



Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church Norfolk, Virginia

Praising the Lord for 100 years of Grace
1920-2020



100th Anniversary—March 2020 Issue

WWII Influx of Military and Industry - and its Effect on Trinity

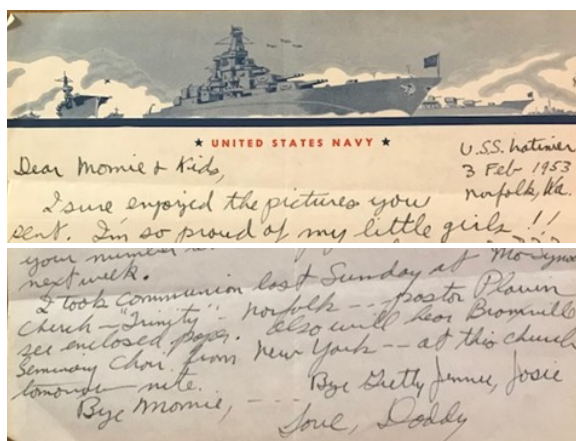
WWII brought a new phase in Trinity's history. Norfolk was a military town and suddenly America was at war. Young men and families from all over the United States flooded into the area. That included many Lutherans... many from the Midwest. Trinity became their home away from home. That trend has continued over the years. Trinity has always been a haven for Lutherans in the military – primarily the Navy. During WWII, the LCMS opened a Service Center in downtown Norfolk to give young Lutheran servicemen a place to hangout and relax. Pastor Plawin was involved and young servicemen began appearing at Trinity services as well. They were welcomed into the church fellowship and into the homes of members of the congregation. They went on hayrides with the youth and ate Sunday dinner prepared by women of the church in the parsonage kitchen and served in the basement.



Find the two servicemen in each of these two pictures of the congregation in 1925 (top photo) and 1932 (bottom photo) Norfolk was a Navy town even before WWII



Servicemen found a touch of home at Trinity with Pastor Plawin's family in 1942



The father of a former member, Johanna Bradley, was a Navy doctor stationed in Norfolk during the Korean War in the early 50s and he attended Trinity. He wrote this note to his wife and 3 daughters back in Missouri. It shows the importance of one's spiritual life in those days: "I took Communion last Sunday at Missouri Synod church - Trinity - Norfolk - Pastor Plawin... see enclosed paper. Also will hear Bronxville Seminary choir from New York at the church tomorrow nite.

Bye Momie, Gretty, Jennee, Josie (Johanna)..
Love, Daddy

War Years Bring Industry/Business Support to Norfolk and to Trinity



The Nolde Bakery/plant on Hampton Blvd....and a billboard close-by



Many businesses also came to Norfolk to support the war effort. That brought new families to Trinity as well. The Nolde family from Richmond became members of Trinity in the early forties. George Nolde opened a bakery on Hampton Blvd. to serve the expanding needs of a military town. He became very involved in Trinity and led the effort to build the new church on Granby St.

Another family - the Johnsons from the Midwest - became members of Trinity during those war years as well. Milton Johnson's expertise was heating and he advised on a new "floor" heating system for the new church building that was very effective. It was just replaced a few years ago.

The war ended but the military buildup in Norfolk didn't - it was a booming military city and that was reflected in the number of military people in the pews at Trinity.

Trinity had expanded quickly during the early 40's and the need for a new and larger church was obvious. So plans were drawn up during those war years and the new church structure was built in 1945 in the newly developed area over the Granby St. Bridge, not far from Trinity's first church.

Many of the military families who came to Norfolk eventually retired and stayed in the area, becoming permanent members of Trinity. Many still sit in the pews today.

Our military brothers and sisters in Christ have been welcomed and embraced by the congregation and they have played a big role in the mission and growth of Trinity. And many Navy chaplains have served the congregation over the years, continuing to this day.

Reflecting back on those early years, the church supplied a spiritual haven and a taste of home for men who were being shipped off to war. We don't know if they all made it back. For some Trinity might have been their last taste of home.



Don and Jane Miller

Military Families at Trinity Serve the Lord in Many Ways

The gold leaf cross that hangs over Trinity's altar was crafted by a Navy dentist, Dr. Aldridge, who was a member of the congregation in the fifties.

Trinity's free standing altar and pulpit were crafted in 1995 by Navy retiree Don Miller for Trinity's 75th anniversary. He also made the hymn boards, bell stand, lectern base, baptismal rolling base, wall holders for the crosses, and the large cross on the front lawn.

Don's wife, Jane, brought her teaching and music skills to Trinity's School in 1975 when she joined the faculty. In 1977 she became head teacher for the grades. Their two daughters attended Trinity Lutheran School. Jane retired in 2002 after 27 years of service, but continued to lead chapel and teach German until they retired a few years ago and moved to Wisconsin to be close to family.

Trinity's Military is Active in Ministry



Linda Blaker leading children's sermon



Bobbie Gillooly working with Trinity Lutheran School students



Paul Lass, Linda Blaker, Errol Jennings, Bud Hubert and Bill Sontag on chow line duty

Salute to Military Leading to Belvedere Hall



When you pass through the hallway to Belvedere Hall - look up over the doorway - you'll see the American Eagle painted atop one of the doorways. On the door below you will see the symbol used for the LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces. Both were painted by Cassie Wyles, U.S. Navy and active guest of Trinity, to salute the U.S military at Trinity and all over the world.

There's also a bulletin board displaying the U. S. flag. LCDR Chris Cassidy, former Trinity Lutheran School parent, gifted the school with the US flag that had flown over Bagram Airbase, Afghanistan, during Operation Enduring Freedom, when he was a Navy Seal. He later became a NASA astronaut flying on the space shuttle Endeavor in 2009 and the International Space Station in 2013. Two other flags, in frames, were gifted from school parents.

Living Last Supper

Chaplain Prince introduced the "Living Last Supper" to Trinity a few years ago. It's a drama of Jesus' last supper with his disciples based upon Leonardo da Vinci's masterpiece - *The Last Supper*. Chaplain Prince and men of the church play the parts of Jesus and his disciples. It will be presented again this year as part of Trinity's Maundy Thursday service, April 9th, at 7 p.m.



Many Chaplains Served Trinity's Ministry

Many Navy chaplains filled Trinity's pulpit over the years. Two chaplains became pastors at Trinity - Arthur Meyer (1974 - 1985) and James O'Connor (1998 - 2009). Three served as interim pastors.

Chaplain Ron Scheir, 1966-1967

Chaplain Scheir became Trinity's interim pastor when Pastor Plawin went to his eternal home in 1966 after 35 years in ministry at Trinity.



Chaplain Al Kirk, 1985 - 1986

Chaplain Kirk became interim pastor when Pastor Bliese left and served for a year and a half.



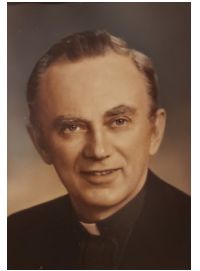
Chaplain Daniel Berteau, 2009-2010

Chaplain Berteau served as interim pastor for 2 years during Trinity's call process after Pastor O'Connor retired.



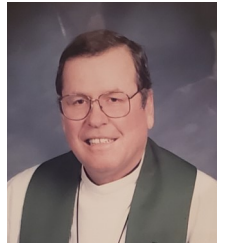
Rev. Arthur W. Meyer, 1974-1985

Chaplain Meyer served as vacancy pastor before becoming Trinity's pastor. During Pastor Meyer's tenure, Grace by the Sea Lutheran Church in Nags Head, NC, was sponsored and served by Trinity. In 1985 Pastor Meyer accepted a call to International Lutheran School in Seoul, Korea.



Rev. James P. O'Connor, 1998-2009

Pastor O'Connor began the annual Reformation Bach Festival. And when Hurricane Isabel took down the huge trees in the front of Trinity in 2003 just missing the building by inches, he suggested that Angel sculptures be created from the downed tree trunks to adorn the church and remind us of God's protection. He also began a campus science lecture series to examine God's role in Creation.

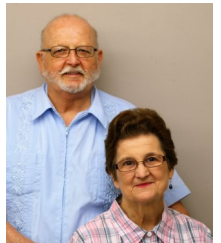


Trinity Military Families Still Sitting in the Pews Today

If you're military and not included here, we'd like to get your story.... please email it to Trinity... we'd like to share it.... You are a part of our history.

Richard and Flo Ball

Richard hails from Wilton, Iowa, where he was a member of Zion Lutheran Church, Cedar Rapids, Iowa. He came to Norfolk in the Navy in 1958, left for a few years and returned in 1964 as a reservist. He married Anne Simms, a life long member of Trinity, and Trinity became his home church from then on. He brought his current wife, Flo, into the Trinity family where she is very active in the Lutheran Women's Missionary League and maintains the children's church bags. Richard leads the Men's Bible Study and is an active greeter on Sunday mornings. He also has served as council president and VP and head deacon.



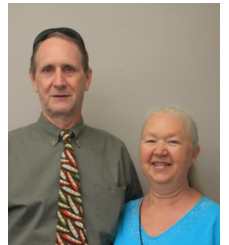
Linda Blaker



Linda served 24 years in the U.S. Navy and was stationed in Norfolk beginning in 1994. She's from Las Vegas, Nevada, and joined the Navy right after high school. She met her husband, Bryan, a Nuclear Machinist Mate from Bloomfield, Indiana, in Norfolk. Their daughter, Shelby, was their initial connection to Trinity. They enrolled her in Trinity Lutheran School and things took off from there! Linda never missed a school event and quickly connected with the church for Sunday School and worship. Linda worked in TLS's extended care program and PreK. She was involved in many school activities including the Christmas Parade and Girl Scouts. Daughter Shelby was very active in Trinity's Youth activities and served as an acolyte for many years.

Jack and Anna Carter

Jack served 4 years in the Air Force and was stationed in Texas, Florida, Alabama and Vietnam. He and Anna, both from Norfolk, began attending Trinity when their two children were enrolled in the school from pre-K to 5th grade. They say Pastor Quiram was a big factor in their joining the church. Anna's parents are Paul and Doris Lass.





Ash and Rebecca Davidson

Ash has 19 1/2 years with the Coast Guard and currently works on an exportable training team and travels the world...he plans to retire next year. Rebecca retired in 2017 after 21 years of active duty in the Coast Guard. They plan to stay in the area and have purchased a home in Great Bridge. "Chaplain Prince married us in 2017 and had nothing but good things to say about Trinity. The rest is history," Ash says. "Rebecca has helped cater some church functions and I help where I can." Rebecca is responsible for many of the beautiful homemade cakes and other treats we enjoy in the Welcome Center.

Bobbie Gillooly

Bobbie and her husband, Paul, are both military. And Bobbie's parents were too. Her father served in WWII and her mother was a Navy nurse from Staten Island, N.Y., who had to give up her commission when she married. Bobbie is a native of Norfolk and served in the U.S. Air Force and then the Army National Guard. Her husband Paul retired as a captain after a 30-year stint in the Navy. And both of their children, Rachel and Ryan followed in their parents' footsteps and are Naval officers. It was their children attending TLS that brought the Gilloolys to Trinity. Bobbie eventually joined the TLS faculty, teaching computer classes and P E. Now she helps as a money counter and is a "Joyful Ringer" in the bell choir.



Sam and Colette Gilson

Sam served in the U.S. Navy as an Intelligence Specialist from 1991 to 1998 serving here and in Gaeta, Italy. He then moved to Northern Virginia for school and work and served 3 years in the Naval Reserve. After graduating from George Mason University, where he met his wife, Colette, Sam worked in Fairfax, Va., for 2 years until his job moved them back to Virginia Beach in 2003. Colette comes from a military family.... her father's 30-year Army career took her family to Spain, Turkey and Germany where she graduated from high school in Manheim. What they liked about Trinity was its traditional service and Pastor's O'Connor's sermons. Their children, Jeanette and Philip, are active at Trinity - attending Sunday School, Confirmation classes and serving as acolytes. Sam is originally from Seville, Ohio.



Conrad and Jeanne Greif

Conrad came to Norfolk via the U.S. Navy during the Korean War. He was told about Trinity by his pastor in Michigan who alerted Pastor Plawin to be on the lookout for him. He fell in love with Trinity because of "its welcoming warmth and Christian love toward servicemen and others." Conrad soon met Jeanne... they were married and she joined him at Trinity where she used her musical talent as Sunday School pianist and assistant organist. Conrad and Jeanne became very active in many ministries at Trinity over the years and Conrad has served on the church council a number of times.



Bill and Charlotte Gunther

Bill and Charlotte, high school sweethearts, came to Norfolk in 1965. Bill was in the Navy - a submariner - from Dracut, MA. After 20 years Bill retired and the couple decided to stay in Norfolk. Charlotte taught in Trinity Lutheran School and was very active in the LWML. Bill "sailed into eternal freedom" on January 29th of this year.



Bud and Lynn Hubert

Bud hails from New York. He came to Norfolk in the Navy aboard the USS Neosho in 1977. He met a local girl, Lynn, and they were married at the Naval base chapel in 1978. When their two daughters came along, a friend recommended Trinity Lutheran School and that began their 34-year history at Trinity. Both have served in a number of leadership positions on numerous boards during that time. Lynn was church secretary for 11 years (personally trained by Wanda Remstedt). Bud has served as director of two call committees and currently serves as President of the congregation and Lynn continues as recording secretary and volunteer bookkeeper for the church. They both volunteer their time to keep Trinity moving forward and continue to be one of its cornerstones.



Errol Jennings

Errol is a 30 year veteran of the U.S. Navy. He's from Rugby, North Dakota, and arrived in Norfolk on the USS Spadefish in 1980 after serving a stint of shore duty in Lawrence, MA. He retired here and when he was looking for a preschool for his grandson, Hayden, he connected with Trinity and has been a church member and active volunteer ever since... serving as usher, communion assistant and office assistant, as well as the Board of Trustees and Trinity's Operation Barnabas Military Ministry.



Paul and Doris Lass

Paul and Doris Lass arrived in Norfolk in 1969 when his ship - the USS Guadalcanal - was transferred here from New York. Paul was a Lutheran from Niagara Falls, NY. He met, Doris, a Methodist, in an Atlantic City skating rink, and it wasn't long before they were married and living in Norfolk. But it wasn't until their grandchildren became students at TLS that Paul and Doris made their way to Trinity and became part of the church family. Paul served many years as an usher and trustee and was head of Stewardship for a time. Doris was very active in the LWML and served on the altar guild as well. Doris was called to her eternal home on February 29th.



Ken and Sharyn Leiding

Ken and Sharyn came to Norfolk as a young married couple in 1960...Ken had just been assigned to the USS Northampton. Ken was the Lutheran from Armstrong, Iowa, and Sharyn hailed from Kentucky. He made contact with Trinity first thing and both he and Sharyn quickly became involved in the church's ministry. Ken taught Youth Sunday School and served on the Executive Board and Board of Trustees. Sharyn taught Sunday School and became totally involved in Trinity Lutheran School where she taught for many years and eventually became Director of the School Board. She has also been very involved in the LWML. Together they led the Youth Group for a number of years and were very active in the Fellowship League. They now serve as deacons for the congregation - Sharyn heads the board. Ken also serves as lay reader and communion assistant and Sharyn gives children's sermons and leads the Ladies Bible Study.



David and Karmen Petri

David came to Norfolk in the Navy in 1988 and lived here on and off ... then returned in 2000 with his wife Karmen. He hails from Wisconsin/Minnesota/Illinois; Karmen from Pensacola, Fla. They researched LCMS churches, visited Trinity and have been here ever since. David has been treasurer of Trinity since 2016 and a communion assistant since 2018.



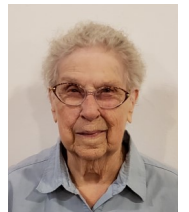
Matthew and Susan Prince

Matt is a Lutheran chaplain in the US Navy and has led worship at Trinity on a number of occasions. He and Susan are originally from Seymour, Indiana. They arrived here in December 2014. Three of their children (Hannah, Rachel, Sarah) attended TLS just before it closed. They also attended Trinity's Summer Camp. Chaplain Prince introduced the Living Last Supper Drama to Trinity, using men of the congregation in the roles of the disciples. It has become an inspiration to all. Hannah has served as acolyte and Rachel will soon.



Thelma Voight Scroxton

Thelma grew up at Trinity when it was on 34th Street and she married a Navy Man. The family, including daughter Anne Starke, traveled to wherever he was stationed in the Navy but finally came back to Norfolk and Trinity.



Bill and Christy Sontag (and the elder Sontags - August & Esther)

Bill is military and comes from a military family. His dad and his uncle were both in the Navy and served in WWII and the Korean War, and were stationed in Norfolk and came to Trinity. Bill's father, August, returned to Norfolk and Trinity with his family in 1947 and Bill was born the next year. His parents - August and Esther - were Lutherans from Minnesota and Wisconsin. Bill followed in his father's footsteps and became a naval aviator. He and Christy were married at Trinity and they went to San Diego, back to Norfolk, then Puerto Rico and Maryland. Bill has held several positions on church council and is currently church sexton. He introduced Trinity's "church garden" in 2011 - a delight to all and a great learning experience for TLS children. Christy worked at TLS as school secretary and also ran Trinity's summer camp for a number of years. Bill's Mom, Esther, taught the S.S. Nursery Class for many years...she was a wonderful teacher.



Cassandra Wyles

Cassie is stationed at Naval Station Norfolk and has been at her current assignment since March 2017. She's from Tomahawk, Wisconsin, and found Trinity through the internet. She quickly got involved... acolyting, volunteering, and working on a patriotic mural above the doorway in the Military Hallway leading to Belvedere Hall. Cassie just returned from a 9-month assignment to Bahrain in support of Operation Spartan Shield. She says Bahrain is a unique little island country and one of the most westernized in the Middle East, although the heat and humidity were difficult getting used to. She was surprised to see a few churches nestled amongst the mosques.

