

The Trumpet

March 2021

INVITE * EQUIP * SEND

Pastor Mike's Mash



Moses listened to his father-in-law and did everything he said. He chose capable men from all Israel and made them leaders of the people, officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens. They served as judges for the people at all times. The difficult cases they brought to Moses, but the simple ones they decided themselves.

—Exodus 18:24-25

The single most frequent question I have fielded with the announcement of Pastor Kari's departure from our ministry staff has been, "How are you going to do it now that Kari's gone?"

The answer has really been pretty simple if what lies beneath that question is really a bigger question: "How are you going to do both your work for mission and ministry AND what Pastor Kari has primarily covered in pastoral care and visitation?" The answer simply is: I can't.

So here are a couple of thoughts that I want to invite you to ponder and wonder about, as well. Every day as I make that beautiful and peace-filled drive through the wildlife refuge between my home and the church, there have been **three main questions** that have occupied my mind:

- **What will now land on my plate for oversight and responsibility in the absence of a second ministry staff person?**
- **What will now fall off my plate?**
- **How will those things that no longer fit on my plate be tended to?**

These are questions that we have begun to wrestle with as a council. And they will certainly continue to be a part of the seating of a new council after February 28's Annual Meeting.

As I write, I heard a sound that brings me up short with what is about to happen to our congregation. What I hear is the unmistakable stretch of a roll of packing tape as Pastor Kari packs up her office. Normally, I

think I have associated that sound with the potential for newness and excited anticipation. And it is certainly that for Pastor Kari, even as, sadly for us, she moves on from here to her next ministry adventure. But that sound of stretching packing tape brings me up short with sadness and grief over losing a partner and colleague for ministry. It sounds like shoveled soil hitting the top of a casket. Or perhaps it is the stone-on-stone sound of a massive boulder being rolled to block the entrance of a tomb. No longer having every-third-Sunday off from sermon prep is the LEAST of my sadness and grief. More so is the loss of her compassion and care and contact, especially for our homebound and least mobile members of our congregation. And. Simply. I have lost a daily colleague and partner in our ministry here.

Yet because we are people whose foundation of faith is built on death AND the hoped-for-promise of resurrection, the sound of that packing tape can still carry with it potential and newness and excited anticipation.

Many congregations across our region have already experienced the decline, the reduction, the withdrawal, the shortfalls, and the flagging participation that this year has hastened upon us and that heretofore we seemed to have avoided. The reality is that all these symptoms have been creeping in for decades. The realities of the pandemic have only accelerated momentum that we have been already previously reacting to and fighting against.

As I look at congregations around our denomination, our synod, and our region—ELCA or not—those that we might cast a longing eye toward in order to be like them are congregations who...

- **...care deeply about the welfare of people in their community, especially those on the fringes of their communities;**
- **...have a growing curiosity about the story of the Scriptures and how that story comes to life in and through their congregation; and,**
- **...own an expansive, vibrant mission and ministry through servants who are not paid; who are not "professional" ministers; and yet who know EXACTLY what they are doing to serve God through their service to their congregation and community.**

The Scripture reading at the top of my "Mash" reminds us that our circumstances are not the first time that...

Continued on page 2

...the people of God have been challenged and beset upon to carry out their identity and to be the people God has created and called them to be. Moses' father-in-law called him out for his over functioning that threatened both Moses and Israel: "What you are doing is not good. You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone. Listen now to me, and I will give you some advice, and may God be with you..." (18:17-19). Acts 6 tells us about a "staffing issue" that the early church had and their solution that "pleased the whole group" (Acts 6:5)—which I have said after Christ's resurrection from the dead is the SECOND largest miracle recorded in the New Testament, that ANYTHING would please a whole group of Christians! **So we are in good company as we wonder how we are going to do this.**

So once again, the Spirit of the crucified-yet-living Christ who comes to us through the Word points us in the direction God is calling: **we will rely ALL THE MORE on the PEOPLE (plural) God has called and gathered into the body of Christ as the vessels and tools in God's hands for the mission and ministry God has in mind for our congregation and community. That's YOU (singular). But better yet, that's ALL Y'ALL.** And so I conclude this Mash as I concluded my report to the congregation in our Annual Report:

I can't even begin to tell you what it means [that we are marked with the cross of Christ; sealed with the Holy Spirit; and healed by the bruises and marks of Christ himself].

But I know that I can't work in to that vision alone.

We will need people who can be that much more generous with what God has always given us: our selves, our time, and our resources.

We will need people who are willing to gather (in whatever way we can gather) and to learn.

We need people who can get comfortable with being uncomfortable.

We will need people who can grow willing to care about people they don't know.

In short, we need YOU.

—See you in worship. Pastor Mike

OFFICE HOURS Monday—Friday 9am –2:30 pm

**Mondays– office support only, except for Council Mondays (2nd Monday of the month), when Pastor Mike will be present.

OTHER THINGS TO NOTE ABOUT OFFICE HOURS:

- After posted hours, your call will be directed to a voice mail box, and someone will return your call as soon as is possible.
- We will continue to encourage you who might be in higher risk categories to stay home and conduct business by phone.
- Pastoral emergencies can still be directed to Pastor Mike by contacting him directly on his cell phones.
- **PLEASE, out of care for our staff, do not come to the office for any reason.....if you are feeling ill or exhibiting any kind of respiratory symptom (coughing, sneezing, etc.);...if you have knowingly been exposed to Covid-19;...if you have a compromised immune system (chemotherapy patients, etc.); or...if you are at a higher risk of exposing others (i.e., nursing home employees, etc.).**
- **IF YOU DO COME TO THE OFFICE, MASKS ARE REQUIRED.**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR UNDERSTANDING, PATIENCE, AND SUPPORT

NEED HELP GETTING SIGNED-UP TO RECEIVE A COVID VACCINATION?

There is an in-take form for our older groups of members that our volunteers can use to help get you an appointment or, at least, onto a waiting list for a vaccine. The form was mailed out a couple of weeks ago, but you can also find it tacked to our main bulletin board the Narthex of the church. *If you need help, please fill that form out and get it into the church office.* At this time we are limiting our vaccine assistance to members only until we feel confident that the process is working well.



In the meantime, please encourage, direct, and help your friends and relations NOT to wait for us. If you can help someone get signed up, PLEASE DO SO. Likewise, if friends and loved ones end up finding an opportunity to have an appointment, however that appointment comes up, they should take it!

(Here is the link to M Health Fairview's intake for healthcare workers and adults 75-years-old and older: <https://mhealthfairview.org/covid19/covid19-vaccine/vaccine-criteria>.) If you have someone who is currently assisting you.

We will still figure out a way to help, **but if they have an opportunity to have an appointment, however that appointment comes up, they should take it!**

THANKS!!

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 10:30am

Our Constitution has set the quorum for our annual meeting at **50**. If you are planning on attending our Feb. 28 Annual Meeting please call the church office (763-389-2671). **We cannot conduct the important business we need to accomplish without that quorum.**

A voting member is anyone who is a *confirmed member of Trinity Lutheran Church*. **If you are unsure of your status, please contact the Church Office.**

We have 3 ways of attending our Annual Meeting this year, all of which will occur at the same time:

- In-person
- Via Zoom
- Via an FM broadcast into the parking lot **HOW WILL THAT WORK?*** Come to the south parking lot (the city lot) on Sunday, Feb. 28.* You will be met and greeted by some of our friendly youth who will serve as our "pages."* The proceedings of the meeting will be broadcast in real time right to your car radio.* We will have phone numbers that you can call for your in-pu or questions.* Our youth will distribute and collect ballots, where necessary, right to your vehicle!

If you have not RSVP'd for the meeting, please follow this link to let us know that you will be there! Thanks!



FAREWELL & GOD'S BLESSINGS FOR PASTOR KARI—SUNDAY, MARCH 14:

Details are still being worked out, but please put on your calendars the date for Pastor Kari's Farewell event!



Trinity received the following thank-you note from Camp Onomia for the gift of money we sent them.

Trinity Church Council & Pastors:

Thank-you so much for the special gift of \$1,200. As we enter a new year we are excited by the potential to get campers & families back to camp this summer!

May God Richly Bless Our Joint Ministries.



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We have received numerous thank-yous for the Valentine bags that our youth delivered this past Sunday to our home bound members. Is is heart warming to see how much this small act brought joy to their day as the bags were dropped off at their homes.

**HELP WITH IN-PERSON WORSHIP?
Greeters & Singers,**

Here's something that will look and feel a little normal: we're looking for worship assistants for February, March, and April.

Please note--there are some things that have changed for the time being. For example, we're

not using Ushers right now. But there are some things that have been added. For example, we could use a handful of SINGERS to help bolster our Hymn Ensemble. Please call the church office (763-389-2671) if you're able to assist as a greeter or singer .



Keeping your contact information current. With the annual report mailings and the 2020 end of year giving statement mailings it became apparent that some of our member address information is not up to date. **So.....**

Did you know that you can access your information to update the church directory online or get it as an app on your phone or tablet? And did you know that it is easy to make sure your own information is up to date? And that you can even update your picture in the online directory (If your picture is in the church directory from 2016, that is the picture used for your online directory. (Many of you may have changed a little since then.)

The software, "Breeze," that Trinity uses for our membership information allows for all of this. If you have not set up your own Breeze account to access the church directory and see/edit your own information, look for an email coming in the next few days inviting you to set up your account. If you don't get an email or need help, please contact the church office. (763-389-2671)

If you wonder if your information is up to date, but are not very computer savvy, please contact the office to double check your information! We want to make sure we keep everyone's contact information current!



LENT 2021: "Lord, Teach Us to Pray—the Lord's Prayer"

There will be some differences for us in Lent this year, namely the absence once again of our Soup Suppers. This is unfortunate, of course. Then again, the kind of growth God seeks to cultivate within us DOESN'T primarily come through soup!

Come join us... Come join the disciples and followers of Jesus from every time and place as we request

Wednesday Lenten Worship Schedule—6pm both IN-PERSON & via LIVESTREAM

We will be part of a 5-congregation "round robin" preaching series. Each Wednesday of Lent, we will have a different preacher bring his or her gifted perspective on a piece of the Lord's Prayer. Unfortunately, that means that each topic will be out of order for the way we know the Lord's Prayer.

In-person & Livestream service will begin at 6pm - No drive-up communion

March 3 Lent 3 "Kingdom & Will" Preacher: Pr. Kevin Fox
Freshwaters United Methodist

March 10 Lent 4 "God's Name" Preacher: Pr. Kari Bahe
St. John Lutheran, Zimmerman

March 17 Lent 5 "Trials & Evil" Preacher: Pr. Paul Brown
Immanuel Lutheran, Princeton

March 24 Lent 6 "Daily Bread" Preacher: Pr. Mike



Small Group Bible Studies

Will be taking place in-person and via Zoom for those individuals who prefer this option. Please contact the church office to receive the updated links for these events.

- **Men's Breakfast (2nd & 4th Saturdays, 8am)**—Our next Men's Breakfast will be held on Saturday, **February 27**.
- **Tuesday Morning Bible Study**—Each Tuesday morning at **10 – 11:30am** a group of anywhere from 3 to 8 men and women. Join us **TUESDAYS** as we talk about the next Sunday's Scripture reading.

Wednesday Noon & 7pm Evening Adult Study –

As Pastor Kari mentioned in her thoughts earlier in this Trumpet, "Lent is a springtime of the soul... a time of growth. ...a time to stretch and grow in our faith and relationship with God and with each other." Prayer—and especially the Lord's Prayer—can be one of the ways we can experience that springtime of the soul. As we seek to gain a deeper understanding of the prayer Jesus taught us and to incorporate prayer into our daily practice, we will experience growth in ways that only each of us can name as we encounter that growth. Each copy costs \$12. You can pick them up from the Church Office, there are still several copies available. Each study session will be offered both IN-PERSON as well as through Zoom.

Starting 2/17--A LENTEN STUDY ON THE LORD'S PRAYER:(17). *"To be a Christian is to submit one's life to trustworthy authorities who can teach us rightly to pray. Therefore, when Jesus' disciples asked him about prayer (Luke 11), Jesus told them to 'pray in this way'—like some poor man who kept pestering his neighbor at midnight, beating on his door until he got out of bed and gave him the bread he needed (Luke 11:5-13). We ought to be similarly persistent in our effort to 'pray in this way.'* In the process of obeying Jesus' command to pray like this, our lives are bent toward God in a way that is not of our natural inclination, and we become as we pray, namely Christian"During Lent, we will also be reading and discussing the book, "Lord, Teach Us: the Lord's Prayer & the Christian Life" by Will Willimon & Stanley Hauerwas. the and book to learn and grow during our season of Lent. In the introduction to their book, a book that we will be using this Lent, noted Christian theologians and authors Will Willimon and Stanley Hauerwas write this about prayer in general and the Lord's Prayer specifically:As Pastor Kari mentioned in her thoughts last month in this Trumpet, "Lent is a springtime of the soul... a time of growth. ...a time to stretch and grow in our faith and relationship with God and with each other." Prayer—and especially the Lord's Prayer—can be one of the ways we can experience that springtime of the soul. As we seek to gain a deeper understanding of the prayer Jesus taught us and to incorporate prayer into our daily practice, we will experience growth in ways that only each of us can name as we encounter that growth. Each copy costs \$12. You can pick them up from the Church Office, there are still several copies available. Each study session will be offered both IN-PERSON as well as through Zoom.

For more information, contact Pastor Mike.



Green Tips for 2021 are researched and written by members of two congregations in our Northeast MN synod. They are published monthly in the Synod Announcements.

These tips are timely and informative messages about environmental stewardship. Offering sound science, they range from practical tips for your own daily practices to needed policy.

Americans use more than **100 million plastic utensils every day**, all of which take a **thousand years to decompose and leach toxins into the environment in the process**. But the phase-out of single-use plastic is picking up steam: The European Union voted to **abandon single-use plastics by 2021, while New York will join California and Hawaii in plastic bag bans by 2020**. At least **127 countries** have adopted some degree of regulation, with **Canada** being the latest country to announce **banning all single-use plastics by 2021**. Also on the single-use chopping block is **polystyrene (Styrofoam)**, already banned in cities such as **New York, Seattle, and Miami**, with **Maryland moving to ban it state-wide**. YOU CAN HELP by **lowering your consumption of plastics, not buying to begin with** and by choosing **reusable packaging** such as stainless steel lunch boxes, glass containers, organic sacks, second-hand metal utensils, or renewables such as bamboo.

If you have drinkable tap water (you can find out at the Environmental Working Group's Tap Water Database ewg.org/tapwater) but have some filterable pollutants, there are **three options to buying single-use water bottles**: **1) The Brita filter makes pitchers and tap attachments**, but with a plastic cartridge that must be tossed out every few months; **2) Kishu Charcoal** skips the plastic cartridge when you simply drop the compostable charcoal stick into a pitcher or water bottle; **3) Ceramic filtration systems**, used around the world to filter bacteria from water, last a full year, while charcoal lasts a few months. ALL THESE OPTIONS reduce the need for purchasing bottled water. A **ceramic filter** works best as a large filter (it is a slow drip filter), but does not remove chemicals unless it comes with a charcoal insert, while the **Kishu Charcoal** does remove chemicals and is small enough to add to a water bottle on the go.

The **anti-plastic movement** has grown so much that "single-use" was named the **word of the year** by Collins Dictionary. **Seattle** became the first U.S. city to ban single-use cutlery, while **Starbucks** plans to eliminate plastic straws by 2020, and **several airlines** are phasing out single-use plastic straws and stirrers. Plastic is derived from crude oil, so banning plastic puts pressure on its **producer, the fossil fuel industry**. Plastic bans also bring attention to **climate change, push customers to reuse, and encourage businesses to create reusable options**. YOU CAN SUPPORT THE MOVEMENT with your purchases, voting with your dollars for sustainable businesses like the ones found in the **Green Business Network** on GreenPages.org. Our collective purchasing power can help us to **put planet health and human welfare first**.

from global warming, is **increasing warm water in the upper 6,500 feet of water, while cutting back on the circulation of cold, deep water**. This is projected to **increase energy available to hurricanes and other storms, reduce essential nutrients for fish in upper ocean layers and diminish the oceans' ability to store carbon**. Since the world's oceans have absorbed the **vast majority of added heat from global warming**, WE MUST ACT to influence our policy makers to move rapidly toward clean, renewable energy and regenerative agriculture (which increases the amount of carbon that can be stored in the soil).



Continued

Non-recyclable and non-reusable plastics, such as **abandoned fishing gear, plastic bags, cigarette butts, plastic straws and food packaging (including water bottles)** are the more commonly found debris in the ocean. Plastic is **coded with numbers 1 - 7, with each number designating a different polymer design**. This means, for example, that a #1 can't be recycled with a #5 because they melt at different temperatures. Unlike metals, such as aluminum, that **can be recycled indefinitely**, plastics **degrade each time they're processed**. If your municipality is no longer taking certain plastics, **try to avoid those in the store as much as you can**. You can also **inquire about local drop off facilities** for those types of plastic. REFER TO YOUR LOCAL RECYCLING CENTER'S guidelines of what numbers are accepted at search.earth911.com. MUNICIPAL FUNDING LEVELS, COMMUNITY PRESSURE, AND DEMAND FOR RECYCLED PLASTICS determine what gets recycled.

Nelson Mandela said this: *"There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children....Our actions and policies, and the institutions we create, should be eloquent with care, respect, and love."* Yet, according to the nonpartisan Union of Concerned Scientists (ucsus.org), **protections for children against environmental threats have been undermined, rolled back, canceled and ignored, putting the health of millions of children at risk**. While the EPA's own scientists warned about the agricultural pesticide **chlorpyrifos, derived from nerve agents used in World War II that can inhibit brain development in children**, the chemical's use is permitted even though it was banned for use in homes 20 years ago. The agency is also ignoring its scientists' advice to **ban the import of asbestos, while neglecting to enforce regulations around existing asbestos insulation in buildings like schools**. Exposure to asbestos greatly **increases the risk of mesothelioma (cancer of the lining of the lungs), to which children are particularly susceptible**. Because these are just two of many examples, URGE OUR GOVERNMENT AGENCIES to **prioritize children's health**.

Ocean heat content in the upper ocean layers **has reached record levels, potentially speeding up how fast the planet will warm in the coming decades**, according to new findings in a study published in the journal *Nature Climate Change*. The study reports that reduction in the mixing of ocean layers, due to added heat