



Tri-County Ministry News

TRI-COUNTY
MINISTRY

June 2020

From Pastor Sherri

“Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord of hosts.” – Zechariah 4:6b

The book of Zechariah offers a vision of restoration of a nation of God’s people after they return from their exile in a foreign land. The restoration of their temple in Jerusalem is of prominent importance. Their rebuilt temple is led by priests who are blessed and rededicated to lead the people in “proper” worship. Zechariah provides a vision of their future.

Covid-19 feels to me like being exiled in a strange land. I wish I had a clear vision of the future for Tri-County Ministry to give you at this time. In reality, we are looking at the start-up procedures for our faith communities across the parish. Right now, leadership of our churches are working on building cleaning procedures and pastoral staff is working on a draft of “In-person Gathering Procedures” for our ministry to present to the individual church councils, Presbyterian Session, and the TCM Council. We are in conversation with other ministries and colleagues as well as using guidelines from the Eastern and Western North Dakota Synods, considerations from the ELCA, guidelines from the North Dakota Smart Restart, and Best Practices for Places of Worship from the North Dakota Smart Restart.

As the referenced article expresses (see link on page 2) the experience of in-person worship will not be the same as the last time that we were together. It is important for us to have our start-up procedures in place for the safety and well-being of our members. We are also considering starting up with in-person worship in outside venues instead of inside of our sanctuaries during the summer.

Have you ever heard the term **Adaptive Leadership**? It is a practical leadership framework that helps individuals and organizations adapt and thrive in challenging environments. It is being able, both individually and collectively, to take on the gradual but meaningful process of change. Adaptive leadership requires leaders to try new things and adjust in mid-stream, to let go of things that are no longer effective or practical. Adaptive leadership is what the church requires because we are trying to navigate uncharted territory. And this was before COVID-19!

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Parish News

Online giving is in the works

Yes, we know we've been talking about this for a while. And now, Trinity, Faith, and Lutheran Church of McVile have entered into an agreement with Vanco, providing another option for offering.

This isn't up and running yet, but eventually you'll be able to go online, click and give your offering, one time or recurring. You'll be able to use your credit or debit card or direct payment from your checking account.

Instructions will come out in the weekly e-news and in the next newsletter when set-up is complete.

In the meantime, our church councils/session gratefully acknowledge all who have continued their offerings in support of our congregations.

In-Person Worship Guidelines

Four of our congregations will begin worship this Sunday, June 14 (see calendar). The TCM pastoral staff has compiled the following guidelines, which have been approved by the TCM Council.

DOORS: Propped open. Everyone comes in the same door. No touching of doorknobs.

UNUSED SPACES: Fellowship halls, offices, and coffee spaces will be closed.

SEATING: Sit in family groups (both indoors and outdoors). Some pews will be blocked off. Families will be dismissed by the ushers after worship. Limit movements during worship.

SANITIZER: will be available inside the church door.

MASKS: Worshippers will wear masks (except under 2 years old). Churches will provide masks for those who do not have them.

MATERIALS IN WORSHIP SPACE: Parents, please bring children's activity bags from home, don't share them outside of the family during worship, and take them with you after worship.

WORSHIP AIDS: If bulletins are used, please take it with you and dispose in your home.

OFFERING: Plates won't be passed around; access on the way in and/or out of the worship service.

WHAT THERE WON'T BE: Singing, communion, passing of the peace, unison responses, prayers, confession of faith. (Some are optional for outdoor worship.)

WHAT THERE WILL BE: Worship and praise with your brothers and sisters in Christ; care for the health and safety of all worshippers.

Online worship will continue!

If your church is not yet open, or if you do not wish to attend a live worship, Sunday morning worship will be broadcast on Facebook Live and on YouTube.

Congregational News

Trinity of Binford

In-person will begin on Sunday, June 14. Worship will be in the gazebo area at the Binford Park starting at 8:30. A very informal service, lasting about a half hour.

Trinity Council met May 11. The discussed church re-opening protocols, repairs, and online giving. The Council agreed to get further information on Vanco, which would allow contributors to give their offering with a credit card or bank transfer. Offerings and benevolences have been staying on track during the time of online worship.

Volunteers are needed to mow the church and parsonage lawns. Please all the office to sign up for the week(s) you can help.

A graveside service for Wallace Iverson was held Saturday, May 23. Wallace passed away in Fargo on May 19. A graveside service for Lorraine Edlund was held Saturday, May 30. Lorraine passed away in Northwood on Sunday, May 24. Please continue to keep these families in prayer.

Lutheran Church of McVile

The church was recently locked for two weeks and a thorough cleaning has taken place.

In-person worship begins Sunday, June 14, with worship in the church yard.

Our Savior's of McHenry

The OS Council held a special meeting and has decided to hold off with re-opening the church.

Summer mowing will be done by volunteers; don't be afraid to sign up!

Our Savior's of Kloten

Members have come to the consensus that they will wait to open the church until later.

Mailing info for congregational offerings:

Faith of Hannaford

Mary Jo Grover
707 Foster Ave. NW
Cooperstown, ND 58425

First Presbyterian

Rita Jungels
509 10th Ave. SW
Valley City, ND 58072

Grace

John Gisi
1951 82nd Ave. NE
New Rockford, ND 58356

Our Savior's of Kloten

JoAnne Brennan
112 6th St. South
McVile, ND 58254

Lutheran Church of McVile

Box 306
McVile, ND 58254

Our Savior's of McHenry

Missy Erickson
9057 16th St. NE
McHenry, ND 58464

Trinity Lutheran Church

Box 226
Binford, ND 58416

Food Pantries still need our donations!

Bread of Life Food Pantry
Box 365
Cooperstown, ND 58425

Carrington’s Daily Bread
875 Main St.
Carrington, ND 58421

Hunger Free Food Pantry
436 1st Ave. North
New Rockford, ND 58356

Michigan Food Pantry
c/o Debbie Narum
3950 County Rd 35
Michigan, ND 58259

Great Plains Food Bank
1720 3rd Ave. North
Fargo, ND 58102-4254
Or give online at
greatplainsfoodbank.org

**God’s Work
Our Hands**

Day of Service
Sunday, September 13,
2020

Churches that
participate in this annual
event might want to
start making plans now.

First Presbyterian of Cooperstown

Comments from Members: Just have really appreciated our new "Sunday Church Services," given our current situation. Thank heavens for technology, and seeing how the system can work. Of course, not the same as being in Church, but it does give us a view we couldn't have realized until now. Perhaps, even, a view of how the future might look given the number of churches and staffing issues. Thanks, Tri-County staff, for the work and time it takes to set up each service.... it is no small task, we are sure. Thank you for your dedication and the work that goes into each service. We are thankful for all of it!

Presbyterian Deacons are staying in touch with our Assisted Living worship family.

A \$1000 donation was made to the Bread of Life Food Pantry which services the Griggs County area.

We are fortunate that most church members have texting capabilities so we have been able to stay in contact that way or by phone with the non-texting members.

Consensus by Session members to discuss the church reopening at the beginning of July.



From Pastor Sherri (continued from front page)

Adaptive leadership experts tell us that we, as church leaders, have made two years’ worth of changes in the last two months because of the pandemic. We would never purposely make changes this quickly, however, the circumstances have forced us to close our buildings, conduct meetings using computer technology and provide online worship for our congregations. And now we are reviewing procedures on how to gather again safely as faith communities. Since there is no clear-cut roadmap, we are relying on guidelines from our wider church, synod bishops and staff from within North Dakota, our state restart guidelines, and guidelines from our health experts. We will gather again for in-person worship. In the interim time, please take advantage of the written and online resources that we are providing for you.

“But he raises up the needy out of distress... Let those who are wise give heed to these things, and consider the steadfast love of the Lord.” -Psalm 107:41-43

From Deacon Tara

“How long, oh Lord, will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?”

-Psalm 13:1

This verse has always been the cry of my heart as I have waited for God to answer the deepest desires of my heart: to be a wife and mom. And today, in the midst of a pandemic, I find myself crying out these words even more. How long will it be before we meet in our church buildings? How long will it be before we hear the laughter of children as they are gathered for Sunday School? How long will it be before we can sing together? How long will funerals only be for family at the graveside? How long will the news be filled with the news of this pandemic? And I am sure you too are asking and crying out your own “how long” questions.

I don't know about you, but I often find comfort knowing that others are crying out “how long, oh Lord” and are feeling many of the same emotions as I am. It is during this time that I find myself turning even more to prayer. In fact, every night when I jump online to do prayer on my Facebook page, it is just as much for me as it is for everyone else who is joining me. In our Gospel text last week, Jesus left the disciples and leaves us with a very simple prayer, “that they all shall be one.” This prayer is a prayer for unity and community. It is a prayer for hope and peace in our broken world. I find such comfort knowing that our faithful God promises to never leave us or forsake us. God does not forget us forever. In fact, God often shows up when we least expect it.

At seminary and in conclusions of call, there is a prayer that is often recited as part of the worship service. It is a prayer that I have continually found myself clinging to in the midst of this uncertainty. I want to close by sharing this prayer with all of you. I hope it brings you comfort too. “O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen (ELW).”

We may not know what is coming next, how long church will meet beyond their church buildings, or how long this pandemic will last, but what we do know is that God's hand is leading us and God's hand is supporting us. Thanks be to God! Amen!

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

How to find TCM on the web

Website: Tricountyministry.org

Facebook (pages or groups)

⇒ **Tri-County Ministry**

⇒ **McVile Lutheran**

⇒ **Grace Lutheran Church—Grace City ND (group page)**

⇒ **Grace Lutheran WELCA (group page)**

YouTube: **Tri County Ministries**

Weekly E-News: e-mail trinitybinford@mlgc.com to be added to the mailing list. E-News is emailed out each Thursday.