



**FEBRUARY**

**2021**

To know Christ...  
and make Him known.

**WORSHIP TIMES**

Saturday 7:00 p.m.

Sunday 9:00 a.m.

With Holy Communion  
every 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Weekend

**Bible Study**  
10:00 a.m.

Church Phone: 715-257-7526

School Phone: 715-257-7559

Pastor Mark Schwalenberg  
715-218-8814

# TRINITY TIDINGS

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

Pastor's Corner – February 2021

What one shape most defines Christianity? The cross. Why? Because God the Father's plan for the salvation of all mankind centers around this gruesome instrument of Roman execution. The cross was ancient Rome's symbol of power and judgment. Ultimately, crucifixion was one of the most severe forms of punishment in ancient times. It was incredibly painful. Its victims usually suffered for days, not hours. No one survived. Death gradually came from suffocation.

But for Christians, the cross is also a symbol of love and hope. The cross is symbol of love because Jesus took our place on the cross. Out of love for you and me, he willingly endured the agony of crucifixion, he willingly endured complete separation from the Father as the perfect offering for all mankind's sin. His death and resurrection for us gives us the assurance (hope) of an eternity of perfect peace in heaven with Jesus.



Why are there so many different shapes for crosses? Do these shapes have meaning? Why do some crosses have Jesus on them, and others not?

These are all great questions! During Lent and Holy Week this year we will be talking about the history and meaning of many of the shapes of the cross, and the special blessing that are to be found in these shapes.

**For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.**

**– 1 Corinthians 1:18**

Join us each Wednesday evening in person or on-line for this inspiring and educational sermon series that will help us all grow in our love for our Savior, Jesus Christ.

God's blessings!

Pastor Mark



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# Trinity Lutheran Church, School & Child Care

Mark Schwalenberg  
Pastor

Dean Frick  
Principal / 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

Tanille Hartwig  
Technology Director / Teacher  
5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

Kim Mroczenski  
Teacher / 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

Becky Van Rixel  
Teacher / 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade

Deb Frick  
Teacher / Kindergarten, 4K, 3K

Diane Tolk  
Aide / Kindergarten, 4K, 3K

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](http://www.trinityathens.net)

# Principal's Message



Last week schools across the country celebrated National School Choice Week. Schools celebrated the choices that parents have when educating their children, especially the choice of a Christian Education. Trinity is embarking

on its second year of participating in the Parental School Choice Program of Wisconsin. Applications for the 2021-22 school year are open from Feb 1<sup>st</sup> to April 15<sup>th</sup>. This is the last year that anyone can apply to qualify for a voucher. After the 2021-22 school year only students in 4K, K, and 1<sup>st</sup> grade as well as anyone transferring from a public school, are able apply. We currently have 8 students with vouchers. We hope to increase this number for next year as the district cap increases by 1%. These 8 vouchers more than pay for any expenses we will have associated with changes that we had to make to participate in school choice.

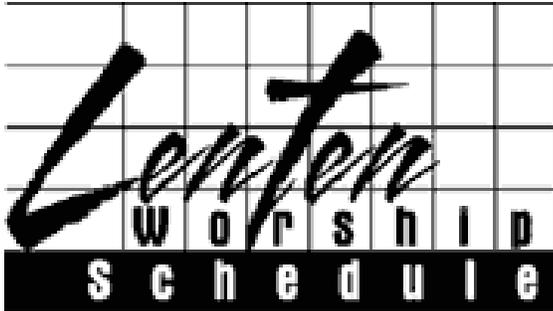
One of the main changes we have had to make is to become an accredited school. We kicked off our accreditation process in January with an informational meeting of all those who have volunteered to help in this self-study process. We have approximately one year from now to have all the work completed. In April of 2022, a visiting team will come in to verify our findings and to decide whether to recommend Trinity by accredited through National Lutheran School Accreditation. We are still in need of volunteers to help with this process. Please contact me or any Board of Christian Education member if you are interested in helping.

We are over halfway through the 2020-21 school year. We continue to ***“Lift our eyes up to the mountains”*** as ***“Our help comes from the Lord”***.

Only with God's help have we been able to navigate this unprecedented year dealing with Covid. We continue to rely on Him as the staff and students have had to make more adjustments to the way we teach than ever before. Some of these adjustments will become permanent improvements to how we provide a Christian education to our students. We will also celebrate when some of these changes are finally gone. May the **“Maker of Heaven and Earth”** continue to guide and protect us though this year.



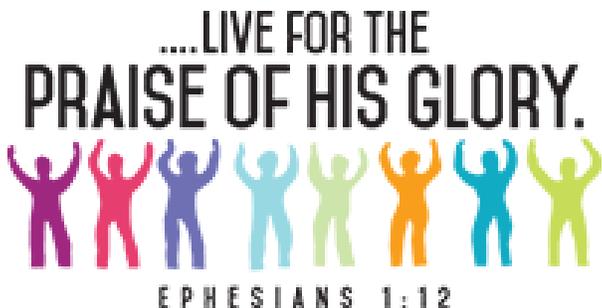
Dean Frick,  
Principal



Ash Wednesday Worship with Holy Communion  
February 17, 2020 – 4:00pm & 7:00pm  
(Asking that you reserve your pew by signing up on the sheets in the Gathering Area.)

Wednesday, February 24 - 7:00pm  
Wednesday, March 3 - 7:00pm  
Wednesday, March 10 - 7:00pm  
Wednesday, March 17 - 7:00pm  
Wednesday, March 24 - 7:00pm

Maundy Thursday Worship with Holy Communion  
April 1, 7:00pm  
Good Friday Worship – 1:30pm & 7:00pm  
Easter Sunrise Worship with Holy Communion  
April 4 – 6:00am  
Easter Celebration Worship with Holy Communion  
April 4 – 9:00am  
Easter Contemporary Worship with Holy Communion – 10:30am



### ATTENTION - 2021 Confirmation Families

Confirmation will be the first Sunday of May –  
**May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021**  
during the 9:00am worship service.

The traditional Faith Celebration will be Wednesday, April 28<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00pm. Pastor will be having a Confirmation Planning Meeting, with Confirmands and their parents, in March. Watch for further details!

**In loving memory** of Frank Koeller, gifts were given to the Altar Guild, Salem Cemetery, General Fund, and Debt Fund, by his family, and also from Jean Ann Thurs, Rick & Julie Kuck, Lenora Hamann, Mark & Dawn Mroczenski, Tony & Cheryl Eckert, Carol Steidinger, Al & Michelle Natzke, Matt & Tammi Viegut and Ken & Nancy Ellenbecker.

**In loving memory** of her mother, Edna Riske, who would have celebrated her 104<sup>th</sup> birthday January 25<sup>th</sup>, a gift was given to Trinity Lutheran School by Linda Riske Eckert. As a 1964 graduate of Trinity Lutheran School, Linda commented that she and her mother have wonderful memories of our church and school.

**In loving memory** of Joan & Roger Gutknecht and Arlo Berndt, a gift was given to the Salem Cemetery Fund by Bonnie Benzinger.

**In loving memory** of Lucinda Nehrbass, a gift was given to the Debt Fund by Bruce & Connie Radloff.

**In loving memory** of Elaine Mueller, gifts were given to the General Fund and Major Building Repair Fund by her family and friends, and also by Dan & Julie Guden, Carol Steidinger, Mark & Dawn Mroczenski, Robert & Barbara Baer, and Don & Faith Gatzke.

**In loving memory** of Martha Zinkowich, gifts were given to the Major Building Repair Fund and Scholarship Fund by and anonymous donor and by Eugene & Doreen Weise.

**In loving memory** of Larry Framke, a gift was given to the General Fund by Kin & Virginia Giese.

*Thank you for your gifts!*

### January Official Acts & Monthly News

**Births / Transfers / Deaths / Weddings:** None

**Baptism:** Briggs Douglas Brodziski, son born to Taran & Heidi Brodziski December 22, 2020, was baptized January 30, 2021.

**Released:** Ty Robert Halopka was granted a Release to St. Anthony Catholic Church. We wish him and Kaylyn the best on their upcoming marriage!

**Hospitalized:**  
Henry Hoff  
Allison Halvorsen  
Kevin Kottke  
Mavis Nehrbass



## February Acolytes

<u>Saturday, February 6</u>	7:00pm
Kian Ellenbecker & Colton Frandsen	
<u>Sunday, February 7</u>	9:00am
Alex LaVake & Eli Schaer	
<u>Saturday, February 13</u>	7:00pm
Michael Meyer & Chance Schienebeck	
<u>Sunday, February 14</u>	9:00am
Aleah Frahm & Malaina Telschow	
<u>Ash Wednesday, February 17</u>	4:00pm
(Acolytes... who can volunteer???)	
<u>Ash Wednesday, February 17</u>	7:00pm
Nick Pittman & Ava Ford	
<u>Saturday, February 20</u>	7:00pm
Addisyn Kottke & Autumn Diethelm	
<u>Sunday, February 21</u>	9:00am
Colton Frandsen & Eli Schaer	
<u>Wednesday, February 24</u>	7:00pm
Gavin Frahm & Garrett Frahm	
<u>Saturday, February 27</u>	7:00pm
Swayne Stencil & Brinly Stencil	
<u>Sunday, February 28</u>	9:00am
Aubrey Kottke & Chance Schienebeck	



## February Birthdays

- 1 - LaVerne Call, Daniel L. Punke
- 2 - Ellie Belter, Austin Natzke, RYANNE PETER
- 3 - Dana Perkins, Olivia Punke, Ken Schug  
Parker Tischauser, Ava Zettler
- 4 - Matthew Weise
- 5 - Jason Mroczenski, Maddix Natzke,  
Dwight Tolk
- 6 - Cindy Hardt, Jane Nehrbass
- 7 - Daltan Lavicka
- 9 - Kyle Frane, Doug Krueger, Mike Rudolph
- 10 - Kristi Redmann, Nick Rudolph
- 11 - Dennis Fladvid
- 12 - Brooklyn Hein, Adam Jeppesen
- 13 - Kandi Lavicka, Richard Paul
- 14 - Derek Czech, Sara Paul, Ryan Tolk
- 15 - Betty Baumgartner, Travis Bergmann
- 16 - Laurie Punke, Kris Venzke
- 18 - Brian Radloff
- 20 - Lenora Hamann, Tucker Roesler
- 21 - Lois Bunkelman, Brian Wiese
- 22 - Leslie Gerhardt, Jeremy Hart; Grant Sodoma
- 24 - Nick Bunkelman, Leslee Schneveis
- 25 - Randy Langhoff, Barb Martin, Donna Houlihan
- 26 - Kierra Penney, Travis Zettler
- 28 - Logan Boushon, Luke Mroczenski
- 29 - Brandon Seefeld, Renee Tessmer

## February Baptism Birthdays

- 1 - Cole Handschke; Tom Schaer
- 2 - Ryan Ellenbecker, Dean Frick,  
Kade Petrie, Daisy Seefeld
- 3 - Tracy Albrecht, Ila Kilinski,  
Mike Nowacki
- 4 - Kinzee Frane, Derek Lavicka,  
Doreen Weise
- 5 - Becki Bliven, Taylor Thurs
- 6 - Samantha Manecke, Diane Murkowski
- 7 - Emily Frick, Nathan Heier
- 8 - Mark Schroeder
- 9 - Jacob Cleveland, Porter Bliven
- 10 - Jean Krueger, Mindy Young
- 11 - Ellen Czech, Tanya Ellenbecker
- 12 - Karen Bergmann, Bev Tiffany
- 14 - Halle Albrecht, Ryan Hovde
- 16 - Gabriel Boushon, Kim Mroczenski,  
Autumn Westfall
- 17 - Nathan Eckert, Don Hardt, RYANNE PETER
- 18 - Phillip Marcott, Oscar Telschow,  
Matthew Weise
- 19 - Declan Bliven
- 20 - Cindy Hardt
- 21 - Jordan Kuck
- 23 - Kyle Frane, Adam Jeppesen, Connor Westfall
- 24 - Robert Nowacki, Olivia Punke,  
Abigail Van Rixel, Kevin Bunkelman
- 25 - Daltan Lavicka
- 26 - Kierra Penney, Colten Weiler
- 27 - Todd Barkow, Laurel Pitzke
- 28 - Sara Paul, Nick Rudolph, Kendra Schug
- 29 - Anna Nowicki



## **Baptism Birthdays**



## February Wedding Anniversaries

<i>Brandon &amp; Samantha Manecke</i>	<i>02/17/2018</i>
<i>Ryan &amp; Kira Hiese</i>	<i>02/20/2020</i>
<i>Nick &amp; Kelsey Rudolph</i>	<i>02/22/2020</i>
<i>David &amp; Linda Westfall</i>	<i>02/26/1972</i>



*Love...*

*vays protects,  
vays trusts,  
vays hopes,  
vays perseveres.*

1 corinthians 13:6,7





## Crusaders for Christ 5<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> grade Youth Group



Crusaders have not been meeting for their monthly meetings but are continuing to live out their pledge of sharing God's love and goodness with their friends and family, and to smile and be kind to those they do not know.

Last year at this time our youth participated in the Dance for Diabetes in Marshfield to raise money for families living with Type 1 Diabetes. A total of \$22K was raised that evening! Due to the Pandemic the "official" event in Marshfield will be held virtually. In support of our "Fellow Crusader Aubrey", we will be joining with the Kottke family and friends for their own version of this event at the Hamburg Town Hall on Saturday, February 13<sup>th</sup>. Our group will join the fun by bringing Trinity's Price is Right Big Spinning Wheel with prizes! A HUGH THANK YOU to Thrivent for the Thrivent in Action Card to help us with the prizes 😊 Our group will be taking precautions by wearing our special "Crusader" face masks that evening.



Please keep all our youth in your prayers as we try our best to follow the recommended guidelines with social distancing. We really want to be able to raise money and hold our Cancer Walk in June!



### 2021 Youth Mission Trip

We weren't able to go last year, but look out Benton Harbor, Michigan... we'll be seeing you in July of 2021!! Eleven youth and 3 chaperones will be making a difference this summer by serving – Gracie Balz, Andrew Frick, Gary Peel, Elizabeth Van Rixel, Heidi Verpoorten, Paige Westaby, Anna Wheatley, Nathan Wolf, Addy Zettler, Jonny Zoromski, Michael Zoromski, and chaperones, Karen Balz, Mike Verpoorten and Judy Weise. ***There is still room for a couple additional youth!***

Youth will be hosting the first five Lent Soup Suppers. The complete menu is in the back of this Newsletter.

The 2021 theme is ***NEIGHBORS... Not where, but who. Not if, but how?*** One of the most radical stories in the Bible is the story of the Good Samaritan. Jesus uses this story to teach us about love and compassion. The Good Samaritan sets and example by choosing to engage, lean in, step toward people and love without limits. In this story, we can reimagine how to love our neighbors in the same way we love ourselves, even when it's costly or challenging.

This summer we will step into this radical story that breaks down cultural barriers. Together we'll spend a week experiencing life alongside "new neighbors" and truly engage with those around us – because being neighbors isn't a question of *if* we love, but *how*.

### **We are looking for a High School & Jr. High Youth Leader!**

You may wonder... *what are the responsibilities of a youth leader?* To be an advocate for our youth! Help plan, develop and implement all aspects of a balanced youth ministry. Help youth feel heard in the church and community. The opportunities! Pray about it, is God leading you to be this leader?????

# Monthly Council Meeting - January 13, 2021

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

## Officers:

President- Rick Guralski (P)	Board of Elders (P)
Vice President- Andy Thurs (P)	Board of Christian Education- (P)
Secretary- Renee Tessmer (P)	Board of Trustees- (P)
Admin Assistant- Judy Weise (A)	Board of Stewardship- (P)
Principal- Dean Frick (P)	Youth Coordinator- Renell Wassmann (P)
Rev-Mark Schwalenberg (P)	

**Secretary Report:** Motion made by Kaye Schwalenberg and seconded by Diane Tolk to approve the secretary report as printed in the monthly newsletter.

**Financial Report:** Checking Account Balance at Credit Union \$38,408, Petty Cash \$0.95. Savings Accounts: Organ Fund \$595, Major Building Repair Fund \$10,739, Enhancement Fund \$1,215, Endowment Fund at LCEF \$122,298, Special Interest Fund at LCEF \$309. Mortensen Progressive Fund \$17,458. Total General Fund Income for December \$64,122, Total December Expenses \$48,876. Dedicated Funds: School Lunch and Child Care salaries are both paid current. Motion made by Ken Punke and seconded by Renell Wassmann to approve the financial report as read. Motion carried.

**Boards of Elders:** The 4 Christmas services went very well, there were almost 500 people between all the services. Thank you to everyone who signed up. Some concern about getting members to come back to church after COVID is over or when things become somewhat normal. Pastor asked for Council to grant Ty Halopka a release from membership at Trinity to the Catholic Church. Motion made Ken Punke and seconded by Kaye Schwalenberg to grant release. Motion carried. Pastor also asked for permission on having two services on Ash Wednesday 4:00 and 7:00 due to the amount of people that usually attend and the fact we need to keep social distanced. Approval given. Sign up sheets will be in the back of church.

**Board of Christian Education:** Dawn Mroczenski gave a recap on the past year reporting that the school has done so well during COVID. The teachers were so organized getting virtual learning started. We got the PPE loan. The school picnic was cancelled but we did have graduation. We had a resignation of a teacher but were able to fill that position with a teacher and member of our congregation. School Choice is going well. Ended up with 8 vouchers, \$15,880 will be added to the positive from School Choice. Shut down periodically but did a great job with virtual learning. Teachers and staff and volunteers have done amazing with the technology to do virtual learning. Still need a replacement for Dawn Mroczenski on the School Board as she is stepping down. She will stay on until June but will remove herself from any topic that would be a conflict of interest. Next big step is accreditation. If we want to be the best school in Athens we need to look at what we can do better and that is what accreditation is. We also hired a preschool teacher. Sarah will stay on as our school choice coordinator. She will help out wherever needed. Audit was completed and submitted. School Safety, trustees have been installing the cameras. Working on a policy about virtual learning vs. in person learning. If students have COVID related issues or are sick then yes they should stay home but they can't just choose to stay home and do virtual learning if school is in session and they are not ill. It's not fair to the teachers with the extra work load and studies show students learn more if they are in school especially at the younger age. Having a kick off meeting 1/20/21 for accreditation teams. About 18 people have signed up but 4 or 5 more people are needed. Dean stated the meeting will be open for people that just want to learn more about what the accreditation is.

**Principals Report:** Dean reported there will be an easier way to deal with Shepherds Staff and get those reports that were needed that created a bottle neck. Sarah Paul will be helping with Judy's workload, school choice and accreditation. Application time is coming around again for School Choice. It is 2/1-4/15. Dean thanked the Trustees for doing the cameras they are all up and working. Accreditation kick off is for set for 1/20/21

**Board of Trustees:** 6 people worked on the camera installation and got them all installed.

**Board of Stewardship:** Kaye reported they would be meeting on 1/18/21 and would be updating a new list of money counters. Pastor and Kaye talked about not doing the Stewardship emphasis right now that we would wait until we are safe as far as Covid goes and then hope that members will return to church. Still many envelopes to be picked up. If someone had not used their box in 2-3 year's they were taken off the list as this was becoming so wasteful.

**Pastor:** Pastor wants to thank everyone for their continued patience with Covid and cooperation with the Christmas Services. He felt they went very well. Pastor has started to visit some of the shut-ins again. We still would like to find a way to restart Sunday School but no plan at this time due to Covid. Pastor is able to go to Athenian Living again but is not allowed to have group Bible Study there yet. More talk about the District Convention that is scheduled in June. Pastor asked if anyone had names of people that they would like to nominate for District President or Vice President as he has a form that we can submit from our congregation. Motion made by Renee Tessmer and seconded by Kaye Schwalenberg to nominate Pastor Lueck for District President. Motion carried. A new Circuit Visitor Pastor from/Edgar Milan has been nominated to replace Pastor Schwalenberg. Need to elect a Lay delegate to the June convention to accompany Pastor. Kaye Schwalenberg made a motion to nominate Rick Guralski as delegate to Lay Convention this was seconded by David Trimner. Motion carried.

**Youth:** Crusaders did their caroling with Jerry and Tamey Zenner's wagon. Mission trip will be doing the Lenten Meals for take-outs only 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Bible Bowl has two committed at this time.

**Old Business:** None

**New Business:** January 31, 2021 will be the quarterly meeting. Elections and budget will be in April.

Motion made by Dawn Mroczenski and seconded by Ken Punke to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried meeting adjourned. Pastor and council closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Renee Tessmer, Secretary

## PTL Meeting Minutes – January 10, 2021

1. Call to Order by Laura Ford 11:05am
2. Prayer by Dean
3. Approval of November 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting Minutes – Moved and 2<sup>nd</sup> to approve the minutes from the last meeting. Motion carried.
4. Reports of Officers and Committees
  - a. Treasurer – not available
  - b. Principal
    1. Staff and students are working hard to continue wearing masks and taking precautions to keep everyone safe and healthy. Other illnesses and diseases are not being spread as well due to wearing masks and taking precautions.
    2. We are looking at eliminating the option of virtual learning and making it available only to students who are in quarantine due to exposure or testing positive for COVID 19. The school is trying to eliminate the extra amount of work required to have students learning virtually.
    3. The main focus for the remainder of the year will be National Lutheran School Accreditation which is required for School Choice
    4. School Choice open enrollment for students in any grade will open on February 1 and run until April 15. This is the last year that students in any grade will be able to apply. After this year, it will be only open to students in 4K, K, and 1<sup>st</sup> grade unless they are coming in from a public school.
  - c. Scrip – Sara reported that the year ended well and people are using the app to purchase Scrip. The end of year total was approximately \$1,300 less than last year.
5. Old Business
  - a. Christmas Program – The whole Christmas service is available online at [trinityathens.net](http://trinityathens.net). There are also some copies available on DVD in the school office.
6. New Business
  - a. Bus Driver Appreciation – Bus driver appreciation week is February 8-12. It was moved and 2<sup>nd</sup> to purchase a \$10 Scrip certificate from On the Square for all of the bus drivers. Motion carried.
  - b. Seroogy's Fundraiser – We will participate again this year. Tabled until next meeting.
  - c. Accreditation Kick off Meeting- Wednesday January 20th 7pm in the church – Anyone who is interested in helping out in any way with Accreditation is invited to come to the Kick Off meeting. An overview of the accreditation process will be presented. Each committee will be meeting afterward to discuss the best time for each group to get together and work on their section.
7. Next Meeting February 14, 2021 – This meeting will possibly be in person. We will continue to monitor if that will be a possibility.
8. Adjourn – Meeting was adjourned at 11:20.

