

For with You is the fountain of life; in Your Light we see light. Psalm 36:9

# Trinity Torch



JANUARY 2021

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January is a month where we purposefully celebrate all aspects of God's gift of LIFE.

**"From Invisible to Indispensable!"** is Lutherans For Life's theme for Sanctity of Human Life Sunday, which is set for **January 24, 2021**.

In our own lives we too can look back at our beginning, our conception, and with joy say; *thank you God for the gift of life!* And like our church we too have traveled through many of our own challenges and again we can have joy as we recognize and celebrate God's promise fulfilled – He is with us!

It does not matter what stage of life development you are in.

God loves you and highly values your life. He created you and that alone gives your life value and purpose. God has a plan for you, and He says you are important enough to lay down His life for you. You are indeed loved... even if you are 90 years old or 9 years old or even if you are not yet born.

Our culture does not always value human life.

Sometimes God's gift of life is seen as a burden, an unwelcome intrusion into the plans that we have for our life. We think that we are in ownership of our lives and that we are free to do whatever we want with our bodies... but a Christian realizes that "we are not our own, we have been bought with a price" and that price is the blood that Jesus shed for our redemption. God is the Creator and all that we are and have belongs to Him alone.

Life is precious. You are precious. Celebrate with us this January the gift of LIFE!

God bless us you this New Year 2021. In Christ,

*Pastor Bob*

# Parish Education – Bible Study Schedule

January 2021

Please check over the many Bible Classes and TLC Bible Groups available throughout the week. If you have questions or desire more information, you may contact the class leader or DCE Rob Grady – 708-839-1200 ext.127. All studies are weekly unless otherwise noted.



## Sunday Morning

Youth Bible Studies – 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

High School Youth Bible Class meets in the school art room.

Sunday School for Three-Year-Old through Grade 8 currently meets in the church basement.

## Tuesday Evening

A study titled “Studies and Parables in Luke” meets each week in Church Sanctuary and on Facebook Live at 7:00 p.m. Pastor Bob is the facilitator.

## Tuesday Evening

Join us as we begin the study “LifeLight: Wilderness Wanderings” in the church basement at 7:00 p.m. This class is facilitated by Rob Grady. This is a study of the books of Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

## Wednesday Morning

Men’s Bible Class meets weekly at 6:30 a.m. in the Church Library. Facilitated by Tom Bruns we will continue the study of Edwin Lutzer’s book “The Church in Babylon.”

## Wednesday Morning TLC

We will continue our study on Timothy, Titus, and Philemon on January 13 and 27. We usually meet the second and fourth Wednesday, and any fifth Wednesday at 10:30 a.m. We will meet in the Church Library.

## Thursday Afternoon TLC

TLC Bible Study Group will meet on January 14 and 28 at 4:30 p.m. via Skype. The class is led by Sharon Wendte (630-455-1775). We are continuing the study on “Psalms”.

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## Church Library News - Email: [LIBRARY@TLBR.ORG](mailto:LIBRARY@TLBR.ORG)

Happy New Year! May 2021 be a blessing as you grow in your faith and relationship with our Savior! A common resolution made at the new year is to spend more time with Our Lord through a stronger devotional life. Excellent! But where to start??? Fear not! Devotional resources abound!!!

First, our church library has some great One Year Devotionals:

Guide Me, Lord (this title is not available digitally) and Guide Me Ever are collections of Portals of Prayer. Every Day with the Savior is also written in the same tradition.

New this year is Unveiling Mercy: 365 Daily Devotions on Insights from Old Testament Hebrew by Chad Bird (1517 Publishing, 2020). Written for the English speaker and not the Hebrew scholar, the author serves as a guide who will lead you through the mansion of the Old Testament, filled with Hebrew treasures, to point out and explain their value to you. Yes, by the end, you will know much more about Hebrew, but, more importantly, you will know far more about Jesus, which is the true purpose of the devotional. He explains everything about each day’s Hebrew word in clear and understandable ways. Experience “Aha! moments” as you trace connections between the Old and New Testaments. The Christ-soaked scrolls of the Torah, Prophets, and Writings show us who the Son of God is, and how He was both active and foreshadowed in Israel’s history and Scriptures. Unveiling Mercy will lead you from January 1st with Genesis 1 through those Old Testament scriptures ending with Malachi 4 on December 31st. Along the way, each devotion will present you with a little Hebrew gift to show how all the parts of the Old Testament usher us to the Messiah.

Day by Day from Martin Luther - Daily readings from Luther’s Works encourage and point us to Jesus and His Gospel. These brief daily readings sound as if they were just written yesterday. They are as relevant now as when first penned. Why not enjoy a little Luther this year?

*Continued on page 10*



# Living Letters

2 Corinthians 3

VOLUME 6 ISSUE 4  
CHRISTMAS 2020

Dear friends and family,  
(By Michael)

Greetings to you during this Advent season! In the Northern Hemisphere the days are getting shorter and the darkness seems to subsume more of our world and life. Amidst the year of 2020, it seems like some people see the darkness ever increasing. I recently heard a news report begin by telling me that we have no hope.

When we look at the state of the world, it is easy to focus on the darkness in our lives. Personally, I mourn the daylight which leaves us this time of the year. I was recently reflecting on this and on Christmas time in Gbintiri. I was reminded of a hope-filled message I want to share with you.

I think it was during one Christmas convention I found myself sitting with my friends. We had a full day of worship and fellowship time. Now, we were gathered for more singing, dancing, and a devotion. The local pastor gave a message from Isaiah 60:1-3, "Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the LORD rises upon you and his glory appears over you. Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn."

Living near the equator, the amount of sunlight does not change much throughout the year. The sun usually rises within the vicinity of 6AM and sets around 6PM (give or take 30 minutes). Flashlights, houselights, and streetlights become necessities if you want to do anything after the sunset.

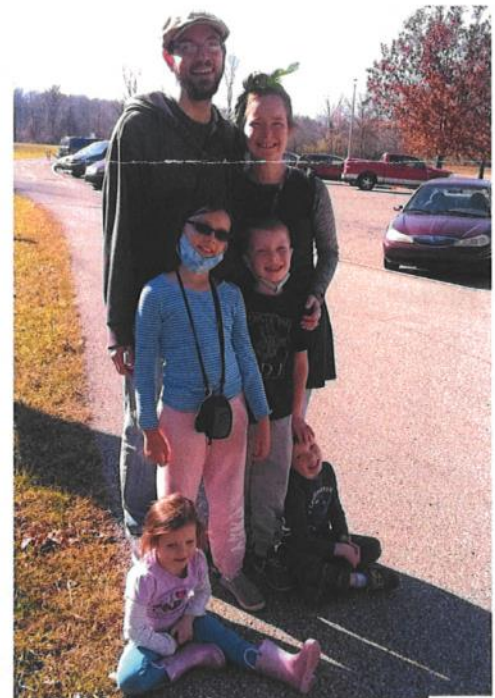
There we were, sitting under a light with darkness an arm's reach away, listening to the message. There is hope! Our light has come! Jesus was born! Those walking in darkness have seen a great light! Nothing can overcome us. Nothing can separate us from God. Jesus has entered our world and we see that Satan and all the powers of evil could not overcome him. Jesus fought Satan and won!

Our joy erupted after the message and we danced to the vibrant drums as our hearts pounded with the hope of light in our lives. Night may have fallen upon us, but the light of Christ brought the light of the noon day as we danced and sang. We are people with hope.

This pastor's message now revisits me years later. In a world where it is easy to feel enclosed in darkness, I am reminded that the darkness is a shadow, a weak silhouette. The light shining behind the shape is Christ, the light that has come and which is coming again. I hope this pastor's message of hope may bring light to you today in this Advent season. We remember the day is coming, Christmas Day is drawing near. We are called to live as people of hope in a world with darkness. The news may say there is no hope in our homes, but as we look to Christ, we see this is a lie. Christ has come. He died for you. He lives. He gives you new life. You are precious and His. May God be with you and provide you with hope as we remember Jesus, the Light of our lives has come to save us from the darkness of our sins and this world! Merry Christmas!



*October brought the celebration of Naomi's birthday (above) and November brought the process of seeing family and saying goodbye (below).*





We were able to visit some family and friends in October and November as we began saying our “goodbyes.” We were also able to visit Guardian Lutheran church in Dearborn, MI during these travels.

As 2020 comes to an end, so too does our time in Dallas, TX. Michael is finishing up his time accessing the library in person and we are switching to being with family during the Christmas and New Year’s time. Michael has not finished his MA thesis, he is hoping to do research while in Ghana. January is looking full as we have final appointments, sorting, packing, and saying goodbyes. We do not know when we are returning to Ghana. COVID has successfully made that an ambiguous date. We are thinking it could be within the first few months of 2021. We appreciate your prayers for us as we enter this time of major transition.

Thank you for praying for technology to work as Michael met with the team for team checking. He was able to join them several early mornings in October as they finished getting Judges, Ruth, and part of 1 Samuel ready for consultant checking. The consultant checking got postponed to 2021. The translators have been hard at work this year and it looks like the remaining books of the Old Testament should be drafted by the end of the year! We have a lengthy ways to go on team checking and consultant checking. Thank you for your partnership with us in this ministry throughout this past year. You have been a blessing in the lives of many people, sharing the light of hope you have in Jesus with others!

Confident in Christ,

Michael and Naomi Ersland

### Prayer Requests

- Pray for wisdom in making decisions as we prepare for returning to Ghana.
- Safety as we visit family and say goodbye.
- Praise for progress in drafting the Old Testament into Komba!
- Praise for the time we were in Dallas.
- Pray for people around the world as they prepare for Christmas.
- Pray for good health as seasons change and for the health of those in Komba land
- How may we pray for you? Please let us know so that we may be praying for you!

Contributions:  
Lutheran Bible Translators  
PO Box 789  
Concordia, MO 64020

Checks written to Lutheran Bible Translators with *Ersland Ministry* on the memo line. You can also give online at [LBT.org](http://LBT.org)

[Michael-Naomi.Ersland@lbt.org](mailto:Michael-Naomi.Ersland@lbt.org)  
Facebook: Ersland Updates



# Preschool Outdoors at Trinity, Burr Ridge—NIDnews.org



At Trinity Lutheran School in Burr Ridge, preschool looks a little different this year.

Every day, Leann Dewitt's classes meet under an outdoor canopy for instruction. They wear coats and hats in the chilly autumn air. The sounds of wind and traffic hum in the background as Leann leads the four- and five-year-olds in the songs and rhymes they know so well.

Attending the virtual Play First Summit over the summer, Leann had heard educators from around the world talk about the importance of independent play in young children's development.

"One of the things I learned was when adults step back, kids step up," says Leann. "I think that's so important. Before, I was trying to help [my students] with every little problem that they had. But if you step back and see if they try to work out their own issues, they can most likely do it. And of course you step in on those times when they need help."

"Every day I came home, she had more and more stuff to tell me. She was just on fire with positivity... with what she wanted to do with the outside classroom," says Andy Dewitt, Principal at Trinity and Leann's husband. "Her theory has always been a play-based model. It made it an easy transition, really, to be outside."

The presence of the COVID-19 pandemic provided further reason for moving a classroom outside, as open-air spaces are associated with a lower risk of infection. The children wear their masks when receiving instruction in close quarters.

Parents and students have both responded positively to the new classroom format. When asked why he looked so dejected leaving school one day,

one student said, "There's no school tomorrow." The plan is for class meetings to remain outside if the weather is 20 degrees Fahrenheit or over. Leann diligently reminds parents to make sure their children are appropriately dressed for whatever the weather brings.

One of the best parts about teaching outside is the connection with God's creation. Pastor Bob Geaschel says, "From Old to New Testament, God reveals himself as the one true God by declaring, 'I am the maker of heaven and earth.' You can go to Isaiah 44, 45, and you can see where God says, 'I am the Lord; there is no other. I have made the sea and all that is in it, and the earth is formed by my hands.' God describes Himself as the true God through His creative action. What an awesome thing to have a Christian preschool outside, interacting with the creation of God, which reveals His existence!"

For Leann, the greatest success is that the kids are happy, healthy, and growing. "It's them being able to just be themselves and use all of their energy and not be in tight quarters inside playing on a rug playing with toys. They're able to be just children."



# Life Sunday Calvary Lutheran Baby Bank update – by Deaconess Lori Trinche

Something both beautiful and tragic happened at the Baby Bank yesterday. Moms were served with love, showered with prayer and care – diapers and wipes, baby food and formula, clothing, toys for the children and Arch books to share God’s Word. I received notes of gratitude and several pictures capturing the love and joy that are a lovely reminder of the impact of this ministry. **One note to pass along from the grandmother of our recent twins, Chase, and Carter, who were preemies we prayed for back when it was expected that one of the boys would be born with a serious heart defect and mom asked for our prayers to carry close to term.**

“Merry Christmas to you, your family and the Church congregation. So grateful for all of you that serve the Lord’s children.”



We have recently had to for the first time reach out to another non-Lutheran congregation to get help in sending volunteers as we do not have any young people or young families serving in the ministry. We have had to recruit from neighboring LCMS churches to stay open. Several of our newer volunteers have stepped back especially recently during the pandemic because they are in the most at-risk category.

During the pandemic we have been blessed by donations, we are grateful to Immanuel Hillside, and friends from Trinity Burr Ridge and Grace Western Springs, so the cupboards are well stocked. Christian Fellowship Church in Itasca has recently added to this with extra abundance.

What has been missing is the personal connection to the church so that the women have a place to worship, women’s Bible studies to attend and youth activities available for the children to share love and fellowship with others and learn God’s Word. Calvary is one of only a handful of Lutheran congregations in our area that partners with a local crisis pregnancy in the unique opening of its doors to serve women and children in crisis pregnancies, showering them with love and grace.

**Our last Baby Bank at Calvary Wood Dale will be on February 18<sup>th</sup> and the first opening at the new location at Christian Fellowship Church in Itasca on March 6<sup>th</sup>** which is my birthday and a day that I normally would be serving these moms with joy. They will likely have more than enough volunteers to serve the needs of the moms, so a full transition of this ministry is currently planned.

Please pray for Pastor Heller in the transition of this ministry to the non-LCMS church nearby that has a large group of volunteers anxious to love and serve these moms and babies, and active intergenerational family ministries to gladly, and with grace, adopt these moms into their hearts and church home.

Pastor Heller has faithfully served for at least 13 years in opening their doors at Calvary - his passion for life ministry has been a personal inspiration to me. His own key volunteers have moved due to health reasons and the operation would have closed without the pleas for help from the women it serves. I have worked over the past two years to help get the word out and generate interest and appreciate many from our congregation stepping forward.

May God teach us something in this and enable us to do better in engaging our next generation of Lutherans to serve in ministries upholding the sanctity of human life, so that they learn firsthand how precious life is from our very conception, actively seek ways to serve in compassion for the at-risk and most vulnerable at both ends of life - all to the glory of God and increase of His Kingdom. We must continue to speak up and actively stand up For Life.



## Lutherans are FOR LIFE!

Life Sunday—January 2021



*Did you know a baby's heart begins beating at 3 weeks and 1 day old and will beat 100,000 times per day for life?*

Redeeming Life is a positive, life affirming maternity home for pregnant women who feel that abortion is their only option.

**In 2018, 42,441 babies lives were aborted in Illinois.**

That's why we're expanding this ministry into the NID!

**We want to give women a loving alternative; equipping them to choose life for their babies.**

**WE can redeem lives in CHICAGOLAND in 2021!**



Our **new maternity home** will house 6-8 women and a live-in “house mom.” Together, we provide:

- ♥ **A safe, stable, Christ-centered home** for women at-risk of abortion, domestic violence, or homelessness
- ♥ **Love, hope, and a future** with daily opportunities for Spiritual growth and to develop healthy, meaningful relationships
- ♥ **Counseling, training and mentoring** to gain life skills and use their God-given time, talent and treasure to the fullest

### Will you join us?

To donate, visit [rlom.org](http://rlom.org)/expansion or mail a gift to:

Redeeming Life Outreach Ministries  
P.O. Box 1496  
Sanford, FL 32772-1496

 **Redeeming Life**  
Outreach Ministries  
[rlom.org](http://rlom.org) | 407.790.9745



September - November 2020

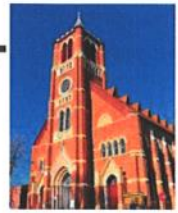
# HISTORIC ST. MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH

"COMEDOR SAN MATEO" SOUP KITCHEN

2108 W 21<sup>ST</sup> ST, CHICAGO, IL 60608

TELEPHONE: (773) 847-6458

WEBSITE: WWW.STMATTHEWCHICAGO.ORG (UNDER CONSTRUCTION)



Rev. Cesar G. Sifuentes, Pastor  
Mobile: (312) 636 - 6496

Deaconess Elly Sifuentes  
Email: Ceelly1973@gmail.com



*"For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat"*



## His Faithfulness is Forever

*"For great is his love toward us, and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever.  
Praise the Lord." Psalm 117:2*

With much joy we greet all of you in the precious name of our Eternal Savior Jesus Christ!

In these very challenging days and always, we know that our merciful God is with us: great is our Lord!

Thanks to our Lord and your prayers. We continue with our Bible studies, our Sunday School, our worship services and continue serving people in need. Praise our Lord.



*Community members in line for Soup Kitchen*



*Deaconess Elly serving meals*



*New freezer donated by Mr. Dave Hendrickson, St. Paul's Matteson*

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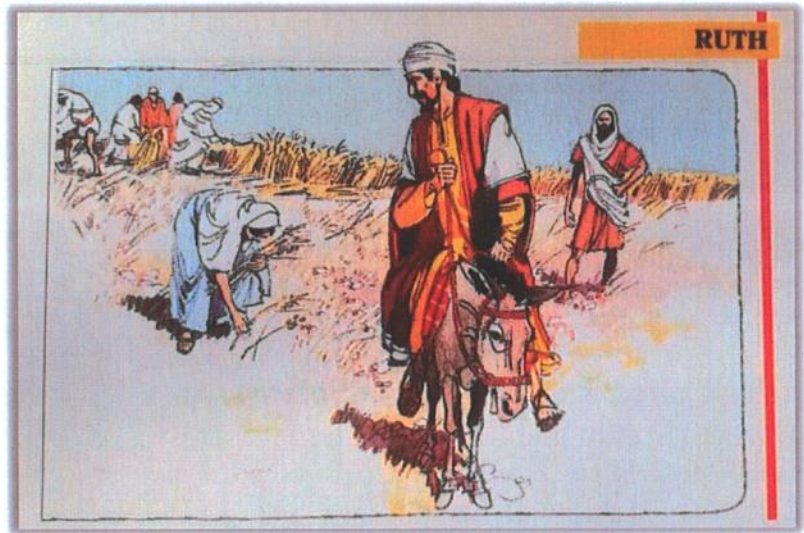
## Reflections from Deaconess Elly



*"...Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God" (Ruth 1:16)*

Dear brothers, sisters, and friends of Christ,

A marvelous declaration inspired by the Holy Ghost in one of the most fascinating stories in the Word of God. In the life of two women, who amidst pain, solitude and suffering, they experienced the infinite mercifulness and grace of God. A plan for redemption that leads us to the lineage of Jesus Christ our holy redeemer. We have learned many things and joyfully remember the program for our church: "Christ for all Nations." In heaven, there will be no race, colors or languages, only the redeemed by the blood of Christ.



*Ruth is harvesting in the fields Boaz*

Like this, my beloved brothers and sisters, I greet you in the name of the Lord and I rejoice having shared what the Lord does every day in us, amidst the danger and storm. He is our protection and strength. Thank you for being collaborators in the holy work that has been entrusted to us.

A rain of blessings you will receive every day, we continue onwards, without looking backwards, and we take shelter like Ruth, under the wings of our God.

Thank you, may the Lord overwhelm you with blessings and his protection. Until next time.

*Your sister in Christ,*

*Elly Sifuentes*





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## Overwhelmed with gratitude

As always, we are truly thankful to our partner congregations and friends for your great and constant support for our ministry of love and compassion. With much joy we celebrated our "Thanksgiving Day" with people in need. We are so grateful to our Lord for his abundant blessing to us.

### Supporting our Ministry

Mr. Wally Heintzen, First St. Paul,  
Chicago



Nikki Deacon and Mr. Bob Morris,  
Lutheran Church Charities



Our Deaconess Elly and Debbie  
Medina, Palos Park, IL



Nancy Blaze, Trinity, Roselle



Pastor Bob Geaschel and  
Members of Trinity, Burr



Members from St. Luke, Itasca

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## Pastor's Plea

Please, your prayers for the urgent needs of our church:

1. To continue the repair of our church, to reduce the 13 city building code violations.
2. We need two new kitchen sinks and a first aid kit for our Soup Kitchen
3. We need meat, chicken, pork and turkey and frozen vegetables
4. We are in need of heaters in both of our offices

We wish you, your families and your congregations abundant blessings!

Joy to the world! **Merry Christmas**

**Yours in Christ, Pastor Cesar and Deaconess Elly**

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## Youth News

Plans are being made for a tubing day at Wilmot Mountain. We are looking at tubing for two hours on Saturday, January 16. Right now there is not a cost for this event. The sign-up sheet is in the school classroom where we meet. Look for more information in the near future.



Our Pizza Sale has begun. You should have received a form for you to sell with all the details. Remember that those forms, along with the money are due by January 14. If you did not receive a form, please contact Mr. Grady.

We are looking into a return trip to Feed My Starving Children in the near future. There were a number of people on the waiting list or were unable to attend because a conflict in their schedule.

**Clothing Drive** - Just a reminder that we are continuing to collect clothes, bedding, shoes, belts and other soft material items (No stuffed animals). Our next drop-off will be at the end of February.



Continued from page 2

A Year in the Old Testament, A Year in the New Testament, A Year with the Church Fathers. Each of these incorporates a reading from the New Testament, the Old Testament, and a Psalm and includes a brief meditation. A Year with the Church Fathers features both famous and lesser known Fathers and serves as a reminder that, as part of a family of believers that spans centuries and continents, we all encounter the same issues as we strive to be faithful ambassadors in a fallen world until our Lord brings us home.

To Live with Christ by Bo Giertz - This book is fantastic! It is a daily devotion book following the historic lectionary by one of the great lights of confessional Lutheranism in the 20th century, Bishop Bo Giertz. He is best known in our circles for his book, *The Hammer of God*, but he's written many wonderful works. Written by the Swedish pastor who journeyed from atheism to Lutheranism, each 2-page reading points to the forgiveness and atonement Christ won for you. *This book follows the church year, not the calendar year.*

The Lord Will Answer - This daily resource can be used in addition to all the above because time spent in the Catechism should never be confined to the time of Confirmation, but rather serve as a foundation we build upon our whole lives. *This book follows the church year, not the calendar year.* (If you want to spend time in the Lutheran Confessions this year, including both the Small and Large Catechisms, try <https://www.bookofconcord.org/> for daily readings, apps, and audio resources.)

God Grant It from C.F.W. Walther - The founder of our Synod speaks with directness about our human condition in these readings taken from his sermons. God's Truth proclaimed here is as applicable today as when Walther first proclaimed it 150 years ago. *This book follows the church year, not the calendar year.*

All of these suggestions are brief and enjoyable for daily use. The books are available in our library. Kindle or eBooks versions also exist online. Each was published by Concordia Publishing House ([www.cph.org](http://www.cph.org)).

A few other edifying resources to consider:

Meditations on the Gospels: According to His Word – First published by Concordia in the 1940s, the devotions in this book are based on the complete text of the four Gospels. They discuss the Gospel writers – who they were, why they wrote – and they reflect on the text to deepen our understanding. Published by CPH and available in our library. Kindle or eBooks versions exist online.

A Year in the Gospels with Martin Luther is not a daily devotional, but rather a weekly one. With longer selections, this 2 volume set offers the opportunity place yourself in a pew in Germany as Martin Luther preaches powerful, blunt sermons for each Sunday. A real treat! *This book follows the church year, not the calendar year.* Published by CPH and available in our library. Kindle or eBooks versions exist online.

A Year of Grace – with sermons by Bo Giertz is also not a daily devotional, but rather a weekly one. You will find that Giertz never pulls punches. He preaches the Law without compromise, but just when the Law has done it's work, he applies the Gospel. (2 book set) *This book follows the church year, not the calendar year.* Published by 1517 Publishing and available in our library. Kindle or eBooks versions exist online.

Everything mentioned here is available as a physical book and digital media, so you can enrich your faith at home and on the go. This year take time to spend with the One who will be with you all 525,600 minutes!

Finally, a recommendation for an app: The "Pray Now" app (\$8.99) for Apple or Android is fabulous!! It is the app form of the Treasury of Daily Prayer. Scripture readings, prayers, psalms, hymnody, writings from the Church fathers appointed for each day work together to deepen reflection and encourage personal devotion. This is a deeply enriching resource that can assist you in developing a regular pattern of prayer and devotion throughout your whole day. Putting this resource together as an app for the tech-minded was a brilliant move.

Please feel free to speak with your library representative should you have questions regarding any of these resources. God bless you as you grow in your love and knowledge of Him.

**\*\*\*Remember, your church library is always here to assist you with tools and resources to aid in your Christian walk. However, in compliance with CDC guidelines, we are not allowing anyone to remove books on your own, at this time.\*\*\***

**Please email the library and we will pull the books and arrange pick-up.**

"How do I know what books are in the library?" you may ask..... I am so glad you did!! Trinity's library is now available digitally!! To view what books we carry in the library, you can access our full catalog at: [www.librarything.com/catalog/TLBRCHURCHLIBRARY](http://www.librarything.com/catalog/TLBRCHURCHLIBRARY)

Your library representative, *Crista Childers* [LIBRARY@TLBR.ORG](mailto:LIBRARY@TLBR.ORG)

*"So let us not lose heart, even in these last, troubled times. Let us not forsake the ship of the Church, thinking it will soon sink. We would eternally regret our decision, for outside this ship, there is no salvation, just as there was no rescue for those who were not aboard Noah's ark. As that ark smoothly navigated through the flood and finally came to rest, safe and sound on Mount Ararat, so too will the ship of the Church pass through the world's storm sea and finally rest on the eternal mountains of divine grace. Then we who have remained true in the faith will have our turn to cry out, full of amazement, "What sort of man is this, that even the winds and sea obey Him?" An we will have all of eternity to rejoice in the answer to that question." – C.F.W Walther from God Grant It*



**Dear Friend of BEDS Plus,**

My name is Miriam Martinez, and I work primarily with clients who have experienced family violence and find themselves homeless. I want to share the story of one family who came to us after seeking political asylum, fleeing domestic violence, and becoming homeless in the middle of the COVID19 crisis. Their story is about surviving and pursuing a dream.

Laura, now a single parent of two, was issued a work visa but denied political asylum. She was a nurse in her home country and hoped to find similar work in the U.S., taking educational courses and practicing English to achieve her dream. As in so many families who experience domestic violence, the abuse was not apparent at first, but increased over time. Last spring as the COVID19 crisis intensified, Laura recognized that for the safety of her children and herself they had to leave. With help from local law enforcement, Laura and her children found shelter with a domestic violence agency that referred the family to BEDS for housing services.

COVID19 restrictions were in full force when Laura came to us, but that did not discourage her from working tirelessly to qualify for housing. Despite some hesitancy in leaving the safety of the shelter behind, Laura believed her example would help give her children the strength to one day become independent. Because of her determination, Laura's family was housed within a week of qualifying for transitional housing assistance.

**Today, Laura is working as a teacher's assistant for children who are bilingual in Spanish.** Already, she is paying a portion of her rent. She continues to work on her English language skills so that she can pass a nursing exam and become truly self-sufficient. Her children have settled happily into their new home. I continue to check in on the family and their progress, and I have 100% confidence that they will soon be independent and flourishing on their own.

**Miriam Martinez,**  
*Housing Case Management Lead*

**Laura's journey would not be possible without transitional housing assistance. According to HUD, Transitional Housing is designed to provide homeless individuals and families with the interim stability and support to successfully move to and maintain permanent housing. BEDS receives funding for its Transitional Housing program from a number of sources, including a three-year award from the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority that specifically assists Victims of Crime, such as Laura. Less than one year into the program, 12 households are on their way to independence.**

**If you are homeless, you don't need virtual help. You need people like the dedicated BEDS Plus staff and volunteers who provide essential services every day, taking every precaution to protect themselves and others from COVID19.**

**Heroes work here.**



December 2020

### FAMILY HOMELESSNESS

Today BEDS serves almost five times as many children in families as we did in 2016. Across the country, family homelessness has been increasing for a number of years due to the lack of affordable housing, growing income inequality, and the trend towards low-pay service sector jobs without benefits for those without skills, training or education.

At BEDS, our priority is to protect families who are facing homelessness through Prevention and Stabilization, Shelter that accommodates the needs of homeless families, and dedicated Housing programs that give families the time they need to rebuild their lives. Family Transition Shelter is the most recent addition to the menu of family services BEDS offers. La Grange Area Transitional Housing supports families for up to 24 months while they prepare for independent housing. Family Transition Shelter places homeless families in apartment units leased by BEDS to give them a homelike environment as quickly as possible. Families have the option to assume the lease at six month intervals, as they stabilize and increase income.

**The COVID19 crisis exacerbates challenges for children in poor and homeless families.** Poverty, homelessness and hunger have been shown time and again to negatively impact academic performance. Traditional schooling for homeless children is often interrupted and delayed, and they are twice as likely to have a learning disability, repeat a grade or to be suspended from school. Remote learning requires computer technology, high speed internet, quiet space to do school work, and a strong support system for successful learning at home.

Please take a moment to consider the more than 500 children in our care. **We need your support to provide the services that will help their families return to housing and stability.**



### Donate now and help a homeless family

- \$5,000** one month of family case management services for 10 families
- \$2,500** security deposit and one month of rental assistance for homeless family
- \$1,000** family apartment starter kit
- \$500** motel-based assessment period of 28 days for Family Transition Shelter
- \$250** 12 months of internet connection for job training and remote learning
- \$100** utility deposit

9601 Ogden Avenue, La Grange, IL 60525

708-354-0858 | [info@beds-plus.org](mailto:info@beds-plus.org)

[www.beds-plus.org](http://www.beds-plus.org)

Tina Rounds, Executive Director





**Northern Illinois District**  
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

**God Knows the End from the Very Beginning**

We are engulfed in the next wave of COVID-19 challenges. There are natural disasters. Social tension continues to grip our country. It might seem as if God has washed His hands of the human race. But He reminds us, “I am the Alpha and the Omega...who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.” (Rev. 1:8) We are a church with confident courage and commitment held together in Christ.

We want you to know that the NID Board of Directors put the NID office building on the market to sell. Our work would deploy to smaller space to be closer to congregations, schools, and agencies. We believe we are among LCMS Districts leading the way for the Church at Large in the future. There will be financial benefits as well. We will let you know more as we consider options.

You have been part of this work and more:

- Over 35 current workers in NID have been financially assisted through Soldiers of the Cross. The LCMS and other entities have distributed 1 million dollars to support church workers.
- We are partnering with our African American congregations and workers. A consultant with LCEF will lead strategic work toward a greater mission effort.
- Our Ethnic Ministries are meeting virtually for encouragement, support, and wisdom at least every other month.
- Hispanic work in NID remains strong, but burdened, as are many of our congregations and missions.

We are grateful for your partnership in ministry.



With You, My Eyes are on Jesus (Hebrews 12: 2, 3),

*Allan R. Buss*

Rev. Dr. Allan R. Buss, President



Meeting with our Southside pastors in support of urban ministry



Welcome to the NID! New worker orientation



Education Department Zoom Meeting: Caring for your staff





**Northern Illinois District**  
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

## Serving

- 200+ Congregations
- 46 Elementary Schools
- 46 Standalone Preschools & Early Childhood Centers
- 2 High Schools

# God's Money at Work\*



\*Through October 31, 2020

## Looking Back

### With Your Partnership

Financially **assisted** **35** church workers with COVID-19 relief grants totalling **\$60,000** plus

**Engaged and communicated** with various constituents through **300+** virtual gatherings since March 2020

Fostered **3 virtual and in-person gatherings for our multi-ethnic ministries** to connect and share ways to promote the Gospel in their communities

Launched **webinars** for the edification and support of all our Northern Illinois District members with over **180 participants**

Initiated a circuit gathering of key lay leaders and pastors of **9 congregations** to **discuss opportunities and challenges** related to their ministries

## Looking Ahead

### With Your Partnership

**Increase engagement** in urban ministry by working with **10** African American congregations in cooperation with LCEF as they develop vision for their ministries

**Encourage collaboration** among our congregations with continued **circuit leadership gatherings** and lay-leader virtual meetings

Challenge our congregations and members to develop a more **vigorous life in the Word** including development of Gospel driven podcasts and webinars. District-wide Bible study planned for 2021

Equip our members to joyfully share their faith and **hope in Christ** through workshops and seminars

Continue spiritual, mental, and physical **support of our church workers** and lay leaders during the pandemic including the launch of the Church Worker Care Team late 2020

# TRIP ORDER FORM

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Order Total (Please make checks payable to "Trinity Lutheran School" and attach to order)**

Waiver: In placing this order, I release TRIP and/or Trinity Lutheran of any responsibility for lost or stolen certificates and I acknowledge there are no refunds or exchanges of orders. Contact Michele in the office for any assistance: 708-839-1444

Name:	_____ Held for my family account for dispersement.
Email:	_____ Another Trinity family:
Cell Phone: # (        ) _____ A text will be sent when the orders are ready.	_____ Applied to the Tuition Assistance Fund.
Delivery: All orders will be available for pickup between 8:00 - 3:30 in the school office the Friday followin the order date, or sometime sooner. <b>Multi-family/friend orders can be grouped in a single pickup: Name:</b>	

Shop online for more merchants or amounts, or reload avail. gift cards @[www.shopwithscrip.com](http://www.shopwithscrip.com) Trinity Member Code: C73LF95B7L57 Orders submitted Monday morning @ 9 a.m. Order Due Dates: \*January 11\* \*February 8\* \*March 8\*

Automotive	%	QTY	Total
AutoZone	8.0%		\$25
Shell	1.5%		\$25
Shell	1.5%		\$50
Shell	1.5%		\$100
Speedway	4.0%		\$25
Speedway	4.0%		\$50
Speedway	4.0%		\$100

Entertainment	%	QTY	Total
AMC Theaters	8.0%		\$25
Chuck E. Cheese	8.0%		\$10
Marcus Theatres	8.0%		\$25

Clothing	%	QTY	Total
American Eagle Outfitter	10.0%		\$25
Banana Republic	14.0%		\$25
Children's Place	12.0%		\$25
Gap	14.0%		\$25
Marshalls	7.0%		\$25
Old Navy	14.0%		\$25
T.J. Maxx	7.0%		\$25
T.J. Maxx	7.0%		\$100

Grocery	%	QTY	Total
CVS Pharmacy	6.0%		\$25
Jewel	4.0%		\$25
Jewel	4.0%		\$50
Jewel	4.0%		\$100
Mariano's (IL only)	4.0%		\$25
Meijer (not AK or HI)	3.0%		\$25
Meijer (not AK or HI)	3.0%		\$50
Meijer (not AK or HI)	3.0%		\$100
Pete's Fresh Market	4.0%		\$20
Sam's Club	2.5%		\$25
Sam's Club	2.5%		\$100
Walgreens	5.0%		\$25
Walgreens	5.0%		\$100

Department Stores	%	QTY	Total
Bloomingdale's	12.0%		\$25
Kohls	4.0%		\$25
Kohls	4.0%		\$100
Macy's	10.0%		\$25
Macy's	10.0%		\$100
Target	2.5%		\$25
Target	2.5%		\$50
Target	2.5%		\$100
Walmart	2.5%		\$25
Walmart	2.5%		\$50
Walmart	2.5%		\$100

Home Improvement	%	QTY	Total
Ace Hardware	4.0%		\$25
Lowes	4.0%		\$25
Menards	3.0%		\$25
Menards	3.0%		\$100
The Home Depot	4.0%		\$25
The Home Depot	4.0%		\$100

Pets	%	QTY	Total
Petsmart	5.0%		\$25

Restaurants	%	QTY	Total
Applebee's	8.0%		\$25
Arby's	8.0%		\$10
Bonefish Grill	10.0%		\$50
Buca di Beppo	8.0%		\$25
Buffalo Wild Wings	8.0%		\$25
Buona Beef	8.0%		\$10
California Pizza Kitchen	8.0%		\$25
Carrabba's	10.0%		\$25
Cheesecake Factory	5.0%		\$25
Chili's/ Maggiano's	11.0%		\$25
Chipotle	10.0%		\$10
Chipotle	10.0%		\$25
Cold Stone Creamery	8.0%		\$10
Cracker Barrel	8.0%		\$10
Cracker Barrel	8.0%		\$25
Dunkin	3.0%		\$10
Dunkin	3.0%		\$25
Freddy's	8.0%		\$25
Grubhub	4.0%		\$5
IHOP	8.0%		\$10
Lou Malnati's	8.0%		\$10
Lettuce Entertain You	12.0%		\$25
Maggiano's/Chili's	11.0%		\$25
Noodles & Co.	8.0%		\$10
Olive Garden	9.0%		\$25
Outback Steakhouse	10.0%		\$25
P.F. Chang's	8.0%		\$25
Panda Express	8.0%		\$25
Panera Bread	8.0%		\$10
Panera Bread	8.0%		\$25
Potbelly	8.0%		\$10
Rainforest Café	9.0%		\$25
Red Lobster	8.0%		\$25
Red Robin	8.0%		\$25
Shaw's Crab House	12.0%		\$25
Starbucks	7.0%		\$10
Starbucks	7.0%		\$25
Subway Restaurants	6.0%		\$10
Taco Bell	5.0%		\$10
Texas Roadhouse	8.0%		\$25
TGI Friday's	9.0%		\$25
Wendy's	6.5%		\$10
Wildfire	12.0%		\$25

Total \$ first side, 1st column  
Total \$ first side, 2nd column  
Total \$ this side, 1st column  
Total \$ this side, 2nd column

Total \$


Specialty	%	QTY	Total
Amazon	2.3%		\$25
American Airlines	6.0%		\$100
Barnes & Noble	8.0%		\$25
Bass Pro Shops	10.0%		\$25
Bath & Body Works	12.0%		\$10
Bed, Bath, & Beyond	7.0%		\$25
Bed, Bath, & Beyond	7.0%		\$100
Best Buy	4.0%		\$25
Best Buy	4.0%		\$100
Binny's	3.0%		\$25
Brooks Brothers	16.0%		\$25
Build - A - Bear	8.0%		\$25
buybuyBaby	7.0%		\$25
Cabela's	10.0%		\$25
Claire's	9.0%		\$10
Comfort Suites	3.5%		\$50
Container Store	9.0%		\$25
Dick's Sporting Goods	8.0%		\$25
Discover Universal Gift	1.2%		\$50
Disney	3.0%		\$25
Disney	3.0%		\$100
Fannie May Candies	25.0%		\$10
GameStop	3.0%		\$25
Great Clips	8.0%		\$25
Groupon	7.0%		\$25
H & M	7.0%		\$25
Hallmark	4.0%		\$25
HomeGoods	7.0%		\$25
Hotels.com	6.0%		\$100
iTunes	5.0%		\$15
iTunes	5.0%		\$25
Jos. A. Banks	10.0%		\$25
Michael's	4.0%		\$25
Nike	12.0%		\$25
Office Depot/Max	5.0%		\$25
Overstock.com	8.0%		\$25
Pottery Barn	8.0%		\$25
Staples	5.0%		\$25
Shutterfly	9.0%		\$25
Sephora	5.0%		\$25
Supercuts	8.0%		\$25
TopGolf	8.0%		\$50
Ulta Beauty	4.0%		\$25
Vera Bradley	7.0%		\$50
Visa	1.3%		\$50
Visa	1.3%		\$100
Wayfair	6.0%		\$100
West Elm	8.0%		\$25
Online Selection:			

Thank you for supporting Trinity Lutheran School.





**TRINITY  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH &  
SCHOOL**

11503 German Church  
Road  
Burr Ridge, IL 60527

Church: (708)839-1200  
School: (708)839-1444  
Fax: (708)839-8503

Email Addresses:  
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rgeaschel@tlbr.org  
adewitt@mytlsonline.com  
rgrady@tlbr.org  
rbordak@tlbr.org  
csecretary@tlbr.org  
lvasquez@tlbr.org  
heggert@tlbr.org

**OFFICE HOURS**  
Church Office Hours  
Mon–Thurs 8am-3pm  
School Office Hours  
Monday–Friday 8am-3pm

In an emergency, contact  
Pastor Bob  
(708)846-4170/call or text

Pastor Emeritus Albrecht  
(815) 293-0934 / home  
(815) 531-7590 / cell

## January Birthdays

- |                    |                      |                        |
|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Kiley Mahoney    | 13 Sheri Abernathy   |                        |
| Kimberly Rediehs   | D. David Lyall       |                        |
| 2 Jayden Williams  | Robert Wott          |                        |
| 3 Sheryl Diamond   | 14 Alex DeWitt       |                        |
| Emma Hruska        | 14 Payton Kohutynski |                        |
| Cindy Leicht       | Karla O'Shea         |                        |
| Nora Malina        | 15 Charlotte Reschke |                        |
| 4 Eva Borchardt    | 16 Hope Bowling      | 24 Hope Salverredy     |
| Heather Stephens   | Georgetta Rediehs    | 25 Kylie Orrick        |
| 6 Nicholas Polchan | 17 Marshall Allen    | Stephen Pahr           |
| Christina Rediehs  | Daniel Murray        | Norm Tiedt             |
| 7 Susan Zaccari    | 18 Alan VanDahm      | 26 Margaret Benes      |
| 8 Ryan Cohen       | 19 Julie Bergman     | Deb Hammes             |
| Mitchell Giliano   | Kevin Collins        | 26 Roberta Wernli      |
| Ted Gogolewski     | Lisa Collins         | 27 David Kneller       |
| 9 Haley Dahlstrand | William Cook         | Karson Kurzeja         |
| 10 Dolores Joiner  | Mark Pasterik        | Julie Tyree            |
| Vincent Saculla    | 20 Mark Winterroth   | 28 Kelly Payne         |
| 11 Burton Beyer    | 21 JoAnne Buege      | Mary Windzio           |
| Sandi Bulthuis     | Beth Lyons           | 29 Jonathan Benstent   |
| 12 Abigail Hruska  | Debra Weisbecker     | 31 Christina Drewniany |
| Jacob Kearney      | 23 Alexander Aluzas  | Brody Magnesen         |
| 12 Brooke Randolph | Jakob Pallisard      |                        |



## Trinity Members Come Through Again!

By Rev. Mark Bussert, Director of Stewardship

In spite of everything – and you probably know what I mean by “everything” – the members and contributors of Trinity have once again outdone themselves! In a year that has not only seen many infections and deaths from the corona virus, and a severe economic impact on restaurants, theaters, airlines and numerous other businesses, you have continued to return offerings to the Lord and supported the ministries of Trinity. As of the end of October, offerings are about \$21,000 (3.7%) ahead of the same time last year. Usually I like to see a 5%-6% increase...this year 3.7% thrills me!

In addition, you have responded generously in our annual Fall Stewardship Emphasis, “Live Generously,” exceeding both the number of Faith Commitments turned in last year (113 this year vs. 109 last year) and the amount of offerings committed (\$446,625 vs. \$439,884). 29 (27%) return a tithe or more. More than 40% indicated an increase in their offering for the year to come. Under the circumstances, I consider this astounding and heartening.

We could take credit for being generous, but really this is the work of the Holy Spirit, who creates and nurtures faith in our hearts. It is not possible for us to be this generous without faith! Without faith, we are selfish and fearful. Once we know that God provides for us and meets all our needs, we are enabled to give freely. And when we realize the depth of His love for us – that “He spared not His own Son, but gave Him up for us all” (Romans 8:32) -- we are motivated by gratitude and love to give offerings to Him.

Thank you, Trinity supporters – and Praise God!



**Live Generously**  
THE HOLD OF THE LIFE THAT REALLY IS LIFE





**www.tlbr.org**  
**www.mytls.org**

# January 2021

**Trinity Lutheran Church & School**  
 11500 German Church Road ☪ Burr Ridge, IL 60527  
 Church: 708.839.1200 ☪ School: 708.839.1444 ☪ Fax: 708.839.8503  
 For more information, go to our website: www.tlbr.org

HC = Holy Communion; BC = Bible Class; BP = Blood Pressure Screening

rev. 12/20/20

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					<b>1</b> 	<b>2</b> 8:30am Trustees 5:30pm Divine Service HC
<b>3</b> 8:00am Worship HC 9:30am Worship HC 9:30am SS 11:15am Contemp. HC 1-1:30pm Holy Communion	<b>4</b> 6:30pm Elders (Zoom) 6:30pm School Brd (SL)	<b>5 School Resumes</b> 7:00pm Bible Class (TFH)	<b>6 Epiphany</b> 6:30am Men's BC (CL) 4:30pm Public School Conf. (CL) <b>7:00pm Worship Service</b>	<b>7 2pm School Dismissal</b> 6:30pm Praise Band (Ch)	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> 8:30am Trustees 5:30pm Divine Service HC
<b>10</b> 8:00am Worship 9:30am Worship 9:30am SS 11:15am Cont. Worship 6:30pm Open Youth (YR)	<b>11</b> 7:00pm Council (CL)	<b>12</b> 7:00pm Bible Class (TFH)	<b>13</b> 6:30am Men's BC (CL) 10:30am TLC (CL) 4:30pm Public School Conf. (CL)	<b>14</b> 4:30pm TLC Wendte (Skype) 6:30pm Praise Band (Ch)	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> 8:30am Trustees 5:30pm Divine Service HC
<b>17</b> 8:00am Worship HC 9:30am Worship HC 9:30am SS 11:15am Contemp. HC 1-1:30pm Holy Communion	<b>18 The Confession of St. Peter</b>  <b>School &amp; Church Offices Closed</b> 7:00pm Voters (CL)	<b>19</b> 12:00pm <b>TORCH DEADLINE</b> 7:00pm Bible Class (TFH)	<b>20</b> 6:30am Men's BC (CL) 4:30pm Public School Conf. (CL)	<b>21</b> 6:30pm Praise Band (Ch)	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> 8:30am Trustees 5:30pm Divine Service HC
<b>24 Life Sunday</b> <b>St. Timothy, Pastor and Confessor</b> 8:00am Worship 9:30am Worship 9:30am SS 11:15am Cont. Worship 6:30pm Open Youth (YR)	<b>25 The Conversion of St. Paul</b>	<b>26 St. Titus, Pastor and Confessor</b> 7:00pm Bible Class (TFH)	<b>27</b> 6:30am Men's BC (CL) 10:30am TLC (CL) 4:30pm Public School Conf. (CL)	<b>28</b> 4:30pm TLC Wendte (Skype) 6:30pm Praise Band (Ch)	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> 8:30am Trustees 5:30pm Divine Service HC
<b>31</b> 8:00am Worship 9:30am Worship 9:30am SS 11:15am Cont. Worship			<b>Altar Guild:</b> Lisa Haak Dorothy Supeter Nancy Alex Betty Rediehs	<b>Ushers:</b> 8:30 am – Group 1 10:45am – Group 3	<b>Meeting areas:</b> <i>(shown in parenthesis)</i> Ch = Church CR = School Conf. Room CL = Church Library TFH = Trinity Fellowship Hall G = School Gym SK = School Kitchen CK = TFH Kitchen SL = School Library N = Narthex YR = Youth Room OP = Off Premises	