
THE TRINITY TWEET

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The mission of
Trinity Lutheran
School is to assist
families to make
fully devoted
followers of Jesus
Christ through
Christ-centered
education.

Climbing the Wrong Ladder

There's an old saying that goes something like this: You can spend your whole life climbing the ladder of success, only to reach the top and discover it was leaning against the wrong building.

That idea stuck with me from Pastor Ben's message this weekend. Before he was Paul, Saul was a ladder climber, and he was really good at it. In Philippians 3, we see the résumé: circumcised on the eighth day. An Israelite. From the tribe of Benjamin. A Hebrew of Hebrews. A Pharisee. Zealous. As far as outward righteousness under the law was concerned, he was "faultless."

If there were awards for religious achievement, the trophy case would have been full. His success gave him identity. His accomplishments gave him status. His religious résumé gave him confidence before God. And then he met Jesus. Suddenly, Saul discovered that the ladder he had spent his entire life climbing was leaning against the wrong building. He changed his name, and changed his life.

Years later, as an older man writing to the Christians in Philippi, Paul looked back at everything he had once considered so important and wrote: "I consider them garbage, that I may gain

Christ and be found in him." — Philippians 3:8–9 The Greek word Paul uses for "garbage" is *skubalon*. And it is stronger than our English translation sometimes makes it sound. It means rubbish, refuse, waste, even dung.

That is quite a statement. Paul isn't saying that working hard is *skubalon*. He isn't saying achievement is bad, that success doesn't matter, or that we shouldn't use the gifts God has given us. He is saying that compared with knowing Jesus, none of those things can carry the weight we so often ask them to carry. Grades can't tell you who you are. Your job can't tell you who you are. Your bank account can't tell you who you are. The number of points you score, followers you have, awards you win, colleges you get into, promotions you receive, or people who recognize your name cannot tell you who you are.

And none of them can make you right with God. That might be an especially important message for our kids to hear, and for us adults to remember.

The world hands our children ladders very early. Climb this one. Get better grades. Make the team. Be popular. Get into the right school. Build the right résumé. Be successful. Be noticed. Be enough. And if we aren't careful, even as Christian parents and educators, we can simply hand them the same ladders. But the Gospel says something radically different. You don't have to climb your way to Jesus. **Jesus came down to you.**

Christianity isn't about proving ourselves worthy enough for Christ. It is about realizing that Christ has already taken hold of us. Paul writes: "I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me." — Philippians 3:12

Notice the order. Jesus took hold of Paul first. That changes everything. Paul still pressed on. He still worked. He still pursued. He still ran the race. But he wasn't running to *earn* an identity anymore. He was running because Jesus had already given him one. That's the difference between achievement and grace. And that is a good question for our families this week:

What ladder are we climbing? What are we quietly believing will finally make us enough? Success? Recognition? Money? Grades? Sports? Our children's accomplishments? Having the right house, the right job, the right reputation,

or the appearance that we have everything together? Those things aren't necessarily bad. But they make terrible saviors. Paul had reached places others could only dream of reaching, and after meeting Jesus he looked back and essentially said, *Compared to Christ? Skubalon.*

Our theme this year challenges us to Stand Firm. Not our accomplishments. Not our reputation. Not our goodness. Not our ability to prove ourselves. Stand firm on **Christ**. Work hard. Use your gifts. Study. Compete. Achieve. Dream big. Encourage your children to do the same. But don't confuse the ladder with the destination. At the end of the day, our greatest accomplishment is knowing Jesus. And even better: being known, loved, forgiven, redeemed, and claimed by Him.

Family Question What "ladder" are you climbing that can become more important than Jesus?

Family Prayer Jesus, thank You that we do not have to prove ourselves worthy of Your love. Forgive us when we put our confidence in our accomplishments, reputation, success, or goodness. Remind us that everything else pales in comparison with knowing You. Help us to press on, not so that You will love us, but because You have already taken hold of us. Keep our eyes fixed on You and help our family to stand firm in Christ alone. Amen.

EXTRA THEME SHIRTS FOR SALE We have a few extra Stand Firm shirts for sale in the school office in the following sizes:
Youth – Small, Large
Adult – XS, S, M, XL
You may bring cash or check, or we can send an invoice to FACTS customers. First come, first served!

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE SCHEDULING Parent-teacher conferences are coming soon. A letter with directions was emailed in September. Please schedule your appointment(s) by Tuesday, October 13.

ADULT JEANS WANTED! WAVE PROJECT is a non-profit organization which provides mobile showers and essentials to men and women experiencing homelessness in the Metro Detroit area. One of our parents is involved with their organization and is collecting new or gently used ADULT jeans. Mens jeans sizes 30-36 are the highest need. A collection box will be in the Coffee Oasis for the month of October if you are interested in donating. Please contact Robyn with any additional questions at 248-318-4348.

LIBRARY LIST Attached to every mailing of the Trinity Tweet is a library overdue list. This will let you know which books your students have not returned. Books are checked out each Friday for two weeks.

TRINITY TRUNK OR TREAT Trinity will be the host site again this year for a parent-organized Trunk or Treat event on Friday, October 30. Students are welcome to dress up and visit the trunks in the parking lot where treats will be passed out. Trunks should be family

friendly, not scary or decorated in a way that might frighten younger children. Set up for trunks will be from 6-7pm with Trick or Treating from 7-8pm. Food trucks will be available as well. This is a rain or shine event. We are looking forward to sharing time outside of school together! For questions, please contact Crystal Albensi or Nicole Thomas.

OCTOBER + NOVEMBER CHAPEL OFFERING is going to Operation Christmas Child. The mission of Operation Christmas Child is to demonstrate God's love in a tangible way by sending gift-filled shoe boxes to children in need around the world. Through this project, Samaritan's Purse partners with the local church worldwide to share the Good News of Jesus Christ and make disciples of the nations. Thank you for supporting this ministry through chapel offerings this month.

OCC BOXES In addition to October chapel offering supporting Operation Christmas Child, third grade teacher, Mrs. Huff, has empty boxes if you would like to fill a shoebox as a family. Boxes need to be filled and returned to Mrs. Huff by Friday, November 20. If you are interested, please email Mrs. Huff at chuff@trinityct.org. Third graders will deliver empty boxes to your child's classroom to be sent home if requested. Thanks so much for joining us in this exciting outreach.

GLASS CONTAINERS AT LUNCH We have seen an increase in students eating lunches from glass containers or drinking from glass bottles. Please refrain from having students use glass at school!

FRIDAY DRESS CODE On most Fridays during the school year, theme shirts or Trinity spirit wear tops may be worn with uniform bottoms (free) or jeans (\$1). This is NOT a dressdown day, therefore there are intentionally less options. Please take note of the guidelines:

ALLOWED -

- Theme shirts from current or past school years
- Trinity spirit wear tops
- Uniform bottoms (free) or Jeans (\$1)

NOT ALLOWED -

- No Michigan State Spartans clothing
 - No sweatpants, joggers, leggings or other non-jeans/non-uniform bottoms.
 - No Thrivent shirts (we love them, just not on Fridays)
- Please continue to follow the guidelines so we may keep Spirit Wear Fridays!

CHURCH EXTENSION FUND ON FRIDAYS CEF is a savings program that students may support each week. You can read about the non-profit work of CEF [on their website](#). Students “purchase” stamps, and the money gets put into an account for them at Church Extension Fund. Parents must be on the account with their minor children. The money earns interest, and you’ll get statements regarding the balance on a regular basis.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

October 7	8:20 Chapel
October 7-9	Grade 6 to Outdoor Education
October 11	Grades 7/8 Choir sing at 11:00 Worship
October 14	8:20 Chapel
October 15	NO SCHOOL
October 16	NO SCHOOL
October 19	Mid-terms emailed
October 20	4p-7p Parent-Teacher Conferences
October 21	8:20 Chapel 4p-7p Parent-Teacher Conferences
October 22	HALF-DAY DISMISSAL 11:30 12:30-4p Parent-Teacher Conferences 5p-7p Parent Teacher Conferences
October 23	NO SCHOOL
October 25	Reformation (9:00) Confirmation (11:00) Grades 3 and 4 sing at 9:00 Worship
October 28	8:20 Reformation Chapel Picture retakes after Chapel
October 30	Trunk or Treat
October 31	Reformation Day
November 1	Daylight Saving ends, fall back one hour!

MEDICINE REMINDER For the safety of every student, any medication for your child should be left in the school

office. This includes both prescriptions and over-the-counter medicine like cough drops.

STUDENT ABSENCES When an absence is necessary, parents should always contact the school office (not just the teacher). Please call (586) 468-8511 first thing on the day of the absence to indicate the student name, grade, and reason for the absence. If it is before 7:30 a.m., please leave a voicemail. Email is also an acceptable way to share an absence and may be sent to Mrs. Nyboer and Mrs. Steenkamp with an explanation.

SECURE STORAGE LAW All schools are required to send information home to parents and caregivers on the safe storage of firearms. This is in accordance with the “Safe Storage Laws,” [MCL 28.429](#), [MCL 380.1313a](#), and [MCL 380.1313b](#). The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services provided this information to the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) for distribution.

[What-is-Secure-Storage-Law](#)
[Safe-Storage-Notice](#)

VOLUNTEER CORNER

K/1/2 LUNCH AND RECESS VOLUNTEERS Grades K/1/2 are looking for volunteers to help each day in the lunchroom and on the playground. Duties include walking around the lunch tables, opening packages, walking kids to the restroom and waiting in the hallway, and walking the playground to monitor students with other staff members. A Parent Participation Form is required to volunteer. No siblings, please, so attention can be on K/1/2 students. Use [THIS LINK](#) to sign up. Please email Mrs. McMahon with questions at jmcmahon@trinityct.org

3/4 RECESS VOLUNTEERS Third and Fourth Grades are looking for Recess Volunteers for Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. A Parent Participation Form is required to volunteer. No siblings, please. Use [THIS LINK](#) to sign up. Please email Mrs. Huff with questions at chuff@trinityct.org

LIBRARY SIGNUP Library volunteers are needed every Friday in the school to help with checking books in and out for the students, as well as reading to small groups or individuals. [Sign up HERE](#) **A Parent Participation Form**

is required to volunteer. For questions contact Mrs. Pace at (586) 260-2074.

KITCHEN VOLUNTEERS Mrs. Chilcutt is seeking volunteers to help in the school kitchen this year on specific days/lunches. Volunteers assist with lunch preparation and serving so punctuality and commitment is important. **A Parent Participation Form is required to volunteer.** Please [consider signing up!](#)

KIDSCO VOLUNTEERS As the [MomCo Group](#) grows in the church, help is needed to support our already established child care workers. Can you lend a hand once or twice a month on a Tuesday morning? Assist our caregivers in playing with little ones for just a couple hours? Please let Rachel Nyboer know if you can help by emailing her at rnyboer@trinityct.org

CHURCH INFORMATION -----

WEEKEND CHURCH SERVICES

Starting October 18

Sundays at 8:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 5:00 p.m.

Wednesdays at 11:00 a.m.

FIRST BIBLE FOR 1ST AND 2ND GRADERS - It's time for Trinity's First Bible Stepping Stone. In this class, parents and children learn the how-tos of getting around a Bible and how the Bible is used to help nurture faith. The First Bible Stepping Stone meets in the Church Lounge on either Sunday, Nov. 8 at 9:30 a.m. or Wednesday, Nov. 11 at 6:30 p.m. Pick the date that works best for you. This class is designed for first and second graders and older students who have not participated. Bibles will be provided. If you have questions, contact the Church Office at church@trinityct.org or 586-463-2921. To register, visit trinityct.org/firstbible/