

Trinity Connections

To Know Christ. To Share
Christ.
April 1, 2021

Pastor's Message

This past week I took a BIG step out of my comfort zone and joined an online Improv class for clergy. This was a stretch for me because I am someone who like to plan, who like to have everything in order, and under my control. This would push me beyond all of that.

As I began this journey, I discovered that the principles of improv are ones that will benefit my work in transitional ministry as well as all aspects of my life. This wasn't something that I was expecting. I thought that this would be a fun time, good for a laugh or two. I really didn't anticipate that it would be so useful beyond the class.

Improv has as its foundation a principle known as, "Yes, and." This principle suggests that you accept what a partner has stated. You respond with "Yes." Then we can expand on that thinking with the "and." This way of thinking encourages the acceptance of what others contribute. It fosters a sense of cooperation rather than shutting down a suggestion right at the start. This principle encourages everyone to listen and to be receptive to the ideas of others. Rather than judging the idea right from the start (though judgment has its place later on), this initial acceptance of the idea enables the discussion to expand on the idea without limitations. Each participant can add new information. We enter this engagement with a realistic and optimistic view as well as seeing it as an opportunity to change something.

As I took this in, I realized this is very different from the way that many of us operate in the world and the church in particular. We can have a preconceived idea about how things are supposed to go and be not open to what could be. This time of transition is a particularly important time to be open to what could be, to what the Spirit is leading us to. In the days and months ahead, we will be asked to listen to one another and to the Spirit of God. We need to listen attentively and openly to where God is leading. Your ministry moving into the future will look different than it has in the past and we must be open to that. Going forward listening to God's Spirit, we begin with, "Yes, and," opening ourselves to amazing possibilities.

Pastor Jodi Golden-Lund

Bibles, Books and Beyond

As I was looking for something else, I came across a reference to a recent book written by Marilyn McIntyre, one of my favorite Christian authors. She also happens to be an acquaintance—we attended graduate school together at UC-Davis and her brother (David Chandler) was briefly a physics professor at Porterville College. But had I never met her, I am certain I would have appreciated her work—much of it writings on the theme of language and faith.

Currently, McIntyre is a writer, professor of medical humanities at UC Berkeley, and former English Professor at Westmont College. But that tells you little about her depth and breadth.

I am reading now one of her books—*Caring for Words in a Culture of Lies*. It's a timely book (first published in 2009). McIntyre notes: "Like any other life-sustaining resource, language can be depleted, contaminated, eroded, and filled with artificial stimulants." She gives suggestions for how this important resource can be rescued and restored.

Some of her other books include the following:

Make a List: How a Simple Practice Can Open our Hearts and Change our Lives

Word by Word: A Daily Spiritual Practice

Dear Doctor: What Doctors Don't Ask and Patients Need to Say

What's In a Phrase: Pausing Where Scripture Gives You Pause (Won a Christianity Today Award)

I highly recommend everything written by Marilyn McIntyre. She is a Christian author of deep faith, compassion, and insight with a gift for communicating all three.

If you would like to "meet" her, this link will connect you with a youtube video in which she is interviewed about her book *Word by Word—A Daily Spiritual Practice*: www.youtube.com/watch?v=MKwXQnqSkj8

Enjoy!

Ann Marie Wagstaff
Education Ministry Chair

April Stewardship Opportunity

Trinity Lutheran Joins Porterville Little Libraries Initiative

You may have read in the *Porterville Recorder* about the Porterville Little Libraries Initiative. The goal is to place 100 Little Libraries, curbside, in neighborhoods throughout the community, in order to create a grassroots, do-it-yourself collective library network. Tim Baker is the local force behind this initiative, which he envisions as one that will “help our community to begin the healing process regarding our beloved local library and the two fire fighters who died trying to save it.” Each of Porterville’s Little Libraries will display a small metal plaque honoring Fire Captain Raymond Figueroa and Firefighter Patrick Jones.

As you may recall, Trinity was preparing to launch a Books for the Homeless Ministry when the COVID-19 pandemic overtook our plans. Now, as we are once again preparing to launch our ministry, we have two new partners with whom to collaborate—the Porterville Welcome Center (a shelter that also operates as a hub that provides meals and other services to the local homeless) and the Porterville Little Libraries Initiative. Here’s the plan: Trinity will build, stock, and maintain one of Porterville’s 100 Little Libraries, and our library will be placed in front of the Porterville Welcome Center for use by individuals and families who are homeless.

To implement this plan, we need the following:

- Someone with the skills to build our little library. (Tim Baker can provide detailed documents outlining the process and the tools and materials needed.) If we cannot find someone to build our library, we can order one from Wisconsin—but I very much hope we can build our own, perhaps with a few added touches to make it look like a church. (Tim sent a few pictures showing this innovation.)
- Donations for materials for the library—approx. \$200-250.
- Donated books (but not yet!) Our goal is to provide the opportunity for the homeless folks who visit the Welcome Center to “order” particular genres and even particular books. Of course, we can also place Bibles in our Little Library.

If you are interested in building the Trinity’s Little Library, please contact me (Ann Marie) at 791-0286. I will provide you with what I have received from Tim, and put you into contact with him.

If you would like to contribute funds for building the Trinity’s Little Library, please send a check to the office made out to Trinity—but be sure to note on the check that it should go to the Trinity Books for the Homeless Ministry.

Ann Marie Wagstaff
Books for the Homeless Ministry

ANNOUNCEMENTS & PRAYER REQUESTS

New Prayer Concerns

Alisha (Jan Gibson) - for strength of mind, reduced stress, and physical healing.

Continuing Prayer Concern

Peggy Holt - for healing and comfort due to health problems

Julie Elston - for continued health concerns

Brian Nelson (Scott Nelson) - for continuing health concerns

La Vida Nueva UMC - for God to prosper our partnership in the gospel

The Sierra-Pacific Synod - for wisdom and a spirit of true fellowship in our shared ministries

Those unable to worship with us:

June Mowles - Sierra Hills

Avis Lindroos - North Dakota

Phyllis Rengstorf - Kaweah Manor, Visalia

APRIL BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Norma Brown	April 6
Scott Nelson	April 7
Rose Johnson	April 15
Linn Wiseman	April 25
Linda & Bob Johnson	April 29

USING VANCO FOR OFFERINGS

Many people are preferring to use online payments with their computers or their smart phones instead of paying with a check.

We are making a service available for online giving to the church, even if you don't use online banking.

If you want to do your giving online, you may make payments with your credit/debit card or with information from your checking account through a company many churches use called VANCO.

To use Vanco online (from a computer), go to: <https://secure.myvanco.com/YJOM>

To use the Vanco app on your phone download the VANCO app called "VANCO Mobile Faith Engagement."

Once you are on the website or have downloaded the app, find our church by searching for Trinity Lutheran Church of Porterville. The rest is self-explanatory. They will ask for address information in order that you can get accurate tax documents.

There is a small fee the church will pay for the service (1% for ACH bank information, 2.75% for debit/credit cards). You will be given the choice to increase your giving by that amount in order to cover the service charges. This is only if you feel led to do so.

You are still welcome to support the church in the regular way you are accustomed to. We are just providing this service to those who prefer it.