

MARCH 2023



PO Box 788, 6810 Hwy 2 W, Cass Lake, MN 56633
tlccsecretary@gmail.com 218-335-6393
like/follow us on Facebook
(Trinity Lutheran Church of Cass Lake)
WEB site: tlccasslake.com

Reflections

This is a testimony and reflection by Craig Sanders of Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Duluth. The idea for the story began with Craig writing amazingly helpful "Adult Sermon Notes" that he shared this Spring with the [Lay Leader Network \(LLN\)](#). Craig was inspired to write these lectionary notes each week through participating in a Northeastern Minnesota Synod ministry, [Lay Leader Network Yearly Intensive Series](#). The LLN Yearly Intensive Series is an educational and lay leader development program inspired by Luke 4:18 "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, has anointed me. . . sent me. . . to proclaim good news to the poor.*" LLN Yearly Intensive Series is designed to connect Spirit with lay leadership and ministry in an ever-changing world. Biblical knowledge including reading/comprehension techniques are primary in the curriculum to better understand the Bible and apply its wisdom. Below is Craig's testimony written by Craig himself.

To answer questions about my motivation or intent for creating Lectionary notes, I would like to summarize the overall intent in writing them.

My childhood was spent in a Methodist Church. We had to go to church. Church was something you just did. I learned that people should be good. God likes that. But I couldn't quite get the spirit. Besides, I had a gripe. Why did God create me with a visual handicap? I had some rebellious issues. I really couldn't remember anything about grace through faith. I

don't remember a mention of the Apostle Paul and his thorn in the flesh, "a messenger of Satan to torment me." I spent several years away from church in college and shortly after.

My faith began to grow in my early 20s thanks to a woman in a bank. I was hired by the National Weather Service in Minneapolis. I went into a bank branch to change my account closer to where I lived. The woman in the bank did the paperwork, but at the end of the work, she said, "This isn't part of the bank account, but we'd love to have you join us at church if you'd like." Her name was Gloria, and no one has been so aptly named. I thought, 'Maybe it's time.' So, I went to Trinity Lutheran Church of Minnehaha Falls. She saw me each week and introduced me to people. I felt like I belonged. One day, she said, "Wait right here a moment. There's someone I'd like you to meet." She dashed up the stairs to the choir loft and came down with a beautiful young woman named Debbie. Over the next year or so I attended Trinity and listened to deeply moving sermons that touched my soul. I would go with Debbie sometimes. Her faith was deep. People in the church were so on fire that they didn't hesitate to share their faith with me. They did it without shame or intimidation. They were simply spirit-filled. People have often said that Trinity was more of a Baptist church than Lutheran. They had world missions and local mission work.

On a few humid nights I found myself watching some Billy Graham Crusades on my 13" black and white TV. I began absorbing what he said and I could feel myself squirm a bit when he would say things like, "Whenever Jesus called anyone, he did it publicly" and "I'm going to ask you to get up out of your seat and come down in front. Your friends will wait for you." The background music playing was [Just As I Am](#) (song begins @ 1:00 minute mark). "We'll give you some literature, and we'll pray with you." I mention this because I reflect back on those times quite often, even these days. I'm still moved by the loving invitation and my expected response. To finish the Trinity connection, I must say that Debbie later became my wife. That NEVER would have happened

without the loving intervention outreach of Gloria. Debbie and I had three children and we took part in an evangelism program. Debbie conducted choir and I taught 1st grade Sunday School for a time.

But through it all, I found that I wanted to learn more and try to remember more from the sermons on Sundays. Even reading the Lectionary each week, I still failed to make the connections and overall purpose. To be honest, when I've heard people read the Lessons, they often don't do it with enthusiasm. It seems like just another thing that we do during worship. I've wanted to hear God's Word with enthusiasm and inflection to awaken my spirit. After 70 some years of doing all of that, I decided I would see if a printed review of the Lectionary would help people remember or if it would spark their curiosity to read more.

I'm a visual learner. I have taught weather classes to pilots and forest fire fighters. I have done technical writing as well. I know what helps people learn and what sparks interest.

Tell me, and I FORGET,
Teach me, and I REMEMBER,
Involve me and I will LEARN.

I've found that short, succinct writing with appropriate graphics is a very effective strategy to learn.

That's why I started the Lectionary Notes as an experiment. It got me off dead center, something I've wanted to have happen. I have bought a whole slew of books to help me learn. There are Commentaries, Dictionaries Study Bibles, my huge Concordance, Atlases, Timelines, and other books that offer brief overviews. I'm loving the process learned by virtue of the LLN Yearly Intensive Series. I've found that other people enjoy it as well. (To see a sample of Craig's Lectionary Notes see the Synod website/[Lay Leader Network Ministry Sharing and Learnings](#)).

Overall, Lay Leader Network training has proven that the future of the church will not rest with a weekly sermon from the pastor(s) as we

fight the secular trends. [Andrew Root](#) has said that people look for stories of our individual lives to serve as evidence of what God has done in our lives. For me, I've been led to try and answer the question posed in Matthew 16:15, **“But what about you?”**, Jesus asked, **“Who do YOU say that I am?”** Perhaps my Lectionary Notes will help others begin to form their own answer to that question. For church members, perhaps they will begin to find their own answers.

My story is not one of being chosen by God and given success, nor has our family been without deep trauma. I suffered a career catastrophe after working hard to advance only to find I did not have the personal skills and patience to bring cohesion to an office. I asked to be removed from the position that I had coveted for so many years to attain. I was deeply depressed, and I asked God, “Where were you when I needed you?” immediately after that a new Befriended Ministries was started at [Good Shepherd](#). To serve, I needed to understand how people needed spiritual uplift. I could not have learned all that from a book. I had to learn it through trial and pain. Later, I became a Hospice volunteer and learned more from the people I was visiting.

Then in 2019, our family was devastated by the suicide of our middle child, Pete. I know full well that his death was not God's will. It was the result of a disease. I could have given up and walked away from the church. But what really made such a huge difference was the personal outpouring of love...deep, abiding love, born of people's spirits. I learned they have had catastrophes as well. In those tragedies, there was real faith and resilience.

So to conclude, I think for my story/this ministry to be helpful, we can share the Lectionary notes broadly so people can read them over at home or refer back to them during the week. The Notes could be a common reference, if people wanted to talk about the sermon around the dinner table or during some other appropriate time. I just feel urged to do something different, time consuming, and

complicated. People have their outreach missions in hunger, housing, homelessness, and addictions, and that's wonderful. But in those interactions, how do we bring Jesus to people in a meaningful, spiritual way that complements their other work? Perhaps we can all begin to form our own responses based on scripture and the question "**who do you say that I am?**" Perhaps Lectionary Notes will help.

Craig Sanders



To worship, soup supper and study from **5:30-6:30 pm on Weds (Mar 1-29)**. This year we are going to try something different by combining all of these faith and life enriching activities into one. The format is based on how Jesus and the disciples as well as the early church gathered together to eat, worship and learn together. If you plan on attending this midweek enrichment opportunity, you will need the book *Entering the Passion of Jesus* which is available in the welcome area. "Want or willing to provide a simple meal of soup and bread? Please sign up on the table in the welcome area.

Easter in bloom:

We invite you to donate potted flowers and/or plants for Easter. Please drop them off no later than Fri Apr 7. Thank you!

Maundy Thurs – April 6 @ 5:30pm

Palm Sun – April 2 @ 5:30pm

Easter – April 6 @ 10:30am

Council & Boards for 2023

President – Terry Baltuff
Vice President – Cheryl Kramer
Secretary – Bev Larson
Treasurer – Connie Miller
Financial Secretary – Jane Christianson

Board of Worship & Education:

Howard Hirdler
Orin (OJ) Jensen
Kathy Baltuff
Sandy Church

Board of Trustees:

Neil Ramsey
Jerry Cleveland
Bill Schulz
Steve Olson

Taking time to see and understand who we are

Our story. A narrative that has spanned one hundred one and a half years, and is still being written. The Vision Team is hosting a meal after worship on **Mar 5**. It will be a time to learn and tell our story as a congregation, so that we can learn from our failures while simultaneously building on our successes. Both have been realities of our life together. Both have things to teach us. We want you there to help us foster relationships as well as renewal and growth.

Need for transportation

Barb Kolkin, a neighbor with connections to Trinity, is in need of *ongoing* transportation to dialysis in Cass Lake on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. There would be compensation. If you or someone you know is available and willing to provide rides, please contact Barb's son Dean Pliml at 218-591-6085. Thank you.

Stewardship Article:

"Stewardship Tip: Required Minimum Distributions"

By Pastor Matt McWaters

Stewardship Tip: Required Minimum Distributions

Over the past several years, members of ELCA congregations have wisely used their retirement plan's "Required Minimum Distribution" to fulfill or exceed their financial pledges to support congregational and synodical mission and ministry. There is a wealth of information about these, so much so that it can get a bit confusing. If you are age 72 or will be soon, learn more about the benefits for you and local non-profits in the clear summary below.

What are Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs)?

To avoid significant IRS tax penalties (50%), retirement account holders aged 72 years old must withdraw a distribution of at least a certain amount determined by the IRS, by December 31 of each year. This distribution is considered Taxable Income, with one exception.

How can I use my RMD to Avoid Paying More Taxes?

To avoid paying Income Tax on your RMD, you may designate your distribution to a non-profit organization of your choice, including your local congregation, parish, or synod.

What Type of Retirement Accounts Apply?

Traditional IRA, SEP IRA, SIMPLE IRA, and ALL Employer Retirement Plans (401k, 403b, etc.) require minimum distributions at age 72.

How is my RMD calculated?

IRS form 590b includes worksheets and information to calculate RMDs. More basically, the full value of qualifying accounts is divided by a life expectancy

factor determined by tables included on IRS form 590b. It can be a bit complicated, and I'd encourage those considering directing RMDs to non-profits, to consult with their financial advisor. Use the links provided below to navigate to the IRS website¹ and an example of the most commonly used life expectancy factor table.²

How Do I Designate my RMD?

To use your RMD to fulfill your pledge to your congregation, or to generously bless another non-profit of your choice, funds must be paid directly from your Retirement Account to the non-profit. It cannot be directed to the account holder or beneficiary, first. Contact your retirement account custodian AND consult with your tax advisor to get the process started or to get more information.

¹ Follow this link to the IRS Website's information page on Required Minimum Distributions.

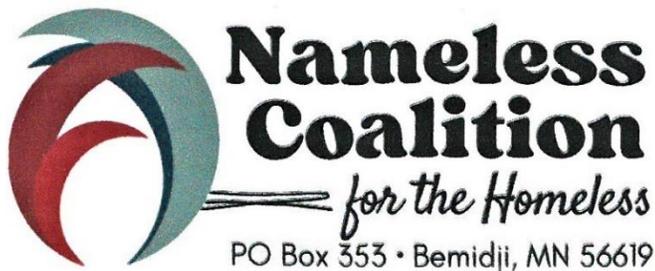
<https://www.irs.gov/forms-pubs/about-publication-590-b>

² Table iii, in appendix B is used to determine life expectancy for most RMDs. This can be found on page 63 through this

link. <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p590b.pdf>

Come to the table!

One of the strengths of the early church was their gathering together to share a meal. Jesus invited his disciples to come to breakfast at the lakeshore. It is a bit early in the season for that kind of meal, but we can gather in the warmth of the fellowship hall each month to sit down together around God's gift of food. The menus are posted on the table in the welcome area. Please sign up so we know how much food to prepare. Invite someone to join you for worship and a meal and time for fellowship.



Thank you so much! Your generous \$500.00 donation to the Nameless Coalition for the Homeless is greatly appreciated.

Your gift helps make it possible to continue providing warm, safe shelter for our neediest neighbors.

The Wolf Shelter and New Day Center are meeting a critical need, especially during these cold winter months.

We are grateful for your support and compassion.
Reed Olson, Executive Director

Home visitation ministers

Do you enjoy fellowship? Are you looking for a new way to serve God and neighbor? If so then maybe the ministry of home visitation is for you! I am looking to train a couple of people to visit our siblings in Christ with blessed sacraments while I am on sabbatical next summer. If interested, please let me know.

Sincerely,
Pr Amanda

March Service Groups

Date	Reader	Comm. Assist.	Recorder
3/5	Roy B.	Roy & Laurie	OJ
3/12	Jerome C.	Tom & Pam S.	OJ
3/19	Jane C.	Lauretta J. & Wes D.	Lon C.
3/26	Patti H.	Lori H. & Patti H.	Connie M.

Ushers for March: Bill & Susan Schulz



Women
of the
**EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN
CHURCH
IN AMERICA**

WELCA

Each Monday:
10am Bible Study &
11am Crafters
Winter/Spring bible study is
"The Ten Commandments
Reviving the Soul"



WELCA *Spring Gatherings*

Saturday, March 18
Living Waters Conference
St. Andrew's Lutheran Church
Grand Rapids



Tammy (Steele) Collins was diagnosed with polycystic kidney disease 4 years ago. And was told she would need a kidney transplant. In September er 2020 she was added to the national waiting list. She started dialysis in May 2022. At her checkup in early September her doctor told her being she's diabetic and on dialysis she needs a transplant as soon as possible. Please call Fargo Transplant at 701-234-6715 with any questions. Keep her in your prayers. Thank you. See Facebook (kidney for Tammy) Joshua Collins/Son; Sadie Meyer/sister



MARCH IS MINNESOTA FOOD SHARE MONTH

The Minnesota Food Share Campaign is

underway! Now in its 42nd year, this campaign remains the largest grassroots food and fund drive to stock nearly 300 food shelves across Minnesota. **The 2023 March campaign will run from February 27th through April 9th.** This year, the need remains even higher.

Northland families, seniors and other individuals continue to suffer from lost jobs and smaller paychecks because of the economy. As you know the cost of buying food has increased significantly stretching pay checks to the limit. During this past year the Bemidji food shelf has served 9,220 households, 28,870 individuals with 595,611 pounds of food. In addition, there were 1,646 first time customers. The Cass Lake food shelf has seen similar increases. You can help feed your northland neighbors by giving. Every dollar you give provides an in creditable seven meals through the food bank programs and partners. This year the board of Worship and Education is **seeking personal care items like toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, shampoo, deodorant, hand lotion, diaper, sanitary napkins, etc.** These items are generally in short supply at both the Cass Lake and Bemidji food shelves. We are keying on these specific items but will graciously take any non-perishable food products or financial donations to feed those in need. The board of Worship and Education has established a goal of collecting \$500.00 during this drive. There is a fundraising thermometer goal tracker located in the narthex so you can view our progress in

meeting our goal. Complete meals in a can are also good suggestions to give like Dinty Moore Beef Stew, Spaghetti with meat balls, and Beef Ravioli in Pasta Sauce. We support both the Cass Lake and Bemidji food shelves and will evenly divide all donations, both products and money, between both of them. **If you make a financial donation, make the check payable to “Trinity Lutheran Church” and in the memo line write “Food Shelf”. If you are making a non-perishable or personal care item donation, drop them off any Sunday morning or during normal office hours, Monday, Thursday and Friday, 9-12. God bless you and thank you for your support.**



Green Tip

A study conducted by researchers from the University of Wisconsin, Kansas State University, and

UC-Davis, released a few years ago by the National Wildlife Federation, finds that the 2007 biofuels mandate meant to curb greenhouse gas emissions has resulted in 1.6 million acres of grass and wetlands nationally being converted to grow annual crops such as corn and soybeans. In the Midwest, another 1.2 million acres of existing farmland that would have been retired to pasture or conservation lands were kept in production. The study also finds that the shift has destroyed crucial habitat for native bees and monarch butterflies, increased the use of chemical fertilizers while releasing millions of tons of carbon dioxide, and is responsible for adding about 300,000 tons of nitrogen fertilizer a year that drain into waterways, causing algae blooms and dead zones. URGE YOUR policy-makers to help revise federal biofuels standards in a way that moves away from corn and soy-based ethanol.

The Pollinator Plot



Keynote speaker: Margot Monson,
entomologist and beekeeper

In a moment of deep ecological crisis, this year's EcoFaith Summit calls us to become part of the Holy Spirit's subversive plot to pollinate an alternative way of being human for the sake of life. In this plot, we find our model and hope from pollinator species. These tiny, apparently powerless, often overlooked and disregarded creatures, whose drastic decline endangers so much we depend upon, are a key to the regeneration of life itself.

In this great plot, faith communities of every size and place can be demonstration plots, pollinating alternative ways of living. We all steward plots of land, even tiny ones, which can become pollinator habitat. In this critical and decisive time, a 'Kairos' moment, what we do with our specific plots wherever we are, matters. How we live the Gospel paradox that God's power is shown in weakness can engage us in active hope amid the growing crisis we face.

Through worship, keynote presentation, diverse storytellers, conversations, and engagement sessions, together we will be empowered to be participants in this unfolding plot.



Needed: any kind of new or used gift bags for the kids room for the Bazaar. Leave in church office or welcome area. Put Carol's name on them. Thank you.

Financials for 2023:

Jan Giving	\$15,531.88
Budgeted Expense	\$11,910.64



Synod Assembly

2023

April 28-30
Cragun's
Resort,
Brainerd

Remember in prayer our TLC voting members Laurie Buehler, Terry Baltuff & Pr Amanda.

New NEMN Synod office address:

1111 London Rd,
Duluth, MN 55802-2240

The Eucharist

From lefse, to hardtack, to wild rice and blueberries our communion celebration has experienced the tangible gifts of God's grace through a variety of cultures. We thank those who have, and continue to supply our bread portion of the Lord's Supper. Anyone is welcome, and encouraged, to provide some. It doesn't have to be fancy, and if it works better in your schedule, make it/them ahead of time and freeze it!



We wanted to share with you how your church has directly impacted our community for good. Last year, Bemidji Community Food Shelf had the opportunity to serve food to 26,000 individuals in Beltrami County. We did this by giving almost 600,000 pounds of food to over 9,200 families. While the numbers are big, each one represents a mom, an elderly neighbor, a veteran, a child. These are our friends and neighbors – some from your church! – who need encouragement physically, emotionally and spiritually. Thank you for partnering with us this past year as we work to support those in our community struggling with food insecurity. Trinity Lutheran faithfully sends 8 volunteers each month to help distribute food. Some volunteers, like Connie Miller, are involved on a leadership level. Others come on the first Wednesday of each month to sort, stock, weigh, interview and shop with customers. We literally could not do what we do without their help.

For 41 years our largest source of funding is individual and community donations. March is Minnesota FoodShare Month, when the Minneapolis Council of Churches gives a partial match for all the funds raised locally.

We appreciate your church and all you do to help us with our mission. We look forward to partnering with you for many years to come! Sincerely, Mike Olson, Executive Director & Debbie Johnson, Volunteer Coordinator.



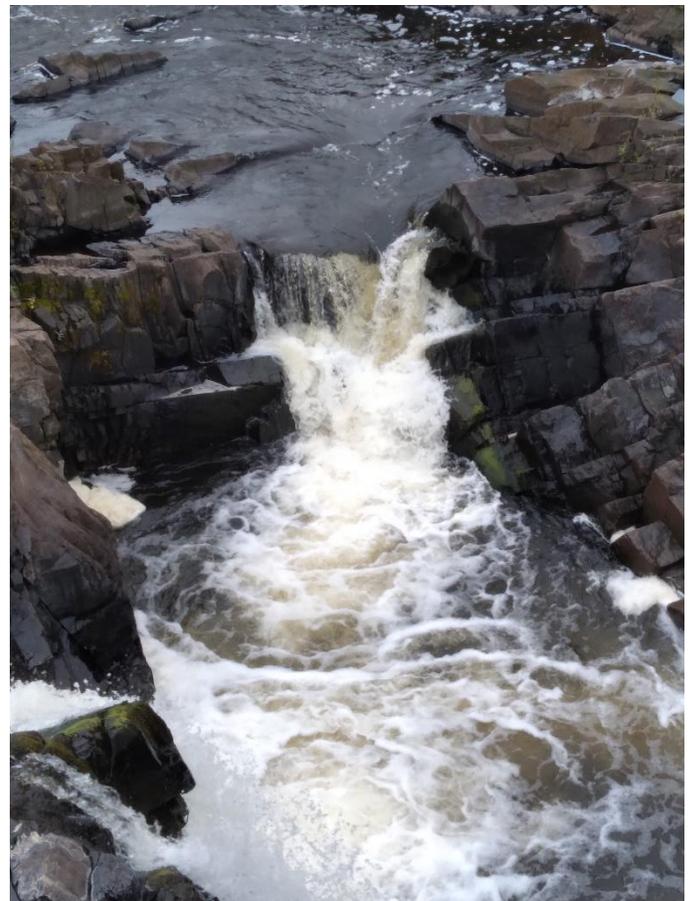
2-2-23

Dear Congregation,

I just want to drop you a note to thank you for the opportunity to get me some furniture that I received. I am very happy I don't have to sit at the kitchen table. Thank you to Roy, Laurie & Gary for shopping for the stuff and dropping it off. I really appreciate it. I will enjoy sitting on it when I have a chance. I am so thankful for the congregation. You's do wonderfully job. May God bless you's every day.

Thank you so much again,
Drenda Carlson

Mental Health Corner



**Come, God, and hear my cry;
my spirit thirsts for you.
My body withers, weary, dry.
Come, Spirit God, renew!**