



Real Repentance looks Different

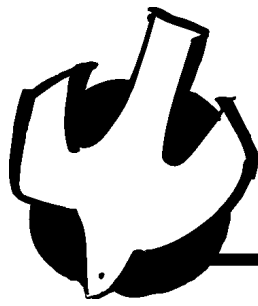
September 27, 2026

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.





Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 27, 2026

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 Gary Wong

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: 403, I Know My Faith is Founded



1 I know my faith is found - ed On Je - sus
2 In - crease my faith, dear Sav - ior, For Sa - tan
3 In faith, Lord, let me serve you; Though per - se -

Christ, my God and Lord; And this my faith con -
seeks by night and day To rob me of this
cu - tion, grief, and pain Should seek to o - ver -

fess - ing, Un - moved I stand up - on his Word. Man's
trea - sure And take my hope of bliss a - way. But,
whelm me, Let me a stead - fast trust re - tain. And

rea - son can - not fath - om The truth of God pro -
Lord, with you be - side me I shall be un - dis -
then at my de - par - ture, Lord, take me home to

found; Who trusts in world - ly wis - dom Re - lies on
maged; And led by your good Spir - it, I shall be
you, And let me there in - her - it All you have

(Continued on Next Page)

shift - ing ground. God's Word is all - suf - fi - cient,
un - a - fraid. A - bide with me, O Sav - ior,
prom - ised me. In life and death, Lord, keep me

It makes di - vine - ly sure, And, trust - ing
A firm - er faith be - stow. Then I shall
Un - til your heav'n I gain, Where I by

in its wis - dom, My faith shall rest se - cure.
bid de - fi - ance To ev - 'ry e - vil foe.
your great mer - cy The end of faith at - tain.

Text: Erdmann Neumeister, 1671–1756; tr. composite.

Tune: NUN LOB, MEIN SEEL (78 78 76 76 76 76) *Concentus novi*, Augsburg, 1540, alt.

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: Almighty 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.

C: Lord, have mer - cy on us. Christ, have mer - cy

on us. Lord, have mer - cy on us.

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 Risen LORD.

GLORY BE TO GOD

The musical notation is written on six staves, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below each staff. The lyrics are: '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 sin of the world; have mercy on us. You take away the'.

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

sin of the world; have mercy on us. You take away the

(Continued on Next Page)

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: Mercifully grant, O God, that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts, for without your help we are unable to please you; 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

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

The word of the Lord came to me.

²What do you mean, you who keep repeating this proverb concerning the soil of Israel, “Fathers eat sour grapes, and their sons’ teeth are set on edge”? ³As surely as I live, declares the Lord God, you will never again use this proverb in Israel. ⁴Indeed, all souls are mine. The soul of the father is mine just like the soul of the son. The soul who sins is the one who will die....

...²⁵ But you say, “The Lord’s way is not fair.” Listen now, house of Israel. Is it my way that is not fair? Is it not your ways that are not fair? ²⁶If a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and practices unrighteousness, he will die because of it. Because of the unrighteousness that he has practiced, he will die.

²⁷ But if a wicked man turns from his wickedness that he has done and practices justice and righteousness, he will preserve his life. ²⁸Because he has seen and turned away from all the rebellious acts that he had committed, he will surely live, and he will not die. ²⁹But the house of Israel says, “The Lord’s way is not fair.” Is it really my ways that are not fair, O house of Israel? Is it not your ways that are not fair?

³⁰Therefore, I will judge each one of you according to his ways, O house of Israel, declares the Lord God. Repent and turn away from all your rebellious acts, so that you will not set out a stumbling block that makes you guilty. ³¹Throw off from yourselves all your rebellious actions by which you have rebelled, and obtain a new heart and a new spirit for yourselves. Why should you die, O house of Israel? ³²For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies, declares the Lord God. So repent and live!

PSALM OF THE DAY: 25

The Refrain is Sung; the Psalm is spoken responsively



M: To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul;

C: in you I trust, O my God.

M: Remember, O LORD, your great mercy and love,

C: for they are from of old.

M: Remember not the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways;

C: according to your love remember me, for you are good, O LORD.

Refrain

M: Turn to me and be gracious to me,

C: for I am lonely and afflicted.

M: Look upon my affliction and my distress

C: and take away all my sins.

M: Guard my life and rescue me,

C: for I take refuge in you.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Refrain

Refrain Tune: Marty Haugen. © 1983 GIA Publications, Inc., Chicago, IL, www.giamusic.com. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

SECOND LESSON AND SERMON TEXT

Philippians 1:18b-28

What does it matter? Only this, that in every way, whether for outward appearance or for the truth, Christ is being proclaimed, and in this I rejoice.

Yes, and I will continue to rejoice, ¹⁹ because I know that this will turn out for my deliverance, through your prayer and the support of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. ²⁰ This matches my earnest expectation and hope that I will in no way be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, so even now, Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. ²¹ Yes, for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. ²² But if I am to go on living in the flesh, that will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet which should I prefer? I do not know. ²³ I am pulled in two directions, because I have the desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far. ²⁴ But, it is more necessary for your sake that I remain in the flesh. ²⁵ And since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and will continue with all of you, for your progress and joy in the faith. ²⁶ And so by my coming to you again, my goal is to give you even more reason to boast in Christ Jesus.

²⁷ Just conduct yourselves in a way that is worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come to see you or am absent, I may hear about you that you are standing firm in one spirit, contending together with one soul for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸ not frightened in any way by the adversaries. This is a sign for them of their destruction and of your salvation, and that from God.

VERSE OF THE DAY

M: Alleluia. At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Alleluia. (*Philippians 2:10,11*)



Stand

GOSPEL

Matthew 21:23-32

M: The Gospel of St Matthew, Chapter 21

C: Glory be to you, O Lord!

²³ When Jesus went into the temple courts, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him while he was teaching and said, “By what authority are you doing these things?” and “Who gave you this authority?”

²⁴ Jesus answered them, “I will also ask you one question. If you answer it, I will tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵ The baptism of John, where was it from? From heaven or from men?”

They discussed it among themselves, saying, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Then why did you not believe him?’ ²⁶ But if we say, ‘From men,’ we are afraid of the crowd, since they all regard John as a prophet.” ²⁷ So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.”

He said to them, “Then I will not tell you by what authority I do these things.”

²⁸ “What do you think? A man had two sons. He went to the first and said, ‘Son, go work today in my vineyard.’ ²⁹ He answered, ‘I will not,’ but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰ He came to the second and said the same thing. The second son answered, ‘I will go, sir,’ but he did not go. ³¹ Which of the two did the will of his father?”

They said to him, “The first.”

Jesus said to them, “Amen I tell you: The tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³² For John came to you in the way of righteousness, but you did not believe him. However, the tax collectors and prostitutes did believe him. Even when you saw this, you did not change your mind and believe him.

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.

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.

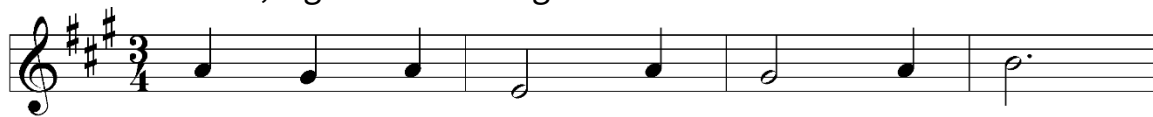
We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church.

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

HYMN OF THE DAY: 457, Fight the Good Fight



1 Fight the good fight With all your might;
 2 Run the straight race Through God's good grace;
 3 Cast care a - side, Lean on your guide;
 4 Faint not nor fear; His arms are near.



Christ is your strength and Christ your light.
 Lift up your eyes and seek his face.
 His bound - less mer - cy will pro - vide.
 He chang - es not, and you are dear.



Lay hold on life, and it shall be
 Life with its way be - fore us lies;
 Lean, and the trust - ing soul shall prove
 On - ly be - lieve, and you will see



Your joy and crown e - ter - nal - ly.
 Christ is the path and Christ the prize.
 Christ is its life and Christ its love.
 That Christ is Lord e - ter - nal - ly.

Text: John S. B. Monsell, 1811–75, alt.

Tune: MENDON (448 88) *The Methodist Harmonist*, New York, 1821.

SERMON

Theme: Fight the Good Fight

Text: Philippians 1:18b-27

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. The key signature has three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The melody is written in a soprano clef. 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, we acknowledge with thanks that all we have and enjoy is a gift from your gracious hand. We come before you today in heartfelt appreciation for our nation and its people.

C: We thank you for enabling us to worship you in freedom and to serve you without fear.

M: You have enriched us with the bounties of farm and factory, the beauty of forest and mountain, and the marvels of medicine and science.

C: For all these blessings, we praise and glorify you.

M: Look with favor upon our nation, and preserve our cherished liberties. Enable our leaders to govern with wisdom, honesty, courage, and justice. Protect those who serve in the armed forces and those who maintain peace and safety in our communities.

C: Give us willingness to obey our nation's laws and to work for the common good.

M: Keep our financial institutions secure and our economy strong. Bless our fields that they may produce abundant harvests. Guard us from calamities of nature and accident, and spare our land from the ravages of disease and epidemic.

C: Teach us not to worry but to cast all our cares on you.

M: Strengthen the homes of our nation. By your Spirit lead husbands and wives to love each other, parents to nurture their children, young adults to assume responsibility, and children to show respect.

Special prayers

M: Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

Silent prayer.

M: To you, O Lord, we bring our thanks and our requests.

C: Hear our prayers for Jesus' sake. Amen.

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

PREFACE

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 promised that wherever two or three come together in his name, there he is with them to shepherd his flock till he comes again in glory. 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.

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.

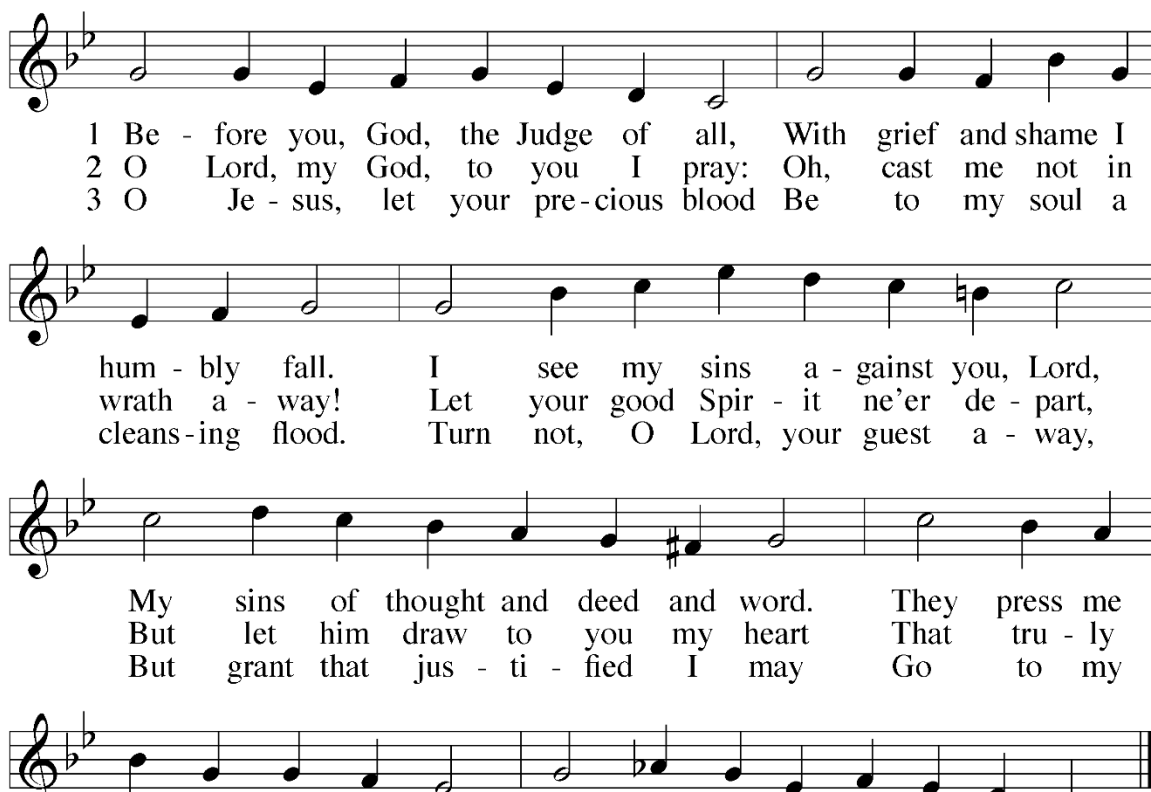
O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;

grant us your peace. A - men.

Be Seated

DISTRIBUTION

DISTRIBUTION HYMN: 306, Before You, God, The Judge of All



1 Be - fore you, God, the Judge of all, With grief and shame I
 2 O Lord, my God, to you I pray: Oh, cast me not in
 3 O Je - sus, let your pre - cious blood Be to my soul a

hum - bly fall. I see my sins a - gainst you, Lord,
 wrath a - way! Let your good Spir - it ne'er de - part,
 cleans - ing flood. Turn not, O Lord, your guest a - way,

My sins of thought and deed and word. They press me
 But let him draw to you my heart That tru - ly
 But grant that jus - ti - fied I may Go to my

sore; to you I flee: O God, be mer - ci - ful to me!
 pen - i - tent I be: O God, be mer - ci - ful to me!
 house at peace to be: O God, be mer - ci - ful to me!

Text: Magnus B. Landstad, 1802–80; tr. Carl Döving, 1867–1937, alt.

Tune: VATER UNSER IM HIMMELREICH, DER DU (88 88 88) attr. Martin Luther, 1483–1546.

THANKSGIVING

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

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and give you His peace.

C: Amen.

Be Seated

CLOSING HYMN: 461, From Eternity, O God (Verses 1, 5, 6)



1 From e - ter - ni - ty, O God, In your Son you
5 Faith and hope and char - i - ty Gra - cious-ly, O
did e - lect me. There - fore, Fa - ther, on life's road
Fa - ther, give me; Be my guard - ian con - stant - ly
Gra - cious-ly to heav'n di - rect me; Send to me your
That the dev - il may not grieve me. Grant me hum - ble -
Ho - ly Spir - it That his gifts I may in - her - it.
ness and glad - ness, Peace and pa - tience in my sad - ness.

6 Help me speak what's right and good
And keep silence on occasion.
Help me pray, Lord, as I should;
Help me bear my tribulation.
Help me die and let my spirit
Everlasting life inherit.

Text: Caspar Neumann, 1648–1715, abr.; tr. August Crull, 1845–1923, alt.
Tune: LIEBSTER JESU, WIR SIND HIER (78 78 88) Johann R. Ahle, 1625–73, alt.

Trinity Lutheran Church

12345 Cotton Mill Drive, Woodbridge, VA

Find us online at www.TrinityofWoodbridge.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/trinityofwoodbridge

Call Meeting is TODAY at 9:45am

We will have our next call meeting today between services during Sunday School hours. Please join us as we prayerfully consider who we will call for our next Pastor.

Trinity Women's Bible Study

Our women's Bible Study meets the second Saturday of the month at 9:00 am at Trinity. We are continuing to read *Take Heart: God's Comfort for Anxious Thoughts* by Lindsay Hausch. Please join us! Questions, or need a copy of the book? Please ask Erika (erika.ohlendorf@gmail.com).

Upcoming dates: Chapter 10: October 10, 2026; Chapter 11: November 14, 2026

Annual Truck or Treat! - October 24th

We need your help to make this year's Trunk or Treat a success! **Candy donations** (individually wrapped or small packets), cookies, and other treats are welcome, and we're looking **for volunteers to bring their cars and pass out treats**. Decorating your trunk and wearing a costume are optional, but all decorations and costumes should be family-friendly and appropriate for our church parking lot. Come join the fun and help us welcome our community!

Wine and Word Bible Study – October 1st The Wine and Word Bible Study is **studying the book of Ephesians** and 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 (or other drink of choice) 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.

Reminder of our Fall Schedule!

As a reminder, we have started our fall schedule::

8:30 AM – Early Service

9:45 AM – Adult Bible Class & Children's Sunday School

11:00 AM – Late Service

12:00 PM – Catechism Class (7th & 8th graders)

We look forward to gathering together in worship, study, and fellowship!

Volunteers Needed to provide snacks for our Sunday School and Fellowship Hour! If you're able to bless our community with simple treats, please sign up on the sheet posted on the Sunday School bulletin board located in the large fellowship and adult Sunday School room. Your contributions help make our time together even more welcoming and enjoyable—thank you for supporting our fellowship!

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 Steven Douglas. 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:



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 Bev Ohlendorf know.

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 with a date, time, and place, and he will make it work.



A Striking Family Resemblance

<https://wels.net/family-devotion/fd20260916/>

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. Ephesians 4:32; 5:1-2

Do you resemble anyone in your family? Brothers and sisters often resemble each other. A child might have his dad's nose, his mom's smile, his grandpa's laugh, or even the same way of walking. Sometimes we sound or act just like our parents. People might say, "You can certainly tell whose child you are!"

Can people tell whose child you are by the way you live?

Honestly, because of sin, we don't always resemble our heavenly Father. Our words and actions are often cruel, selfish, and unforgiving. But in our baptism, God washed away our sins and adopted us as his sons and daughters. Through faith in Jesus, we are children of God, fully forgiven and made heirs of heaven.

But can people see the family resemblance? Can they tell whose children we are by the way we act? Young children often copy everything: the way their parents talk on the phone, the way they fold their arms, the way they cook or clean or cheer during a football game. In today's reading, Paul tells us to follow the example of God our Father as his dearly loved children.

God wants us to speak as he speaks and act as he acts. Just as he is kind and compassionate to us, just as he loves and forgives us—so he wants us to love and forgive those around us. We imitate him because, through Jesus, we already are his children. That is who God made us to be in our baptism. His forgiveness changes us; it leads us to be like him. Dearly loved children show love. Forgiven children become forgivers.

So, follow your Father. Imitate him and let your family resemblance show. When people see kindness, compassion, and forgiveness in you, they are catching a glimpse of your heavenly Father. May they look at you and say, "I can certainly tell whose child you are!"

Questions to Consider:

- In what ways do you look or act like your mom or dad?
- In what ways can you look or act like God?
- What blessings did God give you in Baptism?
- How can your kindness or forgiveness help someone see your heavenly Father in you?
- What does this statement mean: “My baptism is not just something that happened to me; it tells me who I am”?
- Sometimes young people feel unfair pressure to grow up and be just like their parents. Is it unfair for God to expect his children to act like him? Explain.

It is the mission of



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.