

December 12, 19, & 26, 2021

The Weekly Tidings

Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

www.htelc.com

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Come Together, Grow in Faith, Serve the LORD

Holy Trinity's Annual Meeting

Holy Trinity's Annual Meeting will take place on Sunday, January 23rd following a short fellowship after the 9:30 service. At this meeting our 2021 Annual Ministry Allocation Plan will be reviewed and the 2022 Ministry Allocation Plan will be presented. In addition, an update will be presented about the work done with the Church membership and our Church Constitution. Following a discussion, votes will be taken regarding this work along with the acceptance of new Church Council members, our 2022 Ministry Allocation Plan, and who will be the representatives for the ECLA Assembly in August. In addition, an update will be given about the Transition Team's work with time allotted to ask questions.



As always, we will hold an **adult forum on Sunday, January 16th** following the 9:30am service. Digital and printed information about the topics will be available at this meeting and your participation is strongly welcomed.

At this time the Church Council is planning for an in-person Annual Meeting (last year's Annual meeting was on Zoom). Should the weather be severe the "snowdate" for our Annual meeting will be on the following Sunday, January 30th.

If you have any questions or comments please contact the Council President Cristina or Mark in the Church Office. You can also email Cristina at foggdrive@yahoo.com

Presidents Article

The words of Luke, “The voice of one crying out in the wilderness. Prepare the way for the Lord, make his paths straight” was read by Pastor Gerkin Nelson early this month and certainly helped me get into the wonder of Christmas. She spoke about the “noise” of the holiday season and other “noises” from work demands, COVID concerns, family needs, obligations, and world events. Some of us may be able to filter out the noise during the holidays so we can hear “the voice of Christmas” sift through and listen more intently and thoughtfully to be touched by Christmas joy.



Holy Trinity continues to share joy. Our worship is well attended on Youtube and in person as caring Supply Pastors bring hope and life to God’s words during this time of transition. Holy Trinity has many attendees who serve during worships, through ministries, and in the many jobs that need to be completed to maintain the workings of our Church. Our staff has kept us grounded in consistency through Mark’s worship production and the musicians and choir who lift our hearts in words and rhythm. Our Faith Formation Leader, Faith Bygd, creates an email entitled Growing In Faith Together (GIFT), which includes bible lessons, crafts, music, videos, and games for all ages and about 8 teens are attending the youth gathering in Minnesota next summer. We will come together on January 30th for our Reconciling in Christ celebration and our hard-working Transition Team meets weekly to prepare us for the CAT survey in January. As much as we would rather not hear a baby cry, the heart-melting fussing of a baby during a baptism can bring tears to some who reflect upon their own child’s entrance into God’s family. I hope you have opportunities to see, feel, or give the joy of Christmas into the season of Epiphany.

The Church Council met this week to discuss the part-time interim opportunities that have been presented by Steven Wilco, Associate to Bishop Hazelwood. Pr. Wilco will be our supply pastor next Sunday. He will hold a Q & A session about the Pastoral transition process in the sanctuary following worship. As always this will be recorded. If you are unable to attend in person, please send Mark your questions and we will do our best to have him answer them. The Church Council has also decided to make a few shifts in order to remain vigilant for the safety of as many attendees as possible. These considerations are not necessarily new to us and we hope the Congregation understands the reasons for these adjustments. Unfortunately, many systems in our Community are being challenged during this current surge. The following guidelines begin on Sunday, December 19 and will continue until case numbers decrease and significant winter weather has past.

These are the guidelines:

- We are asking attendees to enjoy our worship and do your best to move to the beautiful outdoors for fellowship conversations. Please keep 3 feet away from people outside your “pod bubble” whenever possible.
- At this time, we are suspending the indoor coffee fellowship following our worship.
- Indoor air circulation will be increased whenever possible.
- The use of masks is “highly recommended” to protect others and ourselves. New masks are available at the entrance of the Church.
- The use of communion cups (i.e., wafer and grape juice) or gluten free options will be continued.

Transition Team

Starting January 9th, the Transition Team will be seeking your help in completing the Congregation Assessment Tool, or “CAT.” This tool will help the synod to match us with a pastor, so we are asking for as much participation as possible in a timely manner. There will be a two-week window in which to complete the CAT. We thank you in advance for your participation. Feel free to contact any of the team members listed below with any questions.



- Cheryl Brigham brighamca.cc@gmail.com 603-997 9695
- Jessica Feeley j.g.feeley@gmail.com 207-227-1636
- Eileen Kackenmeister elk611@comcast.net 603-601-8167
- Jeff Morrison jeffermorr74@gmail.com 603-767-2975
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Thanking our Staff

Well, I believe some people living in and around the Seacoast area received their first hint of snow along with some bitter cold and winds this week. Lights are glowing stronger, baking supplies are sometimes sparse, and you may find yourself humming holiday music. During this time of year, we also thank our staff through the collection of a Christmas gift. Unfortunately, I made a mistake in the letter I mailed last week. I inadvertently did not include our Faith Formation Leader, Faith Bygd. Holy Trinity currently has four employed staff: Office Coordinator Mark Donahue, musicians Jon Koelker and Jonathan Bock, and Faith Bygd, Faith Formation Leader. I sincerely apologize for the oversight in not including Faith in my letter.



Contributions to the Staff Christmas Gift will be collected through January 9, 2022. If you are interested in contributing to this gift collection, there are several ways you can do so and they are listed below.

1. Send the enclosed addressed envelope with a check made out to the Church. Please include in the memo a note stating that the check is for the "Staff Christmas Gift" contribution.
2. Drop off your gift contribution at the church. You can deposit your gift contribution in the offering plate during a service or place it in the Church's office. Please call the Church should you be driving over on a day other than Sunday to make sure Mark will be at the church. 603-436-1704.
3. Use the Elexio site (the same site you may use for your offering). You can access Elexio through the Holy Trinity's website. The "Fund" dropdown shows a long list of options. One of them will be "Staff Christmas Gift."

Thank you,

Cristina Dolcino, Council President

Emergency Pastoral Care

As Holy Trinity moves through the transition toward a new Pastor, pastoral care is available for home or hospital visits, emotional support, and church ceremonies. Please contact Mark in the Church office and he will provide you with the Contact Pastor information during daytime and after work (emergencies) hours. Email office@htelc.com or call (603)436-1704.

Holy Trinity and Afghan Resettlement

What would it be like to find yourself in a strange land? You left nearly everything behind when you fled your country...Now what?

Hundreds of Afghan evacuees now arriving in New Hampshire are experiencing just this. Can you help? We hope so. Your gifts of time, money, energy, and compassion are greatly needed.

Ascentria Care Alliance in New Hampshire, along with Ascentria in Massachusetts, is the resettlement agency we'll be working with. They're developing Neighborhood Support Teams (NSTs) of 20-30 people each, one NST for each individual Afghan family. Team Seacoast is an NST being put together through Riverwoods-Durham and area churches. The members of this team will form a supportive community around our refugee family, possibly arriving as early as January. The NST's mission is to help the family restart their lives here in the US and become self-sufficient.



Groundwork has already begun. A local church, Christ Episcopal in Portsmouth, has offered its vacant parsonage to house the family, but much needs to be done before a family arrives. Still more will need to be done after their arrival. With an NST, many hands make light work!

Volunteer possibilities are numerous and varied. No matter your skills or interests, we can find something for you to do! Funds need raising. Furnishings need to be collected. Dishes, cookware, cleaning supplies, personal grooming items, baby equipment, clocks, paper, pencils.... Once the family arrives, we need drivers to help transport family members to appointments; we need schedulers to help make those appointments. Other needs include helping with budgets and fundraising and orienting the family to basic skills we take for granted: shopping and transportation, language acquisition, navigating the job market...and so much more.

Ascentria will guide and support us through the whole process. They provide volunteer training. Want to get started? Our Holy Trinity contact person is **Dot Kasik**, and she'll happily sign you up. Your first responsibility will be to go to Ascentria Care Alliance's website—www.ascentria.org—and sign up as a volunteer for Afghan resettlement.

Tanzanian Scholarships

Looking for that perfect present? For many years Holy Trinity has been providing life-changing scholarships for students in our partner community of Isimani, Tanzania. These scholarships enable these students to improve their lives and the lives of their community. The average cost for a year's education is \$450; any tax-deductible contribution is valued. Send your donation to the church office or offering plate. For more information, contact Helen Goransson or Kurt Kasik.



Homebound Visitation Ministry

If you know of someone who is homebound, or sick from our congregation, please reach out to the Church Office and we will make sure that person is visited by a member of our congregation in a timely manner.



Driving Daisies

If you know of someone in need of a ride to Church on Sunday mornings, please contact the Church Office. We want to make sure anyone who wants to attend our services has the chance to attend at least once or twice a month.



Call Process Q&A Video

Last Sunday, Rev. Steve Wilco hosted a short 12-minute Adult Forum about the Transition and Call Process, and gave us an update about when we might expect an Interim Pastor. The video is available on htelc.com on the homepage, or ask the Church Office to send it to you by email.



Property Team

I have been a member at Holy Trinity for quite a few years and have experienced more than a few opportunities. I have served on various committees and task forces and served on council. For sure, the most significant opportunities have been the many years with the contemporary choir and, later, the Property Team. For a few years I did both the choir and Property Team. I find it informative to compare the two.

The years with the choir were interesting, enjoyable, satisfying, and visible. We did a lot of original music in those years, some of it mine. I have many wonderful memories of those days serving in that role. And it was easy for me, so much so that it seemed almost unfair to think of it as a service to Holy Trinity. It was as though I was getting more than I was giving. Serving in a role that is also something we like, can be very comfortable, but perhaps not much of a challenge.



Property Team work is and always has been a totally different kind of service for me. Most of the time the work is out of sight and out of mind of the congregation. Most of us do not see Holy Trinity's property requirements as a tough task master, especially with the heavy reliance on a volunteer work force. A facility of our size requires a lot to keep it going safely and efficiently. Much, if not most, of what we do is invisible until it suddenly becomes visible. Some property needs such as non-functional toilets and failed fire alarm systems are impossible to hide. In the years when I served as an individual contributor on the Property Team, the big picture was not apparent. I just did the jobs that came my way and helped the team as best as I could. In my years as Property Team Leader, the big picture has a way of jumping out at you. Of course, the position demands dealing with many and varied details, but more importantly, the position requires skills of recruitment to gather the volunteers needed to get things done on an ongoing basis and skills of planning and organization to obtain appropriate approvals and financial resources. These aspects of the position have become increasingly difficult for me. My natural inclination is to do a task and put it behind me. It has always been easier for me to do a task than to recruit someone to do it. In the majority of cases, I still had to remain actively involved even after a volunteer came forward to take on a task.

It has become increasingly clear to me that the Property Team needs a leader with better skills of organization and recruiting. Accordingly, I have asked church council to find my replacement. It is time. Since I made this request, I was asked if the responsibilities could be distributed differently and spread out among several different folks. My response was an old razor, "When two people are in charge, no one is in charge." I also cannot help but think of a

pearl of wisdom from Admiral Rickover who famously noted, "Responsibility is a unique concept. You can share it, but your portion of it is not diminished at all."

When the new leader is found and assumes my position, I imagine I will continue to serve as an individual contributor in some capacity as my inclinations and family responsibilities allow, but I plan on far fewer trips between Madbury and Newington in any given week. I am vain enough to assume that this change will leave a vacancy for someone. So, here is an opportunity for the right person. Perhaps you are that person!

David Mercer, Property Team Leader