

February 2014

Dear Friends of Trinity,

Now that we have begun a new year we can look back and see how our Lord used our congregation to touch the lives of people we will probably never meet and who can never repay us. We are a truly generous congregation!

We can also look ahead and see where we are going. There are exciting times afoot, as well as trying and challenging times. In upcoming days and months you will hear about projects that we will undertake. They will thrill us and stretch us at the same time.

One challenge that is being faced all over Christendom is dwindling numbers in just about any metric you can fathom, but especially in overall membership. Many people today just don't have church on their radar because of a fairly recent development in negative attitudes toward religious institutions. People these days simply don't feel it's necessary to belong to, or even attend, a church of their choice.

Many churches react by giving up and closing their doors. Churches close every day and they will continue to do so. But this is not the time for us to give up. As long as we are here, and as long as the Word of God is read and proclaimed and the Sacraments are celebrated, God will continue to use our congregation. His love is very real and His life given to us through Christ Jesus is everlasting. We can meet whatever comes our way with confidence in the love of our Lord.

Stay tuned. Stay connected. Do not fear, but trust in the work of the Holy Spirit as He reminds us of the sure and certain promises of God given to us through our Lord Jesus Christ.

And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith. (Galatians 6:9-10)

In Christ,
Pastor Hoag

FEBRUARY 2014 NEWSLETTER

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

The annual congregational meeting was held 1/26/2014 following the 10:30 service. There was good attendance at this year's meeting and a lot of lively discussion took place despite a misbehaving microphone, which served to lighten the tone a bit (you probably had to be there to appreciate this...). We heard from our Youth who attended the Youth Gathering in San Antonio this year, reviewed the 2014 budget, talked about the major items that our volunteer property committee is undertaking, discussed our three main charities for 2014 (if you haven't already noticed, please check out the new lettering on our 'Mission Wall,' where further details of our charitable outreach will be posted), reviewed an impressive list of things our Social Ministry committee has done and continues to do, discussed the initial planning of our 75th anniversary that will occur in 2015, and much, much more. We are blessed with a wonderfully supportive congregation, and we are ALWAYS looking for ways to get other members involved - we even had an on-the-spot offer to help with one of the rewiring projects that our Property team is tackling! Maybe you have been thinking that 2014 is a year when you will do more for your church. Since we are run almost exclusively by volunteers, please listen to that urge and consider talking to a member of church council or filling out a time and talents survey (see the next page of this letter) to express your interests. We are as strong as our members make us - perhaps you can help us to become even stronger in the coming year. We have some great things planned for 2014 and beyond, and that encouraging theme was clearly evident during this year's congregational meeting.

CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS

ENVELOPES:

Contribution statements for income tax purposes are available for members using the offering envelopes. If you have not received a statement in previous years and would like to request one, please contact the church secretary or Janice Prospero home #815-485-3558. Rather than mail envelopes to members who had not picked them up by early January, members of Church Council delivered the last few boxes this year. If you were not home, you might find your envelopes in your mailbox or by your front door. Hopefully you had a chance to chat with the council member who delivered them - the goal was to welcome you back to Trinity!

LENT BEGINS MARCH 5, 2014

Ash Wednesday Service will be on March 5th at 7:30 p.m. Lenten services will be held each Wednesday evening at 7:30 p.m.

Although Lent begins in early March, the following listing denotes when each organization is responsible for serving the weekly soup and sandwich suppers. All tableware, dinnerware and serving items will be available, as needed.

March 12 - Chancel Guild
March 19 - Sunday School
March 26 – Women’s League
April 6 – Youth & Confirmation
April 9 – Church Council

All meals begin at 6:30 p.m.

Time and Talents Survey Churches function through the efforts of the congregation. There are many ways members can contribute to the functioning of the church. We know not everyone wants to be on a committee, but sometimes there are certain projects where you may be able to help for one or two items. Please pick up and complete this survey form and place it on the counter in the church office. This is a yellow form and is located on the table outside the church office, by the flower chart.

Idea/Suggestion Box If you have an idea or suggestion to help the church function better, you need to let us know. Please complete the blue form beside the Idea/Suggestion Box on the table outside the church office. Your ideas or suggestions are important and will be reviewed and followed up by the Church Council.

Adult Instruction: Pastor Hoag is starting a new adult instruction class on Thursday, February 6th at 7:00 p.m. If you are interested, or know anyone who is interested, please contact Pastor Hoag.

SOCIAL MINISTRY

St. Matthew's Outreach: Thanks to Bob Jackman and Ed Tatro for delivering rummage and a monetary donation to St. Matthew's Church recently. We will once again begin collecting food goods for St. Matthew's every fourth Sunday throughout the year, and will also offer a Butter Braids fundraiser, with delivery in early April. Additional details will be forthcoming.

Please sign the monthly greeting card for Virgil; he sincerely appreciates all contact from Trinity members. We look forward to Virgil's homecoming in mid-May.

Feed My Starving Children: 22 members of Trinity's congregation participated in the food packing event for Feed My Starving Children, which took place on January 18th. In just over two hours' time, more than 61,000 meals were packed during our session! The overall event exceeded its goal by packing more than 240,000 meals for God's children around the globe.

This is one of three charities we plan to support as a congregation in 2014, and we did learn that funding for this event as of Saturday was only about 50% of the goal. **We were thrilled with the support of so many helping hands from our congregation, but wanted also to make a plea for financial support of this group as well.** If you are willing and able to support this organization, please make your donation to Trinity Lutheran Church and write "Feed My Starving Children" or "FMSC" in the memo line. We will collect donations through early February for this and send in what we collect. Thank you for helping to spread the reach of our congregation beyond our four walls!

BLOOD DRIVE – Give the gift of life! Monday, February 17th from 3-7:00 p.m. Heartland Mobile Coach will be in our parking lot. To schedule an appointment, please sign up online at www.heartlandbc.org or call Debbie at 815.485.0687. **Walk-ins are always welcome. Photo ID required.**

Trinity Pre-School – Registration for Fall Pre-School is now open. Please tell your friends and neighbors. There is a non-refundable registration fee of \$66.00 per student. School year beginning September 2014 the tuition per month will be \$100 for two day

students and \$125 for three day students. Children must be 3 by September 1, 2014.
For further information, please call Trinity Lutheran Church at 815.485.6973.

Sunday School Teachers Meeting – Sunday, February 9th at 11:30 a.m. (immediately following the late service)

February Sign-Up sheets for Readers, Greeters and MorningStar Mission are on the hallway table!

MorningStar Mission: The next serving dates for February are the 3rd and 17th. If you are interested in helping, the sign up sheet is on the hallway table.

CHOIR: Our adult choir meets on **Wednesday evenings at 7:00 p.m.** The choir is always looking for additional voices.

Chancel Guild: The next meeting will be **Monday, February 3, 2014 at 6:30 p.m.** All ladies of Trinity are invited to visit. Hostesses are Doris Bay and Doris Klemm.

Women's League will have their Birthday luncheon at Williamson's Restaurant in New Lenox on Route 30 on **Tuesday, February 25th at 12:30 p.m.** We will also have Birthday cake. Separate checks will be issued. Call Pat Fuerst at 815.485.6441 or Judy Wilmsen at 815.462.1374 for reservations.

Youth Group -- Helping Others! (This is for 7th and 8th grade and high school students).
Saturday, February 22nd. Train trip to Chicago to deliver some much needed supplies to the homeless. We have arranged for a police officer to meet us at the station and he will guide us through the area. You are encouraged to invite your friends to come with you.

Remember, you will be representing Trinity Lutheran Church. We are looking for 3-4 more adults to accompany us. If you are interested and able to help, please add your name to the sign up sheet.

Cost: \$17.00 per person (\$7.00 for the round trip train ticket, and \$10.00 for lunch at McDonalds after delivering the supplies. You are in charge of your own money. Please dress appropriately for the weather conditions and be prepared to do a lot of walking!

Meet at the New Lenox Train Station (Route 30 and Cedar) at 10:20 a.m. We will arrive back in New Lenox at 5:50 p.m. Please make arrangements for someone to pick you up at that time.

The following items are being collected by the Youth Group to pass out on February 22nd. Your donations are appreciated. Hygiene products, handy wipes (of any kind), socks & gloves (new, or gently used, but in good shape), small individually wrapped snack items (such as granola bars). We are also collecting small to medium size, reusable cloth bags or small backpacks. A collection box is by the hallway table. A sign-up sheet and permission slips are on the hallway table. For more information please call Dawn Benzing at 708.829.1162.

VBS – Planning ahead. We are looking for large, appliance size cardboard boxes – to be used to make scenery for VBS this summer. These boxes can be broken for easier transporting. Please place them in the room next door to the downstairs bathrooms. If you have any questions, call Dawn Benzing (708.829.1162) or the church office (815.485.6973)

Thank you Thrivent Members! Through the Thrivent Choice Dollars program, Thrivent members donated \$1644 to our church. We are so grateful for your generosity! If you still have Choice Dollars from 2013 to designate, you need to direct those by March 31. For more information, call 1-800-THRIVENT or visit the website at www.thrivent.com.

ALTAR FLOWERS: Flowers are placed on our altar every Sunday to enhance and beautify our altar area in memory of a loved one, to commemorate a birthday, wedding anniversary or in celebration of God's blessings. The flower order forms are attached to the cabinet in the hallway outside the church office. If you would like to give altar flowers, complete the form and place it in the Chancel Guild mailbox in the church office. If you have any questions, please call Christine Stark at 815.478.4069 or email her at candb.stark@gmail.com. The cost of the flowers is \$8.50 per vase or \$17.00 for both vases. The flowers may be picked up after the Sunday service.

SHAREFEST NEW LENOX ShareFest is an annual event in New Lenox involving over 103 organizations through "Thirty Days of Service" from September 1st through 30th. During this time, they unite as Proud Americans to meet the needs in the community. These needs are met through hundreds of volunteers sacrificing their time, talents, gifts and resources in compassionate community service for those in need. **Their next meeting is Tuesday, February 25th at 12:00 noon and will be held at the Standard Bank Meeting Room, 456 Nelson Road, New Lenox (just South of the Nelson Road Walgreens).** Lunch will be served. This is open to the community. If you are interested or want more details, please call 815.717.2614 or visit www.sharefestnewlenox.com.

LOST AND FOUND! We have once again accumulated a few items (1 blue shoe, pair of mittens, 1 child's jacket, 1 youth jacket, and 1 black, hard cover glass case). Please check the coat rack outside the gym. If any of these items belong to you, please take them.

Church office hours: Monday, 9-3, Tuesday and Thursday, 1-4 and Friday 9-12.

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Jack Mork	1
Jayna Perez	1
Judy Wilmsen	2
Kurt Backhus	3
Collin Black	3
Jordan Cruise	3
Phil MacFarlane	3
Alyssa Regan	3
Sandy Wheeler	3
Debra Williams	3
Ken Oldendorf	4
John Buell	5
Ali Nico	6
Andy Verchimak	6
Dante Berkey	7
Aberdeen Brolick	8
Jacob Bell	9
Owen Perez	9
Bob Romadka	11
Caton Tinker	11
Sharon Buell	13
Dino Borelli	16
Marilyn Johnson	16
Al McCullough	16
Michaela O'Neill	16
Mike O'Neill	16
Benjamin Shea	16
Breiann Beaudry	17
Kim Gappa	17
Gage Moellar	17
Don Johnson	18
Dana Kosel	18
Aaron Brunmeier	19
Tom Buell	19

Les DeCarlo	19
Brian Delcorio	19
Wendy Elmlund	22
Zachary Doerrner	23
Isabella Johnson	23
Jacob Parker	24
Liz O'Neill	25
Robert Bollman	26
Rachel Cundari	26
Michaela O'Neill	26
Monica Schrank	26
Lana Cozzo	28
Taylor Farnetti	28
Jonathon Golden	28

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

Doug and Michelle Hoag	5
Bill and Jeri Sandt	13
Dave and Michele Krohe	14
Ed and Colleen Dampf	16
Don and Beth Parker	16
Robert and Marlen Bollman	20
Ernie and Jan Falk	24
Mike and Barb Studer	24