



On 28th Avenue between Lake and 31st Streets Minneapolis, MN 55406 • 612-729-8358 • office@htlcmpls.org • www.htlcmpls.org  
WORSHIP SERVICES: 8:45 and 11:00 am • CHURCH SCHOOL: 9:45 am • Jay Carlson and Ingrid Rasmussen, Pastors

### TANZANIA PASTORS AND WIDOWS PENSION SUPPLEMENT

You may have seen references in our newsletters and annual reports to the "African Pastors' Fund" at Holy Trinity and have wondered what it was. Now that it has been 15 years since the fund was first established, we would like to explain its history and purpose.

In 1998, Holy Trinity members Josiah and LuAnn Kibira spent a year in Josiah's hometown of Bukoba, Tanzania, as self-supporting volunteers for the ELCA. LuAnn worked as a nurse consultant at Ntoma Orphanage & Dispensary, while Josiah worked as an IT consultant at the diocese's central office.

It was during this time that various retired pastors approached Josiah expressing the economic and financial hardships they were facing due to their low pensions. Josiah was approached partly because many of the pastors had known his father well when he was the bishop in the diocese. Josiah learned that some of the pastors had no income at all because when they retired they opted to take their pension as a lump sum. The amount was not large, however, and was quickly used up. For those who did not take lump sums, the monthly pensions averaged the equivalent of three dollars per month and were quite small compared to the high inflation rates that the whole country was facing. One pastor explained that the bus fare to get to the diocese central office to collect the pension was almost equal to the amount of the pension he was going to collect.

What was remarkable about these retired pastors is that even in retirement they were expected to work in their villages as well as within the diocese. They continued to lead worship, visit the sick, and officiate for weddings and funerals. While the diocese did provide medical care, the pastors did not receive any income.

#### A Plan to Help

Upon completing their service in Tanzania, Josiah and LuAnn were determined to find a way to help. Since Holy Trinity members had come to know Bukoba well through several congregational trips, the Kibiras turned to the congregation for help. The problem was shared with Joel Wiberg and Pastor Ronald Johnson, who had both lived and worked in Bukoba, and they suggested presenting the idea to the finance committee for further discussions. It was later accepted and an African Pastors' Fund was created to augment the income of retired pastors and widows of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania-Northwest Diocese.

#### The Goal of the Fund

At its inception, the goal was to raise about \$25,000 and create a fund to help out about 33 retired pastors and widows. The number of pastors currently eligible to be served by the fund has now decreased to about 23. The current balance as of today is \$40,316.85.

The fund was to operate this way: (a) The name of the fund was to be "Tanzania Pastors and Widows Pension Supplement." (b) Members of the congregation may continue to contribute to the fund even after reaching the original goal of \$25,000. (c) The funds or endowment money is invested for secure growth. (d) The annual growth (interest) is withdrawn and sent by Holy Trinity to the NW Diocese each November for safe and timely distribution to all eligible pastors and widows.

#### Impact of the Fund

One pastor expressed something very personal to Josiah while he was volunteering in Tanzania. He said, "My financial situation (*cont.*)

### SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

*The second covenant in this year's Lenten readings is the one made with Abraham and Sarah: God's promise to make them the ancestors of many, with whom God will remain in everlasting covenant. Paul says this promise comes to all who share Abraham's faith in the God who brings life into being where there was no life. We receive this baptismal promise of resurrection life in faith. Sarah and Abraham receive new names as a sign of the covenant, and we too get new identities in baptism, as we put on Christ.*



#### LESSONS

- Genesis 17: 1-7, 15-16
- Psalm 22:23-31
- Romans 4:13-25
- Mark 8:31-38

#### ADULT FORUM

10:00 am

#### MARCH 1

#### "New Member Reception"

Please plan to attend our new member welcome in the Community Room. We will hear current members Eleni Wolking and John Buzza offer reflections on their participation in this community. And we'll have the opportunity to meet the eighteen people choosing to become partners in ministry at Holy Trinity!

#### MARCH 8

#### "Spiritual Reflections on 2014 Academy Films: Suffering"

Doug Wallace

It is unusual for so many serious films in one year to lift up the experience of suffering. Think of films such as *Unbroken*, *The Imitation Game*, *Wild*, *Selma*, *The Theory of Everything*, and *Still Alice*. They all deal with suffering—different kinds and forms of suffering—but woven through their stories are struggles with how it can be faced.

*(continued from previous column)* is so bad that I do not have an offering for Christmas." This was a heavy testimony from a man whose life was dedicated to teaching others the importance of giving. But now he had nothing to give. This fund ensures that most pastors at least have something to sustain themselves over the holidays so that they can also be generous. On average, each pastor or widow receives between \$35 to \$50 each November. This amount fluctuates depending on the dollar exchange rate to the Tanzanian Shilling and the market performance here in the United States. It may seem small, but it is a significant amount in Bukoba, and pastors look forward to receiving it, especially at the end of the year when expenses tend to increase.

#### Appreciation

The retired pastors and widows continue to express gratitude to the members of Holy Trinity. They continue to appreciate Holy Trinity's partnership in helping them in their mission of spreading the Gospel even in their retirement. They continue to respond to God's call to serve, in part because of Holy Trinity's gift.

— Josiah and LuAnn Kibira, Joel and Nancy Wiberg, Jay Carlson

# PARISH INFORMATION

## STUDY TRIP

The Adult Education Committee is encouraging a Study/Travel trip to Germany on the cusp of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation that takes its origin from the posting of 95 theses intended for discussion on the door of a church in Wittenberg by Martin Luther in 1517. Two options are being considered: one hosted by Paul Daniels and Mary Steeber of Luther Seminary in October of this year; the other will be hosted by Hans Wiersma and Mark Tranvik of Augsburg College in October of 2016. Each will be in Wittenberg on October 31. An informational meeting will be held on Sunday, March 15, at 12:15 p.m. in the library for those interested in exploring participation in such a Study/Travel Seminar.

## BOUNDARY WATERS TRIP

The annual trip to the Boundary Waters is scheduled this year from Friday, August 7, through Monday, August 10. We plan to paddle/portage/camp for three nights. If you are willing and able to portage a pack or canoe, you are welcome to join us! Please sign up in the Community Room. Contact John Sulzbach or Linda McMahon with questions.

## ARTICLE STUDY

Join Jeff Olsen Biebighauser and Pastor Ingrid on Tuesdays, April 21 and 28, from 7:00-8:30 p.m. for discussion of Ta-Nehisi Coates' article "The Case for Reparations." Originally published in June 2014, Coates makes the case that after 250 years of slavery, 90 years of Jim Crow, 60 years of separate but equal, 35 years of racist housing policy, we need to reckon with our compounding moral debts in order to become whole. Hosted by the 20s, 30s, 40s group; adults of all ages welcome. Sign up in the Community Room, where copies of the article can be found.

## COUNCIL CORNER

Highlights from February's council meeting: (1) Updates were given on the AED machine that was installed near the women's restroom by the church offices and on the new sound system that will be installed in the sanctuary before Easter. (2) The bylaw revisions were reported to the congregation at the annual meeting. The revised document has been mailed to members' homes, as required by the constitution. A congregational meeting was scheduled for March 22 to discuss and approve the proposed bylaw amendments.

Jay Carlson and Ingrid Rasmussen, Pastors  
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Ingrid Rasmussen

PARISH EVENTS March 1-7, 2015	
Sunday	8:45 am Worship Service with Holy Communion
	9:30 am Confirmation
	9:45 am Sunday School
	10:00 am Adult Forum/New Member Reception
	11:00 am Worship Service with Holy Communion
	12:15 pm First Sunday Musings at Le Town Talk
Monday	2:00 pm Swahili Service
	11:00 am-2:30 pm AARP Tax Aide
Tuesday	7:00 pm Peace with Justice
	11:00 am-2:30 pm AARP Tax Aide
	11:00 am Text study
Wednesday	3:30-5:30 pm Open gym
	6:30 pm HTTC rehearsal "Anatomy of Gray"
	10 am-3 pm Mosaic workshop
	2:00 pm Worship/Fine Arts Committee meets
	5:30 pm Soup Supper
Saturday	5:30 pm Trinity Singers; 6:00 pm Youth choirs
	6:00 pm Youth Committee meets
	7:00 pm Evening Prayer in Bartsch Room
	7:45 pm Adult Choir
	10:00 am HTTC rehearsal "Anatomy of Gray"

WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS MARCH 1, 2015		
8:45 AM		11:00 AM
Grayson Wieczorek, Linnea Krig	Acolytes	Will Kelley, Louis Kelley
Cathy Alpizar	Assisting Minister	Sharon Englund
Joyce Peterson	Communion	Randy Nelson, Alan Libra
Linda/Gerry Berglin	Altar Guild	Stella Townsend, Rosemary Foley
Bob Peschiutta, DeWayne Townsend III, Marcea Mariani, Neil Anderson	Ushers	Mike Mann, Dennis/Lynda Nordholm, George Madich
Liz/Pat Kelley	Coffee Servers	
Joyce Peterson, Gerry Berglin	Counters	Scott Cole, Deb Helmel
	Closer	Deb Sodt
<b>Financial Report</b>	<b>February 22</b>	<b>Year to date</b>
Budget requirement	13,982.69	111,861.54
Budget receipts	18,878.28	115,791.19
Boiler Fund	27.00	109.00
Exodus Appeal	5.00	1,740.00
World Hunger	20.00	387.00
World Hunger by Karen Batdorf		