

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

Trinity Lutheran Church
Stillwater, Minnesota



TRINITY
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Fiscal year 2024 began September 1, 2023 and ended August 31, 2024.

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Trinity is special. It serves as a safe and loving gathering place. It consists of an intergenerational body of people from all walks of life who embrace all, welcome all, and want to nurture their relationship with God and one another.

In reflection of this past year, there were so many joyful moments we spent together whether it be Sunday worship, drive-in worship, TrinityFEST, Dinner Church, Sunday Faith Forum, Community Palm Sunday Worship, just to name a few. And for that, I am grateful to have shared many of these meaningful experiences with you.

I want to also extend my heartfelt gratitude to our entire Trinity staff team. This is not just a job but a vocational calling by each of them and their loved ones to do God's good work. Please join me in sharing your own uplifting words of gratitude and appreciation in your own ways to: Pastors—Chris Bellefeuille and Peter Weston Miller; Worship & Music—Carol Carver, Sonia Esch, Ashton Kadidlo, Phil Kadidlo, Andrew Kreye, and Clark Weyrauch; Faith Formation—Sarah Olson; Connections & Care—Kim Dahlgren, Zanny Johnson, and Rich Larson; Office & Administrative—Linda Flood, Sarah Kinsman, Courtney Place, Brenda Schumacher, Marilee Tangen, and Jeannie Wendorf; Building & Maintenance—Tom Hosek and Anne Mikesh. It's important to also give special thanks and recognition to Ellen Neseth who departed from her position with Trinity this past fiscal year. We also give thanks and recognition to Monty Lysne

and Eric Trosdahl who departed from their positions on staff in fall 2024. Thank you all for your dedication and many years of service to Trinity.

As I embark on the completion of my tenure on the Congregational Council, it has been such a joy to have served alongside such responsible, caring, and faithful spiritual governance leaders. I want to express my deepest respect and sincere admiration to our Congregational Council members, this past fiscal year, of Vice President Tina Swanson, Treasurer Jill Longnecker, Secretary John Hodler, Kirsten Parker, Bill Bjorum and Pastor Chris Bellefeuille. Pastor Peter Weston Miller and Parish Administrator, Sarah Kinsman are also on council as non-voting, ex officio members.

I am excited for the continued shared work around the impact and outreach of Trinity's Comprehensive Campaign—New & Renewing: the Next 150 Years. What a transformational effort by our faith community to support the campaign but also through its continued stewardship to support Trinity's ministries. We truly are a generous people!

Lastly, I want to say thank you to each one of our many volunteers who spend countless hours of their time and share their many gifts in helping to make Trinity special. The work of our volunteers within all our ministry teams and areas truly embodies our mission and core values as a faithful community in the heart of Stillwater.

I look forward to celebrating God's ongoing work at Trinity

and continuing to grow and learn alongside you within each of our own shared faith journeys. God's love and presence is always with us.

Andrew Thelander
President, Congregational Council
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LEAD PASTOR



Nearing the end of a very eventful eight years at Trinity, I can't believe how fast the time has flown. The most gratifying outcome is how clear you as a congregation have become about how God is calling you to be the body of Christ in the Valley. Your love for God, for each other, and for neighbor grows more apparent with time.

Staff

The staff continue to be dedicated and talented—learning new skills all the time as technology changes and the ministries of the congregation evolve. It keeps life interesting and professionally engaging.

We give thanks for the long and thoughtful service of **Ellen Neseth**, who celebrated her retirement in November 2023. She shepherded our financial well being through some tumultuous times with integrity and commitment.

In the fall of 2024, it was difficult to say goodbye to our Youth Faith Formation Coordinator, **Monty Lysne**, after many years (twice!) of loving, faithful, and highly versatile service to the church. We give thanks for his ministry.

We give thanks for the long years of loving and faithful service of Financial Secretary **Eric Trosdahl**. As we continue to learn and update our financial processes, the position was absorbed into the accounting role. We are grateful that Eric will continue to develop, train, and lead the offering counting team. (And for his many Sundays offering worship hospitality.)

The full office staff meets weekly, as do the administrative staff and Children, Youth & Family team. In addition, the following teams meet monthly: Supervisors, Care Team and Worship Team.

Staff celebrate Fifth Tuesday Funday with fellowship, food, and time to build relationships and enjoy each other. We also

plan regular full staff training and encourage individual staff to pursue training or find peer groups in their areas of ministry. Together we explored the Enneagram with consultant Kim Olstad, worked with a “priority grid” for each office staff member, and are looking forward to de-escalation training before the end of the calendar year.

I have continued (as started in pandemic) to have annual one-on-one meetings with each member of the staff (including those who do not report to me). We also continue the performance evaluation model developed in pandemic, which leads to richer conversations and goal setting for the coming year.

The council and the staff separately participated in retreats, to discover how we are being called into the future. We reviewed three “seasons” of the church: Healing (2017–early 2020), Pandemic (2020–2022), and Building Back (2022–present). On the basis of this reflection, we determined what energy was calling us forward. Council had conversations about the drive-in property, the green space, and youth mental health. Staff spoke of building use partnerships, the green space, revisioning the worship center, and tending to the appearance and welcome of our building.

While every member of staff performs their daily work with care and love, putting the congregation members at the heart of all we do, I want to offer a special thanks this year to Parish Administrator **Sarah Kinsman** and Accounting Coordinator **Brenda Schumacher** for herculean work migrating our accounting system from QuickBooks (desktop) to QuickBooks Online. It took a tremendous amount of time, effort, and frustration—and has made our systems more understandable and transparent.

Summer Book Study/Adult Faith Lab

This summer, a few dozen folks participated in a six-week book study of “The False White Gospel” by Jim Wallis. We added three “watch nights” that included Jim Wallis’ presentation at Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church and the movies “God and Country” and “Bad Faith” (both can be found free online). We welcomed the Rev. Dr. Nancy Koester as our guest facilitator one evening.

Our third weekly worship service, Wednesday Dinner Church is in its third year and growing. We offer faith formation for all ages before and after Dinner Church. I facilitate the Adult Faith Lab. We have explored a host of topics and Bible studies. This fall we turned our attention to civic discipleship, as a continuation of the conversation begun in the summer book study. This conversation will continue after the election, so please join any time.

Comprehensive Campaign

This will be reviewed in more detail elsewhere in this report. Suffice it to say here that the campaign—launched in March 2023—has continued strong, with over 75 percent of the gifts already in the building! We did an additional appeal in March of 2024 for gifts—either divided 70/20/10 or directly to the mortgage—to get our mortgage principal down as far as we could ahead of the interest rate hike in May 2024.

Part of the dream of this campaign was to liberate general operating funds for Outreach Missions as part of our general operating budget. We have not been able to achieve this (yet) but were able to reduce our mortgage payment slightly, despite the rate hike, which has been a significant financial health achievement. And we retain the goal of eventually

having mission largely funded out of general giving.

A special thanks to **Jeff Anderson** who faithfully served as Campaign Resources Coordinator up to this point, and has now stepped back as the work can be absorbed by staff.

Ministry Teams

We try to have a staff person or pastor assigned to each ministry team. I connect to some by virtue of my role as lead pastor (Council, Finance—chaired by **Jill Longnecker**, Stewardship—chaired by **Noah Schumacher**) and some out of interest or availability (Racial Justice—previously chaired by **Rachel Schmeltzer**, now co-chaired by **Gary Cross** and **Ann Wolff**; and Reconciling in Christ—chaired by **Karen Gieseke**). The very best part of ministry team work is seeing the incredible leadership gifts at Trinity. The chairpersons, leadership teams, and members of these groups are talented, committed, and passionate about the various ways in which we live into the gospel as a congregation. **Many, many thanks to every member of these great teams.**

Pastoral Care

It has been a heavy year of loss and funerals, and I am grateful for the partnership of Pastor Peter and Pastor Rich as we cover the pastoral on-call line and share the care of families through funeral ministry. This ministry is further supported by **Dellzie Hodler** and **Lynae Olson** and their incredible team of kitchen volunteers, and **Jeannie Wendorf** in coordinating all the moving parts and payments, and the **Worship/AV staff** in so many ways. Additionally, Faith Community Nurse **Kim Dahlgren** and Connections Coordinator **Zanny Johnson** serve on the Care Team.

Pastors Peter, Rich and I visited senior residences again this year. The sites visited included those where we have multiple members residing: The Lakes, Croixdale, Boutwells, and Oak Park Senior Living.

Pastor Rich continues to provide a monthly service of communion at both Boutwells and Oak Park.

While the number of weddings held at Trinity or at which pastors are invited to officiate continues to decline, it is still a joyous part of our work.* We give thanks for our new Wedding Coordinator **Courtney Place** who has proven an able and fun partner.

* This decline is largely due to the fact that people can be certified online to legally marry folks, so many choose family or friends to officiate.

Partnerships

One of the most exciting things about Trinity is the increasing number of partnerships and partnered activities in which we participate!

- Washington County Emergency Services Housing Building: council member conversations, council meetings, education sessions and newsletter articles. Huge thank you to **John Hodler**, **Jeff Anderson**, and **Roger Funk** for their leadership in this work.
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day Breakfast hosted at Trinity with support from member **Nancy Lyner** (representing the Stillwater Human Rights Commission) and the **Racial Justice Ministry Team**. This is hosted in collaboration with First Presbyterian in Stillwater.
- St. Croix Valley Grief Coalition: Kim Dahlgren, Zanny Johnson and I were part of early conversations as this organization got off the ground. The spring 2024

-continued on next page-

inaugural six-week session was hosted by St. Andrew's Lutheran Church in Mahtomedi. Trinity hosted the fall 2024 session. Huge thanks to Faith Community Nurse **Kim Dahlgren**, custodians **Tom Hosek** and **Anne Mikesch**, and office staff **Linda Flood** and **Jeannie Wendorf** for making this hospitality possible. The grief coalition proved themselves excellent partners.

- St. Croix Valley Ministerial Association: Pastor Peter and I are both active in this great partnership that meets monthly. The annual Palm Sunday service was moved inside this year, but still enjoyed by many. We also learn and train together, share resources, and support one another in times of need. Many of us were able to be on hand for the opening Sunday of the new St. Croix United Church in Bayport in September, to share greetings and blessings from our respective congregations. (This is a union of the former St. Peter's United Church of Christ in Stillwater and People's Congregational in Bayport—and is at home now in Bayport.) This team also met with all of our youth staff last fall and will meet for shared de-escalation training this fall.

Larger Church

Pastor Peter and I both participate in the larger church in various ways. He will describe his interesting work in his report. This work may look like it pulls us “away” from our jobs, but most of it is part and parcel of congregational pastoral ministry. The rest keeps us healthy, supported, and balanced as leaders and human beings.

- East Central Conference Meeting (subset of the Saint Paul Area Synod—SPAS):

Meeting monthly during the school year to learn and pray together. We have explored Christian Nationalism, Mental Health Ministry, Climate Ministry and more. Also gathers each winter with voting members from our congregations for the annual Conference Assemblies where the business of the church is done ahead of the full Synod Assembly, such as electing voting members for churchwide assembly, electing members of synod committees, and offering memorials or resolutions for synod assembly.

- Twice annual ministerium—one for the SPAS and one jointly with both SPAS and MAS.
- Annual Bishop's Theological Conference.
- I participate monthly in a joint synod peer support group, whose primary purpose is supporting us as healthy leaders.
- I served as a chaplain to the Minneapolis Area Synod assembly.
- Pastor Peter, Pastor Rich, and I attended the annual SPAS Assembly with lay voting members. This is akin to a congregational annual meeting at the synodical level, and takes place over two days. Thanks to our 2024 voting members: **Gary Cross**, **Sylvia Cross** (visitor), **Penny Catlin**, **John Hodler**, **Jen Rivera**, **Diane Sauers**, and **Claudia Swendseid**.
- I was part a Luther Seminary Lilly Grant exploring “Compelling Preaching.” This included a beginning and ending retreat, between which we each worked with small groups in our congregations to

explore whether studying the preaching text ahead of time enhanced the experience of the sermon hearer. Thanks to the **Adult Faith Lab** for serving in this roll for several weeks last spring!

- Wrapped up a second round as a mentor to a Second Act Pastor as part of a SPAS Lilly Grant designed to support pastors in various stages of ministry.

The overwhelming spirit of working at Trinity is one of gratitude. Gratitude for an outstanding church council, with thanks to outgoing President **Andrew Thelander**, **Tina Swanson**, **John Hodler**, **Jill Longnecker**, **Bill Bjorum** and **Kirsten Parker**. Your thoughtful discernment, faithful vulnerability, love for God, enthusiasm for Trinity, and enduring support of staff make every day better.

Gratitude for this amazing staff: **Carol Carver**, **Kim Dahlgren**, **Sonia Esch**, **Linda Flood**, **Tom Hosek**, **Zanny Johnson**, **Ash Kadidlo**, **Phil Kadidlo**, **Sarah Kinsman**, **Pastor Rich Larson**, **Anne Mikesch**, **Sarah Olson**, **Brenda Schumacher**, **Marilee Tangen**, **Jeannie Wendorf**, **Clark Weyrauch**, and the best clergy colleague a pastor could ask for: **Pastor Peter Weston Miller**.

Gratitude for a man as powerfully called to the role of pastor spouse as I feel called to pastor, my husband **Ted Olson**. You are a daily gift.

And finally, to you, Trinity. Your courage, curiosity, compassion, faith, and love of neighbor are the living light of God. Thank you for being in the light and love of God who calls us into one!

Pastor Chris Bellefeuille, D.Min.
Lead Pastor
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PASTOR OF LIFELONG FAITH FORMATION

BOTH Heavenly Minded AND Earthly Good

Back in early July 2024, preparing to get ready for a really big funeral of one of our dearest beloveds, it felt like there was no way we were going to finish (or even make presentable) renovating a major audio/visual upgrade in the newly-minted River Room at Trinity.

While this summer project had been a long time in the making (maybe six years) and had been amplified by the creative possibilities of livestreaming/recording during the pandemic, it was one of those things where the deeper we got behind the walls, the number of fixes and workarounds continued to multiply. We kept on saying over and over, “well, we should probably troubleshoot that too while we are here.”

There was still so much to do, taping and mudding, a whole lot of electrical to reconnect, clean-up and fresh paint to apply.

But it had to be ready. And by the grace of God and a whole lot of great help and extra hands, the first coat was dry and one of the TV screens was semi-functional.

It resembled the kind of ministry that I love. A Both/And project. Heavenly minded in the call to hold space for the body of Christ to celebrate and break bread and grieve, as well as good earthly work, to learn what’s behind the walls and open-up new possibilities and build intangible relational bonds. It wasn’t individually overly technical in what needed to be done, but it was adaptive cumulatively in the kind of grit and give and variety skill sets required.

For me, pastoring at Trinity through these seven plus years has often been a great mix of this technical and adaptive service in Christ, very Jesus-ian/Lutheran posture of BOTH in trusting God’s long story of redemption and resurrection AND planting new seeds of hope for the future.

Holding deeply to sacred tradition and drawn faithfully forward into new life and new connections.

Jesus cared for both immediate needs of the physically hungry and also imagined a place for the hungry souls not yet around those first tables.

I feel incredibly blessed and grateful to God for the capacity to accompany this community in so many heavenly minded and earthly good endeavors: AV upgrades and room renovations, policy and advocacy work for the Emergency Housing Services Building, Monthly Mission Minute videos and great guest speakers in Sunday Forum, All-in learning around our commitments to anti-racism and affirming our LGBTQIA+ siblings, witnessing the fruitful generosity of the Comprehensive Campaign and prayerful companions missionally/ecumenically/globally, welcoming newcomers into the abundant waters of God’s love and bidding farewell to our faithful departed.

What I learned most from working behind the walls of the renovated River Room, was being reminded of what is behind the hearts of the people who live and lead with their faith here at Trinity. BOTH heavenly minded AND earthly good.

That same Both/And heart is true of Trinity’s Staff as well. I am

blessed to be around so many tables with each of them, seeing their gifts in action. Their care for the church in all situations and seasons, up front and behind the scenes/walls is truly amazing. Also, a big shout-out to my spouse and children for their unwavering support through all seasons/situations. They have loved and been loved by this community so much.

With you in the Jesus-ian
Both/And Gospel!

Pastor Peter Weston Miller
Pastor of Lifelong Faith Formation
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WORSHIP & MUSIC



We are so blessed with such vibrant music and worship at Trinity. I'm continually inspired by all of our Trinity musicians who so graciously share their God-given gifts of music to enhance our worship services. Along with Carol Carver, Andrew Kreye, Sonia Esch, Phil Kadidlo and Ash Kadidlo— I enthusiastically involve the musicians and tech volunteers of our Trinity family in service and faith development through music and worship. I am so grateful for each of them!

Our musical lives are rooted in relational faith. When our groups come together on a weekly basis, relationships are strengthened with each other and with God. I see this happening as our Youth Choir and Worship Band prepare to lead weekly worship. I experience it as I work with The Trinity Choir and Trinity Brass. The community that we find in our ministry is the connective tissue that brings our faith to life.

Outside of our musical groups, there are several other small groups whose work is worth lifting up. Our Worship Center cleaners gather weekly to tidy our space.



Bread bakers meet “as kneaded” to bake fresh communion bread! Our Worship Arts Committee, lovingly nicknamed “WARTS,” assists in making sure paraments are changed, Christmas trees are set, and Easter gardens are vibrant! The Fine Arts Committee led by Zanny Johnson, develop seasonal art installments in the Narthex. And it is worth mentioning that this summer Kathy Fristad led the charge of helping me to review the entire choral library! She had some help, but it was really her project. Thank you, Kathy!

There is so much joy in our ministry. As we move into 2025 I invite you to join one of our musical or worship groups. If you've thought about singing or playing in one of our groups and never have, know that “All God's People Got a Place in the Choir.” We welcome all levels of ability and experience, and the sense of community found in our music-making will strengthen your faith and nurture your soul. We also have a little fun too!

It is a blessing to be at Trinity Lutheran Church, where the spirit of grace and joy flows endlessly!

Clark Weyrauch
Director of Worship & Music
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“Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances...”

– 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

This verse is one of my favorites and it is so fitting for this year. There has been much to rejoice and give thanks for this year—a comprehensive campaign that has now raised nearly \$1.4 million, the reduction of our mortgage balance to under \$2 million, the line of credit being paid to \$0 for the first time since January 2021 and, of course, meeting the 2023/2024 approved budget. As the 2025 Stewardship theme states... you are a generous people!

Staff

In November 2023, we welcomed our new bookkeeper, Brenda Schumacher. I am so grateful to her for stepping into this critical role on staff. In early 2024, Intuit announced they would no longer support QuickBooks Desktop 2021—pushing up the timeline to migrate from desktop to QuickBooks Online. Working with our accounting firm, Foley Kalseim, Brenda and I spent months preparing for a smooth transition and we learned a lot through the migration process. The online version is also saving us money. Brenda has become such a valued and trusted person on staff here at Trinity!

Facilities

In March 2024, we began the update of the Garden Room—now the River Room. The brick planters along the perimeter of the Garden Room were a tripping hazard—and removing them also created much-needed floor space. New carpet tiles matching the existing carpet were installed the

week after Easter. Additional work was done this summer to update and improve the AV technology (see page 7 for more details). We are grateful to the numerous staff and volunteers who helped with this project!

Mortgage

Last spring we made an appeal to reduce our mortgage balance before the scheduled interest rate adjustment in May 2024. And you responded generously. In February we made an additional payment to principle of \$89,374, in March, \$227,810 and in April, \$123,970 for a total of \$441,154 in mortgage reduction. By the end of May, our mortgage balance was under \$2 million. After some additional work researching other lenders, a decision was made by the Council to remain with Thrivent. Our interest rate with Thrivent increased from 3.5% to 5.85%. With the reduction in our mortgage balance, our monthly mortgage payment decreased from \$15,727 to \$14,289. As of 2024 fiscal year end, our mortgage balance was \$1,922,708.

Stewardship

In May 2024, a decision was made by the Stewardship Team to begin emailing our periodic giving statements and other reminders. Not only is it an eco-friendly solution, but it is also saving Trinity approximately \$2,000 annually in postage and paper costs.

Thank You

A big thank you to the Facilities Team and Helping Hands crew for their continued efforts to repair and maintain Trinity's facilities—electrical, painting, plumbing, planning, construction, outdoor

maintenance, the drive-in property, etc. Each of our volunteers provides invaluable knowledge and expertise of the current and future needs of the “bricks and mortar” church! I also wanted to express my gratitude to Sandy Wendt and our Landscape Team for their efforts to care for our indoor and outdoor plants and gardens. The Green Space looked great this summer!

A special thank you to Noah Schumacher and the Stewardship Team for their commitment, creativity, and hard work on year-round stewardship—as well as our current campaign, “We are a generous people,” which acknowledges the generosity of the people of Trinity. Remember, every gift—no matter the size—is an act of love! We encourage you all to share your gifts and your talents as “acts of love.”

I also want to thank the administrative and facilities staff. I am grateful for their hard work, and faithfulness to upholding the mission and values of Trinity! I appreciate all of their efforts, and I am honored to be on the team with each of them.

Lastly, thank you Trinity for being a generous people. Thank you for your commitment to the work of Jesus Christ through our faith community. There is no way we could have accomplished such great things this year without your steadfast support!

May God continue to bless Trinity richly in 2025 and beyond!

Sarah Kinsman
Parish Administrator
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Facilities Maintenance Team Report

Members of the team are Mark Gieseke, Ron Hagen, Tom Hosek, Sarah Kinsman, Brian Larson, Chuck Newman and Dave Swager.

Projects Completed in 2024

In 2024, the second year of the comprehensive campaign funds became available for deferred maintenance projects identified in the appeal. Projects in each of the five areas listed below are being defined and prioritized for funding. 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.	The project has been delayed due to a lack of qualified bidders. New contractors are submitting bids for work to be completed in 2025.	\$150,000 - 250,000
Lower-level restrooms need upgrades.	Design options are being developed. One goal is to create some all-gender restrooms. Work would begin after the completed east side repairs.	\$150,000
Carpeting and paint in the main offices are 20 years old.	Not started yet.	\$40,000
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.

- The Garden Room was remodeled to remove the gardens. It was renamed the River Room.
- One lower-level restroom was converted to an all-gender restroom.
- A storage container was installed at the Drive-in to provide shelter for equipment and additional storage space.
- An audio-visual equipment closet was added in the River Room along with new monitors.
- 4th Street entrance lighting was replaced.

Priority Projects for 2025

These projects are the next priorities recommended by the Facilities Team.

Item Description	Recommended Action	Estimated Cost in 2025
Historic east side of the church needs masonry repairs.	Complete repairs on the masonry, windows, doors, and trim using campaign funds.	\$150,000 - 250,000
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 projector building at the drive-in needs a new roof.	Remodel the projector building to replace the roof, add a permanent shelter to one side for the refreshment tables, and make other repairs.	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 Lake Area Discovery Center (LADC) to projects that benefit both the church and the school.

Mark Gieseke, Team Member
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CONGREGATIONAL CONNECTIONS & CARE



Connections

I love connections—connections to each other, to our true, beloved selves, and to the God who created and sustains us through the power of the Holy Spirit. And I'm so grateful for the ways in which I get to create, strengthen, and make new connections with the folks here at Trinity!



As a spiritual director with a certification in grief education, I facilitated two grief groups for Trinity members this past year, incorporating spiritual practices with best practices for grief. These small groups were held before and after the larger and newly-formed St. Croix Valley Grief Coalition, extending care for our members in a loving and supported small group setting, and strengthening connections between our own bereaved. It's a joy to see those relationships between members who previously were strangers become trusted friends and a part of the fabric of their healing.



One of the many ministries here that MAJORS in connections is the Caring Friends/Celebrating Seniors ministry. Over 30 Trinity members are paired with other members who are age 80 and above, connecting them through phone calls and cards in the mail. In this way, we maintain and strengthen connections with those who may not be able to attend worship and participate in the life of the church, and they are held in love and care with those regular acts of connection and love.



Other connecting ministries I'm delighted to be the staff liaison for are the Let's Go ministry (recreational and educational events), Trinity Women's Circles (small



groups who gather for Bible study, fellowship and missions), our newly named quilting ministry called Piecemakers (AND their newly acquired permanent space downstairs they dubbed the Quilting Quarters—who create and donate quilts to local and global missions), the Sunshine Ministry (embroidered-by-volunteers dish towels that fund the sending of roses to all our seniors at age 80, 85, 90 and every year after that), the Fine Arts Team (art installations in the Commons), and along with volunteer extraordinaire Sharon Longnecker, the Visitation Ministry (warmly welcoming those who visit Trinity, and following up their visit to Trinity with an email from me and a hand-written note from Pastor Chris), and this fiscal year we welcomed 49 new members to Trinity!

Another annual event that deepens and enriches connections is the Talk & Tea event. On the beautiful Saturday morning of June 1, 40 Trinity women gathered to listen and learn from author Ellie Roscher, who captivated us with her deep knowledge of somatic spiritual practices that invited us toward health and wholeness. She had us up on our feet for body breaks, taught us breathing practices and had us explore pertinent and compassionate questions about our self and body understanding, such as “how am I right now better than ever?”

Our annual fall women's retreat, held on the beautiful campus of Bethel Highlands in Hudson, welcomed Diane Millis, Ph.D., to lead 41 of us through the theme of Our Unfinished Stories: telling our most life-giving stories.

I also coordinate the annual Ministry Fair and food portion of TrinityFEST, inviting our ministries here at Trinity to have representation at the outdoor fair that follows worship. We again had the Shobi's Table food truck (a ministry of the ELCA) provide our delicious meal of burritos.

On Sunday mornings, I look for connections to be made—pulling shy high school Puerto Rico missionaries over to members for sponsorships, lovingly accosting any folks I don't already know with a welcome, checking in on those I know who may be in a life transition or having a hard time, making sure those who are solos—worshiping alone—get warmly greeted and noticed and perhaps, hugged.

These beautiful connections—ways in which God's love is made visible—are the heart of my work here at Trinity. Connecting to God—connecting to others.

Zanny Johnson
Connections Coordinator
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Care

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 and cards are sent. We use masks when needed or requested and apply general safeguards to keep everyone safe. 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
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CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILY



Children & Family Faith Formation

God is good, all the time! All the time, God is good! I say it (a lot), but this phrase continues to resonate deeply as I engage with children and families at Trinity. It serves as a powerful reminder of God's unwavering goodness, which has been evident throughout our year in Children and Family Faith Formation.



This past year, we embraced a vibrant return to weekly Faith Formation on Wednesday evenings. Faith Lab flourished for children ages 4 through Grade 5, focusing on engaging biblical stories and relationship-building. Each session encourages children to hear and reflect on scripture through open-ended questions, creative expression, and interactive activities. It has been heartwarming to witness how the children have grown in their understanding of God's love through the gift of community. God is good!



We also celebrated another year of FAFA (Fellowship and Faith Affinity) Groups. Youth connected with various Trinity members who shared their unique gifts and hobbies. Activities ranged from a Book Club, Woodworking Group to Bible Journaling. These gatherings not only sparked new interests, but also cultivated meaningful intergenerational relationships. God is good!



Monthly Family Faith Events have also been a highlight, bringing families together for fellowship and service. This past year, we hosted a winter hike, Easter Eggstravaganza, Earth Day celebration, and a delightful trip to



the Poplar Hill Dairy & Goat Farm with the LET'S GO! group. These events have strengthened our community bonds and deepened our faith. God is good!

The winter was also bright with many other notable moments, like our third annual winter family retreat at Camp Wapo. Families took a break from their routines to connect with each other and explore various faith practices and get a taste of camp within the comfort of family. Children also presented a powerful Christmas Program titled, Living Word, showcasing their creativity and understanding of the season. Last year also celebrated the completion of the Communion Preparation Class by 11 children and welcomed 14 new saints through baptism into God's community. God is good!

Finally, our Vacation Bible School this past summer was a fantastic success! With the theme Faith on the Waves, children explored Bible stories that helped us understand that when we face the impossible, God meets us with compassion and grace to overcome the seemingly impossible. God is good!

Looking back on the year, I am filled with gratitude for the moments of connection, learning, and growth that have blessed and moved our faith community at Trinity. Each event, each interaction, and each shared experience has been a witness to God's good action in our world. God is good, and I can't wait to see what the next year holds!

Sarah Olson
Children & Family
Faith Formation Coordinator
solson@trinitylc.org

Youth & Family Ministry

BOTH/AND

I offer this interim report as a bit of an addendum to my overall Lifelong Faith Formation Report (renovations and all).

Living the Jesus-ian Both/And Gospel often invites us to hold multiple truths at once. This might be especially apropos of Youth and Family Ministry (adolescence is such a unique time of BOTH heavenly mindfulness AND earthly growth/goodness).

In September 2024, with grief and gratitude, we said farewell to longtime youth staff member Monty Lysne. His faithful presence, adaptability, and leadership in a range of ministries is greatly missed and we wish him well.

Transitions in Children, Youth & Family (CYF) staff are always hard because ministry is always relational. It's both public and personal.

We continue to actively search for a gifted new colleague, with interviews scheduled and lots of great conversations about the right fit to join our team here at Trinity.

In the meantime, thanks be to God, Middle School and High School Ministry remains vibrant coming into the fall program year, with youth fired up about building their faith in the Body of Christ. We have had new youth join small groups in every grade and even be baptized at Dinner Church, an intentionally youth-led Sunday worship service (acolyte included!) and a student-led High School Ministry meeting regularly on Sunday evenings with games, devos, and team-building activities.

On Reformation Sunday, we heard 14 youth Affirm their Baptism and ask for BOTH God's help AND guidance as they mature in this milestone of faith. Pastor Chris and I were able to meet individually with each of these youth and are impressed with the depth of their insight, character, and complex lives.

The 2024 Puerto Rico Mission Trip was another deep investment and outpouring of leadership with 49 servant youth and chaperones. While this experience to Puerto Rico will take a pause until 2026, we are excited about a new Mountain Top Adventure Trip to Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp in Montana that will stretch the faith muscles of our high schoolers and build lasting relationships. More details to come on that soon.

A big shout-out to our youth and parents and key stakeholders who have been instrumental in continuing to shepherd these ministries and adding new opportunities, even as we prepare to welcome an enthusiastic full-time staff person.

We BOTH trust God's leading during this time AND we give thanks for our youth who are shining with the love of Christ right now.

Still with you in the Jesus-ian Both/And Gospel!

Pastor Peter Weston Miller
Pastor of Lifelong Faith Formation
pwestonmiller@trinitylc.org



OUTREACH MISSIONS



For the last several years, the Outreach Missions Team has seriously strategized as to what our team is called to do. We've worked with other members, used the "post-it note" list that we received at the beginning of Trinity's Comprehensive Campaign, and wondered what direction we should head. We've developed a mission statement that we say out loud at each meeting as well as developed an "imperfect house" image that helps us visualize and emphasize our desires.

We have jointly decided, with the help of others, to focus on four areas as we move forward. They are: Housing Insecurity, Refugee Settlement and Inclusion, Global Companions, and Local Companions.

Housing Insecurity

1. Stillwater City Council has approved construction of an Emergency Housing Services Building (EHSB). We will continue our work with Washington County and the EHSB.
2. HSAT (Homeless Strategy & Advocacy Team) is no longer meeting, as their goal to see an EHSB in Washington County has been achieved.
3. Settled, Inc., which builds tiny homes and their communities, will continue to be an avenue that we will pursue. We have a tiny home that Trinity helped purchase and build. We have recently decided to purchase and build a second tiny home (and will be the first church to have sponsored two homes in the metro area). We received a generous gift of around \$25,000 to help us achieve this goal. New areas are being developed and Settled, Inc. has set a goal of building 12 new houses by January 2026.

4. We support MICAHA (Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing) with a \$500 yearly membership and with a team member attending their 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 metro area. Trinity worked with a coalition from First Presbyterian Church, Ascension Episcopal Church, 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 and/or families to our church services, and they provide the message for the day.
3. We want to continue to support refugees in our region. We have opportunities to work with those already in this area, as well as supporting new families. We have recently received a request to work with Syrian refugees and though the timeline was tight we want to further our connections to help as we are able. We will work with refugee resettlement.

Global Companions

1. Tanzania—our focus 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, with an additional church in Ibwange, a neighboring village, 2) providing

Secondary School and College Scholarships for students from Mwatasi and Ibwange. Scholarships are a critical need and are welcomed throughout the year in any amount. Secondary school scholarships average \$350 per student per year. We have been committed to sponsoring about 26 students each year from our partner congregations in Mwatasi and Ibwange, that's close to \$15,000/year and 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 Saint Paul Area Synod, to further our cooperation and relationship. We have 13 people from Trinity visiting Tanzania this Oct. 19 to Nov. 4 to further our connections and partnership.

2. Puerto Rico—we support the Youth as they travel to Puerto Rico. We have considered the possibility of sending adults and families on a similar trip. The finances of Puerto Rico trips with the youth, as well as youth and family events, has been removed from our budget line items.
3. Disaster Relief—both local and global, we have given dollars to those in need through the ELCA Disaster Relief Fund. All of these funds (100%) go to those most in need, whether it be for reasons of war, fire, weather-related issues, or other disasters.
4. Trinity's 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 43 quilts to them. We also sew baby items for Bundles of Love, a Minnesota-based organization. We sew together each Tuesday afternoon.

Local Companions

1. We support local agencies in the Stillwater area—such as Community Thread, Connect Center, Dream of Wild Health Farm (an Indigenous run farm near Hugo, Minnesota), Family Means, Open Hands Midway, Solid Ground, Valley Outreach, and Youth Advantage—through our gifts of time, food and dollars. 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 year we have had a basket to place toiletries and personal care items each Wednesday. This coming year we are planning to work more on getting personal hygiene items for those in need which are given to Valley Outreach each week.
2. Each Christmas we provide gifts for children and grandchildren of those incarcerated. A prisoner will request 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 as each year we have more wanting to give, than we have names received.

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 and in the future, we will show a short video the first Sunday of each month at the beginning of worship to showcase the many ways that the Outreach Missions Team is involved with different organizations. We have made videos on the Piecemakers (our quilters), our Afghani Refugee Resettlement, Community Organizations, Tiny Homes, and our sister congregation in Mwatasi, Tanzania.

We currently have ten members of the Outreach Missions Team, serving three-year terms. 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. We thank Michele Hermansen, Arlyce Melheim and Renae Oswald-Anderson for so faithfully serving on this team since its inception in 2015. Their knowledge and expertise has made for a strong team.

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, Chair
mbvgro@gmail.com

INCLUSION STATEMENT FINAL DRAFT

STATEMENT OF INCLUSION

God's love is all inclusive.

Trinity Lutheran Church joyfully celebrates the wholeness of you.

This community affirms the following statements:

- All people are created in the image of God the Creator and, therefore, all have valuable stories and infinite worth.
- A diversity of thoughts, ideas and voices strengthens lives and faith at every level of involvement and leadership.
- People of all abilities, disabilities, ages, ethnicities, family structures, gender identities, gender expressions, immigration statuses, neurodiversity, political affiliation, races, sexual orientations, socio-economic situations, and more contribute to the whole of this community.
- You are welcome wherever you are on your faith journey – uncertain, undiscovered, rooted – to explore the mysteries of God's creation.
- 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.
- A commitment to inclusion and anti-racism is a core value of this community. Trinity is a justice-seeking community taking steps toward understanding and addressing the racial bias and systemic racism that is around us and within us.
- Sharing the responsibility for learning, listening, and growing together equips us to become more effective and compassionate advocates for all of God's people.

Trinity Lutheran Church invites you to experience a loving God and commits to supporting you in a loving and faithful community.

(10/21/2024)

ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA

154th ANNUAL MEETING OF TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

Stillwater, Minnesota

November 17, 2024, 11:00 a.m.

Meeting Agenda

1. Meeting Called to Order – President Andrew Thelander
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 Inclusion Statement
9. Approval of Minutes of November 19, 2023 Annual Meeting
10. Approval of Minutes of May 5, 2024 Special Meeting
11. Ratification of Constitution Amendment that Increases Trinity's Congregational Council's Voting Membership
12. Approval of ELCA Mandated Model Constitution and Bylaws Amendments
13. Approval of Trinity's Non-mandated Constitution Amendments
14. Approval of Trinity's Amended Bylaws
15. Election of 2025 Council Nominating Committee
16. Report of the 2024 Council Nominating Committee
17. Election of Two (2) Congregational Council Positions
18. Recommended Motion – Nomination of Delegates for Synod Assembly
– May 16-17, 2025
19. Reports from the Congregational Council, Staff and Ministry Teams
20. Report of the Church Treasurer for FY 2024
21. Presentation of Proposed Budget for FY 2025
22. Approval of Proposed Budget for FY 2025
23. Other Business
24. Closing Prayer – Adjournment

MINUTES

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH OF STILLWATER, MINNESOTA

Minutes of the Congregational 153rd Annual Meeting

Held Sunday, November 19, 2023

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 12:00 noon by Congregational Council President Andrew Thelander.

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 17 of the 2023 Annual Report.

5. Introduction and recognition of Congregational Council Members.

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

- ✓ Andrew Thelander, President.
- ✓ Krista Gossai, Vice President.
- ✓ John Hodler, Secretary.
- ✓ Jeff Anderson, Treasurer.
- ✓ Jill Longnecker.
- ✓ Tom Haugrud.
- ✓ 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 Bob Boyd as the Parliamentarian for the annual meeting.

7. Approval of Procedures.

Parliamentarian Bob Boyd 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 Minutes of November 20, 2022, Annual Meeting.

M/S/P to approve the Minutes of the November 20, 2022, Annual Meeting as submitted.

9. Election of 2023 Council Nominating Committee.

The 2023 Council Candidate Nominating Committee consisted of Erica Kanewischer, Carol Straka, and Mel Sullivan. The 2023 Council Nominating Committee recommended the following people to serve as the 2024 Council Nominating Committee:

- ✓ Krista Gossai.
- ✓ Tom Haugrud; and,
- ✓ Carol Straka.

M/S/P to approve the recommended candidates and appoint them as the 2024 Council Nominating Committee.

10. Report of the 2023 Council Nominating Committee.

Andrew Thelander summarized the report of the 2023 Council Nominating Committee, which can be found on page 45 of the Annual Report.

11. Election of Two (2) Congregational Council positions.

For the seats currently held by Krista Gossai and Tom Haugrud, the committee nominated Bill Bjorum and Tina Swanson. 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 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 for the two open congregational council seats.

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

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

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

12. Recommended motion – Nomination of Delegates for Synod Assembly – May 10-11, 2024.
M/S/P to authorize the Congregational Council to elect members of Trinity Lutheran Church to attend the 2023 St. Paul Area Synod Assembly to be held May 10 and 11, 2024.
13. Reports from the Congregational Council, Staff and Ministry Teams.
The reports from the Congregational Council, Staff and Ministry Teams were included in the 2023 Annual Report. Andrew Thelander made an inquiry into whether there were any questions about the reports and there were none.
14. Report of the Church Treasurer for fiscal year 2023.
Jeff Anderson presented the report of the Church Treasurer for the fiscal year ending August 31, 2023. The 2023 Annual Report included a chart with the 2023 fiscal year-end summary comparing the 2023 actual to the 2023 budget. For the fiscal year 2023, Trinity Lutheran Church experienced a deficit of \$127,076 that was mostly offset by the release of \$120,000 of Council Designated Reserves for a net year deficit of \$7,076.
The Congregational Council authorized a financial audit that was completed in October 2023. This replaced the financial review that has been conducted in the past.
Jeff emphasized that the Comprehensive Campaign approved by the Congregation during the 2022 Congregation Annual meeting has successfully reduced Trinity's mortgage balance. The mortgage's interest rate will be reset May 1, 2024. Everyone was encouraged to fulfill their Comprehensive Campaign's 2024 pledges prior to April to minimize the adverse impact of the anticipated interest rate increase.
15. Presentation of Proposed Ministry Budget for fiscal year 2024.
Parish Administrator Sarah Kinsman summarized the proposed budget for the 2024 fiscal year, which was reviewed and 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. A chart for the 2024 fiscal year proposed budget is on page 44 of the Annual Report.
16. Approval of Proposed Ministry Budget for fiscal year 2024.
Upon the conclusion of the Treasurer's report and the presentation of the proposed budget for fiscal year 2024, President Andrew Thelander then sought congregational approval of the proposed budget.
M/S/P to approve and adopt the Proposed Ministry Budget for Fiscal Year 2024 as submitted.
17. Other Business.
Note L – Leases (located on page 35, 2023 Annual Report): to clarify Trinity's ownership, the phrase 'the building and land' will be inserted after the word 'owns' in each of the three paragraphs by the accounting firm that prepared the financial statements.
Lead Pastor Chris Bellefeuille expressed her thanks and gratitude for the congregation's commitment to the Comprehensive Campaign.

She also expressed her thanks and gratitude for the work and commitment of Pastor of Lifelong Faith Formation, Peter Weston Miller, the entire staff of Trinity Lutheran Church, and the Congregation Council.

18. Closing Prayer.

Lead Pastor Chris Bellefeuille provided the closing prayer.

19. Adjournment.

M/S/P the annual meeting will be 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 17, 2023.

MINUTES

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH OF STILLWATER, MINNESOTA

Minutes of the Congregational Special Meeting

Held Sunday, May 5, 2024

Location: Trinity Lutheran Church's Garden Room

1. Meeting Called to Order.

The Special Congregational Meeting of Trinity Lutheran Church of Stillwater, Minnesota ("Trinity Lutheran Church") was called to order at 10:10 AM by Congregational Council President Andrew Thelander.

2. Opening Prayer.

Pastor Peter Miller 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 Special Meeting Agenda.

6. Introduction of Parliamentarian.

Andrew Thelander introduced Dan Wilson as the Parliamentarian for the special meeting.

7. Approval of Procedures.

President Thelander summarized the meeting procedures for the special 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. Recommended motion:

BE IT RESOLVED that Trinity Lutheran Church of Stillwater at its May 5, 2024, special congregational meeting votes to adopt the proposed amendment to Congregation Constitution paragraph C12.01. and C12.02. that adds "*a second called rostered minister (pastor or deacon) of the ELCA*" as a voting member of the Congregation Council. When the proposed Constitution amendment receives the requisite majority vote at the first meeting and the requisite two-thirds affirmative vote at the second meeting of the eligible members present and voting it will be adopted.

M/S/P by majority vote to amend Trinity's constitution per the preceding resolution submitted to the Congregation.

The second vote on the proposed amendment is scheduled for November 17, 2024, at the annual congregational meeting.

9. Closing Prayer.

Lead Pastor Chris Bellefeuille provided the closing prayer.

10. Adjournment.

M/S/P the annual meeting was adjourned at 10:25 AM.

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 17, 2024.

FISCAL YEAR STATISTICS

WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

2023 Christmas Eve:

IN PERSON

11 a.m.	292
2 p.m.	213
4 p.m.	560
9 p.m. (in-person only)	210
TOTAL	1,275

ONLINE VIEWS

11 a.m.	68
2 p.m.	76
4 p.m.	117
TOTAL	261

2024 Easter:

Ash Wednesday

Noon (in person only)	38
7 p.m. IN PERSON	120
7 p.m. ONLINE VIEWS	64

Maundy Thursday (7 p.m.)

IN PERSON	41
ONLINE VIEWS	73

Good Friday

7 p.m. IN PERSON	283
7 p.m. ONLINE VIEWS	314

Easter Sunday

IN PERSON	
7 a.m. (in-person only)	78
9 a.m.	440
11 a.m.	218
TOTAL	736

ONLINE VIEWS

9 a.m.	246
11 a.m.	97
TOTAL	343

Special Services:

TrinityFEST (one service only at 10 a.m. – Sept. 10, 2023)	310
Longest Night (7 p.m. – Dec. 15, 2023)	35 (approx.)
Children's Christmas Program (one service only at 10 a.m. – Dec. 17, 2023)	
Christmas Day 2023 (one service only at 10 a.m.)	75 (approx.)
Lessons & Carols (one online service only at 10 a.m. – Dec. 31, 2023)	183
Drive-Indoors Worship (one service only at 10 a.m. – Feb. 11, 2024)	282
Community Palm Sunday (one service only at 10 a.m. – March 24, 2024)	251
Special Music Worship (one service only at 10 a.m. – April 28, 2024)	298

Average Sunday Worship Attendance:

In person at Trinity	151
Online views	172
Drive-in	175

Average Wednesday Dinner Church Worship Attendance:

In person at Trinity	125 (approx.)
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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).

Fiscal Year 2024 Statistics

Total number of baptized members on

September 1, 2023 _____ 2,618

Number of members received through baptism _____ 14

Number of members received through confirmation _____ 2

Number of members received through transfer/affirmation of faith _____ 50

Number of members removed through death _____ 26

Number of members removed through transfer, request, etc. _____ 91

Total adjusted number of baptized members

on August 31, 2024 _____ 2,567

Non-member funeral services conducted by

Trinity pastors _____ 4

Weddings conducted by Trinity pastors _____ 3

2024 Trinity Congregational Council

Andrew Thelander _____ Council President

Tina Swanson _____ Vice President

John Hodler _____ Secretary

Jill Longnecker _____ Treasurer

Bill Bjorum _____ Council Member

Kirsten Parker _____ Council Member

Trinity Staff as of August 31, 2024

Pastor Chris Bellefeuille, D.Min. _____ Lead Pastor

Carol Carver _____ Organist

Kim Dahlgren, R.N. _____ Faith Community Nurse

Sonia Esch _____ Children's Choir Director

Linda Flood _____ Ministry Support & Registration Coordinator

Thomas Hosek _____ Lead Custodian

Zanny Johnson _____ Connections Coordinator

Ashton Kadidlo _____ Audio Technician

Phil Kadidlo _____ Worship & Technology Coordinator

Sarah Kinsman _____ Parish Administrator

Andrew Kreye _____ Worship Band Leader

Rich Larson _____ Visitation Pastor

Monty Lysne _____ Youth Faith Formation Coordinator

Anne Mikesh _____ Custodian

Courtney Place _____ Wedding Coordinator

Brenda Schumacher _____ Accounting Coordinator

Sarah Olson _____ Children & Family Faith Formation Coordinator

Marilee Tangen _____ Communications Manager

Eric Trosdahl _____ Financial Secretary

Jeannie Wendorf _____ Office Manager

Pastor Peter Weston Miller _____ Pastor of Lifelong Faith Formation

Clark Weyrauch _____ Director of Worship & Music

PASTORAL ACTS

BAPTIZED

Avery Judith Wiegand
Carly Jeanne Carlson
Clementine Christan Sanocki
Cora Kay Lynne Ennen
Wilder Rose Sommer
River Steele Sommer
Aidan Joshua Colstad
Asher Jacob England
Dawson Ray Defiel
Averi Anthony King
Jack Cody McLaughlin
Colette Mae Limberg
Eleanor Grace Lange
Lyla Louise Kroening
TOTAL = 14

CONFIRMED

Faith Ella Brockshus
Mia Eve Canaday
Oliver Si'elet Doe
Madeline Jai Dowling
Klara Sethre Eckman
Annika Elizabeth Gossai
Maxwell Henry Hoff
Ryder Wyatt Johnson
Chloe Elizabeth Knowlan
Julia Anne Nygard
Jackylyn Laura Richert
Alexis Katherine Safe
Allison Rose Slagle
MaryBeth Noelle Swenson
TOTAL = 14
NEW MEMBERS = 2 (bold text)



MARRIED

Geena Stepp & Dylan Brown
Marcia Reding & David Born
Courtney Place & Riley Pelischek
TOTAL = 3

DEATHS/FUNERALS

Larry Robert Day
Edward John Behrman Sr.
Jean Constance Junker
Pamala Marie Watson
Alice Ann Flitter
Greg Jerome Olson
Clinton Allen Shopbell
Dennis Wayne Schmidt
Mary Alice Buckentin
Gary Arthur Hanson
Kevin James Charlsen
James F. Hansen
Barbara Anita George
Khaled M. Slayhi
Charles William Claus
Peggy Sue Miller
John Paul Greenberg
Eric Thomas Dornfeld
Carol Ann Johnson
Sylvia Love McCormack McCallister
Steven Jerald Wolff
Ardith Rose Ness
Donald E. Watson
Michael (Max) Jeffrey Blair
Margaret Forney Prescott
Eugene Arthur Hemner
Linda Ann Rosenbush
Douglas Herbert Johnson
Lois Muriel Peterson
Richard Adam Wetzler
TOTAL = 30
MEMBERS = 26 (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, 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 year 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.

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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.

Prior Period Financial Statements

The August 31, 2023 financial statements were audited by us, and we expressed a qualified opinion on them in our report dated November 8, 2023, but we have not performed any auditing procedures since that date.

Foley Kilsen & Company, LLC

Lake Elmo, MN
November 5, 2024

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TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
Statements of Assets, Liabilities and Net Assets - Modified Cash Basis
August 31, 2024 (unaudited) and 2023 (audited)

	2024	2023
ASSETS		
Cash	\$ 607,901	\$ 581,799
Investments	1,309,726	1,176,248
Prepaid expenses	-	3,905
Deposit	451	451
Property and equipment, net of accumulated depreciation	3,260,592	3,426,797
Total assets	<u>\$ 5,178,670</u>	<u>\$ 5,189,200</u>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Payroll liabilities	\$ 12,542	\$ 18,627
Program deposits	-	5,190
Credit cards	3,202	-
Security deposits	1,288	1,288
Designated mission funds	97,786	111,260
Line of credit	61,135	105,000
Long-term debt	1,922,708	2,655,486
Less debt issuance costs, net	(5,245)	(5,525)
Total liabilities	<u>2,093,416</u>	<u>2,891,326</u>
Net assets:		
Without donor restrictions	1,106,091	718,507
With donor restrictions	1,979,163	1,579,367
Total net assets	<u>3,085,254</u>	<u>2,297,874</u>
Total liabilities and net assets	<u>\$ 5,178,670</u>	<u>\$ 5,189,200</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, 2024 (unaudited) and 2023 (audited)

	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	-	-	-
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
Impairment of design fees	-	-	-
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

	2023		
	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
REVENUE AND SUPPORT:			
Contributions	\$ 1,262,282	\$ 868,103	\$ 2,130,385
Rental income - church property	66,941	-	66,941
Rental income - post office building	24,000	-	24,000
Rental income - Croix Center	60,576	-	60,576
Fees and other payments for program activities	60,554	-	60,554
Interest income	-	50,394	50,394
Government grant - ERC	71,224	-	71,224
Unrealized gain on investment (loss)	-	25,610	25,610
Net assets released from donor restrictions upon expiration of proposed restrictions	634,617	(634,617)	-
Total revenue and support	2,180,194	309,490	2,489,684
EXPENSES:			
Staff salaries and benefits	1,030,951	-	1,030,951
General operating expense	241,159	-	241,159
Building maintenance expense	178,304	-	178,304
Interest expenses and other borrowing costs	109,970	-	109,970
Missions and benevolence	95,365	-	95,365
Children, youth & family ministries	18,304	-	18,304
Communications	2,816	-	2,816
Lifelong learning ministries	2,918	-	2,918
Worship and music	33,592	-	33,592
Mutual care/small groups	24,522	-	24,522
Impairment of design fees	336,085	-	336,085
Depreciation expense	215,350	-	215,350
Total expenses	2,289,336	-	2,289,336
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	(109,142)	309,490	200,348
NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR	827,649	1,269,877	2,097,526
NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR	\$ 718,507	\$ 1,579,367	\$ 2,297,874

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, 2024 (unaudited) and 2023 (audited)

	2024	2023
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:		
Change in net assets	\$ 787,380	\$ 200,348
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash flows from operating activities:		
Depreciation	210,490	215,350
Impairment of design fees	-	336,085
Non-cash interest expense	280	280
Unrealized (gain) loss on investments	(133,478)	(25,610)
Changes in operating assets and liabilities:		
Prepaid expenses	3,905	1,274
Credit cards	3,202	-
Payroll liabilities	(6,085)	7,037
Drive-in escrow	-	(8,600)
Program deposits	(5,190)	1,890
Designated mission funds	(13,474)	(7,286)
Net cash flows from operating activities	<u>847,030</u>	<u>720,768</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:		
Purchase of endowment fund, net	-	(3,533)
Purchases of property and equipment	(44,285)	(13,101)
Net cash flows from investing activities	<u>(44,285)</u>	<u>(16,634)</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES:		
Borrowings on line of credit	277,635	363,500
Payments on line of credit	(321,500)	(336,500)
Payments of debt	(732,778)	(480,533)
Net cash flows from financing activities	<u>(776,643)</u>	<u>(453,533)</u>
Net change in cash	26,102	250,601
CASH		
Balance at beginning of year	<u>581,799</u>	<u>331,198</u>
Balance at end of year	<u>\$ 607,901</u>	<u>\$ 581,799</u>
SUPPLEMENTAL DISCLOSURES OF CASH FLOW INFORMATION		
Cash paid for interest	\$ 114,084	\$ 109,690

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

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
Notes to Financial Statements
For the Years Ended August 31, 2024 (unaudited) and 2023 (audited)

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 \$406,268 and \$367,746 as of August 31, 2024 and 2023, 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, 2024 (unaudited) and 2023 (audited)

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 \$500, 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, 2024. 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 5, 2024, 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 \$61,135 and \$105,000 for the years ending August 31, 2024 and 2023, 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, 2024 (unaudited) and 2023 (audited)

NOTE D – MASTER PLAN DESIGN FEES

In 2014, the Church Council appointed a special task force group to review the Opening Doors campaign and determined it should be discontinued. There is a master plan design fees asset of \$336,085 that resulted from this that the Church still believes hold value and is reviewed annually by an architect. For the year ending August 31, 2023, the Church Council deemed the master plan design fees have no value and should be written off in full.

NOTE E - INVESTMENTS

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

	2024		2023	
	Cost	Fair Value	Cost	Fair Value
Endowment Fund				
Pooled Trust - ELCA	<u>\$ 1,079,547</u>	<u>\$ 1,309,726</u>	<u>\$ 1,079,547</u>	<u>\$ 1,176,248</u>

NOTE F - PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

Property and equipment consists of the following:

	2024	2023	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	1,922,658	1,881,873	5-40 years
Furniture, fixtures and equipment	1,087,501	1,084,001	2-25 years
Computers	163,137	163,137	5 years
Website	7,000	7,000	5 years
Music equipment	520,118	520,118	5-25 years
Vehicles	26,672	26,672	5 years
	<u>9,376,965</u>	<u>9,332,680</u>	
Less accumulated depreciation	<u>(6,116,373)</u>	<u>(5,905,883)</u>	
Total	<u>\$ 3,260,592</u>	<u>\$ 3,426,797</u>	

NOTE G - LONG-TERM DEBT

Long-term debt consists of the following:

	2024	2023
Mortgage bearing interest at 5.85% and 3.50%, payable in monthly principal and interest installments of \$14,289 and \$15,727 as of August 31, 2024 and 2023, respectively. 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.	\$ 1,922,708	\$ 2,655,486
	<u>\$ 1,922,708</u>	<u>\$ 2,655,486</u>

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
Notes to Financial Statements (continued)
For the Years Ended August 31, 2024 (unaudited) and 2023 (audited)

NOTE G - LONG-TERM DEBT (continued)

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

2025	\$ 60,597
2026	64,239
2027	68,099
2028	72,192
2029	76,530
Thereafter	<u>1,581,051</u>
	<u>\$ 1,922,708</u>

Amortization of debt issuance costs (\$280 in 2024 and 2023) are reported in the statements of revenues, expenses and other changes in net assets – modified cash basis as interest expense.

	<u>Aug. 31, 2024</u>	<u>Aug. 31, 2023</u>
Principal amount, less current maturities	\$ 1,922,708	\$ 2,655,486
Less unamortized debt issuance costs	(5,245)	(5,525)
Total long-term debt less unamortized debt issuance costs	<u>\$ 1,917,463</u>	<u>\$ 2,649,961</u>

NOTE H – 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 \$60,705 and \$50,394 in the years ended August 31, 2024 and 2023, respectively.

NOTE I - 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, 2024, retirement contributions for 8 eligible employees were funded at a cost of \$35,486. During the year ended August 31, 2023, retirement contributions for 11 eligible employees were funded at a cost of \$40,106.

NOTE J - PROGRAM SERVICES AND SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES

Program services and supporting activities are summarized below:

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
Program services	\$ 1,513,686	\$ 1,831,469
Management and general	<u>378,421</u>	<u>457,867</u>
Total expenses	<u>\$ 1,892,107</u>	<u>\$ 2,289,336</u>

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
Notes to Financial Statements (continued)
For the Years Ended August 31, 2024 (unaudited) and 2023 (audited)

NOTE K – NET ASSETS WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS

Net assets with donor restrictions at August 31, 2024 and 2023 are available for the following purposes or periods:

	2024	2023
Debt Reduction	\$ 7,493	\$ 705
Building Improvements	19,731	30,739
Other Designated	3,553	12,259
Memorials to be Designated	32,018	32,018
Hymnal Fund	63	63
Organ Fund	641	641
Endowment Funds	1,309,726	1,176,248
New and Renewing	576,907	297,663
Scholarship Fund	8,819	8,819
Roof	7,671	7,671
Fund Raising	7,377	7,377
Capital Funds	5,164	5,164
	<u>\$ 1,979,163</u>	<u>\$ 1,579,367</u>

NOTE L – 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 \$26,000 and \$24,000 for the years ended August 31, 2024 and 2023, respectively.

Lil' Tulips – The Church owns and leases to Lil' Tulips, Incorporated. The lease was renewed for 5 years and will expire April 30, 2025. The lease calls for monthly payments of \$2,536 and increases 3% each year. Rent collected under this lease was \$34,347 and \$31,107 for the years ended August 31, 2024 and 2023, 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 \$29,356 and \$29,469 for the years ended August 31, 2024 and 2023, 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, 2025. The lease calls for monthly payments of \$5,208. Rent collected under this lease was \$57,708 and \$47,500 for the years ended August 31, 2024 and 2023, respectively.

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

2025	\$ 119,420
2026	38,700
2027	8,000
Total	<u>\$ 166,120</u>

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
Notes to Financial Statements (continued)
For the Years Ended August 31, 2024 (unaudited) and 2023 (audited)

NOTE M - LEASE COMMITMENTS

The Church leases copiers. Rental expenses under these leases totaled \$20,874 and \$21,869 for the years ended August 31, 2024 and 2023, 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:

2025	\$	20,784
2026		20,784
2027		20,784
2028		20,784
2029		13,856
Total	\$	<u>96,992</u>

NOTE N – 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, 2024.

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, 2024 (unaudited) and 2023 (audited)

NOTE N – 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, 2024 and 2023 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)
<u>August 31, 2024</u>	<u>Fair Value</u>		
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>
<u>August 31, 2023</u>			
ELCA Fund A	\$ 1,176,248	\$ -	\$ 1,176,248
Long-term debt	2,655,486	2,655,486	-
Total	<u>\$ 3,831,734</u>	<u>\$ 2,655,486</u>	<u>\$ 1,176,248</u>

NOTE O – 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, 2024 (unaudited) and 2023 (audited)

NOTE O – ENDOWMENT (continued)

		<u>Donor Restricted</u>
September 1, 2022	Donor-Restricted Endowment Funds	\$ 1,147,105
	Contributions	3,533
	Unrealized Gain	<u>25,610</u>
August 31, 2023	Endowment Net Assets	\$ <u>1,176,248</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>

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, 2024 (unaudited) and 2023 (audited)

NOTE P – 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.

	2024	2023
Financial assets at year-end	\$ 1,917,627	\$ 1,758,047
Less those unavailable for general expenditures within one year, due to:		
Donor-restricted for endowment funds	1,309,726	1,176,248
Financial assets available to meet cash needs for general expenditures within one year	<u>\$ 607,901</u>	<u>\$ 581,799</u>

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 G as of August 31, 2024 and 2023.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION COMPARISON

As of August 31, 2024

	As of Aug 31, 2024	As of Aug 31, 2023 (PY)
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Bank Accounts		
1000-01 Checking Accounts FSB	183,771	70,239
1000-03 Petty Cash	100	50
1100-01 General Savings FSB	78,789	174,779
1100-02 Debt Reduction Savings FSB	443	705
1100-03 New & Renewing Savings FSB	296,696	289,063
1100-04 Endowment Savings FSB	48,101	47,113
1100-05 ELCA Endowment Fund E271745	742,119	666,488
1100-06 ELCA Endowment Fund E270201	567,606	509,760
Total Bank Accounts	\$ 1,917,626	\$ 1,758,197
Accounts Receivable		
1200-00 Accounts Receivable	0	0
1200-10 FSA Bank Card Deposit	450	450
Total Accounts Receivable	\$ 450	\$ 450
Other Current Assets		
1200-30 Prepaid Expenses	0	3,905
Total Other Current Assets	\$ 0	\$ 3,905
Total Current Assets	\$ 1,918,076	\$ 1,762,552
Fixed Assets		
1300-10 Vehicles - Van	26,672	26,672
1300-20 Furniture & Fixtures	951,279	947,779
1300-30 Music & Choir	646,060	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	1,852,576	1,811,792
1430-00 Mortgage Costs	0	0
1899-99 Accumulated Depreciation	-6,116,373	-5,905,883
Total Fixed Assets	\$ 3,260,592	\$ 3,426,797
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 5,178,668	\$ 5,189,349
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY		
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
2000-00 Accounts Payable	18,679	0
Total Accounts Payable	\$ 18,679	\$ 0
2000-10 Credit Card	3,202	0
Total Credit Cards	\$ 3,202	\$ 0
Other Current Liabilities		
2000-20 Racial Justice Grant	5,972	7,397
2000-30 Lily Sabbatical Grant	0	4,611
2000-40 Council Designated Reserves	11,224	71,224
2100-00 Payroll Liabilities	12,539	18,627
2150-00 Operations Reserve	3,307	2,367
21550 Program Deposits	0	5,190
2160-00 Rent Deposits	1,288	1,288
2200-00 Temporary Restricted/Designated	647,761	373,676
2300-00 Donations Designated to Mission	79,545	91,094
2350-00 Youth/Family Missions	12,269	12,769
2400-00 Endowment Funds - M.M.	48,101	47,113
2500-00 FSB Line of Credit	61,135	105,000
2500-20 Less Debt Issuance Costs, Net	-5,245	-5,424
Total Other Current Liabilities	\$ 877,897	\$ 734,932
Total Current Liabilities	\$ 899,778	\$ 734,932
Long-Term Liabilities		
2600-00 THRIVENT Mortgage	1,922,708	2,655,486
Total Long-Term Liabilities	\$ 1,922,708	\$ 2,655,486
Total Liabilities	\$ 2,822,486	\$ 3,390,418
Equity		
3000-00 Endowment Funds in ELCA Invest.	1,291,292	1,157,815
3500-00 Opening Bal Equity	0	0
3900-00 Retained Earnings	641,067	690,654
Net Revenue	423,822	-49,437
Total Equity	\$ 2,356,182	\$ 1,799,032
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$ 5,178,668	\$ 5,189,450

NOTE: As mentioned in the Gifts Management Report (pg. 9), in consultation with our accounting firm, Foley Kalseim, we migrated our bookkeeping from QuickBooks Desktop to QuickBooks Online in May 2024.

We are working with the pre-existing report formats in QuickBooks Online so the presentation of this year's reports does appear different from the annual financial reports of the past. Thank you.

FISCAL YEAR-END SUMMARY OF INCOME & EXPENSES

September 2023 - August 2024

	FYE 2024 Actual	FYE 2024 Budget	% of Budget
INCOME			
4000-00 OPERATING INCOME	1,308,117	1,299,000	100.70%
4100-00 RESTRICTED INCOME	77,798	114,000	68.24%
4200-00 MISSION INCOME	60,000	60,000	100.00%
4300-00 CAPITAL APPEALS	0	0	0.00%
4400-00 FEE INCOME	57,779	67,000	86.24%
4500-00 RENTAL INCOME	169,617	152,000	111.59%
4800-00 MISC INCOME	60,000	60,000	100.00%
TOTAL OPERATING INCOME	\$ 1,733,310	\$ 1,752,000	98.93%
EXPENSE			
5000-10 SALARIES & BENEFITS	1,007,166	1,016,000	99.13%
5100-00 OFFICE EXPENSES	59,134	60,000	98.56%
5200-00 HUMAN RESOURCES	5,640	7,600	74.21%
5300-00 PROFESSIONAL FEES	24,085	21,500	112.02%
5400-00 FINANCIAL EXPENSES	10,730	9,800	109.48%
5500-00 STEWARDSHIP	4,886	2,000	244.31%
5600-00 COMMUNICATIONS	2,788	5,000	55.76%
5700-00 HOSPITALITY	6,142	6,000	102.37%
5800-00 BENEVOLENCE	39,000	39,000	100.00%
5900-00 PASTORAL EXPENSE	384	500	76.80%
6000-10 MORTGAGE & INTEREST	188,684	204,000	92.49%
6100-00 PROPERTY INSURANCE	34,267	39,000	87.86%
6200-00 PROPERTY TAXES	17,718	22,500	78.75%
6300-10 CHURCH BUILDING	81,017	86,500	93.66%
6300-50 HVAC	5,403	5,000	108.06%
6400-00 UTILITIES	60,405	70,600	85.56%
6500-00 CROIX CENTER	1,863	2,500	74.52%
6600-00 DRIVE-IN	4,944	3,000	164.81%
6700-00 CHURCH VAN	65	500	13.05%
6800-00 COMPREHENSIVE CAMPAIGN	0	0	0.00%
7000-00 LIFE LONG FAITH FORMATION	15,394	11,000	139.94%
7100-00 CHILDREN & FAMILY MINISTRIES	5,209	5,000	104.18%
7200-00 YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRIES	8,849	20,000	44.24%
7200-80 HIGH SCHOOL SERVICE TRIP	0	0	0.00%
7300-00 CARE & CONNECTIONS MINISTRIES	27,675	14,000	197.68%
7500-00 MUSIC & WORSHIP	40,000	34,000	117.65%
8000-00 MISSIONS & OUTREACH	60,000	60,000	100.00%
9000-00 CIRCLES/GROUPS	0	0	0.00%
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSE	\$ 1,711,450	\$ 1,745,000	98.08%
OPERATING SURPLUS (Deficit)	\$ 21,860	\$ 7,000	312.29%

LONG TERM DEBT SUMMARY	2024	2023	Difference
Long Term Debt: Beginning of Fiscal Year	\$ 2,655,486.00	\$ 3,136,046.00	
(Decrease) since Beginning of Fiscal Year	\$ (732,778.00)	\$ (39,714.00)	
Long Term Debt Balance: Fiscal Year End	\$ 1,922,708.00	\$ 3,096,332.00	\$ 1,173,624.00
Line of Credit Balance: Fiscal Year End	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 105,000.00	\$ 45,000.00

TREASURER'S REPORT

It has been a pleasure to report all positive news to the congregation since taking the position as Trinity's Treasurer in February of 2024. Quarterly updates of our long-term debt have shown amazing progress due to your generosity and participation in the Comprehensive Campaign. Our concentrated efforts to reduce our mortgage, maintain facilities and finance our mission efforts have been an awe-inspiring achievement.

In addition, congregation support for our annual giving has remained strong and we have ended our fiscal year (August 31, 2024) in a surplus position of \$21,650 compared to a deficit of \$7,076 in the previous fiscal year. Total contribution income for this year was \$1,308,117. This was a 2.5% increase over the contribution income of \$1,276,252 last year. Our expense year end results also stayed within our projected budget despite unexpected facility repairs and maintenance. This was thanks in part to an unusually mild winter and lower utility costs.

As we look ahead to 2025, the proposed budget reflects an optimistic outlook for continuing the positive momentum we've built over the past year. At the same time, it maintains a conservative and realistic stance regarding our goals and resources. Thank you to the Trinity Financial staff, the Finance Team and the Stewardship Team who have all contributed to the planning and oversight of Trinity's Finances this past year.

Thank you in advance to the Congregation for your continued support for the Church into the next fiscal year.

	2023/2024 Year End
Revenue	
Operating Income (Contributions)	\$1,308,116.65
Restricted Income (Endowments, Memorials, etc.)	\$77,797.76
Mission Income	\$60,000.00
Fee Income	\$57,603.94
Rental Income	\$169,616.85
Misc. Income (Council Designated Funds)	\$60,000.00
Total Revenue	\$1,733,135.20
Expenses	
Salaries & Benefits	\$1,007,166.45
Administrative Expenses (Office, Finance, etc.)	\$113,601.19
Benevolence	\$39,000.00
Mortgage & Interest	\$188,684.25
Facilities Expenses (Maintenance, Utilities, etc.)	\$205,906.69
Life Long Faith Formation	\$15,393.68
Children & Family Ministries	\$5,209.01
Youth & Family Ministries	\$8,848.83
Care & Connections Ministry	\$27,674.68
Music & Worship	\$39,999.62
Missions & Outreach	\$60,000.00
Total Expenditures	\$1,711,484.40
Net	\$21,650.80

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, 2024, the market value of Trinity's Endowment Fund stood at \$1,309,726. Earnings from the fund, distributed back to Trinity in FY 2024, amounted to \$47,113 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.

Jill Longnecker

Treasurer

jeffa409@gmail.com

Sarah Kinsman

Parish Administrator

skinsman@trinitylc.org

COMPREHENSIVE CAMPAIGN

We are approximately halfway through our three-year Comprehensive Campaign entitled New & Renewing: The Next 150 Years. Currently, there are 258 pledges totaling \$1,911,959.

- \$1,466,840 has been given of the pledged amount of \$1,911,959 as of the end of the 2024 fiscal year.
- 77% has been given of the pledged amount.

70% Debt Reduction

The most dramatic impact of the Comprehensive Campaign has been the reduction of Trinity's mortgage balance. As of the end of fiscal year 2024, combined funds from both regular and campaign contributions have reduced our mortgage by \$732,778 for a mortgage balance of \$1,922,708.

20% Deferred Maintenance

In addition to the ongoing work being completed at the Drive-in (stage/concessions), we are currently waiting for estimates on the 3rd Street chapel repair and restoration work.

10% Mission Accompaniment

\$105,146 of comprehensive campaign funds received have been transferred to Trinity Lutheran Church Missions.

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
skinsman@trinitylc.org



FISCAL YEAR 2025 PROPOSED MINISTRY BUDGET

Trinity Lutheran Church of Stillwater Fiscal Year 2025 Proposed Ministry Budget

INCOME		
CONTRIBUTIONS INCOME	\$	1,330,000.00
RESTRICTED INCOME (Endowment, Memorials, etc)	\$	83,000.00
FEE & PAYMENT INCOME	\$	60,000.00
RENTAL INCOME (Croix Center, etc)	\$	170,000.00
COUNCIL DESIGNATED RESERVES RELEASED	\$	12,000.00
MISSION INCOME ***	\$	120,000.00
Total Revenue	\$	1,775,000.00
EXPENSES		
SALARIES & BENEFITS	\$	1,021,500.00
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES (Office, Finance, etc)	\$	105,200.00
BENEVOLENCE	\$	39,000.00
MORTGAGE & INTEREST	\$	173,500.00
FACILITIES EXPENSES (Maintenance, Utilities, etc)	\$	214,000.00
LIFE LONG FAITH FORMATION	\$	17,000.00
CHILDREN & FAMILY MINISTRIES	\$	5,500.00
YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRIES	\$	10,000.00
CARE & CONNECTIONS MINISTRIES	\$	24,000.00
MUSIC & WORSHIP	\$	44,800.00
MISSIONS & OUTREACH ***	\$	120,000.00
Total Expenses	\$	1,774,500.00
Projected Surplus	\$	500.00

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
ANNUAL MEETING
November 17, 2024

Krista Gossai
Tom Haugrud
Carol Straka

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 Andrew Thelander and Kirsten Parker (appointed), the committee nominates Shane Brockshus and Kirsten Parker. Both are eligible to serve two complete terms.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE NOMINATIONS

In addition, the committee recommends the following names as the 2025 Nominating Committee: Andrew Thelander, Krista Gossai and Tom Haugrud.

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)

CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL NOMINEES



Shane Brockshus

My family moved to Lake Elmo in August 2021, so I still feel like we are the “new kids” in ways, in the community and at Trinity.

My wife Jessica and I lived in and first met here in Washington County before moving to Oregon,

where we began life and a family together. We are blessed to have Mya (18), Faith (15) and John (10), plus our dog Annie, on this journey of life with us. We spent 20 years in Oregon before coming back to Minnesota as I took a new position with my employer.

My wife and I both grew up in the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, and have been members of ELCA churches since we were married. In the ELCA, I have appreciated an open mind, open invitation for all to worship, to commune, and to grow in our faith. It has been a great environment in which to learn, worship, and raise our children. At Trinity, I have enjoyed how welcoming and active the church is, the strength of our pastoral team, the musical gifts of the church, and diverse lay leadership. I have been both educated and challenged in my time at Trinity—something I believe is important to growth in life and at a church. I will say there are plenty of people that I am yet to get to know here.

I have previously been a member of church councils in Oregon at Joyful Servant Lutheran Church in Newberg and Emanuel Lutheran Church in Cornelius. Here at Trinity, I have been a youth leader on the two most recent mission trips to Puerto Rico—wonderful experiences.

I currently serve as Chief Operating Officer for Bailey Nurseries, a family-owned wholesale nursery based in Newport, MN. I have enjoyed working in our fields, growing plants and growing people, and now having the opportunity to help lead the business. Outside of work, I enjoy working in the yard, home improvement projects, time with my family outdoors, and training in self-defense.

I believe that the opportunity of an open door should generally be entered. I was honored to be asked to potentially serve on our council and should the congregation want me to join, I would see this as a way to give back and offer my skills to the best of my ability.



Kirsten Parker

When my family and I joined Trinity Lutheran Church, we were seeking a community rooted in openness, compassion, and service. We found exactly that, and

more. Trinity has been a cornerstone in our family's faith journey, helping us build connections and grow spiritually.

My daughters, Eva and Miranda, and I moved to Stillwater after the loss of my first husband, finding healing in this community. Rob and I married in 2016, and our family grew with the addition of our son, James. Our involvement at Trinity—from James' baptism to mission trips that shaped my daughters' faith—has been incredibly meaningful.

Chaperoning Trinity's mission trip to Puerto Rico in 2022 and serving on the leadership team for the 2024 trip deepened my belief in involving all members in faith-building activities. I also enjoy serving as an assisting worship leader and participating in women's events and the summer book study, all of which have enriched my spiritual life.

Since becoming an interim council member in April 2024, I've worked to foster an inclusive environment, engage members, and align our mission with long-term goals. I bring more than 20 years of experience in strategic communication and business advisory, now running my own consulting practice and teaching at the University of Minnesota. Locally, I coach the Greater Stillwater Chamber of Commerce's Leadership in the Valley program, empowering others to strengthen our community.

Rob and I are dedicated to positively impacting Stillwater—he is currently running for the school board, and we share a passion for community service. Outside of work, I'm an avid reader and gardener, and we enjoy spending time in Colorado when we can.

Serving as an interim council member has been an honor, and I'm excited to continue supporting Trinity's mission as we grow in faith, love, and service.

SAMPLE BALLOTS

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH | Stillwater, Minnesota

November 17, 2024

NOMINEES FOR CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

BALLOT

VOTE FOR TWO (2) – 3-year terms

☐ Kirsten Parker

☐ Shane Brockshus

Nominated from the floor:

☐ _____

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH | Stillwater, Minnesota

November 17, 2024

Trinity Constitution and Bylaws Amendments

BALLOT

Motion #1: Constitution Amendment – Increase voting membership of Trinity Congregational Council.

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.

☐ Yes, approve.

No, do not approve. ☐

Motion #2: ELCA Mandated Model Constitution and Bylaws language amendments.

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 Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

☐ Yes, approve.

No, do not approve. ☐

Motion #3: Trinity non-mandated Constitution amendments.

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

☐ Yes, approve.

No, do not approve. ☐

Motion #4: Trinity amended Bylaws.

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

☐ Yes, approve.

No, do not approve. ☐



TRINITY

LUTHERAN CHURCH

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