

# The Weekly Tidings

Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

[www.htelc.com](http://www.htelc.com)

22 Fox Run Road \* Newington, NH 03801 \* 603-436-1704

[office@htelc.com](mailto:office@htelc.com)

Come Together, Grow in Faith, Serve the LORD

## Remembering those who Served

On this Memorial Day weekend, we remember all of those service men and women who have given their lives for the safety of others. We ask that all people who are currently serving overseas be able to return home safely. We look forward to the day when swords will be turned into plowshares and in the words of the old spiritual, "We ain't gonna study war no more."



## Very Short Congregational Meeting

Very Short Congregational Meeting on Sunday, June 4 to approve Glenn Oswald and Kristen Crawford to go to the New England Synod Assembly on June 9 & 10. This meeting will be held after worship. We will need at least 40 people for a quorum.



## Semi-Annual Meeting & Church Picnic

Semi-Annual Meeting & Church Picnic will be on Sunday, June 11 after the 9:30 AM worship service. Our team of grillers will be making Indonesian Food, and if you prefer, American Burgers and Hot Dogs too. Please bring a Summer Picnic Dish. We need your help to set up for the Church Picnic on the day before, Saturday June 10 at 2pm. See Tom Bernth if you wish to help set-up.

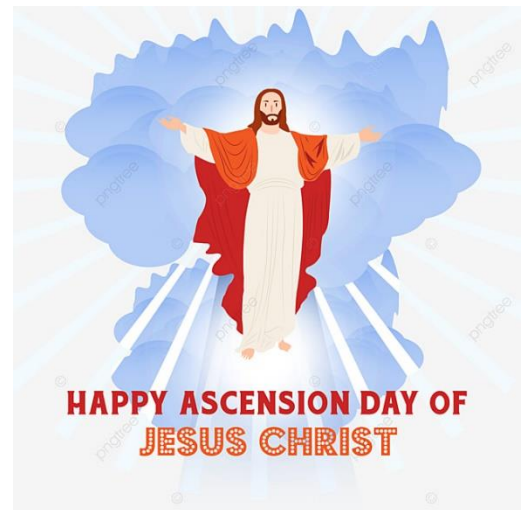


## ASCENSION DAY GREETINGS FROM YOUR PASTOR-ELECT

Happy Ascension Day!

Although I will offer a short reflection on the meaning of this holy day in just a moment, I want to begin by reiterating just how thrilled and humbled I am at your decision to call me as your next pastor. Pat and I are still talking about our celebration with you on April 30th, and how much we miss worshipping at Holy Trinity on Sundays. I can't wait to join you officially in September!

In the meantime, I am preparing for another summer season at my lovely chapel in Manchester-by-the-Sea, which runs from the first Sunday in June through Labor Day weekend. Many of you have kindly inquired about our services. Please know that you are more than welcome to visit if you're looking for a worship experience by the sea. We are about a 50-minute drive from Holy Trinity and our little coastal town is quite scenic. The church itself is just a stone's throw from Singing Beach, one of the nicest beaches around. Our principal service is at 10 a.m. For more information, see [www.emmanuelmanchester.org](http://www.emmanuelmanchester.org) or email me at [pastorluther@htelc.com](mailto:pastorluther@htelc.com) for help in planning a visit.



Now, back to Ascension Day! Although it is a "major feast day" on both the Lutheran and Episcopal church calendars, Ascension Day is perhaps the least observed and understood of the major Christian holy days. This is unfortunate because it really does matter!

Luke is our primary source for the Ascension, and he offers accounts of it in both his gospel (Luke 24:44-53) and in the Acts of the Apostles (1:1-11). In a nutshell, Luke writes that forty days after his resurrection, Jesus "was taken up before the disciples' very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight," and so he was "taken from them into heaven."

If you think this sounds somewhat fantastical as a piece of history, you are not alone. Even for many faithful believers, the spectacle of the risen Christ floating off into the heavens seems just too much to swallow. At the end of the day, however, I'm not sure that the literal accuracy of Luke's attempt to describe what happened that day is the real point. God's movement in

and through space and time is a mystery after all, and human attempts to fully capture things like the Incarnation, the Resurrection or the Ascension are bound to fail. Luke did his best to describe the indescribable.

My conviction is that the importance of the Ascension lies less in the “mechanics” of “what happened” and more in the “why of its happening.” This is how the philosophical theologian Stephen Davis of Claremont University puts it: "I do not believe that in the Ascension Jesus literally went up in the air, kept going until he achieved escape velocity from the earth, and then kept moving until he got to heaven, as if heaven were located somewhere in space. Rather, the Ascension of Jesus was primarily a change of state rather than a change of location. Jesus changed in the Ascension from being present in the realm of space and time to being present in the realm of eternity, in the transcendent heavenly realm."

Understood this way, the Ascension is about the glorification of the resurrected Jesus before God, not his elevation to a geographical place called heaven "up there."

So, why does all this matter? It matters because it assures us of the co-equality and intimate connection between God the Son and God the Father. Jesus was not just some great human teacher, here today and then gone tomorrow. Rather, Jesus was and is eternally present with God, both before and after his time on earth.

Sometimes such admittedly paradoxical, theological truths are best approached through artistic expression. In this vein, I commend to you and will conclude with this lovely sonnet about the Ascension from the Anglican priest and poet, Malcolm Guite, taken from his book, *Sounding the Seasons: Seventy Sonnets for the Christian Year* (2012). His words are so much more beautiful than mine!

*We saw his light break through the cloud of glory  
Whilst we were rooted still in time and place  
As earth became a part of Heaven's story  
And heaven opened to his human face.  
We saw him go and yet we were not parted  
He took us with him to the heart of things  
The heart that broke for all the broken-hearted  
Is whole and Heaven-centred now, and sings,*

*Sings in the strength that rises out of weakness,  
Sings through the clouds that veil him from our sight,  
Whilst we ourselves become his clouds of witness  
And sing the waning darkness into light,  
His light in us, and ours in him concealed,  
Which all creation waits to see revealed.*

Here ends your theology lesson for the week!

Until next time, Pat and I offer our love in the name of the ascended Christ,  
Pastor Luther

(Photo by faith clipart PNG Designed By AlaminGpd from [https://pngtree.com/freepng/happy-ascension-day-of-jesus-christ\\_6006810.html?sol=downref&id=bef](https://pngtree.com/freepng/happy-ascension-day-of-jesus-christ_6006810.html?sol=downref&id=bef))

### **Pastor Luther's Book of Sermons**

"God with Us", written by Pastor Luther Zeigler, is available to borrow in the Church Library. This is a written collection of his sermons preached at Emmanuel Church from 2012-2019. Currently, we have only one copy, and it's not sold on Amazon. If you wish to purchase your own copy, please let the church office know, and we will try to get copies for you.

### **Prayer E-Tree**

This is a group of people who are ready to pray for anyone who need prayers. When there is a prayer request, an email is sent to the members on the prayer tree email group. We recognize and support the power in prayer! If you would like to join our Prayer E-Tree, please contact the Church Office.



### **Columbarium News**

It has been a very long time since we wrote about the Columbarium. Cremation and placing the ashes in the Columbarium is a tangible way to remain connected to Holy Trinity in death as it was in life. Holy Trinity for many of us is important in our lives both in our connection to God and his son, Jesus, as well as to our community within the church. Additionally, cremation is a cost effective way to conduct a funeral. Please see David Arrington or Mark Donahue if you have any questions.

## Former Pastor's Article

*In the spring, Holy Trinity's church office uncovered documents of old Tidings newsletters in our basement. While Pastor Luther is away for the summer, and unable to write articles for us, Holy Trinity would like to share several enlightening articles from old Tidings, written by Pastor Dave Snyder (Pastor from 1989 to 1997) and Pastor Paul Lindstrom (interim Pastor from 1997 to 2000). We plan on having a Former Pastor's Article in the Tidings twice a month, now through August.*

Among the greatest lines from Tennessee Williams is this one: 'The future is called perhaps.'

What lies ahead for Holy Trinity? What is God calling us as a congregation to be about? The answers are at the heart of what the Vision Committee is about. But its not the Vision Committee that provides the answers to those questions. Its the congregation, you the people of Holy Trinity that together need to discern what we believe God would have us be about as we seek to carry on Christ's work in this community.



Some of us think about Holy Trinity's future the way we think about marketing---living in the conviction that if we advertise, have a good product (i.e. the right pastor) and invest our energy in recruitment, we can continue to grow and Holy Trinity's place in the future will be assured.

Still others of us think about Holy Trinity's future the way my old neighbor thought about investments---don't taken any risks, because you might end up losing. (Sadly, he didn't end up winning either, and when he died, his once considerable nest egg was pretty depleted.)

We can learn another way to think about Holy Trinity's future from Abraham, who heard those fateful words from God: "Go forth from your native land and from your father's house to the land that I will show you." Abraham went, he overcame his fears, and he was willing to make a new beginning even at his advanced age." "Give us faith to go out with good courage", we pray, "not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us, and your love supporting us." Every time I pray that prayer, I think of Abraham. It's one of my favorite prayers and can be found at the close of the service of Evening Prayer in our Lutheran Book of Worship. Holy Trinity's future is clear in the mind of God, but none of us knows it yet. And like

Abraham, we can only move out in faith that God is leading us. The process the Vision Committee is leading us into is based on the premise that all of us are in a relationship with a God who is ever more ready to communicate with us than we are to listen.

It is a process that seeks to discern God's will for our parish. At the very heart of the Christian faith lies one fundamental question: How can we understand and live the will of God? This desire, this longing to seek to do God's will, is what will be our focus as a parish this summer as we prepare to call a pastor. We can never be sure that we have truly and fully comprehended God will, but we can make it our prayer and then trust that the Holy Spirit will lead.

PTL (Paul Lindstrom)

### **President's Article**

Slightly less than a month ago we joined together in voting unanimously to call Pastor Luther Zeigler to be our next pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. This spirit driven decision is leading us to exciting new directions for our ministry. The first Sunday Pastor Luther will be with us in worship in this new role will be September. Shortly after he joins us in the fall, we will all join together in officially acknowledging Pastor Luther's ministry with us at an installation worship service. The installation will formally mark the relationship between Pastor Luther and our congregation. This week, I had the privilege of meeting with the Worship Team to begin to plan some of the aspects of this event. As the weeks go by, we will be asking for volunteers to share in the planning and execution of this event such as joining in musical offerings, helping with invitations, assisting at the worship service, or preparing for a reception. We will publicize the date of the installation as soon as we know so that you can mark your calendar. This event will be symbolic in several ways. Clergy from both the Lutheran and the Episcopal traditions will be participating. We also plan to invite representatives from many seacoast religious groups, as well as representatives from a variety of community organizations with which we share ministry goals. This will be an exciting time to formally acknowledge our ministry partnerships and lay the foundation for future endeavors. We are embarking on an exciting and challenging new pathway in our shared ministry at Holy Trinity, and hope you are able to attend this installation service to mark our pathway. Please continue to pray for Pastor Luther and his wife Pat as they prepare for this new time in their ministry.



## Property Team

Just a snapshot in time!

Spring and early summer are always busy times for the property team. There is the normal cleanup of winter debris and such around the grounds as well as the mowing, trimming, pruning, garden care and other routine lawn and garden tasks. As always, we continue to be heavily reliant on our property team volunteers. In practical terms this means the degree to which the team can tend to what needs to be done is dictated by the number of volunteers available at any given time. Each spring we also know we are competing with Holy Trinity members and friends who often have these same tasks to do around their own properties. The team is grateful for the regulars who serve nearly every week with the Thursday Group, and also grateful for those who lend a hand as they can on Thursday or at other times as their situations allow. Some things we will be addressing in the near-term as resources allow include:

- Getting our lawn mowers serviced
- Raising the tent
- Obtaining a service provider to complete routine maintenance on our new highway sign
- Disposing of a basketball backboard, basket, pole and hardware (Available for free to anyone who may be interested ... we can deliver!)
- Obtaining quotes for cleaning and staining exposed exterior wood around the sanctuary and main entrance
- Obtaining quotes for repair of two exterior fire doors
- Obtaining quotes for cleaning and painting of the steeple
- Complete carpet cleaning in selected areas
- And ... and ... and



There is always something on the list to do.

Dave Mercer, Property Team Leader, pro tempore

## Baptism

Baptized into Christ on May 14, 2023 is Hunter James Schleicher, son of Emilie and Matthew Schleicher.



# Prayer Concerns

**Health Issues:** Franklyn Vosburg, Jerry Schock, Pastor Linn Opderbecke, Alice Peterson, Bob Hollister, Don Gindlesperger, Steve Bush, Joyce Rivoire, Richard Anderson, Yvonne Topping, Dave Smith, Larry Sanders, Hazel Larson, Leo Larson, Geri Seig, Rani Marcus, Grover Marshall, Shirley Jackson, Julie Moore, Dick Topping.

**Homebound:** Carol Saufley, Edith Rowan, Barbara Werdelin, Ron Evers, Dave & Joyce Rivoire, Anita Lindstrom, Judy Hollister, Jean Klein. **Military:** Josh Bretz, Matthew Hanrahan, Brendan Podszus, Jacob Schankis, Jessica Chabot.

**Friends:** Frank & Lucille Febbo (Bobbie Febbo's cousins), Mark and Janet Febbo (Bobbie Febbo's cousins), Norman Young (Heidi Morrison's father), Bonnie Bly (Sue Althof's sister-in-law), Donald Seidel (Sue Althof's cousin), Judy Bly King (Sue Althof's sister), Denny King (Sue Althof's brother-in-law), Dave Bly (Sue Althof's brother), Cinda DeWerff (Rich Wilcox's sister).

*Prayers will be listed for at least 6 weeks unless told otherwise. If you would like a prayer concern listed in the bulletin, please fill out a Prayer Request at the Usher's table or contact the Church Office at [office@htelc.com](mailto:office@htelc.com).*

## Monthly Attendance & Offering

<b>Sunday, April 16:</b>	101 ( <i>In-Person</i> ) + 28 ( <i>Online</i> ) = 129	<b>Offering:</b>	\$6,537.40
<b>Sunday, April 23:</b>	67 ( <i>In-Person</i> ) + 63 ( <i>Online</i> ) = 130	<b>Offering:</b>	\$9,463.97
<b>Sunday, April 30:</b>	100 ( <i>In-Person</i> ) + 27 ( <i>Online</i> ) = 127	<b>Offering:</b>	\$3,948.45
<b>Sunday, May 7:</b>	80 ( <i>In-Person</i> ) + 25 ( <i>Online</i> ) = 105	<b>Offering:</b>	\$5,342.90
<b>Sunday, May 14:</b>	101 ( <i>In-Person</i> ) + 41 ( <i>Online</i> ) = 142	<b>Offering:</b>	\$2,963.85
<b>Sunday, May 21:</b>	82 ( <i>In-Person</i> ) + 30 ( <i>Online</i> ) = 112	<b>Offering:</b>	\$10,587.25

## Calendar at-a-glance

**Sun. May 28:** Confirmation Sunday (9:30 AM Worship)

**Sun. June 4:** Brief Congregational Meeting – Synod Assembly Reps

**Sun. June 11:** Semi-Annual Meeting, Church Picnic, & Graduation Sunday

**Sunday Worship,** Sundays at 9:30 AM

**Wednesday Bible Study,** Wednesdays at 9:30 AM

**Property Team,** Thursdays at 8:00 AM until noon.