

September 25 & October 2 & 9, 2022

The Weekly Tidings

Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

www.htelc.com

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

office@htelc.com

Come Together, Grow in Faith, Serve the LORD

Call Committee Notice

The Call Committee met with our Synod Representative, Steve Wilco on 9/26/22. Steve reviewed the process and responsibilities of the Call Committee with us. Since then the committee has started to formulate interview questions for our candidate. We invite the congregation to submit questions as well in writing to our chairperson, Dick Topping, by sending him an email at rtopping@rftopping.com. We also ask you to include us in your prayers as we begin this process of discerning God's next steps in our Christian walk as a church. Thank you.



God's Work Our Hands

On October 23, we have an off-site event scheduled at 1:00. Operation Blessing needs to get their warming building prepped for the winter season. This structure is used for homeless people to sleep when the temperature falls below 20F. The chores include vacuuming floors, cleaning windows, making up the beds and cleaning the Plexiglas partitions. There is also a coffee bar that will need to be set up. It is hoped that we will have enough help to complete this task in less than 2 hours. (As an aside, the Pats are on MNF that week!) A signup sheet at the welcoming table in the Narthex. Please help in any way that you can!



Pastor Luther's Article: September 29, 2022

It was wonderful to be back at Holy Trinity this past Sunday for worship, to reconnect yesterday with our Wednesday bible study group, and to once again be working alongside your faithful Ministry and Office Coordinator, Mark Donahue. I look forward to being with you all these coming months.

In my Episcopal tradition, the first Sunday of October is often set aside to honor St. Francis and to celebrate the gift of Creation which Francis loved so much. So, I hope you will indulge me this coming Sunday as we do just that at Holy Trinity. In place of the usual lectionary readings for the Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost, we will instead read the lessons and sing some of the hymns suggested for the Feast of St. Francis.

I don't know about you, but I feel a desperate need in these fragile times to be in the company of holy women and holy men. For saints, even in the midst of darkness, have a way of reminding us that God's light will not be extinguished but continues to shine in the lives of faithful folk around the world. And certainly, St. Francis remains an inspiring example of what the Christian life at its best can look like.



St. Francis, pray for us

One of my favorite reflections on saints is from the writer Frederick Buechner (who died just a few months ago) in his book *Wishful Thinking*. This is what Buechner says about saints: *"In his holy flirtation with the world, God occasionally drops a pocket handkerchief. These handkerchiefs are called saints."*

Many people think of saints as plaster saints, men and women of such paralyzing virtue that they never thought a nasty thought or did an evil deed their whole lives long. As far as I know, real saints never even come close to characterizing themselves that way. On the contrary, no less a saint than Saint Paul wrote to Timothy, 'I am foremost among sinners' (I Timothy 1:15). In other words, the feet of saints are as much of clay as everybody else's, and their sainthood consists less of what they have done than of what God has for some reason chosen to do through them. When you consider that Saint Mary Magdalene was possessed by seven devils, that Saint Augustine prayed, 'Give me chastity and continence, but not now,' that Saint Francis started out as a high-living young dude in downtown Assisi, and that Saint Simeon Stylites

spent years on top of a sixty-foot pillar, you figure that maybe there's nobody God can't use as a means of grace, including even ourselves.

The Holy Spirit has been called 'the Lord, the giver of life' and, drawing their power from that source, saints are essentially life-givers. To be with them is, in a phrase, to become more alive."

In the short time I have been at Holy Trinity, it has become abundantly clear to me that in this church I am in the midst many, many life-giving saints. Thank you for inviting me into your beloved community. Together, with God's help, and with holy witnesses like St. Francis, we will get through these challenging times!

Finally, I would be remiss if I concluded these remarks on St. Francis without offering the great prayer attributed to him:

Lord, make us instruments of your peace: where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy.

O Holy One, grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console, to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

Blessings,
Luther

College Care Packages

We are collecting names of college students for the annual College Care Christmas Packages. Please send the name and school address of your student to Bobbie Febbo via text or phone call (401-430-5575) or via email (bobbiefebbo123@gmail.com). Also, indicate if your student is on a semester or trimester term and the date this term ends. Please respond by November 1 so that we can prepare for mailing on the Monday after Thanksgiving. Include your contact info in case we need to clarify any information with you. A donation box will be in the Gathering Area from November 6 to November 20. Please help us to fill these packages with goodies for our college students.



Pastor Luther's Article: October 6, 2022

For many years, as you know, I was a chaplain to an elementary school and one of my tasks was to teach young children about prayer. God knows, we all need help in learning how to pray. In order to make things as simple as possible for my students, I borrowed a clever trick I learned from a Reform rabbi (Marc Gellman) and a Christian writer (Annie Lamott), both of whom teach that prayer really comes down to four simple words: Wow! Thanks! Oops! Gimme!

“Wow!” is that part of prayer in which we express our wonder at the world and everything in it. Prayer is praise and celebration. Too often we just drift through our daily lives failing to notice the miracles right under our noses. The beauty of a sunrise; the extraordinary complexity of the bodies we inhabit; the agility of the minds we rely on each and every minute of the day; the vastness of this universe of billions and billions of galaxies. “Wow” is the only apt response.



“Thanks!” is that part of prayer that remembers that all of life is a gift. We did nothing to deserve this. Why was I born to loving parents of means while others live as orphans in poverty? Why do I have an abundance of food in my house while others go hungry? Why am I surrounded by caring friends when others live lives of quiet and lonely desperation? I don't know the answers to these questions, and I suspect you don't either. But I do know that the answer to them is not because we did something to deserve these gifts. Gratitude is the only apt response to the giftedness of life, and that is why prayer always includes “Thanks!”

“Oops!” is that part of prayer in which we admit our mistakes. We're not perfect. No one is. We all have faults. We all have dark corners in our lives, shadowy places we would just as soon not acknowledge. We needn't beat ourselves up about these flaws or our failures, but we are asked to be honest about them. Indeed, the surest way to be free of the burden of our mistakes is to name them, offer them up to God's mercy, and then to rejoice in the extraordinary fact that God will always forgive the contrite. If you're old-fashioned, you can call it “confession,” but “Oops” will do just fine.

“Gimme!” is that part of prayer in which we ask for things. It comes at the end of prayer for a reason. Only after saying our “wows” of wonder at everything God has created, only after giving thanks for all the gifts of this life to which we can claim no credit, and only after humbly owning up to the ways in which we have fallen short and made a mess of our lives, do we dare ask for help. But we needn't feel ashamed about asking. For part of the wonder of God is that, like a mother, God wants nothing more than to know our deepest desires and needs and He invites us to share them in prayer. And so, we ask. At first, as we start out in the practice of prayer, it is natural to ask for ourselves. But then something remarkable happens. As we mature in the life of prayer, and grow in our relationship with God, our asking takes on a new character. We find that we ask less and less for ourselves, and more for those around us. For this is the direction that prayer leads: it takes us out of ourselves and into the world. In true prayer, we lose our own self-absorbed identity and are taken up into the mysterious outpouring of love that God holds for all humanity and all creation.

Wow. Thanks. Oops. Gimme. Try it some time. You needn't worry about fancy language, sounding sanctimonious, or impressing anybody with your eloquence. Just be yourself. Tell God: Wow, I can't believe what you've created. Thanks for all I have. Oops, I'm sorry for the mess I've made of what you've given me. And please gimme help ... give me and the world what we need to do your work in this trouble world, all for your love's sake. Amen.

Baptism

Baptized into Christ on Sunday, October 9 is Sophia MacDonald, daughter of Elisabeth Bismark and Christopher MacDonald.

Upcoming Adult Forums at Holy Trinity

After worship next Sunday, October 16, Pastor Luther will lead an Adult Forum on the subject “What is the Church?”. We will hold another Adult Forum on Sunday, October 30 titled, “Faith and Politics”. Both Adult Forums will be recorded and posted to our YouTube channel the following Monday.



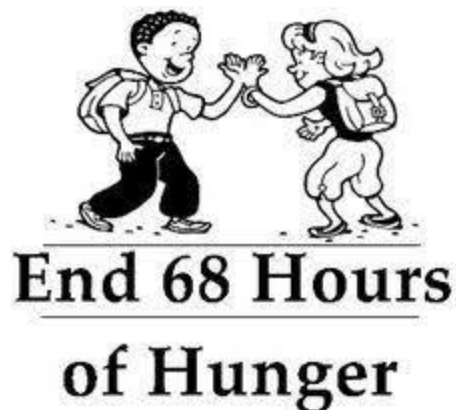
End 68 Hours of Hunger

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 6 Thursdays and 1 Wednesday 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 around 45 minutes to pack 60-80 bags.

End 68 HOH Scheduled Packing Dates for HTELC 2022-2023

- Nov. 9 (Wednesday)
- Dec. 15
- Jan. 26
- Mar. 9
- Apr. 13
- June 1



We welcome all volunteers! If you are interested in joining our team please email us (mckenna.kathy.62@gmail.com) or Lauren Gianino(pglg813@comcast.net). Let us know if you have any questions.

Kathy McKenna & Lauren Gianino

Stewardship envelopes

Our pledge campaign has begun, and your packet was sent in the mail last week, including a pledge card. Please place your completed pledge card in with your offering. Extra pledge cards are found on the table near the bulletins, and spare stewardship packets are available in the church office.

All Saints Sunday

We hold in remembrance those who have lived and died in the faith this past year. Please talk to Mark Donahue, or email the church office if you have a name you would like remembered in the Prayer of the Church on Sunday, November 6.



PRAYER CONCERNS

Health Issues: Franklyn Vosburg, Jerry Schock, Pastor Linn Opderbecke, Alice Peterson, George Parseghian, Sarah Meier, Judy Hollister, Marilee Clark, Don Gindlesperger, Steve Bush, Joyce Rivoire, Richard Anderson, Yvonne Topping, Dave Smith, Larry Sanders.

Homebound: Carol Saufley, Edith Rowan, Barbara Werdelin, Ron Evers, Dave & Joyce Rivoire, Anita Lindstrom.

Military: Josh Bretz, Matthew Hanrahan, Brendan Podszus, Jacob Schankis, Jessica Chabot.

Friends: Martha LaPerle (Betty King's friend), Cinda DeWerff (Rich Wilcox's sister), Evertt Thorne (Rich Wilcox's friend), Sage Pirnie (Jessica Feeley's friend's grandchild), Christine Karmen (Joan Bauer & Stephanie Goupil's friend), Anita Creager (Jill & Jerry Schock's friend), Susan Fischer (Lois Kfoury's cousin), Katy and Sherry (Shirley Jackson's daughter and sister).

Prayers will be listed for 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.