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www.trinitylc.org

July 2020
volume 42, issue 7

trinity TODAY

Because God first loved us, we live as Jesus in the world.

Sunday Worship

SAFE

Summer
Worship

- Online worship at 9 a.m.
- Drive-in worship at 9 a.m.
- Watch on TV at 11 a.m. on local channel 18

Sunday Worship Details see Page 11

Celebrating Class of 2020 see Page 8

Our hope for you is
unshaken; for we know
that as you share in our
sufferings, so also you
share in our consolation.
– 2 Corinthians 1: 7





LEAD PASTOR **THE REV. DR. CHRIS BELLEFEUILLE**

"Dear
God,
this is
hard."

Siblings in Christ,

These days my prayers often start with the words: "Dear God, this is hard."

How about you?

Pandemic is truly hard. Worshipping separately. Not having normal funerals and weddings. Worrying about getting ill or about those we love. Losing jobs and income. Not seeing a mom, a grandchild, a close friend. Fear and "not knowing" are so hard.

Watching George Floyd die was terribly hard. Witnessing riots and violence. Understanding how racism works. Reimagining policing. Changing how we think. Hearing Jesus call us to preference the marginalized is hard.

This is hard, my friends. Really hard. For some of us it may be the hardest ongoing work we have ever done. For some of you, it feels far too familiar and exhausting. It's hard on our brains, our hearts, our spirits and on our relationships.

In Matthew 16, Jesus says: "If you wish to come after me, you must deny your very selves, take up your cross ("the instrument of your own death") and follow me. If you would save your own life, you will lose it, but if you lose your life for my sake, you will find it. What profit would you show if you gained the whole world but lost yourself? What can you offer in exchange for your very self?"

Jesus invites us to let go of our grip on the world, shoulder our own end, and follow in his footsteps. Footsteps that lead through the margins, dark valleys and places of threat—all the way to the cross. That is what we are called to as disciples of Jesus, as the body of Jesus in the world. Wow. Following Jesus is hard.

Right now, following Jesus looks like sacrificing the familiar and routine for the safety of our neighbors. It looks like following rules about limited gatherings, masks and physical distancing. It looks like changing our way of being in the world for the sake of the world.

Right now, following Jesus looks like educating ourselves about systemic

racism. It looks like learning to be an ally and having difficult conversations with friends and family. It looks like changing our way of being in the world for the sake of the world.

Truly, if following Jesus is easy, we probably aren't doing it right. *Nor is following Jesus supposed to be drudgery.* Instead, following Jesus is the effort and gift of being reborn again and again. Pressing through daily from shadow to illumination, from self to other, from incompleteness to completion. We aren't expected to get it right all the time, we humans move between sinner and saint, racist and anti-racist, selfish to selfless, also daily. And Jesus—never wanting to leave us behind—waits as we square our shoulders, set the cross and walk once again with him.

The beauty of the daunting work of being born anew in Jesus, is that as we move toward the cross, we are also moving toward restoration, resurrection and reconciliation! We move toward hope!

A wise person once said, "For anything new to be born, something has to die." A seed, an idea, a way of life, a belief system, a congregation, a relationship. The pandemic is hard. The work of anti-racism is hard. Being a disciple of Jesus is hard. They are hard precisely because each one asks us to let go of what was to make way for what can be!

God goes ahead, Jesus guides, the Spirit empowers as we make our way into a new future where disease and fear no longer rule the day, where all neighborhoods are safe with grocery stores, excellent schools and health care, where all people live in peace with God's justice as our standard. When equity and full participation are for everyone.

It is not only possible, it is God's dream. And following Jesus—while not the easy way—is the sure way. It is the way of hope.

I give thanks for you and our sharing in the gospel every day.

Peace,

Pastor Chris

Responding to the hard stuff.

Trinity has two new Ministry Teams affirmed by Council to help us with the hard stuff.

First, the **Re-Entry Ministry Team**. This team will evaluate the science, determine our policies and reflect on our ministry and mission priorities as we develop a re-entry preparedness plan.

Re-entry includes things like worship, faith formation, small groups, staff and the office, weddings and funerals, LADC preschool and the many groups that rent or use our space: AA/AI-Anon/Alateen, Boy Scouts, music ensembles, homeowners' associations and more.

Re-entry also includes considerations like wearing masks, sanitizing services and air exchange rates, traffic flow, seating, spacing, what materials can and cannot be shared as we meet and what products are most effective to keep us safe. And we also realize that people have different tolerances or medical limitations for re-entry. We are keeping all that in mind, as well.

Mission and ministry of Trinity will receive the priority. We do know that we will not immediately gather in the numbers technically allowed by the governor but determine what is best for Trinity, our members and our staff.

The team is Fred Anderson, retired Washington County Infectious Disease Epidemiologist; Dr. Matt Simcik, U of M School of Environmental Health; Mel Sullivan, Sr. VP and Chief People Officer of Ecumen/Trinity council, Denise Swager, RN; Kim Dahlgren, RN, Faith Community Nurse; Bob Eiselt, Tom Hosek and Pastor Chris.

The team has begun meeting and as material is available, we will share it with the congregation. In the meantime, we welcome prayers for discernment and patience as we find our way forward. If you have questions, please direct them to Bob Eiselt or Pastor Chris.

Second, Trinity has a **new Ministry Team whose name is yet to be determined** but whose work will focus on **inclusion, peace with justice and anti-racism education and transformation**. Rachel Schmeltzer has agreed to be the chair. Rachel is a music teacher/choral director at Oakland Middle School and has done extensive work and teaching in these areas. We welcome Rachel. If you are interested in serving on this team, please contact Pastor Chris. We are interested in a diverse range of voices on this team.

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FROM THE ELCA:

Considerations for Returning to In-person Worship

You might be interested to download and read the document from the ELCA titled "Considerations for Returning to In-person Worship." Available on our web site at: <https://trinitylc.org/e-news/covid-19/>

ADULT FAITH FORUM:

Where is God in Suffering?

Wednesdays at 4 pm | July 1 – Aug. 5

Please join Pastor Chris for a 6-week summer Zoom Bible Study to explore this timeless and timely question. See Page 8 for more information.



PASTOR OF LIFELONG FAITH FORMATION THE REV. PETER WESTON MILLER

NOTE: This is a print version of Pastor Peter's sermon from Sunday, June 14. The scripture was: Matthew 9:35-10:8. To listen please visit <https://trinitylc.org/worship-music/worship/sermon-archive/>

A World in Your Toy Box

Grace and Peace to you from God our Parent, Christ the Rebel, and the overwhelming groans of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

I'm going to start out today in a place I often do, and in the well that I dip my cup most when life is chaotic and uncomfortable and uncertain:

By recalling and sharing a story about my mother, who died of cancer when I was 19.

It's really strange and you just don't know this as a young adult or as a child (depending on how you view 19), but I promise you that I never imagined her to be where I draw inspiration for so many of my ministry moments and learning and growth and still-influencing influences.

I honestly didn't imagine ministry at all, much less those who were shaping me.

But that's kinda how the great cloud of witnesses works—doesn't it?

There is just something about mother's too.

And crying for momma. That just never ends.

My kids do it all the time. Especially if their Dad is the one currently telling them "No."

But in many ways, "Momma" is a cry that never stops.

Sometimes feeling like it is the only cry left.

"Momma" we heard was one of the most painful pleas for help that George Floyd cried out too.

A World in Your Toy Box

But back to my memory: When I was a struggling sophomore in High School, my mom decided to start her own business.

To my knowledge, it's the only one she ever had.

The only idea she felt the urgency and the gap to launch.

It was a small non-profit.

During most of my childhood, my mom had pretty much been a stay-at-home-parent.

Of course she volunteered and sat on the board of the PTA, organized block parties, wrote scripts for the Christmas program, and held vast knowledge of local legislators contact information.

But that is just what Mommas do. Right?

But at some point, along the way, in working and volunteering with primarily immigrant and refugee communities in the small farm-labor canning-factory town of Owatonna Minnesota, she decided to create this unusual non-profit called "A World in Your Toy Box."

I still have the original banner that she stitched together by hand to share her message for this "multi-national toy conglomerate."

On it you can see:

There is like a non-western-centric globe and a bright yellow sun and some hearts of different sizes and shapes with little curious buttons which was my mom's trademark—and this sort of three-dimensional box, with gradiently (not sure if that is a word) colored felt people-shapes swirling around and floating in it....

From like light beige to deep chocolate brown and reddish sand.

My mom initialed the very bottom corner PMR 02.'

Pauline Marie Redmond, 2002.

You can probably imagine the kind of

baffled look on my 15 year-old face when my mom hand-stitched this banner and told me that her new side gig was to be going around to school events and regional conferences and church forums....

Advocating and raising money for black and multi-racial families to find things to play with and read and share that reflected their likeness because most major department stores didn't carry a wide enough selection. Especially in small town Minnesota.

And my mom's business model was essentially not to make a dime and give these resources away.

Some of the dolls she even made herself.

I probably rolled my eyes pretty hard.

I didn't realize it at the time, and I cringe at the thought of my embarrassed reaction, but what my mom was practicing with "A World in Your Toy Box" and what she was teaching me is how to be an anti-racist.

For my mom, even in the last years before she died much too soon, racism was not a tertiary issue or something that black people must solve or fix.

It was a virus that affected us all, and a particularly missed opportunity for white folks.

It was and is a fundamental misunderstanding and damaging theology of the human and God-Beloved family that we must constantly work against.

My mother knew there was no neutral when it comes to being racist or anti-racist in this empire.

You either make dolls or you don't.

In the words of historian Dr. Ibram X. Kendi's most recent best-selling autobiography:

"The opposite of racist isn't 'Not Racist.' Which is so often the way how white folk respond:

'I'm not Racist.' Or 'I am least racist person you have ever met.'

The opposite of racist is being 'Anti-racist.'"

The difference that Dr. Kendi points out is: whether one either allows racial inequities to persevere, like the lack of color-rich dolls, or one confronts and acts on these racial inequities.

You either let a complex system of racial inequity persist, or you actively try to build one that is racially equitable.

Dr. Kendi concludes much like Yoda in the Star Wars series:

Do or do not. There is no try.

There is no in-between safe space of racist and not-racist in this empire.

There is only racist and anti-racist.

Much like Martin Luther swayed in the move back and forth from sinner to saint.

In this world, we are always both, sinner and saint, but never neutral.

And in this current climate that is unveiling much about who we are the pain that still lingers from racism. We too are never neutral.

Neutrality is an illusion of privilege.

Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew

The story we hear today from Matthew's gospel is a strikingly chaotic scene.

There is no mistaking it, these are anxious and uncertain days for God's people, as the life of God's people often was under empire rule and repeated occupation.

Matthew's Gospel describes the crowds of people surround and responding to Jesus' ministry "as harassed and helpless."

Like sheep without a shepherd.

Likely on the brink of despair.

Feeling stretched to survive and not knowing what to do next.

They are desperate and divided.

Fighting over scarcity on the bottom.

Bearing in their own bodies the trauma of patterns of violence and brutality.

And then we get one of the most beautiful depictions of Jesus' leadership in all the Gospels as he joins this crowd and responds to this heavy harvest.

Jesus has compassion for them.

Jesus has concern, and care, and empathy, and he hears their cries.

Jesus listens to the harassed and helpless, not as a problem to solve or fix, but healing and transformative work to join in together.

Accompaniment in action.

There are sicknesses to heal.

Outcasts to be welcomed in.

Hearts and bodies to be mended.

Demons to be exorcised.

Banners to stitch and dolls to make.

Jesus vs. the Disciples

Now it's one thing for Jesus to do this work and ministry alone.

To heal and raise the dead and serve the sick.

To not stand by and not be neutral.

I mean it's Jesus after all.

The Disciples Work Too

But it's a whole other thing for the disciples to embody this work as well.

The disciples likely felt harassed and helpless too.

Unprepared for the journey ahead.

Without a cent to their name, no bags, no extra tunics.

No extras.

And here's the even harder and a really important reminder for us.

Jesus isn't sending them off to some unknown land or people.

To the Gentiles or even the Samaritans. That work will happen too.

But first, Jesus sends them to likely the hardest—their own ZIP code.

To their own tribe. To their own families.

To those asleep and silent, comfortable and subtly placated by a system that hasn't hurt them quite as bad as it has hurt others.

And Matthew's recording of this moment makes it explicitly clear that there are going to be wolves.

There are going to be detractors and push back.

There always has been.

Peace without Justice is never easy.

But Jesus says:

"Don't let it bog you down."

Don't let it stop your progress.

Keep moving on, dust your feet off, let your peace fall and let it go.

For Us

What convicts me and challenges me is also what gives me hope in this passage in 2020.

Jesus is not neutral.

He is not silent.

And Jesus trusts us, he entrusts us, in this difficult work too.

That's not to say that the disciples aren't going to be nervous.

That they aren't going to worry about what to say, about getting it wrong, and making mistakes. (Or even overly inarticulate sermons like this one.)

But growth for all of us is part of the movement too. Lest we forget that this revolution isn't about us.

Because the harvest is still heavy.

There is still work for us to do.

The world has not healed from the virus and the sin of racism and white supremacy.

There are still demons dwelling in our systems that need to be exorcised and repaired and rebuilt.

That have far too long divided our ZIP codes and overly sanitized our toy boxes.

It's not just the police or prison. It's also our preschools and our parks and paid time leave.

It's our churches and our housing and our hospitals.

And God is calling us to the harvest to heal, to build safer communities until we are God's justice and our justice falls down like the waters.

Conclusion

I want to say in closing and in sharing this reflection that I do not speak or act from a pedestal, but am still learning and becoming more aware of my participation in racism as a white straight cis-gender male in this country.

Dr. Ibram X. Kendi notes that we move constantly back and forth between racist and anti-racist.

Between sinner and saint.

But I also share for my own accountability and to those who have been advocating and leading and resisting and championing Jesus' reconciling and anti-racist love and moving us forward together for much longer than I have.

All I know is that as followers of Jesus, we cannot remain neutral.

We had no idea that we that we'd be in this place in 2020, fighting two deadly viruses at the same time.

But we are.

And the world is looking for us to respond. Looking to our city. To our communities.

To join God's work in the harvest of love and equity and inclusion for all.

Pastor Peter

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Congregational Council



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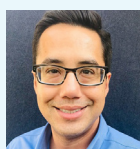
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State of the Church's Finances

By Andrew Thelander, Council Member and Finance Team

A special thank you to the faithful, generous response of our faith community to God's call for financial stewardship. At present, we are sitting in a stable financial position and have been able to maintain a zero balance against our Line of Credit as of today. We continue to actively monitor current and future budgetary implications related to COVID-19. All proactive financial measures are being considered and, in some cases, utilized to best safeguard and care for the well-being of the staff and congregation as a whole during this unprecedented time.

We are working with IPS Solar and Minnesota Interfaith Power & Light to identify a solar array in which to subscribe Trinity. As soon as that happens we should begin seeing the financial benefits of participating in a community solar garden through monthly energy billing credits. The health and well-being of our planet affects everyone and we are excited to further pursue the church's call to environmental stewardship.

All three tenants of the Croix Center property at 216 Myrtle Street have been able to pay-in-full their monthly rents through June and it does not appear that they will have any need for rent deferral discussions for now. Trinity's 2020 budget includes rental income of \$78,000 from the Croix Center. Overall, the Croix Center net operating results account for less than 5 percent of the church's budgeted total operating income. Its net effect on the budget helps us meet expenses, make ministry programs happen and helps us meet our annual budget.

In response to rapidly changing circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. government had passed significant legislation, culminating with the CARES Act in late March. This legislation not only impacts families but many small businesses including Trinity Lutheran Church. The flagship small business benefit of the CARES Act is the Paycheck Protection Program (otherwise known as PPP) and along with the most recent legislation of the Paycheck Protection Program Flexibility Act (PPPFA) now provides for up to 24

weeks of forgivable loans for payroll, health insurance premiums, rent, and utility expenses. With Council approval, Trinity applied for and was accepted into the Paycheck Protection Program in early April. We received the proceeds from the PPP loan on April 16th. The proceeds are held in a separate money market account. We are now tracking incurred and paid applicable expenses (payroll, loan interest and utilities) but, we have not recognized any loan proceeds as income as of May 31. Our financial results for May are without any loan support. Any portion of the loan used on approved expenses will be fully forgivable if present staffing and compensation levels are maintained.

Also with Council approval, Trinity applied for and received a deferral of mortgage principal payments from Thrivent that began in May and will continue for three months. Although Trinity's financials continue to be positive to this point, the potential to make interest-only payments for 3 months enables the church to proactively build up additional cash reserves in the near term.

As the church moves into the 4th quarter of Fiscal Year 2020 that ends August 31, the congregation has continued to remain committed to their automatic giving and stewardship pledges. Some have even been able to increase or accelerate their giving to the church during this time. As you continue to assess your ongoing charitable giving, there have been some positive changes to the tax code for the year 2020 you should be aware of. For those over 70 ½ years of age, RMDs have been waived for this year but you're still eligible to do a tax-free Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) of any amount to the church. Also, donors who are well positioned to give generously, regardless of their income, should pay additional attention to the recent tax law changes. There is now no limit to the deductions you can take for charitable contributions if you itemize your contributions. Previously, you could only deduct up to a maximum of 60% of your adjusted gross income (AGI) via charitable contributions. But under the new

Trinity Financial Update

May Year-to-Date - Fiscal Year 2020

	This Year	Last Year	'20 Budget	% of Budget
Contribution Income	1,003,867	969,660	1,350,000	74%
Other Income	242,112	466,880	342,550	71%
Total Income	\$ 1,245,979	\$ 1,436,540	\$ 1,692,550	
less: Expenses	1,180,121	1,428,330	1,691,330	70%
Surplus (Deficit)	\$ 65,858	\$ 8,210	\$ 1,220	

Long-Term Debt Summary:

Long-Term Debt - Beginning of Fiscal Yr.	3,410,152	3,598,306
Increase (Decrease)	(56,365) *	(165,736)
Long-Term Debt - End of May	\$ 3,353,787	\$ 3,432,570
Line of Credit Balance - May 31	\$ -	\$ 15,000

* 2020 Thrivent Temporary Loan Relief to Congregations - 3 mos. Interest Only Mortgage Pymts (May - July)

guidelines, 100% of your donation would now be tax deductible up to the full amount of your income meaning you may not have to pay taxes on your income. Furthermore, taxpayers can now take a deduction for up to \$300 in charitable contributions even if they don't itemize on their 2020 tax return. This is a big change from the previous rule that required itemization for any tax break. As we continue to navigate through these unprecedented times, we encourage you to connect with Bob Eiselt or the Stewardship Team if you have questions or wish to discuss your Trinity giving plans for 2020 and beyond.

On behalf of Trinity Lutheran Church, thank you for your continued generosity, prayers, and partnership.

Disclaimer: The information provided should be used for general informational purposes only and is not intended to be a substitute for specific individualized tax, legal or investment planning advice. Where specific advice is necessary or appropriate, you should consult with a qualified tax advisor, financial advisor or attorney who can advise on which, if any, of these strategies are suitable for your situation.

Yes! Keep Trinity financially strong!



GIVE ONLINE

Visit www.trinitylc.org then GIVING to make a secure one-time or recurring donation.



GIVE BY TEXT

Text 651-383-1911 with the amount you would like to contribute, include the dollar sign.



GIVE+ APP

Download the Give Plus Church (Give+) app to your smartphone. Under Find Church, enter: Trinity Lutheran Church.



**ADULT FAITH FORUM –
Summer Bible Study**



Photo by Segopotso Makhutja from Pexels

ADULT FAITH FORUM:

Where is God in Suffering?

Wednesdays at 4 pm

July 1 – Aug. 5

Please join Pastor Chris for a 6-week summer Zoom Bible Study to explore this timeless and timely question. Join anytime—for all Wednesdays or just one. There may be some pre-reading, so please sign up. You will receive the Zoom link by email. Please contact Penny Catlin at pccatlin@juno.com.

View on our web site: <https://trinitylc.org/learning/adult/adult-ed/>

CLASS OF 2020

Senior Recognition Sunday at Trinity **May 17**

Showing (God's) love to our 2020 seniors! On Sunday, May 17 during online worship, Trinity celebrated the milestone of graduation with our class of 2020 high school seniors (see list below). Congratulations to our seniors! God is with you.

KIRSTEN ANDERSON
MOLLY ANDERSON
SYDNEY ANDERSON
ELLY BLAIR
NICHOLAS BRANUM
SAM CHAPMAN
MAKENNA CHRISTIANSEN
LILY CICHON
KAITLYN COREY
SOREN DANELIUS
MORGAN DOOLEY
CAL DOUGHERTY
NATE ERICKSON
RACHEL FOGELBERG
BRANDON FORD
LOGAN FRITSCH
CELIA GEAR
JACK GRAY
DESTINY HALLELAND
LOGAN HALVERSON
RYANN HANSON
GRACE HILDRUM
ELSA HUCKELS
ZACHARY JOHNSON
ETHAN KILMER
ABIGAIL KNEESKERN
HADEN KRAFT
EMILY LAABS
BENJAMIN LEON

TYLER LILJEGREN
SAM MACDONALD
TYLER MARONEY
MARLEE MCGUIRE
LYXIE MOOSAI
ABIGAIL MUELLER
NIKITA NEDERLOE
BRITTA NELSON
MADELINE NORELL
OLIVIA OLSON
JOSH PAULSON
SYDNEY JO PETERSON
GRACIE ROESKE
ANNIKA SELNES BROWN
HAILEY SHARON
NATE SIMCIK
NICK SIMCIK
ERIC STACK
ELLA STRATMANN
CARLY SURO
ELLI SWANSON
NATHAN WALLACE
KYLIE WEYER
LIAM WHITE
QUINTON WHITE
AVERY WRIGHT
JENNA YINGLING
CARLY YOUNG
JOSEPH YOUNG

Happy Retirement Ms. Julie! We will miss you.

Thank you, Julie Jolivette, for 15 years of amazing ministry at Trinity. We are grateful for your vision, deep theological heart, creative costumes, songs and cheers. It has been an honor to work in partnership with you to equip families in their faith formation journeys. Enjoy your retirement!



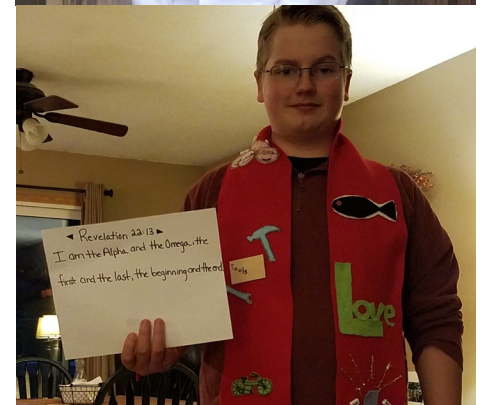
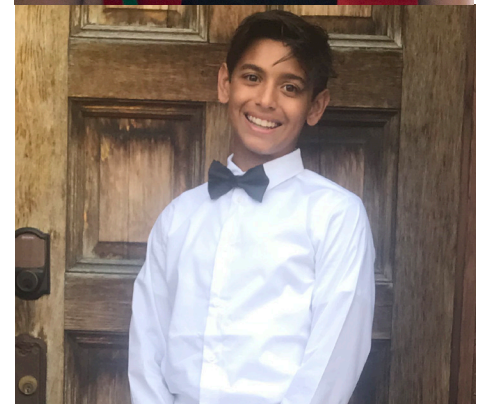
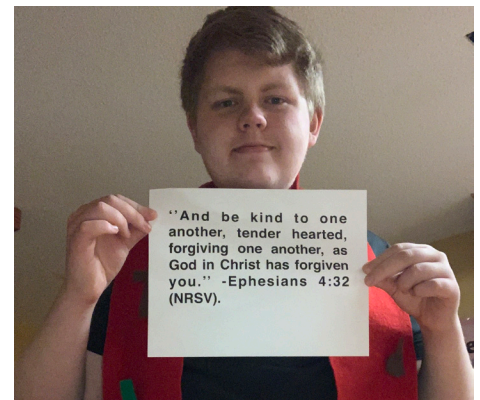
CONFIRMATION *of Baptism*

Celebrating our 2020 confirmands!

We deeply apologize that the confirmands listed below were not included in the June *Trinity Today*. Congratulations on your Affirmation of Baptism Confirmation, God is with you!

Victor Wade Brekke
Zachary Sigvard-Stene Gray
Samuel Lucas Hoff
Colin Prakash Moosai
Isaac Lloyd Rowe
Evan Matthew Schuna
Anika Patricia Wright

Also, misspelled was: Ellie Claire Burg



Above, starting at top: Samuel Lucas Hoff, Colin Prakash Moosai and Isaac Lloyd Rowe



Some Good News

By Sheila Maybanks, Green Team

What a summer! We are being torn apart and put back together in hopefully more just and caring ways.

The news reported how our environment changed—for the better—during the first weeks of shutdown: skies cleared, air pollution dropped, noise levels dropped, fish returned to cleaner water, coyotes in Chicago! Maybe you noticed the increase in the amount and the level of bird song? This was some good news in the midst of all the trauma.

And yet May 2020 was the hottest May EVER; surface temperatures were 1.13 degrees above normal. We have so much to do socially, spiritually, environmentally.

Take a look at:

- MN Interfaith Light and Powers climate justice program at <https://mnipl.org/climate-justice-certificate-program/>
- Consider taking your carbon temperature—calculate your carbon footprint at www3.epa.gov or www.nature.org
- In our beautiful, brief summer get outside as much as you can—social distancing of course. The more we appreciate and love “our common planetary home” the more we are motivated to care for it.
- If you can’t get out, take a look at a wonderful site for all things St Croix River: www.stcroix360.com

SOLO 55+ PLUS

Singles Group
for Ages 55 & Up

Weekly meetings online

Come meet other singles and join this faith-based social group.

During this time of social distancing we are meeting each Tuesday at 4:30 p.m. on Zoom.

For information on Solo 55 Plus send an email to SOLO55PLUS@gmail.com.

**Tuesdays at 4:30 pm
on Zoom!**



The Solo 55 Plus group at a socially-distant, outdoor gathering.

THANK YOU!

Trinity's quilting ministry sewed and delivered more than 260 face masks. This ministry to our community has come to a close and we want to thank all who participated to provide the most vulnerable among us with masks. Special thanks to Kim and Phil Hanson, who coordinated and carried out our face mask ministry.



NEW MEMBER SUNDAY: Sunday, July 19 during online worship

New members will be received during online worship on Sunday, July 19! Online worship continues this summer at 9 a.m. on Sundays. If you desire membership with us, please contact Zanny Johnson at zjohnson@trinitylc.org.



Knitting Ministry Gathers on Zoom

Like many groups, Trinity's knitting ministry team continues to connect online through Zoom. To find groups meeting online, contact the church office at 651-439-7400.

Sign up online!

To volunteer at Sunday
drive-in worship.



Sign up online! To volunteer to help with drive-in worship

We are excited to offer online signups for Sunday morning volunteers at drive-in worship. Thank you to Chuck & Joan Newman who are the lead ushers. Three additional volunteers are needed—a greeter and two ushers. In the interest of safety when directing cars, volunteers must be at least 18 years of age to volunteer at the drive-in. Sign up online and receive helpful reminders!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e044eadab28a1ff2-worship1>



Worship Texts

Below are the scripture texts from the Revised Common Lectionary that will be used on the date listed to prepare the message for worship.

July 5 **Job 41:1-8; 42:1-17**

July 12 **2 Cor 1:1-11 – Consolation**

July 19 **2 Cor 2:1-10 – Forgiveness**

July 26 **2 Cor 4:1-18 – Treasure in Clay Jars**

WORSHIP & MUSIC

Sunday Worship

SAFE

Summer
Worship

- Online worship at 9 a.m.
- Drive-in worship at 9 a.m.
- Watch on TV at 11 a.m. on local channel 18

9 a.m.—Livestream and Online Worship from our Sanctuary

Worship led by organ, song leader or instrumentalists, incorporating historical, yet relevant elements of Lutheran worship. We invite you to sing hymns, songs, liturgy and psalms from home and hear music from the Renaissance to the contemporary, from Bach to Gospel and a message relevant to our lives today.

Facebook Livestream>>
facebook.com/trinitylcstillwater/

Online Worship>>
trinitylc.org/worship-music/worship/online-worship/

9 a.m.—Drive-in Worship in Houlton, WI with safe worship restrictions

Worship led by worship leader incorporating the best of contemporary Lutheran music. The congregation gathers in cars for a time of praise and worship following the historic pattern of Lutheran worship (Gathering, Word, Message, Meal, and Sending.) This year with safe worship restrictions during the pandemic.

Drive-in Worship>>
trinitylc.org/worship-music/worship/drive-in-summer-worship/

11 a.m.—Watch on TV channel 18

Trinity's traditional Sunday worship service is rebroadcast on channel 18 through Valley Access Channels:

Sunday 11 a.m.
Wednesday Noon & 6 p.m.
Thursday Midnight & 6 a.m.
Friday 2 p.m. & 8 p.m.
Saturday 2 a.m. & 8 a.m.

Worship Helps

Download a bulletin and announcements for Sunday worship to view or print at home.

trinitylc.org/worship-music/worship/bulletin-helps/

Sunday Worship

highlight: Solid Ground

By Claudia Swendseid, Stewardship Team

On June 15, I returned to Solid Ground (SG) as a summer camp tutor after a three-month hiatus from volunteering there due to Covid-19. SG's camp follows *Stay Safe Minnesota* guidelines while providing a supportive learning environment that helps children in its housing programs thrive.

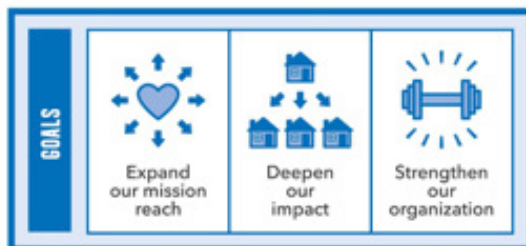
For those of you unfamiliar with SG, it's a nonprofit with offices in White Bear Lake that serves families experiencing homelessness in Washington and suburban Ramsey counties—a total of 482 adults and children in 132 families in 2019. SG is not a short-term shelter like St. Andrew's Resource Center; rather it offers mid- and long-term transitional housing, resources and opportunity so low-income families can gain greater stability, independence and personal agency.

At the heart of SG is the belief that housing stability is fundamental to the healthy development of children and to a family's ability to be contributing members of the community. SG partners with families experiencing homelessness to achieve and maintain housing stability, and to secure permanent housing when they leave SG's programs.

Sadly, but not surprisingly, most families participating in SG programs are persons of color (79%) and mainly African-Americans (61%). Racial and discriminatory economic and housing policies, along with generational poverty, continue to play an outsized role in the overrepresentation of African American people in Minnesota's homeless population.

While about three-quarters of white families in the Twin Cities own homes, only about one-quarter of black families do—which is far below the national average for black home ownership of 42%. Our home town has had a long history of using "racial covenants" to make it hard for blacks to become homebuyers and to live in "white neighborhoods." When my family purchased a home in Edina, Minnesota in 1973, my parents had to engage an attorney to remove the covenant that barred selling their home to a black family.

While rent discrimination by race and color (and more) is illegal in Minnesota, screens like credit scores,



prior evictions and even having children are used by some landlords to reject tenant applications—screens that disproportionately reject black tenants.

Volunteering at Solid Ground has helped open my eyes to these facts about housing disparities and other disturbing forms of racial inequality in the Twin Cities and Minnesota, especially where African Americans are concerned. Some examples:

- The median black family income in the Twin Cities is \$38,178 a year — which is less than half the median white family income of \$84,459 a year. This income inequality gap is one of the largest among our nations metropolitan areas. Minnesota as a whole has the second biggest income inequality gap between blacks and whites in the country; only the District of Columbia is worse.
- Before the Covid-19 pandemic, black unemployment in Minnesota was at a historic low, but it was still double the white rate. Likewise, since March 2020 almost twice as many black Minnesotans have filed for unemployment (40.6%) as compared to white Minnesotans (21.1%).
- According to the most recent census data, the black poverty rate in the Twin Cities was 25.4%—over four times the white poverty rate of 5.9%. Plus, the Twin Cities black poverty rate is significantly higher than the

national one of 22%, while the white poverty rate is significantly lower than the national one of 9%.

- Statewide, African Americans make up about 7% of Minnesota's population. Yet the incarceration rate of blacks in 2019 was 11 times that of whites in 2019, ranking Minnesota 46th among 50 states on this measure. Moreover, the Minneapolis Police Department's (MPD) use of force on black citizens is higher than all other races combined. In 2019, the MPD reported 1,957 incidents in which "force" or "deadly force" was used. Of these 1,304 or 67% involved a black citizen.
- The number of Covid-19 cases among white Minnesotans through May are 22 per 10,000 persons, compared to 167 Covid-19 cases per 10,000 among black residents. As to deaths from Covid-19, these have been 24% higher among black Minnesotans.

Solid Ground emphasizes tutoring and enrichment for children and youth in its housing programs is to address Minnesota's persistent achievement gap between white and black students. In 2019, Minnesota ranked 50th among the states when it comes to disparities in white and black students' high school graduation rates. In statewide standardized testing, more than 60% of white students are proficient in reading and math compared to 34% and 26% of black students, respectively.

These data are deeply troubling and longstanding. They suggest that as

a society we have not valued our African American siblings as we have ourselves. We have not seen them as equally beloved of God. These data sit underneath the rising sense of unfairness, frustration, desperation and anger that we've seen in our community over the past many weeks, fueling protests and even rioting.

Most of us are proud of our state and community. We believe in fairness and equality. We know that racism is wrong, or to use the Christian vernacular, that racism is a sin for which we repent. As Christian stewards we know too that God calls us to bring God's dream of a truly just world into fruition—where all that God has created is named beloved.

How we live out this call can take many forms. Learning. Engaged listening. Repentance. Prayer. Protesting. Opening hearts and minds. Walking alongside our African American siblings as they define and seek equity. Recognizing that racism is not only a political or social problem, but a theological problem and spiritual challenge.

One way that I live out this stewardship call is through my engagement with Solid Ground, where I have learned so much from the children and their parents who have shared with me their stories, experiences, frustrations and hopes with grace and generosity. It's a small step but a place to start—for me. And I ask God every day, show me the way.

For more information about Solid Ground, please visit www.solidgroundmn.org.

Sources for data in this article: 1) NPR, Minneapolis Ranks Near Bottom for Racial Equality, 6/2/2020; 2) Star Tribune, How Did Minnesota Become One of the Most Racially Inequitable States, 9/6/2019; 3) City Pages, Minnesota Still has Some of the Worst Racial Disparities in the Nation, 1/16/2019; 4) U.S. News and World Report, The Minnesota Paradox: A State Grapples with Stark Racial Disparities; 5) Minneapolis Federal Reserve Bank, A Statewide Crisis: Minnesota's Education Achievement Gaps, 10/2019; 6) Minnesota Department of Corrections; 7) Minneapolis Police Department.

Help is available if you need it

By Laura Fredericks, Trinity member and Valley Outreach Board Chair/Volunteer

Everybody needs help sometimes. If you (or someone you know) need to stretch your budget, one way to do that could be to get free, nutritious, fresh and non-perishable food. Valley Outreach welcomes anyone in need of food. They also offer personalized support to navigate resources and focus on helping each individual and family with their unique priorities.

Right now, Valley Outreach has a drive-up food distribution service model. It's safe and low-contact with service hours on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. and Tuesday and Thursday from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. The team at Valley Outreach is also happy to answer questions if you need help with resources but aren't sure where to start. Call 651-430-2739, leave your name, number and brief message. A member of their team will get back to you. All conversations and interactions are treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Valley Outreach also has a list of partner resources available online now with information about other food programs, energy assistance, job resources, health insurance and legal support.

Below are the addresses for Valley Outreach, Christian Cupboard Emergency Food Shelf and White Bear Area Emergency Food Shelf. These are just a few options for food help. Call the Minnesota Food Helpline at 1-888-711-115 to find free food resources across the state.

Valley Outreach

1911 Curve Crest Blvd W, Stillwater, MN
www.valleyoutreachmn.org

Christian Cupboard Emergency Food Shelf (CCEFS)

8264 4th St N, Oakdale, MN
www.ccefs.org

White Bear Area Emergency Food Shelf

1884 Whitaker St, White Bear Lake, MN
www.whitebearfoodshelf.org

Please check out their websites and social media to stay up to date on hours and programs.



OUR COMMUNITY KITCHEN

Our Community Kitchen Meals

Our Community Kitchen next door at Ascension is providing curbside pickup of meals. Everyone is welcome. Donate what you can. Read more and find menus at: www.OurCommunityKitchen.org.

Breakfast: Tuesdays, 9:30 to 10 a.m.
Lunch: Thursdays, 12-12:30 p.m.

Curbside pick-up at:
Our Community Kitchen (Ascension Episcopal Church)
214 N. 3rd St., Stillwater, MN



Reading in All Circumstances

By Norma Wilson, Library Volunteer

One & Done Book Group is a low-commitment, yet thought-provoking book club. We meet only once per book and then decide what's next. Most recently twelve of us discussed *Tightrope: Americans Reaching for Hope* by Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn. With the devastating personal stories of Kristof's childhood friends in Yamhill, Oregon as a starting point, the authors gathered stories and statistics from across the country and around the world. The heart-wrenching stories of brokenness and the shining stories of success, plus efforts to bring help and hope provided a thoughtful discussion.

THOUGHTS SHARED BY SOME WHO READ THE BOOK

Claudia Swendseid: The authors made clear that many of the social inequities and inhumanity that exists in our country today are due to public policies that we collectively have supported over the past 50 years in particular. The good news is we can change this and create a more equitable, just and humane society by supporting policies that other developed nations have implemented to good effect. We just need to get on with it.

Eunice and Don Fultz expressed concern for children and young Americans in their comments—Eunice: Nicholas Kristof in his book *Tightrope* used his hometown as an example of the brokenness in our country. One thing that struck me was the statistics of our children who are exposed prenatally to substance abuse and the increased risk of child trauma and toxic stress. Our politicians often insist that there are no funds to pay for social services to our younger generation—therefore our children are the losers without an ability to speak for themselves. Don: Don referenced a quote from the book, "The Defense

Department estimates that 71 percent of young Americans would not be eligible to join the military even if they wanted to, because of felony convictions, drug use, obesity, failure to graduate from high school and other reasons—and those ineligible include many of those who would most benefit from military service."

Bob Boyd: The book makes a serious effort to sound an alarm regarding several social issues. The message suffers from at least three weaknesses: first, statistical comparisons, particularly involving two countries, are almost always misleading and unfair; second, the list of ten steps at the end of the book are neither new nor helpful as is. The "whats" are relatively easy to determine, it is the "hows" that are difficult. Our country has spent billions on almost all of these steps, with limited results. Lastly, the authors of a book of this nature are always open to the temptation of pushing a political agenda, the authors were not immune from this.

Ann Wolff: Every story and every statistic in this book called out to me. My biggest takeaway is that poverty is a choice—a choice of the country. Personal responsibility must be part of the turn-around, but so must collective responsibility. Kristof's childhood friends made terrible choices that were compounded by terrible choices of the country on multiple fronts. They walked a socio-economic tightrope and one tumble destroyed not only the individual, but the entire family and the generations that followed.

PERSONAL SUGGESTIONS FROM THOSE WHO "WALK THE TIGHTROPE"

Claudia Swendseid: Currently I volunteer and provide financial support to two organizations in our community that seek to lift up the lives of lower-income families through access to safe and stable housing, nutritious food, and other resources. What I will do differently in the future is to engage in more citizen advocacy to address root causes. Nonprofit, social services, as important as these are, will never fill the gap created by poor public policies. As a citizen advocate, I can work with others to make the case for a different set of public policies in our community, state and country, as *Tightrope* outlines in its last chapter.

Ann Wolff: I'm glad the Trinity One & Done Book Group chose this book and that I joined them because it's

going to take a multitude and generations of people reaching out with hope to those who are reaching for hope. Jesus helped the most vulnerable and marginalized people and I feel that this is the work that we are called together to do.

Norma Wilson: While reading *Tightrope*, the words "Here I am Lord" entered my mind. Often, people like us want to help individuals, but are unaware of structural problems in society. Now, I feel a pull to also support systems which impact public policy. All of these people needed hope, support and opportunity, and there is a need to educate ourselves. I share the authors' hope that we are inspired to build comprehensive systems to replicate a web of support possible for all kids, and that Americans show generosity not only in private charity, but in public policy. Here I am Lord, send me.

RELATED RESOURCES IN THE TRINITY LIBRARY

Enough: Why the World's Poorest Starve in an Age of Plenty 363.8 THUR

Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City 339.4 DESM

Heartland: A Memoir of Working Hard and Being Broke in the Richest County on Earth 978.1 SMAR

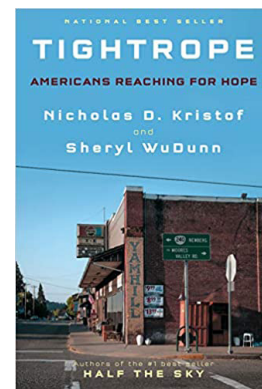
When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor and Yourself 261.8 CORB

THE CHURCH AND RESPONSE
The ELCA has a policy focus which counters the effects of poverty and discrimination and provides insight into how we can become actively engaged. You will also find links to Advocacy and Education.

<https://elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements>

If you have further interest in learning, watch for the new Trinity Virtual Library, classes, and links on the Trinity website. The title of the next One & Done Book Group choice will also be announced on the website. All are welcome!

<https://trinitylc.org/learning/library/>



THANK YOU!

Thank you to our Landscape Team for planting the lilies by the exit from our parking lot onto Myrtle Street. Members of landscape team (left to right): Betty Welke, Lynne Funk, Pat Reinke and Sandy Wendt



CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY

- To family and friends of Phyllis Berglund

WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

SUNDAY WORSHIP

- At the Drive-in at 9 a.m.
- Livestream on Facebook at 9 a.m.
- Online worship at www.trinitylc.org at 9 a.m.
- Watch on TV at 11 a.m.

Watch Worship on local channel 18 through Valley Access

Sundays at 11 a.m.

Wednesdays at Noon & 6 p.m.

Thursdays at Midnight & 6 a.m.

Fridays at 2 p.m. & 8 p.m.

Saturdays at 2 a.m. & 8 a.m.

ONLINE WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

May 17	June 7
Live viewers.... 166	Live viewers..... 91
Views/week..... 619	Views/week..... 300
	Drive-in..... 195
May 24	June 14
Live viewers.... 137	Live viewers..... 96
Views/week..... 634	Views/week..... 441
May 31	June 18
Live viewers..... 85	Live viewers..... 188
Views/week..... 451	
Drive-in..... 263	

why trinity?

Because God
first loved us,
we live as Jesus in the world,
loving God and
loving neighbor.

core values

Exceptional Worship
Radical Hospitality
Authentic Community
Lifelong Faith Formation
Compassionate Action

welcome

To read our full welcome statement please visit our web site at www.trinitylc.org > WELCOME > WHO WE ARE > RECONCILING IN CHRIST.



trinity TODAY

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Email: info@trinitylc.org

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New ministry: **Love Drop!**



Many of you have expressed an interest in spreading love to fellow Trinity members who may be in a position of feeling isolated due to this global pandemic. Well, we have a solution and would love for you to be a part—either as a giver or receiver—BOTH are needed!

Welcome to the new Love Drop ministry: pairing those who are mobile and eager to care with folks who might welcome a small bundle of goodies that speak to the love we share. We are preparing bags with small, inexpensive, meaningful gifts to be dropped off as an expression of God's love through our connection as the body of Christ.

Gifts will be available for pickup for the love droppers (all are welcome—families! individuals! couples!) and will include a list of folks who will receive the love.

If you are interested in being a "love dropper" or if you find that you would welcome a little love being dropped at your door, please contact our Faith Community Nurse, Kim Dahlgren at kdahlgren@trinitylc.org or 651-303-1307.