



Making Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World

February 2018 Newsletter of Trinity United Methodist Church

For God has NOT given us a Spirit of fear and timidity. But of Power and Love and Self-Discipline.

~2 Timothy 1:7

I was talking with a couple of people in church the other day when we noted that the Lenten start day, Ash Wednesday, is also Valentine's Day. I pointed out that the other fun fact about this year's season of Lent and Easter is that Easter is on April 1st. Our conversation went considerably deeper when noted that most Christians gloss over Lent and don't really engage the season or the journey until Palm Sunday, at the earliest, or really just Easter.

That conversation got me listening even closer to God's whisper in my life. God makes it clear that Lent is not to be glossed over. A key component of Lent is the journey. The inspiration, the self-discipline to walk with Jesus for 40 days is just as important as Palm Sunday and Holy Week. We do not just arrive at a destination, we have to journey to it. We need Lent to help us understand, grow and be inspired as we meet Jesus in Easter.

I am struck by the word "Inspiration." Webster defines inspiration as, "something that makes someone want to do something or that gives someone an idea about what to do or create: a force or influence that inspires someone." A good definition for sure, but Dr. Wayne Dyer observes that inspiration is broken down as "in-Spirit." Inspiration comes when we listen to, follow, and do as called by God. It is amazing what we can do and see and feel when we are truly God inspired.

This is, however, different from motivation. Motivation is "I" based. We get an idea and we push it through, ideally, to the end. We do all the heavy lifting and it comes to some sort of end. Dr. Dyer observes that Inspiration is the exact opposite. It is that moment when God grabs a hold of you and you go with it. You are not doing the heavy lifting, you are simply obeying where God leads. It is in the inspiration that you find God's calling for your life. You find that beautiful in your life.

I remember a credit card commercial from several years back. The main players in the commercial were Lou Holtz, the former football coach and Peggy, a very Russian man. Coach Holtz loses his credit card and calls "Peggy" to get a new card. Peggy informs him that it will take four weeks to get the card. Coach gives a rousing pep talk in which "Peggy" says "You inspire me. Three weeks!" Of course, that is still not the time line needed, but my point is that there are those things that are outside of us that move us to greater things than we could ever imagine.

Staying in-Spirit seems to be the secret to this feeling of being inspired. ~Dr. Wayne Dyer

My hope is you have begun to think about how to be inspired. When you were, and are, inspired and how to stay In-Spirit. We must trust that inspiration is already within us and around us. If it eludes us it is because we have disconnected from God. Our number one relationship must be to our ever present, ever creating, ever inspiring God. When we care for this relationship inspiration will appear before our eyes. For Lent, I am going to be offering a sermon series on Spiritual Disciplines and how those work to help keep us In-Spirit and as such Inspired.

Please join with me in the journey of Lent. Let's not gloss it over. Let us be In-Spirit and Inspired. ~Matt

Trinity United Methodist Church 8009 Q Street Ralston, NE 68127

Phone: 402-331-4054 <http://www.trinityralston.org> [facebook.com/TrinityRalstonUMC](https://www.facebook.com/TrinityRalstonUMC)

Sunday Worship: Services @ 8:30am & 11am, Sunday School @ 9:45am

Pastor: Rev Dr. Matt Fowler **Associate Pastor:** Rev Curt Copple **Pastor of Congregational Development:** Rev Dr. Bob Folkers
Executive Pastor: Rev Dr. Cole Fowler **Children /Youth Director:** Becky McClanathan
Director of Spiritual Development/Accompanist: Vicki Buras **Choir Director:** Dr. David Galant
Media Director/Worship Leader: Matthew Hindley **Controller:** Penny Holzbauer
Administrative Assistant: Vicky Segers **Building Supervisor:** Judy Slavik

Mission Notes

In January, the Mission Team revised their goals and outlined projects for the coming year. Many of our ongoing projects will remain the same and we are eliminating several; however, we have added a few really exciting ones.

This month we will make **tie blankets** for Project Harmony on February 8th at 9:30am. If you would like to participate, bring two pieces of fleece (1 and 1/2 yards each) and your own scissors. Ages of children Project Harmony helps are infant to 18 years old.

A really fun project in April will be donating provisions for **birthday parties** for families who are unable to give their child a party. We will be asking for cake mixes, frosting, wrapping paper, toys, and any other trappings for a good party. This project stemmed from a young man with a terminal illness who saw the need in his community. Now that is caring! More specific details will follow.

Look for some interesting and new ways to **fill our boat**. We are going to focus on specific needs that the shelters or food pantries are asking for—such as paper products, hygiene products, specific foods, etc. There will be a flyer each month next to the boat and this month we are asking for **meals in a can**, like Chef Boyardee, chili, beef stew or hash. Thanks to all of you for your generosity in caring for our greater community.

Sack lunches will continue; Bev Konruff is coordinating this project and will have a list posted in the kitchen where people may sign-up. If you have questions, you may talk to Bev. Generally, we work on the third Thursday of the month at 9am and take the sandwiches to Stephen's Center in South Omaha.

Judy Dappen
Mission Chair

February Spiritual Development Opportunities:

• **Adult Sunday School: 9:45-10:45am**

- Judy Dappen's and Bob Folker's class resumes Adam Hamilton's study *Moses: In the Footsteps of the Reluctant Prophet*. In this six week class you'll gain a better understanding of Moses' significance in your life today, and you'll discover how you, too, can turn your own reluctance into boldness. This group meets downstairs in *Room 101*.
- Marge O'Reilly's and Ray Loveland's class resumes Adam Hamilton's study *When Christians Get It Wrong*. This is a compelling six week study which takes an honest look at topics including politics, judgment, salvation, sexuality, tragedy, and science. This class meets upstairs in *Room 205*.
- **Lenten Series:** Both classes will come together again for a Lenten study which will meet in the *Garden Room* (lower level) beginning February 18th.

• **GriefShare: Your Journey from Mourning to Joy**

GriefShare is a friendly, caring group of people who will walk alongside you through one of life's most difficult experiences. This is a 13 week support group series focused on the grief journey. The GriefShare experts address the emotional, spiritual, and practical needs of grieving people with foundational, biblical teaching in a nondenominational setting. You are welcome to join us at any time. GriefShare meets Tuesday evenings, 6:30-8:30pm in the *Music Room*.

For more information contact Vicki Buras at 402-331-4054 or Vicki.B@trinityralston.org.

Scribblers

If you have an interest in writing about your family and ancestors, you would enjoy our newly revitalized writing group which meets on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month at 9:30am. These past several months we have had some very interesting and creative examples of family story telling. All are welcome. If you have questions, talk to Arlyne Weichel.

Education Notes

Sunday School has been busy this past month. Kids and youth have spent time beginning this new year discussing love. What is Love? What is God's love? How does God show us love? What is it like if we have no love?

The youth enjoyed a lesson in Romans, Romans 8:38-39. Summarizing these verses: **NOTHING** can separate us from the love of **GOD**. The preschool-1st graders talked about God's love with the objective that these young students will develop a love for God's Word in their hearts. Their art project that week consisted of them creating hearts that outline the Bible verse, I John 4:16. Titled "God's Love Letter To Me"—We know how much God loves us, and we have put our trust in His love. God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them. The 2nd-5th graders dove into I Corinthians 13:1-8. These kids discussed how to show love in a "Christ-like" way and how this way of love can be lived out in our lives. There's never a dull moment in Sunday School and each Sunday brings new stories, learning and laughter.

Kids for Christ (KFC) classes will meet February 7th, 21st and 28th. February 14th we will **NOT** have KFC. There will be a youth fundraiser taking place and then Ash Wednesday service at 7pm.

Youth will gather for a time of fellowship on the evenings of Sunday February 11th and 25th. Meeting times will be 5-7pm.

Sunday, February 11th: Youth will be **selling flowers and Valentine Chocolates** throughout the morning in Fellowship Hall to kick start fundraising efforts for their summer mission trip. Be on the look out for a display.



YOUTH VALENTINE'S DAY FUNDRAISER!!



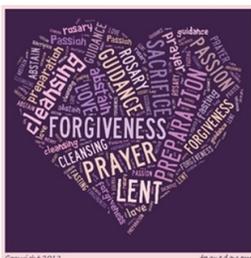
This Valentines Day, the youth (middle school and high schoolers) will be hosting a fundraiser to help fund their summer mission trip to Colorado Springs, Colorado. February 14th, Valentines Day, you are invited to our church to have dinner and dessert. Everything will be served by the youth. Hours that we are serving will be 5-7pm. We will be doing a free will offering for the meal. Couples/and families will have their own tables to eat together. A menu will be presented to you and you will be served, dinner, drinks and dessert if you wish.

We will also have an area set up to purchase Valentines Day chocolates, flowers, and other trinkets. Before your time ends, you are able to take a picture in a photo area. 5x7's will be printed and ready at the following Sunday service. Pictures will cost \$3. This is optional of course. Please invite family and friends to join us in our efforts to raise money for our trip and to provide a "less hectic, restaurant" atmosphere for you.

We don't want to forget about **Fat Tuesday/Mardi Gras!** We are excited to create a fun evening for our church family and friends. This will be from 6-7:30pm on Tuesday, February 13th. Please come and join us. Fun colors to wear are purples, greens and yellows, or anything really. You can wear beads or fun hats. There will be a small craft for kids to make, games to play, King cake to eat, and of course pancake races!! Invite your friends who have not been a part of this fantastic night in the past. We just have way too much fun and would love to share it!



On Sunday, February 18th, the **children sing** at both services.



Let your light shine!!

Becky McClanathan, Director of Children and Youth

(pictures on this page courtesy of Becky McClanathan.)

February Birthdays

- 2/2 Sam Bolinger
Matthew Henderson
Patrick Shannon
- 2/6 Adriana Rush
- 2/8 Kennedy Lee
- 2/9 Kip Dillon
- 2/10 Nancy Johnson
- 2/16 Greysen Jasman
- 2/20 Chantel Brown
Sandra Fraser
Jerry Hayenga
- 2/22 Amanda Uhl
- 2/26 Brianna Annan
- 2/27 Madison Lyons
Jon Olson



UMW Notes

Thurs, Feb 1st	Naomi Ruth Circle	10am
Sat, Feb 3rd	Spring Salad Luncheon Planning Meeting	9:30am
Thurs, Feb 8th	Esther Circle	6:30pm
Sat, Feb 10th	NE Ecumenical Legislative Briefing Day (In Lincoln)	9am
Mon, Feb 12th	Mary Circle (In Fellowship Hall)	7pm
Thurs, Feb 15th	Bingo @ Hillcrest Shadowlake	2pm
Sat, Feb 24th	UMW 2019 Budget Planning Meeting	9:30am



2018 UMW Officers (photo courtesy of Becky McClanathan)

Saturday Book Club

You are invited to join us in Room 205 at 9am on Saturday, February 17th, for fellowship and discussion. This month our selection is *Big Stone Gap* by Adriana Trigiani.

Trinity Methodist Men

The Trinity Men's Group will meet on Saturday, February 24th at 8am. If you are interested in learning more about this group, then contact Steve Gage.

Ash Wednesday

We invite you to join us at 7pm on Wednesday, February 14th as we start our journey to the cross with an Ash Wednesday service.

Wedding Anniversary

Judy and Larry Moody will be celebrating their 60th Wedding Anniversary with a celebration at the United Church of Christ on February 11th from 11am-1pm. They would like to invite their many friends from Trinity to come and join them. No gifts please, but they would be honored by your attendance.

Don & Millie's Sunday

Eat at Don & Millie's on Sunday, February 25th from 11am – 5pm and the church receives 20% of your purchase.

Calendar insert

You will find inserted in this month's Beacon a copy of the current calendar for February. Please check the website (trinityalston.org) for the most up-to-date calendar available. Call the church office at 402-331-4054 for more information, or to schedule your event today.