

# TRINITY TODAY

**OUR CHURCH EXISTS TO WELCOME ALL PEOPLE INTO  
RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS CHRIST EQUIP PEOPLE  
WITH A VITAL, LIVING FAITH SEND US INTO THE WORLD  
TO SERVE IN JESUS' NAME**

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH . 502 NORTH 4<sup>TH</sup> STREET . BISMARCK, ND 58501 . 701.223.3560

PASTOR PAUL SCHICK AND PASTOR GARY ERDMANN, INTERIM

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Over the years I've learned that many of God's finest blessings come as surprises. My life contains many examples of this reality. I met my wife, quite unexpectedly, while working as a camp counselor. I stumbled upon my sense of pastoral call, which caught me totally by surprise, during a year of service work in Kenya. And to top it all off, this Californian discovered the blessing of serving as a pastor of a church in Bismarck, which came as a complete shock, through an expected first call assignment to snowy western North Dakota. The saying is true- *God works in mysterious ways*. And thank God for that, because God's mysterious ways are so much richer than the plans I would ever think up.

Well after six and a half years of having the privilege of serving as your pastor, it is time for me to say goodbye. On January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019 I will begin a new call as Pastor of Community of Joy Lutheran Church in Rio Rancho, NM, (near Albuquerque). My final day at Trinity will be January 9<sup>th</sup>.

Many of you have been asking me how I feel; and some of you have asked if my main feeling is relief, given that we'll be escaping the snow. My honest answer is *no*. Relief is not my primary feeling. The truth is, given the scale of this life change, my family and I are feeling many things at once. The word bittersweet certainly comes to mind. We are sorry to say goodbye to Trinity, to friends, and to our home; and we are simultaneously excited to meet new friends, enjoy new experiences, and live closer to our families. But my primary emotion is one of thankfulness to God and to all of you. Because my time here has been a true blessing.

As my time here draws near its end, I've been reminiscing on some of these blessings, and so many come to mind. I think about building houses in Mexico and getting to know kids on our summer youth trips and confirmation. I think about the wonderful staff and fantastic lay leaders I've been blessed to work alongside. I think about listening to the rich stories of our older members - stories of Model T's on the prairie and WWII escapes behind enemy lines. I think about sitting with families in moments of tragedy, and searching for God's light in moments of darkness. I think about nights of song and fellowship at Beer and Hymns, where fun moments became holy moments. I think about the ways we have served our community together- through the Banquet and food drives, through financial support of good causes and prayers, through worship, youth outreach and mission trips. And I think about the kindness, patience, and openness of the Trinity community, especially when you tolerated (and even celebrated!) my decision to bring a lightsaber to one of my Christmas Eve sermons. And these memories are just the tip of the iceberg!

And so thank you for the blessing of being who you are and for inviting me to walk alongside you in your ministry journey! God has blessed you with everything you need to shine with God's love, and I look forward to seeing how your story unfolds in the years ahead. May the love of Jesus fill your lives now and always!

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Paul



## **Annual Meeting scheduled for January 27**

The Annual Meeting of Trinity will be held at 11:30 a.m. on Sunday, January 27, immediately following worship. The Council will present a budget and a slate of nominees for the elected leadership positions. And this year's meeting holds extra importance as we will be electing our call committee members who will oversee the search for a new lead Pastor. The choices made at this meeting chart Trinity's direction for 2019. Please plan to attend!

# Musical Moments

Deacon Joanne Swonger—swonger@trinitybismarck.com  
Director of Music and Worship

As I write this, the sights and sounds of the Christmas season are ever increasing. The Christmas melodies are everywhere. Sweet smells of cookies and other delicious things are around every corner. The Christmas tree spreads her branches over the growing pile of colorfully wrapped gifts. The fulfillment of all the plans and preparations will soon come to pass! Our hunger for Christmas joys will be satisfied at last and we can rest with our loved ones in the glow of all that's been shared.

The fulfillment of God's gracious plans came to pass that first Christmas night. Mary gave birth to dear Jesus and Joseph warmly swaddled the babe and laid him in a manger crib. In the midst of our human vulnerability and fear, our constant gnawing hunger for comfort, peace, and joy could at long last be satisfied. What blessing! What grace! As we bow our heads and open our hearts to the newborn King, we need never again go hungry for God's presence in the world! Emmanuel, God with us, has come. Like the shepherds peering into the manger, we too may press into his presence and look upon the face of Peace and Joy.

In the New Year, I encourage you to press into the presence of the Christ Child through time in prayer. Set aside a snatch of each day to draw near to him. He will be there! And as you meet together, your awareness of his presence will increase and become more vibrant each day.

I am beginning a six week community prayer opportunity on Tuesday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>. Join me at Trinity for 30 minutes of prayer over the noon hour. We'll meet from 12:10-12:40 PM under the north balcony alcove to read selected Scripture passages and share a time of guided prayer. Our time together will be informal and you may feel free to come whenever you can.



## Celebration and farewell for Pastor Paul

On Sunday, January 6, between services, there will be a time of fellowship, kuchen and fruit in the Community Center. On Wednesday, January 9, following worship, pizza will be served in Fellowship Hall.

Plan to join us as we wish Pastor Paul and his family God's blessings on their move.

# Children & Youth

Gracia Johnson—gjohnson@trinitybismarck.com  
Youth, Family Life, and Christian Education Coordinator

**ROAR!**

Life is Wild & God is good

**Vacation Bible School**

**Save the Date!**

**June 2-6, 2019**

**6 to 8 pm**

**Age 4 to Grade 5**

## Trinity Camperships

Because we believe in the value of Christian Camping, Trinity Lutheran Church will provide scholarships of \$150 to anyone enrolled in Trinity ministries attending Bible Camp. To receive your campership, contact Gracia at Trinity: 223.3560 or gjohnson@trinitybismarck.com.



Check out Camp of the Cross's summer camps at [www.campofthecross.com](http://www.campofthecross.com).

## Senior High Youth Group

For youth in 9th through 12th grade. We meet Wednesdays in the lower youth room at 8:00 pm. Come as you are for a time to relax and grow together in faith!

## Lunch at First

All youth in grades 9-12 are invited to a free lunch every Thursday at First Lutheran (across from BHS). The meal is provided by various churches in town during the school lunch periods. Youth from all schools are welcome!

# The Banquet

Karla Eisenbeisz—karlabice@yahoo.com

Banquet Director



Thirteen years ago, The Banquet began as a Thursday evening meal serving about a hundred people. Over the years that meal grew to a few hundred. Then a Saturday noon meal was added. Then a Tuesday evening meal. In September of this year, The Banquet expanded to include a Sunday noon meal at The Salvation Army. The Banquet is today serving over 1,000 meals each week!

It's COLLABORATION that makes The Banquet a reality. It's businesses, churches, civic organizations that pay most of the meal costs. Recently we have had family groups sponsor and serve meals. It's people working together to serve those in need.

A movement to grow The Banquet's positive impact on our community is underway. We see CARING, COMMUNITY & COLLABORATION. We see a vision coming together. We see HOPE for many. Lives changed. God's blessings poured out.

Join us at The Banquet to see a vision of HOPE come to the marginalized in our community. Volunteer, sponsor a meal, make a tax-deductible contribution, pray for us. There's so much we can accomplish working together.

## Meal Costs:

**Tuesday, Saturday or Sunday** - average cost \$625 - provides up to 250 meals!

**Thursday** - average cost \$1,250 - provides up to 500 meals!

Contact Banquet Marketing Director Marion Kiefer for sponsorship information - 391-0376

May God Bless You & Yours

## Ending the year strong

This has been a very good year for our church – we continue to touch lives and share in joys and sorrows of our church community. And although we continue to support the neighborhoods and communities around us in so many ways, it is this time of the year that reminds us of the needs within our own walls. Traditionally, our church has been especially generous in December, and we are counting on that generosity this year as well. We have fallen behind on our giving and really need your support to end this year with a bang.

# Stephen Ministry



## I resolve to...

Ah, yes. The infamous New Year's Resolution! There's probably a data-cruncher somewhere who could tell us how long the average resolution lasts, and whether "losing weight" really is the resolution made most often.

If the weight you are carrying is on your heart rather than on your hips, perhaps this is the time to consider sharing that weight or concern with someone else. Many times, a heavy burden becomes lighter just because you've shared it out loud with a listener who focuses on you, who accepts what you are feeling without judging those feelings, who doesn't prescribe a "cure", and who keeps your concerns in confidence. Someone like a Stephen Minister.

Could talking with a Stephen Minister lift some of the weight from your heart? If you think it would help, or if you just want more information about how a relationship with a Stephen Minister works, talk to a Stephen Leader (Karen Botine, Margaret Fiechtner). You can also fill out the green Confidential Care Request card in the pew rack and drop it in the Confidential Care box at the Welcome desk in the lobby.

## Sign up for Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University at Trinity in January!

Planning for the future is hard when you're still paying for the past! Listen—there's a better way! Join our Financial Peace University group, and we'll learn how to beat debt and make a plan for the future...together! Interested?

Join us starting January 28 at 7:00 p.m. Sign up at [fpu.com/1078007](http://fpu.com/1078007). If you have any questions call Dan at 701.955.0278.

## Altar flowers

Altar flowers may be given in honor or in memory of someone. To order, call Jan in the church office. Cost is \$50.

## Your gifts

Julie Schaffner – schaffner@trinitybismarck.com Financial Director

### November 2018

	Month Actual	Year-to-date Actual
Income	\$ 62,269.15	\$652,842.33
Expenses	\$ 66,575.84	\$698,038.42
Income less expenses	\$ (4,306.69)	\$ (45,196.09)

**Electronic Giving** - Trinity's offers the option of Electronic Contributions as a simple way to contribute. This would allow you the freedom from worry or concern whether you are out of town, on vacation or wondering how to budget your contributions. Please stop by the office to fill out the form.

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## Women's Ministries

The Women's Coordinating Council met in December. The amount to dispense was \$2747.03. \$547.03 will remain in the women's account for future expenses, which leaves \$2200 to dispense. \$1100 will go to Camp of the Cross building Fund, and \$1100 to ELCA Lutheran Campus Ministry.

Those present voted to disband the Trinity Women's Coordinating Council and turn over the money to the funeral committee.

### Beer and Hymns — Jan 7, 7-9 pm

Beer and Hymns will be held on Monday, January 7 from 7-9 p.m. All persons 21 and over are welcome!

### Pastoral ministries

#### Wedding

Johnathon Torfin and Alicia Lipp

#### Baptisms

Hailey Iris Stenerson; Kinley Rose Wimer; Ryder Allen Reiersen; Finn Alexander Wahl

### Thank you

Thank you to everyone who shared your Christmas baking with our shut-ins. You made it possible for us to really fill the plates. Your generosity is greatly appreciated and means so much to our shut-ins!



Happy  
New Year!

## Feeding of 5000 peanut butter drive: background story and results:

St. Paul once said that God often uses what is foolish to bear his good news. Truer words were never said about me, and you'll see what I mean as you read about the story below about how our peanut butter drive got started...

The whole idea of a feeding of 5000 peanut butter drive came from our friends at Faith Lutheran. When I learned that they had completed such a drive last year, I fell in love with the idea and received permission to borrow it for Trinity. So we announced the drive, did the publicity, and stated our goal to bring in 5000 *jars* of peanut butter. And I took confidence in Trinity's ability to meet this goal because in my mind- *Faith had already done it, so why couldn't we?*

A few weeks later, I was talking with Pastor Sylvia from Faith Lutheran about our plans to collect 5000 jars of peanut butter, just like they did. And here's how she responded: "Uh Paul, we collected five thousand *servings* of peanut butter, which is like 300 jars. Not five thousand *jars*. That would be crazy!"

Whoops! Well sure enough, the more I thought about it, 5000 jars is a crazy goal. In fact it's probably more jars than all the grocery stores in Bismarck carry at one time! But in truth I don't mind playing the fool in this story because this silly mistake of mine led to an incredible level of generosity from you. In fact the results are in, and you have donated an incredible **13,436 servings of peanut butter (954 jars)!** Thank you for your amazing generosity! These donations will now go on to feed hundreds of hungry families in the Bismarck/Mandan area.

In gratitude, Pastor Paul

### Please sponsor a radio broadcast

To sponsor a broadcast for 2019, please sign up at the Welcome Center or call Jan in the church office at 223.3560. The cost is only \$200 and is an important outreach ministry of Trinity.

### Pastoral transition updates

For updates, see "Pastoral Transition Updates" on our website: [www.trinitybismarck.com](http://www.trinitybismarck.com).