





**Trinity Lutheran Church
Rochester, Minnesota
1867-2017**

Trinity Lutheran Church

222 6th Avenue SW
Rochester, MN 55902
Phone: (507) 289-1531
www.trinitylutheranchurch.org
office@trinitylutheranchurch.org



Trinity Lutheran Church

Rev. Nathaniel R. Schwartz, Senior Pastor
Rev. Joel D. Haak, Associate Pastor
Rev. Robert A. Lentz, Visitation Pastor
Mr. Mark Cook, Director of Christian Education

Dear Friends in Christ:

The Psalmist once declared:

“HE COMMANDED OUR FOREFATHERS TO TEACH THEIR CHILDREN, SO THE NEXT GENERATION WOULD KNOW THEM, EVEN THE CHILDREN YET TO BE BORN, AND THEY IN TURN WOULD TELL THEIR CHILDREN” (PSALM 78:5-6).

These are important words for us at Trinity Lutheran Church as we celebrate 150 years of ministry! God has directed us to instruct our children in the Christian faith and to share the Gospel with future generations. And we have been faithful! Indeed, Trinity has an incredible legacy of passing on the faith from generation to generation.

As we celebrate God’s many blessings among us and through us, we reaffirm and pledge our commitment to passing on that legacy of faith in our families and community for many years to come. That is why we recently tuck-pointed our facility, renovated our lower level, and dedicated the Faith and Family Center. That is why we are in the process of a major parking lot project. That is why we remain committed to supporting Rochester Central Lutheran School and expanding the ministry of POBLO (People of the Book Lutheran Outreach).

Yes, our commitment to our Lord remains strong even as we trust and believe that our God will remain faithful. We are convinced that even as the Holy Spirit guided the apostles and the members of the early church and even as He guided the forefathers of Trinity who founded the congregation and built the incredible sanctuary and facility that exists today, He will continue to equip and strengthen us in the future. He will continue to bless us as we step out in faith and continue to reach out to our changing community with the Good News of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

The future is bright because we have a great big God who will continue to bless His church through Word and Sacrament ministry!

Rejoicing in Jesus,

Reverend Nathaniel R. Schwartz
Senior Pastor



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Dear fellow saints of God at Trinity,

It is with great joy that we celebrate one hundred fifty years of God's grace to us. Many thousands of people have heard of God's grace and love for them at Trinity! Some of us have been here only a short time. Others may have seen half -- or more -- of Trinity's rich history. What a joy it is to see young and old, newcomers and long-timers, rejoicing in and receiving God's gifts together!

We celebrate this year around the theme verse, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all" (2 Corinthians 13:14). Among other things, this verse reminds us that our congregation really isn't "ours" at all. It belongs to our Triune God -- Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God has made us, redeemed us, and called us to be His people and to "proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9b). Like everything we are and have, Trinity exists not by our own power and strength, but by the grace and love of God. It's His gift to us! We celebrate that the Holy Spirit has drawn us into a wonderful fellowship with each other, and has done so at Trinity for one hundred and fifty years.

God has richly blessed Trinity throughout the years. We remember festival services and faithful pastors. We remember wonderful education and mission opportunities. And we rejoice in God's continued blessings to us. We also remember God's grace and provision during tough and turbulent times. Yes, it is only by His grace and love that Trinity remains a beacon for the Gospel in downtown Rochester.

Amid all the fun and festivities of our celebration, we are called to go into the future relying on the grace of Jesus, the love of our Father, and the power of the Holy Spirit. Our Triune God will continue to work through His Word and Sacraments and through the witness and mercy we all share with our neighbors and community. By His grace, may Trinity be blessed with the legacy of another one hundred fifty years of sharing that grace in faith towards God and fervent love for one another and those around us.

Peace and joy in Christ,

Pastor Joel Haak
Associate Pastor





THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD

Minnesota South District

Cultivating leaders intentionally engaged in the mission of God

July 20, 2017

Dear Pastors, Members, and Friends of Trinity Lutheran Church:

With joy I write on behalf of all the congregations and workers across the Minnesota South District of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod to congratulate you as you celebrate your 150th anniversary as a congregation. What a milestone and what a testimony to the grace of God! And you do it the very same year that we celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation! Congratulations!

Just to put this in perspective, 1867 has us in the Reconstruction Era just following the Civil War. That year the U.S. bought Alaska for \$7.2 million (2 cents per acre) from Russia, and they called it “Seward’s Folly.” Secretary of State Seward worked the deal. That same year Charles Dickens gave his first public reading in the U.S. Born that year were novelist Laura Ingalls Wilder, pitcher Cy Young, and aviation pioneer Wilbur Wright. This was a while back. You may not look it, but at 150 you’re really old!

Over these years God has blessed you with an amazing parade of gifted pastors and commissioned workers as well as strong lay leaders to push forward the mission of Jesus Christ in your community. Among them have been those who have also served the greater church in district and synodical positions of leadership. It has been “grace upon grace” (John 1:16) for Trinity Lutheran Church!

Just as amazing as your past is the future God has in store for you. God is bringing the world to Rochester, and you are right there in the middle of it, raising high the cross of Jesus Christ. What opportunities you have for service and proclamation in Jesus’ name! May God bless your celebration September 9-10! Even more, may that celebration motivate you into an even bolder witness to the great things God has done in Jesus Christ!

With you in His service,

Dean Nadasdy, President
MN South District – LCMS



THE
LUTHERAN CHURCH
Missouri Synod

Office of the President
The Reverend Doctor Matthew C. Harrison
President of the Synod

January 5, 2017

Trinity Lutheran Church
222 6th Avenue SW
Rochester, Minnesota 55902

Dear People loved by God, Members and Trinity Lutheran Church,

God is faithful. As He promised, God has blessed His Word! It has not returned to Him empty, but has gathered by the Holy Spirit's power a congregation of forgiven sinners at Trinity Lutheran Church for 150 years. And today your congregation joins in raising a mighty song of praise and thanks to Him for His faithfulness.

From Easter evening, the Church has prayed: "abide with us, Lord." And abide He has. He has made His dwelling among you as He washed away your sins in the waters of Holy Baptism. He has made His dwelling among you as His saving Words sounded forth and were heard, rejoiced in, and treasured. He has made His dwelling among you as He has caused his Gospel to be preached to you in order to nurture and strengthen your faith. He has made His dwelling among you as His holy absolution wiped out your sin and His body and blood imparted to you a share in His own divine life. "Abide with us, Lord" the Church prays, and the Lord of the Church answers: "I have and I will."

Whenever an anniversary rolls around, it provides a wonderful opportunity to look back and offer thanks for the blessings that God so richly bestows on and through His Church. As you think back on the history of your congregation, you will be able to thank the Lord not only for the blessings all churches share in common of His abiding presence, but also for the unique blessings of your own parish family. God never does the same thing twice, and so no congregation is ever exactly the same. Just like each of you is a unique child of God, so each congregation witnesses to God's grace in the way that only it can.

Know, beloved brothers and sisters in Christ, that your fellow members of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod celebrate this day with you, joining you in giving thanks to the Lord of the Church for your community of faith and asking with you His great blessing upon Trinity Lutheran Church in the days to come.

In Jesus, our living and reigning Lord,

Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison, President
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod



1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295 | 314-996-1402 | Fax: 314-996-1119 | president@lcms.org | www.lcms.org



Mayor Ardell F. Brede
201 4th Street SE – Room 281
Rochester, MN 55904-3782
Phone: (507) 328-2700 Fax: (507) 328-2727

FIRST CLASS CITY • FIRST CLASS SERVICE



June 9, 2017

Trinity Lutheran Church
222 6th Avenue SW
Rochester, Minnesota 55902

Dear Donna Bell, Church President:

On behalf of the City of Rochester it is my pleasure to offer congratulations to Trinity Lutheran Church on your 150th Anniversary during 2017! Trinity Lutheran and Rochester's faith community has provided compassion and direction to our citizens and your members over these many years.

The members of Trinity Lutheran, past and present have provided service with strong Christian values to our community. May God continue to lead you through challenges you may face and continue to bless you as you embark on the next 150 years.

Congratulations! May the peace of Christ be with you always.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ardell F. Brede".

Ardell F. Brede, Mayor
City of Rochester



In 2017 people of Trinity Lutheran Church celebrate 150 years of God's grace and mercy to our parish. Little did our founding fathers realize that their efforts would be so blessed. The German businessmen from Wisconsin, who moved to Rochester in 1866, were Friedrich Siekert, Theodore Adler, Carl and August Brendemuehl, and Karl Oesterreich. One year later they worked together to form a German Lutheran congregation in Rochester. For the first 8 years of its existence this congregation could not afford their own pastor and were faithfully but intermittently served by pastors from Claremont, Lewiston, and Potsdam, who led worship, celebrated the sacraments, and provided formal religious instruction for the young. If a pastor was not available to lead worship, one of the members would read a sermon to the assembled congregation. These services were first held in homes and later in a room above the business establishment (a clothing store) of Siekert and Adler.

The members of Trinity built a 24 x 30 foot structure to serve as their church in 1869. The parishioners considered themselves fortunate because the Norwegian Lutherans, who formed their congregation at the same time, were unable to locate or build suitable facilities. They asked for and were granted use of our church building on Sunday afternoons, and in return, they furnished the pulpit, altar, and other church furnishings. Notes from prior historians indicate that in the early winters the roof on our first modest church leaked, and on more than one occasion the pastors stood on patches of ice while services were conducted in the cold, drafty building.

In 1874 the congregation chose the name "Evangelische Lutherische Dreieinigkeits Gemeinde" for their church, later to be known as Trinity Lutheran Church. Although they shared their facilities with the Norwegian Lutheran Church, the two congregations together had less than 75 members. God blessed this humble beginning and in the course of these past 150 years Trinity congregation has celebrated more than 5,641 baptisms and witnessed more than 4,064 confirmations.



Trinity Lutheran School was established in 1875. During the week that first small church building was converted to use as a classroom through the ingenious installation of hinged writing boards to the backs of pews. These could be raised and used as desks, or conveniently lowered during Sunday Services. In 1883 a house was rented to serve as the school building. A school was built in 1884, but in 1894, as a new church was built, the original church building was converted for use as the school once again.

Trinity had grown sufficiently to warrant calling a resident pastor in 1875, and Pastor Ludwig von Schenk was ordained and installed, serving as pastor and Christian Day School teacher for three years. The next 3 pastors, George P. A. Schaaf, Heinrich G. Schmidt, and Karl Schmidt served in close succession for periods ranging from 6 to 15 months. Such frequent changes did not discourage the congregation, and the church membership and day school enrollment grew to such an extent that in 1882 the original church building was enlarged and a steeple added at the cost of \$300.



In 1883 the devastating tornado which was such a critical factor in Rochester's ultimate development as a medical center, also caused great damage to our church building, which was located on what was then the north edge of town. No lives were lost from the congregation but some members were injured and many suffered property damage. A plea for help was published in *Der Lutheraner*, Synod's official publication; and one of the first donations was from Dr. C. F. W. Walther, one of the founding fathers of both The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod and of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri. Gifts of food, clothing, and monetary contributions were received from other congregations. The repaired church was re-dedicated in 1883 with the congregation literally "crying out" their hymns of praise and thanksgiving, as recorded in the early records. It is also noted that the first sermon to be preached in the English language was delivered at that Sunday's evening service of re-dedication.

Enlarged School 1889

The German Lutheran Society are about to build an addition to the private school in the rear of their church. It will be 12x14 feet in size. They have also granted their pastor a vacation of four weeks, which he will spend with friends in Canada. The pulpit will be supplied every Sabbath during the pastor's absence.

Rochester Post

July 12, 1889

The ladies of the congregation recognized the areas of need where they could contribute assistance and formed the German Ladies Aid in 1878. It is considered to be Trinity's oldest auxiliary group, continuing their work even as an English Ladies Aid (later renamed Women of Trinity) was formed in 1922. Both groups worked together to further the interests of Trinity and carry out mission work. During the time immediately following the tornado and in subsequent years the German Ladies Aid provided assistance to the church through charitable contributions and also helped support the Lutheran Hour as well as collecting and making clothes for needy students. At the

time of their 60th anniversary the German Ladies Aid numbered 67 in their membership. Pastor Carl W. Nickels was installed as Trini-

Music

The first senior choir practice is recorded as early as 1870 as music has always been a very important part of Trinity worship. The first official choir was organized in 1919. The choir sings for all festival services and at least twice a month in both services. Through the years, the senior choir has participated in larger musical events, such as the Christmas Cantatas, mass choir events, and the Circuit Christmas Concert.

The initial set of handbells was purchased in 1978 and chimes were added in 2015. A set of tympani was purchased in 2009. Over the years, Trinity has had a Youth Choir, a High School Girls' Choir, a Men's Choir, a Cherub Choir and Kids Praise Choir, a Handbell Choir and Choralers.

Presently, Trinity has a Sanctuary Choir and a Handbell/Chimes Choir. Our members give willingly of their time for the privilege to sing and play in the church choirs.

From the earliest of times, Trinity has sponsored organ concerts inviting organists to come and share their talents with a community of listeners.

ty's pastor in 1884 and served here for 28 years, helping Trinity to grow and become one of the largest congregations in the Minnesota District of the Missouri Synod. During his time at Trinity a new church was built at the corner of Center Street and Third Avenue Southwest, presently occupied by the Gonda Building. The cornerstone was laid in July of 1894. This beautiful, spacious house of worship could seat 500 worshipers and was dedi-

1894 Trinity Lutheran Church



1894 Church

**Chancel and organ.
German words
above the chancel:
“How lovely are Thy
dwelling places, O
Lord of Hosts.”**



Altar and Pulpit of 1894 Church.



**Balcony and Rose
Window of 1894
Church.**

cated the first Sunday of Advent 1894. The cost was \$8,000.

A pipe organ was installed in 1905 and was pumped by hand for 50 cents a Sunday, until the Walther League (youth group) provided an electric organ blower. Since electric wiring and fixtures were installed in the church building in 1920 and an organ concert was performed in 1921, it is assumed that stalwart individuals had performed the service of pumping the organ for more than 15 years.

The night before my wedding at the old Trinity Lutheran Church, someone ran into the front steps with their car. Being that my dad (Alvin E. Benike) was in the construction business, he was able to get a crew together and the steps were fixed before the guests started to arrive at church.

~ Mrs. Ethel Herrick

Rev. Martin Weinhold was installed as pastor in 1911 and served as senior pastor until 1941 and from 1941 until 1953 as associate pastor. His 42 years as a pastor at Trinity is a record of service rarely equaled in one congregation.

During Pastor Weinhold's tenure as pastor several structures were built including a modern, two-story brick building at the corner of Second Street and Second Avenue Northwest. It was the new home of Trinity Lutheran School, and was built at a cost of \$13,000. \$2,000 of that cost was raised by the young people of the Senior Walther League. The new school building was dedicated in 1913 and was also used as a meeting place for most of Trinity congregation's social and business functions for some 38 years. The building next to the new school, which had been the parsonage, was given over for use as a teacherage, and a new two-story parsonage was built adjacent to the church on Center Street. The Weinholds moved into their new home in 1913.

In the 125th anniversary book it was noted that in 1913 Teacher Bahle was teaching "90 precious little ones" and the congregation decided that instead of hiring another teacher to assist him, the School Board would hire a janitor to "lighten the load of the teacher in the matter" of his additional duties of cleaning the school and building the fires in the stoves for heating the school and keeping them going.

The 50th Anniversary of Trinity Lutheran Church and the 400th Anniversary of the Reformation were celebrated in 1917. Three jubilee services were held on July 15 with nearly 15,000 people attending. At the time of this 50th Anniversary year the congregation numbered 890 souls, 640 communicants, and 150 voters.

Military Service Deaths

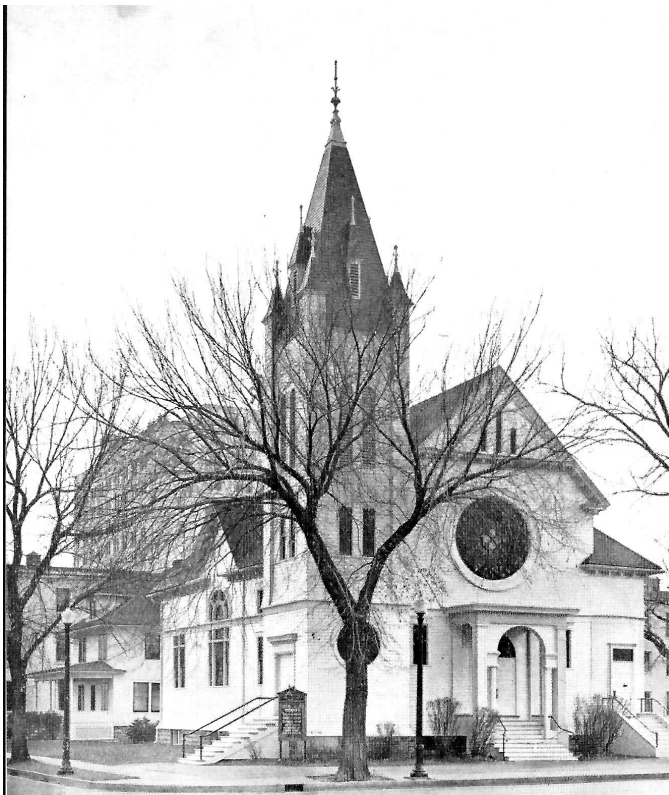
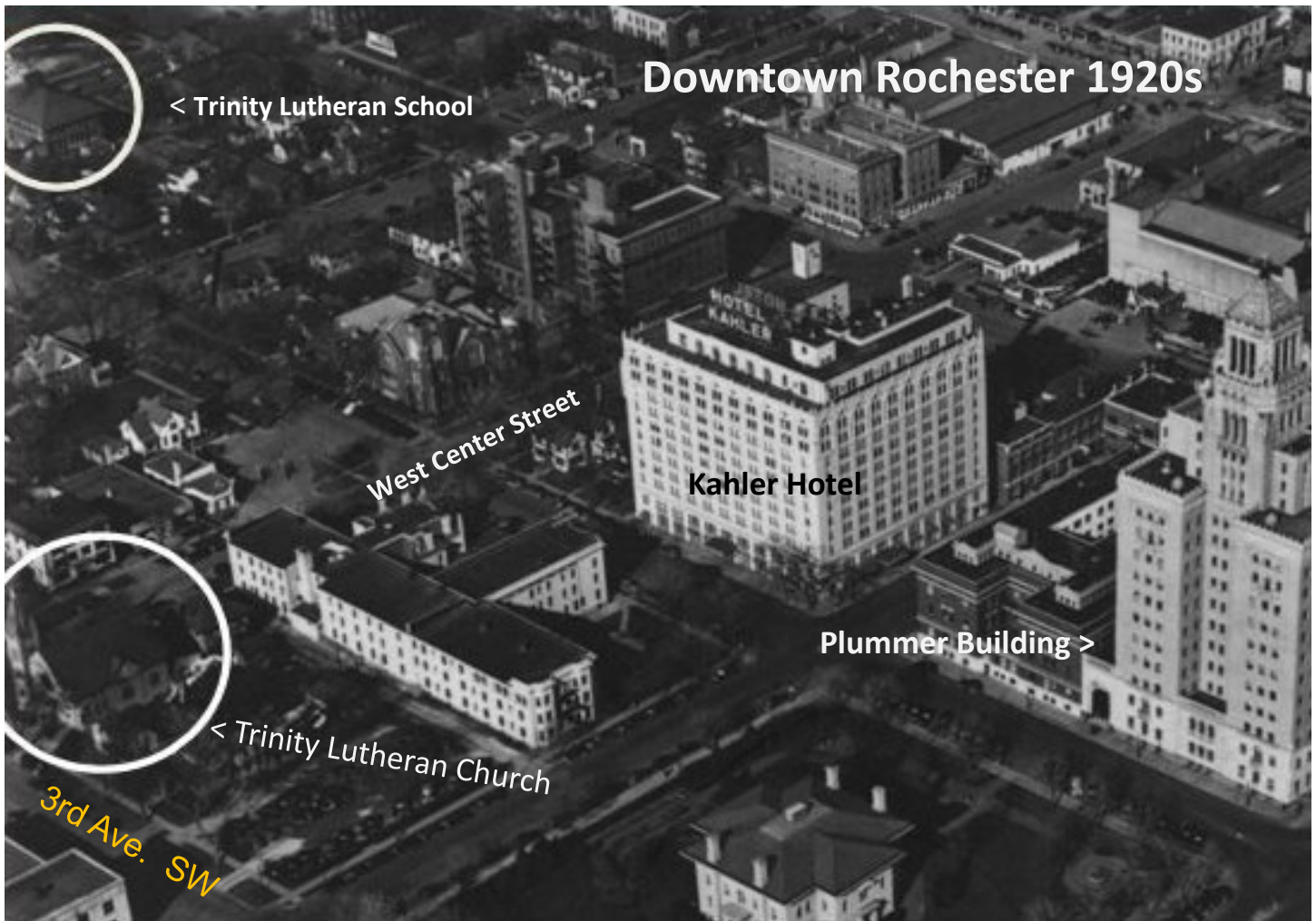
Out of the hundreds of Trinity's young men and women who have served in the military, the following have died in action:

World War I
Carl Sonnenberg

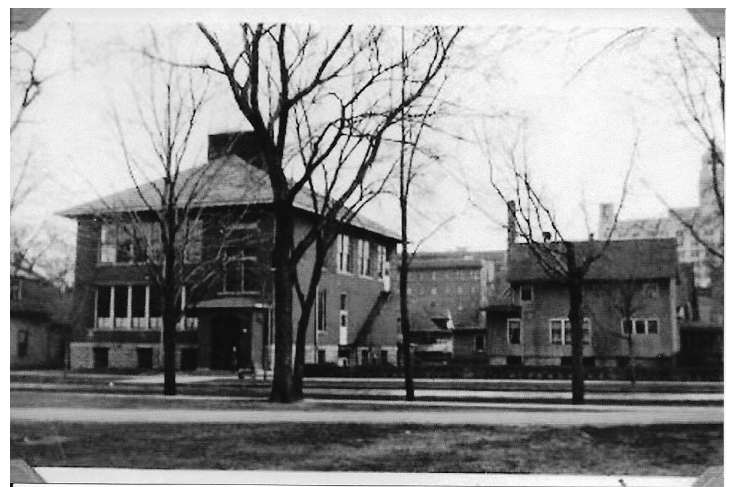
World War II
Lt. G. David Schroeder
Lt. Vernon W. Meyer
2nd Lt. Milton Sell
Lt. Walter Garbisch
Sgt. Reuben O. Schulz
Sgt. Stanley A. Fischer
Sgt. Gordon L. Stewart
Sgt. Arthur H. Zuehlke
Cpl. John L. Campbell

Vietnam War
Sgt. David W. Wehrs
LCPL Byrd Gaertner

Social unrest during World War I dramatically pointed out the need for Trinity's children to be educated in English, as well as German. On July 7, 1918, it was resolved to give religious instruction in English, and "children were to be confirmed in German or English



Trinity Lutheran Church 1894-1951



Trinity Lutheran School 1913-1963

according to the wishes of their parents.” In the post-war era, on April 10, 1921, for the first time 10 children were confirmed in English, and 16 children were confirmed in German. This transition also made it possible to organize the English Sunday School in 1923, which opened with an enrollment of 170 children. A 40-member Adult Bible Class was begun the same year. Confirmation instructions continued to be given in both languages until 1927, and after that time both children and adults were confirmed exclusively in English.

I remember when I was a young boy back at the old Trinity Lutheran Church. Before the children's Christmas Program, we had to wait in the church basement and at that time it had a dirt floor. At the end of the program, the Men's Club always handed out a bag of candy to each child. That bag of candy was really something special!

~ Mr. Harold Buske

In addition to their other duties, Trinity's pastors also ministered to those whose physical ills brought them to Rochester for treatment or hospitalization. This ministry continued until the needs of our congregation became greater and the Minnesota District Mission Board called Rev. G. Drews in 1925 as the LCMS's first chaplain. This ministry to fellow Missouri Synod Lutherans from all over the world continues to this day.

Another man who served Trinity well and long was Edwin E. Zielske, who was installed as principal of the school in 1925. During his 33 years of service to Trinity and the Lutheran School, he was the school administrator, teacher, church organist, choir director, and secretary to the vestry and congregation. In addition to these responsibilities there were many extensive committee assignments, one of which included doing exhaustive research for the Diamond Jubilee (75th) history book.

As the years passed membership at Trinity grew to 1500 and the congregation was finding it difficult to provide sufficient seating during services. A temporary solution was to have 3 services on Sunday morning; two were conducted in English and one in German. To help with the additional duties of a growing church, the congregation called Rev. Walter W. Eifert to be senior pastor, and Rev. Weinholt became his associate pastor in 1941.

Reverend Walter W. and Katherine Eifert were my grandparents. When we were kids we were at the parsonage a lot in the 1950s and 1960s. Before the Sunday School wing was built there was a big back yard with a garden. Grandma would can the food and store it in the scary fruit cellar in the basement. When the Sunday School wing was opened Grandpa took us kids to see it. He let us take off our shoes and slide on the newly polished floor in our socks.

Grandma was on the Altar Society and when she tended the altar, she let us play hide and seek amongst the pews and in the balcony. We always wanted to accompany her when she burned the household garbage in the church kitchen incinerator. We would explore the bell tower, although I'm sure she didn't give us permission to do that.

~ Susan Eifert Rain

It was imperative that construction of a new, larger facility get underway just as soon as materials became available for construction after World War II. In the meantime, the Building Committee was organized and began looking for suitable land and making arrange-

ments to sell the old church. In 1943 the church property on West Center Street was sold to the Kahler Corporation for the sum of \$75,000 with the proviso to the buyer that Trinity congregation could continue to use the church building until their new facility was completed. The property on Third Street and Sixth Avenue Southwest was selected and acquired for the sum of \$24,500. Ellerbe and Company was chosen to be the architects. Working with them as the local representative was Mr. Edgar W. Buenger, a very active member of Trinity. Mr. Alvin E. Benike, Trinity member, was awarded the general contract for construction.

Excavation for the new Trinity Lutheran Church building began at the groundbreaking ceremonies held on August 12, 1947, as other construction projects mushroomed all across the country. Material shortages continually hampered the project, causing delays in delivery and installation. When several labor unions called a general strike against local contractors, congregational building bees were held to advance the project as men made their services available. Despite the congregation facing continual financial crises, the church building was completed after 3 ½ years of construction.

The cornerstone of the old church had been removed on July 30, 1949. The box, which had been sealed for 55 years, was opened and it was discovered that many of its contents were badly damaged by moisture. Inside there was a brief history of the parish written in faded German script, copies of the *Rochester Daily Post*, *The Rochester Daily Record and Union* of July 13, 1894, and various church periodicals of that time which were printed mostly in the German language.

Three weeks later a cornerstone laying service was held at the new church site. This box contained the Bible, Synodical catechism, and copies of *The Lutheran Witness*, *Der Lutheraner*, the *Minnesota Lutheran*, and the *Rochester Post Bulletin Yearbook for 1948*, the history and constitutions of the congregation, church bulletin, school news, the order of service for the cornerstone laying, and a listing of the names of the President, Governor, Mayor, the Building Committee, and officers of the congregation.

The Ladies of the Trinity Guild undertook the project of providing the funds for the stone altar and its beautiful carvings. It took the Guild 13 years to raise the funds, \$14,000 to \$20,000, to cover the cost of this project.

Delays in the delivery of pews, the organ, and other furnishings denied use of the new facilities until 1951. Limited space in the old church forced the issue and the congregation voted to install a temporary organ in the church so that worship could be held there. On Palm Sunday, March 18, 1951, the congregation conducted two farewell services in the old church, took leave, and walked to the new church for the 11:00 confirmation service. Despite heavy snowfall 757 people were in attendance.

I remember when I was confirmed on March 18, 1951. We were the first confirmation class to be confirmed in the new Trinity Lutheran Church. It was on Palm Sunday and it was a blustery, snowy, winter day. Because of the weather, my sponsors were unable to come.

After the church service, our class had to make our way to the Rutz Studio, which was located at the entrance of Kutzky Park, and have our class and individual pictures taken. It was tough travels with all the snow.

~ Marilyn Reinke

The formal dedication service was held on June 10, 1951. Trinity's old, 1,600 pound bell, presented as a gift to the congregation in 1916, rang out from the new 70-foot bell tower to call the faithful to worship.

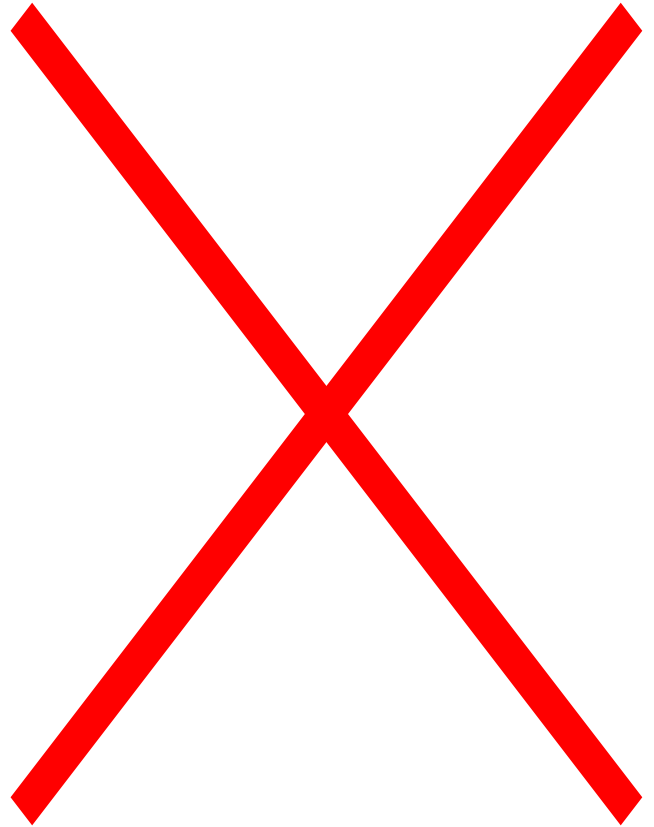


Professor Martin J. Neeb and the Rev. William Buege were guest speakers at the day's festival services. Dr. Theodore Stelzer played an evening concert on the new three-manual Reuter pipe organ. It was a day of great rejoicing and thanksgiving. Large crowds filled the church; according to the 1992 Anniversary booklet "nearly 1,500 crowded the nave, chapel, and basement at morning services; an estimated 1,400 persons were served a noon luncheon by the Ladies Aid; about 1,000 attended the afternoon service; and some 900 people enjoyed the evening recital."

It is estimated that the cost of our new building was \$435,000. On the day of the dedication Trinity congregation numbered 2,000 souls, 1,540 communicants, and 210 voters.



Note the lack of light fixtures, stained glass, and reredos carving.



At the time of the dedication service there were many furnishings that still needed to be added to complete the work. Various groups within the church undertook to provide these finishing touches. The English Ladies Aid equipped the church kitchen with dishes, utensils, and linens. The Trinity Twosome Couples spearheaded a folding door project for the Sunday School classes held in the church basement. The Men's Club tiled the basement floors, landscaped, painted the basement, and provided other materials, equipment, and services.

The German Ladies Aid donated the Rose Window over the balcony. It was reported in the December 1957 edition of the Trinity Tribune that "Mr. Charles W. Tannert, a member of the Stained Glass Window committee, was instrumental in contacting the artist in Germany, and after lengthy correspondence and the sending back and forth of numerous sketches, the window was produced in Germany and shipped to us."



The Buenger family established a fund to furnish the chapel with stained glass windows, a small organ, a specially-designed baptismal font, and the brass lighting fixtures. The Trinity Guild, having already donated the altar rail and baptismal font for the main chancel, continued to work to provide the funds for the carving of the reredos.

In 1955 the search was begun to find the right sculptor for the reredos. The Building Committee asked the architect to help them find the person to complete this project. He suggested Ivan Mestrovic, a man of monumental achievement. He had come to America following World War II from Yugoslavia, wanting to live and create in an atmosphere of freedom. Mayo Clinic had commissioned him to create the sculpture which is currently mounted in the Gonda Building Atrium. Upon hearing the Building Committee's suggested theme of "sacrifice" for the altar carving, Mestrovic replied, "The subject of representing the supreme sacrifice of our Lord as a focus of Christian religion is the one which interests me most."

The Building Committee traveled to the sculptor's Indiana studio to inspect and to approve a plaster model of "The Crucifixion." The plaster model was cast at full size, eight feet wide and twenty-two feet high. The model was shipped to Rochester in July 1956. A Nave window was removed and the model passed inside. From there it was swung into place

against the chancel wall and braced with scaffolding. Then a partition was erected to close it off from the Sanctuary.

Mestrovic selected St. Paul sculptor Anthony Caponi, chairman of the Macalaster College Art Department, to carve the design in the limestone reredos panel. For four months Caponi would travel to Rochester on long weekends and intermittent weekdays, working at a furious, exhausting pace between his college classes. As the work neared its completion the 73-year old Mestrovic came to inspect the project and to meet Caponi for the first time. He suggested some minor changes and approved the sculpture.

During this time of carving the reredos and installing the windows, the ladies of the Altar Society did a huge job of combating the sifting and settling dust in order to have the church ready for worship and communion celebrations. Despite the partition separating the reredos panel from the sanctuary, a strenuous cleaning operation was necessary each week before the altar could be set up with its linens, candles, sacred vessels, and flowers, in order to be ready for services on Sunday morning.

With the sculpture completed, the partition and scaffolding came down. The plaster model was cut into sections and removed, and the tremendous accumulation of dust was cleaned away in preparation for the dedication. In early Advent 1956, the reredos dedication services were attended by 1,400 persons. Artists, professional people, and parishioners alike were strong in their praise for the crucifixion masterpiece.

During this same time, artist Robert M. Metcalf was at work in Ohio creating the stained glass windows for the sanctuary. The windows' themes were drawn from months of research and study directed by Mr. Edgar Buenger. The first stained glass window, the Nativity, was installed in December of 1955. Windows continued to be installed through the late 1960s.

Another person who played an important role in the research for art themes in our church was Associate Pastor Arden Malotky. It was under his direction that the *Trinity Tribune*, our church's first newsletter, was published,

The Reredos at Trinity

One of the most distinctive features in the sanctuary at Trinity is the reredos, the carved panel above the altar. Designed by Ivan Mestrovic and sculpted by Anthony Caponi, the reredos is made of limestone panels. Mr. Mestrovic created three plaster models which were shipped to the church and the reredos was then carved in place.



Upper model panel for reredos



A window had to be removed to bring the full-sized models into the sanctuary.



Lower model panel for reredos.



Instrument used to transfer measurements from model to reredos.

keeping the congregation informed about church news, the progress with the reredos and the stained glass windows, and Trinity's art program.

Newsletter

Throughout the years, the Trinity Newsletter was called a variety of names:

Trinity Tribune
Trinity Newsletter
Trinity Messenger
Trinity Trumpeter
Trinity Tower

In the near future, a book describing and showing the art and special features of Trinity will be available in the church library.

During the 1950s a great many other events and changes happened at Trinity. In November of 1952 the congregation passed a resolution to reduce the number of services in German from every Sunday and holiday to one per month. Dr. and Mrs. Eric Lofgren from our congregation were commissioned to serve Synod's hospital mission in Eket, Nigeria in 1955. German services were discontinued as of January 1, 1957. In July of 1957 nearly 3,000 people attended a Lutheran Hour Rally held at Mayo Civic Center, which was the highlight of the Lutheran Laymen's League convention and for which Trinity was the host. Dr. Oswald Hoffman, Lutheran Hour speaker, and Elmer Kraemer, editor of *The Lutheran Witness*, were the honored guests.

Frederic Nitschke became part of the Trinity School staff as a contracted teacher in the fall of 1957. In early 1958 he was called to be a teacher in our school as well as the organist at Trinity. Mr. Nitschke continued to serve Trinity Lutheran School, Rochester Central Lutheran School, and Trinity Lutheran Church for 59 years, still playing for some services in 2016.

A tract of 15 acres of land was purchased on December 31, 1958, for the purpose of building a new school and possibly a mission church. Other churches in the circuit were contacted in the hopes of forming a Central School Association. On November 12, 1959, a

I attended school at the old Trinity School for two years before RCLS came into being. I remember recesses across the street in Central Park and PE classes were held in the Armory, which later became the Senior Center. I also remember climbing the bell tower during confirmation. It was a "rite of passage."

~ Mr. Bob Ritchie

I was a teacher at Trinity Lutheran School. I remember walking the children to the Armory for PE (Physical Education) in the winter and playing basketball.

I remember before we had air conditioning in the church and we would have the windows open on Sunday mornings. I used to have organ "wars" with the Presbyterian Church organist across the street, to see who could play the loudest.

I remember our congregational (voters) meetings before women were allowed to attend. The men would gather in the church basement and most of the men brought cigars. By the time the meeting was finished, the basement was a cloud of blue smoke.

~ Mr. Fred Nitschke

resolution was passed unanimously by the voters to transfer the ownership of this tract of land to the Central School Association.

Rochester Central Lutheran School

Although our school has transitioned over the years from “the little German School” to Trinity Lutheran School to Rochester Lutheran School to Rochester Central Lutheran School, Trinity continues to be an important part of the RCLS Association of Churches, providing subsidy for the children of Trinity member parents, as well as contributing a substantial part of the yearly RCLS budget. For many members support of RCLS remains a “labor of love.”

Ground breaking services for the new school were held on April 7, 1963. By September 5 of that year classes commenced but some of the most basic modern conveniences were still missing. Heavy rains and a sea of mud prevented buses from driving directly up to the school. Children and teachers had to climb from the bottom of the hill on planks laid over the mud. Since sewer and water lines had not yet been extended to the school site by the city, portable toilets outside were reminiscent of the “olden days” at the little country school-house; and water for drinking and washing was carried up the hill from the nearby home of Principal Rediger.

As in the past, Trinity was again provided with an opportunity to assist in the establishment of another local mission church. Trinity congregation urged the Minnesota District Board of Missions to consider the establishment of a church on the school property. Three acres of

the original 15 acres were purchased by the district and Holy Cross Lutheran Church was established in 1961. Three other mission congregations, which were founded by Trinity, include Redeemer in 1931, Grace in 1941, and Christ Lutheran in 1959.

With the growth of Rochester and our Trinity congregation it was becoming more difficult to have space for enough Sunday School classrooms. Groundbreaking ceremonies for a new Sunday School wing and Parish Hall were held on August 28, 1960, and the construction was completed in September 1961, at a cost of \$140,000.

Quilting

The Trinity quilters have made quilts now for 45 years beginning in 1971. Some years they made up to 125 quilts and other years 30-50.

The Quilters have sent quilts to: LWML, LWR, Minneapolis Indian Mission, Twin Cities Samaritan groups, and to Russia. They have donated quilts to the Ronald McDonald House, Salvation Army, Orphan Grain Train and to our church youth. They have given them to children of our vicars, church workers, needy church members and to be auctioned to benefit RCLS. They have a saying, “Blessed are the Quilters, for they are the piece makers.”

In 1967 Trinity celebrated its Centennial with a year-long schedule of special events. The Rev. Dr. Oliver Harms, President of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, was one of the guest speakers. During that year weekly radio broadcasts of our Sunday worship service were begun. Thanksgiving Day that year was a



RCLS 2016

great celebration as it included a short ceremony in which the \$450,000 mortgage for building the sanctuary was burned.

In 1968 the congregation named Pastor Eifert as Pastor Emeritus. After preaching his final sermon on December 29, Pastor Eifert died very unexpectedly at his home from a heart attack. He had served our parish for 27 years. The upper lounge in the new education wing became a project of the Women of Trinity and was dedicated in May 1970 as the Eifert Room. The Eifert Memorial Scholarship Fund for church workers was also established. Membership in our Church at this point in history was 1,636 communicant members.

I remember when my husband, Grover, brought his painting, (Trinity in the palm of God's hand.), to Trinity that Sunday morning in 1971. I can't remember how we arrived at church, but he brought in his painting and it was still wet! I will never forget that. I never even knew he was working on it in his studio in the basement. He never mentioned a word. I was speechless! It was beautiful and it still hangs in our church library. Look closely and you will see reference to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Father (the hand with Trinity in the palm), The Son (the three crosses), The Holy Spirit (the dove in the sky above the hand).

~ Mrs. Helen Richardson

After discussion of women suffrage in our congregational meetings, it was decided in September 1970 that women could attend the meetings, but they were not yet allowed to vote. This continued until 1975 when women, along with all 18 year olds, were given the right to vote at congregational meetings.

The Weinhold Room was established and dedicated in 1974 through the work of the Women of Trinity. In August 1974 the mortgage for the Education Building was burned at a special service.

As a child, I remember when they used to dim the sanctuary lights during the sermons. It was the perfect time to snuggle up to my mom's shoulder and take a nap. The longer the sermon the better!

~ Kris (Amann) Lindquist

In 1978 Pastor Robert Raedeke introduced the congregation to the Lenten series of Passion Portraits. These portrayals of Biblical characters were a great attraction for our members and the city of Rochester.

The church office became computerized in 1984. Trinity had a membership of 1,801 baptized members. In 1985, Bible Class attendance increased with 300 – 350 people attending classes each week. A new heating system was installed in the church. Individual communion cups and the common cup were used in the same services, beginning in 1988.

In 1990 our baptized membership numbered 1864 souls. *Lutheran Worship* hymnals were introduced to the congregation. An informal mid-week worship service was again offered for those members who could not attend on Sunday mornings.

The congregation decided to build another addition to our building, which would provide a new entrance, narthex, elevator, and gathering area for our members. Benike Construction was chosen to carry out this addition to our building. Ground breaking was held in August of 1991, and the project was completed in 1992, in time for the 125th Anniversary celebration of Trinity. Also in 1991, our membership had grown to 1930 souls.

“125 Years of God’s Grace” was the theme of the 125th Anniversary of our congregation in 1992. Special Lenten offerings were given to our local Dorothy Day House and Concordia College in Selma, Alabama. The Women of Trinity compiled a cookbook of their favorite recipes from the past 125 years, and 125th Anniversary mugs were also available. Congregation member Maxine Schultz arranged for fellow Missouri Synod member Wally Bronner of Bronner’s Christmas Wonderland in Frankenmuth, Michigan, to design and make Christmas ornaments of fine Austrian glass for the occasion.

Library

Our church library got a good start in 1992 with boxes of donated books. It was located on the stage, then in a room in the education wing, and now it has an attractive space of its own on the second floor of the north narthex.

You will find all books to be Bible centered with a Christian message. It has its own “Mission Statement”. A trip to the library is worth going to view the painting at the check out desk done by one of our own members.

In the early 1990s a number of parishioners and friends of Trinity Lutheran Church began to make larger gifts and bequests to the congregation. It was decided to form a Trinity Congregational Endowment Fund. The principal of the fund was to be invested, and the interest earned was to be used for non-budgetary expenses, mission projects, and new ministry initiatives. Over the years, such monies supported major capital improvements, staff development, and more. By the time of the 150th anniversary of our congregation, this fund has grown to a value of well over \$3 million.

During the 1990s and the 2000s, Trinity Congregation experienced a significant number of staff turnovers. In an attempt to be more effective in ministry, a number of part-time staff positions were created, such as Parish Nurse, Coordinator of Volunteers, Coordinator of Education, Coordinator of Women’s

Ministry, Coordinator of Equipping Ministry, and an interpreter to facilitate ministry to the deaf. Dedicated and skilled people filled these positions and contributed greatly to carrying out Trinity’s mission.

In the late 1990s Trinity intentionally began an emphasis on expanding the variety of worship experiences being offered to its members. In 1999 a beautiful grand piano was purchased to be used as part of a contemporary worship praise team, as well as in other musical activities. The Board of Elders and other groups spent much energy in researching and staffing for “Contemporary Worship,” a style of service which began in 2001 and continues to be offered on Saturday evenings as the “Celebration Service.”

In 2000 the congregation contracted with Mr. Claire Vomhof to serve as our Lay Minister. Serving in this capacity for over 15 years, Mr. Vomhof visited the homebound and nursing home residents, bringing them Holy Communion and conducting devotions on a monthly basis.

After having had one Synodical vicar in 1951, Trinity congregation again began serving as a host site and teaching congregation for annual Synodical vicars in 2001. (A vicar is a seminary student who spends a one-year period of time working in a congregation to gain experience and training before graduating from the seminary and being assigned to serve a congregation as a pastor.) Since 2001 Trinity hosted 15 vicars as part of their educational experience.

Our congregation continued to seek ways to be more mission-oriented. In 1994 a commitment was made to help build a church to support a Lutheran mission effort in Malabar, India. For many years, the congregation made annual substantial gifts to support this mission, including sending representatives to India to view the mission activities and report back to the congregation. In 2000 an attempt was made to begin a ministry to Sudanese immigrants who had settled in the city of Rochester. In 2008 mission gifts were designated to support a new LCMS congregation being established in the northwest part of Rochester (Family of Christ) and to support the work of a missionary in Uganda (Rev. Jake Gillard).

In January of 2004 the mortgage taken out in 1992 to construct the new narthex and other projects was paid off and burned in a special service. The mortgage was paid off eight years early!

After the narthex addition to the north side of the Sanctuary was completed, the stained glass windows in the north wall of the sanctuary remained dim because of the lack of external light. For many years, studies were conducted to determine how to correct this issue. On Easter Sunday 2005 at the sunrise service, backlighting panels were dedicated and lights were turned on to reveal these windows' stunning beauty, which had not been seen since 1992.



Studies and discussions for many years led to a decision by the congregation to rebuild and expand the Reuter pipe organ that was installed after the main sanctuary was dedicated in 1951.

The organ was removed by the Wicks Organ Company of Highland, Illinois, in July of 2005. After thorough cleaning, repair, and expansion, it was reinstalled and used again for Easter services in 2006. A formal dedication and recital was held in September 2006. In the early 2000s the congregation turned its attention to find ways to better serve patients and staff related to the Mayo Clinic. A space was set aside in the Education Building to serve as a "lounge" to be used between medical appointments by patients and families. Special attempts were made to make noon-time Lenten services including a lunch available to Mayo workers.

In 2006 an apartment building containing 21 apartments and some "commercial space" became available on the southeast corner of the block on which Trinity Lutheran Church stands. A portion of the building, especially the "commercial space," had originally been built to house the Vine Funeral Home. After much discussion, the congregation resolved to purchase the building and property in September 2006. A major portion of the financing for this purchase was provided by the Trinity Lutheran Congregational Endowment Fund.

Several unsuccessful attempts were made to rent the "commercial space" in the apartment building. In 2012 the congregation offered this space for use by a new mission outreach in Rochester called POBLO (People of the Book Lutheran Outreach). The space is used to hold classes and training for immigrants, to help them integrate into Rochester society, and has become a very friendly and helpful ministry. Volunteers from Trinity and other



Rochester area congregations serve as teachers for: English as a second language, English conversation, use of computers, sewing, cooking, and also as receptionists and schedulers. These contacts allow for Christian witnessing and have led to some students wishing to attend church and learn more about the Christian faith.

In 2009 one of the apartments in the building was set aside to be used free of charge for Lutheran patients and families who were in Rochester for treatment and healing. In January 2015 a second apartment was made available for the same purpose. This ministry is carried out under the banner of "TLCare Ministry." Volunteers from Trinity are in charge of scheduling and cleaning these apartments for use by guests.

Legacy of Faith 2016



***1951 Fellowship Hall east end
with stage.***



***1951 Fellowship Hall
west end.***



***2016 Faith and Family Center
east end.***

***2016 Faith and
Family Center,
west end.***



As the 150th anniversary year approached, the congregation resolved to do a major fundraiser to perform some significant deferred maintenance projects as well as to do a timely renovation of the Fellowship Hall. Benike Construction was chosen to carry out the remodeling and the maintenance projects. The work was begun in the late spring of 2016, and the renovated Fellowship Hall was dedicated on September 11, 2016, and renamed the Faith and Family Center. Other tasks such as tuck-pointing, repairs to the bell tower and cleaning of the reredos were completed by the anniversary celebration.

Our 150th Anniversary theme is “Celebrating a Legacy of Faith: 150 Years of Sharing God’s Grace in Faith and Love.” Our theme verse is 2 Corinthians 13:14: “May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”

By happy coincidence, the celebration of Trinity’s 150 anniversary and the celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation happened in the same year. Trinity’s leaders resolved to combine these celebrations throughout the year. The following activities have been included in the celebration:

Our year of celebrating the 150th Anniversary began with a special New Year’s Eve service and celebration on December 31, 2016.

A Mission Festival service was held on January 22, 2017 with Pastor Elden Kohn, a former vicar, preaching.

On February 12 Trinity celebrated the education ministries sponsored for so many years by the congregation. Current and retired Rochester Central Lutheran School teachers and support staff, as well as several who had taught at Trinity Lutheran School, were honored.

Sunday morning adult Bible classes focused on Martin Luther and the Reformation throughout the year. The new film about Martin Luther was shown and will be shown again during the celebration year.

Midweek Lenten services featured dramatic monologues presenting individuals from the Reformation era, plus Rev. C.F.W. Walther, first president of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

A 150th Anniversary cookbook was prepared and sold.



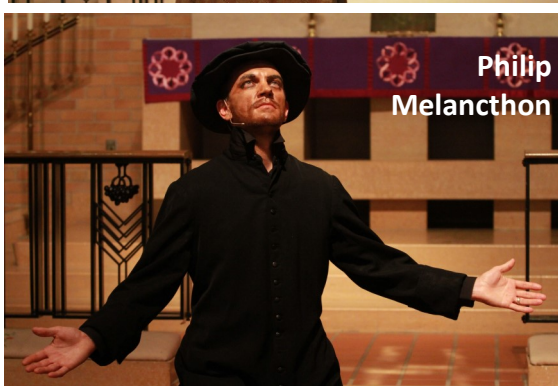
Pope Leo X



CFW Walther



Martin Luther



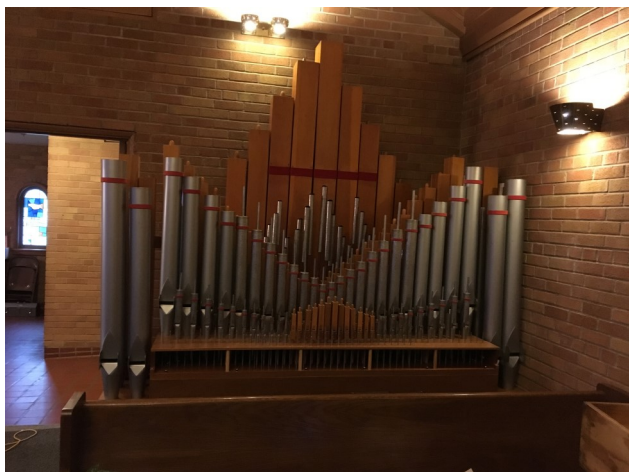
Philip Melancthon



A German Peasant

A full-color booklet showing all the beautiful stained-glass windows at Trinity was prepared and sold.

In April, installation began for a small pipe organ for the chapel. The 2-manual 4-rank Arndt-Carlson organ was donated to Trinity by friends of the congregation, Dr. Dennis and Mrs. Doris Johnson. The organ is used for regular midweek services held in the chapel, as well as other special occasions.



Display pictures of all the pastors who have served Trinity as well as pictures of confirmation classes and other historical items were placed in the hallways of the buildings.

On April 19 at the Homebound Service, Teacher Frederic Nitschke was honored for his 70 years as a teacher and musician in Lutheran Schools (60 of those years were connected with Trinity.)



Pictured above are Pastor Haak, Pastor Schwartz, Sean Martens (Assistant to the President), and Fred Nitschke. Mr. Martens presented a plaque to Fred for his years in ministry.

On May 21 a community open house was held, featuring presentations on the reredos sculpture and stained-glass windows.

On June 4 an anniversary celebration congregational picnic was held at Trinity.

The 2017 Vacation Bible School theme was focused on the anniversary of the Reformation.

Special anniversary celebration services will be held on the weekend of September 10 with the Rev. Dr. Dale Meyer, president of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis and former Lutheran Hour speaker, preaching.

A bus trip on October 29 is planned to bring interested members to the Minnesota South District's 500th Anniversary of the Reformation service to be held on the campus of Concordia University in St. Paul.

A Minnesota South District Region 3 hymn festival is scheduled for November 12 to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

A concluding celebration of Trinity's 150th anniversary is scheduled for New Year's Eve 2017.

As a hymn writer penned long ago "To God be the Glory, Great things He hath done." God's guiding hand has been present throughout our 150 year history, helping Trinity congregation to grow and keeping us firmly planted in His Word. It is by His Grace that each of us is saved and that our congregation has continued to stay strong with His help and guidance. May God continue to bless our Trinity family as we "Make Disciples of Christ and Share His Love."

Trinity Youth

The youth at Trinity continue to be a major part of Trinity's 150 year history. From its inception in 1904 as the Walther League until now, the Trinity youth have been active in synodical and district activities, service in the Rochester community, Bible study, and fellowship.

In the last 25 years, Trinity has attended every National LCMS Youth Gathering – a triennial gathering that provides thousands of youth and adults the opportunity to come together as a community of God's people to learn more about Jesus Christ, the Christian faith, and their Lutheran identity. We look forward to Minnesota South hosting the 2019 Gathering in Minneapolis, MN!

During the 2000s the Trinity youth were also highly involved in Ongoing Ambassadors for Christ. They attended OAFCC's national summer training in Michigan, and also hosted the national conference at Trinity. They also hosted several weekend events at Trinity for other churches involved in OAFCC.

At the district level Trinity has participated on and off in the annual Lutheran Youth day at Valleyfair. This summer will mark the 37th annual event run by the Minnesota South District DCE association.

The Trinity youth have also been very active locally in both service and fellowship events. In 2010 the confirmation program at Trinity was re-structured to bring added focus on service and mission, and monthly service projects were started. In the past Trinity youth had done service projects such as working at Channel One Food Shelf and making Christmas cards and caroling at nursing homes. Added service projects with the new confirmation program included serving meals at Hope Lodge for patients receiving cancer treatments and their families, volunteering at Salvation Army, making treats for residents at Gift of Life Transplant House, visiting and doing activities with residents at nursing homes, and making cards for homebound members.

National Youth Gatherings

2016 "In Christ Alone" Book of Philippians, New Orleans, LA
2013 "Live Love[d]" 1 John 4:10, San Antonio, TX
2010 "We Believe" John 20:31, New Orleans, LA
2007 "Chosen" 1 Peter 2:9, Orlando, FL
2004 "Beyond Imagination" Ephesians 3:20-21, Orlando, FL
2001 "Higher Ground" Colossians 3:1, New Orleans, LA
1998 "Called to Be" Romans 1:6, Atlanta, GA
1995 "River of Light" Psalm 46:4, San Antonio, TX
1992 "Time For Joy" Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, New Orleans, LA
1989 "Blessed in the Journey" Church Year, Denver, CO
1986 "On Wings Like Eagles" Isaiah 40:28-31, Washington, D.C.
1983 "Amigos de Cristo" Luther's Explanation to the Third Article, San Antonio, TX

The program shift also added emphasis on mission work through summer mission trips. The junior youth have gone on week-long mission trips to Green Bay (2011, 2013, 2015) and Duluth (2010, 2012, 2014, 2016) and served many ways in those communities including nursing homes, Boys & Girls Club, food shelves, thrift stores, a center for people with cerebral palsy, elderly and disabled people's homes, and soup kitchens. The high school youth have also grown in experience in the mission field through their summer mission trips to Ysleta Mission in El Paso, TX (2008), inner-city mission work in Las Vegas, NV (2009) and Denver, CO (2012), outreach to Native American populations on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation in Lame Deer, MT (2011) and the Crow Reservation in Lodge Grass, MT (2015), and leadership development and service work through Idaho Servant Adventures (2014). In the past the Trinity Youth have also served at camp LuWiSoMo working with campers with disabilities during a week of the summer (2003, 2004, and 2005).

Trinity youth have also been very involved in fellowship at Trinity. Since the change in confirmation program, both junior and high school youth participate in fall and spring retreats held at Camp Victory for an overnight of fun, friendship, and faith-building. Youth also participate yearly in Grace Lutheran Church's winter tubing event at Ironwood Springs and the Supernight lock-in hosted by Rochester Area Youth for Christ. They also serve and promote fellowship through prepping and cooking Lenten suppers, Advent suppers, and the Easter breakfast.

Trinity has a rich history of promoting and supporting the faith development of the youth in our congregation, and we look forward to the continued uplifting and encouragement of the next generation that will carry Trinity to its next big anniversary!



Anniversary Timeline

- 1866 Late summer. Arrival in Rochester of Charter Members Friedrich Siekert, Theodore Adler, Carl Brendemuehl, August Brendemuehl, and Karl Oesterrich.
- 1867 First divine service conducted by Rev. Johann Herzer of Claremont, MN.
- 1869 First church building 24 x 30 ft. completed.
- 1874 December. Congregation chose name "Evangelische Lutherische Dreieinigkeits Gemeinde" (Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church).
- 1875 Candidate Ludwig von Schenk was installed as first resident pastor.
First regular Christian Day School came into being with an enrollment of 11 pupils, meeting in the church building.
- 1877 November 22. Congregation was incorporated.
- 1878 A German Ladies Aid founded with 5 charter members.
November 17. Pastor George P. A. Schaaf was installed as pastor and also served as a teacher.
- 1879 August 10. Congregation received into membership of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.
- 1880 April. Rev. Heinrich G. Schmidt installed.
- 1882 Rev. Karl Schmidt installed. (Brother of Rev. Heinrich G. Schmidt)
The 1869 church building was enlarged and a steeple added at a cost of \$300 with 10% interest paid.
- 1883 August 21. Tornado struck Rochester.
First sermon to be preached in the English language was delivered at the Sunday evening re-dedication service, after the tornado damage had been repaired.
- 1884 March 30. Rev. Carl W. Nickels installed.
August 17. Resolution to build a school, 18 x 24, cost not to exceed \$425.
- 1886 First janitor, Frederick (Fritz) Witzke, employed at \$15 a year.
- 1887 July 3. Congregation purchased reed organ and new school benches.
- 1889 July 8. Resolved to add an addition of 12 feet to the school building.
- 1891 September 26. Resolution to call a teacher.
- 1892 Gustave Frank, first called teacher, arrived.

Opening of School Year 1892

"The parochial school of the German Lutheran church opened on Monday morning with an enrollment of about 40 pupils. They are under the training and leadership of Prof. G. Frank, a graduate of the Normal School in Addison, Illinois. He teaches both English and German with equal zeal and hopes to accomplish much in his year's work. The object is to give the children not only a practical but also a religious education. The school room can accommodate about seventy pupils and there will be no vacant seats as soon as the summer work is over, and children can come back to school. It is a free institution for the children of the parish but to outsiders a small tuition of 75 cents per month is charged."

Olmsted County Democrat September 8, 1892

- 1894 January 14. Resolved to erect new church building.
February 25. Two lots on 5th and Prospect Streets (West Center and 3rd Ave.) were purchased as building site.
July 15. Cornerstone for the new church laid.

- 1894 First Sunday in Advent, dedication of new church.
The old church building was converted to be used as the school, once again.
- 1899 Teacher Carl Cutkosky installed.
- 1901 Pastor Carl Nickels and daughter taught school during the teacher vacancy.
- 1902 August. Teacher Frederick G. Stephani installed.
- 1905 Pipe organ purchased for \$1,500.
- 1907 Mr. Benjamin J. Stellwagen installed as teacher.
September. Furnace placed in school.
- 1909 March 28. Rev. Nickels' 25th Anniversary as pastor at Trinity celebrated.
October. Monthly envelope system introduced.

Communion Note of Interest

There was a time when members would "announce" their intention to go to communion on Friday before communing on Sunday. They would also get to church 15 minutes early on that Sunday and the pastor would have a short message on repentance of sins.

- 1911 May 6. Rev. Martin Weinhold installed.
Regular evening services in English language introduced.
December 10. Teacher Herman A. Roeglin installed.
- 1912 Jan. 1. Resolved to erect new school at 2nd Street NW. Construction began in September 1912 and completed in August 1913. Cost of building \$13,700.
- 1913 March 31. Teacher Herman A. Roeglin died.
May 4. Resolved to build new parsonage adjacent to church.
June 19. Teacher Carl Bahle of Freeman installed. (He temporarily lived in the school since the teacherage had been given to Teacher Roeglin's widow.)
August 10. Dedication of new school on 2nd St. NW.
- 1914 January. Janitor for school and church employed.
- 1916 1600 pound church bell valued at \$530 donated to congregation by Mr. and Mrs. August Kutzky and Mr. and Mrs. Louis Hoffman, members of Trinity. The bell is still in use at Trinity.
June 4. Mr. Karl F. G. Kath installed as teacher.
Congregation "was persuaded, at last, to hire a second teacher."
July 2. Miss Anna Kionka engaged as second teacher. Had charge of the lower grades.
- 1917 July 15. Golden Jubilee of Trinity Congregation observed.
- 1919 November. Weekly envelope system introduced.
Men's Club organized with 7 charter members.
Dec. 19. Trinity Choir officially organized, with 22 members under the direction of Teacher Kath.
- 1920 August. Young People's Society with Ladies Aid paid for the original electric wiring and fixtures in the church.
- 1921 April 10. Confirmation of the first English class of 10 children, and 16 children were confirmed in German.
April. The Young People's Society became a member of the Walther League, the national Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod youth group.
August. Resolved: "The language of Trinity Lutheran School is to be English."
- 1922 April 19. English Ladies Aid (later known as Women of Trinity) organized with 30 charter members.
- 1923 January. English Sunday school organized, which opened on April 15 with 170 children.
October 10. Adult Bible Class organized with 40 members.
- 1925 January 4. Teacher Edwin E. Zielske of Detroit, Michigan, installed.

- 1925 A department for the deaf was organized in our Sunday School. Seventeen years later several deaf children were confirmed.
- 1927 April. First Noon-day Lenten Services, held in Lawler Theatre.
- 1928 October 14. 50th Anniversary of the German Ladies Aid.
Quarterly Parish Paper and School News introduced.
- 1929 February. Men's Club placed bowling alleys in the basement of the school.
- 1930 June. Men's Club joined the Lutheran Laymen's League.
- 1931 Trinity helped found Redeemer Lutheran Church in SE Rochester.
- 1932 Congregational minutes written for the first time in English.
- 1933 September 11. Mr. Edgar Tassler called to be teacher of the intermediate grades.
- 1934 March. Trinity Ladies Guild organized. It was largely composed of professional women who found it difficult to join other existing church societies. Their focus was mission work and congregation projects.
Monthly School News and Church Bulletins published.
- 1935 December 8. First Lutheran Hour broadcast in South Eastern Minnesota heard over station KROC. Financial support was given by the societies of the congregation. Trinity continues to sponsor this broadcast on KOLM.
- 1939 October. Candidate Armin Deye of Friedheim, MO, entered upon his duties as assistant to Rev. Weinhold.
Three morning services introduced to accommodate larger attendance.
- 1940 September. Leonard Thaemert came to be assistant to Pastor Weinhold.
- 1941 October 12. Pastor Walter W. Eifert was installed as senior pastor, with Pastor Weinhold becoming Associate Pastor.
December (first Sunday in Advent) copies of *The Lutheran Hymnal* were dedicated.
- 1942 September. Miss Bertha Wilbrecht was hired as teacher for lower grades.
Diamond Jubilee Celebration. On Sunday, Nov. 29, Dr. J. W. Behnken, President of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, preached for the morning and afternoon services.
- 1944 All women's groups became affiliated with the International Women's Missionary League.
- 1945 August. Mr. Humbert P. Westermann installed as a called teacher of Trinity Lutheran School.
- 1947 August 12. Groundbreaking ceremony on new church site for present church and parsonage.
August 27. Mr. Alvin Roth from Woodburn, Indiana, was installed as a called teacher of Trinity Lutheran School.
- 1949 August 21. Cornerstone for present church was laid.

I remember when I first started coming to Trinity in 1949. I was a nursing student at Saint Mary's Hospital, so I would walk to Trinity on Sunday mornings. I will never forget how friendly and welcoming Ann Benike was to me. She would always offer me a ride if I needed it. She truly made a difference in my life at my new church home, Trinity! ~ Mrs. Emma Amann

- 1951 March 18 (Palm Sunday). Farewell services at 8:00 a.m. (in English) and at 9:30 a.m. (in German) Conducted in the old church. Confirmation service at 11:00 a.m. held in new church. In spite of heavy snowfall, attendance was 757.
June 10. Formal dedication of new church. Ladies served noon meal to about 1100 guests in Fellowship Hall.

- 1951 Mr. John Ellerman served as vicar at Trinity from Sept. 1951 to June 1952. November. Trinity Altar Society organized.
- 1953 August 16. Candidate Arden Malotky was installed as Associate Pastor. The German Ladies Aid celebrated their 75th Anniversary.
- 1954 First Vacation Bible School, conducted for two weeks.
- 1956 February 9. Building Committee and Trinity Guild agree upon carving for reredos as presented by Sculptor Ivan Mestrovic. Completed reredos was dedicated December 9. November 9. Resolved to drop German services beginning January 1957.
- 1957 June 30. Ordination and installation service for Pastor Roger Polansky, new Associate Pastor.
- 1958 After serving as a contracted teacher during the 1957-58 school year, Mr. Frederic Nitschke was called as teacher to Trinity Lutheran School and also director of music and youth counselor at Trinity Lutheran Church.
- Joint boards urged to prepare a resolution in favor of a Central School Association to be brought before their respective congregations. In December Trinity congregation voted in favor of a Central School Association.
- Mr. Edwin Zielske passed away just prior to Christmas.
- December 31. Purchase of Geselle property completed for the current Rochester Central Lutheran School.
- 1959 May 17. Pastor Carl P. Brenner was installed as Associate Pastor.
- May. Trustees of the congregation authorized to sign the Central School Association agreement.
- Mr. Henry J. Rediger accepted the call as principal of Trinity Lutheran School.
- July. Mr. Henry Rediger and Mr. Frederic Nitschke released from their calls to Trinity Lutheran Church to accept calls to the Rochester Central Lutheran School Association.
- October. Trinity conveyed the school building and property on 2nd Street N.W. along with Geselle property to Rochester Central Lutheran School Association.
- 1960 August 28. Ground breaking for new Sunday School education wing.
- 1961 September. Open house and dedication of new Sunday School education wing. (Cost \$140,000)
- December 14. Trinity Lutheran School property on 2nd Street N.W. was sold to Methodist Hospital Association for \$130,000 with occupancy set for June 15, 1963.
- 1963 April 7. Groundbreaking services held for the new school, in a cornfield, way out in Elton Hills.
- June. Sunday School classes for special needs children began.
- September 5. First classes began in the new Rochester Central Lutheran School (RCLS) facility. Sewer and water not connected by the city but promised for near future.
- October 10. Senior Citizens organization approved.
- 1964 January 12. Dedication service, cornerstone laying, and open house held at the new Rochester Central Lutheran School.
- Third grade Bibles presented, gift of Earl & Mary Senst in memory of son Roger. This program continues to this day.

Bible Reading Program

To encourage Bible reading among Trinity members, Trinity presents a children's Bible to all 3 year olds in the congregation. Children in the 3rd grade receive a Bible appropriate for their age level. For the adults, weekly Bible readings are published in the newsletter.

- 1965 March 14. Installation of Pastor Henry Gaertner as Administrative Pastor, allowing Pastor Eifert to serve as Associate Pastor, per his request.
- 1967 January 8. Three Festival services began official year-long observances of Trinity's 100th Anniversary.

- 1967 February 19. Youth and Education Director Mr. Ed. Thiel installed at Trinity.
 October 1. Radio broadcasts began, originating from the church during worship services with an announcer providing live commentary from a booth with control equipment located in the church.

Trinity Radio Broadcast

Trinity's radio broadcast began October, 1967. Broadcasters had to climb a ladder to get up into the room above the baptismal font. There was no insulation in this room. It was hot in the summer and cold in the winter. The "broadcast booth" was moved to the balcony of the church after 10 years. When the balcony was remodeled in 2006, the booth was moved to the main floor in the back of the church. Many updates in equipment were done and in the summer of 2016 a new equipment console and TV cameras were added to the electronic equipment.

Resolved that Article V of the Church Constitution be changed whereby male members of the congregation, having completed their 21st birthday, would be entitled to vote and hold church offices as voting members, provided they were not under church discipline.

November 23. Thanksgiving Day service with burning of mortgage to signify that the debt against the present church building was erased.

December 31. Candlelight Watch Night Service from 11:00 to Midnight concluded Centennial Year events.

- 1968 December 29. Pastor Walter W. Eifert passed away after preaching at his retirement services.
 1969 January 19. Installation of Rev. Victor Bittner as pastor of evangelism and youth.
 Rev. Emil G. Winkler hired to do homebound visits and preach every 5th Sunday.
 The Rev. Walter W. Eifert Memorial Scholarship fund was established.

War Memorial Plaques

To remember the men killed in the Vietnam War, the church, in 1970, commissioned Charles Tannert and Grover Richardson to design a Vietnam Memorial Plaque to honor the two men from our congregation who lost their lives in that war. This wooden relief plaque is located in the west narthex along with the memorial created by Charles Tannert for the men killed in WWI and WWII.

- 1972 Women of Trinity celebrated their 50th Anniversary.
 1974 July 28. Rev. David R. Rose installed.
 1975 February. Mortgage burning ceremony for the Education building.
 April. The President of the Congregation welcomed the ladies to their first voters meeting with voting privileges. At this time all 18 year old members were also given the right to vote.
 1977 October 2. Rev. Robert C. Raedeke installed.
 1978 March. Trinity's Greeters program was initiated.
 "Passion Portraits" were introduced by Pastor Raedeke at the evening Lenten services.
 Initial set of hand bells was donated to the congregation.
 Thursday morning Bible Brunch class began (around 1978). This class continues to meet to this day.
 1979 January 14. Rev. Dennis Aubey installed as pastor of evangelism and youth.
 1980 July 27. Purchase of Second Street S.W. property for \$200,000 for lower parking lot.
 1981 September 27. Rev. Martin E. Mueller installed.
 October 18. Rev. Frederic W. Baue installed.

I remember being in charge of the Funeral lunch committee. We always made tater tot hot dish and fruited Jell-O from scratch! I remember when Mrs. Bakken and I started the Nursery and it was located in the Education wing. I remember when Lillian Miller always made the coffee for any church event. She had to boil the coffee on the stove and she always added an egg. It was always egg coffee! I remember when Mrs. Gertrude Buenger and Mrs. Sadie Benike had a Roof Top Tea fundraiser on the new roof of our present church while it was being built!

~ Maxine Schultz

- 1985 April 14. Rev. Donald G. Wuertz installed.
- 1987 June 28. Ordination and Installation of Rev. Paul G. Werner, working with evangelism.
- 1988 Mrs. Debra Bird installed as Director of Christian Education.
- 1990 February 4. The Rev. Dr. David R. Zachrich installed as Administrative Pastor.
- 1991 August. Groundbreaking for \$1.2 million addition and renovation project.



- 1991 October. Jane Wiertsema installed as Director of Youth.
- 1992 Trinity's 125th Anniversary Year. The theme of the celebration was "Faith to Build On."
 May 31. The cornerstone was laid and dedication for the addition, which included renovation, the new narthex, air conditioning, and an elevator.
 June. Stephen Ministry (a one-on-one, lay caring ministry) was begun.
- 1993 June 27. Installation of Rev. Kevin Wendt.
 Fall. RCLS Pre-School program started and based at Trinity.
- 1994 March. Trinity began a 5 year commitment to send funds to Malabar Mission in India, funding the first year of work in Naduvil, Cannonore District, Kerala State, India.
 Fall. Confirmation classes discontinued at RCLS. Confirmation instruction to be done at the church homes of the students.
 September. Men's Club started again with a catered dinner and special speaker. Monthly meetings followed.
 Sunday, September 18. First church service for homebound members.
 December. Second annual Christmas Concert by the circuit churches, now at Trinity, and first annual Christmas Cantata at Trinity.
- 1996 March. Trinity sent \$12,602 to purchase a permanent site for the Malabar Mission in India.
 Lenten services included "Passion People" portrayals.

1996 July. Prison Outreach ministry began and included Prison Hospice and Prison Bible Study. A prison ministry continues to this day.

Trinity's Prison Ministry

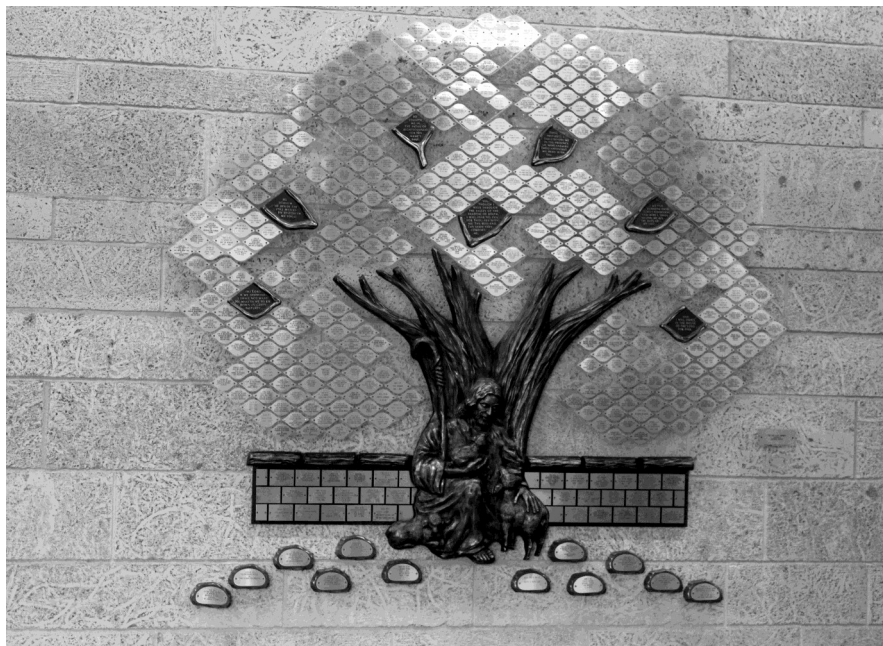
Trinity has had a ministry at the Federal Medical Center in Rochester. It began in 1996 under the leadership of Claire Vomhof. Every Monday evening members of Trinity go to the prison to lead a Bible study or show Bible-based videos and engage in discussions with the prisoners for 1 - 2 hours.

September 8. Pastor John Rasmussen installed after a 3 year vacancy.

1997 September 24. 40th Anniversary Celebration honoring Mr. Frederic Nitschke for his music ministry here at Trinity.

November 30. Pastor James Kroonblawd installed as Pastor of Family and Youth Ministries.

1998 March. Tree of Remembrance unveiled, located on the south wall of the north narthex. It was officially dedicated on November 1.



December. First Sharing and Caring Christmas Tree for homebound members.

1999 May. Simply Giving (electronic giving) was explained in the church's newsletter.

June. Parish Nurse program began at Trinity. Mrs. Florine Murray was the parish nurse.

July 25. Contemporary worship introduced in a Sunday morning service.

November 16 – December 7. Pastor Kroonblawd and congregation member Laraine Ritchie traveled to India along with 12 other people from the U.S. and Canada to visit the Malabar Mission.

2000 January 2. Mr. Claire Vomhof installed as Lay Minister to provide ministerial care and Holy Communion for the sick and homebound of our congregation.

June 3. Contemporary Worship moved to Saturday evenings at 5:30 p.m.

July. Pew Bibles put in the pew book racks.

2001 June 10. 50th Anniversary of the dedication of the present church building.

June 16. 125th Anniversary of the School celebrated.

The Little German School 1875 – 1918

Trinity Lutheran School 1918 – 1959

Rochester Central Lutheran School 1959 – present

August 26. Trinity's first of fifteen consecutive vicars installed.

- 2001 “Operation Christmas Child” began with 50+ boxes filled.
- 2002 October 20. Pastor William H. Otte installed as Administrative Pastor.
- 2003 Maundy Thursday offerings designated for Malabar Mission.
Easter. First Saturday Night Easter Vigil.
August. Name change. Contemporary Service on Saturday evenings became Celebration Service.
Fall. First early communion class offered for grades 5 – 8.
November 15. Meeting to dissolve Women of Trinity (1878 – 2003) and the explanation of its replacement by a Women’s Ministry Council with a Women’s Ministry Coordinator.
- 2004 January. Burning of \$950,000 mortgage taken out on August 3, 1992, for the narthex/elevator renovation project. Paid off 8 years early.
March. Former Trinity member Mr. Gordon Hoffman built narthex stained glass window coverings in accordance with specs drawn up by Trinity member Mr. Dick Brehmer.
- 2005 January. The church’s logo of Trinity’s Bell Tower was launched, and the newsletter becomes *The Tower*.
May 22. Congregation member Deb Lubahn received the national LCMS Lamb Award for being an outstanding volunteer “in fostering the spiritual growth of youth through civic and other service projects.”
July 3. Jennifer Jurgensen installed as Coordinator of Volunteers and Coordinator of Christian Education.
July 31. Michael Tindall ordained and installed as Associate Pastor.
August 10. Quarterly Communion Services for the homebound were introduced.
- 2006 March. Radio Control Booth moved from the balcony to below the balcony.
March. Ladies Lunch Out was started.
March 20. The rebuilding of the organ was finished and installation began. The balcony was also remodeled at this time, including removal of the cork on the walls, painting the frame of the Rose Window, painting the organ chambers, new floor tiles, and new choir chairs.
September 10. Congregation decided to buy the apartment building next door to the church.
September 17. Organ Dedication Recital.
October. New hymnals, the *Lutheran Service Book*, introduced.
- 2007 Lenten Character Portrayals were done at both the noon and evening services.
- 2008 One half hour “Lent at Lunch” services were done to help people come on their lunch hour for a short Lenten service, complete with a Bible character monologue, and lunch afterwards.
March 26. Midweek Services moved to Wednesday evenings instead of Thursdays.
Maundy Thursday and Thanksgiving offerings designated for mission congregation Family of Christ, after supporting the Malabar Mission for 15 years. Future mission offerings will support a local mission project and a foreign mission project, which at this time was Rev. Jacob Gillard and his family, who were serving in Uganda.
September TLCare Hospitality Room opened in the Sunday School wing. It was a place for out-of-town Mayo patients to relax between appointments.
- 2009 First TLCare apartment was furnished and opened for use by Lutheran patients coming to Mayo for treatments, free of charge.
Sept. 13. Mark Cook commissioned and installed as Director of Christian Education, with responsibilities for education and youth programs.
October. Trinity’s loan for the organ rebuild was completely paid off.



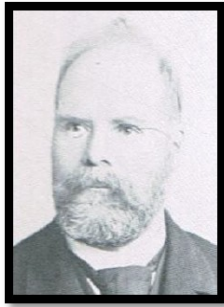
Trinity Lutheran Church



- 2010 June Newsletter explained changes in the confirmation program. Classes for 7th, 8th, and 9th grade students with confirmation in the fall of their 10th grade year, possibly on Reformation Sunday.
July 11. Joel Haak ordained and installed as Associate Pastor of Family Life.
- 2011 First time at Trinity. Summer Organ Recital Series, consisting of 12 free, half hour organ programs, at 12:15 p.m. on Tuesdays.
November. New Trinity Mission Statement: “Making Disciples of Christ and Sharing His Love.”
December Tower newsletter was the first to be electronically mailed to all members. Mailed copies would go only to our homebound members. Other printed copies would be available for pick up at the church.
- 2012 January. The Church Council decided to offer the commercial space in our apartment building for use by POBLO (People of the Book Lutheran Outreach) as their headquarters in Rochester.
May. It was decided that our new mission project would be POBLO.
October 28. First Reformation Confirmation.
- 2013 May. New pew Bibles, ESV translations, which matched our hymnals, both in Bible texts and in their covers, were placed in our pews and dedicated.
- 2014 April. Electronic sign installed at the corner of our church property.
August 17. Pastor Nathaniel Schwartz installed as Senior Pastor.
October. Trinity along with other Rochester Circuit churches began the Uconnect ministry, reaching out to U of M Rochester students.
- 2015 Two couples clubs were launched, for couples under 40 and those over 40.
April 22. Hand chimes were purchased for use by the Bell Choirs.
Summer Organ series shared with Christ United Methodist.
Second apartment was furnished and opened for use in the TLCare Ministry.
October. First annual Prayer Vigil Service.
December. Pastor Robert Lentz contracted for visitation of our homebound members.
- 2016 January 17. 1.75 million dollar Legacy of Faith Campaign approved. Legacy of Faith Capital Campaign began for fellowship hall renovation, tuck pointing, cleaning the reredos, bell tower and bell repairs, sanctuary upgrades, chapel repairs and chapel organ installation.
150th Anniversary Theme was selected “Celebrating a Legacy of Faith: 150 Years of Sharing God’s Grace in Faith and Love”. 2 Corinthians 13:14 is the theme verse: “May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”
May. Work began for the remodeling of Fellowship Hall.
June. Surviving Spouses group began.
September 11. Faith and Family Center (formerly Fellowship Hall) was dedicated.
Ladies of the congregation gather recipes to include in an Anniversary Cookbook, called “Taste of Trinity”.



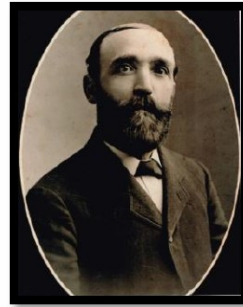
Trinity Lutheran Church Called Pastors 1875-2017



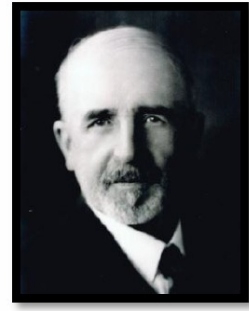
Ludwig von Schenk
1875-1878



George P. A. Schaaf
1878-1880



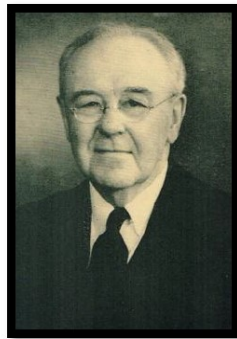
Heinrich G. Schmidt
1880-1881



Karl Schmidt
1882-1884



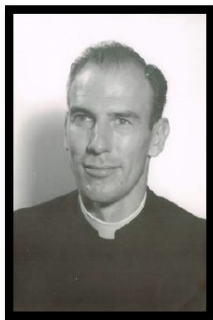
Carl W. Nickels
1884-1911



Martin Weinhold
1911-1953



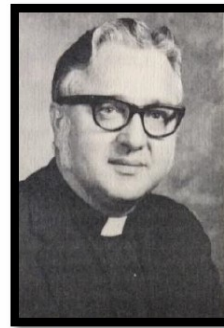
Walter W. Eifert
1941-1968



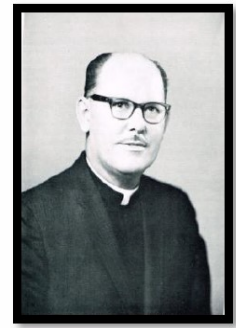
Arden H. Malotky
1953-1956



Roger W. Polansky
1957-1958



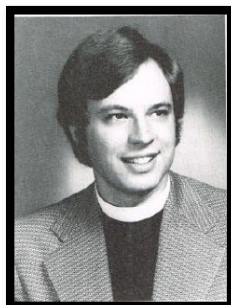
Carl P. Brenner
1959-1964



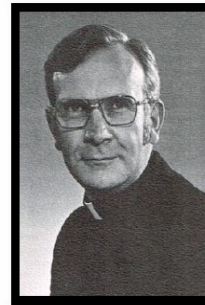
Henry E. Gaertner
1965-1977



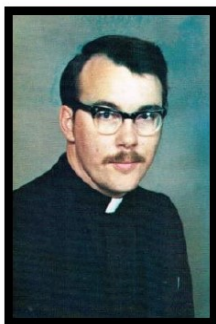
Victor B. Bittner
1969-1973



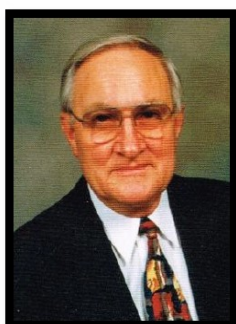
David R. Rose
1974-1978



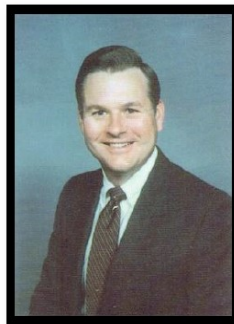
Robert C. Raedeke
1977-1982



Dennis A. Aubey
1979-1981



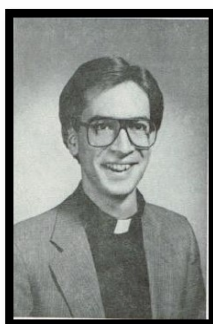
Martin E. Mueller
1981-1999



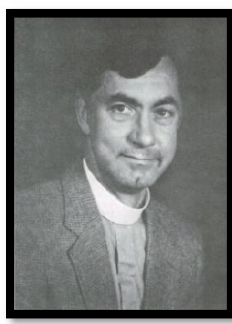
Frederic W. Baue
1981-1986



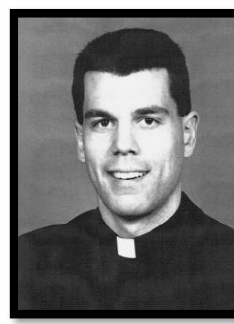
Donald G. Wuerz
1985-1989



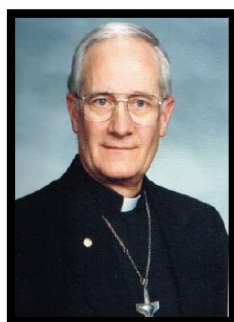
Paul G. Werner
1987-1992



David R. Zachrich
1990-1993



Kevin M. Wendt
1994-1995



John A. Rasmussen
1997-2001



James L. Kroonblawd
1997-2004



William H. Otte
2002-2013



Michael W. Tindall
2006-2008



Joel D. Haak
2011-present



Nathaniel R. Schwartz
2014-present





