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Trinity Lutheran Church

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Kalamazoo MI 49007

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Pastor's Letter

Trinity Staff

Pastor

Outreach Pastor

Organist/Director of Music

Director of Family & Youth Ministry

Office Administrator

Hospitality Host

Bookkeeper

Custodian

Rev. Ken Johnson

Rev. Jake Lehman

Nathan Mattson

Heidi Albertson

Katie Grubaugh

Margaret Stevenson

Terri Schmidt

Bob Koenes

Church Council

President

Secretary

Treasurer

Financial Secretary

Christian Education

Congregational Life

Facilities

Service Ministry

Stewardship & Finance

Worship & Music

Julie Peterson

Holly Wohlfert

Christina Adams

Jerry Molitor

Ashley Wineland & Sally Morris

Paula Sportel & Jennifer Gougeon-Catarino

Max Wineland

Rasma McMullen & Sandy Wallace

Steve Morris & Steve Bittner

Jennifer Gatz

Trinity's Sunday Schedule:

***Worship with Holy Communion
at 8:30 and 11:00am***

Choir at 9:25 in choir loft

All Sunday School classes 9:45

Parent Small Group 10am

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 5.

Trinity will have in-person Wednesday Evening Services at 6:30PM through the season of Lent and Soup/Salad Suppers at 5:45 starting March 12.

March 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
23 Worship w/Holy Communion 8:30 & 11am	24	25	26	27	28	1 Middle School Service Event 9:30 Violin Choir 4-6
2 Worship w/Holy Communion 8:30 & 11am Pancake Breakfast 9:30-10:30 Sunday School 9:45 Adult Bible Study 9:45	3 Prayer Shawl 10-12	4 Clothes Closet 10-2 Loaves & Fishes 11-1 C.F.T. 11am	5 Men's Bible Study 7am	6 Scripture and Sandwiches 12-12:30	7	8 Open Roads Bike workshop 11-3 Violin Choir 4-6 Eucharie Night 6pm
VASA 2-5	10	11	12	13	14	15
9 Worship w/Holy Communion 8:30 & 11am Choir 9:25 Sunday School 9:45 Confirmation 9:45 Adult Bible Study 9:45 Parent small group 10 Church Council 12:15 Sons of Norway 2-5	10	11 Clothes Closet 10-2 Loaves & Fishes 11-1 C.F.T. 11am	12 Ladies Lunch 11:30	13 P.E.O. 10-3:30 Scripture and Sandwiches 12-12:30	14	15 Violin Choir 4-6
16 Worship w/Holy Communion 8:30 & 11am Choir 9:25 Sunday School 9:45 Confirmation 9:45 Adult Bible Study 9:45 Parent small group 10 Family Ministry 12:30-2	17	18 Clothes Closet 10-2 Loaves & Fishes 11-1 C.F.T. 11am	19 Men's Bible Study 7am	20	21	22
23 Worship w/Holy Communion 8:30 & 11am Choir 9:25 Sunday School 9:45 Confirmation 9:45 Adult Bible Study 9:45	24	25 Loaves & Fishes 11-1 C.F.T. 11am	26 Rebecca Circle 10am	27 Quilters 9am	28	29 Violin Choir 4-6
30 Worship w/Holy Communion 8:30 & 11am Choir 9:25 Sunday School 9:45 Adult Bible Study 9:45	31	25 Loaves & Fishes 11-1 C.F.T. 11am	26 Soup/Salad Supper 5:45 Lenten Service 6:30	27 Meeting of the Men 5-6:30	28	29 Violin Choir 4-6

**Please remember that Daylight Saving
Time starts Sunday, March 9.
Don't forget to adjust your clocks forward
one hour Saturday night!**

**Please remember that articles for the
Newsletters are due by the 16th of each month;
articles for the Sunday bulletins are due one
week in advance, by end of day Sunday.**

YOUTH MINISTRY

for all youth in grades 6th-12th

Whether you give up something negative or take on something positive, Lent is a very special time for us Lutherans. And a busy one! Grab those calendars.
~ Heidi

March Youth Group Days

Middle School Youth—So our group had talked about going to Avery's horse barn, True Vine Equestrian, and doing a service project out there. They are not available on Sundays, so we will meet at church on **Saturday, March 1st at 9:30am**. Our volunteering time is from **10am-noon**. They will assign us some tasks to complete, so please dress for work. If you live close to the barn, you can meet us out there at 10am (just let me know!). True Vine is located at: 22759 W McGillen Ave, Mattawan. We'll have a great time and help out a wonderful organization! Sign up on our Facebook page or email me by Friday, Feb. 28th.



High School Youth—Our youth meeting is set for **Sunday, March 9th from noon-3pm**. We will be going to the SPCA and help out with their cats and dogs, and whatever other projects they need us for. We will have lunch at church and then arrive at the SPCA at 1pm for a quick orientation. Then we'll volunteer until 3pm. You'll get to spend time with the cats and walk the dogs. To sign up, please visit our Facebook page or email me by Friday, Mar. 7th.



Upcoming Fundraisers:

Pancake Breakfast:



Coming up soon on **Sunday, March 2nd** is our Pancake Breakfast hosted by our fantastic youth and their amazing parents!! Please

show up at 8:30am ready to create a delicious meal for our church friends. The breakfast will last from 9:30am-10:45am. We'll need help with preparing, serving, and clean up. Parents, please plan on helping out with this event. And bring your griddles!!

Lenten Soup/Salad Suppers:

Another fundraiser for our Youth Activities are the Soup/Salad Suppers we hold during Lent before the worship services on Wednesdays. The suppers begin at 5pm and the worship services begin at 6pm. Youth, please sign up for times to help on the Youth Board across from the kitchen. Parents and church members are encouraged to sign up to bring soup, salad, bread, and/or desserts. Sign up today!!

April Event:

Coming up **April 26th-28th**, we are having a retreat weekend for our Youth and Family Ministries at the Double JJ Ranch in Rothbury, MI (about ½ hour north of Muskegon). This special weekend includes an indoor water park, bonding time together, campfires, and a break from the craziness of life. We will stay in individual cabins. The costs are: \$200 per family of 2 people, \$250 per family of 3 or 4 people, and \$300 per family of 5 or more people. That includes housing, 1 day waterpark passes, breakfast on Saturday and Sunday, and dinner on Saturday. Dinner on Friday and lunch on Saturday will be on your own. This is always a fantastic weekend and we truly hope you will join us. Sign up any time on our Facebook page or email me. Checks can be made out to Trinity, memo: Family Ministry. Please let me know if you have any questions.



CAMP!!!

Calling all Confirmation and Senior High Youth! Our Trinity youth are going to Stony Lake Lutheran Camp on Sunday, June 15th thru Friday, June 20. To sign up, go to the Living Water Ministries website at www.elcalivingwater.com. For each



person signed up for camp, you choose if you want to pay full rate, half rate, or nothing, and Trinity will donate \$100 per person. Camp is such a wonderful way to meet new people and explore your faith! Please let me know if you have any questions.



FAMILY MINISTRY

All families with children infant through 5th grade are welcome to join us!



Pretzels and Prayers

Sunday, March 16th 12:30-2pm

Lent is here and it's often a time for prayer and reflection and... pretzels?!?! A pretzel is special tool used by pastors to help children learn about prayer. After we eat some lunch, we will make our own pretzels and create special pretzel prayers for our congregation members. Hopefully you can join us for this fun time together.

Sunday Morning Opportunities in March:

Parent Small Group:

Dates: Sundays, March 9th & 16th

Time: 10am-10:40am

Place: Family Ministry room

April Event:

Youth and Family Ministry Retreat

Coming up April 26th-28th, we are having a retreat weekend

for our Youth and Family Ministries at the Double JJ Ranch in Rothbury, MI (about ½ hour north of Muskegon). This special weekend includes an indoor water park, bonding time together, campfires, and a break from the craziness of life. We will stay in individual cabins. The costs are: \$200 per family of 2 people, \$250 per family of 3 or 4 people, and \$300 per family of 5 or more people. That includes housing, 1 day waterpark passes, breakfast on Saturday and Sunday, and dinner on Saturday. Dinner on Friday and lunch on Saturday will be on your own. This is always a fantastic weekend and we truly hope you will join us. Sign up any time on Facebook or by emailing Heidi. Checks can be made out to Trinity, memo: Family Ministry. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Camp!!

Our Trinity kids are going to Stony Lake Lutheran Camp on Sunday, June 15th thru Friday, June 20. To sign up, go to the Living Water Ministries website at www.elcalivingwater.com. For each person signed up for camp, you choose if you want to pay full rate, half rate, or nothing, and Trinity will donate \$100 per person. Camp is such a wonderful way to meet new people and explore your faith! You can sign up elementary, middle school, and high school youth. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Worship and Faith Formation

Sunday School Classes Every Sunday from 9:45-10:45am!

- **Adult Bible Study** will be in the Lounge with Pr. Jake.
- **Confirmation** with Pr. Ken on the second floor of the education wing. Confirmation is for all youth 6th-8th grade!
- **High School Sunday school** in the Youth Room with Mr. Grubaugh.
- **Elementary Sunday School** for K-5th grade students on the second floor of the Education Wing with Mrs. Wineland.
- **Preschool Sunday School** in the preschool room on the second floor of the education wing with Mrs. Wright.
- **Parent small group** with Heidi Albertson in the Family Ministry room on the second floor of the education wing

Sunday March 2 will be our Pancake Breakfast Youth Fundraiser!
Everyone of all ages is welcome to join in the Fellowship Hall for breakfast and stay for an intergenerational Sunday school time in the Fellowship Hall.

By Heart - Sunday Morning Adult Bible Study

Are you new to the church? Are you curious about the basics of Lutheran faith? Have you been around for a while, but would like a refresher? Wherever you are on your journey, you are invited to join Pr. Jake throughout Lent for a study and conversation centered on the essentials of the Lutheran faith. We're bringing back the study "By Heart" which was put together by pastors and teachers all across the ELCA in order to bring adults into conversation with Luther's Small Catechism. Starting March 9, join us in the Lounge each Sunday from 9:45-10:30 for this engaging look into the basics of our faith!

March 5 is Ash Wednesday and marks the beginning of Lent. Starting March 5 and through the season of Lent, Wednesday Evening worship services will be in-person at 6:30pm every Wednesday. For those unable to join in person, the service will be live-streamed and be available to view on our YouTube channel.



Please sign up to help with Lenten Soup/Sald Suppers starting March 12.

Lent Wednesday Evening Services start on Ash Wednesday, March 5 at 6:30pm.

Every following Wednesday in Lent, a Soup/Salad Supper will begin at 5:45 before the Lenten Service. We ask for our congregants to sign up to help provide food for these suppers by signing up on the list posted on the Youth Board opposite the kitchen in the downstairs hallway!

Men's Bible Study - We will meet every other Wednesday morning, next on Wednesday March 5 & 19. We will be serving a light breakfast each time. We meet @ 7:00 AM and try to finish around 8:00 AM. All are welcome. "No experience necessary". We're just a group of men trying to apply what we read in Scripture to our present lives and to hopefully become a light for others.

Rebecca Circle Looking for a chance to participate monthly in a women's small group meeting for Bible study? Rebecca Circle is an excellent chance to make some new acquaintances while studying God's word. They meet every 4th Wednesday of the month at Trinity and all are welcome! The next Circle meeting will be on Wednesday, March 26 at 10am.

Lenten devotional materials will be available in the Fellowship Hall as we approach the season of Lent and prepare for Easter. Please help yourself!

Scripture and Sandwiches Online Bible Study! Scripture and Sandwiches is back for an eight week walk through the Sermon on the Mount! We will meet Thursdays March 6th and 13th from 12-12:30 to conclude the series with conversation and study over lunch. The meetings happen via Zoom so you can join in from wherever you are and don't worry if you've missed the first few sessions, you can jump in anytime!

Use the Zoom info below or follow the link provided in the weekly emails to join!

Meeting ID: 821 5743 3849 Passcode: Lunchtime

Worship Assistants

Date	Time	Altar Guild	Welcome Team	Lectors	Acolytes
March 2	8:30	Teri Koretsky	Jen & Tim Gatz	Carol Knoch	Jaxon & Avner Grubaugh
	11:00	Holly Wohlfert	Karen Jachym Sheree Sorensen	Connie Ruch	Elyse Albertson Emma Zimmermann
March 5 Ash Wednesday	6:30	Teri Koretsky	Julie & Keith Peterson	Keith Peterson	
March 9	8:30	Joyce Magerlein	Teri Koretsky Janet Gullickson	Arlen Gullickson	Nolan & Avery Fowler
	11:00	Sheree Sorensen	Julie & Keith Peterson	Sarah Zimmermann	Kaitlyn Albertson Jacob Zimmermann
March 16	8:30	Karn Erlandson	Jason Grubaugh Paula Sportel	Jen Gatz	Jaxon & Avner Grubaugh
	11:00	Holly Wohlfert	Rasma McMullen Pat Mason	Tim Eschelbach	Miryam Greenman Evelyn Sutherland
March 23	8:30	Karn Erlandson	Beth Belleville Arlen Gullickson	Debbie Harding	Nolan & Avery Fowler
	11:00	Julie Peterson	Tom & Joy Kuhs	Linda Ward	Kiley & Calico Morris
March 30		Joyce Magerlein		Steve Bittner	Jaxon & Avner Grubaugh
		Sheree Sorensen	Greta Decker Connie Ruch	Nancy Diment	Frederick Thurn Clare Lehman

Service Ministry

The TLC Prayer Shawl Ministry meets March 3 at 10am We gather the first Monday of each month in the lounge at 10:00 to receive and pray over completed shawls, encourage one another as we work on new shawls, reflect on the gratitude of prayer shawl recipients, and, yes, socialize! If you would like more information, please call Sidney Mueller at (269)806-0023.

***Prayer Shawls** are available for gifting to members of Trinity and their extended families and friends in times of healing, grief, celebration, or any other occasion one feels the need of God's loving presence. To request a prayer shawl, or with questions about our Prayer Shawl Ministry, please contact Sidney Mueller (269-806-0023), one of the pastors, or Julie Peterson, chair of the Caring Ministry team.*

Christ Clothes Closet: The Closet needs donations of men's and women's socks and winter coats for all as they continue to give away cold weather gear throughout this season.

Personal Care Item Donations Needed As part of our care for our neighbors in need, the Christ Clothes closet has expanded its offerings to include personal care items. Items needed are:

- Feminine hygiene products
- Toilet paper
- lotion
- razors
- shaving cream

Good Samaritan Fund Need Trinity's Good Samaritan fund is the fund that enables us to meet the needs of those in our community during some of their most difficult moments. This fund is generated entirely through the generosity of our congregation. These funds go toward electric bills, rent, and other essentials when our neighbors are facing utility shut-offs, eviction notices, or seeking to get into housing. Due to a sustained time of high demand this fund balance is running low. If you find yourself in a position to be able to give, any gift is greatly appreciated. Simply designate the gift to the "Good Samaritan Fund" on the memo line of your check or give online under the "giving" tab on our website www.tlckzoo.com.

Trinity's Loaves and Fishes Pantry Requests:

Although basic food needs are being met, our pantry clients are most grateful for extras that are not often included in our Loaves and Fishes orders. Adding any of these items to your grocery cart would be appreciated. They can be dropped off in the church office.

- Granola bars or similar items
- Pop tarts
- Peanut butter or cheese crackers in wrapped packages
- Snacks (in small bags).
- Baked beans (pork and beans)
- Plastic grocery bags

Refugee Families in Need! Trinity is working with our local refugee services to help provide for new refugee families in Kalamazoo. We currently have 7 families that have a list of practical needs and as a congregation we would like to be able to fulfill those needs! Some of those basic needs include:

- Towels (kitchen and bath)
- Blankets
- Cleaning supplies
- Laundry baskets and detergent
- Toilet paper
- Paper towels
- Personal Hygiene products (soap, lotion, razors, shaving cream, feminine hygiene, deodorant)



If you are interested in helping with this project you can drop items off to church labeled "Refugees" any time the church is open; or if you wish to contribute financially to our Kalamazoo Refugees, scan the QR code to make a donation. And if you would like to volunteer time to help our refugee families, please contact Bess Fitzgerald (bess.fitzgerald@gmail.com) or the church office.

El Sol Elementary Outreach: El Sol Elementary School is just a few blocks away from Trinity and as their partners in serving the neighborhood, we want to show our support for their teachers, students and families! We will be collecting all the items listed below at Trinity and will deliver to El Sol in the fall when school starts back up! Please drop off during the week or on a Sunday! Thanks for your help in building a stronger connection with our neighborhood school!

- Kids Clothes Needed - It's time to clean out your kids' closets! El Sol Elementary has asked for help with supplying some of their students with winter clothes and gear, new socks and underwear, sweatpants and leggings. Snowpants are a particular need! Will you consider helping us spread the word and donating your kids' clothes here?
- School Supplies - Backpacks, crayons, standard washable school markers (Crayola) and plastic two pocket folders. These donations will be collected at Trinity. Look for sales this summer!
- Teachers Breakroom - non-perishable items like chips, candy, granola bars, microwave popcorn, drinks, ground coffee, and K-cups.

Emergency Food Box: Trinity is partnering with people in our neighborhood to stock the emergency food box located on Oak Street between Cedar and Lovell. Easy open, ready to eat, non-perishable foods such as cans with a flip top lid, ramen, granola bars, crackers, protein shakes etc. should be put in the box designated Emergency Food Box outside the Fellowship Hall. Call Rasma McMullen (269-349-9429) or Sandy Wallace (269-375-8876) with any questions.

Thrivent Grant Request - *We are seeking Thrivent Grants! We have several needs between our Service Ministries, Christian Education, Youth and Family Ministries and Congregational Life Ministries that could use your help! With Thrivent Grants, we're able to continue to keep this time welcoming to all. Thank you!*

Helping Hands Needed at Quilters!! No sewing required, please come and help with this project if you are looking for a place to volunteer and some conversation and coffee. Quilters meet the fourth (and fifth) Thursday of each month from 9am – 12noon. For more information, contact Teri at tkoretsky44@yahoo.com or at 269-567-4238.

Volunteer Opportunities

Bike repair workshop for El Sol Elementary School! - Rescheduled for March 8!

Trinity is once again repairing bicycles to be donated to students and families at El Sol Elementary School! We have an abundance of donated bikes and we're partnering with Open Roads to make sure that the bikes are in top notch condition before passing them on to the students. The repair day at Open Roads will be March 8th from 11-3ish and we're looking for 8-10 volunteers who are willing do the repairs. No experience is necessary as the staff of Open Roads will be there to teach and guide us along the way! Space is limited, so sign up in the Fellowship Hall by March 2nd to be a part of the crew!



Love your neighbor, walk the CROP! If you're looking for a way to spread kindness both here in Kalamazoo and across the globe, volunteer your time, talent or treasure to the **Kalamazoo Valley CROP Hunger Walk on Sunday, April 27th!** New this year: Trinity Lutheran will be the starting and ending point for the walk, with both a 1.25 mile and a 3.1 mile route. Event check in starts at 1 p.m., with the walk kickoff at 2 p.m.

CROP Hunger Walks raise money for [Church World Service](#) hunger/ poverty reduction projects locally (~25%) and internationally (~75%). This year our local funds will go to Loaves & Fishes food pantry. The steps we take and the funds we raise together provide life-saving support including emergency

food and resources, along with the seeds, tools and programs that help families feed themselves in the future. \$1 provides 10 meals through local partners in the U.S., \$15 provides chickens for a family in Tanzania, \$30 provides a household water filter for a family in Cambodia...there are so many ways to love our neighbors. Help us end global hunger one step at a time!

If you are interested in walking, donating to our Trinity team, or just would like more information, please contact Karn Erlandson (karnerlandson@yahoo.com; [269-579-0619](tel:269-579-0619)). Our team web page is available for online donations at:

<https://events.crophungerwalk.org/crophungerwalks/team/trinity-lutheran-kalamazoo>

Please sign up for Fellowship Time and Altar Flowers! Sign up in the Fellowship Hall and help share God's love for our community! Individuals, families, and groups are encouraged to provide flowers or host fellowship time for the coming months. This is a great way to celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, or other special events. *(And if you enjoy baking, we're always happy for help to stock our freezer for Sundays that might not have a fellowship host!)* *Altar flowers are \$ 20 per bouquet and should be ordered one week in advance. **Call or email the church office or sign up in the Fellowship Hall if you wish to put altar flowers on for a Sunday.**

We are once again hosting American Red Cross blood drives at Trinity in 2025. The next dates are Wednesday April 16, 2025, Wednesday June 25, 2025, Wednesday August 27, 2025. We are asking for volunteers to become part of the team to help with registrations/hospitality, some set-up and closing the church at end of the drive. If you are interested/able to do this, please contact Holly Wohlfert at 269-808-3889 or the church office. Thank you in advance for your help.

One of the suggested goals from some of our members is to have Trinity's location be "The Best Blood Drive in downtown Kalamazoo!" To help us attain that goal, please prayerfully consider becoming a donor! Also, if you are a Thrivent member and have access to Thrivent gift cards that could be used for prizes, we would welcome them as donations to help increase our donation numbers. Maybe we could also offer additional choices of post-donation goodies? If you have any ideas for ways to make us the best donation spot, please let Holly Wohlfert know!

Please keep these people in your prayers: Linda Ward, David Mason, Ruth Krueger, Bertha Boettcher, Jeannie Grubaugh, Beth Latshaw, Sandy Eschelbach, Diane Reau, Kendall.

Green Team Meeting with Special Guest!

You are invited to join the Green Team on Tuesday March 11th from 2-3pm as we welcome special guest Molly Mechtenberg! Molly is the Executive director of Hope for Creation, a faith-based organization focused on environmental stewardship and sustainability. She will share about the efforts that are happening in our community and how we as a team at Trinity can continue our work to care for the good world God made!

Fellowship Events

Ladies Lunch will be March 12 at 11:30am at Alibi (153 W. Center Ave., Portage) This is a fun way to meet with old friends and make new connections with each other. All women are welcome! Sign up in the Fellowship Hall; hope to see you there!



Pancake Breakfast! To celebrate the final Sunday before the beginning of Lent, the Youth will be hosting a Pancake Breakfast for the congregation! We'll be serving up pancakes and sausage **between services on Sunday March 2nd**. This has become a great annual event for our church and it will also be a fundraiser to benefit the youth fund for all of our activities!

Wartburg Singers and Orchestra to Visit Kalamazoo Our friends at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church are hosting a concert by the Wartburg College Castle Singers and Kammerstreicher Chamber Orchestra on Tuesday, March 4, at 7:30 PM. Musical selections will range from classical to contemporary and will surely make for an enjoyable evening! Wartburg College is an ELCA affiliated school located in Waverly, Iowa and freewill donations will be accepted to help fund scholarships and provide for future tours.

Basket Weaving at Trinity! A basket weaving class is being offered on Saturday, April 19 just in time for Easter. Please sign up on the bulletin board in Fellowship hall if you're interested. The interest in the type of basket and time will be used to determine the final details of the class. Questions? Contact Jennifer Gougeon-Catarino gougeonjs@gmail.com

Meeting of the Men! Meeting of the men is an "informal, come as you are, when you can" kind of get together with no agenda, just good conversation and a great opportunity to get to know one other guys who call Trinity home! We'll gather at O'Duffy's Pub on **Thursday March 20 from 5-6:30pm** for a relaxed time of fellowship and conversation!

Euchre Tournament, Saturday March 8! We will gather at 6pm with card play to start at 6:30pm. A suggested donation of \$10/person at registration (split 50/50 between Good Samaritan Fund and prizes) and \$1.00/person for each time if "Euchred" during play (given to last person winning w/a "lone hand"). For the Euchre tournament, you don't need a partner but bring your choice of beverage and a snack to share! If you have any requests for other games to be offered, let Holly Wohlfert know via text 269-808-3889. Put a "save-the-date" on your calendar and watch for more updates in the upcoming weeks.

Crop Walk to be Held at Trinity! Dust off your walking shoes because this year's Crop Walk will be starting and finishing at Trinity! The walk will happen on April 27th at 2pm and we're thrilled that we've been selected as the host site! You can participate by walking, giving, volunteering, or just showing up! We're hoping to have a great turnout from Trinity so mark your calendars and be on the lookout for more details and announcements to come!

Bring Your Ugly Mug to Church! Okay, it doesn't have to be ugly, but bring your mug to church! In an effort to produce less waste and give a little more of a personal touch the coffee we sip on Sunday mornings we've added a "Mug Wall" to the fellowship hall. There are detailed instructions next to the wall, but the basic idea is you bring in a mug from home, you use the mug when you're here, we wash the mug during the week! Simple, right! So we'll say it again, Bring your ugly (or not ugly) mug to church!

Greece & Turkey Trip – "Walk in the Footstep of Paul and John" - Summer 2027

Trinity is exploring the option of taking a Youth and Congregational trip to Greece and Turkey the summer of 2027. If you would be interested in joining us or would like more information, please sign up in the Fellowship Hall or the Youth Board, or fill out the interest form online in our weekly emails. We will have an informational meeting sometime in the spring, so look for more details soon! If you are in middle school, a parent/guardian would have to attend the trip. If you are in high school, Heidi Albertson would act as your guardian if a parent/guardian is not going on the trip.

Message from the Church Council

Our annual Congregational meeting was February 5. We elected new members and re-elected several other members to the Council.

The Congregation approved resolutions to continue work on roof leaks and plastering needed on a wall in the sanctuary and in the Cedar street entrance.

Annual reports were delivered from each church ministry.

We appreciate your strong commitments to and the time you spend at Trinity!

You are cordially invited to attend Council meetings. Our next is February 23 in the church lounge.

Thanks to all.

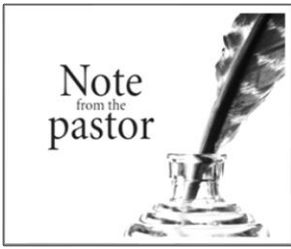
Julie Peterson

If you have questions about any of the above information, feel free to contact Julie Peterson at jtpeterson55@comcast.net. (or find her at 11:00 a.m. worship service!)



If you have not already signed up for our weekly emails, please use the QR code here or visit our website (www.tlckzoo.com) and scroll to the bottom of the home page to sign up to receive weekly updates about what's going on around Trinity!





"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'" **-Matthew 25:37-39**

At times, our faith can seem like a complicated thing and questions about how to *live out* our faith can seem even more confusing and complex. We struggle with how to think about political issues; we worry about when and how to act in regard to social challenges; we disagree with people who we care for and respect and wonder if we've got it right, or if they do, or if nobody does. In a world that very often calls us to take sides, we can at times feel stuck in the middle.

Believe it or not, this is not a new problem. People in Jesus' time were challenged by the same kinds of concerns. They lived with political, religious, and personal turmoil and struggled with ideas of what it meant to live faithfully in the midst of those things.

When addressing his followers, Jesus had a wonderful way of simplifying what it meant to live a life of faith in a way that boiled things down to what was most essential. We see this clearly in the above verses as Jesus describes a scene where the sheep are separated from the goats. After the king commends the sheep for providing for him when he was hungry, thirsty, naked, sick, and imprisoned, the righteous ask, "When did we do this?". The king tells them "Just as you did it for the least of these...you did it for me."

This is a simple and powerful reminder that despite all of the confusing and complex issues in our lives and the world, our mandate is clear. Feed the hungry, refresh those who thirst, clothe the naked, tend to the sick, visit the prisoner. In short, we are freed to care for the least of these; to love our neighbor as ourselves...and there is no shortage of opportunity to do that. At Trinity, opportunities to care for the "least of these" are never far away. Volunteers, funds, and items are needed to care for the refugee families that we have welcomed to Kalamazoo. Donations of time and items (clothing, food, and personal care) are welcome at the Clothes Closet or Food Pantry. Our Good Samaritan Fund which is used to assist our neighbors with things like rent and utilities has run very low and is in need of funds. And if you're not in a position to give time or funds, simply sit with one of our neighbors who has come in on a Sunday morning for some warmth and a cup of coffee.

Sometimes our life of faith can be complex, but I encourage us all to remember that it doesn't have to be. We are wholly and eternally loved by God and because of that, we are freed to share that love with our neighbors. So in the midst of this complicated world, I hope we can all take a moment to pause and thank God for the love we receive and are blessed to share.

Peace,
Pr. Jake