

The First Word



Pr. Rob O'Berg

It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed. Deuteronomy 31:8

The first month of the calendar is named after the Roman god of beginnings and endings, Janus. He is most often depicted as having two faces, one looking back and the other looking forward. And that seems about right as the transition from one year to the next is a time for pondering where we've been and planning for where we're going next. As you prepare for leaving 2025 and entering 2026, what things stand out for you looking back? What do you hope for up ahead?

As I do the same for Trinity, I'm struck by something that hasn't happened in a long time, if ever, in my tenure as pastor—in 2025, we bade farewell to 10 of our saints and welcomed 17 new members. In other words, we grew!

I know that in 2026 we'll bid farewell to more people, no way to avoid that. I also know that in 2026, we'll meet new people and welcome them into our community. How many we welcome has much more to do with you than it does about anybody else, including me.

Yes, we have a talented group of people who work hard every day to get the word out about what Trinity is doing for God in our community. We have a robust social media presence and have used Facebook and other platforms to invite people to worship with us. And we offer the most meaningful worship experiences possible with the help of an incredibly talented group of staff and volunteers every Sunday.

Neither of these things, though, are the most powerful factor in whether somebody new to Trinity decides to return. That has to do with how they felt in your company. Being made to feel welcome, getting the sense that their presence is both expected and celebrated, is the number one factor in people moving from visitor to choosing Trinity to be their spiritual home.

And it seems as though you're all doing quite a good job at it! It's no small thing for a mainline, post-COVID congregation to be thriving. But, we are. There are challenges ahead, to be sure, but also great opportunities to make more, important strides forward for the gospel. So, at the end of one year and the beginning of the next, I want to say, "Good job, Trinity!" I can't wait to see what God asks us to do for him in the year ahead. I know you do, too!

With you in Christ's service!

Pastor Rob

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TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

OFFICE HOURS

Monday CLOSED
 Tues-Thurs 9:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m.
 Friday 9:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.
 (559) 229-8581

Check Out Our Website!

Our website is constantly being updated with new photos, sermons, event information and more! Go to tlcfresno.org and share our website with your friends and family.



Follow us on Facebook and Instagram!

PRAYER REQUESTS

Did you know that you can put in a request for prayer on Trinity’s website? It’s simple and you can do it at any time of day or night. Just go to tlcfresno.com and follow the link to put in your request. You’ll be put on our prayer list right away!

Congregation Council

A fundamental human need is to be heard. Your Congregation Council is here to listen.

- Ed Brewer.....273-6123
- Frank Collins.....250-3589
- Wyatt Czeshinski.....593-5797
- Veronica Flanders.....287-8432
- Walt Flanders.....287-8432
- Paul Fountinelle229-3637
- Barbara Stalis.....270-7708
- Shawn Swaim.....360-1009
- Jeff Willis.....jwillis0312@gmail.com

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Sundays

- 9:00 am-Contemporary Worship Service
- 9:00 am-Adult Bible Study - Conference Room
- 9:00am-Chancel Choir - Music Room
- 10:30 am-Sunday School (K-6) - Multipurpose Room
- 10:30 am-Traditional Worship Service

Mondays

- 9:00 am-Exercise Class 11am-12pm (online)
j3jordan@hotmail.com

Wednesday

- 6:00pm-Middle & High School Gathering/Worship
- 9:00 am-Exercise Class 11am-12pm (online)
j3jordan@hotmail.com

Thursday

- 7:00 am-Men's Bible Study,
- 12:00 pm-Bell Practice
- 1:00 pm-Choir Practice
- 6:00 pm-Women’s Bible Study

COUNCIL’S CORNER



If you attended the Annual Meeting in mid-December, you know that we went about forming the 2026 budget in a different way from years past. We passed a 6-month budget and will reconvene in June to assess our budget health and make plans for the rest of 2026 and for 2027. Many thanks to all of you who attended the meeting and approved this budget plan.

Also at that meeting, we discussed the need for a greater number of our member households to support the operational needs of the congregation. This will enable our budget to be more reliably funded and less impacted by unanticipated expenses. Learning opportunities to support congregational giving will be announced in the coming months. Until then, we wish you all a very happy and healthy new year!

Fun



GOD
GOOD

Happy 2026, Trinity family! The NextGen staff team (Ms. Lisa, Kayla, Jose, Cole, Erica, and Bre) and I are so grateful for your continued support during 2025. We are especially thankful to all who were able to attend the Youth Christmas Talent Show on December 19 and for those who purchased tri tip meals. Because of your generosity, we were able to raise almost \$1000! This money will help replenish the fund that allows us to take on students on retreats and field trips. We will share more about the exciting things we have planned for this upcoming year soon!

This article is bittersweet for me. This month marks the beginning of the end of my time with Trinity Lutheran as I prepare for ordination candidacy internship in September. During these final months—in addition to my regular duties with NextGen, outreach, and production ministries—I will be preaching more often and participating in pastoral care duties alongside Pastor Rob. I am grateful to have these opportunities to cultivate my pastoral identity and learn more about how to be a pastor before my chapter here closes.

God's blessings to you as we begin this new year!

GROW

Grace and peace,

Josh Lee
NextGen & Outreach Director

LOVE

LEARN





The Bulldog Pantry would like to thank the following people for helping us in December; Nancy Bird, Carol Bohlin, Jan Odahl, and Robert Phillips. Thank you also to Linda Riley and WELCA for the donation of calendars and greeting cards.

We are grateful for those who have shared an Action Plan with us too. Your donations and support allow us to serve an increasing number of households in need in our community.

We have served a total of 3,794 households in 2025. We also gave toys to over 600 children to make their Christmas brighter.

We are continuing to look for nonperishable food donations to allow us to start 2026 strong.

“STOCKING THE STREETS”

Thank you for your donations. We were able to make 12 bags to serve our neighbors in need. Our first bag went to an unhoused pregnant woman on Christmas Eve. Our congregation is truly committed to helping others!

Here is the list of items that were included in the bags:

First aid kits, hygiene wipes, new! socks and underwear, travel-sized rain poncho, hand warmers, emergency blankets, food gift cards, flashlight with batteries, prepaid bus cards, resealable plastic bags, and homemade snacks.

TOGETHER WE CAN WARM HANDS AND HEARTS!

Important Note: These items are needed year round and there is still time to get them!



In Our Thoughts and Prayers

Ken Engelman; Connie Rozzi, mother of Rosanne Valenzuela; Marla Poulsen-Reisman; Elfriede Munday, Ernest Munday; James Niell; Rod Harris; Frank Collins; Gayle Brown; Norman Stahl; Coleen Schwartz; Lori O’Berg; Felix Brewer, friend of Robby O’Berg; Nancy Waterhouse; Roger Odahl; Scott Rowley; John & Roni Grove; Barbara Cucuk; Debbie Zoldoske-Clark; Sebastian Truax; Mavourneen Occhino, friend of the Willis’; Lisa Korth, friend of the Techman’s; Gary Caskey, brother of Laurell Huber; Dr. Stephen & Jodi Swanson for their work in Tanzania; the people of the Holy Land; the people of Ukraine and Russia; all victims of natural disasters; victims of violence and terror attacks; our troops, first responders, & their families.

LINKS OF LOVE

Our Links of Love ministry at Trinity reaches out to Trinity members who are homebound or in need of having one of our lay ministers come out and visit, bring Communion, or send cards. Interested or know someone in need,? If so, please call Lisa Collins, at the Church office at 229-8581, and we will make sure to contact you.

Deb Moe
Twindeb2@yahoo.com
559-907-2914

Liz Davis
Twinliz2@icloud.com
559-779-7740

BMAT Puzzle of the Month
(Bible Study Ministry Action Team)

Books of the Bible Scramble

First: Unscramble the letters to reveal a book of the Bible

Second: Write the unscrambled words on the lines directly below them.

Third: For each unscrambled word, use the letters underlined in red to unscramble them as another name for the Bible.

1. A J S E M

— — — — —

2. T R U H

— — — —

3. S N K I G

— — — — —

4. D S U J G E

— — — — —

5. E J U D

— — — —

6. U O J H A S

— — — — —

7. R H S W E B E

— — — — —

8. U X E D O S

— — — — —

ANSWER:

— — — —
— — — —

Answers on page 7



Kathryn Sherman, age 93, went to be with the Lord on June 3, 2025. She was born in Tulsa, Oklahoma on March 20, 1932. She attended college at Southwest Missouri State College graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree in 1954. She married John H. Sherman on August 29, 1954. They raised 3 children and were married for 41 years until John's death in 1996.

Kathryn loved music. She played piano most of her life and took organ lessons. She sang in the church choir and played in a band in Fresno. Besides the choir, she helped make quilts for a Fresno area ranch for troubled youth and for Lutheran World Relief; helped with the monthly food distribution taking turns with others to personally hand out hygiene items to women; put together goodie bags for Craycroft—which was an emergency shelter for abused and/or neglected children; and led a monthly Bible study with the Priscilla circle. She was the pianist and recorder for the church's senior group, Golden League. She strongly supported all efforts to support missionaries in Africa who the congregation helped to sponsor.

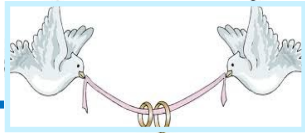
Mom brought light and joy to everyone who had the privilege of knowing her, and her kind spirit and unwavering love will never be forgotten.

Memorials may be made to Trinity Lutheran Church, Layette Ministry, or the Bulldog Pantry.

January 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
4 9a Chancel Choir 9a Cont. Worship 10a Coffee Hour 10:30a Trad. Wrshp. 11:30a Coffee Hour	5 11a Exercise Class via Zoom j3jordan@hotmail.com	6 9a Layettes 12p WELCA Board Mtg.	7 11a Exercise Class via Zoom	8 7a MBS 12p Bells 1p Choir 2:30p TKC 6p WBS	9 9a Warming Fresno	10 9a Warming Fresno
11 9a Chancel Choir 9a Cont. Worship 10a Coffee Hour 10:30a Trad. Wrshp. 11:30a Coffee Hour	12 11a Exercise Class via Zoom	13 1:30p Mary Martha Circle	14 9:30a Pricilla Circle 11a Exercise Class via Zoom	15 7a MBS 12p Bells 1p Choir 2:30p TKC 6p WBS	16 9a Warming Fresno	17 9a Warming Fresno
18 9a Chancel Choir 9a Cont. Worship 10a Coffee Hour 10:30a Trad. Wrshp. 11:30a Coffee Hour	19 11a Exercise Class via Zoom 6:30p Evening Spirit	20 10:30a Good Morning Circle	21 11a Exercise Class via Zoom	22 7a MBS 12p Bells 1p Choir 2:30p TKC 6p WBS	23 9a Warming Fresno	24 9a Warming Fresno
25 9a Chancel Choir 9a Cont. Worship 10a Coffee Hour 10:30a Trad. Wrshp. 11:30a Coffee Hour	26 11a Exercise Class via Zoom	27 1p Good News Circle	28 11a Exercise Class via Zoom 1p Good News Circle	29 7a MBS 12p Bells 1p Choir 2:30p TKC 6p WBS	30 MBS-Men's Bible Study WBS-Women's Bible Study Contact Pastor Rob for a link to join via Zoom!	31 Warming Fresno is open to all levels of crocheters and knitters and they are willing to teach anyone interested!

January Birthdays & Anniversaries



Dennis and Dee Donnelly
 1-22 1983
 Donald and Karen Gregory
 1-10 1981
 Wayne and Doni Truax
 1-30 1993



John McConnell 1/07
 Eric Klimper 1/07
 Sharon Rowley 1/12
 Caroline Mendyk 1/13
 Erica Pena 1/14
 Ken Engelman 1/15
 Gregory Becker 1/18
 Conner Talbot 1/20
 Kristy Hall 1/22
 Shirley Harpain 1/26
 Jan Odahl 1/27



For surely I know the plans I have for you says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.
 Jeremiah 29:11

ANSWER:
 GODS WORD

Trinity Lutheran Church
3973 N. Cedar Ave.
Fresno, CA 93726
tlcfresno.com
(559) 229-8581

January 2026

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**Our Mission:
To Lead People Into The Life-Changing Love of Jesus Christ**