



Trinity
DOVE

MARCH 2026



Installation of
Church Council

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
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Is Lent Worth the Struggle

REV. TANYA VARNER

Lent arrives every year with a quiet insistence. After the dazzling light of the Epiphany season, Lent feels more mundane, and yet there is an urgency to it. The season begins as we gather together on Ash Wednesday, where Jesus invites us into the spiritual disciplines of prayer, fasting, and generosity (Matthew 6:1–6, 16–21).

I have often heard people reflect, ‘Do we really need this season in the church year?’ There is a resistance, on our part, to the invitation of Lent given by Jesus. Even after all these years, when the season of Lent arrives, I feel like I need to give things up – some sort of self-flagellation piety, which isn’t even true to Jesus’ request.

And if I don’t have to give anything up, then do I need to take something on? Well, that’s as hard as giving things up, as I do not have time to take anything else on as I balance work and family. Life already feels full. Already demanding. Already complicated. Why add difficulty on purpose?

And if we know Easter is coming, can’t we just skip ahead to the alleluias, the celebration, the good stuff?

What Is the Point of Lent?

Lent is not spiritual punishment. It is not a test of religious endurance. It is not even about proving our devotion. The spiritual practices Jesus speaks about in Matthew 6 are not performances. They are invitations.

Take fasting for example – fasting isn’t about giving up your coffee, chocolate, or chips. When we fast, we notice what controls us.

The discipline of prayer isn’t a scheduled meeting with God or a personnel review of what I have or have not done. When Jesus invites us to pray, it is so that we take a moment to notice who holds us.

And the encouragement to give alms, the voluntary act of donating money, food, or other goods that help and support our neighbours, offers an opportunity to identify and loosen our grip on what we think we need.

Lent clears space in our cluttered minds and over extended calendars, so that we can notice what truly sustains us and what only distracts us. It clears space so

that we can return to ourselves, to one another, and to the mercy that has never left us.

Lent clears space so that we can face what is fragile or unfinished within us without fear, so that we are ready when Easter dawns. Not rushed or numb, but ready! Ready to receive resurrection as gift rather than assumption.

Our struggle with the season of Lent matters. Because the invitation illuminates contemplation, honesty, and it slows us down when we might rather rush forward.

But the struggle is not the goal. The goal is freedom. Freedom from distraction, self-protection, and from the illusion that we can skip from Good Friday to Easter morning without walking through what is real.

That Easter joy we want to jump ahead to, will mean more when we have faced the truth about ourselves. We are dust. We are beloved. We are in need of grace. And grace meets us not by bypassing difficulty, but by walking through it with us.

So, is Lent worth the struggle?

It is a question we must each answer for ourselves. But I hope this Lent, we can slow down enough to remember who we are: dust and beloved, fragile and forgiven, children of God.

Blanket Donations

Thank you to our Trinity community for responding to the call to collect blankets for the Working Centre’s emergency shelter. February proved to be a very cold month, and the added layers of fresh blankets was much appreciated by the folks who work at, and receive support from, the Working Centre. Trinity donated approximately 30 blankets.

Church Council News

PAT SCHMETZER, COUNCIL SECRETARY

Trinity's Church Council met in person on Thursday, February 19th.

Council heard that Thursday evening soup and worship services during Advent and Lent are very popular and participants have requested more of them. Council approved a motion from the Worship Committee to host a once-a-month soup and service outside the regular Lent and Advent season from October through to May.

Council decided to continue hosting our annual Easter Breakfast.

Council approved a motion to subsidize half of the youth participant fees to attend Summer Lutheran Youth Camp in August.

Thanks to a very generous donation to our Trinity Music Fund, Council approved a motion to purchase a 3-octave set of handchimes from the fund.

Trinity received a letter from the Region of Waterloo in February indicating that churches would no longer receive recycling pickup from Circular Materials when the new waste collection systems begin the first week of March. However, new blue bins have been delivered to the church and there appears to be some ambiguity about whether the province, region, or township has responsibility for the decision. Pastor Tanya has sent a number of letters to the various parties about the decision and the very short notice. Council has decided to continue putting out our blue bins and then assess the

Sacraments and Seasons

We offer congratulations to folks celebrating milestone birthdays in March: Dorothy Jardin (85) and Merva Zehr (95). Happy birthday!

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.

Midweek Soup + Worship



On Thursdays in Lent, until March 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, please use the sign up sheet in the narthex. Consider bringing a friend!

Daylight Saving Time Beings

Don't forget to set your clocks ahead one hour before heading to bed on Saturday, March 7th. Daylight saving time officially begins for another year in the wee hours of Sunday, March 8th.



World Day of Prayer

The Annual World Day of Prayer Service will be hosted by Hillcrest Mennonite on Friday March 6th, 2026 at 2:00 pm. 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.

Visioning Dispatch

KRISTA STRAUS, VISIONING TASK TEAM

Last month, the Visioning Task Team met three times to do an in-depth review of the three conceptual designs prepared by our consultants: Nith Valley Construction, SRM Architects and Urban Design, and Tim Welch Consulting.

To recap, the three options are:

1. Retain all existing church and office buildings, with a separate new structure dedicated to housing.
2. Retain only the Sanctuary and Katie Luther Room, connecting them to a new building that incorporates additional community spaces and housing.
3. Retain none of the existing structures (including the Sanctuary) and construct an entirely new building.

During the January meetings, the Task Team carefully assessed the church needs, along with those of various user groups and renters for each option. The team evaluated a broad range of factors, including (but not limited to):

- Storage requirements
- Internal and external traffic flows
- Parking arrangements
- Building entrances and circulation
- Washroom placement and accessibility
- Overall layout and functionality

This thorough process generated a detailed list of concerns, suggestions, and clarifying questions.

On February 3rd, we met online with the consultants to share our findings and discuss next steps. The consultants provided thoughtful responses and valuable insights, which they will now incorporate into revised conceptual drawings.

Once the updated drawings are complete, the consultants will proceed with preliminary costing for each option. In parallel, the consultants are continuing to explore potential funding models and strategies.

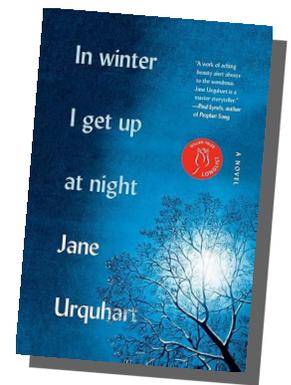
When this next phase of work is finished, the Visioning Task Team will host an Adult Education session to share

key findings and progress for further discussions. We look forward to seeing you there!

We appreciate everyone's continued interest and support as this work continues. We will bring you more details when the next phase is completed.

Trinity Book Club

The March selection for the Trinity Book Club is *In Winter I Get Up at Night* by Jane Urquhart. The group meets next at 7:00 pm on March 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!

Ecumenical Lunches

On Wednesdays in Lent, New Hamburg and area congregations host an Ecumenical Lenten Lunch and Service at noon. Please join us for the remaining dates:

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 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.

Finance Correction

RICK RITZ, FINANCE COMMITTEE

During the Annual Meeting on February 22nd, we discovered that the financial report for the Visioning Project had been inadvertently left out of the Financial Reports package. In 2025, the congregation voted to spend up to \$50,000 from the General Reserve Fund to hire professionals to help us develop potential options to redevelop our property, along with possible financial models to make it possible.

Here is the Visioning Project statement that should have been included in the financial reports. Our apologies for not including this in the documents distributed ahead of the Annual Meeting.

Visioning Project

Visioning Receipts 2025

Advance from General Reserve Fund	\$6,693.52
<i>(from \$50,000 approved at Annual Meeting in 2025)</i>	\$6,693.52

Visioning Expenses 2025

Conceptual Design - first invoice	\$6,173.82
Project Management Fees - first invoice	\$519.70
	\$6,693.52

Total Visioning Receipts 2025	\$6,693.52
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Total Visioning Expenses 2025	-
	\$6,693.52
	\$0.00

The General Reserve Fund balance as of December 31st, 2025 was also reduced by \$6,693.52 to reflect that it was the source of funds to pay the invoice above.

Flowers for Worship



We invite folks in our Trinity community to provide flowers for our Sunday morning worship services. Flowers can mark an occasion, either solemn or joyous. Please use the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the narthex. We welcome flowers from your favourite florist, or from your garden -- when things warm up a bit!

Holy Week Journey

Our journey through Holy Week starts with Palm Sunday worship on Palm Sunday on March 29th at 9:30 am. We wave local greens as we process into the church singing *All Glory, Laud and Honour*.

We gather to hear Jesus' new commandment and observe the washing of feet on Maundy Thursday, April 2nd, at 7:00 pm.

On Good Friday, April 3rd, we meet for worship with Zion United and St. Georges at 10:00 am to hear the passion story and reflect on the victory of the cross. Worship will be at Trinity.

Following the Good Friday service, our annual Prayer Vigil begins at Trinity and continues through Holy Saturday. In one-hour shifts, Trinity folks pray, read, or make music in a time of personal devotion. Please see the signup sheet in the narthex at Trinity to book your time.

We meet on Saturday evening, April 4th, at 6:00 pm for the great Vigil of Easter where we gather around the new fire, hear the salvation story, renew baptismal promises, and share in Holy Communion, all in celebration of the risen Christ.

Our celebration from Saturday continues to Easter Sunday, April 5th. We gather by the banks of the Nith River (Office Pro parking lot) for an



ecumenical sunrise service at 6:30 am. Then we meet for our Sunday morning service at Trinity at 9:30 am. Following Easter worship we gather for Trinity's Easter Breakfast! Please use the sign-up sheet at Trinity to let us know how many might attend from your household for this potluck celebration.

Consider joining us for each of these opportunities as we experience the promise of Easter together.

Note for online worshippers: Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Sunday 9:30 am service will be livestreamed on Trinity's Facebook page. The prayer vigil, Saturday Easter Vigil service, and the Easter sunrise service are all in-person events.

Financial Update

RICK RITZ, CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

2026 General Fund			
	Actual YTD	Annual Budget	% Achieved
Income	22,999	358,285	6.4%
Expenses	29,362	353,310	8.3%
Total	(\$6,363)	\$4,975	

2026 Capital Fund			
	Actual YTD	Annual Budget	% Achieved
Income	1,283	25,000	5.1%
Expenses	0	22,790	0%
Total	\$1,283	\$2,210	

Receipts and expenses for General and Capital Funds through January 31st, 2026. Capital Fund carry-over from 2025, not included above, is \$54,045.

Major Capital Expenditures	
2022 to 2025 Income	154,363
2026 Income	99
2022 to 2025 Expenses	274,962
2025 Expenses	0
Total	(\$120,500)

Receipts and expenses for Major Capital Expenditures through January 31st, 2026. The General Reserve Fund is being used to finance the deficit from Major Capital

Christmas seems like it was just yesterday, and now we already find ourselves in Lent! As we prepared the reports for the Annual Meeting, the reality of the overwhelming generosity of the many and varied stakeholders at Trinity, New Hamburg really hit home.

In addition to the significant surplus in the General Fund in 2025, we completed Capital repairs valued at \$23,556; passed on \$15,631 to agencies like CLWR, the Food Bank, oneROOF; awarded \$21,000 to local ministry partners through our Endowment Fund.

Beyond this generosity, the congregation voted to earmark \$50,000 from our General Reserve Fund to take our Visioning Initiative to a point where we can see a concrete development plan along with a financial model to demonstrate how it could become something beyond a “vision”. All of this sets the stage for a very exciting year in 2026.

At the Annual Meeting, the congregation voted to approve our 2026 program budget. The General Fund budget calls for a 3% increase in donations, a 1% increase in expenses, resulting in a surplus of \$4,975. The Capital Fund budget calls for no increase in donations, and a very small decrease in spending, resulting in a surplus of \$2,210

Please reflect on your financial stewardship goal for 2026. We encourage you to increase your donations to match the 3% increase approved at the Annual Meeting. If you have the capacity to increase in your givings for 2026, your gifts will be used wisely to extend Trinity’s mission and ministry into the future. Changes to your PAR donations can be made by contacting our Parish Administrator, Jamie Courtney.

Easter Feaster Food Drive

During the Season of Lent, our Trinity community is invited to recognize with gratefulness the bounty that will likely be upon many of our tables for our Easter dinners. In thankfulness, consider remembering the folks using the Food Bank at Wilmot & Wellesley Resource Centre by joining our “Easter Feaster” food campaign.

Using non-perishable food, you could be grateful for your turkey with a can of turkey flakes and a can of Chunky

chicken soup. Share your ham dinner with a can of flakes of ham. Remember the canned vegetables and a tin of peaches for dessert.

This project runs until Easter Sunday, April 5th. Please place food in the baskets at the main entrance or parking lot doors. Monetary donations are also accepted; simply mark an offering envelope or etransfer as “Food Bank” to support our campaign.

Easter

IT'S
BACK

Feaster

*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

March 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 2nd Sunday in Lent 9:30 am Hybrid Worship 10:30 am Fellowship 10:45 am Adult Learning <i>Lutheranism: Colours of the Church Year</i>	2 5:00 pm Karate	3 9:30 am Prayer Circle 10:30 am Bible Study 4:15 pm Karate	4 12:00 pm Lenten Lunch at Shantz Mennonite 5:15 pm Music Together	5 8:45 am Music Together 5:30 pm Soup Supper 6:30 pm Holden Prayer	6 2:00 pm World Day of Prayer Service at Hillcrest Mennonite	7 8:45 am Music Together 7:00 pm AA <i>SET CLOCKS AHEAD ONE HOUR</i>
8 3rd Sunday in Lent 9:30 am Hybrid Worship 10:30 am Fellowship 10:45 am Adult Learning <i>Lutheranism: Revised Common Lectionary</i>	9 5:00 pm Karate 6:30 pm Handbells	10 10:30 am Bible Study 4:15 pm Karate	11 12:00 pm Lenten Lunch at Zion United 5:15 pm Music Together 7:00 pm Confirmation	12 8:45 am Music Together 5:30 pm Soup Supper 6:30 pm Holden Prayer 7:00 pm Trinity Choir	13	14 8:45 am Music Together 11:00 am <i>Buiding an Inclusive Church at Trinity, Tavistock</i> 7:00 pm AA
15 4th Sunday in Lent 9:30 am Hybrid Worship 10:30 am Fellowship 10:45 am Adult Learning <i>Lutheranism: The Priesthood of All Believers</i> 2:00 pm Nithview Worship	16 5:00 pm Karate 6:30 pm Handbells	17 10:30 am Bible Study 4:15 pm Karate	18 12:00 pm Lenten Lunch at New Hamburg Christian Centre 5:15 pm Music Together 7:00 pm Church Council	19 8:45 am Music Together 9:00 am Dove Deadline 5:30 pm Soup Supper 6:30 pm Holden Prayer 7:00 pm Trinity Choir	20	21 8:45 am Music Together 7:00 pm AA
22 5th Sunday in Lent 9:30 am Hybrid Worship 10:30 am Fellowship 10:45 am Adult Learning <i>The Lutheran World Federation</i> Rev. Katharine Gohm	23 5:00 pm Karate 6:30 pm Handbells	24 10:30 am Bible Study 4:15 pm Karate	25 12:00 pm Lenten Lunch at Steinmann Mennonite 5:15 pm Music Together 7:00 pm Confirmation	26 8:45 am Music Together 5:30 pm Soup Supper 6:30 pm Holden Prayer 7:00 pm Trinity Choir	27	28 8:45 am Music Together 7:00 pm AA
29 Palm Sunday 9:30 am Hybrid Worship 10:30 am Fellowship 10:45 am Adult Learning	30 5:00 pm Karate 6:30 pm Handbells	31 10:30 am Bible Study 4:15 pm Karate				