

Faith Formation Events

2011 – 2012



HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH,
Chicago, Illinois

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COMMUNITY MEALS

Sundays, 11:45 (following the 10:30 a.m. service)

The food prepared for community meals support local farmers, educate volunteers from the congregation in healthful cooking, and help us care for creation through organic and sustainable food systems.

- October 9 **All-congregation Generosity meal**
- December 4 **Advent Community Meal**
- January 29 **Annual Congregation Meeting and Potluck**
- February 26 **Faith Stories – food4thought**
- April 29 **“Taking Time to Pray”– food4thought**

Rev. Joan Beck, Director of Spiritual Formation and Pastor to the Community, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago)
When St. Paul says, “Pray without ceasing” (1 Thess. 5:17), it’s easy to retort: “I don’t have time.” “I can’t get up any earlier.” “What does he mean by that anyway?” This presentation flow from the point of view that all life is holy, sacramental, a living dialogue with God, and will offer practices to support and explore that awareness. This is in hopes that just as you don’t eat Fast Food every day but often enjoy locally- and sustainably-grown Slow Food, you also will come to relish regular personal prayer that expresses your personality and can be fit into your schedule.

YOUNG ADULT GROUPS

STUDY GROUP: During the fall a young adult study group will read and discuss the book *Daily Bread, Holy Meal: Opening the Gifts of Holy Communion* as part of Holy Trinity’s “Worship Matters” emphasis this year. In the book, the Lord’s Table is set at the heart of the greening, groaning creation, welcoming and reconciling a community of outcasts, enemies, and strangers, and feeding all who hunger for justice, bread, and joy. Those interested in the study will meet following a Sunday worship service in September and set the schedule and meeting places. If interested, contact Matthew Petersen at matthew@ejpetersen.com. Following this study, the group will begin a unit on the book of Revelation.

WORSHIP PILGRIMAGE GROUP: Join our exploration of what draws young people back to church, when media and pundits assert this demographic is not interested in traditional religion. Become a participant-observer and attend a series of events from October 2011 through March 2012, attending three other churches that have experienced growth similar to Holy Trinity’s. Discuss your observations and examine these trends toward the traditional with interested clergy and lay leaders at a day-long conference to be hosted by Holy Trinity February 11, 2011. To learn more, pick up a brochure at the back of the church.

2011 – 2012 DINNER GROUPS

One of Holy Trinity’s most popular offerings, these groups meet in a home for dinner in which the host provides the main course and others provide the side dishes. Sign-up as a couple, with a friend, or by yourself at the back of the church or by emailing the office (office@htchicago.org). Over 50 people participate in dinner groups at Holy Trinity; it’s a great way to meet new folks in our community!

Fall Dinner Groups: Sign-up by September 14; groups will meet in October.

Winter Dinner Groups: Sign-up by January 18, 2012; groups will meet in February or March.

FILM AND SPIRITUALITY SERIES

Saturdays, 5:00 p.m.

Sept. 15, Nov. 19, Jan. 21, Mar. 17, May 19

This group meets every other month to watch a film followed by a discussion of its spiritual themes. Come to one or all of them! You are welcome to bring a salad, fruit or healthy snacks to share. Films will be announced several weeks before each of the below dates; we may also walk to the Music Box on Southport to watch a film of interest. The film *Precious* is scheduled for September 15; other films may include: *Frozen River*; *Doubt*; *Departures*; *Of Gods and Men*

THURSDAY SCRIPTURE STUDY: JOHN

Thursdays, 10:00 a.m.

Join a lively study and discussion of the gospel of John. For background reading participants may purchase the book *Conversation with Scripture: The Gospel of John* by Cynthia Briggs Kittredge. The weekly sessions will include video segments, study of select passages, and discussions linking key themes in the gospel to our own context.



MOM’S NIGHT OUT: Bible Study

This group for Holy Trinity mothers with young children. Meeting in homes, the group meets on the second Friday of the month for Bible Study and discussion.

ADVENT MINI-RETREAT: *Transitions*

Saturday, December 3, 9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

The season of Advent is about endings and beginnings. Often we find ourselves in times of transition, whether it involves jobs, careers, relationships, family, location, living situation, or retirement. This retreat will provide a time for reflection and conversation around themes of change; waiting and preparation; endings and beginnings; spiritual resources for times of upheaval. Leader: Pr. Craig M. Mueller.

Registration deadline: November 20. A minimum of 8 persons is needed to offer the retreat. Lunch plans will be made after registration closes.

It is recommended that participants obtain and read one of the following books before the retreat:

Transitions: Making Sense of Life’s Transitions by William Bridges
Let Your Voice Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation by Parker Palmer
Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life by Richard Rohr
The Gift of Years: Growing Older Gracefully by Joan Chittister

SUNDAY FORUM

9:30 – 10:20 a.m. – Passavant Hall

September 11 – ***The Power of Forgiveness***

On the tenth anniversary of 9/11 our gospel text is about forgiveness. To observe this day, come at 9:30 to watch this documentary with feature stories on the Amish, the 9/11 tragedy and peace-building in Northern Ireland, along with interviews with renowned Buddhist teacher Thich Nhat Hanh, Elie Wiesel, Thomas Moore, Marianne Williamson and others. The film explores the role of forgiveness in various faith traditions, and looks at the intensity of anger and grief that human nature is heir to. *If we can forgive ourselves it's a wonderful thing. I think it's probably our lack of compassion with ourselves that makes us so upset with others.* – Alexandra Asseily

September 18 – ***The Crib*** – David Weasely

The Crib an innovative low-threshold overnight shelter for young people, run by The Night Ministry and housed at Lakeview Lutheran Church. Rev. David Weasley, The Night Ministry's Community and Congregational Relations Coordinator, will facilitate a conversation about The Crib, the youth who call it home, and ways to get involved. The program will also include a brief overview of the history and other programs of The Night Ministry.

September 25 – ***Politics and Religion*** – Barbara Wahler

Our beliefs and values inform our views about politics and religion. These are typically two hard-to-discuss subjects. At this forum, Barbara Wahler--a therapist with Holy Trinity's Spiritual Life Center --leads an open discussion about politics' role in religion and how religion plays out in politics. Differing opinions are welcome and will be honored at this open forum.

October 2 – 30 **Worship Matters: *Centripetal Worship: The Evangelical Heart of Lutheran Worship.***

As part of a year-long emphasis on worship formation, we will read and discuss *Centripetal Worship*, which examines how worship is, and should be at the center of a congregation's life. Themes include: Martin Luther's witness to the center of worship; music in worship; participation as faith construction; redefining evangelism. A Calvin Institute of Worship grant provides books for all participants at no cost. Leader: Craig Mueller.

November 6 – ***Walking the Labyrinth*** – Karol Weigelt

The labyrinth is an ancient tradition used across varied spiritual disciplines. It is one of the oldest contemplative and transformational tools known to humankind, used for centuries for prayer, ritual, spiritual and personal growth. Learn about the history of the labyrinth, its use as a spiritual pathway and its connection to experiencing one's own center. Holy Trinity will have a labyrinth to walk as part of our Advent journey. Leader: Karol Weigelt.

November 13 – ***Today's Readings***

A discussion of this Sunday's scripture readings, led by one of our seminarians.

November 20 – ***Habits Of The Heart*** – Carol Schickel

'I am making all things new' is a promise we hear in the book of Revelation. When we feel discouraged, lost or stuck in our lives, the idea that change is possible and that we can acquire new rhythms in our lives can fill us with hope. If you are longing to become a creature of new habits, join this session for an exploration of spiritual resources you might draw on to make effective change a sustainable possibility for your life. Leader: Carol Schickel, a therapist in Holy Trinity's Spiritual Life Center.

November 27 – ***Today's Readings***

A discussion of this Sunday's scripture readings, led by one of our seminarians.

December 4 – ***Poetry for Advent and Christmas*** – Ryan LaHurd

Most of us are familiar with the vast store of artistic works about the Birth of Jesus in painting and in Christmas hymns and carols. But throughout the centuries many important poems by some of the world's great poets have been written on the subject. Join us for an introduction and a discussion of some of them as a way of injecting new images and perspectives on a familiar topic.

December 11– ***Lutherans Living with Religious Pluralism*** – Carol LaHurd

This season of Advent, anticipating the Word made flesh that is Jesus Christ, happens to be sandwiched between the Muslim Feast of Sacrifices (Nov. 7) and the Jewish Hanukkah (Dec. 20). Such liturgical connections are often obscured by ignorance, negative stereotypes, and even hostility toward religious others. Come and explore the rich resources Lutherans have for fostering friendships and collaboration with persons from other faith traditions.

December 18 – ***The Jesus of Mark*** – Joel Cruz

Though the shortest of the Gospels, the portrait of Jesus in this year's readings is dynamic and diverse, ranging from the heroic demon-buster to the enduring martyr. Come and discover Mark's unique portrait of Christ as we begin our new liturgical year.

December 25 and January 1 – No Forums.

January 8 – ***Epiphany Mysteries*** – Josh Judd-Herzfeldt

We are familiar with the traditional, western celebration of Epiphany: three Magi from the east follow a star to visit the newborn Jesus, bearing gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. The early church and many eastern Christians today, however, celebrate much more than just the Magi and the birth of the infant Jesus. Come learn about other 'Epiphany Mysteries' as we discuss many different Epiphany traditions.

January 15 – ***Death & Dying*** – Barbara Wahler

Medical science has extended dying and its impact on relatives and loved ones. While people may have gained extra years, this may come with added costs--medical, social, economic and personal. Barbara Wahler, a therapist with Holy Trinity's Spiritual Life Center, facilitates this forum where we can begin to explore the contemporary, as opposed to traditional, grief we face as a result.

January 22 - ***The Immigration "Issue"***

We as Americans are confronted with the illegal immigration issue wherever we are--where we eat and where we live. They are our neighbors, our children's friends, our co-workers, our workforce, our clients or students. The complexity of this issue makes it daunting to understand and to work for change. Our legal expert will discuss some of the current political climate surrounding this issue with a focus on the Dream Act.

January 29 – ***Today's Readings***

A discussion of this Sunday's scripture readings, led by one of our seminarians.

February 5 – ***"That's not in my Bible!" And Introduction to the Apocrypha*** – Joel Cruz

Revered by many, rejected by others, the Apocrypha--those "extra" books in some Bibles --remains a mystery to many Christians. This short introduction promises to acquaint you with this wonderful collection of stories, poems, history, proverbs and apocalypse!

February 12 – ***Today's Readings***

A discussion of this Sunday's scripture readings, led by one of our seminarians.

February 19 – ***Today's Readings***

A discussion of this Sunday's scripture readings, led by one of our seminarians.

February 26 – April 1 – **Special Lenten Study: *Watering God's Garden:***

Christian Worship and Earth's Ecology

Written by Holy Trinity member Benjamin Stewart, *Watering God's Garden* makes connections between worship and care for creation. There are chapters on water; seasons and days; fields and vineyards; earth to earth. Using ancient images, contemporary science, medieval mystics, and cosmic symbols, the book calls us to care for the ground on which God has planted us--local community and global home. A Calvin Institute of Worship grant provides books for all participants at no cost. Leader: Craig Mueller.

April 8 – Easter – ***No Forum***

April 15 – ***Art of the Resurrection*** – Joel Cruz

During this Eastertide we have heard the witnesses and tasted the bread and wine of Christ's victory over death. But how have people through the ages seen the Resurrection? Join us on this brief tour as we explore the vision and the theology behind some of the most famous depictions of the Resurrection in the visual arts.

April 22 – ***Today's Readings***

A discussion of this Sunday's scripture readings, led by one of our seminarians.

April 29 – ***"How can I know God's will?"*** – Joan Beck

Using Discernment to Decide -- As individuals and as groups, we often have decisions to make. How do we include God in our decision-making? How do we find God's will for our lives? Ignatius of Loyola (a Roman Catholic contemporary of Martin Luther) believed that God will help to draw people to good decisions because God loves us and wants to help us. Ignatius recommends ways to use prayer, reason, and emotions to realize the will of God through our loving choices. Rev. Beck will introduce the group to several of these practical ways, inviting people to try them out on their own dilemmas.

May 6 – ***Meaning and Metaphor*** – Ryan LaHurd

If you think metaphor is something just for poets, think again. In normal conversation, we utter one metaphor for every 10-25 words. Metaphor is ubiquitous and fundamental. Not just a component of language, metaphor also plays a basic role in how we perceive our world, how we think, and how we act. Sometimes this influence is obvious, but it can also happen well below the level of our consciousness. Metaphor is an intrinsic part of religion, theology and values; this forum will discuss what metaphor is and how it helps shape our thinking about God, the meaning of life, and our dealings with fellow human beings.

May 13 – ***The Rich Get Richer and the Poor Get Poorer?*** – Carol LaHurd

Last year many of us took part the Lenten discussion of economic justice issues via the book *Rediscovering Values*. A year later we will ask old and new questions: What difference does it make to Christians that economic disparities continue to widen in the United States and around the globe? What guidance can we glean from our biblical and Lutheran traditions? How can we work together to make Holy Trinity's outreach to our neighbors suffering financially even more effective?

May 20 – ***Color & Spirituality*** – Richard Bough

Held in Passavant Hall, this will be a hands-on experience using only Color Aid paper, scissors and glue stick that will encourage participants to use combinations of color in a spiritual/prayerful manner. Those who wish to will be invited to comment on their creations. Richard Bough is an artist and spiritual director from Holy Trinity's Spiritual Life Center.