

In this Issue:

- Pg 3** F.L.O.C.K
Naomi Circle
Rachel Circle
Valentine's Dinner
Youth Group
Preschool
Yearly Attendance
Figures
- Pg 4** Birthdays
Anniversaries
February Stewardship
Article
- Pg 5** Unapproved Voter's
Minutes
- Pg 6** Funeral Planning
Information
- Pg 7** February Calendar

Upcoming Events:

Youth Group

Valentine's Dinner

February 15th @ 6:00 pm

Ash Wednesday—March 5th

Lenten Services

March 12th

March 19th

March 26th

April 2nd

April 9th

Maundy Thursday, April 17th

Good Friday, April 18th

Easter Sunday April 20th

Deadline for Newsletter

Articles

March 15th

Who Can Forgive Sins but God Alone?

by Rev. Jonathan C. Watt



You've undoubtedly heard it, visitors to your congregation wondering how a pastor can say that our sins are forgiven. First, it's important to remember the exact nature of sin. And there's no better place to look then to go back to the basics. On Mount Sinai God gave the 10 Commandments to his people through Moses. The 10 Commandments describe what it is to live a life in relationship to God and other people. The first three Commandments describe our relationship with God. Commandments 4 through 10 describe our relationship with other people. But the First Commandment is first for a reason. It is the key to understanding them all.

You shall have no other gods.

What does this mean? We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things.

The "What does this mean" question, flushes out what the commandment is all about. Having no other gods means to have a perfect relationship with the one true God. To fear, love, and trust in God above all things means that. In reality all of the other Commandments are tied to this one. If we could keep this one all of the other Commandments would be automatically kept. If we had a perfect relationship with God, we would indeed have a perfect relationship with every other person and we would never sin against them. In essence, breaking the other Commandments, 2 through 10, is only a symptom of the real problem. And so breaking the other Commandments is really breaking the First. So all sin is ultimately against God.

King David understood this very well. After he had his affair with Bathsheba and covered it up by having her husband killed, he was confronted by Nathan the prophet (2 Samuel 11-12). Nathan accused him of murder. David responded in repentance and faith in God's forgiveness by confessing his sins and writing the words of Psalm 51.

For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment." (Psalm 51:3-4, ESV)

Notice how even though Uriah, Bathsheba's husband, was dead, David confesses that his sin was against God and only God. David had broken the Fifth Commandment: **You shall not murder**. But his breaking of the Fifth Commandment only pointed out very clearly that his relationship with God was far from perfect. He had broken the first. Since his sin was against God, the only forgiveness that mattered to David was the forgiveness that came from God.

Our sin is the same. We daily sin against one another. We break each of the Commandments. Breaking the Fifth Commandment doesn't require actual spilling of blood, only speaking harshly about other people (Matthew 5:21 - 22). Breaking the commandment **You shall not commit adultery** doesn't require a physical

act but only a desire to do that which God does not allow Matthew 5:27–28). And on it goes, through all the Commandments. We break them daily because we live daily in a relationship with God that is not perfect. We break the other Commandments because we have broken the First. It is the true nature of sin. It is the reason that we cannot resolve our sin problem by doing good things. Because good things cannot fix our breaking of the First Commandment.

But it is also true that those who sin against us ultimately sin against God. The only forgiveness that really matters is that which God gives.

Now it is important to understand very clearly where forgiveness comes from. Forgiveness from God, which is all the forgiveness that matters, comes from Jesus life, death, and resurrection. Jesus lived a perfect life in relationship to God. In other words, he kept the First Commandment perfectly. He loved God with his whole heart, his whole soul, and his whole mind. And he loved every other person also perfectly. In other words, he perfectly kept all the commandments. It is this perfect life that he sacrificed on the cross. His death on the cross satisfies the punishment we deserve for breaking God's First Commandment. And we are forgiven for the sake of this sacrifice. God's forgiveness comes from, and only from, Jesus Christ on the cross.

We want to think we have the ability to forgive. We want to think that our forgiveness for those who sin against us is more important than the forgiveness that God gives through Jesus on the cross. We want to be able to withhold forgiveness from those who sin against us. As if our forgiveness was more powerful than God's. The truth is, if forgiveness had anything to do with sinful human beings there would be no forgiveness ever. It's exactly what Jesus says in the Our Father.

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

What does this mean?

We pray in this petition that our Father in heaven would not look at our sins, or deny our prayer because of them. We are neither worthy of the things for which we pray, nor have we deserved them, but we ask that He would give them all to us by grace, for we daily sin much and surely deserve nothing but punishment. So we too will sincerely forgive and gladly do good to those who sin against us.

Notice how Martin Luther explains our forgiveness as coming from the forgiveness that we receive from God. We do not deserve to be forgiven, neither do those who sin against us. But we depend on grace, that is God's undeserved love, for our forgiveness and the forgiveness we give. Forgiveness is the ultimate act of God's undeserved love. We break the First Commandment. But God forgives us because Jesus has satisfied the punishment we deserve. Other people break the First Commandment when they sin against us. But God forgives them because Jesus has satisfied their punishment on the cross. When we forgive each other we are doing nothing other than declaring what God has already taken care of in Jesus Christ. We simply have no right to withhold forgiveness from those who sin against us. When a Christian is asked to forgive he can do nothing other than to declare the forgiveness that is his in Jesus Christ. There is nothing more freeing then speaking forgiveness to those who sin against us even when our heart does not want to forgive. An unforgiving heart is a sign of our great need for God's grace. When we have an unforgiving heart, which is always when we are sinned against, we can see our sin clearly and see our need for Jesus. We can see clearly our sin carried by Jesus to the cross.

In our hymnal, Lutheran Service Book, in The Rite of Individual Confession and Absolution (page 292) after the confession is made, the pastor asks, *"Do you believe that my forgiveness is God's forgiveness?"* He is asking the penitent person whose forgiveness he is about to receive. Sin against God has been confessed and the pastor is about to proclaim forgiveness from God. For the sake of the person who is receiving it, God is about to put forgiveness into his ears through a spoken word. Then the pastor speaks "in the stead and by the command" of Jesus Christ. The forgiveness is from God, spoken by the pastor, for the sake of the sinner.

While all Christians are given to forgive, pastors are given to forgive in a particular context. They do it on behalf of the church. They do it by Christ's command for the sake of those who need to hear. On the very day of his resurrection, Jesus appeared to his disciples in a locked room. He showed them his hands and his side, the marks in his body of the forgiveness that he won on the cross. And he offered to them peace, a restoration of their relationship with God. He offers them forgiveness.

Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld." (John 20:21–23, ESV)

They were sent by Jesus as the first pastors. Jesus gave them forgiveness to give. It was not there for forgiveness but his. And it was given to them through the gift of the Holy Spirit to be given freely to those who ask for it. It is given "in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ."

F.L.O.C.K./SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School and F.L.O.C.K. children provided a story of Jesus' birth, "Silent Night, Holy Night" on December 22 during worship. There were 12 children who took part in the service; three are regular attendees (non-members) to Sunday School while eight of the 12 are Trinity Preschool graduates!

Yearly Worship Attendance

Year	Worship	HC
2010	92	65
2011	98	72
2012	101	70
2013	104	73



Youth will be hosting their annual Valentine Dinner on Saturday, February 15th at 6:00PM. Tickets are \$15 each. Please RSVP to Deanna Petersen @ 641-344-6178 or email me at dpetersen30@gmail.com to let us know how many to expect in your party! Looking forward to enjoying your company and allowing our youth to wait on you for the evening!

JR/SR Youth Schedule

Guests are always Welcome!

- Feb 15th** Valentines Dinner
- Mar 9th** Lock-In Overnight Activities/Bible Study
- Apr. 14th** Bible Study/Games
- May 4th** Bible Study/Games

Leaders: Deanna and Troy Petersen; Jennifer and Tim Fogelson; Joy and Dennis Brown.



Naomi Circle

Naomi Circle

Our **February** meeting will be held Wednesday, February 12 at 1:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Our topic will be the first half of "Let's Talk", found on page 20 of the Winter 2013 Quarterly.

Our **March** meeting will be held Wednesday, March 12 at 1:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Our topic will be the second half of "Let's Talk", found on page 21 of the Winter 2013 Quarterly.

You are always welcome to join us for Bible Study and Fellowship.

Rachel Circle

The Ladies of Trinity Lutheran Church and their guests are invited to attend Rachel Circle Meetings. We meet the first Tuesday of the Month at 6:30 pm at a host home. The following is a list for the year of who will be hosting each month and their address.

- Feb 4th**-Brenda Bochart; 1104 N Elm; Creston
- Mar 4th**-Candace Peterson; 2328 Beechwood; Lenox (Meet @ 6:00pm @ church to carpool)
- Apr 1st**-Cindy Nelson; 2380 Jaguar Ave; Shannon City; (Meet @ 6:00pm @ church to carpool)
- May 6th**-Maggie Dory; 1404 Clayton Rd; Creston
- June 3rd**-Anita Wardenburg; 700 W. Howard; Creston

Ladies you invited to come to our meetings! We look forward to you joining us.

Help, Serve, Get involved

Trinity Lutheran Preschool needs you to volunteer!

Ways you can help:

- ◆ Provide Kitchen Help
- ◆ Be the Photographer
- ◆ Help with Child Care
- ◆ Clean up
- ◆ Set up for the Event
- ◆ Be a Greeter
- ◆ Be a parking attendant
- ◆ Set/up and Take down of the Sound System

Event Dates:

- Sunday, Feb 16: **Father's Night** 5:45pm—8:30pm
- Sunday, Apr 13: **Mother's Tea Party**; 5:45pm—8:30pm
- Wed, May 28: **Graduation** 4:00pm-9pm.

To help with these event, please sign up in the book on the Narthex table on the page labeled "Preschool Event Help"

Thank you for volunteering with these events!

Anniversaries: February/March

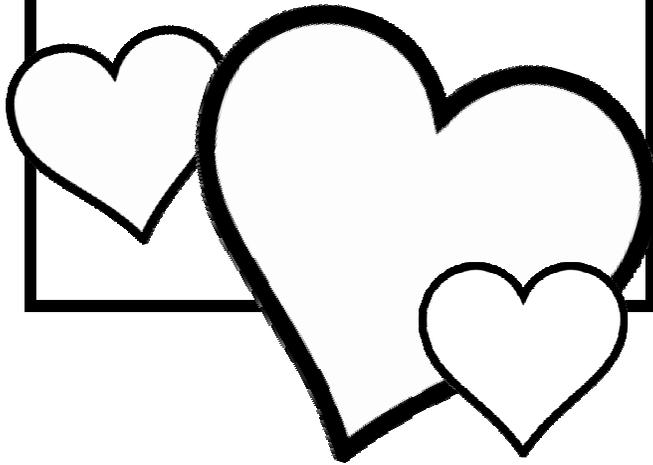
White, Ron & Angela	02/01
Herzberg, Walt & Nelda	02/03
Zellmer, Mark & Patty	02/09
Brown, Dennis & Joy	02/15
Hanson, Heath & Nicole	03/13
Hadley, Dean & Sara	03/23

Birthdays: February

Brayman, Beverly	02/01
Peterson, Alex	02/01
Scott, Marjorie	02/04
Crittenden, Michael	02/06
Larsen, Macy	02/09
Hartman, Hanna	02/16
Bullock, Theola	02/17
Bargstadt, Micheal	02/20
Ehm, Edwin	02/20
Hembry, Doyle	02/25
Ehm, Alberta	02/25
Carson, Dean	02/25
Brown, Alexander	02/26

Birthdays: March

Bargstadt, Ashley	03/01
Ellis, Karen	03/01
Lorenz, Velma	03/01
Herzberg, Luke	03/03
Foglesong, Katelyn	03/05
Hagen, James	03/08
Townsend, Morgan	03/11
Ringsdorf, Randy	03/13
Barkalow, Pat	03/16
Herr, Timothy	03/17
Tomas, Kessler	03/19
VandenBerg, Laryl	03/19
Riley, Alex	03/20
Bullock, Doug	03/23
Porter, Freida	03/23
Townsend, Nolan	03/23
VonAshen, Justin	03/24
Brus, Gabriel	03/26
Tomas, Eddie	03/26
Brus, Jonah	03/27
Kearney, Paul	03/28
Sickels, Vicki	03/30



February Stewardship Article

The four Sundays in February are in the Epiphany season of the Church Year calendar. Epiphany is a word that means “showing forth” or “manifesting.” The Epiphany season begins on January 6 with the visit of the Wise Men to worship the Baby Jesus as the newborn King of the Jews. The season continues with the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River, the calling of His first disciples, His preaching the good news of salvation and the opening of His famous Sermon on the Mount. In the four Gospel readings for February we find Jesus teaching that we are lights in this spiritually dark world who give evidence of our new birth as Christians as we love even our enemies and seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. To live that way is truly an “epiphany experience” to show that we really belong to our Lord Jesus Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit live renewed lives.

That’s what Christian stewardship is all about! Wise Christian stewards manage all of life and life’s resources for God’s purposes and do it freely and joyfully! We practice the kind of stewardship that is pleasing to our Lord when we give freely and generously of our time to serve in special ways that bless the mission of the church and the people living in our communities. This kind of stewardship is also shown when we freely and joyfully offer our talents and skills to help the church prosper and make life sweeter for those around us. This kind of stewardship continues when we give freely and joyfully of our financial resources to support the work of the church in nurturing believers and reaching out to invite others to know Jesus.

Many people view Christian stewardship as something that we have to do [a command] in order to be true followers of Jesus. That simply is not true! Real Christian stewardship is the privilege of offering all that we are and have to make a difference in this world of spiritual darkness. Just as Jesus came on that first Christmas to bring light to a darkened world, so we are called to follow His example. Will we follow in His footsteps perfectly, use all that we are and have in truly unselfish ways and be willing to make sacrifices so the mission of Christ’s church on earth may prosper and become a home for many more redeemed people? No, of course not! We are sinners and will fall short of the glory of God. But, in Christ, God has declared us to be saints because our sins and shortcomings have been forgiven and the Holy Spirit empowers us to let our lights shine so that people will see our good deeds and praise our Father in heaven.

The bottom line for Christian stewards is to hear and obey our Lord’s words when he taught: **“Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things [material blessings] will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself.” (Matthew 6:33-34 NIV)**

Unapproved

Trinity Lutheran Church

Voter's Meeting January 19, 2014

Pastor Watt led the opening prayer. He presented his Pastor's report to the assembly.

See the pastor's report for details.

The assembly reviewed the printed minutes from the November 17 and December 15 Voter's Assembly. Julie Lang moved to approve the minutes, and it was seconded by Dave Dory.

Jim Nelson presented the elders' meeting minutes. See January council minutes for details. Becky Hagen moved and Gene Cook seconded that we accept the transfer of Amanda Herzberg to First Lutheran Church in Orange City, Ia.

Julie Lang presented her Board of Education report with a plea for more workers. She currently has Waunita Watt and Megan Schutt, and Mike Lang moved and Dave Dory seconded that we approve their appointment. Motion passed.

No report from the Board of Youth or Financial Secretary.

Mike Lang presented his treasurer's reports, and he moved for their adoption. Mitzi Cellan made the second.

Anita Wardenburg presented the Mission Board report and moved that we approve Sue Larson and Nicole Hansen as members of Christian Care. Randy Roghair seconded that motion. They are planning a joint service and meal with Mount Ayr in February. Other members are Maggie Dory and Sharon Nonneman. Sue Larson will be the Christian Care treasurer.

Anita Wardenburg presented the Preschool report. Open House will be January 26. Those who have adopted pre-schooler's are invited to attend pre-school on January 28. February 1 is Pray for your School Day.

No report from a trustee. See January council minutes for details.

Janette Lang reported that removing of the greens went well.

Randy Roghair thanked the assembly for keeping us informed of needs in the community. The balance is \$1,229.45. He moved that these names be removed from the Christian Care committee: Cindy Nelson, Randy Roghair, and Carla Roghair. Jim Hagen remains on the committee, and Sue Larson will be the treasurer. Carla Roghair seconded. Motion passed.

A committee has been formed for Mt. Ayr activities to keep pastor informed.

Unfinished Business: Meals will continue to be served at the Voters' meeting provided that someone has signed up to serve. If no one signs up, there will not be a meal. Sign up sheet is in the sign up book that is kept in the entryway at church.

Carla Roghair inquired about the status of the building remodeling committee that was initiated during the past year. Pastor responded that the building remodeling committee is defunct with the new year, as they had become inactive.

A proposal was presented by Phil Wardenburg regarding circuit visitors. Mike Lang and Pastor Watt spoke in favor of it. This is part of the synodical constitution, but this will change the language from circuit counselor to circuit visitor. Mike Lang moved and Randy Roghair seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

The president set up a steeple committee: Charlie Bowman, Mike Lang, and Randy Roghair are on it. Mark Larson and Mike Lang and Bill Magers are on the vicar committee, also set up by the president. All these people were appointed by the president.

Randy Roghair gave a presentation on changes in the Trinity Endowment and Legacy Fund and moved that they be approved. Mitzi Cellan seconded the motion. Motion passed. Mike Lang explained the difference between an endowment and a legacy. An endowment is not to be spent, only the interest. A legacy is an amount which the donor wishes to be spent. These changes will include a distinction so that people can give a legacy. This is not to be confused with memorial funds. Cindy Nelson will remain on the committee as she is the church treasurer. Mike Lang, Randy Roghair, Becky Hagen, Jim Hagen, Maggie Dory, and Norm Schroeder were presented as members for the coming year. Mike Lang moved and Julie Lang seconded it.

Motion passed.

Mike Lang made a motion and Randy Roghair seconded it to raise the salary of the pastor's secretary and church janitor salary by \$.50 per hr. changing the line item for pastor's assistant salary from \$8190 to \$9000 and changing the line item for church janitor salary from \$2730 to \$3000. This will provide an increase from \$11.50 per hr. to \$12.00 per hr. with a maximum of 20 hours per week for both positions combined. Motion passed.

Julie Lang moved and Norm Schroeder seconded to adjourn the meeting.

Now available in the church office!

“Planning a Christian Funeral” at Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

This booklet includes a form for filing in the church office.

Get your copy by contacting Pastor or Waunita.

Introduction

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church is pleased to offer you this guide for planning a Christian Funeral. Whether you are using this guide as an aid for pre-planning or whether you are planning in the midst of a family loss, we hope this guide will be a blessing to you.

Primary in the understanding of The Christian Funeral is the knowledge that the Christian funeral is a celebration of what Jesus Christ has done for us through his life, death and especially his resurrection. Death is a time marked by sadness, yet for Christians it is also a time of celebration because our loved ones who die in faith, have gone to be with the Lord.

The funeral service is a time to reflect and ponder the hope that is ours because of life and death of Jesus Christ, but even more importantly His resurrection.

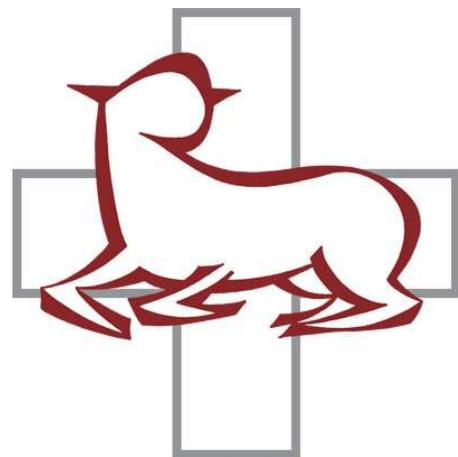
We begin a funeral with a remembrance of Holy Baptism, the event that marks the beginning Christian’s life of faith, a faith that was begun and sustained by the Holy Spirit. Romans 6:3-5 says:

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. (Romans 6:3-5, ESV)

We rejoice with St. Paul as we proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ and His atoning sacrifice for our sin. A primary focus of a Christian Funeral is the recognition of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and what that means for us. That is at the cemetery we use the common Easter response:

For some who attend this funeral this will be the only time they hear a strong proclamation of the work of Jesus Christ on our behalf, it is important then to keep the hope we have through Him foremost in our minds.

We encourage you to give your input to pastor. You might ask yourself if your loved one had any special Bible verses or had marked any thing important to them in their Bible. Likewise, favorite Psalms or hymns could serve as appropriate themes for worship.

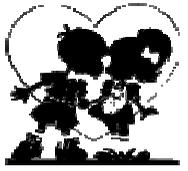


Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Ephesians 5:1-2

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

February

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Elder: Mark Larsen – Mt Ayr, IA Jim Hagen – Creston, IA	Ushers: Mike Sickels, Mark Larsen – Mt. Ayr, IA Paul Kearney, Jim Kneedler, Bill Magers, Troy Petersen – Creston, IA	Finance: Mark Larsen, Mike Sickels – Mt. Ayr, IA Paul Kearney, Bill Magers – Creston, IA	Altar Committee: Anita & Phil Wardenburg – Creston, IA Vicki Sickels – Mt Ayr, IA			1 Lutheran School
2 Groundhog Day Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany 8:00 am Divine Service/HC (MA) 9:30 am Sunday School/Bible Class (MA) 9:45 am Divine Service (CR) 11:00 am Sunday School / Bible Class (CR)	3 Pastor's Day Off	4 6:30 am Early Risers (Fellowship Hall) 1:30 pm Streams of Living Water, Sermon Broadcast www.PirateChristianRadio.com 6:30 pm Rachel Circle-Brenda Bochart's 1104 N Elm; Creston, IA	5 6:00 pm Confirmation Class 7:30 pm Board of Elders	6	7	8
9 Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany 8:00 am Divine Service (MA) 9:30 am Sunday School/Bible Class (MA) 9:45 am Divine Service/HC (CR) 11:00 am Sunday School / Bible Class (CR)	10 Pastor's Day Off 6:30 pm LifeLight	11 6:30 am Early Risers (Fellowship Hall) 1:30 pm LifeLight 1:30 pm Streams of Living Water, Sermon Broadcast www.PirateChristianRadio.com 5:30 pm Habitat for Humanity of Union Co. Board Meeting 6:30 pm Preschool Board	12 Lincoln's Birthday 1:30 pm Naomi Circle (FH) 6:00 pm Confirmation Class 7:30 pm All Boards Meet in Fellowship Hall	13	14 Valentine's Day 	15 6:00 pm Youth Group - Valentine Dinner 
16 Caring for Your Neighbor - Food Bank Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany 8:00 am Divine Service/HC (MA) 9:30 am Sunday School/Bible Class (MA) 9:45 am Divine Service (CR) 11:00 am Sunday School / Bible Class (CR) 12:00 pm School Teacher's Recognition Pot Luck	17 Washington's Birthday (Presidents Day) Pastor's Day Off 6:30 pm LifeLight 	18 6:30 am Early Risers (Fellowship Hall) 9:00 am Handy Helpers (Quilting) 1:30 pm LifeLight 1:30 pm Streams of Living Water, Sermon Broadcast www.PirateChristianRadio.com 7:00 pm Endowment/Legacy Committee meeting	19 9:30 am Circuit Winkle 6:00 pm Confirmation Class 6:00 pm FLOCK 7:30 pm Church Council	20	21 West Iowa Theology Convocation - Greenfield	22 West Iowa Theol Convocation - G
23 Iowa District West Pastor's Conference Seventh Sunday after the Epiphany 8:00 am Divine Service (MA) 9:30 am Sunday School/Bible Class (MA) 9:45 am Divine Service/HC (CR) 11:00 am Sunday School / Bible Class (CR)	24 Iowa District West Pastor's Conference Pastor's Day Off	25 Iowa District West Pastor's Conference 6:30 am Early Risers (Fellowship Hall) 1:30 pm Streams of Living Water, Sermon Broadcast www.PirateChristianRadio.com	26 6:00 pm Confirmation Class	27	28	

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
800 N. Sumner Ave
Creston, Iowa 50801

«AddressBlock»

Trinity Lutheran Church

Teaching
Learning
Caring



Feb 2014/March 2014 Newsletter

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
800 N. Sumner Ave; Creston, Iowa 50801
1111 E. South St; Mount Ayr 50854
(641)782-5095 tlc@TrinityCreston.org
<http://www.TrinityCreston.org>
Pastor: Jonathan C. Watt

T
L
C

If you have an article or event that you would like to have put in the newsletter please submit by **March 15th**. The next newsletter will be published in **April**. Thank you to all those who submitted articles

Sunday Morning Worship Opportunities

8:00am Divine Service (Mount Ayr)
9:45am Divine Service (Creston)
11:00am Sunday School Adult Bible Class