

TRINITYTODAY!

Because God first loved us, we live as Jesus in the world
AUGUST 2025 | volume 47, issue 8

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PHOTO: YOUTH AT CAMP WAPO



INTERIM PASTOR
JEN HACKBARTH

Thank you.

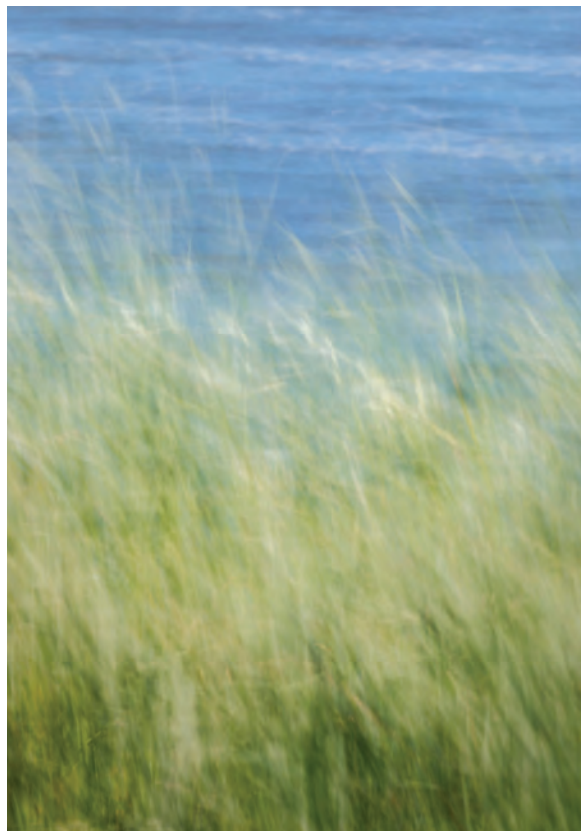
Thank you for the warm welcome I've received since I began at Trinity on July 1. I've enjoyed getting to know your wonderful staff and leadership and to meet many of you in worship, both in the Trinity building and in your cars at the Drive-In! What an honor it is to walk with Trinity in this time of change.

The coming months may bring anxiety and unsteadiness, yet they will also bring opportunity and excitement. Together we will take time to reflect on Trinity's life and mission as you seek to connect with a pastoral leader who will accompany you in your next steps in mission. Thank you for your patience, honesty and prayers as we move forward in Christ.

My son graduated from high school in 2024. His senior year was full of lasts—the last concert, the last game, the last first day of school. I felt like an open nerve, my protective covering gone and my emotions exposed to the elements. I liked having my son tucked into his bed at night and at the dinner table for meals. There is comfort in keeping things the same.

Transitions always begin with an ending. There is death before there is life; you can't get to the resurrection without going through the cross. Jesus says in Mark chapter 8, "For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it." In her book *How to Lead When You Don't Know Where You're Going*, Susan Beaumont translates this verse as "We lose ourselves in order to find ourselves."

Transition is spiritual work. Opening ourselves up to the Spirit's movement is risky, and we often resist the Spirit or introduce change when the Spirit asks us to sit still. We get caught in our own egos and forget to listen to the Spirit's guidance.



I like to think of the Spirit as a cool breeze on a hot day, and at times it brings relief. Yet the Spirit's movement may also feel like a death, prying open our hands when we've gripped something too tightly, upsetting our balance and leaving us disoriented and untethered. At times the Spirit leads us to tenderness and vulnerability, leaving us perplexed and in a daze. Only then may we lose ourselves in order to find ourselves.

The apostle Paul writes in Romans 6, "We were buried with Christ through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life."

We are called in baptism to a cruciform life, dying each day to our old selves and rising with Christ. Life is full of "little deaths," including the deaths of our egos, our expectations, and our need to be in charge, impress others, and

stay comfortable. When we're focused on surviving, what are we missing?

There is peace in letting go. When we dropped my son at his dorm for his freshman year of college almost a year ago, there was a sense of unmooring in our household as we shifted into another stage of life. There was a lot of unknowing. It was also a year of promise and excitement as new opportunities presented themselves. In my good moments, I was curious about what was next and found delight in the changes; in my difficult moments, I remembered it's human to struggle with letting go and sensed the presence of the Spirit with me.

When my son returned home for the summer after his freshman year, I was surprised how much our daily patterns had changed over the past year. We'd all grown and embraced new identities.

During the laying on of hands in the baptism service, we thank God for the gifts of baptism. We pray for sustenance through the gifts of the Holy Spirit (Isaiah 11:2): the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever. Nowhere in baptism do we pray for survival, sameness, or comfort. Instead, we welcome wisdom, might, fear, and joy in the Spirit's presence. Transitions will happen, but the gifts of the Holy Spirit are with us.

*Interim Pastor
Jen HackbARTH*

PASTOR OF LIFELONG FAITH FORMATION
THE REV. PETER WESTON MILLER



Pulled Out of The Ditch

When I was growing up, I had a terrible time driving in the snow. Like really bad. I am not sure if it was the roads, old tires, or a mix of distracted driving even before I had my own cell phone.

We lived pretty far out of town on winding roads through the countryside and commuting back and forth for work or school or activities, I probably went into the ditch at least once a winter. Possibly more. I am not even sure how many times.

Thankfully, I often wasn't going very fast and the snow piles on the side of the road served as a fairly soft landing. I would be stuck just enough with a low-clearance vehicle for my wheels to helplessly spin. I really should have had a truck.

But undoubtedly, on almost every single occasion, after a little while I would see the lights of a tractor and a farmer appearing out of nowhere, coming down a long driveway, who would effortlessly pull me out of the ditch.

It was always a bit embarrassing getting pulled out, but also seemed like a way of being in the frozen north, the cab of the tractor warm and letting out steam through the cracked window.

While I did not like country roads in the winter, I did love living in a community that had the tractor warmed up to pull neighbors out of the ditch.

The Merciful Samaritan and the Samaritan God

If there was ever a story for our times, maybe a story for all time, for me it would be the Parable of the Neighborly Samaritan and representing Jesus' extra-mile-love.

When the Samaritan acts as a neighbor to the man left for dead on the side of

the road, he makes it look so easy. Like a farmer with a tractor.

He kneels down. He bandages wounds. He pours out oil and wine—costly acts of healing. He lifts the man onto his own animal and walks beside him. He pays for his care and even leaves a blank check for follow-up costs.

He does all of this not for a friend, not for someone from his community—but for a stranger. Possibly even someone who wouldn't have stopped for him.

And we're left wondering: What made it so easy for him to do good? Why didn't he hesitate? Why didn't he ask if it was worth it? Jesus doesn't say.

Perhaps the Samaritan had known what it felt like to be left behind, discarded, unseen. Maybe his own wounds had opened him to compassion.

Or maybe it wasn't easy at all—but he had practiced mercy long enough that it had become a kind of muscle memory.

No matter the case, that's the kind of church that I crave. That's the community I want to cultivate. That's the sort of society that God dreams, where eternity meets us in the ditch.

As we move through these short days of summer, I wonder what makes it easy for you to

serve? What makes us generous and willing to have the tractor cab warmed up and ready to go when we see someone in trouble?

I also wonder how we will respond and pull together, rather than pull apart, in the cutting of so many civic programs for health care, humanitarian assistance, refugee resettlement, and care for God's creation.

Jesus shows us in the merciful Samaritan that we want to live in a world where it's normal to stop. Where it's expected to care. Where structures of compassion keep people from ending up in the ditch to begin with.

Where it's easy to do good.

Where the tractor is warm and where God never leaves anyone in the ditch.

Pastor Peter





Congregational Council

Our congregational governance calls for an elected council and includes the Interim Pastor, Jen Hackbarth (starting in July) 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:



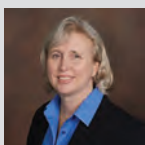
John Hodler
COUNCIL PRESIDENT



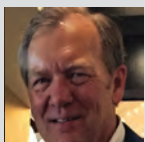
Tina Swanson
COUNCIL VICE PRESIDENT



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/>

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" - **2 Corinthians 5:17**

Greetings Trinity!

THE NEW IS HERE! Just as God brings new life to each of us, God can also breathe new life into a church in transition. Even when things feel uncertain, this is a season full of opportunity - a time to grow, heal, and move forward with purpose. We can trust that God is doing something new and beautiful among us. We had a joyful welcome for Pastor Jen Hackbarth on July 1! After our staff meeting, we gathered for a potluck lunch, which was not only a fun break but also sparked some great conversations. The staff has even decided to plan on a monthly staff potluck lunch! Already, Pastor Jen has brought a calming presence to this time of change. She is listening, observing, and showing a real gift for guiding us through this transition with care and wisdom. As we move forward together, let us remain united in prayer and open to the ways God is moving in and through Trinity. The best is yet to come!

MAY 2025 INCOME VS. EXPENSE

- FYTD General Contributions through June were 1,103,611 (99% of Budget). 2024 YTD Giving was \$1,108,333.
- FYTD Total Income through May - minus Missions- was \$1,496,069 (108.5% of Budget/\$90 in ERC Funds). 2024 Income was \$1,431,413. (\$60K in Council Designated Funds)
- FYTD Expenses through June – minus Missions – were \$1,360,209 (98% of budget). 2024 Expenses were \$1,394,869.
- As of 7/1/25, the FSB Line of Credit balance was **\$0**.

2025 STEWARDSHIP

- Total Pledged: \$1,032,125. Total Contributed through July: \$666,330. Percent Complete: 65%.

JUNE 2025 COMPREHENSIVE CAMPAIGN UPDATE. On July 7, we received a \$74,350.51 non-pledge gift.

- Total Pledged Amount: \$1,853,458.
- Total Contributed (pledge): \$1,631,293 (88% of pledge).
- Total Contributed (pledge/non-pledge): \$1,705,273.

MORTGAGE

As of 7/1/25, the Thrivent mortgage balance was **\$1,696,124.83**. An additional check from the Comprehensive Campaign to principle in June was \$21,017.87.

FACILITIES

The 3rd Street Heritage Chapel Exterior project is nearly complete. Advanced Masonry and Construction is currently working on some fabrication modifications to the east side doors' existing step railings. The railings will then be sand blasted, painted and reinstalled. The new chimney cap is being fabricated and Advanced Masonry is working on a date for a crane truck to lift the cap in place.

SECURITY TASK FORCE

This team was initiated by the Congregational Council to develop a security plan to ensure all individuals' access to the building is controlled. As requested by the Congregational Council, a Safety and Security Policy & Procedure Manual has been drafted and will be presented to the Council for approval at the August Council Meeting. Also, in August, pending approval by the Congregational Council, a video doorbell system will be installed to the 4th Street doors so that we can monitor access to the church building during regular office hours.

WEBSITE UPDATE

We are currently diligently working on the revised Trinity website. Pending any unforeseen challenges, we do plan to launch it in July. Stay tuned.

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

Sarah Kinsman | Parish Administrator

Dear Trinity family,

In reflecting on my 20 years of ministry here at Trinity, and another leadership transition, I have been granted by the pastors and church council a month-long sabbatical of renewal time to press pause, refresh and renew.

The time away will be a renewal of my mind, body, and spirit, so that I can come back after this month with renewed energy and a fresh perspective for the good work of ministering here at Trinity. I plan on lots of down time resting, wandering, reading, creating, riding my bike, and visiting coffee shops. I also have a week planned at a cabin on the north shore (generously offered by a friend of mine) for a solo retreat—unplugged from the rest of the world—to dive deep into the beauty of creation, listen to the waves, walk along the shore and spend uninterrupted time with God.

It will feel funny to be away from all of you—but you will still be close in my heart—and I will be praying for you.

See you in church on August 24!

Much love,
Zanny

TRINITY CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL UPDATE

Pastoral Transition

Welcome Pastor Jen Hackbarth! Pastor Jen will take the next few months to meet Trinity members and staff to learn about Trinity's activities and culture before beginning the Transition Team phase of the pastoral transition process. We invite you to meet and visit with Pastor Jen whenever you have the opportunity!



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



Summer Sunday Worship

Indoor: 8:30 a.m. at Trinity
Outdoor: 10 a.m. at our Drive-in
location in Houlton, WI

Enjoy summer worship at Trinity's Indoor Service or our Hilltop Drive-In Theater in Houlton, WI (1433 Main St. – just 10 mins east of Stillwater). Our summer schedule runs through Labor Day weekend (August 31). For weather cancellations, check our website, Facebook, members app (download at: <https://shelby.ministryone.com/landing/7drB>), or email list (sign up at: <https://trinitylc.org/e-news/email-subscriptions/>).

Special Sundays at the Drive-In!

(Regular worship continues on non-listed Sundays.)

- **August 3** – Jazz Band Sunday: Special musical guests, the Rented Mules Jazz Band, will join our worship.
- **August 10** – Eco-Sunday (EV + Hybrid Car Showcase): Explore eco-friendly vehicles with Sustainable Stillwater and Trinity Earth Keepers.
- **August 17** – Blessing of the Backpacks: As summer ends, we'll bless backpacks and prepare our hearts for the new school year
- **August 24** – Blessing of the Animals: All well-behaved, leashed pets are welcome to receive a special blessing during worship!
- **August 31** – Last Sunday of the Summer Drive-In: Don't miss our final outdoor worship of the season!



VICTORIA ERICKSON JODI GOBLE

THE MILLER'S Daughter

9/12/25, 7:30 PM
URNES RECITAL HALL
ST. OLAF COLLEGE
NORTHFIELD, MN

9/13/25, 7 PM
TRINITY LUTHERAN
STILLWATER, MN

Victoria Erickson is a FY2025 recipient of a Creative Individuals Grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board. This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.

step right this way for the 10th annual

TRINITY



FEST

Celebration

Sunday, Sept. 7

**Join us for Festival Worship
indoors at 10 AM.**

Following the service, the celebration continues outdoors with a Ministry Fair, food catered by Acapulco, Fellowship & Fun, and more!



children & family FAITH FORMATION

Fall Program Registration Opens August 5!

Mark your calendars! Registration for all our exciting fall programming, including Faith Lab, goes LIVE on Tuesday, August 5!

Faith Lab (Ages 4 – Grade 5):

This weekly faith formation meets *Wednesdays, 5:20–6:00 PM* in the Chapel, exploring Bible stories through engaging activities and art. Our full Wednesday evening includes Youth Choir, Community Meal, and Dinner Church.

Faith Lab costs \$50 per child and begins **Wednesday, September 10, running through April 29**. Parents/guardians are asked to attend the first night. We are also seeking volunteers for Faith Lab—reach out to Sarah Olson if you're interested!

[Click here to sign up for Faith Lab](#) and more fall offerings designed for spiritual growth and community connection. We can't wait to see you!

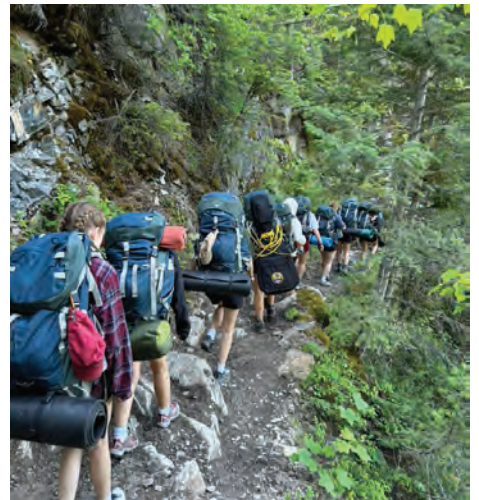
Camp WAPO Fun!

Despite rainy weather, our Trinity kids had an amazing week at Camp WAPO, joyfully exploring the theme "Breathe" and the Holy Spirit's role as advocate, guide, and comforter.



Flathead Lake, Montana Adventure!

Our high schoolers recently returned from an incredible and inspiring trip to Flathead Lake, Montana! They were met with amazing hospitality and delicious food at Flathead, dove into team-building with ropes courses, and experienced the stunning beauty of God's creation while backpacking in the high country. Check out some photos from their unforgettable journey!





TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH earth keepers. Leave it better than you found it

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

Climate Corner T.I.P.s

We need to keep in mind that inconvenience is not an excuse for not taking care of our environment. Yes, sometimes being sustainable and earth friendly takes some effort, but there is no Planet B. Let's all work together to keep it cleaner than we found it for the next generation.

Summer is a great time for plant based meals

As we move into the dog days of Summer, shift your grilling and meals from meat towards plant based alternatives. It's not only healthy for you, but it tastes

great! An example of a super easy and delicious alternative to burgers is the Portobello Mushroom Burger (<https://oohlalaitsevegan.com/grilled-portobello-mushroom-burger/>). The mushroom caps are available at our local grocery stores.

- Place them in a bowl and marinate for 15 minutes in balsamic dressing (feel free to add other spices that you like!)
- You can grill, oven or stovetop cook.
- Cook each side for 5-8 minutes (depending on your source and the heat). You'll know they are done when you push on the stem stump and it's tender.
- Serve with the same ingredients you put on a meat burger.

To find great veggies and fruits for your plant based summer eating, visit a local farmer's market. We have a great one right here in Stillwater! Saturday Mornings! Located at 3rd & Pine Street, Riverview Parking Lot of the Stillwater Veterans Memorial, across from the Historic Courthouse.

Join the Washington County Food Scraps Program-It's FREE to Join!

As you eat more veggies and fruits, you'll have more food scraps. Put them to good use and compost them! Go to www.washingtoncountymn.gov/2969/Food-Scraps-Collection and sign up. The bags come to you for free (if you need a

container, that's free too! Just go pick one up). All you need to do is put your food scraps in the bags and place the bag in your garbage each week. It's THAT easy!

Ditch bottled water and use a reusable water bottle

Switching to a reusable water bottle (<https://projectcleanwater.org/5-reasons-to-opt-for-reusable-water-bottles/>) significantly reduces plastic waste, saves money and is healthier for you because of reduced exposure to chemicals and encourages more frequent hydration. You probably already have a reusable bottle in your home, but if not, now is the perfect time to get one that reflects your personal style and makes a statement about reducing waste and being healthy.

Announcing the Trinity EV Car Show at the Drive-In Service-August 10

Join us for a fun and educational event at the Trinity EV Car Show at the August 10 Drive-In service. Contact Earth Keepers (kdkdesign4@gmail.com) with questions and be on the lookout for additional announcements and details. We hope to see you there!

Where: Drive-In Service August 10
Time:

- 9:30-10—Come early for a preview of EVs as they arrive.
- 10-10:45—Service.
- 10:45-Noon—EV Car Show! Look at EVs up close. Ask questions and learn about EVs. Enjoy treats and fun!



Sunday, August 10 Drive-In Service

Join us for an educational and fun EV car show!

EV Car Show

Stay after the service, grab a snack and take a close look at EVs, ask questions of EV owners, and learn about the environmental and cost saving impacts of driving an EV. If you own an EV, come show it off!





LET'S GO

LET'S GO is seeking a few more team members! Enjoy minimal time commitment, a fun group, and help

plan engaging events for all. Interested? Any team member would love to chat! Contact Randy Propp (co-chair, rapropp56@gmail.com), Sandy Wendt (co-chair, sjwendt46@gmail.com), Jill Longnecker (jnjlony@msn.com), Sandy Weber (stillweber@hotmail.com), or Randy Nelson (randy.lynn.nelson@gmail.com).

Future Events

- *Stillwater Trolley Tour.*
Monday, October 13, 11:00 am
- *Rivertown Inn.*
Sunday, October 26, 3:00 – 6:00 pm
- *Caroling.* Thursday, December 11,
5:00 – 8:00 pm



YogaDevotion Chair/Flow Combo Class

Thursdays 9 – 10 am

In-person and on Zoom

6/26 – 8/14 | \$88 for 8 classes

9/11 – 10/30 | \$88 for 8 classes

Join Sandy, in person at Trinity Stillwater, or virtually from the comfort of your home, for a mat/chair yoga class that incorporates strengthening poses and balancing poses. All are welcome and encouraged to join us!

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 Sue Peterson at toddinsue2@aol.com. Find more information and a link to register at: <https://trinitylc.org/congregational-life/care/yoga/>



Stuff the Bus

Help "Stuff the Bus" for Cimarron students! Trinity supports this community-wide school supply drive, bringing joy and new backpacks to Lake Elmo kids. Your generosity matches their excitement as we together look forward to a new school year!

United Way of Washington County – East is coordinating this year.

Remaining Ways to Volunteer!

(Contact Erin McQuay, 763-222-3988 / www.uwwce.org for most roles):

- **Transferring Backpacks:** Friday, Aug 8, 2 PM @ Oak Park Learning Center (drivers needed!).
- **Distribution & Ice Cream Social:** Monday, Aug 11, 3-6 PM @ Cimarron in Lake Elmo (Contact Jaime Staska: 651-789-4001 or 651-303-0936).

THANKS for your involvement, your gift of supplies, your time, and your heart!

P.S. Cimarron backpacks are now included in our Blessing of the Backpacks service at the drive-in on August 17th!

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE



Abide Readers

ABIDE Readers will begin the season September 22, discussing *The Color of Compromise: The Truth About the American Church's Complicity in Racism* by Jemar Tisby. The book is available in the ABIDE Collection in the Narthex. Everyone is invited. See you in September.

Prayer Requests



We would love to pray for you! If you have a prayer request, please submit via this QR Code



Hospice Kits

Throughout August, Trinity members can contribute to our hospice kit collection. These vital supplies will be assembled into comforting kits during TrinityFest, and then distributed to hospice patients in the Arusha, Tanzania area, as needed from Selian Hospice. Look for the collection baskets in the narthex or by the coffee at the Drive-In to make your meaningful gift.

One hospice kit includes:

- 1 regular size bath towel
(approx. 52" long, new or gently used)
- 1 washcloth
(new or gently used, *NOT* microfiber)
- 1 bath-size bar unscented soap in original package
(such as Dove Unscented for Sensitive Skin)
- 1 toothbrush, in original, individual packaging
- 1 pick-style comb
- 1 nail clipper, larger size preferred
- 6 band-aids, rubber-banded together
- 1 jar or tube of pure petroleum jelly, such as Vaseline
(approx. 4 oz., lid taped)
- 1 pair heavy-duty household gloves
(kitchen type, size medium)
- Pillowcase to protect these supplies while transporting.





When Your Ankle Bone suffers, Does it cause Your Knee Bone to Suffer too? Learning Together 101

Karen Gieseke (she/her)
Pride Justice Team Chair

Having grandkiddos offers moments to recall childhood memories, including the various songs and games woven into one's story, realizing how I often had little or no context for the words or activity. Shifting from kiddo to grandma creates opportunities for a different kind of curiosity about these childhood songs and games-especially before I introduce them to my grandkids.

I recently wondered about the game Operation. Do you remember this game? Participants choose a card, follow the instructions as they assume either the role of Doctor or Specialist, and use a tweezers to carefully remove a plastic object to correct a fictional and sometimes humorous malady (ex: spare ribs or water on the knee) of the patient, nicknamed Cavity Sam. Sam's outlined body rests inside the cardboard game box and has metal trim around openings where the "operation" will occur. The purpose of the game is learning eye-hand coordination and taking turns.

One game malady is titled the "ankle bone connected to the knee bone". This is the only instance where the game's participant does not remove a part from the body but rather connects parts of the body-the ankle to the knee-with a rubber band. I wondered about the origin of this specific connecting activity and learned it comes from an old spiritual song, Dem Bones! Do you know this song?

You can watch a performance of the song in this 1952 Ed Sullivan Show segment! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFQrjXywx6A>

Additionally, I invite you to sing along with me!

*Toe bone connected to the foot bone
Foot bone connected to the heel bone
Heel bone connected to the ankle bone
Ankle bone connected to the leg bone
Leg bone connected to the knee bone*



*Knee bone connected to the thigh bone
Thigh bone connected to the hip bone
Hip bone connected to the back bone
Back bone connected to the shoulder bone
Shoulder bone connected to the neck bone
Neck bone connected to the head bone
Hear the word of the Lord.*

Our body's parts are all connected! Yay! But wait-What? "Hear the word of the Lord"? I don't remember hearing those lyrics when I was young! I thought this song was a science lesson regarding how a body is connected! And now I've learned the lyrics come from a Biblical story that includes "hear the word of the Lord"?

The lyrics for Dem Bones was inspired by Ezekiel 37:1-14. The prophet Ezekiel comes upon a valley of dry bones, and God instructs Ezekiel to tell the people, "I will put my Spirit in you and you will live... and you will know that you have heard my word." God, through Ezekiel, gives a promise of restoration where *all will live and be connected.*

These promised connections are not made with rubber bands. Rather, the connecting occurs because God's spirit is present in God's people and God's words matter. Restoration is given, even when one's bones feel dried up from the world at hand. I had no idea when I played Operation with family and friends that the game had connections to a Bible story!

As often happens, God's word impacts us in different ways, depending on our current life experiences. Learning about God's promise through Ezekiel, the imagery of the human bones and body being connected, and the connection to the Operation game is timely for me. At the July Pride Justice Team meeting, the team reflected on the Bible verse,

If one part [of the body] suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if one part [of the body] is honored, every part rejoices. I Corinthians 12:26



For the Pride Justice team, which is committed to advocacy and ally ship with and for our LGBTQIA+ siblings, stories of suffering are a frequent part of our meetings, ministry, and actions. The team seeks to respond to the knowledge that the Body of Christ has many members-ankle, leg, knee, hip, shoulder and more. All different. All created in God's image. All vital to the Body. All recipients of God's love, grace, spirit, and restoration. Connected not by rubber bands, but by God as Creator, and as neighbors. If someone's bones are dry in the St Croix Valley, especially someone who is part of the LGBTQIA+ community, how can I, you, and we be an advocate and ally for human and spiritual restoration?

The intention of the game Operation is two-fold: to teach eye-hand coordination and to teach how to take turns. When my eyes see injustice for my LGBTQIA+ neighbor, how is my hand — and its coordinating actions — responding? How am I applying the value of taking turns? Micah 6:8 provides direction. "And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

As of July 11, 2025, there are 598 Anti-LGBTQIA+ bills in the U.S. ([ACLU.org](https://www.aclu.org)) What does justice and mercy look like in our neighborhoods, communities, and at Trinity, for our LGBTQIA+ siblings?

Little did I know when I began exploring my childhood game, Operation, I would find so many connections to all parts of my life. Past connected to present. Present connected to future. Head connected to hands. Actions connected to Justice. Love connected to mercy. Walking humbly with our God, as we care for the suffering so that all may rejoice. All of this came to light, because of curiosity about a game and a song. What are you curious about today, and how it is connected to God's people?



Awareness, Relationships, Commitment

Trinity's Racial Justice Ministry Team (RJMT) fosters awareness, relationships, and commitment to learn about the history, culture, and contributions of our BIPOC neighbors. Here's a look at our recent activities and what's coming up:

Recent Activities



Juneteenth, a federal holiday since 2021, commemorates June 19, 1865. On that day, Union General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, announcing that all enslaved people were free—more than two years after the Emancipation Proclamation.

Celebrated since 1866 as the oldest African American holiday, Juneteenth is marked by parades, festivals, food, live music, and educational events, reflecting on the end of slavery and the ongoing struggle for racial equality. In June, some RJMT members attended celebrations in St. Paul's Rondo neighborhood. Perhaps we can organize a celebration in Stillwater next year!



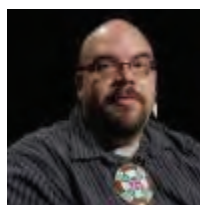
Giants: Art from the Dean Collection of Swizz Beatz and Alicia Keys

Over two dozen Trinity members and friends, led by MIA docents Sara Wagner and Sheila-Marie Untiedt, recently explored the groundbreaking "Giants" exhibition. This first major showcase of the Dean Collection, owned by renowned

musicians Swizz Beatz and Alicia Keys, features nearly 100 significant works by Black diaspora artists.

The exhibition powerfully illuminates the renown and impact of legendary and canon-expanding artists. Preeminent figures like Barkley L. Hendricks, Esther Mahlangu, and Gordon Parks push artistic boundaries, while contemporary artists such as Hank Willis Thomas and Qualeasha Wood use diverse materials to celebrate Blackness and critique society. Works by Deana Lawson, Mickalene Thomas, Amy Serrano, and Titus Kaphar further challenge perceptions and command attention through striking monumentality, embodying the exhibition's "giant" ethos and the Deans' philosophy: "By the artist, for the artist, with the people."

Upcoming Activities



Dakota People - Sacred Sites Tours

Explore Minnesota history from a Native (Dakota) perspective on a Sacred Sites Tour, led by Pastors Jim

Bear Jacobs (Mohican) and Kelly Sherman Conroy (Oglala Lakota). These tours offer a unique opportunity to learn through storytelling, reflection, and experiencing sites vital to the Dakota People.

The tours visit three significant sites located around Bdote (where the Mississippi and Minnesota rivers meet), an area central to Dakota creation stories and rich with historic and contemporary significance. Sites include:

- Fort Snelling State Park
- Dakota Internment Camp (following the Dakota-U.S. War in 1862)
- Pilot Knob Hill (a traditional burial ground)

While 2025 tours are currently full, more tours will be held in 2026. The RJMT will keep you informed of upcoming

dates and times. In the meantime, you can learn more by contacting the Minnesota Council of Churches at www.mnchurches.org/what-we-do/healing-minnesota-stories.



Doctrine of Discovery and the ELCA's Statement of Repudiation. Mark your calendars! On October 12, at 10 AM, Brenda Blackhawk (Ho-Chunk) will speak at Trinity's Adult Forum. She'll discuss the Doctrine of Discovery, a legal and religious concept from the 15th century that justified Christian colonial conquest and advanced the idea of European cultural and religious superiority. This doctrine was incorporated into U.S. law, profoundly impacting Indigenous populations by facilitating land dispossession and exploitation.

Brenda will also highlight the ELCA's Statement of Repudiation of this Doctrine, adopted in 2016. This statement affirms the ELCA's commitment to eliminating the Doctrine from its programs, choosing instead to practice accompaniment with Native peoples, fostering partnerships that mutually enrich Indigenous communities. A 2021 follow-up declaration further confessed the ELCA's devaluation and invisibility of Indigenous people in American society.

Her talk will also cover ongoing efforts to identify tangible ways for congregations to support this stated repudiation.

In Minnesota, as of the 2022 census, the population of 5.7 million is predominantly White at 79.7%. Black or African Americans comprise the largest minority racial group at 6.7%, with the Native population making up 0.9% of the total.

Worship Attendance

Sunday, June 1

In-person 8:30 am	120
Online views/week 8:30 am	385
In-Person Drive In 10 am	194
Cars at the Drive-In 10 am	98

Sunday, June 8

In-person 8:30 am	102
Online views/week 8:30 am	321
In-Person Drive In 10 am	174
Cars at the Drive-In 10 am	85

Sunday, June 15

In-person 8:30 am	86
Online views/week 8:30 am	288
In-Person Drive In 10 am	189
Cars at the Drive-In 10 am	100

Sunday, June 22

In-person 8:30 am	90
Online views/week 8:30 am	272
In-Person Drive In 10 am	108
Cars at the Drive-In 10 am	66

Sunday, June 29

In-person 8:30 am	68
Online views/week 8:30 am	271
In-Person Drive In 10 am	194
Cars at the Drive-In 10 am	103

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

- **Beau David Bjerk**, child of Caitlin and Eli Bjerk

Christian Sympathy

- Sympathy to the family & friends of **Susan Langness**
- Sympathy to the family & friends of **Ed Bieging Jr.**
- Sympathy to the family & friends of **Dean Haynes**
- Sympathy to the family & friends of **Kathy Felsch**
- Sympathy to the family & friends of **Dale Richert**

Summer Office Hours

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

Monday–Thursday
9 a.m.–4 p.m.

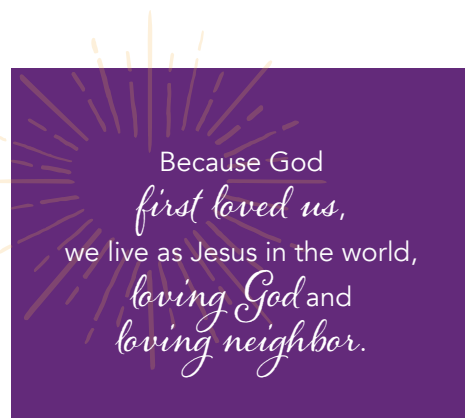
Summer Giving Reminder

Thank you for your generous giving to support Trinity! As members travel in the summer months, we often see a dip in giving.

Please consider making a gift over the summer to ensure that the church's ministries have the necessary support.

You can make a gift online at:
<https://trinitylc.org/giving/>

Have a wonderful summer and thank you for your support of our ministries.



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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Trinity Today is available as a PDF at www.trinitylc.org (click NEWS)

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Grand Opening: “The River Connects Us” Exhibit Opening!

The Trinity Fine Arts Group cordially invites you to a special evening celebrating art and connection. **Join us Saturday, September 6, from 5-7 pm in the Trinity narthex for the opening of “[The River Connects Us](#).”**

This captivating exhibit features the photography of Winona-based Peter Muschler and the poetry of Stillwater’s own Tom Gillaspy (an active member of First Presbyterian Church). It’s an “Ekphrasis” (visual art connected with poetry) journey, depicting the environment and culture along the Mississippi River from its source to its mouth.

The evening will also include a unique performance of “Shade in a Parched Land” for Organ and Percussion by Aaron David Miller, featuring Tom Gillaspy’s poetry. Trinity member and First Presbyterian organist, Dr. Laura Edman, will perform.

Come celebrate the arts at Trinity! Enjoy festive refreshments and a chance to speak with the artist and poet.