

# Executive Summary

## Trinity Lutheran Church Council Meeting

April 14, 2026

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### Overall Assessment

The April council meeting focused on worship and music ministry, facilities planning, leadership transitions, financial oversight, and preparations for several important staffing and ministry changes. Several decisions made during this meeting would significantly shape the congregation's summer ministry, future staffing, and long-term facility planning.

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### Worship and Music Ministry

#### Organ Renewal

The organ emerged as one of the council's most significant long-term concerns.

- The current organ, installed in 1979, continues to deteriorate despite previous repairs.
- Several keys are no longer functioning properly.
- The current technician has indicated that substantial upgrades are necessary.
- Council endorsed the formation of an Organ Review Team, led by Jonathan Lonsway, to:
  - assess the instrument's condition
  - develop recommendations
  - explore fundraising opportunities
  - establish a long-term maintenance plan
- The goal is to address the organ before Trinity hosts the Synod Assembly in 2027.

#### Summer Worship Schedule

Council approved an important worship change:

- From Memorial Day through Labor Day, Sunday worship services will be combined into a single 9:30 a.m. service.
- Saturday evening worship will remain unchanged.
- The change to the Sunday morning summer worship format is intended to:
  - improve volunteer availability
  - strengthen congregational unity

- blend worship traditions and music styles
- Council agreed to evaluate feedback throughout the summer.

## Accessibility

Discussion regarding installation of ADA-compliant assistive listening technology was postponed for future consideration.

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## Staffing and Leadership Transitions

Several important personnel matters were discussed.

### Vicar Sophie Warnberg

- Trinity officially received its new Luther Seminary intern, Vicar Sophie Warnberg.
- Her one-year internship will begin in early June 2026.
- Council approved housing Sophie in the 3711 Jefferson Avenue house.
- The St. Andrews parsonage will remain available for future pastoral staff.

### Additional Staffing

- Applications for the Communication & Office Administrator position are under review.
  - Conversations began with the bishop regarding a possible part-time pastor to assist with visitation, worship, and pastoral care.
  - The possibility of a retired pastor serving in this role was discussed.
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## Financial Highlights

Despite market volatility, Trinity remained financially stable.

- Giving continued to run ahead of expectations.
- Investment portfolios experienced losses due to stock market conditions.
- Total assets remained approximately \$2.59 million.
- Unified fund giving exceeded budget projections through the first quarter.
- Year-to-date giving was approximately 112% of budget expectations.

- **March 2026:**

○ Income:	\$91,954
○ Expenses:	<u>\$99,903</u>
○ Difference:	(\$7,949)

- **YTD thru March 2026:**

○ Income:	\$268,499
○ Investment Return thru March 2026:	(\$10,100)
○ Expenses:	<u>\$287,290</u>
○ Difference:	(\$28,891)

*Not Included: Dedicated Fund and Trinity Trust Fund Balances*

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## **Annual Financial Audit**

Council received the results of an independent financial review. Key findings included:

- Strong internal controls are generally in place.
- No exceptions were found in testing:
  - giving receipts
  - payroll
  - designated funds
  - credit card expense management
  - disbursements
- Several recommendations were made to strengthen documentation, oversight, and review processes.
- Council agreed that regular audits should continue in the future.

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## **Facilities and Property**

### **Camp Trinity at Wixom Lake**

Council discussed renewed investment in Trinity Camp.

- Rising property assessments associated with the lake restoration have strained the camp budget.
- Council approved an additional \$5,000 for minor camp improvements and repairs.
- Volunteer work projects are being developed.
- Council expressed interest in future meetings and activities at the camp property.

### **Church Facilities**

Additional facility updates included:

- Installation of a new double oven in the kitchen.
- Continued discussion regarding parsonage use.
- Potential use of Trinity's parking lot during the LPGA event.

- Exploration of a community garden partnership with the Disability Network.
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## **Preschool and Children's Ministry**

Council reaffirmed that the preschool is an important ministry of the congregation.

- More regular meetings between church and preschool leadership were encouraged.
  - Greater alignment between the preschool and congregational ministry was emphasized.
  - Children's ministry continued to expand opportunities for participation, including:
    - new acolyte training
    - family events
    - regional youth ministry collaboration
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## **Strategic Planning**

Work continued on the congregation's strategic planning process.

A congregational presentation was being prepared highlighting priorities in:

1. Children's ministry.
2. Youth and young adults.
3. Relationships and outreach.
4. Leadership and communication.

The strategic plan emphasized Trinity's core values of Christ-centeredness, love, service, welcome, and generosity.

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## **Vicar Tim and Future Ministry**

Vicar Tim reported:

- Ongoing participation in Listening in Love.
  - Continued preaching responsibilities.
  - Active discernment with several congregations regarding his first call.
  - Anticipated graduation in May and eventual ordination later in the year.
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# Looking Ahead

The April meeting positioned Trinity for several important developments:

- Welcoming Vicar Sophie.
- Launching the summer worship schedule.
- Advancing organ renewal planning.
- Continuing strategic plan implementation.
- Exploring additional pastoral staffing.
- Investing in Camp Trinity.
- Strengthening internal financial processes.

The council demonstrated a strong commitment to long-term planning, responsible stewardship, and preparing the congregation for future ministry opportunities.