



Church Newsletter
February 2022

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

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PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

by Pastor Diane House

“**And the Word became** flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth...From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father’s heart, who has made him known.”
John 1: 14, 16-18

Grace upon grace... today I find myself pondering amazing grace. I wonder why we sometimes have such a hard time accepting this free gift from God. I ponder why it is that we are always so quick to condemn ourselves and others and dwell on our sin, our faults and failings. I wonder why we feel like we have to work so hard to prove that we are good enough for God to love us, for God to want the best for us, for God to show us how to be God’s people?

I ponder on how easily we hear the Law and how heavily we apply the Law of Moses to ourselves and one another without remembering to balance the Law with the Grace of Jesus Christ. Martin Luther warned that that is the way to despair. We will despair if we dwell in the land of Law and confession without journeying to the green pastures and still waters of forgiveness and grace.

Our culture doesn’t help. We live in a society that worships hard work, strength, success, and material gain that proves we work hard enough, are strong enough, successful enough and have more than enough. The good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ directly counters this cultural message.

John tells us that “**No one has ever seen God. It is God the only son, who is close to the Father’s heart, who has made him known.**” In Jesus we see the embodiment of God acting out God’s love, grace, mercy, and forgiveness in the world. This is how we know God. Grace and truth, grace upon grace is gifted to us through the life, death, and resurrection of Christ.

Our salvation is sure. There is nothing to “prove.” God loves us, forgives us, redeems and sustains us as a gift. Now we can be that love for others in our world, others who are caught up in the same dilemma of proving their worth. In Lent we will ponder together this gift of grace that names us “Good Enough.”

Grace upon grace and peace to you,
Pastor Diane

~Announcements~

Lenten Series “Good Enough: Embracing the Imperfections of Life and Faith”

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Lent season, a time when we aspire to make some room for deeper introspection and practices that will draw us into the love and assurance of faith. But sometimes faith can feel not as assured as we hoped for. We can feel “less than,” perceiving that others seem to be able to be “more faithful” in their practices and beliefs. This Lent, rather than change for “the best,” we’ll seek to gain momentum one day at a time, “to reach for a faith that is never perfect, but good enough.”

What in our lives do we dream about for tomorrow, void of sorrow?
Time spent regretting decisions of our yesterdays, mistakes we made?
Sometimes we get what we get, life disappoints us and yet, God is still here and somehow, this faith is good enough.

Join us each Wednesday at 7 p.m. for Lenten worship. This year Trinity/Georgetown will participate in a “Round Robin.” Each Wednesday worship will be lead by a different area pastor. We will gather for worship to consider how God is present in our lives loving and encouraging us to love each other despite our imperfections. Our faith proclaims that we are forgiven and free! Join us for this meaningful time together.

Schedule:

Ash Wednesday, March 2: Worship at 7 p.m. at Trinity with Pastor Diane
 March 9: Worship at Georgetown at 7 p.m. with Pastor Diane
 March 16: Worship at Trinity at 7 p.m. Welcome Pastor Mikayla from Bone Lake
 March 23: Worship at Georgetown at 7 p.m. Welcome Pastor Angela or Intern Kristin from Joy Lutheran
 March 30: Worship at Trinity at 7 p.m. Welcome Pastor Marilyn or SAM Mary from Laketown Lutheran
 April 6: Worship at Georgetown at 7 p.m. Welcome Pastor Emily from Pilgrim and Bethany Lutheran churches

Christian Education Announcement:

In conversation with the church council the decision was made not to meet on Wednesdays in person for Christian Education in the month of February. It is the hope that this will help us ride the wave of Covid infections currently affecting our community so we can be healthy and safely meet for Lent. See the article on the Lenten services to find out when and where to participate starting Ash Wednesday, March 2nd! (See you at 7 p.m. at Trinity for Ash Wednesday worship!)

Gift Baskets

Trinity is putting together Gift baskets to give to anyone who may need a warm welcome, a get well wish or just something to brighten someone's day or maybe for no particular reason. This would include anyone. We are calling them “Just Because” baskets. Anyone who would like to donate items for these baskets, please let Debbie Wickstrom know. Items could be anything from candy to gift certificates, from small toys to bath soaps. Or maybe you would like to make a craft or bake something. Any size baskets/containers are also needed. If you know of someone who could use a basket to let Debbie know.

~NW WI Synod~

Theological Conference

On Monday January 17, Pastor House and Wayne Kendrick attended the Winter Theological Conference of the Northwest Wisconsin Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). The Conference was held at Luther Park Bible Camp at Chetek in their new Conference Building. The Theological Conference was unique in that the Presiding Bishop of the ELCA, Elizabeth Eaton, the first woman elected to that office, was the preacher at the morning worship service and for a Q&A in both the morning and afternoon. It was her first visit to the NW WI Synod.

The Holy Communion Service included both a renewal of baptismal vows and of ordination vows. Among those ordination vows is: “Do you reaffirm your promise to give faithful witness in the world through the Word of God, the Sacraments, and service to our neighbors so that the reconciling love of Christ may be known and received by all.”

In the sessions with Bishop Eaton she highlighted some bright points:

- Lutheran Services in America continues to be the largest social services agency in the US - comprised of 300 organizations, caring for six million Americans, and employing 250,000
- In spite of COVID, Mission Support to the ELCA is equal to or above that of the last non-COVID year
- The skill and hard work of congregations and clergy in moving to virtual services and the increased outreach of those services. She also spoke to the current situation:
- The deep grief and burnout that COVID continues to cause in families, first responders, education and health care workers, clergy, etc.
- The need for respectful conversations and the ease of social media to distort conversations and multiply falsehoods
- In a time of racial tension and reckoning she expressed her hopes for a color amazed society rather than a color blind one

Perhaps the lengthiest conversation centered on the ELCA’s 10-year plan to engage one million youth and young adults inviting them into the way of Jesus.

It was a joy and privilege to attend.

Trinity Church Council Minutes

January 18, 2022

Members present: Pastor Diane House, Steve Anderson, Lacy Sellent, Kathy Grenquist (Treasurer), Debbie Wickstrom, Robin Denver, Chris Wetzel and Christine Anderson

Devotions and reading of Baptismal promises led by Pastor Diane.
Meeting led by Steven Anderson

Reports:

Secretary's Report: Motion to accept October and December council meeting minutes was made by Robin Denver, seconded by Lacy Sellent. Minutes accepted.

Treasurer's Report:

\$5000 was moved from MIF into savings for bills. Kathy created a new savings account in Cumberland for the purpose of holding Endowment donations until the minimum amount for deposit into the ELCA Fund A (Trinity's Endowment fund) is met.

Bank signatures should be updated with the new council, after the Feb. meeting.

Monthly Income	\$7,643.84
Monthly Expenses	- \$5,978.99
	<u>\$1,664.85</u>

TLC Checking has \$1305. TLC savings has \$1000. MIFund has \$28,000.

A motion was made to accept the treasurer's report by Chris Wetzel and seconded by Robin Denver. Report accepted.

Pastor's Report:

New members A letter of transfer was received for Renee and Luis May. A motion was made to accept the letter of transfer by Christine Anderson and seconded by Robin Denver. The motion passed. There was much rejoicing 😊

Winter Theological Event was Jan. 17th. Pastor Diane and Wayne attended. Bishop Eaton of the ELCA met with the group in person!

Lent We will have a "round robin" mid-week Lenten series. The theme will be "Good Enough" and it is a collaboration between 5 congregations (Trinity/Georgetown, Joy Lutheran, Bethany/Pilgrim, Bone Lake). Pastors will rotate between congregations. Trinity/Georgetown will meet at 7pm each Wednesday as follows:

- March 2—Pastor Diane (Ash Wednesday) at Trinity
- March 9—Pastor Diane at Georgetown
- March 16—Pastor Mykala (Bone Lake) at Trinity
- March 23—Pastor Angie (Joy) at Georgetown
- March 30—Pastor Marilyn or Mary at Trinity
- April 4 – Pastor Emily (Bethany/Pilgrim) at Georgetown

The council was excited about the opportunity to work with other congregations in the area.

Confirmation/Wednesday nights Concern about the amount of absences due to Covid exposure and cases. We began to consider taking a break from Wednesday night activities during the month of February. Pastor is wanting to be sure confirmation students stay healthy and be able to attend all Lenten Wednesday worships.

Vacation: Pastor Diane and George will be taking a well-deserved vacation Jan. 26-28th.

Old Business

Covid Update: Unfortunately the Covid numbers continue to climb and are currently higher than have ever been since the beginning in March 2020. A motion was made to pause Wed. night activities until March 2nd by Lacy Sellent and seconded by Debbie Wickstrom. The motion carried. This means our next Wednesday night activity will be at 7pm March 2nd for Ash Wednesday service. We will continue to hold Sunday worship with the physically distanced pews.

Youth: Lacy is hoping to plan some outdoor winter activities in the upcoming months. Discussion was held about sledding party or broom ball. Lacy will plan and let people know.

Endowment: A donation was received last month for the Endowment, since there was no quorum, this could not be finalized at that time. A motion to deposit the gift received to the Endowment Fund as undesignated according to the letter from the donors was made by Christine Anderson and seconded by Robin Denver. Motion carried.

Use of Church: A Luck student continues to receive off-site instruction at Trinity. This seems to be going well, the teacher transports and works with the student on M, T and Th from 1-3pm. A motion was made to continue this arrangement with the Luck Public Schools by Chris Wetzel and seconded by Christine Anderson. Motion carried.

End of the year budget: A motion to give the unspent money in the SS/Youth 2021 budgeted amount to the Sunday School account was made by Debbie Wickstrom and seconded by Robin Denver. Motion carried. Kathy will write a check for the \$196.67 to the Sunday School account.

Quarterly Mission of the “month”: Jan-March will be Lutheran Disaster Fund. 100% of donations go directly to help with disasters at this time funds are used for recovery efforts from the fall tornado in Kentucky. We discussed other opportunities for Mission of the Month. Lacy researched a Salvation Army sponsorship type program. Council also discussed choosing 4-6 entities that could be on a regular rotation for our Mission of the Quarter.

Printer for Trinity: A suggestion was brought to the council that we get a printer/copier for Trinity for printing thank you letters, treasurer reports, and bulletins. The current copier is used for emergencies, single copies, Sunday school copies, etc. Our main printer/copier is at the congregational office at Georgetown. Council doesn't see that it is necessary, but will bring to the congregation at the annual meeting for input.

“Just Because” baskets: Debbie is looking for Thrivent Action Team card and other donations for this new ministry. She will write an article for the newsletter.

Church Directory: Debbie will contact Georgetown and set dates for this summer.

2022 Budget: A motion was made to approve 2022 proposed budget for presentation to the congregation at the annual meeting by Christine Anderson and seconded by Robin Denver. Discussion: Pastor mentioned that the mileage seemed too high. Steven looked up 2019 mileage amount and this budgeted amount is similar to what was paid in 2019. Motion carried.

New Business:

Annual Meeting: January 23, 2022 right after worship

February Council Meeting: Set for 2/15/2022 at 6:30pm. Old and new council will meet together at that meeting.

Meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer. Minutes submitted by Christine Anderson

Trinity Lutheran Church 2021 Annual Meeting Minutes

January 23, 2021

Pastor Diane House led in an opening prayer.

Steve Anderson, President called the meeting called the meeting to order. A quorum was established: 32 voting members were present.

Agenda: A motion wo accept the agenda was made by Kevin Wickstrom and seconded by Judy Kelch. The agenda was approved.

Approval of previous annual meeting minutes: A motion to accept minutes from the 2020 Annual Meeting as written was made by Kathy Greener, seconded by Mandy Rouzer. Minutes were approved

Tellers: Tellers Debbie Wickstrom and Kathy Grenquist were appointed if needed.

Presentation of Reports:

- A motion was made to accept the following reports as written in the annual meeting packet by Mandy Rouzer and seconded by Heidi Wagner. **President's Report, Pastor's Report, Sunday School/VBS, Youth Group, WELCA.** Reports accepted.
- **Financial Repot** Kathy Grenquist pointed out the checkbook balance date should be 1/1/2022 rather than 1/1/2021. A motion was made to accept the financial report with the correction by Chris Wetzel and seconded by Tom Buccholz. Financial report accepted.
- **Audit** of the finances was completed by Wayne Kendrick and Gurine Gall on 1/20/2022. They thanked Kathy Grenquist for the work she has been faithfully doing. The books are in order. A clarification question was asked about the money from Louie's Octoberfest. This was answered by Deedra Wagner, funds are recorded in the WELCA income in 2021. A motion to accept the verbal audit report made by Steve Kelch and seconded by Tom Buccholz. Audit report accepted.
- A motion to accept the **Endowment Committee report** as written was made by Tom Buccholz and seconded by JoAnn Sellent. Report accepted.

Elections to 2022 Church Council:

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

Debbie Wickstrom has 1 year remaining in her term. Robin Denver's term is ending. Nominations requested from the floor. Debbie Wickstrom nominated Shane Beecroft. No additional nominations from the floor. Debbie Wickstrom made a motion to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Shane Beecroft to serve as Elder. Mandy Rouzer seconded. Shane Beecroft confirmed as Elder for 2 years.

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

Lacy Sellent has 1 year remaining in her term. Christine Anderson's term is ending. Mandy Rouzer 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 Mandy Rouzer to serve as Deacon. Kathy Greener seconded. Mandy Rouzer was confirmed as Deacon.

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

Chris Wetzel has 1 year remaining in her term. Steve Anderson's term is ending. Rick 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 Rick Sellent to serve as Trustee. Mandy Rouzer seconded. Rick Sellent confirmed as Trustee.

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

Gurine Gall's term is ending. Christine Anderson has been nominated for a 3-year term. There were no nominations from the floor. Kathy Grenquist made a motion to cast a unanimous ballot for Christine Anderson to serve on the Endowment Committee. JoAnn Sellent seconded the motion. Christine Anderson confirmed to serve on the Endowment Committee.

Thank you to outgoing council member Steven Anderson, Robin Denver and Christine Anderson for their faithful service on the council.

Budget 2022 Proposal:

Many thanks to Jamie Shaffer who continues to volunteer her time to complete the newsletter. The following budget questions were discussed:

- The phone bill is no longer being shared with Georgetown. It has been moved from the Office Expense section (which is shared with GT) to the Building & Property section, line item phone/internet.
- Member Assemblies/Conferences budgeted number went up from 2021 because that had been dropped due to virtual events, more in person events are returning so the number has returned to a similar rate from pre-Covid..

Tom Bucholz moved to approve the 2022 budget. The motion was seconded by Steve Kelch. 2022 budget was approved unanimously.

Old Business:

Steve reminded the congregation of the following projects are coming up:

- **Parsonage repair** work includes dish washer, screen porch and refinishing window sashes.
- **Church LED lights**, front door motion lights and internet wiring are waiting for a electrician to schedule. Any assistance is welcome!
- **The Photo directory** will be coordinated by Debbie Wickstrom. She will contact Georgetown to schedule dates this summer.
- **Bat exclusion** and clean up has been completed. We are exploring if a roof guard is needed in the next couple years for prevention. In the meantime, plastic, tightly sealing tubs are needed to provide storage for costumes that needed to be replaced.
- **The nitrate levels** in the water are high according to the County Health Department. The council has talked with a company about Reverse Osmosis filtration in one sink. A conversation has also been had with Brandt Beecroft about his recommendations. Currently we providing bottled water and posting signs about the risk to women who are or may become pregnant and children under 6 months. The next council will need to continue these actions.

New Business:

- **Endowment Committee** is thrilled to that the fund has done so well in it's first 2 years. The committee voted to give away the maximum allowed (5% of balance from 12/31/20) in this first round. Applications were received up until November 1, 2021. The committee recommended to the council that \$2500 be given to Jim Springsteen for student teaching expenses. The council is seeking congregational approval for this gift. A motion to give the Endowment funds of \$2500 to Jim Springsteen was made by Debbie Wickstrom and seconded by Tom Buccholtz. The congregation authorized the dispersement unanimously.
- **Printer:** It was suggested that council consider purchasing a bigger copier/printer for Trinity. The council reviewed this and requested a quote. Our small copier is serving as emergency and the main printer/copier is housed at the office in Georgetown. This could be a need in the future, but not at this time.
- **Field use**
 - Idea of fixing up a softball/baseball field in our open area for local youth as well as a celebration of our history was brought up.
 - The possibility of a labyrinth had been discussed a few years ago.
- **Mission of the Month** has been changed to Quarterly focus. Council has discussed choosing 6-8 places to lift up on a regular basis rather than trying to think of a new one each time. Donations can be made by identifying "mission of the month" on the memo line on a check and put in the offering plate or by choosing "mission of the month" in the on-line giving site.
- **Church Web-site** has been updated with a new section called Donations. This explains how and provides links to make donations to organizations for anyone looking for information. These include how to donate to Trinity and other Local organizations as well as links to National and International organizations that are reputable.
- **HOPE Foundation** Chris Wetzel shared the results of the angel tree during Nov/December to gather donations of funds and items for children in foster care system in Polk County. The outpouring of support from Trinity members was simply amazing! We donated suitcases, clothing, toiletries that filled Chris's SUV to the brim. We also donated \$1200 plus \$100 in gift cards to HOPE Foundation in time for their holiday shopping event. Many thanks to everyone.
- **"Just Because" baskets** Debbie Wickstrom is helping to organize "just because" baskets to bring to neighbors who are new to the area, in need of some cheering up, having a new baby, or any other reason to show God's love. Watch the newsletter for details.
- **Palt Dinner** Judy Kelch has agreed to help organize. We are considering March or later and exploring having a drive through or outdoor seating.
- **Treasurer:** Kathy Grenquist is willing to continue as treasurer for the time being. However, she would welcome someone to consider taking over. If you are interested, Kathy would be happy to work with you for a year or more to transition. Thank you so much, Kathy!

Motion to adjourn was made by Kathy Grenquite and seconded by Tom Buccholz. 2021 Annual Meeting of Trinity Lutheran Church adjourned. We closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by Christine Anderson

Georgetown Lutheran Council Meeting Minutes



Georgetown Lutheran Church			
Treasurer's Report			
December 1-31, 2021			
<u>Opeining Balance December 1, 2021</u>		\$15,324.01	
<u>December Income</u>			
Offering	\$6,075.00		
Blessing Bucket	\$160.00		
Fall Dinner	\$90.00		
Fellowship Hall Use	\$50.00		
TOTAL INCOME	\$6,375.00		
		\$21,699.01	
<u>December Expenses</u>	\$9,459.72		
<u>Closing Balance December 31, 2021</u>		\$12,239.29	
Budget 2021	\$67,060.64		
Needed Weekly	\$1,289.63		
Offering Through December 31, 2021	\$55,784.78		
Budgeted offering to date	\$67,060.76		
Ahead/Behind Budget	\$11,275.98		
<u>Offering:</u>			
	5-Dec	\$1,420.00	
	12-Dec	\$1,845.00	
	19-Dec	\$865.00	
	26-Dec	\$690.00	
	24-Dec	\$1,255.00	
		\$6,075.00	
<u>Fund Balances</u>			
Youth Activities Fund	\$3,332.19		
Memorial Fund	\$3,496.69		
Blacktop Fund	\$0.00		
Blessing Bucket Fund	\$55.35		12/31/21
Funds totals		\$6,884.23	
NET OPERATING FUNDS		\$5,355.06	