



Trinity Topics

The Newsletter of Trinity Lutheran Church, Riverside CA
Sharing God's love, hope and forgiveness since 1893



Trinity Lutheran Church

Since 1893

Kent Tuohino, Pastor

Volume 26, Issue 10, November 2023

Stewardship: Our Response to God's Blessings

November is a time of year when we are encouraged to give thanks for God's blessings. It's also the time of year when our church encourages our members and friends to think about what it means to be a steward of God's gifts of time, talent, and treasure. God has blessed each of us in different ways and to different degrees, but all of us are responsible for how we manage these blessings. God instructs us to use them not only to benefit ourselves, but to benefit our neighbor's needs as well.

As stewards of God's gifts, we are also called to give an offering to God with thankful hearts. As St. Paul writes in 2 Cor. 9:7-8, "Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work."

This month we encourage you to make up your mind about your giving for the coming year. Stewardship commitment cards will be distributed at church on Sunday, November 5, and mailed to those unable to attend worship that Sunday. On November 12, we will celebrate God's generosity toward us by presenting those commitment cards as part of our offering to God. Please prayerfully consider how you will support God's work through the ministry of our church in the coming year!

It's Piggy Bank Roundup Time!

Please bring your piggy banks to church this month! We encourage people to collect their spare change in piggy banks (or another container) during the year for our PIG Project, and then bring it to church in November.

PIG is an acronym for **P**eople **I**n need of **G**roceries, and the spare change that is collected will help stock the Hope Pantry at Trinity and the food pantry at Central City Lutheran Mission in San Bernardino.



Fall Luncheon on Sunday, November 5

Come one and all to the Fall Luncheon at 12:00 noon on Sunday, November 5th! You will be treated to wonderfully prepared baked potatoes with many delicious toppings. This is a favorite meal at Trinity, so don't miss it! Please sign up in advance so we know how many potatoes to prepare. There is a spot to sign up if you are willing to bring your favorite brownies to share. We'll provide the ice cream! In addition to the meal, Carolyn Bolz will share a personal story and stewardship information will be shared.



Thanksgiving Food Baskets

Do you know someone who could use some help at Thanksgiving? If so, please fill out a Thanksgiving basket nomination form by Sunday, November 12.

You can also give others a reason to be thankful by donating food for our Thanksgiving baskets. Copies of a suggested shopping list are available at church to take with you to the grocery store. Please bring your food donations to church by Friday, November 17. The food baskets will be distributed on Sunday, Nov. 19.

Thanksgiving Eve Service

All Trinity members and friends are invited to attend a Thanksgiving Eve service at Eden Lutheran Church at 7:00 pm on Wednesday, November 22.



Holiday Rummage Sale

The rummage sale committee will have a Christmas-themed rummage sale and craft fair in the church parking lot on Saturday, November 11, from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm. We are only accepting donations of Christmas-themed decorations and new or slightly used Christmas gifts for this rummage sale. Contact Kelly Krashin with questions or to volunteer to help.

Trunk-n-Treat on Saturday, October 29



Trinity was well-represented at the Lutheran Social Services Gala at the Mission Inn on October 7. Brenda S. and Brenda M. Lussier were among those who were honored for their volunteer service.



The bounce house was a new and popular attraction



Men's Clothing Needed

Our Thursday shower program at Trinity and the Project Food meal program at First Congregational Church are both in need of donations of men's clothing. If you have any that you no longer need, please bring them to our church to help clothe our unhoused neighbors. Contact Brenda S. Lussier or Karen Myers for more information.

Sock Drive Report

We received 480 pairs of new socks in October, plus donations totaling \$150. With that and a Thrivent Action team grant, we were able to purchase 300 more, so the final total for this sock drive is 780 pairs. They will be a great blessing for our Shower and BAT guests!



There were games and lots of M&M's there, too!

Transgender Day of Remembrance

A service of remembrance for trans people who have died will be held at Trinity at 5:00 pm on Saturday, November 18. After the service, there will be a community resource fair with refreshments and music in our fellowship hall. Contact Mackenzie Lussier if you would like to volunteer to help with this event.

Website Help Wanted

We are looking for volunteers to help update our church website and strengthen our social media presence. If you are interested in helping with this project, and have computer or graphic arts skills that would be beneficial, please contact our church office.

Thursday Night Bible Study

This weekly Bible study meets online at 7:00 pm each Thursday and discusses the upcoming Sunday Gospel reading. If you'd like to participate, let Pastor Kent know. He will email you the discussion questions along with a link to the Zoom meeting.

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. — Psalm 119:105



Sunday Bible Readings

November 5: All Saints Sunday

1 John 3:1-3; Psalm 34:1-10,22; Matthew 5:1-12

November 12: 24th Sunday after Pentecost

2 Corinthians 9:6-15; Psalm 24:1-6; Matthew 25:1-13

November 19: 25th Sunday after Pentecost

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11; Psalm 90:1-8, 12;
Matthew 25:14-30

November 26: Christ the King Sunday

Ephesians 1:15-23; Psalm 95:1-7; Matthew 25:31-46

December 3: 1st Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; Mark 13:24-37



I was glad
when they said to me,
"Let us go to the house
of the Lord!"
Psalm 122:1

Sunday Coffee Hour

Volunteers are needed to help with the coffee hour. If you would like to host and serve a simple treat on a Sunday, please sign up or call the church office.

Altar Flowers

The Flower Chart is posted on the bulletin board outside the church office. Please consider signing up to donate the cost of the altar flowers for a Sunday worship service. The price is \$34 for one bouquet or \$68 for both (make checks payable to Trinity).

This Month's Flower Donors

11/05 Carol Haffter & The Stumpfs
11/12 Brenda S. Lussier
11/19 Stacy Wheeler
11/26 Brenda S. Lussier & John Collins



Pastor's Paragraphs

*God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.
Psalm 46:1*

The opening words of Psalm 46 came to mind as I thought about the tragic events in the news the past few weeks. The thousands of deaths in Israel and Palestine as a result of the horrific terrorist attack by Hamas on October 7 and the Israeli military response. The ongoing war in Ukraine. The mass shooting in Lewiston, Maine, on October 25.

In times of trouble, we turn to God for help. We pray for an end to violence and war. We pray for solutions that will establish justice and peace. We pray for protection for those caught in harm's way, and comfort for the families and friends of the innocent lives that were lost.

We can also contribute in small but tangible ways to address the suffering we see in the news. It may be with a financial donation to Lutheran World Relief or a similar organization. It may be by making quilts that will be given to victims of war or natural disasters somewhere in the world. It may be by contacting our elected leaders to encourage them to take action or pass legislation.

Closer to home, we can connect with our Jewish and Muslim neighbors, who fear becoming targets of prejudice and hatred because of what's going on in Israel and Palestine. One expression of religious solidarity was an interfaith service in Riverside on October 23 that brought together members of local Christian, Jewish, and Muslim congregations to lament the violence in the Holy Land and pray for peace.

When bad things happen in the world, it can be easy to be paralyzed by fear. We can hesitate to act, confused by differing opinions in the media about who's right and who's wrong. But as followers of Christ, we called to love our neighbors. We are called to embody love, even when that means loving our enemies. We can do so, because we know that love can overcome fear, compassion can overwhelm hatred, and acts of mercy can lead to reconciliation.

Psalm 46 foresees a day when God will finally restore peace. "He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; he breaks the bow and shatters the spear" (verse 9). Until that day comes, let us pray and work toward peace!

— Pastor Kent

*"Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth." (Psalm 46:10)*



TRINITY'S GIVING REPORT (1/1/23 through 10/31/23)

Goal for regular offerings to date: \$ 215,852.56
Regular offerings received to date: \$ 207,818.64
Difference: - \$ 8,033.92

Your faithful giving will help us reach our goal!

Scrip income received in 2023: \$ 716.39

Century Club donations received in 2023: \$ 360.00

Welcome Our New Members Who Joined in October!

Jean Aubin

I moved to California from Wisconsin in 1965. I've lived most of my life in LA County but moved to Riverside in 2012 to be close to my son who lives in Corona. I also have 2 daughters who reside in the San Francisco Bay area.

I was raised Catholic, but in recent years I have become disillusioned with the church and began looking for a church that was more aligned with my beliefs. Through a friend I learned my neighbor, Sue McConnell, belongs to Trinity Lutheran. I do know something about the Lutheran faith, as my father was Lutheran. It took just one time attending a service at Trinity to know that I had found where I belong!

I am retired. My career was in the retail grocery business, at store level and corporate. I recently retired again from being a crossing guard at Norte Vista High School. I had worked there for 7 years. In my leisure time I enjoy spending time with family and friends, reading, playing cards, and working in my flower beds.

Stephan & Teresa Hamilton

We were married in 1990 after meeting in a music room in college, then dating for a few years. We raised three kids who are all grown now. While Stephan is retired from local government budget and finance, Teresa works as a professor of nursing and leads a department of over 30 full-time faculty, 50 adjunct faculty, and nearly 700 students. We moved to Riverside a few years ago and love worshiping and making music with the wonderful people at Trinity Lutheran Church.

Luke Hamilton

I am excited to share a bit about myself as I join the wonderful Trinity Lutheran community. I grew up not far away in Ontario, and attend First Christian Church, where my grandfather was the pastor. I learned at an early age to associate feelings of spiritual growth and attachment with music, and the music at Trinity Lutheran Church has made me feel connected and at home here. Along with good music, Trinity features several qualities which I find to be important: impassioned engagement with the unhoused, inclusive acceptance of the LGBTQ community, and commitment to friendliness. I look forward to all we might accomplish together in the name of our Lord.

Barbara Harte

I was born and raised on a farm in Michigan, close to beautiful Lake Michigan. I was brought up Lutheran, attended several other churches, and I am now returning to my Lutheran upbringing. I've lived in Riverside over 30 years. I have two grown children and five grandchildren. It's a fun family group and I enjoy being around them.

I am a retired Riverside Unified teacher who taught

mostly special education, but also middle school and elementary school. Teaching and family kept me very busy, but as I now enjoy retirement I am attempting new hobbies and adventures. I do love to travel and I'm planning a trip to Spain and Portugal in the spring. Over the past few months I have enjoyed traveling to Yellowstone, Michigan, and New York. Of course, there's always reading and my monthly book clubs as a great pastime too. I also like to take cooking classes and try new recipes. I am looking forward to becoming an active member of Trinity Lutheran church and their many outreach programs.

Mo Nekoonam and Mary Nouritabar, and Amytis Nekoonam

Mary wrote, "My husband Mo and I, and our lovely daughter Amytis, are proud to be members of Trinity Lutheran Church. As a beautician, I find joy in helping others feel confident and beautiful, and I look forward to using my talents to support our church community. My husband Mo, a dedicated computer engineer, and I share a deep sense of faith and a desire to contribute to the church's mission.

We have embarked on a meaningful journey with Trinity, drawn to its teachings and the sense of fellowship it offers. We value the strong faith community and the warmth it provides. Our family is excited to grow spiritually, build meaningful relationships, and serve in any way we can to support the church's mission. We look forward to a blessed and fulfilling journey as members of the Lutheran Church, and to continuing to strengthen our faith together with this loving congregation."

Sue Richards

Sue was born into a Lutheran family in Omaha (Millard), Nebraska. She lived on a farm with her family, including very active brothers and sisters. She met her husband in Sioux City, Iowa – in church, no less. They moved to California in 1980. She was widowed in June 2023 after 46 years of marriage.

Sue worked 25 years in retail management, and 25+ years with a local mom and pop construction shop. She retired in 2017 and took up stained glass and golf. She also plays in Trinity's handbell choir.

Sandy Rodriguez

Sandy was born in Orange, California, and moved to the Inland Empire when they were 10 years old. They've been here ever since and have been living in Riverside since 2020. Currently, Sandy is finishing up their master's in informatics from San Jose State University, but when they're not doing that, they're usually working on something musical, volunteering with ARE animal rescue, trying to catch up on all the books on their "to be read" pile or just hanging out at home with their partner and four cats.

Council Meeting Summary

The Trinity Church council met on Tuesday, October 17, 2023, via Zoom. The meeting was called to order at 6:34 PM. Pastor Kent was away at a Pastor's retreat. Mary Kantola did the opening devotion and prayer. Gary Goldberg was acting secretary.

- The agenda and minutes from the previous meeting were approved.
- Pastor's report was presented. He reported 17 visits to members and shut ins; 18 meetings and 6 Bible studies and classes. We had a special day on Sunday, Oct 15, accepting 9 new members and celebrating 4 Baptisms! Approximately 40 people attended the progressive dinner on September 23. Thank you, Kim Root-George, for organizing and everyone for bringing delicious food to share! We are looking forward to another time of food and fellowship with our annual fall luncheon on November 5 at noon.
- The Council discussed some of the recommendations of the Audit Committee.

- Work has begun on preparing the budget for 2024.
- Discussion of property issues included carpeting for the small LSS office; scheduling the replacement of two heat pumps for the church office and Heinecken Hall kitchen. (This has now been scheduled.)
- Discussion of redesigning our website continued. Before a final decision is made, we would like to ask if anyone in the congregation has skills in that area they would be willing to share. If you do, please contact Pastor Kent.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:57 PM.

If you would like to speak to anyone on Council, the members are Pastor Kent, Mary Kantola, Gary Goldberg, Stacy Wheeler, Wes Krashin, Karyl Robinson, Larry Dodson, Theresa Husted, Mike McMichael. Volunteers and nominations for the 2024 Council are happily accepted!

The next council meeting will be held via Zoom on November 21, 2023, at 6:30 pm.

From Brenda S. Lussier

I am writing to express my deepest gratitude for your unwavering support and encouragement throughout my seminary journey. Your generosity in providing me with a scholarship, the opportunity to engage in Ministry in Context, and the warm reception you extended as I delivered my sermon on October 15 have genuinely been a source of blessings in my life. Your presence means the world to me.

In the six weeks before that Sunday, I embarked on a profound journey in preparation for that sermon, which I had the privilege to share as part of my Biblical Preaching class. This experience has taught me that preaching transcends mere words from the pulpit; it's fundamentally about what is heard and understood by you, the congregation. In essence, preaching is a dialogue, and if we look at the Gospel, we see Jesus himself engaging his audience, highlighting the importance of interaction.

In our faith journey, we are not solitary travelers but partners. Each one of you plays a crucial role in this collaborative effort. Standing behind the pulpit, I know I am not alone; you are an integral part of this process. I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to those who participated in the Thursday night Bible Study discussions. Your insights on the readings and your willingness to grapple with the challenging aspects of the text were instrumental in clarifying the message I aimed to convey. Your contributions were invaluable.

As I prepare for my next sermon on November 26, I am eager to continue this collaborative journey with all of you. I invite you, the listeners, to actively engage in this process. If you are interested, please let me know if you would like to join a small group discussion about that Sunday's Bible readings or consider participating in our Thursday Night Bible study sessions, where we delve into the Gospel reading in depth. Your thoughts, perspectives, and feedback are not only welcomed but cherished, for the interactions we share make preaching meaningful. For me, preaching is about how you hear the information, and it underscores the roles we all play in proclaiming and sharing the word of God. Together, as partners in ministry, we can continue to strengthen and grow in our faith.

I want to express again my gratitude for being on this journey with me. I eagerly anticipate the conversations and connections as we continue on this shared path of faith and understanding.

November Birthdays

(3) Charlotte Wall; (5) Larry Dodson, Larry Stumpf; (6) Kimberly Bayne, Pat Schwartz; Gary DeFrese, Hunter Reza; (13) Joe Afflerbaugh, Barbara McCoy, Barbara Morris; Amanda Reza, Adalyn Wheeler; (17) Bryant Taylor; (21) Kim Root-George; Jim Oster; (25) Teresa Hamilton; (29) Barbara Harte, Rachel Mendivel, Andrew Thompson.

If we missed your birthday, please let us know so that we can add you to our list!



Quilting Bee

On Sunday, October 15, our Quilting Bee displayed the **274 quilts** they made this year. It's always a joy to see their beautiful and colorful quilts covering the chairs in our sanctuary! After our worship services, the quilts were packed in boxes to give to Lutheran World Relief. LWR gives quilts to people around the world who are suffering as a result of natural disaster, war, or famine. It's a tangible expression of Christian compassion for people in need of help and hope.

Trinity's Quilting Bee is now on a much-deserved break, and will resume meeting in January.



Prison Ministry Christmas Project

Remember the stationery kits we assembled as part of "God's Work, Our Hands" Sunday in September? It's almost time for those bags – along with hundreds more assembled by other congregations – to be packed with other goodies and prepared for Christmas. This year the bag packing party will be held on Saturday, December 9, beginning at 10 am at:

First Christian Church
109 E Wilshire Avenue (corner of E. Wilshire and Fullerton, CA 92832 Harbor Blvd.)

A build-your-own-sandwich bar, snacks, and beverages will be provided for volunteers. If you plan to attend, please email your RSVP to Linda Barkman at lindalee_free@yahoo.com.

Living Lutheran Magazine Moving Online

The rise of online media along with the rising costs for printing and postage have challenged many magazines. The ELCA's *Living Lutheran* magazine is no exception. Beginning in 2024, *Living Lutheran* will no longer publish a printed edition and will be available online only.

Sign up now to receive the free *Living Lutheran* e-digest to stay informed about the many ways Christ is at work in congregations and members of the ELCA. Articles will be sent directly to your email inbox. You can pick your favorite topics and the frequency of delivery – weekly, bi-weekly or monthly. Sign up at livinglutheran.org/subscribe.



Taizé Service

Several churches in Riverside take turns hosting a Taizé service on the 2nd Monday of the month at 7:00 pm.

It's a contemplative style of worship featuring simple but beautiful songs, inspiring readings, and prayerful silence. On November 13, it will be held at:

All Saints Episcopal Church
3847 Terracina Drive

The service will also be available to view online. For more information, visit facebook.com/taizeriverside or contact Sandra Soares at fccucc@sbcglobal.net.

Join the Brigade!

Trinity's "Hairnet Brigade" prepares dinner for the men at Central City Lutheran Mission on the third Sunday of the month. They are always very appreciative of these meals!

Volunteers are needed for this ministry. If you are interested, contact Ann Herring at aehlaw@gmail.com or (909) 380-2710.

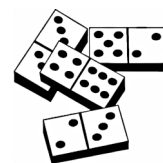


Daily Devotions

Copies of the *Christ in Our Home* daily devotional booklet are available at Trinity. Pick one up at church, or contact the church office and we will be happy to send one to you. A few large-print copies are also available.

Game Fellowship Group

This monthly fellowship group for adults meets on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 10 am in Cooper-Burkhart House. All are welcome. Contact Karyl Robinson for more information.



Eyeglasses Wanted

We make used eyeglasses available to those who cannot afford them. If you have readers or prescription reading glasses you do not need, please bring them to church and place them in the donation box in Heinecken Hall.



Hope Food Pantry

The Hope Food Pantry is open at Trinity from 9:00 to 10:30 am every Wednesday. Volunteers are needed to help with the food pick-up on Tuesdays and food distribution on Wednesdays. (You don't need to help every week.) Contact Larry Dodson to volunteer.



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<p>Ministry Staff Kent Tuohino, <i>Pastor</i> • Mary Kantola, <i>Congregational President</i> Glenn Pickett, <i>Director of Music Ministries</i> • Michael Myers, <i>Administrative Assistant</i> Rev. Hitoshi & Satoko Adachi, <i>ELCA Missionaries in Japan</i></p>
<p>Vision & Mission Statements The vision of Trinity Lutheran Church is to provide a community of faith where all people are challenged to reach their full potential in Christ. Our mission is to <u>represent</u> our Lord Jesus Christ in this time and place. We will do so by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• INVITING people to know God and His message of grace, love, hope and forgiveness.• ASSISTING people to grow in their relationship with God.• EQUIPPING people to serve Christ's church.• ENABLING people to share their faith through what they say and do. <p>KNOW, GROW, SERVE AND SHARE</p>