



THE CHURCH MOUSE



TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH LCMS

1002 East 13th Street, Vinton, IA 52349-2385

319-472-5571



2026

Worship Schedule

Sunday Divine Worship
with Holy Communion
9:00 AM

Wednesday Vesper/Lenten
Worship
6:30 PM

Pastor

Rev Stephen Preus
Home Phone 319-472-2898

Our Staff

Nancy Hughes- Church Secretary
Lea Winsor - Housekeeper

The Church Mouse
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For Us

"For us" is not simply a pithy line to use because it is easy to repeat. It is a confession of who God is and what He brings in giving us His Son. It helps us understand *why* God would send His Son to die for us.

The phrase "for us" also captures much of the Reformation's theological emphasis-and Luther's understanding of Scripture in particular. Luther went from searching for a righteous God and finding only stern rebuke to seeing God in the form of a little baby and as the one who became one of us *for us* so that we might become like Him.

Join us for our Lenten Services on Wednesday evenings beginning at 6:30, this year with 3 other pastors from our Benton circuit in a round robin series.



Potluck

Sunday, February 1st

THEME:

**Super Bowl Party
Foods/Appetizers**

11:30 a.m. - Parish Hall
Please join us!



Wednesday, February 18, 6:30 p.m.



March 4,11,18,25: Lent Worship Services

March 29th: Palm Sunday

(Easter is April 5th)

Daylight Saving Time Begins March 8th

The People Page

FEBRUARY



1. Amanda Leisinger, Cade Oldfather
2. Kirk Appleby
3. Mark Elwick
5. Barb Backes, Erika Lefstad
6. Kelcie Appleby
8. Oliver Licht, Nathan Ober, Craig Schwartz
10. Terri Vopelak
11. Michael Wayson
13. Rev Dr John Stephenson
14. Lillie Lamont, Bowie Visser
16. Melissa Elwick
19. Gene Petersen, Amy Stourac
20. Kendalyn Appleby
22. Renee Petersen
28. Eileen Kreutner



2. Dave and Judy Henkel
4. Dean and Linda Wieditz
7. Jim and Paula Happel
8. Dave and Kim Staab
24. Gene and Wendy Geiger
26. Rev Dr John and Bonnie Stephenson

2026 Flower Chart

Located on the bulletin board across from the secretary's office; if you would like to provide flowers for our altar, please sign up. Thank you!



MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

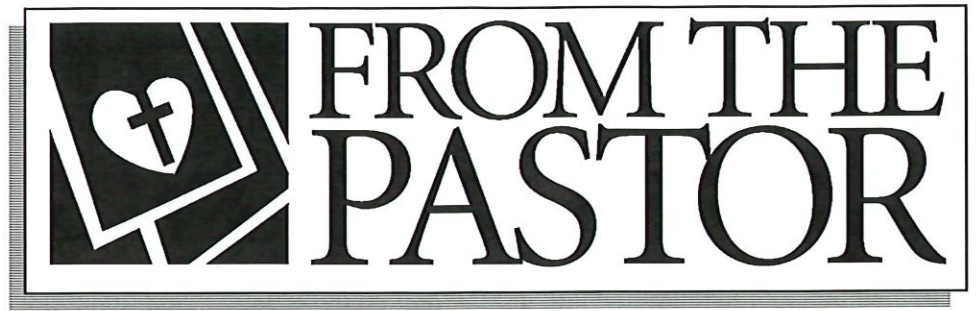
Deaths: Melvin Hupfeld December 7
Joyce Schueler December 20

Transfer Out: Jonathon and Marianne Kreutner
to Trinity Lutheran Church, Knoxville, IA
Pat Bahr
To Christ Lutheran Church, Coolidge, AZ



Congratulations Jim and Paula!

God's blessing on Jim and Paula Happel as they celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on February 7th.
Congratulations, and many more!



What About?

There are plenty of issues that people have questions about in our churches. To address these questions, The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS) produced a series of 29 pamphlets called "What About?" While produced a couple of decades ago, they are just as relevant now as then. The truth is always relevant. While we might *add* a few more contemporary issues that the church is currently dealing with, we would certainly not *subtract* any of the "What About?" series. They address important topics of morality, doctrine, and practice.

Since these pamphlets are so helpful for our unity as a congregation and a church body, we have begun providing one issue in the "What About?" series per newsletter. This current month, we will consider the topic of "The Bible." In this pamphlet, we learn things like:

- What is the Bible
- How did we receive the Bible?
- Why is the Bible so important?
- How do we use the Bible?

While I will also supply newsletter articles from time to time, I would really like to turn your attention toward this series each month. By contemplating these topics, you will understand where our congregation and church body stand on these important biblical issues. And where *you* should joyfully stand too.

If you find a topic helpful, let me know. If you find that you disagree with a topic or are confused about a teaching or practice, let me know. I would love to discuss it with you and help you to see that the teaching of our congregation and church body is faithful to our Crucified and Risen Savior and His holy Word.

Below is the "What About?" pamphlet on "The Bible."

Your servant in Christ,

Pastor Preus

Thank You for your generosity of food and donations to Margaret and Pastor and family; it is greatly appreciated. The Online Meal Train program will not be extended, if you wish to take them a meal please make arrangements with Pastor.



What About . . .

The Bible

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Bible continues to be the best selling book of all time. Throughout the ages, the Bible has provided inspiration, comfort and guidance to those who have read it. But is the Bible merely an inspirational book? It is this, but so much more!

Let's spend a few moments reviewing some important truths about the Bible.

What is the Bible?

The word "Bible" is from a Greek word that means "book." What is this "good book"? That question has a two-part answer.

First, the Bible is actually a collection of books—66 of them to be exact—from the first book, Genesis, to the last, Revelation. These books cover thousands of years and were written in either Hebrew, Aramaic or Greek. There are many different kinds of writing in the Bible: historical narrative, prophecy, poetry, speeches, letters and so on. From a merely human perspective, there is no question that the Bible is a masterpiece of literature.

Second, the much more important answer to the question, "What is the Bible?" is this: The Bible is the Word of God. The Bible is the collection of the thoughts—even the very words—that God gave to the authors of the Biblical books. The Bible is a gift God has given to His church. It is not a collection of ancient fables and myths. The Bible is the sure and certain means that God the Holy Spirit uses to communicate God's Word to us today.

How did we receive the Bible?

The Bible itself explains how we received it. "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16). We read elsewhere that, "Prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. 1:21).

Because people knew that the Bible was the actual Word of God, it was copied and re-copied with painstaking care and attention to detail, letter by letter, word by word. Though today we no longer possess the actual, original text of the Bible, we can be certain that the Holy Spirit has preserved the Word of God for us. Careful study of the many thousands of copies of

the New Testament reveals that though there are minor differences between the various copies, there is no place where any key teaching of the Bible is contradicted.

Our English Bibles are translations from the original languages. When we use reliable translations, we can be sure that we have the true Word of God. Whatever the Word of God is in Hebrew, Aramaic or Greek, it is also the Word of God in English, or in any other language, as long as the translation is faithful to the original languages. Reliable translations include the King James Version, the New King James Version, the old Revised Standard Version, the New International Version and the New American Standard Bible.

Why is the Bible so important?

Someone may say, "The Bible is important to me because it tells me what to do" and another person might say, "The old stories remind me of my childhood" or "The Bible is a guide-book for daily living." These answers all have a grain of truth, but they miss the real reason why the Bible is so important: It is the sure and certain source for knowing who Jesus Christ is and what He has done for us.

Jesus said, "The Scriptures testify about me" (John 5:39). The main message of the Bible is the good news of God's work to reconcile the world to Himself through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Throughout Old and New Testaments, the central message of the Scripture is the account of how God was in the world preparing it to receive His Son and then what His Son did when He was here. It also tells how the church received this glorious message of salvation, and how it grew and spread throughout the known world. Luther once compared the Bible to the swaddling clothes the baby Jesus was wrapped in. Thus the Bible is Christ-centered.

Our Lord Jesus said, "If you remain in my Word, truly you are my disciples" (John 8:31). The divine authority and reliability of the Bible does not rest on the persons God used to write the Bible, nor on the endorsement of the Bible by the church, but rests entirely on the fact that it is the Word of the Lord. How do we know this? This confession of the Bible's complete authority is part of the certainty of the faith God gives to us as a gift.

Real human beings were given real words from God to write down. As our Lord Jesus Christ was both true God and

What About the Bible?

true man, so the Bible is truly the Word of God and also the writing of human beings. Even as our Lord Jesus took on human flesh free from sin and error, so God used human beings to provide a written revelation of Himself that is free from error. Thus, we believe that the Bible is both incapable of error (infallible) and free from error (inerrant).

The Bible has a very important distinction one needs to keep in mind in order to understand the Bible correctly: the difference between Law and Gospel. The Bible reveals God's perfect holiness and righteousness, and His expectation of perfection. His Law, summarized best in the Ten Commandments, reveals our sinful rebellion and our inability to save ourselves. The Gospel is the joyful news that our Lord Jesus Christ has given us complete forgiveness from our sins through His life, death and resurrection for us. The proper distinction between Law and Gospel is the key to understanding the Bible correctly.

The most important message of the Bible is not the Law of God. The Bible is not merely a collection of principles for daily living. The Bible is not a textbook that answers every possible question we may have. Nor for that matter is the Bible a book that predicts every last detail about the future. The central and most important teaching in the Bible is the Gospel, the good news of God's gift of salvation through Jesus Christ. The Gospel is the message that predominates throughout the Bible, from Old Testament to New Testament. Thus the Bible is Gospel-centered.

We know that the Bible was not given merely for the sake of itself. We are not saved because we own a Bible. We are saved by our Lord Jesus Christ, who is revealed in the Bible. We believe the Bible because it is the Lord's Word. We believe in Him, thus we believe His Word to be true. We receive what He has given. He has given us the Scriptures. Thus, the Bible is the foundation and touchstone for everything that the church believes, teaches, confesses and practices. Why? Because the Bible is the inspired, Christ-centered and Gospel-centered Word of the Lord.

How Do We Use the Bible?

The Bible is foundational for the church's ministry. The Bible was never intended to stand alone or apart from the community of faith we call the Christian church. It is sad when some people think that, if they just read the Bible, they can stay away from church. We receive our Lord's gifts with joy and do not say, "We want this, but not that." It would be misleading if our high respect for the Scriptures was used to drive a wedge between the Bible and the church. The church is the gathering of God's people around the Lord's Word and Sacraments. The

Scriptures are the sure and certain revelation of God's Word and thus are to be read, studied and meditated on by Christians at church and at home.

We Lutherans realize that Scripture must be interpreted according to the central truth of the Bible, the Gospel, not picked apart and made to teach things that actually conflict with the Gospel. Therefore, we pay close attention to the grammar and words of the Bible, seeking out the intended meaning, which is the plain sense of the text. We recognize that God the Holy Spirit works through the Scriptures to create and sustain the church as it comes together around the preaching of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments.

Whenever the Word of God is preached, taught, studied, read, learned or meditated on, the Holy Spirit is actively turning people from their sin and drawing them to Christ for their salvation. Thus, we will want to be in the Word daily. At home we read and meditate on the Word through our private and family devotions. At church, our hymns and liturgy are anchored in the Word of God. Our pastors preach to us on the basis of the Scripture lessons appointed for each Sunday in the church year. Our school teachers lead our children into a deeper knowledge of the Word of God. In Sunday school, children learn the biblical accounts and thus have a foundation for their lives. In youth and adult Bible studies, the Scriptures are studied in a variety of ways so they can inform and enlighten us and help us understand how we live out our lives as God's people.

What a blessed gift the Holy Scriptures are to us and to all people! Everything God wants us to know about Himself is contained in His Word. Through the Scriptures, the Holy Spirit reveals the truth about our sinful condition and the joyful news of God's saving work for us through His Son, Jesus Christ. Truly, God's Word is a lamp to our feet and a light for our path (Ps. 119:105). For that reason we pray, "Lord, keep us steadfast in your Word!"

— Dr. A. L. Barry
President

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

TLC Preschool

January was busy with winter crafts and learning about Jesus as a baby. The boys and girls learned that they were babies once, just like Jesus.

February will be filled with learning more about Jesus and His love for us. Valentines will be exchanged and there will be valentine crafts and a special story about Jesus letting the children come to Him.

Currently we are sending registration forms to those who have requested them. If you know of anyone interested in attending TLC Preschool, ages 3 and 4 for the next school year, have them call the church office and a registration form will be sent. We appreciate your help and support of TLC Preschool.

Have a wonderful month and Blessings from TLC,

Gail Gerber
Director



FREEZER MEALS

This round of Freezer Meals includes Enchiladas, Ham and Potato Casserole, Lasagna Soup, Apple Crisp and Cherry Crisp. You can find the yellow order forms on each of the Sanctuary entrance tables; deadline to return to the church office is Sunday, February 15th. Please pick up your frozen meals on / after Sunday March 1st in the church kitchen. Proceeds will help fund extra meals for our shut ins and other community members. Thank you!

BUDGET REPORT

2025 Offering Income: \$ 230,704

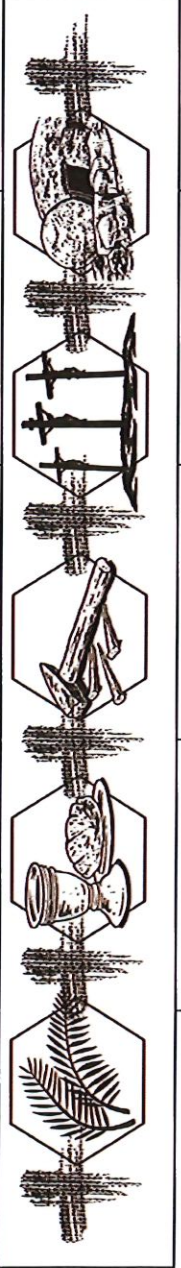
2025 Expenses Paid (Budget items):
\$ 228,434

Saturday, February 14th



TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

FEBRUARY 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:00 am Divine Service 10:20 am Sunday School/ Bible Study 11:30 am Congregation Potluck 5 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal	2	3	4 5:00 pm Catechism 6:30 pm Vespers Service	5 9:00 am Bible Study-Parish Hall	6 Pastor's Family Day	7
8 9:00 am Divine Service 10:20 am Sunday School/ Bible Study 4 pm Preschool Board Mtg 5 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal	9	10	11 5:00 pm Catechism 6:30 pm Vespers Service	12 9:00 am Bible Study Parish Hall	13 Pastor's Family Day	14
15 9:00 am Divine Service 10:20 am Sunday School/ Bible Study 5 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal	16	17	18 Ash Wednesday 5:00 pm Catechism 6:30 pm Divine Service	19 9:00 am Bible Study-Parish Hall	20 Pastor's Family Day	21
22 9:00 am Divine Service 10:20 am Sunday School/ Bible Study 5 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal	23	24	25 5:00 pm Catechism 6:30 pm Lenten Service	26 9:00 am Bible Study-Parish Hall	27 Pastor's Family Day	28
						
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; background-color: #e0f0e0;"> <p>Altar Guild Betty Cayton Becky Fisher</p> <p>Offering Counters Lesa & Brett Caspers Kris Muhl</p> </div>						