



# The Messenger

## “In Person” and Live Streaming of Worship in Holy Week



The people of Trinity will gather “in person” and via live streaming for the services of Holy Week in 2021. A month into our return to “in person” worship, we will gather in Centennial Hall in addition to the sanctuary so that we can share the services of Holy Week with those worshipping at home.

Join us as we get to the heart of our faith story in worship.

### **Maundy Thursday, April 1**

We worship at 7 p.m. with Confession and Forgiveness, a Washing of Hands, Holy Communion and the Solemn Stripping of the Altar. This service will be offered in Centennial Hall in 2021 to allow for live streaming of worship.

### **Good Friday, April 2**

Worship is scheduled at 7 p.m., the Adoration of the Crucified, a service of Passion and Prayer that concludes in silence. We will center our Good Friday liturgy on the Passion According to St. John and the Bidding Prayer of the Church. To allow for live streaming of worship, this service will also be offered in Centennial Hall.

### **Easter Sunday, the Resurrection of Our Lord, April 4**

We will gather for festival liturgies at 8, 9:15 and 10:45 a.m. The 8 and 10:45 a.m. services will be offered in the sanctuary with the 9:15 a.m. service in Centennial Hall to support live streaming of Easter Sunday worship. Be with us in a festival of praise and our glad alleluias as a counternarrative to the long year of pandemic separation!

## You can still join a Grace Group!

Grace Groups are small group Bible Studies that typically meet weekly during the five weeks of Lent. Participants of the 2021 study have found it to be very meaningful for their faith journeys. If you were unable to join a Lenten Grace Group, you are welcome to study on your own at any time. Hard copies of the study guide, “Daily Discipleship,” are available in the church office and electronically by going to:

<https://tlcgr.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/2021-Lenten-Grace-Group-Devotional.pdf>.

To assist with your personal studies, consider viewing recorded weekly sessions of the Grace Group that were led during Lent by Pastor Frank Rothfuss. *If you are new to small group Bible Studies, these videos will give you a good idea of what it would be like to be a participant in the future.* To view the weekly sessions, go to:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLq6TzpFhvFZfy99KR15h5Db2emcLC03bR>.

Contact Director of Discipleship Sylvia Stouten for more information.

## Trinity Sexton Interviews

Steven Basher will be concluding his staff duties as Trinity’s Sexton as he completes his college courses this summer. The position is now posted and we are scheduling interviews. For more information, including a job description, contact Pastor Bob Linstrom.

# What's Happening at Trinity in April?

## Weekly at a Glance

### **Sundays**

*Virtual Sunday School*

Traditional Worship, 8 a.m.

Rejoice Worship, 9:15 a.m.

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

Traditional Worship, 10:45 a.m.

### **Tuesdays**

Lutheran World Relief Quilting, 10 a.m.

### **Wednesdays**

GriefShare, 4 p.m.

### **Thursdays**

*Good Night Trinity*

Resound Bell Choir rehearsal, 6 p.m.

## Daily Calendar

### **Thursday, April 1**

Maundy Thursday Worship, 7 p.m.

### **Friday, April 2**

Good Friday Worship, 7 p.m.

### **Sunday, April 4**

*Easter Sunday*

### **Monday, April 5**

Property Committee Meeting, 6 p.m.

### **Tuesday, April 6**

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

Executive Committee Meeting, 7 p.m.

### **Friday, April 9**

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

### **Sunday, April 11**

Lutheran World Relief Quilting, noon  
Stephen Ministry Peer Support,  
12:30 p.m.

Middle School Youth Group, 2 p.m.

Confirmation Class, 3 p.m.

High School Youth Group, 6:30 p.m.

### **Monday, April 12**

*Messenger* Submissions Due

Stroller Strides, 9 a.m.

Congregation Council Meeting,

6:30 p.m.

### **Tuesday, April 13**

TLC Quilters, 10 a.m.

Mental Health Webinar, 7 p.m.

### **Wednesday, April 14**

Pastor Bob's Adult Forum, 10:30 a.m.

Youth & Family Committee Meeting,  
7 p.m.

### **Thursday, April 15**

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

Endowment Fund Committee Meeting,  
6 p.m.

### **Friday, April 16**

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

### **Sunday, April 18**

Middle School Youth Group, 2 p.m.

Confirmation Class, 3 p.m.

High School Youth Group, 6:30 p.m.

### **Monday, April 19**

Stroller Strides, 9 a.m.

Pandemic Prayer Group, 11 a.m.

### **Tuesday, April 20**

Worship and Music Committee  
Meeting, 7 p.m.

### **Wednesday, April 21**

Pastor Bob's Adult Forum, 10:30 a.m.

### **Friday, April 23**

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

### **Sunday, April 25**

*Stephen Ministry Sunday*

Confirmation Class, 3 p.m.

High School Youth Group, 6:30 p.m.

### **Monday, April 26**

Stroller Strides, 9 a.m.

Outreach Committee Meeting, 6 p.m.

### **Tuesday, April 27**

TLC Quilters, 10 a.m.

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

Tuesday Evening Book Club, 7 p.m.

### **Wednesday, April 28**

Pastor Bob's Adult Forum, 10:30 a.m.

## Planning for a post pandemic world...

There will indeed come a time when our monthly newsletter calendar fills the entire second page again!

Historically we are a very busy church and many of us miss the various ways we could connect with each other on a regular basis. As we look forward to a busy church calendar returning soon, please consider new ways you might want to get involved at Trinity. You might want to seriously consider joining one of Trinity's committees.

Trinity has many committees made up of Congregation Council members and other Trinity members who meet regularly, even in the pandemic via Zoom, to plan activities and events of interest to the entire congregation or smaller groups with specific interests.

You can see the list of Trinity committees and the Congregation Council members assigned as liaisons on page four of this newsletter. Each Council liaison would enjoy talking with

you about the focus of their committee with the hope that you might visit to see if you might enjoy working with the committee. Be a part of the collective that will bring us all into the future by making plans and carrying them out together!

Please call the church office if you would like to be put in contact with a specific Congregation Council liaison.

# A Message from Pastor Bob Linstrom



## Praying for those who do not share our faith

A Trinity worshipper recently inquired about our weekly intercession in worship for people of other faiths. “We pray for a spirit of unity and harmony so that we may come to cherish our commonalities with people of other faiths, including our three Standing Together partner congregations here in Grand Rapids, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Temple Emanuel and Masjid At-Tawheed.” Trinity has lifted up our “Standing Together” partners in prayer for several years, each a congregation that shares our heritage as the spiritual descendants of Abraham and Sarah, and that prayer serves as a manifestation of our engagement in interfaith understanding through the Kaufman Interfaith Institute in the Grand Rapids community.

I am reminded of the petition which we offer during the long Bidding Prayer on Good Friday, a petition which follows our prayers for bishops and pastors, for those preparing for baptism, for unity with other Christians, and for the Jews, “that the people you called and elected as your own may receive the fulfillment of the covenant’s promises.” We then pray, “Almighty and eternal God, gather into your embrace all those who call out to you under different names. Bring an end to inter-religious strife, and make us more faithful witnesses of the love made known to us in your Son.”

As we pray for those who do not share our faith in Jesus Christ, we trust that the very Spirit of a hopeful God continues to work in the world. We remember the words of 2 Peter 3:8-9, 14-15:

*But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.*

The Lord is patient with us, all of us. As we pray for those who do not share our faith, we confess a God whose love extends to **all** the children of God, who patiently waits to draw all people into the rich promise we know in Christ Jesus. We are encouraged to be at peace with our patient God, and to help model the love and grace of God in how we live our lives. Later in the Good Friday Bidding Prayer, we pray, “Grant that all may recognize the signs of your love and grace in the world and in the lives of Christians.” As we pray for those who do not share our faith, we seek to be agents of that love and grace.

Praying for all the children of God, it remains a privilege to serve as a pastor among the people of Trinity.

Grace and peace,  
Pastor Bob Linstrom

## Three Brief Biblical Voices - a Wednesday Adult Forum

The people of Trinity are invited to join Pastor Linstrom in the spring of 2021 for an encounter with three of the shortest books in the Bible; Ruth, Jonah, and James. This six-week study will provide an overview of three biblical books which occupy only about four pages each in the scriptural canon, but all three of which are towering in significance. This series will be offered weekly on Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. via Zoom meetings, with recordings posted on our YouTube channel.

The themes for the sessions in the weeks ahead are as follows:

April 14 and 21	Ruth, the kind and faithful foreigner in the genealogy of Jesus
April 28 and May 5	Jonah, the reluctant prophet, who hoped for God’s punishment of the Ninevites
May 12 and 19	James, an epistle to the Jews that made Luther uncomfortable

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

# Council Corner

## Trinity Congregation Council Members 2020-2021

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

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

*Executive Committee members and Committee liaisons are:*

### Congregation Council Executive Committee

President: Paul Crist

Vice President: Karen Unruh

Treasurer: Chris Engle

Secretary: Carol Butler

### Congregation Council Members

Children's Ministry: Karen Unruh

Communications: Nicole Rodammer

Congregational Life: Eric Gohlke

Endowment Fund: Mike Mason

Fellowship: Amy Fox

Finance: Chris Engle

Health Ministries: Carol Butler

Hospitality: Jamie Kuntzman

Human Resources: Steve Heacock

Outreach: John Fox

Property: Mike King

Property: Rick Radke

Spiritual Growth: Brad Kessel

Stewardship: Amelia Crist

Worship and Music: Kate Bredwell

Youth and Family: Tess Lundgren

Youth and Family: Ryleigh Fischer  
(Youth Representative)



Our word for 2021 is once again streamline, streamline, streamline. The initial focus of this committee was to streamline communication methods with office staff. What does that mean for you? Our committee is working to build a better event calendar in which the members of the congregation can view what events they want to see (filtering out other content that is not useful to them).

Our focus changed suddenly in March 2020 with the shift to virtual services and focusing on direct communications to all congregation members. We learned that all congregation members at least review some form of communication method when no one showed up to church the first virtual Sunday, which we will take as a win (trying to find some humor in 2020). With the focus being implementation of Google calendar, Google form for event submission, and plugins available, we were not able to complete this with Covid-19, a short timeline, and events being canceled. This will be a focus in 2021, and will be implemented in January 2021, while most activities are in lockdown.

We continue to refine Trinity's new website. Our committee has updated the current web site with Trinity's new logo and color scheme, as well as making some other improvements, including calendaring and navigation. The information is having to be changed quickly when things move to a virtual platform instead of an onsite program. Our new website has easier navigation, streamlined content, and makes it easier for staff to update the web site. We now have more Trinity members viewing our website for information regarding services and programs whereas before mostly external guests were viewing our information.

Look for an announcement of this new shift this summer!

Nicole Rodammer

Congregation Council Liaison to the Communications Committee

## 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Trinity Lutheran Church

### Mark your calendar for Sunday, May 16

On May 17, 1896, a small group of Lutherans began to meet for worship in downtown Grand Rapids, Michigan. Seven months later, on December 9, 1896, the congregation of Trinity Lutheran Church was officially organized.

Celebrating 125 years of heritage, our congregation will mark that first service of worship 125 years ago on Sunday, May 16 in prayer and remembrance. Hoping for a more complete return to 'normalcy' later this year, we will officially mark the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our shared ministry with a celebration in December of 2021.

Watch for monthly historical remembrances of our 125-year heritage beginning with the May edition of *The Messenger* newsletter.

## Returning to “In Person” Worship continues – you are invited!

A year after this congregation began to refrain from “in person” worship on March 15, 2020 in the face of the emerging COVID-19 pandemic, the people of Trinity Lutheran Church began a return to worship on Sunday, March 7, 2021. We are gathering for worship services onsite at 8 a.m. (traditional in the sanctuary), 9:15 a.m. (Rejoice worship in Centennial Hall) and 10:45 a.m. (traditional worship in the sanctuary). Current metrics related to the prevalence of COVID-19 in the Grand Rapids region will continue to be monitored by congregational leaders as we resume “in person” worship, but we are grateful for the privilege of gathering again in Trinity’s worship centers.



For those who do not elect to come back to worship this spring, live streaming of the 9:15 a.m. Rejoice worship service will continue every Sunday. The upgrading of the AV system in the sanctuary should be underway in April so that we will have the option to live stream both Rejoice and traditional worship services in the months ahead.

Many will choose to not return to worship right away – we hope that everyone will make the best choice for their own health and safety. Those returning to worship are asked to mask and maintain safe distancing, to refrain from singing and share the Peace from a distance. Still, it is good to be together. We look forward to the evolving pandemic recovery that will allow all Trinity worshippers to feel welcome to return by the late summer or fall of 2021.

Blessings O people of Trinity Lutheran Church! Come, and let us worship . . .

## New Volunteers Needed to help with live streaming of worship

### Volunteer Opportunities in Centennial Hall and the Sanctuary

In the late winter of 2021, a significant new AV system is under development for installation in the sanctuary, seeking to remedy many years of challenges in sound amplification in an extremely bright acoustic space. Long recognized as a wonderful room for music because of that exemplary acoustic environment, the sanctuary has been a challenging space for properly hearing the amplified spoken word. The new AV system will meet that challenge in addition to providing improved hearing assistance support and, for the first time, the ability to live stream from the sanctuary.

We are also implementing an upgrade to the Centennial Hall video system to improve our live streaming and recording technology as part of the overall AV project.

As we begin to return to “in person” worship, new volunteers are needed to assist with live streaming of worship in both the sanctuary and Centennial Hall. For more information, contact the church office or one of the pastors to learn what is needed and/or to schedule training.



# A Message from Associate Pastor Dan Schewe

Over this long pandemic I have missed gathering with my friends. Have you? I have missed our conversations, sharing stories about kids and life, and whatever else comes to mind. I have greatly missed being physically present with them. We would gather nearly every week to simply be with each other. It is a habit that we were not able to keep up over the past year.

My friends and I do not always agree, but something about that shared time together helps us find a way through our differences toward our connection and commitment to each other. That time helps us stay connected with each other.

Over this pandemic separation one of the most troubling things I have observed is how entrenched and defensive we have become in our opinions. It has been easy to only listen to voices who agree with our ideas and support our mindset, and tune out or discount any other. The result I have observed is a fractured community, split where it was once whole.

Will Smith is credited with saying that, "diversity is America's superpower." I'm not sure if he was the first person to say it or think it, but I do agree with him on the sentiment. One of the most beautiful things about our nation is its diversity, and how that diversity brings different perspectives and opinions together to find new and creative ways forward. Together, we can find ways that would have otherwise never be found.

I think the same is true for our faith.

Over the years diverse thinkers have poked and prodded our faith and traditions and helped us see them from different perspectives. These different perspectives have helped us see and understand God in new ways. Sadly, these different perspectives are not always fully welcomed. Just remember Luther and the Reformation.

Hebrews 10:24-25 can help as we find a way forward in our differences. Just like my friends and I don't always agree, the same is true for communities of faith. We can let these differences separate us, or we can lean into our commitment to each other and remain bound to one another. Our continuing to meet together helps us strengthen our commitment to each other and the community of which we are a part. That in person connection helps us remain connected with each other across all of the differences. It is one of the things I love best about Trinity.

As we continue to emerge from our pandemic separation, I look forward to getting back into the habit of meeting together, knee to knee, and reconnecting around a table and finding how God is calling us together in new ways for the sake of the world that God so loves.

Shalom,  
Pastor Dan Schewe



*And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*  
Hebrews 10:24-25 NIV

## Middle School News

### April and May Confirmation Class Schedule

With restrictions for indoor gatherings being loosened and COVID numbers continuing to look good, we have transitioned to in person Confirmation Classes with an online option for those not wishing, or able, to be present in person. Sessions will happen in Centennial Hall and the Courtyard with small group conversations happening all around the building inside and out. The large group presentations will still be recorded and saved to an unlisted YouTube playlist that families can access with a link from Pastor Dan. Watch your email for more information.

- April 4: No Class for Easter!
- April 11 and 18: Youth group from 2 to 3 p.m. and Class from 3 to 4:30 p.m.
- April 25: Confirmation Class only from 3 to 4:30 p.m.
- May 2: Confirmation Sunday!

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



## Rummage Sale Postponed

After careful consideration and consultation, the Youth and Family Committee has determined that we are going to postpone this year's rummage sale into the fall. As we tried to envision what a Rummage Sale this May would look like, we could not find protocols and procedures that felt both good for the sale and safe for the community and volunteers. In the coming months look for more information. Thank you for your support and understanding.

## Camp at Trinity: July 25-30

Due to the pandemic Living Water Ministries has canceled camp at Stony Lake Bible Camp for the season. While we will miss our time together there we are working on an alternative for our campers at Trinity. This alternative will happen the week we were planning on being at Camp, July 25-30. Watch your email and future newsletters for more information.

## High School News



Be sure to check our YouTube channel and weekly emails for current updates.

### First Sunday of the Month Bible Study will NOT meet in April

This April we are not gathering for our first Sunday of the month Bible Study because it's Easter! Join us for worship with your families and celebrate the risen Christ!

### High School Youth Group: Sundays at 6:30 to 8 p.m.

With restrictions for indoor gatherings being loosened and COVID numbers continuing to look good we have transitioned to in person Youth Group. All high schoolers and their friends are invited to join us weekly on Sunday evenings at 6:30 p.m. in the Courtyard. We continue to explore the intersection of faith and life. With restrictions loosening we are also getting back to working on service projects during our time together. Continue to watch your email and our YouTube channel for updates.

### Summer of Service: July 12-16 and more!

At the end of February, a group of youth, parents, and others connected to our high school ministries gathered to talk about this summer's plans. The unanimous decision was to focus our efforts on local service this summer and to not travel to New Jersey. Currently our plan is to have a week of local service the week we would've been in New Jersey from July 12-16, go to Stony Lake Bible Camp once a month to help with projects, and have one or two day projects scheduled throughout the summer months.

Contact Pastor Dan if you are interested in any aspects of our summer of service. Check your email for links to surveys to help him plan. If you have ideas of projects to work on, let Pastor Dan know.

Watch your email and our YouTube channel for more updates.

We are excited for a summer of service!

*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



## Tell the Story of Easter with Eggs

The Easter story can be confusing to young children. Bring a greater understanding of Easter by using a set of resurrection eggs! If you've never seen resurrection eggs, they look like a simple set of plastic Easter eggs in an array of colors. Inside each egg is a symbol of the Easter story, telling of God's love and forgiveness. Kids get so excited to see what's in each egg! Trinity's high school youth have been busy making and delivering sets of eggs to our Sunday School families. Additional sets are available in the church office.

On April 1, Good Night Trinity story-time will feature the Easter story, told with Resurrection Eggs. Families won't want to miss it! Links to Good Night Trinity are sent via email and can also be found on the TLCGR Children's Ministry Facebook page.



## Save the Date! VBS is coming June 21-23

Mark your calendar for Vacation Bible School at Trinity! VBS is open to all kids ages 3 years through grade 5. This year's event will be held outside, with masks when needed. Children will enjoy three fun-filled mornings of Bible stories, games, songs, and more!

Volunteers are encouraged to contact Rachele Battreall at [kids@tlcgr.org](mailto:kids@tlcgr.org). Look for more information and registration coming in May.



## Spring Sunday School Lesson Packets

Spring Sunday school lesson packets are available for pickup at church. Virtual lessons will continue weekly through May 23. Children ages 3 years through grade 5 are welcome to join anytime. Contact [kids@tlcgr.org](mailto:kids@tlcgr.org) for more information.



## Planning Underway for Deferred Celebrations with Trinity's Children and Youth

Among the casualties of the spring of 2020 lockdown was the celebration of our 2020 Confirmation Class and the annual Blessing of our Fifth Graders after the completion of their Lenten Holy Communion Class.

A virtual blessing of our 2020 fifth graders occurred last fall, but the scheduling of Confirmation Sunday was simply postponed. In recent weeks we have scheduled "in person" celebrations with our fifth graders, our Confirmands, and their families. You are invited to mark your calendar for these celebrations with the families of Trinity's children and youth:

- May 2 – Confirmation Sunday for the Class of 2020
- August 1 – A Blessing of the 2020 and 2021 Communion Class Fifth Graders
- August 22 – Confirmation Sunday for the Class of 2021

Be with us in celebration!

## Trinity Lutheran Church Invited to Partner with Kids Hope USA

Kids Hope USA is the largest faith-based, national mentoring organization in the country. Over the last 25 years, they have worked exclusively with the local churches in 37 states, teaching and training individuals to engage in one-on-one relationships with at-risk kids in public schools. The program provides the local church with the structure, training, support, and resources to give children what they need to build resilience and a brighter future: hope and love from a caring and faithful mentor.

Currently Kids Hope USA is working with 17 churches to serve Grand Rapids Public Schools – but that means there are 11 elementary schools that still don't have a church partner! And because of the isolation associated with the pandemic, experts are saying that there are now more children with need for social and emotional support than ever before. Certainly, there has been a need for this type of support before COVID-19.

The first step in establishing this relationship with Kids Hope USA, is for a volunteer from Trinity to serve as the Director or two Co-Directors for our church. Training is provided and, once the program is up and running, the director would serve about four to six hours per week. A detailed job description is available upon request.

If this sounds like something you might be interested in learning more about, please be in touch with Director of Discipleship Sylvia Stouten.



## Stephen Ministry

### Stephen Ministry Extends Care in Our Congregation

On Sunday, April 25, we will be celebrating one of the important caring ministries at Trinity: Stephen Ministry. We will recognize the dedicated volunteers who work in this ministry and praise God for the love and comfort they give. You will see them as Greeters, Ushers, Readers and learn a bit more about the ministry.

Stephen Ministers are laypeople trained to provide one-to-one, Christ-centered care. They have a compassionate heart for those who are hurting, and they're equipped with caring ministry skills by their congregation's Stephen Leaders. A Stephen Minister typically has one care receiver at a time and meets with that person once a week to listen, care, pray, encourage, and offer emotional and spiritual support.

Stephen Ministry supports our pastors by deepening, expanding, and extending the caregiving capacity in our congregation. A team of Stephen Ministers, together with a pastor, can provide ongoing care for more people than the pastor could provide alone. This also frees pastors to invest more time in other important ministry areas.

Currently there are 17 active Stephen Ministers in our congregation. They are matched in 11 caring relationships, caring for people both inside and outside the congregation. Stephen Ministers provide care to individuals facing difficult times in life—grief, cancer, divorce, financial difficulties, hospitalization, chronic illness, job loss, disability, loneliness, a spiritual crisis, or other life struggles.

Through Stephen Ministry, we take Galatians 6:2 to heart:

*Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.*

This month our Stephen Leader Team will begin recruiting members of our congregation to serve as Stephen Ministers. A training class is scheduled to begin this fall.

If you have interest in or questions about Stephen Ministry, please contact Kristin Bradley, Faith Community Nurse at 616.560.4496; Norm Palm, Stephen Leader at 616.430.6676; or one of the Trinity Pastors.



**STEPHEN  
MINISTRY**

# Health Ministries



## Walk & Talk

### April Theme: The Abundant Life

*"I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."* John 10:10b

The emphasis this month is abundant living which is promised by Jesus in the Gospel of John. This month, meditate on what abundant living means and how we can embrace the abundant life we have been promised.

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 and devotion, along with the date and time of our monthly group gathering. PRAISE GOD we can meet together again outdoors!

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



## Pandemic Prayer Group

Please join fellow Trinity members for focused prayer time on Monday, April 19 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

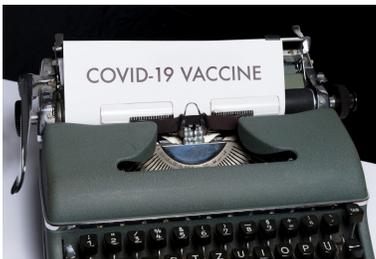
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## Pop-Up Tai Chi

On dry, spring weather days expect to see the Trinity Tai Chi group in the NE parking lot at Trinity. Text @tlctaichi to the number 81010 to get notified of 'pop-up' practice. No experience needed!

A regular schedule will be posted starting in May. Contact Xristina Kuhlmann at 616.719.6961 with any questions or concerns.



## Want Help?

If you are eligible for a Covid-19 vaccine and would like assistance navigating the scheduling process, please connect with our Faith Community Nurse, Kristin Bradley.

## Mental Health Matters

Please join Kristin Bradley and Pastor Dan on Tuesday, April 13 at 7 p.m. as they host Vonnie Woodrick, founder of **i understand**, for a meaningful and timely conversation on mental health. This will be a virtual event. Watch the e-blast for the link.

We have all been affected by mental illness on some level at some point in our lives. This past year has magnified issues many of us didn't even know were present. We must work together to destigmatize mental illness allowing for more recognition, treatment and care. We need to make space where there is no shame in illness and no guilt in feelings.

Vonnie Woodrick is an author of the book, *i understand pain, love and healing after suicide*, host of the "Be the One" and "Behind the Smile" podcasts, certified life coach and a social change agent who is passionate about changing the perception and conversation surrounding mental health and suicide. Vonnie is always willing to share her passion for change, to hear your story, and recognize that "love heals" and comes from the most unexpected places.

You'll love her enthusiasm, knowledge and compassion! ♥

As a community bound together in faith, we support each other, provide for each other's needs and lift each other up in prayer. We do this quite readily when one has a knee replacement, a cancer diagnosis or a gallbladder removal... let's also wrap around each other when we face depression, anxiety, addiction or a brain illness.

And remember, not only do we have each other to lean on, we can live into Matthew 11:28-30:

*Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*

If you have questions you'd like Vonnie to address, reach out to Kristin. It's likely others are wondering the same things. Thank you for caring for each other!

**i understand** is a non-profit organization that offers compassionate comfort to those affected by suicide and mental illness; established by Vonnie Woodrick in 2014 in loving memory of her husband Rob who lost his battle with depression in 2003. <http://iunderstandloveheals.org/>



## Outdoor Worship to Return on First Sundays beginning May 2

During the summer and fall of 2020, while the people of Trinity refrained from worship onsite in the sanctuary and Centennial Hall, a series of outdoor services on the west lawn was well received and well attended. There was also a growing chorus of those attending who suggested that outdoor services should become a part of our summer-time offering of worship in the future.



The Worship and Music Committee and pastors have agreed to host outdoor worship on the west lawn on the first Sunday of the month in 2021 beginning May 2 and continuing into the fall. For those who would prefer worship indoors on those first Sundays, the 8 a.m. traditional service in the sanctuary and the 9:15 a.m. Rejoice services in Centennial Hall will be offered as usual, with the 10:45 a.m. service offered on the west lawn of the church campus.

Mark your calendar and plan to join us. In the event of inclement weather, the first Sunday outdoor service at 10:45 a.m. will shift to the second Sunday of the month.

## Two Key Members of the Trinity Staff Planning Transitions

In late February, Pastor Linstrom met with **Sylvia Stouten**, our Director of Discipleship, who shared her intent to retire from that position on May 28, 2021. A member of the Trinity staff for 15 years, many of those years as a full-time employee, Sylvia has been deeply faithful to the life of our shared ministry and a joyful presence in our life together at Trinity. Although we knew this day was coming, the Trinity congregation is saddened to lose Sylvia's vital partnership with the people of this congregation, but delighted that she will enter into a new chapter in life with travel and family at the forefront of her aspirations. We are also pleased to report that Sylvia has not only endured the pandemic 'stay at home' order with her husband Bill, but also found that the two of them actually deeply enjoy being together at home, a vital test of prospective retirement together . . .

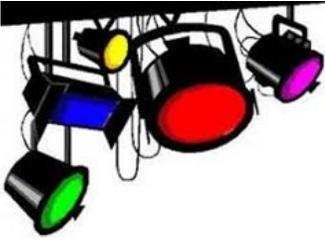


Trinity's Sexton **Steven Basher** also recently shared the impending conclusion of his college courses in the summer of 2021 and his intent to seek employment in web development. Like Sylvia, Steven was gracious to provide a three-month notice, indicating that he would like to step down from his position as Trinity's Sexton by June of 2021. Although a relatively new employee on our staff, Steven has become fully engaged in our life together and an active participant with our staff team. We will miss his willing partnership in the care of our facilities and grounds.



In both cases, we are privileged to bid farewell to these two key members of our staff team, knowing that their next steps on life's journey are positive and promising. We will hope to have an opportunity for "in person" celebrations of their work among us in the months ahead.

A Congregation Council led team is meeting to plan the posting of both staff positions in the spring of 2021. If you are interested in interviewing for either of these two positions, contact Pastor Linstrom. Job descriptions are under development but available for review upon request.



### Servant Leaders: Dan and Carol Butler

Take a glance at the photo of Dan and Carol. A picture is worth a thousand words. Look at the glow in their eyes. Here are two vibrant, caring, and passionate lives that demonstrate servant leadership among the community of Trinity and beyond.

**Vibrant.** Dan and Carol show up with vibrancy, upholding an **outreach minded approach** which helps an individual and church community thrive. They give back from a point of abundance and blessing in their own lives, helping others in their faith journey, work efficiencies, and mentoring self-growth in vocation and avocational aspects of life. They offer service through Lector, Usher and Greeter duties on Sunday mornings during in person worship.

**Caring.** Carol may be found tutoring students at MLK academy, teaching and assisting in VBS, praying for a child within our Prayer Tree program (6 years+), or tucking our little ones in through the "Good Night Trinity" program. Carol has served as Congregation Council member and Executive Committee secretary for almost four years. Dan may be found leading a Grace Group alongside Carol, hosting Dinner Groups (15 years) alongside Carol, praying for teenagers in our Prayer Tree program, or actively providing leadership and mentorship through a variety of area business boards and councils. He was a member of our Congregation Council and Executive Committee from 2006-2011, serving as President during that final year.

**Passionate.** Dan and Carol are visionaries in service, finding a new opportunity to serve as **Trinity Neighbors** Contacts. Both have seized this opportunity to connect with "a smaller group of Trinity members during the pandemic." As this zip code based connection develops, they hope to share life's joys and concerns with one another and eventually plan to join together socially in community when current gathering constraints are lifted.

*Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve. Matthew 20:28.*

Inspiration can be found in a couple who have engaged in such a wide variety of service at Trinity and within the community. May we hear a **fresh calling** of service and connection as we sojourn through this season into a new, expanding space, moving from virtual connections to in person gatherings again. **Join in within your zip code.** Find a place to connect at Trinity that is within your comfort level and God given talents.

Note: The purpose of *Behind the Scenes at Trinity* is to praise God and to encourage others to utilize 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](mailto:cawolson@gmail.com)) or Pastor Karen.



# An Invitation to help raise funds for Living Water Ministries



Dear Friends,

We are excited to announce our first-ever virtual 5k event, benefitting the Living Water Ministries Scholarship Fund! Registration is quick and simple, requesting a \$50 donation to complete. Our goal is to raise at least \$5,000 for the LWM Scholarship Fund. While our camp programs will remain canceled in 2021, your participation in the \$5k/5k this year will help us build capacity to welcome new campers when we return in 2022!

Maybe you're a seasoned runner, maybe you're an avid walker, or maybe you're just somebody who is tired of being cooped up indoors during this pandemic. How ever you come to be a part of the \$5k/5k we are grateful for your participation!

To register, please go to <https://elcalivingwater.kindful.com/register/the-5k-5k-2021> All registrants will receive an exclusive LWM \$5k/5k t-shirt along with a participant medal to recognize your support of Living Water Ministries.

While we are promoting participation on May 5, 2021 (Get it? \$5k/5k on 5/5?) you can run or walk anytime and anyplace May 1 through May 8, 2021. Sign up today! We look forward to being in virtual community with you!

Your support and participation are appreciated!

C.J. Clark, Executive Director  
Living Water Ministries

# Texas Storms - Lutheran Disaster Response is there to help



## Give now for Texas storm relief

We are again witnessing a devastating disaster amid the ongoing pandemic. Harsh winter conditions severely impacted Texas and other southern states this month. This has led to power, food and water shortages throughout the region.

Lutheran Disaster Response is collaborating with the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod, the Southwestern Texas Synod, the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod, and Lutheran Social Services Disaster Response. Area congregations are already conducting relief efforts such as supplying water, food and generators to those in need and opening their doors to serve as shelters. Long-term recovery may include repairing water-damaged homes, case management and supporting vulnerable populations.

To help with relief efforts, please consider donating through Lutheran Disaster Response by going to <https://community.elca.org/us-storms>. Gifts designated for "U.S. Severe Storms" will be used entirely (100%) for direct aid.

Together, we can help provide immediate and long-lasting support for those whose lives have been impacted by severe winter storms and subfreezing temperatures in Texas.

# Synod Mission Support - how our donations help

*Mission Support is the portion of your congregational offering that is sent to and through the synod office to assist in our partnerships in the synod and the church in the world.*

Together as a synod we have pledged to send 50% of all undesignated funds that come into the synod office as mission support to the ELCA. Those funds support all the work we do together as the church. The remaining 50% is used for the work of the synod.

## WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO?

- The Office of the Bishop and Staff  
Support to congregations, call process, supporting and equipping leaders, ethical guidance and boundary training, support for strategic congregations, congregational sustainability, conflict management, and so much more
- Synod Council  
Financial management, establishing policies and proper procedures, credentialing
- Support and governance for Living Water – Lutheran Outdoor Ministries
- Support and guidance for Lutheran Campus Ministries  
One Community-MSU; Matrix-WMU; Immanuel on Campus-CMU
- Providing Lutheran Disaster Response partnership  
Grants to the ELCA congregations in the eight county area affected by the recent Edenville dam breach and flood
- Communications and public relations resources
- Training for congregations in vitality, evangelism, stewardship, visioning
- Planning and support of new ministries, and engagement and re-engagement in community
- COVID-19 Response Grants from the ELCA  
24 congregations have received funds to continue or increase feeding and housing outreach during the pandemic – reaching about 2,000 people per week
- COVID-19 Education Grants  
Seven congregations have received grants to assist their local schools systems with the challenges of the pandemic
- Outreach Grants for new mission ideas
- SO MUCH MORE



*"Again this year Trinity Lutheran Church gave the highest amount of Mission Support to the synod and ELCA in 2020.*

*And I thank God for your love and faithfulness. Your mission and ministry touches the lives of so many people."*

*- Rev. David E. Sprang,  
Assistant to the Bishop,  
N/W Lower Michigan Synod -  
ELCA*

# Mission in India Update

*Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths. Proverbs 3:5-6*

Thanks be to God, Neerekshe has a new bus! Many thanks and much appreciation to the members of Trinity for supporting this ministry partnership. Coronavirus has created many challenges in India also. As the school entered lock down last spring, purchase of the bus was delayed and outreach became challenging as Shadrach and Gladys continued to trust and pray that God would lead their next steps. Now that school has resumed, many families cannot pay even minimal tuition and fees which continues the challenges faced. With great hope and trust, Shadrach and Gladys continue; they are extremely grateful for our generous gifts for their work in Murhanpur.

Thank you, thank you Trinity! Your support, encouragement, and prayers, sustain our friends and their ministry, all to the glory of God.

As always, financial contributions can be made payable to Trinity Lutheran Church with a memo: Mission In India. For more information, you may contact Dawn Brackmann at [dawnbrackmann@gmail.com](mailto:dawnbrackmann@gmail.com).



# Trinity continues to Partner in Prayer with Exalta Health

Trinity members have been invited to lift up the work that takes place at Exalta Health through quarterly prayer requests.

Exalta Health provides quality medical, vision, dental, behavioral and spiritual care services. Unemployment, lack of insurance or other financial factors are not barriers for service. Their chaplain, Rev. Kristen Meyer, will be sending quarterly summaries of specific praises and needs so that we can be more intentional in our prayers. Please consider including some or all of the requests below in your personal prayer life. We all know the power of prayer!

## Exalta Health Prayer Update - March 2021

- **Give thanks with us for the way God continues to sustain our work.** We praise God for gifts and grants of all sizes and for each of our donors – churches, individuals, and foundations. Please pray for Sandra, our Advancement Director, and her team as they prepare for spring, summer, and fall fundraising events. It's difficult to know how to plan due to COVID-19. **Pray for wisdom and clear guidance, as well for successful events.**

- **Praise God for new beginnings and new partnerships.** As we look for different ways to serve our community, we recently made two new connections, one with Samaritas's new affordable living facility here in Grand Rapids and the other with Hope Academy of West Michigan. We are grateful for these connections and pray to know how best to partner with these organizations.

- Several of our post-COVID patients are 'long-haulers,' those who experience symptoms such as debilitating fatigue, difficulty sleeping, and breathing problems for weeks and even months following their initial illness. Please pray for Katia and Dorothy and others like them. **Pray for God's healing grace as well as for strength and hope as they wait for a full recovery.**

- **Pray for consolation and provision** for Elizabeth, a patient in her 60s whose husband of 40+ years died of COVID-19 in the end of January, following a prolonged battle with the disease. Pray also for two families connected to Exalta Health who have lost husbands/fathers who were in their mid-40s to COVID-19. **Pray especially for the school-age children these men left behind.**

- **Pray for our dental department** as we face staff transitions that make busy clinical days even more challenging. **Pray** that as we wait for all the pieces to come together, we can continue to provide excellent, compassionate care for our dental patients.

- **Pray with us for equitable vaccine distribution in our community.** All of the barriers to healthcare that our patients face – transportation, language, technology – apply to access to the COVID-19 vaccine, too, even as this population is bearing the disproportionate burden of sickness and death due to the virus. **Pray** that those who have capacity to direct vaccines toward this community will do so, and **pray** for boldness and wisdom for us as we advocate for vaccine access for our patients.

- **Pray for elected officials** in our community and nation as they make policy decisions that can lead to or limit greater healthcare access for vulnerable people. **Pray for wisdom, humility, and ears to hear God's guidance.**



As always, **pray for daily encouragement, renewal, and hope** from God's Word and Spirit for Exalta Health staff as we accompany our patients through the trials of COVID-19 and the everyday challenges they face.

## Personal Care Items to be Collected through April

The members of Trinity's Outreach Committee would like to encourage everyone to consider donating personal care items. These will be donated to area social service agencies for distribution to their patrons. Many go without the simple things we take for granted.

The following items are most appreciated:

- bar soap, body wash, deodorant, Q-tips, nail file/clippers
- toothbrush, toothpaste, dental floss, mouth wash
- comb, brush, shampoo, conditioner, hand or body lotion, lip balm

While sample sizes are useful, it would be wonderful if we could provide items in regular sizes that will last longer.

Please drop off your donations in the labeled black bin located in the entryway of the main entrance on the west side of the building by Sunday, April 25.



## News Briefs



### Please help my sister find a place to live!

Good afternoon Trinity family,

The Landon family is looking for help in finding Allison's sister a home, trailer, or apartment. Michelle likes to ride her bike, loves to do crafts, loves to cook and bake, work in the yard (especially planting flowers), and she enjoys sitting around a fire, raking and mowing. She loves being outside and going for walks, listening to music, worshipping and reading her Bible. A private landlord or low income housing would be best as she's on disability and has relocated to Michigan from Georgia to be near family.

Michelle lived in her last apartment from April 2015 until the end of October 2020 with payments on time and paid in full and she has a reference letter from the landlord. We are open to looking anywhere in West Michigan and being near a bus line would be great, as she doesn't have a vehicle but does have her own bike. She's looking for a one bedroom, one bathroom apartment that would charge her 30% (around \$300) of her monthly income towards her rent. After she finds a place, she's looking for a part time job, so any leads on jobs in West Michigan would also be helpful. We thank you very much for reading, your consideration, and your help and prayers. God bless!

Love, The Landon family

If you can be of help in finding a home for Michelle, please contact Allison Landon at [allisonlandon@aol.com](mailto:allisonlandon@aol.com) or at 616.581.4704.



Thank you to all who sent cards and emails and offered prayers and well-wishes while I was ill. A special thank you to all those who donate blood, you are truly life savers.

Fran Anderson



### 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!

# April Birthday and Anniversary Celebrations!

## April 1

Chase Laakko  
Logan Landon  
Alberta Nelson  
Chris Reeve  
Jim Reeve

## April 2

Ashton Humphreys  
Jacqueline Kessel  
Kathryn Lee  
Tina Porcelli  
Hannah Warren

## April 3

Remy Bowman  
Cynthia Fongers  
Madelyn Hungerford  
Christy Kendall  
Dave Murray

## April 4

Caroline Murray  
Stephanie Sandler  
Michaela Soczek  
Chris Van Meter  
Lauren Wright  
*Sue & Bill Bailey*  
*Kris & Tom Shannon*  
*Patricia & Gary Stevens*

## April 5

Abigail Severns  
*Katie & Corey Bowman*  
*Anna & Josh Peterman*

## April 6

Greg Law

## April 7

Abbie Glass  
Abraham Glenn  
Amanda Hungerford  
Matt LaFleur  
Lynda McCready  
Sue Stanard  
Leah Williams

## April 8

Adrian Ardolino  
Trevor Bidle  
Jon Ferguson  
Alison Horn

## April 9

Ellie Buggeln  
Carol Butler  
Jeff Haywood  
Rebecca Mattison  
Chelsea Zabel  
*Michelle & James Morin*

## April 10

Barb Crossman  
Alaina Dulecki  
Samantha Garvey  
Teagan Johnson  
April Lothschutz  
Steven Unruh

## April 11

Laney Brang  
Gregg Cothorn  
Renee Fisk  
Kathryn Kubicek  
Shirley Tedford  
*Joan & Doug Start*

## April 12

Alan Helzer  
Hayley Howard  
Hagos Kafil  
*Molly & Mike King*

## April 13

Tessa Grooters  
Harrison Hale  
Adam Hall  
Julie Pardy  
Jane Renwick  
Liam Watson  
Heidi Wilson

## April 14

Dave Boer  
William Schaefer

## April 15

Brenda Fritts  
Lisa Greiner  
Ed Lohr  
Kristen Sytsma

## April 16

Adam Guigue

## April 17

Elizabeth Hall  
Nate Keller  
Grace Lanning  
Rick Radke  
Evelyn Severns  
Emily Williams  
*Beth & David Humphreys*

## April 18

Kelly Blair  
Raija Boles  
Dale Elliott  
Andrew Fox  
Pete Kuipers  
Jim Mielock  
Julia Pfeiffle

## April 19

Ning Liu

## April 20

Tyler Mason  
  
April 21  
Bruce Langenburg  
Lanee Lewkowski

## April 22

Zachary Abbate  
Bryan Bredwell  
Kristen Lamprich  
Daniel Legault  
Robert Mallen  
Mike Palaszek  
Bob Scott  
Chris Waite  
*Mary & Dave Smoes*

## April 23

Blake Brackmann  
Tom Cisler  
Ryan Gallagher  
Madeline Hale  
Abby Haywood  
James Ludeman

## April 24

Florence Bouwman  
Rachel Horn  
*Jessica & Brian Scalabrino*

## April 25

Philip Brondyke  
Lisa Cargill  
Nicholas Derbin  
Charlotte Stephan  
JD Thamban  
Owen Thamban

## April 26

Jaculin Cole

## April 27

Emma Bollinger  
Patrick Lown  
Carolyn McCready  
Helena Phillips  
*Karen & Mike Palaszek*

## April 28

Molly Havard  
Charlie Radke  
*Wendy & Dave Johnson*

## April 29

Steve Johnson  
Jason VanderBand  
*Allison & Lloyd Landon*

## April 30

Olivia Bradley  
David Humphreys  
Dave Krupp  
Becky Luders  
Jen Thamban  
*Jodi and Erik Wood*

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

# Are You Finding a Home at Trinity?

## *New Members to be received in the spring and summer of 2021*

Our last reception of New Members at Trinity was in the fall of 2019. Planning that was underway for the Spring of 2020 reception of New Members was set aside, along with most of our parish program in the early months of our pandemic separation.

Several individuals and families have reached out in recent weeks and months to indicate that they are finding a church home among the people of Trinity. Are you among those who are considering membership with this congregation? Be in touch with the church office or one of the pastors – we are hoping to schedule “Curiosity Classes” with those who are prospective members soon.

All are welcome to find a place in our life together – welcome to Trinity!



2700 Fulton Street East  
Grand Rapids, MI 49506  
616.949.2510 [tlcgr.org](http://tlcgr.org)

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

**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.*



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

## Staff

**Direct Dial:**  
616.949.2510

(then dial extension #)



[facebook.com/tlcgr](https://facebook.com/tlcgr)



YouTube.com  
Search: Trinity  
Lutheran  
Church, gr

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Rev. Dan Schewe, Associate Pastor (ext. 124)  
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Rev. Karen Niemeyer, Assisting Pastor (ext. 112)  
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Rachele Battreal, Director of Family Ministry  
[rachele.battreal@tlcgr.org](mailto:rachele.battreal@tlcgr.org)

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