



From the staff

*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble...
Be still, and know that I am God.” Psalm 46: 1, 10*

Remember that tenth verse of Psalm 46? We used it as our cornerstone a few years ago when we were in a time of transition and we weren't sure what the future held. The only thing we could be certain of was that God was in that future. So God tells us, “Chill out people, remember who I am! I'm the God that was with you at the beginning, I'm the God who is with you now, and I'm the God who is guiding you into the future. I'm your refuge and your strength; a place of respite and building up; the one who gives peace and enables you to persevere. So, rest assured and remember who I am.”

*“Incline your ear, O Lord, and answer me, for I am poor and needy.
In the day of my trouble I call on you, for you will answer me.” Psalm 86: 1, 7*

Here we visualize God as a parent who leans down and brings his ear close to us so that he can hear the words spoken in the midst of anxiety and fear. Love so dear, enveloping us in healing arms as he listens; God's great delight to answer our prayer. And God being the parent who knows more and sees more, whose vision and breadth are far greater than ours answers our prayers for our good. God, who has been with us from the beginning, has plans for the future of Tri-County Ministry. God knows we have fears and anxieties about the future of our parish; and in his answer he says, 'Be still, and know that I am God.'

“Be still, and know that I am God.
*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble...
Therefore we will not fear,
though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;
though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult..”*
Psalm 46: 10, 1-3

We are going to be seeing some changes within Tri-County that may make people feel like we are in the midst of a storm. The changes we will see in staffing may make some feel we are on shaky ground. And yet, we hear in this Psalm that we are not to fear for God is our refuge and strength. If God is us, who can be against us?

Some difficult discussions will take place and difficult decisions made. We will resist giving up our desires and wishes; but through the strength of the Spirit we will, with the “eyes of our hearts enlightened,” discern what is necessary for the future of our parish. TCM will look very different from what we once were. This time of transition and struggle will strengthen the bonds within this parish; sisters and brothers in Christ will walk beside one another, supporting one another as we journey this difficult path together. Our prayers will mingle with one another, our shared stories enriching our relationship.

No, this is not our swan song; we are moving into a future that is new!

“Therefore we will not fear.” Psalm 46: 2

~ Pastor Jessica

Confirmation classes beginning

The TCM confirmation class year begins on October 9. Our 7th and 8th graders will meet in Binford from 9:00 until noon. Revised handbooks will be distributed that day. The group will meet monthly through May, with service projects planned for three of the months.

During the worship services on Sunday, **October 3**, our confirmation students will be recognized and welcomed into this year's program. We will also recognize the adults who will be working with our confirmands.

Weekly Bible study in McVile

Thursday morning Bible study has resumed at the Lutheran Church of McVile. Pastor Marli is currently leading the study of the Epistle of James. The study begins at 9:00 every Thursday morning, and is open to all.

Synod Endowment fund explained

This is the time of year that we hear about the Synod Endowment Fund. What some of you may know is that this fund was the brain child of our former bishop, Rick Foss. Its purpose is to assist retired pastors, seminary grads still struggling with student loan costs, and internship programs. Tri-County Ministry has benefited from this fund; for several years, we have received \$1,000 to help us with our internship program.

I personally have benefited from this program. Although it was not a deciding factor in my coming to North Dakota; I was aware that the Eastern North Dakota Synod is one of the few synods in our church that have a program that helps seminarians with paying off their student loans. Over the past four years the synod has helped me with that obligation.

The Synod Endowment Fund is one of the ways our synod can attract first call pastors as well as experienced pastors to our area. We recognize that the salaries in our section of the woods may not compete with some of the other areas of the country; but our synod has a commitment to providing for those people whom God has called here. Your contribution is greatly appreciated in making this happen. So, please, prayerfully consider your contribution to the Synod Endowment Fund.

Thank you, Pastor Jessica

Carrington Conference Assembly

**Sunday, October 10
Red Willow Bible Camp
2:00**

This gathering is open to all, but our ELCA congregations are asked to have voting delegates in attendance. Bishop Rindy will be giving a presentation on future plans for the END Synod.

Carrington Conference dues are 10 cents per confirmed member. The dues may be brought along to the assembly.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN continues

Early in September, members of our TCM congregations received letters with information about our Capital Campaign, which will be running in our parish through November 15. Donations immediately began to come in. First Presbyterian of Cooperstown has pledged to match the first \$25,000 in donations; over a quarter of that goal has already been realized.

Funds donated are being placed in savings, with the intention that the TCM Council will administer the funds and decide when and how they will be used. Broadly, the funds will be used for future staffing, ministry, and mission of our parish.

If you have any questions about this campaign, please speak to a member of the TCM Council.

Tri-County Ministry Council Highlights — Sept. 22

- ◆ Cooperstown Trinity requested financial assistance with parsonage repairs. Tabled.
- ◆ Rita Jungels was appointed to the Personnel Committee, to replace Avis Lowe.
- ◆ Danielson Letter of Resignation was accepted; parish worship/farewell will be held November 7 in Binford.
- ◆ Discussion of reactions to Task Force recommendations. Finance Committee will meet again to look at different assessment and 2011 budget possibilities.
- ◆ Informal meeting of representatives from the seven remaining congregations will be held October 13; next regular meeting is October 27.

Dear Tri-County Ministry Council, Congregations and Staff:

We write this letter with thanksgiving for the time we have spent together with you, and with heavy hearts as we contemplate that time coming to an end. This has been a year of change, and anticipation of change, in this parish: Trinity in Cooperstown has voted to leave and call their own pastor; Mabel in Sutton will shortly be taking their second vote on whether they will leave the ELCA. Both congregations feel led by God to follow these paths; and so the parish has realized that God will also have new paths for those congregations that remain in this parish.

Because of this, the past year has been a time of discernment for the two of us, as we have come to understand that the coming changes in the parish will mean changes in staffing, as well. And so, as many of you know, we entered into the process of searching for what God has in store for us next. That search has led Marli to a call to a two-point parish in Minnesota; it has led Cheri to decide for a time of sabbatical leave before taking on a new position.

This is our letter of resignation from our positions as Co-Pastors. Our resignations are effective as of Sunday, November 22, 2010; the last two weeks of that time, however, will be vacation time. So our last day with you will be Sunday, November 7, 2010.

We give thanks that God has allowed us to be in ministry together with you for these past two-plus years. It has been a joy living among you, and working and worshiping with you, Theresa and Pastor Jessica. This has been a time of growth for us, and it has also been a joyous and enriching experience in so many ways. We thank you for your expressions of friendship and fellowship while we have been here. We trust that God has been at work in our time together, to accomplish God's purposes in each of our lives, in our congregations, in our communities and in our world.

We will continue to remember the churches and staff of Tri-County Ministry in our prayers. We will continue to pray that you will be open to the new directions and possibilities that God may be unfolding for you, as you ask where God would lead you.

Ministry with you has been one of the great joys of our experiences as pastors. God bless you as you continue your journey in faith and ministry; may God's Spirit guide and comfort you.

Marli Danielson, Co-Pastor

Cheri Danielson, Co-Pastor

Lutheran / Presbyterian Q & A

A wonderful part of Tri-County Ministry is that we are an ecumenical parish. Our fellowship of Presbyterians and Lutherans is a witness that the Body of Christ is greater than our individual denominations. In the effort for us to know who we are better and to get to know each other better there will be a series of questions and answers regarding our two denominations. These questions and answers come from Martin Marty's *Lutheran Questions, Lutheran Answers: Exploring Christian Faith* and Donald McKim's *Presbyterian Questions, Presbyterian Answers: Exploring Christian Faith*. The answers given are a distillation of the full answers found in the books.

Why do Presbyterians have so many confessions of faith?

As part of the Reformed tradition it is necessary to confess one's faith; new confessions of faith are created due to this need to confess; which is inherent in the nature of Christian faith itself. "At significant historical moments, it has been important for the people of God to say who they are and what beliefs they hold most profoundly." (McKim, 6)

From the PC(USA)'s ancestral history are the Scots Confession (1560), the Heidelberg Catechism (1563), the Second Helvetic Confession (1566), and the Westminster Confession of Faith (1647). More recent confessions of faith are the Theological Declaration of Barmen, 1934 (this addressed Christian affirmation in the face of emerging Nazism), The Confession of 1967 (this confession stated the central theme of God's reconciliation in Jesus Christ to key social problems of the day, and in 1993 A Brief Statement of Faith.

These confessions are a way of expressing what the church believes the Scriptures teach; they are never to be treated on par with Scripture. The confessions are a way "to communicate to our contemporaries and to future generations what we hear God's Spirit saying to the churches. (McKim, 7)

Why do Lutherans have so many confessions of faith?

There are ten confessions found in *The Book of Concord* which is the book that contains all the confessions of the ELCA. Three of those confessions are "ecumenical creeds" which are shared with the Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, and most "orthodox" Protestant bodies. (Marty, 17) These three creeds are The Apostle's Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed.

Confessions singular to the Lutheran church such as Luther's Small Catechism (1529), Luther's Large Catechism (1529), and The Augsburg Confession (1530) speak to the Lutheran faith throughout the ages. However, there are some confessions that reflect controversies that took place between 1529 and 1577; these confessions, while necessary to the church, may not speak to everyone all the time (i.e. Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope, 1537). In any case, "the heart and core of the confessions do address many of the great issues of the ages, including our own." (Marty, 18)

(This information was compiled by Pastor Jessica)

October is Clergy Appreciation Month.

This fall at Red Willow Bible Camp



Fall IGNITE Retreat — “LIGHT IT UP!”

October 9-10, Grades 4-6

Learn what it means to be a Light to your world! Worship, playing games, doing a craft, hanging out with friends and all kinds of other great stuff.

Fall IMPACT Retreat — “PRAY/EXPRESS”

October 15-16, Grades 7-9 (Confirmation age)

Learn diverse and creative ways to make prayer a meaningful personal expression for each individual. Worship, games, music, a host of prayer experiences.

Wild West Rodeo Day Play

October 22, (K-3)

The Boote family will once again bring the rodeo experience to Red Willow Bible Camp! Nikki, Alan, Jade and Jory are all veteran rodeo competitors, and will bring a horse, ropes, games and maybe even the goat to get the full rodeo experience. The cowgirls and cowboys will be led by Josh in games, a Bible Study, a craft, music and more!

Adult / Family Events

- ◆ **Scrapbooking (led by Truley Trautman)** — October 1-3
- ◆ **Saddle Up for Jesus: Women’s Trail Ride** — October 2
- ◆ **Family Trail Ride** — October 3

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

www.redwillowbiblecamp.org

Missionaries speaking on October 10

Dwight and Dorothy Hazard, missionaries to Kenya, will be the guest speakers during the worship service at First Presbyterian in Cooperstown on Sunday, October 10. The service begins at 11:15.

The Hazards are missionaries through SIM, and are home on leave. Part of their leave time is spent connecting with sponsoring congregations.

A potluck dinner will be served following the service. All are welcome.

Extra Mile final data



McVille Lutheran has an updated total for their Extra Mile donations: \$418.65.

Both McVille Lutheran and Trinity of Binford sent their challenge donations to the END Synod. Faith of Hannaford is sending their donations to the RWBC Boys’ Bathhouse Fund.

Check out Tri-County Ministry on Facebook!

Anyone having calendar dates, news, or pictures that could be posted on the Tri-County Ministry website or a daily update for Facebook is asked to e-mail them to the parish office in Binford.

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Who's cookin' in October?

Soup, Sandwiches, & Pie

Sunday, October 10

11:00 – 1:00

Sr. Citizens Center in Sutton

Sponsored by Mabel ELCW

Turkey Supper

Sunday, October 17

5:00 – 7:00

Grace Lutheran in Grace City