

Trinity Highlights

April 2026 Newsletter

309-346-1391 ~ www.trinitypekin.com

Rev. Mark Drews ~ 701-390-6073

Stewardship Report:

General Fund Report:	February	Year to Date	Year to Date
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Income	\$ 17,088	\$ 30,804	\$39,662
Expenses	<u>23,857</u>	<u>48,774</u>	<u>55,410</u>
(Deficit)/Surplus	(6,769)	(17,970)	(15,748)

Giving in January was much less than projected, partly due in part to bad weather causing lower than normal attendance. It's possible that this will correct a bit in March should offerings normally given in January and February are caught up given the weather cooperates. Expenses are running less than budgeted. To date approximately \$18,000 of reserves have been used in 2026.

The General Fund balance at the end of February was \$272,961.70.

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

Joint Worship Service: A joint worship service with St. John's Pekin and St. John's Sand Prairie will be held at Good Shepherd Lutheran School on Sunday, May 17. There will be no services at any of the churches. Time and other details will follow in next months newsletter.

The Lutheran Witness keeps you updated with news from the Synod and teaches you how to interpret the world from a Lutheran perspective. The cost of an annual subscription is \$23.50. If you wish to renew your subscription or start subscribing, please use your Lutheran Witness envelope in your offering envelope box or mark a pew envelope and return it to the church no later than Sunday, April 26.

Sisters in Christ: A Sisters in Christ luncheon is being planned by the Boards of Evangelism / Christian Service for Saturday, April 18 at 12:00 p.m. There will be a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in Room 10.

Easter Greeting

As we greet each other on Easter Sunday, the greeting you should offer is "**He has risen!**"

The proper response is "**He has risen, indeed!**"

Let's continue this tradition as we share in the joy of Christ's resurrection! "*The Lord has risen indeed...!*" Luke 24:34



From the Pastor's Desk

"And behold, Jesus met them and said, 'Greetings!' And they came up and took hold of His feet and worshipped Him." Matthew 28:1-10

Dear Members of Trinity,

Alleluia! Christ is risen! *He is risen indeed! Alleluia!* And we're all totally on board with that! We're thrilled to be here this morning! This is a day—the day—we can all let out with a big alleluia!

But for a moment, let's step back from the exuberance and the delight and the emotion, and face a hard fact: Unlike every other religion, the Christian faith is subject to being proved wrong. Hinduism—no serious Hindu claims that the sacred stories ever happened. It's the spiritual reality that matters. Buddhism—Gautama Buddha lived—we're pretty sure of that—but then he died . . . and no one can prove or disprove whether he really made Nirvana or not. Islam—a very historic religion. We know a lot about Muhammad's career. But, of course, Muhammad isn't God, just a prophet, and whether Allah really revealed the Qur'an to him—just have to take that on faith.

But Christianity: If anyone ever did or ever could or ever does find the dead body of Jesus somewhere, that proves we're wrong. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15, "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins" (1 Cor 15:17).

And so of the many world religions, only one can be falsified. Our faith does not make the resurrection true; the resurrection makes our faith true! Easter or Resurrection Sunday puts God's seal of approval on Jesus' self-donation on the cross of Calvary, which made atonement for our sins. This proclamation of Christ's resurrected body is so necessary these days vis-à-vis those who would say the resurrection is merely a spiritual or noetic activity. The angel rolled back the stone not so Jesus could get out, but so the first witnesses, Mary Magdalene and another Mary, could look in and see that the resurrection truly, physically, really did happen. Spiritual or noetic resurrections have much in common with Gnostic thinking, while physical bodies have legs. Hence the important detail that both Mary's grasped Jesus' feet as they worshiped him.

Still feel like alleluia? You should say it all the more, because when we say Christ is risen, we're not just saying he's alive in some spiritual sense. The "alleluia" is that Jesus Is *Really*—Bodily!—Risen! And that means our Christian faith isn't just some spiritual speculation. Living the Christian faith is real, bodily life—including that one day we will really, bodily, rise! Jesus is risen just as he said he would!

The Sabbath rest was concluded, and the grave had been hallowed. He would rise on "the third day," equivalent to our saying "the day after tomorrow." Frequently, the number three speaks of deliverance in the Scriptures. Moses and the Israelites needed to make a three-day journey into the desert to worship Yahweh (Ex 3:18; 5:3; 8:27). Jonah was delivered from the belly of the fish on the third day (Jonah 1:17). Jesus predicted his deliverance from the bosom of the earth on the third day (Mt 12:40). We pick up on this in our baptismal order with the threefold renunciation of Satan, his works, and his ways. So Jesus was fully in control as he predicted his crucifixion and resurrection (Mt 20:19).

All creation testifies to the resurrection! Like symphonic timpani beating joyfully, the earthquake announces the great news. Unlike the earthquake at Jesus' death, which spoke judgment on sin and unbelief, this earthquake trumpets forth victory over the grave. On this day of victory, "an angel of the Lord descended from heaven." So at the "end times" victory, the holy angels will assemble in joyful rank (1 Thess 4:16). The Christian aphorism is appropriate here: Those who are born once die twice; those who are born twice die once. The unbelieving Jewish temple guards fell down in fear like the dead

men they were while the dead Christ rose.

The proof was in meeting the resurrected Christ—in his body. First, physical, concrete realities testify to the resurrection of Jesus. The massive stone requiring the strength of many had been rolled back. The herald who had descended from heaven sits on it. The stone wasn't rolled back to free Jesus. In his exalted state, it couldn't hold him, as the locked door of the upper room would be no barrier. The stone was rolled back so the women could peer into the empty grave.

Then, as the women go to tell the disciples, Jesus suddenly appears and proclaims, “Greetings!”—a word of forgiveness, of peace. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary took hold of Jesus' feet, his *physical* feet! Physical bodies have feet, to which the women clung. This Jesus was no apparition! Both women were at the least on their hands and knees, if not lying on the filthy ground. Thus they demonstrate that the highest worship of the Gospel is the desire to believe in Jesus for the forgiveness of sins.

The difference between faith and foolishness is evidence! These two women saw and held Jesus! And so many more did! St. Paul appeals to evidence when he writes, “He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep”. Surely there were those who wanted to prove Christ was a lie, and all they had to do was produce the body. Instead, the soldiers themselves lied—and a first-century *Jewish* historian, Josephus, confirms that this was their story.

Now if Jesus is really, bodily, risen, the witnesses of his resurrection become the further evidence. The two women were sent by the angel and by Jesus himself to be apostles (“sent ones”) to the apostles. Jesus sent word by the women that the disciples were to meet him in Galilee of the Gentiles where he did most of his ministry. The two Mary's were commissioned to be apostles to the apostles. Though they were given this important, joyful news to proclaim, they are not inducted into the College of the Apostles or the pastoral office.

We, too, are to become witnesses, evidence, of the empty tomb to our world. In our Baptism, we have been commissioned to share the news of Christ's death and resurrection. Like the Mary's, we all are commissioned as witnesses, though only a few men are called into the pastoral office as *public* witnesses. From what we have received through the Word and Baptism, we proclaim the complete and full forgiveness of sins won through Jesus' shed blood and his bodily resurrection—and we proclaim that since he rose and lives bodily, we will also live forever, both body and soul. Jesus sends us where we do most of our work, the living out of our lives—to family, neighbors, and co-workers. Jesus places you into your vocation as spouse, parent, aunt and uncle, farmer, office worker, lab technician, to share the good news of Jesus' resurrection in places pastors can't reach.

We all proclaim the Word of God. Most do so as baptized priests, while a few select men do so from the Office of the Ministry. What “activates” (makes efficacious) the Word to impact hearts and minds is the Holy Spirit, who always accompanies the Word of God (Is 55:10–11).

It's true, of the many world religions, only one can be falsified. Our faith does not make the resurrection true; the resurrection makes our faith true! Easter puts God's seal of approval on Jesus' self-donation on the cross of Calvary, which made atonement for our sins. And that's the very reason for our joy. He really is risen! And that means we will also live really, in risen bodies. Alleluia! Amen.

In Christ,

Pastor Mark R. Drews

Trinity's Service Volunteers - April 2026

ACOLYTES

04/02 6:00 p.m. Edith Spaeth
04/03 6:00 p.m. Ella Spaeth
04/05 9:00 a.m. Ella Spaeth
04/12 9:00 a.m. Edith Spaeth
04/19 9:00 a.m. Lexi Brown
04/26 9:00 a.m. Edith Spaeth

BIBLE BREAKFAST HELPERS

Pick-Up Donuts:

04/05 *Easter Sunday* 04/12 *Open*
04/19 *Open*
04/26 *Open*

Prep Donuts, Make Coffee, Pour Juice:

04/05 *Easter Sunday*
04/12 *Open*
04/19 *Open*
04/26 *Open*

ALTAR GUILD

04/02 Lauren Juergens / Cori Spaeth
04/03 Cori Spaeth / Melissa Deverman
04/04 Melissa Deverman
04/05 Melissa Deverman
04/19 Lauren Juergens / Debbie Fornoff

EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 5

GOSPEL PROCESSIONAL

Cross Bearer: Hunter Anton
Gospel Book Bearer: Emily Anton

USHERS

04/02 6:00 p.m. Dave Harms, Rich Janson
04/03 6:00 p.m. Mike Seidell, Chris Whitley
04/05 9:00 a.m. Dave Harms, Rich Janson
04/12 9:00 a.m. Mike Seidell, Chris Whitley
04/19 9:00 a.m. Dave Harms, Rich Janson
04/26 9:00 a.m. Mike Seidell, Chris Whitley

ALTAR FLOWERS

04/05 *Easter Lilies*

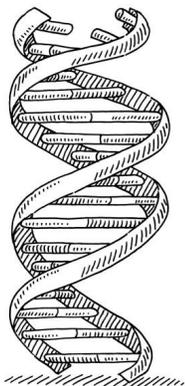
04/12 *Open*
04/19 Beth Abbott, *in celebration of Steve Abbott's confirmation today, and in loving memory of her mother, who was born on this date 114 years ago!*
04/26 Rob & Debbie Fornoff, *for their 51st wedding anniversary.*

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS / READERS

04/02 Matt Deverman, Brad Juergens
(Maundy Thursday)
04/03 Matt Deverman *(Good Friday)*
04/05 Mike Seidell, Matt Deverman *(Easter Sunday)*
04/19 Rob Fornoff

READERS

04/02 Matt Deverman *(Maundy Thursday)*
04/03 Mike Seidell, Matt Deverman *(Good Friday)*
04/04 Eric Spaeth, Matt Deverman *(Holy Saturday)*
04/12 Matt Deverman
04/26 Mike Seidell

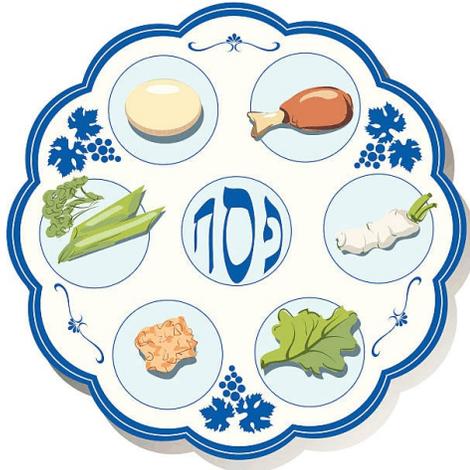


Did You Know?

By Peoria Area Lutherans for Life

Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel motivated voices for life.

- ▶ The DNA inside you can wrap around the earth a couple million times.
- ▶ If the DNA code in **one** human cell was written out in books and stacked up, it would be almost as tall as the great Pyramid of Giza.
- ▶ If you printed all your DNA out in books, it is estimated that it would create enough books to fill the Grand Canyon 50 times.
- ▶ Uncoiled DNA could reach the sun 400 - 500 times.



Seder / Passover Meal Wednesday, April 1 at 5:30 p.m.

Volunteers are needed to prepare food for the Seder Meal. There is a sign-up sheet on the table in Room 10 along with the recipes. Recipes should be doubled. Seder meal recipes can also be found on-line, however, no recipes that include beef or chicken.

There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in Room 10 for those planning on attending the Seder (Passover) Meal so we know how much food needs to be prepared.

Camp Cilca News! Save the Dates!

- **Annual Banquet - Sunday, April 12, 5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.**
Tickets are \$40.00 each. *Tickets must be reserved in advance.* Call the camp office (217-487-7497) or email (camp@cilca.org) to reserve your tickets today!

The Annual Banquet is an evening celebrating God's work of *Creation and Redemption*, especially as those works are enjoyed, proclaimed, and taught at Camp Cilca. Join us for an evening of music, food, great speakers, and friends.

This year, Rev. Jason Braaten will be our speaker on the topic of Patience. Special music by the Lutheran High music ensemble from 5:00 - 5:30 p.m.

- **Hog Roast & Auction - Sunday, May 24, 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.**
Tickets available at the door. This is Camp Cilca's largest annual fundraiser. Come and support the work that the Lord is doing in the great outdoors!
- **Summer 2026** - Camp Cilca is a great place to get away from the ordinary & experience God's grace in His creation. Campers can get involved in a variety of activities like: hiking, games, canoeing, kayaking, swimming, archery, creek walking, crafts, basketball, volleyball, softball, disc golf, fishing, & more. Campers also have opportunities to grow in their Christian faith through Bible studies, campfire singing & devotions. Camp Cilca offers a variety of Summer camps for campers of any age. Registration is open!



Birthdays

April 1

Leah Brown

April 4

Rich Janson

April 5

Christi Gillis

April 6

Brittany Olt
Sheila Schumm

April 7

Kasondra Garber
Jennifer Givens

April 8

Krista Egli
Jennifer Look

April 10

Gary Gillis
Bob Mattheessen

April 14

Pam Buerkett

April 17

Brandon Risinger

April 20

Demi Burke
Betty Ingrassia

April Birthdays & Anniversaries

April 22

Alyssa Hand
Raegan Zevnik

April 24

Robin Thompson

April 25

Jodi Fuchs
Kelly Hubbs

April 26

Nancy Portillo

April 28

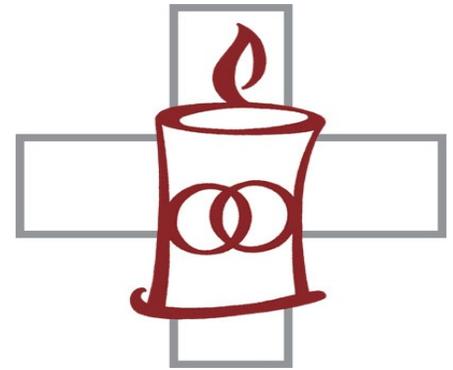
Franklin Spaeth

April 29

Carol Maloney
Denise Risinger

April 30

Jaymie Gordon-Townzen



Anniversaries

April 5

Matt & Melissa Deverman

April 7

Brad & Kim Cordts

April 14

Andrew & Amanda Erickson

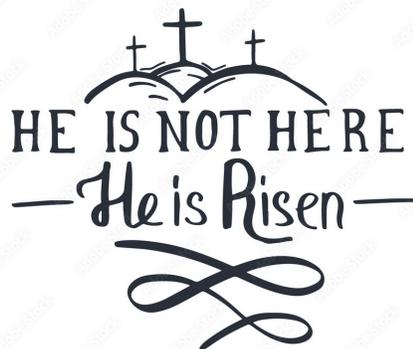
April 21

Craig & Debra Cooney

April 26

Rob & Debbie Fornoff

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



February Sunday School Perfect Attendance

Edith Spaeth
Ella Spaeth
Franklin Spaeth
Mabel Spaeth
Oliver Spaeth

◀ March	April 2026						May ▶
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
			1 5:30 PM SEDER/ PASSOVER MEAL	2 <i>Maundy Thursday</i> 6 PM MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE	3 <i>Good Friday</i> 6 PM GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE	4 <i>Holy Saturday</i> 6 PM HOLY SATURDAY SERVICE	
5 <i>Easter Sunday</i> 9:00 AM WORSHIP/ COMMUNION	6	7 6 PM BOARDS OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE - EVANGELISM	8 5 PM BELL CHOIR PRACTICE 6 PM CHOIR REHEARSAL	9 6 PM CHURCH COUNCIL 1:30 PM CONCORDIA	10	11	
12 9:00 AM WORSHIP 10:15 AM S.S. & BIBLE CLASS	13 2:30 PM CONFIRMATION	14 6:30 PM GSLS BOARD	15 5 PM BELL CHOIR PRACTICE 6 PM CHOIR REHEARSAL	16 6 PM BOARD OF TRUSTEES	17	18 12 PM SISTERS IN CHRIST LUNCHEON	
19 9:00 AM WORSHIP/ COMMUNION 10:15 AM S.S. & BIBLE CLASS	20 2:30 PM CONFIRMATION	21 6 PM BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION	22 5 PM BELL CHOIR PRACTICE 6 PM CHOIR REHEARSAL	23	24	25	
26 9:00 AM WORSHIP 10:15 AM S.S. & BIBLE CLASS	27 2:30 PM CONFIRMATION	28	29 5 PM BELL CHOIR PRACTICE 6 PM CHOIR REHEARSAL	30 6 PM BOARD OF ELDERS	HE IS RISEN <i>alleluia</i>		



TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

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APRIL



Holy Week Schedule

Seder / Passover Meal	Wednesday, April 1 - 5:30 p.m.
Maundy Thursday Service <i>With Holy Communion</i>	Thursday, April 2 - 6:00 p.m.
Good Friday Service	Friday, April 3 - 6:00 p.m.
Holy Saturday Service	Saturday, April 4 - 6:00 p.m.
Easter Sunday Worship	Sunday, April 5 - 9:00 a.m.