



# Tri-County Ministry News

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

## ***From Pastor Kara***

Grace and Peace!

This is my favorite church season, as I have been saying for years. I love the emphasis upon contemplation, of reestablishing devotional practices, of discipline, and - most especially - of honesty. Honesty because this is a time when we look honestly at our lives and see where we can improve, where we have been falling short and are most in need of God's grace. We face our trials and challenges with open eyes and can see how God is at work in the world.

I don't know about many of you, but I have been working with a Lenten discipline. In past years, I gave up chocolate or took on devotional practices. This year, I gave up shopping for wants. I can purchase anything necessary for living, like food or laundry detergent (we all want me in clean clothes, right?) as well as gifts for others (like for the school kits). And there have been several times I struggle, especially within the first week. So many times I pick up an item and think "Cool. Must have." Then I wander around with it before I think about the likelihood of me using it or being able to live without it.

Temptation is real, especially when we encounter good deals. That is the definition of temptation, by the way. Looks good even when it's not actually good. It might not be bad per se, but it likely is not what God wants for us.

The end of Lent is a time of highs and lows. During the 40 days we reflect honestly about our lives and how we are called to LIVE as the people of God. Then we start Holy Week with Palm Sunday, when we celebrate Jesus entering Jerusalem. We'll continue on to Maundy Thursday when we are reminded of betrayal and Good Friday when we talk about death. But even in the midst of such darkness, when our emotions will match the somber music and texts, in the back of our minds we will be holding onto hope. Because we know that ultimately we will end up at Easter and an empty tomb.

Lent is truly a journey. Just as Jesus was always walking towards Jerusalem, we are always heading toward Holy Week.

May God bless your journey as you seek to live Lent with an open heart to be able to see God at work in and through you. May you have a blessed Holy Week as we face the harsh realities of human betrayal and death. And may your Easter be full of rejoicing and praise for the God who can do the impossible. Amen.

# Lent / Holy Week / Easter Sunday

## ***Wednesday Evening Lenten Worship***

***March 2, 9, & 16***

### ***“Living Lent”***

- ◆ 5:30 at Trinity, supper following
- ◆ 7:00 at Faith in Hannaford
- ◆ 7:00 at Lutheran Church of McVille (supper at 6:00)

## ***Maundy Thursday, March 24***

- ◆ 5:30 at Our Savior’s in McHenry
- ◆ 7:00 at Faith
- ◆ 7:00 at McVille

## ***Good Friday, March 25***

- ◆ 7:00 a.m. at First Presbyterian
- ◆ 5:30 at Trinity
- ◆ 7:00 at Grace
- ◆ 7:00 at McVille

## ***Easter Sunday, March 27***

- ◆ 7:00 a.m. at Faith
- ◆ 8:30 at Grace
- ◆ 9:30 at Lutheran Church of McVille
- ◆ 9:45 at Our Savior’s in McHenry
- ◆ 11:15 at Trinity
- ◆ 11:15 at First Presbyterian



# Opportunities at Red Willow Bible Camp

## **Impact Retreat**

March 4-6 and March 18-20

Open to all youth in grades 6-9

Our confirmation students will be attending this retreat. Any other youth interested may go to the camp website for registration. (You need a code to register online. Please contact Theresa or the camp for this.)

## **RWBC Annual Meeting**

Sunday, March 20

3:00 p.m. at the camp

All are welcome!



## **Women’s Retreat**

April 1 –2

(5:00 p.m. Friday-Noon Saturday)

Sponsored by Morningstar Parish of the Pekin/Tolna area

Open to all. Watch for more info.

## ***Attn Farmers: Bushels of Love for Campers!***

Did you know that you can donate 2015 grain to Red Willow Ministries and receive tax advantages? If God has blessed you with abundance, this is a great opportunity to give back for the work of God’s kingdom through the campers at Red Willow. A gift of grain, corn, beans, or any crop you choose can be given through your local elevator. It is a simple process. You haul in a load or two of last year’s crop and state that the grain belongs to Red Willow Ministries. Questions? Call Julie at 701-676-2681 or go to their website, [www.redwillowbiblecamp.org](http://www.redwillowbiblecamp.org).

# Lent in Tri-County Ministry

Our annual Lenten mission project continues through March, and donations will be accepted any time!

Items for school kits are being collected and will be packed and shipped in May. ELCA donations will go to Lutheran World Relief; Presbyterian donations will go to Presbyterian Disaster Response. Each organization has slightly different lists for their school kits.

Monetary donations are also welcome! Gifts may be given through your church or directly to Tri-County Ministry. Funds received will be used to purchase backpacks for the school kits unless otherwise designated.

Anyone wishing to sew the backpacks can find the pattern at [www.lwr.org](http://www.lwr.org). Theresa also has the pattern in the TCM office in Binford.

	<i>Lutheran World Relief</i>	<i>Presbyterian Disaster Response</i>
<b>Week 1</b>	4 notebooks (70 sheets each)	3 notebooks (70 sheets each)
<b>Week 2</b>	12 inch ruler with inch & centimeter markings	12 inch ruler with inch & centimeter markings
<b>Week 3</b>	5 unsharpened #2 pencils & a 2 1/2 inch eraser	6 unsharpened #2 pencils
<b>Week 4</b>	5 black or blue ballpoint pens	Handheld pencil sharpener
<b>Week 5</b>	Box of 16 or 24 crayons	Box of 24 crayons
<b>Week 6</b>	Blunt safety scissor and a handheld pencil sharpener	Blunt safety scissors

## First Communion Class

**Saturday, March 12**  
**Trinity in Binford**  
**9:30 — Noon**



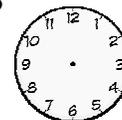
No age limit. Please contact a pastor if you have questions. If you have not yet registered your child, please speak to a pastor as soon as possible.

Parents are welcome and encouraged to attend.

## Worship time alerts

*First Presbyterian*

- ♦ 9:45 March 6 & 20



*Faith Lutheran*

- ♦ 7:00 a.m. on Easter Sunday

## **TCM Council & Leadership Retreat: “The Power That Drives Us”**

On Saturday, February 13, the Tri-County Ministry Leadership gathered at Red Willow in order to listen for where God is leading our ministry over the next year and to hold our TCM Council meeting for the first quarter of 2016. Thank you to all who made this a priority as we know there are many other places that you could have been on that day!

The name of the retreat was “The Power That Drives Us.” We learned about how the Holy Spirit calls and equips us for ministry through gifts that were given each of us in Baptism. We also clarified our purpose: to make disciples. This is our measuring stick based on Matthew 28:18-20. Jesus commanded his disciples to go and make disciples by Baptizing them and teaching them to obey his ways. What are we to teach disciples? 1) Worship; 2) Read & Study the Bible; 3) Pray; 4) Give; and 5) Spread the Good News of Jesus Christ through our own lives. The word “disciple” is based on the word *discipline*. These are the things that disciples DO. (Lent is a good time to start or expand on these disciplines.)

In order to MAKE DISCIPLES, we also need to BE DISCIPLES. So when you gather any group, please ask the question, “Which discipline of the five listed here are we modeling and teaching in this gathering?” Starting meetings and events with prayer and/or devotion time is one thing that we already do. So we are praying and reading scripture together. You get the idea. Maybe we can take turns leading devotions and prayer so everyone gets a chance to practice. Being a

disciple is a “learning by doing” activity. The good news is that we never reach the goal. The Apostle Paul tells us to keep on pressing toward the goal of knowing Christ and arriving at his resurrection because Jesus Christ has made us his own. (Philippians 3:12)

So we have received our call and clarified our purpose through specific activities. The Holy Spirit has equipped each and every one of us. So let us continue on this life-long journey together by focusing in 2016 continue daily to be disciples and make Disciples of Christ. What a privilege it is to walk with you!

Pastor Sherri

### ***TCM Council Meeting Highlights***

**Membership Numbers:** Active confirmed memberships of each congregation as of 1.1.16:

Faith – 72    Our Savior’s of McHenry – 47  
First Presbyterian – 24    Trinity – 78  
Grace - 59    Lutheran Church of McVile – 90  
Our Savior’s of Kloten - 26

**TCM Parish Worship:** Scheduled for Sunday, August 7, 10:30 at Red Willow Bible Camp.

**McVile Parsonage:** Motion approved that the total funds earmarked for the McVile parsonage as of February 1, 2016, be disbursed to the Lutheran Church of McVile.

**TRI-COUNTY MINISTRY STAFF**

*Rev. Sherri Frederikson* .....676-2762  
*(cell) 336-688-2879*  
*PastorSherri@yahoo.com*  
*Box 226, Binford ND 58416*

*Rev. Kara Wiechmann*.....322-4926  
*(cell) 605-770-4005*  
*pastorkaraw@gmail.com*  
*Box 115, McVile ND 58254*

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

**TCM CONGREGATIONS**

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

*First Presbyterian of Cooperstown*  
*797-3112*  
*jejohnson99@yahoo.com*

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

*McVile Lutheran Church*.....322-4952  
*mcvilleparish@gondtc.com*

*Our Savior's, Kloten*.....322-4952  
*mcvilleparish@gondtc.com*

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

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

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

*website: www.tricountyministry.org*  
*blog: www.tricountyministry.com*  
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*Tri-County Ministry News is*  
*published nine times per year:*  
*January, February, March, April, June,*  
*August, September, October, and*  
*November.*

*Palm Sunday Supper*

*Grace Lutheran Church*

*Palm Sunday, March 20*

*5:00 — 7:00*

*Grace in Grace City*

*Ham and Turkey and all the trimmings*  
*Plus their huge bake sale!*