



August 2017

Trinity Times

Newsletter
Holy Trinity Lutheran Church

Experience God. Find Community.

National Night Out

National Night Out is a great opportunity for neighbors to get to know one another and bring more people into the process of preventing crime. Holy Trinity is holding an outside event from **6:00pm - 8:00pm on Tuesday, August 1st**. You are invited to come to church and enjoy some outdoor games and frozen treats. Bring your own chair if you just want to sit and relax while meeting people in the neighborhood.



Pancake Breakfast

On **August 6th**, from 8:00am - 9:00am, Holy Trinity is opening our doors to the Elgin community for a breakfast of pancakes, sausage, coffee and juice. The congregation is welcome to come and enjoy breakfast and meet some people from the community. If you would like to help cook, serve, or clean-up, please talk to Bob Langlois.



Pastor Robert E. Linstrom's 90th Birthday

A birthday open house to celebrate Pastor Linstrom's 90th birthday will be held on **Sunday, August 6th, from 2:00pm-4:00pm** at Bethany Lutheran Church, 76 West Crystal Lake Ave., Crystal Lake, IL 60014.

This casual open house will be hosted by Pastor Linstrom's sons and their families. Light hors d'oeuvres and cake will be served. A short program will be held at 3:00pm. Pastor Linstrom has requested no gifts, but if you would like to make a gift in celebration of your friendship, please consider a gift to the Bethany Fine Arts Series (checks payable to Bethany Lutheran Church).



Blessing Our College

Students

Our high school graduates will be off to college soon

and we will have a blessing for them on **Sunday, August 13th** during worship. We also have a special gift for each of them to take to college!



Where two or three are gathered, there I am among them. Matthew 18:20

Blessing of the Backpacks

Another fall is approaching! It is a time for students to return to the classroom and for other fall schedules to resume. Holy Trinity will be having a Blessing of the Backpacks Milestone celebration on **August 13th** during worship.

We are asking that all students, teachers, and school support staff bring backpacks or another kind of school bag to be blessed.



Elder Cafe

It's National Chocolate Chip Cookie Day! We'll celebrate it on **Wednesday, August 16th at noon**. Invite friends to come along! Sign up on the glass table in the sanctuary.



Education

Sunday School begins on **Sunday, August 20th, at 10:30am** for children ages 3 - 5th grade.

August 20th & 27th: Gathering & Harvesting
 September 17th & 24th: Peace
 October 15th & 22nd: Martin & Katie 500 years
 November 19th & 26th: Gratitude
 December 17th: Christmas Celebration
 December 24th - no class



FarmRaiser

Foods Resource Bank is a partnership of farmers and churches to provide support for sustainable growing efforts in some of the poorest countries of the world. Small investments have made a big difference to the most marginalized people in developing countries, especially those earning less than \$300 per year. FRB is the beginning of community development. When the community can come together to solve hunger issues, then they are free to dream and implement plans for schools, improved roads, health care and other areas of concern.



Holy Trinity is connected to the Earlville and Ottawa/Barrington projects. Each year there is a harvest celebration in October. To raise funds for our annual donation, we will be holding a FarmRaiser on the weekend of **August 19th/20th**. We'll have a display of fresh produce and baked goods in the Community Center after worship on Saturday and in Lind Hall during the fellowship hour on Sunday. Come and buy some fresh fruits and veggies or some baked goods and help support Foods Resource Bank!

If you have extra veggies or fruit in your home garden you can donate or if you would like to make something for the bake sale, please sign up on the glass table.

Kids Hope Meeting

Current mentors and prayer partners and anyone who would like to become a mentor or prayer partner are invited to this meeting on **Sunday, August 26th at 10:30am**. Kids Hope is a one-on-one mentoring program that meets one hour a week. We are working with elementary school children at Lords Park School. For more information contact Jackie Kutina.



Summer Music

Thanks to our July Soloists:
 July 2: Karen Brhel, alto
 July 9: Jennifer Gontarek, cello
 July 16: Lilly Woerner, Maddie Schaefer
 July 23: Christina Bernardoni, mezzo-soprano
 July 30: Alexis Foster, flute

We're looking forward to our August soloists:

August 6: Larry Brook, tenor
 August 13: Kristin Delaney, alto sax
 August 20: Cecilia Anderson, soprano
 August 27: Mark Kuntz, cello

The Journey

Check out our new worship service at **10:45am on Sundays**. The Journey is short, interactive, has communion, prayers, and music. It's a very different way of connecting with God. Invite someone to come with you!

Our Sympathy

Charlotte Wolfe passed away on July 3rd. She had been a member of Holy Trinity for 62 years.



Newsletter

This newsletter is given by LaVonne Whipple in honor of Pastor Robert E. Linstrom on his 90th birthday.



This newsletter is given by Carol Stafford in honor of her birthday on August 6th.



From the Desk of Pastor Jeff

Statistics indicate that one-third of all Protestant churches in the United States will close in the next 13 years. Annual reports indicate that one-half of the congregations in the Metro-Chicago Synod cannot realistically afford even one full-time pastor AND a church building at the same time. These are the things that keep pastors awake at night!

This is not to say that Holy Trinity fits into either of those categories, because as of today we do not. However, it does indicate patterns that we as a congregation would do well to stay out in front of lest we do fall into one or both of these categories one day soon.

There are many reasons for this crisis in the Church. The economy is obviously an issue as inflation has increased much faster than average income in this country since 1980. That having been said, we also must shoulder some of the blame. Clearly in the era from 1945-1975, we honestly built too many churches and over-saturated many communities. Consider that both Mount Prospect and Sandwich have two ELCA congregations each in relatively small communities. Now many of these congregations compete against one another rather than working as One Body of Christ. (An issue for another conversation!!!) However, the largest issues we face today have to do with culture. For the first time in decades, churches must market themselves and give people a reason to come. It is no longer the case that everyone

is “expected” to be in church every weekend, or even claim membership in a church. The old “if you build it they will come” mentality is long gone. And many churches who enthusiastically added on to their facilities in year’s past are now struggling mightily with large debts. This leads right into the next concern, and by far the MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE WE FACE TODAY, which is that mainstream Christian churches are failing to connect to the Millennial Generation, leaving the Church reliant upon an ever-aging membership with a much more fixed income to support our ministries worldwide. (Losing entire generations does not bode well for the future!!!)

All of this means that we must envision the Church differently, and be willing to change! Through the ages, the Holy Spirit has led the Church into many new endeavors and in many different directions. We now stand in one of those ages. We cannot be so stubborn as to ignore the flowing current of society or the call of the Holy Spirit, or we will be left behind on a deserted island. We must learn to market and brand ourselves. We must learn to build greater community and focus upon relational ministry. We must learn to work outside our walls, finding ways to be invited into neighborhoods in the same way we invite neighborhoods into our buildings. We must learn to value people over structures and traditions. We must learn to put aside our personal preferences and be willing to meet society where it is.

We still have the greatest gift any community has to offer the world – that is the Gospel of Love, Grace, Justice, Mercy and Unity. Our

Congregational Council is working on strategies to meet the years to come and always stay ahead of the trends. We must be willing to meet these challenges standing before us as a unified community ready to embrace and welcome all people and all callings of the Spirit. We are truly blessed to have each other, and to be the Church prepared to answer the needs of our world in this day and age. Peace and Blessings be with you!

Rev. Jeffrey G Mikyska

The Council recently formed a Task Force to look into ways we can bridge the gap with our younger generations. Below is a portion of their research. This is the beginning of our efforts to increase Outreach ministries to underrepresented groups here at Holy Trinity.

Church Research about the Millennial Generation

- Looking for authenticity more than programming
- Want the message they hear and their experience of the Church to be consistent
- Visual cues around the building are important
- A majority want community over privacy, and casual over dignified
- Want to be challenged to think about difficult messages
- Want to hear about, and talk about, the Jesus that “challenged the establishment”
- Tired of big box churches marketing entertainment rather than following Jesus
- Not looking for perfect people - want people to be real and honest about their struggles
- Want intellectual engagement - and even mentors to live in relationship with

- Crave relationships within the church - not be just a number
- Want to hear how God's principles apply to everyday situations
- Would like easy access to information - maybe a clearly marked kiosk instead of needing to “find someone” to get information
- Want relationship - and a voice in the Church that is valued
- Mission is of utmost importance
- Would like to find ways to engage culture for the glory of God - don't want to separate the church from the culture of the community around them
- Nature is important to the younger generations, and helps them connect with God
- Desire the Church to be a place to rest, rather than a Church full of activities/programs
- Students and recently graduated adults have grown up in an era where debt is an accepted risk and natural part of life; many are burdened with a load of student loans that could take 20 or more years to pay off
- 33% of 18-29 year olds attend worship on a weekly basis, compared to 53% of those 65 and older (Pew Research Study)
- Younger People want to see genuine faith and community in Christ - Lives lived for the sake of the gospel

5 Reasons Younger People stay connected to a church:

- Make room for meaningful relationships
- Teach cultural discernment
- Make reverse mentoring a priority
- Embrace the potency of vocational discipleship

- Facilitate connection with Jesus

*Holy Trinity must:

- 1) Be willing to adjust and change where needed to meet groups from society that are underrepresented in the Church
- 2) Be focused upon building relationships first and foremost (we can't talk to people, but rather must talk with them).
- 3) Be authentic. Our goal is relationship in Christ, not saving the institution of Church. We need to start seeing that God is already at work out in the world among underrepresented groups and then we need to get up and follow God into the lives of our brothers and sisters.

Council

President: Jordan Wildermuth

Vice-President/Worship: Jackie Kutina

Secretary: Heather Friedel

Scott Kolakowski

Mary Cook

Bob Jones

Bruce Woerner

Bob Langlois

Worship Times

Saturday: 5:00pm

Sunday: 9:30am and 10:45am

ELCA Youth Gathering

Every three years, 30,000 high school youth and their adult leaders from across the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America gather for a week of faith formation known as the ELCA Youth Gathering. Through days spent in interactive learning, worship, Bible study, service and fellowship, young people grow in faith and are challenged and inspired to live their faith in their daily lives.

Next year, June 27-July 1, 2018 the youth gathering is in Houston.



The 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering theme is: "This Changes Everything." The primary scripture will be Ephesians 2:8 "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God." Grace is a foundational and distinctive piece of the Lutheran faith. This gift, undeserved and freely given, changes lives and perspectives as people realize they are enough because of what Christ has done and are called into the world to serve their neighbor and share the good news.

The logo is a visual representation of our theme and the 2018 Gathering experience. It incorporates the coming together of a mosaic to reflect the diverse host city of Houston, as well as the idea that we are a church where all are imperfect and incomplete, yet we each belong in – and have an important place in – God's masterpiece. The cross at the center of the logo is the focus – it is

God's grace, through Christ's life, death and resurrection, that changes everything for all people.

In her book "Woo: Awakening Teenagers' Desire to Follow in the Way of Jesus," Morgan Schmidt identifies the three central desires of teens.

All youth desire:

- Someone to become
- Somewhere to belong
- Something to do [that changes the world]

Throughout the 2015 Gathering and the evaluations and conversations that followed, we heard our young people echo these desires again and again. As young people desire and struggle to find someone to become, somewhere to belong and something to do, the Gathering seeks to be a ministry that helps define some of that or at least open up pathways of discovery. Ultimately, we want youth to understand the fierce love that God has for them, just as they are, and that by grace, through faith, they have been saved. When young people (or really any age person!) truly claim this reality, it indeed changes everything.

The gathering plans at Holy Trinity:

August 8th, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. – parent and youth planning meeting

During the coming months, the youth will be exploring the theme of the gathering at youth group events. They also will be holding fundraisers to help families afford to send their youth, including the Dine and Share at Moretti's in Bartlett on August 17th. Part of the youth gathering, the participants are invited to bring specific books to help

the Houston Independent School District. The list of books is available on the glass table in the sanctuary. The youth will be collecting books and gifts cards to Barnes & Noble's and Amazon this year. Please bring books or gift cards to church office.

Youth Group Calendar 2017-2018

August 8 at 6:30pm. - youth and parent's meeting for National Youth Gathering

August 17 - Dine and Share Bartlett Moretti's

*September 9 - 5pm - 10pm Youth Group

September 30 - Great America

*October 14 - 5pm-10pm Youth Group

Trick or treat at HT - pass out candy/table

*November 11 - 5pm-10pm Youth Group

December 3 & 10 - Gift Wrapping

*December 9- 5pm-10pm Youth Group

February 4 - Super Bowl Sub Sale

February 18 - Chili Lunch

June 27-July 1, 2018 - National Youth Gathering



* Beginning in September the youth group will be meeting once a month on Saturday evening. The time will consist of a short Bible study, a topic of the month (hunger, advocacy, racism, etc.), any youth group business/planning, and time for fellowship/fun. All youth grade 6-12 are invited to any event! College-age young adults and others in the congregation are invited to help chaperone/lead

a portion of the evening if you feel called. Please contact Deaconess Andrea.

Coming in September

Peace and Reconciliation

We live in a world filled with violence and hatred. We live in a nation filled with differing viewpoints that have split us apart. Sometimes we live in conflict with our families, neighbors and friends. Sometimes we think God is not listening to our prayers to stop all of the hatred, violence and conflicts. This September our worship services each weekend will be built around the theme of peace and reconciliation.

Mary Bible Study

Fear. Anticipation. Heartache. Joy. Mary knew the struggle of bringing new life into a harsh world. Still she willingly opened herself to be vulnerable to God's purposes. From her simple faithfulness as a young woman to her soul-piercing anguish at the foot of the cross, journey with Mary through the sorrows and the joys of saying yes to God. Bible Study will be held the **first Wednesday of the month in September, October, November and December at 10:00am**. Books are \$8. Sign up on the glass table to order a book. Deaconess Andrea will be leading the study.

God's Work. Our Hands.

On **September 10th**, ELCA Lutherans will be coming together to help with projects. The lunch will be held at Christ the Lord Lutheran Church. We need donations of old t-shirts for dog toys that will be made and given to Anderson's Animal Shelter. We also need donations of granola bars/protein bars, gum/mints/hard candy for First Responder's Baskets.

International Luncheon

Ooh la la! We're celebrating French cuisine on **Sunday, September 17th, at 10:45am**. A free-will offering will be taken. Come and enjoy! Invite friends!



Imagine Campaign

Our next project will be the outside stairs on the west side of the building. The Property Team and the Council have contracted with an architect who is drawing plans for the stairwell and also working on how to fix the stairs to the sanctuary. After the plans are approved by the City of Elgin, we will get bids from contractors to do the projects. Thanks for your continuing support!



As a fun project, we're going to begin videotaping people who would like to share some of their memories of Holy Trinity and Elgin. As part of the Imagine Campaign we'll be turning the Community Center into a living museum. There will be displays and fun areas to explore from the past and present.

If you have a collection of something you would like others to see, we'll have a display case to keep your collection safe. Call or email the church office and we'll add you to the schedule.

