

March 2021

Dear Friends,

When it comes right down to it, it's all about Jesus. After everything we've been through as a society and as a congregation—all of the drastic changes in worship, scheduling, safety protocols, closed businesses and financial ruin, sickness, and much more—there has been one constant: Jesus.

The proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ will never change. It serves as the anchor for our lives that are filled with upheaval and change. Though we are at times put off, thrown away to the winds, unsure of ourselves, and tossed around by storm-filled lives, our God is faithful with grace and forgiveness. He will never change. He will never forsake us. Jesus has us each firmly in his grasp!

We have all borne a very heavy cross through this pandemic. None of us are the same as we were before. On the bright side, we've all learned things. On the darker side, we have suffered loss in ways we've never thought we would have to endure. The burden is great.

In the midst of these burdens and this very heavy cross, we are reminded of the constancy of Jesus, who tells us "my yoke is easy and my burden is light". Jesus bears our burdensome cross for us and gives us his love and compassion. It doesn't mean life becomes easier. But it does mean that Jesus is not indifferent to our plight. He has promised us that after the cross comes resurrection and new life. He demonstrated it himself by his own death and resurrection. It really is all about Jesus, our sure and certain anchor, our comfort, and our peace.

Easter is coming!

In Christ,

Pastor Hoag

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St. Matthew's Outreach:

UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE, WE ARE NOT ACCEPTING DONATIONS OF FOOD OR CLOTHING ITEMS FOR ST. MATTHEW'S. They are fully stocked and have no room for any more donations.

Also, our storage room is at full capacity and we can't store anything else. We will let you know when we can start accepting donations again.

Thank you all for your support of St. Matthew's.



MIDWEEK LENTEN SERVICE THEME 2021: THE CHARACTER OF GOD

Join us on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 PM, in person and online, for a fascinating look at the Character of God. With help from videos from our friends at The Bible Project, we will explore this important, dimension of our salvation story.

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UPDATE FROM OUR COUNCIL PRESIDENT, Bob Blecke

Trinity's annual congregational meeting was held on 2/14/21 at 1130 in the gym. Despite weather and pandemic, we had 9 council members and 14 congregational members attend. As you might guess, many of the retrospective reports focused on limitations imposed by, and challenges overcome due to COVID19 mitigation. The underlying good news is that we remain a viable and active congregation who, with very few exceptions, was able to maintain a full range of services and activities despite the limitations of the year, and some of the lessons learned in extending our reach into social networks will continue and be improved in the future. The congregation passed a proposed budget for 2021 that includes a modest increase in salaries and anticipated benefits cost increases, due to the ongoing generosity and support of the Trinity family. Given the completion of the Kitchen project and the work in Fellowship Hall, we come to the end of several years of capital improvement projects that have left us in good physical condition, and prepared to re-engage in the full range of in-person activities as the state's numbers improve. My thanks to the council for their faithful stewardship in 2020, the congregation for their faithfulness, to outgoing Council President Jeff McDonald for his years of service, and a welcome to new addition Mike Gardner for taking on the mantle of Outreach. I wish all of the Trinity family the best in 2021, and hope to see you soon.



Bible Classes – everyone is invited to attend.

Wednesday Morning – 8:30 a.m. - In Person and Online.

Thursday Evening – 7:00 pm - In Person and Online.

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Sunday School is open for In Person Classes on Sunday Mornings at 9:15 am. Masks and Social Distancing are required.



Pre-School Registration for September 2021-2022. If you know of anyone who is interested, please have them call the pre-school at 815.485.6973. There is a non-refundable registration fee of \$65.00 per student. The tuition per month for the school year beginning September 2021, will be \$115.00 for two day students and \$145 for three day students. Children must have turned 3 by September 1, 2021.



SOCIAL MINISTRY

All ladies of Trinity are invited to join our committee. If you have any questions or would like further information, please contact the church office at 815.485.6973. **Our next meeting will be March 15th at 7:00 p.m.** in the church library.

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USHERS

March Usher Schedule:

- 1 st Sunday: Brett Carr and Paul Krol
- 2 nd Sunday: Tom Buell, Tommy Buell, and Tony Lopez
- 3 rd Sunday: Jeff McDonald and Mike Lyman
- 4 th Sunday: John Buell and Phil MacFarlane

April Usher Schedule:

- 1 st Sunday: Tom Kaun and Larry Wennlund
- 2 nd Sunday: Tim King and Ed Tatro
- 3 rd Sunday: Mike Gardner and Gary Purnell
- 4 th Sunday: Steve Tomany and Randy Varju



Scrip Fundraiser - Thank you so very much for your participation in this fundraiser. Our next order deadline will be [Sunday, March 14, 2021 at noon](#). Cards will be ready for pick up at church the following weekend after each order. Any questions can be directed to Angie Minett at minett411@yahoo.com or [\(815\)467-2537](tel:8154672537). There are order forms and lists of participating stores on the table below the youth bulletin board. You can also check out shopwithscrip.com to learn more about this simple way to help the youth earn funds.

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Confirmation News:

To The parents of the eighth grade confirmation class:

In preparation for Confirmation, the eighth grade students need to be measured for their robes. If you could please measure your child and send me their height by March 15, 2021. The measurement should take into account any shoes that they will be wearing on that Sunday. If you have any questions, please contact the Judi Donovan at 815-485-6973.



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Member Updates:

Deceased

Les DeCarlo – January 31, 2021

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Chancel Guild: The next meeting will be **Saturday, March 6th at 9:00 a.m.** Easter flowers are on the agenda. All ladies of Trinity are invited to join us!

Chancel Schedule for March:

March 7th – Jan Prospero & Rita Larson
March 14th – Rita Larson & Jennifer Mudrock
March 21st – Jennifer Mudrock & Jan Falk
March 28th – Jan Falk & Sally Jackson



Chancel Guild members will again be decorating the Chancel area for our Easter services. Because of the unpredictability of Covid-19 restrictions and to ensure we have enough lilies; we will only be ordering lilies this year. We are hoping restrictions will not prohibit in-person services over the holiday. However, if this does happen, Chancel members will still decorate the Chancel area for our on-line services. Watch for order forms in the bulletins and/or attached to the weekly Order of Service notes. Call Kay Purnell at (815) 485-9017 or email her at purnellk51@hotmail.com if you would like to order but do not have access to an order form. Thank you for your support!



ALTAR FLOWERS - A new 2021 Altar Flower Calendar has been posted. You can find it in the glass case hanging on the wall across the old office. If you would like to reserve a weekend for 2021 in memory of a loved one, to commemorate a birthday, wedding anniversary, or in celebration of God's blessings, please fill out a sponsor sheet. Sponsor sheets are located on a hook attached to the glass case housing the calendar. **Please do not fill in the calendar. Fill out a sponsor sheet and put it in the Chancel Guild mail box in the general office.** Flowers are \$30.00 for both arrangements. If you

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would like a weekend already spoken for, it is sometimes possible to share the cost and arrangements with permission from the person already sponsoring. Chancel Guild members would like to thank those of you who sponsored a weekend this past year. We appreciate your efforts to help us enhance and beautify the altar area. If you have any questions, email Kay Purnell at purnellk51@hotmail.com or call her at (815) 485-9017

Flowers left in the refrigerator will be disposed of after 1 weeks.

Flower List:

March 7th – Gary & Kay Purnell in Memory of their parents, Ray & Elvira Purnell and LaVern Yeske

March 14th – Jennifer Mudrock in Memory of Henry, Gertrude, and Steven Sward

March 21st – Andy & Julie Verchimak in Celebration of their Wedding Anniversary

March 28th – Steve & Rita Tinker in Thanksgiving for their children: Damon, Caton & Brandy

PRAYER

changes things

The January-March 2021 Portals of Prayer are still available. Pick up your copy from the wall display in the Narthex or from the hallway table. The April-June 2021 will be available in mid March.

Church office hours: Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9am till 1pm.

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