

# TRINITY BUILDER

October 2018  
Trinity Lutheran Church, Alameda, CA



A few years ago, I heard renowned author and theologian Barbara Brown Taylor speak at the Festival of Homiletics. Leaning on the insight of Celtic Christianity, she reflected upon the “thin places” in our lives. Not the “lean” or “meager” places, but those places where

the veil between heaven and earth are so thin that we sense there has ceased to be a separation. Some might call these “holy moments” or “God moments.”

As I sat and listened to Taylor’s “thin place” examples, I realized that we brush across this veil far more often than we stop to appreciate. We are quick to explain away God’s little gifts to us. Moments of “God-space” we encounter between the parentheses of urgent tasks are often squeezed away by our frenetic schedules and other pressing needs.

God comes to us in some of the most mundane times and places in our lives. Where there are children laughing and playing, God is present. Where two friends share their struggles and joys, God is present. Where a grown child is caring for an aging parent, God is present. Where one stops briefly to help a stranger in need, God is present.

These days it is easy to be caught up in worry, anger, fear, or doubt. We think that by working harder, sleeping less, and running around more we might have a chance to escape those unpleasant things. But watch out that you don’t run over God in your path. God wants you to know that you do not walk this path alone. God is so near that you can almost hear God’s voice; you can almost touch God’s very presence. Take a deep breath and watch for those “thin places” where God is near.

Blessings,  
Pastor Stephanie

## BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

It's back! That time-honored celebration of God's creatures commemorating St. Francis of Assisi, the Blessing of the Animals, will be held **Sunday, October 7**, at our 10:30 a.m. worship service. Bring your furry (and not so furry) friends and don't forget to invite your neighbors and their pets as well. This year we're also asking people to bring an offering of pet food to donate to the Alameda Animal Shelter.





Join the Bridges Conference Hymn Fest on **Sunday, October 7**, at 3:00 p.m. at Napa Valley Lutheran, 1796 Elm Street, Napa, CA. The theme is "Make a Joyful Noise unto the Lord" (Psalm 100). After the Hymn Fest, Bishop Mark Holmerud will prepare chili for the gathering.

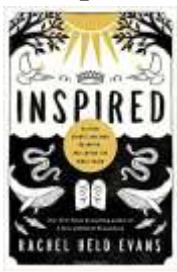
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## CONTINUING EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

### Sunday Morning Adult Faith Formation Fellowship

During our discussion about the ELCA Draft Social Statement on Women and Justice, those participating expressed how much we enjoyed getting together Sunday mornings over coffee to talk about matters of our faith. Together we decided that we would continue to meet from **9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings** for intentional, but informal, discussion. Discussion may cover topics of scripture, theological questions, or topics that are being discussed by the ELCA and other faith groups. Please plan to grab a cup of coffee with us Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m.!

### Deep Thoughts with Pastor Stephanie



Pastor Stephanie's discussion group will continue on **the third and fourth Mondays of the month from 7:00-8:30 p.m.** This group will use discussion series, books and discussion guides, videos, and our everyday current events to discuss how we live out our faith day to day. This month (**Oct. 15 and 22**) we're continuing to read *Inspired: Slaying Giants, Walking on Water, and Loving the Bible Again* by Rachel Held Evans. You may purchase the book through Apple iBooks (\$9.99) or Amazon.com – (Kindle version \$9.99; Paperback \$13.20; Audible Audiobook \$15.17 or 1 credit). For more information please contact Pastor Stephanie.

### Women's Bible Study

Our Women's Bible Study meets **each Wednesday from 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.** This month we will continue discussing Galatians. There will **NOT** be Bible Study on Wednesday, October 3, as Pastor Stephanie will be away. For questions or more information, contact Pastor Stephanie.

### Tuesday Morning Bible Study

This group meets **each Tuesday morning beginning at 7:15 a.m.** to discuss the readings for the following Sunday.

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## ASANTE NETWORK UPDATE

Kathy Booker

Thank you Trinity!!! You outdid yourself! Our Fair Trade African Bazaar was a great success once again. Proceeds were approximately \$4200, which means over \$800 for Kagitumba. We hope to keep Asante Network going through this calendar year; and with whatever inventory is left, I will have a sale at my house to liquidate the rest of the inventory. I will keep you posted.

Thanks again for your support. And thanks to the Mission and Service Committee for their hard work with publicity, providing cookies, and helping with setting up and packing up.

## MUSIC MINISTRY UPDATE

Julie Haydon, Director of Music Ministry

Our ensembles are back into their weekly rehearsal routine, and it is wonderful to have the halls of Trinity alive with music! We are preparing for our fall concert scheduled for Sunday, November 4, at 3:00 p.m. We still have space for more singers and ringers, so consider getting involved this fall.

Joyful Noise! Community Children's Choir resumed, and we have a lot of new families participating. We are offering two sessions, one for preschoolers and kindergarteners and another for first through fourth graders. The new split is offering a lot of great musical opportunities for the groups, and I am so pleased by their progress in the first weeks. I visited the Boys and Girls Club in Alameda to do two sing-alongs and to encourage enrollment and had a wonderful time with the kids there.

On **Sunday, October 14**, singer-songwriter Ken Medema will join us at the 10:30 worship service. Don't miss the chance to enjoy his dynamic music and creative energy. During coffee hour, we will take a special offering to help raise funds for Interlude, which is a foundation Ken created to nurture church music directors and small churches across the country. I was the beneficiary of this foundation last summer when Ken invited me to his Interlude retreat for mid-career music directors. It was a life-changing experience for me to spend a week with new colleagues, to recommit myself to music ministry, and to re-imagine the creative and spiritual possibilities. Interlude covers the costs for music directors to have this experience, which is unique in our profession; most music directors have to pay out of pocket for their professional development. Supporting his foundation benefits not only the directors who participate but also the hundreds of members of their congregations and communities who are blessed by their ministries



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## TRINITY LUTHERAN BOOK CLUB

The next meeting of the Trinity Book Club will be at 7:30 p.m. on **Tuesday, November 13**, in the church meeting room. Ruth and Peter Dow will provide refreshments. The book chosen for discussion in November is *Fascism-A Warning* by Madeleine Albright. If you are interested in discussing this book, please come to our meeting. (There is no commitment to future meetings/books.)

The following summary is excerpted from Amazon:

A Fascist, observes Madeleine Albright, "is someone who claims to speak for a whole nation or group, is utterly unconcerned with the rights of others, and is willing to use violence and whatever other means are necessary to achieve the goals he or she might have."

The twentieth century was defined by the clash between democracy and Fascism, a struggle that created uncertainty about the survival of human freedom and left millions dead. Given the horrors of that experience, one might expect the world to reject the spiritual successors to Hitler and Mussolini should they arise in our era. In *Fascism: A Warning*, Madeleine Albright draws on her experiences as a child in war-torn Europe and her distinguished career as a diplomat to question that assumption.

Fascism, as she shows, not only endured through the twentieth century, but now presents a more virulent threat to peace and justice than at any time since the end of World War II. The momentum toward democracy that swept the world when the Berlin Wall fell has gone into reverse.

*Fascism: A Warning* is a book for our times that is relevant to all times. Written by someone who has not only studied history but also helped to shape it, this book presents lessons that we must understand and questions we must answer if we are to save ourselves from repeating the tragic errors of the past.



Pastor Craig Minich

We're looking forward to our new program year here at EBLYP!

**EBLYP Family Ministry:** Come to our annual Halloween party and Spooky Escape Room (put on by our middle and high school youth) on Sunday, Oct. 28, at St. Paul Lutheran (1658 Excelsior Ave., Oakland). Join us in costume for Halloween-themed games with prizes, hot dog dinner, and fun for the whole family!

**G.E.T.** (God's Elementary-people Together), our upper elementary youth group: We will be attending our Synod Elementary Weekend Retreat for our third - sixth graders at Mt. Cross in Felton on October 12-14. Led by Lutheran high school leaders from across the Sierra Pacific Synod (including 6 of our EBLYP leaders!), we will learn and sing camp songs, play games, pray together, and deepen our faith by learning about several Bible stories. Please contact Jessica Fleischman to register.

G.E.T. together, G.E.T. excited, and G.E.T. connected with God!!!

**MYLK** (Middle Youth, Lutheran Kids), 6<sup>th</sup> –8<sup>th</sup> grade youth ministry: We will be spending the month preparing for our Spooky Escape Room at the St. Paul Family Halloween Party. Come join us October 28.

**SNL** (Sunday Night Live), 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade youth: On Sunday, September 30, we did research for the Family Halloween Party (and group building) by going through an Escape Room at Escape Oakland! This event happened after the writing of this article. Come back next month to hear how we did!

**ELCA YAGM** (Young Adults in Global Mission) Presentation on Wednesday night, October 24, at St. Paul Lutheran Church (1658 Excelsior Ave, Oakland): All EBLP CONGREGATIONS are invited to attend a presentation by two young adults who finished serving with YAGM in Hungary last year. Pearl Penumaka and Juliana Stein-Webber are both alumnae of the EBLYP youth ministry! Dinner is from 6:00-7:00 p.m. (\$7/person) and the presentation is from 7:00-8:00 p.m. RSVP to Jessica Fleischman by October 20 so we can plan appropriately in regard to food.

**Schedule of presentations from Senior High Youth and Adults who attended the ELCA and MYLE gatherings in Houston this summer.** Small groups from our EBLYP delegation will be preaching and presenting about our experiences at:

Trinity-Alameda on September 30

St. Paul Wednesday night program on October 17 from 7:00-8:00 p.m.

United Lutheran on October 21

Trinity-Oakland on October 28

Resurrection: no date yet

Please pray for our presenters

**Save the Date: Mental Health First Aid Class** at St. Paul Lutheran (1658 Excelsior Ave., Oakland), details to be announced soon.

**Sierra Pacific Synod Youth Committee (SPSYC) Youth Leaders update:** Six of our EBLYP youth serve on this leadership team in our Synod and 4 of them attended the overnight fall planning meeting in Roseville on September 14 and 15 where we fine-tuned our October upper-elementary retreat.

Let's have an amazing year filled with challenge and growth, laughter and love!

## SEPTEMBER COUNCIL MEETING NOTES

### Pastor Stephanie's Report:

**Vision Statement:** Council members have not yet provided feedback on vision statement ideas we had brainstormed at our last council meeting.

**Education Hour:** Discussions on the ELCA Draft Statement on Women and Justice were well attended with 10-18 people at each. Together we decided that having an opportunity between services for coffee and thoughtful conversation would be appreciated. The consensus was that people wanted something intentional but informal, so I'm calling the time from 9:00-10:00 Faith Formation Fellowship. [Also see Page 2]

**Family Fun Week:** Nine children participated with their families – 6 that were there every night of the week. We didn't increase our participation numbers this year, but having kids who chose to come back each night is a win in my book.

**Narrative Lectionary:** Since September 9, we have been using the Narrative Lectionary in worship. So far, I have heard positive feedback.

**Website:** Jessica Fleischman, Pat Fleischman, and I have been working on the new format for our website. Inspiration has come from a website which you may view at [www.flcva.org](http://www.flcva.org) (Faith Lutheran Church in Arlington, VA). I continue working on verbiage for the website and welcome descriptions of your ministries and pictures of events. In the September *Builder* I posted a photo scavenger hunt contest looking for royalty-free images to use on the website. So far, I have not received any entries. Please encourage people to help us.

### Meals for Alameda's unsheltered

**population:** The next community Dine and Connect meal for the homeless will be at Immanuel Lutheran on Monday, September 24, from 5-7. This is a community effort with the City of Alameda, Operation Dignity, Building Futures, and the All Faiths Coalition of Alameda. Our volunteers have been asked to help in the kitchen again. Contact me for more information on this program.

### Pastor Stephanie's Report:

**Budget Discussions:** I've been meeting with committees to discuss their plans for 2019. During my call process and also stated in my letter of call is a desire to grow attendance and membership (especially with young families and their children), continue Trinity's commitment to our community and serving others, and focus on a deeper knowledge, understanding, and relationship with the Bible. To this end, I've been having discussions with the Evangelism, Education, and Mission and Service ministry areas. Right now, budget requests are bigger than in past years, and some committees still need to look at what we've budgeted to do next year and assess what our priorities are so we can bring our budget back in line with our expected income.

**Vacation:** I will be on vacation September 30 – October 6. Pastor Craig will be preaching and leading worship on September 30.

### Ministry Area Reports:

**Christian Education:** Margie Sherratt and Pastor Craig have developed a survey that will be given to the youth at the five Lutheran parishes that Pastor Craig serves. Henry Mills volunteered to edit the survey and will be getting a revised version to Pastor Stephanie.

The committee will submit a request for \$1,000 for the Christian Education Budget for 2019 to support adult education, Christian education, Joyful Noise!, rites of passages for our youth, and baptisms.

There was a discussion about changing the name "Sunday School" to something else to encourage new students who don't want to have more "school" on weekends.

Steve Ganschow suggested finding a way to help transport young people to church. Pastor Stephanie is looking into the possibilities.

Julie Haydon and Pastor Stephanie are in conversation about the Christmas Pageant.

Julie Haydon's Family Fun Concert in August was a tremendous success with about 40 participants.

## SEPTEMBER COUNCIL MEETING NOTES (continued)

**East Bay Lutheran Parish:** Mike is working with an established committee at St. Paul on the EBLP Safe Congregation Policy.

**Evangelism:** The Children's Library now handled by nursery staff. Meng Li is spearheading some changes.

We now have 2 different bags for children attending worship service. The fabric one is an activity bag for use during the service. The paper bag is to be given to the child as a thank you for attending.

Julie has suggested that we have a Sidewalk Little Library at Trinity. Based on our emphasis, we thought we should have 2 levels (adult and children). Jessica offered to do the paper work and get us registered.

The committee discussed an Advent family event. Possibilities include: have crafts to promote family devotions during Advent, make Advent wreaths, provide family devotions for Advent, show a Christmas film.

**Mission & Service:** "God's Work Our Hands" Saturday took place on Sep. 8. We packed bags for the unsheltered with donations from the congregation. There was also a project at Farm2Market at Alameda Point.

The committee approved sending \$2500 from their designated fund to Kagitumba towards the building of their new church. They hope to use the new church for Christmas.

**Property:** As of August 26, we have received donations totaling \$12,625 of the total cost of the roof project (\$24,041.33).

**Music Ministry Report:** [Also see the Music Ministry report on Page 3]

The choir anthems planned for youth Sundays are such that young people can join in singing. Also, on these Sundays anyone who wants to come for the morning warm up can join in with the choir. Julie also has plans to involve some of the older youth in special roles with bells and other instruments.

Julie will work with Mary James and the Christian Ed committee to coordinate music

activities with the Sunday School youth for Advent. Joyful Noise! singers who want to participate in Advent events can come to a few special practices for this.

Our Music Explorers Concert in August was a huge success with over 40 children with their parents. The program and events went smoothly, and families seemed to be having a wonderful time and were very appreciative of the opportunity. The 2019 proposed budget request will include funds for an additional family concert in January.

### Old/New Business:

The Vision Statement has been narrowed down to three tagline phrases, which will be presented to congregation on October 7 and 14 via a written bulletin insert with a space for members to contribute their own ideas.

Committees' proposed budgets should be in the Council's hands by Oct. 11 so that the November council meeting is budget driven with decisions being made. Pastor Stephanie explained that she was attending the committee meetings to discuss budget dreams with the intention of talking about our priorities and dreaming and visioning - how do we fund what is most important to us? What can we do in 2019 and what needs to wait until 2020? These dreams/visioning give us something to get excited about.

Pastor Stephanie showed the council members our current website, the shell of the new website, and the website on which we are basing the new website. She welcomed feedback and gave an update on where we are with the new site.

The next council meeting is scheduled for October 18.

## FOOD BANK SUNDAY

Our next Food Bank Sunday is **October 14**. There is a barrel in the fellowship hall or narthex in which to put your non-perishable food donations. Please continue to help to support the Alameda Food Bank.

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

New prayer lists are started at the beginning of each quarter. Please contact the church office ([office@trinityalameda.org](mailto:office@trinityalameda.org) or 510-522-5220) to have names included on the prayer list for the fourth quarter of 2018 (beginning the first Sunday in October). Make sure that you have **permission from the named person to include him/her on the list.**

## SECOND-MILE GIVING FOR OCTOBER

### California Lutheran University

Founded in 1959, California Lutheran University is home to more than 2,810 undergraduate and 1,316 graduate students who come from more than 61 countries and represent a wide variety of faiths. Our dedicated, accomplished faculty works with small classes of students who are open-minded—about ideas, about people, and about faith—and are seeking to grow as individuals. Both in the classroom and outside of it, everyone at Cal Lutheran is committed to helping each student pursue their passions to discover their purpose, and follow that purpose to transform their community—and the world. Please keep CLU in your prayers this month and consider an additional offering toward their ministries.



## OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

2 Ken Gutleben

3 Kori Lamb

3 Guillermo Ruiz

5 Betty Jaber

5 Joanna Ruiz



7 Tana Moschetti

10 Kylie Beardsley

21 Joyce Blamire

21 Sophia Hofmann

31 Karol Luque



*Trinity Builder* is a monthly publication of  
Trinity Lutheran Church  
1323 Central Avenue, Alameda, CA 94501  
510-522-5220

Pastor: Rev. Stephanie Johnson

Nursing Home Ministry Pastor: Rev. Ned O'Donnell

Youth Pastor: Rev. Craig Minich

Council President: Anita Burnaford

Organist/pianist: Starr Brown

Director of Music Ministry: Julie Haydon

Custodian: Martin Kelly

Groundskeeper: Martin Kelly

Office manager: Jessica Fleischman

*Builder* editor: Marilyn Ohm-Smith

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