



TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
1314 E Lexington Blvd • Eau Claire, WI 54701



JULY 2026 NEWSLETTER

FROM THE PASTORS DESK

Most folks are aware of the old adage that it is not a good idea to talk about religion or politics in polite company. We were taught from a young age not to bring up those topics at our next social gathering, let alone that politics may find its way into a sermon. Heaven forbid! And yet in our current national context, it seems the two topics are intermingled, if not completely indistinct from one another, in some circles. And with the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence this year, expect no shortage of this on display across our country.

The NY Times recently ran a story that said, "The United States was written into being..." with the words, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." Amazing words and wisdom behind them! We are equal. We have rights. Those rights give shape to our very existence as created beings. As author A.O. Scott puts it, they move us "from a theory of knowledge to a vision of the good."

Looking back from our vantage point 250 years into the future, we see evidence that these words were more aspirational than descriptive of the conditions on the ground. While the truths may be self-evident, we continue to struggle with instances of inequality in the human race where people have their endowed rights infringed upon. This is not new; Jesus lived and did ministry in an environment even more challenging.

Jesus found himself in conflict with both the religious and empirical forces of his day for hanging out with tax collectors and sinners. You see, the powers of the day had strict rules about conduct and purity, and they believed Jesus was violating those rules. When confronted, he told them, "Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds." Jesus put them on notice that the wisdom of the world is fruitless, and his incarnational deeds of inclusion, forgiveness and love were the true wisdom from God. He gave thanks that the Lord of heaven who had hidden this from the wise and intelligent and had revealed it to infants.

Jesus shows how easy it is to take his yoke on, one that is gentle and humble in heart. Yet the gyrations of leaders throughout the millennia have sought to exert their power and control over others under the guise of wisdom and intelligence. The truth of God's love for all remains hidden to them, even as infants are able to recognize it as self-evident. Jesus calls us to fulfill the law and encourages us to take it even further. Jesus calls us to treat all people as equal and to help them live out their unalienable rights given them by their Creator. May you know that easy yoke and light burden that Jesus proclaims.

WITH GRATITUDE

Offering Update as of May 31, 2026.

- Amount Budgeted to Date: \$1,158,113
- Amount Received to date: \$1,075,274
- Expenses to Date: \$1,026,556
- Deficit/Surplus: \$48,718

3 Ways to Give at Trinity:

- Scan the QR code
- Text "GIVE" to 715.468.6800
- Click GIVE on www.trinity-ec.org



Trinity Food Pantry Hours:

Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday
1:30 – 3:00 p.m.

DO YOU RECEIVE THE WEEKLY E-MAIL BLAST FROM TRINITY?

Scan the QR Code to receive Trinity's weekly e-mail blasts. This is a great way to stay up to date with all that's going on at Trinity.



Sundays this Summer
10:00am at Phoenix Park
Trinity leads worship:
July 5 and August 3.

MEMORIALS & GIFTS

Food Pantry:

In Memory of Glen Tamke

- Mary Nelson
- Carla Brandrup
- Janet Kunert

In Honor of Jane Hartman from Skip Hartman

In Memory of Caroline Heaps from Ruth Circle

In Memory of Dee Guthman from David & Jeanette Suchla

In Memory of Lauretta Sheffield

- Sharon Smith
- Roxanne Berg
- Steve & Sue Marczinke
- Mary & Bob Schoenknecht

Quilters:

In Memory of Glen Tamke

- Jack & Sheila Running
- Marlene Dingle
- Bill & Carol Reed
- John & Nancee Burbank

Library

In Memory of Ardis Nystuen from Mary & Bob Schoenknecht

In Memory of Jane Brown

- Mary & Bob Schoenknecht
- Friends of Mary Doering

Memorial Fund:

In Memory of Glen Tamke from Don Winter

In Memory of Chuck Wallen from Carol Wallen

In Memory of Ardis Nystuen

- David Nystuen
- Thomas & Wanda Nystuen
- Ron Nystuen
- Rebecca & Thomas Berger
- Aldemar Hagen
- Patricia Prissel

Endowment Trust Fund:

In Memory of Chuck Rumphol from Barb Tischer

Preschool:

In Memory of Ginny Lien from Darcy & Vicki Fields

ANNOUNCEMENT CENTRAL

FRIENDSHIP GROUP - CHRISTMAS IN JULY POTLUCK

The Friendship group will meet Wednesday July 8, 10:00am in 208. We will celebrate Christmas in July with a potluck lunch and games. Please bring canned goods or a cash donation for the Trinity Food Pantry. Come and share the fellowship & fun. See you there!

GRIEF AND LOSS SUPPORT GROUP

Location: Trinity Lutheran Church- Fireside Room

Time: 10:00am - 11:30am

Dates: Third Wednesday of each month (July 15, 2026)

This supportive and compassionate group is designed for older adults who are navigating grief and loss in any form; death, changes in health, loss of independence or other life transition. This group meets every month, with the next meeting on July 15th. Facilitated by individuals through ARDC.

CONFIDENT DEMENTIA CAREGIVER SERIES

Sponsored by ARDC and led by Lisa Wells, Dementia Care Specialist from Eau Claire County ADRC.

Location: Trinity Lutheran Church- Trinity Room

Time: Tuesdays from 1:00pm - 2:30pm

Dates: Fourth Tuesday of each month (July 28, 2026)

- July 28th topic: ***

HIKE FOR THE HOMELESS

Mark your calendars, the 23rd annual Hike for the Homeless will be August 18th at River Prairie in Altoona. Registration for the hike begins at 5pm and the hike starts at 6pm. There will be a 1 mile or 2.8 mile option. All money earned will support families in the Chippewa Valley. Register Online at: familypromisecv.org/hike-for-the-homeless

ELCA Missionaries Join Trinity on August 16

Trinity welcomes ELCA Missionaries, Patrick & Jackie Bencke, from Kumamoto-she, Japan to Worship on August 16, 2026. Patrick teaches English at Kyushu Lutheran College. Jackie is involved in music ministries. Both Patrick and Jackie have taught in the Menomonie, WI school district.

LIBRARY TIDINGS

NEW BOOKS

***Where the Wildflowers Grow* by Terah Shelton Harris**

From the acclaimed author Terah Shelton Harris comes a poignant story of survival and redemption, asking readers to question what it means to stop surviving and start living. It follows Leigh a convicted felon and the sole survivor of a fatal prison bus crash, who escapes into the remote wilderness. Using survival skills, she finds refuge on a rural flower farm in Gees Bend, Alabama. Subjects include romance, mystery, and historical fiction. (FIC HAR)

***Whistler* by Ann Patchett**

Ann Patchett's latest novel explores memory, family, and the power of reconciliation through a chance reunion. It alternates between two timelines to show how a brief but profound childhood relationship can shape the rest of your life. (FIC PAT)

***Mrs. Endicott's Splendid Adventure* by Rhys Bowen**

Blindsided by betrayal in pre-WWII England, Ellie Endicott charts a daring new course in this captivating tale of resilience, friendship, and new love. (FIC BOW)

***The Calamity Club* by Kathryn Stockett**

This historical fiction novel is set in 1933, Oxford, Mississippi, during the depths of the Great Depression. It follows a diverse group of women facing financial ruin who band together to form an unlikely, fiercely loyal sisterhood. (FIC STO)

***The Midnight Train* by Matt Haig**

The Midnight Train, a fantasy time-traveling love story, is described by the author as a companion piece or thematic sibling to The Midnight Library. While both novels explore life, death, and regret, they feature entirely different characters and settings. (FIC HAI)

***The Nantucket Restaurant* by Pamela Kelley**

In this summer romance, three sisters at personal crossroads inherit a Nantucket restaurant and work together to make it a success. (FIC KEL)

A Book Recommendation from Member Monika Fiedler:

***The Hotel Nantucket* by Elin Hilderbrand (FIC HIL)**

"The Hotel Nantucket is light and entertaining, with just the right amount of romance, interesting characters, and there's even a bit of the supernatural. Yes, a chambermaid who died in the 1922 hotel fire gleefully haunts the halls. This is a quintessential "beach read." That said, it also includes information on the plight of coastal communities which I found interesting. The final pages offer helpful tips for visiting Nantucket Island, including restaurants, hotels, beaches, and activities. It's a delightful read, and I loved the ending." - Monika Fiedler

MEET OUR NEWEST TRINITY TEAM MEMBER:

Tyler Hahn has joined the Trinity Staff as the Communications Coordinator. Tyler has a background in Public Relations and Theatre: Acting/Directing. He moved to Eau Claire in 2018 from Pennsylvania and spent the last eight years as the Outreach Coordinator for the Eau Claire Children's Theatre. Tyler resides in the East Hill Neighborhood with his girlfriend Brittany and his stepson Amari. He performs regularly in Community Theatre productions; you may have seen him as the Grinch in ECCT's 2025 production of *How The Grinch Stole Christmas*. Tyler coaches his stepson's soccer team and enjoys camping throughout the summer.



Let's welcome Tyler to Trinity!

WANT SOMETHING LISTED IN THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OR WEEKLY BULLETIN?

Scan this QR Code and fill out the "Communications Request" Form. This can be used to add info to:

- Newsletters
- Bulletins
- E-News Blasts
- Trinity Website
- Social Media Accounts



CAREGIVER CORNER!

Experiencing caregiver burnout?
Looking for assistance coping?
Ask yourself these questions.

- Do you care for someone on a regular basis?
- Do you feel worn out, or have chronic symptoms of fatigue?
- Do you find yourself more irritable, short-tempered, or on edge more than normal?
- Do you feel guilty or second-guess your caregiving decisions?
- Have you avoided or left early from socializing or events because of lack of interest?
- Have you ever skipped meals, appointments, or sleep because you are caregiving?
- Have you ever felt trapped or helpless regarding caregiving?
- Has it been over 2 weeks since you took time for yourself and truly enjoyed yourself?

There are resources in this community that can help you and your loved one. See Vicki Dueringer for more information.

ATTENTION: KNITTERS & CROCHETERS

We have a new supply of yarn, and need to expand our prayer shawl choices. Please stop by the office to pick up yarn.



Trinity is hosting ECLA Northwest Synod of Wisconsin's "Let's Learn Spanish 101" class on July 15 & 16. This class will explore basic grammar and much more. For more info, scan the QR code or visit nswwi.org/events



CARE & CONCERN

LONELINESS: IT IS NOW A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

Loneliness is now widely recognized as a public health crisis. With over half of U.S. adults reporting feelings of isolation and disconnection, the issue is fueled by a mix of digital dependency, urban sprawl, and a decline in community involvement. Its physical toll can be as severe as smoking 15 cigarettes a day. In the U.S., this issue has triggered formal public health advisories warning of increased risks for heart disease, stroke, dementia, and premature mortality.

Finding reconnection:

- **Intentional Community:** Addressing loneliness requires a deliberate shift to prioritize in-person activities, joining local community groups, or engaging in hobbies that encourage regular social contact.
- **Third Places:** Urban planners and community advocates emphasize the importance of accessible, welcoming "third places" (churches, parks, cafes, libraries, or community centers) that foster spontaneous social encounters.
- **Open Conversations:** Overcoming the loneliness epidemic requires moving past the stigma of loneliness and being open to the vulnerability of making new friends.
- **Trinity Lutheran Church** offers numerous groups and activities for you to join.

Ways to expand your social circle

- Find local community events, clubs, or volunteer opportunities in the Eau Claire area.
- Discover public spaces or third places nearby to simply be around others.
- Share tips and communication strategies with others for initiating conversations with new people.

Safe in the Sun: Protect Your Health This Summer

As we enjoy the warmth and fellowship of the summer season, let us also remember to care for the earthly temples God has given us.

Staying safe in the heat is simple with a few daily habits:

- **Apply Sunscreen:** Use a broad-spectrum SPF 30 or higher every day, even when it is cloudy.
- **Seek the Shade:** Limit direct sun exposure during peak hours from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM.
- **Hydrate Constantly:** Drink plenty of water throughout the day, well before you feel thirsty.
- **Dress Wisely:** Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing, wide-brimmed hats, and UV-blocking sunglasses.

Let's look out for one another, so we can all enjoy a healthy, blessed, and vibrant summer together!

CHILDREN, YOUTH, & FAMILY

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

July 27-30 • 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

For kids who turn 4 by 9.1.2026 through those completed grade 5
This summer, we invite children to experience the Lord's Prayer through the theme "On Earth as in Heaven!" We will learn together the connections between prayer and service in the world, focusing especially on feeding others, having good health, quality education, and peace. Vacation Bible School is a time to learn Bible stories, sing songs, make new friends, play games, create art, and spend time outside exploring all that God has given us! Suggested donation is \$25 per child.

Register Online Today at trinity-ec.org/register

VBS VOLUNTEERS

Adults and students in grade 6 and older are encouraged to participate in Vacation Bible School (July 27-30) as volunteers. Volunteers are needed in a variety of areas including STEAM, snack/kitchen, nursery, and more! Middle school volunteers will be paired with a high school counselor and a small group of children. Sign Up at trinity-ec.org/register

WANTED: VBS SUPPLIES

Zero Hunger is one of the daily themes for Vacation Bible School this summer which has opened up a very exciting and unique opportunity for our VBS kids to partner with the Trinity Food Pantry! Katie Conner and Sue Marczinke thought it would be awesome to have the kids put together a meal in a bag that will then be distributed throughout the week after VBS finishes.

However, we could use **YOUR HELP!!**

Now through Sunday, July 19, we will be collecting ingredients for Chicken Cobbler. We will need 175 of the following items:

- 15 oz cans diced potatoes
- 9-11 oz box of Red Lobster Cheddar Bay Biscuit mix (or similar)
- 12 oz can evaporated milk
- 10.5 oz can cream of chicken soup

You can drop these items off in the lobby by the VBS Volunteer board on Sunday mornings.

Office drop off from M-Th: 8:00am-4:00pm or Fr: 8:00am-Noon.

If you have any questions, please contact

Katie Conner at katie@trinity-ec.org or 715.832.6601 ext. 218.

PLAYGROUND PLAYTIME

Thursdays • June 11-July 23

10:00-11:00 A.M.

(No Playtime on July 2)

Invite your friends to enjoy Trinity's fenced-in playground area together! The playground has a sandy surface, so there is plenty of opportunity for digging as well as exploring the playground equipment. Trinity also has a few trikes and cars for little ones to drive! This playground is best for ages 6 and under, but older siblings are also welcome. No registration is needed. Caregivers must stay with and supervise children at all times.

LUTHERAN FAMILY SWIM NIGHT

Friday, July 24 • 7:00-8:45 p.m.

Together with the other ELCA churches in Eau Claire, Trinity will be taking over Fairfax Pool! The pool will be open after regular hours just for the churches, so you'll have lots of room to swim laps, check out the slide or diving area, or just splash around. Free pool entry; no registration needed!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

TECH BOOTH VOLUNTEERS

- Flexible Commitment: Whether you can volunteer every now and then or a few times each month, your help is greatly appreciated!
- Volunteer at either the 8:15 or 9:45 service, depending on your preferences!
- Email Sue Jensen at suej@trinity-ec.org or stop by the tech booth on Sunday mornings!

COMMUNITY TABLE VOLUNTEERS

Trinity will serve The Community Table on:
Thursday, July 9, 2026

We are in need of two shifts of six volunteers each.
Cooking & Prep: 9:00am - 11:15am
Serving & Clean Up: 11:30am - 2:00pm
Sign Up at Clipboard Central
Remember: No open-toed shoes!
Hope to See You There!

NOAH'S ARK REGISTRATION OPEN NOW!!

We currently have just a few openings for 4-year-olds in our afternoon classes! Available Opening in our Tuesday and Thursday PM class.

If you are interested in registering your child or would like more information, please contact Kim Dewey at **715-832-6601 ext. 205** or email **kim@trinity-ec.org**.

We would love to welcome new families to our Noah's Ark Preschool community!

FRIENDS OF FLYNN

The Friends of Flynn Committee is starting to plan for the new school year. Our focus this month is collecting school supplies. Please check out the display in the lobby for lists of supplies that are needed for students at Flynn.

Our committee sincerely appreciates the generous support of all who donate throughout the year.

Your continued support provides:

- Food for the Flynn Family Food Pantry
- Snacks for every classroom to ensure all students can have a daily snack
- Forward Exam snacks for 3rd - 5th grade
- School supplies
- Clothing, shoes, and boots
- End of the year staff appreciation treats
- Lots of Books - so every student receives a new book to take home three times a year.

Contributions to this ministry are accepted and greatly appreciated any time throughout the year. Checks should be made payable to Trinity Lutheran Church with the memo: Friends of Flynn.

Again, a special thank you to all who support this ministry. It is greatly appreciated by the committee, but especially the Flynn students, teachers and staff.

-Lynn Gullicksrud

NOAH'S ARK PRESCHOOL & EARLY CHILDHOOD ENRICHMENT CLASSES

"This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it." Psalm 118:24

Noah's Ark Preschool and Early Childhood Enrichment students and teachers are enjoying a well-deserved summer break after a wonderful 2025-2026 school year. As we move through these summer months, I encourage families to spend time enjoying God's great outdoor playground. God has filled this world with opportunities for children to learn, explore, and create. Simple treasures such as sticks, pinecones, rocks, leaves, flowers, and trees can inspire hours of imaginative play and discovery. Through these experiences, children develop creativity, problem solving skills, cooperation, confidence, and a deeper appreciation for the world God has made. Summer is a wonderful time for both children and adults to slow down, recharge, and enjoy God's creation together.

Families looking for opportunities to connect this summer are invited to join us for Playground Playtime on the Trinity playground on Thursdays in July from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. Children and caregivers can enjoy outdoor play, special painting activities, and library books while spending time with friends old and new. Please note that there will be no Playground Playtime on July 2.

In Peace,
Kim Dewey
Noah's Ark Director and ECE Coordinator

ECE REGISTRATION FOR THE 2026-27 SCHOOL YEAR

Registration for Fall 2026 and Spring 2027 Early Childhood Enrichment classes is now open.

- **Music and Movement:** Wednesdays, 10:30-11:30 a.m.
 - A parent/child class for children who are 18 months-36 months at the start of the session. A fall and spring session is offered.
- **Come and Play:** Tuesdays and/or Thursdays, 9:15-11:15 a.m.
 - A drop off class for children who are two years old by September 1, 2026. A Fall and Spring session is offered. Children may be registered for one or two days each week.

Brochures with additional information are available in the Children's Ministries office and on our website. For more information or to register, please contact

Kim Dewey at 715.832.6601 ext. 205 or kim@trinity-ec.org.

Grounded in Connection



Adam & Eve

In Genesis, God says that "It is not good for [hu]man to be alone." God created Adam and Eve to be in community. In 2023, then U.S. Surgeon General, Dr. Vivek Murthy released an advisory called "Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation" outlining the ways that loneliness functions as a national health crisis. The report found that loneliness is associated with many health concerns reminding us that our flourishing and wellness depends on human connection, belonging, and relationships.

A SUMMER SERIES EXPLORING
OUR CONNECTION TO GOD
AND TO ONE ANOTHER

ADAPTED FROM CHURCH ANEW



Genesis 2: 4-22

In Genesis 2, Eve is often described as Adam's helpmate. More often than not, people place a value of subordinate or hierarchy on the helper language; however, throughout the Old Testament, God is considered a helper to Israel. There was never meant to be a hierarchy placed on this word. It is a mutual working and tending together. It is more the image we see in Romans 12: we are one body in Christ with many parts.



Road Trip Activities

- A to Z Animals: go through the alphabet giving an animal for each letter. Make it harder by recalling all the animals that have already been named!
- Adam's name means Earth Creature. Eve's name means Life. Do you know what your name means and how you got it? What about your other family members -- what do their names mean?

Questions for Connection



- Tell someone about a time you felt a deep sense of connection and belonging. What was it about that time, about you, or about others that made you feel so connected?
- Tell someone about a time you felt the sting of loneliness. Where did you feel it in your body or spirit?
- Who are the people who have made you feel most known and connected in your life? What is it about them that connects so deeply with you?
- God said that "It is not good for humans to be alone." Where do you see the symptoms or consequences of loneliness playing out in our world?

"SERVING IN CHRIST'S LOVE AND SHARING THE GOOD NEWS"



STAY CONNECTED

Find inspiration, updates, and ministry news on our Instagram & Facebook pages:

- Trinity Lutheran Church
- Children, Youth, & Family Ministries
- Noah's Ark Preschool



CONTACT & LOCATION

- Phone: (715) 832.6601
- Website: trinity-ec.org
- Location: 1314 E Lexington Blvd
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PASTORS

Patrick Patterson - Ext. 216

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Tom Westcott

On sabbatical May 18 - August 18

CHILDREN, YOUTH, & FAMILY MINISTRY

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Children, Youth, and Family Ministry Director

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Noah's Ark Teacher

Natasha Durnick

Noah's Ark Teacher

Grace Park

Early Childhood Enrichment Teacher

Jody Anderson

Early Childhood Enrichment Teacher

CARE & CONCERN MINISTRIES

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Brian Pressler

Organist / brian@trinity-ec.org

Tatyana Roberts

Adult Choir Accompanist

Gary Rambo

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WORLD MISSIONS

Jabneh Christian Academy, Grange Hill, Jamaica

Blantyre Lutheran Parish, Malawi, Africa

Jacqueline & Patrick Bencke, Japan

- Please submit all articles for the Trinity Tidings electronically via this QR code or on the Trinity website on the "Newsletters" page at the "Communications Request" button.
- All submissions must be your own work. Any copyrighted materials (code, images, or otherwise) must include written permission from the original source.
- Deadline for the Newsletter is the **15th of each month.**

