

October 31 and November 7 & 14, 2021

The Weekly Tidings

Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Come Together, Grow in Faith, Serve the LORD

Thanksgiving Bags

We will again be distributing 25 bags with holiday items. If you would like to help, we are looking for the following items: 25 cans of cranberry sauce, 25 pies, and 25 breads. Please email pbsirois@gmail.com or call Mark in the church office to sign up. All items are due on or before Sunday, November 21. Thank you for your continued generosity.



Toys For Tots

The holiday season is approaching and we will once again be collecting new, unwrapped toys for the Marine Corps Toys for Tots program. The collection box will be in the narthex as it has been in the past and toys can be dropped off during services or office hours. All donations must be received by December 6th for timely delivery to the Marines. A suggestion list is available near the collection box and on the website. Thank you for your generosity.



Our Covenants

One of the requirements when a Pastor leaves a congregation is the signing of two covenants. One covenant is the promise the Pastor agrees to follow and the other is what the congregation agrees to follow. This article is to summarize these covenants and in doing so, accomplishes this requirement from the Synod. The entire covenants are available from Mark in the church office. The Covenant signed by Pastor Tim (and witnessed by the vice president Judy Evans) includes the understanding that he will pray for the ongoing mission of our congregation but not be involved in any leadership, advisory, support, or consulting roles for Holy Trinity. In addition, Pastor Tim is not able to be involved with any ministerial services (e.g., weddings, funerals, visiting the sick) and will support the ministry of Holy Trinity's new pastor. The Covenant signed by the Cristina Dolcino (church council president) and witnessed by the vice president (Judy Evans) involves attendees praying for Holy Trinity and its leadership. It also states that we respect the Covenant signed by Pastor Tim and refrain from asking him to perform any ministerial services (e.g., weddings, funerals, visiting the sick). In addition, we are asked to show respect and regard for our new pastor as we seek their ministry services. In addition, to remember to celebrate what we have been and what we will be as a church.

Pastor Tim's Article: November 1, 2021

This Sunday, November 7th, is All Saints Sunday. It is a day in which we remember those who have died this past year. The way we do this is by giving you an opportunity to light a candle in their memory after you receive communion.

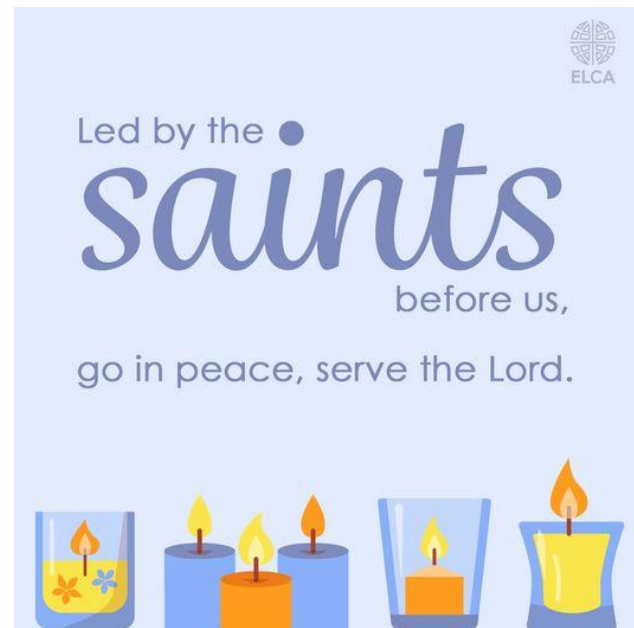
Obviously, due to the pandemic and our need to keep the services shorter to limit the amount of time that we spend indoors, we have been receiving communion in our seats using disposable communion cups. I know this is not ideal. Many people have expressed their desire to receive communion up front, near the altar, from either me or a communion assistant. I would prefer that, also. While the effectiveness of communion is not dependent on the way it is practiced, there is something sacred about receiving it personally from someone at the altar. I have appreciated the understanding that people have expressed during this time as we continue to implement practices that keep us all healthy and allow as many people as possible to feel as safe as possible. As I write this all to you, I am reminded that, concerning local ELCA churches, we are far more advanced in our worship practices during COVID than many others. As an example, Nativity Lutheran in North Conway has returned to only online services this fall.

This Sunday, we will make a one-week exception and alter what we have been doing for two reasons. First, if we are going to allow people to come forward to light a candle in memory of a loved one, we ought to allow you all to come forward for communion. Secondly, there will be three of our young ones who will be receiving their "First Communion." Some parents have asked if I would do first communion class before I go. We will be doing that this week and then this Sunday will be their first official communion. I would like to give them the experience of receiving it up front.

I know this will raise the question of "When can we return to our 'normal' communion practices?" I wish I knew the answer to that. The pandemic is still going on around us and it is necessary to implement practices that reduce the risk of spreading it when we gather together. One of the main ways to reduce the risk is to limit time spent indoors in large groups (along with wearing masks).

I look forward to this coming Sunday. It should be a sacred and special day.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Tim

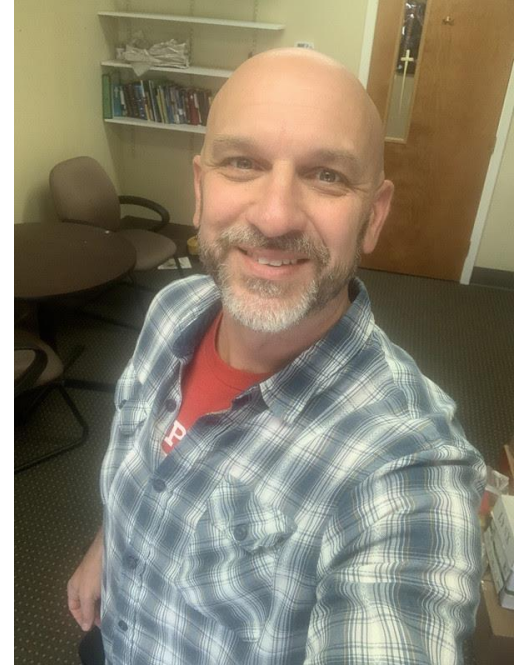


Pastor Tim's Article: November 11, 2021

Somedays I think a lot about what I wear for the day, and other days the only requirements I have is that it is cleaned and somewhat ironed. Today was a day that I stared at the clothes in my closet and thought about what I was going to wear. I settled on a casual, plaid, button down shirt. Fortunately, it was clean and not wrinkled, otherwise, I would have had to potentially woken the kids up when I opened up the ironing board with it customary "screech!"

The reason that I picked out the shirt that I am wearing, is because it is the same shirt that I wore when I met most of you for the first time. It was a Saturday in November, 2017 and I was making my second visit out to Holy Trinity. I came alone and the primary purpose was for an "official meet and greet" with the members of the church and then to preach in worship the next morning before you held a congregational meeting to call me as your pastor. For some reason, it felt fitting for me to wear the same thing on my last day "in the office" as I did for one of my first days with you.

It made me think about that Saturday and the conversations we had. During our time in the sanctuary, I remember being asked a question, "Where do you see yourself in 5 years?" In response, I said, "Let me tell you what you are really asking. The real question behind the question is, 'How long are you going to be here?'" I followed that up with, "There are no guarantees. I hope to be here until my kids are through high school and then we will re-evaluate. But I can't promise that the phone won't ring because of tragedy or with an opportunity. All I can do is promise you this. I will give you the best I have for as long as I am your pastor, even though there will be days when my best will not be very good."



Tragedy did strike my family when my brother died 3 years ago and I would be lying if I didn't admit that we had serious thoughts about moving back to the Midwest then. But we didn't want to put our kids through another transition as we were still transitioning from the current move.

Opportunity called this past summer when I saw a new position with Lutheran World Relief. As I read about it, it was an opportunity that I found enticing and exciting and decided pursue it. Over the next couple of months, it went from possibility to reality and, as you know, on Monday of next week, I begin that opportunity with them to raise money to help end global poverty.

A question I was asked during that interview process was, "Where do you see yourself in 5 years?" I gave a very similar answer. "There are no guarantees. I have hopes for how this will turn out, but I can't promise the phone won't ring and bring tragedy or opportunity. I only promise you I will give you my best for as long as I am with you."

The more I think about that, the more I like that answer and I think that is the answer or response that God wants for us and from us. There are no guarantees in life. As we all have learned, life is fragile and can change in a blink of an eye. I don't like the saying, "If you want to make God laugh, tell God your plans," because that

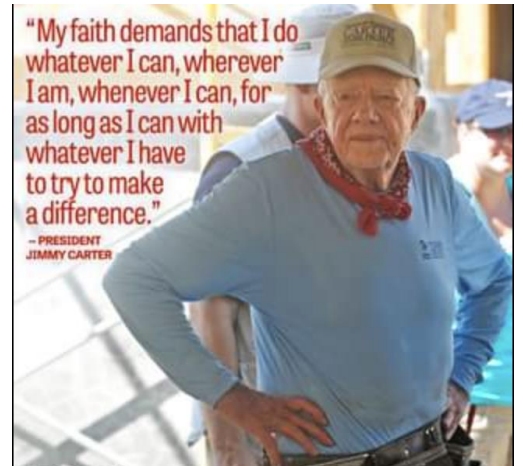
makes it sound like God is just somewhere toying with us and finding amusement in our frustrations as God decides and manipulates our lives. Rather, I think "God's plans" for our lives are simply to do the best we can with what we have. It actually reminds me of a great quote/meme of former President Jimmy Carter.

"My faith demands that I do all that I can, wherever I am, whenever I can, for as long as I can with whatever I have to try and make a difference."

I think that is good advice for all of us. There is a lot of uncertainty in the world and in our lives. I don't know the future. None of us do. There is so much out of my control and I am learning to be fine with that. Instead, may we control what we can control and do the best that we can with whatever that is...remembering that at times it won't be very good!

Grace and Peace,

Pastor (for this last time) Tim



End 68 Hours of Hunger

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church has a team that packs food for the program 'End 68 Hours of Hunger' for the Portsmouth schools. This program provides food for children in need that sustains them for the weekend when school is not in session. Kathy McKenna and Lauren Gianino are the Team Coordinators for our church. Our team is responsible for packing food bags for children on 7 Thursdays throughout the school year. We pack at the First United Methodist Church, 129 Miller Ave. Portsmouth and we meet at 6pm. Depending on the number of volunteers, it takes between 45 minutes to an hour to pack 70-90 bags.

End 68 HOH Scheduled Packing Dates for HTELC 2021-2022

- Dec. 16
- Jan. 27
- Mar. 10
- Apr. 14
- May 26



This school year we are welcoming back volunteers! If you are interested in joining our team please email us (mckenna.kathy.62@gmail.com) or Lauren Gianino(pglg813@comcast.net). *****Due to covid safety concerns we are requiring that all volunteers be vaccinated and masked.** Let us know if you have any questions.

Kathy McKenna & Lauren Gianino

President's Article

Wow! What a ride it has been from Pastor's very first children's sermon! Does anyone else remember seeing shaving cream in front of the altar?

Over the past four years of Pastor Tim Krick's pastoral leadership at Holy Trinity, I believe our Church has deepened our faith through his words, passion, and fortitude.

Through his words...

He helped us gain an understanding when considering the (Go ahead, say it.) "context, context, context" of a scripture's historical elements. Pastor's words challenged us to reflect on how we could more actively live out our faith by highlighting the ways we can address our community needs.



We appreciated the engaging activities that Pastor delivered in sermons. This helped us each hold a mirror to ourselves for reflection which lead to further reading and dialogue far after the benediction was delivered.

We savored the peaceful mid-week service, Bible Study group, conversations over coffee, different classes/forums of faith instruction, and discussions that encouraged us to listen and gain new perspectives which helped us "soften" any misguided beliefs we were harboring.

We felt the magic when we listened to the children's honest, insightful, and joyful responses during the children's sermon. This also brought smiles, insight, and hope for us not sitting on the carpet.

Through his passions...

We gained a better understanding of diverse communities who we may not regularly intersect our daily life. Pastor's intentional work in the Reconciling in Christ process provided us with the opportunity to learn about the challenges and inequities people who identify as being in the LGBTQIA+ community.

We gained awareness of the importance to earnestly listen, ask questions, empathize, discuss, and adjust our understanding of complicated and sensitive topics.

We continued to financially support and participate in local and international ministries which provides different avenues for Holy Trinity to serve people living in situations of housing or food insecurity. Yes, Pastor's departure brings us significant change after already experiencing months of pandemic concerns, yet we are also sending out his "gifts" of engagement, personal connection, and teaching to a far bigger community in need through his work with Lutheran World Relief.

We practiced living through awkward, unfamiliar, or unpredictable discussions and experiences because we were reminded we are a Christian first and we are capable of doing what we can now to love our neighbors.

Through his fortitude...

Pastor provided Holy Trinity with a steadfast presence, diverse engagement, and loving concern through these ongoing months during the Pandemic. Despite being physically out of our Church, he helped us to remain grounded in the presence of God due to Pastor's pastoral fortitude.

After months of online service, we understand that a vibrant church doesn't have to be a traditional church setting. During the most challenging times of the Pandemic, Pastor's vision provided experiences that helped to improve feelings of isolation and generated spiritual engagement.

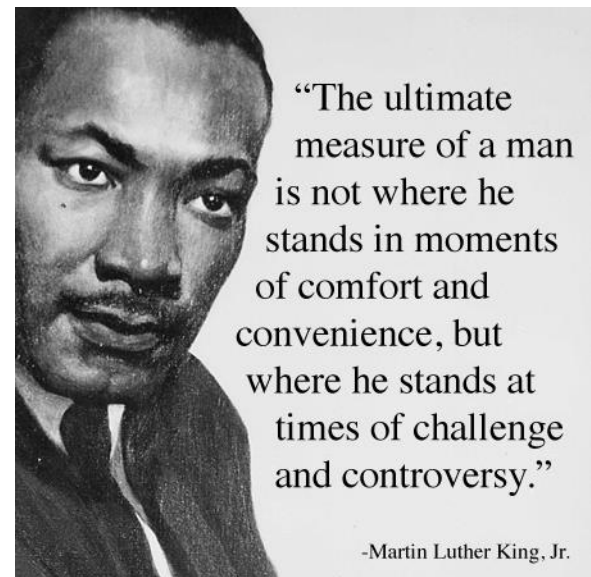
We felt comforted and energized by the people we saw on Zoom when attending online services. The participation of individuals and families to read, sing, share faith stories, chat together in breakout rooms, or Adult Forums was a magnificent dance of creativity and collaboration by Pastor, Mark Donahue, our musicians, and others.

One of my close friend's favorite quote is by Martin Luther King is one you have probably heard. "The ultimate measure of a person* is not where they* stand in moments of comfort and convenience, but where they* stand at times of challenge and controversy."

Christians understand that when we are given opportunities or choices, we are told to do what is right for those who happen to be living without a voice. A voice that may need resources, knowledge, mental or physical health, or just some plain "old" good luck." For reasons that you can obviously fill in, our Church Community finds itself in challenging and controversial times which makes it more important than ever to live through the lens of a compassionate Christian.

Let us keep God's grace close as we make decisions of how we prioritize our time, energy, gifts, and financial support. Breathe in patience and an open heart as Holy Trinity moves through discernment and ask for your participation in the many months ahead. Let us live in the present and not let our concerns, worries, big aspirations, or expectations take over what we can do right now in our community and World as a caring, vibrant, and inclusive Church.

(*The words "man" and "he" were replaced by "person" and "they.")



Property Team

I once wrote a song that starts, "I know there is a reason, a time for every season, every year the summer turns to fall. October from September, then will come November, won't be long before the winter calls." And isn't that the truth! It is easy to forget those hot, sticky days of summer when some of us give some thought to what it might take to air condition our Sanctuary! Then come those crisp nights and not-so-warm days when thoughts swing around to the cold and the heating system. There is an old New England saying which is, more or less ... "On January's last day, if you have half your wood and half your hay, you can make it safely through to May". We don't have to worry about wood heat or hay for animal feed, but there is wisdom in getting ready for what is to come. This year we had reason to keep the heating system in mind. First, we (by "we" I mean our ubiquitous heating system super-volunteer, Jim McKenna) discovered there was an electrical issue with our new fire alarm system that caused our heating system to shut down anytime the thermostat in the Sanctuary called for heat. That probably sounds like a strange interconnection between these two seemingly unrelated systems, but fact is, the fire safety code requires the heating system boilers to be shut down in some situations, so some interconnection between systems is normal. Jim worked with our fire alarm contractor to get this issue resolved and it has been fixed. I have mentioned before that we had another fire alarm issue impacting our heating system. During the installation of the new system, a drilling operation accidentally punctured one of our heating system water lines, and we had to take half of the heating system capacity for the Sanctuary out of service until the line could be repaired. Again, Jim to the rescue! He was able to retain the services of the contractor who installed these heating lines and worked with them to repair the line and put it back into service. The next time you see Jim, give him a big thank-you-well-done. We are so fortunate to have him and his abilities. At this point, all is well. As I said, the heat is on!



On the subject of Property Team volunteers, we have two more members. Roberta (Bobby) Febbo is our newest member, and June Slipp, a charter member of the Thursday Morning Group who served on the group for many years, has returned again. Welcome to Bobby and welcome back June. It is great to have you both!

You probably have noticed that the tent is gone. Recent wind and rain activity took it down in a disorganized and disheveled manner, but nothing was broken or damaged. We gathered it up and put it away for the winter. It will be back in the spring and ready to go again.

The window air conditioners have been removed and put into storage, a seasonal ritual for the Thursday Group. Another seasonal ritual, window washing, is in progress. We try to get this done spring and fall. We hope to get the outside windows done as well before the seasonal cold forces us inside.

We have also been actively working on the autumn leaves (.."as they tumble from the trees" as my song goes on to say) and doing some other cleanup work on the grounds. Because of the many different varieties of trees, our leaves tend to fall over a period of several weeks, so we are cleaning up some while we are actively

mowing grass and continue to pick up leaves into the colder days when the grass no longer needs to be cut. The good side of all of this is we get to spread out the work on leaves over a long period of time, so it stays within the capabilities of our relative small number of volunteers. Typically, it is not practical to hold off picking up leaves until most or all have fallen, so it can be tough to try to schedule a one-day, large group leaf cleanup event.

We recently experienced another case of water on the basement floor. The problem occurs only when we have had substantial rainfall for a long period of time. Several years ago, we removed some winter ice-damaged rain gutters from the area to the right of the main entrance to the building. In periods of heavy rain fall, water builds up along the foundation in that area and eventually finds its way into the basement. I am aware of the entry point and am seeking a resolution. The first step will be to replace the missing rain gutters so we can minimize the water buildup along the foundation. A resolution to the water entry point may be more difficult and potentially expensive. The problem does not typically involve a lot of water (perhaps 5 or 10 gallons for a given episode), but it is enough to damage items stored on the floor and can present a slip hazard to those who are unaware of casual water on the floor. Please be aware of this possibility when we have periods of heavy rain.

Dave Mercer, Property Team Leader

Healthy Transitions Update

Even as we say farewell and Godspeed to Pastor Tim and we give thanks to God for his time with us, we are already embarking on a time of transition. Healthy Transitions is the term used by the Synod when a Pastor moves on from a congregation to another ministerial service. This transition process as outlined by the Synod includes a number of activities and events that will provide the foundation to guide the call committee when they begin the work of identifying and interviewing pastoral candidates.

The first step is the formation of the Transitions Team that will oversee the transition process over the next 8 to 10 months. The goal of the council is that the Transitions Team will be in place before Thanksgiving – an ambitious goal, but possible. The first task of the Transitions Team will be to distribute to all Holy Trinity members and friends the Congregational Assessment Tool (CAT). The CAT is an online (or paper) congregation-wide survey that provides an in-depth look at the experiences, perceptions, and aspirations of Holy Trinity. Even though many of you remember completing this survey several years back, and several years before that, it is very important that we try to identify how we have changed and how our congregation is trending. Rolling out this survey to the Congregation will hopefully begin in December and continue into January. From the information provided to the Council by Pastor Steve Wilco (an Associate to the Bishop and out guide during this time) it is important for us to begin the CAT sooner rather than later. Pastor Wilco will be here at Holy Trinity on Sunday, December 19th to serve as our Supply Pastor! He will also be meeting with the Congregation following this service to explain the Transition and Call Processes.

Pastor Tim has graciously completed the roster of supply pastors for worship for all Sundays through the end of the year, as well as for Christmas Eve. Some of them are familiar to us, some may be new faces. We humbly ask all to pray for our Transition Team members, those who will prepare the call document, and Call Committee, and the Council as we all work to discern God's path for our church.