



# Tri-County Ministry News

November 2023

## ***Giving thanks for our lay leaders!***

***Submitted by Marla Larson, SAM***

GIVE THANKS to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever!

*The Lord is my strength and my shield; in him my heart trusts; so I am helped, and my heart exults, and with my song I GIVE THANKS to him. ~Psalm 28:7*

*Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous, and GIVE THANKS to his holy name! ~Psalm 97:12*

The psalms are full of praise and thanks to God. We have much to praise and thank God for in Tri-County Ministry. Tri-County Ministry has not fallen apart with the changes taking place. God called people many years ago to supply preach, and never did they imagine that they would continue — not only continue but increase the work they are doing.

*For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. ~Ephesians 2:10*

Marvin Goplen and Pastor Russ Pollock have graciously come out of retirement. Pastor Pollock is also leading a Bible study in McVile.

Truley Trautman is teaching confirmation to five youth in McVile and one in Binford using the Faith Incubators series. I have heard that people are rejoicing to see young people in church services, and I have heard the students will be taking part in leading worship. More on confirmation classes in future newsletters as they have met only once at this writing.

I am enjoying visiting and taking communion to members of Tri-County. We have approximately 20 people in nursing homes, assisted living and/or who are shut-ins in New Rockford, McVile, Aneta, Cooperstown, Carrington, Fargo and Binford. It makes my heart glad as people have welcomed me and asked me to come back. We have reminisced, sung songs, prayed together, discussed the weather and farming, or have just sat quietly together. They have encouraged me in my walk with Jesus. One lady tells me that her dad told her the most important thing is to make God the center of your life. What a witness and reminder to me! God can use us to encourage and farther God's kingdom no matter how old we are or the state of our mind. So far, I have visited most people once and half twice, and plan on visiting the people who were added to the list soon. As soon as harvest is over, I plan to try to visit everyone at least once a month.

Gilbert Black, a lay leader, continues to fill the pulpit as his schedule allows. He is also taking on a confirmation student.

***(continued on next page)***

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# Parish News

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*(continued from front page)*

First Presbyterian and Faith have heard and been impressed with Cooperstown native Rusty Bender, a Presbyterian Lay Minister from Bismarck. When he is in the area visiting relatives, he will continue to preach in a couple of our churches at a time.

Many of God's people work in each church by teaching Sunday School and Club 3:16, quilting, lay worship leaders, printing bulletins, etc. We thank God for all of you!

Through the changes in our parish, God's work is being done — maybe not how we envisioned — but the Holy Spirit is moving in directions we can only dream of.

*Give thanks to God and praise his name. For the Lord is good. His unfailing love continues forever, and his faithfulness continues to each generation. ~Psalm 100:4-5*

Take a few minutes each day during this month to write down or express in some way five things you're thankful for.

## **Pounds for the Pantry**

Food scarcity is real. All donations of food benefit the food pantries. The annual **Pounds for the Pantry** food drive will run from November 1-19th. Each church may collect donations and then take to a local food pantry. The food pantries should be able to weigh your food.

Contact [lutheranchurchmcville@gmail.com](mailto:lutheranchurchmcville@gmail.com) with your total as soon after Nov 19th as possible. Thank you for your donations!

## **Prayer List**

The TCM Council has discussed ways to bring our parish closer together, and one suggestion involves our prayer list. Therefore, congregation or community is now listed with the names on the weekly prayer list.

Question of how names are added to or taken off the prayer list: no one goes on the list without their permission. Whoever adds a name to the list is also the person who would have the name taken off the list. If you have an update to the list, please contact Theresa at the TCM office.

## **Red Willow Ministries Annual Meeting**

**Sunday, November 12 at 3:00 p.m.**

**Retreat Center at Red Willow Bible Camp**

Updates on future plans for the camp and election of board members.

Voting members are asked to pre-register. Go to [redwillowministries.com](http://redwillowministries.com). The meeting will also be available on Zoom. Once you pre-register, you'll be sent a link.

## **Next Newsletter**

As usual, our next newsletter will cover the months of December and January. Dates for all events in those months (such as Christmas programs and annual meetings) need to be given to the TCM office by **November 15**.

**Tri-County Ministry Council**  
**October 16, 2023**  
**7:00 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church in Binford**

**PRESENT:** Norris Olson, Olen Ophaug, Allen Hetland, Janice Johnson, Gilbert Black, Bob Delfs, Marla Larson, Truley Trautman, Theresa Fiebiger

**OPENING DEVOTIONS:** Marla Larson

**CALL TO ORDER:** Gilbert Black

**SECRETARY'S REPORT:** Minutes of the September 25, 2023, meeting were approved and filed.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Approved and filed

Balance on Hand October 16, 2023	General Fund Checking	\$69,020.87
	Savings Account	\$22,672.90

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Technology Committee / Grant:** The committee is in place and is working to set an initial meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Prayer List / Parish Connections:** Discussion of current prayer list and the suggestion of including congregation or relationship to TCM by **each** name; give more mention in the newsletter of the prayer list and procedure for adding names to the list or editing the list.

**Parsonage Report:** Discussion of the condition of the McVile parsonage and possibility of a contract and deposit if tenant has pets, and necessity of a walk through of the parsonage when tenant moves in and before tenant moves out.

Discussion of financial responsibility for cleaning costs following departure of pastor/deacon/intern. Motion by Bob Delfs, seconded by Janice Johnson, that Tri-County Ministry pay the professional cleaning costs associated with the McVile parsonage following the departure of Deacon Tara, and that those costs be placed under Miscellaneous Expense. Motion carried. Total cost of professional cleaning was \$1,975.

**2024 TCM Budget / Current Finances:** Motion by Bob Delfs, seconded by Olen Ophaug that compensation for SAMs / lay pastors be set at \$30 per hour plus mileage, and that the hourly rate include prep time for confirmation classes and drive time for visitation, confirmation classes, meetings and events, all retroactive to October 1, 2023. Motion carried. Motion by Bob Delfs, seconded by Norris Olson, to approve the 2024 budget as recommended by the Executive Committee. Motion carried.

Motion by Bob Delfs, seconded by Allen Hetland, that the November and December 2023 Congregational Ministry Contributions to Tri-County Ministry be suspended. Motion carried. Motion by Bob Delfs, seconded by Olen Ophaug, that \$20,000 in CDs be purchased using funds from the General Fund. Motion carried.

Special congregational meetings will be held Sunday, November 5, 2023, in each congregation to approve the 2024 Congregational Ministry Contributions.

## **STAFF REPORTS**

**Marla Larson** – Officiated at the committal service for Pam Standal. Has begun visitation and plans to do visits monthly.

**Truley Trautman** – Has led one confirmation class in both McVile and Binford, with a total of six students. Theresa Fiebiger volunteered to be at Trinity during confirmation classes there. The SAMs are registered for the Vital Churches discussion in Cooperstown on October 26, and for the SAM retreat on November 4 in Valley City.

**Theresa Fiebiger** – Asked that each congregation set their Christmas Eve service time and their annual meeting date by November 15.

## **CONGREGATION REPORTS**

**Trinity** – Committal service for Pam Standal was held. Quilting has begun. Sunday School meets every other week. Pony Express will begin shortly.

**Faith of Hannaford** – Received a special offering for the Griggs County Central weekend backpack program.

**First Presbyterian** – Session will meet October 26.

**Lutheran Church of McVile** – Parsonage has been cleaned. Trunk or Treat is planned for Halloween. Confirmation class has begun.

**Our Savior's** – Adrien Jay Ophaug was baptized during the October 15 worship service; over 40 people were present for worship.

**Grace** – Sunday School is no longer held at Grace, but area students attend the community Sunday School in Kensal.

**NEXT MEETING:** To be determined

**LORD'S PRAYER**

**MEETING ADJOURNED**

Respectfully submitted by  
Janice Johnson, Secretary/Treasurer  
Theresa Fiebiger, Recorder

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# Congregational News

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## Our Savior's

Adrien Jay Ophaug was received into the family of God through the Sacrament of Baptism during worship services on October 15. Adrien is the son of Jake Ophaug and Rebeca Vivas. He was born May 23, 2023, in Grand Forks. Baptismal sponsors were Ryndee Hegg, Anthony Denault, Rene' Vivas, and Paolo Salcedo Vivas.

## Lutheran Church of McVile

McVile Lutheran will host the community Thanksgiving service on Wednesday, November 22, at 7:00 p.m. Coffee will be served afterwards. All are welcome!

McVile is again heading up the annual Pounds for the Pantry competition. (See page 2 of this newsletter.)

## Trinity of Binford

The committal service for Pam Standal was held at Trinity on October 5. Pam passed away in Cooperstown on September 29. Blessed be her memory.

Pony Express letters have been mailed; this special offering may be returned in the envelope that was included or may be left at the church. The Pony Express will conclude on November 19.

The God's Work Our Hands special offering totaling \$210 was sent to the Great Plains Food Bank.

## Faith of Hannaford

The congregation at Faith Lutheran will host their annual Thanksgiving dinner following the worship service on Sunday, November 19.

## **Special Congregational Meetings**

**Sunday, November 5** following the worship service in each of our six congregations to vote on the proposed Congregational Ministry Contributions for the 2024 Tri-County Ministry budget.

## **Remembering the Saints**

On Sunday, November 5, some or all of our congregations will observe All Saints' Day.

We remember and give thanks for the memory of our congregational members and friends for whom services were held in our churches during the past year:

Bunnie LaPlant  
Mike Sundquist  
Bud Loe  
Gerald Stutrud  
Richard Wahl  
Sherman & Donna Rorvig  
Helen Johnson  
Delila Everson  
Kathy Ward  
Lois Dahl  
Denise Thomas  
Myrna Thompson  
Doris Bakke  
Elgar Paulson  
Wayne Topp  
Rosalie Naas  
Pam Standal

**TRI-COUNTY MINISTRY STAFF**

**TCM Parish Administrator**

**Theresa Fiebiger ..... 676.2761**  
**trinitybinford@mlgc.com**

**Lay Leaders**

**Truley Trautman**  
**Marla Larson**  
**Gilbert Black**  
**Marvin Goplen**

**TCM CONGREGATIONS**

**Faith of Hannaford .. faithl@ictc.com**

**First Presbyterian of Cooperstown**  
**jejohnson99@yahoo.com**

**Grace of Grace City**

**Our Savior's of Kloten &**  
**McVile Lutheran Church.... 322-4952**  
**lutheranchurchmcville@gmail.com**

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**We exist to serve Christ in harmony**  
**with our member churches and**  
**communities.**