



Something to Think About . . .

God came to help, to put the world right again. (John 3:17b)

DON'T READ THIS . . . if everything in your life is “together” and under control. Read no further if you’ve never had major struggles with life or with other people. If you have no fears for the future. If you feel like your life is everything you could possibly want it to be. Find something different to read if your needs and desires have been fully met, and you have never said or done anything awful or stupid to any of the people you love the most.

Why? Because this article is about God. And God is all about taking care of the things in this world that have turned out all wrong. It’s not that God doesn’t care about us when things in our lives are great, any more than we don’t care about the people we love when things in their lives are great. No, it’s just that God’s heart goes out to us when times are tough — *especially* when times are tough. Even when it’s our own fault. God wants to make things right, no matter what it takes.

God’s heart goes out to us when we’re most in need of someone to set things right. God’s heart goes out to strengthen the knees that shake in fear; to fill up those who are hungry for a word of hope and truth; to empower those who need to make big changes in the way they live their lives. To set free those who have been terrorized by others — and those who terrorize others, including themselves. For, you see, God’s heart is Jesus Christ. And Jesus Christ, quite simply, is love as we’ve never known it before.

Want to hear it again? Pick up a Bible and read John 3:16-17: “This is how much God loved the world: He gave his Son, his one and only Son. And this is why: so that no one need be destroyed; by believing in him, anyone can have a whole and lasting life. God didn’t go to all the trouble of sending his Son merely to point an accusing finger, telling the world how bad it was. He came to help, to put the world right again.” (*The Message*)

No matter how hard we try, no matter how much we know, life here on earth — even life in the church! — is not paradise. We are just plain human beings. And God’s people have always been a mixture of the very best and the very worst. (Read the book of Genesis if you doubt this!) Each one of us, in fact, is a mixture of the very best and the very worst, both at the same time.

With God’s help, we can work toward getting out from under the horrible burden of hiding this truth and cling instead, with everything we’ve got, to *this* truth: we are made whole by God. For some reason (LOVE!), God just keeps working with us and in us and through us. All of us.

Are you still reading? Then maybe you need this word about God just as much as I do. This year, may you know in every way that you are blessed by God’s unending, creative love!

~ Pastor Cheri Danielson

Ash Wednesday is February 25.

Services of Holy Communion

Trinity of Binford — 5:30

Trinity of Cooperstown — 6:00

Mabel of Sutton — 6:00

Lutheran Church of McVile — 7:00

Our Savior's of McHenry — 7:30

Faith of Hannaford — 7:30

Recipes from the Staff Open House

Many of you asked for recipes for the spinach dip and the hot cranberry punch that were served at the open house. We don't yet have the recipe for the spinach dip; but here's the recipe for the cranberry punch (adapted from the *Fix-It and Forget-It Cookbook*, by the way).

Hot Cranberry Punch

- 2 qts hot water
- 1½ C sugar
- 1 qt cranberry juice
- ¾ C orange juice
- ¼ C lemon juice
- ½ C red hot candies

Combine all ingredients and heat on the stove or in a slow cooker; enjoy it with those you love!

Healing Service

Sunday evening, February 22

7:00 p.m.

Trinity in Cooperstown



For all the people of our communities

Northland Rescue Mission Trip

On December 6th a troop of 30 people headed up to Grand Forks for our mission trip to the Northland Rescue Mission. (There we were joined by 5 UND students, two of which were granddaughters of one of our members) With 14 youth and 16 adults we took a trailer load of goods for the mission; along with people hauling clothing and things in their cars. Six out of the nine churches were represented on our trip. By the end a grand total of \$672 dollars was raised for the mission.

The Northland Rescue Mission, we came to learn, is considered the “Cadillac” shelter in the Midwest. With their attention to resident safety, clean environment, and services, they provide shelter and food for a growing homeless population. Currently there are 107 residents at the shelter, with the majority being men (which is always the case).

Our youth were able to serve meals to the residents as well as work in the store. The store provides clothing and linens needed by the residents. The youth, along with many adults went through all the bags and boxes we sent up and organized them for easy accessibility by the residents. The residents are able to take advantage of this free store in order to access clothing for everyday life and for job interviews.

The shelter, being a Christian based organization, relies mainly on private contributions in order to provide the services necessary. They shared stories with us about how the power of prayer has helped them in times of need. One such story was being faced with only having 2 turkeys for Thanksgiving they prayed and the word went out and they found themselves with 200 turkeys for the holiday. All two hundred turkeys were put to good use for the meal and prepared for meals to come.

The mission trip was a growing experience for us all. We plan on another trip in the coming early spring. Keep watch for upcoming details.

“Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.” Hebrews 13: 1-2

Youth News

Coming up in February for our youth:

Lost and Found Ministry presentation on addictions

Wednesday, February 4

For all our confirmation students, parents welcome too
All classes will meet at Trinity in Binford
Supper at 6:00, presentation at 6:30

Dogsledding

Saturday, February 7

9:30—3:30 at Red Willow Bible Camp

For our TCM confirmation students

Extended registration deadline of February 2

Ski Trips!

Saturday, February 21 to Walhalla

For junior and senior high students

Saturday, February 28 to Fort Ransom

For elementary students

Sunday evening discussion

Darla Fliflet home, rural Cooperstown

7:00-8:30

For junior and senior high students

- February 1— We have all been created in the image of God.
- February 8—Things that truly matter in our lives.
- February 15 — God loves us, he always has and he always will.
- February 22 — What about our anger?

First Communion classes

Saturday, April 4

Sites and times to be announced.

Information and registration for most events is in the hot pink youth newsletter that was mailed out in November. Or go to the youth section of the TCM website.

The next youth newsletter will be coming out around the middle of March. It will include information on our summer mission trip.

Changes in our confirmation program

The parish council and the staff have for the past few months been discussing the confirmation program: its challenges, its joys, and our hopes for its effects on young people. At its November meeting, the parish council voted to change the program from three years to two years.

There are a number of reasons for this: one is the difficulty of students' schedules and travel distances; another is the availability of staff (having three pastors rather than four). We have tried this year to combine all three grades, but have discovered that the developmental differences between a 7th grader and a 9th grader make it difficult to meet the needs and keep the attention of both.

So this spring we will be making the transition to a two-year program by confirming both those in 9th grade and those in 8th grade. We hope our confirmation sessions this year will help young people to feel a connection to their church, and to find places in their congregations where they can share their time and talents.

After they are confirmed, it will be up to each congregation to take seriously the need for ongoing involvement by each of them. Please don't let them down!

Confirmation dates on the calendar so far:

- May 17 at Cooperstown
- May 31 at McVile, Hannaford, Binford

Coming up at Red Willow Bible Camp



Dog Sledding Days

- February 7 (TCM Confirmation students)
- February 28 (general public)

Men's Mid-winter Getaway

- February 20-21

Family Winter Fest & Wild Game Feed

- February 21

Confirmation Retreat (Grades 7-9)

- March 6-7

Creative Memories Scrap Booking Retreat

- March 20-22

Garden Art Retreat

- March 20-21

Grades 4-6 Retreat

- April 3-4

Jr. High Retreat

- April 17-18

Adult and youth retreat brochures are available in our churches.

Subscribe to the camp's eNewsletter at: redwillowbiblecamp.org/subscribe.htm

www.redwillowbiblecamp.org

Valentine Banquet

Saturday, February 14, 6:00 p.m.

Trinity in Cooperstown

*Prime rib, shrimp,
dairy potato bake, coleslaw, dessert*

Entertainment

\$25 per person

*Proceeds will be used toward
Trinity's current building projects.*

Call Nancy at 797-3611 for tickets.

Many Thanks . . .

Thank you to all housed seminarians during the 2009 Seminary on the Prairie:

- Dan and Marla Larson
- Duna Frigaard
- Vernon and Lois Knudson
- Laverne and Kathy Larson
- Jim and Terry Dramstad

Also, many thanks to two of our parishioners for their presentations: John Leininger and Scott Tranby.

And finally, thank you to the staff at Red Willow Bible Camp — Becky and Denny Goetz, Becky Delfs, Ken Gilbertson, and Erica Adrian — for the wonderful hospitality to all who attended.

How does the TCM budget work?

By the first part of February, all nine of our TCM congregations will have had their annual meetings, giving all members a chance (among other things) to review the nuts and bolts of operating a congregation and Tri-County Ministry.

A few months before our annual meetings (probably in October), each congregation has a special meeting to approve the TCM assessment for the coming year. But some members may wonder how the council arrives at the assessment. If you are one of those members, this is the newsletter article for you!

For a couple of years now, the TCM Council has used this method for arriving at the assessment:

Each congregation pays \$100 per Sunday worship service. That means that each congregation pays a base rate of \$5200 into the TCM General Fund, with the exception of Our Savior's of Kloten. Our Savior's holds 48 Sunday services per year, so pays a base of \$4800.

The remainder of the budget is divided up on a per active confirmed basis. This is where it might get a little more complicated. First of all, each congregation needs to have a current membership number. So, at the end of each year, each church might have a committee get together to look at the membership list. The committee will add the transfers in and the confirmands, subtract the transfers out and the deaths, and then possibly move members to an inactive list. (A member might be moved to the inactive list after not attending, giving or communing for two years, for example.) Each congregation reports their membership number at the January meeting of the TCM Council. That number is the basis for the following year's budget.

The base assessment (the \$100 per Sunday service per church) is subtracted from the amount needed for the TCM budget, and that new amount is divided by the total number of active confirmed members in TCM. And that gives the per member assessment.

For 2009, each church is paying Tri-County Ministry the base rate of \$5200 (or \$4800) plus \$195 per confirmed active member. That assessment is based on the 992 active confirmed members in our nine congregations at the beginning of 2008.

And finally, what does this assessment pay for?

The TCM General Fund covers the expenses which are shared by our congregations, namely the pastors and administration of TCM. It covers mileage, salaries and benefits, pulpit supply, office and telephone expenses, upkeep of parsonages which are in use by TCM, the intern program, youth ministry, the TCM website, and conventions and retreats. Our General Fund also now has a line item for Seminary on the Prairie.

If you ever have questions about TCM, please go to your TCM council representatives or any member of the TCM staff.

~Theresa Fiebiger

Worship Service Alert!

Please note that all the late worship services on Sunday mornings are now at 11:15.

This change gives our pastors needed fellowship and travel time between services.

Tri-County Ministry
Box 226
Binford, ND 58416
Phone 676-2761
trinitybinford@mlgc.com

Box 665
Cooperstown, ND 58425
Phone 797-3611, fax 797-3610

www.tricountyministry.org

Pastor Jessica Merchant 769-2231
..... (cell) 218-230-4479
..... uncas16@hotmail.com

Pastor Cheri Danielson 676-2762
..... (cell) 789-8016
..... cheridanielson@dlytech.com

Pastor Marli Danielson. 676-2762
..... (cell) 789-8006
... marli_danielson@dlytech.com

TCM Parish Administrator
Theresa Fiebiger 676-2761
..... trinitybinford@mlgc.com

Faith of Hannaford 769-2387
..... faithl@ictc.com

First Presbyterian of Cooperstown
..... 797-3112
..... bthomas@invisimax.com

Grace of Grace City 674-3112
..... kmac@daktel.com

Mabel of Sutton 769-2396
..... gstokka_00@yahoo.com

McVilLe Lutheran Church 322-4952
..... mcvilleparish@gondtc.com

Our Savior's of rural Kloten 322-4952
..... mcvilleparish@gondtc.com

Our Savior's of McHenry 785-2117
..... trinitybinford@mlgc.com

Trinity of Binford 676-2761
..... trinitybinford@mlgc.com



Snow, snow, snow . . . and still more snow!

**Ohhhh, the weather outside is frightful,
and the roads are drift- and ice-full;
we'd like to be at church – but NO!
It's gonna snow, gonna snow, gonna snow!**

**Oh, it doesn't show signs of stopping,
and the wind chill is eye-popping;
it seems there's no place we can go--
it's gonna snow, gonna snow, gonna snow!**

**When we finally get those bills--
for the church's heat and mission, no frills--
things can start to seem even worse
if your offering's still in your purse!**

**Oh the budget is slowly dying,
but my dears, we're still relying
on you to help with the cash flow,
while it snows and it snows and it snows!**

