



**Trinity
Lutheran Church
LCMS**

The Tidings

February - April 2026

Our Mission

“To share the good news of Jesus Christ”



“To serve as God guides us to bring people closer to Jesus Christ through worship, Bible studies, prayer and Fellowship”

**WORSHIP
With us**

**Sundays
8:00am &
10:30am**

**Sundays
9:15am**



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Ash Wednesday Service

February 18 @ 4pm

Lenten Midweek Services

Fellowship Dinners to Follow at 5:00pm

Wednesdays @ 4pm

February 25

March 4, 11, 18 & 25



Palm Sunday—March 29

8:00am & 10:30am

Maundy Thursday—April 2

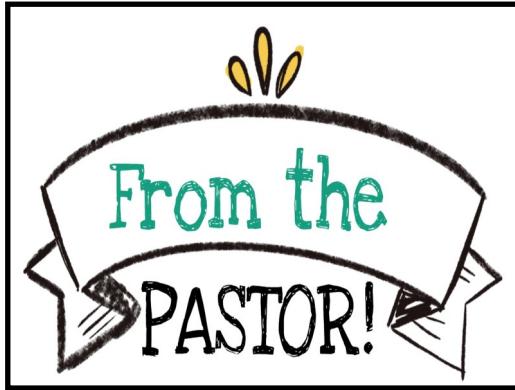
4:00pm

Good Friday—April 3

4:00pm

Easter Sunday—April 5

8:00am & 10:30am



THROUGH GOD'S EYES

John tells us the story in chapter 13 of his Gospel. It was just one day before Jesus would be nailed to a cross. One day before he would be stripped and whipped and mocked and spat upon.

As John describes Jesus on the brink of the worst day of his life, the apostle writes one of the most astonishing lines in the Bible. He tells us that with our Lord fully aware of the mental anguish and then physical pain that faced Him only hours away, Jesus knew “that the Father had put all things under His power.” What an amazing perspective for a man about to be tortured and murdered!

If somebody was about to nail me to a cross, I might be screaming in fear and praying for help, but I seriously doubt that I would be overwhelmed with a consciousness of how much God was blessing and empowering me at that moment. Jesus was obviously able to see something in His circumstances that would have eluded me. Scripture reminds us, “Man does not see as God sees.”

We do know that resurrection power changed a benediction into a glorious invocation. Easter is a calendar date marking the wonderful moment when the miracle of life over death walked from the pages of antiquity onto the pavements of our life. Jesus viewed the cross through the eyes of the Father. Beyond its terror and torment He saw God’s love and strength.

Maybe I’m missing something. Maybe I need to take a closer look at my own struggles and challenges. Perhaps I need to ask, “God, in my times of fear and weakness and pain, help me to see tokens of Your goodness and grace.”

The resurrection is a veritable banquet prepared and set before every seeking heart that is thirsting and hungering for righteousness. The great Easter truth is not that we are to live anew after death – but that we are to be new here and now by the power of the resurrection. That was the most stupendous victory that has ever been won. May we all see more clearly, through God’s eyes, how the strain and sacrifice of earthly life become worthwhile because eternal values are added.

Peace,
Pastor Jack Mackowiak



AND now these
THREE remain:
FAITH, HOPE & LOVE.
But the greatest of
these is LOVE.
1 CORINTHIANS 13:13, NIV

A
Message
From the
CHAIR

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

HELPING OUR CHURCH GROW

As the new Chairman for the Board of Directors, I think we should continue to focus on “**Change**” as Paul has stated. I would also like us to direct our focus on “**Growing**” our Church. This will involve change for all of us. The comments below will help us focus on this concept but in no way limit our thoughts and abilities to being successful.

“We will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word” Acts 6:4

Congregational duties involve active participation in church life through **time**, **talent**, and **treasure**, including attending church services, receiving sacraments, volunteering, offering financial support, and serving on committees, all to support the church’s mission and spiritual growth, reflecting your baptismal call to holiness and service.

Core Responsibilities:

Worship & Sacraments
Financial Support

Active Participation & Service:

Volunteering
Community Building
Governance

Spiritual Growth:

Bible Studies
Living the Gospels

In essence, we are **all** expected to be the living heart of the Church, contributing to its spiritual and practical life through **dedicated involvement**. Our Church needs growth, and it will take every member of Trinity’s congregation to make this happen. Ask yourself, what am I doing to contribute to the growth of Trinity Lutheran Church?

Continue to spread the Love of Jesus and pray for your Elders, Staff, Pastor, Board of Directors, all who Volunteer, our church, and invite family, friends, and community people you meet, to attend.

If you are interested in serving on any of Trinity’s Ministry Teams please contact Carolyn or Kathy at the Church Office by calling (352) 307-4500.

Blessings,

*Wayne Greenwell
Chairman of the Board of Directors*

Board of Directors:

Chairman: Wayne Greenwell

Co-Chairman:
Carl Kruger

Treasurer: Joan Egeland

Secretary: Wanda David

Members at Large
Susan Bailey
Paul Stieber
Michael Vencion



ALWAYS FAITHFUL BIBLE STUDY

The Always Faithful Bible Study small group has begun a new series of lessons from *God's Word for Today*. Join us as we meet on the first and third Tuesday each month from 10:00am to 11:30am in Classroom 3. If you are interested in joining us, please contact me so that I can have materials prepared. There is no cost to you. Thank you, Jan Garner.

God's Word for Today: 1st & 2nd Kings

A wise and powerful king. A magnificent temple and palace. Moral weakness and spiritual corruption. The splitting of a dynasty.

Weak and ineffective rulers.

Attempts at reform. National ruin and regret.

Foreign invasion. And then?

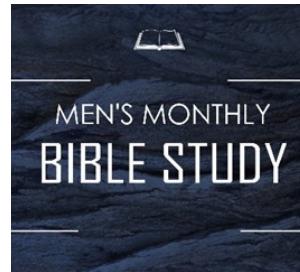
This story is not the creation of a brilliant writer of contemporary fiction, it is the true record of God's Old Testament people, a record inspired by the Holy Spirit.

In 1 and 2 Kings you will learn:

- how the world can allure us away from heavenly blessings;
- how God goes to great lengths to redeem His people;
- that in spite of their disobedience, God keeps His promises through our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Schedule and Lesson Outline:

Feb. 3	Lesson 8 - A Parade of Weak Kings
Feb. 17	Lesson 9 - Israel Falls
Mar. 3	Lesson 10 - God Rejects Judah
Mar. 17	Lesson 11 - Judah Falls



**Monday, February 2, 2026
9:00am**

The Men's Monthly Bible Study meets the first Monday of each month in the Fellowship Hall.

Stop by for fellowship and Bible study with Pastor O'Connor!



Cards are regularly sent to members of our congregation who are celebrating "Milestone" birthdays (65, 70, 75, etc.) & anniversaries (25, 50 etc..). Sympathy

cards are also sent to those who have lost a spouse or close loved one, plus to those who are hospitalized, in rehab, or are homebound.

Special requests for cards can be made by contacting Sharon Pruszynski by email at Steve9930@aol.com, or by calling (352) 245-5271 (landline - no texts). "Your Trinity Family" will be glad to reach out by mail to those who just need that special touch by sending a handmade card.



Trinity Singles
meet on the 3rd
Friday of every month @ 5:00pm
at various local restaurants.
Look for details in weekly
Announcements!

Sign-up sheets are located in
the Narthex.

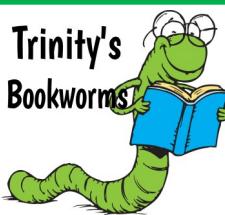
We have a great time...Come join us!



Mark your calendar on the 4th Thursday of every month.

Our next two meetings will be in the conference room located in the Fellowship Hall on February 26th, March 26th, starting at 9:00 am.

Call Wanda David with questions!



The Trinity Bookworms meet the first Wednesday of each month at 1:30pm in Classroom One by the kitchen to discuss current and sometimes classic secular and nonsecular novels of many genres.

You can always be guaranteed a lively conversation and anyone can attend. We ask if possible for you to find the books on your own through libraries or use your own electronic devices. (*HINT: Order from the library early so it is ready when you need it.*) But, we usually have a copy to pass around as well. Below you will find a list of the next three selections and a brief synopsis for each. If you need a book or have any questions, contact Kathy Dowbenko or Carol Keenan.

Feb. 4:

"*The Last Lifeboat*" by Hazel Gaynor is based on a true event that took place during WWII. Because of the constant bombings in Britain, some parents attempted to send their children to what they thought would be a safer location in America. That is until one ship was struck by a German U-Boat's torpedo. You will find yourself fighting for survival along with survivors on "*The Last Lifeboat*".

March 4:

"*The Girl Who Wrote in Silk*" by Kelli Esters is a dual timeline historical fiction that travels in time between the shameful purging of Chinese immigrants in Seattle during the 1880's and now. This is a fascinating story about two young girls who will never meet and yet are caught up in a world of secrets and deceit by the writing on a silk sleeve.

April 1:

(don't let the early date "fool" you) "*The First Ladies*" by Marie Benedict explores the unlikely friendship between Eleanor Roosevelt and civil rights activist Mary McLeod Bethune. This is a 2023 novel so we encourage you to find a copy NOW and don't let the early April date catch you off guard without a book.

Stewardship



Robert Trent Jones, Sr. was a famous golf course designer.

CORNER

He once re-designed the 4th hole at Baltusrol shortly before the 1954 United States Open golf tournament, one of the most prestigious prizes in the game.

His re-design of this par three hole was particularly challenging, testing the skills of even the finest golfer. He was openly criticized for making the hole too hard. In response to the criticism, Jones, Sr. teed up a ball on the 4th hole at Baltusrol to play it for his first time. He made a hole-in-one! Jones turned to the gallery and said, "Gentlemen, the defense rests. I think this hole is eminently fair."

When we talk about financial stewardship, we might fall into the trap of thinking that God's way is too hard. "First fruits" is just an expression, giving off the top is not practical, and the tithe is just impossible. It is all too hard! But Jesus reminds us, "Give and it will be given to you, pressed down, shaken together and running over."

God has re-designed how we as Christians manage our earthly resources. It is eminently fair, for everything belongs to Him. God's way is not the hard way; it is the one way to maintain a proper perspective of God as our Provider, and we as His stewards.

Places of the Passion

Ash Wednesday is February 18. We will begin the season of Lent with a 4:00pm Worship Service with Holy Communion. This Lent, we will gather to reflect on the **Places of the Passion**. We will read through the entire passion account as told by Luke, a small portion each week, and you won't be surprised at the story.

It's a simple story and you've been to these places before. The upper room, the garden of Gethsemane, the halls of Pontius Pilate and the hills of Golgotha are some of the places we remember when we meditate on our Lord's passion. Yet when Jesus enters a place, he never leaves it as he finds it. The most troubling places in our lives become the most amazing places of God's grace when Jesus visits them. We will see each week that no matter where we are in our lives, God is still coming and claiming us as His children.



The Lutheran Women's Missionary League is the official women's auxiliary of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS). All women of Trinity Lutheran Church are members and are encouraged to serve others through mission, education, inspiration, and service. We invite you to attend our meetings and learn what we are all about as we "Serve the Lord with Gladness" Psalm 100:2 our motto.

2025 was a year that no one expected! We experienced an increase of need in our community and we finished the year serving 1,123 neighbors in October, 1,388 in November, and in a 2 week period in December we served 1,168. Each month we see new neighbors in the need of food and other products.

There was personnel turnover during the year and a longtime volunteer is leaving in a few weeks. His absence will require a realignment of the Board; however, he will remain for a few weeks longer as he prepares his move. The A/C finally gave out after multiple attempts to repair it. It cost \$6,000.00 to replace the A/C and then the large refrigerator quit.

The Lord was looking down and realized the Community of Gratitude needed a lifting hand. The surrounding community came forth with the Lions Club donating 2 large refrigeration units and a volunteer family member donating an upright freezer. This is not even to mention the contributions from Trinity. Trinity Lutheran Church is a huge blessing to our organization. We continue to thank you for the weekly food donations that your members deliver to our door. In addition to the food donations we received a \$840.00 donation from Trinity Lutheran's LWML, \$1,200.00 in Walmart holiday gift cards, and \$10,000.00 Christmas gift from an anonymous Trinity member. These monies were a Godsend in the time of equipment needs and other obligations.

We thank Trinity Lutheran Church's volunteer members, church leadership, and God stepping in with these gifts in our time of need.

*Sharon Brewer
Director of Community of Gratitude Emergency Food Bank*

Lutheran Woman's Missionary League

At our February meeting on Tuesday, February 24 we will have a speaker from House of Hope in Wildwood. House of Hope is a residential program for men seeking to break free from addiction. It serves men eighteen years of age and older. During the month we will be collecting underwear, (size med to XL) and toiletries. There will be a laundry basket in the Narthex if you would like to help out. We would also like to invite the men of the congregation to attend this meeting since this is a service for men. We meet at 1:00pm in the Fellowship Hall.

In March, Tuesday, March 24, we will have two members of the Ocala Police Department speaking on Human Trafficking. This is a huge problem today and we should be informed. We may also learn of a possible project to help the victims. The meeting is at 1:00pm.

Our April meeting will be a Salad Supper Meeting at 6:00pm in the Fellowship Hall. This should be a fun meeting for all. We are doing a Thrift Shop Fashion Show. We will be looking for models. Sign up for this meeting will begin the April 12. The meeting date is April 28, 6:00pm pm in the Fellowship Hall.

May's meeting will be an LWML luncheon. Watch the bulletin for more details.

**LWML Mite Box Collection
1st Sunday of each month!**



The *Christian Cancer Care Blessings (CCCB)* project is a ministry of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) of Trinity Lutheran Church (TLC) striving to make living with cancer more comfortable through God's love and blessings.

CHRISTIAN CANCER CARE BLESSINGS (CCCB)

A cancer care bag, also known as a chemo care package, can provide comfort, entertainment, and practical items for someone undergoing cancer treatment. Key items to include are those that address common side effects like nausea, dry mouth, and fatigue, as well as those that offer comfort and a sense of normalcy during a challenging time.

If you are interested in sending a Cancer Care bag to a friend or relative out of town, please complete the form below and drop it off at the Welcome Center desk, church office or give it to Jan Garner. If you would like to send a card or note, you can attach it to this form and it will be included in the bag. There is no charge for this ministry.

Thank you.

Tear Here

Trinity Lutheran Church CCCB Ministry **Request Form for Shipping Cancer Care Bags**

Date _____

Your Name _____

Your Phone Number _____

Recipient's Name _____

Recipient's Address _____

Brief Message (Optional) _____



2025 Cantata
Jan Garner, Music Director

I would like to thank the following people for their contribution to the Music Ministry here at Trinity and for their dedication and hard work in the service of our Lord:

Thank you Trinity Choir for an outstanding Advent service and worship message. Your gifts and talents are gratefully appreciated. You have exceeded my expectations for this Christmas Cantata 2025 as well as every Wednesday and Saturday rehearsal, your commitment to at-home rehearsals and your participation at both Sunday services

Thank you to our guests and new members for joining our Trinity Choir family. Their willingness to learn the music quickly and take time out of their busy holiday schedule to be with us is commendable: John, Maureen, Candy, Lynda, Melanie, Katie and Linda.

Thank you to Lee for the beautiful video work, sound and lighting. His tireless work and many hours of dedication to this Cantata was amazing. He has been with us through rehearsals and church services. Thank you so much and also to his assistant Linda.

Thank you to Judy and Joan for their piano and organ accompaniment.

Thank you to Jim for helping everyone with rehearsal music.

Thank you to Karen for assisting everyone with Cantata music, folders and robes.

Thank you to Mary Ellen for working the Coffee Bar for Saturday's rehearsal.

Thank you to Pastor Jack, the greeters and ushers for their support.

Thank you to Patti and the Hospitality Team for our Fellowship dinner.

And Thank you, our congregation, families and guests for coming. We hope you enjoyed the service.

Congratulations to everyone who participated in creating this special Advent Service and may the blessings of hope, joy, love and peace from the new born Christ child be with you and your families this holiday season.



“Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God”.

Colossians 3:16



Singing is beneficial to your health and well-being. Singing offers numerous health benefits, acting as an aerobic exercise that boosts mood, reduces stress by lowering cortisol, strengthens the immune system, improves lung capacity, and enhances cognitive functions like memory and alertness, all while releasing feel-good endorphins and oxytocin, promoting relaxation and social bonding, and even helping with pain management.

Singing:

- lowers cortisol (stress hormone) levels and activates the vagus nerve, promoting relaxation and well-being.
- releases endorphins, dopamine, and oxytocin, leading to feelings of happiness, pleasure, and connection.
- engages multiple brain areas, improving memory, concentration, and mental alertness, useful for dementia care.
- boosts confidence and provides a sense of accomplishment.
- Is an aerobic activity that improves circulation and lung capacity through deep breathing.
- can boost immune function and help fight disease, even more effectively in groups than listening alone.
- encourages better balance and strengthens core muscles.
- can alleviate chronic pain symptoms and potentially reduce the need for medication.
- releases oxytocin, creating feelings of belonging and reducing loneliness.
- enhances leadership, listening, and teamwork skills.

But most importantly, singing in your church choir raises your voice to praise our Lord, sends messages of spiritual encouragement to our congregation and dedicates your time and talents to serving. Won't you consider using the Gift that He chose for you?

The Bible gives us reason to sing:

- Praise & Thanksgiving: For God's great salvation, steadfast love, and wondrous works (1 Chronicles 16:9, 2 Samuel 22:15).
- Joy: To express gladness and rejoice in the Lord (Psalm 92:4).
- Worship: To come before God with music and song (Psalm 100:2).
- Instruction: To teach and encourage one another (Colossians 3:16).

Consider joining the choir in this New Year. Talk to a choir member and welcome to the Music Ministry here at Trinity Lutheran. We practice on Wednesdays at 4:00 pm in the church sanctuary. See you soon. Call me or Karen and we will get your music folder ready for you. Jan Garner, 352-598-2048. Thank you.



Trinity's Sewing Angels

In the last quarter the primary focus of The Sewing Angels was doing what we could to provide warmth to the homeless and impoverished of the Ocala Forest. Sixty-six blankets were sewn and distributed. We have about twenty more that are in the last stage of completion before they are distributed.

Special thanks to Debbie Zwolak for all the many beautiful and clever crocheted items which we distributed to G.G.s House. This included twenty crocheted balls, eight ditty bags, thirteen hats, three booties, three pairs of socks, eight headbands, three mats, six snakes and 212 Christmas Card ornaments. Approximately one dozen crocheted balls are being used for angel craft project.

We continue making and distributing soapy washcloths to the 7,000 people of the Ocala National Forest who come to a food bank. In the last quarter we provided one hundred twenty six soapy washcloths and forty-four crocheted soap socks. A soap sock is a crocheted pouch that a bar of soap slips into and is closed with a strap that can hang from a faucet. It is made with cotton yarn which serves as a washcloth can be refilled easily when the soap is used up. Dorothy Flowers returned from her summer vacation with hundreds of bars of soap donated by her son-in-law who works at a packaging plant that packages bars of soap. This will go a long way in keeping our soapy washcloth ministry going strong.

One of our other outreaches is sewing pillowcase sized drawstring bags which are used for foster care kits. Forty-two foster care kit bags were recently made and filled to provide the basics for children of the Ocala National Forest who are removed from their homes. The bags included pj's, books, a stuffed toy, a blanket, toiletries, socks, underwear, clothing and snacks. It is so sad that so many children continue to be removed from their homes due to parents who are in trouble with the law or losing their lives due to drug related issues. Julia Mack has coordinated the donations needed to fill these bags and volunteers to help fill them.

The Sewing Angels received an incredibly special gift this Christmas! This comes with a special story. I sew for people out of my home. One of the groups of people I sew for is the Band of Brothers. It is a veteran's group that tells the story of their time in the service with patches sewn on their black leather vests. A man came to me with a leather vest he wanted patches sewn on for as a Christmas present for a friend. In visiting with him I found out he was the man who custom made patches for the Band of Brothers to sell as a fund raiser for that group. The funds raised by the sales of these patches supports the charities funded by Band of Brothers. The cost of making these patches he writes off on his taxes, never taking a penny for himself. He also told me that for Christmas he was providing shirts and hat with name and branch of service for one hundred twenty men in three different Veteran's homes in Michigan. I said to him you must have done very well in life to be able to do this. He looked me in the eye and said, "It's not my money, it's God's money!." Wow! I told him about the outreach of the Sewing Angels. He said he would like to do something for us. I told him I would love to have bags made for each of the girls in our group with our logo on it. He could not wait to begin this special project. He did not take a penny for making these bags for us! At our annual Christmas gathering, the girls were so surprised by this special gift and were touched by the story of this man's generosity and story of his outreach!!!!!! We plan to make him a very special quilt!

We are now switching gears to sewing quilts for babies and children's outreaches.

We praise God for all the blessings of the Sewing Angels outreach! If you would like to join our group, we meet on Thursdays from 9:00am – 12:00pm.

Blessings,
Sue Lehota

Sewing Angels





Trinity's prayer groups are busy praying for our church families and friends. This page is dedicated to those who wish to send a thank-you to everyone who takes the time to pray for them! This is a new addition to our Tidings beginning with this issue. Please continue to send your appreciation message and they will be printed in the next Tidings!!

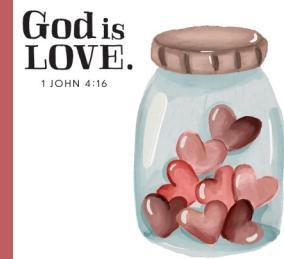
I would like to thank you all, my Trinity Church family. The signed Birthday card and gifts, the Christmas cards and gifts, and the love and support you have shown me throughout the year have meant so much. You are a joy to work with and an answer to my prayers.

May God's Blessings continue to shine upon you in the New Year. Thank you from my heart to yours.

*Jan Garner,
Music Director*

Thank you to all my Trinity family for your love and support this past year. My life has changed so much since Dan passed away 1 year ago. God has blessed me in numerous ways, just as so many of you have. May we all remember that we never walk alone, God is with us every step of the way. God Bless you all.

Joyce Lindstrom



**THANKS
from the
HEART**

Please thank the friends at Trinity for all the prayers they said for my daughter Jessica. She fought her way back and is looking for a discharge to go home.

The power of prayer is mighty.
GOD IS GOOD!

Susan Coon

**I want to thank you all for your
prayers and good wishes. I am happy
that I am able to start coming to the
office a few hours as my health has
improved and continues to!**

**God Bless all of you!
Rusty Ryan**

