

Trinity Today

Vol. 23, No. 2

February 1, 2021

Lent and Holy Week at Trinity

Worship During Lent

This year the theme for worship at Trinity Downtown will draw from the sermon series, "It Happened At..." Each service will focus on one of the places Jesus was at as our Savior walked the path of His passion for our sake. Stops along the way include: Bethany, Mount of Olives, Garden of Gethsemane, High Priest's Courtyard, Pilate's Judgment Hall, Bethphage, Golgotha, and the Garden Tomb. Many of these places can still be visited today. Whether you've physically been there or not, each location continues to speak to the journey of faith we travel and offers us great hope along the way.



In-person Worship During Lent & Holy Week

The global pandemic has had its impact on our world and brought about the need to be flexible and careful including when and how worship happens at Trinity. Based on current worship attendance, protocols needed to address the welfare of those present, along with the need for additional volunteers to screen those who come to worship, the following plans have been made for Lenten Services:

- There will not be in-person services during the week with the exception of Ash Wednesday and Holy Week. (See article on Lenten Video Devotionals on page 8.)
- Ash Wednesday worship will be in-person and online at 6:30 p.m. (Ashes will not be physically imposed on attendees to preserve social distancing.)
- Maundy Thursday worship with Holy Communion will be in-person and online at 6:30 p.m.
- Good Friday worship will be in-person and online at 6:30 p.m.
- There will not be an in-person Sunrise Service. (See article on Lenten Video Devotionals on page 8.)
- Easter worship in-person and on-line will be on Saturday at 5:00 p.m. and Sunday at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. with Holy Communion at all services.

Continued on page 8 - see Lent and Holy Week

Youth and Children's Ministries Update

I am so excited for 2021, January was such a success! Our Among Us teen game night was so awesome and so was the Children's Ministry virtual scavenger hunts! I'm looking forward to the events coming up in February for both Children and Youth!! I have a tentative 6 month calendar (see below) worked up for both areas of Ministry! While the dates will remain the same, the events may change depending on the state of things, so the events are named adventures and experiences respectively! This gives families a way to plan without experiencing a phenomenon I like to call Covid disappointment! Here's to a year of growth and joy! God is so good and I'm so thankful for all of you!

Blessings,
Haley Davisson, Director of Youth and Children's Ministries



*Children's Events

*Youth Events

*We may adjust based on current events.

- FEB
 - 20 | Kids Adventure #2 (afternoon)
- MARCH
 - 27 | Kids Adventure #3
- APRIL
 - 24 | Kids Adventure #4
- MAY
 - 15 | Kids Adventure #5
- JUNE
 - 19 | Kids Adventure #6

- FEB
 - 20 | Teen Experience # 2 (evening)
- MARCH
 - 6 | Teen Experience #3
- APRIL
 - 11 | Teen Experience #4
- MAY
 - 28 | Teen Experience #5
- JUNE
 - 11 -12 | Teen Experience #6

• More details will come as we get closer to each event! •

First Communion Classes Begin

Hey, Trinity Families!

It's that time of year! If you have a student who is in 5th grade or who hasn't taken their First Communion yet and would like to, please fill out the short survey at the link below. This will help me prepare for our gatherings!

<https://trinitydt.ccbchurch.com/goto/forms/111/responses/new>

We will start via Zoom at 2:00 p.m. on February 7th and end on March 14th. It is required that a parent/guardian participates with their student in the gathering. If you miss a gathering for some reason you will need to watch the recorded Zoom and provide me with a paragraph summary of what they learned. Here is the Zoom link/meeting ID.

Join Zoom Meeting

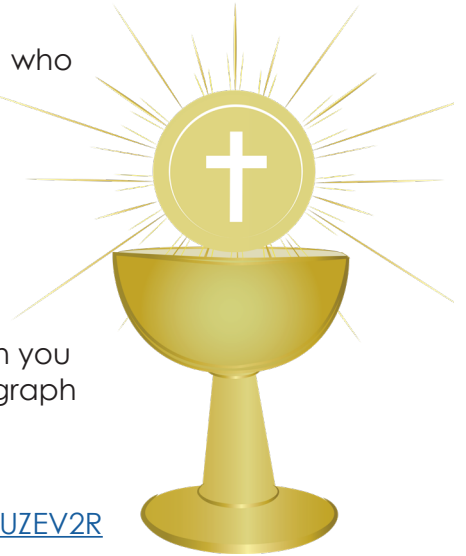
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88659160929?pwd=UWtTTDkwaURJeU5uRUZEV2R1NVBpZz09>

Meeting ID: 886 5916 0929

Passcode: 223492

Thank you so much for beginning this journey with me! I am looking forward to it!

Blessings,
Haley Davisson
Director of Youth and Children's Ministries



Updating Our Prayer List

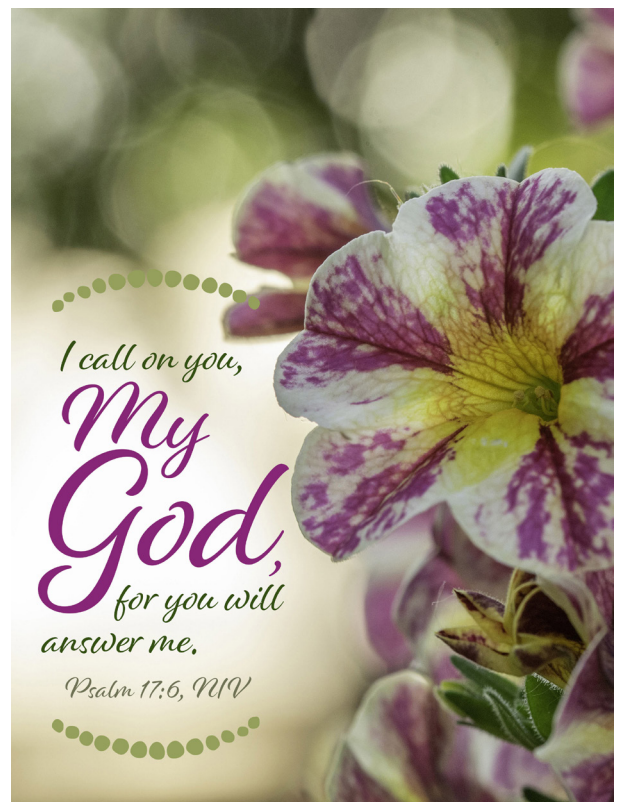
We are starting an experiment that involves changes in the way we maintain the prayer list that is distributed every week. We want to make it easier for you to send us a request and we want to make the prayer list more focused and manageable.

If you have a prayer need that you'd like to tell us about, you can:

- Click [here](#) to add a request to our list;
- Call Stefanie at 713.224.0684 from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. each weekday;
- Send an email to prayer@trinitydt.org; or
- Tell one of our pastors or staff.

As part of our experiment, we've started removing prayer requests after they have been on the list for four weeks unless the individual who reported the need renews it.

We ask that if you are submitting a request on someone else's behalf that you have their permission to do so.



Does Prayer Really Make Any Difference?

For where two or three are gathered in My name, there am I among them. Matthew 18:20 ESV

Polls reveal that 90 percent of people pray. And prayer is certainly the very heartbeat of our relationship with our gracious God. Yet prayer, which should be the most nourishing and uplifting activity that Jesus' followers engage in, can sometimes be frustrating, unfulfilling, and mysterious.

In late January, Trinity's Stephen Ministry embarked on a new study of Philip Yancey's classic study titled "Prayer". We are digging deep to answer questions like:



- What is prayer?
- Does prayer change God's mind?
- How is prayer supposed to change us?
- If God already knows everything, what's the point of praying?
- Why does God sometimes seem close and sometimes seem far away?
- How can I make prayer more satisfying?

Stephen Ministers are laypeople in our congregation trained to provide one-to-one, Christ-centered care to individuals facing difficult times in life—grief, cancer, divorce, financial difficulties, hospitalization, chronic illness, job loss, disability, loneliness, a spiritual crisis, or other life struggles. They have a compassionate heart for those who are hurting, and they're equipped with caring ministry skills by their congregation's Stephen Leaders. They listen, care, pray, encourage, and offer emotional and spiritual support.

Everyone is welcome to join our study on prayer. We meet (virtually via Zoom) on the first and third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Send your request for the Zoom credentials to Ron Lacy at rlacy@trinitydt.org.

Have the events of 2020 worn you down? Do you have an issue that you need to bring to the feet of our Lord in prayer? If you'd like to learn more about how our Stephen Ministry could provide a listening ear and caring heart for yourself, a loved one, friend, neighbor or co-worker (inside or outside our congregation) please speak with one of our pastors, or reach out to Ron Lacy at rlacy@trinitydt.org or 713.229.2970.

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Finance Corner - February 2021

I will build My church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. Matthew 16:18b ESV

2020 was certainly a year chock-full of surprises, wasn't it? We know, however, that God wasn't taken by surprise, and He continued to work all things together for good for those that follow Him. **In 2020, your tithes and offerings played a direct role in supporting what God is doing through Trinity Downtown.** Here are a few highlights from last year from a financial perspective:



- **Offerings exceeded plan.** Due to your generosity, our 2020 tithes and offerings **exceeded** the (pre-COVID) annual budget by over \$35k (or 2%). Praise God for your generosity and His mercy!
- **Continued debt reduction.** During 2020, over-and-above giving allowed us to dramatically pay-down our operational debt from \$462k to \$133k. This puts us on track to completely pay off this debt by the end of 2021!
- **Expenses were lower than plan.** Many of our operational expenses were lower than planned in 2020 due to the restrictions on in-person activities. This included both the revenue and expenses associated with outside events, e.g., weddings. For the year, total expenses were more than 9% lower than plan, and over 10% lower than in 2019.
- Streaming our worship services online required new equipment, and you gave designated gifts of over \$90,000 in 2020 to equip Trinity with the needed equipment.
- We expanded our use of video beyond live streaming and Zoom classes by creating 21 daily Advent devotionals, and video-based devotions for both Thanksgiving and New Year's. The Advent videos had more than 5,000 views, and the holiday-themed videos have been viewed over 750 times.

Here's a thumbnail sketch of 2020's financial results:

Account	2020 Ministry Financial Plan (the budget)	2020 Actual Results	Variance from Plan
Discretionary Revenues	\$1,792,507	\$1,827,906	\$35,399
Operational Expenses	\$1,856,347	\$1,682,795	\$173,553
Net Cash Flow after debt payments	\$1,738	\$108,934	\$107,196

Outstanding Debt Balances

Loan Description	12/31/2019 Balance	12/31/2020 Balance
Education Building mortgage loan	\$3,500,257	\$3,387,262
Operational debt from school subsidy	\$462,119	\$133,277

We look toward 2021 with faith in our God that He will continue showing us how to share the Good News of Jesus' love in new and meaningful ways to our community. Please continue playing your part in His great plan through your prayers, engagement and generous giving of time, talent and treasure.

Joining Jesus alongside you,
Ron Lacy
CFO

Youth and Adult Virtual Bible Studies

Please consider joining one or more of our weekly virtual Bible studies. It's a wonderful way to begin a new spiritual discipline. Virtual login information is available on Trinity's website www.trinitydt.org.

SUNDAYS - YOUTH

Foundations 56 (5th-6th grades) - 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Led by Jane Suchma & Karen Maynard

Online Kids Interactive Experience. (Note: To join this class go to <https://www.trinitydt.org/youth-ministries/>.)

First Communion (5th grade) - 2:00 p.m.

Led by Haley Davisson

Class for 5th graders or older who haven't taken their First Communion yet but who desire to do so on Maundy Thursday. (See class information on page 3.)

Confirmation Class (7th-9th grades)

Led by Mary Oliver and Haley Davisson - 10:30-11:30 a.m.

The Confirmation program seeks to help 7th, 8th, and 9th grade students own their faith. In the course, each student will learn the key truths of the Christian church as they prepare to confirm the faith into which they were baptized. The class will equip each student to apply their faith for life and provide a foundation for an ongoing relationship with God.

High School Class (9th-12th grades)

Led by Elizabeth Oliver - 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Study of the book of Ephesians.

SUNDAYS - ADULT

Lights in the Darkness: Engaging the Culture

Led by Jim Cleary - 10:30-11:30 a.m.

It seems like everything is more contentious and people are more angry. How should we relate to those we disagree with? How can we become more fully the people God wants us to be? Join us as we discuss these questions, focusing on God's goodness and light and how we can be His lights in a dark world. Discussion-oriented!

Our Life's Seasons as Lived by David

Led by Thomas DeVries - 10:30-11:30 a.m.

A human life can be divided into unique "seasons". As a multi-generational class, we see the value in openly exploring among those who anticipate the season, those who are living it and those who have passed through with their medals and scars. We will use King David's life as a backdrop to our discussion and find nuggets of God's truth that can help us live in a way pleasing to Him and beneficial to the world.



The Gospel According to Mark

Led by Pastor Paul Dorn - 7:00-8:00 p.m.

The Gospel of Mark proclaims in bold and certain terms that the reign of God has come in Jesus Christ. It's good news for a world looking for hope.

Wise Up and Live - The Book of Proverbs

Led by Bill Fischer's Team - 10:30-11:30 a.m.

The Proverbs are a series of statements primarily written by King Solomon that give good advice on how a person should live. They don't tell a story as do so many other books of the Bible. Instead they provide instruction and guidance on a variety of topics, including wisdom. Learn with us on how to "Wise Up and Live!"

WEDNESDAYS

Bless These Lips (Women's Study)

Led by Jan Case - 9:30-10:30 a.m.

Make over your words to influence the world! *Bless These Lips: 40 Days of Spiritual Renewal* examines things we say that get in the way of our relationships with God and with others. Each chapter draws on lip product analogies and uses humor, anecdotes, and observations to introduce Scripture passages that address common behaviors and attitudes.

Book of 2nd Peter (Women's Study)

Led by Mary Oliver - 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

The Wednesday Evening Women's Bible Study is currently on Zoom studying 2nd Peter using Jen Wilken's video series and workbook.

Virtual Midweek Spiritual Check-in

Led by Jim Cleary - 7:00-8:00 p.m.

THURSDAYS

Sonrise Bible Study

Led by Pastor Donald Black - 7:30-8:30 a.m.

The class discusses the Scripture readings assigned for the following Sunday. The class is open to men and women. For more information, contact Bill Fischer at 713.827.8664 or bfisch@aol.com.



Lent and Holy Week (continued from page 1)

Lenten Video Devotionals

This year Trinity Downtown will offer a special way to support your daily reflection and personal devotion during Lent. Four of our pastors will be working to provide you with a short daily devotional thought that you can watch at a time that works best for you. A new devotion will be released each day during the Season and you will receive a link to watch it on a digital device. Plan now to set aside a regular time each day to join these pastors - Donald Black, Paul Dorn, Greg Finke, and Aaron Richert - as they share God's word with you.

Each daily video devotion will pick up on the theme of "It Happened At..." following the journey of Jesus from His birth at Bethlehem to the Passion in Jerusalem. You won't want to miss the very special video planned for the day before Easter which will be recorded at Trinity's Cemetery.

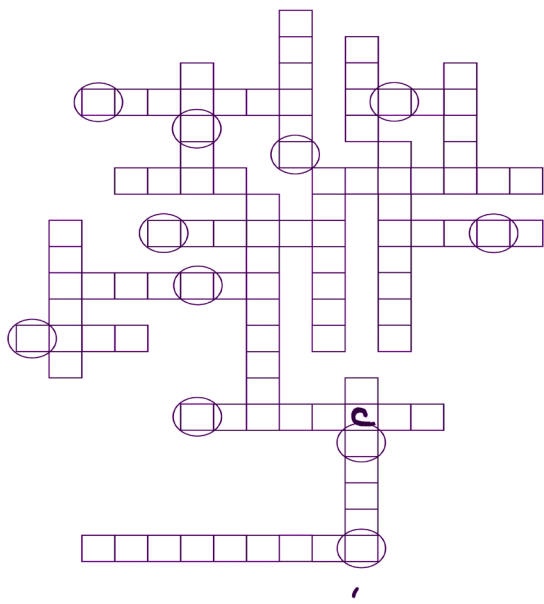
The response to the daily Advent video devotionals far exceeded expectations and it is hoped that you will find the Lenten devotionals equally helpful. In fact, the hope is that you will share the video link with someone else and invite them to join you on this Lenten journey,



Puzzle!

Fit the names of these Bible-times places in the puzzle. Then write the circled letters on the lines below, in the order found, to find out where your citizenship is.

Tyre	Sidon	Kedesh	Ephesus	Philippi
Cana	Berea	Sychar	Corinth	Bethlehem
Rome	Lycia	Galilee	Iconium	Jerusalem
Gaza	Athens	Ephraim	Damascus	



Greetings from Westfield House, Cambridge!

Hello lockdown, our old friend. Well, technically, we're in 'Tier IV' and told to stay at home except for certain 'necessary' reasons. But it's essentially the same thing. The result is the same in that we haven't been doing much besides reading, getting a few long walks in ('exercise'), and having minimal social interaction through church and Westfield House staff. We try to have a 'movie night' with our fellow DTM student (we get him to choose the movie) once a week or so, allowing some time to wind down and discuss a movie that we probably would not have picked ourselves. We were able to celebrate Christmas, though, with this new friend and the last Valpo student remaining at Westfield House. I preached on Christmas morning and we baked cookies, made eggnog, and replicated some of the food traditions of Stephanie's family. We did not (or at least, I did not) stay awake until midnight on New Year's Eve, but I've never been particularly keen on that tradition.



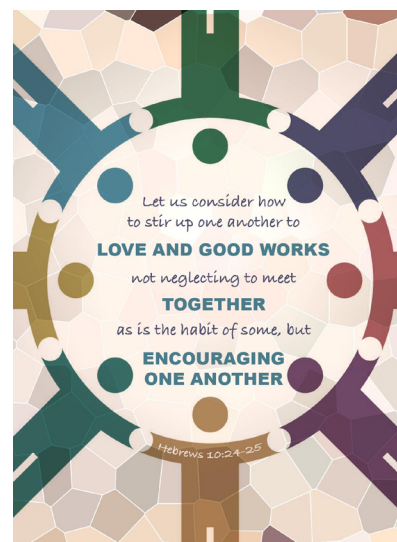
**Chuck Ridley,
Seminary Student**

As I write, the Lent Term has officially begun, and classes start meeting today. However, we won't have any sessions until next week (the last week of January). Stephanie and I were signed up to take two 'half papers' this term, but we decided to switch from this arrangement to one 'full paper'. The examination work at the end will be the same, but this should save us a few hours each week, allowing more time for our 'dissertations' and the ongoing work for courses from last term. We were slated to take 'The Gospel and Western Culture' and 'Christian Mysticism and Contemporary Spiritual Practice'. I was looking forward to the first of these two. I wasn't too thrilled about the mysticism class – we added it after we realized that we had misunderstood the requirements for the number of 'papers' we needed for the DTM program and we were short of options. Despite that, I thought it might be a good 'broadening' experience.

However, upon further reflection this month, I thought it best to try and simplify things a bit for both of us. Instead of these two courses, we will be taking a course on the Reformation. This will allow us to get a better understanding of the English Reformation and the whole Reformation period from the English perspective. While we go through that course this term, we will still have a few sessions of the practical theology course and we will have some continuing work for our more philosophy-heavy courses (we each have two supervisions which entail fairly extensive reading and then writing to be discussed in a small group). We also have an extended essay to work on for a topic from our ethics course last term. Amidst all the reading and writing, we're still hoping that restrictions will start to ease up in the next couple of months and we will be able to get out to see more of the country. If things go well, we should be able to join our principal on a series of trips for an intensive course in Christian Art.

Until then, I am also preparing to serve at Resurrection Lutheran (the congregation here at Westfield) over Lent by occasional preaching and leading Bible studies. I encourage you to keep attending worship services (in person when possible) and Bible studies, keeping up the habit of meeting together and encouraging one another. The peace of Christ be with you as you endeavor to live faithfully to Him in a world set against Him.

"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near." (Hebrews 10:23–25, ESV)



In Christ,
Chuck Ridley

Football Saturday at Satellite Service

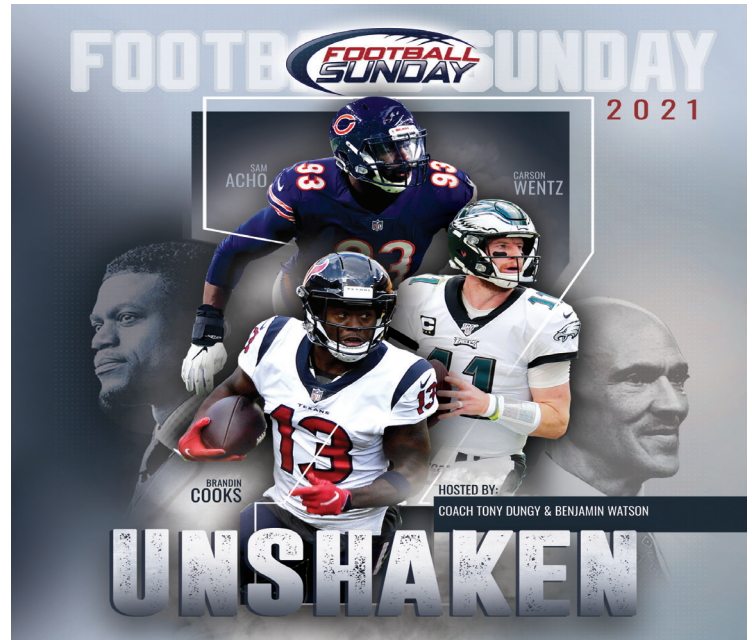
In Person and Live Virtual

2/6/2021 - 5:00 pm

Please plan to attend and invite friends to our annual Football Saturday event on February 6th. This service will feature a special video sermon with some of the NFL's biggest stars, offering a crystal clear presentation of the gospel.

Just as this year's Super Bowl will look very different, so will our Satellite Service's Football Saturday worship service. While the Superbowl of Chili will not take place this year at our annual event, we encourage you to attend Football Saturday in person or virtually on February 6, 2021 at 5:00 pm. In person worship requires RSVP's and space is limited.

Please reach out to Matt Meier (mmeier@trinitydt.org or 832-301-3105) with any questions.



Prayer Chain



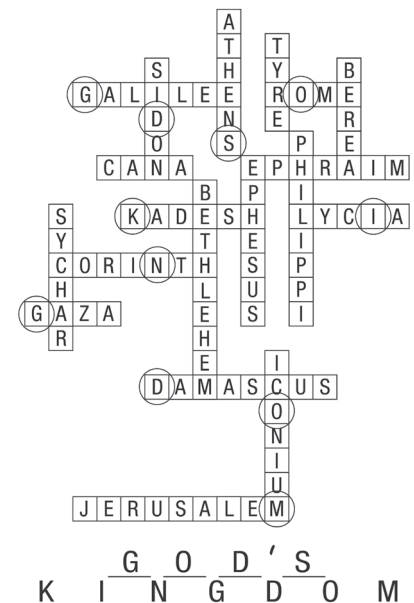
For urgent prayer requests, please call:
Lil Hohle - 346.207.7442 or Alice Scherer - 713.984.0803



Puzzle!

Fit the names of these Bible-times places in the puzzle. Then write the circled letters on the lines below, in the order found, to find out where your citizenship is.

Tyre	Sidon	Kedesh	Ephesus	Philippi
Cana	Berea	Sychar	Corinth	Bethlehem
Rome	Lycia	Galilee	Iconium	Jerusalem
Gaza	Athens	Ephraim	Damascus	



Lenten Devotions from Lutheran Hour Ministries

Following the narrative of Mark's Gospel, *The Marks of Love* explores the life and ministry of Jesus. The tragedy of Golgotha is met with the triumph of the resurrection on Easter morning. Along the way, we learn of Jesus' deep compassion for those He loved and served, including those who put Him to death.

No story in human history is like the narrative of Jesus' Passion. In it we see God in the flesh, coming to seek and to save the lost. In *The Marks of Love*, we meet a Savior who endured life's hardships, suffered our pain, and bore the weight of our sins. Each left its mark on Him as He pressed on to the cross, giving His life for ours, appeasing God's wrath against sin, and rising victorious over sin, death, and the devil.



Devotion booklets will be available at Trinity beginning Sunday, February 14. They will also be available to read [online](#) or as a [podcast](#) beginning February 17, 2021. *The Marks of Love* can also be received as an [e-mail subscription](#) throughout the Lenten season. The [audio version](#) will be available on the LHM Daily Devotion page beginning February 17, 2021.

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How to increase your giving to Trinity without spending any additional money.

Please remember that you can expand your stewardship by using a program that Trinity has qualified for at Amazon. Amazon will give Trinity a 0.5% rebate for all purchases made by our supporters when making their normal purchases at Amazon. It's very easy—whenever you are shopping on Amazon, go to this web address (instead of www.amazon.com): <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/74-1238451>

Using this service from Amazon won't change the cost of the products you buy, and all of your account settings and preferences will be retained. The only thing that will change is that Trinity will receive a rebate!

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Minutes of the Governing Board are available to our members at the Welcome Center.



A Life Quote for the Church Year - February 14 – Transfiguration of Our Lord/ St. Valentine's Day

"God shines forth out of Zion" (Psalm 50:2), not from outer space or some other dimension. He adorns human faces with His own glory. It isn't angels, superheroes, or celebrities only that He makes so sacred, but sinners like Moses (Exodus 34:29-30) and peasants like Jesus (Mark 9:2-3). The Almighty Father holds every human life open, no matter how embryonic or elderly, as a window to heaven. Who are we to pull the shades?

This "Life Quote" is from LifeDate, a quarterly journal of news and commentary from Lutherans For Life – www.lutheransforlife.org



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*Joyfully Sharing Christ's Saving
Love With All People Now!*

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Article submission deadline is **February 12** for articles to be published March 1, 2021.

Submit articles to pschroeder@trinitydt.org.

Contact Pam Schroeder at 713.229.2944 with any questions about this publication.