

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”
August 2019

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Sundays 11AM (traditional)

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Council Vice-President.....Bonnie Piskac
Council Secretary.....Bill Weidman
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Sisters and brothers in Christ,

A few weeks ago, Sarah and I ventured down to the Blossom Music Center to see *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone* with the Cleveland Orchestra performing the famous John Williams-composed score. I’ll be the first to admit this was definitely a gift for the Mrs., as I’m not exactly a fan of the J.K. Rowling series. Nevertheless, I gave it a shot, and although I’m not jumping into the thousands of pages’ worth of books just yet; it wasn’t quite as filled with eye-rolling reactions on my part, as I expected. Maybe I don’t want to allow myself to dip into the fantasy world of literature and cinema without getting a better grasp on the world around me first, but, every once in a while, such authors and producers have a way of offering an interesting take on “our” world.

There was this one scene (and, yes, I have to refer to the movie production since I haven’t the read the book) where Harry Potter comes upon this mirror, The Mirror of the Erised, they call it. When looking into the mirror, Harry not only sees himself, but his parents standing behind him (his parents who died when he was young). The idea behind The Mirror of the Erised is to “show the deepest, most desperate desires of our hearts” (side note: Erised is *desire* spelled backwards). So, of course, that should lead the audience, all of us, to ask (if such a thing existed in front of us): what would the mirror reveal of us?

It makes sense for Harry Potter, as the story so goes, that he would want to see his parents, his parents that he hardly got to know before they were taken away from him far too soon. Many people’s deepest and most desperate desire would be the same in similar circumstances, no matter what the age may be of the onlooker at the time. But what would such a mirror reveal of us in terms of the church? What is our deepest, most desperate desire for the/our church?

If we want to limit it to our specific congregation, some of us desperately desire, for instance, that the pews be filled on Sunday mornings. That’s all we really want. Except,



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**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

maybe if such a mirror reveals the truly deepest, most no-limit desperate desire, it's not just wanting pews filled; it's wanting the pews filled with the same people who were there years before. We don't want to sit around *all* new people. We want the people we came to know and love over emotionally-charged moments that shaped our life, our journey in the church. We want our parents back, our spouse, who we weren't quite ready to let go just then. We want our children and their families sitting just in front of us so we can smile and our hearts be filled with the deepest joy imaginable.

There's, also, a different movement happening in the church, reflecting others' deepest, most desperate desire for what they think the institution should look like going forward. If they look in such a mirror, they would see a diverse church, for starters. They would see people clamoring together advocating for the underprivileged at city hall. There would be others on the phone calling up their local representatives to ensure that asylum-seekers are cared for no matter what. They would see a church serving as a vital instrument of social change, getting back to the basics of the prophets themselves.

Yes, such a vision would make many of us feel uneasy. We're not meant to rile up...at least, not too much. We're meant to be a place and a people to offer comfort and hope, while also empowering us as disciples, following the One who did his fair share of rabble-rousing. Not everyone shares the same desires for what they want out of *their* church. Whether we like it or not, that's part of the reason why denominations are still in full force. Nevertheless, hopefully, we can at least be, somewhat, that Mirror of the Erised, in the sense of having the conversation with others, hearing their deepest desires not just for a church, but for their homes, their communities, their lives.

One line that's spoken by the aged and wise Albus Dumbledore, who warns Harry Potter about potential effects from said-mirror: "It does not do to dwell on dreams and forget to live." Not all our deepest, most desperate desires can be reached; it's true. And yet, when we look into any mirror (you know, the real kind) and see our face: imperfect with a past that isn't perfect either; we can still rest assured that our ultimate dream has already come true. We do not need to dream about a God who loves us. It's already true. We don't need to dream about the possibility of being saved out of pure desperation at the end. It's already done. When we look in the mirror, we see a face, a life that is loved by God so much so that not even death could take it away from us. That kind of grace might just make this life worth living, after all. Thanks be to God indeed!

In Christ,
Pastor Brad

"We Are Church"

Next month, voting members will convene Aug. 5-10 for the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly at the Wisconsin Center in Milwaukee. This will be the 15th gathering of the assembly, the primary decision-making body of the ELCA. This year's theme is "We are church," and voting members will spend the week participating in plenaries, discussions, Bible studies and worship while deliberating the work of the church. This year, voting members will:

- Elect the presiding bishop and secretary. Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, elected in 2013, is seeking re-election to a six-year term. Secretary Chris Boerger, elected in 2013, is retiring after this term. The secretary is elected to a six-year term.
- Act on "Faith, Sexism and Justice: A Lutheran Call to Action." The proposed social statement covers a range of issues in which the ELCA is called to action, including gender-based violence, workplace discrimination, economic inequality and more.
- Act on "A Declaration of Interreligious Commitment: A policy statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America." The proposed document underscores the ELCA's long-standing commitment to interreligious relations and provides a framework for common application and theological reflection across the varied contexts of this church.
- Vote on proposed budgets for the 2020, 2021 and 2022 fiscal years.
- Review proposed amendments to the "Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America."
- Consider a proposal that the entrance rite for ministers of Word and Service be ordination and to no longer count deacons as laypeople for the representational principles.

- Act on responses to memorials from synod assemblies.

On Aug. 6, voting members will participate in hearings to ask questions and learn more about some ministries of the church and the proposed actions that will come before them.

In her introductory letter to assembly participants, Eaton reminded voting members that the assembly is “a process of communal spiritual discernment to bring about God’s will for God’s people.”

Also taking place during the assembly will be a celebration for “Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA,” a program to honor the 50th anniversary of women’s ordination, and an observance of the church’s focus on gun violence awareness.

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



Jenny Bennett
 Bev Deitrick
 Cathy Gallagher
 Richard Jakubcin
 Joann Loede
 Matt Loede
 Mary Phillips

Hazel Schwab
 George Tomaselli
 Martha Wasson
 Trudy Weidman
 Mardell Weiss
 Clara Wilcox
 Dave Wilcox

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.

8th Brigitte Kiemschies
 14th Trudy Weidman



5th Dale & Linda Kirk
 11th Matthew & Meghan Shatt
 14th Howard & Carol Dorsey



Summertime HYMN SING

On Sunday, August 25, during our worship at 11am, we will take time to sing some of our favorite hymns! In the meantime, you are encouraged to let us know which songs are your favorite by August 18, whether they be from the *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* hymnal that we use during worship, our previous *Lutheran Book of Worship* (green hymnal), or even something from Sunday school that you remember. You can simply let us know the title, and we'll be sure to find it! We encourage you to turn in your votes

via e-mail to the church, filling out a piece of paper and putting it in the offering plate or letting Edith or Pastor Brad know. Then, join us on Sunday, August 25, as we make a joyful noise to the Lord through the precious gift of music!

As mentioned below in the council minutes, the results from the surveys that were filled out by several members of the congregation, as requested by the Director of Evangelical Mission for the Northeastern Ohio Synod (ELCA), Pastor Julianne Smith, are available in the narthex area at the church. We will engage in further conversation at our next congregational meeting as well as future council meetings (which you are always welcome to attend!) before meeting with Pastor Julianne, again, in January.



You are invited to join Triune and Covenant sisters and brothers in Christ for a fun night at the Blossom Music Center on Sunday, September 1, at 7:30pm! The film will be shown on the big screen with the Cleveland Orchestra playing the John Williams score, conducted by Sarah Hicks. There will, also, be fireworks following the concert.

The seating will be in a preferred section, Section 22 of the Pavilion, which is adjacent to the tram depot. The tickets, at the Senior Discount rate are \$28.50.

Please let Arlene Lasher from Covenant know by Sunday, August 4, as Blossom requires full payment one month prior to the concert date. Arlene can be reached at 216-662-1939.



Lutheran World Relief

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. LASTING PROMISE.

In the next couple months, we ask you to take part in our next congregational service project dedicated to the world-wide ministry of Lutheran World Relief. Just so we remember:

Founded by Lutherans in the United States at the end of World War II, grounded in Lutheran theology and building on decades of experience, Lutheran World Relief tackles global poverty by helping people adapt to the challenges that threaten their livelihoods and well-being.

We work with people based on need, regardless of race, religion or nationality and we do not evangelize.

We provide aid in emergencies and help families restore their lives. We partner with communities to build and grow rural economies. We break the cycle of poverty, so families and communities can thrive.

Our goal is to help people build self-sufficiency and create new community-owned approaches to problem-solving that will last long after our projects end.

- lwr.org

We will be putting together personal care (health) kits, collecting towels, bars of soap, toothbrushes, combs and nail clippers. We are hoping to put together 50 of these kits, which will be shipped anywhere around the world for those in need. There will be sign-up sheets in the narthex area, where you can sign-up for sets of ten of such items. We will, then, determine a date in September, when we can gather together to put the kits together, before they are shipped in early October. So be on the look-out for the following (the list below is what will comprise one kit):

- 1 light-weight bath-size towel (20" X 40" to 52" X 27")
- 2 or 3 bath size bars (4 to 5 oz.) of soap, any brand, in the original wrapping (total of 8 to 9 oz. of soap)
- 1 adult-size toothbrush in its original wrapping
- 1 sturdy comb (no picks or fine-toothed combs), removing packaging
- 1 metal nail clipper (attached file), removing packaging



A Commitment to Service

For First Lutheran, St. Paul, Minn., caring for people who don't have a safe place to live or who are living in poverty is as important to its mission as Sunday morning worship, and it stems from its start as a congregation. Its first pastor, Eric Norelius, was a Swedish immigrant who would go on to have a building named for him at Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, Minn., and a statue erected of him in Lindstrom, Minn. But perhaps his largest legacy was his commitment to caring for people living in poverty in the congregation's neighborhood. First's current pastor, Chris Olson Bingea, said Norelius was known as a "friend to the homeless."

Olson Bingea came to First in 1985, serving as its youth director for four years. She found she enjoyed urban ministry and working in a diverse community. When she returned nearly 20 years later as pastor, the congregation was aging and finding its way again. Olson Bingea led them to recommit to providing shelter and safe spaces for people living in poverty.

The congregation started a breakfast on Sunday mornings. They saw it as a community outreach, but it didn't work that way at first. "For about a year and a half, we ate with ourselves," Olson Bingea said. "Eventually we started feeding [other] people." They soon learned that what people needed went beyond food—a sense of community, housing and health care were also important.

Around 2007, First partnered with nearby Metropolitan State University's nursing department to have students provide free foot care, blood pressure checks and other health care needs. This created the Love Grows Here Wellness Center at First. Then Wednesday evening community meals took the place of the Sunday breakfasts, and a woman brought a sewing machine to mend people's clothing and backpacks.

In 2016, Listening House approached First about using its site. The next year the nonprofit began providing a day shelter and community center at First for people who are lonely, disadvantaged or experiencing homelessness. Coupled with the wellness center, the partnership with Listening House meant the congregation was living its desire to build relationships in the neighborhood.

But conflict soon followed. Neighbors were concerned about the number of people frequenting the day shelter and the potential for crime or disruption. They soon convinced the St. Paul City Council to institute a zoning restriction limiting the number of people served by Listening House and the wellness center to 20 visitors per day. First responded to the challenge, leaning on the legal background of its then-intern pastor Maggie Anderson Peterson, who connected the congregation to a law firm. Drawing the city's attention to a federal regulation in the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA), the church noted that the city was barred from interfering with the rights of religious institutions while practicing their mission.

In June 2018 a federal judge issued a preliminary injunction, and by year's end the city reached a legal settlement with Listening House, changing the capacity limit to 112 visitors at any time. Olson Bingea said the legal battle seemed more contentious than it actually was, adding that police and many neighbors support the church's work.

Now First hopes other religious institutions that do anti-poverty work can use the RLUIPA precedent to protect their ministries. But for Olson Bingea, the best parts of this ministry come from the stories of people she's met through this work. One story involved a woman who attended Home-full Camp, a weeklong event for people living in poverty at the congregation's Bay Lake Camp in northern Minnesota. The woman spent her first three days in withdrawal from drugs. "When she finally woke up enough to start having conversations, we talked a lot," Olson Bingea said. "She was so struck by the fact that she was finally able to sleep in safety. It changed the course of her life."

Five years later, that woman has remained sober, was married at First and, later, her two children were baptized there. Cheryl Kenney, a wellness center and Listening House visitor, shared her story: "When I first came, I was

afraid, but I got involved. I began by helping make food in the kitchen and doing what I could to promote it everywhere. I learned so much about different types of healing and how important being with others was.”

Kenney later joined First, saying the congregation gave her a sense of what unconditional love really was. “[Jesus] fed people and healed them even before he preached or taught,” she said. “He showed love to people no matter what and wasn’t bound by traditions or rules that meant some were invited in and some were not. “I’ve noticed that people who come to the wellness center and the Listening House have also started coming to church, and now I pray that people will come so they can know the same love I’ve experienced.”

- The Rev. Angela Denker

Minutes of Triune Lutheran Church Council Meeting of 07 July 2019

Meeting opened at 6:31 PM with a prayer by Pastor Brad,

We were joined by Pastor Julianne Smith, Director of Evangelical Mission for the Northeastern Ohio Synod (ELCA). Pastor Smith had joined our 13 May meeting, and had given us a survey to be filled out by our congregation members to determine our attitudes about our vitality and sustainability.

Pastor Smith presented a survey of results evaluating our perception and there was discussion of this and, also, about any thoughts of our congregation going forward.

We were joined, also, by Norelle Gress, who asked Pastor Smith about congregations in our area who may have approached our same problem and came back stronger. There was some discussion of this, and Pastor Smith said she would look into this further.

It was decided that we would request Pastor Smith to return for a follow-up meeting to get our ideas on how to react to our situation. A date for this was set for Monday 13 January at the regular meeting time of 6:00 PM.

At 7:45 PM we commenced with the regular council meeting with Jack reporting a checking balance of \$7,695 and a mutual fund balance of \$150,622.

Jack, also, advised that we should have a yearly grease trap check-up to avoid the problem we had last year. It was decided to get a cost from the provider of last year’s repairs to proceed with this.

Jack reported that the gutters have been cleaned and the drape support rods in Willmann Hall have been re-anchored to prevent sagging.

Bonnie reported that there are four inquiries for Willmann Hall rental in progress.

Dale reported that Gordon Jarde will be starting the transition into the janitorial work starting on Friday, 12 July. It will be for 8 hours per week of service.

Dale outlined plan for training and transition to this work, and stated that, at a later time, the grass cutting job may be offered for inclusion.

Meanwhile, plans will be made for coverage of Willmann Hall parties scheduled for 20 July and 01 August.

Meeting was closed at 8:11 PM.

Next Meeting at 6:00 PM Monday 12 August 2019

August 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 AA @ 8 pm	2	3 WORSHIP @ 5 PM <u>TIM MIZE</u>
4 WORSHIP @11 AM	5 Bible Study @ 1 pm The Oaks Service @ 3:15 pm	6 AA @ 7pm	7	8 AA @ 8 pm	9	10 WORSHIP @ 5 PM <u>PASTOR BRAD</u>
11 WORSHIP @11 AM	12 Bible Study @ 1 pm Council Meeting @ 6	13 AA @ 7pm	14	15 AA @ 8 pm	16	17 WORSHIP @ 5 PM <u>TIM MIZE</u>
18 WORSHIP @11 AM	19 Bible Study @ 1 pm	20 AA @ 7pm	21	22 AA @ 8 pm	23	24 WORSHIP @ 5 PM <u>PASTOR BRAD</u>
25 WORSHIP @11 AM	26 Bible Study @ 1 pm	27 AA @ 7pm	28	29 AA @ 8 pm	30	31 WORSHIP @ 5 PM <u>TIM MIZE</u>



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.