

# MINISTRY SITE PROFILE (Abridged for Public)

Approved September 2023 – Updated May 2026

## Trinity Lutheran Church

Waupaca, WI



*The Ministry Site Profile (MSP) is intended for use by congregations and church-related organizations that are seeking to call a rostered minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, or a First Call candidate for rostered ministry. Congregations must complete the entire MSP. Church-related organizations may, with the concurrence of the synod bishop, complete only the required sections (Part I, III and IV). Once complete, this form is submitted electronically to your synod bishop for review and posting to the "Current Openings" listing on the ELCA website ([www.ELCA.org/call](http://www.ELCA.org/call)).*

### Summary Description

**A large and active church community in a small Central Wisconsin city seeks a community-minded associate pastor skilled in relationship building, congregational care, and spiritual development.**

## PART I: WHO WE ARE

### Name and Location

#### CONGREGATION

CONGREGATION/MULTIPLE POINT PARISH/ ORGANIZATION

**Waupaca, WI, 54981**

CITY, STATE, ZIP

**East-Central Synod of Wisconsin (5I)**

SYNOD

**Small city (10,000 - 49,999)**

SIZE OF COMMUNITY

**Trinity Lutheran Church**

NAME

**US**

COUNTRY

**Congregation - Organized**

TYPE OF MINISTRY SITE

**1943**

YEAR ORGANIZED

### Contact Information

#### Ministry Site (preferred contact information)

**Trinity Lutheran Church**

ADDRESS LINE 1

**206 E. Badger St.**

ADDRESS LINE 2

**Waupaca, WI, 54981**

CITY, STATE, ZIP

**US**

COUNTRY

**trinity@tlcwaupaca.org**

E-MAIL

**tlcwaupaca.org**

WEB SITE

**(715) 258-7688**

PHONE

#### Chairperson of Congregation or Head of the Organization

**Bob Olson**

NAME

#### Chairperson of Call or Search Committee

**Stephen Johnson**

NAME

## Demographics

### Language Spoken

In the congregation/ organization	English	Spanish	
	PRIMARY LANGUAGE	SECOND LANGUAGE	THIRD LANGUAGE
In the surrounding community	English	Spanish	
	PRIMARY LANGUAGE	SECOND LANGUAGE	THIRD LANGUAGE

### Race/Ethnicity (In the Congregation)

Caucasian (95%)	Latino/Hispanic (5% or less)		
LARGEST	SECOND	THIRD	FOURTH
COMMENTS OR EXPLANATION			

### Race/Ethnicity (Surrounding Community)

Caucasian (95%)	Latino/Hispanic (5% or less)	African American/Black (5% or less)	
LARGEST	SECOND	THIRD	FOURTH
COMMENTS OR EXPLANATION			

### Gender comparison

<b>46%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>30%</b>
MALE	FEMALE	19 YEARS OR YOUNGER	20 - 34	35 - 49	50 - 65	OVER 65

### Age distribution

### Number of Paid Staff

<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
Ministers of Word and Sacrament (PASTORS)	Ministers of Word and Service (DEACONS)	OTHER LAY PROFESSIONALS	SECRETARIAL SUPPORT	CUSTODIAL SUPPORT	OTHER

### Congregational Information

<b>251 - 400</b>	<b>101+</b>	<b>Single site</b>
AVE WEEKLY WORSHIP ATTENDANCE	AVE ATTENDANCE IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION	PARISH TYPE

### Distance members live from church facilities:

<b>10%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>55%</b>
1/2 MILE OR LESS	1/2 - 1 MILE	1 - 3 MILES	MORE THAN 3 MILES

### Community Type

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Suburban   | <input type="checkbox"/> College or University | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Farming    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inner City            | <input type="checkbox"/> Mining/logging        | <input type="checkbox"/> Ranching              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Industrial | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resort     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retirement |

**Budget of the Congregation/ Organization**

2025

**\$837,330**

TOTAL BUDGET FOR THE LAST FISCAL YEAR

**\$51,513**

MISSION SUPPORT TO THE ELCA/ SYNOD FOR THE LAST FISCAL YEAR

LAST FISCAL YEAR

**\$808,318**

TOTAL DEBT OF THE CONGREGATION/ ORGANIZATION AT THE END OF THE LAST FISCAL YEAR

**\$1,968,175**

TOTAL SAVINGS, RESERVES, ENDOWMENT AT THE END OF THE LAST FISCAL YEAR

**PART II: OUR VISION FOR MISSION**

**Trends in the Community Context of the Congregation or Organization**

**Characteristics:**

Write a description of your community in terms of socio-economic status, demographics, primary areas of employment and lifestyle. The Demographic ZIP Code report for your primary ZIP codes may be helpful.

**Waupaca is a lively community where residents know and care for one another. Our vibrant downtown is well-supported by locals, and many people in the area are employed in manufacturing, education, city and county government, and healthcare. Waupaca offers an extensive system of city parks, an excellent local restaurant scene, and an active arts community. Grateful for the quality of the school system, folks who grew up in Waupaca return to raise their own families here. Trinity’s downtown neighborhood is actively undergoing a genuine renaissance, with a new residential complex recently completed, the city’s Recreation Center undergoing a major expansion, and a relocated Arts Hub revitalizing an old school—all within blocks of our church building. Each summer, the area thrives as an outdoor destination for tourists who enjoy hiking, fishing, and exploring the Chain O’ Lakes. Located centrally in Wisconsin, we’re also within an hour or two of shopping, Broadway shows, and professional sports.**

**Trends:**

List three changes or trends within the congregation or organization which have occurred in the last three to five years.

**Since 2020, Trinity has deepened our focus on engaging our community and creating a welcoming environment for everyone. Expanding our reach with online worship services, we also support the community through free, family-oriented events. Trinity hosted one of Waupaca’s largest summer events, Strawberry Fest, at a transitional point for the city in recent years.**

**Within our walls, we recently renovated our youth room and upstairs atrium to include a coffee bar and fresh gathering space, and Trinity’s Tiny Treasures Preschool emerged from a brief closure to reach its 25th anniversary with renewed relevance to the community.**

**Our church staff structure has adapted extensively in the past five years to meet changing needs; meanwhile, we have strengthened our leadership structure by establishing Governance, Finance, and Mutual Ministry committees.**

**Context:**

List three ways the community in which you are located has been challenged by change and transition in the last three to five years.

**Historically, Waupaca has not had an ethnically diverse population, but recent hiring efforts by a major employer have brought new faces to our community. Many of these new residents come from different backgrounds and speak languages that differ from those of longtime Waupaca families. Echoing experiences in other Wisconsin cities that have already become more diverse, this shift has been welcomed by many established community members.**

**Waupaca is also not unique in its shortages of both affordable housing and childcare. Already limited in public transportation options, folks here are grappling with a transition in transit services.**

**We also face the notable demographic challenges of a growing elderly population and a decline in younger people.**

### Programs:

Describe your congregation's or organization's current programs for mission and ministry.

At Trinity, we embrace a calling to serve both our congregation and the community through an array of programs. While carrying on cherished traditions like Sunday school, youth group, Bible studies, and a quilters' ministry, we continue to expand our horizons beyond the usual offerings. For more than a decade, we have forged a meaningful partnership with a diocese in South Africa, and we empower our youth and adults to embark on transformative mission trips throughout the country. In the summer, we unite with other local churches to offer ecumenical evening worship services aboard a sternwheeler on the Chain O' Lakes—a 50-year-strong ministry of reflection and connection called Chapel on the Lakes. Trinity hosts a variety of community services and events, including grief and cancer support groups, a monthly social gathering for veterans, Older Wiser Lutherans (OWLs) outings, an annual Pancake Supper, A.A. meetings, the Waupaca County Senior Nutrition Program, Scouting functions, and Waupaca Community Theatre rehearsals, as well as inspiring concerts and music ministries. Together, we shine a light of hope and joy in our community.

### Goals:

What are the primary goals of your ministry site (please refer to any Strategic Plan that has been adopted).

Trinity's mission statement, adopted in 2024 after the completion of a Strategic Plan, is "Together in Christ, we welcome, love, and serve all."

In 2023, Trinity approved this vision statement:

As a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Trinity rejoices in the free and undeserved gift of God's grace that we share as Christians. Liberated by faith, we fully accept and embrace each other—questions, complexities, and all. As we do God's work in Christ's name for the life of the world, we know we are called to:

- Welcome ALL people who desire to know and walk with Jesus Christ in response to God's love. All are invited to take their spiritual journey with us, without reservation or prejudice.
- Connect with God and each other in a family of faith where everyone can feel that they belong. We strive to nurture connection through worship, fellowship, and action.
- Engage in service in our community and world. In the face of darkness and suffering, we are called to bring the healing light of Christ by working where we can have a meaningful impact.

### Energy:

What is your congregation or organization really excited about right now?

Emerging from the pandemic, our church has rapidly regained momentum and even grown in energy. In 2023, Trinity undertook an expansive congregational survey to gather valuable insights from our members. The results confirmed our priorities of being a welcoming congregation, fostering meaningful connections among members, and actively engaging the community. We are joyous and grateful that God has raised up a synod-authorized minister (SAM) from within our congregation. Since 2025, this role has significantly strengthened our pastoral care and empowered members to revive past ministries and successfully create new ones. With a strong foundation firmly in place, we are eager to bring aboard a new associate pastor to continue this progress and further fulfill our mission.

### Partnership:

How does this congregation or organization see itself as a member and active participant in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the synod?

Trinity Lutheran Church in Waupaca lives out the various expressions of our Lutheran faith. Within our synod, we are a top benevolence contributor, regularly participate in the annual Synod Assembly, and actively support and promote Crossways Camping Ministries. The synod vice president is a Trinity member. Regarding the greater ELCA, we host women's events, bring dozens of participants to ELCA Youth Gatherings, and frequently send members to the ELCA Churchwide Assembly. Trinity consistently supports larger efforts such as Lutheran Disaster Response, ELCA World Hunger, and Lutheran World Relief. We recently sent members to visit our sibling congregation in South Africa, developed a Native American Land Acknowledgment statement, and routinely use our education endowment and other funds to provide scholarships to seminarians and Lay School participants.

**Ministry Site Characteristics**

**AS A COMMUNITY**

	A LOT LIKE US	A LITTLE LIKE US	A LITTLE LIKE US	A LOT LIKE US
--	------------------	---------------------	---------------------	---------------------

We tend to be formal and programmatic.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We tend to be informal and spontaneous.
We have clearly defined goals and plans for our future.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We have no stated goals or plans.
We are racially and economically diverse.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We are demographically homogeneous.

**OUR LEADERSHIP STYLE**

We welcome ideas that are provoking and challenging.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We prefer ideas that are tried and true.
We rely on our leaders for direction.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We rely on group decision-making.
We have learned how to use conflict constructively.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We tend to perceive conflict as something destructive.

**OUR PROGRAMMING**

Our facilities are often used by community groups.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Our facilities are only used for our activities.
We train people to minister outside our walls.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We train people to minister inside our walls.
We focus on ideas and beliefs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We focus on skills and action.

**OUR THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE**

We are obviously Lutheran in identity and practice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We are less obvious about our Lutheran heritage.
We participate in synod and ELCA activities.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We are not very active in the synod and ELCA.
We focus on Biblical studies and doctrine.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We focus on contemporary issues and topics.

**Purpose, Giftedness and Mission**

**Purpose**

How does this congregation or organization understand its reason for being in the light of God's call to mission and service? Who are you? Why are you here?

Trinity Lutheran Church includes many members whose parents and grandparents also attended here, and we are appreciative and proud of that tradition. We truly value our legacy. Yet recent survey results also indicate that we are adaptable, flexible, and open. Each year, we welcome new members, many of whom are not originally from Waupaca. We believe that God has positioned us downtown—between Dairy Queen and Little Caesars—to open our doors to a wide variety of people and organizations. Folks naturally gravitate toward us, which gives us the opportunity to connect with them. We strive to teach our youth about God's love and how they can apply that knowledge to live as Jesus calls us to do. In fact, we strive to equip all our members to be ministers in this way.

**Giftedness**

What are your gifts and resources for fulfilling this purpose? What are the congregation’s or organization's top three assets and how are they being used? Are there obstacles that must be overcome to be able to use these gifts and accomplish the mission?

Our members support our mission to welcome everyone and share God's love. They are generous and rise to the challenge of ensuring the financial health of the congregation while also supporting special projects. Additionally, our members have a genuine desire to help; our church is filled with good-hearted people who want to contribute to the well-being of both the church family and the greater community.

Another strength is our diverse age demographics, as we have both an extraordinarily vibrant youth program—one of the strongest in our city and our synod—and an abundance of older members. Yet, this diversity also presents challenges. We strive to balance traditional practices with new approaches that will foster growth in our congregation. Mindful of our Reformation heritage in challenging “the way it’s always been,” we seek to respect all members and provide a worship experience that everyone can appreciate.

Our evolving staff structure is an opportunity born out of the challenges of ongoing transition, and the addition of our synod-authorized minister in particular has offered a healthier and more approachable pastoral team within the priesthood of all believers. God has provided ample evidence that these thoughtful adaptations in recent years are building a solid foundation for what lies ahead.

**Mission**

In light of the way you have described your ministry context in this Ministry Site Profile, what are the top three mission priorities which, if accomplished, hold the most promise for the continued development of this ministry?

Trinity has recently embraced new vision and mission statements, and we feel strongly that abiding by them will keep Trinity relevant in the future. If we welcome all people, foster connection with God and one another, and engage in service, our church will be a meaningful part of many people's lives for many years to come. We will be intentional with our conversations, plans, and activities to encourage community-building among our people; welcome community members into our building and into our church family; and share Christ with the wider world.

**PART III: LEADERSHIP NEEDS**

**The Leader we Seek**

**Roster Type:**

- Minister of Word and Sacrament       Minister of Word and Service       In Candidacy/First Call

**Associate / Assistant Pastor**

**Master's Degree (seminary or graduate school)**

**Full-time call**

POSITION TYPE:

MINIMUM DEGREE REQUIRED:

FULL TIME/PART TIME:

**Language Proficiencies**

**English/Fluent**

**Spanish/Conversational**

PRIMARY LANGUAGE (PROFICIENCY)

SECOND LANGUAGE (PROFICIENCY)

THIRD LANGUAGE (PROFICIENCY)

**Experience:**

- 0-3 years       4-9 years       10 -15 years       16- 20 years       21 + years

### **Top Five Ministry Tasks**

*The five most critical tasks required in this position.*

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administration                          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building a Sense of Community   | <input type="checkbox"/> Campus / Young Adult Ministry    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chaplaincy                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Children's Ministry                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Christian Education              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications/ Media                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Organizing                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict Management              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Counseling/ Social Work                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Early Childhood Administration             | <input type="checkbox"/> Ecumenical Work                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Evangelism/ Mission                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Management                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Global Service                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Innovation / Creativity                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Interim Ministry                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Interpret Theology               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inter-personal Climate                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Ministry in Crisis                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Ministry in Daily Life           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ministry with Seniors                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Multicultural Ministry                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Music / Worship / Arts           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor/ Camping Ministry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Parish Nurse / Health                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Participant in the Larger Church |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pastoral Care and Visitation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preaching / Worship             | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Policy / Advocacy         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recruit and Equip Leaders               | <input type="checkbox"/> Self Care / Family Life                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Small Group Ministry  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social Ministry                         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Spiritual Formation / Direction | <input type="checkbox"/> Stewardship                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strategic Mission Planning              | <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer Coordination           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth and Family Ministry               |   |   |

**Gifts for Ministry**

*The five gifts essential in this position, and the five that are very helpful in this position.*

<b>Top Priority</b>		<b>Very Helpful</b>
<b>Yes</b>	Help people develop their spiritual life.	
	Help people understand and act upon issues of social justice.	
	Provide care and nurture.	
<b>Yes</b>	Be active in visitation of members and non-members.	
	Be effective in working with children.	
<b>Yes</b>	Build a sense of community among the people with whom he/she works.	
	Help others develop their leadership abilities and skills for ministry.	
	Be an effective administrator.	
<b>Yes</b>	Be an effective communicator.	
	Be an effective teacher.	
	Encourage support of the Church's wider mission.	
	Work regularly in the development of stewardship growth.	
	Be active in ecumenical relationships.	
	Be effective in working with youth.	<b>Yes</b>
	Organize people for community action.	<b>Yes</b>
	Be skilled in planning and leading programs.	<b>Yes</b>
	Have a strong commitment and loyalty to the ELCA.	
	Understand and interpret the mission of the Church from a global perspective.	
	Deal effectively with conflict.	
	Bring joy and good humor to relationships.	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Yes</b>	Be able to share leadership and work in a team.	
	Be creative and innovative about his or her tasks.	<b>Yes</b>
	Be able to use technology and media.	
	Appreciate cultural diversity in language and customs.	
	Have talents in the areas of music, arts and writing.	

**Mutual Expectations**

Please list the five primary areas of activity or focus that you wish your newly-called rostered minister to give special attention to during the first year of his or her ministry at this congregation or organization:

- A. **Use excellent relational skills to build community in the congregation.**
- B. **Embrace the associate pastor's role in the congregation and support the lead pastor.**
- C. **Begin to understand the associate pastor's passions in our church family and begin to seek ways to share that with the greater community.**
- D. **Take initiative with pastoral care.**
- E. **Aid in spiritual formation for all ages.**

Please list the five ways that this congregation / organization will support and encourage the rostered minister during the first year in order to help her or him accomplish these responsibilities:

- A. **Introduce relationships in the Mutual Ministry Committee to support specifically the needs, health, and growth of the associate pastor and their family.**
- B. **Be open to new ideas and innovations suggested by the associate pastor.**
- C. **Introduce the pastor into the larger community through events and other activities.**
- D. **Provide opportunity for peer support and learning.**
- E. **Provide clear expectations via a pastoral covenant and opportunity for regular check-in and review.**

**Compensation**

No	Yes
PARSONAGE	SOCIAL SECURITY TAX OFFSET
\$75,000 - \$80,000	
MAXIMUM AMOUNT AVAILABLE FOR DEFINED COMPENSATION	

**Benefits**

<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>4 weeks</b>
PENSION	MEDICAL	VACATION WEEKS
<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	
SABBATICAL POLICY	PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY	
<b>Yes</b>		
ARE BACKGROUND CHECKS REQUIRED		

**Professional Expenses**

<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
AUTO / TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT	PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES ACCOUNT
<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
FIRST CALL THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION	CONTINUING EDUCATION

**Comments:**

Please offer any comment or explanation regarding the compensation package, especially as it compares to synodical recommendations or guidelines.

Trinity's ordained ministers receive a housing allowance above the compensation guidelines of the East Central Synod of Wisconsin. The housing allowance is 40 percent of the total salary compensation.

Other Supporting Resources

Are you able to supply the following items, if requested?

Mission and Vision statement of the congregation or organization	<b>Yes</b>
Printed history of the congregation or organization	<b>Yes</b>
Strategic Plan: Goals and Objectives	<b>Yes</b>
Budget	<b>Yes</b>
Annual Report	<b>Yes</b>
Position description: Duties and Responsibilities	<b>Yes</b>
Communications Piece (publicity, newsletter, etc.)	<b>Yes</b>

**PART IV: COMMENTARY**

You are encouraged to offer information or commentary that will help the reader appreciate the vision, opportunities, challenges and nature of your ministry site. Use this opportunity to creatively promote and commend your ministry possibilities.

**Recently celebrating 80 years as a congregation, we are honoring the past and embracing the future as we discern how we are to live into God's calling. We are ready to welcome an associate pastor who will help us in our prayerful conversations for many years to come.**

**Relevant results from Trinity's 2023 Congregation Assessment Tool survey:**

- Among members age 65+ there is a clergy focus, meaning evaluation of the church's ministry is strongly determined by how they evaluate the pastors.
- Members believe Trinity offers opportunities to discover their spiritual gifts and engage them in ministries of the church, the world, and their daily lives.
- Members believe Trinity provides high-quality education appropriate to all ages.
- There is a diversity among members regarding theological perspectives, with members age 65+ theologically conservative and members under age 44 holding a theologically progressive stance.
- There is a need to develop more certainty across the congregation on matters of friendliness, an atmosphere of genuine care and concern among members in times of personal need, and a sense that Trinity gives new meaning to people's lives.
- There is a wide diversity of views between age groups on whether "the worship services at our church are exceptional in both quality and spiritual content."
- According to members who completed the survey, Trinity's top two priorities are: (1) Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new people and incorporate them into the life of the church and (2) Make necessary changes to attract families with children and youth to our church.
- One priority appears across all demographics of the membership: Create more opportunities for people to form meaningful relationships (for example, small groups, nurtured friendships, shared meals, etc.).
- In comparison to other churches, another priority that is unusually strong for our church is: Expand outreach ministries that provide direct services to those living on the margins of society (i.e., homeless, immigrant, transient persons).

## **PART V: COMPLETION OF PROFILE**

### **Discernment Process and Adoption**

Please describe the process used to gather information, formulate responses, and officially adopt this Ministry Site Profile. (Approximately 100 words maximum).

**We've been intentional and thoughtful through this call process. Our Call Committee is a diverse group of Trinity members who have remained committed amid a long transition. As we built our Ministry Site Profile, we engaged with our Strategic Planning Team and utilized the Congregation Assessment Tool to gather information from as many people as possible. We prayerfully considered all the survey input as we built the list of attributes we hope to find in our next associate pastor. We worked to paint a transparent picture of who we are and where our church is headed, and we have updated this document to reflect the great gains that God has granted since this call process began.**

Reflections on Ministry and Context – Updated May 2026

## **Trinity Lutheran Church**

Waupaca, WI

---

*Congregations and Organizations in the Call Process are invited to expand their Ministry Site Profile (MSP) by reflecting on the several key aspects of ministry and context given below. You are encouraged to give short, thoughtful answers (a maximum of 250 words). This form is optional unless specifically requested by a synod bishop. The form is submitted electronically and becomes a part of the Ministry Site's MSP.*

1. Identify the three most significant or formative events in the history of your congregation or organization.

**Trinity Lutheran Church has existed in Waupaca for more than 80 years, but we're focusing our responses to this question on more recent history. Trinity is deep in tradition and leans theologically and politically conservative relative to most of the ELCA. Change can be difficult for our congregation, partly because we've been fortunate to have senior pastors who have spent many years with us. In fact, between 1949 and 2014, we had only three different senior pastors. Despite the conservative demographics of the Waupaca area, we decided to remain part of the ELCA after 2009. This was not true for other local ELCA churches, and while we lost some members, we gained many whose parishes left the ELCA. In May 2024, rooted in the prior decision by Trinity's Church Council in 2010 to remain an ELCA congregation that ministers to all people, the Council approved a new wedding policy providing for weddings that are inclusive of all people, regardless of gender or orientation. Lastly, prior to 2010, Trinity made the decision to stay downtown. This eventually led us to build a new sanctuary to allow for future growth and consolidate the number of services held each week. In summary, Trinity and our leaders have said, "We're staying, we're staying, we're staying," despite the challenges we've faced, and we believe that is often because of our rich history.**

2. Has your congregation or organization had significant conflict in recent history and, if so, what have you learned from that experience?

**The most challenging conflict for Trinity in recent history has been the turnover of pastors since 2014, following the retirement of two long-tenured ministers. Although each of the four called pastors who left between 2016 and 2023 did so for different reasons, some members struggled to adjust amid the changes in leadership after such a stretch of stability. Yet this has sparked observable progress in Trinity's needed transformation from a clergy-led congregation to a parish where pastors support lay leadership.**

**Likewise, since the retirement of our long-serving pastors, we have learned the importance of developing and updating policies to support our ministries. The repeated turnover prompted a commitment to deeply evaluate our identity as a congregation and redefine how we operate as an organization.**

**In the last six years, we have embraced significant changes: adding an administrator, which allowed us to streamline the pastoral staff from three to two; updating our constitution and other governing documents; restructuring our Church Council, committees, and ministry teams; and adding our aforementioned SAM. Trinity now faces another important transition with the retirement of the longtime staff member who has developed our music program as one of Trinity's strongest ministries.**

**We recognize that if changes are not embraced, new pastors risk becoming long-term interim leaders. We are determined to break this cycle and are dedicating extra effort and time in our call process to find a partner who will inspire growth and lead our church into a bright future.**

3. Describe your physical facilities: construction date, purpose, capacity, date of last renovation, any deferred maintenance, and any plans for upgrading.

**Trinity is fortunate to have been housed downtown for the life of the congregation. The original building was constructed in 1943, and we added a new sanctuary in 2012. The current capacity of our sanctuary is 463 people. Our lower-level Fellowship Hall and contemporary basement gathering space provide ample room for ministry opportunities (as well as potlucks!). We recently remodeled a portion of the gathering space leading to our sanctuary in order to install an updated coffee bar and comfortable common area, and we redesigned our entire youth room to make it feel more like home. Maintenance is a priority for our congregation—we have dedicated staff and members who take pride in the upkeep and care of our property and grounds. We're also fortunate to have financially supportive members who give when the need arises. In the last 10-plus years, we've held successful dedicated campaigns to raise funds for a new grand piano, a bus, and a digital outdoor sign. A beautiful memorial garden also took shape during the pandemic. Currently, we are undergoing a roof replacement and upgrades to our HVAC system, and we plan to redesign our preschool entrance soon. We stay up to date with technology, most notably allowing for YouTube streams of our services as well as traditional radio broadcasts. We recently overhauled our network and computer systems, and we anticipate updates to our sanctuary audio-video systems, having already added similar sound and video installations elsewhere in the building. The goal of all our physical and digital spaces is to facilitate fellowship and connection—with one another, with our community, and with God.**