



TRINITY HIGHLIGHTS

MAY 2020

*The monthly newsletter of
Trinity Lutheran Church
Greencastle, PA*

Dear Family,

Hasn't this been the strangest Lent/Easter/Spring ever? No one could have predicted the upheaval, chaos and trauma of the pandemic. The Lord has some words for us in chaotic times written by one of the prophets.

"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, God's mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness." (Lamentations 3: 22-23)

These words of hope are found in the middle of the Book of Lamentations. The book was written to describe the destruction of the temple and subsequent exile of the Jewish people to Babylon. These are words of hope we cling to in the middle of this Pandemic.

Steadfast in Hebrew is a word that means more than unwavering and persistent. It means "womb-like." When we are scared, confused, angry or anxious, God's love envelopes us. We are completely surrounded by love which never ends no matter what. St Paul tell us "...nothing will separate us from the love of God." (Romans 8: 39)

God's love is what keeps us grounded and provides perspective in our current situation. We are bombarded with conflicting information, opinions and perspectives. As followers of Jesus and beloved children of the Most High, our perspective must begin and end with Jesus' command to "love one another as I have loved you."

Your leaders are in conversation about the safest way to begin gathering again. It will be a slow process and we beg your patience. There are many important details to consider. We want to make certain the process is completed well to ensure the safety and health of all of us, especially the most vulnerable in our family. There has not been a decision made as to when we will gather in the sanctuary. It will probably not happen before the end of May.

And so we sit in the crucible of suffering together. It can be a learning time if we let it. What does it mean to BE church when we can't come together in the building? How are we called to personal spiritual practice taking time to deepen our relationship with God? How is knowing God loves us as beloved children making a difference in how we live, the decisions we make, the opinions we hold? How is God transforming us as individuals so that our congregation might see a revival of love and spiritual depth and maturity?

These are deep questions. I invite you to take time to pray and journal with them. When we return to gather in the sanctuary, may we find our congregation transformed. May we recognize Jesus in our worship and in ourselves.

God bless you in your journey!
Pastor Barb





Until we can gather safely, worship will continue to be videotaped and downloaded to the Website, You Tube and Face Book. Please like and share each worship service so we can have the widest exposure.

This is one way Trinity Lutheran can "Share Christ in Word and Deed."

VIDEO CONFERENCING: A WAY TO CONNECT



Until we can gather safely, we will continue to find creative ways to connect and gather with one another. Ministry teams, Council, Bible Study, Confirmation, Elementary Sunday School and Prayer Services have been happening through Zoom. We have added a password, waiting room and lock to all meetings to increase security. Thank God for technology that is helping us continue to gather even though it is through the computer.

PRAY FOR TRINITY

Each Thursday at 6PM we meet to pray for the congregation of Trinity Lutheran, Greencastle. We pray for the family and ask God's guidance as we move forward in renewal. Please join us via Zoom or set your phone alarm to pray from where you are.



FEED HUNGRY FAMILIES

God invites those who are richly blessed to share what we have with those who are struggling. Many people in our community are

furloughed or have lost their jobs because of the COVID19 Pandemic. We are the church who feeds the hungry. Please consider dropping by to place something in the food pantry box by the front door when you go to the grocery store. It is what Jesus would have us do.

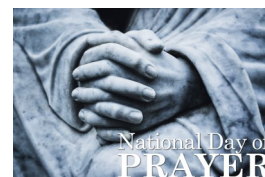


A way to stay grounded and find meaning in these chaotic times is to stay close to God. Let's use this time to deepen our relationships with God and one

another. Thursdays at 7 we are meeting by Zoom for Bible Study. The topic is: *People in the Bible*. We can use the examples we find to live more fully into who God is calling us to be. Join by your computer or dial in by phone. Call Pastor Barb or email her for the meeting ID and Password.

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

The National Day of Prayer service sponsored by the Greencastle-Antrim Christian Women's Fellowship was taped in Trinity's sanctuary. It will be downloaded to Trinity's Website and Facebook page on Thursday, May 7, 2020. Come worship with local pastors to pray for our community and nation.



DEVOTIONAL MATERIALS

The new editions of the *Christ in Our Home* and the *Upper Room* devotionals are now available. They are located in the rack outside of the Church Office. The Church is open on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9AM to 1PM.



The Youth Committee has been meeting to discuss the plan for those who are interested in attending the ELCA Gathering in 2021. We have been reviewing finances available, the cost that will be involved to attend, and what we would expect of the youth who plan to attend. We will be having a meeting with the parents and youth who have made their interest known. This meeting will be held via Zoom on May 8th at 7 p.m. Rachelle attended the Zoom Synod meeting for updates on the Gathering. She will bring that information to the

meeting.

We had been holding a weekly Zoom devotional time for the current youth but also invited past Youth Group members to join due to low attendance. This is being held on Tuesday nights at 7:30. We started to rotate who brings the Devotion to the group. If you would like to be included in these Zoom meetings please let us know.



2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 Renewal Team 9AM via Zoom
3 Confirmaion 10AM <i>Worship Online</i>	4	5	6	7 Prayer Team 6PM <i>Bible Study 7PM</i> (both via Zoom)	8	9
10 Confirmaion 10AM <i>Worship Online</i>	11	12 Finance 7PM via Zoom	13 Council 7PM via Zoom	14 Prayer Team 6PM <i>Bible Study 7PM</i> (both via Zoom)	15	16
17 Confirmaion 10AM <i>Worship Online</i>	18	19	20 Joint ET Planning 6:30 PM via Zoom	21 Prayer Team 6PM <i>Bible Study 7PM</i> (both via Zoom)	22	23
24 Confirmaion 10AM <i>Worship Online</i>	25	26	27	28 Prayer Team 6PM <i>Bible Study 7PM</i> (both via Zoom)	29	30
31 PENTECOST Confirmaion 10AM <i>Worship Online</i>						



NOTES FROM SAUNDRA

JOIN OUR HYMN SING!

How does an **online Hymn Sing Concert** sound? It could be posted to the Website and Facebook pages for you to click on and access at any time. Please help me choose titles by **submitting your favorites** to me by **May 11**. If you are unsure of title, the words to the first line of the song would be helpful. Also it does not have to be a hymn as such; any spiritual song, e.g. "*10,000 Reasons*" can be a favorite. No Doug! Sorry! Not "*Home on the Range*"! :-)) I cannot guarantee your favorite will be posted. It will depend on number of favorites submitted, my ability to find the music for them, and any copyright restrictions. But I will do my best! Should be fun!

NEW ADDITION TO OUR NARTHEX



When we emptied the old filing cabinet in the office we found some important and interesting historical items. Trinity Lutheran, Greencastle has roots and history! Bud and Donna Wolfe donated the cabinet in the picture to hold the items. When it is safe to gather once again, take time to look into the cabinet and explore.

Building on tradition, guided by our loving God, we are moving into the future sharing the light of Christ in our neighborhood.



WHERE HAVE YOU SEEN GOD?

The Renewal Team continues to invite our family to notice God active in our lives. The more we notice God in our lives; the more we'll see God as the anchor on which we stand both personally and as a family of faith. **Send us your God moments and we will share them next week in the Parish News.**

Here are some ways our Confirmation Students saw God this week:

- Facetiming with close friends.
- Zoom Meeting with my Math Class where the teacher helped clear up some questions.
- Cleaning up the yard with my family.
- The family pet was left accidentally outside, stayed in the yard and remained safe.
- Thinking about church.



God has blessed Trinity with an abundance. Many of our family give time, talent and supplies behind the scenes so our work as the people of God

can happen. Each month we will take some time to say thank you. You are appreciated! If you know of someone who should be on this list, call the office.

- Bud and Donna Wolfe: cleaned the kitchens.
- Charlie Ford: mowing the lawn.
- Hannah Ruffner and Dave Wolfe: helping assist with Worship services during Holy Week.
- Bud and Donna Wolfe: Donated the glass front cabinet to hold our historical material.
- Our family who are taking time to drop off food in the food pantry box for our hungry neighbors.
- Pam Arnold and Carol Swart: Giving time and energy to secure the Payroll Protection Loan and provide information to the congregation.
- Our family who are maintaining their tithes in the midst of trying times.
- Our family who are making the effort to reach out and check on others in the family. Social distance does not mean isolation. WE are the church.

MAY SPECIAL APPEAL

The special appeal for May is Spiritrust Lutheran Hospice. Most of us know of someone who has been cared for by the staff of Spiritrust Lutheran Hospice. The Hospice team is dedicated to caring for those living with a terminal illness and their families. They assist by managing pain and symptoms, providing support to the family, providing education on what to expect and teaching care giving techniques. They also provide grief support programs in our community. More information about the services of Hospice can be found in the brochures located in the rack by the office door. If you desire to make a monetary donation, please mark your envelope for "Special Appeal".



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE AND COVID –19

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), a new respiratory infection, has been declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO). So far, more than 2.2 million people around the world have tested positive for COVID-19, and more than 150,000 people have died, according to WHO.

Our response:

Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) is responding to this pandemic here in the United States and around the world, including:

Across the United States, LDR is providing support for ELCA World Hunger's Daily Bread grants, which are supporting congregational feeding ministries as they do the critical work of providing those who are in need in their communities with food.

In New Orleans, LDR is aiding the expansion of Bethlehem Lutheran Church's community meal program, which targets the at-risk population who are impacted at this time.

In Southern California, LDR is supporting Care Connection Network, a social ministry organization, to serve older adults and people who are home bound by delivering food and essential supplies, in collaboration with congregations in the Pacifica Synod.

In China, we helped provide medical supplies including ventilators, protective face shields, disposable gloves and more, as well as daily necessities such as food.

In Italy, through the ELCA's companion church, the Chiesa Evangelica Luterana in Italia, LDR is providing Betania Evangelical Hospital in Naples, Italy, with support and medical gear and supplies.

In Palestine, LDR is working with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jerusalem and the Holy Land to provide food and necessities to families whose livelihoods have been impacted.

In Sierra Leone, we are supporting the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sierra Leone so the church can participate in a national response plan with the government.

LDR is also working with the Lutheran World Federation and the ACT Alliance to support their global responses.

As the situation develops, LDR will continue to be in communication with companions and partners at home and abroad to assess the needs and provide support. We anticipate this public health crisis will escalate in coming weeks and will affect many more people, particularly those who are most vulnerable in our communities. Here in the U.S., we stand ready to work with Lutheran social service organizations affiliated with LDR and with ELCA synods to address the needs of those impacted.

What you can do:

Pray

Please pray for our nation and the world as we face uncertainties. May God's healing presence bring peace and hope in this time of need. Pray that God will deliver comfort to those who mourn the loss of loved ones and strength to those who are working diligently to care for affected communities.

*Trinity Highlights
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Will COVID-19 help us become better stewards?

Toilet paper. Seriously. Will we ever take lowly “TP” for granted again?

Toilet paper is just one of the countless everyday blessings that the pain of COVID-19 has taught us to savor – along with worshiping beside loved ones, going to work, getting paid, shopping, going to the movies, and on and on. (What’s on your list?)

Pain teaches us, focuses us, molds us. Pain strips away pretensions and defenses. Pain shows us what’s real, what’s true, what’s valuable. Pain cleanses our spirit and draws us closer to God.

Easter reminds us that our faith journey is all about death and rebirth. Explaining baptism in *The Small Catechism*, Martin Luther taught that baptism’s waters must *daily* drown our old sinful self, so that *daily* we may be born anew.

As we walk in God’s sanctifying light, parts of us should be dying *daily* and being reborn.

Pain? It serves as midwife in our death and rebirth.

And COVID-19 has given us pain aplenty, far beyond the shortage of bathroom supplies. Many have lost loved ones, jobs, security, healthcare, homes, retirement, wellbeing and relationships.

Pain will be long with us as we slowly inch back towards normalcy. But “normal” will probably look much different than what we’ve known. A “new normal” is already emerging. Do you sense it? That the pandemic has changed you? Us? Forever?

With the Holy Spirit’s help, may COVID-19’s pain prune from our lives what needs to die in order for us to be reborn as God’s people in this “new normal.” May the “new normal” find us better stewards of our lives -- less greedy, less self-focused, less preoccupied with silly things, and more centered in Christ, more loving to our neighbor, more generous, more hopeful and more tolerant.

--Rob Blezard

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