



April 2025
volume 47, issue 2

trinity
TODAY

PHOTO: Drive In-Doors Service March 2

OFFERING MUSIC

He Never Failed
Me Yet



Meeting God in the midst of extremes

holy week & easter schedule ON PAGE 7



LEAD PASTOR **THE REV. DR. CHRIS BELLEFEUILLE**

Good heavens, what HAVE you done?!?

On Wednesday evening, the Adult Faith Lab group set off on a Lent project: writing a faith story. Guided by Britta Levenhagen, we began by plotting a timeline of our life and looking for themes or a story to focus on. The writing commences and in a few weeks we will share them with each other!

Trinity naturally found its place on my timeline. In the margin, I wrote: "This is where I came to truly understand the theology of the Body of Christ and what it means to move as one body."

That is what you have done over the past eight years. You have learned to move as a body, unified, shoulder-to-shoulder, one voice composed of many.

Not group think. Not monolithic.

Instead, we have clarified our shared priorities and learned to celebrate our diverse gifts and interests without begrudging our differences.

For example, you are well on the way to building your third tiny house! And you mobilized Stillwater to support the Emergency Housing Services Building in your town. You care about housing your neighbors!

And someone says, I love that we are building tiny homes and sheltering those experiencing homelessness! I work to support music ministry because worship lifts me up and equips me for life as a Jesusian in the world and I want to be sure that marvelous choir has everything they need.

And someone says, I love that we have a great choir at Trinity! Me? I worship at 11 but I love that we have a great choir, because it draws new people and allows us to have such a powerful Good Friday.

I support youth ministry because when the youth got back from Puerto Rico, they started a youth group with the support of Pastor Peter and some adults. And they are building relationships and growing in faith together.

And someone says, I love that youth are flourishing at Trinity! Personally, I never even had kids, but youth give life to the whole community, and I am excited to know that they are engaged and serving God. I support the Sunshine Ministry because I love that our older members get cards and flowers on their birthday to celebrate and give thanks for their wisdom and love. They are precious!

And someone says, I love that we get cards and flowers on our birthdays because it keeps me tied to the body of Christ in a tangible way! I support Trinity by having my daughter get me signed up for automated giving so that my money supports everything that Trinity does. Because we ARE the body of Christ, and we are one people in many expressions, and we listen to each other and celebrate what excites each other.

And so it goes. We support ministries that we love with time, energy, faith, and money. And we support what gives life to each other so that we can live together as one body.

Trinity, ALL of this, every bit of it and the dozens of other ways we love each other is BECAUSE GOD FIRST LOVED US. That, Trinity, is what you have done. That is what God has done in you.

What an absolute privilege it is to be on this journey with you.

Thanks be to God!

Pastor Chris



Can you still do my funeral? Or What happens after Pastor Chris retires?

Fair question.

The answer is: Pastor Chris will no longer do pastoral acts for Trinity Lutheran Church or members. This includes leading worship, preaching, funerals, weddings, pastoral care, and hospital visits. There are three primary reasons for this.

1. It's a healthy boundary that allows Trinity to move into a new future and develop a full relationship with our new lead pastor.
2. Pastor Chris needs to feel retired!
3. See number 1.

The ELCA supports a policy where departing pastors fully disengage from the congregation. This is to allow for a clean, healthy departure with clear pastoral boundaries. And it allows

the new pastor to connect with the community, just as Pastor Chris was allowed to.

It is not an indication of a pastor's love for or commitment to a congregation. In fact, the most loving thing is to abide by these boundaries.

Pastor Chris and Ted are not planning to leave the Valley, so you will run into them in the community. Please say hello!

Have conversations. Even tell them you miss them. And avoid triangulating conversations about Trinity, Trinity leadership or the call process.

If you have further questions about these boundaries, please contact our synod representative Deacon Krista Lind krista.lind@spas-elca.org or Council President John Hodler jhodler@trinitylc.org.



TRINITY CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL UPDATE

Pastoral Transition

In the past few weeks, the Council has worked with the St Paul Area Synod to begin implementing the ELCA's structured pastoral transition process. This includes beginning the evaluation of potential interim pastor candidates, while we celebrate Pastor Chris' ministry. Below is a visual of the four key phases of this 12 to 18+ month long process.



Additional information will be communicated when each phase's implementation details are finalized. If you have any questions, please contact a member of Trinity's Congregational Council.



John Hodler
President



Tina Swanson
Vice President



Kirsten Parker
Secretary



Jill Longnecker
Treasurer



Bill Bjorum
Council Member



Shane Brockshus
Council Member



Congregational Council

Our congregational governance calls for an elected council and includes the Lead Pastor, Chris Bellefeuille and Pastor of Lifelong Faith Formation, Peter Weston Miller. Parish Administrator, Sarah Kinsman is also on council as a non-voting, ex officio member.

Our current congregational council includes the following Trinity members:



John Hodler
COUNCIL PRESIDENT



Tina Swanson
COUNCIL VICE PRESIDENT



Kirsten Parker
COUNCIL SECRETARY



Jill Longnecker
COUNCIL TREASURER



Bill Bjorum
COUNCIL MEMBER



Shane Brockshus
COUNCIL MEMBER

For more information about your council or to get in touch, please visit: <https://trinitylc.org/welcome/who-we-are/council/>

Financial Update from the Treasurer

Feb 2024 – Fiscal Year to Date
By Jill Longnecker

Long Term Debt Summary	February 2025	February 2024	12 Month Difference
Long-Term Debt - Beginning of Fiscal Year	\$1,922,708	2,655,486	
Increase (Decrease) since beginning of FY	\$(127,243)	\$(277,313)	
Long-Term Debt Balance - Current Month	\$1,795,465	\$2,378,173	\$(582,708)
Line of Credit Balance - Current Month	\$-	\$-	\$-

It is hard to believe we are already into our third month of 2025 as of this writing. The overall financial health of the Church has continued to be strong with the ongoing momentum and benefit of the Comprehensive Campaign and the contributions to our long term debt. Due to continued strong giving, we have also been able to keep on track with our budget, without accessing the line of credit.

As we continue into the 2025 calendar year, reporting on our long term debt and line of credit (if needed) will continue to be reported on a quarterly basis.

If you are interested in learning more about the Finance Team or have any general questions, please feel free to reach out to me at jlongnecker@trinitylc.org.



Mark your calendars!
Sunday, May 18 at 10:00 am

We will come together for a single, unified worship service to celebrate and honor Pastor Chris and her ministry at Trinity.

Following the service, share your reflections, gratitude, and moments of joy with Pastor Chris as we recognize her impact on our congregation during a special lunch reception. We welcome everyone to attend this meaningful morning of worship, community, and gratitude.

Want to help with the celebration? Contact Sara Wagner.



Financial Update

Sarah Kinsman | Parish Administrator

"The flowers appear on the earth. The time of the singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land." - Song of Solomon 2:12

Greetings Trinity!

We are days away from the first day of Spring as I write this – and we have spotted the robins in our feeders already! We have had a crazy March with both snowstorms and 70-degree temps... so Minnesota.

OFFICE REMODEL

Spring cleaning came early to the church offices – as the offices are now lighter and brighter - please stop in and check it out! We are waiting on some new framed "art" made by staff and new office reception furniture. Again, a special "thank you" to the Helping Hands crew for putting our offices back together and recycling all the old cubicles, partitions, etc. We could not have done it without their help! As a reminder, this remodeling project was funded by a restricted private gift.

2025 STEWARDSHIP

Thank you, Trinity, for your generous response to giving for 2025! There are currently 289 pledges totaling \$1,036,809. In 2024, there were 272 pledges totaling \$953,922 – an increase of \$82,887!

FEBRUARY 2025 INCOME VS EXPENSE

- FYTD Giving through February was \$712,097 (107% of Budget). 2024 YTD Giving was \$695,455.
- Total Income - minus Missions - was \$1,025,156. (124% of Budget/\$90 in ERC Funds) 2024 Income was \$939,252. (\$60K in Council Designated Funds)
- Total Expenses – minus Missions – were \$810,090 (98% of budget). 2024 Expenses were \$843,680 (Audit/higher mortgage payment).
- As of March 1, 2025, the Line of Credit balance was \$0.

MARCH 2025 COMPREHENSIVE CAMPAIGN UPDATE

- Total Contributed: \$1,578,909.33
- Total Balance: \$335,049.44
- Total Pledged: \$1,913,958.77
- Percent Complete: 82.49%

MORTGAGE

- As of 3/1/25 the Thrivent mortgage balance was \$1,795,465.
- Additional check from the Comprehensive Campaign to principle in March for \$24,127.

FACILITIES

The 3rd Street Heritage Chapel Exterior project (tuckpointing/structural repair) will begin this spring/summer. This project is the 2nd funded project from the Comprehensive Campaign. There is still a bit of work to be done out at the drive-in as well which includes the replacement of the roof on the projection building.

THANK YOU!

THANK YOU for all you do to continue to make Trinity a healthy, vital, and viable community of faith! Blessings!

Combined Governing Document Available to Download

Trinity's Constitution has been updated to bring it into compliance with the Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America mandated language. The Constitution, By-Laws, and Continuing Resolutions are now combined into one document that facilitates access to these governance documents. The combined document was approved during Trinity's Nov. 17, 2024 annual meeting. You may download the approved document from our website at: <https://trinitylc.org/welcome/who-we-are/council/constitution-by-laws/>



WORSHIP & MUSIC

worship TEXTS

Below are the scripture texts that will be used on the date listed to prepare the message for worship.

Apr. 6 _____ **Luke 19:1-10**

Special Musical Guests at 9 am
worship: Cantus

Apr. 13

Presentation of "The Cry of the
Whole Congregation" - a dramatic
reading of the passion story

Apr. 20 _____ **Luke 24: 1-12**

Apr. 27 _____ **John 20: 19-31**

TRINITY *concert series*



Drake University Choirs

**Friday, April 4 | 7 pm | Worship Center
at Trinity**

Experience the powerful music of the Drake Choir and sp̄ero Chamber Choir, joined by special guests Tartan High School Chamber Choir, on their 2025 tour. A concert of hope and resilience. Free-will donation appreciated.

Get full details at: <https://trinitylc.org/worship-music/music/concert-series/>

Cantus: The Secret Letter

**Sunday, April 6 | 3 pm | Worship
Center at Trinity**

Two millennia of forbidden love letters, from emperors to poets, reveal hidden passions in "The Secret Letter."

Croix Chordsmen Spring Concert

**Saturday, April 26 | 3 pm | Worship
Center at Trinity**

"CROIX COLLEGE GLEE CLUB REUNION,"
Vocality Quartet, \$15 advance tickets.

Stillwater Choir Home Concert

**Tuesday, April 29 | 8 pm (Senior
Tributes begin at 7:15) | Worship
Center at Trinity**

Stillwater Choir's Home Concert:
year-end and tour celebration.



High School Graduate Blessing & Recognition

Sunday, May 5 | 10 a.m.

On Sunday, May 4th, at our 10 a.m. single Worship Service, our faith community will celebrate the Class of 2025 with a special blessing and recognition. During the service, led by the Trinity Worship Band, we will invite graduating high school seniors and their families to come forward for a time of blessing, alongside the celebration of First Communion.

Sunday, May 11 at 10 a.m.

Children's Musical (during the message),
worship lead by the choir and organ.

Sunday, May 18 at 10 a.m.

Celebration of Pastor Chris! Festival
worship with band, choir, brass and
organ.



Holy Week & Easter

Palm Sunday | Single Worship Service & Palm Processional

April 13 | 10 am | Worship Center

Join us for a powerful Palm Sunday experience! Witness a dramatic reading of the Passion story, brought to life by our youth. Hear the joyful voices of our Children's Choir as we begin Holy Week together.

Maundy Thursday on Wednesday | Dinner Church

April 16 | Dinner 5:30 pm, Service 6:15 pm | River Room

Join us for a meaningful Maundy Thursday experience at Wednesday Dinner Church, our only program that evening, featuring hand and foot washing and Stations of the Cross.

Good Friday Breakfast | All Are Welcome

April 18 | 7 am | River Room

Gather for a hearty breakfast and time to connect. All are welcome!

Good Friday Worship | A Prayer for Rest

April 18 | 7 pm | Worship Center

Experience K. Lee Scott's "The Suffering Servant," a choral work based on Isaiah 53, featuring the Trinity Choir, string quartet, and soloists. This performance brings to life Isaiah's prophetic vision of Christ's suffering, written over 600 years before his birth.



Easter Sunday Worship | Grief & Hope

April 20 | 7, 9 & 11 am | Worship Center

7 am | Sunrise Worship (no live stream)

9 am | Traditional Worship with choir, brass and organ

11 am | Contemporary Worship with the worship band

Easter Egg-stravaganza | The Easter Season Continues!

Saturday, April 26 | 10 am | Green Space (or Gym)

The Easter season continues long after Easter Sunday! Spread out the celebration of Christ risen with an all-things Easter party in partnership between Trinity Lutheran and LADC on Saturday, April 26 at 10:00 am. Join us for games, crafts, and a snack! Weather permitting, this event will be outside on the Green Space with the Gym as backup. This event is free and open to all, but your RSVP is so helpful in our planning.



Easter Garden | Memorials & Honors

In the spirit of memorializing or honoring loved ones, we welcome donations toward an Easter Garden. We also gratefully accept memorials and honors designated for worship and music, enriching our services. Scan the QR code to the right, or find a Easter Garden paper form in the Commons.





Sunday Faith Forum 10 a.m. | River Room

At Trinity we believe faith formation is a lifelong endeavor. Questions? Reach Pastor Peter at pwestonmiller@trinitylc.org or Penny Catlin at pccatlin@juno.com. Read more at: <https://trinitylc.org/learning/adult/adult-ed/>



Climate Change, Decarbonization, and the Need for Many Small Solutions

Dr. James M. Jonza
Sundays, March 30 & April 6 | 10 am |
River Room

Dr. James Jonza, a 3M veteran, developed key technologies including optical polarizer films, which significantly improved LCD displays and saved energy. He also focused on climate change solutions, notably carbon capture with Svante, and now teaches seminars on the subject.

THE MENTAL HEALTH FAITH FORUM

**SATURDAY,
MAY 3, 2025**
9:00 AM - 12:30 PM

EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES TO SUPPORT ADDICTION AND MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY

Join us for a interfaith and multicultural gathering celebrating addiction and mental health recovery. Together, we'll mark the launch of Our Stigma—a new podcast and educational resource designed to destigmatize outreach and bridge gaps in your community.

Details : info@ourstigma.com

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

Stillwater, MN
115 4th St N,
Stillwater, MN

REGISTRATION FEE

\$15

(Special arrangements
available for individuals
in recovery contact us
for details.)



Elim
Lutheran Church
They called it Elim, and they gathered there for worship. Genesis 13:18



Mental Health Awareness Month is coming up in May

Would you like to learn more about mental illness and what help is available to people who live with a mental illness? Would you be interested to know what resources are available towards becoming more aware and creating an

empathetic informed environment for all of our neighbors?

NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Health) has an active affiliate group in Washington County. One of our goals for 2025 is to raise awareness of various efforts our local chapter has done which support education about mental illness and also to promote presentations that focus on living with a mental illness or being a family member of someone who does. We strive to share resource information which might be helpful for folks going through crises themselves or who know someone who is. Volunteers can help spread the word that there are several local support groups for those living with mental illness and also for those who love them whether they are family or friends.

Another goal NAMI Washington County has for 2025 is to enlist volunteers to be present at various community events to share prepared materials. An upcoming opportunity to do this while you learn more is the Mental Health Summit which takes place on Saturday, May 3rd from 9:30 - 11:30 at Trinity. We would also love for Trinity volunteers who'd be willing to help with the task of setting up the event that day.

Jeneal Olsen | momjmo@comcast.net | 651-271-7734

children & family FAITH FORMATION

FYI: Faith Lab, Dinner Church, Confirmation, and Adult Faith Lab end April 30th; Youth Choir meets May 7th.

Spring 2025 Communion Preparation

Wednesday, April 2 | After Dinner Church

Join us for Communion Preparation Class on Wednesday, April 2nd at 6:30 PM in the River Room (following Dinner Church)! Learn about Holy Communion, bake communion bread, and celebrate with us at the 9:00 AM service on Sunday, April 6th. All ages are welcome!



FAFA: An Woodworking Experience



Join Pastor Peter and volunteers for an intergenerational woodworking experience, building picnic tables for Trinity and the Settled Tiny Home Community, and reflecting on God's love for gathering, on April 9 and 23 after Dinner Church. There is no cost to participate, but please register via QR code.



Easter Eggstravaganza

Join Trinity & LADC, April 26, 10 AM for games, crafts, and snacks. Event is free, however, a RSVP is appreciated. Register using the QR code to the right.



Summer Camp 2025: Summer 2025 Registration Open (Limited Space Available)

Weeklong camp for completed grades 4-12 is the week of June 22-27

Seeds weekend camp for completed grades 1-3 is the weekend of June 20-22

Scholarships are available, contact Sarah Olson at solson@trinitylc.org. Here is our Trinity-specific registration link: <https://lwlbc.com/trinity-stillwater>

VBS 2025: Compassion Camp Registration is Open

Discover what it really means to be loved, be kind, and be YOU! Compassion camp is for ages 3 (fully potty-trained) through Grade 5. Get more info and register using the QR code.



- **When:** Mon., June 16 - Fri., June 20
- **Time:** 9:30 am - 11:30 am
- **Cost:** \$50 to cover the cost of program needs. An optional \$11 to cover the cost of a VBS t-shirt.



LADC Preschool

Lake Area Discovery Center Now Enrolling Preschool Families for the Current and Upcoming School Year!

See how our Top-Rated, Faith Based Preschool Program is building bright futures for Minnesota's littlest learners, and schedule a tour at: <https://trinitylc.org/learning/children/preschool>

PHOTOS: Mid-winter Intergenerational Retreat





welcome NEW MEMBERS

On Sunday, March 9 we welcomed the following new members into our faith community. Please give them a warm welcome!



Janet Newman

100 percent Norwegian, book and bird lover, recently moved from the island of St. Croix to Croixwood



Maureen Seibert

Travels the world whenever she can. Part time musician and plays clarinet and jazz saxophone in groups in the Twin Cities.



Beth Koehler and Lysa Asmus

Oak Park Heights neighbors, Texas refugees, Sports enthusiasts



Seth and Caitlin Leinard; Owen

Mahtomedi folks. Adventurous & Outdoorsey. Musical.



John and Lou Cunico

Married 58 years, Outdoor hobbies, painter, golfer



ABIDE READERS

Next Book Discussion:

All are welcome to our discussion of **The Black Box: Writing the Race by Henry Louis Gates, Jr.** on Monday, April 28, 6:30-8:00 via Zoom. Because this is our last book until September, we will also be choosing the books for next year. Email wolff701@msn.com for the Zoom link for this and for ABIDE opportunities and events throughout the spring and summer.

ABIDE Readers meet on the fourth Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. on Zoom. Find the upcoming book discussion list and more information at: <https://trinitylc.org/congregational-life/connections/abide-readers/>



The Light in Me sees and honors the Light in each of You

YogaDevotion Chair/Flow Combo Class

Thursdays 9 – 10 am | In-person and on Zoom

May 1 – June 19 | \$88 for 8 classes

Discover God's presence through YogaDevotion, a practice of breath, prayer, and movement. Join us in person in the Narthex or online via Zoom, led by a trained instructor. All skill levels are welcome, both men and women, to cultivate healthy living and peaceful presence.

If you have a guest, want to try a class or want to take fewer than a full session of classes, you can purchase one or more drop-in-tickets. Questions? Contact Su Peterson at toddllinsue2@aol.com. Find more information and a link to register at: <https://trinitylc.org/congregational-life/care/yoga/>



Dinner Church & Wednesday Learning

Dinner Church is for EVERYONE—not just for a mix of families of different ages—but also a great time for singles, couples, and friends to join in the Body of Christ at Trinity. Community meal is served at 5:30 p.m. with worship from 6:15-6:45 p.m.—all in the River Room. Followed by faith formation opportunities for all ages!

Wednesday Evening Schedule

4:30-5:15 p.m. Youth Choir Rehearsal (Kindergarten-Middle School) – Choir Room

5:20-6 p.m. Children's Faith Lab (Faith Formation for Ages 4-Grade 5) – Narthex

5:30 p.m. Community Meal Service Begins (eat together) – River Room Families with children in Faith Lab and staying for Dinner Church should grab food for the whole family during this time.

6:15-6:45 p.m. Dinner Church (worship together) – River Room

6:45-7:45 p.m. Break into Small Groups:

- Middle School Confirmation (Grades 6-8)
- Adult Faith Lab
- FAFA – Faith And Fellowship Affinity (Elementary School Age)

God is calling us to the table.



TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH EARTH KEEPERS. Leave it BETTER than you found it

Dear Trinity community, here are your April Earth Keeper T.I.P.s (Thoughtfully. Intentionally. Purposefully.)

Climate Corner T.I.P.s

Our climate needs us more than ever. Every little act that takes care of the earth does make a difference! Remember, a lot of little things add up to big change.

April Showers Bring May Flowers
Rain Barrels

Collecting rain water in rain barrels will give you water on hand for watering your plants and gardens. Check out how to get your rain barrels here.

Speaking of Flowers; Dandelions and Other Early Bloomers
Let 'em Grow!

Try rethinking the purpose of the early bloomers like dandelions and clover. Stop looking at them as weeds and spraying them to kill them and remember these are some of the first sources of food for pollinators. Bees are precious and vital to our eco system.

Reduce. Reuse & Refuse
Just Say No.

We don't need more trinkets and swag in our households. Whether you're attending a conference, an event, or simply a party, don't just take the free stuff just because it's free. Instead politely decline it.

MARCH was FoodShare MONTH!

As of Noon on Thursday March 20th, we've collected 119 pounds of food and supplies for Valley Outreach, thanks to your generous donations! Remember, Valley Outreach's top needs include cash donations (\$25 goes a long way!), spices and oil, canned meats, grains, household paper items, shelf-stable items, and hygiene products.



REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT — SOS Untangling the Mess; Helping the Marooned

By: Spike Carlsen

NOTE: It's a long story. So I'm going to begin at the end. The Minnesota Council of Churches (MCC) Refugee Services, which guided "our" Sadat family from Afghanistan—and 10,000 other refugees from around the world over the past 40 years—will be shuttered mid-April due to the abrupt suspension of federal funding.

This explains the urgent need; donate to help MCC support 91 Minnesota refugee families. Here's a compassionate, concrete way to help.

A REFUGEE, according to the United Nations' definition, is "someone who has been forced to flee his or her country and is unable to return because of a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group." Today there are somewhere between 35 and 43 million refugees worldwide.

Refugees wishing to resettle in the US need to first apply, and are then vetted by UN and/or US officials to make sure they meet the requirements. Those with refugee status who have been granted entry into the US—and some wait up to 20 years to do so—are authorized to work upon arrival, can apply for citizenship after 5 years, are eligible for most public benefits and are protected from being forcibly deported, except in cases of criminal activity.

Since the 1980s, the number of refugees admitted to the US has been decided under the annual "Presidential Determination Act" set by the president and congress. Past Presidential Determination numbers look like this:

- **1980 231,700 refugees**
- **2016 110,000 refugees**
- **2020 11,000 refugees**
- **2024 125,000 (as set by Biden)**
- **2025 ZERO (after Jan. 20th, as decreed by the current administration.)**

PHOTO: The Sadat Family Welcome Coalition summer picnic (2024)



For decades refugee resettlement has been undertaken by agencies like MCC—almost all faith based—under contract with the Federal government. These agencies are reimbursed a set amount for providing housing, employment and basic needs for a period of three to six months.

It's not a perfect system, but it works.

Many members of Trinity, and other congregations and groups, worked with the Sadat family of Afghanistan as they resettled in Minnesota three years ago. The Minnesota Council of Churches (MCC)—one of five organizations in Minnesota contracted with the US government to help resettle refugees—oversaw the Sadats' resettlement. MCC assigned a social worker to the family, designated our coalition as their sponsor, and helped them pay rent, enroll in social service programs, search for jobs and, generally feel at home in their new home. In turn, the government reimbursed MCC for these services.

Today, Sayed, the father, works as an intake nurse at a clinic, Latifa the mother works in food preparation at a local school cafeteria. The kids are thriving in school. With the help of a pro bono lawyer, they earned and received their green cards—which gives the family the legal right to live and work permanently in the US. The family has purchased a dependable car, are saving to buy a home, no longer need social services, and pay taxes. They are living the American dream.

This is important stuff. If the Sadats were still in Afghanistan, Sayed would most likely be in prison or worse, Latifa would not be allowed to work, and for Zainab—like other 12 year old girls in that country—this would be her last year of school.

On Jan. 20th, the current administration suspended entrance of all refugees into the US. They not only terminated thousands of grants and agreements regarding new refugees in the US, but also ended essential, life-saving assistance for refugees abroad. Click here for more details.

By ending reimbursement to resettlement agencies committed to helping already-arrived refugees, agencies nationwide have been marooned ... devastated. In the case of MCC, it will mean shuttering the entire refugee resettlement division mid-April. Yet MCC remains committed to helping

219 refugees already in Minnesota, within their 3 month "resettlement period." But now lacks federal funding to do so.

The Trinity missions team met with MCC staff early March to see how we could help. Based on that conversation Trinity, in conjunction with Ascension, First Presbyterian, the Eastern Twin Cities Islamic Center, Boutwells and the Church of Christ, raised \$40,000 to help cover March and April rents. People also donated \$3,000 in gift cards, 1300 diapers, 140 rolls of toilet paper, countless personal hygiene and cleaning supplies and a bottle of sunscreen. When we delivered three truckloads of donated items to MCC, one staff member explained "We were down to our last two rolls of toilet paper." Another expressed "You just helped provide 91 refugee families a place to live for 2 months. And you bought them extra time to look for jobs."

And now, it's time for Round #2. MCC staff is attempting to make arrangements for rents to be paid and other basic necessities provided for refugees even after they've been laid off ... selfless people doing God's work.

So please consider donating. Up until April 11th, checks and gift cards can be sent to MCC at the addresses below. After April 11th please contact [Spike](#) or [Kat](#) Carlsen regarding donations.

- **Minnesota Council of Churches
122 Franklin Ave West, #100
Minneapolis, MN 55404
(write "MCC refugee services" in
check memo line)**

Online donations can be made at. <https://www.mnchurches.org/give-refugee-services>

QUESTIONS? Contact Spike at Carlsen@usinternet.com or Kat at katdcarlsen@gmail.com

I'll end with some words from Diane Butler Bass that inspired me.

Up off the floor. Stop sitting around sniveling. You are part of the solution. Get to work and do something about injustice. Stand up to evil. Feed the hungry. Care for the suffering. Don't beg for a miracle or a magic fix. Just do it.



Quilt Fundraiser

The Piecemakers (Trinity Quilters) annual fundraiser is in process. Tickets, \$10 each, are available in the narthex until Sunday, April 6th, when the drawing will be held at noon. The quilt to be presented to the chosen name is currently hanging on the south wall in the narthex. The quilt has been named "Aloha". Other items, made by our volunteer piecemakers are shown in the display case next to the hanging quilt.



"Feed the World" Globe

We continue to collect money to purchase baby food for Valley Outreach. During Lent, the Globe is displayed in the narthex. This past month we also received a Thrivent gift of \$250 from a faithful member. Thank you, Eunice, for your generosity to help our neighbors in need.

Donations for California Wildfires

The Missions Team thanks those who have supported ones in need, due to the horrific wildfires in California.

LET'S GO and Missions

Invite you to Lunch at Shobi's Table

Wednesday, May 7, noon

Shobi's Table is a ministry of the St. Paul Area Synod of the ELCA. It is a pay-as-you can food truck that makes God's love edible on the streets of St. Paul. We will experience this ministry by eating lunch and conversing with those that benefit from this ministry. More specific information will be shared closer to the date. Please RSVP to Sandy Wendt at sjwendt46@gmail.com or Marie Liberda at mbvgo@gmail.com by April 30.

Settled, MN/Tiny Homes

On Sunday, March 9 at our Monthly Mission Minute, Dr. Gabrielle Clowdus, Founder of Settled, Inc. (our Tiny Home) project, presented us with a watercolor of our first tiny home, that Trinity Lutheran Church purchased to build in 2022.

In 2024, through more generous donations, we sponsored a second home to be built. And now, in 2025, a generous servant has donated \$37,000 for a third home. This one will be 20% larger than the first two and will cost \$42,000. So at church we presented Dr. Clowdus with a large cardboard check for \$37,000 and a second large unsigned cardboard check for \$5000. Wow, was she surprised.

Great news! Another kind and thoughtful and loving individual presented a \$5000 check within this week for the final payment for our third tiny home.

Thank you to all who believe and are radically committed to life with the poor.





LET'S GO Enjoy "Sing Me!" (70s Piano Tribute)

Bethel Lutheran, Hudson, WI

April 6 at 3:00 pm.

Free-will offering; Featuring Craig Koehn with a full band. Have questions? Contact Sandy Wendt at sjwendt46@gmail.com.

LET'S GO and Missions

Invite you to Lunch at Shobi's Table

Wednesday, May 7, noon

Shobi's Table is a ministry of the St. Paul Area Synod of the ELCA. It is a pay-as-you-can food truck that makes God's love edible on the streets of St. Paul. We will experience this ministry by eating lunch and conversing with those that benefit from this ministry. More specific information will be shared closer to the date. Please RSVP to Sandy Wendt at sjwendt46@gmail.com or Marie Liberda at mbvgo@gmail.com by April 30.

Music of John Denver

Hanifl Performing Arts Center,
White Bear Lake

Friday, May 23 at 7:30 pm

Join us for an evening of John Denver music performed by Country Roads. Please RSVP to Sandy Wendt at sjwendt46@gmail.com or Sandy Weber at stillweber@hotmail.com with payment of \$43.50 made by Friday, April 18.

Upcoming Possible Events

- Buddhist Temple visit
- Rustic Roots social
- Progressive (2 stop) food gathering
- Packing at Second Harvest
- Tours of other faith communities



One thoughtful idea ... can bring a community together.

Karen Gieseke (she/her) | RIC Team Chair

When you think about the image of God, what comes to your mind? A One thoughtful idea ... can bring a community together.

On March 14th, a community came together. Approximately fifty people from eleven different cities gathered. Some traveled solo, while others came with family, friends, or colleagues. Cars driving by slowed to catch a glance. People walking by paused to read the event sign on the door, and some stopped in due to the energy of the overflow crowd.

In 2024, Trinity's RIC Team had a thoughtful idea for the future: Let's plan and host community opportunities that support our LGBTQIA+ siblings!

Trinity's Inclusion statement declares, "All people are created in the image of God the Creator and, therefore, all have valuable stories and infinite worth." The RIC team's commitments include creating sacred community space to meet and listen to people's valuable stories, especially the stories of our LGBTQIA+ siblings. And being both Jesus-ian, and Midwest Lutherans, the March 14 event included breaking bread (or coffee and bars!) together with our neighbors!

The Spirit was alive and active! The coffee shop* filled with people, and the energizing buzz of conversation provided a welcome challenge when it came time to focus the group's attention. The conversation paused as the book, *The Power of One-Every Act of Kindness Counts*, by Trudy Ludwig and Mike Curato, was read to the group.

The book invites readers to consider,

"One is the starting point for change. Change begins with one person standing up for what is right.

And one act of kindness can start a chain reaction."

That evening created a series of chain reactions. Stories and information shared from the director of Transforming Families, a safe, supportive, and welcoming space for transgender children, youth, and parents of transgender persons of all ages, told both the joys of having transgender kiddos, and also the fear and harm caused by uniformed and hurtful words and actions. Likewise, the director of Hudson Pride Co, the group coordinating the third annual Valley Wide Pride Fest on June 21, shared stories of the history and positive impact of the Pride Fest for the LGBTQIA+ community, and also the challenges created by disruptors. The questions and thoughtful ideas which emerged from listening to people's valuable stories planted seeds of opportunities for the future of our shared work.

The accompanying Educator-Community Guide to *The Power of One-Every Act of Kindness Counts*, asks, "Do you[r students] understand the relationship between kindness and social justice? ... Acts of kindness are different from taking social action."

Trinity's Inclusion statement includes social action when it states: The teachings of Jesus call us to reconciliation and wholeness. The Gospels challenge us to be agents of healing within our society and to act as advocates working towards ecological, economic, LGBTQIA+, and racial justice.

May each ONE of us be filled with thoughtful ideas, moments of kindness towards ALL our neighbors, and energy for taking social action!

**A heartfelt thank you to Mike & Kat's Other Place Espresso Bar for their generous hospitality, and to Milly's Kitchen Madness & Bakes, for the delicious bars and cookies!*

Worship Attendance

Sunday, Feb. 2

In-person 9 am _____ 184

Online views/week 9 am _____ 213

In-person 11 am _____ 108

Online views/week 11 am _____ 196

Sunday, Feb. 9

In-person 9 am _____ 143

Online views/week 9 am _____ 185

In-person 11 am _____ 131

Online views/week 11 am _____ 237

Sunday, Feb. 16

In-person 9 am _____ 157

Online views/week 9 am _____ 185

In-person 11 am _____ 131

Online views/week 11 am _____ 237

Sunday, Feb. 23

In-person 9 am _____ 166

Online views/week 9 am _____ 275

In-person 11 am _____ 107

Online views/week 11 am _____ 180

NOTE: Online views in one week are one-minute or longer views.

Worship On Tv

Trinity's traditional Sunday worship service is rebroadcast on channel 14 through Valley Access Channels (VAC) on the following days and times:

Sundays at 11 a.m. & 7 p.m.

Mondays at 7 a.m. & 1 p.m.

Baptisms

- **Thomas Robert Giebner**, child of Rachel & Adam Giebner
- **Josephine Theresa Farley**, child of Kathleen & Genevieve Farley
- **Liam Louis Lehmann**, child of Karlie & Travis Lehmann

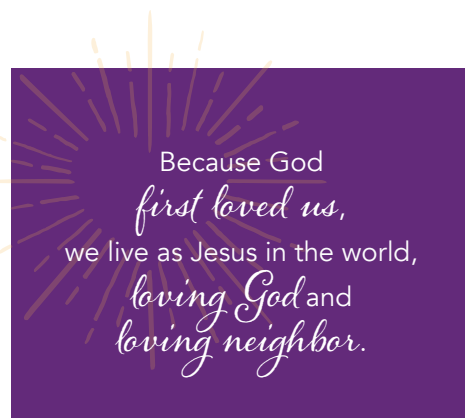
Christian Sympathy

- To the family and friends of **Danny Fleming**
- To the family and friends of **Dennis Pederson**
- To the family and friends of **Ute Erickson**
- To the family and friends of **Shirley White**
- to the family & friends of **Sonia Churchill**

Church Office Hours

The church office is open the following hours or by appointment.

Monday–Thursday | 9 a.m.–5 p.m.



Core Values

Engaging Worship
Radical Hospitality
Authentic Community
Lifelong Faith Formation
Compassionate Action

Welcome Statement

Read our welcome statement at: <https://trinitylc.org/welcome/who-we-are/mission/>

trinity
TODAY

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Articles for the next Trinity Today (May issue) are due Monday, April 14, to begin arriving in mailboxes Wednesday, April 23.

Office: 651-439-7400; Fax: 651-430-2935

Email: info@trinitylc.org

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EASTER GARDEN Memorials & Honors

This form and payment must be
turned in by Sunday, April 13.

Scan the QR code with your
smartphone camera to fill out
this form online.



In the spirit of memorializing or honoring loved ones this Easter, we welcome donations toward an Easter Garden. We also gratefully accept memorials and honors designated for worship and music, enriching our services. Easter Garden names will be printed in the May issue of *Trinity Today*. Please fill out the form below and mail it along with payment to Trinity Lutheran Church at P.O. Box 339, Stillwater, MN 55082.

☐ Worship and Music \$ _____

☐ Easter Garden (suggested donation \$25) \$ _____

In memory of: _____

In honor of: _____

Given by: _____

Phone Number (_____) _____ Total amount enclosed \$ _____