



Tri-County Ministry News

We exist to serve Christ in harmony with our member churches and communities.

From Pastor Sherri

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

Matthew 9:37 NRSV

As part of our 25th Anniversary Celebration at Tri-County Ministry, we invited former pastors and interns to be guest preachers if they could work it into their schedule. On June 18th, we were privileged to host Rev. Matt Dollhausen, a former intern at TCM. I hope you were moved by this message of God's grace in our lives. I hope you were also reminded of the ground work that you did in preparing this leader for decades of proclaiming the gospel message in other congregations and for the wider church. I hope this was a celebration of your ministry over the years in this place.

This visit came on the heels of my two-day New Intern Supervisor Training Class, which took place at Luther Seminary, in St. Paul. As most of you know, Stephanie White will be joining us in September as Pastoral Intern for the next year. While Stephanie will be coming to us with much ministry and life experience, we need to be reminded that Stephanie is not another staff member, but a student. We have been granted a sacred trust of shaping and launching a future leader of the church. One-fourth of Stephanie's time in seminary will be spent with us, so we are also teachers. While Stephanie will have the opportunity to do much preaching and visitation, we are responsible to give her a complete ministry experience based on her own goals. Instead of focusing on "What will this intern bring to us?" we are challenged with the question "What can Stephanie RECEIVE from us?" What are the strengths and gifts of each congregation of TCM? I challenge the congregation councils, TCM Council, and all of us to name these strengths in preparation for Stephanie's arrival in September.

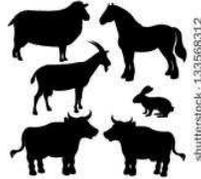
So wholeheartedly and enthusiastically celebrate the past 25 years of proclaiming the Gospel message at Tri-County Ministry! The highlight will be our worship and activities on August 6 at Red Willow Bible Camp. God reminds us, by entrusting an intern to us, that God is not done with us yet. And God reminds you that you have a part in shaping this future leader of the church. You are one of the laborers that Jesus calls into the harvest field. Whether that means that you serve on the Internship Committee, serve as a council or worship leader, or participate in other vital ministry, you are in partnership with Luther Seminary, the Internship Supervisor, and the Candidacy Committee in preparing this intern for a leadership role in the church. The Holy Spirit gives us wisdom and strength for this sacred calling. May the Holy Spirit also give us the grace to let this student mess up and make mistakes while she is figuring out this call into ministry and who she is within this call.

Another role in which you can serve is with the gift of hospitality. If you like to entertain in your home, invite Stephanie over for a meal. If you like to meet for coffee, invite her to the local café. If you attend community and school events, invite Stephanie to join you at a basketball game or concert. There will be opportunities throughout the year for you to form relationship and encourage this new member of our community. God gives us what we need in order to serve in where we are called. Celebrate and serve in 2017 and beyond.

Summer Mission Project: *Buy a Farm*

Your TCM staff has committed to buying a farm and is challenging each congregation to fill up the m & m containers to buy a farm. Because who doesn't want to be able to say they bought the farm? In a good way of course...

Here are the facts: ELCA Good Gifts (elca.org/goodgifts) and Presbyterian Gifts (presbyteriangifts.org) both have options for buying livestock, farm tools and seeds to help a family get started in both a business and a way to feed their family. To purchase a cow, two pigs, chickens, some goats, farm tools, and seeds as well as basic training to go with costs \$715.



So here is what you can do:

1. Pick up your m & m container at church.
2. Fill it with change, cash or checks since we'll take everything from pennies on up.
3. Bring it back to church at the end of summer.
4. Think about how amazing it is when we help our neighbors near and far as we care for "the least of these" (Matthew 25:34-40).

Looking ahead:

God's Work Our Hands

Sunday, September 10

Church councils are encouraged to start planning now!



30th Annual RWBC Quilt & Fine Art Auction

Thursday, August 17: Quilters Appreciation Supper

5:30 Music by Lossie May Combo

6:00 Dinner

7:00 Program, featuring recognitions and barn quilt demonstration

Sunday, August 27: Quilt Auction

9:00 Retreat Center open

10:00 Worship in the chapel

11:00 Buffet lunch

9:00-2:30 Silent Auction

1:00 Live Auction in the chapel

2:30 Drawing for raffle prizes

Raffle tickets are available in our churches and the day of the auction.

Worship time alerts

First Presbyterian

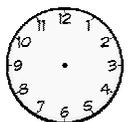
- ♦ 9:45 July 16 (assisted living) and July 23, August 13, 20 (assisted living) and 27

Trinity

- ♦ 7:00 Wednesday evenings July 5 through August 2

McVile

- ♦ 7:00 Wednesday evenings in August



Celebrating 25 Years

**Tri-County Ministry
Anniversary Celebration**

**Sunday, August 6
Red Willow Bible Camp**

9:30 – Gathering coffee hour in the Chapel

10:30 — Worship

Noon Meal in the Retreat Center
Ham and turkey provided by Thrivent

*Please bring a dish to pass
and an item (paper product, laundry soap, or
coffee) or a cash donation for the Bible Camp*

2:00 — Anniversary Program in the Chapel
Special guests: former pastors and intern pastors

To God Be the Glory!

STEWARDSHIP CORNER: Keep on Giving

We continue to look at our giving as a spiritual practice that is faithful to God. In the past, stewardship has been about the churches and our own yearly budgets. Instead, let's start from a place of hope no matter what our circumstances.

The first spiritual practice is to COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS. The second is to COUNT YOUR CASH. We talked about contentment and labeled it LEARN TO BE CONTENT. Last time, we pondered CHOOSING A SIMPLER LIFESTYLE. Once we have those things in place, we have the power to KEEP ON GIVING.

"The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work." (2 Corinthians 9:6-8)

It is important that we continue to give during an economic downturn, and not only because our faith communities and charities depend on our giving.

We give because WE NEED TO GIVE. The Holy Spirit is continually at work shaping and growing our hearts, leading us to reflect the generosity of God's nature, as well as the depths of God's self-giving nature made known in Jesus. As we give, we experience the deeper joy of growing in our faith.

One advantage of thinking about our giving in terms of giving away a percentage of our income is that it helps us adjust our giving as our income goes up or down. When we have less money coming in, we can give less, but do so knowing that our relative generosity is unchanged.

Here is a suggested exercise: Review your giving in relation to your income. Do you know what percentage of your income you give back?

There is a peace that comes when aligned with God's purpose of shalom, or peace that comes from living in right relationship with each other and all of creation. Understanding how we fit into God's purpose leads to joyful giving.

Loving God, help us to align ourselves with your purpose on this earth and to experience the joy that you intend for our lives in you. All this we pray in the name of Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.

25 years ago . . .

As we approach our anniversary celebration, think back to this time 25 years ago. A full staff had been hired for this experiment on the prairie. Pastor Carell Foss had accepted the call to be our Lead Pastor, and his wife Bonnie had been hired as the TCM Coordinator. Pastor Eric Hulstrand was on the way to his first call here, where he would be our Youth Pastor. His wife Pam, an Associate in Ministry, was hired for part-time ministry. And finally, Pastor Elwyn Nissen had been called out of retirement to be our part time visitation pastor. The three pastors and Pam would all be preaching every Sunday, each of them covering two worship services.

So Tri-County Ministry was off and running the first of August, 1992. Plenty of work was still to be done. By-laws were being drafted, Bonnie Foss was designing a logo for the parish, Pastor Eric was working out plans for a confirmation program that included students in four or five school districts. Open houses at the parsonages were planned. Retreats and youth events were put on calendars. And an Installation Service was being planned.

One more "25 years ago" in the next newsletter . . .

On the Road Together

In early June, the Eastern North Dakota Synod Assembly gathered together with worship, fellowship, learning and business. Hundreds of attendees heard stories of mission (local and global). The theme was “On the Road Together: Traveling into the next 500 years” with the emphasis that we celebrate all the shared ministry among ELCA congregations, all our full communion partners (including Presbyterians), the Roman Catholic Church, and the global Church.

We had six delegates from TCM (two pastors, four lay) and here are some quick insights and reflections in their own words:

Becky Goetz – “The theme this year focused on being a church for others. We took part in the ordination of Jacob Mayan, founding minister of South Sudan Lutheran Church in Fargo. Sister Michelle was consecrated as a Deaconess in the ELCA during opening worship and will serve the church with her passion and talents in the arts. The dynamic worship, the great preaching and teaching, plus workshops on a wide variety of topics are very uplifting.”

Pastor Kara – “Keynote speaker Eric Barreto both uplifted and challenged us to think about how we read the Bible from within our own culture. We have so much to learn from people whose experiences are different from our own. Diversity enriches the body of Christ and encourages us to remember that we cannot fully understand the full scope of faith if we ignore some of our neighbors and their beliefs.”

Denny Goetz— “This year’s Eastern ND Synod Assembly was enjoyable, informative, and inclusive. It was a reunion with pastors and parishioners from across eastern ND. Assembly events included participants from multi-cultures, many of them new Americans. It was extraordinary to have the Catholic Bishop John Folda participate in a joint Lutheran-Catholic

Commemoration of the Reformation.”

Rob Loe – “We are an ever-evolving church. The church-wide mission strives to react positively to realities of change. The ethnic and cultural diversity of the church was displayed literally and symbolically in the opening worship. This parade of diversity carrying flags and wearing ethnic clothing encircled the entire Assembly with rhythm and song. This was humbling and inspiring, and it altered perspective and world view.”

Linda Loe – “Sunday morning’s worship was incredible. The message from Bishop John T. Folda of the Catholic Diocese of Fargo helped us know we all worship one God, share scriptures and can worship together. Witnessing an ordination of a pastor to lead the South Sudan Lutheran Church was moving. Men, women and children from their church helped create an atmosphere of excitement, joy and love.”

Pastor Sherri— “A Catholic Priest who was a breakout session leader described the closing worship as ‘historic.’ We were a part of the same church for 1500 years, three times as long as we have been separate; we worship the same God, celebrate Jesus Christ’s crucifixion and resurrection and acknowledge that the Holy Spirit moves among us. Last year our church bodies signed a document called *Declaration on the Way*. Our church bodies, like us, are still being reformed every day.”

Dan Larson, member of Faith Lutheran in Hannaford, was elected the Prairie Rose Conference representative to the Eastern North Dakota Synod Council. Elections were held at the Synod Assembly in Fargo where the Conference meetings were held.

Dates for the 2018 Synod Assembly: June 2-3.



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Tri-County Ministry News is published nine times per year: January, February, March, April, June, August, September, October, and November.

**Annual Indoor Picnic
&
Pie Auction**

**Sunday, July 30
Our Savior's in McHenry**

**5:00-7:00 Picnic
5:00-6:30 Silent Pie Auction
6:30 Live Pie Auction**