



# TRINITY HIGHLIGHTS

## JANUARY 2021

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

Dear Family,

2020 is behind us. Yes!!! 2020 is a year that historians will attempt to describe accurately for many years to come. It was marked by our response to the pandemic, racial unrest and political divisiveness. We had to close the church building at Trinity Lutheran, Greencastle and gather for worship on-line for extended periods while missing both the Easter and Christmas seasons.

2020 did provide some blessing and opportunity. As a family of faith, we had been exploring what it means to be church. Closing the building helped us experience that church is NOT the building. WE are the church and as church we moved forward and continued sharing Christ in our neighborhood. We supported the Food Pantry and adopted a family for Christmas. We prayed for one another sending cards of support. Each week we noticed God active in our lives sharing our God moments with one another. Many of us reached out to others in the family making phone calls to stay in touch. We learned new technology and worship now includes Facebook Live and downloading to the Website. We can gather together on-line and have grown a sizeable on-line community. Those on Facebook connect via the comments.

As much as we might hope otherwise, 2021 will not magically make things easier or bring the Pandemic safety precautions to a halt. If anything, we need to be just as vigilant with wearing masks, socially distancing and washing hands. Hospitals will continue to be overrun unless we help. We have already lost one member of our Trinity family to Covid. Working together we can minimize the risk to others. The general population won't have access to the vaccine until much later in the year. Scientists are predicting that we won't see an end to restrictions until maybe the middle of the summer.

In the meantime, what is a follower of Jesus, disciple of Christ and child of God to do with all this? Psalm 46 can give us some direction.

*"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.*

*Therefore, we will not fear."*

Some people interpret that to mean we shouldn't fear the virus and therefore there's no need for masks or any of the other safety measures. I wonder, though, if in fact the very opposite is true. We don't need to fear the virus because God gives us what we need to get through. Following safety measures only makes logical sense – like wearing seat belts and using an oven mitt to take something out of a hot oven.

The fear the Psalm describes is that pervasive anxiety that comes when things feel out of control like they do right now. God is our refuge and gives us the strength and courage to do what needs to be done. We act and then leave the results to God! We don't need to fear because God is walking with us no matter what happens.

As we move into 2021, let's pray for one another, our country and the world that we all might take a very big breath and move together to make decisions that share Christ's love rather than division. May we, as followers of Jesus, open our hearts for the transformation that trusting God brings. And in so doing, love one another as Jesus loves us.

God bless you on your journey,

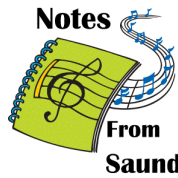
*Pastor Barb*





# January 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 <i>Worship 10 AM</i>	4  Exec Committee 7PM	5	6  Bible Study 2PM Worship & Music 7PM	7  Prayer 6PM	8	9
10 Confirmation 9AM <i>Worship 10 AM</i>	11	12  Finance 7PM	13  Bible Study 2PM Council 7PM	14  Prayer 6PM	15	16
17 Confirmation 9AM <i>Worship 10 AM</i>	18	19	20  Bible Study 2PM	21  Prayer 6PM	22	23  R3 Workshop 9AM - 12PM
24 Confirmation 9AM <i>Worship 10 AM</i>	25  R3 Workshop 7PM	26	27  Bible Study 2PM	28  Prayer 6PM	29	30
31 Confirmation 9AM <i>Worship 10 AM</i>						



From  
Saundra

New Year greetings to each of you! May God accomplish His Word among us individually and corporately in 2021. I've been coming back again and again the past two months to Isaiah 55:8-11. The New American Standard translation reads thus: "'For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways,' declares the Lord. 'For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return

there without watering the earth, and making it bear and sprout, and furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so shall My word be which goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.'" I hear plenty of growth and fruit in those verses, so I am looking for spiritual growth and fruit in 2021.

The Advent and Christmas seasons were different, but services were made successful and hopefully special to you and the Lord by the team work of a number of people. There was Pastor's ongoing challenges through her sermons and Thursday devotionals; there was Carol's bulletin preparation even for those of us involved in each service after we went virtual; Hannah, Matt and Zak took turns singing with Hannah's special vocal solo Christmas Eve; Zak and I played a piano duet and Zak did a stirring version of "O Come All ye Faithful" as an organ prelude Dec. 27, which, due to technical difficulties, will hopefully be recorded separately and uploaded to the web site soon; and you would not have heard any of the aforementioned had it not been for the technical work of Brandon Sidoli; folks whose names I do not know watered and transported poinsettias to and from the sanctuary each week to beautify the space; the organ was tuned Dec. 21 thanks to a generous donation from one of our family; and Dave Wolfe climbed into the organ chamber twice to rectify sticking ciphers because the organ does not like humidity and it rained much after the organ was tuned. I am privileged to work alongside these and other volunteers!



### COVID NEWS

To protect our community and our front-line medical workers, Trinity Lutheran Greencastle, has made the difficult decision to gather exclusively on-line at least through January 3. The executive team and our medical consultants will continue to evaluate the situation. We will inform you regarding worship in January as information becomes available.

This decision is not made lightly. The number of Covid infections and deaths is climbing and from love of our neighbor we have a responsibility to be part of the solution.

On-line Worship will be offered on Sundays at 10AM via Facebook Live. The worship services will be downloaded after the services to YouTube (click on TLC Greencastle PA) and can also be accessed on Trinity's website.

### THURSDAY DEVOTIONS

Pastor Barb is broadcasting a midweek devotion on Facebook Live on Thursday afternoons. Take a minute to breathe and recharge! It helps in this time of uncertainty and challenge to remember God walks with us. After recording, the devotions can be found at the bottom of the first page on the website.



### FOOD PANTRY NEEDS OUR HELP

God blesses us with enough so we can share those blessings with others. Barbara Grange at the Greencastle Food Pantry is asking for our help to stock the shelves. As Covid continues to ravage those with the least resources, we can be helpful in providing food. A recent survey shows that 1 in 8 US citizens are at risk for food insecurity. To help us focus our efforts, each week we'll assign a food item. Please drop your food off at the church. If the office is closed, it can be placed in the bin by the door.anytime.

- Jan 3 Peanut butter and jelly
- Jan 10 Canned vegetables and fruit except green beans and corn
- Jan 17 Mac and cheese or canned pasta like Chef-Boy-R-Dee
- Jan 24 Toilet paper
- Jan 31 Canned soup or soup mixes

### YOUTH

- ♦ The Tuesday night devotion Zoom meetings continue. Contact Rachel Gehr for the zoom information to join.
- ♦ The planning team will be meeting soon to explore options for youth group with the challenges presented by the pandemic.



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.

- TruPrecision Lawn Service: plowed the parking lot to allow access for the office staff and visitors
- Tom Sidoli: Changed the sign to reflect on-line worship
- Anonymous Donation: Cover the cost of organ tuning
- Brandon Sidoli: Continues to work with sound for Worship and Facebook Live and downloads the video to YouTube.
- Donna Wolfe and Nancy Freshman: Packed the boxes for our college students
- Sue Wunderlich: Continues to keep the altar flower donations organized and take the food to the food pantry each week
- Leah Porto: Send birthday and anniversary greetings from Trinity Lutheran
- Donna and Bud Wolfe: Change the banners and altar paraments for the season
- Those who donated and wrapped packages for our Christmas adopted family. Donna and Bud Wolfe for delivering our gifts.
- Trinity Family: For continuing to tithe to support God's work
- Dave and Stacey Wolfe: Donated a computer for the Sound Room
- Darrell Swart and family, Matt Cessna, Donna Wolfe and Charlie Ford: watered the Christmas poinsettias.

### PLEASE CONSIDER THIS

Council members are still needed to fill 3 vacant seats. We need everyone's help if we are to move forward to grow spiritually mature and be about God's work in the world as Jesus would have us do. Please pray about whether you are called to council. Your voice is needed! Even if you have served before, please consider stepping up again.



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### 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 congregation saw God this week:

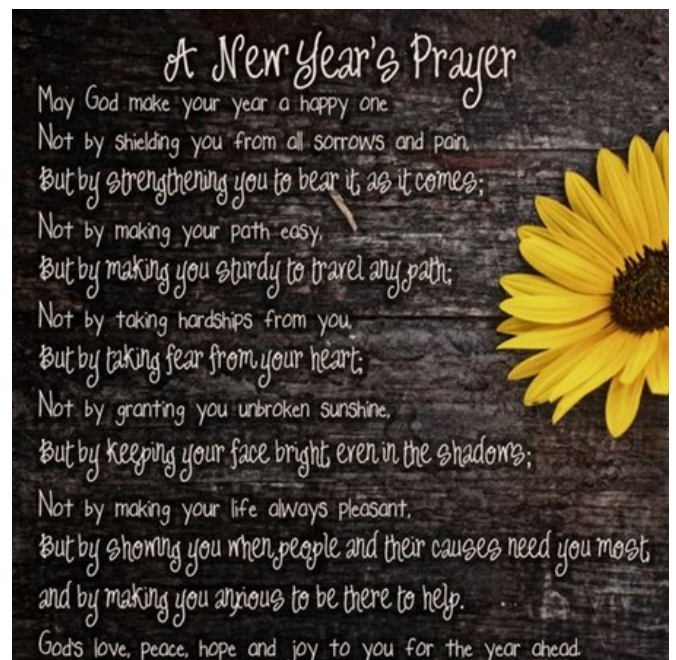
- Taking a drive and looking at all of the beautiful Christmas lights. There were so many this year.
- I woke to enjoy another beautiful day.
- The moon shining through my bedroom window.
- Watching my grandchildren open their presents on Christmas Eve.



*Thank you for the Christmas gifts and cards I am so grateful to be part of the Trinity Family. You are in my thoughts and prayers*  
*Pastor Barb*

### JANUARY SPECIAL APPEAL

The Special Appeal for January is the Franklin County Homeless Shelter and the Cold Weather Drop-In Shelter. If you desire to make a donation, please mark your envelope for "Special Appeal".







## ***TLC RENEWS R3 GROUP UPDATE***

### **God Moments:**

The R3 group wants to thank all of you for sharing your God moments with the congregation. These have proven to be a great way to start conversations about God between members. Others have found the request itself to be valuable, even if they choose not to share their moments, because it provides them with a moment to reflect on how God is acting in their lives. Thank you to everyone who has supported this effort. We will continue to ask the congregation to share their God moments.

### **Our Principles:**

The Renewal Team has been hard at work meeting together and with the larger R3 group on zoom. Using the information gathered during the PAWN process back in February 2019, the team created 4 principles to help guide our ministry focus moving forward.

### **Trinity Lutheran at our best:**

**Passionate about God**  
**Feeds the hungry physically, emotionally, and spiritually**  
**Open, welcoming, and friendly**  
**Courage to creatively use our gifts in the community**

### **Call to Action:**

Beth Ford, chair of the Renewal Team, presented the focus for Renewal in 2021 at the December congregational meeting. Trinity Lutheran is being challenged to involve the congregation in developing new ways to connect with each other in our family of faith and connect with our neighborhood.

To meet this new challenge, the R3 team is asking each committee, including council, to develop and implement a plan which helps our congregation connect with each other and/or the neighborhood. Each committee, and council, will be asked to:

- Meet with Beth Ford to get guidance, ideas, and tools for planning and implementation
- Choose a month in which to implement their plan
- Develop a plan for an activity which will help our members connect with each other and/or the neighborhood
- Recruit leaders and helpers to put the plan into action
- Implement the plan when it is ready
- Celebrate

We understand this is something new which can be off-putting or even intimidating. However, it is important for any community of God to spread His message, even in this time of uncertainty due to the pandemic.

With God walking with us, we can continue moving forward in mission and ministry.

# ‘The Year of My Wellbeing’

*“But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength.”—Isaiah 40:31a*

The Covid 19 pandemic has endured far longer than anyone imagined, and it has left us feeling stressed, weary, fearful, frustrated, angry, isolated, and dislocated. Many are simply depleted.

Even in normal times, being a good steward of our personal health takes time, vigilance, commitment and discipline. The pandemic’s protracted disruption has made it especially hard to take care of ourselves at the very time we need it most.

Because it will take months for the Coronavirus vaccine to be widely available, and even longer for “normal” to return, it may be wise for God’s people to designate 2021 “The Year of My Wellbeing” and focus on our health.

Our spiritual, mental, emotional wellbeing are interconnected. Working on any one of them will improve the rest. Working on all of them will best help you maintain equilibrium as we live into this new future.

Here are some tips for crafting a wellbeing strategy. Some may seem pretty basic, but many of us forget even the most obvious ideas.

- Ask God for help.
- Don’t go it alone! Work with friends for mutual support.
- Tend to your spirit through Scripture study, devotionals, worship, and, most importantly, prayer!
- Make quality time with loved ones.
- Do something just for you.
- Stuck? Talk to a counselor.
- Exercise regularly.
- Eat healthfully.
- Practice stress reduction techniques.

The pandemic will end, rest assured. When it does, we will all be greatly relieved. In the meantime, making 2021 “The Year of My Wellbeing” will help you stay strong.

—Rob Blezard

Copyright © 2021, Rev. Robert Blezard. Pastor Blezard serves as pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Aberdeen, MD, and works as content editor for [www.stewardshipoflife.org](http://www.stewardshipoflife.org). He blogs at [www.thestewardshipguy.com](http://www.thestewardshipguy.com).

