

Trinity Highlights

October 2026 Newsletter

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

Stewardship Report:

General Fund Report:	August	Year to Date	Year to Date
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Income	\$ 26,320	\$ 153,511	\$159,913
Expenses	<u>24,753</u>	<u>202,190</u>	<u>216,578</u>
(Deficit)/Surplus	1,566	(48,679)	(56,665)

Giving in August exceeded projections due to two main factors – 1) 5 Sunday month, 2) a couple annual gifts. Giving remains approximately \$6,000 lower than projected year to date. Expenses were right on budget and are close to \$14,000 lower year to date.

The General Fund balance at the end of August was \$261,091.44.

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

Operation Christmas Child

We are thankful that God has given us an opportunity to bless children around the world by packing shoe box gifts for Operation Christmas Child. We are asking for you to bring in **new** items to help fill shoe boxes for boys and girls ages 2 - 4; 5 - 9 and 10 - 14. Gifts do not need to be expensive. You might try searching the dollar stores in town. Check out the display in Room 10 for a list of acceptable items. Please remember items need to fit inside an average size shoe box. There is a box in Room 10 to put your donations in.



Sunday, October 4, 2026
2:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Meet at Planned Parenthood
2709 N. Knoxville, Peoria

Life Chain is an annual, nationwide, peaceful, prayerful hour of silence on public sidewalks supporting the dignity of and right to life. Thousands of churches nationwide are participating at the same time.

Join us for a peaceful, prayerful witness for the most vulnerable among us.

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you..."
Jeremiah 1:5

From the Pastor's Desk

"And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words." Matthew 6:5–15

Dear Members of Messiah,

Cross words. You remember that we're in the midst of a series looking at the Six Chief Parts of the catechism. And the big point to be made throughout the series is that all of these chief teachings of the Christian faith are really about the cross of Jesus Christ. The Ten Commandments: cross bones. The Apostles' Creed: cross eyes. And now, the third Chief Part, the Lord's Prayer. We're going to speak of the Lord's Prayer, and really God's gift of prayer in general as well, as "cross words." How so?

What Does It Mean to Call the Lord's Prayer "Cross Words"?

When we speak of prayer, it may be that a beloved hymn comes to mind. It's in every one of our hymnals. In our *Lutheran Service Book*, it's hymn number 770; in *Lutheran Worship*, it's number 516; and if we go way back to *The Lutheran Hymnal*, it's hymn number 457. Lutherans evidently have found courage, strength, and consolation in this hymn throughout our recent history, up to and including the present day. And it's wonderful to remember the sentiment and theological nuance of the North African St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, who is credited with saying, "He who sings prays twice!"

This hymn was written by Joseph M. Scriven in 1855, and it has biblical referents in John 15 and 16 (15:13–16; 16:23–24). In fact, we wouldn't be very astute if we couldn't find some basis to recount the truth of this hymn in every book of the Holy Scriptures.

You know this hymn. The words say, "What a friend we have in Jesus, All our sins and griefs to bear! What a privilege to carry Ev'rything to God in prayer!" (*LSB* 770:1). It is an incredible, even awesome, privilege to be able to use the grace of language, our inadequate words, to draw near unto the throne of grace in prayer. But why do we have this privilege?

In our text, Jesus enjoins his hearers not to pray like the Gentiles. But we are not *like* the Gentiles. We *are* Gentiles, foreigners, sojourners, cut off from our heavenly Father by our sin. When Adam and Eve sinned, and when we willingly joined them in sin, we threw up an iron curtain between ourselves and the holy heavenly Father. More recently, we might have said we cut the cable. More currently yet, we'd have to say we unplugged our router. In an emergency, even 911 wouldn't work. See, the holy God cannot interface with sin. As long as we're in sin, we have no access to the Father.

But Jesus says, "Pray . . . like this: 'Our Father'" (v 9). That's Jesus' loud and clear announcement that God is, as Luther says, our dear Father again. Jesus made him our dear Father again, reconciled us to him, by his death on the cross that took away our sin—took away our sin that was that iron curtain, that disconnect, that stood between us and God. You see, when Jesus teaches us to pray the Lord's Prayer, it's cross words, words we can only speak to God because of the cross, but words we *can* joyfully, boldly speak to God because of the cross.

It's in the Lord's Prayer that Jesus teaches us how best to use this privilege—words to glorify the Father and ask his blessings. Jesus teaches us the content of prayer pleasing to the heart of the Father: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil".

The Lord's Prayer says it all. We acknowledge God's holiness, call for the advance of his kingdom, seek the fulfillment of his will on earth, thank him for daily physical bread to feed our bodies as well as the daily spiritual bread of forgiveness. In this prayer, we plead for deliverance from our enemy, even as we confess God's loving kindness in revealing his Son. All these things that we ask, we ask because Jesus' death on the cross has reconciled us to the Father.

Part of the genius of the sainted Doctor Luther is to link the proclamation of cross words in prayer with the obedience of the cross bones in the Commandments. After all, prayer is one of the foundational tenets of Christian life. Luther says: "So you see that in this petition [the First Petition, "Hallowed be thy name"] we pray for exactly what God demands in the Second Commandment. We pray that His name not be taken in vain to swear, curse, lie, deceive, and so on, but be used well for God's praise and honor" (*LC III* 45).

These are cross words in which we clearly view the cross-play of all the Six Chief Parts. Truly, the cross of Calvary, the resurrection of Jesus, and the honor of our Father and obedience by grace through faith in the atoning death and resurrection of Jesus remain at the center of prayer.

We are also reminded in these cross words, the Lord's Prayer, of the privilege we have to steward the mysteries of our Father—one of which is forgiveness. Forgiveness, earned by Jesus on the cross, enables us to stand before the Father and pray, confessing our own sin. Then it is a great honor to speak the cross words of forgiving the sins others commit against us. We model our Lord Jesus in the literal cross words of prayer uttered by our Savior in Luke 23, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Lk 23:34a). Jesus reminds us of this grace, saying, "If you forgive others their

trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses” (vv 14–15).

It is fitting that as we go through the challenges and celebrations of life, we “get caught” using cross words to speak with our Father, seeking his mercy and grace. The context of Jesus teaching the Lord’s Prayer, in the middle section of the Sermon on the Mount, is his speaking about consecration and holiness and not being double-minded or hypocritical.

When Jesus cautions against praying like the Gentiles, he says, “Do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words” (v 7). Do you see the error? They didn’t understand that prayer is cross words. They thought they had to make themselves heard. But Jesus’ death on the cross has already made God eager to hear us. We’re reconciled, so that, again as Luther says, “with all boldness and confidence we may ask Him as dear children ask their dear father” (Small Catechism, Lord’s Prayer, Introduction). God claimed us through baptismal water and filled us with the Holy Spirit, who anoints us to pray, just one of his many graces.

You see, prayer, when not viewed as an awesome privilege won through the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, can be a crass exercise of arrogance and pride. “You must not be like the hypocrites,” Jesus also says. “For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others” (v 5). Look at me. I am so holy, standing here with my head bowed and covered in dust and sackcloth. Listen to me. I am so consecrated because I know how to use all the right words and phrases to be pleasing to God and impressive to all who are listening, and I can do it *ad infinitum* or *ad nauseam*. Impressive, am I not?

Our Lord warns us not to be like them. In fact, Jesus said they have already received their reward, as their shallow consecration was celebrated by others. We do not desire the reward of human acknowledgment. Our hearts long for the approval that comes from the Lord alone. Consequently, in faithful obedience we do what Jesus has commanded.

We go into our private, secret place, and we seek the face of our Father, praying psalms, hymns, and Scripture verses. We appreciate that our Father is listening; we don’t need to besiege him with our petitions because he already knows what we need. That means we can spend as much, if not more, time listening than we do speaking. That is the admonition from Eli to the boy Samuel, who hears the Lord calling. The final time Samuel hears the voice of the Lord, the priest instructs him to reply simply, “Speak, Lord, for your servant hears” (1 Sam 3:9). It’s then that the Lord releases the message.

It seems good at this point to debunk some inappropriate teaching about prayer. There are some who say that we only need to ask the Lord for a request one time. The Lord hears us the first time, so, they say, to go back to him a second or third time is evidence of a lack of faith. The biblical record does not support this misaligned teaching. What a friend we have in Jesus, and what a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer again and again and again!

To prove this, we need simply go to the Garden of Geth-se-m-ane with our Lord on Maundy Thursday evening. As recorded in the gospel of Matthew, chapter 26, verses 36–46, our Savior’s soul within him is very sorrowful, and he asks the disciples to watch and pray with him. He goes and prays that the cup will pass from him but acknowledges the will of the Father to be preeminent. He comes and finds the disciples sleeping, and he rouses them. Then he goes back a second time and a third time with the same words again.

To those who would say we can’t make the same request of the Father in prayer multiple times, I would simply inform them that Jesus did it. I’ll throw my lot in with Jesus and bring my petition to him as often as my soul is troubled. Then I’ll listen intently to hear what he’ll say to me. This is praying with cross words. What a friend we have in Jesus!

Of course, the enemy must challenge us as we use our cross words. His agenda is to distract us with lies and half-truths (which are whole lies!), to keep us from approaching the throne of grace to honor our Father and make our petitions known. Paul knew Satan’s distractions, and he wrote to the saints at Philippi, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Phil 4:6–7).

In other words, Paul is saying that when you are confronted with the fiery darts from the enemy and you are besieged by temptation on every side, when the enemy is trying to confuse and deceive you by convincing you that our Father doesn’t hear and doesn’t care, do not get all worked up; do not get anxious; remember the friend we have in Jesus, the Crucified One. Use your cross words to take it to the Lord in prayer, and the shalom, the peace and wholeness of our Father’s grace and love, will rest, rule, and abide in our hearts, relieve the distress, and set us once again to singing.

We have trials and temptations. There is trouble everywhere. We will never be discouraged. We take it to the Lord in prayer. We are weak and heavy laden, cumbered with a load of care. The precious Savior still our refuge, we take it to the Lord in prayer. Our friends despise and forsake us; we use our cross words and take it to the Lord in prayer. We know that in his arms he’ll take and shield us, that we’ll find a solace there (cf *LSB* 770:2–3).

In Christ,

Pastor Mark R. Drews

Trinity's Service Volunteers - October 2026

ACOLYTES

10/04 9:00 a.m. Lexi Brown
10/11 9:00 a.m. *Open*
10/18 9:00 a.m. Edith Spaeth
10/25 9:00 a.m. Ella Spaeth

BIBLE BREAKFAST HELPERS

Pick-Up Donuts:

10/04 *Open*
10/11 Mike Seidell
10/18 *Open*
10/25 *Open*

Prep Donuts, Make Coffee, Pour Juice:

10/04 Julie O'Conner
10/11 Julie O'Conner
10/18 *Open*
10/25 *Open*

ALTAR GUILD

10/04 Lynn Brown / Cori Spaeth
10/18 Lauren Juergens / Debbie Fornoff
10/25 Melissa Deverman / Debbie Fornoff

USHERS

10/04 9:00 a.m. Dave Harms, Mike Seidell
10/11 9:00 a.m. Chris Whitley, Owen Miller
10/18 9:00 a.m. Dave Harms, Mike Seidell
10/25 9:00 a.m. Chris Whitley, Owen Miller

ALTAR FLOWERS

10/04 BonnyLou Schmidt, *for God's Blessings.*
10/11 Owen & Jane Miller, *for their 40th wedding anniversary on October 13.*
10/18 Marcia Whitley, *in memory of her husband, Perry Whitley.*
10/25 *Open*

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS / READERS

10/04 Rob Fornoff
10/18 Brad Juergens
10/25 Rob Fornoff

READERS

10/11 Matt Deverman

Did You Know?

Peoria Area Lutherans for Life

“One of the penalties of refusing to participate in politics is that you end up being governed by your inferiors”
- Plato

Mid-term elections are coming in November this year, but did you know that Christian pollster George Barna's research indicates that approximately half of Christians are not even registered to vote? His research also shows that of those Christians who are registered, only about half of them actually cast a ballot! In practical terms this means only about 25% of Christians vote. Fellow believers, the laws that affect every aspect of our lives are all determined by our votes. Who we elect to represent our interests at all levels of government and what those elected officials believe determines what sort of society we will live in. Our faithful and loving God is ultimately in control of all, but He uses human agents (Noah, Joshua, Gideon, King David, Esther, and so many others) to accomplish His purposes, and He has given us in this blessed nation the privilege and responsibility of choosing our leaders. Peoria Area Lutherans for Life will again be providing voter guides to help you vote for candidates who have a Christian worldview. These guides, prepared by the Christian non-profit Illinois Family Institute will be available to you in your church in October, and you can find them on-line right now at illinoisfamily.org/voterguide, with additional candidate info available at ivoterguide.com. Election day is officially November 3rd, but early voting and mail-in voting will be available before then. If you have moved recently or your name has changed, be sure you are registered correctly. Consider Proverbs 29:2. Study, pray, vote, and trust Jesus in all things. Thank you, and may God bless you.



ROOTED IN CHRIST: CID Youth Event

Saturday, November 7 • Camp Cilca

Youth from across the Central Illinois District are invited to gather on Saturday, November 7, for a full day of worship, fellowship, and spiritual growth at Camp Cilca. This year's event carries the theme ***“Rooted in Christ,”*** drawn from Colossians 2:6–7, which calls believers to walk in Christ, ***“rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith.”***

Registration will open at 8:30 a.m., with programming running until 4:00 p.m. Organizers are planning a day filled with worship, small-group discussion, and recreation, all centered on what it means for young people to grow deep in their faith and stand firm together as a community.

The cost to attend is \$40 per youth, which covers the full day of activities. Adult volunteers attend free of charge, and organizers are encouraging churches to bring chaperones to support their youth groups throughout the day. Register at: <https://pci.jotform.com/form/262385217608057>

Save the Date: The 75 & Over Dinner will be held on Saturday, October 24 at 12:00 p.m. Letters will be sent out soon and more information will follow.

GSLS News:

- The Good Shepherd Spirit Wear Store is open once again. Stock up on your favorite GSLS Rams gear! The online store will remain open through November 1. GSLS receives a percentage from every purchase. Shop here: <https://gslspekin.itemorder.com/shop/home/>
- GSLS is selling Domino's Slice the Price Cards again! The cards are Buy One Pizza, Get One Free - and you can use the card as many times as you want through June 2027! There is no limit on how many pizzas you can order at one time. Order here: <https://store.dominos.cards/54902>

LCMS Foundation: Your LCMS Foundation Gift Planning Counselor has some examples of Christian Preambles/Family Blessings. Even a simple worksheet, to get you started on the task of creating your concise statement of faith, as you exhort future generations coming after you to continue walking in the faith, just as you have.

For help getting started, contact Scott Radden @ 618-977-4049 or scott.radden@lfnf.org.



Daylight Savings Time Ends Sunday, November 1

Don't forget to set your clocks back one hour before you go to bed Saturday, October 31.

“From the beginning of my Reformation I have asked God to send me neither dreams, nor visions, nor angels, but to give me the right understanding of His Word, the Holy Scriptures; for as long as I have God's Word, I know that I am walking in His way and that I shall not fall into any error or delusion.”

Martin Luther



October Birthdays & Anniversaries



Birthdays

October 1

Ryan McCoy
Jane Miller
Mary Ann Vaupel

October 6

Brian Ingrassia
Amy Watson

October 7

Christopher Adkins

October 8

Rick Conrad

October 11

Nicholas Maquet

October 13

Bernard Harms Jr.
Nicklaus Hernan

October 14

Hollie LandiVittori

October 15

Barret Speck

October 16

Zachary Cooney
Ashley Fornoff

October 17

Debra Cooney

October 18

Hermene Upchurch

October 21

Kiel Baldes
Kreigh Look

October 22

Roger Simpson

October 23

Kelly Hoehn
John Mattheessen

October 25

Rocky Crawford, II
Arlene Moldenhauer

October 27

Virginia Hilst

October 28

Summer Watson

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



Anniversaries

October 7

Nicklaus & Toni Hernan

October 10

Tim & Lori Kincaid

October 12

Bob & Paula Mattheessen

October 13

Owen & Jane Miller

October 19

Jeff & Pam Hemp

October 21

Richard & Gina Kuhn

October 22

Mike & Kelly Hoehn

October 23

Dave & Nicole Harms

October 24

Trent & Billie May

October 29

Bryan & Cassie Dunn
Amy & Doug Hand

◀ September		October 2026					November ▶
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
 <i>"We are not saved by our own merits and good deeds, but by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone."</i>				1 6 PM CHURCH COUNCIL	2	3	
4 9:00 AM WORSHIP/ COMMUNION 10:15 AM S.S. & BIBLE CLASS	5	6 6 PM BOARDS OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE - EVANGELISM	7 3:30 PM CONFIRMATION 5 PM BELL CHOIR PRACTICE 6 PM CHOIR REHEARSAL	8 1:30 PM CONCORDIA	9	10	
11 9:00 AM WORSHIP 10:15 AM S.S. & BIBLE CLASS	12	13 6:30 PM GSLS BOARD	14 3:30 PM CONFIRMATION 5 PM BELL CHOIR PRACTICE 6 PM CHOIR REHEARSAL	15 6 PM BOARD OF TRUSTEES	16	17	
18 9:00 AM WORSHIP/ COMMUNION 10:15 AM S.S. & BIBLE CLASS	19	20 6 PM BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION	21 3:30 PM CONFIRMATION 5 PM BELL CHOIR PRACTICE 6 PM CHOIR REHEARSAL	22	23	24 12 PM 75 & OVER DINNER	
25 9:00 AM WORSHIP 10:15 AM S.S. & BIBLE CLASS	26	27	28 3:30 PM CONFIRMATION 5 PM BELL CHOIR PRACTICE 6 PM CHOIR REHEARSAL	29 6 PM BOARD OF ELDERS	30	31 <i>Reformation Day</i> DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME ENDS - DON'T FORGET TO SET YOUR CLOCKS BACK	



TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

700 S. Fourth St.
Pekin, IL 61554

Non-Profit Organization

U.S. Postage Paid

Pekin, IL

Permit No. 100

(Return Service Requested)



Entire Month of October
Operation Christmas Child

October 4
Lutherans for Life - Life Chain

October 24
75 & Over Dinner

November 1
Daylight Savings Time Ends