

# TRINITY *Tribute*

May 2024 Newsletter  
Trinity Lutheran Church-ELCA  
Cook, Minnesota

*"We believe there is no person or created thing which is outside the active love and grace of God shown so clearly in Jesus Christ. And through the active love and grace of God, we, as a body of Christ, are called to invite, welcome, and care for all."*



**May Star Word Prompt:** As we prepare for Pentecost, how has the Holy Spirit lit a fire in you in/through your star word? What new thing has it inspired you to do?

The Trinity Building & Grounds team has been busy with tasks this spring, including trimming the trees that surround the space. Thanks to Dale Bixby & Peter Stone for all this and other jobs done. Bill Conger and Jody Bixby are heading up the group of volunteers. If you are not at this time a member of the crew, but would like to help, please contact either of them or leave them a message in the office.



## **CAMP VERMILION OVERNIGHT/WORK DAY** *Friday & Saturday, May 10 & 11*

Bring your friends, family, and congregational members to Camp Vermilion as we prepare our sites for another fantastic summer in God's Great Northwoods!

Come for the day on Saturday when the work happens:  
Registration begins at 8:30 am, Lunch at 12:30 pm

*OR*

Arrive Friday night by 6:30 pm for dinner plus games, a campfire and fellowship. Spend time on your own exploring Camp Vermilion. \$50/family or free if you help with Work Day.

Information can be found at:  
[vlmcamps.org/programs-events](http://vlmcamps.org/programs-events)  
or call: 800-331-5148



Bill Tibbetts and Jim Aune are just two of the Trinity family that have spent Work Day Saturday at camp.

Join us for worship on Pentecost Sunday, May 19, when we will be celebrating the Affirmation of Baptism for six Trinity youth and their families.



Children's Sermons with the Synod Staff



## **FREE COMMUNITY MEAL**

May 23, 2024

Meals served Drive-Thru or Eat-In  
4:00 - 5:30 pm

*(or until gone)*



This month's menu includes:

Hamburgers, Pasta Salad,  
Pickles, Chips and Dessert



Trinity and Dn. Kari had a variety of assistance leading worship during the month of April, including Bp. Amy Odgren, Dn. Susan Williams and Dn. Brenda Tibbetts. Dn. Brenda reminded us during a children's sermon about all the symbols in our building that help us remember a story; Bp. Amy was here to help us bless the many colorful quilts put together this month and Dn. Susan was here to remind us that the Lord is My Shepherd.



### Bubbles, Ten Steps and the Overflowing Love of God

Yesterday was a good reminder to me that having fun together is a really important part of being the body of Christ. Playing together, laughing together, problem solving together and praying together do so much to strengthen our relationships with one another and are good for our souls. With all of the challenges going on in the world around us, sometimes we just need to play.



Deacon Kari

On Wednesday, April 24, the Bible Quest kids and many of their Prayer Partners joined together for the final Bible Quest of this school year. After we lingered over snacks, reviewed the Bible Stories for the year, and witnessed a science experiment that reminded us of God’s overflowing love for each one of us, it was time to go outside. It was so much fun to watch the faces of all ages as they played with bubbles. There were bubbles everywhere and some kids (and maybe some adults) probably needed to be hosed down when they got home. Balls and frisbees were tossed. Wiffle ball was happening in the parking lot. Ten Steps was played around the church building. And the sidewalk chalk messages will remain until the rain washes them away.



And the joy on the faces of everyone was contagious.

In the evening, I met with the students who will be confirmed on Sunday, May 19. During our time together, they worked together on writing their faith statements. As they talked about some of their favorite faith memories, a lot of them included playing together. As I was wrapping things up for the evening, they insisted on going outside to play one of the games they had been reminiscing about, Ten Steps. The same game the Bible Quest kids still love to play. I said, “GO,” as I shoed them outside. They all ran outside and played Ten Steps around the church building for about 15 minutes as their rides waited patiently in their cars, smiling at they watched.



The joy on their faces was contagious.

What a great reminder that we all need to play. Play is good for our physical health, mental health, and spiritual health. It is good for our relationships with each other and with God.



This summer we will not be able to offer Vacation Bible School, which saddens many people, including me. But my hope is that we will be able to offer other opportunities for people of all ages to come together. To come together to eat and talk and play. What about a picnic and games? Or a barbeque and a talent show? Or an ice cream social with room to play? Or.....what are your ideas. Let’s make them happen.

You can’t go wrong with bubbles, Ten Steps, and the overflowing love of God.

Blessings,  
Dn. Kari





**by President Crystal Whitney**

To inform the congregation about Council meetings and actions in a timely manner, a recap of the most recent meeting will be published in the church newsletter. This recap is NOT official meeting minutes. All approved meeting minutes are available in the church office.

Trinity Council met on Sunday, April 14, at 11:00 a.m.

The *Growing in Grace* balance is now just over \$40,000 as Trinity gets closer to paying off the building.

Deacon Kari is assessing if there are enough volunteers for the Vacation Bible School program.

Crystal will meet with Ministry Teams before the next council meeting to answer questions and talk about next steps while Pastor Erika is on leave. Crystal will meet with the Worship and Music Team next week.

The Council welcomes Jeanie Wilson as the new Church Custodian.

The Building and Grounds Team is working on creating lists of duties and building needs.

Council is still gathering information about obtaining an AED.

Trinity is now a member of the Cook Chamber of Commerce and is listed on their website. Any member is welcome to attend the Chamber meetings.

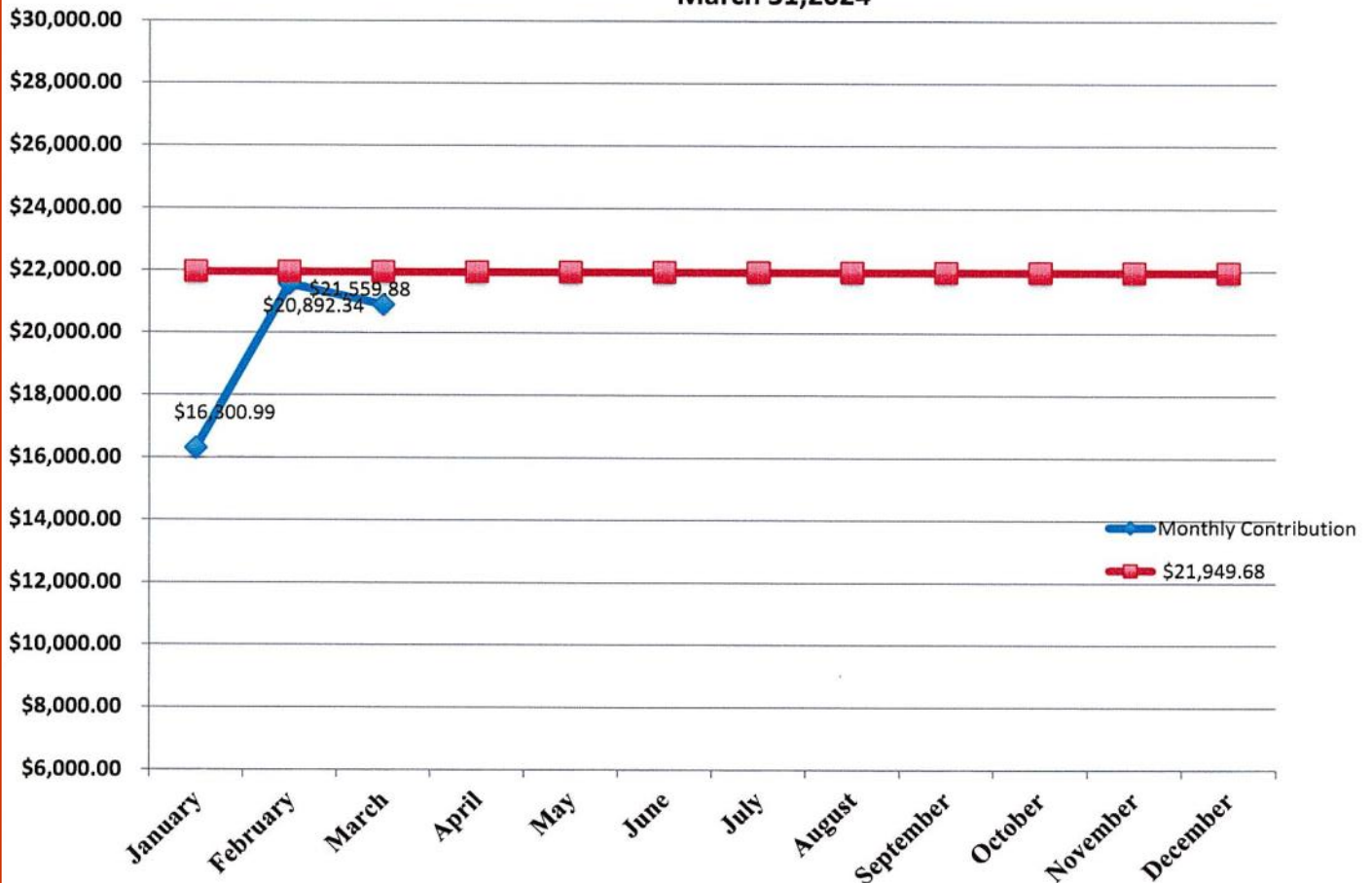
Pastor Erika has applied for Disability Coverage. As we await the outcome of that application, Council supports Deacon Kari as our spiritual leader.

Next Council meeting is tentatively scheduled for Sunday, June 16.

After the close of business, Bishop Amy Odgren met with councilmembers to discuss the Disability application process.

### Giving in Grace

2024 General Fund Offerings  
March 31, 2024



## NEMN Synod Assembly 2024



This year's assembly was held via Zoom only on Saturday, April 27, and originated from Trinity Lutheran Church in Brainerd, which hosted synod staff members. Litany for the Opening and Closing of the Assembly was led by Bp. Amy Odgren. Dn. Kari Olson, one of the NEMN Synod Council Members, was asked to lead the assembly in prayer prior to taking a vote; Pr. Lori Gordon from Jessie Lake Lutheran, former Youth Minister at Trinity and also a member of the Synod Council, offered a prayer prior to the assembly voting. Voting members from TLC-Cook, were and Julie Horihan.

Anniversaries of Ordination slides included: Dn. Kari Olson, Congregational Care Minister for TLC-Cook (5 yrs.); former TLC-Cook member Pr. Ray Reinholtzen (65 yrs.); former leader Pr. Dennis Morreim (55 yrs.); and former Youth Minister Pr. Liz Cheney, (10 yrs.). Dn. Kari has had years of experience as a consecrated deaconess in another denomination, as well as experience serving in one of the ELCA full communion partner denominations prior to completing the necessary requirements to be ordained as an ELCA deacon.



Dennis Morreim

Check out the NEMN Synod's website at [nemnsynod.org](http://nemnsynod.org) and Facebook page for more information about assembly.



Kari Olson



Elizabeth Cheney

## Mental Health & Wellness Team -- ABUSE

There are many types of abuse. Some common ones are spousal or intimate partner abuse, child abuse, and elder abuse. Abuse can take the form of sexual, physical, financial, neglect, emotional, or all the above. These abuses can occur even in a close relationship.

In the United States, 1/3 of all women and 1/4 of all men have been physically abused or stalked in their lifetime. This statistic comes from the Coalition Against Domestic Violence. If you are in an abusive relationship, people say, "why don't you just leave?". It's just not that easy. Generally, people don't leave because of fear. Besides the fear of extreme bodily harm, they fear the loss of financial support, loss of their family and friends, loss of standing in the community and loss of the positive things that the abuser has contributed to their life.

Another reason for not leaving is shame. Shame is generally the feeling that you are not good enough and the belief for some reason you must deserve this abuse. According to Brené Brown, professor, author and public speaker, a way to keep shame alive is through secrecy, silence and judgment. By bringing the abuse out into the open and talking about it empathetically, only then can you work on helping to remove shame from the victim.

Many of these reasons also apply to why children don't report their abuser. However, children are more vulnerable because they trust the abuser and don't know what's right or wrong. They only know they want the abuse to stop even if they love the abuser.

Elder abuse occurs as a person ages and is unable to handle their own affairs. They depend on others for various daily needs and can be put in a position of extreme vulnerability. According to the National Institute of Health, 10% of people over 65 are victims of elder abuse at some time in their life. The same reasons apply for why this abuse is not reported to authorities.

Lastly, emotional abuse can be a very murky topic for some people. It is often described as anything that is threatening, humiliating, bullying, controlling or scary to the other person. Emotional abuse is often used to isolate the victim. Long-term emotional abuse can cause depression, anxiety, mental health concerns, and chronic pain in the victim. Sometimes it may not seem like the abuser is being aggressive, but statements like "you're so dumb" or "I won't explain it because it's over your head", made to humiliate the victim can be considered emotional abuse.

There is a difference between aggressive and assertive communication. Aggressive communication is when a person wants to control the situation. Assertive communication is letting someone know your own feelings in a clear, concise way, but wanting to connect with that other person; you communicate that both of your interests are important.

Bishop Amy Odgren talked about scars in her sermon at Trinity on April 14. She said everyone has scars, even at a young age. It's part of being human. So even if your scars are physical or emotional, we all need to work on healing. Jesus was vulnerable and showed his scars to his friends. That is an important lesson for all of us. We need to recognize our scars before we can do the work to heal them.



The Mental Health and Wellness Team welcomes your feedback, and even criticism. Please leave a note in the suggestion box in the Fellowship Hall or call:

Dn. Kari Olson	218-290-5984	Lauren Simensen	610-507-0051
Arlene Jershe	218-749-5503	Vickie Lange	507-412-1117

**General Fund**

Budget Receipts	\$20,894.34
Budget Expenditures	\$20,801.87
Checkbook Balance	\$3,055.47

**3/31/2024**

**2024 Budget = \$263,396.21**

**Offerings Needed**  
 Monthly = \$21,949.68  
 Sunday = \$5,065.32

<u>Income</u>	<u>March Received</u>	<u>Monthly Anticipated Budget</u>	<u>YTD Received</u>	<u>Anticipated YTD Budget</u>
Envelope Offering	\$ 18,104.15		\$ 54,993.68	
Loose Offering	\$ 2,713.19		\$ 3,534.53	
Church usage	\$ 75.00		\$ 225.00	
<b>Total Regular Income</b>	<b>\$ 20,892.34</b>	<b>21,949.68 **</b>	<b>\$ 58,753.21</b>	<b>\$ 43,899.36</b>

<u>Mission Support</u>	<u>March paid</u>		<u>YTD Paid</u>	
NE Synod	\$ 633.33	\$ 633.33	\$ 1,899.99	\$ 1,899.99
VLM	\$ 81.00	\$ 81.00	\$ 243.00	\$ 243.00
<b>Total Mission Support</b>	<b>\$ 714.33</b>	<b>\$ 714.33</b>	<b>\$ 2,142.99</b>	<b>\$ 2,142.99</b>

<u>Expenses</u>				
Education		\$ 311.67	\$ 140.00	\$ 935.01
Wellness Ministry		\$ 12.50		\$ 37.50
Stewardship	\$ 127.17	\$ 91.67	\$ 344.53	\$ 275.01
Mental Health & Wellness		\$ 41.67		\$ 125.01
Social Outreach Ministry				
Worship	\$ 1,039.21	\$ 783.58	\$ 2,571.38	\$ 2,350.74
Church Operations	\$ 5,712.09	\$ 7,902.23	\$ 24,594.79	\$ 23,706.69
Pastoral Salary & Bene	\$ 8,224.20	\$ 8,299.35	\$ 24,759.81	\$ 24,898.05
Congreg Care Minister Sal & Bene	\$ 4,859.87	\$ 3,767.66	\$ 12,228.49	\$ 11,302.98
Misc	\$ 125.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 285.46	\$ 75.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 20,801.87</b>	<b>\$ 21,949.66</b>	<b>\$ 67,067.45</b>	<b>\$ 65,848.98</b>

<u>Growing In Grace(3)</u>		<u>February</u>	<u>Attendance</u>
<b>Total loan</b>	<b>\$786,660.31</b>	Mar 3	56
<b>Current Balance</b>	<b>\$43,388.47</b>	10-Mar	59
Pledged	\$183,603.00	17-Mar	36
Pledges Received	\$133,900.70 (49 giving units)	24-Mar	70
	72.90% thru 3/31/24	31-Mar	102

Receipts for the month are **BELOW** budget by \$1,057.34. Receipts are **BELOW** budget for the year \$7,095.83.  
 Expenses are **BELOW** budget for the month by \$1,147.81. Expenses are **ABOVE** budget for the year \$1,218.41.

Memorials received this month in memory of:  
 No memorials were received in March.

Given by:

Regular offerings keep Trinity going; **Thank You** for continued support. Whether worshipping in person or online, TLC ministries and missions are dependent on faithful giving. *If you would like to set up regular electronic payments contact the office at 218-666-5965 or email [info@trinitycook.org](mailto:info@trinitycook.org) for further information.*

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<u>GIFTS</u>	<u>Received</u>	<u>Submitted-YTD</u>
Noisy Offering		
Cook Food Shelf	\$774.48	\$774.48
Social Outreach Ministry	\$68.00	\$134.00
Pastor's Discretionary Fund		
Salvation Army		
Lenten Offerings	\$ 523.00	\$523.00
Mental Health and Wellness	\$ 1,800.00	\$2,695.00

\*\*\*\*\*



Submitted by Sue Carstens, Financial Mgr. Bkkp

*Bible Quest:  
Bibles, Birthdays & Bubbles  
LOTS of Bubbles!  
God's Love Overflows*

*Special Thank You to All the Prayer Partners*

Bible Quest celebrated the end of this year remembering God's overflowing love, sharing all of our birthdays with cupcakes, and enjoying the beautiful weather outside with chalk, games and bubbles -- lots and lots of bubbles!



The Mad Scientist aka Dn. Kari came to visit.



Thanks to all the special people who prepare and serve the snacks each week: Kim Marwick, Mickey Maki, Bailey Conger.  
Not pictured: Vickie Lange, Elizabeth Storm and Barb Brenna,



Big Shout-Out to Kate for all her help!



Thanks to Patti Naughton for the colorful fish for each of the kids.



**Trinity Lutheran Council Contact List**

While Pastor Erika is on medical leave, she is unable to perform any pastoral tasks. Each Council member has been assigned to help with communication. Please contact the following with questions or concerns.

**DEACON KARI OLSON**

Questions about Congregation Care, Programs and Worship

deaconkari@trinitycook.org  
218-290-5984

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT**

Questions about Council and Pastor Updates

Crystal Whitney  
lrpcjw@gmail.com  
218-750-7417

**PASTORAL RELATIONS**

Questions on how to help and support Pastor and her family

Leo Wilenius  
llwilenius@gmail.com  
Jody Bixby  
jodybix@gmail.com

**MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS**

Questions about support and resources

Larry Lange  
lakesearch@msn.com

**WORSHIP & MUSIC**

Questions about worship leaders and assistants

Patti Naughton  
pn3151@gmail.com  
Kim Marwick  
kmarwick04@gmail.com

**YOUTH GATHERING**

Questions about the National Youth Gathering

Laura Aune  
lauraeaune@gmail.com



Trinity helped Elmer Vanden Heuvel celebrate his 93rd birthday on Sunday, April 21. Daughters Julie Horihan and Marcia Vermedahl provided a cake and also provided piano/organ duets throughout the morning worship. Birthday Blessings, Elmer!



Anniversaries

- 2 Bob & Leigh Zika
- 9 Duane & Sue Gustafson
- 12 John & Diane Cin
- 24 Mark & Barb Schmidt

Birthdays

- |                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 4 Roger Lindbeck   | 15 Diane Culbert   |
| 5 Leetah Anderson  | Wendy Jordan       |
| Nora Anderson      | 16 Caleb Uchal     |
| Rob Marwick        | 17 Sonja Foss      |
| Taylor Midthun     | Kaden Ratai        |
| 8 Cora Chapman     | 21 Jesse Glass     |
| 9 Beth Wilenius    | 22 Kate Cheney     |
| 10 Greg Aune       | 23 Tricia Bodri    |
| 13 Joel Anderson   | 27 Anya Pearson    |
| 14 Michelle Arvila | 31 Crystal Whitney |
| Tony Pascuzzi      |                    |

*Lord, Hear Our Prayers:*

*Those needing healing and comfort:*

Pastor Erika Foss, Duane Gustafson, Judy Posch, Nancy Foss, Larry Kujala, Jessica Harmston, Barry Hansen, Katie Aune, Dave O'Melia, Shirley Bixby, and Kevin Cairn.



- + Families and communities that are still trying to get back on their feet following the devastating storms, fires, and floods throughout the country
- + Citizens, refugees and their families caught in the devastation and military actions in Ukraine and Eastern Europe.
- + People facing medical testing, challenges, & difficult situations
- + Those serving in the armed forces, at home or abroad.
- + Those seeking Jesus Christ in their lives.

**Scripture Readings May 2024**

May 5

6th Sunday of Easter  
Acts 10:44-48  
Psalm 98  
1 John 5:1-6  
John 15:9-17

May 12

7th Sunday of Easter  
Acts 1:15-17, 21-26  
Psalm 1  
1 John 5:9-13  
John 17:6-19

May 19

Pentecost Sunday  
Acts 2:1-21  
Psalm 104:24-34, 35b  
Romans 8:22-27  
John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15

May 26

Holy Trinity Sunday  
Isaiah 6:1-8  
Psalm 29  
Romans 8:12-17  
John 3:1-17

Trinity's Women of the ELCA will be meeting on **Wednesday, May 8, at 9:30 am** for Bible Study and a business meeting.



*There is still time to Help!*  
**WELCA is collecting School Kits**

**for Lutheran World Relief**

Check out the display in the entry and help them fill the next tub by May 15, 2024.

Needed for each kit:

- 4 - 70-sheet Spiral Notebooks  
*(no loose-leaf paper)*
- 1 - Ruler
- 1 - Pencil Sharpener
- 1 pr - Blunt Scissors
- 5 - Unsharpened #2 Pencils  
*(w/erasers)*
- 5 - Black or Blue Ballpoint Pens  
*(NO gel ink)*
- 1 - Box of 16 or 24 Crayons



Contact Gerry Ruuska or Norma Thomas with questions.

Sunday, April 14, was the day that Dn. Kari, Bp. Amy and the Trinity congregation blessed the beautiful quilts that will be going to Lutheran World Relief, Salvation Army and will also benefit area needs. Quilts were also chosen to be presented to graduating high school seniors of Trinity's family. As is tradition, members helped carry them out.



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**WELCA 2024 SPRING GATHERING**  
*by Sue Gustafson*

The annual spring gathering for Women of the Laurentian Conference met on April 6 at Immanuel Lutheran Church of Tower. The theme for the conference was "Renewal". Norma Thomas, Gerry Ruuska and Sue Gustafson from Trinity attended the conference.

Worship was led by Pastor Joel Guttormson of Immanuel Lutheran and a special meditation on Mary Magdalene was presented by storyteller Gloria Anderson-Hegg.

The business meeting included installation of new officers, proposed financial changes, treasurer's report and planning for the Fall Gathering. Information was given for the Women's Synod summer convention in June.

Kim Dickey from Global Health Ministries was the afternoon speaker. She gave a presentation with pictures and interesting information on personal experiences with women and families from impoverished countries in Africa. Young women in these countries are in desperate need for prenatal care and newborn care for their babies. GHM is working to fulfill their urgent needs such as iron pills, vitamins, malaria medications, transportation to hospitals, newborn kits, etc.

There were 35 attendees which included 13 church units from the Laurentian Conference. Fellowship was also shared during a luncheon at the church.

A common thread from the churches in our conference is quilt-making for Lutheran World Relief. There are multiple projects WELCA contributes to including Buddy Back Packs. There is a display outside the front door of the Fellowship Hall for School Kits, so please contribute to this mission by May 15.

Trinity's WELCA meets the second Wednesday of every month at 9:30 a.m. There is Bible study from the *Gather Magazine* and a short business meeting.

*All women of Trinity Lutheran are members of WELCA  
 And  
 ALL are Welcome*



Gerry Ruuska, Norma Thomas, Sue Gustafson busy packing up quilts to deliver to the Lutheran World Relief warehouse in the Twin Cities. Sturdy boxes to hold 3-5 quilts are always needed and may be dropped off during office hours, Sunday mornings or contact one of the WELCA ladies.



Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

<p>Worship 9:30 am w/communion <b>CCC Service 1:30 pm</b> AA, Al-Anon 7:00pm</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11</p>
<p>Worship 9:30 am w/communion <b>Happy Mother's Day</b> Worship 9:30 am w/communion AA, Al-Anon 7:00pm</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p>
<p>Pentecost Worship 9:30 am w/communion <b>Affirmation of Baptism</b> AA, Al-Anon 7:00pm</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>
<p>Holy Trinity Worship 9:30 am w/communion AA, Al-Anon 7:00pm</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>Worship 9:30 am w/communion <b>CCC Service 1:30 pm</b> AA, Al-Anon 7:00pm</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11</p>
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May

2024



Trinity Lutheran Church, ELCA  
P O Box 1196  
231 Second Street SE  
Cook, MN 55723  
(Address Service Requested)



## Trinity Lutheran Church Information

*Pastor:* Rev. Erika Foss  
*Congregational Care:* Dn. Kari Olson  
*Music Director:* Bailey Conger  
*Financial Manager/Bookkeeper:* Sue Carstens  
*Secretary:* Beth Sprouls



**Sunday Worship 9:30 am**  
*(Holy Communion Most Sundays)*  
Livestream Available on  
*Facebook & YouTube*

Office Hours  
Mondays by appointment  
Tuesday - Thursday 9:00 am - 4:00 pm  
Phone: 218-666-5965  
Email: [info@trinitycook.org](mailto:info@trinitycook.org)

Website: [www.trinitycook.org](http://www.trinitycook.org)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/TLC.Cook.MN](http://www.facebook.com/TLC.Cook.MN)  
YouTube: [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)  
(Trinity Lutheran Church of Cook)

**The Trinity Tribute** newsletter is published monthly to keep members and friends informed of church programs and to report news about the Trinity Lutheran Church community.