

# THE COURIER

*Sharing Christ's Love by Welcoming, Worshiping, Learning, and Serving*



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*The Lord God formed a human creature from the dust of the ground, and breathed into its nostrils the breath of life.*  
(Genesis 2.7)

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Did you know that there are puns and word-games in the Bible?

The ancient Hebrew word for the “ground,” the “earth,” or the “dirt” is “adamah.” The word for “human creature” is “adam,” which, when the original creature is split into two genders, will be kept by the male creature as his name.

To say that the “adam” is formed from the “adamah” is to say that the dirt creature is made from the dirt. And the only thing that distinguishes it from the dirt is the breath of God.

If that suggests too low of an opinion of human beings, consider that the word “human” is based on the Latin word “humus,” a word for the soil, and that it’s connected to words like “humility” and “humiliation.”

You could say that a humble person is someone who is “down to earth.”

The reason I’m going on about this is that, while much of this issue of our newsletter will talk about love, and pink hearts, and flowers, part of my job as a pastor is to remind you that Valentine’s Day is only three days before Ash Wednesday—the day when we are told to “remember that you are dust, and to dust you will return.”

When faced with the question of what to do about Ash Wednesday when we can’t gather together to have ashes placed on

our foreheads, my answer is to find a way for each of us to observe Ash Wednesday in our own homes.

While many of you could burn some old palm fronds or paper to make ashes and then mix the ashes with some olive oil (which is the “recipe” for what we use), it will be much easier for you to use something that is much more common and has a biblical precedent—dirt.

As a way of observing the season of Lent in your home this year, I invite you to choose a small bowl that you like because of its appearance or sentimental value—and fill it with dirt or soil. It can be potting soil or some dirt from your back yard. Keep it somewhere in your home where you can look at it every day and be reminded both of your “humble” origin and of the fact that you are filled with the breath of God.

Keep the bowl by your side when you participate in worship or Bible study or fellowship. Our bowls of dirt will be one of the things that connect our church family together.

In preparation for watching our pre-recorded Ash Wednesday service, set aside a pinch of your dirt and add to it a drop of olive oil (or some other cooking oil or essential oil). Then, at the appropriate moment of the service, you’ll be able to use this dirt to draw a cross on your own forehead or the forehead of someone in your family, while saying the words, “Remember that you are dust, and to

## Trinity Lutheran Church

Paul Gibson, Pastor  
Anne Harman, Intern Pastor  
Lynne Tallon, Deacon  
Ron Turner, Organist and  
Director of Music  
Leah Heinicke, Office Admin  
Azur H. Abdić, Facility Admin  
Gayle Nelson, Seminarian

## Council Members

Lisa Johnson, President  
Daryl Stewart, Vice President  
Toni Durilla, Financial Secretary  
Helen Mowrer, Treasurer  
Lynne Tallon  
Jan Dorr  
Jen Durilla  
John Hill  
Barb Macomb  
Pastor Paul Gibson

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dust you will return.”

We are creating a number of ways to mark the season of Lent together, as a community of faith.

Alongside the “Word in Season” and “Christ in Our Home” devotional booklets that are always available, we’ve purchased a special devotional booklet for the season of Lent called “A Story to Tell.” It’s made up of daily readings that will take you through the whole gospel of Mark between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday.

Printed copies of the book are available from the church office. Perhaps some tech-savvy person can take responsibility for putting each day’s material on our website or Facebook page...

We are putting the finishing touches on a weekly study of the Gospel of John that we will offer in the seasons of Lent and Easter. It will replace our Saturday book study group and our Monday faith-sharing gatherings, and it will meet “over Zoom” as they have done.

We’ve chosen Thursday evenings for the Bible study, but we want to find a second day and time on which to offer it, as well. Let us know if there is a particular day and time that interests you. We want as many people as possible to join together on this study.

In place of our live-streamed Evening Prayer services, we will offer special pre-recorded services of prayer and lament in the season of Lent. They are described elsewhere in this newsletter; be on the lookout for when and how to watch them.

Together, I pray that we can mark the season of Lent in ways that remind us of God’s unfailing love, with or without the pink hearts and flowers.

Your brother in Christ,  
*Pr. Paul*



## Notes from the Organ Bench

I can’t believe it’s already time for the February newsletter! Our choir and our bell choir are still on hiatus, but I am hoping we will be together again sooner rather than later. The bells will be learning the Pachelbel canon when we begin again, and the singing choir will be working on the Faure Requiem. Want to get an early start? Both of these have easily accessible recordings, and the more familiar you are with the music, the easier it will be to learn.

We continue to look for ways to improve our online music in worship. Please contact me if you have any thoughts about how we can improve!

Thanks,

- Ron Turner  
Organist and Director of Music

# Lenten Evening Prayers of Lament

By Intern Pastor Anne Harman

We have arrived at the one-year anniversary since Covid began. It has been a challenging, life-altering year for all of us. All of us have experienced loss this year. We are all grieving what was that cannot be, what will never be, and even the empty space and time that feels stolen or wasted. We have all been impacted. But each of us holds our own story. Some have been thrown into the midst of this pandemic working in hospitals, or as emergency responders. Some have worked countless hours to research vaccines or treatments. Some have been exposed as “essential workers” — jobs that seemed simple but all of a sudden felt heroic. Some became isolated as they were identified as having the greatest risk. Some were unable to care for aging loved ones. Some watched their livelihoods disappear. And most tragically, far too many lost their lives to this virus. We have collectively experience trauma.

Trauma always invites meaningful change. Trauma always disrupts what was. It also exposes our most vulnerable places. We have seen this in our country as conflict overflowed into our streets and as once again, those who are most vulnerable paid the greatest price. But change also allows us to arrive in a new place able to live into a new reality. There are identifiable stages to trauma. The longest and more challenging stage is grief. Each loss, named here or not, must be grieved for us to arrive in a new place ready to live fully. We are still living out the suffering, but with a vaccine, hope has

been given and we stand in the in-between space of not yet there and no way to go back.

Hoping to bring our grief to prayer, on each Thursday evening of Lent at 6:00 PM we will offer an Evening Prayer of Lament on our Facebook Page. We will gather on Facebook to pray, grieve, and sing together. We will open our hearts to God’s healing touch and invitation to new life. In these days leading up to Lent I invite you to spend some time with God, open your heart, and name the losses this year. I will also invite you to consider sharing your loss with me via email ([welcome@mylutheran.org](mailto:welcome@mylutheran.org)). The Thursday evening services will be structured around various forms of loss I have heard of and experienced this year. Also, if you have someone who died this year you would like to be remembered by name please share that with me as well. They will be mentioned by name in our prayer. They don’t have to have died of Covid. This year every death was made more complicated and harder to process because of social distancing.

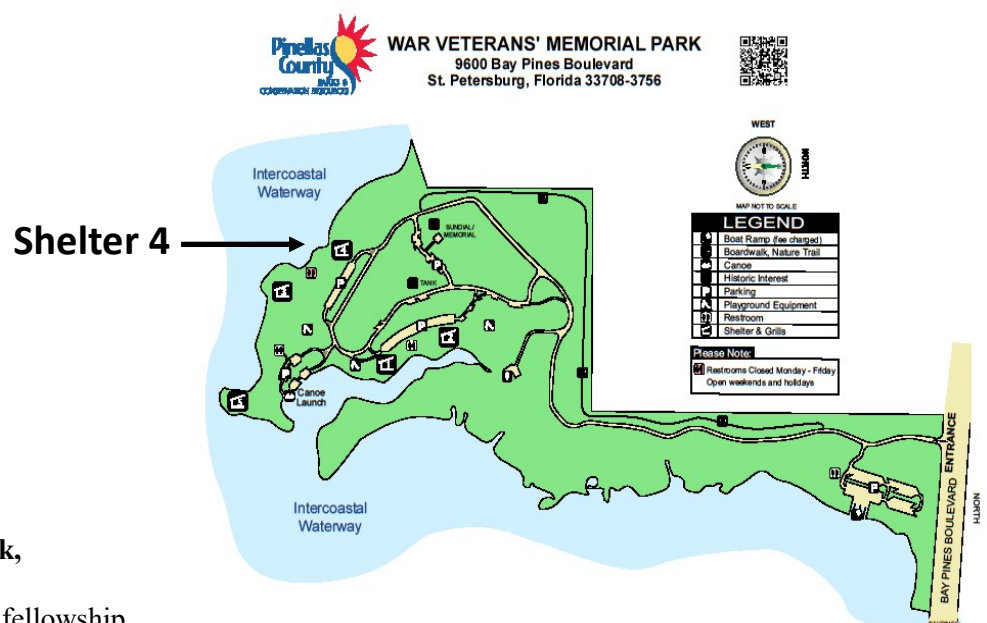
I hope this time of prayer will help all of us prepare for what God has planned for our future. God is always working on tomorrow even when we cannot face today.

*“For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.” – Jeremiah 29:11 NRSV*



At 10 a.m.  
- Sun, Feb 21, 2021

join us in **Shelter 4** at  
**War Veterans' Memorial Park,**  
**9600 Bay Pines Boulevard,**  
for socially distanced worship and fellowship.



# The TLC Bulletin Board



## Our Weekly Online Gatherings

You can join any of these gatherings by **computer** or by **telephone**.

- By computer, go to <https://zoom.us/join> and enter the meeting ID
- By phone, dial **(301) 715-8592** and enter the meeting ID.

You may be put into a "waiting room," but you will then join the meeting.

### Fellowship Hour:

Sundays at 2 pm

### Monday Night Faith Sharing:

Mondays at 7 pm

### Book Study:

Saturdays at 3 pm

Meeting ID for all of the above:

**402 615 714.**



## >> ANNUAL MEETING <<

Don't forget! **Part 2** of our **annual meeting** will take place on **Sunday, February 7, at 10:00.**

The annual meeting will be led from the homes of the congregation's president, pastor, council members, and paid staff.

All members of the congregation who wish to participate and who can do so with a computer will be expected to do so from their home.

For those who wish to take part and cannot do so with a computer, we will have a zoom link active in the Van Horne Fellowship Hall. Please let the staff know if you plan to join from there.

At the January 31st meeting (part 1), we approved the 2020 annual report.

Still to accomplish at the February 7th session:

- to set a congregational vision for 2021 and beyond,
- to choose and elect congregational leaders, and
- to approve the 2021 budget of the congregation.

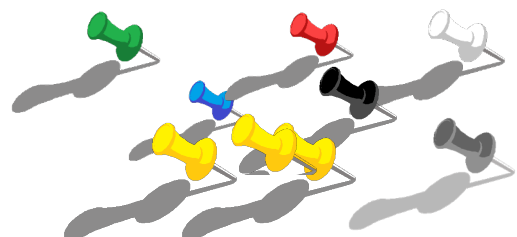
### **Next Council Meeting**

**FEBRUARY 21**

### **Council Retreat/Workshop**

Following worship in the park at War Veterans Memorial Park

(see page 3)





# Why Complementarian Men Do More Housework

## Editor's Note:

*This article by Pastor Joe Carter is about growth and change among heterosexual men who are married to women. Recognizing God's work among all genders and all relationships, this article has important things to say to all of us.*

**The Story:** A social science study titled “Godly husbands and housework” finds that husbands who attend religious services regularly tend to do more housework than other men do.

**The Background:** Housework, including child care, is a type of labor that often falls primarily on women. While men have increased their share of housework significantly over the past 50 years, women still provide most of the domestic labor. For example, women in the United States spend two hours more each day cleaning, cooking, taking care of children, and doing other unpaid work than men do, according to a report by Oxfam and the Institute for Women’s Policy Research.

But a study by researchers Bethany Gull and Claudia Geist finds two types of couples that share the workload more equitably. The first is secular couples who share a progressive view of gender equality. The second is couples who are religious (particularly Protestant) and frequently attend worship services.

The researchers found that men who attend religious services sporadically do occasionally report a more traditional division of labor for grocery shopping, meal preparation, and cleaning, and limited evidence that they may do less housework overall (among those who attend services once per month). However, men with high levels of participation in religious services are associated with both equal sharing of the labor and also spending more time on housework.

“What can we surmise from these findings?” the researchers ask. “One possibility is that highly religious men are heeding the call from their leaders to become more involved in family life, including participation in household chores. Despite giving lip service to traditional gender ideology, many conservative couples exhibit a pragmatic egalitarianism that may lead to more equal sharing of household task.”

The researchers also note that the effect could be related to complementarianism:

Conservative Protestant denominations, from their pulpits as well as in their written works, promote traditional gender ideology, known as ‘complementarianism,’ and create religious cultures in which breadwinner/homemaker roles are imbued with divine significance. . . . Yet complementarian gender ideology and reduced male participation in household labor may not be directly linked.

A number of conservative Christian organizations, as exemplified by the Promise Keepers, promote versions of masculinity which encourage men to spend more time in the home and develop qualities such as nurturance, cooperation, and expressiveness. These organizations pointedly critique men who ignore their responsibilities at home, although these responsibilities center more around relationships than around

participation in housework.

**What It Means:** Discussions about complementarianism often focus on the role of women, especially in the church. What is often overlooked—or at least underexamined—is how complementarianism affects men in the home, especially in sharing housework.

As family researchers Laurie DeRose and Anna Barren point out, most religions are pronatalist and family-oriented and promote traditional gender ideologies that view the man’s role as leader, protector, and provider. “Given that understanding,” they note, “it seems

safe to assume that many highly religious men have a vested interest in carrying out their role as the family head with involved love and devotion, especially, since faith adds a certain divine calling to each of the roles.”

“It would be surprising if a man called to value his wife above his work would be content to spend his evenings being served by her,” they add.

What is true for traditional religions is especially true for Christians who embrace what can be called “mere complementarianism.” As Denny Burk explains, “*Mere complementarianism* suggests ‘both equality and beneficial differences between men and women without



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the differences cancelling the equality. . . This biblical doctrine of the *imago dei* is why mere complementarianism eschews any notion of male superiority or female inferiority.”

In Ephesians 5:25-30, Paul lays the foundation for how such complementarianism is exhibited by husbands:

*Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church—for we are members of his body.*

In this passage we find three qualities of love a husband must exemplify toward his wife. The husband’s love is to be sacrificial, purifying, and caring.

First, a husband’s love must be sacrificial. Just as Christ gave his life to the church, a husband should be willing to give his life for his wife. And if he is willing to make the ultimate sacrifice, then he must be willing to make lesser sacrifices too. A husband shouldn’t say he’d take a bullet for his wife if he won’t take out the trash for her. If he truly will give his life for her, then he will be willing to give her his time, attention, effort, money, and whatever else is required for her good.

**A husband shouldn’t say he’d take a bullet for his wife if he won’t take out the trash for her.**

Second, a husband’s love must be purifying. Just as Christ wants to purify his church from all sin, a husband should

seek to protect his wife’s holiness, purity, and virtue. He will not induce her to sin, and he’ll make every effort to protect her from sin.

Third, a husband’s love must be caring. Just as Christ nourishes and cherishes his church, a husband should seek to nourish and cherish his wife. To nourish her is to give her what she needs to flourish in all areas of life. To cherish her is to lovingly protect and care for her with warmth and affection. To be caring requires husbands to display kindness and patience and to be tender in the way they treat their wife.

At least two of these qualities of a husband—being sacrificial and caring—will naturally affect the husband’s role in housework.

Why, then, is helping around the home a relatively new phenomenon for Christian men? Perhaps it’s not. The study by Gull and Geist is one of the first to even explore the subject, so complementarian men may have been doing the dishes all along. But a more likely explanation is that the demands of complementarianism may change depending on the cultural context.

For the last 70 years, the demands on women—whether they work outside the home or not—have substantially changed. It would not be surprising then to find complementarian men have also changed their behavior to be more sacrificial and caring in the changed context. For our great-grandfathers, it might have been enough to show love to one’s wife by providing for the family financially. But for today’s complementarian husbands, it might also mean helping with the laundry.



## The power of love

By comparing love to everything from oxygen and fire to wind and war, songs and poetry emphasize its immense power — for good or for ill. Christian author Patrick Morley uses metaphors that focus on love’s practicality in everyday life: “Love is the glue that holds us together and the oil that keeps us from rubbing each other the wrong way.” He also calls love “the WD-40 of relationships” because it “can seep into tight places where logic, threats and even promises just can’t seem to penetrate.”

St. Augustine, who predated WD-40 by centuries, knew that love not only eases friction in personal interactions but, with God’s help, can change hearts and lives. “Love all [people], even your enemies,” he advises. “Love them, not because they are your brothers, but that they may become your brothers. Thus you will ever burn with fraternal love, both for him who is already your brother and for your enemy, that he may by loving become your brother.”





**Lent** begins each year on Ash Wednesday, 46 days before Easter Sunday. This year **Lent** will start on February 17th, **2021**; and if you are following the 40 days tradition, **Lent** will then end on Holy Saturday, April 3rd, **2021**.

## Fasting from criticalness

Most fasting involves temporarily giving up something you enjoy. When you long for a cookie or a favorite show, you instead turn your attention to God, reorienting yourself to his best.

Catherine Marshall, in *A Closer Walk*, presents a different approach she calls fasting from “criticalness.” God dealt with her judgmental spirit by prompting her to spend 24 hours without criticizing “anyone about anything.” At first, Marshall felt rather empty when she didn’t engage in a heated political debate. But friends and family didn’t seem to miss her comments. Plus, God replaced the energy she’d spent attempting to correct others with energy and creativity to positively influence them.

A critical spirit can make us lose perspective, joy and even relationships. It also can prevent the good work God wants to achieve through us. Consider what could happen as a result of your own “criticalness fast.” Pray for God to do the correcting while you focus on building up others.

—Janna Firestone

## An interlocking community



Christ distributes courage through community; he dissipates doubts through fellowship. He never deposits all knowledge in one person but distributes pieces of the jigsaw puzzle to many. When you interlock your understanding with mine, and we share our discoveries, when we mix, mingle, confess and pray, Christ speaks.

—Max Lucado, *Fearless*



**02/05** Marty Snapp  
**02/06** Ginni Truglio  
**02/13** Craig Mowrer  
**02/18** David Amann  
**02/23** Sean Reynolds  
**02/26** Alan Due



**02/03** Cal Cook & Mary McMahon  
**02/16** Matthew & Jennifer Reitz

## Celebrating love

For 80 years, a couple in Ecuador was an exceptional example of marital love. Julio Cesar Mora Tapia, 110, and Waldramina Maclovioa Quinteros Reyes, 104, were wed on February 7, 1941. Until Julio’s death last October, they were reportedly the world’s oldest married couple. Their large family includes nine great-great-grandchildren!

Good News Network recounts: “Julio Cesar fell in love with Waldramina’s beauty, her conversation, and her big heart.” Meanwhile, she found in him “a poet with a young spirit.” The couple says the formula for a lasting marriage is “love + maturity + mutual respect,” as well as patience, compassion and hard work.

That calls to mind Paul’s words, often read at weddings: “Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth” (1 Corinthians 13:4-6, *ESV*).

# Trinity Lutheran Church Calendar

# february



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 7p Faith Sharing- via Zoom <sup>1</sup>	2 >> Handbell Hiatus <<	3 3pm—Pre-Record Sunday service	4	5	6 3p Book Study - via Zoom <sup>1</sup>
7 Worship Service available online 10a Congregation Annual Mtg Pt 2 - via Zoom <sup>1</sup> 2p Virtual Fellowship - via Zoom <sup>1</sup>	8 7p Faith Sharing- via Zoom <sup>1</sup>	9 >> Handbell Hiatus <<	10 3pm—Pre-Record Sunday service	11	12	13 3p Book Study - via Zoom <sup>1</sup>
14 <b>Valentine's Day</b> Worship Service available online 2p Virtual Fellowship - via Zoom <sup>1</sup>	15 <b>Presidents' Day</b> 7p Faith Sharing- via Zoom <sup>1</sup>	16 >> Handbell Hiatus <<	17 <b>Ash Wednesday</b> Worship Service available online 3pm—Pre-Record Sunday service	18	19	20 <b>March Newsletter Deadline</b>
21 Worship Service available online 10a Worship in the Park (see p.3) Followed by: Council Retreat/ Workshop	22	23 >> Handbell Hiatus <<	24 3pm—Pre-Record Sunday service	25 6pm—Facebook Prayer Service 7p Bible Study - via Zoom <sup>1</sup>	26	27
28 Worship Service available online 2p Virtual Fellowship - via Zoom <sup>1</sup>	<b>Church office hours: Monday -Thursday 9 am - 3 pm</b>					



<sup>1</sup>All church meetings now use the same Zoom link.

To participate by computer, go to: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/402615714>

To participate by phone, dial (301)715-8592 and enter meeting ID: 402 615 714.

Our pre-recorded services can be found

on our YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCVa-kol4fUtz65ttLjxD2Ng>

or on our website's "Worship" page: <https://trinitylutheranstpete.org/outreach/worship/>

Livestream Services on our facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/trinitylutheranstpete>