



From the Pastor

Hello Sports Fans,

When I was on vacation some years ago I saw a sign that read, “A politician is someone who was born on second base, but thinks he hit a double to get there.” Now, I don't want to throw any political stones here. In fact, it wasn't the political part of the saying that caught my eye. I liked the sign because I think it makes a good point about *all* of us, regardless of who we are or what political party we belong to.

That point is this. It seems that we often look around ourselves and see all that we have accomplished or accumulated, and we see the investment we have put into it, and that we have earned it by the sweat of our brow. And so we gather it to ourselves in a protective embrace and say, “This is mine—all mine.” It seems that we often we think that we are where we are in life because of what we have or have not done. We think that we hit a double that advanced us from home plate to second base. And there is some truth to that statement: we are “at bat” in our lives. But it is not *entirely* true.

It also seems that we often overlook the blessings of all that we take as “givens” in our lives. Basic education; clean water; the ability to travel freely; a roof over our heads and food on our table; medical care; the change of seasons; the mystery of sleep; the joy of feeling the sun on our faces. The list goes on and on; and we don't always think to give thanks for these things because they are what we *expect* to have in our lives.

In a sense we are all “born on second base.” The raw materials for the muscle power and the brain power that it takes to advance the bases were all *given* to us, not earned by us. The ball, the bat, the team members and coaches and fans, the rules of the game and the playing field were already there, provided for us. We simply use all of those resources, along with the sweat of our brows, in order to move around the bases.

Stewardship simply asks us to remember how it is that we have gotten to whatever base we are on in life—or how it is that we even come to be standing in the batter's box at all. All the good gifts of creation, including life itself, have come to us from the hand of our generous and gracious God. They come into our hands without our even asking. And they are not meant to *stay with us*; rather, they are meant to be *used by us for the benefit of all God's creation*. And they are not meant to be taken for granted, but to allow us to realize how much God loves us and cares for. That is to say, they are meant to be used and appreciated to the glory of God.

A verse in one of our hymns ends with the words: “All that we have is Thine alone, a trust, O Lord, from Thee.” A trust is something that is held by one person for the benefit of someone else. All that we have is a *trust*: owned by God and held by us for the benefit of all God's creation around us.

May we invest ourselves, and the sweat of our brows, to use wisely all that is entrusted to our hands. May we begin to give thanks for all the many overlooked blessings and gifts of each day. And may we share all of our gifts freely and joyfully, just as they have been shared with us.

Enjoy your blessings! Give thanks to God! Give generously to others! God has blessed us!

Pastor Cheri Danielson

Confirmation dates set

Students throughout TCM are completing their work in preparation for affirming their faith through the Rite of Confirmation. Dates, places, and the candidates for confirmation are as follows:

- May 17 at Trinity in Cooperstown
Cassidy Anandel
Carter Anderson
Kennedy Briss
Marissa Ellefson
Jesse Halvorson
Ben Johnson
Jesse Myers
Morgan Somerville
Kris Wathne
- May 17 at Our Savior's in McHenry
Tova Olderness
Jacob Olderness
- May 31 at Grace in Grace City
Sakara Topp
- May 31 at Lutheran Church of McVile
Libby Haabak
Sage Nichols
Scott Rorvig
Andrea Gleason
Braden Henningsgard
Taylor Reitan
Jordan Nerison
- June 7 at Trinity in Binford
Kayla Feiring
Mike Beaver
Zach Gilbertson
Tyrel Harding
- June 14 at Faith in Hannaford
Dillon Fliflet
Aaron Hetland
Mara Heinze
Alecksy Iverson

The Good News About Internship at Tri-County!

We are pleased to tell you that we do have an intern coming to Tri-County this year! Her name is Trichelle Kirchenwitz, and we'll let her tell you more about herself when she arrives. But here are a few interesting tidbits: she grew up on a dairy farm near Medina, ND; she spent several summers working as a counselor at Red Willow Bible Camp; she graduated from Concordia in Moorhead with a degree in social work; and she is married.

She will be starting her time with us on September 1. In the meantime, the Tri-County Council will be deciding which of the empty parsonages she will be living in (Cooperstown or McVile), as well as other details. We'll keep you informed. *This would also be a good time for each congregation to be sure they have selected an internship committee member, and have given that information to Theresa!* The committee will need to begin work before she arrives, and there will be an orientation session for committee members.

The parish will also be responsible for furnishing the parsonage (including the kitchen), and we will supply her with some pantry items to start out with. We will keep you informed about what is needed; we're guessing that between the nine churches we'll have enough "stuff" to provide a functional home for her!

In the meantime, wouldn't it be a nice thing for our congregations — councils, schools, WELCA groups, members, etc — to send cards welcoming her? If you would like to do this, you may call Theresa for Trichelle's address.

Healing Service

Sunday evening, May 24

7:00 p.m.

Trinity in Cooperstown

For all the people of our communities



END Synod Assembly

“God’s Work, Our Hands”

May 2-3

Alerus Center in Grand Forks

On-site workshops, off-site workshops and service projects

Note to delegates: A pre-assembly packet will not be mailed out to you this year. Instead, you need to go to the synod website, download and print out the various documents which are to be brought along to the assembly. The website also has documents to be read before the assembly. If you have questions, please contact Theresa or a pastor.

Our pastoral staff and delegates from the congregations will be attending this annual gathering.

The END Synod Assembly is open to all. Non-delegates may attend as visitors at no charge. (Meals will not be provided for visitors who did not register before April 22.)

WELCA Dessert Social

Sunday, May 3

Trinity in Cooperstown

2:00

Guest speaker: Pastor Ray Branstiter

“Co-Dependency: Compulsive Behaviors Practiced by Others to Drive Us Crazy”

Special Music

Door Prizes

Tickets are available at the Cooper Trinity office or from any Trinity WELCA member.

Dinner Theatre

**Faith Lutheran
Church**

Sunday, June 7

6:00 p.m.

‘50’s theme

**Performance by
Faith Sunday School
kids**

Everyone welcome!

FEMA Disaster Assistance

If you have sustained losses or damage in the recent floods, you may apply for disaster aid. Call

1-800-621-FEMA (3362)

Or register online at

www.disasterassistance.gov

You will need the following:

- your social security number (yours and spouse’s)
- private insurance information
- address and zip code of the damaged property
- directions to the damaged property
- the phone number where FEMA can reach you.

Reflections on the mission trip

Two years ago, I promised myself I would go on the Mexico Mission Trip, next time, to find out what was so Life Changing. So now two years had passed and it was time to take up the challenge. When I asked Dan if he would go with me, he wasn't sure he could go because the first dates were set for May, but someone asked me what was "holding me back" as I was very capable of going by myself, wasn't I. So I signed up with 13 other people including a reluctant husband when the date was changed to March. We met at Darla's the end of December and she told us, "You will receive so much more than you give!" and that thought stayed with me.

As many of you know, 14 turned into 9 and then ended up to be 7 so that we ended up combining with the First Lutheran group out of Fargo to make 34 people going to the Yucatan in Mexico. Darla, Dillon, Stephanie, Shane, Dan and I drove to Fargo three times to do group dynamics, form family groups and work groups and do devotions to ready ourselves to go and do mission. Part of the process was to write to people and ask them to support us financially and prayerfully. Thank you for supporting us. I felt like we were giving to God and the people we hadn't met yet. We gave time and paper and stamps, we cooked soup and made sandwiches for the people of Faith Lutheran and talked about going. I felt like God asked us to give of ourselves. The hardest was the humbleness to ask

for money and donations. But Rollie Johnson encouraged us to let other people be a part of our mission and it was amazing. You gave love and money and acceptance to us and were so excited for us to go. You gave us so much more than we expected. The prayer was tremendous.

Then the day arrived to go. Most of the group left on the 11th of March but Dan and I left on March 15th with 6 others. We were on different flights but were able to cross paths at the airports. In Mexico, the 6 others waited an hour and a half for Dan and I to arrive and then we were off to meet the other 26. God blessed us with no delays and we were in the village of Heuchenbalam by dark and supper. Dan stayed in the Catholic church with 7 other men with a cement floor and half walls, poles for walls and a thatched roof and I was a block south with 8 other women in a traditional casa (house) with a thatched roof, dirt floor and poles for walls. We had enough room for 9 hammocks. Someone forgot to teach me how to sleep in a hammock and I still haven't mastered it. We worked as a group, ate meals together and shared our faith stories. I felt like God was asking me to give — to move out of my comfort zone — to live with and next to college students, to sit and converse with people I hardly new while others cooked and did the things that would give normalcy to my day. To talk to people who didn't speak my language. Again, the college students and the rest of the group

gave me acceptance and love and shared their lives with me. On Friday morning, one of the little Mayan girls, Teddiceda and her mother, Marianna gave me kisses and hugs and we saw many village people turning their heads while they shed tears as the bus left the community center and we were on our way to Akamel. On the bus I thought of what Darla had said, "You will receive so much more than you will give."

Since being back people have asked me what did you accomplish in such a short time? Did you go because it felt good to give to the poor? I can say that I didn't accomplish alot in the physical sense nor were the people so poor that they lacked for food or water or shelter. I went because I was called by God to change myself. One of the lessons that I learned is that I have so much that I do not appreciate, another lesson that the Mayan people taught me by example is to take time to be with people and friends, and finally to take time to be quiet with God. God has given me so much, a chance to experience His love through you and everyone I met on the mission trip to Mexico. Romans 8 "For God is for us."

And yes, Dan said he will go again and take me with him and we hope to get to know some of you more deeply on the next Mexico Mission trip Darla leads!

God Bless You!

Marla and Dan Larson

SUMMER YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Backyard All Night “Outdoor” Movie Night

- > Sunday, June 14, 2009. All movies will be G or PG rated
- > 8:00 pm Sunday to 8:00 am Monday morning
- > At the home of Darla Fliflet, rural Cooperstown



Canoe & Overnight Camping Trip

- > Friday, June 19, 2009
- > Begin at Cooperstown Bible Camp, canoe for 3-4 hours, camp along the Sheyenne River
- > Return to Cooperstown Bible Camp by 11:00 am Saturday morning



20 Mile Bicycle Trip

- Tuesdays: June 16th, June 30th, July 21st, July 28th
- Bike from home of Darla Fliflet to Hannaford, swim at creek, lunch at creek (food provided)



Hike The Hills and Overnight Campout Event

Sunday, July 19th

Hike and explore the Sheyenne river hills, camp out in tents (location TBA)



“Mission in Minneapolis” Youth Service Trip

August 2-6 2009

Serve meals at the “Marie Sandvik Center” homeless shelter., accompany less fortunate children on a field trip to the zoo, a local water park, and plan bible school for them. Free time includes a day at Valley Fair. We will be staying at a local church.

Sunday Night Discussion:

The Sunday night Bible study and discussion will happen in May (see calendar), but no discussion group again until September.



Upcoming events:

In September “Homeless and hungry” food drive, and donations will be taken for homeless shelters, youth will sleep outside in cardboard boxes to become more aware of the homeless issues in our world.

This summer at Red Willow Bible Camp



Seekers — Grades K-3

May 29 (free!)
June 12 (\$30)
July 15 (\$30)
9:00-3:00 each day

Servants Camp — Grades 9-12

July 26-13
\$230

Pathfinders Camp — Grades 2-3

June 21-23
July 20-22
\$95

Hands & Feet — Grades 7-12

July 12-17
July 19-23
\$15 per day

Swimming Lessons

Pre-K — Grade 3
August 10-14
\$30

Creation Camp — Grades 4-6

June 14-19
July 12-17
\$130

Counselors in Training — Grades 9-11

June 8-19
\$160

Call the camp if you'd like to volunteer during Discovery Camp (the camp for adults with disabilities being held June 29-July 2).

Outback Challenge—Grade 7-9

June 21-24
\$140

Holy Hoops

July 19-23 (grades 4-6)
\$240
July 26-31 (grades 7-9)
\$250

Canoe trips are being offered down the Sheyenne River. Trips can be guided or unguided. Check with the camp; services and prices are negotiable. These trips are especially encouraged in May and June.

Disciples Camp — Grades 7-9

July 5-10
August 2-7
\$230

Volleyball Camp — Grades 7-9

June 14-19
\$250

For more information on all camps, check out the summer brochure or go to the camp's website. And remember that our churches offer financial assistance to help all our young members experience Red Willow Bible Camp!

www.redwillowbiblecamp.org

Vacation Bible School

Being led by staffers of Red Willow Bible Camp

June 3-5

Trinity in Cooperstown

June 10-12

at Red Willow Bible Camp

For both sessions: 9:00-3:00 on Wednesday and Thursday, 9:00-Noon on Friday
\$25 per student (check with your church or WELCA for financial info)

Theme: "Loved to Serve"

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To all Tri-County Women:

*McVile Lutheran Church Women
cordially invite you to attend the
Spring Salad Extravaganza
Wednesday, May 13
Dinner at 6:30 p.m.*

*Guest speaker Carma Hanson will share
the story of her mission trip to Honduras
in March*

An evening of food, fun and fellowship!