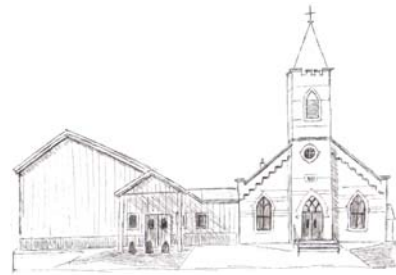


## Trinity Lutheran Church

46448 263<sup>rd</sup> St. Hartford, SD 57033  
Pastor Robert E. Moeller, Jr.  
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January 2007

### Pastor's Ponderings

Dear Christian friends,

On Sundays, January 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 21<sup>st</sup>, we will be conducting our annual stewardship emphasis in our worship services. On the 21<sup>st</sup>, we will also have a special stewardship Bible study for everyone. God, Who has given us His first and best, in His Son Jesus Christ asks us to respond to His love and generosity by returning to Him our first and best. This is why we have chosen the name **"Firstfruits Living and Giving"** for our theme.

The Apostle Paul, writing about the Christians in Macedonia, put before us a model of firstfruits living and giving. *"For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. They gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will"* (2 Corinthians 8:3.5). As we follow that example and put God first, we, too, will joyfully practice **firstfruits living and giving**.

As your pastor, I pray that the messages that I will share from the Word of God will challenge, encourage, and inspire you to put "God First" in all you do, not just on Sunday morning, but throughout the week. When God occupies His rightful place in your life, you will be eager to serve Him by serving others and you will be a cheerful, generous giver of your financial resources in order that His Word might be preached to the edification of those within our church and to a lost and dying world outside our walls.

I pray that you will make every effort to attend worship on these three Sundays and the Bible study on January 21<sup>st</sup>. The themes on which we will focus are as follows:

- Sunday, January 7<sup>th</sup> – "God First"
- Sunday, January 14<sup>th</sup> – "A Life of Service"
- Sunday, January 21<sup>st</sup> – "Whose Money Is It Anyway?"

Commitment Sunday is January 21<sup>st</sup>. You may bring your commitment form that day or return it to the church office at your convenience.

May God continue to bless you and give you joy in His service!

*Pastor Moeller*

### Celebrate Life!

It's time to celebrate!! Celebrate what you may ask? It's time to celebrate your life and the lives of those around you! Join us for birthday cake on January 28<sup>th</sup> to celebrate life. This year's theme for Life Sunday is "Cherish the Children." Just as Christ loves us, we too must work together to cherish His children. Whether you decide to give a donation to a local charity, educate others about the ramifications of abortion, or participate in the Bike for Life, we can all work together to "Cherish the Children."

Speaking of upcoming events, be looking for more information about the upcoming diaper dirby and Bike for Life. This year marks the 10 year anniversary of the Bike for Life and we have hopes of riding into Sioux Falls with 100 riders!! What a statement this would make! This fun event is held in September and we hope you will consider joining us! In the mean time, mark your calendars for a celebration of life (January 28<sup>th</sup>) and let's work together to cherish His children.



## Stewardship Thoughts

*“Maturing stewards make the most of new starts.”*

St. Paul wrote the following words in 2 Corinthians 5:17: *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!”* What a marvelous thought for Christian stewards entering into a New Year.

2006 is gone and with it go the failures and sins of the past. Yes, they remain in our memories and can provide us with good lessons of life as we look to the future, but the real good news is that we have a fresh new start, and maturing stewards make the most of each new start.

The first of the eight LCMS Biblical Stewardship Principles states that *“God’s stewards are God’s stewards,”* and one of the implications of this principle is that we have the privilege of being reminded and of reminding one another that *“we are God’s new creations each day.”* By the way, the eight Biblical Stewardship Principles provide good Biblical thoughts for study and reflection. You can find a free study copy of all eight principles by going to [www.lcms.org/stewardship](http://www.lcms.org/stewardship) and clicking on “Biblical Stewardship Principles.”

A new year reminds us of God’s gift of time and points us to Scripture passages like Psalm 90:12 (Today’s English Version): *“Teach us how short our life is, so that we may become wise.”* Galatians 6:10 (NIV) provides these words of encouragement: *“Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.”*

Yes, the past is gone and the future is not yet ours even though it holds out hope. What we have with each new year and day is the present and God’s forgiveness and strength to live renewed lives, using all of life and life’s resources to give glory to God and provide blessings to those around us.

There’s an old poem that talks about two people riding in a covered wagon—one was in the front looking forward and one was in the back looking behind. Both people were in the same place, but their perspectives were very different. As new creations in Christ we, like St. Paul, adopt the motto: *“forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, we press on with the goal to win the prize for which God has called us heavenward in Christ Jesus.”* (Philippians 3:13-14).

Happy New Year, maturing Christian stewards, and may God bless you richly as you say and do those things that honor him and bless others!

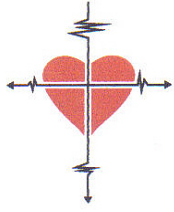
## Simply Giving

The Stewardship Committee at Trinity Lutheran Church invites you to consider a new way of implementing your giving of tithes and offering. Thrivent Financial for Lutherans has developed an automated giving program called *Simply Giving* to assist congregations and their members. Our church council and voters assembly have examined the program and found it a good option for members who regularly use automatic withdrawals from their bank accounts. Responses from those at Trinity who have been using this program have been very positive.

Both our members and the ministry of our church benefit with this program. For those who choose to participate, withdrawing the pledged or specified amount from your bank account is truly giving the Biblical “first fruits.” It also eliminates the minor frustrations of writing frequent checks or forgetting the checkbook. For the church, the advantages are related to a consistent, predictable income. The seasonal fluctuations in giving patterns are lessened. Thrivent Financial offers this service to benefit congregations. They pay all of the cost for this service.

You can implement this plan by asking for an enrollment form, completing it, and sending it and the appropriate bank information to the church office.

## Fit for Life



Why is the world so messed up? Why does God let bad things happen to good people? If we all use the same Bible why are there so many different denominations? Does God still speak to us today? Is His Word reliable? Is it relevant for today? If these are questions that you have asked, please plan to attend “Fit For Life in Christ,” an exciting course in Christian growth that presents the Word of God in new and meaningful ways. It is a course for those who are interested in membership in our church, or for anyone who wants to know what it really means to have a relationship with Jesus Christ. We

are beginning a new class soon. If you are interested in participating, please speak with Pastor Moeller, about a time that would work well for you and/or your friends.

## How to Become A Member Of Trinity Lutheran

We extend the Sacrament of Baptism to all who have not been baptized—infants, children, youth, and adults. We invite those adults who are looking for a church home to come to one of our New Member Orientation classes. A new class will begin soon. If you are interested in joining us, please contact Pastor Moeller as soon as possible.

Upon completion of this class you may join Trinity Lutheran Church in one of the following ways:

- The Rite of Confirmation for those who have never been confirmed in the Lutheran Church.
- A Letter of Transfer is gladly accepted if you wish to transfer your membership from another Lutheran congregation.
- Reaffirmation of faith is for those who have been confirmed in a Lutheran church but have not been active in their former church.

## LWML National Convention

Have you started to gather your *Gifts from the Heart*? This year there are no limits on the number you can bring ... truly give from the heart at the 2007 LWML Convention in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, June 21-24. And, it's time to get in shape for two pledge walks, one on Saturday morning for those early risers and another during lunch Saturday. These Rockin' Trails help raise money for missions, so sign up your supporters now.

We are privileged to have as our keynote speaker, Terry Kieschnick who is first lady of the LCMS, wife of LCMS President Gerald Kieschnick. Terry has a heart for all women who serve the Lord with gladness! All of you that have heard her know, she will give a sparkling address. Be there to hear her encourage us, as we learn to truly “**ROCK! Rest On Christ the King.**”

There's a lot to do to get ready, so start now and plan on a **ROCK**-filled weekend in Sioux Falls!! Visit [www.lwml.org](http://www.lwml.org) for more information.

## Proverbs Bible Study

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.” So says the author of Proverbs in chapter 1, verse 7. He goes on to tell us that the wisdom of the Lord is more precious than any worldly wealth, and God wants to give it to all.

Where does one find such wisdom? Through faith strengthened by the Holy Spirit working through His Word, God provides wisdom. In fact, the book of Proverbs is a treasure chest filled with wisdom and practical advice on Christian living.

To help in this search for wisdom, we will examine the Book of Proverbs each Tuesday night at 7:00 p.m. Everyone—young and old, experienced and beginners—are invited to join us.

# STEWARDSHIP DEVOTION

## “Plan for Eternity”

### Scripture Readings:

“He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end” (Ecclesiastes 3:11).

“The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is nearly over; the day is almost here” (Romans 13:11b-12a).



### Thoughts:

The New Year has arrived and, with it, reflections on the past and plans for the future. Are we planning for one year or for eternity? It is wise to plan for this life, but it is important to do so with an eye toward those things that are of eternal value. Let us work not just to provide for our families, but to provide for the mission and ministry of our churches, that the Word of God might be made known to all, that all may begin to “fathom what God has done from beginning to end.”

Time is of the essence. Because it’s been almost 2000 years since Christ’s Ascension, we sometimes lose sight of that fact. Each day brings us closer to His coming again, but, for many, that day will not come in their lifetimes. It is imperative for us as stewards to use all our resources to baptize, teach, and disciple. “The night is nearly over.” Whether or not this will be the year we see Christ descending from the clouds, it will see many whose time on earth is ended. As we face the beginning of a new year, let us begin anew to commit our hearts and minds to things of eternal significance.

### Discussion Thoughts:

1. In light of the brevity of time, what improvements can you make in the stewardship of the time God has given you?
2. How can your church equip its members to be better stewards of the Gospel?

**Prayer:** Dear heavenly Father, Thank You for Your Word and, through it, the sure hope of eternal life. Forgive us when we take each day for granted and put off until tomorrow the task of reaching, teaching, and discipling. “Let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light” (Romans 13:12b). Through Christ we pray. Amen.

### Financial Peace University

The stewardship committee is sponsoring Financial Peace University, a life-changing 13-week program on personal finance. It is designed to empower people to manage their money better, eliminate debt and build wealth. All material is biblically based and taught via entertaining video by Dave Ramsey. Find out how to:

- Make a budget that you will understand and use.
- Get out of debt and stay that way.
- Gain control of your money.
- Communicate with your spouse about finances.
- Invest with confidence.
- Change your financial future.



New classes will begin January 11<sup>th</sup>. For more information speak to Penny Eggebraaten (351-0054).

### Wanted

Trinity Lutheran is scheduled to serve Hartford Nutrition Meals on January, 25, 26, & 31. If you are able to help, please contact June Snyder (526-6681).

### **Lutheran Marriage Encounter**



A Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekend is planned in Sioux Falls, S.D, on March 2-4, 2007. It will be held in the beautiful new Good Samaritan Retreat Center. Couples are urged to consider this opportunity to nurture your marriage and appreciate its blessings. Learn simple, effective communication techniques. Practice privately; no group sharing! Four presenting couples will share and show you how they learned to bring more joy and understanding to their marriages.

The cost of this weekend is \$45 for registering (insuring your meals and rooms) and a free will offering at the end of the weekend. To learn more about this weekend, check out [www.GodLovesMarriage.org](http://www.GodLovesMarriage.org) and/or contact Pastor Bob and Aimee Moeller

Marriage can and should be an exciting and fulfilling journey! Can your GOOD marriage be BETTER or even GREAT?

### **From the SD District Office**

As of December 14, 2006, the District office received \$766,046 from congregations toward their 2006 Mission's Intention to District and Synod. Thank you to the 27 congregations that have met or exceeded their intention for the year. Yet the total of this year's mission intentions from congregations fell well below the needs and opportunities facing the District. Also, this year the District added no new mission work but are trying to maintain the mission and ministry work we began in previous years. In spite of our best efforts District has been running a negative \$200,000 operating balance for 2006. We therefore make a special appeal to all congregations both to meet their intentions, and if possible to exceed those intentions with additional gifts for missions this final month.

Note from Pastor Moeller: So far, Trinity has received \$5,737.00 designated for missions out of the \$7,800.00 we sent in for our intention in 2006. Please consider ways you might be able to help with this shortfall. The deadline for congregational remittances to District for 2006 is January 14, 2007.

### **The DaVinci Code**

There's some interest in beginning a study about "The DaVinci Code" in January. This bestselling novel, and then blockbuster movie, contains allegations against historic Christianity. Four sessions of study will address the following questions:

1. What Can History Really Tell Us?
2. Can We Trust the Four Gospels?
3. What's the Role of Women in Christianity?
4. Is Jesus Really the Son of God?

Enjoy riveting DVD interviews with noted experts and prepare for lively discussions.

We will be meeting briefly after the worship service **on Sunday, January 7<sup>th</sup>** to discuss study times and dates. If you are interested, please contact Pastor Moeller or Laura Johnson so we may order materials.

### **The Truth About Islam**

With more than a billion adherents worldwide, Islam is second only to Christianity in terms of size and geographic spread. Despite this, most Christians have a limited understanding of Islam. More importantly, few Christians feel equipped to share the Gospel with the Muslims they meet.

During the next few weeks, we will be studying "The Truth about Islam" in our adult Bible study each Sunday at 10:45 a.m. This study will help you gain a better understanding of Islam and how it relates to the Christian faith. It will prepare you to confidently share the life-giving message of Jesus Christ with Muslims or people attracted to Islam. Please join us each Sunday as we discuss this timely topic.

### **Church Council & Voters Meeting**

The Church Council will meet on Sunday, January 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. to prepare an agenda for the annual voters meeting. All groups, committees, and officers are asked to submit their written reports to June Snyder by Jan. 7<sup>th</sup>.

The Annual Voters meeting will be held on January 21<sup>st</sup>. A potluck meal will be held at noon. The meeting will follow at approximately 1:00 p.m.

### **High School Bible Study**

The High School Bible Study is currently studying “Going Out, Getting Dumped, and Playing Mini Golf on the First Date.” This engaging book contains solid, biblically based advice on dating, sexuality, and marriage. The author, Rev. Tim Pauls, treats this subject with honesty, clarity, and a good bit of humor, providing plenty of opportunity for thought and discussion. All high school students are invited to attend this study each Sunday at 10:45 a.m.

### **Trinity Altar Guild**

An altar guild is being formed that would take care of the altar paraments, banners, candles, plants, and many other services in preparation for the worship. If you are interested in helping or would like more information, please contact Aimee Moeller or Mary Krizan.

### **Card Shower for Martha Westphal**

Martha Westphal, a lifelong member of Trinity Lutheran Church will be celebrating her 104<sup>th</sup> birthday on January 22, 2007. For many years Martha lived on a farm in this area. In recent years she has been residing at Good Samaritan Home in Sioux Falls. We would like to honor her with a card shower for her birthday. Please bring your cards to Connie Geide or the church office by January 21<sup>st</sup>, so we can pass them on to her.



### **For Better, For Worse**

Soaring divorce rates indicate that good marriages don't just happen. So, what makes a good marriage? A good marriage requires a firm foundation and effective ways to deal with key areas such as financial concerns, decision-making processes, and child-rearing. *For Better, For Worse* is a free booklet that shares four principles of a healthy marriage and provides practical recommendations to maintain the love that brought couples together in the first place.

You'll find *For Better, For Worse* and many other helpful booklets in the Project Connect tract rack located in the hallway to the fellowship hall. Project Connect is provided by Lutheran Hours Ministries. Check them out today!

### **The Lutheran Difference: Angels and Demons**

Cherubim. Angel of the Lord. Satan. Demons. Seraphim. So many opinions. What do you believe? As Lutherans interact with other Christians, they often struggle to explain their beliefs and practices. Although many Lutherans have learned the “what” of Lutheran doctrines, they do not always understand the “why.” Based on God's Word as faithfully reflected in the Lutheran Confessions, this study will help you state clearly what you believe.

Among the topics discussed will be:

- Angels and their beginning
- Ranks and numbers of angels (demons)
- What do evil angels do?
- What do good angels do?

Please join the Lighthouse Bible study each Wednesday at 9:30 a.m., beginning January 17<sup>th</sup> as we study this interesting and important topic.

# January 2007

## Cleaners, Greeters, Head Ushers, & Acolytes

### Sunday, January 7th

Cleaners: Marlo Anderson, Mike Anderson, Janie Schauff  
 Greeters: Marlo Anderson, Mike Anderson  
 Head Usher: Steve Oligueller  
 Acolyte: Kylee Thompson

### Sunday, January 14th

Cleaners: Ray & JoAnn Matthies, Bryan & Susan Kelley  
 Greeters: Bryan & Susan Kelley  
 Head Usher: Steve Oligueller  
 Acolyte: Colin Kelley

### Sunday, January 21st

Cleaners: Dale & June Snyder, Adel & Amy Valdes  
 Greeters: Dale & June Snyder  
 Head Usher: Steve Oligueller  
 Acolyte: Ashley Matthies

### Sunday, January 28th

Cleaners: Roger & Bert Carls, Henry Dansman, Jr., Dianne Dansman  
 Greeters: Henry Dansman, Jr., Dianne Dansman  
 Head Usher: Steve Oligueller  
 Acolyte: Jenny Eggebraaten

### Sunday, February 4th

Cleaners: Harvey & LaRaye Rehfeldt, Melvin Matthies  
 Greeters: Harvey & LaRaye Rehfeldt  
 Head Usher: Lance Wollmann  
 Acolyte: Eric Wolfe

### Sunday, February 11th

Cleaners: George & Donna Vogt, Lester & Jean Gregersen  
 Greeters: George & Donna Vogt  
 Head Usher: Lance Wollman  
 Acolyte: Dustin Kleba

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<b>1</b>  <b>New Year's Day</b>	<b>2</b> 9:00 am Chapel at Tieszen Home 7:00 pm Bible study	<b>3</b> 9:30 am Lifelight Bible study 5:30 pm Confirmation	<b>4</b> 6:00 pm Wedding Rehearsal	<b>5</b> 6:00 pm Wedding of Scott Schnider / Kayla Romkema	<b>6</b> 9:00 am Stewardship Committee
<b>7</b> 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am S.S. & Bible Study 7:30 pm Men's Club meeting	<b>8</b> 6:00 am Men's Bible study	<b>9</b> 7:00 pm Bible study	<b>10</b> 9:30 am Lifelight Bible study 5:30 pm Confirmation	<b>11</b> 1:30 pm LWML meeting 6:30-8:30 pm Financial Peace University	<b>12</b> 7:00 pm Circuit Pastors Supper	<b>13</b>
14 9:30 am Worship w/communion 10:30 am S.S. & Bible Study 7:00 pm Church Council meeting	<b>15</b> 6:00 am Men's Bible study 6:30 pm Christian Education Comm.	<b>16</b> 7:00 pm Bible study	<b>17</b> 9:30 am Lifelight Bible study 5:30 pm Confirmation	<b>18</b> 9:30 am Circuit Pastors Meeting 2:00 pm Chapel at Leisure Living 6:30-8:30 pm Financial Peace University	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> 1:00 pm SD LFL Annual meeting—Zion, Mitchell
<b>21</b> 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am S.S. & Bible Study 12:00 noon Potluck Dinner 1:00 pm Annual Voters meeting SESD LFL Soup Supper at Freeman	<b>22</b> 6:00 am Men's Bible study	<b>23</b> 7:00 pm Bible study	<b>24</b> 9:30 am Lifelight Bible study 5:30 pm Confirmation	<b>25</b> 12:00 noon Hartford Nutrition Meals 6:30-8:30 pm Financial Peace University <b>Newsletter Deadline</b>	<b>26</b> 12:00 noon Hartford Nutrition Meals	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> 9:30 am Worship w/communion 10:30 am S.S. & Bible Study  <b>Life Sunday</b>	<b>29</b> 6:00 am Men's Bible study	<b>30</b> 7:00 pm Bible study	<b>31</b> 9:30 am Lifelight Bible study 12:00 noon Hartford Nutrition Meals 5:30 pm Confirmation			