



TIDINGS

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH OF WATERTOWN, MINNESOTA



Free!

**So since the Son makes you free,
you will be free indeed. Jn. 8:36, NRSVUE**

In Martin Luther's "A Mighty Fortress is Our God," he writes, "one little word subdues him." The "him" in that line refers to the power of sin, death, and the Devil – the unholy Trinity, as Luther calls them. We might wonder which word is so full of power? Which word has this kind of authority? Which word transforms our realities? Which word fully frees us?

In 1547, a triptych was installed in the Town Church in Wittenberg. In one panel, Martin Luther stood in a pulpit. In another, a cross holds the crucified and risen Jesus Christ. In a third, the community is gathered with their eyes fixed on Christ. They point there because Luther, still in the pulpit, points with one hand on the Bible, and the other reaches out directly to Jesus. In this painting of the resurrected Jesus on the cross, there are shadows cast against the stone floor. Jesus's resurrection extends all the way down to where we are and as we are. In our world, freedom can be conveyed through many different words and images. In Luther's view, the only one who can subdue the unholy Trinity is Jesus Christ who died and was raised for our sakes.

Near the middle of October, we will gather to celebrate the Affirmation of Baptism for nine of our young people. On the final Sunday of the month, we will celebrate the Reformation. We do so not because Martin Luther is a rockstar. He's not. Though he was right on in his Reformation discovery of the Gospel, in other ways, he was also wrong. We may linger to listen to Luther's proclamation of the Gospel, our eyes are fixed elsewhere. We are focused on the crucified and risen Jesus Christ whose death and resurrection set us wholly and completely free. He does all these things so "...that [we] may be his own," as he writes in the Small Catechism. These words are among the first to be stitched on our hearts at baptism. They teach us what it means to be free. We are Christ's own, and Christ is ours.

Grace & Peace,
Pastor Paul Lutter, Interim Pastor



OCTOBER 2025

INSIDE:

October Events at Trinity
Pastoral Transition Update
Children's Ministry
Trunk-or-Treat Event
Council Highlights
Faith Resource Corner

Worship
Sundays at 9:00 am
Onsite & Online

STAFF:

Interim Pastor	Paul Lutter
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Music Ministry	Hannah Rosholt
Office Manager	Robyn Behrens
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AT TRINITY LUTHERAN?



Reformation Sunday
October 26

On the last Sunday of October, we will celebrate the story of the Reformation. When people tell this story, they want to point out how Martin Luther called the Church back to the power of the gospel by

nailling the 95 Theses on the Castle Church door in Wittenberg. While this a part of the story, it's not all of it. There's more to it. Whether Luther nailed the theses to the Church door – there's some debate about that – in the sweep of what unfolds before this and after this is, even until the end of time, is much larger, complex, and astounding. When we talk about reformation, we look not so much at Martin Luther. Our focus is on the God who raised Jesus from the dead for us, and by the power of whose Spirit at work in our lives we are always reforming. You're invited on that Sunday to come to worship wearing red, a sign that the work of reformation continues in, on, and through us by the grace of God.

Confirmation

Confirmation Service

Celebrate with the following students as they affirm their baptisms at their Confirmation service on Sunday, October 12 at 10:30 am.

**Lexis Brever, Wesley Gruette,
Lydia Haller, Jackson Hastings,
Maxwell Hastings, Caden Horsman,
Eric Skahaug, Luke Stutsman,
Kennedy Tufte**

PASTORAL TRANSITION PROCESS

HOW LONG?

The interim season at Trinity has many dimensions. Each month in this newsletter, I'll highlight one of them and invite you into conversation about our congregation's life through that lens.

A Conversation about Trinity's Transition Process

I know the congregation is anxious to move out of this time of transition and into a time of welcome for a new pastor. I empathize with the concern: will we lose some momentum if the process goes on too long? Yet, transition times, sometimes called liminal spaces, can be a creative time, an opportunity to experiment and explore what the future could hold if we think we want to try something new in our life together. It is possible the pastoral transition process could take a year. And, at the same time, it's important to note that sometimes the process is shorter, and other times it's longer. What I can say for now is this: we're on the way. It's important to know God is with us on this path. I invite you to pray for the congregation, the leadership, and for God's guidance as we listen to God, the congregation, and to the wider community. Ask God to lead and guide us. And trust that God is for us in this process. Feel free to reach out to me if you'd like to have some conversation about this.

Grace & Peace, Pastor Paul Lutter



Thursday, October 16 | 9:30 am

We're going out for breakfast! Join Trinity's OWLS (Older, Wiser Lutherans) Fellowship Group for breakfast at Farmer's Plate Hometown Cafe in downtown Watertown. Bring a friend and your ideas for future OWLS events.

Children's Ministry

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

This month in Sunday School, we are excited to dive into our new curriculum theme: "Hear Me Roar!" Together, the kids will be learning about how God is always with us—giving us courage, strength, and confidence to live out our faith in bold ways. Each week's lessons are filled with fun, learning, and meaningful reminders of God's constant presence in our lives.

Please note, there will be **NO Sunday School on Sunday, October 19**, due to MEA break. We hope you enjoy the time with your family and look forward to gathering again the following week.

This year, we are planning a monthly special activity or service project for the Sunday School classes to participate in. This month, we're hosting a Bake Walk!

Bake Walk for the Food Shelf

Sunday, October 12

10:00–10:30 am in the Fellowship Hall

This is a wonderful opportunity for our children to serve people outside our church walls by raising money for Gather & Grow Food Shelf in Watertown. For \$1 per ticket, you can participate in the Bake Walk for a chance to win a sweet treat made or contributed by our Sunday School families and other members of Trinity.

Want to contribute a Bake Walk Prize?

Sign up to donate a baked good item (homemade or store bought) at www.trin.org under EVENTS—we are grateful for your support in making this event a success!

This Month at a Glance

October 5: Regular Class

October 12: Service Project: Bake Walk

October 19: No Sunday School (MEA Break)

October 26: Regular Class (and then come back to church between 1:00 - 3:00 pm for Trunk-or-Treat!)



Trunk-or-Treat

Sunday, October 26

1:00 – 3:00 pm

Trinity families, friends and neighbors are invited to "trunk-or-treat" from vehicle to vehicle in the Trinity parking lot. There will be treats, apple cider, bounce houses, and fun for all ages! Start decorating your vehicle and choosing your costumes for an afternoon of fun at Trinity!

We are looking for volunteers to:

- decorate a trunk
- help with various event activities
- help setup / serve the food
- help with clean up after the event
- donate candy

If you can help with any of these items, please sign up at www.trin.org under **EVENTS**.



Noisy Offering

Make a joyful noise in October and support the Watertown-Mayer Royals Room!

The children of Trinity will collect loose change during worship services in the month of October. (Dollar bills will also be accepted, although they don't make as much noise when dropped into the collection cans!) This special offering will go to the Watertown-Mayer Elementary School Royals Room, which provides healthy snacks and school supplies to students.



*October is Pastor
Appreciation Month!
Be sure to thank Pastor Paul
for his care, leadership, and
ministry among us.*

Have You Remembered Trinity Lutheran Church in Your Will?

Some people are able to continue to give to Trinity in death, as well as in life. Giving through your will helps to continue the 160-year tradition of ministry and mission at Trinity, continuing the legacy of your witness. With the advice of your attorney or tax adviser, the following language may be added to your will, trust, or codicil: **"I bequeath X% of my estate to Trinity Lutheran Church, 513 Madison Street SE, Watertown, MN 55388."** Thank you for considering a lasting gift to Trinity Lutheran Church!

Note: The full Trinity Church Council meeting minutes are always available upon request from the church office.

COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

September 16, 2025

FINANCIAL REPORT

Operating Fund summary July 2025

Beginning balance 8/1/2025:
-\$ 18,522.97

Operating Fund inc: \$ 26,958.96
Operating Fund exps: \$ 31,404.28
Net balance (August): -\$ 4,445.32

**Operating Fund balance as of
8/31/2025:** -\$ 22,968.29

**2025 operating fund EXPENSES
exceeded INCOME by \$8,133.00.**

Capital Improvement Fund:
No expenses this month

Cash Summary:
Bremer: \$ 55,700.95
(includes 1,695.50 for Aug federal withholding)

Citizen's Building Fund: \$ 77,776.23

Comments

- 6% of operating fund income for benevolence to Minneapolis Area synod amounted to \$1,615.68.
- August Xcel bill for fuel and electricity amounted to \$1,090 (down about \$66 from July).
- Nothing else out of the ordinary other than operating fund continues further into the red.
- FYI - price of coffee has gone up \$7.00 a bag since April.

M/S/C Nick Neaton, Dave Kind, carried

PASTOR'S REPORT

Pastor Lutter led discussion on our Mission Statement, excitement around Confirmation Orientation Night and the upcoming Adult Faith Formation sessions.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Nylunda Bell:** Discussion on this project is ongoing.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Special Congregational Meeting** regarding removal of the parsonage set for October 5, 2025, at 10:15 in the Fellowship Hall. Letter/email was sent out on September 15. The meeting will be announced during worship on the two Sundays prior to the meeting.
- **Employee 2026 Insurance** Presentation by Mary Jech. Motion was made for Trinity Lutheran Church to elect Portico's Select Copay 2000 as the supported option for employee (pastor's) health insurance in 2026. *M/S/C Nick Neaton, Nancy Stello, carried*
- **Congregational Listening Session** on Sunday, September 28 at 10:15 will be led by Pastor Lutter.
- **Transition Team** Ten individuals will be offered a position on the Transition Team along with invitation to be involved in the Congregational Listening Session on September 28.



ANNOUNCEMENT

Special Congregational Meeting on Sunday, October 5, 2025 at 10:15 am

Over the past several months, the Trinity Church Council and Property Committee have spent significant time in conversation, exploring options, gathering information, and carefully considering the future of the parsonage (the house located on the southwest corner of the church property). After this thoughtful process, both groups are recommending that the parsonage be removed from the church property. A copy of the Property Committee's recommendation is available from the church office upon request.

Because this decision requires the approval of the congregation, a Special Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, October 5, at 10:15 am in the Fellowship Hall (following worship) to vote on the removal of the parsonage. The meeting will also include information about the factors and research that went into this recommendation, along with input from the Finance Committee regarding how this project would be financed.

We encourage all members to attend and be part of this important decision in the life and mission of Trinity. By grace, we are sent into the world with God's love, and together we seek to make faithful choices about how our resources serve that mission. If you have any questions, please reach out to the church office, or to any member of the Church Council, Property Committee, or Finance Committee.



Curious About Handbells?

Wednesday, October 1
5:30 pm

Ever wondered what it's like to play handbells? Now's your chance! Join us for a fun, informal session where you can try out

handbells and see what it's like to make music together in a small group. No pressure, just a chance to give it a ring and enjoy the experience! If you're interested, contact Eileen Nelson at 952-955-1491 or nelsej@gmail.com for details.

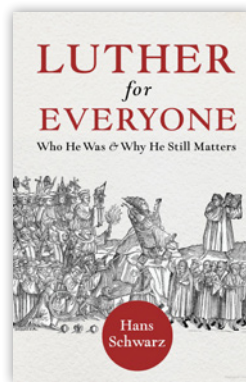


TRINITY
YOUTH MINISTRY

Meeting for Parents & Youth in Grades 6-12 Sunday, October 19 | 10:00 am

Let's get together to discuss how Trinity can provide meaningful youth ministry experiences this upcoming year. Trinity Youth in grade 6-12 and their parents are invited to join Pastor Paul after worship on Sunday, October 19 from 10:00-10:30 am in the Pioneer Room to get the conversation started. Bring your interest and your excitement for this vital ministry.

PASTOR PAUL'S FAITH RESOURCE CORNER



October is a month of reformation. I'm excited to recommend to you a relatively new book written about Martin Luther. ***Luther for Everyone: Who He Was & Why He Still Matters*** suggests an arc that reaches back to the Reformation Era and forward into the present and the future. This book is written by Hans Schwarz, a theologian and pastor who has taught both in Germany and in the United States. When I was not yet in

college, I happened upon one of his earlier books and was hooked by how he talked both about Martin Luther and the Christian faith. This present book is easy to read and understand and may be an opportunity for you to talk to one another and others about how you think about how Luther's theology has been important in your faith and life. (This isn't bragging; it's evangelism.) Reading this book can offer some ways to think about this in light of your life in the world in which we all live. If you choose to read it, let me know what spoke to you and what surprised you. I'll look forward to that conversation.

Luther for Everyone: Who He Was & Why He Still Matters, by Hans Schwarz (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2024).

Grace & Peace, Pastor Paul Lutter

Last Month in Pictures

We're off and running with Trinity's program year!
 Sunday School is underway, the Apostles and OWLS
 are back at it, the choir and band are rehearsing, and
 Confirmation preparations are moving forward!



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Prayer 12:30 pm Adult Ed 1:15 pm Handbells 5:30 pm 6-8 Confirm. 6:30 pm Worship Choir 6:30 pm Worship Band 7:30 pm Happy Birthday Audrey Neaton	2 Housekeepers 9 am Adult Ed 6:30 pm Happy Birthday Chrissy Johnson Mandi Kohls Julia Salzsiedler	3	4 Happy Birthday David Olson Jeff Tronnes
5 Worship 9 am Fellowship 10 am Sunday School 10 am Special Cong. Mtg. 10:15 am Happy Birthday Emily Hecksel Anita Huber Hal Pysick	6 AA Meeting 8 pm Happy Birthday Kristine Erickson Jackson Jones Alden Sandquist Cathy Vanderbilt	7 Quilters 9 am Happy Birthday Tracie Hill	8 Prayer 12:30 pm Adult Ed 1:15 pm Handbells 5:30 pm 6-8 Confirm. 6:30 pm Worship Choir 6:30 pm Worship Band 7:30 pm Happy Birthday Ryan Hallermann Ethan McCleary	9 Adult Ed 6:30 pm Happy Birthday Gary Harding Ed Rundell	10 Happy Birthday Pat Essen Mia Kuffenkam Ronna Ritter	11
12 Worship 9 am Fellowship 10 am Sunday School Bake Walk 10 am Confirmation Service 10:30 am Happy Birthday Nicole Gohman	13 Apostles 8:30 am Priscilla Circle 2 pm AA Meeting 8 pm Happy Birthday Steven Markgraf William Stenson	14 Quilters 9 am Finance Committee 6:30 pm Happy Birthday Anna Goetz Josh Guetzkow	15 Prayer 12:30 pm Adult Ed 1:15 pm Handbells 5:30 pm <i>No Confirmation Class</i> Worship Choir 6:30 pm Worship Band 7:30 pm Happy Birthday Laura Hagelin Luke Stutsman	16 OWLS (Older, Wiser Lutherans) 9:30 am Adult Ed 6:30 pm Happy Birthday Eliot Fautsch Thomas Lindberg	17 Happy Birthday Jason Emmons Mary Paschke	18 Happy Birthday Rob Lohmann Val McCain
19 Worship 9 am Fellowship 10 am Youth Ministry 10 am <i>No Sunday School</i> Happy Birthday Austin Barfknecht Elaine Beckstrom Stacy Guetzkow	20 AA Meeting 8 pm Happy Birthday Emmett Danielson Sawyer Ritter	21 Quilters 9 am Council Mtg. 6:30 pm Happy Birthday Arlin Sieling	22 Prayer 12:30 pm Adult Ed 1:15 pm Handbells 5:30 pm 6-8 Confirm. 6:30 pm Worship Choir 6:30 pm Worship Band 7:30 pm Happy Birthday Sarah Barfknecht Nick Neaton Joy Rundell	23 Tidings 9:30 am Adult Ed 6:30 pm Happy Birthday Jill Matson Nancy Stello	24 Happy Birthday Vivian Stenson	25 Happy Birthday Jordyn Burns
26 REFORMATION SUNDAY Worship 9 am Fellowship 10 am Sunday School 10 am Trunk-or-Treat 1:00-3:00 pm Happy Birthday Leif Schmidt	27 Apostles 8:30 am AA Meeting 8 pm Happy Birthday Dru Illies Dale Loehrs Marilyn Weiland	28 Quilters 9 am Happy Birthday Allison Neaton Mary Sloan	29 Blood Drive 10 am Prayer 12:30 pm Adult Ed 1:15 pm Handbells 5:30 pm 6-8 Confirm. 6:30 pm Worship Choir 6:30 pm Worship Band 7:30 pm Happy Birthday Scott Phearman Stephanie Semeja	30 Adult Ed 6:30 pm Happy Birthday Scott Phearman Stephanie Semeja	31 Happy Birthday Matthew Gallus	



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The Sounds of Worship

Have you ever paused to listen — really listen — to the world around you?

The hum of morning birdsong. The laughter of children. The comforting voice of a friend. Even the quiet moments of stillness. These aren't just background noise — they're invitations to worship. God designed a world that sings. Worship isn't limited to Sunday mornings or formal songs; it's woven into the everyday moments that tune our hearts to Him. And when we pause to truly hear it, we are drawn into praise, right where we are.

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises! (Psalm 98:4, ESV)

What sound lifts your heart toward God today? Take a moment to listen. Let it remind you of His love and nearness.