

# TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

# TRINITARIAN

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2019

Available online @ [www.trinitylutherannorfolk.org](http://www.trinitylutherannorfolk.org)

## From Our Pastor

Rev. Jonathan Meraz

Grace and peace to you...

As I write this message we are in the middle of what some people refer to as the **summer doldrums**. The word **doldrums** is defined as a state of inactivity or stagnation. As for me I have never considered any part of summer to be stagnant. I like to fish, I like to golf, I like to enjoy the great outdoors and I find that it is a lot more pleasant to do all of those things in the warmth of summer as opposed to the cold of winter. I guess it depends on your attitude. (After all, there was a time in my life when I liked to ski!)

Some people have described the season of the church year that follows Pentecost as a time of being in the doldrums. No big feasts or festivals like Christmas or Easter, Reformation Day or All Saints Day. No special hymnody. Green paraments on the altar week after week after week. Green stole on the pastor week after week after week. I see how this could be mistaken for inactivity or stagnation... but trust me, it is not!

We are blessed here at Trinity to have Divine service every Sunday morning. This is not our service to God, it is God's service to us where He purposefully, intentionally forgives our sins, speaks His life-giving Word and distributes His most holy sacraments. In the Divine service God is on the move, coming down to us, filling us with good things, making us holy. In Divine service we receive forgiveness, life and salvation!

Maybe because we do not have to fight for it we take it for granted. Maybe because it is so readily available we lose some appreciation for what it is. But what it is, is a weekly miracle! Do not be fooled by the appearance. Come to receive God's gifts earned by our Savior at the cost of His life, given to us without any cost on our part. Come to hear His forgiveness spoken into your ears, His Word preached and His very body and blood placed into your mouth. No inactivity or stagnation here, just weekly miracles!

God's blessings to you all...

Pastor

## SUNDAY SCHEDULE

9:00 am  
*Sunday School and  
Adult Bible Classes*

10:00 am  
*Worship Service*

*Holy Communion  
Every Sunday*

## OUR MISSION

*United in Christ we will  
proclaim the Gospel,  
administer the Sacraments,  
and provide Christian  
education to children and  
adults in a supportive and  
nurturing environment.*

*Check out our website:  
[trinitylutherannorfolk.org](http://trinitylutherannorfolk.org)*

*where you can also  
view our podcasts:*

[trinitylutherannorfolk.org/  
podcasts](http://trinitylutherannorfolk.org/podcasts)



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## TRINITY'S MINISTRY TEAM

### **Pastor**

Rev. Jonathan Meraz

### **Church Secretary**

Anne Combes

### **Music Director**

Stephen Pruitt

### **Bookkeeper**

Lynn Hubert

### **Sexton**

Bill Sontag

### **Custodian**

Antonio Tutt

### **Chairman of Deacons**

Sharyn Leiding – Zone 3

### **Deacons**

Sharon Plawin – Zone 1

Craig Scott – Zone 4

Ken Leiding – Zone 5

Roger & Mary Ann Medlin – Zone 6

## Council 2019

### **President**

John Knickelbein

### **Vice-President**

Bud Hubert

### **Recording Secretary**

Lynn Hubert

### **Treasurer**

David Petri

### **Christian Growth Chair**

Judy Sykes

### **LWML President**

Cathy George

### **Special Ministries Chair**

Patty Malone

### **Stewardship Chair**

Craig Scott

### **Worship Chair**

Janice Gwin

### **Church Properties**

Errol Jennings - Chair

Gerry Harger - Trustee

## Deacons

Sharyn Leiding

The SPRING SING event was held on Sunday, June 9th. Following a light lunch in Belvedere Hall, a group of Trinity's finest went to the homes of Paul and Doris Lass and Helen Everett, with a stop at Lake Taylor Hospital to serenade Erika Straddeck. Familiar hymns and patriotic songs were sung to the delight of Trinity's homebound members. Bud Hubert gifted us with his harmonica accompaniment. It was time well spent and is an appreciated outreach. THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO PARTICIPATED!

The spiritual atmosphere at Trinity is always a topic of conversation at monthly meetings of deacons. Please contact your deacon of any concerns you might have and we will address them.

One homebound member has requested transportation for medical appointments; it seems that her family is not in a position to accommodate her. Please let the office know if you are interested in accepting this task.

Your presence in the pew on Sunday mornings during worship service is encouraging to others. Because the deacons track attendance, please remember to sign the WELCOME book in your pew. Thank you. Doing so enables our records to be more accurate.



## Adult Choir and Bell Choir

Stephen Pruitt

Adult Choir meets on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. and will begin rehearsals on September 4<sup>th</sup>, we will not meet on the 11<sup>th</sup> but will continue on September 18<sup>th</sup>, Bell Choir meets on Sundays right after church and will begin rehearsals on September 15<sup>th</sup>. If you are interested in adding your talents to praise God with music, please speak with Stephen Pruitt, our Director of Music.

Pastor's recommended reading ...

### **5 Things You Can Do To Have A Faithful Prayer Life**

Paul J. Cain

This is the second book I have reviewed in the 9 book ***You Can Do It! Series*** described by CPH this way: *The series encourages and equips believers to live out life as disciples of Jesus Christ, being formed and shaped by God's Word. Written in a clear and encouraging style, each of these topical books gives Christians achievable goals for strengthening their faith and relationships. Each book features a consistent presentation of a topic in five parts with each part consisting of a presentation, a summary, discussion questions, and several action steps.*

Prayer is one of God's greatest gifts to us. When you stop to think about it the very fact that God not only allows us but encourages us to come to Him directly is nothing short of a miracle. Through prayer God keeps us close to Him and to His gifts.

One of the regrets I often hear from God's people is that they don't pray as often as they would like to. I know the feeling. Life is busy. I have to admit that prayer is something that I have struggled to include with regularity throughout my life. When 'all is well' I have a tendency to 'forget' about God. That makes me normal. What helps is being intentional and developing a discipline. My personal experience tells me that over time discipline becomes default and you find yourself praying unceasingly. I think that this little handbook can help you to develop a discipline.

The book leads you through a series of steps that can lead to a faithful prayer life. The steps include preparation. They include being intentional. They include setting aside time. Prayer is not work and we certainly do not want to turn it into a task that we have to accomplish to 'fulfill all righteousness'. It is a free gift for believers to use as often as they are able. This book, like the others in the series, is a very easy and quick read. If you are intent on increasing your prayer life, I encourage you to include this book in your reading. I truly believe it can be a blessing for you. If you would like to discuss it after you are finished I would love to talk with you.

### **From our Pastor**

#### **Introduction to the Divine Service**

Notes on the Liturgy #20 –  
Agnus Dei

The Agnus Dei was introduced to the liturgy of the church by Pope Sergius I about 700A.D. *Agnus Dei* means *Lamb of God*. It is based on the words of John the Baptizer as he testified that Jesus is the Son of God. What a wonderful passage to sing! It fills me with joy simply contemplating these marvelous words.

Christ, the Lamb of God, who was present in the flesh with John the Baptizer almost 2,000 years ago is also present in the flesh with me and all believers. But, how has He come? As a harsh Law giver? No, He comes as a Lamb in self-sacrifice for us! He comes to us in His body and blood. The church by faith recognizes this and so cries out ***Lamb of God have mercy upon us.*** Jesus does indeed have mercy on us! That mercy is given into our mouths as we receive the holy elements of the Lord's Supper.

At this point, these liturgy notes may seem somewhat repetitious. You see, ever since the Preface we have had a singular focus of receiving God's gifts in the Lord's Supper. This is the value of the liturgy. It has faithfully pointed us to God's gifts time and again.

*These notes were originally written in 2001  
by Pastor David Oberdieck and have been edited.*



## 100th Anniversary

Bud and Lynn Hubert

### **Praising the Lord for 100 Years of Grace - Trinity's 100th Anniversary Celebration begins in 2020**

Our committee has taken a little time off for the summer, but we will be getting back to planning soon.

As of this writing we have received \$19,248.71 in donations toward the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration. Thank you!

Lynn has been working on our 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Cookbook. This cookbook will be on sale November 24, 2019 at the LWML Holiday Happenings. Price to be determined by cost of paper and copier. The deadline to submit recipes is September 2019.

Lynn is currently taking pictures of any member of the congregation to add to our member board or update an old picture on the member board. The 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary Pictorial Directory will be available for distribution in March of 2020. Please ask to have your picture taken/updated!

We will kick off our anniversary year on January 12, 2020. At that time, you can pick up your calendar for 2020. Lots of activities planned.

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW for our Anniversary Sunday, June 7, 2020. A glorious service is being planned with introduction of our new 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Hymn. A panoramic picture of the entire congregation will be taken on the front lawn following the service. A banquet will follow that evening at Grand Affairs on Pleasure House Road in Virginia Beach. Tickets will be sold in early 2020. Watch for more details in your next Trinitarian.

Guest Arrival 5-6 pm – Hors d'Oeuvres  
Buffet Dinner 6-7:30 pm (child's menu will be available)  
Cutting and Service of Cake – 7:30 -8:00 pm

A new church banner has been designed and will be used at our kickoff service in January and all celebrations following in 2020. A special thank you to Jan Knickelbein for taking on this assignment.

We are currently gathering proposals for some work around Trinity that could be covered by remaining funds donated toward our anniversary. Some funds will be used to help cover costs thru the year as we praise God for His blessings. If you have a need in mind, please speak with Bud or Lynn so we can bring it to the committee for review.

Some special dates to keep in mind –

Sunday, January 12, 2020 –  
Kickoff service and reception after service

Sunday, April 5, 2020 – Palm Sunday,  
Lunch followed by the Last Supper Presentation

Sunday, May 17, 2020 –  
Service salute to the military,  
Pastor James O'Connor, guest proclaimer

Sunday, June 7, 2020 –  
Trinity Sunday Anniversary Celebration and  
Banquet (guest pastor's participating)

Sunday, September 13, 2020 –  
Service honoring our children, SS Rally Day and  
our Day School,  
Pastor Daniel Quiram, guest proclaimer

Sunday November 15, 2020 –  
Pastor Charles Froelich, guest proclaimer

Still working on a date for Pastor Daniel Berteau to serve as guest proclaimer.

Your prayers are requested for this committee and for decisions that are made, that they be to the Glory of God and in Thanksgiving for 100 years of Grace!





## Board of Stewardship

Craig Scott

### LCMS Stewardship Ministry

Have you ever noticed the subtle ceremony of receiving the offerings during the Divine Service? The offerings are collected in plates or baskets, and they are brought forward and given to the pastor or an assistant. The pastor turns toward the altar, and, as he slightly bows his head, the offerings are raised slightly to the Lord and placed on the altar or an adjacent table.

Why do we have this ceremony? And what does it teach us? For that is what ceremony does – it teaches, as the Augsburg Confession tells us what we need to know about Christ (AC XXIV, 1–3).

Originally, this ceremony included more than simply bringing forward what was collected in the offering plates. The elements for the Holy Communion – the bread and the wine – were brought forward with the offerings. The offerings and elements were lifted toward the Lord and placed upon the altar. The altar, now made a table, would be set for the Lord's Supper.

Gifts brought to the altar come from the sweat of His people's brow. They are the bread and wine, the fruits of His people's labor in this fallen world. After six days of labor and toil, the people are to bring a generous proportion for the Lord's work. Gifts set upon the altar are offered to the Lord for Him to take up and press into service for His gracious work.

For what is offered to the Lord from the sweat of His people's brow – the bread of anxious toil – comes back to us as the bread of life. The bread comes down from heaven that whoever eats this bread and drinks this cup will receive life through the forgiveness of their sins.

This is not unlike what the Lord did for His people in the Old Testament:

“You shall tithe all the yield of your seed that comes from the field year by year. And before the Lord your God, in the place that he will choose, to make his name dwell there, you shall eat the tithe of your grain, of your wine, and of your oil, and the firstborn of your herd and flock, that you may learn to fear the Lord your God always. And if the way is too long for you, so that you are not able to carry the

tithe, when the Lord your God blesses you, because the place is too far from you, which the Lord your God chooses, to set his name there, then you shall turn it into money and bind up the money in your hand and go to the place that the Lord your God chooses and spend the money for whatever you desire – oxen or sheep or wine or strong drink, whatever your appetite craves. And you shall eat there before the Lord your God and rejoice, you and your household.” (Deut. 14:22-26)

What a blessing! God provides for us in all things. He provides bread from the sweat of our brows. He receives this from us in the first-fruits offerings we give to Him in thanksgiving and praise, and He turns these into spiritual bread. He gives this heavenly bread – the bread of eternal life – back to us so we might have joy.

So, the next time you are in the Divine Service, watch this ceremony in wonder. The offerings we have given to Him, the Lord gives back to us in His supper so that we may rejoice in the salvation He won for us upon the cross.

-copied from LCMS newsletter August 2019

## LWML

Cathy George

LWML had a service event on July 11th. We started making red scarves for Women Heart, an organization supporting women facing heart disease. We plan to complete 7 scarves. Thanks to all who supported this event.

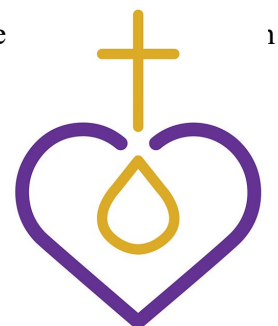
On August 24<sup>th</sup> we will hold our LWML Bazaar from 8:00 am – 1:00 pm, in Belvedere Hall. Proceeds from our sale will support our mission work and our league. Please plan to attend and bring your friends.

Beginning in August, we will offer greeting cards for sale in the Welcome Center on the first Sunday of each month. Cards are sold individually or by box.

On September 14th we will have our Fall activities.

Come and join us!

ALL women are invited.



## Board of Worship

Bud Hubert

At our Worship Service on August 28<sup>th</sup>, there will be a blessing of students and everyone involved in education. This includes but not limited to students, teachers, aids, lunch personnel, bus drivers, crossing guards, custodial staff, volunteers, and any others we might have neglected to list. Every one of these people play an important part. We pray that God will bless them and their efforts.

On September 8<sup>th</sup> we will celebrate Sunday School Rally Day, and also recognize the service of our acolytes.

On September 29<sup>th</sup> Pastor is dedicating this Sunday to Missions. The Service and the Music will follow this theme.

The Board of Worship would like to thank all those who participate, and support our Worship Services. Their efforts are greatly appreciated.

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## Nominating Committee

Bud Hubert

The Nominating Committee for this year is made up of Bud Hubert, Ralph Knorr, and Linda Blaker. According to The Bylaws, the Nominating Committee needs to find candidates for Vice President; Second Trustee; Recording Secretary; Director of Special Ministries; Director of Stewardship; Director of Worship; and LWML President.

The Nominating Committee has been busy. The following members of the Church Council have agreed to remain in their current positions: Recording Secretary – Lynn Hubert; Director of Special Ministries – Patty Malone; Director of Stewardship – Craig Scott; Director of Worship – Janice Gwin; LWML President – Cathy George. We thank them for their continued service. Walter Staley has agreed to become Second Trustee for 2020 and First Trustee in 2021. This leaves one position open – Vice President for 2020 / President in 2021. If anyone is inspired to volunteer for this position please speak with a member of the Nominating Committee.



## Christian Growth

Judy Sykes

Trinity's Summer Camp 2019 is going very well. Approximately 20 students are attending each week. The schedule of events includes Water Fun day, Cooking Day, a visit to Slover Library, a visit from a balloon man, Color Me Mine, lots of arts and crafts, chapel each Wednesday with Pastor Meraz and Stephen Pruitt (who also gives some music lessons), all amid a fun, relaxed atmosphere of Christian love. This is all due to the skilled employees who have been working at our camp for 10 years or more: Christy Sontag, Lucy Makriyanis, Carol Maxwell, Anne Combes and Director Linda Loper. Former TLS students Emma Loveland and Jason Loper are also helping out. We thank them for their mission work on our behalf.

The Mallie family has relocated to Seattle, Washington. Therefore we have lost Susan as our S.S. teacher, as well as her two sons as our S.S. students. We are very grateful for Susan's dedicated service. Trinity does not have any other children attending Sunday School at this time. Members of the Board of Christian Growth will continue to conduct S.S. with any children who may show up. If you have or know of any children who may be interested in participating in Sunday School at 9:00 am, please let a member of this board know and we will be extremely happy to welcome them in the main S.S. room, next to Pastor's Bible Class. Of course "Lessons To Go bags" will continue to be distributed to children who come to church services, so they and their parents can have a Bible lesson on their own at home.

Soon we will be providing materials for our older children to take home as well and there will be a lesson ready for them during the S.S. hour too. Speaking of which, Hayden Jennings will be confirmed on Sunday, August 11th. We are so proud of his Christian development at Trinity from a small boy to a teen!

David Chadwick is working on finding an adult speaker for the spiritual enrichment of our members, perhaps to occur during our anniversary year. If you have any ideas for topics or a speaker, please contact Dave.

Sunday School will celebrate Rally Day on Sunday September 8th. Please look for details to come!

Please pray for the Christian growth of all of us and especially our children. Modeling the Christian life is the best gift we can give them!



## August Birthdays

2 Philip Gilson  
 4 Gerald Harger  
 4 Lorie Bonin  
 7 Evelyn Kuenzli  
 10 Marilyn Vaughan  
 12 Candy Sontag  
 12 Jeanette Gilson  
 16 Nani Sabillion  
 18 Ada Bugbee  
 22 Arthur Christy  
 22 Maggie Bayse  
 23 Richard Robertson  
 24 Nora Bugbee  
 25 Richard Ball  
 25 Buster Sontag  
 26 Donna Pitt  
 26 Hayden Herring  
 27 Victor Duarte, Sr.  
 29 Conrad Greif



7 Charlie ♥ Susan Mallie  
 12 Donald ♥ Deborah Adams  
 14 Jonathan ♥ Julie Meraz  
 29 Eugene ♥ Shirley Barker  
 29 Kevin ♥ Anne Combes  
 30 Craig ♥ Mary Lou Scott

## September Birthdays



3 Bud Hubert  
 5 Justin Malone  
 7 Rebecca Peele  
 9 Andy Bonin  
 11 Robert Sawyer  
 12 Jon Leiding  
 12 Dante Mallie  
 13 Anne Combes  
 13 Hannah Prince  
 14 Janice Gwin  
 19 Bettie Terrell  
 20 Ruth Kaufman  
 24 Thelma Scroxtton  
 25 Tyler Clute  
 29 Alex Ruediger



1 Conrad ♥ Jeanne Greif  
 5 Jon ♥ Christine Leiding  
 14 Robert ♥ Ashlynn Sawyer

## Lutherans Bowling

Doug Sulak

The Tidewater Lutheran Bowling League will have it's organizational meeting on Monday, August 19<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30 p.m. There will be free bowling after the meeting. We need both regular and substitute bowlers. There is a one time sanction fee for all bowlers; however substitute bowlers will not have to pay anything. The league's season will start on Monday, August 26<sup>th</sup>. We would love to see more Trinity smiling faces this season. Please come and check us out. The league is all about fellowship as well as some spirited competition. Should you have any questions please contact Doug Sulak.



# WORSHIP SERVER SCHEDULE

	August 4	August 11	August 18	August 25
Ushers	Bud Hubert and Justin Malone	Linda Blaker and Doug Sulak	Justin Malone and Julie Meraz	Errol Jennings and Doug Sulak
Lector	James Hoeft	Ken Leiding	John Knickelbein	Ralph Knorr
Communion Assistant	Errol Jennings	Ken Leiding	John Knickelbein	Ralph Knorr
Acolyte	TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA
Children's Sermon	Pastor Meraz	Pastor Meraz	Sharyn Leiding	Stephen Pruitt

***If you are unable to serve on your designated Sunday, please make arrangements for someone to cover for you and phone the Church Office with the changes. THANKS!!***

	September 1	September 8	September 15	September 22	September 29
U	Bud Hubert and Julie Meraz	Justin Malone and Bud Hubert	Linda Blaker and Doug Sulak	Bud Hubert and Julie Meraz	Errol Jennings and Doug Sulak
L	Julie Meraz	Anna Carter	Cathy George	David Chadwick	Tresea Staley
C A	Dave Petri	Roger Medlin	Ralph George	Bill Sontag	Jeff Ingmire
A	TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA
C S	Pastor Meraz	Pastor Meraz	Sharyn Leiding	Stephen Pruitt	Pastor Meraz

*In the event of inclement weather please visit our website at [www.trinitylutherannorfolk.org](http://www.trinitylutherannorfolk.org) and our Facebook page at TLCNorfolk for announcements concerning any cancelations. Notifications will also be sent by email to those with an email address on file and by phone to those who do not.*





Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 11:30am Ladies Weekly Bible Study 1pm Men's Bible Study	2	3
4 <b>8th Sunday after Pentecost</b> 9am Sunday School /Adult Bible Class 10am Communion Worship Service	5	6	7	8 11:30am Ladies Weekly Bible Study 7pm Men's Bible Study	9	10
11 <b>9th Sunday after Pentecost</b> 9am Sunday School /Adult Bible Class 10am Communion Worship Service	12	13	14	15 11:30am Ladies Weekly Bible Study 1pm Men's Bible Study	16 Last day of Summer Camp	17 8am Men's Breakfast
18 <b>10th Sunday after Pentecost</b> 9am Sunday School /Adult Bible Class 10am Communion Worship Service	19	20 1pm Deacons Meeting	21 2pm Red Cross Blood Drive	22 11:30am Ladies Weekly Bible Study 7pm Men's Bible Study	23	24 8am LWML Bazaar
25 <b>11th Sunday after Pentecost</b> 9am Sunday School /Adult Bible Class 10am Communion Worship Service	26	27	28	29 11:30am Ladies Weekly Bible Study 1pm Men's Bible Study	30	31



# SEPTEMBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> <b>12th Sunday after Pentecost</b> 9am Sunday School /Adult Bible Class 10am Communion Worship Service	<b>2</b> Labor Day Office Closed	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 6:30pm Choir Practice	<b>5</b> 11:30am Ladies Weekly Bible Study 1pm Men's Bible Study	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> <b>13th Sunday after Pentecost</b> SS Rally Day 9am Sunday School /Adult Bible Class 10am Communion Worship Service	<b>9</b> 6:30pm Bowling	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> 7pm Financial Peace University	<b>12</b> 11:30am Ladies Weekly Bible Study 7pm Men's Bible Study	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 10am LWML Meeting
<b>15</b> <b>14th Sunday after Pentecost</b> 9am Sunday School /Adult Bible Class 10am Communion Worship Service 11:30am Bell Choir Rehearsal Trinitarian Dead-line	<b>16</b> 6:30pm Bowling	<b>17</b> 1pm Deacons Meeting	<b>18</b> 6:30pm Choir Practice 7pm Financial Peace University	<b>19</b> 11:30am Ladies Weekly Bible Study 1pm Men's Bible Study	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> 8am Ladies Monthly Bible Study @ Coaster Coffee on Tidewater Drive 8am Men's Breakfast 9am Foodbank
<b>22</b> <b>15th Sunday after Pentecost</b> 9am Sunday School /Adult Bible Class 10am Communion Worship Service 11:30am Bell Choir Rehearsal	<b>23</b> 6:30pm Bowling	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> 6:30pm Choir Practice 7pm Financial Peace University	<b>26</b> 11:30am Ladies Weekly Bible Study 7pm Men's Bible Study	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> <b>16th Sunday after Pentecost</b> 9am Sunday School /Adult Bible Class 10am Communion Worship Service 11:30am Bell Choir Rehearsal Mission Sunday	<b>30</b> 6:30pm Bowling					

# Pray without ceasing

by Matthew C. Harrison , President LCMS

Luther famously wrote that there are three things that make a theologian (and this applies to all Christians):

- (1) prayer;
- (2) meditation on God's Word; and
- (3) trials.

He then observed that the trials we experience really bring it all together. They drive us to rely on God's Word, and they drive us into prayer. He quipped, "I thank God for the pope. Through all his ranting and raving, he's made me a pretty good theologian."

Trials always come. You have yours; I have mine. They tempt us to believe that the Gospel is not ours, that Scripture is not true, that God does not really love us, that He might even hate us and want to punish us, if He exists at all. The art of being a Christian is, in large measure, believing in God against God. We believe the clear Word of the Gospel of free forgiveness and trust in Baptism, Absolution and Christ's body and blood in the Supper for forgiveness. We trust His promises against the pain, death, spiritual struggles and disappointments we so often experience in this life and which God allows and even brings upon us. Does God will suffering? Contemplate Jesus' prayer in the garden for the answer: "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done" (Luke 22:42). The art of being a Christian is to experience suffering, yet to trust that it is sent for good, not harm. It is to pray with Job: "Though [God] slay me, I will hope in him" (Job 13:15).

In my feeble walk of faith, in my challenged prayer life, through a multitude of trials, the Psalms have been a solace. Raising children and grandchildren; facing illness, tragedy or problems in the family or at work; struggling with faith due to assaults of the sinful flesh and the devil — all drive us to prayer and meditation on God's Word. That's how God makes "theologians" or "Christians" of us. That's what He did with the prophets too (Gen. 22). That's what He did with the apostles (2 Cor. 12). That's what He does with you. "Why, O Lord, do you stand far away? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?" (Ps. 10:1).

Open on my kneeler is the LSB Altar Book, which contains all the Psalms. The Psalms are God's prayer book especially for us. Jesus had them memorized. They express the full range of human emotion — frustration, pain, faithlessness, but also happiness, joy and steadfastness. They tell us who God is and how He regards us. They have their own contexts, like prayers for royal events. But they console us now because they tell us that God acted in the past, even as He promises to act today and shall continue to act for the well-being of His saints into the future (Ps. 145). The enemies of the faithful remain the same: the devil, the world and our flesh. The weaknesses of Christians are the same: doubt, sin and faithlessness.

My trials have driven me to the Psalms. I am daily shocked and delighted at how the words I pray from 3,000 years ago are so applicable now. I am struck low by the Law and raised to life by the Gospel. "I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,' and you forgave the iniquity of my sin" (Ps. 32:5; see Ps. 130; 143). I resonate with the complaints of David (Ps. 9; 10; 124; 129). I am led by the words to give thanks to God for all His manifold blessings to the contrite (Ps. 147). And time and time again, the inspired and living words of these prayers pray me into joy and rejoicing. "Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart!" (Ps. 32:11; see Ps. 122; 126). I am consoled by the Lord's promises (Ps. 119:151).

More than any other prayers, the Psalms lead us directly to the life St. Paul wills for us because it is Christ's will for us. "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thess. 5:16–18).

-copied from the *Lutheran Witness*, August 2019

*Renewals/new subscriptions for the Lutheran Witness will be coming up in October. Please watch your bulletin for information to subscribe to this magazine. This is a publication well worth your reading time, and is available at a group rate when purchased through the church.*

TRINITY EVANGELICAL  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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[www.trinitylutherannorfolk.org](http://www.trinitylutherannorfolk.org)



**If your mailing address or email address  
has changed,  
PLEASE notify the Church Office.**

Dave Ramsey's

**Financial** *Peace*  
UNIVERSITY

A biblically based curriculum that teaches people how to handle money God's way!

Pastor Meraz will be leading the classes, beginning Wednesday, September 11th  
and lasting for nine weeks. The cost is \$129.99.

This nine-lesson course uses biblical wisdom and common sense to help you tackle budgeting, pay off debt, and make your money work for you! FPU includes your member workbook and a year of free online resources through Financial Peace Membership. Talk with Pastor or find out more at <https://www.daveramsey.com/store/product/financial-peace-university-class>.