

Pastor's Ponderings

Pastor David Eisenhuth

Our regular communion service is divided into two parts: the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. The sharing of the peace separates the two. As the second part of the service begins, we bring our offerings of money and bread and wine to the table. Our financial gifts provide for ministry here at Trinity and in the broader church. The bread and wine, of course, is set apart as Jesus's body and blood and returned to us so that we may be nourished and strengthened for service in God's kingdom.

An offertory prayer follows the physical gathering of the money and the presentation of the earthly elements for the Eucharist. Then follows the familiar dialogue, "The Lord be with you." To which the people respond in word or chant, "And also with you." Two other call and response phrases ask us to lift our hearts to the Lord and to give thanks to the Lord.

The next part is called the Proper Preface. Its words set the stage for the Eucharistic prayer appropriate for the day. The Sanctus ("Holy, holy, holy . . .") follows the preface. There are many prayers that can be used at the table, so likewise there are many prefaces. Most are very straightforward. However, the one we use during Holy Week is more riddle-like. I would like to use this space to explain its deep significance. Here it is:

It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord; who on the tree of the cross gave salvation to all, that, where death began, there life might be restored, and that he, who by a tree once overcame, might by a tree be overcome. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn.

The first part is understandable. Christ offers himself on the cross on Good Friday to give salvation for all. The cross is God's chosen instrument for the redemption of a fallen humanity. Why the cross? Why not some general announcement that the gap between God and God's creation is forgiven and restored? We don't know. This is part of the mystery of God's actions.

What about the next part? Where did death begin? On something made of wood. It was the tree in the Garden of Eden, the fruit of which God forbade his archetypal people to not eat. But as the story goes, Adam and Even wanted exactly what the tree conveyed: knowledge of both good and evil. Not content with being only happy, and maybe a little bored, they chose unwisely to seek their own way. Their defiance of God and ultimate desire to be like God had terrible consequences. They would have to work to provide food and shelter for themselves and their progeny. There would be pain. There would be death. And so it was. A tree that was pleasant to the eye became a symbol of death. We don't know what kind of tree it was. But wood from a tree was eventually shaped into a cross, an instrument of a heinous death by crucifixion.

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Be the Light that the World Needs

June Habeck-Holler

“Word, bro. Omma do dis—ain’t throwing shade at yo hive.” (Translation: Honestly, friend. I’m going to do this and I’m not disrespecting your church.)

Neighborhood street jargon may seem like a foreign language to many of us, but working in a true missionary field, which is Trinity’s neighborhood, the dialect of the Hagerstown poor is, at times, just that.

The example above is actually more prominent in New York City and with street youth, but the cultural divide between most Trinity folk and our possible mission field population may require us to change our perspective on, and learn the actual needs of, our “third congregation.”

Trinity has seen members leave our church over the course of several decades. The neighborhood around TLC has been experiencing something similar, but for vastly different reasons. In his blog, *Costly Mercy*, the Reverend Dereck Scudder writes, “Professionals may begin careers in a poor area but most seek a better paying job somewhere else as soon as they can; stable families with regular incomes move out as soon as they are able because they don’t like the neighborhood; this constant transition deteriorates a neighborhood; the result is that, “in a poor neighborhood, a lot of the people who stay are the people who can’t leave.” (<https://costlymercy.com/why-the-church-isnt-growing-poor-neighborhoods/>.)

If God is calling the faithful to ministry in these areas, then seminaries and church planning organizations will need to change training and longevity expectations for the pastors who are serving there.

Low-income neighborhoods require a long-term commitment. Scudder writes, “The church isn’t going to make a difference in poor neighborhoods until it plans to stay and stays for God’s glory.”

Even if the pastors plan to stay, they can only do so successfully if godly lay people stay. Their commitment to praying for their pastor, encouraging and supporting him/her, as well as tithing to the church, will enable that. We can support our pastor, model the Christian life for new believers, and come to understand our neighbors *right on Randolph Avenue*, to the glory of God.

Understanding our neighbors will mean learning about how communication happens or doesn’t happen. TLC presents our online site that explains what we are doing, we distribute this monthly newsletter, and we preach. Our songs, sermons, and evangelical materials are written by (and likely for) well-educated, middle-class people.

However, Scudder notes, recent surveys report that “most high schoolers are reading at a 5th grade reading level and the English Standard Version of the Bible is written at a 10th grade reading level.” There is a disconnection. It even becomes more of a problem when “three out of four people on welfare can’t read.” Add to that the fact that most people today have very little knowledge of the Bible, then our theology, stories, and hymns can have little to no meaning for them.

Scudder reminds us that even our basic Christian words have different meanings to the unchurched. *Love, faith, and hope* are now used in everyday language and have *opposite* meanings to the Biblical definitions. In today’s secular jargon, *love* is a subjective feeling, *faith* is a leap in the dark, and *hope* is wishful thinking.

To communicate in our new mission world, we must be able to explain to each other and to those who don’t know the Christian meaning of those words, what it is we believe. Scudder asks, “We need to keep in mind that we are actually introducing words, stories and ideas to them for the very first time; is it any wonder that someone with a poor education and without much church background, may only visit our church once?” There have been numerous times when new, local people who have come to worship at Trinity during the past year never return, and we wonder why.

Learning Hagerstown street jargon may come over time in our interactions and relationships with our neighborhood residents. In addition, if we evolve and adapt our building, our communications, and ourselves for this local mission field, Trinity could become essential to our neighborhood for the physical, emotional and spiritual support we offer and contribute.

The surprising reality is that the neighborhood will also become essential to us.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

For the Food Bank: Any desserts for families with children: cookies, goldfish crackers, saltines, animal crackers, pretzels, snack chip bags.

For the Clothing Bank: towels, washcloths, sheets (especially twin), men’s white socks, blankets.

PONDER THIS

The Maryland Food Bank is partnering with Foodworks Catering and the Salvation Army to train 53 unemployed persons in prepared food skills. Keandre is one of the trained persons who helped prepare 86,780 meals. He said, “I know what it’s like to go nights without eating. I know how it feels. So to know that I’m helping those people who are in that position, it’s amazing.” Source: <https://mdfoodbank.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Annual-Report-FY18.pdf>

From the Organ Bench

Pastor Greg Shook



I am just home from our Good Friday service here at Trinity. I came away from the service with a sense of renewal and realization of the power of this week in the life of the church year and for us as Christians. The texts, prayers, hymns, and speakers provided a framework that re-enforced the events of the Crucifixion and its relevance for us as Christians.

Some years ago I interviewed at a large metropolitan church in the South. I remember the odd feeling when I entered the building. Something did not feel quite right and I couldn't figure out what was making me so uncomfortable. I was escorted to the organ for practice and preparation time for the interview and choir rehearsal which would occur later in the evening. It was after practicing a few hours when I took a break that it hit me. There was no cross anyplace in the sanctuary. In fact, there were no crosses in Sunday School rooms, in hallways, no place was there a cross. The only place I could find a cross was in some literature in a rack in the main entrance. I couldn't get over the fact that there was no cross.

After a mini-recital and several choir rehearsals, I sat down with the search committee. They were interested in having me come there and lead their music. The interview went really well, that is, until they asked me if I had any questions. I asked, "Where is the cross?" Well, the interview came to a screeching and uncomfortable halt. People on the committee gasped. No one spoke or would look at each other. There was silence until the pastor and search committee chair asked me, "What do you mean?" Thinking that my question needed no explanation, I asked again, "Why is there no evidence of the cross in the church?" The only answer was from the search committee chair who answered my question with a response that floored me when he said, "Because we like it that way." I had decided at that point that I could not work there and so kept asking. They came up with all sorts of answers and excuses until I said to them "Why not have visible the very thing that symbolizes hope, freedom, and grace for us as Christians. The very visible symbol that reminds us of the sacrifice and love of God through the death and resurrection of Jesus?" I thanked them for their time and told them that I could not work there. They didn't understand.

As I watched news coverage of the fire at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, there was something that stood out in many of the photos and news stories. The large altar cross appears in many of the aftermath photos and news stories and that cross stands out as the hope from the horrible events of the fire. Just as the cross rises out of the ashes and devastation of the fire, the cross rises out of the darkness and uncertainty of Good Friday. The empty cross reminds us, not only of the darkness and torture of Jesus, but the empty cross also reminds us and secures us in the hope of Easter.

God's ultimate realization of love for us.

One comment that came from a woman interviewed after the fire was, "Fire can touch the building but faith is something that remains untouchable." And so it is with the cross. The horrible events that leave us in darkness on Good Friday give way to the brightness, joy, hope, and faith that the resurrection brings to us. The cross is central to that. My favorite part of the baptismal service are the words "Child of God, you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the Cross of Christ forever."

Inspired by the Cross of Christ, Issac Watts (1674-1748) wrote his most famous, and one of our most beloved hymn texts. He wrote the text to *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross* (ELW 803) 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." In the beautiful third stanza Watts takes the image of John 19:34, "...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."

My we all find hope in the image of the cross, remembering the price paid for all of us and leaving us with love and grace that is unsurpassed.

Soli Deo Gloria,
Pastor Greg



Ring! Ring! Still looking for some volunteers to ring handbells. It would be nice to have a group for Church Music Sunday in June. If interested, please see Pastor Greg.

Upcoming 150th Events & Celebrations

Carol Brashears

MAY

We will celebrate our Anniversary at the Ladies Night Out Event by recreating the first Mother-Daughter Banquet held in May 1939—80 years ago! The date is Friday, May 10. Plan to wear something to represent a past decade—apron, gloves, hats, jewelry, et cetera, as we celebrate the influence of women at Trinity. Bring you memories of the ladies who have helped with your faith formation and this church!

JUNE

June is the month of weddings, and this will be our focus this month. Bring in your wedding pictures and come celebrate with us as we highlight marriage at the service and have an old-fashioned wedding reception in Fellowship Hall following the service. Watch for more information.

JULY

Christmas in July will be our focus. One of the goals of our anniversary is to do an outreach program, and we have chosen Operation Christmas Child. Our goal is to make up 150 boxes. Watch for more information and the list of items to be included very soon.

AUGUST

25 August 2019: A festive liturgy to celebrate our 150th anniversary day. This is celebrated on the Sunday closest to the actual signing of the charter on 26 August 1869. We will also highlight our Christian Education History that day.

SEPTEMBER

Genealogy will be the highlight of this month. Learn how to trace your history. We will also have records from our archives for members to examine. Watch for more specific details about this informative and exciting opportunity to learn how to trace your family history.

OCTOBER

The concluding event of our year-long celebration will be on 13 October 2019, with Bishop Gohl as guest preacher.

Continued at the bottom of the next column.

Senior Ministry Upcoming Events

Kathy King

Senior Ministry will host a Game and Card night on Thursday, May 16, beginning at 6 p.m. with a light dinner provided by Fellowship and Parish Life, with games starting at 6:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall.

Plans are to have card games (bring your own deck) and a group of friends to play with. Also Dominos (what is Mexican Train?), Scrabble, Jenga, and possibly corn hole. And for those die-hard Bingo fans, we'll have that too.

Bring a small prize for the prize table! So save the date, bring some friends, and any game you enjoy. We will also be accepting nonperishable food items for the Trinity Food Pantry.

Ice Cream Social and Movie

Kathy King

Save the date! Ice Cream Social and Movie—Saturday, July 20, at 2 p.m. in Fellowship Hall.

The movie “Risen” will be shown.



Upcoming 150th Anniversary Events

We will also have a choir reunion with a choir made up of anyone who sang in one of our past choirs singing that day.

All choir members—Cherub, Junior, Young Peoples', and Senior choirs—are invited to come and sing. We will also have a celebration meal together that day.

Please watch for more details about each event as we get closer to that event in our newsletter, Mini-Messenger, and on our website. All are welcome to help with the upcoming celebrations. We meet the second Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. in Memorial Hall. We would love for all to help as we celebrate our past and embrace our future.

Our Fifth Chat with Pastor David

June Habeck-Holler

Five church members were in attendance at the fifth Chat with Pastor David (plus the pastor) on 14 April. The Mutual Ministry team will continue to provide this opportunity for members to ask questions and to express their opinions, preferences, and concerns.

Discussion revolved around the playground that was approved by Church Council, the Music and Worship Team, the Property Team, and the 80 percent of the congregation who responded to the survey. This accommodation for families with children during both worship services may alter the tradition of some members who have been sitting in specific pews for years. The tradition of “personal pews” was historically reviewed by Pastor David. Jewish worshippers rented pews initially to provide funds and to assure a preferred seat to those who came faithfully each week to the temple. Some American churches even eventually placed name placards on pews. However, today, as we invite new people into our sanctuary, what would telling them they are sitting in “our” pew communicate to them?

There is still an interest and need for Trinity to hire a marketing firm to effectively advertise the new programs and accommodations we offer. One idea to consider is that, as people in the 21st century seek spiritual (rather than religious) worship in their lives, many denominational churches are having much more success attracting new members when they drop the denomination of their church. If we were to be Trinity Church to the public, for example, rather than Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, we would still be Lutheran, worship, teach, and believe as Lutherans, but would have dropped a label whose meaning most of the public does not understand.

The next Chat with Pastor David will be at 10 a.m. on Sunday, 14 July, in Memorial Hall.

June Jazz Vespers

Come celebrate Evening Jazz Vespers 7 p.m. Thursday, June 27. Listen and join in ancient chant music, jazz standards, and sing-along New Orleans style jazz. A wine and cheese reception will follow. Vespers will be on vacation in July and August, and return in September

Earth Day

Pastor David Eisenhuth

The Sunday following Easter, April 28, will be observed as Earth Day. We will use texts that remind us that we are but temporary creation. We are this world and the mutual sup-children. We are to conserve the future generation may be blessed stewards of God’s creation. We are called to wisely use all its wonders for the benefit of all God’s children. We are asked to carefully steward the earth to pass it on to future generations so all people may benefit by God’s providence. We will use the setting of Holy Communion, “Of the Land and the Season” with its folk tunes this day.



Deacon Peggy has made a stole for herself and another for me that show many ecosystems and their creatures and plants. They are amazing, and we hope you will take the time to look at them after the service. Both will be blessed as part of the service. A stole is a symbol of called authority in the church. The deacon’s stole is worn over the left shoulder, tied at the waist on the right side. This is a symbol of Word and Service. The pastor’s stole is worn as a yoke over both shoulders, hanging down on both sides. This is a sign of the office of Word and Sacrament.

Those who come to the Food Pantry during the week will receive a potted herb with instructions on how to use that herb to flavor food. Those who come to church will receive a bulb to plant outside or to grow in a pot inside.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America sponsored a program for the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in which 500 trees would be planted; 20 of those trees will be planted at Emerald Point where Peggy and Hunt Hardinger, as well as several other parishioners live. The trees will be for all who know it, of the great reformation of the church in the 16th century.

7 Sundays of Easter

Pastor David Eisenhuth

Festivals in the life of the church are celebrated for an entire week. Easter is the Queen of Festivals, and so is celebrated for a “week of weeks,” a full seven weeks. Hence, these Sundays are known as the Sundays of Easter. This is different than, for example, the Sundayz in Lent. We will do our best to keep the Easter spirit alive during this long period. Easter ends with the coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. Jesus’s ascension to heaven falls 40 days after Easter—always on a Thursday.

Pastor's Ponderings

Now comes the interesting part. On this same wood, Jesus' death atones for the sin of Adam and Eve. The idea that the Messiah would suffer for the sake of God's people was quite foreign to those of Jewish sensibilities. In fact, there are only three passages, all in Isaiah, that suggest the Messiah will do anything other than reign as the glorious Son of Man. Herein is one of the main reasons Jesus was rejected by the very people he came to save. They believed the Messiah would be a powerful king and restore the fortunes of the people under King David. He would also boot the detested Roman occupiers out of Palestine. What they got was a simple rabbi preaching peace and love. But that love extended to giving his life for us on the cross, and hence life itself is restored.

Who tempted Adam and Eve to eat that tasty fruit in the first place? They may not have needed much encouragement to disobey God, but a serpent appeared and suggested to Eve that God has lied when God said they would die. I think Eve believed God said they would die immediately, which of course was not true. They would eventually die at the end of their now mortal existence. In this, the serpent told the truth. So the "he" in the preface is the serpent, widely interpreted as Satan, at best a fallen angel who resists God, at worst, evil incarnate. So he, by a tree, seemingly overcame God's plan for a perfect world.

But that's not the end of the story, because by a tree, he, Satan, and the powers of darkness are now overcome. Life turned to death on both the tree in the garden and on Calvary. But death is vanquished and life restored also on a tree—the cross. It's no coincidence that Revelation, the last book of the Bible, shows an image of the crucified but now risen Christ in the form of a lamb seated on the throne from which comes water abundant. The water becomes a river, and on both sides of the river grow trees that bear fruit year round. The Tree of Life is there and people can eat freely of it and live!

As with all prefaces, we are then invited to be part of the glorious company of the redeemed who sing forever before the throne of God. We, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, praise the name of the Lord and join in an unending hymn of glory.

Pretty neat, isn't it. And how suited is this preface for Palm Sunday through Holy Thursday, as the events by which God will redeem the world unfold for us. From Jesus's triumphant entry into Jerusalem to his last meal with the disciples, the Eucharist joins us with Jesus and equips us to walk the way of the cross to see that tree that at once condemns and redeems.

Alleluia, the Lord is risen! He is risen indeed!

Celebrating 150 Years of Great Food!

Judy Melby Robinson

This month we highlight another recipe from Trinity's cookbooks to honor and in memory of a long-time member and her contribution to Trinity. May's recipe is from the kitchen of Dottie Cochrane, mother of Carol Brashears. Dottie was a life-long member, born in 1939 and baptized at Trinity shortly after. She was instrumental in developing and growing the Fine Arts and Memorial program that Carol continues today.

MOCK BOURSIN

One 8 oz. pkg. cream cheese, softened
 1 clove garlic, minced or 1/8 tsp. garlic powder.
 1 tsp. caraway seed
 1 tsp. basil
 1/2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
 1 tsp. dill weed
 Lemon pepper

Blend all ingredients except the lemon pepper. Pat into a flattened circle on waxed paper. Sprinkle another piece of waxed paper with lemon pepper. Roll all sides of the cheese in the pepper. Shape again into a circle in a tuna fish can. Cover with plastic wrap and chill at least a day. Serve with crackers.

At a Glance: Use of Our Food Pantry and Clothing Bank

	2019 Jan - Mar	2018 Jan - Mar	% Increase (decrease)
Food Pantry			
Families	368	400	--
Individuals	904	964	(6.2)
Clothing Bank*			
Families	469	520	(9.8)

* The Clothing Bank was closed for 3 days in January 2019 to move to new location.

“Thank You!”

Thank you so much for the beautiful flowers I received for my birthday. Thanks to Anne Mowen for delivering them to me. The flowers are still beautiful.
—Carole Gibney

Dear Trinity:

Thank you for the beautiful flowers I received for my birthday. Thank you Barbara Smith for delivering them.
—Elaine Byers

Dear Trinity Lutheran Congregation,

Thank you so very much for so generously hosting the Westminster Schola Cantorum on March 18 for lunch. The college kids were overwhelmed with the delicious food and the outpouring of your generous spirit. Thank you for allowing us to use the church for the concert, too. The acoustics are amazing.
—The Barbara Ingram School for the Arts Vocal Department

Dear Prayer Group Members,

I recently received an attractive post card informing me that you prayed for me and the congregations of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod. Please accept my heartfelt gratitude for your kind remembrance of them and me.

It is encouraging to know that sisters and brothers in Christ are so thoughtful. We are strengthened by your prayers.

You and all of Trinity, Hagerstown will be included in prayer here during our Thursday service of Morning Prayer.

God bless you in your very important ministry.
With sincere gratitude,
—Bishop Sam Zeiser

Dear Friends at Trinity,

Thank you so much for your postcard telling us that Trinity’s prayer group prayed for us and the congregations of the Central States Synod.

In our Sunday morning greetings to our churches in Missouri and Kansas we always point out and celebrate the fact that we are indeed connected as a vast community in ways that we may never see but are as real as the love of Christ. You are perfect examples.

Thank you for giving us the strength and love of your prayers. We are happy to do the same for you.

—Peace and hope, Rev. Roger Gustafson, Bishop, Central States Synod

Dear friends,

How you blessed me by inviting me to participate in the 150th celebration at Praise Worship, and for welcoming me so enthusiastically. I can honestly say that spending March 31 with you has been and is the absolute highlight of my ministry.

Praise God for calling me to the Lutherans! Pastor David, Pastor Greg, especially Andy Wallace—Thank you!
—Pastor Micki Bond

Altar Guild,

Many thanks for the lovely bouquet of flowers for my 94th birthday, which I celebrated on March 17. A special thanks goes to Sue Fiedler for taking the time to deliver them. It’s nice to be remembered.
—Dorsey Martin, Jr.



Birthdays

** over 75
* under 10

- 1 Anton Williams, Jr.
- 2 Susan Kreiger
Lezlee Sabo
- 3 Lisa Conrad
Mark Deiterich
- 5 Caroline Kreiger
Michael Mowen
- 6 Lois Herchenrother
- 9 Timothy Higgins
Scott Paddack
Kate-E Reed
- 12 Elias Fowler
Robert Griffith**
- 13 Gary Little
Linda Tantillo**
- 15 Breese Dickinson**
Sara Oxendine
Lauren Williams-Rowe
- 16 Jeffrey Sabo
- 17 Carol Schofield
Betsy Warner
- 21 Vicki Harshman
Amanda Rankin
- 21 Wayne Whitmore III
- 24 Anna Kriechbaum
- 26 Krista Repp
- 31 Cynthia Stoner

Anniversaries

- 10 Robert and Barbara Winebrenner
- 14 William and Kathy Griemsmann
- 16 Michael and Christine Stowell
- 25 Charles and Debra Warner, III
Wayne and Sarah Whitmore

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.

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

