

The Weekly Tidings

Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

www.htelc.com

22 Fox Run Road * Newington, NH 03801 * 603-436-1704

office@htelc.com

Come Together, Grow in Faith, Serve the LORD

Graduating Seniors in 2021

If you have or know of a child who is graduating from High School or College, we want to recognize them in a few months! Please email Mark at the Church Office with their name(s), and we'll make sure to celebrate them in June.



Summer Camp at Camp Calumet

Summer Camp is happening, but it will work out differently than before because of COVID. There are four sessions at Calumet: Three 2-week sessions, and One 1-week session.

- June 27 - July 10 (Weeks 1-2)
- July 11-24 (Weeks 3-4)
- July 25 - August 7 (Weeks 5-6)
- August 8-14 (Week 7)



If you and your child would like to go, please let Pastor Tim know. Scholarships are available if money is tight. Reserve your week(s) at <https://www.calumet.org/summercamp/residentcamp>

Faith Formation

Our last Weekly GIFT goes out this weekend, what a journey this year has been! Providing an in-home way to engage in Faith Formation has been a joy. We would like to extend our gratitude to our partners, Luther Crest Bible Camp, who supplied us with weekly videos that were included in the Weekly GIFT. We are quickly turning our efforts to planning summertime family gatherings/activities at church. More details coming soon!



Pastor Tim's Article: April 26

Tonight is a "Pink Moon." If you don't know what that is, you are in good company, because I didn't know until just a few days ago. Prior to me googling it, I had only heard of a "Pink Moon" from the 1972 song of the same name by the artist Nick Drake. But after tonight, I plan on having something else to associate with it.

The "Pink Moon" has nothing to do with the color of a moon on a certain night. Instead, it is a supermoon in April that generally coincides with the one of the earliest blooming spring flowers in the US, Phlox subulata, commonly known as creeping or mountain phlox, and is pink in color. A supermoon is when the moon is full and it is extremely close to the earth. Depending on your definition of "supermoon" we will have 2-3 of them this year and they will all happen in consecutive months. The first was in March, called the "Worm Moon" (coincides with worms coming out of the ground as the weather warms). It will then be followed by the one now in April, and then on May 26th, called the "Flower Moon" and by now you can guess why it was given this name. It will reach its "fullest phase" tonight at 11:32 pm EST. I just checked the weather and we are supposed to have clear skies tonight with the temperature in the low 40's. Could be a lot worse and not much better!



If you are able to stay awake that late, I invite you to head outside to see it. Even if you are not able to stay awake that late, at some point, before you go to bed, head outside. It might not be at its biggest, but it will still be pretty amazing.

Now, before you go out, find your Bible. (Don't feel bad if you have to think about where it is or blow dust off of it. Heck, use your phone and download an app. I frequently do when I make visits! I use the one called "YouVersion.") Find Psalm 8 and then step out the door. Locate the moon (hopefully it won't be difficult, otherwise be prepared to be disappointed) and take a few moments to look at it. Breathe in a few deep breaths of the cool air and let it fill your lungs. When you are ready and before you get too cold, read Psalm 8 aloud. Here it is for you to read now.

*O Lord, our Sovereign,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!*

*You have set your glory above the heavens.
Out of the mouths of babes and infants
you have founded a bulwark because of your foes,
to silence the enemy and the avenger.*

*When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars that you have established;
what are human beings that you are mindful of them,
mortals that you care for them?*

*Yet you have made them a little lower than God,
and crowned them with glory and honor.
You have given them dominion over the works of your hands;
you have put all things under their feet,
all sheep and oxen,
and also the beasts of the field,
the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea,
whatever passes along the paths of the seas.*

*O Lord, our Sovereign,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!*

The cosmos are absolutely stunning. It is mind boggling to think about how large it all is. Space is so vast and endless that it would be easy to feel insignificant. If you noticed in the Psalm, people have been feeling that way since the beginning of time. Again, you are in good company if this thought crosses your mind. Yet, that is not the truth. In the midst of all of creation, God thinks of you, thinks of all us, as a little lower than God's self!

Think of how beautiful and wonderful all of creation is. You are...we are...the pinnacle of God's creation. We aren't an afterthought; we are THE thought! You matter. You are important. You have value and worth simply because you are part of God's creation. Not because of anything you have accomplished, or anything that you have failed at. No, simply because you can fill your lungs with the cool air of the night, you are God's and

you are loved. And when the time comes when you can't fill your lungs with air, and those lungs have breathed their last breath, you will become part of God's restoration project in a new way.

Remember, we are in the season of Easter. The hope of the risen Christ is among us! We have been talking about the goodness of creation and how there will be a physicality to the resurrected life! Look outside at the beauty and goodness of all of creation and be reminded of the goodness and beauty that is you.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Tim

Pastor Tim's Article: May 3, 2021

It is May and yesterday was a beautiful day! I greeted people outside as they came in for worship and it felt good. Obviously, we weren't "at capacity" but more people are returning to indoor/in-person worship. It was great to see people.

As you most likely have seen, the CDC has released new guidelines concerning what people can do if they are vaccinated, what they should continue to refrain from if they are unvaccinated, and guidelines over mask wearing for everyone. I am in conversations with a team of people from church and council to determine what these new guidelines will mean for us and how we gather for worship here at Holy Trinity.



The options we are considering serve a two-fold purpose. One, how can we gather in a way that brings as many people physically together to participate in as full a worship service as possible? Two, how do we provide an online experience to connect people to our community and worship who are still not able to gather in-person, whether it is pandemic related or geographical distance?

Some of those options being considered would be to move our primary worship service, on Sunday mornings, outside and only have an indoor service if weather dictates it. It

would be similar to our outdoor Easter service at the building. This service, whether it is indoors or outdoors would be live-streamed to our website. This might mean the discontinuation of our zoom service. Also, since we had such a good time with an outdoor/midweek gathering last year, we would like to do that again.

Additionally, just so you are aware, we are not going to require people to be vaccinated in order to attend. We understand that some people have reasons for intentionally choosing not to do so. Therefore, when we gather, the safety protocols we will implement around distancing and mask wearing will be with the assumption that we are always in a mixed group of vaccinated and non-vaccinated people. Things we require when we gather indoors, will be different than what we require when we gather outdoors.

After a year of zoom and other forms of digital worship with reduced in-person experiences, we realize new routines and habits have formed. I have read that as many as 25% of the church-going population has stopped attending during this time AND do not intend to return. As we continually contemplate the best way to worship during the COVID pandemic, please be mindful of the habits that you are forming, and have formed, and please keep worship part of them.

Lastly, to help us determine our worship schedule for this summer, please take a couple minutes to complete the following survey. Results will be anonymous. Please keep in mind this is not a vote to determine what we will do. We are gathering information to help us determine what we feel is the best course of action. *(Church Office Note: the survey will remain open at least through Thursday, May 13. Please call the Church Office if you wish to participate in the survey, but cannot access the survey online).*

<https://forms.gle/dhiumqThUWSJp3778>

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Tim

Immigration Support Blog

“Patricia” lived with her family, including her 4-year-old daughter Florencia, in Cameroon. Patricia and her husband worked and were active in their community, ministering to the poor through the work of their church congregation. The problem? They were publically and politically vocal when they saw things wrong with the government. One night, a neighbor arrived to tell Patricia that her husband, mother, and sister had all been murdered. Knowing she and her daughter’s lives were also under threat, she packed up and fled. After spending a year and a half in a refugee camp, she and her daughter were finally able to come to the United States. A cousin living in Pennsylvania helped get her connected to appropriate legal sources, and she obtained her work permit. Now as she awaits her asylum hearing, through the help of her cousin’s local church, she has a job and a place to live.



Thousands are in Patricia’s situation, thousands more even less secure. Claudine, for instance, is still in the process. We read stories like theirs and we ask ourselves, “What can I do?” Here’s a suggestion: Go to your church/synagogue/mosque denomination’s national website and type “immigration” in the search bar.

Below are some of the things you can find.

- The United Church of Christ: You can become an active immigration “accompanier.”
- The Roman Catholic Church: Their Immigrant Integration Project tutors immigrants in language, civil education, skills for job hunting, etc.
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in America: Lutheran World Relief will distribute your handmade quilt, and the Lutheran Immigrant and Refugee Services will send your cards and letters to folks in detention.
- Jesuit Refugee Services: You can join a Youth Refugee Support team.

- American Friends Service Committee: Learn how your congregation can offer sanctuary.
- American Methodist Church: You can advocate for the comprehensive reform of the US immigration system.
- Presbyterian Church USA: Join the Mid Counsel Work Group on Immigration.
- WMO International Ministries—American Baptist Church: Join the White Cross Project.
- Muslims for Progressive Values: Donate through the Muslim Legal Funds for Immigration.

Each site offers ideas for service, conversations to join, and ways to donate both time and talents. Each is informative. Most include true stories about immigrant experience. The more you read, the more you'll be inspired. You'll want to get involved; you'll want to ask others to join you!

Prayer Tree

After many years as the Leader of the EPrayer team Donna Hout is stepping down from the role. She has left Liberty Mutual and is starting a new chapter in her life. She has been such a great guide for this team and the church to insure all those needed prayer requests were addressed. Please join me in thanking Donna for all she has done and wish her much fun and happiness filled with loads of laughs as she starts this new journey! Linda Edwards has graciously stepped up and offered to take over the role as the Leader of this team. Please welcome Linda to the role and as of today forward any EPrayer requests to her at: edwardsl@stolaf.edu

Thank you Linda for stepping into this incredibly important position! I would also like to take this opportunity to remind everyone that if you need prayers or know someone who needs them please reach out to this Team. This is an incredibly devoted Team of people who are there to fulfill the prayer needs/requests! We all know how important prayer is and especially prayer in numbers.



Cheryl Brigham

Property Team

Yes, spring has arrived along with the expected inconsistencies in weather this time of year. The normal, routine sounds of spring, our lawn mowers and trimmers, can be heard on typical Thursday mornings, and other outside work on gardens, plantings, the barn and more is in progress unless rain forces the Thursday Group inside. Another sure sign of spring, our tent, should be up by the time you read this. I am always reluctant to raise the tent before May. Even in early May there is some risk of snow, and if it comes, it would certainly be the wet and heavy variety that could damage the tent. Think positive! Hopefully, the 2020-21 snow season is finally over. It will be nice to see folks gathered under the tent again through the warm seasons.

Hackworth Fire and Security, our fire alarm system contractor, is actively engaged again with the installation of our new system. This is good news because we certainly do not want our building use limited for lack of a fully operational fire alarm system once the pandemic-imposed restrictions are eased.

We are continuing to see some significant issues with mice in the building. In a building of our size and age, a certain mouse population is to be expected. The lack of significant, regular building use may be contributing to their increased visibility. We will continue working to keep this issue under control. We all need to be aware of our little friends and avoid leaving things around that draw their attention, particularly food items including crumbs, food wrappers and such that they will seek out, given the opportunity.



For quite a few years the Thursday Morning Group and a small cadre of other volunteers have carried the bulk of the load to maintain our building and grounds. Given the reduction in our numbers over time, we are in the process of developing some alternate approaches to get more folks involved, either on Thursday or at other days and times that may be more suitable for them. You will likely be hearing more about this as the year moves on. Think of it as an opportunity!

Dave Mercer, Property Team Leader