



## ***From the staff***

In early September some years ago, the temperatures had already begun to fall and the autumn winds were blowing cold. On one of those chilly September mornings my son called me to the back porch to see something he had discovered. There, clinging to the hummingbird feeder, sat a little hummingbird — feathers ruffled, head hanging down, wings askew. It looked like it was dying, or at least sick. It didn't struggle when I closed my hand around it; but I had to work to pry its little feet off the feeder perch.

We brought the bird into the kitchen and laid it in a shoebox lined with soft washcloths, and left it alone in a quiet, dark area. Not long afterward, my son went back to check on the bird, and I heard him call, “Mom! You've got to come see this!” Fearing the worst, I went to my son—and found the little bird buzzing around the ceiling as fast as it could fly, seeming to be healthy and looking for a way out.

That little bird coming to the bird feeder makes me think of how often in life we find things that “feed” us, things that give us purpose and identity and strength and joy. These are things that are important to our well-being, and so we return to them again and again, just as the hummingbird returned to the feeder again and again. They become *traditions*; they become what we want and expect from life. They give us a sense of identity and connection with each other. They are things to be cherished — gifts from God.

But the little hummingbird also makes me realize that the things that have worked for us in the *past* aren't always the things we need in the present or the future. In all the many visits that the hummingbird made to the feeder through the summer months, it was fed and nourished, and it got just what it needed. On that cold September day it must have thought that it could return once again and get what it needed. But this time, the feeder was not what it needed. It needed instead to be winging its way south, heading into new territory, breaking out of the routine of summer.

When the weather changes in our lives, when circumstances are different, when the world around us changes, when the church or parish we love changes, we often need to leave behind the familiar things that have always worked in the past and head into new territory. That's not easy to do. Like the hummingbird, we often cling to our traditions and desires and expectations so tightly that it is difficult even to pry them out of our grip. But to hold too tightly to the things of the past can often mean devastation or death in the here-and-now, as it might have for the little bird. It's not that we have to give up our traditions altogether, any more than migrating birds have to give up eating in order to fly south. It's just that if we let our traditions or our desires or our expectations become *too* important to us, they will bring us death instead of life.

There is a delicate balance between tradition and change. But God is always leading us forward into new things, challenging us to realize that it is God, not our cherished traditions — not our desires or our expectations — it is *God* who truly “feeds” us. It is only God who can give us all that we really need to truly live.

May God bless Tri-County Ministry, its congregations and people and staff, as we head into the changing season of the future. May God bless us and keep us all fed for life.

- Pastor Cheri Danielson

## **Wednesday night worship opportunities**

Labor Day weekend will bring a shorter Sunday morning worship schedule. No worship on Sunday, September 5 at Faith in Hannaford, Our Savior's of Klotten and Lutheran Church of McVile. Wednesday evening services are on the calendar:

### **Wednesday, September 1**

- ◆ 7:30 at Our Savior's, rural Klotten

### **Wednesday, September 8**

- ◆ 7:00 at Faith in Hannaford

## ***A parish update***

Trinity Lutheran Church of Cooperstown has called a pastor, and as of August 15 they are functioning as a single congregation and not as part of a multi-point parish. Tri-County Ministry will provide limited pastoral care but no preaching through the end of this calendar year.

Mabel of Sutton voted on August 1 on whether or not to begin the process of leaving the ELCA. The vote was more than the two-thirds required to begin the process. They will now follow the constitution of the ELCA through the process, including a meeting with the Bishop of the END Synod. Their second and final vote can be no earlier than November 1, 2010.

## **Fall Webcast from Luther Seminary**

### ***The Gospel of Matthew***

The Gospel according to Matthew has for a long time been called "the church's gospel," as in Matthew we find that the formation of the community of disciples is one of the main themes. Yet, Matthew's gospel is also complex, and Christological and ethical themes, the story of Israel, and conflict with the political powers of the day all weave together with Matthew's emphasis on discipleship, creating a very rich fabric. We will explore the colors and contours of the fabric of Matthew's narrative, to open up fresh ways in which Matthew's gospel can shape and instruct the church today.

*Monday Evenings: September 13 – October 11*

*7:00 pm – 9:00 pm*

*Griggs County Central High School*

You do not need to attend the Monday evening class; you can watch the course on your own computer at your leisure.

If you are interested in registering for the course please contact Pastor Jessica (769.2387) or Theresa (676.2761). The fee for the course is based on how many register.

## **Confirmation classes begin in October**

Parents of 7th and 8th grade confirmation students met with Pastor Jessica in August, and plans were made for the upcoming year of confirmation studies.

The first session will be held Saturday morning, October 9, from 9:00 until noon at Trinity in Binford. Most meetings are set for the second Saturday of the month, and the location will rotate among the churches that have confirmation students.

This year's schedule includes a trip to Northlands Rescue Mission in Grand Forks on December 11 (parents, please note the date change), and to the Great Plains Food Bank in Fargo on May 7, 2011. Watch for more information about these service projects; all members of the parish will have an opportunity to donate to these missions.

## **CAPITAL CAMPAIGN this fall**

Tri-County Ministry has been blessed to receive a match commitment for a capital campaign. Up to \$25,000 will be matched by First Presbyterian Church of Cooperstown. That congregation has chosen to show an “attitude of gratitude” to TCM for allowing them to sustain their church and congregation for the last 18 years.

The Council has decided to use the money raised from this campaign to help attract and retain pastoral staffing and the internship program. The money raised will be over and above our budget and will be administered by the Tri-County Council.

You will soon be receiving a letter with details about this campaign and how you can contribute to the future of Tri-County Ministry. The Council is excited to offer this opportunity for discipleship and pray that you will give prayerful consideration to the letter when it arrives. In the meantime, anyone who so chooses may make a donation; just send it to Tri-County Ministry, Box 226, Binford

## **Glocal Missions Gatherings (connecting global and local)**

**October 1-2**

### **United Lutheran Church in Grand Forks**

Connect with local congregations, learn how to “glocalize” mission, deepen your understanding of mission, gain tools and resources, meet mission-minded people, enjoy great food and music, build congregational team skills.

Workshops on mission trips, stewardship, worship and music and more!

For more information or to register, visit  
[www.elca.org/globalevents](http://www.elca.org/globalevents)

or call 1.800.638.3522

## **You went the extra mile!**



Seven of our congregations chose to go with the Test Kitchen’s Extra Mile Challenge, and an amazing total of \$3,906.65 was donated! The winner of the challenge is First Presbyterian of Cooperstown. They earned the pie social by taking in over \$1300.

Donations by church, and the recipients of the donations (if decided yet) are listed below.

- ◆ First Presbyterian — \$1320 to the Cooperstown Cemetery Association
- ◆ Trinity of Binford — \$782
- ◆ Faith of Hannaford — \$525
- ◆ Our Savior’s of Klotten — \$500 to the Nelson County Food Pantry
- ◆ Trinity of Cooperstown — \$303 to the Griggs County Food Pantry
- ◆ Our Savior’s of McHenry — \$258 to be divided between the Eddy and Foster County Food Pantries
- ◆ Lutheran Church of McVille — \$218.65 to the Nelson County Food Pantry

### ***Eastern North Dakota Synod WELCA Gathering***

***Saturday, September 18***

***Peace Lutheran Church in Fargo***

***“Building CommUnity: It Takes U and I”***

***Check with your local WELCA leaders for more information.***

# TCM Council Highlights

## JULY 22 MEETING

**Cooperstown Trinity:** The Trinity and TCM Councils agreed on a split of the jointly owned office equipment; Trinity will keep the folding machine and TCM will keep the Risograph duplicator. The split will take place at the end of 2010; until that time, the Risograph will remain at Trinity in Cooperstown.

**Mabel of Sutton:** Pastor Jessica reported that the Mabel congregation was meeting with a representative from the LCMC.

**Membership Numbers:** The TCM congregations (with the exception of Cooperstown Trinity and Mabel) are asked to update their active confirmed membership lists as of August 1, 2010. This updated total will help in establishing a more realistic TCM budget for 2011.

**Matching Grant:** The congregation of First Presbyterian Church in Cooperstown is offering up to \$25,000 in matching funds to Tri-County Ministry. This money would be matched through a TCM capital campaign, where the churches of TCM would raise \$25,000. This campaign and grant money would be over and above the regular budget. Further discussion of the capital campaign and grant will take place at the August TCM Council meeting.

**Property Committee:** Pastor Jessica reported that work is beginning on the Hannaford parsonage roof.

**Task Force:** Rob and Connie reported that the task force has been looking at possibilities for budgeting, staffing, and worship times. They have discussed Lay Commissioned Pastors and Associates in Ministry, sharing a staff member with Red Willow Bible Camp, and Seminary on the Prairie. The task force welcomes ideas from all congregation members.

## AUGUST 25 MEETING

**Cooperstown Trinity Update:** Pastor Jessica Merchant and Trinity's pastor have drawn up an agreement, as recommended by END Synod Bishop Rindy. The agreement spells out the pastoral duties that will be shared until the end of 2010. Agreement was approved.

**Mabel of Sutton Update:** The congregation held their first vote on August 1, 2010, and voted to continue the process of leaving the ELCA. Bishop Rindy will meet with the congregation on September 19, and their second and final vote will be held no earlier than November 1, 2010. The congregation wishes to affiliate with another denomination, and possibly with another congregation, rather than closing.

**Congregational Membership Numbers:** Active confirmed membership numbers as of August 1, 2010:

Faith .....	117
First Presbyterian.....	36
Grace.....	62
McVile Lutheran .....	98
Our Savior's, Kloten.....	30
Our Savior's, McHenry .....	64
Trinity .....	99
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>504</b>

**Matching Grant:** The Task Force presented a letter which they had composed regarding the proposed Capital Campaign. Motion to approve the capital campaign passed. The letter and a donation card will be mailed to TCM members sometime in the next week.

**Recommendations of Task Force:** The Task Force distributed a list of their recommendations regarding staffing. Council members are asked to take these recommendations back to their individual councils/session for discussion.

# This fall at Red Willow Bible Camp



## Quilt and Fine Art Auction

### September 11

- 9:15 Quilt Viewing opens, Silent Auction begins, Antique tractor display
- 9:30 Prayer Breakfast
- 10:15 Antique Quilt Bed Turning
- 11:15 Buffet Lunch
- 12:30 Live Auction
- 3:00 Quilt Raffle drawing

## 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](http://www.redwillowbiblecamp.org)

## Synod Endowment Sunday in September

September 26 is the annual Synod Endowment Sunday for the EaND Synod. This special offering enables our synod to offer financial help for pastors in repaying student loans, help with intern programs, and scholarship help for seminarians.

Special offering envelopes will be available in our ELCA churches.

*TCM’s Facebook page has been reactivated! Our page got off to a slow start, but now you should be able to check the page every day or two for updates. 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.*

**TCM STAFF**

Pastor Jessica Merchant ..... 769-2231  
(cell) 218-230-4479  
uncas16@hotmail.com

Pastor Cheri Danielson ..... 676-2762  
(cell) 789-8016  
cheridanielson@dflytech.com

Pastor Marli Danielson ..... 676-2762  
(cell) 789-8006  
marli\_danielson@dflytech.com

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

Youth Leader  
Darla Fliflet ..... 797-2149  
flifletfive@invisimax.com

**TCM CONGREGATIONS**

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

First Presbyterian of Cooperstown  
797-3112  
bthomas@invisimax.com

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

Mabel of Sutton..... 769-2396  
bstokka@yahoo.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

Trinity of Cooperstown ..... 797-3611  
trinityofcooperstown@mlgc.com

Tri-County Ministry  
Box 226

Binford, ND 58416  
Phone 676-2761

trinitybinford@mlgc.com

**www.tricountyministry.org**

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October, and November.

***Annual Beef and Pork Supper***

***Our Savior's Lutheran Church in McHenry***

***Saturday, September 25***

***5:00-7:00***

***Sponsored by the Our Savior's WELCA***