



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

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

Trinity Messenger

March 2023

Field Notes: Rev. C. Richards

¹⁶ “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. ¹⁷ “Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸ Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

- John 3:16-18

It's always a powerful week when I get to preach on John's 3rd chapter. This month I have the privilege once again of finding something to say that opens up the scripture for all of you, to hear what God might be saying to you this time.

In this chapter of John, Jesus is approached by Nicodemus, a leader on the Temple Church Council (essentially) who starts by saying – “Jesus, we know God is behind you, that you are doing God things. BUT” – And he doesn't get too much further than that.

If you look at the frustrations of the various groups within the Temple at that time, there's a few main things Nicodemus was probably concerned about. First – Jesus acts in ways that contradict the “church” practices of the time. He does stuff during sabbath. He doesn't always follow the rituals of cleaning and washing, whom to talk to, who not to talk to, etc. Worst of all, he hangs out with folks of bad reputation, or more frankly, folks the “church” has branded SINNERS.

Jesus tackles this head on. He says – Nicodemus, there is no in or out, no us and them. There are simply those who hear God and follow, and those that don't. Those born of the Spirit and water (which we now understand as baptized or receivers of the Holy Spirit) and those who deny me (the son of God.) And I am here for everyone, not just the “church.”

2000 years later it remains the case. Jesus looks us in the eyes - there's no in or out with God, no righteous or unrighteous, no us or them. It is only US. All humans are imperfect. All humans sin. All humans can approach God and receive blessing and forgiveness. It might be at baptism, or in hearing the word of God. It might be in being blessed by another, or simply praying and the Spirit shows up.

As Lutherans we know there is one God, one faith, one scripture, all of it depending on God's grace and our imperfect Faith. We trust that God shows up in Baptism, Communion, and in the gathering of God's people around God's word preached in word or deed.

As many folks have been coming back to worship, and as the intense unity and stress of the pandemic is fading, I have seen more folks become frustrated with preachers and leaders. I'm not sure if this is because of the fading sense of unity with others during an intense and painful time, or if it is people listening more intently having been distracted and stressed previously and now looking for a THEM to blame on the difficulties of the moment.

But Jesus has not changed. The Word (who is a person) has not changed. The Truth (who died for us) remains that God loved the world (as it is) and sent his only Son, not to condemn it, but to save it. We are not tasked with condemning those we believe to be sinners, those we do not agree with or do not understand. We are tasked with serving others, and letting God be their judge.

This Lent, I wonder how we can live out Christ's love in a way that helps others to see that he is worth following. In John 3:18 it says there is no condemnation from God – rather, those who deny God are already condemned, they reject the lifeboat after the shipwreck. How might we welcome folks into the lifeboat, even when we don't understand them or see them as Sinners? Because we too are sinners who can be difficult to understand, and Jesus loves us all.

Christ's Peace – 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

** 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.

+ + + 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
Wed, March 1st	6pm	N/A	K. Zenner	R. Huebner	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sun., March 5th	9:30am	D. Dahl	J. Odello	R. & B. Barsness	L. Berg	W. Richards	A. & K. Schmidgall
Wed, March 8th	6pm	N/A	K. Zenner	R. Huebner	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sun., March 12th	9:30am	H. Black	K. Zenner Special Music: S. Banta	J. Knorr	N/A	N. Kolden	M. & J. Huntley
Wed, March 15th	6pm	N/A	K. Zenner	T. & W. Richards	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sun, March 19th	9:30am	L. Banta	W. Richards	M. Barsness	N/A	L. Anderson	T. & J. Jergenson
Wed, March 22nd	6pm	N/A	K. Zenner	R. Huebner	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sun., March 26th	9:30am	K. Hassler	K. Zenner Special Music: Sunday School	R. Huebner	S. Giles	T. Richards	L. & L. Banta
Wed, March 29th	6pm	N/A	K. Zenner	R. Huebner	N/A	N/A	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: tlccyruskavla@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.

03/01	Roger Pieske	03/18	Rachel Banta
03/05	Pam Hoddinott	03/21	Andrew Wink
03/07	Sarah Lilienthal	03/22	Haley Erdahl
03/07	Claire Bruland	03/24	Ava Boyle
03/07	Madison Erdahl	03/25	Joel Thompson
03/08	Avis Brandt	03/26	Jerri Jergenson
03/08	Dena Carbert	03/26	Kadam erickson
03/10	Pr. Chris Richards	03/27	Bailee Barsness
03/12	Shannon Fernholz	03/27	Klaire Wente
03/12	Renaе Olsen	03/28	Alan Hagen
03/14	Neil Rutter	03/29	Michael Loehr
03/15	Lori Berg	03/30	Tony Amborn
03/15	Rebecca Dalen	03/31	Richard Giles
03/17	Kyle Schiefelbein	03/31	Jennifer Huntley

CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES

Council Minutes; February 12, 2023

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

Absent: Mark Barsness

Holly called meeting to order.

Kathy made a motion & Dena seconded to approve agenda.

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

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

Pastor Chris gave a short report.

Old Business:

1. Dena found white banquet tables from Sam's Club (4 have been ordered).

New Business:

1. Bread 'n Bowls – Trinity will donate plates to the event and reach out to congregation members to donate bread and/or desserts.

Committee Reports:

Property – Possible put together a binder about things about what needs to be done/things to do

Education – Looking for a way to have teachers for older kids class

Worship – Working on some things for Lutheran World Relief for during Lent

Outreach – Nothing new to report.

Next meetings: Sunday, March 19th after worship

Sunday, April 16th 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.

** We're still looking for volunteers to work with AV and for Readers. Please let the church office know if you'd be interested in helping.

** We will begin serving Lenten suppers starting on Wednesday evenings at 5pm. Lenten services will start at 6pm.

** Please sign-up downstairs if you'd to serve supper one evening.

* ELEMENT SCHEDULE (held at First Lutheran unless noted)

** No Element due to Lenten services **

* SR. HIGH FUSION SCHEDULE (held at First Lutheran unless noted)

* Sunday, 3/5 - 6:30p-8p

* Sunday, 3/12 - 6:30p-8p

* Sunday, 3/19 - Mission Trip Meeting (for those going on the trip!); 6:30p-8p

* Sunday, 3/26 - 6:30p-8

** The UMM has The Bread 'N Bowls event on April 24th. Please contact the church office by the end of February if you'd like to donate a dessert or bread. See letter on board in Narthex or contact Sarah Eckel at UMM (589-6457) for more information.

* Financial Update

Income: \$35,425.72

Expenses: \$35,186.51

\$ 239.21

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

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
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