



# Trinity Team

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## Messy Community, Messy Love

It's not easy sharing community, is it? Like family members sharing close quarters in one house, we all have one another's schedules to remember, we all have our likes and dislikes, we all have our favourite foods and rituals and habits, and we all step on one another's toes every so often. Life can get messy.

But when we share well, that mess becomes part of a brilliant, colourful, artful journey that deepens our love for one another and for God. Our imperfect sharings help perfect our love for each other. Isn't that an amazing thought?

Jesus says in Matthew 22 in response to being asked about which commandment is the greatest: " 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' <sup>38</sup> This is the greatest and first commandment. <sup>39</sup> And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' <sup>40</sup> On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

There is truly no greater journey than how we learn to love. In our mess, in our cracked and imperfect expressions of what it means to be human, God's love radiates from us when we dare to share this love journey even still.

I could see such glorious messiness and wondrous hope when we shared Trinity Sunday together with Holy Trinity Anglican and Edmonton Moravian this past May.

I witnessed the wet and wonderful delight of this love during a beautiful baptism of three sisters in June., and during a lakeshore baptism in July.

I shared in the exhausting, draining need for love during our Synod Convention when we spent much time discerning who was to become our next Bishop.

I nearly burst with pride in this mess of love, watching our Trinity people – along with other fabulous folks – pro-

vide incredible camp experiences for our young students out at Mulhurst. Despite difficult circumstances, despite climate realities, these people embodied the love of God for one and all in every way they possibly could.

I felt the test of this love as I supported a number of people suffering with drug poisoning crises outside our church walls...as I journeyed with a family who lost both parents in a sudden head-on collision...as I listened to more than a few tearful responses about the changing faces of faith in our world. Love is wonderful...and it is so, so hard.

I participated in tangible expressions of this messy love during the ordination service of a colleague, sharing space with some of our own Trinity folks who participated as well.

There was bubbly, hilarious love shared at the Families with Young Kids Picnic this past Sunday – people who don't know each other too well just yet agreeing to gather out of doors, to share food, to let the smaller folks run around and play, and to explore together how Trinity can be shaped for and with families of all kinds.

These are but a few gathering spaces Trinity has shared in over the past few months. There has been so much more, but suffice it to say: we are replete with opportunity for sharing community! We are given an over-abundance of ways we can learn to love one another, even if those ways are unfamiliar to us.

We will step on each other's toes every so often.

We're human and we can't help it. All these opportunities are happening in close quarters after all!

But we figure it out, we try again, and we journey forward together as best we can.

It's important to remember too, though, that even in the mess, Christ's

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divine love is alive and vibrant! The point is not to get it perfect – to have every hair in place or liturgical cloth precisely positioned. The point is to learn how we can give and receive and share love between ourselves and God in as many ways as we possibly can.

And these journeys and lessons will take time.

And that's more than okay.

It's okay not to be perfect.

It's okay to try again.

It's okay to be unsure when sharing community in ways that are new.

It's okay to enjoy sharing community in ways we have known for a long time.

May we be open to all these ways and more as God's Spirit continues to be on the move.

We are given so many opportunities to learn how to love one another. Trinity is humming with the life of it all! I consider myself richly blessed to be sharing this messy journey with you all each and every day. Let us enter into this fall season with the hope and delight of the God's Spirit embodying Herself in us. Amen.

*Pastor Erin*

## My thoughts about this coming year at Trinity Lutheran Church

by Pastor Reichel

First of all I would like to thank the congregation for the opportunity to continue working at Trinity Lutheran Church. Gertrud and I feel really welcomed among the church members, and we hope that the congregation also approves of the time we spend with the members. During our time at TLC we have focused on four important points regarding many people in this congregation, as well as people from other Lutheran Churches and also other denominations:

1. The German services on two Sundays a month: We have not only TLC members participating, but very often we have visitors from other churches who attend our services because of the German language.
2. German Seniors' Group: All participants have the opportunity to listen again to God's Words through a devotional and to fellowship together in the German language.
3. Visitation and Phone Calls: We notice the importance of having contact with the elderly when they have to stay at home and cannot come to church regularly anymore. It is very important for them to have the opportunity to pray and to listen to God's Word again in their mother tongue.

4. To help support our outreach to our members I try to call all the members (from the German and the English congregations) on their birthdays. The feedback that I get is always very good. People are surprised and happy when I call them.

5. German confirmation classes: These classes were a highlight for me during this year's work. In April we started a German confirmation class with two girls who were interested in learning, in the German language, about the bible, catechism, and what it means to be a Christian today. It is very interesting in this group, that sometimes the parents/grandparents are also interested in participating in the activities. We meet once a month for three hours.

Considering that we still have a strong German congregation at TLC, I think it is very important that the ministry in the German language be continued. My wife and I love this work at TLC and feel happy to be able to be at TLC and to work with its members. I am happy to continue to serve as the interim pastor in this congregation until the needs change or another pastor can be found to serve our German members at TLC.

## Bishop's Message



**October 2024 Message for Congregations and Lay and Rostered Leaders**

**Grace and peace to you from Jesus who loves us,**

*There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.* Ephesians 4

Welcome to fall with its cool, crisp mornings requiring a warm jacket - and then to sunny afternoons when a t-shirt will suffice! Change is in the air!

As many of you realize, it's been a big change to step into the Synod office and begin to learn about ministry in a new way. I think my favorite analogy so far, as several people have said, is "it must be like drinking from a firehose!" I laugh, because that's pretty accurate! Thank you for your patience and prayers - they truly mean a lot.

Ministry is always challenging no matter the context. I know (and have heard from many of you already) that the ministry you are doing on streets and farms, in office towers and backyards is a lot to undertake. We are reeling from societal changes, internal conflict, uncertainty, financial struggles and so much more. Many ministers and congregations feel alone when the going is tough (and likewise in times of celebration!)

We are one body across this Synod. I invite you to pause and remember that. It's important to remind one another of this because one of the challenges of being a congregationally based church is that we try to do ministry in isola-

tion. We need one another for support, prayer, encouragement and hope. We need the expertise of gifts, voices of wisdom, the songs and ideas of many to fuel our ministry together.

We are one body across the ELCIC (and even globally.) We are part of a much larger family across Canada and the world - which is no small thing. When you feel or experience any particular challenge - someone, some place has been through it before or even is going through it at the same time. We are grandchildren and great grandchildren of generations who have perspired, given, taught, worshiped, fought, forgiven, hoped and worked together - a legacy that supports us to this day.

As a new bishop I would like to invite you to do two things: i) Let's learn about our ministry. What are you facing, celebrating? Where are you hurting, stuck, afraid? Send me an email at [tschermund@elcic.ca](mailto:tschermund@elcic.ca) or book a time to chat and I will make time to listen. ii) Take time to remember and pray for your siblings in this world. Pick another congregation, person, ministry, camp, your town or neighbourhood and lift them up in prayer. Why? Because prayer changes us.

I may be turning up the fire hose in inviting you to this! Yet, I feel it is critical for us to know God through one another, to nurture one another in ministry, and to honor God in the ways we live into being a church family.

**Blessings,**

*Bishop Irish*

## German Seniors' Group (Seniorengruppe)

The German Seniors Group at Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church in Edmonton is a social group for the elderly. We meet once a month with elderly German-speaking people who aim to increase the quality



Coffee Time

of life through biblical reflections, Christian and folk songs, activities, conversation circles and exchange of experiences.

A group for the elderly at the church is essential for maintaining the physical and mental health of the participants. Although we all have different reasons why we meet, there are five very important benefits that we keep in mind when we meet, and I would like to highlight them:

### Avoid loneliness

One of the biggest issues faced during old age is the isolation of the elderly. Loneliness can cause various illnesses, both physical and emotional, and become a serious and difficult problem to overcome.

### Practice different activities

There is a wide range of activities that can be carried out by groups, making it a very productive experience for the elderly. In our group we have already had yoga time, paper crafts, debate moments. Some of our participants bring texts and read them to the group: poems, jokes or news, etc.

### Socialize with other people

Even though elderly people receive visits from family members, it is essential that they socialize with people in their age group who are having similar experiences. From the moment the person is included in a group to discuss and exchange experiences, they will feel more welcomed, will know their body and limitations better, and will be more integrated into their community.

### Leave the house

For many elderly people, leaving the house is a major challenge, mainly caused by depression and other illnesses. When elderly people have a reason to go out, their health tends to improve, as does their mood. Interestingly, in our group, at the last meeting, one

lady had to face a two hours bus ride to get to our meeting. And this 95-year-old lady isn't even a member of our church, but she likes being with other people and having the opportunity to talk in the German language.

### Maintain a routine

It is common in old age to have kind of a loss of the sense of time, especially when the elderly person does not follow a defined routine. Social groups for the elderly can be a way of reestablishing this balance. The frequency of the meetings (monthly) helps establish a sense of time for members.

In our group we have several people from other religious denominations, who feel comfortable in our midst, and always look forward to meeting with their German friends at Trinity Lutheran Church again.

***"They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green, proclaiming, "The Lord is upright; he is my Rock, and there is no wickedness in him." (Ps 92:14-15).***

Old age is a special time granted by God so that the elderly are able to joyfully reap the fruits of the seeds planted in their youth.

Our average attendance at these events is around 25 to 30 people.



Maisingen

We also know that some members of our congregation would like to but are not able to join us in person. We have an active visitation program for our German members, but we need information about people who need visits, Holy Communion at home, or simple chats and talking about daily issues when they are unable to leave their homes. If you have friends or family members who would like to be visited please let the church office know their details and contact information (call: 780 433 1604 or email: [office@trinity-lutheran.ab.ca](mailto:office@trinity-lutheran.ab.ca)).

## Our Seniors' Group Trip to Pioneer Day at Mulhurst Camp

Our seniors engage in different activities throughout the year. One of the activities they always look forward to is the yearly excursion to Mulhurst Camp. This summer, we had our excursion with the seniors' group to that beautiful Camp on July 4<sup>th</sup>.

We had 33 people who were very excited to get on the bus tour to the camp. Our bus tour included members of three different churches in Edmonton. We always invite members of other Lutheran congregations in Edmonton to join us and encourage them to participate. The bus ride itself was already very much appreciated. We had entertainment with a quiz (Questions about the bible, the church, the camp, etc.), distribution of prizes, snacks, and water. Arriving at the camp, we were surprised by the excellent job done with the reception and programming for that special Pioneers' Day. Our seniors enjoyed the wagon ride through the area of the camp very much. Besides the wagon ride there were other activities available; like participating in different games, taking a walk to the lake shore, or just enjoying the beautiful nature and chatting with other visitors. After a wonderful lunch, we had a biblical devotional which was our responsibility. We focused on friendship and what it means to



be together with other people. The seniors enjoyed the little activity of folding a paper flower and watching it "bloom" in a bowl of water, symbolizing our expectations for friendship, what we expect from our relationship with other people.

Then we took the bus back to Edmonton; all the participants were very happy, and some of them asked already to be registered for the next excursion! They were all very grateful to have had this opportunity again this year.



Entertainment at Seniorengroupe Treffen

# Called into Worship

*Come, praise the Lord - Psalm 134:1-2*

## Upcoming Worship Opportunities

### Regular Worship:

- English Service: 11 AM
- German Worship: 9:30 AM on the second and fourth Sundays every month

### Special Services:

- Sunday September 29 -- Lutheran Campus Ministries-Edmonton, 11am English Service
- Sunday October 13 -- Thanksgiving Sunday,
  - 9:30 AM German service
  - 11:00 AM English Service with Holy Communion
- Sunday November 24 - Christ the King Sunday & Remembrance of Loved Ones,
  - 9:30 AM German service with Holy Communion
  - 11:00 AM English Service with Holy Communion

### Other Special Events/Dates:

- Sunday, October 06 -- Citywide Confirmation Event @ Ascension Lutheran Church, 1:30-4:30pm
- Sunday, October 20 -- Ushers Luncheon & Training (noon-2pm)
- Sunday, October 27 -- Reformation Sunday & Volunteer Appreciation
- Sunday, November 17 -- Citywide Confirmation Event @ Trinity Lutheran Church, 1:30-4:30pm
- Wednesday, November 27 to Wednesday, December 18 - Travelling Advent Services; schedule to be shared soon!
- Sunday, December 01 -- Advent Lessons and Carols - An Ecumenical Celebration with Lutherans, Anglicans, and Moravians @ Holy Trinity Anglican Church, 5-8pm (potluck dinner & service)

## The many facets of Trinity

*By Deena Hinshaw (Council chairperson)*

For those of us who attend Sunday morning services at Trinity Lutheran, we may not see all the other ways our church is part of the lives of others in our broader community. For example, did you know that we share our building with two other congregations? The Bethel Mandarin Church worships upstairs on Sunday mornings at 9 am, and the Bethel International Church has services here on Sunday afternoons. We also rent office space to our synod - the Alberta and the Territories synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church In Canada (ELCIC).

Beyond sharing with other churches, our building also serves several needs of our community. On Tuesday nights, our church is a pick-up location for the Edmonton Food Bank where volunteers from our church and the Anglican Holy Trinity Church support our neighbours who need basic food supplies. If you might be interested in joining this service ministry, you can contact Rosanne Thede ([rosannethede@gmail.com](mailto:rosannethede@gmail.com)) to find out more. We also provide space for weekly meetings of two different Twelve-Step programs supporting people in their recovery from substance use disorders.

Another way we are part of our community is with long-term rentals or space use agreements. We rent our basement and park space to the Helping Hands Daycare - a longstanding tenant of Trinity's. In addition, we house the library of the Historical Society of Germans from Poland and Volhynia (open on Thursday mornings) and provide practice space for choirs like the Edmonton Swiss Men's Choir and the St. David's Welsh Male Choir. We also share our park space with the Trinity Community Garden project.

Finally, our space is shared with those who use it for short term rentals. From private gatherings in the Luther Centre, like anniversary or birthday parties, to longer rentals like the Grindstone Theatre renting space for the annual Fringe Festival, we are a part of the diversity of our community. Our newly renovated conference room on the second floor is also available for rentals, so if you know of a group looking to rent space, please have them contact our office to find out more.

Even though many of us only see our church on Sunday mornings, it's good to remember that Trinity is serving and partnering with our neighbours every day of the week!



Ordination of Bishop Trish - Ascension Lutheran - August 2024

# My ordination

by Andrea Wilhelm

Dear Trinity friends,

On July 27, 2024 I was ordained a pastor. It was the culmination of a very long journey. If I look back, it started in my adolescence and perhaps even in my teens. But I did not know what it was.

Trinity has been instrumental in my hearing the call to be a pastor. I may have told you before that it was one of you who said one Sunday morning to me, "Andrea, have you ever considered becoming a pastor?" Apparently this was not the first time someone (typically a pastor) made that suggestion to me, but it was the first time I heard it. And it didn't leave me alone.

But there's more to it. Trinity has been my spiritual home that nourished my faith, theologically, musically/artistically, relationally, and through role models. I assumed leadership positions such as being on the communication committee, on church council, being parish manager for a little while, coordinating the mural, and being on Erin's internship committee. It seemed whatever I felt led to do, at Trinity I could run with it. Working closely with others, lay and ordained, shaped me more. And perhaps I became visible in ways that led to that Sunday question that sent me to seminary.

some of you about your favourite moments in my ordination service. Or after - someone noted the borscht! I want to share my two most special moments with you.

The first was when I was called up and presented as candidate by representatives who had called me. At that moment it became real for me: Yes, I *was* called! I *was* wanted in this office of pastor. That moment affirmed my four-plus years of discernment: asking God, seminary, internship, spiritual direction, the synod's candidacy process, conversation with family and friends, trial and error. I had come to think that perhaps I had a voice, passions and gifts that God could use not only in linguistics/academia, but also in pastoral work. And now this sense was confirmed. I was called to be the next chaplain at University of Alberta Augustana (the former Camrose Lutheran College). This position combines my academic and my faith sides. I never imagined such a custom-made position existed. When I was presented, all that gelled in me, and a bolt of joy raced through me. After that I did not stop smiling.

The second special moment for me was when people stood around me, laid their hands on me and there was a long silence, after which we kept singing, "*Veni sancte spiritus, tui amoris ignem accende*" - Come Holy Spirit, kindle in us the fire of your love. I felt like we took time to wait on God, wait for God, the Holy Spirit, to do something. This was not just a human ritual, we invited and asked God. We did this together, in community. It felt incredible, and it felt like a God moment.

It was great to see so many of you at my ordination. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for your support over the years - and your practical help on July 27 too: setting up, ushering, tech support, kitchen help, reading, making music, and so on.

Bless you, people of Trinity. People of our triune God.

That is why I wanted my ordination to take place at Trinity. People of Trinity, you have nurtured me and enabled me to hear that call to consider becoming a

pastor. You have raised yet another pastor! What a gift to me, to the church at large, and to all creation. You are special and God is at work among you. God uses you and makes you a blessing.

I have heard from



## SYNOD CONVENTION REPORT

*Andrea Wilhelm, delegate*

Every three years, the Synod of Alberta & the Territories of the ELCIC meets in convention to discern the will and conduct the business of the synod. Every congregation sends one or more delegates, who have the power to vote and to make motions. Others are welcome to attend as visitors.

The 2024 convention took place June 22 -24 at King's University in Edmonton. Trinity's delegates were Deena Hinshaw, Pastor Erin, and myself.

The theme was ***One Body, One Spirit, One Hope*** ("There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called." Ephesians 4:4). Many words of encouragement and hope were spoken at this convention, which marked the end of Larry Kochendorfer's tenure as the synod's bishop, all in a time that is still reeling from the pandemic, plus climate disasters, plus affordability challenges, plus increased societal division and acrimony. I want to particularly recommend to you the sermons preached by the convention chaplain, Deacon Faith Nostbakken, and especially her sermon on the body: <https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:US:1de89dde-ecac-4040-affe-71ae5a5f3c3b>

With Bishop Larry stepping away, the convention needed to elect a new bishop. Perhaps you remember the prayerful discernment exercise Trinity (along with many other congregations) participated in a few months ago to prepare us. The election process itself, called an ecclesiastical ballot, is very interesting. While some people had been nominated ahead of time, the first ballot consisted of delegates writing down names. No name had a majority, so more rounds of election (more ballots) took place, in which those names receiving low numbers of votes were successively eliminated. This process happened throughout the convention, and I found it very deliberate, thoughtful, and sound. Delegates had time to inform themselves about the candidates, pray (and sleep!) over it, and people whose candidates were eliminated had a chance to use their vote for a different candidate in the next ballot. In the end, Rev. Trish Schermund from Holy Spirit, Edmonton, was elected bishop. We rejoice with her and are very grateful that she is willing to take on this difficult task. Bishop Trish was ordained on August 24.

While the bishop election drew much attention, other people were also elected. Among them Trinity member Sylvia Becker to synod council. Congratulations and blessings, Sylvia!

The convention's worship services introduced the **Liturgy of the Beloved**, a parting gift by Larry and Cathy Kochendorfer to our synod. Written by Ben & Caitlin Johnston-Urey of Trinity Lutheran in Whitehorse, the lit-

urgy is musically gorgeous (in my opinion) and has wonderful contemporary language. I am excited about it and am happy that we are learning and beginning to use it at Trinity.

On the theme of hope, I moved, and my husband seconded a motion that the ABT Synod's congregations and specialized ministries seek to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by 50% relative to 2019 levels by 2030, and be carbon neutral by 2050. The motion passed with a large majority. Synod Council has been tasked with implementation, including eliciting and receiving implementation proposals. The fact that we as a synod have made this commitment gives me great hope in our time of global heating. I personally believe God calls us to repent from our carbon intense ways and live in peace with creation. I also believe us working on this will be a great witness of hope to others, especially young people, many of whom suffer from climate grief. There are already churches in the synod who have made great progress on this path, for example Hosanna here in Edmonton and Bethel in Camrose. It's also very good for utility bills.

All convention materials, including videos, are available on the synod website: <https://albertasynod.ca/our-story/abt-synod-information/abt-synod-2021-convention/synod-convention-2024/> Or talk to Deena, Pastor Erin, or myself!



Blessing of the Bishop elect - Synod Convention 2024

# Thank You to Our Guest Musicians This Summer

Once again, during the Summer Sundays in 2024, **Cherie Larson**, our organist and pianist, used her extensive list of contacts, students and friends to invite a variety of musicians to share their musical gifts to enhance our Sunday worship experiences all summer long.

The members and leaders at Trinity extend a special thank you to:



Anne Campbell,  
Maren Elliott,  
Gina Friedrich,  
Clara Knoefel,  
Shauna Krismer,  
Lita+Nora+Ramona  
LeDressay,  
Joshua Liu,

Sienna Palmer,  
Elisabeth Scholtz,  
Gerald Simanjuntak,  
Sonia Skakun,  
Frank Thede,  
Isabelle Wong,  
Yao Yao and  
Chloe Zhu.

Thank you for coming to Trinity when Cherie invited you and for sharing your time, talent, and gift of music with us. We know that your offering of music draws people to Trinity during the summer. It has been a pleasure to listen to you. Thank you very much for beautifying our worship services with your offerings.

As always, a special thank you goes to **Cherie Larson**, who has been graciously organizing these special music events every summer since 2003!



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