



THE BELL TOWER August 2026



Our mission is to:

Teach and share God's Word with those around us

Live in fellowship with one another and foster Christ-centered relationships

Care and grow in faith by serving God and His People

God's Good Gifts

As the summer is starting to wrap up, I have spent some time reflecting on the blessing it has been to have Megan and Josiah and Saige living with us. Having those special moments with my granddaughter and watching my daughter and son-in-law parenting Saige. I think we don't do as much of reflecting and seeing the blessings that have come our way as often as we should. I once again came across a devotion that my former pastor growing up wrote, I should probably start paying him royalties for the number of devotions I have used of his in the past few years, but I think he does a good job of talking about God's blessings and seeing them and sharing them for what they are, blessings. Have a blessed month.

In the not-so-distant past, air conditioning was not the norm. Most cities had big parks full of ponds and trees where families would go on the weekend to escape the heat. When I visited my grandparents in St. Joe, Missouri, Krug Park was the weekend getaway for family picnics and shady breezes. Our highlight as kids was feeding pieces of bread to the swarms of goldfish in the pond. I imagine that is where my practice of saving stale bread to feed to our birds got its beginnings, as I continue to "cast my bread upon the waters."

For a couple years, we fed bread to our resident crows. For some reason they have moved on to another part of the neighborhood and squirrels now seem to enjoy bread as much as the birds. Yesterday, however I saw something new. One squirrel scampered back and forth looking for bread and found a big piece. He looked around to make sure he was alone, ran to the other side of the yard, and started digging a hole. This was a first as I watched him bury a chunk of bread into the earth. He ran away, likely proud of his accomplishment but is in for a big surprise. That bread will not be there should he return, and unlike an acorn will not produce a bread tree. A futile effort and waste of stale bread! Having watched something new I considered how we often do the same thing as we encounter something new, unexpected, desirable and respond as we are conditioned to do. We often see our surprises as blessings we deserve and hide them for a rainy day (or to keep others from enjoying we would rather not share.) Too easily we hide what we don't know how to handle, but our first inclination is typically not to embrace what comes as a surprise. We are like pack-rats with so much hidden away for a rainy day, or safely locked up so no one else can take what is ours. One of the first words of all children, after learning to say dad or mom is the word "mine!" When Jesus taught us to pray "give us our daily bread," the point was to remember all we have is a gift from God, rather than understand he was teaching God is the giver of all good gifts. To say "thank you" rather than "mine."

Obviously, squirrels don't understand such notions and simply do what they are conditioned to do. But as Jesus taught so often, sharing and surrendering to others allows blessings to become gifts that change us. That can never happen when our chunks of bread are buried or hidden away. God gave us sun and moon, water and trees, birds and puppy dogs not as special gifts just for me but to reveal the greatness of his love for all. The story of Adam and Eve is a reminder there is a stale breath that encourages us to selfishly assume we deserve more and we are easily conditioned to grab as much as we can and bury what we don't want to ever have shared. Jesus' example of washing feet and inviting the unloved to family meals was a better example for us than a squirrel hiding bread in a hole in the ground. Selfishness is often our first response as we scurry to gather and hoard before anyone else can take what is rightfully mine.

How much better it is to remember blessings are multiplied as they are shared and what we bury in the ground simply decays and is lost from its potential intent. The squirrel never heard the words about not hiding our light under a basket. But we have, and that changes what we do with the bread that is cast upon our waters.

In Him,

Pastor Brett

August's Memory Verse

"I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."

John 16:33

Worship Schedule for August

Sunday, August 2nd - 9am Worship with Communion

Sunday, August 9th - 9am Worship

Sunday, August 16th- 9am Worship with Communion

Wednesday, August 19th – 7pm Worship with Communion

Sunday, August 23rd – 9am Outdoor Worship

Sunday, August 30th – 9am Worship with Communion

Electronic Giving: Scan the QR code to give via Subsplash. The QR code will also bring you to our livestream and newsletter.



2026 Trinity Council Members

Gary Schellack, Chairman
Cody Nelson, Elder
Bob Johnk, Elder
Adam Schellack, Elder
Lance Kistner, Elder
Curt Hutchins, Elder
Derrick Grenz, Elder



Adam Hanson, Trustee
Jesse Sandry, Trustee
Rich Hayes, Trustee
Erik Hanson, Secretary
Amy Wohlwend, Treasurer

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Jessica Heim
Cassie Waggoner
Kayme Torgerson

BOARD OF EVANGELISM

Lynn Johnk
Amanda Nelson
Janelle Kistner

BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP

Tera Orr
Nikki Grenz
Amy Rasmussen

Council Meeting Minutes

July 8, 2026

Teach and share God's Word with those around us. Live in fellowship with one another and foster Christ centered relationships. Caring and growing in faith by serving God and His people.

Members in attendance: Erik Hanson, Pastor Brett Hartwig, Jessica Heim, Curt Hutchins, Bob Johnk, Lynn Johnk, Cody Nelson, Gary Schellack, Amy Wohlwend

1. Call to order – Gary Schellack
2. Opening prayer – Pastor Brett Hartwig
3. Approve agenda – Motion by Lynn Johnk to approve the agenda. Seconded by Cody Nelson. Motion passed.
4. Secretary's report – A correction to the previous minutes was noted to by Curt Hutchins. Motion by Curt Hutchins to approve the minutes with this correction. Seconded by Amy Wohlwend. Motion passed.
5. Treasurer's report – Submitted by Amy Wohlwend.
 - a. The balance sheet format has been slightly revamped to better distinguish between general funds available for operations and funds that are restricted for specific designations.
 - b. Operating income from offerings was \$7,318.43 for the month of June. Total expenses just for church operations were \$21,292.77, resulting in an operating deficit of (\$13,878.66) for the month. Year-to-date, the offering is short (\$7,257.65).
 - c. The actual-to-budget remaining report excludes capital improvement and cemetery income and expenses, as those items utilize their own dedicated sources of funding and are not budgeted for.
6. Committee reports
 - a. Elder – Report by Bob Johnk.
 - i. Elders met prior to the council meeting.
 - ii. Discussions included cemetery business and coordinating coverage for the upcoming pastoral absences scheduled for July 19 and August 9.
 - b. Trustee – Report by Gary Shellack on behalf of trustees.
 - i. Ongoing HVAC updates will be discussed in old business section.
 - ii. Jesse Sandry completed the installation of new baby changing tables in the church restrooms.
 - c. Evangelism – Report by Lynn Johnk.
 - i. Summer is traditionally a slower season for evangelism activities, and no major events are planned during the summer months.
 - ii. The committee is currently focusing efforts on planning activities for the fall season.
 - d. Board of Education – Report submitted by Jessica Heim.
 - i. Vacation Bible School registration reached was 34 with 30 in attendance. The volunteer-to-participant ratio was highly effective this year. Family Night was hosted on the final Thursday of VBS and was a success, drawing over 100 attendees. Planners noted they were happy with walk-ins and the high turnout among the younger children.
 - ii. Rally Sunday is scheduled for September 13, and the tentative final day of Sunday School is set for May 16. The curriculum selection for the upcoming Sunday School year remains under evaluation.
 - e. Pastor's report – Submitted by Pastor Brett Hartwig.
 - i. Official Acts include no baptisms or funerals for the month. Average attendance for June was 45.
 - ii. Pastor continues to serve as the Vicar's supervisor at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church following their pastor taking a call in April. Pastor will also serve as the part-time vacancy pastor until their new pastor arrives in September.
 - iii. The Adult Bible Study focused on the parables over the past month, exploring their meanings and everyday applications. This study will resume in August following the national convention.

- iv. Pastor assisted with the openings and closings for VBS. Over 100 people attended the closing celebration, which featured Ohana Shaved Ice.
- v. The Summer Worship schedule has been finalized, featuring outdoor worship services scheduled for July 26 and August 23. Wednesday Evening Worship services continue on the first Wednesday of each month. Evaluation is underway to potentially increase the frequency to twice a month beginning in September.
- vi. Continued collaboration with the planning committee to host Tanner Olsen at Our Redeemer. The committee is currently identifying event sponsors. Pastor also continues to lead monthly chapel services at the ORLC Child Care facility.
- vii. Pastor will serve as the circuit pastoral delegate for the LCMS National Convention in Phoenix, Arizona, and will be out of the office from July 18–23.

7. Old business

- a. Pastor attended the Sabin Harvest Days community planning meeting. Trinity Lutheran Church has been given full responsibility for the 5K event. Most other Harvest Days activities will be centralized around the church grounds.
- b. Gary Schellack and Randy Schellack consulted with Fritz Electric regarding the church heating and cooling infrastructure. One air conditioning unit was successfully replaced. Fritz Electric advised against replacing the remaining furnace and AC units prematurely, noting that they can be easily repaired or replaced efficiently upon breakdown.
- c. The concrete installation for the patio project has been scheduled. The project is currently on standby and is anticipated to be completed within the next few weeks.
- d. Invitations for the RedHawks Baseball Night have been distributed by the Pastor. Ticket orders will be finalized tomorrow morning for this Friday's game.
- e. Cody Nelson reported that a trial run of robotic mowers was conducted on a section of the cemetery grounds with favorable results. Based on this trial, he recommends the purchase of two robotic mowers for a total capital expenditure of \$8,000. Cody has agreed to take the lead on equipment deployment and training.

8. New business

- a. The council entered discussion regarding an agenda item from Bruce Hanson concerning constitutional spending limits. It was noted that if the baseline limits have not been updated from church constitution, frequent meetings would be required to approve routine expenditures. Pastor has solicited feedback from peers regarding structural spending limits at other congregations. This financial policy amendment will be presented to the voters for discussion at this Sunday's upcoming meeting, with future additions noted for consideration.

9. Other new business

- a. Lynn Johnk raised a point of inquiry regarding whether the council should consider adjusting the regular meeting schedule to an alternative night of the week.
- b. Lynn Johnk mentioned possibility of developing a formal training structure for incoming committee members.
- c. Lynn Johnk started a discussion of costs and benefits of the Subsplash platform, which manages the church website, app, and digital giving. Pastor noted its effectiveness as an outreach mechanism for non-members and reported that the app has exceeded 200+ active downloads.

10. Adjourn meeting – Motion by Amy Wohlwend to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Cody Nelson.
Motion passed.

11. Closing prayer – Pastor Brett Hartwig

Church Happenings

Golf this Summer - Join us again this month for golf. We will meet Sunday, August 9th at approximately 4:30 p.m. for nine holes of golf @ Village Green Golf Course in Moorhead.

There will also be a weekday option at Willow Creek Golf Course just east of Barnesville where we will meet on Tuesday, August 25th at 7:45 a.m.

At Willow Creek there will be a short devotion including donuts (BYOB) prior to teeing off. If interested in joining please provide your name and text contact information to Bruce (701-261-9734) for more details.

Harvest Days - We are looking for volunteers to help with Harvest's Day, Saturday, August 15th. We need help with the 5K and then serving food. If you are interested, please sign-up at

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0B4EAFAB2BAAFC1-64894864-harvest>



ESPN Fantasy Football and CBS Pick'em - will be starting soon with the first NFL game slated for Wednesday, September 9th. If you would like to join either league, please send an email to brucehansonbrsfd@gmail.com. If you have participated in the past, you have or will receive an invitation to rejoin soon.

Wednesday Evening Services - We are continuing our Wednesday Midweek service. Our service for July will be Wednesday, August 19th at 7pm. We will continue offering communion. Join us as we continue to grow in His Word and worship Him for who He is.

Adult Bible Study - This coming month we will continue our series on the parables. We will continue looking at some of the parables that Jesus used in His teachings. Come and join us this month and we continue to grow in His Word.

Women's Tuesday Evening Bible Study - All are welcome to attend the women's Bible study every other Tuesday. The study will start at 6:30pm and the topic will be women of the Bible. Emma Hansen will be leading the study. They will meet August 4th and 18th.

Youth Happenings

Sunday School - Sunday School Registration is open! Please use the QR code to register.



Rally Sunday - Join us for Rally Sunday after service on Sunday, September 13th to kick off the Sunday School year!

Backpack Blessing - for students and teachers will be during outdoor Worship on August 23rd. Bring your backpack and celebrate the beginning of a new school year.

August Celebrations

Birthdays

1st Maleah Schellack

2nd Amya Zapata

4th Amy Rasmussen, Rexton Rosenfeldt, Jesse Lass, Alex Hansen

5th Teresa Dickelman

6th Erika Escobar, Randy Johnk

7th Ashley Davis

9th Arlene Dickelman

11th Paula Dobmeier, Haylee Wohlwend

13th Brooke Windus

14th Micah Hall, Brooklyn Nelson

16th Russell Hoeck

17th Wayne Curry

18th Navey Kluver

21st Sandy Herbrandson

22nd Angie Dufault, Rob Rich

23rd Emma Brandt, Noah Brush

24th Edele Rosenfeldt

26th Darrell Byram, Paradise Rich-Johnson

27th Tina Windus

28th Angie Hansen

31st Ione Cook, Cheryl Nerby



Happy Anniversary



Anniversaries

3rd Pastor Brett and Carrie Hartwig - 24 years

8th Del and Jessica Lass - 18 years

8th Herman and Rennae Weiss - 56 years

13th Wayne and Jeanne Curry - 49 years

21st Ronald and Cheryl Hoeck - 55 years

24th Scott and Wendy Paulsen - 24 years

24th Hermie and Nicole Weiss - 24 years

25th Roger and Anne Morris - 47 years

28th Chuck and Sara Skatvold - 22 years

28th Philip and Karen Wagner - 33 years

August 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 9am – Worship with Communion 10:15am – Adult Bible Study	3	4 6:30pm – Women’s Bible Study	5	6	7	8
9 9am – Worship with Quarterly Voters Meeting following 10:15am – Adult Bible Study 4:30pm – Golf @ Moorhead Village Green	10	11	12 6:30pm – Elders Meeting 7:30pm – Council Meeting	13	14	15 Harvest Days
16 9am – Worship with Communion 10:15am - Adult Bible Study	17	18 6:30pm – Women’s Bible Study	19 7pm – Worship with Communion	20	21	22
23 9am – Outdoor Worship with backpack blessing 10:15am –Adult Bible Study	24	25 7:45am – Golf @ Willow Creek Barnesville	26	27	28	29
30 9am – Worship with Communion 10:15am – Adult Bible Study	31					

Trinity Lutheran Church
100 2nd Ave. W.
PO Box 198
Sabin, MN 56580

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

www.tlcsabin.com
tlcsabin@gmail.com
Pastor Brett Hartwig 218-790-8431
Paige Schmidt, Office Manager 218-789-7259

