

FEB 2026

Sunday, February 1

Communion

First Reading: Micah 6:1-8

Psalm 15

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12

Pastor Joel Petruschke preaching

February 8

First Reading: Isaiah 58:1-12

Psalm 112:1-9 [10]

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 2:1-16

Gospel: Matthew 5:13-20

Pastor Joel Petruschke preaching

February 15 – Transfiguration

Communion

First Reading: Exodus 24:12-18

Psalm 2

Second Reading: 2 Peter 1:16-21

Gospel: Matthew 17:1-9

Pastor Joel Petruschke preaching

Ash Wednesday, February 18

Communion

First Reading: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

Psalm 51:1-17

Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:20b–6:10

Gospel: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Pastor Joel Petruschke preaching

February 22 First Sunday of Lent

Communion

First Reading: Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

Psalm 32

Second Reading: Romans 5:12-19

Gospel: Matthew 4:1-11

Pastor Joel Petruschke preaching

Report from Senior Pastor Petruschke



This month begins the Church's Lenten journey. Ash Wednesday falls on February 18, which this year coincides with the date of Martin Luther's death. That aside, the trek towards Easter Sunday commences on Ash Wednesday and concludes with the resurrection of our Lord and Savior on Easter Sunday.

And during the season of Lent, we remember the sacrifice that God makes for the sake of all Creation. In his Son Jesus Christ, God dies on the cross so that the powers of sin and death may not hold sway over us. Sacrifice is a major theme, if not the central theme of Lent.

As people, we journey with Christ in Lent by making our own sacrifices. For many, giving up something for Lent is a part of the Lenten devotion. Some people give up sweets. Some people give up social media. Some people give up excessive screen time, TV watching, web surfing, etc. Some people give up swearing. All of these involve sacrifice.

Other people choose to "add" something to their routine. Some people take up reading the Bible throughout Lent. Some people decide to hit the gym or go for a daily walk. Some people take up a new hobby. Some people begin to keep a journal. We could also speak of these practices as "sacrifice." (cont.)

Mission Statement

We are by God's Grace a Community Connecting with Christ's Love for the World.

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church

31 South Duke Street

Lancaster, PA 17602

717-397-2734

church@trinitylancaster.org

M-T 8:00 - 4:30

FRI 8:00-3:00

For in order to take up something in Lent, that is to "add" something to our routine, means we sacrifice time and energy we would devote to doing something else.

With respect to Lent, we might also speak of the sacrifice of "god." But notice, this is god with a small "g." There are many false gods out there, which need to be sacrificed. And this may be the most important sacrifice we need to make not just during the season of Lent but throughout our earthly journey as human beings. To sacrifice those false gods may be the most important thing of all.

There is a revelation I had some years back that I found to be most profound. The revelation is this, "The gods WE make, will be the gods that destroy us." We make gods of fame and fortune. We make gods of power and prestige. We make gods of health and well-being. We make gods of all sorts of things. Luther said (I am paraphrasing here), "That which we turn to in our most dire of need, is our god." Some people turn to drugs and alcohol in their dire need, and these become gods. Some people turn to forms of escape in their dire need, and those things become gods. But, the truth is, the gods WE make will be the gods that destroy us.

In the history of Faith, God's people in ancient times moved from a belief in monolatry (the belief that there are many gods of various nations, but we only worship our God), to a belief in a wrathful monotheism (the belief that there are no other gods but the one God, however, our God gets mad at us and brings wrath upon us), to a more merciful monotheism (the belief in one God, and God does not bring retribution for sinful behavior). This evolution in theology came about because earlier belief systems didn't work. In effect, the "gods" (monolatry, wrathful monotheism) destroyed God's people.

Today, I wonder about the gods we lift up in our country. Particularly, I am deeply concerned about the "god" of free speech and free press. Now, I am not against these freedoms, but with any "god" they can work against us. What I mean to say by that is I am concerned about media outlets that ratchet up the divisive nature of the cultural and political climate. We like our talking heads, we like our political pundits, we like impassioned discussion, and we need this. But when such discourse in the media spills over into vitriol as it does so very often, it becomes unhealthy. In short, what I am saying is that there is a larger discussion that needs to happen in our country about media which contributes to the ill-health in our culture and politics. We love our freedom of the press and our freedom of speech, but even this "god" could work to undermine and destroy us. What is the answer? I don't know. How does sacrifice speak into this issue? I don't know. But this needs to be part of the larger conversation about how we strive toward a healthier nation.

So, in this season of Lent, we do think about sacrifice. And as you and I enter into this season, let us consider what sacrifice means in our lives. Let us consider the "gods" WE make, and let us sacrifice those gods that seek to destroy us, so that we might seek the true God who saves.

In Christ,
Pastor Joel Petruschke

Sunday Worship

Sunday morning worship begins at 9:30 a.m. and is held in the sanctuary.



Worship during Lent

Ash Wednesday, February 18 at 7 p.m.
Communion with the Imposition of Ashes

Communion each Sunday in Lent

Mid-week Lenten meal & service 6 p.m. **Feb. 26 - Mar. 26**



Just for Kids

Every Sunday there are children's activity bags in the narthex. Please feel free to ask an usher where to find them.

BREAKFAST FELLOWSHIP



Breaking Barriers. Building Community.

Our Breakfast Fellowship continues to be a marvelous Holy Trinity Ministry. Food acquisition, preparation, and serving is led by Cathy Dobish. Informal worship is led by Doug Frazer, Tim Wentworth, and Loren Good. Pastor Joel Petruschke presides at Holy Communion once a month and Trinity's choir sings once a month. Linda Flick shares her talent on the piano each Sunday. Thank you to all who serve.

Breakfast Fellowship Year Review

2025 was a very busy year for Breakfast Fellowship.

- 12,516 meals (hot breakfast and bagged lunches) were prepared every Sunday. In addition to hot meals, fresh fruit, juice, cold cereal, and hot coffee were served.
- As many as 200 cups of coffee were served weekly.
- Over 500 diapers and wipes were given to families.
- Families were given a bag of "extra food" such as tuna, juice, canned pasta, ramens, fruit, etc.
- We gave away clothing, hygiene bags, and many, many socks, gloves and hats.

Breakfast Fellowship was able to accomplish much due to the generosity of the congregation and friends and families of the congregation. Thank you for ALL THE EGGS, Pam, sugar, cereal, fruit cups, etc. Thank you for the monetary donations. Thank you for your prayers and words of encouragement.

Last, but not least, thank you to all the volunteers who help to procure, prepare and serve breakfast, clean up, and do the dishes. Our guests at breakfast are grateful for the volunteers' smiles and kind words while serving breakfast.

Paul says in his farewell to the Ephesians, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Holy Trinity is truly blessed!

The Kindness of Others

Since the Parish Resource Center, Food Hub, and Blessings of Hope had limited hours over the holidays, I was pushing a very full cart through Giant in Willow Street.

At the milk case, a gentleman commented that I had a lot of drinks. I told him that the drinks were for breakfast for the needy at my church. He said that was good work and handed me a \$10 bill. I thanked him and proceeded to check out.

At the checkout, the lines were long. The woman in front of me commented on the number of buns and cakes I had. I told her they were for breakfast for the needy at my church. She thanked me for helping the needy and was ready to check out. She then handed me a \$20 bill and said she never goes to church. I thanked her and put the money in my pocket. When I got to my car, I put the money in my purse and realized the woman had given me \$40.

Breakfast Fellowship is truly blessed.

Cathy Dobish



SENIOR COMMUNITY WORSHIP

Communion at Willow Valley – Wednesday, February 18

at 3 p.m., *Manor North Auditorium*

Communion at Woodcrest – Every other month at 1 p.m.

This month's service is on Feb. 19

Eagle Commons Chapel

FROM THE VESTRY PRESIDENT

Dear Siblings in Christ,

Happy New Year - We tend to say this very easily without realizing how impossible it is to be happy all of the time. Blessings for the New Year suits me better - May God guide us throughout the year and be our rock in good times and in times of stress and concern. I am looking at Health as my number one topic. No, I am not talking about a new physical fitness routine. I am talking about the health of my family, physically and mentally, the health of the church, and the health of our community and nation.

As Vestry President I will focus on our collective health now and in the future. I wish I could say I had the answers to the concerns we all have about the church, but we all know I don't. The answers lie in prayer, study, discussion, care and involvement. We are in a good place right now. Pastor Joel Petruschke as our Pastor and spiritual leader, Loren Good as our Lay Associate Minister, our new full-time sexton Rick Jones, our organist Chris Prestia, our office staff Andrea Collins, Executive Secretary and Anna Marie Snyder, Financial Secretary and Receptionist. Then, there is our amazing vestry and congregation.

P.S. Please welcome Rick Jones, our new sexton, to our Trinity family.

Susan Garofola
Vestry President

FROM THE WORSHIP AND MUSIC SMALL GROUP

An ongoing series on why we do what we do in worship, by Loren Good.

The Use of Hands and Gestures in Worship

You've undoubtedly noticed that during worship, the presiding pastor uses various hand gestures and postures throughout. What do they mean? Why is it done? How to select which goes with what?

We'll cover a few of them right here. Sign of the Cross. Often two or more times in our worship service the Pastor will say "In the Name of the Father, The Son, and the Holy Spirit"....a tribute to the Triune God. The Sign of the Cross is synonymous with these words. If you are a long time Trinity worshiper, you recall when the Sign of the Cross was not our practice. Currently, some, even many, but certainly not all, Make the Sign. In short, it reminds us of why we gather. Then, during communion, as the words of Institution are read, the pastor makes the sign above the bread and then the cup. While there are a number of acceptable ways to make the sign, most common it is use of the thumb and the index and middle finger. (Think Triune God, three) with the ring and pinky finger folded in against the palm.



Loren Good was installed as Lay Associate Minister on December 21, 2025

Other gestures include "Orans Posture." This is when the pastor raises their upturned hands during prayer. This is an ancient practice that recognizes the reverence to God. The raised arm with the palm facing the congregation is often used during the benediction, conveying a blessing on behalf of the church. During communion the pastor will hold his hands over the eucharist, asking God to be present. Bowing before the altar, opening prayer for example, is reminiscent of ancient Biblical texts.

It's important to remember that it is not what the pastor does that makes it Holy, rather to show what is Holy and that God is present and it is sacred. All these are importantly symbolic.

As worshipers we show reverence by standing to sing, kneeling at the altar to commune, return a bow to the pastor when the words "May the Lord Be with You" are said, and we reply "And Also with You" is also acceptable.

In closing I will share what Martin Luther said about the sign: "In the morning, when you rise, you shall make the sign of the holy cross, and you shall say In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. And then, while kneeling or standing, recite the Apostle's Creed and the Lord's Prayer."

No pressure, but think about it.

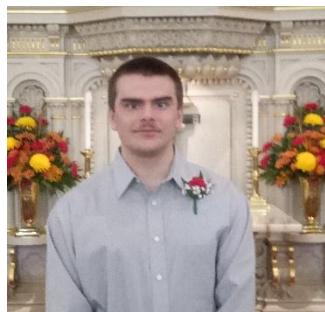
MIDWEEK LENTEN SERIES

Beginning **Thursday, February 26** and continuing through **Thursday March 26**, Holy Trinity will host a meal followed by a Lenten service. The meal begins at 6:00 p.m. in Fondersmith Auditorium and worship starts at 7:00 p.m. We will study five specific Psalms during this meditative worship series.



Ale and Nina Sgro reading during the Advent Candle lighting.

WELCOME MASON ENGLISH



The newest member/disciple to join Holy Trinity is twenty-four year old Mason R. English. Mason was born in Lancaster to a family that has lived in the county for at least four generations. His childhood home was in Conestoga, located in the Penn Manor School District. Mason graduated from Penn Manor High School having participated in the College Prep course then completed his education at the Lancaster County Career and Technology Center in the welding program. Upon graduation from Penn Manor he worked for several welding companies and has recently accepted a position as manager

with Blueprints Company. Among Mason's goals are starting his own business in a field yet to be determined, having a family, and living a happy life. He plans on being a faithful and active member of Holy Trinity.

EDUCATION

SUNDAY FELLOWSHIP 10:30-11:00 a.m. in the Fondersmith Auditorium, prior to Forum.

SUNDAY FORUM

The Sunday Forum begins at 11:00 a.m. in the Fondersmith Auditorium.

Feb. 1 Silvia Cavanaugh/Nelson Polite - Part II The Underground Railroad in Lancaster

Feb. 8 Souper Bowl Party – Eat some great soups, play fun games, party time.

Feb. 15 Zach Weiss – Lutheran Camps for All Ages

Feb. 22 Lent – Meaning, Significance, History – Loren Good

FAITH TALK: Living by Faith in Christ

As we move from January into February, our Faith Talk study remains anchored in a single book of Scripture: Epistle to the Romans. That continuity is intentional. Romans is not simply another New Testament letter; it is the Apostle Paul's clearest and most comprehensive presentation of the Gospel. In many ways, it reads like a carefully ordered summary of the Christian faith; what later generations would call a kind of "systematic theology."

During January, we laid the foundation. We introduced the letter and worked carefully through the first two chapters. There we encountered Paul's unflinching diagnosis of the human condition; Jew and Gentile alike stand accountable before God. We also heard the phrase that would echo across church history: "The righteous shall live by faith." That single line has sustained believers in every generation, reminding us that life with God begins not with our effort, but with trust in His promise.

In February, we move to the very heart of Romans, especially chapters 3 and 4. Here Paul speaks with unmistakable clarity: we are justified by grace through faith, apart from works of the Law. This teaching did more than shape early Christianity; it rescued Martin Luther himself when he felt crushed under the weight of a medieval, works-based system. In these chapters, the Gospel breaks through with full force: righteousness is given, not earned.

This is the beating heart of the Reformation, and it remains the heart of the Christian faith today.

Because these truths matter so deeply, we are deliberately slowing down. Our study is verse by verse, with time to pause, reflect, and ask honest questions. Faith Talk is not a lecture series; it is a conversation grounded in Scripture, where understanding grows through careful listening to God's Word and to one another.

FEB. SCRIPTURES

Feb 1 Matthew 5:1-12

Feb 2 Philemon 1-25

Feb 3 James 5:1-6

Feb 4 Luke 6:17-26

Feb 5 1 John 5:1-5

Feb 6 Psalm 112:1-9

Feb 7 Mark 7:1-8

Feb 8 Matthew 5:13-20

Feb 9 Romans 11:2-10

Feb 10 2 Corinthians 4:1-12

Feb 11 John 8:12-30

Feb 12 Hebrews 8:1-7

Feb 13 Psalm 2

Feb 14 Mark 9:9-133

Feb 15 Matthew 17:1-9

Feb 16 Acts 7:30-34

Feb 17 Romans 11:1-6

Feb 18 Isaiah 58:1-12

Feb 19 Romans 1:1-7

Feb 20 Psalm 51

Feb 21 Matthew 18:1-7

Feb 22 Matthew 4:1-11

Feb 23 Hebrews 2:10-18

Feb 24 Hebrews 4:14—5:10

Feb 25 Matthew 18:10-14

Feb 26 2 Timothy 1:3-7

Feb 27 Psalm 121

Feb 28 Luke 7:1-10

Whether you have studied Romans before or are opening it fresh, you are warmly invited to join us as we linger over the Gospel that continues to give life, freedom, and assurance in Christ.

Faith Talk meets each Sunday and remains a welcoming, discussion-based setting where questions are encouraged and the Gospel remains central. All are welcome to join the conversation.

Faith Talk meets after Fellowship, about 11:00 a.m. each Sunday, normally in the Library in the Parish House. We also operate a Zoom link if you would like to attend remotely.

You can attend with this Zoom Link: <https://millersville.zoom.us/j/3024219881>
Meeting ID: 302 421 9881
By Phone 646-558-8656 meeting: 3024219881#

Each class session is independent, so we encourage you to attend when you can.

You can also find Faith Talk discussions on all of our previous series
at <https://www.youtube.com/@FaithTalk-HolyTrinity>

FELLOWSHIP AND EVENTS

HOLY TRINITY FIRST FRIDAY SPEAKER SERIES

Everyone is welcome to Holy Trinity on **Friday, February 6**, for our new *First Friday Speaker Series*. We are reimagining our First Friday events to build on one of our core strengths, education. The evening will begin with the playing of our church bells at 5 p.m., followed by an introduction of our church, refreshments, and a short organ performance. The presentation begins around 5:30 p.m., followed by sanctuary tours and an opportunity to meet the speaker. Our February 6 speaker is Trinity member Tanya Kevorkian presenting "G.H.E. (Henry) Muhlenberg, 1753-1815, Renaissance Man in Lancaster: Botanist, Pastor, Farmer, Healer, and More." We will continue the series focusing on our church history, social topics, and content from our partners.

FELLOWSHIP EVENTS AT HOLY TRINITY

The Fellowship Small Group reminds all Trinity Disciples that if you are planning as part of a committee or any event that involves food, refreshment or supplies, please notify Loren Good loren@trinitylancaster.org who will share with the rest of the Fellowship Small Group. The purpose of this is to ensure we avoid scheduling conflicts and do not duplicate services or purchases. Thank you.

WHAT DO YOU DO THAT WE DON'T KNOW ABOUT? You may be involved in a chorale group, a band, a bocce club, theater...whatever the case may be; please let us know about it. Your fellow Trinity disciples may want to see your talent at work.

CHILDREN'S AND FAMILY MINISTRY

You are invited to a special "Soup"-er Bowl Party on **Sunday, February 8th** following worship. That Sunday, we are asking attendees to bring a crockpot of soup to share. Soup can be dropped off in Trinity's Parish House Kitchen after 9:15 a.m. A signup sheet is posted on the fellowship easel in Fondersmith Auditorium. We'll also play some soup trivia and other games during the event. Plus, the winner of Trinity's Fourth "Soup"-er Bowl will be announced!

Be sure to dress casually to worship on **February 8!**
Everyone can wear their **favorite football jerseys and sports gear to worship.**

Our "Soup"-er Bowl Party will celebrate all the items you have most generously donated to the Downtown Lancaster Food Hub. We are helping to restock their shelves after the holiday food demands. Below is a list of all the food items we are collecting.

- Individual meals in cans or trays with "pull-tab" lids (i.e. ravioli, beef stew, mac and cheese, etc.)
- Meal helpers (Hamburger Helper, rice sides, taco kits, etc.)
- Cans or pouches of tuna/chicken
- Individual canned fruit with "pull-tab" lids or cups
- Soup
- Peanut butter and crackers
- Cereal (low sugar)



Drop Off

If anyone would be interested in helping to drop off the donated food at the Lancaster Food Hub during the week of **February 9th, 2026**, please contact Rachel at rachel@trinitylancaster.org.

Forum

On Sunday, **February 15th**, be sure to join us for a special Intergenerational Forum. Mr. Zach Weiss, Director of Camp Kirchenwald, will be speaking to us about the Lutheran Camping Corporation and all the year-round camping opportunities that they offer. From Youth Camps, Family Camp, and Elder Camp, there are numerous options for you to connect with God in his beautiful creation during any time of year. Any Trinity member is offered \$100.00 off their camp registration by the Children's and Family Ministry Program. You can be eligible for other discounts to attend camp. We do not want finances to keep anyone from going. For questions see Rachel, rachel@trinitylancaster.org, your congregation's CampPerson.



INTERNATIONAL MINISTRY

HOLY TRINITY'S 2026 VALENTINE APPEAL

Each year, Holy Trinity's International Ministries Committee (IMC) selects a project for the Valentine Appeal, inviting our congregation to extend Christ's love to those in need of physical and spiritual healing and to make a positive impact on the communities in which they live. For 2026, we are partnering with the Nazareth Hospital in Israel to support the "Advanced Medical Training of West Bank Doctors" program.



NAZARTH HOSPITAL AND SCHOOL OF NURSING COURTESY OF NAZARTH PROJECT, INC.

West Bank Palestinian physicians face major barriers to advanced medical education due to political and economic challenges. This results in a shortage of specialists and leaves many communities without critical healthcare services. The Nazareth Hospital's Advanced Training for West Bank Doctors program, launched in 2023, provides specialized training in vital fields such as surgery, internal medicine, emergency medicine, obstetrics/gynecology, orthopedics, cardiology, and radiology.

West Bank doctors are selected for their commitment to return and serve their communities, ensuring that the skills gained directly benefit underserved Palestinian

communities. Doctors benefiting from the training have been selected from Al Razi and Al Mezan hospitals in the West Bank.

Since the program began, five doctors have completed their training and returned home, and two others will return to the West Bank soon after a short stint of work at Nazareth Hospital. Four additional doctors are currently in training and are on track to complete their training in 2027. These doctors are completing their first second year and need funding through 2026 and into 2027.

Our goal is to help the Nazareth Project raise \$75,000 in 2026, with Holy Trinity aiming to contribute \$6,000 through this year's Valentine Appeal. Your gift will help cover training costs, registration fees, and meals, allowing these dedicated doctors to focus on their education and service. To participate, please place your Valentine gift in an LWR World Hunger envelope marked "2026 Valentine Project" and drop it in the offering plate on Sunday, February 15th, or mail your check to the church office by February 28th with "2026 Valentine Project" on the memo line.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Communion 9:30 Worship 10:30 Fellowship 11:00 Education New Member session	2 9 am VITA	3 9 am VITA 9:45 TWIST	4	5 7-8:15 pm Choir rehearsal	6 5 p.m. First Friday	7
8 9:30 Worship Reception of New Member 10:30 Souper Bowl 10:30 Communion Asst. training 11:00 Education	9 9 am VITA 9:30 Breakfast Fellow. meeting 2 pm Christ. Ed meeting 6:30 pm Vestry meeting	10 9 am VITA 9:45 TWIST 1 pm Mutual Ministry meeting	11 5 pm Endowment meeting	12 7-8:15 pm Choir rehearsal	13	14
15 Transfiguration-Communion 9:30 Worship Valentine appeal 10:30 Fellowship 11:00 Education	16 9 am VITA	17 9 am VITA 9:45 TWIST	18 3 pm Willow Valley Worship 7 pm Ash Wednesday Service	19 1 pm Woodcrest worship 4:30 MLK Scholarship Board 7-8:15 pm Choir rehearsal	20	21
22 9:30 Worship 10:30 Fellowship 11:00 Education	23 9 am VITA	24 9 am VITA 9:45 TWIST	25 2 pm Luther Acres Lent service	26 6 p.m. Lenten meal/service 7-8:15 pm Choir rehearsal	27	28

Feb 2026



Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity
31 South Duke Street
Lancaster, PA 17602

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Deaths

Larry Clark on December 22, 2025

John Long on December 27, 2025

Theresa Ramos on January 2, 2026

Rev. Dr. Joel Petruschke, Senior Pastor; Christopher Prestia, Organist and Choirmaster;
Rachel Kramer, Director of Children's and Family Ministry; Loren Good, Lay Associate Minister;
Tanya Kevorkian, Archivist

For centuries, this has been a place of inspiration and courage. We are devoted to breaking barriers between people through social outreach and by providing a nurturing environment that embraces all viewpoints in hearty discussions about faith. We are passionate and unwavering in our pursuit to build a thriving community.

We are Holy Trinity Lutheran Church.

Holy Trinity Church is affiliated with

