

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Trinity Lutheran Church
Stillwater, Minnesota



TRINITY
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Table of Contents

Report of the Council President_____	Page 3
Lead Pastor_____	Page 4
Pastor of Lifelong Faith Formation_____	Page 6
Worship & Music_____	Page 7
Gifts Management_____	Page 8
Facilities & Management Team _____	Page 10
Congregational Connections & Care _____	Page 12
Outreach Missions _____	Page 14
Children, Youth & Family_____	Page 16
Middle and High School Youth Ministry_____	Page 17
Annual Meeting Agenda _____	Page 18
Minutes of Annual Meeting: November 17, 2024_____	Page 19
Fiscal Year Statistics _____	Page 25
Pastoral Acts_____	Page 26
Independent Accountant's Review Report _____	Page 27
Statement of Financial Position Comparison _____	Page 43
Fiscal Year-End Summary of Income & Expenses _____	Page 44
Treasurer's Report_____	Page 45
Comprehensive Campaign _____	Page 46
Fiscal Year 2026 Proposed Ministry Budget _____	Page 47
Report of the Nominating Committee _____	Page 48
Congregational Council Nominees_____	Page 49
Sample Ballots _____	Page 55

Fiscal year 2025 began September 1, 2024 and ended August 31, 2025.

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT

As Trinity Lutheran Church continues through this season of pastoral transition, many members have naturally asked, “What is happening with the transition process?” or “When will we call a new pastor?” These are understandable questions — change often brings uncertainty. Yet, this time of transition is also one of the greatest blessings God offers His church: a chance to listen, reflect, and grow in new and unexpected ways.

Change invites renewal. It gives us space to rediscover who we are as a faith community and to envision who God is calling us to become. While the process may be uncomfortable at times, it allows us to strengthen our foundation, reaffirm our shared mission, and build unity through prayer and discernment.

Author Susan Beaumont reminds us, “Transition periods are challenging, disorienting, and unsettling. While we strive to move forward with purpose and certainty, we feel we are moving away from something comfortable and known, toward something that can’t be known.” Yet it is precisely in this movement that God’s Spirit does new work among us.

Let us, therefore, embrace this season not with anxiety, but with anticipation. The Transition Team will engage the congregation to celebrate what makes Trinity strong, identify areas ready for renewal, and explore emerging opportunities for ministry. Each conversation helps us perceive the “new thing” God is doing in our midst — just as Isaiah 43:18-19 reminds us:

“Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.”

This forward-looking spirit is already evident in the ongoing success of our “New & Renewing: The Next 150 Years” capital campaign — a testimony to our congregation’s faith and generosity. Through your support, pledges totaling over \$1.85 million continue to strengthen our church through financial accompaniment, debt reduction, and deferred maintenance. This is more than stewardship — it is a shared declaration that we believe in Trinity’s future.

Our ministry teams, staff, and volunteers have modeled faithful adaptability throughout this journey. The comprehensive campaign, guided by Pastoral and Lay leadership, and many dedicated groups, has reminded us that real transformation happens through collaboration and prayerful trust. The Church’s Council is deeply grateful to all who contribute time, creativity, and faith to sustain the life of this congregation.

As we enter a new fiscal year, change will remain a constant companion — and that is good news. Every season brings new opportunities to grow in faith, deepen relationships, and serve others in Christ’s name. Together, we continue to live our mission: to embrace all, welcome all, and provide a safe and loving place to nurture our relationship with God and one another.

On behalf of the Congregational Council, thank you for your commitment, generosity, and trust in God’s unfolding plan. With hearts open to renewal, we move forward together — confident that the God who has guided us thus far will continue to lead us into a vibrant future.

John Hodler
President, Congregational Council



INTERIM PASTOR

The Lead Pastor position at Trinity has been full of transition in 2025! After a lovely retirement celebration for Pastor Chris in May, I started at Trinity as Interim Lead Pastor on July 1. Thanks to the staff and congregational leadership for shepherding the congregation through the six weeks between Pastor Chris's last day and my arrival.

I received a warm welcome from both the staff and congregation in July and continue to be surrounded with patience, support and dedication as we settle into the interim time. It's not easy to live in the in-between, yet I sense a readiness to embrace the process of reflection that the interim time provides while also moving forward with ministry.

Staff

The Trinity staff are faithful, gifted and hold themselves to a high standard. The staff transitions of this past year have been challenging, but staff members continue to move forward with faithful hope and commitment to Trinity. It is not easy to onboard a new person in the Interim Lead Pastor position, and they have shown endless patience with my questions!

In my first few weeks at Trinity, I talked individually with most staff members to connect with them and learn how I could best support them in this time of change. Working with and supporting the staff is an important part of my position, and I'm grateful for them.

The Trinity staff said goodbye to several members over the last year:

We gave thanks for **Marilee Tangen**, who served as Director of Communications until February 2025, keeping the congregation connected to one another and the wider community for the past ten years. We also gave thanks for Ash Kadidlo, who helped with AV needs and made sure sound ran smoothly at worship services and events. Pastor Rich Larson decided to step away from his role at Visitation Pastor in September to fully embrace retirement. His gentle presence and care will be missed in that role, but he will continue his membership at Trinity. We're still in the process of connecting with our next Visitation Pastor.

We also welcomed several new staff members:

Megan Gaul stepped into an interim communications role from February-September, and **Sammie Bonko**

started as Communications Coordinator in October. **Dana Kruse** joined the staff as Youth Faith Formation Coordinator in April. In August, we welcomed **Isaac Newcomer** as the Audio Engineer.

Full staff meetings happen every Tuesday morning. The Administrative and CYF Teams and the Staff Supervisors also meet weekly, as do Pastor Peter and me. The Worship and Care Teams meet monthly.

The staff has enjoyed several potlucks and a happy hour together since my arrival, but my goal is to continue with fellowship and learning events while I am here. There is a tradition of wonderful staff development offerings at Trinity.

Interim Tasks

Interim pastors have two simultaneous tasks: to move the transition process forward while also tending to the daily pastoral and leadership needs of the congregation. Here are a few ways I participate in moving Trinity forward in mission:

Daily Work

In addition to worship leadership, preaching, and pastoral care, I serve as staff liaison for the Finance Team (chaired by Jill Longnecker), Stewardship Team (chaired by Noah Schumacher), Racial Justice Team (chaired by Ann Wolff) and the Pride Justice Team (chaired by Karen Geiseke). I also attend HR Team meetings (chaired by Jenn Swenson). The HR Team will meet at least quarterly during this transition time to update the Employee Manual and review job descriptions for the staff (among other tasks).

I am part of your outstanding church council, who work together with enthusiasm, commitment and good humor. We will read and study Susan Beaumont's book "How to Lead When You Don't Know Where You're Going" in the coming year. I appreciate the ways they carefully listen to the congregation and am grateful for their support during this interim time. Thank you to President John Hodler, Tina Swanson, Jill Longnecker, Bill Bjorum, Kirsten Parker and Shane Brockshus.

I also continue Trinity's commitment to connecting with the community and larger church:

I participate in monthly gatherings of the active Stillwater ministerium group (local clergy of many denominations), the East Central Conference of the

St. Paul Area Synod, and the Interim Pastors in St. Paul.

I also have the joy of leading the Adult Faith Forum on Wednesdays. This fall we are discussing the ELCA's social statement on Faith and Civic Life that was adopted at the 2025 Churchwide Assembly. In winter 2026, we plan to read and discuss the book *Becoming Nicole* by Amy Ellis Nutt.

Transition Tasks

In late October, the Transition Team met to begin their work together. I will work closely with them in the next months. Thank you to Penny Catlin, Gary Cross, Dick Edstrom, Sabrina Fay, Keith Rediske, Kris Torma and Ann Wolff for their commitment to leading this reflection process. They will gather information from the congregation and community and create Trinity's Ministry Site Profile, a document that names Trinity's mission and the gifts the congregation is looking for in its next lead pastor. This information will be used by the Call Committee (a separate group) who will interview potential candidates and recommend a final candidate to the congregation.

Comprehensive Campaign Celebration

March 2026 marks the close of the 3-year Comprehensive Campaign at Trinity. I look forward to celebrating the success of the Comprehensive Campaign this spring. Leadership is working on plans to mark the occasion, end the campaign well, and look to what is next.

I'm glad to be at Trinity and am grateful to partner with all of you in this time of transition as we seek God's guidance for the congregation's next steps. 2026 will be an exciting year at Trinity!

Jen Hackbarth
Interim Lead Pastor



PASTOR OF LIFELONG FAITH FORMATION

Gratitude and Absurdly Jesusian

Trinity Beloveds, what a joy and blessing it is (and has been) to serve with you in ministry!

It's hard for me to fathom that this is my 8th Annual Report as Pastor of Lifelong Faith Formation. I have learned so much with you and from you in these seasons of life together, as I have "grown in place" as a pastor, parent, and public leader along with my dear spouse Ashley and growing tween girls Ella (11) and Emily (9). We did not know how meaningful this community would continue to be for us, but it has surpassed any of our expectations. You have loved us and nurtured the fullness of who we are and I thank God for y'all daily.

Both personally and professionally, this year has felt significant, even before we gave thanks and bid happy retirement to the Rev. Dr. Chris Bellefeuille. Pastor Chris' departure was seismic and filled with grief and gratitude. Her leadership, vision, preaching, teaching, story-weaving and relational heart has meant so much for God's people here—including me. From our first conversations in 2015, we experienced so much Spirit-filled alignment and simultaneity, even in heated disagreements, leaning heavily on the promise of being Absurdly Jesusian. Absurdly hopeful in Christ. Absurdly welcoming with God's love. Absurdly focused on neighbor justice. Absurdly collaborative and open to what God might be up to next. Which has been a lot. Thanks be to God!

God's Future for Trinity

One of the things that I loved most about Pastor Chris and her leadership and pastoral mindset is she insisted on "God's future for Trinity." Not one person's. Not one leader. Not one agenda. Not one team's. Not one project or even one comprehensive campaign. Her theological gravitas and identity and purpose is God's future. God's vision. God's creating. That has always felt continually freeing and liberating for me in all that I have been gifted to share, trusting that God has a way forward that delights in this constellation of faithful servants on the banks of the St. Croix River. Put another way, God loves us and we get stuff done.

Freedom to Experiment and Invest Relationally

The most freeing thing over my time here at Trinity has been finding and equipping incredible leaders. I feel blessed to have built so many strong relationships, social capital, and deep connections in this community. That longevity invites opportunity and creativity, as well as the freedom to experiment.

We have done that in a variety of ways that I want to highlight:

- Investing in Ministry Teams who have championed Trinity's values in learning and intersectionality
- Youth-led Worship that blends the gifts of all-ages into the most essential part of sabbath community
- Welcoming Dana Kruse and Re-developing High School Ministry through leadership, wilderness exploration, consistent youth group, WOW outreach summer program, LADC partnership events
- Spotighting ministry through video and integration (Mission Minutes, Dinner Church Hosts, EV station)
- Serving the wider church through Ministerium, Synod Committee, Churchwide Assembly, Memorials (End of Life Care), Vitality Team
- (3) Tiny Homes and Wash. Co. Emergency Housing Services Building opening in November 2025
- Comprehensive Campaign leadership and generosity

May we continue to invite God's vision and future for Trinity, new and renewing, blessing and serving.

Absurdly Jesusian,

Pastor Peter Weston Miller

Pastor of Lifelong Faith Formation



WORSHIP & MUSIC

Of all the wonderful things that go on at Trinity, it is worship that is the constant that brings us together each week in the Worship Center and out at the Drive-In. We are so lucky to be blessed with marvelous musicians, worship assistants, communion helpers, bread bakers, ushers, and greeters, all of whom make worship happen each week. I'm grateful as well for our incredible music and worship staff: Carol Carver, Andrew Kreye, Sonia Esch, Phil Kadidlo, and Isaac Newcomber, who are committed to helping craft thoughtful and meaningful services each week, both in person and online! It's worth noting that Isaac joined us in August of this year as our sound engineer. Isaac recently graduated from the Ontario Institute of Audio Recording Technology and has been a great addition to our team.

Some highlights from the past year that come to mind are:

- Our tearful but spirit-filled worship service, where we said goodbye to our beloved Pastor Chris.
- Creating opportunities for the congregation to experience the many facets of the arts, such as the Trinity Choir's collaboration with the St. Croix Valley Symphony Orchestra at our annual Christmas Concert
- The continued growth of our Trinity Choir and Trinity Worship Band with many new members!
- Hosting Cantus, The Concordia Choir, The Drake Choir, Valley Chamber Chorale, The Stillwater Choirs, and Orchestras all for concerts in our beautiful Worship Center for incredible concerts.
- Pride Worship with special music provided by the One Voice Mixed Chorus
- Summer worship at the Drive-In, including Jazz Band Sunday, Blessing of the Animals, Run/Bike Sunday, and our first-ever EV Sunday!

And SO many wonderful Sundays at both the 9 and 11 a.m. services with the Trinity Choir, Praise Band, and guest musicians!

Trinity is a place where we gather to worship God, make music, pray, laugh and sometimes cry. It is a place where all are welcome. Where we can be challenged. A place where we hear from the voices of

all generations. Trinity is a place that I am proud to be a part of. I look forward to continuing our work together for many years to come!

With gratitude and peace,

Clark Weyrauch

Director of Worship and Music



GIFTS MANAGEMENT

“We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to His purpose.”

– Romans 8:28

In a season filled with both gratitude and growth, we’ve witnessed God’s faithfulness in remarkable ways. Our Comprehensive Campaign has reached an incredible milestone—raising nearly **\$1,712,915** (as of 08/15/2025) of the pledged amount of \$1,853,308, bringing us to 92% received. The mortgage balance now stands at **\$1,679,220** (as of 08/15/2025), and since January 2025, our line of credit has remained at **\$0**. Truly, all things are working together for good. As our 2026 Stewardship theme reminds us—we are a GRATEFUL people!

Transitions

In February 2025, Marilee Tangen accepted a full-time marketing position in the private sector. Marilee was an integral part of Trinity for over 10 years and was instrumental in communicating Trinity’s mission. We entered an interim time with her position, and we thank Megan Gaul for stepping in to a part-time role as we evaluated the needs of this position. Pastor Chris announced her retirement in May 2025, and as we were able to celebrate her years of exceptional ministry at Trinity – we also anticipated the arrival of our interim, Pastor Jen, and entered a new season in the life of Trinity.

Parish Office Updates

In January 2025, thanks to the incredible generosity of a private donor, we were able to paint and recarpet the parish offices, creating a more welcoming and refreshed space for all who visit. This gift also allowed us to do some much-needed house cleaning, and we hope you’ve noticed - and appreciated - the difference.

Comprehensive Campaign Projects

As summer arrived, we were grateful to complete the replacement of the old roof on the concession building at the drive-in, and we added a new awning

to provide covered hospitality for our community gatherings. And most recently, we completed the 3rd Street Heritage Chapel Exterior Restoration Project, a significant milestone in our Comprehensive Campaign. This much-needed project was estimated to cost \$250,000 – but came in under budget at \$160,000. None of this would have been possible without the generosity, faith, and commitment of so many. We are deeply thankful for every gift that helped bring these projects to life.

Website

In July 2025, we refreshed Trinity’s website to better reflect the warmth and vibrancy of our community. This update was more than just a facelift—it was a thoughtful redesign of our digital “front doors,” created to welcome both new visitors exploring faith and longtime parishioners looking to get more involved or find helpful resources. Our goals were simple: a cleaner front page, easier navigation, and updated language and photography that truly reflect who we are. We’re still adding content and making improvements, but we hope you find the new site helpful—and that it continues to support Trinity’s mission of being a place of welcome, both in person and online.

New Teams

This summer, we welcomed the formation of two important new teams—the Security Task Force and the Human Resources Team—each dedicated to supporting the evolving needs of our church community. Initiated by the Church Council, the Security Task Force was created to develop a comprehensive plan to ensure safe and controlled access to our building. Their work has been focused on creating a Safety and Security Policy & Procedure Manual, as well as enhancing overall building security. The newly formed Human Resources Team has begun reviewing our existing policies and procedures, etc. Their efforts are aimed at ensuring Trinity continues to be a healthy, respectful, and mission-driven workplace—one that reflects our values and supports the people who serve our congregation. I am deeply grateful to the members of both teams for their time, expertise, and commitment to strengthening the foundation of our church.

Gratitude

I am so thankful for the incredible dedication and hard work of our Facilities Team, Helping Hands crew, and Diggin' In volunteers. Your ongoing efforts to care for and maintain Trinity's facilities and grounds—whether it's electrical work, painting, plumbing, planning, construction, or outdoor landscaping/upkeep—are truly a gift to our entire community. Your knowledge, skill, and commitment to the present and future needs of our “bricks and mortar” church are deeply appreciated. Thank you all for the many ways you serve!

I am also deeply grateful to Noah Schumacher and the entire Stewardship Team for their dedication, creativity, and tireless work in shaping our year-round stewardship efforts and guiding our current campaign, “We Are a Grateful People.” This campaign beautifully reflects the generosity and spirit of the Trinity community. We encourage everyone to continue sharing your gifts and talents in ways that express your love for God and for one another. Together, we are building something truly special.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our administrative and facilities staff for their hard work, generous spirit, and the care they bring to support the mission and values of Trinity each and every day. Their behind-the-scenes efforts make a meaningful difference, and I deeply appreciate all that they do. It's an honor to serve alongside such a faithful and supportive team.

And finally, thank you, Trinity, for being a community marked by generosity and faithfulness. Your commitment to the work of Jesus Christ through this church has made all the difference. The incredible things we've accomplished this year simply wouldn't have been possible without your support - your gifts, your prayers, and your presence.

As we look ahead, may God continue to bless Trinity abundantly in 2026 and beyond.

Sarah Kinsman
Parish Administrator



FACILITIES & MANAGEMENT TEAM

Projects Completed in 2025

In 2025, the comprehensive campaign funds were directed toward repairs to the historic east side of the building. The following is an update on the status of the campaign funded projects.

New & Renewing Comprehensive Campaign Deferred Maintenance Projects		
Item Description	Status	Estimated or Actual Cost
Drive-in facilities need improvement.	Completed asbestos removal, took down the screen shell, and demolished the concession building.	\$62,500 (Actual Cost)
Historic east side of the church needs various repairs.	A contractor completed various repairs, including tuckpointing, chimney repair, and steps repair, with a maximum cost of \$250,000. All the planned work has been completed.	\$160,000 (Actual Cost)
Lower-level restrooms need upgrades.	Design options are being developed. One goal is to create some all-gender restrooms. Work would begin after completed the east side repairs.	\$150,000
Carpeting and paint in the main offices are 20 years old.	Completed	Not funded with CC funds
Complete refinishing of the Worship Center floor	Not started yet.	\$60,000

Other projects, not using campaign funds, were completed during the past year, including the following.

- Security improvements were made, including a 4th street doorbell and cameras.
- Relocated the Library to the former Nursery space and moved the LADC classroom to the former Library space.

Priority Projects for 2026

We have not met to discuss 2026 priorities. These projects are the next priorities recommended by the Facilities Team.

Item Description	Recommended Action	Estimated Cost in 2025
Lower-level restrooms need upgrades.	Complete design of restroom updates for 2026 construction and interim solutions. This is a comprehensive campaign project.	TBD
New stage at the drive-in.	Review ministry needs and develop designs for an improved stage and secure storage. For future construction.	TBD

The Facilities Team would like to thank the volunteers who regularly take on many of these maintenance projects. Much of the work is completed by members of the Team, custodial staff, and Trinity's Helping Hands group. Their service greatly reduces the cost of maintaining our facilities and allows us to make far more progress than would otherwise happen.

The Team also is grateful for the contributions of the Lakes Area Discovery Center (LADC) to projects that benefit both the church and the school.

**Dave Swager, Brian Larson, Ron Hagen,
Chuck Newman, Tom Hosek, Sarah Kinsman, and Mark Gieseke**
Team Members



CONGREGATIONAL CONNECTIONS & CARE

To the family and friends of Trinity Lutheran,

What a joy it has been to serve as your Connections Coordinator over the past year! As we reflect on 2025, we celebrate a year of strengthened bonds, new friendships, and God's love shining brightly through our many ministries. We have worked to ensure every person who walks through our doors—or joins us for an off-site event—feels welcomed, valued, and connected to our vibrant community.

Creating Space for Connection

- Women's Fall Retreat (November 16, 2024): Our journey together began with a meaningful retreat at Memorial Lutheran church in Afton, titled For Such a Time as This. Led by Pastor Chris and myself, 38 women focused on living into the fullness of who God created us to be and claiming it! Our time together provided a beautiful and intentional space for reflection, bringing us closer as we shared our faith journeys and learned from one another how to own our own belovedness and unique design.
- Intergenerational Retreat (January 24–25, 2025): The magic of Camp Wapo was on full display as all generations of our Trinity family came together for fun, fellowship, and faith formation at the overnight retreat Rest in God. Parents, children, and friends of all ages enjoyed outdoor activities like SLEDDING, Bible studies, spiritual practices

while creating lasting memories and building bridges between generations.

- Let's Go Ministry: Our "Let's Go!" ministry expanded our fellowship beyond the church walls, offering a variety of opportunities to explore, learn, and grow together in new settings. Whether attending a local event or exploring the natural beauty of our area, this ministry has been a true testament to building friendships through shared experience.

Care and Support for Our Community

- Grief Ministries: Trinity hosted one of the St. Croix Valley Grief Coalition series: a newly formed grief resource, made up of many individuals and businesses in the local Minnesota and Wisconsin area. Growing Through Loss is a six-week grief support series providing grief support in a large and small group setting. I also offered two spiritual support grief groups for Trinity members on the "off season," between the times the Grief Coalition meets, incorporating spiritual practices with best practices for grief.
- Caring Friends/Celebrating Seniors: This important ministry continued to honor and celebrate the cherished senior members of our congregation. Through calls and cards, the more than 30 Caring Friends fostered connections, shared stories, and ensured our seniors remained active and connected members of our community. Our Celebrating

Seniors events in May and December gathers everyone together for worship and a luncheon with entertainment.

- Sunshine Ministry: Our Sunshine Ministry has truly brightened the lives of many this year! Through the work of our volunteer embroiderers and led by Carolyn Minor, embroidered dishtowels and special dishcloths are purchased by congregants, the proceeds of which fund this ministry, sending roses to our seniors at ages 75, 80, 85, 90, and every year there after.

Building Our Community

- Visitors and New Members: We are thrilled to report that 2025 has been a year of growth! We welcomed numerous visitors and celebrated as 32 individuals chose to make Trinity their church home. We warmly welcomed our new members during special services in March and October. We look forward to continuing to walk alongside them on their faith journeys.
- Piecemakers: The "Trinity Piecemakers," our quilting ministry, continued to thrive, wrapping countless people in God's love. This dedicated group of quilters lovingly created and donated quilts for various needs, including Bundles of Love, and Lutheran World Relief. This beautiful ministry is a true symbol of our congregation's warmth and generosity.
- Women's Circles: Trinity's Anna, Dorcas, Leah, Marion,

and Rebekah's Circles gather together monthly for fellowship, Bible study, prayer and mission.

Enriching Our Spirit Through the Arts

- Fine Arts: Our Fine Arts Group continued to enrich our community with its passion for creative expression. We were captivated by the "River Connects Us" exhibit, featuring the stunning photography of Peter Muschler and the poetry of Tom Gillaspy, and enjoyed a special musical performance; the gorgeous watercolor work of Trinity member Molly Birkeland; meaningful and whimsical oil paintings by member Lou Cunico, and a member exhibit of all things flowers!

Looking Ahead

As we look toward the future, let us continue to build on the foundation of connection and care that defines our Trinity family. Thank you for your commitment to loving God and loving your neighbor, no matter who they are or where they are on their faith journey.

Blessings,

Zanny Johnson
Connections Coordinator



Community Nurse

I enjoyed being part of our Care Team, continuing to serve the needs of the congregation again this year. The team tends to the spiritual and social needs of home-bound members. During times when in-person visits are not advised, calls are made, cards are sent. It is a joy to bring God's word and love on a regular basis. I also work with the Knitting Ministry and Prayer Teams. We have a team of 19 knitters and meet every fourth Thursday at church. Knitters continue to make prayer shawls and baptismal shawls as special gifts to members during both difficult and celebratory times in life. The prayer list is sent out per request and is updated as the need arises. There are more than 20 people that currently receive the prayer list and pray faithfully for our church and its members. I send out a series of grief booklets to our members that have experienced loss of a loved one. I am also the person through whom care needs are directed. Specifically assisting with clarification and help with understanding medical needs and different levels of care. Our team provides all kinds of love and care for our beloved faith community.

Kim Dahlgren, R.N. Faith
Community Nurse

OUTREACH MISSIONS

The Trinity Missions Team has had an exciting and fulfilling fiscal year. We have continued to focus on our four defined areas: Housing Insecurity, Refugee Settlement and Inclusion, Global Companions, and Local Companions.

Housing Insecurity

1. The EHSB (Emergency Housing Services Building), approved by the Stillwater City Council has been built and will be open to residents in early 2026. We will continue to work with EHSB and Washington County in the future as the need is requested.

2. P.I.T. (Point In Time) is a national program that attempts to count the homeless and twice a year two specific dates in Stillwater are set to provide services to our local individuals in need. In January 2025 we distributed winter clothing to households in need. This past July we had 33 organizations providing needed help. We work with Washington County to count as well as provide needed services, such as baby clothes, diapers, haircuts, counseling services and many other important areas. Gift cards for gas and food are distributed and this past year we purchased \$3000 in gift cards (\$25 each).

3. The second home that we had provided money for to build through Settled, Inc., which makes Tiny Homes, has been completed. As the Director of Settled came to our church service to present Trinity a thank you gift for building our first home, we presented her with a check for \$37,000 (another generous gift from a family of our congregation) for the start of a third Tiny Home,

sponsored by Trinity. A \$5000 gift was then given by another family of our congregation and our third home has now been built. So besides being the only congregation in the Metro Area that has built two Tiny Homes, we have the distinction of also building THREE Tiny Homes. We also spent \$1000 to help purchase tools to help build.

4. We support MICAHA (Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing) with a \$500 yearly membership and with a Team member attending monthly Zoom meetings.

Refugee Settlement and Inclusion

1. In the past few years we have sponsored a family of five from Afghanistan who are now living and thriving in the MSP area. We worked with a Coalition from First Presbyterian Church, Ascension Episcopal Church, TLC, the Eastern Twin Cities Islamic Center and Boutwells Justice Team.

2. For the past two years we have had a Refugee Sunday (near World Refugee Day) where we sponsor a local refugee or/and families to our church services, as they are the preachers for the day. This year we had two members of the Refugee Housing MN organization, which has been developed due to the withdrawal of funds from the U.S. Government to support our Refugees. We also had the two children, now grown, who came to the United States with their parents 50 years ago from Vietnam. Trinity sponsored them at that time. A beautiful day to realize what we can do for our Refugees.

3. We want to continue to

support refugees in our region.

Global Companions

1. Tanzania- The focus for Tanzania mission has three primary elements centered in walking alongside (using our Accompaniment Model of Missions) our Tanzania mission partners: 1) our Companion Congregation relationship with the Mwatasi Lutheran Church in the rural high country of the Iringa district, along with their five preaching points. 2) providing Secondary School and College Scholarships for students from Mwatasi. Scholarships are a critical need and are welcomed throughout the year in any amount. Secondary school scholarships average \$450 per student per year. We have been committed to sponsoring about 27 students each year from our partner congregations in Mwatasi, around \$13,000/year and this year we also gave over \$3000 to post-secondary students. 3) The medical ministries started by the late Dr. Mark Jacobson (a son of this congregation) in Arusha. We also maintain involvement with partner organizations such as Iringa Hope (savings and loan agriculture cooperative), St. Paul Partners (water engineering) with water projects in Mwatasi village, and Global Health Ministries. We work with Bega Kwa Bega, an agency of the ELCA St. Paul Area Synod, to further our cooperation and relationship. We had 13 people from Trinity visiting Tanzania October 19- November 4, 2024 to further our connections and partnership. We purchased a piki-piki (small motorcycle) for one of our evangelists, who was walking two hours from home each way to serve one of our preaching points.

2. TLC Piecemakers make quilts and baby items for those in need in our Quilting Quarters. Most of our quilts are sent to Lutheran World Relief. This past year we sent 41 quilts to them. We also sew baby items for Bundles of Love, a MN based organization. This year we delivered 14 baby quilts, 82 bags, 1 blanket, 5 burp cloths, 11 hats, 3 sweaters and bags of donated fleece and flannel to them. We sew together each Tuesday afternoon.

Local Companions

1. We support local agencies in the Stillwater area, such as Community Thread, Connect Center, Family Means, Solid Ground, Valley Outreach, and Youth Advantage, through our gifts of time, food and dollars.

2. We specifically urge families to bring food and toiletry items to church, as we weekly bring these items to Valley Outreach. We have tried to involve the Dinner Church families and Confirmation Students with giving offering to the church. This past school year we have had a globe at Dinner Church as well as at the front of the church where we collect coins and bills to "Feed the World". With this money we purchase Enfamil baby food, which is then distributed to families in need, through Valley Outreach. This was a specific request made to a volunteer at Valley Outreach, who is a member of TLC, and who mentioned the need to a Missions Team member. Thus "Feed the World" at Trinity began. This past fiscal year we collected \$2400 (including two Thrivent grants totaling \$500) to purchase powder to make 1283.4 fluid ounces of formula for infants in the Stillwater area.

3. Each Christmas we provide

gifts for children and grandchildren of those incarcerated. The prisoner requests who to give gifts to and then we purchase and deliver them in the local area (from East St. Paul to Somerset area). This is done through the Angel Tree organization. We also give a Gift Card to the caregivers. This has been a very positive and rewarding endeavor each year.

A desired request this year is to involve others in our congregation and community to get involved. We want our members and friends to feel a part of something beyond their everyday lives. A goal may be to ask each member to volunteer at least once to an organization unfamiliar to them. If we volunteer once, we may choose to continue this relationship. This past year we have showed a short video the first Sunday of each month at the beginning of church to showcase the many ways that the Missions Team is involved with different organizations. We have made videos on the Water Pumps in Tanzania, Community Organizations (as listed in 3.), Settled, Inc. (Tiny Homes), Tanzanian School Scholarships, Angel Tree, Mwatasi and Iringa, Tanzania, Arusha/Hospice/Selian Hospital in northern Tanzania, Quilt Sunday, and Refugee Update.

We currently have 10 members of the Mission Team, serving a 3 year term. They are Glenda Bjorum, Spike Carlsen, Eunice Fultz, Mike Johnson, Mike Karlsrud, Marie Liberda, Lynae Olson, Beth Payne, Mark Weber, Sandy Wendt and Pastor Peter Weston Miller as a non-voting member.

I close this report with our Mission Statement. May it be a prayer for all of us.

We will follow God's example of love by collaborating with others to facilitate a world in which the basic needs of all people are met in an environment of peace with justice.

Marie Liberda

Missions Chair

mbvgro@gmail.com

484-577-7272



CHILDREN & FAMILY FAITH FORMATION

Through the joy and connection of our community, God's faithfulness is made known. For that, we give thanks.

As we reflect on another year of ministry with children and families at Trinity, one thing remains clear: the Spirit continues to move in beautiful, surprising, and faithful ways. Though not every detail of our programming changes year-to-year, the joy and energy of this community continue to deepen. It's in the laughter of children, the curiosity in their questions, and the shared moments of wonder that we experience the steady presence of God.

This past year, our weekly Wednesday evening Faith Formation returned in full force. Faith Lab—designed for youth ages 4 through Grade 5—centered on interactive Bible storytelling and relationship-building. Through open-ended wondering questions, hands-on activities, and creative expression, children explored scripture in a way that invites faith to take root and grow. Week after week, we saw young hearts and minds light up with the love of God.

Our FAFA (Fellowship and Faith Affinity) Groups continued to build intergenerational bridges within our congregation. From woodworking to baking to book club gatherings, these unique groups gave youth opportunities to learn new skills, make meaningful connections, and explore how our Godgiven interests can reflect God's creativity in the world.

Family Faith Events provided simple, welcoming opportunities for families to connect with

one another and with Trinity. Designed to be easy entry points into community life, these gathering included our Fall Harvest Fest and Easter Eggstravaganza, both hosted in partnership with our Lake Area Discovery Center (LADC) site. These events offered fun, fellowship, and a chance for families to experience Trinity in a relaxed setting.

Our fourth annual Winter Family Retreat at Camp Wapo continued to offer families and individuals a space to pause, reconnect, and grow in faith together. This year, Zanny Johnson joined the planning and leadership team, helping to shape the retreat's spiritual direction—particularly for adults. Her thoughtful presence added depth to the experience and supported meaningful reflection across all ages.

We also tried something new for our Children's Christmas Program. Recognizing the busy rhythms of family life, we experimented with a fresh format designed to be both creative and accessible. The result was Station Good News, a digital program presented during worship. Modeled as a news broadcast, it wove together the nativity story with real-life Christmas reflections from congregation members—shared through interviews led by our youth. It was a joyful and imaginative way to tell the story of Jesus' birth.

Other faith milestones included a Communion Preparation Class, which welcomed children to God's holy table; a Bible Discovery class that helped children transition from the Spark Story Bible to the full NRSV Bible—giving them

tools and inspiration to explore scripture in new ways; and the celebration of several baptisms, marking the beginning of new life in our faith community.

One of the most exciting developments this year was the birth of W.O.W. Camp (Week of Wonder). Responding to a significant need in the St. Croix Valley, Trinity partnered with St. Paul's Lutheran, Our Savior's Lutheran, and St. Croix United to over a day camp during the final week of summer—a time when childcare and camp options are limited. With encouragement from local Community Ed leaders, our churches came together to launch something new and hopeful. Trinity was honored to host the inaugural W.O.W. Camp and welcome 32 children from across the community for a week of fun, faith, and connection.

Of course, summer also included a joyful week of Vacation Bible School. With the theme Compassion Camp, children explored powerful Bible stories that taught us about God's never-ending love and compassion.

As we look ahead, I carry immense gratitude for all who support this ministry—through time, resources, prayer, and presence. As cocreators with God, we are shaping a community where children are known, loved, and nurtured in faith. Thank you for being part of this journey.

Sarah Olson

Children & Family Faith
Formation Coordinator

MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH MINISTRY

As I begin to reflect on my time at Trinity, I'm struck by how quickly the past 7 months have gone. It has been a wonderful transition, and I'm so thrilled to share what's been happening with the middle and high school youth here at Trinity.

When I arrived, the program year was wrapping up, but I got to spend a few Wednesday nights with the students in Confirmation. We were making picnic tables for the green space and the Drive-in. We ended on a high note with an evening of "stump Pastor Peter and Dana". This program year started strong with 4 small groups in our 678 Confirmation. We are up and running with our focus this year being on Luther, the Catechism, and the world's religions. On average, we have 23 students every Wednesday evening. In addition to myself, we have an amazing team of 6 adult leaders and 4 high school leaders! Each week is an adventure with a lesson, small group time, and some games. As this program year began, we had 14

9th graders affirm their Baptisms on Reformation Sunday.

Upon my arrival in April, I got to meet our amazing high school youth group! This group of dedicated students ended their year by showing me around, and the leadership team started brainstorming for the next year. So far, we've had a bonfire, pumpkin painting, and a costume contest. The High School Leadership team meets on Sundays when we don't have youth group, and they are a motivated group of students who are taking their leadership role very seriously. They are planning and leading activities, making suggestions, and embracing their leadership.

In addition to the high school youth group this summer Pastor Peter and I took 21 of our high school youth and 4 to adult leaders to Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp in Montana and wow that was truly a mountain top experience to top them all (pun intended). Like any trip, this one had its ups, downs, challenges, and triumphs.

The group spent two nights camping in Glacier National Park, went whitewater rafting, took any chance to go swimming, explored the camp, and had a great time on the high ropes course too. It was an experience surrounded by God's amazing creation and the youth embraced it all! At the end of our journey, we had the great joy of leading worship after returning. The plan for the summer of 2026 is a service trip and in 2027 we will hopefully attend the ELCA Youth Gathering in Minneapolis!

These highlights only scratch the surface of the past 7 months and all the great things that have been happening for the middle and high school youth here at Trinity! I look forward to sharing even more next year!

Dana Kruse

Middle and High School Youth
Ministry



ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA

155th ANNUAL MEETING OF
TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
Stillwater, Minnesota
November 16, 2025, 11:00 a.m.

Meeting Agenda

1. Meeting Called to Order – President John Hodler
2. Opening Prayer
3. Sharing of the Peace
4. Approval of Agenda
5. Introduction & Recognition of Congregational Council Members
6. Introduction of Parliamentarian
7. Approval of Procedures
8. Approval of Minutes of November 17, 2024, Annual Meeting
9. Ratification of Trinity's Non-mandated Constitution Amendments
10. Approval of ELCA Mandated Model Constitution Amendments
11. Election of 2026 Council Nominating Committee
12. Report of the 2025 Council Nominating Committee
13. Election of Two (2) Congregational Council Positions
14. Recommended Motion: Nomination of Delegates for Synod Assembly, May 15-16, 2026
15. Reports from the Congregational Council, Staff and Ministry Teams
16. Report of the Church Treasurer for FY 2025
17. Presentation of Proposed Budget for FY 2026
17. Approval of Proposed Budget for FY 2026
19. Other Business
20. Closing Prayer – Adjournment

MINUTES

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH OF STILLWATER, MINNESOTA
Minutes of the Congregational 154th Annual Meeting
Held Sunday, November 17, 2024
Location: Trinity Lutheran Church's Sanctuary

1. Meeting Called to Order.

The Annual Congregational Meeting of Trinity Lutheran Church of Stillwater, Minnesota ("Trinity Lutheran Church") was called to order at 11:12AM by Congregational Council President Andrew Thelander.

Attendance: 120 voting members were present.

2. Opening Prayer.

Lead Pastor Chris Bellefeuille provided the opening prayer.

3. Sharing of 'the Peace'.

Andrew Thelander announced the sharing of the peace.

4. Approval of Agenda.

M/S/P to approve the Annual Meeting Agenda as set forth on page 19 of the 2024 Annual Report.

5. Introduction and recognition of Congregation's Council Members.

Andrew Thelander introduced and recognized the current members of the Congregational Council:

- ✓ Andrew Thelander, President.
- ✓ Tina Swanson, Vice President.
- ✓ John Hodler, Secretary.
- ✓ Jill Longnecker, Treasurer.
- ✓ Kirsten Parker, member-at-large.
- ✓ Bill Bjorum, member-at-large.
- ✓ Lead Pastor, Chris Bellefeuille.
- ✓ Pastor of Lifelong Faith Formation, Pastor Peter Weston Miller (non-voting member); and,
- ✓ Sarah Kinsman, Parish Administrator (non-voting member).

6. Introduction of Parliamentarian.

Andrew Thelander introduced Tom Haugrud as the Parliamentarian for the annual meeting.

7. Approval of Procedures.

Parliamentarian Tom Haugrud summarized the following procedures for the annual meeting:

- ✓ The Constitution of Trinity Lutheran Church provides that the individuals entitled to participate and vote at the meeting are confirmed members of Trinity Lutheran Church and who, during the current or preceding calendar year, have communed in the congregation and made a contribution of record to the congregation.
 - ✓ Also pursuant to the Constitution, Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure at the meeting.
 - ✓ In the spirit of the purpose of the meeting, all comments and discussions are to be kind, positive and seek to advance the mission of Trinity Lutheran Church.
- M/S/P** to approve the foregoing procedures.

8. Approval of Inclusion Statement.

There was no discussion on the Trinity's revised 'Inclusion Statement' as all questions and congregation members' comments had been addressed at previous information meetings.

M/S/P to approve the revised Inclusion Statement.

9. Approval of Minutes of November 19, 2023, Annual Congregational Meeting.

M/S/P to approve November 19, 2023, Annual Congregational Meeting minutes as submitted.

10. Approval of Minutes of May 5, 2024, Special Congregational Meeting.

M/S/P to approve May 5, 2024, Special Congregational Meeting minutes as submitted.

Prior to consideration of the four Constitution and Bylaws amendment actions, Council Secretary John Hodler explained the proposed amendment discussion and the required approval process. The approval process complies with the ELCA, St. Paul Synod, and Trinity Constitution requirements. All four Constitution and Bylaws amendment actions will be voted on via a written ballot. All revisions were posted in late September on the Trinity website and an information meeting was held in October to facilitate answering Trinity members' questions prior to the annual meeting.

11. Ratification of Constitution Amendment that increases Trinity's Congregational Council's voting membership.

- ✓ This amendment was approved by a majority of the voting members in attendance at the May 5, 2024, Special Congregational meeting. In compliance with Constitution approval protocol, this amendment requires a ratification vote at Trinity's next annual meeting (Nov. 17, 2024). This Amendment requires two-thirds of the voting members present and voting to ratify the amendment.
- ✓ The discussion included members that spoke in opposition to the amendment. They focused on the risk that increased clergy voting membership would adversely affect the Council's ability to represent the desires of the congregation at large, and that the current voting setup was not encountering a problem that required a change in the voting membership. It was made clear that opposition to this amendment was

not driven by personality issues. Instead, opposition was based on the concern that this amendment would not be a governance 'best practice'.

- ✓ Members that spoke in favor of the amendment focused on the benefits gained from adding a second called roster minister to the voting membership, i.e., improving retention of clergy, development of junior clergy through experience in church governance, and fulfillment of Trinity's mission and values.

Motion: Trinity Lutheran Church of Stillwater, Minnesota at its November 17, 2024, Annual Congregational meeting ratifies Trinity's amendments to Constitution paragraphs C12.01. and C12.02. that add a "second called rostered minister (pastor or deacon) of the ELCA" as a voting member of the Congregation Council.

M/S/P 83 of 120 voting members present voted in favor of ratifying the amendment. The two-thirds approval threshold was met.

12. Approval of ELCA Mandated Model Constitution and Bylaws amendments.

- ✓ Approval to adopt these mandated amendments requires a majority vote in favor.
- ✓ There was no discussion.

Motion: Trinity Lutheran Church of Stillwater, Minnesota at its November 17, 2024, Annual Congregational meeting adopts the Constitution and Bylaws amendments that bring Trinity's Governance documents into conformity with the 2022 Model Constitution for Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

M/S/P 120 of 120 voting members present voted to adopt the mandated amendments.

13. Approval of Trinity's non-mandated Constitution Amendments.

- ✓ Approval of these amendments is a two-step process.
 1. At the first Congregation meeting (November 17, 2024), a majority voting in favor of the amendments is required to immediately begin utilization of the Constitution's amended language.
 2. The amended language must then be ratified at the Congregation's next annual meeting. This requires two-thirds of the voting members present at the meeting to vote in favor of ratification.
- ✓ Discussion: The language revision to reduce the Council's spending authority without the Congregation's approval was explained. This revision reduces the Council's authority from a multi-million-dollar authority to \$250,000.

Motion: Trinity Lutheran Church of Stillwater, Minnesota at its November 17, 2024, Annual meeting adopts Trinity's non-mandated amended Constitution language that reduces Congregation Council financial authority and eliminates redundant and inaccurate language.

M/S/P 119 of 120 voting members present voted to approve the non-mandated Constitution amendments.

14. Approval of Trinity's Amended Bylaws.

- ✓ Approval of these amended Bylaws requires a two-thirds vote in favor of the action.
- ✓ No discussion

Motion: Trinity Lutheran Church of Stillwater, Minnesota at its November 17, 2024, Annual Congregational meeting adopts Trinity's amended Bylaw language that eliminates conflicts with the Trinity's Constitution and revises how Trinity's Constitution provisions will be implemented.

M/S/P 119 of 120 voting members present voted to adopt the amended Bylaws.

The two-thirds approval threshold was met.

15. Election of 2025 Council Nominating Committee.

President Andrew Thelander thanked Carol Straka for her service on the 2024 Council nominating Committee. The 2024 Council Nominating Committee recommended the following people to serve as the 2025 Council Nominating Committee:

- ✓ Andrew Thelander,
- ✓ Tom Haugrud; and,
- ✓ Krista Gossai.

M/S/P to approve the recommended candidates and appoint them as the 2025 Council Nominating Committee.

16. Report of the 2024 Council Nominating Committee.

Andrew Thelander summarized the report of the 2024 Council Nominating Committee, which can be found on page 49 of the Annual Report.

17. Election to fill two (2) Congregational Council positions.

- ✓ For the seat currently held by Andrew Thelander (leaving the Council due to term limitation), the committee nominated Shane Brockshus. Kirsten Parker was nominated to continue to serve on the council. Both are eligible to serve two complete terms.
- ✓ The Bylaws of Trinity Lutheran Church provide that it remains the prerogative of the congregation to make nominations to Council from the floor. Andrew Thelander made an inquiry on three occasions whether there were any nominations to Council from the floor, and there were none.

M/S/P to approve the nominating committees' two candidates to fill two congregational council seats.

M/S/P to suspend voting by ballot for Council members and proceed with a raising of a hand vote.

M/S/P elect Shane Brockshus to serve a 3-year term on the Congregational Council.

M/S/P elect Kirsten Parker to serve a 3-year term on the Congregational Council.

18. Recommended motion – Nomination of Delegates for Synod Assembly – May 2025.
M/S to authorize the Congregational Council to elect members of Trinity Lutheran Church to attend the 2025 St. Paul Area Synod Assembly to be held in May 2025.
M/S/P amend the recommended motion by inserting “as voting members” immediately after Church.
M/S/P approve the amended motion which now reads “authorize the Congregational Council to elect members of Trinity Lutheran Church “as voting members” to attend the 2025 St. Paul Area Synod Assembly to be held in May 2025.
19. Reports from the Congregational Council, Staff and Ministry Teams.
- ✓ Pastor Chris added to her published report by notifying the Annual meeting attendees that a special gift had been received to pay for much needed Church office maintenance and updates. Pastor Chris emphasized that no Comprehensive Capital Campaign funds will be used for this office work.
 - ✓ The reports from the Congregational Council, Staff and Ministry Teams were included in the 2024 Annual Report. Andrew Thelander made an inquiry into whether there were any questions about any of the other reports and there were none.
20. Report of the Church Treasurer for fiscal year 2024.
- ✓ The Council appointed Jill Longnecker to the Trinity’s Treasurer in February 2024.
 - ✓ Jill, as Treasurer, is also the administrative Finance Team leader. Jill recognized and thanked the finance team members, who are: Jeff Anderson, Tom Olson, John Olson, Phil Hanson, Noah Schumacher, Clark Thurn, and Trinity Staff: Pastor Chris Bellefeuille, Parish Administrator Sarah Kinsman, and Brenda Schumacher.
 - ✓ Jill Longnecker presented the Church Treasurer’s report for the fiscal year ending August 31, 2024. The 2024 Annual Report included a 2024 fiscal year-end summary (page 45) comparing the 2024 actual to the 2024 budget. For the fiscal year 2024, Trinity Lutheran Church experienced an operating surplus of \$21,860.
 - ✓ Parish Administrator and staff have completed the conversion of Trinity’s accounting records to QuickBooks.
 - ✓ The Comprehensive Capital Campaign had \$1.9 million pledged over three years. 77% of the pledges amount was received by 2024 Fiscal year-end, even though only 50% of the three-year period has elapsed.
21. Presentation of Proposed Ministry Budget for fiscal year 2025.
- ✓ Parish Administrator Sarah Kinsman congratulated the Congregation on successfully reducing Trinity’s mortgage from \$3,100,000 at fiscal year-end 2022 to approximately \$1,900,000 at Fiscal year-end 2024. Sarah emphasized that without this reduction the 2025 fiscal year budget would look different, as the mortgage had an interest increase in August, whose annual cost impact was offset by the interest cost saved due to the mortgage balance reduction.

- ✓ Parish Administrator Sarah Kinsman summarized the proposed budget for the 2025 fiscal year, which was recommended for approval by the Finance Team. After the Council and Finance team worked through a joint budget workshop, the Council approved the budget for submission to the Congregation for final approval. The summary of the 2025 fiscal year proposed budget is on page 48 of the Annual Report.

22. Approval of Proposed Ministry Budget for fiscal year 2025.

Upon the conclusion of the Treasurer's report and the Parish Administrator's presentation of the proposed budget for fiscal year 2025, President Andrew Thelander sought congregational approval of the proposed budget.

M/S/P to approve and adopt the Proposed Ministry Budget for Fiscal Year 2025 as submitted.

23. Other Business.

Pastor Chris offered words of deep appreciation for the work of Trinity's staff. Gratitude was expressed to Eric Trosdahl - transitioning out of his role, Monte Lysne – moving on to a new life phase, and Ellen Neseth – who retired, for their contributions to Trinity.

A big thanks was given to Andrew Thelander upon completion of completion of two terms on council, including several years as Council President. Before his council terms, he served on Trinity's Finance team.

24. Closing Prayer.

Pastor Peter Westen Miller provided the closing prayer.

25. Adjournment.

M/S/P the 154th Trinity Annual meeting adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
s/ John W Hodler
John Hodler
Congregational/Council Secretary
Electronically signed.

The foregoing Minutes will be considered for approval at the Annual Congregational Meeting scheduled to be held November 16, 2025.

FISCAL YEAR STATISTICS

WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

2024 Christmas Eve:

IN PERSON

11 a.m.	182
2 p.m.	215
4 p.m.	654
9 p.m. (in-person only)	265
TOTAL	1,316

ONLINE VIEWS

11 a.m.	Not Broadcast
2 p.m.	95
4 p.m.	133
TOTAL	228

2025 Easter:

Ash Wednesday

Closed due to Snow

Good Friday

7 p.m. IN PERSON	230
------------------	-----

Easter Sunday

IN PERSON

7 a.m. (in-person only)	80
9 a.m.	582
11 a.m.	301
TOTAL	963

Special Services:

TrinityFEST (one service only at 10 a.m. – Sept. 8, 2024) ____ 330

Longest Night (7 p.m. – Dec. 8, 2024) ____ 35 (approx.)

Children's Christmas Program (one service only at 10 a.m. – Dec. 15, 2024) ____ 204

Christmas Day 2024 (one service only at 10 a.m.) ____ 80 (approx.)

Lessons & Carols (one online service only at 10 a.m. – Dec. 29, 2024) ____ 141

Drive-Indoors Worship (one service only at 10 a.m. – March. 2, 2025) ____ 285

TLC Palm Sunday (one service only at 10 a.m. – April 13, 2025) ____ 230

Special Celebration of Pastor Chris Worship (one service only at 10 a.m. – May 18, 2025) ____ 494

Average Sunday Worship Attendance:

In person at Trinity	122
Online views	172
Drive-in	177

Average Wednesday Dinner Church Worship Attendance:

In person at Trinity ____ 80 (approx.)

NOTES: All online views are views in one week and include live viewers. (Per ELCA guidelines, the number of views per week will be reported to the synod as multiplied by two to factor in multiple viewers in one household.) Average Sunday worship attendance includes all Sundays (including Easter).

Year 2025 Statistics

Total number of baptized members on September 1, 2024 ____ 2,567

Number of members received through baptism ____ 18

Number of members received through confirmation ____ 2

Number of members received through transfer/affirmation of faith ____ 32

Number of members removed through death ____ 34

Number of members removed through transfer, request, etc. ____ 65

Total adjusted number of baptized members on August 31, 2025 ____ 2,520

Non-member funeral services conducted by Trinity pastors ____ 3

Weddings conducted by Trinity pastors ____ 1

2025 Trinity Congregational Council

John Hodler ____ Council President

Tina Swanson ____ Vice President

Kristen Parker ____ Secretary

Jill Longnecker ____ Treasurer

Bill Bjorum ____ Council Member

Shane Brockshus ____ Council Member

Trinity Staff as of August 31, 2025

Jen Hackbarth ____ Interim Lead Pastor

Carol Carver ____ Organist

Kim Dahlgren, R.N. ____ Faith Community Nurse

Sonia Esch ____ Children's Choir Director

Linda Flood ____ Ministry Support Coordinator

Thomas Hosek ____ Lead Custodian

Zanny Johnson ____ Connections Coordinator

Isaac Newcomer ____ Audio Technician

Phil Kadidlo ____ Worship & Technology Coordinator

Sarah Kinsman ____ Parish Administrator

Andrew Kreye ____ Worship Band Leader

Rich Larson ____ Visitation Pastor

Dana Kruse ____ Youth Faith Formation Coordinator

Anne Mikesh ____ Custodian

Brenda Schumacher ____ Accounting Coordinator

Sarah Olson ____ Children & Family Faith Formation Coordinator

Megan Gaul ____ Communications Manager

Jeannie Wendorf ____ Office Manager

Pastor Peter Weston Miller ____ Pastor of Lifelong Faith Formation

Clark Weyrauch ____ Director of Worship & Music

PASTORAL ACTS

BAPTIZED

Briggs Solomon Weiss
 Cora Rose Goldberg (twin)
 Henry Smith Goldberg (twin)
 Logan Andrew Grupa
 Grady Charles Butenhoff
 Ethan Louis Knoflicek
 Dolores Maeve Brownson
 Grace Marie Adamson
 Savannah Claire Birkeland
 Thomas Robert Giebner
 Josephine Theresa Farley
 Liam Louis Lehmann
 Lennox Lee Madline (twin)
 Layla Joy Madline (twin)
 Nadia Clare Granquist
 Arlo Nicholas Anderson
 Ava Lynn Carlson
 Beau David Bjerk
 TOTAL = 18

CONFIRMED

Luciana James Budion
 Thomas Gary Whitcomb Fossum
 Grant Louis Gabrielli
 Chase Aiden Gohdes
 Annika Marie Weekes Kanewisher
Madison Emery McDonald
Isla Mae Noah
 Maggie Elise Noah
 Brody Lee O'Connor
 Elijah Scott Parkin
 Soren Nicholas Sanchez
 Stefan Christopher Sheridan
 Camryn Lynn Slachta
 Leyna Grace Stebbins
 Robin Rose Thury
 Evelyn Dorothea White
 Adeline Belle Wilichowski
 Irene Jean Wilson
 Nash Oliver Wolden
 TOTAL = 19
 NEW MEMBERS = 2 (bold text)

MARRIED

Lauren Jonikas &
 Theodore Larson
 TOTAL = 1

DEATHS/FUNERALS

Bradley Kurt Ford
Jeffrey Jay Abbott
Reid Sumner Johnson
Donna Jean Dielentheis
Anna Christine Swanson
Allan Thomas Palmer
Harold H. Buckentin
Myrtle Marie Janilla
Daniel Charles Bruch
Paul Edwin Carlson
John Howard Weiss
Danny LeRoy Fleming
Dennis Leonard Pederson
Patricia Ann Bourman
David Walter Johnson
Ute Christel Erickson
David James Graham
Shirley Mae White
 Marilyn Agnes Deaner
Thomas Eugene Sundquist
 Philip Mark Wendt
Sonia Carol Churchill
Elaine Anna Frederickson
Donald Eugene Steinmetz
Irene Harriet Berg
Ruth Adeline Wiesner
Martha (Molly) Marlene Woltman
Douglas Ross Johnson
Susan Jean Langness
Edward Paul Bieging Jr.
Dean Edward Haynes
Kathleen Jane Felsch
Dale Oscar Richert
Kathleen Meretta Luhrsen
Marion Lois Meyer
Kristin Tori Hanson
Katherine (Kay) M. Sanders
 TOTAL = 37
 MEMBERS = 34 (bold text)

INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANT'S REVIEW REPORT



FOLEY
KALSEIM
& COMPANY, LTD.
Certified Public Accountants

INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANT'S REVIEW REPORT

To Church Council of
Trinity Lutheran Church
Stillwater, MN

We have reviewed the accompanying financial statements of Trinity Lutheran Church (a nonprofit organization), which comprise the statements of assets, liabilities and net assets – modified cash basis as of August 31, 2025 and 2024, and the related statements of revenues, expenses and other changes in net assets and cash flows – all on the modified cash basis for the years then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements. A review includes primarily applying analytical procedures to management's financial data and making inquiries of Church management. A review is substantially less in scope than an audit, the objective of which is the expression of an opinion regarding the financial statements as a whole. Accordingly, we do not express such an opinion.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with the modified cash basis of accounting; this includes determining that the modified cash basis of accounting is an acceptable basis for the preparation of financial statements in the circumstances. Management is also responsible for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement whether due to fraud or error.

Accountant's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to conduct the review engagement in accordance with Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services promulgated by the Accounting and Review Services Committee of the AICPA. Those standards require us to perform procedures to obtain limited assurance as a basis for reporting whether we are aware of any material modifications that should be made to the financial statements for them to be in accordance with the modified cash basis of accounting. We believe that the results of our procedures provide a reasonable basis for our conclusion.

We are required to be independent of Trinity Lutheran Church and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements related to our review.

Basis for Qualified Conclusion

As disclosed in Note B to the financial statements, the capitalization of property and the recording of depreciation over the estimated useful lives of the assets is a generally accepted modification of the modified cash basis of accounting. Management has informed us, however, that the Church has stated property and equipment in the accompanying financial statements at the November 1, 1995 replacement cost, which is not a generally accepted modification of the modified cash basis of accounting. Capital additions after that date are being recorded at cost or fair market value if received as donations. The effect of these accounting departures from the modified cash basis of accounting on the financial statements is not practical and has not been determined.

foleykalseim.com

12415 55th Street North
Lake Elmo, MN 55042
P: 651.430.3635

Qualified Conclusion

Based on our review, except for the issue noted in the Basis for Qualified Conclusion paragraph, we are not aware of any material modifications that should be made to the accompanying financial statements in order for them to be in accordance with the modified cash basis of accounting.

Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note B of the financial statements, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the modified cash basis of accounting, which is a basis of accounting other than accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. Our conclusion is not modified with respect to this matter.

Foley Kalsium & Company, Ltd.

Lake Elmo, MN
November 6, 2025

This page intentionally left blank.

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
Statements of Assets, Liabilities and Net Assets - Modified Cash Basis
August 31, 2025 and 2024

	2025	2024
ASSETS		
Cash	\$ 618,724	\$ 607,901
Investments	1,417,992	1,309,726
Deposit	451	451
Property and equipment, net of accumulated depreciation	<u>3,205,476</u>	<u>3,260,592</u>
Total assets	<u>\$ 5,242,643</u>	<u>\$ 5,178,670</u>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Payroll liabilities	\$ 4,167	\$ 12,542
Credit cards	5,497	3,202
Security deposits	1,288	1,288
Designated mission funds	86,381	97,786
Line of credit	-	61,135
Long-term debt	1,679,221	1,922,708
Less debt issuance costs, net	<u>(4,964)</u>	<u>(5,245)</u>
Total liabilities	<u>1,771,590</u>	<u>2,093,416</u>
Net assets:		
Without donor restrictions	1,386,656	1,106,091
With donor restrictions	<u>2,084,397</u>	<u>1,979,163</u>
Total net assets	<u>3,471,053</u>	<u>3,085,254</u>
Total liabilities and net assets	<u>\$ 5,242,643</u>	<u>\$ 5,178,670</u>

See independent accountant's review report and notes to financial statements.

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
Statements of Revenues, Expenses and Other Changes in Net Assets - Modified Cash Basis
For the Years Ended August 31, 2025 and 2024

	2025		
	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
REVENUE AND SUPPORT:			
Contributions	\$ 1,339,779	\$ 421,558	\$ 1,761,337
Rental income - church property	81,500	-	81,500
Rental income - post office building	22,000	-	22,000
Rental income - Croix Center	57,826	-	57,826
Fees and other payments for program activities	45,105	-	45,105
Interest income	-	67,280	67,280
Government grant - ERC	95,961	-	95,961
Miscellaneous income	1,554	-	1,554
Unrealized gain on investment (loss)	-	100,483	100,483
Net assets released from donor restrictions upon expiration of proposed restrictions	484,087	(484,087)	-
Total revenue and support	<u>2,127,812</u>	<u>105,234</u>	<u>2,233,046</u>
EXPENSES:			
Staff salaries and benefits	938,694	-	938,694
General operating expense	257,503	-	257,503
Building maintenance expense	36,329	-	36,329
Interest expenses and other borrowing costs	132,280	-	132,280
Missions and benevolence	199,022	-	199,022
Children, youth & family ministries	12,898	-	12,898
Communications	3,762	-	3,762
Lifelong learning ministries	15,047	-	15,047
Worship and music	37,467	-	37,467
Mutual care/small groups	7,359	-	7,359
Depreciation expense	206,886	-	206,886
Total expenses	<u>1,847,247</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,847,247</u>
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	280,565	105,234	385,799
NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR	<u>1,106,091</u>	<u>1,979,163</u>	<u>3,085,254</u>
NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR	<u>\$ 1,386,656</u>	<u>\$ 2,084,397</u>	<u>\$ 3,471,053</u>

	2024		
	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
REVENUE AND SUPPORT:			
Contributions	\$ 1,315,169	\$ 928,318	\$ 2,243,487
Rental income - church property	79,914	-	79,914
Rental income - post office building	26,000	-	26,000
Rental income - Croix Center	63,703	-	63,703
Fees and other payments for program activities	72,200	-	72,200
Interest income	-	60,705	60,705
Government grant - ERC	-	-	-
Miscellaneous income	-	-	-
Unrealized gain on investment (loss)	-	133,478	133,478
Net assets released from donor restrictions upon expiration of proposed restrictions	722,705	(722,705)	-
Total revenue and support	2,279,691	399,796	2,679,487
EXPENSES:			
Staff salaries and benefits	1,030,063	-	1,030,063
General operating expense	220,784	-	220,784
Building maintenance expense	48,299	-	48,299
Interest expenses and other borrowing costs	114,364	-	114,364
Missions and benevolence	193,457	-	193,457
Children, youth & family ministries	11,483	-	11,483
Communications	2,788	-	2,788
Lifelong learning ministries	16,722	-	16,722
Worship and music	32,530	-	32,530
Mutual care/small groups	11,127	-	11,127
Depreciation expense	210,490	-	210,490
Total expenses	1,892,107	-	1,892,107
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	387,584	399,796	787,380
NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR	718,507	1,579,367	2,297,874
NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR	\$ 1,106,091	\$ 1,979,163	\$ 3,085,254

See independent accountant's review report and notes to financial statements.

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
Statements of Cash Flows - Modified Cash Basis
For the Years Ended August 31, 2025 and 2024

	2025	2024
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:		
Change in net assets	\$ 385,799	\$ 787,380
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash flows from operating activities:		
Depreciation	206,886	210,490
Non-cash interest expense	281	280
Unrealized (gain) loss on investments	(100,483)	(133,478)
Changes in operating assets and liabilities:		
Prepaid expenses	-	3,905
Credit cards	2,295	3,202
Payroll liabilities	(8,375)	(6,085)
Program deposits	-	(5,190)
Designated mission funds	(11,405)	(13,474)
Net cash flows from operating activities	<u>474,998</u>	<u>847,030</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:		
Purchase of endowment fund, net	(7,783)	-
Purchases of property and equipment	(151,770)	(44,285)
Net cash flows from investing activities	<u>(159,553)</u>	<u>(44,285)</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES:		
Borrowings on line of credit	197,000	277,635
Payments on line of credit	(258,135)	(321,500)
Payments of debt	(243,487)	(732,778)
Net cash flows from financing activities	<u>(304,622)</u>	<u>(776,643)</u>
Net change in cash	10,823	26,102
CASH		
Balance at beginning of year	<u>607,901</u>	<u>581,799</u>
Balance at end of year	<u>\$ 618,724</u>	<u>\$ 607,901</u>
SUPPLEMENTAL DISCLOSURES OF CASH FLOW INFORMATION		
Cash paid for interest	\$ 131,999	\$ 114,084

See independent accountant's review report and notes to financial statements.

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
Notes to Financial Statements
For the Years Ended August 31, 2025 and 2024

NOTE A - ORGANIZATION

Trinity Lutheran Church (the Church) located in Stillwater, Minnesota was organized in 1871. The Church is a constituent of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). The Church is a nonprofit organization and is dedicated to engaging as many persons as will share its confession of faith in the fellowship of worship, learning, witness, service and support, so that the Word of God may become effective in their lives together and individually. This includes relationships with other Christian fellowships and with social institutions at home and throughout the world. The Church is supported primarily through contributions of the congregation.

NOTE B - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of Accounting: The financial statements have been prepared on the modified cash basis, which is a comprehensive basis of accounting other than generally accepted accounting principles. Under the modified cash basis, revenues are generally recorded when cash is received and expenses are generally recorded when cash is disbursed. Modifications to the cash basis of accounting include recording:

1. Property and equipment purchased as assets
2. Accumulated depreciation and depreciation expense on property and equipment
3. Liabilities arising from the receipt of borrowed cash
4. Employee FICA and withholding taxes not deposited with the IRS
5. Net assets with donor restrictions at fair value

The modified cash basis of accounting does not give affect to account receivables, pledge receivables, inventories, accounts payable, and accrued expenses.

The Church has stated property and equipment in the accompanying financial statements at the November 1, 1995 replacement costs, which is not a generally accepted modification of the modified cash basis of accounting. Capital additions after that date are being recorded at cost or fair market value if received as donations. The effect of this accounting departure from the modified cash basis of accounting on the financial statements has not been determined.

Financial Statement Presentation: Net assets, revenues, gains and losses are classified based on the existence or absence of donor imposed restrictions. Accordingly, net assets of the Church are classified and reported as follows:

Net assets without donor restrictions: Net assets currently available at the discretion of the Church Council for use in the Church's operations, and those resources invest in land, buildings and equipment.

Net assets with donor restrictions: Grants and other contributions with explicit donor restrictions which specify how the gifts are to be used, including net assets restricted by donors in perpetuity as endowments or irrevocable trusts. When a donor restriction expires, that is, when a stipulated time restriction ends or a purpose restriction is accomplished, net assets with donor restrictions are reclassified to net assets without donor restrictions and reported in the statements of revenues, expenses and other changes in net assets – modified cash basis as net assets released from restrictions.

Concentration of Credit Risk: The Church places its cash with one banking institution. At times, the amount on deposit exceeds the insured limit of the institution and exposes the Church to a collection risk. Uninsured balances were \$450,172 and \$406,268 as of August 31, 2025 and 2024, respectively. Additionally, the investments in the Endowment Fund Pooled Trust of the ELCA are not insured and consequently expose the Church to a collection risk. The Church has not experienced any losses.

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
Notes to Financial Statements (continued)
For the Years Ended August 31, 2025 and 2024

NOTE B - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

Property and Equipment: All property and equipment on hand at November 1, 1995 is valued at the replacement cost on that date. Additions to fixed assets after November 1, 1995 are valued at actual cost if purchased, or fair market value at date of donation for donated property. Valuation of fixed assets at current replacement cost is not in accordance with the modified cash basis of accounting.

Depreciation has been computed on the straight-line basis, beginning with the 1997 financial statements. The Church capitalizes all expenditures in excess of \$1,000, and whose useful lives are more than a year.

Cash: For the purposes of statement of cash flows, the Church considers all short-term debt securities purchased with a maturity of three months or less to be cash.

Revenue Recognition: Contributions, including unconditional promises to give are recognized in the period received. All contributions are available for unrestricted use unless specifically restricted by the donor. Conditional promises to give are recognized when the conditions on which they depend are substantially met.

Support that is restricted by the donor is reported as an increase in net assets without donor restrictions if the restriction expires in the reporting period in which the support is recognized. All other donor-restricted support is reported as an increase in net assets with donor restrictions. When a restriction expires (that is, when a stipulated time restriction ends or purpose restriction is accomplished), net assets with donor restrictions are reclassified to net assets without donor restrictions and reported in the statements of revenues, expenses and other changes in net assets – modified cash basis as net assets released from restrictions.

Investments: Investments are reported at fair value. Realized and unrealized gains and losses are included in the statement of activities.

Income Taxes: The Church is exempt from federal income taxes under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and is also exempt from state income taxes.

The Church has evaluated for uncertain tax positions and management has expressed there are no uncertain tax positions as of August 31, 2025. Tax returns for the past three years remain open for examination by tax jurisdictions.

Subsequent Events: In preparing these financial statements, the Church has evaluated events and transactions for potential recognition or disclosure through November 6, 2025, the date the financial statements were issued.

Use of Estimates: Management uses estimates and assumptions in preparing these financial statements in accordance with the modified cash basis of accounting. Those estimates and assumptions affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities, and the reported revenues and expenses. Actual results could vary from the estimates that were used.

Prepaid Expenses: The Church has recorded prepaid expenses which is a departure from the modified cash basis of accounting.

NOTE C – LINE OF CREDIT

During the year ended August 31, 2024, the Church renewed the line of credit in the amount of \$200,000 at a 4.75% interest rate. There was a balance outstanding of \$0 and \$61,135 for the years ending August 31, 2025 and 2024, respectively. The line of credit comes up for renewal on January 15, 2026.

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
Notes to Financial Statements (continued)
For the Years Ended August 31, 2025 and 2024

NOTE D - INVESTMENTS

Cost and fair value of investments held as net assets with donor restriction consist of the following:

	2025		2024	
	Cost	Fair Value	Cost	Fair Value
Endowment Fund Pooled Trust - ELCA	\$ 1,087,330	\$ 1,417,992	\$ 1,079,547	\$ 1,309,726

NOTE E - PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

Property and equipment consists of the following:

	2025	2024	Depreciation Lives
Land	\$ 630,000	\$ 630,000	-
Drive-in	484,784	484,784	-
Church Building	4,205,095	4,205,095	40 years
Croix Center	330,000	330,000	10 years
Remodeling	2,071,625	1,922,658	5-40 years
Furniture, fixtures and equipment	1,087,501	1,087,501	2-25 years
Computers	163,137	163,137	5 years
Website	7,000	7,000	5 years
Music equipment	522,921	520,118	5-25 years
Vehicles	26,672	26,672	5 years
	9,528,735	9,376,965	
Less accumulated depreciation	(6,323,259)	(6,116,373)	
Total	\$ 3,205,476	\$ 3,260,592	

NOTE F - LONG-TERM DEBT

Long-term debt consists of the following:

	2025	2024
Mortgage bearing interest at 5.85%, payable in monthly principal and interest installments of \$14,289 as of August 31, 2025 and 2024. Interest rate will be adjusted every five years to the current rate for similar loans, which will be reviewed next on May 1, 2029. Matures May 1, 2043. Secured by Church building and land.	\$ 1,679,221	\$ 1,922,708
	\$ 1,679,221	\$ 1,922,708

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
Notes to Financial Statements (continued)
For the Years Ended August 31, 2025 and 2024

NOTE F - LONG-TERM DEBT (continued)

Future maturities of long-term debt, are as follows, August 31:

2026	\$ 75,229
2027	79,750
2028	84,543
2029	89,623
2030	95,009
Thereafter	<u>1,255,067</u>
	<u>\$ 1,679,221</u>

Amortization of debt issuance costs (\$281 in 2025 and \$280 in 2024) are reported in the statements of revenues, expenses and other changes in net assets – modified cash basis as interest expense.

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
Principal amount, less current maturities	\$ 1,679,221	\$ 1,922,708
Less unamortized debt issuance costs	(4,964)	(5,245)
Total long-term debt less unamortized debt issuance costs	<u>\$ 1,674,257</u>	<u>\$ 1,917,463</u>

NOTE G – ELCA ENDOWMENT FUND POOLED TRUST

During 1997, an Endowment Fund Committee was started by the Church Council. The committee has established policies and procedures for the Endowment Fund. The Endowment Fund is invested in the ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust. Earnings on the Endowment Fund are restricted for one year after they are earned. Earnings on the Endowment Fund was \$67,280 and \$60,705 in the years ended August 31, 2025 and 2024, respectively.

NOTE H - RETIREMENT PLANS

The Church makes monthly contributions to two retirement plans on behalf of eligible employees. Eligible employees are those employees who work 32 hours or more per week. During the year ended August 31, 2025, retirement contributions for 8 eligible employees were funded at a cost of \$33,422. During the year ended August 31, 2024, retirement contributions for 8 eligible employees were funded at a cost of \$35,486.

NOTE I - PROGRAM SERVICES AND SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES

Program services and supporting activities are summarized below:

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
Program services	\$ 1,477,798	\$ 1,513,686
Management and general	<u>369,449</u>	<u>378,421</u>
Total expenses	<u>\$ 1,847,247</u>	<u>\$ 1,892,107</u>

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
Notes to Financial Statements (continued)
For the Years Ended August 31, 2025 and 2024

NOTE J – NET ASSETS WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS

Net assets with donor restrictions at August 31, 2025 and 2024 are available for the following purposes or periods:

	2025	2024
Debt Reduction	\$ 10,931	\$ 7,493
Building Improvements	25,983	19,731
Other Designated	-	3,553
Memorials to be Designated	22,849	32,018
Hymnal Fund	63	63
Organ Fund	641	641
Endowment Funds	1,417,992	1,309,726
New and Renewing	576,907	576,907
Scholarship Fund	8,819	8,819
Roof	7,671	7,671
Fund Raising	7,377	7,377
Capital Funds	5,164	5,164
	<u>\$ 2,084,397</u>	<u>\$ 1,979,163</u>

NOTE K – CROIX CENTER LEASES

Post Office – The Church owns and leases to the United States of America, the building and land for the current Stillwater Post Office. The lease calls for monthly payments of \$2,000. The lease may be renewed at the option of the Government for four five-year terms. The lease is currently in its third five-year period. The third lease will expire December 31, 2026 unless the Government exercises its option for the fourth five-year period. Rent collected under this lease was \$22,000 and \$26,000 for the years ended August 31, 2025 and 2024, respectively.

Lil' Tulips – The Church owns and leases to Lil' Tulips, Incorporated. The lease was renewed for 5 years and will expire March 31, 2030. The lease calls for monthly payments of \$2,750 and increases 3% starting in the 3rd year after the lease is reviewed. Rent collected under this lease was \$29,092 and \$34,347 for the years ended August 31, 2025 and 2024, respectively.

Reclaiming Beautiful – The Church owns and leases to Reclaiming Beautiful, LLC. The lease was renewed for 3 years and will expire April 1, 2026. The lease calls for monthly payments of \$1,942 for the 1st year, and increases to \$2,001 for the 2nd year and \$2,100 for the 3rd year. Rent collected under this lease was \$30,734 and \$29,356 for the years ended August 31, 2025 and 2024, respectively.

Lake Area Discovery Center – The Church owns and leases to Lake Area Discovery Center. The lease was renewed for 1 year and will expire June 30, 2026. The lease calls for monthly payments of \$5,208. Rent collected under this lease was \$57,292 and \$57,708 for the years ended August 31, 2025 and 2024, respectively.

Future minimum lease payments to be received on operating leases, are as follows, August 31:

2026	\$ 123,780
2027	41,950
2028	35,720
2029	36,791
2030	21,833
Total	<u>\$ 260,074</u>

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
Notes to Financial Statements (continued)
For the Years Ended August 31, 2025 and 2024

NOTE L - LEASE COMMITMENTS

The Church leases copiers. Rental expenses under these leases totaled \$22,516 and \$20,874 for the years ended August 31, 2025 and 2024, respectively. The copier lease was renewed for 5 years and will expire in April 2029.

The minimum future lease commitments are payable, as follows, August 31:

2026	\$	20,784
2027		20,784
2028		20,784
2029		13,856
Total	\$	<u>76,208</u>

NOTE M – FAIR VALUE OF FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The framework for measuring fair value provides a fair value hierarchy that prioritizes the inputs to valuation techniques used to measure fair value. The hierarchy gives the highest priority to unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities (level 1) and the lowest priority to unobservable inputs (level 3). The three levels of the fair value hierarchy under FASB ASC 820 are described as follows:

Level 1

Inputs to the valuation methodology are unadjusted quoted prices for identical assets or liabilities in active markets that the Church has the ability to access.

Level 2

Inputs to the valuation methodology include: quoted prices for similar assets or liabilities in active markets; quoted prices for identical or similar assets or liabilities in inactive markets; inputs other than quoted prices that are observable for the asset or liability; and inputs that are derived principally from or corroborated by observable market data by correlation or other means. If the asset or liability has a specified (contractual) term, the level 2 input must be observable for substantially the full term of the asset or liability.

Level 3

Inputs to the valuation methodology are unobservable and significant to the fair value measurement.

The asset or liability's fair value measurement level within the fair value hierarchy is based on the lowest level of any input that is significant to the fair value measurement. Valuation techniques maximize the use of relevant observable inputs and minimize the use of unobservable inputs.

Following is a description of the valuation methodologies used for assets and liabilities measured at fair value. There have been no changes in the methodologies used at August 31, 2025.

ELCA Funds – The fair value of investments in marketable equity and debt securities is based on quoted market prices of the funds in the investment.

Long-term debt and line of credit – The carrying amount reported in the statement of financial position approximates fair value because the Church can obtain similar loans at the same terms.

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
Notes to Financial Statements (continued)
For the Years Ended August 31, 2025 and 2024

NOTE M – FAIR VALUE OF FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS (continued)

The following tables set forth by level, within the fair value hierarchy, the Church's assets and liabilities at fair value as of August 31, 2025 and 2024 as follows:

Fair Value Measurements at Reporting			
		Date Using: Quoted Prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets and Liabilities (Level 1)	Significant Other Observable Inputs (Level 2)
August 31, 2025	Fair Value		
ELCA Fund A	\$ 1,417,992	\$ -	\$ 1,417,992
Long-term debt	1,679,221	1,679,221	-
Total	<u>\$ 3,097,213</u>	<u>\$ 1,679,221</u>	<u>\$ 1,417,992</u>
August 31, 2024			
ELCA Fund A	\$ 1,309,726	\$ -	\$ 1,309,726
Long-term debt	1,922,708	1,922,708	-
Total	<u>\$ 3,232,434</u>	<u>\$ 1,922,708</u>	<u>\$ 1,309,726</u>

NOTE N – ENDOWMENT

The Church's endowment consists of a fund established for a variety of purposes. As required by authoritative guidance, net assets associated with endowment funds are classified and reported based on the existence or absence of donor-imposed restrictions.

Interpretation of Relevant Law

The Church Council has interpreted the Minnesota Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act (UPMIFA) as requiring the preservation of the fair value of the original gift as of the gift date of the donor-restricted endowment fund absent explicit donor stipulations to the contrary. As a result of this interpretation, the Church classifies as net assets with donor restrictions the original value of the gifts to the permanent endowment and the value of subsequent gifts to the permanent endowment. In accordance with UPMIFA, the Church considers the following factors in making a determination to appropriate or accumulate donor-restricted endowment funds:

1. All funds shall be used as the donor intended at the time the Church solicited or accepted the gift.
2. Investment portfolio shall provide a long-term growth real (inflation-adjusted) assets.
3. Provide a predictable stream of income to the Church for programs.
4. Follow investment policies of the Church.
5. Other resources of the Church.
6. General economic conditions.

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
Notes to Financial Statements (continued)
For the Years Ended August 31, 2025 and 2024

NOTE N – ENDOWMENT (continued)

		<u>Donor Restricted</u>
September 1, 2023	Donor-Restricted Endowment Funds	\$ 1,176,248
	Contributions	-
	Unrealized Gain	<u>133,478</u>
August 31, 2024	Endowment Net Assets	\$ <u>1,309,726</u>
September 1, 2024	Donor-Restricted Endowment Funds	\$ 1,309,726
	Contributions	7,783
	Unrealized Gain	<u>100,483</u>
August 31, 2025	Endowment Net Assets	\$ <u>1,417,992</u>

Investments Objectives and Strategies

The Church has adopted an investment policy to provide guidelines for investing endowment assets. Under this policy, as approved by the Church Council, the endowment assets are invested in a manner that is intended to maintain the purchasing power of the current assets and all future contributions, maximize return within reasonable and prudent levels of risk, and maintain an appropriate asset allocation based on a total return policy that is compatible with a flexible spending policy.

To achieve these objectives, the Church follows an asset diversification plan, sets performance benchmarks for investment managers, and has established various asset quality and limitation thresholds. The Church expects its endowment, over time, would achieve total returns after all fees to be equal to or exceed an annualized realization rate of 5%. These total returns are expected to meet or exceed the composite performance of the securities markets on a three to five-year basis. Actual returns in any given year may vary from this amount.

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
Notes to Financial Statements (continued)
For the Years Ended August 31, 2025 and 2024

NOTE O – LIQUIDITY AND AVAILABILITY OF FINANCIAL ASSETS

The following reflects the Church's financial assets as of the statements of assets, liabilities and net assets – modified cash basis date, reduced by amounts not available for general use because of contractual or donor-imposed restrictions within one year of the statements of assets, liabilities and net assets – modified cash basis date.

	2025	2024
Financial assets at year-end	\$ 2,036,716	\$ 1,917,627
Less those unavailable for general expenditures within one year, due to:		
Donor-restricted for endowment funds	1,417,992	1,309,726
Financial assets available to meet cash needs for general expenditures within one year	\$ 618,724	\$ 607,901

As part of the Church's liquidity management, it invests in cash and fixed income securities. The Church has loan commitments described in notes C and F as of August 31, 2025 and 2024.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION COMPARISON

Statement of Financial Position Comparison

As of August 31, 2025

	As of Aug 31, 2025	As of Aug 31, 2024
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Bank Accounts		
1000-00 General Checking FSB	13,648	-38,380
1000-01 Council Reserves Savings FSB	74,183	0
1000-02 Missions Checking FSB	165,353	223,705
1000-03 Petty Cash	100	100
1100-01 Restricted Money FSB	75,988	78,789
1100-02 Debt Reduction Savings FSB	1426	443
1100-03 New & Renewing Savings FSB	238,266	296,696
1100-04 Endowment Savings FSB	49,761	48,101
1100-05 ELCA Endowment Fund E271745	798,756	742,119
1100-06 ELCA Endowment Fund E270201	619,236	567,606
Total Bank Accounts	\$ 2,036,717.00	\$ 1,919,180.09
Accounts Receivable		
1200-10 FSA Bank Card Deposit	450	450
Total Accounts Receivable	\$ 450.00	\$ 450.00
Other Current Assets		
Total Other Current Assets		
Total Current Assets	\$ 2,037,167.00	\$ 1,919,630
Fixed Assets		
1300-10 Vehicles - Van	26,672	26,672
1300-20 Furniture & Fixtures	961,463	951,279
1300-30 Music & Choir	648,863	646,060
1300-40 Computers Hardware & Software	212,094	212,094
1400-00 Land	1,130,528	1,130,528
1410-00 Buildings	4,557,755	4,557,755
1420-00 Building Improvements	2,001,544	1,852,576
1430-00 Mortgage Costs	4,963	5,244
1899-99 Accumulated Depreciation	-6,323,259	-6,116,373
Total Fixed Assets	\$ 3,220,622.52	\$ 3,265,835.60
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 5,257,789.52	\$ 5,185,465.69
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY		
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
2000-00 Accounts Payable	90,234	23,080
Total Accounts Payable	\$ 90,234	\$ 23,080
2000-10 Credit Card	0	0
Total Credit Cards	\$ -	\$ 0
Other Current Liabilities		
2000-20 Racial Justice Grant	5,972	5,972
2000-30 Lily Sabbatical Grant	0	0
2000-40 Council Designated Reserves	0	11,224
2100-00 Payroll Liabilities	4,167	12,116
2150-00 Operations Reserve	3,307	3,307
2160-00 Rent Deposits	1,288	1,288
2200-00 Temporary Restricted/Designated	654,951	647,761
2300-00 Donations Designated to Mission	68,704	79,545
2350-00 Youth/Family Missions	11,705	12,269
2400-00 Endowment Funds - M.M.	49,761	48,101
2500-00 FSB Line of Credit	0	61,135
2500-20 Less Debt Issuance Costs, Net	-5,245	-5,245
Total Other Current Liabilities	\$ 797,618	\$ 882,719
Total Current Liabilities	\$ 887,852	\$ 905,799
Long-Term Liabilities		
2600-00 THRIVENT Mortgage	1,679,221	1,922,708
Total Long-Term Liabilities	1,679,221	\$ 1,922,708
Total Liabilities	\$ 2,567,073	\$ 2,828,507
Equity		
3000-00 Endowment Funds in ELCA Invest.	1,391,755	1,291,292
3500-00 Opening Bal Equity	0	0
3900-00 Retained Earnings	1,065,243.00	641,067
Net Revenue	233,698.00	424,598
Total Equity	2,690,696	\$ 2,356,957
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$ 5,257,769	\$ 5,185,465

FISCAL YEAR-END SUMMARY OF INCOME & EXPENSES

Trinity Lutheran Church of Stillwater
FISCAL YEAR-END SUMMARY OF INCOME & EXPENSES
 September 2024 - August 2025

	FYE 2025 Actual	FYE 2025 Budget	% of Budget
Revenue			
4000-00 OPERATING INCOME	1,287,038	1,330,000	96.77%
4100-00 RESTRICTED INCOME	106,495	83,000	128.31%
4300-00 CAPITAL APPEALS	0	0	0.00%
4400-00 FEE INCOME	43,050	60,000	71.75%
4500-00 RENTAL INCOME	161,326	170,000	94.90%
4700-00 OTHER INCOME	547	0	0.00%
4800-00 MISC INCOME (ERC=\$98,636)	107,185	12,000	893.21%
8000-05 MISSION INCOME	120,000	120,000	100.00%
Total Revenue	\$ 1,825,640	\$ 1,775,000	102.85%
Gross Profit	\$ 1,825,640	\$ 1,775,000	102.85%
Expenditures			
5000-10 SALARIES & BENEFITS	955,274	1,021,500	93.52%
5100-00 OFFICE EXPENSES	60,423	59,000	102.41%
5200-00 HUMAN RESOURCES	13,273	6,000	221.21%
5300-00 PROFESSIONAL FEES	13,944	12,000	116.20%
5400-00 FINANCIAL EXPENSES	13,069	11,200	116.69%
5500-00 STEWARDSHIP	2,511	4,500	55.79%
5600-00 COMMUNICATIONS	4,471	6,000	74.51%
5700-00 HOSPITALITY	4,831	6,000	80.51%
5800-00 BENEVOLENCE	39,000	39,000	100.00%
5900-00 PASTORAL EXPENSE	177	500	35.33%
6000-10 MORTGAGE & INTEREST	172,316	173,500	99.32%
6100-00 PROPERTY INSURANCE	41,691	40,000	104.23%
6200-00 PROPERTY TAXES	21,215	19,000	111.66%
6300-10 CHURCH BUILDING	58,699	85,500	68.65%
6300-50 HVAC	6,316	6,000	105.27%
6400-00 UTILITIES	65,787	60,000	109.65%
6500-00 CROIX CENTER	5,028	2,000	251.40%
6600-00 DRIVE-IN	1,138	1,000	113.77%
6700-00 CHURCH VAN	60	500	12.05%
6800-00 COMPREHENSIVE CAMPAIGN	0	0	0.00%
7000-00 LIFE LONG FAITH FORMATION	14,781	17,000	86.95%
7100-00 CHILDREN & FAMILY MINISTRIES	8,843	5,500	160.78%
7200-00 YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRIES	2,815	10,000	28.15%
7200-80 HIGH SCHOOL SERVICE TRIP	0	0	0.00%
7300-00 CARE & CONNECTIONS MINISTRY	20,368	24,000	84.87%
7500-00 MUSIC & WORSHIP	51,267	44,800	114.43%
8000-00 MISSIONS & OUTREACH	120,000	120,000	0.00%
9000-00 CIRCLES/GROUPS	0	0	0.00%
Total Operating Expense	\$ 1,697,295	\$ 1,774,500	95.65%
Operating Surplus (Deficit)	\$ 128,345	\$ 500	25668.99%

TREASURER'S REPORT

Thank you to the congregation for your steadfast giving and the continued special gifts towards our long-term debt and Comprehensive Campaign (CC). Over the past year we have continued to build momentum, making substantial payments towards our mortgage balance.

Throughout the year, we were able to make additional principal payments to the mortgage. In August of 2025, we closed our fiscal year with an extraordinary additional payment of \$55,243.92. This was above and beyond our regularly monthly payment.

At the end of fiscal year 2023, our long-term debt (mortgage) stood at approximately \$2,655,000. As of the most recent figures at the time of this writing (as of 10/01/2025), our mortgage balance has been reduced to \$1,610,493. This remarkable progress reflects the generosity and faithfulness of our congregation.

Every single gift and contribution makes a difference. These collective efforts have strengthened the church's financial foundation, ensuring a more secure and sustainable future for generations to come. The significant reduction in our mortgage, along with the resulting potential to allocate funds toward meaningful ministries, is steadily becoming a reality.

Thank you to the Trinity Finance Team for your continued work and contributions.

Current Finance Team Roster:

Phil Hanson

Tom Olsen

John Olson

Clark Thurn

In addition, thank you to the Trinity Financial staff and the Stewardship Team who have all contributed to the planning and oversight of Trinity's Finances this past year.

Jill Longnecker
Treasurer

Trinity Endowment Fund

Since its inception in 1997, the main purpose of the Trinity Endowment Fund has been to support new and emerging ministry opportunities. Thanks to the generosity of members over the years through individual gifts and bequests in their wills, Trinity is blessed with an Endowment Fund to support these ministries. Our Endowment Fund is an example of the result of sacrifices made by current and past parishioners that benefit our parish now and in the future. Gifts to the Endowment are invested with the ELCA Endowment Fund and earnings from these gifts are distributed back to Trinity for use in areas designated by the donors.

As of August 31, 2025, the market value of Trinity's Endowment Fund stood at \$1,411,083. Earnings from the fund, distributed back to Trinity in FY 2025, amounted to \$48,000 and were used to fund activities and programs in the following areas: General, Care, Worship & Music, and Children & Youth ministries as designated by the donor. Thank you for the generosity of all who have contributed to Trinity's Endowment Fund.

Sarah Kinsman
Parish Administrator

NEW & RENEWING COMPREHENSIVE CAMPAGIN

New & Renewing Comprehensive Campaign Update

As Trinity enters the final months of our 3-year New and Renewing Comprehensive Campaign, I am filled with deep appreciation and heart-felt gratitude. Together, you have raised an extraordinary \$1,712,915 (as of 08/31/2025) of our pledged goal of \$1,853,308 - a powerful testament to your generosity, your commitment, and your bold vision for Trinity's future. Through prayer, sacrifice, and trust in God's provision, we have accomplished remarkable things:

70% DEBT REDUCTION. As of the end of fiscal year 2025, combined funds from both regular and campaign contributions have reduced our Thrivent mortgage from \$3,097,495 (as of 12/1/2022) to \$1,679,220 (as of 8/31/25) – for a reduction of \$1,400,275 in less than 3 years.

20% Deferred Maintenance. The completion of the Drive-In Renovation and the 3rd Street Heritage Chapel Exterior Preservation (budgeted at \$249,000 – but came in at \$160,931) projects,

10% Mission Accompaniment. The financial accompaniment of \$17,442 to SPAS Planting Hope Campaign and \$105,146 to support the vital work of the Trinity Missions Team. Additional checks to SPAS and the Mission Team will be cut in December.

With over 92% of our goal already achieved, we are inspired by the Spirit that has carried us this far. Whether you gave early, recently, or are planning to contribute soon, your support matters. You are part of this journey that is transforming lives, spaces, and possibilities. And for that, we say **thank you**. These final months are not just a countdown - they are a celebration of what we have already accomplished and a call to finish strong, **together**.

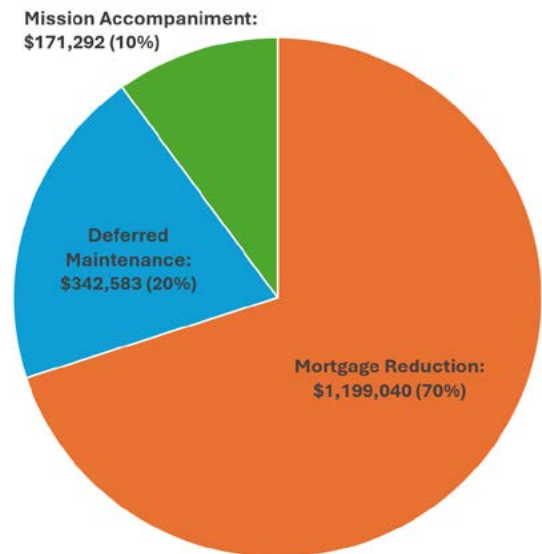
THANK YOU for your faithfulness to the Comprehensive Campaign. Your generosity demonstrates your tremendous commitment to Trinity's future and its ministries!

Sarah Kinsman
Parish Administrator

TLC Thrivent Mortgage Principal



NEW & RENEWING COMPREHENSIVE CAMPAIGN: \$1,712,915



FISCAL YEAR 2026 PROPOSED MINISTRY BUDGET

Trinity Lutheran Church of Stillwater Fiscal Year 2026 Proposed Ministry Budget

	25-26 Proposed Budget
INCOME	
4000-00 OPERATING INCOME (Contributions)	1,330,000
4100-00 RESTRICTED INCOME (Endowment, Memorials, etc)	70,500
4300-00 CAPITAL APPEALS	0
4400-00 FEE INCOME	44,000
4500-00 RENTAL INCOME	174,500
4700-00 OTHER INCOME	1,000
4800-00 MISC INCOME (Council Designated Reserves)	20,000
8000-05 MISSION INCOME ***	140,000
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 1,780,000
	25-26 Proposed Budget
EXPENSE	
5000-10 SALARIES & BENEFITS	1,015,500
5100-00 OFFICE EXPENSES (Office, Finance, etc)	103,500
5800-00 BENEVOLENCE	40,250
6000-10 MORTGAGE & INTEREST	172,000
6100-00 FACILITIES EXPENSES (Insurance, Taxes, Utilities)	206,000
7000-00 LIFE LONG FAITH FORMATION	17,000
7100-00 CHILDREN & FAMILY MINISTRIES	8,000
7200-00 YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRIES	10,000
7300-00 CARE & CONNECTIONS MINISTRY	22,000
7500-00 MUSIC & WORSHIP	45,200
8000-00 MISSIONS & OUTREACH	140,000
Total Expenditures	\$ 1,779,450
Net Operating Revenue	\$ 550

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee sought input from Council leadership and the Pastors regarding two Congregational Council seats.

The duties of the Council as stated in the Constitution are:

- a. To lead this congregation in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals.
- b. To seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support.
- c. To oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission.
- d. To maintain supportive relationships with the rostered ministers and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling or employment.
- e. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.
- f. To promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.
- g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor.
- h. To emphasize partnership with the synod and churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran, subject to established policies of the synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- i. To recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced or approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- j. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel. In addition, the council stresses the following roles of a council member:
 - To be a spiritual leader of Trinity.
 - To oversee the life and activities of Trinity.
 - To oversee the administration of Trinity.

NOMINATIONS

For the seats currently held by John Hodler who has completed his initial 3-year term and Tina Swanson due to her resignation effective after the 2025 Annual Meeting, the committee nominates John Hodler and Bryan Barts. John Hodler is eligible to serve another complete 3-year term. Bryan Barts is eligible to serve a 1-year term. Per Trinity's Constitution C12.03 the

congregation will need to vote on a candidate/s to fill the remaining year of Tina Swanson's initial 3-year term.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE NOMINATIONS In addition, the committee recommends the following names as the 2026 Nominating Committee: Krista Gossai, Tom Haugrud, and Andrew Thelander.

COUNCIL MEMBER ELECTION PROCEDURES:

1. Nominees, whether by the committee or from the floor, are expected to be in attendance at the Annual Meeting.
2. Each nominee will be given up to one minute to introduce him/herself, tell why he/she would like to serve on the Council, and give other information including areas of interest, in order to help the voters choose Council members.
3. Nominees, whether by the committee or from the floor, will be expected to have completed the requested information forms ahead of time or, in the case of nominees from the floor, at the meeting.
4. Endorsement speeches or questions of the candidates will not be a part of the Annual Meeting agenda.
5. After all nominated candidates have been identified, a sample ballot will be projected onto a large screen at the front of the sanctuary. The names of all candidates, whether nominated by the committee or from the floor, will be listed alphabetically.
6. A motion to approve the ballot will be made, seconded, and approved.
7. Ballots will be handed out by authorized tellers. The ballots will include pre-printed names of the candidates placed in nomination by the Nominating Committee and blank lines available to write-in names of the candidates nominated from the floor, using the names projected onto the screen as a reference.
8. Voting will be by written ballot.
9. To be elected, a candidate must receive a majority vote of the number of valid ballots cast.
10. In the event a run-off election is required, all candidates not receiving a majority of the votes will be entered on a second and succeeding (if required) ballots. Voting will continue until all council vacancies are filled by candidates elected by a majority (as described in #9).

Krista Gossai
Tom Haugrud
Andrew Thelander

CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL NOMINEES



John Hodler

My wife and I joined Trinity twenty-five years ago when we moved to Stillwater from Texas. During my working career, we moved numerous times and have always conducted church searches each time we moved. Upon our first Sunday worship at Trinity, we realized it was the church home we were

searching for in Minnesota. Our three sons, their significant others and two granddaughters now live on the East Coast.

I have enjoyed years of fellowship and faith building with groups and teams such as Food for Thought, Retired Men's Group, Men's Bible Study, Drive-In and Sunday greeting/usher/communion server, Tanzania mission trips that helped create clean water systems and improve subsistence farming methods, the Emergency Winter Warming Space and Shelter team, and the Homeless Strategy and Advocacy team.

I was privileged to serve on the previous Trinity Lead Pastor Call Committee, and I served on the Outreach Missions Team as we successfully transitioned Trinity's Outreach Mission program to a team led by lay people. Currently, I serve as a member of the St. Paul Area Synod Reference and Counsel Committee.

I retired from a 42-year professional career during which I worked in numerous management jobs in the Agriculture Industry. During my career's many related moves, I encountered distinct cultures, local traditions, strong personalities, and dialects. At each stop, I had to quickly learn how to communicate differently and build trust to be effective. I found this to be an exciting and satisfying challenge.

In November 2025, I will complete my first three-year term on Trinity's Congregational Council. During this term, I served two years as council secretary and one year as council president. Serving the congregation as an active council member is rewarding and carries the responsibility of working to ensure Trinity Congregation's needs are fulfilled. I am honored to have served as a Council member, and if I am elected to a second term, I will strive to serve the congregation to the best of my ability.



Bryan Barts

Currently, my wife Sarah and I live in Oak Park Heights with our son Bennett (10), who currently attends St. Croix Prep Academy as a 4th grader. We moved to the Stillwater area in 2016 and joined Trinity Lutheran as members in 2018. But to share a bit of our backstory, we met in college, at the University of Wisconsin

– Stout and got married in 2003. We moved out east, to Philadelphia for work, shortly after and ultimately 8 yrs later returned to Minnesota while in the process of starting our family. Bennett was born in 2015 and through the Lord's intervention he created our family through adoption. An amazing blessing to this day.

My Faith Journey - Growing up in Kiel, a small town in Wisconsin, my family was part of a Lutheran church. However, we weren't really engaged, and when I was 12 yrs old, I was in a serious bicycle accident. During my recovery, I became connected with my local Baptist church and that's where I embraced faith more personally in 1991, accepting Jesus as my Lord and Savior. I started attending regularly, getting active and involved which shaped my values, taught me the importance of having a relationship with God, the impact of prayer, the meaning of worship and instilled the need for godly service. Through my life experiences I have developed firm beliefs that God is watching over us, communicating with us and caring for us; Trinity, and this church community is a clear example of that to me. Over the past 30+ yrs, my relationship has only deepened as I continually learn from the Bible and its many applications to role as a father, husband and friend.

Professional Life - I currently serve as Director of Career Services at UW-Stout, where I lead a team that supports students in all stages of career and professional development — from self-discovery to internships and onto professional careers. My work involves building partnerships with employers, designing programs to build career-readiness and guiding institutional strategies to improve student outcomes.

Hobbies & Passions - When I'm not at work or trying to finish house projects, I am typically in the garage working on my classic car projects.

Why I'm Called to Serve - Having the opportunity to recently serve on the Trinity Security Task force has been a rewarding experience. Because of that experience, I feel drawn to serve on the Congregational Council because I want to further contribute my leadership experience, service mindset, collaborative spirit and deep commitment to help Trinity continue to grow in faith, community, and outreach.

Trinity Congregation Governance: Constitution amendments

During Trinity's November 16, 2025, annual meeting, the congregation will be asked to approve ELCA mandated model constitution language changes to Trinity's Constitution and to ratify the non-mandated constitution amendments the congregation approved in November 2024.

Trinity's non-mandated constitution amendments ratification explanation:

The St. Paul Area Synod and Trinity's constitutions require non-mandated constitution language amendments to be approved by a majority vote at one congregational meeting and ratified without change at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds vote approval.

At the Congregation's November 17, 2024, Annual Meeting the following non-mandated amendments to the Constitution were approved by 99% of members in attendance and voting. The complete language for each of these amendments can be found in Trinity's Constitution which is located on Trinity's website:

Trinity Website>New Here?>Our Leadership?>Constitution/Bylaws

Chapter 10. Congregation Meeting

C10.01, C10.02, C10.03, C10.05, C10.06, C10.07, C10.08, C10.09 *clarified Congregational meeting notification and voting procedures for in-person and remote meetings.*
C10.04. *Establish fifty voting members as a meeting's quorum.*

Chapter 11. Officers of this Congregation

C11.01 *clarified/removed redundant language that identified Congregation Council officers.*

Chapter 12. Congregation Council

C12.05. *Reduced Council spending authority from balance sheet asset value to \$250,000.*
C12.11. *Clarified language regarding who can call special meetings.*

Chapter 13. Congregational Committees

C13.01. *Membership of Executive Committee was clarified.*
C13.08. *Changed 'shall' to 'may' serve. Added language clarifying Lead Pastor and Council President serve on Executive Committee.*

Mandated ELCA Model Constitution amendments explanation:

The ELCA's model constitution is routinely reviewed, and amendments are approved by the Churchwide Assembly. As explained below, ELCA congregations are required to adopt this revised language. Below is a detailed explanation of the revisions and the adoption process.

MANDATED 2025 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY AMENDMENTS TO THE MODEL CONSTITUTION FOR CONGREGATIONS OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA®

[WITH RATIONALES]

Prepared by the Office of the Secretary
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
August 2025

Following are amendments to the *Model Constitution for Congregations* that were approved by the 2025 Churchwide Assembly. Additions are underlined; deletions are ~~struck through~~; all changes are highlighted.

Provisions within the *Model Constitution for Congregations* are of two types:

- **Those provisions marked with an asterisk (*) are required when a congregation amends its governing documents.** They must be used without alteration or amendment of the text in any manner (i.e., neither additions nor deletions are permissible). Such provisions go into effect immediately upon approval by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any legally called meeting of the congregation, provided that they have been presented to the congregation at least 30 days prior to the meeting.
- **Provisions not marked with an asterisk are non-required provisions.** These provisions represent wording recommended by the Churchwide Assembly. If the congregation chooses to incorporate them into the congregation's constitution exactly as presented here, these provisions require a majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any legally called meeting of the congregation, provided that they have been presented to the congregation at least 30 days prior to the meeting.

If the wording of non-required provisions is altered or amended in any way from the text presented here, the provisions must be approved at one congregation meeting by a majority vote and then must be ratified *unchanged* by a two-thirds vote at the next regular meeting of the congregation. (See *Model Constitution for Congregations*, *C16.04. for more detail.)

For convenience, the rationale that was presented to the Churchwide Assembly for each amendment is provided in italics following the amendment. These rationales are *not* part of the amendments with which they are associated, they are *not* part of the *Model Constitution for Congregations*, and they are *not* intended to be incorporated into the constitutions of congregations. They are here only to give context for the amendments.

The Office of the Secretary would like to express gratitude for your faithful attention to your congregation's constitution!

Chapter 1.

NAME AND INCORPORATION

- C1.02.** For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws and continuing resolutions, the congregation of (insert full legal name) is hereinafter designated as “this congregation.”

Rationale: Insertion for comprehensiveness.

Chapter 5.

POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

- *C5.04.** This congregation or the Congregation Council shall elect from among its the voting members of the congregation laypersons to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly as well as persons to represent it at meetings of any conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. The number of persons to be elected by this congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by the (insert name of synod) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Rationale: This change allows for lay voting members of the Synod Assembly to be elected either by the congregation or by the Congregation Council. Current language requires election by the congregation.

Chapter 7.

PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

- *C7.03.** If the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to relocate transfer to another Lutheran church body, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation, provided the process for termination of relationship in *C6.05. has been followed. Before this congregation takes action to relocate transfer to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with representatives of the (insert name of synod).

Rationale: Consistency with 9.71.d. of the ELCA Constitution.

Chapter 9.

ROSTERED MINISTER

- *C9.02.** Only This congregation may call as a pastor only:
a. a member of the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or
b. a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament who has been recommended for this congregation by the synod bishop
may be called as a pastor of this congregation.

Rationale: Formatting for clarity.

- *C9.03.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
a. Every minister of Word and Sacrament shall:
....
8) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, proclaiming God's love for the world, advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations.

Rationale: A number of amendments were made by the 2019 Churchwide Assembly to this bylaw and to its parallels throughout the constitutions. In the process, the phrase “proclaiming God’s love for the world” was omitted from the list of responsibilities of rostered ministers. This amendment restores the phrase.

Trinity Lutheran Church Constitution amendments – November 16, 2025, Annual meeting

- *C9.06. At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor ~~shall~~ **may** be appointed by the bishop of the synod with the consent of this congregation or the Congregation Council.

Rationale: It is not always possible for a synod bishop to appoint an interim pastor for every congregation.

- *C9.15. Under special circumstances, subject to the approval of the synod bishop and the concurrence of this congregation, a minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion may serve temporarily as pastor of this congregation under a contract between this congregation and the pastor in a form proposed by the synod bishop and approved by this congregation.

Rationale: Provision is being changed to "required." With the increasing use of exchangeability of rostered ministers with full communion partners, it is advisable that all congregations make allowance for that possibility.

- *C9.22. ~~Only. This congregation may call as a deacon only:~~
a. a member of the roster of Ministers of Word and Service of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, ~~or~~
b. a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Service who has been recommended for this congregation by the synod bishop.
~~may be called as a deacon of this congregation.~~

Rationale: Editorial reformatting for clarity.

- *C9.23. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every minister of Word and Service shall:

-
c. Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, **proclaiming God's love for the world**, advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations;

Rationale: A number of amendments were made by the 2019 Churchwide Assembly to this bylaw and to its parallels throughout the constitutions. In the process, the phrase "proclaiming God's love for the world" was omitted from the list of responsibilities of rostered ministers. This amendment restores the phrase.

Chapter 15.

DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION

- *C15.01. Persistent and public denial of the Christian faith, willful or criminal conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, continual and intentional interference with the ministry of this congregation, or willful and repeated harassment or defamation of member(s) of this congregation is sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation and repentance will be attempted following Matthew 18:15–17, proceeding through these successive steps, as necessary:
a) private counsel and admonition by the pastor,
b) ~~censure~~ and admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses,
c) written referral of the matter by the Congregation Council to the vice president of the synod, who will refer it to a consultation panel drawn from the Consultation Committee of the synod, and
d) written referral of the matter by the consultation panel to the Committee on Discipline of the synod.
If, for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by ~~paragraphs~~ a. and b. hereof, those steps may be performed by another pastor chosen by the Executive Committee of the Congregation Council.

Rationale: Formatting correction and consistency of constitutional language.

Trinity Lutheran Church Constitution amendments – November 16, 2025, Annual meeting

- *C15.11.** When there is disagreement between or among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue which cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation may petition the synod bishop for consultation after informing the president [vice president] of this congregation of their intent to do so. The synod bishop shall seek a timely resolution of the dispute. If the issue relates directly to the pastor, the bishop may begin the process in ~~§14.18~~ ***C9.05**.d. In all other matters, if the bishop's consultation fails to resolve the issue, the bishop shall refer the matter to the Consultation Committee of the synod, which shall undertake efforts to find an appropriate solution. If the Consultation Committee's efforts fail to resolve the dispute, the entire matter shall be referred to the Synod Council for adjudication by whatever process the Council deems necessary. The Synod Council's decision shall be final.

Rationale: It is more logical to cross-reference within the Model Constitution, rather than to make reference to the synod constitution.

Chapter 16. AMENDMENTS

- *C16.02.** An amendment to this constitution, proposed under *C16.01., shall:
- be approved at any legally called meeting of this congregation by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting; and
 - be ratified ~~without change~~ **unchanged** at the next regular meeting of this congregation by a two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting.

Rationale: Consistency of constitutional language.

SAMPLE BALLOTS

SAMPLE BALLOTS

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH | Stillwater, Minnesota
November 16, 2025

NOMINEES FOR CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

BALLOT

VOTE FOR TWO (2) – 3-year terms:

☐ John Hodler

☐ Brian Barts

☐ Nominated from the floor: _____



115 4th St. N
Stillwater, MN 55082

651-439-7400
www.trinitylc.org