

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 4TH STREET . BISMARCK, ND 58501 . 701.223.3560

PASTOR GARY ERDMANN, INTERIM

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February 2019

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

Christmas has come and gone. And now it's time to settle back and regroup. Well, not entirely. From the standpoint of dashing from store to store looking for the perfect gift, or standing in long lines at the cashier, or making the last trip to the grocery store for the one forgotten item, yes, that is done. But from the standpoint of our church year, well, it's not over yet. We have celebrated the birth of Christ on Christmas Eve, and now, during this time of Epiphany, we are left to think about what just happened.

Epiphany is a term that means "appearance" or "manifestation" as it refers to the time when the magi came to see the Christ child for the very first time. Epiphany, which is celebrated January 6th, is all about the first appearance of Jesus. But the time after Epiphany is all about trying to digest what we have just seen.

You can only imagine what it must have been like for the magi as they were returning home from their visit to Joseph, Mary, and Jesus. The things that were going through their minds must have been mind-boggling. This was their new king, but in a place not very kingly...what's up with that? Can this baby really have the strength to forgive sin and carry this world?

No doubt, the things that were going through their minds had to have been difficult, and at the same time joyous. But there is no doubt, what they saw changed them forever!

This is what Epiphany does for us today. It causes us to settle back, and reflect on all the ways God's call has affected us. For the message that came with the birth of Jesus is our message as well. God came to us that day, and ever since then God has been calling. So it is fair to ask ourselves, how have we responded to God appearing in our lives?

People respond differently, no doubt. Just look at some of our biblical characters. Samuel, who was hearing voices while he slept, thought it was Eli talking to him at night. Finally, when Samuel figured it out, he responded to God saying, "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening." When Jesus calls his first disciples, the fisherman just stand up and leave everything, and follow him.

The prophet Jeremiah, when he was called, couldn't come up with enough reasons to turn God down, and he also eventually gave in.

Then of course, some react like Jonah. When God called Jonah to prophesy to the people of Ninevah, Jonah took off running in the opposite direction. But it's not easy to escape God, and after spending 3 days in the belly of a fish, Jonah, still reluctant, wandered slowly back to Ninevah to do what God had asked.

God has come into each of our lives, just as Jesus came into the lives of the Magi. So how have we responded?

With the new challenges we face we could pick any one of these characters and justify our actions. Should we fix up the church, or support more mission projects, re-evaluate our worship space, or maybe re-evaluate what it means to worship... and on and on. All of these support God. Not one of these were meant to stand on their own. So the answer is YES!

As a congregation Trinity has responded with obedience, trust, and love in the past. God will continue to guide us if we let him. Let's take this time after Epiphany and celebrate the joy of having Christ in our lives.

Happy Epiphany to all!

Interim Pastor Gary

Musical Moments

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

“Leaning into prayer”

Lean into the power of God’s presence through prayer! A six-week guided prayer experience will be led by Joanne Swonger beginning **Tuesday, January 22nd and concluding Tuesday, February 26th**. We’ll meet from 12:10-12:40 PM in the sanctuary and will focus on selected Scripture passages to guide our prayer time together. This group is informal so feel free to come whenever you can.

Questions? Email Joanne at swonger@trinitybismarck.com

Experience “God’s amazing love”

Beautiful cards, candy hearts, and chocolates brighten February’s days. Here at Trinity, we aren’t giving out Ghirardelli chocolates (maybe Hershey’s kisses!), but we do have exciting things planned to help us know “God’s Amazing Love!”

See God’s Amazing Love –

Wednesday, Feb 6th and Sunday, Feb 10th, Witness Trinity’s youth in action as they lead our worship services!

Honor God’s Amazing Love –

Wednesday, Feb 13th and Sunday, Feb 17th, Wear something red to worship and church school. Join us in singing songs of love praising our amazing God!

Celebrate God’s Amazing Love –

Wednesday Feb 20th and Sunday, Feb 24th, Enjoy a presentation during worship showing many events in the past year when God’s love was abundantly revealed to our congregation!

Share God’s Amazing Love – All month

Bring baby items such as diapers, baby wipes, onesies, sleepers, etc. to be shared with FirstChoice Women’s Care Center in Bismarck. Bless expectant mothers, young mothers, and their babies who are in need of these donations. Look for drop off bins at Confirmation, Church School music, or the crib in the narthex!

Concordia College choir

Every spring, The Concordia Choir travels around the United States for their National Tour. We are thrilled to announce that the final concert of their 2019 Tour will be at Trinity Lutheran Church on **Saturday, March 16th at 7:30 PM**. The Concordia Choir of Moorhead, Minnesota, under the direction of Rene’ Clausen, has a reputation as one of America’s finest a cappella choirs. In May 2017, the Choir toured Germany in observation of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation. Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$15 for seniors, and \$5 for students and may be purchased in the church office. If you want to purchase tickets online the link is: www.ConcordiaCollege.edu/ChoirTour.

Host families are needed to house overnight guests from the Concordia College Choir.

If you can help us provide housing for 2 or more choir members after the concert on Saturday, March 16th, please contact Joanne Swonger, swonger@trinitybismarck.com.

Children & Youth

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

Save the Date
Soup Cook-Off & Silent Auction
Wednesday, March 6
A fundraiser for Trinity Youth.



Vacation Bible School

June 2-6, 2019

6 to 8 pm

Age 4 to Grade 5

Join us for Roar VBS this summer where kids will discover that Life is Wild and God is Good! Pick up a registration form at the youth board in the lobby or register online by going to the Trinity website (trinitybismarck.com), click on the ‘children and youth’ tab on top and then ‘vacation bible school’. Volunteers are needed! Please see Gracia to help with this fun week!

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.

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



Pictured are volunteers at the January 3rd Banquet, which was served by Trinity

According to Feeding America, the rate of hunger among seniors aged 60 and older has increased by 45% since 2001, a lingering effect of the 2008-09 recession. At the current rate, the number of food insecure seniors may grow to more than 8 million by 2050. One in 5 children in our community are food insecure. That should make all of us sad. But there's hope! There's an increasing awareness of hunger in our community and The Banquet is on the cutting edge of doing our part. We are currently service 4 days each week and are pushing forward to serve 7 days a week.

Adding these extra days requires community support. Please, join the Banquet Board of Directors and myself, in helping expand a much needed ministry in our community. Give me a call at 701.202.4749 if you would like to join us by volunteering or sponsoring a meal.

Trinity's new leaders for 2019

President: Beth Campbell

1st Vice President: Cindi Offerman **2nd Vice President:** Mike Hanson

Council: Missy Kopp, Wanda Benz, Amy Peterson

Nominating Committee: Jim Lewis, Susan Ronning, Julie Bucholz, Jessica Simpson, Phil Murdoff

Audit Committee: Sheila Peterson

Trust Fund Committee: Dan Welsh

Convention Delegates: Reggie and Julie Christian

Stephen Ministry



It's a win/win situation...

Obviously, Stephen Ministry is a benefit to the care receivers; otherwise, this ministry would not have lasted for over 40 years. But what about the individual Stephen Ministers? What do they gain from their involvement?

For some Stephen Ministers, the program is a way for them to answer the question, "How can I help?" in a very real, hands-on way. They may also realize that being able to listen without judging and without providing solutions, is a real gift they have that can be offered to a care receiver. Stephen Ministers have also discovered that the knowledge and skills they gain or enhance during their training and supervision are not limited to working with an assigned care receiver. The same knowledge and skills can - and do - carry over into other parts of their lives. Stephen Ministers have reported they made changes in the ways they speak with, listen to, or otherwise respond to spouses, children, co-workers, and others, and that these changes (often small ones), have caused positive changes in their relationships. Although some Stephen Ministers do not "re-up" after their initial 2-year commitment ends, the changes in their ways of relating to others go on, and on, and on.

Currently Trinity's Stephen Ministry program has 2 women and 4 men as active Stephen Ministers. The men are available to be assigned to a care receiver, but both of the women are assigned to caring relationships that are likely to go on for some time. This means we may be considering training additional Stephen Ministers (especially women) soon. Is this ministry something you would consider? If so, talk to one of the Stephen Leaders (Karen Botine, Margaret Fiechtner). If you are feeling that gentle push on your back, we look forward to hearing from you.

Beer and Hymns

Beer and Hymns will be held on Monday, February 4 at 7 p.m. at Harvest Brazilian Grill, Mandan. Food served at 6:15.



Your gifts

Julie Schaffner – schaffner@trinitybismarck.com Financial Director

December 2018

	Month Actual	Year-to-date Actual
Income	\$115,043.74	\$767,886.07
Expenses	\$ 68,094.14	\$766,132.56
Income less expenses	\$ 46,949.60	\$ 1,753.51

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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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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Message from Trinity's upcoming president, Beth Campbell

But those who trust the Lord for help will find their strength renewed. They will rise on wings like eagles; they will run and not get weary; they will walk and not grow weak. Isaiah chapter 40 verse 31



As I begin the year as Council president, I'm thankful to those of you who have been kind enough to come up and express your confidence in me. Many have said that this year was going to be quite a challenge, but my response is I'm not worried. Jim Lewis was always quick to remind me that God is in charge. If Trinity is willing to do the work, God will provide.

I'm a lifelong member of the church and over the years have been involved in many different ways. I was baptized here, attended Sunday School, Confirmation, Luther league, and served on church council in the early 90's. I have vivid memories of the day worship began in the old church and ended in the new sanctuary, weddings, the Messiah, and of course funerals. It's the people of Trinity I remember most, those wonderful people who made Trinity a home for me.

In my college years I read *The Power of Positive Thinking* by Dr. Norman Vincent Peale. As I remember it, he provided a suggestion for times of stress. It was to memorize a Bible verse that you can quietly repeat to help you focus. I was never good at taking tests, and the calming effects of simply repeating the above verse 3 times helped me get through.

Trinity is in the midst of change and that can be unsettling for some. We have a great deal of work to do, but it is good work. You have just chosen new council members and call committee members whose task it will be to help us move forward. We have an outstanding staff who will continue to help us with this good work.

We are also being challenged by declining attendance at worship and in giving. While Trinity is sound, we need to work to maintain that stability.

As we move forward this year, I would ask that each and every one of you contribute in your own way. That might be ushering at worship, helping with the rummage sale, banquet, Stephen Ministry, a committee of the church, church school, music, worship, communion, greeting. There are many ways to contribute your time and talents.

Pastoral ministries

Baptisms

Harper Leigh Becker

Funeral

Jacob Heath

Trust Fund Spotlight

What's so good about a Trust Fund?



As specified in the Bylaws, both the Trust Fund and the North Dakota Tax Credit Endowment Fund exist to *enhance the work of Trinity by establishing new ministries and stewardship opportunities additional to and apart from the general operation of the congregation.*

Providing for the ongoing operation of Trinity, as reflected in the annual budget, is the responsibility of the current members and is met through the weekly, monthly or annual pledges and offerings. The income from the Trust and Endowment Funds enables Trinity to extend our reach beyond the limits of the annual budget, and perhaps go in directions we didn't know about in the past, or take on new projects that once existed only in dreams. It has also enabled us to address unexpected and unbudgeted situations quickly (remember the cost of snow removal a couple of winters ago?).

In 1998, almost \$80,000 was distributed in grants. Approximately one-third of that amount was used for building and supporting the faith journeys of Trinity's youth through curriculum, camperships, youth trips, and college scholarships. As we move forward, what will be needed to support the growth in faith of our youth? the young adults? the growing families? the empty-nesters? the seniors? How will we reach out to those who are searching for something to give meaning to their lives? How can we link with other ministries to reach farther or make an even greater difference in the world around us? You can answer those questions, and the Trust and Endowment Funds can help.

If you would like to provide support now and in the future by making a gift to either the Trust Fund or the Endowment Fund, talk to a Trust Fund Committee member: Richard Bjornson, Richard Hansen, Dwight Offerman, or Susan Weiland.

Trust Fund scholarship available

Scholarship applications are available in the church office or on our website under the children and youth tab, and must be turned in by March 30.

Any graduation high school senior or post-secondary student who is a Trinity member is eligible to be considered to receive a scholarship for post-high school education.