

Trinity Times

My Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In the world of athletes, success quite often causes amnesia. An athlete to secure victory and accolades must tirelessly study, work and invest in the process of training. Many athletes are not born into fortune and glory, but some come from humble origins and due to the effort and self-sacrifice, success is earned. However, when the fortune and glory is obtained, many often develop forgetfulness of how they got to there. Instead of remaining humble, grateful for the blessings of God and dependent on a good work ethic, the successful athlete becomes proud of their accomplishments and forgetful of how they got there and from where their skills and abilities come from. Success becomes short-lived and the fall from glory is inevitable.

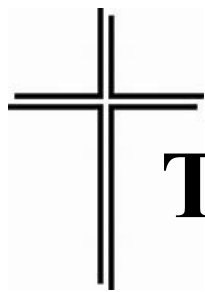
Just as athletes may develop amnesia from their success, so too did God warn the Israelites of their capacity to become forgetful of what God had done for them. When the nation was preparing to enter the Holy Land during the conquest of Canaan, Yahweh through Moses warns them, not to forget how they obtained every blessing and success. When the milk and honey begin to be enjoyed, when the estates have been built, when the fields have been harvested, when the herds and flock swell in size, when the gold and silver have been refined, Yahweh warns them, not to forget Yahweh's grace and glory which created and endowed them with every good blessing.

But, just as Yahweh warned Israel, so too with us. All too often, we forget the source of all our blessings and our successes. In a few months we will be, God willing, returning to a state of normal. Many will return to jobs, businesses will be open, shopping will be done, meals will be eaten in a restaurant, vacations will be taken. But with the many blessings of God pouring out into our communities again, will we forget the source and the giver of all these things. When we return to life as the new normal, will we forget the covenant of grace in Jesus Christ?

Something tends to happen when life goes from trial or struggle into satisfaction and prosperity. God's Word in Deuteronomy says, *when you have eaten and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, then your heart will become proud and you will forget Yahweh your God.* Our human nature seems to be afflicted with the desire to believe that our success is not due to the Freedom and Mercy of God who gives and creates all things, but in the power and strength and abilities of ourselves to produce them. God has not given them to us graciously and freely, we have earned them on the might of our muscles, or on the knowledge of our minds. Gratitude and dependence become pride and ungratefulness. We forget.

We need the Word and warning of God that reminds us to remember the source and giver of all our blessings. Was it not for the grace of God which led Israel through the wilderness, and which led us through the pandemic, would we be alive and whole enough to have a time of blessing and prosperity? Was it not for the grace of God which created us with the abilities of mind and muscle, would we have the means of success? Was it not for the grace of God which cut a covenant with us sinners through the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ, would we have only wrath and judgment, not the Kingdom of God? Without God would we have anything?

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So, in the next few months as we begin to return and reopen our communities, we need to reflect on Yahweh's warning. *Remember how Yahweh your God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. Observe the commands of Yahweh your God, walking in his ways and revering him.* When life returns to the new normal, let us take care and pay attention not only to the blessings we are again able to enjoy, but let us praise the God who has given them to us, and let us remember to walk in his ways and observe his commands and will for our live. Let us not develop a severe case of material and spiritual amnesia. Amen.

In Christ,

Rev. Mark

Monthly Communion Procedure

Due to Trinity being in quarantine, we will continue using the new procedure to celebrate and distribute the communion elements. On the Saturday before our scheduled Communion celebration, Rev. Mark will be blessing pre-packaged and individually sealed wafers and juice. These blessed elements will be distributed on Saturday, March 6th, from 11am to 12pm. On Sunday, during the elements section of the video, you may partake of the elements during the service. When you drive through the parking lot, we ask that you remain in your cars, while wearing a mask, and roll down your window and the elements will be handed over to you on a tray. We are still the Church, and we can still celebrate Communion, even if we are socially distancing.

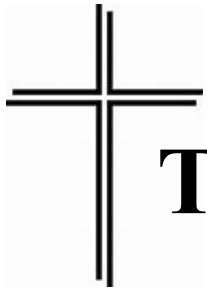
A Note From Session

Lent is here, the season of fasting and penitence. We hope through this time to think about our calling as your session to lead Trinity to be the loving, caring, giving church that we are called to be. Those of us who are able, continue to meet virtually to do the business of Trinity. We are grateful for the opportunity to meet safely. We will move ahead to fulfill all our duties as your session, with grace and joy and innovation.

Thankfully, many of our congregation have begun the process of acquiring Covid 19 vaccinations. It is our hope that we can soon meet face-to-face again. What a joy it will be to worship, study, and meet with each other!

Let us continue to worship together via YouTube with Rev. Mong every Sunday, as well as read his words of encouragement on his blogs. All are available on trinityashtabula.org. We thank Rev. Mark for his continuous work in leading us through this trying time.

Blessings for health and the hope that we look forward to through Lent.



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A Note From Scrip

January was slow, but folks are once again using scrip cards. Thank you for all the support you are giving to the Scrip program.

Call or text 440.862.6786, call 964.6073, or e-mail at mbelding237@gmail.com.

Blessings from Co-coordinators of Trinity's Scrip Program,
Dee Fassett and Mary Belding



A Note from Community Outreach

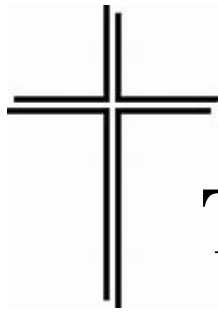
Community Outreach continues to meet virtually with the assistance of Rev. Mark.

We are continuing our relationships with Youth Opportunities, Faith Lutheran Food Pantry, GO Ministries, Plymouth United Methodist Church, and Ashtabula Area City Schools. We also suggest pledges to the PCUSA on behalf of Trinity. Thank you to all who contribute to Trinity and through Trinity.

We look forward to the time when we can meet in person to help Trinity do the work of sharing the love of Jesus Christ in our community.

Blessings,
Mary Belding, Chair





Trinity Times

Property and Finance

Grateful...Thankful...Blessed...

From your Property and Finance Committee

2020 was a challenging year for us all. I feel that 2021 will allow us the opportunity to start getting back to a “new normal”. Financially speaking, we are off to a good start! We have received a “paid in full” stamp regarding the \$10,520.83 forgiveness loan through the Paycheck Protection Program. This loan, which assisted in employee salaries, was 100% forgiven meaning the church incurred no financial responsibility.

We recently had an anonymous donation to the Capital Improvement Fund. Our new balance is \$1,622.38. We are planning a Town Hall meeting in April to discuss 2021 church projects. Please be thinking of ideas that you would like to submit for discussion. We have accomplished so much already-let’s keep this wheel moving forward!

Thank you to all who joined the February 14 virtual Congregation meeting and to those who sent their vote to the church. The 2021 Terms of Call have been approved. We are so thankful for all the Mark does for us!

Updates on recommendations of contractors for:

- Estimates on gutters for better drainage. We have received one quote.
- Replacement of the double doors located in the back of the sanctuary on the east side. We have received contact information for possible contractors.

We have cancelled the contract with our cleaning company which will assist in reducing the church’s monthly operating costs. A special thank-you to Mary Belding, Dale and Kathy Fassett, and Beth Dougherty who are volunteering their time to keep our church clean! If anyone is interested in helping contact Beth at 440-661-1416.

Per Capita for 2021 is \$32.41.

Don’t forget One Great Hour of Sharing-April 4

*The Property and Finance committee
would like to thank everyone for your continued support.*

Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. (2 Corinthians 9:6)

God’s blessings to all,

Beth Dougherty

March 2021

Website www.trinityashtabula.org

Email trinitypres04@gmail.com

Elder On Call: Beth Dougherty 440-661-1416

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6 Communion element Distribution 11am to 12pm
7 Video Worship and Communion Service	8	9	10 Property and Finance 6:30pm	11	12	13
14 Video Worship	15	16	17 Community Outreach 6pm Session 7pm	18	19	20
21 Video Worship	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 Palm Sunday Video Worship	29	30	31			