flowers for Traditional and Rejoice Worship at Trinity Lutheran Church

If you are interested in providing altar flowers and/or eternal light remembrances, please copy the link below to the SignUp Genius in your browser to choose a date(s) - <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0a4eaca623aaf85-altar4>

Flowers are a wonderful way to:

- Honor family members or friends who are celebrating birthdays, anniversaries, or other special occasions.
- Give recognition in memory of a loved one who has passed away.
- Beautify our worship space

Our procedure for ordering flowers will simply invite those who are purchasing arrangements to make that purchase directly with a florist of their choosing. If you have a florist that you like to work with, please be welcome to make arrangements with that florist. Members of the Worship and Music Committee and church staff have additionally suggested the following four florists for those without a favorite option:

- Ball Park Floral & Gifts, 8 Valley Ave NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49504, 616.459.3409 <https://www.ballparkfloral.com/>
- Alpine Floral & Gifts, Inc., 5290 Alpine Ave NW, Comstock Park, MI 49321, 616.784.0626 <https://www.alpinefloralandgifts.com/>
- Kennedy's Flowers & Gifts, 4665 Cascade Rd SE, Grand Rapids MI 49546, 616.956.6747 <https://www.kennedyfloral.com/>
- Ludema's Floral & Garden, 3408 Eastern Ave SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49508, 616.452.2961 <https://www.ludemas.com/>

We request delivery by the florist during office hours on Friday, between 7:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. We will seek to put arrangements in the refrigerator when there is room. Otherwise, the arrangement will be placed directly in the worship space.

Our Office Coordinator Kris Baker will continue to gather information from your signup to properly note your memorial or honorary designation of the floral gift in the Worship Resources.

Eternal Light

You are invited to remember a loved one who has passed away by sponsoring the Eternal Light for a week. The Eternal Light, which burns 24 hours per day throughout the year, hangs in the sanctuary near the sacristy and close to the altar.

A bulletin announcement in Trinity's Worship Resources will read: The Eternal Light reminds us of God's eternal presence among us. The Eternal Light for today has been given by _____ in memory of _____ .

A suggested donation of \$10 to the Eternal Light Sustaining Fund will cover our costs for the wax candle. Others may also choose the same week to remember their loved ones. Their names will also be listed for that week.

If you have any questions, please contact Office Coordinator Kris Baker in the main office.



Update on the New American family sponsored by Trinity

A Huge THANK YOU for Fresh Start and Beautiful Christmas for our New Americans!

Our New American family extends their heartfelt gratitude to the people of Trinity for their generosity toward them. With faces full of smiles they keep saying, "Thank you, thank you, thank you!"

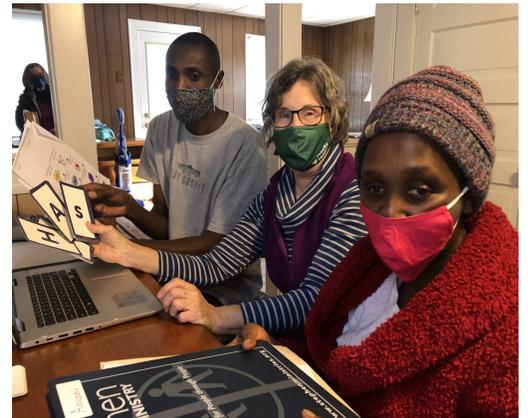
In September, Trinity's refugee team welcomed Kanyeshuri and Amani to the United States, after having spent many years in refugee camps in Africa. They are accompanied by Kanyeshuri's mother, Souzane, and their three children, Cynthia (age 9), Gloria (age 7) and Clever (age 3). With guidance from Samaritas and **generous support from over 50 Trinity families**, the family is well-settled in a rental property in southwest Grand Rapids.

Trinity members provided complete furnishing for every room: bedrooms, living room and dining area. The kitchen is stocked with all the pots, utensils and dishes needed to serve the growing children. They have learned to use the wide variety of specialized western cleaning products for hair, teeth, body, clothes, dishes, floors ... and they are grateful to be clean and safe, and to have supplies for a few months.

Family members were delighted to receive western clothes and especially touched by donations of native African wrap around garments. Grandma Souzane definitely prefers that! At Christmas, Trinity families gifted each family member with new, warm clothes as is the African holiday tradition. Of course, we also gifted toys and other household gifts in the western tradition! There were smiles all around and truly grateful hearts. Through your generosity, we are also positioned with a gift for each birthday in 2021.

Now the challenge continues: getting health care, learning English and getting jobs! It takes ongoing support from a team of people. For example, a team of Trinity volunteers helps transport family members to appointments and helps them navigate the health system. With COVID-19, the normal adult English classes are not in session, so Kanyeshuri and Amani are participating in tutoring sessions with Trinity volunteers, organized by the Literacy Center of West Michigan. As for the girls, they are enrolled in Kelloggsville Public schools. They already know their ABC's and can count to at least 30! Kanyeshuri started a job in mid-January and we hope to find a position for Amani soon.

Our goal is to support these children of God to become independent members of our country. The Trinity congregation has come together to get them started and to offer ongoing support as needed. We are a blessing to our New American family, as they are to us!



A Clean Start in the New Year

As you plan ahead, please be aware that we will once again be collecting cleaning supplies for distribution to area food pantries and social service agencies. Especially now, such things as laundry detergent and assorted household cleaning necessities are difficult for many people to afford.

So why not buy a laundry basket or cleaning bucket and fill it with cleaning supplies? Here are just a few suggested items:

- dish detergent, all purpose spray cleaner, powdered cleanser
- glass cleaner, disinfectant (bleach or other), disinfectant wipes
- toilet bowl cleaner, toilet bowl brush
- sponges, scrub brush, rubber gloves, paper towels
- laundry detergent, stain remover, fabric softener sheets

Please drop off your donations at Trinity through February in the labeled black bin located in the entryway of the main entrance on the west side of the church building.



© Can Stock Photo / Jennifer

From the synod Environmental Stewardship Task Force (ESTF)

'Only you can prevent wildfires.' Many of you probably remember this phrase that Smokey the Bear would say at the end of a TV commercial. Actually it is still being used by the USDA Forest Service. I'd like to coin another similar phrase as we combat the plastic pollution issue; 'Only you can reduce plastic use.' Plastic use and pollution are real problems. It is up to us humans who, because of the inexpensive nature of plastic, continue to increase its use. But we can each reduce our personal use of all types of plastic. Commit to doing something weekly that decreases your use of plastic. And remember to recycle all plastics that are recyclable. Here are just a few websites that may be helpful: plasticpollutioncoalition.org; plastic.oceans.org; plasticfreejuly.org; NRDC.org; and madesafe.org. If you are interested in being a part of the Mitten Synod's ESTF, please contact Linn Kracht at ldkracht@gmail.com. Turn Green!



If you are interested in joining the Trinity Earthkeepers, please contact Director of Discipleship Sylvia Stouten. We plan to begin meeting together again in late spring.

Help for Non-Profits During Uncertain Times

For many months ahead, there will be a huge number of people with continued need for help with the basic necessities of living such as food and shelter. Please reach out, as you are able, directly to non-profits in the greater Grand Rapids area with financial support and gifts-in-kind. During the pandemic, every organization would welcome your help and most have ways to donate online.

Pray for the incredible numbers of people who are currently finding it a challenge to have their basic needs met. And pray for the leaders of the non-profits that strive to do the best they possibly can during the pandemic. This is such a complicated environment in which to safely serve those who have the greatest needs.

If you would like suggestions for how to best be of help to others, please be in touch with Director of Discipleship Sylvia Stouten. She would be happy to assist you in exploring ways to help our neighbors in Grand Rapids during this incredibly difficult time.



Thank You Notes



Words cannot express the gratitude, love and support that I have received after Mike's passing through hundreds of cards, many meals, calls, and visits. These acts of kindness are still helping me through many sad and lonely days.

I also want to thank Pastor Bob for being there for our family in Mike's last days and at the cemetery. Many thanks to Pastor Karen for her calls and visits, poinsettia and special lap quilt from the Trinity Quilters.

Thank you also to Joyce Schenk for the beautiful prayer shawl and to the many friends who brought planters.

Mike's life as a Stephen Minister was a very special gift and a blessing to him. I also appreciate the living garden in his memory and honor.

I am looking forward to seeing many of you at Mike's Celebration of Life, hopefully in the spring where we can celebrate his musical ministry and praise God for his life.

Blessings,
Mari Franz and family

To my friends at Trinity, a big thank you for the cards and all of your support. It is very much appreciated.

Janet Chobanian

Are you connecting with Trinity's Directory App?

 TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH



Have you discovered the Trinity Smartphone or Desktop Pictorial Directory App? Trinity members are raving about it. "Where has this been?" "This app is slick!" "We just moved; our new address was updated on the app in real time."

Trinity members, reach out to Director of Congregational Life Angela Davis to learn how to get the pictorial directory app so you can stay connected to your church family. If you do not have a photo on the app you can send one to Angela and she will upload it right away.

Davis
Angela

HOME
3823 Taft Ave SW
Wyoming, MI 49519-3762
angela.davis@tlcgr.org

Angela
616-745-3757 (cell)  
angela.davis@tlcgr.org



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!



Copies of the Annual Report available in the church office and online

The people of Trinity gathered for the Annual Meeting of the Congregation on January 17, receiving 2020 reports, electing new leaders and adopting a budget for 2021. Copies of the Annual Report are available in the church office. You can also access the report on the Trinity website.

Congratulations to the following leaders elected to serve new terms on the Trinity Congregation Council:

Bill Bush – first three-year term

Alaina Lundgren – one-year term (youth representative)

John Fox – second three-year term

Eric Gohlke – second three-year term

Christophe Muganza – first three-year term

Sarah Huckstep – first three-year term

Karen Unruh – second three-year term

February Birthday and Anniversary Celebrations!

February 1

Adam Ardolino
Cindy Burchfield
Cami Estep
Craig Mutch
Terry Zabel
Steve & Helen Johnson

February 2

James Genow
Jason & Heather Loepp
Dan & Deb Pollert

February 3

Kerry McKee
Lleyton Olson
Paul Reges

February 4

Tom Albaitis
Elliot Bekker
Ashlynn Kimble
Christian Kimble
Kylee Kimble
Brandon Owens
Molly Teichow
Bob & Louise Pfau

February 5

Kara Day
Jude Gingras
Marilla Marks
Annette Remsburg
Cliff & Margaret Hartline

February 6

Jerry Anderson
Corina Dulecki
Sharon Fourcha
Susan Guterrez
Erick Kind
Benedicte Mukadi
Nick Pardy

February 7

Ali Bredwell
Allison Landon
Olivia Ulrich

February 8

Song Anderson
Gavin Faas
Diane Gohlke
Heather Palaszek
Michelle Tshilumba
Caleigh Wood

February 9

Owen Battreall
Jamie Kuntzman
Laura Price
Ann Schomberg
Joan Sellman

February 10

Eric Gohlke
Ericka Peters
Morgan Taylor
Carrie Woolworth
Mark Youngren

February 11

Doug Earhart
Chris Luders
Jurgen Luders
Karen Niemeyer
Sara Robach

February 12

Cheryl Bushman
Keith Flatt
David Flink
Marcia Schaner
John & Karin Moglia

February 13

Wendy Burns-Ardolino
Joyce Snyder
Steve Stephan

February 14

Stephen Brink
Kaleigh McKee
Lindsey McKee
Sam Siminski
Erica Spalding
Scott & Kari Proux

February 15

Garrett Bakkila
Jeanne Becker
Jack Bishop
Tom Cannon
Janet Chobanian
Lloyd Landon
George Mencarelli
Andy & Ausma Pupel
Bruce & Joyce Schlanderer
Tom & Amy Williams

February 16

Brody Conway
Ryan Hall
Isaac Keller
Bergen Marquardt
Rebecca Ulrich

February 17

William Severns
Patricia Whittemore
Allie Zollman

February 18

Lindsey Peters
Shad Selleck

February 19

Steven Basher
Chase Bidle
Patty Boer
Linda Holm
Fritz Kilcrease
Mike McCardell
Jon Mirque
Jason Montgomery

February 20

George Bauer
John Fuger
Catherine Hagenbush
John E. Leese
Beth Vanderwall
Bob & Edie Pergler (50)

February 22

Cheryl Ahrens
Brett Bradbury
Krista Knight
Owen Loepp
Jenna Ludeman
Nicole Rodammer
Kevin & Kate Schaefer

February 23

Joyce Kuecherer
Rhonda VanDeusen
Zewditu Zeratsion

February 24

Claire Robach
Jim & Melissa Owens

February 25

Dawn Brackmann
John Holm
Emmet Schmehling
Sheila Talsma
Linda Zabel

February 26

Isla Anderson
Katelynn Bowman
Steve Hale
Linda Heine
Galen Knutson
Allison Potter
Turner Sytsma
Jing Zhao-Cairns
Jim & Sue Coates

February 27

David Benkert
Sherry Blair
Andrew Ryan

February 28

Jimmy Bennett
Emma Conrad
Ella Estep
Karin Neal
Vince Schumacher
Mike Unruh

February 29

Nathan Feutz

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

Trinity's Current Inclement Weather Policy

If you are thinking about driving to Trinity and the weather is snowy and/or icy, please reconsider. Typically when Forest Hills Public Schools close during the day, all Trinity daytime activities are cancelled and the church offices are closed. But it may not be realistic to base our building/programming plans on school cancellations this winter.

If an event is scheduled at Trinity and FHPS is not holding "in person" classes, please check WOOD TV8 or WZZM TV13 for updates on Trinity cancellations. Please be as certain as possible that it will be safe for you to be out on the road. We count on you to use your best judgment when it comes to your personal safety this winter!



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

Office Hours: 7:30 AM - 3:30 PM (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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