



A History of  
Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church

## Celebrating the GIFTS of God School and Early Learning Center



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



1100 Philadelphia Road  
Joppa, MD 21085  
Established 1873

## Trinity Lutheran School & Child Care Center

America in the 1960's was a time of change for our country. John F. Kennedy became president and Martin Luther King, Jr. promoted peaceful protests to win basic rights for Black Americans. We put two men on the moon, opened the first Wal-Mart store, and played the first Super Bowl.

You could buy a Volkswagen Beetle for \$1,800 and a new home for about \$14,000. The stories of Spider-Man, Doctor Who, Sesame Street and Star Trek begin. The Beatles released their first song in the United Kingdom and Chubby Checker was doing the Twist. We first used zip codes, BASIC computer coding language, and the first heart transplant happened.

Change also happened in Harford County, Maryland, but the change is all for the glory of God. Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church takes the first step in becoming a leader in Harford County Christian education when it begins its first Kindergarten class of twelve students.

### The Beginning

Trinity School began in 1960 with one morning Kindergarten class of twelve children under the capable leadership and guidance of Pastor John H.S. Austin. This first class was taught by Catherine Venzke Tilley, a longtime Harford County resident and Trinity Church member. Within a few years, multiple Kindergarten classes were being taught in



Catherine Tilley, first teacher at Trinity

both morning and afternoon

sessions. Mrs. Ann Mentlik and Mrs. Dorothy Herbert, also members of Trinity Church, were hired to teach Kindergarten at first, but transitioned to be the first Pre-Kindergarten teachers after a few years. In 1964, Mrs. Virginia Eddy became the first Director and Mrs. Sandy Vanderbeek was hired to help teach the expanding Kindergarten program.

These teachers were the pioneers in what would become a long-running history of education at Trinity.



Bruce Anderson graduates from first Kindergarten class.

With the growth of the school, Trinity's built a single-story Educational Building in 1964 to accommodate the expanding Pre-School Program. This one-story educational building would provide space for Pre-K, Nursery and Kindergarten classes as well as extra bathrooms.

In the next couple of years, there were 90 children in three Kindergarten classes. By 1968, there were 100 children in three Kindergarten classes, in addition to the first Pre-Kindergarten classes with 32 students. By 1970, Trinity had added a Nursery program for 3-year-olds. At this time, two buses provided transportation for many of the students at a nominal cost.

## Trinity's Community Impact Grows

As Trinity congregation saw the growth of the school program and the need for childcare within growing communities of Joppatowne and Edgewood, it formed a committee to discuss ways the Church could use its resources to serve the community. A Child Care Center was declared the first priority.

The congregation broke ground for a new two-story Educational Building. This building provided 17,000 square feet of space for a Child Care Center, Sunday School classes and a Fellowship Hall. It was designed with the future in mind – a School and Child Care Center to eventually include Middle School classes. This building would eventually provide space for several hundred students.

When the building was completed in 1972, Trinity's week-day educational programs included a Child Care Center and School classes of both half and full days. By 1975-1976, there were 36 Nursery students, 80 Pre-Kindergarten students, and 47 Kindergarten students. Nursery classes were held two or three mornings a week. Pre-Kindergarten classes were scheduled for mornings and afternoons five days a week.

With enrollment numbers still growing, by the 1976-1977 school year there were 36 Nursery students in two classes, 60 Pre-Kindergarten students in three classes, and 50 Kindergarten students in two classes. Also, there were 57 children for full-time daycare in mixed ages 3-5 from September to June, as well as 35 children mixed ages 3-7 in the summer. The two-story Educational Building was a key to accommodating the hundreds of children who called Trinity School their own.

The Nursery program had options for a two-day program and a three-day program. The Pre-Kindergarten program had options of morning or afternoon classes. The Kindergarten program had morning classes and the First Grade program had full-day classes. For the first time, a hot lunch was included and bus transportation was available in Joppa and Edgewood for morning sessions.

## Trinity's Grade School Begins

In 1974-1975, Trinity had proposed to Harford County the addition of a Grade School ; however, it did not get approved at that time because Harford County felt there was a lack of public utilities in the area. In the next decade, improvements

*"The Early Learning Center has long been a leader in the development of pre-school programs in Harford County. The child is invited into a world of self-discovery in a Christian setting. ... The Early Learning Center offers children the freedom to grow, to learn and to develop physically, spiritually, socially, and intellectually. All of this is designed to enable the child to grow into a more mature person, secure in the love of God."*

*ELC Board Members'  
Handbook, 1976*

were made to the property and in 1987, another proposal was submitted. This time approval was given by the County.

In 1988, Trinity began its weekday parochial school for Grades 1-5. The initial 1<sup>st</sup> Grade class was added that year. After that, a new grade school class was begun approximately every year: 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade in 1989, 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade in 1991, 4<sup>th</sup> Grade in 1992, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade in 1995, and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade in 1996. The building was now home to hundreds of children age 2 through 6<sup>th</sup> Grade.

## Key Staff Have Had Huge Impact in the School

In October 2018, a celebration was held to honor Pastor John H.S. Austin for 62 years of service to God and Trinity Congregation, which included 58 years as Headmaster of the School and Child Care Center. Pastor John was responsible for all facets of the educational programs at the School and Childcare Center since its inception. Pastor John was a visionary, always looking to the future to find innovative ways to educate the children of Harford County and the surrounding area. He demanded excellence in all areas, whether that was education, services provided, or teachers and other support staff because he loved the students enough to want the very best for them. Pastor John always planned five to ten years in the future and therefore was ready for changing times and increasing needs of students. He is absolutely the primary reason that the school has been so successful in its 60+ years.

Though there have been many, many caring and loving teachers and staff members, there have been several staff members that have highly impacted education at Trinity. In 1988, Mrs. Kathy Feld was appointed as full-time Educational Director of the School and Child Care Center which then had a staff of 30 teachers, secretaries, aides and custodians. By the time Kathy retired, she had expanded the school's capabilities many times over.

She was a key part of helping the Church and School communities become more of a family. Under her leadership, the Child Care program, as well as the TLS Nursery, Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten programs were filled to capacity.

Kathy helped support teachers and staff by establishing college classes for in-service staff training; holding CPR training for all staff; initiating Teacher Appreciation Week; and held yearly School Board/Staff meetings where teachers could voice their concerns directly to the School Board.

For the students, she started the D'Nealian Handwriting Program; established a foreign language program for Pre-Kindergarten and up; added computers, art, gym, uniforms, and band programs; she also expanded the field trip program, the library and the weekly Chapel program.

For school parents and family members, she began holding Parent Appreciation Breakfasts, Family Night Dinners, Family Fellowship Nights; Mother's Day, Father's Day , and Grandparent's Day celebrations were begun; the Parent Teacher League (PTL) and parent volunteer programs were added. Over the years, the PTL

**THANK YOU,  
Pastor John!**

FOR 62 YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE!

has raised tens of thousands of dollars for special improvements and enhancements within the school. The PTL is also responsible for the success of large events such as the Basket Bingos and the Church/School Golf Tournaments.

Mrs. Patricia (Patty) Ree was appointed as the school's Educational Director in 1998. In her 25+ years of service to Trinity, she has been a steady presence and a familiar face to students, parents and staff. Her steady hand and Christ-centered character has guided the Lower School through ups and downs. As a long-time educator, she is an incredible resource who is highly respected by her peers. Her personal touch is apparent as she greets each child by name at the door to the school each day. Patty is known as being fair, just and humble, doing whatever is necessary in any given situation. Her impact on this school will be apparent for years to come.

Randal C. Gast (Randy) was officially appointed as Head of School in March of 2019. Randy is known for his vibrant personality and his total commitment to bringing up children "in the strength and admonition of the LORD." He was also a visionary who believed that the students could do anything to which they put their minds. Those who worked with him know of his tireless pursuit of excellence. Randy was always the first to arrive in the morning and the last to leave. He helped foster in the students a love for giving back to the community. Randy's leadership and commitment was key in keeping the School and Child Care Center open during the COVID shut-down. He worked hand in hand with staff and parents to provide continuous education throughout the shut-down. Randy kept the guidelines of the Office of Childcare, the Maryland State Department of Education and the Centers of Disease Control in practice at the school and personally worked to ensure that the students were safe and healthy, as well as the school environment being safe. Trinity's success during COVID was due in large part to Randy's leadership.



### Trinity Directors Lead by Example

The success of our School and Child Care Center is determined by the success of its leadership. The Directors have shown compassion, love, and guidance to their students. Each Director develops personal connections with the students under their leadership, and while each one has had a different style, all have put their mark on Trinity. We thank all of our Directors (as well as teachers and other staff members) for making the school so successful in the past 60+ years.

### Child Care Center/Early Learning Center

Kim Austin, Carol Schafer, Linda Botts, Danielle McKim, Mary Woodall, Dawn Carver, Julie Moody, Kristy Grantland, Sharon Pindell, Brittany Welch, Tia Bryant, Kim Newell, and Christine Morris

### Elementary/Lower School

Kathy Feld and Patty Ree

### Middle School

Patty Ree, Rita Ebbert, Bill Rehrig, Kari Moore, Deb Cronin, Mari Schrader, Donna Hostetler, Randy Gast, and Rick Jester

### New Building Provides New Opportunities

As Trinity School added each grade school level, increased space once again became a necessity. Groundbreaking for a new one-story School Building and Gymnasium took place on January 15, 1995. When dedicated on March 10, 1996, this building added eight new classrooms and a gym to Trinity's 10-acre complex.

The additional classrooms provided growth opportunities for both church and school. The Church could use these classrooms for Sunday School, Adult Bible Study and Vacation Bible School in the summer, and the gym for evening sports programs. The School and Child Care Center, of course, could use these for Child Care classes as well as Grade School classes. The gymnasium could be used for Church youth groups, assemblies, gym classes and practices for sports teams.

The other benefit to this building was that it created the potential to add a full Middle School Program. By 1996 the weekday program served 534 students. It included a Learning Center comprised of Nursery, Pre-Kindergarten, and Kindergarten classes along with a Grade School of six grades, a Child Care Center with classes from Toddler through Kindergarten and a Before- and After-School program.

The first 7<sup>th</sup> Grade class began in 1997 and the first 8<sup>th</sup> Grade class began in 1998. On June 10, 1999, Trinity graduated its first 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Class of nine students. Former Educational Director Kathy Feld was the speaker. The first graduating class included Josh Edler, Victoria Lashley, Scott Persuhm, Brigitte Preston, Brendan Roach, Amber Rose, Brittany Sauzer, Alexandra Tyler, and Brian Yealdhall. This first graduating class was a watershed moment for the school and it made opened the doors for even more expansion.



By 2001, with the school continuing to be extremely successful, it was clear that this growth indicated a need to go ahead and add the second floor to the School Building. On a beautiful, sunny day in May 2001, Groundbreaking Day was held. After eight months of work (during which the 9/11 attack on the New York Trade Center occurred), the "John H.S. Austin Educational Building" was dedicated at the flagpole on

January 6, 2002, in honor of Pastor John Austin's unwavering commitment to top-notch Christian education. This addition added 15,000 square feet of new building space, including four additional classrooms, a youth room, a computer room, a science room, a library, and a renovated faculty room.

### Sports Build Character and Cooperation

Trinity's sports history follows closely with their building and property

expansion history. Once the School Gymnasium was built in 2002, Trinity was able to field both boys and girls basketball teams, as well as a cheerleading team. With the addition of teams and cheerleaders, pep rallies naturally followed, with the school's Lion mascot building enthusiasm for all of Trinity's sports programs.

As athletic fields were added to the campus, Trinity fielded multiple soccer teams beginning with clinic age children all the way through Middle School. More open space on the campus also added the opportunity for a cross country team. After the school's new playground spaces were improved, both an outdoor basketball court and a GaGa pit were added for recess times.

Trinity has had a good share of success in multiple sports. Soccer teams have won championships over several years, including a three-year run by the Middle School co-ed soccer team in the early 2010s. Over the past ten years, there have been championships by teams in almost every year.



In 2017, the School celebrated something special within their sports program. Both boys basketball teams (A and B) were undefeated League Champions. The boys A basketball team applied and was accepted into the National Lutheran Basketball Tournament in Indiana to play against Lutheran schools from all over the country. The whole school came together to raise the funds necessary for the entire team to travel to Valparaiso for the Tournament and a big pep rally was held to send the team on their way with the prayers and support of students, teachers and parents. Being invited to this

tournament capped an incredible season for the team members. In the tournament, they won their first two games and were competitive to the end in the following two games. The team came away from this tournament with confidence in their abilities and a sense of pride in their school.

### Sharing God's Love With Others

Trinity has always fostered a passion for sharing God's love with others through word and deed. Pastors, faculty and parent volunteers have worked with students of all ages on many projects that made a difference in people's lives here locally and in the world.

Most notably, students have participated in the Jump Rope for Heart fundraiser for the American Heart Association for 23 years. Bonnie Schnell, on staff for 20+ years as Physical Education teacher, health teacher, Athletic Director and most recently as Middle School Director, spearheaded the yearly effort. Over these past 23 years, Trinity School has raised \$192,902 for the Association and was named a "Heart of Gold Top School."



The project list includes a wide variety of events including a hat and mitten tree in the winter; the "New Beginnings" Mission Program; the One Million Pennies Project which benefitted a medical facility in Zimbabwe; the St. George Parish Service Project; and a 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Save the Zoo fundraiser.

In 2005, Trinity families donated food and clothing for victims of Hurricane Katrina and the 4<sup>th</sup> Grade held a Bake Sale to raise money for those in need in Louisiana. In the mid 2000s, Trinity fielded teams for the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life event which provides funding for research and services for those with all forms of cancer. The school has taken part in the Marine Corps Toys for Tots collection as well as the Operation Christmas Child shoebox collection for several years. The School has held several Walks for Athletics over the years which raise funds for athletic programs and field improvements. One Kindergarten class had a "100 Cans of Food for 100 Days of School" collection, and in 2004, Middle School students put together shoeboxes for our troops.

### TRINITY SENDS CARE TO THE TROOPS

*"In December 2004, middle school students put together CARE packages for servicemen stationed in Iraq. The project was part of the school's "Christmas Experience," a day for students to think about the true meaning of Christmas and a chance to give the soldiers a token from home," 8<sup>th</sup> grade student leader Rachel Weinberg said. At the time, the students weren't sure what they could do to help. Ed Howe, a 7<sup>th</sup> grader's father, gave the students an idea. He received a letter from the mother of a friend of his who had been in Iraq for several months. Howe's friend told his mother about the rough conditions and said that many soldiers need essentials." ...*

*"By early October, letters solicited donations from the community. On Halloween, when most kids were trick-or-treating for candy, Trinity Middle schoolers were trick-or-treating for cash donations to buy \$20 rechargeable calling cards for each serviceman. By November, students had raised more than \$1,200 to buy calling cards and food and supplies. Throughout December, students were busy writing letters to troops and making Christmas cards.*

*They decorated each shoebox and filled it with toothpaste, deodorant, Q-tips, razors, OTC medications, mouthwash, tissues, hard candies, a variety of snacks and instant foods and a calling card. Also in the boxes were personalized prayers, a letter, a Christmas card and self-addressed stamped envelope with Trinity's address on it in case soldiers wanted to respond. Each student searched for prayers and quotes they wanted to give the soldiers. One prayer slip said, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding."*

*The Aegis, December 24, 2004*

For the past two years, the School has held a “Run for the Son” event which is a Fun Run in honor and memory of fallen Baltimore City firefighters who passed away tragically in a row house fire in January 2022. Those who died included Lt. Kelsey Sadler who was the stepmother of a Trinity School student. The event raises money for the Lt. Kelsey Sadler Memorial Scholarship which is used specifically for children of first responders or active military members.



Trinity's 2023 "Run for the Son"

### Technology in Classrooms Adds Invaluable Opportunities for Students

One of the highlights of education at Trinity is the technology that has been put in place to help students learn. The students have had access to a Computer Lab for many years; however, as the years progressed, technology was added which kept pace with the quickly changing world.

SmartBoards have been installed in all classrooms to provide a more interactive experience compared to chalkboards or plain whiteboards. Teachers can project content on the board, as well as manipulate that content through touch capabilities; students are able to access the content projected and interact with it at the board. By 2007, tablet PCs were provided for teachers in Grades 4-8 to use as small, easy to use mini laptops to move around the room with. By 2009, laptops were issued to Middle School students for use in the classroom and at home, in

order to complete their schoolwork and other assignments.

By 2013, Trinity expanded technology use across all grades and subject areas, and added online grading and report cards. Parents access real-time student grades and keep track of all assignments and whether or not they are complete, including what grade was received. In 2016, the school issued iPads to Lower School students to use for schoolwork and extension activities in the classroom.

### COVID Brings Unprecedented Challenges and Creates Opportunities for Trinity to Shine

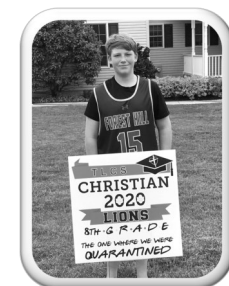


“We first learned of the initial COVID restrictions approximately 90 minutes before showtime on the opening night of the Middle School musical “Frozen,” on March 12, 2020. With the Governor’s mandate that large gatherings were prohibited, we decided to postpone the three nights of the musical. Little did we know that many more shutdowns were to come and the musical, “Frozen,” would never take place.

“The following day, we learned that schools were being closed. The technology team immediately met with administration and proposed a plan for Virtual Learning using Zoom, Seesaw, and Google Classroom. On Friday, March 13, we sent all of the students home with their textbooks and school supplies. Several of the students had signed up to take their devices home, and we offered this privilege again to any families who wanted to sign up but had not done so previously. On Monday, March 16, Laura Smith hosted a training session with all staff members to explain how to host lessons via Zoom and assign classwork digitally. On Tuesday, March 19, just seven days into the COVID shutdown, Virtual Classes began.

“Lower school teachers hosted individual Zoom Meetings, while the Middle School developed a schedule of classes that ensured teachers would be able to meet with their students regularly. Thanks to the planning and dedication of the Trinity Staff, our school was one of the few in the state of Maryland that was able to provide consistent, regular lessons, finishing the year with very little instructional time lost. We were even able to host an outdoor graduation ceremony for our 8th Graders, complete with a week leading up to Graduation in which Bonnie Schnell, Middle School Director, and other parent and staff volunteers delivered special surprises and treats to the homes of each graduate.

“As the Summer came to a close and the 2020-2021 School Year approached, most school systems were still closed





## AN INTERVIEW WITH LAURA SMITH, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

### How has school curriculum changed to fit changing technology?

*"When technology was first introduced at Trinity, students would visit the computer lab as a Special Area class, similar to Art and Library. Now, however, technology has moved to a model in which it is seamlessly integrated in everything we do. This fits the current needs of our society much more efficiently. We want our students to see that technology is a part of life, and it makes the most sense to use technology within each content area authentically."*

### How has the Internet changed the way Trinity teaches students?

*"The internet can be an amazing resource for learning, but, as Uncle Ben said to Spiderman, 'With great power comes great responsibility.' There are many dangers and pitfalls that students and parents need to be aware of and prepared for. There is also a need to impart a sense of balance, because media overconsumption can lead to depression in young people. Media Literacy is a new feature that has been added to our Middle School curriculum to help students learn balance, media skills, and how to find the resources they need and determine fact from fiction."*

### What are the accreditations or certifications that help you teach?

*"I am continually seeking certifications and training in various technology programs and skills. I am on the Executive Board of the Maryland Society for Educational Technology, and have achieved certifications such as Google Certified Educator, Levels 1 & 2, Google Certified Innovator, Apple Learning Coach, Microsoft Innovative Educator, Seesaw Ambassador, and more. Each of these certifications keeps me current in the technology that I share with teachers and students."*

### How has the addition of a dedicated full-time technology/network team helped the school get ahead of the game?

*"Having a dedicated technology team helps our school stay at the forefront of technological advances. When COVID hit, we were able to put together a plan and execute it successfully within 48 hours. In today's technology centered world, having Mr. Smith and myself on staff is critical to ensure that students (and teachers!) are learning the skills they need to be successful in high school, college, and their daily lives."*

to in-person learning, opting instead for Virtual Instruction. Trinity once again led the state in providing Hybrid instruction, offering families a chance to choose which option worked best for them. Teachers again stepped up to the plate, teaching both students in the classroom, masked and socially distanced, as well as students online via Zoom. Ed Smith, Network Administrator, deconstructed the Computer Lab and used the computers to build Zoom Carts, each with their own large-screen television, Computer, Keyboard, and Webcam, to host the Zoom sessions for each classroom each day.



### Drama Programs Set Trinity Apart from Other Schools

Trinity's Drama Program has been top-notch for several decades. In earlier years, the elementary choruses would perform musicals or dramas for special occasions. These include "The Princeless Princess" production and a holiday performance of "The Christmas Caper" directed by Pamela Byrnes, a professionally trained singer and theater actress.

The addition of Suzanne Bowden to the Trinity staff (and her husband Chuck) brought years of Broadway experience which has fostered a love of acting in our Middle School students. Beginning in 2001, students have produced a yearly musical. Productions have included "Guys and Dolls," "Fiddler on the Roof," "Aesop's Fables," "Godspell," "The Music Man," "Oklahoma," "High School Musical," "Beauty and the Beast," "Annie," "Wizard of Oz," "Godspell," "Little Mermaid," "Willy Wonka," "Cinderella," "Aladdin," "Frozen" (The 2020 COVID shut down canceled this musical on the first day of their performance) and "Lion King."



Professional sets and costumes combined with acting and music instruction make the musicals very popular as shown by their sold out shows each spring. In 2018, the former sanctuary at Trinity was remodeled and became the new drama center complete with professional lighting and a large stage area.

The Drama Program at Trinity continually expands its reach in the student body. Fourth and fifth graders now can include drama as part of their school experience. "A Charlie Brown Christmas" and "Christmas Carol" and a Variety Show have been produced in recent years. The After-Care Program has also added drama to its student choices with a Variety Show.





### Trinity Traditions and Other Special Stuff

Fun traditions make students' school years entertaining. Over the many years that Trinity School has been operating, several traditions or events stand out to students and staff. The 1<sup>st</sup> Grade parade of Dalmatian celebrates the 101<sup>st</sup> day of school with a parade of 1<sup>st</sup> graders dressed as dalmatians. In Science class, traditionally the 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade dissects owl pellets to learn what these predatory birds eat. Beginning in 2000, the Middle School begins its Christmas break with a Volleyball Tournament which includes games between grades as well as games against teachers/staff. The Book Jacket Fashion Show is a great way to get kids interested in reading. That event, combined with Reading Fun Nights, promote reading in an entertaining way. A couple of special events in the School's history include SGA participation in the Legislative Session in Annapolis and the Middle School Chorus winning 1<sup>st</sup> Place at the Music in the Parks Festival at Kings Dominion in May 2001. The annual Easter Egg Hunt provides an opportunity to get some fresh air while having fun. Spelling Bees, Junior Honor Society and the Student Government Association involve students in meaningful activities outside of schoolwork.

Weekly Chapel Programs serve to spread God's love not only to each student in the school, but also to parents and other relatives. Wednesday morning chapels are always open to anyone who would like to attend. Staff members, teachers and pastors provide leadership and involve students in the planning and implementation of services. Baptisms of school children bring a smile to all.

Trinity's 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Class Gifts celebrate each class's individuality. Each graduating class works hard throughout the school year to provide a parting gift to future students. The gift embodies the spirit of the students by focusing on an area that was important to them. Some of the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade classes have donated gifts to benefit sports programs, which included playground equipment, athletic fields, gym acoustical panels and trophy cases to display the various trophies and awards Trinity's athletes have earned. Some classes focused more on educational items such as for equipment for the Science Lab, the iPad tablet program, and scholarship funds for students. Other classes gave more general gifts such as the Art Room, a new flagpole, and Hall of Fame plaques that are displayed in the Middle School hallway for each graduating class. Other gifts that benefitted the student body in general include gifts for teachers, wireless microphones for the drama program and large portable TV screens that can be moved from classroom to classroom if needed. A couple of the classes donated beautiful stained-glass windows that hang in the large windows of the school library. These gifts are a special way for classes to leave a legacy behind for future students.

At Trinity, yearly themes set the tone for each school year. Beginning in the



early 2000s, the School and Childcare Center have chosen a yearly theme. Chapel content, t-shirts, etc. revolve around the phrase which is promoted to students, parents and staff members. Each theme has a Bible verse connected with it. Beginning with the first theme of "Jesus, You're My Firm Foundation," themes have included "Celebrating God's Love," "Stand on Jesus," and "Living in Harmony with God." Several of the year's themes have been connected with special events. "We Are Golden" coincided with the School's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2010. "In His Steps" coincided with the school's commitment to being "A Step Ahead with School for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." Other years' themes have connected with familiar Christian ideas such as "Reflect the Son," "Soar Like Eagles," "Let Your Light Shine," and "A New Creation." These themes are ways for the entire school community to connect.

School field trips provide experiences you can't get in a classroom. While many, if not all, schools provide field trips, Trinity has had some special trips that became traditions for different grades. Some feel like a rite of passage to the students who participate. Middle School trips to places like Black Rock Retreat Center have been special times of bonding and friendship building. For several years, the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade graduation trip to Williamsburg capped the students' final year at Trinity. Other special experiences have included a trip to NYC to see "Godspell," and an opportunity to see the Sight and Sound theater production of "Jesus," a trip to the Bel Air Middle School musical "Aladdin," as well as the opportunity to plant bay grass to help clean and protect our local waterways.

### Concerts, Assemblies and Special Programs Combine Fun and Learning

An important part of student learning is hands-on training or in-person visits by guests. Trinity has worked hard to provide these types of opportunities. Visits by authors such as Lulu Delacre, Nancy Patz, Priscilla Cummings and K.M. Kimball helped students develop an appreciation for reading. First Responders have taught the kids about fire prevention, K-9 training, and drug abuse prevention. Students also had a visit from the 175<sup>th</sup> Wing Air National Guard unit.

Assemblies that combine wildlife and science are a hit with students young and old. Maryland's Department of Natural Resources brought their Scales and Tales program, the Wildlife Adventures group brought many little visitors to the school and Rick Smith, amateur paleontologist, visited to talk about animal and plant fossils. Trinity students were also visited several times by the "Maryland Ag in the Classroom Mobile Science Lab" which teaches the importance of agriculture in everyday life.

Some assemblies have been pure fun. The Chinese Acrobats were amazing, the Hoppin' Hawks Jump Rope Team dazzled students with their fancy footwork, and the Circus of the Kids taught students about the art of the Big Top. The Blue Sky Puppet Theater and the Oriole Bird provided a fun break from the school day.

Other assemblies have been music related. The Children of the World Choir brought the Gospel to life with children from five countries. Students have learned about Japanese Taiko drumming and have participated in the Children's Choral Festival at Towson United Methodist Church. All of these events have enriched the school experience at Trinity.

### **Credo on Christian Education**

*We believe that effective education is carried on through quality and experiential learning programs that relate the Christian faith to every aspect of life.*

*We believe that the uniqueness of Christian education rests in this:*

*Christian education views the pupil through the cross of Christ;*

*Christian education has the Father's given reasons for educating man;*

*Christian education is powered by the Spirit for accomplishing its purposes.*

*We believe that the Lutheran school's uniqueness lies in:*

*Adequate time for Christian instruction;*

*The impact of professional teachers who are Christians;*

*The plus of the "Body of Christ" at work; and*

*The fact that the Lutheran school tries to meet the learners' educational needs in a single school setting.*

*ELC Board Members' Handbook, 1976*

### **The Future is Bright**

The future of Trinity Lutheran School looks bold and bright because of the strong foundation that has been built over 60+ years. The Child Care Center continues to be accredited by the National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA). Both the School and the Child Care Center continue to be approved by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and the Harford County Health Department.

Their Deep Roots Bible curriculum is apologetics based. It equips students with the tools and training to stand firm in their faith in the face of today's cultural challenges. The Sadlier Math curriculum that is used offers the tools to build mathematical proficiency using real world problem-solving. McGraw Hill's Wonders Reading curriculum empowers students to take an active role in learning and exploration.

As it has done over the past 60+ years, Trinity Lutheran School and Child Care Center now educate and share the love of Jesus Christ with hundreds of children each day. It continues to be a place where children can explore a world of opportunities and interests, while growing academically, spiritually, and emotionally.

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*NOTE: A special note of thanks to those who have researched our school's history over the years. The research used here was pooled from a variety of sources: partial histories, meeting minutes, yearbooks, photographs, interviews with staff and former students, etc. Any wording with quotes around it has been taken directly from one of these sources and credit given when possible. Authorship for some of the information is not known; however, a special thank you goes out to Pastor John H. S. Austin, Laura Smith, Patty Ree, Pam Wiechec, Bonnie Schnell, Bev Reed, and Rick Jester who added valuable details, data and memories.*



"Trinity Lutheran Church has served the community of faith for 150 years. With the support from a dedicated congregation and blessings of our Lord Jesus, Trinity has been able to offer a Maryland state approved School and Early Learning Center for over 60 years with an exceptional educational program."



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