

# Trinity Highlights

February 2026 Newsletter

309-346-1391 ~ [www.trinitypekin.com](http://www.trinitypekin.com)

Rev. Mark Drews, Pastor ~ 701-390-6073

## **Stewardship Report:**

<b>General Fund Report:</b>	December	Year to Date	Year to Date
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Income	\$ 25,231	\$243,493	\$257,265
Expenses	<u>25,459</u>	<u>336,478</u>	<u>360,921</u>
(Deficit)/Surplus	(228)	(92,985)	(103,656)

Giving in December was in line with projections. Year to date giving was off \$13,772 from what was projected at the beginning of the year. Expenses were right on budget and finished \$24,443 under budget for the year.

The General Fund Investment Account saw an earnings gain of \$5,670.24 in the fourth quarter.

The General Fund balance at the end of December was \$290,551.33.

The Endowment Fund saw a gain of \$3,687 in the fourth quarter and finished the year with a balance of \$179,001 of which \$52,331 is available to gift to charitable organizations.

In January, the Voters Assembly approved a budget of \$324,867. Giving is projected to be approximately \$249,870 meaning that approximately \$75,000 will be needed from General Fund reserves to meet the budget.

Let us give thanks to the Lord for his continued blessings and pray that we may continue to be faithful stewards until the day of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Rob Fornoff  
Chairman - Board of Finance



Ash Wednesday Service  
Wednesday, February 18  
6:00 p.m.  
With the Imposition of Ashes

# From the Pastor's Desk

## Sanctity of Human Life Sunday

### Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

Isaiah 49:1-7

*A poem written by Rev. Michael W. Salemink, Former Executive Director, Lutherans For Life, St. Louis, Missouri, and Assistant Professor of Pastoral Ministry and Missions, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana*

Mother's wombs may give life.

But they don't give it up without a fight.

The womb doesn't make for a particularly peaceful place. How loud the whomp and whoosh of landlady's pulse  
Pummeling in attic and basement, pounding against the walls themselves.

Intestinal oceans drive tidal waves to slap and shatter,<sup>[1]</sup>percussion of bubbles erupting like bombs behind and all around.

The womb shrink-wraps occupants in a continuously constricting straitjacket

Thick with stifling ninety-nine degree heat and smothering hundred-percent humidity.

Cells incessantly swell and split.

Nerves erratically spark spiderweb circuits into service.

Detainee gets fed when and what someone else wants,

Sat down at another's control

And got up without one's own consent.

Right where eternity's portal opens to earth,

Heaven has humankind securely clamped to its laboratory table

And operated on by almighty God's power to make life and take it.

We mistakenly imagine mother's womb as tranquil.

Intense, more like.

Traumatic, even.

No wonder we come out crying.

Of course we exit trembling.

For nine months things bigger have had their way with us.

We awaken to existence aware, above all, of weakness.

Our earliest experiences orient us with ownership,

Branded upon us by belly buttons that bear witness into perpetuity.

I suspect the sense never really leaves us.

In fact, it seems we've been born with the ambition to overcome vulnerability.

So Isaiah's timeless insights today juxtapose mother's womb with sharp sword and honed arrow.

The Lord God dealt like dagger and dart with me, too light a thing already inside Mom's body.

Time and environment will not permit you to forget

You come about as one engineered and forged, carved and chiseled into being,

Every bit as fearfully made as the Scripture famously proclaims.

Israel's whole history embodies the churning.

Age after age, they get stirred and extruded.

And they model the prototypical human instinct,

Ever desperate to extract an advantage,

Interpreting the ordeal as an indignant wound,

And manipulating it into a deadly weapon.

Fearfully indeed we lean into that legacy of bigger bullying littler.

What we assume as the way of the womb we then assimilate into the way of the world.

Strength dictates.

Superiority imposes.

Success exploits.

Fearfully, though, so you'd rather not think about it.

A painful business, personal matter and political minefield, how the womb affects people.

Deeply despised and even abhorred by the nation to consider pregnancy or address procreation.

Best keep your concentration centered on what you can control.

Autonomy, entitlement: that counts as true humanity.

Indulgence, gratification: this constitutes the good life.

So crave and conspire, at the expense of the competitors.

Acquire and consume, brandish and discard to the detriment of adversaries.

Provoke opponents, threaten enemies, seduce and delude, swindle and slander.

Winners demand losers, and both deserve it.

Get yours.

Oh, you will get yours.

You're gonna get yours.

What goes around comes around.

Call it karma, cycle of life,

Fate, law of nature, programming,

Or God.

You see, you never outgrow the womb.

No one ever really escapes the womb.

You bend it but never break out.

You stretch, but you don't cut loose from or slip clear of its grip.

Whatever monster you make of yourself,

You only summon the greater beast,

And it barrels all the faster after you.

The next dog will eat too, and the bigger fish also gets its feed.

Fearful womb keeps claim on you still.

He who works us over with the womb retains title and tether.

This womb world will contract, collapse, and last long after you.

But he doesn't just got the whole world in his hands.

He goes and puts his whole heart in this world.

Womb means over and around, yes,

But also and even more so among and alongside,

Hid in the shadow of his hand

And concealed securely in his quiver.

The Wombing and Wombed One who eclipses and overwhelms us

Does it with gentleness, humility, and servanthood.

And he is barreling toward us to deliver and swaddle,

Not shackle and devour.

He stampedes at us not to crush

But to cushion and clutch, incubate and cradle.

He chases us down

For rescue rather than retribution

And embracing instead of imprisoning.

Far Bigger Than Us His Fearful Looms,<sup>[[SEP]]</sup>but Bigger Yet Than That His Wonderful Comes.

The wonderful descends so immense that

We get a smiling face with the iron fist

And after the booothel a heart broken open and pouring out.

His fearful stands so vast and massive that

Only his wonderful surpasses it,

Only his generous demeanor exceeds his gigantic dimensions.

Bigger than the descendants of Jacob or the remnant of Israel,

Broader than the nations and their coastlands,

The Wonderful Wombed One encompasses the peoples from afar even unto the ends of the earth.

This One John recognizes and confesses Lamb.

Lamb of God and Lamb for you,

Him of womblike bounty and wombful extravagance,  
From every direction, on all sides,  
Around any corner, and with every step of the way,  
More than we could ever ask or even imagine good,

He stays.

The Lamb stays.

This Lamb of God stays as servant and safeguard, [SEP] sacrifice and substitute.

This Lamb stays the hand of death by himself dying on the bloody cross.

Jesus wombly lambs on your behalf to absorb our repercussions and ingest our consequences.

He lambly converts punishment to compassion,

Turns fury to forgiveness,

Births from worry nothing less than wonder,

By making of it occasion and instrument for divine mercy.

Lamb and Womb of God C-sections a crucifixion-shaped, sinner-sized egress from the grave itself

With Son of God force and Savior flair.

Behold your Chaperone and Escort.

Come and see our Companion and Attendant

Whose womblike wonderworking inauguates us ladies and lords of the domain,

Anoints us princes and princesses of the palace and enthrones us kings and queens of the castle!

Settle and nestle, then.

Entrust and enjoy.

You know, you see, you feel this whole womb world belongs to him,

Heavenly Father and Holy Child.

Daily bread, the plentiful sustenance body and being, self and fellowship, heart and whole life,

Our daily bread imparts an abundance of evidence that he is ordering it all toward you.

Jesus Christ abides as ceaseless reason

And endures as never-ending reservoir for this womb-[SEP]won-derful,

And resurrection to immortality in the paradise festival everlasting the inevitable outcome.

Believe and delight that he wrings glory from struggle and ripens distresses into blessings

That sculpt when we only expect them to pulverize.

Inhabitants and inheritors of this greater womb are we all.

And this reality has appropriately positioned us,

privileged and gifted us, even,

To advocate for our neighbors still located in the lesser wombs.

Eagerly receive them as sisters-in-waiting and broth-ers-to-be,

Not a single one of them at any time, in any way, or for any reason

At all less fearfully and wonderfully, purposefully and preciously made than you and me.

Find it entirely fitting to put words to it, in congregation and in community.

We Christians know nothing but praying, confessing,

Reciting, testifying, conversing, and counseling

To and for and about the Womber and his wombing.

If it fills us, it will surely overflow us,

With insistence and even forgiveness toward them that would wage war on or in wombs.

May we make it to the moment when wonderful overtakes fearful for every one,

As the Lord God has graciously made it so for us. Amen.

In Christ,

*Pastor Mark R. Drews*

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## Trinity's Service Volunteers - February 2026

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### ACOLYTES

02/01	9:00 a.m.	Edith Spaeth
02/08	9:00 a.m.	Lexi Brown
02/15	9:00 a.m.	Ella Spaeth
<b>02/18</b>	<b>6:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Ella Spaeth</b>
02/22	9:00 a.m.	Lexi Brown
<b>02/25</b>	<b>6:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Edith Spaeth</b>

### USHERS

02/01	9:00 a.m.	Owen Harms, Dave Harms
02/08	9:00 a.m.	Mike Seidell, Chris Whitley
02/15	9:00 a.m.	Brad Juergens, Dave Harms
<b>02/18</b>	<b>6:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Mike Seidell, Brad Juergens</b>
02/22	9:00 a.m.	Mike Seidell, Owen Miller
<b>02/25</b>	<b>6:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Dave Harms, Chris Whitley</b>

### BIBLE BREAKFAST HELPERS

#### **Pick-Up Donuts:**

02/01	<i>Open</i>	02/22	<i>Open</i>
02/08	<i>Open</i>		
02/15	<i>Open</i>		

#### **Prep Donuts, Make Coffee, Pour Juice:**

02/01	Julie O'Conner	02/22	<i>Open</i>
02/08	Julie O'Conner		
02/15	<i>Open</i>		

### ALTAR GUILD

02/01	Lynn Brown / Debbie Fornoff
02/15	Lauren Juergens / Melissa Deverman

### ALTAR FLOWERS

02/01	<i>Open</i>
02/08	The Harms family, in loving memory of Walter Harms.
02/15	<i>Open</i>
02/22	<i>Open</i>

### COMMUNION ASSISTANTS / READERS

02/01	Rob Fornoff
02/15	Brad Juergens

### READERS

02/08	Owen Miller
02/22	Mike Seidell



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## **BEHOLD YOUR KING!** **2026 Lenten Devotions**

In *Behold Your King!*, Jesus comes to us in flesh and blood as a Man, as God's own Son, and as the lowly Servant King bearing the sins of the world. Though He was forlorn and forsaken, He did not abandon His mission or shirk His obedience to the Father. He followed through - and in so doing He won for each of us the forgiveness of our sins and eternal life in His presence.

Copies are available on the table below the screen in Room 10. Please pick up a copy!

## 2026 Lenten Midweek Series

### *Set Free: The Gospel in Exodus*

**Ash Wednesday, February 18**  
*The Good News of a God Who...  
Hears and Answers Cries*  
Exodus 2:23-25

**Lenten Service, Wednesday, February 25**  
*The Good News of a God Who...  
Reveals Himself to Us*  
Exodus 3:1-15

**Lenten Service, Wednesday, March 4**  
*The Good News of a God Who...  
Sends a Deliverer*  
Exodus 4:1-20

**Lenten Service, Wednesday, March 11**  
*The Good News of a God Who...  
Passes over Us in Mercy*  
Exodus 12:1-14

**Lenten Service, Wednesday, March 18**  
*The Good News of a God Who...  
Makes a Way for Us*  
Exodus 14:5-31

**Lenten Service, Wednesday, April 9**  
*The Good News of a God Who...  
Sustains on Our Journey*  
Exodus 16:1-18, 35

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#### GSLS News:

**Annual Spaghetti Dinner & Talent Show** will be held Friday, February 20. This is a free will donation event. Cracked Pepper will be serving spaghetti, salad & garlic bread. GSLS needs dessert donations such as cookies, cakes, etc. If you are interested in helping with this event, please contact Katie McDonough in the school office for more information.

**Save the Date:** Good Shepherd's 20th Annual Auction will be held on Saturday, March 21 at Embassy Suites, 100 Conference Center D, East Peoria, IL. Doors open at 4:00 for the silent auction.

Contact the school office for ticket information or visit:  
[onecau.se/gsln20th](http://onecau.se/gsln20th) auction or by using the QR code



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**Passover / Seder Meal** is being planned for Wednesday, April 1. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in Room 10 for those planning on attending.



# Seder Meal

Pastor Drews is planning a Seder (Passover) Meal to take place Wednesday, April 1, 2026, during Holy Week. He is looking for volunteers to prepare food for the Seder Meal. Listed below are the dishes needed. Pastor Drews suggests doubling the recipes. Soon there will be a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board and recipes will be made available. Seder meal recipes can also be found on-line, however, no recipes that include beef or chicken.

Choco-Carmel Matzo Brittle	Crispy Smashed Potatoes with Caper Gremolata	Matzo Ball Soup	Potato Kugel
Coconut Macaroons	Flourless Chocolate Cake	Matzo Icebox Cake	Potato Salad with Vinaigrette
Coriander-Maple Glazed Carrots	Green Beans with Olive-Almond Tapenade	Matzo Toasts	Roasted Carrots and Red Onions
Crispy Roasted Potatoes	Herb-Roasted Root Vegetables	Pimiento-Cheese Deviled Eggs	Vanilla Roasted Sweet Potatoes

**Other Items Needed:**

Candles & Holders	Plates	Water Pitchers	Wine Glasses
Dessert Plates	Saucers	White Tablecloths	
Napkins	Soup Bowls	Wine Decanters	

## February Birthdays

Feb. 2  
Katie Daniels

Feb. 3  
Marcella Harms  
Lisa Prather

Feb. 4  
Alexzandra Hoehn  
Jeanine Meyers

Feb. 5  
Vicki Egli

Feb. 6  
Debra Brock

Feb. 10  
Samantha Durbin

Feb. 12  
Nicholas Kreager

Feb. 14  
Lynn Wyatt

Feb. 15  
Gage Cutting  
Dakota Harms

Feb. 16  
Lauren Juergens  
Les Schultz

Feb. 17  
Tabitha Mattheessen

Feb. 19  
Nevaeh May  
Hailey Weyhrich

Feb. 20  
BonnyLou Schmidt

Feb. 24  
Brad Juergens  
Casey Whitley, Jr.

Feb. 25  
Austin Ewing  
Ella Spaeth

Feb. 26  
Carrie Whitehead

Feb. 27  
Brian Maquet  
Cody Zevnik

Feb. 28  
Lorraine Weyhrich

## February Anniversaries

Feb. 25  
Robert & Sarah Johnson

*If your birthday or anniversary was omitted or a date is incorrect, please contact the church office so we can update our records.*

## December 2025 Sunday School Perfect Attendance

Edith & Ella Spaeth  
Franklin Spaeth  
Mabel & Oliver Spaeth  
Henry Stout

We *love*  
because  
he first  
*loved us.*  
1 John 4:19



## Lenten Fellowship

We will have cookie fellowship after each midweek Lenten service. Trinity members are asked to bring one dozen cookies to the church kitchen before 5:30 p.m. on the Wednesday under which your name is listed below.

**February 25**  
*Abbott - Durbin*

**March 4**  
*Egli - Huey*

**March 11**  
*Ingrassia - Nash*

**March 18**  
*O'Conner - Whitley*

**March 25**  
*Boards of Christian Service / Evangelism*

## Did You Know?

How are your New Year's fitness goals coming along? By week 9, a baby's muscles are growing and forming. He'll be using them a round week 17 to stretch, kick, punch, and swim in his mother's womb. He'll be flipping and rolling until his size limits him in the womb. Baby's muscles are being exercised and strengthened. By God's design, it takes a lot of work for a baby's body to develop all of the intricacies needed for a healthy, functioning body.

◀ January		February 2026					March ▶	
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat		
<b>1</b> 9:00 AM WORSHIP/ COMMUNION 10:15 AM S.S. & BIBLE CLASS	<b>2</b> 2:30 PM CONFIRMATION	<b>3</b> 6 PM BOARDS OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE - EVANGELISM	<b>4</b> 5 PM BELL CHOIR PRACTICE 6 PM CHOIR REHEARSAL	<b>5</b> 6 PM CHURCH COUNCIL	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>		
<b>8</b> 9:00 AM WORSHIP 10:15 AM S.S. & BIBLE CLASS	<b>9</b> 2:30 PM CONFIRMATION	<b>10</b> 6:30 PM GSLS BOARD	<b>11</b> 5 PM BELL CHOIR PRACTICE 6 PM CHOIR REHEARSAL	<b>12</b> 1:30 PM CONCORDIA	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>		
<b>15</b> 9:00 AM WORSHIP/ COMMUNION 10:15 AM S.S. & BIBLE CLASS	<b>16</b> 2:30 PM CONFIRMATION	<b>17</b> 6 PM BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION	<b>18</b> <i>Ash</i> <i>Wednesday</i> 6 PM ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE	<b>19</b> 6 PM BOARD OF TRUSTEES	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>		
<b>22</b> 9:00 AM WORSHIP 10:15 AM S.S. & BIBLE CLASS	<b>23</b> 2:30 PM CONFIRMATION	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> 4:45 PM HANDBELL PRACTICE 6 PM LENTEN SERVICE 7 PM CHOIR REHEARSAL	<b>26</b> 6 PM BOARD OF ELDERS	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>		



TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

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*(Return Service Requested)*

**February**



Ash Wednesday

Service

Wednesday, February 18

6:00 p.m.

With the Imposition of Ashes