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Ingrid C. A. Rasmussen, David Larson-Martínez, and Doug Mork, Pastors

JOIN US EVERY SUNDAY FOR WORSHIP SERVICE AT 10:00 A.M.

Love and stardust

By: [Elise Seyfried](#) / February 13, 2026, Living Lutheran

You are dust and to dust you shall return ([Genesis 3:19](#)).

Atoms in our bodies trace to the remnants of exploded stars. We are stardust. We are alive in the universe. And the universe is alive within us (astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson).



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I'm never prepared for the beginning of Lent. For one thing, the date moves around each year. Ash Wednesday is always 46 days before Resurrection Sunday, but it can be quite early (Feb. 4) or very late (March 10). There are years when people wear shorts along with their [forehead ashes](#), and years when Easter egg hunts are preempted by snowstorms.

Beyond the calendar confusion, I never feel quite ready for the [Lenten season](#) in general. While I understand that it is the time to focus on reorienting myself toward God, I'm not always inclined to do that heart and soul work.

I used to be the queen of Lenten sacrifice, spending six weeks in chocolate withdrawal, reading books instead of flipping through TV channels. But I've stopped giving up soft drinks and snack cakes and have faced the fact that my real motives have always been ulterior: weight loss, cleaner teeth, clearer skin. Curbing social media time and getting more sleep were likewise selfishly undertaken disciplines. Recently, I've committed instead to a deepening of my spiritual practices—but that's still very much a work in progress, and I've been looking ahead to this Lent as more of the same old struggle.

This year, Ash Wednesday falls on Feb. 18, just four days after Valentine's Day. This seems like an odd coupling at first—polishing off big, heart-shaped boxes of Godiva chocolates

(continued on next page)

TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD READINGS

*Exodus 24:12-18; Psalm 2;
2 Peter 1:16-21; Matthew 17:1-9*

ADULT FORUM

Holy Trinity Adult Forums feature in-person presentations beginning at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday. The presentations are also available via [Zoom](#) (meeting ID:858 5687 1594; passcode:317879) for those unable to attend in person.

February 15 "Move Your Money:

Break Up with Your Bank

Please join the members of our Creation Care Committee for a presentation and discussion on how your banking choices can have a positive impact on the environment and climate justice. Creation Care will also share updates on other parts of their work. This committee has led on bringing solar panels and LED lighting to Holy Trinity and our neighborhood, greater investment in clean energy, resiliency hubs, and more. Join us at 9:00 a.m. in the Library or on [Zoom](#).

February 22 Youth Recital in the Sanctuary

Join us in the Sanctuary or on Zoom as we celebrate the gifts of several of Holy Trinity's young people during our annual recital.

~ Concerning People ~

We pray today for all those in need of God's tender care, especially those who face illness, sorrow, or hard times. We pray especially for **Scott** and **Emilee Hendrix**; **Carol Berg**; **Darren** and **Sarah**; **Paul Ramsour**; **Merlin Wells**; **Wilson Murray**; **Dorothy Kelly**; **Nikki Randolph-Martinez**; **Carol Kelly**; **Mary Petersen**; Tre Tellor's mom **Jill**; **Tina** and **Neela**; **Rick Lathrop**; Karen Batdorf's sister **Marie**; **Josie Tober**; **Stella Townsend**; **Angel Blanco**; all people deeply hurt and affected by ICE activity

P A R I S H I N F O R M A T I O N

may not be the best way to show repentance for our sins. But the more I think about it, the more the two observances fit perfectly together.

The ashy reminder of our mortality that begins the Lenten season doesn't just mean, "Hey, you're dying a little more every day!" Likewise, Valentine's Day isn't only about flower deliveries and exchanging mushy greeting cards. Love is the core meaning of both special annual events.

On Valentine's Day, we celebrate the people we care about most, grateful for their continued presence in our lives. Love is also a vital part of the imposition of ashes: Not only did God love us into existence—and throughout our earthly lives—but God gives us the ultimate gift of love: eternal life.

The demise of our bodies, our return to dust, is just the beginning of a glorious next chapter for us. The Genesis verse repeated to us as our foreheads are being smudged doesn't tell us that we are doomed—quite the opposite. We will be free, someday, of our bodies, and our souls will soar. That makes death something to think about, but not to fear.

A shining trail

Stars have been connected with love stories for thousands of years. There's the mythological pair of Eurydice and Orpheus, whose lyre was flung into the sky after his death, creating the constellation Lyra. And, of course, there's the Shakespearean "star-crossed lovers," Romeo and Juliet. The twinkling stars are considered romantic, beautiful things to gaze at and wish upon.

The stars in the February night sky appear unusually bright and sharp due to the colder air. The light we see from them has traveled thousands of light years—far beyond any human lifespan. And that soul-light, that stardust, will continue to shine long past our earthly deaths.

There are times in human history that are exceptionally difficult and challenging. Times when affection and compassion seem to be in short supply, when the voices of hate and division drown out a kinder, gentler response. There's no question—we are living in one of those times right now. How do we keep hope for a brighter future alive when the forces of darkness are advancing all around us?

We need to recognize that we ourselves *are* the hope we've been wishing for on our special star. God has given us all we need to transform our world. Clouds may obscure the stars for a while, but then they gloriously sparkle once more. It's up to us, here and now, to live in love and leave a shining trail of love arcing through the sky. It's a trail that anyone and everyone can follow. Our light can lead one another out of the dark.

So let's celebrate love on Valentine's Day and then again on Ash Wednesday—and again and again throughout Lent, to Easter and beyond. Let love forever be our purpose and our guiding star. And may we enter this Lent joyfully, with love-filled, star-dusted hearts.

PANCAKE BREAKFAST SUCCESS—THANK YOU!

Thank you to everyone who helped and participated in the 2026 pancake breakfast. What a fun and successful day!

What a great group of kids. I so look forward to being involved. ~ Tom Skold

Thanks everyone for making it happen. It is a well oiled machine I would say. It is a joy watching the kids take pride in making their event a success. ~ Katy Benson



THIS WEEK

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 15—COMBINED SUNDAY SCHOOL AND CONFIRMATION CRAFT-MAKING

Breakfast / 8:30 a.m.

Join us in the Community Room for a light breakfast and hot coffee starting at 8:30 a.m. Please note: Adult supervision will not be provided, so parents and caregivers are expected to stay with their children until 9:00 a.m.

Combined Faith Formation / 9:00–9:50 a.m.

Join us in the Community Room in which we will learn about Saint Valentine, create Valentine's Day crafts, and spend time together.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15—SAMBUSAS IN THE COMMUNITY ROOM AFTER WORSHIP

Sambusas from Quruxley restaurant will be for sale in the Community. Sponsored by the Racial Justice Committee.

FEBRUARY 2026: BOOK GROUP WITH PASTOR INGRID

This season, our whole congregation is invited into a transformative book study on *The Power of Bridging: How to Build a World Where We All Belong* by John A. Powell. Drawing from years of research and community practice, Powell offers a hopeful, practical vision for healing divides and nurturing belonging in a fragmented world. Together, we'll explore what it means to "bridge" across differences and try simple, meaningful actions that strengthen connection in our daily lives.

Across the region, thousands of people have already joined this growing movement through the Bush Foundation's book club, and we're excited to add our voices to the conversation. Whether you're eager to deepen relationships, strengthen our communal life, or practice new ways of engaging across difference, this study will offer inspiration and tools for the journey. Copies of the book have been provided by the Bush Foundation and distributed to Holy Trinity members. A few extra copies are available in the Community Room for friends and visitors who'd like to join the book read.

AARP TAX AIDE—NOW-APRIL 8

AARP Tax Aide will again be available at Holy Trinity to provide assistance with 2025 tax preparation for seniors and low-income taxpayers. Tax assistance is available at Holy Trinity on Mondays and Wednesdays now through Wednesday, April 8. The procedures necessary to receive tax assistance will be the same as those used in 2025. The steps to take are described below. You will need an appointment to have your tax documents prepared at Holy Trinity. Call **612-567-2368** between the hours of **9:00-11:00 a.m. or 1:00-3:00 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday**. Please have your 2024 tax return available.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17—WEEKLY SCRIPTURE READINGS STUDY

Join Pastor Doug and congregants on Tuesdays at 11:00 a.m. in the youth library or on Zoom to study the assigned worship readings for the upcoming Sunday. Participants need not attend every session, and no prior bible experience is necessary (to join on [Zoom](#): Meeting ID: 872 7504 3389, Passcode: 336030).

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18—ASH WEDNESDAY AT 6:00 P.M.

As the days slowly lengthen, we begin the holy season of Lent. The ashes we receive on our foreheads remind us that we, along with all of creation, are dependent on God's grace. A service with the imposition of ashes will be held in the sanctuary at 6:00 p.m. *Please note: We will not have a soup supper tonight; those will begin next week.* We are moving Ash Wednesday worship one hour earlier so that our younger members can participate more easily. The Adult Choir will share music at the 6:00 p.m. worship service.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18—GLORIA RINGERS REHEARSAL ONLY

Gloria Ringers rehearsal (7:00-8:00 p.m.)

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18—TH!RD ACT ACTION

Join member of TH!RD ACT and other groups from around the country, Wednesday, February 18 to urge lawmakers to impose a moratorium on all Data Center construction until proper regulations are in place to protect our water, clean energy, and communities. We'll meet in the Capitol rotunda at 9:45 a.m. For more information, contact Dennis O'Brien or visit: <https://thirdact.org/minnesota/>

Also, thank you to the 76 Holy Trinity members and friends who joined 1,000 others in signing the TH!RD ACT petition asking our governor to initiate legislation to require thorough environmental impact review before any more centers are allowed in Minnesota. Those petitions were delivered by a delegation to the governor's office last week.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19—ENCORE! AT TURTLE BREAD

Encore! (the group for members 50 years of age and older) meets monthly at 8:00 a.m. at Turtle Bread (4205 E. 34th St.). There is no agenda. Breakfast goers simply get to know one another. No sign up necessary.



LIBRARY NEWS

Greetings, Readers! In these days, it can be hard to concentrate on reading. But, if you want to delve into something new, just know that we have been busy cataloging new acquisitions (60+ since August). Some we purchased, some were donated, some just appeared(!).

You will find several anthologies from the Prison Writing Workshop displayed in a small bookcase at the front wall of the library.

To see all the new titles, you pick up a printed list in the library or find the catalogue online at

<https://holytrinitylutheran.library.site/>
or try our new QR code.



SAVE THE DATE

YOUTH RECITAL SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 9:00 A.M.

We celebrate the musical gifts of several of Holy Trinity's young people during our annual music recital in the Sanctuary at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, February 22. This will serve as our adult forum for the day. Sign up in the Community Room, or contact Phil if you wish to perform (pradtke@htlcmpls.org).

SOUP SUPPER HELP NEEDED WEDNESDAYS IN LENT, FEB. 25, MARCH 4, 11, 18, AND 25

For each Wednesday during Lent, four households are needed to prepare and serve enough soup for 30 people, one household is needed to prepare 6 boxes of Kraft macaroni and cheese, one person is needed to pick up bread by 2:00 p.m. at Laune Bread on Lake Street (preordered and prepaid), and volunteers are needed to set up and clean up each Wednesday in Lent. Please sign up in the Community Room if you can help.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26—SISTERS' CAMELOT GROCERY DISTRIBUTION

Sisters' Camelot is a collectively run nonprofit founded in 1997 that is focused on food justice, waste reduction, sustainable living, community building, and youth education. They share free organic groceries and free organic meals with the community. They deliver groceries at Holy Trinity on the fourth Thursday of each month at 2:30 p.m. Distribution takes place outside by our pizza oven.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26—EXPLORE SPIRITUAL PRACTICES – WINTER SMALL GROUP

Final session for this group meets in the Library at 7:00 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28—CHILDREN AND YOUTH CHOIR FESTIVAL

Singers in 1st through 12th grade are invited to be part of the Twin Cities Children and Youth Choir Festival held at Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church. This festival, sponsored by Choristers Guild, brings together young singers to grow through the rehearsals with guest directors, and gives choir directors and educators time in workshops and sessions that build their skills. Cantor Phil will be leading a session on vocal techniques for young voices. The elementary choir (grades 1-5) will work with Jennifer Cadwell while 6th-12th graders will spend time with Paolo Debuque. Morning rehearsals will end with an afternoon concert that is free and open to the public. If your singer wishes to participate in the festival please contact Cantor Phil for registration.

SUNDAY MARCH 1 ADULT FORUM—“HOW CAN WE KEEP FROM SINGING?”

Singing in these times of oppression feeds the soul. Songs tell the stories of love of neighbor, civil resistance and connection with each other. Join us March 1st during the Adult Forum to sing songs with Mary Preus and Tom Witt, well-known Lutheran music leaders. Both have released multiple recordings that reflect honoring diversity and justice. No history of singing required - all voices welcome. Sponsored by the Racial Justice Committee.

NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION SUNDAY, MARCH 1

We invite interested persons to consider membership in this congregation. The orientation will be held from 9:00-10:00 a.m. in the Bartsch room. Breakfast will be served. There are no prerequisites; all are welcome. Please sign up in the Community Room if you intend to come.

 I'm a Saint Paul resident, scientist, and mom of four (Ray, 19; Sam, 18; Frank, 10; Mona, 9).

ESPECIALLY NOW, FINDING A FAITH COMMUNITY THAT CELEBRATES AND CENTERS ITS THEOLOGY ON RADICAL LOVE OF NEIGHBOR, SEEKING JUSTICE, AND CARE OF OUR WORLD AS EXPRESSIONS OF FAITH HAS BEEN IMPORTANT FOR NOT ONLY MY OWN SPIRITUAL GROWTH, BUT FOR THAT OF MY CHILDREN.

From my first visit to HTLC, we've felt accepted and spiritually at home; people put me to work to care for others beyond Sunday at 10:00 a.m., expanding prior thoughts on what it means to seek justice and love our neighbor. In HTLC, we've found a community that can help us leverage and grow our existing gifts and strengths, while accepting and building space for our vulnerabilities and limitations as humans." —Angie Eder (she/her)

A DAY ON THE HILL—THURSDAY, MARCH 5

Day on the Hill - Repeal MN Anti-Boycott Laws: MN Statutes 3.226 and 16C.053, deny state contracts to MN companies for exercising their First Amendment rights by boycotting Israel. Join the Palestine/Israel Committee on March 5th for (the second) First Amendment Rights Day on the Hill. We will come together to Register for freedom of speech, tell our stories to legislators, and persuade them to Repeal the Anti-Boycott Law! **The deadline to register for the Free Speech Coalition Day on the Hill is February 17th, 2026.** Register [here!](#) If you register after February 18, we'll put you on a waiting list and contact you about other ways to get involved. Sign up in Community Room if you want to connect with other Holy Trinity members for this event.

2025 THRIVENT CHOICE® DOLLARS EXPIRE MARCH 31

Since 2010, over \$370 million has been distributed to churches, schools, and other nonprofits through Thrivent Choice®. Through this program, eligible members can recommend where Thrivent donates millions of charitable outreach dollars each year. Please consider recommending Holy Trinity for your Thrivent Choice Dollars.

AUGUST 7-11—FAMILY-FRIENDLY BOUNDARY WATERS TRIP

Attention campers, (and aspiring campers). We have been busy planning for HTLC's annual BWCA canoe trip. This year, our Boundary Waters camping adventure is scheduled for August 7-11 and we can have a group of 18. The 18 spots are filled, but you can put your name on a waiting list if you're interested and we can let you know if anyone currently signed up has a chance in plans. The total cost is approximately \$175 per person. Scholarships are available. As always, this is a family-friendly trip. Call or email with any questions or for more details. Contact Tom at (612) 616-0507, or jtcahoy@gmail.com.

THANK YOU FROM SOUP FOR YOU!

Mary Gunderson, Soup For You! volunteer, clothes closet coordinator, and Holy Trinity Associate Member, would like to thank HT members and friends for all the wonderful clothes and winter apparel donations during the past few months. It's great to be able to provide the clothes closet for those in need and your donations help make it possible.

WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS FOR SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 10:00 AM

Guest Preacher	Paul Slack (he/him)
Presiding Minister	Doug Mork (he/him)
Cantor	Caren Hiatt (she/her)
Altar Guild	Roberta Shaw (she/her), Annie Hines (she/her)
Crucifer	Bob Hulteen (he/him)
Assisting Minister	Liz Conway (she/her)
Communion	Lori Lathrop (she/her), Sally Kohlstedt (she/her), Dennis O'Brien (he/him)
Ushers	Alan Libra (he/him), Chris Amundson (he/him), David Kohlstedt (he/him), Bob Peschutta (he/him)
Coffee Servers	Kathy Ekwall (she/her), Jamie Bistram (he/him)
Counters	Chris Engen (he/him)
Closer	Bob Hulteen (he/him)
Video Operator	Jan Mehlhoff (she/her)

Save the date and
get a new photo(s)
for the church
directory!

PHOTOGRAPHER AT HOLY TRINITY SUNDAY, MARCH 1, 9:00 A.M.-12:30 P.M.

All are encouraged to have new photos taken for Holy Trinity directories. A photographer will be available on Sunday, March 1, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Community Room. Appointments are not needed.

PARISH EVENTS FEBRUARY 15-21, 2026

Sunday, February 15	8:30 AM 9:00 AM 9:00 AM 10:00 AM 12:00 PM	Family Coffee Time Sunday School and Confirmation Craft-Making Adult Forum Worship Service of Holy Communion Swahili Service
Monday, February 16	6:30-8:00 PM	Adult Choir Rehearsal
Tuesday, February 17	11:00 AM	Worship Readings Discussion
Wednesday, February 18	6:00 PM 7:00-8:00 PM	Ash Wednesday Service Gloria Ringers
Thursday, February 19	8:00 AM	Encore! at Turtle Bread

LIVESTREAM LINKS FOR WORSHIP SERVICES

A [live-stream](#) of the 10:00 a.m. Sunday service is available online at 9:55 a.m.
You can access recordings of previous worship services [here](#).

