



From Pastor Kara

Greetings, one and all!

Spring is well under way in North Dakota (although it seems as though the season arrived very early this year). I was a bit leery of moving to ND because of the horror stories of winters gone by, but this past winter was a true blessing! And now the plants are growing and yet another time of transition has arrived.

This is a time of year when I always think about the tension between past, present and future. The minutes, days, months, years keep going by, and far too often we forget to savor the small moments. We can forget that life is happening now. I am guilty of this. For so many years, I was focused on my schoolwork as a means to graduate (which I've now done three times). I was in the habit of looking to the future events instead of learning how to really enjoy the life that God provides in the here and now. Learning how to live into the daily blessings is a challenge for those of us who are always taught to look towards a future of change.

During the month of May, change and transition are easy to see and remember. We see the flowers and the crops starting to grow and flower. The school year is ending and seniors are preparing to graduate and move onto the next step in their journey, whether that is more education or a new career. Life continues to flourish and change throughout all parts of creation.

And with change comes a mixed bag of emotions. We are full of sorrow and nerves, remembering the past with nostalgia while looking to the scary, unknown changes to come. But we are also happy and excited, looking forward to the future and the countless possibilities that God will send our way.

At TCM, we also experience the changes and transitions in life, good and bad. We participate in baptisms, First Communion, Confirmation, weddings and funerals. We rejoice as much as we mourn. We praise God while we question the pain. The challenge for us is to always be looking for how God is constantly working in and through our lives. God is a God of the living, who is at work in our world throughout all the ups and downs and twists and turns of life.

So in this world that is constantly transitioning, may we always be on the lookout for how God is in the midst of the changes.

Peace,
Pastor Kara



Affirmation of Faith services set

Services of Confirmation will be held in four of our churches during May. We have ten 8th graders who will be affirming their faith:

Lutheran Church of McVile — May 6
Haley Monsebroten

Faith of Hannaford — May 13
Jayden Grover
Zachary Hanson
Michael Haugen
Jesse Iverson
Nicholas Muncy



Trinity of Binford — May 6
Larissa Feiring
Jesse Gilbertson
Brandt Ronningen

Our Savior's of McHenry — May 20
Joseph Vollmer

Our confirmation class will be finishing out the school year with a service trip to the Great Plains Food Bank in Fargo on Saturday, May 12. They invite parents and anyone else who may want to join them. **If you're interested in going along, please call or e-mail the TCM office in Binford.** (The food bank needs to know ahead of time how many people will be coming, so they can prepare for the projects, and we need to plan our transportation.)

A special thanks to “the crew” — Donna Evers, Denny and Becky Goetz — for all their help with confirmation classes again this year!

Seminary on the Prairie

June 3-4
Red Willow Bible Camp

Ministry to People in
Addiction and Recovery

Facilitated by staff from Lost and Found Ministry in Moorhead, including Pastor Ray Branstiter.

Pre-SOP Round Table Discussion on Friday morning, June 1. All are invited to join the discussion on multi-point / cooperative ministries.

The round table discussion and Seminary on the Prairie are both open to the public. The Friday morning discussion is free. The only cost for Seminary on the Prairie is for meals and lodging at the camp. Much more information, along with the brochure and registration form, is available on the TCM website. Or, you may call the parish office, Pastor Jessica, or Pastor Kara.

Congratulations to our high school graduates

Lutheran Church of McVile:
Scott Rorvig
Libby Haabak
Sage Nichols

Our Savior's of McHenry:
Tova Olderness

Trinity of Binford:
Zach Gilbertson
Tyrel Harding

Faith of Hannaford
Dillon Fliflet
Alecksy Iverson
Dylan Krabbenhoft



Let's Talk about Stewardship

The EaND Mission and Stewardship Table (of which I'm a member) will be hosting get-togethers that will allow folks to just talk about stewardship. On June 14th you can attend a gathering in Jamestown or Devils Lake to sit and talk with other members of our synod about this vital aspect of living out one's faith. As Pastor Kara said last fall, "stewardship isn't what you think it is." Now you have a chance to talk about what it is and isn't. Please save this date on your calendar for one of the locations. More information will follow.



Thank you,
Pastor Jessica

For the past 4.5 years Tri-County Ministry has been blessed with a dedicated and talented Youth Director, Darla Fliflet. It is with joy and sadness that we say goodbye to her ministry with us; Darla is getting married this summer and moving to East Grand Forks. Hence, the joy; but, our sadness in having to say goodbye. Over the years she's been an intrepid leader in youth discussion groups, a stalwart driver of bus and van to concerts and ski trips, and a solid witness of living a life of following Jesus. She has provided a support system for our young people in times of crisis as well as directing them in ways to have fun and adventure. Please join the staff in saying thanks to Darla when you see her (or drop her a card). We have been blessed and are confident that the Spirit will continue to guide her in her work in God's kingdom for God's children.

Directory time is here!

For several months now, you've been hearing and reading about the Tri-County Ministry pictorial directory that will be published this year. Well, it's finally time to sign up for your photo session.

Our directory this year is being locally produced. George Dutton and his staff from Valley City will be in our parish for three weekends in June, traveling from church to church to take the portraits and also to take candid shots.

Here is how the photography schedule has shaped up:



- ◆ June 2-3 at Faith in Hannaford (times TBA)
- ◆ June 9 at Trinity in Binford (9:00-6:00)
- ◆ June 10 at Grace in Grace City (12:30-6:00 or so)
- ◆ June 11 at Our Savior's in McHenry (1:00-9:00)
- ◆ June 24-25 at Lutheran Church of McVile (times TBA)

Because of time and space requirements, George did not think it would be possible for him to set up his equipment in all seven churches. Therefore, members and friends of First Presbyterian are invited to be photographed in Hannaford or at any other location. (Transportation will be provided to Hannaford if needed.)

You are not limited to your own church when it comes to signing up for a photo session. You may go wherever works into your schedule. Or you may go to the studio in Valley City. Sign-up sheets will be in our churches in May. Those who do not get a chance to sign up on a Sunday morning will be called to set up an appointment.

There are a few differences with this directory:

- ◆ First of all, you will not be receiving a free 8x10 as you have in the past. But, you will also not be pressured whatsoever to purchase a portrait.
- ◆ Second, you may submit a photograph. But George charges \$15 for submitted photos, due to the extra work for him to work the photo into the directory. (And it can't be a photograph from one of our previous directories.)
- ◆ And finally, you are being photographed by a professional photographer, with optional backgrounds and props. So our directory is not going to be a cookie cutter directory at all.

All who are pictured in the directory will receive a free directory.

The TCM pictorial directory has always been an invaluable tool for our pastors and for all our members in getting to know one another. So please participate in the 20th anniversary directory!



Summer at RWBC

Seekers

Grades K-3
June 1, 14 & 28
July 11 & 26

Taste of Camp

Grades 1-3 & an adult
June 3-4, July 8-9

Pathfinders

Grades 2-3
June 3-5, July 8-10

Creation Camp

Grades 4-6
June 3-8, July 8-13

Holy Hoops

Juniors
Entering grades 4-7
July 22-27

Advanced Holy

Hoops
Entering grades 8-10
July 15-20

Disciples Camp

Grades 7-9
June 24-29,
July 29-August 3

Wilderness

Week
Grades 7-10
August 5-11

Amp! Camp

Grades 8-11
June 10-15



Brochures are available in our churches. Please check with your church council and WELCA for scholarship information.

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

Quilt Auction — August 26



ELCA Social Statement on Criminal Justice

Over the past years the ELCA has periodically published social statements on various issues that are part of our living our faith. These documents are for allowing discussion to be part of the work of the church as a Church that works within the public realm of our lives. The ELCA is discerning the role of social statements as part of the church's public life. Last year's church-wide assembly passed a resolution for the review/discussion/feedback and presentation of the Social Statement on Criminal Justice. Anyone who is interested in reviewing the draft of this document and providing feedback to the task force is welcome to contact Pastor Jessica.

April is Domestic Violence Awareness Month:

Did you know that in ND:

- ⇒ There was a 3% increase in incidents of domestic violence from 2010 to 2011 (5,159 reported). Domestic violence is the most chronically underreported crime, so the percentage and number of incidents is actually higher.
- ⇒ 4,739 children were directly impacted by domestic violence in 2011.
- ⇒ 26% of the victims accessing ND crisis intervention in 2011 were **under the age of 25**.

Although April has passed, domestic violence is an issue of which we should always be aware. Considering the statistics, it is likely that many of us have in some way been affected by this issue. As communities of faith we are called to care for those who are the most vulnerable and marginalized.

We would like to thank Grace Lutheran Church and the Community of Grace City for organizing the benefit for our family, all the surrounding businesses that donated supplies, and all the people who came to support us. All we can say is Wow! We are very blessed to live in this community that has gathered around us to support us and pray for our family. Thank you also to the people who have sent cards and messages with encouraging words throughout this difficult time. We would not be where we are without you! We are hopeful that Lane, Tanner, and Ty will be accepted into the trial in CA sometime this year. Please continue to pray for the boys as we know that is the one thing that will help!

Jay, Laura,
Lane, Tanner, and Ty
Kulsrud

What are the characteristics of a fitting hymn or spiritual song for Lutherans?

The following article was written by Rev. Roger Reinhart, pastor of the Colfax/Richland Parish. Roger is originally from the McVille area. (This is being reprinted with his permission.)

- **It's about God** – God's love for the world and what God has done for us in Jesus.
- **It's not about "I, me, my"** – Does the song speak more about God or me? Who is the song really about (look at the pronouns)?
- **It reflects a "Theology of the Cross"** – Life is hard, and in the midst of trouble and darkness we find God – not who has rejected us, but who came to die rather than lose us, the God who understands us, the God who is in the darkness with us AND FOR US, the God who loves us just as we are.
- **It does not reflect 'decision theology'** – If I know myself to be a child of God, I thank God that God has decided to make me God's own – it is not my decision that does this (see Luther's explanation of the 3rd Article of the Creed in his Small Catechism). Being a Child of God does not depend on my decision, my reaching out, or my choosing. THANKS BE TO GOD that in Jesus Christ God has decided for us!
- **Being Christian is not exclusive but inclusive** – we are not 'better' or 'more loved by God' if we are Christian (not a part of some 'in-crowd'), but to us has been given the Good News (the Gospel) that God loves ALL PEOPLE and has forgiven us all in the cross of Jesus Christ (we are called together and then sent out by this Good News). "All are welcome in this place," is the message God sends through us. This gives new shape to our lives, indeed it gives new life!
- **It is sacramental** – Lutherans believe in the "means of Grace" (the ways that God gives us undeserved blessings, saves us). In particular, we include: The Word, Holy Baptism, & Holy Communion. (Again, see Luther's Small Catechism on Holy Baptism, Office of the Keys, and Holy Communion). Indeed, God is with us all the time – but in the Means of Grace, God shows us that God is here FOR US. Worship itself becomes a sacrament of God's gifts to us.
- **It is about Community** – This may be most difficult for us. We live in a culture and time where: 'It is all about me.' 'It's just me & Jesus.' Even salvation has become an individualistic thing, and much of modern 'religious music' reflects this. However, in the Church, WE sing in praise of God who calls US together to be God's people (again, look at the pronouns. Are we singing as a community – "we, us, our"; or am I singing just for me – "I, me, my"?).

Lutheran World Relief

Drive

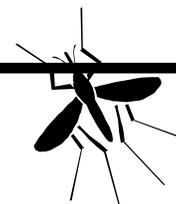
May 14-18, Great Plains Food Bank in Fargo

May 17-18 at Midwest Motor Express in Grand Forks

LWR collects quilts, personal care kits, school kits, baby care kits, fabric kits, and new bars of soap. They no longer collect clothing.

Your quarters at work

The M&M campaign for the Central African Republic brought in over **\$53,000** dollars from the congregations in the EaND Synod. This will help our sister synod provide water management (clean water) for four villages, school supplies for the whole year for 20 elementary schools, monies for the health clinic, a roof on a school, women's scholarships, education for the seminary, and health care for children.



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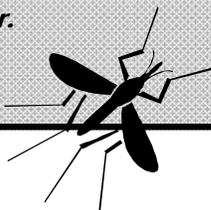
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WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT THE MOSQUITOES?



**McVile Lutheran Church Women's
Annual**

Salad Supper

**Thursday, May 24
6:00 p.m. at McVile Lutheran**

Program by Paula Deutsh

Everyone welcome!