



# Trinity Topics

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



## February

Trinity Lutheran Church  
Since 1893  
Kent Tuohino, Pastor  
Volume 27, Issue 2, February 2024

### The Season of Lent: Lord, Teach Us to Pray

The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, which this year falls on February 14. On Ash Wednesday we will have a special service at 7:00 pm, which will include the imposition of ashes and holy communion. The congregation of Eden Lutheran Church plans to join us for worship on Ash Wednesday, and our congregation is invited to attend the service at Eden on Maundy Thursday. Both churches will have services on Good Friday.

This year our midweek Lenten services will focus on the Lord's Prayer. In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus' disciples say to him, "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1). In response, Jesus taught them the prayer we call the Lord's Prayer. Each Wednesday during Lent, we will explore the meaning of one part of this prayer. Pastor Kent and Pastor Stephanie from Eden will take turns leading Wednesday soup suppers and a study of the Lord's Prayer at Trinity and Eden.

Lenten suppers at Trinity will begin on Wednesday, February 21, at 6:00 pm (there is no supper on Ash Wednesday). There is a sign-up sheet at church to help with the supper by providing a soup or bread. Mark your calendar and plan to join us for these special times of worship and fellowship during Lent!



### Congregational Meeting Report

This year's annual meeting of the congregation was held on January 28. The budget for 2024 was approved, and the following people were elected:

Church Council: Peggy Fryc, Cherie Guillow, Brenda S. Lussier, Sue Rogers

Audit Committee: Stephan Hamilton

Endowment Committee: Karyl Robinson

Scholarship Committee: Peg Bradley, Karen Clarke, Gretta Merwin

Synod Assembly: Luke Hamilton, Sandy Rodriguez

After the meeting, a baked potato lunch was served. Donations totaling \$148 received at the luncheon will help support the Thursday shower program at Trinity. During the lunch, the new and continuing members of the church council met to choose officers for this year. The new officers are:

- Gary Goldberg, President
- Karyl Robinson, Vice-President
- Cherie Guillow, Secretary
- Brenda S. Lussier, Treasurer

In addition to these officers, the other members of the church council are Larry Dodson, Peggy Fryc, Wes Krashin, Mike McMichael, Sue Rogers, and Pastor Kent.

### Souper Bowl of Caring

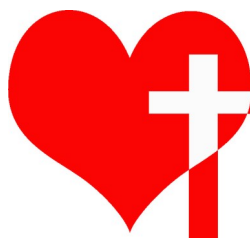
It's coming soon! The Super Bowl will be on Sunday, February 11, and so is the annual Souper Bowl of Caring. We are now collecting canned soups and other non-perishable food items. The donated food will be distributed through Lutheran Social Services, Central City Lutheran Mission, and our blessing bags.

You can bring donations to drop off at church on Sunday morning or between 8 am and noon Monday-Friday. A table will be set up where you can choose which team you want to win the big game. Let's tackle hunger together!



### Valentine Cards

Help us send Valentine cards to children and youth in our church family! A list of those we would like to send cards to is available at the church.



Here's a tip: Valentine cards in classroom sets are available at a low price from Dollar Tree and other stores at this time of year. Please bring your cards to the church by Sunday, February 11, and we will deliver them in time for Valentine's Day.

Our donation table overflowed with donated spices and cooking oil in January! Thank you for your donations!



## Missionary Support

You can help support our missionaries in Japan! Rev. Hitoshi and Satoko Adachi are serving Japanese and English-speaking congregations in Kumamoto, Japan. Consider donating \$25/week for one or more weeks to help us reach our annual goal of \$1,300 in support for these ELCA missionaries. When you make your donation to Trinity, please write "Missionary Support" on the memo line of your check or offering envelope.

*"Go therefore  
and make  
disciples of  
all nations."  
Matthew 28:19*



## Food Pantry Spice and Oil Drive Results

By Larry Dodson



Ed and his disabled wife are senior citizens who live close to the church. On most Wednesday mornings, Ed walks to the Trinity food pantry pulling an old suitcase and signs in as one of our pantry guests to receive a box of food. He places the food in the suitcase and pulls it home. On one occasion when he saw a bottle of cooking oil in his box, he clutched it in his hands, and with a big smile joyfully declared, "Oh! My wife will kiss you for this!" Cooking oil is an item that they do not usually buy with a food budget limited by their fixed income.

The spice and oil drive last month was a tremendous success. By last count, we received a total of 726 items. Thank you for your donations! These are items that the pantry rarely has on hand, and these gifts will be received with expressions of gratitude similar to Ed's elation. Thanks for the continuing generous support of the work that the pantry does in serving our community.

## What is Lent?

Lent comes from the Anglo-Saxon word, *lengten*. This refers to the spring season when the days are beginning to lengthen in the Northern Hemisphere; the darkness of winter is ending and is overcome by the sunshine and new life of spring.

The Lenten season in the church is one of prayerful and penitential preparation for the great festival of Easter. It is a six-week journey from darkness to light – from death to new life – from the desert to Jerusalem – from penitence to pardon – from ashes to Easter. The color of Lent is purple, signifying penitence.

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, which falls somewhere between February 5 and March 10. It is called Ash Wednesday because of the early Christian practice of marking a person's forehead with ashes (in the sign of the cross) as an outward sign of penitence. The focus is the confession of sins and the imposition of ashes is a sign that we confess and repent of our sinfulness. It reminds us of our own mortality — the fact that we will all eventually die and return to the earth, "ashes to ashes, dust to dust."



There are forty days of Lent (six weeks minus Sundays, which are considered Sundays in Lent but not of Lent) and they are symbolic of the forty days Jesus spent in the wilderness. For Jesus it was a time of fasting, temptation, and prayer – preparation for his ministry and his final journey to the cross in Jerusalem. The forty days of Lent can inspire our journey of learning and growing in faith in preparation for the celebration of Christ's resurrection. The focus of the Lenten season is not on the Crucifixion, as that is the theme of Holy Week, but on spiritual renewal and growth. Jesus said, "Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain, but if it dies it bears much fruit." (John 12:24)

He was speaking of his own death and resurrection, but his words also carry the promise that if we follow him on the path of discipleship, Christ will lead us from death to new and abundant life. So, embrace the season of Lent as a spiritual springtime for your soul!

## 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

February 4: Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 40:21-31; Psalm 147:1-11; Mark 1:29-39

February 11: Transfiguration of Our Lord

2 Corinthians 4:3-6; Psalm 50:1-6; Mark 9:2-9

February 18: 1st Sunday in Lent

1 Peter 3:18-22; Psalm 25:1-10; Mark 1:9-15

February 25: 2nd Sunday in Lent

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16; Psalm 22:23-31;  
Mark 8:31-38

March 3: 3rd Sunday in Lent

1 Corinthians 1:18-25; Psalm 19; John 2:13-22



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

## 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

2/04 Carol Haffter  
2/11 Karyl Robinson  
2/18 The Knapik Family  
2/25 Barbara Morris



## Pastor's Paragraphs

*Nations shall come to your light. — Isaiah 60:3*

At our annual meeting on January 28, I shared how this verse from Isaiah seems especially appropriate when I think about our congregation. In the past year, we have welcomed families from Iran and Ukraine to our church, and an older couple from China has also been attending services regularly — they use an app on their cell phones to translate the words in the bulletin from English into Mandarin! A father and son from Afghanistan recently came to the church office seeking help, and I was able to refer them to a local agency that helps refugees and asylum seekers. Last month, another couple visiting our church told me that they had been looking for a new church for some time, but after attending worship at Trinity, they felt they had finally found their new church home.

Each of their stories is unique, but somehow all of these people found their way to Trinity Lutheran Church. I believe it's because so many of our members are inspired by the love of Christ to welcome newcomers and reach out to people in need of help. Again and again, I have been moved by the generosity and hospitality I have seen demonstrated by members of our congregation.

A couple of weeks ago I received an email from a woman whose son is a senior in high school. He needs to do a senior project that helps the community. She wrote that when she was working at a nearby restaurant, she had gotten to know some of the homeless people in the neighborhood. So, while trying to think of an organization her son could gather donations for, she asked some of them what place they felt helped them most. She wrote, "You [Trinity] were who they named. With rave reviews." Now her son is collecting items to donate to our BAT meals and Thursday shower programs.

Jesus said, "Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:16) As new people are drawn to our church, we have seen some modest but significant growth this past year in our worship attendance, Sunday School attendance, choir participation, and financial offerings. The growth in each of these areas tells us that people are being drawn to the light of God's love that shines from Trinity Lutheran Church.

That light shines brighter when each of uses our gifts and talents in service to God. I hope that you will think and pray about how God is calling you let your light shine in the coming year! — *Pastor Kent*



## Stewardship Report

### TRINITY'S GIVING REPORT (1/1/24 through 1/31/24)

Goal for regular offerings to date: \$ 21,433.96

Regular offerings received to date: \$ 24,057.02

Difference: + \$ 2,623.06

*Your faithful giving is helping us reach our goal!*

Scrip income received in 2024: \$ 38.00

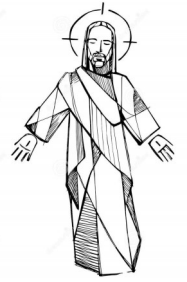
Century Club donations received in 2024: \$ 0.00



A graveside service of remembrance for **Pat Schwartz** will be held at Riverside National Cemetery at 1:00 pm on Sunday, February 18. Call Shawn Lowell at 909-890-6797 with any questions.

A funeral service for **Joe Ramos** will be held at Arlington Mortuary at 12 pm on February 20, followed by a burial service at 2 pm that same day at Riverside National Cemetery.

*Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life.  
Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live."  
John 11:25*



## Love and Ash

By Pacifica Synod Bishop Dave Nagler

February 14, 2024, will hold two "holidays" that seem to be moving in opposite directions. Valentine's Day is a Hallmark creation dedicated to expressions of love. Ash Wednesday is a time of remembering our finitude; that each of us and all whom we love are impermanent. On the surface these commemorations seem an odd pair. "Bring a date to church and get an ash cross from a person who reminds them that they are dust". I would argue that if we go deeper, they are a perfect pairing.



An ancient symbol for impermanence in the Celtic tradition is the triskelion. It is a circle, sometimes depicted with three legs or waves chasing one another around in an endless cycle. It is meant as a reminder that Spring follows Winter, Winter follows Fall, and Fall follows Summer. Times of scarcity follow times of abundance. Times of connection follow times of loneliness. It is an echo of Ecclesiastes 3 which sings, "To everything, there is a season and a time under Heaven."

The key to living this fundamental reality in a spiritually healthy way is to not get overly attached to any season or any moment in your history. And yet, to celebrate its beauty to feel deeply and to not deny the power that a moment can have on us. It is a delicate dance between not distancing ourselves from what is happening in our lives, but also remembering that all things fade away. New things arrive daily.

Anyone or anything that we love does not truly belong to us. They are shooting stars that shine brilliantly and then are gone. When they go, they return to the Source; to God. We feel the weight of their empty space and grieve. We also know that this grieving will shape us into a form that will be new for us. The grief we feel is a mirror of the love we shared. The hollow ache is an echo of the heartfelt joy.

One year on Ash Wednesday, I invited the congregation I was serving to a different practice of the imposition of ashes. I traced the ashen cross on the forehead of the first person who came forward and proclaimed the truth, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return." Then this person turned and did the same to the next person in line. This sequence continued for the whole assembly. Tears flowed when husbands made a black cross on the forehead of their beloved spouses. Voices cracked when parents reminded children that they too would not live forever. As they say, it got real that day!

So, on February 14th we will bear witness to love and impermanence. Some of us will spend time with loved ones. Others will be alone. Some will go to church and receive a cross and a word of remembrance. Others will be unable to bear that this year. No matter what you choose, remember that you are loved in this impermanent form. Please consider a Lenten practice of telling someone that you love them everyday until Easter (and then beyond if it makes you and them happy!) And let us not cling to any season too tightly. Our fragile planet will do another lap around the sun. People will come into our lives and depart. All of it is held in Divine hands.

## Let Love Be Genuine

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil; hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal; be ardent in spirit; serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction; persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; pursue hospitality to strangers. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another. — Romans 12:9-16

## Council Meeting Summary

The Trinity Council met via Zoom Tuesday 1/16/2023. Members present: Pastor Kent, Mary Kantola, Stacy Wheeler, Gary Goldberg, Wes Krashin, Theresa Husted, Karyl Robinson, Larry Dodson, and Mike McMichael. Pastor Kent led a devotional from *Christ in Our Home* based on John 1:43-51 and offered an opening prayer.

### Pastor's Report

- We are still seeking nominees for elected positions to be decided at our annual meeting on January 28.
- As we have done before, the financial donations received at the lunch following the annual meeting should be designated to help with one of our food programs, such as BAT, Thursday Showers, or the Hope Pantry.
- Lutheran Social Services has opened a new Riverside office at 6857 Indiana Avenue. However, they may still want to rent some office space at Trinity. At a minimum, one of their staff will be at Trinity on Thursdays to help people who come for showers. Brenda Lussier and pastor to meet with the LSS Area Director on January 25 to discuss their plans.
- We need to prepare an updated job description for the Administrative Assistant position.
- Lent is early this year. February 14 will be Ash Wednesday, and Easter Sunday will be March 31. This year's mid-week Lenten service will focus on the Lord's Prayer. As we did last year, members of Eden will come to Trinity for our Ash Wednesday service, and we will go to Eden for their Maundy Thursday service. Eden and Trinity will each have a Good Friday service.

### Treasurer's Report

- December was completed with \$32,237.14 in envelope giving and \$11,612.95 in unrestricted income.
- For the 2023 fiscal year, we have \$281,262.04 in envelope giving. We are \$26,004.00 over projected

giving for this year. Regular offerings for the 2023 fiscal year were \$309,262.04.

- We finished December with a net of \$10,511.44. We finished the fiscal year with a net income of \$96,065.06. Please note that this large net is due to the \$30,000.00 from Grace and the \$19,000.00 donated for the air conditioner replacement in December. The actual net for the 2023 fiscal year minus \$49,000.00 is \$47,065.06.

### Old Business

- Job description for the office staff position needs to be updated.
- The proposed budget for 2024 was approved for presentation and a congregational vote at the annual meeting on January 28, 2024.
- Seeking nominations for council positions, audit committee, and synod assembly (1 female/1 male)
- Property updates: Heat pump installations in the office and kitchen were completed. Decision on carpet installations in LSS office on hold pending determination of LSS needs.
- Discussion of potential space needs for LSS. Carpets may be cleaned in LSS small office. Sanctuary carpets were cleaned.
- No actions on Audit Committee recommendations. Additional counters are needed for weekly offering.

### New Business

- A proposal from HASCO Heating and Air to repair gutters was presented and approved.
- A proposal was approved to give the donations from the Baked Potato Lunch after the annual meeting to the Shower of Hope program.

The next council meetings will be held in person following the annual meeting on January 28, 2024, and on February 20, 2024, at 6:30pm via Zoom.

## LIRS is Now Global Refuge

*"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." Psalm 46:1*

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service is now Global Refuge, a nonprofit serving newcomers seeking safety, support, and a share in the American dream. For 85 years, they have welcomed more than 750,000 of those seeking refuge from around the globe, upholding a legacy of compassion and grace for people in crisis. They write, "We walk alongside individuals, families, and children as they begin their new lives in the United States through our work in refugee resettlement, welcome and respite services for asylum seekers, economic empowerment and employment, and family unification for unaccompanied children. At Global Refuge, welcoming newcomers isn't just our duty – it's an inherent part of our identity, rooted in our Lutheran heritage and inspired values and serving as a testament to our unwavering commitment to those in search of refuge. For more information, visit our website at [globalrefuge.org](http://globalrefuge.org)."

## February Birthdays

[4] Scott Taylor; [6] Frank Rodriguez; [8] Morgan McClure, Michelle McPhee; [10] Martha Mott; [11] Jeanne Fitzgerald, Ruta Raterman; [16] Addison Garcia; [23] Julie Root-Almond, Bradley Taylor; [26] Helen Ramos; [27] Amanda Pitts.

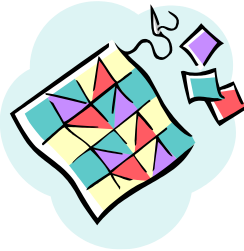
If we missed your birthday, please let us know so that we can add you to our list!



## Quilting Bee

Trinity's Quilting Bee meets on the first and third Saturday of each month from 9:00 am to 12 pm in Cooper-Burkhart House. You are invited to come and join them! There are many different tasks involved in quilt-making, and you don't even need to know how to sew. Contact Kelly Krashin for more information.

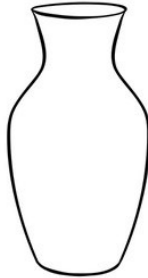
The Quilting Bee also needs used sheets, curtains, and other large pieces of fabric to use for quilt backs.



Lutheran Social Services of Southern California (LSSSC) recently announced that – in partnership with the City of San Bernardino – they will receive a \$35 million Homekey grant to build a comprehensive facility for individuals experiencing homelessness, low-income populations and those with complex health and social service needs. The funding will build interim housing for the homeless on the current campus of Central City Lutheran Mission.

## Flower Vases Wanted

If you have any clear glass flower vases that you don't need, please donate them to our Altar Guild to use to send the Sunday altar flowers home. If you have used a vase to take altar flowers home with you, please bring it back to church for others to use. Thank you!



## Help Support Trinity with Scrip

We sell scrip cards as a way to help support our church. They are the same gift cards you can buy elsewhere, but when you buy them through our church, a percentage of your purchase is returned to the church. Cards are available for over 700 stores and restaurants. Visit [raiserright.com](http://raiserright.com) to see all of the brands available.

To place an order, talk to Michael Myers or Judy McMichael on Sunday morning, or call or email Michael in the church office on weekdays. You can pay when you order or when you receive your card(s); any checks should be made payable to Trinity Lutheran Church. The weekly scrip order is submitted on Sundays at noon, and we usually receive the cards on Friday, in time for you to get them on Sunday.



RaiseRight™

## 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 February 12, it will be held at:

Madison Street Church  
3991 Madison Street

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

## Volunteers Wanted

Your help is needed! There is a sign-up sheet in the church narthex to volunteer to read the Bible lessons and the prayers of intercession for a Sundays, and another sign-up sheet to help with coffee and refreshments. We also need volunteers to help with Sunday School, and volunteers to help count the weekly offerings. Think about which of these you can help with.

*Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace. — 1 Peter 4:10*

## 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.



## 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.



## 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.



**TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
5969 BROCKTON AVENUE  
RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA 92506

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<p><b>Sunday Worship Schedule</b> 9:30 am — Contemporary Service (in person and on YouTube) 9:30 am — Sunday School      11:00 am — Traditional Service <b>Church Office Hours:</b> open 8:00 am to 12:00 pm, Monday-Friday Phone: (951) 682-1350 • Email: <a href="mailto:office@trinityriverside.org">office@trinityriverside.org</a></p>
<p><b>Ministry Staff</b> Kent Tuohino, <i>Pastor</i> • Gary Goldberg, <i>Congregational President</i> Glenn Pickett, <i>Director of Music Ministries</i> • Michael Myers, <i>Administrative Assistant</i> Rev. Hitoshi &amp; Satoko Adachi, <i>ELCA Missionaries in Japan</i></p>
<p><b>Vision &amp; Mission Statements</b> The vision of Trinity Lutheran Church is to provide a community of faith where all people are <b>challenged</b> 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"><li>• <b>INVITING</b> people to <b>know</b> God and His message of grace, love, hope and forgiveness.</li><li>• <b>ASSISTING</b> people to <b>grow</b> in their relationship with God.</li><li>• <b>EQUIPPING</b> people to <b>serve</b> Christ's church.</li><li>• <b>ENABLING</b> people to <b>share</b> their faith through what they say and do.</li></ul> <p><b>KNOW, GROW, SERVE AND SHARE</b></p>