



From the Pastor...

Happy New Year! It is my great pleasure to welcome you to our first “unified” newsletter! As you can see from the masthead, we do not yet have a title for this publication, which brings me to some important news that I have to share with you.

Now that the churches formerly known as *Peace* and *Trinity* have begun their new life as one, new and unified congregation, the first items on our official TO-DO list are:

- To choose a new name for the congregation,
- To decide on the best time for our Sunday service,
- And to select a title for our newsletter.

Luckily, we have a new, unified Church Council (*see below*) that is prepared to prayerfully and carefully begin deliberating these decisions on our behalf. But, before we begin, we want to hear from our members and get as many creative ideas and prevailing preferences as possible.

Therefore, from January 1st through the 15th, we will be accepting suggestions for church names, newsletter titles, and worship times. These suggestions must be received in the church office, in writing, by noon on January 15th, to be included in the discernment process. From the suggestions we receive, the unified Church Council will choose the most appropriate and appealing suggestions. Then, starting on Sunday, January 22nd, the “finalists” will be posted on the bulletin board outside the (Trinity) church library.

On Sunday the 22nd and 29th of January, everyone who attends worship will receive three colorful stickers in their bulletin. Either before or after the service, these stickers can be placed next to whichever church name, worship time, and newsletter title you like most. You may do this on either, or both, Sundays. Based on this input, the final selections will be made by the Council during the first week of February. The results will be announced on Sunday February 4th.

To make your suggestions, feel free to use the form below, or simply jot down your choices and bring or send them to the church office by noon on January 15, 2024. We look forward to hearing and considering your ideas and preferences.

In the meantime, please keep the new church, this renaming process, and all of our faithful church leaders in your prayers. Overall, we are hopeful and optimistic about the future, but also recognize that we are in the midst of significant changes. There are many among us who need time to grieve the loss of what was before they can fully embrace what is, and what is yet to come. Therefore, we will all need to be patient and as compassionate as we can be during this transition period, making room for healing as well as for new, forward-facing ideas and energy.

Our 2024 Unified Church Council:

Barb Nimocks -- Co-chair, Russ Shannon -- Co-Chair, Diane Cox -- Secretary, Jerry Bower -- Finance, Dave Foley -- SPRC, Howard Nelson -- Trustees, Joan Bethke -- Lay Leader, Jim Brock -- Lay Leader, Barb Shannon -- Education Ministry, Paul Murphey -- Memorial Ministry & Membership, Rosie Steinmetz -- Visitation Ministry, Kathy Bastian -- Missions Chair, Dianne Monson -- Hospitality Ministry, Monica Eernisse -- Treasurer

Suggestions for the New Unified Church:

1. **Church Name:** _____
2. **Sunday Morning Worship Time:** _____
3. **Title for the Monthly Newsletter:** _____

Return to: United Methodist Church
400 E. Seminary Ave
Richland Center, WI 53581