

Trinity Tidings for Spring 2020

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Pastor Julie Osterhout, Deacon Carol Koch, Musician: Nancy Moyer, Sexton: Jamie Black

“Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out.”

Deuteronomy 28:6 NRS

This beautiful blessing from Deuteronomy is the last of several blessings at the beginning of Chapter 28. In addition to this blessing, there are several more blessings that are promised to those who are obedient to God’s commandments. For the children of God of ancient times, salvation came from living a righteous life grounded in following the law. Today our salvation comes in the promise of God’s grace.

Okay. Enough history and theology. Actually, I have been spending some time wondering about blessings. Like how do we find blessings amid quarantine and isolation? After how many episodes of *Call the Midwife*, *Star Trek Picard* and *Discovery*, home improvement projects, and actually trying to work from home, it is difficult to find the blessings. Some days I really do feel anxious, trapped, and claustrophobic.

As an introvert (no, really) the thought of staying home sounded appealing. But believe me, even introverts can only take so much. Yes, there is some boredom, but it is easy to give yourself over to sleep when boredom comes to claim you.

So what are and where are the blessings? Like the Bible verse says, you shall be blessed when you come in and when you go out. I know I am blessed when I go out—out into the world to minister face to face with our Trinity family and our neighbors and those friends we have yet to meet.

But how am I blessed when I come in? Well, I think I know. And I am not the only one who has seen the blessings of coming in. I have eaten better as I am able to cook a decent well balanced meal every night and eat in a timely fashion for each meal of the day.

I have slept better as I no longer set the alarm. I stay up at night until I am genuinely ready to “hit the hay.” My natural circadian rhythm has settled me into a pattern in which I feel more rested and therefore more productive. I have been more active as Bruce and I go for a walk each day and engage in good physical activity as we rake leaves and sticks, garden, and work on home improvement projects. (Though I must admit I have reactivated some dormant achy muscles and joints.)

Days seem brighter, friendlier, and certainly more relaxed. People are out and about walking with their pets, spouses, and children. There is more bike riding, more hiking, more time spent with family. Bruce and I even played Trivial Pursuit one night—the Baby Boomer version.

But in an even bigger sense, the world is changing for the better. People are finding ways to make music and art and are sharing it with the world in print, on TV, radio, or internet. As we stay home, wildlife is regaining a foothold in unexpected places. There have been pictures of lions lounging on African roadways, wild goats roaming the streets of a Welsh town, wild boars in the streets of Paris, and many other wild animal sightings in places that are normally inhabited by throngs of humans. Scientists say these changes are for the better.

There is less pollution up and down the eastern coast of North America and the people of Punjab, India can actually see the Himalaya Mountain Range for the first time in thirty years. The crime rate has dropped. These spectacular occurrences are not isolated events. The world is changing in exciting and beautiful ways—even on a planet that has more than doubled in population in my lifetime alone.

These are the blessings of 2020 quarantine—the silver lining that comes out of the coronavirus. God has given us intelligent minds in which to see these blessings and act on them. Not only that, it is our

baptismal calling to “care for others and the world God made” (ELW Baptismal Rite). The daunting question is this: In the future, how will we respond to these changes we’ve seen in our society and world. We have only one earth and one life. We have seen what can happen when we take time to be responsive to each other and in tune to human relationships—our earth gets better.

We have been given a gift—a rare opportunity to not only see God’s blessings of coming in and going out, but with the help of God we can “go out” ready to live into these blessings every single day. May God continue to bless your coming in and going out.

In Christ nothing is impossible,
Pr. Julie

THANK YOU ALL

Thank you to all those who have diligently continued giving gifts of financial support and prayer to the work and ministry of Trinity Lutheran Church. It is difficult to remain present in ministry while Trinity’s building is closed. But you are doing it!

We mourn the loss of face to face preschool but rejoice in technology as we explore the Zoom classroom. We mourn the loss of face to face worship but are grateful for the opportunity to meet car to car in parking lot worship. We mourn the temporary loss of the Lord’s Supper but even so are considering how we might safely administer the bread and cup. We miss our music but rejoice in the music that flows from the heart of God.

The Conrad Weiser Food Pantry continues to provide meals. CW teachers continue to teach their students using on-line resources. We continue the ministry of Trinity in any way possible providing on-line and YouTube, devotions, sermons, At-Home worship services as well as Parking Lot worship.

Look for ways to carry out the ministry of Trinity in any way that you are able—perhaps simply by staying home, assisting your neighbors in need, buying groceries for a senior, and/or wearing a mask in public. Ask God for guidance, patience, and endurance.

In the meantime—thanks again for supporting the ministries of Trinity. We are indeed church together!

This was sent from one of my neighbors in Westgate after the Palm Sunday car parade on our street.

one of my more cherished
remembrances from this
challenging time in our lives.

April 7, 2020

Christ is Risen! Hallelujah! Dear Friends,

Blessings in Him,
Judy Plica

Thank you so much for your
Palm Sunday parade in my
Westgate Village community.
I am a member at Reformation
in Exeter Twp & am feeling
so sad to be disconnected.
I stood on my porch &
waved & sobbed as you
drove past. It will become

I would also like to thank the pot pie maker and deliverer—a nice Easter treat, and those who have offered and pickled up groceries for me before I had a mask—Diane Brown, Beth Byler, Rick & Kathy Lawry, Bruce Osterhout, and Kay Stout.

Deacon Carol

4/10/2020
Dear Friends,
Thanks so much
for the pot pie &
treats! I was greatly
surprised by your

visit. (Made a little
speechless too)

Yes, this is a very
lonely and difficult
time for everyone
right now. Also
frightening when you
listen to the news.

I miss church
especially the Lenten
and Easter services,
but I am grateful to
know it's there, alive
and well.
yours most gratefully
Elaine Bruner

Trinity

THANK YOU FOR THE
PRAYERS, CARDS, AND CALLS.
I WILL BE FOREVER THANKFUL
FOR THE LOVE AND SUPPORT
OF MY CHURCH FAMILY

JOE SICKLER

CONFIRMATION

Hello students and families. It's been a long month and a half without any classes. I miss you all and the fun we were having together. There have been no at-home assignments or Zoom classes as the intent was never to compete with school by assigning at-home work to do. I hope you have all had opportunity to do school work, rest, spend time with your families, and look for places where God is present in your life (through those who love you, nature, pet companions, in work, and play).

My hope is that we can actually gather together sometimes this summer and then pick up regular classes in the fall. Pastor will be in touch to consider some new options for class and when Affirmation of Baptism might happen as Reformation Sunday in October doesn't give us or Needles of Love enough time to prepare. In the meantime—be safe, be well, and ask God to guide you.

Peace,
Pr. Julie

