

January - February 2024



Trinity Lutheran Church

Villa Park, IL

Always Growing in Christ

The Lion's Roar

Amos 3:8

"The lion has roared; who will not fear?"

The Lord GOD has spoken; who can but prophesy?"

2 Timothy 3:14-17 ESV

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Do You Want Stronger Faith?

I miss Bishop Pittelko. He was a beacon of faith for this congregation. Whenever the sky was falling around here, he would smile and say, "It will work out." As anyone who has spent any time as a member of the Church knows, the sky is always falling. Since the day the Church was born, she has been in constant danger, want and need. It is hard to have faith in God. God promises to take care of everything we need and we immediately ask, "yeah, but what if He doesn't?" Bishop had been around long enough and had faith strong enough, that he no longer doubted. He no longer wavered. He was a rock. But he did not start out that way. We were blessed to know Bishop after all the hard work had been done and he had become the mountain of faith that God had made him. But he started out just like everyone else. Faith was created in him at his baptism and he strove for 88 years to feed that faith so that it would grow into what we witnessed at the end.

But not everyone gets to be a giant of faith like Bishop was. So, what's the difference? Do you want stronger faith? I would imagine that everyone would want stronger faith. But wanting stronger faith is much like wanting stronger physical health. I want to have good health but that requires eating right and regular exercise. The question is not "do I want better health?" Of course, I do. The question is, "am I willing to do the work that brings me better health?" Am I willing to exercise every day? Am I willing to forgo cookies and stick with fruits and vegetables? The path is obvious but not easy. The same can be said for faith.

Do you want stronger faith? Do you want to be rid of worry and anxiety? Do you want to have that calm that pervades the lives of people like Bishop? If so, I can show you the path, but you have to do the walking. Faith is nourished by Word and Sacrament. People who are in worship every week and Bible Study every week will have more peace, stability and calm in their lives. When you are consistently filled up with God's Word and Sacrament, you will experience more peace and more joy. I will go so far to say that this is an absolute. It works every time. People who pop into worship once a month and whose Bible is sitting on the bottom shelf of the

nightstand covered in a layer of dust will never have the same level of peace and joy as someone who reads their Bible every day, is in Bible study every week and hears the word and receives the Sacrament every week.

Some people have said, "hey, I'm in church pretty regularly, but I don't want to be in a Bible study too." That's fine. If I exercise once a week and eat a salad with my dinner, I'm better off than someone who doesn't but I am not anywhere near achieving really good health. Do you want really strong faith? Do you want faith like Bishop's? I do. So I'm in worship every week. I receive the Sacrament 3 times a week and I study the Scriptures almost every day and my faith has grown immeasurably. It's not where Bishop's was yet, but I am headed in that direction.

Come join me. Resolve in this new year to put your faith first.

Commit to being in worship every week.

Choose a Bible study either here at church or with friends somewhere else and attend every week. Here at church Dr. Boudro, Mary Stahlke and I teach on Sunday Mornings at 9:15am. We have two women's studies during the week: one on Mondays and one on Thursdays. Pastor Allyn teaches on Wednesday mornings at 10am. Dr. Boudro leads a prayer group on Wednesday nights and we have a mom's group on Thursday evenings. Beyond that we have Sunday School for all ages on Sunday mornings, confirmation instruction of middle schoolers on Wednesday afternoons and High School Bible Study on Wednesday nights. In other words, you almost have to work to avoid Bible study at Trinity.

Finally, get a Bible and read something from it every day. Don't be put off by plans that have you reading 20 chapters from Leviticus. Just focus on reading something, even if it is just a few verses every day. Don't go to bed without reading your Bible every day. The Word of God has power in and of itself. If you want God to work, **do what he says!** He will bless you when you read and study His Word and when you receive His body and blood. He will bless you every single time. You can count on it.

I don't know if I will ever make it to Bishop's level of faith, but that's my goal. I hope you will join me in worship and Bible Study this year.

Villa Park Cocoa Crawl

Saturday, February 10th

11 am - 4 pm

Trinity will be a stop on the [VP Cocoa Crawl](#). If you'd like to help serve cocoa or greet guests, please let us know. Thrivent is a sponsor for the Cocoa Crawl.

LENT SCHEDULE

Ash Wednesday Wednesday February 14

Lenten Services

Wednesdays @ 7 pm on February 21, 28, March 6, March 13, March 20

Palm Sunday March 17 @ 8 am and 10:30 am

Maundy Thursday March 21 @ 7 pm

Good Friday March 22 at noon and 7:00 p.m.

Easter Sunday March 31 @ 8 am and 10:30 am

Lenten Soup Suppers

WEDNESDAYS, February 14- March 20 @ 5:30 - 6:30 pm

During Lent, the youth will host family dinners before worship. If you'd like to prepare some food to contribute there is a sign-up in the Narthex.

Food Pantry

Our pantry donation tubs are empty and feeling lonely. Please consider dropping off an item or two. We're always in need of food, but also toiletries, adult care, pet and baby supplies. Thank you for your support.

Sponsor-A-Bill

This quarter's bills to sponsor are Plowing (approx. \$4-5k during plowing season) and Gas (approx. \$833/mo.). As you can, please consider sponsoring one of these bills above & beyond your normal giving. Sponsor-a-Bill contributions help keep our budget on track & reduce the need for end-of-year pleas to meet the budget.

Clothing Drive

Please donate gently used coats and clothing for the Ukrainian refugees. We're accepting men's, women's and children's coats and clothing. With the war in Ukraine still ongoing, the need is still great. Please drop in the red bin in the narthex.

Stewardship Corner

The Chief Stewards of Humanity: Mom and Dad

St. Paul tells the Ephesians that the first commandment with a specific promise attached to it is, "Honor your father and mother so that it may go well with you, and you may live long in the land" (Eph. 6:2). This promise is one indication of the importance of this commandment. The other thing that highlights the special nature of this commandment is its placement within the Ten Commandments.

The Ten Commandments are clearly organized in two big categories. The first three commandments deal with our relationship with God. This category is called the First Table of the Law. The last seven commandments, the Second Table of the Law, tell us how we should relate to other people. These two tables correspond to what Jesus calls the two greatest commandments: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind," and "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matt. 22:37-39).

The order of the Second Table of the Law is also important. Murder is a greater sin than adultery, which is a greater sin than stealing, or lying, or coveting. But why is the Fourth Commandment first in the Second Table, ahead of "you shall not murder"? Is disobeying your parents really worse than murder? Or maybe we should give up on thinking these commandments are ordered?

The overall effect of this order is to get us to see our parents as a connection point between our neighbors and our God. Throughout our upbringing our father and mother stand between us and God and deliver His gifts to us: God clothes us, feeds us, protects us and teaches His Word to us through our parents.

So, parents have a very high calling from God. They are called to be stewards of the greatest gift: the gift of life.

Parenting thus gives us a keen insight into all our stewardship. Parents know that they have been given a great treasure in their children, a treasure that does not belong to them, yet for which they feel a great deal of responsibility. Truth be told, every gift we have been given is like this, because everything we have — whether our own personal skills and powers or our wealth and time — is all from God. He entrusts it all to us so that we can use it all and take care of it all for His great purposes

Worship Services

Saturdays 4:30 pm

Sundays 8 am & 10:30 am

Save the Date

July 21-27 Summer Servant Event in North Carolina – Current 8-12 Graders