

FALL 2026

# Trinity

Matters





# Rooted Together in Christ



*“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in Him, rooted and built up in Him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.” - Colossians 2:6–7*

As we begin a new ministry year, we do so with grateful hearts, reflecting on God's faithful work in and through us and looking ahead with hope. He is still working! Our theme, "Rooted Together in Christ," is more than a theme for the year it is an invitation to draw closer to the One who is the source of our life, our strength, and our hope; Jesus.

**Rooted.** Paul's words to the church in Colossae remind us that the Christian life begins with Christ and continues in Christ. We are called to put our roots down deeply into Him, allowing His love, His Word, and His Spirit to nourish every part of our lives. Like a tree planted beside flowing streams, the deeper our roots grow, the stronger we become. Jesus is our soil and life-giving stream. Storms may come, seasons may change, and challenges may test our faith, but those whose lives are firmly rooted in Christ can stand with humble confidence because their foundation will not fail.

**Together.** God never intended for us to do life alone. He has placed here at Trinity, within a family of faith where we can worship together, pray for one another, encourage one another, and carry each other's burdens. In every conversation, every act of kindness, every shared prayer, and every opportunity to serve, God is strengthening the bonds that unite us as His children.

Each person at Trinity is precious to God and has a place in His purpose. Whether you have walked with Jesus for many years or are only beginning your journey of faith, you belong in His family. Together we are being shaped, refined, and built up into a community that reflects His love and grace.

Being rooted in Christ also produces visible fruit. Hearts grounded in His love become hearts that forgive. Lives rooted in His grace become lives marked by compassion, humility, generosity, and joy. As Trinity recommits to being rooted in Christ, we will continue to be and become even more so a place of welcome for the weary, hope for the discouraged, and light for the community around it. Our neighbors are longing to see the love of Christ lived out, and God has called us to do just that.

As you read the stories and reflections in this edition of *Trinity Matters*, my prayer is that you will be encouraged by all that God is doing among us. May these pages remind us that God is faithfully at work in every generation, every ministry, and every life. Trinity matters. You matter. Our neighbors matter.

*Pastor Justin Krupsky*  
REV. JUSTIN KRUPSKY | SENIOR PASTOR



# Laying Stronger Roots



REV. JOSH BRITTON  
ASSOCIATE PASTOR OF WORSHIP

I was recently up north this summer after a strong storm had blown through. You know the scene: branches, leaves, and debris are all over the place with even some huge trees tumbled over. At the sight of a massive tree uprooted from the ground, what struck me was the reminder of how important roots are, not just for trees, but for us as the church as members of the body of Christ.

It is not enough for trees to have roots that go deep into the earth to provide for a good foundation into nutrient-rich and hydrated soil for life, you also need roots that span wide for stability and to interlock with other plant life to provide long lasting support.

This truth experienced around us in God's creation has been getting my attention a lot lately as I think about how this applies to us here at Trinity moving forward into the fantastic and exciting days ahead. We are reminded by Paul in Colossians 2:6-7 that we are to be "Rooted Together in Christ." I see this playing out in a variety of ways in the coming year.

First, I thank God for what He has built here over the past few years in the worship ministry at Trinity. The team Jesus has called here has been able to dig some deep roots so that worship can function efficiently as it does every week. However, there is always more room for growth to take place, specifically as roots branch out. This is where you come in.

I believe there has never been a more ripe season to see new growth with new team players coming to be part of the body of Christ within the worship ministry here at Trinity. At the great opportunity that God has provided by moving both our congregation, as well as Our Redeemer, to agree on having me step away to be a site pastor for the next year, there is ample opportunity to kick things into a higher gear as we branch out to connect and lay stronger roots out as a family who serves Jesus by serving others.

If you want to get more connected to play a direct role in the life of worship and have musical, people, or technical skills, please reach out to me at [jbritton@trinityutica.com](mailto:jbritton@trinityutica.com).

**We resume our regular fall worship schedule the weekend of September 19-21, 2026.**

Traditional | Saturday 5:30 pm  
Traditional | Sunday 9 am  
Contemporary (gym) | Sunday 9:45 am  
Contemporary | Sunday 11:15 am

Secondly, I believe we will only grow stronger as the body of Christ, or as we confess weekly "the holy Christian church, the communion of saints," if we are willing to not only go deeper, but also stretch out wider together as the church. Being rooted in Christ matters. Being rooted together with other brothers and sisters in Christ for the exponential growth of God's kingdom is life giving. I have never been more excited about the possibilities of what God is going to do by partnering together with another sister congregation!

*Being rooted together with other brothers and sisters in Christ for the exponential growth of God's kingdom is life giving.*

Finally, please continue to bathe all of this in prayer as we seek God's wisdom, heart, discernment, counsel, and direction over the next year. There is lots of work to be done, work that I believe God is calling you to join together and partner with us in as week seek to serve the world around us by sharing Christ's story with love!





REV. NICK DUERR  
**ASSOCIATE PASTOR OF FAITH FORMATION**

As we begin this next school year with the church and school theme of being Rooted Together in Christ, I have been thinking about that word "together" and all the ways that God brings us together in this community of faith. And today, I want to focus on how, within Trinity, God has given us people with lives similar to our own, people with whom we can support and grow in our faith together. In particular, I'm thinking about Trinity's Men's Ministry, Women's Ministry, Seniors' Ministry, as well as Children's and Youth Ministries.

### **Men's Ministry**

Men's Ministry has been going for several years, with several awesome events like the annual golf outing, a car show, campfire, retreats and more. And they're looking to do more again this coming year! The annual golf outing is happening soon, and plans are being made for more events to be announced soon!

### **Women's Ministry**

Inspired by Trinity's Men's Ministry and the amazing things God is working on through them, several women have decided to launch a similar Women's Ministry! They are working to get ideas and plan events throughout the year so that women can gather together and be in relationship with God and one another. To that end, they are planning and inviting all Trinity women to their Launch Night on September 11 from 7-9 pm. Join them for food, fun, and the opportunity to get to know other interested women here at Trinity!



If you have any questions, please reach out to Dana Resch at [dlresch@yahoo.com](mailto:dlresch@yahoo.com) or Lauren Krueger at [lkrueger@trinityutica.com](mailto:lkrueger@trinityutica.com).

### **Seniors' Ministry**

Seniors' Ministry has had a lot of fun events this last year, including grandparenting seminars, fun holiday celebrations, and delicious food. And there's more coming up! God's Carnival of Life will be taking place on September 18, and is going to be a wonderful opportunity to reflect on God's gifts to us and to have a lot of fun while doing so! The next Christian Grandparenting Today breakfast will be Saturday, October 3 from 9:00 -10:45 am in the Fellowship Hall. The speaker will be Gary Faszholz, retired art teacher and football coach from Lutheran High North. His topic will be, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." He will speak about leaving our faith legacy from generation to generation. Please register in the Seniors' Binder or on the Church Center app.

### **Children's and Youth Ministry**

This summer has been packed with activities for children and youth, from VBS to mission trips, to chances to just hang out, the younger generations have had lots of opportunities to spend time together and spend time getting to know God better. And we are looking forward to this fall, when we will back to a regular schedule of Trinity Kids, youth group, and lots of fun activities.



# Rooted Together in Christ

...Even in Tough Times



REV. CHAD WRIGHT  
**ASSOCIATE PASTOR OF  
CHRISTIAN CARE & COUNSELING**

Roots. They are more than just an anchor system for plants and trees. Roots are vital for growth, underground organs that also absorb water and nutrients. Roots store reserves to help the plant or tree survive dry spells. Some tree roots even communicate with other plants and soil organisms. They develop a communication network where trees exchange chemical signals via fungal networks, caring for other trees by warning neighbors of pest attacks and by sharing nutrients with tree relatives. Roots are far more than just “holdings” for plants — they are complex, adaptive, and interconnected systems that sustain life above and below ground.

If you haven’t caught on by now, the theme for the next school year at Trinity and the next overarching focus for our worship over the next year is “Rooted Together in Christ.” While various aspects of Trinity’s ministry focus on the absorption of God’s Word and feeding the faith of believers, the area of ministries that I oversee tend to focus on the communication and caring, similar to the nurturing aspect of a tree roots system.

GriefShare is offered as a small group support for adult individuals who have lost a loved one. It is a 13-week program that meets weekly, offering a combination of video presentations, group discussions, and a participant workbook to guide individuals through the grieving process.



Participants engage in group discussions, sharing experiences, and reflecting on the session content in a safe, supportive environment. If you are grieving and would like the support of our GriefShare team, a new cycle of GriefShare starts Thursday, August 13, at 1:30 pm.

Another supportive, caring ministry offered at Trinity is Stephen Ministry. you’re facing the loss of a loved one, divorce, job loss, medical crisis, or another challenging life situation, a Stephen Minister is equipped to walk alongside you and help you carry those burdens. They provide a non-judgmental presence, a patient listening ear, and an intentional focus on you and your needs. We all need help at times, and Stephen Ministers are there for those moments. If you’re going through a tough time, you don’t have to handle it alone. Give yourself the gift of a Stephen Minister.

If you are experiencing a difficult season, Christ provides support through these ministries. If you would like to know more, please reach out to me. It is not a sign of weakness—it is a step toward wholeness. As the Associate Pastor of Christian Care and Counseling, I am here to help, as we stay rooted together in Christ.

*If you're going through a tough time,  
you don't have to handle it alone.*





GRANT NELSON

**CHAIRMAN OF THE CONGREGATION**

When I think of being “Rooted Together in Christ,” my first inclination is around individuals becoming rooted together sharing a common mission. However, we also need to be rooted together congregationally as the many churches that make up the Body of Christ. We need to work together in ministry to support each other. That can take the form of supporting ministries and events of other churches. It can be partnering together for a particular ministry or event. It can also be supporting and growing through church planting or mergers. We have an opportunity to become rooted together by potentially merging with Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Washington Township.

At the June 14 Voters’ Meeting, Trinity approved entering into a 12-24 month investigation period to evaluate a potential merger with Our Redeemer Lutheran Church on 27 Mile Road east of Van Dyke. As a result, we have formed a Merger Committee to lead that investigation. That committee developed a contract defining the terms of the investigation. The contract was approved by the Church Councils of both Our Redeemer and Trinity. During the investigation period which starts September 1, Pastor Josh will serve as Site Pastor with Our Redeemer reimbursing Trinity for all expenses.

Although the investigation contract starts September 1, Trinity has been providing pastoral support throughout the summer. We are planning to complete the investigation in a year but are allowing extension of the contract for a second year if necessary. During the investigation period, the two churches remain independent (finances, governance, etc.) If the merger is successful, we will become a single, unified LCMS congregation operating in two sites.

The Merger Committee has met half a dozen times throughout the summer. We are working through 29 areas of investigation to determine the feasibility of a merger. Although the Merger Committee guides the merger investigation, we will be forming subcommittees to conduct studies of specific areas relying on expertise of staff and congregational members. Throughout the investigation we will be holding information meetings to keep both congregations updated on the discussions. The first information meeting is scheduled for August 30. Please bring your comments and questions. For more information, see the merger page on our church website, [www.trinityutica.com/merger](http://www.trinityutica.com/merger) (or in the drop down menu under “CHURCH”). It includes a FAQ sheet and a Church Profile Comparison Summary which is a high level comparison of the two churches. From that same page, you can also share your comments and questions directly with the Merger Committee. Please pray that God gives us clarity as we work to discern His plan for us so we can be rooted together as the full body of Christ.



# Merger Committee Members

## Trinity

- Pastor Justin
- Pastor Josh
- Grant Nelson, *Chairman of the Congregation*
- Dan Kennedy, *Vice Chairman of the Congregation*
- Brian Stump, *Chairman of the Elders*

## Our Redeemer

- Chuck Brennecke, *Vice Chairman of the Congregation*
- Mark Bernthal, *Chairman of the Elders*
- Dave Carmona, *Elder*
- Rob Lorts, *Elder*

# Areas of Investigation

## Doctrine

- Theological Beliefs
- Governance Organization
- Governance Voting
- Affiliations

## Personnel

- Merger Expectations
- Pastoral Staff
- Boards & Committees
- Staff
- Missionaries

## Ministry Philosophy

- Mission
- Vision
- Values
- Discipleship Strategy
- Worship Style
- Preaching
- Membership
- Programs & Ministries
- School & Preschool
- Finance & Budget
- Software & Technology
- Communication Plan

## Legal

- Legal Council
- Church Name
- Voting
- Dissolution
- Property & Facilities
- Assets & Liabilities
- Debt Management
- Timeline

# Safety Update



STEVE POWELL  
SAFETY MANAGER

As Trinity Lutheran Church and School grow in fellowship and service, our commitment to safety remains firmly rooted in Christ. The Safety Ministry exists to support our congregation, school, and visitors by helping create a peaceful atmosphere where worship, learning and fellowship can flourish. The Safety Ministry supports a welcoming, peaceful campus while reflecting Christ's care and vigilance.

We're grateful to share a few key updates as the ministry continues to grow.

## Building a Strong Foundation

Our team is a ministry of watchful service, grounded in Colossians 2:7—being “rooted and built up in Him.” Volunteers welcome and assist guests, monitor campus areas, and maintain a safe, distraction-free environment for everyone who walks through our doors. We've onboarded our first wave of volunteers and held our inaugural July meeting, which included training in situational awareness, threat identification, effective communication, and a review of policies and procedures.

## Growing Together

As our church and school continue to grow, so does the opportunity to strengthen this ministry. We're looking to expand our team with additional volunteers who have a servant's heart and a desire to help care for others. Whether greeting visitors, being attentive to those around you, or simply offering a reassuring presence, every volunteer plays an important role in supporting the safety and well-being of our Trinity family.

If you are calm under pressure, observant, and have a heart for serving and protecting others, we invite you to prayerfully consider becoming part of the Safety Ministry. Every new volunteer helps strengthen this ministry and contributes to creating a welcoming, secure environment rooted in Christ's love.

To learn more, please contact Safety Manager Steve Powell at [spowell@trinityutica.com](mailto:spowell@trinityutica.com) or pick up a flyer at the church information desk and return the contact card.



**SCAN HERE FOR MORE  
INFO AND TO SUBMIT  
FEEDBACK REGARDING  
THE POTENTIAL MERGER**



# Better Together



BRUCE VOLKERT  
**SCHOOL PRINCIPAL**

“Rooted Together in Christ” is the theme for our 2026-2027 school year. It is based on these words from the 2nd chapter of Colossians: “So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in Him, rooted and built up in Him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.”

There are so many concepts and truths that we can apply to our walk with Christ through these images and words. Some that quickly come to mind are the planting and nurturing of seeds. We could contemplate how our Lutheran school provides the environment for young people to be built up in Jesus. Faith is strengthened by the teaching that occurs at Trinity. Plants give life as Jesus gave His life on a tree. We could brainstorm for many minutes about the application of the theme of Rooted Together in Christ.

Let’s pick the idea of “together” and dive deeper into that (because that is what roots do). Think about times that you have pulled weeds in your garden or in your lawn. Raise your hand if you have received a full sense of satisfaction when you take hold of the weed and the entire root slips out of the ground. I know I have felt accomplished when the big ‘ol dandelion comes up and gives up the entire taproot. Now raise your hand if you have ever in frustration given up attempting to remove a bush or even a tree. It takes a crazy amount of effort to remove an established plant. You may decide that the tree looks just fine where it is and throw in the towel trying to remove it. Hearty plants do not give up because they have an entire system of roots working together to make that growth immovable. The roots work together - as a unit. Individually, each would probably fail if a gardener wanted to remove the tree.

Jesus gives up the opportunity to go about His kingdom work together. In his wisdom, He sent out the first apostles two by two. Our Savior continues to equip us to fulfill His will by endeavoring to work together.

For centuries the church has known that we are better together. Our school ministry follows this Biblical idea. We begin our 144th year of Christian education with about 60 dedicated school staff members. This includes our preschool teachers, homeroom teachers, specials teachers, classroom aides, paraprofessionals, Latchkey workers, office workers and administrators. Each plays a role that could not be done by the other or completed without the other.

In addition, our school is served by the multiple members of our church staff, our pastors, the custodial team, musicians and others. A large number of volunteers are woven into the team that is deeply rooted in Christ. Hundreds of students and thousands of family members become part of the system that is rooted in our Heavenly Father. In Christ alone each of us receives strength. When we are all rooted in the Word and wound together, Jesus makes us able to withstand terrific storms. Not one of us could complete the ministry of Christ alone. Thank you Jesus for the JOY in being Rooted Together in you.

We have a few new faculty members that are becoming a part of our root system this fall. Stacy Styers was once a student at Trinity and now will be one of our three year old preschool teachers. Stacy has experience serving in early childhood departments of Lutheran schools. You will find Janis McGrath in one of our first grade classrooms. Janis also brings to us years of experience in Lutheran schools in our area. Brittney Rastigue joins us as a fifth grade teacher. She previously taught at the Michigan Math and Science Academy. Our new librarian is Jodie Bargowski. Jodie has taught at a number of grade levels and has served as a reading interventionist in previous schools. We look forward to getting to know our new colleagues more as they set down roots here at Trinity.

Keep our school community in prayers as we begin the school year with a half day on Wednesday, August 26. Remember, we have to get up a little earlier this year! We are expanding our school day. We will now start at 8:25 am and dismiss at 3:25 pm. We will go about our mission to Make Disciples Who Share Christ’s Story With Love.

# Rooted in Christ

## Trusting God With Every Season



**CYNDI CARPENTER**  
**DIRECTOR OF HR & FINANCE**



*“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in Him, rooted and built up in Him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.” – Colossians 2:6-7*

As we begin a new fiscal year at Trinity, we are reminded of the importance of being Rooted in Christ. A tree with deep roots is able to withstand storms, endure dry seasons, and continue to grow because it is connected to a strong source of nourishment. In the same way, when our lives are deeply rooted in Jesus, we are strengthened to face seasons of waiting, uncertainty, and change with faith and confidence.

Being rooted in Christ means trusting that God is at work even when we cannot see the full picture. It means believing that His timing is better than ours and that His plans are guided by His wisdom and love.

I experienced this personally during a season when my husband and I were waiting for the right time to purchase a home. For more than ten years, we lived in our starter home. It was a blessing and a place where we created many memories, but over time it became clear that it no longer fit our family’s needs. It needed many updates, it was older, and it felt too small. I often wondered when God would open the right door for us.

Looking back, I realize God was doing more than preparing a new home for us —He was preparing our hearts to trust Him.

During those years, we learned patience. We learned to pray, save, work hard, and wait on God’s timing instead of trying to force our own plans. I had to trust that God was working through my husband and that when the right time came, God would give us wisdom and unity in our decision.

Then one day, my husband felt it was time. He shared what we could responsibly afford, and we began looking in an area we had always loved. Houses rarely became available there, but suddenly a home appeared on Zillow. When my husband called, he discovered that the previous sale had just fallen through. He sent me with my mom to look at it, and the moment I walked through the door, I knew God had provided something special for our family.

I called my husband, and even though he had not seen the home himself, he trusted me and trusted that God was leading us. He gave a verbal offer, and through God’s provision, the final price was exactly the amount he had told me we could afford.

The blessing was not just the home—it was the journey. God used that waiting period to strengthen our faith, teach us contentment, and remind us that He is our provider. The home was a gift, but the deeper blessing was learning to trust the One who provided it.

This is what it means to be rooted in Christ.

When we are rooted in Jesus, we begin to see everything we have differently. Our homes, our families, our careers, our time, and our finances are not things we have earned apart from God—they are blessings He has entrusted to us. A heart rooted in Christ responds with gratitude and a desire to use those blessings to glorify Him.

As we begin this new fiscal year at Trinity, we have an opportunity to reflect on how God is calling each of us to be rooted—not only in our faith but also in our commitment to His church.

Last year presented financial challenges. While we are deeply thankful for the generosity of so many faithful members, overall giving did not reach the level approved in the congregational budget, and we ended the year with a deficit. Even in those challenges, God has continued to provide through His people, and we are grateful for every person who gives, serves, prays, and supports Trinity’s ministry. Every gift given to Trinity is an act of faith. Your generosity helps support the ministries God has called us to carry out—sharing the Gospel, teaching children and families, caring for one another, providing worship opportunities, supporting our staff, maintaining our facilities, and keeping Trinity a place where people can come to know and grow in Christ.

As we enter this new year, I encourage each of us to prayerfully ask: “Lord, how are You calling me to grow deeper roots in You and faithfully use the blessings You have given me?”

For some, that may mean beginning a regular practice of giving. For others, it may mean prayerfully increasing their generosity. Stewardship is not simply about meeting a budget—it is about trusting God, responding with gratitude, and participating in the work He is doing through Trinity. When we are rooted in Christ, we can give confidently because we know the One who provides. Just as God faithfully provided for my family in His perfect timing, He continues to provide for Trinity through the faithful hearts of His people.

May this year be a season where we grow deeper roots in Christ, stronger roots in our faith, and a renewed commitment to building His Kingdom together.

### Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for being our provider and our source of strength. Help us to grow deeper roots in You so that our faith remains strong in every season. Teach us to trust Your timing, follow Your guidance, and faithfully use the blessings You have given us to serve You and others. Bless Trinity, our ministries, our staff, and every member of our church family as we seek to glorify You together. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

### Reflection Question

Where is God inviting you to trust Him more deeply? How might being more rooted in Christ change the way you use your time, talents, and treasures to support His work through Trinity?

## Financial Report

| JUNE 2026                | Actual Month | Budget Month | Actual YTD     | Budget YTD     |
|--------------------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|
| Church & School Income   | \$499,173.64 | \$407,595.85 | \$5,585,607.62 | \$5,539,513.00 |
| Church & School Expenses | \$421,883.04 | \$451,792.09 | \$5,660,780.89 | \$5,535,513.00 |

### Sanctuary Renovation/Building Fund:

June Income \$15,863.7

Total to date: \$2,629,896.94

## Ways to Give

- Online at [trinityutica.com/give](http://trinityutica.com/give)
- Church Center app
- Send in by mail
- Stock/IRA



# Meet Our New Staff



**JODIE BARGOWSKI**  
Library Media Specialist

Jodie joins Trinity as our new librarian and is excited to begin building relationships with students and families. She lives in Macomb Township with her husband of nearly 28 years, their daughter, Lexi, and their two rescue dogs, Skylar, a laid-back Beagle mix, and Cooper, an energetic Labrador mix. Outside of school, Jodie enjoys taking her dogs for walks at the park, browsing bookstores with her daughter, and spending time with her family playing board games—especially Uno Attack.

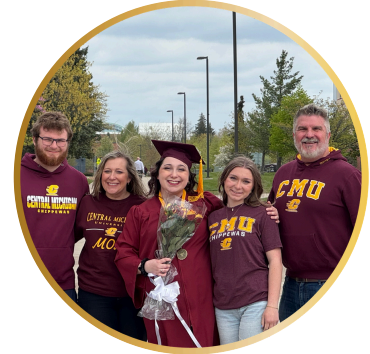
As she begins her first year at Trinity, she looks forward to creating a kind, caring, and welcoming library where every child feels valued, supported, and encouraged to grow. She is excited to see how God will use this new opportunity to serve Trinity's students and families.



**JESSICA SPALDING**  
Children's Ministry

Jessica has been part of the Trinity family her entire life. She and her husband both attended Trinity Day School, met through Trinity Church, and are grateful to once again call Trinity home after spending a year in Texas. She previously served at Trinity in youth and worship ministries and is excited to continue serving the congregation as Children's Ministry Coordinator.

Jessica is passionate about partnering with families to help children build a strong foundation rooted in Christ, creating a place where kids and parents feel supported, encouraged, and connected to Jesus. Outside of ministry, she enjoys fishing, hiking, camping, sewing, reading, singing, and spending time with her husband and their energetic dog, Chip. She looks forward to seeing how God will continue to grow the faith of Trinity's children and families in the year ahead.



**JANIS MCGRATH**  
First Grade Teacher

Janis brings 20 years of experience teaching in Lutheran schools and is a proud graduate of Lutheran education herself, having attended St. John Fraser and Lutheran High North. She holds a master's degree in reading instruction and continues to pursue professional development in literacy through the MISD. Janis and her husband have been married for 24 years and are blessed with three children. She believes God led her to Trinity through a friend and is grateful for His guidance in this new chapter. Outside the classroom, Janis enjoys reading, watching sports (especially cheering on her son as he plays football for Hope College), and spending time at the beach during the summer.

As she begins her first year at Trinity, Janis looks forward to becoming part of the school community and asks for prayers for a smooth transition and a healthy, blessed school year.

## *Please welcome these new faces to our Trinity family!*



**LAUREN KRUEGER**  
Christian Growth Associate

Originally from Frankenmuth, Lauren graduated from Concordia University Nebraska with a degree in Theology and Christian Education Leadership and completed her DCE internship in Bettendorf, Iowa. She and her two children, Amora and Ezra, recently moved back to Michigan to be closer to family. Drawn to Trinity's strong sense of community and outreach, Lauren is grateful for the opportunity to serve and looks forward to getting to know the congregation. Outside of ministry, she enjoys exploring God's creation through hiking, kayaking, wildlife photography, lifting weights, and is even scuba certified!

Lauren hopes to encourage others to deepen their relationship with Jesus and remain firmly rooted in His love and promises. As she and her children begin this new chapter in Michigan, she welcomes your prayers as they continue to adjust and settle into their new home.



**BRITTNEY RASTIGUE**  
Fifth Grade Teacher

Brittney has 13 years of teaching experience and a passion for helping students grow both academically and spiritually. She and her husband, Nick, recently celebrated 11 years of marriage and live in St. Clair Shores with their 7-year-old daughter, Emma. Originally from Phoenix, Arizona, Brittney moved to Michigan as a child and is excited to begin this new chapter teaching fifth grade at Trinity, where she can share both her love of learning and her faith in Jesus.

Brittney enjoys spending time with family and friends, running, working out, painting, and cheering on the Detroit Lions each fall. She believes being "Rooted in Christ" means making Jesus the foundation of every part of life and hopes to create a classroom where students feel loved, encouraged, and supported as they grow in both knowledge and faith.



**STACEY STYERS**  
Preschool Teacher

Stacey is excited to return to Trinity, where she attended school from fourth - eighth grade before graduating from Lutheran High North. She and her husband, Matt, who first met as students at St. Peter Lutheran School in East Detroit, have been married for many years and are blessed with three adult daughters and six grandchildren. After a lifetime of Lutheran education and the past ten years teaching in Lutheran schools, Stacey is grateful for the opportunity to share the love of Jesus with Trinity's preschoolers.

Stacey believes children learn best by example and hopes to help each child develop a close relationship with Jesus by modeling His grace, love, and the Fruits of the Spirit each day. As she begins the school year, she asks for prayers that she will lead our youngest learners with the same joy, excitement, and love for Jesus that has shaped her own life.



# The Mission Field Is Here: *Why Trinity Should Consider an International Friendship Center*



REV. CHRISTIAN JONES  
**ASSOCIATE PASTOR OF OUTREACH**

*"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations..."*  
- Matthew 28:19

When we think about "mission work," we often picture missionaries traveling overseas. But today, God has brought the nations to us. Many of our neighbors in Macomb County are immigrants, refugees, international students, and families learning to navigate life in a new country. Some are simply looking for a friend and someone to help them practice English.

What if Trinity became a place where they found both practical help and the hope of Jesus Christ?

One exciting opportunity is partnering with POBLO International, an LCMS mission organization, to establish an International Friendship Center at Trinity. These centers build relationships through hospitality, English conversation, and practical assistance while creating natural opportunities to share the Gospel.

Many adults in our community want to improve their English so they can communicate with employers, schools, doctors, and neighbors. Learning English can make everyday life less overwhelming and help families feel connected.

As Lutherans, serving our neighbors is nothing new. We care for people because Christ first cared for us. Helping someone learn English or feel welcome is one way we live out our vocation in love.

You don't need to be a teacher, though. The greatest gifts are often kindness and friendship.



Volunteers might welcome guests, practice conversational English, or share coffee or a meal. Others might help with childcare, answer everyday questions about life in America or build genuine friendships. And, as relationships grow, so do opportunities to answer questions about our faith and share the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Imagine welcoming a Muslim family, an international student, or a refugee into our church, helping them settle into a new community, and one day opening the Scriptures together. That's more than community service - it's mission work.

The mission field isn't only across the ocean. It's right here in Macomb County - in Utica. Would you prayerfully consider serving if Trinity launches an International Friendship Center?

If you would like more information, please contact Pastor Jones at [cjones@trinityutica.com](mailto:cjones@trinityutica.com).

As Lutherans, serving our  
neighbors is nothing new.  
We care for people because  
Christ first cared for us.



# Rooted Together in Service



BETH HELMER  
FOOD MINISTRY ASSOCIATE

*"So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in Him, rooted and built up in Him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness." - Colossians 2:6-7*

The past few weeks in the ENews and bulletin there have been articles expressing gratitude for the kindness and generosity for all the donations given for the Food Ministry "Summer Stock Food Drive." We are truly overflowing with thankfulness, as each item helps to serve our neighbors in need, which is just one way we continue to live our lives in Him. This summer we received hundreds of non-perishable food items that we will be using to serve Trinity's three main feeding ministries: SSS, Delivering Disciples (DD) and the food pantry.

As food came in and we began to unload and stock the shelves, we all began to talk about how awesome it is to see us come together as the Body of Christ to accomplish this task He has set before us. Regardless of what Christian church someone attends, it is clear across the world that as believers in Jesus we are rooted in the service of feeding those in need, but in order for this to happen, we must come together as one heart and mind, and here at Trinity we are continually being built up in Him and strengthened in the faith when we witness these miracles in front of us.

As teams of staff and volunteers we are strengthened in the faith daily as we come together in His service. It's important we reflect upon what it means to us and share those thoughts with one another so we are continually remembering what God is doing and has done in our midst.

Here are some reflections from our staff and volunteers about how stocking the pantry and receiving food donations touches their hearts as we are rooted together in service:

"Having our pantry stocked for people in need is very rewarding to me. I know I am doing a good thing for my community to help people in need and be able to know that we are there to serve and help in any way-big or small." - Trinity Utica pantry volunteer

"Getting food donations is such a blessing to Delivering Disciples because it allows us to expand on our menu for the meals that are delivered to our patrons. We also utilize the catered food that comes in each week, but when that slows down in the colder months, the food drives are a staple to our meal preparation. The soups cooked each week are also dependent on the food donations. We try and work around what food is coming in so that nothing goes to waste. Praise God for His abundance toward Trinity Food Ministries." Dawn Janicki, Delivering Disciples Coordinator

"Seeing the shelves full is like seeing the hands and feet of God on full display, stocking the shelves for the needs of their neighbor. The summer food drive was a massive success for the pantry! I'm blessed to be at a church with people who love their neighbors as themselves." Christian Jones, Associate Pastor of Outreach

Thank you, Trinity, for your love and support of the food ministry. Let's stay rooted together in service to Him.



# Men Rooted Together



REV. JUSTIN KRUPSKY  
**SENIOR PASTOR**

*"As iron sharpens iron so one man sharpens another." Proverbs 27:17*

As we seek to be Rooted in Christ together it is more important than ever to rub shoulders with other men around God's word in Christian fellowship. If you are looking to encouragement, direction, courage or strength to be the man that God created you to be for the sake of your family, neighbors, and co-workers we believe our men's ministry is the place to be. Bring a friend and check out these Bible studies and events.



## upcoming events

**SUBSCRIBE TO  
MAN UP MONDAY  
WEEKLY  
PODCAST**

**TEXT MANUP TO  
586.731.4490**

**MONDAY NIGHT  
FOOTBALL  
BIBLE STUDY  
7:30 PM  
HAMLIN PUB  
25/VAN DYKE  
CONTACT RICK  
248.766.1168**

**SAVORY GRILL  
BIBLE STUDY  
WEDNESDAYS  
6:30 AM  
CONTACT MIKE  
586.321.4912**

**12  
SEP**

**GOLF OUTING**

**25-27  
SEP**

**THE CHARGE  
RETREAT**

**4  
OCT**

**40-DAY  
CHALLENGE**

**14  
OCT**

**WARRIOR DADS  
BREAKFAST**

**24  
OCT**

**THE FORGE  
MEN'S  
BREAKFAST**

**SCAN HERE**



FOR EVENT DETAILS PLEASE VISIT:

**TRINITYUTICA.COM/MEN**

# PASTORAL STAFF



**Rev. Justin Krupsky**  
Senior Pastor  
jkrupsky@trinityutica.com



**Rev. Josh Britton**  
Associate Pastor  
jbritton@trinityutica.com



**Rev. Nick Duerr**  
Associate Pastor  
nduerr@trinityutica.com



**Rev. Christian Jones**  
Associate Pastor  
cjones@trinityutica.com



**Rev. Chad Wright**  
Associate Pastor  
jcwright@trinityutica.com

## CHURCH COUNCIL

**CHAIRMAN**  
Grant Nelson

**VICE-CHAIRMAN**  
Dan Kennedy

**TREASURER**  
Bob Vondett

**SECRETARY**  
Donna Lee/Shirley Rottman

**CHAIRMAN BOARD OF ELDERS**  
Brian Stump

**CHAIRMAN OF CHURCH PROPERTY**  
John Rank

**CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN DAY SCHOOL**  
Heather Odinga

**CHAIRMAN BOARD OF PERSONNEL**  
Stephanie Carroll, Chair  
Rick Hipple, Co-Chair

**CHAIRMAN CHRISTIAN OUTREACH**  
Cindy Gliesman

**CHAIRMAN OF CHRISTIAN GROWTH**  
Kim Juszczyk

**CHAIRMAN OF FAMILY LIFE**  
Kayla Kambeitz

## ELDERS

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Theodore Meinka  
Frank Meinert  
Dave Garden  
Dale Techel  
Brian Stump  
Mark Kuppe  
Steven J Powell  
Howard Cichoski  
Andrew Briggs  
Leonard E Harden III  
Mark Hu  
John Banasik  
Keith Vergin  
Tim Carpenter

## DIRECTORS, ASSOCIATES, & MINISTRIES

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Bruce Volkert

**DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS**  
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Lauren Krueger

**FOOD MINISTRY ASSOCIATE**  
Beth Helmer

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David Sheldon

**RECEPTIONIST**  
Linda Powell

**PASTORS' ASSISTANT**  
Karah Gomez

**VIDEO PRODUCTION**  
Joshua Weyhing

**WORSHIP ASSISTANT**  
Jacob Roggow

**WORSHIP TECHNICAL ARTS**  
Chris Winter

**YOUTH MINISTRY ASSOCIATE**  
Andrew Brazeal

## CHURCH & SCHOOL INFORMATION

**CHURCH LOBBY HOURS**  
PHONE: 586-731-4490

**M, W, TH, F**  
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

**TUESDAY**  
8:00 AM - 9:00 PM

**SATURDAY**  
4:30 PM - 7:00 PM

**SUNDAY**  
7:00 AM - 1:00 PM

**WORSHIP SERVICES**

**SATURDAY - 5:30 PM**

**SUNDAY - 9:00 AM,**  
9:45 AM (GYM)  
11:15 AM

**MONDAY - 7:00 PM**

**FRIDAY FLOCK - 11:00 AM**  
(normally 1st Friday of the month)

**SCHOOL OFFICE HOURS**

**MONDAY - FRIDAY**  
7:15 AM - 4:15 PM

(Entrance is located on the east side  
of building along Deshon.  
Please look for the red awning.)

**ONLINE INFORMATION**

**WEBSITE**

[HTTPS://WWW.TRINITYUTICA.COM](https://www.trinityutica.com)

**EMAIL**

[CHURCHOFFICE@TRINITYUTICA.COM](mailto:CHURCHOFFICE@TRINITYUTICA.COM)  
[SCHOOLOFFICE@TRINITYUTICA.COM](mailto:SCHOOLOFFICE@TRINITYUTICA.COM)

**LIVESTREAM**

[HTTPS://WWW.TRINITYUTICA.COM/LIVE](https://www.trinityutica.com/live)

**WORSHIP INFORMATION**

[HTTPS://WWW.TRINITYUTICA.COM/INFO](https://www.trinityutica.com/info)





**Trinity Lutheran Church and School**

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Utica, Michigan 48317-5578

A Church of



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**CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED**



**FAMILY FUN Festival**

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2026**

**10 am Outdoor Worship**  
**11 am - 1 pm Food & Fun Activities**

Articles for the next Trinity Matters are due Friday, October 30, 2026. Please send to [mgrupe@trinityutica.com](mailto:mgrupe@trinityutica.com). Thank you!



**Our Vision Statement**

To be a church family who grows together in our relationships with Christ and one another.

**Our Mission Statement**

Go and Make Disciples who Share Christ's Story with Love

**Core Values**

Love, Learn, Live, Lead

**Discipleship Strategy**

Our community's focus points...  
Heart (worship services)  
Head (educational opportunities)  
Hands (service ministries)