

Trinity Lutheran Church
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March 2005

Pastor's Ponderings

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

When a famous person is about to die, we expect him to utter "famous last words," a sentence or two that captures the meaning of existence. Expectations must have reached an all-time high when people anticipated the famous words of our Lord and Savior. He parted His freshly moistened lips and ... His words did not sound all that profound. The words he used were, in a manner of speaking, not even in His own spontaneous words. Jesus simply quoted Psalm 31:5, a traditional bedtime prayer: "Into your hands I commit my spirit." It remains a bedtime prayer to this day, as it is cast into the rhyme: "If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take."

The prayer used by many of God's children as they close their eyes to a hard and tiresome day was the same prayer Jesus used as He closed His eyes for the last time to an entire earthly life of suffering and heartache. At the climactic moment, when Jesus finished the work of our redemption, He did not pull out some new, profound insight. He did not utter some secret bit of theology which He held in reserve for that final moment. As the Son obedient to His Father's will, He finished His ministry for us in the very same way He had begun it and continued it day by day. He died the same way He had lived. He stayed in the Word and will of God.

When someone is about to die or a loved one had died, some might expect their pastor to bring out some precious pearl of wisdom he has held back and reserved for just such a tragic time. But I have nothing new to offer. I can't say anything different than what I've been saying all along: that life comes through Jesus Christ. Indeed, if my ministry has been properly focused upon the unconditional Gospel of what God has done in Christ, and if you've been hearing that Gospel in the worship services and Bible studies week in and week out, you won't expect to hear anything new. You'll know that the Gospel provides enough comfort and assurance for any crisis situation, including at the time of death. You'll know that the ultimate problem of man has always had the ultimate solution. You'll remember that God's Word has never given you a false theology of glory which evaporates when it is needed most, but that you've always heard of salvation and eternal life through the cross, a message that wipes away every tear.

Without intending to sound morbid or fatalistic, I strongly believe that preparing people for death (their own or a loved one's), is among the most important work I do as a pastor. It is at the time of death when we each try to ask those "why" questions that may not have a satisfying answer and try to make sense out of what *does not make sense*. At such times our faith is tested the most. But properly prepared, it can be the time in which our Christian witness is the most effective, where we may have unique opportunities to share the Good News of Jesus Christ, who has defeated death and transformed it into the gate to eternal life. We might say, if we are better prepared for death, we are better prepared for life.

Over 400 years ago, a relatively unknown Lutheran pastor in Germany, Rev. Martin Möller, wrote a small book, *Heilige Sterbekunst*, which dealt with "the holy art of dying." Although a book of this kind can never outgrow its usefulness, it was not available in English until Pastor Arthur E. Schulz translated it in 1974. Beginning March 13th, we will begin examining this small book, *Preparing for Death* in our Sunday morning (10:30 a.m.) adult Bible study. We encourage all adults of the congregation to attend. Those who do, will find a very helpful companion and resource to use for many years in the future, as they face the death of their loved ones and their own inevitable death. *Preparing for Death* gets the message straight and gets the message of God's love out. Please plan on joining us!

God's richest blessings!

Pastor Moeller

Lutheran Marriage encounter



A Lutheran Marriage Encounter weekend will be held March 4-6, 2005, in Sioux Falls. The purpose of Marriage Encounter weekends is to deepen relationships and improve communication. They are for couples of all ages with good marriages who want better marriages. Those who attend will have an opportunity to renew your marriage relationship and celebrate your love. A communication tool is introduced and practiced that you can use many years.

Cost is \$45.00 to register and a donation. For more information or for a registration form, contact Pastor Bob and Aimee Moeller, (605) 526-3572, seelsorge8@aol.com; Milton and Donna Kaufman, (605) 651-3231, miltkauf@tnics.com; or Vern and Karen Harrington, (712) 546-7381. giblem@frontiernet.net



Revelation for Lent



Seven churches of the ancient world received messages from Jesus Christ through the revelation to the apostle John. What do these letters have to say to the modern church? How does this section of Holy Scripture relate to the Lenten season?

Each week during Lent we will focus on one ancient city from Revelation 2:1-3:22 and its unique challenges, Christ's call to "hold on to what you have," and how this message still applies today. With special emphasis on why we need Jesus Christ to do what we are unable to do, these messages will help us focus prayerfully on the Savior's sacrifice for our salvation and the faith and hope that He alone gives. In addition to this special sermon series, we will have special music and dramas. We will also have a Bible study each Monday night at 7:00 p.m., in which we will look at the text from Revelation for the upcoming midweek service.



Midweek Lenten services will be each Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. and then Maundy Thursday (March 24th) and Good Friday (March 25th) at 7:30 pm as well. For your convenience the 125th Anniversary Committee and YES groups will be serving supper each evening from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. The proceeds will be used for expenses for the upcoming 125th anniversary celebration and camps.

Easter services will be held at 6:30 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. on Sunday, March 27th. The Men's Club will be serving breakfast from 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

Taste of Cultures & Treasures of the World

Lutheran Social Services Refugee and Immigration Programs hosts its 10th Annual *Taste of Cultures Benefit Dinner and Treasures of the World Silent Auction*, Saturday, March 12, 2005 at Faith Lutheran Church, 601 N. Cliff Avenue, Sioux Falls. If you have any questions, would like to purchase tickets, be a sponsor, or donate an item for the silent auction, please call Pat Reichert at 526-6225.

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, letting him know a time that would work well for you and/or your friends.

SD District LCMS Youth Gathering

The South Dakota LCMS Youth Gathering will be held Monday, July 25th to Wednesday, July 27th at the Crossroads Hotel & Convention Center in Huron, SD. It is open to all youth entering the 9th grade in the fall of 2005 to those who will have graduated from high school in the spring of 2005. The theme for this year's gathering is "Courageous Faith/Bold Witness," the theme for the upcoming 100th anniversary of the South Dakota District. The main speaker will be the Rev. Terry Dittmer, who is in charge of youth ministry for the Synod. "Against All Odds," a professional band from Minneapolis, will lead the music throughout the gathering and put on a concert Tuesday evening. Other scheduled activities included servant events, worship, the "junk-food potluck," and games.

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.

Baptism—The Lutheran Difference

As Lutherans interact with other Christians, they often find themselves struggling to explain their beliefs and practices. Although many Lutherans have learned the "what" of the doctrines of the church, they do not always have a full scriptural foundation to share the "why." Because of insecurities about explaining particular doctrines or practices, some Lutherans may avoid opportunities to share what they have learned from Christ and His Word, including our understanding of prayer.

Our Lifelight Bible study group meets on Wednesday mornings at 9:30 a.m. in people's homes. Our study—Baptism: The Lutheran Difference—will identify how Lutherans differ from other Christians and demonstrate from the Bible why Lutherans differ. These studies will help you grow in your understanding and appreciation for your Baptism and help to prepare you to share your faith with others. Please join us!

Keepsake Cookbook

If you have submitted a recipe, **Thank You!** Please feel free to submit a couple more of your special recipes. We are short of recipes for beverages and snack things but will be happy to accept any you want to share. If you have not submitted any, **please do so now**, as we would like to have a few recipes from everyone in the congregation. There are forms available on the stand at the rear of the church. We need the completed forms back by March 15, so we can get them ready for a printer. You may return them to the box that is next to the forms.

Camp Minneboji 2005

KIDS IN GRADES 4-9: Camp Minneboji is coming! June 19-25 is the time. Camp Okoboji in northwest Iowa is the place. The camp features Bible study, mission presentations, music, crafts, sports, recreation, and the chance to meet new Christian friends. This year's camp theme is "*Courageous Faith: Bold Witness.*" The camp registration fee is \$210 (\$240 for 9th grade "Honors" Campers). Camp registration booklets will be sent to congregations in mid-March. Check out the camp Web site: www.minneboji.com or contact the Camp Dean, Rev. Scott Sailer (Faith Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, SD), for more information (605/332-3401; scottsailer@aol.com).

Wanted:

The Trinity Drama Troupe is looking for men, women, and teens who would be willing to share their acting talents in our upcoming mid-week Lenten services. You need not have any previous experience, only a desire to help share the Good News of Jesus Christ. If you are interested in helping, please contact Pastor Moeller.

We are also looking for people who would be willing to share their musical talents (vocal/instrumental) at our worship services.

Parking During Construction

During construction, parking places near the church will be at a premium. Please leave the two handicapped parking spaces for those with state handicapped permits. If you park in front of the church please park diagonally, headed toward the **west**. Gary Miles has given permission to park in his driveway, directly south of the church. We suggest parallel parking on the west side of the driveway and turning around by the house.

Please do not park near the road on the south side. The edge of the road is very narrow and with the all the traffic that goes by, it can be very dangerous for pedestrians crossing the road, coming between cars. Thank you for your patience and consideration of others!

Stewardship Thoughts

"Maturing stewards do the right things for the right reasons and strive for excellence in all they do."

On Sunday, March 20, Christians will observe Palm Sunday commemorating the entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem. On that same day Christians will join with all the citizens of our country in observing the first day of spring. The coming of spring reminds us that God keeps his promises, such as the one he gave to Noah in Genesis 8:22: *"As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease."*

God is faithful and his goodness endures forever. We see his goodness in the fertility and bounty of the earth. Springtime brings renewal to the earth as we look forward to seedtime and harvest. It is amazing that God trusts his people to be stewards of his creation. What a privilege! What a responsibility! God provides more than enough to satisfy the needs of all living creatures. But he lets it up to people to distribute this bounty so that all may have enough.

One of the signs of poor stewardship in our nation is the greed that tempts us all to gather up more and more for ourselves so that we have way more than enough while others are doing without the basic necessities of life. The Apostle John reminds us Christian stewards of our responsibilities to share with these words: *"If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth."* (1 John 3:17-18)

Yes, springtime reminds us of the goodness of God in providing more than enough to meet our needs. But it is also reminder that we have been blessed to be a blessing to others. As Christian stewards we seek opportunities to share our money, goods, time and talents so that others may be blessed by our actions. We do this through our support for our church, other charities and personal acts of kindness. And, because Christ is alive in us, we do all this joyfully and generously.

May God bless us so that we may continue to be maturing stewards who do the right things for the right reasons and strive for excellence in all we do!



A Mile of Pennies

The High School Youth Group is sponsoring “A Mile of Pennies” Fundraiser. Members are invited to donate their pennies and other spare change into the jar on the table by the entrance to the church nave. Other monetary donations will be accepted as well (\$1.00 = 100 pennies). The proceeds will be used to purchase a multimedia projector for the new building addition. We now have over 91,400 pennies (or \$914.00) collected, which placed side by side would stretch over 1 mile. Thank you for contributing!

Stewardship Committee Meeting

The Stewardship Committee will be meeting at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, March 12th. Everyone is invited to join us as we study stewardship and look for new ways to grow in our walk in the Christian faith.

Simply Giving

The Trinity Stewardship Committee would like to introduce a new program that could help you in your giving of your tithes and offerings. Through *Simply Giving*, your tithes and offering are made through a pre-authorized withdrawal from your bank account. You determine the frequency of your automatic gifts—weekly, semi-monthly, or monthly—the option is yours. Your gift is deposited into the church’s bank account on the same day it is withdrawn from your account.

Simply Giving is a reliable, safe way from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans to move your stewardship plan into action. It allows you to share your gifts through planned giving and activates your generosity into ongoing stewardship. Because your gift is given consistently, you won’t need to play “catch-up” at year-end or worry about forgotten checkbooks or missed Sunday offerings. But you’re not the only one that benefits. Our congregation benefits from steady, more predictable revenues throughout the year, and more efficient bookkeeping.

To participate, all you need to do is fill out a simple form that is available from the members of the Trinity Stewardship Committee (John Barber, Tim Totton, Mary Krizan, Aimee Moeller, or Amy Valdes). If you have any other questions they are willing to help you.

Prayer Chain > Prayer link

To insure better communication, the prayer chain will now operate using email. If you want to be included in the Prayer Link, send your email address to Pat Reichert at mmreichert@msn.com. When prayers are requested, you will be sent an email including the prayer request. If you do not have email but want to be contacted when prayers are requested just call Pat at 526-6225 and you will be put on the list to call. Everyone is encouraged to contact Pat Reichert or Pastor Moeller with prayer requests. St. Paul encourages us, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God” (Philippians 4:6).



Safari Adventure VBS

It is time that we begin to plan for this year’s VBS. Because we are expecting a large turnout again this year, we are going to need a bunch of help and support. If you are interested in contributing to this year’s *Safari Adventure*, whether it is by helping to make snacks, teaching, driving, or providing us with supplies, please attend our informational meeting at the church on March 28th at 7:00 p.m.

All of your ideas, opinions and prayers are greatly appreciated. If you are interested in helping out or would like more information about this year’s program, please contact Pastor Moeller at 526-3572 or Jessi Moeller at 321-1642.



Trinity Lutheran Fellowship Hall



Progress continues on the Fellowship Hall addition to Trinity Lutheran Church. The building is now enclosed so finish work can begin. In addition to the fellowship hall, church offices, Sunday School classrooms, restrooms, a library and new kitchen are included. When construction crews are finished, Trinity members have volunteered to do finish work in the Sunday School rooms and kitchen. We are looking forward to using the new facility this summer.

Pat Reichert, Future Facilities Committee

Couples Club

The Couples Club will be getting together for supper at the Hartford Steak Company Tavern on Saturday, March 19th at 6:00 p.m. Following the supper, we will go to Tim and Kathy Totton's place for dessert and to watch the movie *Luther*. All couples of the congregation are invited to join us! Please contact Kathy Totton at 528-3849 to let her know if you are able to attend.

Photos! Photos! Photos!

We are sorting through 300 to 400 photos taken by our unsalaried church photographer, Ray Matthies. The photos cover most of the activities that have occurred in the last 20 years at Trinity. There are pictures of pastor's installations, church anniversaries, VBS, Men's Club, LWML, AAL, church building renovations, etc. We are using appropriate photos to be on display at the 125th anniversary. The rest will be returned to each of you, personally, if you are the lead person in the picture. So within the next 6 weeks you will get a picture or many pictures of your involvement at Trinity. Thank you to Ray and JoAnn Matthies for the dedication of taking these pictures, for the film, and the development of them – our unsung heroes.

March 2005

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 9:00 am Chapel at Tieszen Home 6:30 pm Choir practice 7:00 pm Bible study 7:30 pm 125th Anniv. Comm.	2 9:30 am Lifelight Bible study 5:30 pm Confirmation classes 6:00 pm Supper 7:30 pm Worship	3	4	5
6 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am SS & Bible study 12:00 noon Elders' 3:30 pm Choir festival 6:30 pm Church Council mtg. 7:30 pm Men's Club meeting	7 6:00 am Men's Bible study 2:00 pm New member class 7:00 pm Drama rehearsal	8 6:30 pm Choir practice 7:00 pm Bible study	9 9:30 am Lifelight Bible study 1:30 pm LWML 5:30 pm Confirmation classes 6:00 pm Supper 7:30 pm Worship	10 2:00 pm Chapel at Leisure Living	11	12 9:00 am Stewardship Committee meeting 5:30 pm LIRS Auction & Dinner
13 9:30 am Worship w/communion 10:30 am SS & Bible study 11:45 am LWML Pampered Chef Fundraiser	14 6:00 am Men's Bible study 7:00 pm Drama rehearsal	15 6:30 pm Choir practice 7:00 pm Bible study	16 9:30 am Lifelight Bible study 5:30 pm Confirmation classes 6:00 pm Supper 7:30 pm Worship	17 9:30 am Circuit Pastor's meeting at Parker	18	19 6:30 pm Couples Club
20 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am SS & Bible study Palm Sunday	21 6:00 am Men's Bible study 7:00 pm Drama rehearsal	22 6:30 pm Choir practice 7:00 pm Bible study	23 9:30 am Lifelight Bible study 5:30 pm Confirmation classes	24 6:00 pm Supper 7:30 pm Worship w/communion Maundy Thursday	25 7:30 pm Worship Good Friday	26
27 6:30 am Worship 7:30 am Breakfast 9:30 am Worship w/communion 10:30 am SS & Bible study Easter Sunday	28 6:00 am Men's Bible study 7:00 pm VBS Planning meeting	29	30 9:30 am Lifelight Bible study 5:30 pm Confirmation classes	31		

Cleaners, Greeters, Head Ushers, & Acolytes

Wednesday, March 2

Greeters: Denny & Walt Plagman
Head Usher: Brock Thompson
Acolyte: Aubrey Larson

Sunday, March 6

Cleaners: Helen Wenzlaff, Pat Wenzlaff, Melvin Letsche
Greeters: Helen Wenzlaff, Pat Wenzlaff
Head Usher: Bryan Kelley
Acolyte: Austin Wolfe

Wednesday, March 9

Greeters: Melvin Letsche
Head Usher: Brock Thompson
Acolyte: Brady Eggebraaten

Sunday, March 13

Cleaners: Orrin Geide, Earle & Connie Geide, Matthew Anderson
Greeters: Orrin Geide
Head Usher: Bryan Kelley
Acolyte: Derek Johnson

Wednesday, March 16

Greeters: Earle & Connie Geide
Head Usher: Brock Thompson
Acolyte: Jenny Eggebraaten

Sunday, March 20

Cleaners: Archie & Lisa Wolfe, Myron & Paula Semrau
Greeters: Lester & Jean Gregersen
Head Usher: Bryan Kelley
Acolyte: Kimberly Kleba

Thursday, March 24 Maundy Thursday

Greeters: Archie & Lisa Wolfe
Head Usher: Brock Thompson
Acolyte: Derek Johnson

Friday, March 25 Good Friday

Greeters: Roger & Bert Carls
Head Usher: Orrin Geide
Acolyte: Holly Kelley

Sunday, March 27 Easter

Cleaners: Marvin Mielke, Wilbur & Lois Mielke, Jennifer Bauer
Greeters: 6:30 am Marvin Mielke
9:30 am Wilbur & Lois Mielke
Head Usher: 6:30 am Bryan Kelley
9:30 am Denny Plagman
Acolyte: 6:30 am Thad Johnson
9:30 am Megan Eggebraaten