



# Ev. Trinity Lutheran Church

Activities Newsletter                      Spring 2009

## Message from Pastor Gramit



### Lent 2009

Greetings to the children of God at Ev. Trinity Lutheran Church

(UAC), in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, whose suffering and death are our salvation and are about to be our specific commemoration!

A couple of musings from your pastor are offered for your consideration, one somewhat relevant to the season (for us here at Trinity, at least) and another concerning the expression of our faith and faith-related principles

### Lent, Worship, and Holy Communion

This time of year finds us in a special season; namely, Lent. Lent affords us a chance to ponder our faith, and the

elements thereof, in a bit more of a somber and contemplative manner than usual. Hopefully, this will lead us to not pity our Lord Jesus, but to rejoice in His immense, incomprehensible love for us to have led Him to procure our salvation on that cross of Calvary.

For us here at Trinity, Lent specifically offers us something else as well, at least since the past few years. Not just as a pastor, but as a Christian, it gives me great joy to know that, every Lord's Day when I make my way to His house of worship, He is there to meet me -- in *both Word and Sacrament*. Now, "Word and Sacrament" can be one of those very familiar terms to many, especially if it's heard half as often as I wish it were. But when you think about it -- and using the word "do" *very* loosely -- "Word and Sacrament" is what we as Christians *do*.

*[Continued on Page 4-- Message from Pastor]*

## Youth Group –

Expect to see more of the Youth Group in the coming months! Our next major event will be the Easter Breakfast. It's a longstanding tradition for the Youth Group to put on an Easter breakfast prior to worship on Easter morning, and this year is no exception. Also, the past two years there has been the added entertainment of the Easter Gazette, a pithy newspaper containing "all the news not fit to print," and this year you can expect to see another edition. (Who can forget the great Kuchen Scandal, or Phil and Gladys' Polka Competition?)

*[Continued on Page 9-- Youth Group]*

## Contact Information

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Dave Terry

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Altar Guild Coordinator: Carolyn Matthew  
Ladies Aid President: Cordie Mueller  
Sunday School : Cordie Mueller

Bulletin: Kathy Martin - martinkm@aol.com

Choir Director: Doug Bittner  
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Youth Leader: Rick & Kathy Waller  
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Web Servant: Heidi Notaro  
[WebServant@TrinityLutheranMS.org](mailto:WebServant@TrinityLutheranMS.org)

## Calendar of Events

### March

10 – 7:00, Women’s Book Club meeting  
10 – 7:30, Council meeting  
11 – 6:00-7:00, Lenten supper  
11 – 7:30, Lenten worship service  
18 – 6:00-7:00, Lenten supper  
18 – 7:30, Lenten worship service  
25 – 6:00-7:00, Lenten supper  
25 – 7:30, Lenten worship service

### April

1 – 6:00-7:00, Lenten supper  
1 – 7:30, Lenten worship service  
9 – 7:30, Maundy Thursday worship service  
10 – 7:30, Good Friday worship service  
12 – Easter Service

### May

3 - Rev. Martin's 70th Anniversary as an ordained minister.

### Service Times July & August And Labor Day Weekend

Sunday service 9:00AM

### Service Times Sept - June

Sunday School 8:45AM  
Sunday Service 10:00AM



➔ **Master Calendar:** A master calendar has been started in the entry way of the church basement. Please utilize it when planning activities for your group at Trinity; and be sure to include them by writing them in on the appropriate date

## Master Plan Committee and Other Updates:

The master plan committee generally meets the first Sunday of each month after morning worship services. Projects vary, so there is something for you to do on this committee! **Please fill out and return the survey in this newsletter** to help this committee begin some long-range planning for this congregation.



**Women to Women:** Tune in to the “Woman to Woman” radio program with Phyllis. There are currently no local stations carrying the program, but you can listen to XM Satellite radio station XM170 on Saturdays at 1:30 or anytime via your computer at [www.womantowomanradio.com](http://www.womantowomanradio.com).

**Men’s network:** On Jan 1 Lutheran Hour Ministries’ brand-new program, the Men’s network, launched on the Internet. “The Men’s network is designed to equip and motivate men to greater levels of commitment, leadership, and service through activity-based, Christ-centered events for the authentic man; edgy, humorous, and thought-provoking video-based Bible studies; and an active Web-based community. Be sure to check out the web site <http://www.lhmmen.com>

**Church Roof:** The roof is in great need of repair.

Early estimates are the cost will be \$100,000 to

fix the bow and replace the shingles.

We’ve established a fund towards this effort. We are up to 7 tiles on our ‘roof thermometer’ indicator. Please consider making a special donation towards this cause.



### **Sunday School :**

Attendance has kept steady during this past quarter. There are still children we are missing and hope to see them soon! We miss you. Classes will continue through May, as usual.

**Choir news:** The choir joyfully welcomes the return of Gladys & Phil! We thank God for His blessings of voice & pitch discrimination, and for giving us the opportunity to sing His praise. Are you looking for a new adventure? Maybe something new to do on Thursday evenings? Consider joining the choir. New members are always welcome. If you have suggestions, requests, or questions, please contact Doug Bittner.

**Lenten Suppers:** Please join us for supper before Lenten services. Supper is served from 6:00-7:00pm on the nights of March 4, 11, 18, 25, and April 1.

**Ladies Aid Society:** The Ladies’ Aid activities resume in March after a two month hiatus. The ladies will server (served), at least one Lenten supper, on March 11. The ladies will also be serving dinner at the Community Café on Monday, March 30.

*[Message from Pastor - Continued from cover page]*

Both Word and Sacrament are what we gather to receive. Word and Sacrament -- *both* -- are meant to be neither just an occasional "treat," nor, on the other hand, something that we do out of mere habit, such as walking up a flight of stairs as part of our daily travels, but key elements in our blessed and Gospel-based existence as Christians, that is, as God's children, whom He'd bestow this gift upon *very* frequently.

*What I am asking of EACH of you* -- Please consider the blessing that our Lenten worship pattern (each Sunday) offers, and as Palm Sunday is upon us, what our Lord's Divine Service Word and Sacrament presence *each* Lord's Day has meant for you during the now waning Lenten season.

**"Choose Life"**

Literally a couple of hours before typing this, on a routine area business stop, I encountered a very familiar person working behind the counter in an area shop, which I visit approximately once each week or two. A simple slogan on her shirt led to her mentioning her pro-life stand to me. Before the conversation was over, I'd encouraged her to check out a website which I'm now commending to each of you also; namely, [www.machoose-life.org](http://www.machoose-life.org).

This website is the one offering information on the "Choose Life" license plate. It's a very real possibility that these plates could be on our vehicles in the months ahead, but *only* if enough plate sets are reserved!

As I've mentioned in church, I'd fully understand were someone to say to me, "We're of course pro-life, but getting this license plate would mean surrendering the plate we've had for twenty, thirty-some years," or, "The plate we have is already a special issue one of an area interest of ours." But, let's face it -- most of us display relatively recent issue plates on our vehicles, the design of which and the number of which mean little, if anything, to us. I'd encourage each of you, especially if this is the case, to consider this way of not only helping the pro-life cause, but more important, *confessing* -- publicly! -- our pro-life position!

And, as I'd mentioned to my checkout-counter-working friend -- check out the site and, if you like what you see, tell your friends!

One more thought on the subject. There are *many* worthy causes for which special plates exist. While of course wishing the efforts of those who support those causes well, I would hope that, whether with the tags *or* in *other* ways, pro-lifers would *also* be forward about *their* stand -- not to be in anyone's face in any obnoxious way, but to shamelessly confess to those around them.

God's richest blessings to you this Lenten season and always!

*Pastor Paul Gramit*

**Trinity Congregational Survey  
2009**

Please help the Master Plan Committee prioritize their tasks by completing the following survey. Please rate each of the statements below by circling the response that most closely reflects your feelings:

- ...1...Strongly Disagree
- ...2...Disagree
- ...3...Uncertain
- ...4...Agree
- ...5...Strongly Agree

Mission:

1. A high priority of Trinity should be to make disciples of all nations through the preaching and teaching of the Law and Gospel through worship, administration of the sacraments, and outreach to the Clinton community and beyond: ...1...2...3...4...5.
  
2. Trinity should explore targeted outreach opportunities to the Worcester area. ...1...2...3...4...5.

Stewardship:

3. Christians should be faithful stewards of all that God has given us; this includes sharing first-fruits and proportionate giving of offerings. ...1...2...3...4...5.
  
4. A high priority of Trinity in 2009 should be to promote an increase of annual giving in order to meet general operating expenses. ...1...2...3...4...5.

Facilities:

5. A high priority of Trinity should be to repair the bow in the roof and re-shingle. ...1...2...3...4...5...
  
6. A high priority of Trinity should be to improve the parking surface. ...1...2...3...4...5...
  
7. A high priority of Trinity should be to add additional parking spaces. ...1...2...3...4...5...
  
8. A high priority of Trinity should be to add visitor and handicapped parking spaces close to the church entrance. ...1...2...3...4...5...
  
9. A high priority of Trinity should be to improve the rest rooms, including handicap accessibility. ...1...2...3...4...5...

11. A high priority of Trinity should be to increase storage space...1...2...3...4...5...

12. A high priority of Trinity should be to increase Sunday School space:  
...1...2...3...4...5...

13. A high priority of Trinity should be to make the Sanctuary handicap accessible:  
...1...2...3...4...5...

14. A high priority of Trinity should be to make the basement handicap accessible:  
...1...2...3...4...5...

15. A high priority of Trinity should be to increase the space in the entrance  
(narthex). ...1...2...3...4...5...

16. A high priority of Trinity should be to improve the library's accessibility.  
...1...2...3...4...5...

17. A high priority of Trinity should be to enlarge the office and make it more easily  
accessible. ...1...2...3...4...5...

18. A high priority of Trinity should be to increase worship space capacity.  
...1...2...3...4...5...

Attendance: Please check the response that most closely describes your attendance level at Trinity.

- A. I attend 3 or more times per month, plus special services, such as Advent. \_\_\_\_\_
- B. I attend regularly, 3 or 4 times per month. \_\_\_\_\_
- C. I attend occasionally, 1 or 2 times per month. \_\_\_\_\_
- D. I seldom attend, 3 or 4 times per year. \_\_\_\_\_
- E. I rarely attend; less than 3 times per year. \_\_\_\_\_

Any comments you would like to share with the Master Plan Committee?:

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Please respond by March 31. Place in the designated box church narthex box or send to:  
Master Plan Committee, Ev. Trinity Lutheran Church, 117 Chace Street, Clinton, MA 01510

## Understanding Trinity's Financial Status:

Note: all numbers, unless indicated otherwise, are as of 12/31/08

### **Current:**

Current expenses category is the money to run the day to day operations of the church. It includes costs such as Pastor's salary, electricity, property insurance, maintenance costs, altar supplies and such. Current income consists of the plate and envelope offerings which, in order to keep the church running, should be equal each year to current expenses. These operating funds are generally kept in a checking account.

2008 Current expenses: \$118,072.72

2008 Current income: \$95,116.58

Summary: Trinity finished the year \$22,956.14 over what came in for income. This shortfall was off-set by \_\_\_\_\_

2009 Current budget: This is the projected cost of running the church in 2009. To break even, we will need reduce expenses or increase giving to equal this amount. \$125,406.20

### **Funds:**

Funds are accounts where money is held for specific purposes. Donors can designate money for a specific project and this money cannot be re-purposed without donor and/or voting body approval. The voting body can also place un-designated income into a specific fund. Funds expected to be held for a period of time are in a term certificate or invested in mutual funds with thriven Funds or cash funds with Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF). Trinity has the following funds:

Helping Hand Fund: The voters have authorized the pastor to give money from this fund to a worthy cause. An example might be a church member loses his or her job and is unable to pay the rent for a month. The pastor can designate money from this account to cover this cost and the recipient has no obligation to pay it back. The funds in the Helping Hand Fund are generally given by individual members and money not spent in one year is carried over to the next year. In 2008, Trinity started the year with \$2,855.00 in this account, no donations were given, \$9.00 of it was given away, and \$2,846 remains in this account.

Library Fund: This is money given by a donor or designated by the voters specifically to purchase books or supplies for the church library. It is also carried from year to year if not spent. In 2008, no money was given to the library fund, no money was spent, and it remains at \$1,182.87.

Music Fund: This is money given by a donor or designated by the voters specifically to purchase supplies for music. It does not include the organist's salary. The choir director or pastor can access this fund. This fund also saw no activity in 2008. We started the year with \$508.41, no money was given or spent, and we ended the year with \$508.41 in this account.

Orphan Grain Train Trailer Fund: Orphan Grain Train is one of the LCMS missions Trinity supports. A fund was started to purchase a trailer in order to store and haul supplies given to Orphan Grain Train until it is forwarded on to the organizations warehouse in NY. We have since

constructed a small shed to provide additional storage. This account has also been inactive; we started the year with \$255.00 in this account and that amount remained at the end of the year.

Property Maintenance Fund: This is money given by a donor or designated specifically towards maintaining the property and buildings of the church above and beyond the usual annual expenses. Money for routine maintenance items such as custodian salary, electricity, gas, and such is taken from the appropriate Current Expense budget line-item and it does not come from the property maintenance fund. The property maintenance fund does also not include the authorization to use this money for "new" construction. For example, the property maintenance fund could be used towards re-shingling the sanctuary or parsonage, but it can not be used to build a handicap accessible ramp as that would be considered "new" construction and must come from elsewhere in the budget. Money given to this fund is either specified by an individual donor or designated by the voters and use is requested by the trustees when a project is over the amount listed in the annual current budget. It must be authorized by the voters. Trinity is anticipating several large project needs and have been trying to build up this fund in order to help pay for them. One way this has happened is by designating in recent years an annual gift to Trinity from a local trust to this fund. In 2008, we started the year with \$10,467.15 in this fund, \$14,659.04 was given to it (mostly by the Beck Trust), \$2,837.95 was spent, and we ended the year with \$22,288.24 in this fund. An example of this fund in use is the current roof repair fund-raising effort. Money raised is being held as a sub-division of the property maintenance fund

Building Fund: This is Trinity's largest fund and the money in this fund is designated for construction that does not include repairs that would be covered by the Property Maintenance Fund. Some of this money was given specifically to it by the donor and some was designated to this fund by the voting body. An enlarged sanctuary, handicap access, new rest-rooms, new Sunday School or office space are all projects in which could be covered by this fund. The voting body does have the authority to re-purpose funds in this account if those funds were designated to it by the voting body. This fund includes the \$50,000 Walter Ryll Memorial donation. In total, Trinity started the year with \$152,026.40 in this fund, \$10.00 was spent, \$1,074.47 was added, and we ended the year with \$153,110.87 in this account.

Endowment Fund: An endowment fund is a fund in which money is placed to meet future long-term needs of the church. In some situations, the endowment may be a large enough amount that the fund remains and the interest from the fund is used each year. Trinity has authorized the start of an endowment fund with the goal of benefiting the general fund and projects for Trinity. At this time, Trinity's endowment fund has not been named or all the details specified, although that will likely happen in 2009. There is currently \$0.00 in Trinity's endowments fund.





**Budget Shortfall:** In response to our 2008 budget shortfall, the Voters have made some changes to the 2009 operating budget. Pastor Gramit has been asked to cover some of the expenses for the parsonage that have always been covered by the congregation as part of the pastor's housing. Please be assured the Council works very hard to keep costs to a minimum. Your generosity in support of the congregation will help ease the burden.

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*[Youth Group - Continued from cover page]*

The Youth are also preparing for the 2010 National Youth Gathering in New Orleans, so we are making plans to start fund raising again, our biggest event being the annual Oktoberfest. As we begin our planning for the coming months, we are inviting those kids who will begin high school by the time of the gathering to come join us. Four of our members are graduating High School this Spring, but some will still be eligible for the New Orleans Gathering and have expressed interest in going with us again. We had 9 kids go with us in 2007. Maybe we can bring even more this time! The Youth Group is also planning to participate in the Lenten Suppers by sponsoring one of the meals. As always, the youth and their leaders are very appreciative of the support given us over the years. We couldn't do it without such broad support of so many of our church members. Not just financially, but all the kind words of encouragement and prayer support.

Rick & Kathy Waller  
Youth Group Leaders

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**Congregational In-Home Bible Studies**

This spring, we will be hosting in-home Bible studies for the members of our congregation. Volunteers will be contacting members to invite them to a specific study, each of which will meet for three sessions total, spread out over the course of several weeks. If the study to which you're invited is one you cannot attend *but you are* able to attend one of the others, this can easily be arranged also.

Please make it a point to attend this study, even if you're busy with other matters. Again, while we will be inviting each person to a specific setting, arrangements *will* be made to set up the alternatives as needed.

- Pastor Gramit

***The study leaders, locations, and dates are as follows:***

Rev. Gramit will lead one section at McAndrews' in Lancaster on Wednesdays, April 15, May 6, and May 27.

Rick Waller will lead one section at Matthews' in Berlin on Tuesdays, April 21, May 5, and May 26.

Paul Martin will lead one section at Moores' in Sterling on Mondays, April 13, May 4, and June 1<sup>st</sup>.

## Vacation Bible School

VBS will be held again this summer in mid-August. Definite dates to be announced later. Teachers and helpers are needed.

This year's theme: "Parables of Jesus"

Come see what it's all about!  
*Invite your friends and neighbors!*

## Rev. Martin's 70th Anniversary celebration:

Please reserve Sunday, May 3rd as a day of celebrating Rev. Martin's 70th Anniversary as an ordained minister. We'll have a meal and program following the morning worship service. More info to come.



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