

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church Newsletter

July 2015

104 West Main Street, Stafford Springs, Connecticut 06076



“Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul. None would say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all.” (Acts 4, 31-33)

Scripture tells us clearly that when Christians gather together, great things happen! We have been focusing in these weeks since Pentecost on the wonderful gifts of God by which the Risen Christ comes into our midst and dwells among us: We are witnesses every week to Christ giving Himself in the miracle of Holy Communion to us who believe, giving forgiveness and wholeness—being our Nourishment and spiritual Medicine under the form of Bread and Wine! We have been witnesses to the Grace of God poured out in Baptism, as little ones were baptized into fellowship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit—Adopted as God’s own sons, and made heirs with us of Eternal Life! We regularly gather during the week to read the Holy Bible and discuss how the Word of God strengthens our lives, and gives us hope. We stand to acknowledge Christ’s presence as the good news of the Gospel is proclaimed among us on Sunday morning, and we welcome Him shouting, “Praise to You, O Christ!”

As Christians our lives are centered in the Word of God, in the life of prayer and in praise. God gives us so many good things when we stay close to Him. We are created for fellowship with Him, and are happier the more we talk with Him. **This is simply what Christians do!** *Martin Luther once said, “As it is the business of tailors to make clothes, and of cobblers to make shoes, so it is the business of Christians to pray.”* **Prayer and praise is not something we do once a week. It is the rhythm of our lives!**

Are you stressed? Let us pray! Are you frustrated? Let us pray! Are you sick? Let us pray! Are you worried? Let us pray! Are you joyful? Let us pray! Are you thankful? Let us

pray! Are we lax in our prayer lives? Let us pray together and so encourage one another. Andrew Murray wrote, *“Most churches think their members are gathered into one simply to take care of and build up each other. They know not that God rules the world by the prayers of His saints; that prayer is the power by which Satan is conquered; that by prayer the church on earth has disposal of the powers of the heavenly world.”*

There is great power in prayer, and as we grow our prayer lives we will grow in strength and in appreciation for God, for His gifts, and for one another! I pray that everyone will take advantage of opportunities for community prayer and that as we recognize anew God’s generous self-donation in the sacraments we will gather faithfully and eagerly as the family of God, knowing we are called into Christ’s embrace in this place.

Oremus pro invicem! Let us pray for one another!

Pastor Drobená

A Brief History Of The Tithe By Michael Welch

Over the years I have been asked many questions about giving and its importance and I have had questions as well. This paper attempts to address some of the most frequently asked questions, that I and others have had over the years.

No one really knows where the act of tithing (giving 10%) began, but we know from other ancient writing that it was not uncommon for someone to give a king or religious leader ten per cent of what they had won in battle. However this custom began, Abram knew of it and brought it with him out of Ur. In Genesis 14:17 we read of Abram returning from the rescue of Lot and the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the Kings allied with him. Abram is greeted upon his return by two kings, Bera King of Sodom and Melchizedek King of Salem, whose very name means King of Righteousness, King of Peace. The King of Righteousness, King of Peace communes with Abram, and he gave him bread and wine. Does this sound familiar? He was the priest of the God Most High Possessor of Heaven and earth and he says “Blessed be Abram of the God Most High who has delivered your enemies into your hands”. So Abram gave him a tenth of all. Now the King of Sodom offered a share to Abram, but he refused lest the king claim that he made Abram rich. Think of this event in this manner, we know that it is more blessed to give than to receive, in other words if we give we will be blessed. Melchizedek’s acceptance of Abram’s gift activated his blessing. The king of Sodom recognized Abram as his

superior by the offering of his gift, but Abram's refusal denied him his blessing. Psalm 110:4 and Hebrews 5:7 identify Jesus as the High Priest after the order of Melchizedek.

Thus a precedent is begun, Abram wasn't asked to give anything before his blessing. I think the blessing was due to Abram's faith, but in recognition that all that he had belonged to the Possessor of Heaven and Earth he freely offered up what he knew belonged to God. When we tithe we do so as a sign of our surrender and obedience to Christ, and recognition that all that we have and all that we are belongs to the God Most High, Possessor of Heaven and earth.

As we read through the scriptures we find a system of offerings (tithes) evolving. In Numbers, we find the first fruits being offered to the Levites for "they have no inheritance". They are to be given the best of everything. God speaks to Aaron giving him charge over the offerings, every devoted thing in Israel. Everything that opens the womb first, man or beast shall be yours, but they must be redeemed for a price, in silver (Num 18:8-21).

Originally they would take their tithes to the dwelling place of the Lord giving 10% to the Levites and partaking of the rest, (Duet. 14:22,23) but if the dwelling place was too far they could sell their tithes (produce) and bring the money to the Lord and buy whatever their hearts desired and share 10% with the Levites. As time passed the temple was built and the law was further codified. They had to exchange foreign money, which pictured deities and rulers of different lands, for the temple currency (*for thou shalt have no graven images before Me*). This practice opened the door for dishonesty. To further complicate things a third year offering was introduced (Duet 26:12,13) "to be given to the stranger, the fatherless and the widow". "Honor the Lord with the first fruits of all your increase, so your barns will be filled and your vats will overflow with wine" (Prov. 3:9,10). The codification continued with oaths of accuracy and penalties if the money wasn't exchanged properly. As the requirements of temple worship increased more and more demands for support were made, culminating in Christ's cleansing of the temple. Prior to Christ coming, any failure to adhere to the smallest minutia of the law would lead to condemnation. Who then could be saved?

With the advent of the risen Christ the law was put into our hearts and written in our minds. We were given a Comforter to instruct us. No longer giving as a duty, but giving out of love, charity and worship, in total surrender to our Lord and Savior. Because we were redeemed, bought and paid for, not offered up for silver as our Lord, but purchased with His blood, and saved by His grace.

There is an old saying, "keep the main thing the main thing". Our injunction by Christ is to go forth and spread the word to the uttermost parts of the earth. To comfort, clothe, feed, show mercy and above all, love. In order to do this, ministries must be supported. (James 5:20) *Let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his ways will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.* I don't know about you, but I'll take all the help I can get. Our

God is a God of increase. We act out of faith, illustrating to our children and family our commitment, setting a course for them as they grow and mature, leaving no doubt where our heart lies.

Why do we need to talk about tithes and offerings?

Responsibility, (Mt 5:19) anyone in a leadership position in the church is held to a higher degree of accountability, by our Lord. Anyone in a leadership position be it that of a Pastor, Teacher, or Council Member is personally accountable to God for what they have taught and for what they have not taught. The omission of any topic including money could have a detrimental effect on the prosperity of the church and us all as individuals.

I give my time, doesn't that count as a tithe?

I used to think the same way. Then one day it came to me if I'm not giving 10% of my time it isn't a tithe. Now I don't want to diminish all the hard work and countless hours spent in all aspects of the ministry. It is a special calling and a blessing to all and we need all the helping hands we can get. Each Sunday at the offering we say these words "we offer with joy and thanksgiving ourselves, our time, and our possessions". It doesn't say we off ourselves and/or our time and/or our possessions. Let them who have ears to hear, hear.

Will I be denied salvation if I don't tithe?

No! The only way we receive salvation is to confess with our mouth and believe in our heart that Jesus Christ is our Lord and Savior. We must examine ourselves and ask this question do I really believe this? Being a good person living a moral life will not cut it. It all boils down to this, Jesus Christ is Lord. Hebrews 10:16 "I will put my law into their hearts and in their minds I will write them". Matthew 5:18 Jesus speaking of the law "not one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled" and He goes on to say that "whoever *does and teaches* the law he shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven, but who ever doesn't shall be least in the Kingdom of Heaven". Imagine eternity in the cheap seats.

Where does Christ say we should Tithe?

When we read Matt 23:23, Jesus admonishes the scribes and Pharisees, calling them hypocrites (actors) giving for show without mercy or justice but as we read further He says "these you ought to have done without leaving the others undone".

Where does it say we should be materially well off?

Read the Psalm 1:1-3 "he shall prosper in whatever he shall do". "I would that you be in good health and prosper even as your soul prospers." (3Jn 1:2) "It is the Lord God who gives you the power to gain wealth. (Deu 8:18) Just to name a few verses. It may come as a surprise, but Jesus spoke about money more than any other subject. Remember if there wasn't a rich man there could not be a good samaritan.

Pastoral Care

Contact information for

Rev. Thomas S. Drobená; ‘Pastor Tom’

Office phone: 860-684-7571

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Email address: thomas.drobená@yale.edu

Mailing address:

7 Green St. Stafford Springs, CT

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Contact information for President Michael Welch

Cellphone: 860-982-3697

Email – mikeswelch49@gmail.com

Church – htlc-church@att.net

Website – holytrinitystafford.org

Members of the Council are:

Rev. Thomas S. Drobená

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 Drobená, 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

July Anniversaries

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

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

☺ Heavenly Father, please help me face each day with grace and appreciation for the blessings of Your love.

August Anniversaries

- 15 – John and Joan Fittz
- 31 – Donald and Barbara Hoffman

Birthdays

- 05 – Madeleine Mercier; Happy 1st
- 07 – Adam Tremblay
- 14 – Rob Titus
- 17 – John Fittz
- 17 – Kenneth VanDyk
- 18 – Brittaney Titus
- 23 – Cynthia Brown
- 27 – Judy Titus
- 28 – Alex Hoss
- 29 – Patricia O’Brien
- 29 – Claudia Sevcik

Church Picnic

The date for our annual picnic is Sunday, August 9, 2015.

Greetings from Michigan!

Well, it’s been 6-months since we moved from Stafford Springs, CT to Cass City, MI.



We have adjusted well, putting up a fence and baby-proofing the house. Nicole will be turning 2 in August and Owen is now almost 8-months old! They are growing so fast and are both happy & healthy kids! I have also settled into working from home and head back to CT every so often to check in the office. Jevon is doing an awesome with the kids as a stay-at-home dad. He has a lot of patience! We really miss Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. It is a great place to worship and we always felt welcomed and loved. We haven’t found a church quite like HTLC, but still on the hunt. Take care & God bless!

Jenny and Jevon Baarck



Asking for prayers for the upcoming marriage of Maureen Scully & Caleb Hartmann who will be married in our church September 12.

Dear Lord Jesus we pray today for all those that have made the choice to become engaged and spend their lives together in the union of marriage – which You Yourself ordained and blessed. Lord we pray that You would help all betrothed couples to recognize the sanctity of the promises that they have made to each other, and give them grace to forsake all others and cleave only to each other, for as long as they live - as You ordained. Give them wisdom and guidance as they start to make their future plans together and provide each of them with the wise counsel from godly counsellors, so that they may have all that they need to equip themselves for a future together - where they become united as one. Lord in a world where

the sanctity of marriage is becoming so unpopular, we pray that You would renew a deeper understanding and reverence for the true meaning of marriage, to all engaged couples. Bring each to a deeper understanding that Christ's love for the Church is a beautiful picture of what marriage for every Christian couple should be. In this period of engagement we pray that You would prepare each one for tremendous changes and challenges that their marriage will bring and help them to overcome all the difficulties that will arise as they adapt their single status into a meaningful marriage partnership. May they grow closer together in love with each other and with You, day by day - in Jesus name we pray, Amen.

Holy Trinity Hosts Baccalaureate Service

June 15, 2015, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Stafford Springs, CT celebrated Evening Prayer in thanksgiving for the Stafford High School Class of 2015, followed by a banquet in the hall of the church. The baccalaureate is a yearly ecumenical celebration in Stafford Springs, which Holy Trinity had the honor of hosting this year. Scripture was read by Melissa Fisher, Hailey Ebenstein, and Jacob Ives, students of the graduating class; the Charge to the Graduating Class was delivered by Tracy Rummel, the Chairwoman of the Stafford Board of Education. Invocations and prayers were led by clergy representatives from the Roman Catholic Church, the Methodist Church, and the Episcopal Church, as well as by the Rev. Thomas S. Drobenka, the Pastor at Holy Trinity. The Rev. Wilma S. Kucharek, Bishop of the Slovak Zion Synod, offered a closing benediction.



Music was performed by the SHS Concert Choir, offering renditions of “Awaken the Music” and “Reaching for the Stars”. The SHS Madrigal singers also offered their rendition of *Amazing Grace*.

Over 150 were in attendance to view the graduating class process into the church and to offer thanks to God for the blessings bestowed upon these young people. The evening conveyed the immense amount of support and sense of pride that the faith community of the town of Stafford Springs has for its youth. We join them in praying for God’s continued guidance and blessings upon these young people and upon all our graduates, that God may be their Light and Guide into the future.



July***Holy Trinity Lutheran Church*****2015**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 7:30 p.m. Bible Class at Lichanec Home	2	3 Thomas, <i>Apostle</i> (no service)	4
5 The Sixth Sunday after Pentecost 10:00 a.m. Holy Communion 11:15 a.m. Church Council	6 Jan Hus, <i>Martyr</i> 7:30 p.m. Vespers	7 <i>Pastor's Day off</i>	8	9	10	11 9 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. Safe Net
12 The Seventh Sunday after Pentecost 10:00 a.m. Holy Communion 11:15 a.m. Learning and Youth Committee	13	14 <i>Pastor's Day off</i>	15 7:30 p.m. Bible Class at Lichanec Home	16	17	18 8 p.m. Movie Night
19 The Eighth Sunday after Pentecost 10:00 a.m. Holy Communion	20	21 <i>Pastor's Day off</i>	22 Mary Magdalene, <i>Apostle</i> 7:30 p.m. Vespers	23 WIC	24	25 9 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. Safe Net
26 The Ninth Sunday after Pentecost 10:00 a.m. Holy Communion 11:15 a.m. Social Hour	17	28 <i>Pastor's Day off</i>	29 7:30 p.m. Bible Class at Lichanec Home	30	31	

July Service Schedule

You'll notice the hymnals have changed. We will be using the Cranberry Hymnals up to the Advent season. These reading are from for from the Evangelical Lutheran worship on page #42 through #43, Series B.

Tellers

Ushers

Worships Assistants

Reader

July 5, 2015 – 10:00 a.m. – The Sixth Sunday after Pentecost – Green

Ezekiel 2: 1-5; Psalm 123; 2 Corinthians 12: 2-10; Mark 6: 1-13

Amelia Hinchliffe	Walter Kovaciny	Stacy Fisher	Stacy
Fisher	Sheila Welch	A Volunteer	Sheila Welch

July 12, 2015 – 10:00 a.m. – The Seventh Sunday after Pentecost – Green

Amos 7: 7-15; Psalm 85: 8-13; Ephesians 1: 3-14; Mark 6: 14-29

Cathy Lichanec	Walter Kovaciny	Stacy Fisher	Ruth Boyles
Michael Welch	Debbie Lewis	Michael Welch	

July 19, 2015 – 10:00 a.m. – The Eighth Sunday after Pentecost – Green

Jeremiah 23: 1-6; Psalm 23; Ephesians 2: 11-22; Mark 6: 30-34, 53-56

Amelia Hinchliffe	Daniel Lichanec	Cathy Lichanec	Steve Marvonek
Sheila Welch	Leonard Lichanec	Stacy Fisher	

July 26, 2015 – 10:00 a.m. – The Ninth Sunday after Pentecost – Green

2 Kings 4: 42-44; Psalm 145: 10-18; Ephesians 3: 14-21; John 6: 1-21

Cathy Lichanec	A Volunteer	Cathy Lichanec	Michael Welch
Michael Welch	Walter Kovaciny	Debbie Lewis	

Altar Guild

Set Up – Andrew, Melissa and Stacy Fisher

Typist

July – Stacy Fisher

Remove – Leigh Maxa

July 2015

- 1, 15 & 29 – Bible Study at Lichanec Home – 7:30 p.m.**
5 – Council meeting – 11:15 a.m.
6 – Jan Hus, Martyr Vespers – 7:30 p.m.
11 & 25 – Safe Net, food distribution – 9:00 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.
12 – Learning and Youth Committee – 11:15 a.m.
18 – Movie night – 8:00 p.m.
22 – Mary Magdalene, Apostle Vespers – 7:30 p.m.
26 – Social Hour – 11:15 a.m.

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



