



## Echoes of Trinity

### February/March 2023

#### From the Pastor:

Every morning an email arrives in my mailbox with a daily devotional from the UCC's Stillspeaking Writers Group. I usually find something in it to ponder throughout the day. This Monday's reflection gave me a lot to think about. Here it is:

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#### **Join a Church** by Mary Luti

*Above all, love each other deeply... Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace. – 1 Peter 4:8-10 (NIV)*

I know an old woman who worries about outliving her partner and most of her family and friends. The grief of that anticipated loss messes with her sleep. And the fear. With them gone, who'll look out for her? She doesn't want to die alone.

She confided all this to a friend. His advice? Join a church. Church people will take care of you, he said. You won't be alone.

She was taken aback by how crass and self-interested his advice felt. Hi, I'm Sally, I'm old and getting older. I'm joining your church so I won't be alone. What kind of reason is that? If people knew she'd come hoping for a few visits and a casserole someday, wouldn't they feel used? She decided he must be kidding. He wasn't.

I don't know whether she'll do it, but I hope so, because her friend is right. Anyone who's ever been lucky enough to be part of a loving church knows it. To approach such a community for company and care isn't selfish. It's giving that church a chance to be church.

Some Christians think that the church is most fully what Christ intends only when it's publicly engaged in the struggle against the sinful systems of our unjust world. But the world's axis also tilts towards

God's dream whenever some random old woman (or anyone at all) comes to us to be accompanied and is met with open arms.

Join a church. They'll take care of you.

#### **Prayer**

Compassionate Christ, open your church's arms to the lonely and fearful, no matter who, no matter why, no matter when. Amen.

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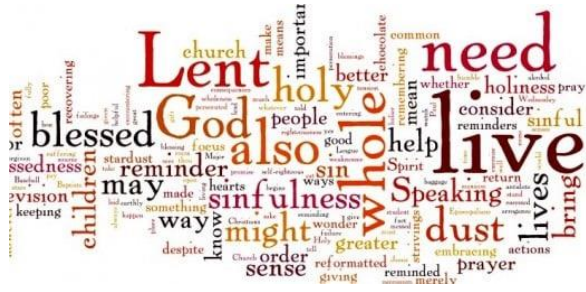
When I read this, my first thought was, "This is so true!" I have seen it happen again and again. Recent widows or widowers often feel lost after the death of their spouses. They show up on a Sunday not even knowing what they are seeking. In a relatively short period of time they are invited to go out to lunch or join a Bible study. They are brought into the fold and quickly become part of the church family.

Before you know it, we are praying for the newcomer's health issues or family members and driving them to the doctor. And if they need chicken soup or a casserole is needed during recovery, the church ladies make it happen. I smiled as I recalled the dear friends I've made over the years with elders who came to church at a vulnerable and fearful time. (And not just elders, young people too!)

That was my first thought. My second thought was to wonder if reaching out to elders in Affton might be Trinity's calling. A number of us are dealing with aging issues ourselves. We know what it is like to be fearful or lonely. Just imagine . . . we might find experience, strength and hope as we share our lives with others who are going through the same thing. It would be a blessing to us, to them, and to the community to have an outreach to seniors. Who might we partner with to do this kind of ministry? A senior center? Meals on Wheels? Individual neighbors?

I don't know. It's just a thought. I share it to see what you might imagine. If you want to explore it further, let me know.

Peace and Blessings,  
Pastor Mary



## Lenten Mission Project

In just a few weeks we will begin the season of Lent. This season invites us into a time of prayer and reflection and spiritual preparation for Easter.

On February 19<sup>th</sup>, our service will conclude with the imposition of ashes, and all who wish may come forward to receive the mark of Ashes.

Each Sunday during Lent we will light a candle as a reminder of our intentions to grow spiritually through the season. We will look at temptation, willingness, faith/doubt, promise, confession and sacrifice prayerfully ask God to prepare us for resurrection and new life with Christ on Easter Sunday.

With council's encouragement, we are making some changes in the service. Lent invites us to be open to seeing ourselves and God in a new perspective. (This will be OK. We will return to the familiar on Easter. Let's give it a try!)

On March 12 and March 26, we will stay after worship for a simple soup luncheon and table conversation. This will give us some informal social time and opportunities to notice what God is doing among us.

On April 2<sup>nd</sup> we will have a combined Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday (with the last supper), and Good Friday service to lead us into Holy Week.

May this Lenten season be a time of grace and transformation for us all!

This year we will collect items to assemble hygiene kits for Church World Service. Please bring one or more items to add to our kits each week. It will be fun to watch our collection grow each week, and after Easter we will have a "Boxing Day" to assemble the kits and box them up to send to Church World Service.

**2/26: Fingernail or Toenail Clippers**  
(either size is OK)

**3/5: Toothbrush**  
(individually wrapped.  
Do not include toothpaste.)

**3/12: Bar of Bath Soap**  
(individually wrapped in original packaging)

**3/19: Hand Towel (16" x 28")**

**3/26: Wash Cloth (12' x 12")**

**4/2: Sturdy Wide Tooth Comb**  
(not a pocket comb.)

We will also need some cash donations toward this project so we can cover the \$2 service fee per kit and shipping costs.



## Letting the Word Speak

You can deepen your experience of worship by reading the scriptures in advance. The service will usually be based on one of the lessons for the week. Here are the scriptures through Easter:

### February 5

Isaiah 58:1-12

Psalms 112:1-9

I Corinthians 2:1-12

Matthew 5:13-20

### February 12

Deuteronomy 30:15-20

Psalms 119:1-8

I Corinthians 3:1-9

Matthew 5:21-37

### February 19

#### Transfiguration

Exodus 24:12-18

Psalms 2 or Psalms 99

2 Peter 1:16-21

Matthew 17:1-9

### February 26

#### First Sunday in Lent

Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7

Psalms 32

Romans 5:12-19

Matthew 4:1-11

### March 5

#### Second Sunday in Lent

Genesis 12:1-4a

Psalms 121

Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

John 3:1-17 or Matthew 17:1-9

### March 12

#### Third Sunday in Lent

Exodus 17:1-7

Psalms 95

Romans 4:1-11

John 4:5-42

### March 19

#### Fourth Sunday in Lent

1 Samuel 16:1-13

Psalms 23

Ephesians 5:8-14

John 9: 1-41

### March 26

#### Fifth Sunday in Lent

Ezekiel 37:1-14

Psalms 130

Romans 8:6-11

John 11:1-45

### April 2

#### Palm/Passion Sunday

Psalms 118:1-2, 19-29

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Philippians 2:5-11

Matt. 21:1-11, 26:14-27:66

### April 9

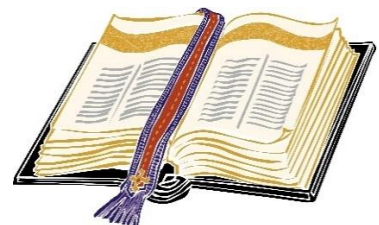
#### Easter Sunday

Jeremiah 31:1-6

Psalms 118: 1-2, 14-24

Colossians 3:1-4

John 20:1-18 or Matt. 28:1-10

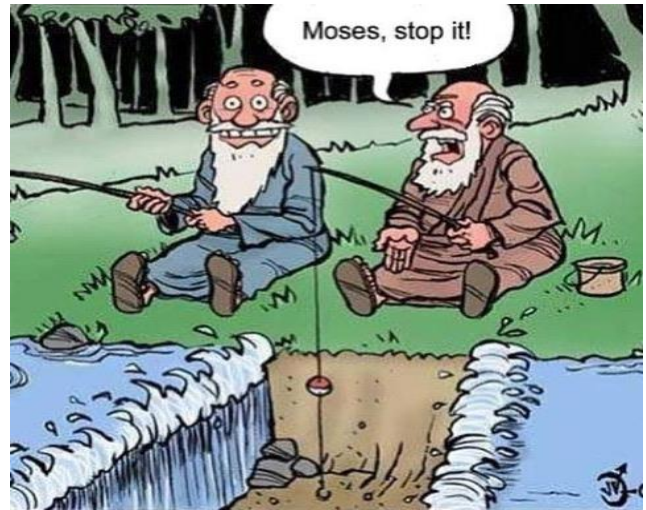




I have a request for the Trinity members:

If you throw away your egg cartons, would you please save them for me? It does not matter if they are 12 or 18 count or foam or cardboard.

Thank you! —Janet Smith



**Trinity Quilters** L to R: Linda Weldon, Judy Schmitt, Eileen Sondermann, Terry (Eileen's Daughter), Karen Brandau, Janet Smith

Here is the "Wish List"  
from the Affton Christian Food Bank  
for January/February:

- |              |                       |
|--------------|-----------------------|
| Cereal       | Macaroni n Cheese     |
| Dry Beans    | Canned Beans          |
| Pasta Sauce  | Tomato Paste          |
| Potato Sides | Hamburger Helper      |
| Cake Mixes   | Pasta - not Spaghetti |
| Toilet Paper | Shampoo               |
| Laundry Soap |                       |

As you know, I make a delivery to them every week and they are glad to see Trinity's donation!





February 2<sup>nd</sup> – **Groundhog Day**  
Happy Birthday **JoAnn Grasfeder!**

February 3<sup>rd</sup> – Happy Birthday **Chloe Birdnow!**

February 5<sup>th</sup> – Worship/Communion – 10:30 am

February 8<sup>th</sup> – Quilters – 9 am

February 10<sup>th</sup> – Happy Birthday **Dee Pape!**

February 12<sup>th</sup> – Worship – 10:30 am

February 14<sup>th</sup> – **Valentine's Day**

February 15<sup>th</sup> – Quilters – 9 am  
Happy Birthday **Maxine Hantak!**

February 19<sup>th</sup> – Worship/Ashes – 10:30 am  
**Transfiguration Sunday**

February 20<sup>th</sup> – **Presidents Day**

February 22 – **Ash Wednesday** – Quilters 9 am

February 26 – Worship – 10:30 am  
**First Sunday in Lent**

March 1<sup>st</sup> – Quilters – 9 am

March 3<sup>rd</sup> – **World Day of Prayer**

March 5<sup>th</sup> – Worship/Communion – 10:30 am  
**Second Sunday in Lent**

March 8<sup>th</sup> – Quilters – 9 am

March 12<sup>th</sup> – Worship – 10:30 am  
**Third Sunday in Lent**  
Soup/Conversation  
Happy Birthday **Hannah Misselhorn!**

March 15<sup>th</sup> – Quilter – 9 am

March 17<sup>th</sup> – **St. Patrick's Day**

March 19<sup>th</sup> – Worship – 10:30 am  
**Fourth Sunday in Lent**  
Happy Birthday **Michael Tolley!**

March 21<sup>st</sup> – Happy Birthday **Connie Estopare!**

March 22<sup>nd</sup> – Quilters – 9 am

March 26<sup>th</sup> – Worship – 10:30 am  
**Fifth Sunday in Lent**  
Soup/Conversation

29<sup>th</sup> – Quilters – 9 am





## Want to give up something for Lent?

Here are some ideas:

Give up complaining

Give up pessimism

Give up worry

Give up bitterness

Give up on negativity

Give up gloom

Give up hatred

Give up jealousy

Give up gossiping

Give up Giving up

Focus on Gratitude

Become an Optimist

Trust God

Turn to Forgiveness

Be Positive

Enjoy the Beauty all around you

Return Good for Evil

Pray for Trust

Control your Tongue

Hang in there!

## Council News from the President – Angela Wagner

Well, we are into a new year and As we all reflect on the year past, and look into the year ahead I'm sure we all have ideas, goals, and changes in mind. These may be personal, professional, family related, and even spiritual. Whatever they are each one means something to us. My hope for this year is that you find growth, peace, hope, and success in reaching them. Just as individually we have these goals, we as a church family should have goals. After our Congregational conversation, I thought hard about what these goals may be. A couple came to mind:

- strive to support the community food bank as we always have
- continue to have fellowship and fun activities together
- take care of, support, and encourage our church family

These are great goals for us, and we do a good job maintaining them. I also heard some other goals that may ruffle our feathers a bit and take us out of our norm.

- mission work outside of our 4 walls
- making sure to minister to the virtual world as well
- reaching out to those who may be different from us in ways we may not know in advance

These may take extra thought, time, and prayer, but I believe Trinity has more to give and share. My hope for this church family this upcoming year is that together we can take steps, even if baby steps to reach the less fortunate outside of our church walls. May God help guide us as we strive to do his work!!

Currently council is maintaining status quo with financials, building up keeps, and normal business. Pastor Mary will be on vacation for two weeks in February. She has secured pastoral support with Rev. Dr. Guangyu Lou. He will be with us February 12 and 19th. We are looking forward to a full Lenten season, with some new things. Hopefully winter will be nice, and we will begin to turn the corner to spring. As always if there are ideas, events, comments, concerns for the good of our congregation please share them with council member so appropriate action can happen.

May God watch between me and thee,  
while we are absent one from another.

Amen

—Angela