



TIDINGS

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH OF WATERTOWN, MINNESOTA



Saints & Sinners

When I'm asked how I'd like to be introduced, I will often point to a description of the human being before God and the world from Martin

Luther. I'm simultaneously a saint and sinner. People often laugh. Who wants to work that into an introduction of someone else? No one has yet taken me up on this description. I don't think it's because I identify as a sinner; after all, the Apostle Paul wrote that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. (Rom. 3:23) Maybe it's that I also describe myself as a saint, and more, as both at the same time. It's hard to wrap one's mind around calling someone a saint unless the person is long-suffering for any number of reasons. In no way do I fit this common description.

The pairing of simultaneously sinner and saint has nothing to do with what we have done. Rather, in it, we name who God is and the ways God is present and at work in our lives. In the waters of baptism, our sinful selves are put to death, and we are raised anew in Christ. This description is what makes us saints. You can likely guess what it is that makes us sinners. Think of Adam and Eve in the garden. Their sin isn't that they ate the fruit. It was that they wanted to be God. We are sinners; we are also forgiven sinners, forgiven by a God whose child is raised from the dead for our sakes.

On All Saint's Sunday, we give thanks for those who have died and been raised in Christ Jesus over the last year. We give thanks for those who have been baptized into Christ Jesus. These two truths, at the same time, reveal God's capacity to do in our lives what we cannot. To hear names from both groups read one after another is a moving display of God's love. We may not be able to fathom it, much less explain what it means to be both things at once. Still, that's not really the point.

In the end, it signals the abundant flow of God's grace on the loose from every direction of our lives.

Grace & Peace,
Pastor Paul Lutter, Interim Pastor



NOVEMBER 2025

INSIDE:

November Events at Trinity
The Sandwich Project
Children's Ministry
Pastoral Transition Update
Thanksgiving Worship
Looking Ahead to Advent

Worship
Sundays at 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

513 Madison St SE | PO Box 1177
Watertown, MN 55388
phone: 952-955-1891
email: trinityoffice@trin.org

www.trin.org

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

What's Happening AT TRINITY LUTHERAN?



All Saints' Sunday Sunday, November 2

All Saints' Day celebrates the baptized people of God, living and dead, who make up the body of Christ. On Sunday, November 2, Trinity Lutheran Church will celebrate our newest Saints—those baptized in the past year, as well as our departed Saints who have been called to be with the Lord in the past year. Saints are all of us—as Saints are simply forgiven sinners. Thus, we rejoice in the righteousness we all share through faith in Jesus Christ.

The Sandwich Project MINNESOTA



The Sandwich Project Congregation-Wide Service Project

Sunday, November 16
10:00 am

The Sandwich Project of Minnesota is a grassroots organization that provides thousands of sandwiches each week to shelters and food shelves in the metro area, helping feed people experiencing hunger throughout the year. Trinity is excited to join this effort on Sunday, November 16 with an onsite congregation-wide service project! The ingredients will be provided and we'll need your help to assemble the sandwiches. Join us after worship to make a difference—one sandwich at a time. All ages are welcome to help out.

Children's Ministry

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

We're continuing our exciting theme, *Hear Me Roar*, learning how God is always with us and gives us courage to share His love! This month's service project is The Sandwich Project, right here at Trinity during Sunday School (10:00-10:45 am), where we'll spend time helping our community. Parents are encouraged to stick around and help out. An email will be sent with a Google Form to RSVP for Sunday School, helping us plan songs and rehearsals for the holiday season. So many fun and meaningful things are happening—come grow, serve, and celebrate with us as we learn to "roar" for God together!

THIS MONTH AT A GLANCE

- November 2:** Sunday School Class
- November 9:** Sunday School Class
- November 16:** The Sandwich Project
- November 23:** Sunday School Class—start practicing Christmas songs
- November 30:** Sunday School Class—practice Christmas songs



Thursday, November 20 | 10:00 am

Trinity's OWLS (Older, Wiser Lutherans) Fellowship Group gathers monthly for activities and Christian fellowship together. This month, we're playing BINGO! Bring a friend and 1-2 wrapped items for game prizes and join us for a fun-filled morning of food, fellowship and BINGO, called by Trinity's very own Dave Sloneker. All "older" and/or "wiser" Lutherans and friends are invited to attend.

PASTORAL TRANSITION PROCESS

NEXT STEPS

Trinity Lutheran Transition Team

In November, Trinity will install its Transition Team—members who will work with Pastor Paul to prepare the congregation's profile for the pastoral call process. This team's task is to help tell Trinity's story and express our hopes for future leadership. Their work will result in a document that helps both potential pastoral candidates and the congregation get to know one another and see how their hopes and gifts align.

Once the profile is completed and approved by the Church Council, the Call Committee will take the next step in the process. Each stage is an important part of faithfully preparing for Trinity's next chapter in ministry.

Transition Team members: Anna Goetz, Robyn Behrens, Sara Hallermann, Diane Johnson, Allison Neaton, Eileen Nelson, Thomas McMahon, and Denice Widmer.

Please hold this team, the future Call Committee, and our congregation in prayer during this season of transition and hope.

Congregational Conversation: Leadership — Pastoral and Lay

Sunday, November 9
10:15–11:15 am

Trinity will hold its second Congregational Conversation on Sunday, November 9. Join us in the Fellowship Hall for coffee, treats, and meaningful discussion about leadership—both pastoral and lay. Together, we'll reflect on the gifts we hope for in our next pastor and the gifts we strive to live out as members of this congregation.

Following the same format as the first session, participants will write responses to questions about leadership, discuss them in small groups, and then share insights with the larger gathering. More than 30 people joined the first conversation, which offered wonderful time for reflection and connection. This time, we're aiming for 60 participants or more as we continue discerning how God is guiding us forward as a community of faith.



Community Thanksgiving Service

Sunday, November 23 | 4:30 pm
Immaculate Conception Catholic Church

Before the holiday season becomes a whirl of activity, take time to give thanks to God for your many blessings. Worship with friends and neighbors at the Watertown Community Thanksgiving Service on the Sunday before Thanksgiving. Immaculate Conception Catholic Church (109 Angel Ave NW, Watertown) is hosting the service this year and it will include worship leaders from Trinity, Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, Watertown Evangelical Free Church, and Peace Lutheran Church.



Decorating for Christmas & Poinsettia Sale

The Advent and Christmas seasons will be here before we know it! Keep an eye on bulletin announcements and eNews updates for details coming soon about decorating Trinity for Christmas and our annual Poinsettia Sale in November!

Advent Suppers & Worship Services

Wednesdays, December 3, 10, 17
Light Supper from 5:30 - 6:30 pm
Worship at 7:00 pm

Join us for a light meal in the Fellowship Hall, followed by a "Holden Evening Prayer" Advent worship service.

The first Sunday of Advent is November 30.

Congregational NEWS

PASTORAL ACTS

BAPTISM

Rhett McCleary
son of

Ethan & Emma McCleary
Baptized on October 26, 2025

NEW MEMBERS

Kory Bender & Becky Cronk

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!

COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

October 21, 2025

FINANCIAL REPORT

Operating Fund summary September 2025

Beginning balance 9/1/2025:
-\$22,968.29

Operating Fund inc: \$ 24,907.48
Operating Fund exps: \$ 35,049.81
Net balance (Sept.): -\$ 8,642.33

**Operating Fund balance as of
9/30/2025:** -\$ 31,610.62

**2025 operating fund EXPENSES
exceeded INCOME by \$16,775.33.**

Capital Improvement Fund:
No expenses this month

Cash Summary:
Bremer: \$ 45,606.29
(includes \$1,703.16 for Sep. federal withholding)

Citizen's Building Fund: \$ 80,139.49

Comments

- 6% of operating fund income for benevolence to Minneapolis Area synod amounted to \$1,493.22.
- September Xcel bill for fuel and electricity amounted to \$931.42 (down about \$159 from August).
- Bibles for 6th graders were purchased.
- Books for Martin Luther study were purchased. Several people have reimbursed the church for their copies.
- Music for choir and praise band was purchased.

- Paid Nursery attendants have started again for the school year.
- \$25 gas cards continue to be purchased to be given to people in need as part of social ministry.
- Operating Fund continues further into the red.

M/S/C Nancy Pickering / Nancy Stello / carried

PASTOR'S REPORT

Pastor reported that nine members affirmed their baptismal faith on Confirmation Sunday; the Transition Team has been set with first meeting scheduled; discussed plans to reinvigorate the Ministry Teams and Support Committees at Trinity.

OLD BUSINESS

- Follow-up discussion regarding the Congregational Meeting on Oct. 5 regarding removal of the parsonage.
- Follow-up discussion regarding the parsonage property tour on Oct. 19.

NEW BUSINESS

- Motion to accept Dave Kind's resignation from Church Council effective immediately was made with regrets.
M/S/C Nancy Stello / Corky Ibeling / carried
- Pastor Lutter encouraged Council members to attend the Minneapolis Synod Tool Kit event on November 8.
- Pastoral Transition Team to be installed during worship in Nov.



A Successful Noisy Offering Supports the Watertown-Mayer Royals Room

During worship in the month of October, Trinity collected over \$400 in coins and bills with our Noisy Offering. The donation was given to Watertown-Mayer Elementary School to support the Royals Room, which provides healthy snacks and school supplies to students who need them. Thank you for your noisy generosity!



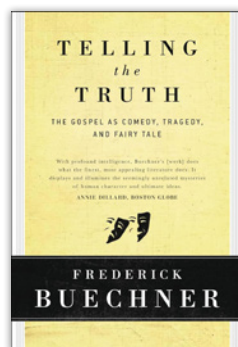
Gather and Grow Food Shelf: Most Needed Items

The Gather and Grow Food Pantry is in special need of the following items this time of year.

- Spaghetti sauce (please, no glass)
- Mac and cheese
- Refried/chili beans
- Black/kidney beans
- Mashed potatoes (box or pouch)
- Saltine crackers
- Egg noodles spaghetti
- Elbow pasta
- Canned fruit & applesauce
- 100% juice – shelf stable
- Gift Certificates to Marketplace Foods in Watertown

Donated items can be dropped off at Trinity's Donation Station at the main parking lot entrance. Financial donations can be dropped off in the church office or the offering plate. Thanks for your generosity during the upcoming holiday season.

PASTOR PAUL'S FAITH RESOURCE CORNER



Telling the Truth: The Gospel as Tragedy, Comedy, and Fairy Tale by Frederick Buechner

I first read this small book while in seminary. I had heard of Frederick Buechner – a Presbyterian pastor, writer, poet, and theologian. I was intrigued by the structure of this

book. Each chapter considers the gospel from different angles under the umbrella of telling the truth: the gospel as tragedy; the gospel as comedy; and the gospel as fairy tale. Don't let these angles turn you away. Use them as cause for curiosity. By this, I mean: why would Buechner look at the gospel from these perspectives? It turns out there's quite a bit we can learn from Buechner. When I first read this book, this quote, referring to Abraham and Sarah laughing at God when they were told they would have a child, struck me: "Maybe the most interesting part of it all is that far from getting angry at them for laughing, God told them...he wanted them to name [their child] Isaac [his name means laughter in Hebrew]...So you can say that God not only tolerated their laughter but blessed it, and in a sense, joined in it himself..." (p. 53) This book helps us look at God and ourselves through lenses that are unique. I highly recommend you take this book and read it – and then let's talk together about it.

Grace & Peace, Pastor Paul Lutter

Last Month in Pictures

There is so much to celebrate at Trinity!
From Confirmation Sunday and Bible studies to
Trunk-or-Treat and our youth collecting food
for the food shelf, we are shining God's light in
joyful and meaningful ways.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH WATERTOWN, MINNESOTA www.trin.org						1 Happy Birthday Pam Olson Gail Singsank Gail Sommerfeld
2 ALL SAINTS' SUNDAY Worship 9 am Fellowship 10 am Sunday School 10 am Happy Birthday Jim Hendricks	3 AA Meeting 8 pm Happy Birthday Curt Nelson	4 Quilters 9 am 	5 Prayer 12:30 pm Handbells 5:30 pm 6-8 Confirmation at FMSC 6:15 pm Worship Choir 6:30 pm Worship Band 7:30 pm Happy Birthday Cody Brabec Graham Stutsman	6 Housekeepers 9 am 	7 Happy Birthday Claire Herman Chloe Matson Jacob Matson	8 Happy Birthday Willow Bottem
9 Worship 9 am Fellowship 10 am Sunday School 10 am Trinity Listening Session 10:15 am Happy Birthday Allyson Thomson	10 Apostles 8:30 am Priscilla Circle 2 pm AA Meeting 8 pm 	11 Quilters 9 am Finance Committee 6:30 pm Happy Birthday Bill McCain	12 Prayer 12:30 pm Adult Ed 1:15 pm Handbells 5:30 pm 6-8 Confirm. 6:30 pm Worship Choir 6:30 pm Happy Birthday Deb Anderson	13 Adult Ed 6:30 pm Happy Birthday Joy Bolea Robin Durkin	14 Happy Birthday Gus Bottem Bruce Wingert	15 Happy Birthday Kari Brueggemeier Shirley Hirsch
16 Worship 9 am Fellowship 10 am The Sandwich Project 10 am Happy Birthday Lori Sieling	17 AA Meeting 8 pm Happy Birthday Milo Rosholt Kasen Schmidt	18 Quilters 9 am Council Mtg. 6:30 pm Happy Birthday Robyn Behrens Rodney Domjahn	19 FCA Breakfast 7 am Prayer 12:30 pm Handbells 5:30 pm 6-8 Confirm. 6:30 pm Worship Choir 6:30 pm Worship Band 7:30 pm Happy Birthday Reese Otto	20 OWLS (Older, Wiser Lutherans) 10 am Happy Birthday 	21 Happy Birthday Cate Drahos	22 Happy Birthday Susan Jerde
23 Worship 9 am Fellowship 10 am Sunday School 10 am Community Thanksgiving Service 4:30 pm 	24 Apostles 8:30 am AA Meeting 8 pm 	25 Quilters 9 am Happy Birthday Mike Empting Jackson Hastings Maxwell Hastings	26 Tidings 9:30 am Prayer 12:30 pm No Confirmation Class Happy Birthday Jeff Larson Chad Semeja Evan Singsank Dana Vraspir	27 THANKSGIVING Church Office Closed Happy Birthday Loren Bottem Penny Koets	28 Church Office Closed Happy Birthday Nikki Hunkins Avery Olson	29
30 FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT Worship 9 am Fellowship 10 am Sunday School 10 am Happy Birthday Josh Oak						



513 MADISON ST SE | PO BOX 1177
WATERTOWN MN 55388
www.trin.org

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
WATERTOWN MN
55388
PERMIT NO. 22

If you have a new address or if you would like to be removed from our mailing list, please contact the church office at 952-955-1891 or trinityoffice@trin.org.



SIGN UP FOR EMAIL UPDATES FROM TRINITY

Stay up to date with what's going on at Trinity Lutheran Church. Sign up for email updates to receive eNewsletters and other church-wide announcements. Subscribe to Email Updates on our website www.trin.org.

CONNECT WITH US



Facebook/Trinity Lutheran Church (ELCA) Watertown MN



Follow us on
Instagram @trinwatertown

Giving Thanks for All Things

It's easy to list the blessings in life: good health, family, a satisfying career, a comfortable home. We might even be thankful for things others take for granted such as freedom and clean drinking water, reliable transportation and food enough to eat. Then there are the little things, such as gardens, sunrises, pets and coffee.

But what about life's storms or unanswered prayers? Should we be thankful for these? Loss and hardship remind us of our dependence on God. He uses trials to draw us closer to him, to show us that He is our rock and refuge. In misfortune and grief, we discover God's comfort and strength. Should we not, then, be thankful for the storms, too?