

New England Synod  
Ministry Site Profile

Congregation Name: Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

Congregation ID #: 03531

Address: 22 Fox Run Rd, Newington, NH 03801

Website: htcl.com

<u>Does the Church own a Parsonage?</u>	YES	<input checked="" type="radio"/> NO
<u>What is the church's annual operating budget?</u>	\$ 294,000.00	
<u>Total indebtedness:</u>	\$0	
<u>Total Savings in all accounts:</u>	\$360,582.00	
<u>Do you have an endowment fund?</u>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> YES	NO
<u>What is your annual Mission Support to the New England Synod?</u>	\$20,000	

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Congregational President: Judy Evans  
Email: jaevans99@gmail.com  
Phone: 603-498-8754

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Call Chairperson: Dick Topping  
Email: rtopping@rftopping.com  
Phone: 508-523-1027

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**REFERENCES**

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Conference Dean: Kim Hester  
Email: pastor@ctknashua.org  
Phone: (603) 862-6142

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Key Lay Leaders (Treasurer, Property, Outreach):  
*Dan Scammon*, (603) 781-8363, dbscammon@gmail.com  
*Cristina Dolcino* (603) 340-0045, foggdrive@gmail.com

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Community Leader (Someone in your city/town who knows the church): Tammy Joslyn  
Title: Executive Director of Operation Blessing  
Email: Joslyn\_Tammy@yahoo.com  
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## OPEN RESPONSE QUESTIONS:

### **1. Describe Your Congregation's Mission or Purpose: (Why do you exist?)**

In 2001, we adopted the mission statement, "Come Together; Grow in Faith; Serve the Lord." It continues to lead our congregation's belief and activity. In 2010 we enhanced that statement by adopting nine guiding principles.

#### *Come Together*

We center ourselves in Jesus Christ.

We value Lutheran worship and preaching that is nourishing, thought-provoking, and inspiring.

We are a welcoming congregation that practices hospitality and inclusivity.

#### *Grow in Faith*

We study to understand God's will for our lives, intentionally open to understanding each other.

We value prayer.

We are open to new directions and change as guided by the Holy Spirit.

#### *Serve the Lord*

We serve the Lord in our daily lives.

We spread the love of God by sharing our faith, talents, and resources.

We care for God's creation and each other by being good stewards.

From its beginnings as a Lutheran congregation founded primarily by area military people (Air Force and Navy) seeking Lutheran fellowship, our top priority has always been to come together as God's people, enriched by His Word and Sacraments. From our personal relationships with God, we seek to demonstrate His love in community outreach and mission initiatives both locally and internationally.

Our recent transition process has shown us areas where additional energy, focus, and growth are needed to fulfill this mission. We are currently exploring ways to be more effective at feeding our members spiritually and welcoming new individuals and families seeking an enriching connection with God.

### **2. Describe your congregation: (Membership, Activities, Worship Style, Property, Etc.)**

As of the end of 2021, Holy Trinity's total confirmed membership is 345 members. Our average weekly worship attendance in 2021 on site was 77, with 34 participating online. The approximate number of people actively participating in the life of the congregation in 2021 was 155.

Our membership is drawn from approximately 30 communities, mainly from York County in Southern Maine, Strafford and Rockingham Counties in southeastern New Hampshire, and northeastern Massachusetts. The socio-economic status of those neighborhoods is predominantly middle to upper-middle class, as is our membership.

The main campus of the University of New Hampshire is nearby, as are other colleges, and technical schools. Diverse ethnic and racial components make up 8-10% of the population, which includes a large population of Indonesians. We in fact share our facilities with Imanuel Indonesian Lutheran Congregation, one of the first of its kind in the United States. Primary employment is blue- and white-collar jobs—including those at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard and Pease International Tradeport. There is a mix of small urban, rural, and suburban communities. The region is scenic with coastline, beaches, open lands, woods, mountains, and protected wilderness nearby. Portsmouth is a technology hub as well as the artistic, cultural, and culinary center of the State.

Holy Trinity is actively involved in mission and ministry both internationally and locally. Internationally we offer strong support to and are prayer partners with the people of our sister congregation in Isimani Tanzania. Our members have undertaken mission trips to Tanzania and have provided scholarships for students; electricity for the church, parsonage and sewing school; and funding to establish a successful SACCO (Savings and Credit Cooperative Organization) to offer microloans to the community. We have also supported Fundaninos Orphanage in Guatemala with prayer and we have done hands-on work at the facility and with the children in the past. We maintain support for the Lutheran Church in the Holy Land and its missionaries. Locally we participate in missions such as serving a soup kitchen once each month, providing volunteers, materials, and financial support for a homeless shelter, and supporting the 68 Hours of Hunger backpack ministry. Each year for a week in June, Holy Trinity hosts Bike and Build. Bike & Build is a non-profit organization where college-aged students from around the United States bike in a summer-long cross-country journey to raise awareness for affordable housing. Our youth participate in the ELCA National Youth Gatherings. We are very connected to Camp Calumet for youth attendance, women's retreats, and family camping. Several Holy Trinity members have completed the New England Synod School of Lay Ministry. During Covid we hosted a weekly Pop-Up Pantry on our property. And throughout our two-year Covid isolation we participated in immigrant support, notably providing food assistance for a woman from Cameroon and presently helping to host a family from Afghanistan.

Our physical plant is widely used by our surrounding community. Our facility offers options for concerts (including a new audio system), various meeting rooms, music practice areas, recreational area, and storage. Our location along a major highway makes us highly visible as well. A small designated chapel with columbarium offers additional worship space.

Holy Trinity also ministers to its members through a weekly Bible Study, Tables of Eight (yearly dinner groupings of singles and couples who gather monthly), and regular Adult Forums following Sunday service. Because we are a regional rather than community-based congregation, we are intentional in providing social ministries that both accommodate Sunday groupings and area gatherings.

As in the case of many congregations, while Covid made usual worship practice a

challenge, it also offered ways for Holy Trinity to grow. We took advantage of a recently improved sound system to discover and enhance worship experience with various zoom formats, pre-recorded music, and archival tapings.

Prior to the pandemic, we held two worship services on Sundays. The 8:30 service featured contemporary music with a guitarist and piano accompaniment. The 11:00 AM traditional service featured piano and organ music.

Our building is located in a commercial area across from a Walmart, and next to a retail mall. It has good visibility from a major highway and is easily accessible to a wide seacoast area.

As Covid hit, Holy Trinity was in the process of becoming a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) congregation, providing members with monthly presentations with in-person, audio, and visual presentations, as well as copious opportunities for discussion. Though Covid slowed the process, it didn't stop it. When we were finally able to come together for worship in person, we held an official RIC celebration which included a concert by the NH Gay Men's Chorus and a luncheon.

In November 2020, Holy Trinity was officially recognized as a RIC Congregation by ReconcilingWorks. We adopted the following Welcoming Statement, which is displayed in our Gathering Area and included in each Sunday Bulletin.

*At Holy Trinity, we welcome and affirm everyone—because God welcomes and affirms everyone—*

*regardless of age, race, ability, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, or other life circumstance.*

*You are welcome. Your family, children, friends, spouses, and partners are welcome.*

*You are welcome, whether you are a believer, a doubter, or a seeker.*

*Your diversity and uniqueness are welcomed and affirmed into the full life of Holy Trinity.*

*You are wanted here.*

### **3. Describe the Community where your congregation is located: (Demographics, Community needs, location, buildings.)**

Based on the 2020 U.S. Census, the greater Portsmouth area (including Newington, where our church is located) consists of a community made up of 90% Caucasian, 5% African American, and 2% Asian.

Before Covid, the local economy was strong and employment levels were high; we then suffered similarly to most and challenges exist. Throughout the Seacoast, especially in Portsmouth, the cost of living is so high that many of our church members find they need to seek affordable living further away from our church. Moreover, the population of New Hampshire is aging. Though the economic and social climates are attractive to

retired people, the rising home values increase real estate taxes make it difficult for seniors to stay in their homes. Finally, as with much of the country, our area is wrestling with the opioid crisis.

#### **4. Describe your next Pastor:**

##### **What gifts do you hope they will have?**

We hope our next Pastor will have the gift of inspired preaching and teaching. Other hoped for gifts include, (i) the ability to help people develop their spiritual life; (ii) joining with us in building a strong sense of community and willing to be active in visitation of members and non-members; (iii) effective communication; (iv) the ability to help us develop leadership skills and abilities for ministry; (v) being able to share leadership and work in a team.

##### **What would you like them to emphasize in their ministry?**

We would like our next Pastor to help us renew our sense of community in this post-pandemic and on-going Covid time. Also, we hope our next Pastor will partner with the congregation to strengthen and grow our social ministry involvement locally and beyond.

##### **What kind of worship/preaching would you hope for?**

We hope for a Pastor who has a respect and appreciation for traditional worship but also a willingness and desire to explore and offer new and meaningful forms of worship. We currently have a single Sunday service and alternate our version of “traditional” and “contemporary” worship styles. At the end of 2020, we professionally installed two cameras that are used to live stream our Sunday morning worship services over YouTube. Music is important at Holy Trinity and we hope our next Pastor will value music and actively support our current music program and the development of our future music ministry.

We hope that our next Pastor will provide Gospel-centered preaching which emphasizes God’s love for all people and inspires us to be Christ to our neighbor. We also hope for a Pastor who enjoys teaching both through sermons, Bible study, and other settings sharing their knowledge and understanding of scripture and how it is relevant in our time and place.

##### **How would you like them to lead you in your walk with Jesus?**

We hope our next Pastor would have a calm, compassionate and nonjudgmental presence and that they will be a good listener, guide and teacher helping us navigate a sometimes chaotic world and changing Church.

##### **What would you prefer they not emphasize?**

We hope that our next Pastor will be sensitive to diverse political and worldviews within our congregation but remain true to and boldly proclaim the Gospel.

**5. Is there anything you have not mentioned, that you believe would be important for a future Pastoral Leader to know about your congregation?**

Holy Trinity supports the ELCA through the New England Synod as part of its annual budget. We support Lutheran Ministry programs, disaster relief, world relief, world hunger, and missionary support. We have been a teaching congregation and have regularly had seminary interns in the past—something we would like to do again, if possible. We support Camp Calumet financially, including budgeting scholarships for youth to attend. Members of our congregation are staff and volunteers at Camp Calumet. Our support of the congregation at Isimani, Tanzania, is funneled through the Bega Kwa Bega program at the St. Paul Synod in Minnesota. We maintain an active partnership with Imanuel Indonesian Lutheran Congregation which shares our facility. We contribute to Ascentria Care Alliance and Habitat for Humanity through Restore and Bike and Build. Holy Trinity has always been active in supporting immigrants. We recently supported a woman from Cameroon with transportation and finances. At present we are involved through Ascentria with housing, counseling, and financial support of a family from Afghanistan.

\*Please attach most recent CAT /Vital Signs Report or Conversations Assessment