

March 2013

Dear Friends of Trinity,

As Easter approaches quickly we are given opportunity to ponder the fact that life is borne out of death. It's apparent in nature and in our own bodies. In that light, consider these words of Jesus:

The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. (John 12:23-24)

Jesus is talking about himself and all who follow him. As a grain of wheat produces only after it dies, so it is with Jesus. Notice that Jesus gave this process a very special word, and that word is *glorified*. It's not a word we would expect, and if it were up to us, we would give it a different label. Death is obvious. We know it when we see it. We mourn when we experience it because it seems to be so final and so overwhelmingly sad. But in the big picture, which is harder to see, natural processes are occurring that support the perpetuation of life.

Because it's so hard to see and ponder this, it's difficult to follow Jesus precisely because Jesus demands that his followers give up everything. To die, if you will. To set aside all of our grandiosity and bloated egos. To put off those things that puff us up. You will not get much support for this from our consumer society, which tells us to accumulate and to better ourselves by material and financial gain, thereby making ourselves big in the eyes of others and to be larger than life. That is being glorified in the eyes of others, and it's not to our advantage in the long run.

Only in Christ are we truly put to death and raised up. In his own death and resurrection he has shown us how we are really and truly glorified. It is only in being united with him through the waters of Holy Baptism that we die and rise, setting for us the true pattern of our lives and showing us how life actually works. Life is borne out of death! We as Christians are life givers when we repent daily of our complicity in the world's version of glorification and put on the glorification that is only in Christ. That is the glory and the joy of Easter.

At Eastertime we rightly celebrate God raising Jesus from the dead. But we can also rightly celebrate *our* rising from the dead in anticipation of the time when death will be no longer and eternity gives us life everlasting! I wish all of you a very Happy and Blessed Easter!

In Christ,
Pastor Hoag

March 2013 NEWSLETTER

Many things are popping up here at Trinity, as Spring begins to pop up, too. (Okay, so today it is dumping snow, but by the end of the month there WILL be signs of Spring!

LENT BEGAN 2/13

Amos compared the voice of God's judgment to the roaring of a lion (Amos 1:2). The Lord roared, and Amos preached. This Lent, we will listen to the Lion as He rumbles. And gathering under the cross, we will all the more be amazed when the roaring Lion defeats the greatest enemies: the devil, hell, and the power of death. Then with resurrection of joy, we will say of Jesus, "The Lion of the tribe of Judah ... has conquered." (Revelation 5:5)

The soup/supper serving schedule is as follows:

3/6 Youth Group
3/13 Church Council
3/20 Women's League
All meals begin at 6:30.

CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS

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 at home at 815 485 3558. Thank you. You may also e Janice at japropero@sbcglobal.net

Choir rehearsals are now at 5:30 on Wednesdays.

Check out the Choir section of the web site (under Trinity Groups) to see a list of dates when the choir is performing and considering joining us for any date(s) you can make!

Chancel March Assignments and Meeting

Weekend of 2/3: Judi Donovan & Doris Klemm
Meeting 4 6:30 pm Hostesses: Jeri Sandt & Jan Falk
Weekend of 9/10: Doris Klemm & Wendy Kaun
Weekend of 16/17: Wendy Kaun & Ann Romadka
Weekend of 23/24 Ann Romadka & Sally Jackson
Maundy Thursday 3/28 Jan Prospero & Kay Purnell
Easter 3/31 7 am Sharon MacFarlane & Rita Larson
Easter 10:30 am Robin Krol & Allen Bachman

TRINITY SEVENTH ANNUAL EAST EGG HUNT!!

Bring your kids, grandkids, camera, baskets and smiles to Trinity's 7th Annual Easter Egg Hunt! Fifth Graders and younger, please join us again on Saturday, **March 30, 2013** starting promptly at 9:30 a.m.

CONFIRMATION CLASSES

As part of a Service Project for Confirmation Class, we are asking all confirmands to please bring in a bag or two of individually wrapped candy, toys, wrist bands, or other items that fit inside an egg. PLEASE, NO CANDY CONTAINING NUTS DUE TO ALLERGIES!!! The Easter Egg Hunt is scheduled for **Saturday, March 30** at 9:30 a.m.

Do you need Service Hours? Helpers are needed to hide the Eggs downstairs. Meet at 9:00 a.m. on March 30 in the Gym. PLEASE SEE THE SIGN UP SHEET ON THE DESK OUTSIDE THE GYM! THANKS!

TO THE TRINITY CONGREGATION – if anyone would like to donate plastic eggs and/or wrapped candy, other candy or small items that fit inside an egg for the Easter Egg Hunt; or juice or treats after the Egg Hunt, please leave your donations in the office on the counter by **March 29**. Any contributions are greatly appreciated!! The kids get thirsty after all that running around!! THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!!

SOCIAL MINISTRY NEWS

Please sign the greeting card for Virgil; he sincerely appreciates all contact from Trinity members. He really looks forward to knowing we, here at Trinity, have him in our thoughts and prayers.

SEDER MEAL: Maundy Thursday, **3/28**, is the date of our biennial Seder Meal, immediately followed by a free chicken dinner. A sign up sheet for those planning to attend will be available in the hall table in mid-February. Because, in the past, many proposed attendees often do not attend after becoming included in the chicken dinner count, we are requesting that “sign-ons” deposit a check charging \$3.00 for each family member over 3 years old; the check to be held and returned in full when all show up for the meal. If persons after registering to attend do not “show up,” their check will be cashed to offset the cost of food purchased on their behalf. Deadline for sign-up will be Sunday **3/17**. When you sign the attendee sheet, deposit your check immediately in the marked envelope.

Youth had a busy and fruitful February...

February Fundraising News

Thank you to all who supported the youth fundraisers this month. We raised \$319 at the bake sale and \$100 from the Culver's Night. The manager at Culver's said "You didn't tell us you had such a big church!" We also raised \$751 at the Chili Cook-off and Trivia Night, plus another \$500 from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans in matching funds. Congratulations to Ann Wennlund for winning the chili cook-off, with Steve Friant in 2nd place and Sandy Peters in 3rd place. Winner of the trivia was Amy Ingall's team. Thank you to all of you for your generosity to our youth. We would especially like to thank:

- Everyone who donated baked goods to our bake sale
- Culver's of New Lenox for donating 10% of the purchases on Culver's Night
- Chili Chefs: Sandy Peters, Daniel Willenborg, Steve Friant, Debbie Aiken, Ann Wennlund, Julie and Andy Verchimak
- Silent Auction and Prize Donors: Debbie Aiken, Pam & Don Burke, Lori Hilger, Floria Kelderhouse, Sandy & Chuck Peters, Jan Schlak, Jan Toepke, Amy Ingalls - Avon, Liz Lyman Massages, Donna Cuthbert - Tastefully Simple, Alsip Nursery, An English Garden, Culver's, PJ's Restaurant, and That Certain Look Hair Salon

March event - The San Antonio-bound youth will be hosting a Make Your Own Pizza lunch on Palm Sunday, **3/24**, following the 10:30 a.m. church service. Families are invited to stay after the children have sung in church. Cost is \$3 per person for one personal-size pizza; \$5 per person for two personal-size pizzas. Drinks and desserts are included. We'll supply the ingredients to make your own pizza, then we'll have some games while the pizzas cook. We'll also have some raffles. Hope you can attend!

2013 Financial Report: The congregation adopted a 2013 General Fund Budget of \$196,472 at its Annual Meeting on January 27. The Budget is 4.6% higher than contributions made to the General Fund in 2012. The Council deemed the increase warranted to cover expected higher operating costs, including a 9.9% increase in health care premiums. A modest salary increase of 2% was granted for Pastor, the Church Secretary, Organist and Choir Director. Primary support of the General Fund by the congregation is very important to meeting Trinity's ongoing needs.

Our congregation was truly blessed with financial support during 2012. Even though General Fund receipts were lower than in 2011, special donations and lower expenses allowed for the payment of all bills. Some Steward Account reserves and Memorial Funds were used for the tuck pointing and stained glass projects. We exceeded our budgeted remittances for Synod Missions, LCCF and Debt repayment while generously providing special support for Mission India, Feed My Starving Children and Morning Star charities. The balance on the original \$100,000 mortgage, used to finance the new restrooms, was \$21,693.92 at year-end. We want to thank everyone for their support of Trinity Lutheran Church and its missions. If you could not make the Annual Meeting and have financial questions, please contact Janice Prospero, Financial Secretary, or Bruce Hasch, Treasurer.

Speaking of things financial, Council made the decision to support 3 charities this year. Each will be supported at separate times. We will be supporting SowHope, Feed My Starving

Children, and MorningStar this year. All three have a food/hunger aspect. What follows is a little bit more about each charity and the time frame for each one.

SowHope (www.sowhope.org) is run by Ginny DeCarlo's niece and we will be supporting them through the end of April. SowHope sponsors wellness, education, and economic projects that give impoverished women opportunities to improve their lives. They are primarily focused on women in the developing world who make less than \$2 a day.

Because we are also charged to be good stewards with the gifts YOU donate, here is some more information, courtesy of GuideStar.org – an organization that checks on charities to see what they do with the donations that are entrusted to them: More than 93% of donations go to program services (about 3% to fundraising and 3% to admin costs). As a rule, 80% is usually pretty good.

Here is a little more that Jeff McDonald graciously researched for us:

Projects:

1. Wellness: A) Physical B) Emotional
2. Educational: A) Literacy B) Vocational and Technical C) Higher Education Scholarship
3. Economic: A) Micro-loans B) Small Business Training

Program Long-Term Success:

2007- Two projects. 1000 women received micro loans in Bangladesh and 1 PhD student in India received tuition reimbursement and a computer.

2008 - AIDS prevention for 1000 women in Egypt. AIDS care for 40 in Kenya.

Microloans for 1400 women in Bangladesh and 30 in Nigeria. Literacy for 4200 women in India. Computers for 20 in Zambia.

Total number of women impacted by SowHope wellness, education and economic projects: 7650

We are going to try to fund a specific project for them. Our goal is to raise \$2400.00 for a Birthing Center in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, an association of women has built a birthing center to assist women in childbearing. They are seeking funds to better equip this center, specifically for the purchase of a delivery table and solar lighting.

About 75 babies a month are delivered at the center.

Total project cost \$2,400 Imagine! Think about how a very small amount (to us) can have such a huge impact on so many lives.

Once again, we will be joining forces with Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Frankfort to support Feed My Starving Children (www.fmssc.org). This year it should be even bigger, as we join the community-wide event at Lincoln-Way West on **August 9-10**. Do you remember how many we fed last year? A) 53,000 B) 79,000 C) 96,000 D) 116,000? Answer later in the newsletter. How many will we feed this year? This will be the focus of our fundraising efforts from **May 1- August 10**.

MorningStar Mission will be the focus for the remainder of the year and consideration is also being given to focusing some of our efforts on the Lutheran Malaria Initiative through LCMS.

Sunday School is also focusing on the hungry and needy at this time: They are in the process of holding a food drive until **March 23** to fill the New Lenox Food Pantry. If you are able to bring food, please bring canned or boxed goods to church with you and we will bring them over to the New Lenox pantry. We have been told that they are having a hard time keeping their shelves stocked at this time of the year.

Thrivent Members: Time is running out to direct 2012 Choice Dollars®

Thrivent Choice® gives eligible Thrivent benefit members the chance to recommend where Thrivent Financial directs some of its charitable grant funds.

Remember, the deadline to direct 2012 Thrivent Choice Dollars is **March 31, 2013**.

You have two easy options in directing your Choice Dollars:

- Direct dollars online now through March 31.
- Direct dollars by calling 800-THRIVENT (800-847-4836) and say "Thrivent Choice" at the prompt, now through March 28. The Member Connection Center is open until 8 p.m. Central time. Note: The Member Connection Center will **not be open during the Easter holiday: Good Friday, March 29 – Easter Sunday, March 31**.

Contest for Kids: Help kids ages 3-18 think about generosity

Thrivent magazine is sponsoring the second annual Contest for Kids. Cash prizes of \$100 will be awarded to the best three essays and drawings related to the theme, "Describe a way someone has been generous to you." The deadline is **April 15**. For complete contest rules and prizes visit Thrivent.com/magazine/contest.

Adult Instruction Class will begin on **Tuesday, April 9**, at 7pm and will meet every Tuesday evening through May 21. This class is required for those joining our church from non-Lutheran church affiliations (or from no affiliations), but is open to anyone interested.

Register by calling the church office at 815-485-6973.

Would a 1 in 200 chance to win \$5,000 appeal to you? The New Lenox Rotary Club Gold Rush is on! The drawing will be held on **Thursday, April 25th**, 6-9pm at the VFW Hall in New Lenox. There will also be a silent auction, a Chinese Raffle, and door prizes. Plus-- some great food provided by local restaurants! Tickets are \$100. You do not have to be present to win, but it will be a lot more fun if you are! See Pastor Hoag to buy a ticket.

Prayerful Giving “Time and Talent Survey”

We know that being a church in these modern days takes a strong financial commitment to thrive especially in these challenging times. We also know that all gifts come from God the Father. Therefore, when we give of our money, our time and our talents we are only praising Him for the blessings he has given us. A community of believers takes a congregation of workers to nourish one another in fellowship and to spread God's Word.

“Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.” 1 Corinthians 12:27

“The Church functions much as a human body. Eyes, ears, and brains --- spectacular body parts! There are many less notable parts, yet each is vital to healthy living and is dependent on the others. The body is unity in harmony.

In a church, pastors, teachers and music leaders are the up front people. Those with other gifts, however, are also important. Love, kindness, hospitality, wisdom, a serving spirit – what would a church do without these and other godly talents to help things run smoothly?

The Lord, who freed us from sin, values each of us. How He desires that we cooperated without fighting, without envy, without complaint! In the human body, parts protect and nurture one another. In a church, concern for others and their spiritual gifts are blessings that make our service happy and productive. What a witness when church members share their unique gifts and work together harmoniously for their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

Portals of Prayer, Carol Albrecht, January 2013

Please think about how God has blessed you. Sharing of your time and talents is excellent way to demonstrate your faith and contribute to our community of believers. As St. James 2:26 tells us: “Faith without works is dead.” Working together as believers supports our Christian mission and demonstrates our faith to and in our community. Please prayerfully respond to the “Time and Talent Survey”. Our hope is to compile a list of stewards that might respond to opportunities that would promote Worship and Spiritual Life and Trinity’s Mission. Questions? Dr. Edward A. Tatro, Council Member: Worship and Spiritual Life, 815 485 5760.

Extra surveys can be found next to the suggestion box and we’re working toward adding this to our web site as well.

Please be so kind as to respond and return the survey in the suggestion box located in the narthex.

Answer: How many did we feed last year with Feed My Starving Children? Actually, a trick question: OVER 116,000.

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Jeremy Paul	2
Tom Kaun	5
Jessica Newman	5
Taylor Kessel	6
Paul Prospero	6
Jacob Sheffer	6
Russell Rohner	7
Sam Sigrist	7
Tina Fox	8
Matt Kunce	8
Helen Anderson	9
Janet Buell	9
Christine Alfano	10
Sarah Leahy	10
Chris Reithel	11
Susan Jandeska	13
Lois Dobbs	14
Nick Buell	15
Benjamin DeMaertelaere	16
Kathy Fandl	16
Joe Farneti	16
Lawrence Cozzo	18
Ken Oldendorf	18
Keith LaVazza	19
Laura Forsythe	21
Melissa Gappa	21
Helen Sullivan	21
Brian Thompson	22
Nancy Varju	22
Jeff Pavlovich	23
Anthony Prospero	23
Jeff Smith	23
Amanda Grady	24
Ava Peters	24
Alexander Renwick	24
Joanne Gardner	25
Noah Cruise	26
Doug Schlak	27
Jim Capretto	28
Johna Salazar	28
Damon Tinker	28

Greg Giffin	29
Bill Loggarakis	30
Bill Smith	30
Greg Guenther	31
Weston McCure	31
Ralph Teare	31

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

Glen and Victoria Fabish	5
Bud and Andrea Sherman	10
Angela and Kevin Klisz	17
Chris and Michelle Kosel	18
Walter and Angie Opiola	19
Amanda and Robert Romadka	20
Edward and Pat Czerwinski	23
Andrew and Julie Verchimak	26