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Happy Birthday!



January 23rd to January 31st

- 23rd: Stacy Christensen
24th: Madison Schickel; Marcia Wetzel
25th: Angela Bahls; Payton Bowling; Angela Moore; Ruth Rosenberg; John Scott; Scott Stephenson; Randall Welser
26th: Mariellen Ehredt; Benjamin Pulley; John Rakus; Bethany Roth; Andrew Schrup; Nancy Tiedge; Ronald Weis;
27th: Jeffrey Brandt II; Martha Johnson; Matthew Vana
28th: Kimberly Nelson; Mel Piff
29th: Julie Baner; Randy Bender; Gary Bowling II, Ashlee Drury; Beverly Gregory; Kathy Johnson
30th: Eva Hunt
31st: Bruce Adams; Adrienne Kruse; Mark Petersen; Tyler Peterson; JoAnn Rowland; Duane Swenson

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Trinity Visitor

Forty Days of Purpose Driven Lutherans: Living the Purpose Driven Life

Have you ever asked the question, “What if every member of Trinity was just like me?” I thank God for the people of Trinity who share a great variety of spiritual gifts and blessings for the building up of the Kingdom of God. Imagine the impact Trinity could have if every single member fully committed to living out God’s purposes for our lives.

Sunday, February 6th we will begin a spiritual journey using Rick Warren’s book, *The Purpose Driven Life* and Trinity’s own 2005 Lenten Devotional Book. ***We will continue during the Lenten Wednesday education time after the Soup Supper from 5:30 to 6:20 in the Multipurpose Room.*** Just think what might be possible if every soul who shows up at Trinity on the following days were to be able to boldly state:

Sunday, February 6th: “I’m no accident! I know my PURPOSE for my life here on this planet.

Ash Wednesday, February 9th: “Forty Days of Purpose” readings begin.

Sunday, February 13th: “Forty Days of Purpose” for the Family @ 10:00 hour

Wednesday, February 16th: “I’m planned for God’s Pleasure.” - WORSHIP

Wednesday, February 23rd: “I’m formed for God’s Family” - FELLOWSHIP

Wednesday, March 2nd: “I’m Created to Become like Christ” - DISCIPLESHIP

Wednesday, March 9th: “I’m Shaped for Serving God” - MINISTRY

Wednesday, March 16th: “I’m made for Mission” - WITNESS

Wednesday, March 23rd: “I’m created for celebrating” - THANKSGIVING

The Forty Days of Purpose will include:

1. We will experience eight “Purpose Driven Life” learning opportunities.
2. I encourage every worshiper to pick up a copy of *The Purpose Driven Life*. We’ll all be invited to meditate on the same thought each day for forty days.
3. Folks who are presently not in a small group will be invited to take part in a six-week ‘connection experiment.’ Those already in groups will be invited to invest six weeks discussing God’s purposes.

Why forty days?

The Bible is clear that God considers forty days to be a spiritually significant time period. Whenever God wanted to prepare someone for God’s purposes, God took forty days.

(continued on next page)

MISSION STATEMENT OF TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH – ELCA
Praise God – Serve Christ – Love One Another

Pastor Joel Bexell

Pastor Laura Koppenhoefer

Pastor Chris Meyer

The Next Two Sundays at Trinity Sunday services at 8:30 am and 11:00 am

Sunday, January 23rd—Third Sunday after Epiphany

Today's gospel reading narrates a strange fishing expedition. Jesus utters simple words that change human lives: "Follow me and I will make you fish for people." No glitz, no slick marketing, no extravagant claim; only these words: "Follow me."

Here is the mission that flows from the watery pool of our baptism into Christ. The Christian community goes forth and invites others to see what good things God offers in the waters of rebirth, in the scriptures, in the holy supper, in the community of faith. People can be "caught" in many things. What happens when they are caught in the net of God's mercy?

Sunday, January 30th—Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

What does the Lord ask of us? To do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with God. These are simple words from today's first reading that, nonetheless, remain a challenge for anyone who recognizes the injustice and suffering that mark and mar much of human existence. In the gospel reading, Jesus teaches his disciples a way of seeing those who are blessed in God's sight: the poor, mourners, the meek, those who hunger for righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers. These are the people to whom Jesus has constant recourse in his ministry. How does this congregation serve them?

- ▶ Noah's life was transformed in forty days of rain
- ▶ Moses was transformed by forty days on Mount Sinai
- ▶ The spies were transformed by forty days of viewing the Promised Land.
- ▶ David was transformed by Goliath's forty day challenge.
- ▶ Jesus was empowered by forty days in the wilderness.
- ▶ The disciples were transformed by forty days with Jesus after his resurrection.

It's not just the duration, but also the direction of the **40 Days of Purpose** that changes lives. The emphasis is designed to help every person answer the most basic question of life: **What on earth am I on earth for?** During the **40 Days of Purpose**, you will rediscover God's eternal purposes for our lives: **WORSHIP, FELLOWSHIP, DISCIPLESHIP, MINISTRY, & WITNESS.**

Partners in Christ's mission, **TRANSFORMATION** has an important aspect of my public and personal ministry for the last ten years. I am excited that we will have the opportunity to share God's transforming power through a commitment to **40 Days of Purpose.**

Your transforming shepherd,

Pastor Joel

Annual Meeting:
Annual Meeting to be held Sunday January 23rd
at 12:15 pm.
Music by the Praise Ensemble
Nursery Care provided.

Sunday School Class of the Month
In January, 4th grade is the Sunday School class of the month. Please plan to all come to worship January 23rd at 11:00!

Hints to Encourage Children at Worship
Listen to the beautiful music during worship. Take your child to see the organ, the piano, drums and guitars after worship.

Welcomed in Baptism:
We welcomed *Ellen Kay Tews*, daughter of David and Lisa Tews, on January 9th.

I am sincerely grateful for all my Trinity family who graciously cared for me during my resent illness. Your visits, cards, food and most of all, your prayers carried me through a rough time. I love you all and thank you so much.
Mary Carson.

Attendance:
Wed., Jan. 5th: WOW: **25**
Sun., Jan. 9th: 8:30: **180** 11:00: **204**
 Learning: **138**
Sun., Jan 16th: 8:30: **175** 11:00: **154**
 Learning: **168**

Connection
LYO News

Wednesday, January 26th:
We meet in the LYO room at 7:30 pm for an evening of faith filled discussion and sharing.

Wednesday, February 2nd:
Let us all attend the WOW service at 6:30 pm. A great time to worship mid-week with your family. Following worship, at 7:30, we will meet in the LYO room—see you there!

Important Date:
February 11
Overnight Ski Trip to Sun Down Mountain
You **MUST** have your permission form in by January 25th. This is the absolute deadline! See Jim for more information!

Up 'n Adam, Eve
Wednesday, February 2nd at 8:30 am

Kai Swanson
Behind the Baton: Insights into the world of the Quad-Cities Symphony
Tickets: \$3.00, available January 23rd and 30th, in Founders Hall, the West Narthex and the Elevator entrance.

January ticket holders: your ticket will serve as your February reservation. Please check with Martin Cosentine in Founders Hall so we can have an accurate count for meal preparation.

Diet, Discipleship & Discipline
There will be an information meeting on January 24th at 7:00 pm in the Library for those interested.



Blessed Beginnings Preschool to Accept Enrollments

The wintry wind is still blowing, but *Blessed Beginnings Preschool* is looking ahead to the crisp days of Fall. We will soon be accepting enrollments for the 2005-2006 school year for our 3 and 4 year olds' programs. Please note your family's special dates to come to Blessed Beginnings and enroll:

Mark your calendars...

Current students and Trinity Lutheran Church children:

Thursday, February 3 through Friday, February 19, 2005

(a mailing will be going out to eligible TLC families at the end of January)

Alumni families (any family that has had a child at Blessed Beginnings in the past):

Thursday, February 10 through Friday, February 19, 2005

Open Enrollment to the public:

Tuesday, February 22 through August 31, 2005

Hours to enroll are 8:15 – 11:00 a.m. and 12:15 – 3:00 p.m.

Please stop in the preschool to drop off your application and pay your non-refundable \$35.00 enrollment fee according to the dates above. Please make the check payable to *Blessed Beginnings Preschool*. Class spaces will be filled on a "first come, first served" basis and we will notify you regarding placement by March 1. If you have any questions, please contact Mrs. Hayz at (309) 764-7220. Peace and blessings to you all and thank you for your interest and support of *Blessed Beginnings Preschool*.

Celebrating Trinity's Health and Healing Ministries—Sunday, January 30th!

On this special day we will experience the healing power and presence of God with a Healing Service at both the 8:30 and 11:00 worship services, celebrating Julie Blew's fifteen years of faithful ministry and the commissioning of our Befriender Ministers.

The children at Ericsson School have been busy this week making bookmarks for the people of Trinity who have been so generous in their support of Ericsson. The bookmarks will be given to the Trinity congregation at both services next Sunday—January 23rd. This is a small token of the children's appreciation for the money to meet the matching grant requirements so they may receive three books per year. When the bookmarks are picked up at Ericsson, the children will be given the second of their three books. Thank you Trinity!



Watch for details about the Souper Bowl of Caring coming in the bulletins!

Notes on the Journey

Is it spring yet? I miss working in the dirt. I miss transplanting things. I miss standing in wonder at the garden shops—imagining this flower or that one gracing our lawn. I miss standing in the yard, calculating where the sun will shine in mid-summer. I miss the hummingbirds coming to the trumpet vine on the deck. This Christmas a friend gifted me with a unique humming bird feeder. Each time I pass it in my sun room, my thoughts wander to how I will hang it in the yard, and I wonder just when the humming birds will start to visit it. Of course, there are some things I don't miss, like keeping hoards of hungry rabbits at bay while my young perennials take hold.

My desire to dig in the dirt got me wandering through the forgotten zones of Wal-Mart last week. One day when everyone was buying Slim Fast or hanging file folders or close-out Christmas candy, I was in the artificially warm outdoor rooms, weaving my cart past the aging house plants and meager stacks of Kingford charcoal. There it was, one of six terra cotta pots with an angel on the side. "In season" it would have taken me a good 45 minutes to make a pot selection, but this one called out to me, "Take me! It's boring here! I'll look good in your dining room, and even better on your deck in a few months!" How could I resist?

That afternoon, it was like I was reborn. Houseplants got pruned and watered. And then one, very lovely one got a new pot home. Unfortunately, the potting soil acted a lot like confetti with a bad case of static electricity. It took quite a bit of coaxing for it to be re-hydrated, but once it was, the pot, the plant, and the dirt became a thing of beauty. (The kitchen floor, the counter, and the sink became the opposite—isn't that great?!) Ah, the dirt.

There is something holy in that tending. There is something that touches my soul when I dabble with the Creator, and the creator in me. Each day I check that plant in the new pot. Is it still moist? Is the light working there? Is the pot going to ruin the

finish on the buffet (like the last pot)? Is there enough room for root growth?

Are you a gardener? Maybe yes, maybe no. Even still, as a child of the Creator, we each still grow and help others grow. How is your tending going? Who is tending you? Who are you tending? It is a new time in our ministry year. New council members come. People try new ministries. We take seedling ministries and continue to nurture and tend them, trusting that the Grower will grow them in due season.

I pray that we will all do some growing and tending, especially as we start this new year and as we approach Lent. I pray that we will grow and tend one another through our Christian Education—and especially through our small group study of the *Purpose Driven Lutheran*. I pray that people will come forward to join the Companions in Christ group after Lent. I pray that we will check on one another—do we have room for roots to grow? Are we turned toward the light? Are we fertilized by water and the Word in worship? Are we a part of the beauty of all creation—growing together? Spring is here... Let's get started.

Confident in Christ,
Pastor Laura

CONGREGATION COUNCIL MINUTES

January 11, 2005

Survey for Congregation Input: Members from the Worship & Music and Education teams, WELCA, and others met to begin to prepare a church member survey in order to obtain congregational input concerning our Worship/Learning/Worship and fellowship on Sundays and at WOW on Wednesdays. The “Survey Process” team will distribute a copy of the survey to Council Members for review and then to all Trinity Lutheran Church members. This will occur in the next few weeks, and the congregation will have the opportunity to respond.

Discussion of Budget 2005: Eric Sandberg attended the Finance Committee meeting and showed the Church Council the “Income Analysis” and “Expense Analysis” data. The Finance Committee suggested that we attempt to reduce/decrease our expenses and increase our giving/income, possibly using the “Second Mile” approach or using special fundraising events.

Motions approved and carried include:

It is the intention of Trinity Lutheran Church Council to pay 10.4% of 2005 monthly revenues to benevolence on a monthly basis.

That the Council recommend to the congregation the proposed 2005 Budget from the Finance Committee as amended by the Church Council

To utilize any of the unused/dormant dedicated funds to replenish the Relocation Fund as reviewed by the Finance Committee.

Building Council/Staff rapport: It was suggested that the staff be invited to participate in some part of the Council Retreat at Augustana College on February 4-5, and again at the combined Council year-end party.

Funding for Seminarian: Ben Ingelson, a Trinity Church member and a seminarian, has inquired about additional funding from Trinity. Pastor Laura contacted Ben about looking into the Reid Estate for financial aid.

Staff Update: Pastor Meyer is recovering well after surgery. Carmen Stout has resigned her position as Communications Coordinator, and the Human Resources team will coordinate the staffing process. Julie Blew has been parish nurse at Trinity for fifteen years, and Steve Steely begins his twentieth year at Trinity. The Council congratulates Steve and Julie for their ministries at the church.

Nominating Committee: Pastor Joel reported that the Nominating Leadership Team met on January 10, 2005, and selected these candidates for the 2005 Church Council: Karen Dowsett, Bruce Peterson, Deb Robb, and David Tews. Additional nominations for Council may also be made from the floor at the Annual Meeting, with the consent of the nominee.

The 2006 Nominating Committee is: Tom Ribbeck, Chair, Sue Buckles, Trish Fox, Al Hansen, Doug Hultquist, Jack Meyer, and Robert Ruud. Alternates are Diane Swayne and Jane Zimmer.

The Council accepted the names of the 2005 Council nominees and the 2006 Nominating Committee members. Pastor Joel suggested that the 2005 Executive Council determine which of the new members will serve the one or two year terms.

Memorial Committee: The Council recognized the new chairman and members for the Memorial Committee: Barbara Steigman, chair, members Denny Zwiefel, Cosette Thoms, and Bill Grimes. Brian Blew and Al Hansen are new members.

Educational Concerns: The Christian Education/Youth Ministry Committee met to discuss ways to invigorate the High School education hour on Sundays.

Proposal to Video-Record Trinity Worship Services: The Congregational Life and Communications Team are proposing that Trinity video-record its worship services for broadcast on MediaCom’s free public access Cable TV channel. The Council supports further investigation of this proposal.

Reid Estate: This committee will meet on January 12, 2005, to discuss how to spend the funds and will then make a recommendation to Council.

Northern Illinois Synod Delegate and ELCA Convention Observer: Bob L Anderson was appointed to be a Trinity Lutheran Church delegate to the Northern IL Synod Convention and to be the congregational observer at the ELCA Convention at his own expense.

Good Fruits

Outgoing 2004 Council members Tom Ribbeck, Steve Kruse, Al Hansen, and Carol Horstmann
Finance Team and Council members Eric Sandberg and Steve Kruse for coordinating the Ministry budgets

Nominating Committee members for their new approach to filling leadership positions

Submitted by Carol Horstmann, Secretary
Summarized by the Communications Team

School, Health & AIDS/Hospice Kits For Lutheran World Relief and Global Health Ministries

The World Mission Ministry Team will again be packing School Kits and Health Kits for Lutheran World Relief and AIDS/Hospice Kits for Global Health Ministries. To complete these kits we need your donations of items to be included in the kits. You may put them in the LWR box on the table under the World Mission bulletin board in the lower West Narthex.

Following is a list of items needed:

SCHOOL KITS

Blunt Scissors

Pencil Sharpeners

Rulers with inches on one side and centimeters on the other

HEALTH KITS AND AIDS/HOSPITAL KITS

Soap (bath-size bars)

Toothbrushes

Toothpaste (5 or 7 ounces)

Wash Cloths

Bath Towels (new or used)

Any questions? -- Call Joan or Jim Ribbeck, 788-8058