



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Give, Worship, Prayer, Invite, Serve, Study, Encourage

Trinity Messenger

February 2022

Field Notes: Rev. C. Richards

Division or Identity Confusion?

¹⁷ So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; ¹⁸ for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, ²⁰ built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. - Ephesians 2:17-20

Lately my clergy colleagues tell me they worry about the division they see in our local area and wider US culture. We have conversations about how to stay in touch with parishioners who feel that church leaders are too conservative or too liberal or that something the denomination published is unacceptable. We have conversations about the anger we see come out sideways in different parts of our congregation's lives. We reflect on our own fatigue and the compassion we feel for the frustration and exhaustion many of our members experiencing. Yet, even as I listen to my colleagues, I am not experiencing this time in the same way. When I am in conversation with all of you – I don't see huge division. Instead hear you experiencing confusion and caution.

The more time I reflect on this in prayer and with scripture, the more I am convinced that what I see in the wider community is a crisis of identity, individually and corporately.

Since the late '80s, many political candidates and corporations have changed strategies around branding and persuasion. Rather than being a company that sells a product, they have changed their advertising message to be a company that is "associated with a type of person". Politicians quickly joined in on this strategy. Rather than having a platform of issues and positions, politicians began to sell an identity that is tied to party or candidate. If you are "Conservative",

then there is a list of things that are a part of your “identity”. If you are a “Liberal”, similarly, there is a cloud of identity qualities that you and “people like you” all share together.

This is completely ridiculous, by the way. I can purchase a brand of car for a variety of reasons and not be a “FORD” person or a “BMW” person. My identity, my heart, my beliefs, my friends, my tribe- none of these have anything to do with what particular situation drove me to purchase a new or used vehicle. There might be some associations – wealthy folks often purchase some of this or that, folks in the country are more likely to purchase this or that... Sure. But that isn’t a commentary on one’s identity or value as a human. It is a purchasing decision.

Identity Politics and Identity Marketing have become ubiquitous in the last 20-30 years. Lately the intensity of this identity-shaming/tribalism have become magnified by social media, news media, and online and print advertising. Another example: what brand of coffee I drink is not a value statement on whether I am conservative and therefore worth talking too. If I drink a latte, I am not a “liberal” and therefore associated with a collection of political and social value statements. I may just like steamed milk in coffee. Similarly, if I drink Black Rifle coffee, it does not also mean that I support various politically conservative issues or platforms, I might just like their roast or support of veterans!

I bring all of this up because identity marketing and politics creates tribes, not for the sake of community, but for the sake of fundraising politically, vote-getting, or selling a product. Social media does not solely exist to connect people. It survives by monetizing your attention and feeding you identity marketing in a way that drives sales and advertising. The US media is as affected by this problem as are our school kids who wear T shirts denouncing one group or another who their parents have told them are not in their “identity” group.

As Christians – as people whose entire identity is centered on Jesus Christ – identity politics and identity marketing ought to raise some very large red flags. Our identity is located in the person of Jesus. Whether or not I drive a snowmobile or own an Italian suit does not indicate my relationship with God.

When I listen to all of you – I don’t hear hatred for groups of people, I hear confusion as to how to express the identity that you are being told you must express by media and advertisers. I hear worry about the arguments and frustration you experience when trying to have conversations with others who are in different “tribes”. I hear love for your neighbor and confusion as to where that fits in the identity politic or marketing identity that is vying for your time and attention.

Brothers and Sisters in Christ, Jesus died and rose for each one of us; those who wear Prada and drink Cristal, and also those who shop at the thrift store and like Mountain Dew. I urge you this month - have identity politics or marketing caused you frustration or pushed you into beliefs or associations that you aren’t comfortable with? How might we as Christians be centered in Jesus? How might our deepest selves reflect the love of God for our hearts, and for our neighbors’ hearts? When we get pulled aside into a marketing strategy or an identity politics argument – are we losing sight of the humans we are to care for? God’s Blessings to you in the coming month!

Peace and Joy – Pr. CR

How You Can Help!

Here are some things you can do to support the church and your neighbors this month!

1. **Call people.** Use your Trinity Directory – call your church family members and check in. **Make a Plan to call 3 families or individuals** (especially those who may be isolated) If everyone does this from the church – all will receive messages of care and hope. You could pray on the phone with one another.
2. **Give Financially:** You can support local charities like the food shelf, Luther Crest, the Red Cross, etc. Please remember to either mail or drop off contributions to the church office or give online. You can download the Vanco mobile app to do the online giving. Check it out at <https://www.vancopayments.com/egiving/church-app>.
3. **Pray:** Please keep up a prayer list of those you care for. Daily prayer is a powerful way to develop compassion, empathy, and spiritual discipline. There is no better time than now to begin praying.

TRINITY LUTHERAN WOMEN

The new booklet will be available at the March 6th meeting which will be held after church. There are some changes in the funeral policies and service groups, so those will be explained at that time. We encourage everyone to attend!

Do Days

Do Days will be
February 21st &
22nd

Quilt making continues
as an ongoing project.

+ + + WORSHIP + + +

SERVICES ARE IN-PERSON & LIVE WEBCAST

We are still looking for volunteers for tech/AV and readers. Please contact the church office if you're interested.

1st Sundays of each month are Food Shelf Offering & 4th Sundays are Luther Crest Offering

DATE	TIME	READER	MUSICIAN	TECH/AV	COMM. PREP.	ACOLYTE
Sun, Feb. 6th	9:30 AM	L. Banta	J. Odello & W. Richards	A. Erickson	A. Mullins	S. Logeais
Sun, Feb. 13th	9:30 AM	J. Solvie	K. Zenner	T. & W. Richards		L. Anderson
Sun, Feb. 20th	9:30 AM	H. Rutter	K. Zenner	J. Knorr		O. Huebner
Sun, Feb. 27th	9:30 AM	H. Black	K. Zenner	D. Black	J. Brandt	W. Mithun

Special Music: We would like to welcome anyone interested in sharing God's message through special music in our service to please let the office know: tlccyruskayla@gmail.com.

+++++

BIRTHDAYS

NOTE: We are working on updating our online membership system, please let the church office know if any birthdays are incorrect or missing.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| 02/01 Steve Edlund | 02/18 Donald Hansen |
| 02/01 Brian Payne | 02/18 Valentina Alessi |
| 02/03 Paulette Solvie | 02/19 Kimberly Brandt |
| 02/03 Diane Estenson | 02/20 Eric Berg |
| 02/03 Scott Estenson | 02/20 Dawn Driggins |
| 02/04 LeRoy Edlund | 02/22 Lila Estenson |
| 02/04 Daniel Bratton | 02/22 Lisa Banta |
| 02/04 Andy Aaberg | 02/22 Jarrett Carlsen |
| 02/05 Linda Retzlaff | 02/23 Ella Anderson |
| 02/05 Joe Boots | 02/24 Jason Bratton |
| 02/05 Kayla Schmidgall | 02/24 Sophia Carlsen |
| 02/06 Joel Hanse | 02/25 Aaron Larson |
| 02/06 Barb Wentz | 02/26 Joyce Brandt |
| 02/06 Randy Erlandson | 02/26 Mark Tollefson |
| 02/08 Braelynn Black | 02/26 Grayson Huntley |
| 02/09 Lynn Asmus | 02/27 Barb Jergenson |
| 02/10 Joel Mickelson | 02/27 Mitchell Maanum |
| 02/12 William Osterman | 02/28 Thomas Olson |
| 02/14 Barb Hesse | 02/28 Mathew Anderson |
| 02/15 Roxane Malland | 02/29 Jacob Banta |
| 02/15 Alissa (Maanum) Steffens | |

CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES

Trinity Lutheran Church
Annual Meeting (in person and by Zoom)
January 23, 2022

President Holly Rutter called the meeting to order.
Pastor Chris Richards led us in devotions.

Scott Banta made a motion to accept the agenda. Alan Rutter seconded it. Motion passed.

Secretary's Report – Julie Rutter made a motion to accept the 2021 Secretary's Report. Scott Banta seconded it. The motion passed.

Pastor Chris gave his report and statistics for 2021. Conformation and Fusion are going well.

Dena Carbert made a motion to accept Committee Reports. It was seconded by Linda Retzlaff. The motion passed.

New Business:

Lonnie Anderson presented the 2022 Budget. A motion was made by Lonnie and seconded by Jerry Carlson to accept the budget. The motion passed.

The following people were added to the Nominations Report:

Secretary – Katie Erickson

Memorial Committee – Jeff Anderson and Linda Dahl

Nominating Committee – Kathy Wevley

A motion was made by Kathy Banta and seconded by Scott Banta to accept the slate of nominations. The motion passed.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Roxane Malland, Council Secretary

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please contact Kayla (tlccyruskayla@gmail.com or 320-795-2569) if you'd like to add any other announcements or information to the upcoming monthly newsletter.

** Reminder: Pick up any bowls/containers in church kitchen (many still leftover from serving at funerals or Taste of Christmas).

** Pederson Funeral Home's Gatherings Sunday Luncheons for Widows and Widowers will be on February 6th at Noon at Common Cup in Morris.

** Element: Confirmation schedule

- * Wed, 2/9 – 6pm @ First Lutheran
- * Fri, 2/11 – Sat, 2/12 – Winter Retreat
- * Wed, 2/23 – 6pm @ First Lutheran
- * Sat, 2/26 – Ski & Tubing trip to Andes Tower Hills-5pm-Midnight

Element Winter Retreat – Feb. 11th-12th at Luther Crest-sign up on Fusion website (www.fusion-ministry.com)

** Fusion Sr. High schedule

- * Sun, 2/6 – 6:30pm @ First Lutheran
- * Sun, 2/13 – No Fusion
- * Sat, 2/26 – Ski & Tubing trip to Andes Tower Hills-5pm-Midnight
- * Sun, 2/27 – 6:30pm @ First Lutheran

** Parent/Caregiver bible study (held by Barb Barsness) will be Wednesday's in February from 6pm-7:30pm at First Lutheran church in Morris.

** Luther Crest Bible Camp is taking registrations for Summer 2022 & Trinity has budgeted funds to send our youth. Early registration ends on February 14th & provides great savings. Please sign up at www.luthercrest.org. When completing your registration, it is important that you put Trinity Lutheran-Cyrus as your home church. For the Day Camps and Explorers (weekend camp), a \$50 deposit is required. For all other registrations, a \$100 deposit required. If you're unable to pay, please contact Jodi Jergenson for arrangements. The earlier we sign up, the more kids we can send. God's Blessings!

** Pederson Funeral Home's Gatherings Sunday Luncheons for Widows and Widowers will be on February 6th at Noon at Common Cup in Morris.

** Pederson Funeral Home's Bridges of Hope Support Group session 1 will be on Monday, February 21st from 6:30p-8p and February 22nd from 10am-11:30am.

** Concordia College Choir has a concert on Saturday, February 26th at 3pm at Alexandria Area High School.

Today < > February 2022

Search, Help, Settings, Month, K

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
30 ● 9:30am Worship ● 6:30pm Sr. High Fusion	31	Feb 1 First Day of Black History ● 4:30pm Book & Bible St	2 ● 9am Weekly Devotional ● 6pm Element - Can it be	3	4 church office closed	5
6 ● 9:30am Worship ● 6:30pm Sr. High Fusion	7	8 ● 4:30pm Book & Bible St	9 ● 9am Weekly Devotional ● 6pm Element - How can	10	11 Element - Jr. High - Winter Retreat	12
13 ● 9:30am Worship ● 6:30pm Sr. High Fusion	14 Valentine's Day	15 ● 4:30pm Book & Bible St	16 ● 9am Weekly Devotional ● 6pm Element - Why did	17	18	19 Therapy Gathering for Girls
20 ● 9:30am Worship ● 6:30pm Sr. High Fusion	21 President's Day	22 ● 4:30pm Book & Bible St	23 ● 9am Weekly Devotional ● 6pm Element - Why do	24	25	26 ● 5pm Element-Ski Trip to ● 5pm Fusion-Ski Trip to
27 ● 9:30am Worship ● 6:30pm Sr. High Fusion	28	Mar 1 First Day of Womens Hist ● 4:30pm Book & Bible St	2 ● 9am Weekly Devotional ● 6pm No Element - Ash'	3	4	5

**Trinity Lutheran Church
Box 220
Cyrus, Minnesota 56323**

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
Cyrus, Minnesota 56323
Permit No.1

