

>>> NEWSLETTER <<<

THE TRINITARIAN

All are welcome, all are loved

>>> PASTOR'S PEN

2024 - HIGHS NOTES AND VERY LOW ONES

It's usually this time of the year when people look back at the previous months, tally things up and decide if it was a good year.

Looking back at 2024, I think it's safe to say the year held a mixed bag for Trinity.

THE (VERY) BAD

It pains me to consider that the discovery of human feces in the sanctuary is what will mark our entire year together in faith. It was the subject of my first extended conversation with the synod's new bishop. It was an inauspicious introduction to Trinity for the Bishop Carla.

The full measure of a person's arrogance and entitlement that would lead someone to scoop something out of a toilet, bring it to the church and deposit it within the sanctuary is impossible to fathom.

Congregational Council has begun the work of making the building more secure and limiting after-hours access.

I am grateful to those who reached out and shared their disgust, sadness and anger over such a repulsive act. I am grateful that we were able to grieve together. However, I am troubled by the number who remain silent over this incident and over other divisive actions that some have undertaken during the past year.

I spoke to the congregation prior to worship on December 22.

In my short talk, I shared the pain I felt as the congregation I love was wounded by the desecration of its worship space. I questioned what pastor would want to minister to a congregation where a number of its members seem so accepting of such behaviour and of those who actually take part in efforts to undermine Congregational Council and divide the congregation.

I invited those in attendance to discuss the matter amongst themselves for a few minutes.

Continued on Page 2

SCHEDULE

JANUARY 26 - RIC SUNDAY

RECONCILING IN CHRIST (RIC) SUNDAY IS AN ANNUAL WORSHIP CELEBRATION TO SHARE IN THE COMMITMENT TO THE ONGOING WORK OF WELCOME, INCLUSION, CELEBRATION, AND ADVOCACY FOR 2SLGBTQIA+ PEOPLE IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH.

FEBRUARY 9- ACM

FOLLOWS SUNDAY SERVICES

MARCH 4 - SHROVE SUPPER

ENJOY PANCAKES AND SAUSAGES IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL AS WE PREPARE FOR THE START OF THE LENTEN SEASON. THE SUPPER WILL TAKE PLACE FROM 5-7 P.M. FREE-WILL OFFERING TO SUPPORT TRINITY'S OUTREACH EFFORTS ACCEPTED. JOIN US AND BRING A FRIEND OR TWO.

MUSIC PROGRAM EXPANSION

ONE KEY TO TRINITY'S FUTURE

From Page 1

What was said during those minutes? Nothing ... the sanctuary was silent.

If a turd in the sanctuary doesn't merit outrage and discussion, what would?

Silence, then, is the problem.

Silence is taken as acceptance ... silence allows these actions to continue unchallenged. Ultimately, silence could kill Trinity. It seems that any talk comes when backs are turned

Unless members stand up and say "no," divisive personal ministries and reprehensible acts will continue to pull council's attention from essential areas and divert us from moving into a future that offers new life to Trinity and to those to whom we minister.

If we cannot advocate for Trinity within our walls and stand against those who would divide us by placing their egos before the congregation's well-being, then how can we effectively and authentically advocate and stand with others outside our walls?

If you profess to love Trinity - as a community of faith and not as a private club - then it has come time to stand up and help congregation leadership move Trinity forward and ensure that its future lies beyond the next couple of years. Silence can no longer be an option.

NOW... THE VERY GOOD

The full potential of our music program is being unlocked.

The leadership and connections that Val brings to the role of choir director and accompanist has been beyond belief. I joke that she works the choir like thoroughbreds - even when they run the scales, they sound fantastic. Best of all, new voices from the congregation have joined the choir - and more are expected to come aboard in 2025. As well, plans are being made to bring people from the community on to the choir.

Our guitarist, Esther, continues to help the congregation develop new musical chops. Esther is joining the Worship & Music committee, which grows to five members.

Our latest addition, Brandon Lesperance, made his Trinity debut on Christmas Eve. Even though he was unfamiliar with the pipe organ, Brandon was fantastic during the early service. He will be a valued member of the music program as we move forward.

The variety of musical talents within the music program gives us the opportunity to create and offer a variety of worship experiences to the congregation and to the church-shoppers who give Trinity a try.

* * *

The Trinity Arts Series, the brainchild of Jim's and Mary's son-in-law, Florin Simioanca, holds so much potential for Trinity and its new Music Outreach Program.

The proceeds from the concerts will go toward the church and help fund music scholarships and instrument rentals for students (those are just two of the ideas that have been pitched thus far).

The concerts will also bring the community into the building and enhance our efforts to be a neighbourhood hub.

The next concert, featuring a performance by the Detroit Symphony's string quartet, is scheduled for April 12.

* * *

Moving the Clothing Giveaway to a monthly schedule has proven to be a good move.

The turnout each month has shown that the need is too great to make people wait six months between offerings. At the most recent Giveaway, a single mother of four was in tears of joy that she was able to get clothing for her children in time for Christmas. [We do great ministry.](#)

* * *

Our ministry with Street Help and the Welcome Centre continues to grow and strengthen. Our regular donations are met with thanks and tears. The need is great and our ministry is essential.

* * *

Best of all, new faces are coming to Trinity AND they are becoming involved in the life of the congregation. Where once things ran through one or two people, now a number of people have stepped forward to help guide the life of the congregation. They are a blessing to us all.

Treasurer Update

Here is our financial statement as of November 30, 2024.

WFCU Accounts	Value	Previous Month	Comments
Chequing Account – Account 3	\$94,293.21	\$95,902.23	
Alto Savings – Account 13	\$33,878.63	\$33,871.67	
Alto Savings – Account 14	\$23,926.07	\$23,921.15	
Alto Savings – Account 15	\$5,866.53	\$5,865.81	This is the Memorial Fund
Term Deposit #10	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00	Matures August 14, 2025
Bingo Account	\$4,065.74	\$4,065.74	
ELFEC Investment	\$54,317.10	\$54,317.10	As of 09-30-2024
Total Funds	\$241,347.28	\$242,943.70	
Due Back to Savings	Value	Previous Month	Comments
Gift Cards	\$4,380.00	\$5,580.00	
Total Funds	\$4,380.00	\$5,580.00	

The following are our restricted fund accounts:

Restricted Funds	Value	Previous Month	Comments
Memorial Fund	\$5,866.53	\$5,865.81	
Endowment Fund	\$30,705.21	\$30,705.21	
Congregational Growth	\$1,700.00	\$1,700.00	
Youth	\$1,857.84	\$1,857.84	
Family Assist	\$815.00	\$740.00	
Total Funds	\$40,944.56	\$40,868.86	

The following is our year to date income-expense totals.

END OF November 2024	Budgeted		Actuals
INCOME TOTAL	\$128,892.00		\$94,868.11
EXPENSES TOTAL	\$148,021.48		\$143,961.06

END OF November 2023			Actuals
INCOME TOTAL			\$103,748.44

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me.

Submitted by Bob Swiatoschik/(Treasurer)

Budget Meeting:

The 2025 budget meeting was held on Sunday, December 15, after church services.

The budget was passed:

- 24 YES
- 1 NO

We discussed the future of the Church:

- Closure on December 31, 2026
- Redevelopment

More discussion will be held at the Annual Meeting

Outreach Update:

Christmas Bazaar – The Christmas Bazaar earned Trinity \$1,367.25 (compared to \$1,677.48 in 2023). A big THANK-YOU to ALL the helpers who make baked goodies, made the cookie packages and help set up, serve our customers and tear down. THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT AND CARING ABOUT TRINITY!!

Saturday, December 21 – The Academy Brass Quintet – This performance was awesome!! Words cannot express how wonderful this event was. This was our premiere event of our new Music Ministry. The attendance from the community was wonderful. THIS IS TRINITY’S FUTURE – ARE YOU A PART OF IT??

Our next planned event will be with the Detroit Symphony String Quartet on Saturday, April 12, 2025, at 2 p.m. We hope to see you there, especially those who were conflicted for the December performance.

Clothing Give Away – We had a steady stream on Saturday, December 14. Once again, our community is so grateful!! The next one will be on Saturday, January 11, 2025. Do you wish to help??

Submitted by Bob Swiatoschik (Council Lead for Outreach)

»» COUNCIL

TRINITY'S MISSION IS TO SERVE

As I write this message, the Christ child has come and the celebrations praising and thanking God for giving us his only Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, are underway. We gather in the fellowship of the family of Christ. Our Lord came to us on earth to be a servant, to serve and help people no matter their station in life.

In Mark 10:45 "The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

We, too, are also called to be a servant and to serve and sacrifice, whether that be with time, talents, gifts, and the generosity thereof, especially in our congregation, in our community, to help the young, assist the old, greet the stranger, help the feeble, weak, and marginalized, support the poor, feed the hungry, and clothe the naked. We, as a congregation, are called to this, as Jesus was called.

In this past year, in two outreach efforts, Trinity was part of Pridefest, where Trinity's booth received much

attention, and Trinity will hold its monthly Clothing Giveaway, the third of which will take place on January 11.

People's need is great, not only the physical, but also to experience belonging and find that spiritual home.

Trinity Lutheran Church and its faithful members are exercising that mission to be the servant and to serve others; not us, not ourselves in self-aggrandizing actions that allow egos to bask in victimhood, actions that alienate other members, exclude and insult fellow members of the body of Christ, and disrespect the leadership of this church body.

Martin Luther believed that servanthood was a key aspect of Christian discipleship, where believers follow the example of Jesus Christ. Share God's love with those in need in your words and actions.

Dagmar Raulin
Trinity Council Chair

»» LOVE FEAST



Trinity marked the first Sunday in Advent with an Agape Meal Service. The service took place in the Fellowship Hall with a meal of fruit, yogurt, bread and stewed prunes (with a recipe from Jerusalem) being offered as part of The Meal. The service was so well received that an Agape will become a regular offering at Trinity.

CHRISTMAS EVE AT TRINITY



Even though the attendance could have been higher (which is always the case), the two Christmas Eve Services resonated with the comfort of the past and the hope of the future. The music program enhanced the worship experienced and brought more depth to the services' spiritual aspects. Val, Mark, Brandon and Dagmar offered a moving and beautiful experience. The evening service was punctuated with a guitar and piano accompaniment for Silent Night that made the moment both intimate and powerful. Thank you (and all the worship assistants) for offering your talents.



»» Concert kickoff

ACADEMY BRASS QUINTET INAUGURATES ARTS SERIES



The Academy Brass Quintet from Toledo, Ohio, performed the inaugural concert of the Trinity Arts Series. More than 70 people - many of who had never been to Trinity before - attended the concert of Christmas music. Conceived by Florin Simioanca (right photo), the series aims to bring people into the building for musical events. The proceeds will fund Trinity's new music outreach efforts. The next concert, featuring a string quartet from the Detroit Symphony, is set for April. Tickets go on sale in the new year.





>>> COUNCIL

Council Updates:

Membership Update – Lane Peifer:

After much reflection, discernment and discussion over Lane’s decision to refuse delivery of a letter calling for a meeting with the Church Council and the Pastor on December 11, 2024, to offer an explanation, contrition and an apology to this Church Council and members of this congregation for his divisive actions, Church Council has voted to move Lane’s membership from active to responsibility status. The Synod will be notified and his non-Christian behaviour will be documented and will be on file at the Synod office.

Lane, will now be designated an inactive member. As a result, in accordance with our Constitution and with the knowledge of the Bishop’s office, his membership is now in the responsibility status effective December 11, 2024.

The implications of this move, means that he:

1. cannot take part in or vote at Congregational meetings;
2. cannot serve on any congregational committees;
3. cannot take part in any congregational activity;
4. cannot attend services or congregational functions at Trinity;
5. cannot represent Trinity in any means at external functions.

If after prayerful discernment Lane comes to a point where he believes he can offer sincere contrition and an apology, he can contact either the congregational council or the pastor to schedule a meeting.

***** Lane Peifer scheduled a “secret” Trinity Christmas event at the Legion on Saturday, December 21 – the same afternoon as the Academy Brass Quintet’s performance. Lane did not even have the decency or respect to ask Congregational Council if he could have this event at Trinity. The off-site event held no benefit for Trinity or its future. *****

The Gloves Are Off:

Your Council is now tired of being the “nice guy” while members of this congregation bad mouth us, spread lies and now shit on us – literally. THIS MUST END!! A very emotional and troubled Pastor Chris spoke with his heart on Sunday, December 22, before the service started.

»» COUNCIL

Even though in the past they called this “THEIR BELOVED TRINITY!”, a small group of narcissists are working VERY hard to divide and kill this Church. This group is divisive, disrespectful, feels entitled, and acts contrary to Christian values.

A narcissistic personality involves a pattern of self-centred, arrogant thinking and behaviour, a lack of empathy and consideration for others, and an excessive need for admiration. SOUND FAMILIAR??

Val Daniel is our Choir Director and Dagmar Raulin is our Music Co-ordinator. These are the people who decide and arrange offsite singing to shut-ins. The previous choir director and organist was given numerous opportunities to be part of Trinity’s music program and received right of first refusal to accept the formal description of the positions – but she turned the roles down. It is totally disrespectful on her part to have her so-called “Friends singing for Friends” an exclusive event that divides this Church and divides our Choir. This must end!!

This council is working very hard to keep Trinity moving forward into the future. This small group is working very hard to put an end to Trinity, while WE are trying to save Trinity.

If Trinity closes, how will Frank and Regina Klein and others feel when they will not have THEIR Church available for their funerals? Think about our renters, who will be homeless; as I am sure they would not be able to find similar accommodations for \$950 per month. These are the sad side-effects.

Council is also tired of finding disrespectful notes in our hymnals; tired of people making unauthorized admissions (entrance) to the Pastor's office. We have had quite enough of this malicious behaviour!!

Security changes are coming and some are already implemented. ALL keys will be returned and all locks will be changed.

God gave us a mouth to talk with and ears to listen.

Good people of Trinity, the time is NOW. You must take a stand and say “NO” to this divisive and disrespectful behaviour. In UNITY we will succeed, if we remain divided, then we will fall.

Submitted by Your Church Council

»» CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

Have a voice?

Join the choir

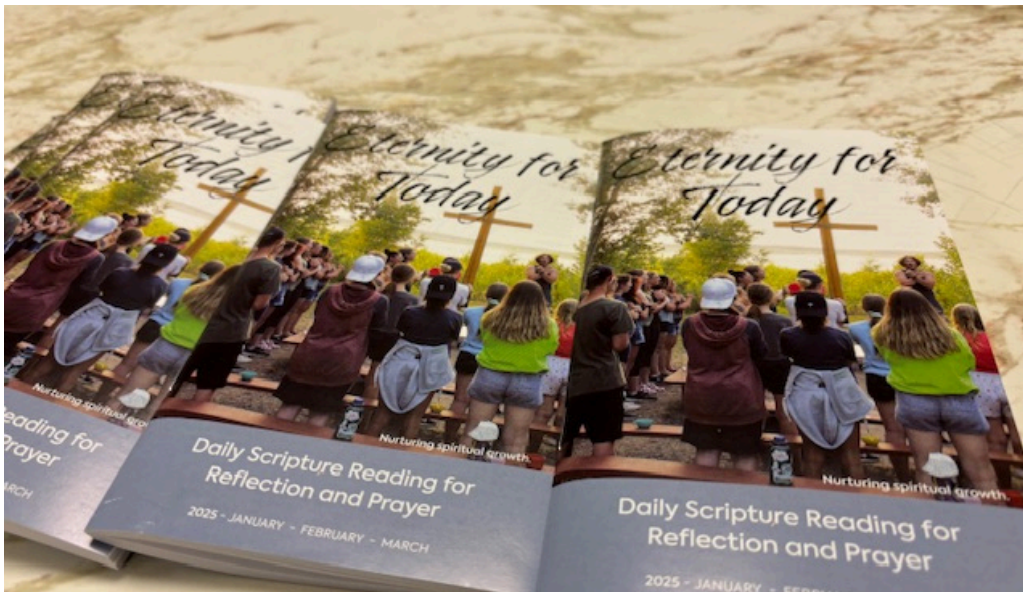
Talk to Val or Dagmar

»» LET'S TALK

"Let's Talk" will be monthly open, non-aggressive discussions for those who wish to chat about anything Trinity-related.

"Let's Talk" will take place following church services in the sitting area in the Fellowship Hall. The next session is set for the new year.

»» DEVOTIONALS ARRIVE



With Canada Post back in action, the latest edition of *Eternity for Today* arrived at Trinity. Copies are available in the Narthex. By the way, Pastor Chris composed the devotionals for the final week of January.

»» WHEN A TRINITY EVENT IS A TRINITY EVENT

To avoid confusion with events that purport to be Congregational events, communication about true Trinity events will be provided by Congregational Council and will be distributed through the Church Office.

Trinity events are primarily held within the church building. Off-site events are rarely, if ever, actual Trinity events.

Invitations or information will be issued through the Office via email, the newsletter or by members authorized by congregational council.

If you have questions about specific events, please contact the Church Office or a member of Council.

**TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
PRE-AUTHORIZED REMITTANCE PROGRAM**

AUTHORIZATION

I hereby authorize *Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church*, 1215 Parent Avenue, Windsor, ON N8X 4J1, to cause a cheque to be drawn on my account, each month as a contribution by me to Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, as follows:

Total *monthly* contributions to Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of:

_____ (\$ _____ .00) per month

Distributed as follows:

Current Giving/Benevolence \$ _____ per month

Global Hunger and Development Agency (GHDA) \$ _____ per month

Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR) \$ _____ per month

ELCIC World Missions/Volunteers in Mission \$ _____ per month

Specify _____ \$ _____ per month

Specify _____ \$ _____ per month

Specify _____ \$ _____ per month

Total Monthly Giving: \$ _____ per month

Contributor's name _____ Envelope # _____

Bank/Trust/Credit Union Name _____

Branch Address: _____

Account Number _____ Type of Account _____

Date: _____ Signature: _____

This authority may be changed or cancelled by the contributor at any time.

To ensure accuracy, a sample cheque marked "VOID" must accompany this form.

The transfer of contributions to the ministry of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church will begin in the month *following* receipt of this authorization.