

Holy Trinity Ambassador

October 2026



Voters Meeting

Sunday, October 18th
2027 budget will be presented.
10:15 a.m.

Operation Christmas Child Begins!

Pack a shoebox to be sent to a child at
Christmas.
Every gift is an opportunity to share with
children around the world.

Boxes available in Narthex
or on the stage.
Boxes need to be returned
November 16th.

Prayer Service

October 7
2 opportunities
7 a.m. or 7 p.m.
In the church
Lasts approx. 15 minutes
Join us as we pray for Country,
Community and Church



Sunday School

For PreK – 2nd Grade
Begins October 4 at 10:15 a.m.

Classroom C

Womens Bible Study - NEW

"Be Thou My Guide"
October 6th at 9 a.m.
in the Mauve Room.
Led by Lori Welch

#1 Reason Someone Starts Coming to Church? Someone Invites Them!

Don't make a production of it.
They are forgiven and loved in Jesus.
If they say, "No," respect that.
There will be other opportunities.
On the other hand, they might surprise
you
and say, "Yes!"

Risk giving them that opportunity!

Ponderings in the Pasture – Pastor Gutz

To forgive is very difficult. The concept isn't difficult, the practice is. Forgiveness doesn't come naturally. It rarely happens quickly. It's hard to do. And . . . It's not optional. As a follower of Jesus, you are called to forgive. That is the mark of a Christian. We are all good lawyers when it comes to forgiveness. We look for the loopholes. We look for reasons why we shouldn't forgive. Jesus does not suggest there are no consequences to sinful behavior or that we shouldn't have boundaries. He also doesn't provide exceptions to His call for forgiveness.

It starts, begins, becomes possible because you have been forgiven in Jesus.

We all know people who should forgive. One family member doesn't talk to another because of something that happened years ago. Parents cut off children. Children cut off parents. Siblings refuse to speak. It can become generational. We don't talk to "that side" of the family. Friendships dissolve. Neighbors are no longer neighborly. We all know other people that need to forgive.

We don't think of ourselves as being unforgiving. We justify our withholding forgiveness. "They didn't apologize." "They didn't ask for forgiveness." "If you knew what they had done to me you wouldn't forgive them either."

Forgiveness doesn't mean there are no consequences. If you have suffered abuse, physical, sexual, verbal, forgiveness does not mean putting yourself in a position where that happens again. That doesn't mean there no forgiveness. It means there are consequences to our sinful behavior - even when it's forgiven.

When it comes to forgiveness, we are not only lawyers – we are accountants and bookkeepers. The disciples were too. Peter asked Jesus, "Lord, how often should I forgive my brother? As many as 7 times?"

Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy times seven."

Jesus tells a parable. A man owes the king a great sum of money. It's an incredible amount. 10,000 talents. 1 talent was the equivalent of 20 years of work. This man owed the king 10,000 talents. This man owes the king many lifetimes worth of money.

The king orders the man and his family and everything he has to be sold. The servant falls on his knees and begs the king, **"Have patience with me and I will pay you everything."** More time is not going to help this man pay back the debt. It's too much, but the king has mercy. The king doesn't simply let him go so that he can start to pay things back - he cancels the debt, forgives it, sets the man free. The king has mercy.

This same servant finds a fellow servant who owes him 100 denarii - an amount equal to 100 days of work. He grabs him by the throat and demands payment and has him thrown into prison. When the king learns of this he calls back in the servant and rebukes him, **"You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?"** And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers until he should pay all his debt.

Jesus said, **"So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."** With these words Jesus crushes our hardened, unforgiving hearts so that His forgiveness might freely flow. Jesus wants to rescue us from our unforgiveness.

When something is forgiven it no longer has power. When a debt is forgiven it no longer has any claim over our money. When sin is forgiven, it no longer has any power to condemn. You have been forgiven in Jesus – wholly and completely.

Forgiveness is a choice - not a feeling. You don't have to be in a forgiving mood. It means that we do not return evil for evil, anger for anger, sin for sin. We don't do to others what they have done for us. We take the high road, the narrow path.

When we do not forgive we are saying, "Sin is bigger and more powerful than God." Refusing to forgive is a form of idolatry. Forgiveness is not a tool of manipulation. It doesn't change other people. But it will change you – for the better. Lord Jesus, teach us to forgive, and forgive our unforgiveness.

Church Council Meeting

August 25, 2026

Present: J. Zavada, M. Peters, D. Gotch, K. Downey, R. Kochis, J. Araujo, D. Reynolds, N. McMullen and Pastor Gutz.

Treasurer: Preschool fiscal year solid. Church offerings keeping up with expenses.

Church Properties: Finished bulletin boards installation. Painted the frame work on the outside sign. 3 restrooms/Mother's room need touch up paint. Light fixtures still need to be completed. Parking lot is due to be sealed in 2027.

Education: Preschool for enrollment is full with 18 students and no waiting list. School started August 31st. Fundraiser at the Bullpen is Sept. 28. Parents Handbook was reviewed. Open House held with a good turnout. Children's Bible will be given to each family in preschool. Confirmation instruction begins in September.

Elders: Scheduled volunteers for Adult information class is currently underway and will wrap up by early September.

Parish Activities: 1 cradle roll was mailed. Budget was reviewed with no changes. Planned 5th Sunday Fellowship for August 30.

Old Business: Reminder the budgets need to be submitted to the office by Thursday.

New Business: Illinois Valley Brain Injury Clubhouse asked to temporarily park a donated camper on parking lot. Request approved until end of Nov. Discussion about pursuing Old #3 placed on Illinois Historic Registry. Council not interested at this time.

For the Record

Welcome to the Lord's Table!

**Bella Beardsley
Susan Briggs**

September 13

Serving in October

Elders

Saturday – Jack Zavada
Sunday – Matt Brandenburg

Ushers

Bob Barr Jr., David Kochis

Altar Guild

Saturday – Kim and Ben Donner
Sunday – Val McCollum

For Your Prayers

Members in Bold (requested by)

Gary Brandenburg (Matthew Brandenburg)

Bob Cross

Buddy Crouch (Lauren Pastirik)

Roberta Foster

John Kochis

Rick Mahrt (Denise Burt)

Larry Runyon

Shirley Zavada (Jack Zavada)

Lutheran Heritage Foundation

TIM missionary: Rev. Jordan Andreasen

If you have placed a name on the prayer list please keep the Church Office updated on their status.

Quilting Circle

The Quilting Circle has resumed **Thursdays, 9 – 11 a.m.** Every quilt made is donated as a blessing to others. Members and non-members who are interested in sewing or quilting are welcome.

Preschool

In October, we'll be diving into the magic of autumn, exploring forest life, nocturnal animals, and all things pumpkins. We'll also spend plenty of time strengthening fine motor skills and practicing name writing through fun, hands – on activities.

October Memory Verse: Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Isaiah 43:5

CATechism corner” – October 2026

Fall is here! We are on the prowl for mice who want to come into your warm house or garage for the winter. They are tricky critters – and delicious! Voles are a close second but they are harder to catch. They like to tunnel more than we do. Last month we started on Baptism – let’s roll on.

Humans are strange. If you could see humans from a cat perspective you would agree. Cats are way more predictable and relaxed than people. Whenever Baptism comes up you can count on a human asking the question, “Can you be saved without baptism?” Like – “Where are the loopholes?” “What happens if we don’t follow God’s design?” Really??? God gives His one and only Son to die for sinful people and then those people want to find ways around God’s Word. Strange. God commands people to be baptized. Not optional. God’s Word is clear. When you follow Jesus, you will be baptized. Following Jesus means to follow His Word, His plan, His design. It is good and for good. Water is not hard to find. You don’t need 100 gallons. Follow Jesus? – get baptized. But . . . what if you don’t have the opportunity? What if you die without being baptized? Faith in Jesus saves. Unbelief condemns. To pile on the negatives – not getting baptized doesn’t condemn a person – unbelief does. Could a person have faith in Jesus and not be baptized? Of course. Not likely. But of course.

The flip side is, “Can a person be baptized and still not follow Jesus?” Yes. Us cats see that all the time. Baptism is not magic. Faith in Jesus saves. Unbelief condemns. Baptism works faith in a person. It gives the Holy Spirit. But that faith still has to be nurtured and cared for. You can’t bring home a pet and then neglect it and expect things to turn out well. So . . . get baptized. Pray for those who are not. Let the Word of God work. Most Christian churches baptize infants and children. A few do not. Why? Baptism is a promise that God gives to people – NOT a promise people make to God. God always keeps His promises. Can an infant make a promise? No. Doesn’t have to. It’s about the promise God is making to an infant. Churches that wait until children are “of age” to baptize believe that baptism is a pledge of faith people make to God. Our God is so incredible He can work faith in a child before the child is born. Luke 1:39-45 tells about that.

Rejoice in your baptism. You are a child of the Almighty God. But don’t baptize your cat – it is neither commanded nor necessary. We can swim – but out of necessity – not out of enjoyment.

Be Kind, Sammy and Monroe



Andreasens in Romania

We thank you for your prayers as we do the work of the Lord in Romania and the Balkans.

The Lord works in ways which are often not clear to our human understanding. The last two years have been full of experiences, challenges and wonderful developments in Mission in Romania and the Balkans.

With the growth and addition of Romanian men as pastors my local role has slowly diminished as part of good growth of the church. This means I have begun serving as the temporary local chaplain for our LMSC personnel and families here in Brasov, while continually mean being ready to allow work of the kingdom to be handed off to others. The Gospel is on the move, and Christ is at work for this we greatly rejoice and pray that you do as well. In Christ, Rev. Jordan and Alison Andrase



- See and Read More in Their Newsletter on bulletin board across from church office.