



The Monthly Newsletter  
of  
Holy Trinity Lutheran  
Church



## CALL COMMITTEE UPDATE

*Meet Pastor Ryan on Saturday, March 9 at 2:00 p.m*



As you have heard by now, the Call Committee has found a pastor we would like to present to the congregation for consideration to be our next Lead Pastor. Pastor Ryan will arrive in Charlotte with his family on Friday, March 8. The Call Committee and the Church Council will meet with him Saturday morning, March 9. During the afternoon, **we are inviting the entire congregation to meet Pastor Ryan and his family at Holy Trinity at 2:00 p.m.** Pastor Ryan will then preach at both services on Sunday, March 10 and we encourage every disciple to attend both services if possible.

Further details concerning the Call Process will be mailed to the congregation in early March. We continue to ask the congregation to be in prayer for Pastor Ryan and his family, his current congregation and for the disciples of Holy Trinity as we step closer to calling a pastor.

**Blessings in Christ,  
Donna Allen  
Call Committee Chair**

### HOLY WEEK



### WORSHIP SCHEDULE

- March 24**      **Palm Sunday - Combined Service at 10:30 a.m. in the church**
- March 28**      **Maundy Thursday**  
12:00 Noon Quiet Communion  
7:00 p.m. Worship with Holy Communion
- March 29**      **Good Friday Stations of the Cross 3:30 p.m.**  
**Good Friday Tenebrae Service 7:00 p.m.**
- March 30**      **There will be an Easter Vigil for our area. All details will be in the bulletin.**
- March 31**      **The Resurrection of Our Lord – Easter Sunday**  
6:30 a.m.      Sunrise Easter Service  
7:30 a.m.      Breakfast  
9:00 a.m.      Contemporary Service  
11:00 a.m.     Easter Festival Service





Dear Holy Trinity Family,

Bill Smith, longtime professor of pastoral care at Luther Seminary who is now deceased, used to talk about four types or levels of communication. Each level is deeper. The goal is to move down through the levels to get to deeper communication and deeper community. The first level is ***small talk***: "The weather sure is beautiful today." The second is ***control talk***, the realm of commands, seeking to manipulate or move someone to where you want them to be. The third kind of communication is ***searching talk***: "I wonder why the Church Facebook Clergy Page is so often a place of harsh communication?" **The fourth level, which can only be reached with care and time, is straight talk where people are emotionally open and authentically speak from the deepest parts of their hearts and minds.**

For a healthy church to reach the ***fourth level*** it will take both the laity and the clergy being open and honest with each other. That is a journey that is well worth all the effort!

Your Call Committee has been working hard. They want a pastor to lead you. One of the characteristics of the pastor they are seeking is one with a heart for the individuals of the congregation.

Rev. Carl J. Scherzer wrote a book in 1966 entitled *And You Visited Me*. Cody Carpenter introduced me to this book, and I ordered one for myself. It was written as "Guide for Lay Visitors to the Sick." The personal needs of Holy Trinity are so important, and so varied, that no single person can begin to meet all the needs. I have a prayer and a vision that is based on Ephesians 4:11-12. Paul gives wise counsel when he writes: <sup>11</sup> ***The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers,*** <sup>12</sup> ***to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ....***

The phrase: ***to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ....*** is a primary way to think as you are seeking to call a new Lead Pastor. But always remember that it takes both the clergy and the laity working together to have a healthy and dynamic ministry.

Thomas Gillespie wrote:

***Pastoring will be realized only if the  
non-clergy are willing to MOVE UP,  
if the clergy are willing to MOVE OVER,  
and if all of God's people are willing to MOVE OUT!***  
(*Can The Pastor Do It Alone?* page 60)

**That, my dear people, is my prayer for Holy Trinity and your next Lead Pastor!  
To God be the Glory!  
Pastor Tom**



**CHRIS MURPHY WILL BE LEAVING AFTER EASTER**  
*We Thank God For His Music Ministry at Holy Trinity*

Chris Murphy has joyfully led us in music for a decade. He has brought new music to the 8:30 Contemporary worship service and has beautifully selected hymns and liturgy for the 11:00 o'clock traditional service. He has now accepted a call to Steele Creek Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, NC.



We sincerely thank him for the gifts he has brought to Holy Trinity. His computer/IT skills have helped us countless times! His beautiful voice has blessed our church in so many ways. A special time of honoring him and thanking him will be announced in the bulletin. Starting March 11, he will be reducing his hours here at the church but will stay with us for worship through Easter Sunday.

Chris, we will always be grateful for your ministry among us. It has been an honor to work with you. God bless you as you begin your new ministry to the glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!



**SCHEDULE FOR WEDNESDAYS IN LENT AT HOLY TRINITY**  
*Soup and Sandwich meals at 6 :00 p.m. ~ Worship at 7:00 p.m.*

**Soup & Sandwich Meals Will Be Provided By:**

- **March 6** - *Currently seeking a group to volunteer*
- **March 13** - *Currently seeking a group to volunteer*
- **March 20** - Chancel Choir and LaVerne Davis's Small Group/Lingle Class.

**Under the theme of *Guided by the Cross* the following topics will be addressed:**

**March 6 • Guided to Peace** (Colossians 1:19-20): With wars waging within and without, the cross settles them all with peace to body, mind and soul.

**March 13 • Guided to Trust** (1 Timothy 1:15): Plagued by doubt and competing voices, we turn to the cross to put our trust fully in the salvation won for us there.

**March 20 • Guided to Perseverance** (Ephesians 6:18): When we are faced with hardship, we look to Christ on the cross who endured to the end so that we might carry on.



## COMMUNITY LENTEN LUNCHEONS & SERVICES

*Luncheons/Services Begin at 12:00 Noon ~ Cost \$8.00*

Date	Location	Speaker
March 6	Holy Trinity	Danielle Webb with Displaced Roses will speak and Rev. Brad Simpson (First Presbyterian) will bring devotions.
March 13	First Baptist	Dave Wilcox Organ Program (St. Mark's)
March 20	First Methodist	Carolyn Dewberry (St. Stephen's AME Zion)

### HOLY TRINITY TO HOST COMMUNITY LENTEN LUNCHEON MARCH 6

#### Volunteers Needed!

Holy Trinity will be hosting the Community Lenten Luncheon on Wednesday March 6. **On Tuesday, March 5 from 9:30 a.m – 1:30 p.m.**, any and all ladies of the church (and gentlemen are invited to help too!) are needed to help prep and decorate for the luncheon.

**All are invited to volunteer Wednesday, March 6** for the final prepping, cooking, serving and clean-up **beginning at 9:00 a.m.** Please contact Janet Green, Marsh McLamb or Pepie Jones to offer your time.

### SONSHINERS MEETING FOR MARCH



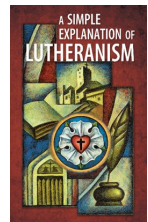
The SONshiners meeting for March will be attending the Community Lenten Lunch on March 6 here at Holy Trinity. The luncheon begins at 12:00 noon.

**We hope all will join us!**

### NEW MEMBER AND REFRESHER COURSE CONTINUES IN MARCH

During the Sunday School hour, Pastor Tom will continue to offer a basic New Member and Refresher course. The topics will be the following: Who are Lutherans and what is the Lutheran Church?, A complete study of Lutheran liturgy, basic Lutheran Theology, a short history of the Reformer Martin Luther, and The Seasons of the Church Year.

*All are welcome to come to the PLC for this learning experience.*



## HOLY TRINITY CHRISMON WORKSHOP

*Saturday, March 9 ~ 12:30 – 3:00 p.m.*

Three butterfly inspired designs will be included in the classes conducted by the designer, Melonie Ruffy Beaver, on Saturday afternoon March 9. Classes range from \$38.00 plus tax for the beginner session to \$50.00 plus tax for the intermediate and advanced intermediate designs. Registration and payment for the kits needs to be done ahead of time by calling the Ruffy's 704-636-7790.



## EASTER LILY SPONSORSHIPS

Anyone interested in sponsoring an Easter lily "In Honor of" or "In Memory of" a loved one is encouraged to use the form below, the online form or the bulletin insert in the coming weeks. Cost of each lily is \$12.00. Each plant will be wrapped in green foil with a white bow. All orders need to be completed by March 22 so that Upchurch Greenhouse in Cherryville can deliver the appropriate amount for Easter. Thank you in advance for helping to herald the Easter Season with these beautiful flowers.

### HOLY TRINITY, HERE'S YOUR EASTER LILY ORDER FORM!

Given in honor of:

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Given in memory of:

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Given by:

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**\$12**  
EACH



# of lillies:

total enclosed

\$	.00
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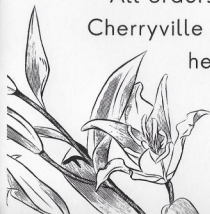
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order online here: [holyltrinitygastonia.org/easterlily](http://holyltrinitygastonia.org/easterlily)

*Thank you for your gift!*





**LENTEN QUIET MORNING**  
*Saturday, March 23 at 9:00 a.m - 1:00 p.m*

Join your church family on **Saturday, March 23** as we prepare for the Great and Holy Week. We will gather for Morning Prayer at 9:00 a.m., and then the remainder of the time can be spent in quiet.

Devotional materials will be provided, and pastoral conversation will be available. You can stay for as much (or as little) time as you'd like, but I encourage you to come find solace in the quietness of the church.



**EASTER SUNDAY - AN EMPTY CROSS**  
**A Risen and Scarred Savior!**

Presumably [Jesus] could have had any resurrected body he wanted, and yet he chose one identifiable mainly by scars that could be seen and touched. Why?

I believe the story of Easter would be incomplete without those scars on the hands, the feet, and the side of Jesus. When human beings fantasize, we dream of pearly straight teeth and wrinkle-free skin and sexy ideal shapes. We dream of an unnatural state: the perfect body. But for Jesus, being confined in a skeleton and human skin WAS the unnatural state. The scars are, to him, an emblem of life on our planet, a permanent reminder of those days of confinement and suffering.

I take hope in Jesus' scars. From the perspective of heaven, they represent the most horrible event that has ever happened in the history of the universe - the crucifixion - Easter turned into a memory. Because of Easter, I can hope that the tears we shed, the blows we receive, the emotional pain, the heartache over lost friends and loved ones, all these will become memories, like Jesus' scars. Scars never completely go away, but neither do they hurt any longer. We will have re-created bodies, a re-created heaven and earth. We will have a new start, an Easter start.

**-Philip Yancey, *The Jesus I Never Knew* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995).**



## MARCH IS A USO MONTH

March is USO month. The center is especially in need of the following:

<b>Individual snacks</b>	<b>Individual oatmeal</b>
<b>Pop Tarts</b>	<b>Capri Suns</b>
<b>Juice boxes</b>	<b>Travel size toothpaste</b>

The USO Center in Charlotte serves anywhere from **500 to 700 guests daily**. Any and all donations are greatly appreciated.

**Charlene Lisenmayer**  
**Holy Trinity USO Contact**

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## YORK CHESTER MIDDLE SCHOOL NEEDS *Collection in March 2024*

Many of you may remember that HTLC Disciples used to donate 2-3 items a month for the ongoing needs of our neighbors at York Chester Middle School. We would like to begin again, as York Chester has reached out to us with quite a list of needs. For the **Month of March**, we would like to collect the following:

**Kleenex**  
**3 Subject Notebooks**  
**Youth Sweatpants with drawstring (Youth Sizes XXS - XL )**

**The exhaustive list will be posted by the YC Collection box and printed in the Herald in the future.** ANY ITEM from the list can be donated at any time. With a student population of 458, 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> graders, it is unlikely Holy Trinity can ever out give on any of the requested items. But boy, let's try! Pick a favorite thing you would like to give.

Please remember that any clothing item is for **Youth**, ages 11-14 years old, youth sizes XXS to XL .

Thank you again for your loving spirit and generous support.

**In Christ,**  
**Diane George**  
**Holy Trinity York Chester Contact**





Our ministry partner, Displaced Roses, serves the entire Gaston County homeless population and works with other community organizations to meet their needs. Services include meal distribution, crisis response, furnishing "Forever" homes, dignity in death and street outreach.

Each of these services requires donated supplies that we as individuals and a congregation can provide. Your donations will be collected at Holy Trinity in the donation corner. **The donation corner is located at the red double doors adjacent to the connector hallway and PLC.** Labeled baskets on shelves are provided for your convenience for "**recurring**" (R) items. "**One-time**" (O) items should be placed in the larger receptacles. A list of supplies will be updated as needed each month in the Herald and weekly in the bulletin.

**Immediate needs (listed in priority order)**

- Nail Clippers (R)
- Men's Deodorant (R)
- Men's Underwear - Boxer Briefs only (Medium to Large) (R)
- Laundry Detergent (R)
- Women's Sports Bras (assorted sizes) (R)
- Casual Men's Clothing (Medium to X-Large in tops and sweatpants) (R)
- Men's Jeans (28" waist to 34" waist) (R)
- Women's underwear (sizes 4,5, and 6) (R)
- Single Serve Snacks (salty and sweet) (R)
- Can Sodas (R)
- Travel Size **Alcohol Free** mouthwash (R)
- Men's Tennis Shoes (R)
- Men's disposable razors (R)
- Batteries (AAA, AA) (R)
- Chapstick (R)
- Hangers (O)
- #4 rolling wardrobe racks (O)
- #12 Flexible laundry baskets (O)
- Computer Desk and Chair (O)
- Tote bags (R)

Displaced Roses needs volunteers on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday each week. Please contact Danielle Webb (828-773-2815) for volunteer opportunities. Visit <http://www.DisplacedRoses.com> for more information and like their Facebook page.



## YORK CHESTER MIDDLE SCHOOL MENTORING PROGRAM

Gaston County School System mentoring program began in 1994 and has had many success stories over the years. York Chester has voiced gratitude over the years for all that the disciples of Holy Trinity have done for the school and its students. In addition to the tangible needs, they have voiced a need for mentors.

**What does a mentor do?** A mentor is someone who has good listening skills and is willing to invest 40 minutes a week with a student. Activities can include sharing time together, reading a book together, doing a fun activity together, talking, and building a relationship with the student. The time spent is not focused on academia, yet the result of having a positive and encouraging relationship with the student has a direct impact on the student's success in the classroom, graduation, secondary education, and life in general. You make a difference. How wonderful is that?

**What is involved in making a mentoring commitment?** The program asks that a mentor commit to one year of mentoring with a student. This typically is a weekly visit of 40 minutes and takes place during the school day on the school grounds. Applications can be made online [gastonschoolvolunteers.com](http://gastonschoolvolunteers.com). A background check and a one-hour training and orientation class are required.

**Before I commit how can I learn more?** Please visit the website , watch a very short video (Our Mentoring Program) by Valerie Yatko, Director of Business and Community Partnerships [business-partnerships@gaston.k12.nc.us](mailto:business-partnerships@gaston.k12.nc.us). You may also call Valerie at 704-866-6329. You also are invited to join an orientation meeting just to see if it is a perfect fit for you.

You may possibly be the missing piece to a future success story.

**Knowing, Loving and Sharing Christ together with you,  
Diane George**



Dear Holy Trinity,

Thanks to all of you who donated coats during the cold weather we have experienced for those less fortunate. The coats were so appreciated and accepted with many tears. Although cold weather is not over and we can continue to accept coats, etc., I wanted to thank you for your generosity. You never hesitate to give from your heart to help others.

**Thank you!  
Martha E. Williard**

## WHAT WE LEARNED FROM THE HUMAN TRAFFICKING SEMINAR

In February, Holy Trinity hosted a Human Trafficking awareness seminar led by Hannah Hopper of Hope United Survivor Network. We learned some eye-opening truths about what labor and sexual trafficking looks like, how it happens, and how to report it.

- Most victims are trafficked by someone they know, not strangers in windowless vans.
  - Traffickers are often an addicted family member who needs drugs or money for drugs.
  - Traffickers groom their victims for a long period of time over an internet relationship to earn trust. The victim is coaxed into meeting the trafficker in person.
  - Adults are forced into labor to pay off a debt or by being brought into this country under false pretenses.
  - Elderly, healthy adults are often controlled by family for their house and money.
  - Elderly adults can be abused or trafficked by nursing home personnel.
- Victims can't just speak up, run away, or call the police.
  - Traffickers maintain the victims silence and cooperation by threatening their lives and the lives of their families.
  - Victims of labor trafficking may be from another country and not speak or understand English.
  - Traffickers might be blackmailing the victims.
  - Traffickers are patient and will gaslight/brainwash their potential victims for years.
  - Victims raised by their traffickers have been in that situation their entire lives and are sheltered from knowing what a healthy family is.
  - Homeless population is vulnerable because no one notices if they disappear.
- North Carolina is ninth in the nation for highest level of human trafficking.
  - Charlotte is number one in the state.
  - There are two international airports.
  - Interstate system gives easy access to Atlanta, New York City, and Florida
  - Yes, it happens in our County and close to our Church.

There are clues to help spot a victim of trafficking.

- Despite being able-bodied and of sound mind, they are being controlled by a person.
  - They have no access to their own identification documents.
  - They can't go anywhere on their own. Driving privileges taken away.
  - They don't control their own money.
  - They can't make any decisions on their own.
- They exhibit signs of physical assault.
- They frequently have sexually transmitted infections.
- They have repeated hotel stays.

How can we report if we suspect abuse or trafficking of a child?

- Gaston County DHHS child abuse hotline: 704-862-7555
- Gaston County Sheriff: 704-862-6677
- 911

How can we report if we suspect abuse or trafficking of an adult?

- National Human Trafficking Hotline: 1-888-373-7888 or text 233733
- Gaston County DHHS adult protective services: 704-862-7575
- Gaston County Sheriff: 704-862-6677
- 911




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**THE VOICE OF THE MARTYRS**  
*Founders: Richard and Sabina Wurmbbrand*  
*(A short introduction for the family of Holy Trinity)*

In order to understand the ministry of the Voice of Martyrs, it is important and helpful to know about the man that began the ministry. The man was Richard Wurmbbrand who was born in Bucharest, Romania in 1909. He was a Jew. In his early life he became an atheist. Through the Christian witness of a Messianic Jewish pastor Isaac Feinstein, Wurmbbrand accepted Christ as his personal Savior and became a Christian. He later became a Lutheran pastor and ministered to the Jewish people in Romania, mostly through the underground church for 25 years. Jews were disliked and persecuted in Romania. When World War 2 ended, the Russians came into Romania with their band of hate for the Jews. Pastor Wurmbbrand found himself in prison. He was imprisoned for 14 years; three of those years were in solitary confinement, thirty feet underground where it was dark, damp, and cold. There were no windows. The food was scarce too. He was also brutally tortured and beaten on a regular basis. He had the scars to prove it. He was freed after 14 years of confinement when the Norwegian Lutheran Church was able to raise enough money to pay his ransom. His message and witness to groups and congregations after his release from prison were always the same. He spoke about LOVE and FORGIVENESS!

These four passages of scripture really define the man. (1) Romans 1:16 “For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ for it is the power of God unto Salvation for everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.” (2) Luke 9:23 Jesus says, “If any man should follow me let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.” (3) Paul writes in Galatians 2:20, “I have been crucified with Christ; it is not I that live, but Christ who lives in me.” (4) Romans 12:2a Paul writes, “Do not conform to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind.”

Pastor Wurmbbrand and his wife, Sabina, came to the United States in 1967 and settled in Bartlesville, Oklahoma; he then began the Voice of the Martyrs Ministry.

VOM ministry is a nonprofit, interdenominational organization dedicated to assisting the persecuted church worldwide. The VOM has many ministries. To name two: it seeks to raise awareness about the many thousands of Christians annually who are tortured, imprisoned or harassed for their beliefs, and to encourage and empower Christians to fulfill the Great Commission in areas of the world where they are persecuted. This is accomplished by providing Bibles, literature, radio broadcasts and other forms of aid and giving relief to the families of Christians martyrs in these areas of the world. VOM ministry is funded through donations of supporting churches and individuals. The address for the VOM ministry in the United States is P.O. Box 443, Bartlesville, Oklahoma.

**--article provided by Mrs. Christine Smith**

## FAMILY MINISTRIES

### Youth Ministry Schedule for March



- March 3:** No youth group  
**March 10:** Confirmation and High School Groups: 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.  
**March 15 - 17:** CMR youth retreat at Union Lutheran Church in Salisbury  
**March 23:** Lenten quiet morning at church 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.  
**March 24:** Palm Sunday  
 Family Catechesis during Sunday school  
 Youth group from 5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. – *Note time change!*  
**March 31:** Easter - No youth group

### Children's Ministry Schedule for March



- March 23:** Lenten quiet morning at church 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.  
 Childcare available!  
**March 24:** Palm Sunday  
 Family Catechesis during Sunday school  
*Palm Sunday activities for children immediately after worship.*  
**March 31:** Easter egg hunt *immediately following Easter breakfast*

*There will not be a Parent's Night/Morning Out in March.*

### Palm Sunday Activity Day



Calling all kiddos! Join us after combined worship on Palm Sunday for lunch, crafts, activities, and a special story time as we enter the Great and Holy Week. This is open to anyone who wishes to participate. **RSVP to Cody by March 15.**

### Family Catechesis

Once monthly, youth and children's families will gather for fellowship and learning during the Sunday school hour. This will be a time of discussion, age-appropriate teaching, and a lot of fun, too! Other members of the congregation are invited, as well! Snacks will be served!



## WOMEN'S MINISTRY NEWS FOR MARCH

The newly elected Holy Trinity Women's Ministry team is off to a busy start. As Janet Green was the only nominee received after the election at the general meeting for the open position of Fellowship Director, the team approved her stepping into that role.

After reviewing suggestions made at the General Meeting and from the two circles, the team voted to donate to the following places: \$200 to Least of These - Life Box, \$200 to Webb Street School, \$100 to Displaced Roses, \$100 to Crisis Pregnancy, and \$100 to Gaston Literacy Council.

Barbara Kies, Outreach/Mission Director announced that she and others are revamping the donation corner in the Connector to make it more appealing and accessible for giving to Displaced Roses and other groups.

Thanks to the two circles and some individuals, new round and rectangle tablecloths and overlays have been ordered to replace the much-stained ones. The old ones will be repurposed rather than discarded. The new ones should be available when Holy Trinity hosts the Community Lenten luncheon on March 6. The team thanks the Holy Trinity women for their generosity in making the above-mentioned possible.

### Holy Trinity Lutheran Church Women's Team

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### March Circle Meetings

This is a time of fellowship, snacks, a program led by a Circle member and service projects that are for Holy Trinity Disciples and people in the community. These groups are always open to new members. **Please join us!**

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|----------------------------|---|---|----------------------|
| <b>Circle of Patience:</b> | <b>Sunday, March 3</b>  | <b>After 11:00 Worship</b>                  | <b>Walker Lounge</b> |
|                            | <b>Bring your lunch. Dessert and drinks will be provided.</b> |   |                      |
|                            | Program:  | Anita Stiles                                |                      |
|                            | Hostesses:  | LaVerne Davis, Darlene Harper, Anita Stiles |                      |
| <b>Circle of Goodness:</b> | <b>Thursday, March 14</b>                                     | <b>10:00 a.m.</b>                           | <b>PLC Room 25</b>   |
|                            | Program:  | Marie Ferguson                              |                      |
|                            | Hostess:  | Judy Weatherford                            |                      |
|                            | Card Ministry:  | Annemarie Couture                           |                      |

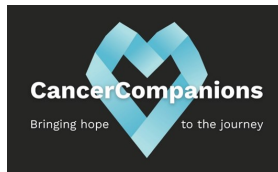


## **CHURCH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS**

### **From the February 19, 2024 Regular Meeting**

At the February 19 meeting of the Church Council, the following actions were taken:

- Voted to purchase Cancer Companions Kit in preparation for training of interested congregation members for this mission field.
- Agreed on Loan draw final amount to fund properties improvements as necessary.
- Received Final 2023 Benevolence Distributions.
- Discussed facilities use agreement with St. John's the Baptist Academy - proposal tabled until meeting with Academy Director on available classrooms.
- Discussed Memorial Fund requests. Two were approved and one tabled for additional information.
- Next Council Meeting: March 18, 2024



### **CANCER COMPANIONS UPDATE**

On January 14, 2024 Karen Tripp, the founder of Cancer Companions spoke to our congregation. Out of that meeting with Karen, I simply asked the people of God, here at Holy Trinity, to meet me following the service if they had any interest in some kind of Cancer Ministry.

On February 28, we had a Zoom meeting with Karen. (I am writing this article con February 19). I will inform you through bulletin and weekly email the results of that meeting and how Holy Trinity will be involved.

**Pastor Tom**

## COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



We currently find ourselves in the season of Lent, a time of reflection, repentance, and preparation. What a perfect time for us to meet Pastor Ryan, the candidate being recommended by the Call Committee as our next Lead Pastor. As we humble ourselves in our Lenten preparations, let's open our hearts and minds to receive God's Word for us and the future of Holy Trinity.

There's much we can do to prepare ourselves for the **weekend of March 9 and 10** when Pastor Ryan and his family will visit. First, and most importantly, we each should dedicate ourselves to praying that we might discern and follow God's will regarding the future of Holy Trinity.

Secondly, dedicate your time. Please make every effort to reserve the afternoon of **Saturday, March 9** to come meet Pastor Ryan and his family at a **casual "meet and greet"** at the church. And, commit to attending **worship at Holy Trinity on March 10** when Pastor Ryan will lead our services. If you are unable to be at worship, you can always watch it online.

Thirdly, be available to vote either in person or online during the **Palm Sunday worship service on March 24**. This is when we will vote regarding whether to extend a Call to Pastor Ryan. It is important that we have everyone's participation in all aspects of this process.

Lastly, as you prepare your house for visitors, **let's prepare our collective "house"** for our visitor. If you regularly use a classroom and it has become a little disarrayed, please clean it out and straighten up. If you notice a wall that needs washing, feel free to wipe it down . . . the list goes on.

In summary, let's be ready both spiritually and physically to receive Pastor Ryan and his family. We are a welcoming and loving church family. **Let's prepare our hearts and our house for this special visit.**

**In His Service,  
Anna Houser  
2024 Council President**



This year, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church celebrates our 125th anniversary.  
So, Happy Anniversary, fellow saints!

If you would like to participate in planning an anniversary celebration, please contact Anna Houser (704-813-6560 / [annaplus2girls@gmail.com](mailto:annaplus2girls@gmail.com)). Thank you.





## HOW DO YOUR FINANCIAL GIFTS GLORIFY GOD?

*<sup>16</sup> Three times a year all your men must appear before the LORD your God at the place he will choose: at the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the Festival of Weeks and the Festival of Tabernacles. No one should appear before the LORD empty-handed: <sup>17</sup> Each of you must bring a gift in proportion to the way the LORD your God has blessed you. (Deuteronomy 16: 16-17 NIV)*

We see in this verse, three times a year every male was to make a journey to the sanctuary in the city, that would be designated as Israel's religious capital. At these festivals, each participant was **encouraged to give what he could in proportion to what God had given him**. God does not expect us to give more than we can, but we will be blessed when we give cheerfully. For some, 10 percent may be a burden. For most of us, that would be far too little. **Look at what you have and then give in proportion to what you have been given. What is your response to those blessings God has bestowed on you?**

### For those that like numbers...

Noted below we show our January 2024 offerings compared with our monthly budgeted ministry plan. Our staff and leaders continue to manage our expenditures. Our church leadership is doing their best to be good stewards of our financial resources.

<b>Gifts Received in January 2024:</b>	\$40,734
<b>Monthly Budget for Ministries:</b>	\$48,533 (4 Sunday month)
<b>Difference:</b>	(\$7,799)
<b>Gifts Received in January 2023:</b>	\$35,379

**Thank you for your continued support of the ministries of Holy Trinity,  
Lee Stadther  
Church Council Treasurer 2024**

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### Missed Worship Services on Sunday?

If you miss a Sunday, feel free to mail your gift to the church using your offering envelope which can be used as a self-addressed envelope or give online @ [www.holytrinitygastonia.org/](http://www.holytrinitygastonia.org/) and click on the Online Giving\* tab.

\*Holy Trinity Lutheran Church discourages the irresponsible use of credit cards. We offer the opportunity to donate by credit/debit card as a convenience to those who manage their finances in a God-honoring way.

## LENT & EASTER WORD SEARCH



ASH WEDNESDAY  
 FORTY DAYS  
 NAILS  
 FASTING  
 MAUNDY THURSDAY  
 PALM SUNDAY  
 CROSS  
 GOOD FRIDAY  
 LENT  
 JESUS  
 EASTER  
 HOLY WEEK  
 TOMB  
 SACRIFICE  
 RESURRECTION  
 PASSOVER  
 LOVE  
 PURPLE  
 PRAYER

Play this puzzle online at : <https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/3477344/>





- **Cissy Belton**, hospitalized with a blood clot in her lung
- **The family of Terri Conrad**, at her death on February 18th
- **Dennis Hedrick**, brother of Elizabeth Lethermon's coworker, for healing from flu, pneumonia, and RSV
- **Jane McCarter**, mother of Nancy Faulkner, hospitalized after fall and healing
- **Tess Gibbons**, for peace while anticipating upcoming test results and for favorable outcomes
- **Rob Frye**, as he has been placed on palliative care
- **The family of Dennis Zander**, son of Bruce and Judy Zander, following his death on 1/25
- **The family of Tommy Thompson**, father of Janie Norton and grandfather of Sawyer Norton, after his death
- **Geoff Schoenberg**, friend of Morayo Orija, in end-stage kidney disease. Prayers for healing or a viable donor.
- **The family of Dawn Goodwin**, sister of Darlene Harper, following her death
- **Cindy Garrison**, recovering from surgery on her broken ankle
- **For friends and family dealing with cancer:** Jackie Lybrand, Jim Siedel, Teresa Hartman, Renee Dubler, Kelly Powell, Octavia Glenn, Margo Schopper, Chad Barnes, Lauren Bryant, LeaAnn Buckwell, Bob Burlison, Jackson Hall, Tina Heracklis, Artie McGlohon, Braxton Morris, Pastor Bill White
- **Homebound:** Caroline Banker, Pinkney Froneberger, Rob Frye, Dell Guffey, Paul Kaiser, Janie Norton, Kathy Wallace, Iris Work
- **Family and friends actively serving in the military:** Brett Boyd, Logan Cape, Eric Cooper, Mae Dodd, Josh Holland, Andrew Lambert, Luke Saylor, Liam Overby, Ryan Wallace, Jacob Lawing
- **For healthcare workers and first responders:** Chuck and Bridget Niemeyer, Beth Michaels, Melodie Garrison, Kailey Hinds, Cindy Isenhour, Lynn Ledbetter, Anna Murphy, Reggie Parlier, Jennifer Sutley, Jon Michael Brackett
- **Robin Simmons**, for her health
- **Belinda Chrzanowski**, cousin of Elizabeth & Harriet Lethermon, grieving the loss of husband, Alan Chrzanowski
- **That the world would value the dignity of all life**
- **For peace in the world and in our homes**
- **Leah Sharibu**, and all the persecuted
- **The Voice of the Martyrs**
- **The Thorstad family** and all missionaries
- **For those outside the Church**, that they may be brought to faith in Christ Jesus
- **For the youth and children of Holy Trinity**, for the Holy Spirit to guide them
- **For our ministry partner, Displaced Roses**, and for the Holy Spirit to stir us up to serve our neighbors in need

- **For the North American Lutheran Seminary System and for an increase in vocations to the ministry**
- **The Call Committee:** Tia Abernathy, Donna Allen, Sam Black, Leisa Brown, Bill Eaker, Janet Green, Glenn Rupp, Grant Sparks, Grace Young, Bruce Zander
- **For our Bishop, Dan, our dean, Steven, and for all clergy and people of the Carolinas Mission Region**

## Upcoming Birthdays

*With special joy, we recognize and celebrate these birthdays in the months of March & April. We are thankful for the life and spirit of the birthdays we celebrate. May the blessings of God flow in the life of each of you.*



2 Matthew Fox  
 3 Jaimie Cline, Janie Norton  
 4 LaVada Barnhill  
 6 Tim Black, Martin Brown  
 7 Alex Johnson  
 8 David Fogle, Katrina Hinds  
 10 Tim O'Donohue  
 11 Kinslee Stroupe  
 12 Ryan DeFreitas, Donna Motsinger  
 13 Gabriella Rupp  
 18 Bruce Blalock  
 22 Kevin Novinc  
 23 Paul Kaiser  
 26 Mitch Wells  
 29 Butch Barnes, Anna Currie



1 Beth Heffner  
 4 Kristie Gornto, Chris Murphy  
 5 Martha Williard  
 6 Amy Godwin  
 9 Cierra Fox  
 12 Garrett Oakes  
 13 Carson Johnson  
 15 Sawyer Norton  
 16 Donna Allen, Kristen Parsons-Rupp  
 17 Les Miller, Bruce Zander  
 18 Robbie Oakes  
 20 Betty Blalock  
 21 Debbie Keller, Ashley King,  
 Bridget Niemeyer  
 24 Reggie Parlier  
 25 Margaret Abernethy  
 28 Johnathan Hawkins  
 29 Marian Clemmer  
 30 Dale Christman

### *Did we miss your birthday?*

*If your birthday is incorrect, or you have a birthday in March/April and your name is not on this list, please call or email the church office and give us the correct information.*

HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH  
805 SOUTH YORK STREET  
GASTONIA, NC 28052

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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## Knowing, Loving and Sharing Christ

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Website: [www.holytrinitygastonia.org](http://www.holytrinitygastonia.org)

### MINISTRY STAFF

Intentional Interim Pastor  
Music Director  
Seminary Ministry Assistant  
Organist  
Office Administrator  
Nursery Supervisor  
Custodian

Tom Corbell  
Chris Murphy  
Cody Carpenter  
Matthew Noonan  
Kim Borromeo  
Evelyn Anthony  
David Stephens

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