

The Weekly Tidings

Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

www.htelc.com

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Come Together, Grow in Faith, Serve the LORD

Christmas Eve Worship

Due to COVID-19, Christmas Eve Worship will look a little different. We will NOT have any indoor worship services in our Sanctuary that day, but we have two alternative ways to worship with us on Christmas Eve.

First, we will be recording a video of our Christmas Eve worship and posting it on Christmas Eve. This video will be posted to our webpage at www.htelc.com and Facebook page at 10:00 AM on December 24. It will also be emailed to the congregation via our email blast.



Second, Pastor Tim will be traveling across the seacoast region, holding outdoor Christmas Eve services. Starting at 5pm, and then on every consecutive hour, Pastor will be at a different, outdoor, location in the seacoast area for a 20-minute service that will include

For More Information about the outdoor Christmas Eve services, please read Pastor Tim's article on Pages 4 & 5 of this issue of The Tidings.

Order Poinsettias for Christmas Eve

If you would like to order a Christmas Poinsettia(s), please call the Church Office at (603)436-1704. Each Poinsettia will be \$10 each.

You will be able to pick up your poinsettias on December 23, December 27 in the morning, or anytime during office hours in January.



Pastor Tim's Article: December 1, 2020

Lot's going on, but I want to highlight just a few.

First, every week during Advent, please look for a video devotion to be used with your Advent Wreath. I will speak for no more than 5 minutes on the theme for the candle that we light in worship on the prior Sunday. Yesterday, we lit the candle for Hope, hence, tomorrow there will be a video on Hope. Sorry, I won't have them ready for you on Sunday evening, but if you are like my family, you light the candle on your Advent Wreath any night you can, and not just Sunday nights. You don't even need to do it with the wreath, just watch it when you can.

Second, starting tomorrow (or Tuesday, Dec. 1) we will be live streaming Holden Evening Prayer, from our sanctuary on YouTube Live at 7pm, EST (subscribe on [our YouTube Channel](#) or go to [our website](#) to find the live stream). You are invited to join us every Tuesday, during Advent, for this time of music and peacefulness. If you would like a copy of Holden Evening Prayer to have at home, please stop by church during our regular hours (8:30am-4pm) and pick a copy up (please return it when Advent is over!)



Third, remember, there are multiple ways to worship with us on Sunday mornings. We will be livestreaming (on YouTube Live) a worship from our sanctuary at 8:30am. If you can't join us at that time, the worship will be available immediately afterwards on YouTube, again [subscribe to our YouTube channel](#) to find it easily. Don't worry, this is not replacing our worship on Zoom at 9:30am every Sunday. We will continue that for the foreseeable future. The zoom worship is made available on facebook simultaneously and afterwards on our website. Also, the sermons are podcasted each week and can be found by searching for "Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church" [on iTunes or Stitcher](#).

Thank you to everyone who participated in our congregational meeting on Nov. 22 as we accepted our Statement of Welcome and Affirmation and became a Reconciling in Christ Congregation. We had 85 people and, while I will not say it was perfectly smooth, it went really well. The final vote was 79 "in favor," 5 "opposed," and 1 "abstain." Look

for more information in the coming months on how we will celebrate this as a community.

As always, there is lots going on here at Holy Trinity for you to participate in, not just from the ways listed above, but from all the ways listed below, that you haven't read yet. But remember, the most important work we do as a church does not occur in the building or through the building, it occurs in your life. It occurs because you are so moved by the love of Christ that it captures your imagination and it comes out in the way you treat your loved ones, in the way that you treat your friends, in the way you behave in public and behind closed doors when you are alone. It occurs in a peace and contentment in your heart when the storms are ranging around you and you will the whisper of God in your ear say, "The storm will not last. I am with you. Do not be afraid."

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Tim

Toys for Tots – Thank you!

Thank you to all for a very successful, remote toy drive. The Marine Corps Toys for Tots program received 67 new toys from Holy Trinity this year. Due to Covid protocols for social distancing, the Marine Corps did not deliver to individual families this year but to multiple non-profits bringing Christmas to those in need. As usual, I am blown away by the generosity of our congregation.

Thank you for your gifts.



Pop-Up Pantry

Our deepest thank you's to all who donated food items or contributed funds towards our bags. It was wonderful to come together for such a needy project and we were happy to see all 25 bags were taken. The need will only grow.

Thank you so much and now on to Christmas bags!

- Paulette, Cristina, Jules & Mark

Pastor Tim's article

It goes without saying, but as Thanksgiving was different for all of us this year, Christmas will follow suit. We will not be able to gather as we have in the past, either without our individual extended families or without our Holy Trinity family...well, at least not in the way we traditionally have. But we will still gather. Therefore, let me introduce you to...

CHRISTMAS EVE EVERYWHERE!

Starting at 5pm, and then on every consecutive hour, I will be at a different, outdoor, location in the seacoast area. You are invited to bundle up and join me (being physically distant and wearing a mask, of course) for a 20-minute service that will include...

- Singing of O Come All Ye Faithful (with masks on)
- Reading of the Nativity Story from Luke
- Communion with REAL BREAD AND WINE (we will have gluten free and NA options available)
- Singing of Silent Night and lighting of candles (or using glow sticks if weather dictates it).

The locations and times are shown on the poster. Please find the location nearest to you (or at the most convenient time) and join me. The only reason why we wouldn't meet would be if there is a blizzard and it is not safe to drive, therefore, come dressed appropriately.

Due to the distance between a couple of the locations, I will be arriving just before or right at our designated starting time. Also, due to some of the distances, we will need begin promptly at the top of the hour so I have ample time to get to the next service. If you traditionally arrive late on Christmas Eve and like to sneak in the back, that will not be an option for you! Please contact me if you are willing to help.

For those of you who are not able to join us at one of the locations, we will be recording our traditional Christmas Eve worship in our sanctuary and posting that on YouTube for you to watch at your convenience. The sanctuary has been with our tree and banners and all the things that make it so beautiful this time of year. That service will also consist of communion and end with the singing of Silent Night and the lighting of candles (glowsticks shouldn't be needed indoors)

Just because we can't do what we have always done does not mean that this year will be any less special. As I said at the top of this message, it will simply be different. Different is neither good nor bad. Different can be what we make of it. I am looking forward to making something good with it. I hope you are as well.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Tim



Holy Trinity Lutheran Church brings you...

CHRISTMAS EVE EVERYWHERE

Join us at a location near you!

- 5pm - Henry Law Park, Dover
- 6pm - Long Sands Beach Bathhouse
- 7pm - Prescott Park, Portsmouth
- 8pm - Hampton Beach, south end
- 9pm - Founder's Park, Exeter, NH
- 11:30pm - Holy Trinity Parking Lot

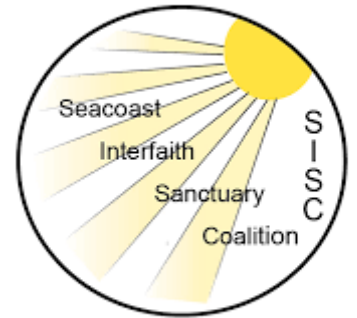
AT EACH LOCATION WE WILL...
SING A CHRISTMAS CAROL,
HEAR THE NATIVITY STORY,
SHARE COMMUNION AND
LIGHT CANDLES.

Only a blizzard will stop us!



Companioning an Immigrant

When Kurt and I joined HT, we found a church that enthusiastically supported immigrants. When the Viet Nam War ended, many of its citizens, as well as folks from Thailand, came to the States to find new lives. Holy Trinity helped in finding housing, lending financial support, collecting food and warm clothing, etc. Some of you will remember when Warren Galle led a program to aid seamen arriving in Portsmouth on the salt and oil carriers. If you walk into the BGLibrary and look up, you'll see a statue of a lion-like creature wood-sculpted by an immigrant from Croatia who used to worship with us. And for the last twenty years we've enjoyed partnering with Imanuel Indonesians.



We now have another opportunity. We've been invited by the Seacoast Interfaith Sanctuary Coalition (SISC) to "companion" a woman from Cameroon who'll be moving to Dover late December. Companioning an immigrant includes offering friendship and support through phone calls, rides to appointments, occasional food help, etc. Companionship in this case will be two-fold as we'll be sharing the responsibility with Portsmouth's Temple Israel.

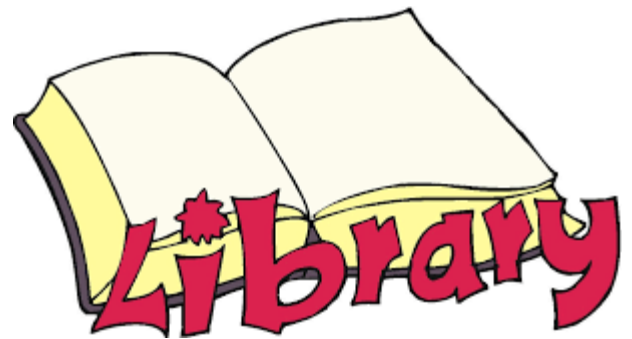
Let me tell you about our companion. Claudine arrived in the States five years ago and applied for asylum under international law. She had worked in a law office in her home country, and she was able to secure a work permit quite soon after arriving here. An immigration attorney was appointed for her, and the asylum process began. Things looked promising for her until she missed a scheduled hearing. She was arrested and spent the next four years being transferred, jail to jail, until finally ending up in the Stafford County facility. She just recently secured bond and is living temporarily in Nashua in a "safe home," that is, with a private volunteer who's opened her home to folks like Claudine. While in Nashua she's been taking classes to be certified as a legal assistant so that she can go back to work as soon as she's allowed to do so. (An immigrant on bond awaiting asylum hearing must wait a full year from bond before being granted work papers.)

When Claudine moves into her new home in Dover she'll be assigned a new attorney and once again begin the process of asylum. That's when we'll be given her full name, address, and contact information. And we can begin active companionship!

Interested? Contact Dot Kasik

BGLibrary

In these days of COVID isolation, we're all looking for interesting new ways to celebrate the season of Advent. Stations of the Nativity, a beautifully illustrated book by Patrick Kelley, offers fourteen scenes from Jesus' life as opportunities for prayer. From the Annunciation to the visits of the Wise Men, each scene offers ideas for meditation and a lesson. Each lesson brings new meaning for our present day lives. They're perfect for family activity but still meaningful for solitary reflection. A dozen copies of Stations of the Nativity are available in the Library. Feel free to pick one up for your family or as a gift to someone else.



Property Team

Some of you have asked about progress on the new fire alarm system. I have to say progress has been more meager than I had anticipated. Many of the new components (I am not sure of the percentage) have arrived and are in the basement work room, but very little equipment installation has been completed. Fortunately for the schedule, building use continues to be minimal, and we have not been pressed to get the new equipment installed for the Christmas season. I contacted our contractor to request information on their schedule for our work. Their reply stated that they were being impacted by COVID matters and were working to complete a couple of smaller jobs so they could turn their attention to our job. Hopefully, they will be getting to us soon and this work will not impact our eventual return to full building use. For now, I have no significant progress to report.

We experienced a loss of the heating system for a short time (probably less than a day) due to an electrical issue in a panel in the boiler room. Fortunately, Jim McKenna, our competent and conscientious heating system volunteer, resolved the problem quickly. In an unrelated matter, if you were in the building in November, you may have heard a regular, periodic "chirping" from the boiler room. Many of us quickly assume that this means a battery needs replaced. In this case it was our carbon monoxide detector telling us it had reached the end of its life (perhaps seven years or so) and Jim McKenna replaced this detector as well. It is interesting to note that the boiler room currently has a heat sensor which would normally be operational through the first floor portion of the fire alarm system which is not functional at this time. The new system will replace this sensor with a combination heat, smoke, carbon monoxide detector, but until then, the existing carbon monoxide detector is the only functional detector, so we did not have the luxury of waiting for the new equipment. As we say, there is always something!



The Thursday Group continues to serve in limited numbers. Recent efforts have included installation of the Advent Wreath and candles, the garlands and blue bows, and the Chrismon Tree in the Sanctuary. The last hurrah for normal grounds work, de-gassing the mowers and removing batteries, has also been completed, and some late season work on leaves, including leaf removal from gutters, has been completed. Equipment in the barn has been rearranged to suit the winter season and snow blower use as needed. It seems no matter how late we work on leaves, some remain here and there waiting for spring. As always, some normal inside cleaning work has been done as time has permitted.