



THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

FEBRUARY 2021

The Holy Trinity Herald is the official monthly publication of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church.

HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

605 Madison St. (P.O. Box 52)
Marshall, Wisconsin 53559
Pastor: Rev. Nancy M. Raabe

www.holytrinitymarshall.com + (608) 655-4246

Email: htcstaff@holytrinity-marshall.com

Office hours: may be arranged as needed

Office manager: Kathy Schluter

FROM THE PASTOR: Tears of Hope

Since the pandemic began, I have kept up with the stream of information provided by Public Health of Madison and Dane County. Council member Lynn Weyer has encouraged us to share the county's Data Snapshot at every Council meeting as we've discussed whether and how to return to indoor worship.

A few weeks ago, reading deep in that web site, <https://publichealthmdc.com>, I saw a contact listed for the committee that was discerning who would be in Tier 1a for the vaccinations. Even though I assumed with my age bracket and good health it would be summer before I'd receive the vaccine, I wrote

to suggest pastors should be included as those providing an essential service. I argued that it would be dispiriting to congregations to learn their pastor was sick with the virus. So when I discovered last week that "Spiritual Care Providers" were in fact listed in Tier 1a, my heart leapt. I called my clinic, they recommended I contact SSM Health, and, incredibly, within a day I'd received the first shot. I'm scheduled for the second on Ash Wednesday. (No side effects – not even a sore arm.)

As the vaccine was being administered, I was overcome with emotion. I wasn't thinking of personal hardships during this long time—for example we have not seen our daughter and her husband since Christmas 2019—but I was thinking of all that we, you and I, have been through together. I tried to thank the health worker who was giving me the vaccine for being part of this monumental effort but got choked up as tears started to flow. I'm sure he wrote me off as overwrought.



But, friends: It has been SUCH a long road we have traveled together! It is my tremendous privilege to be on this road with you. I may not have been in touch with each of you personally as much as we used to do before and after worship, but know that I have been holding each of you in my heart with overflowing gratitude every of these past 11 months. We have faced challenges together that, in previous times, would have seemed insurmountable. We figured out how to have an online service that keeps 30-40 of you connected each week. We figured out how to have a drive-in service that keeps 30-40 *others* of you connected each week. Our total “attendance” figures, which Kathy faithfully keeps, are consistent with preceding years. In other words: We have figured out how to continue to be the church together, against overwhelming odds.

grateful

And not only that, but we accomplished major projects that in previous years would have seemed daunting: Resurfacing our parking lot. Selling our parsonage. Seeing the end in sight of our burdensome mortgage payments. Repainting the church inside *and* out. Putting on two hugely successful fundraisers while ensuring that everyone remained safe. Christmas Eve in our parking lot in 7 degree weather. An Annual Meeting after the season’s biggest snowstorm. A Pastor’s Assistance Fund, at long last. A Maintenance Fund to provide for our aging building so we do not live in fear of the next building crisis. Much-needed repairs and improvements to our church building.

None of this, not one element, could have happened without you and your incredibly faithful support of Holy Trinity. From a full heart, I pour out to God my thanks to those of you who continue to give to support our church; to those of you who invested time, great effort, and sweat (but I hope not blood and tears!) into making each of our accomplishments possible; and to all who continue to pray for the continued well-being of our congregation, our community, and our synod.

As we move into a new year in which we are still not clear about what our life together will look like moving ahead, I lift my prayers to God first for your safety and well-being, and second that your support will continue and maybe even increase. May I offer to you, with all my heart, a paraphrase of Psalm 31:15 – “Our times are in your hands” – aware that God who knows our every need and provides for us with the abundance of his amazing grace.

May the God of hope go with you every day,
Pastor Raabe



OUR LENTEN JOURNEY IN 2021

This year, Ash Wednesday and Lent will take on special meanings as we continue to make our way hesitantly through the wilderness of the pandemic. It sounds strange to say, but here is where our current situation may actually be a source of strength. By necessity, our lives as we approach this season are very different from past years. The frenetic pace of busy-ness has evaporated. Many of us are working largely from home. While that requires a lot of juggling for families with school-age children, bringing about perhaps a different frenetic pace, still our avenues that lead out into the world have been narrowed. We have developed a renewed

sense of home, of place, and of our being in that place. It is really an ideal time in which to turn inward toward the discipline of Lent.

“Lent” comes from the old English word “lencten” (meaning lengthen), and is a reference to the lengthening of days that occurs during this time of the year. For that reason, Lent is associated with Spring. As the earth sees a rebirth and renewal of the plants and flowers during this season, so Lent is a time for Christians to consider our rebirth in Baptism and engage in spiritual renewal as preparation for Easter. The ancient church embraced Lent as a period of preparation for those who were to be baptized at the Easter Vigil, a dramatic service that takes place the night before Easter. That preparation included instruction, fasting, repentance, prayers and special acts of devotion. In modern days the entire church has come to use this same period, and some of those same practices to prepare for the Feast of the Resurrection of Christ that we know as Easter Sunday.

During these weeks our prayer and worship turns inward as we contemplate Jesus’ sacrifice for us and his road to the

cross. We find some of the church’s strongest theology and teaching in our Lenten hymns because they articulate the truth of the Crucified One. We see God most vividly and feel God’s grace most acutely as we ponder Jesus on the cross, God’s dearly beloved Son who was given for us that we may know each day the truth of God’s surpassing love.

This free gift, requiring no action on our part and completed in the resurrection, is the essence of God’s grace. What an unfathomable mystery for us to ponder as we walk through these 40 days.

Devotional resources for the home as we move into Lent

In addition to our worship services, we are pleased to these opportunities to deepen your experience of Lent:

- *A Story to Tell: Devotions for Lent, 2021*
This lovely pocket-sized devotional takes us through Mark’s Gospel every day during Lent with an evocative photograph, a scripture reading, a brief reflection, and an invitation to connect this reflection with the world in which we are currently living. There are two dozen copies of this devotional in the bin outside church; you may pick these up on Sundays or come to church anytime. Don’t forget that copies of the “Word in Season” devotionals are also in the bin.
- *I Bind Unto Myself Today*, an online devotional based on the stirring hymn of that name (ELW 450) on a text written by St. Patrick, the famed 5th century bishop of Ireland. This devotional

How long is Lent?

Lent is 40 days long, counting from Ash Wednesday (and minus the six Sundays, which are “little celebrations” of the resurrection). Like 12, 40 is a Biblical number: Those 40 days identify with Jesus’ 40 days of fasting and prayer in the wilderness as he prepared for his ministry; with Moses’ 40 days of fasting and prayer on Mount Sinai as he waited to receive the Law from God; and with Elijah’s 40 days of fasting and prayer on his way to Mount Horeb, the mountain of God.

plus the hymn itself is posted on our web site under “Resources for Lent.” Each verse of the hymn, one per week, offers a focus for each week of Lent, and inspires in us ways to pray, things from which to fast, and ideas for how we might give. Each entry consists of four sections: A hymn verse, a scripture passage, weekly practices, and journaling space. We’ll also provide a link to an audio recording of the hymn.

We pray that you may find these opportunities for worship and prayer meaningful as we move together through this time, one in which we continue to seek renewal of our relationship with God and with each other as Holy Trinity Lutheran Church.

ASH WEDNESDAY 2021

On Ash Wednesday, February 17, we begin our forty-day journey toward Easter. (Read below for how we will do this together.) We are invited “to struggle against everything that leads us away from love of God and neighbor” by exercising the discipline of Lent: repentance; fasting from that which distracts us from God; prayer; and works of love. These become the specific occasions and opportunities for spiritual renewal during this season of renewal.

Marking our foreheads with dust, we acknowledge that we die and return to the earth. At the same time, the dust traces again the life-giving cross that was indelibly marked on our foreheads at baptism. Remember, though, that as we journey through Lent to return to God, we have already been reconciled to God through Christ. Even as we humbly pray for God to make our hearts clean, we rejoice that “now is the day of salvation.”



“Ashes to Go”

As we have decided that the in-person administration of ashes is not completely safe in this time, we are offering small packets of “ashes to go” for this year’s Ash Wednesday. These will be handed out to those attend our drive-in services on February 7 and 14. One packet “serves four.” 😊 If you are not able to come on one of those two days, please contact Pastor Raabe or call the church and we will get a packet to you.

We were pleased to be able to order 5 dozen of these packets. Please note these guidelines:

- Mix with oil only, *not water*; olive oil is best.
- You need literally only a drop or two of oil, so be sparing.
- After you empty the (meager) contents into a small dish, I recommend cutting apart the small envelope and dipping your finger in oil to capture what remains in the envelope, then mixing into the dish the drop or two of oil with that same finger which you’ll use to make the cross of ashes.

Even if we hand out all 5 dozen packets, we will not run out. We still have ashes left over from last year, which are in fact from the preceding year's palm branches on Palm Sunday. If needed we can assemble additional packets of "ashes to go" so that everyone who wants them has them. Again, if you would like some and did not receive them on Feb. 7 or 14, or if you live at a distance and would like a packet mailed to you, please let us know. *There will be no in-person services at church that day.*

How and when to administer the ashes?

We will be recording a special Ash Wednesday service online, which will be posted that morning. During this service I will invite you to do your own administration of the ashes as we say the words together: "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return." If you are doing this alone as you watch the service, think of these words as addressed to me. I will welcome them!

Christ be with you,
Pastor Raabe

HOLY TRINITY TASK FORCE FOR REGATHERING: FEBRUARY UPDATE

The Task Force for Regathering, chaired by Wendy Franke, has recommended to the Council that we return to indoor worship for brief Wednesday night Lenten services starting February 24. The Council will vote on this at its February 9 meeting. If all goes well and there is no significant spike in virus infections in our area, we hope to be adding an indoor Sunday morning service at some point, while maintaining both the Sunday 10 a.m. drive-in and the online service each week. Please stay tuned to our web site and Facebook page for the Council's decision.

A reminder that when we do go back inside, these procedures will be followed:

Face coverings will be mandatory. Those unable to wear them may watch the service online.

Hand sanitizer stations will be placed throughout the narthex, sanctuary, and fellowship hall.

Ushers: Three will be needed for each service – two to guide worshipers entering and leaving, and one for the Welcome Desk to register those who arrive for worship. We do ask everyone to sign in.

Seating: Individuals or family groups may choose their seats as long as they are spaced apart from others by three pew chairs and one row.

Communion: Worshipers will receive pre-packaged communion kits in small bags, as we've been doing; use the bag for disposal. We will all commune at the same time.

During worship: No singing or praying aloud. Words to hymns will be projected. The organ the piano will serve as the "singing" voice of the congregation as we pray the words silently.

Cleaning and sanitizing: A special sanitizing crew will clean the sanctuary thoroughly before and after each service, which will include thorough sanitizing of all surfaces and bathrooms.

Fresh air: As the weather warms, doors will be kept open as much as temperatures allow for good ventilation. Our circulating system pulls air in from outside.

Thank you all for your extraordinary patience and perseverance during this time.

HOLY TRINITY AT HOME – 2021 EDITION

Last spring I tried to start a collection of photos and short videos to post online under the heading of “Holy Trinity at Home” so that we could see each other in our home-bound activities. A few families caught on. I’ve used those pictures quite a bit since, haven’t I? Thank you, faithful families!

Now I want to try this same thing from a different perspective. We did this a bit before Christmas with our decorations, but I’d like more of you to be involved.

We each have special areas in our homes where mementos are arranged. Or maybe they’re not mementos but just humble “installations” in which you have grouped meaningful items together. Would you take a photo of such an area in your house, and text or email the photo to me, with a brief explanation of what the items represent? I will then share these through our web site, which even still continues to be the portal into our lives together.

I will get things started. You can view this very humble corner of our dining room here. These things have been sitting in this spot largely untouched since we moved into our current home three years ago, with the addition of one item; until now, I never gave them much thought. Maybe you will enjoy the same process of rediscovery of nooks and crannies within your own household.

Send your photos and explanations to me by text at 614-214-2639, or to nancyraabe@gmail.com. Thank you! – Pastor Raabe

ANNUAL MEETING RESULTS

In the aftermath of the year’s biggest snowstorm, we were able to hold our Annual Meeting as planned after our drive-in service on January 31. The 2021 proposed budget passed by a wide margin; you can find that budget in the Annual Report, which can be viewed under the “Home” menu of our web site. We now know that the projected deficit of \$18,000 will be significantly offset by the great news that we once again have received a fully forgivable loan of \$13,300 for 2021, under the second draw of the Payroll Protection Program, to cover 8 weeks of salaries. Many thanks to those who got this done.



By an equally wide margin, we also approved a constitutional amendment defining active membership as those who have communed, and made a contribution of record, in the current or preceding calendar year. Our Constitution previously defined voting, or active, members according to the “current or two preceding calendar years.” This brings us back into line with what the ELCA recommends in its Model Constitution, upon which ours is based. For 2020, however, the ELCA is allowing for an exception patterns of worship were different this past year. This does still enable us

to move forward in the clarification of our roster of active members. It is another reminder of why offering envelopes are so important for those who make plate offerings (the “plate” is now our Sunday offering box), so that your gift may indeed be counted as a contribution of record. If you need envelopes, just let Kathy know. Or better still, sign up for online giving. Call or write if you need help in doing that.

The last item of business at the meeting was Council elections. Lynn Weyer and Dan Timpel were elected to new three-year terms. We thank outgoing members Richard Tooley and Susy Pawl for their service.

Maintaining the Church—a fresh appeal

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Now that we have sold our Parsonage, your Council has been hearing some disturbing talk. One of the more disturbing is that we will no longer need to give to a Building Fund. Nothing could be further from the truth. What we used to require for our mortgage payment will still be needed for our reduced mortgage, maintenance and upkeep on our Church Home as well as increased pastoral costs due to selling the parsonage.

Our mortgage payment was \$3587.00 per month. Without a parsonage, we are obligated to pay our Pastor a \$2000.00 housing allowance per month. This is from the Synod and is not negotiable. This leaves us with \$1587.00. Your Council is proposing to take \$587.00 and transfer that to a new Maintenance Fund. This leaves us \$1000.00 to put toward our greatly reduced mortgage. We could pay off our reduced mortgage early.

This Maintenance Fund can then be used to cover the coming costs of repairing or replacing our Church infrastructure without needing an emergency fundraiser. Your Council would like to avoid these crisis management situations.

I find it amazing that it has been almost 20 years since we walked together from our old Home to our new Home. As we have aged these 20 years, so has our church building. Our HVAC equipment will not last forever. Just this year, one of our HVAC units died and required a new compressor. That was \$3000. Imagine if your home furnace died tomorrow. Are you prepared to cover the cost of a new furnace? Do you have an emergency fund? Our church home has five HVAC units. They are all the same age. We can also expect to replace office equipment (computers, printers, copiers, phone) We have a water heater which is as old as our building and has lasted much longer than it's expected life of 8-10 years. These are all items that can be covered without a fundraiser if we have a healthy Maintenance Fund.

Prudent planning will require us to be looking into a roof replacement sometime before 2035. A new roof could easily cost \$65 - \$75,000. We will need a fund-raising effort for that.

While we had a remarkably successful fund raiser to reseal our parking lot, it was just a band aid. The entire parking lot should be resurfaced/replaced in 5 to 8 years at a guesstimated cost of \$25,000 - \$35,000. This will also require a fund-raising effort. Our extraordinarily successful solar panels are also getting to the end of their life cycle. Another fund raiser.

Good stewardship is much more than an annual fund drive. Good stewardship is planning for the maintenance needs of our church home in the future. Your church is counting on your continued support. Please maintain your giving to our building effort. We have good use for your continuing generous support.

Thank you -- Richard Tooley, Chair of the Parking Lot Fundraiser and Maintenance Fund projects

CHURCH NEWS

Holy Trinity Book Study: We would like to continue this group, possibly meeting by Zoom on alternate Mondays. Please let Pastor Raabe know if you're interested, pastor@holytrinity-marshall.com, and we will share ideas for what the next book might be.

Bible Study on 1 Corinthians: This is a group that works through a Facebook page associated with our church, and which also meets occasionally on Zoom. Contact Pastor Raabe if you'd like to join.

To reach Pastor Raabe, please call or text at 614-214-2639;
call her home phone at 608-839-0322;
or call and leave a message at church at 608-655-4246.

Second Harvest Mobile Food Bank: The drive-up distribution at 1:00 pm this month is on **February 26**. It will always take place on fourth Fridays, even when there is a fifth. Please try to arrive early!

Quilts for LWR Please continue to provide new fabric that can be cut into squares for making quilts. It's possible, also, for someone to take the next step and cut 11-inch squares of fabric and donate them. Our quilters are thankful for all who have supported Holy Trinity's mission to make quilts that are sent around the world by Lutheran World Relief.

Offering Envelopes If you are giving electronically and no longer wish to receive weekly offering envelopes, please e-mail htcstaff@holytrinity-marshall.com and let us know that; otherwise you will continue to receive them. Thank you.

Electronic newsletter To save paper, you may prefer to receive this newsletter electronically if you do not already. Just e-mail htcstaff@holytrinity-marshall.com and let us know that.

Our web site, holytrinitymarshall.com, is regularly updated with all the latest news and information that you might need. And share the link to our online services with family and friends!

YOUR 2021-2022 CHURCH COUNCIL

Gary Waalkens, President	608-655-4989	gwaalkkens1952@yahoo.com
Carol Woldt, Secretary	608-712-8947	bearcollector20@yahoo.com
Cheri Harwood	608-469-2142	mac9harw@gmail.com
Lynn Weyer	608-417-9196	lyweyer@gmail.com
Stephanie Woodley	608-371-7233	swoodley1@outlook.com
Wendy Franke	920-350-2838	frankew1115@gmail.com
Dan Timpel	608-575-2211	dktimpel@gmail.com
Pastor Nancy Raabe	614-214-2639	pastor@holyltrinity-marshall.com

Our thanks and gratitude to those who continue to give so much for the sake of this body of Christ such as our organist and secretary, Sunday ushers and worship leaders, hard-working Second Harvest Food Bank volunteers, those who have been readers for our online and parking lot services, dedicated Council members who have been meeting twice monthly since last April, those so willingly donating time and materials to maintain the church, and those who keep our grounds looking so well-manicured and our snow plowed.

thank you



Contact the church office at 608-655-4246 or htcstaff@holyltrinity-marshall.com

--If your name is spelled incorrectly, your address has changed (post office charges church when things are sent to an old address), you no longer wish to receive the church newsletter, or you wish to have the newsletter e-mailed to you

- Especially to let us know if a member of your family is admitted to the hospital or a nursing home or will be needing surgery
- A baby arrives in your family
- A death occurs in your family
- You know of someone to be added to the prayer list
- A member of your family is deployed

Dear Holy Trinity Members:
Here are balances on the funds I manage:
The Memorial Fund Balance as of 12/31/2020 is \$2,082.46 at F&M Bank.
Avestar Credit Union Balance is \$3,569.52
And the Edward Jones account balance is \$26,527.91.
Thanks,
Jack A. Erb
Endowment Investment Committee Chair

COMMUNITY NEWS

Marshall-Waterloo Food Pantry The Marshall/Waterloo Food Pantry is located in the lower level at 117 E. Madison Street (Hwy. 19) in Waterloo. (Please use the door in the alley.) People may visit the food pantry once each month. Hours are Wednesdays from noon-1:00PM and again Wednesday evenings from 7:00-8:00 PM. Saturday hours are from 9:00-10:00 AM. If you or someone you know needs help, please make use of this community ministry.

FoodShare Helpline 877-366-3635

Wisconsin Home Energy Plus Program at 1-866-432-8947 or 608-267-8601