

Pastor Brian's
Mid Week Message
September 22, 2021

“SEASONS CHANGE”

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” (Hebrews 13:8)

At exactly 3:20pm today the season of summer will be over, and fall will arrive. At that very instant the temperature will drop 15 degrees, the humidity will vanish, and all the leaves on the trees will immediately turn to an array of beautiful colors...NOT! The truth is that you'll notice no difference at all. The change of seasons is strictly an astronomical event, a function of the tilt of the earth's axis of rotation and its orbit around the sun, and has no cause related to meteorology. Trust me, I know. The "Autumnal Equinox" occurs at the exact time that the direct rays of the sun pass over the equator, headed southbound, due to the causes I listed above. There will be changes in the weather during this autumn season, but they will take place gradually as colder air builds up in northern latitudes and begins to slowly spread south, bringing with it the people who don't like that fact at all, "Snowbirds". The average date of our first overnight low under 60 degrees in the fall is October 22nd. That's the average. While the weather will change slowly the rate of change around TLC will be much faster. Big things are going to happen this autumn season centered on our *“Building to Serve Christ and Community”* campaign, the climax of which will be in late November and early December...right before the winter season officially arrives. First up will be our first annual **TLC Oktoberfest** (details below), which will be the official launch of the "Inform Phase" of this campaign. That happens on Friday evening, October 1st. The goal of the Inform phase is for all of us to know and understand what we plan to do, and why we need to do it. This doesn't just include a church building project, more important than that is building up the church in our faith and knowledge of God, and our service in the kingdom, our mission and ministry. The program following our Oktoberfest German dinner will be centered mostly on "the why". Why does this congregation, Trinity Lutheran Church of SW Florida, even exist? Why did it come into being? Why have we grown so much...to the point of outgrowing our current and wonderful facility? Why do we need to expand, and how will we put to use a new building for the work that God has given us? From there on through October our focus in worship will include stewardship and service to God and our neighbor. During this time, we want to get everyone's comments and questions about our future, and answer all of them. We don't want anyone to be uninformed as to what we're doing and why. The Inform Phase will conclude with another major event, actually two of them, at the end of the month. On Tuesday October 26th the campaign leadership team will host "Inform Forums" at 11:00am and 6:00pm. These meetings will offer everyone clear and detailed information on our future plans and give you the opportunity to make comments and raise questions. Again, we want to make sure that every question gets a proper answer. You're free to attend either one of them, and attendance is about as mandatory as church can make it. If you don't participate you might just have your pastor and an elder or two show up on your doorstep the following week to "keep you informed". On October 31st, Reformation Sunday, we will transition to the "Inspire Phase" which will last into early December. The purpose of this phase is to move everyone from "I understand what we're doing" to "I agree with this and am excited to participate...to do my part". Again, two HUGE events will take place over the course of the Inspire Phase. On Sunday November 21st we will hold a "Charter Member Celebration" luncheon. This will be at the Rotonda West American Legion Hall, where TLC came to life 6 years ago. This event will recognize and celebrate the faith and foresight of those who gave birth to this congregation and had the trust in God and courage that comes with that to move forward. All Charter Members of TLC will be the honored guests. At this event they will also have the opportunity to be the first to fill out commitment cards pledging financial support over three years for our future. On Sunday December 5th we will hold a "joint" special worship service and celebration fellowship brunch/picnic for our "Commitment Sunday". This will be the day that all of us can bring our commitment cards forward to be collected as part of the service, and then tabulated. The results...how much has been pledged...will be announced during the brunch. There will be other events too that I don't right now have space to mention. The one thing THAT WILL NOT CHANGE is our Gospel message; Jesus Christ. We have an unchanging and unchangeable God whose Word is perfect and complete. We WILL NOT depart from preaching our crucified and risen Savior for ours and all people's forgiveness and salvation!