

# TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

2015 ANNUAL REPORT

*JANUARY 24, 2016*

*This is Christ's church...*

*There is a place for you here.*



**2015 ANNUAL REPORT  
OF  
TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**

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# ***TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH***

107 South 7th Street  
Laramie, WY 82070

## **ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

January 24, 2016  
10:15 a.m.

### **AGENDA**

**Confirmed members sign in**

**Call to Order**

**Devotions** – President Andrea Toven

**Adoption of Agenda**

**Approval of 2015 Annual Meeting Minutes**

**Introductions of New Staff Members**

Susan Manown - Treasurer

James Greening – Church Office Secretary

**Election of Council members**

Introduction of 2015 Council

Introduction of 2016 Council candidates: (5 Openings)

Nominations from the floor

Appointment of Tellers

Election (Three 3-year Full Terms)

**2015 Reports**

Pastor's Report

Intern's Report

Church Council President

Standing Committees

Campus Ministry

Christian Education

Confirmation

Evangelism

Fellowship

Finance

Internship

Mutual Ministries

Property

Social Ministry

Stewardship

Worship & Music

Vision

**Other**

Altar Guild

Endowment Fund

**Acceptance of the 2015 Staff, President's, Standing Committee,  
and Other Reports.**

**Financial Status Report**

Treasurer's Report for 2015  
Acceptance of Report

**Unfinished Business**

**New Business**

1. Synod Assembly Delegates (April 28-30, 2016 in Loveland, CO)
2. Presentation of & Action on Proposed 2016 Budget
3. Installation of Council Members

**Announcements**

Revised Congregational Constitution – Work Continues on Revisions

**Adjournment**

**Closing Prayer** - Pastor Rachel Larson

**2015 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES**

February 1, 2015

The meeting was called to order by Terri Rittenburg on 1 February 2015 at 9:25 a.m.

**Devotions:** Devotions were led by Don Holmstrom.

**Quorum reached at 9:48 a.m.**

**Adoption of Agenda**

Thomas Edgar made a motion to adopt the agenda, Sally Edgar seconded the motion

Discussion: none, Motion passed 9:49

**Approval of the 2014 Minutes**

Larry Hazlett made a motion to approve the minutes, Adam Huck seconded the motion

Discussion: Pastor Rachel clarified that reports re the 2014 minutes are really about 2013 even though the meeting occurred in 2014

Motion passed at 9:50

**Election of council members**

Introduction of 2014 council: Eric Nye, Roland Kidwell, Jennifer Lyford, outgoing members. Terri Rittenburg, Steve Boss, Lindsay Conyers, Mark Stayton, Eric Wright, Kris Oolman, Jennie Lawrence.

Candidates for 2015 council: Margot Birkholz, Sharon Leder, third vacancy has no candidate.

Diane Fiedler made a motion to accept these nominees for council and to cease nominations, and for council to seek additional member to be appointed by council at the soonest possible meeting.

Mary Baldwin seconded the motion, Discussion: none, Motion passed with one dissenting vote.

Roland Kidwell moved to elect Margot and Sharon by acclamation, Thomas Edgar seconded, Motion carried.

Acclamation at 9:53.

## **2014 Reports**

In the interest of time, see the printed reports of committees

Other reports not printed:

Endowment: \$17,995.81 is in the endowment, gain of \$409.72 in 2014. Terri said council will determine who will write the report in the future.

Altar Guild: a correction was suggested to the report, but upon further investigation it was found that the report was correct as printed in the book; prior recognition of said item appeared in 2013 report.

Roland Kidwell made a motion to accept the Pastor's, Church President's, Standing committees, Altar Guild, and endowment fund as presented, Steve Boss seconded the motion, Discussion: none

Motion passed 9:56

## **Financial Status Report**

Roland Kidwell acknowledged Heather Patterson, our Treasurer since January 2014.

Roland Kidwell reviewed Finance Officer's report. He suggested that Trinity needs to decide on changing how we look at some restricted funds, incorporating them into the budget. The plan is to retain the Building, Memorial, Piano Replacement, Pastor Housing, and Thrivent Choice Funds but fold others into operations. January offerings were about \$6,000 short of the \$20,000 per month offerings needed for the 2015 proposed budget. Perhaps the late university start lowered giving, but the congregation needs to realize that more giving is needed, including in times when people are away like Christmas break and the summer. Linda Kidwell noted that the 2014 budget was built on calling a less experienced pastor, but we voted to call a more experienced pastor and made the financial commitment to do so.

Eric Nye made a motion to accept the financial status report, Mark Stayton seconded, Discussion: none

Motion passed

## **New Business**

Synod delegates are needed. The conference will be in Salt Lake City this year. Lindsay Conyers has expressed interest. Pastor Rachel doesn't want to have preference for couples, so if a man is interested, she offered to share lodging with Lindsay.

Roland Kidwell moved that volunteers contact the pastor, and council will vote at the February meeting.

Thomas Edgar seconded, Motion passed.

## **Budget:**

Roland Kidwell discussed the proposed budget, reminding the congregation that they had voted to call Pastor Rachel, including paying salary and benefits for her experience. Council wants to fold other funds into the operating budget, because funds and control of funds are getting too disbursed. But youth, music, and campus

ministry are all part of operations and should be the central work of the church, so their funds should be consolidated. R. Kidwell was concerned about the giving level and whether it will support the budget. This is what council agreed on, but if the congregation wants to propose cuts, they can. However, he noted, the focus should be on giving. The congregation was encouraged to look at the stewardship report for guidance on needed giving and to challenge themselves to consider whether they could give more.

Synod support for the intern is in a restricted account. The intern account balance is \$12,580, and the budget proposed using \$11,350 of that for an intern in 2014.

Diane Fiedler asked about whether we need both a youth minister and an intern. Trey Sherwood said the intern comes and goes and can't do long-term relationship building, so there are advantages for a longer term youth minister. Jennifer Lyford said that in the past, too much responsibility for youth was delegated to the intern. Pastor Rachel said an intern is supposed to get broad experience, but her vision is to have the intern work with campus ministry but also share the responsibility with the pastor, leaving more time for homebound, setting up service, etc. Mary Baldwin said interns are part of our service to the wider church. Lindsay Conyers noted we need to decide today whether to have an intern.

The music development fund includes paid singers, but it's being folded into the general fund, with faith that the benefactors of that fund will continue to do so through the general fund. Pastor Rachel explained the music coordinator line to help with planning of music and to help guide Meng as our organist.

Mike Smith noted youth/campus ministry and intern money is there. He pointed out other items are obligated, like pastor salary. He said it has always been up to council to figure out what not to pay if there's not money to pay. He pointed out that money has never been pledged to support budget, but it's always a wish list. He said we can argue line items, but he said we should adopt budget on faith.

Linda Kidwell suggested a report of how many pledges and past gifts are in each stewardship category to help us know where we stand.

Mark Lyford moved that we adopt the budget in faith in our work in the body of Christ, Trey Sherwood seconded.

Discussion:

John Mauer said council has always had the responsibility to determine decisions about which things to cut as we go. Larry Oolman asked about money for an intern and whether it will continue. Pastor Rachel said synod campus ministry gives us \$7,000 a year and we have leeway in how to use it, but an intern is the likely option. Lindsay Conyers clarified that the budget implies agreement to pursue an intern. Larry Hazlett asked about whether we can change to subscription service to Lutheran Magazine. That was rejected two years ago, so others suggested it was too soon to revisit that option. Diane Fiedler said we need to commit to clearing sidewalks, and she asked about flooring. Roland Kidwell noted that the flooring would be something to be addressed in the building fund, not the operating budget. He reminded the congregation that we're also folding in restricted funds, so the finances will look deceptively flush next month so we need to be cautious.

Lindsay Conyers called the question. Motion passed.

Mark Lyford's motion to adopt the budget passed on voice vote with a few voice no votes and two abstentions – pastor and finance chair.

**Unfinished Business as service time arrived:** Council will be installed next week.

**Adjournment:** Lindsay Conyers moved to adjourn. Mary Baldwin seconded. Meeting adjourned 10:30 a.m.

**Closing:** Closing prayers were offered by Pastor Rachel Larson

## **2015 CURRENT COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Margot Birkholz	<b>Evangelism</b>	<b>TERM ENDS:</b>	2018
Steve Boss	<b>Property / V. P.</b>	<b>TERM ENDS:</b>	2017
Lindsay Conyers	<b>Social Ministry</b>	<b>TERM ENDS:</b>	2016
Rachel Larson	<b>Pastor / Vision</b>	<b>TERM ENDS:</b>	N/A
Jennie Lawrence	<b>Christian Education</b>	<b>TERM ENDS:</b>	2016
Sharon Leder	<b>Worship &amp; Music</b>	<b>TERM ENDS:</b>	2018
Kris Oolman	<b>Fellowship / Secretary</b>	<b>TERM ENDS:</b>	2017
Terri Rittenburg	<b>Stewardship</b>	<b>TERM ENDS:</b>	2016
Mark Stayton	<b>Mutual Ministries</b>	<b>TERM ENDS:</b>	2017
Andrea Toven	<b>President</b>	<b>TERM ENDS:</b>	2016

## **NOMINATION COMMITTEE / CANDIDATES FOR 2016 COUNCIL**

This year's Nomination Committee included the Church Council.

Those members going off Council today are: Jennie Lawrence, Terri Rittenburg, and Andrea Toven. Also, there were two resignations submitted earlier in the fall of 2015: Mark Muhsman and Eric Wright. We truly appreciate your dedication and hard work for the good of our congregation.

Lindsay Conyers has agreed to another term as council member. Thank you for your willingness to continue helping our congregation.

We currently have 5 open positions on Church Council (Three are 3-year terms; one is a 2-year term; one is a 1-year term). Judy Moline and Mark Lyford have presented themselves as nominees. Additional nominations will be taken from the floor and introduced during the Annual Meeting on January 24, 2016.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Nomination Committee

## **2015 REPORT OF THE PASTOR**

### **I am thankful...**

1. for all of you who give so much of yourselves to this community of faith, to our surrounding community and to the world around us. Your generosity of spirit, of time, of talents and financial resources witnesses to others of our gracious and loving God.
2. for many concrete ways our congregational council, teachers, committee members, office volunteers, gardeners, musicians, worship assistants, nursery attendants, property caretakers, and many others give hours, prayers, preparation, practice and sweat equity to make this church function.
3. for our new members who by their presence and gifts have enriched our life together. We received Ben and Jenna Clancy, Don Holmstrom, Tony and Kaitlin Maus in February. Roger and Wendy Bredehoft; Laura Buckner; Doug, Marie, Connor and Lauren Frick; Den'ja, Sara, Daphne and Deacon Pommarane; and Jacob Smith joined us in May.
4. for those employees who served us well and resigned this past year: Adam Huck who was our Youth and Campus Ministry Associate during the 2014-2015 academic year, Colleen Minor who faithfully

served the better part of twenty years as our church secretary and Heather Patterson our treasurer for two years.

5. and for those who continue their work among us: Meng Xu, organist/pianist, Larry Hazlett, choir director and Jennifer Lyford, music coordinator who so graciously led the musical efforts of our congregation this past year.
6. for those new employees who we welcome to our midst: James Greening, our office secretary and Susan Manown, our treasurer.
7. for the opportunities I had to renew our campus ministry connections within the local community and the wider church by attending both the regional and national Lutheran Campus Ministry Staff Conferences, participating in the Rocky Mountain Synod Campus Ministry Committee gatherings, and applying for and receiving a \$15,000 Campus Ministry Internship Grant from the Constance Parvey Fund of National LCM.
8. for the re-establishment of the Internship Program with Wartburg Seminary and this year's intern, Jennifer Michael. Jennifer brings openness to learning about pastoral ministry, offers her gifts willingly, and has adapted gracefully to changes in office staffing.

### **I have noticed...**

1. the care you have taken to repair and update the worship space, church offices and the church grounds. All of this has increased the beauty and functionality of Trinity and enhances the worship and fellowship experiences of members and visitors.
2. that our financial support of the ministries of Trinity has grown significantly. We continue to work on financial planning and reporting. The ministry of stewardship received a boost with new paper forms and the option of completing them online.
3. that we have been willing to try some new things. This is a good sign. While some have been met with enthusiasm, others have struggled to get off the ground. So it goes!
4. that gathering for worship and fellowship is a real strength. For example, our Lenten season was a rich and meaningful experience with people participating in the mid-week soup suppers, Holden Evening Prayer and the biblical character monologues. In lieu of regular classes, our confirmation students served as lead worship assistants.
5. that our online presence has increased significantly with upgrades to our website: our church activity calendar, newsletter, photo albums, weekly blog and sermons. We have a Facebook page for Campus Ministry and a public Facebook group for anyone interested.

### **In the coming year I hope...**

1. we develop a clear mission statement and goals for the next five years.
2. we study the foundational elements of scripture and the Lutheran traditions as we anticipate the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation.
3. we continue to strengthen our education and formation of our children.
4. we finish administrative "things left undone," such as adopt a revised constitution and bylaws, review our policies and procedures regarding finances, update job descriptions, and initiate annual reviews.
5. we can find a way to continue the internship program by increasing our financial commitments to the work of our congregation.
6. we celebrate the many wonderful people, gifts, stories, and opportunities for service we have as the congregation of Trinity Lutheran Church.

Grace and Peace,  
Rachel S. Larson

## **2015 CONGREGATIONAL STATISTICS**

	<u>12/31/13</u>	<u>12/31/14</u>	<u>12/31/15</u>
Family Units	174	171	177
Baptized Members	407	397	421
Confirmed Members	354	333	332
Avg. Worship Attendance	130	110	103

## **2015 REPORT OF THE INTERN**

For the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, each candidate for rostered leadership must complete some form of internship. This experience is considered a core integrative experiential learning component of the spiritual formation of our public leaders. It is a program that provides opportunities to gain hands-on experience in all aspects of pastoral ministry, including pastoral care, visitation, outreach, and sharing God's word with others. Here at Trinity Lutheran Church, you have been participating in this formation process for almost 20 years. What a gift to the church!

As part of my own formation, I would like to share with you the many ways your support has helped me to grow and learn. Here are some highlights of what I have been able to accomplish while serving as your intern:

- Worked with multiple committees—including Campus Ministry, Worship & Music, Finance & Stewardship, and Church Council—to enhance the mission and ministry of Trinity Lutheran.
- Facilitated Trinity Lutheran Campus Ministry (TLCM) group each Sunday; this includes tracking down study resources and programming from a multitude of sources at no cost to TLCM.
- Co-leader of confirmation classes with Pastor Rachel; developed PowerPoint slides for each class and created additional original content to augment the “Here We Stand” study materials.
- Visited with many of our shut-ins and other older members on a monthly basis, providing pastoral care and fellowship to those who are not able to attend church regularly.
- Leader of adult Christian education in multiple areas including women's bible study, adult Sunday school and a small group adult study on the book *Faith in the Face of Empire* by Mitri Raheb.
- Preached at least once per month and presided during worship twice as a Synodically Authorized Minister of Word and Sacrament.
- Active partner in planning worship and other events to enrich the spiritual lives of the congregation.

This is only a partial list of what has happened during my time here to as your intern. And there are certainly many more intangible things that have helped in my formation. However, I can confirm that in every experience, I am learning. In every encounter, I am stretching beyond my current knowledge and gaining insights that will be invaluable to me as I move forward.

Because of my relationships with each of you, I am building a foundation of pastoral experience that will be the bedrock of my ministry. You are the ones helping me to hone my skills and strengthen my call. You are vital to my theological education... but more importantly, you have an impact on how I see the future of our church. Thank you so much for all that you do to support me and to support the crucial task of growing leaders!

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jennifer Michael

## **2015 REPORT OF THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT**

2015 has proven to be a year of blessings and challenges for Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church. It has been exciting to see and be a part of all the changes going on here! Some of our highlights from the past year include:

- Changes to the sanctuary - refinishing the original hardwood floor, installing new carpet in the transepts, and reinstalling the pews
- A new contemplative worship service, held once a month on Sunday evenings
- Our re-entry into the internship program with Wartburg Theological Seminary
- A new secretary (James Greening) and treasurer (Susan Manown)
- Redecorating and refreshing the nursery
- Continued work on the landscaping around the bell tower

### **FINANCIAL OVERVIEW**

At times, it has been a struggle to meet the budget that was approved at the 2015 annual meeting. Due to changes in Thrivent funding, we were able to move those funds not designated to a specific area or project into the general fund. Trinity received a significant grant from the Constance Parvey Fund, administered by the churchwide ELCA Campus Ministry office, which helped to fund this year's intern. We have tried to be good stewards of all funds that we have received, no matter what the source may be. Expenditures for 2015 were lower than expected, and generous giving in December allowed Trinity to finish 2015 in good financial shape.

The ad hoc budget committee - Linda, Thom, Kris, and Jason - diligently prepared a draft budget and presented it to the council for review. The council suggested changes and adjustments to the committee, and it was decided to present both "Budget A" and "Budget B" to the congregation. The major differences between the budgets include an adjustment in custodial services, not having an intern for 2016-17, and turning down the second year of our grant from the Constance Parvey Fund. Please carefully review the differences between the two budgets before our annual meeting. When we discuss the 2016 budget at our annual meeting, please be mindful of what and how you can contribute and help your church meet its obligations and goals as set forth in that plan for ministry.

### **THANK YOU!**

I would be remiss if I didn't recognize the saints who have led our congregation this year -

Thank you to those who served faithfully on church council - Jennie, Lindsay, Terri, Mark S., Sharon, Margot, Kris, Stephen, Mark M., and Eric

Thank you to Trinity's staff members - Colleen, James, Heather, Suzy, Larry, and Meng

Thank you to our pastoral staff - Pastor Rachel and Intern Jennifer

And thank you to YOU, the saints of Trinity, for giving your time, talents, and treasure to advance the work of the Kingdom in Laramie, in the Rocky Mountain Synod, and beyond!

Your sister in Christ,

Andrea Toven

Trinity Congregational President, 2015

## **2015 REPORT OF THE CAMPUS MINISTRY COMMITTEE**

The purpose of the Campus Ministry Committee is to provide support and guidance for our student-led RSO, Trinity Lutheran Campus Ministry (TLCM). The committee meets on a monthly basis, usually on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month and is composed of 8 members: Janet Boss, Trey Sherwood, Pastor Rachel Larson, Intern Jennifer Michael, Thom Edgar, Mark Lyford, Liz Darnell, and Adam Huck. We thank all of them for their diligent efforts to support this valuable outreach ministry for Trinity Lutheran Church.

Events and activities for Campus Ministry in 2015 include the following:

- Adam Huck served as Campus Ministry Associate from September 2014-May 2015.
- Adam led weekly gatherings/discussions/fellowship on Wednesdays.
- Students tabled in the Wyoming Union during both spring and fall semester, as well as during Saturday Discovery Days and New Student Orientation in summer 2015.
- A grant proposal process began in February and resulted in an award from the Lutheran Campus Ministry Constance Parvey Fund of \$15,000 over two years to help re-establish a campus ministry internship. The proposal is on file in the church office.
- "Faith Talks," a panel discussion of "big questions" moderated by Adam Huck was held on campus in the spring semester.
- On August 22, 2015, Intern Jennifer Michael attended a training event at the synod office to learn more about the *El Camino Colorado* mentoring program in the hopes of using a similar approach for TLCM. This program matches mentors with students to explore faith and vocation in a supportive relationship.
- Fall semester kick-off meeting included a drum circle with Alice Telander leading and closing with prayers around the cross. Weekly gatherings are now held on Sundays, 5:00pm – 7:00pm.
- In October, 5 students and 2 committee members participated in the "Ghost Tour" at the Wyoming Territorial Prison.
- On October 24, 2015, Pastor Rachel and Intern Jennifer attended the Rocky Mountain Synod Campus Ministry Committee meeting sharing information and ideas with other campus ministry groups in our synod.
- In November, students began a study series called "Animate: Faith". This study is an imaginative exploration of Christianity's big questions with topics such as "God", "Religion", "The Cross," and others that sparks spirited conversations about faith. This study, facilitated by Intern Jennifer, will continue in the 2016 spring semester.
- Students have been participating regularly as worship assistants in the contemplative worship service that occurs each 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month.
- Meals provided each week by congregation members from Trinity Lutheran.
- Plans for the upcoming semester include a targeted service project, co-sponsoring a "Healing of the Nations" interfaith service on UWyo campus, and helping as chaperones/mentors for the Wyoming Conference Youth Retreat.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jennifer Michael

## **2015 REPORT OF THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

Christian Education provided various opportunities for church members and visitors. Darcy Loeske accepted the position as Sunday School Superintendent. The Sunday School students have been busy with a variety of activities throughout the year, including planting pansies in the Memorial Garden and starring in the recent Christmas Pageant. Seven adults are active as Sunday School teachers. Various changes were made to the Sunday School room assignments in order to make the space more user-friendly. Adam Huck was Trinity's link to Vacation Bible School. We had a number of youngsters from Trinity attend as both students and helpers. Confirmation class continues with Pastor Rachel and Intern Jennifer teaching. Various adult study opportunities are available, including the Women's Bible Study, and a Sunday morning bible study.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jennie Lawrence

## **2015 REPORT ON CONFIRMATION**

On May 31, 2015 the following young people were confirmed: Kelcey Anderson, Derk Lyford and Trey Muhsman.

This year we are studying the Bible using *Here We Stand* materials from Augsburg Fortress. Intern Jennifer and Pastor Rachel are team-teaching the class that meets on Wednesday evenings at 7:00PM. We have another large group in the Confirmation class: Silja Alexander, Marygrace Buckner, Carl Buckner, Nick Ferris, Connor Frick, Rylie Hegge, Kent Henry, Eli Jablin, Madie Jablin, Rebecca Lyford, Ian Meyer, Marlana Meyer and Makayla Renneisen.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Pastor Rachel Larson

## **2015 REPORT OF THE EVANGELISM COMMITTEE**

No report submitted for review, but Evangelism Committee will discuss events during annual meeting for inclusion on the minutes.

## **2015 REPORT OF THE FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE**

January 2015 – Watched Second Hand Lions, made popcorn, treats and drinks

February –planned and presented a Women's retreat, faith scrapbooking, exercise, prayer labyrinth, luncheon

March – Facilitated Soup Suppers and participated in them. College, Confirmation Class and their Parents, Choir, Women's Bible Study, were hosts. Thanks to all for providing wonderful meal of soup and desserts!! Organized Agape meal.

April – Easter Breakfast – Senior High Youth, Tammy Heggie, Mai Anderson, Judy Moline were our leaders – Thank you!!!

May – Made the Appreciation French Toast breakfast for all of Trinity's volunteers! Many hands make the work load lighter!!

Confirmation Breakfast – provided fruit, and drinks. Thanks to all who provided egg casseroles and assorted breads to honor our confirmands and their families.

June – provided the luncheon for the Senior High Fundraiser

July – Freedom has a Birthday booth. Many volunteers making dozens of ginger snap cookies served refreshing limeade and passed out brochures. Thanks to all who helped.

Jubilee Days Float – Decorated float! Thought we purchased and froze enough ice pops, but did not. Passed out brochures, greeted the crowd. Won first prize for best church float!! Who cares if it was the only church sponsored float, everyone had a great time.

August –Summer picnic at the Otto Dahl (former member of Trinity) shelter. Otto loved his trees, fitting place for a picnic. We all enjoyed lawn games.

September – Vedauwoo at its best! What a spectacular fall day for a picnic! Fellowship provided drinks, table ware and more and more Smores!!

October –The Oktoberfest – need I say more?

November – Annual Thanksgiving Day Dinner, a community sharing traditional dishes.

December – prepare our hearts for Jesus.

Next year ideas are:

- to host a Gold and Silver Tea *in January, a chance to meet and greet our fellow* members in Christ
- Sweetheart Dinner in February, celebrate all kinds of love and relationships.
- Hymn sing paired with different wines
- Bike tour of Laramie
- Plus your great ideas!

Respectfully Submitted,  
Kris Oolman

## **2015 REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Please see Council President Andrea Toven's report for updates on the Finance Committee.

## **2015 REPORT OF THE INTERNSHIP COMMITTEE**

The purpose of the Internship Committee is to oversee the Intern's year at Trinity, to provide support and input to the Intern and to provide several evaluations to Wartburg Seminary. The Committee meets on a monthly basis, usually on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month and is composed of six members: Steve Barrett, Lindsay Conyers, Diahann Jablin, Mark Lyford, Andrea Toven and Thomas Edgar. I thank them for their dedicated, highly involved service. It is truly appreciated.

Our current intern is Jennifer Michael from Pensacola, Florida. Jennifer is an exceptional intern candidate with extensive church wide experience. She started being involved with the Women of the ELCA (WELCA) at her home church in Tampa, Florida. Then, she became president for WELCA at the Synod level and attended the WELCA leadership conferences at the churchwide office in Chicago. In 2008, she was elected to serve on the churchwide board for WELCA. A job change took her to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba where she worked as an administrative assistant. While there, her Lutheran congregation was without a pastor. Because of her WELCA experience at the Synod level, she was given special licensure to serve as a Lay Minister of Word and

Sacrament for approximately 6 months while at GTMO which included presiding over communion. In 2011, she was elected by ecclesiastical ballot to serve as Churchwide President for WELCA and completed her three year term in 2014. She is currently a member of the Leadership Table for the ELCA Fund for Leaders. We have been very fortunate to have her selected to come to Trinity for her internship year offering her leadership skills and other gifts, especially in the campus ministry area.

Just an update on Seth and Jennifer Nelson, our intern during 2012-13. Seth is a pastor at Ronan, MT, 80 or so miles west of Glacier National Park. We visited them on our trip this September. We visited on the first day that his and Jennifer's son Otto came to church. It was a day of great celebration. People kept pulling me aside and telling me how much they appreciated and respected him. The parsonage is next door to the church and the hospital where works is four blocks away. They are very happy being there.

Our interns have continued to be a gift to our congregation and they strengthen and support our congregation in many ways. Wartburg Theological Seminary considers our church to be one of their outstanding sites and values our contribution to the seminarians' theological education and pastoral formation. The committee strongly urges the congregation to continue to support this valuable and much appreciated program.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Thom Edgar

### **2015 REPORT OF THE MUTUAL MINISTRIES COMMITTEE**

No report submitted for review, but Mutual Ministries Committee will discuss events during annual meeting for inclusion on the minutes.

### **2015 REPORT OF THE PROPERTY COMMITTEE**

#### **Sanctuary Flooring**

This past year, the sanctuary flooring was updated. A team of volunteers worked to remove the pews and remove the carpet. The center portion of the sanctuary was restored to the original hardwood oak flooring. Windy City Hardwood sanded and put Polyurethane on the floor.

Carpet One placed new carpet on the north and south sides of the sanctuary where there was no hardwood flooring underneath. After the flooring work was done the pews were put back into place. The pews were placed using a plan that allowed for improved handicap access and were spaced further apart to allow for comfort and easier congregational movement. Thanks to all who worked on this project.



## **Memorial Garden Activities**

The Memorial Garden really took shape this past year. Plants were purchased and were planted. A weed barrier was installed and mulch was placed on top. Flagstone from Ace was added as a walkway. The sprinkler system was adjusted to better water the garden area. Next summer we plan to add new plants and keep the garden looking nice.



## **Sprinkler System Maintenance**

A number of sprinkler heads were replaced by church volunteers. We think we replaced all of the broken sprinkler heads and feeder lines that had leaks. We will continue to replace portions of the feeder lines as needed.

## **Gutter and Gutter Extension Work**

ABC Seamless placed new gutter extensions on a number of downspouts coming off the church roof. They also straightened some of the downspouts so they came straight down without bends.

## **Squirrel Family/Gruver Room Electrical Line**

A squirrel family got into the attic of the church and damaged an electrical line running through the Gruver room and the hallway leading to the Dahl Chapel. Several of us capped off the squirrel entry hole located just under the roof overhang. Fremont Electric fixed the electrical line.

## **Painting the Nursery/Electrical Outlet in the Nursery**

A group of volunteers came and painted the nursery. It really looks nice. An outlet in the nursery stopped working. Mike Dietz with Dietz Electric fixed this problem.

## **Information Technology Improvements**

- Placed a new/used 23” flat-panel screen on the church secretary workspace;
- Obtain a new/used PC for the church secretary;
- Signed up for Office 365 for non-profit organizations;
- Placed Windows 10 on the machine;
- Obtained and placed a new wireless router;
- Got rid of old technology;
- Enabled all three offices so personnel could print to the B & W/Color Copier located in the church secretary’s workspace.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Stephen Boss

## **2015 REPORT OF THE SOCIAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE**

No report submitted for review, but Social Ministry Committee will discuss events during annual meeting for inclusion on the minutes.

## **2015 REPORT OF THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE**

Many people have shared their time and resources with Trinity this year. Due to the generosity of members, we have new flooring in the sanctuary as well as a sound system, we were able to resume our internship program, and we have carried on with benevolence programs such as contributions to Interfaith/Good Samaritan and Operation Christmas Child. These are only a few of the initiatives Trinity was able to implement this year, thanks to the stewardship of our members.

With respect to our annual stewardship campaign, we tried something new this year, with the able assistance of our intern Jennifer, to allow members to complete the time, talent, and treasure information online. Most continued to opt for the paper forms this year, but it gave us a chance to get a new system set up that provides more flexibility, and several members did use the new system.

In terms of results, it was a somewhat bumpy year for stewardship. In last year’s budget, we estimated the expected offerings for the year at \$239,955.21 in order to meet our budget needs. As of the last Sunday in December, offerings have totaled \$232,991.69 (based on the counters’ ledger), which puts us \$6,963.52 behind the total we had hoped to reach. We will have difficult, important decisions to make at our annual meeting this year, driven in part by budget concerns. I ask you all to open your hearts and minds and consider how we will go forward in pursuit of Trinity’s mission.

I would like to close with a quote from my late husband, Jim Smithson’s 2008 Stewardship Report: “. . . gratitude throws open a portal to other positive feelings and engenders behaviors which glorify God by implicitly and explicitly acknowledging that He is in His Heaven and all is well with the World. Moreover, in gratitude, we are delighting in and embracing, without irony, the best of all possible worlds . . .”

Respectfully submitted,  
Terri Rittenburg

## **2015 REPORT OF THE WORSHIP & MUSIC COMMITTEE**

The Worship and Music Committee has been meeting monthly on Tuesday evenings since spring 2015. Members of the committee included Larry Hazlett (choir director), Mike Smith (ushers), Margot Birkholz (altar guild), Sharon Leder (council liaison), Eric Nye, Jennifer Lyford (music coordinator), Jennifer Michael (intern), Rachel Larson (pastor), Mary Baldwin, Lindsay Conyers (nursery).

Throughout the year a number of special services planned by Pastor Rachel Larson, in collaboration with the Worship and Music Committee and other congregational members, were held at Trinity. During Lent and Holy Week we had a series of reflective and meaningful services with the wide participation of readers, musicians, choir members, clergy, altar guild members, ushers, greeters, nursery workers, soup supper preparers, and confirmation students. Pastor Don Holmstrom wrote monologues of various individuals involved with Jesus in the last week of his life, and church members served as readers of these monologues at the Lenten services. An agape meal and service were held the last Wednesday in Lent. On Palm Sunday a number of members did a dramatic reading of the Passion according to St. Mark at both services. Holy Week continued with a Maundy Thursday service with Holy Communion and the Good Friday Tenebrae service with a reading of the Passion according to St. John. Festival worship services were held on Easter Sunday with special music by the choir, organists Meng Xu and Dan Groathouse, and instrumentalists Jennifer Lyford, Mark Lyford and guest trumpeter Richard Hopkins. Contributions of red flowering plants were included in the sanctuary for the services on Pentecost Sunday. Members were encouraged to wear red clothing on that festival day.

The church service on October 18 was a hymn festival with guest organist Chad Winterfeldt (from Gustavus Adolphus College) accompanying the hymns and the University Collegiate Chorale singing several numbers. On Reformation Sunday a narrative Eucharist used by congregations in the ELCA throughout the Synod was incorporated into Trinity's worship service. For All Saints Sunday names of loved ones who have died were read, and candles in memory of the loved ones were available for lighting during the service. The November 15 service was led by the college students. Advent services were held weekly at 6 p.m. on Sundays and were contemplative in nature with readings and hymn singing. The college students who ordinarily meet from 5 to 7 p.m. on Sunday evenings participated in the Advent services. The children's Christmas program, based on material developed by Don Holmstrom, was presented at the 10:30 am service on December 13. Christmas Eve services were held at 5 p.m. (readings and carols) and 9 p.m. (Eucharist) with special music by a number of vocalists and instrumentalists.

Trinity was the host site for musical offerings throughout the year. On March 15 Trinity hosted a concert in the Laramie organ concert series. Our organist, Meng Xu, was one of the individuals who played at this concert. The Bel Canto Choral group from the University of Wyoming sang at the late service on April 26, and Jacob Borchardt, a university music major, gave a trumpet recital in the sanctuary later that day. On the afternoon of October 18, Chad Winterfeldt offered an organ concert at Trinity for the Laramie community.

Meng Xu was the church organist throughout 2015 and continues in that position. When she was on vacation, Gloria Orr-Weiss served as substitute for one Sunday. Dan Groathouse graciously agreed to play the organ the remaining times a substitute was needed, with a particularly heavy load at Christmas and the several Sundays after Christmas.

The Chancel Choir, with Larry Hazlett as conductor, sings regularly at the 10:30 a.m. services and occasionally at 8 a.m. services from September through May. The choir was augmented this fall with the soprano and tenor voices of two students from the University of Wyoming, who are paid for their services. Members of the choir

and Pastor Rachel participated in the second annual community ecumenical Christmas service at UW on Dec. 18. They sang as a part of the joint community choir, and they sang an anthem as an individual church choir.

Margot Birkholz continued as coordinator of the Altar Guild and provides her own report in this document. During the year the Worship and Music Committee suggested that it would be desirable to purchase a set of gold altar paraments for certain festival Sundays. Margot obtained a number of samples of material and brought them to a committee meeting for members to examine. The committee decided that the purchases of these paraments, which would cost \$800-\$900, would occur when money was available through memorials or other financial gifts to the church.

Jennifer Lyford served as music coordinator for 2015. Throughout the year she arranged for special music in church services, including a variety of special music in the summer when the choir did not sing, instrumental accompaniment of liturgy and hymns at Sunday morning and Advent services, musical offerings by string ensembles, and the organization of a wind ensemble that played a Christmas number at the December 20 service. During the year a job description was developed by Jennifer and Pastor Rachel and reviewed by the Worship and Music Committee.

Rosalind Kidwell and other attendants continued to provide supervision of young children in the nursery during Sunday services. This past year they were paid for their work.

The Advent wreath was again prepared and hung in the sanctuary by Jay Talbott. The Worship and Music Committee decided to hang it in the back of the sanctuary this year rather than the front because it partially blocked the view of the altar in the front. Also, the back of the sanctuary, with the baptismal font located there, is the focal point for the opening of church services. Typically, the Advent wreath candles are lit at the beginning of services.

Larry Hazlett arranged for the tuning of the organ in March and November by Jim Steinborn of Steinborn Organs in Fort Collins. The sanctuary piano was also tuned in November. The old piano in the choir room was replaced by an upgraded piano which was donated by the Lyford family.

In the spring the Worship and Music Committee made a recommendation to Council to consider replacing the carpet in the sanctuary to enhance the appearance of the worship space. Council approved this project, and the Property Committee had the work done during the summer and early fall with a combination of refinished hardwood and new carpet.

The 500th anniversary of Reformation will be in 2017. The possibility of establishing a task force to plan special events for this anniversary was discussed by the Worship and Music Committee.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Sharon Leder

## **2015 REPORT OF THE VISION COMMITTEE**

Please see Pastor Rachel Larson's report for updates on the Vision Committee.

## **2015 REPORT OF THE ALTAR GUILD**

The Altar Guild is responsible for preparing the altar for communion, delivering altar flowers, changing altar paraments with the church seasons, decorating the trees at Advent, installing the cross for Good Friday and Easter, and keeping pencils and leaflets stocked in the pews. We are fortunate as a congregation to have a group of people who share these duties, so please take the time to thank the dedicated members who serve the church by participating in the Altar Guild.

With the arrival of Pastor Rachel Larson, changes were made to the Communion Service, but the Altar Guild members are comfortable with the changes and all things are running smoothly.

We lost a few members and gained a few members, but we would be grateful for a few additional members this coming year. Please consider joining us.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Margot Birkholz

## **2015 REPORT ON THE ENDOWMENT FUND**

No report submitted for review, but the Endowment Fund report is forthcoming at the annual meeting for inclusion on the minutes.

## **2015 REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATUS OF THE CHURCH**

Additional financial reports are available upon request from the Church Office Secretary.

### **ESTIMATED GIVING NEEDS FOR 2016 BUDGET**

<b><u>Units Needed</u></b>	<b><u>Yearly</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>	<b><u>Ave Monthly</u></b>	<b><u>Ave Weekly</u></b>
5	\$12,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$230.77
10	\$6,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$500.00	\$115.38
20	\$3,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$250.00	\$57.69
40	\$1,500.00	\$60,000.00	\$125.00	\$28.85

75 Families = \$240,000.00

## WHY WE Give

Our financial generosity is an expression of our love for God and for our neighbor. A critical component of what we do together is the offering made by you and your congregation that is shared for synod and churchwide ministries. We call this Mission Support, which makes it possible for ELCA members from Alaska to the Caribbean to be responsive as one church to exciting new opportunities for ministry.

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## FUNDING OUR Mission

Mission Support is an important percentage of your weekly offering. Many congregations set a goal of 10 percent or greater for Mission Support through their synod and do additional giving beyond their congregation. In this way congregations are making a difference in their giving both in and through their church. Your congregation shares its Mission Support offering with the other two expressions of this church.

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## WHERE YOUR Offering GOES

Mission Support is the lifeblood of the work that God does through the ELCA.

**Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
**107 S. 7<sup>th</sup> St.**  
**P.O. Box 909**  
**Laramie, Wyoming 82073**

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**Annual Meeting 2016**