

From the Pastor's Pen



**“Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens,
and let us make a name for ourselves; otherwise we shall be scattered
abroad upon the face of the whole earth.”**

- Genesis 11:4 -

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

In Confirmation, we have begun learning about and wrestling with the Hebrew Bible, what is more commonly known as the Old Testament. People of all ages will often lament that they find the Hebrew Bible boring, difficult to understand, and irrelevant to their lives. A common question I hear from folks is, “Why do any of these stories matter to us today?” A big part of what we try to do during the “Bible Year” of Confirmation is help the students reframe this perspective. Because when you are open to it and paying attention, there is so much there that is helpful, meaningful, and pertinent.

A recent example came to mind for me from Genesis, Chapter 11. The descendants of Noah were making their way in the world after the great flood and after God’s universal covenant which followed. Following the flood, God promised to bless and never again destroy human beings and all creatures. In response, the people decide they should work together, using their abilities and technological advances to build a majestic tower with its “top in the heavens.” They did this, not to glorify God, not to help others, but so that they might “make a name” for themselves. The goal

was to amass fame, influence, and power for themselves. This did not work out well for the people.

When I read this story today, I can’t help but think of another technological advancement, one that we hear a lot about these days, Artificial Intelligence (AI). AI is seemingly everywhere right now. It is integrated into nearly every application on our devices and machines. It is in the news almost every day. If you go on a road trip, you will find data centers dotting the landscape.

Like the people after the flood, those who hold power in the AI revolution today are preoccupied with “making a name” for themselves and their people. They are obsessed with the questions of whether we *can* develop this technology and who will “win” the AI race. Consequently, too few people are questioning whether we *should* continue down this path. AI developers, tech companies, and government agents are disregarding the likely ecological consequences and overlooking the unknown societal implications of Artificial Intelligence. In recent weeks, we are even hearing dire warnings from some of the developers themselves. In spite of all this, we press on, full speed ahead, racing toward ... what, we’re not even sure.

Continued on page 6

Unapproved September Council Meeting Minutes

Trinity Lutheran Church
Church Council Meeting
September 8, 2026
7:00 p.m.

President Virginia Lemme called the meeting to order at 7:20 p.m.

Voting members present: Pastor Steven Lindley, Deacon Koren Lindley, President Virginia Lemme, Vice-president Jeremiah Schneider, Past president Kurt Christiansen, Treasurer Dick Ellis, Secretary Nancy Sabbe, Darrel Presuhn—Board of Trustees, Karen Giles—Board of Deacons, Marissa Nussbaum—Board of Faith Formation designee

Non-voting members present: Tonia Meadows, Dave Ellens, Rob Thuringer, Tami Christiansen

Voting members absent: Alicia Entringer—Board of Faith Formation

Non-voting members absent: Sherri Dubbelde, Rachel Waagmeester, Brenda Soper, Ben Kapelle

Vice-president Jeremiah Schneider gave the devotion based on Ecclesiastes 4:9 which states that two are better than one. It is a reminder that the church is the shared responsibility of all its members.

Pastor Steven Lindley opened the meeting with prayer.

The Council recited Trinity’s mission statement.

Motion by Kurt Christiansen, seconded by Darrel Presuhn, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

The following correction was made to the minutes of the August meeting: change the first paragraph of the Financial Report to read “Treasurer Dick Ellis reported that the checking account balance is sufficient to cover the July bills payable in August. This balance includes a \$20,000 transfer from the Hanneman Endowment Fund. The general fund offering through July totals approximately \$42,000 less than anticipated in the 2026 mission plan. To date, the expenses are about \$18,000 less than anticipated.” Motion by Treasurer Dick Ellis, seconded by Vice-president Jeremiah Schneider, to approve the minutes as corrected. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Treasurer Dick Ellis reported that the checking account balance is sufficient to pay the August bills payable in September. The general offering through August is \$51,700 less than anticipated in the 2026 mission plan. To date, expenses are \$23,000 less than anticipated.

\$104,000 has been transferred from savings to cover expenditures January through August 2026. The balance remaining in savings is \$89,000 in the Hanneman Endowment Fund and \$19,220.04 in the Cornerstone account.

Annual income of \$400,000 is necessary to continue Trinity’s mission. Discussion of how to raise the awareness of the financial circumstances followed. Messages to the congregation through speaking at worship services and written correspondence were suggested.

Motion by Vice-president Jeremiah Schneider, seconded by Past president Kurt Christiansen, to acknowledge the Financial Report. Motion carried.

REPORTS

Pastor Steven Lindley reported

- He is waiting for communication from the web development team.
- Cindy Meyer has accepted the Custodian position. She will work 20 hours a week beginning Monday, September 21.
- The position of Maintenance Manager is open. The position description and job listing are being prepared.
- The community Thanksgiving Eve service will be held at Trinity this year. He is thinking about making some changes to the service.
- A theme has been chosen for the Hanging of the Greens service.
- He reminded Council members that the Mission Moments are one way to let the congregation know about the good things that are going on at Trinity.
- Confirmation classes have begun.
- A small, but faithful, group of high school students are meeting weekly.
- He has scheduled visitation weeks through December.

Unapproved September Council Meeting Minutes

Deacon Koren Lindley reported

- Sunday school begins September 13. 85 students are registered. Teachers include three sets of two high school girls who have volunteered.
- December 13 is the date for *Angels Aware!* worship. This will be an intergenerational, musical Christmas program and will be presented at the 11:00 service.
- She and Pastor Rebecca Breddin will continue their ministry on the Dakota State University campus and are hopeful that it will be recognized as an official DSU activity group.
- She has been selected to participate in a trial cohort for Wonders of Worship. The intent is to explore and explain why we do what we do in worship.
- *See For Yourself* has been selected as the text for the Women’s Bible Study beginning Wednesday, September 23.

President Virginia Lemme reported

- Reminded the Council of upcoming events—God’s Work, Our Hands on September 20, the community Thanksgiving Eve Worship on November 25, and Hanging of the Greens on November 29.
- Richard Wolf has cleaned all the carpets. He suggested that the areas seeing more traffic be cleaned again possibly after Christmas.
- The evidence of the bat population has increased recently especially in the front of the sanctuary. The owner of CP Bat Mitigation will be coming this week check on the problem. There will be no charge.
- She is meeting with the chairs of the Boards to prepare for their work on the 2027 mission plan. The Board requests must be completed by November 10.

Vice-president Jeremiah Schneider had no report.

Board of Deacons—Karen Giles reported

- Choir directors and the music performance schedules are in place.
- The monthly letters going out to the service groups will include the option for donating coffee, paper products, and money for the coffee hour.
- They will be discussing the funeral policy and potentially updating it.
- Home care teams will be meeting.

- Diane Bruns will bring the message on October 18. Pastor Jeff Backer from St. Dysmas will preach on November 22.
- The Jingle Change offering in August was \$192.52. The September Jingle Change offering is designated for the local Kids Backpack project.
- There are currently five videographers. The scheduling and their time sheets have been revised.
- Hanging of the Greens will be November 29.

Board of Trustees—Darrel Presuhn reported

- Acuity Insurance Company has quoted a price of \$26,900 for Trinity’s property insurance. This is less than the 2026 premium because they reduced the value of the building. The Board is waiting for additional quotes through Marsh McLennan Agency.
- Riddles Glass will provide a quote for repairs to the ADA door and the door in the north hallway.
- Ruud’s Construction has submitted a quote of \$4,778 to replace the door in the southwest stairway.
- Madison Lawn Care has replaced a sprinkler head and raised others in the south boulevard.
- New carpet has been installed in the two Sunday School rooms on the lower level.
- The Board discussed the placement of the flags and recommended leaving them in the narthex.

Board of Faith Formation—report contained in Deacon Koren’s report

TEAM BUILDING

Teams—Deacons, Trustees, Faith Formation, and officers—played a round of Apples to Apples: Bible edition.

NEW BUSINESS

President Virginia Lemme reminded the Boards that they must have their requests for the 2027 mission plan to her no later than November 10. The requests should reflect the amounts that are truly necessary.

Council members were encouraged to begin preparing the description of what they have done in the past year. It is intended to be a written report that will aid incoming Council members.

October 2026						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Holy Communion on the 1st & 4th Sundays Home Communion on the 4th Sunday				01 • No Preschool • 1:00PM–3:00PM Coffee Time on Thursdays : Fellowship Hall	02 • No Preschool • 6:30AM–7:30AM Men's Group Bible Study	03 • Stewardship Day • 5:00PM–6:00PM Fellowship Potluck Meal : Fellowship Hall • 6:00PM–7:00PM Saturday Worship w/Holy Communion : Fellowship Hall
04 • Stewardship Day • 8:45AM–9:45AM Traditional Worship : Sanctuary • 9:45AM–10:45AM Coffee Hour & OCC Pre-Packing : Fellowship Hall • 10:00AM–10:59AM Nominating Committee Meeting : Church Office • 10:00AM–10:50AM Sunday School : Fireside Room, Sunday School Rooms • 11:00AM–12:00PM Celebration Worship : Sanctuary • 12:00PM–1:00PM Worship Broadcast on KJAM 1390 AM • 12:15PM–12:45PM <i>Angels Aware!</i> Rehearsal : Fellowship Hall	05 • 7:00PM–8:00PM Scouts Troop 5 Meeting : Fellowship Hall	06 • 10:00AM–11:00AM Staff Meeting : Church Office • 1:00PM–3:30PM Quilting : Fellowship Hall • 6:30PM–7:30PM Rostered Staff Reviews : Conference Room	07 • 4:30PM–5:15PM Epiphany Bell Choir Rehearsal : Sanctuary • 5:30PM–6:15PM Covenant Choir Rehearsal : Fireside Room • 5:30PM–6:30PM 6th–8th Confirmation : Fellowship Hall • 5:30PM–7:00PM OCC Pre-Packing : Upper Level Sun. School Rooms • 7:00PM–8:00PM Youth Group : Youth Room • 7:00PM–8:15PM Women's Bible Study : Fellowship Hall	08 • 1:00PM–4:00PM Coffee Time on Thursdays & DSU Athletes OCC Work : Fellowship Hall	09 • 6:30AM–7:30AM Men's Group Bible Study	10
11 • Jingle Change • 8:45AM–9:45AM Traditional Worship : Sanctuary • 9:45AM–10:45AM Coffee Hour & OCC Pre-Packing : Fellowship Hall • 10:00AM–10:50AM Sunday School : Fireside Room, Sunday School Rooms • 11:00AM–12:00PM Celebration Worship : Sanctuary • 12:00PM–1:00PM Worship Broadcast on KJAM 1390 AM	12 <i>Native American Day</i> • No Preschool • Office Closed • Pastor's Visitation Week	13 • Pastor's Visitation Week • 10:00AM–11:00AM Staff Meeting : Church Office • 12:00PM–1:00PM Finance Meeting : Zoom • 1:00PM–3:30PM Quilting : Fellowship Hall • 5:00PM–6:30PM Stewardship Cohort : Church Office • 7:00PM–9:00PM Council Meeting : Fellowship Hall	14 • Pastor's Visitation Week • 10:00AM–1:00PM DSU Tabling • 4:30PM–5:15PM Epiphany Bell Choir Rehearsal : Sanctuary • 5:30PM–6:15PM Covenant Choir Rehearsal : Fireside Room • 5:30PM–6:30PM 6th–8th Confirmation : Fellowship Hall • 5:30PM–7:00PM OCC Pre-Packing : Upper Level Sun. School Rooms • 7:00PM–8:00PM Youth Group : Youth Room • 7:00PM–8:15PM Women's Bible Study : Fellowship Hall	15 • Pastor's Visitation Week • 1:00PM–3:00PM OCC Pre-Packing : Fireside Room ; Coffee Time on Thursdays : Fellowship Hall	16 • Pastor's Visitation Week • 6:30AM–7:30AM Men's Group Bible Study	17 • Pastor's Visitation Week
18 • Pastor's Visitation Week • 8:45AM–9:45AM Traditional Worship : Sanctuary • 9:45AM–10:45AM Coffee Hour : Fellowship Hall • 10:00AM–10:50AM Sunday School : Fireside Room, Sunday School Rooms • 11:00AM–12:00PM Celebration Worship : Sanctuary • 12:00PM–4:00PM Confirmation Retreat : Fellowship Hall, Sanctuary • 12:00PM–1:00PM Worship Broadcast on KJAM 1390 AM	19 • 7:00PM–8:00PM Scouts Troop 5 Meeting : Fellowship Hall	20 • 9:30AM–11:00AM Mary Circle : Fellowship Hall • 10:00AM–11:00AM Staff Meeting : Church Office	21 • 4:30PM–5:15PM Epiphany Bell Choir Rehearsal : Sanctuary • 5:30PM–6:15PM Covenant Choir Rehearsal : Fireside Room • 5:30PM–6:30PM 6th–8th Confirmation : Fellowship Hall • 5:30PM–7:00PM OCC Pre-Packing : Upper Level Sun. School Rooms • 7:00PM–8:00PM Youth Group : Youth Room • 7:00PM–8:15PM Women's Bible Study : Fellowship Hall	22 • 1:00PM–3:00PM Coffee Time on Thursdays : Fellowship Hall • 7:00PM–8:00PM Scouts Pack Meeting Halloween Party : Fellowship Hall	23 • 6:30AM–7:30AM Men's Group Bible Study	24
25 <i>Reformation Sunday</i> • 8:45AM–9:45AM Traditional Worship w/Confirmation : Sanctuary • 9:45AM–10:45AM Coffee Hour : Fellowship Hall • 10:00AM–10:50AM Sunday School : Fireside Room, Sunday School Rooms • 10:00AM–10:30AM Confirmation Pictures : Sanctuary • 11:00AM–12:00PM Celebration Worship w/Confirmation : Sanctuary • 12:00PM–1:00PM Worship Broadcast on KJAM 1390 AM	26 • 7:00PM–8:00PM Scouts Troop 5 Meeting : Fellowship Hall	27 • 8:00AM–5:00PM Preschool Bundt Cakes Sorting : Narthex • 10:00AM–11:00AM Staff Meeting : Church Office • 1:00PM–3:30PM Quilting : Fellowship Hall • 5:00PM–6:30PM Stewardship Cohort : Church Office • 6:00PM–7:00PM Policy Committee Meeting : Fellowship Hall ; Scouts Committee Meeting : Fireside Room	28 • 10:00AM–1:00PM DSU Tabling • 4:30PM–5:15PM Epiphany Bell Choir Rehearsal : Sanctuary • 5:30PM–6:15PM Covenant Choir Rehearsal : Fireside Room • 5:30PM–6:30PM 6th–8th Confirmation : Fellowship Hall • 6:30PM–7:00PM Adult Choir Rehearsal : Fireside Room • 7:00PM–8:00PM Youth Group : Youth Room • 7:00PM–8:15PM Women's Bible Study : Fellowship Hall	29 • 1:00PM–3:00PM Coffee Time on Thursdays : Fellowship Hall	30 • 6:30AM–7:30AM Men's Group Bible Study	31 <i>Reformation Day</i>

Pastor’s Article

Continued from page 1

Scripture can often serve as a mirror, which can help us more clearly see and interpret contemporary issues. The story of the “Tower of Babel” is a story that continually repeats itself in every age, era, and culture. And it is playing out right before us once again today. My thoughts here are not intended to stir up fear, but to encourage you all to be aware and informed, and to use your voice when you are able. In the end, our hope and trust is not in our own technology, abilities, or achievements, but in God, who is trustworthy and loving and merciful. As people of faith, we are called to lift up God’s name, not our own.

Peace be with you.

Pastor Steve

Pastor’s October Visitation Week

Pastor Steve’s October visitation week will be the week of October 12th. Visitation weeks are intended to be time set aside simply to connect with you all. You do not need any particular reason to schedule a visit with pastor, but if you are struggling and need someone to talk with, he is available for that, as well. Visits can be serious or light, thoughtful or silly, lengthy or brief - whatever works best for you.

Please feel free to get yourself or your family signed up for a visit at this [link](#). Once you have signed up, as we get closer to that day, pastor will contact you to set a location. If you have any questions, or would rather schedule a visit directly with Pastor Steve, feel free to reach out to him.

Membership Information

Is your info. up-to-date?

Have you moved? Did you disconnect your landline? Did you change your e-mail address? Did you get married? Did you have a baby? Did you get a divorce? Do you wonder why the church has not been connecting with you? Please notify the church office when you have an address change, e-mail change, marital status change, etc. or update the information on your Realm account.

Council Minutes

Continued from page 3

Pastor Steven Lindley will send an email to the Nominating Committee to initiate the first meeting of the committee. He encouraged Council members to look at the responsibilities of the Board positions, and if updates are needed, to send them to President Virginia Lemme.

Staff reviews will be conducted in October.

Motion by Treasurer Dick Ellis, seconded by Darrel Presuhn, to continue to offer the full-time staff Portico’s Select Copay option for their primary health care benefit. All voting members voted in favor of the motion with Pastor Steven Lindley and Deacon Koren Lindley abstaining. Motion carried.

The meeting closed with the Lord’s Prayer.

Motion to adjourn made by Past president Kurt Christiansen and seconded by Darrel Presuhn. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Sabbe, secretary



Coffee Hour Schedule

October: Goodness–Carol Andersen and Tom & Joyce Farrell
November: Faithfulness–Tonia Meadows and Gayle Maberry
December: Gentleness–Linda Nighbert



Financial Response
as of 8/31/2026

General offering for the first eight months is \$51,718.44 less than the mission plan anticipated.

The year-to-date statistics are:
Total Income (YTD) \$198,066.43
Total Expenses (YTD) \$275,618.17

Thank you for your generous support of Trinity’s mission!

NEWS FROM THE FOUNDATION

Save the date for Sunday, November 15, for the first-ever Trinity Foundation Sunday at Trinity Lutheran Church. Foundation commission members will lead and assist with both worship services, serve freshly made lefse during fellowship, and share updates in the E-news through early November about your Trinity Foundation.

This special day will highlight how the Trinity Foundation supports our church and community’s future and ministry goals. Please join us for worship, fellowship, and delicious traditional treats as we learn together about our foundation’s lasting impact. Save the date: Sunday, November 15, 2026.

Foundation Grants

Upcoming grant applications for 2026 are open for the Faith In Action Grants and the Hazel Johnson Endowment; all applications are due by October 31, 2026, and awards will be decided in late November 2026.

Faith In Action Grants

- **Goal:** Fund projects that support the missions and ministries of Trinity Lutheran Church.
- **Rules:** Must not be paid for by the church’s regular operating budget.
- **Who Can Apply:** Individuals, boards, choirs, committees, and youth groups.
- **Deadline:** October 31, 2026.

Hazel Johnson Endowment

- **Goal:** Support global, national, and local U.S. missions.
- **Rules:** The foundation tries to split funds between global and U.S. missions based on requests.
- **Deadline:** October 31, 2026.

How to Apply

- **Get Forms:** Pick them up at the church office, visit the Trinity Lutheran Church Website, or email Tom Farrell at retiredtom.farrell@gmail.com or Alex Eykamp at officemanager@tlcmadison.com.
- **Turn In:** Return completed forms to the church office by October 31, 2026.
- **Decision:** Award winners will be chosen in late November 2026.

Trinity Family, ALL are Welcome

We want to welcome you to join us for varied times in October to pre-pack items for Operation Christmas Child GO (Gospel Opportunity) Shoeboxes. Our Goal is 400 GO Boxes!

Activities will include:

- Coloring Insert Pages
- Gluing Colored Pages inside the lids of the Boxes
- Putting socks in Baggies
- Creating Bags of hair ties and bracelets
- Creating Bead Kits
- Folding T-shirts around Pumps and Wrapping in Folded Soccer Balls plus Rubber Banding
- Sorting Items for age groups.
- Writing insert cards from the Trinity Family

Pre-Packing Dates/Times/Place

Sunday, October 4, 9:45am to 11am/Fellowship Hall
Sunday, October 11, 9:45am to 11am/Fellowship Hall
Thursday, October 15, 1pm to 3pm/Fireside Room
Wednesdays
October 7, 5:30pm to 7pm/ Designated Sunday School Rooms/Upper Level Only
October 14 " "
October 21 " "

Confirmation Students and Parents: Wednesday Dates allow you to come and help during your child’s confirmation time **and/or** having them stay an extra half hour to provide help.

These Pre-Pack Events will allow us to be organized for our:

Congregational Packing Party
(Please Mark Your Calendars)
Sunday, November 8, 3pm–??
Fellowship Hall

Affirmation of
Baptism
Sunday, October 25
8:45 & 11:00 a.m.





203 N. Harth Ave.
Madison, SD 57042

Return Service Requested

Financial Giving Options

- Checks can be mailed to the church.
- Credit cards can be processed in the church office.
- The church website (www.tlcmadison.com) allows for one-time or recurring donations using a checking/savings account or a credit/debit card. If you would like to give online, please use this code.
- The Electronic Giving option through Vanco can also be initialized by filling out an application form in the church office.
- If you should have questions with any of these options or would like to discuss which one is the best option for you, please call Alex at the church office at 605-256-2771.



Mission of the Month

The October Mission of the Month is Domestic Abuse Network (Madison). Our donations help support our local center, who serves women and children impacted by domestic abuse. Men are also served but are transported to a center in Sioux Falls. *Gifts may be designated on offering envelopes/checks to Mission of the Month Fund. The Jingle Change collection on October 11 also supports the Mission of the Month.*

Pastoral Care

If you are in need of pastoral care or know someone who is, please contact Pastor Steve or the church office.

Congregational Information

Deaths: Fay Dimick on September 10

Baptisms: Rhett Lindholm on September 6

Cross Hoff on September 13

Weddings: none

Food Pantry

The Lake County Food Pantry mission of the month for October is laundry detergent. Diapers and baby wipes are also requested.