

TRINITY FAMILY NEWS

We Welcome:

Brianna Perez, second granddaughter of Paul and Lily Perez. Brianna is the daughter of **Robert and Maria Perez** and joins big sister Isabelle. She was born on August 27 in San Jose.

We mourn with:

Lorena Trichler on the death of David. A private service was held for David on September 4.

Betty Ranum and family on the death of Ernie Ranum. A memorial service was held on September 18 at Trinity.

The Meehan, Reginato and Trieger families on the death of Lauren Meehan. A memorial service was held on September 11 at Trinity.

We keep in our prayers: Ruthe Anderson, Rob Anderson, Claudia Smallwood (niece of Jane Poythress), Pricilla & Kevin O'Brian, Rowan Carr (granddaughter of Mary & Alan Gregersen), Rosita, Cathy May, Ruth Harrison, Joanne Tveidt, Larry Hammett, Jean Appel, Hal Oquist, Paul Griffith.



A reminder from the Altar Guild...please check the flower book for a date to honor a loved one or celebrate a special event. The flower book is located to the right of the sanctuary entrance.

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Rolly Lokre	3	Alexandria Carrillo	17
Lois Rye	3	Jack Trieger	19
Alan Schroeder	3	Graham Hurvitz	19
Nathan Tufvesson	4	Ulla Jorgensen	20
Astrid Hammett	6	Norman Tveidt	22
Rece Graham	7	Shari Herzog	23
Anita Peca	9	Darcy Jensen	24
Natasha Hurvitz	9	Richard Church	26
		Bruce Rice	28
Melissa Perez	13	Mary Ebeling	28
Carla Church	13	Gary Watts	30
Karen Anderson	13	Dennis Lewis	30
Jeff Carroll	14	Virginia Gough	30
Shannon Satterthwaite	14		
Scott Moll	16		
Sara Moll	16		
Isaac Tufvesson	16		
Val Oquist	17		

NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Paul & Lily Perez	4	Stephan & Jean Weeks	24
Steve & Lynn Jones	8	Bill & Nancy Kelly	26
Rolly & Cindy Lokre	21	Seth & Karen Anderson	27
Allen & Laurabelle Engler	23		

Please call the office with any corrections or additions to this list.

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

Pam Herzog	1	Dawn Heimendinger	18
Cindy Thomas	2	Jean Wallis	19
Ari Petersen	3	Arlene Petrauskas	20
Ann Cavalli	3	Joyce Karl	21
Lorraine Kolich	6	Peggy Morin	22
Janet Seiler	7	Barbara Griffith	22
Joanne Nelson	9	Samantha Onnen	23
Phyllis Lenker	9	Ronda Johnson	24
Esther Lantz	9	Madisyn Graham	24
Alan Gregersen	10	Annelies Dahlquist	27
Bruce Wollenberg	12	Deanna Hunt	27
Edythe Smith	13	Paul Klinker	27
Loesje Tracy	13	Sydney Davis	28
Mary Turner	15	Cesli Vierra	28
Bob Burtness	17	Jerry Griffith	30
Nancy Graham	17	Erik Weeks	31
Sherry Hunt	17	Alex Tufvesson	31
Jan Watts	18	Louise Caccese	31

OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

Jeff & Betty Ahlgren	2	Einar & Elaine Hovind	25
George & Jeanne Kuipers	9	Jens & Anne-Margrethe Steenstrup	25
John & Edythe Smith	10	Dave & Pat McClure	26
Donald & Christine Anderson	11	Lisa & AJ Sobczak	26
Martin & Jean Appel	11		

Please call the office with any corrections or additions to this list.



Bookbinders will start up again on October 4 at 3:00 PM at the home of Jane Huhn. Please bring books that you have already read and enjoyed, or would like to read so we can make up a list of books we will read this coming year. We would like a variety of books so bring whatever you like and bring a friend.

Please call Jane Huhn at 682-2189 or Cindie Trieger in the church office, 687-1577 to RSVP. All women are welcome.

IT'S TIME FOR A NEW PHOTO DIRECTORY!



Lifetouch Church Directories will be on the Trinity campus October 27-30 from 2:00-9:00 PM and October 31 from 10:00 am - 5:00 PM to take portraits for the directory.

Photography and proof viewing will take place on the same day. We hope one of these sessions will work for everybody. If anyone is interested in serving on the directory committee, please call the church office. Sign-ups will begin soon. More information about the photo directory will be forthcoming.



Thank you to Dorothy Burkhart for coordinating and to **Ellen Ahlers, Jane Maddalon, Sylvia Redding, Nancy Sittig, Cindie Trieger Marilyn Reginato, Kim Bish, Bennie Olson and Food From the Heart**, for contributing to the September Transition House meals.

Thank you also to **Jean Wollenberg and Eddie Mindheim** for serving the preparing lunches for the next day. Kim Bish donated and bbq'd tri-

tip and chicken. We also served green salad, rolls, green beans and ice cream bars for dessert.

Please sign up at the Welcome Center if you would like to contribute to the meal in October.

SUNDAY OCTOBER 4 – BOOK OF FAITH/CLU SUNDAY
SINGLE WORSHIP SERVICE AT 9:30 A.M.

Please mark your calendar! This year, we're moving up our fall joint SALT (*Serving as Lutherans Together*) worship service to October 4. We'll have one service only on that day, at 9:30 a.m. Our special guest, Dr. Guy Erwin, is scheduled to preach. Dr. Erwin, Professor of Lutheran Confessional Theology and Professor of Religion and History at California Lutheran University, is a respected scholar and very popular speaker. It is appropriate that Dr. Erwin is with us on October 4, *California Lutheran University* Sunday, a day the College invites us to celebrate the mission of this College of the Church. Following a half-hour break on the patio for refreshments, Dr. Erwin will present a 50-minute lecture in the sanctuary that will give us an exciting launch into fall Book of Faith groups. Our activities will conclude by Sunday noon. You won't want to miss this day of worship and learning!

Annual Response Program
Congregational Meals, Sunday, October 18

This year our congregation will be participating in an annual response program entitled **“Responding to God’s Generosity, Thanking God with my Financial Resources”** The Bible passage that guides us this year is “Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift.”

2 Corinthians 9:15

I invite you to mark your calendars for Sunday, October 18. Brunch or lunch will be served after each regularly scheduled church worship. Alternate dates will be available if you are not able to join us that day. During the meal we will show a power point presentation depicting how Trinity members and our finances have made a difference in the lives of others.

Before the end of September, you will be receiving in the mail a registration card asking you to indicate when you will be able to attend a meal. More information will be included in that mailing.

With Gratitude for the Lord’s Generosity,

Bob Huhn

MEMBERSHIP MUSINGS

Our Trinity congregation has been blessed with a number of enthusiastic new members. September's group included a wide range of ages and backgrounds, many of them coming as transfers to Trinity from other Lutheran traditions. Our challenge, as not-so-new members, is to become well-acquainted with these folks. Their photos, with brief "bios," will soon be posted in the entryway to the sanctuary. Let's all make an effort to get to know these new people and help them feel at home.

The Membership Ministry Team offers two opportunities for members.....new, as well as seasoned, to get to know each other better. The first is the MIDWEEK WALKERS. The WALKERS is a group that varies in number from 10 to 15 people. We walk between 1 1/2 to 2 miles at an average pace. Our walks always fall on a Tuesday at 9:00. We begin and conclude at a coffee shop where we enjoy coffee and friendly visiting. Our routes are different each week, with the location posted in Sunday's bulletin. No sign-up is necessary: just be at the starting point at 9:00.

The second "get-acquainted" opportunity is BREAD BREAKERS. This program is a return to a successful Trinity activity of the 1990's. It's quite simple: a small group of Trinity members meet at the home of a Trinity volunteer to share a meal. It might be a brunch, or it could be a dinner. (The times for the meal are posted on the sign-up sheet.) Guests are asked to bring an item to share as part of the meal that the host/hostess will organize. While is it too late to sign up for the October BREAD BREAKERS dining groups, you might want to think about jumping in when BREAD BREAKERS return after the Christmas holidays. We'll be looking for new host families for the January get-togethers: if you'd be interested in hosting one of these dining groups, please contact any member of the Membership Ministry Team.

The GARDENER'S EXCHANGE TABLE seems to be slowing, as the supply of backyard tomatoes, lemons and squash fades with the summer season. We will continue the table throughout October, allowing gardeners with figs, rhubarb and guavas to find a home for their extra produce. Remember, you are welcome to take anything you see on the TABLE, courtesy of our Trinity backyard gardeners. And, of course, it is always free.

OUR MISSIONARY FAMILY IN KENYA

Last month we introduced our missionary family, the Rev. Sam and Cindy Wolff. Sam had originally expected to depart for Kenya by the end of August but Cindy had been diagnosed with breast cancer and he delayed his departure for her surgery until September 7. The surgery was successful and Cindy will join Sam after her radiation and hormone therapy is completed.

Sam will be serving in a church in Dagoretti, a once quiet village on the outskirts of Nairobi that now has become a depressed area dealing with overcrowding and unemployment. However, literally across the road is nice housing and apartments that have attracted many of Nairobi's expatriate population. The Kenyan Synod has challenged Dagoretti to serve both the international English speaking population and the Swahilli speaking population. Sam will minister to the English speaking members of the congregation and oversee outreach projects that address the social and health issues of the community. An AIDS outreach clinic is planned as well as a technical training school and a water project.

Please keep Sam and Cindy in your prayers.

SUPPORT A FAITH-BASED BENEFIT!

The **Santa Barbara Rescue Mission's 8th Annual Fund Raiser** will be held on Saturday, October 3, 2009, at 2 p.m. at beautiful Rancho Dos Pueblos. Let's get a table of Trinity friends together for this worthwhile event!

- The theme is FUN – **PICNIC ON THE BAYOU** – come casual!
- The price is RIGHT -- \$150 per person
- The food is a SOUTHERN SUPPER – delicious down-home cookin'
- The Silent Auction is TERRIFIC – rated the best in town!

Enjoy a lovely afternoon and support this Christian organization in its mission to provide assistance to people in need, particularly those struggling with addictions.

To join the **Trinity Table**, contact Kathy Hartnett at 683-1626, Sharon Troll in the church office, or Rebecca Wilson at the Rescue Mission (805) 966-1316 ext. 105.

NOTES FROM THE SALT SHAKER

Retreating to Advance! The SALT (Serving As Lutherans Together) Advisory Board will meet in a day-long retreat session on Saturday, October 3, led by Nancy Ackerman, Assistant to Bishop Nelson. We have established a firm relationship between our three congregations – Christ, Grace and Trinity. Now is the time to vision our next chapter!

Mark Your Calendars. The SALT congregations will hold a single joint service at Trinity on Sunday, October 4 at 9:30 AM. Dr. Guy Erwin, a professor at California Lutheran University will be our guest preacher. Lunch will not be served but coffee and rolls will be available on the patio after the service. Be sure to linger in fellowship with other SALT members and then return to the sanctuary where Dr. Erwin will lead a seminar that will inaugurate the fall season of Book of Faith.

Stretching our Outreach. Members from Trinity and Christ are joining together to add an additional Saturday a month to the food distribution program at Grace. The Lutheran Food Pantry will now be available to clients on the 1st, 2nd and 4th Saturdays of each month. Contact Bob Huhn at Trinity if you can add your support to this program. The first additional Saturday was September 26.

Want to Get Involved? Two additional members from Trinity are needed on the SALT Advisory Board. The Board meets once a month on the 4th Tuesday at 6:30 PM. Please contact Joanne Nelson for details.

Ruth Harrison would like to thank Pastor Truls and all the members of the congregation for their thought and prayers for herself and daughter Cathy May. Please continue to hold Cathy up in prayer as she slowly heals.

Marilyn Reginato and Cindie Trieger would like to thank the members of the congregation for their cards, prayers and support after the death of beloved granddaughter and niece Lauren Meehan. Thank you also to Pastor Truls for officiating and to Philip Wilson and Sarah Kreitzer for participating in her memorial service.

October Notes in Youth and Family Ministry

Fall is a time of change, and though we barely notice it in the weather, we see it practically everywhere else around us, even in Santa Barbara!

We had an amazing kickoff to Sunday school, confirmation, and our L.O.L. (Love Our Lord) youth group! Parents joined us as we baked cookies for Transition House, ate pizza together, and even had a rousing game of knocking over soda can pyramids with marshmallows!

Karen Wilson has stepped up to assist Pastor Truls in leading confirmation, and we have some exciting new options this year, including some web-based learning over the internet!

We will also be launching a combined high school Sunday morning Bible study as we talk about heaven. As of this writing we will tentatively meet at Goleta Coffee Company across from San Marcos High School around 9:10AM on Sunday mornings. Trinity students can meet at Trinity and carpool from there, but we will leave at 9AM SHARP (unless the 8AM service runs over time, of course). Christ Lutheran students will still return for worship at 10, and, of course, Trinity students will be back in time for the 10:30 service as well. There could even be some light breakfast goodies provided...!

This month, mark the date for Saturday, October 10th. We will be having our very own Disco Night in the youth room and the Fellowship Hall, and high school students are invited to sleepover for a movie night! Details are still coming on exact times; please check with Rich for details.

Next month we will also have our annual Fall Middle School Gathering at Universal Studios. High school students are invited to join us as junior counselors if they wish. Registration is \$125 and must be submitted no later than Sunday, October 25. Don't miss it!

We've also been talking a good deal about promises lately in youth group; what the promises of our baptism mean, what confirmation promises made at affirmation of baptism mean, and how God is clearly One who enjoys making covenants and encourages us to stick to our words as well.

Grab a Lutheran book of worship and check out the promises that you have made, or the ones that were made for you. Where do you need God's help and guidance in fulfilling those promises?

Peace,

Rich Lashua
Director of Youth and Family Ministries



Seasonal Flu Vaccines are here!

It's that time of year again! The CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against seasonal influenza. The seasonal vaccine protects against the three seasonal viruses that research suggests will be most common. Vaccines are available at Sansum Clinic and from your Parish Nurse (check church bulletin for times). Cost is \$20, suggested donation. In addition, all Seniors mark your calendar for the Senior Expo at Earl Warren Showgrounds on October 8, 2009 from 9AM-1PM! For \$10 you can receive a flu shot and lunch!

A new vaccine against H1N1 is being produced and will be available in the coming months. Continue to check the church bulletin for updates on this vaccine.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Reduce Your Risk for Breast Cancer

A mammogram can help detect disease, but also remember to get your clinical breast exam with your physician each year if you are 40 or older, and every three years if you're 20-39. Being overweight increases your risk for breast cancer. Physical exercise has been shown to reduce the breast cancer risk, so remind a friend to schedule her mammogram and take your daily walk!



Dates to Remember:

Cancer Fair Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital

October 24th, 2009 9AM- 12Noon

Come early, first come first served.

FREE cancer screenings:

- Skin cancer screening (for ages 20+)
- Visual oral cancer screening (for ages 30+)
- Clinical breast exam (for ages 40+)
- Colon cancer at-home screening (FOBT) kits (for ages 50+)
- Prostate exam – Low-cost PSA blood test (for ages 40+)

El Montecito Presbyterian Church is sponsoring a **Grief Recovery Workshop**. This is an eight week workshop on Monday evenings from 7:00-9:00 PM. for anyone who has experienced the death of a loved one in the last few years. Sessions began on September 27, but you may still register at the second session on October 5. The cost is \$20. Please contact Nancy Warda at 682-4337 or Carol Bussell at 969-5041 for more information.



Driving and Your Medications

According to a new study released by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, 95 percent of respondents 55 and older have one or more medical conditions and 78 percent use one or more medications, yet only 28 percent indicated some awareness of the potential impact on driving performance associated with those medications. Beta Blockers, Ace Inhibitors, and Sedatives have warnings about potentially impaired driving while under the influence. *Ace inhibitors* are used to treat high blood pressure, glaucoma and migraines. *Beta Blockers* are drugs that treat angina and other heart rhythm disorders, migraines, high blood pressure, panic attacks, and tremors. *Prescription Sedatives and Tranquilizers* are central nervous system depressants that slow brain function. *OTC* medications such as those that contain antihistamine may also cause drowsiness. As age increases so do medications and 69% of surveyed individuals are on more than one potentially driving impaired medication. In addition drivers over age 65 are involved in more crashes per mile than drivers age 30-64.

As we age physical changes occur that center around our vision, hearing and reaction time. Taking an AARP course or a mature driver course (through Adult Ed) provides useful driving tips in handling these changes. The next course at Adult Ed is Oct 3rd. Check the AARP website for their next available course. It is only \$10.

And for those who speed on the highways..... a few hymns to sing:

- 45mph.....*God Will Take Care of You*
- 65mph.....*Nearer My God To Thee*
- 85mph.....*The World is Not My Home*
- 95mph.....*Lord, I'm Coming Home*
- 100mph.....*Precious Memories*

October Senior Fellowship Luncheon



“Helen’s Hula’s

Come relax and enjoy the sound of the Hawaiian Islands. Four vintage hula dancers will bring their welcoming spirits.

Join us!! Open to all congregational members and guest!

10:30 Exercise, 11:00 Program, 12 Noon Lunch

Cost: \$6.50; Sign-up at the Welcome Center

OCTOBER 13th CARE MINISTRY

“How Foods Fight Cancer”



4PM Library

The focus is on cancer this month. Thinking of foods as medicine is a simple, delicious way to put yourself on the road to good health. Each year more than 1.3 million people in the U.S. are diagnosed with cancer.

***We will sample foods following a video and discussion.**

FAITH FORMATION

From EDUCATION to PROCLAMATION!

What does Scripture teach us today? Never is God's Word a collection of dull, lifeless words on dusty old pages, written for a people long ago. In contrast with static propositions or declarations, God's Word is a living word. On every page God reveals to us Christ - a manger holding Christ as Luther called it. Each time we read Scripture, God reveals anew to us who we are as humans, and our great need for Christ and God's mercy. God's Word speaks to us, cajoles us, convicts us, and is our balm and comfort. Through God's Word the Holy Spirit plants and nourishes seeds of faith in our lives.

God's Word was also written to be spoken - sort of an oxymoron! God's Word becomes active when heard - when preached, when sung, when spoken when two or more are gathered in Christ's name.

So we call all to join us weekly in studying Scripture - be it through Trinity's Sunday Faith Formation classes, or weekly Bible study, or through SALT's Book of Faith studies ... or one of each! Be part of our community as we let God till our lives and plant seeds of God's Good Word, nurtured by the Holy Spirit to become God's fruitful harvest. Blessings - - Karen Wilson, TELC Director of Education (kawil001@gmail.com)

Sunday Faith Formation Classes

9:15am - 10:15am -- between services

Adults

Fellowship Hall

Leader: Karen Wilson

Discipleship – through Nov 22

What does it mean to be a disciple of God? We are first looking to Scripture to glean how the writers of the Gospels and New Testament letters defined discipleship. Then, we will look to see how what they wrote jibes with what we think discipleship means. What can God teach us in 2009? Come join us and find out!

Adults (continued)

UPCOMING SCHEDULE:

Oct 4th - Dr. Guy Erwin will lead a class after the single service

Oct 11th - John

Oct 18th - No Adult Ed - Stewardship Brunch

Oct 25th - Acts

Oct 29th - Pauline Letters

Advent (Nov 29 - Dec 20)

How do we proclaim Christ is the only way? Come join us as we learn what other religions believe, and how we can live and work ecumenically in a pluralistic world.

Kids

Nursery (2-4 yr olds - Mary Lopez & Dolores Soto),

Fellowship Hall (PreK - K - Ruth Bloch; 3rd Grade - Dawn Heimendinger & Tom Johnson

Library (5th Grade - Jean Weeks & Diana D'Evelyn)

We are using "Witness" to lead us through the Bible. Check out TELC's website (www.TELCSB.com) for our weekly schedule!

PLEASE NOTE the upcoming special dates:

Oct 4th - NO Classes: Single SALT service

Oct 18th - PreK through 3rd will meet in the Nursery & Fireside Room.

Oct 29th - Reformation Party! All classes will meet in the Library.

Sunday Evenings 6:00pm - 8:00pm

Youth Group

6pm - 8pm: Youth Room (High School)
Leaders: Rich Lashua & Kelly Courtney

Weekly Bible Study & topical studies, games, fellowship, food!

Confirmation

6pm - 8pm: Youth Room / Library (Jr High School)
Leaders: Pastor Truls & Karen Wilson

This year's Confirmation focus is the Bible, using "Here We Stand" curriculum. Of course, we start and end with youth group activities, so there are games, fellowship, and the obligatory Food!! Why such an emphasis on Food??!! Check out the Gospel of Luke - Jesus was constantly at dinner parties! Such a social butterfly, that one So of course we model Christ and fellowship around fueling our bodies as well as our souls together.

The Endowment Committee wants to share these notes of thanks from those who have benefited from receiving college scholarships through the TELC Endowment Fund.

Brittany Bailey – 1st year student at UCSB

“Thank you so very much for the generous scholarship...I am so thrilled to attend UCSB and this scholarship will help me worry less about the financial burden and focus on the great education I will receive.”

Karisa Daniels – 3rd year student at UC Berkeley

“Thank you so much for your continued support over the years. This scholarship has made my college experience one of the best of my life.”

Trinity's Global Sponsorship of Children

Did you know that for years Trinity has been sponsoring children living in other countries?

Renuka Thanyaseethong, an 11 yr old girl in Thailand. Sponsored through ChildFund, International.

Trinity's Women's Group has faithfully sponsored children in need for decades, from American Indians on reservations in the US, to Renuka in Thailand. As of this year, Trinity's Sunday School will be taking over Renuka's sponsorship. Renuka lives with her parents and her brother. ChildFund writes that she is part of Tak Child Welfare, a project in Mae Sod, a mountainous district of Thailand's northern Tak Province. The project provides services to two hill tribe villages, and is about 350 miles from Bangkok, Thailand's capital. The families in this area are very poor farmers and hunters, who work hard for inadequate incomes. They live a traditional and primitive lifestyle. While parents work in the fields and jungles, the children remain in the villages and play. The most pressing problems to these communities is poverty and malnutrition. Adequate clothing in cold seasons is scarce, as is knowledge of sanitation and hygiene. Diseases are transmitted easily, especially among children. Daily meals include steamed rice and vegetables. Animal proteins are occasional, and fish is rare. Iodized salt is promoted at meals.

Our sponsorship helps Renuka and her family with health and education services, including immunizations, physicals, dental check-ups, school supplies, uniforms, and daily nutritious lunches. The project even supplies 24 hour accident insurance coverage on the children it supports, paid for by the project and the families. The parents also receive assistance in implementing the various programs offered by the projects.

Chironjdt Boidja, an 8 yr old boy in Bangladesh. Sponsored through Compassion, International.

In 2007 our Children's Sunday School chose to sponsor a child through Compassion, International, both as a means of sharing our resources with someone less fortunate than we here in the US, and also to put a face to our ministry. Through our letters and cards we have learned about each other, and shared God's love. Compassion International writes that Chironjdt lives with his father, his mother, and four siblings. His main responsibility in the family is to carry water. His father is sometimes employed as a farmer and his mother maintains the home. Chironjdt loves to run, and to attend Bible

class. He lives on the plains of Suagram, where typical houses are constructed of tin with dirt floors. The regional diet consists of fish, rice, and lentils. Common health problems in this area include malnutrition and skin diseases. Half of the adults are unemployed but if they are able to work as day laborers they ear the equivalent of \$21 per month. The community is in need of health facilities, schools, educational materials, employment opportunities, and adult literacy.

Our sponsorship helps supply Chironjidt and his family with Bible teaching, food, medical treatment, health and hygiene education, recreational activities, special celebrations, picnics, tutorint, tuition, uniforms, shoes, and academic support. The center staff also provide meetings for Chironjidt's parents.

So what does this cost Trinity? These sponsorships cost our congregation less than \$100 per month, combined. Yet, with that small amount we are able to drastically impact the lives of two entire families, as well as their communities, in some of the poorest regions of the world. As we all consider our giving to God's global ministry, if God is calling you to help Trinity's Sunday School underwrite these children this year, your contributions would be greatly appreciated! Checks of any size can be sent to and made payable to Trinity Lutheran, with "Child Sponsorship" in the memo line so that the counters know where to route the funds.

Blessings - Karen Wilson, AiM

FROM PASTOR TRULS

With great joy, we welcomed fourteen new members into our congregation on September 27. We witnessed them pledging that they would join us in our mission of sharing the good news of Jesus Christ in word and deed. In turn, the rest of us pledged to support and pray for them.

The question has come up more than once lately, “What does it mean to be a member of a church?” Technically speaking, being a member gives one the right to vote at congregational meetings and to serve on the congregational council. I believe there’s a deeper dimension, however. Membership implies a different level of commitment, ownership, and responsibility. This applies, for example, in areas of worship, service, support, and study.

Worship - Worship together is the heart of what we do. As with family reunions, you can’t be *forced* to attend, but we go because it’s what we do. We come together to hear God’s Word for our lives, to praise God with our hearts and voices, and to be with our sisters and brothers in the faith. So, if you’re in the area on Sunday mornings, we’ll see you at the family reunion!

Service and Support - Christian service is *exhaling* the good news. If all we did were inhale, eventually we would turn blue and pass out. We have to exhale in order to stay alive! Likewise, members of a congregation are expected to exhale, to support the church and each other as they share Christ’s love in daily life.

Stewardship applies to our entire being. Members support their congregations through gifts of time and talents. I’ve been encouraging our new members to get connected in areas of service within and beyond our congregation. I believe that active members are healthy members.

Obviously, stewardship includes finances. I know that, as a pastor, it’s easy to be accused of talking only about money, but a lot of our mission around Trinity is dependent upon financial giving. The average Lutheran gives less than 3% of his or her income to the church. When I first saw this statistic, I was startled at how low the percentage is. Can you imagine what we could do with 4%? Dare we even imagine mission at 10%--or 15%--or 20%? I look forward to celebrating our congregation’s mission with you at our stewardship meals this month.

Study - One of the rich blessings we have at Trinity is the opportunity for growth through Bible study and faith conversation. There’s a place for people of all ages—preschool through adult. I hope you will take advantage of the wonderful *Book of Faith* offerings that begin this month. You may choose to participate in the large group Bible 101 survey course or a small group study (both meet six times). In either case, I trust that God will be present in love and power in our fellowship.

God has called us into the fellowship of the Body of Christ for worship, growth, and service. I give thanks that God has blessed me to share with you in this family of faith.

