

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church Newsletter

July and August 2016

104 West Main Street, Stafford Springs, Connecticut 06076



Dear Sisters and Brothers,

In several conversations with members of our parish here at Holy Trinity, I've been asked to "weigh in" on what has proven to be a very contentious political season. What is the responsibility of a Christian as a citizen? What are the values that Christians bring to discussions of politics? How does a Christian's faith inform her appreciation for her country? Is there a Lutheran understanding of Church and State??

I will address some of these questions when preaching among you this month of July, but to aid our thoughtfulness on this matter I first offer you an excellent article (which follows, below) by Rebecca Florence Miller entitled, "How Luther's Two Kingdoms Challenges Fundamentalism's 'Christian Nation'" that gives a concise explanation of the Lutheran approach to Church and State. As we gather around the Word of God, around our tables, and around the coffee pot in these next weeks, I want to encourage us to think about some difficult issues we face as Americans and how we as Lutheran Christians are called to faithfulness and to holiness. I look forward to sharing in these discussions with you.

Peace and joy,

Pastor Tom

“Martin Luther’s 16th century Germany was a world dominated by the confusion of spiritual and temporal power. Popes held authority over governmental princes and attempted to wield earthly power by means of the sword. Meanwhile, governmental authorities attempted to rule over the hearts and minds of their subjects and impose “proper” beliefs. Luther confronted both false uses of power and in “Temporal Authority: To What Extent It Should Be Obeyed,” he issued careful clarifying guidelines for the recognition of God’s left and right hand work on earth. This was not only a theological treatise, but a pastoral word written to John the Steadfast, the Duke of Saxony, by all accounts a Christian who wanted to know how to exercise his government role as a Christian

God’s Right and Left Hand

“The teaching of the Two Kingdoms, in short, is this: God has both a left and a right hand by which He works in our world. With the left hand, He uses temporal authority—authority which He establishes for the sake of restraining evil in society. This temporal authority is given the tool of the sword (enforcement power) so that it might be taken seriously and have real, not theoretical, power. This authority is exercised in rulers, public servants, judges, law enforcement, and the military. God’s left hand is used for the punishment of wrongdoers; it is not for the restraint of true Christians because true Christians are set free by the Gospel and do not need external law.

“God also has a right hand by which He works in our world. This right hand operates through the power of the Gospel, which the Kingdom of God on earth—the Church—delivers. This is a kingdom of peace, love, and self-sacrifice. Because Christians are free from the burden of the Law and from its punishments, and because everything is theirs in Christ, they no longer need worry about the frantic pursuit of self-interest. Although they do not need the Law to restrain them anymore, they willingly submit to it out of love for their neighbor. [I would add the caveat from other portions of Luther’s writings that Christians are simultaneously saint and sinner, and therefore *do* need the restraint of God’s left hand kingdom as regards their always-present sinful nature.]

“So, how will a Christian simultaneously operate in the midst of these two kingdoms? She will not demand her own rights in society, but will turn the other cheek as the Sermon on the Mount suggests. At the same time, if her neighbor is wronged, she will engage in her neighbor’s fiercest protection and defense.

“The False Conflation of the Two Kingdoms”

“We can apply the teaching of the two kingdoms to those in the fundamentalist community who constantly seek to establish (or re-establish, as is the view of some) America as a “Christian nation.” We can—and must—use the wisdom of the Reformation to confront the false conflation of the Two Kingdoms. The power of religious privilege that is wielded over a nation is the attempt to take God’s Kingdom (which is “not of this world,” John 18:36) and turn it into a

temporal kingdom. It is the attempt to legislate faith into the hearts of the citizens of the temporal kingdom. This, my friends, cannot be done! **God’s Spirit changes hearts through His Word, not through the exercise of earthly power.**

“In fact, the kingdom of God is an “upside-down” kingdom in which the lowly are the most powerful, and those bearing the hallmarks of earthly power are the weakest before God. This means that we in the evangelical community must humbly forsake our wrong-headed attempts to dominate the nation through earthly power. We must lay down our idols. As Luther wrote, “Christians are always a minority in the midst of non-Christians.” We must recognize that the only reason to serve in positions of temporal authority is not to bring about some Kingdom of God on earth (for this Kingdom already exists, invisibly, in the hearts of believers), **but in order to serve our neighbor.** We witness to Christ when we are willing to serve our neighbor regardless of his profession of faith or lack of faith. We serve him because we follow the Savior who emptied Himself of His rights *for us*.

“When we turn on the news today (or scroll through our Facebook newsfeed), we find countless examples of American Christians in a huff, claiming their rights. Our revolutionary history as Americans has gotten us well in the habit of claiming rights and starting fights. When that impulse is used to defend our neighbor, it is an asset and an opportunity for service. But when it becomes the constant drumbeat of self-interest and privilege and demands, it damages our witness before a watching world. The church today would do well to consider Luther’s words of wisdom, as he counsels those who are willing to serve in positions of governmental authority:

“In such a case you would be entering entirely into the service and work of others, which would be of advantage neither to yourselves nor your property or honor, but only to your neighbor and to others. You would be doing it not with the purpose of avenging yourself or returning evil for evil, but for the good of your neighbor and for the maintenance of the safety and peace of others. For yourself, you would abide by the gospel and govern yourself according to Christ’s word [Matt. 5:39-40], gladly turning the other cheek and letting the cloak go with the coat when the matter concerned you and your cause.”

“I ask you, as American Christians: are you *that free*? (Am I?) Are you free enough to let personal offense go and to focus simply on defending and caring for your neighbor? I have to admit that I am deeply challenged by Luther’s teaching. I too easily claim my rights and focus on my own needs. The needs of my neighbor easily fall to the bottom of my list. But what Luther is describing here is a belonging, wholeness, freedom, and life that come to us in such a real and potent sense through the Gospel that we no longer spend our lives worrying and clawing our way up the ladder of success by our fingernails, desperate to hold on to our power and control. Rather, this is the love that lays itself down for its neighbor—even our unbelieving neighbor. This is the love that lays down privilege. This is the love that can do no other but live Gospel. Reflecting on the two kingdoms, Luther said this:

“You have the kingdom of heaven; therefore, you should leave the kingdom of earth to anyone who wants to take it.”

Now *that* is radical!

“When it comes to our political activism, one way we could apply this teaching of the Two Kingdoms is to ask before we vote or demonstrate for anything or anyone, “Am I acting on behalf of myself and my own interests—or am I acting on behalf of my neighbor?” The more quickly we can begin to cast aside the idols of political power and control that serve our own privilege, the more quickly the message of Christ’s right hand kingdom can again be heard with the credibility it deserves. The sooner we focus on serving more than being served, the sooner a watching world can begin to hear this Gospel word of freedom afresh.

“We are a people—Christians of every nation and tribe—who have been given everything in Christ. We are so rich in Christ that we don’t need to grab power and goodies and privilege for ourselves anymore. We are so free that our agenda is cleared to make room for our neighbor. How might we live this out today?”



Pastoral Care

Contact information for
Rev. Thomas S. Drobeno; 'Pastor Tom' Office
phone: 860-684-7571

Email address: thomas.drobeno@vale.edu

Mailing address:

7 Green St. Stafford Springs, CT 06076-1334

Contact information for President Andrew
Fisher Cellphone: 860-930-2845

Email - acffbuisness@gmail.com

Church - htlc-church@att.net

Website - holytrinitystafford.org

Members of the Council are:

Rev. Thomas S. Drobeno President Andrew
Fisher Vice-President - Walter Kovaciny
Treasurer - Catherine Lichanec Secretary -

Amelia Hinchliffe Melissa Fisher

Leonard Lichanec

Michael Marvonek

Patricia Marvonek

Financial Secretary - Leigh Maxa

Service Teams

Worship & Music Team: Leigh Maxa

Property Team: Andrew Fisher,

Michael Marvonek, Adam Tremblay and
Michael Welch

Learning & Youth Group Team:

Rev. Thomas Drobeno, Melissa Fisher,
Walter Kovaciny, Cathy & Leonard Lichanec

Shut-in Members

Attn: Mr. Harold Barton Fox Hill Center

1253 Hartford Tpke. Room #49A Vernon, CT
06066-4560

Attn: Mrs. Barbara Bulick Brookdale

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 #1101 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

Summer Wishes

May everyone have a restful and rewarding
summer. Then come back to church
energized to make this year's Harvest Sale a
success.

July Birthdays

- 06 - Jillian Verney
- 08 - Anna Mandak
- 15 - Bill Mottes
- 20 - Carl John "Jack" Mercier
- 20 - Janet Renn
- 21 - Catherine Hoss
- 21 - Jamie Murray
- 22 - Richard Palacko
- 23 - Melanie Mordasky

Anniversaries

- 07 - Rob & Dawn Titus
- 08 - Ryan & Jessica Cooley
- 26 - Derek & Sarah Bauer
- 28 - Michael & Patricia Marvonek

August Birthdays

- 05 - Madeleine Mercier
- 07 - Adam Murray
- 14 - Rob Titus
- 17 - John Fittz
- 17 - Kenneth VanDyk
- 18 - Brittaney Titus
- 19 - Carol Schraffenberger
- 23 - Cynthia Brown
- 27 - Judy Titus
- 28 - Alex Hoss
- 29 - Patricia O'Brien
- 29 - Claudia Sevcik

Anniversaries

- 15 - John & Joan Fittz
- 31 - Donald & Barbara Hoffman

Church Picnic

The picnic which will be potluck this year is scheduled for Sunday, July 31 from 2:00 to 6:00 p.m. A signup sheet will be posted in the narthex to indicate you're coming, how many and what you're bringing to the picnic. We're looking for main dishes, salads, desserts and beverage.

Anyone attending should bring a lawn chair for their use. Perhaps games that can be shared with other people attending the picnic.

Hopefully we'll have a good turnout and make some memories for the future.

Around 6ish, we'll start cleaning up so the outside area, the social hall and kitchen are all in better condition than when we started.

Drive-in Moves

At the Church Council meeting that was held June 12, 2016 it was decided to have drive-in movies this year. The first Drive-in movie will be "Zootopia" on July 23rd at 8:00 p.m. The second drive-in movie will be "Risen" on August 20th, at 8:00 p.m.

Weather permitting, a screen will be setup in the big parking lot. In the event of a raining evening, the movie will be shown in the social hall.

Does anyone want to supply popcorn for everyone's snacking pleasure?

August

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church

2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 <i>Pastor's Day off</i>	3	4	5	6
7 The Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost 10:00 a.m. Holy Communion	8	9 <i>Pastor's Day off</i>	10 Lawrence, Deacon (no service)	11	12	13 8:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. Safe Net Distribution
14 The Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost 10:00 a.m. Holy Communion	15 Deadline for submitting articles for the September newsletter	16 <i>Pastor's Day off</i>	17	18	19	20 Drive-In Movie "Risen" 8:00 p.m.
21 The Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost 10:00 a.m. Holy Communion	22	23 <i>Pastor's Day off</i>	24 Bartholomew, Apostle 7:30 Holy Communion	25 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. WIC	26	27 8:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. Safe Net Distribution
28 The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost 10:00 a.m. Holy Communion	29 Martyrdom of John the Baptist 7:30 Vespers	30 <i>Pastor's Day off</i>	31	September 4 to 10, 2016 SZS Assembly	September 4 to 10, 2016 SZS Assembly	September 4 to 10, 2016 SZS Assembly

July

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church

2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 The Seventh Sunday after Pentecost 10:00 a.m. Holy Communion	4	5 <i>Pastor's Day off</i>	6 7:30 p.m. Bible Study at the home of Leonard and Cathy Lichanec	7	8	9 8:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. Safe Net Distribution
10 The Eighth Sunday after Pentecost 10:00 a.m. Holy Communion	11	12 <i>Pastor's Day off</i>	13	14	15	16
17 The Ninth Sunday after Pentecost 10:00 a.m. Holy Communion	18	19 <i>Pastor's Day off</i>	20 7:30 p.m. Bible Study at the home of Leonard and Cathy Lichanec	21	22 Mary Magdalene, Apostle (no service)	23 8:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. Safe Net Distribution 8:00 p.m. Drive-In Movie: "Zootopia"
24 The Tenth Sunday after Pentecost 10:00 a.m. Holy Communion	25 James the Elder, Apostle (no service)	26 <i>Pastor's Day off</i>	27	28 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. WIC	29	30

July Service Schedule

With the new church season starting, the reading for the next year are from Series C.

Tellers Ushers Worships Assistants Reader

July 3, 2016 – 10:00 a.m. – The Seventh Sunday after Pentecost – Green

Isaiah 66: 10 – 14; Psalm 66: 1 – 9; Galatians 6: [1 – 6] 7 – 16; Luke 10: 1 – 11, 16 – 20
Amelia Hinchliffe Melissa Fisher Leigh Maxa Daniel Lichanec
Michael Marvonek Walter Kovaciny

July 10, 2016 – 10:00 a.m. – The Eighth Sunday after Pentecost – Green

Deuteronomy 30: 9 – 14; Psalm 25: 1 – 10; Colossians 1: 1 – 14; Luke 10: 25 – 37
Michael Welch Walter Kovaciny Sheila Welch Ruth Boyles
Sheila Welch Cathy Lichanec

July 17, 2016 – 10:00 a.m. – The Ninth Sunday after Pentecost – Green

Genesis 18: 1 – 10a; Psalm 15; Colossians 1: 15 – 28; Luke 10: 38 – 42
Leonard Lichanec Daniel Lichanec Cathy Lichanec Steve Marvonek
Patricia Marvonek Leonard Lichanec

July 24, 2016 – 10:00 a.m. – The Tenth Sunday after Pentecost – Green

Genesis 18: 20 – 32; Psalm 138; Colossians 2: 6 – 15 [16 – 19]; Luke 11: 1 – 13
Melissa Fisher Melissa Fisher Cathy Lichanec Daniel Lichanec
Cathy Lichanec Walter Kovaciny

July 31, 2016 – 10:00 a.m. – The Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost – Green

Ecclesiastes 1: 2, 12–14; 2: 18–23; Psalm 49: 1–12; Colossians 3: 1–11; Luke 12: 13–21
Michael Marvonek Rick Bednar Leigh Maxa Leonard Lichanec
Walter Kovaciny Walter Kovaciny

Attention all Lay Assistants and Volunteers that help with services

This includes Council Members, (Tellers), Ushers, Worship Assistants and Readers.

Please let me know dates and days of when you aren't available to serve in your position. It's much easier to find a replacement prior to typing the Monthly Service Schedule rather than finding a replacement after the schedule is typed or you just don't show up.

You can hand me a piece of paper when we see each other at church; or send me an email at walterkovaciny@cox.net or send me the information via snail mail. Just don't tell me verbally. Thanks to everyone for their assistance with this. Walter Kovaciny, part of the newsletter team.

August – September Service Schedule

With the new church season starting, the reading for the next year are from Series C.

<u>Tellers</u>	<u>Ushers</u>	<u>Worship Assistants</u>	<u>Reader</u>
August 7, 2016 – 10:00 a.m. – The Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost – Green			
Genesis 15: 1 – 6; Psalm 33: 12 – 22; Hebrews 11: 1 – 3, 8 – 16; Luke 12: 32 – 40			
Amelia Hinchliffe	Melissa Fisher	Leigh Maxa	Leonard Lichanec
Michael Marvonek	Walter Kovaciny		
August 14, 2016 – 10:00 a.m. – The Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost – Green			
Jeremiah 23: 23 – 29; Psalm 82; Hebrews 11: 29 to 12: 2; Luke 12: 49 – 56			
Michael Welch	Cathy Lichanec	Sheila Welch	Ruth Boyles
Sheila Welch	Walter Kovaciny		
August 21, 2016 – 10:00 a.m. – The Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost – Green			
Isaiah 58: 9b – 14; Psalm 103: 1 – 8; Hebrews 12: 18 – 29; Luke 13: 10 – 17			
Leonard Lichanec	Daniel Lichanec	Cathy Lichanec	Steve Marvonek
Patricia Marvonek	Leonard Lichanec		
August 28, 2016 – 10:00 a.m. – The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost - Green			
Sirach 10: 12 – 18; Psalm 112; Hebrews 13: 1 – 8, 15 – 16; Luke 14: 1, 7 – 14			
Melissa Fisher	Melissa Fisher	Cathy Lichanec	Michael Welch
Cathy Lichanec	Walter Kovaciny		
September 4, 2016 – 10:00 a.m. – The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost - Green			
Deuteronomy 30: 15 – 20; Psalm 1; Philemon 1 – 21; Luke 14: 25 – 33			
Amelia Hinchliffe	Melissa Fisher	Leigh Maxa	Daniel Lichanec
Michael Marvonek	Walter Kovaciny		

*****Coming Events *****

July

6 & 20 - Bible Study at the home of Leonard & Cathy Lichanec - 7:30 p.m.

23 - Drive in movie, Zootopia - 8:00 p.m.

31 - Church picnic - 2 - 6:00 p.m.

August

2, 9, 16, 23 & 30 - Pastor Tom's day off, let's try to observe this.

15 - Deadline for submitting articles for the September newsletter. 20 - Drive-in movie, Risen - 8:00 p.m.

24 - Bartholomew, *Apostle*, Holy Communion - 7:30 p.m. 29 - Martyrdom of John the Baptist, Vespers - 7:30 p.m.

September

4 to 10 - Slovak Zion Synod Assembly

October

15 - Annual Harvest Sale.

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church

104 West Main St. Stafford Springs, CT 06076

Web site address www.holytrinitystafford.org

Address Correction Requested Slovak Zion Synod – ELCA



