

Trinity Tribune

Trinity Lutheran Church ✦ Paola, Kansas

November
2016



Twenty years ago while serving as a Pastor in Lawrence, Kansas I was privileged to attend a dedicatory recital for the University of Kansas' spectacular \$1 million pipe organ, housed in the \$1.5 million Bales Recital Hall attached to Lied Center. This unusual space was specially designed and built to recreate the layout, materials, and acoustics of the 12th-century Church of St. Francis de Sales in Lyon, France. Complete with gothic arches and stained-glass windows, it *really* looks, feels, and sounds like a church.

As I sat in that recreated "church," I thought how ironic it is that across the country are countless *actual* churches fully equipped with marvelous acoustics and grand pipe organs. The erection of such facilities and acquisition of such instruments was once a dream that had been joyously realized only after years of effort and much sacrifice.

But now, in so many churches of various denominations, all that is being cast aside—their pipe organs sitting silent and unused. And yet, the secular University of Kansas spent \$2.5 million to recreate that very atmosphere! It makes me wonder: *Who, really, is on the cutting edge?*

An article that appeared some years ago in *The Kansas City Star* about the Tallis Scholars, still a very active and popular English choral group, put it this way:

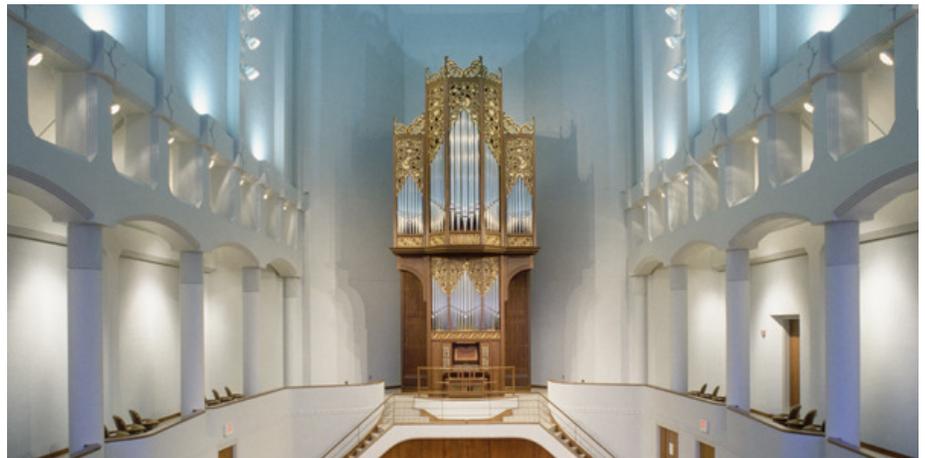
"Who'd have thought . . . that a small, a cappella choral ensemble could develop a worldwide cult following for Renaissance church music? But then, who could have imagined that a bunch of Spanish monks singing Gregorian chant could become best sellers on the CD charts? Or that a quartet could be packing concert halls with music of the 12th-century Hildegard of Bingen? Clearly, something is in the air: a bit of escapism, perhaps, from the hurly-burly of modern urban life, but also a connection—across the centuries—with music of spiritual richness . . ." (Scott Cantrell, "Group Makes High-Octane Church Music," *The Kansas City Star*, October 20, 1996, p. K1).

In his fascinating book [The Empty Church: The Suicide of Liberal Christianity](#) (New York: The Free Press [Simon and Schuster], 1996), noted secular historian Thomas C. Reeves examines the decline of mainline American Protestantism from his perspective as an historian. He focuses on the Episcopal Church, the United Methodist Church, the Presbyterian

Church in the USA, and, of special interest to us, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and its predecessor bodies.

As I sat in that recreated "church" at the secular University of Kansas, I thought how ironic it is that across the country are countless actual churches equipped with grand pipe organs that now sit silent and unused.

As the subtitle indicates, Reeves concludes that these churches committed institutional *suicide*. For example, the Episcopal Church lost an astounding one-third of its membership in just one decade, going from 3 million to 2 million members, at which rate it will cease to exist sometime this century. There are now more Buddhists in the United States than Episcopalians!



With its gothic arches, stained-glass windows, 72-foot-high ceiling, and walls two feet thick, the Bales Recital Hall at the University of Kansas' Lied Center meticulously replicates the 12th-century Church of St. Francis de Sales in Lyon, France, all to provide perfect acoustics for one of the finest pipe organs in the United States.

All this was done, however, with the best of intentions and noblest of goals: To become more relevant to modern society and modern man, by making changes in worship and doctrine. But, the irony Reeves' analysis reveals is that it was this very quest to make themselves more relevant that actually made these churches *irrelevant*, not only to society, but even to their own members.

So, how can we be truly relevant in the 21st century? By going "back to the future," back to our own heritage!

Back to our heritage in *worship*, for which even the secular world has a renewed appreciation. And, more importantly, back to our heritage in *doctrine*. As German theologian Franz Delitzsch said in 1839 for the 300th anniversary of the Reformation in Leipzig:

"I confess without shame that in matters of faith I am 300 years behind our time, because I came to see, after wandering a long time in the mazes of error, that truth is one and indeed eternal, immutable, and that, since it is revealed by God, it is not in need of any sifting and improvement. . . I preach to you retrogression: Return to the Word of God, which you have forsaken. . . What I have voiced and sought to defend is nothing but the faith of our old Lutheran Church, which our forefathers confessed as their faith . . ."

Pastor Kevin Vogts

Trinity Tribune

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Mission Sunday & Thanksgiving Potluck November 20

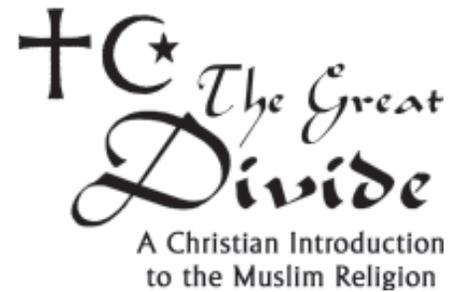
We will observe Mission Sunday during our morning service on Sunday, November 20. Our guest preacher will be Rev. Dr. Patrick Dennis Mason. From 1984-1997 he served as a Missouri Synod missionary in Africa, in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria, having great success even though it was a dangerous time of much unrest and civil war.

During those years he also earned his doctorate degree in missions. Returning to the United States due to health reasons, from 1998-2011 he served as pastor of Grace Lutheran Church, Ulysses, Kansas, where he now lives in retirement.

Following the service we will celebrate Thanksgiving a few days early with a "Thanksgiving Potluck." Everyone asked to bring favorite Thanksgiving dishes to share. After the dinner we will be having an informational meeting for the whole congregation about our possible building project (see article page 3).



As has become customary, we are again having extra services of Holy Communion from October thru March, on both the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month. This provides an extra opportunity to receive the Sacrament for those who may not be able to attend worship on the first Sunday of the month due to inclement weather during the more stormy fall and winter months.



New Bible Class on Islam & Christianity Begins November 6

We hear constantly in the news about Islam. But, what is it really all about?

On Sunday, November 6 we will begin a new study in Adult Bible Class, comparing and contrasting Islam with Christianity and helping give us a better understanding of the religion of Islam, its origins, history, and adherents today.

The Great Divide: A Christian Introduction to the Muslim Religion will include video presentations by Dr. Alvin Schmidt, who is an LCMS pastor and professor emeritus of sociology at Illinois College, and a recognized authority on the relationship between Islam and Christianity. Sessions include:

Muhammed and the Koran
Jesus in the Koran
The Five Pillars of Islam
Islam: A Religion of Peace?

This study will help us appreciate the grace we experience in Jesus Christ, in contrast not only to the political terror wrought in the name of Islam, but also the inner, spiritual terror experienced by many Muslims themselves.

Everyone is invited to join in Sundays at 9:00am in the Overflow!



Building for the Future

Building Project Informational Meeting November 20

As we approach the 150th Anniversary of our congregation in 2018, a committee appointed by the chairman reviewed our buildings and grounds. Because of the complexity of the issues involved, especially regarding code requirements, etc., last year the Voters Assembly approved engaging an architectural firm to develop a proposal.

We interviewed representatives from several firms and found that Guenther-Mills-Keating of Raytown, Missouri specializes in the design and construction of new churches and church remodeling and additions. They recently completed a very impressive Family Life Center for St. Matthew's Lutheran Church (LCMS) in Lee's Summit, Missouri that blends beautifully with the existing building, and ingeniously addresses what was lacking with that building and the future needs of the congregation.

Their proposal for our congregation was presented to the Church Council on October 18 and Voters Assembly on October 23. The Church Council recommended and Voters Assembly approved soliciting pledges from our congregational membership to gauge support for such a project.

Following the Mission Sunday "Thanksgiving Potluck" after worship on November 20 we will have an informational meeting for the entire congregation, whether or not you participate in the Voters Assembly. The architects' proposal will be presented and explained, costs and finances reviewed, timeline explored, and your questions answered!



Thanksgiving Day Service

Bring Your Family and Guests to Celebrate Thanksgiving
at Trinity, Thursday, November 24, 10:00am

All Invited — Everyone Welcome!

O Give Thanks unto the LORD, for He is Good

Everyone is invited and encouraged to join in this important discussion on the future of your congregation and its facilities. You may contact congregational chairman Greg Windler with questions or for more information.



Thank you to all those providing snacks for Coffee Hour! Could you—individual, family, or group—serve snacks sometime after worship during the remainder of 2016? Most Sundays are open thru the end of the year.

There is a sign-up sheet on the table with the snacks. Our Generations group has generously agreed to provide and prepare the coffee and juice each week! So those signing up are only asked to provide some treat. Consider signing up for special occasions such as birthdays or anniversaries.

November 6
Kristina Jenkins

November 13
Terry Vogts

November 20
Mission Sunday
Thanksgiving Potluck

November 27
Need Volunteers



Each month we remember in prayer in our worship services—and you are encouraged to remember in your personal prayers—specific missionaries around the world who are supported by our congregation through our mission offerings to our Synod.

November 6

Rev. Charles & Connie Cortright
Czech Republic

November 13

Jamielynn Tinkey
Dominican Republic

November 20

Rev. Emad & Shireen Tawadrous
Omaha (Missionary to Muslims)

November 27

Rev. Stuart & Debra Freese
Burkina Faso



New Luther's Seal Flag

Check out the new flag on the church flagpole! We already had the general Protestant Christian flag flying on the Shelter House pole. As we enter the year leading up to the Reformation 500th Anniversary on October 31, 2017, in celebration of our Lutheran heritage we have added a flag on the church flagpole with Luther's Seal, also known as the Lutheran Rose.

This symbol was designed by Martin Luther in 1530 as his personal seal and family crest, and quickly became the symbol not only for him and his family but of the entire Lutheran Church. Luther explained in a letter that he intended this new seal he designed to be a concise summary of his theology and teaching:

"These thoughts now come to my mind about my seal as a symbol of my theology. There is first to be a cross, black and placed in a heart, which should be of its natural red color, so that I myself would be reminded that faith in the Crucified saves us. For if one believes from the heart he will be justified."

"Even though it is a black cross, which mortifies and which also should hurt us, yet it leaves the heart in its natural color and does not ruin nature; that is, the cross does not kill but keeps man alive. For the just man lives by faith, but by faith in the Crucified One."

"Such a heart is to be in the midst of a white rose, to symbolize that faith gives joy, comfort, and peace; in a word it places the believer into a white joyful rose; for this faith does not give peace and joy as the world gives and, therefore, the rose is to be white and not red, for white is the color of the spirits and of all the angels."

"Such a rose is to be in a sky-blue field, symbolizing that such joy in the Spirit and in faith is a beginning of the future heavenly joy; it is already a part of faith, and is grasped through hope, even though not yet manifest."

"And around this field is a golden ring, symbolizing that in heaven such blessedness lasts forever and has no end, and in addition is precious beyond all joy and goods, just as gold is the most valuable and precious metal."



Advent Begins November 27

The new Church Year begins with the First Sunday in Advent on November 27.

On Sunday, December 18 our Christmas service of Holy Communion will feature a "Christmas Carol Communion Service," with favorite carols used for portions of the Liturgy.

The theme for this year's Children's Christmas Program on Christmas Eve, Saturday, December 24 at 7:00pm, will be "Symbols of Salvation," with an

explanation of the different Christian symbols used at Christmastime and throughout the year.

Christmas Day, December 25 falls on a Sunday this year. Our service at 10:00am will be a traditional "Festival of Readings and Carols," with a series of Scripture readings and carols celebrating our Savior's birth.



Tape Ministry

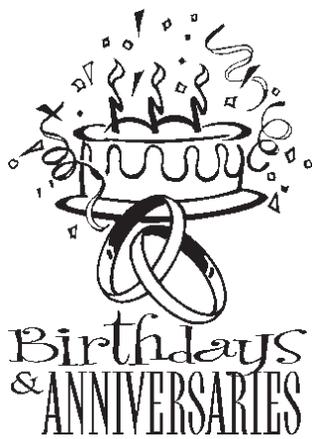
Cassette tapes of our services are now available in a rack in the back of the church. These differ from the online audio by including the entire service; the online audio has only the sermon.

Duplicate tapes may be kept or returned. Master tapes may be borrowed but need to be returned, or you may request a new duplicate be made for you to keep. Tape players are also available for loan.



Hearing Assistance System

Trinity is equipped with a wireless hearing assistance system, which broadcasts our sound system to small personal receivers. Receivers are available on the counter in Church Office, where you are asked to return them after the service. Or, you may ask an usher for assistance.



Our records of birthdays and anniversaries may not complete. If your information is missing or inaccurate, please accept our apologies and notify the Church Office at 913-849-3344 or email Church Secretary Stacey Elkinton at blocktfc@midwest-connections.com.

- November 1 Christopher England
- November 2 Steve Debrick
- November 4 Peyton Mitchell
- November 5 Sara Prothe
- November 7 Fritz Meyer
- November 8 Erin England
- November 8 Leonard Windler
- November 9 Greg Windler
- November 9 Brad Ashley
- November 11 Lana Kettler
- November 11 Chylar Jones
- November 12 Jack Alpert
- November 13 Dennis Ohlmeier
- November 13 Doris Rodewald
- November 14 Elena Smithhisler
- November 15 Frances Minter
- November 15 JoAnn Vaughn
- November 16 Sacred Davis
- November 19 Elaine Brocker
- November 19 Kreston Debrick
- November 19 Kathy Peckman
- November 20 Alexis Belsanti
- November 20 Luke Elkinton
- November 20 Randy Maisch
- November 21 Jim Prothe
- November 21 Megan Tesar
- November 22 Whitney Shoemaker
- November 22 Burl Peckman
- November 22 Jason Peterson
- November 24 Lindsey Lester
- November 25 Carolyn Isenhower
- November 25 Courtney Belsanti
- November 25 Dana Hall
- November 30 Alan Hutchison



This fall we are having an occasional sermon series looking at the history and meaning of some favorite hymns. These hymns not only uplift and comfort us, they also beautifully teach us the faith. The stories behind these hymns are also very inspiring. Come and enjoy learning more about these favorite hymns!

If you missed any of these messages they are available in both written and audio form on our church web site at www.trinitylcms.org/sermons.

September 25
"Amazing Grace"
1 Timothy 1:12-17

October 9
"Rock of Ages"
Exodus 33:18-23

October 16
"How Great Thou Art"
Psalm 145:3-6

November 24–Thanksgiving Day
"Now Thank We All Our God"
1 Thessalonians 5:18

October 23
*"O Sacred Head,
Now Wounded"*
Isaiah 53:4

October 30–Reformation Sunday
"A Mighty Fortress"
Psalm 46

November 13
"Abide with Me"
Luke 24:29

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- November 3 Ken & Karla Debrick (30)
 - November 18 Darrell & Barb Brandt (44)
 - November 20 Harry & Gay Stubbs (40)
 - November 22 Brad & Susan Ashley (11)
 - November 23 Vernon & Donna Prothe (61)
 - November 29 Webb & Virginia Oberheide (30)
 - November 29 Brett & Becky Stutzman (47)



Thank you to everyone who helped make our 8th annual Trunk or Treat on October 30 another big success! Lots more photos online at www.trinitylcms.org/photos.

