



TIDINGS

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH OF WATERTOWN, MINNESOTA



When What You Think Is No Longer True

Jesus is not here, for he has been raised.... Matthew 28:6

Put yourself in the place of the first disciples, the women at the tomb, and even those who at one moment sang Jesus' praise and, in the next, cried out for Jesus to be crucified. Three days later, something happens that fundamentally changes everything. While we sit at a distance from the first announcement of resurrection, it's not uncommon for people to say how they'd do things better than those who first heard the news: "Jesus is not here, for he has been raised." But is this true? Are you and I able to lean so fully into the grace of God that comes in the celebration of Easter that the experience of the disciples—who hid, locked their doors, denied knowing Jesus, and tried to run away from any association with him—is somehow different than our own? Are you and I able to do all of this, or any of this? We may think so.

The story of Jesus – and our own stories, too – challenges us. Each Sunday, we confess we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. Wrapped in these words are the good intentions we hold about ourselves, until we reflect: We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. And then: We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. Before long, we see that the story we tell about ourselves and Jesus is no longer so true.

Jesus' resurrection from death for us rewrites the whole story. It doesn't begin with us, but with a Lord of love and compassion for us. None of this is about what we would do, or about how much better we'd be than those whom Jesus first called to follow. Rather, the whole story is about how much Jesus loves us, forgives us, heals us, and in all other ways is with us, even in the face of death. You are known, seen, forgiven, and loved by a Lord who has decided you are his, and he is yours. You are held in God's gracious hands now and forever.

Grace & Peace,
Pastor Paul Lutter, Interim Pastor



APRIL 2026

INSIDE:

- Holy Week & Easter
- Vacation Bible School
- Adult Faith Formation
- Pastoral Transition Update
- Council Highlights
- ELCA Missionary Update

Worship
Sundays 9:00 am
Onsite & Online

STAFF:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Interim Pastor | Paul Lutter |
| Children's Ministry | Chelsea Farniok |
| Music Ministry | Hannah Rosholt |
| Office Manager | Robyn Behrens |
| Financial Secretary | Gail Cassidy |
| Financial Administrator | Mary Jech |

Trinity Lutheran Church

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www.trin.org

Office Hours: Mon - Fri 9:00 am - Noon

What's Happening AT TRINITY LUTHERAN?



HOLY WEEK WORSHIP

Palm Sunday, March 29

9:00 am ~ Onsite & Online

Maundy Thursday, April 2

7:00 pm ~ Onsite & Online

Good Friday, April 3

7:00 pm ~ Onsite & Online



Easter Sunday, April 5

9:00 & 10:30 am ~ Onsite

9:00 am ~ Online



Drive Thru Prayers

Mon-Fri, March 30 - April 3

7:30 - 8:30 am

During Holy Week, Trinity will be offering prayers and free coffee to morning commuters driving by the church. All are invited to stop by for a cup of coffee and a prayer to start your day.

Golden Agers / OWLS Luncheon

Maundy Thursday, April 2

12:00 Noon

Trinity's Golden Agers (members 70+) and OWLS (Older, Wiser Lutherans) and a guest are invited to enjoy lunch in the Fellowship Hall on Maundy Thursday, April 2. A Maundy Thursday worship service with communion will follow the meal.



Thursday, April 16 | 10:00 am

Fellowship Hall

Join the Trinity OWLS (Older Wiser Lutherans) for an informative session with Watertown-Mayer Superintendent Darren Schuler. He will share insights into our district's academic excellence, athletic programs, and the strategic allocation of tax dollars, so please come prepared with your questions.

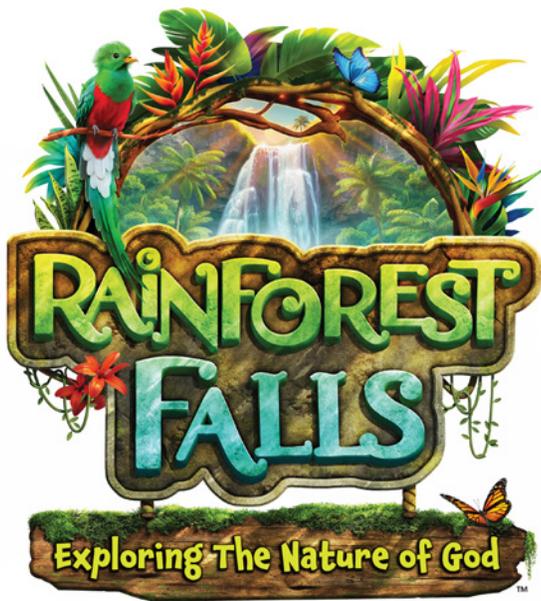
Royals Room Donations

To keep the support going for our local kids, feel free to bring donations of healthy snacks or school supplies for the Elementary School's Royals Room. These items make a huge difference for students who need a little extra help during the day. Thank you for your generosity to our community.

Trinity College Scholarships

The Trinity Lutheran Church Foundation offers college scholarship opportunities to Trinity's graduating seniors each year. The scholarship application is available at www.trin.org/scholarships. **Scholarship applications are due by May 1, 2026.**

Children's Ministry



Join us this June for Vacation Bible School!

June 15-19, 2026
5:30 - 7:30 pm

Optional Family Dinner: 5:00 - 5:30 pm

For ages 3 years old (by September 1, 2025)
thru 4th Grade (2025-2026 School Year)

Join us for **Rainforest Falls VBS**, where we will explore the nature of God—discovering who God is and how much he loves us! Each evening will include a Bible story, singing, prayer, games, snacks, explorations, friendships, and more! Register today! Sign up by May 1 to guarantee a VBS T-shirt.

Register @ www.trin.org/vbs

Looking For Volunteers!

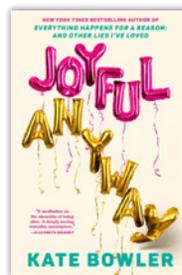
There are many opportunities to help out with VBS. We'll need volunteers to help prep items before VBS as well as lots of helpers during the event itself. Adults and youth in 5th Grade and older are invited to volunteer. Email Chelsea at cfarniok@trin.org to sign up to be a VBS volunteer.

ADULT faith FORMATION OPPORTUNITIES

Joyful, Anyway: An Adult Faith Series

Thursdays, April 16 – May 21 | 7:00 - 8:00 pm
Pioneer Room

How do we find joy when "don't worry, be happy" isn't enough? Join us for a 6-week series as we dive into the latest book by Kate Bowler—Duke professor, historian, and host of the *Everything Happens* podcast. Known for her wit and deep wisdom, Bowler explores how to find joy amidst life's difficulties, arguing that joy isn't about fixing problems but about finding small, surprising moments of delight even when life is hard. We'll read, laugh, and learn from her work—and from one another. Invite a friend and join us, too!



The book is called *Joyful Anyway* and is releasing in early April. Please pre-order your copy; if the cost is a barrier, let's talk. I don't want you to miss out on what we can learn together.

Please register at www.trin.org under the EVENTS menu.

Looking Ahead...

The Gospel of Mark: An Adult Bible Study Wednesdays, June 3 – 24 | 1:15 - 2:15 pm

While Mark is the shortest of the four Gospels, its brevity only fuels its intensity. Known for its breathless pace and the recurring phrase "and immediately," this narrative presents a Jesus who is constantly on the move and a Good News that refuses to stay put. We invite you to join us for a four-week study as we track this "Gospel on the loose" and explore how its story intersects with our own lives today. Whether you are a longtime reader or opening the Bible for the first time, come ready to discuss what God is up to in our world and our life together. Friends and neighbors are always welcome. Registration will be available as the study draws nearer.

Grace & Peace,
Pastor Paul Lutter

Congregational NEWS

PASTORAL ACTS

BAPTISM

James Charles Rosso
son of John and Dana Rosso
baptized March 29, 2026

FUNERAL

Scott Johnson
April 28, 1968 ~ March 11, 2026
Memorial Service on
March 21, 2026



Love INC Heartland Fresh Start Program

Love INC Heartland aims to promote positive, lasting life transformation. Their Fresh Start Program encourages independence by helping people gain valuable life skills and see their self-worth. Volunteers from the partnership of local churches provide community meals, lead classes, and mentor participants. Love INC relies on donations to sponsor families in the Fresh Start Program.

[Learn more about the Love INC Fresh Start Program at loveinheartland.org.](http://loveinheartland.org)

COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

March 17, 2026

FINANCIAL REPORT

Operating Fund summary for February 2026

Beginning balance

2/1/2026: -\$ 11,490.98
Operating Fund income: \$ 24,515.38
Operating Fund exps: \$ 34,513.80
Net balance (Feb.): -\$ 9,998.42

**Operating Fund balance as of
2/28/2026: -\$ 21,489.40**

**Year to date operating fund expenses
exceed income by \$26,635.86.**

Capital Improvement Expenses:

None

Cash Summary:

Old National: \$ 57,087.93
(includes \$2,740.56 Feb. federal withholding)

Citizen's Capital Fund: \$ 69,790.26

M/S/C Corky Ibeling / Kari Olson / carried

Comments:

- 6% of operating fund income for benevolence to Minneapolis Area synod amounted to \$1,470.
- February Xcel bill for fuel and electricity amounted to \$3,392.29 (up about \$820 from January).
- January snow removal cost \$350.

MINISTRY TEAM REPORTS

- **Stewardship Committee:** Jim shared the Time & Talent info with Council and also a brief overview of faith promises over the past few years.

- **Worship & Music:** Tammy shared that Worship & Music has been meeting quarterly to go over the calendar and upcoming events to help with worship planning and logistics

OLD BUSINESS

- **Call Committee:** All six of our recommended candidates have agreed to be on the Call Committee.
- **Council Retreat:** Scheduled for Tuesday, April 21, 2026 at 5:30 at Corky Ibeling's house.
- **Congregational Meeting:** Held before conversation with the Bishop on Sunday, March 22, 2026. Vice-President Kevin Beck will lead the meeting asking for Church Congregation approval of our six Call Committee candidates.
- **Conversation with the Bishop on Sunday, March 22, 2026:** Transition Team members will act as hosts for the Bishop that morning.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Installation of the Call Committee** will take place on Sunday, March 29 during Worship by Pastor Paul.
- **Upcoming Congregational Events:** Holy Week Worship & Events Graduate Sunday on May 17, 2026

PASTORAL TRANSITION UPDATE

Exciting Steps Forward: Call Committee Approved!

Thank you to everyone who joined us for our Special Congregational Meeting on Sunday, March 22 to approve our Call Committee – the team that will lead the search for our next pastor.

Meet Your Call Committee We are grateful to these dedicated members for accepting the call to serve:

Rachel Blacketter
Terri Gens
Tom Lindberg
Richard Murray
Gina Phearman
Jake Rosholt

A Meaningful Conversation with Bishop Nagel

Following the official business, we had the pleasure of hosting Minneapolis Area Synod Bishop Jen Nagel for an informal conversation. We shared what makes Trinity such a special place and outlined our collective vision for the qualities we hope to find in our next pastor. It was a wonderful moment of reflection and unity that reminded us all why this community is so vibrant. A huge thank you to everyone who attended and contributed their voice. Your input is invaluable as we begin this journey together!



ELCA MISSIONARY UPDATE



A New Chapter for the Ronnevik Family Andrew, Meredith, Bea, and Hans

After three years of dedicated service in Papua New Guinea (PNG), the Ronnevik family has announced that they will conclude their missionary chapter this June. The transition aligns with their upcoming home assignment, marking a bittersweet departure from their roles at Martin Luther Seminary (MLS).

While the decision was difficult, the family feels it is the right time to return to the United States. Andrew and Meredith have found immense joy in teaching—launching the Master of Theology program and leading English seminars—and are now working closely with colleagues to ensure a smooth handover of their responsibilities.

As they look toward the future, the Ronneviks anticipate a move to the Midwest, where Andrew will return to pastoral ministry and Meredith to nursing. They express profound gratitude to their supporters, noting that the prayers, gifts, and encouragement received over the last three years have been their bedrock.

The Ronneviks kindly ask for your continued prayers during this transition:

- For a "good goodbye" as they conclude their work with the MLS community.
- For the logistical challenges of packing and international travel.
- For clarity and discernment as they seek God's calling for their next professional roles.

➤➤➤ Last Month in Pictures

Lent at Trinity was filled with beautiful music and worship, an engaging OWLS gathering, and Trinity youth who brought their energy to game nights and helped serve midweek Lenten meals, making this a season of connection and fun for everyone.



Another Successful Year of Packing the Pews!

Many thanks to all who contributed to our annual "Pack the Pews" campaign this year. We collected 265 pounds of food and \$60 in gift certificates for the Gather & Grow Food Shelf. Our Sunday School students also got the chance to build creative castles with all of the donations to show off the scale of our impact!



PASTOR PAUL'S FAITH RESOURCE CORNER

Little Alleluias: Collected Poetry and Prose by Mary Oliver

Let's say you were made to read poetry in school, and promised yourself you would never put yourself through that again. People think of poetry as too abstract, too removed from the daily lives we live, and too hard to understand. It's fair; so often the way poetry is taught and discussed leaves people feeling a little...inadequate. I thought this for a long time, too. Later, I would read some poetry by Mary Oliver. Her writing – in poems and prose – is beautiful, clear, and welcoming for everyone, even those who have sworn to never read poetry again. Her poetry is worth reading.

Let me share a poem from the book I'm inviting you to read. The poem is titled *Summer Poem*.

*Leaving the house, I went out to see
the frog, for example,
in her shining green skin;
and her eggs
like a slippery veil;
and her eyes
with their golden rims;
and the pond with its risen lilies;
and its warmed shores
dotted with pink flowers;
and the long, windless afternoon;
and the white heron
like a dropped cloud,
taking one slow step
then standing awhile then taking
another, writing
her own soft-footed poem
through the still waters.*

If you decide to read this book, let me know. I'm curious to hear what you think.

Grace & Peace,
Pastor Paul Lutter

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
<p>Drive Thru Prayers 7:30 - 8:30 am each weekday morning of Holy Week in the Trinity parking lot.</p>						
			Prayer 12:30 pm Worship Choir 6:30 pm Worship Band 7:30 pm	MAUNDY THURSDAY Housekeepers 9 am Golden Agers 12 pm Worship 7 pm <i>Happy Birthday</i> Kurt Beckstrom Adam Kirkman Sarah Ress	GOOD FRIDAY Worship 7 pm <i>Happy Birthday</i> Kari Olson Sam Ragner	<i>Happy Birthday</i> Casey Skahaug Mary Sloneker
5 EASTER SUNDAY Worship 9 am Fellowship 10 am Worship 10:30 am	6 <i>Church Office Closed</i> AA Meeting 8 pm	7 Quilting 9 am <i>Happy Birthday</i> Harrison Farniok Brett Gens Grace Lopez	8 Prayer 12:30 pm 6-8 Confirm. 6:30 pm Worship Choir 6:30 pm Worship Band 7:30 pm <i>Happy Birthday</i> David Sloneker	9	10	11 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Roger Anderson Mike Loehrs Cooper Thomson
12 Worship 9 am Fellowship 10 am Sunday School 10 am <i>Happy Birthday</i> Emilie Empting Cindy Essen Amanda Hastings	13 Apostles 8:30 am Priscilla Circle 2 pm AA Meeting 8 pm <i>Happy Birthday</i> Nathan Zellmann	14 Quilting 9 am Finance Committee 6:30 pm <i>Happy Birthday</i> Kathy Baluski Linda Gray	15 Prayer 12:30 pm 6-8 Confirm. 6:30 pm Worship Choir 6:30 pm Worship Band 7:30 pm <i>Happy Birthday</i> Devin Horsman	16 OWLS 10 am Adult Faith Series 7 pm	17 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Bodil Empting Mike Haller Ben Lohmann Eric Skahaug	18 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Cole Koets Tristan Wells-Eliason
19 Worship 9 am Fellowship 10 am Sunday School 10 am <i>Happy Birthday</i> Stephen Bolea	20 AA Meeting 8 pm <i>Happy Birthday</i> Melissa Bauernfeind	21 Quilting 9 am Church Council Mtg. 6:30 pm	22 FCA Breakfast 7 am Prayer 12:30 pm 6-8 Confirm. 6:30 pm Worship Choir 6:30 pm Worship Band 7:30 pm	23 Tidings 9:30 am Adult Faith Series 7 pm <i>Happy Birthday</i> Tim Gulbrandson Carol Murray	24 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Elaine Mitteness Eliza Rowan	25 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Sylvia Becker Jonah Blakstad
26 Worship 9 am Fellowship 10 am Sunday School 10 am First Communion Workshop 11:00 am <i>Happy Birthday</i> Megan Oak	27 Apostles 8:30 am AA Meeting 8 pm <i>Happy Birthday</i> Bernadine Venske	28 Quilting 9 am <i>Happy Birthday</i> Trevor Brabec Adelle Peterson	29 Prayer 12:30 pm 6-8 Confirm. 6:30 pm Worship Choir 6:30 pm Worship Band 7:30 pm	30 Adult Faith Series 7 pm <i>Happy Birthday</i> Russ Kuntz Nancy Wandersee		



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A large, colorful graphic for Easter. The top half has a light blue background with the text "Join us for" in a red cursive font and "EASTER" in large, white, bold, sans-serif letters with a blue outline. Below the text is a landscape with a yellow sky, a brown ground, and three red crosses on a hill. The bottom half has a teal background with a faint butterfly pattern. The text "Holy Week" is in a yellow serif font, followed by "Palm Sunday, March 29 | Worship ~ 9:00 am", "Maundy Thursday, April 2 | Worship ~ 7:00 pm", and "Good Friday, April 3 | Worship ~ 7:00 pm". Below that, "Easter Sunday" is in a yellow serif font, followed by "Sunday, April 5 | Worship ~ 9:00 & 10:30 am".