

TRINITY CHURCH TIDINGS

JUNE 2020

Trinity Lutheran Church & School
146 Reserve Road, West Seneca, New York 14224
Church: (716) 674-9188, School: (716) 674-5353

Rev. Dennis Krueger, Pastor, 674-9188 / C: 997-5666
Mrs. Kathleen Fretthold, School Principal, School: 674-5353

Church Website: trinitywestseneca.com
Church Office E-mail: trinitylutheranchurch146@verizon.net



WORSHIP TIMES

Sundays @ 9:30 am - "Drive-In" Style

Also online on the church website

"THE CHURCH BUILDING IS CLOSED – THE CHURCH IS OPEN!"

There has been a lot of talk in the media lately about "Reopening the Churches." I've got news for all the politicians, reporters, commentators and talk show hosts (instigators) ... **THE CHURCH NEVER CLOSED!!!** Most all church buildings have been closed, of course. But that doesn't mean that churches have been closed! As most of you know, I hope, we have been worshipping online and via a drive-in venue. Without a doubt it's not the same as being in the church building but it is genuine authentic worship. The same powerful Word of God is proclaimed, His name is praised and His gracious forgiveness of sins is pronounced. Hymns are sung and prayers are lifted up! And all of this has been done in respectful and honoring way to our Lord! And that's just about worship! In many other ways the church has been "open" and active: phoning members; emails and 'snail' mailings; meeting and planning; teaching students (school); food and meal assistance; prayer chain; and people caring for one another! The church is not closed! Actually, the church may be growing and expanding in new ways of ministry and carrying out the mission of the church!

When I was a teenager (in the 60's!) I remember a song we sang in Walther League and Youth Group gatherings entitled, "I Am the Church." Honestly, I never cared for the melody, or lack thereof, but the words make a good point about what God's church is – and is not. In summary the song proclaims: the church is not a building, a steeple, or a resting place; sometimes the church is marching, sometimes bravely burning, sometimes hiding – but always learning. Then the familiar refrain: "I am the church; You are the church; We are the church together; All who follow Jesus... Yes, we're the church together!" Holy Scripture calls the church the "Body of Christ." All who believe in Jesus and serve Him are members of Him. He is the head and we are the various members. **THAT BODY – THE CHURCH NEVER CLOSED!**

Under the Constitution of the United States that guarantees freedom of religion and the right to gather together for worship, could a government official forbid churches from gathering together for worship? Can they dictate the wearing of masks, maintaining six feet of social distancing and the maximum number of worshippers gathering at one time? The simple answer is, "NO." But I would add that, hopefully the church would not put parishioners in harm's way by ignoring safe precautions and guidelines.

Christians also need to remember that they are to obey the governing authorities. Read Romans 13:1-7. Only when the authorities oppose God, His Word and His will, must we obey God rather than man. To my knowledge, God does not insist that we worship Him only in the church sanctuary. He does command that we worship Him only and not refrain from gathering with other believers.

Are we not trusting God to protect us if we gather together as we normally would and ignore guidelines and precautions? (This one really gets to me!) Of course not! God has blessed us with intellect, understanding and wisdom. Should we opt to ignore this and put God to the test? It seems to me that satan tried that with Jesus in the wilderness. Jesus responded that we should never put the Lord God to the test!

The church is OPEN, alive and well. In this time of coronavirus pandemic we will utilize the gifts God has given us of wisdom and technology to safely gather as the Body of Christ to worship our Lord. When it is safe we will joyfully throw open the doors of the church building! We will sing and praise, pray and give thanks, fellowship in sacrament and congregation! And, hopefully we will have learned a few lessons about ministry opportunities through this time of exile (so it seems). Just as God grew and dispersed His church in the face of trial and persecution, may He again grow His church now! I pray that all those who howl and holler about opening up the church buildings for worship, will actually come to worship when the gates are flung wide!

God bless you – His church!

~ Pastor Dennis Krueger

WORSHIP SERVICES AT TRINITY

“Drive-In” Worship Services

Sundays at 9:30am

May 31st - June 28th

As I’m sure most of you know, Trinity will be offering Sunday morning Drive-In Worship Services from May 31st thru June 28th in the church parking lot at 9:30am. Masks and social distancing are required when (if) you get out of your car. Restroom facilities will be available in the school building. The offering will be received as cars leave the service. The loose cash offering (not in church envelopes) is designated to the LADD Thrift Shop in South Buffalo.

On-Line Worship Services

If you’re concerned about attending the Drive-In services, the online worship services will be continued. Even after we are able to resume regular worship services inside the church, there has been discussion on continuing to post an online recording of a worship service. Whether it’s online or drive-in, worship is not the same as when we are gathered together in God’s house. Until then, members are encouraged to participate in regular worship in one of these ways. We look forward to the day when we can worship together as the family of faith in our Father’s house!

When Will Services Resume In The Church Building?

Worship services will resume at (and in) Trinity Lutheran Church when it is safe to do so. While we need to obey our governing authorities, we do not only rely on what the governing authorities tell us to do. If we are forbidden or restricted by law from gathering together, we will obey our civil leaders. But, as tempting as it is to throw the doors open and welcome everyone to assemble for worship, we must use our God-given intellect to judge when it is prudent and safe to do so and not foolishly put God to the test. My hope and prayer is that we can resume our regular worship and schedule of activities this Fall.



A big thank-you to all those who have been tending to our church property, especially the Tuesday night ‘Garden Club’! Thank-you also to our cemetery co-superintendents, Roger Meissner and Mark Blajszczak, for the great job they are doing. The cemetery looks like a wonderful park for a picnic! They put out American flags at all of the graves of our veterans to honor them on Memorial Day. Come and see for yourself and honor our veterans and faithful departed.

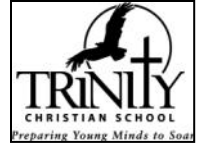
Thanks also to our ‘Drive-In Worship’ team. You may not realize it, but a lot goes into setting up the drive-in venue for worship from music and audio programming to setting up the stage and ushering. As we hold these drive-in services each Sunday (9:30am) perhaps others might be willing to volunteer and help out. Please let us know that you’d like to help at one of our Sunday morning services. Many hands make light work!



Trinity’s Stephen Ministers and leaders hope and pray that you, your loved ones, and the people you care for are healthy and safe. We know the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted everyone—raising the level of fear, stress, and anxiety for people all over the world and underscoring the importance of caring. If you are feeling stressed and/or anxious, we are here to listen, care, encourage, pray, and provide weekly support for as long as the need persists. If you or someone you know is hurting, and needs someone to talk to, please contact one of the Stephen Leaders: Pastor Krueger (997-5666), Don Meissner (479-4862), Kevin Kot (445-5923) or Colleen Kot (445-5922).

**Our Stephen Ministers are ready to bring
God’s love and care to those in need.**

Trinity School News



From the Principal ...

Dear Friends in Christ,

I pray that June finds you well, enjoying the beautiful weather and maybe, just maybe, thinking a bit about the possibility of a few more opportunities to enjoy the company of others *in person*. It's difficult not to live in fear. I know we've heard so much of this, and it certainly is a central Biblical teaching, but putting it into practice has been challenging in a new way these past several months. As we move forward, the churches begin to reopen and your Board and staff plan for September. We proceed with caution and wisdom, but not fear. There are many, many factors to consider, with the understanding that it can all change again in a moment, but we are called to move forward in faith. It has always been that way, since God first called Abram in the desert and throughout his lifetime. This is another type of challenge that we know we are equipped to confront, cautiously, but with Abram's confidence. *"Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward."* Genesis 15:1. Please continue to pray for strength and wisdom for your church and school leadership!

End-of-the-year plans are progressing for our school students and families as we prepare for report cards, awards, graduations and virtual farewells. The end of May brought a wonderful surprise for our staff in the form of virtual teacher appreciation activities and other remembrances too. The staff and I were overwhelmed at the outpouring of kindness and generosity from our school families. They worked together to produce a student video for us - I'll ask if it can be linked to this newsletter. It was a tear-jerker! We desperately miss our students and sharing in their joy and excitement as the school year progresses.

Our 8th Grade Commencement Ceremony will be a drive-in event on June 12 for immediate family only. Trinity's leadership has been helping me organize this event like a church service and I am very appreciative! Stage, steps, sound, decor, publicity - there are many details and all of them new to me. The staff and I are dedicated to providing meaningful graduation experiences for all students involved. To that end, there will be a car parade through the church parking lot to honor the graduates following Commencement. At about 5:45pm on Friday, June 12, all friends and extended family are invited to drive through the rows of parked and decorated graduate family cars to share your love and best wishes with them. Visitors will be directed to the cemetery side of the parking lot to wait until we begin, and you will be directed how to proceed through the rows by school staff. Our property neighbors will have received notification that it may get a bit noisy for a little while! Remember, you may deliver graduation cards and/or notes for these students to the church or school, or mail them, before that day. I will make sure they receive them. Report cards for the rest of the student body will be available to be picked up on June 18, our regularly scheduled last day of school, along with all of their awards and recognitions. The Board and I have prepared next year's school calendar in faith and trust that we are in God's Hands and He will lead us in His ways, as He has faithfully done all these years. Please pray for our graduates, our students and families and staff, even as we remember and pray for you, our brothers and sisters in mission here at Trinity. Grace, mercy and peace to you!



~ Kathleen Fretthold, Principal



Altar Flowers

We will resume ordering flowers to be placed on our outdoor altar beginning in June for the Sunday 9:30am "drive-in" services. The church office will contact those individuals who had already signed up for June to confirm if they still wish to donate the flowers. At this time, flowers are still needed for June 14, 21 and 28. If anyone would like to sign up for those dates (\$10 each), please contact the church office (674-9188 / Email: trinitylutheranchurch146@verizon.net). Arrangements may be taken home following the service if you wish.

Cemetery News

With summer upon us, it is important to be reminded of some of the Rules & Regulations of Trinity's Cemetery:

- Flowers and plants should be placed in rugged, sturdy containers which can be placed on either side of the monuments. They should not be planted directly in the ground. **NO** glass containers are allowed in the cemetery.
- In-ground plantings (trees, shrubs, etc.) are subject to Cemetery Board approval. Approval must be given prior to anything being planted.
- **ANY** burials or spreading of ashes in Trinity's Cemetery are prohibited without pre-approval from the Cemetery Board. Both state and cemetery regulations need to be adhered to.

Keeping Busy & Updates for Ladies

Thank you to some of the ladies in the Women's Bible study and anyone else who are making fleece throws for the November LWML event. We will donate the throws to Hearts for the Homeless. If you would rather just donate a kit, that *is* an option, and thank you. There is a box labeled "Hearts for the Homeless" in the coat room under the window if you want to bring them to the church once the building re-opens.

Linda Meissner will continue to collect ink cartridges and old electronic devices. See the purple tote in the narthex for all the details. She continues to collect CANCELLED stamps with a quarter inch border around them for a bible ministry. MITES (loose change) is also always accepted. Also, for the LWML Retreat at Pioneer, all occasion cards are being collected (a good way to use those freebies sent from fund raisers) to make crosses for prisoners. This craft will be done at the retreat, which is still planned for September 18-20, 2020. The theme is "CAN DO WITH JESUS", and registration forms can be e-mailed to you or contact Linda Meissner if you don't have internet access. Commemorative long sleeved shirts and hooded sweat shirts are being offered for pick up during the retreat. Details can be e-mailed to you when you contact Linda M.

If we can't get together in person, we can do good for others as a unified body.

"And whatever you do in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." Col. 3:17

LCMS Foundation

Imagine standing on a railroad track with a train coming right toward you. Would you be scared? Of course, you would! Hopefully, you would have enough sense or physical strength to jump off the track.

Sadly, Satan can fill our minds with his lies that create fear, with the result that we feel life is nothing more than facing the danger from oncoming trains. We jump and jump, until one day our efforts are to no avail.

Yes, those are devilish thoughts. From the day the Lord claimed you as His own in baptism, you are headed to a destination. Washed in Jesus' blood, chosen for inheritance, you are destined for life in His new creation of a new heaven and new earth, the "home of righteousness." (2 Peter 3) Your resurrected body will make you fit and ready for that great joy.

So, no, you are not staring into the face of an oncoming train. You are being led in the Savior's grace to the life He has prepared for you. (John 14) Because of this, life is not a reaction to the next threat but a purposeful look into the future, that has no end.

That purposeful living includes making specific plans, directed by the Lord in prayer. For the child of God, such plans include assembling a specific direction of the Lord's assets He has assembled under your control in your estate. These gifts will bless family (through inheritance) and ministry (through bequests), so that long after you are "home with the Lord" (2 Corinthians 5), His gifts will continue to bless, enabling others to know the love of Jesus. This is Christian gift planning.

Your LCMS Foundation Gift Planning Counselor is ready to assist you today, in person, or by video conference. Contact Robert Wirth, LCMS Foundation Gift Planner @ robert.wirth@lfnd.org or 716-863-4427.

Happy Birthday

6/1	Peter Bullock Kasey Lelito	6/8	Helen Schultz Mary Colwell	6/17	Fred Schultz Bruce Heckman	6/26	Kyle McCoy Camden Stefanik
6/2	Rev. David Belasic Karen Hollowood Trevor Jelowski		Peter Szeider Jeff Gertis Cadence Jelowski	6/18	Dallas Smith	6/27	Don Meissner Trevor Wilkening
6/3	Dick LoGalbo Denise Meissner	6/9	Shannon Heckman Jacob Ecker	6/20	Kristen Zawadzki Travis Barnas	6/29	Lisa Osberg
6/4	Martha Birrer	6/11	Johanna Guenther Madelyn Monahan	6/21	Anthony Strong	6/30	Jennifer Evans
6/5	Norine Ecker Jered Cornell	6/13	Becky Mann Abigail Lelito	6/22	Larry Thompson Lenore Ecker		
6/6	Henry Jelowski Claire Haas	6/14	Linda Daum	6/23	Jeffrey Wackowski		
6/7	Brynn Zawadzki	6/16	Mark Blajszczak	6/24	Shana Caldarella		
				6/25	Marilyn Lein Gregory Ringle		

Happy Anniversary

6/3	Brad & Theresa McKernan	6/18	Christa & Charles Wilkening
6/4	Gregory & Lindsay Ringle	6/19	Ken & Becky Mann
6/8	Charles & Eleanor Gass	6/20	Frank & Sandra Lelito
6/12	Paula & David Winkelses Ingrid & Alan Hamann	6/22	Adriano & Roberta DeMoura
6/15	Rev. Ron & Carolyn Habedank	6/23	Dennis & Tricia Glinski
6/17	Ron & Nancy Hope	6/26	Don & Beverly Weiss
6/18	Joshua & Jessica Ecker	6/29	Mark & Katie Willert



While the church building is closed, we are posting weekly videos online. Visit our church website "www.trinitywestseneca.com" to access:

- On-Line Worship Services
- Mid-Week Video Visits from Pastor Krueger
- Children's Church Videos
- Chapel Services

VBS 2020 Cancelled

We are sad to announcement that, due to our current circumstances, Trinity will not be holding Vacation Bible School this summer. We plan to resume VBS in 2021.

Emergency Need

If a family member is **hospitalized** or there is an **emergency need**, please inform and phone Pastor Krueger (997-5666), the church office (674-9188), or one of the Deacons.

Ministers: The People of Trinity Church & School

Position

Pastor
School Principal
Youth & Family Coordinator
Church Office Administrator
School Office Administrator

Name

Rev. Dennis Krueger
Kathleen Fretthold
Mark Willert
Teresa Lynch
Judeen Babcock

Contact Information

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