



THE TORCH

www.trinitylcpv.com
office@trinitylcpv.com

January 2023
Sunday Worship
9:00 AM

Trinity Lutheran Church • 18137 Criswell Street • Bettendorf, Iowa 52722 • 563-332-5188
Pastor Stephen Nilsen 563-332-6432 (office) 319-540-1172 (cell) snilsen@trinitylcpv.com (email)

Dear Siblings in Christ,

Throughout the second half of 2022, the recent graduates of Wartburg Theological Seminary (including myself and my wife Leah) have continued to show up for each other and celebrate alongside the church universal in the rite of ordination. I was thrilled when some of you could join my family, friends, and home congregation in Cedar Rapids in my ordination in July, and since then I've attended several other ordination services of my friends and colleagues. One of those ordinations was for a good friend of mine named Laura, who was ordained on December 17, at the very end of the season of Advent and Leah and I were pleased to serve as readers of some of the Scripture during the service.

There's a particular section of the service that continues to stand out at each of these services just after the giving of a stole. The ordinand stands and hears four passages from scripture known as the charge: it's a powerful reminder of how Scripture has called pastors and many other leaders to serve and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the ages. These four passages are: 1 Timothy 6:11-12, Acts 20:28, 1 Peter 5:2-4, and 1 Corinthians 4:1-2.

While each of these passages (and the pastors/mentors I had reading them at my service) means a lot as I reflect upon my first few months and look ahead at a full calendar year of pastoral ministry. That last passage, from Paul's first letter to the church in Corinth, continues to make me wonder. It reads: *"Think of us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy."*

Two short verses pack a lot. This is of course a worthwhile passage for pastors to remember, but I would suggest that all Christians can learn a great deal from this brief two verses for their life and vocation as beloved children of God. Paul is writing to an audience who has found many new leaders coming and going to take charge of the church. But Paul wants to make it clear that he and his companions Apollos and Cephas are not merely new leaders of a party, but first and foremost are "servants of Christ." Across all divisions that could be brought between anyone, if we unite in that common bond of serving Christ, we have a steady ship that will be guided by Christ as our pilot for us to row.

Paul also mentions that the church should regard him and the other leaders as "stewards of God's mysteries." When you look outside in the wintertime, and it gets dark very early, you can behold God's mysterious way of working in the universe through the stars in the sky. Likewise, we can marvel at the mysteries of God's grace in our presence and steward them for one another. Every now and then, I pause during worship and consider what an amazing thing it is for all of us to be in that one space at that one time worshipping the one God – and each of you has a part in stewarding that: whether serving in worship in some way or attending and singing out during the hymns... you too are stewards of God's mysteries!

The last point in this charge is perhaps its most important: *"Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy."* When I was in the Boy Scouts growing up, trustworthy was the first point in the Scout Law, and it always raised some questions from younger scouts about what that word means. I love thinking of all the ways that Christ models trustworthiness, and I hope that each of you reading this can find ways to thank your friends in the congregation for continuing to be trustworthy. It is in keeping with this trustworthiness that each of us can walk together, stewarding God's mysteries and sharing in our service of Christ, whom for the sake of all who Christ died for on the cross.

In Christ,

Pastor Stephen Nilsen

LETTER FROM COUNCIL PRESIDENT

The December meeting brought a number of topics to the table that needed to be finalized. One issue that we have been having is with the Per Mar alarm system. The phone lines were switched over to VOIP (Voice Over Internet Protocol) and this has resulted in countless false alarms as the alarm system can't pick up a phone signal. Per Mar offered a solution, but it involved a one time fee along with an additional monthly expense. They were not willing to negotiate or reduce this cost. The council discussed this over a number of meetings, and finally decided to discontinue the service for the time being while other options are considered. There will be a slight increase in building insurance costs, however the increase is less than what the proposed Per Mar switchover would have cost. As we proceed into 2023, options will be discussed and evaluated. If this is an area you are familiar with and have suggestions, please let Pastor, me, or any council member know.

Council also approved a 2023 budget that will be brought to the annual meeting on January 22nd. I am very pleased with the budget trend from 2022 to 2023. In 2022, we approved a budget with a projected income of \$148,300 and expenses of \$181,679.50. Essentially, we approved a deficit budget of \$33,379.50. This year everyone has been very diligent with their giving and keeping an eye on expenses. Through November, expenses were \$155,392.65 so the final number will come in under the approved budget amount. On the other hand, Total Income after November was only \$12.84 away from our projected income number. With strong giving in December, we will have exceeded our budget number. As we move into 2023, we have further reduced expenses and approved a budget of \$172,589. We boosted our projected total income to \$158,600. We will still be recommending approval of a deficit budget, but the gap has closed from over \$33,000 in 2022 to under just under \$14,000 in 2023. Collectively, we have been able to close the gap nearly \$20,000 in one year. Everyone should be congratulated for that!

Soon you will see a Time and Talents sheet distributed that focuses on weekly worship assignments. The goal is to have a standing list in case no one signs up or a short notice conflict arises and a volunteer is needed. Please prayerfully consider where your time and talents could best be used to serve Trinity!

Also, you will notice that communion will continue to evolve with an increased usage of serving at the Altar. Please be open to this change. Everyone knows that there can be challenges with kneeling/standing at the communion table. If you need to stand at the communion table. . . by all means stand. If you need to sit during the service while others are standing. . . by all means sit. The important thing is that we are able to be present together to worship God. No one cares whether you stand or sit, so please do what you are most comfortable with and physically able to do. I assure you that no one is judging!

I'm looking forward to celebrating Trinity's successes of 2022 at our annual congregational meeting on January 22, 2023. I hope you are able to put that date on your calendar and make the meeting!

As always, I'm just a phone call, text, or e-mail away. If you need anything or have question, please reach out!

Justin



MEETINGS FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER

January	2	Education	6:30 PM
January	3	Worship & Music	4:30 PM
January	5	Property	11:00 AM
January	9	Council	6:30 PM
January	22	Annual Meeting	10:00 AM

ATTENDANCE TOTALS FOR DECEMBER

December	4	67
December	11	60
December	18	43
December	24	66
December	25	33

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE

In 2022, Trinity was able to distribute \$19,000 from our Endowment Fund to various agencies within the ELCA and our community. We would like to invite you to read the heartfelt Thank You Notes from many of the recipients posted on the bulletin board outside the office.

Each year, the distribution amount is based on the balance of the funds. In 2023 the distribution amount will be \$14,000. The committee encourages our congregation to make suggestions for the distributions. As you travel through 2023, please be attentive to potential needs in our community.

Committee members: Alan Diers, Diana Mayes, Mitch Sussex, Susan Varilek, Marcia Brunsvold-Council Representative.



AMITIE

A reminder that Amitie does not meet in January or February due to weather concerns. We will meet again on March 13, 2023



ANNUAL MEETING

Trinity's Annual Meeting will be held on January 22, 2023 after the 9:00 AM Worship Service. If your committee does not have your report turned in, please get it to Paula as soon as possible. It takes a lot of time to put the report together and have ready it for all to review at least one week before the meeting.



YEAR TO DATE THROUGH NOVEMBER 2022

Collections to date	\$162,200.12
Expenses to date	\$155,392.65
Net to date	\$6,807.47

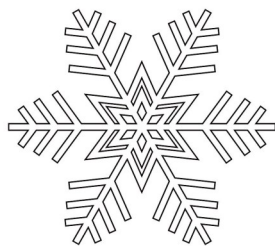
No funds have been transferred from Stewardship Reserves to date.

Trinity Office Hours Tues, Wed, Thurs + 9AM-1PM

Pastor Stephen's Office Hours Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs +10AM - 2PM

BIRTHDAYS

3 Hannah Schnack
4 Mary Shelton
4 Joshua McBride
5 Tonia Kennedy
6 Cassie West
7 Ken Kaul
9 Vicki Engler
10 Pam Schroder
12 Don Cook
19 Luke Prather
19 Luke Ven Horst
20 Paxton Heidenreich
22 Dani Dexter
24 Melissa Aguilar
25 Glenna Sbertoli
30 Janet Riedesel
31 Aiden Engler



New Year Prayer

Thank you Lord for giving me
The brand new year ahead.
Help me live the way I should
As each new day I tread.
Give me strength and courage
So a shoulder I might lend.
The year ahead is empty,
Help me fill it with good things
Each new day filled with joy
And happiness it brings.
Amen



FOOD ASSISTANCE UPDATE (aka Food Baskets for Those Needing a Helping Hand).

Thanks to the generosity of the congregation, The Memorial and Endowment Committees, we were able to provide Fareway gift certificates in the amount of \$200 each to nine families for Thanksgiving and Christmas. The families were very thankful for your generosity.

WEEKLY READINGS

01/01 Isaiah 63:7-9, Psalm 148, Hebrews 2:10-18, Matthew 2: 13-23
01/08 Isaiah 42: 1-9, Psalm 29, Acts 10:34-43, Matthew 3: 13-17
01/15 Isaiah 49: 1-7, Psalm 40: 1-11, 1 Corinthians 1: 1-9, John 1: 29-42
01/22 Isaiah 9: 1-4, Psalm 27: 1,4-9, 1 Corinthians 1: 10-18, Matthew 4: 12-23
01/29 Micah 6: 1-8, Psalm 15, 1 Corinthians 1: 18-31, Matthew 5: 1-12

WANT TO CONNECT THE WITH WEEKLY HAPPENINGS AT TRINITY?

Sign up for our weekly email bulletin that will let you know what's happening in the week ahead and have other great upcoming announcements, as well as the weekly bulletin for worship. Call (332-5188) or email (office@trinitylcpv.com) Paula in the office to sign up!

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS and FELLOWSHIP

If you are unable to fulfill your duties, please find a replacement and call the church office (332-5188) with your replacement. Thank you.

	January 1	January 8	January 15	January 22	January 29
Altar Guild	Randy Goslin	Diane Holst	Linda Busch		
Communion Assistant	Carol Kaufmann	Lois Schurr	Jo Ann Hogenson		Marcia Brunsvold
Lector	Justin Paul	Ellen Opperman	Diane Noll	Claudia Neumann	Dawn Brick
Usher/Greeter	Ed Kaufmann	Deb Anderson Jo Ann Hogenson			Travis Brunsvold
Fellowship	X	Diana Mayes			

	February 5	February 12	February 19	February 26	March 5
Altar Guild					X
Communion Assistant					X
Lector					
Usher/Greeter					
Fellowship					X