

# Trinity Te Deum

The official newsletter for Trinity Lutheran Church

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Sunday School and Bible Study 9:15 AM – Divine Service 10:30 AM

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August - September 2025

## Greetings and Blessings in the Name of Our Lord, Jesus Christ!

As summer comes to a close (yeah, right) and we prepare for the coming of fall (what's that?), that can only mean one thing...FOOTBALL SEASON! Whether it's "War Eagle," "Hook 'em Horns," "Gig 'em," "Guns Up," or whatever other battle cry you make this fall, the wait is over! Pretty soon there will be full stadiums, packed tailgates full of delicious food (and traditional Lutheran beverages), and a relaxed Saturday or Sunday afternoon watching the game with family and friends. I can tell you that is exactly where I will be planted once the first game kicks off.

Well, you may be asking why in the world is Pastor going on about football? I'd like to share with you a description I found online, though I made a few modifications:

Join us for a transformative experience of *football* and community. We believe in the power of coming together to connect with the *team spirit* and uplift one another. Whether you seek *touchdowns*, *comradery*, or simply a sense of belonging, our doors are open to you. Expect meaningful music, inspiring messages, and a welcoming atmosphere that embraces all. Come as you are, and let's journey together in *victory* and fellowship. We look forward to welcoming you with open arms. See you there!

Sounds like it would be a great time at a football venue hanging out with other fans, right? Well, let's

look at this statement now without my modifications:

Join us for a transformative experience of worship and community. We believe in the power of coming together to connect with the divine and uplift one another. Whether you seek solace, spiritual renewal, or simply a sense of belonging, our doors are open to you. Expect meaningful music, inspiring messages, and a welcoming atmosphere that embraces all. Come as you are, and let's journey together in faith and fellowship. We look forward to welcoming you with open arms. See you there!

I took this from the website of a "Lutheran" church. I was, of course, not surprised, but this is the level to which the contemporary worship crowd has devolved. It has become nearly impossible to differentiate what should be the Divine Service from attending a football game. And I'm sure there's a custom battle cry to go along with it. Contemporary worship is not innocuous and harmless. It diminishes the work of Christ and makes the soul rely on itself instead of the one who gave His life to redeem the world. They come out of "church" the same way that fans come out of a victorious football game. "Boy, we really took it to that other team. I feel so great about what we did in there."

Me, me, me. I feel good. I did great. I praised so hard in there. I made a difference. I gave myself up to Jesus. I really nailed that guitar solo. None of that is any different than cheering on a football team. When our worship becomes imperceptible from the world, it ceases to be worship at all. The confessors wrote in the *Solid Declaration of the Formula of Concord* Article X, 6-8:

For in such a case what Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 6[:14, 17] should and must be determinative: “Do not be mismatched [with unbelievers.]...What fellowship is there between light and darkness?” “Therefore, come out from them, and be separate from them, says the Lord....” In the same way, useless, foolish spectacles, which are not beneficial for good order, Christian discipline, or evangelical decorum in the church, are not true adiaphora or indifferent things. On the contrary, in regard to true adiaphora or indifferent things (as defined above) we believe, teach, and confess that such ceremonies, in and of themselves, are no worship of God or any part of it. They must instead be distinguished from each other in an appropriate manner, as it is written, “In vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines” (Matt.15[:9]). \*Taken from Kolb/Wengert Book of Concord

That which separates one from the Divine Service as given to us in Word and Sacraments is not a thing indifferent, and as Confessional Lutherans who hold to truth of God’s Word, we cannot and will not allow these mindsets to pervert and invade God’s Divine Service to us.

The solution and defense against the heresies of contemporary worship is the Means of Grace. God Himself instituted these for our benefit, to keep us steadfast in the one true faith unto life everlasting. So long as we keep these Gospel treasures the center of our worship, we will withstand the attempts of the evil one to subvert God’s service to us. And we continually battle this by showing up and receiving His gifts. We don’t make a battle cry to cheer ourselves on, but we confess our faith to one another in the Creed, and come together as one body in Christ at the Lord’s Supper, and there we receive His great gift which we openly confess. Our worship is founded solely upon Christ and the forgiveness He won for us at Calvary, and that firm foundation will never be shaken as long as we cling to His Word and Sacraments. It’s not about fun. It’s not about feeling good. It’s not a journey that you must walk. It’s all about Christ, and what He has done for us poor, miserable sinners, and everything we do reflects just

that. *Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi*. As we worship, so we believe.

Yours in Christ,



## Updates/ Reminders

1. My office hours will again be changing slightly. Thank you for your patience as I figure out the best way to schedule my time. My new office hours will be Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 7am-2pm, and Wednesday from 10am-5pm. As I have mentioned on numerous occasions, this does not mean that these are the only times I am available to you, only the times I am physically in the office. Everyone has my phone number and can reach out to me via call, text, or email at any time.
2. I will be on vacation from August 11<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>. If you need anything non-urgent during this time, please contact your Elder. If you need any pastoral care during that time, I expect you to call me. Do not feel like you are bothering me or infringing on my time. If you need me, I am here. The Lord didn’t call me to only serve on His behalf when it is convenient for me. I am to care for His sheep at all times.
3. On that same note, the Divine Service on August 17<sup>th</sup> will be led by my father, Pastor Tim Killion (more affectionately known as Pastor Killion, the Elder), from Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Forsyth, Illinois. This means that service will go on normally with Holy Communion. If you have any questions, please let me know, and be sure to thank

Pastor Killion, the Elder, for generously agreeing to fill the pulpit.

4. Check the Calendar section for important dates and events that are coming up. There are some good ones!

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## The Sign of the Cross: Why, How, and When?

I was asked to include a brief article on the sign of the cross and how, when, and why we use it in the church. But of course, we all know it's only to flaunt our superior piety, right? While there are those who would accuse us of such, that is obviously not the case. The sign of the cross has been used in the church for centuries. In the Small Catechism, Luther says to do it before you pray. Augustine wrote, "What else is the sign of Christ but the cross of Christ?" So, why then do we use it?

**Why?** The sign of the cross is done as a remembrance of our baptismal identity in Christ. It calls us to remember that moment when we were claimed as God's own dear children, and made heirs of the Kingdom. Dr. Arthur Just writes in his book, *Heaven on Earth: The Gifts of Christ in the Divine Service* (p. 184):

Our services begin with the Invocation of the name of the triune God: "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Wherever the name of Jesus is, there is Jesus—present bodily with the gifts of salvation. The name of Jesus bears His presence. By beginning with the trinitarian name placed upon us in our Baptism, we are announcing that Christ is present among us in His Word, in His Sacrament, and in the baptized gathered as the Body of Christ, His Church.

In remembrance of that very baptism, we make the sign of Jesus, the sign of the cross, beginning at our forehead where water was applied in the name of the Holy Trinity. That is why I issue the blessing that I do to the non-confirmed who come forward to the

communion rail. "(NAME), receive the sign of the cross as you did at your baptism, marking you as redeemed by Christ crucified and risen from the dead." This blessing is based in the words of Paul in Romans 6, where he teaches us that we are baptized into Christ's death and will share in a resurrection like His.

**How?** So, we have the why; now what about the how? The structure of the sign of the cross is based upon the Creed, which is not hard to pick out in the description below. Here it is, step by step:

- a. Three fingers are used – the pointer, middle, and thumb brought together to form a triangle, representing the Holy Trinity
- b. The sign of the cross begins at the forehead where the baptismal water was applied and for the Father, who is above all things as the Creator
- c. It then goes to the naval to symbolize the incarnation, Jesus coming down from heaven
- d. It then goes to the right shoulder for the Son, who sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty
- e. It then proceeds to the left shoulder for the Spirit, who proceeds from the Father and the Son
- f. It then finishes over the heart as a reminder that by virtue of our baptismal identity "it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (Gal 2:20).

**When?** Now that you know how to do the sign of the cross, when do you do it? We make the sign of the cross at the mention of the Holy Trinity in the Divine Service (In the name of the Father, ✠ and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen). We make the sign of the cross at the end of the Creed as a reminder that Christ will come again and raise us to eternal life in our bodies (the resurrection of the body ✠ and the life everlasting). We make the sign of the cross after receiving the Lord's Supper as a reminder

that Christ's crucified body and blood are truly present there, were truly received, and truly gave the forgiveness they promise (Depart ☩ in peace. Amen.). Also, any other time you wish to remember your baptism. As Luther said, do it before you pray. Some choose to do it before every meal, and others simply in times of strife and trials.

The point is that the sign of the cross is not an empty movement. It is a solid, concrete reminder that you have died to the world and are alive in Christ. And that is because of the baptism which washed you clean in the blood of the Lamb who was slain. Don't do it to fit in. Don't do it because it makes you feel more pious than the rest. Do it because it is the symbol of your Lord and Savior, the one who has redeemed you by His blood and marked you as His own. And do not despise or judge those who do it if you choose not to. It is not "too Catholic" to make the sign of the cross. Do it frequently and as often as you need the remembrance of Christ's redemption and the washing of water and the Word. I guess, for my part, I'll have to run around doing it non-stop, because that reminder is always a welcome thought as we battle our Old Adam and drown him in those blessed waters.

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## **The Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Article IX: Of Baptism.**

The Ninth Article has been approved, in which we confess that Baptism is necessary to salvation, and that children are to be baptized, and that the baptism of children is not in vain, but is necessary and effectual to salvation. And since the Gospel is taught among us purely and diligently, by God's favor we receive also from it this fruit, that in our Churches no Anabaptists have arisen [have not gained ground in our Churches], because the people have been fortified by God's Word against the wicked and seditious faction of these robbers.

And as we condemn quite a number of other errors of the Anabaptists, we condemn this also, that they dispute that the baptism of little children is profitable. For it is very certain that the promise of salvation pertains also to little children [that the divine promises of grace and of the Holy Ghost belong not

alone to the old, but also to children]. It does not, however, pertain to those who are outside of Christ's Church, where there is neither Word nor Sacraments, because the kingdom of Christ exists only with the Word and Sacraments. Therefore, it is necessary to baptize little children, that the promise of salvation may be applied to them, according to Christ's command, Matt. 28:19: Baptize all nations. Just as here salvation is offered to all, so Baptism is offered to all, to men, women, children, infants. It clearly follows, therefore, that infants are to be baptized, because with Baptism salvation [the universal grace and treasure of the Gospel] is offered.

Secondly, it is manifest that God approves of the baptism of little children. Therefore, the Anabaptists, who condemn the baptism of little children, believe wickedly. That God, however, approves of the baptism of little children is shown by this, namely, that God gives the Holy Ghost to those thus baptized [to many who have been baptized in childhood]. For if this baptism would be in vain, the Holy Ghost would be given to none, none would be saved, and finally there would be no Church. [For there have been many holy men in the Church who have not been baptized otherwise.] This reason, even taken alone, can sufficiently establish good and godly minds against the godless and fanatical opinions of the Anabaptists.

(Source: <https://bookofconcord.org/defense/of-baptism/> )

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## **What Christ Gave Up for Us**

By Dr. John Bombaro

***The way of the cross is the actual way of victory.  
Jesus absorbs the worst of what humanity  
and even the devil can do to him,  
and he spurns the shame of it all.***

Philippians 2 opens a door to the Gospels that jolts our sensibilities. Saint Paul, it turns out, is up to something a little more theologically subtle than "You know, Jesus was humble; so, how about you start being humble, too?"

Paul sets before us a glimpse at the two ages of which Scripture speaks and of which our one reality

is composed. There is “this present age” that our Lord sometimes refers to as “this present evil age” and, second, the “the age to come,” which is actually already here for those within the Holy Church; those baptized into Christ. Christians live in the age to come right now, not fully, but in part, just as that age is here not fully but in part.

These two ages encapsulate the principle theme and pattern presented in Philippians 2. As N.T. Wright has long taught, this theme and pattern is another way of understanding the four Gospels. Saint Paul tells us that this “present evil age” is saturated by a theology of glory, while the age to come envelops a theology of the cross. They are two ways of understanding and interpreting all of reality, but especially the ways and nature of God and his holy Church. Put differently, they embody the things of men and the things of God, respectively.

We find both theologies—the glory one of this present evil age and the cross theology of the age to come—right here in Philippians 2. Christ was God but, contrary to the self-styled gods who were the Roman Caesars, the Creator of heaven and earth came “in the form of a servant.” It turns out that the Anointed King of all the Earth “did not count being equal with God a thing to be taken from others but rather, in the flesh, he engaged in astonishing self-giving for our salvation and transformation. “He made himself nothing, being born in the likeness of men,” though he was glorious, the Son of God. In the face of the extravagance and entitlement of Tiberius Rex, King Jesus “humbled himself to the point of death, even death on a cross.” That’s the theology of the cross, the theology of the age to come, which broke into our reality by way of an execution on Golgotha and the surprising vacancy of a nearby tomb. This is a theology that stands in contrast to the theology of glory that seeks after signs, wonders, and spiritual intimacies with a domesticated Jesus.

Our present evil age is defined by wealth, glory, and pleasure. It is also a world of laws and power-plays, manipulation, status, and image. The theology of glory is the ideology of entitlement. It manifests itself through conspicuous consumerism, selfishness, the small-mindedness of envy, and the celebration of the cult of celebrity. It’s about glossy

tabloid pictures. It’s about getting your own, your due. It is a culture of compensation: “I want to experience God, and it better be more titillating than I can imagine. I want goose bumps with my spiritual gifts and some divine pizzazz when I meditate. Show me your face O God; Moses wasn’t worthy, but I am.” The theology of glory wants a deity that’s nice and tidy: a sanitized cross. It’s defined by a Christianity that’s convenient and trendy.

But the kingdom of God, the kingdom of the age of Christ to come, is not a kingdom of power and glory but of suffering and humiliation. In the theology of the cross, the emphasis is on his suffering and his humiliation: our Great King beat up, bloodied and crucified naked for the world to see and mock, if they so choose. Get that picture and you begin to get an idea of what St Paul is getting at in Philippians 2. That is what Passion Sunday is all about: the theology of glory calls it the triumphal entry; meanwhile, Jesus weeps, lamenting the reality of the situation, knowing that he processes toward crucifixion — the theology of the cross. The theology of glory wants to see Jesus and his entourage take up residence in Jerusalem’s Palace; Christ’s theology of the cross has him beat down the Via Dolorosa and take up residence on Golgotha. The theology of glory has Jesus ascending David’s throne in Solomon’s portico; the theology of the cross has the Messiah nailed to a tree for his coronation. If you get the picture, then you’ll catch a glimpse of what Christ gave up for us. Get the picture and you’re getting intimate with God as God has revealed himself in Christ for us. And ultimately, your understanding of the divine glory will be turned on its head. The way of the cross is the actual way of victory. Jesus absorbs the worst of what humanity and even the devil can do to him, and he spurns the shame of it all.

### **Giving Up Glory**

And what Christ gave up for us was two things in particular. First, glory. He made himself of lowly estate, shocking our sensibilities. We expect him to be kickin’ it with all kinds of royal perks. Instead, he’s betrayed by a friend he loved. The rest of the disciples leave him for dead in the cemetery of Gethsemane. No. The glory we expected was left

behind. He exchanged that for the glory of a public execution.

According to Philippians 2, Mark's Gospel is especially concerned to recount how, in his Incarnation, the Son of God hides his glory. He has hidden his majesty by becoming fully man. John's Gospel highlights this startling fact in his opening chapter by declaring that God has become flesh and has tabernacled among us. In other words, the man Jesus of Nazareth is the true temple, the true locus of God's presence on earth – not Mecca, not Tibet, and certainly not the pathetic remains of Herod's temple in Jerusalem – the one now with a mosque on top of it. And yet, just as Isaiah prophesied, God's Messiah isn't what we expect, he hardly strikes us as majestic – let alone comparable to Solomon's temple. In fact, Scripture leaves us with the opposite effect. The Christ of God is not atop of rolling clouds-a-thunder, but found at the end of an umbilical cord. And when all is said and done, God is left breastfeeding for survival. This is the theology of the cross.

Satan reveals his theology of glory when he tempts Jesus to get the crown without the cross. You have to remember that Jesus is fully human and the severity of this temptation is measured by the fact that he has given up his former glory. He knows perfect peace, perfect joy, happiness, and power. But instead of grasping what the human nature may want and what he as the Christ of God is entitled to, he obeys the Word of God and refuses the easy way to glory. He refuses to cater to felt needs. He is someone who is God and yet, unlike us, refuses to place himself at the center of the universe. While the First Adam craved after forbidden fruit, while Israel craved the glory of the nations and in the wilderness demanded the food they craved from Egypt; this Last Adam, this true Israel, is already obedient to the Word of God which is a word of the cross. You see, he gave up the word of glory; gave it up for the likes of you and me.

For a time, even his own disciples were card carrying members of a theology of glory. After Peter's declaration in Matthew 16:16, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God," what does he do? As soon as Jesus begins to talk of death and the cross, he takes Jesus aside and says, "Whoa, settle down with the negativity. All this gloomy cross stuff is bumming us

out. Maybe you're not seeing things clearly, like us. The people are about to make you king. As your agent, let me tell you, things are going great: the miracles tour has been the gig of a lifetime, so let's ride this gravy train all the way to Jerusalem. You've got to stop this stuff about cross and dying – we're having success and you're raining on the parade. Knock it off." Jesus then sharply rebukes Peter, telling him and all the disciples that he has come to proclaim the gospel, not pander to the paparazzi. Here it is not Lucifer but one of his own disciples as the agent of temptation in the face of Golgotha.

Immediately, Jesus follows this with the theology of the cross – a cross that he will bear for us, but also one that he bequeaths to us. He tells his disciples that they must bear their own cross, that is, the Cross of Christ that they are to make their own. This is the life in the age to come in the here and now. But they couldn't see it because he came in the humble form of a servant, and gave up his heavenly glory and its entitlements to live the life we do not and can not live.

### **Giving Up Blood**

Second, Jesus gave up blood for us. Nails, blood, spear, torn flesh, corpse on a cold slab: this is our eternal salvation carried out in grotesquely physical categories. It's these two things – glory and blood — that Christ, our God, gave up for us. His beatific glory he left behind in heaven; his blood he left behind on the instruments of his torture. By his blood, he makes atonement and we are reconciled to God — sins gone, perfect righteousness through obedience fulfilled.

Leviticus 17:10-11 says,

If anyone of the house of Israel or of the strangers who sojourn among them eats any blood, I will set my face upon that person who eats blood and will cut him off from among his people. For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes the atonement by the life.

Old Testament law forbade eating (that is, drinking) blood because "the life is in the blood." Then Jesus

comes along and explodes the Jewish worldview by declaring in John 6, “Truly, I say to you, unless you eat of the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever feeds on My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. Whoever feeds on My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me and I in him.” It is this life-giving, sin atoning blood that is offered to us in Holy Communion. “Take, drink. This is the cup of the New Covenant in my blood poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins.”

The atonement began with his bloody birth, his eight day circumcision, and it continued with his blood-sweat agony in Gethsemane and scourging in the Praetorium, and it climaxed with his crucifixion and the piercing of his side from which blood and water flowed. It is this blood, given to us under the auspices of wine and Holy Communion that we are to take and drink for our salvation. What was once forbidden in that animals could not truly atone for sins, we are now bid to have in our most intimate communion with the Christ whose blood truly atones. Christ gave up blood for us while in the inglorious state of a humiliated servant and thereby the Messiah

of God, our Lord, saves from our sin, from the judgment due us, from even death.

The two things he gave up for us meet up in his bloody and humiliating death on the cross. What an inglorious sign of redemption: God bloodied. And yet, this is the sign of wisdom and power of God, this is the sign of power and mastery over the powers and kingdom of this world, and it should be marvelous to our eyes. Faith alone grasps the wisdom in divine foolishness, the power in God’s weakness. We may crave something spectacular: glory, not the cross; pride, not humiliation; a triumphal entry, not a painful crucifixion. But if you want to see God, don’t look directly into his awesome face. Your sin cannot bear his majestic holiness. Instead, see him as he has revealed himself clothed in humiliation and suffering of the Servant of Yahweh. Search for God according to a theology of the cross and you will find our Lord revealed in the two principle things he gave up for you. Then and only then will you begin to revel in the glory of the Cross and understand that this once-crucified Lord rules and reigns by grace and mercy, by giving all that he has, not taking all that you’ve got.

\*Taken from <https://www.1517.org/articles/what-christ-gave-up-for-us>

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## **Trinity Lutheran Church**

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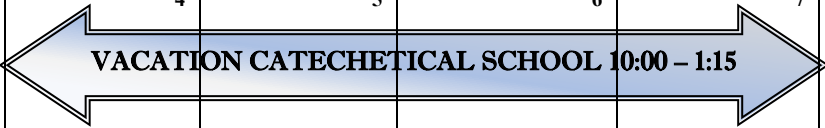
Trinity Te Deum is published bi-monthly.

**Deadline for all articles is the 15<sup>th</sup> of the odd months.**

All articles must be approved by Pastor Josh Killion.

Articles with no author are written by him.

## AUGUST 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3 <b>NO ADULT CONFIRMATION</b>	4	5	6	7	8	9
						
10 <b>TRI-TIP DINNER NOON</b> <b>NO ADULT CONFIRMATION</b>	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 <b>PASTOR TIM KILLION DIVINE SERVICE W/ HOLY COMMUNION</b> <b>NO ADULT CONFIRMATION</b>	<div style="background-color: #cccccc; text-align: center; padding: 10px;"> <h3 style="color: yellow; margin: 0;">PASTOR ON VACATION</h3> <p style="margin: 0;">AUGUST 11 – 23</p> <p style="margin: 0;">(NO BIBLE STUDY 8/06, 8/13, OR 8/20)</p> </div>					23
24 <b>ADULT CONFIRMATION NOON</b>	25	26	27 <b>BIBLE STUDY 7:00 PM</b>	28	29	30
31 <b>ADULT CONFIRMATION NOON</b>						

## SEPTEMBER 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3 <b>BIBLE STUDY 7:00 PM</b>	4	5	6
7 <b>ADULT CONFIRMATION NOON</b>	8	9	10 <b>BIBLE STUDY 7:00 PM</b>	11	12	13
14 <b>ADULT CONFIRMATION NOON</b>	15	16	17 <b>BIBLE STUDY 7:00 PM</b>	18	19	20 <b>BEER, BRATS, &amp; BRIDE 3:00 PM</b>
21 <b>ADULT CONFIRMATION NOON</b>	22 <b>ELDERS MEETING 7:00 PM</b>	23	24 <b>BIBLE STUDY 7:00 PM</b>	25	26	27
28 <b>ST. MICHAEL &amp; ALL ANGELS ADULT CONFIRMATION NOON</b>	29	30 <b>VOTERS MEETING 7:00 PM</b>				



