

TRINITY MONTHLY

ENGAGING OUR COMMUNITY WITH GOD'S TRUTH THROUGH CHRIST'S LOVE



GOD'S LIVING WORD

A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

God has established His Church with a purpose: to share the Gospel with all people. The Gospel is nothing less than the person of Jesus Christ Himself, who graciously offers salvation, forgiveness of sins, and new, eternal life to everyone who believes. This sacred mission belongs to every church, in every place and time.

Before ascending to the right hand of the Father, our Lord Jesus gave

the Great Commission: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matt 28:17-20)

To equip us for this calling, God generously provides everything we need: Baptism, which unites us to Christ; the Lord's Supper; and the gift of faith to believe. All these blessings come to us through His
(continued)

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Word in Holy Scripture, which faithfully proclaims the Gospel and delivers God's grace. Apart from His Word, we cannot know God. He has chosen this means to reveal Himself to us. By His Word He spoke creation into being, and by that same Word He still creates faith today, whenever and wherever He pleases. Praise God that He has chosen to work that faith in you and me!

Doubts about the truth of God's Word are deeply serious, because if we cannot trust what He has spoken, how can we fully trust the God who speaks? Faith is weakened whenever we fail to rely on Scripture. That is why standing firmly on the absolute truth and trustworthiness of Holy Scripture is so vital; without it, we are lost. At Trinity, we hold unwaveringly to this conviction: every word of Scripture endures forever (Matt 24:35), every jot and tittle is sacred (Matt 5:18), and nothing may be added or removed without great peril (Rev 22:18-19).

God plants each individual congregation with a purpose as well. Trinity is here in Ashland to bring the life-giving Word of God to our community. We can only share what we have received, yet God has richly supplied us with everything needed to bring salvation to all. The lives of our families, neighbors, and yours are infinitely precious to Him. This is why we cling so tightly to the truth of His Word. What else could we do? As Peter once said to Jesus, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life." (John 6:68) Yes, he does.

Let us hold fast to every word of Scripture and joyfully share it—and the Christ who comes to us through it—with everyone around us.

In Christ,



Rev. K. McClain
Pastor Kevin McClain
Lead Pastor

CONNECT WITH OUR COMMUNITY

 508 Center Street
Ashland, Ohio 44805

 Phone: (419) 289-2126

 Fax: 419-289-1381

 trinityashland.org

Of course, you are always welcome to stop by Trinity's office:

Monday - Thursday
9am-5pm



A SEASON OF GRATITUDE AND NEW BEGINNINGS IN OUR MUSIC MINISTRY

After forty faithful years of leading music ministry at Trinity, our beloved Music Director, Ron Marenchin, is entering a season of intentional transition. While his official retirement will take place in June, the months ahead will be a meaningful time of shared leadership as Kim gradually assumes additional responsibilities within our music ministry. And while some things are changing, one thing remains certain—Ron’s presence, leadership, and legacy will continue to be felt throughout Trinity.

To honor Ron’s extraordinary ministry, a new choral work is being commissioned in celebration of his 46 years of service. This sacred piece will be offered in worship and presented to the congregation on Labor Day Weekend 2026, during Rally Day at our combined service. This meaningful project is an investment in Trinity’s worship life, and donations are being accepted to help make it possible. We are deeply grateful—for Ron, for the journey behind us, and for the music God is still writing among us.

TRINITY STAFF HOLIDAY PARTY

An evening of appreciation and shared joy.

Our staff holiday party was a wonderful time of celebration and connection! It was a joy to pause and celebrate our staff, reflect on our shared accomplishments, and spend time together outside of our daily work. We even enjoyed a fun game that was a favorite of Pastor Mitchell and his wife, which brought lots of laughter to the evening. A heartfelt thank-you to the pastors’ wives, Kristen and Kayla, for planning such a thoughtful gathering and to South Street Grill for the delicious catering. Thank you to our incredible staff for all that you do throughout the year—and we missed those who were unable to join us and look forward to celebrating together again soon.



2026 ALTAR GUILD INSTALLATION

Sunday, Feb 8th | 8:45am Service | Sanctuary

The 2026 Altar Guild installation will be Sunday, February 8, 2026 at the 8:45 a.m. service. The following members will be installed: Marilyn Frank and Melinda Haag, Co-Directresses, Sarah Rivenburgh, Secretary, Devera Ritz, Treasurer, and Susan Garrison, Jessie Gruver, Jan Hamilton, Katie Harpster, Melissa Merkel and Sharon Mutsch. At the conclusion of the installation, former Altar Guild members will be asked to stand in recognition of their service.

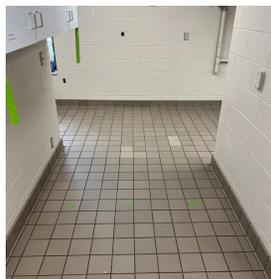


CARING FOR OUR CHURCH: RENOVATIONS UPDATE

Thanks for your patience and care around the construction areas!

Kitchen renovations are moving along smoothly and efficiently! As of mid-January, all of the old tile has been fully removed, and work is underway on laying the new flooring. Painting has also begun, bringing a fresh, clean look to the space. In addition, our old boiler has been updated and replaced, and hallway carpet replacement is scheduled to begin in February. We are very excited about all of these improvements and the refreshed spaces they will bring.

We are grateful to share that these updates are not being funded through Trinity's operating budget but are instead supported by interest accrued from designated endowment funds. Thank you to those whose generosity made this work possible. We are thankful these projects can move forward without impacting the church's overall budget. Thank you for your continued patience and support—please keep watching for more updates as the work progresses!



CONFIRMATION GOSPEL RETREAT & LOCK-IN

Friday & Saturday, Feb 20th - 21st | Trinity Lutheran Church



We are excited to announce the upcoming Confirmation Gospel Retreat & Lock-In on February 20-21, a special opportunity for our confirmands to deepen their understanding of the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ as recorded in the four Gospels.

Students will arrive for the retreat on February 20 between 7 and 7:30pm and will be released after the 5:30 folk service on February 21. During the retreat, the students will take part in teaching sessions with the pastors, vicar, and other instructors, along with participate in several worship and recreational activities. This will all culminate in our 5:30 Folk service, where the confirmands will assist in various roles throughout the service such as lecturing, ushering, and more.

More details will be forthcoming, but if you have any questions, concerns, or are interested in supporting this retreat, please reach out to Vicar Gage Garlinghouse in the church office.



CELEBRATING FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS



Let's shower our cherished members 85 and over with lots of love and well-wishes as they celebrate their birthdays this month!

Carolyn Amstutz | 02/01 | 86

James Prinz | 02/05 | 87

LeEtta Emmons | 02/06 | 89

Nancy Walker | 02/12 | 85

Alice Gelsanliter | 02/17 | 85

Larry Sears | 02/28 | 88

FATHER-DAUGHTER DANCE

Friday, Feb 6th | 6-9pm | Jack's Place



Join us for a lovely evening to make memories between fathers and daughters. The theme for the dance is "Father-Daughter Hawaiian Luau. So, grab your grass skirt and flower leis and get ready to dance! There are limited seats left so sign-up while you still can!

TODDLER TIME CONTINUES

Feb 12th, 19th, 26th | 10:30-11:30am | Jack's Place



It's time for our youngest kids to burn off some energy while moms enjoy fellowship together! This fun and relaxed gathering is free to attend, and registration is encouraged so you'll receive updates about weather-related cancellations or schedule changes. Join us on February 12, 19, and 26—we'd love to have you there!



SAVE THE DATE: MOTHER-DAUGHTER TEA

Sunday, Mar 8th | 1:30-3:30pm | Church Home

Save the date for our upcoming Mother-Daughter Tea, a special afternoon for moms and daughters to spend meaningful time together. Join us as we share a devotion, enjoy special food, and participate in fun activities designed to create lasting memories. The cost is \$12 and includes a light lunch, a memory photo, and activities. Please sign up using the QR code or by calling the church office. If you have any questions, contact Dawn Forbes—we hope you can join us for this sweet time together!

PRAYING FOR THE YOUTH WE SERVE

In this month's Ways to Pray for the Youth We Serve we will feature Brynn Kemery, Landon Kemery, Owen Schneeg, and Ethan Haag. As we pray for the youth of Trinity let us also pray for the youth of our community. We ask God to provide for the needs of their hearts and to provide physical protection.



It is our privilege to introduce Brynn Kemery as our wonderful youth of the month. Brynn is thirteen years old and is in the 8th grade at Ashland Middle school. She is an active young lady that is involved in softball and volleyball. She is currently attending the Catechism class with Vicar Gage Garlinghouse. Brynn is grateful that God has blessed her with an amazing family and friends while allowing her to awake each day on this beautiful earth. She takes comfort in Jeremiah 29: 11: For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future". Brynn has been blessed by God with the ability to have compassion and forgiveness shown to others. Brynn would like to ask her Trinity family to pray for a successful sports season and for protection against injuries.

FEBRUARY YOUTH SHARE GROUPS

Sundays, Feb 8th 15th, & 22nd | 7-8pm | Youth Room | Grades 7-12

Let's come together for a thoughtful hour of prayer, scripture, and fellowship! We will gather in the Youth Room at Trinity Lutheran Church. Invite a friend and join the fun! Contact Ryane Briggs with any questions.

FEBRUARY YOUTH FUN NIGHT: NERF NIGHT

Nerf Night | Feb 11th | 7-8pm | Jack's Place

All youth are invited to join us for a fun and welcoming night this February—a great chance to hang out with friends, try something new, and enjoy a relaxed, laughter-filled atmosphere. Bring your Nerf blasters and darts as we build obstacles, form teams, and battle it out to see who comes out on top!



Invite your friends and let Ryane Briggs know you'll be attending!

MNM'S: MAKING NEW MEMORIES

Tuesday, Feb 17th | Noon | Jack's Place



Women on their own are invited to join us for the next MnM's (Making New Memories) lunch! Enjoy shredded chicken sandwiches with soup and a dessert while connecting with others in a warm and welcoming setting. RSVPs can be made by contacting the church office at (419) 289-2126. We hope you'll join us for this wonderful opportunity to share good food and great company!

EUCHRE NIGHT

Thursday, Feb 19th | 6:30pm | Jack's Place

If you enjoy playing Euchre, join us for a fun evening of cards! You don't need a partner to register—just come ready to have fun and meet new people as you rotate partners throughout the night. Be sure to RSVP by contacting the church office at (419) 289-2126. All ages and skill levels welcome. Please note this is a week earlier than usual.

MNM'S OUTING TO THE ASHLAND HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL

Sunday, Feb 22nd | 2pm (Doors Open at 1:30pm | Archer Auditorium

You're invited to join MnM's for an afternoon at the Ashland High School Musical, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, on Sunday, February 22 at 2:00 pm doors open at 1:30pm. Come enjoy a fun and uplifting performance and the opportunity for fellowship together. Please note the tickets are \$10. RSVP by February 5, 2026 by contacting the church office or Wendy Shreffler. We hope you can join us!



EXPRESSIONS OF FAITH

Friday, Feb 20th | Noon | Lower-Level Elevator Hallway

Do you enjoy making greeting cards? Join us at Expressions of Faith, a creative time for anyone interested in crafting cards. Bring your lunch and ideas you'd like to share—we'd love to see your creativity in action! No sign up needed.

Luther Club Break

Luther Club will not meet in February. We will see you back on March 5th!

GIRLS NIGHT OUT: ASHLAND THEATRE

Monday, Feb 9th | 5:30pm | Ashland Theatre

We're going to the movies! Join us for a private showing of *Unsung Hero*, a 2024 American Christian drama that follows Rebecca, Joel, and Luke Smallbone of For King & Country and their journey to becoming Christian recording artists. We will meet at the theatre for a light boxed meal; please bring cash if you'd like to purchase popcorn or drinks. The cost is \$10 and includes the boxed meal, or \$5 if you will not be eating.



As a service project, please bring donations of diapers, wipes, or individual diaper cream to support the newly established Diaper Pantry located at Christ United Methodist Church in Ashland.

GOOD SHEPHERD PRESCHOOL

TRINITY GOOD SHEPHERD PRESCHOOL: EPIPHANY CELEBRATION

A joyful and meaningful Epiphany celebration for our preschoolers!

Our preschool recently celebrated Epiphany, a special day that reminds us of the visit of the Wise Men to baby Jesus. During the celebration, the children carried the "Light" and explored symbols such as the star, crowns, and the three gifts—gold, frankincense, and myrrh—through songs, scripture, and prayer. It was a joyful and meaningful time as the children learned about generosity, kindness, and following God's light. A heartfelt thank-you to Becky Schaaf for presenting the Epiphany lesson, Pastor Kevin for leading our devotion, and Kim Wolbert for sharing music with our children. Following the program, the Preschool Board welcomed families to Mitchell Hall for a pancake brunch.



STEPHEN MINISTRY: BRINGING PEACE AND ENCOURAGEMENT

Do you find yourself seeking a way to serve that allows you to bring peace and encouragement to others? Please consider Stephen Ministry. We will train and support you as you join with others in the joyful service of listening to those in need of support. If you would like to learn more about Stephen Ministry, contact Michelle Vanderzyden at the church and check out www.stephenministries.org



JOIN THE PRAYER CHAIN

If you would like to become a member of our prayer chain, you can support others by lifting their needs in prayer. Please reach out to us through our website, or contact Michelle Vanderzyden at Michelle@trinityashland.org, to become part of our prayer chain ministry.

December 2025 Church Services		
DATE	SUNDAY SCHOOL	CHURCH SERVICES
12/06-07/2025	100	302
12/13-14/2025	51	872
12/20-21/2025	63	372
12/24/2025 (4:00pm)		152
12/24/2025 (6:00pm)		327
12/24/2025 (7:30pm)	-	252
12/24/2025 (11:00pm)		148
12/25/25	-	35
12/27-28/2025	-	244
12/31/2025	-	45

December 2025 Receipts	
DATE	AMOUNT
12/06-07/2025	\$28,839
12/13-14/2025	\$30,017
12/20-21/2025	\$34,655
12/27-28/2025	\$45,655
12/31/2025 + EOY Giving	\$30,578

Operating Fund YTD	
INCOME	\$1,108,723
DISBURSEMENTS	\$1,373,067
DEFICIT	-\$256,279
WEEKLY INCOME NEEDED FOR OPERATION BUDGET	\$26,405

**Newsletter receipt and operating fund amounts reflect information from two months prior, as approved and available at the time of newsletter composition.*

REGARDING GIVING ENVELOPES:

If you receive giving envelopes but would like to discontinue them, please email giving@trinityashland.org with your name & address to confirm your request. You may continue to give online via the website.

COUNCIL REPORT: JANUARY 2026 MEETING

Opening & Pastor's Report

Pastor Kevin opened with a reflection on faithfulness as a guiding theme for 2026, encouraging council members to live out their beliefs, values, and hope as leaders within the congregation.

Key Updates & Reports

Approval of Minutes

- Council approved the previous meeting's minutes and the treasurer's report.

Personnel / Lay Leader

- Council approved changes to Trinity's health insurance offerings, transitioning from NALC coverage to Anthem/Blue Cross plans, including both traditional and HSA options, with the establishment of a Health Reimbursement Account to help offset deductible costs.
- Approved posting the Kitchen Director position.
- Approved \$250 per college quarter to support Lindsey Morr's accounting studies.

Staff Updates

- Council reviewed the NALC Intern Review for Pastor Ben.
- A proposed Property Use Agreement, including pricing and indemnity clauses, was discussed and edits were suggested. A vote will be taken after edits are made.

Christian Education

- Fifty-five students were recognized for excellent Sunday School attendance on January 17–18. Students also contributed over \$200 to the General Fund while learning about tithing.

Finance Committee

- Council approved a plan to offset the 2025 operating deficit using designated funds, including Bequests and Memorials, Rental Property, Rybolt Property, Jack's Place Maintenance, and the Clark Fund.
- Discussion continued regarding communication around funding large projects tied to the 2026 budget.

Trinity Lutheran Good Shepherd Preschool (Montessori)

- Epiphany was celebrated January 7, followed by a brunch for approximately 70 attendees.
- Planning is underway for Grandparents Day, an open house on February 21, and partnership support for the May Rummage Sale.

Outreach Committee

- Council approved revisions to the Outreach bylaws (first of two required approvals).
- Amy Baker was nominated and approved to fill an open Outreach committee seat.

Property and Grounds

- Boiler replacement has begun.
- Kitchen tile and painting are nearly complete, with equipment expected to be moved back soon.
- Discussion continued regarding potential sale of church vans.
- TLC Properties reported stable balances and 100% occupancy; annual inspections are beginning.

Women & Children Ministries

- January Girls' Night Bingo was well attended.
- Planning continues for a February Girls' Night outing and the upcoming Father-Daughter Dance.
- Trinity Kids 4-5-6 hosted a successful Movie Night fundraiser.
- VBS planning is underway.
- Toddler Time began with weather-related cancellations; additional dates are scheduled.

Worship & Music

- High Praise will host a spring concert on April 19.
- Women's Choir rehearsals begin March 31, singing April 25-26.
- Passing the offering plate during Praise services remains under discussion.

Youth

- Share Group is now meeting in the Youth Room.
- The first Youth Council meeting will be held January 22.
- Youth Coffee House & Open Mic Night is scheduled for January 29.

Adjournment

The meeting concluded with prayer and the Lord's Prayer.