



Church Newsletter  
February 2021

## The Parish Messenger

### **Mission Statement**

We are a Christian community rooted  
in God's love growing in Christ  
through reaching out and serving.

### **Worship Times**

#### Georgetown

Worship 10:30 a.m.  
Sunday School 9:00 a.m.  
Sept.-May

#### Trinity

Worship 9:00 a.m.  
Sunday School 10:15  
a.m. Sept.-May

God  
proved  
his love  
on the  
cross.

### **Contact Information**

#### **Pastor Diane**

Home: 715-822-3553  
Cell: 715-702-1240

#### **Georgetown**

PO Box 86  
Balsam Lake, WI 54810  
Office: 715-857-5580

#### **Trinity**

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Cumberland, WI 54829  
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# PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

by Pastor Diane House

“Then Jacob tore his garments, and put sackcloth on his loins and mourned for his son many days. All his sons and daughters sought to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted, and said, ‘No, I shall go down to Sheol to my son, mourning.’ Thus his father bewailed him.”  
Genesis 37: 34-35

“Then David said to Joab and to all the people who were with him, “Tear your clothes, and put on sackcloth, and mourn over Abner.” And King David followed the bier. They buried Abner at Hebron. The king lifted up his voice and wept at the grave of Abner, and all the people wept.”  
2 Samuel 3: 31-32

This morning I have been pondering Lent. I have been pondering sackcloth and ashes and outward signs of repentance. I looked up sackcloth in one of my bibles concordance and the two scriptures quoted above were listed. Both of these instances of outward signs of repentance and mourning occur after serious harm has befallen someone.

In Genesis, Jacob mourns his son Joseph who has been beaten and sold into slavery in Egypt by his own jealous brothers. They have lied to their father and told him that Joseph died. So, Jacob mourns and refuses to be comforted thinking that his favorite son is dead.

In 2 Samuel, David leads a funeral for Abner who he had just made peace with. After leaving David's presence in peace, Abner is surprised by two soldiers in David's army and murdered. The two soldiers murder Abner as revenge for Abner killing their brother in battle. So, David has the people publicly repent and mourn his death.

Both of these examples from scripture remind us of the ways we all have sinned against one another and harmed relationships. Lent is a time to repent of all of the ways our relationships with God and with one another may be broken. We can confess our part in this and pray for guidance on how to repair and heal these relationships.

On Wednesday, February 17th we will celebrate Ash Wednesday. We will not tear our garments and put on sackcloth, but we will be marked with ashes to remind us of our mortality. We will be invited into a 40 day period of repentance to prepare for Easter Sunday when we celebrate the resurrection and gift of God's mercy, grace, and forgiveness. It is a solemn time for us to consider our own shortcomings and to re-commit to being disciples of Jesus.

In order to assist you in this discipline our congregations will have the following opportunities:

Ash Wednesday there will be two short, outdoor, drive-in services that will end with the imposition of ashes as you leave the parking lots. One will be during the day at Georgetown and the other in the evening at Trinity.

Families will receive a “Lenten bag” similar to the bags we gave out in Advent. Inside there will be a daily devotion booklet, children's bulletins, a craft, and a bank. It is my hope that families

will do the daily devotion and craft together. We will be collecting offering to support Benjamin's House, the shelter in Rice Lake to support families in crisis. I will be posting a weekly children's sermon each Wednesday as "Pastor at the Parsonage" through youtube on our facebook pages for you to access and view.

A weekly devotion will be delivered to shut ins adults that do not utilize internet technology. A copy of this weekly devotion will be sent by email to everyone who receives it on Wednesdays in Lent for weekly devotions in the home. Everyone is invited to view the weekly children's sermon posted as "Pastor at the Parsonage" through youtube on our facebook pages. Banks will also be distributed to shut ins so that they may make an offering to benefit Benjamin's House in Rice Lake, if they choose. Everyone in both churches are welcome to support this mission during Lent and may give an offering through the mail, online, or in person on Easter Sunday when we will worship either in church, or outdoor by drive-in worship due to Covid restrictions if necessary.

I hope and pray that you will utilize these opportunities to pray, study God's word, repent, and recommit to following Jesus. I hope that Lent can be a solemn and yet meaningful experience for you.

Blessings and peace, Pastor Diane

## ~Announcements~

### **Ash Wednesday Drive-in Parking Lot Worship**

Ash Wednesday falls on Wednesday, February 17th this year. We will gather outdoors in our cars in the church parking lots for a brief service that day and there will be two service times to choose from: 11 a.m. at Georgetown and 5:45 p.m. at Trinity. Please come and park in the lot for the brief service and at the close of the service an usher will direct you to the place that you can pull up and Pastor Diane will mark those in your car with the sign of the cross in ashes before you leave.

### **Lenten Devotions for the Wednesdays in Lent:**

Adults in the congregations who do not use the internet will receive a copy of the Lenten devotion "Walking Dusty" along with a candle, matches, and an offering box delivered to their homes. We will be collecting a special offering during Lent to support Benjamin's House, the family crisis shelter in Rice Lake.

Families will receive a daily family devotion booklet, a craft, children's bulletins, a candle and matches to be used for daily and weekly devotions during Lent. They will also receive an offering box to collect a special offering during Lent to support Benjamin's House, the family crisis shelter in Rice Lake.

Easter Sunday is on **April 4th** and we will gather to worship at our regular times of 9 a.m. at Trinity and 10:30 a.m. at Georgetown that Sunday! Hopefully, we can gather indoors in our churches. If we cannot due to Covid-19 restrictions, then we will gather outdoors for drive-in, parking lot worship! Either way we will celebrate the joyous occasion of the resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ!

## Trinity Church Council Minutes

### Trinity Church Council Minutes

January 19, 2021

**Members present:** Kathy Grenquist (Treasurer), Pastor Diane House, Debbie Wickstrom, Robin Denver and Christine Anderson. Absent: JoAnn Sellent, John gall, Steven Anderson

Devotions led by Pastor Diane.

Meeting called to order by Christine Anderson.

#### Reports:

**Secretary's Report:** Minutes from the December Trinity Council meeting were read. A motion was made to approve the minutes from the October council meeting by Robin Denver and seconded by Debbie Wickstrom. Minutes approved.

**Treasurer's Report:** The monthly statement was provided and discussed by the council. The summary for Dec. 15-Jan 15 is:

Income ..... \$7166 (average of \$6600 needed each month to match annual budget)

Total Expense.... -\$1658

Dec. 15 balance ...\$5508 (monthly balance only)

Checkbook Balance: \$25,685

Motion to approve the report as written was made by Robin seconded by Christine. Report approved.

#### Pastor's Report:

- Prayers: Continue to pray for those suffering from Covid-19, cancer and in transition.
- Winter Theological Event: Pastor Diane will attend the virtual event Sun/Mon. January 24-25<sup>th</sup>.
- Ash Wednesday: We will hold a short outdoor worship on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 17<sup>th</sup>. There will be a drive through imposition of ashes at the close of that service. It will be held at two times: Daytime at Georgetown and Evening at Trinity. Times will be announced by pastor and communicated by e-mail, Facebook and phone.
- Lent: We will order family devotional and an adult devotional for those who can't access the weekly Advent worship on-line. These will be distributed before Feb. 17<sup>th</sup>.
- Confirmation Update: Confirmation continues via e-mail. The kids and parents are communicating with pastor this way. We discussed the possibility of meeting in-person for confirmation and Pastor Diane will discuss with parents with one of the confirmation e-mailings.

#### Old Business:

- **Virtual Services**—Gretchen Frenndt has agreed to look into making DVDs of the service for those who do not have the ability to watch on-line.
- **Covid Update**  
Using information provided by the WI Council of Churches, The Harvard Global Pandemic metrics for suppression, WI Department of health, Polk and Barron county Covid

information, Christine created a chart to help the council make decisions about when and how to return to worship. The items recommended by the above bodies that we consider are rate of new cases, positivity rate, cases per 100K and vaccination rates. Council will revisit at the February meeting.

- **Mission of the Month/Quarter:**
  - January-March donations will go to Benjamin's House.
- **Photo Directory** A new company has contacted us about church directory. Council requested they contact us again in 3-6 months to see what we are interested in.

### **New Business:**

**Annual Meeting** will be January 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Young Adults** Concern expressed for those young adults from our church family who have moved away and have no church home. How can we reach out to them? Cards, calls, e-mails and keep them in our prayers.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Robin and seconded by Debbie. Meeting adjourned.

Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Next council meeting will on Tuesday, Feb. 16<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm

Minutes submitted by Christine Anderson

## Trinity Lutheran Church Annual Meeting for 2020

January 24, 2021

The annual meeting was held by conference call at 9:35 am on January 24, 2021.

Pastor Diane House led in an opening prayer.

Steve Anderson, President called the meeting was called to order. A quorum was established by voice identification over the phone. 23 voting members were present.

**Agenda:** A motion to accept the agenda was made by Gurine Gall and seconded by Deedra Wagner. The agenda was unanimously approved.

**Approval of previous annual meeting minutes:** A motion to accept minutes from the 2019 Annual Meeting as written was made by Glen Greener, seconded by Kathy Grenquist. Minutes were unanimously approved.

**Tellers:** Tellers were not nominated at this time. If there were nominations for elections from the floor, tellers would be appointed at that time.

**Presentation of Reports:** The following reports were provided in the annual meeting packet.

**President's Report**

**Pastor's Report**

**Sunday School/VBS**

**Youth Group**

**WELCA**

**Audit** of the finances has not been completed at the time of the annual meeting. The council will direct this to be completed and published in the newsletter in February or March.

**Endowment Committee** update was given by Gurine Gall. The year end numbers have not been provided yet, so the numbers as printed in the report are as recent as we have. When the year-end reports come in Gurine will provide an update for the church newsletter. There have been a couple inquiries for endowment disbursement, according to the by-laws the endowment will not give any money out until 2022. Applications will be accepted beginning Oct. 1, 2021. The form is included in the annual meeting packet and will be posted on the church web-site.

A motion to accept the reports as written was made by Robin Denver and seconded by JoAnn Sellent. The reports were unanimously accepted.

### **Elections to 2021 Church Council:**

**Elder**—*responsible for worship life, fellowship and evangelistic outreach to the community*

Robin Denver has 1 year remaining in her term. Debbie Wickstrom's term is ending. Debbie Wickstrom has agreed to serve one more 2-year term. There were no nominations from the floor. Deedra Wagner made a motion to cast a unanimous ballot for Debbie Wickstrom to serve as Elder. Robin Denver seconded. Debbie Wickstrom was confirmed as Elder.

**Deacon** – *responsible for education and youth ministry of church*

Christine Anderson has 1 year remaining in her term. JoAnn Sellent's term is ending. Lacy Sellent has been nominated to serve for a 2-year term. There were no nominations from the

floor. Kathy Grenquist made a motion to cast a unanimous ballot for Lacy Sellent to serve as Deacon. John Gall seconded. Lacy Sellent was confirmed as Deacon.

**Trustee**—*responsible for managing property and financial affairs of congregation, including development of congregational program of Biblical Stewardship*

Steve Anderson has 1 year remaining in his term. John Gall's term is ending. Chris Wetzel has been nominated to serve for a 2-year term. There were no nominations from the floor. Glen Greener made a motion to cast a unanimous ballot for Chris Wetzel to serve as Trustee. JoAnn Sellent seconded. Chris Wetzel was confirmed as Trustee.

**Endowment Committee**—*responsible for monitoring endowment fund investment and disbursement. This is a 3-year term.*

Steve Kelch had a 1-year term and that term has ended. He is eligible for and has agreed to serve for an additional term of 3-years. There were no nominations from the floor. Gurine Gall made a motion to cast a unanimous ballot for Steve Kelch to serve on the Endowment Committee. Wayne Kendrick seconded the motion. Steve Kelch was confirmed to serve on the Endowment Committee.

Thank you to outgoing council member JoAnn Sellent and John Gall for their faithful service on the council for the past two years.

Next year's nominating committee will be outgoing council members, Christine Anderson, Steve Anderson and Robin Denver.

### **Budget 2021:**

Many thanks to the congregation for their generosity during this uncertain time. Because of this faithful giving we were able to finish the year in the black.

The following budget questions were discussed:

- The shared phone bill with Georgetown went up in the past year because we have agreed to pay half the internet fee since they are hosting the on-line worship weekly.
- Propane at the parsonage looks quite low. This is because last year's pre-pay was over and the company applies the extra to the next year.
- Questions about pastor's benefit and salary.
  - Pastor Diane generously suggested the congregations not increase her salary in 2021 due to the on-going pandemic.
  - Pastor Diane also did not submit mileage reimbursement for the same reason.
  - The healthcare changes are minimal
  - Our budgeted amount seems high. Portico provides the congregations with the bills each year based on the health care level chosen, the budget number is an estimation and may be high, and may have been high for the past few years. The council will direct the treasurers to communicate together about predicting this number from Portico information for the next budget year.

JoAnn Sellent moved to accept the 2021 budget. The motion was seconded by Glen Greener. 2021 budget was accepted and approved unanimously.

**Old Business:**

- Endowment Committee:
  - Developed a Gift Policy as directed at last year's annual meeting. This has been approved by the council and is published in the annual meeting packet. Members are able to contribute to the Endowment any time.
  - Developed an application for Trinity members to apply for disbursement of funds from the endowment starting October 1, 2021. The disbursement will be approved by the congregation at the 2021 annual meeting. The application has been approved by the council.
  - Next meeting will be in April, 2021.
  - The Gift policy and Application for funds will be posted on the Trinity web-site
- The Egress window has been installed in the parsonage. Some trim and painting work needs to be finished.
- Photo directory was scheduled to be updated last June. Due to the pandemic Lifetouch has discontinued its church directory work. Debbie Wickstrom has been in contact with a former Lifetouch person who has started a company to work with churches. Contact will be made again this spring with them.
- Confirmation was being held was in person, however students were having to miss due to quarantine, so it has been moved to e-mail at this time. This is an ongoing conversation between pastor and confirmation parents.

**New Business:**

- **Mission of the Month** has been changed to Quarterly focus. Jan-March is for Benjamin's House in Rice Lake. Donations made for school lunches in the fall remain in the church account because the government is providing funding for all school breakfast and lunches during the pandemic. Kathy Grenquist will provide the number to the council so that it can be donated to school lunches when the government funding is discontinued. It was suggested that the council designate April-June donations for an area food shelf.
- **Return to Church**  
Using information provided by the WI Council of Churches, The Harvard Global Pandemic metrics for suppression, WI Department of health, Polk and Barron county Covid information, Christine created a chart to help the council make decisions about when and how to return to worship. The items recommended that we consider are rate of new cases, positivity rate, cases per 100K and vaccination rates. At this point we are in the less than 10 people gathering inside with masks, distance and handwashing in place. Council will continue to review.
- **Wi-Fi**  
The cost of getting internet at the church is around \$110/month. This would double our phone bill. The benefits of internet include being able to livestream Trinity worship as well as providing opportunities for Sunday School, youth and worship. There may be many opportunities for funding recording equipment necessary for livestreaming worship (grants, Trinity funds, etc). Discussion focused on the need to have a team in place to record worship services in order to have consistent access. Wayne Kendrick, Alison Anderson and Kathy Grenquist volunteered to serve on an implementation team with others who are interested. Deedra Wagner made a motion to direct Trinity Council to move forward with acquiring internet at Trinity. Gurine Gall seconded. The motion carried unanimously. The council

will move forward with getting internet service. The council will also investigate grants for funding as well as contact the local school district for advice on equipment.

- **Treasurer:** Kathy Grenquist is willing to continue as treasurer for the time being. However, she is looking for someone to hand the responsibilities to soon. The position comes with a lap-top, Quick Books and council support.
- **Palt Dinner** discussion about the possibilities for hosting a drive through Palt dinner. There is concern for the safety of volunteers and attendees. With careful planning and advice from people in food service (Kelly, Bill, Judy) as well as Georgetown's experiences it may be possible for us to hold something safely. The council will discuss.

Motion to adjourn was made by Gurine Gall and seconded by JoAnn Sellent. 2020 Annual Meeting of Trinity Lutheran Church adjourned. We closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by Christine Anderson

**Georgetown Lutheran  
Council Meeting Minutes  
Minutes  
January 26, 2021**

Present: Stephanie Fansler, Sherry Doornick, Judy Gammel, Dennis Weise, Tim Frenndt, Keith Ward, Pastor Diane, Roberta Hansen, Treasurer

Absent: Jody Binfet

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm.

Pastor led prayer and devotions.



**Secretary Report:** Council members read the minutes.

Roberta Hansen pointed out that the \$2000 designated to be sent to the “NW Synod Benevolence” in the 2020 fiscal year was actually sent after the first of 2021, so did not get included in this fiscal year’s expenditures. A motion was made and seconded to accept the Secretary’s report as corrected. Motion carried.

**Treasurer’s Report:** Roberta passed out the Treasurer’s Report for December 1 – 31, 2020. Our Net Operating Fund balance is \$7,588.26. The Mission Endowment Fund was spent down to “0” for new equipment. There is a \$54.82 balance remaining in the Bold Generosity Capital Campaign Appeal. We have not applied for forgiveness for the Payroll Protection Program funds provided by the Government, but new forms will soon be available. We may also have an opportunity to apply for a second loan. A motion was made and seconded to approve the Treasurer’s report. Motion carried.

We reviewed the Proposed Budget for 2021. Overall there were few changes.

**Pastor’s Report:** The Cumberland Hospital has no Pastoral care department so they were offering Coronavirus vaccines to area Pastors. Pastor Diane would be receiving her 1<sup>st</sup> vaccine this Thursday. Gene Palas is turning “80” years old on February 5<sup>th</sup> and we wish him a Happy Birthday. February 17<sup>th</sup> is Ash Wednesday and Pastor Diane will hold a short service in the parking lot at each church; 11:00 am at Georgetown and 5:45 pm at Trinity. Because this is a different year with no Lenten services each week, Pastor would like to put together lent bags for members and their families. They will include weekly devotionals, candles, offering boxes to benefit the homeless shelter in Rice Lake, and children’s activities. Help will be needed to pack the bags and deliver them by February 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Deacon, Elder and Trustee Reports:** No reports.

**Old Business**

1. No progress on the stained glass window.
2. No nominating committee at this time.
3. Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting will be held as planned on March 21, 2021. An audit of books for the past two years will be conducted by Stephanie Fansler and Judy Gammel and brought to the Annual Meeting. Specific plans will be made at our next meeting as to how the meeting will be conducted. The Annual Meeting at Trinity was held on the telephone with members receiving materials in advance of the meeting.

4. The next monthly newsletter will be mailed to each member household.
5. The Treasurer has mailed 40 tax deductible donation statements for 2020.

**New Business**

- 1.** PPP loan. Discussed previously.
- 2.** The quilting group has asked when they might be able to begin meeting at church to work on quilts. It was discussed that it is not safe to meet indoors in person as yet.
- 3.** Easter is April 4, 2021 and Pastor assures us that we will have some form of service at church that day, depending on the weather and the Coronavirus.
- 4.** Roberta received an estimate from John Amrhien of \$1010.00 to paint the fellowship hall, including all paint and labor. A motion was made and seconded to accept the bid. Motion carried.

Closing prayer

Minutes respectfully submitted by Judy Gammel

**Next Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 23, 2021 at 6:30 pm**

## Georgetown Financial Report

Georgetown Lutheran Church  
 Treasurer's Report  
 December 1-31, 2020

**Opening Balance December 1, 2020** \$36,496.04

**December Income**

Offering	\$5,375.00
Dividend Income/CountrySide Coop	\$10.00
Meat & Pie Fundraiser	\$80.00
Blessing Bucket	\$50.00

**Total Income** \$5,515.00  
\$42,011.04

**December Expenses** \$7,287.35

**Closing Balance December 31, 2020** \$34,723.69

Budget 2020	\$66,879.00
Needed Weekly	\$1,286.13

Offering Through December 31, 2020	\$53,975.65
Budgeted offering to date	\$66,878.76
<b>Ahead/Behind Budget</b>	<b>-\$12,903.11</b>

**Offering:**

6-Dec	\$1,170.00
13-Dec	\$555.00
20-Dec	\$2,500.00
27-Dec	\$1,150.00

**Fund Balances**

Youth Activities Fund	\$2,977.49	
Memorial Fund	\$1,804.19	
Blacktop Fund	\$13,553.64	
Bold Generosity Capital Campaign Appeal	\$54.82	
P & C Claim Fund	\$0.00	
Mission Endowment Fund	\$0.00	
Blessing Bucket Fund	\$245.29	<b>12/31/2020</b>

**Funds totals** \$18,635.43

<b>OPERATING FUNDS</b>	<b>\$16,088.26</b>
Payroll Protection Program	-\$8,500.00
<b>NET OPERATING FUNDS</b>	<b>\$7,588.26</b>

