

March 2014

Dear Friends of Trinity,

As the season of Lent approaches I'm frequently asked if we have to give up something in order to properly observe Lent. My answer is no. There is no such thing as "have to" in the Christian faith. However, there is certainly nothing wrong with giving up something for Lent. It's actually a very good practice to undertake. Doing without certain creature comforts in order to learn total dependency on God for our being and sustenance can go very far in revealing our enslavements and addictions. You might even surprise yourself in the discoveries you would make.

For our Lenten focus in our midweek Lenten services this year we're going to watch some video Bible lessons about how God sets His people free from slavery. Filmed at various locations in Egypt, renowned Bible teacher Ray VanderLaan will show us what God's ancient people, the Israelites, experienced during their time of slavery. God heard their cries of misery and brought them out to, of all places, the desert. That is where there is no choice but to depend on God because there are no creature comforts in the wilderness.

I think you'll find this Lenten series to be insightful and enjoyable. We'll have some time to discuss what we saw to encourage each other in our Lenten walk. I pray that you have a blessed Lent and a fervent anticipation of our celebration of Easter in April.

In Christ,
Pastor Hoag

OUR MIDWEEK LENTEN FOCUS—*God Heard Their Cry: Faith Lessons with Ray VanderLaan*

In ancient times, nothing was bigger than Egypt. Powerful pharaohs, strong armies, and a multitude of gods. God's people were no match against the Egyptians. In this video series, discover how God answers the cry of His persecuted people and proclaims Himself LORD to them and their oppressors.

Experience the Bible for yourself! We'll join teacher and historian Ray VanderLaan as he guides us through the land of the Bible. Each week, Ray will illuminate the historical, geographical, and cultural context of the Scriptures. Filmed on location in Egypt, this series will transform our understanding of God and challenge us to be true followers of Jesus.

Week One (March 12)—How Big Is Our God? (Luxor)

Week Two (March 19)—Israel in Bondage: God Heard Their Cry (Deir al Medina)

Week Three (March 26)—Finger of God: The Plagues (Ramesseum)

Week Four (April 2)—Watch With Me: Israel Leaves Egypt (The Red Sea)

Week Five (April 9)—The Lord Reigns: The Red Sea (The Red Sea)

Join us on these dates at 7:30pm. Use this as an opportunity to invite friends and neighbors as well!

MARCH 2014 NEWSLETTER

It has been a long winter for everyone but believe it or not, spring is just around the corner.

Lent begins March 5, 2014 with our Ash Wednesday Service at 7:30 pm.

Lenten services will be held each Wednesday evening at 7:30 p.m.

Soup and sandwich suppers will be held at 6:30 p.m., just prior to each Lenten service. The following organizations will be responsible for preparing and serving the meal each week

March 12 - Chancel Guild

March 19 - Sunday School

March 26 – Women’s League

April 2 – Youth & Confirmation

April 9 – Church Council

All tableware, dinnerware and serving items will be available, as needed

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.

2014 Financial Report: The congregation adopted a 2014 General Fund Budget of \$193,951 at its Annual Meeting on January 26. The Budget is 1.1% higher than contributions made to the General Fund in 2013. The Council deemed the increase warranted to cover expected higher operating costs, including a 13.9% increase in health care premiums. The increase was tempered by plans to pay off the mortgage balance in 2014, saving about \$8,000 in General Fund expenses. Endowment Funds will be used. 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 2013. General Fund receipts, that were higher than in 2012, and special donations allowed the payment of all bills and adding extra cash to reserves. We exceeded budgeted remittances for Synod Missions, LCCF and Debt repayment while generously providing special support for Sow Hope, Feed My Starving Children and Morning Star charities. The balance on the original \$100,000 mortgage, used to finance the new restrooms, was \$13,745.63 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

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.

Pre-School Board Meeting is scheduled for March 16th at 11:30 a.m. (immediately following the late service)

CHOIR: The schedule for the Adult Choir has revised their schedule due to the Lenten services. **The Choir will be meeting on Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m.**, just prior to the soup/sandwich suppers at 6:30 p.m. *The choir will be singing during the Ash Wednesday service on March 5th, but there will be no choir practice that evening.*

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

SOCIAL MINISTRY

All ladies of Trinity are invited to join our committee. If you have any questions or would like further information, please contact Midge Meents at 815.485.6527 or call the church office at 815.485.6973. **Our next meeting will be March 10th at 7:00 p.m.** at Sue Kunce's home.

St. Matthew's Outreach:

We will once again be collecting food goods for St. Matthew's every fourth Sunday throughout the year.

Butter Braid orders will be delivered on Wednesday, March 19th. You may pick them up when you come to church that evening.

Virgil Switzer. Please sign the monthly greeting card on the hall table. We look forward to Virgil's homecoming in mid-May.

MorningStar Mission: The next serving dates for March are the 4th and 18th. If you are interested in helping, the sign up sheet is on the hallway table.

Thank you! Thank you! "I would like to thank everyone for their support this past year with MorningStar. To all my volunteers who baked, donated food and the ones who are so faithful to serve the meals. And also for the many mugs which were donated. You would think they were gold! I feel so blessed that Trinity is such a church that is always ready to help. May God Bless each and everyone this year." Judy Wilmsen

Chancel Guild: The next meeting will be **Monday, March 3rd at 6:30 p.m.** All ladies of Trinity are invited to visit. This will be a work session to repair the hymn marker ribbons. Hostesses are Wendy Kaun and Christine Stark.

Women's League The next meeting will be **Tuesday, March 25th at 12:30 p.m.** Ellen Meents-DeCaigny will present a program on Seeing China A-New: The People, Culture, History, Religion and Education. This will be a very interesting program and will be open to the community. Hostesses will be Pat Fuerst, Ruth Hucher and Millie Steinbrenner.

Youth Group -- Helping Others! The 7th and 8th grade and high school students) took a train trip to Chicago on February 22nd to deliver some much needed supplies to the homeless. Thanks to everyone who donated items for this project. A special thanks to the adults who accompanied the youth. The trip was a very eye-opening experience.

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)

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.

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.

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.

VOLUNTEER(S) NEEDED: *Thanks to the new lights our Property Committee installed in the church library, that room could now use a fresh coat of paint on the ceiling and walls. We'll supply the paint, but we wanted to see if a member of our congregation would be willing to volunteer to do the actual painting in that room. This is a great opportunity to help beautify our church, since that is one of the first rooms people see when they enter the building. Since our property volunteers put in a lot of time and energy into keeping our house of worship in order,*

we thought it would be nice to have someone else take on this job. Please contact Pastor Hoag, the church office or a member of the property committee know if you would be willing to help out with this project.

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.

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, March 26th 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.

10th Annual Clergy & Men’s Unity Breakfast will be held Saturday, March 22nd from 8:00 – 10:00 a.m. at Trinity Christian School, 901 Shorewood Dr., in Shorewood, IL. Guest speakers on “Mentoring & Ministry: *the Fuel that Flame the Faith*”. Last year they had 70 churches present and 285 in attendance. Please RSVP to Gary at 815.717.2614 or email register@unitybreakfast.com

LOST AND FOUND! Please check the coat rack outside the gym to see if any of the items belong to you.

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

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Bridget Wise	1
Ginny DeCarlo	2
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
Kinley Toepke	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
Joel Handorf	23
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
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