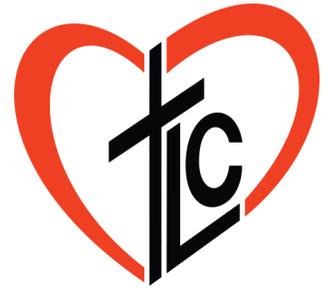


Weekly Tidings
Trinity Lutheran Church
05/28/20



Dear Trinity,

Council met again on Tuesday for our regularly scheduled meeting. (We meet as necessary in between our planned sessions too.) We prayed, talked, listened, and finally came to 2 true statements:

1. We long to gather in person to worship Jesus Christ.
2. We will not be gathering in person to worship at this time.

Together we will continue to monitor and assess what will be safest for our community. Please keep us in prayer. While we don't have a precise date as to *when* we will return to worship, we have ideas of *what* it will look like. As we consider returning to worship, here are some things we're thinking about:

1. At Trinity, we love being together. **Physical distancing of 6 feet apart** will be a challenge we must meet. We love to talk with one another, welcome newcomers, and generally experience our community and we'll learn to do so in a new way.
2. **Several adjustments to our routine need to take place**, such as suspending the practices of passing the peace, shaking hands/hugging to greet one another, passing an offering plate. We will begin using pre-packaged communion elements of juice & wafer. Coffee and community meals won't be offered.
3. **Singing needs to be suspended.** Statistics say that people need to be 6 feet apart from one another because particles, potentially viral, are emitted when speaking and therefore easy for others to breathe if they are in near proximity. The risks of singing are much higher - officials vary in saying these particles can travel 16-30 feet. Singing is an important part of our worship experience and while we can, and will, have instrumental music, we don't want to undervalue the choir and congregational signing.

4. People in **at-risk age groups and categories** will still be able to worship online. Online worship is here to stay even when we return to in-person worship.
5. **Our online** ministries are having success in reaching people and will continue. We're looking forward to more possibilities all the time.
6. We need to carefully plan to **sanitize the church** almost constantly. We're concerned about the possibility of people who clean also contracting the virus.
7. We've checked with our **insurance company** regarding liability if we should become a source of outbreak. Claims are "case specific" and they are non-committal if we would be covered. This isn't an issue of an individual suing the church. It's about insurance companies working out who pays medical bills.

There are a lot of things we can do right now.

- **Trust God:** we worship a God who is present and traveling with us. God soothes the sick and inspires the essential worker. God calms our hearts and brings prayers to our lips. We can Trust God.
- **Name our Grief:** our world won't be the same and the speed with which its changing is scary. Yet, we're resilient people to whom God gave strength. We can Name our Grief.
- **Consider the Spirit:** we're blessed with a new take on the church. The power of the Holy Spirit unites us! We can Consider the Spirit.
- **Share Jesus with others:** We're reaching people with our online ministry that we've never met! We can share Jesus with others.

Sunday is Pentecost, the day we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit. In so many ways, I can see and sense the Spirit on the move among us right now. Yes, its certainly not what we're accustomed to, but the Spirit still works! Thanks be to God!

Grace + Peace,

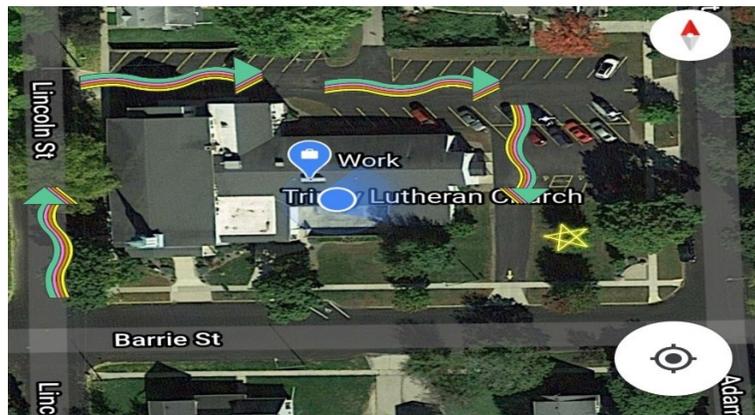
Pastor Amy

Drive Through Communion: This Sunday, 5/31, 9 – 10 am at Trinity!

Communion is a sacred gift to us from God. Jesus commanded that we “do this to remember” him and still serves as the host of this meal. Come. Receive this gift, be strengthened by the love and sacrifice of Jesus, be renewed. To prepare yourself for receiving communion, please worship online with us at 8 am. Although the logistics of this feast are decidedly different, it is no less holy.

Pastor Amy and Pastor Dan will be stationed in the parking lot ready to distribute blessed elements of juice and wafer, the body and blood of Jesus. All you need to do is roll down your window!

- Even with mask and glove precautions, there is some element of risk to this. If you feel unwell or are hesitant in any way, please stay home. Jesus loves you!
- Enter the church parking lot of Lincoln Street and wrap around the building (arrows). Parking lot attendants will direct you to stations where Pastor Amy and Pastor Dan will pass communion to you through your window.



Please note: the church will be closed and bathrooms unavailable.

Gluten Free Wafers available on request

Little Free Pantry – Now Open!

Current stock: Toothpaste + toothbrushes, soap, shampoo, towels, feminine hygiene products, other personal care items. Help yourself and spread the word. This is for anyone in need. Feel free to donate directly to the Little Free Pantry and spread the word!

Tune in to worship 6/7 for a sermon delivered by Rev. Elizabeth Eaton, Presiding Bishop of the ELCA.

Beginning Sunday, June 14, we start a new worship series called

Unraveled: Seeking God when our Plans Fall Apart. Life doesn't always go as planned—sometimes that's good, and sometimes that's painful.

Sometimes we need God to unravel us, for we long to be changed. This worship series explores 12 stories of unraveled shame, identity, fear, grief, dreams, and expectations. These are stories where God meets us in the spiraling, unraveling our plans—and us—into something new.

Study journals available at drive through communion and by appointment. Please contact the office for yours!

Sunday school/Christian Education

A BIG Thank you to all of the volunteer Sunday school staff! As with many programs, we ended abruptly with several loose ends – one of them being giving Thanks to our volunteers. So, volunteers; Thank you for helping our students “Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen. 2 Peter. 3:18

PRAYERS REQUESTED FOR.....Judy Almquist, Marsha Anderson, Sandy Anderson, Nick Bee, Linda Doerr, Kim Hannan, Renee Jensen, Ron Kemmerling, Bob Kyle, Phyllis Lang, Steffani Liebel, Rick Liebel, Dan Morrow, Pam Nicholas, Debbie Pierce, Tom Pomraning, Violet Prust, Tim Sawyer, Denny Stark, Shelley Scheurm, Ruth Smithback, Karen Weber, Donna Weeks, Aryzone Zick, Donald Zuehlke and those we name silently in our hearts.

TRINITY

Youth, Families and Ministry Team News

LIFT—The summer service trip has sadly been cancelled for this year.

Deposits can be fully returned, be forwarded to the National Youth Gathering next summer or be donated to LIFT for future projects. Please see me for more details.

The National Youth Gathering will be next summer the week of June 26th. We will be scheduling a meeting sometime in September to pass out information on this trip.

VBS—Virtual VBS sign up will begin next week. We are calling it VBS in a bag! All of the materials that you will need will be in the bag as well as links to some activities. We anticipate late July for delivery of bags.

Ministry Teams—A Zoom meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 1st at 6:30pm for all ministry team members that are interested. We will be discussing ideas on moving forward.

Personal—Tim is home recovering from his triple bypass. Thanks so much to everyone that reached out to us. Once again, our Trinity family blew us away with their kindness and generosity.

Please join us in celebrating our Seniors here at Trinity.

Please contact Beatrice at officetlc314@gmail.com to provide students addresses so you can send them notes or cards of Congratulations.

Seth Draeger

Seth will be attending Western Technical College in LaCrosse for business. He also is a member of their Cavaliers Baseball team.

Patrick Veenhius

He is not sure of his plans and wants to try working first for a trade opportunity.



Daily Faith Practices

The Day of Pentecost (A) – 1 Corinthians 12:3b-13

Focus: *The Gift of the Spirit*

word of life

“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in every-one.” (1 Corinthians 12:4-6 NRSV)

Read 1 Corinthians 12:3b-13

Today is the festival Sunday of Pentecost—a day in the church year celebrating the gift of the Holy Spirit and the gifts the Spirit gives which form and shape the community of believers. It is a major festival of the church and is often seen as the birthday of the church.

1. *Are there special things (special music, decorations, etc.) done in your congregation to celebrate Pentecost Sunday? What are some of them?*

Today’s reading from Paul’s letter to the Corinthians addresses the gift of the Spirit and the gifts given through the Spirit to the whole church. It seems that some in the church believed that certain spiritual gifts were of more importance than others. Elitism was expressed as those who were gifted with these gifts were lifted up as being a “better” or more spiritual believer.

2. *Why is elitism sometimes experienced when gifts are recognized and affirmed?*

3. *How can we keep this from happening in the church?*

Paul begins with the foundational gift of God to the Church—the gift of faith. “And no one can say ‘Jesus is Lord’ except by the Holy Spirit.” (1 Corinthians 13:3b NRSV) The very confession of belief in Christ is a gift from the Spirit. Martin Luther, in his explanation of the Apostles’ Creed in the Small Catechism, wrote. “I believe that I cannot, by my own understanding or effort, believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to him. But the Holy Spirit called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, and sanctified and kept me in the one true faith.”

4. *Do you agree with Luther’s statement: “I believe that I cannot, by my own understanding or effort, believe in Jesus Christ....”? Why, or why not?*

The gift of faith is manifested in the variety of gifts given by the Holy Spirit. As Paul affirms diversity – there are varieties of gifts, there are varieties of services, there are varieties of activities—he emphasizes unity. The same Spirit and Lord activates these gifts for the sake of the body of Christ. The gifts of the Spirit are given not for the sake of building up the individual. The litmus test by which Paul defines spiritual gifts is whether or not the gifts are expressed and shared for the building up of the community of faith. “To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.” (1 Corinthians 12:7 NRSV)

5. *Think of your congregation. How are the gifts of the Spirit expressed in your community of faith?*

6. *Think of some examples of individuals who willingly share their gifts for the common good.*

“All these are activated by one and the same Spirit who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.” (1 Corinthians 12:11 NRSV) In the body of Christ, no gift is greater than another. In the body of Christ, all are included and valued—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free (vs. 13). In the body of Christ, the gifts shared build up the whole community. “For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body” (1 Corinthians 12:13 NRSV)

Word among us

Shirley was a special member of the congregation. Some might describe her as “differently-abled.” Some might use the word “handicapped” or “disabled” or “mentally challenged” or “slow.” The congregation had learned long ago and had grown accustomed to Shirley’s verbal outbursts and comments made when she agreed with something said in the sermon. They accepted her boisterous singing with the choir, even though she was always out of tune. That was just Shirley.

One Sunday, a family new to the community came to worship at Shirley’s church. They were looking for a church home. The mother couldn’t believe how distracting Shirley was. As the family sat at the table after church for Sunday dinner, they all agreed that the church probably wasn’t for them. Shirley was just too disruptive and took away from worship. But they agreed to try it one more Sunday.

Tragically, the family suffered a great loss that week as the husband experienced a heart attack and died. As the family, grieving and in shock, walked through the church door the Sunday after the funeral, who was there to greet them but Shirley. She wrapped her arms around the grieving widow, and with tears in her eyes, she said, “I feel so bad for you. But I know he’s in heaven with Jesus.” The widow wept in Shirley’s arms, and they became inseparable friends.

1. Describe a time when you experienced the gift of the Spirit through someone unexpected.

Shirley wasn’t a talented singer. She didn’t have human wisdom. She wasn’t always appropriate in her comments. But Shirley was gifted, and she shared her gifts to build up the community of faith.

Shirley’s story is a poignant reminder that spiritual gifts are more than just talents and abilities. To view them as talents or abilities alone is to risk elitism and boastful pride. No, spiritual gifts (Greek *charismata*) are expressions of God’s grace (Greek *charis*), given and shared for the building up of the body of Christ. “To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.” (1 Corinthians 12:7 NRSV)

faith practice in daily life

Live among God’s faithful people

In baptism we are each bestowed with gifts of the Spirit. Some of the gifts are readily evident and easily claimed. But for many, the gifts bestowed upon us in baptism are not so clear. We need the gifts of discernment and the gift of a community of faith wherein our gifts are identified and shared for building up of the body of Christ.

2. What are your gifts of the Spirit? (If you find this question difficult to answer, ask others group to name gifts they see in you.)

3. In what ways can you share your gifts for the building up of the body of Christ?

Prayer

Come, Holy Spirit, come! Empower us with your grace, so that we might realize, claim, and share your gifts in the service of others. Amen

last word

Identify the gifts of the Spirit within you, and think of ways to share those gifts
for the building up of the body of Christ.