

Dear Friend in Christ,

The *Spring Forward in Mission* information provided to the congregation (DVD, the informational brochure, newsletter, worship focus) talks about why it is important, the needs, and some possibilities to pray about as we move forward in ministry. Many questions were received and this document attempts to answer them in part.

After reading this information, you may have additional questions. We invite you to stop in and talk to any of the ministry staff, e-mail your questions to us at trinity@trinitynet.org. We welcome your questions!!!

Please continue to pray for the Kingdom work that we share as part of the body of Christ.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Phil Larson".

Phil Larson
Lay Minister

Q. *Spring Forward in Mission* relates back to a resolution that was approved in May of 2007. What was the resolution that was approved?

Answer: Whereas the congregation of Trinity Lutheran Church has been committed over the past 99 years to proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ and promoting spiritual growth, now be it resolved that as the congregation of Trinity Lutheran Church embarks on its 100th year of ministry, that the congregation of Trinity Lutheran Church use the 100th Year Anniversary Capital Campaign offering in the following areas:

- Campaign – 10%
- Mission Start – 30 %
- Debt Retirement – 30 %
- Facility Planning/Expansion –30 %

Q. Is my *Spring Forward in Mission* pledge the same as my regular weekly giving or tithe?

Answer: No, it is above and beyond your regular weekly offering or tithe.

Q. How does *Spring Forward in Mission* relate to *Rise and Shine*?

Answer: *Rise and Shine* was the last three-year capital campaign and ends May 31st of this year. The *Rise and Shine* campaign raised funds for debt reduction, but did not include other areas that are part of *Spring Forward in Mission*.

Q. The resolution passed by congregation in May 2007 indicates that 30 percent of the campaign would be used to start a mission church. If we raise \$3 million, does that mean \$900,000 would go towards the mission start?

Answer: No. At the February 2008 Voters Meeting, the congregation committed to provide \$175,000 over a three-year period to support the mission start. This helps support the three-year non-tenured call extended to Pastor Mark Lewis and the anticipated administrative costs (postage, paper, printing of mailing, etc.) associated with the mission start. The LCMS-North Wisconsin District has also committed \$75,000 towards the mission start. Additional financial support requested by the mission start would need to be approved by the congregation.

Q. Assuming that Trinity does go ahead with the mission church and the facility upgrade/expansion as outlined in the information brochure, what would Trinity's debt position be at the end of the three-year campaign assuming the campaign commitments are \$1 million, \$2 million or \$3 million?

Answer: We cannot provide these projections because decisions about the facility upgrades/expansion have not been made.

Q. What will happen if we have more dollars pledged than is needed?

Answer: We will rejoice and praise God together! The Church Council would present an approach a plan based on the amount pledged to the congregation for approval.

Q. In the *Spring Forward in Mission* information we received, it has been communicated that all the needs could be met if we raise \$3 million dollars. What would be the course of action if we raise less than that amount?

Answer: The congregation has approved the financial obligations we have in the areas of:

- campaign expenses,
- debt retirement and the,
- mission start.

Based on the amount raised, the Church Council will bring forward recommendations for congregational approval on how to approach the facility upgrade/expansion.

Q. What administrative expenses are included in the *Spring Forward in Mission* campaign?

Answer: The administrative expenses include the production of the DVD, all printed materials, the banners, microwave popcorn and postage. The estimated expense is \$25,000.

Q. Has Trinity contracted with a professional campaign consultant and if so, what is the expense?

Answer: Yes. Trinity has contracted with Resource Services Inc. to help us with the Spring Forward in Mission 100 Year Anniversary Capital campaign. They partner with congregations during capital stewardship programs. They emphasize a prayer focused journey that is focused on the spiritual blessings of Christian stewardship. *Revision: The estimated expense is around \$55,000.*

Q. What is our current debt?

Answer: As of April 16th it is \$982,448.

Q. What contributions have already been given for the proposed mission church?

Answer: Trinity has not received any major gifts which are specifically designated for the proposed mission start. The North Wisconsin District is giving \$2500 per month as part of their commitment to the start and we have received some smaller gifts.

Q. Will people in the mission start church pledge as part of *Spring Forward in Mission*?

Answer: If they are currently members of Trinity Lutheran Church, they are encouraged to pledge towards *Spring Forward in Mission*. If they are not members, they will not make a pledge.

Q. Will children of families of the new mission start be charged non-member tuition if they enroll in Trinity Lutheran School?

Answer: Per our policy, members of the new mission start would be charged non-member tuition like any other non-Trinity family. The mission start will be encouraged to provide tuition assistance to families who choose to enroll their children in the school. The congregation could vote to implement a different policy at any time though.

Q. Shouldn't we wait with any expansion/upgrade assuming we are entering a recession?

Answer: As has been shared in the past, *Spring Forward in Mission* is about Kingdom of God work. The need to be doing God's work is a calling that occurs in the midst of recessions as well as financial prosperity. The truth of this is seen in our past as the school was built in 1932, in the midst of the Great Depression. It was paid off in 1937 by the congregation before the depression ended in 1939. *Revision: According to other information, the school was built in 1926 and the mortgage burned in 1942. Different memories of what happened when!!!*

The growth that we see in many areas of ministry is evidence that God is at work and blessing us with opportunities to minister to people. Perhaps part of this is because people look to God for help during difficult times which increases the opportunity for ministry.

In *Spring Forward in Mission*, you are encouraged to make a stewardship commitment. A true stewardship commitment is not made based on external factors or after doing a quick accounting. A stewardship commitment is a prayerful faith commitment where we ask God to lead and guide us in our response.

Q. Can my *Spring Forward in Mission* pledge be matched using the Thrivent Matching Gifts program?

Answer: No. *Spring Forward in Mission* contributions are not eligible under the Thrivent Financial for Lutherans rules for matching gifts.

Q. Shouldn't we work towards being debt free as a congregation?

Answer: The Bible doesn't say that a church should be debt free, but it does say we should repay our debts and it warns about "bad debt." A church has "bad debt" if the congregation's concern over debt and financials takes the focus away from God and His work.

Used wisely, debt is a tool that a congregation can use to enable ministry. As an example most of us have taken out a mortgage. If we exercise wisdom and discernment with respect to the size of our payments, they are not a burden for us. The home is a blessing to us and our families immediately and for many years.

Q. What expectations of the three-year commitment does Trinity have for those families or individuals who leave the area and join another congregation during the three year time period?

Answer: Members leaving the congregation are relieved of their pledge.

Q. Does my pledge need to be a cash contribution? If not, what are some other ways I can make a financial commitment to *Spring Forward in Mission*?

Answer: Stocks, bonds, and real estate are examples of other appreciated assets that have been given in past campaigns; they can be pledged in this one, too.

There is a place on the pledge card for specifying this type of commitment. If you make this type of pledge, our Parish Administrator will work with you directly in transferring it to Trinity.

Q. Why haven't there been breaks between campaigns? Is this capital campaign necessary? Why do we need to spend more money?

Answer: Since our expansion in 1995-96, we have had debt commitments to meet. The congregation has voted to fulfill these commitments through stewardship campaigns like *Spring Forward in Mission*.

But *Spring Forward in Mission* is about more than debt reduction. Ultimately the goal is to do God's work. As God blesses our work, there will be growth. All spiritual growth is internal but it manifests itself in both our actions and in God adding to our numbers just like we read in Acts 1-2.

Q. How can retired parishioners support this since they are on a fixed income?

Answer: Making a commitment to *Spring Forward in Mission* is a spiritual decision. Each person needs to prayerfully approach their commitment and seek God's will. The Prayer Journal was given to help you in this process. Some will pledge more than others. No one should give out of guilt. Instead use God's approach which is in 2 Corinthians 9:7. "Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

Q. What is the long-term goal for expanding the Early Childhood Learning Center?

Answer: We are praying for growth in this area along with every other area of ministry at Trinity. As God blesses us with growth, we will look to expand. Growth brings new challenges in many areas including facilities, staffing, and administration just to name a few. We will continue to look to God for direction and blessings as this occurs while striving to provide a caring, safe environment where children not only grow but flourish as we share God's love.

Q. If there is such a need for child care, why don't we build a separate child care facility?

Answer: The Extended Child Care Learning Center is just one part of the ministry here at Trinity and having it in the same facility enables us to minister to families, provide encouragement to parents to consider Trinity Lutheran School for their children, and it provides us ways to invite unchurched families to become part of our worshipping family. Churches that have their child care facility connected to their church and school typically see about 50 percent of the children from the child care center enroll in the school. When they are in detached facilities, a lower percentage typically enrolls in the school.

Q. What about the immediate need for more rooms in the school for grades K-8 assuming the Extended Child Care feeds into our school as hoped?

Answer: We do have three existing classrooms that are available for expansion. If this space is used up, we may need to consider approaches used prior to the 1995-96 expansion. We met growth needs then by temporarily dividing the Art/Science Room into two classrooms, temporarily having classes in part of the music room, the library and in the lounge area. Another option is to bring in temporary structures to accommodate the growth.

Q. Why do we need a bigger Spiritual Life Center?

Answer: Our pastors, worship leaders and members often see that there are few places for families to sit together during worship especially at the 10:40 AM service. People may visit once but they may not come back because they don't perceive that there is a place for them. Adequate seating is necessary for growth. Based on these real observations, we are at a point where a new Spiritual Life Center needs to be planned in order to welcome new members, visitors and people seeking to grow in their faith in this type of worship setting.

Q. Instead of building a larger Spiritual Life Center, why don't we just have people attend worship in the Upper Sanctuary?

Answer: There are some people in our congregation who are comfortable with worshipping in the Spiritual Life Center as well as the Upper Sanctuary. Other people prefer a specific style of worship and music. Scripture is silent with respect to worship style and music. It doesn't mandate one way over another. All of the worship services at Trinity are liturgical and we need to respect the different preferences while celebrating our unity in Christ joining together in the mission He has given us.

Q. Is there a temporary way to use the upper sanctuary for the contemporary service by perhaps removing a few front pews which would enable room expansion into the current Spiritual Life Center while the new addition is being built?

Answer: We would look at using the gym as a temporary option first.

Q. Why can't we offer more worship services in the Spiritual Life Center to accommodate growth there?

Answer: This is a possibility but we have concerns with moving our Sunday School from the spiritual Life Center to the gym during the 9:00 AM hour. The gym environment is a temporary approach because the sound and the environment aren't good for either teaching children or for worship. We also have concerns with having the pastoral and music resources to add another service.

Q. Since I worship in the upper sanctuary, why I should contribute to a larger Spiritual Life Center?

Answer: We could all ask this question based on where we worship or on what ministry we are most passionate about. St. Paul encourages us to think of ourselves as parts of the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12). As part of the body of Christ, each of us is called to support the ministry that we are passionate about and to support and encourage the ministry of the rest of the body. Decisions on whether to support ministry aren't based on where we worship. We have God's promise that the Holy Spirit works in each and every service through Word and Sacrament.

We have room to grow in worship in the upper sanctuary but need more space in the Spiritual Life Center worship services so people are able to receive the blessings of the Holy Spirit. How much is that worth? Jesus doesn't put a monetary value on it but rather says "take up your cross and follow me." He says nothing we have is more important than the mission He has given us. God says "let salvation to spring up, let righteousness grow with it."

Q. What are the advanced commitment dinners all about?

Answer: Some members of the congregation are being invited to these dinners to help encourage all of us by making their *Spring Forward in Mission* pledge before everyone in the congregation is asked to do so on May 3rd and 4th. Our prayer is that their commitments will encourage and help us rejoice in what God is doing through us.

Q. Do the architecture plans that were shared reflect an addition to our facility?

Answer: Yes. It would be on the east wall of our existing gymnasium.

Q. Are there any other facility upgrades besides the organ that are projected to be addressed as part of the campaign?

Answer: No. *Spring Forward in Mission* has tried to highlight needs. The congregation will give approval to anything done in the facility upgrade/expansion area.

Q. Are their building plans for growth of ministries? If so, what do those plans look like? How will people be able to provide input?

Answer: The only building plans at this time are the ones that were shared in the *Spring Forward in Mission* information brochure. These do address growth in various areas of ministry including worship, youth, Early Childhood Learning Center, and building fellowship with one another. These are not the final architectural plans. A building committee would be established to gather more input for a final building plan.