

# *trinity* TODAY

BECAUSE GOD FIRST LOVED US, WE LIVE AS JESUS IN THE WORLD.

AUGUST 2026

VOLUME 51 ISSUE 8





## interim lead pastor *jen hackbarth*

Buenos Dias from Puerto Rico!

I write this article as the Trinity group wraps up a week of service in San Juan and gets ready to head home. 25 youth, 2 young adult leaders, and 6 adults traveled, served, and connected with one another and the people of Puerto Rico. For some, this trip was a return trip to Puerto Rico after serving on previous Trinity trips. For others, including me, it was a brand-new experience. And what a joyous, challenging, inspiring, moving experience!

We arrived in Puerto Rico on Saturday and settled into a church in San Juan, where we stayed for the week. Our trip leaders from Praying Pelican Ministries led and worked alongside us all week, including David, who has hosted Trinity groups several times! We attended a beautiful church service on Sunday morning, then planned our week of service projects. For the next several days, we helped lead an "elderly VBS" in the mornings at the church. In the afternoons, we led a children's VBS at a San Juan low-income apartment housing complex. The group was split in two, and those who weren't at a VBS painted either at the church or at a local elderly care facility.

The elderly VBS theme was "Echoes of Wisdom." It began with devotions and teaching time from the church's pastor and a local seminary professor, then the Trinity group led crafts and activities. We made cards for the VBS kids, did water coloring, shared information about cyber security, crocheted crosses, and led a session of chair yoga.

The most moving moments were when our kids and the attendees shared conversation about wisdom, life and faith. It was a joy to talk across generations and cultures and learn from one another.

The kids' VBS was full of energy. When our vans pulled up to the apartment complex, kids were waiting for us and ready to have fun. We talked about brave characters in the Bible, did crafts, and played games. By the end of the afternoons, we usually ended in a dance party. I couldn't decide who was more enthusiastic about dancing—the Trinity kids or the VBS kids! All of them impressed me with their stamina.

The group also made quick work of the painting projects. The church looked beautiful on the inside with a new coat of white paint, and the people at the care facility expressed their gratitude for our hard work all week. Despite some stifling days, the painting got done!

At the end of the week, we enjoyed a drive through the local rainforest and mountain called El Yunque, then we went to a gorgeous beach to swim. On Friday, we spent time in Old San Juan, then relaxed at our hotel overnight.

All week, everyone commented on the positivity and respectfulness of the Trinity kids. I was also impressed with the caring adult and young adult leaders who were willing to step in and help with whatever was needed, and who displayed flexibility and good will through constantly changing plans and a different culture. They truly connected with the kids and walked beside them the whole week, whether it was a fun outing or work project.

I leave you with a couple of quotes from the kids:

*"I really liked trying to communicate with other people. It was fun to see them try to connect with us and the ways we could communicate without words."*

*"I really liked the elderly VBS. Connecting with people of different ages was great. I loved hearing about their lives."*

The Puerto Rico group will lead worship on Sunday, August 2 at both services. I look forward to hearing their reflections! Thank you all for your support and prayers as we experienced God's love and grew in faith with the people of Puerto Rico.

*Pastor Jen*







## interim pastor of lifelong faith formation

### *kristine stedje*

What is a prophet? My shorthand definition is....a prophet is one who speaks God's truth to God's people. Not "my" truth, but God's truth. As we begin planning our autumn programming, on Wednesday nights we will be discovering what God's prophets are up to! How are they speaking truth to God's people in their time, and in their place. How are they speaking to us now?

The Confirmation students will be studying Miriam, Moses' sister, who encouraged God's people as they were being pursued by the Egyptians through the Red Sea. Miriam is defined as a prophet (you can check her out here, Exodus 15:20). She kept the Israelites focused as they passed through the wall of water out of Egypt, singing and dancing their way into freedom from slavery. She spoke truth to God's people.

And then there is Nathan. King David, of Goliath fame, saw a woman and fell in love with her. David wanted her so much that he sent her husband into

battle where he was killed. Prophet Nathan, directed by God, was sent to confront King David, to speak God's truth to him. Prophet Nathan chose to tell David a story, a parable about a rich man who took a poor man's little lamb. The lamb was taken by the rich man to prepare a meal, and a tasty meal it was.

Unaware that the story was really about David, Prophet Nathan used the story to reflect David's own actions. When former shepherd David learned what happened in the story, he became angry and declared the rich man must die! Prophet Nathan declared to David, "you are the man." Nathan spoke God's truth to God's servant, David, and David repented.

Or, how about Jonah? I like Jonah. At first, he does the right thing. He sets out for Ninevah to tell God's people to repent. Speaking God's truth to God's people. When he decides, he doesn't want to do that, he gets in a boat which

goes in the opposite direction. That's when the trouble starts. Soon there is a storm, then a whale, then a man overboard, then a dark and terrifying ride (see insert!) and finally a spitting out! All so that eventually Jonah walks the streets of Ninevah calling the people to repent, and lo and behold, all the people repent! Happy ending...but not for Jonah, he goes away and pouts (but that's another story!).

Prophets speak God's truth to God's people when they are under a burden of distress. When they are anxious and fearing the future. When they can't find the words to express their sorrow, their pain. When it feels like they are in the belly of a whale, in the dark, with only a small light to illumine the way.

We are bombarded with news feeds, images and words describing the world we live in today. Where is the truth, we wonder? You will find it in scripture. You will hear it in the words of the prophets. You will speak it when you stand up for the poor and the meek, the outcast and the lonely. Speaking God's truth to God's people makes you a prophet.

Go prophecy!

*Pastor Kristine*



"Commit your way to the Lord;  
trust in him, and he will act."  
- Psalm 37:5

### Greeting Trinity!

Historically, this season is known as the "*dog days of summer*," named for **Sirius, the Dog Star**, which rises alongside the sun during the hottest weeks of the year. Sirius is the brightest star in the night sky, and that image serves as a fitting reminder of Trinity's calling to be a bright light in the St. Croix Valley, reflecting Christ's love through worship, education, service, and outreach. Because of your faithful generosity, Trinity continues to shine as a beacon of hope and faith in our community.

While we are experiencing the typical summer slowdown in giving, our financial position, especially with the mortgage now paid in full, is significantly stronger than it was a year ago. Even so, the summer months can create cash flow challenges as many families travel and settle into a different rhythm. We encourage you to consider online giving as a simple way to sustain the ministries and mission of Trinity through these leaner months. As we approach the close of the fiscal year (August 31), we invite you to prayerfully consider helping us finish strong by making an additional year-end gift, if you are able. Every gift, large or small, helps ensure that Trinity remains a bright and vibrant witness to Christ in our community and beyond.

Together, we rely on the faithful, courageous, and generous commitment of our congregation to keep Christ's work thriving.

Thank you for your partnership in ministry. We simply could not accomplish all that God is doing through Trinity without your support. To make a fiscal year-end gift, visit Giving - Trinity Lutheran Church ([trinitylc.org](http://trinitylc.org)).

### JUNE 2026 FYTD INCOME VS. EXPENSE.

**Total Contributions:** \$1,124,351 (101.5% of budget) compared to \$1,103,316 last year.

**Total Income** (excluding Missions and Anonymous Gift): \$1,366,918 (100% of budget), compared to \$1,495,228 last year.

**Total Expenses** (excluding Missions): \$1,345,727 (98.5% of budget), compared to \$1,350,320 last year.

**Operating Reserves:** \$109,961. In addition, \$100,000 was transferred from First State Bank into a 6-month CD at Lake Elmo Bank to earn a stronger return on reserve funds.

**FACILITIES.** Thanks to the additional funds made available through mortgage savings in our current fiscal year, the Council approved several important – and some unexpected – projects. These funds will be used to:

- Repair a leak in the Sanctuary's air handling unit.
- Replace the cooling unit serving the Narthex - which was 26 years old – and just recently failed.
- Purchase and install a new dishwasher, on-demand water heater, and water softener.
- Hardwire combination smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in the lower level of the building.
- Purchase new Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) as part of our commitment to the safety and well-being of our congregation and community.

We are grateful for the opportunity to address these facility needs while continuing to invest in the safety, comfort, and care of all who use our building.

**BUDGET.** Work on the preliminary 2026/2027 budget is well underway, with a continued focus on responsible stewardship and thoughtful allocation of church resources. As we reviewed operating expenses, opportunities to reduce costs were identified to include:

- A new copier contract that reduces administrative costs while maintaining service levels.
- A new employee health insurance provider that offers comparable coverage while helping contain rising healthcare expenses.

These proactive decisions support our commitment to good financial management and help ensure that resources remain focused on Trinity's ministry and mission priorities.

As we look ahead to the next fiscal year, we extend our sincere thanks to the congregation for your faithful and generous giving. Your ongoing support provides the financial strength that allows us to care for our church home, respond to unexpected needs, and continue the work and mission of our ministry with confidence and gratitude!



**Sarah Kinsman,  
Parish Administrator**





## Special Service Schedule

at St. Croix Hilltop Drive-In:  
1433 Main Street, Houlton, WI 54082  
Aug 2 | Puerto Rico Celebration Sunday  
Aug 9 | EV & Hybrid Car Showcase  
Aug 16 | Blessing of the Backpacks  
Aug 23 | Blessing of the Animals  
Sep 6 | Last Sunday of the Summer  
Sep 13 | TrinityFEST back at Trinity



We give thanks to Andrew Kreye for three years of faithful leadership and service! While Andrew is stepping down from his leadership role, we are grateful that he will continue sharing his musical gifts in worship!

## Trinity Lutheran Church is hiring a Contemporary Worship Leader!

This position will lead Trinity's contemporary band and provide music planning for Trinity's Contemporary Sunday morning worship. Please help us spread the word and keep this search in your prayers. Interested candidates may submit a resume and cover letter to Clark Weyrauch, Director of Worship & Music. The full job description can be found here: <https://www.trinitylc.org/employment-opportunities>

## CALL COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Call Committee continues to make steady progress in the call process and remains committed to a thoughtful, prayerful, and thorough search for our next lead pastor. Since our last update, the committee has continued to meet weekly to advance the work of the call process. We successfully completed the congregation's Open Nomination process and appreciate everyone who participated.

The committee has also developed a comprehensive set of first-round interview questions that are intentionally aligned with our Ministry Site Profile (MSP). These questions are designed to help us discern each candidate's faith journey, gifts, experiences, leadership style, and vision in relation to the ministry priorities identified by our congregation.

We have continued our conversations with Deacon Krista Lind as we prepare for the presentation of candidates and the upcoming interview process.

Our search is nationwide, allowing us to consider qualified candidates from across the country. To gain a "first blush" of the initial candidates, we will conduct virtual interviews using a consistent approach and the same set of questions for each.

**We remain grateful for the congregation's continued prayers and support.**

## AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM THE CHURCH CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

The Trinity Church Council has received three proposals from businesses that want to purchase small portions of the drive-in property. Two proposals were regarding small portions of the south edge of the property. After considering the impact on our use of the property, these were declined by the committee convened to review the proposals, and the Church Council agreed to decline them.

A third proposal was to purchase a bit more than one quarter acre in the center of the east edge of the drive-in. Specifically, this is for a small bump out in the center of the east edge of the property, east and behind the shipping container, well and cement slab, which will remain Trinity's property. The committee and Council agreed this sale would have minimal impact on our use of the rest of the drive-in and agreed to present the proposal to the congregation at the annual meeting in November.

### **Fall Faith Formation Registration Opens August 10!**

Mark your calendars! Registration for Trinity's fall faith formation opportunities, including Faith Lab (ages 4 through Grade 5) and Confirmation (Grades 6–8), opens August 10.

As summer begins to wind down, we're looking forward to another year of community, connection, and growing in faith together. Families can watch for additional details about schedules, program offerings, and registration information in the coming weeks. Feeling the Spirit's nudge to volunteer this year? Please contact Sarah Olson for more information about serving with Faith Lab or Dana Kruse to learn about opportunities with Confirmation. Leader training will take place on the evening of Wednesday, September 9.

We can't wait to welcome everyone back this fall!

### **Save the Date for a Blessing of Backpacks on Sunday, August 16!**

Calling students of all ages, teachers, and school support staff! Join us for 10:00 a.m. worship at the Drive In (1433 Main St., Houlton, WI 54082) and receive a special blessing as a new school year begins. Together, we'll celebrate the gifts you carry into classrooms, hallways, offices, and learning spaces, and send you into the year ahead with the reminder that God's love goes before you, beside you, and with you every step of the way.



### **Help Refresh Our Worship Bags!**

At Trinity, worship is for everyone. Our Worship Bags are one small but meaningful way we help children and other worshippers engage comfortably in worship through quiet activities and sensory supports.

After years of joyful use, many of our supplies are ready for replacement. If you'd like to support this refresh, consider purchasing an item from our [Amazon Wish List](#) (you may also email Sarah Olson at [solson@trinitylc.org](mailto:solson@trinitylc.org) for this list). Every donation—whether finger puppets, blocks, fidgets, or other supplies—helps create a welcoming space where people of all ages and abilities can fully participate in worship.

### **Donation Deadline: August 31**

Items may be shipped directly to Trinity (Attn: Sarah Olson) or dropped off with Sarah Olson at church by August 31. Thank you for helping us continue to create a welcoming worship experience where everyone belongs!

Link:

[https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/J5IHISC0I6PO?ref\\_=wl\\_share](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/J5IHISC0I6PO?ref_=wl_share)



### **Playground Happy Hour | AUGUST 11!**

Play, sip, connect! Parents, this one's for you, too. Join us for our final Playground Happy Hour at Trinity this summer (August 11)! Families are invited to gather from 5 PM–6 PM for casual connection and play on Trinity's wonderful outdoor playground.



Children can run, climb, and make new friends while grown-ups relax, chat, and enjoy a refreshing beverage. It's an easy, joy-filled way to connect with other families before heading home (or off to dinner!) for the evening. Come as you are — no registration required. All ages welcome, and friends are too! This event happens rain or shine with Trinity's Gym as our weather backup.



**Let's Go is Trinity Lutheran Church's social activities group in Stillwater. Our mission is to plan a wide variety of events and outings that appeal to members, friends, and the broader church community.**

Over the years, we've enjoyed everything from caroling at nursing homes and attending concerts to hosting progressive dinners and participating in art lessons. More recently, we toured Saint John's Abbey and University and visited the beautiful Munsinger and Clemens Gardens in St. Cloud. We've also gathered informally at Rustic Roots Winery for music, fellowship, and good conversation. We strive to offer at least one activity each month and are always looking for new ideas and suggestions. Information about upcoming events can be found in the monthly Trinity Today, church bulletins, Friday email updates, and on the church website. Come join us and see where Let's Go takes you next!

**The next Let's Go adventure is:** Franconia Sculpture Garden followed by Potluck at Randy and Randy's home. Sunday, August 2, 3 PM. Enjoy the unique sculptures! RSVP to Randy Propp, text [651-238 5153](tel:651-238-5153) for more information.



**Summer Reading Suggestion:** *Love Thy Neighbor: A Muslim Doctor's Struggle for Home in Rural America* by Ayaz Virji

"Love thy neighbor." Where have we heard these words? In Sunday School, in Confirmation—specifically Luther's explanation of the Commandments, in Jesus' parable about the Good Samaritan? And what does love mean? The ELCA has produced numerous resources and official teachings that define how this love of our neighbors is put into practice.

This short, very readable book, is the powerful, true story that takes place not far from here. Dr. Virji left a high-end medical center on the East Cost because he no longer wanted to practice "turnstyle medicine." He wanted to practice "dignified medicine." Dawson MN was the place where his career became his calling.

The only Muslim family in the tiny farming community, Dr. Virji's family overcame the initial period of adjustment and culture shock and comfortably settled in. That is, until three years later, after the 2016 election, when anti-Muslim hate speech "blew across the country like a wildfire." Instead of leaving for Dubai as they wanted to do, the local pastor convinced Dr. Virji to speak the truth about his faith at a town hall style meeting.

Dr. Virji's parents were immigrants to the U.S. He went to a Lutheran school from

LOVE THY  
NEIGHBOR

A MUSLIM  
DOCTOR'S  
STRUGGLE  
FOR HOME  
IN RURAL  
AMERICA

AYAZ VIRJI WITH ALAN EISENSTOCK

pre-K to 10th grade. He went to a Catholic University, Georgetown, for undergrad and medical school. He was "humbled by the intellect and scholarship among the Jesuits and the Catholics." He also took classes at the Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding and later continued to study about other religions in his spare time. He also told his audience:

"Christianity is a religion of love, of kindness, of peace, of justice. I am very proud and happy to have gone to Christian schools. It was my honor to do so...We can't be scared of each other. We need to join together and build a foundation of love and respect."

Throughout the book, Dr. Virji corrects mis-information and misunderstandings about Islam. He writes about the prejudice and push-back that he experienced.

I found this book to be very informative, interesting, and important. It is available in the ABIDE Collection in the Narthex. Check it out. – **Ann Wolff**

## ELCA Commitment to Equitable Education

It's that time of year when many are thinking, "back to school." We buy school supplies for our kids and grandkids. We join in local and international "back pack" drives for families that need our help.



From Stillwater Area School District Facebook Page

The Lutheran Church is rooted in education. Martin Luther nailed 95 theses to a university door. He translated the bible into German, then only available in Latin, so common people could read it. At a time when education was limited to the wealthy or religious professionals, Lutheran reformers claimed that learning is a baptismal vocation meant to empower each person's God-given gifts and serve the common good. Consequently, Lutherans advocated for access to schooling for all – a radical idea at the time.

The ELCA continues to advocate for equitable access to education through its 2007 Social Statement, "[Our Calling in Education](#)." This statement supports equitable, sufficient, and effective funding of public schools, emphasizing that every child deserves access to a high-quality education regardless of social, economic and ethnic backgrounds, immigration status and disabilities.

The statement observes, "Because all are created in God's image, all have equal worth and dignity and should be treated accordingly. This belief stands behind our strong support...that all young people have equitable access to high-quality schools." The statement also highlights the existence of "...glaring inequities in this

country's schooling." And that "This reality is most pervasive in poor communities, especially where poverty is intertwined with a history of racism and discrimination."

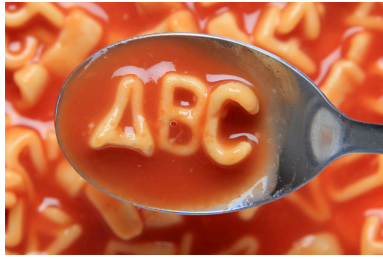
Consequently, the statement commits the ELCA to focus public attention on these inequities "...and to support public policies that give top priority to children and youth who do not have equitable access to good education, both in large cities and rural areas, and on American Indian reservations and in Alaska Native communities."

Moreover, the ELCA has its own colleges, schools, and learning centers – attended by many Trinity members and staff. These institutions are guided by a *Diversity and Justice Statement*(2023) that reads in part, "...we are grounded in the scriptural truth that we are all created good and in the image of God; As a Christian community, specifically engaged in education and moral awareness, we task ourselves to provide safe environments that oppose racism, ableism, sexism, and homophobia while actively teaching appreciation for diverse peoples in an inequitable world."

So, as you go about your "back to school" activities, consider exploring further the ELCA's faith-centered commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and justice, through the following free guide: [Lutheran Identity: DEIJ](#). Or listen to the spoken poem, Race in the Classroom: Seeing Color by Valyn Lyric Turner – a celebration of God's diversity on display in our classrooms, (at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EO7k04dc\\_8g](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EO7k04dc_8g)). It opens with these words, "In a world so full of color, why would I choose to be colorblind..." And closes with, "To promote tolerance, talk about it, read about it, and be about it. See color, then use it to paint a better future for your students."

**Claudia Swendseid, Racial Justice Ministry**





## Remembering “Alphabet Soup”! Learning Together 101.

Have you eaten Campbell’s Alphabet Soup? Do you or did you have a can of Campbell’s Alphabet Soup in your pantry? Have you heard of Alphabet Soup? Three very different questions with very different answers possible! If you answered “yes” to either of the first two questions, you are experiencing what’s called the Mandela Effect. You are remembering what you expect-not what is fact-and is referred to as mis-remembering! Campbell’s never made alphabet soup! They made Vegetable soup with noodles shaped like alphabet letters but did not call it alphabet soup. Beginning in 1999, Amy’s Kitchen began-and still does-make and sell alphabet soup.

The recorded history of the term alphabet soup begins in 1867, post-Civil War, and the Tri-Weekly Standard, Raliegh, NC, reports on a lighter topic, *alphabetical soup*, a soup with alphabet shaped pasta. This fun food continues to gain popularity, but the term’s definition shifts in the 1930’s, when US president F.D.R. launches many New Deal programs, are abbreviated to just the first letter of each word in the program. Have you visited a state or national park where structures were built by the WPA? This program’s acronym name, along with the many others, became known as alphabet soup politics or organizations. In the current Merriam Webster dictionary, alphabet soup is defined as “a hodgepodge especially of initials(as of the names of organizations”).

In 2026, the term *alphabet soup* is sometimes used to describe the LGBTQIA2S+ community. In this context, the letters do not represent a hodgepodge.

Rather, the letters are recognizing the diversity of God’s Beloved children, and giving them a place of belonging and voice in God’s story. Recognizing each letter’s representation may or may not be familiar to you, either due to a lack of information - or maybe even mis-remembering.

In upcoming Trinity Pride Justice Team articles, we will learn together the representation and descriptions of the letters used as we go beyond the binary understanding of gender, including learning the different flags associated with the terms. **THANK YOU to YOU** for being a learner, advocate, and ally of God’s diverse and LGBTQ+ beloved children!

Let’s get started with the root letters of the acronym, using the GLADD glossary of terms to help our learning. (GLADD: Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation)  
<https://glaad.org/about/>

**L: lesbian:** A woman whose enduring physical, romantic, and/or emotional attraction is to other women.

**G: gay:** An adjective used to describe a person whose enduring physical, romantic, and/ or emotional attractions are to people of the same sex.

**B: bisexual:** An adjective used to describe a person who has the potential to be physically, romantically, and/or emotionally attracted to people of more than one gender, not necessarily at the same time, in the same way, or to the same degree.

**T: transgender:** An adjective to describe people whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth.

**Q: queer:** An adjective used by some people, particularly younger people, whose sexual orientation is not exclusively heterosexual

**Karen Gieseke (she/her), Pride Justice  
Ministry Team chair**

## The Four Pillars of the Trinity Missions Team

1. Refugee Resettlement & Inclusion
2. Housing Insecurity
3. Global Companions
4. Local Companions



### Reverend Gary Langness to speak on Tanzania

Reverend Gary Langness, who grew up at Trinity, will be speaking about his experiences in Tanzania on Wednesday, August 12th at 10 AM in the narthex. He will be joined by his wife Carol. Reverend Langness has a passion for missions and was first drawn to Tanzania because of his friendship with Dr. Mark Jacobson. Reverend Langness has been invited to talk to the team planning on going to Tanzania in 2027. He has stories to tell that will interest many. All are welcome to hear Reverend Langness speak.



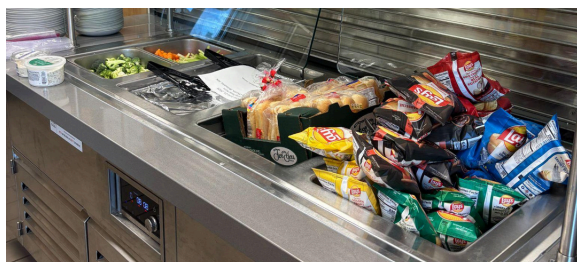
### Food Delivery to St. Paul Family

On January 27, the Missions Team was asked to help purchase food for a family of six—4 adults and 2 children—who were afraid to leave their home due to ICE activity in their neighborhood. Generous individuals from Trinity gave a total of \$1400 to the Missions Team to specifically help with this situation. Food was purchased from a grocery list made by the family and was delivered to their home in St. Paul approximately every week from late February until June 19, when the donated money had been spent. The four adults are back to working with their businesses—lawn care in the summer and snow removal in the winter—and extend their heartfelt gratitude for the help received from Trinity.



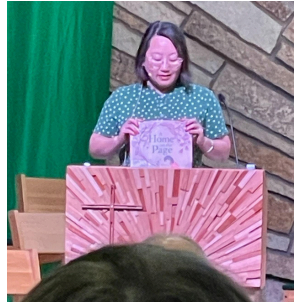
### Crisis Meal Assistance for Emergency Housing Services Building

Due to a sudden lack of staff, Stepping Stone Emergency Housing reached out to local churches requesting help in providing meals for two weeks in June. Many thanks to the Trinity volunteers who shopped, prepared, and served a week of meals on short notice: Marie & Steve Liberda, Glenda Bjorum, Beth Payne, Sandy Wendt, Mitch Florence, Kat Carlsen, Eunice Fulz, Phyllis & Don Paulson, John & Dellzie Hodler, Dana & Mark Kruse, Renae Oswald-Anderson & Fred Anderson.



Kristy Bjerk, Beth Payne, Spike Carlsen  
The Trinity Missions Team





## Refugee Voices Weekend at Trinity.

Author Kao Kalia Yang and Reverend Gilo Agwa shared their powerful stories as refugees from one land and as newcomers to the United States, as well as their hopes for the future.

Thanks to the Stillwater Public Library, SPL Foundation, and Valley Bookseller for their support of the author event with Kao Kalia Yang. One patron of the event reported that Kalia Yang “feeds my soul and is such a peacemaker.”

Thanks to Refugee Housing MN for their presence both Saturday evening and Sunday morning at Trinity. Though the Drive-In service was canceled at the last minute due to inclement weather, Rev. Gilo graciously held a circle chat following the 8:30 service and led those in attendance to consider ways to partner with his community here in Minnesota.

View author Kao Kalia Yang’s presentation and the Q & A following at this address: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1t7ndd2hpbRcyfEfnyYOTeUdVTIZENZ73/view>

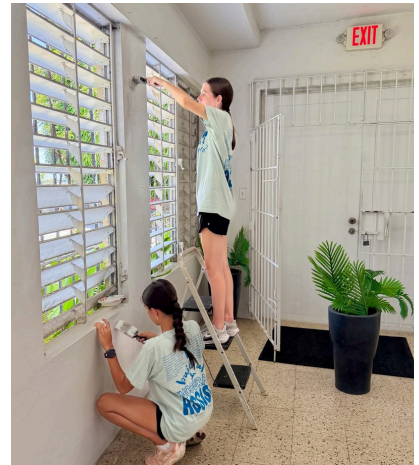




happenings



Puerto Rico Service Trip



# CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

Our congregational governance calls for an elected council and includes the Interim Lead Pastor, Jen Hackbarth and Pastor of Lifelong Faith Formation, Kristine Stedje. Parish Administrator, Sarah Kinsman, is also on council as a non-voting, ex officio member.



John Hodler  
Council President



Kirsten Parker  
Vice President



Shane Brockshus  
Secretary



Mike Karlsrud  
Treasurer



Brian Barts  
Council Member



Bill Bjorum  
Council Member

## CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY

Sympathy to the family & friends of  
**William (Bill) Straka**  
**Ronald Gavelek**  
**Paul Blaisdell**

## CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

The church office is open the following hours or by appointment: Monday - Thursday | 9 AM – 5 PM  
**Summer Hours (Memorial Day thru Labor Day): 9AM - 4PM.**

## WORSHIP ON TV

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

- Sundays at 11 a.m. & 7 p.m.
- Mondays at 7 a.m. & 1 p.m.

## CHURCH ATTENDANCE

| JULY ATTENDANCE | Early | Drive-in People | Drive-in Cars | Online Views |
|-----------------|-------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|
| 2026-07-05      | 58    | 130             | 74            | 315          |
| 2026-07-12      | 64    | 182             | 103           | 437          |
| 2026-07-19      | 63    | 111             | 66            | 304          |
| 2026-07-26      | 80    | 107             | 70            | 397          |

At Trinity, you are truly welcome. Whether you're exploring faith for the first time or have been on the journey for years, we invite you to bring your whole self - your questions, your hopes, your story. Rooted in God's unconditional love, we are a community where all are embraced, valued, and encouraged to grow.

### Trinity's Core Values

Engaging Worship  
Radical Hospitality  
Authentic Community  
Lifelong Faith Formation  
Compassionate Action

### Inclusion Statement

Read our Inclusion Statement at:  
[www.trinitylc.org](http://www.trinitylc.org)

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Sammie Bonko

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Trinity Lutheran Church of Stillwater





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Periodical  
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11TH ANNUAL  
**TRINITY**  
FEST  
SEPT 13  
2026  
10 AM WORSHIP INDOORS • 11 AM FESTIVITES OUTSIDE  
WORSHIP • MUSIC • COMMUNITY

The poster is a colorful collage. At the top, there are five icons in a row: two green flowers on a blue background, a purple tent on a purple background, a white guitar on a green background, and a blue church steeple on a blue background. Below these icons, the text "11TH ANNUAL" is in blue. The word "TRINITY" is in large, bold, blue letters. To the right of "TRINITY" is a green box with "SEPT 13" and "2026" in blue. Below "TRINITY" is a green box with a blue church steeple and waves, and a purple box with the word "FEST" in white. The word "FEST" is also in large, bold, blue letters. At the bottom, the text "10 AM WORSHIP INDOORS • 11 AM FESTIVITES OUTSIDE" is in blue, and "WORSHIP • MUSIC • COMMUNITY" is in purple on a green background.