TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
The Rev. Nancy R. Easton
Assistant Pastor's Report
March 1-31, 2009

Sunday a.m. services: Thursday services: 1
Preach/Preside: 6

I'll discuss any pastoral work occurring during Holy Week in my April report, which will be made available for the May congregation council meeting.

Besides the worship/preaching schedule noted above, I continued preparation for the worship opportunities of Holy Week. Working with FaithX in a special Markan Passion reading (the band sang "O Sacred Head Now Wounded" in harmony and *a cappella* at break points in my Passion reading), and communicating with all those involved in the Palm Sunday processional were two of the items of preparation. No worship service goes unplanned, if we truly care about the quality of praise given to God. It is worth the time and effort.

I participated in the Council/Leadership retreat on March 7, and attended the special congregational meeting the next day. As well, I attended two Strategic Planning meetings. I served as one of the readers at the March 22 concert featuring organist Michael Burkhardt, and sang two solos at a parishioner's funeral service.

The Affirmation of Baptism (confirmation) class and I met to discuss the variety of experiences they had at houses of worship in February. Not only were a diverse group of Christian congregations visited, but some students, parents and mentors went to a Jewish synagogue and a Hindu temple. Some of our discussion revolved around worship styles and gestures of piety—from the removal of shoes in the Hindu temple to the genuflecting in the Roman Catholic Church.

The leaders of the Book Discussion Group (which reads a book monthly and comes together for reflection on it) asked me to join them on March 15. Naturally, that involved "homework," and I read Bart Ehrman's book *Misquoting Jesus*, as well as listened to his recent interview on NPR's *Fresh Air*. I was impressed with the discussion around the room—the theological insights articulated and questions raised. It is obvious one does not reflect on a book in a vacuum, but within the context of one's religious faith, life experiences, and personal study. It was also good incentive for me to read Ehrman's book, which I might have put on a "To do" list and never tackled.

Four Baptisms are scheduled for the 10:45 service between May 3 and June 14, so I'm in the process of working with the various families on the details. Must be something in the water, since I see so many young babies out there! I had significant pastoral conversation with 25 or so persons. These conversations ran the gamut from physical/emotional concerns to financial concerns to theological questions and reflection to the mission/ministry of Trinity.

March was a month of some personal stress. Our home computer died. Some documents and correspondence were lost in the process, but nothing that I cannot live without. I also visited my parents for three days to offer some care. My father's decline is slow but evident; my mother continues providing good care for him, with a strong support system in their hometown.