

The Monthly Newsletter of Trinity Reformed Church

CONNECTIONS

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Welcome to the March Connections!

Here you'll read about our ongoing Lent series and some recommendations for going deeper into Romans beyond just our Sunday morning exploration. You'll get a sneak peak at what we'll focus our attention on after our Trinity Volunteers section comes to a close in a few months.

And you can enjoy the latest article by Rex and the Jerusalem Temple Gazette that has a connection with the Apostle Paul.

Make sure to flip all the way to the back for updates on upcoming events like the Northwestern College Acapella Group coming to town, March birthday and anniversaries, opportunities to support our younger brothers and sisters, and other fun stuff!



Pastor Lydia shares her mom's photography of some Elephant Seals February 2nd in California – do you have a photo or art you want to share? See our column on Trinity Creates!



LENT SERMON SERIES

This Lent we join Paul as he writes to the Church in Rome... Romans is one of the apostle's last letters, written later in his life, to a community of faith at odds with one another. As Paul addresses the reality of division in the Roman church, he pens one of the most beautiful and rich statements of faith on the power of God in Christ and the power of the Gospel to transform the lives of those "loved by God and called to be his own holy people" (Romans 1:7).

As we journey to Easter, let's listen to Paul's call to remember and believe the power of our God in Jesus to raise the dead and to transform enemies into beloved ones.

March 1 | 2nd Sunday of Lent

Romans 1:18-2:16 | No Room to Judge

April 2 | Maundy Thursday Service at 6:00pm

Romans 8:18-30 | Suffering & Glory

March 8 | 3rd Sunday of Lent

Romans 3:21-5:11 | Enemies Transformed

April 5 | Easter Sunday

Romans 8:31-39 | More Than Conquerors

March 15 | 4th Sunday of Lent

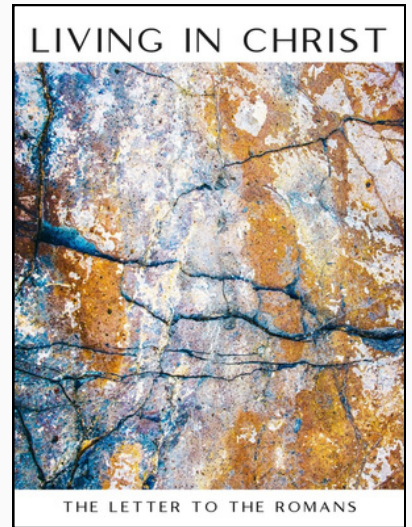
Romans 5:12-6:23 | A New Life

March 22 | 5th Sunday of Lent

Romans 7:7-25 | Longing to Do Good

March 29 | Palm Sunday

Romans 8:1-17 | Belonging to Christ



Looking to go deeper in Romans during the week?

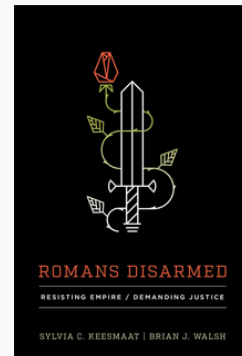
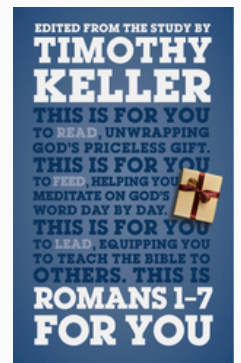
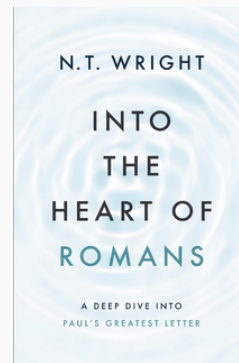
Check out these resources below for deeper study on Romans. We will only be able to scratch the surface of this deep book on Sunday mornings, so here's an invitation to wrestle and study and learn more during the week....

Romans Disarmed brings Romans right into the present with special attention to issues of justice and marginalization in Paul's time and in our own.

Into the Heart of Romans is an intensive look at Romans 8 as the culmination and heart of Paul's letter.

In **Romans 1-7 For You**, the pastoral wisdom of Tim Keller is on full display in a way that makes Romans connect with your everyday life and faith.

And the **Bible Project** is an online resource of videos and podcasts that unpacks Romans in winsome, engaging, helpful, and fun ways!





TRINITY CREATES!

This month we're taking a short break from our Trinity Volunteers section to share our upcoming section for 2026-2027:

Trinity Creates!

Not only do we all volunteer in our neighborhoods and communities, in our church and in our city, but we also are incredibly CREATIVE folks!

Trinity is made up of...

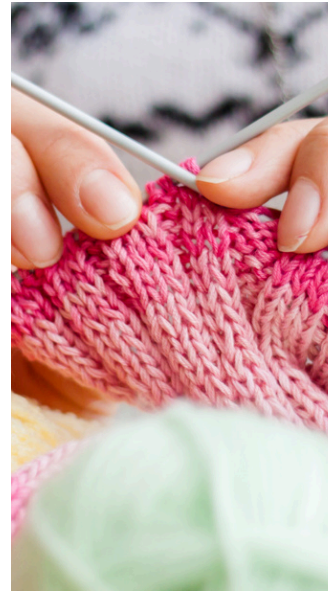
- knitters and gardeners,**
- quilters and weavers,**
- painters and bakers,**
- 3D printers and coders,**
- poets and writers,**
- musicians and collectors,**
- carpenters and wood-carvers,**
- candle-makers and cake-decorators,**
- singers and puzzlers,**
- embroiderers and photographers....**

and, well, we could keep going but that's what's this new column is for!

There's a lot of ways that Trinity creates and we want to highlight them! In the next month or so, you'll receive an invitation to share about your own creative endeavours.

And remember, we're sharing not to bring attention to ourselves but to bring glory to the One in whose image we are made.

Because the works of our hands reflect the work of His hands...and that is something to celebrate!



Our creative work "is a reflection of God's creativity, an evidence that we are made in the image of God."

-Francis Schaeffer



JERUSALEM TEMPLE GAZETTE

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

Rex--Hello, Readers. My guest today is Onesimus. He is rather infamous in law enforcement circles. His face and description were posted all over the Empire after he ran away from his slave master Philemon. "WANTED, Onesimus--Escaped Slave. \$100 Denarius Reward. Contact Philemon. 123-456-7890."

Onesimus made his way to Rome and found Paul. He appealed for sanctuary and became one of Paul's dearest friends and aides. Paul actually calls him "son" and "my dearest heart." He's here today because Paul is sending him back to Philemon with a letter that he and Timothy composed. He certainly knows a lot about slavery and "slave masters." I think he can tell us how Paul views his slavery and maybe give some idea of how this new movement, "The Way" views slavery. Welcome, Onesimus.

O--Hello, Rex.

Rex- Onesimus, the number one question that people wonder about is why did you agree to go back to Philemon's plantation and back to possible slavery? It is so counter-intuitive for an escaped slave to voluntarily go back to slavery.

O-- I have to admit that I am very anxious about going back. But, Paul is a very persuasive fellow. He believes

that Philemon's soul is at stake in this matter, and maybe just not Philemon's, but the whole house church there. He even talks about our example affecting "The Way" far into the future. I am not returning expecting to be a slave again. I, like Paul, expect Philemon to free me and put into practice the equality of believers that Christ's Kingdom demands.

Rex--What exactly is Paul worried about?

O--Paul believes that God put his image into every individual and so no individual or group of individuals is so superior to another individual or group that they have the right to enslave them, control them, or use them as "objects." Fallen cultures believe the opposite. They believe there are superiors and inferiors and the superiors have the right, even the duty, to exercise power over the inferior. Slavery is normal, even required. He's afraid Philemon might believe that, deep down.

Paul believes that the Christ died for all individuals and in the Body of Christ and in all followers of "The Way" or churches of "The Way," there should be no slavery, no patriarchy, no favoring of status or riches. Philemon hosts our "church" in his house, so he is our pastor, our leader, The whole community knows him and sees him as the model or

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 focuses on the Apostle Paul and his letter to Philemon about his runaway slave named Onesimus....



spokesperson for our group. If he supports slavery or favoritism or patriarchy or any of these other "isms," Paul is afraid our witness to the Christ's new Kingdom will be lost, or if not lost, at least seriously compromised and distorted.

So, Paul asked me to deliver this "letter" that he and Timothy composed asking Philemon to change his mind about slavery, sexism, patriarchy, etc. and follow Paul and Jesus. Paul thinks my being there, in person, "will be better than ten thousand words" in showing people what Jesus-people believe and practice. "See everyone, Philemon and Onesimus are equals before God and have similar rights as human individuals. All humans should live like this!"

Rex--I-hear you saying that Paul's focus is on Philemon's change. Won't some think that Paul is saying to you, "Onesimus, you are a slave. You were meant to be a slave. You should be content as a Christian slave and just serve your better, Philemon, as you would serve the Christ? Go back to Philemon and resume your destiny!"

O--I understand Paul's belief to be that slavery is wrong and not to be practiced among Christians. But not all people are Christians. If I am enslaved among non-Christians, I must still act as a Christ follower and "Love God with all my being and my neighbors as myself." But, I don't have to believe or accept that I am inferior and doomed to be a slave forever. I

am duty bound to try to escape that slavery and be all that God has made me to be. I am duty bound to try to correct my owner's misconceptions. I am not duty-bound to accept those misconceptions.

So, to repeat, I am returning to Philemon with the great hope that he will free me, accept me as a brother in Christ, and "treat me as he would want to be treated." If he does not do so, his soul is in danger, the witness of our church is in danger, and maybe the future witness of "The Way" is in danger.

Rex--Thank you, Onesimus, for speaking with us today. We will be watching closely to see how Philemon responds to Paul and Timothy's letter. I certainly hope you are right about what Philemon will do. It is certainly hard for the rich and powerful to give up either their riches or their power even when they know what is the Christian thing to do.



Children's Ministry Notes

Children and Worship

After the Children's Blessing, students ages **4 yrs old-3rd grade** are invited to Children & Worship downstairs. Please see the bulletin for who the Teacher and Helper is each week. Parents: Children will be led back upstairs at the end of the service.

March 1 | Lenten Puzzle

March 8 | Jesus and the Children

March 15 | Jesus and Bartimaeus

March 22 | Jesus and Zacchaeus

March 29 | TBD

We are always looking for more volunteers to help with Children & Worship. If you're interested or have any questions, please see Lori Kooyers.

4-8th Grade Post-Service Class

After every Sunday service in March, students in 4th through 8th grade are welcome to join Pastor Lydia in **The Reflections Room** immediately after service for a time of fellowship and fun. This 25-minute post-service space is designed for kids to have a place to belong to one another, be themselves, and explore/discover who God is. *Please don't hesitate to reach out to Pastor Lydia with any questions!*



March Youth Events:

Trinity has been invited to come and support!



Kimy has a choir concert at **7pm on March 31** at **Vansingel Fine Arts Center** (8500 Burlingame Ave SW, Byron Center, MI 49315).

Do your kiddos have events (sports, theatre, music programs, etc) coming up that you'd like to share with the congregation? We would be happy to share the information! Please reach out to Pastor Lydia!

COMMUNITY NOTES



Are you hungry?

Third Thursday Breakfast

JOIN US AT BOB EVANS ON 24TH ST

Thursday, March 19 at 9:30 AM

Sign up
using
the QR
code
below



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.

March | Killers of A Certain Age by Deanna Raybourn

April | The Echo of Old Books by Barbara Davis

May | Page Turner by Viola Shipman

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



Trinity Care Closet

This month, Care Closet needs the following items. Would you please consider making a donation to assist our neighbors who could benefit from some extra support?

Look for the donation basket located on the Welcome Desk!

Thank you very much for your continued support of Trinity's Care Closet.

Donations of the Month

MARCH

TOILET PAPER
+
PAPER TOWELS

Second Sunday Brunch

Sunday, March 8



Oatmeal & Yogurt Breakfast Bar

Please join us, in the gym, after the Sunday morning worship service. Further details on how you can participate and RSVP can be found at the Welcome Desk.

Missional Opportunity



Kids' Food Basket

After brunch, help us pack 100 sack supper bags for Kids Food Basket. Sack Suppers are a nutritious, ready-to-eat meal delivered right to a child's school or community site, ensuring children have access to the healthy food they need to thrive.

Bags and decorating tools will be provided!



North Holland Reformed Church is hosting a concert by the Northwestern College A cappella Choir, titled "Amazing Grace". This concert is free and open to the public!

Friday, March 6 | 6:30pm | 12050 New Holland St, Holland

You are invited to...

North Holland Reformed Church will host a free concert that is open to the public by the Northwestern College A cappella Choir on **Friday, March 6, at 6:30pm**, titled "Amazing Grace". The program traces a musical journey from celebration and lament to hope, grace, and praise. North Holland Reformed Church is located at 12050 New Holland Street, Holland. The main entrance is handicap accessible with an elevator to access the sanctuary. If you have questions, please contact North Holland Reformed Church at 616-399-1578 or office@northholland.org.

March Birthdays

Judy Shoemaker	03/01	Bob Long	03/11
Betty Nyhoff	03/09	Cynthia Nyhoff	03/11
Lydia Ribich	03/09	Don Kane	03/27
Arloa Dykstra	03/11	Cliff Ponstein	03/28

March Anniversaries

Glen & Shirley Vereeke	03/02
Doug & Arloa Dykstra	03/26
Cliff & Nancy Ponstein	03/26



Financial Update thru January 31, 2026

<u>Budgeted Income</u>	\$40,303.58	<u>Actual Income</u>	\$35,205.79	<u>Income YTD</u>	\$35,205.79
Contributions	\$37,360.00	Contributions	\$18,177.93		
Monthly New Ministries Endowment Fund Transfer	\$2,943.58	Monthly New Ministries Endowment Fund Transfer	\$2,943.58		
		Interest from Accounts	\$36.14		
		Church Use	\$300.00		
		Transfer from Endowment Funds for Year End 2025	\$13,748.14		
<u>Budgeted Expenses</u>	\$40,303.58	<u>Actual Expenses</u>	\$38,472.08	<u>Expenses YTD</u>	\$38,472.08
		<u>Net Income</u>	(\$3,266.29)	<u>Net Income YTD</u>	(\$3,266.29)

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.



March 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1 8:00am - 9:00am TRC Worship Team Rehearsal 9:30am - 11:00am TRC Worship 9:45am - 10:45am Children & Worship 10:45am - 11:15am 4-8th Grade Post-Service Class 10:45am - 11:30am TRC Post-Service Coffee 11:00am - 12:00pm Bread House Coffee & Breakfast 11:00am - 11:30am Digging Deeper 11:30am - 12:00pm BH Set-up + Rehearsal 12:00pm - 4:00pm Bread House Worship</p>	<p>2 5:00pm - 7:00pm Bread House Praise & Worship Practice 5:15pm - 7:00pm Holland Rovers Soccer Practice 6:00pm - 8:00pm Finance Team Meeting</p>	<p>3 9:30am - 11:00am Women of the Word Book of Acts 6:00pm - 7:30pm Girl Scout Troop Meeting 7:00pm - 9:00pm Bread House Bible Study</p>	<p>4 7:30am - 8:30am Men's Bible Study 10:00am - 11:00am Folding Group 7:00pm - 8:30pm WOW Walking with God through Psalm 119</p>	<p>5 1:00pm - 2:00pm Escape Ministries 6:30pm - 9:00pm Bread House Family Night 7:00pm Community Connections Meeting</p>	<p>6 World Day of Prayer 6:00am - 7:30am Holland Middle Wyldlife</p>	<p>7 10:00am - 2:00pm Quilt/Craft Group Meeting Church Building Closed at 8pm</p>
<p>8 Daylight-Saving Time Begins 8:00am - 9:00am TRC Worship Team Rehearsal 9:30am - 11:00am TRC Worship 9:45am - 10:45am Children & Worship 10:45am - 11:15am 4-8th Grade Post-Service Class 10:45am - 11:45am Second Sunday Brunch 11:00am - 12:00pm Bread House Coffee & Breakfast 11:30am - 12:00pm BH Set-up + Rehearsal 12:00pm - 4:00pm Bread House Worship 4:00pm - 7:00pm Kooyers Rental</p>	<p>9 5:00pm - 7:00pm Bread House Praise & Worship Practice 5:15pm - 7:00pm Holland Rovers Soccer Practice</p>	<p>10 9:00am - 10:30am Care Closet Packaging 9:30am - 11:00am Women of the Word Book of Acts 7:00pm - 9:00pm Bread House Bible Study</p>	<p>11 7:30am - 8:30am Men's Bible Study 10:00am - 12:00pm Care Closet 10:00am - 11:00am Folding Group 7:00pm - 8:30pm WOW Walking with God through Psalm 119</p>	<p>12 1:00pm - 2:00pm Escape Ministries 6:30pm - 9:00pm Bread House Family Night</p>	<p>13 6:00am - 7:30am Holland Middle Wyldlife</p>	<p>14 Church Building Closed at 8pm</p>
<p>15 8:00am - 9:00am TRC Worship Team Rehearsal 9:30am - 11:00am TRC Worship 9:45am - 10:45am Children & Worship 10:45am - 11:30am TRC Post-Service Coffee 11:00am - 12:00pm Bread House Coffee & Pastries 11:00am - 11:30am Digging Deeper 11:30am - 12:00pm BH Set-up + Rehearsal 12:00pm - 4:00pm Bread House Worship</p>	<p>16 5:00pm - 7:00pm Bread House Praise & Worship Practice 5:15pm - 7:00pm Holland Rovers Soccer Practice</p>	<p>17 St. Patrick's Day 9:30am - 11:00am Women of the Word Book of Acts 12:30pm - 2:30pm Consistory 6:00pm - 7:30pm Girl Scout Troop Meeting 7:00pm - 9:00pm Bread House Bible Study</p>	<p>18 7:30am - 8:30am Men's Bible Study 10:00am - 11:00am Folding Group</p>	<p>19 9:30am - 10:30am Third Thursday Breakfast 1:00pm - 2:00pm Escape Ministries 6:30pm - 9:00pm Bread House Family Night</p>	<p>20 First Day of Spring 6:00am - 7:30am Holland Middle Wyldlife 6:00pm - 9:00pm Bread House Leadership Meeting</p>	<p>21 Church Building Closed at 8pm</p>
<p>22 8:00am - 9:00am TRC Worship Team Rehearsal 9:30am - 11:00am TRC Worship 9:45am - 10:45am Children & Worship 10:45am - 11:15am 4-8th Grade Post-Service Class 10:45am - 11:30am TRC Post-Service Coffee 11:00am - 12:00pm Bread House Coffee & Breakfast 11:00am - 11:30am Digging Deeper 11:30am - 12:00pm BH Set-up + Rehearsal 12:00pm - 4:00pm Bread House Worship</p>	<p>23 5:00pm - 7:00pm Bread House Praise & Worship Practice 5:15pm - 7:00pm Holland Rovers Soccer Practice 7:00pm - 9:00pm Worship Life Meeting</p>	<p>24 9:30am - 11:00am Women of the Word Book of Acts 11:45am - 12:45pm Staff Meeting 7:00pm - 9:00pm Bread House Bible Study</p>	<p>25 7:30am - 8:30am Men's Bible Study 10:00am - 11:00am Folding Group 7:00pm - 8:30pm TRC + BH Partnership Meeting</p>	<p>26 1:00pm - 2:00pm Escape Ministries 6:30pm - 9:00pm Bread House Family Night 7:00pm - 9:00pm Cover to Cover Book Club</p>	<p>27 6:00am - 7:30am Holland Middle Wyldlife 6:00pm - 9:00pm Bread House Prayer Meeting</p>	<p>28 Church Building Closed at 8pm</p>
<p>29 Palm Sunday 8:00am - 9:00am TRC Worship Team Rehearsal 9:30am - 11:00am TRC Worship 9:45am - 10:45am TBD Children & Worship 10:45am - 11:15am 4-8th Grade Post-Service Class 10:45am - 11:30am TRC Post-Service Coffee 11:00am - 12:00pm Bread House Coffee & Breakfast 11:00am - 11:30am Digging Deeper 11:30am - 12:00pm BH Set-up + Rehearsal 12:00pm - 4:00pm Bread House Worship</p>	<p>30 5:00pm - 7:00pm Bread House Praise & Worship Practice</p>	<p>31 7:00pm - 9:00pm Bread House Bible Study</p>	<p>1 7:30am - 8:30am Men's Bible Study 10:00am - 11:00am Folding Group 6:30pm - 9:00pm Bread House Family Night</p>	<p>2 Maundy Thursday 1:00pm - 2:00pm Escape Ministries 6:00pm - 7:00pm Maundy Thursday Service 7:00pm Community Connections Meeting</p>	<p>3 Good Friday</p>	<p>4 10:00am - 2:00pm Quilt/Craft Group Meeting Church Building Closed at 8pm</p>



Trinity Consistory

Elders:

Teresa Harrington, *Vice President*
Dee Hubbard
Bob Koning
Tom Lampen
Jan VanAuken

Deacons:

Jay Lynn Wheeler, *Chair*
Neil DeBoer
Rick Fisher
Warren Kooyers, *Treasurer*
Dianne Moker

Trinity Staff

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

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lydia@trinityrc.org
hope@trinityrc.org
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jhallen_48@yahoo.com
dan@trinityrc.org

Church Office Hours

Monday - Thursday | 9am to 1pm

After Hours Emergency Contact *Pastor Amanda | 616.402.4671*



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