

## Pastor's Page July 2020

It takes 7 seconds... if it ever gets that far.

The modern metaphor for the brain is a computer, but this is not entirely accurate. There are elements of the brain that resemble a computer. The brain has memory. The brain can process information. But in the end, the brain is more of a gland that responds to that information, or reacts to that information that is fed to it by the senses. All in the goal of keeping us alive.

7 seconds...

There are 3 different levels of reaction in the brain, 3 tiers of processing any and all information that the brain receives. And it makes sense when it is broken down and you think about it. The entry-level reaction is threat-assessment. That's what happens the quickest. Makes sense. The brain stem. It's the fight/flight/freeze reaction. Am I in danger? All animals have this portion of the brain. In humans, it is substantially bigger. Anything we see, feel, hear, taste and smell goes first to the brain stem for evaluation.

The second level is the mid-brain where all the body functions are voluntarily and involuntarily managed. Processing information is done appropriate to those needs.

And then the final stop on the road for processed information is the cerebrum, the largest portion of the brain. This is where critical thinking and processing happens. On average, depending on the person, it takes 7 seconds for information to make the trip this far. And all the while, the brain stem is weighing in (and rightfully so) with its own commentary.

This brief tour through our own brains is something I needed to establish as I come to the real subject of my thoughts this month. We have been in the midst of a national and really even global conversation about a topic that generates a lot of REACTIONS in people. And I say REACTIONS respectfully and honestly. The subject is racial inequality and social injustice.

I've been listening to how people react. There are many different reactions. And I've been thinking about my own reactions, how I have been reacting to the reactions of others.

How many of us feel threatened by such a conversation, the mere presence of the conversation? What feelings are going on within us? Where do those feelings come from?

Do we empathize with the plight of our global community members who are in inordinate danger through no fault of their own? And that second-hand threat that we feel causes us to speak out to lower the threat level or diminish the danger for them? My cerebrum would stamp this as Legitimate.

Do we empathize with the plight of those who willingly walk into danger for our sake? And that second-hand threat that we feel causes us to speak out for and seek their support and protection? Equally legitimate.

Do we recoil from the conversation about racial equality because we have experienced it as a club over our own heads before when it has been addressed? Have we had to suffer the punishment for the transgressions of others when we have not contributed to the issue? Certainly legitimate.

All of these grossly oversimplified examples (and many others) will activate our threat-response system. It will color the information as it makes its 7-second trip to the processing center of the brain. This is called bias. By the time we are ready to evaluate and assess, we've already decided what to do with it. This conundrum is compounded when we receive the information from media sources that already present it with bias, pre-chewing our mental information and adding flavoring. And it is even further exacerbated by the fact that our brain stem, the first level of processing information, is also the spot that shoots adrenaline and endorphins into our system to make us powerful and able to react decisively. There is a natural high that accompanies outrage.

And so... it is into a global stage such as this, into our own local communities with our own local levels of reaction and response, that we are being called to count to 10. Give ourselves a chance to take a breath. Allow the information to percolate before we drink it. Some of us will be more adept than others, but with practice, everyone should be able to regulate their own threat-response system and get to the critical thinking phase for such a call.

We are being invited into an intentional conversation. And by we, I mean the Lutheran congregations of the Nebraska Synod. Our Bishop has issued the call.

"I am asking, inviting, challenging you—each member and every congregation of the Nebraska Synod—to take advantage of this moment, this holy now, to do one thing, to take one step toward the reconciliation for which Jesus died, and for which humanity continues to wait." - Bishop Brian Maas.

The entire email is excellent, and I commend it to you. I wish I could find a way to link to it directly, but I'm happy to share it with you upon request!

I'm sharing this call with our congregations in De Witt and Wilber. And the call is not complicated. There is an opportunity to do something right before us. If you're not sick of Zoom, there is this:

**Let's Talk: An Honest Conversation about Racism**

Monday, June 22

7:30 p.m. CT (6:30 MT)

Registration for this event is available at [this link](#).

You're invited to join members of the [ELCA Nebraska Synod's RARE team](#) (Racial Awareness, Reconciliation and Engagement) on Monday, June 22, at 7:30 p.m. CT (6:30 MT) for a Zoom panel discussion as a follow-up to the June 17 ELCA prayer service marking the five-year anniversary of the murder of the Emanuel 9.

Let's come together to talk honestly about racism -- where we are right now and where we hope to go from here. We don't promise to offer any answers, but we believe honest conversation is the right first step.

**Panelists:**

Rev. Miriam Blair, pastor, First Lutheran Church, Omaha

Michelle DeRusha and Brad Johnson, members, Southwood Lutheran Church, Lincoln

Moderator: Deacon Sunni Richardson, Director for Leadership Development, ELCA Nebraska Synod

I'll be in Zoom attendance. I'm asking specifically that our Council members please make every effort to attend. All of us are invited. Please notice the Registration link. If you're reading this in the monthly newsletter, my deepest regrets that this event is likely long past, but my hope and prayer is that we can find a way to appropriately bring this deeper issue with us after we are done.

With that in mind, I do observe that our rural Midwestern context is unique. The issue is not one-size-fits-all, and what is appropriate for some regions of the country is not necessarily a good fit for us in ours. But I believe the time is right for the important conversation to happen, because the world is getting much smaller every day, and where in ages past we might have been confined to our own bubble, the advent of social media has allowed these issues to find us much more easily, whether welcome or not.

Let us proceed together with the approach and assumption that we are safe to do so, managing our own threat-level responses along the way. It will definitely take some practice. But I believe that we are worth it. Please join me. Hope to see you on Zoom on Monday, June 22nd.

Peace,  
Pastor Panning

## **Trinity Lutheran Church Minutes**

May 20, 2020

### **I. Call to order**

Chairperson, Tim Garrison called to order the regular meeting of the Trinity Lutheran Church Council on May 20, 2020 via online streaming due to continued social distancing. Members in attendance were Tim Garrison, Adam Wollenburg, Lana Hager, Cindy Wollenburg, Jane Stokebrand, Larry Pieper, Arlyn Parde and Pastor Panning. Pastors Panning led the group in devotions.

#### **Reports**

- a) **Secretary's Report:** A copy of the April minutes was reviewed. There was a motion by Larry and a second by Arlyn to approve the minutes. Motion carried.
- b) **Treasurer's Report:** A copy of the monthly treasurer's report indicated a balance of \$29,614.42. There was a motion by Larry and a second by Arlyn to accept the report. The motion carried/
- c) **Investments Report:** The current balance is \$42,439.71
- d) **Memorial Report:** Brian Smidt reported a balance of \$18,204.79.
- e) **Suggestion Box:** None.
- f) **Committee Reports**
- g) **Pastor's Report:** Pastor Panning reports that he has conducted weekly worship services presented via streaming and as a drive up service. He has held a weekly Bible study online. No visits were made due to continued social distancing and the closure of nursing homes and hospitals to all visitors.
  1. **Spiritual Life and Growth**
    - a) **Social Committee:** Nothing new to report.
    - b) **Worship Committee:** Nothing new to report.
    - c) **Evangelical/ Stewardship:** Nothing new to report.
  2. **Youth Development**
    - a) **Parish Ed/VBS:** Jane reports the committee is looking to a nontraditional approach to Bible School due to the no gathering policy. The plan is that students will receive a postcard with a Bible verse and an example of a family activity to complete. Students from First Lutheran will be invited to attend. The council was in favor of this idea to keep our young people and children engaged with the church..
    - b) **Youth Group Committee:** Nothing new to report.
    - c) **Confirmation:** Pastor Panning reports confirmation classes have been completed for this year.
  3. **Care, Management and Overview**
    - a) **Property:** Darcy Baker and Kathy Rahe are nearing completion of the parsonage cleaning and will submit a bill when completed. Arlyn, Tim, Kathy and Darcy will tour the house at completion to determine repairs needed and Arlyn will get a bid for carpet cleaning. Arlyn has also repaired a ceiling where there was water leakage. Richters of Seward will be contacted regarding air conditioning service. The current lawn service will be maintained with one treatment of the parsonage lawn and eight treatments for the church lawn.

### **II. Old Business :**

1. **A planned meeting with the First Lutheran was not held do to restrictions on group gatherings.** Chair Tim Garrison made a contact with a member of the First Lutheran council to assure that things continue to work smoothly.

2. The Call Committee has collected a total of 64 surveys and continues to proceed with the Call Process. If Trinity Lutheran is not prepared to offer a call at the end of June, the transition ministry phase can be continued by an extended contract with Pastor Panning.
3. Jane reported that she had contacted the Scherling family to determine if they were able to access service. They are currently using a streamed service for the deaf community.

### **III. New Business:**

1. Consideration of selling extra folding chairs from the fellowship hall is being tabled.
2. There was discussion of how to proceed with Sunday Services, including the restrictions on worship practice. Following discussion, it was the decision of the council that we are not yet ready to resume Sanctuary worship at this time. Sunday services will continue to be available on Zoom, Facebook and Drive In service at this time.
3. Jenn Uher will be moving to Lincoln with her family and has given notice of her resignation from the position of church secretary/financial secretary for Trinity Lutheran. Thank you for your exceptional service, Jenn. To date there have been two applicants for that position. The executive Committee along with the current holder of that position will conduct interviews in June.
4. Communion service will be held at the Drive In service at Trinity Lutheran the last Sunday of May. Individual communion packets have been purchase and will be distributed.

There was a motion by Arlyn and a second by Adam to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried. In conclusion, Pastor Panning led the group in praying the Lord's Prayer..

Reminders: Next Council meeting will be June 17, 2020 at 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,  
Church Council Secretary, Jane Stokebrand

## Special Meeting DeWitt/Wilber Councils

June 11, 2020

A special meeting of the Trinity Lutheran and First Lutheran councils was held via zoom to discuss continued shared ministry between the two churches. Those in attendance were Tim Garrison, Brian Smidt, Ed Schachenmeyer, Marge Rhynalds (non-voting), Jeremy Connelly, Arlyn Parde, Nicole Steinfeldt, Jo Schachenmeyer, Jane Stokebrand, Connie Strouf, and Pastor Panning.

The meeting was called to order by Ed Schachenmeyer, chair of First Lutheran Council. Pastor Panning led the group in devotions. Arlyn Parde reported the Call Committee for Trinity Lutheran has completed the Ministry Site Profile, which is ready to be submitted to the Nebraska Synod office. Following approval of the synod the call committee is charged to submit the information to the Trinity Church Council. Following approval by the council, the Call will be sent to the Trinity Church body. Following Arlyn's report there was discussion regarding amending the Letter of Agreement for Transitional Ministry to continue until the Call Process can be completed. This was agreeable to all present. Further discussion included details of the Call document regarding reimbursements, supplemental benefits, housing allowance, and services to be provided by Pastor Panning. When completed, the new proposal will amount to approximately an additional \$333.10 per month per church. The process will continue as per requirements of the Nebraska Synod.

At this point, Tim Garrison adjourned this portion of the meeting for Trinity participants, in order to allow First Lutheran to continue their regular council meeting.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jane Stokebrand  
Trinity Lutheran Church Council Secretary.

		Treasurer's Report May 31, 2020		
	Bank Balance as of 04/30/2020			\$29,614.42
		<u>Income</u>	<u>Outstanding</u>	
	Offering	\$7,355.92		
	Other Deposits	\$1.24		
	Total Income			\$7,357.16
		<u>Expenses</u>	<u>Outstanding</u>	
01-00	Pastor Salary	\$1,875.00		
01-01	Financial Secretary Salary	\$206.24		
01-02	Secretary Salary	\$358.19	\$358.19	
01-03	Organist Salary	\$150.00		
01-04	Custodial Salary	\$490.62		
02-00	Mileage	\$117.53		
02-06	Pastor Housing	\$562.50		
02-07	Pastor Social Security	\$186.47		
02-08	Pastor Portico	\$390.97		
02-09	Pastor Health/Dental/Vision	\$316.83		
03-03	Communion	\$64.00		
04-02	Office Supplies	\$169.42		
04-04	Office Equipment	\$136.57		
04-05	Accountant Fees	\$40.00		
05-00	Village Utilities Church	\$140.79		
05-01	Village Utilities Parsonage	\$97.92		
05-02	Natural Gas Church	\$352.75		
05-03	Natural Gas Parsonage	\$41.27		
06-04	Vanco E-giving Fees	\$61.40		
07-01	Devotional Books	\$72.50	\$72.50	
07-04	Technology	\$43.02		
08-00	Telephone Church	\$175.22		
09-00	Sunday School	\$296.12		
11-00	Church Maintenance	\$18.56		
11-03	Lawn and Landscape	\$112.00		
	Total Expenses			\$6,475.89
	Previous Months Checks that Cleared			\$1,044.03
	Available Cash as of 05/31/20			\$29,451.66
	Outstanding Checks			\$430.69
	Reconciled to Balance on Bank Statement 05/31/20			\$29,882.35
		<u>Deposits</u>	<u>Disbursements</u>	<u>Account Balance</u>
	Other Accounts:			
	Benevolence (Savings Account)	\$135.00	\$0.00	\$645.08
	Capital Improvement Fund (Savings Account)	\$10.00	\$0.00	\$4,954.66
	<u>ICVF Grant Funds Deposited 9/1/19 TLC General fund</u>		<u>Disbursements</u>	
09-00	Care-A-Lot		\$0.00	\$333.33
09-02	Confirmation (Mentor)		\$0.00	\$333.33
09-02	Confirmation (Liz)		\$0.00	\$333.34
			\$0.00	\$1,000.00



**Worship Committee** will meet... TBD

**WELCA board** will meet... TBD

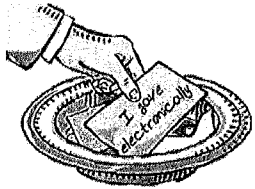
**Hope Circle** will meet... TBD

**Church Council** will meet Wednesday, July 15

**Shalom Circle** will meet... TBD



All members of the Congregation will be asked to remember the home bound and those in need of visitation during your month assigned. Service List Leaders and Circle Chairperson are responsible for contacting facilities to set up visitation dates and/or times for playing bingo or other planned activities. **July – Hope Circle**



**ELECTRONIC GIVING**

Just as you rely upon receiving income on a regular basis, Trinity Lutheran relies on your regular contributions. Trinity Lutheran appreciates the efforts of congregation members to make consistent donations throughout the year. To assist you, the church provides a convenient electronic giving option for setting up regular contributions. To donate, visit the church website at [www.trinitylutherandewitt.com](http://www.trinitylutherandewitt.com), locate the link to our online giving page and follow the instructions.



Date	Attendance	General Offering	Benevolence Offering	Property Offering	E-giving Offering
5/31	-	\$930.00	\$100.00	-	\$513.82
6/7	-	\$1726.00	-	-	\$1245.62
6/14	-	\$240.00	\$190.00	-	\$343.35
6/21	-	\$8410.00	-	-	\$382.82



**PASTOR TRAVIS PANNING**

Trinity/DeWitt: 683-3225  
First/Wilber: 821-2846  
Cell Phone: 239-5291  
Email: [pastorpanning@gmail.com](mailto:pastorpanning@gmail.com)  
OFFICE HOURS:

Wednesday/Friday 9am-12noon at Trinity/DeWitt  
Thursday/Saturday 2pm-5pm at First/Wilber

**SECRETARY - JENN UHER**

Church: 683-3225  
Email: [tlcdewitt209@gmail.com](mailto:tlcdewitt209@gmail.com)  
Cell: 402-245-8198  
OFFICE HOURS:  
TBD

# JULY 2020

<u>SUNDAY</u>	<u>MONDAY</u>	<u>TUESDAY</u>	<u>WEDNESDAY</u>	<u>THURSDAY</u>	<u>FRIDAY</u>	<u>SATURDAY</u>
			1 Jesse Gronemeyer	2	3 Cameron Brown Julia Garrison	4
5	6	7 Alice Wollenburg	8 Edith Holtmeier	9	10 Bruce Rahe	11 Jaden Smith
12	13	14 Lonnie Groathouse	15 Roger Little	16	17	18
19	20 Mike Holtmeier	21	22	23 Nancy Mahloch	24 Darcy Baker	25 Sammy Kirchoff Julie Koch
26 Alan Dunn David Schneider	27	28 Chris Schwan	29 Deanna Brown Norm Michel Karen Nelson	30 Brian Nelson	31 Spencer Morrissey Hailey Tietjen	



**PLEASE KEEP** Bev Plihal and family as they grieve their loss, Jean Malchow, Don Wollenburg, Brian Stokebrand & Family, Roman Dunn (great grandson of Jan & Alan Dunn), Jim Burger, Jack Garrison, and Tina Groathouse in your prayers.

**Pastor Panning, Trinity Council Members, Shalom Circle, and Trinity Members:**

Words can never express our gratitude for allowing the church to be opened in order to provide a time of farewell and expression of caring for Galen Plihal, our husband, father, & grandfather. Everyone worked together to ensure social distancing, safe expressions of sympathy, and to provide refreshments under Covid guidelines. Our hearts are heavy, but Galen would have been humbled by the thoughtfulness and willingness of our congregation to make the day filled with many blessings too. Thanks to each of you, Bev and family

**Trinity Members -**

At our council meeting it was decided to continue with existing schedule alternating drive in and zoom services between DeWitt and Wilber until the next council meeting which is July 15<sup>th</sup>. We will be having communion services at our drive-in service in DeWitt on June 28<sup>th</sup> passing out the individual packaged wafers and juice cups as you arrive.

We will be having our Semiannual meeting on August 9, 2020 and following that meeting we will also be having a second meeting to vote on the call committees' recommendation to accept Pastor Panning and approve the compensation package. Tim Garrison - Council Chairman

**Worship Services will continue to be "Live Stream" in addition to Drive in Services ...**

Pastor Panning will start the Live Stream about 15 minutes early as to allow people time to "come in and sit down." The stream can be found on Facebook on either the First Lutheran or Trinity Lutheran pages or You can join on Zoom... This is a recurring meeting, Join Zoom Meeting <https://zoom.us/j/5131704161>, Meeting ID: 513 170 4161... Password: 961555

**ZOOM Bible studies** on Tuesday evenings at 7:00 p.m. Same meeting ID and password as Sunday worship.

**The July Calendar and July Service Leaders are NOT included in the newsletter** as all Services are Drive in and Live Stream for now. Questions? Contact Pastor Panning, Tim Garrison or Jenn Uher or check our Facebook page or Website for further details.

**WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY** will not meet

**MEN'S BIBLE STUDY** will meet July 1 & July 15 at 6:30 am

**PLEASE CONSIDER USING E-GIVING** as we still need everyone's financial support to pay our monthly bills. If you require assistance in setting this up, please talk to Pastor Panning. Go to [www.trinitylutherandewitt.com](http://www.trinitylutherandewitt.com), and click the green OFFERING button and follow the instructions.

*Hope Circle – No Report*

*Lutheran Men in Mission*

We start a new study this month titled #52 Caregivers – Lifting others up without getting down. First and third Wednesday from 6:30-7am. Coffee is on! July 1 Topic is Taking a Break: Manna and the Sabbath Exodus 16: 1-35 & Entering God's rest Hebrews 4:1-13. July 15 Topic is Dealing With Demands: Moses gets weary Exodus 17:1-16 & Paul's boasting 2 Corinthians 11:16-33.

*Shalom Circle – No report*

*WELCA – No Report*

# KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS...

## SERVICEMEN

**SSG – Brock Johnson**

**Darin Bartlett**

209 W. 6<sup>th</sup>

Knob Noster, MO 65336

[Bartlett\\_Riley@yahoo.com](mailto:Bartlett_Riley@yahoo.com)

*(Mary Garrison's Son)*

**Matt and Meighen Friesen**

CMR 447 Box 115

APO AE 09020

**Please continue to keep these members in your prayers:**

**Janice Buhr**

Villa at Flowing Springs

2211 Sunset Dr. #225

Beatrice, NE 68310

**Beryl Beerenstrauch**

Clark Jeary

8401 S. 33<sup>rd</sup> Street, Apt. 320

Lincoln, NE 68516

**Eileen Damkroger**

103 N Juniper

DeWitt, NE 68341

**Herb Rehm**

Wilber Care Center

611 N Main

Wilber, NE 68465

**Richard Wollenburg**

Heritage Crossings

501 N 13<sup>th</sup> St.

Geneva, NE 68361