

# TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

*2009 Annual Report*



Annual Congregational Meeting  
June 14, 2008  
9:00 a.m.

# ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MINUTES

## Sunday, June 1, 2008

President Lani Urbas called the June 1, 2008 Annual Congregational Meeting to order at 10:15 a.m. Pastor Mark Dressel gave the opening prayer.

Sharon Franks moved and Chris Malueg seconded the motion to approve the June 3, 2007 Annual Meeting Minutes. Motion passed.

Mae Laatsch moved to adopt the audit report as prepared by Mae, Sheri Bell and Linda Zwicker, with the following suggestions: tracking and balancing credit card statements, developing written instructions for handling offerings after each church service and developing procedures for security and safety of the building and personnel. Motion was seconded and approved.

Traci Chisholm reported on the Stewardship program for the past year. We have 244 giving units and received 120 pledge cards (with a total of \$144,100.00 being pledged). Traci encouraged automatic withdrawal (The "Simply Giving" program). She also started a "Welcome New Babies" program, whereby a card and gift are presented to all new babies in the congregation. The Talent Show and Auction were very successful, with 10% of the profits going to the Synod and Food Pantry. Other members of the Stewardship Committee were Paula Constable, Deb Haines, Bob Crump and Nancy Klocek.

Bob Crump emphasized that we need to encourage all members (long-standing and new) to become involved in Worship and activities within the congregation.

Election of the following Audit Committee members for 2008-2009 was approved: Scott Johnson (2 years), Shane Moen (3 years), and Glenn Franks (1 year).

Pastor Dressel made the motion to nominate Monica Hepp and Traci Chisholm as representatives at the June 6 and 7, 2009 Synod Assembly at Kalahari Resort in Wisconsin Dells. Carol Moehrke seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Next year's Annual Meeting will be held Sunday, June 14, 2009 at 9:00 a.m.

Four new Church Council members were nominated, voted upon and approved, including: Linda Neils (Stewardship); Julia Wolfgram (Social Concerns); Linda Disch (Secretary) and Glenn Franks (Maintenance).

The next regular Church Council Meeting will be held Thursday, June 19, 2008 at 6:30 p.m. at the church.

Jamie Stock gave the 2007-2008 Treasurer's report. Our loan balance is \$532,000.00. A total of \$2,760.00 was given to benevolence, plus \$500 from the Talent Show and Auction (equaling \$3,260.00). If members wish to give to Missions, please indicate that on your envelopes. Pastor stated that as a congregation we do care and to look at the blessings we have received and give back to God.

The proposed budget for 2008-2009 is \$200,705.00. Items not budgeted for include: Laurie Roehl's severance pay (\$1,830.00); underpayment of Christ Malueg's salary (\$4,182.00) and cost of keyboard (\$1,000.00), plus a \$321.00 deficit.

Jody Medenwaldt moved to amend the 2008-2009 budget to include these items. Sharon Franks seconded. Motion passed. Thus the revised version of the budget will be increased by \$7,333.00. Mae Laatsch moved to accept the additions and revised amendment to the budget. Shane Moen seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Dee Ann Persson thanked the members who gave money to support the Youth Mission Trip to Tennessee.

Lani suggested forming the following committees: Community Life (connect with inactive members); Stewardship (connect with new members); Volunteer Committee (seeking and organizing volunteers) and Roof Committee (doing research to see if the church roof needs to be replaced or repaired).

Jody Medenwaldt thanked and commended Pastor Dressel for the excellent film showing activities throughout the past year.

Lani thanked outgoing Church Council members Arlys Hawkes, Traci Chisholm and Sam Northey for their dedicated service.

Dennis Hawkes moved to adjourn the meeting. Bob Crump seconded and motion passed.

Pastor Dressel closed with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,  
Arlys Hawkes, Secretary

# COUNCIL REPORTS

## PRESIDENT

Joy. That is the feeling that I most sense when walking into church these past months. I'm not sure if I can put my finger on it...perhaps it's the many new members, the incredible number of births and baptisms. It could be the enthusiasm generated by Alpha participants this past winter or the steadfast centeredness of the Bethel Class members. It could be the rising attendance at worship, or maybe the music, rousing to contemporary to traditional. Maybe it's the new directions some of our services have taken, outside worship in summer, contemplative chanting during Lent. Perhaps it's a more practical thing; we have found some financial stability and now have time to spend in worship rather than in the struggle to keep afloat. No, I really do not think it is any or all of these things that have brought Joy to our church community. I believe and I know it is the love of God around us, the Holy Spirit passing through us, and our willingness to let Jesus into our lives to lead us that brings us the Joy that I feel.

Blessed. That's how I feel on a weekly basis as I come to church. Never before in my life have I seen so many examples of God's work. I have seen members move from difficult illnesses or injury to robust health. I have seen people join our church because they have felt their personal needs met and their spiritual life filled in new and exciting ways. I have seen God bring forth life, abundantly! I have seen the beauty of people stepping outside of themselves to serve each other, to act outside of their comfort zone as worship leaders, and to live the life God wants us to live more fully and more selflessly. We are so blessed.

Grateful. On a personal note I am grateful for the trust you have put in me to help lead our congregation. I am grateful for the prayers you offer to God for guidance, temperance, love, and sensibility, for your selves and for your leaders. I am grateful God has given me this opportunity to serve his church and pray that over the next year we are able to move ever closer to meeting his plan for us, to be closer and more trusting in his love, and to embrace his desire and his ability to care for us and all of the world.

Respectfully submitted,

Lani Urbas  
Council President

## WORSHIP

Lots of new and exciting events are happening at Trinity this year with our worship services.

This year Pastor Dressel addressed the council and stated that, based on the numbers from last Easter and Christmas services, he felt we should seriously consider having 3 services during Easter and Christmas to accommodate our growing numbers for Holiday Worship.

On Easter Sunday, services were at 7:00, 8:45, and 10:30 a.m. with a delicious Easter Breakfast between 8:00 and 10:30. The tentative Christmas Eve Worship schedule for Christmas (2009) will be at 3:00, 5:00, and 10:30 p.m.

During our Wednesday night Lenten Service, we adopted a new format called the "Holden Evening Prayer Service". This service was written in 1985 and 1986 by Marty Haugen while he was the musician-in-residence at Holden Village; a Lutheran retreat center in Washington State. This lovely setting of vespers follows the traditional form while using contemporary and inclusive language. Contents include "Service of Light," Evening Hymn-"Joyous Light of Heav'nly Glory," "Evening Thanksgiving," "The Annunciation," "The Magnificent," "Litany and Prayers," and "Final Blessing."

This summer we are having Outdoor Worship services every Wednesday evening (weather permitting) at 6:30 p.m. There will be a campfire, and after the service there will be Smores available to cook over the fire. In case of inclement weather, the service will be held indoors.

The new Sunday Summer worship schedule is as follows: 8:15 a.m. Traditional Service  
10:00 a.m. Contemporary Service

One new program that was added this year that has been well received by members who are unable to attend the regular church service is the "Home Communion Ministry." Several members from our congregation have volunteered to take communion to members wishing to receive communion at home. Communion Volunteers are Linda Disch, Jackie Erwin, Heidi Kabat, Jeana Lenz, Marie Stark, Joyce Takle, and Don and Sandy Zimmerman.

I think that these are very exciting times in the life of our church, and I am very proud to be a part of such a great caring congregation.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Heidi Kabat

## TREASURER

Trinity began the fiscal year with a heavy heart as we faced the reality of the congregation's financial position. With a reduced staff and lower funding, we stepped into the new fiscal year with the hope that our finances would no longer take center stage. With some unbelievable belt tightening of the staff and the continued generous financial support of the congregation, we were able to put money behind us and focus the spiritual growth of the congregation. This year has brought a change in focus, wonderful new events such as Alpha and a renewed sense of community and spirit. Even in the face of the national recession, the congregation remained faithful and gave generously and exceeded our budgetary needs for the year. Over the next year we will continue to see changes and have financial uncertainties but with faith in God, we can meet the challenges ahead.

Before heading into the year in review, I feel it is important to make the congregation aware of the financial aspects of Trinity. First, Trinity has an operational budget which keeps the church running including salaries and regular expenses. The budget for the 2008 – 2009 fiscal year was \$207,908. This operational budget is traditionally what is discussed and passed at the annual meeting. In addition to the operational budget, we also have an appeal fund which provides for the mortgage first and any additional money comes back to the operational accounts to fund programming for the church. At the end of this fiscal year our current mortgage balance is \$508,251. To pay for the mortgage each year we need to raise almost an additional \$60,000 beyond what it takes to operate the church. Lastly, the congregation has a dedicated account which is used for special gifts that are given for specific purchases or events.

The 2008 – 2009 budget passed last June had a budgeted income of \$200,705 and budgeted expenses of \$207,909 leaving a \$7,203 deficit in the budget and one year to fill the gap.

We began the 2008 – 2009 fiscal year with a deficit of \$4,000 in the form of a bank loan and we were unsure what the summer might bring. As members received their economic stimulus checks many generous members tithed on their payments which helped us make it through the lean giving summer months. Thank you to all those who participated in this! Also, this was the first year that we did not do a special three year commitment to the appeal fund and thus this left us short to pay our mortgage starting in the summer. Thankfully, overall giving was generous enough to cover expenses and the mortgage so with small changes in our accounting we made this new arrangement work. As we headed into fall, giving remained stable, however the economy fell apart and we continued to worry about what might happen to giving and the staff continued to reign in costs. By Christmas giving remained consistent and we finally felt comfortable to pay off our loan from the previous year.

### 2007 STATISTICS

#### Average Weekly Worship Attendance

2008	189
2007	199
2006	194
2005	200
2004	198
2003	211

**Active membership total:** 809  
As of 5/31/09

#### Increases: (6/1/08 to 5/31/09)

Infant Baptisms	19
Adult Baptisms	3
New Members	55
<b>Decreases:</b>	
Deaths	4
Transfers	4
Adjustments/Corrections	206 *

**Active membership total:** 672  
As of 5/31/09

**\*Over the years as members have moved out of the area or on to another church, their status has not always been accurately reflected in our numbers. In an effort to correct this, we are this year trying to give an accurate report that reflects our actual congregation size.**

We held a mid-year meeting in early January at the request of the congregation to report of the current financial position of the church. At that time, we reported that we were staying above water but did not want to make any assumptions on what was to come. We continued to be optimistic and continued to keep expenses as low as possible.

We were blessed another successful Talent Show and Silent Auction in February which increased our sense of community and provided some additional income for the congregation. The council decided to increase our portion of benevolence to 25% and we provided \$1,250 to the Synod for programs in need of support.

The congregation has continued to push for an increased commitment to giving outside our walls. We now have a budget for benevolence and we try to increase this amount by 1% per year in hopes to the tithing level of 10% and maybe even beyond. This year we had budgeted to give \$4,000 of our operating income to benevolence and joyfully we were able complete this commitment at the end of our fiscal year.

With all the economic challenges the congregation still was able exceed the budgeted operative income of \$200,702. We thank everyone for their generosity and continued commitment to Trinity regardless of the economy!

Church operation expenses were just under \$192,000, approximately \$17,000 under budget. The prior fiscal year had expenses of almost \$212,000 thus we reduced expenses by almost \$20,000 between the two years. Part of this was due to our reduction in staffing however another large part was due to the diligent cost containment of the staff and our host of volunteers. Thank you to the staff for putting up with the freezing temps and to all the volunteers as we couldn't have done this without you! We were truly blessed as members of the congregation continue to clean our church and assist in the office on a volunteer basis.

By the end of fiscal year we had \$205,902 in income available for operations and expenses of \$190,830. Thus, the congregation ended the fiscal year with a surplus of \$15,071. We were able to pay off debt from the prior year which leaves us \$11,071 available as we head into our new fiscal year.

We end our fiscal year with a sigh of relief as our efforts to reverse our financial position have started to pay off. As we go into our next fiscal year we hope to continue all of the great things here at Trinity. We pray that we will continue to grow as a congregation, continue to add programming and see a continued increase in volunteers. As we go forward we hope that being proactive in our fiscal responsibilities will allow us to continue moving in a positive direction. As you evaluate your giving in the upcoming year, consider all the great things that are going on here at Trinity and beyond our walls.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jamie Stock

## AUDIT COMMITTEE

On June 10, 2009, the Audit Committee consisting of Shane Moen and Scott Johnson audited the financial records of Trinity Lutheran Church for the time period of May 1, 2008 through April 30, 2009. The committee reviewed a random selection of transactions and found no concerns.

Feel free to contact audit committee members with any questions you may have.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Shane Moen  
Scott Johnson

## SOCIAL CONCERNS

This past year we had many great volunteers and opportunities to reach outside of the congregation to help meet the needs of others.

We worked at the Soup Kitchen at St. Marks in Madison. We had an incredible turn-out for the past two soup kitchens and hope to see this continue.

The Sunday school children helped deliver and stock the LM Food Pantry shelves before Thanksgiving. They also helped to create Cookie Jars for the LM Food Pantry Christmas baskets. Thank you to the congregation for donating to these food drives in order to help those in need during the tight financial times. We have another food drive that will run through June if you are in a position to donate.

We have a new knitting group at Trinity called the "Knit Wits," who have made over 25 lap blankets for Willowbrook Nursing Home this past year. They also have a mitten ministry. Watch in the fall for the return of our Mitten Tree. If you or someone else you know is in need, please feel free to take what you need. If you wish to join the "Knit Wits," they meet in the Gathering Space on the last Sunday of each month during Fellowship Hour.

## LONG RANGE PLANNING

Tight financial times last year forced us to focus our efforts toward the short-term business of operating the church. Decisions made over the past year and a half have turned our financial picture around significantly enough to allow us to turn from constantly looking inward to looking toward our future. Our next "opportunity" will be the repair/replacement of the church roof. In this regard, the big decision(s) will focus on the most logical and cost-feasible way to complete this work.

Our ultimate long-range goal is and must be to become a benefactor to the Lake Mills community and the church at large.

Respectfully submitted,  
Eric W. Bahner

## STAFF REPORTS

### PASTOR MARK DRESSEL

Dear Friends,  
This is not the first version of this pastor's report.

It's not the second, either.

To be honest, the first two efforts were laundry lists of events and programs that have taken place in the past year. They contained no sense of coherent plan or direction for the future. They were not compelling reading. Even I thought they were boring and I was the one who wrote them.

I lamented my frustrations to my dear wife who had been unable to avoid noticing my grim demeanor. She made a good suggestion. "Why don't you start by describing what your ideal church would be? You've always wanted church to be a place where everyone can use the gifts that God has given them, whatever those gifts may be."

As I was inclined to believe that I had already tried everything that could produce a decent report, I grumbled that I would think about it.

Upon reflection, I began to see the merit in her suggestion. So, how would I envision an ideal congregation? My wife was right. It would be a place that would encourage each person to use the gifts and resources they have been given. It would also be a place where people use the gifts and resources they have been given *in a common direction*. It would not be a community of people simply doing whatever they want and working at cross purposes with one another. Instead it would be like a piece of art I once saw. The piece was an image of Jesus. But if you looked closer, the image was made up of thousands of tiny photographs of people. The people were dressed differently. They looked different. Their expressions and poses were different. They were each individuals with their own strengths and weaknesses, but the pictures all worked together to depict the image of Christ. That would be how I envision the ideal congregation. Each person would use the gifts they have been given in a common direction to reflect Jesus to a world that desperately wants to see him.

If you have been part of the church for a long time, you may wonder why this is necessary. Surely our work must be almost done by now. I was talking with Glenn Hershberger, the pastor at Real Hope Community Church, before Easter. In the course of our conversation, I speculated that over two-thirds of the people in the Lake Mills area had no church home.

He agreed with my estimate without hesitation. If we are even close to correct, there are a lot of people who have little or no support for their faith and no avenue to find their savior. As Jesus commanded us to make disciples of all nations, there seems to be plenty of work to do helping people connect with him.

So, perhaps you are wondering who provides the direction for the ideal congregation. Is it the pastor? Is it the synod, the church council, or the strongest voice? My response would be none of these. Direction would come from people knowing God. Okay, not in isolation. Not everyone doing what they want and claiming that God is on their side. But, by the same token, not everyone blindly doing whatever the pastor or ministry leader says. Direction would come from people striving to see what God has done in the past and looking to work in harmony with what God will do in the future. Direction would come from members learning to cooperate with what the Holy Spirit is doing in the church and in the world.

Rick Warren, the author of *The Purpose Driven Life*, wrote a previous book which was called *The Purpose Driven Church*. In it he pointed out that churches cannot grow on their own. Only God can make a church grow. But people can learn to use their skills and abilities in a way that takes advantage of the growth God sends. He compares the work of the church to surfing. He states the obvious when he says that if there is no wind or waves, no one can surf. Even the most skilled surfer cannot surf on calm seas. Only God can send the waves that make surfing possible. When God sends the waves, then the surfing begins. But even when there *are* waves, not everyone can surf (and I can personally attest to that fact, having tried it). Surfing takes the ability to read the waves, recognize their patterns and work in harmony with them. When all this happens, a surfer can get quite the ride.

The same is true of churches. Only God sends the conditions that make growth possible. We cannot make a church grow in size or spirit. But we can learn to read the conditions and patterns that God sends and work in harmony with them so that when God sends growth we use our skills and abilities to take the ride.

That's my hope for an ideal congregation, that we could learn to use our own skills and abilities to ride the waves of growth in size and spirit that God will send.

# DIRECTOR OF WORSHIP

## MINISTRIES

“O come, let us sing to the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation! Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise! Psalm 95:1-2

The Bible gives us some very specific instructions on how we should praise God. There are hundreds of references to singing and music. God is pleased when we lift our voices, play our instruments and “make a joyful noise to him”.

Trinity is blessed with an incredible wealth of talented musicians. You would be hard pressed to find the same caliber of musicians at another church our size. These musicians volunteer not only their time but also their talent to help move our hearts and minds as we worship.

Trinity’s music and worship has indeed fulfilled our duty in praise of our God.

- The Adult Choir continues to grow. We are always striving to perform new and inspiring music and find opportunities to sing at both services.
- The Cherub Choir saw it’s biggest numbers yet with many enthusiastic voices and is a wonderful expression of faith by our youngest members.
- The Christmas Programs continues to grow and change and offers opportunities for all Sunday School Students to celebrate the birth of our Lord. We have many talented actors and soloist and this continues to be a great outlet for both their talent and faith.
- The Worship Band grew as well this year and saw many new chances to perform. Their repertoire has grown to include the most contemporary of Christian music.
- We began using the wall projected power point presentations in church two years ago. This is an invaluable addition to worship for parents with small children, those who have trouble reading the bulletins and those who prefer not to use a bulletin. It is also an example of the kind of technology that is currently being used by the greater church and represents different directions for us to enhance worship.
- Worship on Wednesday continues to provide a worship experience with more contemporary resources and praise songs. During Lent we added a new way to worship and pray by performing the Holden Evening Prayer each week. It was a very successful and meaningful experience and will become a regular service here at Trinity. We are

also holding services outdoors every week during the summer months.

- Both the Traditional Service and Jubilee continue to learn new music in trying to reflect the message of the Scriptures and the interpretations of our Pastor.
- The “2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Trinity Talent Showcase” was just as successful as the 1<sup>st</sup>. We had a great assortment of wonderful entertainment and succeeded in beating last years fund raising numbers. It’s a great way for us all to do something a little different, enjoy each other’s company and support our church. Thank you to everyone who helped make it a huge success!

The search for new and meaningful music is never ending. We are blessed with many wonderful resources for worship at Trinity. Some we use constantly, some we have just started using and some we haven’t begun to use. Christian Copyright Licensing International or CCLI continues to be our greatest outlet for contemporary Christian music. We have purchased the musicians resources for the new Evangelical Lutheran Worship hymnal (ELW). The ELW was released in the fall of 2006 as a replacement for our current hymnal the LBW. We have used a few of the new hymn settings during worship and will continue to find ways of utilizing our new resources.

The energy at Trinity has been very positive this last year. The spirit of fellowship, volunteerism and service to others has been palpable. As we have weathered difficulties in the past, and are currently faced with problems of job loss and financial uncertainties, the community at Trinity has remained devoted and positive to its mission of “Growing in Faith and Sharing God’s Love”.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Chris Malueg

“O, give thanks to the Lord, call on his name. Make known his deeds among the peoples. Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of all his wonderful works.” Psalm 105:1-2.

## SECRETARY

*“You are like light for the whole world. A city built on top of a hill cannot be hidden, and no one would light a lamp and put it under a clay pot. A lamp is placed on a lampstand, where it can give light to everyone in the house. Make your light shine, so that others will see the good that you do and will praise your Father in heaven.”*

*Matthew 5:14-16*

As I review the past year as Secretary here at Trinity, I am amazed to see our “light” burn a little brighter every day through our words, our acts, and our sense of community that continues to grow.

The calendar in the past year has been full each week, with baptisms, Sunday school and monthly Cherub Choir performances, YOW, high school events, two Resale events, our first appearance in the Town & Country Days parade, our 2nd Annual Trinity Talent Showcase, The Bethel Series, and The Alpha Course, not to mention expanding worship services at Christmas and Easter and now an additional summer worship service.

We have seen several groups commit to serving the needs of others, including Alpha volunteers, the Knit-Wits, the Home Communion Team, our dedicated Soup Kitchen volunteers, our Office Volunteer Team, our Cleaning and Maintenance Volunteers. We have raised funds for the LM Food Pantry with the sale of Christmas trees, and the Sunday school classes have raised over \$800 to be given to the Jefferson County Humane Society. Trinity’s proceeds from the Spring Resale will go to help offset costs of WaterWorks! Park Vacation Bible School to be held in August. It is an amazing thing to see so many shining for all to see, spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ while serving the needs of others.

As I have watched these blessings unfold, I have balanced an ever-increasing workload. Some of my daily duties are being available to support Pastor Mark, Chris, Kim, and Council, answer phones, distribute mail, order supplies, maintain the church calendar, prepare bulletin announcements & Tidings, prepare scripture readings and Children’s Moment materials, work with our volunteer coordinator Paula Constable and the Sunday School Board, maintain the church database, distribute giving envelopes, prepare quarterly and year-end statements, coordinate and maintain the Simply Giving Program, promote and coordinate fundraisers such as Sherwin Williams, Pick-N-Save, Denny’s Give-Back Program, or Eco-Phone Fundraiser, track Official Acts, maintain church records, and prepare certificates for baptisms, Confirmation, and First Communion, and prepare Trinity’s Annual Report.

In addition to these duties, I have also enjoyed working on several special projects over the past year that challenged me and encouraged me to learn new things, including working with Traci Chisholm to host two Resale events, teaching Sunday school for the first time with Lori Sanders, helping with promoting The Alpha Course, and working with a great group of leaders as we prepare for VBS.

As I look forward to the coming year, it is with a sense of anticipation of the things to come, watching the growth of various ministries, and the opportunity to witness to others through these ministries.

After participating in the Spring session of The Alpha Course, I encourage you to try out the Introductory Session on September 13th. Renew your relationship with God, allow him to bless you in your life in order that you may be a blessing to those around you. At the same time, renew bonds and create new ones with those who share your faith and love for Jesus Christ.

I am humbled by the generosity, faith, commitment, dedication, and service that surround me every day. It is an empowering gift to be able to watch those around you grow in their faith and turn their hearts and lives over to serving God. I thank each of you who set that example, for providing the daily encouragement and reminders that I need to remove the “clay pot,” and “make my light shine” for God’s glory.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Vallier

## ALTAR GUILD

The Altar Guild has 11 volunteers to help prepare the altar for services and prepare and cleanup after communion on Sundays and Wednesdays. Thank you to all of these people for all the work they do. This year we started using communion bread during the 2nd service throughout the school year. At this time we would also like to thank Wayne and Carol Moehrke for their donation of the Communion Wine this year.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Julia Wolfgram  
Carol Wolfgram

## SUNDAY MORNING NURSERY

We have anywhere from 2 to 10 children in the nursery during the 10:30 service on Sunday. I would like to thank those who helped out and filled in on special weekends. .

Respectfully Submitted,  
Julia Wolfgram



## EDUCATION

It has been a privilege to serve on the Trinity Council for these last three years. Although my official position was Chair for education, I will humbly admit that I did very little in this area. Ironically, now that my term is ending, I can clearly see the essential role education plays in a church-going life. Here are some examples:

Even before formal education begins, the Trinity Nursery provides a safe and loving Christian-centered environment. I know children soak up so much without conscious thought. I am indebted to Julia Wolfgram for managing the nursery.

For young children, Sunday school is the obvious answer. I am grateful for all the teachers here at Trinity who offer their time and knowledge.

For older kids, the YOW (Youth on Wednesday) program continues the education and provides preparation for confirmation at a critical time in young people's lives. Credit goes to Dee Hassler and Pastor Mark.

For Adults, I offer these examples:  
How is one drawn to a church? The Alpha Course is an outstanding example. In fact, an Alpha course in 2000 was instrumental in bringing me back to church.

How does one grow in knowledge of Christianity? Here, the Bethel Series offers a long-term course of study.

I am convinced there are countless other educational opportunities for Growing in Faith and Sharing Christ's Love here at Trinity, from the high schoolers' mission trips, to presentations by members of their own service experiences, to serving on church committees and council.

I would like to extend an open invitation to anyone with energy and vision to serve on the church council or in any other capacity to promote further educational experiences at Trinity. Step right on up. The sky truly is the limit, and we need you.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Charlie Pinckney

But how do we do that? There are a lot of programs out there that promise great things. Programs claiming to bring in money. Programs claiming to motivate parishioners. Programs promising to make church buildings and congregations user-friendly to visitors. These may all have some place, but it seems to me that if God is the one who sends growth for congregations and people, then we need to connect with God.

There are not many programs that try to do that.

But there are a few.

We are doing two of them for adults.

One is the Alpha Course. Alpha is a practical presentation of the Christian faith. It approaches our relationship with God systematically. It starts by asking if there is “more to life than this” and continuing with such subjects as how we can have faith, how does God guide us and how can we pray. Its continual emphasis is on our relationship with God and on recognizing what God is doing in our lives and world.

The other is the Bethel Bible Series. The Bethel Series is the bigger undertaking because it has a more ambitious goal. Its aim is to allow participants to recognize how God is working in the world today, and to work in harmony with God, by doing a firsthand investigation of what the Bible tells us God has done in the past. The Bethel Series emphasizes the big picture of how God’s saving work has developed throughout history so that we can better understand how we fit into God’s saving work today. It is by learning to humbly read and recognize the work of the Holy Spirit that we are able to work in harmony with God’s plan and use the skills and abilities we have to ride the wave. The more adults grow in ability to act in cooperation with the Spirit, the more they will tend to find satisfaction and success using their gifts in God’s service and the more other people will want the sense of confidence and the sense of being part of something bigger than themselves that they have found.

To be fair, the Alpha Course and the Bethel Series are not the only ways adults can grow in ability to read and recognize what God is doing. They *are* ways that this congregation presently offers and I encourage you to take advantage of them.

The benefit of adults working in harmony with the Holy Spirit is that all activities within the church tend to flourish. Have you noticed a new excitement since we began the Bethel Series a year and a half ago and since we began Alpha last January? As adults grow better at riding the waves God is providing, they grow in ability to draw others with them. Worship services, Sunday School, Youth on Wednesday, and Home Communion Ministry are but a few ministry areas that have been enhanced by the blessing of God and the renewed spiritual sensitivity, knowledge and enthusiasm of their participants and leaders.

There are many wonderful things happening at Trinity Lutheran Church. Our Sunday School and Youth on Wednesday programs are thriving. Our worship services are blessed with many gifts in our choir, worship band and children’s choir. We have people voluntarily using their gifts to clean and maintain God’s house. We have had enthusiastic response to food drives, soup kitchen outings and Christmas Tree sales to raise funds for charity. Fellowship events such as Trinity Talent Showcase, Girls’ Night Out and Dartball League have had strong participation. We have a great facility and are moving in the direction of financial stability. These ministry aspects and more thrive only at the blessing and support of God. I am so grateful for everyone who has worked to grow in faith and spirit, whether it was through a Trinity program or elsewhere. Your efforts to improve your ability to perceive and to work in humble harmony with the Holy Spirit have not only benefitted you but have strengthened this congregation.

Thank you also to everyone who supported another person in spiritual growth. Your generosity and support has benefitted the kingdom of God.

I may never see the realization of my vision of an ideal congregation. God surely has plans for all of us that differ from and surpass the dreams that we have. But I believe that if we focus on connecting with God and working in harmony with God, God will bless us and bless the world through us.

Thank you for this past year of ministry.

I look forward to serving with you in the future.

Your co-worker in Christ,  
Pastor Mark Dressel

**Trinity Pines Retirement Center, Inc.  
ANNUAL REPORT TO MEMBERS**

**To the Voting Members of  
Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church of Lake Mills  
And residents of Trinity Pines Retirement Center**

Trinity Pines completed its 19<sup>th</sup> year as a proven asset to the Lake Mills area, where senior citizens can simplify their lifestyle without leaving their friends and normal social activities. The Board of Directors has strived to keep The Pines true to our mission of balancing the independent living needs of our residents with the need for a loving, caring community.

During 2007 Trinity Pines maintained a financial occupancy rate of over 99% and except for a transitioning period for new residents, we have been 100% full. Our Waiting List has continued to grow, with ten (10) parties now on the list.

Financially, The Pines continues to be very strong. Income exceeded all expenses including depreciation, resulting in an increase in the reserve escrow for future building improvements. The board has worked hard to control the costs of operations while assuring that we continue to meet our mission of serving the needs of our senior citizen residents. However, increasing operating expenses have made it difficult to maintain a sound financial margin. As a result, the board had approved a modest 1.5% rent increase and plus \$.25 per meal beginning January 2008.

It is important to the board that we continue to maintain our facilities and services to the high standards every resident has come to appreciate and insure our future as a proven community asset. A survey during 2007 of other similar senior living centers in our area shows Trinity Pines to be very competitively priced and a good value to our residents.

One of the major facility projects for 2007 was the installation on motion sensitive lights to assist our residents when entering or leaving their garage parking space and storage bins. This project has greatly improved the lighting of these areas, yet only on "as needed" basis to conserve energy.

Also, we have continued the project to replace the few bathtubs in resident's apartments, so that all bathrooms will contain a low-threshold shower. This design is much safer for our residents. These projects continue our dedication to keeping Trinity Pines in "like new" condition. A place we can all be proud of. I invite all the church members to take the opportunity to tour this beautiful building. Please see our manager, Brad Anderson to arrange for a tour

Our Community Outreach Coordinator, Debbie Cornella, has continued to lend her talents to further developing the social, entertainment and educational programs we provide our residents. Though out 2007 many new activities were set up by Debbie to encourage community members to participate and interact with our residents. This has greatly improved the social opportunities for our residents and the overall awareness of the valuable asset Trinity Pines has become to the senior citizens of the Lake Mills area.

At all times we strive to achieve the mission of Trinity Lutheran Church by providing senior citizens and handicapped persons with housing facilities and services especially designed to meet their physical, social, psychological and spiritual needs and to promote their health, security, happiness and usefulness in longer living.

I encourage all members of the congregation to become acquainted with this remarkable community asset that you have sponsored.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Bob Dimperio, Chair  
Board of Directors  
Trinity Pines Retirement Center, Inc.



# OFFICIAL ACTS

## BAPTISMS ( 22)

### (1) August 6, 2008

**Payton Rae Quest** (born: December 30, 2006)  
Daughter of Craig & Melissa Quest

### (2) August 24, 2008

**Tyler William Jones** (Born: January 26, 2008)  
Daughter of Nathan & Andrea Jones

### (3) September 28, 2008

**Brigitta Margaret Hale** (Born: September 15, 2008)  
Daughter of Brian & Abby Hale

### (4) October 1, 2008

**Lillyanne Eva Medenwaldt** (Born: July 24, 2008)  
Daughter of Jody & Julie Medenwaldt

### (5) October 12, 2008

**Savannah Atez Retzke** (Born: October 14, 2003)  
Daughter of Chad Retzke and Amanda Calhoun

### (6) November 9, 2008

**Shawn Alan Hoyme** (Born: March 3, 2008)  
Daughter of Chris & Tracy Hoyme

### (7) November 23, 2008

**Harrison Phillip Corsten** (Born: October 16, 2008)  
Son of Craig & Laura Corsten

### (8) November 30, 2008

**Annalyse Courtney Fuglestad** (Born: September 11, 2008)  
Daughter of Darin & Molly Fuglestad

### (9) December 31, 2008

**Zoe Renee Hassani** (Born: August 4, 2008)  
Daughter of Hooman & Robyn Hassani

### (10) January 21, 2009

**Carrie Lynn Mess** (born: May 2, 1982)

### (11) January 25, 2009

**Kenneth Woodrow Wickersham II** (born: April 6, 1999)  
Son of Kenneth Woodrow Wickersham & Nysa Renee Smith

### (12) February 22, 2009

**August Everett Fritsche** (born: August 3, 2008)  
Son of David & Leah Fritsche

### (13) March 1, 2009

**Audrey Lynn McMahon** (born: September 29, 2008)  
Daughter of Lacey Behm & Justin McMahon

### (14) March 1, 2009

**Elizabeth Ann Bade** (born: January 28, 2009)  
Daughter of Matthew & Stephanie Bade

### (15) March 15, 2009

**Milan Vivana-Sandra Fullerton** (born: February 9, 2009)  
Daughter of Nate and Trish Fullerton

### (16) March 22, 2009

**Gunnar Ehlers** (born: December 12, 1997)  
Son of Nysa Renee Smith and Lance Scott Ehlers

### (17) April 12, 2009

**Brooke Madison Palmer** (Born: December 12, 2008)  
Daughter of Andy & Jolie Palmer

### (18) April 19, 2009

**Teagen John Stivarius** (born: March 3, 2009)  
Son of Ben & Rhiannon Stivarius

### (19) May 3, 2009

**Eli Andrew Schoeneck** (Born: February 28, 2009)  
Son of Andrew & Katharine Schoeneck

### (20) May 17, 2009

**Lilla Vivian Wierl** (Born: March 3, 2009)  
Daughter of Michael & Miranda Wierl

### (21) May 24, 2009

**Reese Katherine Willems** (Born: May 10, 2009)  
Daughter of Joe & Karen Willems

### (22) May 31, 2009

**Colter Wayne Streich** (Born: April 9, 2009)  
Daughter of Jim & Shannon Streich

# OFFICIAL ACTS

## WEDDINGS (3)

### (1) August 9, 2008

Patrick Mess & Carrie Chestnut

### (2) October 4, 2008

Matthew R. Wickus and Nicole M. Neupert

### (3) May 23, 2009

Phillip Wendel Yohn & Kristy Lynn Havens  
Camp Emmaus, Oregon Township, Ogle County, Illinois

## FUNERALS (4)

(1) **Dewey Carl Oleson**, (born: June 26, 1914), Member  
Died: June 1, 2008 ~ Funeral: June 4, 2008

(2) **Violet Hall** (born: May 13, 1916), Member  
Died: August 8, 2008 ~ Funeral: August 13, 2008

(3) **Joyce Ann Gerstner** (born: November 30, 1943),  
Member  
Died: October 19, 2008 ~ Funeral: October 23, 2008

(4) **Herb Roessler** (born: May 1, 1910), Member  
Died: December 11, 2008 ~ Funeral: December 19, 2008

## NEW MEMBERS (55)

### October 5, 2008

Amanda Calhoun (Savannah Retzke, 5 years)  
Jesse & Jennifer Coates (Meghan, 3 years)  
Craig & Laura Corsten  
Nathaniel & Trish Fullerton (Paris, 2 years)  
Curtis & Karin Keddie (Payton ~ 6 yrs, Jack ~ 2 yrs,  
Simon ~ 5 yrs)  
Greg & Paula Renz  
Adam & Anika Sutton (Aston ~ 4 yrs, Annelie ~ 2 yrs)  
Jason & Linda Teeter (Amelia ~ 8 yrs, Benjamin ~ 5 yrs)  
Connie Zastrow

### January 25, 2009

Chad & Jennifer Breaker (Katrina 5 yrs & Alex 2 yrs)  
David & Leah Fritsche (Theodore 5 yrs, Henry 3 yrs,  
August 9 mos.)  
Robyn Hassani (Zoe 9 mos.)  
Cliff & Violet Johnson  
Pat & Carrie Mess  
Chad & Jessica Rebstock (Lizelle, 2 mos)

### May 3, 2009

Elizabeth Oertel  
Jeremy & Amanda Kluz  
Steve & LeeAnn Soma  
Carter, 1 yr, Cash, 6 mos, Sydney 16 yrs, Tripp, 13 yrs,  
Will 11 yrs)  
Shirley Wickersham

## OFFICIAL TRANSFERS OUT (4)

### (1) Douglas Britzke

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Delavan, WI  
December 3, 2008

### (2) Linda Neils

February 8, 2009

### (3) Glen & Jean Doty

Christ Lutheran, Lake Mills  
March 25, 2009

## CONFIRMED (8)

### Zachary George Bahner

Parents: Eric & Kathy Bahner

### Katherine Jean Grunewald

Parents: Steve & Nancy Grunewald

### Caitlyn Hoyme

Parents: Chris & Tracy Hoyme

### Travis Niesen

Parents: Ron & Lori Niesen

### Katelyn Amber Primmer

Parents: Don & Rachel Primmer

### Tish Topel

Parents: Tim & Dawn Topel

### Christopher James Trevarthen

Parents: Terry & Linda Trevarthen

### Caleb A. Zastrow

Parents: Dan & Toni Zastrow

**Order of Business  
June 14, 2009**

**Opening Devotion**

**Approval of Minutes of the previous meeting**

**Reports of the Pastor, Congregation Council, Committees and others**

**Elections**

- **Audit Committee ~ 2 positions: one three-year term and one two-year term**
- **Synod Assembly Representatives ~ 2, preferably one male and one female,  
June 5 & 6 at Kalahari in Wisconsin Dells**
- **Congregational Council ~ 3 positions, three-year terms**

**Treasurer's Report**

**Presentation, discussion and approval of the Budget**

**Unfinished Business**

**New Business**

**Closing Prayer**