



TRINITY TIDINGS

A monthly newsletter for the people of Trinity Lutheran Church of Athens, WI

Pastor's Corner

People periodically ask me, "What led you to become a pastor?" It's a great story...

It probably started (unknown to me) during a children's Christmas program rehearsal back when I was a child at Chapel of the Cross Lutheran Church in Milwaukee. The pastor, Rev. Harvey Krueger, leaned over to my mom, who was watching me read my part from the pulpit, and quietly said, "He'll make a good pastor some day!" Turned out to be prophecy fulfilled!

My inspiration for electrical engineering came from my father. Even though he was an assembly line worker at Allen-Bradley in Milwaukee, he had an insatiable curiosity for tinkering with radios, tv's, and stereo equipment. He built much of our home stereo by hand (Heathkits). I would regularly watch him and became fascinated with the world of tubes, wires, capacitors, resistors, and transformers. I knew that one day, I would not be fixing these things, I would be designing them.

My mom got called to a parent-teacher conference with my 1st Grade teacher – Mrs. Finas for the unusual drawings I was doing during free drawing time. My mom assured the teacher that I was not crazy, but was drawing, from memory, parts of television schematics I seen my father using when he repaired televisions.

God blessed my desire to become an engineer by giving me the opportunity to attend Boys' Trade and Technical High School in Milwaukee (Pre-engineering program) and the Milwaukee School of Engineering (Class of 1978). My education took place at a critical time in the field of engineering as I had the college's last course in slide rule theory and one of the last classes in vacuum tube design.

As an adult, I had been quite involved in the churches I belonged to: youth leader, contemporary worship leader, Board of Elders, Board of Education, etc. I really enjoyed my involvement in all these areas!

It all became clear when I started graduate engineering classes at Washington University in Washington, D.C. At the same time, I was also taking New Testament Greek at a night-time seminary in Baltimore, MD. It was at this point that I stopped, looked at my life, and realized that God had me on a journey, a journey whose next chapter would take place at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

(continued...)

Our Mission:

To Know Christ...

and make Him known.

WORSHIP TIMES

Saturday N/A
 Sunday 10:00am
 Thursday N/A @
 Athenian Living

With Holy Communion
 every 1st & 3rd weekend (N/A)

HOLY WEEK / EASTER

Maundy Thursday N/A
 Good Friday 6:00pm
 Easter 8:00am

Bible Study & Sunday School
 Sunday 10:20am (N/A)
 Wednesday Bible Study
 10:00am @ Athenian
 Living (N/A)

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How could a God possibly turn an engineer into a pastor? Easy! Take what He had and move me toward a new direction in life. To give me peace of mind, God blessed me with a verse of inspiration: Proverbs 3:5,6:

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight. – Proverbs 3:5,6.

Obviously, it worked. This year will mark my 29th year as a pastor and my 5th year at Trinity. One thing is clear, trusting God is the only possible explanation for all of this! Why? Not because I'm so trusting, but because God is so trustworthy! And how do we know that? Because He taken care of our greatest need:

He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all--how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? – Romans 8:32

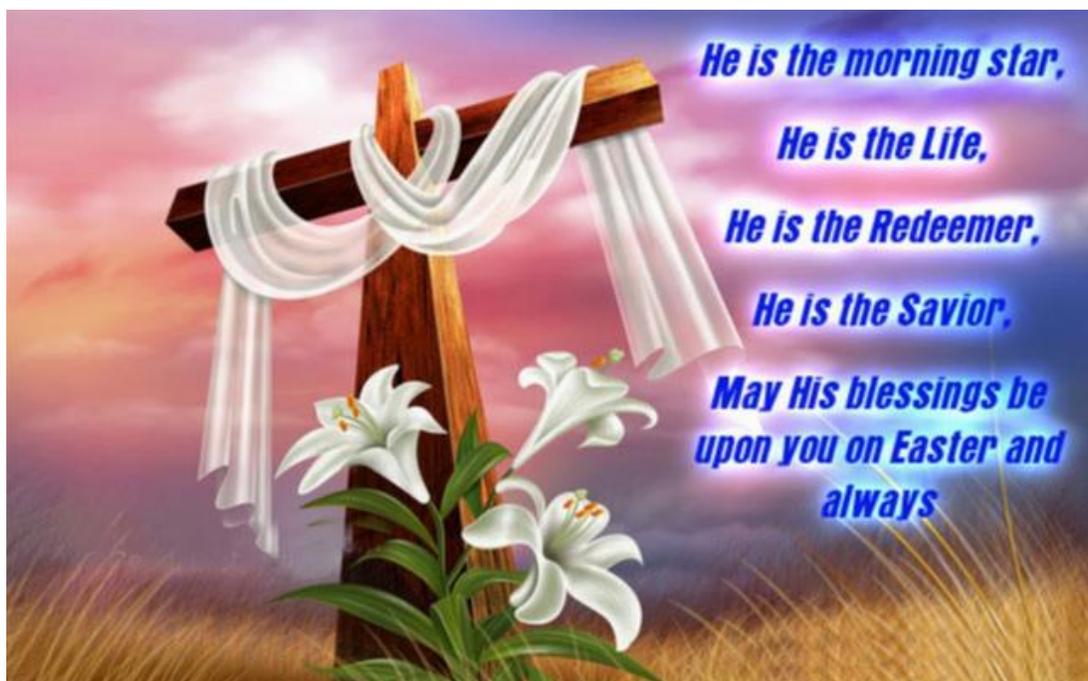
The God who created the heavens and the earth... the God who loved you and me with an eternal and infinite love that He would be willing to send His own Son to be our Savior... the God who turned an electrical engineer into a pastor... is the God who has saved us through the life, suffering, and death of His own Son, Jesus! He is the God who shares the complete benefit of all that His own Son has done through faith alone.

The God who saved us, is the God who is indeed with us, smack in the middle of the worst pandemic the world has ever seen in the past 100 years! He's the God who says, "Trust me, I got this... and here's the proof – my Son, Jesus!"

My dear friends in Christ, this is not a time for depression, sorrow, and selfishness, but a time for rejoicing! As I mentioned in a earlier sermon, God has our backs (and fronts, insides, and outsides). On Easter this year, we will gather to celebrate the victory of Jesus over death, the love and God, and the hope we have for the future! Rejoice! Celebrate! Give thanks!

Amen!

Pastor Mark



Trinity Lutheran Church, School & Child Care

Mark Schwalenberg
Pastor

Dean Frick
Principal / 7th & 8th Grades

Tanille Hartwig
Teacher / 5th & 6th Grades

Karen Trench
Teacher / 3rd & 4th Grades

Becky Van Rixel
Teacher. 1st & 2nd Grades

Deb Frick
Teacher / 3K, 4K & Kindergarten

Debbie Balz
Aide / 3K, 4K & Kindergarten

Judy Weise
Administrative Assistant

Kaye Schwalenberg
Custodian

Laurie Brodziski
School Cook

Mark Schroeder
Sarah Lemmer
Organists

Randalyn Ellenbecker
Child Care Director

Trinity Elders

Ken Punke – 715-257-9312

Kevin Kottke – 715-257-9971

Dwight Tolk – 715-581-8090

Robert Riemer – 715-257-7312

Mark Mroczenski – 715-257-1485

Keith Niemann – 715-506-0047

*A congregation of the
Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod*

www.trinityathens.net

Principal's Message

What a difference a month makes. So much has changed a school, at church, at home, and in the world. I don't even know where to begin. How about going back to the beginning of the school year when we chose our theme. "Soul Survivor" was chosen as our theme based on 1 John 5:4b "And this is the victory that has overcome the world- our faith" Who would have known that "survivor" would become such a relevant term with the spread of the corona virus.

So, at this time, we go back to our theme for this year and examine the comfort that it can give us at this time. Comfort that only God's Word can provide. 1 John 5:5 says "**Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.**" The "world" is a scary place right now. Covid-19 is constantly put in front of us as it continues to take lives from this world. Can you imagine the panic and fear that could be gripping those who don't know Jesus Christ? The fear of what of what is happening in this world right now can be paralyzing. Those of us who know that there is more after this world, because of Christ's death and resurrection, need to be the calming peace to those around us.

Do you think that it is a coincidence that the peak of this is near Easter? What a great opportunity for you to share your faith and the comfort and peace it brings you. Covid-19 won't stop Easter and it won't prevent us from having "Victory in Faith"

Mr. Dean Frick, Principal

VICTORY IN FAITH



Church News & Events

Trinity Ladies Aid/LWML

Trinity LWML met on January 8th at Athenian Living. Kaye Schwalenberg led the Bible study "Why the Joy of the Lord is our Strength". Mites and gifts for LCMS Global Missions and Lutheran Seminary were gathered. Discussion was held on the scholarship fund and the need for donations to keep the fund available for students choosing careers in the church. We currently have two students here at Trinity pursuing careers in church work. Each one is eligible to receive \$1,000 per year to help with their tuition

Respectfully Submitted, Kaye Schwalenberg



March Memorials

Thank you for your gifts!

In Loving Memory of Scott Venzke, a gift was given to the Altar Guild by Dennis & Nathalie Fladvid.

In Loving Memory of Melvin Schmidt, gifts were given to Trinity Lutheran School and the General Fund by Delores Schmidt and family.

In Loving Memory of Arnie Steidinger, gifts were given to the Altar Guild, General Fund, Trinity Lutheran School, and the Debt Fund by Doug & Patty Riske, Kelly & Lois Bunkelman, Dennis & Nathalie Fladvid, Sherri Nehrbass, Luann Thurs, Sandy Koeller, Helen Schreiber, Nancy Albrecht, Wil & Darlene Strack, Jerry & Linda Murkowski, Matt & Tammi Viegut, Nathlie Venzke, Dan & Grace Frick, Ken & Kathy Brice, Ellen Czech, Eugene & Doreen Weise.

In Loving Memory of Arlon (Pops) Balz, gifts were given to the Altar Guild, General Fund, Trinity Lutheran School, by Sherri Nehrbass, Dennis & Nathalie Fladvid, Dan & Grace Frick,

In Loving Memory of Sally Schroeder, gifts were given to the Altar Guild by Dennis & Nathalie Fladvid,

LWML Zone 10 Spring Rally

The **LWML Zone 10 Spring Rally** was to be hosted by St. John High Steeple Lutheran Church and held on Thursday, April 16, 2020. You will be notified if and when a new date is scheduled.

Thank you.



Official Acts & Monthly News

Released, Weddings: none

Baptism: Emma Joy Lee, daughter of Ross Lee & Brittany Ashley, was baptized before our altar on Sunday, March 8, 2020.

Death: Sally Schroeder was called home to be with the Lord on Monday, March 23, 2020. Her Celebration of Life will be held at a later date.

Births: Emri Rose Belter, daughter born to Nick & Maddie Belter on Thursday, March 19, 2020.

Everett Robert Riemer, son born to Jacob & Amber Riemer on Friday, March 20, 2020.

Hospitalized: Jamey Handschke, Florence Punke, Dave Tessmer, Pastor Mark, Sally Schroeder

Exciting News!

Trinity's Board of Christian Education is developing a data base of graduates for our school. We would like your name, address, phone, email address, and the year of graduation from Trinity. Please email this information to alumni@trinityathens.net

Spread the word! Thanks!

We're Recycling...

We have two new programs –

- 1) **Saving Plastic Caps** - Our goal is to have a bench made out of them for our Child Care! *Can you help out?* Please see the informational sheet in the back of this Newsletter as to what's acceptable and not acceptable.
- 2) Crayola and schools across North America are banding together to help kids understand the importance of their role in protecting the environment. Crayola ColorCycle will accept ALL brands of plastic markers, not just Crayola markers. That includes dry erase markers and highlighters!



April Acolytes

(being optimistic...)

<u>Saturday, April 18</u>	7:00pm
Addison Lavicka & Aleah Frahm	
<u>Sunday, April 19</u>	9:00am
Gavin Frahm & Swayne Stencil	
<u>Saturday, April 20</u>	7:00pm
Eli Paul & Natalie Salber	
<u>Sunday, April 26</u>	9:00am
Jenna Handschke & Addison Kottke	

April Birthdays

- 1 - Perry Haehlke
- 2 - George Stauske
- 3 - Jaxson Perkins
- 4 - Linda Murkowski, Allan Riemer
- 5 - Marcy Scheithauer, Virgel Weiler
- 6 - Lois Balz
- 8 - Helen Schreiber
- 9 - Ashley Kottke, Rachel Ostrander, Linda Westfall
- 10 - Kian Ellenbecker
- 11 - Adnay Luetschwager, Deb Sprotte
- 12 - Connor Lewandowski, Dominic Lewandowski
- 13 - Mary Miller, Michele Swanson
- 16 - Mark Mroczenski, Carmen Woiak
- 17 - Luke Sprotte, Derek Wheatley
- 18 - Glenn Belanger, David Frahm IV, Kasandra LeSieur, Easton Thom, Stacy VanDerLinden
- 19 - Cassie Call, Jenna Handschke, Ava Lemmer
- 20 - Mr. Kim Kottke, Matthew Wassmann
- 23 - Patty Riske, Sheila Scheffler
- 24 - Gerald LeMay
- 25 - Tyler Brodziski
- 26 - Caden Frandsen
- 28 - Rachel Berry
- 29 - Bitsy Ewan, Natalie Salber
- 30 - Shannon Boesl, Blake Hein, Russ Schneveis



April Baptism Birthdays

- 1 - Betty Baumgartner, Heidi Hein, Ed Schultz, Jr.,
- 2 - Suzanne Rudolph
- 3 - Heidi Denzine, Larry Sprotte
- 6 - Raedynn Fredrickson, Parker Tischauser
- 7 - Norma Heier
- 8 - Denise Bunkelman, Esther Mueller, Wallace Walters
- 9 - Jeremy Hart
- 10 - David Nowacki, Carol Roesler
- 11 - Karen Guralski
- 12 - Curtis Balz, Randy Jeppesen, Brody Lipinski, Mary Schreiber, Tasha Stencil, Michael Zoromski
- 13 - Jordyn Kralcik
- 15 - Rebecca Van Rixel
- 16 - Ryan Tolck
- 17 - Gary Belanger, Ben Hartwig
- 20 - Shirley Denzin, Perry Haehlke, Judy Weiler, Evan Thurs
- 21 - Joe Kepner, Nick Pittman
- 23 - Ava Ford, Andrew Schaer, Brooklyn Westfall
- 24 - Taylor Albrecht, Archie Becker, Ty Bunkelman, Linda Murkowski
- 25 - Joel Mroczenski, George Stauske
- 26 - Gage Punke
- 27 - Sandy Koeller
- 28 - Allison Halvorsen, Nadie Drewek
- 29 - Lois Balz, Mike Dahl, Ava Lemmer
- 30 - Donna Houlihan, Connor Lewandowski, Ava Zettler



April Wedding Anniversaries

Mike & Nancy Pecher	04/01/1978
Ed & Donna Sandle	04/02/1988
Tim & Jamie Diethelm	04/04/2008
Adam & Vicki Halopka	04/05/1997
Ken & Kathy Brice	04/06/1968
Don & Cindy Hardt	04/07/1993
Brian & Kandi Lavicka	04/08/1995
Glen & Lynn Luetschwager	04/08/1978
Ken & Nancy Ellenbecker	04/09/1965
Wallace & Lorna Walters	04/11/1970
Ryan & Karen Ellenbecker	04/13/1996
Derek & Michelle Urmanski	04/13/2013
Jerry & Linda Murkowski	04/19/1975
Jeramie & Katrina Penney	04/21/2000
Don & Marlene Westfall	04/24/1965
Larry & Ronda Frane	04/26/1986
Tim & Sally Westfall	04/27/1968
Tom & Tanya Schaer	04/28/2001

Youth News

Jesus is the Bread
7th & 8th grade Youth Group



Crusaders for Christ
5th & 6th grade Youth Group

Neither youth group met in March due to the Safer at Home Order.



Mission Trip Bound!

June used to seem so far away at the beginning of our planning. Now it's just 2 months away!

The YouthWorks 2020 theme is..

NEIGHBORS

Not where, but how. Not if, but how?

Being NEIGHBORS isn't just about where we live but about how we love the people that God puts in our path. We are reminded that being neighbors isn't a question of *if* we love, but *how* we love!

Please continue to keep the youth and the families in their prayers as they continue to plan for this life changing week-long event.



THANK YOU!

All the youth working hard to raise money for the summer Mission Trip to Benton Harbor, Michigan send out a **HUGE THANK YOU** to everyone for your continued support! Whether through the Advent Meals, Soup Suppers, and Pizza Fundraiser, but mostly for all your prayers. We feel extremely blessed to be a part of this beautiful church family.

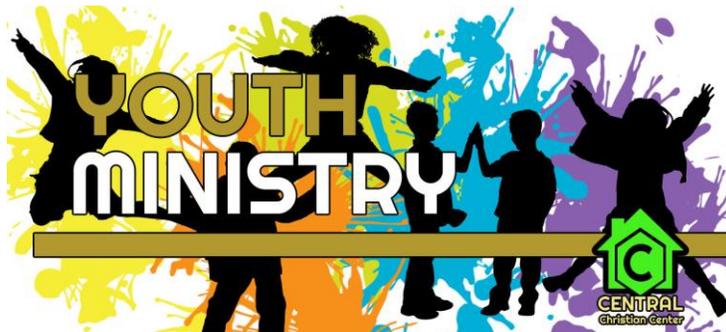


Trinity Lutheran School Happenings

Students might not be "attending" school right now, but they are learning.

Classrooms have been flipped to bedrooms, kitchens, and living rooms. Any place there is a good WiFi signal will serve as back drop for teacher student interaction. "Screen" time now means time spent with teachers on Google Meet or Zoom. Educational materials are now sent home in a tub or distributed through Google Classroom. In a matter of about 3 days, these changes were made by our teachers and we were up and running with this new format. The time, effort, and energy put into this was amazing.

GOD IS GOOD – ALL THE TIME!



Council Meeting – March 11, 2020

Meeting was called to order by President Rick Guralski. Pastor opened with prayer.

Officers:

President - Rick Guralski (P)

Vice President - Andy Thurs (P)

Secretary - Renee Tessmer (P)

Admin Assistant - Judy Weise (P)

Principal - Dean Frick (P)

Rev. Mark Schwalenberg (P)

Board of Elders (P)

Board of Christian Education (P)

Board of Trustees (P)

Board of Stewardship (P)

Youth Coordinator Renell Wassmann (P)

Secretary Report: Motion made by Dawn Mroczenski and seconded by Andy Thurs to approve the secretary report as printed in the monthly newsletter. Motion carried.

Financial Report: Checking Account Balance at the Credit Union \$2,374, Petty Cash \$25, Savings Accounts: Organ Fund \$594, Major Building Repair Fund \$ 6,792, Endowment Fund at Thrivent \$113,561, Special Interest Fund at LCEF \$308, Balance of our Line of Credit at Dorchester Bank \$61,137, Mortensen Progressive Fund \$24,510 Total General Fund Income for February was \$45,251 (Note: Increase of General Offerings was \$10,000 more from last month. Total February Expenses \$52,365 resulting in a loss of \$7,114. Dedicated Funds: School Lunch and Child Care salaries are both paid current. Motion made by Renee Tessmer and seconded by Kaye Schwalenberg to approve the financial report as read. Motion carried.

Boards of Elders: Mark Mroczenski gave report on steps to take with the recent spread of the Coronavirus. The Elders made the decision to keep with the sharing of the peace in the greeting prior to church but to incorporate the hand sanitizing. Would like to have members participate more in on-line giving if possible, in the event that church services would need to be cancelled.

Board of Christian Education: Dawn Mroczenski gave report that School Choice application period is right now and 1 family with two students has been approved. Will contact families that filled out surveys saying that they might qualify for school choice to be proactive before the due date of 4/6/20. Sara Paul, Dean Frick and Judy Weise attended training for school choice. May need to change our budget from a calendar year to a fiscal year. Did some area church visits to St. Johns High Steeple and Bethlehem Lutheran, presentations went well, next visits will be Hope Church on Hwy 97 and St. Johns in Hamburg. Doors have been installed and are functioning. 7 students registered for 3K. 3 spots are open yet. A 5/6th grade tech/ed teacher contract will be put together soon. Lutheran School Accreditation we will need to start working on it this summer. Looking to have someone head this up as it will be like a 2-year process. We need many volunteers to head this up as well as council members. Will need this to be finalized by April 2022. Tuition assistance Fund has \$12,600 in it \$4,000 of it will go to offset tuition for the 3K families. Tuition is looking good as far as payments. Good comments on the delicious lunch for Grandparents day. Patti Riske has volunteered to head up a Trinity Alumni drive and would like to establish a Trinity E-mail account to establish an alumni base. She would like to eventually have an alumni recognition here at the school and possibly an alumni reunion not every year but maybe every 5 years.

Principals Report: Dean Frick reported that we will start gathering information for the Trinity Alumni program. Trinity Lutheran School Accreditation will need to be completed by summer of the third year. Going back to the training may be an advantage to change to a fiscal year. Judy is working on looking back at past expenses as we have to write an educational expense policy. We can depreciate things like the new furnace. We can also write a policy on depreciation so we can include depreciated expenses. The training for School Choice was good and included a great deal of information. *(continued...)*

Dean reported that changing to fiscal year would need to be voted on and asked for a workable timeline would like an answer by the April Council Meeting. Talked about involving more church members in the school choice program as there would need to be several committees. Talked about advertising for Trinity Lutheran School, Dean had gathered with several principals, discussion held that mailings sometimes work better than TV advertising. Wisconsin Valley Lutheran has time with 89Q that could possibly be shared amongst other schools we will continue to look into this but will be put on hold right now due to our financial situation.

Board of Trustees: Joel Mroczenski gave report that light bulbs are almost replaced. Will replace filters on roof once the snow melts. Will do landscaping around the flag pole. Snow Blower will be taken off the lawn mower in the next month or so. Inspection of the chair lift is under contract that Judy sees through.

Board of Stewardship: Continue emphasis on the Consecrated Stewards. Each weekend they will have a display that celebrates a ministry group. 3/22/20 Leadership luncheon for all council members. 3/29/20 is Consecration Sunday with pot luck which will be the completion of the program. Each week at Wednesday service is a bible study. Weekend sermons have a stewardship focus as well.

Pastor: Pastor talked about Lent and Consecrated Stewards. Pastor Lueck will come on Consecration Sunday and will be our guest preacher. Pastor asked for feedback on the Wednesday Lent Bible Studies. Pastor said he will be having a heart procedure called a heart ablation to help fix his A-Fib on 3/19/20. Please keep Pastor in your prayers.

Youth: Crusaders did have their monthly meeting. Held their Lock-In on Thursday 2/20/20 at 8:00 P.M. through Friday morning 2/21/20. "Light up the Night" was their theme. They had youth attend the Dance for Diabetes event held in honor of fellow Crusader, Aubrey Kottke. Many things were there for youth and adults to do. That night over \$21,000 was raised for this cause. Next meeting will be Sunday 3/8/20 at 6:30 p.m. Jesus is the Bread youth group: will continue to have their meeting the third Sunday of each month. Next meeting will be 3/15/20 at 6:30 p.m. Mission Group: The next meeting is 3/29/20 at 6:30 p.m. The Theme being Neighbors. They made approximately 750 pizzas. Still have 3 more Lenten meals. They will also host the Easter Breakfast. Pastor commented on how well the youth are doing on the delicious Lenten meals.

Old Business: None

New Business: Sunday June 21, 2020 10:30-11:30 Dawn Riske and the Riske family will have a concert here at Trinity Church. Judy Weise reported that Advantage Community Bank has been bought out by Nicolet Bank which could possibly change our needs. Jessica Frahm employee of Forward Financial Bank, that will be building in Athens spoke to Judy about our financial situation. She spoke about a program at Forward Financial called a Charitable Money Market Account which is similar to a Savings Account. Income earned in Athens will stay in Athens. Hoping to break ground for the new bank May 1, 2020. Forward Financial could also become the institution that we move our Line of Credit to as they can give us a \$100,000 line of credit and can offer a 4.5% variable rate using the parsonage as collateral, as opposed to the \$75,000 line of credit and 5.25% fixed rate that Advantage Community Bank in Dorchester now gives us. They would need to do an evaluation of the parsonage to include title work and recording fees up to \$500. May transfer our checking account to Forward as well. Council members agreed that this would be a good move for Trinity. US Bank contacted us as well but are unable to accommodate our needs. Motion made by Andy Thurs and seconded by Cheryl Eckert that we make the move and will establish a \$100,000 line of credit at Forward Financial using the parsonage as collateral. Other accounts will be moved to Forward at Pastor and Judy's discretion. Motion carried.

Motion made by Dwight Tolk and seconded by Kaye Schwalenberg to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned. Pastor closed with prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,
Renee Tessmer, Secretary

SPECIAL VOTERS MEETING: March 30,2020 Trinity Lutheran Church – Athens, WI

Meeting was called to order by President Rick Guralski. Pastor opened with prayer. 23 members were present some council members in house and remainder of members called in using Zoom app.

The purpose of the Special Voters Meeting is to vote on increasing our Line of Credit from \$75,000 to \$125,000 and refinance through Forward Bank instead of Advantage Community Bank (Dorchester). Jessica A. Frahm is our contact who was present to answer any questions. VP/Commercial Lender/Forward Bank.

Dean Frick made a motion to increase our line of credit and to move this to Forward Bank and was seconded by Andy Thurs. Discussion was held. Members present voted. 18 yes and 0 no's that Trinity would increase the Line of Credit from \$75,000 to \$125,000 and to move our credit to Forward Bank instead of Advantage Community Bank (Dorchester). Motion Carried.

Side Note: Pastor also brought up that he would proceed with Easter Services which will be planned at the Athens High School parking lot. Other area churches will also hold services here. Good Friday service for Trinity will be at 6:00 p.m. and Easter Sunday Service will be at 8:00 Sunday Morning. More to come.

Ken Brice made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Will Strack seconded it. Meeting adjourned.

Pastor closed with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Renee Tessmer, Secretary.