



Trinity
DOVE

APRIL 2026



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Vice-President, North America

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Hope and Holy Week

REV. TANYA VARNER

I subscribe to a weekly emailer from Kate Bowler (katebowler.com). Ms. Bowler is a four-time *New York Times* bestselling author, award-winning podcast host, and Professor of Religious History at Duke University. You may have heard me reference some of her blessings in my sermons over the last year. I'm a bit of a fan girl for her through-provoking writing.

A few weeks ago, she asked her readers the following question, "What does it look like to maintain hope and kindness in a world that keeps daring us not to?"

That question has echoed in my mind ever since.

I don't need to list all the things in the world right now that cause concern or stir fear, because we all know what they are; we all feel them. Instead, I want to speak about hope. Not as an escape from reality, but as a way of living within it. What does it mean to hold on to hope when the world seems to push against it?

Many have tried to name and define hope. Victor Frankl wrote about searching for hope in dire circumstances, and Jane Goodall cites hope as the resilience of nature and the human spirit. Emily Dickinson described hope as 'the thing with feathers that perches in the soul.'

Scripture, too, speaks often of hope — over and over again. This tells us something important: hope is not an afterthought of faith, but rather a central pillar. It reminds us that God meets us not in certainty but in promise. Hope, found in the words of scripture is not a naïve optimism, but an invitation to trust God's promises. And a word of hope in scripture is essential, not optional, in times such as these.

As people of faith our worship does not ignore the realities of life, it moves through them. As you read this article we are heading into Holy Week, and I cannot think of a better day than Good Friday to sit with the question, what does it look like to maintain hope and kindness in a world that keeps daring us not to?

What did it feel like for those disciples to see their hope crucified on a cross. In that moment, the promises of resurrection must have seemed distant, even meaningless. Where was hope then?

And yet, this is where our faith speaks most clearly.

Hope is not the absence of struggle. In fact, scripture tells us that hope is often formed within it. "*Suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope*" (Romans 5:3–4). This is not a glorification of suffering, but a recognition that God meets us within it, shaping something deeper than certainty.

I find hope not in easy answers, but in shared struggle. I don't want to struggle, I don't want others to struggle, and I don't believe God causes us to struggle. Yet something relational happens there. In the ways we show up for one another. In the quiet persistence of kindness. In the courage to keep seeking justice. In the Spirit at work among us — sometimes gently, sometimes like fire — drawing us toward love even when fear would pull us apart.

Above all, I find hope in this promise: "*Hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit*" (Romans 5:5).

Hope is not something we manufacture. It is something we receive.

In a world that dares us to give up on hope and kindness, we return again and again to this truth: God's love is already at work within us.

And that is where hope begins.

Eastern Synod Scholarships

The Eastern Synod is happy to announce they will be offering scholarships for the 2026/2027 academic year. All funds are administered by a Scholarship Committee appointed by the Eastern Synod Council. This financial support is available for the 2026-2027 academic year. The application is available at easternsynod.org/2026-2027-eastern-synod-scholarships. The application deadline is Friday, April 3rd.

Church Council News

PAT SCHMETZER, COUNCIL SECRETARY

Trinity's Church Council met in person on Wednesday March 18th, 2026.

Council members elected the following executive for the next year:

- Kitch Radke, President
- Suzan Deckert, Vice-President
- Pat Schmetzer, Secretary

Council members' individual portfolios will be established prior to our April meeting.

Council approved a motion to appoint Larry Gravill to the Mutual Ministry Team. Welcome Larry!

Council approved a small stipend to have one of our youth put out our garbage containers on Tuesday and return them to storage on Wednesday. Previously, this was done by our cleaner but the change in our garbage collection day to Wednesdays made this change necessary.

Sacraments and Seasons

We offer congratulations to Ken Schatz celebrating his 95th birthday in April. Happy birthday, Ken!

On Sunday, March 15th, Trinity welcomed three new members in an Affirmation of Baptism rite. We rejoice as Diane Goring, Kim Schmidt, and J.R. Bestvater join us in our mission and ministry.

Eternity for Today

Eternity for Today is the daily devotional published by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada featuring lay and rostered writers from across the country.

The April-May-June issue has now arrived at Trinity and can be picked up in the narthex.



The Gift of Music

JAMIE COURTNEY, MINISTER OF MUSIC



In fall 2025, Trinity hosted a three-part concert series in support of the Trinity Music Fund. It was our pleasure to welcome folks to hear the Penderecki String Quartet, concert organist Ian Sadler, and Local Vocals in their debut Christmas Concert.

It was in my mind that we would begin saving towards the purchase of a set of handchimes for the Trinity Handbell Ensemble. Handchimes another handheld chromatic instrument for group playing, with a more mellow sound than handbells, and would be another tool in our Trinity musical toolkit.

Our fall concerts got us on our way towards our goal. A few weeks ago though, Trinity received a generous directed donation to the Trinity Music Fund. This donation completed our fundraising target for the three-octave set of handchimes. They've since arrived from Malmark Bellcraftsmen in Pennsylvania.

We are grateful to the Estate of John Reinhardt Schmidt for this tremendous gift. John died in October 2024 and was son to Peter and Virginia Schmidt, longtime members of Trinity. Kim Schmidt, who recently joined Trinity as a new member is one of John's two brothers.

This musical gift will serve as a music tribute to John's memory. John worked in radio for his entire career, fulfilling his lifelong love affair with the airwaves. He was with MZ Media (New Classical FM) for over 25 years.

The Trinity Handbell Ensemble will debut the new set of handchimes in worship on Sunday, May 3rd.

Visioning Dispatch

NANCY DALE, VISIONING TASK TEAM

March was a quiet month for the Visioning Task Team as the consultants (Nith Valley Construction, SRM Architects, Urban Design, and Tim Welch Consulting) continued their work on updating the conceptual drawings. The consultants have indicated that this work should be completed by early to mid-April. Nith Valley Construction has begun the preliminary costing for each option while potential funding models and strategies also continue to be explored. When this next phase of the work is finished, the Visioning Task Team will meet with the consultants and will host an Adult Learning session to share key findings and progress for further discussion. We'll also communicate these findings through Trinity's other communications channels.

As well, Pastor Stephen Larson asked at the Annual Meeting in February if the Visioning Task Team could provide information to show the geographic distribution of the congregation. An option of using a mapping software program and congregational postal codes is being explored to provide this information.

Thank you again for your continued support and interest in this exciting project.

More Soup & Evening Prayer

On Thursdays in Advent and Lent, Trinity has hosted a simple soup supper followed by a brief Evening Prayer worship service. These evenings have been a wonderful time to break bread and worship in-between Sunday morning gatherings.

Several folks have asked if it might be possible to have these events outside of the Advent and Lent season also. So, we'll give it a try! In addition to the seasonal weekly gatherings, we'll host soup supper and worship once per month from October through May.

Mark your calendars for Thursday, April 30th and Thursday, May 28th. Both evenings the simple soup supper will be at 5:30 pm with Evening Prayer to follow at 6:30 pm. A sign-up sheet will be available soon for those who might contribute soup or bread.

Trinity VBS Coming Soon

Save the date!

Creation Care Quest
Vacation Bible School is coming to Trinity Lutheran Church, New Hamburg this summer from **Monday, August 17th to Friday, August 21st.**



This will be a full-day program from **9:00 am to 4:00 pm** with lunch and snacks included. Kids ages 5 – 11 years old as of December 31st, 2026 are invited to attend.

Online registration will begin on May 1st. More information as to cost and further details will be forthcoming.

Volunteers are required for leaders, snack and lunch preparation, music, and set up. Youth and teen volunteers are welcome – volunteer hours can be earned.

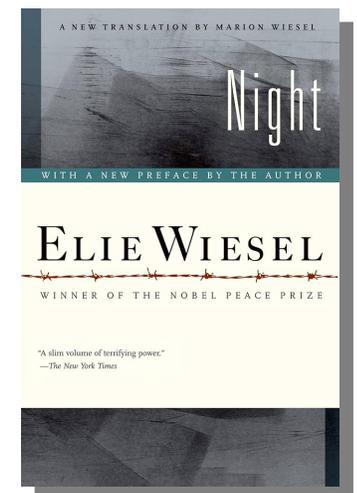
Please speak with Pastor Tanya, Jo-Anne Schwass or Katharine Borch if you are interested in helping with this event.

This VBS is made possible by proceeds from the Trinity Endowment Fund.

Trinity Book Club

The April selection for the Trinity Book Club is *Night* by Elie Wiesel. The group meets next at 7:00 pm on April 21st 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!



Easter Feaster

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

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".

Help us have a strong finish by Easter Sunday!

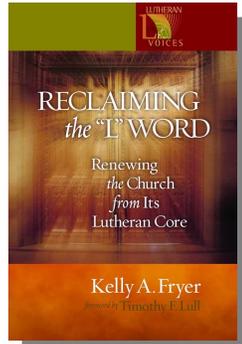


TRINITY
Lutheran Church
New Hamburg

Book Study

PASTOR TANYA VARNER

Have you ever wondered what it really means to be Lutheran? Whether you are new to the Lutheran tradition or have been part of it your whole life, our upcoming four-week study offers an opportunity to explore the heart of our faith together.



Later in April, we will begin a conversation based on the book, **Reclaiming the 'L' Word: Renewing the Church from Its Lutheran Core** by Kelly A. Fryer. Through this engaging and accessible book, we will explore the core ideas of Lutheran faith and how they shape our understanding of grace, discipleship, and life together as the church.

This online study via Zoom will happen on four Tuesdays from April 28th to May 19th. The time of day will be determined shortly.

If you are interested in joining the study, please sign up with Pastor Tanya by Easter Sunday, April 5th. The cost of the book is \$26.00 and can be paid after signing up.

All are welcome as we rediscover and reflect on what it means to live as Lutheran Christians today.

E-Transfer Donations

In addition to weekly offering envelopes and PAR, Trinity accepts donations via Interac e-transfer at donations@telc.ca. We are set up for auto-deposit; password not required. Please use the memo field in the e-transfer to give us instructions on how to allocate your donation (General Fund, Capital Fund, etc). You may also include your envelope number, if known.

Financial Reporting

Due to some staff and volunteer vacation scheduling, we take a pause on monthly financial reports in the this issue of the Dove. Look for our monthly financial snapshot to return in the May issue.

Holy Week Journey

Our journey through The Three Days of Jesus' death and resurrection beings on Maundy Thursday as we gather to hear Jesus' new commandment and observe the washing of feet. Join us on 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.

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.

Humanitarian Appeal

As violence in the Middle East escalates, CLWR, the ELCIC and the Humanitarian Coalition are asking for your help to provide life-saving aid. Please join us in prayer and consider donating today. Give now at clwr.org/middleeast, call 1-800-661-2597, or mark a Trinity offering as "Middle East".

Local Vocals

Wilmot's a cappella chorus

Friday, April 24th • 7pm
Saturday, April 25th • 7pm

ONE STOP WORLD TOUR

Dust in the Wind ▪ *9 to 5* ▪ *Uptown Funk* ▪ *Both Sides Now*
When I'm 64 ▪ with a special tribute to Lady Gaga

\$20 general admission ▪ \$5 age 16 & under

They're back! Enjoy the musical stylings of Wilmot's own a cappella ensemble, *Local Vocals*, in two shows at Trinity: Friday, April 24th and Saturday, April 25th, both at 7:00 pm. .

Local Vocals has been celebrated as "One of the Vocal Groups in Canada." You may recognize them from their appearances at esteemed venues such as "Stairs at Castle"

or "Parking Lot Christmas Tree Sale." They'll be dusting off oldies like: *Dust in the Wind*, *9 to 5*, *Uptown Funk*, *Both Sides Now*, *When I'm 64*, and with a special tribute to Lady Gaga! You won't want to miss out!

Tickets are on sale now at telc.ca or can be purchased from Minister of Music Jamie Courtney after church on Sundays.

Kitch Radke, president • Tanya Varner, pastor
Jamie Courtney, parish administrator & minister of music
Brian Racho, sexton • Gywin Murray, emerita director of music

April 2026

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | | | 1 5:15 pm Music Together | 2 8:45 am Music Together 7:00 pm Maundy Thursday Worship | 3 10:00 am Good Friday Worship | 4 6:00 pm Easter Vigil Worship 7:00 pm AA |
| 5 Easter Sunday 9:30 am Sunrise Worship 9:30 am Hybrid Worship 10:30 am Easter Breakfast | 6 Easter Monday Church Office Closed 5:00 pm Karate | 7 9:30 am Prayer Circle 10:30 am Bible Study 4:15 pm Karate | 8 7:00 pm Confirmation Class | 9 7:00 pm Trinity Choir | 10 | 11 7:45 am Music Together 7:00 pm AA |
| 12 2nd Sunday of Easter 9:30 am Hybrid Worship 10:30 am Fellowship 10:45 am Adult Learning | 13 5:00 pm Karate 6:30 pm Handbells | 14 10:30 am Bible Study 4:15 pm Karate | 15 10:00 am Wilmot Indigenous Working Group 5:15 pm Music Together 7:00 pm Church Council | 16 8:45 am Music Together 9:00 am Dove Deadline 7:00 pm Trinity Choir | 17 | 18 7:45 am Music Together 7:00 pm AA |
| 19 3rd Sunday of Easter 9:30 am Hybrid Worship 10:30 am Fellowship 10:45 am Adult Learning 2:00 pm Nithview Worship | 20 5:00 pm Karate 6:30 pm Handbells | 21 10:30 am Bible Study 4:15 pm Karate 7:00 pm Trinity Book Club | 22 5:15 pm Music Together | 23 8:45 am Music Together 7:00 pm Trinity Choir | 24 7:00 pm Local Vocals' One Stop World Tour | 25 7:45 am Music Together 7:00 pm Local Vocals' One Stop World Tour |
| 26 4th Sunday of Easter 9:30 am Hybrid Worship 10:30 am Fellowship 10:45 am Adult Learning | 27 5:00 pm Karate 6:30 pm Handbells | 28 10:30 am Bible Study 12:00 pm Worship Committee 4:15 pm Karate 7:00 pm Reclaiming the 'L' Word Study | 29 5:15 pm Music Together 7:00 pm Confirmation Class | 30 8:45 am Music Together 5:30 pm Soup Supper 6:30 pm Evening Prayer |  | |