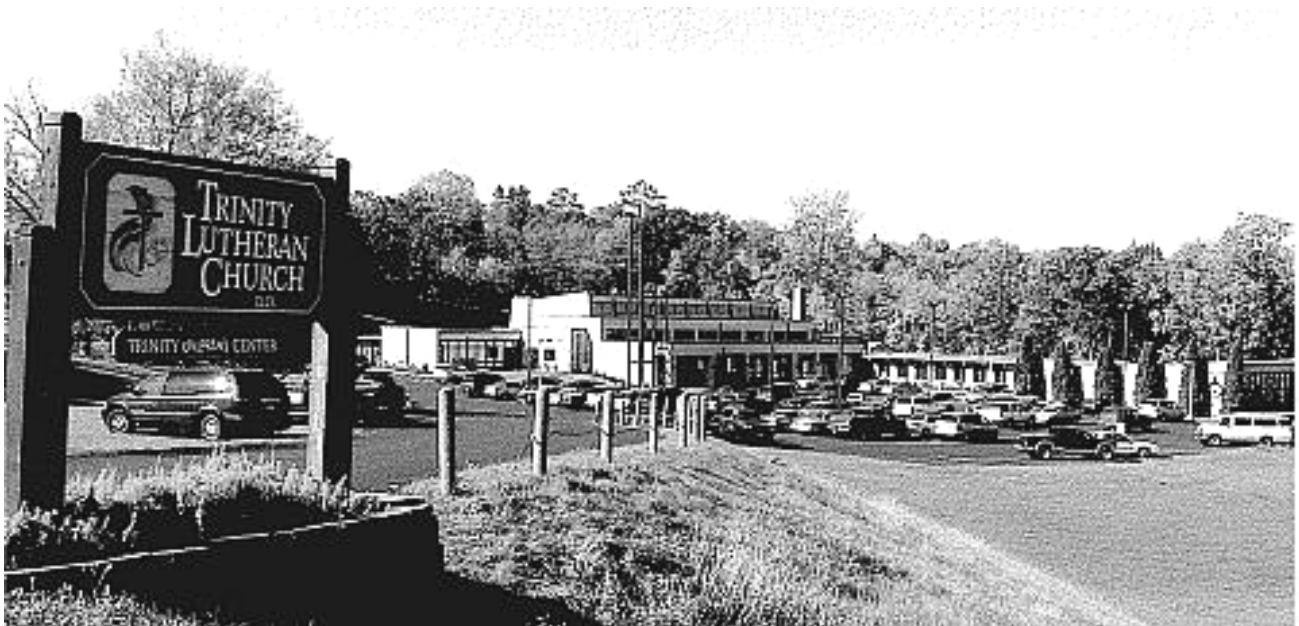
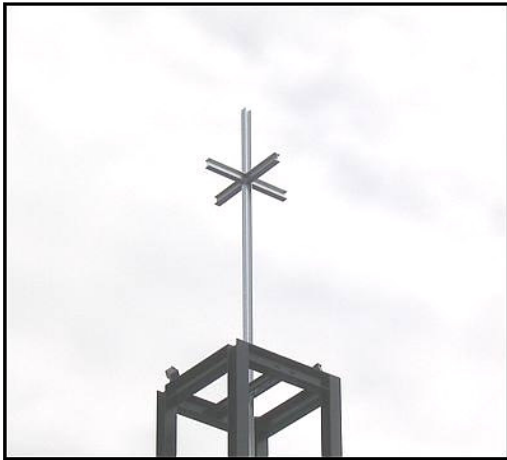




TRINITY THROUGH THE YEARS

*Trinity Lutheran Church
Brainerd, Minnesota
1885-2006*





A community committed to God through caring, sharing and outreach.



Hallelujah! I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart. Psalm 111:1



Trinity Lutheran Kirke var grunnlagt i arret 1888. Kirken fikk navet Norske-Danske Lutherske Kirke med sesusteen mannfolk og deres familier. Kirken ble grunnlagt au denne famelene.

If you had been among the first members at Trinity, you would know that paragraph means: What we now know as Trinity Lutheran Church started in 1888 as the Norwegian-Danish Lutheran Church with sixteen men and their families as charter members.

Actually, they began worshipping together in the fall of 1885. According to A Century With Our Churches, Brainerd, Minnesota 1871-1971 "Bishop Knut Knutsen Bjorgo of the Norwegian Synod, who served a parish in Lake Park, Minnesota, came to this area and conducted services on various occasions for Norwegian settlers in Long Lake Township. Since there were so many Scandinavian Lutherans in the Brainerd area he found it his duty to conduct services for them also. Other Lutheran churches already established in Brainerd invited Bishop Bjorgo to use their buildings for meeting places; these congregations being the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church on Eighth Street and Bethlehem Lutheran Church on Seventh Street. Later on the group used the Blair Hall on Sixth Street and the school building on the corner of Sixth and Oak Streets." (That one was across the street from the Lincoln School, where the congregation worshipped in 1958 after the building on Oak and South 10th was sold to the First Church of Christ and the new building on South 6th Street was not completed.)

When they started worshipping in 1885 they went by the name Brainerd Evangelical Lutheran Church until 1890 when they formulated a constitution and elected trustees.

Pastor Hans A. Nodshilder was called as a permanent pastor and served 1888-1889. During that time two committees were formed - a purchasing committee to select and buy a lot, and a building committee to plan a church building. A small frame building (insured for \$600) was erected at the corner of Oak and South 10th Streets and in the evenings served as a school to teach the Norwegian immigrants the English language. Permission was given to a German congregation to use the building for twenty five cents per visit.

The Trinity Lutheran Church Centennial 1888-1988 booklet lists the following men as charter members with their families: Henry Mahle, Erik Petersen, L. Rasmussen, Andrew Peterson, Elias Eliason, Jens Larson, Knudt Thoe, Martin Krogen, Hans Haaker, Hans Svorkmoe, Christ Nelson, Ole Asbjeld, J. E. Johnson, Thorvald Mysen, Nels N. Wide, and John Hongso. The first constitution specified that the Pastor would conduct the congregation meetings, any member not attending would have his name listed in the minutes, and if someone wanted to become a member they

must be voted in by the current members.

Pastor John Rasmus Rorvik served 1889-1892 and the congregation doubled to thirty two families. A \$300 mortgage at 10% interest was taken on the church building for funds to build a parsonage next to the church.

For a few months after the resignation of Pastor T. J. Tonneson in the fall of 1893 the congregation was without a pastor until Pastor Dorotheus Johnson Growe came in the spring of 1894. Pastor Growe was assistant to the Bishop of the Minnesota District of the Norwegian Synod. He was paid \$200 a year plus three festival offerings and the parsonage to live in. The congregation approved a plan to borrow \$65 to purchase a new organ when the organist refused to play the old one they had been using.

The city of Brainerd started in 1871.

Trinity had its beginning meeting in homes in 1885, then in a small log building until a frame building was erected in 1889, and a woodshed, a barn and parsonage were added a couple years later - where the Oak Street Chapel is now.

1890 St. Joseph Hospital was started.

On July 3, 1903 Trinity Lutheran Church was struck by lightning and the newspaper reported it did not burn, but the roof was split in two and the walls splintered. Within two weeks a building committee had been formed, re-building started in August, and services were held on Christmas Day. During that time services

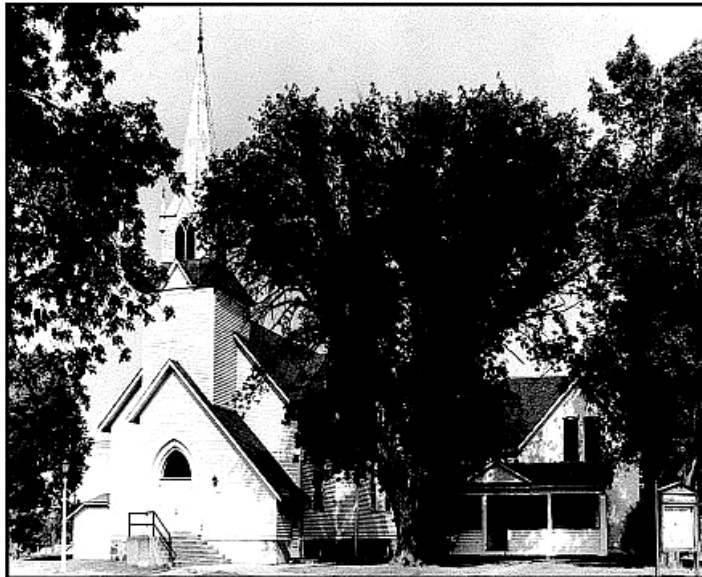
were at the Bethlehem Lutheran Church again. Early pictures show chairs in the first building and again after the church was rebuilt. When the basement was excavated and finished for Sunday School and social activities in 1919, pews were purchased and the chairs were used in the lower level. Records show the Ladies Aid voted to spend 80 cents for fabric to make curtains in the basement.

Pastor Dorotheus Growe served for ten years until 1904 and was followed by several pastors: Thore Laurentius Rosholt 1905, Christian Haugstad 1907 (\$400 for the year 1911) conducted the first services in English once

a month, Andreas Sorenson 1916, Edward R. Rorem 1919 (\$1250 a year), and Karl Stromme 1921. The pastors served at the Vaale Church and sometimes at churches in Deerwood, Motley and Pequot Lakes as those churches were developing. The original altar was donated to the Motley Church when a new one was purchased.

1919 The concrete water tower was built at 6th and Washington Streets in Brainerd.

In 1920 Trinity's property taxes were \$73.99, and according to the records were paid by the Ladies Aid "as usual".



It is really rather amazing that there is a Trinity Lutheran Church at all! All through the records there are references to the fact that there was very little money, or none. In 1897 it was a big decision whether to use the \$6 from the Ladies Aid to paint the church or pay the insurance premium, which was past due. In 1904 the Trustees borrowed \$260 from Andrew Pederson to pay a note that was due at the bank. In 1913 the Treasurer reported \$4.38 as the beginning-of-the-year balance. Many of the young men went off to World War I in 1917, then the railroad strike in 1922 and the great depression in the early 1930s caused major setbacks to Brainerd's economy. The use of pledge cards was started in 1928 to assure there would be enough funds to pay the pastor. Pension plans for pastors were discussed as early as 1915, but it was not until 1943 that Trinity started paying into it. The Men's Club, Ladies Aid, Sewing Circles, Young Peoples Society and Girls' Society often had ice cream socials, basket socials, craft sales and suppers to raise funds. In 1906 the ice cream social brought in \$18, but the lutefisk supper made \$85.55!

With great faith, the members persevered. And Trinity continued to grow – from the first 16 families in 1888, to 225 members in 1907, to 1130 when we moved into our current building in 1985, to 2027 at the end of 2005.

Pastor Oscar L. Bolstad came in May 1922 and served Trinity and Vaale Churches until 1947. During that time he also served at Crosby for 18 years and Pequot Lakes for five years. In 1923 the church voted to buy a car for the pastor's use – a Ford sedan for \$749.14 and they “threw in” an extra inner tube. In 1929 Pastor Bolstad gave both an English and a Norwegian service at Christmas and Easter. The name was officially changed to Trinity Lutheran Church in 1932 and a sign with the name was placed outside.

1938 Brainerd Junior College started with a dozen students.

By 1945 all the morning services were in English and a new, bold, decision was made by the men (they had been talking about it for 20 years) – women would be allowed to vote on church issues! But some things never change: records show the roof was leaking in 1898, the roof was leaking in 1910, the roof was leaking in 1986, and the roof was leaking in 2000.

When Pastor Bolstad retired in 1947, Pastor Kermit O. Graves came to Trinity at a salary of \$3200 a year, and was a strong leader as the congregation considered how to plan for the continual growth. The church on Oak Street “at the edge of town”, was becoming very crowded and committees discussed how and where to build on additional space. Folding chairs were set up in the side aisles and on both sides of the center aisle (certainly the Fire Chief would not have approved), and one member quipped, “We all sit down together, we all stand up together, and sometime we are all going to end up in the basement together!”

Vaale in Norway is valley.

About the same time in the 1880s that Trinity was getting started as the Norwegian-Danish Lutheran Church, a group of neighbors were meeting in homes in the farm area east and south of Brainerd whenever a pastor could come. A trip into Brainerd with a team of horses was an all-day affair and only undertaken when necessary for supplies, especially in the spring when the frost was going out of dirt road Highway 18 and the mud made it



nearly impassable. The original eight men who formed the Vaale Lutheran Church were O. B. Olson, Torres Johnson Gjienes, Nels Gjienes, Hans Anderson Kloster, Ole O. Sunde, Knute Olson Flatekval, and Lars Knutson Flatekval. Since they shared a pastor with Trinity, they helped to build the parsonage on Oak Street.

It was most disconcerting to find out that something I ‘knew’ for half a century isn't so! I have been to the Vaale Cemetery and, of course, that is where Vaale Church had been. Not so! The Vaale Cemetery is east out Oak Street six miles on Highway 18, south two miles on County 23, then east on County 24. If you go on past the cemetery a ways you come to Rognaldson Road. Leonard Rognaldson, on the cassette tape recorded in the 1980s by Bill Hansen for the Trinity Archives, remembered that his great-grandfather, Knute Olson Flatekval had given two acres on his farm in Maple Grove Township for a church and cemetery in 1886. Leonard and his wife Gayle lived out their lives on that farm. About 1906 many of the families who lived further north wanted the church in their area and a Mr. Eagan gave two acres from his farm with the understanding that if the church ever disbanded, the land would revert to the owner. A church was built there – east out Oak Street on Highway 18 to the 7-mile corner, now Burgwald Road, then south a mile and a half, where Leroy Thompson's cornfield is now. Thelma Johnson remembered when Mrs. Thompson's dad, Birney Wilkins owned that land. The church continued there until the merger with Trinity in 1952.

When their first log church was torn down and a frame building erected the logs became part of Herman Anderson's barn. On the tape recorded with Nora Johnson, she remembered that it made her sad, “It was so terrible,” when the frame building was torn down and the lumber used to build a house and machine shed at the Bill Johnson farm. The altar and furnishings were sold to the Christian Missionary and Alliance Church that was building near Garrison. Nora was born in 1892, was still attending worship at Trinity when she was 105 years old, and died in 2000 – having lived in three centuries.

Leonard remembered when services were only one or two Sunday afternoons a month. The men sat on the right side and the women on the left with the children. There was no Sunday School, but there was a month-long Bible School in the summer and he was part of a Confirmation class of six boys who studied with the preacher once a week from May through October. "One time we got to the church before the minister and checked out the belfry, including ringing the bell." Of course there was no denying they had done it as everyone for miles around wondered why the church bell was ringing on a weekday afternoon. Sometimes the young people got together with those from the Bethel Lutheran Church for fun activities like sleigh rides where, "someone always got pushed into a snow bank." In August 1996 a flagpole and granite memorial were placed at the cemetery to honor the Rognaldsons, "Dedicated in appreciation to the Rognaldson Family for land donation and many years of cemetery maintenance." Both Leonard and Gayle lived into their 80s and both died in 1997. Donald and Doris Sievek's son Stephen owns that farm now.

Still with us at Trinity are Carl and Mabel Britton. She is Leonard's sister and grew up attending Vaale Church and the Ladies Aid, "where everyone knew everyone and helped and visited with each other." Perhaps you don't know Mabel, but if you went to Washington School you know what she did. She was the cook there for 25 years. The Britton's daughter Elaine is a Trinity member and her husband Bill Axtell resurveyed the lots for the Vaale Cemetery records a few years ago.

The cemetery was deeded to Trinity in 1968 and is well cared for by the Vaale Advisory Team with Fred Casey, Chairman, Ernest Aarrestad, Robert Knudson and Donald Sandberg, who do the mowing and up-keep there. The cemetery is over an acre in size, divided into four blocks with a total of 850 plots with some still available for purchase for \$250. That's up slightly from the 75 cents charged for the first ones. A well, a new fence, tarred roads and a small storage building - a replica of the first church - have been added in recent years.

One of the fun activities at the Vaale Church that Ernest Johnson recalled on his recorded tape was the Ice Cream Socials they had to raise funds. In later years many people from Brainerd drove out to enjoy the wonderful homemade ice cream made with that real farm-fresh cream. One lady thanked them over and over and no one had the heart to tell her that they had purchased the ice cream at a store that year!

1947 was a turning point for Trinity. The Reverend Oscar Bolstad retired after serving for 25 years and the Reverend Kermit O. Graves began his 16 years

At the retirement party for Pastor Bolstad, after the usual words of recognition for work well done and 'thank you's', C. J. Walstad shared this story. "Ole and Sven owned a saloon downtown Brainerd and had a pet parrot. One Saturday night the parrot got out the door and they couldn't find him. Sunday morning the door was open at Trinity and the parrot flew in. When Ole and Sven came to get him they asked him how he liked going to church and he responded, 'Same crowd. Different bartender.'" That really was quite risqué, considering that some years earlier the church council discussed if a man who was a bar tender could be a member.

On her tape recording Christine Rowland referred to Pastor Graves as a "real fireball" and the membership started growing

faster soon after he came.

Marie, widow of Pastor Graves, taped her memories of their years at Trinity - 1947-1963. She recalled that Pastor Graves shocked the congregation by having the high pulpit cut down (without Trustee authorization) so he was closer to the people, Intern Leonard Flachman started the Trinity Tidings Newsletter that was sent to every family in 1961, Intern Jerry Stroud gathered evergreen boughs and made the first advent wreath in 1963, and Choir Director Curtis Hansen (1951-1963) referred to coffee as "Norwegian penicillin". When Vaale Church members decided it was too hard to heat their building and asked to attend Trinity it worked out so well the two merged. Mrs. Graves praised them for that decision as so many small churches fought change for as long as possible.

The only problem for Trinity members was trying to figure out which Johnson was which (originally their name had been Mjones). There were Peter and Annie Johnson and sons: Nels and Esther, Joseph and Helen, Theorin and Ardella, Ernest and Elaine, Tillman and Betty, and Melvin and Elsie; and their daughter Alma who married Bert Johnson; and Peter's second wife Rachel. Then there was Emma Johnson and her children Bennie and Esther. Bennie married Thelma and he was a cousin to Bert. Many of us remember Ardella who died recently. She did the wonderful bake sales as fundraisers for Trinity projects. Still at Trinity are Nels' daughters Alice Tuil and Loretta Knudson; Elaine and her daughter Joyce Sands; Betty; Melvin and Elsie, Thelma and daughters Jeanette Warburton and Bonnie Carlson; and Bert's son James and daughters Lavonne Mudge and Sally Chisholm. Dan Johnson who has served as the leader of our Master Plan Task Force isn't related to any of them. Other early Vaale members were Thelma's parents Ole and Ragnild Swelland and Thelma's sister Bertha and Jens Jensen who were Gladys Aspholm's parents.

Lois Kanne remembers Ruth and Lincoln Auld getting her and Dr. Earl (deceased) involved in Trinity on Oak Street. Soon Pastor Graves had her teaching Sunday School in the crowded and noisy basement with Jessie and Joan Hansen (now Joni Hill) taking care of her baby Gary. "I remember teaching Vacation Bible School in the old church when my Robert was about 4 or 5, and he and Bruce Haugene gave me a lot of trouble by having fun underneath the table my class had." After teaching for many years she also became Director of Parish Education.

Another of the teachers on Oak Street was Tillie Dale. She started upstairs in the church when Ralph Collette had a class of twenty 3rd graders and needed to divide the group. "I had never taught Sunday School but those kids were so beautiful and I learned as much as the kids did." She also taught Bible School in the summer and Release Time classes during the school year, and kept at it for 25 years.

Willis Haugene's dad Halvor was Sunday School Superintendent for years at Trinity on Oak Street, then Willis was the first one at the new church and now Willis and Lois's son Steven recently finished several years with the Properties Board and the Vision Council.

From 1947 to 1956 the Sunday School grew from 45 students to over 300! With Trinity's membership growing everyone began seriously considering how to add more space. Pastor Graves again shocked the congregation when he suggested they build a new parsonage and church building rather than trying to add on.

Everyone who was a member of Trinity on Oak Street remembers the Lutefisk Suppers! It was working in the hot kitchen over steaming boilers of fish. It was forming hundreds of meatballs. It was peeling bushels of potatoes and rutabagas. It was rolling rounds and rounds of lufse. It was donating homemade pies, and pounds of butter to melt. It was setting tables, serving food, washing dishes (no dishwasher then), and cleaning everything afterwards, including the pieces on the altar that were tarnished in the process. It was great fellowship and a great fundraiser as the entire community came to enjoy. And no one enjoyed it more, or ate more, than Brainerd businessman Louie Hostager. He kidded they should put up a curtain for a private booth for him so others couldn't see how much he ate! No lutefisk suppers were held in the new church, "to not smell up our new building."

We have gone from the formal title, The Reverend Oscar Bolstad, to Pastor Chester Hoversten with the ELCA merger, to the casual Pastor Dave and Pastor Hans and Pastor Jim, and from preaching from the high pulpit to the center aisle. While we still respect their special call to ministry, we also have come to love and appreciate our pastors as people with our same joys and sorrows. October being "National Clergy Appreciation" month is the perfect time to tell them.

Our present church location and building actually got its start at the annual meeting of the congregation in January 1950 when a Planning Committee was elected with Otto Dahl as chairman and Ann Lord as secretary. They had their first meeting later in January and seriously considered the advantages and disadvantages of adding on to the old building or building a new one at the Oak Street location or looking at a new location and a new building. Could they lease land from the railway property just to the east to have enough space? Could they sell the Oak Street property for enough to buy new larger land?

By May the Planning Committee gave their recommendations to the congregation: "Whereas --- 1. We humbly thank God for His grace ---. 2. Trinity congregation stands in a crucial position in its history and that many important and far reaching decisions will need to be made in the very near future relative to the imperative needs of our growing congregation. 3. The needs of our congregation have exceeded the present facilities --- due to increased growth in Sunday School --- and mounting attendance at Sunday morning worship services --- we will never do the effective work we can and must do unless we have a new church on a new location. --- The first need will be the selection of a suitable site, the election of a Finance Committee and the engaging of an architect."

By May 1951 Solvik, Mathre & Associates Architects, Northfield MN was hired to make a study of suitable locations - including the corner of 7th and Oak, land on 15th St. SE, the present location and land across 6th Street to the east that was empty lots then. Architect E. A. Solvik told the congregation, "Important trends should be kept in mind. The possibilities for service in any church are limited by the plant, and a building program should be thought of as something which can continue over a long period of time until the potential service of a church is not limited." It's 55 years later and we aren't there yet!

By September Attorney S. G. Fitzgerald had been hired to negotiate the purchase of the 11 acre Betzold property on S 6th Street for \$8000, and plans were being discussed to build a new parsonage

there so the current one on Oak Street could be used for additional Sunday School space. What a leap of faith! Following the purchase of the land, an article in the Brainerd Dispatch reported the Planning Committee had been meeting for two years and consisted of Otto Dahl, Ann Lord, Lincoln Auld, Lester Bell, Mrs. Alfred Fiskum, Mrs. Wm Hansen Sr., Arne Dybvik, Mrs. Hilding Jahnke, Stanley Davis, Mrs. Ed Lien, Otto Heikkenen and Elna Stendal. Can you imagine that Planning Committee standing up on 6th Street and looking down into the hole filled with brush and trees and 'seeing' a church building nestling into the hillside with a parking lot in front?

Yvonne Larson remembers when she was a child her parents were friends of the Betzolds and they visited them in a their log house on S 6th Street.

To start the building process two committees of couples were formed: Finance - Chairman L.Auld, T.VanWyke, O.Dahl, F.Casey Jr., R.Haugene, O.Heikkenen, E.Kanne, H.Lee, H.Peterson, E.Northouse, O.Foss, Wm. Hansen and C.Akre; and Building - Chairman, H.Jahnke, Vice Chairman, S.Wiggins, A.Fiskum, E.Groth, L.Nygaard, G.Hanson, C.Kostek, C.Satre, L.Bell and A.Olson.

Leonard Rognaldson was on the Board of Trustees and he used his chain saw to cut enough trees straight down the hill on the west side of the new site so a crew could get down to the bottom to do soil samples. When a road was made into the site from 6th Street it was kept plowed all winter so trucks could haul the coal ashes from all the Brainerd schools for fill. Carl Britton put in the guardrails.

By April 1952 some used lumber had been purchased from the NP Railroad and a \$25,000 mortgage had been secured to pay off the debt on the property and build the new parsonage. F.J.Casey Agency set up Workmen's Comp Insurance to cover paid and volunteer labor.

By June 1953 the new parsonage was completed, insured for \$20,000 and dedicated. Marie Graves remembered the thrill of moving into the brand new large parsonage, and then having a ring-side seat to watch the construction of the new church building. Fritz Casey remembers being on the Board of Trustees that year and for the first time the church budget was over \$10,000! He was even more apprehensive when he was helping with the Every Member Visits and one member pledged 10 cents a week. But they made it! Another leap of faith.

By the summer of 1954 the average Sunday attendance was over 300 and there were 250 kids in Bible School. A Planning Committee was established to consider a new church building: Chairman, H.Lee, H.Nordgaard, W.Hansen Jr., C.Satre, E.Kanne, C.Hanson, O.Dahl and C.Berge. When they recommended going ahead with building, the Board of Trustees called a special meeting and approved hiring the Wells Organization to do the necessary fund raising (even if they had to borrow the money to pay them). When the fund drive was starting Pastor Graves wrote in a letter to all members, "To review past attainments is sometimes satisfying, but hardly inspirational. It is as we look into the future to see what our church can and should be that we derive inspiration for our future activities. We are a growing congregation and our responsibilities become greater each year." And we are still growing.

In 1954 we were still in the church on Oak Street but we were making big bold plans!

The Planning Committee and the Board of Trustees were considering how to proceed with plans to build a new church at the 6th Street location. A committee was busy studying our needs and working on a new constitution. We had set up a plan to broadcast our worship services each Sunday on radio KLIZ. The Daily Devotional book was sent to every family.

In the 1954 Annual Report, Pastor Graves praised the work done planning for a new church, "A real challenge was before us and we met it with prayer, faith and sacrifice. Isn't it true that the Lord has never failed us when we have gone ahead and done His work!" A quite detailed report of the meeting was published in the *Brainerd Dispatch*: ninety-nine new members had been added during the year to bring the membership to 675; there were 220 in the Sunday School; we were having two worship services every Sunday; our giving for the year was nearly \$25,000 - up \$6000 from the previous year; we had sent \$2800 for Lutheran World Action and Lutheran Welfare; new officers were Norval Anderson President, Ann Lord Secretary and Henry Peterson Treasurer. Henry continued as treasurer until 1985 - that's 31 years. And there were times when there was no money in the church account and he just quietly paid out of his own funds.

In 1955 a Building Committee was elected: Chairman Clarence Berge, Secretary Ann Lord, Harold Nordgaard, Earl Kanne, Curtis Hanson and Mrs. Hilding (Olive) Jahnke. An Advisory Committee was also elected: Otto Dahl, C.S. Wiggins, Andrew Olson and Orvis Twombly as alternate. Later Mr. Dahl was included on the Building Committee.

After interviews with representatives from several architectural firms, Solvik, Mathre and Associates of Northfield MN was hired in 1956 as architect for the new Trinity Church building and the landscaping of the grounds. The first estimated cost to build the church, Sunday School wing and Fellowship Hall was \$363,000. Too much! Building Finance Committee Chairman L.J. Arhart reported \$25,000 in the Building Fund. Many options were discussed: build only the Sunday School wing and then add the church and Fellowship Hall later when funds were available? Where on the land to place the building - further down the hill so there would be fewer steps but lose parking space? How many parking spaces? Have a basement? Brick exterior? What kind of heating system?

Ann Lord's minutes for the Nov. 2, 1956 meeting to decide on a special meeting of the congregation were very precise, "It should be a "Yes" or "No" meeting. Three things should be presented: 1- The Need, 2- The Plan, 3- The How - finance." On Dec. 4 the Building Committee was guest of Mr. Solvik and Mr. Mathre of the architectural firm at a dinner at Cave's Restaurant in downtown Brainerd, followed by the special meeting to consider preliminary building plans. The average Sunday attendance was 400, and something had to be done! The vote was 68 yes, 5 no, and 3 blank to go ahead with working plans.

On the tape recording Bill Hansen did in 1988 with Ralph and Edna Collette, Ralph remembered as part of the Board of Trustees he was "scared to death" when he signed for a \$270,000 loan so the building could start. He remembered the Wells organization that did the fund raising. He felt their tactics were too force-

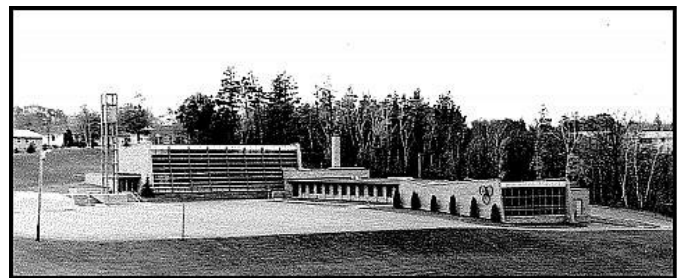
ful, to the point he was about ready to leave Trinity. But the necessary funds were raised and the church got built and paid for. It seems they asked your income and then told you what you were expected to give. That, for Scandinavian Lutherans who never discussed money with anyone? Thelma Johnson remembers back in the 20s and 30s when they held the Vaale Church Annual meeting at Pete Johnson's house and each family was told to give \$10 for the next year to pay the preacher. Finally it became a free-will offering as part of the worship service. It was 1956 before the annual report listed everyone's giving by envelope number instead of by name.

From the adversity of the Wells fundraising came the Stewardship Program that Ralph developed with Earl Kanne. They were convinced it was more important to educate people to the needs and to encourage them to give a proportion in relation to how God had blessed them. Ray Bang worked with them designing, printing and donating all the drawings, charts, and any other papers they needed. They continued for the next 20 years to train stewardship committees to do fund drives, not only at Trinity but at Lutheran churches throughout all of Northern MN, and even at the Catholic and Congregational churches. Ralph also served on the District Stewardship Board and concluded, "We had great fun, even if we were driving home from Fargo at 2am, and Trinity was such a blessing to me and my family, and there never was a dull moment."

It was hoped the sale of the property on Oak Street would go a long way towards the new building program, but after advertising for bids there were not many interested and it was sold to the First Church of Christ for \$10,000. The altar, communion rail and kneeler, and baptismal font were donated to the Remer Lutheran Church and un-needed items were auctioned.

All during construction of the new building it was an exciting time for all the members, while the Board of Trustees had the main responsibilities. As Chairman, Bennie Johnson had been in on the ground-breaking ceremony and closely followed the progress. One Sunday morning in 1958, after attending worship services, he went to see how much had been accomplished the previous week. Before the day was over, he had become ill and died. His place on the board was filled by Nels Johnson.

As the Sanctuary and Sunday School rooms were being built, a group of dedicated Trinity members decided it was important to build the Fellowship Hall and kitchen area, too, and personally signed to guarantee a second loan to build it. Thankfully, the funds over the next several years were sufficient to cover it.



In 1958 the new Trinity Church building was being completed and a drawing of the completed building was on the cover of the bulletins many Sundays. Before we could even get moved in, there was a summer rainstorm and guess what. The north window wall in the sanctuary leaked! The contractor who had installed it did some re-caulking and assured everyone that the problem was solved. Right! Only it wasn't. Several times through the years it had to be re-done. Do you remember when Otto Schmidt did it? He didn't even use any ladders or scaffolding - he just climbed all over the outside of it like Spider Man. He wasn't a young man and he was of a hefty build. Eventually even some of the main beams had rotted and have now been replaced.

At that time the best floor covering at the best price was tile. Unfortunately, no one knew then of the dangers of the asbestos it contained. Removal of that tile slowed the refurbishing work now.

When the pews had been installed it was discovered they were made with spliced boards instead of the solid ones that had been ordered, and the Gunder Manufacturing Company agreed to replace them at no further cost. Those pews had cost \$6000 and were recently sold for \$4000. Many families paid \$142 per pew in honor or in memory of someone, including one from Thelma Johnson in memory of her husband Bennie. When Fritz Casey approached Sid Rosenberg to buy a pew, he responded, "You ask me, a Jew, to pay for a pew in a Lutheran Church?" But he did. In honor of his wife Thelma, who was a Trinity member.

According to church records many of the furnishings for the new church were donated by members: the 2700 pound two-piece polished Italian marble altar by Mr/Mrs Norval (Evelyn 'Brownie') Anderson; solid oak octagon pulpit by Dr/Mrs Earl (Lois) Kanne; baptismal font with wide mosaic border and Communion rail and kneeler by Ida Peterson; another kneeler by Mr/Mrs Stan (Ramona) Gorham; African mahogany 14-foot wall cross and seven candle brackets by Mr/Mrs Fred (Irene) Casey; two credence stands by Mr/Mrs William (Becky) Hansen; two candelabra by Robert Olson; missal stand for altar and four flower stands by Mrs. Gilbert (Emma) Johnson; piano by Gerry Halvorson; another piano by Mr/Mrs Roy (Madeline) Winkler; and two seven-branch candelabra by Mr/Mrs Lewis (Myrtle) Larson.

Furnishings for the Chapel were also donated: altar, cross, candelabra and Trinity symbol by the Haugene family - Halvor, Willis and Lois; baptismal font by Mr/Mrs Melvin (Elsie) Johnson; lectern by Mr/Mrs Jim (Christie) Martinson; missal stand by Minnie and Dale Ebinger; and chairs by Anna Gunderson and Ellen Jeppson.

The Lounge was furnished by the members of the Lutheran Daughters of the Reformation. In the Education unit furnishings were: Grade 1 by Mr/Mrs Aaron (Lois) Dale; Grade 2 by Mr/Mrs Orvis (Betty) Twombly; Grade 3 by the Sunday School and Vacation Bible School; Grade 4 by Ann Lord; three high school rooms by C.R.Peterson and Harold Nordgaard.

The "Trinity Lutheran Church" sign was given by Mr/Mrs Burill (Edna) Crandall after the Board of Trustees decided a "dignified" sign was needed at 6th Street at the church entrance.

The bell and the 62 foot tower were given by Mr/Mrs Maurice (Irene) Peterson and Rex Rognaldson. Does anyone know who gave the Trinity symbol on the outside wall of the Fellowship Hall?

MANY people gave many many dollars for all the many many things it took to make the building useable. Other items were given later and will be listed later.

One thing that was saved from the Oak Street church was the beautiful statue of Christ that has been in the back corner of the Chapel. Now it has



been placed in the entrance area. Be sure to look up as you enter. The "Christus" statue is of marble, a replica of one made in the 1820s by Danish sculptor, Bertel Thorwaldson, who studied at the Academy of Art in Copenhagen, and in Rome. A 1909 picture shows the statue on the altar. Also saved were oak offering plates, and silver candle holders that had been given in 1932 by John Larson in memory of his wife. Lois Haugene has two brass candleholders that her great aunt Sena Jensen had given to Vaale Church and then gave to Lois when Vaale closed.



Our last worship service in the Oak Street church was July 6, 1958. For the next several weeks we worshiped in the Lincoln School gymnasium. Then the day we had been waiting for - Sunday, September 14, 1958! Our first service in the new building! Pastor Kermit Graves and Dr. Arden Anderson, congregation president, led a ceremony to lay the cornerstone below the bell tower at 10:30am then Pastor Graves unlocked the front door and all 680 people entered. His sermon was entitled, "Enter to Praise-Leave to Serve". Special music was by the 50-member senior choir with Curtis Hanson directing. Ernie Johnson remembered a crew working far into Saturday night to have things ready by morning. Pastor Graves wrote in the newsletter, "It is a worshipful, worthy structure and we will find it adequate for our needs."

Donald and Idelle Sandberg's wedding was on Oct. 11 (the Fellowship Hall wasn't completed so their reception was in the lounge, Sunday School rooms and hallways). On Oct.19 at 9:30 and 11am worship times the sermon was by Dr.Alvin N.Rogness, President of Luther Theological Seminary, St.Paul. A Dedication service was at 3pm with Dr.A.E.Hanson, President of the NE MN District officiating. It had been seven years since the purchase of the land. A community Open House was on Oct.29 and a dedication to youth and music on Nov. 2 with sermon by Dr.Joseph L.Knutson, President of Concordia College, Moorhead, and an evening concert by the Trinity choirs. The new Trinity Church was pictured on the cover and an article and pictures included in the Evangelical Lutheran Church magazine The Lutheran Herald.



Throughout the years, Trinity and Vaale Churches have been blessed with dedicated pastors, each unique in their own way.

From 1885 when The Reverend Knut Knutsen Bjorgo organized the congregation, nine preachers served until 1922 when Oscar L. Bolstad came. He stayed for 25 years and retired in 1947. There was still at least one Norwegian service a month until 1945. His wife was a stay-at-home mom and people seldom saw her. She died during the time they were at Trinity. Of their five children, Ruthie was still living in North Carolina in 2005.

In 1947 Kermit O. Graves came and served for 16 years until 1963 when he accepted a call to Detroit Lakes. He died in 1984. In 1950 his salary was raised to \$3600 with a \$300 car allowance. He and his wife Marie were very active in the whole process of getting the new parsonage and church built at our present location and they were the first to live in the new parsonage. They had two children, Alan and Ann Marie. Alan died several years before Marie and Ann Marie lives in Alexandria MN. Pastor Graves was an accomplished organist. One girl in his confirmation class was surprised to learn that even a minister gets angry – when one of the boys misbehaved again.

Following Pastor Graves departure, Chester E. Hoversten became our next pastor and served for 23 years until he retired to Easy Street in NE Brainerd, and received the honorary title of Pastor Emeritus. He and Phyllis and their six children came to Brainerd from Barnesville and were well pleased with the nice large parsonage, and were active in all aspects of Trinity activities. When a car went out of control and came crashing through the kitchen wall of the parsonage in 1966 it sent Phyllis and Karina to the hospital. Annette is now near Boston, Philip in the Minneapolis area, Krista in Italy, Mark in Las Vegas, Karina near Brainerd and plays in the Trinity Flute Choir, and Elizabeth is at Northfield. It was during those years that some parents were convinced the confirmation students (and their parents) needed one morning a week to sleep in. After years of “reading for the minister” on Saturday mornings, confirmation classes began meeting on Wednesday evenings. Rather than the staid and sober tradition of Scandinavian Lutherans, Pastor Hoversten encouraged people to be friendly and shake hands and even SMILE as we passed the peace. You could almost hear a collective gasp of surprise when Barb Love hugged him! He helped organize Covenant Groups – small groups of families who met in homes for fellowship and fun. The Hoverstens have recently moved to an apartment at Woodland Good Samaritan. During his years Trinity first added additional pastoral staff. Arlo Feiock came as an Assistant Pastor in 1965, and with his wife Ginger and son Matthew moved to Trinity Lutheran Church in Cass Lake the following year and later to Bemidji.

Our first Associate Pastor was Gary Sartain, who served from 1971-1973. He went on to be a Pastor/Pilot in The Northwest Territories and Ontario in Canada, flying in to preach and teach and bring the sacraments to people in very remote areas. Trinity people continue to financially support that program. In 1993 he started a clinical pastoral education program for the Good Samaritan Society. He and his wife Beverly are now living in Apple Valley and he is the Director for the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc. and travels throughout the Dakotas, MN, IA, WI, IL and Upper Michigan. They adopted an Indian girl and are now parenting her son. They also have two sons who are both married and teaching at St. Paul College.

The second Associate Pastor was Ronald R. Gilthvedt. He and his wife Betty were at Trinity from 1973 to 1979 and then moved to Enid OK. He is now serving at Our Savior's Lutheran church in Owatonna MN.

Our next Associate Pastor, Michael J. Fibranz, served from 1980 to 1984. He and his wife Cindy and family now live in Kansas and he is at Trinity Lutheran Church in McPherson.

David P. Holte came in 1984 as Associate Pastor and when Pastor Hoversten retired Pastor Holte was required by ELCA guidelines to resign. With a special meeting of the congregation he was called as our new Senior Pastor. His is a musical family – they play in the Bell Choir, he and his wife Ellen are talented organists, Ellen has served Trinity well for many years as our organist, accompanying many choirs and a myriad of soloists. Their daughter Lise plays violin and their son Peder plays cello with our music groups and for special occasions. Pastor Dave has made the “smiley face” a symbol of cheerful giving.

Associate Pastor Lynn R. Ronsberg came to Trinity in 1988 after much serious debate by the congregation whether we should have a woman pastor. After all, we had never done it that way before! But as people got acquainted she was well accepted, though one older lady she was visiting did gently chide her for wearing a short-sleeved clerical shirt and exposing her bare arms. She was an avid Twins baseball fan and as she stepped in the pulpit to preach her first sermon she was greeted by all the choir members waving Homer Hankies from the choir loft. She is now the Senior Pastor at Zion Lutheran Church in Grand Rapids MN.

Pastor Paul H. Ellens came to Trinity from Cass Lake with his family in 1993 and served as Associate Pastor for one year before resigning for health issues. With Pastor Holte he taught a class – “The Bible-a User's Manual”. Maybe it's time to do that class again?

We had found that a woman pastor was just fine and our next two Associate Pastors were women. Marggi Pleiss-Sippola was with us from 1994 to 1996. She was a runner and encouraged others to run, including Grandma's Marathon in Duluth. She moved to CO with her husband David and their children Ben and McKinzie, and is now at Beaver Lake Lutheran Church in Maplewood MN.

Juli Sutton-Deem was at Trinity from 1997 to 2004. With her husband Bill and daughters Ashley and Coryn they were the last to live in the parsonage before it was donated to Habitat for Humanity and moved away. They are now living in rural Brainerd and she has served as Interim Pastor for First Lutheran Church in Pillager and Bethany Lutheran Church in Cushing until they recently hired pastors there.

Our newest Associate Pastor is Hans Anderson who was installed in Feb. 2005 and quickly jumped into all that was happening at Trinity with our programs and our building and refurbishing. Besides, we got a great bargain! His wife Erin has taken on the job of Director of Music, directs choirs, fills in at the piano, plays flute, and, and, and. Their two-year-old son Karl is everyone's favorite.

While searching for past pastors in the ELCA Yearbook it was interesting to find four more Pastor Hoverstens - all of them related to our Pastor Chet. There are also four more Pastor Holtes - none of them related to our Pastor Dave. The one nearest is Sandra Berg-Holte in the Aitkin area. She is pastor at St. Johns at Cedarbrook and Bethesda at Rossberg. (Ole Howard's home church)

Several times through the years Trinity has taken an active role in the training of seminary students, as they are required to spend their third year working in a parish setting before returning to the seminary for the final year of classes. While this means added responsibilities for our pastor, it also means an additional person on staff to do the everyday work here at Trinity.

Our first four intern pastors were here with Pastor Graves.

Leonard R. Flachman was here in 1960. Later he and his wife Shirley became missionaries to Ethiopia, Africa for several years. They have three sons and are now living in Golden Valley and have a publishing company.

David L. Place was here in 1961 and is now living in Monterey CA after serving churches in IL, MN and CA. Since his retirement in 2000 he has served as Interim Pastor at two CA churches. He met his wife Carol while he was at seminary and she was a nurse at Fairview Hospital. They have three children and six grandchildren.

Gerald Stroud was here in 1962. He served at a church in southern MN and for many years has been in Redford MI. He and his wife Annelle have two daughters. When at Trinity he had never tasted lefse, so on lefse-making day he was given a nice warm piece all slathered with butter and rolled with sugar. After deliberating carefully, he decided, "Even newspaper would be pretty good if you put on enough butter and sugar!"

John M. Braaten was here in 1963 and has recently retired from St. Peter Lutheran Church in Mesa AZ. During his time at Trinity, Pastor Graves accepted a call to Detroit Lakes and John received special permission from the seminary to carry on with an Interim Pastor for several months until Pastor Hoversten came. Through the years he has done some writing, including the daily devotions in Christ In Our Homes in 2004.

Our next interns came while Pastor Holte is here. Rena Peterson was here in 2004 and has now graduated from Luther Seminary in St. Paul and has been assigned to the NW MN Synod. Her husband David was pastor in Clarissa and Rena had returned to school while their two children are also in college. She was ordained at Trinity on December 9, 2006.

Jennifer Rose was our intern in 2005 and played a really hot trumpet. She is now completing her final year at Luther Seminary and has also been assigned to the NW MN Synod. Her husband Matt is also a student at the seminary.

Currently our intern is Kari Casper. She is busily getting involved in all the Trinity activities and plays flute with the Flute Choir.

Several retired pastors have served at Trinity as part time Visitation Pastors: Olaf Engh, Edward Barsness and Maurice Molvik. James Almquist, our current Visitation Pastor started in 1998 when he retired from Immanuel Lutheran Church in Crosby after 45 years serving in several Minnesota churches. While he was at North Emmanuel Church in St. Paul they worshipped in temporary space while the church was torn down and rebuilt. He was serving at one of the oldest Lutheran churches in MN, Chisago Lutheran in Center City, when the wedding scene from the movie "Grumpy Old Men" was filmed there. He is credentialed in Clinical Pastoral Education and was a Consultant at the Hazelden Treatment Center. Since living in Brainerd he is one of the on-call Chaplains at St. Joseph Medical Center. He and his wife Jan

moved to Brainerd just in time for a major windstorm to blow down the evergreens in front of their new home. Despite some health problems, Pastor Jim keeps active, saying, "The Lord isn't ready for me and devil is afraid of me, so I'm still here!"

The Visitation Pastor's salary is paid from the interest on our Endowment Fund.

Among the members at Trinity is Rev. Richard Query, Chaplain at the Brainerd Regional Human Services Treatment Center. After 11 years as pastor at three MN churches, he came to Brainerd 35 years ago and continues to work part time at the treatment center and to fill in as supply pastor in area churches.

Also at Trinity is Rev. J. Dean Gevik, who retired after four years as part-time Chaplain at Woodland Good Samaritan, following 30 years as pastor at churches in MI and MN and eight years as Chaplain in nursing homes in the Red River Valley. He has written books, HOW'S THE WEATHER OUT THERE?, FINDING MEANING IN THE LATER YEARS and CONFESSIONS OF A PARISH PASTOR and has recently compiled CALLED TO SERVE, a book with each chapter written by a different local pastor - including Pastors Holte, Anderson, Almquist and himself from Trinity.

Trinity has a policy to help seminary students with expenses. Have we done enough to encourage young people to pursue the ministry? Of course, Pastor Holte says, "Don't become a pastor unless you just can't help yourself!"

Through the years several young people from Trinity have attended seminary.

Gordon and Ruth Winjum's son James was at Trinity through his growing up years and was ordained in 1976. He is now in Pastoral Care at York Hospital in York PA.

Cheryl, daughter of Lloyd and Mary Berg worked at Luther Crest Bible Camp and has served as Interim Pastor at a number of churches. She is now at St. Peter Evangelical Lutheran Church in Huntington Station NY.

Dort Lofstrom's son Timothy attended Yale and then Luther Seminary in St. Paul. He and his wife Kathie, also a pastor, live in Saskatchewan, Canada with their two sons.

Jim Koski's daughter Jennifer was ordained at Trinity in July 2004 after her graduation from Luther Seminary and is now serving at Trinity Lutheran Church in Boyd MN. Her husband Timothy Hackbarth is also a pastor.

Donald and Patricia Howitz's son Mark graduated from seminary and is in the Minneapolis area with his wife and family and working with the ELCA Board of Pensions.

David Krinke was Trinity's Youth Director in 1998 and has since gone on to the seminary.

Eleanor Jensen's grandson Duane Jensen is a pastor at a church in Maryland.

Other pastors who were a part of Trinity congregation were Leroy Nevin while he was the Chaplain at Bethany and Woodland Good Samaritan Homes, and retired Pastors Ernest Theilen and Bobbi Johnson - both now deceased

While worship has always been top priority, education has also been of major importance at Trinity. In 1896 the Ladies Aid paid \$20 for a teacher for two months of Summer School. Older members remember “reading for the minister”, which included much memorization of Bible verses and the catechism before they were confirmed when they were about 15 years old. In 1903 there were 37 young people in Saturday School (confirmation). The Sunday School was divided into three classes: 29 students in the ABC books, 21 in Catechism and Bible history, and eight in Bible history and explanations with classes being held year-round. Of course, even then, the big day was the Christmas program when everyone had a part and every child received a bag of treats. In 1981 70 angel outfits were sewn, complete with wings and glittering halos so every small child can be an angel. Now the children also receive a hand-made ornament.

Summer school became known as Vacation Bible School after Pastor Graves came. In 1949 a Bible School teacher was hired from Concordia College for \$25 a week plus room and board. Later, when a male teacher was not available, women were permitted to teach the classes as volunteers. By 1960 there were nearly 200 students. As so many women went to work outside the home Bible School was discontinued, until the summer of 2005 when they joined with Lutheran Church of the Cross at Nisswa. In the summer of 2006 Bible School was again held at Trinity with over 50 kids.

In 1950 Release Time classes were started on Wednesday afternoons for grades three through nine. After we moved to our current location the students from Bethlehem Lutheran Church and their teachers joined at Trinity for a series of movies on the life of Jesus, the travels of Paul, etc. followed by discussion time at each grade level. By 1993 those classes were only for the second through fifth grades and have since been discontinued completely. For the students it was a great “vacation” from school, but a big disruption for the classrooms.

In the first years after we were in the new church the Sunday School attendance was at its greatest – 400 students with 40 teachers divided between two sessions sandwiched between three worship services. By then the Sunday School budget had been incorporated into the church budget under “Christian Education”.

In the old church on Oak Street, Ann Lord was the first to be hired as Parish Worker and did secretarial work and a lot of the education planning. Later a Board of Parish Education had the responsibility for planning the educational activities and then in 1987 Janice McDonald (Femrite) was hired part time as the first Director of Education Ministries. The next director, Jeanette Rydberg, developed the Trinity Children’s Center and became director for that program offering Christian day-care to about 50 children. She is presently the Child Development Division Chair at Central Lakes College. She was followed by Kimberly Johnson. The current director is Jacki Mehr working full time with about 180 kids from three years old to senior high and about 50 teach-



ers and support people.

Students start their confirmation classes in 6th grade and also do a variety of retreats that are a combination of education and just plain fun – Luther Crest, Clearwater Forest, Camp Shamineau, St. John’s University, Cragun’s, and others. They also learn by helping with altar care and serving communion and are confirmed at the beginning of the 10th grade.

Of special importance to those just starting Sunday School is the presentation of their apples from the “Tree of Life” from the case by the nursery that were made by Ronald and Karen Sorenson and placed there when the child was baptized. Another important presentation is when each of the children in third grade receives their very own Bible. Trinity members who are graduating from high school are guests at a breakfast and are invited to wear their caps and gowns to worship service. One Sunday each year students take part in a worship service and those attending a church

college receive a scholarship from Trinity that is matched by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans and their school. Classes are held periodically for anyone who is interested in becoming a member of Trinity and they are welcomed at a dinner in their honor.

Many opportunities have been offered through Christian Education. Communion was received only by those who had been confirmed until after the ELCA merger. Then communion was available to those in fifth grade following meeting with their parents with the pastor. They get together to make the bread and to decorate their own chalice. They learn about the Passover and take part in a Seder meal. In recent years some of the staff from Luther Crest Bible Camp have come to Brainerd and held Day Camp for young children who aren’t quite ready to spend a week at Luther Crest.

In 1969 Pastor Hoversten went for intensive training to teach a group who would then teach groups of about 20 adults in the two-year-long Bethel Bible Study series written by the Reverend Harley Swiggum. Teachers included: Gail Fitch, Lorraine Hinds, Donald and Patricia Howitz, Lois Kanne, Dort Lofstrom, Walter and Irene Petaborg, Dennis Sands, Jay Simon, Donald and Idelle Sandberg and DeLyte Specht. Is it time for those classes again?

The Alpha classes for adults that look at the basics of what it is to be a Christian was presented for the second time, led by Pastor Anderson. Among the classes led by Pastor Holte was one based on the book, THE PURPOSE DRIVEN LIFE by Rick Warren. The Lutheran Bible Adventure presented “A Walk Through the Old Testament” in 1992 and “A Walk Through The New Testament” the following year. Lay people have also led many classes for adults, including Andy Larson on the book, PRAYER by O. Hallesby, “Radical Lutheranism: Luther for Armchair Theologians”, and learning about other religions. Often various topics are presented at forums during the education hour – how to plan your funeral – how to budget your money – Lutheran World Relief information, etc. If you have a specific interest, suggest it and someone will address it.

Through the years there have been many groups within the church. From the very start of the church there was a Ladies Aid. While the men were taking the responsibility for the church business through the Board of Trustees, the ladies were busy meeting for fellowship and raising necessary funds. In 1913 they paid \$4 for a man to use his horses and wagon to take them to gather at Stendal's home three miles out of town. The minister was always in charge of opening the gathering with scripture reading and prayer and leading the singing of hymns until the 1950s when Pastor Graves suggested women could do that themselves if they wished. A lady was hired to baby sit the children during the meetings.

Very detailed minutes were kept of each meeting - in Norwegian until 1925 - and give a look at their activities, many of which included food as a way to raise money for things the church needed. They sponsored ice cream socials, basket socials, bake sales, lefse sales and suppers for such projects as \$6 to paint the parsonage in 1897 and to help buy an altar to replace the one of stacked boxes in 1907. In 1909 they served a dinner of chicken pie, ham, scalloped potatoes, salad, brown and white bread, coffee and cake. Tickets were twenty-five cents. Extra dollars were often needed to pay the minister, or buy a ton of coal, or get a piano, organ and choir robes. \$2 in 1939 bought a used icebox, and in 1954 it was \$150 for a Norge refrigerator, and in 1972 it took \$1675 for the dishwasher from Mudford Plumbing.

Other fund-raising ventures included a bazaar at the YMCA in 1896 that featured much fancy work and beautifully dressed dolls. Mrs. Fred Kyllingstad won the largest one and gave it to four-year-old Nora Huseby. That is Nora Johnson who was still attending Trinity when she was 105! Many other bazaars were held with the largest being several "Doorways to Christmas" in the 1970s. Some years boxes of greeting cards were sold and in 1935 they earned \$20 by selling 50 bottles of Gold Star furniture polish.

A Trinity cookbook was published and sold in 1962 and dedicated to Pastor and Mrs. Graves. It was included in an expanded book "Seasoned With Love" in 1995.

The first mission endeavor was to send \$10 to Twin Valley Children's Home in 1908 and many other projects followed throughout the years - money to help the poor widows of deceased ministers, Red Cross for flood sufferers, clothing drive for Norway during World War II, support for youth going to Luther Crest Bible Camp, support for missionaries and support for local families in need.

Among special projects were "Welcome Home" luncheons for returning service men in 1918 and again in 1946. They made \$118 in 1937 serving a pike and chicken supper at Lum Park for the W.P.A. office workers and \$260 in 1946 serving a banquet for Brainerd's 75th Anniversary.

In 1927 Mrs. Lars (Nellie) Meas was the Ladies Aid president and one of the new members was her sister Mrs. Erwin (Agnes) Hemkin, who in 1948 was the president and started the Trinity Cradle Roll. By then there were nearly 50 Ladies Aid members, including new members Mrs. F.J. (Irene) Casey and Mrs. Carl (Mabel) Britton. It was voted to take roll call and pay monthly dues if they were present or not, to sing the table prayer before lunch, and to cut back to serve only two things for lunch.

At first there were sewing circles numbered one to four. Besides fancy work for the bazaars, one of the special things they made

were hardanger cloths for the altar, pedestals, and small table by the minister's chair. Later they became Bible study groups named Mission, Charity, Education, Promotion and Life Membership and were responsible for programs in those areas at the Ladies Aid monthly meetings. Then the circle names were changed to Bible places - Bethel, Bethlehem, Capernaum, Corinth, Galilee, Jerusalem, Nazareth and Samaria. Four are still active.

A group of women with Miss Ida Peterson presiding formed a Ladies Guild in 1945. Their purpose was for entertainment and to raise funds. Their name changed to The Lutheran Daughters of the Reformation and later to the Samaria Circle. The Ladies Aid also went through some name changes - to Women's Missionary Federation and later to Trinity Lutheran Church Women. But no matter the name the ladies have always been busy - serving lunch at receptions and after funerals; hosting World Day of Prayer; Churchwomen's Conferences; Teas at area care centers; and making quilts. Some activities were just for fun - Mother/Daughter Banquets, picnic at the Arboretum, and in the 1950s they sponsored a girls/women softball team (which included Joni Hansen Hill, Yvonne Paulson and Verdelle Goble) in the Brainerd Church League.

Almost from the beginning Trinity men had a Men's Club for entertainment and discussion and fund raising. The minister always opened with scripture and prayer and they often had speakers on current topics and special musical performances. In 1915 they held a Birthday Festival where each man paid for his meal at one cent for each year of his age. At one meeting in 1921 it was duly recorded in the minutes - there was a motion and second and unanimous vote to spend \$1.50 for new brooms, and to pay Gladys Deaver (Van den Heuval) a dollar each time she played piano for their meeting. The minutes were not in English until 1930.

The lutfisk supper was always a lot of work but it was a good source of income. They had pancake breakfasts, basket socials and talent shows to raise funds. They worked with the youth on Christmas tree sales set up in the parking lot at Rau's Dairy Way just north of the church on 6th Street. They took orders, hauled them from north of Aitkin with the help of Don Sievek and his truck and delivered them if requested.

The men sponsored a boys/men softball team in the Brainerd Church League with Andrew Olsen as manager and they even had official shirts in the late 1950s. Players included Rolf Bollum, Gene Hansen, Kenneth Hill, Ole Howard, Jim and Joe Melby, Kenneth Pederson, Donald Sandberg, and Carl Specht. They played at a field in the hole across Washington Street from the Franklin School. We have a trophy inscribed, "YMCA Church League Softball Playoff Champions 1989". They sponsored a Boy Scout troop and helped sponsor the Chaplain at the Boy Scout Camp. They also sponsored a Trinity boys' basketball team complete with suits and their own basketballs.

The Father/Son Banquet was a well-attended function for many years with special programs and many prizes and was served by the women. The men served for the Mother/Daughter Banquets. Some years they did snowmobile trips and canoe trips down the Mississippi River to Crow Wing State Park, and still do some fishing trips. In 1949 the group changed its name to Lutheran Brotherhood and is now known as the Trinity Men's Group with meetings on Friday mornings at the church.

Almost from the beginning of Trinity Lutheran Church, there was an organization for young people. They were always involved in spiritual and social activities and fund raising.

In 1897 they were The Norwegian-Danish Lutheran Young People's Society and were given permission to use the church for their meetings - but had to pay half the cost of the wood for heat and replace any broken lamp globes. The minister always started the gathering with prayer and scripture. By 1915 the youth had done enough fund raising that they had helped pay for the organ, new music books for the choir, electric lights and lights for the Christmas tree, \$300 to help build the church steeple and \$100 to help remodel the parsonage.

By 1919 the name was changed to The Luther League of the Norwegian-Danish Lutheran Church and one Sunday evening each month they gave a program for the entire congregation. In 1931 they hosted the Luther League Convention for all the area Lutheran Churches.

One of the active members in 1942 was Willis Haugene as Vice President.

It took many ice cream socials, basket socials, candy sales at the lutefisk suppers, pancake breakfasts, Easter breakfasts, etc. to get the funds needed to attend national Luther League Gatherings that were held every three years. Some the youth went to were: San Francisco in 1955, 29 Luther League members and counselors to Miami Beach in 1961, 1964 to Detroit with Youth Director Al Houts - a Brainerd teacher who later went to the seminary and was ordained in 1973, 1967 to Seattle, 1970 to New York under the name "Full Circle", 1973 to Houston, 1976 to New Orleans, 1982 to San Antonio with Associate Pastor Michael Fibranz, 1985 to Denver with then-Associate Pastor David Holte, 1988 to Seattle by Amtrak, 1991 to Dallas, 1994 to Atlanta, 1997 to Washington D.C., 2003 to Atlanta, and in July 2006 there were 17 off to San Antonio with Associate Pastor Hans Anderson.

Directors of Youth Ministry have included Caron Wise in 1989 and when she married Michael de la Montanya he shared the position. When Brian Monsen was the director a bus was acquired in 1994 and the youth painted it with colorful designs and named it "Bubba". It took them to a lot of activities and with a lot of prayer and luck it usually got them back again. David Krinke was Youth Director in 1995, Mark Giese in 1999 and later Denise Schubert Carter.

In 1982 the "Youth Club" was planned and directed by Norma Madsen, Jinny Miller (Haugen), Anne Lauve and Mimi Wolverton with about 70 3rd through 9th graders. They came to Trinity after school on Wednesdays and had fun activities, Bible study, supper, Confirmation classes, choir practice and a speech choir for those in 8th and 9th grades. The tuition was \$45 for the year and Trinity members gave funds for scholarships.

Another group that was formed at Trinity was for retired people. In 1978 Carl and Ethel Satre invited several couples to their home to organize a Retired Couples Covenant Group and they decided on the name "Jolly Free Timers". Their purpose was to meet and eat together for fun and fellowship. After Alton 'Tony' Jensen's wife Violet and Ardis Braaten's husband Harland died, they convinced the group to be open to single retired people, too. Through the years they have had many fun activities: bus trips to

the Congdon Mansion in Duluth, the Showboat Show at Grand Rapids several times, Lindbergh Park in Little Falls and the MN Zoo; picnics at Ann and Erwin Cedarholm's in Lindstrom, Millie and Ed Barsness's in Glenwood, Crow Wing State Park, Mission Park, and at Dwayne and Ardith Peterson's lake home; fish fry at Orvis and Betty Twombly's, Wilbur and Doris Becker's and the Braaten's; lutefisk supper at Faith Lutheran Church in Staples; corn feed at Roy and Helen Fischer's; grilled hamburgers on the Radmacher pontoon on Whitefish Chain; and many pot-lucks at the church. Entertaining programs have included everything from a crazy hat parade to pictures and talks by those who have traveled to interesting places, to concerts and plays at Central Lakes College and Staples Area Men's Chorus Dinner/Concerts, to class at the one-room school house at the fairgrounds, to horse-shoe and Bingo. No one ever keeps minutes but an album of pictures tells their story. The Jolly Free Timers continue to meet monthly and everyone takes a turn at planning what's next.

An Altar Guild was formed in 1974 with Associate Pastor Ronald Gilthvedt's wife Betty as the first president. With the help of Confirmands and their parents, Guild members are responsible for the care and use of the altar ware and paraments.

Another important group has been the secretaries - though they were only with us one or two at a time. Ann Lord was the first in 1954 - \$100 a month as Parish Worker/Secretary/Director of Education. Others were Ardell Eyrich who donated her time to paint the secretary's office, DeLyte Specht, Diane Kosloske, Gloria Schimelpfennig, Shirley Stang, Jan Satre, Pat Peterson, Shanyndentvedt, Julie Keran, Brenda Goritz, Terry Simon Bock, Cynthia Gold was an intern and Beth Larson, Tina Dunlap and Susan Voss were Business Administrators. Currently Joe Niklaus is the Administrative Assistant and Joan Oscarson is the Financial Assistant.

An important 'behind-the-scene' group has always been the janitors who keep our building and grounds and the Vaale Cemetery clean and beautiful. Ernest Johnson replaced Andrew Olson in 1955 and didn't retire until 1977. He even mowed those hillsides with a push mower! Other custodians have been Thelma Johnson, Al Riddering, Bob Monkman, Keith and Cynthia Riedel, Mike Ramig, Jean Smith, Ron Jensen and now Randy Anderson.

"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord" Psalm 110:1

In the book "Our Neighbor: Martin Luther" author Elizabeth Rundle Charles quotes him as saying, "The devil always flies from music, especially from sacred music, because he is a despairing spirit, and cannot bear joy and gladness."

Music has always been a major part of worship at Trinity and there was always a choir and someone to play the piano and organ. According to the tape Bill Hansen recorded with Selina Molstad, she remembered from the beginning the families brought their own Norwegian hymnbooks with them each Sunday, the hymn numbers were posted on a board behind the high pulpit and the "kluker" led the singing. In 1917 the Men's Club purchased the first English hymnbooks for the church and were still buying Norwegian books in 1926.

In 1903 the 18-member "Tenth Street Singing Group" secretary reported \$44.75 from ticket sales for their concert. Early organists included Mayme McCollough, Inga Mills, Christine Engen and Gladys Hegstad Deever VanDenHeuvel. Gladys remembers playing the pump organ at Trinity and Vaale Churches, all the Dybviks singing in the choir, and Virgie Larson singing solo "I Know That My Redeemer Lives" every Easter. Ida Peterson started as organist in 1914 and continued for 33 years. Those years Ida also directed the choir and started small singing groups and escorted them to sing in churches in surrounding towns. On the tape of Christine Rowland she remembered playing the piano for the Ladies Aid and Men's Club and singing with her father and son and traveling with Ida to sing at other places. On the tape recording of Virginia Larson she remembered Ida as being strict but jolly and being a mentor and encouraging her to sing solos. For 20+ years Ernie Aarrestad sang "The Palms" every Palm Sunday. He also kept the pianos tuned.

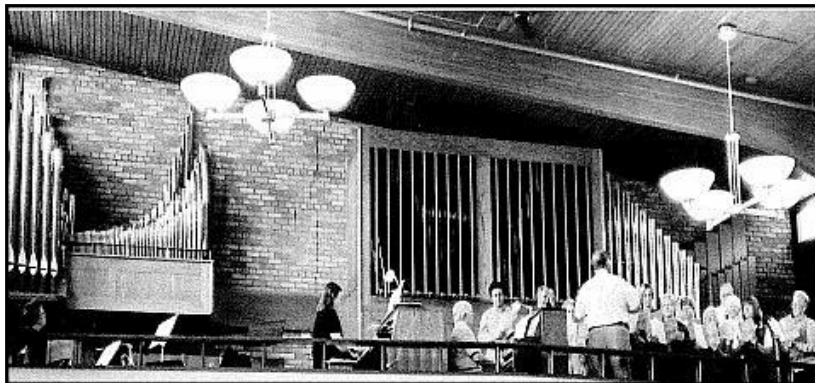
When Ida retired in 1947 Kaye Torgerson became organist and Russell Griswold the choir director. Kaye continued for 26 years and often sought out a capable young person to give free organ lessons - including Lois Adamson and Linda Anderson, who then filled in at the organ for Kaye sometimes.

Other organists were James Wiske, Mark Forkner, Mrs. Al Ciernia, Richard Gartner, a Mrs. Wolleat and a Miss Miller. Jan Norgard was organist for four years and was followed in 1977 by Eldon Hegstrom, a director of vocal music at Washington School. He often played duets with Lois Broekemeier at the piano. In 1985 Ellen Holte became the organist and continues to the present time, with some years off to have her children while Brad Eveland took over.

A Baldwin electric organ was purchased in 1949. In 1953 a set of Deagan Patrician chimes from the J.M. Wylie Piano Company in Minneapolis was purchased for \$595. Linda Engel remembers they were given by the children of Peder and Rachel Olsen. They were moved to the balcony window in our present building. For years the last thing listed for each service was "Three fold Amen - Chimes - Postlude". A new Baldwin organ was purchased from the L.M. Wylie Piano Company of Fargo in 1959 for \$6961.60. An Allen digital #903 electric organ that had been in Orchestra Hall in Minneapolis was purchased in 1985 for \$38,000. (It has now gone to the First Baptist Church in Backus) The organ and speakers were installed by the Schmitt Music Company from Minneapolis and they sponsored the dedication with a recital by Mr. Francis Winkels of St. Paul. At Christmas time he returned to present another recital and hymn sing that was broadcast live on KQBR.

As early as 1962 discussions were held on getting a pipe organ. Now one that had been at the St. Joseph Convent in Crookston has been installed - a gift from several Trinity families. It has 1284 pipes. Some are over 100 years old and some are brand new. The organ was re-built to like-new condition and to fit the back wall of the balcony. A dedication recital was presented by Dr. Timothy Olson on October 1, 2006.

There have been Senior, Senior High (Rainbow Children), Junior High (Music Corps), Children, Folk (Spirit), Bell and Flute Choirs and instrumental groups with violins, guitars, keyboards, drums, etc.



Other Senior Choir Directors have included Curtis Hansen, Ernest Aarrestad, Carolyn Norquist, Roger Lauve, Melody Wick, and now Jim Anderson with Pat Anderson as accompanist. For years the worship service began with the organ playing and the congregation and choir singing HOLY, HOLY, HOLY as the Senior Choir came down the center aisle in their black robes with white collars. Members were required to take those collars home to launder, starch and iron and then to be sure to remember to bring back the following Sunday. After moving to our current location new choir gowns were beige with flame colored stoles - like the accents on the large wooden cross on the wall. In 1965 the Trinity and Bethlehem Choirs made a 33 1/3 record, "The Seven Last Words of Christ" with Mark Aamot directing.

Youth and Children directors have included Marlene Larson, Virginia Leikvold, Jeri Hoffman, Leslie Dahl, Corine Petraborg, Mark Hoversten, Midge Nelson, Beth Anderson, Lisa Bertelt, Rosalind Haapajoki, Pat Anderson, Carolyn Norquist, Douglas Denison, Sue Thorsteinson, Donald Madsen, Julie Orr and Julie Schreifels. Jody Dahl has started a new group, "Alive" for 2nd - 5th graders.



Diane

Peterson directed the 40-member Spirit group and it expanded to be a clown ministry at Rally Sunday services and through the years they were invited to share their message at Bethlehem Lutheran, Park United Methodist, First Presbyterian, World Day of Prayer, Brainerd Fourth of July Parade and Arts in the Park, "Benefit for Ethiopia" and the kick-off for the Crop Walk for World Hunger at Tornstrom Auditorium. One member explained, "Christianity should be full of joy. We've got such a loving Father, why shouldn't we be happy?" In 1991 they recorded a tape, "Give It Away" and they gave the profits to the local soup kitchen and the Brainerd Crisis Line. A set of 25 hand bells was a gift from Henry and Dorothy Peterson. They were first played on Palm Sunday 1980 by junior high kids under the direction of Carolyn Norquist.

Later Petersons and Gordon Winjum gave additional bells, and chimes were given in memory of Jim Torfin by his family. Later senior high students and in 1988 adults joined in playing the bells with Midge Nelson as leader. Julie Keran then directed for 16 years. Currently Jim Anderson is director.

The new green hymnals were purchased in 1979 - many of them by individuals and many of them in memory of Dr. Earl Kanne. A "Hymn-of-the-Month" was sung each Sunday for a month as we learned new hymns. Many musical offerings have been a treat over the years: Christmas Song Service the second or third Sunday of December every year with all musical groups participating; Lutheran colleges and MN All State Choir concerts; a concert by Bemidji College and Brainerd High School a Cappella Choirs hosted by Trinity's Luther League in 1987; a Bach Festival Service at Tornstrom Auditorium with area churches taking part and Carolyn Norquist directing to celebrate the 300th birthday of Johann Sabastian Bach; in 1997 world-renowned organist and composer Dr. Paul Manz played at Trinity for a Lutheran unity service hymn sing for all area churches; Trinity musicians as part of the Community Christmas Sing-a-long each year; and the four-pianist rendition of "The Stars and Strips Forever" on the Sunday nearest the Fourth of July.

If you are single and like to sing, maybe you should join the choir! Bill Hansen had been singing since he was young and in 1952 he was welcomed home from the Army and back to the choir. Curtis Hansen had invited Becky, the new business teacher at the Brainerd College, to sing in the choir - and the rest is history! They were married in 1955. Lewis and Myrtle Larson's daughter Arlis was singing in the choir when the Sampsons moved to Brainerd to open Sampson's Shoe Store and their son Bill came to sing in Trinity's choir. Arlis and Bill were married and moved to Fergus Falls. Donald Sandberg went off to the Army and college and came home to Trinity and met Idelle singing in the choir. She had come to Brainerd to teach at Harrison School. They were the first couple married in the new Trinity Church in 1958. Ernest and Elaine Johnson's daughter Joyce grew up singing at Trinity. Dennis Sands moved to Brainerd with his family and started his new job at a local bank and came to Trinity's choir. They will soon celebrate their 50th anniversary.

Since the Ladies Aid first sent money to the Twin Valley Children's Home in 1908, Trinity has been involved with many mission projects. When Pastor Sartain and Intern Flachman went on to work in missions Trinity helped to support them. In 1968 Gerald Kramer was sponsored as a missionary in Taiwan. Pastors Eric and Christine Finsand were in Japan for six years and are now at Chatfield Lutheran Church. In 1994 support was given to Gary Peterson in Mexico until his retirement from there in 1999. Currently we are sponsoring Pastor Mahlon and Nancy Bekedam working in Tokyo, Japan.

In 1991 five families from Trinity were affirmed as missionaries as Charter members to the newly formed Lord of Life Lutheran Church in Baxter and included Joe and Elsie Melby, Glen and Donna Pepel, Marilyn and Carol Sims, Bert and Marie Larson and Jeff and Fran Semmler. Trinity and the other area Lutheran churches gave financial assistance - including our \$1500 Christmas offering, and Julie Keran did their sign. \$25,000 was sent from Trinity as part of our Commitment to Missions to sponsor St. Andrews Lutheran Church in Grand Rapids MN over a six-year span in the 1990s. With other area Lutheran churches we are now sponsoring the new Rejoice Lutheran Church that is forming in Baxter and meets in the Forestview School. We have committed \$15,000 over

three years.

With Trinity's sponsorship in 1975 SonVi and Van Chu and their two daughters, an aunt and two brothers from Viet Nam were resettled to Brainerd as one of 200 families in MN that Lutheran Social Services was working with. Later a son was born to them and several of their extended family joined them here. After many years in Brainerd they moved to California - they never did learn to appreciate Minnesota winters. In 1983 Trinity and First Lutheran Churches sponsored a Polish refugee family to resettle in Brainerd. Homes were found and furnished for the families and they were helped to find employment.

Many projects have been a part of the giving at Trinity: helping at the Soup Kitchen; food and money for the food shelf; food baskets to area families in need delivered on the Sunday before Thanksgiving; money to World Hunger through the Crop Walk and sharing of garden produce; quilts, layettes, sewing kits, mid-wife kits and health kits through Lutheran World Relief; Lutheran Vespers radio broadcasts; Gideon Bible Society; Oak Grove Lutheran High School; scarves and hats for sailors through the Twin Ports Ministry to Seafarers at Duluth/Superior; support of Camp Knutson, a camp for special needs people and their families on the Whitefish Chain near Crosslake that was dedicated in 1960; support for the Heart Walk for the American Heart Association; funds for the local Salvation Army and for Souper Bowl Sunday; help for Habitat for Humanity; host and participate in World Day of Prayer; bail Pastor Hoversten out of "jail" by raising funds for the local jail ministry; quilts and layettes to Tanzania, Africa with local doctors and nurses mission trips; and back-to-school health kits through Kinship Partners.

Trinity has reached out to many since the services were first broadcast on KLIZ radio in 1954 at \$25 per Sunday and now on 1340 KVBR at \$70. Many individuals have supported the broadcasts, including a fisherman on Mille Lacs who sent \$1 after listening while he fished in 1955. Several years Trinity hunters sponsored the broadcast on opening weekend of deer season. Starting in 1960 dime folders were used for many years during Lent to help pay for the broadcasts. Telecasts at 1pm on Charter Cable Channel 8 started in 1989. At that time the cost of each telecast was \$50, but are now being aired at no cost to Trinity.

Along with 127 other congregations - from Glenwood to Breckenridge to Brainerd - Trinity is owner of 97 acre Luther Crest Bible Camp on Lake Carlos north of Alexandria and 59 acre Luther Crest West on a peninsula between Middle and Lower Pomme de Terre Lakes north of Morris that offer year-around camping experiences to people of all ages. An additional 40 churches pay to make use of the camp facilities.

Many occasions have been the reason for celebrations:

In 1903 the re-building of the church after a lightning strike

In 1952 when Vaale merged with Trinity

In 1958 the dedication of the "new" Trinity

In 1963 Trinity's 75th Anniversary with Rev. Dr. A.E. Hanson, President of Northern MN District of A.L.C. preaching - and a fellowship dinner

In 1976 the USA Bicentennial Independence Day celebration with flags presented by Trinity Boy Scouts Orin Anderson and David Hansen, and a Community Christmas Pageant in our lower site complete with live animals

In 1978 a Mortgage Burning Ceremony with Pastors Hoversten, Flachman, Sartain, Barsness, Theilen and Gilthvedt participating

In 1986 the Christian Women's Bowling champions included Trinity's Merrily Monda, Doris Sievek, Karen Sievek and Meriel Park

In 1988 a Unity Community Service following the merger of the American Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Church of America and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to create the new ELCA. 1300 people attended at the Brainerd High School gymnasium. Diane Peterson led the Mass Folk Choir in singing "We Are One, Lord".

In 1988 Ole Howard was the committee chairman for Trinity's Centennial Celebration. A booklet of history and pictures was printed and special services were held - one in Norwegian with the men sitting on the right side and the women on the left. Other services were for old-timers, children, young people, and the community. A meal for the entire congregation was served at the Brainerd High School Cafeteria with 100-year-old Peter Gaus-tad as honored guest. A Reunion Choir composed of anyone who had ever sung in the choir and directed by Curtis Hansen and Ernie Aarrestad sang at the re-dedication communion service at Tornstrom Auditorium. The Jolly Free Timers hosted a birthday party complete with birthday cake. The Senior High Luther League transformed the Fellowship Hall into "The White Lights Restaurant" and served an elegant adults-only sirloin steak Valentine Dinner prepared by guest chef Doug Johnson. Commemorative glass crosses and Trinity symbol sun catchers were designed and made by Greg Rosenberg.

In 1990 dedication of the completed addition of the Commons, offices, Sunday School rooms, Youth Room and wheel chair lift at a total cost of \$500,805.36 - with cake and coffee, of course! A pancake breakfast by Ardella Johnson raised funds to help furnish the Youth Room. Many years the Youth Room is turned into a special place for The Great Pumpkin Party for All Saints Day.

Recognition and gifts were given to each pastor as they moved on from Trinity, with the entire congregation joining at a meal when Pastor Hoversten retired.

In 2006 we have just celebrated with the dedication of our "new" Trinity with a special dinner for members over 70 years old, a musical evening with all our music groups and special events for our youth and the community,

Every few years Trinity has had a directory printed with all members' pictures. The first seems to be 1969. Does anyone have an earlier one? It has been especially helpful for new pastors and new members as they are getting acquainted. For a number of years Gary Fitch has taken pictures of each Sunday School class and they are framed and mounted by their classroom door. He also takes pictures of new members so we can become acquainted with them.

In the late 1980s Trinity ran a series of inserts, "Trinity Alive" in the Trinity newsletter that included pictures of Everett Nelson playing his violin and Justin Sebring as an angel in the children's Christmas program. In 2003 we had a flyer with activity schedules and pictures that highlighted our Mission Statement of Car-ing, Sharing and Outreach that came out with the *Brainerd Dis-patch* just before Rally Sunday in September. Note cards with a

sketched picture of Trinity, done by Evelyn Matthies, were used by the pastors and staff for Trinity greetings, and packs of them were sold for members use. In 1962 Ray Bang donated 12,000 postcards featuring a photo of Trinity. New ones have now been printed showing the "new" Trinity.

We have kept our membership informed by penny postcards for the annual meeting in 1947, and now monthly with the Trinity Tidings. Some years it was a monthly "Calendar of Events" or "The Trinity Scribe". In 1988 a computer was purchased for the office.

The Library was started in 1969 in what was then the Lounge with a few donated books in a bookshelf. Each year the Ladies Aid bought a book in memory of deceased Aid members. After the addition to the south side of the church, the Library had a whole room and is financed through the church budget. As soon as the current building project was completed, the Library was moved to a newly remodeled room - the old lounge space where it had started. It now has a great selection of books and videos for children and adults and the taped interviews that Bill Hansen did with long-time members for everyone to check out.

In 1958 a committee from Trinity worked with other churches through the Ministerial Association to conduct a Religious Cen-sus survey throughout the area on a Sunday afternoon.

The Nursery has been a busy room every Sunday morning with small children being supervised by volunteers, or sometimes a paid sitter. In the old Trinity on Oak Street, when we started broadcasting the service live on the radio, there was a line in the bulletin every Sunday. "Will parents with small children please sit in the back pews and if your child becomes noisy you can go out quickly so as not to interfere with the broadcast."

At the height of the Cold War Trinity was designated as a fall-out shelter by the local civil defense authorities. Some years Trinity has been the voting location for the south part of Brainerd.

The Brainerd newspaper in 1883 stated that Brainerd's popula-tion was over 4000 and there were over 50 saloons. By 1913 there were 22 churches. That year George W.Holland, who owned many acres in south Brainerd and Barrows and expected to go into iron mining big time, died and in his will left \$1000 to each church - including Trinity - though he was not affiliated with any of them.

When F.J.Casey, Sr. died in 1972, he left \$2000 to Trinity for a Foundation Fund. That has been re-named The Trinity Endow-ment Fund and with additions from many other families it now has a balance of over \$180,000. Only the interest earned each year is used - for special projects not in the regular budget. Trin-ity also has a Memorial Fund with a balance of over \$130,000. Families may designate what they want their gift used for or leave it to the discretion of the Planning Council.

Do you think pastor's duties have changed? The Board of Trus-tees' minutes in 1950 stated that the pastor should act as chair-man for the Trustee's meeting in the absence of the chairman, and he was instructed to check for the need of insulation on the heat pipes in the parsonage basement and order what was need from Sears Roebuck. The church would pay \$20 for a substitute preacher on the two Sundays a year he had off.

The procedure for the celebration of Holy Communion has changed through the years. Through the 1940s communion was offered only a few times a year and it was necessary to arrive at church early enough to meet with the pastor and get permission to receive communion that day. In the 1950s the first Sunday of each month was Communion Sunday and it was possible to meet with a member of the Board of Deacons in the narthex, receive a card from them, fill it out and place it in the offering plate. Sometimes the communion service followed the worship service, with a brief intermission so those who wanted could leave, and occasionally a special communion service was held in the evening. Communion was always served by the pastor with communicants kneeling at the altar rail. By the 1970s council members helped to serve - which included the first women who were on the council. Our bulletin states, "All baptized Christians, who acknowledge in faith and repentance Christ's presence in the bread and wine are invited to partake in Holy Communion. Small children are invited to the Table for a blessing."

In 1998 a freestanding table built by Bob Miller and George Nelson was placed so the pastor could face the congregation as the table was prepared. In June that year it was decided, with lay people assisting, to offer communion every Sunday worship service - sometimes by intinction (dipping the bread into the wine or grape juice) with two stations at the front of the church and two at the back. The communicants remain standing.

Flowers and plants have always added beauty to our worship space - sometimes shared from weddings or funerals, sometimes given in honor or memory of family loved ones. At Christmas time many poinsettias and at Easter time many lilies are given and then shared with Trinity members who are unable to come to worship.

There are many interesting little facts in all the records that have been included in the Trinity archives.

In the original church building the chairs had a shelf underneath for the men's hats, at Christmas real trees were decorated with strings of popcorn and cranberries and there were real candles and men stood on each side with a snuffer and a pail of water, communion wine was served from a common cup to the men first (many had large mustaches), and one usher in the center aisle used a basket on a long handle to receive the offering. Ushers were always men and when we moved to our current site they also directed parking of cars. Now women and young people also serve as ushers. At one time a four-generation family team ushered - Ernie Johnson, Dennis, Michael and Jeffery Sands.

The couple's club, The Trinity Twos, had a masquerade party and Pastor Graves came as a woman, complete with silk hose and a bonnet. Another time they had a wedding - wearing their wedding gowns and suits and a wedding cake was made by Marie Graves and Lois Haugene. The Men's Brotherhood often had a pancake breakfast - including green ones on St. Patrick's Day and one baked with a cardboard center served to Earl Kanne that he handed off to a little boy.

In the 1950s three-hour Good Friday services were rotated between Trinity, First and Bethlehem Lutheran Churches and the stores all closed from noon to three so anyone who wished could attend. Now we observe Good Friday with the evening Tene-

brae, "a service of lights", and depart in dark silence.

1957 was a big year with the groundbreaking for our new church. 54 people were baptized, including babies Lois Adamson, Cheryl Beard, Sharon Jensen, David Dale, Steven Collette, Mark Lange, Richard Bollum, Craig Williams, Brenda Pederson and Kenton Goble. New members included Chellis Evanson, Donald Sievek, Lloyd Duda and John Aga families. There were only seven weddings that year. In 1916 there had been only one wedding, but the busiest years with 24 each were 1969, 73, 78, 82, 87 and 95 and in 1971 there were 26 - for a grand total of over 1200.

More than 1400 funerals have been conducted at Trinity. In 1916 there was only one but most years had many more with 1991 the most at 32. That year there were more for non-members than members, as has been the case in at least six other years since then, as a result of our out-reach to the community through our radio and television ministry and our compassionate pastors.

In the mid 1980s we all helped Bill Hansen's 6th grade class learn how many a million is by collecting the pulls from beverage cans. In 1984 we saved all our Green Stamps for a new microwave oven at Luther Crest Bible Camp, we were paid to serve sandwiches and coffee for the Grand Opening of the new Fleet Farm store, and we observed "Little Christmas Eve" Dec. 23rd in John and Diane Peterson's stable with communion - and the animals. That is a Scandinavian traditional time to secretly do nice things for others.

We've tried to stay healthy through the years with Trinity Trimmers, Weigh Down and currently with Faithfully Fit and our Parish Nurse Sue Dudding.

So many have helped in many ways large and small. In 1981 John Peterson and Ronald Sorenson built our wall of mailboxes. When speakers were first installed at the front of the church Harold Moen built a partial wall around them and when a crack appeared in the brick wall it was repaired by Harlan "Chink" Chisholm. Dwayne Peterson built the welcome desk, the crosses on the office wall and Commons door and small replicas that have been given as gifts.

Besides the communion table, Bob Miller and George Nelson, often with the help of Elwood Wessman and Dick Anderson, built whatever was needed at the moment - stable for Christmas program, large table for the Fellowship Hall kitchen, Library bookcases, storage closets in hallway, changing tables for the Day Care, etc. plus whatever was needed in the parsonage. Kenneth Pederson keeps things fixed before most of us even realize they are in need of repair. For years Shirley Nelson and Lillian Rankin have headed the group that keeps all our kitchens cleaned and stocked with staples and clean dishtowels.



The Scattering Garden where ashes may be interred following cremation was given by Orvis Twombly and was constructed in 2004 south of the church building. A large stone cross stands at the center and names and dates are on paving tiles. A bench, inscribed, "Dedicated in loving memory of Betty Twombly" is an invitation for visitors to linger awhile. The idea first started when Betty express her wish to have her ashes scattered

among the shrubs and flowers she had helped to establish on the Trinity grounds. Much landscaping and many Christmas decorations have come from Landsburg Landscape Nursery - Roger and Marie and John and Tina Landsburg.



The Chapel pews were given in 1993 in memory of Sara Birkland by her family. The leaded glass window over the Chapel doors was given by Don Wennberg. The small brass vial for sand that the pastor inscribes a cross on the casket with the spoken words, ". . . dust to dust . . ." was a gift in memory of Glen Goble after his daughter noticed Pastor Holte using an orange plastic pill bottle for sand at his funeral. The tall candleholders, that were on the ends of the pews, and will now be used with the pew chairs, were given in 1979 by Bennie and Beverly Britton in memory of their nine-year-old son George. Wooden offering plates were made by Bill Matthies with orange felt liners with embroidered Trinity symbol by Evelyn Matthies. Now in 2006 many of the furnishings for our "new" Trinity have been given by many members.

Maybe the best gift was from Ray Bang when he told us, "Tell people you love and appreciate them while they are still alive, not praise them after they have died."

The original corner stone of Trinity contained a Katekismus (Catechism), Menighedsordning (Constitution), Synodalhaandbog (Synodical Handbook), history of the congregation from 1887-1904, Kirkelig Samler (Danish newspaper), Brainerd Dispatch of April 29, 1904, Donnevirke, issue of April 27, 1904, Evengelist Lutherst and Kirketidende (Danish church newsletter). Following dedication of our new building at its present location in 1958 new items were added: Revised Standard Version of the Holy Bible, Luther's Small Catechism, Lutheran Herald of September 16, 1958, Brainerd Daily Dispatch of September 12, 1958, annual report of the congregation for 1957, and Constitution and History of the congregation.



This booklet has been written by Verdelle Goble and published by Joan Oscarson December 2006.

SENIOR PASTORS

Knut Knutsen Bjorgo	1885-1888
Hans A. Nodshilder	1888-1889
John Rasmus Rorvik	1889-1892
T.J. Tonneson	1892-1894
Dorotheus Johnsen Growe	1894-1904
Thore Laurentius Rosholt	1905-1907
Christian Haugstad	1907-1916
Andreas Sorenson	1916-1919
Edward R. Rorem	1919-1921
Karl Stromme	1921-1922
Oscar L. Bolstad	1922-1947
Kermit O. Graves	1947-1963
R. C. Reinholtzen-Interim	1963-1964
Chester E. Hoversten	1964-1987
David P. Holte	1987-Present

ASSISTANT PASTOR

Arlo Feiock	1965-1966
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ASSOCIATE PASTORS

Gary W. Sartain	1971-1973
Ronald R. Gilthvedt	1973-1979
Michael J. Fibranz	1980-1984
David P. Holte	1984-1987
Lynn R. Ronsberg	1988-1993
Paul H. Ellens	1993-1994
Margaret 'Maggi' Pleiss-Sippola	1994-1996
Juli Sutton-Deem	1997-2004
Hans E. Anderson	2005-Present

INTERN PASTORS

Leonard R. Flachman	1960
David L. Place	1961
Gerald Stroud	1962
John M. Braaten	1963
Rena Peterson	2004
Jennifer Rose	2005
Kari Casper	2006



Sunday Schedule

8:15am & 10:30am Worship Services with Holy Communion

9:30am Education Hour for all ages.