



Trinity DOVE

FEBRUARY 2026



Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
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Experiences with Author Tanya Talaga

REV. DR. STEPHEN LARSON

This month, Pastor Tanya is pleased to turn over the Pastor's Newsletter to Pastor Stephen Larson, who shares with us a meaningful learning opportunity he experienced with author Tanya Talaga.

On November 25th Tanya Talaga gave The Canada Lecture on Citizenship at the Kitchener Public Library and stood before its packed auditorium as something of a Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) prophet.

Like Isaiah or Jeremiah, she began with lament and moved toward hope. She began by observing that ten years after the TRC report and its "Calls to Action," very few of those calls have been answered or even attempted. She eloquently wondered why as she described the decade of minimal action.

A gifted speaker, Tanya Talaga, is a uniquely qualified TRC prophet for she is something of a "TRC Dual Citizen" with an Indigenous Ojibwe mother and a Settler Polish father.

She is also a very gifted writer — for two decades she was a journalist with the Toronto Star and now is a columnist for The Globe and Mail. She is also the author of three award winning books.

Her first book, **Seven Fallen Feathers: Racism, Death and Hard Truths in a Northern City**, was published in 2017 and told the story of seven Indigenous youth from northern Ontario First Nations who traveled to Thunder Bay for high school and met their death either through accident or homicide — the local police were never overly interested in the differences in those cases. One of the youth was the grandson of the well known artist, Norval Morriseau.

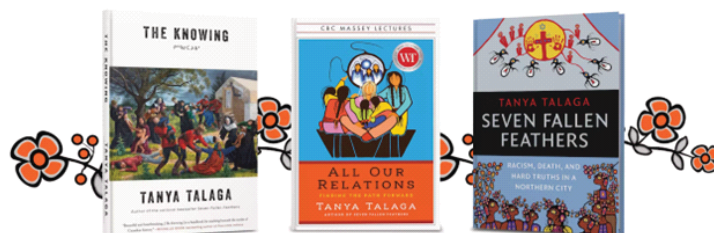
Her book won the 2018 RBC Taylor Prize for non-fiction and the 2017 Shuaghnessy Cohen Prize for Political Writing.

Her second book, **All Our Relations: Finding the Path Forward**, was published in 2018, as the byproduct of her

2018 CBC Massey Lectures — the first woman of Anishinaabe descent to present a CBC Massey Lecture series.

But it's her third book, **The Knowing**, that is most astonishing. For in the course of her research and writing, she was accompanied throughout by a documentary film crew that recorded her journey and interviews, her lamentations and hopes as she sought to find the unmarked grave of her maternal great-great grandmother, Annie Carpenter. That documentary is available on CBC Gem.

Her grave quest leads through her great-grandmother, Liz Gauthier's, childhood and experience as a residential school survivor.



*Tanya Talaga's books can be found
in Trintiy's Indigenous Resource Library*

"The Knowing" is a term that refers to the knowledge of unmarked graves in proximity to residential schools in Canada. As you read, or watch the documentary, you'll follow Tanya in her grave quest to the unmarked graves at the residential school in Kamloops, to her ancestors' homes and migration routes in northern Ontario and James Bay area.

Through the book you'll encounter another perspective on Canadian history — a history not often found in other Canadian history books written from a settler viewpoint. It should be required reading in high schools, churches and universities.

You'll encounter her poignant observations as she travels as a journalist with the First Nations delegation to the Vatican as they appeal for a papal apology and witness her shock when the Vatican museum unpacks and displays Canadian First Nations' artifacts held in their museum. In her shock, she phones an elder back in Canada to explain what is happening and the elder advises her to speak to the artifacts in their native language! At which point, Vatican officials escorted her out of the museum.

Pope Leo XIV recently announced that some of those artifacts would be returned to Canadian First Nations in

Talaga... continued

early December 2025. I can't wait to read Tanya's reporting on that recovery of Indigenous spiritual and artistic history!

As you read, you'll also follow Pope Francis' apology tour in Canada as Tanya accompanies the Pope's entourage among the journalists on that papal pilgrimage.

It's not much of a spoiler alert to share that after all those months of travel and research, writing and filming, she does find her Great-Great Grandmother Annie's resting place in a hospital cemetery's unmarked grave just across the Gardiner Expressway from the IKEA store in Toronto.

It's the first sentence of chapter 1.

Concurrent with her work on *The Knowing*, Tanya founded an artistic collective called Makwa Creative, (makwacreative.ca) The collective is creating and curating films, podcasts and other resources of Indigenous history on Turtle Island.

I've become a huge Tanya Talaga fan. Since that first 2017 unanswered invitation, I've had an opportunity for brief conversations with her three times after her recent K-W presentations, while asking her to autograph copies of her books.

I can't recommend her writing and presentations highly enough.

At her Kitchener Public Library presentation on November 25th she began by sharing her remembrance of being in that library auditorium in 2017 to talk about that first book. Only her children and a couple other people showed up.

Don't miss her when she's next in K-W.

Church Council News

PAT SCHMETZER, COUNCIL SECRETARY

Trinity's Church Council met over Zoom on Wednesday, January 21st, 2025.

Council did a final review of the General Fund budget for 2026 and approved a motion to forward it to the Annual Meeting for approval.

Pastor Tanya is putting some guidelines together for a new Finance Committee to help support Council as needed on financial reports, annual budgets, etc. Carol Murray and Rick Ritz have both agreed to serve on this committee.

Council supported a motion to approve Lynn Thompson as a new member of the Mutual Ministry team. Welcome, Lynn!

Council agreed to a request for overflow seating for our Sunday morning fellowship time. Extra seating and tables will be set up in the Martin Luther room. Feel free to use both the Katie Luther and Martin Luther Rooms.

2025 Tax Receipts

Tax receipts reflecting financial donations in 2025 have now been mailed. Thank you to our Financial Secretary, Holly McCurdy, for her work in preparing the receipts. We are grateful to all folks who support our mission and ministry through gifts of time, talents, and treasure.

World Day of Prayer

The Annual World Day of Prayer Services are held throughout the world on the first Friday in March. In New Hamburg, the planning and hosting of these services are shared by 5 churches – St. George's Anglican, Hillcrest Mennonite, Holy Family Catholic, Zion United, and Trinity Lutheran.

The 2026 World Day of Prayer Service will be hosted by Hillcrest Mennonite on Friday March 6th, 2026. The service was written by the women of Nigeria, and the theme of the service is "I Will Give You Rest: Come". These services are always very meaningful and educational.

Sacraments and Seasons

We offer congratulations to Ken Hoffman, celebrating his 85th birthday in January. Happy birthday, Ken!

We also received some news from Brittany Hufnagel to share with our Trinity community:

I just wanted to let you know that we welcomed our son, Henry, on January 4th. Everyone is doing well and we're settling in at home. The girls are smitten with their new brother.

Congratulations to the Hufnagel family!

On Sunday, March 15th, Trinity will welcome new members in a simple Affirmation of Baptism rite. If you would like to take your place in our community, sharing in our mission and ministry as a member, please speak to Pastor Tanya.

Annual Meeting

Trinity's Church Council has set the date for our next annual meeting, Sunday February 22nd at 10:45 am. Please join us for our yearly review of mission and ministry and as we look ahead to the coming year. The Annual Report and accompanying financial statements will be available by Sunday, February 8th.

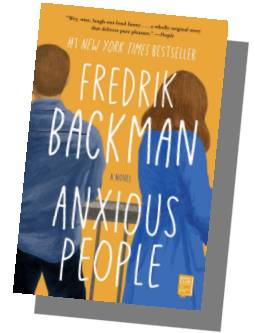
Lenten Journey

Trinity's Lenten journey begins with ecumenical Ash Wednesday worship on Wednesday, February 18th at 7:00 pm, where we gather with friends from St. George's Anglican and Zion United Church. That service is hosted at Zion with confession, imposition of ashes, and Holy Communion.

On Thursdays in Lent, starting February 26th, we gather for a simple soup supper at 5:30 pm, followed by Holden Prayer Around the Cross at 6:30 pm. If you care to contribute soup or bread to the meal, watch for the sign-up sheet in the narthex coming soon.

Trinity Book Club

The February selection for the Trinity Book Club is *Anxious People* by Fredrik Backman. The group meets next at 7:00 pm on February 17th in the Martin Luther Room at Trinity. Simply come to the meeting having read the book in advance.



If you have any questions regarding the book club, please contact Dee Radke. New members always welcome!

Weather Cancellations

In the event that worship is cancelled on a Sunday morning due to inclement weather, communications are sent out as follows:

- an email is sent to those on our email list
- a notice is put on the church website
- posts are made on Facebook and Bluesky social media channels
- the message on our phone system is updated to note the cancellation

Trinity's leadership team strives to connect with folks who might also need a phone call. If you would like to be added to our phone list for any Sunday weather cancellations, please contact the church office.

Visioning Dispatch

LOIS SMITH, VISIONING TASK TEAM

Trinity's Visioning Task has provided a summary of the work to date in the Annual Report which will be available February 8th. Please refer to the report for details on what has been accomplished thus far, as well as a recap of the current state of our Conceptual Design work with Nith Valley Construction, SRM Architects and Tim Welch Consulting.

Look for the regular "Visioning Dispatch" in the next issue of the Dove newsletter.

Ecumenical Lunches

On Wednesdays in Lent, starting February 25th, New Hamburg and area congregations host an Ecumenical Lenten Lunch and Service at noon. Please join us at the following congregations throughout the season:

February 25th	Trinity Lutheran Church
March 4th	Shantz Mennonite Church
March 11th	Zion United Church
March 18th	New Hamburg Christian Centre
March 25th	Steinmann Mennonite Church

These gatherings with a simple lunch and devotion are open to all, and are a restful midweek pause with our siblings in Christ. Donations accepted each week to cover the cost of the lunch.

Sock Drive

Trinity was pleased to once again support Susan Hammer in gathering sock donations for House of Friendship during our Season of Giving. Susan reports:

Thank you, Trinity, for your generosity and support! With your help, we surpassed by goal of 500 pairs, gathering a total of 655 pairs, with 306 from the Trinity community. Since 2016, 3609 pairs of socks have been collected in total.

Conversations with Bp. Larry

Mark your calendars for February 22nd for the second Conversations Across the Church online ELCIC event!

2026 is a milestone in the life of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada as we mark 40 years since the formation of our church. Join ELCIC National Bishop Larry Kochendorfer as we begin our Lenten journey and reflect on this 40th anniversary milestone: where have we been, where are we today, and how is God calling us forward as we seek to be a church Living out God's grace and unconditional love for the next 40 years. Zoom registration link available at telc.ca.

Summer Youth Camp



It's that time of year again! Youth entering grades 6 to 12 (as of fall 2026) are invited to consider attending Summer Lutheran Youth Camp (SLYC).

Each year we join with 12 Lutheran congregation from across Southwestern Ontario for a week at Camp Kintail, located on the beautiful shores of Lake Huron. Camp Kintail is the ideal venue, offering high-ropes courses, archery, disc golf, gaga ball, and a gorgeous waterfront with watercraft programming. Check out campkintail.ca for a list of amenities.

Youth will come together in a welcoming and inclusive environment for fellowship, worship, and learning. Campfires, dances, and a talent show are just some of our camper favourites.

This year camp runs from Sunday, August 30th to Friday, September 4th. The cost for the week is \$750, which covers accommodations, food, and activities. The Trinity Youth Fund provides a partial subsidy. Details forthcoming on the subsidy.

If you'd like more information about camp, contact Pastor Tanya. Camper registration forms and payments are due by Sunday, April 26th.

There is also a need for youth aged 16+ to be camp counselors for the week. If you are interested in applying, please speak to Pastor Tanya. Counselor applications are due by March 1st.

Financial Update

RICK RITZ, CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

2025 General Fund			
	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Variance
Income	367,992	341,197	26,795
Expenses	345,595	350,540	(4,945)
Total	\$22,397	(\$9,343)	\$31,740

2025 Capital Fund			
	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Variance
Income	18,561	25,000	(6,439)
Expenses	23,556	29,500	(5,944)
Total	(\$4,995)	(\$4,500)	(\$495)

Receipts and expenses for General and Capital Funds through December 31st, 2025.
Capital Fund carry-over from 2024, not included above, is \$59,040.

Major Capital Expenditures	
2022 to 2024 Income	148,386
2025 Income	5,977
2022 to 2024 Expenses	274,952
2025 Expenses	0
Total	(\$120,599)

Receipts and expenses for Major Capital Expenditures through December 31st, 2025.
The General Reserve Fund is being used to finance the deficit from Major Capital

The month of January has been an extremely busy one for the finance and administration folks at Trinity. Closing the financial books on 2025 and preparing our 2026 budget within tight time frames has been challenging and rewarding work.

It’s a true pleasure to report that we finished the year with a significant **surplus** in the General Fund. At the end of summer, we were in a deep deficit position and it seemed like the trend would continue. Thanks to the unfailing generosity of the Trinity Community, we received some very large gifts in September and December, along with an upward trend in donations in general through the last quarter of 2025.

General Fund expenses came in slightly under budget, which further helped our surplus for the year. It’s been difficult for the staff and Council to keep expenses in line while so many costs are increasing. For example, winter maintenance cost \$10,485 and the budget was \$5,500! Savings from not fully staffing the youth and visitation ministries, and the improved efficiency of our Major Capital investments are significant contributors to keeping overall expenses under budget.

The **Capital Fund** finished the year with a small deficit, just \$500 worse than we had budgeted. However, there was a large carryover from 2024 in Capital, so we are well covered.

Please reflect on your financial stewardship goal for 2026. If you have the capacity to consider an increase in your goal for 2026, your gifts will be used wisely to extend Trinity’s mission and ministry into the future.

Detailed information about Trinity’s finances will be available in the Annual Reports on February 8th. 2026 budget discussion and approval follows at the Annual Meeting on February 22nd.

Reconciling in Christ



Since 1983, the Reconciling in Christ program has been a public way for faith communities to see, name, celebrate, and advocate for people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions in the Lutheran church. Since 2001, the work has expanded to include racial equity and a commitment to anti-racist work.

Building an Inclusive Church Training Workshop

Saturday, March 14, 2026 • 11:00 am to 5:00 pm
Trinity Lutheran Church, Tavistock
Lunch and coffee breaks included. Registration costs covered by the Eastern Synod Queer Committee.

Register by Sunday, March 1st by contacting Trinity, Tavistock at trinitytavipastor@gmail.com or 519-655-2372

Easter Feaster

IT'S
BACK

*in support of the Food Bank at
Wilmot & Wellesley Resource Centre*

During the season of Lent, consider picking up an item or two to help our neighbours share in the Easter feast. Items can be left in the baskets at Trinity's entrances.

Monetary offerings are also accepted! Simply mark your offering as "food bank".



TRINITY
Lutheran Church
New Hamburg

February 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 4th Sunday after Epiphany 9:30 am Hybrid Worship 10:30 am Fellowship 10:45 am Adult Learning <i>Tim Louis, MP</i>	2 5:00 pm Karate 6:30 pm Handbells	3 9:30 am Prayer Circle 10:30 am Bible Study 3:30 pm Visioning Task Team 4:15 pm Karate	4 10:00 am Wilmot Indigenous Working Group 5:15 pm Music Together	5 8:45 am Music Together 12:00 pm New Hamburg Ministerial 7:00 pm Trinity Choir	6	7 8:45 am Music Together 7:00 pm AA
8 5th Sunday after Epiphany 9:30 am Hybrid Worship 10:30 am Fellowship 10:45 am Adult Learning <i>Lutheran Liturgy: Why we do what we do</i>	9 5:00 pm Karate 6:30 pm Handbells	10 10:30 am Bible Study 4:15 pm Karate 7:00 pm Church Council	11 5:15 pm Music Together 7:00 pm Confirmation	12 8:45 am Music Together 7:00 pm Trinity Choir	13	14 8:45 am Music Together 7:00 pm AA
15 Transfiguration of Our Lord 9:30 am Hybrid Worship 10:30 am Fellowship 10:45 am Adult Learning <i>Understanding Church Structure</i> 2:00 pm Nithview Worship	16 FAMILY DAY <i>Church Office Closed</i>	17 10:30 am Bible Study 4:15 pm Karate	18 Ash Wednesday 7:00 pm <i>Ecumenical Worship at Zion United</i>	19 8:45 am Music Together 9:00 am Dove Deadline (March Issue)	20	21 8:45 am Music Together 7:00 pm AA
22 1st Sunday in Lent 9:30 am Hybrid Worship 10:30 am Fellowship 10:45 am Annual Meeting 6:00 pm Conversations Across the Church <i>with Bishop Larry</i>	23 5:00 pm Karate 6:30 pm Handbells	24 10:30 am Bible Study 4:15 pm Karate	25 9:30 am NVMA Rostered Leaders 5:15 pm Music Together 12:00 pm Lenten Lunch at Trinity 7:00 pm Confirmation	26 8:45 am Music Together 5:30 pm Soup Supper 6:30 pm Holden Prayer	27	28 8:45 am Music Together 7:00 pm AA

Thursdays in
LENT
 starting February 26th



Soup Supper at 5:30 pm

Join us in Trinity Hall for a simple supper of soup and bread. Consider bringing a friend.

Worship at 6:30 pm

We gather for Holden Prayer Around the Cross with song, prayer, and candelighting