

## Pastor's Ponderings

*Pastor David Eisenhuth*

Just prior to coming to Trinity, I was invited to participate in the funeral of a longtime family friend, Margaret Evans. She died at the ripe age of 92. I had known her my entire life.

Margaret belonged to a congregation which had, at one time, been United Church of Christ (UCC). After problems with a pastor, the congregation had become independent. It was now being served by a Baptist preacher who seemed to be lacking in credentials. Ummm . . .

I would see Margaret from time to time, especially at holidays. I did not know how important I was to her until that pastor told me every time he visited Margaret, she talked about me. I did know, however, that Margaret had told her relatives and her then pastor that she wanted me to preach at her funeral, as I had done at the funeral of her husband, Jack, many years before. Despite these clear instructions from Margaret, when I spoke with her pastor about my participation in the service, he made it clear I could offer a few comments after reading a lesson. He would give *the* sermon. He promised Margaret's relatives that he would be brief. His sermon would only be 20 minutes.

It was a terribly hot day. I wore a cassock (an ankle-length garment of one color) topped with a surplice (a white tunic, like the one worn by our choir). We got off to a rocky start when I appeared in the sacristy so dressed and the pastor told me I did not need "those things." I told him it was my tradition to vest like this. He was wearing a business suit. I didn't heed his words and chose to preach a 15-minute sermon after reading the Gospel. Then . . . the *real* sermon followed, all 35 minutes of it. The pastor told

me I could sit in a front pew so as to better hear him preach. I took a seat near a big industrial fan, as there was no air conditioning in the building.

The pastor made four points about what he called the biography of any Christian. They were election, justification, sanctification, and salvation. The first two points sounded very familiar to me. I could have

preached the same words. In fact, he even mentioned the cornerstone of Lutheran theology, "Justification by grace through faith." I also had no problem with sanctification, the process by which, through the power of the Holy Spirit, we are

called to grow in holiness (sanctity)—holy living. Then his Baptist theology came out in all his glory (or infamy, if you will). For after saying we are saved by grace, he added these words, which for Lutherans are the poison of the law: "But, you still have to. . ."

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# Lessons in Epiphany, and Ash Wednesday

Pastor David Eisenhuth

During the Epiphany season—Sundays after the celebration on January 6, of the coming of the Magi to the infant Jesus—we will have a series of sermons on the Lord's Prayer. Here are the schedule and petitions with accompanying lessons.

## JANUARY 19

*"Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name."* How close can we come to a holy God?

## JANUARY 26

*"Your Kingdom come."* What is the Kingdom and what is the Kingdom yet to come?

## FEBRUARY 2

*"Your will be done, on earth as in heaven."* How can we glorify God in our daily lives?

## FEBRUARY 9

*"Give us this day our daily bread."* What place does self-sufficiency have in the Christian life? How can we glorify God in our daily lives?

## FEBRUARY 16

*"And forgive us our debts/trespases/sins as we have also forgiven our debtors/those who trespass against us/those who sin against us."* What does the reality of our forgiveness say at our treatment of others?

## FEBRUARY 23

*"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil./Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil."* How does a Christian respond to the enormity of evil in the world?

We will give particular attention to the ways that the traditional Lord's Prayer differs from the words of the "new" contemporary Lord's Prayer. This prayer, known by most Christians and shared by all, is one of Jesus' most important teachings. It's packed full of

deep theology while it gives us a model for the godly life. Come and hear all the sermons!



February 26 is Ash Wednesday. This solemn day marks the beginning of Lent. While the word "Lent" means "spring," and gives hint to its use as a time of preparation for Easter, the first day reminds us of the necessity of Jesus' sacrifice. Hence, the color is black—a sign of death. Services on Ash Wednesday begin with an extended confession of sin, the absolution for which is reserved for the end of Lent on Holy Thursday. As a sign of our mourning for the sin that separates us from God and from one another, the penitent has a cross of ashes traced on his or her head. This was a sign in Hebrew scripture that someone was in mourning or had decided to change his or her life. The services will continue with the first of a series of sermons about *Your Nail*. Information about this will be forthcoming in a separate mailing. The expression "a nail in your coffin," is widely used. Here the emphasis is on the nails we pound into the cross of Christ. It's a powerful image, and the end of Lent will be something extremely powerful. The celebration of the Eucharist, while always a remembrance of Christ's resurrection, is, on Ash Wednesday and through Lent, a way to nourish us and strengthen us on the Lenten journey.

We will have two services on Ash Wednesday, the first at noon in All Saints' Chapel and the second at 7 p.m. in the sanctuary. Please come and start off with a bad Lent! That is to say, may we use this time to contemplate the ways in which we have separated ourselves from God and from one another, and when Easter comes, be prepared to celebrate the Paschal Feast with more meaning and joy than ever before.

# From the Organ Bench

*Pastor Greg Shook*

If you've thought about singing, Parish Choir welcomes you to join us. If not for an entire year, how about for the season? Give up sitting in the pew for Lent!

Join us for Lenten and Easter seasons. Materials are furnished and you have a seat on the "50 Yard Line." Please see me or any choir member for details. We rehearse Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. in the "upper room" choir room.

We are seeking additional worship to serve at the 11 a.m. service. If willing to assist, please let me know.



# Pancakes & Jazz

The Tuesday before Ash Wednesday, Shrove Tuesday, is on February 25 this year. The day before Lent begins is a time of celebrating. Eating, drinking, laughing, and carousing (oops should we take that last one back?) mark a time of Carnival throughout the Christian world. The origin of the word "shrove" is a bit uncertain, but in archaic Latin it has to do with a priest hearing confessions. Perhaps revelers are free to do things on Shrove Tuesday that they will confess the next day?

At Trinity we mark the evening before Ash Wednesday with a traditional Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper. Carl Disque and his band, the Prophets of the Abstract Truth, will be here to make the evening festive, with New Orleans-style music. At the end of the evening, we will use a liturgical form to "bury" the alleluia. This "A" word will not be used during Lent, and will not reappear in the liturgy until Easter.

The Pancake Supper begins at 5:30 p.m. Pancakes, scrambled eggs, and sausage are on the menu. Tickets go on sale February 2 after both services: adults—\$6; children six to 12—\$5; children five and under—free. Join us for a fun night of good food, good music, and good company!

# Micah's Backpack

*Carol Brashears*



Once again we will send boxes of Valentines Day cards home with students in their Micah's Backpack. Children love sending and receiving Valentines in their classroom. We welcome boxes of at least 15 or more Valentines cards, so that our Micah's children may have cards to share. Please choose cards that could be used by girls or boys, since we do not have the ability to make sure the Valentines will go to a specific gender.

We need the cards by February 2, so they can be packed and given to our students the week before Valentine's Day. This way they can prepare them for their class.

Please place the cards in the boxes provided in both Fellowship Hall and the Narthex. We are up to nearly 70 students, so we will need lots of boxes of Valentines cards. Thank you for your support of this project!

Longtime Trinity member and choir member **Richard (Dick) Hershey** moved to Pennsylvania to be closer to his family in February 2016. If you would like to write to him, his address is 839 North Fourth Street, Denver, Pennsylvania 17517.



# Soup & Sandwich Sale

Fellowship and Parish Life will hold two more soup and sandwich sales this winter. The first will be on Sunday, February 16, after both services. We will have taco soup and vegetable chowder for sale by the bowl, pint, or quart. We will have ham and cheese sandwiches and turkey and cheese sandwiches for sale also. Order forms will be available beginning January 26.

The second sale will be held on Sunday, March 15. We will offer potato soup and chicken corn soup. Chicken salad and tuna salad sandwiches will be on the menu.

For more information, contact Judy Conrad, (301)992-5855 or Scarlett Michael, (301)800-6666.



# Prayers: Conversations with God

Deacon Inge Dudda, OSSD

At Trinity, we have several ways to share our joys and sorrows with God in prayer.

- During Praise Worship, Peg Hardinge includes requests given to her that morning in the congregation's prayer.
- There are Prayer Request forms in both worship locations and in the church office for your requests, that will then be printed in the Mini-Messenger that is distributed at both services.
- You may fill out a yellow *Amazing Prayer* request card, available at both locations, and put it in the offering plate. The Trinity staff and the Tuesday Bible study members will pray for you.
- Every week I suggest prayer petitions that you can find in the MiniMessenger and on the TLC website ([tlchag.org](http://tlchag.org)).
- We have the *ELCA Prayer Ventures* resource that is available for you every month on the TLC website; printouts are at both worship locations. The petitions are offered as guides to prayer for the global, social, and outreach ministries of the ELCA, as well as for the needs and circumstances of our neighbors, communities and world.
- On Tuesday mornings after Bible study, we pray for one or more congregations that are picked randomly from the list of ELCA congregations and we send post-cards to let them know. In previous months we prayed for all 65 ELCA synods. What a privilege and joy to support the life and mission of the larger church through prayer!

In 1 Peter 5:6-7 we read: "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you." The Apostle Peter assures us that God will hear our humble, honest, and trusting prayer, made in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thanks be to God!



## Pastor's Ponderings

*Continued from page 1*

According to Lutheranism, whatever you say after this point abrogates, negates, cancels, and defames the freedom of the Gospel. While the pastor was sure Margaret was in heaven, he was not sure about the rest of us. He even said something that I took personally. He said, "Some pastors will stand in this pulpit and preach 'that all you have to do to get to heaven is die.'" Well, I wanted to put up my hand and shout *alleluia*. You see, I lean more on the side of Gospel than law and judgment. He obviously was in the court of judgment.

I remember Dr. Lawrence Nieting, a professor of New Testament at Gettysburg Seminary was when I was there. He was firmly in the court of grace. At seminary, students preached the homily at daily chapel. If a hapless student ended a sermon on a note of law, Dr. Nieting would stand up, and at the top of his voice yell out, "*Law, not Gospel!*" and then he would sit down. The silence would be deafening. The deflated strident would likewise sit down. Nevertheless—the lesson had been learned. That student, when he or she became a full-blown preacher, would hopefully remember to end a sermon on a note of Gospel. If not, the ghost of Nieting returns.

Now, you who come to church may listen very closely to how I end my sermons. If I tell you to do something: it's law. If I compromise the free grace that God gives us in Jesus Christ: it's law. Now, I admit that sometimes we need to hear the law to understand the Gospel, but please listen closely. Gospel frees us. Law binds us. Thank God I'm not Baptist. I don't think I would make it as a preacher. You may know that I love vestments. But I love the Gospel even more! That's the Lutheran in me.



## Lay Visitation Team

Lay Visitation Team meetings are at 10 a.m. in Memorial Hall on Saturdays, January 18, April 18, July 18, and October 18. Please join us!



## Love Casts Out Fear

*June Habeck Holler, Social Ministry Outreach*

“There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and he who fears is not perfected in love.” John 4:18

“He’s young, why isn’t he working?”

“They will steal anything!”

“He smells bad; doesn’t he have any decency?”

“I don’t think it’s safe to be alone with them when they are around.”

At the Clothing Bank and Food Pantry, we volunteers take basic precautions for safety and have procedures for handling disruptive or unruly guests. The actual experience is that more than 90 percent of those who are economically challenged in our neighborhood are cooperative and grateful.

Some days it’s harder than most to open ourselves to Christ’s spirit of love, when we encounter manipulation, drama, and whatever emotional pain our guests are experiencing when they enter. But when we do, and make an effort to move past our encounter with the exterior of these individuals, we see a person like ourselves in hard times, and love replaces the fear.

We don’t always succeed; but as we work at this, it slowly becomes how we approach the world.

In the fall 2019 issue of the Maryland Food Bank (MFB) magazine, there is an article, “Hunger through a Regional Lens,” that may help us better empathize with those who suffer. The MFB staff shares outreach experiences of some of the 208,000 food insecure people (97,000 of them children) in four regions of Maryland.

In Western Maryland, Wanda Barber from Smithsburg worked hard and was proud that she was able to support herself until she injured her back, the medical bills piled up, and she lost her home. She says, “I’m not trying to take advantage of anything, I come for food because I’m now on disability and income is limited. I had two jobs for years trying to make more money, but I ended up getting hurt and needing back surgery. Now I am not able to lift 30 pounds anymore so I can’t continue in my old jobs. So I spend time volunteering at the Food Pantry, because I want to help others in need. You never know what circumstances bring them in.”

In Central Maryland (Baltimore), Erica Ramos also volunteers at the site that helps her. She says, “People have many different reasons for needing help: loss of jobs, taking care of parents, medical issues with costs that have depleted their resources, addictions, the elderly raising their grandchildren, loss of their home and untreated emotional/psychological problems.”

In Southern Maryland, Ava Wentz, who is raising her five-year-old son on her own says, “I am trying to stay off welfare and be able to live in a nicer area, so my son can go to a good school

system. Even spending \$30 less on food each week means I can do better things for my family.”

On the Eastern Shore, Denise Smiley says, “I thought I was going to be fine when I got older, but I wasn’t able to save much money. I am diabetic, and without the really good people here who are willing to help me, I don’t know what I’d do.”

Fred Hare from Calvert Country sums up how he experiences God’s love instead of fear in his neighborhood outreach center: “Worried about when my next dollar was going to come, I walked in the door of the Pantry and their attitude put a smile on my face. To me, that was worth as much as the food that I was getting.”

The MFB staff also understand that it’s going to take more than food to end hunger for Marylanders. They are developing strategies to combat some of the reasons that lead people to seek out food assistance: financial resources, medical needs, childcare concerns, and transportation.

Jesus said, “Truly I say to you, as you did it to the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.” Matthew 25:40

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

**Our Clothing Bank** needs towels, bed sheets, and men’s shoes, as well as toiletries such as tooth brushes and toothpaste, deodorant, soap and shampoo. **Our Food Pantry** needs cereal, chicken noodle soup, and boxed desserts.

### PONDER THIS

This is from our own Food Pantry. A 40-year-old homeless neighbor teared up, patted my arm and said, “Thank you for helping me and my nephew.”

## Bible Study

Our evening Bible Study has concluded, and another evening study is coming soon! Our next Morning Bible Study is based on the video series “Comparative World Religions,” narrated by Ben Kingsley. It covers Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, and then the other world religions. Join us for this interesting and timely topic! We start with refreshments on Tuesdays at 10a.m., and end with prayer by noon. Those interested then go out to lunch.

# FEB 2020

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						<b>01</b> COUNCIL RETREAT
<b>02</b> 8:45am Praise Worship 10am Sunday School 11am Trad. Service	<b>03</b> 1pm Parish Life 7pm Boy Scouts	<b>04</b> 10am Bible Study 1:30am Sr. Ministry 7pm Property	<b>05</b> <b>MINI-MESSINGER</b> <b>IDEAS DUE 12PM</b> 10am Social Ministry 6pm Crochet Group 7:30pm Parish Choir	<b>06</b> 6:30pm Praise Band	<b>07</b> 10am Worship and Music 10:30am Community Kids Craft Day 8pm Community Dinner	<b>08</b>
<b>09</b> 8:45am Praise Worship 10am Sunday School 11am Trad. Service	<b>10</b> 3:30pm Civitan 7pm Boy Scouts	<b>11</b> 10am Bible Study 6:30pm Mutual Min. 6:30pm Personnel	<b>12</b> <b>MINI-MESSINGER</b> <b>IDEAS DUE 12PM</b> 5:30pm Civitan Karaoke 7:30pm Parish Choir	<b>13</b> 5:30pm Exec Team 6:30pm Praise Band	<b>14</b> 10am Lay Visitation	<b>15</b>
<b>16</b> <b>SOUP &amp; SANDWICH</b> <b>SALE</b> 8:45am Praise Worship 10am Sunday School 11am Trad. Service	<b>17</b> 7pm Boy Scouts	<b>18</b> 10am Bible Study 6:30pm Council	<b>19</b> <b>MINI-MESSINGER</b> <b>IDEAS DUE 12PM</b> 6pm Crochet Group 7:30pm Parish Choir	<b>20</b> 6:30pm Praise Band	<b>21</b> <b>NEWSLETTER</b> <b>ARTICLES DUE</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>23</b> 8:45am Praise Worship 10am Sunday School 11am Trad. Service	<b>24</b> 7pm Boy Scouts	<b>25</b> <b>SHROVE TUESDAY</b> 10am Bible Study 5:30pm Pancake Supper	<b>26</b> <b>ASH WEDNESDAY</b> <b>MINI-MESSINGER</b> <b>IDEAS DUE 12PM</b> 12pm Ash Wed Service 7pm Ash Wed Service	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>



## Souper Bowl of Caring—February 2

The “clanging kettles” are returning for the annual Souper Bowl of Caring, when youth in the United States collect money to fight hunger.

This fundraiser began more than 30 years ago with a simple prayer from a single youth group. It has become a powerful movement that transforms Super Bowl time into a celebration of giving and serving.

More than \$153 million has been raised for local charities and food pantries.

Please support the confirmation class, Children Helping Children, and the Trinity Food Pantry as kettles clang for cash on Super Bowl Sunday, February 2.

It doesn't matter which team you root for! Just put your change, bills, and/or checks in the kettles in the Narthex and Fellowship Hall. Checks made out to TLC will be graciously accepted.



## Community Kids' Craft Day

*Peg Hardinge, OSSD*

In response to requests from the children who attended the last community dinner we hosted in Fellowship Hall, our first Craft Day will be February 8, 10:30 a.m. to noon in Fellowship Hall. We will assemble Valentine mobiles and cards.

Enjoy working with kids? We'll have four such events in 2020 and folks are needed to:

1. Set up craft tables,
2. Help kids assemble the crafts,
3. Prepare a modest lunch,
4. Help restore order afterward.

Everything will be kept at the simplest level possible, to be easy on those who volunteer. Community Craft Days are planned for 10:30 a.m. to noon in Fellowship Hall on Saturdays April 4, June 20, September 19, and December 5. Thanks for considering how you may be a part of this new outreach. For more information, contact Peg Hardinge [peggy.hardinge@gmail.com](mailto:peggy.hardinge@gmail.com).



\* Indicates under 10

\*\* Indicates over 75

- 2 Zachery Repp  
Dave Warner III
- 3 Dorothy Benchhoff\*\*
- 5 Rick Anthony  
Judith Hess\*\*
- 6 Hazel Eichelberger\*\*
- 7 Scarlett Michael
- 10 Daved Paddock
- 11 Jean Price\*\*  
Molly Warner
- 14 Rick Toms
- 16 Greg Shook
- 22 Christopher Bradford
- 23 Keith Staley
- 25 Kristina Norgard  
Brianna Scheer
- 26 Diona Minnich
- 27 Torben Aarsand
- 28 Akira Williams



- 13 Dave and Lauren Williams-Rowe
- 18 Tom and June Habeck Holler

# Thank You!

Dear Trinity,

Thank you for the flowers delivered to me by Rhonda Munson for my birthday. The Christmas arrangement is beautiful!

Yours,  
Jean Kendle

**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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