

# Trinity Tribune

Trinity Lutheran Church ✠ Paola, Kansas

2020



I encountered a bit of a mystery several years ago when compiling the new map and index for our church cemetery. Because of Trinity's unique practice of conducting all burials in chronological order, it was more easily noticeable than would be the case for most cemeteries that our congregation experienced an unusually large number of deaths in 1918-1919.

And tragically these involved a striking number of young people, including a brother and sister who died in chronological order and are therefore buried next to each other. I puzzled over this spike in deaths here until I realized: "Of course, the Spanish Flu!"

It was given that name because Spain was one of the few countries that didn't impose censorship during World War I, and so cases occurring there were widely reported. So, for instance, American newspapers couldn't at first report on the epidemic in the United States—but they could reprint reports from Spanish newspapers about it sweeping through Spain, giving the false impression that it was more severe there or had even started there.

But, in fact, since diseases of this type are generally named after their point of origin, it should not have

been called the *Spanish Flu* but the *Kansas Flu*. Because, the first recorded case was just a few hours from us here at Block, on March 4, 1918 in a cook at Fort Riley, Kansas. From there it spread out quickly to the rest of the world, infecting an estimated 500 million people worldwide and killing 50 million. So, it is no wonder that our own Kansas community so near to the point of origin was hard hit.

You may have seen news stories about a few amazing individuals who survived contracting the Spanish Flu as infants and—now over 100 years old—also contracted and survived coronavirus. This present pandemic has been an unpleasant reminder that our blessed, modern experience of not knowing times of plague, during the intervening century between those two outbreaks, is very much the exception in human history, not the rule.

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***As an archaeologist, I am accustomed to peeling back the layers of human history that are found in an archaeological site—and the same exploration of the past can be conducted in the pages of our hymnal.***

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Until the recent advent of modern medicine and preventative public health measures, devastating plagues were a routine fact of life. The worst in history was the Black Death, a wave of bubonic plague that swept through Europe for seven years from 1346 to 1353, killing up to an estimated 200 million people.

It seems inconceivable, but based on historical population records it is estimated that during the peak of the pandemic approximately 50% of the European population died in just four

years, wreaking extraordinary havoc upon all aspects of European society, and altering in many ways the course world history.

As an archaeologist, I am accustomed to peeling back the layers of human history that are found in an archaeological site. The same exploration of the past can actually be conducted in the pages of our hymnal. For, these hymns spanning 2,000 years of Christian history are actually an informative record representing layers of history—including the frequent occurrence of plagues that until recently were common to human experience.

One of the first two dozen hymns written by Martin Luther in 1524, and published by him that year in the very first Christian hymnal ever produced, was "In the Very Midst of Life" (*Lutheran Service Book*, 755). Luther adapted the music and first stanza from a popular Latin hymn that he had often sung in his youth and as a monk, which originated during the Middle Ages as a lament about the devastating effects of the great plagues:

*In the very midst of life  
Snares of death surround us;  
Who shall help us in the strife  
Lest the foe confound us?  
Thou only, Lord, Thou only!  
We mourn that we have greatly erred,  
That our sins Thy wrath have stirred.  
Holy and righteous God!  
Holy and mighty God!  
Holy and all-merciful Savior!  
Eternal Lord God!  
Save us lest we perish  
In the bitter pangs of death.  
Have mercy, O Lord!*

To this medieval frantic cry for help Luther added two more stanzas proclaiming the Gospel, the second stanza a comforting assurance of God's grace, and the third stanza a confession of God's goodness:

*In the midst of death's dark vale  
 Pow'rs of hell o'ertake us.  
 Who will help when they assail,  
 Who secure will make us?  
 Thou only, Lord, Thou only!  
 Thy heart is moved with tenderness,  
 Pities us in our distress.  
 Holy and righteous God!  
 Holy and mighty God!  
 Holy and all-merciful Savior!  
 Eternal Lord God!  
 Save us from the terror  
 Of the fiery pit of hell.  
 Have mercy, O Lord!*

*In the midst of utter woe  
 When our sins oppress us,  
 Where shall we for refuge go,  
 Where for grace to bless us?  
 To Thee, Lord Jesus, only!  
 Thy precious blood was shed to win  
 Full atonement for our sin.  
 Holy and righteous God!  
 Holy and mighty God!  
 Holy and all-merciful Savior!  
 Eternal Lord God!  
 Lord, preserve and keep us  
 In the peace that faith can give.  
 Have mercy, O Lord!*

*(A recording of this hymn is online at  
[www.trinitylcms.org/LSB755](http://www.trinitylcms.org/LSB755).)*

Another example is "From God Can Nothing Move Me" (*Lutheran Service Book*, 713). This hymn was written in

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**Thank you for the wonderful turnout on September 26 for the cemetery cleanup! There were 28 helpful souls who did a great job cleaning and scrubbing moldy gravestones and clipping and thinning the peony bushes. If any of you are interested in a peony root or would like peonies planted over a loved one's plot, please see Pamela Peckman and she will help you. Again, thank you for the great support!**

1563 by Lutheran theologian, pastor, and poet Ludwig Helmbold, a lecturer at the University of Erfurt, where a half-century before the late Martin Luther himself had once studied. The city was experiencing a horrible plague, so much like the recent closing of many of our schools and universities, the faculty and students fled.

***Like the gravestones in our cemetery of those who passed away here from a pandemic a century ago, these hymns are poignant memorials recording the sufferings experienced by Christians throughout history.***

Before leaving town, Helmbold, who was later appointed poet laureate of Germany, quickly composed a poem to strengthen his friends and lift their spirits as they dispersed—much like an encouraging Facebook post that we might share today. Later set to music as a beloved Lutheran hymn, Helmbold's poem is a reflection on the beautiful words of Psalm 73:23-26:

*"Yet I am always with You; You hold me by my right hand. You guide me with Your counsel, and afterward You will take me into glory. Whom have I in heaven but You? And earth has nothing I desire besides You. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever."*

Such trust in the Lord and confident assurance of an end to all life's struggles in eternal life is beautifully reflected in the sixth stanza of Helmbold's hymn:

*Yet even though I suffer  
 The world's unpleasantness,  
 And though the days grow rougher  
 And bring me great distress,  
 That day of bliss divine,  
 Which knows no end or measure,  
 And Christ, who is my pleasure,  
 Forever shall be mine.*

*(A recording of this hymn is online at  
[www.trinitylcms.org/LSB713](http://www.trinitylcms.org/LSB713).)*

Like the gravestones in our cemetery of those who passed away here from a pandemic a century ago, these and many other hymns are poignant memorials recording the sufferings experienced by Christians throughout history. Many people assume—and sadly some false teachers proclaim—that like a "Get Out of Jail Free" card in

the game Monopoly, being a Christian entitles you to a "Get Out of Troubles Free" card. However, the book of Acts tells us that the Apostle Paul, "Preached the Good News . . . strengthening the souls of the believers and encouraging them to remain true to the faith, reminding them that we must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:21-22).

**Such trust in the Lord and confident assurance of an end to all life's struggles in eternal life is the only thing that brings true comfort in today's troubling times.**

Jesus Himself put it this way at the Last Supper: "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). That is the attitude beautifully reflected in these hymns of old, and the only thing that brings true comfort in today's troubling times: trusting faith in God's goodness, and our final victory in Christ over all the sufferings of this world. As the Apostle Paul declares in 2 Timothy 4:18, "The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack, and will bring me safely into His heavenly kingdom. To Him be the glory forever and ever! Amen."

Pastor Kevin Vogts



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 trinitylutheranblock@gmail.com.

October 1 ..... Mike Schmidt  
 October 1 ..... Kimala Morton  
 October 1 ..... Michele Minden



## Fall Sermon Series on Philippians

Beginning August 30 we are having a special "Fall Sermon Series" on the book of Philippians. Here are the weekly topics, with selections from Philippians for you to read in preparation for the sermon:

August 30

*"When Bad Things Happen to Forgiven People"*  
 Philippians 1:12-18

September 6

*"To Live Is Christ and to Die Is Gain"*  
 Philippians 1:19-26

September 13

*"The Code of Christian Conduct"*  
 Philippians 1:27-28

September 27

*"To Suffer for Him"*  
 Philippians 1:29-2:2

October 4

*"Look Not Only to Your Own Interests"*  
 Philippians 2:3-11

October 11

*"Press on Toward the Goal"*  
 Philippians 3:1-14

October 18

*"Friendly Fire?"*  
 Philippians 3:15-19

November 8

*"Four Questions About the Resurrection"*  
 Philippians 3:20-4:1

November 15

*"The Cause and Characteristics of Christian Joy"*  
 Philippians 4:4-7

November 22

*"Think on Such Things"*  
 Philippians 4:8-9

November 26 (Thanksgiving Day)

*"The Secret of Contentment"*  
 Philippians 4:10-13

October 2 ..... Ashley Peckman  
 October 2 ..... Sharon Prothe  
 October 4 ..... Kyle Minden  
 October 5 ..... Mark Deering  
 October 8 ..... Megan Stutzman  
 October 8 ..... Brian Oberheide  
 October 9 ..... Kyle Garrison  
 October 10 ..... LeRoy Thoden  
 October 11 ..... Shelby Barrett  
 October 11 ..... Kegan Warring  
 October 12 ..... Ray England  
 October 13 ..... Vicky Boyer

October 13 ..... Aaron Mueller  
 October 13 ..... Hazel Prothe  
 October 15 ..... Pam Peckman  
 October 15 ..... Jay Warring  
 October 16 ..... Ariel Alcorn  
 October 16 ..... Erica Peckman  
 October 17 ..... Dylan Fanning  
 October 17 ..... Tony Hubbard  
 October 17 ..... Julie Kellogg  
 October 18 ..... Carter Zajic  
 October 19 ..... Betty Prothe  
 October 19 ..... Joe Stephens  
 October 20 ..... Khrystin Davis

October 20 ..... David Minden  
 October 23 ..... Brett Golubski  
 October 23 ..... Kaelah Garrison  
 October 23 ..... Hannah Allcorn  
 October 24 ..... Payton Bruce  
 October 26 ..... Charlie Peckman  
 October 26 ..... Dalton Russell  
 October 26 ..... Garrett Russell  
 October 27 ..... Kolby Fanning  
 October 27 ..... Lloyd Peckman  
 October 27 ..... Kayla Shappell  
 October 30 ..... Chris Kettler  
 October 30 ..... Rose Peckman  
 October 30 ..... David Prothe  
 October 30 ..... Jai Jenkins  
 October 31 ..... Nina Gerken  
 Oct 1 ..... Larry & Dana Simonson (15)  
 Oct 7 ..... Scott & Nancy Golubski (31)  
 Oct 17 ..... Joe & Anisha O'Barto (22)  
 Oct 17 ... Darrel & Brigitte Rodewald (39)  
 Oct 19 ..... Kyle & Pam Minden (29)  
 Oct 25 ..... Mark & Diana Deering (17)  
 Oct 27 ..... Eric & Lindsey Lester ( 8)  
 Oct 30 ..... Les & Beth Prothe (27)  
 Oct 31 ..... Dale & Linda Prothe (43)

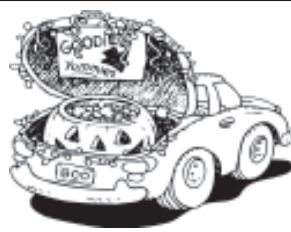


## Service Time 9:00am Thru End of October

Help spread the word that because we are not going to resume Sunday School and Bible Class until November 1, the worship service time at Trinity will remain at 9:00am thru the end of October.

At this point we plan—Lord willing!—to return on November 1 to our regular schedule of Sunday School and Bible Class at 9:00am and worship at 10:00am.

Thanks to everyone for your patience and understanding when it is necessary to respond with such changes to the current unusual situation. Lord willing, things will get more back to “normal” soon!



## Drive Thru Trunk or Treat October 31

Our 12th Annual Trunk or Treat will be held as a “drive-thru” event in the circle drive of the Shelter House from 2:00pm-4:00pm on Halloween Day, Saturday, October 31. We will have six designated stations with different treats. There will be no meal or games this year, and visitors are encouraged to “drive thru” and remain in their vehicles.

Your donation of treats for this event would be appreciated! Volunteers are also needed to decorate their trunks for the stations and pass out the treats. Please contact Lori Schlegel to donate treats or help with the event.

## Missionaries of the Month



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.

October 4

*Rev. James &  
Deaconess Christel Neuendorf*  
Puerto Rico

October 11

*Matt & Dee Dee Wasmund*  
South Korea

October 18

*Rev. Steven & Martha Mahlburg*  
Sri Lanka

October 25

*Shara Osiro*  
Kenya

## “Heritage Sunday” October 18



Everyone enjoyed so much worshipping with *The Lutheran Hymnal* of 1941 for our 150th Anniversary that we made it an annual tradition! This year our “Heritage Sunday” will be October 18.

Because of the virus the liturgy and hymns will be printed in the bulletin, but we’ll also have copies of *The Lutheran Hymnal* available for those who desire the familiar feel of holding a hymnal. Or, if you have one you received for Confirmation, or perhaps you inherited from your parents or grandparents, you’re encouraged to bring it along! All hymns and liturgy will be from *The Lutheran Hymnal*, with the order of service the familiar “Page 15.”

## Prayer Emphasis

Check out Trinity’s Facebook page daily for “90 Days of Prayer” in response to the virus from the LCMS Kansas District.

## Sunday School & Bible Class Begin November 1

Lord willing, Sunday School & Adult Bible Class will resume on Sunday, November 1, at 9:00am.

Instead of meeting in the Heritage Room, to allow for social distancing the Adult Bible Class will meet in the basement. The topic will be *When I Suffer Pains and Losses*. Named after a touching hymn by the famous Lutheran hymnwriter Paul Gerhardt—who experienced many extreme pains and losses in his own life—this study will seek God’s answers from the Bible to the questions we have about the sufferings and struggles we experience in this world, such as the current virus outbreak and its many consequences.