

The logo for the newsletter, featuring the word "spirit" in a large, white, lowercase, cursive font, with "NEWSLETTER" in a smaller, white, uppercase, sans-serif font below it. The background is a dark blue gradient with a faint, stylized starburst pattern.

The Monthly Newsletter Publication of Triune Lutheran Church
“Set Free to Serve One Another”
January 2019

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Office Hours:

Monday & Wednesday, 10AM-1PM

Worship Schedule:

Saturdays 5PM (contemporary)

Sundays 11AM (traditional)

Ministers.....All People

Pastor.....Brad Ross

Administrative Assistant.....Jan Piskac

Organist.....Edith Schatt

Council President.....Dale Kirk

Council Vice-President.....Bonnie Piskac

Council Secretary.....Bill Weidman

Council Treasurer.....Jack Schwab

Sisters and brothers in Christ,

I honestly cannot think of the last time I made a new year resolution (or a set of them). Not gonna lie: I'm not exactly a goal-oriented person. Maybe that's not a very pastoral thing to be, but that ship has sailed (at least, for the time being). Then again, too many variables happen in this life. Too many curveballs, and such things tend to happen beyond our control; and there's no need to get bogged down in feeling little to no self-worth when those goals can no longer be met because of it. "God loves you just as you are," we like to say in the church.

We also like to say, "We welcome you just as you are!" Another way for us to increase our public look-at-us hospitality for potential visitors and all: that they don't have to act/dress/liturgically-speak a certain way in order to be part of our worship experience or our all-around congregational life. Now...again, this may not be a very pastoral thing to say, but I almost always feel a subconscious "yeah, but..." whenever that lovey-dovey tag-line comes up.

Don't get me wrong, God does love you/us right now: always has, always will; no questions asked. Truth is, the church will welcome you just as you are, because we don't exactly go through an interview process before we let you in. Heck, you can even take Communion and we won't exactly research the entire Christendom database just to make sure you went through the whole baptism process (to our standards, of course).

Yeah, but...God also wants what's best for the other sisters and brothers whom God loves too. The church is (or, at least, should be) interested in that too. So, if we're engaging in behavior that harms another, God wouldn't mind we kick it up a notch in the whole "love thy neighbor as thyself" department. Yes, God still loves us, but God isn't exactly asking us to "keep on sinning so that grace may abound all the more" (to steal from a fellow sinner, Paul).

Yes, God loves people who commit crimes against humanity, but God does want us to realize that sin,



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**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

repent (pull a 180 from that not-helping-the-Kingdom-of-God activity), and go on with that incomprehensible grace/new life/mercy for the benefit of improving the quality of life for our neighbor near and far (not just to make ourselves feel better that God loved us so much to forgive our sin).

Yes, this is the same debate in 2019 that's been had since even before a Catholic Luther riled up other Catholics. Whatever resolutions children of God make under the auspice of "good works" for the upcoming year, even if those hopes are dashed by noon today...God's still gonna love you just as you are. But God also loves you with all your gifts, all your capabilities, all your deep-down warm-and-fuzzy feelings you may not like to show off; and not just because that means you're all the more special to God with all the gifts you have in your soul's back-pocket. But because God knows how much you can help other children of God in this life, for the better.

It won't affect the eternal end, but the truth is: eternal life doesn't start at some far-off distant year beyond our knowing. Eternal life started when Christ came along and fulfilled the ultimate resolution of God: to save all the precious children of God (to be honest...from ourselves). Eternal life started when sin and death were defeated on the cross and out of the empty tomb. This year of 2019 is another year added to the eternal life story.

Yes, there's another chapter still to come when Jesus returns again to kick it up a notch. And, in the meantime, God has more than blessed us to kick it up a notch ourselves (whether through resolutions beforehand or not): not for our rightful place in the Kingdom (that's already taken care of), but for those who feel little to no self-worth at all. We're here to tell them, show them, that they are worth more than they can ever imagine. Amen (so let it be, oh God [and not just this year]; so let it be).

In Christ,
Pastor Brad

From all of us at Triune Lutheran Church, we wish you and yours a wonderful start to 2019 and a blessings-filled year!



We now have Guest WiFi at the church!

Login: Triune Guest

Password: Triune4810



Our Monday afternoon Bible study group, continuing Your God is Too Small, will start again on January 14 at 1pm. Newcomers welcome (with more books available)!

Prayer Request

We ask you to keep the following sisters and brothers in Christ in your prayers:

| | |
|------------------|------------------|
| Jenny Bennett | George Tomaselli |
| Bev Deitrick | Ed Uhlir |
| Joanne Loede | Trudy Weidman |
| Cathy Gallagher | Mardell Weiss |
| Richard Jakubcin | Clara Wilcox |
| Mary Phillips | Dave Wilcox |
| Hazel Schwab | Huber Family |

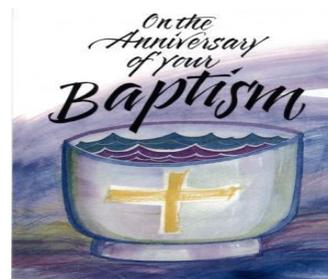
If you wish to send any cards, please send them, or drop them off, to the church office, and we will be sure to deliver them.

1 Dave Wilcox
30 Elyse Siggelkow



29 Dave & Clara Wilcox

13 Cody Schwab



*****We are currently working on updating our church directory for 2019. If anyone has any changes that are needed, please let us know.*****

Happy New Year!

Ah, a new year! It opens up before us with infinite possibilities like brand new notebooks at the beginning of the school year or the beginning of football season in Cleveland—everyone has a 4.0, everyone is undefeated!

At the turn of the new year it seems possible to slough off the failures and disappointments of the past, leave one's old self behind and start a new life. In this glow we begin to make all kinds of resolutions, not just for the amendment of our lives but for the perfection of our future. It's a wonderful space of hope and potential. It's also ephemeral—morning dawns on Jan. 2.

We are strange creatures—bounded and finite, yet aware of the infinite; marked by brokenness, yet with the memory of Eden. I think this tension becomes more acute at nodal times: the beginning of a new year, venture or relationship, the move to a new place or a new stage in life. We know, as the psalmist wrote: “Yet you have made them a little lower than God, and crowned them with glory and honor” (Psalm 8:5).

And we know that we are not quite right “... since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).

This is a very Lutheran understanding of the human condition. We know we are simultaneously saint and sinner. It's when we deny this truth or when we believe that we can fix the sinner and become the saint all by ourselves that we get into trouble. Our efforts for perfection bring frustration and real pain to ourselves and to others. The demands we place on ourselves to get our lives together, especially when can't quite bring it off, lead to despair or at least to fatalism. Or, believing that we have got it all together, we can fall into the trap of self-righteousness.

Here is where the great gift of grace, especially as it comes to us in baptism, helps us make sense of our lives and resolves the stress of New Year's resolutions—it acknowledges that we are broken and does away with the false hope or the intolerable burden of our being able to make ourselves right. “It brings about forgiveness of sins, redeems from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all those who believe it, as the words and promise of God declare” (Small Catechism).

And it joins us to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. “Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:3-4).

We have already died the only death that really matters—we have died to sin and its consequence, death. We are a kind of walking dead—with all of popular culture's fascination with zombies, we may have found ourselves a niche!

New Year's resolutions can be a burden because, except for the most disciplined among us, it's a good bet we will make the same resolutions next year. The old creature is to be drowned daily but, as theologian Karl Barth once wrote, “the old creature is drowned in baptism but is a good underwater swimmer.”

Here is where it is necessary to hear Paul's letter to the Romans—“all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”—not as final, nor as a bludgeon to get people to fall into line, but as the truth.

The very next thing Paul wrote is: “They are now justified by his grace as a gift” (Romans 3:24).

Now we have the possibility of daily repentance because we have been given the gift of new life. Now resolutions can be made and attempted, not because our life depends upon them, but because we are free. Happy New Year!

- The Rev. Elizabeth Eaton
Presiding Bishop of the ELCA

Minutes of Triune Lutheran Church Council Meeting of 03 December 2018

Meeting opened 6:10 PM with a prayer by pastor.

The minutes of the last meeting of 15 October 2018 were reviewed having been previously approved and published in "The Spirit." It is important to note that there was no council meeting in the month of November. Our semi-annual congregational meeting was held on 11 November, the day before the council meeting was scheduled, and the then-current considerations were sufficiently covered, so the council meeting was considered unnecessary.

Jack reported a checking balance of \$2,403, and a mutual fund balance of \$147,060. Jack also reported that the property tax refund has not yet been received, and, also, that the locking of the back door has been secured and the women's rest room plumbing problem has been corrected.

Bonnie reported three new Saturday hall-rental have been reserved.

There was discussion of electric signs, as seen at many churches now. Jack mentioned a price range with signs of many sizes and features, including remote wireless control, which would work well for us as we have power available at what would be the sign location. Some checking on specific sign models will be done.

It was decided that we will hold our regular Saturday service the Saturday before Christmas, 22 December. The worship for Christmas Eve of lessons and carols will be at 4PM. Pastor informed us that the service for the Sunday after Christmas, 30 December, will be of different lessons and carols from Christmas Eve.

Pastor informed us that he will be attending a continuing education session in Huron on 24-27 January.

There was discussion of making WiFi available to visitors with signage to so indicate; this to make our premises friendlier to those who might desire this access.

Jack reported that arrangements are made for snow plowing to now be reduced, elimination the back portion of our parking lot now that this is no longer used by Sovereign Grace Community Church. Plowing to be done on Sunday morning, Saturday evening and Tuesday/Thursday as needed for AA groups.

Pastor informed us that the items from the Mitten Tree this year will go to the West Side Catholic Center. Because items will go to adults, as well as children, they have a need for adult size winter gloves.

It was noted that we have at times had difficulty contacting the two AA groups that rent space from us because of changes in leadership without us being informed, and was suggested we ask them to keep us up to date on this.

Meeting was closed at 6:47 PM.

Next Meeting at 6 PM Monday 07 January 2019

**Initial copies to attendees, Dale Kirk, Bonnie Piskac, Pastor Brad, Jack Schwab,
Bill Weidman, and to Jan Piskac**

Submitted 04 December 2018

January 2019

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|----------------------------------|---|--|-----------|---------------------|--------|---|
| | | 1 New Year's Day AA @ 7pm | 2 | 3 AA @ 8 pm | 4 | 5 WORSHIP @ 5 PM TIM MIZE |
| 6 WORSHIP @ 11 AM | 7 Council Meeting @ 6 pm | 8 AA @ 7pm | 9 | 10 AA @ 8 pm | 11 | 12 WORSHIP @ 5 PM PASTOR BRAD |
| 13 WORSHIP @ 11 AM | 14 MLK JR. Day Bible Study @ 1 pm | 15 AA @ 7pm | 16 | 17 AA @ 8 pm | 18 | 19 WORSHIP @ 5 PM TIM MIZE |
| 20 WORSHIP @ 11 AM | 21 Bible Study @ 1 pm | 22 AA @ 7pm | 23 | 24 AA @ 8 pm | 25 | 26 WORSHIP @ 5 PM PASTOR BRAD |
| 27 WORSHIP @ 11 AM | 28 Bible Study @ 1 pm | 29 AA @ 7pm | 30 | 31 AA @ 8 pm | | |



If you have something you would like to put in the newsletter, please let us know by email, written letter, phone call or stopping by the office.