



From the Pastor's Desk

"Staying Connected Through Life's Transitions"



On Sunday, December 19th Erin, the kids, and I were blessed to use one of my last vacation days of 2021 to attend a worship service at First Trinity Lutheran Church, a Missouri Synod (LCMS) congregation in Oakland with Connor and Kate Wholey! Don and Barb Roose, whose daughter (Ashley) was married by Pastor Doug Spittel at First Trinity, also joined us.

Connor (a senior at CMU) and Kate (a freshman at Pitt) had never visited First Trinity. Finding a new congregation with whom to worship, and getting actively involved in the ministries of that congregation, are difficult challenges for people experiencing life transitions. Whether moving away from home (and your home church) because of a career change, retirement, college (as in

Connor's & Kate's case), marriage, or other life milestones, those transitions and their accompanying challenges can easily cause us to lose contact with the family of Faith.

Erin and I have some experience with that. When I moved away from home in Lancaster, PA to attend Pitt in 1997, I never found a new church home, and only attended worship services a handful of times in my four years at Pitt. When Erin and I moved away from Ruthfred in 2012 for my new job directing a pregnancy center in Harrisburg, it took us over a year to find a new church home.

While Connor and Kate have continued worshiping periodically at Ruthfred, they hadn't yet found a congregation near CMU or Pitt with whom to worship regularly or get involved. When Kate moved to Pitt this fall I naturally didn't see her at Ruthfred as often as I did when she lived at home. Before college she was here several times per week for worship and to participate in and lead youth ministry. When she moved we weren't in regular contact, though I'd often wonder how she was doing.

With 2021 drawing to a close I had one Sunday vacation day to use for the year. I contacted Kate to ask if she'd like to join my family and me in attending a worship service at my favorite Lutheran congregation in Oakland: First Trinity. Kate enthusiastically agreed. Her brother, Connor, said he'd like to join us too! Erin happened to mention to Don and Barb Roose that we'd be visiting First Trinity with Connor and Kate, and they asked to join us too.

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Ruthfred Lutheran Church

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As far as I know First Trinity is the only Lutheran congregation in Oakland that's part of a Bible-believing church body (the LCMS). It's conveniently located three blocks from Pitt's Cathedral of Learning. First Trinity's Pastor, Doug Spittel, has been a friend of mine for several years. I was excited to introduce him to Connor and Kate. We also met First Trinity's college outreach Pastor, Eric Andrae, on the 19th.

It was a wonderful worship service. We were blessed to stay afterwards for lunch with the congregation and to help them put up their Christmas decorations. Connor and Kate enjoyed First Trinity. I pray they'll make it their Oakland church home, and be involved in that congregation's wonderful ministries while in college.

Life's transitions are challenging. Staying connected and active in the family of Faith even when our lives and daily schedules drastically change, as they often do in life transitions, can be overwhelming. I confess that when people move away from Ruthfred and I don't see them as regularly, I can easily lose contact with them, failing to reach out as often as I should. Maybe I've done that with you. Please know, it isn't intentional. Even pastors struggle with life's transitions.

If you're a college student from Ruthfred, or you or someone you know is experiencing some other life transition, has moved away from Ruthfred (perhaps even several years ago), and is struggling to find a good church home, please contact me! Maybe Erin, the kids, and I can visit you too, as we did with Connor and Kate, stop by a local church, and meet the pastor with you!

When my family and I moved in 2012, we were blessed by regularly contacting Pastors Carlson, Osier, and Brent Olson, talking with them throughout our search for a new church home. God blessed us, connecting us with Calvary Lutheran Church (LCMS) in Mechanicsburg, before calling us back into the AFLC, leading us to seminary in 2016.

Here at Ruthfred, or wherever life's transitions take you, may God be glorified in your life! May the peace of God, which passes all understanding, guard and keep your heart and mind through Christ Jesus. Amen.

Love in Christ,
Pastor McMin



Christmas 2021



As always, Ruthfred was beautifully decorated for Christmas, and the empty pews shown in this picture were filled with worshippers joyfully celebrating the birth of our Savior. If you were unable to be with us, or to watch the livestream, services are always available for viewing on the Ruthfred website.



Member Profile:**by Mettelise Ziegler*****Ron & Karen Thorhauer***

Ron and Karen Thorhauer have been church members at least 32 years. Soon, Ron will be retiring from work a second time. He has been the business manager at Ruthfred nearly ten years. Neither Ron nor Karen were raised at Ruthfred, although neither of them would want to belong anywhere else. Ron's father started attending, long after Ron had left home.

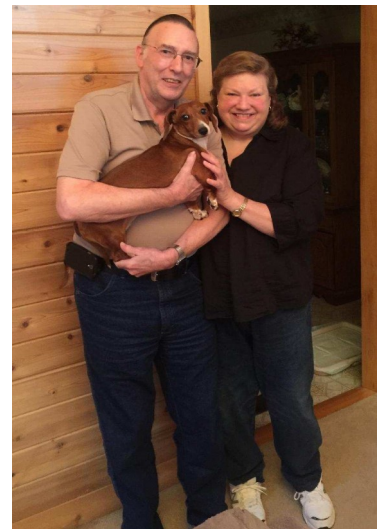
A Bethel Park native, Ron knew Pastor Dennis back in the day. Pastor was legendary for chatting with families all over Ruthfred Acres, whether they belonged to the church or not. He would often connect with Ron at the Ruthfred plaza across the street although at the time Ron and his family attended St. David's Episcopal Church.

Karen is from Brentwood. She attended St. Sylvester's Roman Catholic Church. After working in Don Koenig's State Farm insurance office in Bethel Park for many years, she went back to school, earning Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Social Work. She was employed by Presbyterian Senior Care until this past September when she retired. Ron worked in the auto industry as well as the Community College of Allegheny County and Staples until retiring. He worked part time at the church for five years, and then took a full time position in 2013.

The Thorhauers are a blended family, and have been married forty-two years. They met at an Episcopal church where Ron's son and daughter attended. Friends of Karen's introduced them to each other. They have one son together and several grandchildren. They enjoy getting together with their entire family in Deep Creek, Maryland, where some of them live. They are also happy to have a son and daughter-in-law close by in Finleyville.

Ron says that in his long and varied career, he has never worked at a better place than Ruthfred Lutheran Church. He says it's because of the people. They make Ruthfred a great place to come to work every day, although it is time to retire again.

Thank you, Ron and Karen, for being so loyal to Ruthfred. We are very grateful to you both and are especially thankful that Ron has been such a great business manager for so long.



Respect Life Month Stewardship Project

We have added **New Life Options Pregnancy Center** in Monongahela to our list of benevolences in this year's budget. As January is *Respect Life Month*, we will be collecting baby items for them this month. Any of the items listed below would be greatly appreciated. They can be placed in the marked bin in the fireside lounge through January 30. Thank you! Contact Jill Kurtz with any questions.

Wipes, baby wash, shampoo (unscented)
Diaper cream
Disposable diapers - sizes newborn, 3, 4 & 5
Baby bottles
Hooded baby towels & washcloths
Teething rings, nasal aspirators



Blankets
Crib sheets
Comb & brush sets
Sippy cups
Pacifiers, nail clippers
Onesies - sizes newborn to 24 months - new

Evening JTTW Schedule:



January 5th: Ruth Week 1
January 12th: Ruth Week 2
January 19th: Ruth Week 3
January 26th: Ruth Week 4



February 2nd: The Pilgrim's Progress Week 1
February 9th: The Pilgrim's Progress Week 2
February 16th: The Pilgrim's Progress Week 3
February 23rd: The Pilgrim's Progress Week 4

Time: 6:45 pm – 8:00 pm



90+ Birthday Club

Priscilla Tarr

January 17th 91

Else Resosky

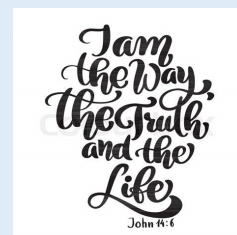
January 24th 91

Official Acts -- December 2021

Funerals:

Kevin Blanc -- 12/27/21 (Prayer service at funeral home)

* indicates member



Life Quotes from Lutherans For Life



Lutherans
For Life

“Where are your eyes today? ... Gaze at the baby Jesus in the manger—born into humanity for you. Watch as Jesus teaches, heals, comforts, and calls lost people to Himself. Fix your eyes on Him as He hangs on that cross for you. And look joyfully at Him as He meets you after the resurrection—loving you, forgiving you, and sending you out into His world to share His love with others ... Let’s fix our eyes on Jesus!”

Dr. Kari Vo, Lutheran Hour Ministries – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life
lutheransforlife.org

Ponderable Quote:

Despotism may govern without faith, but liberty cannot.

Alexis de Tocqueville

Song of the Month

By Tom Glasser

'Tis Good, Lord, to Be Here

Lyrics: Joseph A. Robinson

Music: Johann S. Bach

There are many reasons to be happy about being Lutheran. The most important, of course, is that most Lutheran bodies continue to be stewards and proclaimers of the Gospel of salvation by grace alone, through faith in Christ alone, based on Scripture alone. There are other perks, however. Consider coffee and donuts, potluck suppers, solid teaching and preaching, and plenty of music and singing, just to name a few. Regarding the latter, how cool is it that the Lutheran heritage can lay claim to one who is generally regarded as the greatest composer of all time – Johann Sebastian Bach. Bach was also an extremely talented organist, harpsichordist, and expert in organ construction. With these things in mind, I thought it would be nice to feature a hymn this month by Herr Bach. I was torn, however. Considering how we are entering the Epiphany season, maybe it would be better to write about an Epiphany hymn. I decided to go with the Bach idea.

The first thing I then did was check the Composers index in the back of our SBH hymnal. There were 20 entries from which to choose – great! One by one, however, I found that the credit to Bach was for adapting, arranging, and/or harmonizing. A bit confused, I reached out to our own Bob Vogel for any insight he could provide on this. Here was his knowledgeable, thoughtful response:

"Bach is not remembered as a prolific composer of original hymn tunes. However, a Chorale is a German hymn, and Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians lists over 200 Chorales for four voices to Bach's credit. In total, Bach reharmonized about 400 existing chorale melodies. Some movements of Bach's Church Cantatas were used as hymn tunes, but again, most would have been based on melodies that were already known such as *A Mighty Fortress* and *Wachet Auf*. Germans loved their Chorales, so Bach would write Chorale Preludes such as *Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring*, where the chorale tune was woven one line at a time into a newly composed and elaborate work. Interestingly, Bach was so prolific as a composer that Beethoven commented, 'Not Brook (Bach is German for 'Brook') but Sea should be his name.'"



Pressing on, however, I did find a hymn in my old Missouri Synod hymnal credited to Bach – the melody that is. It's a simple, very singable hymn titled "'Tis Good, Lord, to Be Here". The lyrics are by Joseph A. Robinson, an English academic from the late 19th / early 20th centuries. His lyrics got paired with Bach's melody called 'Potsdam', probably so named from Bach's visit to Potsdam to meet with King Frederick II (later dubbed Frederick the Great).

By happy coincidence, the theme of "'Tis Good" is the Transfiguration of Jesus, which happens to fall on the last Sunday of Epiphany. This hymn would thus satisfy both of my goals for this article! It is interesting to note, also, that apparently there are not very many hymns in existence devoted to the Transfiguration. This hymn may be one of very few. On the down side, however, it does not appear in our SBH or Ambassador hymnals, and so I fear not many of my readers may be familiar with it. Maybe our pastors would consider introducing it for Transfiguration Sunday.

Continued on next page ...

Here are the prayerful lyrics:

*'Tis good, Lord, to be here, Thy glory fills the night;
Thy face and garments, like the sun, shine with unborrowed light.*

*'Tis good, Lord, to be here, Thy beauty to behold;
Where Moses and Elijah stand, Thy messengers of old.*

*Fulfiller of the past, promise of things to be;
We hail Thy body glorified and our redemption see.*

*Before we taste of death, we see Thy kingdom come;
We fain would hold the vision bright, and make this hill our home.*

*'Tis good, Lord, to be here, Yet we may not remain;
But since Thou bidst us leave the mount, come with us to the plain.*



Worship Team Members for January 2022

Acolytes:

8:30 a.m. Joshua Cimarolli
11:00 a.m. Noah McMinn

Crucifers:

8:30 a.m. (1/9, 1/23) Maddie Cox
11:00 a.m. (1/2, 1/16, 1/30) Abby Stutzman

Altar Guild:

Kathi Siciliano

Counters:

8:30 am Brian Schmidt and TBD
11:00 am Will Charlton,
Kris Wentz

Ushers:

8:30 am Bernard Pattera,
John Ruzicka
11:00 am TBD

Coffee Hour:

Weighley

CL



~Psalm 84:10
(KJV)~

For a day in thy courts
is better than a thousand.
I had rather be a
doorkeeper in the
house of my God, than
to dwell in the tents
of wickedness.

CL







January, 2022

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 
2 Holy Communion 8:30 Sunday School 9:45 Holy Communion 11:00 Holy Communion 6:00 CITY MISSION FOOD	3 Craft & Sew 9:30 Elders' Meeting 7:00	4 Worship Team 7:00	5 Children's Choir 5:45 Bell Choir 6:30 JTTW 6:45 Confirmation 6:45 Kids' Time 6:45	6 	7 Men's Prayer Group 7:00 a.m.(Fireside Lounge)	8 Mary Bible Study 9:30 (Fireside Lounge)
9 Worship Service 8:30 Sunday School 9:45 Worship Service 11:00	10 JTTW Leaders 9:30 Elders' Prayer Time 7:00 Council Meeting 7:30	11 Worship Team 7:00	12 JTTW 9:15 Esther Noon Children's Choir 5:45 Bell Choir 6:30 JTTW 6:45	13 Knit Wits 10:00	14 Men's Prayer Group 7:00 a.m.(Fireside Lounge)	15 Contemporary Liturgical Worship Service 5:00
16 Worship Service 8:30 Sunday School 9:45 Worship Service 11:00	17 JTTW Leaders 9:30 Craft & Sew 9:30 Happy 91 st Birthday Priscilla Tarr 	18 Worship Team 7:00	19 JTTW 9:15 Children's Choir 5:45 Bell Choir 6:30 JTTW 6:45	20 Ruth 2:00	21 Men's Prayer Group 7:00 a.m.(Fireside Lounge)	22
23 Sanctity of Human Life Sunday Worship Service 8:30 Sunday School 9:45	24 JTTW Leaders 9:30 Happy 91 st Birthday Else Resosky 	25 Worship Team 7:00 Benevolence Committee 7:00	26 JTTW 9:15 Children's Choir 5:45 Bell Choir 6:30 JTTW 6:45 Confirmation 6:45	27 Knit Wits 10:00	28 Men's Prayer Group 7:00 a.m.(Fireside Lounge) XYZ Noon	29
30 Worship Service 8:30 Sunday School 9:45 Worship Service 11:00	31 JTTW Leaders 9:30					

January 2022

Youth Ministry Calendar

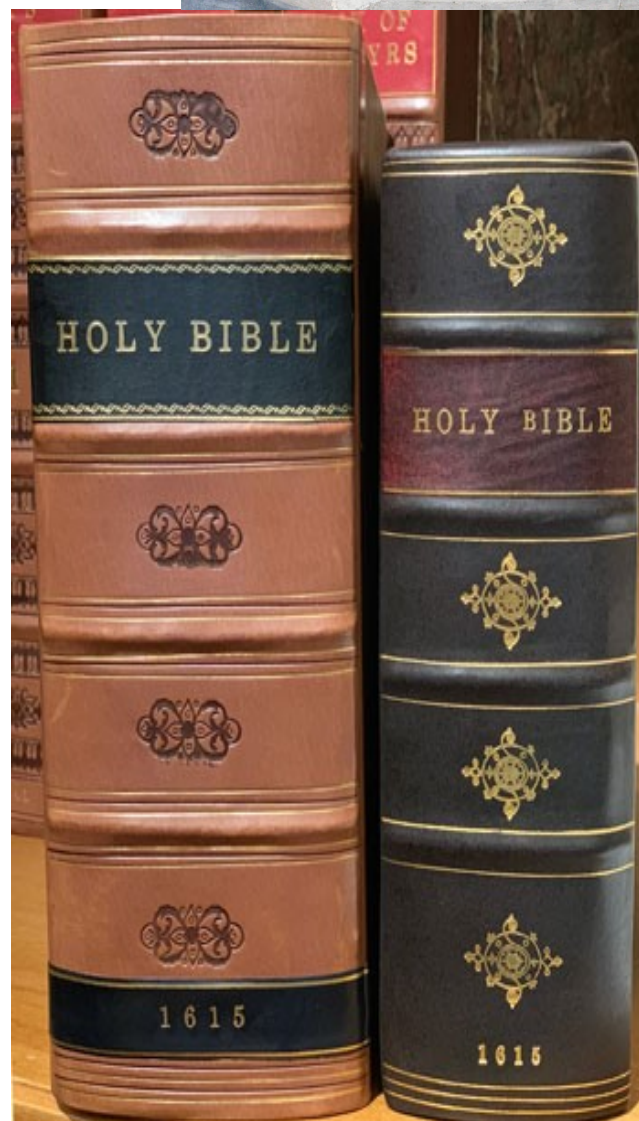


Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 
2 Sunday School 9:45	3	4 TNT @ Church 7-9	5	6  EPIPHANY OF THE LORD	7	8
9 Sunday School 9:45 SWAP @ Church 6-7:30	10	11 TNT @ Church 7-9	12	13	14	15
16 Sunday School 9:45 SWAP @ Church 6-7:30	17	18 TNT @ Church 7-9	19	20	21	22 Game Night @ Church 5-10 p.m.  GAME NIGHT
23 Sunday School 9:45 SWAP @ Church 6-7:30	24	25 TNT @ Church 7-9	26	27	28	29
30 Sunday School 9:45 SWAP @ Church 6-7:30	31					

Reading Through the Bible 2022

Schedule for January

1st	Genesis 1	Genesis 2	Genesis 3
2nd	Genesis 4	Genesis 5	Genesis 6 Genesis 7
3rd	Genesis 8	Genesis 9	Genesis 10 Genesis 11
4th	Genesis 12	Genesis 13	Genesis 14 Genesis 15
5th	Genesis 16	Genesis 17	Genesis 18
6th	Genesis 19	Genesis 20	Genesis 21
7th	Genesis 22	Genesis 23	Genesis 24
8th	Genesis 25	Genesis 26	
9th	Genesis 27	Genesis 28	Genesis 29
10th	Genesis 30	Genesis 31	
11th	Genesis 32	Genesis 33	Genesis 34
12th	Genesis 35	Genesis 36	Genesis 37
13th	Genesis 38	Genesis 39	Genesis 40
14th	Genesis 41	Genesis 42	
15th	Genesis 43	Genesis 44	Genesis 45
16th	Genesis 46	Genesis 47	
17th	Genesis 48	Genesis 49	Genesis 50
18th	Exodus 1	Exodus 2	Exodus 3
19th	Exodus 4	Exodus 5	Exodus 6
20th	Exodus 7	Exodus 8	Exodus 9
21st	Exodus 10	Exodus 11	Exodus 12
22nd	Exodus 13	Exodus 14	Exodus 15
23rd	Exodus 16	Exodus 17	Exodus 18
24th	Exodus 19	Exodus 20	Exodus 21
25th	Exodus 22	Exodus 23	Exodus 24
26th	Exodus 25	Exodus 26	Exodus 27
27th	Exodus 28	Exodus 29	
28th	Exodus 30	Exodus 31	Exodus 32
29th	Exodus 33	Exodus 34	Exodus 35
30th	Exodus 36	Exodus 37	Exodus 38
31st	Exodus 39	Exodus 40	



A joyful heart is good medicine.

Proverbs 17:22a

For the science enthusiasts among us:

Two atoms were walking down the street one day in opposite directions, and accidentally collided. The first said to the second, "So sorry, are you OK?" "No, I've lost an electron." "Are you sure?" "I'm positive!"

A neutron walked into a bar one day and ordered a drink. "How much will that be?", he asked. The bartender replied, "For you -- no charge."

I found a good book the other day all about helium. Couldn't put it down!

Church of the Covered Dish by Thom Tapp



"Our family is trying one of those old-fashioned churches, with preaching, the Bible, and all that stuff."

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SIRI ... SAY GRACE

02-06-2015