



Trinity Team

10014 - 81 Avenue NW

Edmonton, AB T6E 1W8

Phone: (780) 433 1604

Email: office@trinity-lutheran.ab.ca

Website: www.trinity-lutheran.ab.ca

September 2026

Reading the Bible When You Don't Have Time to Read the Bible

The Bible is the most read book of all time. The second most read book in the world is most certainly the Quran, and the third most read book in the world is probably also a religious text. That being said, it is certainly one of the harder books to read cover to cover. Most books, like fiction, draw the reader into reading from cover to cover, and then, unsatisfied, the reader immediately dives into reading the second book in the trilogy. But the Bible often leaves an enthusiastic reader struggling to keep reading. It is pretty common to hear that someone tried to read the Bible cover to cover, but they gave up, usually somewhere in the book of Leviticus. The keen reader who gets through the Leviticus and the books of Moses will probably stay committed to reading for several more books, slogging through Joshua and cruising through 1st and 2nd Samuel and Kings, only to stumble in 1st Chronicles, recover and keep reading through Ezra and Nehemiah only to fade out in the Psalms, or maybe even in Job. Or if not that, maybe the reader fizzles in Jeremiah.

But the Bible wasn't really created with the idea that one would read through it cover to cover. It is a library of books, with most biblical books being designed to be read from end to end. Yet, often that isn't what we do with a book of the Bible. We tend to turn the Bible into readings, short slices of a book of the Bible, averaging about ten verses long, and we use those readings as the basis for preaching with four different

readings for each Sunday. Usually in worship and preaching, we become very familiar with many of the best short readings in the Bible.

The other way people slice up the Bible is to focus on key verses. One of the congregation's that uses the Lord of Life sanctuary has a preacher who likes to preach on one verse at a time. I would find that very hard to do. I also worry that the way to value the scriptures is to understand larger and larger sections.

The middle ground between reading very small passages (like single verses, or the readings used on a Sunday) and the entire Bible cover to cover is to read smaller books of the Bible with just enough knowledge of the context to make reading a short Biblical book interesting.

So, I am going to suggest some shorter books of the Bible one could read easily in one sitting and give just enough commentary to give you something to look for when reading.

Philemon: Arm Twisting Done Right

The last of Paul's "pastoral" letters, and one of the shortest books of the Bible over-all, this short read becomes interesting when you read it looking to see how Paul puts subtle, friendly pressure on Philemon to do the right thing. In a world where people fight over ethical choices, it is nice to see a different way to appeal to someone's heart. Watch carefully how Paul

Inside This Issue

• Reading the Bible	1
• Pantry Food Drive	2
• Bishop's Message	3
• Embodiment	3
• Pastor Reichel Recognition	4-5
• Council Message	6
• Harvesting Apples	6
• Worship at Trinity	7
• Summer Musicians	8
• Grape Juice	8

crafts his words to pull at Philemon's conscience.

Galatians: Paul's Case for the Defense

Galatians is a short letter written to stop a legalistic wing of the Galatian church from forcing non-Jews to be circumcised. If the Gentiles were forced to be circumcised, everything Paul would have stood for would come to naught. This letter has the feel of a courtroom drama Paul starts by defending his own ministry but turns the tables on the legalists, putting the Law on trial and offers a solution in the Gospel. Watch in Galatians for the delicate dance between Law and Gospel.

Jonah: Frustrated with a Loving God

Situated in the middle of the minor prophets, the Book of Jonah is like a modern short story. The reader gets to follow Jonah as

Jonah flees from God, winds up in a dark place, where Jonah changes course and does what God wants. Jonah's success doing what God wants only leads to a final confrontation between Jonah and a loving God. Watch for the final question from God to Jonah.

Mark: A Messianic Secret

The second book of the New Testament and the shortest Gospel, this book introduces itself as the good news about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. And yet, in this whole book, only one character, and the least likely character at that recognizes Jesus as Son of God. That is thematic of this whole book which is about how people do not understand who Jesus is. Some people, including evil spirits, draw the wrong kind of attention to Jesus. The unusual path that Jesus takes invites the reader into asking a deeper question of who Jesus really is. Watch for how irony weaves its way through this Gospel. To this end, stop reading the Gospel of Mark at chapter 16 verse 8, the last verse before the two alternative endings. Leave out the endings and just sit with Mark 16:8, which we presume to be Mark's original ending.

Ecclesiastes: Existential Angst

In contrast to the simple morale sayings of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes is written by the Teacher struggling with the very meaning of life itself. The opening and closing words of the Teacher's writings is "All is vanity" or "nothing makes sense" depending on your translation. However, this book has "book ends" a short single sentence introduction at the beginning and a short epilogue at the end we presume was written by someone other than the Teacher. Do the simple answers in the epilogue accurately summarize the Teacher? Depending on your translation, watch for the breaks between verse and prose (passages in verse are usually indented) Ask yourself whether the verse parts stand out compared to the prose.

1 John: A Love Letter

John is such a different writer than Paul, and this short letter called First John and found after 2nd Peter repeatedly calls on followers of Christ to love and avoid sinning. The upbeat hope of this letter is encouragement to trust God is transforming us. Watch for connections between this letter of John and the Gospel of John.

Genesis 37, 39-45: The Annoying Brother Succeeds Against All Odds

Rather than look at an entire book of the Bible, I will suggest reading nine chapters of Genesis in one sitting. These chapters constitute the story of the tension between Joseph and his brothers. (Note that I suggest skipping over chapter 38). Joseph remains faithful to God even after betrayal by both brothers and the slave master's spouse. God helps Joseph succeed in unexpected ways. Watch how Joseph tests his brothers when they come to Egypt looking for food.

I have listed seven different shorter readings from the Bible. For those who don't read the Bible on a regular basis, this is the kind of short reading, with (I hope) enough of an introduction to let the reader discover for themselves some of the unique material in these passages. This is also a gentle introduction to some of the different writing styles in the Bible.

Please tell me if you found this list useful and you would like to explore some more readings. If there is an interest, we can put more work into creating a whole list of short Bible reading projects.

Pastor David



Unlike traditional food pantries meant for families with a kitchen, a homeless outreach pantry needs foods that can be eaten immediately without cooking, refrigeration, or a knife.

Ready-to-Eat Food (No-Cook & Pop-Tab)

- **Pop-tab canned goods:** Tuna, chicken salad kits, Vienna sausages, or hearty soups with pull-top lids.
- **Portable snacks:** Granola bars, protein bars, peanut butter or cheese cracker packs, and applesauce cups.
- **Nutrient-dense items:** Dried fruit, trail mix, beef jerky, and small nuts.
- **Hydration:** Bottled water and shelf-stable individual milk or juice boxes.

Essential Hygiene Supplies

Hygiene items are among the most requested and hardest-to-find resources on the street.

- **Oral care:** Toothbrushes and small tubes of toothpaste.
- **Body care:** Travel-size soap or body wash, wet wipes, hand sanitizer, and deodorant.
- **Feminine hygiene:** Tampons and sanitary pads.
- **Skin protection:** Sunscreen and lip balm (vital for people spending all day outdoors)

Bishops Message

Grace and peace to you from Jesus!

September has always carried with it a welcome back to routine. We're often busy wondering, What do I need to do? What do we have to buy? What must I mark in my schedule? But what if we begin this fall with a different question?

What are we here for?

The church in Canada faces significant challenges – financial, volunteers, buildings, spiritually - we know them well. Church is no longer at the centre of community life in the way it once was, and many people have little familiarity with the Christian story. These realities are real and they matter. They demand wisdom, courage, and faithful stewardship.

God has never relied upon abundance or even expertise to accomplish God's purposes. God has always invited faithful people willing to trust, willing to take a chance, willing to foster brave imagination.

So, what are we here for, ABT Synod? I believe the "answer" is more about what we do. Backed by an amazing God, we step out in curiosity to explore where God is and what God is up to. With open hearts we listen to the needs of the poor and oppressed. With generosity of time and talents and money we strive to be persistent in supporting the church and making meaningful changes in our world.

Put "Sunday worship" back in your calendars this fall. Worship is where we are nourished by community, word and sacrament (and perhaps good coffee!) to be ready to encounter a world that needs good news. Every Sunday, Christ gathers us not simply to comfort us, but to send us back into the world as witnesses of grace.

In addition – take advantage to join in learning together at gatherings and events planned by the Synod or in your region. October 3 you are invited to come to the ABT Synod Congregational Life Event in Red Deer. We welcome internationally recognized Anna Madsen to bolster our spirits and Ben and Caitlyn Johnston-Urey to inspire with a new healing liturgy. Such events are times that spark learning, imagination and hope as we meet others just like us and know we are not alone. Watch for more details on this event.

So as September begins, whatever corner or rural route you are on, spend some time in prayer and pondering: What are we here for?

May the Holy Spirit continue to lead us, challenge us, and surprise us together!

In Christ,

Bishop Trish

Bishop Trish Schmermund
Synod of Alberta and the Territories, ELCIC



Embodiment means turning an invisible idea or quality into a real, visible example.

So, if that's the dictionary meaning of the word "Embodiment" then what does it mean in the context of Trinity's Vision statement?

In community with one another, we
are called to be the embodiment of
God's love in the world.

If we are true to our vision of being the embodiment of God's love in the world, then others, looking at us, at our community, should see a tangible example of God's love working in the world. That's a pretty lofty goal.

While the Vision has significant implications for us individually, it really speaks to who we are as a community, as a congregation. It is "in community with one another" that we become the embodiment of God's love. And it's not that we are the embodiment, but that we are "called to be" the embodiment of that love.

It is in community that we receive this call, and in community that we are promised support to fulfill the calling. "Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them." (Matthew 18:19-20).

A vision statement for the congregation is meant to guide us in making decisions. When we meet to do the work of the church, whether that's in worship, in study, in discernment, in committee, or even in physical work around or for the church, we should be asking ourselves: "Do our actions reflect to others that we are called to be the embodiment of God's love in the world?"

IMHO – Frank Thede



Mulching the flower beds in front of Luther Centre

Recognition of Ministry



Pastor Reichel - June 14, 2026



Church Council Update – Sept. 2026

Deena Hinshaw – Council Chair

I love that our communications committee has chosen the theme of “Embodiment” for this issue of the Trinity Team. Thinking about this theme, its central place in our mission statement, and what it means in the context of church council is a great opportunity to reflect on what it means to be church in our world at this moment, both in general and in particular at Trinity.

As you may know, Trinity’s church council has been spending much of our time in the past year in collaboration with our property, personnel, and other committees on topics like prioritization of maintenance and building repair projects and personnel issues like supporting Pastor Erin’s recovery, selecting and onboarding a part time interim pastor - Pastor David - and supporting selection and onboarding processes for the church maintenance position. These tasks can seem mundane or removed from the spiritual life of the church, but I think the theme of embodiment invites us to think about these practical matters as also holy and to resist the temptation to separate the mundane and the sacred. As Kathleen Norris says in her book “Quotidian Mysteries”: “...God loves us – loves us so much that the divine presence is revealed even in the meaningless workings of daily life. It is in the ordinary, the here-and-now, that God asks us to recognize that the creation is indeed refreshed like dew-laden grass that is “renewed in the morning” (Ps 90:5)...” I recall a sermon Pastor Erin preached a while ago that reflected on how Jesus’ birth in human form is a clear, and actually somewhat shocking, message that the frail flesh humans inhabit is beloved and holy, with all our imperfections included. As the seven of us on church council and many others on Trinity’s committees work on ordinary tasks of running the church, we bring our limited human selves to the work. Sometimes it doesn’t feel like enough in the face of many challenges and yet somehow, like the feeding of the five thousand, our offerings are made enough to keep going.

Having said that, this time in our church is also an opportunity to reflect on the wisdom of Ecclesiastes 3:1: “There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens”. With the support of a small planning group, we have been having conversations with our congregation about the realities of the challenges we are facing, and the need to think about where we are being called going forward. We have been leaning into advice from Lutheran Theological Seminary President, Bill Harrison, who encourages churches like Trinity to accept that our core task right now is hearing where God is calling us to go as a smaller congregation than we have

historically been, not to see numbers or growth as our primary metric. I have enjoyed the opportunities to be part of these conversations over the past few months, and I invite you all to plan to join our upcoming conversations on October 18 and November 22 after services on those days.

We have also been talking with church council chairs of other Edmonton area ELCIC churches, and we are not alone in our challenges. We are embracing a theme of “Let’s do this together” going forward, with specific collaborative work planned this year with the University of Alberta Lutheran Campus Ministry group to build multigenerational bridges through shared evening services. The first of these will be on September 27, followed by the fifth Sunday of months with five Sundays, so please mark Sept 27, Nov 29 and Jan 31 as dates to join a 5 pm supper and worship service at St. George’s Anglican Church.

Our future will be different from our past. God is out there in front of us, inviting us to allow ourselves to be the embodiment of God’s love in the world. Our opportunity is to accept the invitation, let go of perfection, and to find the resilience that comes from doing this work in community with each other.



Time to pick apples from our own apple trees

Called into Worship

Come, praise the Lord - Psalm 134:1-2

Upcoming Worship & Communion Schedule

[A Message from Our Worship & Music Committee]

Our upcoming Sunday worship schedule will be a little different from our past schedule. Our two pastors will be dividing their time to serve regular Sunday services at Trinity, with Pastor David serving two Sundays each month at Lord of Life. The schedule also considers coverage for the festival Sundays and when communion will be celebrated. Thank you for your understanding and continued support as our pastors share in this ministry together with us.

October 4, 2026

English Service – Pastor David

October 11, 2026 - Thanksgiving

German Service – Agnes Melax

English Communion Service – Pastor Erin

October 18, 2026

English Service – Pastor David

October 25, 2026 - Reformation

German Communion Service – Pastor Andrea

English Communion Service – Pastor Erin

November 1, 2026

English Service – Pastor Erin

November 8, 2026

German Service – Agnes Melax

English Communion Service – Pastor David

November 15, 2026

English Service – Pastor David

November 22, 2026 - Christ the King

German Communion Service – Pastor Andrea

English Communion Service – Pastor Erin

Trinity Sunday Worship June 14, 2026

Joint service:

- Trinity Lutheran
- Holy Trinity Anglican
- Edmonton Moravian



Thank you to Our Summer Musicians

This summer, as for the last 24 years, Cherie Larson our organist organized volunteers to beautify our summer services with their music. We want to thank the following for their contribution this summer:

- Campbell Anne, soprano
- Duokan, Christina Kant, harp and Kannan Bloor, saxophone
- Eeles Mark, cello
- Goodall Willem, piccolo
- Gregory Bonnie, violin
- Knoefel Clara, soprano
- Krismer Shauna, Piano and Alto
- Larson Cherie, Viola and Piano
- Palmer Sienna, Cello
- Simanjuntak Gerald + Felicia, piano
- Trinity Singers: including Frank Thede, Aaron Addorissio, Stefan Ritter
- Yao Yao, cello
- Zabka Emily, violin



The Trinity Team is a publication of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Edmonton, Alberta. The Team is published 3-4 times a year - in August, in December, and in April under the auspices of the Communications Committee.

Next publication date: December 2026.

The Team is intended to serve the members of Trinity Lutheran Church as a comprehensive communications tool. The editors welcome your comments or questions. Please submit all Team articles, information, comments or questions to: Trinity Office (office@trinity-lutheran.ab.ca) or drop them off at the church office - Attn: Trinity Team

© Trinity Lutheran Church, 2026

Source should be acknowledged if material reproduce in whole or in part.

Juice from Our Grapes

This fall we harvested grapes from our own grape vines in front of the church. Thanks to Gertrud Reichel and Rosanne Thede for turning these grapes into grape juice which will be served as an option during communion:

