

April 2013

Dear Friends of Trinity,

Did you know, now that Easter Sunday has passed, that Easter isn't actually over yet? In the church, Easter is not a day but a season that lasts all the way to Pentecost Sunday. Jesus didn't rise from the dead and then disappear. He continued his ministry as God's victorious beginning of the new creation. Jesus' resurrection marked the time when the old order was passing and the new order was bursting onto the scene. Pentecost was the beginning of the worldwide spread of God's new resurrected order. It was truly good news for the world!

The old order of things was characterized by the exacerbation of sin by the Law and alienation from God. The new order is characterized by forgiveness and reconciliation with God. This is the gift of God through the resurrected Jesus and his work through his apostles, his inner circle of 12.

The Season of Easter is the time in which you and I have to get used to the idea of being dead to sin and alive to God as our birthright in Baptism. We really are free... and it frightens us to death! We are like prisoners just released from the penitentiary. We can't fathom life on the outside. We walk around dazed and confused, not knowing what to do next. We long to return to the order, structure, and 3 squares of life in the pen. Yes, it's prison but at least it's familiar! If only we can go back to the way it was before.

But we can't. It would be a step backward. New wine doesn't belong in an old wineskin. Our old ragged and torn, but comfortable, prison clothes have been stripped from us. We now have a new covering—a white robe cleansed with the righteousness of Christ. It's our new identity that is not fit for the old ways. We need to learn to get used to it.

There will be those who will beckon us back to the Law, to self-righteousness, to the prison of rules and regulations. It will sound appealing. It will be a song sung to the tune of an old favorite. But don't listen. Shut your ears to those words of death and cling to your new identity in Christ! You are alive and loved by God, free to be one who has passed from death to life, and given space to act out what is humanly good and true and excellent as you have been gifted with these.

Have a very Joyous and Blessed Easter Season!

Pastor Hoag

April 2013

'Truly I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.' Matthew 25:40 b

Trinity has been richly blessed as a congregation and this year has chosen 3 mission projects, all dealing with hunger on some level to support. Currently we are gathering funds to support SowHope, a group founded by Ginny DeCarlo's niece. Jeff McDonald and Kim Blecke had the opportunity to meet with Mary Dailey Brown in March and what follows are some highlights of that conversation. Envelopes for donations may be found in the hallway by the display and we have also placed little "churches" to gather any change you would like to deposit both upstairs and downstairs.

The name SowHope came to Mary from God. She argued with Him about it. 80% of the world's farmers are women. The name brings women in the third world to tears. When you sow hope, you reap hope. God won this one. Guess He knew what He was doing.

Mary began by doing mission work at her church and wanted to expand into an area that focused on women but found that NO ONE did. She wasn't planning on forming her own organization, but after 3 weeks of searching, she and her husband used their life savings (including an inheritance from her father-in-law) to start the organization. When her father-in-law realized what his gift had done, it brought him to tears.

SowHope goes in and seeks local leaders and LISTENS. They do not come in with ideas for them; they need local input as to what the problems are and what the solutions should be. Americans, while well-intentioned, waste a lot of time and money on ideas that WE think are right. When local input is solicited, they OWN the solution. Trust goes a long way in helping people.

The birth center; which we are seeking to replicate for them in another area of need; was built with mud walls by a group of women literally with their own HANDS. They managed to procure a tin roof, but needed \$2,000.00 for furniture (beds, curtains, etc). They bought a MOTORCYCLE to use as an ambulance (yes, for women in labor). They made 35+ transports in their first year about 10 miles away over dirt paths to get women c-sections (100% survival rate). All would have died absent this transport.

They have no shortage of needs and projects. They are short on cash – not where to use it. They have just raised the millionth dollar in December of 2012. They are using funds from 2012 to fund future projects and to make sure that they stay ahead in terms of their income and expenditures.

For those of us who expect charities to adhere to accountability guidelines, SowHope has an excellent rating from GuideStar – an organization that rates charities on their return on "investment."

It seems clear that a little (relatively speaking) goes a long way with SowHope and we're hoping to collect enough from Trinity to fund a new birth center for them. Please help if you can!

Go Tell It on the Mountain

This year's VBS theme, Go Tell It on the Mountain, has already been the topic of some meetings. (Yup, we start planning early for that one wonderful week!) Friday night, **4/5** at 7 pm we will be gathering in the gym to begin to put the craft kits together for the week. Come and join us for an evening of fellowship and fun (perhaps some frustration if things don't go as easily as the directions promise). We'll all laugh about it though.

VBS - Time to register for Vacation Bible School! Due to high demand last year, we are giving church members and preschool families first priority in registration during April ONLY. On May 1, registration will be open to the public on a first-come, first-served basis. You can register online at the church website, but you must use the password "Trinity" to access the registration page. Please do not share the password outside of the church. You may also use the paper registration form. (The form is at the back of the newsletter.)

Vacation Bible School will be June 10-14, 9:30 a.m.-Noon. Cost is \$5 per child. Ages 3 through 5th grade are welcome to enroll. Adult and youth volunteers are needed.

Please contact Michelle Hoag at trinityvbs@hotmail.com or 815-723-7642 to volunteer.

Easter Breakfast

Once again, our congregation's Easter Breakfast was truly delicious, plentiful, and, most of all, it added to the joyous ambience of the blessed holiday. Abundant thanks to our directors, Les DeCarlo and Ernie Falk (their wives Ginny and Jan, too), chief helpers Jeff McDonald and Andy Verchimak, Cooks Bob Romadka, Phil MacFarlane, Garrett Aiken and Ray Kohler, Youth Servers Zach and Noah Burke, Cameron Hoag and Mark Lorenz, Social Ministry's "Egg Beaters" all and the members who so graciously donated "goodies" and their time. A special thanks to Biff Aiken, our chief dishwasher, for preparing and donating the plentiful, delicious panfuls of potatoes. Thank you, one and all! We, once again, shout a hearty "thanks" and sad farewell to Ernie and Les, who are now retiring after 13 years of supervision (though they are likely to stay involved).

Coffee Hour

Thanks to Judi Donovan, who has volunteered to host the second Sunday coffee service, henceforth. We appreciate her kind offer to handle this chore.

Women's League

Join us on April 30 at 12:30 for a visit from Angela Vicerra, from Angie's Mission. All women are welcome. Hostesses and prayer will be led by Carol Oldendorf and Pat Czerwinski.

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Samantha Paulson	1
Michael Wajchert, Jr.	1
Linda Bleck	2
Nina Dyer	2
Halie Forsythe	2
Lia Krohe	2
Roberta Jackman	3
Scott Marz	3
Faith Mierop	4
Cheryl Mork	4
Tracy Bailey	5
Zachary Prejna	5
Carol Berkey	6
Sean Leahy	6
Jessica Leja	6
Robert Puttkammer	6
Madeline Anderson	8
Scott Baggs	8
Robert Beaudry	8
Ben Kaun	8
Weiland Torkelson	8
Philip Schafer	10
Randy Varju	10
Jim Welsh	11
Pat Czerwinski	12
Troy Kessel	13
April Tatro	13
Daniel Edens	14
Scott Gardner	14
Mark Nagel	14
Barbara Backhus	15
Amy Tatro	15
Cristian Stuart	15
Ryan McDonald	17
Paul Moeller	17
Noel Salazar	17
Troy Schultz	17
Scott Elmlund	18

Bob Hodo	19
April Norton	19
John Buell	20
Daniel Leja	20
Jackson Remm	21
Jacob Kocenko	22
Nicholas Sheffer	22
Tyler Baggs	24
Bill Dudeck	24
Karen Wendling	24
Quinton Baxa	25
Mackenzie Schultz	25
Morgan Taylor	26
Susan Willenborg	26
Kyle Lerner	28
Connor Richards	28
Harold Schrank	28
Marlen Bollman	29
Ryan Devine	29
Charles Fleege	30
Ava Krol-Mudore	30
Mike Lyman	30
Matt Varju	30

APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

Terry and Rita Larson	8
Mark and Kelli Simon	15
Brian and Lynn Pigney	24
Raymond and Deborah Koehler	25
Allan and Donna Brunmeier	30