

# TRINITY *news*

JANUARY 2020

VOLUME 26 ■ ISSUE 1

## TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

203 East Main Street; PO Box 188  
Spring Grove, MN 55974

507.498.5291  
www.trinitysg.org



Trinity Lutheran Church Spring Grove



Instagram  
trinityyouth203  
trinitylutheransg

### Office hours:

Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri: 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.  
Wed: Noon – 6:00 p.m.

### Sundays at Trinity

9:15 a.m. Worship  
10:15 a.m. Fellowship  
10:30 a.m. Sunday School

Listen live on KVIK 104.7 FM  
www.kvikradio.com

### Saturday Worship

5:00 p.m.  
1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays each month

### STAFF

Elizabeth Hermeier, Lead Pastor  
trinitysr@springgrove.coop

Lane Zaffke, Visitation Pastor  
lane.zaffke@gmail.com

Bekah Leafblad, Dir. Of Children, Youth  
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Kayla Tollefsrud, Custodian

Ben Salo, Custodian

Scott Solberg, Choir Director

Rachel Storlie, Organist/Pianist

Willy Leafblad, Handbell Director

Jean Ellingson, Pianist/Organist

Linda Gjerdrum, Pianist

Mark Udstuen, Praise Band leader

*"Instructed by the king, they set off. Then the star appeared again, the same star they had seen in the eastern skies. It led them on until it hovered over the place of the child. They could hardly contain themselves: They were in the right place! They had arrived at the right time! They entered the house and saw the child in the arms of Mary, his mother. Overcome, they knelt and worshiped him. Then they opened their luggage and presented gifts: gold, frankincense, myrrh."*

~ Matthew 2:10-11



**GIFTS FROM REVERSE ADVENT CALENDARS** We are happy that so many participated in our Reverse Advent Calendar ministry. Thank you to everyone for your gifts of LOVE! Every box of crackers, pair of socks, or money donated looks like love to us!

Please drop off your items from the Reverse Advent Calendars, any time **before or on Sunday, January 5**. There are marked boxes at both the north and south entrances to Trinity. We will be using a representation of these gifts as part of the celebration of Epiphany during worship that day. Thank you so much for your participation and gifts!



### THANK YOU!

Care Ministry packed 10 Christmas Cheer packages with food and gifts for families, single homes, as well as Sunrise Care Facilities. Monetary gifts helped make this important ministry possible — thank you!

FROM OUR PASTORS

*The waters closed in over me to take my life; the deep surrounded me; weeds were wrapped about my head at the roots of the mountains. I went down to the land whose bars closed upon me forever; yet you brought up my life from the pit, O LORD my God. When my life was fainting away, I remembered the LORD, and my prayer came to you, into your holy temple. ~ Jonah 2:5-7*



Dear friends in Christ,

Jonah isn't the obvious choice to quote when writing a year-end message. But I love Jonah, as our confirmation students can tell you. In just four short chapters, Jonah is called by God to prophesy to the wicked city Nineveh, flees, ends up in the belly of a fish, and **gets a chance to start all over again**. It is Jonah's prayer in the middle of the book that I find compelling.

As many of you know, I have focused some of my time this year on learning about the issues facing our farmers. Most recently, I attended a seminar on "Farming in Tough Times." It was led by professionals from the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, the "Make It OK" organization focused on mental health, the Southern Minnesota Center of Agriculture, and more. All these professionals brought information and resources for folks in rural areas who are struggling. I have placed some of these resources on the bulletin boards in church. Or you're free to stop by my office anytime and learn more.

Many of us, including our farming families, feel like Jonah at times ... like the waters are closing in, the deep surrounding, the weeds wrapped about our heads. As part of a faith community, God calls us to help lift up the struggling and remind them of the light of God. But sometimes we need professional help as well.

If you are struggling, or if you know someone who is struggling, reach up. We are here. There are resources here. And God is here for you.

God bless you all, and may 2020 be a blessing for Trinity!

~ Pastor Elizabeth



In this year's 2020 newsletters I am going to look at when God speaks to people in the Bible. It happens right away in Genesis 2. God formed Adam out of the dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. God then planted a garden in Eden and put Adam in the garden to till it and keep it. It had all sorts of trees and plants to see and eat. God told Adam he could eat of every tree of the garden *except* the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, for the day he eats of it he will die. Then in an effort to find a helper fit for Adam, God makes animals but they don't quite fit. Finally God makes a woman.

Now through that whole story there must have been some conversation between God and Adam. What that sounded like, I have no clue. But God does tell Adam he can eat most everything except from the Tree of Good and Evil. Perhaps they visit about the Tree of Life as well. I have an image in my head of God and Adam discussing all the trees and plants in the garden. Talking about how to take care of them and how they are good and the nutrition. Unfortunately, the story heads downhill fast. Because Adam and Eve wanted to be like God, they eat of the Tree of Good and Evil. Bad, bad, Bad! The idealism and goodness is broken as they realize sin. The next time God talks to them is to scold them and hand out their punishment.

For us today, being out in nature is one way to contemplate and communicate with God. The Houston Master Gardeners last year agreed to be part of a study by the University of Minnesota looking at the psychological benefits of gardening. I am not sure what the study discovered, but in conversation the gardeners all agreed that gardening helped make them feel better. I have had some men tell me that being out in a fishing boat Sunday morning is communing with nature. HMMM? Yeah I agree, but they could wait till after Worship! After All Jesus did tell his disciples to go fishing. For some that may be the closest they get to communicating with God.

~ Pastor Lane

## BACKGROUND TO THE PROPOSAL TO SELL TRINITY CENTER

Several things have happened to prompt the Congregation Council to study the possibility of the sale of Trinity Center.

In 2017, the building consultant encouraged us to do a study of all the rooms in our church and Trinity Center. Bekah volunteered to do this. We found that at that time the church used Trinity Center (TC) for Release Time once a month, Beary Patch Preschool, and for Sunday School. Since then parents asked that the Sunday School classes be moved back to church.

In 2019, the Hiawatha Valley Ed District asked to tour TC with the possibility of leasing space or buying the building. Because of our location at the end of their district, they decided against this location; however, this prompted the council to ask serious questions about the possibility of selling the building.

Trinity Center costs the church about \$1,000 per month to run. This includes utilities, maintenance and insurance.

For these reasons an ad hoc committee was formed to study the possibility of selling this property. Members included: Nolie Kapplinger (Staffing), Steve Kemp (Support), Lee Hoekstra (Property), Alan Frydenlund (Finance) and Jacque Wennes (Education).

At this time, we have no interested buyers, but decided to inform the congregation of the possibility and the recommendation of the Congregation Council to sell the building, if possible.

We plan to have an informational/discussion meeting on January 12 following worship and a proposed vote at the Annual Meeting on January 26, 2020.

### Two items to consider:

We would need to relocate Beary Patch to the church or another location in town or rent space from the new owners.

We would have to rent space from the new owners or transport our Release Time students to the church once a week for each class for the seven months of Release Time.

We are committed to supporting both Beary Patch and Release Time and will ensure we have a solution for these programs if and when the Trinity Center is sold.

Thank you for your prayers as we consider this opportunity.

## TRINITY U

Trinity U offers people of all ages the opportunity to gather for education, faith development, and mutual growth — youth, parents, grandparents, friends.... **EVERYONE is welcome!** The purpose of Trinity U is to create a relational confirmation program where students (and other members) understand that they can live out their faith in everything they do with their lives. Please register ahead of time. Registration form is on the website or stop in the office for a paper form. Questions? Contact Bekah, [bekah@trinitysg.org](mailto:bekah@trinitysg.org) or 498-5291.

### JANUARY CLASSES

Come Feast at the Great Banquet: January 22, 4-7 p.m. Prepare, enjoy, and clean up a wonderful meal.

The Teen Girl's Survival Guide: January 22, 29, February 5, 3:30 p.m. Spiritual and practical advice for navigating the ups and downs of life with humor and with confidence.

\*\* Complete Trinity U Catalog with all of the classes for rest of the school year is available in the office, at the sanctuary entrances, and on our website.

**TRINITY'S EMPTY BOWLS EVENT** Sunday, February 23, 10:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m. All the food items for this event are donated, from the homemade soups, to the fresh baked breads and muffins. This means 100% of the money gathered at the serving of the meal will go directly to the Houston County Food Shelf and the ELCA World Hunger Fund. Donations are welcome from anyone who is interested in participating. If you'd like to make food or help in some way, please contact Lara Wold Mendez, (507) 450-6118.

### STOCK SALES

Make sure to answer your phones on the evenings of **January 8, 12, 19 (and 22 if needed)**.

**Why, you ask?** Our youth will be calling YOU and asking if you would like to buy "shares of stock" in Trinity's youth program. These are not real shares of stock, rather a way to support the youth at Trinity in their future youth trips. Each share of stock is \$15 and stockholders can purchase as many shares as they would like.



The youth who travel on the upcoming trips will share their experiences with stockholders and other church members during worship after the trip. Future youth trips: a mission trip to Puerto Rico in July 2020 and the ELCA Youth Gathering in Minneapolis the summer of 2021. Questions? Contact Bekah Leafblad at [bekah@trinitysg.org](mailto:bekah@trinitysg.org) or call the church office, 498-5291.

### CLASSES RESUME

- ▶ Sunday School resumes Sunday, January 5. We will begin with music in the sanctuary at 10:30 a.m. and conclude with class about 11:20 a.m.
- ▶ Remember these Sundays where there will be **NO Sunday School**: January 19, February 16, March 29, and April 12.
- ▶ Sunday School students will sing on the following Sundays: January 12, February 9, March 8, and May 10. Sunday School students will be asked to participate in the Palm Processional on Palm Sunday, April 5.

### SAVE THE DATE!

VBS and Day Camp will be June 22-25. Registration forms will be available closer to the date. Please note that the closing program will be at 2:30 p.m. on June 25.

**TRINITY'S ANNUAL MEETING** Our Annual Meeting is **Sunday, January 26 at 10:30 a.m.** in the Sanctuary. We'll worship at 9:15 a.m. and begin the Annual Meeting at 10:30 a.m. Refreshments will be available before the meeting begins. Remember, all confirmed members of Trinity are eligible to be voters at the meeting!

All reports for the Annual Report are **due in the office by Friday, January 10**. Thank you for your promptness!

### DECEMBER 2019 CONGREGATION COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

#### Motions approved:

- To accept the budget as presented.
- To hire Ben Salo as a part-time custodian for up to 10 hours/week at \$12/hour.
- To have Barbara Arnold fulfill Fred Arnold's position on the Facilities Planning Team. She will be a non-voting member in the selection of an architect.

#### Updates:

- Care Ministry Team will give quilts to the Habitat for Humanity Heritage House family for Christmas.
- Currently 9 students and 8 adults have signed up for the Puerto Rico Trip, July 25-August 1, 2020.
- Kaitlin Bratland will be filling in for Bekah during her 6 weeks of maternity leave.
- Tim and Tyler Ladsten have been hired to do snow removal.
- The Facilities Planning Committee had their final architect presentation on December 12. The next step is to vote on which architect to use.
- The budget allows for 1 computer replacement. This year it will be Pr. Elizabeth's computer.
- Little Gnome Daycare requested renting a room for their after school program. The request was tabled until the council received additional information.

**Next Meeting: January 8 at 7:45 p.m. in the Gathering Room.** Complete minutes are on Trinity's website, at sanctuary entrances, and in the office.

**UPDATE FROM MISSIONARIES MARK AND LINDA JACOBSON**

Our Tanzanian bishop requested the ELCA to allow us to continue on a part-time basis to serve the church and the hospital as “respected elders.” In Arusha, Mark is focused on construction of a campus for the ALMC School of Nursing. This entails fundraising, construction, and long-term planning. Future expansion of the hospital is now needed and Mark is assisting in developing a long-range plan and possible funding for this effort. Our church has built a holistic ministry in South Sudan with worship space, educational spaces, and a clinic primarily for women and children. Mark is an advisor for the clinic and has led several teams to come and do fistula surgery for some of the sixty thousand woman estimated to be needing such surgery in South Sudan today. Now there is a plan to expand the clinic by adding a Maternity Unit to provide safe, midwife-attended deliveries for the thousands of women coming to our clinic for help. Mark is helping in planning and implementing a holistic cancer care center in the Kilimanjaro Christin Medical Center on the slopes of Mt. Kilimanjaro. Linda is continuing with the Widow’s Mite Project in Arusha.

~ Blessings, Mark and Linda

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS! WE’RE GLAD YOU’RE HERE!**



Charles & Audrey Ellingson



Devin & Erin Becker  
Natalie, Simon, and Caroline



Kathy Phillips

**Devin & Erin Becker** and children, Caroline (6 years), Natalie (4 years), Simon (2 years)

The Becker family lives in Spring Grove where Erin (Wiste) grew up. Devin grew up Caledonia. Devin is an electrician for Winona Controls and Erin is a kindergarten teacher in Spring Grove. They love to travel as a family to the north shore, go camping, have family movie or game nights.

**Charles (Chuck) & Audrey Ellingson**

Both Chuck and Audrey grew up in Spring Grove and were high school sweethearts. They were married at Trinity 58 years ago! They have four children, 11 grandchildren and the 12<sup>th</sup> expected in February! Chuck is still running his business and they continue to live in Caledonia. They are happy to be back at Trinity again!

**Kathy Phillips**

Kathy can be found sitting in front of the choir at Trinity much of the time — it’s a joy to see her enjoying the music! She lives in Spring Grove and has a great outgoing personality which you may encounter when frequenting Doc’s Blue Moose — service with a smile for sure! We will work on moving Kathy back a few rows....into the choir!

**Laverne Reierson**

Laverne grew up in Spring Grove and now lives in Caledonia — he makes the drive over for Sunday services as much as the weather will allow. It is great to catch up with Laverne, as he knows much about the folks you and I or our parents grew up with.



**Christmas Program** — Our Sunday School children told the story of Jesus' birth through readings and songs.

- ◀ Pre-K and Kindergarten singing "Little Baby in the Manger."
- ▼ Elementary children re-enacted the Christmas story.



PHOTOS

RECORDS

**MILESTONE RECORDS AT TRINITY FROM JULY—DECEMBER 2019**

**BAPTISMS**

*July*

Blair Todd Melbostad

*August*

Anthony Steven Renzoni  
Calum Clarence Rask

*September*

Tyler Owen Pecinovskiy  
Trevor Samuel Pecinovskiy  
Cain William Salo

*October*

Lily Lynn Turek  
Declan John McCabe  
Jillian Jean Wiste

*November*

Logan Robert Kiedrowski  
Bryson David Ladsten

**WEDDINGS**

*August*

Katherine (Bissen) & Peter Zaffke

*September*

Elizabeth (Johnson) & Andrew Houdek

**FUNERALS / GRAVESIDE / DEATHS**

*July*

Lorraine Venita Harry

*August*

Doris Belinda Hagen

*September*

Gary Marland Bjerke

*October*

David Allen Severson

*November*

Stanley J. Guberud  
Donna R. Guberud  
Betty Rae Storlie  
Fred Robert Arnold

*December*

Lucille Helen Wilhelmson



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			<b>1</b> Happy New Year! <i>office closed</i>	<b>2</b> 5:30pm Education Team, MR 7:00pm Finance Team, GR	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 5:00pm Worship/Communion
<b>5</b> 9:15am Worship/Communion 10:15am Fellowship 10:30am Sunday School,	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> 7:00pm Support Team, GR	<b>8</b> 9:30am Adah Circle 2:00pm Release Time (K), TC 6:00pm Worship Team 7:00pm Handbells 7:45pm Council, GR 8:00pm Choir, 3:16s	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> 12:00pm Teams, WELCA, Endowments —reports due for Annual Report 7:00pm Middle School Game Night	<b>11</b> 10:00am Praise Band practice
<b>12</b> 9:15am Worship/Praise Band 10:15am Special Congregational Informational meeting 10:30am Fellowship, Outreach, Stewardship, Sunday School 11:30am Tweenen Care Ctr. service	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 9:00am Deborah Circle 9:00am Root River Pastors Conference	<b>15</b> 1:00pm Release Time (1 <sup>st</sup> ), TC 6:00pm Confirmation Core 7:00pm Handbells 8:00pm Choir, 3:16s	<b>16</b> 9:30am Communion at The Manor	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> 5:00pm Worship/Communion
<b>19</b> 9:15am Worship/Communion 10:15am Fellowship 10:30am Sunday School	<b>20</b> 7:00pm Hannah Circle	<b>21</b> 2:30pm Phoebe Circle	<b>22 Christmas</b> 1:00pm Release Time (2 <sup>nd</sup> ), TC 3:30pm Trinity U: Teen Girl's Survival Guide 4:00 Trinity U: Come Feast 7:00pm Handbells 8:00pm Choir, 3:16s	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 12:00pm Newsletter Info due 7:00pm Middle School Game Night	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b> 9:15am Worship 10:15am 10:30am Sunday School, Annual Meeting	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 12:30pm Release Time (3 <sup>rd</sup> ), TC 7:00pm Handbells 8:00pm Choir, 3:16s	<b>30</b> 2:00pm Newsletter mailed	<b>31</b>	

**VOLUNTEERS** — *Thank you for all that you do!*

	JANUARY 5	JANUARY 12	JANUARY 19	JANUARY 26
<b>LECTOR</b>	Bekah Leafblad	Willy Leafblad	Jen Solberg	Carolyn Olson
<b>ACOLYTE(S)</b>	Jacob Hernandez, Lydia Solum	Joelle Halverson	Ella Wennes, Ezra Griffin	Maria Albrecht
<b>COMMUNION SERVERS</b>	Janna & Len Myrah, Milly Halverson	/	Terry Holland, Kris Rud, Janice Messner	/
<b>COMMUNION BREAD</b>	Marilyn Sylling			
<b>ALTAR GUILD</b>	Karen Bingham (chair), Bonnie Solberg, Marilyn Sylling, Deb Spence, Geri Worden, Terry Holland			
<b>USHERS</b>	Scott Bingham (captain), Steve Nelson, Al Frydenlund, Mark Schroeder, Bruce Bergsgaard, Ken Heim			
<b>FELLOWSHIP HOSTS</b>	Sheri & Andy Allen, Jenny & Nate Stender	Rachel & Mark Udstuen, Rachel & David Storlie, Sarah & Mark Schroeder	Terry Holland, Kris Rud, Jen Wedmann	Steve & Peggy Landsom, Deb Landsom Lawson, Kris Olson
<b>498-AMEN</b>	Dec. 29-Jan 11: Lori Wilhelmson; Jan. 12-25: Milly Halverson; Jan. 26-Feb.8: Judy Bratland			
<b>MEALS ON WHEELS</b>	Jan. 13 –14: Elaine Van Minsel, Deb Brumm; Jan. 15-16: Judy Roble; Jan. 17: Jan Kraabel			

**The new year is beginning soon.....**have you kept us up-to-date with any new mailing addresses? Phone numbers? Email addresses? Please let us know of any changes so that we can have accurate records!

***Thank you very much!!***







## The Presence Jar

See how the simple act of setting a daily intention can help you live with greater presence. Cut the following daily activities into strips, add them to a jar, and choose one to try each day. By practicing presence, you can let go of distractions and focus on what matters most in life.



<p><b>SING A SONG THAT MAKES YOU WANT TO TAP YOUR FEET AND DANCE</b></p>	<p><b>MEDITATE</b> Sit in a relaxed position and notice your breathing — clear your mind of other thoughts.</p>	<p><b>DECLUTTER ONE ROOM</b> An organized living space can reduce your overall stress level.</p>
<p><b>NAME ONE THING YOU'RE GRATEFUL FOR</b> E.g. friends, laughter, good coffee, pets</p>	<p><b>INCREASE YOUR STEPS</b> Take an extra walk today, whether it's through your home or around the block.</p>	<p><b>SAVOR A SNACK</b> Whether a piece of fruit or a baked treat, take a moment to truly enjoy the experience of eating.</p>
<p><b>IDENTIFY A MOVEMENT OF CHOICE TO INCORPORATE INTO YOUR DAY</b> E.g. walk, stretch, plank</p>	<p><b>NOTICE SHAPES IN THE CLOUDS</b> Reconnect with your surroundings using your imagination.</p>	<p><b>LISTEN TO THOSE AROUND YOU</b> Pay attention to their words, their actions, and practice compassion for their feelings.</p>
<p><b>MAKE A MEAL TOGETHER</b> E.g. pancakes for breakfast, chicken with roasted veggies for dinner</p>	<p><b>TAKE A MOMENT TO NOTICE NATURE</b> It's amazing what can go unnoticed when you're going about your day.</p>	<p><b>SPEAK OR SEND A WORD OF HOPE</b> Be a light in the darkness for those around you.</p>
<p><b>BAKE A FAVORITE SEASONAL RECIPE</b> Chili, bread, soup, etc.</p>	<p><b>LISTEN TO YOUR BODY</b> Don't push through your feelings! Eat when you are hungry, rest when you are tired.</p>	<p><b>APOLOGIZE</b> If something is weighing on your heart, seek reconciliation to find peace.</p>
<p><b>TAKE A BREAK FROM ELECTRONICS</b> Instead, start a conversation or play a card game with a loved one.</p>	<p><b>REFLECT ON A MOMENTO</b> Sit with a treasured item for five minutes and explore its significance in your life.</p>	<p><b>MAKE TIME FOR YOUR PASSION</b> Release your creativity and reconnect with yourself!</p>
<p><b>DECIDE WHAT YOU WILL COMMIT TO</b> E.g. yes to coffee with a friend, no to hosting your extended family</p>	<p><b>SHARE YOUR HEART</b> Voice your gratitude, love, frustration, or pain with someone you care about.</p>	<p><b>PRACTICE PATIENCE</b> Focus on your breathing to reduce stress and give yourself time to respond rather than react.</p>
<p><b>DO AN ART PROJECT</b> E.g. color, paint, stamp, scrapbook, sculpt</p>	<p><b>SMILE</b> Give yourself the freedom to feel and share your joy.</p>	<p><b>DONATE TO A FOOD SHELF</b> Consider how fortunate you are. Take this opportunity to share with others this season.</p>
<p><b>GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP</b> Go to bed early after at least an hour without screen time.</p>	<p><b>LAUGH</b> Whether at a joke or a stressful situation: find the humor and enjoy the moment.</p>	<p><b>SHARE YOUR FEARS</b> Openness helps to relieve stress and move forward when you feel stuck.</p>
<p><b>READ A BOOK</b> Immerse yourself in the story and be present with the characters.</p>	<p><b>SHARE A RANDOM ACT OF KINDNESS</b> E.g. give a compliment, pick up a stranger's tab, give to a charity</p>	<p><b>SHARE YOUR DREAMS</b> Voicing your dreams can create accountability and open your mind to new possibilities.</p>
<p><b>VISIT A LONELY PERSON</b> This season can be difficult for many. Share the gift of your time with someone who needs it.</p>	<p><b>MAKE YOUR BED</b> Instead of adding another task to today's to-do list, make your bed when you wake up. Done!</p>	<p><b>TELL SOMEONE YOU LOVE THEM</b> Sharing love is the most powerful way to connect with those around you.</p>

As the ELCA's benefit ministry, Portico works to empower whole-person well-being — so you can live well. For more wellness content visit [PorticoBenefits.org/wellness](https://PorticoBenefits.org/wellness) or follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

## HAPPINESS IN THE YEAR AHEAD

# 2020

May the Lord make my New Year a happy one. . .

Not by shielding me from sorrow and pain, but by strengthening me to bear it if it comes.

Not by making my path easy, but by making me sturdy enough to tread any path.

Not by taking hardship from me, but by taking all cowardice and fear from my heart as I meet hardships.

Not by granting me unbroken sunshine, but by keeping my face bright even in the shadows.

Not by making my life always pleasant, but by showing me where men and His cause need me most and by making me zealous to be there and to help. . .

**God, make my year a happy one.**

— from *Guideposts* magazine