



TIDINGS

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH OF WATERTOWN, MINNESOTA

from the pastor



Dear Trinity friends,

Grace and peace to you from God Almighty, the One who leads us and guides us as we grow together in God's love!

Since I am retiring at the end of May, this will be my final article for the Trinity Tidings. It's a bittersweet moment for me – I'm sad to be leaving this congregation that I have come to know and love since first coming here in 2015. But I'm also excited to see what God has

planned for us all in the next chapter of our lives. When I look at the display of pastor's pictures downstairs in our Fellowship Hall, I'm reminded that God has been at work at Trinity through the life of all 26 pastors, along with all the numerous church councils, lay leaders, and every individual member since the congregation began in 1858. And just like in the past, God will certainly be at work in the 27th pastor that soon arrives at Trinity, along with the next set of church leaders that God calls forward.

So as we all look ahead to the future God has prepared for us, I am confident that we will step out in faith just like we have always done: "As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothed in compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience." I'm also confident that we will continue to "bear with one another... forgive each other... and above all, be clothed in love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony." These words from Colossians 3 remind us that God is in charge, and that God's Spirit has given us everything we need to work together for the sake of our church, our community, and our world.

On behalf of Susan and myself, please know how grateful we are to have been a part of Trinity's life and ministry for the past ten years. May this prayer guide us all into God's future:

O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Stay Calm, Stay Connected, and Shine On!
~ Pastor Engholm



MAY 2025

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May Events at Trinity
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Worship
Sundays at 9 am
Onsite & Online

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What's Happening AT TRINITY LUTHERAN?



A Farewell Celebration for Pastor Jeff

Sunday, May 18

9:00 am Worship

10:00 am – Noon Reception

Pastor Jeff is starting a new playlist! After years of faithful service, inspiring sermons, joyful music, and heartfelt ministry, Pastor Jeff is retiring from Trinity Lutheran Church. Before he hits "play" on his next track, let's gather to bid Pastor Jeff and Susan farewell with a chorus of love, laughter, and blessings. We invite you to join us for worship at 9:00 am as we give thanks to God for the ministry and music of Pastor Jeff. A festive reception will follow—a chance to share memories, say thank you, and wish Pastor Jeff and Susan a warm goodbye.

"Sing to the Lord a new song, for He has done marvelous things." —Psalm 98:1

Graduate Blessing Sunday

Sunday, May 11

Join us as we celebrate with, pray for, and bless our high school seniors as they prepare to graduate this spring. Worship and a special reception following worship on Sunday, May 11 will be held in honor of the Class of 2025!



OWLS (Older, Wiser Lutherans)

Thursday, May 15 | 10:00 am

Join the OWLS for a morning of fellowship, conversation and learning about Planning and Planting for Pollinators with Trinity member and Master Gardener, Marty Bergland. Learn how you can create pollinator-friendly landscapes and gardens for native bees and butterflies in your own yard. All "older" and/or "wiser" Lutherans and friends are invited to attend.



**Join the
Livestream
Team!**

We're excited to share that Trinity's livestreaming is going strong and has been very well received by our online viewers! Whether it's members traveling, homebound friends, or new visitors checking us out, the ability to worship together from anywhere has made a real difference.

Now that things are running smoothly, we're ready to invite others to be part of this rewarding ministry. If you enjoy working with technology—or are simply curious and willing to learn—we'd love to have you join our livestreaming team! Training is fun, hands-on, and a great way to serve behind the scenes while still being a key part of our worship life.

Interested? Contact the church office at 952-955-1891 or trinityoffice@trin.org to learn more or to schedule a time for training. We'd love to have you on board!

Children's Ministry

Children's Ministry Update from Children's Ministry Coordinator, Chelsea Farniok

The final day of Sunday School this school year is Sunday, May 11. It has been such an incredible year for Children's Ministry. We have laughed, sung, played, crafted, and learned about Jesus. I'm so grateful to the dedicated families and all the parent and youth volunteers who make Sunday School possible.

A big thank you to:

Chelsey Kuffenkam, Nina Kirkman, Allison Neaton, Carrie Herman, Nicole Gohman, Meaghan Erickson, Stephanie Schmidt, Stephanie Salonek, Olivia Salonek, Sara Hallermann, Sarah Ress, Hannah Rosholt, Nick Neaton, Danielle Luoma, Shiree Hirsch, Lily McMahon and many other parents for sharing their time and talent on Sunday mornings.

Also, a big shout out to the nursery gals, Natalie Johnson and Eliza Rowan, for being so dependable and caring with the young children in the Nursery during worship service.

Even though the last day of Sunday school is May 11, we are inviting families to help celebrate Pastor Jeff's last day on May 18. The Sunday School children will be singing two songs during worship.

We are getting excited for VBS on June 16-19! Register online today!

Dates to Note:

- **May 11:** Last day of Sunday School
- **May 18:** Sunday School singing during worship for Pastor Jeff's last day
- **June 16 -19:** Vacation Bible School



Vacation Bible School at Trinity

June 16-19, 2025 • 5:30 - 7:30 pm
Family Dinner at 5 pm

Kids ages 3 years old through 4th Grade are invited to "True North" VBS. Together, we'll see that Jesus is a faithful friend we can always trust! He is our True North! Each evening will include a Bible story, singing, prayer, games, snacks, explorations, friendships, and more!

Register @ www.trin.org/vbs

Volunteers Needed! 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.



Celebrating First Communion

These 5th Graders received communion for the very first time last month – with bread that they made as part of their First Communion preparation! Please keep these young people in your prayers, that they might grow strong in faith, hope, and love!

Congregational NEWS

PASTORAL ACTS

BAPTISMS

Harrison Farniok

son of Travis & Chelsea Farniok
Baptized on April 6, 2025

Lorelei Kuffenkam

Declan Kuffenkam

daughter and son of
Chad & Chelsey Kuffenkam
Baptized on April 6, 2025

Liam Botz

son of Alexander & Erin Botz
Baptized on April 27, 2025

NEW MEMBERS

Chad & Chelsey Kuffenkam

Jaxon, Amelia, Lorelei, Declan

Ben Goetz

With Gratitude

Thank you to everyone who helped make our Lent, Holy Week, and Easter celebrations at Trinity so meaningful—from worship and music to meals and special events, your gifts and dedication truly blessed our community. We are deeply grateful for all the ways you shared your time, talents, and love.

COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

April 15, 2025

FINANCIAL REPORT

Operating Fund summary March 2025

Beginning balance 3/1/2025:

-\$ 20,880.37

Operating Fund income: \$ 38,357.50

Operating Fund exps: \$ 35,038.22

Net balance (March): \$ 3,319.28

Operating Fund balance as of 3/31/2025: -\$ 17,561.09

2025 operating fund EXPENSES exceeded INCOME by \$2,725.80.

Capital Improvement Fund:

There were no Capital Improvement expenses in March.

Cash Summary:

Bremer: \$ 61,462.32
(includes \$1,699.20 for Mar. federal withholding)

Citizen's Building Fund: \$ 82,014.74

M/S/C Dave Kind / Corky Ibeling / carried

PASTOR'S REPORT

Palm Sunday included a procession of palms, excellent music from the Praise Band, a tasty brunch, and a fun Easter Egg Hunt. We are celebrating Holy Week with drive-thru prayers, Maundy Thursday meal and service with Golden Agers/OWLS and Service with Holy Communion, Good Friday Service of the Passion Story, and two festive Easter services! Pastor thanked those who spoke at Wednesday Lent services: Mary Gallus, Steve Hendricks, Tom Lindberg, Allison Neaton and Lori Sieling as they focused on the theme based on Hebrews 13:8 "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever."

Pastor shared a list of church events that happen throughout the year, and also a list of pastors who can fill in if needed prior to receiving our Interim Pastor. Hannah Rosholt will be coordinating musicians for worship.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Nylunda Bell Display** discussion will continue. Existing brickwork will stay for now as that may be the new location.
- **Property Committee Update:** Interior painting of sanctuary is complete.
- **Pastoral Transition Update:** An email was sent to the volunteers explaining the Transition Team and Call Committee timeline.
- **Council Spring Retreat** will be scheduled once an Interim Pastor is in place.

NEW BUSINESS

- **A Farewell Party** for Pastor Jeff is being planned with Jodi Boylan as team chair. Motion was made that a gift of the small pump organ along with a monetary gift will be given to Pastor Jeff on behalf of the congregation and will be presented at the farewell party.

M/S/C Steve Boylan / Ryan Ress / carried

- **Banking Business Update:** A motion was made that the Trinity Lutheran Church Council approve the following two Council officers, President and Treasurer, to become official signers for the money market and checking accounts at Bremer Bank (to become "Old National") and at Citizen's Alliance Bank in Watertown, and that as the office holders change through time, the signers and records will be updated annually.

M/S/C Nancy Stello / Corky Ibeling / carried

MISSIONARY UPDATE

Rev. Andrew & Meredith Ronnevik Serving in Papua New Guinea



Dear family and friends,

Warm greetings from Papua New Guinea. As we look back on the season of Lent and celebrate the joy of Easter, we give thanks for the God who emptied himself to make us whole and who raised the One who was dead to life.

We sent our last newsletter in late December. Since then, we've traveled to Bribie Island in Australia for a holiday break, our friend Amanda came for a visit all the way from the U.S., Bea and Hans have started school, Meredith has become a seminary teacher, I've had our family's first cases of dengue fever and malaria, and our family marked one full year in PNG. Our new house on the seminary campus is feeling more like home, and the good soil in the yard around our house has produced abundantly.

The seminary started the 2025 school year in February. We started with heavy hearts, as a student returning home from vicarage (internship) died from a sudden illness. Amid grief, the semester began. Meredith is teaching English writing to seventeen first-year students in a 7:30 a.m. class focused on writing "key word" outlines, paraphrasing, and library skills. She'll continue with this group for the whole year.

I'm teaching "Advanced Reading and Writing" to upper-level students in the bachelor's program, focusing largely on grammar so far, along with another round of "Contemporary Theology," this time with new readings. I'm also helping our New Testament professor prepare to launch a master's degree (MTh) program in theology in 2026—a big task, but one filled with promise.

During the recent school break, we joined other overseas Lutheran missionaries for our annual retreat, held this year in the mountain town of Bulolo. It was a welcome time away, with cooler temperatures and good fellowship. We returned in time to observe Holy Week here and to prepare for a new set of classes. Term 2, for both the seminary and the kids' school, start the week after Easter.

We remain deeply grateful for your support, prayers, and friendship. May the hope and joy of Easter continue to shape your days in this season of resurrection.

God's peace to you.

Andrew, Meredith, Bea, and Hans



Support our ELCA Missionaries

Trinity supports missionaries Rev. Andrew & Meredith Ronnevik, serving in Papua New Guinea, with prayer and financial support. You can sign up to support the Ronneviks by adding your name on the calendar at the Trinity Welcome Center (outside the church office) and placing cash or a check in the offering plate on Sundays or give directly to the church office. You can also give on Trinity's Online Giving page under 'Special Gifts'. A \$25 donation supporting our ELCA missionaries is a great gift for a birthday or anniversary or a meaningful way to remember or honor a loved one.

Last Month in Pictures

Our Palm Sunday breakfast served up cinnamon rolls and breakfast pizza with a side of joy, while kids hunted eggs with glee at our Easter Egg Hunt. Drive-Thru Prayers brought blessings to go, and the OWLS sing-along hit all the right notes with tunes, laughter, and community cheer!



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Housekeepers 9 am <i>Happy Birthday</i> Wilbur Light Zachary Lohmann	2 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Wade Baluski	3
4 Worship 9 am Fellowship 10 am Sunday School 10 am <i>Happy Birthday</i> Kristin Hecksel Luke Sandquist	5 AA Meeting 8 pm <i>Happy Birthday</i> Mark Fritzke Kim Whitehead	6 Quilters 9 am <i>Happy Birthday</i> Madison Gohman Michael Huber Kallie Jackson	7 Prayer 12:30 pm Worship Band 7:30 pm <i>Happy Birthday</i> Leona Farniok Hannah Rosholt Shelley Stenson	8 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Ailsa Gilbert Kimberly Patterson	9 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Lynn Hendricks Theresa Hennessey Sharon Schroeder	10 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Caroline Farniok Stephanie Salonek
11 GRADUATE BLESSING SUNDAY Worship 9 am Fellowship 10 am Sunday School 10 am <i>Happy Birthday</i> Erik Eliason Elena Ress	12 Apostles 8:30 am Priscilla Circle 2 pm AA Meeting 8 pm <i>Happy Birthday</i> Sophia Danielson Carter Jones Jenna Kohls Mickey Kottke Amelia Neaton	13 Quilters 9 am Finance Committee 6:30 pm <i>Happy Birthday</i> Brynn Illies Glen Schroers Dan Sieling	14 Prayer 12:30 pm Worship Choir 6:30 pm Worship Band 7:30 pm <i>Happy Birthday</i> Jake Berhow Lexis Brever Drew Isakson Matthew Isakson McKenzie Mitteness	15 OWLS 10 am <i>Happy Birthday</i> Parker Jackson	16 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Lorelei Kuffenkam	17 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Lorelei Kuffenkam
18 FAREWELL SUNDAY Worship 9 am Farewell Reception 10 am - Noon <i>Happy Birthday</i> Jackson Bauernfeind Sue Johnson Vicki Wingert	19 AA Meeting 8 pm <i>Happy Birthday</i> Jordyn Gohman Ryan Whitehead	20 Quilters 9 am Council Mtg. 6:30 pm <i>Happy Birthday</i> Dan Hagelin Rochell Prigge	21 FCA Breakfast 7 am Prayer 12:30 pm <i>Happy Birthday</i> Lonne Gilbert Alden Hirsch	22 Tidings 9:30 am <i>Happy Birthday</i> Madison Dalbey Luke Maas	23 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Declan Kuffenkam Gary Vanderbilt	24 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Kevin Beck Samantha Fautsch Jennifer Jackson Norah Stienessen
25 Worship 9 am Fellowship 10 am <i>Happy Birthday</i> Declan Kuffenkam Gary Vanderbilt	26 MEMORIAL DAY <i>Church Office Closed</i> AA Meeting 8 pm <i>Happy Birthday</i> Kevin Beck Samantha Fautsch Jennifer Jackson Norah Stienessen	27 Quilters 9 am <i>Happy Birthday</i> Dave Hendricks Steven Paschke	28 Prayer 12:30 pm <i>Happy Birthday</i> Peggy Markgraf Mike Panzer Pat Sandquist	29 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Carl Hagelin	30 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Hannah Skahaug	31



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Know who (and whose) you are

Actor Kirk Douglas once picked up a hitchhiker. After the man got settled in Douglas's car, he turned to look more closely at the driver. Surprised to recognize the famous man at the wheel, the hitchhiker exclaimed, "Do you know who you are?!"

We would do well to ask ourselves and each other the same thing. Often, we seem to forget — or perhaps we never knew.

Through much of life, we behave as if our identity depends on our occupation, wealth, family line, daily accomplishments or good deeds. But none of these — not even the last one — determines the core of who we are. All that matters is our Creator's opinion, and God loves us with abundant, unconditional love.

Do you know who you are? You are God's beloved child! And so is everyone else. May we live out that knowledge, treating one another as such.