

the Candle

September/October 2023



Too soon??!! I hope this picture doesn't traumatize anyone! But, if it brings back bad memories, I could certainly understand why!

With the several storms we had in July and August that left multiple widespread power outages across the area in their wake, this could be either a comforting sight or a troubling sight, or both.

Did you lose power? If so, how many times? And, for how long? We lost power at our home in Bartlett three times, but the first was the worst. It was the very first major storm.

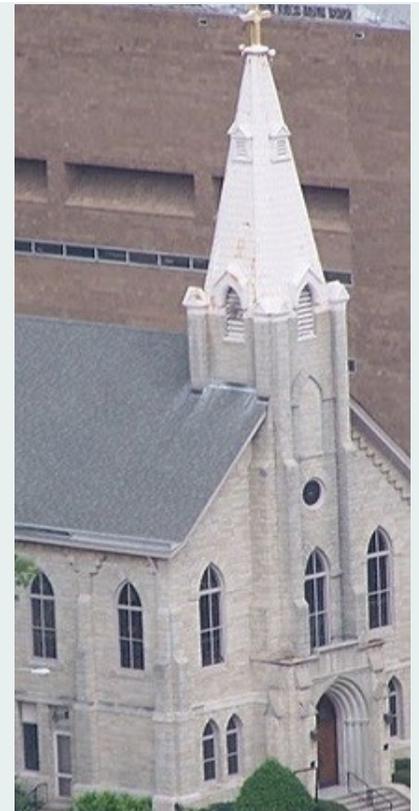
Somewhere around 130,000 people in total were without power. Our lights went out around 6:30 the night of that storm. They finally came back on around 7:00 the next Sunday night. We were out for a full week. And, of course, as I'm sure many of you remember, the temperature was in the 90s most of that week. It was a challenging time, being without power that long. No AC. No lights. You know! When I see this picture, it reminds me of late Sunday afternoon when there were several trucks like this sitting outside our neighborhood, and the lights came back on a little while later. At the same time, it reminds me of all the time in our house over that week that we were in the dark.

Being stuck in the dark is no fun. It can be disconcerting when you want light but there is none. It can also be scary.

There's another darkness that is even scarier: The darkness of sin which shrouds us from the light of life with our Creator, God, and Lord – real life, that is. The Bible often speaks of sin as darkness, living in sin as being in the dark. It's a place we all found ourselves at one point. Void of all light, subject to darkness, enslaved to it.

But, there's another picture I want you to see, this one in your mind. Actually, two. First, Jesus and His cross and empty tomb. In chapter one of John's Gospel, it says: **"All things were made through Him, and without Him was not any thing made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."** The One who is light and made light shine for the life of man at creation came to break the eclipsing darkness of sin over every man's life. He broke the darkness in full with His sin-removing death and by swallowing up sin and death with life in His resurrection.

For those who receive Him by faith, as Peter says in his first letter, the Lord has **"called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Pet. 2:9)!"** Picture that! You, me, us walking with and in the light of



CHURCH EVENTS

- 9/6 Board of Cristian Education Meeting
- 9/9 Church Council Meeting
Elders Meeting
Men's Group Meeting
- 9/15 Beginning of Spanish Heritage Month (09/15-10/15)
- 9/17 Naomi Circle Meeting
- 9/22 Trinity @ Redbirds Game
- 9/24 Rally Day
- 10/1 LWML Sunday
- 10/4 Board of Cristian Education Meeting
- 10/7 Church Council Meeting
Elders Meeting
Men's Group Meeting
- 10/21 LWML Fall Zone Rally at Trinity
- 10/31 Reformation Day

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life who is our Savior and Lord! Light that will never be taken out! Light never, ever to be shut off or eclipsed!

The second picture I want you to see in your mind is this: you, me, us together ... in the light and at the same time, *shining the light!* Jesus says of His disciples in Matthew 5: **“You are the light of the world (Matt. 5:14).”** We who are enlightened by Christ have the light of Christ to shine on others!

There is a world of people still stuck, lost in the pitch dark of a perpetual power outage. Many don't even know it. Others actually prefer the darkness. Whatever the case, Jesus has made us light to shine Him into the darkness of sin-subject lives. In Jesus and His Good News, we have, and are, the light that can break the darkness of others that they might live with no more oppressive darkness and join us in the everlasting light of Christ!

Picture *that!* But, don't just picture that in your mind. Let's actually live it in the world!

*Blessing and Peace in Jesus,
Pastor Michael Croom*

NEWS AND NOTES

Trinity has Texting - Trinity now has a text dedicated phone number for questions and all needs. Make sure to save it in your contacts to get reminders about Trinity's activities and events! It is **(901) 665-3665**

Trinity on Instagram and Twitter/X - Trinity is now active on both Instagram and Twitter/X. If you are on either or both of these, we would love it if you would follow us at **trinitymemphis!**

Memphis Redbirds Faith and Family Night is Friday, September 22, at 7:05 pm. We are getting a group together from the church to go. If we have 20 or more people going, the cost will be \$15 per person. There is a sign-up sheet on the board in the fellowship hall. If you plan to go, please sign up ASAP

Rally Day will be held Sunday, September 24, following a combined service to celebrate the beginning of a new Sunday School year! Please join us for food, fellowship, and games! The Fellowship Board and the Board of Christian Education will partner to serve a main dish but we are asking the congregation to sign up for any additional main dishes, side dishes, and desserts. There is a sign up sheet on the board in the fellowship hall.

New Sunday School and Bible Classes will begin on Sunday, October 1 at 11:30. We will have classes for all ages. We will meet in the fellowship hall and go to our classes as a group following an opening devotion. Please make plans to join us to grow in faith and in knowledge of God's Word!

After Worship Fellowship - The Hospitality Board is asking people to sign up to bring snack-type items and drinks for our fellowship. The sign-up sheets for **September and October - December** are on the board in the fellowship hall.

2023 Offering Envelopes Still Available - If you have not picked yours up, they are labeled and on a table in the fellowship hall.

The Board of Missions is requesting the following: canned goods (cans with pop tops are best), manual can opener, tuna, salmon, peanut butter (creamy or crunchy), Kroger gift card (\$25 increments), toothpaste, toothbrushes, body wash, soap bars, women's underwear, socks, (like Hanes sizes M, L, etc.), men's undergarments, socks, t-shirts (like Hanes sizes L, etc.), men's razors, shave cream, shampoo, deodorant, mouthwash, lotion, small containers of laundry detergent, cooking oil, pancake batter and syrup, or any similar items. Please place them in the corner of the fellowship hall where the food pantry closet is. If you have questions, please contact Charlotte Johnson (662-782-7251).

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

ONLINE GIVING

Did you know that you can make your offering online? Go to the Trinity website, trinitymemphis.org, then click on Give Online. You can choose to give one time or set up a recurring offering. For one-time contribution, click Trinity Lutheran Church (default). If you already have an account, click on Log-in. If you don't have an account and would like to set up a recurring offering, click Create Account. It works with either credit and debit cards, or as a draft from your bank account. It is all very secure.

Note: If you use a credit or debit card, the company charges Trinity a processing fee that will be deducted from your offering, but there are no fees to Trinity for using a bank draft.

MEMBERS RECEIVED

By Baptism

Kimiko Schreiber

August 5, 2023

Alan Teran

August 20, 2023

Caroline Strong

August 20, 2023

MEN'S GROUP

The Men's Group will be getting together for Bible Study on Saturday, September 9 at 12:30 PM. Please contact Stacy Johnson (501-269-5324) to let him know you're planning to attend or if you have questions.

Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.

~ James 5:16

FOCUS ON MISSIONS

Letter from... Board of Missions

I would like to thank all our volunteers at the first Crafts & Drafts SUMMER Festival at Crosstown. The first event scheduled on June 25, 2022 gave Trinity an opportunity to serve our neighbor. We are looking for more opportunities to show our community who we are and what we believe.

If you did not participate in the June 2022 event, do not worry, we have another community outreach event scheduled for November 12th, at Crosstown.

In reviewing our mission statement, “*Connecting People to Christ for Life*,” board members created mission programs that helps us fulfill the mission statement, “Connecting People to Christ for Life” as we live out our Christian lives. Luther writes, “*Holy Scripture is a book that has transferred its message from the close quarters of the people of Israel into the wider ethnic world. It is a missionary book.*” (*The Lutheran Study Bible*, pg. 1493).

Pastor Croom and the Board of Mission continuously offers learning opportunities like Bible Studies (online and face-to-face), Sunday School, new member orientation classes, informational material, pose questions to make us think through the scripture, newly designed church t-shirts, and the like to help us prepare to lead people to Christ. **You may ask...how can I help?!**

Missions Opportunities...

Listed below are mission opportunities that the congregation can get involved in. Take time to review the list and ask one of the coordinators about the project if you need more information and how you can get involved. We appreciate your involvement!!

The goal of the Missions ministry centers on being intentional in helping our church family, community, and international family. We plan to meet those goals by engaging in the following service events:

Church and Local Community:

- Hispanic Missions Fund – Pastor Croom
- Homeless Food Project – Coordinators Vernetta Eddleman and Charlotte Johnson
- Water Tumbler Project – Coordinator Charlotte Johnson and Supplier Candace Henderson
- School Backpack Project – Coordinators Charlotte Johnson
- St. Jude Marathon Project – Coordinators Pastor Croom, Anna Pittman
- Christmas Angel Tree Project – Coordinator Vernetta Eddleman
- Food Pantry – Coordinator(s) – Charlotte Johnson and Cynthia Stovall

International Missions:

- (Immanuel Lutheran Church Cambodia) ongoing support – Charlotte Johnson

Haiti Trinity Hope ongoing support – Pastor Croom and Sunday School Classes

Support Life Projects (Life Walk, Banquet, and Baby Bottle Fundraiser) – Coordinator Dr. Angela Campbell and Charlotte Johnson

Crafts and Drafts Market - Summer and Fall at Crosstown Festival Coordinator – Charlotte Johnson

New Ideas in Development:

South Main Trolley Night (<https://www.gosouthmain.com/trolley-night>)

Making Disciplines for Life: Let Us Keep Awake (Conference October 10-12, 2022, calendar.Lcms.org) Online registration \$29 or in-person registration \$69 at the Seminary. Includes meals and snacks.

Kingdom Toastmasters – First Lutheran Church of Little Rock (Firstlutherannlr.com)

Thank you to the Church Council and all the Boards and members for your continued support, also Lynn Petry for sharing Toastmaster’s program to help Trinity have opportunities to serve our neighbors. Continue to share your ideas so we may continue to share the Word of God and that His kingdom increases.

To leave you with a final note to contemplate from Martin Luther...

Whoever believes and holds to Christ’s Word, heaven stands open to him, hell is shut, the devil is imprisoned, sins are forgiven, and he is a child of eternal life. That is what this book teaches you—the Holy Scriptures—and no other book on earth.

--Martin Luther

(WA 48:155)

In His name we serve,
Dr. Charlotte C. Johnson
Board of Missions, Chair



‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’ Matthew 25:35,40



*“The Gospel does not belong in a corner, and Christ is Lord of everything”
Lutheran Study Bible, p. 1493*



“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.” Joshua 1:9



*For not all have faith. But the Lord is faithful. He will establish you and guard you against the evil one.” 2
Thessalonians 3:2-3*



BIRTHDAYS

September

Robert Johnson	9/1
Alaina Bailey	9/2
Ilyn Lynn	9/8
Daniel Reilly	9/8
Chris Johnston	9/9
Zachary Croom	9/10
Jerry Johnson	9/10
Griselda Teran	9/16
Alejandro Teran Jr.	9/19
Angela Johnson	9/20
Edith Ringger	9/20
Bill Kratzke	9/30

OCTOBER

Madison Boles	10/2
Ceneida Briceno	10/8
Paula Martens	10/8
LaMontrell Beverly	10/20
Savannah Bailey	10/26

ANNIVERSARIES

September

Tom and Eileen Sander	9/25
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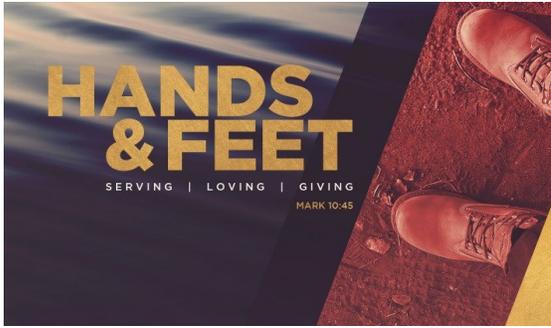
October

Christopher and Carley Peterson	10/14
Bill and Linda Wilkins	10/29



For a full calendar of upcoming events, visit www.trinitymemphis.org
"Calendar of Events"

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE



Christian Education - If your interest is in working with children to teach Sunday School as a substitute, helping as a teacher's aide, assisting with special projects such as VBS in the summer etc., you can contact Cheryl Croom (270-348-5505 or cherylcroom23@gmail.com).

Fellowship - The Hospitality Board is asking people to sign up to bring snack-type items and drinks for our after-worship fellowship. There is a sign-up sheet for September and October - December is on the board in the fellowship hall.

Church Maintenance - If you can work a drill, have plumbing experience, can install light fixtures, or another handyman-type talent, the Board of Trustees would love your help. Whether it is general maintenance around the building or a renovation project, your assistance would greatly help keep these costs manageable. You can either simply help out as needed or even join the Board. Contact Mike Grant or Paul Koehler if you'd like to serve in this capacity.

Missions - While we are all ambassadors for Trinity, there are always opportunities to help others in the community as well. If you are interested in helping plan and prepare outreach events, the Board of Missions would love to have you! Contact Charlotte Johnson if you'd like to join this endeavor. Her contact information is jnsncc@yahoo.com and (662) 782-7251.

Altar Duty - Helping with Altar Duty is a very rewarding way to serve the Lord. Some of the duties consist of keeping the candles filled with oil to "let our light shine," preparing the elements necessary for communion, and cleaning up afterwards, changing the paraments and banner in accordance with our church calendar, and making sure the pews have the correct amount of hymnals, Bibles and pencils. We rotate monthly and new volunteers are paired up with experienced people while learning. For more info or to volunteer, contact Linda Wilkins at 774-3777.

KROGER COMMUNITY REWARDS

Trinity is enrolled in the Kroger Community Rewards program. Once you register your Kroger Plus Card online at krogercommunityrewards.com and select Trinity Lutheran Church - Memphis, TN (NPO number DG721), 4% of what you spend on groceries will be donated to trinity! See the flyer on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall for more information on how to sign up if you have not already.





An Article from The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod Stewardship Ministry for September 2023 Stewardship in the First Commandment

The greatest gift that Martin Luther gave to us was his Small Catechism. The word “enchiridion” is part of the original title of this work. This is the Greek word for “handbook.” The Small Catechism is a handbook of the Bible. All the basic knowledge that a Christian needs to understand the faith and live a godly life has been taken from the Bible and distilled into this beautiful little book of Christian piety.

Luther starts with the Ten Commandments.

The First Commandment:

You shall have no other gods.

What does this mean? We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things. (SC I)

We have a God above us. He is the Lord God and we are not. He is Almighty and in control. He is righteous and good. And therefore, we should fear Him.

This God is also our heavenly Father. He wants us to be saved. He does not want us to suffer His just wrath. He has provided salvation for us in His Son, Jesus Christ. And therefore, we should love Him.

Our heavenly Father will never leave us nor forsake us. He has promised as much — and the Bible shows us that He always keeps His promises. So, we should trust Him.

In the Large Catechism, Luther explains how money and possessions form one of the greatest temptations against the First Commandment:

This I must unfold somewhat more plainly, that it may be understood and perceived by ordinary examples of the contrary. Many a one thinks that he has God and everything in abundance when he has money and possessions; he trusts in them and boasts of them with such firmness and assurance as to care for no one. Lo, such a man also has a god, Mammon by name, i.e., money and possessions, on which he sets all his heart, and which is also the most common idol on earth. He who has money and possessions feels secure, and is joyful and undismayed as though he were sitting in the midst of Paradise. On the other hand, he who has none doubts and is despondent, as though he knew of no God. For very few are to be found who are of good cheer, and who neither mourn nor complain if they have not Mammon. This [care and desire for money] sticks and clings to our nature, even to the grave. (LC I 5–9)

These words of Dr. Luther should call us to repentance; sometimes, we live and act like we don't have a Father in heaven. We seek our comfort and peace outside of His gracious promises. But we do have a Father in heaven. He does love us. All His promises are true. And the Lord will surely provide. If that is our belief, then our outward lives will reflect our belief in our acts of generosity and mercy. We will see money and possessions not as gods but rather as tools for doing God's work.

– LCMS Stewardship Ministry: lcms.org/stewardship



"You Give Them Something to Eat"

Matthew 14:13a, 14-21 - Now when Jesus ... went ashore He saw a great crowd, and He had compassion on them and healed their sick. Now when it was evening, the disciples came to Him and said, "This is a desolate place, and the day is now over; send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves." But Jesus said, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." They said to Him, "We have only five loaves here and two fish." And he said, "Bring

them here to Me." Then He ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass, and taking the five loaves and the two fish, He looked up to heaven and said a blessing. Then He broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

I wonder what the disciples' faces looked like when Jesus said that to them—"You give them something to eat." They knew they didn't have what it took to do the job. Why was Jesus asking, then?

And yet, God does the same thing today, doesn't He? One phone call or letter, and your life is changed forever. "You want *me* to raise that child, Lord? I haven't got the first idea what to do." "You're going to dump *that* project in my lap, God? You know I don't have those skills." Or my own favorite from young adulthood: "You're calling me to be a *what*?"

Jesus has a habit of calling the unqualified to do the impossible. (I've always suspected it has something to do with His sense of humor.) And it makes for some terrifying moments. But in the end, it comes out all right—for the disciples and for us. Because Jesus supplies what we lack—whether it's wisdom, money, courage, or miracle-working power.

The disciples told Him honestly what they had, and Jesus worked with that. His instructions were plain and simple, and in the end, everyone was fed. When God faces us with the impossible, we can do what the disciples did—tell Him honestly, "This is all I can bring to the situation," and then wait. Because in the end, it isn't us in charge. It's Jesus.

This is the God who planned to save the entire world, including us, from the power of sin, death, and the devil—and *how*? Using only a single human life—His own. He lay down that life for all of us on a cross outside Jerusalem, paying the price for all our evil. And three days later, He rose from the dead, breaking the power of death not just for Himself but for all of us who trust in Him. That's a lot to do with so little!

And He can do extraordinary things with us limited people as well, if we will trust Him.

WE PRAY: Dear Lord, help me to trust You when You call on me to do something for You. Amen.

This Daily Devotion was written by Dr. Kari Vo.

Reflection Questions:

1. When has God asked you to do something that feels impossible?
2. What happened?
3. What did this experience do for your attitude toward Him?

This is a Lutheran Hour Ministries Daily Devotion from August 3, 2023.

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