



# Tri-County Ministry News

March 2025

## Entering into Lent

Lent, more than any other season of the Church's liturgical year, captures our imagination. Each year we eagerly anticipate the observance of this unique and spiritually rich season. Despite our affinity for Lent, we frequently approach the season with a misunderstanding of its purpose. We often treat it as a time dedicated to self-improvement, something like a cleanse—giving up some food we deem unhealthy or a habit we think we ought to break. At the extreme, Lent can become an extended period of self-punishment. Both approaches, in drawing the focus inward to the self, distort the true purpose of the season, for Lent is not about self-improvement or punishment but about reorientation to God.

This first day of Lent, Ash Wednesday [March 5], is our entrance into this dedicated time of reorientation and repentance and serves for many as the most compelling day of the Lenten season. The ritual imposition of ashes that gives this day its name explains in large part, I think, the popularity of the day. Confronting us with our mortality as humans, and by implication our sinfulness and need for repentance, the imposition of ashes is without question a powerful spiritual experience. We do well to remember, though, that today is but the beginning, the first day of a season.



In the liturgy of this day, we are invited to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination, repentance, prayer, fasting, self-denial, and by reading and meditating on holy Scripture. These fundamental spiritual practices that have nourished Christians for centuries are commended to us as well. In addition to these, we might bring our own intentions and practices, whatever we feel God has placed on our hearts for this season in which we seek to draw closer to Christ as we prepare for the celebration of his passion and glorious resurrection.

May this holy journey that we begin this day be a blessing for us all as we turn again to our God, whose compassion and mercies are everlasting. May God give us the grace to faithfully observe this holy season, to amend our lives, and to follow more fully the way of our Lord Jesus Christ.

(by The Rev. Patrick Keyser, Washington National Cathedral)

## First Communion Class

Our annual First Communion class will be held on Saturday, **March 15**. Location is Trinity in Binford; time is 1:00-4:00.

Children who are ready to receive the Lord's Supper are invited to take the class. A parent or other adult should attend with the student.



We would like to have a listing of participants so that plans may be made. If you have a child wishing to take the class, please contact Theresa directly at the Tri-County Ministry office if you haven't already done so. (The best way to contact would be through e-mail.)

[trinitybinford@mlgc.com](mailto:trinitybinford@mlgc.com)

## Lent in Tri-County Ministry

**Ash Wednesday, March 5**

**Services of Holy Communion**

Trinity — Supper at 5:45, worship at 6:30

- Faith — Worship at 7:00
- Grace — Worship at 7:00
- McVile — Supper at 6:00, worship at 7:00 (Sundahl and Ottawa congregations have been invited to McVile's meal and service)

**Each of the five Wednesdays of Lent**

**Worship in McVile**

**March 12, 19, 26, April 2 & 9**

6:00 — Soup Supper

7:00 — Worship with Holden Evening Prayer Service

All are invited to the meal and services in McVile. Weekly Lenten services will not be held in the other congregations of Tri-County Ministry.

## Who is serving on our 2025 councils

**Trinity:** Kayla Bjork, Becky Delfs, Duane Feiring, Theresa Fiebiger, Shian Hoyt

**First Presbyterian:** Janice Johnson, Vickie Goplen, Bev Campbell, Kathy Larson, Dennis Jungels

**Lutheran Church of McVile:** Mary Gleason, Haley Klefstad, Linda Loe, Teresa Rorvig, Norma Trost, Corrina Olson, Kelli Schmitt

**Our Savior's:** Dale Nelson, Richard Hanson, Gale Flohaug, Olen Ophaug, Mary Lou Krogh, Greg Kueber

**Faith:** Paulette Gronneberg, Nick Muncy, Connie Eslinger, Allen Hetland, Deb Dahl, Allen Hetland

**Grace:** Gilbert Black, Jo Black, Jess Johnson, Kathy McCracken, John Gisi, Pete Johnson, Mitch Ellingson, Katie Larson, Janine Gisi

# Exploring Cooperation

On a very cold Saturday morning, February 15, approximately 45 members of eight congregations gathered at Red Willow Bible Camp for “Pizza and Perspective.” This event was organized by Vicar Penny Millspaugh (intern pastor at Sundahl and Ottawa) and the END Synod office to discuss possibilities of cooperation between Tri-County Ministry and the Sundahl and Ottawa congregations of Aneta. Each of the Tri-County Ministry congregations had at least one person in attendance.

Deacon Erin Power, Director for Evangelical Mission in the Eastern North Dakota Synod, guided the group through an agenda meant to bring out strengths and weaknesses, questions and concerns. In a nutshell:

## What are we wondering about?

Providers, lay leaders, preachers	Loss of members and young people
Mileage	Finances
Day to day leadership	Confirmation

## What are our strengths?

Commitment	Deeply rooted history
Sunday Schools/youth education	Financial support
Strong leadership	Technology
Good use of individual members’ gifts	Willingness to cooperate
Strong group of volunteers	Desire to continue

## What are the challenges in our congregations?

- Attendance; keeping all age groups involved
- Communication
- Future leadership as SAMs and others age out

## What are the core values of our congregations?

Doors are open to all	Outreach to community and beyond
Stewardship	Importance of worship

Other items of discussion included sharing the workload and the possibility of joint activities.

## What’s next?

The Tri-County Ministry Council will hold their first discussion of a possible cooperation at their March 11 meeting. Although this discussion is in the beginning stages, it creates the opportunity for congregations to look at their visions and values.

**TRI-COUNTY MINISTRY LEADERSHIP**

**TCM Parish Administrator**

**Theresa Fiebiger ..... 676.2761**  
**trinitybinford@mlgc.com**

**Preachers**

**Truley Trautman, SAM**  
**Marla Larson, SAM**  
**Gilbert Black**  
**Marvin Goplen, SAM**  
**Bob Schlotman**  
**Rev. Russ Pollock**

**TCM CONGREGATIONS**

**Faith of Hannaford .. faithl@ictc.com**

**First Presbyterian of Cooperstown**  
**jejohnson99@yahoo.com**

**Grace of Grace City**

**Our Savior's of Klotten &**  
**McVile Lutheran Church.... 322-4952**  
**lutheranchurchmcville@gmail.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](http://www.tricountyministry.org)**

**Like us on Facebook!**

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