

Living with Christ, Growing in Grace!



Evangelical
Lutheran
Church in America



The
United
Methodist
Church

*Rooted In Christ - Growing in Love -
Branching out in Service*



Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Ministers: Everyone!

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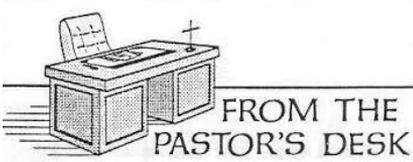
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Grace & Trinity Newsbites

APRIL 2021



In the springtime, with new life showing up all around us, it becomes increasingly difficult to navigate Covid; or maybe that's just me. It's been a year already; I expected us to

be done with this by now! However, we are not. Both councils continue to discuss Covid restrictions and have decided to stay the course with masks, physical distancing, pre-packaged communion elements and no inside fellowship for now. For some this is too much, for some being together inside with more than a few people does not yet feel safe.

Navigating and negotiating community life will continue to be a chore for awhile longer. So how does our faith, our belief in a crucified and risen Savior inform and shape our daily life, in these days? Because we are sinners, bound by the tendency to curve inward, to turn away from God in whose image we are created; because our default is toward the "I" that we allow ourselves to become; it is essential that we open ourselves to every possible reminder of who we are and to whom we belong. We need to remember that we disciples are called to a life of love – of God, of neighbor, of ourself. We are called to do good and to do no harm. We do not live in isolation; our 'I' is always part of 'We'; and we need one another. We need to rehearse, to practice, to study; just as musicians and actors and athletes do, so that we become stronger, more fluent disciples of Jesus. We need to memorize how to behave, how to pray, how to live so that when we are faced with tough times like these, we know the words and actions and attitudes that will allow us to be followers of the Way, the Truth, the Life who is Jesus. Worshiping and serving, learning and praying together are our duty, our joy, and our defense against sin and all evils that befall us. We are still figuring out what this looks like; how 'in person' and 'virtual' presence intertwine and interact and form community together. This conversation had already begun in some churches; a year of pandemic has just forced us all to join in. Even as we grapple with this new reality and exciting possibility; we deal with some familiar issues.

Each congregation is called to be good stewards of the property, buildings, and finances with which God has entrusted us; all for the good of God's people and the world. A year of pandemic has had an impact!

Each congregation offers opportunities to worship – and there are a variety of ways to assist in making communal worship possible. We don't always do things perfectly but then a worshipping community is never perfect (We're sinners, remember?) We are participants not performers. We worship God nor perfection. We lead each other in prayer, encourage one another to serve the Lord, and feed each other by the generous (prudent and wise) sharing of our time, talent and treasure.

Each congregation has bills to pay - and giving is not as robust as it has been. Each of our properties and buildings need to be maintained; much of it through the gift of time, energy and skill of members. So, how are you being a good steward and adding to, and increasing, the vitality and health of the congregation? I encourage and challenge you to be as generous as you are able – with time, talent and treasure.

Each of us, working together, forms these communities of faith; and the two congregations working together are able to do more effective mission and ministry than either of us can do alone. We are the church, where ever we are; every day, our life is a sermon. If we want that sermon to reveal God working in the world, we need the reinforcement of the community of faith that helps us keep turning our lives around, to keep turning toward Jesus. The community of faith needs each of us and we need each other. This is how we get through the tough times - together. God's 'at one ment' with us is for just such a time as this; with us in joy and sorrow, in good times and in bad; with us and for us that we might be for each other, God at work in the world.

Be strong! Be bold! Be wise, using your brain and good common sense. Be the sermon that is needed in your world today.

Traveling mercies,
Pr. Priscilla

Holy Week for Trinity and Grace.

Maundy Thursday Service, April 1 – 7:00 p.m. at Trinity

Good Friday Service, April 2 – 7:00 p.m. at Grace

Trinity Sunrise Easter Service, April 4 – 6:45 a.m. (Outdoors – weather permitting, east side of church)

Grace Easter Service, April 4 – 9:00 a.m.

In the church year we are set to begin Holy Week and the Great Three Days. Palm/Passion Sunday – shouts of acclamation and condemnation. Maundy Thursday – a supper followed by a garden betrayal. Good Friday – Jesus at-one-ment with humanity, made known to us by the light of a star, is completed in his death on the cross. The Feast of the Resurrection, begins in the darkness of Saturday evening and continues on into Sunday morning. We are fortunate that so many are able to be able to gather for worship, so we will be in our sanctuaries which will be ‘dressed’ for each of the services. Even so, I would invite you to ‘set the stage’ so to speak for this week in your home.

We will have palms at each of the weekend services; you might place some in a vase or lay them on a prayer table.

For Thursday, I hope that you will set a table with some bread, some fruit of the vine, a candle and a cross. You might also have some water and a basin or some other symbol of service. You might make some bread or buy a special loaf, or pretzels or muffins or biscuits to enjoy with your evening meal; for communion if you are participating via live stream, or as a snack when you come home from the service at Trinity.

For Friday have on your table, a cross and if you are worshipping via livestream 7 candles; and some matches or a lighter. The candles do not have to match, different colors and sizes are all fine. When we begin the service, have the candles lit, and the lights in the room on only enough for you to see the words of the lessons and hymns. We will be observing the service of Tenebrae and so you could extinguish your candles along with the ones at Grace.

Looking ahead to Sunday, plan to have some water in a bowl, along with a white Christ candle, and cross. Think about ways to adorn the cross for Easter – with flowers or white cloth or ribbon. Add fresh flowers if you have them – and maybe some Easter treats. If you are participating via livestream have some bread and wine or grape juice for communion.

We will be publishing a May/June newsletter. In it we would like to include information about our graduates - high school, college and beyond. Please have this information into the office by April 25. You are welcome to include a photo and brief article listing where graduated from, honors received and next steps. We will also include photos of our students who are being Confirmed on Pentecost; May 22 at Trinity: May 23 at Grace: (Please contact office for confirmation class list)

Both congregations have scholarship funds available to go to church summer camp! Check out the offerings at Camp Fontanelle (<https://www.campfontanelle.com/>) and Camp Carol Joy Holling (<https://www.caroljoyholling.org/>).

Thrivent Action Team "Undie Sunday"

We are collecting **new** undergarments (underwear, bras, socks) of any size or gender. There will be a collection box in the Narthex. Items can also be dropped off at either office. Please bring donations by Sunday, April 25th. Donations will be given to Lutheran World Relief and Orphan Grain Train.

Don't skip this! Please:)

Opportunities to serve, to be the church together.

It seems as though spring has arrived! Which of course means that lawncare season is right around the corner. Watch for sign-ups at both buildings. If you've never been a part of the rotation, maybe this is the year!

Right now, both yards have a few branches, and more than a few sticks, to be cleaned up. There are areas that could use trimmed and spruced up. This could be a great family activity; or a time to get to know someone else in the congregation. Ask someone, or invite another family, to work with you, and then have coffee or ice cream or a meal afterwards.

Grace is still looking to form a gardening group, talk with Tisha Wilson if you'd like to be part of this new endeavor.

Now is also the time, as more folks are able to be back in the building for worship, to think about adding yourself to the rotation for assisting during worship. Both congregations' video for the cable station. Both live-stream the service. Trinity has a powerpoint to run. Both have ushers, readers, and acolytes; and those who prepare the elements for communion (light duty these days). While we aren't yet having fellowship inside, we can certainly have coffee outside on nice days. These are all what I like 'housekeeping' chores. All of them are important. **Hospitality and welcoming folks** begins with how our property and buildings look – neat, tidy, 'cared for' or not; this speaks volumes. Worship is more vital and interesting with multiple voices. The more of us who participate, the easier it is for each of us to make a commitment.

I encourage you to prayerfully discern how you are able to contribute to the life of the congregation. I also invite you to consider these questions: 'What is it you need in order to be a more faithful disciple of Jesus? What does your family need? Your children need?' The churches' responsibility, and thus each congregation's work, is to form faithful disciples of Jesus whose ministry and mission it is to proclaim the Gospel, to love the neighbor and serve Christ.

There's fun to be had! Another fishing expedition? A road trip to do a short-term mission project or go on a pilgrimage? How about a family overnight retreat or a women's or men's retreat or a congregation retreat? There are several beautiful camps and retreat centers available. A multi-generational VBS or day camp or adventure days? How about a barbecue? And what about some outdoor services this summer? Some concerts, game nights, inside or out? Many of the stories I hear from members of both congregations are of the activities that you did together with other church members over the years. Times have changed; and we are still living in a time of pandemic. However, the church is still built the same way – through relationships and people being together, in-person and now virtually, for worship, service, study and just plain caring for one another.

Let's get creative and continue to build the church and be formed and reformed into ever more faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.

In Our Prayers this Week:

Please contact office for updated list!

Trinity News

April Birthdays & Anniversaries

Please contact office for updated list!

Notes from Trinity Church Council's February/March Meeting
(pending council approval)

Trinity Church Council was held on Wednesday February 17, 2021. Pastor Priscilla opened the meeting with prayer. Present were Jean Schlickbernd, Jim and Kathy Sherwood, Terry Nelson, Jackie Blocher, Bev Meyer, Barb Schroedter, Tom Swenson and Pastor Priscilla.

The Funds from the sale of the DeWitz Land were discussed. Bev made a motion to designate \$49,500.00 to the DeWitz Music Fund, with interest from the Land account being credited to the Music fund. Barb seconded the motion, motion carried. A reminder letter will be sent to members making pledges to remind them that we are wrapping up the Roof fund campaign and if they would like to know where they stand regarding their pledge amount to contact the office and we will get them the information requested.

The Ionizer to be used for the Building Sanitation has arrived. We will need to get a list of Church Activities and times. We will then set a schedule to turn on the machine and hang signs on doors to let people know they shouldn't enter the building while the machine is running.

Lenten Services will be held Wednesday evenings, at 6:45pm and will be held at Trinity. Maundy Thursday services and Easter Sunday sunrise services will be held at Trinity. Good Friday services and the 9:00 Easter service will be held at Grace.

Peg Rood contacted the church regarding holding a Celebration of Life for Lori Ovington sometime in March. Masks will be required and no food will be served.

Jean made a motion to start singing during the worship services, Jackie seconded the motion, motion carried. Masks will still be required and we will maintain social distancing. Singing only with masks will be allowed.

Streamlining of the Church Council continues. In June we will elect new members to the Council. There will be 7 to 9 members and will have staggering terms. The new council will start in July and election of officers will be held.

A joint Calendar meeting with Grace will be held to plan events for the next year.

There are plans to host an Easter Egg hunt this year and we are looking for Chairman to start getting plans made.

Pastor Priscilla informed the Council about the possibility of participating in an Intern Program. The Financial obligation is around \$40,000.00 and the cost would be split 65/35 between Grace and Trinity. It might be too late to host an intern this year but Pastor will continue to look into the program.

At the March meeting, discussion will be held on Tithing funds received from the DeWitz Land sale. What does the Congregation want to do with the money?

The meeting was closed with prayer.

Respectfully Submitted
Jackie Blocher

Trinity Church Council was held on Wednesday March 17, 2021. Pastor Priscilla opened the meeting with prayer. Present were Jim and Kathy Sherwood, Terry Nelson, Jackie Blocher, Bev Meyer and Pastor Priscilla.

A celebration of Life Service will be held at Trinity Church on Saturday March 27th at 10:30 am.

Discussion continues on the Streamlining process of the Church Council. We will have 7 – 9 members with 2 – 3 year cycles. Positions will be Council Chair, Vice. Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. Members at large will callings will be Worship, Education, Building and Maintenance. Calendars from the current committees will be used for the Church operation calendar.

Maundy Thursday services and Easter Sunday sunrise services will be held at Trinity. Good Friday services and the 9:00 Easter service will be held at Grace.

The Trustees approved the redo lighting in the front yard of the church. Memorial Funds will be used to Fund this project.

Jean Schlickbernd reported that the piano in the loft is shot. The Music Committee will make recommendations to the Council on how to proceed with replacing the Piano.

Pastor adjourned the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully Submitted
Jackie Blocher

Grace News

April Birthdays & Anniversaries

Please contact office for updated list!

Women of the EICA (WELCA)
The Northeast Conference Spring Gathering

Saturday, April 24 from 9:30 – 3:30 p.m. at the Salem Lutheran Church in Dakota City, NE. The registration deadline is April 14! Masks are recommended and a gluten-free lunch will be provided. Registration forms are available at the Grace/Trinity office.

Grace Lutheran Church

Council Minutes February 9, 2021 (pending council approval)

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm by Vice President Kathy Mahannah. Other council members present: Lynn Stofferahn, Melissa Nielsen, Pam Petersen, Robert (Bob) Wilson, and Todd Kuxhausen. Pastor Hukki was also in attendance.

Pam Petersen moved and Bob Wilson seconded to accept the agenda. Motion carried

Bob Wilson moved and Lynn Stofferahn seconded to accept the minutes from the January 12, 2021 meeting. Motion carried

Pastor report: Pastoral text study will be in person next week at Grace. Ash Wednesday service will take place at Grace at 12:15 pm and at Trinity at 6:45 pm.

Vice President's report: no report

Treasurer Report: Pam Petersen moved and Bob Wilson seconded to accept the treasurer's report. Motion carried

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Property: there is something flapping on the edge of the roof on the south side of the church. They will have someone look at it when the weather warms up. A brick will be ordered for Carol Sellentin to honor her years of service as parish coordinator. We will leave a note for Getzschman's the next time they are here to discuss moving the thermostat from the sacristy to the sanctuary. NorthStar is hoping to resume cleaning in March. Pastor will ask the congregation to get together to clean on February 28th. Kathy Mahannah moved and Lynn Stofferahn seconded a motion to continue to using only NorthStar to schedule our cleaning. Pam Petersen abstained from the vote. Motion carried

Worship & Music: no report

WELCA: will meet February 14th after worship to distribute funds

Christian Education: no report

Endowment: Steve Blocher audited the Endowment accounts and found them in good standing.

Memorial: Have agreed to purchase sound equipment that will connect the microphone to the Mevo camera which will improve the sound quality of our livestreams.

New Member: no report

OLD BUSINESS:

· **COVID-19 Restrictions:** It has been decided to allow the congregation to participate in the liturgy and to sing. Masks will still be required.

NEW BUSINESS:

· **Election of Officers / Committee Assignments:** Kathy Mahannah moved and Melissa Nielsen seconded the motion to elect the following officers, President Robert (Bob Wilson), Vice President Kathy Mahannah, Secretary Melissa Nielsen, and Treasurer Lynn Stofferahn. Motion carried. The following committee liaisons were assigned:

- o Property – Pam Petersen
- o WELCA – Melissa Nielsen
- o Worship & Music—Kathy Mahannah
- o Christian Education – Lynn Stofferahn
- o Endowment – Todd Kuxhausen
- o Memorial – Melissa Nielsen
- o New Member – Bob Wilson

· **Changes in Church Account Signature Cards:** Kathy Mahannah moved and Todd Kuxhausen seconded removing Vicki Furchert and adding Robert Wilson to the signature cards for the general fund account at F&M Bank and to the safe deposit box also at F&M Bank. Motion carried

· **Goals for 2021**

o Will continue to work with the task force, the synod, and Trinity church in making a more formal agreement

o Will research necessity and timing of outside audits of financial accounts

o Will research the requirements of keeping church records, particularly meeting minutes

o Will express to Synod our desire to resume the Vicar program

o Will schedule time with Trinity to create a 2021 activity calendar

• **Holy Week and Easter schedule:** Maundy Thursday April 1, 2021 service will be at Trinity. Good Friday Service, April 2, 2021 will be at Grace at 7 pm. Plan for Easter is to have sunrise service at Trinity, breakfast at Grace and then a 9:00 am service at Grace.

Melissa Nielsen moved and Pam Petersen seconded to move the regular council meetings to the third Tuesday of the month at 5:30 pm. The next regular meeting will be March 16, 2021 at 5:30 pm.

Melissa Nielsen moved and Pam Petersen seconded to adjourn the meeting and was closed with the Lord's Prayer at 7:00 pm.

Submitted by Melissa Nielsen, Secretary
Grace Lutheran Church

Council Minutes March 16, 2021 (pending council approval)

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm by President Bob Wilson. Other council members present: Lynn Stofferahn, Melissa Nielsen, Pam Petersen, Kathy Mahannah, and Todd Kuxhausen. Pastor Hukki was also in attendance.

Melissa moved and Pam seconded to accept the amended agenda. Motion carried. Items added: Use of Parish Hall and Easter schedule.

Lynn moved and Todd seconded to accept the minutes from the February 9, 2021 meeting. Motion carried

Pastor report: There will an Easter Egg hunt at the Villa sponsored by Trinity and Grace on Saturday, April 3rd.

President's report: no report

Treasurer Report: Kathy moved and Pam seconded to accept the treasurer's report. Motion carried

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Property: New paper dispensers have been installed in the bathrooms.

Worship & Music: there will be a choir for Easter. Pastor would like to form a committee to help with service and hymn planning.

WELCA: they have distributed their funds totaling \$3,500.

Christian Education: Confirmation Sunday will be May 23rd and two students will be confirmed.

Endowment: no report.

Memorial: no report.

New Member: A family of three will be joining this spring.

OLD BUSINESS:

· COVID-19 Restrictions: no changes to the procedures with the exception that ushers will no longer escort members in or out of their pews.

· Update on 2021 Goals: a meeting will try to be set for councils of both churches to meet and share information on the arrangement we have in place. Will also try to get Synod liaisons involved.

· Holy Week and Easter schedule: Maundy Thursday April 1, 2021 service will be at Trinity. Good Friday Service, April 2, 2021 will be at Grace at 7 pm. Sunrise service at Trinity then 9:00 am at Grace. Rolls and coffee will be served outside of Grace after service with an Easter egg hunt.

NEW BUSINESS:

· Update on water damage: Environmental Services have completed the clean-up of the Sunday School room and the freezer room from the water leak in February. Will work on getting a contractor to replace the flooring, ceiling, and walls. Hugo is still working on the faulty coil. The insurance adjuster has been kept up to date on progress.

· Vacation: Pastor is planning a vacation in April or May and will secure a relief pastor for the Sunday affected. Teala will take April 5th and May 31st as vacation days.

· Use of Parish Hall: after reviewing the Building Use Policy, it was decided that we need to make some adjustments. Pastor will work on a draft and send it via email for approval.

Announcements: Next meeting will be April 20, 2021

Pam moved and Lynn seconded to adjourn the meeting and it was closed with the Lord's Prayer at 7:30 pm.

In an email thread dated March 17, 2021 Melissa motioned to accept the new Building Use Policy as written. Kathy seconded and the motion passed.

Submitted by Melissa Nielsen, Secretary

**Grace Lutheran Church
Financial Report – February 2021
General Fund for February**

Please contact office for updated list!

Address Service Requested

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