

**TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH  
433 S. WINSTEAD AVENUE  
ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804  
(252) 443-7462  
[www.trinityrm.org](http://www.trinityrm.org)**

*Identity Statement:  
With God We Can!*

**THE JOYFUL NOISE  
APRIL 2024**

**THIS MONTH'S HIGHLIGHTS**

**SUNDAYS, APR. 7 - 28**

**SUNDAY SCHOOL  
9:00 AM  
WORSHIP  
10:00 AM**

**SUNDAYS, APR. 7, 21**

**FELLOWSHIP  
AFTER WORSHIP**

**SUNDAY, APR. 21**

**COUNCIL MEETING  
AFTER WORSHIP**

**PLEASE READ ARTICLES IN THE NEWSLETTER FOR MORE  
INFORMATION ABOUT MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED HERE  
AT TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH DURING APRIL.  
PLEASE ACCEPT THE INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE.**

**BE SAFE, BE KIND.**

**Pastor: Rev. Alice Johnson-Curl**  
[pastortlc@trinityrm.org](mailto:pastortlc@trinityrm.org) 252-443-7462

**Administrative Assistant:**  
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## **From the Pastor's Desk**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

<sup>29</sup>To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down; before him shall bow all who go down to the dust, and I shall live for him.

<sup>30</sup>Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord,

<sup>31</sup>and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn, saying that he has done it.

Psalm 22:29-31

This psalm begins with a desperate lament –  
My God, why have You forsaken me?

And as the psalmist guides us – all humanity – through the harsh reality of life as broken, flawed creatures, exposing all our pain and sorrows and feeling lost and forgotten and alone, we come to this closing passage, and are reminded that we never travel without God. Even along the rough roads life takes us, Jesus is with us and leads us to the place beyond the dust to life in His presence where there is plenty and wholeness and restoration and joy and hope and life forever!

Jesus, the Risen One, extends His nail-scarred hands to embrace all people – you and me included – and delivers us all from the sleep of death! Jesus claims all generations, long ago and today and yet to be born, into His forever life.

And whatever dirges that might try to steal our hearts' cries are turned into hymns of praise of the One who has indeed done it!

And so with all the cosmos we celebrate the Resurrection and the holy invitation to live forever as Easter people!

Christ is Risen!  
He is Risen, indeed!  
Alleluia!

Glorious and Risen Jesus! You have changed our sadness into celebration! You have lifted us from dust into Your presence forever! Our hearts shout Your praise! In Your Name we pray. Amen.

Thank you for your partnership in ministry.

You continue in my prayers.

Breathe peace,

Pastor Alice

*This is a reprint of my devotional for Easter in the 2024 Lent Resource provided by the leaders of Trinity Lutheran Church.*

## **My Brief Time at Trinity**

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

I want to write just a few words: privilege; absence; return. (Another kind of trinity!) And then expand upon these words.

### **PRIVILEGE.**

I've been retired from active ministry for 10 years. Typical of the retired pastor I've done the interim (filling in between pastors under call), also volunteered in the community, even worked part-time for the NC Synod for 5 years. All of which were fulfilling. What I've most wanted to do in retirement is to enable pastors to get a break from the rigors of their callings. So, when the Synod leadership made these mini-sabbaticals available, I raised my hand. This is a dream come true for me. I've longed for the opportunity to support pastoral colleagues who otherwise may not receive extended time away. I'm so glad Pastor Alice is taking this break. I consider it a great privilege to briefly receive the baton from her, so she can walk (run, in her case) into rest. Frankly, I owe it to the church to assist pastors in this way. Thank you!!

## **ABSENCE.**

Your pastor will be away. Miss her. Miss her dearly. And let her be absent. My prayer is that Pastor Alice sets aside her great passion to serve as your pastor, for a while. And that in so doing, she will gain new perspective. Maybe, she'll get in touch with some 'un-lived' portion of her life, she otherwise, would not have encountered.

I asked your council leaders what their hopes were for Trinity while Pastor Alice was away. To a person they said, "For Pastor Alice to know that we can step up, and the ministry can continue without her, for a time." That's my hope too.

## **RETURN.**

When someone so central to a community is away, something may also 'bubble up' for you as you take note of Pastor Alice's absence. What may come to the surface, may surprise you. And it may be something you are most thankful about Pastor Alice's ministry. Please take note. Capture those thoughts, those soulful ideas. Then, pass them to Pastor Alice upon her return.

It will be a gift for your pastor.

## **WHO AM I?**

My wife Sally and I raised 5 children who gave us 8 grandchildren. We currently reside in Southeast Durham after living in Raleigh for 40 years. I retired in 2013 after 35 years under call (4, as Associate Pastor, Macedonia, Burlington; 31, as Pastor, Good Shepherd, Raleigh). Sally is also retired after a career in education and advocacy.

We are grateful to be members of St. Paul's Lutheran, Durham.

I enjoy golf and limited woodworking. I'm learning to cook more at home. Together, we enjoy walking, our grandchildren, reading and writing.

I'm planning to be at Trinity on Sundays and one weekday. I'll also be available by phone, as needed.

I look forward to sharing Easter season with you at Trinity.

In Christ,

Pastor David Sloop

**Just A Few Words** As I write this, I'm counting down days until my mini-Sabbatical begins. I am really excited for the opportunity I'll have to learn and grow and be restored. I am also excited for the opportunity for Trinity to learn and grow and be restored.

To remind everybody, the start date of my mini-sabbatical is Monday, April 1, 2024; end date is Monday, May 13, 2024. You will be in good hands and well cared for by Rev. David Sloop, a retired ELCA pastor. Pastor Sloop will lead Sunday worship and be in the office one day most weeks. Pastor Sloop will be gone two of the six Sundays (he and his wife, Sally, already had plans before being invited to serve as interim); on those Sundays, Rev. Marcia Kifer will serve as supply pastor.

Because of a generous grant awarded by the Peeler Grant of the North Carolina Synod, there is no cost to the congregation. This grant fully covers all expenses for Pastor Sloop and Pastor Kifer. I am also excited to share

with you that I have been awarded a grant through the Casey Grant which will provide funding for almost half my mini-Sabbatical expenses. I am very humbled to receive this support and encouragement.

Pastor Sloop will be available for pastoral care emergencies. If there is a need, please contact Aaron Webb, congregation president, or Anica Weeks, administrative assistant, and they will contact Pastor Sloop. Please understand, I will not be available since I'll be travelling or on-site studying. Pastor Sloop will contact me if he feels it is necessary.

Here's my itinerary:

- Drive to Austin, TX; spend several days at Community First! Village;  
drive back to Rocky Mount, NC.
- Drive to Blacksburg, VA; hike part of the Appalachian Trail called Kelly Knob;  
drive back to Rocky Mount, NC.
- Drive to Great Barrington, MA; spent several days at Gutherie Center;  
drive back to Rocky Mount, NC.
- Back to Trinity on Tuesday, May 14, 2024.

This is a gracious time for all of us. I'll miss you while I'm gone, but look forward to returning with a renewed spirit and energy for our ministry together.

You all continue in my prayers. I ask that I would be included in yours.

Breathe peace,

Pastor Alice

### **From the Congregation Council**

**Here's an Update on Pastor Alice's Mini-Sabbatical: Pastor Alice will be gone from April 1 to May 13, returning to the office on May 14. Rev. David Sloop will be in the office on Tuesday, April 2; Wednesday, April 17; Monday, April 22; Tuesday, April 30; and Tuesday, May 7.** If you are in need of pastoral care outside of his office hours, please contact the congregation president, or the administrative assistant, who will reach out to him. Please understand that Pastor Alice will not be available by phone, text, or email due to traveling or participating in learning experiences onsite during her sabbatical. In case of extreme pastoral emergency, Pastor Sloop will contact her.

### **April is National Child Abuse Awareness Month**

It is a reality for thousands of children that most of us can't imagine, scenes that are beyond our worst nightmares. Yet, the ugly truth is, child abuse is very real. There is no community immune. During this month, please remember the children who long for a safe adult in their lives. Wear a blue ribbon for them. And, please, lift a prayer every day for healing of these

precious bodies and minds and spirits as well as those who cause the hurt. Thank you.

***Please include in your prayers our members, relatives, and friends who have requested our prayers:***

for children who are abused, for people and land threatened by or recovering from recent weather events especially our brothers and sisters who have no shelter, for our brothers and sisters in Ukraine and Gaza, Palestine and Israel and all communities wounded by violence, and for those who feel there is no one to pray for them.

*If you have added a name to the prayer list, please contact Pastor Alice and share an update regarding the person. Names will be rotated off the list every 30 days. Thank you.*

### ***Our Homebound Members***

*Please remember our shut-ins and seniors with a note or card or phone call.  
Please call before visiting.*

### **Pray for Our Troops**

### **Words of Appreciation**

**Thank you** to everybody who has given time and effort in assembling bulletins and newsletters in March! We are truly blessed by your partnership in ministry.

**Thank you** to the folks who help prepare for worship and share worship leadership!

## **Holy Week**

**Holy Wednesday, March 27**, for a Service of Prayer for Healing which will offer anointing and Eucharist

**Maundy Thursday, March 28**, which will include individual absolution, Eucharist, and Stripping of the Altar

**Good Friday, March 29**, which will use the ancient service of Tenebrae.

**These worship services will gather at noon and 7:00 pm in the Sanctuary.**

**Holy Saturday, March 30**, preparation of Sanctuary and Easter Cross, **10:00 am**. All are welcome! Please bring flowers or greenery to decorate the Easter Cross.  
Thanks!

**Easter Sunday – March 31, 2024 at 10:00 am**

This is the highest celebration of the Church. Please come and join your voice and praise with all who will gather in the Sanctuary of Trinity Lutheran Church. Invite somebody to come with you!

**You are Invited to Help Provide  
a Beautiful Witness of Easter!**

**Flowers for the Easter Cross** – contributions of home garden flowers (or store bought!) will be used to decorate

our Easter Cross. This effort is a beautiful visual announcement of the celebration of the Resurrection to all who drive along Winstead Avenue. Please bring flowers to the church on Holy Saturday, March 30, at 10:00 am. Also, help is needed to do the decorating of the Cross for Easter. The Easter Cross will be at the gate of the Memorial Garden for the entire Easter season (through May 19). Please help keep this visual acclamation of the Resurrection bright with fresh flowers and greenery. For more information, please contact the church office. Thank you!

**Love Meals** A reminder that the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of every month is designated as Love Meals Sunday. Please bring non-perishable food items to share with folks in our community who struggle to provide food for their families. Our cupboard is extremely low, and the need is still great. The bucket is in the Gathering Space. Thanks!

**Book Group** We will gather on **Tuesday, May 14** at 11:00-12:30 to discuss *Rip Van Winkle* by Washington Irving. This is an adjustment to the previously posted schedule. Please note – book group will not meet in April. The book selection June 11 at 11:00 am is *The Old Man and the Sea* by Ernest Hemingway. Everyone is invited to join this time of conversation.

**Weekly Worship** continues to be posted usually by late Sunday afternoon. Google **Trinity Lutheran Church ELCA Rocky Mount NC Facebook** to access the recording. Or go to our website at [www.trinityrm.org](http://www.trinityrm.org),

scroll down to worship where you'll find a link to Facebook and YouTube. Remember, you do not need a Facebook account to view, only to comment. All the worship videos are available on our Facebook page for you to watch at your convenience. The website also offers embedded videos for the most recent three services. Hope you'll share this worship time.

### **Ah! Spring Time!**

Yes, warmer days are here! Flowers are in bloom! Birds sing from tree limbs! And the grass needs to be mowed! Coming soon – the signup sheet on the bulletin board near the office and on the door of the mower shed. Our yard is known throughout Rocky Mount as being attractive and well-kept, bringing many compliments from folks. Let's work together to provide this visual ministry of God's amazing creation to our community. For more information, please contact the church office. Thanks!

### **Graduates – We Want to Celebrate With You!**

Families of graduates, please send information about your graduate to the church office via email at [officetlc@trinityrm.org](mailto:officetlc@trinityrm.org) by Tuesday, May 14, so it can be shared in the June newsletter. Include student's name, school, date of graduation, and plans for after graduation. A litany of blessing will be part of worship on Sunday, July 7. Thanks!

**A Summer Change Beginning in June** During the summer months, we'll change from having after worship refreshments twice a month to only gathering in

Resurrection Hall on the first Sunday of the month which will be when we celebrate birthdays and anniversaries. But, a change to the change is that *on Sunday, June 2, we'll have lunch and conversation*, sharing updates about ministries and asking questions about Pastor Alice's mini-Sabbatical and reconnecting. Everybody is invited for this opportunity to celebrate being called to serve in this faith community. Please watch for more information.

**Congregation Council**  
**Cluster Reports**  
**March 2024 meeting**

**Worship Cluster**

Lent Mid-Week Worship-Services will be held at noon and 7pm in Resurrection Hall on Wednesdays.

- March 6
- March 13
- March 30

**Holy Week**

Palm/Passion Sunday at 10:00am- Service will start in the front parking lot (weather permitting)

- March 24

Holy Wednesday, Service of Prayer for Healing which will offer anointing and Eucharist- Services at noon and 7

- March 27

Maundy Thursday, Service will include absolution, Eucharist, and Stripping of the Altar-Services at noon and 7

- March 28

Good Friday, Service will use the ancient service of Tenebrae-Services at noon and 7

- March 29

Easter Sunday

- March 31

Easter lilies- payment is due March 17

Saturday, March 16- Spring Work Day

Saturday, March 30- Prepare Sanctuary for Easter

April 1- Annunciation of Our Lord

## **Faith Growing Cluster**

### *Christian Education*

The Bible Study focus has been on David and then a review of selected Psalms noting the type of Psalm, noting the musical instruments used in worship; and placing the time of the Psalm, the subject matter and the author when available. This effort has made the weekly Psalms reading more meaningful.

We will finish our review of David's history next week before beginning our study of Solomon.

### *Stewardship*

The Stewardship material research is ongoing while we focus on a program in Ordinary Time.

## **Caretaking Cluster**

### *Family Life*

Our team leaders are doing a great job over-seeing and organizing our after-worship fellowship gathering on the 1st and 3rd Sundays. To help with the recognition of birthdays and anniversaries on the 1st Sunday, please be sure that your “special” dates are on file. Also, the sign-up sheet to help with refreshments is on the table in the Gathering Space. Thanks!

*Finance – see separate report*

### *Property*

- Work day is scheduled for 10:00 am on Saturday, March 16, 2024; rain date is Saturday, March 23, 2024.
- Regular inspection conducted on Tuesday, February 13, 2024 of boiler required by North Carolina; other routine inspection was done of the property per requirement of Church Mutual (through whom we have our property and liability insurance policies); inspector did not find any concerns; we received a statement from the state that says we passed.
- Please be mindful to turn off lights when leaving the building; also if you notice any problems, please tell Pastor Alice or call the church office. Thanks.

## **Invitation Cluster**

- YouTube and Facebook continue to be updated on a weekly basis.
- The Book Group continues each month. See separate articles and bulletins on titles and times.

- Love Meals Sunday is the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of every month.
- Meals on Wheels will be on May 29<sup>th</sup>.
- Highway Clean-up for the first quarter will pick back up in March.

## **Prayer for Easter**

**O God, Whose Blessed Son made Himself known to His disciples in the breaking of bread, open the eyes of our faith, that we may behold Him in all His redeeming work, Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

*From Sundays and Seasons, Year B, 2024*