

Pastor's Ponderings

Pastor David Eisenhuth

Although Roman Catholicism is still the predominant faith tradition throughout Latin America, Protestant denominations have made great inroads in bringing people to a different understanding of one's relationship with God. Whereas Catholicism, like Lutheranism, is liturgical centered on the sacraments, a form of worship that is group oriented, Protestantism in Latin America in general, and in Central America in specific, emphasizes a personal relationship with God. Many of these faith traditions, new to Latin America in the past 40 years or so, are also charismatic. "Charism" is Greek for gifts, and a church that is charismatic will value the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and often requires that these gifts be manifested in individual believers. For example, some extreme charismatics require believers to speak in spiritual tongues as a sign that they have the gift of the Holy Spirit. Conversely, someone who does not have this gift is excluded from the fellowship. Another important gift in such churches is prophecy.

The theology and practice of Protestant churches in Latin America is very challenging to me. My husband, Antonio, sometimes tells me things about the church that his mother attends that I find shocking. Last week we were talking about that church's ground-breaking for a new worship center, the pride and joy of which will be a sanctuary capable of seating 100,000. No, I didn't mistype that number. Right now the sanctuary accommodates 50,000 weekly, by way of many services on Saturdays and Sundays. The hope is to have everyone together at one Sunday morning worship service and that the spirit of so many together in worship will help the church grow.

In any case, the point of theology we were discussing had to do with my understanding of the Gospel. The word Gospel means "good news." For us in the Lutheran church, the good news is that we are justified (made right) before God by grace through faith. Our relationship with God is a free gift. We can do nothing to earn what Jesus won for us by dying on the cross and breaking the bonds of death by his resurrection. Antonio told me that his mother's church believes in the *Gospel of Judgment*. Wow! At first that seemed so antithetical to what I believe that I had to step back from the conversation for a couple of seconds. I



asked myself, "How can the Gospel be a message of judgment?"

However, as I thought about what that might mean, I came to understand the similarities between that gospel and our gospel. You see, Luther did emphasize sin as the first step towards accepting grace. Without knowing how we have sinned and how far short of God's hopes for us we have fallen, how can we understand the amazing news that God loves us anyway? This is based on Paul's view that sin leads to death, but, like Jesus, we die to sin and rise to newness of life.

The challenge of a Gospel of Judgment is to move beyond judgment: we understand and recognize our own sin, but what comes next? It's too easy to get stuck right there. Life must be miserable if every day you recite a litany of what you have done wrong and never fully accept the forgiving love God gives us in Jesus. To me, that view of the gospel is pretty grim and doesn't hold much joy in it.

On the other hand, we as Lutherans face the opposite dilemma. It is often the case that we spend too little time

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From the Organ Bench

Pastor Greg Shook

Dear Flock,

I recently lost a significant person in my life, Brad Smith. It has caused me many hours of thoughts, memories, and reflections about his teaching, mentoring, and friendship. He was my middle school band director at the Washington Street School, and he is largely responsible for my passion for playing the oboe. Times of reflection have caused me to think about teaching and how each of us teaches throughout our lives.

In the education classes I had when I was a college undergraduate, there were certain characteristics of teaching that we were strongly encouraged to emphasize in our teaching. They included:

- The ability to develop relationships with our students
- Patience, caring, and a kind personality
- Knowledge of those we would be teaching
- Being dedicated to teaching
- Engaging students in learning

Brad did all of these things, and more. Some of his methods I still use when starting out students. They still work. If one way of explaining something didn't get through, he had another way, and another, and on and on.

I was moved to see what the scriptures say about teaching. Here are a few that I remembered and others that I thought are particularly relevant.

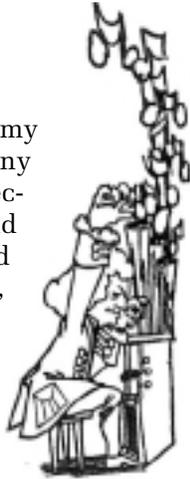
Titus 2:7-8: "Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us."

Proverbs 22:6: "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it."

James 3:1-2: "Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. For we all stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body."

Luke 6:40: A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher.

The Bible is full of stories about teachers and teaching throughout the many generations who mentored and provided examples of faith. These stories are timeless and still inspire us today. I remember when Brad assigned me the same exercise for several weeks because he knew I had not practiced, processed, and learned it sufficiently. Several years ago, while visiting Brad and his wife Darleen,



I asked him about that. He commented that while it was frustrating for me and I was being obstinate about learning it, he was equally (and maybe more so) frustrated because he would feel like he had not presented the lesson in a way that I understood it. He knew I was being stubborn about learning it; however, he was equally stubborn for me to learn it before moving on to the next lesson.

I can only think of Jesus, traveling with the disciples and attempting to teach them. Yes, most got it. However, on some occasions, some did not. Throughout the Bible, the word "listen," or words of encouragement to listen, appear many times. One reading from Mark 9:7 comes to mind: "Then a cloud formed, overshadowing them, and a voice came out of the cloud, 'This is My beloved Son, listen to Him!'" Interesting. Teaching works when the teacher is passionate, prepared, and promoting, but the student must be receptive and willing to work at learning.

Brad Smith taught with the prowess that inspired his students to apply his teaching, not just to music, but life. Jesus did the same thing for us. All the stories throughout the Bible are shared with the excitement, hope, and prayers that we would apply these stories to our lives and, in turn, share them with others. It seems simple, yet. . . .

More than anything, lessons learned, or knowledge received, deserves to be shared. One more scripture to pull this together. From 1 Peter 4:10 we have these words: "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace."

As God's ambassadors, may we all share gifts received.

Blessings and Peace, Pastor Greg



Joyful Noise Choir

Pastor Greg Shook

Joyful Noise Choir practices will resume at the beginning of March. Jane Drawbaugh (and others!) will once again be working with young people at Elgin Station.

Watch next month for updates and a possible performance date for a spring program. Boys and Girls Club is so grateful for this partnership with Trinity. Please keep us in your prayers.

Thank You

Judy Conrad

Fellowship and Parish Life would like to extend a huge “Thank You” to everyone who assisted with Vi Carlson’s service and luncheon. She was a prized leader of our group for many years and her loss hit us hard.

It was wonderful to have so many individuals step up with food and to donate their time to make the luncheon so wonderful, and clean up so much easier. We truly appreciate how everyone came together to honor such a wonderful lady.



Easter Bulb Garden

Once again Fellowship and Parish Life will arrange a bulb garden around our beautiful Easter Cross. The pots of bulbs are available for purchase and can be taken home after the Easter service. Please indicate your choices of plant and color on this form. Checks should be payable to Trinity Lutheran Church with a note that it is for the bulb garden, before March 22.

	Quantity:	\$ Subtotal:
Hyacinth: 3 bulbs/pot, \$7.50		
Pink	_____	_____
White	_____	_____
Blue	_____	_____
Tulips: 3 bulbs/pot, \$5		
Red	_____	_____
Yellow	_____	_____
Pink	_____	_____
Purple	_____	_____
Tulips: 6-8 bulbs/pot, \$8.50		
Red	_____	_____
Yellow	_____	_____
Pink	_____	_____
Purple	_____	_____
Large daffodil: 6-inch pot, 6-8 bulbs/pot, \$10	_____	_____
Mini daffodil: 4½-inch pot, 3 bulbs/pot, \$7.50	_____	_____
TOTAL enclosed:	_____	_____

Concerts at Trinity!

Pastor Greg Shook

ANNUAL BACH FESTIVAL

One of the great outreach ministries of Trinity is our music program. Sunday, March 29 at 4 p.m. we will host our annual Bach Festival. This homage to the great Johann Sebastian Bach was started by Dr. Clair Johannsen back in 1996 to celebrate renovation of the church organ. This year the program is quite varied and will include choirs, instrumentalists, and, of course, organists. Mark your calendars and invite a friend to this program.

MUSIC TO BE COOL

Our summer music events Music To Be Cool will begin in June with the Maryland Wind Festival. Mark your calendars for Friday, June 12 at 7 p.m. for this concert of Mozart, Dvorak, and others.

CONCERT TO REDEDICATE THE ORGAN

The restoration of the organ console is complete and, to celebrate, we will host Chuck Seipp, trumpet, and Randall Sheets, organ, in a rededication program for the organ on Sunday, September 20 at 5 p.m. Both of these musicians are friends and colleagues who I know will present a wonderful program.

Our Trinity Concert Series is self-supporting through private donations and concert offerings. If you would like to sponsor all or part of a program, please speak with Pastor Greg.

Summer Camps at Mar-Lu-Ridge and Camp Joy El

Jane Drawbaugh

Camp brochures are available now for Mar-Lu-Ridge and Camp Joy El. Brochures are on the bulletin board outside the Parlor for anyone wishing to send their child or grandchild to a Christian summer camp. Day camps and boarding camps are both available.

Mar-Lu-Ridge, our Lutheran camp outside Jefferson, Maryland, offers a variety of camps for youth of all faiths. The mountaintop experience of Christian community changes lives, makes disciples, builds friendship, and encourages care of God’s creation. Open House dates for the camp are March 15 and May 17, from 2 to 4:30 pm. Registration may also be done online at mldr@mar-lu-ridge.org.

Fellowship and Parish Life

Judy Conrad

The next few months are going to be very busy for us! We start on March 15 with our last Soup and Sandwich Sale for the season. We will have vegetable chowder and chicken corn soups, and chicken salad and tuna salad sandwiches. Everything is homemade and fresh and all the money goes to support our seminary students, Alex Knepper and Maggie Stone. The money is divided equally between them and is to be used to cover incidentals that pop up. Please help us to support them while you are having some delicious food!! An order blank is included on page 6.

On Maundy Thursday, April 9, we will assist Pastor David by coordinating a potluck supper before the Maundy Thursday service.

On Easter Sunday, April 12, we will assist with a coffee hour before and after the 10:00 a.m. Unity Celebration of Easter Sunday. Coffee, tea, and goodies will be available in Memorial Hall. Please consider donating a breakfast item to this celebration. This will be the perfect time to relax and check out the baskets for the Basket Auction and place your bid!

Please check the order forms found in the newsletter and order your lilies or bulbs for Easter day. Our deadline this year is March 22. We would like for you to take your orders home after Easter services in order that you might enjoy them while they are still fresh!



Easter Lily Memorials

Please use this order form to honor and remember loved ones by purchasing one or more Easter lilies, which will decorate the church on Easter. Fill out and return this form to the Church Office with payment of \$12 per plant. Deadline for orders is March 22. A booklet will be available Easter Day with the names the donors and those being remembered. Take your lily home after the service!

In Memory of:

Given by: _____

Children Helping Children, Operation Christmas Child, and Souper Bowl of Caring

Jane Drawbaugh

Trinity is a truly giving congregation! During the past year your donations to Children Helping Children allowed us to provide a meaningful Christmas to five children from Pangborn Elementary School.

Last fall, you helped to fill 162 shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child and send them to Madagascar.

In February, you donated \$413.37 during the Souper Bowl of Caring. Thank you, Thank you, Thank you!

Your generosity inspires our children and youth to become loving, sharing individuals for the world and the community in which they live.

Trinity Ladies Night

Judy Conrad

Our traditional Ladies Night will be held Tuesday, May 5. Mark your calendars now!!!



In Honor of:

Amount given: _____

Contributions for the lilies may be made payable to Trinity Lutheran Church. Please designate on your check "Easter Lilies."

Pastor's Ponderings, Continued

reflecting on our shortcomings and jump right over them to grace. Yes, we begin almost every service with a confession of sin, but only occasionally do we really talk about sin and its implications for our individual lives. Dietrich Bonhoeffer called this “cheap grace.” His own life and ultimate death at the hands of the Nazis during World War II was a testament to how Christians know and experience—and live out—God’s love, even in the midst of evil. For him, action, rather than antipathy, was a sure sign that someone was alive with the good news.

The key here is, for me, a proper balance between the two. Rather than dwell on one to the exclusion of the other, both sin and the good news take their place in shaping our theology. To this end, a season like Lent, with its focus on sin, is very helpful. We are called to spend 40 days (Lent does not include Sundays) reflecting on how we have offended God by our individual actions. As such, we are called to have a *bad* Lent because at its end we should be oh so ready to hear the good news of Easter. Penitence leads to grace. Judgment yields its sadness to hope, joy, and love.

To this end, on the Sundays in Lent, our sermons will focus on the seven deadly sins. In Roman Catholic theology there are three kinds of sins: venial (for example, sass off to your mother); mortal (for example, steal something); and cardinal (that is, deadly). There is an increasing gravity to each type of sin that further and further removes us from God’s presence. In my 40-some years of ministry, I don’t ever remember emphasizing the seven deadly sins that threaten our very lives and pollute our personal relationships with God.

The seven sins are: lust, gluttony, greed, sloth, wrath, envy, and pride. At first, each sin may seem straightforward. Lust surely must have some sexual element in it. Right? Well, no. It covers all the ways in which we have an inordinate desire to possess something. Lust is destructive. Anything can become an object of our lust. The series starts on Ash Wednesday, February 26, with lust. It concludes with anger on Palm Sunday, April 5.

Another way for us to reach this balance between judgment and salvation by grace is to use the Lenten devotional booklet, “Your Nail.” The booklet offers a daily reading and reflection for each day in the season. Accompanying the booklet is a real nail that we might look at, hold, or carry around to remind us of our own sin. The nails and booklets were distributed prior to Lent, but if you are reading this and want one, please call the church office and one will be sent to you.

The nails can be symbolically ditched at the 8 p.m. service on Good Friday. Those who so desire may pound their nail into a real cross, indicating how we as individuals nailed Jesus to the cross. It is a powerful experience. For those who don’t want to do this, the nails can be placed in a basket on the altar. Others might want to keep their nails as a sign of the ongoing struggle each of us has.

On a lighter note, each Wednesday in Lent we will gather at 5:30 p.m. in Memorial Hall for a light supper. Then we will see a 30-minute video showcasing one of the most important churches in the world. We will look at ancient and modern buildings that embody the spirit of faith for people in very different times. The program will start at 6:15 p.m. It will be followed by Evening Prayer and Holy Eucharist in All Saints’ Chapel. A free-will offering can be made to help pay for the dinner.

So there you have it. Antonio’s mother would be happy because we are taking time to have a structured look at sin and judgment. We should be happy that this will lead to an Easter that is more joyous than ever, because we will know the Gospel of Grace rescues us from the death sin bring.

Social Ministry

Carol Brashears



MICAH'S BACKPACK

We are so grateful for a very generous donation to Micah’s Backpack. Because of this donation, we have the funds to get some items for the children that we have not been able to get recently because of the cost.

We are looking for someone who would like to go to the grocery store once every six to eight weeks to purchase items for the backpacks. Examples of the foods needed are more costly snacks, such as pudding cups, cookies, and Jell-O cups.

If you would be interested in doing this, please see Jeff Reed or Carol Brashears. This is a great opportunity to help the children, especially if you cannot commit to a regular schedule. You can shop on your own schedule!

LENTEN PROJECT

The charity of the month for March and April will be personal hygiene products for our Food Pantry and Clothing Bank clients. We are asked many times for these products. We are asking for the following and all in family sizes: toothpaste and tooth brushes, shampoo, deodorant, and feminine hygiene products.

There will be a basket to place these items in Fellowship Hall and in the Narthex. Thank you for supporting this Lenten Project that will benefit our neighbors.

Special Olympics

Judy Conrad

On Saturday, April 18, the Washington County Special Olympics will be hosting a Spaghetti Dinner in Fellowship Hall. Tickets will go on sale in mid-March.

Deacon Updates

Peg Hardinge, OSSD

In response to a verbal poll taken from the kids who attended our last community dinner, I wanted to act upon one of their requests: that we have craft sessions. So, on the morning of our recent community spaghetti dinner, our team of volunteers came to do crafts with the community kids at 10:30 a.m. We had planned to serve lunch, however, since we had one toddler and one 'tween, both of whom are children of members, we decided to skip lunch, since we were finished by 11:15 a.m. and both kids were on their way to another activity.

Despite advertising in all of the hot spots where downtown kids go to find out what is happening, kids did not come at 10:30 a.m. Having so many supplies (that were made out of wood by Craig Robinson), we really wanted to put them to good use! So, as per June Habeck-Holler's suggestion, we returned to Fellowship Hall in the late afternoon and set up our crafts for the kids to make the wooden heart mobile that Judy Melby-Robinson designed and a Valentine card to take home. It was a huge hit for kids and adults alike. So, we decided to combine the two activities from here on out; dinner and a craft. The next community dinner dates are July 25, September 12, and November 7. Volunteers, please hold these dates open and Judy and I will be prepared with our next gig.

My thanks to Judy and Craig, June, Marty Blake, Kathy King, Mary Madurski, Lori Journey, and Sharon for being swift to answer my call for volunteers to help with this activity. Michele Nearchos was planning to come prepare lunch, but we were able to call her before she left home. Ladies, please know how very much your willingness to help has meant to me.

Presently, I am preparing for our annual celebration of Earth Day by creating a stole for Pastor Greg. He has requested that his have dachshunds on it! Which there are, but they are dispersed among the trees, birds, plants, and a few other stateside animals. I hope to have it finished in a few weeks so that he and Pastor David and I can wear them together that Sunday (yet to be determined).

Our Lay Minister roster is growing a bit, and we are able to visit our shut-ins on a regular basis in between our pastors' visits. I am grateful to all of you for being so faithful to this incredibly important mission.

I continue keeping in contact with our students away at college. They receive midterm notes, birthday cards, and Christmas presents of gift cards from Trinity in each mailing. When I do receive a reply from students, they report that this communication from home touches them deeply and they appreciate little articles or uplifting comments included.

I attended our recent staff and Church Council member retreat at Mar-Lu-Ridge a few weeks ago. We accomplished a great deal with regard to organizing the coming year.

Other duties I perform are serving as pulpit supply elsewhere as needed, writing the Prayers of the People for the 8:45 a.m. Sunday services, and teaching Bible studies on Wednesdays at Emerald Point and Lasting Change. Presently, we are studying Hebrews. Anyone who wants to join the Emerald Point study is welcome to come to our clubhouse at 4:30 p.m. on Wednesdays.

Lastly, I intend to retire this spring after 51 years of nursing (48 of which were in the operating room as a First Surgical Assistant). God, Himself, picked this job for me. I wanted to be a teacher, but God knew better. We had limited finances when I was young, and I was chosen to be sent to nursing school free of charge. Turns out, it was the perfect fit for me, and I wound up in a job I have treasured and adored for an entire lifetime. I am so, so grateful and just filled-to-bursting with joy for a lifetime of work that has meant so much to me. I wish the same for my students and for all of you. It's never too late to go with your heart.

Peg Hardinge
Order of Saint Stephen Deacon



Soup & Sandwich Sale Order Form for March 15 Sale

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

Soups	# pints @ \$4.50 ea.	# quarts @ \$6.50 ea.
Vegetable chowder	_____	_____
Chicken corn	_____	_____
Sandwiches	# chicken salad @\$4.50	# tuna salad @ \$4.50
	_____	_____

Please place your completed order form in the collection plate or in the Church Office. All profits go to our seminarians Alex and Maggie, to help with incidental costs. For more information, please call Judy Conrad at (301)992-5855 or Scarlett Michael at (301)800-6666.

News from the Property Team

Judy Conrad

Many of you may have noticed our new and improved gate at the Fellowship Hall entrance. The first gate that was installed was not done to the specifications given in the written contract. It was replaced at no cost to us with the specified emergency, no power, exit capability. It also has an “electronic eye” emergency stop just like a home electronic garage door. It can be opened and closed easily with an electric “rocker” switch inside the gate. If you are coming from outside, you will need a key. It is the same key that was used for the original door. If you would like to have a key, please let Ralph Conrad know at (301)992-5856.

We have discovered that some of the copper gutters on the Sanctuary building have failed at their seams and water has been leaking in to the wall on the Pulpit side of the Nave. If you look at the right side of the second window from the rear, you will see a dark line on the plaster wall. Thanks to eagle-eye Craig Robinson for noticing that and calling it to our attention. We had the entire roof and gutter systems on both the church and the Educational Building carefully inspected. We received a very detailed estimate at a very reasonable price. The contract has been signed and work will begin as soon as they are ready. Once the walls have had an opportunity to dry, we will have them checked and restored as needed. We will also have the water damage in the Board Room and Memorial Hall kitchen repaired. Hopefully by then we will be water tight!

Rich Kittle has designed a new tool for sending requests to the Property Team for any needed repairs that you may find around the buildings. There is a stack of the forms in the Property Team mailbox. Please feel free to use one to let us know of something that needs to be fixed.

We recently had a very careful inspection of all of our buildings by our insurance carrier. He spent hours going over all of the buildings. Other than the gutter leaks and some minor adjustments to the boilers, he felt that we were in very good shape! That is wonderful news for a building that is over 100 years old!

However, we have noticed “stuff” lying around the building that does not seem to belong to anyone. Especially behind the stage in Fellowship Hall, in the Memorial Hall kitchen area, and in the Sacristy. These can become fire hazards and problems with an emergency exit. Please take a look around and if you see something you recognize, get it back to where it belongs, or dispose of it.



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.*



Trinity Lutheran Church

15 Randolph Avenue
Hagerstown, Maryland 21740

Phone: (301)733-2878 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.

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

