

Covenant News



September 2022

Pastor's Spin



The month of September is always when my alma-mater, Trinity Lutheran Seminary, holds what they call Trinity Days: a homecoming of sorts while also providing some continuing education along with it. Homecomings, in general, have their own interesting combination of emotions, whether it be with high school, college, or anything else. They're packed with nostalgia, "I wish I would have done this or that," re-connecting with old friends, and perhaps trying to avoid certain individuals as well (if we're perfectly honest). And while most homecomings are about welcoming back, this particular Trinity Days will include a time to bid farewell to one of my beloved professors.

I had known about Dr. Brad Binau even before my first orientation day on campus. You see, Pastor Binau was born and raised in the same hometown as me. We worshiped at the same home congregation, and there haven't been too many of us "sons of the congregation," who have gone onto doing this whole pastor thing. He went onto Trinity himself, and eventually to Princeton Theological Seminary, before returning to Trinity to teach in 1993. So, for nearly thirty years, he's been shaping us wanna-be pastors.

During my time there, Dr. Binau was more so responsible for the classes and all-around experiences under the pastoral care realm, and I still remember learning for the first time about this different concept of the soul. I was always under the impression that our soul was something residing inside of us, like a formless cloud or something right next to our heart. It was deep within our body, and that's where we could connect with God. That's where the Holy Spirit hung

out, and tried to go to work in us to convince us to worship more, read the Bible more, “love your neighbor as yourself” more, etc. That’s the part that had to be reached to save us for the after-life and all. And if you don’t let Jesus in that deep...well, you’re in trouble. There won’t be any heavenly homecoming for you.

However, Dr. Binau let me in on different take. The soul was the entirety of who we were: encompassing body, mind, heart, and well, everything about us. The soul was our entire existence, the entirety about us, all of which God loved. No, God doesn’t just love the spiritual, or small speck of some inner-dwelling. God cherishes everything about us: our brain, heart, and all-around imperfect body. And yes, we had to get away from the idea that we wanna-be pastors, and the church as a whole, had to go out and “save souls.” Lest we clergy-types get too big of egos, we’re not in such a ministry business. The saving has already been taken care of God anyway. Our job was to let the world know it, in no uncertain terms: God loves you, and not just a small speck inside you; no, everything about you.

Yes, there are some parts to us that are imperfect to say the least, parts of us that lead us to not so overly “loving your neighbor as yourself” behavior, not to mention parts of our body that do not cooperate physically as much as we like. But, God loves the imperfect, too. God can still do wonderful work with that. And I suppose that was part of the learning experience with Dr. Binau: we clergy-types and the church as a whole cannot only care about our and others’ spiritual health. We care when people are physically and mentally hurting as well. The church is called to respond to the physical and mental needs of their surrounding community and beyond: from hunger, poverty, and more. Jesus seemed pretty to focus on that quite a bit, himself, after all.

So, yes, we still care for the soul, but not just a small speck within the child of God, but the entirety of what makes them who they are today and always. And so, our work continues to make sure people know that Great News, not just on seminary campuses or inside sanctuary walls, but throughout the world. That all may know that God has already welcomed them home in Jesus Christ, our Risen Lord. Thanks be to God, indeed!

In Christ,
Pastor Brad





September Birthdays

9/2 William Mendat
9/10 Phyllis Treichel
9/11 Doris Akerley
9/16 Barb Gaglione
9/16 Jason Lanese

9/22 Madeline Ptak
9/26 Allan Treichel
9/28 Ethan Lockmiller
9/28 Evan Bernardo



9/8 Carolyn & Ken Frajter
Happy 66th Anniversary!

9/21 Gwen & Tom Susanek
Happy 25th Anniversary!

9/29 Bishop Abraham Allende & Linda Godhardt Allende
Happy 17th Anniversary!



Covenant Lutheran Women's annual Rummage Sale will be Friday, September 9, and Saturday, September 10, from 9:30AM-1PM. These dates coincide with the Maple Heights citywide garage sale. Please drop off items for the sale on the stage until Wednesday, September 7, when we are planning to set up and prepare for Friday morning.

All proceeds from the Rummage sale will be going toward the celebration for our 75th Anniversary events (see below).

CELEBRATING 75 YEARS

We are delighted that 2022 marks 75 years of ministry for our Covenant family! And so, we will boldly celebrate on Reformation Sunday (October 30) with worship in the sanctuary at 9am and a catered brunch following the worship downstairs in our fellowship hall. Bishop Emeritus Abraham Allende will return to preach, and we will also have our ecumenical handbell choir and the Wolf Creek brass quintet join us to make the day all the more special as we give thanks to God for the honor to be part of this wonderful body of Christ. We ask that if you do plan on joining us, please RSVP to Jen Lasher-Dobush by Sunday, October 16, as we need a head-count for the meal. We hope to see you here!

FREE community MEAL

Our next FREE community meal is Thursday, September 22 (5-6pm)! We invite you to come in through the back door into our fellowship hall and have a seat, as we serve you and our neighbors a FREE meal. However, if you don't need this yourself, please help us let others know of this wonderful opportunity to not only have some food, but conversations with our neighbors.



We have started updating our Covenant congregation directory, not only with revised phone numbers, email and physical/ mailing addresses, but also including pictures with this one as well. However, we're going to try something new this time around. Instead of having you come to Covenant for an appointment with a photographer, we're inviting you to send in your own picture of yourself, you and your loved one, or your whole family. This does not have to be professionally done. Feel free to make it your own. Make it fun and creative, if you like. Take it outside in nature. Include your pets, if you want. It can be in-the-moment laughter. We would like this to be an enjoyable Covenant family project! Then, you can send the picture in via email, mail, or dropping it off at the church. If you need help taking a picture, please contact Jen at the church office, and we will be happy to make arrangements to do so.

2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly Summary of Actions

Chicago —The 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly met Aug. 8-12 at the Greater Columbus Convention Center in Columbus, Ohio. Gathering under the theme “Embody the Word,” the assembly worshiped together in services of eucharist and lament, experienced a liturgy rooted in Indigenous traditions, and heard a public apology in a nonlegislative session to Iglesia Luterana Santa María Peregrina for harm experienced from actions taken by the Sierra Pacific Synod and this church. The following key actions were taken by the assembly:

- Elected Imran Siddiqui of the Southeastern Synod as vice president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).
- Directed the ELCA Church Council to establish a Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church to reconsider the statements of purpose for each expression of this church, the principles of organizational structure and our shared commitment to dismantle racism, with findings to be reported to the 2025 Churchwide Assembly in preparation for a possible reconstituting convention. Directed an external audit of the governing documents of the ELCA to consider diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility, with findings resulting in recommended changes to the governing documents.
- Authorized revisions to the social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*; approved exploration of reconsideration of the four stated positions of "bound conscience."
- Encouraged members, congregations and synods of this church to educate themselves about Indigenous peoples, calling on the churchwide organization to work with synods and Indigenous partners to identify sources of funding for ministries for Indigenous peoples, and encouraging restorative justice that could include the return of land to the appropriate Native nations.
- Referred a proposed study of pay gaps for rostered ministers to the Church Council.
- Mandated a review process of the roster manual and policies related to specialized ministries, on leave from call status, and protocols for removal from the rosters; encouraged bishops and synod councils to use sparingly the process of removal from the roster for nondisciplinary reasons.
- Approved the budget proposal for the triennium, including a spending authorization of \$68,814,000 for 2023 for the current fund, along with a spending authorization of \$22,869,000 for ELCA World Hunger.
- Affirmed limits on the use of nondisclosure agreements by the churchwide organization; urged synods, congregations and other ministries to apply the same limits.
- Reaffirmed the commitment of this church to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, directing the churchwide organization to set a goal of a 50% reduction of net greenhouse gas pollution by 2030, with a long-range goal of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050.
- Called for a review of the nomination and elections processes used by synods and the churchwide organization.
- Responded to memorials on diversity; nuclear weapons; voting rights and Washington, D.C., statehood; strategies for fortifying urban ministries; a Black migrant strategy; the right to boycott; gun violence; LGBTQIA+ welcome; substance abuse; Roe v. Wade; remembrance of Armenian, Assyrian and Greek genocide; parental and medical family leave; a process for pre-identification of nominees for the Office of the Presiding Bishop; revisions to the mission development process; consideration of communion practices related to remote worship; affirmation of the task force created by the Church Council to review the discipline process; and a social message on child abuse and protection.

The Lutheran Church of the Covenant

September 2022

Server Schedule	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
AG: Sheila Werner, Annie Copeland, Paula Hohenstein					1	2 6:30-8:00 pm GOD AA meeting in Parish Hall	3 3:00 pm Women's AA meeting in Hall 5:00 NO Saturday Worship
AG: Joan Garvin, Marie Zahn, Jen Garberich	4 Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost 9:00 Eucharist in Parking Lot	5 Office Closed for Labor Day	6 1:30 Worship & Music Meeting 6:30 Women's AA meeting in Parish Hall	7 6:00-8:00 pm Rise Ministry Bible Study in Hall	8 Set up in hall for Rummage Sale 6:00 Book Club in Parlor	9:30- 1:00 Rummage Sale in Hall 6:30-8:00 pm GOD AA meeting in Parlor	10:30- 1:00 Rummage Sale in Hall No AA Women's Meeting in Hall
AG: Joan Garvin, Marie Zahn, Jen Garberich	11 Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost 9:00 Eucharist in Parking Lot	12	13 7:00 Council Meeting in Parlor 6:30 Women's AA meeting in Parish Hall	14 6:00-8:00 pm Rise Ministry Bible Study in Hall	15	16 6:30-8:00 pm GOD AA meeting in Parish Hall	17 3:00 pm Women's AA meeting in Hall 5:00 Worship in Sanctuary
AG: Claudia, Snderak, Jean Rusher, Gwen Susanek	18 Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost 9:00 Eucharist in Parking Lot	19	20 6:30 Women's AA meeting in Parish Hall	21 6:00-8:00 pm Rise Ministry Bible Study in Hall	22 5:00-6:00 pm Community Meal in Parish Hall 6:00 Book Club in Parlor	23 6:30-8:00 pm GOD AA meeting in Parish Hall	24 3:00 pm Women's AA meeting in Parish Hall
AG: Claudia Sanderak, Jean Rusher, Gwen Susanek	25 Sixteenth Sun. after Pentecost 9:00 Eucharist in Parking Lot 1:00 Brass Rehearsal church	26	27 6:30 Women's AA meeting in Parish Hall	28 6:00-8:00 pm Rise Ministry Bible Study in Hall	29	30 6:30-8:00 pm GOD AA meeting in Parish Hall	Oct. 1 3:00 pm Women's AA meeting in Parish Hall

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The Lutheran Church of the Covenant
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