

Dear Trinity,

Over the past few days, I've heard and read some news reports about precautions necessary if you're going to "**congregate**." Yep, that's the word I keep hearing and it sure grabs my attention since we are a congregation! It's what we do and who we are. I'm hopeful that with our precautions in place we will be congregating again soon. On Tuesday, July 7, the council meets again to go over the survey responses and that will help us in going forward. So thank you for the 175 we've received so far! They're due tomorrow, July 3! The council, staff, and I appreciate your feedback to the plans we've made for returning to worship.

So far what I'm seeing in the surveys (and we will publish the stats next week), is the overwhelming desire we *all* have to return to normal. You appreciate online worship and drive thru communion, but it doesn't quite feed you like you've been fed before. Every council member, staff member, and I agree!

I, too, want to return to worship as we knew it. I'll tell you what, it's awfully sad to preach in an empty sanctuary. I want to sing and celebrate communion. I want to walk through the congregation with a newly baptized baby in my arms while you give a blessing. I want to hear the unexpected answers during the children's sermon! I want to **congregate**.

But knowing that it will be a while until we're able to "return to normal," we're going ahead with precautions in place and modifications to what we're accustomed to so that we can worship at all. Friends, I don't want these things to become the we do things forever. Neither does anyone on staff or council. But I understand that they're necessary for now so that we can make long term progress.

Modifications and precautions are temporary measures designed to let us congregate so that we can worship the Lord.

Each of us has been tremendously nimble in our ability to change and adapt and that will continue to be my mindset. We'll start small and get the pattern down and then grow. We're going to keep being creative and dedicated. Afterall, we're still a living community of Christ. While our worship, learning, and serving look different these days, our identity remains the same.

Grace + Peace,

Pastor Amy

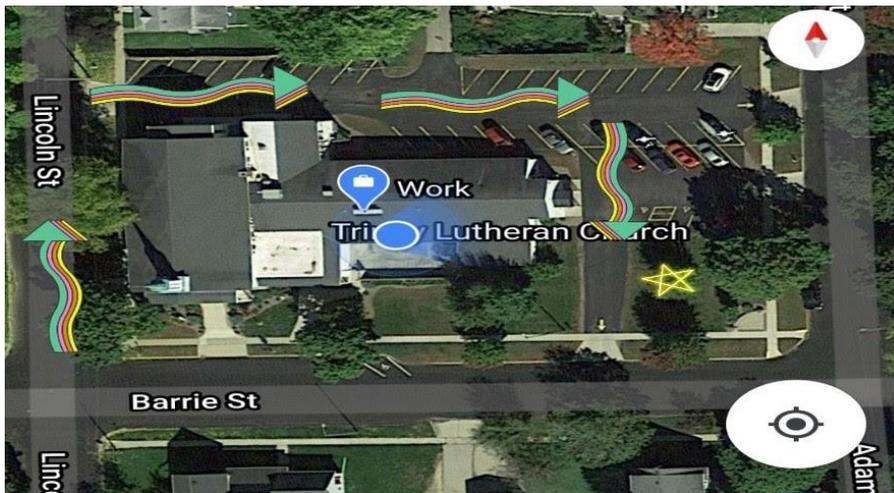
PRAYERS REQUESTED FOR.....Judy Almquist, Marsha Anderson, Sandy Anderson, Nick Bee, Linda Doerr, Kim Hannan, Renee Jensen, Ron Kemmerling, Bob Kyle, Phyllis Lang, Steffani Liebel, Rick Liebel, Dan Morrow, Pam Nicholas, Debbie Pierce, Tom Pomraning, Violet Prust, Paul Reed, Tim Sawyer, Shelley Scheurm,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

Drive Through Communion: Sunday, 7/12, 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.

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!

1. 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!
2. 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

Yes! You can bring your offering to communion.

Yes! You can bring your quarters for Guatemala to communion.

Yes! You can bring your pop tabs for the Ronald McDonald House to communion.

Memorial Gifts: Thank you to all who send financial gifts to Trinity in memory of a loved one who has died. For example, when Sandy Anderson's brother, Bob, died this summer, she sent a gift to Trinity in his memory. Thank you Sandy. We cherish being honored in such a way. Sometimes people specify where they'd like the gift to go. For example, if their loved one enjoyed listening to the choir, the family might earmark the gift for choir music. Many times the gifts we receive don't have a designation. With those gifts, we combine them to purchase things for the good of the church, usually visible items within the sanctuary such as new worship materials or technology. It is not our practice to list those gifts anywhere, but we do send handwritten thank you notes. Thank you to all who chose to honor their loved ones in this way. It is a privilege to steward these memorial gifts.

Trinity to be a site for Bishop Election!



Due to covid-19, synod assembly & election of a new Bishop was postponed. To safely accommodate synod assembly participants, 12 churches from around the synod will be satellite locations for a live stream assembly. Trinity is one of them! We're proud to host this event currently scheduled for 8/1. This year, only voting members of the assembly are allowed to attend.

Can you volunteer? We need 2 people to usher & be contact sanitizers.
Let Pastor Amy know.



Daily Faith Practices

Sunday, July 3-9 (A) – Romans 7:15-25a

Focus: *Internal strife*

word of life

“I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.”

(Romans 7:15 NRSV)

Read Romans 7:15-25a

A significant amount of Paul’s letter to the Romans addresses the issue of sin. In particular, this passage contains classic verses describing the inner conflict waging inside each person. And yet, not everyone can acknowledge this reality.

The apostle Paul understands his own struggle with sin is not unique to himself. But rather, all are enslaved to sin because sin dwells inside of us. That is just the way it is.

This internal strife has been described as a civil war raging inside. Paul writes from his own personal experience of wrestling with the power of sin over his life. The verse preceding this lectionary text includes a heartfelt confession by Paul. He writes, “... but I am of the flesh, sold into slavery under sin.” (Romans 8:14 NRSV) Ouch! Sold into slavery! Those strong words from the apostle Paul sound irreversible and final. One might ask if there is any hope to live a righteous life.

1. *What does Paul mean when he describes being sold into slavery under sin?*
2. *Who sold Paul into slavery under sin?*

Paul writes in very personal terms: “I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.” (Romans 7:15 NRSV) No wonder Paul describes this as slavery. Despite being born with freedom of choice, he cannot control his own actions—despite his best attempts to do so. His human will is limited because of sin dwelling inside of him.

3. *Can you relate to Paul’s words? How so?*
4. *Give an example of not wanting to do something, but doing so anyway.*

“For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me.” (Romans 7:18-20 NRSV) These words can be quite discouraging. Paul’s words ring out, “Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?” (Romans 7:24 NRSV) Again, the question has to be asked: Is there any hope to live a righteous life?

5. *Who rescues humanity from this body of death and sin?*
6. *Why does Paul spend so much time writing about sin?*

Paul’s answer is clear: “Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!” (Romans 7:25 NRSV) We cannot and do not defeat the power of sin on our own. Thanks be to God who defeats sin yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

It can be helpful for all Christians to hear Paul name the power of sin and identify his internal civil war, knowing all along that sin does not have the final say in his life. Jesus Christ has set him (and us) free from the slavery of sin. As much as Christians desire to do God’s will, the internal battle never ends. That is an important self-awareness to obtain in this life. We are left to turn to God with each breath.

Word among us

Diets are begun on January 1 or shortly thereafter. Gyms and fitness centers overflow as people vigorously try to shed extra pounds gained over the holidays. But as the days and weeks wear on, those same gyms and fitness centers become less busy.

Our New Year's resolutions are often full of good intentions which may or may not be followed. One person always resolves never to make resolutions. He knows he can't keep a resolution, so why try?

1. *What are your thoughts about New Year's resolutions?*
2. *Why can't we do what we intend to do in our New Year's resolutions?*
3. *What is the key to staying on a diet?*

Paul writes, "I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate." (Romans 7:15 NRSV) This verse has been used by some to justify not trying to make changes. They might say something like, "Look at the apostle Paul. He can't do what he sets out to do. It is simply impossible. Why even bother to attempt to live a godly life? The power of sin is too great."

4. *How do you respond when people quote this verse to justify their actions?*
5. *Was Paul encouraging people to give up? Explain your answer.*

Imagine a young person approaches you after hearing this passage read during worship. This person has a confused facial expression and begins to ask you about this passage.

6. *How might you respond to this young person?*
7. *What do you find confusing about this passage?*
8. *How do you describe the internal strife inside each one of us?*

Martin Luther was one who wrestled with the power of sin over his life. He struggled with how he could ever stand before God. He fully and totally related to Paul's words, "Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?" (Romans 7:24 NRSV) For that is how Luther understood himself. For both the apostle Paul and Luther, this self-awareness about sin raging inside did not lead to despair; rather, it led them to the love of God found in Jesus Christ.

faith practice in daily life

Proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed

In baptism we have been claimed by Christ and sealed by the Holy Spirit forever. But that does not mean that we skip over the internal civil war and tensions within us. Sin is still a reality. But thanks be to God who frees us from the power of sin in our lives and empowers us to live as a new creation in Christ. Each day we remember God's claim on us in baptism and God's invitation to live in Christ.

9. *What is important to remember from this passage?*

Prayer

Gracious God, thank you for not giving up on us. Continue to rescue us from the power of sin within us. Amen

last word

For one day, make a list of those things you intend not to do, but that you do. Pray over that list.