

Trinity Tower



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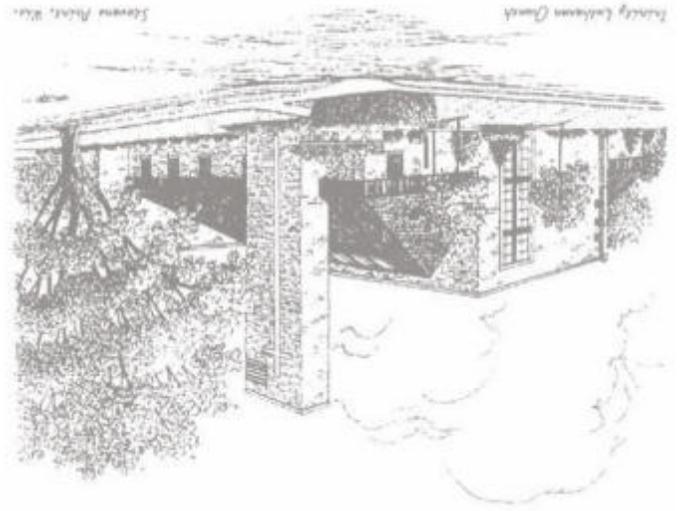
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NOVEMBER 2020



Dated material

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Greetings, Trinity Family and Friends,



As you know, we have not been putting out a monthly Tower newsletter and calendar during these pandemic months. Most of the things we usually comment about have been postponed or cancelled. In its place, I have been sending out occasional Pastoral Letters, giving updates on important information. Recently, however, a number of people have been asking for an update on all of the ministries that are continuing at Trinity in spite of the pandemic church closure. In response, we have asked committee, ministry, and team leaders to give a brief update on what is happening in their corner of Trinity's ministry. This special Tower issue offers you the responses we have received. Please join me in finding ways to thank our earnest servants of Christ for all they are doing.

~Pastor Clay

Pastoral Care

There was a brief window recently when pastoral visits could be made in person (with safety precautions in effect). That window has now closed for the time being and we are back to communicating with our home bound members, people on the prayer list, and others through phone calls. When you read the names on the prayer list, please call the people you know to offer your encouragement. If you know of anyone who has a special need, please contact Pastor Clay.



Since the summer, there have been:
One baptism, which was performed in the Plover River at Iverson Park: Eliana Jo Stoflet
Three weddings, held outdoors or in outdoor shelters, and
Three graveside (and one funeral home) funerals

New Members

Even through the pandemic, people are finding and wanting to be a part of our congregation. Pastor Clay is meeting with them via Zoom and will be finding a way to install them as members in an upcoming worship service. This will likely involve presenting them by video.

Re-Opening Task Force

As predicted by the CDC, our fall weather is causing a resurgence in Covid infections in our state and community. Carefully following the Badger Bounce Back protocols and guidance from our synod office, our Task Force is recommending that we keep Trinity closed to all meetings and activities for the time being. While this is a hardship for all of us, we are grateful to know that we are doing all we can to suppress the disease and not be part of its spread. This is one way for churches to demonstrate love for our neighbors.



WORSHIP

Worship

The Trinity worship and music staff continues to work creatively to offer live-streamed services on Face Book, and soon on You Tube. Our new broadcast equipment is now in place. Please see a separate article from our tech team on when we can expect our improved broadcasts to begin. As for the upcoming holidays, we are researching creative means by which to offer Thanksgiving, Advent, and Christmas offerings on Wednesdays and Sundays that will be meaningful and enriching. Thanks are due to the music team for their faithful work during challenging times.



Update on Live Streaming Technology

With gratitude to the congregation for the highly successful fund-raising effort, and to the volunteer and professional team that has been working to acquire our new equipment and put it into use, we want to let you know how close we are to putting it all to use in our live-streaming services.

We are currently operating in what can be called a "studio mode." This means that we set things up to be viewed and audible on the broadcasts, making use of a tiny portion of our chancel. This will continue during our church closure, but it will be significantly improved. We have a better camera and the capacity to move from slides to live images; we will also have fully integrated sound. The set up for converting to our new equipment is 85% complete. We are waiting on a couple of vendors (SoundWorks and Ontogeny, our website provider) to complete some final preparations. We anticipate that they will be done soon and we will be able to move to our new format in a week or two. As might be expected, businesses such as these are very busy these days, so the delay is understandable.

The second mode will involve our new sanctuary cameras and will be useful to us when we return to live worship in church. This part of the project is further behind, but it will not be needed until we feel comfortable holding live worship. When we return to live worship, these cameras will capture our full services and interface with our screen slides and our sound system. Together, these things will give us high-definition recordings of our services which will be broadcast live on Facebook and YouTube and our local access TV channel.

Thank you for your patience as we learn to use this new technology.



Staff Updates

Although the church building remains closed, there is still work to do and Trinity staff remain busy and are available daily for phone or email requests and to respond to any concerns or questions. Wanting to make the office space as safe and distanced as possible, the office is staffed each day, but not all of the staff are on site. We are wearing masks whenever we are in the building. Doris is in the office on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Tammy is scheduled each Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Todd works from the office on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, and as needed. Pastor Clay is holed up in his office Mondays through Thursdays. The days, we are not "in," we are each working from home and can be contacted via our cell phones. This time of less congregational activity has allowed staff to begin work on several church record and organizational projects and plan for future ideas and efforts. We are keeping busy! Glen Bauer, continues to be in the building each day tending to both the usual (and enhanced) cleaning and building and grounds projects. Amy is doing all she can to make sure the children and staff of the Learning Center and Preschool are safe and cared for. In the midst of all that is happening, she and her staff are also awaiting the Center's formal YoungStar rating evaluation. If any member of the Trinity staff can be of assistance in any way or if you have any additional questions, please reach out to Todd or Pastor Clay anytime.



Through the use of Zoom, the council has been meeting monthly, as needed, throughout the pandemic period to see to the ongoing business of the church. It has been following the financial situation carefully, regarding both the congregational budget and the Learning Center and Preschool. The Executive Committee has also been meeting regularly to set agendas and see to any business that comes up between council meetings. If you have any congregational concerns or agenda items for the council to consider, please contact our president, Jeff Martin (jdmart5771@icloud.com).



Trinity Learning Center and Preschool



The last 9 months have been very interesting at the learning center, from the start of the pandemic when we were limited to how many people we could have in the building to all the changes the pandemic has brought. The staff and children have done an amazing job throughout the whole process. We have been able to continue to provide a loving, caring and positive learning environment. We successfully started another year of our 4K program and have our highest attendance ever. Our biggest joy is that, even with the pandemic, our families, the church, and the community have gone above and beyond in our fundraising effort to get a new playground climber and flooring. They will be installed in the spring of 2021. Wishing everyone a healthy holiday season.

~Amy Kurkowski, Trinity Learning Center & Preschool



Our congregational Bylaws require that we hold an annual meeting between January 15 and 31. They also allow for creativity in holding our meetings, including electronic means. Accordingly, the Executive Committee has set the following dates for our budget information meetings and our annual meetings, all of which will be held via Zoom.

- ◆ Informational meetings: 9:00 am on Sunday, January 17 and 6:00 pm on Wednesday, January 20.
- ◆ Annual meeting: 9:00 am on January 24.

Watch for more information about how to participate in this important ministry event.

CONFIRMATION

The Latest on Confirmation

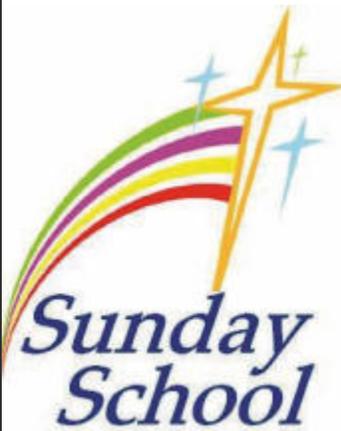
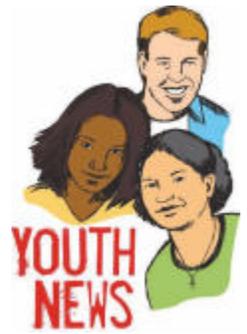
Seven Trinity tenth graders affirmed their faith during an outdoor, socially distanced Confirmation service on Reformation Sunday, October 25th. Alli Bena, Matt Davis, Ian Houtman, Adam Rust, Nathan Saari, Aileen Winn and Zach Kolodziej (and families) gathered in their vehicles in the West lot and one-by-one came forward to the baptismal font to share their personal statements of faith. Video of the liturgy was included in the following All Saints Sunday online worship (and is now available on Trinity's You Tube channel). A special thank you to Mary Kay Doolittle and Carrie Bonikowske for their beautiful contributions to the morning: to Mary Kay for her work on the Confirmands embroidered stoles and to Carrie for creating the wood and floral crosses. Congratulations and continued blessings to these seven amazing young people as they journey on in life and faith!

Wednesday night Confirmation resumed October 7th. We will continue to meet the first three Wednesdays of each month at 6:30 PM. Thirteen first and second year group members are exploring the books of the Old and New Testament via Google Meet. This time together is definitely different, but we are utilizing some new video resources and enjoying the opportunity to connect.

Third year Confirmation group members and their families will be getting together on Google Meet on Thursday, November 19th at 6:30 PM to learn about plans for what will be a very different "Mentor Year." Many of the shared experiences that are typically a part of the year will have to be moved virtually for a time.



Trinity youth are "Google Meet"-ing once or twice each week. For a fun break from what's normal, we recently competed in the first-ever virtual "World's Largest Trivia Contest" online and on WWSP. "Bad Shepherd and the Missing Flock," our trivia team, even managed a respectable 162nd place finish (out of nearly 300 teams) in "Experiment in Trivia," October 23rd-25th. Thanks to all the youth, former youth and parents who joined in the fun! We are continuing to look at additional ways to connect in the months ahead.



Todd, with the support of Sunday School volunteers and the Christian Education Committee, has been emailing out occasional devotions and activities to participating families. October's message was based on the popular children's story "Spookley the Square Pumpkin" by Joe Troiano. In November, we will find creative ways to give thanks and as we head into Advent and continue into December, we will prepare and look again to Christmas.

Men's Bible Study

Until recently, when the weather turned cold, the Men's Bible study has been meeting out of doors. We have now returned to zoom meetings at 8 am on Thursday of each week. Because people are home more now than ever, our attendance has grown nicely and we have added a few new members. Any men who would like to join us are invited to tune in to our zoom meetings. The zoom link always stays the same. Please join us: Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6715504256>

Trinity's Circles

The women's Joy and Charity Circles continue to meet monthly for Bible study and fellowship on the Zoom platform.

Zoom Meetings

Who knew that Zoom would turn out to be such a vital ministry and educational platform during the pandemic. While anyone can have a free Zoom license, Trinity has acquired a special license that can be used for long, uninterrupted meetings. If you wish to have a Zoom meeting for any reason, please contact Doris in the office. She will set it up for you.

Trinity Quiltmakers



For 75 years, Lutheran World Relief has worked with partners like us to remind families around the world that they are not alone. From earthquakes to drought, to hurricanes and extreme poverty, the need to provide

humanitarian support remains. Our quilts and kits are urgently needed!

The gifts you give through these projects are an immeasurable blessing to families around the world! Thank you to everyone who brings fabric, yarn, baby blankets, baby sweaters and all the things that go into making all the kits we prepare for Lutheran World Relief.

Trinity's annual shipment was loaded and driven to WI Rapids yesterday. Thanks to Barb Krueger and Ozz Hagen for hauling two truck loads. We sent the following items for 2020: 130 Quilts; 104 Baby Care Kits; 140 School Kits and 120 Personal Care Kits. 8 quilts were given to Operation Bootstrap.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed in various ways to our mission, we couldn't do any of this without your help.



During these pandemic months, maintenance of Trinity's building and grounds has continued daily. Glen Bauer, our skilled and knowledgeable B&G Director, has directed or been involved in the following major improvements during this time.

Some **major** maintenance items taken care of have been:

- The AC drain pan for the air handler in the Crow's Nest was replaced.
- The kitchen refrigerator, freezer and stove have had repairs.
- A man hole in the west parking lot was replaced.
- A new AC condenser and air handler for the 2nd floor at 1501 was installed.
- A new grease interceptor was installed in the kitchen and tiles relaid around it.
- The kitchen hood was cleaned and the fan belt for it, located on the roof was replaced.
 - LED lights have been installed in the basement classrooms.
 - The west exterior doors, which were part of 2019 Stewardship have been ordered.



ThankOffering Sunday

The tradition of ThankOfferings goes back to the 1800s or even earlier. Back then, when it seemed that there was not enough money to carry out the work of the church, the women would act together as “cent” or “mite” societies. Each woman would set aside offerings at home throughout the year in thanksgiving for blessings received. On occasion, the women would come together, joining their offerings together to support ministry of many kinds. When *Women of the ELCA* was formed in 1987, we committed to continue this tradition of giving in gratitude for blessings. Each year, in thousands of congregations, ThankOfferings are given to support the life-changing ministries of Women of the ELCA. Together, we do more than we could ever do apart. On Sunday, November 22nd, will be ThankOffering service. The sermon will be delivered by Pastor Clay’s sister, Pastor Diane Dardon’.

All ThankOfferings can be made online through **GIVEPLUST⁺** on our website, mailed to Trinity or dropped off in the mail slot at door #2 with ThankOffering written on the envelope or the memo line of the check.



Report for Global & Local Outreach (GLO) Committee

The Global & Local Outreach Committee has continued to remain active on a very limited basis. We spearheaded the drive for contributions for the Lutheran Disaster Response for Southern hurricanes and floods, and Western wildfires. This appeal netted close to \$500.

Additionally, this summer the GLO committee was in charge of collecting school supplies for Project Fresh Start for the local school children. We did this collection in conjunction with the Lutheran World Relief appeal for school supplies for School Kits.

As the church has remained closed, collecting items for the local food pantries has been problematic, so we have altered this appeal and are now requesting monetary donations. We rotate the donations for the four local food pantries on a monthly basis. For October, Operation Bootstrap was the recipient (close to \$600), for November it will be Interfaith Food Pantry. At the end of each month, the church totals the donations and sends a check to the food pantry of that month.

The GLO committee, jointly with the Youth and Family committee, will be coordinating the Holiday Basket Project.

Going forward, Good Gifts Catalogs will again be available, and during Advent the GLO committee will be doing publicity and requesting donations for “Bread for the World” or “World Hunger” (or both).

A big Thank You to all our members and friends of Trinity who have generously contributed to our local and global outreach appeals.



Bible Quiz

After Jesus healed 10 men at one time, how many returned to thank him? What had been their ailment?

- A. five; blindness
- B. all 10; deafness
- C. one; possession by demons
- D. one; leprosy

Thank YOU Jesus

Answer: D (See Luke 17:11-19.)



Holiday Baskets

Trinity will again be sponsoring several families through the "Holiday Basket Project." We are developing an online sign-up system that will work for both those who would like to purchase gifts for our sponsored families, as well as those who would prefer to donate to our efforts. Stay tuned to the Trinity Weekly email as we get closer to December for the latest details on how you can be a part of this special program.

Trinity will again be sponsoring several families through the "Holiday Basket Project." We are developing an online sign-up system that will work for both those who would like to purchase

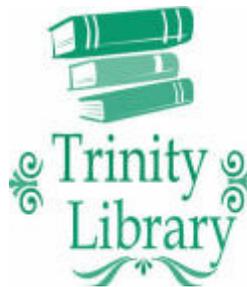
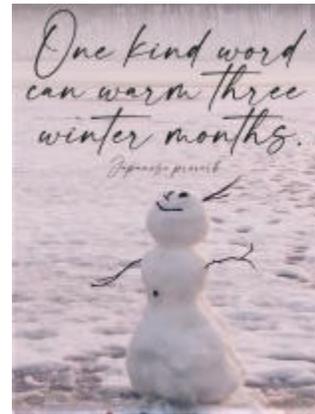
"Hat and Mitten Tree"

This year's "Hat and Mitten Tree" collection to benefit Operation Bootstrap has kicked off! Please bring your donations of new hats, mittens or scarves to Trinity and place them in the appropriate bin just outside the South doors of the church. With temperatures dropping, let's help make this season a little warmer for those in need throughout our community. The last day to drop off items is Monday, December 7th. We are grateful for your continued support!



Christmas Wreath Sale Cancelled

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Trinity youth will be unable to provide members the opportunity to purchase Christmas wreaths this year. We apologize for any inconvenience this will cause. Our new supplier is limited in their capacity to produce wreaths in light of current conditions. Please contact Todd if you have any questions.



Though the indoor library is quiet, the library committee has been in touch on email, by phone, and with a couple of outdoor lawn chair meetings. We have been actively searching for and noting good books to add to our collection. About 30 titles have been purchased and will appear on the library shelves during 2021.

The Little Free Library (outdoors) is open and very busy! Books are removed and added regularly. Everybody is welcome, and encouraged, to use this "no contact" library. It is located on Ellis St., near the Trinity parking lot, next to the Little Free Pantry.

Stay well and cozy up with a good book!
Sybil Strupp for the Trinity Library Committee

Dear friends,

We had planned to gather in May 2020 in Johannesburg for an ELCA Southern Africa Companion Church Consultation but the COVID-19 pandemic forced us to postpone the gathering.

Companion synods relating to Lutheran churches in Namibia then asked: “What can we do to keep in touch, to support each other and to strengthen our companionship as we respond to COVID-19, racism, poverty, inequality and climate disaster?”



The publication by the ELCA of a study guide on Martin Luther’s 1520 treatise *Freedom of a Christian* provided an opening. (The Treatise and Study Guide are available for free download at <https://www.elca500.org/>)

500 years ago Martin Luther wrote: “The Christian [person] is a completely free lord of all, subject to none. The Christian [person] is a completely dutiful servant of all, subject to all. ... Christian[s] ... do not live in themselves but in Christ and their neighbor, or else they are not Christian. They live in Christ through faith and in the neighbor through love.”

While one can ask what Luther meant when he wrote this, the key question is, “What does this freedom mean for us today?” What are we freed from and what are we freed for?

We decided to use the internet to bring us together. Eight presenters, representing the three Lutheran churches in Namibia, four ELCA synods, Wartburg Seminary and ULTS Seminary Paulinum, were asked to reflect on four topics relating to Christian freedom.

Participants were invited to read and listen, and then in breakaway groups, to reflect and to share their unique stories, experiences and insights from Namibia and the USA.

Time and the number of participants were limited but we are finding new ways to be together. Presenter Prof. Paul Isaak said: “It was really good that sisters and brothers could come together, sit and talk together to paraphrase Psalm 133.”

We hope to develop similar learning and sharing platforms in future as we walk together as companions in God’s mission.

Thank you for your prayers and support and your participation in God’s mission locally and globally.

Yours faithfully,

Rev. Dr. Philip Knutson

ELCA Global Mission Regional Representative - Southern Africa

Johannesburg, October 27, 2020

My blog page address is: <https://southernafricanconnections.wordpress.com/>

Please note the link for online giving can be found at <https://community.elca.org/MissionaryGiving>

**FROM OUR CHURCH RECORDS THROUGH THE
MONTH OF OCTOBER 2020**

	ANNUAL BUDGET	ACTUAL
Envelope Offering	504,353.40	453,485.18
Loose Offering	6,000.00	1,121.00
Miscellaneous	0.00	30.47
World Hunger	0.00	2,065.00
Seasonal Offering	10,750.00	3,531.00
Receipts (YTD)	525,603.40	460,508.19
Disbursements	559,490.80	436,520.17
Net (+/-)	(33,887.40)	23,988.02
Receipts (Month)		41,142.55
Disbursements		48,767.83
Net (+/-)		(7,625.28)



	12/31/18	12/31/19
Baptized Membership	1097	1076
Confirmed Membership	810	789



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 Wednesday Worship 6:30 p.m.
 All Committee Night Tuesday, March 3 at 7:00 p.m.
 Church Council Monday, March 23 at 6:30 p.m.
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