



Trinity Trumpet

March 2024

Pastor's Letter

This weekend I was working on gathering documents to take to our accountant for our taxes. This necessary spring task is something I generally don't put much thought into. Gather up all the various end-of-the-year statements, get on Travis to remember to give me his W-2, calculate my outside income, our charitable contributions, and (because clergy taxes are complicated) our housing expenses, and organize it all neatly in a folder to hand over to our accountant. A necessary but not particularly engaging task.

But this year, I found myself thinking differently about this yearly task. During the spring, as part of my preparation for the community center project, I've been taking a course to pursue an executive certificate in religious fundraising through IUPUI (Indiana University / Purdue University – Indianapolis). We spent the first portion of the course thinking about the theology regarding money and how we use our money across various faith traditions. So maybe because I've been immersed in the language of the spirituality of fundraising, or maybe because it is Lent and I'm reflecting on how to deepen my faith and trust in God, I started thinking about how gathering my tax documents provided an opportunity for me to think deeply about how my faith influences my finances.

Just as a quick aside, this is not a theological reflection on paying taxes. That is a much more complicated topic than I'd attempt in a newsletter article. There are theses on that subject by people much smarter than me. What I did was use the need to go through my finances to figure out my taxes as an opportunity to reflect on whether my finances reflect my values.

Money is a complicated topic in faith. Is it a sign of God's blessing or the root of all evil? Are we to give it all away or gather it for good? Money, I

would argue, is at the same time all of those things and none of them. Because money is simply a tool. What matters is our response to it. Do we use it to serve others and God, or to build for ourselves a false sense of security and of our own importance? This, fun fact, is a question people of faith have been asking since the very beginning. In a sermon on money, second century church leader Clement of Alexandria wrote, “Riches, then, which benefit also our neighbors, are not to be thrown away. For they are possessions... and they lie in our hands, and are put under our power, as material and instruments which are for good use to those who know the instrument. If you use it skillfully, it is skillful; if you are deficient in skill, it is affected by your want of skill, (money) being of itself destitute of blame.”

Gathering documents gave me the opportunity to reflect on how I am using the tool of my finances. And I’m thinking beyond just “am I giving money to charity.” That’s important, but it’s the obvious one. Looking over my tax documents allowed me to ask things like, are my retirement accounts invested in sustainable ways (right here a more complicated question than it may seem. Portico, who manages ELCA retirement funds, talk about the pros and cons of divesting from certain companies vs. staying invested and keeping a voice at the table)? Are my housing expenses in line with needs, could I spend more for more fuel efficiency, or save to have that money available in other ways? Are we living in ways that allow us the flexibility to give to charitable causes? These basic finance questions can also be questions of faith, stewardship, and care to the gifts God has given us. They’re also complicated questions, with no one right answer. The growth, like so much of faith, is in the asking and the considering.

So this year, as you’re sitting down with your accountant or financial planner, I invite you to consider some of these questions and look at your finances through a faith lens. Faithful stewardship of our money is about more than just the check we write to Trinity or to other worthwhile charities. It is about how faith affects all our decisions. And every spring the government conveniently gives us the opportunity to do that reflecting. Not their intention, sure, but we can make of it a helpful time of growth.

Peace,
Pastor Kjersten

Worship Opportunities for March

Wednesday Bible Chats

March finds us firmly in the season of Lent and Lent is a great season for taking on a new spiritual practice and deepening your relationship with scripture. Join Pastor Kjersten on Wednesdays at 10:30am or 5:30pm in the lounge to discuss the texts. Bring your questions and hear what others are thinking.

FED: Faith, Food, Fellowship

Our new dinner church with the Woman's Co-op continues to feed people with faith, fellowship, and food. In February, we discussed what it means to love and be love honestly, by each other and by God. Then in honor of Black History Month, we enjoyed a soul food meal of fried chicken, mashed potatoes, macaroni and cheese, and green beans. Fun was had by all!

FED is now a monthly occurrence, on the third Thursday of each month. Our next opportunity for worship is March 21st at 5:30 pm. All are invited to come check it out. This is a great service to bring a friend who isn't familiar with church because it is very informal and casual.

Midweek Lenten Worship – Thursdays at St. Peter

Potluck meal @ 6pm, Worship @ 7pm

Trinity and St. Peter are once again teaming up to offer a midweek worship opportunity for Lent. Centered around the theme of the Lord's Prayer, we are digging into the words of the prayer Jesus taught us to pray. Pastor Kjersten is preaching on February 22nd and March 14th and Pastor Ed is preaching on February 29th and March 7th. On March 21st, the time and location move to Trinity at 5:30pm to take part in our FED Worship experience. This is a great opportunity to deepen your faith this Lenten season.

Holy Week at Trinity Lutheran Church

Palm/Passion Sunday

March 24

Worship at 10:30 am

Meet in the Social Hall to process with palm branches.

Maundy Thursday

March 28

Trinity Lutheran Church, 6:30 pm Dinner and Eucharist

On the night he was betrayed, Jesus ate with his disciples and taught them to love one another as he had loved them. On the night in which we remember Jesus' command to love, we too will gather over a simple meal of soup and bread and share Holy Communion together.

Good Friday

March 29

St. Peter Lutheran Church, 7 pm

We will gather at St. Peter for a service of prayer and reflection. We will hear the passion story, sing together, and reflect on God's great love for us.

Great Vigil of Easter

March 30

St. Peter Lutheran Church, 6:30 pm

We join with our sisters and brothers of St. Peter's to celebrate the night of Christ's resurrection. This is one of Pastor Kjersten's favorite services, and she's excited to partner with St. Peter to share this experience. The Great Vigil of Easter is a service that moves from creation to Christ's resurrection. It includes sharing stories (in super fun ways, get ready for audience participation!), shouts of praise, sharing the Eucharist, and a Bunny cake!

Easter Sunday

March 31

Worship at 10:30am

Christ is Risen! Christ is Risen Indeed, Alleluia! Join us in worship as we praise God for the miracle of Christ's rising from the dead and bringing us to everlasting life. There will be great music, prayer and praise, and lilies.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT LAST MONTH ... PART 1

At the Annual Meeting held February 4, one item on the agenda was an update on moving towards becoming a community center and approving the filing of the paperwork for becoming a 501(c)3 corporation. The minutes concerning that portion of the meeting are here:

Community Center Concept

At the December 19, 2023, council meeting, the council voted to recommend to the congregation the following action:

To establish a 501(c)3 corporation for the purpose of a community center and authorize the expenditure of up to \$1000 from the Community Cornerstone Fund to be used for the cost of the legal documents.

- Bob Kamphuis reviewed the fees (\$600+) and the wait time for approval. The 6 months will allow us to plan and “get our ducks in a row”. The paperwork for submission can be completed in about a week’s time.
- Laurie Swanson noted that some churches have been criticized for their lack of following fire laws, etc., but that we are working to make our center a legitimate organization. We are building our center organically from our long-term relationship with the Co-Op.
- Eileen Martens noted that the cost for submitting the application is coming from the Community Cornerstone Fund which was created for projects like this.
- Doug Martens noted there will be third parties involved in the center. Legally there will be no limit but we will watch who we invite so that we maintain the smooth relationships we currently enjoy. Pastor Kjersten also noted that we are currently working on an incubator kitchen and DHS is increasing the time it uses our nursery for supervised visits while KCC and the Co-Op already have leases with us. We don’t know precisely what the pieces will look like but we will have time to set them up.
- Bob K. noted that a community center will open up new funding from sources reluctant to give money to a religious organization.
- Jeff Andert noted that the Council has moved to appoint their president and vice president as Trinity’s two members to the start up board. The Co-Op will appoint the third member.

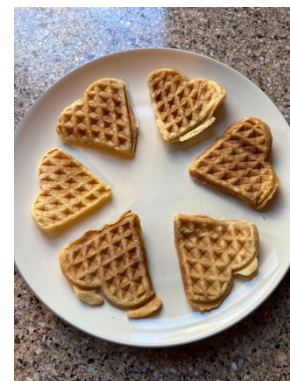
Pastor K. will be at all board meetings as the Executive Director/employee of the center (much like she is now with the Council).

- Jeff A. also noted that we are now getting 2nd tier questions which is a good sign. We will need to submit a budget with the application using Trinity building costs as an aid to get a projected amount.
- Moved by the Council and seconded by Doug Martens to move forward with submitting our 501(c)3 application. Unanimously approved.

If you would like a copy of the entire minutes from the meeting, please contact Connie Everson at CAE226@aol.com.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT LAST MONTH ... PART 2

On Monday, February 12, Shrove Monday was back with pancakes being provided by Pastor Kjersten and heart shaped waffles (perfect for Valentine's Day/Ash Wednesday) by Diane Andert. The pancakes and waffles were both enjoyed with favorite toppings including whipped cream and fruit along with traditional maple syrup!!



THANK YOU

I would like to thank my Trinity Family for their support during this difficult time of Rose's passing.

Wayne Walentowski



ROAD RUNNERS



The Road Runners are on the road again on **March 21 @ 11:30 am**. We will be gathering at **Moonraker** on Beadle Lake Rd. Join us, bring a friend or 2 and enjoy a good meal and great conversation!

Easter Lilies

It's time to order Easter Lilies to adorn our sanctuary on Easter morning!! **The cost is \$6**. If you would like to donate a lily, there is a sign-up sheet in the narthex where you can indicate if you are placing it in the sanctuary "In Memory Of" or "In Honor Of" a loved one. **The deadline is March 6th**. You can give the money directly to Doug Martens, place it in the offering plate in an envelope marked Easter Lily, donate via our Facebook "Donate" button or PayPal including your information. Lilies can be picked up after the Easter service on March 31st.



Easter Breakfast



After many years under Covid, we will once again have an Easter Breakfast on Easter Morning. It will start at 9:00 am to be followed at 10:30 with our Easter Service. Look for the sign-up sheet in the narthex. Questions? Talk to Wayne Walentowski.

COVID/FLU/RSV

Even though we've been experiencing a "roller coaster" of weather that's included springlike temperatures, it's still winter with covid, flu and RSV remaining a concern. Please join us via FaceBook Live if you or someone in your home is feeling ill.





RECIPE CORNER

Beef Barley Soup from Connie Everson

- ½ C. each of chopped carrots, celery, onion
- 1 T. butter
- 4 C. beef broth
- 1 lb stewing beef or 1+ C. of cooked, diced beef
- ½ Can diced tomatoes (freeze the other ½ can for your next batch)
- ½ C. quick cooking barley
- Salt and pepper to taste.

Sauté vegetables and beef in butter until the beef is browned if using fresh stewing beef (which is what I always use).

Add broth, tomatoes. Cook for an hour (ish) until the beef is done.

Add barley and cook for an additional half hour or until barley is cooked. If using pre-cooked beef, this is can done after the you're done with sautéing.

Enjoy with your favorite bread or biscuits!

Opportunities

Would you like an opportunity to serve our congregation in a new way? There are two opportunities in May! One is serving as our delegate to the Synod Convention which will be held on May 11 via ZOOM. Gloria Kolodzieizyck has volunteered to be our female representative and we are still in need of a male congregational member to represent us at the convention. There is also talk of a “Watch Party” for anyone interested to see the Synod at work. In addition, there will be a council election in May, contact any council member if you would like to be on the ballot.

Social Justice Committee

One of the goals of the Council this year has been to get our various committees up and running returning them to their pre-covid levels of activity. One of those committees is Social Justice. At the February 27 meeting, the Council approved the “dissemination of the information regarding the legislative advocacy of the expanding of the Child Tax Credit with the congregation”. This information was contained in an ELCA Action Alert. If you would like to get more information and respond, go to: support.elca.org and fill out the form. Simply click on “Send Message” and a letter will automatically be sent to your senators. Even if you’re sure they will be voting in support of this expansion, it still helps the cause when they can tell fellow senators how many of their constituents contacted them concerning this issue. Watch this space for future ELCA Action Alerts!



If you know, you know

March Prayer Partners

We are praying weekly for Lutheran Congregations in our Synod. Our prayer partners for March are:



March 3 – All Saints Lutheran Church, Mason, Rev. Gerald Ferguson

March 10 – Christ Lutheran Church, Michigan Center, Rev. Robert Martin

March 17 – Trinity Lutheran Church, Midland, Rev. Jeffrey Gramza, Senior Pastor, Rev. Danielle Shealy, Associate Pastor

March 24 – Trinity Lutheran Church, Millersburg, Rev. Mary Hughes

March 31 – Immanuel Lutheran Church, Mt. Pleasant, Rev. Dana Hendershot

Worship Volunteers & Readings for March

Lay Assistants, Sound Board

March 3 – LA: Mary Conklin
Sound: Don Boulton

March 10 – LA: Teresa Garver/Teresa Momenee-Young
Sound: Ellis Cutler

March 17 – LA: Jeff Andert
Sound: Ellis Cutler

March 24 – LA: Scott Schindehette
Sound: Don Boulton

March 28 – Maundy Thursday

Readings

Exodus 20: 1 – 17
Psalm 19
1 Corinthians 1: 18 – 25
John 2: 13 – 22

Numbers 21: 4 – 9
Psalm 107: 1 – 3, 17 – 22
Ephesians 2: 1 – 10
John 3: 14 – 21

Jeremiah 31: 31 – 34
Psalm 51: 1 – 12
Hebrews: 5: 5 – 10
John 12: 20 – 33

Mark 11: 1 – 11
Isaiah 50: 4 – 9a
Psalm 31: 9 – 16
Philippians 2: 5 – 11
Mark 14: 1 – 15:47

Exodus 12: 1 – 4 [5 – 10], 11 – 14
Psalm 116: 1 – 2, 12 – 19
1 Corinthians 11: 23 – 26
John 13: 1 – 17, 31b – 35

March 29 – Good Friday

Isaiah 52:13 -- 53:12
Psalm 22
Hebrews 10: 16 – 25
John 18: 1-- 19:42

March 30 – Great Vigil of Easter

Genesis 1: 1 – 2:4a
Genesis 7: 1 – 5,11 – 18; 8:6 –18;
9: 8 – 13
Exodus 14: 10 – 31; 15: 20 – 21
Daniel 3: 1 – 29
Romans 6: 3 – 11
John 20: 1 – 18

**March 31 – LA: Doug Martens
Sound: Ellis Cutler**

Acts: 10: 34 – 43
Psalm 118: 1 – 2, 14 – 24
1 Corinthians 15: 1 – 11
Mark 16: 1 – 8

March Birthdays & Anniversaries

3/29 Eileen Martens
3/29 Gwen Geselle
3/30 Diane Andert
3/31 Kendra Witkowski-Lehman

3/13 Doug & Eileen Martens



Prayer Requests

COMMUNITY

Sharon Cutler
Pam Ellison-Kring
Linda Hermann
Family of Rose Walentowski
Tish Gancer

IN OUR HEARTS/ON OUR MINDS

Jim Hines (Maxine's Nephew)



OTHER WAYS TO CONNECT WITH TRINITY

Trinity's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/trinity.church.581>

"Like" the Trinity Facebook page to follow events and activities.

WEBSITE

Trinity website: <http://www.tlcbattlecreek.org>

Check out the **What's New** tab to see the latest events going on at Trinity. You can also find transcripts of Pastor Kjersten's sermons under the **Worship** tab.

TRUMPET

To update your newsletter email/mail preferences, contact Pastor Kjersten at pastor@tlcbattlecreek.org or 963-5356. Let us know if you would like to be added our quarterly mailing list to receive a color brochure of what's new at Trinity.

ONLINE GIVING

Trinity now has online giving. Simply go to Trinity's website, <http://www.tlcbattlecreek.org> and click on the yellow button that says "Donate" on the bottom left corner of the page. Or go to Trinity's Facebook page and click on the blue button that says "Donate" on the right side of the page.

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|---|---|--|---|--|---|---|
| MARCH | | | | | 01 | 02 |
| | | | | Pastor Kjersten gone through March 4 | | |
| 03 | 04 | 05 | 06 | 07 | 08 | 09 |
| 10:30 Worship Coffee Hour | 8:30am-4pm Woman's Co-Op Monday Mixer | 1:00 Bible Chat FaceBook Live 12:30 Food Pantry | 10:30 & 5:30 Bible Chat 6:45 Choir | Midweek Lenten Worship @ St. Peter 6 Potluck 7 Worship | | |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 10:30 Worship Coffee Hour | 8:30am-4pm Woman's Co-Op Monday Mixer | 1:00 Bible Chat FaceBook Live 10:30 Worship & Music | 10:30 & 5:30 Bible Chat 6:45 Choir | Midweek Lenten Worship @ St. Peter 6 Potluck 7 Worship | | |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 10:30 Worship Coffee Hour | 8:30am-4pm Woman's Co-Op Monday Mixer | 1:00 Bible Chat FaceBook Live | 10:30 & 5:30 Bible Chat 6:45 Choir | Road Runners @ Moonraker, 11:30 FED, 5:30 | | |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 10:30 Worship Coffee Hour Palm Sunday | 8:30am-4pm Woman's Co-Op Monday Mixer | 1:00 Bible Chat FaceBook Live | 10:30 & 5:30 Bible Chat 6:45 Choir | Maundy Thursday @ TLC 6:30 Dinner & Eucharist | Good Friday @ St. Peter 7:00 | Great Vigil of Easter @ St. Peter 6:30 |
| 31 | | | | | | |
| 10:30 Easter Worship Coffee Hour | | | | | | |

