

TRINITY TRIBUTE

January 2025 Newsletter

"We believe there is no person or created thing which is outside the active love and grace of God shown so clearly in Jesus Christ. And through the active love and grace of God, we, as a body of Christ, are called to invite, welcome, and care for all."

Trinity Lutheran Church-ELCA Cook, Minnesota



January Star Word Prompt: What initial thoughts, impressions, and prayers do you have for your star word?

Please note that Deacon Kari Olson will be out of the office January 6 - 20, on a much-anticipated and well-deserved trip with colleagues. Deacon Brenda Tibbetts will be available for pastoral needs during this time and will be presiding during the worship service on January 12. Pastor Denise will also be available if needed and will preside during worship on January 19.

Trinity Christmas 2024

The advent and holiday seasons are always busy ones for the Trinity family and this year seemed especially so. From the Lutefisk & Meatball dinner, Bible Quest's "All God's Children" program to Christmas Eve candlelight worship, other events included a spiral meditation time, Grace Notes performing at the Cook Care Center and a Blue Christmas service.

This year the spiral meditation was available throughout the day in the Fireside room for those who wanted some quiet, reflective time on their own, with prayers, calming music and support,



Another newer addition to the season is the Blue Christmas worship during which Deacon Kari Olson presides, usually on or near the winter solstice (the longest night of the year). It is also the time of year that resident ice candle maker, Glen Seopa, shares his craft with Trinity. This year some of the candles were a beautiful blue color which were perfect for a Blue Christmas evening.



And of course, the annual candlelight service on Christmas Eve that helps us remember the reason for the season. Pastor Denise Scheer gave a wonderful message and included the numerous children in attendance with the story of the birth of Jesus -- with help from all the children of God. Thanks to all the extra musical participants as well.



Grace Notes sharing their music with residents at the Cook Care Center, (l to r): Julie Horihan, Leigh Zika, Sue Carstens, Bailey Conger, Diane Pascuzzi, Beth Sprouls, Bruce Garbisch, Laura Aune, Margaret Rinne, Lindy Wilenius.

It was a Beautiful Season



Another successful evening of Lutefisk is in the books.

(More pictures, pg. 8)

Meatballs, Rutabagas, Potatoes, Lefse, Pickled Herring, Krumkake and Kransekake...

Oh, my!

FREE COMMUNITY MEALS RESUME

January 23, 2025

Meals served Drive-Thru or Eat-In
4:00 - 5:30 pm (or until gone)

January's menu includes:
Chicken Noodle Soup
& Fixings



WHAT IS EPIPHANY?

Pastor Denise Scheer



Beginning on January 6th, we move into the church season of Epiphany. The day is a celebration of God manifesting as the baby Jesus, as well as the Magi, or the Three Kings, visiting the baby Jesus and bringing gifts.

The Magi are instrumental in spreading the word about God appearing in the flesh to with us to the wider world. The liturgical color for this special day is white. This is also the date many people put away their Christmas decoration, as it marks the end of the 12 Days of Christmas. After January 6th, the liturgical color will change to green, a revelatory color. This season will run until Ash Wednesday.

May we experience joy in the many ways Christ comes to us in our worship and in our lives during this rich season of Epiphany



**An Update from TLC's Transition Team
Survey Deadline Extended to January 2, 2024**

Thank you for your patience and perseverance in taking the time to fill out the Transition Team's Questionnaire. We are grateful for your input and ideas! The online format will be available until January 2nd. If you choose to fill out a hard copy, they are available on the sign-up table in the fellowship hall. Once filled out, please drop them off in the church office. Contact one of the team members if you would like an in-person conversation.

Why are we doing this now and why is it different from previous transition work? There have been a lot of changes these past 5 years for the congregation as well as the Cook community. The previous transition team work was also led by a full-time interim pastor. That too, makes this a change for us. Some things will look different and the process might feel different, too. The process can vary from interim to interim. And that is ok! The important part is that we are listening to the Holy Spirit's lead and to one another.

The Transition Team will be meeting again after the holidays. We hope to compile a synopsis of everyone's input by mid-January. There are some options we will be exploring (that will be fun!) for sharing the findings with the congregation as Trinity continues to move forward in ministry - shining the light of Christ and welcoming all people to experience God's love, grace and mercy.

Trinity's Transition Team includes: Julie Aune, Mike Enzmann, Jesse Glass, Tony Pascuzzi, Ashley Skorseth and Brenda Tibbetts.

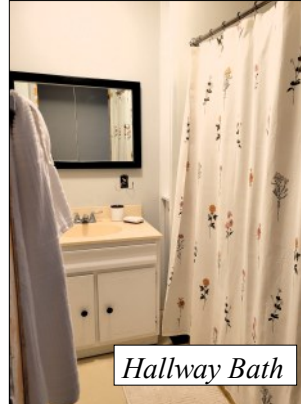
Blessings to all in the New Year!

Parsonage Repair/Refresh Update

The crew working on the parsonage updates have been busy the last few months; a slideshow with pictures of various stages of the remodel has been available to view before and after worship on Sunday mornings.



Living Room



Hallway Bath

Phase I has progressed to the point that the team was able to make the parsonage available for Pr. Denise to stay during her time with the Trinity family. There is much left to complete, but as visible in these photos, a lot has been done to this point.

Thank you to all the construction team and the many workers they have recruited to assist with the labor. It is a big task and is much appreciated.



Dining Room



Kitchen



General Fund

11/30/2024

2024 Budget = \$263,396.21

Budget Receipts	\$19,423.20
Budget Expenditures	\$14,562.40
Checkbook Balance	\$5,785.58

Offerings Needed
 Monthly = \$21,949.68
 Sunday = \$5,065.32

<u>Income</u>	<u>November Receipts</u>	<u>Monthly Anticipated Budget</u>	<u>YTD Received</u>	<u>Anticipated YTD Budget</u>
Envelope Offering	\$ 19,249.20		\$ 190,612.07	
Loose Offering	\$ 1,099.00		\$ 9,664.92	
Church usage	\$ 75.00		\$ 1,485.00	
Total Regular Income	\$ 20,423.20	21,949.68 **	\$ 201,761.99	\$ 241,446.48

<u>Mission Support</u>	<u>November paid</u>		<u>YTD Paid</u>	
NE Synod	\$ 633.33	\$ 633.33	\$ 6,966.63	\$ 6,966.63
VLM	\$ 81.00	\$ 81.00	\$ 891.00	\$ 891.00
Total Mission Support	\$ 714.33	\$ 714.33	\$ 7,857.63	\$ 7,857.63

<u>Expenses</u>				
Education	\$	311.67	\$	140.00
Wellness Ministry	\$	12.50	\$	137.50
Stewardship	\$	104.81	\$	1,186.27
Mental Health & Wellness	\$	41.67	\$	1,008.37
Social Outreach Ministry				
Worship	\$	564.69	\$	9,498.19
Church Operations	\$	5,836.01	\$	91,315.46
Pastoral Salary & Bene	\$	1,801.72	\$	35,272.93
Congreg Care Minister Sal & Bene	\$	5,001.84	\$	52,807.89
Misc	\$	539.00	\$	866.23
Total Expenses	\$	14,562.40	\$	198,944.60

<u>Growing In Grace(3)</u>		<u>November</u>	<u>Attendance</u>
Total loan	\$786,660.31	Nov 3	80
Current Balance	\$0.00	10-Nov	55
Pledged	\$183,603.00	17-Nov	79
Pledges Received	\$171,183.45 (48 giving units)	24-Nov	61
	93.20% thru 11/30/24		

Receipts for the month are BELOW budget by \$1,526.28 Receipts are BELOW budget for the year \$39,684.49. Expenses are BELOW budget for the month by \$7,387.28 Expenses are BELOW budget for the year \$42,501.88.

Memorials received this month in memory of: Pastor Erika Foss
 Given by: Tim & Beth Sprouls



Regular offerings keep Trinity going; **Thank You** for continued support. Whether worshipping in person or online, TLC ministries and missions are dependent on faithful giving. *If you would like to set up regular electronic payments contact Sue for more information at 218-666-5965 or email sue@trinitycook.org.*

<u>GIFTS</u>	<u>Received</u>	<u>Submitted-YTD</u>
Noisy Offering		\$1,303.84
Cook Food Shelf		\$774.48
Social Outreach Ministry		\$3,436.50
Pastor's Discretionary Fund		
Salvation Army		
Lenten Offerings		\$1,454.00
Mental Health and Wellness		\$2,695.00

Submitted by Sue Carstens. Financial Mgt/ Bkcp

Saying Good-bye to Pastor Erika - December 6, 2024

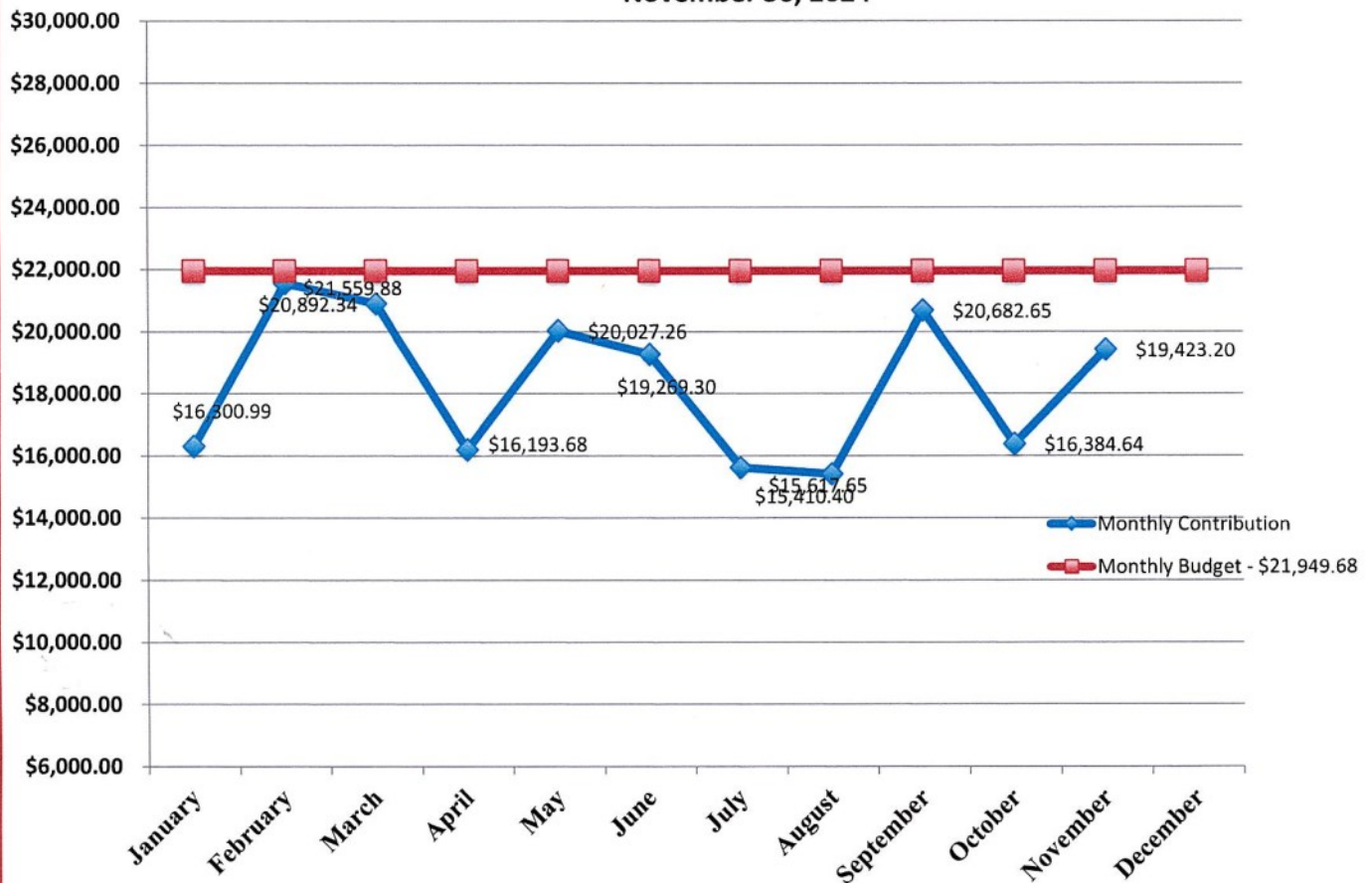
A Celebration of Life for Erika Foss was held on Friday, December 6, officiated by Bishop Amy Odgren with assistance from numerous friends and colleagues of the NEMN Synod, including a Children's Message from Rev. Taryn Montgomery.



The family of Pastor Erika want to express our deepest gratitude to the Trinity community for your overwhelming support & prayers during Erika's illness & passing. Your kind words & thoughtful gestures provided immense comfort during this difficult time. We are deeply touched by your compassion & will forever cherish your support.
Dale & Sonya
Dian & Kaitie
Maren



2024 General Fund Offerings
November 30, 2024



*And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod,
they left for their own country by another road.*

—Matthew 2.12

Peace be with you as we begin a new year. As we continue on this journey of life and enter the season of Epiphany, this *Blessing of the Magi* by Jan Richardson seems fitting. They are words I need to hear and perhaps you do, too.

Peace, Deacon Kari



Deacon Kari

Blessing of the Magi

There is no reversing
this road.
The path that bore you here
goes in one direction only,
every step drawing you
down a way
by which you will not
return.

You thought arrival
was everything,
that your entire journey
ended with kneeling
in the place
you had spent all
to find.

When you laid down
your gift,
release came with such ease,
your treasure tumbling
from your hands
in awe and
benediction.

Now the knowledge
of your leaving
comes like a stone laid
over your heart,
the familiar path closed
and not even the solace
of a star
to guide your way.

You will set out in fear.
You will set out in dream.

But you will set out
by that other road
that lies in shadow
and in dark.

We cannot show you
the route that will
take you home;
that way is yours
and will be found
in the walking.

But we tell you,
you will wonder
at how the light you thought
you had left behind
goes with you,
spilling from
your empty hands,
shimmering beneath
your homeward feet,
illuminating the road
with every step
you take.

—Jan Richardson, © Jan Richardson. janrichardson.com.
Circle of Grace: A Book of Blessings for the Seasons

The Mental Health and Wellness Team

Resolutions vs Goal Setting

Beware of New Year's Resolutions! They are notorious for being ineffective. We people of good intentions are left feeling disappointed with ourselves and even ashamed. Instead, we could approach change and self-improvement using the **SMART** technique. Having a general long-term goal in mind can be a starting point, such as increasing physical fitness, eating a healthier diet, or increasing social connections. They are vague, hard-to-attain outcomes. Setting SMART short-term goals as steps along the way can provide us structure, support, and rewarding success.

S: *SPECIFIC*. To improve physical fitness, we often think of exercise. Identify a form of exercise that is appealing to you, like taking walks.

M: Make that exercise goal *MEASURABLE*. I will walk for 20 minutes 3 times a week.

A: Is it *ATTAINABLE*? Do you have physical restrictions? Do you have a tread mill or an alternative indoor location if bad weather prevents outdoor walks?

R: Is it *REASONABLE* when you consider the demands on your time, your current physical condition, and your level of commitment? "I will try..." is not setting a goal.

T: *TIME LIMITED*. Do your walking plan for 6 weeks. Then re-evaluate. You may find that you are feeling more energetic or more relaxed. This is do-able and even enjoyable. You can extend your time limit, and maybe increase your duration or frequency of walks. Or you are meeting your goal but find it boring or onerous. Or not meeting your goal. What is your obstacle? Substitute an alternative exercise activity or choose another aspect of fitness to focus on. Then set a new *SMART* goal.

Goal setting can be applied to all aspects of our lives. Spiritual, physical, emotional, educational, and financial areas can be addressed. Trinity's Visioning Team is in the beginning stage of goal setting by gathering information of our current strengths and weaknesses as well as our hopes and dreams for the future. Big goals can be met one SMART step at a time while we remain humbly confident that our God has good plans for us.

*"For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord, "plans for welfare
and not for evil, plans to give you hope and a future."*

Jeremiah 29:11



For further discussion/questions, feel free to contact:

Dn. Kari 218-290-5984, Lauren Simensen 610-507-0051, or Vickie Lange 507-412-1117.

Comments can also be left in the Mental Health & Wellness suggestion box in the Fellowship Hall.

Christmas with All God's Children



Bible Quest presented a Christmas program on December 15 during worship time, inviting All God's Children to join them during the program. They were also joined by a community band, Grace Notes and several of the Trinity family.

This year's presentation was just as entertaining as always and all the "kids" did a great job.



Extra thanks to Lindsey, Susan and Claire for the yummy after-snacks!



Sometimes the rehearsals are as fun as the performance ...more from Bible Quest as they prepare the story.



Thanks to all who participated...



and to Dn. Kari, Brenda Tibbetts and all volunteers for continued dedication to God's Kids.



BQ
Bible Quest



From the NEMN Synod:

Dear Friends in Christ – quilters, crafters, woodworkers, and those who love all things handcrafted.

This letter is to update you about the 2025 Northeastern Minnesota Quilt and Marketplace Auction for World Hunger. As you may remember we did not have a Quilt Auction or Marketplace at the 2024 Synod Assembly due to Assembly being completely virtual. However, the Quilt Auction and Marketplace will be back for the 2025 Synod Assembly!!

Here is what we know so far:


- + The In-person Synod Assembly will be May 3 - 4, 2025, at Breezy Point near Brainerd. We plan to have on-line bidding starting a few days before the Assembly. On-line bidding has helped us reach a larger audience and also makes the "bookkeeping" end of the auction much easier.
- + Quilts and Marketplace items will be displayed at the Assembly and posted on the bidding website.
- + Some Marketplace items will be available for point of sale at the Assembly.
- + Specific information for submitting items and up-loading information to the Auction website will be sent out in March.
- + Look for continued information about the Auction in the Synod Information Packet and on the Synod website and Facebook page

Since the first year of the Quilt Auction in 1999 and the addition of the Marketplace a few years later, nearly \$300,000 has been raised for World Hunger. This could not have been done without the many talented quilters and artisans who have shared their gifts so that others might be fed. So as you hunker down this winter, please consider working on an item to donate.

If you have questions, please contact Amy Loken at 218-391-4260 or Marybeth Jacob at 218-830-0355 or email at marybeth.jacob56@gmail.com


Blessings, The Quilt Auction and Marketplace Team

BIRTHDAYS		ANNIVERSARIES	
3	Brian Anderson Lorraine Bowman Bob Zika	14	Bill & Karen Woods
4	Sue Aune	20	Philip & Lisa Simensen
5	Lois Garbisch Diane Pascuzzi	17	Amanda Pascuzzi
6	Charles Bergman Glen Weum	23	Diane Cin Jocelyn Pascuzzi
8	Judy Anderson	26	Dale Horihan Kim Marwick
		30	Lisha Pearson

Women of the ELCA 

Trinity's *Women of the ELCA* will meet
January 8 at 9:30 am for monthly Bible study.


Thank You! To all who contributed craft items and baked goods for the WELCA sale held during the Lutefisk & Meatball dinner. Proceeds from sales will go toward the Parsonage Repair & Refresh Fund.



Lord, Hear Our Prayers for those needing healing and comfort:

Mark Schmidt, Walter Putney, Marla Kahn, Natalie Enzmann, Dave O'Melia, Judy Anderson, Larry Kujala, Barry Hansen, and Katie Aune.

- + All those in the Cook community still working toward recovery and reconstruction after July's flooding
- + Families and communities that are still trying to get back on their feet following the devastating storms, fires, and floods throughout the country
- + Citizens, refugees and their families caught in the devastation and military actions in Ukraine and Eastern Europe.
- + People facing medical testing, challenges, & difficult situations
- + Those serving in the armed forces, at home or abroad.
- + Those seeking Jesus Christ in their lives.

Scripture Readings January 2025		
<p>January 5 <i>2nd Sunday of Christmas</i> Jeremiah 31: 7-14 Psalm 147:12-20 Ephesians 1:3-14 John 1:[1-9]10-18</p>	<p>January 12 <i>Baptism of Our Lord</i> Isaiah 43:1-7 Psalm 29 Act 8:14-17 Luke 3:15-17, 21-22</p>	
<p>January 19 <i>2nd Sunday of Epiphany</i> Isaiah 62:1-5 Psalm 36:5-10 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 John 2:1-11</p>	<p>January 26 <i>3rd Sunday of Epiphany</i> Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10 Psalm 19 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a Luke 4:14-21</p>	


Thank you to all those who help out in the kitchen area throughout the year -- and a big thanks to those who are conscientious about recycling and reusing. There are tubs in the kitchen for items -- **PLEASE** remember to rinse all all food containers, especially the milk jugs! Thanks!

AN EXPANDING OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE GOD ON SUNDAYS

Sunday mornings are always exciting times as our church family gathers to worship and praise God. And afterwards many of us congregate in the fellowship hall for refreshments, a time when we laugh, catch up, meet new friends, and offer one another support and encouragement. And taking turns providing refreshments one to another is one more way open to us to serve God.

Starting on January 5, we will open up this important ministry opportunity to all members of Trinity. Each household/family will be paired with another so both can serve together. Parent(s) and children are welcome to work as part of the team. Each individual/household will be given a designated Sunday to minister. If you are unable to make worship that Sunday, please find someone to trade dates with you. If you need to opt out of serving altogether, you have that option as well. Just let Lindy Wilenius or Leigh Zika know.

<u>SUNDAY COFFEE</u>		
January	1/5/25 Leo & Lindy Wilenius 1/12/25 Leigh Zika 1/19/25 Mark & Diane Pascuzzi 1/26/25 Larry & Vickie Lange	Tom & Jennifer Kindler Garrett & Lauren Simensen Marcia Price Bruce & Lois Garbisch
February	2/2/25 Jim Aune & Arlene Jershe 2/9/25 Gerry Ruuska & Lorraine Carlson 2/16/25 Mike & Lorene Enzmann 2/23/25 Steve & Laure Maki	April & Jesse Glass Kristen Foster Ron & Mickey Maki Roger & Nancy Lindbeck
March	3/2/25 Julie & Dale Horihan 3/9/25 Duane & Sue Gustafson 3/16/25 Rob & Kim Marwick 3/23/25 Barb Brenna 3/30/25 Mark & Barb Schmidt	Darren & Susie Holter Hope Simpson & Audrey Armagost Ivette Reing, Dan & Nancy Reing Judy McGlynn & Bob Walker Randy & Jeani Swenson





Bob Walker

Uff! da!

Lutefisk!
It Takes a Village...



Chefs Duane Gustafson & Garrett Simensen



Peggy Pearson & Lorene Enzmann

Thank you to the 55 volunteers who helped make the Lutefisk & Meatball Dinner a success! We fed 278 people (vs 253 last year). The net proceeds of \$2,696.98 (vs \$1,871.75 last year) have been split between the Cook Lions Club Flood Relief Fund and Trinity's Parsonage Repair Fund. We continue to hear rave reviews about our lutefisk and the dinner as a whole. It's a fun, festive outreach ministry that brings the community together and benefits our local needs. Thank you to everyone!



Barb Schmidt, Roger Lindbeck,
Leigh Zika, Rob Marwick



Diane Pascuzzi & Kate Cheney



Bailey Conger & Mickey Maki



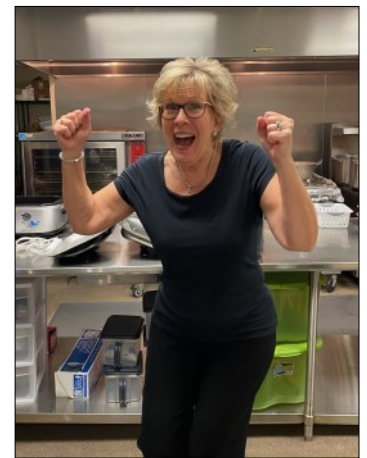
Laure & Steve Maki & Crystal Whitney



Leo Wilenius, Roger & Nancy Lindbeck

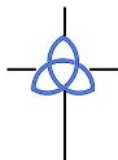


Dale Bixby, Nick Nicklowe, Peter Stone



Julie Horihan

Trinity Lutheran Church, ELCA
P O Box 1196
231 Second Street SE
Cook, MN 55723
(Address Service Requested)



TRINITY
TRIBUTE



January
2025

Trinity Lutheran Church Information

Part-time Interim: Pr. Denise Scheer
Congregational Care: Dn. Kari Olson
Music Director: Bailey Conger
Financial Manager/Bookkeeper: Sue Carstens
Secretary: Beth Sprouls

*Trinity Lutheran
Church*



Sunday Worship 9:30 am

(Holy Communion Most Sundays)

Livestream Available on
Facebook & YouTube

Office Hours

Mondays by appointment
Tuesday - Thursday 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Phone: 218-666-5965

Email: info@trinitycook.org

Website: www.trinitycook.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/TLC.Cook.MN

YouTube: www.youtube.com

(Trinity Lutheran Church of Cook)

The Trinity Tribute newsletter is published monthly to keep members and friends informed of church programs and to report news about the Trinity Lutheran Church community.