



THE TORCH

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February 2025
Sunday Worship
9:00 AM

Trinity Lutheran Church • 18137 Criswell Street • Bettendorf, Iowa 52722 • 563-332-5188
Pastor Stephen Nilsen 563-332-6432 (office) 319-540-1172 (cell) snilsen@trinitylcpv.com (email)

Greetings Lovely People of Trinity,

As February approaches, we see lots of signs that love is in the air: stores are stocked with Valentine's Day candy, cards, teddy bears, and other gifts, TV has commercials reminding people to go get those last minute jewelry or cards for their loved one. Even my daughter's daycare has reminded us of the rules for the upcoming Valentine's Day party. Love is all around us, but most of it is the commercialized, sugary version that asks us to mostly look for the stuff we need to get to show someone we love them.

Most people (even those who aren't the most active at a church) can tell you about a passage from the Bible that is about love. The movie *Wedding Crashers* even makes a joke about it at one point: First Corinthians 13 is an entire chapter devoted to love, as Paul poetically writes about what love is and how love is shared. Many of you are already thinking of that most common stretch now:

"Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends." (1 Cor. 13:4-8a)

I've been thinking a lot about this stretch of Paul's first letter to the church in Corinth lately. The community Paul was writing to was divided, arguing about many of the things we still argue about in worshipping communities today: whose gifts are best (or most needed), who has the right to speak in certain situations, and how to live out these laws that have been fulfilled by Christ. In chapter 12, Paul writes about how there are "many gifts but the same Spirit" and compares the community, as the Body of Christ to an individual's body, noting "If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it". (1 Cor. 12:4, 26; NRSV)

When we think of the love poem from the 13th chapter of Paul's letter as a continuation of his sentiment to a community working through what ways to share their gifts and honor the gifts of everyone in a divided community, we see why Paul bridges the two chapters with "If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal" (1 Cor. 13:1, NRSV). We need to act with love to live out our gifts to the fullest. Whether we are electricians or pastors, police officers or bookkeepers, data processors or students, what Paul is calling us to in a life together in Christ is that we use our gifts for love of the neighbor, and particularly love for the outcast and the least.

As I mentioned above, we are still working through how this will work. We are living in times that are ripe with division, hyper-partisanship, amped-up noise from siloed-off media, and arguments where it seems that people can hardly listen to someone else. This happens in our families, our churches, our communities, on social media, and (of course) in our government. Even when someone might try to preach about love and mercy for everyone, it can spark a debate about the place one should say that.

I implore you, dear people of Trinity Lutheran Church, to act with love. When we play into the same tendencies of our culture to be "noisy gongs" or "clanging cymbals," we miss the chances to listen. When we insist on boasting about who is right or fail to be patient or kind with our neighbors who are working toward a better version of themselves, we miss the chances to celebrate the gifts they bring and support the members who are suffering. I hope that we, as a congregation, as friends, and as a community gathered in Christ's name can do everything we do out of love: love for God, love for our neighbors, and love for each other. With that, the world will be a little bit less divided.

With love,

Trinity Office Hours Tues, Wed, Thurs - 9AM-1PM
Pastor Stephen's Office Hours Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs -10AM - 2PM

LETTER FROM COUNCIL PRESIDENT

As we move into 2025, three council members were elected to serve Trinity this year. Kathy Naslund was already on council, but we welcome new members Diane Holst and Ron Morrow. Thank you for your service! In addition, Bill Romans and Susan Varilek were voted to serve as members on the Trinity Endowment committee. Dane and Michelle Crist will be representing Trinity at the annual Synod Assembly, and Sharon Marquard will be representing Trinity as the Luther Properties delegate. I am happy to report that we also have a replacement on the Luther Properties Board as Henry Marquard agreed to replace John Newman. John had served on the Luther Properties Board for over twelve years! Thank you John for your dedication to helping keep a vital community necessity (affordable senior housing) running smoothly.

The 2025 annual operating budget was approved with estimated income of \$194,900 and expenses estimated at \$199,660.96. Expense budget increased roughly 2.5% from 2024, however our expenses for 2024 came in nearly \$15,000 under budget. Considering where we have been in years past, our budgets have been in a very good position for the past couple of years and the projection is that this will continue.

An enormous amount of work was done by the Property Committee and others to address the west Fellowship Hall wall. This is an extensive rehab project that will breathe new life into the exterior of Trinity. This project was approved and will be a great complement to the sign out front that was installed in 2024. These two projects show that Trinity is committed to keeping their property maintained and updated.

I would like to close by saying that there was a certain level of tension that was present at the annual meeting. This tension could also be viewed as passion in wanting to fully understand the annual report. There are lots of volunteers here at Trinity, and they do lots of great work to keep Trinity operating as efficiently as it can. I welcome any questions, comments, criticisms, or suggestions. If you don't know who to approach, please know that you can call or text me anytime at (563) 505-5211 or e-mail me at jpaul@bettendorf.org. I do not have all the answers, but I will make sure that the individuals that can answer your question(s) are put in contact with you. We all want the same thing, but at times we don't agree on the path to get there. That doesn't make anyone wrong, and I can assure you, that I will take the time to listen and understand your concerns. My only request is that you don't wait for a public forum to ask the questions. Please ask them in advance so we can sort through them.

Justin



WANT TO CONNECT THE WITH WEEKLY HAPPENINGS AT TRINITY?

Sign up for our weekly email bulletin that will let you know what's happening in the week ahead and have other great upcoming announcements, as well as the weekly bulletin for worship. Call (332-5188) or email (office@trinitylcpv.com) Paula in the office to sign up!

YEAR TO DATE FINANCIAL INFO THROUGH DECEMBER 2024

Collections to date	\$173,818.77
Interest Income	\$ 4,929.30
Expenses to date	\$180,061.16
Net to date	(\$1,313.09)
No funds have been transferred from Stewardship Reserves year to date.	

ATTENDANCE TOTALS FOR JANUARY 2025

January	5	69
January	12	49
January	19	52
January	26	78

BIRTHDAYS

3 Don Hogenson
4 Ellen Opperman
10 Aaron Trelstad
13 Karen Romans
16 Ridge Raddatz
19 Lolita Baker
26 Carol Kaufmann



ANNIVERSARY

4 Joel & Judy Rutledge



Worship & Fellowship Volunteers

	February 2	February 9	February 16	February 23	March 2
<i>Altar Guild</i>	Linda Busch	Randy Goslin	Linda Busch	Diana Mayes	Volunteer Needed
<i>Communion Assistant</i>	Sally Morrow	Justin Paul	Diana Holst	Marcia Brunsvold	Volunteer Needed
<i>Lector</i>	Sally Morrow	Justin Paul	Henry Marquard	Volunteer Needed	Ellen Opperman
<i>Usher Greeter</i>	Al McIlrath Ron Morrow	Don Cordts Debra Anderson	Volunteers Needed	Travis Brunsvold Volunteer Needed	Paul Opperman Volunteer Needed
<i>Worship Video Livestream Producer</i>	Justin Paul	Debi Goslin	Justin Paul	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed
<i>Fellowship</i>	Rudie Eberlein Kris Rupp	Volunteer Needed	HOT Team: Cookies	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed

If you would like to help us in our Sunday Gathering by doing any of the above tasks, please contact the church office to be added to the list of volunteers.

If you are unable to fulfill your duties, please find a replacement and call or email the church office (332-5188 or office@trinitylcpv.com) with your replacement. Thank you.



March 5

Worship Service at 6 PM

Disbursing Blessings & "Ashes to Go"
Anytime after 11 AM

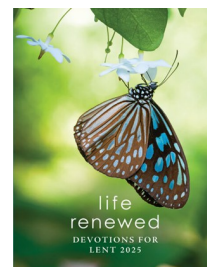
Ash Wednesday 2025

Ash Wednesday and Lent will be here before we know it, and we want to let you know what the plans are for TLC this Ash Wednesday. There will be an Ash Wednesday worship service at 6 PM with the usual imposition of ashes. This year we will also have brief blessings and ashes available throughout the day from 11 AM onward, so if you have plans for something else happening March 4, you are welcome to stop by the church parking lot throughout the day for the imposition of ashes and a blessing.

If you would like to assist in burning last year's palms from Palm Sunday to make the ashes for this year, please contact Pastor Stephen.

Lenten Devotionals Available for 2025

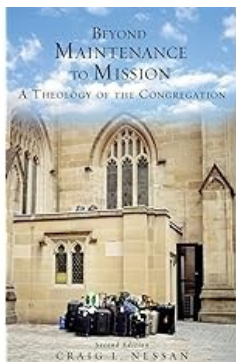
With Ash Wednesday on March 5, the Lenten season will be here soon and with it comes an opportunity to reflect on scripture and use some of the great work of pastors and theologians from around the Lutheran church. God brings new life in unexpected ways and in the most unlikely situations. This devotional reflects on how God does this in the creation of all things, the Israelites' rescue from slavery in Egypt, the dry bones and Ezekiel, the fiery furnace, the big fish and Jonah, and more. Life Renewed provides devotions for each day from Ash Wednesday to the Resurrection of Our Lord/Vigil of Easter (March 5 to April 19, 2025). The devotions begin with evocative images and brief scripture readings drawn from traditional Easter Vigil texts. The writers then bring their diverse voices and pastoral wisdom to the texts with quotations to ponder, reflections, and prayers.



Lenten Book Study:

Beyond Maintenance to Mission: A Theology of the Congregation by Rev. Dr. Craig Nesson

Wednesdays at 5:30 PM – March 12 - March 20



Lent will be here before we know it! As part of our Lenten Midweek Dinner, Worship & Study Series, Pastor Stephen invites you to take part in a book study on the influential book *Beyond Maintenance to Mission: A Theology of the Congregation* by Craig Nesson. Nesson is a professor at Wartburg Theological Seminary, specializing in ethics and contextual theology, and his book delves into the centrality of worship and mission to the life of any congregation. This book is visionary yet practical, urging connections to every aspect of ministry. We'll split the study over the course of the five Wednesdays in Lent before Holy Week, and if you'd like to buy the book, you may either talk to Pastor Stephen or purchase one online at the following [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com/dp/0800634444) | [Barnes & Noble](https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/beyond-maintenance-to-mission-craig-nessan/1134444444) | [Bookshop.org](https://www.bookshop.org/books/beyond-maintenance-to-mission-a-theology-of-the-congregation-craig-nessan/9780800634444)

The readings for the weeks will be:

- March 12 Preface & Chapters 1 & 2
- March 19 Chapters 3 - 5
- March 26 Chapters 6 - 8
- April 2 Chapters 9 - 11
- April 9 Chapter 12 & Conclusion

If you have questions, feel free to contact Pastor Stephen.

Trinity Card Crafting Ministry Meeting

Thursday, February 13 - 1:00 - 3:00 PM

Trinity's card ministry meets monthly on the second Thursday of the month at 1:00 PM in the lower level of the church. The next meeting will be February 13 from 1:00-3:00 PM. All are welcome to join us- no experience necessary!

Each month we make and deliver cards to the residents of Aspire of Pleasant Valley Nursing and Rehab (Formerly River Manor). We also make and mail greetings to members and friends of Trinity. In addition, the committee has been working to replenish the supply of greeting cards for sale in the Fellowship Hall. All cards are \$2.00.

Thank you for your support of this ministry. If you have any questions, please contact Chris Kaul, Linda Busch, Claudia Neumann, Cathy Newman, Marcia Brunsvold or Pastor Stephen.



Trinity Card
Crafting
CRAFTED WITH LOVE

Altar Flowers



Do you have a birthday or anniversary you'd like to commemorate? Starting in January, we will have Altar Flowers that you can sign-up to sponsor for any of the worship services throughout the year. The bulletin board will be by the door between the narthex and hallway.

Questions?
Call or Email Paula at
563-332-5188 or
office@trinitylcpv.com

Seeking Help with Livestreaming Worship

Our worship services are available to view on both our Facebook page (facebook.com/TrinityLCPV) and our YouTube channel

([@TrinityLCPV](https://youtube.com/@TrinityLCPV)). As we continue to provide this ministry for those who

are unable to join us in worship in-person, please consider helping with the livestreams. After much work from dedicated volunteers, our live-stream set-up is very easy to operate. Please contact Pastor Stephen or Randy Goslin (rgoslin@mchsi.com) if you would like to help.



Let Us Gather Together Sunday, February 2 @ 5:00 PM

Valley Country Cafe

We love gathering together for fellowship here at TLC, but what if we took that out into the community for a dinner out? Bring a friend or just bring yourself to our night out at Valley Country Cafe for food and fellowship. You can view their menu online [here](#).

Let Us Gather Together



Sunday, February 2 at 5 PM
Valley Country Cafe
24487 Valley Drive, Bettendorf



Listen God is Calling
Loving Our Global Neighbors

Thursday evenings on Zoom
 6:30 - 8:00 PM
 All are welcome

Register once to attend any or all sessions

Southeastern Iowa Synod
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Southeastern Iowa Synod Hosting Evening
 Join Bishop Amy Current and leaders from across the synod for a short presentation and discussion. You may register once and attend any one or all of these events online at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6481123456789>

January 30: Loving our Neighbors of Palestine, Israel, and the Middle East.

February 6: Loving our Neighbors by "Preaching and Teaching with Love and Respect for the Jewish People."

February 13: Loving our Neighbors through Accompanying Migrants with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities.

February 20: Loving our Neighbors in partnership with the Pare and Mwanga Dioceses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.



Winter Scott County Library's Bookmobile Stops

The Scott County Library Bookmobile will stop by the church parking lot through the winter on Tuesday afternoons every three weeks. Anyone with a library card from a library in Scott County can check out books and other media. We'll have snacks and drinks available in Fellowship Hall.

We hope to see you there! Tuesdays 4:40-5:10 PM, February 11, March 4.

For more info, visit: Scottcountyiowa.gov/library/bookmobile

New PPALs Bible Study
*Saturdays at 8 AM at
 Trinity Lutheran Church*

Join together in a new Bible Study with Christians from around the PV, Princeton, Argo, and Le Claire area that make up PPALs. We encourage you to grab a coffee or beverage and join in for readings and discussion of the Bible. For more information, see [Randy Goslin](#).




BIBLE Study

WEDNESDAYS AT 10 AM
 Join us for a **weekly** Bible study centered around the texts for the upcoming week's worship service as we find what God is up to in the text and our lives this week

HOLY BIBLE

ALL ARE WELCOME

WEEKLY READINGS

02/02 Jeremiah 1:4-10, Psalm 71:1-6, 1 Corinthians 13:1-13, Luke 4:21-30

02/09 Isaiah 6:1-13, Psalm 138, 1 Corinthians 15:1-11, Luke 5:1-11

02/16 Jeremiah 17:5-10, Psalm 1, 1 Corinthians 15:12-20, Luke 6:17-26

02/23 Genesis 45:3-11, Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40, 1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50, Luke 6:27-38



Shared Youth Group Diving in to Faith and Fun with Food

Sundays, 5:00-6:30 PM

February meetings at First Pres. Church in LeClaire

March meetings here at Trinity Lutheran Church

TLC youth from 6th through 9th grades will be joining together with First Presbyterian Church's youth (and any friends that the youth would like to bring along) for a fun, faith-filled youth group meeting each Sunday through the school year. Each meeting will include a simple dinner, games, and discussion of the developing faith of the youth. In January, we will re-start the group after our month off in December, and we may have a special outing later in the month.

The Sunday night youth program will be at Trinity for the months of January, March, and May. TLC will be providing simple meals. If anyone would like to donate money or buy food, snacks, and drinks, please sign up on the sheet in the Narthex and you will be contacted as to what is needed. Further questions or looking for other ways to help? Contact Pastor Stephen or Debi Goslin.

Trinity Lutheran Church Food Pantry Volunteer Opportunities

A dedicated group of volunteers from around TLC and others in our community has continued meeting and working out some early logistics for our new food pantry. The Trinity Food Pantry will open starting the first week in November, serving the community with dry goods and non-perishables.

The pantry will be open Mondays from 9 AM to 11 AM and Thursdays from 4 PM to 6 PM.

If you are interested in helping with this exciting new ministry opportunity, please contact Dane Crist or Pastor Stephen or email pantry@trinitylcpv.com. There's also a sign-up sheet in the Narthex, full of opportunities to help sort food, help guests, and track the inventory of our pantry in the basement.



Did you know...LUTHER PROPERTIES provides affordable, independent housing for seniors? This ELCA organization consists of 5 complexes, 2 in Davenport and 3 in Bettendorf. These apartments provide safe homes for those seniors who struggle financially. Rent is based on income, with electricity and water costs included. If you know of someone who could benefit from such assistance, please contact John Newman (563-949-7375) for information.



Luther Properties' mission is to provide housing assistance to low-income elderly or disabled persons in Scott County, Iowa.



Sharing the Stories of Favorite Hymns *Adult Sunday School Opportunity after Worship*

Join Pastor Stephen after worship beginning Sunday, February 9 for a special Adult Education Forum on our favorite hymns and the stories behind them. Pastor Stephen will pick the first week's, but you are encouraged to send in your favorite hymns to learn more at other Sunday sessions. All are welcome to learn the story! How can we keep from singing!? Email Pastor Stephen at snilsen@trinitylcpv.com if you have a hymn you'd like to learn more about.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS: Lutheran Day on the Hill is coming up in March!

Are you interested in a trip to the Iowa State Capitol to advocate for neighbors in need around Iowa? Would you like to meet with your state representative and senator to discuss issues like refugee assistance, mental health access, or adoption? These and more are great reasons to keep an eye out for the date coming of the 2025 Lutheran Day on the Hill sponsored by Lutheran Services in Iowa. Pastor Stephen will be going and would love to have you join in for the day. You may visit LSIowa.org/LDH for more information.



Winter Coat & Boot Drive

Help our community in need by bringing any new or lightly used coats, jackets, boots, or shoes for people who are served by either Central Community Circle Food Pantry or Trinity Food Pantry. There's a shopping cart in the narthex to drop off donations for those in need.

Hats and gloves are also appreciated!



Thank-you to Choral Director Chelsea Crumbleholme for a great year leading the Trinity Lutheran Choir! Best wishes on your future endeavors in the Chicago area!





February 2025 LSI Bulletin/Newsletter Article

February reminds us of love. Love for the Lord, love for our partners, and love for friends and family. We offer you this story of the power of love between a mother and daughter.

“Without Amy’s support, I would still be an addict, and I wouldn’t be where I am today,” said Michelle, an LSI client.

Michelle was struggling with substance abuse, legal issues, and mental health issues when she found LSI therapist Amy Davis back in 2021.

“God helps us in ways we don’t always want him to,” said Michelle. “When the coronavirus pandemic hit, I lost my job. The unemployment lines were long at the time, so we went several months without a paycheck, so I decided to get creative with my finances. I started selling drugs and was later arrested with a large quantity of drugs. They came in, took my kid, and I went to jail. After that, I was referred to work with Amy at LSI.”

Michelle and Amy worked through Michelle’s childhood trauma, processing the significant losses in her life due to drug overdose and death. Amy helped Michelle work on building a positive support system, a list of future goals, and a relationship with her daughter, Rachel.

“Rachel and I had a lot of problems when we entered therapy because I was a drug addict, and there was a lot of broken trust between us,” said Michelle. “LSI therapists helped us rebuild that trust and helped show her the progress I had made when she couldn’t see it herself.”

Rachel, in therapy as well, has been seeing LSI Therapist Chelsea Zaragoza since 2019. In addition to one-on-one therapy sessions with their respective therapists, Michelle and Rachel also do family therapy sessions with Amy and Chelsea. These sessions help the mother and daughter have time set aside to talk about issues they are having in a healthy, productive way.

“Michelle has had a lot of struggles, loss, and a lot of people who didn’t believe in her, and her daughter was one of them,” said Amy Davis, LSI Therapist. “We have worked hard doing family and individual therapy to bring those two back together, and it has worked. Where they are now, I don’t think I’ve seen a mother-daughter relationship as healthy as the two of them are.”

Today, Michelle has her daughter back in her home, she is thriving as a general manager at a coffee shop, and she is going to school for substance abuse counseling. She just received her one-year sobriety chip, and she has a good support system.

“To see how far Michelle has come since I met her is truly remarkable,” said Amy. “She built the ladder, and she climbed out.”

“I was a mess when I first came to LSI,” said Michelle. “Now, I’m sober, in college, have a high-paying job, and have my daughter back. Amy believed in me when no one else did, not even myself. She gave me hope.”

For more information, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI’s Director of Philanthropy and Church Relations, at Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org or 563-676-2065.

LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at LSIowa.org and facebook.com/LSI.iowa.

February 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 8 AM PALS Bible Study
2 9:00 Worship 10:00 Sunday School 10:00 Property 5:00 Youth Group 5:00 Gathering at Valley Country Cafe	3 9 AM - 11 AM Food Pantry	4 2:00 Education 4:00 Worship & Music	5 10:00 Bible Study 3:30 Social Ministry	6 4 PM - 6 PM Food Pantry	7 Pastor's Sabbath	8 8 AM PALS Bible Study
9 9:00 Worship 10:00 Sunday School 5:00 Youth Group	10 9 AM - 11 AM Food Pantry 6:30 Council	11 4:40 - 5:10 PM Bookmobile	12 10:00 Bible Study	13 1:00 Card Ministry 4 PM - 6 PM Food Pantry	14 Pastor's Sabbath	15 8 AM PALS Bible Study
16 9:00 Worship 10:00 Sunday School 5:00 Youth Group	17 9 AM - 11 AM Food Pantry 6:00 Stewardship	18	19 10:00 Bible Study	20 4 PM - 6 PM Food Pantry	21 Pastor's Sabbath	22 8 AM PALS Bible Study
23 9:00 Worship 10:00 Sunday School 5:00 Youth Group	24 9 AM - 11 AM Food Pantry	25	26 10:00 Bible Study	27 4 PM - 6 PM Food Pantry	28 Pastor's Sabbath	