



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

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

Trinity Messenger

January 2023

Field Notes: Rev. C. Richards

I wonder, have you ever found yourself asking the question, “why bother?”

I asked that question the other day. It was the fourth (fourth!) time I had to snow-blow the driveway. I especially had to blow out a deep drift that was 30 some feet wide and a foot & a half deep. It kept filling right back in. Every time.

As I suited up the fourth time to head out while the rest of the family did their various activities and relaxing weekend stuff, I asked myself the question: “Why bother? It’s cold out there. It’s warm in here.”

By the way, this is a reasonable question. It could be asked when you are trying to save \$1.00 on eggs. You could ask this question while mowing before company comes. I definitely have asked myself this question while being polite to someone who is rude, judgmental, or oblivious. It is particularly hard to keep being kind when the individual you are being kind to remains focused only on themselves.

Why bother? Aren’t they just going to sin again? Why bother? Aren’t they just going to judge my forgiveness as weakness, or my patience as foolishness, my faith as gullibility? Won’t the drift just fill in? Why not leave it and someone else just deal with it?

I wonder if Mary or Joseph had that thought? They’d been waiting on God. Soon they were travelling to Bethlehem. God didn’t send money. God didn’t send a security team or a horse or a cart. God didn’t even reserve them a room. They stayed in a barn. And when Jesus finally arrived, the greeting team was shepherds. Yup, ranch hands.

I imagine that, even for the parents of Jesus, the “Why Bother?” question was loud and prominent. Even more so after they ran to Egypt the next year. Will God even show up? Will anyone know or care about us? What good could our little son even do in this messed up, dangerous world?

God’s answer to that question, to the question of; “why not stop caring about others, or God, or anything? Why not just live for myself?” is powerful. God’s answer is to show up, live as one of us, show us how it’s done, and then, after being rejected for all the love that God shared, open the way to heaven for all of us by forgiving sin, and conquering death.

But there’s no big freeway entrance to this life. There’s no fancy loudspeaker or rally that points it out without some hidden angle. Most folks think we’re idealistic fools if we really live Jesus’s way. He was born quietly, died painfully, and when he came back to show himself the first time, got things moving slowly and intentionally with a small team.

His story is spread between individuals. The truth is shared in daily actions, one kind word, one glass of water, one sin forgiven at a time by normal people in normal life. It isn’t usually flashy. It is often unnoticed or misunderstood. But it is the key to the eternal, the door to paradise, and the way to joyful life together with God and those we love forever.

So yes, it matters. Snow-blowing the fourth time meant my oldest boy could get to work that day. Doing the dishes meant my wife could sit down after cooking all afternoon, taking the phone call meant a couple in need got a food and gas card, listening patiently to the self-interested fool meant that they knew I cared about them. All the things you do. HOW you do them matters, deeply, forever. And since we have an opportunity to be with folks we love for eternity, those memories will last just as long. Make them good ones. Make them count this year!

Peace – PrCR

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

** No Do Days in January, February, or March.

** Do Days can always use sheets that are in good condition with no stains or tears to use for making quilts

** Pope County Families in Need is looking for used (good condition!) clothing. Drop off donations at Trinity & Barb W. will deliver.

Do Days

Quilt making continues
as an ongoing project.

A Prayer for the New Year

Lord,
Whether I leave behind
a year of joy or of trials and difficulties,

I pause to *give thanks*.
Thank you for being with me
every day of every year.

Thank you for making all things **new**
and for giving me the grace of
fresh starts

and *new beginnings*.

Remind me of your presence in the days to
come,
even when I feel pushed and rushed by
busyness.

Be glorified in my life this year.

Amen

+ + + WORSHIP + + +

SERVICES ARE IN-PERSON & STREAMED LIVE ONLINE

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	USHER/ GREETER
Sun., Jan 1st	9:30am	J. Knorr	K. Zenner	S. & K. Banta	N/A	N. Kolden	N/A
Sun., Jan 8th	9:30am	K. Hassler	TBD	R. Huebner	L. Ness	D. Black	N/A
Sun, Jan. 15th	9:30am	A. Barsness	K. Zenner	M. Barsness	N/A	H. Banta	N/A
Sun., Jan. 22nd	9:30am	L. Anderson	TBD	T. & W. Richards	A. Mullins	L. Anderson	N/A
Sun., Jan 29th	9:30am	C. Carlsen	K. Zenner	B. & R. Barsness	N/A	W. Mithun	N/A

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: tlccvruskayla@gmail.com.

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BIRTHDAYS

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

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|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 01/02 Laura Mithun | 01/22 Nancy Barsness |
| 01/03 Sydney Engebretson | 01/22 Sydney Logeais |
| 01/04 Tim Kannegiesser | 01/23 David Lilienthal |
| 01/05 Eric Joos | 01/25 Denise Olson |
| 01/07 Rollyn Strand | 01/25 Izan Erickson |
| 01/07 Hayden Banta | 01/31 Mark Estenson |
| 01/10 Myla Huntley | |
| 01/12 Betty Sayre | |
| 01/12 Rachel Smith | |
| 01/13 Zoey Schmidgall | |
| 01/14 Matthew Huntley | |
| 01/14 Nathan Pieske | |
| 01/14 Jada Lilienthal | |
| 01/16 Jaztyn Gades | |
| 01/17 Jacqueline Boots | |
| 01/18 Holly Rutter | |
| 01/18 Logan Anderson | |
| 01/19 Warren Osterman | |
| 01/21 Patricia Anderson | |
| 01/21 Eric Rau | |

CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES

Council Minutes; December 12, 2022

Present: Holly Rutter, Lonnie Anderson, Katie Erickson, Barb Barsness, Kayla Schmidgall, Jerry Carlsen, Dena Carbert & Pastor Chris Richards

Absent: Kathy Banta

Holly called meeting to order.

Dena made a motion & Lonnie seconded to approve agenda.

Lonnie made a motion & Dena seconded to approve minutes from last meeting.

Dena made a motion & Barb seconded to approve the treasurer's report.

Pastor Chris gave his report.

Old Business:

1. Sabbatical – Pastor taking time off in summer 2023 & getting language together to discuss the possibility.

New Business:

1. Formed committee to disburse Mission Fest 2022 funds.
2. Discussed the first draft of 2023 budget – Barb motioned & Dena seconded to approve first draft, with Kayla to make changes discussed & email new draft to council for review. Final budget will be shown to congregation at annual meeting.

Committee Reports:

Property – Ducts have been cleaned & needs to be fixed. Lonnie motioned & Dena seconded to have that done.

Education – Nothing new to report.

Worship – Nothing new to report.

Outreach – Courage Cottage is thankful for the TLC old Christmas tree.

Next meeting: Sunday, January 8, 2023, after worship

Respectfully submitted,
Katie Erickson, 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.

- * Kayla will be back in the office on Tuesday, January 3rd.

- * Pastor Chris will be out of the office until Sunday, January 8th.

- * ELEMENT SCHEDULE (held at First Lutheran unless noted)
 - * Wed, Jan 4th – 6pm
 - * Wed, Jan 11th – 6pm
 - * Wed, Jan 18th – 6pm
 - * Wed, Jan 25th – 6pm
 - * Fri, Jan 27th & Sat, Jan 28th – Winter Retreat at Luther Crest

- * SR. HIGH FUSION SCHEDULE (held at First Lutheran unless noted)
 - * Sun, Jan 8th – 6:30pm
 - * Sun, Jan 15th – 6:30pm
 - * Sun, Jan 22nd – 6:30pm
 - * Sun, Jan 29th – 6:30pm

Thank you so much ,Trinity Family ,for the delicious baskets of goodies.
You are amazing!! God bless! Merry Christmas!
- DeAnne Hawkinson & Aaron Larson

Thank you, Trinity Family, for the lovely Poinsettia. It is lovely and full of Christmas Joy.
- Mary Ann Stiver

* Financial Update

Income:	\$235,239.57
Expenses:	\$198,026.29
	\$ 37,213.28



JANUARY 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 9:30a - Lessons & Carols service Pastor Chris out of office	2	3	4 9a - Weekly Devotional 6p - Element	5	6	7
8 9:30a - Worship 10:30a - Council meeting 10:30a - Sunday School	9	10 11:30a - Cyrus Seniors - lunch at Lariat	11 9a - Weekly Devotional 6p - Element	12	13	14
15 9:30a - Worship 10:30a - Sunday School	16	17	18 9a - Weekly Devotional 6p - Element	19	20	21
22 9:30a - Worship- 10:30a - Sunday School	23	24	25 9a - Weekly Devotional 6p - Element	26	27 Element Winter Retreat at Luther Crest	28
29 9:30a - Worship 6:30p - Fusion	30	31				

