

# Pastor’s Ponderings

Pastor David Eisenhuth



Nedra, a good friend of mine, is a mystery buff. She lives in a room at an assisted living facility. Three walls out of four have bookcases filled from top to bottom with paperback mystery novels. Some shelves have books that are doubled up in columns. She had been living in a fairly large apartment before her health forced her into assisted living. When she was planning what to take with her as she left her apartment, she insisted that all her books go with her. Most did, although some had to be sacrificed to the limitations of what she could squeeze into her rather small room.

I have to admit that I couldn’t understand why she wanted to take books with her that she had already read. Lest I sound hypocritical, Judy Conrad and Colleen Gildee spent a long morning unpacking 20 or so boxes of books in my office. I dare say that many are reference books that I *might* use in the course of my ministry at Trinity. Others, however, were purchased some 30 years ago and never read. They probably should have been culled. Anyway, back to my friend.

I could see taking art books that are looked at from time to time for the beauty of their pictures. But mystery books? Once read you know who did it. It was the butler who killed the old lady. Or the dead guy accidentally fell off the bridge. Why would you want to keep a mystery book? Nedra explained that the books were her friends and she needed their comfort as she faced a big change in her life. She also told me that every time she reread a book she would find something new like a hidden clue she had missed the first time around. These things made the writing all the more interesting and helped color the final reveal.

Here we are—once again ready to celebrate the events of Holy Week. On Palm Sunday we ride with Jesus as he enters the Holy City of Jerusalem. He is greeted by the crowds with shouts of acclamation: “Hosanna, Son of David!” On Thursday we find him in the upper room celebrating Passover. The ritual and words of this meal recall how God led the people of Israel from their bondage in Egypt to the joy of the Promised Land. At the end of the

meal Jesus blessed bread and wine and gave his disciples a new way to remember him and affirm the sacrifice they did not yet witness. On Good Friday, the horror of the cross overshadows everything. “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” On Saturday we bless the new Pascal Candle, hear lessons recalling the passion narrative. We affirm our Baptismal vows and we are ready . . . for Easter!

It’s really easy to skip over Holy Week and go right to the resurrection. But like closely reading a mystery novel, we miss the clues that give real meaning to Easter Sunday. I have heard the narrative of Holy Week since I can remember. But for me, each time I live it out in worship, it is new and exciting and meaningful. Like Nedra’s mysteries, I know how it all ends, but the story of Jesus’ passion can be new and fresh. My prayer for you is that you will come and hear it! May God fill your heart with this story of God’s love for you, so you will be prepared for that glorious day when light and life are given as God’s gift to us.

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# Holy Week Preparation, Services, Events

Pastor David Eisenhuth

## Wednesdays in Lent—March 7, 14, 21, 28

- 5:30 p.m.: Light supper
- 6:15 p.m.: Study: *Tales from the Madhouse*
- 6:45 p.m.: Evening prayer with the Eucharist

All activities on these evenings will take place in Memorial Hall. Join us for any portion of the evening.

## Maundy Thursday—March 22

- 7:00 p.m. Liturgy for Maundy Thursday
- Stripping of the altar in the Sanctuary

## Good Friday—March 30

- 7:00 p.m.: Tenebrae service in the Sanctuary

## Saturday Easter Vigil—March 31

- 8:00 p.m.: Easter Vigil service in All Saints Chapel
- Blessing of the Paschal candle

## Easter Sunday—April 1

- 9:00 a.m.: Service in the Sanctuary
- Breakfast immediately following in Fellowship Hall

## Palm Cross Workshop

Inge Dudda and Sharon Michael

On March 24, the Saturday before Palm Sunday, Altar Guild members will meet at 9:30 a.m. in Fellowship Hall.

As in previous years, we will make palm crosses to be given to the congregation on Palm Sunday.

All are welcome to join us for fellowship and refreshments.

## Easter Breakfast & Basket Raffle

Junior Michael



Easter breakfast will be held in Fellowship Hall immediately after the 9 a.m. unity service.

Food will include egg casseroles, French toast casseroles, fruit, coffee cakes, and muffins.

A basket raffle will also be held at the same time. Each ministry team is being asked to donate a completed basket. Baskets are due in the volunteer office by Sunday, March 25.

Tickets will go on sale on Sunday, March 11. Price is \$6 for adults, \$5 for children aged six through 12. Children aged five and under are free.

On Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of Holy Week we will celebrate the Eucharist in All Saints' Chapel at 11 a.m. (Yes, the chapel has a name!) The lessons for each day focus on what Jesus did between the better known days of Palm Sunday and Holy Thursday. Each service will be approximately 30 minutes.

On Holy Thursday our liturgy begins with a confession for which absolution is given. You may remember that we began Lent with a long confession, the absolution for which was reserved until the end of the Lenten Discipline—Holy Thursday. As part of the absolution we will wash one another's hands as sign of our Baptism and our commitment to be disciples in the world. Our attention then turns to the joy of Jesus' celebration of Passover with his disciples and his institution of Holy Communion. We bless oil that is used for anointing of the sick during the coming year. Then we leave the joy of the upper room and go with Jesus to the Garden of Gethsemane where he is betrayed. We flee with the disciples, symbolized in the solemn stripping of the altar as we hear the words of Psalm 51. We leave the church in silence.

On Good Friday we will read the Passion narrative at noon in the chapel. In the evening at 7 p.m. we will have a service with monologues based on the seven last words from the cross. The service ends with a time of darkness when we think about the solitude of the tomb. The light partially returns and we leave the empty church until Easter Sunday.

On Holy Saturday, we will have an Easter Vigil at **8 p.m.** The liturgy begins with the blessing of the Pascal Candle. The candle is the focus of Easter worship and is lit at the vigil and for services on the Sunday of Easter then again at funerals and baptisms. The candle is a power symbol of the resurrected Christ. The candle is blessed with the sung words of an ancient text called the Exsultet. Tenor needed! A series of lessons from Hebrew scripture follows. They recount God's saving actions in creation and prophetic voices. We affirm our baptismal vows. Ordinarily the first Communion of Easter is celebrated, but here at Trinity this will be reserved until Easter Day itself. We leave the chapel in hushed silence as we await the dawn of the happy day. The service will be an hour in length.

On Easter Sunday we begin with the news of Jesus's resurrection. Then follows a litany that gets louder and faster until we shout out "He is Risen!" There will be a baptism at our joint 9 a.m. service. The celebration of Communion is always a remembrance of Jesus's triumph over the powers of sin and death, but it is made special by the beauty of the decorated church and our favorite hymns. Pastor David will preach about the tree that caused all the ruckus in the Garden of Eden (not the one you think) and how it reappears in the Book of Revelation. A festive breakfast follows the service. More in the April newsletter.

# From the Organ Bench

Pastor Greg Shook

Dear Flock,

I always enjoy hymnody, but Lent is that time in our church year when the hymns offer a more special presence for me and are processed and taken to heart more deeply than at other times. The hymn "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" (ELW #803) goes deep. Lent exudes love and the symbol of that love is the cross.

The text to this hymn was written by the great hymnwriter Isaac Watts, who penned this text after studying Galatians 6:14, "May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world." Other scriptural references include Philemon 3:7 ("Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ"), and Galatians 2:20 ("... and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me"). In the beautiful third stanza, Watts takes the image in John 19:34 ("... one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out") and transforms the physical details into their spiritual equivalents, "sorrow and love." The final stanza reaches a climax of personal resolve, as gratitude makes its irresistible demand: to give "my soul, my life, my all." The text is considered one of Isaac Watt's finest works.

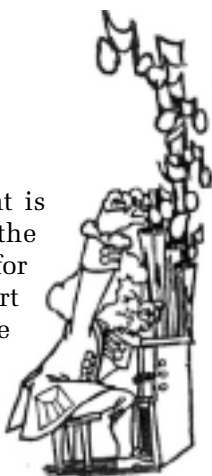
I have recently spent time with folks who have faced illness, either in family or friend. Others have experienced the death of a friend or loved one, and it is these things that bring life's values into full perspective. "All the vain things that charm me most," or, more accurately, "all the vain things that concern me most," fall into their proper place. The projects we've been meaning to finish, the buttons that need to be sewn on the shirt hanging in the closet for weeks, (the list continues . . . ) all fade into unimportance.

Sorrow seems to be one of the keys that opens the door to a new perception of what is important. It is uncomfortable to be sad or anxious about someone else, but this condition can be understood, also, as a gift from God, giving us back our best selves. It is as if our tears of compassion cure, at least for a while, our usual blind self-involvement and make us able to see the world around us and all its needs.

When we see in such a way, we draw just a little bit closer to the meaning and the love of the wondrous cross. In its shadow, our worldly gains become unsubstantial and our pride and self-importance melt away. The cross

illuminates our truer selves, the dwelling place of love and of the compassion that causes our sorrow. It is these true selves that reflect the image of the Prince of Glory who suffered for us; it is these selves that kneel at the foot of the cross in self-offering and gratitude: "love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all."

Soli Deo Gloria,  
Pastor Greg



## Bach Festival

The Bach Festival will be held at 4 p.m. on Sunday, March 18, in the Sanctuary.  
Mark your calendars and plan to attend!



## Lenten Service Project

Carol Brashears

Our Food Pantry and Clothing Bank clients often ask for personal care items that we take for granted each day.

Please help us stock our shelves with the following items that are greatly needed and would be very appreciated. Please place your items in the boxes provided. We encourage you to bring in a variety of items that could be used by all ages.

- Soap
- Toothbrush
- Deodorant
- Disposable razor
- Feminine hygiene products
- Toothpaste
- Shampoo
- Chapstick
- Comb/brush
- Hand crème /lotion

Join us as we seek to share our blessings with those less fortunate in our community.

# From Your Council President

Judy Conrad

It hardly seems possible but we are well into our quiet, reflective season of Lent and on the way to another joyful Easter Sunday. I hope you have taken the opportunity to join the Wednesday Evening Lenten suppers and worship. Pastor David has given us much to think about with his series, *Tales from the Madhouse*. The Evening Prayer service is thoughtful and beautiful followed by the Eucharist. It is an evening very well spent, and we encourage you to join us at 5:30 p.m. in Memorial Hall.

Plans are underway for a wonderful Resurrection Service on Easter Sunday followed as always by our Easter breakfast. Tickets will be on sale starting March 11. We will also have our basket auction at the breakfast. Each ministry team will provide a basket for the auction. We have some great themes: tools, a spa basket, Burt's Bees, potluck, gardening, breakfast, chocolate, movie night, golf, and beach! If you would like to provide a basket on your own, please do! The more, the better. Tickets will be sold at the breakfast.

I hope you have noticed the new Welcome message found on the slide at praise worship and at the top of the bulletin at traditional worship, written by Greg Shook and June Habeck-Holler. We have always wanted to be a welcoming congregation, but when we really looked at some simple ways to convey that message, we found that we were lacking in some opportunities to show our welcome. How do you greet someone you have never seen before, or not seen in a long time? Is it only the usher's job? The pastors'? Suppose a disheveled, apparently homeless person came in. Would you greet that person with the same enthusiasm you would greet a well-dressed new person? It's important to Trinity and to our God that we greet everyone openly and equally. Our Lutheran faith assures us of God's nonjudgmental grace and love. We must offer that same grace and love to all who enter our worship spaces. Our Worship and Music Team is looking closely at other opportunities for us to be a loving people of God. Stay tuned for more things to come and if you have some ideas, please pass them along.

Recently I watched one of our ushers, Mark Deiterich, seat three people whom I had not seen in worship before. He introduced himself by name, explained the bulletin to them, and returned with the trifold brochure found in the Narthex that explains the stained glass windows, the lectern, and the baptismal font. After the service he made sure they met Pastor David. By the time they left, they knew the names of four or five new friends. What a wonderful example of a genuine, Christian welcome. I truly thank him for his efforts.

At our last Church Council meeting we reinstated the Tech Team position held by Hunt Hardinge. You will see

evidence of his hard work on our Facebook page and on the church website. He can only post information and photos that he has or knows about. If you have anything from your ministry team or photos that you have taken of a church activity, please send them to him at [hunt.hardinge@gmail.com](mailto:hunt.hardinge@gmail.com).

Carol Brashears, Jane Drawbaugh, and Scarlett Michael have been quietly cleaning, organizing, and sorting the Historical Room on the second floor of Memorial Hall in preparation for our 150th anniversary next year. You may have seen the display that Carol does during our soup and sandwich lunches. We are beginning to formalize our team to organize that celebration next year. If you would like to be a part of the plans, please let Carol know.

There are lots of wonderful things going on at Trinity. Pastor David has bought a new viewpoint and new energy to us, and we thank him for that. There are plans for new worship opportunities and new Bible studies. He is working his way through our membership lists trying to visit as many of us as he can fit into the week. So far he has seen up to 10 in one week! If you would like to schedule a visit or know of someone who needs one, please let the office know. He has enjoyed all the visits he has done so far, especially the good cookies he has been served!

Your Church Council members are working hard for you, but we can only do what we know needs to be done. Soon, Church Council members will be wearing name tags identifying them as part of your elected leadership. We want everyone to know who we are so that you can approach us with ideas, suggestions, and especially complaints so we can address them. Please let us know how we are doing. How we can help. What we could do to do better. What we have done well.

God's Blessings to all of you during this Lenten season.





# Mutual Ministry

Peggy Hardinge

Greetings from the Mutual Ministry Team.

Last year we finished a book on clergy burnout and discussed the different chapters in our meetings. We also discussed our goals for the year, which included keeping the congregation apprised of our activities and direction.

Last year, we wound up putting our listening posts on hold because, in the absence of congregants and staff approaching our team or others with perceived issues, there did not seem to be the impetus to continue with them. The calm has been consistent throughout the summer and fall with Pastor Greg and into Christmas and winter with Pastor David.

The listening posts are excellent for airing grievances and working with conflicting parties to resolve issues that come about. Many of these issues have been resolved, to the point where, now, it seems that we are left with a different category of concerns, things like wanting more people in the pews, more children involved, more combined worship services, *et cetera*. These sorts of things would be best dealt with by its coordinating team such as Music and Worship or Christian Education or Outreach, perhaps. These desires of the heart are not confrontational issues for which Mutual Ministry would be consulted. But they are absolutely vital concerns and deserve attention by the team to which you would ultimately be referred by Mutual Ministry, anyway.

That being said, I explained at the February 3 Church Council Retreat why we have put the listening posts on hold. It was suggested that Trinity consider holding a round of cottage meetings to discuss how we might address these nonconfrontational issues and concerns. Mutual Ministry, to my knowledge, is not the coordinator of these meetings, but fully supports the suggestion to address these issues and have a good turn out while doing so.

Let me hasten to say, however, that Mutual Ministry is quite alive and well. We exist to help bring peace and harmony to the church. We exist to help both staff and membership solve their individual and joint concerns. We are a deeply caring team who wants nothing more than to continue enjoying the harmony that has grown from our sharing in the recent past and we are here for you when you need us. The listening posts will begin again when the need arises. Please send your thoughts or suggestions to me at [hunt.hardinge@gmail.com](mailto:hunt.hardinge@gmail.com).

I will only be chair of this committee until May 5. As a deacon, I will be required to withdraw from Mutual Ministry at that point. It has been a real joy to work with the staff and membership during these years and I will embrace whatever new team of which the Lord leads me to become part.

God's blessings to you and yours.



## Social Ministry News

Carol Brashears

### MICAH'S BACKPACK

Thanks to all who brought in Valentines for our Valentine's Day project. We were able to give each child a box and have some ready to start for next year. The teachers were very excited and thankful. The children loved them. Thank you!

### FOOD PANTRY AND CLOTHING BANK

We are in need of men's shoes and pants—all sizes are welcome!

### HELP NEEDED

There is a great need for someone to recycle the cardboard from the Food Pantry and Micah's Backpack.

- The boxes are broken down.
- You may use the church van.
- Recycling center is close by, next door to REACH Cold Weather Shelter.
- We would need this done once a week or once every other week.
- You may do it on your own schedule—anytime Monday through Friday.
- See Jeff Reed if you can help.

### SOCIAL MINISTRY

Get ready for extreme couponing! In April and May, Social Ministry will be collecting coupons for items we purchase for the Food Pantry. Keep all of your coupons now and watch for more details after Easter. Every little bit counts!

# God Speaks to Our Struggles

## June Habeck, Outreach Ministry

"The ruling classes use their positions for power to make themselves more wealthy and the working class poorer.

"Judges are bribed and priests can be lured into a life of abuse and greed.

"There is continuous carnage, tragedy and violence against women and children.

"The strong plunder the weak creating chaos and suffering.

"In the cities the people worship idols of their own making.

"Prostitutes abound.

"Leaders practice dishonesty which impoverishes their citizens.

"Many who profess faith in God, these believers in name only, have long abandoned spiritual discipline and have no genuine moral qualities different from worldly people.

"The words of God are ignored, twisted or rejected."

Thus spoke the prophet Micah, circa 737-690 B.C., to the people of Judah and the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Micah had witnessed all of these things in his childhood, even the murder of his relatives, the destruction of his beautiful village, and the kidnapping and enslavement of his friends by the King of Assyria.

Now, as an adult, he was seeing the same evils fill the land he loved. The numbers of the faithful had dwindled to a small faction of the population. He observed the majority did not practice discipline in daily reading of God's word and that many caused suffering in the name of God. Micah heard these evildoers accepting the perils of the day as God's will, which justified not altering their life choices.

In spite of his life experiences, Micah's spirit was not affected nor did he fall into tearful depression. He was faithful, remained firmly convicted in his love of God, and was not deterred by the ridicule he faced.

So Micah spoke the words God gave him. He was the first prophet to foretell the first total destruction of Jerusalem, saying that unless the people returned to God's ways they would experience conflagration and exile. However, Micah also offered the people hope by prophesying that the Messiah Jesus would be born in Bethlehem. After the fact, Saint Mathew quoted Micah's prediction.

Micah's message was for God's people to make a deliberate endeavor to put God above all. To this end we will embrace spiritual disciplines found in reading, prayer, and fasting. Hermas (an Ante Nicene Father) elaborated on productive fasting:

"[I will tell you] what is acceptable fasting to the Lord. Do no evil in your life and serve the Lord with a pure

heart. Keep the commandments, walking in his precepts and let no evil desire arise in your heart. If you do fast, calculate the price of the meals you have not eaten and give that amount to a widow, an orphan or some person in need."

Or give backpacks full of food to hungry local elementary children who don't have enough to eat on weekends through the Micah's Backpack program here at TLC.

"God has shown you, oh man, what is good. What does the Lord seek from you but to do justly and to love mercy and to be ready to walk with the Lord your God?" (Micah 6:8)

So be strong, do not lose heart, choose God's Love, and go forth to continue to be his instruments in a lost world.



## Bingo Night!

Karen Spessard

There will be Bingo for all ages of the congregation on Thursday, April 26, in Fellowship Hall. A light supper will be served at 6:00 p.m. with Bingo following at 6:45 p.m. Everyone is invited.

Please bring an item for the prize table. We will be collecting nonperishable food items for the Trinity Food Bank that evening.

This event is sponsored by the Trinity Senior Ministry Team.

Please RSVP by adding your name to the sign-up sheets at church services, available after Easter, or by calling the church office at (301)733-2878.

If you need transportation, this can be arranged by calling Karen Spessard at (301)791-1532.



## Birthdays

\* Indicates under 10

+ Indicates over 75

- |    |                     |
|----|---------------------|
| 3  | Dorothy Rhodes+     |
|    | Sam Young           |
| 6  | Howell Hammond+     |
|    | Logan Hammond       |
|    | Mona Hardinge       |
| 7  | Judy Conrad         |
|    | Abby Rankin         |
| 8  | Barbara Seltzer     |
| 9  | Janice Keefer+      |
| 10 | Heidi Bitner        |
|    | Kim Cochrane        |
| 12 | Pamela Bradford     |
|    | Nathaniel Repp      |
|    | Deborah Rochefort   |
| 15 | Michele Nearchos    |
| 16 | Kelly Rohrer        |
| 17 | Christen Fairley    |
|    | Dorsey Martin, Jr.+ |
| 19 | Elaine Byers+       |
| 20 | Carole Gibney       |
| 21 | Kenneth Purdham+    |
| 22 | Erin Tolson         |
| 23 | Dylan Rowe          |
| 24 | Suzanne Bell        |
|    | Annika Rochefort    |
| 25 | Mary Anne Day       |
|    | Anne Thayer         |
| 26 | Kelly Toms          |
| 27 | Carl Disque         |
|    | Sandra Wiebel       |
| 28 | Sharon Hoppes       |
|    | Jack Pryor          |



## Anniversaries

- |    |                             |
|----|-----------------------------|
| 25 | Sam & Marilyn Young         |
| 27 | Dorsey & Betty Martin, Jr.* |

## Thank You!

Trinity Family,

Just a note to thank you for the beautiful flowers I received for my birthday. Thanks to Sue Fiedler for bringing them to me. They added a touch of "spring" to many cold, winter days.

Also, I would like to thank everyone for the cards, visits, prayers and concerns for Ron in his recent setback.

Kind regards,  
Barb and Ron Smith

Dear Trinity Family,

Thank you so much for the beautiful flowers for my birthday. Ms. Michael delivered them on a snowy afternoon. They brightened my day!

Thanks again,  
Judith Hess



## Please Call Us If You Need Us!

If you have a caregiving emergency, please call Pastor Greg or Pastor David on their cell phones. It's okay to leave a message on the office phone—(301)733-2878—but should you have an immediate need, cell phones are the best way to contact them.

Pastor Greg's cell is (301) 992-1305. Pastor David's cell is (410) 487-3960. It's okay to leave messages there, as they will be heard and addressed sooner. Thank you!

**Trinity Lutheran Church**  
15 Randolph Avenue  
Hagerstown, Maryland 21740

Phone: (301)733-2878 [www.tlchag.org](http://www.tlchag.org)

Sunday Worship at 8:45 a.m. and 11 a.m.  
Sunday School for All Ages at 9:55 a.m.  
Church Office Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday

### **MAKING DISCIPLES FOR CHRIST**

Food Pantry and Clothing Bank: (301)733-5651  
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, 11 a.m. to 1:45 p.m.

Washington County Literacy Council: (301)739-4208  
Tuesday and Thursday: 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

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**CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED**

