

The Monthly Newsletter of Trinity Reformed Church

CONNECTIONS

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Endings & Beginnings...

The end of one thing and the beginning of something new... With school starting this month, students are getting ready for a new year. Whether they're elementary age or college age, there is a mixture of nerves and excitement in the air: *What will this year bring? Who will I be at the end of this new school year?* As the summer winds down and a new school year begins, there is the joy and trepidation that comes in the transition between the two.

And for us here at Trinity, there's something similar happening.

This past month, we saw the ending of a staff position - our Children's Ministry Coordinator - and next month, we will begin a new position focused on community engagement and outreach. This month we will also start the process of nominations for two elders and two deacons in anticipation of our election of new office-bearers in October, which means we have to say good-bye to familiar faces on Consistory as they end their terms. And like the students around us, we wonder: *What will the year bring? Who will we be at the end of this new ministry year?* For some of us we love new things and for others of us change is uncomfortable and risky.

As we enter a time of endings and new beginnings, let's encourage each other and help one another in this new season of joy and trepidation!





A NOTE FROM PASTOR AMANDA

Dear Trinity Family,

Do you see that mesa in the picture above? That's known as Chimney Rock in Abiquiu, New Mexico. And I CLIMBED THAT! On an early morning hike before coffee. I know, I can hardly believe it either. The trek up there wasn't just rocky with several sharp and precarious slingbacks, but the elevation also changed by several thousand as we made our way up. Breathing became harder. Legs began to feel like they were made out of lead. A bit of dizziness set in. The change in elevation took a toll.

Signing up for a 4 mile hike before breakfast the night before didn't *sound* so difficult....but the hike proved much harder in the actual experience. Even though the *number* of miles wasn't daunting, the *effort* of those miles proved more challenging than a simple 4 mile walk. This experience - something that sounds easy, proving to be much harder in the actual doing - tracked with another part of my life.

Part of what I brought with me into my spiritual retreat at Ghost Ranch wasn't just my eagerness to learn about Sabbath from Rev. Dr. Carol Bechtel or my joy to be in the desert (one of my favourite landscapes) or the desire to get away for some solitude (any parent of younger children can relate!)...a big part of what I brought with me was the weight of **my decision to formally transfer my ordination from my home denomination, the Christian Reformed Church, to the Reformed Church in America.**

And this decision, this change in my life both vocationally and personally, has proven to be much harder in the actual experience of it. On paper, the change isn't a big deal. A bit of paperwork. An interview followed by a classical exam in September. Yet in real life, the change for me is an uprooting of belonging and vocational hopes. Disorienting. Exhausting. And hard.

The past few years in my home denomination have been tumultuous as we have fractured and fought over the issue of human sexuality. I hoped that we could find a way through that honored our theological differences and still valued our belonging to each other despite those differences. Like the CRC did in the 1990s over women in office when we agreed to live in a theological tension of "both/and" because we valued belonging over being "right". This time, the CRC has valued being theologically right over belonging to each other across differences of interpretation.

While I could persist longer in the CRC (practicing what I am preaching about belonging over being right), I am concerned that the partnership between the CRC and the RCA that makes it possible for me to serve Trinity Reformed Church may be in jeopardy. And I do not want to anxiously wait each year to see if the CRC Synod severs the CRC's ties with the RCA. I have found a church home with you all and I want to protect that.

Serving in Holland Classis these past two years, I have also witnessed the cost of the RCA's decision to value belonging to each other rather than forced agreement. I have deep respect for those who have chosen to live in the tension and still serve alongside each other. Because of this shared value, I realized that I can find a home in the RCA. But the change comes with significant loss - of denominational identity, of a sense of belonging, of dear colleagues and congregations. But even as I grieve all that is changed in my (almost) former denominational home, I am also excited about the new possibilities and opportunities to serve in the RCA and in Holland Classis and with you all.

If you want to hear more or have a question about any of this, please do not hesitate to reach out!

CURRENT SERMON SERIES

Consider the Birds: A Summer Series

The universe is before our eyes like a beautiful book in which all creatures, great and small, are as letters to make us ponder the invisible things of God

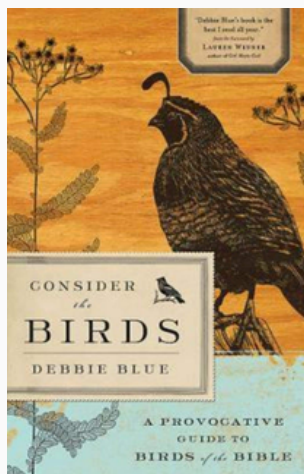
Belgic Confession Article 2

This summer we have been following the wisdom of the Belgic Confession and pondering what little creatures may have to teach us about the ways of our God. Inspired by a book by the pastor and preacher, Debbie Blue, we are taking seriously Jesus' invitation to consider the birds of the sky.

In August, we will continue to look at different birds named in Scripture by turning our attention to the Hen and the Raven. Then we will conclude the whole series by returning to the teaching of Jesus in Matthew 6.

After considering the dove and the quail, the eagle and the sparrow, the hen and the raven, how do we hear Jesus' words in a fresh way?

Let's consider the birds together and may these little letters in God's book of creation teach us and instruct us in the ways of our God...



August 3 - Guest Preacher

August 10 - Hen

August 17 - Raven

August 24 - Matthew 6:25-34

Memorization Challenge!

There's no better way to learn God's Word than by committing it to memory! So here's your challenge: **Memorize our series theme verse: Matthew 6:26-27.**

If you need more of a challenge, memorize Jesus' WHOLE teaching on worry: Matt 6:25-34

Consider the birds of the air....

They don't plant or gather crops. They don't put away crops in storerooms. But your Father who is in heaven feeds them.

Aren't you worth much more than they are?

Can you add even one hour to your life by worrying?

-Matthew 6:26-27

NAME THAT BIRD!

As we continue our summer worship series, we're considering the birds of the Bible AND the birds in our own backyard!

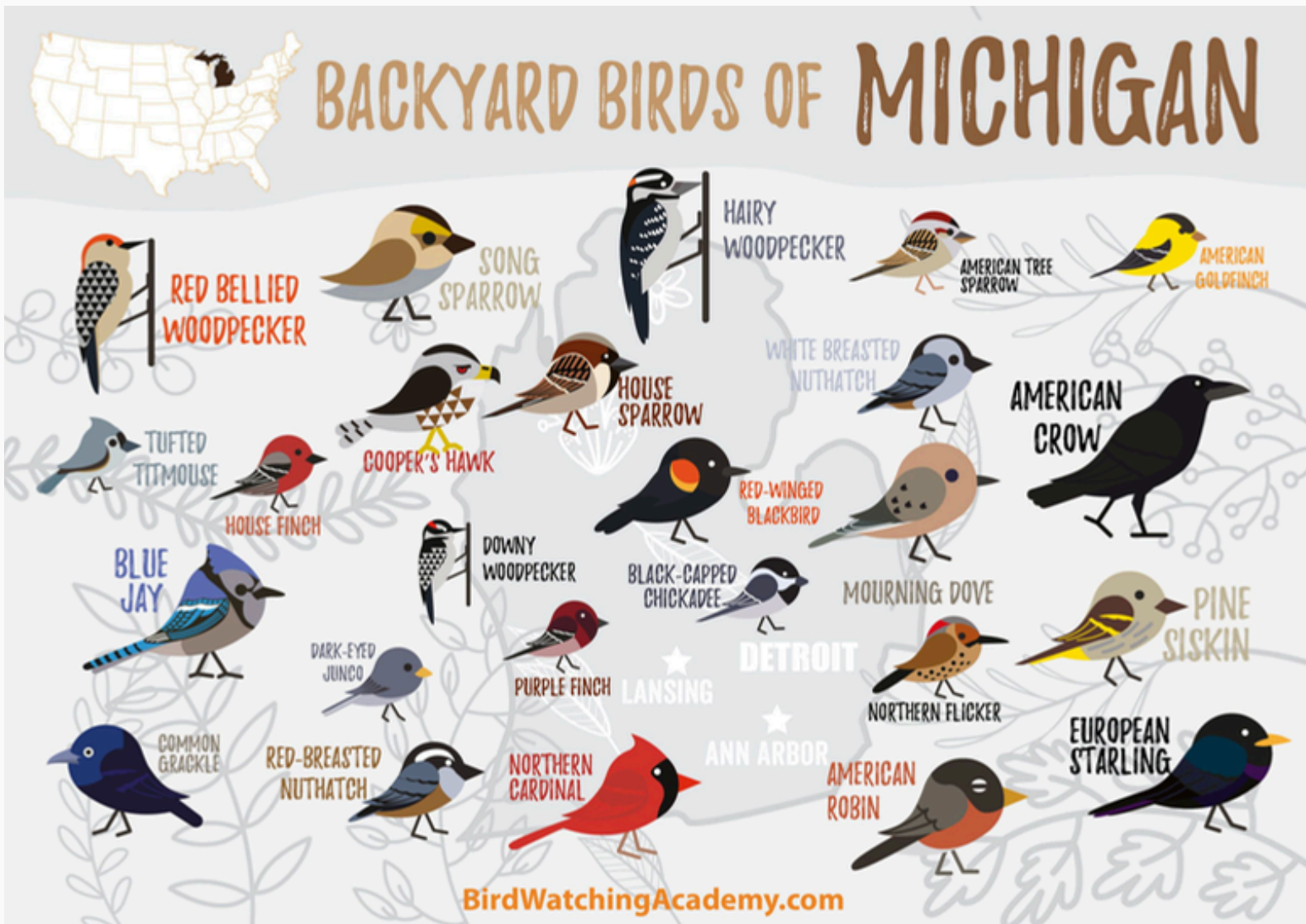
You're each challenged to be able to name and identity 10 of the most common backyard birds here in Michigan by the end of our series on August 24th!

Whether you're a long-time birder or you don't know a Robin from a Goldfinch, let's join together in learning, naming, and noticing our common backyard birds.

Checklist for the 10 Most Common Birds in Your Backyard this Summer:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> House Sparrow | <input type="checkbox"/> Blue Jay |
| <input type="checkbox"/> European Starling | <input type="checkbox"/> House Finch |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Robin | <input type="checkbox"/> Mourning Dove |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Cardinal | <input type="checkbox"/> American Crow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Common Grackle | <input type="checkbox"/> American Goldfinch |

Don't forget to track your sightings each week on the board in the foyer! At the end of the series, we'll count the stickers to see which bird was the most seen and named by Trinity!





TRINITY VOLUNTEERS!

This month's Trinity volunteer is Shirley Perez!

Shirley volunteers weekly at Refresh, a collaborative project between Community Action House and First United Methodist Church.

Refresh's mission is to provide access to services that increase dignity and eliminate barriers to housing stability.

First United Methodist provides showers in their church building to persons experiencing homelessness and, together with Community Action House, they provide access to services, case management, personal care items and clothing, mail collection, haircuts, and a light meal.

All this is made possible by volunteers like Shirley...



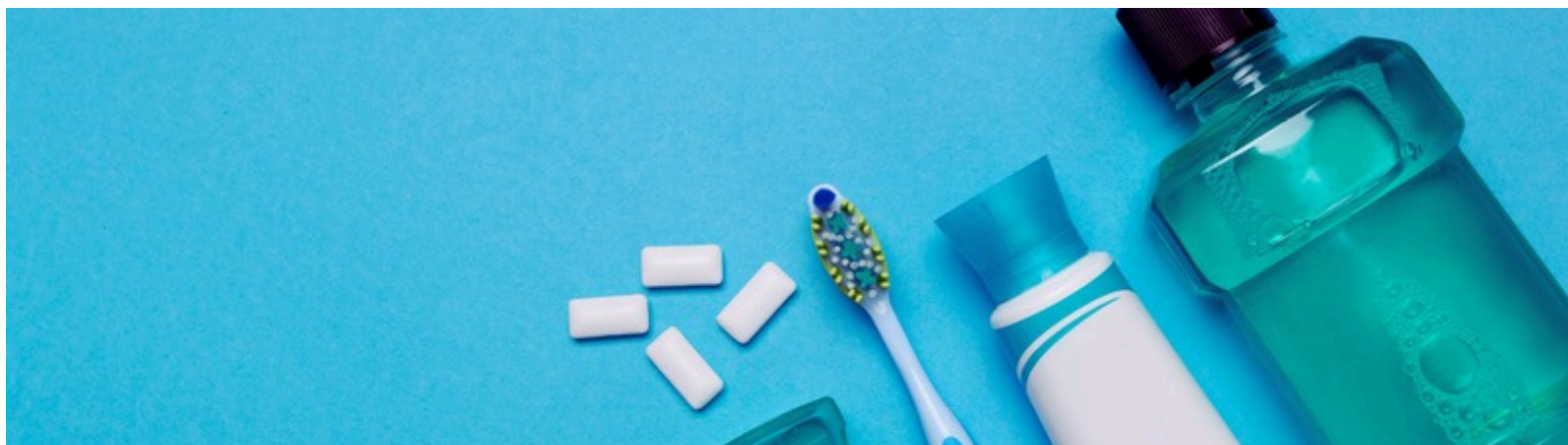
Q: How did you get started volunteering at Refresh?

Shirley: About six years ago, Pastor Deb was telling me about a new program that First United Methodist Church had started a few months before. She thought it might be a good volunteer opportunity for me. I have been working every Friday morning since! Usually 7:30am - 11:30am. Refresh also happens on Tuesday mornings and Wednesday evenings.

Q: What do you do at Refresh?

Shirley: At 8am the doors open and people rush in to sign up for showers. There are two large bathrooms each with showers in the gym area, one for women and one for men. My job is to welcome them and find out their needs. Usually a total change of clothes while waiting for their name to be called. Each person is allowed 15-20 minutes for showers. There is a menu to order breakfast while each person waits their turn for showers. Not everyone showers. Some come to associate and talk with friends. Some have appointments with Community Action House workers who work in our building and help with housing, etc. One person told me he comes because it's the only place he feels safe. How sad. It makes me sad to think what his life must be like.





I work my area with usually two other people going in and out of the closet getting clean clothes, hygiene products like toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant, first-aid products, sweatshirts, seasonal clothing, and some shoes. Whatever they need, we to supply.

We also have a laundry and washer/dryer for dirty clothes and to restock the closet. We try to keep some appropriate things on hand for their job interviews, too.

We can have from about 70-100 people at times. Winter brings other issues: COLD WEATHER. I have worked two nights in the warming center this past winter, with temperatures around 10 degrees and below outside. As the people come in we give them a blanket and a pillow. In the gym they find a corner to sleep. We supply hot drinks and snacks, and in the morning they turn in the pillow and blanket and put their name on a large plastic bag for use on the next frigid night.

I also at times take home extremely dirty clothes that need extra cleaning or mending: I put on missing buttons, hem pants, and put new strings in sweatshirts and sweatpants.

We also have haircuts every other Friday morning and someone who does "footcare" a few times a month.



According to officials in Ottawa County, there are roughly

2,000 people

experiencing homelessness here; living in cars, tents and storage units, or facing the elements head-on

from Holland Sentinel article, Dec 2024



Snapshot of the closet stocked and ready to be used

Q: And, finally, how does your volunteering deepen your relationship with God and your neighbor?

Shirley: I have enjoyed working these people at Refresh. Most of these people just need some love and encouragement. They need to be treated with dignity. And I enjoy helping and putting a smile on their faces.

And when people ask me why I do this, I just tell them what God told us to do: to love our neighbors.

And be thankful we can help.

Thank you to Shirley and all the Refresh volunteers for loving and serving our neighbors experiencing homelessness!



JERUSALEM TEMPLE GAZETTE

by Rexilius, investigative scribe of the Jerusalem Temple Gazette, AD 33 or so

Rex-- Hello, Readers. My guest today is the wife of Zebedee, and the mother of two of Miracle Rabbi Jesus' twelve closest followers, namely James and John, otherwise known as the "Sons of Thunder". My guest also has an interesting nickname among the Jesus group. They all call you "Sophia" which means "wisdom." But I detect an awful lot of tongue-in-cheek irony in that name. How did you happen to get nicknamed "wisdom?"

Sophia - Hi, Rex. I don't know why they keep calling me that. My name is Harriet and always has been. People have been giving me strange nicknames ever since I married Zebedee and moved to Galilee with him.

Well, Harriet/Sophia, are you willing to share any of these nicknames with us?

Sure, why not?

The first one I remember was when the twins, James and John, were starting elementary school. I walked with them into the homeroom and

demanded that the teacher seat them in the first row and right in the middle. I wanted them to have the best view of the teacher and the place where they would have the least distractions from the "antics" of their classmates. A good mother fights for the best for her kids, right? When I was walking out, I heard a strange name, "Helicopter." I had no idea what they were talking about. Every year after that, most of the teachers and most of the parents apparently thought that was my nickname.

I also had a talk with the PE scribe who ran the after-school games program, mostly soccer around here, you know. Anyway, I made sure he knew that James and John were really good midfielders and he should be sure to make sure they were on the "A-team" and starters. He called me "Madam Bair" even though my name tag said "Ms Bar-Jonah." All the rest of the parents of the kids on the team apparently thought that was my name too. I was called that a lot. The strangest name, even stranger to me than "Helicopter" was "Monday Morning." I asked several friends


Rexilius, an investigative scribe from AD 33, is the pen name of our very own Ron Blaukamp!

Ron started writing these interview style historical pieces many years ago as a way to process what he heard in sermons and deepen his own engagement with Scripture.

This month's column is inspired by Mark 3...

Jesus calls twelve men to be His apostles. Among them are "James son of Zebedee and his brother John (to them he gave the name Boanerges, which means Sons of Thunder)" (Mark 3:17).

This is the only place in Scripture that mentions the designation of the sons of Zebedee as the Sons of Thunder, and there is no stated explanation as to why Jesus named them this...



what that might mean. None of them had any idea why a day two days after Sabbath would be used as a nickname. Maybe someone in the future will know?

Anyway, the twins are often called by their nickname, "The Sons of Thunder." There again, what a crazy name. Zebedee's name doesn't mean "Thunder." His name is a variation of "Patience." Where does this "Thunder" stuff come from?

Interesting! Did your mother have a lot of nicknames too? I guess I'm really asking if you see yourself being a good mom as your mom modeled motherhood for you?

Oh no! My mother was so quiet and weak that she never spoke up or defended any of us. My aunt was my role-model. She was always saying that "It's the squeaky wheel that gets the grease." Or "No one will ever give you anything unless you ask for it." Her favorite was probably "Know what you want and aggressively go for it." I think good parents should teach their kids to think that way and should model that behavior. I try!

Rumor has it that you had a similar conversation with Rabbi Jesus

about the status of your twins when Jesus as Messiah overthrows the Romans and sets up his new Jewish Empire. Did you really ask him to install James and John as his "Right-hand" and "Left-hand" administrators in his Empire?

Yes, I did. Every mother thinks her kids have amazing potential, don't they? I think James and John would do a great job as Secretary of State or Secretary of Defense or something similar. Actually they would be great at any job Jesus needs doing. One can't start too soon in planting the seeds. I want Jesus to seriously consider them for those jobs anyway. We can hardly wait for Jesus to unleash his miracle power and oust those Roman invaders and restore Israel to David's glory and beyond. I want my boys to be in the inner circle, for sure. Most of us think it's going to happen very soon. It can't happen quick enough for most of us.

What did Jesus say to you?

He answered like any good politician would who doesn't want to commit to a position. He said something about serving and not ruling. He said something about the

last being first and the first being last. I got it. He didn't want to commit to James and John in those positions yet. I had to ask though and now he will have their names in the back of his mind for those positions.

Well, Sophia/Harriet, thanks for chatting with me. We have heard a lot about you and you have certainly made things a lot clearer. One last question if you will? Do you think the twins have that nickname because they are so "thunderous", so "Ox in the Spice Shop" type of guys? What are they like?

Oh, they take after their dad. They both are very patient, very thoughtful, and not pushy at all. I keep telling them that they'll never get anywhere or get anything unless they push for it. They just laugh at me and give me a hug, one from each side. I call them, "My Teddybears."

Come back next month for another deep (and humorous!) dive into a biblical story with Rexilius, our new favorite investigative scribe!

COMMUNITY NOTES

Women of the Word Book of Acts

The Thursday morning women's Bible study will resume meeting on Tuesday, September 9th at 9:30AM in the Reflections Room.

We will be studying the Book of Acts.

Interested in joining us?

Reach out to Dee Hubbard for more information.

Women's Bible Study
Book of Acts

Thursdays 9:30-11:00am
Reflections Room

Contact: Dee Hubbard 616-566-5520

Hop on board and
join the fun by
signing up using
the QR code below



Are you hungry?

Third Thursday Brunch

JOIN US AT BOB EVANS

Thursday, August 21 at 9:30 AM

THANK YOU

Third Thursday at the DeBoer's!

A big **THANK YOU** to Karen and Neil DeBoer for your incredible hospitality during our July Third Thursday Breakfast! We truly appreciate the time and effort you dedicated to welcoming us into your home.

Additionally, we would like to thank Ed Borgman for being willing to drive the Trinity bus, allowing even more friends to join us.

Pictured below (left, Doris Welling; right, Mary Naber) are Trinity friends checking out the chair lift installed in the DeBoer's home!



A Heartfelt **THANK YOU** to Ruth Klungle and her family!

Thank you for leading us in worship on Sunday, July 13. Your presence brought so much joy to the service, and we truly appreciate you taking the time to be part of our Sunday morning worship!

Front row: Ruth Klungle, Ella Kate Waters
Back row (from left to right): Gavin Waters, Katie Waters, Brent Waters, Patty Rhoney, Auri Koralewski, Connie Zoodsma, Ellie Koralewski, Chelsea Koralewski

Poem by Linda Louisa Johnson

Psalm 91

You have an angel
right by your side
taking care of you
both day and night
when trials befall
and you struggle with it all
Look at your angel
and you will not fall
Though you
may hurt
Clench your fist
Open your hand
Pretend a kiss
your angel
will catch your kiss
in her hand
Now you stand
and walk away
You will be
fine today



Dear Trinity Reformed,
We cannot thank you enough for your continued partnership with Gateway Mission through the Corners of Your Field program. Your generosity has made a meaningful impact, not only by supporting our vision of leading people to changed lives in Christ but also by providing food, shelter, and essential services to those in need.

Below are your donation totals from January 2025 through March 2025:
Value of Item Donations: \$7,080
Value of Gift Cards: \$355

Your contributions make a real difference in the lives of the men, women, and children we serve. If you have any questions or would like to schedule a Fill the Trailer event, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Additionally, if your church would like a Gateway Mission update, I would be happy to visit your church and share more about how your support is transforming lives.

Thank you again for your partnership and commitment to serving those in need.

In Christ,



Jason Parks
Community Relations Coordinator
jparks@hopefoundhere.org
(616) 216-8679

Please know you can mail your contribution or use the link on our website or the QR code to the right if you are unable to worship with us.



Cover to Cover Book Club

The 2025/2026 Book Club will meet the 4th Thursday of every month.
Participation is limited to 12 people.

If you are interested in joining, please see Sharon Kruse.

September | The Stark Beauty of Last Things by Celine Keating

October | Becoming Mrs. Lewis: the Improbable Love Story of Joy Davidman and C.S. Lewis by Patti Callahan

November | From Here to the Great Unknown by Lisa Marie Presley and Riley Keough

***No December meeting**

January | Tom Lake by Ann Patchett

February | I'm Glad My Mom Died by Jennette McCurdy

March | Killers of A Certain Age by Deanna Raybourn

April | The Echo of Old Books by Barbara Davis

May | The Underground Library by Jennifer Ryan

Cover to Cover Book Club will meet in The Reflections Room at Trinity

August Birthdays

Marcia Brink	08/06
Scott Brower	08/06
Cal Overbeek	08/06
Randy Timmer	08/08
Matt Oom	08/10
Pat Yurk	08/12
Dawn Schurman	08/13
Wilma Prince	08/17

Doris Welling	08/18
Mia Garza	08/19
Ed Borgman	08/21
Betty Marcus	08/21
Sandy Bedard	08/22
Judy Tanis	08/28
Amanda Bakale	08/29
JoAnn Dykstra	08/30

August Anniversaries

Pat + Deb Yurk	08/05
Brian Bork + Amanda Bakale	08/09
Randy + Sally Timmer	08/14

Tom + Nita Bos	08/17
Ed + Beth Borgman	08/21
Martin + Pat Trevino	08/22

August 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 8:00am - 9:00am TRC Worship Team Rehearsal 9:30am - 11:00am TRC Worship 10:45am - 11:30am TRC Post-Service Coffee 11:00am - 12:00pm Bread House Coffee & Breakfast 11:30am - 12:00pm BH Set-up + Rehearsal 12:00pm - 4:00pm Bread House Worship	4 5:00pm - 7:00pm Bread House Praise & Worship Practice	5 7:00pm - 9:00pm Bread House Bible Study	6 10:00am - 11:00am Folding Group 6:00pm - 9:00pm Summer Picnic on Playground	7 6:30pm - 9:00pm Bread House Family Night	8 3:15pm - 6:30pm Moreno + Betancourt Wedding Rehearsal + Set-Up	9 1:00pm - 4:00pm Moreno + Betancourt Wedding Ceremony 5:00pm - 9:00pm HSO Community Concert: Music Unites Us
10 8:00am - 9:00am TRC Worship Team Rehearsal 9:30am - 11:00am TRC Worship 10:45am - 11:30am TRC Post-Service Coffee 11:00am - 12:00pm Bread House Coffee & Breakfast 11:30am - 12:00pm BH Set-up + Rehearsal 12:00pm - 4:00pm Bread House Worship	11 5:00pm - 7:00pm Bread House Praise & Worship Practice	12 7:00pm - 9:00pm Bread House Bible Study	13 10:00am - 12:00pm Care Closet 10:00am - 11:00am Folding Group	14 9:00am - 10:30am Vandenberg Pest Control 6:30pm - 9:00pm Bread House Family Night	15 Washington Baby Shower I Set-Up 6:00pm - 9:00pm Bread House Leadership Meeting	16 1:00pm - 7:00pm Washington Baby Shower
17 8:00am - 9:00am TRC Worship Team Rehearsal 9:30am - 11:00am TRC Worship 10:45am - 11:30am TRC Post-Service Coffee 11:00am - 12:00pm Bread House Coffee & Breakfast 11:30am - 12:00pm BH Set-up + Rehearsal 12:00pm - 4:00pm Bread House Worship	18 5:00pm - 7:00pm Bread House Praise & Worship Practice	19 6:00pm - 7:00pm Deacons Meeting 7:00pm - 9:00pm Bread House Bible Study 7:00pm - 9:30pm Consistory	20 10:00am - 11:00am Folding Group	21 9:30am - 10:30am Third Thursday Breakfast 6:30pm - 9:00pm Bread House Family Night	22 6:00pm - 9:00pm Bread House Prayer Meeting	23
24 8:00am - 9:00am TRC Worship Team Rehearsal 9:30am - 11:00am TRC Worship 10:45am - 11:30am TRC Post-Service Coffee 11:00am - 12:00pm Bread House Coffee & Breakfast 11:30am - 12:00pm BH Set-up + Rehearsal 12:00pm - 4:00pm Bread House Worship	25 5:00pm - 7:00pm Bread House Praise & Worship Practice 7:00pm - 9:00pm Worship Life Meeting	26 11:45am - 12:45pm Staff Meeting 6:00pm - 9:00pm Apple Tree Condo Meeting 7:00pm - 9:00pm Bread House Bible Study	27 10:00am - 11:00am Folding Group 7:00pm - 8:30am Partnership Meeting I TRC + BH	28 6:30pm - 9:00pm Bread House Family Night	29	30
31 8:00am - 9:00am TRC Worship Team Rehearsal 9:30am - 11:00am TRC Worship 10:45am - 11:30am TRC Post-Service Coffee 11:00am - 12:00pm Bread House Coffee & Breakfast 11:30am - 12:00pm BH Set-up + Rehearsal 12:00pm - 4:00pm Bread House Worship						



Trinity Consistory

Elders:

Gregg Harper, *Vice President*
Teresa Harrington
Dee Hubbard
Bob Koning
Lynda Simmons

Deacons:

Jay Lynn Wheeler, *Chair*
Matt Oom, *Clerk*
Warren Kooyers, *Treasurer*
Steve Lundy
Shirley Perez

Trinity Staff

Rev. Amanda Bakale, *Pastor*
Hope Ward, *Assistant Treasurer*
Samantha Valentine, *Office Administrator*
Jim Allen, *Facilities Coordinator*
Dan Kruithof, *Custodian*

amanda@trinityrc.org
hope@trinityrc.org
samantha@trinityrc.org
jhallen_48@yahoo.com
dan@trinityrc.org

Church Office Hours

Monday - Thursday | 9am to 12pm (*Summer Hours*)

*Regular office hours | Monday - Thursday | 9am to 1pm
returning on **Monday, August 25**

After Hours Emergency Contact Pastor Amanda | 616.402.4671



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