



From the staff

How does your mind work with the term “change?” I would like to share this month a story of change within Tri-County Ministry concerning Seminary on the Prairie. During the annual January 2009 SOP event at Red Willow Bible Camp, Dr.. Alvin Luedke, from Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota, and I talked about the topics that he would be able to support with seminary staff into the future. Alvin and I, over lunch the last day of SOP, shared how this joint endeavor had enriched many lives by bringing seminary students into rural ministry. We parted thinking we had a plan for the following January session in 2010.

During August 2009, I called Alvin and asked how things were looking for the January SOP event. Alvin immediately told me that he did not envision how he could possibly participate in the January 2010 SOP. He shared that he would have 35 doctoral students to work with in January 2010. Because of seminary staff changes, Alvin was assigned all the students from an other professor that was on sabbatical leave for the academic year. In other words, Alvin's work load had changed from January to August, and he could not possibly help with SOP in January 2010.

I brought this information to our next staff meeting, thinking what possible good could evolve from this discouraging news. We brainstormed some and wondered if we could possibly focus on lay pastors in January 2010. We shared this idea with the Eastern North Dakota Synod of the ELCA and the Presbytery of the Northern Plains PC(USA). Both church bodies said they would be willing to participate in the training of lay pastors.

TCM shifted the focus of SOP from bringing seminary students to the rural setting of North Dakota to training lay pastors in the work of preparing sermons with the resources available from the synod, the presbytery, the Internet, and the printed page.

I ask you again, what does the term “change” do for you? When TCM was faced with a change from seminary students to lay pastors as the focus, we brought 15 participants together for a Saturday at RWBC. We offered a pulpit to each participate to preach in the following day; we had three lay pastors accept the challenge and the opportunity. The TCM staff and the lay pastors met after church services and shared about the experience of preparing their sermon and preaching in rural churches.

Did anyone envision this much change in SOP from 2009 to 2010? Did anyone ever see this much cooperation and exchange of ideas between the presbytery and the synod? Would anyone have ever dared to think TCM would be such a leader in lay ministry for rural North Dakota? What should we anticipate for 2011's SOP?

In Christ,

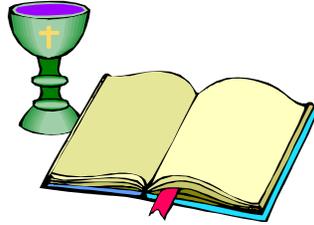
Pastor Marli

First Communion Class

Saturday, March 27

First Communion class will be offered to youth in Tri-County Ministry on **Saturday, March 27, at Trinity in Cooperstown.** The session will run from 9:00 a.m. until noon.

If you have not yet registered your child(ren) for this class, please call or e-mail Theresa (676-2761 or trinitybinford@mlgc.com.)



Lenten series through March "The Sign of Jonah"

- March 3** — Our providing God (Jonah 1:17)
- March 10** — Praying in the belly of the great big fish (Jonah 2:1-10)
- March 17** — The God of the second chance (Jonah 3:1-4)
- March 24** — About face (Jonah 3:5-10)

Wednesday Lenten schedule:

- ◆ Noon — Soup and study at First Presbyterian in Cooperstown
- ◆ 6:00 — Trinity in Binford
- ◆ 6:30 — Trinity in Cooperstown
- ◆ 7:00 — McVillie Lutheran
- ◆ 7:00 — Grace City on March 3 & 17;
Our Savior's of McHenry on March 10 & 24
- ◆ 7:30 — Mabel of Sutton
- ◆ 8:00 — Faith of Hannaford

Coming up for jr. and sr. highers

A lock-in is on the calendar for Friday night, March 12. (Note the date change.) Overnight, 8:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. Saturday morning. It will be held at the Hannaford Community Center. Free of charge; just bring a snack to share. Pre-registration not needed.

Sunday night discussions continue at the home of Darla Fliflet. All junior and senior highers are welcome, 7:00—8:30.

Young Adult Group

Tri-County Ministry has a new young adult group! This is a group for people ages 18-35. We will be meeting two times per month. One meeting will focus on Bible Study/discussion and one meeting will be some kind of activity.

We would love to have more members!

We meet on Thursday nights. Our next two meetings will be on March 11th and March 25th. Watch the bulletins for more information.

If you have any questions or if you have ideas for the group to do, please contact Intern Trichelle by phone at (701) 797-3463 or by e-mail at tkirchenwitz001@luthersem.edu.

March at Red Willow Bible Camp

Confirmation Retreat (grades 7-9)

March 5-6

Kari Bahe, Assistant with the Bishop of the EaND Synod, will lead this retreat on the Sacraments.

Elementary Retreat (grades 4-6)

March 19-20

"Are you being a Mr. or Mrs. Potato Head?"

Garden Art Retreat

March 26-27



For more information, call the camp or go to their website.

www.redwillowbiblecamp.org

A Job and a Ministry

by Michael D. Powell, via Dick Hanson

Do you have a job in this church and this community . . . or do you have a ministry? There is a difference!

If you are doing it because no one else will, it's a job.

If you're doing it to serve the Lord, it's a ministry.

If you're doing it just well enough to get by, it's a job.

If you're doing it to the best of your ability, it's a ministry.

If you'll do it only so long as it doesn't interfere with other activities, it's a job.

If you're committed to staying with it even when it means letting go of other things, it's a ministry.

If you quit because no one praised you or thanked you, it was a job.

If you stay with it even though no one seems to notice, it's a ministry.

If you do it because someone else said that it needs to be done, it's a job.

If you are doing it because you are convinced it needs to be done, it's a ministry.

It's hard to get excited about a job.

It's almost impossible not to get excited about a ministry.

If your concern is success, it's a job.

If your concern is faithfulness, it's a ministry.

People may say "well done" when you do your job.

The Lord will say "well done" when you complete your ministry.

An average church is filled with people doing jobs.

A great church is filled with people involved in ministry!

If God calls you to a ministry, for heaven's sake (literally) don't treat it like a job. If you have a job in the church, give it up and find a ministry! God doesn't want us feeling stuck in a job, but excited, fulfilled, and faithful in a specific ministry.

Many thanks

Over the past couple of months, council members have finished their terms and new members have been seated on councils throughout TCM.

A big thank you goes out to members who completed their terms on the Tri-County Ministry Council: Leona Kulsrud, Mark Urness, Becky Iverson, Rob Loe, and Dick Hanson.

Do you have something for our website?

Anyone having calendar dates, news, or pictures that could be posted on the Tri-County Ministry website is asked to e-mail them to the parish office in Binford. From there, Theresa will either post them on the site or forward them to the webmaster to be posted.

Tri-County Ministry Council — February meeting

ELECTION OF OFFICERS: The following were elected for 2010: President – Jim Dramstad, Vice President – Connie Eslinger, Secretary – Missy Erickson, Treasurer – Iris Brandt.

Congregational Membership: Active confirmed membership numbers of the congregations as of January 1, 2010 are:

Faith, Hannaford.....117	First Presbyterian, Cooperstown 36	Grace, Grace City..... 68
Mabel, Sutton37	Lutheran Church of McVile..... 130	Our Savior’s of Kloten 32
Our Savior’s, McHenry.....79	Trinity, Binford99	Trinity, Cooperstown..... 294
Total membership – 892 (decrease of 57 from 1.1.09)		

Task Force: TCM Executive Committee recommended that the Council establish a task force for the purpose of studying the ramifications to TCM should Mabel and/or Trinity of Cooperstown leave the parish. The task force would bring recommendations to the TCM Council regarding reconfiguration possibilities. Task force would consist of not more than five members, not necessarily people who are already serving on the TCM Council. Motion made and approved to establish task force. Motion made and approved that Keith Zeh be invited to meet with the task force, and that he be invited to meet with the TCM Council at a later date.

Haiti: Motion approved by roll call vote that Tri-County Ministry donate \$900 from the TCM General Fund towards relief for the victims of the earthquake in Haiti. The \$900 would represent \$100 from each TCM congregation, with each congregation designating to which relief agency their \$100 would be sent.

STAFF REPORTS:

- Pastor Cheri reported that Intern Trichelle Kirchenwitz is almost at the halfway point in her internship with TCM. Cheri and Trichelle will be reevaluating Trichelle’s schedule, according the goals that Trichelle set at the beginning of her internship.
- ♦ Pastor Marli worked with Seminary on the Prairie.

CONGREGATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS:

- **First Presbyterian:** Will be having a Wednesday noon study/soup & sandwiches during Lent; they have received two new members.
- **Faith:** Sponsored a bake sale at Hannaford’s Snowflake Festival.
- **Trinity of Cooperstown:** Held a sledding party at the Tranby farm. Three new members have been received. Stained glass window has been installed in the church balcony, using proceeds donated from an estate; stained glass windows will also be installed in the sanctuary, using funds donated by members of the congregation.
- **Our Savior’s of Kloten:** Sponsored their annual soup and sandwich lunch in November.
- **McVile Lutheran:** Will have soup suppers with their Wednesday evening Lenten services. Pastor Marli is leading a Thursday morning Bible study.
- **Grace of Grace City:** Have had a baptism and received new members.
- **Our Savior’s of McHenry:** Three members passed away in January. Received one new member. Will alternate Wednesday Lenten services with Grace City.
- **Trinity of Binford:** The Radio Stars provided music at the January 17 worship service. Freewill offering was received for Lutheran Disaster Response – Haiti. Planning soup suppers for Wednesday evenings during Lent. Sunday School brunch on February 14, freewill offering for John’s English School in the Dominican Republic.
- **Mabel of Sutton:** Kari Bahe, Assistant with the Bishop of the END Synod, has met with the congregation for questions and answers. One funeral has been held. Looking at having a Bible study meeting in their homes.

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

“At the Hop”

Dinner Theatre

Presented by Faith Sunday School

Sunday, March 28

**Faith Lutheran Church
Hannaford**

Dinner at 6:00

Advance Tickets only!

Please order your tickets by March 22.

**Call Darla Fliflet at 797-2149
or Becky Muncy at 769-2477.**