

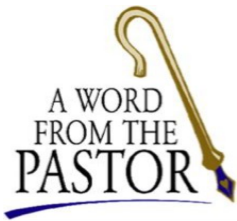
May Trinity Tidings

Trinity Lutheran Church

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I have a pair of leather boots that I purchased years ago. Leather boots take a while to become comfortable. You need to suffer through days, weeks, or even months, of wearing them, walking in them and repeatedly pulling them off and then back on, before they start to loosen up and feel comfortable. But once you suffer through those aches, pains, and maybe even a blister or two, a good pair of leather boots seem to mold themselves to your feet and can become your favorite footwear for many years.

It's a bit different when it comes to athletic shoes. You want them to be comfortable of course, but they must give your foot proper support and cushion. That's the purpose of a pair of athletic shoes—that's their "mission." They need to cradle your heel and support the arch while you are running or exercising in them. They need to hold your foot firmly in place, while still giving your toes enough room to move.

Like a leather boot, a good athletic shoe needs to be broken in. You need to walk in it before you run in it. But unlike a leather boot, once an athletic shoe becomes broken in and comfortable, you cannot plan on keeping it for years. No matter how comfortable it may feel.

Why? Because as an athletic shoe becomes more comfortable, it loses more support and cushion. And that's bad for your feet. Just because the shoes feel comfortable and easy to slip on, does not mean that you should continue to run or exercise in them. Instead, the time comes when you have to get a new pair, which means going through the "break in" process all over again.

So, what does all this talk about footwear have to do with the Church?

Like an athletic shoe, the Church has a purpose and it has a mission. It is the means by which Christ continues to be at work in the world. Through the Church, His Word is proclaimed, not only inwardly to the congregation, but outwardly through evangelism and witness. His Word is not to be restrained, it is to go out into society. It is to shine, not only where the fire already burns, but also into the cold darkness.

The Christian Church, and thus its individual congregations, share a common purpose and mission. "Go!" Jesus said in the last chapter of Matthew. "Go! Teach! Baptize!" Who? "All nations!," or more accurately translated, 'all peoples' (Matthew 28:19). The Church is not to sit and look inward, but to stand up and go out into the world.

Jesus tells the Church to "Go," but getting up and going can be uncomfortable.

Over the years, Trinity West Chicago has actively gone about its mission. An early pastor of ours went from this very place to become one of the first Lutheran Missionaries in Japan. Through its school and pre-school, Trinity has reached out to and taught countless young people the life-saving truth of Christ crucified. In the 2000's Pastor Hesham Shehab of Salam Christian Fellowship hosted a Bible study here at Trinity for converted

(Pastor's Message Continued)

Muslims. From 2013 to 2021 we served our Spanish-speaking neighbors with regular Sunday worship and Bible study. These are just a few examples of how Trinity has faithfully fulfilled Christ's Great Commission and I am humbled to have been a small part of it.

Now it is May 2025 and at the end of next month, June 2025, I will be entering my retirement. Which should come as no surprise. This has been openly discussed since before the pandemic. Still, many of you may be wondering why. "Why, Pastor? Everything seems to be going fine. We are in a good place financially and we have relatively good attendance. Besides, we're comfortable with you as Pastor."

Why retire now? Well, there are a number of reasons, but it is that word "comfortable," that is most concerning. Being comfortable is fine for a pair of leather boots, but not always for a pair of athletic shoes. Being comfortable is fine for the living room sofa, but not for the church pew and not for its pastor. This is because being comfortable can lead to becoming complacent. And becoming complacent can lead to not challenging oneself.

When St. John the Evangelist was elderly and on the isle of Patmos, the Lord granted him a vision—a revelation of Christ's glorious victory. In that vision, John was told to write down the message of the Lord to seven churches. Each of these churches were told that the Lord knew them intimately. He knew their good works, as well as their less honorable ones.

These letters of Law and Gospel given to the seven churches in history apply to all churches to this day. In particular, the letter to the Church in Smyrna. *"I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich)..."* the Lord says to them. *"Do not fear what you are about to suffer."* The Lord reminds them that they are abundantly wealthy as they have inherited the kingdom of God. Yet, they will face periods of suffering and testing. This is not because the Lord is punishing them! No. It is because He is testing them. Testing is what exercises their faith! If one does not push against something hard, or lift something heavy, then their muscles won't strengthen. It's the same with our faith. We need to exercise it, or it weakens. *"Be faithful unto death,"* the Lord says, *"and I will give you the crown of life."*

In His letter to the church in Laodicea, the Lord gives a different warning. One that should cause all churches to take a look at themselves. This church had become comfortable and complacent. Like Goldilocks who thought the father bear's porridge too hot and the mother's too cold, the church in Laodicea had settled for lukewarm. They were comfortable and it felt "just right." They were so comfortable that they were no longer burning with the fire and light of the Gospel and the desire to spread it. They weren't totally cold, they still believed, but they weren't actively exercising their faith.

"I know your works;" the Lord says, *"You are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth."*

Like an old, well worn running shoe, the church in Laodicea had become comfortable and was not doing what it was called to do.

Serving as your pastor here at Trinity has been a most blessed experience. This is a welcoming, hard-working and faithful congregation. Your support and generosity cannot be put into words. We've gone through so much since I first returned here as your vicar over 14 years ago. Having been baptized here, educated here, confirmed in the faith here and now, having served as pastor here, I feel quite comfortable here... like a well-worn leather boot.

(Pastor's Message Continued)

But the church is not a boot, it is an athletic shoe. It has a mission. The time comes when, in order to remain "hot," and not risk becoming lukewarm, what has become comfortable needs to be traded out for what is needed.

There are so many opportunities for this congregation at this point in time. As I was originally called to start a Spanish-language ministry, and was able to do so for a number of years, refocusing on this ministry has always been a desire. But that takes a large amount of time and energy, two things that, at 67-years-old, I have less and less of. It also takes commitment and dedication.

We are blessed with faithful and active young adults. Serving them better through social events, youth oriented Bible studies, mission trips or other activities also requires time, energy, commitment and dedication. A new batch of babies have been baptized and in a few years will reach the age of Sunday School. We need to plan and organize accordingly

There is nothing worse than having ideas, making promises and then not being able to keep them. It's time for this comfortable "old shoe" to make way for a better fitting one. One that can keep the fire of the Gospel burning hot. One that can carry this congregation forward and into new territory. O, it may take some getting used to. It may take some days, weeks, even months of walking instead of running. There may even be a "blister or two." But the Lord remains our firm foundation and He is the rock on which this church is built. He has blessed us for over 140 years and He will continue to do so in the future.

In Christ,

Pastor Gaede



Assistants.... If you aren't available for your assigned Sunday, it is your responsibility to find a substitute.

2025 SCHEDULE	Count Team	Worship Asst.	Usher	Altar Guild	Lay Reader
5/4/2025	Nancy Westra and Ron Benes	Jim Grobe	Dan Rakow	Nancy Westra	Andrew Greubel
5/11/2025	Greg & Sharon Garcia and Cheryl Perkis	Wayne Matejka	Andrew Greubel	Sharon Garcia	Grace Greubel
5/18/2025	Nancy Planek and ?	Wayne Matejka	Doug Schmidt	Eldra Rakow	Ron Benes
5/25/2025	Laura Grobe, Sue Mennecke and	Ron Benes	Doug Schmidt	Sue Mennecke	Nancy Planek

Ladies Fellowship & Bunco March 29, 2025

Twenty-three Trinity ladies attended a lively afternoon of fun, fellowship, and rolling of the dice! The multi-generational gathering allowed time for sharing stories, building our relationships, and a lot of cheers and jeers; (Rolling 3 threes made you lose your score!)

The snack table was lavishly filled with goodies and everyone enjoyed the variety. The poem that we shared made everyone smile and "put their troubles in the trunko!". Though there were some prizes, the greatest gift was being together for a very fun afternoon! Thank you to all who provided a snack! BUNCO! BUNCO!



**The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
LCMS Stewardship Ministry
May Newsletter Article**



Stewardship in the Body of Christ

Baseball season is upon us. The southern images of spring training give way to the pageantry of Opening Day. On that day, the hopes and dreams of every major league team, player and fan focus on doing whatever it takes to get to the Fall Classic, the World Series. Baseball is a secular way that so many of us confess that hope “springs” eternal.

With all of this in mind, baseball can also teach us a new perspective about stewardship. Think about the game itself. Baseball is a team sport. The home team faces off against the visitors. Yet while it is a team game, there are repetitive, individual confrontations that take place within the game. The baseball game cannot start without the individual pitcher against the hitter. Once the batted ball is in play, the battle is between the ability of the fielder against the speed of the baserunner. Once there is a runner on base, an attempt to steal a base pits the runner against the catcher. A base hit into the outfield pits the outfielder against a runner trying to score.

Baseball is a team game with many smaller units at play. Without all those smaller units working together and achieving their tasks, the team will lose.

Romans 12 puts our stewardship of the Gospel in a similar setting. The church is certainly described as a team, if you will.

Verse 3: *“For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.”* This is where the Body of Christ is really seen as a team. No one member of the baseball team can win the game by themselves. In the same way, no one part of the Body of Christ can accomplish stewardship of the Gospel alone. The pastor cannot. The congregational chair cannot. The lead soprano in the choir cannot. But each of these individuals have been added to the local congregation to be built into a team that can win the victory with Jesus.

Verses 4–5: *“For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.”* In baseball, the pitcher pitches. The catcher catches. The hitter hits. When a pitcher attempts to hit, the result is usually not very pretty. Catchers often do not excel at running the bases. The hitter usually does not do well when they are sent to the mound to pitch. Every member of the Body of Christ has a unique set of abilities and functions. Not everyone preaches. Not everyone leads. Not everyone sings well. Yet when the congregation assembles together as a team, it can succeed in ways unattainable by the individual.

Verses 6–8: *“Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.”* Each member of the team has a role to play. Abilities and opportunities are en

(LCMS Newsletter Continued)

trusted to the individual members of the Body of Christ to be used for the ultimate purpose of stewarding the Gospel for the glory of God and the benefit of the neighbor. The one preaching is no more or less important than the others. The one serving or the one teaching, the leader or the merciful one — all are equally important in the faithful stewardship of all that the Lord has entrusted to the Body of Christ. All this stewardship is for the sake of the other!

A baseball team can have five All-Star pitchers but cannot win if the hitters do not hit. The best lineup in the league will struggle if the pitchers cannot get anyone on the other team out. Pitchers need the defense behind them to play well. Coaches need to lead well. When they all work together, you have a winning baseball team. When the Body of Christ has all its members faithfully stewarding the unique individual talents that have been entrusted to them, the victory goes to Jesus! This is the goal of faithful stewardship! It is all about

2025 TRINITY ELECTIONS

MAY VOTERS ASSEMBLY


The following candidates have been placed on the ballot for Voter Approval on May 4th, 2025.

Assistant CEO	Larry Kotke
Treasurer	Dean Mennecke
Board of Evangelism	Laura Grobe (CO) - Eldra Rakow (CO)
Board of Christian Ed	VACANCY
Board of Stewardship	Sue Mennecke
Public Relations	Heather Greubel (CO) – Kristi Horvath (CO)

These directors/co-directors will serve a two year term. If you have any questions or concerns, or you would like to volunteer for any of these positions (per Elder approval), please contact Jim Grobe or Sue Mennecke.

Do you know of anyone that should be included in our **Prayer Chain**? If so, please contact Rita Dauber at 630-293-0518 or rita.dauber3@gmail.com



Find us on 
**Trinity Evangelical
Lutheran Church**
West Chicago

Have something you'd like to post?
Email secretary@trinitywc.org or
Darcy.l.lee@gmail.com

FYI—The current Trinity page has no comma in it's name. If the picture associated with the account is of the outside of the church, you're on the wrong page.

He is risen! He is risen indeed! Food and fellowship were enjoyed by all who attended Trinity's Easter Breakfast. Thank you to all who helped make the breakfast a success!



SERVING THE LORD IN

Latin America & the Caribbean: missionaryMAC

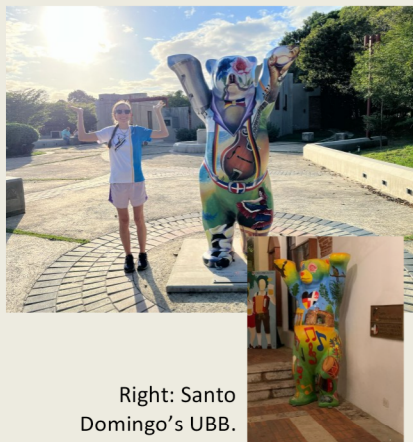


April 2025

News from Volunteer Coordinator Erin Mackenzie | missionaryMAC.blogspot.com | [f erin.mackenzie5](https://www.facebook.com/erin.mackenzie5)

(If you received a hard copy of this and would like to help me be green and save on postage, please email erin.mackenzie@lcms.org.)

Sightseeing in [Berlin](#) following a work trip in 2021, I was drawn to a citywide art installation: Buddy Bears. An entrepreneurial husband-and-wife pair dreamed up the painted, life-sized statues in 2001. A majority of the originals were sold at auction, but 140+ [United Buddy Bears](#) (UBBs) each representing a different country emerged on the scene a year later. After *they* relocated to their respective countries' embassies—or respective countries—a third set began its world tour in 2003. Latest stop: Ljubljana, Slovenia. I made it to Parque Central earlier this month to see Santiago's UBB (the DR's 2nd), inaugurated 4/2. Dignitaries from the German embassy joined the mayor of Santiago for the occasion.



Right: Santo Domingo's UBB.

Meet us in St. Louis

At [last year's regional missionary conference](#), Human Care Coordinator and conference organizer Tirzah announced that after seven years at the same all-inclusive resort, 2025 would look a bit different. She sought me out in the audience and brought the mic over so I could excitedly shout out the location: my hometown of St. Louis, MO!



That's right: 40 missionary families serving in 11 countries will explore our American Lutheran roots by descending on the "Gateway to the West" this August. It's going to be one for the decades. LCMS mission work in Latin America & the Caribbean dates back to Brazil in 1900, so from a Tuesday through a Friday, we'll celebrate 125 years of Spreading the Gospel, Planting Lutheran Churches, and Showing Mercy under the banner of "Remember, Repent, Rejoice" (see logo).

If you're a LAC alumni, YOU can join us! Beginning with a cocktail reception Thursday evening, the invitee list includes anyone who served as a Career or GEO missionary or Volunteer Youth Ministry (VYM) missionary through LCMS World Mission or the Office of International Mission. Friday's programming will include current and former missionary speakers, dinner, and a Vespers service—and it's all FREE. Register [here](#) anytime between now and June 1.

If you're NOT a LAC alumni, you can *still* join us! We're looking for [volunteers to assist with children's programming](#), and there are a number of ways for St. Louis-area individuals and congregations to support our time in the area; [email the conference planning committee](#) for more details on the latter.

Though we can but echo David in saying "Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that you have brought me thus far?" (2 Samuel 7:18), we trust that He holds our next 125 years in the palm of His hand.

**Making
Disciples
for Life**



Praises and Petitions

1. Thanksgiving for the safe arrival of new missionaries [Aaron Reith](#) and [Abby Young](#) on 4/9.
2. Thanksgiving for a fruitful visit from Mark Wolfram, the LCMS's Director of Missionary Services.
3. Thanksgiving for Easter Sunday Baptisms and confirmations in Belize, the DR, Mexico, and more.
4. For Anne & Ariana, two of the St. Louis-based colleagues I work most closely with, as they adjust to their recent role reversal.
5. For the families of those who lost loved ones in the Jet Set nightclub roof collapse, and for all still hospitalized.

Regional Roundup: Panama



It started with **contacting**, morphed into **connecting**, and eventually came around to **celebrating**: the newest (sort of) IELPA mission! LCMS missionaries in Panama had a presence in La Chorrera going back 20+ years, but the site had been inactive for at least a decade until the Revs. Alejandro López and Demetrio Pérez grew convinced it merited a reinvestment of time, energy, and resources. The area isn't far as the crow flies from metro Panama City but can take 2-3 hours to reach by car—and many people do everyday for work—due to infamous rush hour traffic; it's more accessible with no traffic from López's home in Sora. Visits to isolated families began in June 2024; by September, a quorum was ready for services of the Word. An octogenarian

member from way back when eagerly loaned his patio for the first couple gatherings; the third, sadly, was his funeral. A neighbor picked up the reins until 2/22, the date of the first Divine Service in a rented space the group of ~30 is already outgrowing! López presently officiates services 2-3x/month and began a Zoom Bible study, uniting the faithful in La Chorrera with brothers and sisters in Christ at multiple IELPA congregations.

*Left: [Dinner](#) for a volunteer team of 3 teachers from Trinity Lutheran Church & School in Davenport, IA. Center: Saturday morning coffee with the gals one last time before [Courtney](#) (& baby Jacqueline) relocated to PR, where her husband Paul will serve his vicarage. Right: Aunt life is the best life, except when it involves saying *hasta luego*.*



Quote of the Month

"Failure is success in progress."

—Albert Einstein

To support the LCMS through me, you may give a tax-deductible gift...

- **online**, securely from any device: lcms.org/givenow/mackenzie;
- by **phone**: 1-888-930-4438 (donor care rep) or text **LCMSMACKENZIE** to 41-444;
- by **sending a check** (with "Mackenzie/Latin America" on the memo line) to:
 - ⇒ LCMS, PO Box 66861, St. Louis, MO 63166-6861; or
 - ⇒ Mission Central, 40718 Highway E 16, Mapleton, IA 51034.





May 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28	29	30 Timmy Kotke	1	2	3
4	5 Jonathan Bartels	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15 Jim Grobe	16	17
18	19	20 Eudelia Serna Josh Kotke	21 Brady Lee	22	23 JT Adams	24
25	26 Jackie Leeseberg	27	28 Hayley Macko	29	30	31



May 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28 Carrie Tedrahn Grayson Matejka Chapman	29	30 Leila Pena	1	2	3
4 Rowan Gregory	5 Millie Planek	6	7	8	9	10
11	12 Zoey Boorsma	13 Kari Petrovich	14	15	16	17
18	19 Jean Musick	20	21 Jonathan Bartels	22 James Siekmann	23	24
25 Jerry Planek Michael Matejka	26	27 Charlie Adams	28 Greg Garcia Philip Zelman Sharon Garcia	29	30 Jim Grobe	31



May 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28	29	30	1 Sharon and Greg Garcia	2	3
4	5	6	7 Cheryl and Ed Perkis	8	9 Kelly and John Pacini Michael and Janet Perso	10
11	12 Eldra and Ron Rakow	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20 Beverly and Marvin Boorsma	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

TRINITY CHURCH CALENDAR

May 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27 9:30am Divine Worship Service 10:30am Fellowship 7:00pm - 8:00pm AA Meeting	28 7:00pm Elder's Meeting	29 6:30pm Joyful Noise Rehearsal	30 6:00pm - 6:45pm Confirmation	1	2	3
4 9:30am Divine Worship Service 10:30am Fellowship 10:45am Voter's Assembly 7:00pm - 8:00pm AA Meeting	5	6	7 6:00pm - 6:45pm Confirmation	8	9 7:30pm Compassionate Friends (Fellowship Hall)	10
11 MOTHER'S DAY 9:30am Divine Worship Service 10:30am Fellowship 7:00pm - 8:00pm AA Meeting	12	13 6:30pm Joyful Noise Rehearsal	14 6:00pm - 6:45pm Confirmation	15 7:00am Long Range Planning Committee	16	17
18 CONFIRMATION 9:30am Divine Worship Service 9:30am Joyful Noise Sings 10:30am Fellowship 7:00pm - 8:00pm AA Meeting	19 7:00pm Call Committee	20	21	22	23	24
25 9:30am Divine Worship Service 10:30am Fellowship 7:00pm - 8:00pm AA Meeting	26 7:00pm Elder's Meeting	27	28	29	30	31