Trinity TIDINGS
THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH OF WATERTOWN, MINNESOTA

ELCA

A Whole New ~~World~~ Kind of Truth

Some of you might remember TrinFest Sunday, when I preached on Genesis 9. That Sunday, I did some dancing, sweating, the Praise Band praised and we had treats and face paint.

I asked you to think about your favorite Disney movie as a kid. If you were listening closely, you may have noticed I never actually circled back to it — I preach without notes, and somewhere between the flood and the finish, I lost that particular thread. So consider this part two.

Here's what I was getting at. I don't believe the story of Noah's flood is historically true — I don't think it happened exactly the way it's described, water covering every mountain, animals loading up two by two. But I believe the *TRUTH* in that story completely. And those are two different things. Historically accurate and true aren't the same, even though we often treat them like they are.

To make the point, I wanted us to think about Disney movies, because we already know how to hold both of those at once without it being a crisis of faith.

Mine was *Aladdin*. I grew up on the lower-income side of things — my dad had been diagnosed with MS and money was tight. I remember one Christmas, my sister and I were on the receiving end of something like Toys for Tots. So a story about a "street rat" who didn't have much of anything, and turned out to be worth infinitely more than his circumstances suggested? That landed somewhere in me before I could express why.

None of Aladdin is historically true. There was no genie, no magic carpet, no monkey turned into an elephant. And yet — the truths in it are real ones. People have hopes and dreams bigger than the box the world tries to put them in. Nobody wants to stay confined to what they've been told they are. Help shows up in the most unexpected places. And to be truly loved is to stop pretending to be someone you're not — to actually *beee* yourself.

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Worship
Sundays at 9:00 am
Onsite & Online

STAFF:

Pastor	Adam Teske
Children's Ministry	Chelsea Farniok
Music Ministry	Hannah Rosholt
Office Manager	Robyn Behrens
Financial Secretary	Gail Cassidy
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What's Happening AT TRINITY LUTHERAN?

How God Meets Us Now: Rethinking Reformation Sunday

We celebrate the Reformation on the last Sunday of October. If you grew up Lutheran, Reformation Sunday might mostly mean wearing red and singing "A Mighty Fortress". But Reformation isn't just a history lesson about a monk and a church door. It's what God has been doing all along. God started with the whole cosmos, then narrowed in on one ordinary family, then came close in the person of Jesus, and now keeps showing up through an imperfect, beautiful Church. God has never stopped reforming how God meets us.

So maybe the question isn't "What did Luther believe?" It's "What do we believe, and why?" Is it a reflection of the living Christ, or just what's comfortable and been that way? That's not a scary question. It's a faithful one.

PASTOR ADAM CONTINUED

Nobody watches Aladdin and says, "well, none of that happened, so I guess I got nothing out of it." We already know how to let a story be historically inaccurate and deeply true at the same time. We do it every time we watch a movie or read a novel that moves us.

That's exactly how I'd invite you to read Genesis. It's not a science report on ancient rainfall totals. It's a story that tells us who God is — a God who grieves over what's broken in the world, and who responds not by demanding something from us, but by making an unconditional promise to stay. That's the truth I want you walking away with. Not whether the math on the boat adds up. Whether you believe God has bound himself to you, rain or shine.

So — what was your Disney movie? And what truth is God speaking to you through it?

Coffee, Conversation and Cribbage

Sundays | 10 am

Let's play cribbage! Cribbage improves brain health, sharpens math skills and builds strong social skills. If you're interested in learning more about cribbage, or playing a game with someone new, join us during coffee hour on Sunday mornings in the Fellowship Hall. Dave Hendricks and Diane Hayes will be there with the cribbage boards. Come give it a try!

OWLS

OLDER, WISER LUTHERANS

Thursday, October 15 | 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.

Meet & Greet with Pastor Adam

There are still spots available for a Meet & Greet with Pastor Adam

We are continuing our series of casual Meet & Greets to help everyone get to know our Pastor Adam—and to give him a chance to get to know you! Whether you'd like to simply join a gathering or open your doors as a host, we'd love for you to be part of it. Visit www.trin.org and find the sign-up form under the EVENTS menu to learn more and to let us know if you'd like to attend, host, or both!

Trunk-or-Treat

Sunday, October 25 | 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**.

Confirmation Service

Celebrate with the following students as they affirm their baptisms at their Confirmation service on Sunday, October 11 at 9:00 am.

Carter Blackketter, Ethan Danielson, Emma Hunkins, Kendra Kottke

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.

a Youth Ministry Event

Trick-or-Treat for the Food Shelf

Sunday, October 25
3:00 - 6:00 pm

Middle and High School youth from local churches are going door-to-door to collect food for the Watertown Food Shelf. We'll head out to various neighborhoods to collect food. Trinity Youth are invited to meet at church at 3:00 pm (on the Madison Street side of the building) to get started. Parents of youth are also needed as drivers.

Community members: Get a bag of non-perishable food items ready — don't forget the holiday favorites! We'll also collect monetary donations (checks made payable to "Gather & Grow Food Shelf" or put money in a sealed envelope labeled "Gather & Grow Food Shelf"). Thank you for your generosity!

Congregational NEWS

FUNERALS

Jean Bakken
4/25/1944 ~ 8/31/2026
Memorial Service on
September 11, 2026

MEMORIALS

in memory of

Jim Morrow
General Fund ~ $345
Music Ministry ~ $100

Emmett Danielson
General Fund ~ $120

Beth Malo
General Fund ~ $25

Shane Markgraf
General Memorial ~ $85

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

COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

September 15, 2026

FINANCIAL REPORT

Operating Fund summary August 2026

Beginning balance 8/1/2026: -$ 37,585.73

Operating Fund inc:	$ 25,697.63
Operating Fund exps:	$ 27,400.74
Net balance (August)):	-$ 1,703.11

Operating Fund balance as of 8/31/2026: -$ 37,585.73

2026 operating fund EXPENSES exceeded INCOME by $44,435.30.

Capital Improvement Expenses:
None

Cash Summary:
Old National Bank: $ 37,656.99
(includes $2,123.96 Aug. federal withholding)

Citizen's Building Fund: $ 58,968.75

Comments

- 6% of operating fund income for benevolence to Minneapolis Area synod amounted to $1541.28.
- August Xcel bill for fuel and electricity amounted to $1224.19 (up about $50 from July).
- Expenses were down slightly with Pastor Paul's interim finishing.
- Pulpit supply for August amounted to $852.20.
- Adam Rowan will update the congregation on Sunday, Sept 27, on the financial status.

M/S/C Nick Neaton, Corky Ibeling, carried

PASTOR'S REPORT

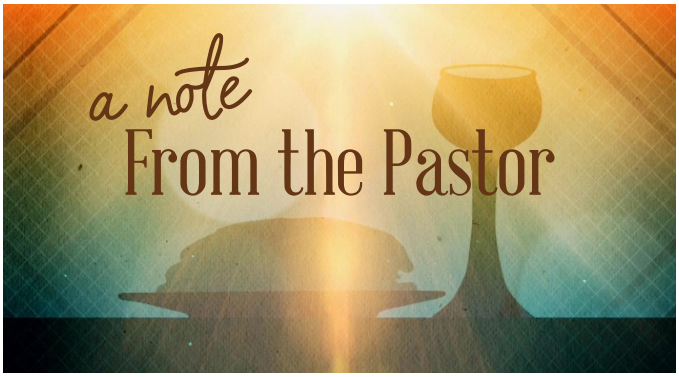
Pastor Adam is thankful to be a part of Trinity and reflected on his first few weeks here. He is looking forward to the start of Fall activities including Confirmation and homebound visits. He will also be providing clergy services for Johnson Funeral Home in Waconia upon request.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Pastoral Transition** We're very happy to have Pastor Adam Teske at Trinity!
- **TrinFest** was a success on Sunday, September 13, with fellowship and fun (and no rain)!
- **Job Descriptions** are being reviewed with planned updates soon.
- **Chamber Events** Jim reached out to the Chamber. We have a small group of musicians who will play at Ladies Night Out. Pastor Adam will attend the Chamber lunch on September 16.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Pastor Adam Insurance Package** Motion was made to continue Portico's "Select copay" health insurance option for Pastor Adam and family for 2027.
  M/S/C Jim Sandquist, Kari Olson, carried
- **Installation Sunday for Pastor Adam** is Sunday, September 20. Pastor Jen Collins will participate in the service.
- **Handbook Updates** Motion was made to adopt the updates to the handbook per the highlights provided and conversation
  M/S/C Kevin Beck, Nancy Stello, carried
- **Open Communion Policy** Motion was made to formally adopt the Open Communion Policy of the ELCA
  M/S/C Kari Olson, Corky Ibeling, carried



The Table Is Open

When Nicholas was very little, he'd get a present, tear off the wrapping paper, and exclaim, "It's a box!!!" He was thrilled. Not about what was inside — about the box. My mother-in-law, who is a little further along than Nicholas, loves the look of a present. For her, everything on the outside matters, almost more than what's inside. The wrapping, the bow — you know a present is from her because it's gorgeous.

Same gift. Two completely different ways of receiving it. Neither one of them is doing it wrong.

I bring that up because we're making a change here at Trinity, and I want you to know the "why" behind it before you hear the "what."

Here's the truth: neither a 3-year-old nor a 93-year-old fully understands what's happening at that Table. The body of Christ: present in, with, and under a piece of bread — I've got a seminary degree and I still can't fully explain that one to you. None of us can. It's mystery, not math.

> **We live in a world that's awfully good at sorting people into in and out, winners and losers, enough and not-enough. Christ's table doesn't run on that system.**

But here's what both of them do understand, without any theology at all. A 3-year-old and a 93-year-old both know exactly what it feels like to be included. And they both know exactly what it feels like to be left out. When they are welcome somewhere and when they are not. That's not complicated. That's just being human.

We live in a world that's awfully good at sorting people into in and out, winners and losers, enough and not-enough. Christ's table doesn't run on that system. It never has. Jesus didn't say "let the children come to me once they've studied up." He said, "Let the children come to me." So — we're going to let them come.

Which brings us to the what.

What's actually changing. Communion at Trinity will now be open to any baptized person who comes to the table, no matter their age or how much theology they've got sorted out in their head. This is standard practice at many ELCA congregations, and our council just voted to support it, in line with ELCA guidance. You can read that policy here: ELCA — At What Age? https://tinyurl.com/atwhatage

How it'll actually work. The person serving communion is going to ask a simple question of a kid coming forward: "Can they receive?" If the hands are open, communion is given. If they're not, the child receives a blessing instead. Nobody is put on the spot. Nobody has to pass a test. It's just: are your hands open? Okay. Here you go.

We're not dropping the other stuff. We'll still offer our communion retreat for kids, and we'll still celebrate that first time a child comes to the table on purpose, understanding a little more of what's happening. That milestone still matters. This isn't instead of that — it's alongside it.

If you've got questions about this, I would genuinely love to talk with you. Come find me, call me, corner me at coffee hour, whatever works. And if you want a good starting point, here's a short video (about 7 minutes) that's a great way for your family to talk through what communion is together: What Is Communion? https://tinyurl.com/whatiscommunion

Grace isn't something we grow into. It's something we're handed. Open hands and all.

— Pastor Adam

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Please allow 1–2 business days for a reply.
If it's urgent, please note that in your message.

Last Month in Pictures

From vibrant worship and Pastor Adam Teske's installation to TrinFest celebrations and group fellowship, September at Trinity was packed with connection and non-stop fun!

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
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October 2026

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

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Charging Forward

Rhinoceroses are remarkable creatures. Strong, sturdy and surprisingly fast, a rhino is built to protect. When it senses danger, especially near its herd or its young, it does not hesitate. It moves with focus, strength and purpose.

There may be a stewardship lesson for us in that.

God has entrusted each of us with gifts, time and resources to use for his kingdom. When opportunities come to serve, give, encourage or help, faithful stewards do not stand still and wait for someone else to go first. They respond with willing hearts and steady faith.

Stewardship is not passive. It calls us to move with purpose, give with conviction and serve with the strength God provides. May we be quick to answer God's call, bold in putting our faith into action and faithful in caring for the people and work God has placed before us.

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