



March Beacon

Hello Trinity Family,

Welcome to the season of Lent!

Since Lent is a season of the church where we are encouraged to repent – turn back towards – God, I thought it'd be interesting to focus this month on just what God sees as essential in worship. When we gather on Sundays, which parts of worship are commanded by God for us to do, and which parts does God in the Bible never mention, or command us to do, or are not forbidden to do but add to the experience of faith anyway. So, our question of the month in the category of 'why do we do this in church?' is, in other words: *What do we have to do in worship to make it worship?*

This was a huge controversy in the years following Martin Luther's death in the early days of the reformation and the founding of the Lutheran church. So, are you ready to learn all of the pieces that God commands us to have in our Lutheran worship to make it worship? Are you really ready? Okay, here we go...these are all the pieces that are essential for worship:

1. The gospel is proclaimed.
2. The sacraments are administered.

That's it! And you thought that there were dozens of pieces essential or commanded by God. I was surprised too. So that means that we can cut out

confession and forgiveness, all music (sorry choir!), prayers, creeds, candles, paraments, organs, stained glass...all of it...right? Well...

Aside from the Gospel being proclaimed and preached, and having baptisms and holy communion, everything else falls into a category called 'indifferent things' or 'adiaphora.' They are not commanded by God, but they also aren't forbidden, and in fact they add to our worship life. So long as they don't go against God, they're all good. And especially seeing as how they add to our worship and faith lives, having music, confession, prayers, profession of our faith, and visible elements that add to worship are good things that we include at church.

And what's neat about these 'indifferent things' is that they can be crafted into whatever way works for a particular church and faith community, so long as they remain focused on worship of God and care of creation and community. So we can sing, pray, decorate, profess, confess, and all the other things as we feel called by God to do. It's what makes Trinity, well, Trinity. And it's what makes each church sort of unique in their own way. Being labeled as 'indifferent things' doesn't take away or diminish their effect on our faith formation or faith lives. Rather, it frees us to experience faith and worship in traditional and new ways at church and at home too.

May you be blessed in new ways this Lent as you turn back towards God and experience your faith in tried and true, and maybe even new ways, this season.

By the way: please let me know if you – or someone you know – would like a visit from the pastor (me!) during Lent and Easter. I'm more than happy to venture out to home or a care facility. I can visit, be a listening ear, pray with you, bring communion, and just be a presence with you for a little while. I do have some folks I make regular visits with, but I'm happy to add more.

Blessings,

Pastor Rick



LIVESTREAMING AVAILABLE

Not able to make it to worship service in person? Don't forget to join us Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m. on our livestream. To access it, go to www.youtube.com, type in 'Trinity Akron' in the search bar, and you should find our page. Then click on the day's worship to watch from home.

Don't forget to follow us on Facebook and Instagram if you haven't already! On Facebook we are: Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of South Newstead. On Instagram we are trinityakronny.

Next council meeting: March 14 @ 7:00

Counters: March: Paula, April: MaryLou

Please Pray For...

Strength & Healing for:

Michael – health issues

Carl Patterson, Sr. – broken hip

Debbie Smith – broken hip

Carl Patterson – recovery from broken hip @ Beachwood Nursing Home

Bill Beaky – beginning cancer treatment

The family & friends of:

Mary Frye

Clara Weber

Don Holmes

Judy Bell

Johanna Metz Coleman

Praise & Thanksgiving for: Jim – Diane Hurne's son, who is back to work!

Prayers are a powerful way to lift up people who are sick, injured or suffering for God's healing. Let us know of names you would like to have the church pray for, and we'll add them to the list here and in the Beacon. If you wish for names to remain anonymous, you can let Pastor Rick know privately and he'll pray for them silently. Names will remain in the bulletin and Beacon for around a month unless you let us know to extend their listing or remove them sooner. There is a list near the offering collection plate to write names down, or you can leave a message with the church office.

Sunday School

Our March dates are March 12th & 26th. We look forward to seeing you!

Communion Helpers:

We resumed our communion “helpers!” Any child that wishes to help with communion by handing out goldfish to the other children during communion is welcome. Pastor will ask for a volunteer during service and will choose a different volunteer to help each week. Every child will get a chance to help if they desire.

Sunday School News

Trinity’s Sunday School continues to gather twice a month at 9:45am. They join together in prayer, talk about events in their lives over the past couple of weeks, and hear a story related to that Sunday’s scripture. A brief discussion on the story takes place, followed by a craft or activity that also reflects the day’s scripture readings.

On February 12th, it was only appropriate for the young people to make valentines for Trinity’s homebound and any other names submitted. (The Rizzo family made a card for their grandpa, for example.) It’s great to see the students get so excited about showing off their originality as well as sharing love with the older members of Trinity!

This Sunday, the youngsters will be painting a bank. These banks are to help the children better understand mission work. The Synod has come up with a new program in which the less fortunate may receive aid to use to pay their medical bills. The children will challenge the congregation to share in this mission project. The kids can take their banks home, drop coins into them daily, and return them on Easter Sunday (April 9th.) The banks will be emptied & the coins counted, and the kids can take them home on April 23rd to use as their own personal bank.

As we travel through this season of Lent, the Congregation is encouraged to share in this mission project either by picking up a baby bottle from the table in the narthex or by making their own bank, returning their money each week by dropping it into the large kettle in the narthex.

It's hard to believe there are people who must choose between paying their bills or buying food, or getting their medicines each month. Help with this program! Help people who need meds get them.

Donna Kumpf

The Historical Committee Needs Your Help

First, we want to thank **Lois and Dale Kruschke** on behalf of the whole congregation for the 13 years they meticulously kept records of our church's history. It has been a labor of love that Lois took on following in the steps of our Aunt Betty Sugg who acted as historian before her. Thank you for all your hard work!!

Secondly, while we may never live up to these previous historians, we would like to try something a little different. The Historical Committee would like to involve everyone in the church. Tracy will have a folder on her computer for historical facts for 2023. Whenever there is an event or holiday at Trinity, we would like a volunteer to give a brief recap of what happened. We are inviting all of you to participate - anyone can submit a short recap. For example, it would contain information like the date, what it was, how many attended and how it went. It can be as short as one sentence.

Submit the entry either by email to the church office, or if you prefer, write it down and put it in Tracy's mailbox. You can decide at your event who will be responsible for sharing the information with us. At the end of the year, Tracy will compile the list and submit it with the reports for the Annual meeting. If this is successful, we can continue in the future the same way.

Thirdly, while Ryan Dorr will photograph as many events as he can, we would like to invite all you photographers out there to join in sharing your pictures of church events as well. Please email them or copy them onto a USB and leave it in the office. Attach your name so Tracy can get it back to you.

While it will not be as fantastic of a job like we are used to, it will be a new twist on a job that has been a lot of work for one or two people. By working together, we can continue keeping up the historical records of Trinity as we move forward into our next 150 years. Just as we enthusiastically celebrated our past 150 years based on memories and written factual words, let us join together in keeping today's history at Trinity for future generations. Thank you for your help and God Bless you all.

Jane Dorr

Pancakes!

Come for all-you-can-eat pancakes with eggs, sausage, ham & homefries at the Newstead Fire Company on **Sunday, March 5th**! It runs from **7:30 am – 1:00 pm**. Kids 4 & under eat free.

Holy Week Services

Join us as we complete the walk towards the cross on Holy Week. Our services are:

- Maundy Thursday: **April 6th at 7 pm**
- Good Friday tenebrae (a service of light to darkness): **April 7th at 7:30 pm**

Easter Sunday at Trinity

We celebrate Easter at Trinity on Sunday, **April 9th**:

- Easter breakfast at 8 am...this year will be a *pot-luck breakfast*, details TBA
- Easter worship is at 9:30 am
- Following worship will be the Sunday School Easter Egg Hunt for the kids!

Souper Bowl of Caring

Thank you to all those who donated to the Souper Bowl of Caring! We raised \$125 for the Community of Good Neighbors – They're the real winners! \$85 went in the Eagle's pot and \$40 into the Chief's.

Spring Cleaning

Bring your cleaning implements to help make the church shine this spring! We've scheduled our indoor cleanup day for **Saturday, March 18th**, and our outdoor cleanup day for **Saturday, April 1st**. **Both dates start at 9 am** and go until we're done. Stay tuned as the weather may cause us to swap which day we clean indoors or outdoors.

Synod Lenten Collection:

R.I.P. Medical Debt

Did you know:

- Over 1 in 3 Americans struggles with the weight of medical debt?
- Over HALF of all Americans struggle to afford paying off medical debt?
- And over 6 in 10 families of color and low-income adults struggle to afford healthcare costs?

Let's do something about this! We are teaming up with our Synod churches to collect funds to eliminate medical debt. How it works:

- You make a donation at church in our collection pots
- We'll send donations to *RIP Medical Debt* (more about them at ripmedicaldebt.org)...
- They pinpoint the debt of those most in need by using poverty and income data

- *RIP Medical Debt* then buys medical debt at a steep discount (\$100 buys about \$10,000 in medical debt!)
- For those whose medical debt gets wiped out, they receive a letter that their debt has been erased, with no tax or financial penalties...just like that! And all of this will be forgiven in New York State!

What a wonderful way this Lent to practice faith and forgiveness, which Jesus talks about a lot! **Our collection challenge runs through Palm Sunday (April 2nd).**

Our Synod's goal is to raise \$10,000, which translates into eliminating \$1 million of medical debt! Even Sunday School is collecting donations in piggy banks! Be sure to grab a collection bottle or use your own container...any and all donations (paper and coin cash, checks, etc.) are welcome!

**Pastor Rick will match the first \$200 that is donated, and he challenges Trinity to raise at least \$1,500! That would eliminate \$150,000 of medical debt! We can do it!*

Adult Forum

Adult Forum Book Study: Tattoos on the Heart

We have our next book that we are going to dive into in our Adult Forum times this spring: *Tattoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion* by Gregory Boyle. More on the book:

For twenty years, Gregory Boyle has run Homeboy Industries, a gang-intervention program located in the Boyle Heights neighborhood of Los Angeles, the gang capital of the world. In *Tattoos on the Heart*, he distills his experience working in the ghetto into a breathtaking series of parables inspired by faith.

Arranged by theme and filled with sparkling humor and glowing generosity, these essays offer a stirring look at how full our lives could be if we could find the joy in loving others and in being loved unconditionally. From giant, tattooed Cesar, shopping at JCPenney fresh out of prison, we learn how to feel worthy of God's love. From ten-year-old Lula we learn the importance of being known and acknowledged. From Pedro we understand the kind of patience necessary to rescue someone from the darkness. In each chapter we benefit from Boyle's gentle, hard-earned wisdom.

These essays about universal kinship and redemption are moving examples of the power of unconditional love and the importance of fighting despair. Gorgeous and uplifting, *Tattoos on the Heart* reminds us that no life is less valuable than another.

Options to get your copy of *Tattoos on the Heart*:

- Pastor Rick has copies available for purchase for \$10 each.
- The Erie County Public Library has copies available for loan.
- You can also purchase your own copy elsewhere.

We'll dive into our book at these upcoming Adult Forum times following Sunday worship:

10:45 am on March 19th

10:45 am on April 16th

10:45 am on April 30th

Spaghetti Supper

Mark your calendars for the Spaghetti Supper on **March 25th from 4:30-7:00**. We'll be going back to in-person dining with a basket raffle!! The cost will be **\$11 for adults and \$7 for kids** ages 12 and under. Flyers are available in the narthex – help us spread the word to the community!

Supper includes all-you-can-eat Spaghetti with meat sauce, salad, French Bread & a cookie. A sign-up sheet will be in the Narthex in early March for donations of ingredients and volunteers. Baskets for the basket raffle can be left in the Sunday School room at the end of the hall on the boiler room side any time between now – March 25th. The Crittenden Quilters will also be setting up a table of hand-made goods for sale – you won't want to miss this!

In Search of:

Do you or someone you know have a spare laminator lying around that's not being used? If so, please see Ronda. She is looking for one for Sunday School use. Thanks!

Bible Study Continues Through Lent

Join us as we continue our Bible Study on Matthew Wednesday evenings at 6:30. During Lent, we'll begin and end with evening vespers prayers. There will be no Bible Study on April 5th or 12th.

Choir

Choir is meeting Wednesdays at 7:30 all are welcome. Please see David for additional Sunday rehearsal dates. There will be no choir March 8th & 15th.

Easter Flowers

Easter flower orders will be due on Monday, March 20th. Stay tuned – order forms will be available in the narthex soon.

Little Food Pantry

The Little food Pantry is in constant need of restocking. Dry, non-perishable items like peanut butter and mac 'n cheese will help keep the pantry afloat to help those in need. Please spread the word so we can get the community involved as well. There is a collection box in the narthex, or you can place your items in the Pantry itself.

WI-FI

Trinity now has community Wi-Fi! To access it, go to 'Trinity Guest' on your device, and then when prompted, enter the password: BeABeacon

AKRON-NEWSTEAD FOOD PANTRY

The food pantry is doing heroic work feeding our neighbors in the community! If you or someone you know is in need, here's when the pantry is open:

- Food distribution is on the first Tuesday of each month, from 8:30-10:30am. The next one is: 2023: March 7th March 28th and April 4th
- Set up occurs on the day before each distribution starting at 8 am.
- Call Jean Dolph at 716-908-2306 or Sharon Waff at 585-599-3893 for details.
- *Would you like to volunteer?* Sharon at sjwaff@yahoo.com.
- To donate monetarily, please make checks payable to: 'Akron Newstead Food Pantry.

OFFICE HOURS:

Pastor Rick: Tuesdays & Thursdays 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. or by appointment
Tracy: Thursdays 9:30 - 2 p.m

(Pastor will be away March 10-12th.)

Be a Beacon - seeking and reflecting the light of the Lord!



MARCH BIRTHDAYS:

- 1st- Julianna Mazur
Collin Rehwaldt
- 8th - Bethany Brown
Donna Kumpf
- 10th - Lois Kruschke
- 12th- Jerry Edgar
- 14th - Nicolena Fazio
- 15th - Melissa Polkowski
- 17th - Patricia Smythe
- 18th - Samantha Francis
- 19th- Brenden David
- 21st - Ben Blasko
Dan Eckerson
- 23rd - Carrisa Palizay
- 28th - Laura Pingitore

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES:

- 30th - Bill & Linda Lawrie