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The Good News

May 2020
Volume 4 No. 5
Page 1



IT'S MAY!

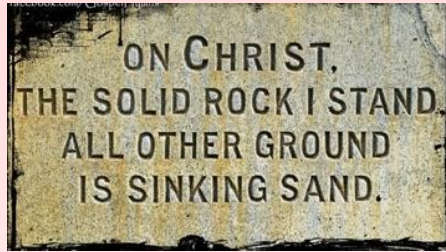
How fast time is flying! When I was a child, the only time, time went fast was in the summer. It seemed like you just got out of school and now it was starting again. But not now. The older we get,

the faster it seems to go.

It's May.

It has been six weeks since we have been put on "Pause" as Governor Cuomo called it. Life seemed to be put on pause, but it really didn't, did it? All that happened is that some things we used to be able to do, we could no longer do. The goal was that these things that we couldn't do anymore, would just be temporary. Some indeed will be temporary. Other things will change.

It is dealing with that change that can cause some consternation. Some people hate change. Like when you step on the scale and notice that little uptick because you are at home all of the time and visit the refrigerator far more than you usually would. But not all change is bad. You like it when you get a raise in your pay check don't you? You like it when you have been working at a place long enough that you get an extra week of vacation. You like it because you are one of those who has seen a downtick on the scale. That is a nice change.



But that fact of the matter is, whether we are under quarantine or not, whether we are under "Pause" or not, change happens. So we are already used to it.

I think what probably bugs me the most about change is that we don't know when it is going to happen.

As I write this article, the numbers listed in Newsday show that the number of new cases of Covid-19 are down for the fourteenth day in a row. That is a measure of when we might consider reopening things. It is and will be a slow process to be sure, but it looks like it will happen. When? We do not know. So things like when can we go back to worship, work, school, the movie theater, the mall, the ball park or the soccer field are still up in the air. These are all things that are outside of our control. And that bugs all of us too.

But in the midst of this change, there is one thing that does not change. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." Hebrews 13:8 (ESV)

He is our rock in the midst of the change around us. He is our foundation. In Jesus, we know we have a God who loves us, who is our refuge and strength. He is the One we call on in times of trouble. Therefore, we will not fear.

Continued...

Inside this Issue...

Pastor's Message	Page 1	Honor, Serve, Provide Capital Campaign	Page 5
More from Pastor Hopkins	Page 2	Board of Outreach.....	Page 6
From the Minister of Music.....	Page 3	Board of Stewardship	Page 7
The Deacon's Bench.....	Page 3	Comfort Dog Ministry	Page 8
A Word from the Principal.....	Page 4	The Art at Trinity	Pages 9-10
Early Childhood Center News	Page 5	Lutheran Counseling Center.....	Page 11

Recall the promises made personal to you in your baptism are not affected by the times in which we live. His promise is sure. He forgave your sins. He gave you the promise of everlasting life. The Holy Spirit who lives within you is the guarantee that these promises are and will be kept. Those do not change!

Consider this, you have a place in heaven! It's already prepared. The address is set. Therefore, do not fear!

That is good to remember, for as you read this, it's May. The date to "reopen" has not been set. It is getting closer, but we do not know. When it happens, it will be a welcome change.

But the love God has for you, never changes. It was yours yesterday, it is yours today, it is yours forever, through Jesus Christ. That provides us with a measure of peace that surpasses all human understanding, no matter what day it is!

Take comfort! Take care! And God bless you now and always!

Serving the Lord with you,

Pastor Hopkins

REMINDER: All church activities remain cancelled until further notice. (No change there.) However, I can share with you that as a Circuit Visitor for the District President/Bishop Lecakes, the district is beginning to make preparations for when we can reopen. No details as yet do I have to share. The reason being questions such as these will need to be answered by the governor. How large can social gatherings be, such as a worship service? Will we need to wear masks? Continue to practice social distancing? Again, all relevant questions that need to be answered. How that will look, no one knows just yet. My hunch, gatherings will be limited in numbers at attendance, less than 50 people per gathering. Social distancing will still be needed. Wearing masks? Most likely. I foresee this continuing into the future until they come up with a vaccine for Covid-19. That means that we will need to be flexible in how we conduct worship.

That prospect doesn't bother me, nor will I consider it a hindrance. Why? We will be getting back together in face to face worship. Since, there will be some who may not want to risk getting out yet, we will still do Online Worship. In fact, I have said this multiple times, we need to prepare to continue Online Worship as a permanent feature. Quite frankly, as your pastor, that prospect I find exciting, because it is one more way to reach out to others with the Gospel no matter where they live!

Therefore, pray that the Lord gives an extra measure of wisdom to some doctor, scientist, on individual to come up with a way to provide a vaccine. And if He has already and we don't know it yet, give Him thanks anyway! For our God is still in charge. That never changes. Good thing too!



NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

... for the June 2020 issue are due no later than noon on Friday May 22!

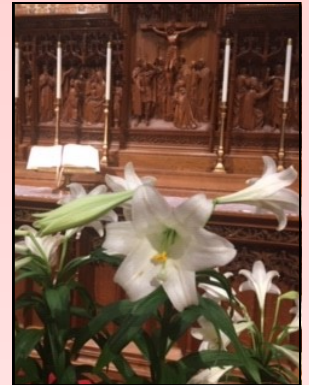


Consider the Lilies

Easter blessings to all.

Well, it was Easter but in many ways it didn't feel like the Easters we know. There wasn't the joy of coming to church, seeing the children dressed up, hearing the choir and congregation singing together, I even missed Scott crashing the cymbals! There wasn't the family gatherings later in the day. It was a quiet day, spent with a quiet but joyful reflection.

Holy week is always a time of mixed emotions for me from Jesus entering Jerusalem on Palm Sunday to the sadness on Good Friday. But then there is the great joy of waking up on Easter morning and singing "I Know That My Redeemer Lives" (Which is one of my all time favorite hymns). This year was, well, just different. But then I saw the lilies at Trinity. The beautiful flower of Easter. It's white trumpet seeming to proclaim Jesus' triumph over the grave. I went to look in my front yard and there they were. Little leaves poking out of the ground. About a dozen lilies starting to grow, planted a few at a time, the last few years from Trinity's lilies. Finally my heart felt lighter, yes it still was a beautiful Easter.



So this year we Zoomed, called, or Facetimed with loved ones. We gathered online to worship together. We didn't eat together. Maybe we took a walk. But it was Easter and my Redeemer lives!

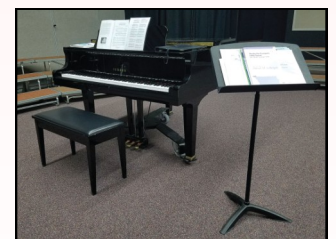
Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." Matthew 6:28-29

Deacon Lynn Waldeck

Your Deacons: Doug Brosky Betsy Lazarek Debbie Vergara
 Anthony Cavaliere Peg Ruhs Lynn Waldeck



During this crazy time, our music program has taken a hard hit since we can no longer gather together as choirs for rehearsals or for services. Everyone is waiting, as you are, to come together as a family to sing, ring and worship together. I have actually sent recordings of the music that we would have sung and rung this year to our choirs, so they had a chance to at least sing them during Holy Week and Easter, even if it was only by themselves with recordings. Please continue to listen to worship online, I am still striving to bring us the best possible music each week. Believe me, no one is more anxious to hear a full church again than myself. I miss hearing each and everyone of you adding yourselves to our worship each week. Please stay safe, and I hope to hear you all back soon.



Henry DeVries,
Minister of Music

Dear Trinity Families and Friends,

Teaching and learning during this past month has been a new experience for both the teacher and the student. Students are "Zooming" with their teachers, individually and as a group. Assignments are being posted online, completed and submitted online. Even Art, Music, PE, and Spanish classes are being held thanks to the wonders of YouTube, Google Classroom, Flipgrid, and other such resources. The teachers' dedication, talents, and creativity have served to help Trinity maintain a robust and varied educational experience. Still, the screen is not a replacement for face-



to-face interaction. We miss our students! This is what we expressed in the following video link that we sent to our families at the beginning of the Easter vacation. Click here to view our video <https://youtu.be/UjKoyeTZ8jc>

Now that everyone is home, I encourage you to continue to check out the links on Trinity Lutheran School's web page. There, you will find a link to our daily morning announcements and much more. Also, I invite you to join us for Chapel on Wednesdays at 12:00 PM via Facebook Live via the following link <https://www.facebook.com/trinityhicksville/>

As I said to the staff, students, and families on the first Monday after vacation, it is good to be back, in a manner of speaking. I know we all look forward to the day that we can be together again. In the meantime, our lives are not unlike those of the disciples who locked themselves away and waited after Jesus' death – afraid, wondering, and watching. As Easter people, we know that the story did not end there. Unexpectedly and miraculously, Jesus appeared to the disciples, saying "Peace be with you." Just as our risen Lord came to His disciples, He is present with us now, and always, bringing us the hope of the resurrection and the comfort of His peace.

Yours in Christ,

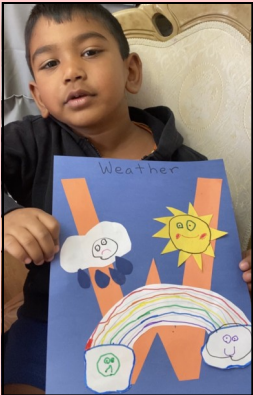
Mary Leake

For those of you who are Amazon shoppers, did you know that Trinity will receive a donation from them every time you make a purchase? It's called AmazonSmile. AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support Trinity Lutheran Church and School every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at



smile.amazon.com, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate 0.5% of the purchase price to Trinity. Simply go to smile.amazon.com and enter your regular Amazon log in and password information. For "Pick Your Own Charitable Organization," type "Trinity Lutheran Church". Then bookmark smile.amazon.com and use it for all future Amazon purchases. Even after you've designated Trinity as your Smile recipient, we only receive donations if you purchase your products through Smile. You will

see eligible products marked "Eligible for AmazonSmile donation" on their product detail pages. For more information please visit AmazonSmile.



As we continue this new way of life and education, Trinity's Early Childhood Center teachers have gone above and beyond to keep the children learning and feeling the love of God around them each day. The staff has certainly been creative and has learned new ways to continue to reach the children we care for.

The ECC classes have begun having fun Zoom sessions with their teachers and classmates. The teachers have incorporated so many wonderful learning experiences into their virtual learning, including monitoring plant growth, and charting their favorite fruits and vegetables which they brought to their Zoom classes. All classes spoke about Earth day and some classes are even having moms and dads as guest readers! Each week the teachers incorporate art projects, music and movement and so much more. The children also continue to enjoy Jesus time with their teachers as they learn about the love that Jesus has for them all of the time. The parents of Trinity's youngest children have been amazing partners in education. Trinity is blessed to work with such supportive families. Most importantly, the children have taken everything in stride and continue to give their best each and every day.



As each day passes I continue to be impressed and amazed at the wonderful work of our teachers, parents, and students. I know we will all continue these amazing efforts until we are able to gather in Trinity's building

again. Wishing everyone continued health in the weeks ahead.

Carolyn Gallegos,
Early Childhood Center Director

Zoom!

The Good News
Honor, Serve, Provide Capital Campaign News



Trinity's capital campaign continues. A big thank you to those who continue to honor your three-year promises by submitting those weekly, monthly, quarterly, etcetera pledges. The Honor, Serve, Provide campaign has now received over \$247,540 from memorial gifts and pledges. More than \$74,175 is earmarked for the remaining projects.

As you can imagine those projects are on hold for the time being. We are so thankful for the members of the Board of Properties who have not only kept up with regular maintenance and emergency repairs, but who have made the projects in this capital campaign a

reality.

Trinity's church and school staff and congregation are fortunate to have these dedicated workers tackling these projects. We are extremely thankful to them and to you who have made these vital contributions.

Be safe, stay home and trust God will see us through this difficult time.

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Colossians 3:1-4

When we became Christians, we died to the old self and became new creatures in Christ. We are to focus on being tender-hearted and kind toward all people. We are to forgive always even as we have been forgiven, to love even as we are loved. We are never to seek our own agenda.

In this time of enforced social distancing, individuals, organizations, and retailers have increased their activity and presence on social media. Even though the medical experts and politicians cannot agree on the nature and treatment of the Coronavirus, millions of lay people and media talking heads have suddenly become experts on epidemiology. Many are accusing the governmental and medical experts of failure to address the situation in a timely and effective manner even though this virus is new and beyond the experience of anyone, except of course, the Lord God. But who speaks for God? You and I do. God is speaking through His church, through believers for such a time as this. He is calling in this time for all to repent and come to faith, believers and nonbelievers alike. Our mission is to tell others of the eternal comfort that God gives through faith in Jesus.

So how are we believers carrying out this call? When we speak our mind on social media, why do we do so? Do we do it because we want to show our knowledge, maturity, superiority, or excellence? Do we seek to justify ourselves? Do we want others to shame or hurt others? Or do we really want to help others by asking for God's blessings on all, even those we do not agree with? If so we must be careful that what we say and when we say it is tempered by love and humility, as well as the awareness of our own sinful imperfection.

What about people who always seem to post things that get under our skin? We are to engage with them, but with love and encouragement. Remember that they are human, so ask them why they think the way they do. Lift them up. Remember that people often times turn to social media to share a hurt or something upsetting—sometimes almost to the point of almost over-sharing. Take some time today to offer a supportive ear and share a gentle or kind word with someone who is hurting or sharing in a vulnerable way about something going on in their life. Ask they how they are and offer a supportive ear. And finally, notice how many times where you've reacted harshly in the past. Now would be a good time to remove your negative comments or posts. Now is the time to share love, understanding and the gospel, not political opinion, with those who disagree with you



Back on March 5, the Board of Stewardship completed Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University, a 9 week video seminar which presented sound advice on budgeting and financial planning. I was there assisting Jeanine Davis and Wayne Hoeberlein who took turns facilitating the meetings with a great deal of expertise drawn from personal experience.

As subsequent events have shown, that presentation was quite timely. A week after our last session, the government began to shut down businesses resulting in the loss of employment and income for millions of Americans. Those dozen people who attended that seminar at least had been prepared to better ride out the current financial storm because they had begun to implement Ramsey's advice.

Among other things, Ramsey recommends that people not incur debt but if they have, he shows the best way to pay it off quickly. He also espouses giving to the church using the tithe as a start. Honoring God by giving to His work should be our primary consideration when preparing our monthly or yearly budget.

One important recommendation Ramsey made was for individuals and families to have emergency savings to cover 3 to 6 months' worth of expenses. Now I have been doing that for over 30 years so I assumed that most people knew this. As Ramsey pointed out most Americans not only do not have emergency funds, they have little or no savings. They live paycheck to paycheck even those with high incomes. Most people prefer to spend now and give little thought to the future.

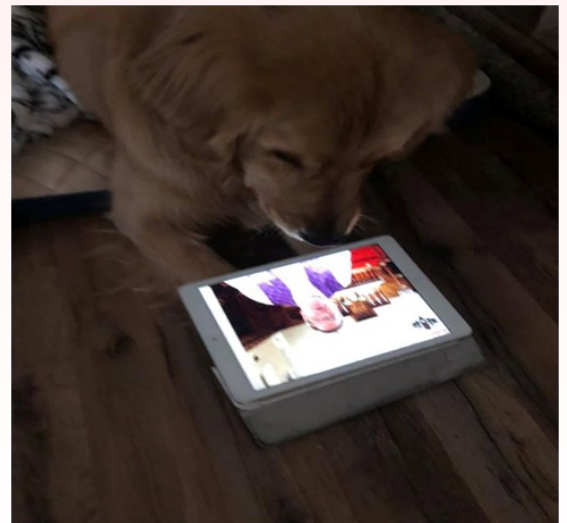
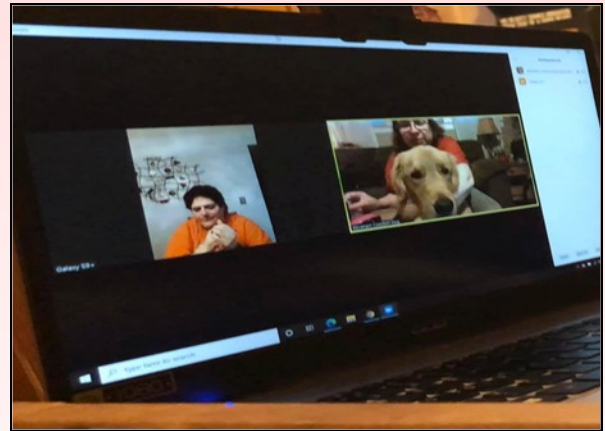
The heartache and sadness wrought by the COVID 19 virus alone is tragic and difficult to cope with, but the pandemic lockdown has contributed an added crushing financial burden for millions who were not prepared for any emergency, let alone one of this magnitude. If most folks had had emergency funds, some of their suffering and worry could have been ameliorated. They would not have to rely on the government to bail them out, to save them from starvation and bankruptcy. While we Christians have been called to extend charity to the hurting and the needy in times such as these, no doubt all of us would be better off if most people had heard and heeded Ramsey's advice.

We plan to do the presentation again in the Fall. Maybe you should seriously think about signing up or recommending it to a friend or loved one.



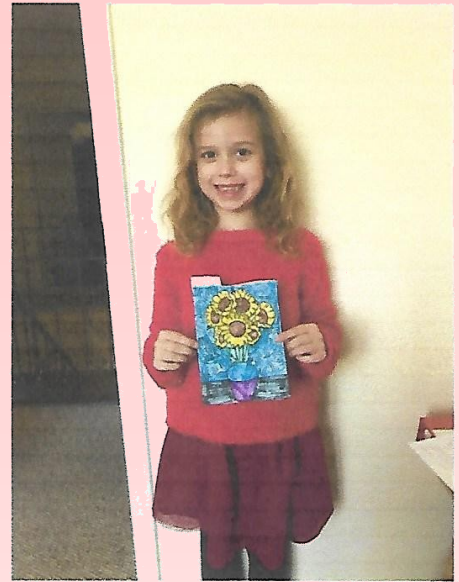
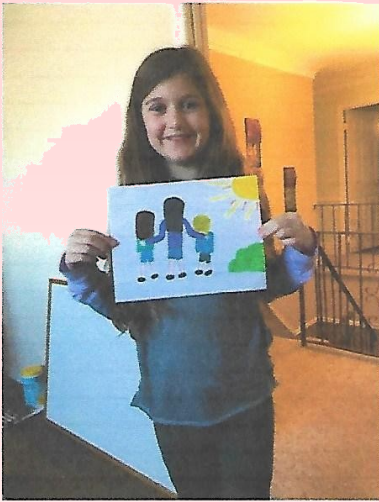


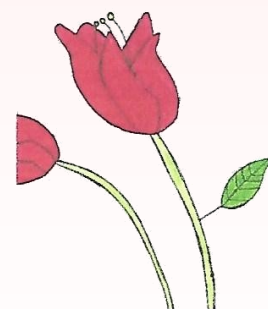
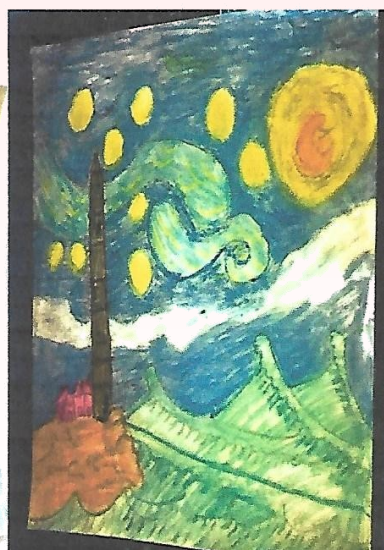
Abraham has been finding unique ways to stay in touch with those he interacts with every day, providing support and love to help people cope with the loneliness and isolation they may be feeling. When we are not physically able to be present, our presence is still felt by sharing the hope and love that can be found in Jesus Christ! Although one of Abraham's favorite activities is to do zoomies he has entered the world of virtual Zoom. Through a link from Lutheran Church Charities people can request a virtual visit with Abraham. Donna and Abraham are able to visit with his friends and even pray. It is giving folks something to smile about. Some haven't seen Abraham physically in a while so they enjoy checking in on him, while Abraham gets used to this new way of visiting. For a dog trained to be social, the social distancing has confused him, so to interact with people this way has helped.



The Art at Trinity

Trinity Lutheran School Student Artwork
~ inspired by artists from online art lessons







UPDATE FOR MAY 2020
NOW WITH SECURE, VIRTUAL COUNSELING SES-
SIONS AVAILABLE FOR ANY NEW YORK RESIDENT

Finding the Silver Lining In COVID-19

By Eden Althaus, LCSW, LCC Counselor

So far, the year 2020 has certainly been different than what anyone could have imagined. The world seems to be on pause as we have been battling this monster known as COVID-19. The news channels have shown devastating statistics for illness and death and the spread is faster than we could have ever dreamed possible. It is natural to feel overwhelmed, scared, anxious, or depressed during a time like this... I know that I have felt all of these emotions at different times throughout the last few months. Uncertainty has replaced any sense of normalcy and it has caught us off guard. However, in the midst of these challenging times, I have also seen humanity step up. I started noticing it in the simple things. While I was out for a walk, people smiled and waved. In those moments it hit me that I was surprised by this. I wasn't used to everyone's friendly hellos. Blinded by my usual hustle and bustle, had I been missing these smiling faces? Or perhaps now that we are all forced to social distance, everyone is just happy to see another kind soul walking by.

It seems that almost overnight, people became professionals at sewing facemasks. I saw friends and family donating to humanitarian causes and supporting our overworked and exhausted healthcare and frontline workers. Pizza deliveries to hospital staff and shift change cheer groups made the difficult and long hours a tiny bit easier. Communities banded together to support the small businesses that managed to stay open. Weekly family game nights became "a thing." FaceTime and Zoom became household names and the lifeline of communication. Connecting regularly with those I usually talk to only a few times throughout the year, I started to see some positive to this otherwise horrific time in our world.

I recently read an article by Julio Vincent Gambuto called, "Prepare for the Ultimate Gaslighting." The article discusses how after this is over and things go back to "normal," we have a chance to bring back only the things that we need to. Gambuto had a different perspective on the whole situation, calling it "sacred" and highlighting that we will never have another opportunity like this to press pause on life as we know it and take a good hard look at how we have been living.

I began to see that God can use this as a time to help us see what is truly important. It is true that countless people have suffered loss so profound that there are no words to describe their grief. Although, we may never be able to fully comprehend the losses that everyone has experienced on different levels, we can, in time, begin to look forward and refocus. God promises us in Joshua 1:9 "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be discouraged, For the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." He will walk with us through this valley and bring us through to the other side.

I challenge you to try and see the silver lining. Ask God to help you take something good out of this time period. Continue to call and connect with your people. Look out for one another and be there to support each other. Know that it is okay to take time for yourself and check in to see what your own needs are. Use quiet time to have conversations with God, to pray, and to get into the word. If you haven't opened your bible in a while, this may prove to be an ideal time to start. Take this as an opportunity to choose kindness over busyness and love over judgment. And above all else know that Jesus will hold us during this time and He will bring us through.

For more information or to set an appointment, call LCC at 1-800-317-1173. For safety, all sessions are provided using a secure, HIPAA compliant virtual video and/or audio platform.