



THE TEMPO

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2026

9:30AM

INFORMAL SERVICE

11AM

TRADITIONAL SERVICE

“To nurture Christ-centered lives that reflect God’s love and grace in our local and global communities.”



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America



California
Interfaith
Power
& Light

1 West Avenida de los Arboles, Thousand Oaks, CA 91360-2939
805-492-1234 office churchoffice@htlcto.org www.htlcto.org
PASTORAL CARE EMERGENCY - 805-492-1234, press 1

WHAT'S INSIDE

A New Look for Holy Week.....	4
Altar Flowers.....	16
Authentic Diversity.....	13
Brian's Book Review.....	12-13
Calling All Graduates.....	11
CYF Schedule.....	7
Dorcas Quilting and Crafting Circle.....	9
Events at a Glance.....	3
Fair Trade.....	11
Fun Facts.....	16
Gather Young Adult Group.....	4
Harbor House Benefit Concert.....	10
Holy Week Schedule.....	4
Honey Tree.....	8
Lenten Lunch Thank You.....	14
Library News.....	9
Lutheran Lobby Day.....	6
Manna Food Bank.....	10-11
Meditation Group.....	9
Music Minister Update.....	14
New Member Orientation.....	8
Pastor's Note	5
Prayer Requests.....	15
Ray of Life Thank You.....	11
Remembrance for Jim and Anne Lieberknect...14	
Synod Thank You.....	10
THEA Book Group.....	9
Time and Talent.....	8
Trivia Night.....	6
Tuesday AM Bible Study.....	7
VBS Sign Up.....	14
VBS Volunteers.....	4
Women's Bible Study.....	7



OFFICE HOURS

9:00 AM-2:30 PM

For assistance, please contact
Kathleen Sands
Church Office & Campus Operations Manager

805-492-1234
churchoffice@htlcto.org

GET SOCIAL WITH US



facebook.com/HTLCTO



instagram.com/htlcto/



youtube.com/HTLCTO/



[@htlcto.bsky.social](https://twitter.com/htlcto.bsky.social)



April 5 - Easter Sunday

April 18 - Harbor House Benefit Concert

April 22 - Trivia Night

April 26 - Authentic Diversity Speaker Event

SEND FUTURE NEWSLETTER & SOCIAL

MEDIA SUBMISSIONS TO

COMMUNICATIONS@HTLCTO.ORG

**DEADLINE FOR TEMPO SUBMISSIONS IS THE
THIRD FRIDAY OF EACH MONTH
(APRIL 17 FOR MAY TEMPO)**

WELCOME STATEMENT



Holy Trinity joyfully extends Christ's love to all. We welcome everyone regardless of race, age, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, physical or mental health, faith, doubt, family composition, political affiliation, socio-economic status, or any other category that divides us. Christ taught us that loving is a never-ending process of growth and reconciliation. At Holy Trinity, we strive to love diversely and deeply. To all who have been marginalized, we will work to demonstrate that nothing can separate you from the love of God.

"There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus."
Galatians 3:28.

OUR LOCATION

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church is located on the original and ancestral homelands of the Mitsqanaqan Ventureño Chumash Tribes and Peoples, and we give thanks for their presence here since time immemorial. We also wish to recognize and honor all our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to call this land their home. In making this acknowledgment, we are pledging not to forget them or their story, and to learn from them and our common history.



APRIL EVENTS AT A GLANCE

- 4/2** - Maundy Thursday Service
- 4/3** - Good Friday Service
- 4/5** - Easter Sunday + kids activity
- 4/7, 14, 21, & 28** - Tuesday Bible Study
- 4/9** - Zoom Meditation
- 4/12** - New Member Orientation
- 4/12, 19, 26** - GATHER (Young Adult Group)
- 4/16, 23, & 30** - Meditation in the Church Library
- 4/16** - Dorcas Quilting Circle

- 4/18** - Women's Bible Study
- 4/18** - Harbor House Benefit Concert
- 4/22** - Jim and Anne Lieberknecht Remembrance
- 4/22** - Church-Wide Trivia Night
- 4/26** - Authentic Diversity Event
- 4/27** - THEA Book Circle

CYF Schedule on page 7

A NEW LOOK FOR HOLY WEEK

When Holy Trinity replaced the pews in the sanctuary and put in chairs one of the reasons was so we could have the flexibility to have different configurations of seating for different kinds of worship. An example of this was this past Ash Wednesday when we moved chairs around to create space for prayer stations in the middle of the sanctuary.

During Holy Week for both Maundy Thursday and Good Friday we are planning to adjust the chairs again so we can move the altar table to the center of the room and have worship “in the round”. This will be a new format for many attending worship and we wanted to be sure to inform the congregation so that people are not surprised when they come on those nights.

Please note that the chairs will be moved back for Easter Sunday. This arrangement is only for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday in order to give a different experience for these two worship services. We hope you will join us for one or both of these nights during Holy Week.

-Pastor Erik & Pastor Emily

GATHER (YOUNG ADULT GROUP 20S & 30S)

GATHER (our Young Adult Group) meets on **Sundays at 12:15pm** on church campus. Sign up for regular updates by emailing pastoremily@htlcto.org.

- Sunday 4/5 - No meeting, Happy Easter!
- Sunday 4/12 - Bible Study at 12:15pm
- Sunday 4/19 - Trivia planning meeting at 12:15pm
- Sunday 4/26 - Bible Study at 12:15pm

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

Please join us on **Thursday, April 2** for Maundy Thursday service at 7pm and **Friday, April 3** for a Good Friday service at 7pm. Then we will joyfully look forward to seeing you on **Sunday, April 5**, EASTER SUNDAY, at our 9:30am or 11am services. We will also have a kids activity between services, at 10:30am. We are looking forward to soending the morning together. Happy Easter!



HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

<p>MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE 4/2, 7pm</p>	<p>GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE 4/3, 7pm</p>
<p>EASTER SUNDAY 9:30am Informal Service 10:30am Easter Activity for Kids 11am Traditional Service</p>	

Christ is Risen!

WE NEED YOU!



Summer VBS July 6-10
9am to 12pm
VOLUNTEER FORM (6th grade and up)

VBS is not until July, but we’re planning already and are gathering our volunteer list. Help out 1 day, all 5 days, only in the morning, or all day everyday. However you can help, we can find a job for you! Between skits, songs, games, arts, science, small group Bible study, snack, sign in, sign out, prep the week before, and clean up each day, there is plenty to do!

VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION: Go to htlcto.org/vbs to register as a volunteer and let us know your preferences of how/when you would like to participate.

PASTOR'S NOTE FROM PASTOR ERIK

CROSS-SHAPED THEOLOGY

At a debate in Heidelberg, Germany, in 1518, Martin Luther distinguished between theologians of glory and theologians of the cross which became a key part of Lutheran theology. Theologians of glory see the things of God as a path of glory, whereas theologians of the cross see the path as one marked by suffering. The theologian of glory, says Luther, is "completely puffed up, blinded, and hardened" and "misuses the best in the worst manner." A theologian of the cross, on the other hand "comprehends the visible and manifest things of God seen through suffering and the cross."

Professor of religion, Carl Trueman, writes this in explaining the approach Luther took:

"At the heart of this new theology was the notion that... God achieves intended purposes by doing the exact opposite of that which humans might expect. The supreme example of this is the cross itself: God triumphs over sin and evil by allowing sin and evil to triumph (apparently) over God.

God's real strength is demonstrated through apparent weakness. This was the way a theologian of the cross thought about God. The opposite to this was the theologian of glory. In simple terms, the theologian of glory assumed that there was basic continuity between the way the world is and the way God is: if strength is demonstrated through raw power on earth, then God's strength must be the same, only extended to infinity. To such a theologian, the cross is simply foolishness, a piece of nonsense."

It is easy to be tempted to think in terms of a theology of glory. It is an attractive concept. Who doesn't like to win and be victorious? Many of us

would want to be on the side of the strong and powerful. The problem, however, is that when we chase after a theology of glory we are seduced into thinking that might makes right and that earthly power is somehow a sign of God's blessing. We can fall into the belief that God calls us to conquer others and that victory is a sign that God is on our side. This mentality has contributed to many wars over the centuries as people have invoked the name of God to justify what they perceive as glorious conquest, but often results in violence and destruction for others. Even today, as the war in Iran has raged, there are those in our culture who would frame the conflict as a kind of "holy" war.

But Jesus said if you want to enter his kingdom you must first become like a child. Jesus said the first shall be last and the last shall be first. Jesus said he came not to be served but to serve. Jesus said that those who want to follow him must lay down their lives and pick up their cross. In Jesus we see a different image of God than the glorious one we so often seek. We see humility and sacrifice. We see that more violence is not the answer. We see that might does not necessarily make one right and that more power does not make someone more "godly."

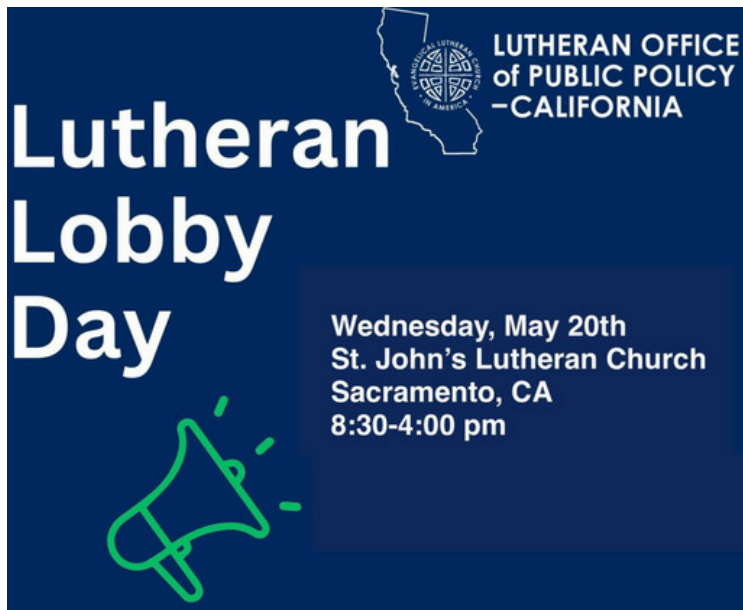
So if we hear the name of God being used to justify destructive actions within the world, may we be reminded by our Lutheran heritage, which teaches that whenever we are tempted to succumb to the theology of glory, the call of Jesus convicts us with the theology of the cross.

Sources of this Article:

<https://apologeticsforthechurch.org/theologians-of-glory-or-the-cross/>

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justin-taylor/the-difference-between-a-theologian-of-the-cross-and-a-theologian-of-glory/>

LUTHERAN LOBBY DAY IN SACRAMENTO



Lutheran Lobby Day

LUTHERAN OFFICE of PUBLIC POLICY - CALIFORNIA

Wednesday, May 20th
St. John's Lutheran Church
Sacramento, CA
8:30-4:00 pm

The Lutheran Office of Public Policy (LOPP) has designated **Wednesday, May 20** as Lutheran Lobby Day from 8am to 4pm. The day begins with an orientation to the process for the day, followed by dividing the group into small groups of 4-6 who will visit legislators who have agreed to meet with us. We have 4-5 bills we are advocating for because they relate to the priorities for serving others that are expressed in our ELCA social statements. There are hundreds of bills the legislators will be voting on this year, and this is an opportunity for us to lift up our Lutheran priority bills for them to pay attention to. Yes, we get to meet them, but even more importantly they see and hear us as we tell our stories from our communities. Those who have participated in Lobby Day, often are enthusiastic to repeat the experience as they get a firsthand look at how our democracy works and how important we are as constituents in the process of educating our representatives.

It is possible to fly up to Sacramento in the morning and leave that evening or you can come

the day before for the 6pm worship service which begins the event. If you are under age 36, contact Regina Banks, the director of LOPP, for funds available to help finance the overnight and travel for the day. If you have questions, contact me at dixhanson@gmail.com or my cell at (805) 368-5709. Join us as we lift up our Lutheran advocacy voices!



CHURCH-WIDE TRIVIA NIGHT



HTLC Young Adult Group
Presents...

Trivia Night

Wednesday, April 22nd

**FELLOWSHIP HALL DOORS
OPEN AT 6 PM
TRIVIA STARTS AT 6:30 PM**

**THIS EVENT IS OPEN TO THE WHOLE CHURCH
COMMUNITY, EVERYONE IS WELCOME!**

**snacks and light refreshments will be provided*

HTLC WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Join us on **Saturday, April 18th** at 2pm in the Fellowship Hall for Session 2 of our study **God's name, God's promise: "God the protector: Gate and Shepherd."**

In March, we learned how God abides with us and this month we learn how God protects us. "God stands with the oppressed. God's tender love is an act of justice, a repudiation of false shepherds and corrupt leaders who use and abuse their flocks for their own gain."

Join us as we share both God's and our stories!

APRIL CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILY CALENDAR

April 5 - Happy Easter! Join us on the patio between worship services for a fun and meaningful Easter art activity.

April 12 - None

April 19 - Faith Explorers/Youth Group at 10:45-11:30

April 26 - 10:45am - ELCA Youth Gathering interest meeting for all current 7th-11th grade youth

May 3 - Save the Date for Hearts and Hands Worship at 9:30am

Be on the lookout for end-of-year parties for Faith Explorers and Youth Group attendees!



TUESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

WHY DID JESUS HAVE TO DIE?

During April we will continue a study based on the book "Why Did Jesus Have to Die?" by Pastor Adam Hamilton. Despite the crucifixion's central place in Christian faith, the New Testament offers few clear answers about how Jesus' death saves, or why, exactly, he had to die. The New Testament writers use a host of metaphors—ransom, sacrifice, reconciliation, victory—but never explain exactly how it works or why it had to happen this way. What if that's because we've been asking the wrong question? What if the cross isn't a transaction to be explained, but a living Word from God meant to transform who we are and how we are to live?

Join us in exploring these questions Tuesdays at 10:30am in the church Fellowship Hall. If you would like the link to the Zoom option let us know and we will include you in the email reminders.

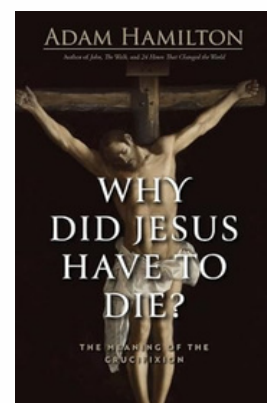
Here's the reading guide for April:

April 7 - Chapter 4 - "Were You There?" ...The Moral Influence and Moral Example Theories of Atonement

April 14 - Chapter 5 - "What Wondrous Love Is This?" ... Moral Influence Theory Part II

April 21 - Chapter 6 - "Christ the Lord is Risen Today" ... Christus Victor Theory of Atonement

April 28 - Postscript...My God I Love Thee





Registration: Registration is open to the community. Please spread the word to friends and family!

See's Candies: Thank you so much church members for your kindness and generosity! We are grateful for your participation in our fundraiser. Fundraisers make it possible to provide classroom and art supplies, and new & fun activities for our students. Orders will be in the Church Office before Easter.

Mud Garden with Kitchen: The kindness and generosity of Karen Lindgren's family donation makes it possible for us to create a new Mud Garden with Kitchen. Mud play is an important part of development within early childhood, increasing brain activity, stimulating motor skills, and learning about the natural world. We are so excited for this project to be completed over the summer. Thank you Lindgren family.

Summer Camp: We are happy to announce that we are hosting Summer Camp for Honey Tree Families June 1st - 26th. Our families are so happy to have their children remain on the Honey Tree campus for camp.

Vickie Cass, Honey Tree Director

honeytreeecc@gmail.com, myhoneytree.com

Upcoming events:

Easter Break
April 3-April 10

Pastor Visit
April 15 & 16

Dads & Doughnuts
April 20 & 21



NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION

Join us on **Sunday, April 12th at 12:15pm** for a new member orientation. We will meet in the library with some light refreshments. Learn more about becoming a member of our church, no pressure!

New Member Orientation



Interested in becoming a Holy Trinity member?
Join us for an orientation

Sunday, April 12th at 12:15pm in the library

There is no obligation to join,
just come learn more about Holy Trinity!

TIME AND TALENT

"Nobody can do everything, but everyone can do something." Or as Martin Luther put it: "God doesn't need your good works, but your neighbor does."

Ever wonder how Holy Trinity accomplishes all that it does? Volunteers—a critical component of Stewardship. During three Sundays, May 3, May 10, and May 17, in a drive called Time and Talent we will be highlighting the opportunities for members to get involved in the church's numerous activities.

There are three categories of involvement: Worship Assistance, Ministry Teams/Committees, and Service/Outreach and each week will highlight the opportunities within one of these three categories

through in-person or video testimonials, opportunity lists, and patio sign-up stations. Give some thought to what you have to contribute: your interests, skills, and time availability and help Holy Trinity make a collective difference.

THEA BOOK CIRCLE

The Fox Wife by Yangsze Choo is the 18th Annual TO City Read and our April chosen book. The story takes place in Manchuria in 1908. A servant (Snow) and a detective (Bao) deal with foxes which are believed to lure people by transforming themselves into beautiful men and women. These shape-shifting fox spirits deal with world myths as they hunt for vengeance of the killers.

The TO Library has many copies of the book available. There will be many events and programs during April highlighting the book. The group will meet to discuss The Fox Wife **Monday, April 27 at 7pm** in the Church Library.



LIBRARY NEWS

LIBRARY BROWSING AT HOLY TRINITY

During the months of April and May, we will be featuring books about the Old and New Testament. I'm not sure what books we have, since I haven't explored those shelves, but there are quite a few. Time to feature them!

Maybe I'll have some cheese to let you sample and we can have an event between services!! Stay tuned. Brian is reading the new Martin Luther King, Jr. biography, so also stay tuned for his review.

Blessings!

Miriam Nakayama, Laurel Engstrom & Brian McGuire

DORCA'S QUILTING CIRCLE

On **Thursday, April 16 at 9am** Dorcas will continue making comfort quilts. Since we received a grant from the Thrivent Action Team we will be purchasing essential batting to use in completing the quilts.

Thanks to all who help sew and create comfort wrapped in spring colors for warmth and love. All are welcomed to help

APRIL MEDITATION GROUP

WHAT IS THE WAY OF MEDITATION?

John Main, the founder of World Community of Christian Meditation, says:

Let me describe to you now the way of meditation itself. In saying the word you enter a great tradition, a tradition of men and women who have meditated over the centuries and who, in meditating, have sought to transcend their own limitations and to enter into the wonder of God, to enter into heart of the divine energy and to do so by entering their own heart. When we meditate we are still, body and soul, body and spirit, entirely open to the presence of God, knowing that presence to be pure love, pure gentleness, pure forgiveness. In that presence we become who we are: creatures created by God, creatures redeemed by the love of Jesus, creatures who are temples of the Holy Spirit and in that experience we are made utterly free, free to be ourselves, free to love ourselves, our neighbour and God. From In the Beginning

If that is a lot to "unpack", join us on Thursdays at 4 pm, and we will tell you what we know. **April 9 is our Zoom meeting at 4.** Contact Miriam at miriamnakayama@gmail.com for a Zoom invite.

On **April 16, 23 and 30**, we meet in-person in the

church library. Beginners are welcome. We pray, listen to and discuss a meditation cd, and finally meditate in silence for 25 minutes. We are done by 5.

Joyous Easter!

Miriam Nakayama

HARBOR HOUSE BENEFIT CONCERT

Harbor House Benefit Concert



♪ Saturday, April 18, at 6:30 PM ♪

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church Sanctuary
1 W Avenida de los Arboles, Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

Listen to your favorite music teachers.
Help those in greatest need.

[The Music Teacher Association of California \(MTAC\) Conejo Valley Branch](#) is collaborating with [Harbor House](#) and the [Holy Trinity Lutheran Church of Thousand Oaks](#) to provide a powerful benefit concert to raise awareness, food, and funds for the most impoverished residents of the Conejo Valley.

There is no charge, but we will be taking a freewill offering with all financial donations going to Harbor House.

All money and food donations will go to Harbor House.

Food Donation Preferences:

- Granola and Protein Bars
- Pop top cans (tuna and chicken, and tuna salad kits)
- Beef Jerky

A THANK YOU FROM THE SYNOD

THANK YOU

To the members of

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Thousand Oaks

from the

Southwest California Synod

of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
In grateful appreciation for giving

\$49,223.05

for Mission Support beyond the congregation for synod and churchwide ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

What does our tithe to the Synod support? Below is a summary of a few of the efforts it is being used to lift up:

MISSION SUPPORT – A portion of your offering, called Mission Support, advances the ministry of our church, helping the ELCA nurture Christian community, raise up leaders, serve our neighbors and strive for justice.

ELCA WORLD HUNGER – Part of our church’s long tradition of meeting human needs, ELCA World Hunger testifies to our hope for and commitment to God’s promise of a time when we will hunger and thirst no more. ELCA World Hunger walks alongside communities in more than 60 countries – including the United States – to create unique solutions to hunger and poverty.

LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE – Lutheran Disaster Response shares God’s hope, healing and renewal with people whose lives have been disrupted by disasters in the United States and around the world. When the dust settles and the headlines change, we stay to provide ongoing assistance to those in need.

WHERE NEEDED MOST – Where Needed Most supports the powerful ways we work together around the world – supporting leaders, inspiring young people, fueling ministries and championing global mission. Gifts to Where Needed Most support and sustain the people, congregations, synods and ministries working around the world to realize the hope-filled future God promises.

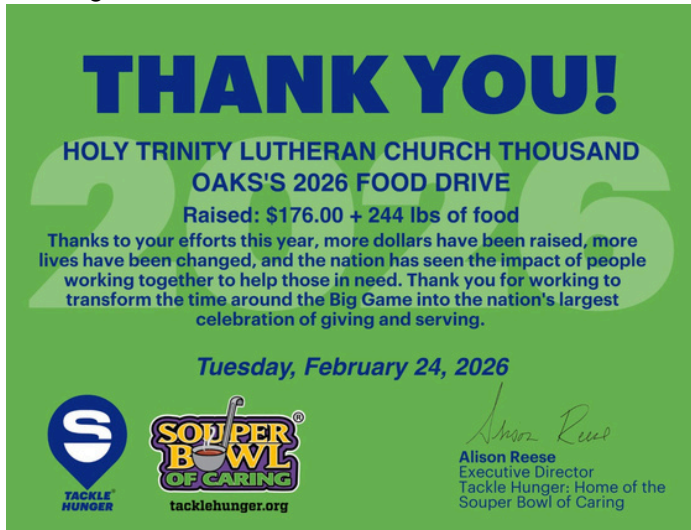
MANNA CONEJO VALLEY FOOD BANK

In March, our Holy Trinity Lutheran Church gave **122 pounds** of groceries to Manna Conejo Valley Food Bank. That is an impressive amount!

Here is the latest list of Most Needed Items:

1. Coffee, Tea, or Hot Chocolate
2. Canned Pasta Sauce
3. Canned Beans
4. Broth (Canned or Shelf-Stable Cartons)
5. Canned Meat (Chicken, Spam, or Ham)
6. Canned Soup (Any Variety)
7. Instant Ramen
8. Instant Oatmeal Packets
9. Preserves, Jam, or Jelly (Any Flavor)
10. Canned Beans (Red, Navy, White, Kidney, or Garbanzo)

We also wanted to share our official certificate of giving from our February Souper Bowl of Caring efforts!



Please place your Manna donations on the designated table in the narthex.

Happy Easter! Karen and Marty Kreman

DO YOU HAVE A SOON-TO-BE GRADUATE IN YOUR FAMILY?

If you'd like us to celebrate your graduate, please fill out this form which includes name, photo, from where they are graduating, and any post-grad plans if they want to share:

<https://htlcto.breezechms.com/form/31a38d7291>

For graduates who are active members of our congregation, we will celebrate them on June 7th during worship. All others will be included in the prayers and in the June newsletter. **Please submit information by May 17th.**

FAIR TRADE



DOING SOMETHING FAIR WITH MIRIAM

Frustrated with the world's situation? Feeling like you can't do anything to help?

Yes you can!! Buy fair trade items. You are helping the farmer or the artisan by paying them a fair price. You are helping to make their life better and these are people who are vulnerable but are trying their best to make a living. I bought mini-chocolates from Holy Trinity for Easter eggs and a flock of fair trade little sheep from HumanKind, a fair trade store. Any chocolate bar, any box of tea, any bag of coffee, any bottle of olive oil, and any can of cocoa helps the world.

I will not be getting dates until the new harvest comes in. The olive oil is the Sindyanna Brand from a co-op of Israeli and Palestinian women. It is \$15 a bottle.

We'll also be taking orders for cheese, both the 3 and 5 year aged cheddars are \$6. We will be at our fair trade table on the 2nd and 4th Sundays between services and after the 11:00. April 12th and 26th.

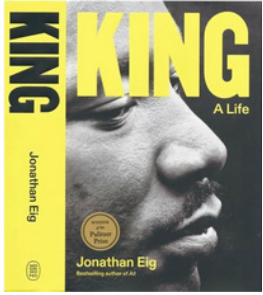
Miriam Nakayama, Nancy Truex, and Terri Kelly

RAY OF LIFE FUNDRAISER THANK YOU

Thank you sincerely to everyone who donated to our February fundraiser for the Ray of Life program. We collected almost \$1,300.00 for humanitarian aid to Ukraine. Your generosity is deeply appreciated.

HTLC LIBRARY BOOK REVIEW

by Brian McGuire



There are two new books in the HTLC Library on Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. donated by Denna Heerema. One is "Strength to Love," a collection of sermons by King himself; the second is a biography **"King: A Life"** by Jonathan Eig and the subject of this book review. This is Twentieth Century history that we never got in school.

Martin Luther King Jr. was born in 1929 into a stable Christian household; his father Martin Luther King Sr. was pastor of the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta. King lived to be only 39, but what he packed into those few years is impressive.

Similar to Dietrich Bonhoeffer, King espoused Gandhi's philosophies of nonviolent protest. When Bonhoeffer visited the US in the 1930s and saw Black oppression first-hand, he compared it to the treatment of German Jews. After WWII many white Americans, repulsed by events in the Holocaust, became more aware of these parallels. After one of many arrests, King stated: "We will continue to protest in the same spirit of nonviolence and passive resistance, using the weapon of love." King consistently drew his authority directly from the Bible.

The book covers in detail all of the key events related to King and the fight for civil rights, equality, and integration, including the early boycotts of segregated buses in Montgomery AL, the Freedom Rides in 1960, sit-ins at segregated

businesses, his arrests and imprisonments, a world tour, the famous "I Have a Dream" speech at the Lincoln Memorial, the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the 1965 Voting Rights Act, the Nobel Peace Prize, and so much more.

Certain factoids about King surprised me. He was only 5'7" tall. The "I Have a Dream" portion of his Lincoln Memorial speech was ad-libbed. Despite all of his public speeches and exposure he was by nature shy and prone to self-doubt and depression. Nor was he a perfect man. After his death, it came to light that parts of his dissertation had been plagiarized. Surveillance by J Edgar Hoover's FBI attempting to connect him to Communist groups uncovered nothing but extramarital indiscretions in hotel rooms.

The countless examples of white-on-black violence throughout southern states—many never prosecuted or even investigated—are jaw-dropping and I won't repeat them except to express disgust that those perpetrators considered themselves Christians. A certain southern city actually closed its public parks, pools, and zoo for six years rather than integrate them; another city even threatened to close its schools. During one speech King suffered an anxiety attack and had to be escorted off the stage. This was after several bombings and shootings directed at his home and he was consumed by angst and guilt over what he was putting his family through. I wish I could say that King died with dignity. He was shot in the face by James Earl Ray, an obscure segregationist, dying shortly thereafter on April 4 1968 in Memphis.

Our country is fortunate that it was Martin Luther King—a Christian minister and pacifist who insisted on nonviolent protest, peace, and forbearance—who drove the Civil Rights movement rather than the more militant Malcolm X. The outcome might have been similar with the

BOOK REVIEW CONTINUED...

latter; however the cost would have been much greater. But even now are we significantly better than we were? Recent events have shown us that the hatred is still there and the targets have multiplied to include even more minority groups that I don't need to list.

One image that stayed with me was not of King himself but of his father as a boy, whose mother Delia was deeply religious. Every Sunday, without a car, Delia and her children made their way to church dressed in their best Sunday clothing. They walked in stocking feet—carrying their shoes until they got to church, in order to preserve them and so that they would look their very best to glorify God.

AUTHENTIC DIVERSITY

On **April 26th** and **May 3rd**, we will welcome Dr. Peter Carlson from California Lutheran University. Dr. Peter Carlson will come to preach on April 26th. Then, on the afternoons of April 26th and May 3rd, they will offer an educational series on Queer Theology. But what is Queer Theology?

Queer theology is where queer theory and Christian theology meet. Here are some quotes to get you thinking from reformationproject.org: *“Queer theory is an academic field of study dating back to the 1980s and 1990s that focuses on challenging norms related to gender and sexuality. It encompasses a range of ideas about gender and sexuality, but one of its most significant elements is its distinctive use of the term ‘queer.’*

‘Queer’ is used to describe an action that ‘turns upside down, inside out’ that which is seen as normative... To ‘queer’ something is to engage

with a methodology that challenges and disrupts the status quo.’

Queer theologians use the word ‘queer’ as a verb as well as an adjective, arguing that we should ‘queer’ the Bible, theology, and the church. While many people assume that ‘queering’ these things simply means making them inclusive of gay, bisexual, and transgender people, queer theologians clarify that it goes far beyond that. As in queer theory, ‘queering’ in queer theology is about resisting norms categorically.”

So, what does all this mean for Christian theology, the Holy Trinity community, and how we live out our faith individually? Come and find out!

April 26th is a class on “Queer Theology 101” and on May 3rd, we’ll talk about “Queering the Church” - going beyond welcome and the intentional work of blessing and nurturing the gifts of the Queer community in our faith communities. Join us in welcoming them, hearing their stories, and learning how we can continue to grow as a Reconciled in Christ community.

Dr. Peter Carlson wrote a commentary A Queer Lectionary: (Im)proper Readings from the Margins - Year A, which can inspire preachers as they craft their sermons that align with the Revised Common Lectionary.

To learn more about Dr. Peter Carlson: <https://www.callutheran.edu/faculty/profile.html?id=pcarlson>



TIME OF REMEMBRANCE FOR JIM AND ANNE LIEBERKNECT

You may have seen that one of our long-time members, Anne Lieberknecht, passed away a few weeks ago. Her family is currently not planning to have a memorial for her and they did not have one at the church when her husband Jim passed away either. Jim and Anne were so involved at Holy Trinity, however, it seems appropriate to offer a time to gather for folks who knew them to give thanks for their lives and their impact on Holy Trinity.

We are planning to do an informal "Time of Remembrance" for the Lieberknechts on **Wednesday April 22** at 2:00pm in the Fellowship Hall. We will have some coffee and dessert and share some memories. You are invited to bring a short story about them to share if you are willing. We will share a prayer and may do some singing since Anne loved being in the choir and singing on Sunday mornings. An RSVP is not required, but it is helpful to know for the purchase of refreshments. You can let us know if you are coming at churchoffice@htlcto.org.

LENTEN LUNCH SERIES THANK YOU

Thank you, everyone who helped and participated in the Lenten Lunch Series, "Civic Life and Faith." Forty to sixty people attended each week to enjoy a great lunch while learning and discussing our roles and responsibility as citizens and followers of Jesus. Special thanks to the Small Groups, Tuesday Bible Study; COAM, Community Outreach and Action; Gather, Young Adult Group, and many, many individuals who (sometimes more than once) cooked, donated, set up, and cleaned up the room. We are grateful for the wonderful food and stimulating program. We are thankful for those who participated in learning and sharing their thoughts, reactions, experiences. Everyone enjoyed the series.
- Jean Kammerer

SUMMER VBS AT HTLC

July 6 - 10th, 2026 from 9am-12pm

Theme: #KidsConnect

Cost: Free (donations are always welcome!)

As children learn and create together, they will find a place of belonging, relate to trusted adults, make new friends, and follow Jesus' example of making room for all and loving one another. Each day includes worship and drama, Bible study, art and science explorations, brain-building challenges, and active games. Daily take-home activities encourage families to grow faith and build community with people of all ages. Let's build a better world filled with the love and peace of God! Lead counselors are adult volunteers who are background checked and trained. Junior counselors include youth ages 6th-12th grade.

Registration: <https://www.htlcto.org/vbs>



MUSIC MINISTER UPDATE

We hope you've had a chance to read the recent update from the Music Minister Search Team. What began as a process to fill the choir director position has grown in scope as we prepare for Richard and Wanda Ferrin to transition out of their roles in June as well. Their faithful leadership, alongside various choir directors, has shaped our music ministries for many years. The upcoming departure of the Ferrins invited us to broaden the search to find someone who can help guide the full range of musical life at Holy Trinity.

The Interview Team—made up of the search team (Darin Erickson, Tim Wagenknecht, Marty McCambridge, Richard Ferrin, and Pastor Emily) along with two additional interviewers (Elmer

MUSIC MINISTER UPDATE CONTINUED...

Heerema and Pastor Erik)—met with candidates on March 11. After thoughtful conversation and careful review of references, the team has invited two candidates to move forward to a second round of interviews. This next step will include an audition with members of both the band and the choir. Because of Holy Week and various vacation schedules, auditions will take place in mid-April. Choir and band members will receive the date and times soon and will be invited to complete a review form afterward. Their feedback will be an important part of the discernment process for both the interview team and the church council. Our hope is that council will be able to vote on a candidate at the April meeting, with a fuller update to the congregation in May.

Throughout this process, the team has been reminded again and again of the tremendous leadership we have been blessed with in our music ministries. We also recognize that a new leader will bring their own personality, gifts, and vision—arriving with fresh eyes and a heart ready to serve. As we prepare for this transition, we invite you to join us with openness, gratitude, and hope. Your support, prayers, and excitement continue to strengthen our community as we look toward the next chapter of music at Holy Trinity.

APRIL PRAYER REQUESTS

Please keep these people in your prayers:

For Lori O’Neil, for continued healing

For Evonne Larson, for healing after a fall

For Susie Wilber, for continued good recovery after surgery

For Martha Buratto, for a good recovery after knee surgery

For Pamela Baldwin, for healing

For Helene Shughart, Jean Kammerer’s sister, for healing from side effects of chemotherapy

For Karen, a dear friend of Linda Ross, for healing

For Dave Marrotta, a friend of Tim Wagenknecht and Yvonne Bernschneider who battles recurring cancer and consequent treatment

Please hold these families in prayer as they grieve the loss of their loved one:

For the family of Greg Miller, son of Jerry & Margaret Miller, upon his recent death

For the family of Elizabeth Velarde, Yolanda Mosley’s mother, upon her recent death

For the family of Anne Lieberknecht, upon her recent death

For the family of Christopher Vandezande, upon his recent death (Margie Vandezandee’s grandson)

For the family of Hazel Dell Hansen who recently died (Hazel is a cousin to Margaret Schwalm and Nelius Ronning)

For the family of Dawn Aiken, cousin to Pamela Baldwin, upon her recent death

For the family of Scott Yant, Katie Yant’s brother-in-law, who recently died





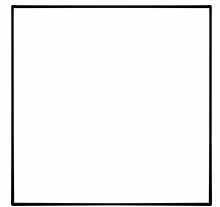
Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

1 West Avenida de Los Arboles

Thousand Oaks CA 91360-2939

805 492-1234 office churchoffice@htlcto.org www.htlcto.org

Return service requested



April

2026

ALTAR FLOWER DONATIONS

If you would like to purchase and donate flowers for the church altar, please fill out **THIS FORM** or follow the instructions below.

1. **Sign Up:** Visit the Flower Chart located on the kiosk in the narthex and select the date you would like the flowers to be placed on the altar.
2. **Payment:** The cost is \$65. Please write "Flowers" on the memo line of your check to ensure proper allocation or use an Altar Flower Envelope, available in the narthex. Kindly make your payment by the Wednesday prior to your selected date to allow ample time for ordering.
3. **Bulletin Note:** Email your dedication and any color preferences to churchoffice@htlcto.org by noon on Wednesday to be included in the Sunday bulletin.
4. **Pickup:** After the second service, you are welcome to take the flowers home.



April Fun Fact!

April gets its name from the Latin word aperire, meaning "to open"—a nod to flowers blooming and the earth coming back to life in spring. It's also the month of April Fools' Day, a day dedicated to harmless pranks and laughter. And a fun calendar fact: in any given year, April always has 30 days and is one of four months that do!