

# Trinity Te Deum

The official newsletter for Trinity Lutheran Church

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Sunday School and Bible Study 9:15 AM – Divine Service 10:30 AM

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## Bam-Bam

In sports they talk about the kind of play that happens so fast that before super-slow-motion replay you couldn't separate the different parts. That type of play is referred to as a bam-bam. We have something of this sort happen every year on the calendar and this year we have it twice on the Church's.

First, we have the usual New Year's Eve/ New Year's. The world's is December 31<sup>st</sup> and January 1<sup>st</sup>. The Church's is the Last Sunday of the Church Year and the First Sunday in Advent. The Church doesn't count time the way the world does. Its heart doesn't beat to the rhythms of the secular world – January 1, Memorial Day, July 4, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and New Year's Eve. The Church's heart beats according to the rhythms of Christ's life. His First Coming, Epiphany, Transfiguration, Passion, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension is the drumbeat for the first half of our year, and what impact these have on our lives is the cadence for the second half of the Church Year.

If you know anything about marching "in step," you know it is very easy to see when someone is marching out of step. There is a joke about a mother watching her son in a military parade and marveling how every one is out of step but her son. As our world descends ever

deeper into the abyss of an "unproved mind" (cf. Romans 1) of denying reality – killing the unborn isn't murder and selling their body parts is perfectly normal, men can join together what God has not, and God has stuck people in the wrong body – those of us not in step to these increasingly primitive drumbeats will stick out more and more. It will be obvious we are marching to the cadence of a different drummer.

It will take strong legs to keep on doing, and this brings me to the second bam-bam. This year Lent follows Advent/Christmas/Easter bam-bam. Lent begins February 10. The earliest it can begin is February 5.

It's a blessing that we have a scant 6 weeks between double-dipping on Word and Sacrament because of services on Sundays and Wednesdays. Thomas Paine - at best a Deist but most likely a complete unbeliever – said of the Revolutionary War times "These are the times that try men's souls." I suppose every man feels that at some "time" in his life, but it seems to me the Revolutionary War was more of a trial of the body. Indeed Paine first said this in December 1776 around the time of Valley Forge. *These*, however, are times that literally try the soul. Whatever undergirding, support, affirmation, or defense our Faith once had from

the State and society around us are gone, and it is open season on anyone who believes in a Creator God, in a God that has revealed the truth once and for all, and that the distinction of male from female can no more be denied than the difference between night and day can be.

Bam! Bam! We get a quick double shot of God's Word for 5 weeks during Advent-Christmas and 7 in Lent-Easter. And boy howdy do I need it. I need it more than that double espresso, that double shot, or that double dip ice cream. But do you want to know the real scream? Most of the flock won't partake of the double. Some our content with just one shot; some our content, malnourished but content, with less than even that.

Remember how 9-11 sent people running into the church? Well something a lot bigger than the twin-towers has come crashing to the ground. The foundations are being destroyed and the only refuge when that happens is the Lord enthroned in heaven and available in is temple on earth (cf. Psalm 11). Hit me. Bam! Bam!

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## Advent Vespers Begin Wednesday, December 2, 7:30 PM

Advent as a season of preparation for the Nativity originated in France. Its observance was general by the time of the second Council of Tours, 567.

In some places six or seven Sundays were included. When Rome adopted Advent, she limited the period to four Sundays as we now have. It was probably not until the 13th century that Advent was universally recognized as the beginning of the Church Year which up until that time had begun with the

Festival of the Annunciation, March 25, or in some places at Christmas. While Advent never attained the extreme penitential character of Lent, it has always been regarded as a season of repentance and of solemn anticipation and preparation for the coming of Christ. [Adapted from Reed, *The Lutheran Liturgy*, 465-466.]

Three comings of Christ are remembered in Advent: the first coming, the incarnation of the Second Person of the Trinity in the womb of the Virgin Mary; the Second Coming of Jesus at the end of the world to judge it; and His continual coming among us in Baptism, the Word, and Holy Communion. The Advent wreath is of relatively recent origin, the 19th century. Only two candles have historically represented something specific, the pink one and the white one. Lit on the Third Sunday the pink one stands for joy. On this Sunday, the penitential theme is supposed to be lighter. Tinged with the white of the Christ candle, the purple of penitence shades to the pink of a joyous rose.

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***The Dummies Guide to Reality***  
A Nine Part Sermon Series on  
the First Chief Part  
Advent 2015 – Lent 2016

Could the fifth time be the charm? That isn't even a godly way to speak is it? But we are embarking on our 5<sup>th</sup> trek through Luther's Small Catechism keeping the Reformation tradition that Advent and Lent services be devoted to catechetical study.

The popularity of *dummy* books seems to be fading. At one time there was no end to those yellow covered books with scrawling black typeface saying, *The Dummies Guide* to everything from soup to nuts. I toyed with the theme "Ten Statements about Reality" or "How things Really Are," but since one of my statements is a question and "How things Really Are" seemed too blasé, I went with *The Dummies Guide to Reality*.

In one sense this is what the 10 Commandments are. They are statements of what God's people are like. We hear them as only commanding, but they can be heard, since they are in the indicative in the original, as statements of how things are. Of course when held up as a mirror they reveal how short of God's reality we are. This drives us to how Christ really did live and die according to them.

All services are on a Wednesday. They start at 7:30 PM. With the exception of Ash Wednesday, you can be out the door at 8:15.

December 2  
First Things First  
The 1<sup>st</sup> Commandment

December 9  
What's in a Name?  
The 2<sup>nd</sup> Commandment

December 16  
A Bitter Feast Day  
The 3<sup>rd</sup> Commandment

Ash Wednesday Feb 10  
They Are the Boss of Me  
The 4<sup>th</sup> Commandment

February 17  
No Thoughtless Murder  
The 5<sup>th</sup> Commandment

February 24  
It's not really All about Sex  
The 6<sup>th</sup> Commandment

March 2  
A Limitless Commandment  
The 7<sup>th</sup> Commandment

March 9  
I Can Tell a Lie  
The 8<sup>th</sup> Commandment

March 16  
Hooked by a Feeling  
The 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> Commandments

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**Christ, the Church's Mission,  
and the Church**

*Then [Jesus] said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (NKJV Luke 24:46f).*

*"How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!" ... So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (NKJV Romans 10:14-15, 17).*

*"[God our Savior] desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (NKJV I Timothy 2:4).*

Christ, the One of whom all

Scripture testifies, was anything but reticent in declaring to His disciples the Church's mission. The verses above represent but a small portion of Christ's teaching on the Church's evangelistic task, and yet a wealth of theological truth and practical guidance is packed into them.

Take the third passage, for example, which leaves no doubt as to the will of **“God our Savior”** toward all people, regardless of ethnicity, gender, age, health, wealth, location, or occupation. What He **“desires all”** to be delivered from is the slavery, oppression, and tyranny of sin – that all would come to understand the truth of their own and the world's dilemma – and also God's way of emancipation. Here then, the Church is given **“God our Savior's”** “global vision,” which in turn sets the course of the Church's day-to-day life in this world.

In the second group of passages, the Church is given God the Holy Spirit's “evangelistic blueprint” for carrying out the “global vision.” This “evangelistic blueprint” informs the Church as to the overall course of action that is to be initiated and maintained in the Church's pursuit of fulfilling **“God our Savior's”** “global vision.” This flows forth from these verses because they present the Church with unbroken-interconnecting-links which inexorably join sending, preaching, hearing, and believing – all of which awaken and lead people to **“call on Him,”** which is precisely in keeping with the first Table of the Law. Stated another way,

the Church carries out the will of God as expressed in the first three commandments and the first three petitions of the Lord's Prayer by sending men to preach the Good News message into all the world. The common thread which the Church constantly employs in awakening people from the deadness of their sin to **“call on Him”** is precisely that message which Jesus gives His Apostles in Luke 24:46f, the first set of passages listed above.

The words, **“Thus it is written,”** in which Jesus is referring to the Old Testament, are the translation of a perfect, passive verb which carries the sense of completed actions in the past that have continuing effects in the present. Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection are the completed past actions, and the **“repentance and remission of sins [being] preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem”** is that message which delivers the continuing effects of His completed actions to each individual hearer in the world. Thus, the act of preaching **“repentance and remission of sins”** is the resurrected Son's “apostolic charge” to His Church. It is in recognizing and acting on the need to deliver this Law/Gospel message **“to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem”** that gave rise to the zeal of the Apostles from the Day of Pentecost forward!

Here is how The Augsburg Confession puts it in Articles IV and V: **“1** Our churches teach that people cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or

works. **2** People are freely justified for Christ's sake, through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor and that their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake. By His death, Christ made satisfaction for our sins. **3** God counts this faith for righteousness in His sight (Romans 3 and 4 [3:21–26; 4:5]). **1** So that we may obtain this faith, the ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments was instituted. **2** Through the Word and Sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Spirit is given [John 20:22]. He works faith, when and where it pleases God [John 3:8], in those who hear the good news that God justifies those who believe that they are received into grace for Christ's sake. **3** This happens not through our own merits, but for Christ's sake.” (Concordia, The Lutheran Confessions).

So, what's the problem in the LCMS? For the full story and documentation on this matter, [visit our website](#), but here is a brief summary.

- In our day it seems that new “mark” of the Church has been established under the rubric of numerical growth within the congregation.
- This new “mark” has caused many to extol and speak of numerical growth as validation of the true Church.
- This new way of thinking has promoted the use of words such as (that a Church is in need of) “revitalization,” or (that a Church is) “unhealthy” when

describing a particular congregation's ministry if it is not growing numerically (i.e. that the people and congregation there in that place are not doing their "job").

- The anthropocentric emphasis and efforts resulting from these new ideas is a telling indication that many Districts within Synod (if not Synod itself) have lost sight of God's doctrine of election, and this has resulted in placing unnecessary, unwarranted "guilt" upon pastors and congregations alike who have been faithfully following the "global vision, evangelistic blueprint, and apostolic charge" given them by the Triune God.

Scripture is eminently clear: the agenda of the devil is to destroy and obscure the glory of Christ and the salvation of the Christian in Christ. His attack on (or hijacking of) the Church's historic methods of carrying out the "global vision" given them by Christ assails the very heart and center of the Gospel by misidentifying the mission of the Church as the human effort required to make disciples. This misidentification leads not only to a Synod divided against itself (Luke 11:17), but it greatly blurs God's divinely instituted Means of Grace – given to comfort and console man in the forgiveness of sins – with man's self-focused efforts, which ignore and deny the efficacy of God's work in our lives. The result of such confusion all too

easily leads to the de-emphasizing of God's ordained Means in favor of what "works" to increase the number of giving units.

The evidence provided by the ACELC in [VIII. The Church's Mission and Her Evangelistic Task](#) is sufficient to show that we are a divided Synod in this matter. And the sad thing is, it is just one of the 10 errors being promoted and/or tolerated in District after District. For five years now the 31 congregations (not to mention the hundreds of associate members) of the ACELC have pursued avenue after avenue to try and get ecclesiastical supervisors to address and correct these errors. To date, *none* have been corrected, *nor have we been given a single credible indication that efforts are being made to do so*. The ACELC has only the power and authority of the Word of God and the pen, and we intend to continue putting these matters before the people of the LCMS as well as the elected leaders. [We invite you to join us in that effort.](#)

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### **Young Christians Spiritually Failing in Real World Because Youth Groups Depend Too Much on Emotional High, Says Nancy Pearcey (CP Interview 1/2)** By Napp Nazworth

April 14, 2015

Pearcey is a best-selling author whose previous works include *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural Captivity*, and, coauthored with Charles Colson and Harold

Fickett, *How Now Shall We Live?*

Following the Apostle Paul's example in the first chapter of his letter to the Romans, *Finding Truth* provides readers with a progression of five principles to help them identify unbiblical ideas and articulate a response to those ideas. These principles are useful for both speaking to non-Christians and for addressing unbiblical ideas that have infiltrated the Church. Each of the core chapters deals with one of the five principles, and there is a study guide in the back of the book.

Those principles are: 1. *Identify the idol.* 2. *Identify the idol's reductionism.* 3. *Test the idol: Does it contradict what we know about the world?* 4. *Test the idol: Does it contradict itself?* 5. *Replace the idol: Make the case for Christianity.*

In her CP interview, Pearcey said the book was motivated, in particular, out of a concern for young Christians. Church youth groups are often good at establishing an emotional commitment but are failing young Christians intellectually. Parents and church leaders need to encourage their youth to grapple with difficult questions and help them learn to think through those issues, she argued, or else they will be left unprepared when their views are challenged.

Below is part one of the transcript of that email interview. In [part two](#), Pearcey applies the five principles of Romans 1 to the issue of same-sex marriage.

**CP: Why did you want to write this book?**

**Pearcey:** *Finding Truth* challenges the mindset of "Don't think, just believe," whether in the Church, the classroom, the media, or politics. Studies find that the main reason people abandon their Christian upbringing is unanswered intellectual questions. The researchers were surprised; they expected to hear stories of relationship issues — people saying they'd been hurt or emotionally wounded. But the reason given most often by those who de-convert is that they could not get answers to their doubts and questions.

That is my own story as well. Raised in a Lutheran home, I started asking questions in high school: How can we know that Christianity is true? Is it just an emotional crutch? None of the adults in my life gave any answers. I asked a college professor why he was a Christian, but all he said was, "Works for me." A seminary dean said, "Don't worry. We all have doubts sometimes" — as though I was just going through a psychological phase.

Eventually I concluded that Christianity must not have any substantial answers. I decided to put it aside and embark on a search for truth. After several years as an agnostic, I finally stumbled across L'Abri, the work of Francis and Edith Schaeffer in Switzerland. There for the first time I met people who offered reasons and arguments supporting the truth of Christianity.

My own experience convinces me that it is important to take people's questions seriously. I wrote *Finding Truth* to help other people who have questions to find solid answers.

**CP: Did you have a particular audience in mind?**

**Pearcey:** I am especially concerned about a generation of young people who are not being prepared for the challenges of growing up in a secularized culture.

Recently a mother told me, with tears in her eyes, that her son had lost his faith at a state university. The teen was a psychology major; and ever since Freud, most psychological theories have treated Christianity as a symptom of neurosis, an infantile regression, a projection of an imaginary father figure in the sky. The student came from a loving family and strong church, but he was not prepared for the barrage of critical theories he was learning in the classroom. Within a semester, he had abandoned his Christian upbringing.

This is where *Finding Truth* can help. It offers a 5-part strategy derived from Romans 1 that empowers people to think critically about secular theories in any subject area. Paul states that there is a body of knowledge giving real-world evidence for God, available to everyone across all cultures and all periods of history — what we call general revelation — which provides a way to test worldviews.

For example, we all have direct awareness of human nature.

Because humans are capable of thinking, the first cause that created us must have a mind. Because humans are capable of choosing, the first cause that created us must have a will. As one philosopher sums it up, because a human is a someone and not a something, the source of human life must also be a Someone — not the blind, automatic forces of nature, as we are told by philosophies like naturalism or materialism.

**CP: You write about the failures of the Church to help young people seek answers to difficult questions. What grade would you give the American Church on the subject of apologetics?**

**Pearcey:** The good news is that in recent years, apologetics resources have become far more available. The bad news is that many churches continue to ignore those resources, treating Christianity as though it were primarily emotional.

Youth groups rarely encourage young people to grapple with tough questions. Instead the goal seems to be to engineer events that ratchet up emotional commitment. But emotional intensity is not enough to block out questions. If anything, it leads teens to redefine Christianity in purely emotional terms — which leaves them vulnerable when they finally do face their questions.

*Finding Truth* opens with the story of a presentation I was invited to give on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. Afterward a congressional chief of staff stood up and announced to everyone there, "I lost my faith at an Evangelical college." How



did it happen? The staffer explained that his professors taught the prevailing theories in their field, but those theories are typically secular and sometimes explicitly anti-Christian. They did little or nothing to offer an informed biblical counter-interpretation. The young man even met with his professor privately, asking, "How do you relate your theological convictions to what you teach in the classroom?" Not one could give an answer.

A 2007 survey of the Coalition of Christian Colleges and Universities found that only about half the faculty said they could give a biblical perspective on the field they teach.

A unique feature of *Finding Truth* is that it offers a strategy that can be applied in every field, every profession — and in ordinary life too. One of my students wrote, "The method of critique you taught in this book has been incredibly helpful to me, not just in my other classes but also in my life, reading books and watching movies."

**CP: Sometimes in our culture people grow up thinking they are Christian just because their parents are Christian and they live in a community of mostly Christians. At Southern Evangelical Seminary's National Apologetics Conference in January, Josh McDowell said Christian parents can help their children develop their own convictions by not answering their questions, but responding to questions with more questions. What do you think of this suggestion?**

**Pearcey:** Most adults do need to learn to ask more questions

and listen more. But that should not become a way to avoid doing the careful work of finding answers. When I went to L'Abri as an agnostic, I was impressed by the way the staff used my questions to introduce me to the wider world of ideas. It was exhilarating to discover that Christianity is not limited to a privatized "religious" sphere — that it actually gives superior answers to the fundamental questions that everyone faces.

*Finding Truth* cites several secular thinkers who admit that Christianity offers answers precisely where their own worldview fails. The late philosopher Richard Rorty was revered as the "philosopher of democracy," yet he admitted that his own worldview did not give a basis for democracy. He was a committed atheist and Darwinist, yet in the Darwinian struggle for existence, the strong prevail while the weak are left behind. So, clearly, evolution is not the source of universal human rights. Instead, Rorty acknowledged, that concept came from the Christian claim "that human beings are made in the image of God." So he simply borrowed the concept of universal rights from Christianity. He dubbed himself a "free-loading" atheist.

No wonder Paul, living in the midst of the powerful Roman empire, proclaimed that he was "not ashamed" of the gospel (Rom. 1:16). Christianity is so appealing and so attractive that adherents of other worldviews keep free-loading the parts they like best.

<http://m.christianpost.com/news/young-christians-spiritually-failing-in-real-world-because-youth-groups-depend-too-much-on-emotional-high-says-nancy-pearcey-cp-interview-1-2--137420/>

## Mr. Rogers Worship

Posted on [May 5, 2014](#) by [Rev. Paul R. Harris](#)

When my kids were small I didn't forbid my kids from watching Mr. Rogers but I ridiculed the man, and I say so now unapologetically not wishing to speak ill of the dead but truthfully of the one-time living.

He was effeminate. He taught morality apart from Christian spirituality and that is moralizing. And he thought neighborliness solved everything. It doesn't, but it's appealing. In the 90s the church came up with "Friendship Sunday." Yes, I tried it, and felt like Mr. Rogers doing so.

This must have been the mind set of St. Michael's Lutheran Church, Winchester, Texas when they did "Polka-Style Worship Service at the Park" on January 12, 2014. It's all there. "Come Now and Worship" is set to the "Beer Barrel Polka." "High Above the Mountain Tops" is set to "Erica Waltz." "O Bless the Lord" is set to "Liechtensteiner Polka." The Gospel Acclamation seems to have been left inviolate, but "Oh, That the Lord Would Guide My Ways" is set to "Happy Wanderer." (Now that's almost funny rather than ridiculous.) The Benediction is set to "Edelweiss." I don't know if the closing hymn, called "Sending Hymn" is Polka or not. It's "Adio, The Service is Ended," and I would say mercifully so.

Having been at the 2013 ACELC conference and hearing one of our speakers say that you could rap the Nicene Creed, I

shouldn't be shocked. You really may in Christian freedom and can with some knowledge of the genera do it. But should you? Is this a case of Dr. David Scaer's dictum: if all they can sing is "Dropkick me Jesus through the Goalposts of Life," then do it?

I can't speak for the pastor of St. Michael's but when I have gone out on a limb in the name of neighborliness or friendship it wasn't about either. It was about what I thought was the best chance to spread the gospel for growing the church. That's why the remarks of John W. Robbins in the foreword to a 1990 Gordon Clark book stopped me in my tracks. He says, "One of the sins for which Christ condemned the scribes and Pharisees – the religious leaders of his day – was their dynamic evangelistic program. 'Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves' .....Growth, as a goal, is the ideology of the cancer cell. True evangelism has a different goal: the propagation of God's truth" (*Today's Evangelism: Counterfeit or Genuine*, v, vi).

Can God's truth be propagated by rap and Polka? Is John 3:16 just as true whether it is beat-boxed to or accompanied by Oompah-Pah? Yes. But do these "art" forms befit the truth expressed? You could sculpt the Venus de Milo out of horse manure and it would still be her but would it be fitting? Actual-

ly I don't think it would be even friendly or neighborly to do so.

Mr. Roger's theme song "Won't You be my Neighbor?" was written by the host and was used for 34 years till the show went off the air. Do you think the people to whom the show is beloved would tolerate, accept, let alone applaud it being rapped or Oompah-Pah-ed in the name of making the reruns more popular? No, they would be insulted. What about the person who had never heard the original? He may indeed be drawn to Mr. Roger's neighborhood, but it would be one with rap or Polka music.

Notice how I have referred to rap and Polka music with no need to define them? Why does everyone recognize the legitimacy of categories of music called jazz, soul, rock, punk, grunge, heavy metal, country, rap, and Polka, but some refuse to recognize that there is a category called sacred music? Who thinks it fitting to hear punk in a jazz club or rap at a honkytonk? The same people who think it fitting to hear Polka in church.

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### **Boom! Changes Everything**

Posted on [August 10, 2015](#) by [Rev. Paul R. Harris](#)

Fox has a new summer show titled *Boom!* and does it change everything? No, it shows everything really has changed.

The premise of the show is that a ticking bomb and someone trying to diffuse it make for great entertainment. I suppose those in the Army's EOD units might not think so. I suppose

those behind *The Hurt Locker* might be justifiably hurt by something that is deadly serious for them being regarded by others as entertainment.

O come on! Lighten up! This is Hollywood. They make fun of everything except Muslims and homosexuals. More about the latter later.

On Boom! an "explosive" device filled with anything from chili to chocolate pudding is rigged with wires. The wires correspond to answers to various questions. Right answers mean you cut the right wire. Cut the wrong wire and BOOM!

I have to admit when I watched a bit of their inaugural episode they did manage to catch the suspense that goes with watching someone trying to diffuse a ticking bomb. Then a real explosion happened.

I hadn't been watching the show. I changed channels as the closing credits rolled. The announcer guy with the voice most pastors would die for says with all rhythm, unctuousness, and zing: "Tune in next week as the [I can't remember their name] family takes on a gay kickball team from Los Angeles!" He didn't miss a beat, slur a syllable, or give a hint that he was saying the moral equivalent of: "Tune in next week while a Texas family takes on an ISIS death squad!" Or, "Tune in next week as the Harris family takes on a B & E crew from the Bronx's!"

A member sent me a link to an op-ed titled "The Big Gay Marriage Lie." It was subtitled: "Gay marriage, we've been

told, will not affect you. What a crock.” Somewhere in the piece he says something like: They repeatedly told us that nothing will change once gay marriage is the law of the land. In fact everything has changed.

I am not well versed enough in history to say this definitively, but in Bible history not even the Sodomites or the Gibeahites openly accepted their homosexuality. O everyone knew about it, but it was still under the cover of darkness that their perversity was pursued. Neither Greece nor Rome made laws protecting it and giving it equal standing with real marriage. That was left for us “upon whom the end of the ages has come.” I use that quote so you will look it up and put this whole issue in perspective.

In one sense everything has changed; in another sense nothing has. The last thing that changed everything was Easter morning. From then on it was the end, the Latter Days. The next thing that really changes everything is the Parousia, and that doesn't happen with a BOOM! but “with a loud command” “with the voice of the archangel” “with the trumpet call of God.” And we know whose voice, angel, and trumpet it is. And though the announcer can say “a gay kickball team from Los Angeles” with a straight face, God can't hear it without lowering the boom just a bit more.

**Welcome to Trinity  
Lutheran Church**  
-LCMS-  
1207 West 45<sup>th</sup> Street, Austin,  
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**512-251-4204 (H)**  
**pastorharris@**  
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**Divine Service 10:30 am,**  
**Sunday School and Adult Bi-**  
**ble Class 9:15 am**

#### **New Member Information**

**This information is to help answer questions you might have. After reading it, if you still have questions the secretary is Darcy Geu, she will be happy to help you or point you in the right direction.**

Pastor's hours: Monday-Thursday 10 am - 1 pm in the office and again from 4 pm - 6 pm. 1 pm to 4 pm Pastor is usually making calls. The best way to see him is by appointment which can be before, during or after regular office hours.

**Secretary's hours:** Darcy Geu comes into the office on Wednesdays. Her cell phone number is 618-567-1923. She can also be reached by e-mail: [secretary@trinityaustin.com](mailto:secretary@trinityaustin.com) on Sundays and Wednesdays.

**For maintenance or safety issues** contact a trustee, they are Matthew Geu 307-340-1250, Joe Krohn, 512-878-7215, Matthew Graves, 512-434-0002 or Ryan Ruwe, 646-509-8926.

**Bible Study Classes:** Wednesday Evenings at 7:15 pm.

**Mail:** Your weekly bulletins, bi-monthly newsletters, other fliers and information will be in your mailbox (the boxes are alphabetical some of the time). If you are not in church on a Sunday, you may choose to have the secretary post in the mail or email you the bulletin and a copy of the sermon

to you the following week.. Extra copies of the previous weeks' bulletin may also be found on the little table by the mailboxes. Please let the secretary know if you wish to have your mailbox contents mailed or emailed to you. A rough draft of the sermon is available Sunday mornings on the main bulletin board

**Sermon copies:** The final draft of the Sunday sermon is copied on the Monday after it is preached and is placed on the table by the mailboxes. They stay there for two weeks, but we have a copy on file if you missed one and would like a copy. The sermons can also be read and heard on our website [www.trinityaustin.com](http://www.trinityaustin.com)

**Offering Envelopes:** If you wish the financial secretary to keep a record of your givings and give you a statement at the end of the year, fill out an offering envelope in the pew and place your offering in it. The financial secretary is Thomas Copeland. You can reach him at (512) 632-9478.

**Organizations:** Kids of our Lord (KOOL) youth group (ages 6-18) contact Debbie Potter (512) 431-4458(cell), Voters Assembly and Church Council contact Dwayne Potter (512) 458-3798. Board of Social Activities chairman is Jim Lesko. You can reach him at (512) 484-7611 or email him at [jlesko@austin.rr.com](mailto:jlesko@austin.rr.com).

**Bulletin boards:** We have two large general boards (one located in the fellowship hall and one outside Pastor's office), one Seminary Student information board, and one KOOL information board (in the hall around from Pastor's office), and a trustees and social activities board (located between the bathrooms) please check with the Pastor to



post items on any of the bulletin boards. Once approved, the secretary would be more than happy to post your information for you on any of the boards.

**Auditorium and Flower Calendars:** If you have a special occasion or meeting coming up and would like to reserve the auditorium check with Pastor to get approval to use the facility. If you would like to place flowers on the altar for a special occasion, choose an open date on the flower calendar and place your name there. If you are bringing your own flowers, please indicate that on the chart. If you would like Brown's Florist to deliver the arrangements they will do so for \$50. Please make a check out to Trinity Lutheran Church and in the memo section write the date you want the flowers and place the check **in the Secretary's mailbox.**

Updated 11/23/2015

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### Alone Again UN-naturally

Posted on [December 15, 2014](#) by [Rev. Paul R. Harris](#)

In the 70s or perhaps 80s, the saying was don't let your kids watch TV till they have learned to read. I added in the 90s don't let your kids get a computer till they have learned to think. I now add don't let them get a cell phone till they have learned to be alone.

I know; I know. In the name of safety, efficiency, and practicality there are a dozen reasons that every kid outside the house needs a cell phone, but let's not forget all that goes along with that phone. He gets 24/7 peer pressure. He gets the constant comfort of the collective, the group, the hive. Having a cell

phone gives a whole new spin to Timothy Leary's "turn on, tune in, drop out." Turn on the cell phone; tune in to the constant stream of consciousness of the world, and drop out of home, school, church into the realm of cyberspace where tweets by twits rule. Sartre thought people are hell; I know they aren't, but they can be a drug.

"Alone Again Naturally" is a 1972 Gilbert and Sullivan song. "Solitary Man" is a 1966 Neil Diamond song and "I am a Rock" is a 1965 Simon and Garfunkel song. All of these make my top 500 songs. While the first bemoans a state of solitude, the next two celebrate it, but in a painful way. That's because God didn't make us for that state. He's the one who said, "It's not good that the man should be alone."

However, it must be noted that Moses, Elijah, Paul, and Jesus all spent time alone in the desert. True, it's not good that a man should always be alone, but it's not good when he is never alone and worse still when he *can't* be alone. The millennial generation is the first, at least in America, that has the reaction to *not* being around people that former generations had to being around too many people for too long. They get jumpy, depressed, stressed.

There is a pendulum here. I'm not advocating swinging to isolation. When we listen to Neil, Paul, and Art we know Neil is not really glad that he's a solitary man and Paul and Art aren't a rock let alone an island. I'm certainly not wishing to

swing all the way to Timion of Athens who was known for his hatred of men and desire to be left alone. Shakespeare's play has his self-authored epitaph but it's different than the one in Plutarch's *Lives of the Noble Romans* which reads as follows: "Timion, the misanthrope, am I below. / Go, and revile me, traveler, only go" (328).

No, Christians don't want to raise haters, but we *do* want them to be able to stand on their own and *alone* if necessary for the sake of confessing the truth. Children are to be raised with the knowledge that their touchstone that tells them everything is okay is *not* the group, the herd, the collective, the hive. Their link to that can be interrupted and it is not an indication that anything at all is wrong. The link that can't be even interrupted is the vertical one between them and God. We live, move, and have our being in Him not the group. Everything is from Him, to Him, and through Him not others.

[Proverbs 16:32](#), "He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, And he who rules his spirit, than he who captures a city," and [Proverbs 25:28](#), "Like a city whose walls are broken down is a man who lacks self-control" both address the controlling of one's self. That is learned both in the company of others and in solitude. One thing is for sure though, if you can't stand to be alone with yourself, you won't have much success in controlling the self.

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### December 2015

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
			Advent Ves- pers 7:30			
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	<b>5pm Confir- mation</b>		Advent Ves- pers 7:30			
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
<b>Bus Caroling</b>	<b>5pm Confir- mation</b>		Advent Ves- pers 7:30			
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	<b>NO Confir- mation</b>			<b>Christmas Eve Candlelight 7:30pm</b>	<b>Christmas Day Festival of Worship 10am</b>	
27	28	29	30	31		
	<b>NO Confir- mation</b>					

### January 2016

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<b>Epiphany Dinner 5pm</b>	<b>5pm Confir- mation</b>		<b>7:15pm Ro- mans</b>			
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	<b>5pm Confir- mation</b>		<b>7:15pm Ro- mans</b>			
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	<b>NO Confir- mation</b>	<b>6:30 Elders Meeting</b>	<b>7:15pm Ro- mans</b>			
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	<b>5pm Confir- mation</b>					