

The JOURNEY — Walking Daily with Jesus

From the Pastors Desk, July 2025

“And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.” (Hebrews 10:25:NLT)

Summer is here! Yay! (Well, the last couple of days of near 100-degree temperatures do damper our enthusiasm for summer just a bit.) But, this is a time of vacations, time with family, and a time to soak up some of the warmth of the sun after a long winter and short spring. Many consider it to be a time of “rest” from our labors. And many also find that they are soon worn out with the busy-ness of the summer and realize that they actually need rest from their time of “rest”!

Summer is a time when many churches struggle. Many reduce the number of services because fewer people attend. The faithful take time away from gathering with their church family. For me, this is difficult to hear because God has given us our church family for our own benefit. How does this group of forgiven sinners help us?

The following story was shared at a text study in my last congregation. It provides a powerful visual of the importance of continuing to gathering together as brothers and sisters in Christ. It is titled *The Lonely Ember*: written by Dr. John MacArthur

A member of a certain church, who previously had been attending services regularly, stopped going.

After a few weeks, the pastor decided to visit him. It was a chilly evening. The pastor found the man at home alone, sitting before a blazing fire.

Guessing the reason for his pastor's visit, the man welcomed him, led him to a big chair near the fireplace and waited. The pastor made himself comfortable but said nothing. In the grave silence, he contemplated the play of the flames around the burning logs.

After some minutes, the pastor took the fire tongs, carefully picked up a brightly burning ember and placed it to one side of the hearth all alone. Then he sat back in his chair, still silent. The host watched all this in quiet fascination.

As the one lone ember's flame diminished, there was a momentary glow, and then its fire was no more. Soon it was cold and "dead as a doornail."

Not a word had been spoken since the initial greeting.

Just before the pastor was ready to leave, he picked up the cold, dead ember and placed it back in the middle of the fire. Immediately it began to glow once more with the light and warmth of the burning coals around it.

As the pastor reached the door to leave, his host said, "Thank you so much for your visit and especially for the fiery sermon. I shall be back in church next Sunday."

What a powerful picture! What a convicting story. What response does Jesus have to this story? He responds with words of promise, words which call us to “come.” Jesus says in Matthew 11:28, *“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”* Come, partake in God’s means of grace alongside your church family, and you will find fulfillment of Jesus’ promise that all who come to Him will find true rest and peace, a *“peace which surpasses all understanding...”* (Philippians 4:7)

Have a safe and blessed summer!

Pastor Dan

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From the Council President:

A few months ago, I promised to tell you about my experiences of being a Stephen Minister in my previous congregations. My journey down this road began back in 1990 when I heard a presentation from the senior pastor at Lutheran Church of The Master (LCM) on the great need for one-on-one caregiving for the hurting members of our congregation. People who were going through grief, medical crisis, job loss, depression, and several other life challenges. The LCM pastors could provide visitation but didn't have time to provide longer term caregiving for the number of people that need God's healing.

Hence the need for Stephen Ministry (SM). Initially I had the desire but didn't feel I had the gifts or talent to be a caregiver but through encouragement from the pastor and the LCM Stephen Leaders, I signed up and started SM training. The practical, interactive, and comprehensive training taught us active listening, caregiving, and relationship skills. We were not counselors, we were just to be present with our care receivers, showing empathy, compassion, love, and faith. We were caregivers. God was the cure giver.

The training taught us practical skills on how to give care for a variety of life challenges. The fellowship, love, and affirmation I received from the SM trainers and fellow trainees was incredible. These trainees and the SM Leaders would become our support group once the leaders matched us with a care receiver. We never felt alone in our care relationships.

My first meeting with my care receiver was a

little stressful but I fell back on God's presence, my training and the support from the Stephen Leaders and the LCM congregation.

The last caring relationship I had was one of the most rewarding. I was matched with Bill (name changed to protect confidentiality) by our Stephen leaders and associate pastor. Bill was a hypochondriac, and his stomach ailments kept him confined to his apartment. The number of pills he was taking was staggering. Once we started meeting, Bill talked about his daily routine and about his inability to live a normal life because of his ailment.

It was apparent he questioned his doctor's advice and wasn't taking his prescriptions as prescribed. I just listened to his fear and heartache for not having a normal life.

One main tenet of SM is to use active listening, show compassion, and let the care receiver talk about their feelings. We were not trying to fix the problem but let God work through us. Thankfully, Bill was incredibly open to prayer and reading encouraging scripture.

As time passed, I heard him talk about how he missed fishing with his friend, getting together with his family and the desire to ask out a lady friend in whom he was interested. All these things he was missing because of his health. As Christmas was approaching, we discussed calling his son and inviting his family to visit. Bill's health improved and he started getting out more. As Bill's confidence increased, he got the nerve to call his girlfriend. Since Bill's issues were being resolved, we discussed closure of our

caregiving relationship, but certainly not our friendship. A few months later, I saw Bill and his girlfriend at church, and he told us they were engaged. His relationship with his son and his family grew closer and he had been out fishing with his best friend. Bill's healing and improved life was miraculous.

This experience was so heartwarming and even now causes me to tear up with emotion. It's a reminder that we have such a loving God who cares for his hurting children. All I did was to be present with Bill and waited on God's timing. I thank God for what he did in both of our lives. My faith increased as the Holy Spirit worked through our lives and we experienced the amazing power of prayer. The wonderful experience of serving God and his church through this ministry is the reason, I have agreed to be a SM leader at TLC.

I hope you have noticed we have new Stephen Ministry articles in the Journey Newsletter each month. These articles are meant to give you more information about this important and exciting new ministry here at TLC. The Stephen Leaders plan to start a new Stephen Ministers training course in September. If you have interest or have questions about the training program contact Di Hubbard, Gelene Tabor, Pastor Dan, or me. One of us can meet with you and will keep our conversations confidential.

Jim McGraw





JULY-SUNDAY WORSHIP ASSISTANTS



	July 6 9:00a	July 13 9:00a	July 20 9:00a	July 27 OUTDOOR Service 9:00a
GREETERS	Terri Freeman	June Bibeau	Chad & Bailey Preble	Cheri & Eric Anderson
USHERS	Rob Freeman Wally Thom	Mike Capra Steve Tracey	Kevin Ploessl Wes Mohns	
COMM. ASSTS	Dan Dahl	Ellen Ehrich	Pat Mackey	
READER	Kathy Thom	Sue Capra	Gloria Widiker	Dianne Buxton



7/1 Jerry Janetski
 7/9 Wyatt Sunderland
 7/10 Scott VanGilder
 7/11 Eric Anderson
 7/11 Karen Hayes
 7/13 Sue Svitak
 7/27 Ken Raether
 7/31 Kevin Sunderland



7/9 Lou & Colette Sandow
 7/18 Cindy & Mike Rubin
 7/21 Kathy & Wally Thom
 7/27 Di & Kyle Hubbard
 7/30 Tom & Maryann Cowans

BRUNCH POTLUCK

Calling all Lutherans!

You are invited to join in fellowship for our BRUNCH style potluck on July 27 immediately following the outdoor 9 am service.

A sign-up sheet is at the Welcome Center in the narthex (lobby) to allow for a variety of dishes to share and for opportunity to help.

To ease the kitchen efforts, please bring any hot style meal items FULLY cooked. A quick re-warm in the oven is manageable.

Thank you! Women of Trinity Service Group #1 will host this month. (If you don't know which Service Group you are in, pick up a Women of Trinity Handbook on the Welcome Center counter).

All other helpers are greatly appreciated!



Meeting

NEXT MEETING OF . . .

Birchwood Food Pantry Open. **July 7 & 21, 10:30-12:30pm**
Worship & Music Team. **No July Mtg**
Christian Life Meeting. **No July Mtg**
Women of Trinity **No July Mtg**
Trinity Council Meeting **No July Mtg**

7 Reasons to Become a Stephen Minister



Is God calling you to become a Stephen Minister? In Stephen Ministry, members of our congregation are trained and equipped to meet once a week, one to one, with someone going through a difficult time. Stephen Ministers provide a caring presence, a listening ear, and comforting words—supporting care receivers throughout their journey. There are many reasons people become Stephen Ministers. Here are a few to think about as you prayerfully consider whether Stephen Ministry is the right place for you to serve.

As a Stephen Minister, you will . . .

Make a real difference in the lives of people who are hurting. Stephen Ministers walk alongside people going through life challenges like grief, divorce, a medical crisis, job loss, and more. They offer care, support, and encouragement, connecting hurting people with Christ's healing love during some of the hardest times in their lives.

Help our congregation ensure that no one suffers alone. Caring for one another is a hallmark of the Christian faith. As a Stephen Minister, you will play a crucial role in helping our congregation carry out that mission so that, even if we can't take away their pain, those who are suffering know our church truly cares.

Learn what to say and do—and what not to say and do—to care effectively for people who are suffering. Stephen Minister training teaches highly practical caregiving and relational skills that equip and empower you with everything you need to effectively care for others. In addition to preparing you for caring ministry, these skills can help you deepen and enhance relationships in all facets of your life—with family, friends, coworkers, and others Galatians 6:2 "Bear one another's burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ."

Be involved in meaningful ministry that uses your spiritual gifts. Serving as a Stephen Minister gives people an opportunity to put their spiritual gifts into action—gifts such as faith, mercy, compassion, and encouragement. Ministry that draws on your gifts is personally fulfilling and touches people's lives in powerful ways.

Deepen your faith as you see God at work through your ministry. Providing care while trusting in God is at the core of Stephen Ministry. Stephen Ministers regularly say how their faith deepens as they experience training, learn to use distinctively Christian caring tools, and witness God at work in the lives of their care receivers.

Be part of a group of caring Christians who support each other as they care for those who are hurting. One of the blessings of being a Stephen Minister is being part of a community of people who care, all of whom lift one another up as they strive together to provide the best possible ministry. The strong relationships you'll form are both rewarding and a great source of support. 1 Thessalonians 5:11 "Therefore encourage one another and build up each other."

Join a worldwide tradition of caring ministry. Congregations all over the world use Stephen Ministry—and have trained hundreds of thousands of Stephen Ministers who have gone on to care for millions of hurting people. It's this ongoing tradition of "Christ caring for people through people" that you'll join as a Stephen Minister.

Next steps: If this article piqued your interest in our Stephen Ministry, contact one of the Stephen Ministry Leaders. Pastor Dan, Jim McGraw, Diane Hubbard, or Gene Tabor would be happy to give you more information about the ministry. No pressure or commitment for just asking questions.



VBS True North





It's a Wrap for TRUE NORTH VBS!

Thirty-four children and 30 volunteers journeyed to the Alaskan tundra for a week of adventures!

The crew members learned Bible stories, Bible verses, and fun songs; ate awesome snacks, played games, and dove into the book of Matthew.

Their mission project was to raise funds to purchase warm clothes and blankets for children all over North America. Every \$5 can provide up to \$70 worth of brand-new warm clothes and blankets. WOW! The kids raised \$208 and our Sunday offering raised \$216 for a total of \$424. That amount could purchase up to \$5,936 worth of clothes and blankets!

THANK YOU to all who helped out with our VBS week! We couldn't do it without everyone's help.



Trinity Lutheran Church Spotlight

Each month we will highlight a TLC member and learn more about them - their background, any hobbies or little known facts they might like to share!

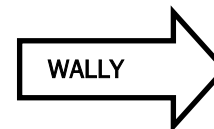
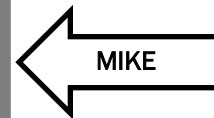
Name: Mike Rubin

- † Place of Birth: Parkers Prairie, Minnesota
- † # of Siblings: 6 siblings, 2 sisters and 4 brothers
- † How did you meet your spouse? I met Cindy on the first day of college in 1975 when I accidentally let a door close on her at the dorm.
- † How long are/were you married? 44 years
- † # Kids (or nieces/nephews)/Grand/Great-Grands: 2/4
- † What are some jobs you've had? Civil/structural engineer for IBM, then engineering, Safety, IH and environmental engineering manager. Later I managed the IBM facilities from California to North Carolina for a facility management firm.
- † Hobbies: I love history. I love to use a metal detector to find old items in older house yards and public places. I have been detecting for 50 years so I have a large collection of rusty items.
- † Fun Fact: At age 48, just for fun, I went back to school and earned a degree in radiography and worked at Mayo Clinic in Rochester. I retired as the Mayo Clinic Radiology Informatics Manager.



Name: Wally Thom

- † Place of Birth: Marshfield, WI
- † # of Siblings: 4 Brothers (1 passed) and 2 Sisters (1 passed)
- † How did you meet your spouse? I was introduced by "then sister-in-law" on an evening out on the town.
- † How long are/were you married? 52 years on July 21st
- † # Kids (or nieces/nephews)/Grands/Great-Grands: 2 boys/5 grandkids
- † What are some jobs you've had? Warehouse supervisor (Figis mail order house) for 7 years and the Rice Lake Utilities for 35 years
- † Hobbies: Woodworking, hunting, fishing, teaching grandkids
- Fun Fact: I coordinate the Men's Ministry, member of the VBS Build Team



TLC Roof Replacement Project Update

The Roof Replacement Project is progressing well.

We have reached the funding target. At this time approximately \$40,050 has been raised!

The stewardship team has determined that no more fundraising events are needed at this time. Thanks to all!

Contract and construction management is being managed by John Schieffer, Wes Mohns and Eric Anderson.

We have four bids from contractors, due to the size of the project.

The roof of the parsonage garage will also be done under this contract.

The steeple will not be put back on the roof due to leakage issues.

The work is expected to start this summer and be done well before winter.



July 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 1:00p Stephen Ministry Mtg	2 6:30a Men's Bible study	3 10a Women's Bible Study 6:30p Divine Drama	4 OFFICE CLOSED	5
6 8a Text Study 9a Worship w/ communion	7 Office Closed in Observance of the 4th	8	9	10 10a Women's Bible Study 6:30p Divine Drama	11 OFFICE CLOSED	12
13 8a Text Study 9a Worship w/ communion	14 9a Quilters 3:30p Women's Bible Study 7p AA, Fellowship Hall	15 1:00p Stephen Ministry Mtg 6:00 BAHS Mtg	16 6:30a Men's Bible study	17 10a Women's Bible Study 6:30p Divine Drama	18 OFFICE CLOSED	19
20 9a Worship w/ communion Love Fund/Food Pantry Offering	21 9a Quilters 10:30a-12:30p—Food Pantry Open 3:30p Women's Bible Study 7p AA, Fellowship Hall	22 Journey Deadline	23	24 10a Women's Bible Study 6:30p Divine Drama	25 OFFICE CLOSED	26
27 8a Text Study 9a OUTDOOR Worship w/ communion 10:30 Potluck Brunch Prayer Shawl Sunday	28 9a Quilters 3:30p Women's Bible Study 7p AA, Fellowship Hall	29	30	31 10a Women's Bible Study 6:30p Divine Drama		

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Join us for Outdoor
Worship & Potluck



The JOURNEY July 2025

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

Rev. Daniel Tabor—Pastor

Pastor Barb Kleven—Associate Pastor

Julie Sunderland, Parish Administrator

Joanne Schilling, Choir Director

Donna Rae Carrell, Custodian

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Adult Sunday School	8am
Office Hours	8 – 11:30 am, 12:30 - 3:00pm (M-Th)
Bulletin deadline	9 am Tuesdays
JOURNEY deadline	Tuesday - 3 rd week of the month
Pastor's Office Hours	Mondays (8 am—3:00pm)
	Wednesdays (8—11:30 pm) other days by apt.



SUNDAY WORSHIP

July 6 — 9:00a worship service w/communion

July 13 — 9:00a worship service w/communion

July 20 — 9:00a worship service w/communion

**July 27 — 9:00a OUTDOOR worship service
(weather permitting) Pot luck to follow service**

**** Next Month Our last outdoor service will be on August 24 ****

KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS

Debbie Davis	Bill Rice
Andy Hedman	Ro Sackmann
Lora	Carter Sackmann
Sharon Mackey	Timothy Wallace
Tracy Reid	Donna Willis

In the military: Rigil Christensen, and all those serving in the military.