

March History
Holy Trinity, Our Church and Community
By Susan Exley

From its early beginnings Holy Trinity organized a Sunday School. It has always had elected officers including a Superintendent and Treasurer. Holy Trinity has taken part in the historic annual Sunday School Convention held at the Effingham County Methodist Campground. We march with a banner, sit as a group and sing a special during the service. Our church has supplied many officers for the Sunday School Association for the Convention. Our Sunday School holds a Sunday School Picnic annually. In the days of Bethel Parish it was held at Tybee Island on the beach. Most memorable was the loss of our first pastor, Rev. T. W. Shealy, who died there of a heart attack. Many of our picnics were held at Davis' Swimming Pool near Garnett South Carolina. In recent years, we hold our annual event at Ebenezer Retreat Center on Sunday after services.

Holy Trinity has taken part in a Fifth Sunday Union Service from our organization. The Baptist, Lutheran and Methodist churches have all participated. Each pastor takes part in the service and it rotates from one church to the next. One of the other denominations provides the pastor for the sermon in rotation so that the pastor giving the sermon is not from the host church. Most recently the St. Boniface Catholic Church has joined in the event.

Holy Trinity has had an active youth program through the years. It was first called the Light Brigade, then Luther League and the organization names have changed through the years. Holy Trinity has had two employed youth ministers in its history and many fine adult leaders including: the Troutmans, Rebecca Wilson, Esther Pruett and Darwin Exley. Our youth always present a Christmas Pageant for the congregation.

Vacation Bible School has always been a great event, initially held for a week in summer with the Bethel Parish. Later after we became independent of the parish, we held our own. We switched to night Bible School with adult participation at one time. We now are part of a joint VBS at Ebenezer Retreat Center with other Lutheran Churches even offering an overnight program for some of the older youth and it is held during the day for a week in early summer. Holy Trinity has teachers as well as students participating.

We always take part in a joint Reformation Service in our area and now most recently join our LCMC sister churches in an afternoon worship event. We have also held Family Night Events in our past with lively programs and entertainment from Womanless Weddings to Male Beauty Pageants.

Our congregation has volunteered or hosted in the community for many events including Blood Drives. We provide staff for Manna House, are active in FORCE with the food pantry ministry and provide drivers for our Senior Citizens Meals on Wheels program. We support Mission on the Move and have members who participate in Mission Trips. Our church has been active in the Habitat for

Humanity home building program.

Our women have always had a strong organization, whether known as LCW or WELCA, they provide so much: furnishing meals for the bereaved, hold donation dinners for matching funds with Thrivent to benefit people in need or for furnishings and items for our church and worship or hold fund raising meals for mission or youth trips. We have an altar guild. There are too many projects to mention that our ladies support aside from good Christian fellowship with an annual joint ladies' fellowship with Springfield's local churches and they join with the LCMC sister congregations in joint women's gatherings.

Our Men's Organization, Men in Mission, hosts monthly breakfasts with guest speakers. They support many church projects. Our men participated in a Joint Springfield Churches Men's Breakfast for many years. The Men's group currently participates in joint events with other LCMC churches. The church men and women held Father Son banquets and Mother Daughter Banquets for years with men hosting women and vice versa. Now we hold a joint Christmas Fellowship Meal for the Men and Women of Holy Trinity.

Harvest Years has been active for about 30 years. Those aged 50 and above enjoy a monthly covered dish lunch, guest speaker or occasional group outing with a meal.

Annually Holy Trinity has prepared food baskets for the needy at Easter and Thanksgiving supporting hundreds of families over the years. More recently we are part of the Angel Tree Project providing gifts for underprivileged children for Christmas.

We have Special Events annually including our: Pre-Lenten Pancake Supper, Lenten Service Suppers, Easter Sunrise Breakfast, Ice Cream Social for our high school graduates and a Christmas Social now called Birthday Party for Jesus. We have held several homecoming events since our congregation celebrated 50 years.

Ministry at Holy Trinity has always been alive and well in so many areas. We look forward to growth and fellowship as we near our 100th Anniversary.