

# *Holy Trinity Lutheran Church Newsletter*

*August 2015*

*104 West Main Street, Stafford Springs, Connecticut 06076*



**Sun rise on the Sea Of Galilee**

As the sun rises over the Galilee and its light is reflected upon us, so has the Holy Spirit been reflected upon Holy Trinity Church by the gracious generosity of Pastor Robert and Linda McGurn, for they have laid down the gauntlet and have given us a challenge! For every \$100 gift above and beyond a parishioner's normal giving they will match it with a \$50 gift of their own. This offer extends from August 1, 2015 thru August 31, 2015. For example if 20 members gave an extra \$100 during the month of August the McGurn's would give \$1,000. We would encourage all who are able to prayerfully participate in this opportunity. Paul writes:

**6** *The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully[a] will also reap bountifully. 7 Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency[b] in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. 9 As it is written,*

*“He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor;*

*his righteousness endures forever.”*

**10** *He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. 11 You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God. 12 For the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints but is also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God. 13 By their approval of this service, they[c] will glorify God because of your submission that comes from your confession of the gospel of Christ, and the generosity of your contribution for them and for all others, 14 while they long for you and pray for you, because of the surpassing grace of God upon you. 15 Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!(2 Cor. 9:6-15 ESV)*

## Pastoral Care

Contact information for  
Rev. Thomas S. Drobena; 'Pastor Tom'  
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thomas.drobena@yale.edu Mailing  
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Contact President Michael Welch  
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Church – [htlc-church@att.net](mailto:htlc-church@att.net) Website  
– [holytrinitystafford.org](http://holytrinitystafford.org)

## Members of the Council are:

Rev. Thomas S. Drobena  
President – Michael Welch

Vice-President – Leonard Lichanec  
Acting Treasurer – Sheila Welch

Secretary – Amelia Hinchliffe  
Financial Secretary – Leigh Maxa  
Andrew Fisher  
Cathy Lichanec  
Michael Marvonek  
Patricia Marvonek

## Service Teams

† Worship & Music Team: Leigh  
Tremblay  
† Property Team: Andrew Fisher,  
Michael Marvonek, Adam Tremblay  
and Michael Welch

† Learning & Youth Group Team:  
Rev. Thomas Drobena, Melissa Fisher,

Nan Hayden, Walter Kovaciny, Cathy  
& Leonard Lichanec

## Shut-in Members of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church

Attn: Mrs. Barbara Bulick Emeritus  
1715 Ellington Rd. Room # 212 South  
Windsor, CT 06074-2702 Ms. Shirley  
Kaba  
7 High St.  
Stafford Springs, CT 06076-1215

Attn: Ms. Barbara Kovaciny Evergreen  
Health Care Center  
205 Chestnut Hill Rd., Room # 1105  
Stafford Springs, CT 06076-4005

Mr. Paul C. Kovaciny  
242 East St.  
Stafford Springs, CT 06076-3923

Ms. Anna Mandak  
21 Old Monson Rd.  
Stafford Springs, CT 06076-3343

Mrs. Tonia Marvonek  
Evergreen Health Care Center  
201 Chestnut Hill Rd., Rm. # 2107  
Stafford Springs, CT 06076-4005

## Elena Kay Markell



June 21, 2015

At 12:05 AM

6 LB. 14.5 OZ.

20 inches

Congratulations!

To the Markell's

## **The First Miracle**

**By Michael S. Welch**

Why did Jesus choose to perform His first miracle at a wedding? What is its significance as it relates to the Passover and Communion? Why is marriage and its definition so important to Christians in light of the current sociological upheaval of our times? Bits and pieces of this puzzle have been floating around in my head for years, like some spiritual Rubic's Cube. I have been awakened at 4:34am each morning and have been juggling this around in my mind and meditating on it throughout the day. Now at last I think the Lord will allow me a little sleep, at least for a day or two. Here is my breakdown of this wondrous miracle reported by John.

***“On the third day there was a wedding”*** Why not the 2<sup>nd</sup> day or the 7<sup>th</sup> day? When visiting Israel it came to our attention that more weddings are held on Tuesday than any other day of the week. This is the first day in the creation story with a double blessing. God did two things on this day, he created the Earth and the seas and he saw that it was good. Then on the same day he said *“Let the land produce vegetation: seed bearing plants and trees that bear fruit with seeds in it and He saw that it was good”* It is no accident that Jesus would select the day on which our Father created the fruit of the vine to demonstrate His power over creation. Jesus also rose on the third day. Ever wonder why we vote on Tuesday? Our founding fathers also wanted to exercise our most sacred civic duty on the first day with a double blessing.

The mother of Jesus said to him, ***“They have no wine.”*** I believe Mary was a relative of the bride or groom. If she was just a guest, she would have been saying where's the wine? Most people that I have spoken with believe that Joseph had already died and Jesus being the eldest would be the logical choice to fulfill the need. A wedding in the time of Christ was a major event, sometimes lasting a week or more. Often the whole town would attend and people would travel days to get there. We know from the scriptures that Jesus and his disciples came up from Capernaum some 30 miles which would take about 3 days. Running out of wine would bring disgrace upon the family, but Jesus meets all our needs, not some.

Jesus said, ***“Woman”***, Sheila and I have great fun drawing reactions from politically correct people. All I have to do is call to Sheila by yelling *“Woman!”* in a store and they go nuts. I don't know what bothers them more my saying it or Sheila not taking offense. They just don't get it. I used to think this to be a sharp rebuke by Jesus, but it occurred to me that later in John we find Mary at the foot of the cross and Jesus saying *“Woman, behold your son”* referring to the apostle John. According to Strong's the Greek word here is defined as woman or wife. It is a term of respect. Today when we refer to a man's wife we would say Mrs. or Madam and our children would address their mother as Mom, Ma, Mam. I think this a rebuke but a soft one. I can just see Jesus shaking his head, maybe a little grin and saying, “Ma, what am I going to do with you?”

***“My time is not yet come.”*** This phrase is mentioned a number of times in John and implied in the other Gospels, each time in reference to attempts on his life or arrest. One time he went up to the temple to celebrate the Feast of Dedication (Hanukah). Another while teaching in the temple they tried to arrest him, *“but it was not yet his time”*. If you remember at the last supper, He said *“my time has come”*.

***“Do what ever He tells you”***. I am hard pressed to think of a time that Jesus performed a miracle without an instruction. Two things about miracles, one, they can only happen in an impossible situation and two; they all require us to do something on faith. The proof of faith is action. The servants are told to fill six ceremonial jars with water. John says that they held about twenty to thirty gallons. I have seen jars of this kind from this time period in Cana.



They are carved out of a white stone and stand about waist high. By using these jars there could be no question about the miracle. They would have been used for ceremonial cleansing before entering the synagogue and therefore spotless. Some have tried to explain the miracle by implying that wine had been stored in them in the past and the remnant would have colored the water. Then at Jesus’

**This Stone Jar was excavated from beneath the Catholic Church, which was built upon the remains of a synagogue from Christ’s time. It could be one of the six jars which Christ turned the water into wine.**

command they drew some out and took it to the Master of the Feast. They had seen what Jesus had done and the Master of the feast performed a blind taste test saying to the Bridegroom *“most bring out the best wine first then the cheaper one after everyone has well drunk, but you have saved the best till now”*. This miracle caused the disciples to believe in Him. This miracle was a true transubstantiation of water into wine. So, for me, the big question is why did He choose a wedding to perform His first miracle?

Sheila and I have traveled to Israel a number of times. On each of these trips we noticed young Ultra Orthodox couples sitting together in the lounge of the King David Citadel Hotel enjoying a glass of wine and engaged in conversation, while a somewhat distant chaperone looked on. Upon inquiring we found that they were on their one and only date with their prospective marriage partner. This practice has gone on for over 2,000 years.



This is the process. First the parents would agree to a match, which was typically arranged by their Rabbi or a matchmaker. Then the couple would be introduced and after their one date would have to decide if this was the person to which they would be joined for the rest of their lives. At this point they could refuse. Upon agreeing there would be a public announcement of their pledge. Today we would call it an engagement. The next time they would see each other would be at their wedding. Even though they haven't had the marriage ceremony they are considered married, and any faltering on either of their parts would constitute adultery. Our Jewish friends went onto explain how it would have happened in Christ's time. Listen to the terminology that they use. Remember these are Jews explaining this. First as is today a match would be arranged. The groom and his father would go to the brides house where the groom and the bride would be seated across from each other. The father of the groom would then offer a price for the bride. Once agreed upon they would place a cup of wine in front of the bride and they would ask if she agreed. She had only minutes to decide. If she agreed she would drink from the cup thus sealing the covenant or contract. The groom would then say to the bride, "*I will go and prepare a room for you in my fathers house*". I will come for you when it is ready, but I don't know when, only my father knows. You see this room had to be prepared properly and had to have the father's approval, and only then could the marriage be consummated. This is because the groom, like any healthy male was looking forward to consummating the marriage where as the father would make sure there was proper provision for the new family in his house. Remember these are the words our Jewish friends are using. Now when the room was prepared the groom would come with family and friends in procession. This would usually take place at night. When they came near someone would give a yell, to warn the bride of their approach. After they arrived a brief ceremony would be performed. Then they would return to the groom's house for the feast, gathering more friends along the way. The bride was not sure when the groom would come so she had to be ready (Matt 25 remember the ten maids, 5 of which were ready and the other five who ran out of oil. "*It was midnight and a cry was heard*"). As the procession proceeded back to the groom's house, guests would join in along the way, hoping to be invited into the banquet. (In order to be invited in they would have to be dressed properly. Remember the man who was asked to leave the wedding?) Isaiah and Jeremiah portray Israel as the bride and we the gentiles are grafted into the true vine and are part of Israel. Today I believe we are erroneously referred to as "*the church*".

We read these words proclaimed by Jesus at the last supper "*In my fathers house there are many rooms if it were not so I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place I am going*". Thomas said "*Lord we don't know the place you are going, so how can we find the way*". Jesus answered "*I am the way and the truth and the life* (John 14). *I am in you and you are in me* (John 14:20). Again He prays that we maybe as one as He and the Father are one. (When two are joined in marriage, they become one "*Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh*"). "*After supper He took the*

*cup saying, this cup is the new covenant (contract) in my blood, which is poured out for you* (Luke 22:20). He did not drink of it, the disciples did. Do this in remembrance of me. (My covenant) When we take of this cup we are in effect pledging our selves to our Lord and Savior. Because we sin, each time we celebrate communion we are confessing our infidelity to the Groom, repenting, asking forgiveness and renewing our vows. Is it any wonder why Jesus was so adamant about marriage and divorce!

So, what are our instructions from Jesus? What should He find us doing when He comes “*as a thief in the night*”, “*with a shout*” (Thes. 4:16). “*Whoever has my commands and obeys them loves Me. He who does not love Me will not obey My teaching.*” *I am the vine; you are the branches....If a man remains in Me and I in him, he will bear much fruit.*” “*This is to My Fathers Glory that you bear much fruit*”. In other words upon His return we should be found doers of the Word.

Every Jew for 3,200 years has been commanded to celebrate the Passover by God Almighty thru Moses. A traditional Passover meal consists of 4 cups of wine, the third is most important to us. The last thing eaten at this meal is a special piece of unleavened bread. There are three pieces of bread stacked on top of each other. Sometime before the feast the middle piece is broken in half, wrapped in a cloth and hidden. Then as part of the ceremony it would be found and usually by the children and a prayer said by the father of the house. *Blessed are you O Lord who brings forth bread out of the ground.* For the Jew the coming Messiah, for us the risen Christ! Jesus is the Bread of Life, born in Bethlehem the house of bread. Then he would take the cup and say “*Blessed are you O Lord Creator of the Fruit of the Vine*”. Remember the third day? Paul writes in 1st Cor.15 “*but Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep*”.

We have been pledged to Him. He paid the marriage price. He is preparing a place for us, but no one knows when He will return. I pray that when the Bridegroom returns He will find us doing His will, that we would be clothed in His righteousness, that our lamp might be full and above all, that we will be ready to receive Him. Amen.

### **2000 year old Cana Synagogue floor that Christ may have walked upon**



**August      Holy Trinity Lutheran Church      2015**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 8 p.m. Movie Night
2 <b>The Tenth Sunday after Pentecost</b> 10:00 a.m. Holy Communion 11:15 a.m. Church Council	3 <b>Joanna, Mary, Salome, Myrrh-Bearers</b>  (no service)	4 <i>Pastor's Day off</i>	5 7:30 p.m.  Bible Class at church	6	7	8 9 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. Safe Net
9 <b>The Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost</b> 10:00 a.m. Holy Communion 11:15 a.m. Learning and Youth Committee 2:00 p.m. Church Picnic	10	11 <i>Pastor's Day off</i>	12	13	14 Deadline for submitting Information for the September newsletter	15 <b>Mary, Mother of our Lord</b>  7:30 Holy Communion
16 <b>The Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost</b> 10:00 a.m. Holy Communion 11:15 a.m. Golden Rule Kids Club	17	18 <i>Pastor's Day off</i>	19	20 WIC	21	22 9 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. Safe Net
23 <b>The Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost</b> 10:00 a.m. Holy Communion 11:15 a.m. Social Hour	24 <b>Bartholomew, Apostle</b>  (no service)	25 <i>Pastor's Day off</i>	26	27 <b>Monica, Confessor</b>  (no service)	28 <b>Augustine, Bishop</b>  (no service)	29 <b>Martyrdom of John the Baptist</b>  (no service)
30 <b>The Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost</b> 10:00 a.m. Holy Communion	31					

## August – September Service Schedule

You'll notice the hymnals have changed. We will be using the Cranberry Hymnals up to the Advent season. These readings are from the Evangelical Lutheran worship on page #43 through #47, Series B.

Tellers                      Ushers                      Worship Assistants                      Reader

### August 2, 2015 – 10:00 a.m. – The Tenth Sunday after Pentecost – Green

Exodus 16: 2-4, 9-15; Psalm 78: 8-13; Ephesians 4: 1-16; John 6: 24-35

Amelia Hinchliffe	Melissa Fisher	Stacy Fisher	Daniel Lichanec
Sheila Welch	Walter Kovaciny	Sheila Welch	

### August 9, 2015 – 10:00 a.m. – The Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost – Green

1 Kings 19: 4-8; Psalm 34: 1-8; Ephesians 4: 25 to 5:2; John 6: 35, 41-51;

Michael Marvonek	Walter Kovaciny	Stacy Fisher	Ruth Boyles
Michael Welch	Debbie Lewis	Michael Welch	

### August 16, 2015 – 10:00 a.m. – The Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost – Green

Proverbs 9: 1-6; Psalm 34: 9-14; Ephesians 5: 15-20; John 6: 51-58

Michael Welch	Daniel Lichanec	Cathy Lichanec	Stacy Fisher
Sheila Welch	Leonard Lichanec	Stacy Fisher	

### August 23, 2015 – 10:00 a.m. – The Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost - Green

Joshua 24: 1-2a, 14-18; Psalm 34: 15-22; Ephesians 6: 10-20; John 6: 56-69

Cathy Lichanec	Melissa Fisher	Cathy Lichanec	Michael Welch
Michael Welch	A Volunteer	Debbie Lewis	

### August 30, 2015 – 10:00 a.m. – The Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost – Green

Deuteronomy 4: 1-2, 6-9; Psalm 15; James 1: 17-27; Mark 7: 1-8, 14-15, 21-23

Michael Welch	Walter Kovaciny	Michael Welch	Daniel Lichanec
Sheila Welch	Debbie Lewis	Sheila Welch	

### September 6, 2015 – 10:00 a.m. – The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost - Green

Isaiah 35: 4-7a; Psalm 146; James 2: 1-10 [11-13] 14-17; Mark 7: 24-37

Amelia Hinchliffe	Melissa Fisher	Stacy Fisher	Daniel Lichanec
Leonard Lichanec	Walter Kovaciny	Sheila Welch	

#### Altar Guild

**Set Up** – Andrew, Melissa and Stacy Fisher  
**Remove** – Leigh Tremblay

#### Typist

**August** – Leigh Tremblay  
**September** – Stacy Fisher



Safe Net Ministries is your ministry. When ever they care for someone in need it is on behalf of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church and, the other five congregations that are the incorporators of this great ministry. Safe Net Ministries is an extension of HTLC reaching out to our community and fulfilling Jesus's admonitions to care for those in need.



The Food Cupboard is open twice a month (second and fourth Saturdays) from 9:00 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. Food distributions are conducted at Safe Net Headquarters, 86 Main Street, Stafford Springs.

In January 2010 Safe Net Ministries opened the Safe Net Food Cupboard at 68 Main Street in Stafford

Springs, CT. The Food Cupboard was relocated to 86 Main Street February 2011. This Food Cupboard serves Stafford and Union residents and any member of their congregations.

In 2014 Safe Net distributed **164,964** pounds of food to **150** families that represents **430** people, of which **156** are children and **43** are seniors. Over the past five years, the Food Cupboard has distributed a total of **622,390** pounds of food. An average distribution takes a **173** volunteer hours to perform. In 2014, the Food Cupboard started to deliver food to Avery Park shut-ins (currently 12 people).

**BREAKFAST AND BEYOND** – The team also continued a program for children during August called “Breakfast and Beyond.” Children were able to pick up a bag of food for breakfast and snacks for later in the day. We distributed **600** lbs. of food. This filled a void after the town recreational programs ended.

**BACKPACKS WITH SCHOOL SUPPLIES** – For the Food Cupboard team also distributed over **100** backpacks to children with school supplies appropriate to their grade levels and juice and snacks. This not only helps the children, it also assists the teachers, many of whom purchase school supplies with their own money.

**HALLOWEEN ON MAIN STREET** – The Food Cupboard participated in this town-wide event.

**THANKSGIVING** – We also distributed **226** turkeys (including 76 Avery Park residents) this Thanksgiving along with the fixings.

**CHRISTMAS STOCKING STUFFERS** – The Food Cupboard provided goodies for **163** children.

Increased community support was exhibited by food collected by local food drives: Feinstein challenge; Postal Food Drive; TTM; and the food donated by private collections. In 2014 it cost **\$55,695** to operate the Food Cupboard.

Safe Net is a Foodshare partner which enables us to obtain food at an average cost of 17 cents a pound. According to Foodshare the Safe Net Ministries Food Cupboard is one of the top performing cupboards in their network. This is a remarkable advantage to Safe Net in meeting our goal of eliminating hunger in our town. There is no reason someone should be hungry in Stafford or Union!

**\*\*\* Coming Events \*\*\***

**August**

- 1 – Movie Night – 8:00 p.m.**
- 2 – Council meeting – 11:15 a.m.**
- 5 – Bible Study at church – 7:30 p.m.**
- 8 & 22 – Safe Net, food distribution – 9:00 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.**
- 9 – Learning and Youth Committee – 11:15 a.m.**
- 9 – Church Picnic – 2:00 p.m.**
- 15 – Mary, Mother of our Lord, vespers – 7:30 p.m.**
- 16 – Golden Rule Kids Club – 11:15 a.m.**
- 23 – Social Hour – 11:15 a.m.**

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church 104 West Main St.

Stafford Springs, CT 06076

Web site address [www.holytrinitystafford.org](http://www.holytrinitystafford.org)

Address Correction Requested Slovak Zion Synod – ELCA

