

*Forget the Buffet;
Take the Bread*

February 23, 2025

An Explanation of Our Communion Practice

Today we are celebrating the Lord's Supper, which is a wonderful gift from our gracious God. In his Word, God teaches that Christians need a proper understanding of the Lord's Supper before receiving it (1 Corinthians 11:27-29). He also tells us that Christians should be completely united before communing together (1 Corinthians 10:17). Therefore, we ask that only members of our fellowship (The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod and, worldwide, The Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference) commune at Trinity.

We do want everyone to commune with us. So that everything may be done decently and in good order (1 Corinthians 14:40), we ask for the opportunity to verify that we are united in our beliefs based on God's Word, and then to celebrate that unity publicly in the Sacrament. If you would like to learn more, please speak to Pastor. Thank you for your understanding of our belief and practice.





February 23, 2025

Welcome! Thank you for joining us for worship! In our service, we receive God's grace through his Word and sacraments. As he works to strengthen our faith in Jesus, we respond to his goodness with our prayers, praise, and offerings. We are glad to be here and glad that you have joined us today!

- Restrooms are located in the main hallway, narthex, and back classrooms.
- If you wish to step out of the service to calm your child, please feel welcome to use the Fellowship Hall or the Toddler Sunday School Room (located in the back-corner classroom of the building, connected to the Fellowship Hall). Both of these rooms have televisions showing the worship service. Also, please do not hesitate to ask an usher or any member if you need help locating anything. We want to make you feel welcome.

Serving the Lord and Serving Us:

Pastor: Rev. Paul Jenkins

Today's Focus: Jesus, who loves all, calls his followers to love all, too. Our worship follows *The Common Service*.

WE COME INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD

MUSICAL INTRODUCTION

This is an opportunity to quiet your mind and heart and prepare for the joy of worshipping your God.

OPENING HYMN: 236, All Praise to God, Who Reigns Above, verses 1 and 5



1 All praise to God who reigns a - bove, The
5 Then come be - fore his pres - ence now And
God of all cre - a - tion, The God of
ban - ish fear and sad - ness; To your Re -
won - ders, pow'r, and love, The God of
deem - er pay your vow And sing with
our sal - va - tion! With heal - ing balm my
joy and glad - ness. Though great dis - tress my
soul he fills, The God who ev - 'ry sor - row
soul be - fell, The Lord my God did all things
stills— To God all praise and glo - ry!
well— To God all praise and glo - ry!

Text: Johann J. Schütz, 1640–90, abr.; tr. composite.

Tune: LOBT GOTT DEN HERREN, IHR HEIDEN ALL (87 87 887) Melchior Vulpius, c. 1570–1615.

Stand

INVOCATION

Minister: In the name of the Father and of the (+) Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation: Amen.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

M: Beloved in the Lord: let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, asking him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

C: Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.

M: God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given his only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the (+) Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

M: In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.



C: Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will toward men.



We praise you, we bless you, we wor-ship you, we glorify you,



we give thanks to you, for your great glory, O Lord God, heav'n-ly King,



God the Fa-ther al - mighty. O Lord, the only begotten Son, Je-sus Christ;



O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the

(Continued on Next Page)

sin of the world; have mercy on us. You take away the
 sin of the world; re - ceive our prayer. You sit at the right hand of
 God the Father; have mercy on us. For you on - ly are holy;
 you on - ly are the Lord. You only, O Christ, with the Ho - ly Spirit,
 are most high in the glory of God the Father. A - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

M: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

M: Let us pray. O God, the strength of all who put their trust in you, mercifully grant that by your power we may be defended from all adversity; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Be Seated

THE WORD

FIRST LESSON

Genesis 45: 3-15

Joseph displays Christ-like love for his brothers.

Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?"

His brothers could not answer him, because they were terrified by his presence. ⁴ Joseph said to his brothers, "Come closer to me, please."

They came closer. He said, "I am Joseph, your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. ⁵ Now do not be upset or angry with yourselves for selling me to this place, since God sent me ahead of you to preserve life. ⁶ For two years now the famine has been in the land, and there are still five more years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. ⁷ God sent me ahead of you to preserve you as survivors on the earth, and to keep you alive by a great act of deliverance. ⁸ So it was not you who sent me here, but God, and he has made me a father to Pharaoh, lord over his entire household, and ruler over the whole land of Egypt. ⁹ Hurry, go up to my father and tell him, "This is what your son Joseph says: "God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me. Do not delay. ¹⁰ You shall live in the land of Goshen, where you will be close to me—you, your children, your grandchildren, your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. ¹¹ I will take care of you here, for there are still five years of famine. Otherwise you will come to ruin, you, and your household, and all that you have." ¹² Pay attention. Your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that it is my mouth that speaks to you. ¹³ You shall tell my father all about my position of honor in Egypt and about everything that you have seen. Hurry and bring my father down here."

¹⁴ He threw his arms around his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his shoulder. ¹⁵ He kissed all his brothers and wept over them. After that his brothers talked with him.

PSALM OF THE DAY: 103

Read responsively

M: Praise the LORD, O my soul;

C: all my inmost being, praise his holy name.

M: He forgives all your sins

C: and heals all your diseases;

M: He redeems your life from the grave

C: and crowns you with love and compassion.

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M: The LORD is compassionate and gracious,

C: slow to anger, abounding in love.

M: He does not treat us as our sins deserve

C: or repay us according to our iniquities.

M: For as high as the heavens are above the earth,

C: so great is his love for those who fear him;

M: as far as the east is from the west,

C: so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

M: As a father has compassion on his children,

C: so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him;

M: for he knows how we are formed,

C: he remembers that we are dust.

M: Our days are like grass, like the flower of the field;

C: the wind blows over it and it is gone.

M: But the LORD's love is with those who fear him

C: from everlasting to everlasting.

SECOND LESSON

Romans 12:14-21

St. Paul echoes the words of our Savior in the Gospel.

Bless those who persecute you; bless, and do not curse. ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who are rejoicing; weep with those who are weeping. ¹⁶ Have the same respect for one another. Do not be arrogant, but associate with the humble. Do not think too highly of yourselves.

¹⁷ Do not pay anyone back evil for evil. Focus on those things that everyone considers noble. ¹⁸ If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, maintain peace with everyone. ¹⁹ Do not take revenge, dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath. For it is written, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay," says the Lord. ²⁰ But:

If your enemy is hungry, feed him;
if he is thirsty, give him a drink.

For by doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.

²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

VERSE OF THE DAY

M: Alleluia! "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of everlasting life." Alleluia!
(John 6:68)

Stand

GOSPEL AND SERMON TEXT

Luke 6:27-36

M: The Gospel of St. Luke, Chapter 6.

C: Glory be to you, O Lord!

"But I say to you who are listening: Love your enemies. Do good to those who hate you. ²⁸ Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who mistreat you. ²⁹ If someone strikes you on one cheek, offer the other too. If someone takes away your coat, do not withhold your shirt. ³⁰ Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes away your things, do not demand them back.

³¹ "Treat others just as you would want them to treat you. ³² If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? To be sure, even the sinners love those who love them. ³³ And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? Even the sinners do the same thing. ³⁴ If you lend to those from whom you expect to be repaid, what credit is that to you? Even the sinners lend to sinners in order to be paid back in full. ³⁵ Instead, love your enemies, do good and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the unthankful and the evil. ³⁶ Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful."

M: The Gospel of our Lord.

C: Praise be to you, O Christ!

NICENE CREED

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one being with the Father.**

Through him all things were made.

**For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary,
and became fully human.**

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**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Be Seated

CHILDREN'S SERMON: Jesus Makes It Possible

HYMN OF THE DAY: 492, Son of God, Eternal Savior



1 What God or - dains is al - ways good; His
 2 What God or - dains is al - ways good; He
 3 What God or - dains is al - ways good; He
 4 What God or - dains is al - ways good. Though
 5 What God or - dains is al - ways good; This



will is just and ho - ly. As he di - rects my
 nev - er will de - ceive me. He leads me in his
 is my friend and Fa - ther. He will not let me
 I the cup am drink - ing Which sa - vors now of
 truth re - mains un - shak - en. Though sor - row, need, or



life for me, I fol - low meek and low - ly. My
 right - eous way And nev - er will he leave me. I
 suf - fer harm Though man - y storms may gath - er. Now
 bit - ter - ness, I take it with - out shrink - ing. For
 death be mine, I shall not be for - sak - en. I



God in - deed In ev - 'ry need Knows well how he
 take con - tent What he has sent; His hand that sends
 I may know Both joy and woe; Some day I shall
 af - ter grief God grants re - lief, My heart with com -
 fear no harm, For with his arm He will em - brace



will shield me; To him, then, I will yield me.
 me sad - ness Will turn my tears to glad - ness.
 see clear - ly That he has loved me dear - ly.
 fort fill - ing And all my sor - row still - ing.
 and shield me; So to my God I yield me.

Text: Samuel Rodigast, 1649-1708, abr.; tr. *The Lutheran Hymnal*, St. Louis, 1941, alt.
 Tune: WAS GOTT TUT (87 87 44 77) Severus Gastorius, 1646-82, alt.

SERMON

Text: Luke 6:27-36

Theme: Eat the Bread, Leave the Buffet: Love Your Enemies

Stand

CREATE IN ME

C: Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -
new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -
way from your pres-ence, and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it
from me. Re-store un - to me the joy of your sal - va -
tion, and up-hold me with your free Spir-it. A - men.

The musical score is written on five staves in a single system. It begins with a treble clef, a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and a common time signature (C). The melody is written in a simple, hymn-like style with various note values including quarter, eighth, and half notes, as well as rests. The lyrics are printed below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Be Seated

OFFERING

Please take a moment to sign the friendship register found in your pew.

The members of Trinity make joyful offerings to support this church's ministry. A portion of our offerings is also used for the training of future pastors and teachers, and the worldwide mission work carried out by our fellowship, the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. Our guests are under no obligation to give, but any gifts freely given are welcome and will be put to work in service to God's kingdom.

Stand

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

M: Almighty God and Father, we thank you for all your mercies, especially for the gift of your Son, through whom you have revealed your gracious will. We praise you for the Holy Spirit and his working through the means of grace.

C: Plant your Word in our hearts, and cause it to produce fruit in our lives.

M: Strengthen and defend your Church, that by your Word and sacraments faith may grow and love toward all may increase.

C: Support all who spread the light of your truth throughout the world.

M: Keep our children in the grace of their baptisms. Enable their parents to train them in lives of faith.

C: Raise up Christians to serve you in the ministry of the Word and in all godly walks of life.

M: Preserve our nation in justice and honor. Guide and bless all who make, administer, and judge our laws.

C: Give them wisdom that they may promote justice and hinder evil.

M: Let your blessing rest on planting and harvest, commerce and industry, medicine and science, the arts and culture. Protect all who travel, and care for those whose work is difficult or dangerous.

C: Be with all who devote themselves to any useful task.

M: Comfort all who are in sorrow or need, sickness or adversity. Remember those who suffer persecution for the faith. Have mercy on those for whom death draws near.

C: Grant them your love, and take them into your tender care.

M: We remember with thanksgiving those who have loved and served you, who now rest from their labors. Console those who are mourning or living with sadness.

C: Keep us in the true faith, and bring us at last to the joys of heaven.

M: Grant these things, Father, for the sake of Jesus, who died and rose again.

C: Amen.

Special prayers

LORD'S PRAYER

C: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

THE SACRAMENT

M: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

M: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them up unto the Lord.

M: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.

C: It is good and right so to do.

M: It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lived among us as a human being and revealed his glory as your only Son, full of grace and truth. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

C: Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of heav - en - ly hosts:
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san -
na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.
Bless - ed is he, bless - ed is he, bless - ed is he who
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san -
na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

The musical score is written on a single staff in treble clef with a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and a common time signature (C). The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes, with some phrases ending in a quarter rest. The lyrics are printed below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across notes.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

M: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this (+) is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this (+) is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

M: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: Amen.

O CHRIST, LAMB OF GOD

C: O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;
have mer - cy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God,
you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.
O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;
grant us your peace. A - men.

The musical score is written on five staves in a single system. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The time signature is common time (C). The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes, with some phrases spanning across bar lines. The lyrics are printed below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across notes or bar lines.

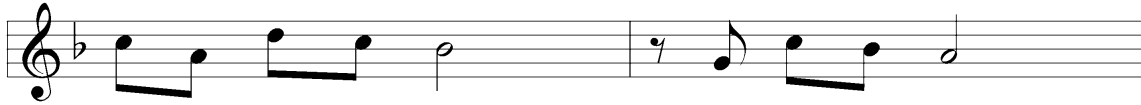
Be Seated

DISTRIBUTION

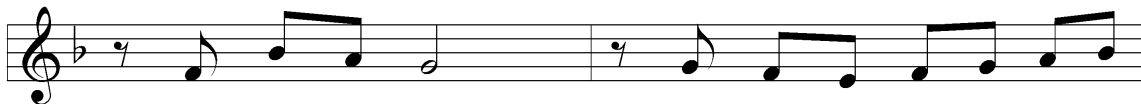
HYMN: 742, What is this Bread?



1	What	is	this	bread?	Christ's	bod - y
2	What	is	this	wine?	The	blood of
3	So	who	am	I,	That	I should
4	Yet	is	God	here?	Oh,	yes! By
5	Is	this	for	me?	I	am for -



ris - en	from the	dead:	This	bread	we	break.
Je - sus	shed	for mine;	The	cup	of	grace
live	and	he should	Un -	der	the	rod?
Word	and	prom - ise	In	mouth	and	soul
giv - en	and	set free!	I	do	be -	lieve



This	life	we	take	Was	crushed	to	pay	for	our	re -
Brings	his	em -	brace	Of	life	and	love	un -	til	I
My	God,	my	God,	Why	have	you	not	for -	sak -	en
He	makes	us	whole—	Christ,	tru -	ly	pre -	sent	in	this
That	I	re -	ceive	His	ver -	y	bod -	y	and	his



lease.	Oh,	taste	and	see—	the	Lord	is	peace.
sing!	Oh,	taste	and	see—	the	Lord	is	King.
me?	Oh,	taste	and	see—	the	Lord	is	free.
meal.	Oh,	taste	and	see—	the	Lord	is	real.
blood.	Oh,	taste	and	see—	the	Lord	is	good.

This hymn nicely summarizes Martin Luther's fine discussion on the institution and blessings of Holy Communion as outlined in his Small Catechism.

Text: Frederic W. Baue, b. 1946 © 1991, 1998 Fred and Jean Baue. All rights reserved. Used by permission.
 Tune: PREPARATION (48 44 88) Jean Neuhauser Baue, b. 1951 © 1991, 1998 Fred and Jean Baue. All rights reserved.
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Stand

SONG OF SIMEON



C: Lord, now you let your servant de - part in peace ac-cord-ing
to your word. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have pre-
pared be - fore the face of all people, a light to light - en the
Gen - tiles and the glo - ry of your peo-ple Is - ra - el.

M: O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.

C: **And his mercy endures forever.**

M: We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this holy supper. We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

BLESSING

M: The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and (+) give you peace.

C: **Amen.**

Be Seated

CLOSING HYMN: 490, Love in Christ is Strong and Living, verse 1

The image shows a musical score for a closing hymn. It consists of four staves of music in 4/4 time, with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The lyrics are: "1 Love in Christ is strong and liv - ing,". The second staff continues with: "Bind - ing faith - ful hearts in one;". The third staff continues with: "Love in Christ is true and giv - ing—". The fourth staff concludes with: "May his will in us be done!". The music is written in a simple, clear style suitable for a hymn book.

1 Love in Christ is strong and liv - ing,
Bind - ing faith - ful hearts in one;
Love in Christ is true and giv - ing—
May his will in us be done!

Text: Dorothy R. Schultz, b. 1934. © 1980 Concordia Publishing House. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Tune: DOROTHY (87 87) Ralph C. Schultz, b. 1932. © 1980 Concordia Publishing House. All rights reserved.
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Trinity Lutheran Church

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Find us online at www.TrinityofWoodbridge.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/trinityofwoodbridge

VBS Planning Meeting - March 1

On Saturday, March 1 at 9:30 am we will hold our first 2025 VBS planning meeting. We will choose our dates and curriculum. Anyone interested in helping with VBS is welcome to attend. Questions? Please contact Pastor or Erika Ohlendorf at erika.ohlendorf@gmail.com

Women's Bible Study - March 8

The Trinity Women's Bible Study will meet Saturday, March 8 at 9:00 am at Trinity. We'll discuss chapter 6 of the book "Measured by Grace: How God Defines Success" by Sharla Fritz. Please join us!

Wine and Word Bible Study – March 6

The Wine and Word Bible Study meets at the home of Bruce and Dawn Knox. Their home is located just 5 minutes from the church in Old Bridge Estates. We meet the 1st and 3rd Thursdays from 7-8:30 pm. Those who wish can bring a bottle of wine and a small bite appetizer. Come and join us whether you drink wine or not! Contact Dawn at 703-615-9320 or dawn.f.knox@gmail.com to RSVP.

Sunday School Service Project for February

All February long, Trinity's Sunday School kids are collecting baby items for Birthright of Woodbridge to distribute to expectant moms who have little or no support for their pregnancies.

Items particularly needed are:

- + baby clothes sizes newborn to 6 months (new and gently used)
- + baby toiletries such as baby shampoo, diaper cream, towels, and washcloths
- + diapers size newborn to 4
- + baby blankets (handmade blankets are welcome)

(Also: no toys, please.)

There will be a collection bin in the narthex for these items through February 23. You can find a more complete list of items needed on the Sunday School bulletin board in the hallway leading to the large Sunday school room.

Divine Call Received

On January 22, Pastor received a divine call to serve as a pastor at Grace Lutheran Church and School in St. Joseph, Michigan. He is currently deciding where his gifts could be best used by praying for guidance and discussing things with the leaders of both Trinity and Grace. He is aiming to reach a decision late this month and appreciates your prayers.

Ash Wednesday Worship and Lenten Suppers

Ash Wednesday worship will be held on March 5 at 7pm, including the Rite of Imposition of Ashes for those who desire it. On the following five Wednesdays of Lent, potluck suppers will start in the Fellowship Hall at 6, followed by short devotions around 6:30. Everyone is welcome!

Fifth Annual Easter Egg Hunt

Trinity's next outreach event will be our Fifth Annual Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, April 12 at 2pm. Eggs filled with candy will be ordered again this year, but you're welcome to add your own to the stash, if you'd like. Our goal is to show kindness and also invite our unchurched neighbors to join us for Holy Week worship. This is a low-volunteer event, but a few will be needed to supervise and to staff a welcome table. If you'd like to help, please speak to pastor. Thank you!

Trinity's Little Free Library is one of our church's most effective tools for reaching out to our neighborhood. Many families in the area around Trinity regularly visit our LFL for books and shelf-stable food items, especially those who are experiencing food scarcity. Particularly useful are canned or boxed foods that do not require additional ingredients besides water to prepare. Books are always welcome, too, of course! If the shelves happen to be full, there is a donation bin for overflow items in the Fellowship Hall beside the door to the hallway.

Small Choir

Trinity's choir sings about once a month during worship. Anyone is welcome to join! We'll sing hymns from our hymnal, Christian Worship. If you are interested in joining, please let John or Erika Ohlendorf know.

Ushers and Usher Assistants Needed

A sign-up sheet is sent via email through Sign-up Genius. You are welcome to fill in as many Sundays as you are available. If you would like to become part of the regular rotation of ushers, or even just fill in once in a while when needed, please speak to Worship Elder Andy Lutz. If you have any questions or are not getting the emails for Sign-Up Genius, please email worship@trinityofwoodbridge.org. You can also scan this code to sign up:



Lord's Supper Available to All Members

If you are a confirmed member of Trinity, Pastor would be happy to commune you at home, or anywhere else you would like to meet. Just contact him at (309) 433-5807 or revpauljenkins@yahoo.com with a date, time, and place, and he will make it work.



Crossroads

<https://wels.net/family-devotion/fd20240301/>

**If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.
Mark 8:34**

Have you ever gone hiking in the woods? If you follow marked paths, sometimes you will come to a crossroads. That's where two paths cross each other. At a crossroads, you have a choice. You can continue on the same path or change directions and go on another path.

From the time he was born, Jesus was walking on the path to the cross. A few months before he died, he told his disciples exactly what was going to happen when he went to Jerusalem. But Peter didn't want to hear it. He couldn't imagine why Jesus would want to suffer and die. He tried to talk Jesus out of it.

Jesus was at a crossroads.

He could continue the path to the cross or he could choose the easier route of not suffering. At that moment, Jesus could have changed course.

Jesus was at a crossroads, and he chose the road to the cross. Peter tried to change his mind. The devil tried to discourage him. But Jesus wasn't going to change paths.

Why? Because he loved you so much. Jesus knew that you were going to mess up. He knew all the bad things you would say and do in your life. He knew that your sins had to be punished.

But Jesus loved you before you were even born. He didn't want you to have to go to hell. So, he chose to walk the road to the cross in your place to suffer God's punishment for all the bad things you would say and do.

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We should be the ones who have to suffer what Jesus suffered, but he loved you so much that he walked that road to the cross for you. In fact, he wasn't about to let anyone or anything stop him.

In your life, you will come to many crossroads. You will have many choices—the choice to follow Jesus and do what is right or to listen to the devil's lies and do what is wrong. The path to follow Jesus is sometimes harder and more painful. The other paths look easier and more fun.

The next time you come to a crossroad and wonder which one is the right one, look for Jesus. Remember the path Jesus chose for you. Then follow him! He loved you so much, he walked all the way to the cross for you. Trust how much he loves you and follow him, even when it's hard.

Questions to Consider

Who tried to talk Jesus out of going to the cross?

Why did Jesus keep going to the cross even though it was going to hurt so badly?

When Peter tried to stop him, Jesus said, "Get behind me, Satan!" Why do you think he said that?

Jesus talked about the crosses we have to carry when we follow him. Since it's not an actual wood cross, what are those crosses?

Give an example of when kids your age are at a crossroads and have to make the difficult choice between following Jesus or following another path.

A friend tells you, "Going to church is boring. Being a Christian is no fun. God doesn't want us to have any fun." What would you say?

It is the mission of

trinity



LUTHERAN
CHURCH

to glorify God

by growing in His Word and by going with His Word

to Woodbridge and to the world.



Trinity Lutheran Church is part of a group of nearly 1,300 churches called the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod or WELS. The WELS is a world-wide church with congregations serving in all fifty of the United States, as well as in Mexico and Canada. The WELS also serves over 26 foreign countries through world mission work. We are united in faith and teaching with the other churches of the WELS as well as the members of the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference, consisting of 21 confessional Lutheran church bodies throughout the world.