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# TRINITY GAZETTE

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## Welcome to the Trinity Gazette!

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By Ute Galloway



*It was last June since I wrote the previous Gazette, announcing an interview with a candidate for the Dan position at Trinity. A lot of things have happened since June, starting with the job offer decline by Cory Kugle. Since then, our search committee has gone through hundreds of resumes and once again brought two candidates to Trinity, to see who would be the better fit for the needs of the church, and who would be the man God had chosen for the position. After these exciting visits, the search committee and the Servant board recommended to ask Stephen Lay to come and to meet the members of Trinity. So, at the beginning of March, Stephen Lay and his family came to see the members of Trinity.*

*Last Sunday, March 13th, the congregation voted overwhelmingly to bring Stephen Lay on board, and within minutes of receiving our vote, Pastor Stephen Lay responded with the following test message: "I am ready to serve wherever God wants me to be, even if it is in Gator Country." With this text message, we embarked on a joyful journey. I decided that it is time for me to sit down with Stephen, Melody, Mathew, Andrew, Gregory and John Patrick for a delightful*

*hour and a half. So for your enjoyment, please read the following interview and get ready, because by early June, Pastor Stephen will move his family to Florida and join our pastoral staff on July 1st.*

*Ready or not here he comes!*

Ute: When did you have your first inclination that you wanted to send in your resume to Trinity?

Stephen: interesting question; I did not initially, send my resume to Trinity. I had posted my resume on the EFCA ministry match making site. This site helps EFCA churches and pastors determine if they are a ministry match. It was then that I received a call from Pastor Dave, and we started, over a period of phone calls, to make a strong connection over Ministry practice and Theological beliefs.

Ute: Melody, What went through your mind when Stephen told you that he was thinking about applying for a job in Eustis, Florida?

Melody: The first thing I did was to look it up on a map, and then I became very excited. I grew up in a small town with "Big city" access, when I saw Eustis' nearness to Orlando, I was excited.

Ute: Melody or Stephen, what did the boys think about all of this?

Melody: It took a while before we told the boys what was going on, we did not want to disappoint them if it should not work out. We finally told them when we knew that you all wanted us to return and come for a visit. The little ones also wanted to know if people in Florida would speak English. They also were really excited about Disney. You know, kids are "sold" fast with Disney. Once we visited, many things about the area encouraged them, especially the welcoming arms of the children at Trinity.

Ute: Stephen, how are you feeling right now about starting at Trinity?

Stephen: I am very excited, full of anticipation; I see great things happening at Trinity. It is poised for growth, through a service and outreach mindset that already exists; I am ready to come today. Ministry is like a journey, I am very excited to start ministries in Florida; however, there will be

some mountains to climb and valleys to walk. There will be some difficulties to overcome. Regardless where you go, you will find them.

Ute: Stephen what are your parents thinking about you moving to Florida?

Stephen: They are excited. They might wish that it would be closer to Tennessee, but they are very happy that I am not moving further away from them. My parents are also very excited that I get to use my gift of teaching and preaching more. So am I. I am looking forward to using my gifts for God at Trinity.

Ute: What stood out to you about Trinity, and what are you looking forward to?

Stephen: It is going to be great to be working with the people of Trinity, to do life with them and to do the Lord's work with them. The things that really stood out to me was the music, I really enjoyed the music both times we visited. The big thing I am looking forward to is getting settled and getting into a rhythm of life and ministry. You know, when you are excited it sometimes becomes a "hurry up and get going" transition.

Ute: Melody, do you have a passion you want to get involved in? I know that you said you're planning to stay in the background, but sometimes, you know, God will not allow you to do that. So, is there something you want to get involved in or bring to Trinity?

Melody: I want to build relationships with the people of Trinity. I want to help Stephen in his ministry, building up relationships with the young couples who have children. I want to be an example to young couples, to teach, guide them with wisdom, and to help build them up spiritually.

Ute: What visions do you have, Stephen, for you and your family at Trinity?

Stephen: My vision is to build the next generation of people for Trinity and for Christ. Of course, it is important that we disciple and equip people for Christ, but we also want to challenge the members of Trinity to take a step forward into the community themselves, for Christ. I want to build teams to reach out, but first we need to evaluate what exists in the ministry, its strengths and weaknesses.

Ute: Did you hear anything about KidZone when you were here?

Stephen: Yes I did. I will have to learn about the culture and environment in the church and the city before we decide how to reach the community. If it is KidZone, or some other way, the first thing is to be a learner of the area. I cannot say at this point exactly what will come, but we will learn the culture, pray a lot, build a team and see what God does. There are a lot of

wonderful resources for kids' ministry, but reaching a community is not simply in resources or programs. Reaching a community takes people reaching people for Christ one person at a time.

Ute: Melody you have recently been involved in women's ministries. Are you having any thought on participating in this?

Stephen: Dave and I will work together, and I hope my presence frees him up, to build a new generation with the current generation. You can never build the next generation alone. We need everyone whether young or old working together; women mentoring women, men mentoring men, social gatherings both generationally and intergenerationally.

Melody: It will be helpful to have a women's ministry team in place, and see what programs are already in place, and then how we can contribute to helping build up the ministry.

Ute: What about College Groups, how are you planning to reach them?

Stephen: We can't forget our members when they leave for college. We need to stay in contact with them, check in with them, for they are the next generation of church families. Some will not return to Eustis, but those that do should think of Trinity because we've walked with them.

Ute: Stephen, I know that you are very familiar with CBMC—Christian Business Men's Connection. Have you given a thought of having a chapter at Trinity?

Stephen: It is always good to have strong groups like that involved in any church or for the matter in the community. It is also important that you work side by side with churches and community groups to bring Christ to people.

Ute: Melody, how do you feel about precept studies?

Melody: I have done several over the years.

Stephen: You know that Kay Arthur's headquarters are in Chattanooga, Tennessee, so I have been familiar with them for a long time. Melody has done precept and learned the inductive bible study methods precept teaches. It helps you experience the bible first-hand because it makes you look and dig for the answers. And I cannot tell you how important it is to become a self-feeder when it comes to the Word of God.

Ute: Melody, What are some of your favorite precept studies you have done?

Melody: My favorite precept study is Genesis. I also like the one "Lord, only you can change me"

Ute: Stephen, you said you are going to do some counseling. Are there areas within counseling you prefer or are stronger in?

Stephen: I am looking forward to developing a counseling ministry as God leads.

Ute: What kind of counseling are you going to do?

Stephen: I am looking forward to doing all kinds, but am excited about pre-marital counseling. I also want to encourage people to get pastoral help before it has become a last ditch effort, to take care of their families first, not as a last result. God has blessed me with discernment, which really benefits my counseling ministry. I will counsel whoever walks through the door. It will not matter what issue they have. Counseling is shepherding and accountability with God's Word.

Ute: When are you planning to move to Florida?

Stephen: Around the 1<sup>st</sup> of June.

Ute: How did you guys meet?

Stephen: You tell her.

Melody: We knew each other in high school, but really met while in college. We went to a social function, I was in my first year and he was in his second year when we met at a friend's house. That is where we started to date. We've been dating ever since 😊

Ute: How long have you been married?

Stephen: For 18 years in May, and dating for 20 Years in June.

Ute: Melody, How did he propose to you?

Melody: In my apartment in college, we had dinner and that is when he asked me to marry him.

Stephen: You know, I wanted to ask her in a very nifty way, but after I had saved up enough money to get her ring, I had it in my car for two weeks, but I got so excited that I just could not wait to ask her to marry me.

Ute: You know there is a story running through Trinity that you guys have like 3 dogs, 4 cats, birds, and whatever else. How many animals do you have?

Stephen: *Laughter* So there are animal stories being told about us, ha-ha. No we have two dogs and one cat. There is Chester the Cockapoo; he is 2 ½ years old. Then there is Lacy our Golden Retriever, she is 5 years old. Finally there is Kitty the cat, which Mathew named Oreos. We had a frog but he died so the boys wanted to have a funeral for him. We did!

Ute: Hi Mathew, what do you think about moving to Florida?

Mathew: I say it is good, I am excited, but I am sad also because I will not be able to see my friends as much. I am looking forward to going to a new school.

Ute: Do you look forward to go to Club Mid?

Mathew: Kind-a, I will miss my friends.

Ute: When is the last time you moved?

Mathew: When I was seven, so 5 years ago.

Ute: What are your favorite sports besides Dodge Ball with Pastor Dave's Oranges?

Mathew: *Laughter* Karate.

Ute: What belts do you have already?

Mathew: I have the third brown belt

Ute: what comes next?

Mathew: Second brown belt, then first, after that is first black belt.

Ute: I heard that you also like video games? What kind of games do you like to play?

Mathew: Super smash Brothers and Mario Cart for the Wii.

Ute: Hi Andrew, (Andrew is the young man with his glasses on) How are you doing? What do you think about moving to Florida?

Andrew: Good, because it is only going to take an hour to Disney.

Ute: Do you look forward to Awana?

Andrew: Yah,

Ute: What book are you on?

Andrew: the first one

Ute: What is your favored verse?

Andrew: John 3:16

Ute: Are you ready for a new school?

Andrew: Yah.

Ute: Hi Gregory, what do you think about moving to Florida?

Gregory: Moving to Florida is good; I am looking forward to make some new friends, and a new school.

Ute: What else are you looking forward to see happening?

Gregory: Going to Disney

Ute: Do you like Rollercoasters?

Gregory: Yah

Ute: Would you go on a rollercoaster with Mommy or Daddy? Do you like big ones or little ones?

Gregory: Daddy, Mommy would not go on one.

Ute: What is your favorite verse?

Gregory: John 3:16

Ute: Hi John Patrick, what did you like about Trinity?

John P: The Gym, the music, and the kids.

Ute: What is your favorite verse?

John P: John 3:16

Ute: So tell me what is the one thing which you remember about your week here in Florida?

John P: The restaurants we went to, I like the Crazy Gator the best. I had chicken fingers, and I liked the big Gator they had in the entrance way.

Ute: Stephen what is your favorite bible verse?

Stephen: Romans 5:8. What, you are not going to ask me to say it? Ute concedes.

"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Ute: Melody, what is your favorite verse?

Melody: Jeremiah 29:11 --<sup>11</sup> For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Ute: what is your favorite song?

Melody: In Christ alone.

Stephen: I like songs by Michael W. Smith: "Missing Person", Never been Unloved." I also love old hymns.



*There you have it! After an hour and a half I bade them farewell, and let them get back to packing up boxes. I must tell you that all three of the triplets did recite John 3:16 to me and their different personalities came out clear as day. Andrew is very analytic like his daddy, choosing his words, where Gregory ran through it at a hundred miles per hour, and John P. was concise but fast, and if you missed it, he is also our food connoisseur.*

*I hope that you will enjoy this special edition as much as I did when I sat down with the Lay family. I believe that God is embarking us on a wonderful journey. I am looking forward to seeing where it will lead Trinity, and the Eustis Community.*

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## From the left field

### Heaven's Entrance Exam

A man dies and goes to heaven. Of course, St. Peter meets him at the Pearly Gates. St. Peter says, "Here's how it works. You need 100 points to make it into heaven. You tell me all the good things you've done, and I give you a certain number of points for each item, depending on how good it was. When you reach 100 points, you get in."

"Okay," the man says, "I was married to the same woman for 50 years and never cheated on her, even in my heart."

"That's wonderful," says St. Peter, "that's worth three points!"

"Three points?" he says. "Well, I attended church all my life and supported its ministry with my tithe and service."

"Terrific!" says St. Peter. "That's certainly worth a point."

"One point?" "I started a soup kitchen in my city and worked in a shelter for homeless veterans."

"Fantastic, that's good for two more points," he says.

"Two points?" Exasperated, the man cries.

"At this rate, the only way I'll get into heaven is by the grace of God."

"Bingo, 100 points! Come on in!"

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## Editor's Comments

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God our Heavenly Father has taken His time to reveal to us His choice for the Young Family Pastor position for Trinity by closing a door, only to re-open it when the timing was right. I am excited to see where this will lead us in the work for our Heavenly Father. We need to continue to be obedient and pray to properly discern His wishes for Trinity. Our commission is to make disciples, to let them hear the gospel so that we can bring glory to God our Father and to Jesus Christ. It will be a great adventure, and I for one will ask the famous question once uttered by one of America's Presidents, and I will rephrase it: "Ask not what God can do for you, but what you can do for God!" Yes, we all know President Kennedy was talking about this country; I am talking about our rightful place in heaven. Who is with me?