



# Trinity Lutheran Church Parish Caller

**“Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.” (Joel 2:13)**

The calendar this February has an interesting conjunction of events. Valentine’s Day and Ash Wednesday fall on the same day. Most people are familiar with Valentine’s Day. It is a day for sending expressions of love to others. Not as many people are familiar with Ash Wednesday. It is a day for humble repentance before God as the church season of Lent begins. It is a day marked on the calendar only by Christians. Which one will occupy us more this February? While not neglecting Valentine’s Day, we will certainly put the focus on Ash Wednesday that the day deserves, and which benefits our Christian faith.

The key theme of Ash Wednesday is repentance. Repentance means coming clean before God with regard to sin. Whenever we repent, we humbly confess our sins to the holy God. Such repentance is not just surface deep. The prophet Joel said as much to his contemporaries. The Jews long ago had the customary of rending (or tearing) their garments as a way of expressing deep feelings of hurt, grief or anger. They also had the custom of putting ashes on their heads as another way of expressing these kinds of feelings (from this practice we have the term *Ash Wednesday*). Apparently, Joel’s contemporaries, just like us today, could mask a lack of inner repentance with outward actions that made a person look repentant. The heart was not right with God, even though outward actions might have had such an appearance. So Joel preached, “Rend your heart and not your garments.” His hearers were to repent from the heart. They were to be genuine in their repentance. This is a fitting message for us. Before God, from whom we cannot hide anything, we seriously and humbly confess the sinful flesh which lives inside of us and our many sins against his commands. We may choose to practice customs that demonstrate such an attitude of our hearts, but they should not form a mask to cover up impenitence.

Joel reminds us that repentance also involves a returning to the Lord. We not only regret our sins, but we also turn to the One who can and does forgive them. “He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love.” Throughout the season of Lent we will marvel again at the vivid way that God demonstrated his grace, compassion, patience and love. The saving deeds of Jesus recorded in the Passion History offer overabundant evidence that the Lord is “gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love.” Those saving deeds will be the centerpiece of our midweek Lenten services as we follow Christ along the path he took to rescue us sinners. In our repentance (on Ash Wednesday and on every day) we turn to the Lord, who forgives us because of Christ’s deeds on our behalf. He has relented from sending the worst calamity of all, eternal death in hell. Instead, we have life in Christ, now and forever!

Serving Christ and you,

Pastor Brett Brauer

February 2018

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## Women in Service

Trinity Women In Service met in the Conference Room on Thursday, January 11, 2018, for their regular business meeting. 10 ladies were present plus Pastor Brauer. We enjoyed welcoming Judy Kohlhoff and Kristine Learman to our group and pray that they'll continue to join us. Hostess was Clare Schmidt.

Pastor Brauer opened the meeting with a presentation about "God's Part and Purpose in Disasters and Disease." We discussed how God always loves us and is always present with us. The pastor closed with a prayer.

The business meeting was opened by Vice President Audrey Zautner in the absence of our president. The minutes for December were in the January newsletter and were approved as printed. The treasurer's report for December was approved with a Women In Service balance of \$639.58 plus a Lutheran Women's Missionary Society (LWMS) balance of \$198.14. (The LWMS offering of \$156.14 was sent to a wrong address and returned to us. It will be included in the Spring offering.) The basket collection today was for the general treasury.

Correspondence: Thank you notes were read from: Ruth Vogt (East Fork Missionary, for her gift); Michelle Wegner, Jared Matthies, and Principal/Mrs. Moeller (for gift certificates); for Cheer Bags: Alan Sanders, Shirley and Jason Schroeder, Eileen Gutzdorf, and Pastor Schumann (with a WIS donation); and Barb Paskey (for cheer bag and for carolers). Also available was the newsletter from the Institutional Ministries.

Old Business: Phyllis reported that the new coffee urn now is leaking. Nancy Zastrow is looking into this and may possibly get a different one from another company.

Kim Turney reported that no one had gotten in touch with her regarding visiting shutins. If you think this is something you would like to do once a month, check out her Facebook page or contact her (248-6046 or email [turney@netwurx.net](mailto:turney@netwurx.net)).

You can also contact Pastor Brauer.

Since Ann was not present, the discussion about prospective W.I.S. ladies was tabled.

New Business: Auditors for the Treasurer's books will be Lone Staude and Audrey Zautner.

We were reminded again to save the covers of old, Scriptural Christmas cards – just the covers. If you can, write a Scripture verse on the back (if there isn't one) or a short, encouraging sentence or two. (No covers with ribbons, glitter, glue, or stickers on them, please.) Do not sign them! Leftover, unsigned Christmas cards with or without envelopes can also be used. They can be put in the top drawer of the bin across from the Office Manager's office. Other church holiday covers are also fine from Thanksgiving and Easter. These all can be left in the bin at anytime during the year.

Audrey has bought and donated another Nesco roaster to Trinity's kitchen. The old one will be kept as a spare in the supplies room; it is on the floor under the shelves.

The Women In Service will be serving bakery in the Fire-side Room after the early service on Sunday, March 4. It was suggested that they make a list of what a person is bringing so that there aren't duplicates. This will be brought up again at our February meeting.

The W.I.S. were also to consider serving a mid-week Lenten meal. This will be tabled until March.

There being no more business, the meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer. The next regular W.I.S. meeting will be held on Thursday, February 8 at 1:00 p.m. in the Conference Room. Hostess will be Kim Turney. Pastor Yahnke will be speaking about his trip in Egypt.

Respectfully submitted,

Phyllis Kaesermann, Secretary



## First Love at Christmas

### THANK YOU!

This does not seem like gratitude enough for the blessings you helped share with those in need for this Christmas. We helped about 15 family units with food, paper goods and/or gifts this Christmas. Everyone was so thankful for everything that Trinity shared with them. Many families belonged to our Trinity family but some did not, and we were able to share

God's wonderful message with at least one of those families. So if you helped in any way with sharing God's message, prayers, contributions, household goods, purchasing gifts or helping on the committee I am so grateful to you. Thank you for sharing the blessings that God has given you with others who needed a little help to make their Christmas a happier one. Your friend in Christ, Michele Maas

## Rock River Area Owls

Our OWLS chapter will have its next monthly gathering at St Paul's Lutheran Church in Fort Atkinson on February 20 starting 1:30 PM. Rev. Mark Bartsch, who provides pastoral services to independent and assisted living and memory care residents at Heritage Homes in Watertown, will tell us about his "Heritage Homes Chaplaincy." This topic will be of special interest to seniors. You will find St Paul's Church in Fort located on the city's highest point with a fitting address of 301 South High Street. Be careful to observe the one way streets when finding entrance from the south into the church's higher level parking lot. The Organization of WELS Seniors (OWLS) provides meaningful activity for those who are retired and/or 50 years and older. Here is a wonderful opportunity for seniors to grow spiritually and enjoy the fellowship of neighboring WELS and ELS members. All are welcome.

## Usher and Greeter Schedules

These schedules are now available. You may find your copy on the ushers' table in the narthex. Thank you for your service to Christ and to Trinity!

## Visitation Committee

Would you be interested in visiting some of our members who are not able to come for worship? The pastors visit these members regularly, but additional visits are always appreciated. If you wish to find out more or make your interest known, you may speak with either of the pastors.

## Financial Status

*Thanks be to God for the gifts given for the work of the church!*

In order to give a clearer picture of our financial status we will be reporting the weekly and monthly totals of offerings for the unified budget.

Weekly offering needed to support the ministry plan: \$14,031

Monthly offering needed to support the ministry plan: \$60,801

Offerings received the week of December 3	\$ 9,244.50
Offerings received the week of December 10	\$12,917.30
Offerings received the week of December 17	\$11,498.60
Offerings received the week of December 24	\$22,920.16
Offerings received the week of December 31	\$11,259.00
Offerings received through electronic giving for December	<u>\$ 7214.70</u>
Total Offerings received in the month of July for support of the ministry plan	<b>\$75,054.26</b>



## Treasurer's Report

As of the end of December, total operating income was \$315,915 or 43% of the annual budget. Total expenses are \$403,876 or 55% of the annual budget. Revenue and expenses are both expected to be at 50% after six months. The income is behind for the year of \$42,962 for the amount of expenditures.

We borrowed \$45,000 from the money market to pay down mortgage. As of the end of December, current assets totaled \$31,919, comprised of \$25,949 in checking, \$5,970 in the money market account. The Thrivent mortgage balance decreased to \$365,948, while member loans are at \$365,859.

## Teen News

Trinity Teens will have their first fellowship outing of 2018 on February 11. We will enjoy lunch together and then do some bonding as we conquer an escape room together. Escape rooms are great for groups, but they can also get too crowded. If a large group would like to attend this event, I'd like to rent two rooms so that everyone feels like they can participate. To accurately plan for the escape room and the transportation (the escape room is in Madison), **please sign up on the sheet in the Fireside Room by Wednesday February 7**. The cost for this event along with more information will be available soon.

Trinity Teens will also be wrapping up a Bible study on the book of Revelation and beginning a brand new Bible study. Now is a great time to join on Sunday mornings at 9:15 in the teen room.

## Membership Activity

Carolyn Bertolus – transfer to St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Watertown

Charles and Kristine Learman – transfer from St. John's Lutheran Church, Peshtigo, Wisconsin

## Grief Support Group

Several years ago Trinity had a group for widows and widowers to encourage and support each other with God's Word and our Christian fellowship. Upon the request of some members, we will start up this group again. The target date to begin is Tuesday, February 20 at 7 pm (meeting at church). Members whose spouse or other loved one has entered eternal life with Christ are invited to come.

## TRINITY LADIES' AID/ TRINITY WOMEN IN SERVICE

\* \* 100 YEARS AGO \* \*

*In December 2017 the Trinity Ladies' Aid/Trinity Women In Service celebrated the centennial anniversary of their organization. Articles containing Minutes and some of Pastor Stern's notes from the first year are presented monthly in the Parish Caller.*

### ***"The Third Meeting of Ladies Aid***

#### **Watertown, Wis. Feb. 14, 1918**

The third meeting of our Ladies Aid certainly proved a red letter day in its short existence. Altho' a heavy rain storm with thunder & lightning was raging outside, inside of the cozy home of Mrs. M. Grant all was comfortable & everyone merry. As no mending was available at the Epileptic Home, the ladies did sewing for one of the members and also made six hospital robes for the Red Cross. Two sewing machines kept time to the merry chatter & ripple of laughter that was head thru the rooms.

Then the meeting was opened by Rev. Stern with a prayer. He also gave us a very beneficial reading on Lenten duties, this meeting being the first meeting in Lent.

The business was then taken up. The Pastor announced the good news that no charges would be asked for our 2 previous meetings in the rooms of the Young People's Society of St. Mark's Church.

Mrs. Reutler, Mrs. Sauer, Mrs. Schoppe were next in line to serve & the meeting to be at Mrs. Reutlers.

A motion was carried in regard to the sending of a message of Sympathy & hopes for speedy recovery to Mrs. Frank Schlueter who had been ill. It was duly carried out by the Sec.

Another motion was carried that Mrs. H. Sauer & Mrs. H. Frank call on the following ladies who are newcomers here: Mrs. Brewer, Mrs. Drexler, Mrs. Polzin, Mrs. Menge.

Coffee was then served and the meeting closed with the Lords Prayer by all & was disbanded until next month.

Mrs. H. A. Frank

Sec.

A new member arrived at this meeting: Mrs. F. Bramer. Also we had 3 guests: Mrs. R. Reutler Sr., Mrs. C. Bolle & Mrs. Held."

*[from Pastor Stern's personal notebook--Feb. 14--add:]*

...home of Mrs. M. Grant, 417 Dewey Ave.

...made infant dress for F. Graf child.

...Msdms. Frank & Sauer were appointed for visiting com. for next mo.

...Treas. bad report -- \$1.01 in cash

...Ladies took unfinished work along home to finish.

...Present 16

# Trinity/St. Luke's School News

## Early Childhood Registration and Open House

Trinity-St. Luke's Lutheran School (TSL) will be holding its annual ECE Registration and Open House on Thursday, March 1. This event allows parents and students to come and see the rooms of 3K, 4K, 5K, and grade one, meet the teachers and staff, and participate in a number of different activities. Please look for further information in the weeks to come as we finalize plans and times for that day. Information will be sent to children of these age levels that are currently in the congregations' membership files. We will also be circulating information in the greater Watertown community.

Consider inviting other members of your family and friends who have children of this age and are looking for a Christ-centered education. Your word-of-mouth-promotion is the best and most effective advertising we can do.

## Updates on Several Matters

As reported in last month's congregational newsletters, as well as to the congregational voters' meetings in December and January, there are a number of initiatives and regular activities that are taking place. We want to keep you updated on what is being done.

TSL's participation in the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program (WPCP) is on track. Paperwork has been filed, the principal — who will serve as the Choice director — has completed the on-line training, TSL financial personnel will be traveling to Madison in March for training in WPCP financial matters, promotion of the program has been taking place, and individual and group meetings are being scheduled to present the nuts-and-bolts of the application process.

The open enrollment period begins February 1 and continues through April 20, 2018. Enrollment is done on-line through the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) website. Our entry level points for current TSL students are students entering next year's (2018-2019 school year) kindergarten and grade one.

In addition, students who are currently home-schooled, in public school, or who were not in school during the current 2017-2018 school year are eligible for the program. Families of our supporting congregations who could not send their child(ren) to TSL due to the cost of tuition and fees may find this a beneficial opportunity. The website of the DPI contains a number of very informative and helpful articles and documents on applying for the WPCP as well as general information on the WPCP. You can access this information at [dpi.wi.gov/choice](http://dpi.wi.gov/choice).

And, if you have questions, comments, or concerns, don't forget to check with Mr. Moeller. If he doesn't know the answer, he has learned that the DPI staff dealing with Choice programs to be very helpful in all Choice matters.

The Early Childhood Ministry (ECM Committee) continues to meet. They have prepared and presented several recommendations concerning the expansion of our ECM program. Trinity congregation has approved the recommendations; St. Luke's church council continues to prayerfully consider the proposals.

Key to the recommendations is the calling of a full-time ECM Director. This individual would not only teach in the program in the mornings, but would also use the afternoon hours for planning ECE curriculum and instruction, parenting classes for ECE parents, and program development, of which many opportunities exist. The ECM Committee will soon be working on a position description for a future director.

The Salary Review Committee (Myron Duin and Dan Meis from Trinity; Scott Buss and Jim Schildbach from St. Luke's) has been meeting and working. They have forwarded to the Joint Board a salary schedule using the newly updated WELS Compensation Guidelines as well as a plan for introducing housing allowance for the teachers and bringing this plan up to full strength over several years. The Joint Board will review these materials again at their next meeting.

The TSL Funding Committee (Bob Turney and Mark Zastrow from Trinity; Will Wendorff and Paul Dettman from St. Luke's) has met and entered the data necessary to determine the next five-year rolling average of percentages per congregation for their portion of the FY2018-2019 TSL Budget. This information will also be reviewed by the Joint Board at its next meeting.

Communication has been taking place between the YMCA of Watertown, the Joint Board, and Trinity's church council on a desire of the YMCA to possibly rent all or a part of the Western Avenue campus to expand the YMCA's childcare offerings. If it should be decided to follow through with this plan, it would necessitate to combining of our current two campuses together at the Clark Street campus beginning with the next school year.

At this time no decision has been reached on any part of the possible proposal. There is much to consider, discuss, and sort through. One of the study committees two years ago reviewed campus usage. While we have enjoyed the blessing of two campuses, the committee also recognized that declining enrollment could necessitate downsizing to one campus.

We will continue to keep you posted on all of these plans, activities, and options. Your questions are appreciated as well as your comments and opinions. We ask that you join us in praying the Lord's guidance and direction as we come to decisions that will serve the best interests of the Kingdom as well as the precious lambs and sheep of our Good Shepherd.

#### The Joint Board

The final elections for this year have taken place at the congregations for the Joint Board. Trinity is represented by Matthew Zastrow, Dan Meis, and Giles Isham. Mr. Isham was recently elected to take the place of Dan Cole whose term expired. St. Luke's is represented by Tim Hammond, Prof. Brent Archer, and Prof. Steve Vasold. Prof. Vasold was elected to take the place of Prof. Justin Gregorius, whose term has likewise expired. At its February meeting the Joint annually organizes itself for its work over the next year by electing officers.

Please remember these men in your prayers as they undertake the responsibility for oversight and direction of our joint school. May the Lord bless their efforts!



## RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Trinity Lutheran Church  
604 S Fifth Street  
Watertown WI 53094

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## TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

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### Sunday Worship Services

8 & 10:30 am

Bible Activity Hour & Bible Class

9:15 am

Wednesday Worship Service

6:30 pm

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