



HOLY TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A LOOK AT 50 YEARS

Below is the story of how Holy Trinity Lutheran Church began, written by Harold Lee.

Our Prayers Were Answered

Me and my family arrived November 1955. I signed in at Pease Air Force Base and settled in. We searched for a church and didn't find any Lutheran churches for 55 miles: one in Peabody, Massachusetts, Concord, New Hampshire and Portland, Maine. We attended four churches and we didn't get turned on. It was not friendly. They did not greet us or shake hands. We asked the Lord for help.

We went to Portsmouth and we passed by the Baptist Church. I told Mama the we were going there Sunday. She said, "Dad? Not a Baptist Church!" and I said, "I bet they worship the same God we do". She said, "Alright." so we went.

The friendliness was overwhelming. We couldn't asked for a better sermon. We attended for months. Then I met a guy, Airmen Zeller, from Illinois. He said, "Where are you from? Down south?" I said, "I'm from Wisconsin. Are you Lutheran?" He said, "Yes, are you?" I said yes and I invited him to my home. We had supper and Mama's cooking got him. We decided to write a letter to the Lutheran Synod for help. They sent a young fellow that was not ordained and he helped us to get organized and see how many people we could contact to start. He surveyed the off-base people and Airmen Zeller and I surveyed the on-base people from Pennsylvania, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota and a lot more. We went through the whole card file.

Our meeting in the base chapel was our last meeting before he returned to Illinois. We had good luck because Chapman Emerson showed up and told us he was a Lutheran.

We started to hold services at the chapel on base. On the first Sunday, only seven people showed up: a couple from Wisconsin, and my family. The

sermon was about a farmer who had a load of hay. Only seven cows showed up so he did not give them the whole load of hay. Chaplain Emerson said that was what he was going to do today. Only seven showed up.

We had five services at the base chapel and decided we had to go off base. We contacted the Baptist minister in Portsmouth and asked him if we could rent the little chapel. He said he would see what he could do. When he called me back, he said, "No." to the renting and said we could use it for free.

Around August 1956, we met in the Baptist Chapel. At the first Sunday service, I counted thirteen in attendance. The second Sunday there were twenty seven and thirty five at the third. We continued to grow until we outgrew the chapel.

Reuben Edin, a local businessman, was a good organizer. We held meetings and decided to go in search of land. We found some and Mr. Edin and Mr. Heinse and I went to meet a farmer in Newington. We struck a deal for the land. It was \$9,000.00 for the three acres in September 1957. I am getting ahead of myself.

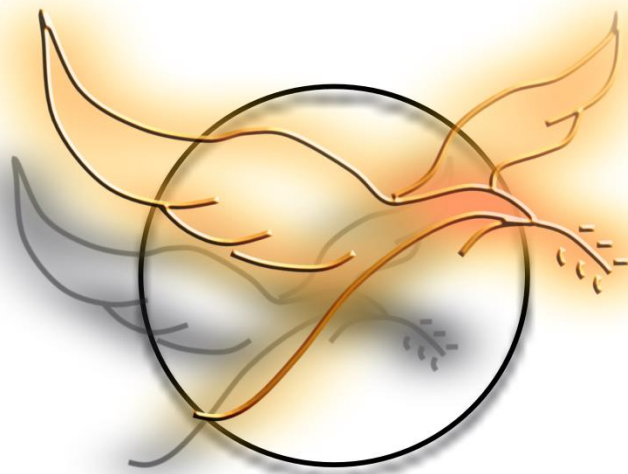
In the meantime, Dr. H. Allison Linne arrived from the Board of Missions to take over the preaching and organize the work of the Lord. We also moved our church services to the Wentworth Acres School in Portsmouth. That is when we started to search for land.

In the fall of 1958 we broke ground for our new church. I remember that day. We had a builder but many from our church helped the builder.

In the spring of 1959, we dedicated our church and held our first service. Pastor Linne presided over the service and it kept growing. We had to build an extension on what we started with three times. God sent us good ministers to guide us. I was privileged to serve in all kinds of positions. It is still growing. God blessed us for fifty three years. Our prayers were answered.

Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

A Look at 50 Years



“A Half Century Behind Us – An Eternity Ahead of Us”

Dedication

Webster's Dictionary defines a literary dedication as a "tribute to a person or cause." This book is the fruit of efforts made through faith and for the purposes of faith. This dedication begins, then, at the beginning: as a tribute to God's cause on this earth, the saving grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

God's message of grace, of course, is carried out by the Holy Spirit working through people. And so, this dedication is also a tribute to founding members of Holy Trinity, Harold and Shirley Lee. We are ever thankful that God touched the hearts and guided the actions of Harold and Shirley. We are also thankful that He brought to our doorstep members and pastors committed to continuing Harold and Shirley's work over the years. Some of these individuals stayed only a short time, while others came and made Holy Trinity their church home. Each and every one of them contributed in some way to the Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church that exists today. We thank all of you for your dedication to and loving support of our wellbeing and spiritual growth throughout the past fifty years.

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Introduction

As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of our church, we seek to gain both a spiritual and historical perspective on the events that have guided the growth of Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church into the new millennium. Our job as Christians is to work tirelessly in defining and carrying out the mission of the Holy Spirit and witnessing to the Gospel. We hope that the historical account in [*Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church - A Look at 50 Years*] will help us understand where we are and give guidance to our role as Christians in the future of our community.

Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church was formed in the middle 1950's in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Its roots are firmly planted in the Cold War and in the military economy of the local region. The Pease Air Force Base, a bomber base first conceived in 1951 and begun in 1954, was built as a direct response to the Soviet threat. Likewise, the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, which had been central to the economic life of the region during both the Second World War and the Korean War, continued to prosper during the Cold War. By the mid-1950's, Portsmouth had become a military town and the local population had grown significantly. Holy Trinity was formed primarily as a response to the desire of Lutheran military personnel in the area for a local Lutheran church. The rapid growth of the church during the late 1980's and early 1990's, however, a period when the military population of the area was fast disappearing, suggested that there was an intrinsic place for our kind of church among the civilian population of the seacoast as well. Our experience here at Holy Trinity in the first decade of the new millennium has confirmed this, and further reassures us of Holy Trinity's enduring purpose and place in our community.

Part I of this history of our congregation begins with a review of what was happening during 1955. This review should allow the reader to put the roots of the church into an historical context. Much of the discussion of life in the 1950's will bring back memories to those of us who are old enough to have experienced it, and may open up a new world to younger readers. Part I continues with a chronicling of the formation of our church and its first years.

Part II takes us through the life of the church during the four decades of the 1960's through 1990's, a time of growth and outreach.

Finally, Part III provides a glimpse of the events and many continuing activities at Holy Trinity in the new millennium.

Part I

Planting a Church: 1955-1958

*"But he that received seed into the good ground is he
that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which
also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an
hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."*

- Matthew 13:23



The Fertile Field: National and Local Life in 1955

This examination of 1955, developed through a careful reading of the Portsmouth Herald, provides a picture of life on the seacoast and a preview of the changes that were to come. It reflects, first of all, the two major public issues that overshadowed everything else: jobs in the local economy and a concern for national security, issues that remain at the forefront of public life today. Secondly, it describes local and state political issues, recreation, and a variety of trivia which will add flavor and interest to the picture of 1955.

Early in 1955, employment level changes were in the news for three major local employers. First, Simplex Wire & Cable Company, which had opened in Newington in 1953, procured the contract to produce nearly 2,000 miles of copper cable for the first Trans-Atlantic phone line. The additional work manufacturing the cable, which was to contain 2,700 tons of copper, was expected to double Simplex employment

from 250 to 500 people. Second, Senator Styles Bridges announced that six civil service jobs were opening at the Pease Air Force Base, which had been under construction for about six months.

These six jobs were to be the first of about 450 permanent civilian jobs and 5,000 to 6,000 military jobs on the base.

Though in general these events created an optimistic employment outlook at the beginning of 1955, there was bad news from the shipyard. The Navy was predicting a cutback from 7,600 civilian employees to 6,900.



Pease Air Force Base, Illustration by William Paarlberg

The cloud on the shipyard horizon, however, quickly disappeared for two reasons. The nuclear submarine *Nautilus* began sea trials in January 1955 and proved to be fantastically successful. The shipyard was ushered into the atomic age in August by winning the contract to build an atomic submarine, even as it was finishing the construction of several conventionally powered submarines including the *Sailfish*, which was launched in September. Additionally, the shipyard received the contract to repair the Coast Guard cutter *Eastwind*, which had caught fire while tied to a dock in Boston. The badly listing ship arrived at Portsmouth under its own power in March and provided welcome additional jobs throughout the summer.



Portsmouth Naval Shipyard

The Air Force Base construction resulted in employment for hundreds of workers during the year. Early in May, the laborers received a raise from \$2 to \$2.10 per hour. Later that month, the carpenters went on strike for more pay, a strike that stopped all work at the base for a week.

The Cold War was at its height in 1955. Anyone who read the newspaper, listened to the radio, or watched television could not help but be aware of the threat of the Communist menace. The year began with a shooting war in the Formosa Strait between the Chinese Nationalists and Communists. Chaing Kai-shek was determined to hold the island of Quemoy, and expected American aid. In January, the U.S. Seventh Fleet was stationed in the area, and Senator Styles Bridges of New Hampshire assured the Chinese Nationalists that America would fight for them. Every few weeks atomic bombs were tested in Nevada. The Korean War had been over less than two years and American flyers captured by the Chinese Communists were being released every couple of months. In June, the Soviets shot down an American Navy patrol plane off the coast of Alaska. President Eisenhower went to Geneva in July for a Big Four summit meeting, with the unification of Germany at the top of the agenda. Bulganin

had succeeded Malenkov as Soviet Leader and Krushchev was waiting in the wings. In August, four Israelis were killed and ten were wounded by Arab terrorists in the Gaza strip. Most ominously, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles assured the government of Vietnam U.S. support if the Communists attacked.

Because of the presence of the shipyard and the Air Force Base, all of these momentous international developments directly affected the seacoast communities. It was clear that more and more people would be coming to the Portsmouth area. For this growing seacoast population, national concerns were accompanied by pressing local issues in Portsmouth. Such issues included parking, schools, and the redevelopment of the South End. During 1955, the city acquired the land for its current municipal parking lot at the end of the Memorial Bridge and the municipal garage downtown. In June, there was concern that the Air Force base would increase the school population by 5,500 students. Several days after the initial discussion in the newspaper, Lt. Col. Andreas A. Andeae (who would later be a member of Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church) clarified the figures. He stated that there would be no more than 1,500 new students. However, this still represented a 40% increase in the local student body. During 1955, the newspapers were full of ideas, plans, and drama relating to the South End Urban Renewal.

A terrible disease, Polio, was on everyone's mind during 1955. In January, local mothers held in Portsmouth a "Mother's March" against polio. By April, plans were made to inoculate school children with the newly developed Salk vaccine. In the face of public concern over dangers accompanying the vaccine, the U.S. Surgeon General made assurances that the vaccine was safe. Finally, the inoculations were completed, but isolated reports of polio cases continued throughout the summer.

New Hampshire state politics seemed no different in 1955 than they are now. In June, the legislature killed a sales tax proposal. In July, Governor Lane Dwinell signed legislation repealing the 50-cent bounty on porcupines. In August, the governor vetoed a bill calling for a New Hampshire State Lottery.

Entertainment for tourists constituted a large segment of the local economy during the 1950's. In June 1955, Bill Haley and the Comets appeared at the Hampton Beach Casino. Guy Lombardo performed there later in the summer. Also at Hampton Beach was the Ferncroft Bowling Alley, with automatic pinsetters – state of the art technology. At York Beach there was dancing every Saturday night at the York Beach Casino.

Other forms of entertainment in 1955 included movies, radio, and television. Drive-ins were very popular. They were located in Kittery, Newington, North Hampton, and on the Dover-Rochester Road. Movies that played during 1955 included Huphrey Bogart and Ava Gardener in “The Barefoot Contessa”, and “Soldiers of Fortune” with Clark Gable and Susan Hayward. TV shows included *Face the Nation*, *Meet the Press*, *Ozzie and Harriet*, *Gunsmoke*, *Our Miss Brooks*, and on Sunday Evenings at 7:30 on WNACV, *The Lutheran Hour*.

Baseball was popular and 1955 was a heartbreaker for the Red Sox. The team, managed by Pinky Higgins, was only three games out of first place at the beginning of September. One newspaper article referred to the “pennant fever” that was gripping the seacoast. But when the season ended a month later, the Red Sox were down by 11 games. The Brooklyn Dodgers beat the Yankees four games to three in the World Series.

Other miscellaneous information from 1955 gives flavor to that year: Morell's bacon sold for 39 cents per pound at the Pic N Pay; you could buy a 2 -door Buick Special for \$2,388.88; Athertons was selling Kelvinator spinner washers for \$189.95; the New Hampshire State Police started using radar to catch speeders; the Air Police joined the Shore Police in policing Portsmouth's streets in June; local lobstermen complained about Navy restrictions on where they could put their traps; and the Atoms for Peace conference, which was held in Geneva in August, reported that nuclear-generated electricity would be so cheap that with-in twenty years houses would no longer need electric meters.

Planting the Seed of a New Church (1955-56)

Though the 1950's were troubled times, people had the courage and faith to proceed in the risky venture of church planting. They saw the need to create an institution that would be God's instrument and witness in the seacoast area, and went ahead with the plan.

One of our charter members, Harold Lee, arrived at Pease Air Base in November of 1955. He was immediately concerned that the closest Lutheran churches were more than fifty miles away in Concord and Manchester. Lee soon met Airman Darwin Zeller and discovered that he was also a Lutheran. Lee and Zeller started looking through base personnel files trying to find and make contact with other Lutherans who might be interested in starting a church. This was not an easy task because most Lutheran Air Force personnel were designated as Protestant in the files. So Lee and Zeller ended up contacting people with German or Scandinavian names who came from such states as Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Pennsylvania.

In February of 1956, the Lees wrote to the Augustana Lutheran Church asking for assistance in researching the possibility of starting a Lutheran church in the Ports-mouth area. In July of 1956, Mr. Carl Towley, a student intern from Augustana Seminary in Rock Island, Illinois, arrived in Portsmouth to begin a study of the area. During one of the meetings between Zeller, Lee, and Towley at the base chaplain's office, a new chaplain named Stanley Emerson walked in and introduced himself to the Roman Catholic chaplain who was in the room at the time. The three overheard Chaplain Emerson tell the Catholic chaplain that he was a Lutheran pastor; they quickly welcomed the Lutheran chaplain with open arms. Chaplain Emerson was to become one of the guiding forces behind the creation of Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church.

A Healthy Sprout with Little National Support: Lutheran Services Begin (1956-57)



Harold Lee

Chaplain Stanley Emerson conducted the first Lutheran service at the base chapel on July 28, 1956. Eight people, all connected with the Air Force, were present: Darwin Zeller, Harold and Shirley Lee, the Lee children (Gary, Larry and Jeffrey), and Tom and Barbara Pierick. This first service was followed by services the next four Sundays at the same location.

On September 2, 1956, the group moved their services to the Memorial Chapel of the Middle Street Baptist Church in Portsmouth. Eleven people attended that first worship service in the Baptist Church, seemingly a small beginning. However, the first service marked the beginning of a period of rapid growth. Attendance averaged about twenty people during the first few months of worship and reached a high of eighty-three on August 18, 1957.

Though the Baptists indicated that they wanted no fee for the use of the building, the Lutherans faithfully paid between five and six dollars for each Sunday they used the building. On Sunday, June 23, 1957, the Lutherans began worshipping in the Wentworth Acres School at the corner of Woodbury Avenue and Granite Street in Portsmouth.

Chaplain Emerson conducted the services until the end of 1956, when he was temporarily assigned to a post in England. His wife routinely provided the music for the services. Between December of 1956 and May of 1957, services were conducted by several different individuals: the Rev. J. Robert Nordlander, a regional

director of the Board of American Missions, and the Rev. Phillip Froiland and Mr. James Christ, both of Harvard Divinity School.

Remembrances

"I met this young fellow at the base, Airman Zeller; we were in the same squadron. He was from Illinois and was a Lutheran. Anyway, we talked about the need for a Lutheran Church in this area, and he was the one who supplied the information about the Synod in Illinois. Shirley wrote the letter to the Synod [inquiring about setting up a church] and sent it off to Illinois.

So the Synod sent a young fella who was not ordained yet. One day this person from the Synod, Ariman Zeller, and I were in the chapel comparing notes about what we found, and honestly and truly along came this guy, and he looked seven feet tall when we heard he was a Lutheran chaplain! And there was the beginning!"

- Harold Lee

Supporting Growth: National Board Provides Assistance and Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church is Officially Formed (Early 1957)

March 1957 was a busy month for the new mission. Three things happened that would lead to the creation of the church later that year. First, at the beginning of the month the Rev. H. Allison Linné, then serving a parish in Los Angeles, accepted the call to be the first mission pastor in Portsmouth and began making arrangements to move his wife and five daughters to the seacoast area. Second, the Board of American Missions of the Augustana Lutheran Church made a deposit of \$100 on the parsonage at 1885 Lafayette Road in Portsmouth. Third, on March 27, the first organizational meeting of the new church was held.



*Rev. Dr. H. Allison Linné and family, Board
Missionary/Developer, Board of America
Missions, Served May 1, 1957 – May 31, 1960.*

Organizational Period: March through September 1957

Attending the organizational meeting on March 27 was Mr. Leroy Heinse, chairman of what was to become the Lutheran Mission Steering Committee. Other committee heads included:

Treasurer: Mrs. Mae Pearson

Secretary: Mrs. H. James Morley (replaced in June 1957 by Reuben Edin)

Director of Music: Mrs. Althea Brown

Director of Publicity: Mr. Theodore Kleine

Historian: Mrs. Stanley Emerson

Ushers: Mr. Edwin Boynton, Mr. Heinz Hoenecke, and Mr. Dean Reese

Air Base Contact: Mr. Darwin Zeller

Reception: Mr. Harold Lee

At the March 27 meeting, participants discussed administrative and housekeeping details, such as the sending of postcards to everyone in the congregation announcing the Linné family's arrival on May 5 and Rev. Linné's first service on May 12. Harold Lee was assigned the job of organizing the clean-up of the Lafayette Road parsonage. The group also decided to hold a "food shower of canned and boxed goods" for the Linné family.

The Lutheran Mission Steering Committee met nine times between March 27 and the end of September. Most meetings were held at the parsonage. Each meeting opened with a prayer and Bible reading and closed with a prayer. Typically, Mrs. Linné provided refreshments after the meetings.

On September 14, 1957, a special meeting of the steering committee was held at the Edin home in Barrington. It included a potluck supper in the "Garden of Edin". At this meeting, the group appointed a site committee consisting of Reuben Edin, Leroy Heinse, and John Braun, and set the date for the Rite of Inception on Reformation Sunday, October 27, 1957. The group also drafted

the constitution of the church and appointed people to various committees.

It is difficult to describe briefly the numerous tasks carried out by the committee during the period of March through September 1957. It ranges from the trivial (the purchase of six candles) to the monumental (the decision to sell the Lafayette Road parsonage and buy the Bernard property on Dover Point Road for \$22,000). A careful reading of the minutes of these meetings indicates the great variety of issues that founding members deal with when creating a new church. The following is a list of some of the items of business considered during the summer and fall of 1957:

- Periodic financial reports
- Provision of flowers for Rev. Linné's first service
- Newspaper publicity
- Gifts valued at about \$10 each for Mr. Christ and the Rev. Froiland
- An April 28 letter from Theodore J. Kleine, the public-ity chairman, to the Board of American Missions taking the Board to task just a week before the Linné's arrival date for not completing the purchase of the parsonage
- The summer worship schedule
- Weekly church bulletin printing
- Getting a refrigerator for the parsonage (the Linné family survived for nearly three weeks without one!)
- Fencing the parsonage yard as a play area for the Linné children
- Visits from Augustana Lutheran Church dignitaries
- Possible locations for the church building
- Hymnal purchases
- Getting free publicity
- The location of the Sunday School
- Naming of the congregation (the church was initially named Holy Trinity).
- Arrangements for financial assistance from Augustana Lutheran Church
- Screens for the parsonage

- Organist's salary (set at \$20 per month)
- Purchase of material for red shirts and white surplices for Acolytes
- Appointment of David Heinse and Nelson Pearson as acolytes
- Discussion of whether the church might want to purchase and remodel the Ski-Hi Ballroom (which included three acres of land)
- Purchase of three acres of the Nevelski farm property at the corner of the Spaulding Turnpike and Fox Point Road for church building

In the middle of this organizational period, several members of the group went to Rev. Linné and stated that they felt the church should have an organ. Rev. Linné responded that the church could not afford one, and that for the time being they would have to get along with a piano. In spite of the negative signals from Rev. Linné, a fundraising committee got together and came up with the money. This committee consisted of Reuben Edin (chairman), Dr. Hilding P. Johnson, Leroy C. Heinse, Mrs. Nelson Pearson, and Adolph Volkman. Through their efforts, the \$1,600 necessary to buy the new Wurlitzer electric organ was raised. The organ was purchased at cost from Mr. J. M. Fullford, a Portsmouth music dealer. The committee obtained pledges for \$720 the first day of the fund drive. On June 30, Rev. Linné conducted a special congregational meeting to obtain approval for the purchase.

In addition to attending to the physical environs of the new church, efforts were carried out during the organizational period to attend to the needs of non-Lutheran charter members. Specifically, during July and August of 1957, Rev. Linné found time to hold adult confirmation classes for charter members who were not from a Lutheran background.

Organizational Service, Rite of Inception, and Congregational Meeting



Rite of Inception, The Congregation as it looked at services the morning of 10/27/57 when we organized at the Wentworth Acres School in Woodbury Avenue, Portsmouth, NH. Left to right in rear: Dr. H. Allison Linne, Missionary & Developer; Rev. Reuben Lundeen, Board of American Missionaries; Chaplain Stanley Emerson; Bishop Eskil Englund.

Sunday October 27, 1957

Marking the official formation of Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Organizational Sunday was held on Reformation Sunday, October 27, 1957. The event consisted of a 10:30 a.m. worship service with a Rite of Inception, and a 5 p.m. congregational meeting at Went-worth Acres School.

At the service, attended by 140 people, twenty adults were confirmed and four were baptized. The president of the New

England Conference of the Augustana Synod, the Rev. Eskil G. Englund, preached the sermon.

The Rev. Reuben Lundeen, regional director of the Board of American Missions, presided over the congregational meeting. It was a long meeting, lasting until 8:30 p.m., with a short break for a potluck supper. At the meeting, the congregation chose the name for their new church: Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church. As Marie Edin, church historian explained, "Holy Trinity – because we believe in the Triune God... Evangelical – because we believe the Bible to be the true word of God."



Reformation Sunday – Rite of Inception 10/27/57, First Adult Confirmation Class and Dr. H. Allison Linne.

The congregation also approved the church constitution which, among other things, dealt with church government, property ownership, and the raising and spending of money. Also agreed upon was the replacement of the Lafayette Road parsonage with the Arthur E. Bernard home at 231 Dover Point Road for \$22,000. Finally, the congregation selected the church's first board members (John Braun, Reuben Edin, Leroy Heinse, Edward Miller, William

Peter-son, and Leonard Wenant) and first trustees (Dr. H.P. Johnson, Nelson Pearson, Albert Martin, Mancil Thompson, Robert Walker, and Theodore Kleine).

THE CHARTER MEMBERSHIP LIST

The next time you are in church take time to view a piece of church history. As you leave the Gathering Room, look over to the outside wall on your right. You will see two Charter Membership Lists. The list on your left contains the names of the people actually present the morning of October 27, 1957. The list on the right contains the names of people who came into the church after October 27, 1957 and before December 31, 1957.

Why are there two Charter Membership Lists? At the congregational meeting held the afternoon of Sunday, October 27, 1957, Dr. Linné suggested to the congregation that it consider leaving the Charter Membership List open until Dec 31, 1957. A lengthy discussion ensued. A motion was made to leave open the Charter Membership List up to and including Dec 31, 1957. The motion was seconded. The motion passed.

Augustana Lutheran Church

Organization of a Congregation

Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

Name of Congregation

Portsmouth, New Hampshire

Location

New England

Conference

Boston

District

October 27, 1957

Date of Organization

Roll of Charter Members

December 29, 1957

Date Roll Closed

Dr. H. Allison Linné, Pastor	Edward W. Miller
Mrs. H. Allison Linné	Mrs. Edward W. Miller
Mary Ingrid Linné	Mrs. Ella F. Johnson
Martha Ingrid-Lis Linné	S. Willing P. Johnson, P.C.
Ruth Linné	Mrs. Gerlie Amundson
Esther Linné	Mrs. Carol Peterson
Anna Katherine Linné	Mrs. Mary E. Martin
Georben E. Edin	Robert H. Martin
Martha J. Edin	John L. Braam
John T. Leary	Etzel S. Braam
Donathy E. Leary	Cynthia L. Martin
Robert B. Edin	Albert V. Martin

Roll of Charter Members on October 27, 1957

Benjamin E. Edin	Robert H. Martin
Martha J. Edin	John L. Braun
John F. O'Leary	Edual S. Braun
Martha E. O'Leary	Cynthia L. Gaitan
Donald B. Edin	Albert V. Martin
Marie L. Edin	Wayne W. Merrill
Conna A. Flint	Robert Nelson Pearson
Brittjone Amundson	Carl Edward Rogalski
Jacqueline Baer	Oscar Fritz Olson
Jenette Saylor Marshall	Michael S. O'Leary
Robert E. Loxie	Sharon B. O'Leary
Wylene A. Howell	Jack A. O'Leary
Tom R. Finin	August R. Linn
Mrs. Harold Lee	Karin Linn
Harold L. Lee	GARY L. O
Leonard Oldenau	LOU N. O'LEARY
Louise Merant	Mrs. Joseph L. Gustavson
Arthur S. Ekstrom	Joseph Gustavson Jr.
Rudolph E. Ekstrom	Trina Gustavson
Harlem Erankovsch	Marta Ann Erankovsch
Mrs. Robert W. Leonard	

Rev. J. Allison Linn, B.D., S.T.M., Ph.D.
 Pastor in charge at time of organization



Roll of Charter Members on October 27, 1957

Augustana Lutheran Church

Organization of a Congregation

Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
Name of Congregation

Portsmouth, New Hampshire
Location

New England
Conference

Boston
District

October, 27, 1957
Date of Organization

Roll of Charter Members

December 29, 1957
Date Roll Closed

August Ann Lowell
Lloyd Linnwood Lowell
Elizabeth Spelling
William Brown Stearns
KATHRYN W. WILSON
Diann Wierant
Dora Wierant
Jean Wierant
Mrs. Marie Wierant
Mansel L. Thompson, Sr.
Mansel L. Thompson, Jr.
Steven A. Thompson
Elizabeth Thompson
Mrs. Augusta K. Hillis
Mr. Henry S. Hillis
Mrs. Anne Peterson
Caroline Sjogren
Mrs. Naomi Cunningham
The ...

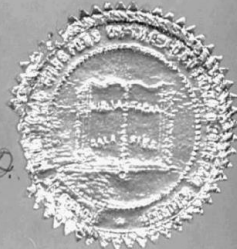
Louise Larson
Claire C. Larson
Dora Larson
Erik Kim Larson
Kristine Susan Larson
Mal V. Pearson
R. Nelson Pearson, Jr.
Carl S. Pearson
Mrs. Keith E. Brown
Amela Laura Brown
Patricia Ellen Brown
Raymond Paul Brown
Mr. Edward F. Rogalaki
Mrs. Elora A. Rogalaki
Astrid Rogalaki
Capt. Carl A. Schuch
Elsa Schuch
John Carl Schuch
Mrs. ...

Roll of Charter Members after October 27, 1957 and before December 31, 1957

Steven A. Thompson
 Elizabeth Thompson
 Mrs. August K. Hibbard
 Mr. Henry J. Hibbard
 Mrs. Anne Peterson
 Caroline Szymanski
 Mrs. Naomi Cunningham
 Mr. James Cunningham
 Master Richard Cunningham
 Carl Adolph Johnson
 David Charles Heinse
 Timothy John Heinse
 Robert K. Walker
 Inger K. Walker
 Robert K. Walker
 Jan. C. Walker
 David A. Walker
 James C. Walker
 Robert Kavanagh
 Mrs. Robert Z. Kavanagh
 Miss Rosanna Leven Dahl
 Mrs. Jules E. Leven Dahl
 David Robert Leven Dahl
 Valentine Leven Dahl
 Mr. Harold R. Snyder
 Myra Snyder
 Keith Snyder
 Karen Snyder
 Hugh Snyper
 John P. Baker De
 Kenneth L. Hanson

Raymond Paul Brown
 Mr. Edward = Regalaki
 Mrs. Elva A. Regalaki
 Astrid Regalaki
 Capt. Carl A. Selwick
 Elva Selwick
 John Carl Selwick
 Mrs. Cecelia Johnson
 Dan Edward Johnson
 Ann Lee Johnson
 Ulva Gray Johnson
 David Hugh Johnson
 Fred R. Hoffmann
 Ronald Hoepfinger
 Scott Hoepfinger
 E. Alton Brown
 Robert A. Brown
 Bertha A. Holmes
 Paul A. Holmes
 Theodore H. Holm
 Ross Holmes
 Marilyn Holmes
 Mrs. Elsie Ailer
 Michael C. Ailer
 Diane Ann Ailer
 Mrs. Bruce Cassell
 Andrew D. Cassell
 Mrs. Harry Cheney
 Coral E. Cheney
 Sharon L. Cheney
 Harry C. Cheney III

Rev. N. Allison Linné
 Pastor in charge at time of
 organization
 B. K. S. F. M. P. D.



Roll of Charter Members after October 27, 1957 and before December 31, 1957

Setting Down Roots: Construction of the Church Building on Site of Old Navelski Farm (1958-59)

The year following Organizational Sunday was characterized by growth in membership and a growth in commitment to raise funds necessary to finance a church building. The funds were raised and on August 24, 1958, the congregation unanimously approved the plans. On October 26, the congregation approved awarding the contract to the Maxam Construction Company in the amount of \$47,370.

Groundbreaking for the new building took place on a rainy October 26, 1958, the first anniversary of the formation of the congregation. The site consisted of three acres of the former Navelski farm that had been bought for \$3,000 per acre. The Rev. Eskil G. Englund preached the sermon at the 10:30 a.m. worship service. The actual groundbreaking took place at 4 p.m.

The church building was constructed during the time period October 1958 to June 1959. On June 14, 1959, the building was dedicated. Governor Wesley Powell spoke at the service, and Dr. Englund was back to carry out the dedication.

At the time of the dedication of the building, the church had grown to 190 adult members and 140 children.



10/26/58 - Lutheran Church Groundbreaking - The weather was foul yesterday but didn't stop groundbreaking ceremonies for the new Lutheran Trinity Church to be built off the Spaulding Turnpike between Gosling and Fox Point Roads. Wielding the shovel is the Rev. H. Allison Linné, Missionary & Developer. Others in photo left to right, are Richard Koehler, the architect; 1st Lt. Stanley K. Emerson, Chaplain at Pease AFB, and Dr. Eskil Englund, President of the New England Conference.

“First Lutheran Church in Area Dedicated in Ceremonies Here”

Portsmouth Herald - June, 15, 1959

“The first Lutheran Church in this area – the Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church – was dedicated at services yesterday afternoon.

The Rev. Theodore E. Matson of Minneapolis, Minn., executive director of the Board of American Missions, delivered the sermon. The act of dedication was by Rev. Eskil G. Englund, president of the New England Conference. The Rev. H. Allison Linné, pastor, gave the invocation.

* * *

The church has come a long way since a small group of adherents banded together for Lutheran services at the Middle Street Baptist Church early in 1957 under the direction of the Rev. Stanley Emerson...”



*left to right - Jeffrey Lee , Val Levendahl, remaining children unknown,
Sunday School Christmas Program, Wentworth Acres School,
Portsmouth, NH, December 1957 - Marie Edin, Teacher*



*1957 - 1958, Junior Choristers (made many public appearances), Virginia
Whitlock, Director*



1958 - 1959 First Young Adult Confirmation Class, rear - Dr. H. Allison Linné

Chancel Furnishings Donated

At a dedication service on March 16, 1958, the following items were generously donated to our new church building:

THE ALTAR

of the church was made and given by Mr. & Mrs. Carl Lindburg and Mr. & Mrs. Albert Peterson, members of Mt. Olive Church, Shrewsbury, MA., which was previously organized by Pastor Linne. The church also donated chairs

THE ALTAR RAIL

was given by Grace Church of Needham, MA.

THE PULPIT

was given by Concordia Church, Concord, NH

PAIR OF CANDELABRA

was given by the Emanuel Church of Pittsburg, MA.

SACRAMENTAL CANDLE HOLDERS

were given by Richmond Hills Lutheran Church, Richmond Hills, NY

The outpouring of love and support of these churches overwhelmed the members of our newly formed church.

Part II

**Four Decades of Perseverance,
Joy, and Trials
1959-1999**

*"Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us."
- Hebrews 12:1-3*



The life of our church from 1959 through 1999 may best be described as a time of challenge and joy. Like all churches, Holy Trinity has gone through highs and lows. But each time that we, as a congregation, faced and overcame the challenges presented us, we became more aware of what God called us to do.

Some of the challenges we faced during this four-decade period included those beyond our control, such as personnel cut backs at Pease Air Force Base in 1966 and its eventual closing in 1991. Others included internal conflicts, often relating to questions of expansion and the struggle to define the direction of the church.

During these four decades, we were blessed with wonderful pastors, some serving only a few years as interim pastors, and several serving as many as eight years. One of the realities we came to learn and accept during this period is that sometimes a pastor outgrows the church or the congregation outgrows the pastor. We learned also that this natural cycle allows a church to benefit from the unique contributions of each pastor. Though detailed information about each Holy Trinity pastor has not been available for inclusion in this church history, the strong state of Holy Trinity today is a tribute, in part, to the gifts and talents of all pastors who served our church during this four-decade period.



Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church 1960's

1959-1969: Building a Church Community and Meeting the Challenges of Local Economic Changes

The first worship service in the new building was held June 14, 1959. Rev. Dr. Allison Linné was pastor at the time. Marie Edin still remembers the details of that important day:

“We arrived for church that morning to find the front doors to the church closed! One-by-one church members arrived for church. We all waited in the front of the building.

The door to the church opened and Dr. Linné came outside. He led the congregation in prayer. He then turned and opened the double doors to the church – pushing both doors back as far as they would go. The organist had started to play. She was playing the hymn, “The Church’s One Foundation”.

Dr. Linné started to walk very slowly into the church. The congregation followed. We were all singing, “The Church’s One Foundation.”

From the opening of the new church building in 1959 until 1966, church membership grew. With a growing congregation, the need for additional space, programs, and education also increased. A church Planning Sub-committee Report noted that expansion of the new building was already being considered as early as the mid-1960’s, just several years after its original construction. The first expansion took place in 1962.

Remembrances

Furnishing the new church took the effort and generosity of the congregation and the pastor. Pastor Linné purchased little wooden chairs for the Sunday school classroom. The original pulpit came from a church in Concord. Marie Edin, a charter member, recalls that her father and some fellows from Holy Trinity used her father’s truck to transport the pulpit. She remembers the pulpit hanging over the sides of the truck, but the determined crew brought it safely to its new home at Holy Trinity.

1966 saw a sudden and substantial cut-back in personnel at Pease Air Force Base. The sub-committee report describes the impact of the cutback on Holy Trinity: “[W]hen the Pease cutback hit... the church lost 55 families in the resultant shuffle and transfers. By 1969, however, Church attendance was up again and the membership was approaching 200. The 1969 Planning Sub-committee report describes the crowded conditions in the 10-year old church:

Sunday School is rapidly growing. ... The nave of the church seats about 130 in the worship area and 20-30 more may be seated in the choir area if that is not in use. Both services are becoming more crowded.

At the present time, there are 5 classes meeting in the nave using curtains and divider partitions to help give each class some privacy. Noise and lack of privacy make it difficult for teachers and pupils to concentrate on one of the most important tasks of the church. ... The adult class is bulging at the seams, but it also contributes to the noise in the nave ... The church office is too small for the needs of the volunteer secretarial force and would be hopelessly inadequate for a full-time office. Pastor’s study is not large enough or private enough for the counseling and study which is becoming more important as one of the duties of all clergy.

Because of these space needs, and in light of the forecast for continued economic growth in the entire seacoast region serviced by Holy Trinity, the congregation in 1969 considered expanding the church building. The expansion, however, was not to take place for another ten years.

HTELC Pastors of the 1960’s

Rev. Dr. H. Allison Linné served Holy Trinity until May 31, 1960. Having been without a pastor from June through July, 1960, the congregation at Holy Trinity welcomed Rev. Arnold G. Levin as pastor on August 1. He served Holy Trinity until August 1, 1963. Rev. Carl O. Ebb answered the church’s call for a new pastor and served until August 1971.

During a summer when Pastor Ebb served at Camp Calumet, Mr. Neville Kretzman from East London, South Africa, was the summer assistant at Holy Trinity. He was a student at the Lutheran School of Theology, Rock Island, Illinois. He eventually returned to South Africa to serve as a Lutheran pastor.

Pastor Ebb Reports on NH Summer Venture -- 1965

"Nestled in a cove on New England's Atlantic coast rests the resort hotel Wentworth-By-The-Sea established in 1873 by the Camel family still residing in the seacoast area. For over 93 years, the East's wealthy have come and gone spending anywhere from one week to several weeks in this haven. The hotel boasts of four of the best clay tennis courts in the east, dozens of grass putting greens, an eighteen hole golf course, fresh and sea water swimming facilities, along with programs and parties, bridge and dancing and professional help in any of these areas.

For 93 years this hotel and its 400 plus guests have not had Sunday Protestant services, until this past summer, when the young Portsmouth Lutheran congregation accepted the invitation of James B. Smith, President of the Wentworth.

The first service conducted by Pastor Carl Ebb, began on July 2nd and the last one was held on September 10th. It was a wonderful and rewarding experience. Mr. Smith has invited Holy Trinity to offer the same service next summer. The congregation and Pastor Ebb look forward to this and a possible expansion into other services as well.

The challenge is not only in serving these people in their period of rest, but also to make the 15 minute drive through Portsmouth and back without missing connections at the Wentworth at 9:50 or Holy Trinity at 11:00 a.m.

The word is, that in the course of the summer shorts cuts were found through the narrow streets of Portsmouth.

An invitation is extended to all that are thinking about traveling to New England to place Portsmouth on your agenda and then worship with the folks at Holy Trinity. For ten years now, Holy Trinity has been serving the mobile population of these United States. The parish serves Pease Air Force Base, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard (including the hospital, prison, Shipbuilding and Marine Barracks), a Coast Guard installation and the University of New Hampshire as well as the tourists passing through. Indeed, it is an exciting place to be."



Reverend Arnold G. Levin,
Served August 1, 1960 –
August 1, 1963

Ballroom Becomes Chapel for Resort Hotel Ministry Second Year - 1966

"It's the second season for the Rev. Carl O. Ebb. He began an experimental ministry last summer at the posh seaside hostelry after one of the most succinct dialogs on record.

'Why,' Pastor Ebb asked Wentworth president James. B. Smith, 'don't you have services for Protestants in your hotel?'

'I can't get anyone to do it,' Smith said. 'You've got someone now!' Ebb told him.

The conversation took place at a Rotary luncheon. Smith is an Episcopalian, but the Wentworth has had only Catholic masses for its guests in the hotel's more than 90 years of existence. The two men are friends, and 'I was kidding him about no services for the poor Protestants,' Pastor Ebb says. 'He asked me if I could start the first Sunday in July, and I said, 'You're on.'



Pastor Carl O. Ebb & family, wife - Jeanne, girls - Kathy, Karen, Nancy, Diane & Mary

Carl Ebb is pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, a young Portsmouth congregation. He has a regular 8:30 service in the church and another at 11 o'clock. Between the two, he dashes across town to Little Harbor, where he uses a converted ballroom off the main lobby as a chapel.

Last year, July 2 to Sep. 10, attendance averaged over 45 per Sunday-not bad Pastor Ebb thinks, considering that many of the guests are Roman Catholics and that the 500-bed luxury hotel offers such competitive attractions as an 18-hole golf course, dozens of putting greens, swimming pool and ocean bathing beach, and some of the best clay tennis courts in the east.

Hotel guests assisted in ushering at the services, and some of the staff members helped with the music. A seminarian, Robert Lundgren, engaged through the Board of

American Missions from the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, assisted the pastor, as did Holy Trinity's organist, John March.

'It was a wonderful and rewarding experience,' Pastor Ebb says.

Invited to repeat the services this season, he began on June 2 and hopes to expand this ministry, possibly to include study clubs. In any case, it will be a busy summer for Carl Ebb, because his parish consists not only of the permanent Holy Trinity congregation, but takes in also the Portsmouth Navy Yard and its Marine barracks, Pease Air Force Base, a Coast Guard installation, and the University of New Hampshire at Durham, where he's campus pastor."



May 1960 Lutheran Choristers - TV Channel 11, front row - Susan Whitlock, Gary Lee, Ruth Linné, Henson, unknown, unknown, Denise W., back row - John Marsh, Stanley Whitlock, John Whitlock, Linda Jacobs, Mary Linné, Sharon Cheney, Judy Emerson, Dianne, Martha Linné, Mrs. Virginia Whitlock - Director



Confirmation Class, rear - Pastor Ebb, middle row - unknown, unknown, Kathy Baker, Jackie Robertson, Wenant, Mike DeNola



Easter 1969 - Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church



Whitlock's Easter Band 1969, top second from left - Sue Whitlock, forefront - Christine Calaman

1970's: Reaching Out

The 1970's at Holy Trinity marked a period of growing maturity. Having built the foundation of a church community in the 1950's and 1960's, the congregation and pastors of Holy Trinity in the 1970's were able to turn their attentions more fully in an outward direction to youth, the larger Lutheran community, and to the disadvantaged.

Contemporary Service

Reaching out to youth, the church in the fall of 1971 instituted the contemporary service at Holy Trinity through a cooperative learning experience with leaders at a local Catholic church.

Rev. Kreider, our pastor at the time, had extensive experience working with youth in other churches prior to coming to Holy Trinity. But as senior pastor, he had only limited time to devote to the task of engaging our youth. His wife, Lois, loved working with young people and so gladly offered to investigate new liturgies which might more fully attract and engage young congregants.

As part of her investigation, Lois reached out to the leader of the contemporary service at St. Joseph Catholic Church and learned much about setting up a contemporary liturgy. With Lois's enthusiasm,

Steve's talent, and Lois's son Clark (Sparky) being a pretty cool kid, it was easy to find youth to join. The name "Sounds of Peace" resulted from brainstorming when the kids got together to practice.



[Rev. Eugene C. Kreider with family, Lois Kreider, Clark Kreider, Served 8/22/71 - 8/23/74]

Remembrances

Congregant Jean Wenant recalls the leadership style of "Sounds of Peace" director Lois Kreider. "Lois ran a pretty tight ship and did not tolerate, 'fooling around'! She earned the respect of the youth quickly because her ideas were new and she was so devoted to 'selling' them and becoming progressive."

-- Jean Wenant



"Sounds of Peace", left to right - Jean Wenant, Chris Wenant, Max Hoene, Tad Ackman, Lois Kreider, Linda Krygeris, behind Linda Krygeris unknown, unknown, Cheryl Ackman, unknown, Cathy Rosholt, Steve Thompson (sitting)

The contemporary music was fully embraced by many in the congregation, but not all. Pastor Kreider and others recognized, however, that this new approach had much to offer and its acceptance continued to grow. The Contemporary Service has continued to flourish since the Kreiders' departure in 1974. As the youth grew and went off to college, the "Sounds of Peace" became more of an adult contemporary choir, and eventually the name, "Sounds of Peace" was dropped.

Remembrances

Congregation member June Slipp volunteered hundreds of hours over a ten-year period preparing the church bulletins. June remembers the unexpected help she received from Pastor Kreider one day in June 1972. June was assisting the pastor in preparing Holy Trinity's Annual Report, but she also needed to finish typing the bulletin. Determined to keep June working on the Annual Report, Pastor Kreider took over the typing. "He typed up a storm!" remembers June.

New England Synod Convention

In June 1972, Holy Trinity hosted the New England Synod Convention held at Wentworth-by-the-Sea in New Castle, NH. Over 240 Lutheran churches in New England were represented at the gathering.

Our pastor, Rev. Kreider, served as chaplain of the 11th annual convention, and also preached the sermon at the public communion service. The public service was held at the Ship, a building at Wentworth-by-the-Sea located on the water with a front façade shaped like a ship. At the service, Rev. Kreider was assisted by Pastors John Timm of Concord, Gary Miller of Salem, and Robert Magnuson of Portland, Maine. Pastor Kreider invited the newly formed "Sounds of Peace" to sing at the service. It was an exciting experience for the youth.

As convention sponsor, Holy Trinity provided much in the way of service and planning. Members of our church who helped with local arrangements included: Chairman Algird Krygeris and Mary Krygeris, Elizabeth Turcotte, Dr. James Mittlestadt, Dr. John Whitlock, Cleo Levendahl, Mae Pearson, Shirley Kane, Joann Trader, and Jackie Kohlhase.

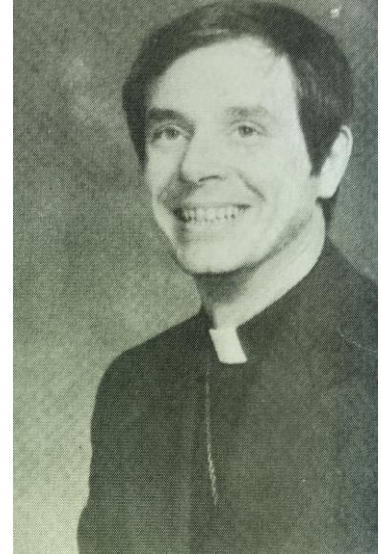
First Refugee Resettlement

After the fall of Saigon, South Vietnam in 1975, many Vietnamese families who had helped the American forces were evacuated and relocated to refugee camps in the United States. In this national effort, Holy Trinity was one of the first churches (and

maybe even the very first church) to sponsor a refugee family in the seacoast region. Our pastor at the time was Rev. Frank Hanrahan and he was contacted in the mid-1970's by Lutheran Social Services about sponsoring a Vietnamese family. Holy Trinity congregation members Warren and Barbara Galle, Len and Jean Klein, and several others volunteered to lead the sponsorship team.

Because the sponsorship team members expected to work directly with Lutheran Social Services, they were surprised to receive a call one day directly from the father of the refugee family. Warren and Barbara Galle received that call from Lac Thanh Truong, a merchant marine captain who had escaped with his wife Min, their two young daughters, and Min's brother, a school teacher. Warren and Barbara learned that Thanh had been teaching himself English by reading and listening to the radio. Thanh was, therefore, able to ask very clearly and directly for the Galles to be his sponsor.

Thanh's social worker gave the family a glowing recommendation. Without even a committee meeting, Warren and Barbara agreed to sponsor the Truong family. When the paper work came, Warren Galle signed as sponsor of record. Lutheran Social Services did not then have a strong presence in New Hampshire, so the Galles and other committee members communicated directly with social workers in California to finalize the sponsorship.



Reverend Frank C. Hanrahan, Served October 21, 1974 - May 1, 1982

Pastor Hanrahan secured an apartment for the Truongs in Dover. The congregation donated furnishings and stocked the pantry. The family arrived in Boston in the fall of 1975. They were a lovely family, and, in spite of never having done manual labor, Thanh and his brother-in-law accepted jobs at Prime Tanning in Berwick. A carpool was set up for them with other workers in the area. The girls were placed in school. (It was Halloween and they were terrified of the ghosts hanging from the trees.) Having lived in Saigon, the Truongs were knowledgeable about driving and managing in a city environment and were independent in a very short time. The family currently (2007) is still living in the Rochester area.



Word & Witness Class, back row - George Crockett, Gary Miller, Frank Hanrahan, Alice (Crockett) Vosberg, Joe Roedder, Dave Farnum, Ruth Roedder, middle row - Richard Tichenor, Connie Tichenor, Millie Farnum, front row - Edna DiNola, Margareta Claesson, Sue Bridge, Carolyn Miller

Word & Witness Program

The Word and Witness program was developed by the Lutheran Church in America (now part of the ELCA) as a scholarly, in-depth study of the Bible (the “word” component), with a heavy concentration on evangelism (the “Witness” component). The course had 54 lessons: 31 on the Bible and 23 on evangelism.

In 1978, Pastor Frank Hanrahan recruited members of the congregation to participate in the first Word and Witness program at Holy Trinity. Holy Trinity started Word & Witness with 24 participants, but lost a few during the course of the program.

The class met for 2-1/2 hours once a week, and the format was discussion with some role-playing. Sessions alternated between blocks of material on the Bible (“The Kingdom of God”) and evangelism (“Telling the Good News”). The Word and Witness program was unique because it not only taught adults about witnessing, it also helped them take practical steps to begin doing so.

Initially, the group would role-play witnessing. Members would then break into pairs and witness to other members of the congregation. Witnessing to other members of the congregation allowed the participants to gain the confidence they felt they needed to prepare themselves for actual witnessing in the community.

The Word and Witness program continued for several years. It helped strengthen our faith and gave us tools to better witness to others.

HTELC Pastors of the 1970's

Rev. Carl Ebb concluded his tenure as pastor of Holy Trinity in August 1971, having served for eight years.

Rev. Eugene Kreider succeeded Pastor Ebb and arrived at Holy Trinity in August 1971. He served through August 1974.

In October of that year, the church welcomed Rev. Frank C. Hanrahan as pastor. Rev. Hanrahan served for eight years, until May 1982.

Miscellaneous pictures of the 1970's



Above: Confirmation Class - 1970's, back row - unknown, Pastor Eugene Kreider, unknown, Wenant, seated - Victoria Robertson, E. Max Hoene, unknown, unknown



Left: Holy Trinity Choir - unknown, Ursula Hinck, unknown, unknown, Martha Rosholt, unknown, unknown, Edna Dinola, unknown, unknown, Terry Rosholt, unknown, Caroline Ackman, Ted Ackman

1980's: Coming of Age

Holy Trinity turned twenty-five in the early 1980's. That important milestone was reached during a decade of expansion and continued outreach befitting an established church.

Second Refugee Resettlement

At the Annual Meeting in 1979, our congregation, under the leadership of Pastor Frank Hanrahan, unanimously voted to sponsor a refugee family again. Although we did not know it at the time, halfway around the world in Laos a family was struggling to come to terms with the Communist takeover of its country. Boulong and Keo Chanthapho, and their large family, owned and farmed land on the outskirts of Vietiane, Laos. The new government expropriated their farm and the family was forced to turn over all their produce to the People's Farm Association, with only a small percentage of their crop being returned to them. The Chanthapho children were being taught Communists ideas and the older students were taken out of school to do manual labor on the new roads. In July 1977, the oldest son of the family escaped across the Mekong River in a rowboat at night. By 1979, the rest of the family had illegally emigrated into Thailand where they were reunited in a giant, overcrowded refugee camp.

As soon as our decision to sponsor was made known to Church World Services, they put us in touch with the Chanthaphos. The family consisted of Boulong and Keo, seventh grade son, Thonglo, fourth grade daughter, Deuane, first grade daughter, Dao, kindergarten age son, Chiengkham, older sons, Chay and Xay, married son, Sengkham, his wife Phong, and their baby daughter Panga. (Their oldest daughter, her husband, his brother, and their baby daughter were able to leave Laos also and were sponsored by the Dover Methodist Church).

Though resettling this large family was a substantial undertaking, members of Holy Trinity stepped out in faith. They formed a Steering Committee to provide housing, ethnic foods, clothing, furniture, medical care, employment, and daily contact to oversee all the services needed by this large and multi-aged family. The goal was to help the Chanthaphos make a good adjustment and become independent citizens of their new country.

On the look-out for housing, one Holy Trinity member noticed a vacant house in Madbury on the corner of Madbury Road and Pudding Hill Road. Its owner, Jim Colpritt, agreed to rent the house for use by the Chanthaphos, and also offered employment at the Elliot Rose Greenhouse adjacent to the property. Jim Colpritt eventually hired Boulong and his two sons, Chay and Xay, to work at the greenhouse.

As it turned out, the tropical greenhouse was more to their liking than our New England winters!

The Steering Committee worked to get the long-vacant house in order: cleaning, painting, and repairing before the furniture was moved in. The house was a great contrast to the family's stilt house in Laos. The family was challenged with dealing with a heating system for the first time.

The family arrived in Boston the first week of October 1980, after a 32-hour flight. Enthusiastic members of Holy Trinity greeted them. Lou MacIntosh of Dover helped us as an interpreter with the difficult five-tonal Laotian language. Many, many people helped out on a daily basis in the months to come. Sue Bridge was a frequent visitor, as well as the Mercers, the Kleins, and the Hanrahans. Dr. Richard Scherf provided free dental care. Warren Galle had signed as sponsor of record and taught Boulong and the older boys to drive and helped them get their licenses. Many more members continued to be the support group that made this effort a success. Financial resources were generously provided without question in this endeavor.

The Chanthaphos have done very well. They own homes in Newmarket, where there is quite a large Laotian community. Boulong, the patriarch, passed away in the summer of 2006. Sue Bridge and the Galles attended his Buddhist service and were warmly greeted by Keo and all the family. They expressed their thanks for our help.



Roomet Aring, Richard Tichenor, Pastor Frank Hanrahan, unknown

Expansion of Church Building and Addition of Solar Panels

From the late 1960's through the 1970's the congregation at Holy Trinity recognized the growing need for physical expansion of the church building . In late 1979 the need for more space was addressed, and the church commissioned Pickering Associates of Portsmouth to significantly expand the existing building. Chester P. Keefe Associates served as consulting architect. Our own congregation member Roomet Aring, who was a solar designer with Pickering Associates, designed and oversaw the building of the church expansion. On March 9, 1980, Holy Trinity dedicated its newly expanded and renovated church.



Passive Solar Wall Facing South

The unique design and function of the expansion are testaments to the forward-thinking character of this church community. Many churches have south-facing stained glass windows that fill their sanctuaries with multicolored sunlight, but at Holy Trinity that sunlight was put to work. The expansion in 1980 resulted in a unique, solar-heated church.

According to designer Roomet Aring, "We worked with the Kalwall Company to find the most cost-effective way to do it." In the end, the church's original timber roof was retained, and was supported by posts standing in the new sanctuary aisles. The solar design called for extending that roof somewhat, then constructing new, sloping walls to create a dramatic, contemporary effect. The design also provided roughly twice as much floor space as the church originally contained. The south side of the building became a 250-square foot Kalwall Sunlite solar wall.



Sanctuary Area & Passive Solar Wall

Inside the sanctuary, 16 eight-foot-tall Kalwall water storage tubes filled with colored water lined the sun-wall. The water's color was nick-named "ecclesiastical blue." The dye increased the water's thermal absorption and direct solar gain. The energy cost savings were evident from the start. Roomet explained: "When we started out, we wanted to keep the original heating system and budget about the same amount for fuel, and still be able to heat about twice the volume as the original church contained. So far, with our solar wall and R30 insulation, we're running ahead."

At Sunday morning services, both the visual and energy effects were dramatic. As Roomet noted, "We got a stained glass window, a solar collector and a new, low-cost church all in one."

The solar panels were eventually removed as part of later church renovations.

Take a Look

The next time you are in the gathering area, look up. You will see beautiful, natural wood beams. For years these beams were hidden under sheetrock. During the 1979-80 expansion, some members of the congregation gathered to do the hard work of taking the sheetrock down and exposing these beautiful beams for all to enjoy.

25th Anniversary Celebration

On Sunday October 31, 1982, Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of Newington celebrated its 25th Anniversary with a dinner at the N.C.O. Club at Pease Air Force Base. Dr. Raymond Kask, Assistant to then-Bishop Harold Wimmer, was there to join in the celebration and to represent the New England Synod. Congregation member Richard Tichenor served as master of ceremonies.



Gerri Sieg Decorating cake for 25th Anniversary

Charter members attending the celebration included: Henry and Augusta Albrich; Mrs. Elizabeth Thompson; Mrs. Ethel Braun; Mrs. Jacqueline Kohlhase; Mrs. Hanna Leonard Wolstencroft, and Robert Leonard, Jr., all of Portsmouth; Miss Marie Edin of Dover; Jules and Cleo Levendahl and Mrs. Valentina Barrette of Barrington; Miss Caroline Seymore and Mrs. Deanna Ryder of Eliot, Maine; Harold and Shirley Lee of York, Maine; and Gary Lee of Exeter.



HTELC 25th Anniversary, Dr. John Whitlock, Virginia Whitlock & Pastor Reuben Lundeen

During the celebration, all who were baptized, confirmed, or married in the church were honored, as were the pastors who served Holy Trinity over the years and those who joined Holy Trinity since its inception in 1957.

Remembrances

Pastor Werdelin, who served during the mid- to late-1980's, had earned a degree in botany prior to becoming a pastor. Often, he would bring potted flowers to church and charter member Henry Albrich would plant the flowers in front of the church building.

Members Jay and Virginia Whitlock, too, had no small hand in beautifying our church with flowers. Week after week, for years, Jay and Virginia provided flowers for the sanctuary. They would come to the church on Saturday and prepare the flowers for the Sunday services. These members also provided palm branches and arrangements for Palm Sunday for over 20 years.

Holy Trinity Sponsors First Earth Run -- *September 1986*

"In a flurry of song, banners and multicolored balloons, Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church celebrated its sponsorship of the first Earth Run on Sept. 18, 1986. Marching through Portsmouth in the eighth leg of the 10-kilometer torch relay capped off several weeks of fund-raising at the church to benefit UNICEF - The United Nations children's organization.

The Earth Run began Sept. 16 in New York City at the United Nations Building with the lighting of a torch symbolizing peace and global cooperation.

Asked how the church became involved in the event, Holy Trinity's Social Ministry chairperson, Jean Pouliot, said that 'one day a letter was sitting in my mailbox asking for sponsors and participants for Earth Day. I figured that the opportunity was just too good to miss. The next thing we knew, the church was sponsoring a kilometer!'



Reverend Earl D.
Werdelin, Served
March 13, 1983 - 1988

Mary Jean Scholl was chosen to carry the torch. As she ran, she sang 'He's Got The Whole World In His Hands,' and the group of runners struck out down Middle Street. Art Wingo, a retired military chaplain, summed up the feeling toward peace of the other participating military servicemen, saying, 'the motto at Pease Air Force Base reads "Our Job is Peace," that's why we serve.'

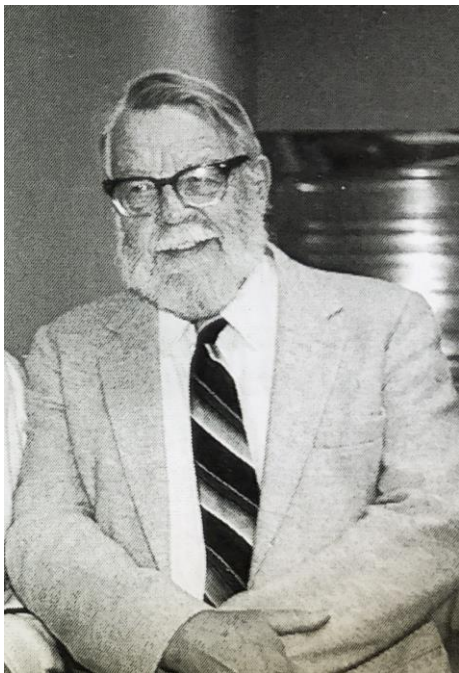
Other participants in the walk were banner bearers Len Small, Jill Larsen with son Brett, Mike Johnson, Geri Sieg, Carol Pouliot, Rich and Brenda Riepel, Marcia Greensfelder with children Erik and Amy, Peggy Salmonsens with son Eric." -- *Portsmouth Herald, September 1986*

HTELC Pastors of the 1980's

Rev. Frank Hanrahan, who served Holy Trinity beginning in 1974, finished his tenure in May 1982. He was followed by interim pastor Rev. Reuben Lundeen from the Board of American Missions. Pastor Lundeen served from June 1982 until March 1983.

Holy Trinity welcomed Rev. Earl D. Werdelin in March 1983. Pastor Werdelin served until 1988. Pastor Werdelin retired on October 26, 2003.

From April 1988 until July 1989, Rev. Theresa Bianchi served as interim pastor until the arrival of Rev. David L. Snyder.



Left: Reverend Reuben Lundeen, Board of American Missions (interim pastor), Served June 1, 1982 - March 1983. Right: Reverend Theresa Bianchi, Served April 1988 - July 1989

Miscellaneous pictures of the 1980's



Left: Installation of Cross - Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church. *Right:* Terry (Rosholt) Bianchi Ordination in 1984, First Holy Trinity member to be ordained, Pastor Earl Werdelin in rear.

1990's: Merger and Expansion, Trial and Hope

Holy Trinity Church in the 1990's faced external and internal challenges, but emerged at the end of the decade stronger and ready to meet the new millennium. The closure of Pease Air Force Base on March 31, 1991, and the downsizing of the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard later in the decade, caused much sadness as the congregation said good-bye to many members. The church's merger with Resurrection Lutheran Church of Rochester in November 1994 and the expansion project of 1995 challenged us to resolve internal conflicts for the good of the church. Through it all, Holy Trinity continued to reach out to the less advantaged and to continue building its church community.

New England Seafarers Mission

Congregation member Warren Galle served in the U.S. Navy during WWII and subsequently worked in the Design Division as a naval architect at PNSY for over thirty years. He always loved the sea and ships. Upon his retirement, he served as a driver for Hampton-Seabrook Meals on Wheels for five years and then as site manager for five years, ministering to the people he contacted each day. He retired from that position around 1989.

One Sunday, the director of New England Seafarers Mission came to speak at Holy Trinity. He was looking for volunteers to visit ships coming into Portsmouth. Warren was not in church that Sunday, but someone volunteered him, and he was happy to become a visitor.

Warren started his seafarers ministry in 1990. His task was to minister to the needs of sailors from all over the world who served far from home for periods of two or three years. When a ship docked, Warren brought the seamen Bibles in their language, magazines, and maps of Portsmouth, and visited and shared meals with them. He also took the sailors shopping, made them aware of local churches, and assisted them in making phone calls to their families. This was a time before cellular phones or even phone cards. Warren brought the sailors to Holy Trinity, usually in the evening, contacted the overseas operator for rates, and timed their calls. He collected the money due and deposited it with the church.

When Greek crews arrived in port Warren often took Father Pappas from the Orthodox church with him to visit the sailors. The sailors appreciated the opportunity to chat with Father Pappas in their own language and to have a local spiritual contact. On one occasion, several crew members from one ship confided in Warren that they were afraid to leave port because the ship was unsafe. Warren contacted his supervisor, who then contacted the U.S. Coast Guard. The ship was inspected, found to be un-seaworthy, and kept in port for necessary repairs.

Each year at Christmas Warren delivered "Ditty Bags" containing hand-knit hats, gloves, and scarves, and shaving supplies and goodies. Women in churches all over New England made, gathered, and assembled the items for the Ditty Bags.

In 1998, Warren reluctantly left the ministry he loved so much after suffering an Achilles tendon injury. The injury made it difficult for him to go up and down the gangplank and ship ladders, especially the rope ladders on the sides of the coal ships. Warren's ministry was a blessing to many men far from home.

Preaching Mission

In 1992, members of the Evangelism Committee at Holy Trinity extended an invitation to Father John Judie, an African American priest, pastor, and evangelist from the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Louisville, Kentucky, to come to New Hampshire after Easter to preach a three-night "Preaching Mission". In doing so, the committee members knew they were breaking new ground.

"We didn't know what the response from the congregation would be," confessed Kathy Beals, chair of the Evangelism Committee, "but we sensed the Holy Spirit was calling us to plan an event that would be the catalyst for congregational renewal."

Believing authentic Christian evangelism, like charity, begins at home, Holy Trinity's Evangelism Committee wanted to design a proactive event to promote spiritual renewal in the parish and also provide an opportunity for Christians from other faith communities to come to Holy Trinity for a unique "Celebration of the WORD". Members of the Evangelism Committee – chair Kathy Beals, Lee Englund, and Erlinde Beliveau-- worked tirelessly for several months to organize and prepare for the three-day mission.

Their efforts were fruitful. The response from the congregation and the community was outstanding. An average attendance of 130 people packed the small church each night from April 26-28th to sing, pray, and hear the Gospel proclaimed in a new and challenging way. Father Judie, an accomplished musician, taught the congregation new songs of praise. Each night featured dramatizations, special music provided by area choirs, witness and testimony, and an "altar call". A stirring candlelight commissioning service was held on the final night.

Although the primary focus of the mission was the "building up" of the spiritual life of Holy Trinity, the benefits of the mission were appreciated by Christians who attended from area congregations. Approximately one-third of the worshippers each evening were parishioners from ten area congregations.

The theme for the mission, "Getting Back to Basics...What Does It Mean to Be A Christian?" included sermons designed to answer the question "What does it mean to believe in Jesus, the Son?" and "What does it mean to believe in the Holy Spirit?"

Summer Mission in Florida After Hurricane Andrew

The idea of a summer mission trip to south Florida to help rebuild after the devastation of hurricane Andrew was conceived in the fall of 1992.

Just after Labor Day, a small group of adults met in the office of Pastor Dave Snyder to discuss the possibility of sponsoring a summer Habitat-for-Humanity trip for the youth and adults of Holy Trinity. The group members agreed to pray about this during the month of October and get back together in November to continue their conversations.

In October the group learned about Habitat's "Hurricane Response", which envisioned the construction of more than 200 new homes in the area devastated by one of the worst hurricanes in United States history. In November, group members reached a consensus that Holy Trinity's first-ever summer mission trip would be to south Florida.

During the months before their departure on June 27th, 1993, the team members raised over \$3,000, thanks to generous contributions of parishioners and friends and a baked bean benefit supper sponsored by the local branch of the Aid Association for Lutherans. The group recruited eight adults and two youth to participate in the trip. Round trip airline tickets were secured for all at half the normal fare, thanks to Jack Gaines and the people at Cook Travel, Ltd. and American Airlines.

It is estimated that hurricane Andrew added 250,000 residents of south Florida to the rolls of the homeless. The Holy Trinity mission team members did not solve the enormous problem of homelessness that summer, and they didn't even finish building one house, but they did accomplish a great deal during their week of building.

Remembrances

"We left Florida with a wonderful feeling of joy and peace in our hearts that we will all remember for a very long time. My greatest thrill was having the opportunity to meet and to work with Susan Byrd, who will live in the house we worked on during our week.

What did we learn from our summer mission experience? We learned that whenever God's people cooperate in God's great missionary activity – whenever we have the courage and the will to participate as 'partners' in the holy work of introducing others to the God who is 'gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love' – we receive more than we give, and our labor is not in vain"
--Rev. Dave Snyder, pictured right.



Merger with Resurrection Lutheran Church of Rochester

By 1994, the congregation of Holy Trinity numbered 350. In November of that year, the congregation agreed to the merger of Holy Trinity with Resurrection Lutheran Church of Rochester. After the merger, about fifteen families joined our congregation and the affairs and assets of Resurrection Church were transferred to Holy Trinity.

[Left: Messiah Lutheran Church, Amherst, NH]

In 1995 we sold the Resurrection Church property in Rochester. We received \$193,046 in proceeds from the sale. At the semi-annual meeting in June 1995, a motion was passed to distribute \$80,000 to Messiah Lutheran Church in Amherst, NH, to be used for capital expenditures. The funds helped Messiah Lutheran build Messiah House, a building containing classrooms and offices. Many Holy Trinity members helped with construction of Messiah House.



1995 Expansion

In an historic congregational meeting held on Sunday, February 5, 1995 (the morning after the most significant winter storm of the season) seventy-two members of Holy Trinity braved the elements to attend a special congregational meeting to consider a plan for the expansion of the church facilities.

The congregation heard a report from Herman Hassinger, an architect from Moorestown, N. J., who was engaged by the congregation to work with the building committee in the development of a master plan for the renovation and expansion of the church building. Hassinger and his associates specialized in church architecture and had built more than 200 churches, sixty-percent of them Lutheran.



Right: Ground Breaking for New Building, Herman Hassinger, Architect, Tim Althof, Lee Englund, Pastor Dave Snyder

The congregation supported the plan for expansion, and the groundbreaking took place four months later in June. The expansion, which was completed before Christmas 1995, was significant. It more than doubled the size of the existing facilities to both relieve existing overcrowding and to accommodate future growth. The project included the addition of a 3600 square-foot sanctuary to accommodate 230 worshippers, a 2000 square-foot educational wing with six new classrooms, a 1,250 square-foot administrative office complex, and the addition of a steeple. The steeple was built by Metal Pro of Essex, Connecticut, and rivals that of the Old North Church in Portsmouth's Market Square for visibility. The construction was completed at a cost of \$630,000.

A unique feature of the project was the relocation of the church's entrance to what had been the rear of the building. The project's architect, Herman Hassinger, recommended this change.

Remembrances

"As most of us want our Christmas tree up by December 25th, members of Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church wanted their new steeple in place for Christmas Eve service.

The church was prepared to raise a new steeple yesterday, but the base of the steeple was the wrong size for the roof. Anxious members of the church stood by in anticipation of the steeple raising that never happened. Measurements taken before the steeple was raised revealed that the pads it would rest on were 11 inches too low. That made it impossible to properly mount the steeple on the church roof."

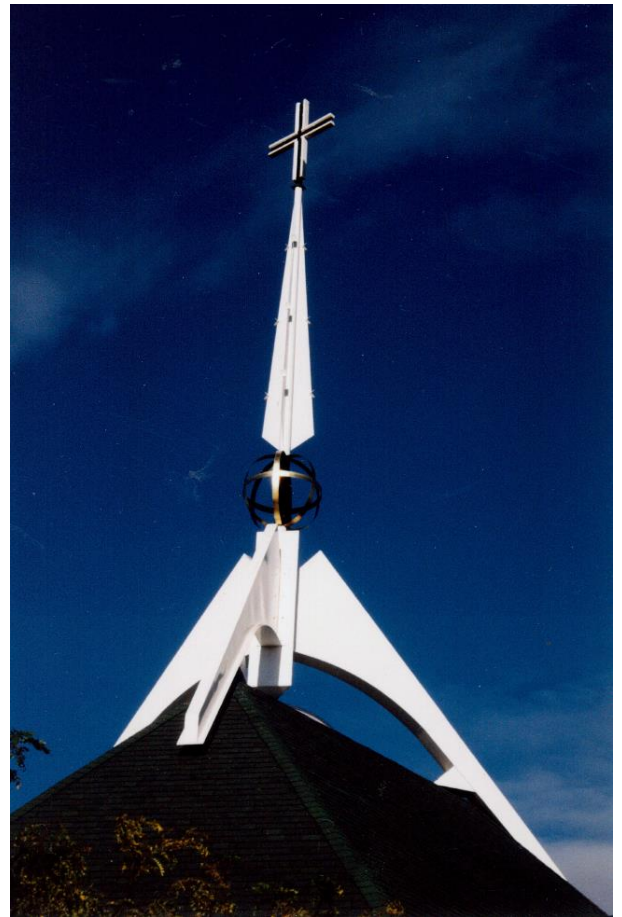
Portsmouth Herald, December 1995



Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

Third Refugee Resettlement

On November 12, 1998, a small group of people, including members of Holy Trinity, met at St. John's Episcopal Church in Portsmouth. Don Cimato of Lutheran Social Services in Concord, NH, spoke to the group about a cooperative project to be shared by six local churches – five Episcopal churches and Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church. Our church would have the opportunity to sponsor a refugee family. The group members took the information back to their congregations and met again on December 7th. Our congregation was enthusiastic about the project because of past positive experiences with refugee resettlement, though some members felt overwhelmed at the prospect of accepting the responsibility and sharing the work among many churches. However, the majority of us were optimistic and so we stepped out in faith.



Church Steeple

In January 1999, we organized a steering committee to oversee Fund Raising, Housing and Donated Goods, Employment, Health, Food and Clothing, Language and Education, Orientation and Transportation. Volunteers from all the churches were listed in each area to be called as needs arose. A large organizational meeting was held and Don Cimato explained our responsibilities. The concepts were not new to Holy Trinity members who had already successfully sponsored two families with almost no supervision from national headquarters. We chose the name "The Seacoast Resettlement Project" and opened a bank account with seed money from each church. We were considering a family from either Bosnia or Africa. Carol Lincoln, from St. John's Church, and Barbara Galle from Holy Trinity, served as co-chairs. The committee projects were divided among members as follows: Warren Galle (Holy Trinity), Funds; Tedine Roos (Holy Trinity), Housing; Bob Mennell (St. John's), Employment; Candace Dilisio (Christ Church), Health; Carol Sanderson (St. John's) and Patrick DeCredico (Christ Church), Food and Clothing; Mari Louise Knopp (St. John's) and Jane Crooks (St. George), Language and Education; Richard Belshaw (St. George) and Judy Saddler (Holy Trinity), Orientation; and Grace Richards (St. Thomas), Transportation. Church of the Redeemer in Rochester also participated.

At a March 1999 meeting, we reviewed an informational printout on the Popovic family of four. They had fled Bosnia to settle in Belgrade, Yugoslavia seven years before because of their mixed marriage. They very much wanted to come to America. They had lost their home and all their possessions.

There was a defining moment when we all said “yes” and they became “our family”. We firmed up the bank account with fund-raising projects and began some of the actual work. Looking for housing was the greatest challenge.

We waited for word of the Popovic’s arrival date. The American bombing of Belgrade began and we prayed and waited some more. Finally, after a harrowing journey from Belgrade to Budapest over the last standing bridge in a UN convoy, then a flight from Amsterdam to New York, the Popovics finally arrived in Manchester, NH. Boro, Dila, and their two children, Sandra, twenty years old and Sasha, fifteen years old, arrived very weary and very happy to be on their way to a new life of freedom. They settled in with Blake and Sally Staude until their Somersworth apartment was ready.

Part-time jobs were found for all family members during the summer, and in September 1999 Sasha enrolled at Somersworth High School where he joined the soccer team. All family members except Boro were quite fluent in English and took a course at the University of New Hampshire to sharpen their language skills.

HTELC Pastors of the 1990's

Pastor David Snyder concluded his eight-years of service at Holy Trinity on June 22, 1997.

Four months later, in October 1997, Holy Trinity welcomed Rev. Paul Lindstrom as interim pastor.



Reverend Paul Lindstrom, Served October 15, - May 2000

Concerts Held at Holy Trinity

During the 1990's Roxana Tourigny was the organist and choir director at Holy Trinity, as well as the Programs Coordinator at the University of New Hampshire. She was instrumental in putting together a series of concerts at Holy Trinity that were open to the public. We were fortunate to experience the extraordinary talents of many of these individuals. One Christmas season, a 50-member children's choir performed a medley of holiday tunes. We were also entertained by the talents of the Taubl family, consisting of dad, mom, and seven extremely gifted children who performed a unique blend of vocal harmonies and stringed instruments. The concerts also included brass ensembles, an extraordinary young pianist, and wind instrument ensembles. The concert selections appealed to all ages and gave Holy Trinity an opportunity to become known in the community.



70th Anniversary of Clarence & Marion LePage - June 1999, The Reverends Dave Snyder, Kurt Baumann, Tom Maehl, Art Wingo, Paul Lindstrom, and Earl Werdelin

Remembrances

"LePages Celebrate 70 years"

"...Clarence and Marian LePage celebrated 70 years together with a party Sunday afternoon with 125 of their closet friends and family.

Clarence, 92 and Marian 91, renewed their wedding vows Sunday morning at Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church in Newington. ...

'They are just absolutely wonderful people,' said the Rev. Paul Lindstrom, who has been the couple's pastor the past two years. They are family-oriented people living lives focused on their church, faith and family. But if you look closer, there is more than just affection binding the two together at a time when 50 percent of modern marriages end in divorce.

'I think the difference has nothing to do with love. It has to do with commitment.' Lindstrom said, explaining that Clarence and Marian persevered 'come hell or high water.'

The Rev. Earl Werdelin was the couple's pastor for the first decade in New Hampshire, and when he thinks about the LePages, he thinks of the creative gifts they have and share-just as they have shared their lives for seven decades. With 70 years together and more than 90 a piece, there is one thing the two absolutely agree on - the best is yet to come. 'We're still together, and that the best part.'"

Portsmouth Herald, June 11, 1999

Miscellaneous pictures of the 1990's



Top Left: Newington Town Hall – 1992, Jennifer (Rosholt) Salmon as Psalty, Psalty Song Book skit performed by youth at 35th Anniversary.

Top Right: Former Holy Trinity members who became pastors: David Dalzell, Terry Rosholt, Michele Cooper, Tom Maehl, Kurt Baumann.

Bottom: 50th Anniversary of Ordination of Art Wingo September 17, 1994, Evie Wingo, Pastor Dave Snyder, Art Wingo





Top: Vacation Bible School 1995]

Bottom: Tom Maehl Ordination – 1999, left to right – Mark Beliveau, Andy Waters, Tom Maehl, Meg Maehl, Franklyn and Alice Vosburg, Jill Kammermeyer, Bob Hochstetler, Pastor Dave Snyder, Barbara Werdelin



Part III

Growth and Vigorous Outreach: 2000-present

“Continue to live in Him, rooted in Him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.”

--Colossians 2:6-7



This first decade of the new millennium, though not yet over, has truly been a remarkable time of strength and outreach for the congregation of Holy Trinity. This seven-year time period is marked by discrete events and by a vast number of continuing activities.

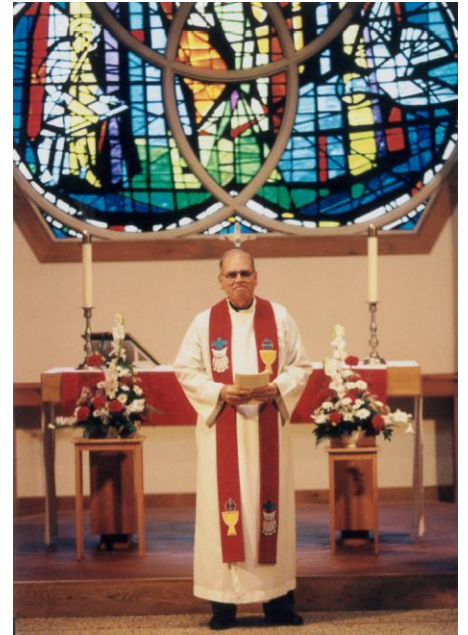
Events 2000-2007

Pastor Opderbecke

On Monday, February 21, 2000, the Call Committee unanimously presented to the Church Council the name of Pastor Linn Opderbecke to be the next pastor of Holy Trinity.

At an installation ceremony at Holy Trinity on September 22, 2000, we welcomed our new pastor and his wife, Nina.

Pastor Opderbecke said that he viewed as areas of focus and challenge the development of adult education, active small group ministry, and family and youth programs and activities.



[Reverend Linn Opderbecke, Served June 1, 2000 - present]

Fourth Refugee Resettlement

After the Popovic family was on its way to independence (see Part II, 1990's), the people of St. George Episcopal Church in Durham and Holy Trinity decided to sponsor another family together. We worked again through Lutheran Social Services in Concord and Episcopal Migration Ministries. This time we chose to sponsor Davor and Sanja Stilin, and their two young children, Sinisa and Stephan. The Stilins were fleeing from the war and unrest in Croatia to find a better life for themselves and their children.



Pastor Opderbecke's Installation
9/22/2000]

On September 20, 2000, our organizational meeting was held in Durham. Steering Committee members were: Barbara and Warren Galle, Charles Allen, Ron Indorf, Jill Kammermeyer, Judy Saddler (all members of Holy Trinity), and Jane Crooks, Scott Anderson, Richard Belshaw, Amanda Willard, Susan Martinen, Ben Mayer, Jean Mettam (all members of St. George). We chose to name our group "Welcoming Hearts". Warren Galle signed papers as Sponsor of Record, as he had done for the Popovic family. Charles Allen volunteered to be treasurer. The money taken in from our fund-raisers was deposited in a special bank account. Many of our parishioners volunteered and helped with daily contact and transportation.

By the time of our October 2000 meeting, a furnished apartment in Exeter had been offered at nominal rent by Rob Leatherbee, and an automobile was available when the family was ready for it. All the usual tasks were assigned and we waited for their arrival date. On December 14 the family arrived by plane and landed in a snowstorm. There was an enthusiastic welcoming group and we brought the Stilins back to their lovely apartment for a reception. Sanja spoke English and there was an interpreter from LSS on hand as well.

We were soon busy with our daily visits, getting Social Security cards, and enrolling Sinisa in first grade. Stephan was only two years old at the time. After the mandatory physical exams, we found a job for Davor at Exeter healthcare as a maintenance man. Sanja did housekeeping for some church families. It was soon apparent that Sinisa had some serious dental issues. A pediatric dentist who accepted Medicaid was found and Sinisa began a lengthy schedule of appointments to treat infection and save his teeth.

Our sponsorship was progressing well when on March 1, 2001, Sanja told us that Davor wanted to relocate to Milwaukee where he had contacts in the large Serbian community. At first we were saddened and shocked because we had so many plans for them, but then we realized that our role was to help them achieve their dreams, whatever they might be. We helped them prepare for their trip to Milwaukee. Sanja and the boys flew and Davor drove their car with a U-Haul. The Popovic family had grown close to the Stilins and had been assisting us helping with their adjustment. One of the Popovic men accompanied Davor to Milwaukee to help with the driving. The family left on March 17, 2001. When they first arrived in Milwaukee they stayed with relatives until Davor was working, then later moved into their own apartment. We kept in touch by phone.

Sanja got a job as a bank teller as soon as the boys were in school and daycare. Her bi-lingual skills were a great help, and she had opportunity for advancement, but her dental problems and missing teeth made her too self-conscious to apply for new positions. We decided that we could remedy that situation and set about to find help for her. Tedine Roos, a former Holy Trinity member, had also moved to the Milwaukee area, and proved to be an invaluable ally. She took the issue to her church AAL agent

and found a local dentist, Dr. Debra Palmer, who took on Sanja's care for a greatly reduced fee. Between AAL funds and our Holy Trinity yard sale, we raised the funds needed and Sanja was overjoyed to have a new smile. Her confidence restored, she took a management position at the bank. Sanja and the boys became active in the Eastern Orthodox Church.

Although our contact with the Stilins gradually stopped, we know that they will never forget how much their sponsors loved and supported them during their first days in their new country. It has been a blessing for all of us at Holy Trinity to know that because of our outreach many generations of the families we have sponsored will live in freedom.

Sale of Parsonage

Pastor and Nina had been searching for a home from the time they arrived in New Hampshire. After looking for almost two years, the congregation voted in June of 2002 to sell the parsonage to the Opderbeckes. They were happy to put an end to their search for a home in the seacoast area. The purchase of the parsonage was completed in August of the same year. Pastor and Nina were quite excited to own their own home again.

Columbarium

At the semi-annual meeting of June 2001 the Church Council requested that a task force be formed to research the placing of a columbarium at Holy Trinity. Many asked, "What is a columbarium?" A columbarium is a final resting place for the ashes of someone who has been cremated. Taken from the Latin word *columba*, which means dove, the literal translation of columbarium is "a nesting place for doves."

The columbarium task force researched and considered the issue of placing a columbarium at Holy Trinity, and provided updates to the Church Council. Recognizing that a columbarium would aid families in our congregation who desire to maintain a sacred place in which to honor deceased family members, the task force eventually recommended that Holy Trinity establish the columbarium. In addition, after having considered several options, the task force also recommended that the columbarium be placed within the chapel to lend an air of reverence and awe.



The Church Council considered the recommendations of the task force and approved the concept of an educational program. The program provided church members information about Lutheran theology on cremation and about columbariums, and was used to gather information about the support of church members for the idea of a columbarium.

At the Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting in June 2004, a motion was made to renovate the chapel and install the columbarium. The motion was approved.

The chapel renovation and the columbarium construction were completed in 2007. The dedication service for the columbarium and refurbished chapel will be held in mid-2007.



May 2007 Imanuel Indonesian Church accepted into the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, Pastor Robert Waworuntu with his wife Veronika

Immanuel Indonesian Church

May 20, 2007, was truly a milestone in the life of the Imanuel Indonesian Church. With much fanfare and celebration, the Imanuel Indonesian Church was accepted into the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. Imanuel was the fourth Indonesian congregation in the ELCA, the 108th Asian ministry. Preparation to make the transition into Lutheranism began in 2005, and May 20 was the culmination of many months of hard work. Pastor Robert Waworuntu had successfully passed all candidacy requirements, a constitution and bylaws had been written and accepted, and Imanuel had formally called Pastor Robert as their Lutheran Pastor.

The history of the Imanuel Indonesian Lutheran Church dates back only a few years, but much was accomplished in that short period of time. Beginning in the middle of the year 2000, a group of Indonesian Christians living in the Portsmouth-Rye area began worshipping in house fellowship on Saturdays. By September 10 of the same year, they began to meet Sundays in the function hall at White Cedar Apartments in Portsmouth, with Rev. Sandra Longdong as their first pastor. In October they moved to the Comfort Inn in Portsmouth. It was here on October 14 that the new congregation named itself the "Immanuel Indonesian Protestant Church of New Hampshire". The next month, with the blessings of Pastor Linn Opderbecke, Imanuel found a permanent church home, worshipping on Sunday afternoons at Holy Trinity, a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).

Immanuel formed its first church council that fall. In January of 2001, Pastor Longdong announced her retirement from ministry. With the help of Atty. Ronald Indorf, Imanuel registered in June as a congregation in the state of New Hampshire. The next month, on July 15, 2001, Rev. Robert Waworuntu was called as pastor.

In March 2002, Imanuel's church council began talks with the ELCA, New England Synod, on how to begin the process of joining ELCA. Pastor Hans Arnesen, then Mission Director for the New England Synod, met with the council in May. It would prove to be a long process, interrupted by Pastor Waworuntu's need to return to Indonesia to renew his visa and Pastor Arnesen's leaving office. Imanuel was served in Pastor Waworuntu's absence first by Pastor George Kountul and then by Pastor Longdong.

In the Synod offices, Pastor Jane Shields was called to become the new Mission Director. Pastor Waworuntu returned to the U.S. in October of 2003 accompanied by his son Robert, Jr. By the following summer, his wife, Veronika, and daughter Pamela would finally join him.

In February of 2004, Pastor Opderbecke entered into Synod conversations about Imanuel's process to join the ELCA. Two years later, in February 2006, the ELCA formally received Imanuel as a new mission congregation. Pastor Waworuntu completed his candidacy to become a rostered ELCA pastor. In April Imanuel voted to change its name to Imanuel Indonesian Lutheran Church. On May 6, Imanuel signed its ELCA charter. On May 20, 2006, the congregation celebrated its official acceptance into the ELCA and the installation of Pastor Waworuntu and the church council under the ELCA.

In 2001, the Imanuel Protestant Church was established on the seacoast by a handful of Indonesians fleeing religious persecution in their home country. Today, Imanuel has 150 members. They are not only the first Indonesian congregation to join the New England Synod, but the first to attain full status in the ELCA.

Intern Seminary Student

At the annual congregational meeting in January 2007, we voted to have a seminary student serve as an intern at Holy Trinity for the period September 2007-08. Pastor Opderbecke traveled to Lutheran Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota, to interview potential interns in early February. He interviewed sixteen seminarians, and we sent the seminary our top four choices. We are pleased that the seminary is sending student Mary Tillman Glade to join Holy Trinity in September 2007 as our seminary intern for one year.

Students usually complete their required internship in the third year of their four-year seminary education. The intern is a student, not yet a pastor, who spends the year learning about the daily duties of a pastor. Intern Mary will conduct worship, preach at least once a month, attend council and ministry team meetings, visit sick and shut-ins, and visit members of Holy Trinity. She will teach and work with our Junior and Senior High youth, participate in Synod events, help out at Camp Calumet, and be part of the New England Intern cluster. Pastor Opderbecke will serve as her supervisor, and the Holy Trinity family will be her teachers.

Continuing Activities

Youth Ministry at Holy Trinity

The youth ministry has always been an important part of life at Holy Trinity. Senior High youth play an active role in church services, whether in teen choir (from 2003 to 2006), as readers, or as ushers. They also work to give back to their communities, both local and national. The Senior High youth ministry at Holy Trinity has offered a place for high school students to gather, learn, and grow in God.

The Senior High youth ministry grew in leaps and bounds with the arrival of Kristy Moore and John Christianson in 2003. Both John and Kristy were active at Camp Calumet both in years prior to their arrival at Holy Trinity, as well as during. John and Kristy were later married at Camp Calumet.

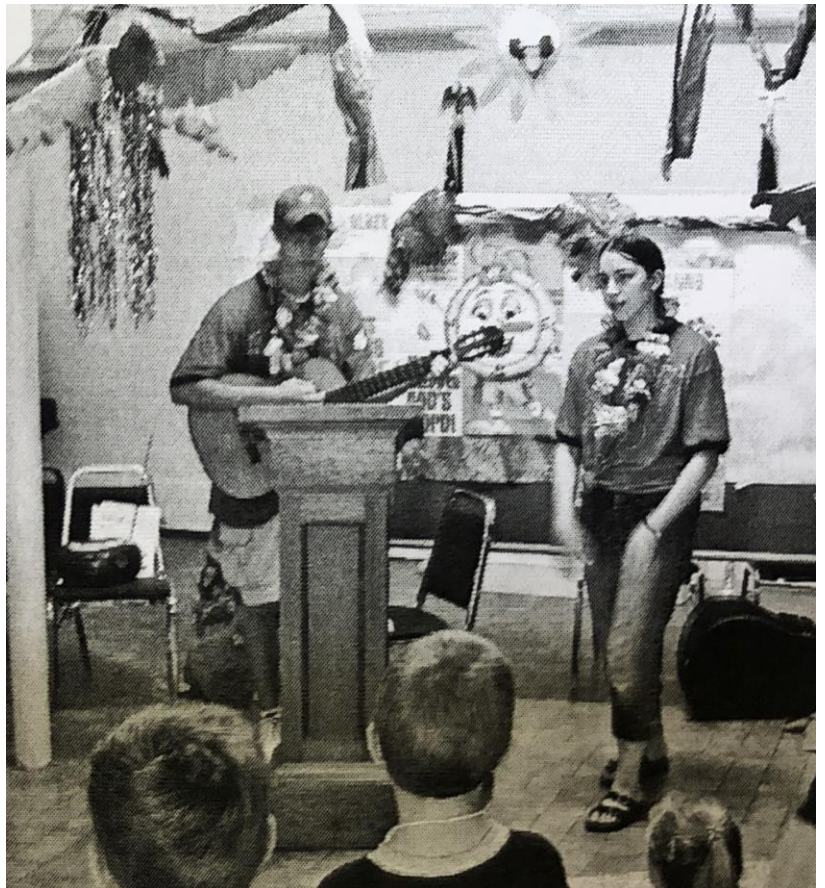
As our Teen Choir directors and Youth Group leaders, John and Kristy played an integral part in the youth program. They served not only as mentors and leaders, but also as friends. During their Teen Choir performances, the youth were not only learning new worship songs to share with the congregation, but also developing their faith through discussion, fellowship, and fun. Always ready and willing to try new ideas, the youth group expanded and "Hang Time" was created. Hang Time offered Senior High youth an hour or so on Wednesday nights to get together and just ... hang

out! The Senior High youth group has continued to thrive through the programs that John and Kristy created, even after they moved to Colorado.

Over the past few years, the Senior High youth have given their time and energy to community service. During vacation bible school, many of the senior high youth serve as teachers and leaders for the children who attend. The Senior High youth also serve outside of Holy Trinity while on Mission Trips. In 2003, 13 students spent a week renovating the local church's parsonage, as well as assisting in maintenance work for a non-profit organization in the town of Cherryfield, Maine.

Mission Trip 2004 - Vacation Bible School at Gustaf Adolf Lutheran Church, Kent Willis, Jennifer Gile

In 2004, eight of our Senior High youth went on a Mission Trip to New Sweden, Maine. On Sunday, July 25, 2004, the group loaded up their supplies and drove nearly eight hours north to Gustaf Adolf Lutheran Church. The group prepared, organized, and led a community vacation bible school for the children at the church. There had not been a VBS hosted there in years, so our team from Holy Trinity was especially proud to have played a part. While in New Sweden, our senior high youth did an outstanding job teaching, singing, acting, crafting, and playing with the children. After busy mornings of VBS, Holy Trinity teens did various community work projects in the afternoon.



In 2005, twelve of the Senior High youth embarked on a Mission Trip to New York City to volunteer their time and talents. The group painted the interior hallways of the Bergen Street Residence for formerly homeless and mentally ill people. Our youth worked six to eight hours a day during this servant event. During the evenings, the group saw the Fourth of July fireworks, had a picnic in Central Park, visited Times Square, and walked the Brooklyn Bridge.

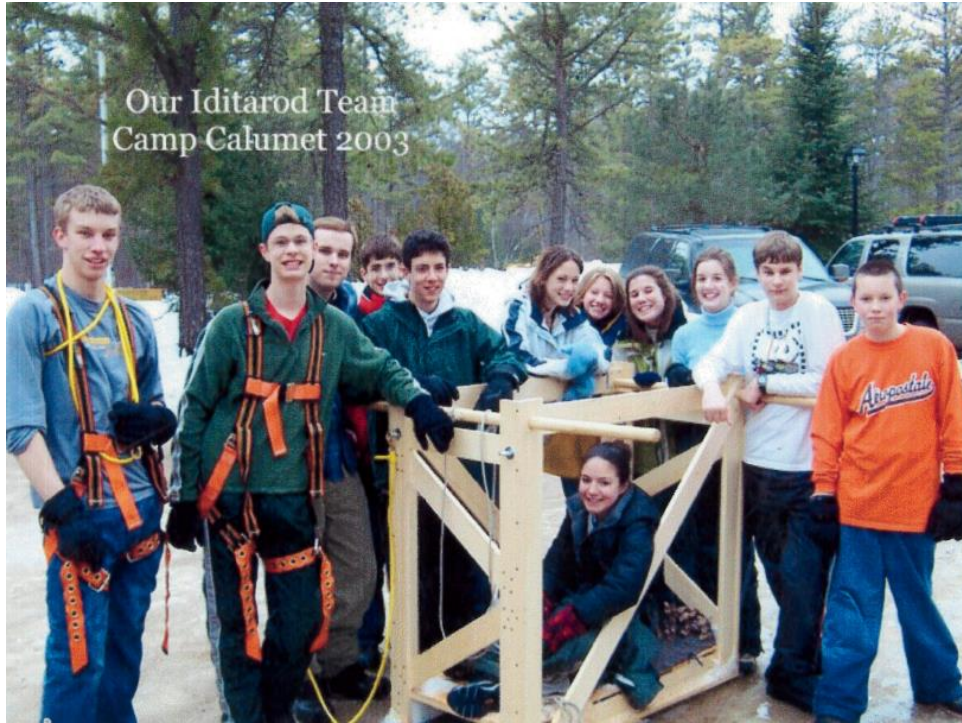


[Mission Trip 2005 - left to right: Pastor Linn Opderbecke, Drew Willis, Alyson Sweet, Tony Gass-Dolcino, Anders Essley, Imani Lugalla, Lindsay Sweet, middle row: Kendall Masse, Alice Tilton, unknown, Cristina Gass-Dolcino, front row: Nick Waterman (seated), Hilary Eslinger, Lauren Stone, Kent Willis

In July 2006, six of Holy Trinity's senior high youth attended

"Cruzando", the National ELCA Youth Gathering in San Antonio, Texas. The event brought together youth from all over the United States for singing, praying, laughing, and fun. All the Bible studies and evening programs at Cruzando were held in the Alamodome - a huge convention center located just minutes from downtown San Antonio. Speakers ranged from a former slave in the Sudan, to people who helped immigrants, to a handicapped man from Ghana who rode across his country on a bike.

Each one of the 14,000 youth who were in attendance at Cruzando received a bracelet that read "Vaya con Dios," which translated from Spanish means "Go with God." According to those who went on the trip, Cruzando was not only faith strengthening, but also a life changing experience.



Camp Calumet
Iditarod Team
2003, Addison
Masse, Kent
Willis, Matt Willis,
Andy Stone, Peter
Goransson,
Michelle Carson,
Beth Reny, Hilary
Eslinger, Lauren
Stone, Drew
Willis, Kendall
Masse, Allison
Janakis (seated)

Every February, the Senior High youth make their trek to Camp Calumet for the Annual Iditarod Race. A long anticipated event each year, the Iditarod involves teamwork, problem solving, and, at the end, a nice warm fire back in the lodge! Thanks to the members of Holy Trinity who have been instrumental in the development and support of our youth, the Senior High youth group continues to grow and stay involved in the life of the church and local community. With lively discussions in Sunday School, casual gatherings, trips locally and nationally, as well as countless opportunities to serve others, the Senior High has an important place in the past, present, and future at Holy Trinity.

Iditarod Race

The Senior High Youth makes an annual trek to Camp Calumet in February for the Calumet Iditarod Race. Holy Trinity has participated in this race in years past and now there is a new "generation" of racers.

Camp Calumet, W. Ossipee, New Hampshire

Holy Trinity is very fortunate to be in close proximity to Camp Calumet. Camp Calumet is located an hour and a half from Newington on the northern shore of Lake Ossipee at the edge of New Hampshire's magnificent Mount Washington Valley.

Camp Calumet provides camping and a welcoming conference center for over 200 congregations in the New England Synod, ELCA. It is a place where Christian values are taught and lived. There are programs for everyone from the young to the more mature campers.



Summer camps for the youth are scheduled for one- or two-week sessions. It is an experience young campers never forget. Kids make great friends, play games, swim in Lake Ossipee, go boating, make awesome crafts, enjoy great food, praise God, and have the time of their lives.

Holy Trinity youth have participated in the programs at Calumet for over 30 years. Some of the more seasoned members of Holy Trinity remember sending their children to Calumet back in the 70's.



3-10 Confirmation
Camp June 2007

Each year six to twelve of our youth participate in Holy Trinity's confirmation program. Over the years several Holy Trinity members have played a role in helping our confirmands grow spiritually at this critical time in their lives. In recent years however, none have been more involved in our confirmation program than Scott Carson. Our youth have loved Scott's approach to teaching God's word in a contemporary, witty, yet meaningful way to which they can relate. A key milestone in Holy Trinity's confirmation program is when our young confirmands get to spend a week at Camp Calumet. For most, that time at Calumet has had a profound impact.

In addition to programs for the youth, there is family camping every summer and Mom's Weekend in the fall and Holy Trinity Women's Weekend in the spring. If you've never been to Camp Calumet, it's an adventure you need to experience.

Habitat for Humanity

For many years, Holy Trinity has been a covenant church for Habitat for Humanity. Volunteers for Habitat provide free labor in the construction of affordable housing for low-income families.

Members of our congregation, including former Pastor Dave Snyder, were instrumental in beginning the Southeast New Hampshire Chapter of Habitat for Humanity back in the early 1990's. Many of our members have served on its board of directors over the years. In addition, we as a congregation have been actively involved in local Habitat building projects, and a group from Holy Trinity traveled to Florida to assist Habitat in rebuilding after the disastrous hurricane hit in the late 1990's.

As a covenant church, Habitat is included as part of our Social Ministry budget. We continue to be actively involved in the building of safe, decent, and affordable housing for people and families who desperately desire to have their own home but are unable to afford it.

Habitat is truly a wonderful Social Ministry organization. We look forward to continuing to support Habitat through our hands-on work and financial contributions.

Faith and Service Award

The Holy Trinity Faith and Service Award is a grant awarded to a graduating high school senior to assist with post-graduate education, in recognition of faith and service. This grant was established in 2002 to: encourage active participation at Holy Trinity, recognize and affirm faith and service, and encourage future faith and service.

Those eligible for this award are graduating high school seniors planning to attend a two- or four-year college, and who are members of Holy Trinity. The criteria the Awards Committee uses to select the persons receiving the award are:

Attendance and participation in worship (e.g., lector communion assistant) and in the life of the church;

Attendance in Sunday School and participation and leadership in the youth group;
Witness to faith in daily life; and

Service to the wider community

A generous donor provided the first \$6,000 of seed money for the award. It is hoped that others will donate to the Fund. The first Faith and Service Award was presented in June of 2002.

Community Outreach

Holy Trinity has been involved in many outreach projects in the community. Since 2000, that ministry has continued to grow.

Operation Blessing

Operation Blessing, located in Portsmouth, is a tax exempt, non-denominational Christian ministry that assists people in crisis situations with food, clothing, household goods, and furniture. Each month Operation Blessing sends a "Special Needs" list to Holy Trinity, which is posted on the bulletin board in the Gathering Area. In addition to the one or more items highlighted for the month, there are other items requested. We as a church have committed ourselves to support this non-denominational Christian ministry through our donations of special needs items.

Dover Soup Kitchen

Holy Trinity has been volunteering at the Dover Soup Kitchen located at the St. Thomas Church for years. Two teams alternate serving on the fourth Tuesday of each month.

Belonging Bundles

Holy Trinity supports the Antrim Girls Shelter. The shelter is a mission run by ELCA that provides an interim home for teenage girls in crisis. The girls have been removed from their homes for various reasons and stay for up to sixty days while other living situations and services are found for them. Girls arriving at the shelter often have nothing but the clothes they are wearing at the time. The "Belonging Bundles", which we prepare, are given to girls upon arrival at Antrim. The bundles contain items such as bath towel, washcloth, toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo, conditioner, brush, soap, deodorant, and a small notebook, all of which are wrapped in the towel and tied with a ribbon or yarn. The bundles help to make the girls feel personally acknowledged and truly welcomed into the community.

Wish Upon a Star

The Wish Upon a Star program is a Christmas ministry program sponsored by the Salvation Army that provides Christmas presents for needy children in our area. Holy Trinity is a major helper in this program, contributing over fifty gifts a year.

Thanksgiving Food Drive

The generosity of our members during Thanksgiving season has been evident for years at Holy Trinity. Each year the number of food baskets has increased to meet the needs of those in the community. Not only are food baskets delivered, but gift certificates are donated so families can purchase fresh fruits and vegetables.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Imagine you are experiencing one of life's most difficult times. Perhaps you are sick. Or someone you love has died. In your heart, you know that, even as you suffer, God is with you. You know that members of your church family are praying for you. Or, imagine that you would like to do more for your church family. You go to church. You pray. Your day just won't allow for another commitment, but in the evening you like to spend some time knitting or crocheting. Simply put, a prayer shawl is a rectangle of yarn, either knitted or crocheted according to simple directions that, when completed, is large enough to wrap around someone. Whenever the knitter picks up her work, she begins by praying that the recipient (whom she may or may not know) will be comforted by the wearing of the shawl. The knitter adds prayers on a regular basis throughout the project until the completed shawl can wrap the recipient in love and prayer.

As of this writing, the Shawl Ministry has distributed forty knitted or crocheted shawls to members of the church.

World Outreach

Tsunami Fund

Holy Trinity raised and sent nearly \$5,000 to ELCA World Disaster Fund and to Lutheran World Relief Disaster Fund to aid the recovery from the recent Tsunami that struck in December 2004. Our funds aided in recovery in Indonesia and India.

Hurricane Katrina

In the final week of August 2005, Hurricane Katrina struck New Orleans and other parts of Louisiana. In the aftermath of that disaster, our congregation raised over \$4,000 for the Hurricane Katrina survivors.



Tanzania Trip - June 2006, back row - Doug Lattman, Ed Mallon, Pastor Linn Opderbecke, Kurt Kasik, Judy Evans, Carol Larkin, front row - Elinor Young, Linda Swiatocha, Pastor Paul Lindstrom, Jackie Refsdal, Dot Kasik, Melissa Lattman

Tanzania Trip

Holy Trinity has always tried to respond to opportunities for ministry when they present themselves, such as our sponsorship of refugees and our relationship with Imanuel Indonesian congregation. Our establishment of a partnership with the Lutheran congregation in rural Isimani, Tanzania, represents another such example. The story of our relationship with our Tanzania sister congregation begins with the Lugalla family.

The Lugallas are from Tanzania and joined Holy Trinity in the late 1990's. Joe, a professor at UNH, remained very involved in Tanzania even after his relocation to the United States. His father was a Lutheran pastor there. In talking together, Joe and Pastor Opderbecke came up with the idea of linking Joe's father's former congregation with Holy Trinity. The conversation was the beginning of a meaningful partnership that continues to grow today.

On June 11, 2006, thirteen people from Holy Trinity left Boston to visit our sister congregation in Isimani, Tanzania, for a 14-day trip. Isimani is located in a rather remote series of villages about one hour north of the state capitol of Iringa. Iringa is an eight-hour drive from the capital of Tanzania, Dar es Salaam. Holy Trinity parishioners brought several banners and some of our extra communion ware. In addition to visiting our sister congregation for several days, the group took a two-day safari in Rhuaha National Park, a trip to Zanzibar, and visited several Lutheran ministries in Tanzania. They visited with students supported by Holy Trinity in Isimani, worshipped at eight preaching points, and worshipped on Sunday at the church in Isimani. Each participant brought gifts for our sister congregation in their extra bag, including pens, pencils, markers, used wedding gowns, and other clothing. They purchased treadle sewing machines in Iringa to help start a women's sewing co-op in Isimani.

"Reflections on Trip to Tanzania"

"It is 9:00 a.m. on a sunny day as we leave for our first trip to Isimani. We had 4 bags filled with presents to give to four different preaching points. When we arrived in Isimani, Joe Lugalla, who was already there, pointed to the right of the road we were on and told us to turn into a dirt road.

"We were not ready for what we encountered. A large group was waiting as we turned onto the road. They began to sing "Karibou" (Welcome), dancing and shrilling (the women make a high pitch sound with their voice and run their tongue back and forth; you have to hear it to believe it). They had drums and one woman had a whistle that she seemed to blow at key times. Everyone would say to us "-san-tay-so-na", thank you very much. This was a quick stop as we then left for the Hostel that had been built with funds from Holy Trinity. The people continued to sing and dance until we got back on the road and left.

"The area is very high and dry and the day was exceptionally cool. They have had two consecutive years of crop failures due to lack of rain. The biggest crop is corn, which depletes the soil. The majority of homes are made of clay with a thatched roof. While riding on a very, very bad road, we passed a woman making bricks on the side of the road. Once off the main road, the roads go from bad to worse to non-existent. Joe told us the former government had a great deal of corruption and bit by bit the roads washed out from the rain, since they are not paved.

"We pulled in front of a woman's house as she was hand-grinding meal. It was a small clay house, but the woman had on a colorful outfit and had attached pieces of cloth with splashes of color on her house that looked good. In the front yard she was hand watering corn stalks and other vegetables. The Tanzanian government made fresh water a priority and about 80% of the people have access to fresh water. The government has also set up clinics in most areas and mandates education between the ages of 7 and 14. They must now deal with feeding a population that is growing a 7% last year and is expected to double in 18 years.

The Congregation is in the process of building two hostels. The first is almost completed. It has six small rooms each to hold four students and a large central room. It is intended to house boys going to a secondary school (high school) that is close by. The second hostel will house the girls. The students will cook their own food. It is very competitive to get into secondary school; about 5% of students make it.

"We stopped at one of the largest preaching points where Pastor Msola introduced Pastor Opderbecke. We exchanged gifts. Their gifts to us included a live chicken in a box. There was more singing with drums, whistle and trilling. We then left the preaching point building and we were served food and tea while even the servers waited in an adjoining room while we ate. It is custom to feed one's guests even if you cannot feed yourself. It would be rude not to accept their gifts and food.

"Once you have been to Africa, you are changed forever. To say it is a different world than ours is a gross understatement. It seems to be a land of extremes, from the very old to the very new.

"In Iringa, the Bible truly came alive for me. The way they build their homes, using bricks made by stomping mud and straw together and baking them in the sun reminded me of the Hebrews in Egypt making them that way in "The Ten Commandments". The way the Tanzanians wash your hands before meals by pouring water from a pitcher over them into a bowl reminded me of the woman who washed Jesus' feet. The preaching point was so poor that their only gift to us was a twelve pack of pint sized water bottles that reminded me of the widow who had nothing yet gave her last cent to the church. The reception we received rolling into Isimani on the bus complete with singing, dancing, and the waving of palm branches reminded me of Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. Everywhere something reminded me of Biblical life.

"Having seen the beauty of the landscape, the interaction of the animals and the feeling emitting from the ground, nature at its absolute best; it's not hard to see why God chose this part of the world to be the cradle of life, or why he chose me to go there to feel closer to His Son. But why did he choose me to see first-hand the danger that life is in now, from the draught, economic hardship and global warming? What can I do to help alleviate their pain and suffering besides pray for them and help raise money and awareness to their plight? What can we do now?"

The Tanzanian Travelers

Emergency Food Fund for Tanzania

During the 2006 visit to Tanzania, the Holy Trinity group saw the dried-up fields around Isimani and discovered that the people of Isimani were in the middle of a two-year drought. Many of the members of our sister congregation were experiencing hardship and hunger. We also discovered we could buy and deliver sacks of corn and grain to Isimani. A \$35.00 gift would purchase a delivery of a 100-kilogram (220 pound) bag of corn. Since our trip to Tanzania in 2006, we have raised almost \$4,000 or over 25,000 pounds of corn and grain.

Tanzania Scholarship Support

Over \$11,000 was raised during Lent 2006 to support scholarships for thirty youth in Isimani, Tanzania. Most of these thirty students would not be continuing their education without our support. The scholarships provide room and board at boarding school, as well as school fees. Without an education, most of these young people would not be able to get good jobs and would live in poverty.



Guatemala June 2007, Margareta Claesson on left

Guatemala Project

During their 2005 Christmas vacation, the Gass/Dolcino family traveled to Guatemala to work in the Fundaninos Orphanage. The family was so moved by the experience that they decided to return to the orphanage the following year.

For their Christmas 2006 trip, the team from Holy Trinity increased in size to include the Carsons: Scott, Leslie, Kaitlyn, and Michelle. Their time spent at the Fundaninos Orphanage was exhausting and exhilarating time under God's supporting hands. They played with and took care of fifty-one children, and worked on service projects. The children ranged in age from birth to fifteen years old and are living at the orphanage because of poverty, abandonment, alcoholism, or various types of abuse. The orphanage is located outside of the city of Guatemala in a rural setting that allows the children space to run and play.

The group from Holy Trinity worked scraping, priming, and painting the entrance gates of the orphanage. They bathed, changed, dressed, and fed the babies (fourteen of them) daily. They dug three drainage ditches and back-filled the foundation of the new baby house. They worked with other wonderful volunteers, practiced their Spanish, and had the opportunity to visit the neighboring town of Antigua.

Because of Holy Trinity's strong commitment to mission, a third trip was planned to Guatemala in June 2007. A multi-generational group of eight women traveled to Guatemala on this mission trip.

Vegetable and Flowers Donations

Through the generosity of parishioners such as Harold and Shirley Lee, Barbara and Warren Galle, and Leslie and Scott Carson, who provided fresh vegetables and flowers every Sunday during summer and fall, money was raised to help world hunger programs via Lutheran World Relief.

HTELC Pastors 2000-present

Rev. Paul Lindstrom, interim pastor, served until May 2000. We are blessed that he remains a member of Holy Trinity. Rev. Linn Opderbecke answered the call and joined Holy Trinity in June 2000 and is still serving.

From January 2004 to the present date, Pastor Lindstrom has served as our visitation pastor for one day a week. Pastor Lindstrom primarily visits our “shut-ins” and older members. We are very pleased to have Pastor Lindstrom on staff. This allows Holy Trinity to do a better job of visitation and communion for older members on a regular basis.

Pastor Lindstrom also served as interim co-pastor at Trinity Lutheran in Worcester, MA.

Spiritual Gifts

Now the gifts God gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors, and teachers to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.

Ephesians 4:11-12

In his letter to council members in January 2001, Pastor Opderbecke first introduced Holy Trinity to the idea of “helping people to discover and use their spiritual gifts.” In May of 2001 a task force worked enthusiastically through May 2002 and developed recommendations on how to proceed. Then in April 2003, a plan was drafted to implement a six-week program to lead the congregation in learning about spiritual gifts. On May 7, 2003, Linda Edwards and Erik Johannessen led the first workshop with 13 participants.

During the Church Council Retreat on May 21, 2003, the Council decided that the number one goal for the year was to develop a Spiritual Gifts Program. They believed that implementing a gift-based ministry would be the best way of ensuring that members and friends discover, develop, and use their spiritual gifts. “Do not neglect the gift you have...” (1 Corinthians 12:31). Then on July 7, 2003, the church council voted to authorize a new Spiritual Gifts Ministry Team. The team developed the following mission statement: “Believing that each person is uniquely gifted for ministry, the Spiritual Gifts Team will offer opportunities to help members identify, develop, use and appreciate their spiritual gifts at Holy Trinity and the surrounding community.

Since that time, Pastor Opderbecke integrated the spiritual gifts theme into his preaching. There have been Tidings and bulletin articles, several workshops, and take-home Kits. The team also took on the responsibility of New Member Sponsors as well as the “Using Our Gifts” time and talent program. The team continues to offer

opportunities for people to discover their gifts and to assist them in using these gifts in the best area of the church.

In the book "Wishful Thinking", the author writes, "The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet." We each have special gifts from God and when we find and apply them we will find the deepest joy. That is when our special talents become spiritual gifts.

"I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you..."
11 Timothy 1:6

Holy Trinity Talent Auction

The Holy Trinity Talent Auction has been held since 2001. It is a fund-raiser sponsored by the Youth to help raise funds for Confirmation Camp and also give to youth who could not otherwise afford it an opportunity to experience Camp Calumet. Members are asked to donate their talents. It may be cooking, sewing, gardening, or offering their boat for a ride on the bay, or a golf outing-- the list goes on and on. The money helps defer the cost for Confirmation Camp, so that those youth going only pay a small stipend.

The money raised one year was used to send our high school group to New York City on a mission trip. The seniors served in Manhattan soup kitchens and experienced New York City living, including a "faith walk" at Ground Zero and more. Funds from the Talent Auction also helped to support our youth who attended the National Youth Assembly in San Antonio, Texas. Because of the generosity of the Holy Trinity members, it was decided to use one year's funds to support the Fundaninos Orphanage outside of Guatemala City, Guatemala. The goal was to raise enough money to support the completion of the "casa de bebes" (baby house) at the orphanage and to help defray the lodging costs of the Holy Trinity members that traveled to Guatemala.

Parish Nursing Program

In 2003, several church members who are nurses, and others in the congregation with ties to health care, began to dream about starting a parish nursing program at Holy Trinity. Congregations of all denominations across the country have been initiating parish nursing programs to meet the “wholeness” needs of their members. The members identified the key healthcare and support roles into which the ministry would evolve:

- **Health counseling**
- **Education on health and wellness issues**
- **Advocacy**
- **Liaison and information on accessing available resources**
- **Teacher**
- **Healer of the mind, body and spirit**

The Parish Nurses group provides an article in the Tidings each month regarding health issues. Members have also been taking blood pressures after the services on Sunday.

Thursday Morning Crew

Each Thursday morning a group of our retired folks come together to clean-up and fix-up our church inside and out. Take a few minutes and notice the lawns and gardens surrounding the church. The grounds are lovingly maintained by these individuals. They have done many small and big jobs in the church that parishioners likely don't notice. Each year new members join the group. We are thankful for their fine work and we owe a big round of applause to everyone involved.

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans (formerly Aid Association for Lutherans) is a leading fraternal benefit society of Lutherans joined together for insurance, investment, education, and volunteering.

Thrivent has been an integral part of our Holy Trinity family for many years. It has provided matching funds (up to \$1,500) for many of our fundraising projects. Holy Trinity has had its own Thrivent Branch for a number of years.

Bike and Build At Holy Trinity

For several years Holy Trinity has housed 30-plus young people that participate in the northern route of the “Bike and Build”, a project to end poverty housing. These young

people stay in the church on two evenings in June, as they prepare for their cross-country journey from Portsmouth to Vancouver, BC. The general purpose of the organization is to build awareness about poverty housing, raise funds to support these efforts, and to physically assist in the building process as they journey across the country. Holy Trinity provides an evening meal for the group.

Missionaries Supported in Jamaica

Since March 1995, Holy Trinity has been supporting the missionary work of Pastor David Kuck and his wife, Mary, in Jamaica. Pastor Kuck is working with students who are being nurtured for Christian ministry. Mary works with students who are preparing to be vocational and technical students. They have two grown children.

The Kucks visited Holy Trinity on June 15, 2003, and shared their experience of working in Jamaica. They serve our Lord at the United Theological College in Kingston, Jamaica.

Social Activities

Throughout the years there have been a number of social activities offered to the members. Though we are not able to list each one, the following descriptions give a sense of the breadth and variety of social activities at Holy Trinity:

Pairs & Spares: Later called the Adult Group, Pairs & Spares provided social activities for all adults.



Mother-Daughter Banquet: Nancy Clapp, Jean Klein, Doris Abling

Mother-Daughter Banquets: Mothers and daughters enjoyed an evening of dinner and socializing. Prizes were awarded in different categories.

Progressive Dinners: Participants enjoyed each course at a different house. One year there were 57 people traveling from one house to another.

International Food Festival: Booths representing seven different countries displayed their culinary dishes. Tickets were purchased, allowing individuals to sample delicacies from each country. Funds raised were donated to support outreach projects.

Men's Breakfasts: Men in the congregation would get together Saturday mornings for breakfast and fellowship.

Mom's Weekend at Calumet: Women from Holy Trinity and from several New England Lutheran churches would spend a relaxing weekend with Bible study, arts and crafts, cross-country skiing, singing, and plenty of eating.



Women's Weekend March 2006

Holy Trinity Women's Weekend at Calumet: Over time, the Mom's weekend became so large that Holy Trinity decided to offer a second weekend at Camp Calumet just for women from Holy Trinity. The women's weekend is held in March of each year.



October 2002 Tables of Eight - Peggy & Roger Stolley, Ray & Sue Masse,
Scott & Leslie Carson, Jon & Donna Huot

Tables of Eight: How about dinner with eight people (maybe more), whom you may not know well? The Tables of Eight concept provides an opportunity for church members to get to know each other in a setting outside of church and to enjoy fellowship and good food.

There have been many programs and activities that have been an integral part of our life at Holy Trinity. We have attempted to highlight some of those activities here. As we look forward to the future we will strive to continue to support the members of Holy Trinity both socially and spiritually.

Holy Trinity Mission Endowment Fund

As part of our 50th Anniversary Celebration, we have started a “Holy Trinity Mission Endowment Fund”. We have been deeply blessed by those folks who had a vision and made sacrifices so that Holy Trinity can be here for us 50 years later.

The Mission Endowment Fund will encourage us at Holy Trinity to be “mission minded” in the future. The proceeds from the fund will enable new ministries to be created, and will allow us to continue serving God by reaching out beyond the bounds of our congregation.

At the Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting on June 10, 2007, the congregation voted to amend the Bylaws of the Constitution for Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church by adding Article 12.05, which reads in part:

1. The Mission Endowment Fund will be used to fund mission work at home and around the world above and beyond the programs supported through regular offerings. The Fund will serve as a receptacle for accumulated resources as well as legacy gifts. The Fund will be invested and managed by the ELCA Foundation.

* * *

2. The duties of the Mission Endowment Fund Committee are:
To encourage gifts to the Mission Endowment Fund through education and promotion of the Fund;

To receive and celebrate gifts given for ministry through the Fund and to maintain a permanent book of remembrance of donors to the Fund;

To monitor the Fund’s investments and to receive and review periodic reports from the ELCA Foundation concerning those invested funds;

To recommend annual distributions from the Fund, with a goal of distributing approximately four to six percent of total accumulated assets in the Fund each year; and

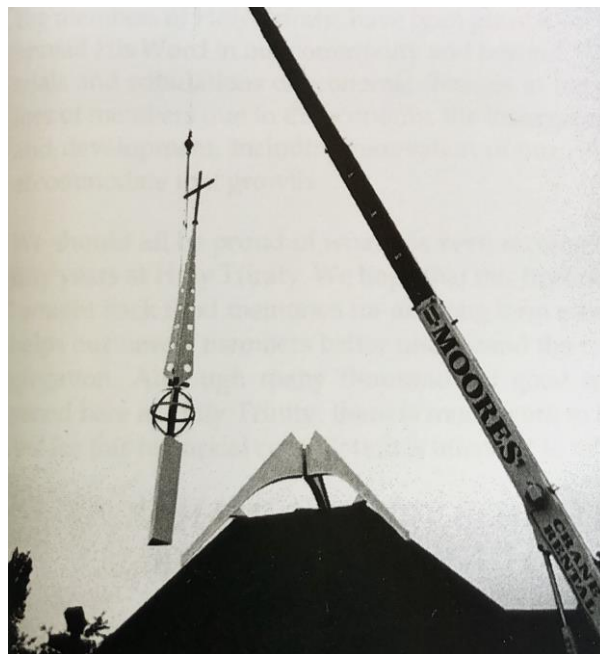
To recommend specific beneficiaries for those gifts in one or more of the following categories: ministries with the New England Synod of the ELCA, ELCA church-wide ministries or extraordinary programs; projects within the local area; outreach ministry initiatives of this Congregation. Recommended distributions are subject to acceptance by the council and approval of the Congregation at a duly called meeting.

Other than an initial contribution to the fund by Holy Trinity in the amount of \$25,000 from the sale of the parsonage, the fund’s assets will come exclusively from those who wish to contribute to the fund in one of a number of ways either during their life, or after death by will, trust, or other estate planning mechanism.

Miscellaneous pictures of the 2000's



Top: Tree dedication to Shirley and Harold Lee
Bottom: Reattachment ceremony for fallen steeple



50-year Reflection

As we reflect on the past fifty years, we realize that we have touched on just a few of the many happenings at Holy Trinity. There have been countless members throughout the years who have supported a multitude of programs, those who have served on Council and all the supporting committees, and those serving as Sunday School teachers who have given tirelessly of their time and energy to teach and nurture our future congregation. We realize it would be foolish to try and name everyone because we would run the risk of forgetting someone.

A parishioner once said that Holy Trinity reminded him of a gas station: people came in, were filled with the Holy Spirit, and went out to spread the Word and share the message of Jesus Christ. We the members of Holy Trinity have been given a very special gift-- to spread His Word in our community and beyond. We have faced the trials and tribulations of economic changes in our community, the loss of members due to the economy, the insurgence of new growth and development, including renovation of our church building to accommodate that growth.

We should all be proud of what has been accomplished in the first fifty years at Holy Trinity. We hope that this historical overview has brought back fond memories for our long term members and that it helps our newer members better understand the roots of their congregation. Although many thousands of good works have happened here at Holy Trinity, there is much work to be done. The tag line for this historical compilation is intended to reflect that reality:

"A HALF CENTURY BEHIND US - AN ETERNITY AHEAD OF US"

Acknowledgements

As we attempted to record the many events that occurred at Holy Trinity over the past fifty years, we have gleaned information from a variety of sources. We have reviewed past church records, searched through various documentation highlighting those fifty years and also interviewed and informally spoken with Charter Members, as well as those who have been long standing members in the congregation. The information contained in this book is a compilation of all of the above and more.

This project has been enlightening, informative, satisfying and a labor of love! The final result is the story of Holy Trinity's rise from one man's dream to start a Lutheran Church in the seacoast area, to one of the largest Lutheran churches in the New England Synod. The Lord has truly blessed Holy Trinity!

We wish to thank the following individuals for their help in compiling our 50-year history of Holy Trinity. In alphabetical order:

Ted Ackman	Provided photographs taken during the 70's-80's
Marie Edin, Church Historian	Provided invaluable information regarding the church beginnings.
Don England	Wrote the history on the first 35 years
Barbara Galle	Wrote the Refugee articles and the Seafarers Mission
Jean (Wenant) Herrick	Provided Contemporary Service (Sounds of Peace) information
Algird Krygeris	Provided photographs
Lois Kreider	Contemporary Service (Sounds of Peace) initiator
Jill Larson	Provided the Spiritual Gifts article
Harold Lee	Initiated the creation of Holy Trinity in the seacoast
Jean Philbrick	Provided information on missionaries in Jamaica
Beth Rice	Provided youth information
Mark Donahue	Converted the document for online viewing

Compilers
Sarah Cooley
Sue Masse
Martha Rosholt

Writer & Editor
Kate Spoto

Whenever an attempt is made to recognize individuals, there is always the risk that someone will be omitted. We apologize if that has happened.

Timeline

Important events in our church history are noted here in chronological order:

1956 - February, Harold and Shirley Lee write to Augustana Lutheran Church about starting Lutheran church in Portsmouth area

1956 - July 28, Chaplain Stanley Emerson conducts first Lutheran service at Pease Air Force Base chapel

1956 – September, services moved to Memorial Chapel of Middle Street Baptist Church in Portsmouth

1957 - June 23, services moved to Wentworth Acres School in Portsmouth

1957 - Reverend Dr. H. Allison Linne accepts call to be first mission pastor

1957 – The Board of American Missions of the Augustana Lutheran Church makes deposit on parsonage at 2885 Lafayette Road in Portsmouth

1957 – March 27, first organizational meeting of new church

1957 – Purchase of three acres of Navelski farm property at corner of Spaulding Turnpike and Fox Point Road to be site of church building

1957 – October 27, Organization Service and Rite of Inception on Reformation Sunday

1957 - October, Holy Trinity sells Lafayette Road parsonage and purchases Arthur E. Bernard home at 231 Dover Point Road

1958 – October, construction begins on site of old Navelski farm

1959 – June 14, new church building dedicated

1960 - August 1, Reverend Arnold G. Levin becomes Pastor of Holy Trinity

1962 - First church expansion

1963 – September 12, Reverend Carl O. Ebb becomes Pastor of Holy Trinity

1971 – August 22, Reverend Eugene C. Kreider becomes Pastor of Holy Trinity

1971 – Contemporary service instituted

1974 – October 21, Reverend Frank C. Hanrahan becomes Pastor of Holy Trinity

1975 – Sponsorship of resettlement of Vietnamese refugee family

1980 – Sponsorship of resettlement of Laotian refugee family

1980 – March 9, Holy Trinity dedicates newly expanded/renovated church

1982 – June 1, Reverend Reuben Lundeen becomes interim Pastor of Holy Trinity

1982 – Sunday, October 31, Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church celebrates its 25th Anniversary with dinner at N.C.O. Club at Pease Air Force Base

1983 – March 13, Reverend Earl D. Werdelin becomes Pastor of Holy Trinity

1986 – Holy Trinity sponsors first Earth Run

1988 – April, Reverend Theresa Bianchi becomes interim Pastor of Holy Trinity

1989 – July 9, Reverend David L. Snyder becomes Pastor of Holy Trinity

1994 – Merger with Resurrection Lutheran Church of Rochester

1995 – Sale of Resurrection Lutheran Church property in Rochester

1995 – Expansion doubles size of church building

1997 – October 15, Reverend Pal Lindstrom becomes interim Pastor of Holy Trinity

1998 – Sponsorship of resettlement of Bosnian refugee family

2000 – Sponsorship of resettlement of Croatian refugee family

2000 – June 1, Reverend Linn Opderbecke becomes Pastor of Holy Trinity

2002 – Sale of parsonage to Pastor and Nina Opderbecke

2007 – Chapel renovation and Columbarium construction

2007 – May, Imanuel Indonesian Church accepted into Evangelical Lutheran Church of America

2007 – September, Mary Tillman Glade serves as Holy Trinity seminary intern for one year

2007 – Formation of Holy Trinity Mission Endowment Fund