

The Weekly Tidings

Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

www.htelc.com

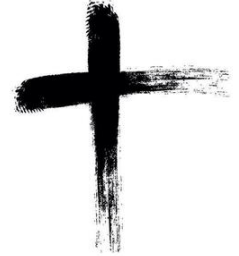
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Come Together, Grow in Faith, Serve the LORD

Ash Wednesday - February 22

Plan now for the start of Lent. Worship services will be offered at 12:00 noon and at 7:00 pm in the Sanctuary. The worship will include the Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion. Our 12:00 PM service will be livestreamed on htelc.com.



Holy Week

Please note the upcoming schedule for Holy Week 2023.

Further details to come shortly.

- Palm Sunday, April 2 (*Worship at 9:30 AM*)
- Maundy Thursday, April 6
(*Worship at 12:00 PM and 7:00 PM*)
- Good Friday, April 7 (*Worship at 7:00 PM*)
- Holy Saturday, April 8 (*Online Worship only*)
- Easter Sunday, April 9 (*Worship at 9:30 AM*)



Holy Week

Bell Choir interest

Holy Trinity is looking to start up our Bell Choir for the first time in years, and we would like to know who is interested in joining. We are looking both for new members to join us and experienced members to return. If you have an interest in joining the Bell Choir, please speak to Heidi Morrison or Dot Kasik, or let the Church Office know.

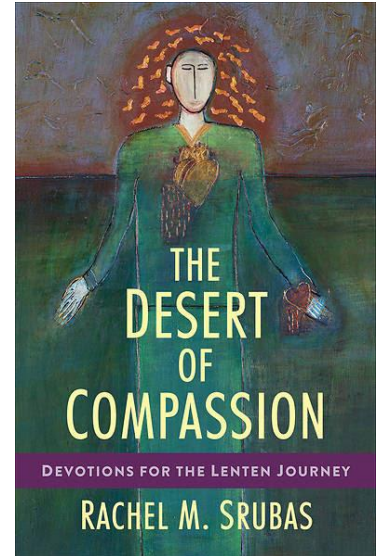


HANDBELL CHOIR

Pastor's Article: February 5, 2023

Now that we've turned the calendar to February, your pastor has started thinking about Lent. We still have three Sundays of Epiphany to go, but Ash Wednesday will be here before we know it, this year falling on Wednesday, February 22. Lent, of course, is a time for self-examination and reflection. In this season, we are invited to go into the wilderness with Christ for a conversation about how we are doing. Despite what you may have heard, Lent is not so much a time to wallow in guilt about our many foibles and failures as it is an opportunity to listen to Christ about how we might grow and mature in our faith in the days ahead.

Every Lent, I like to try a new devotional to help me along in this journey. This year I have selected a new book by Pastor Rachel Srubas entitled *The Desert of Compassion: Devotions for the Lenten Journey*. A Benedictine oblate and Presbyterian minister, Rachel pastors a Presbyterian church in Tucson, Arizona. Her book was just published last month, so I have yet to read it. But I've heard good things about it from readers who received advance copies and my perusal of it this past week confirms that it seems a thoughtfully constructed devotional.



My proposal to you is that we read it together during Lent. The book is organized so that for each day of Lent, from Ash Wednesday all the way to Holy Saturday, there is a short Scripture reading, a reflection, and a prayer. The book is only 170 pages, so it is to be lingered over rather than rushed through.

My thought is that after church on Sundays during Lent (roughly from 10:45 to 11:30 a.m.), those who are interested might join me for a discussion of each week's entries as we make our way through the book.

Copies are available in the Church Office or on Amazon. Our first Lenten Book Discussion will be held after worship on Sunday, March 12, and will continue weekly until Palm Sunday. I hope you will join me in this Lenten journey of reading, reflection and prayer.

Property Team

For this Tidings contribution I want to feature an aspect of Property Team work that can easily go unnoticed. Nearly every Thursday morning, property team volunteers work on a variety of tasks to make our building, inside and out, as neat, tidy, and presentable as can be reasonably done given time and people resource limitations. I know that many of you assume these matters are taken care of by the congregation's professional cleaning service, but that is not the case. Many cleaning tasks are outside the scope of our cleaning service. Thursday Group volunteers regularly clean up discarded paper and other items left in the Sanctuary, clean furnishings in the Sanctuary, clean the glass doors at the Sanctuary entrance, clean doors and windows at the main church entry, and the entry doors on the office side of the building. The group also targets cleaning of all windows, inside and out, twice each year. The Thursday also regularly does what is needed to keep the kitchen, kitchen cabinets, refrigerators, stoves and other items neat and tidy. From time to time the group does cleaning in other parts of the building that are not in the scope of the cleaning service (stairwells, basement, classrooms, offices). In season, some of these same volunteers also work outside on plants, flowers, and other grounds tasks.



We are a group of equal opportunity volunteers. We do not have a list of work for men and a list for women, although some types of work seems to fall more heavily on one or the other. In the spirit of full disclosure the vast majority of work in the cleaning category discussed above has fallen on the women and we all need to thank them for their service and ongoing contributions. David Mercer, Property Team Leader (Pro Tempore)

Operation Blessing

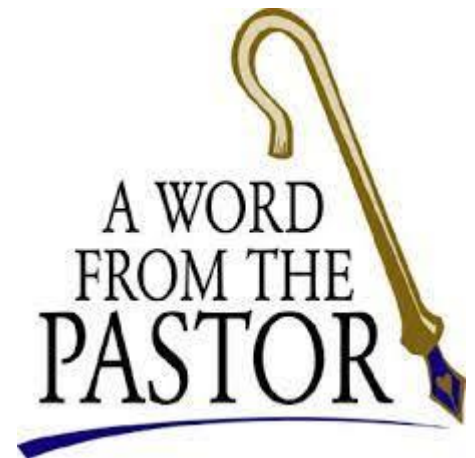
We will be collecting condiments for Operation Blessing this month as well as dish detergent. Thank you for all you can bring to Holy Trinity and put it in the dark green buckets under the mailboxes. Lois Laurence



Pastor's Article: February 12, 2023

Our Scripture lessons every Sunday have many purposes and functions. Often, they offer moral and spiritual guidance, as, for example, Jesus' teachings from the Sermon on the Mount, which have been the subject of our gospel readings these past few Sundays. Other times, our lessons teach us history that allow us to appreciate how God's people in generations past have encountered many of the challenges that face us today, and how God stood faithfully by their sides just as He stands by us. And still other times, our Scripture readings teach us deep theological truths about the nature of God.

Sometimes, though, these lessons also help us to understand our liturgy and why we do what we do during worship on Sundays. This week's gospel text is one such example. In yesterday's Bible study, among other verses from Matthew, chapter 5, we considered this teaching by Jesus: "So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift" (Matthew 5:23-24).



What do we make of this? On one level, this verse is just a part of Jesus' teaching on anger and broken relationships, and his point is simply that all Christians must endeavor to work toward forgiveness and reconciliation, setting aside things like enmity, bitterness, jealousies and envy, and all negative feelings that create friction and division within Christian community.

And it is also more than that, making its way into our worshipping life each Sunday. Indeed, this teaching about reconciliation was viewed by the early Church as so foundational that it became the theoretical cornerstone of what we now call "the Exchange of the Peace," which comes at the end of the Liturgy of the Word and before Holy Communion. You know, it is when the Pastor says: "May the peace of the Lord be always with you," the congregation responds, "And also with you," and then everyone greets one another with the sign of the peace.

This moment in the liturgy is much more than an opportunity for socializing or stretching your legs. Its original purpose was a much more solemn one: to invite everyone in the community to be reconciled to one another—i.e., forgive each other for any past wrongs, hurts, or slights,

and “make peace” with one another—just before receiving the sacred gift of the sacrament of bread and wine.

This is how one ELCA worship guide explains the “Exchange of the Peace”:

The exchange of peace is a ministry, an announcement of grace we make to each other, a summary of the gift given to us in the liturgy of the Word. This ministry we do to each other is far greater than a sociable handshake or a ritual of friendship or a moment of informality. Because of the presence of Jesus Christ, we give to each other what we are saying: Christ’s own peace. Then, having been gathered by the Spirit around the Risen One present in the word, we turn to celebrate his meal.

I offer this not just as a bit of bible study or liturgical history, but also in the hope that it might re-frame how you experience this moment in our worship. Yes, “exchanging the peace” can still be a pleasant opportunity to warmly greet your neighbor, but it should also be an invitation to soften your heart and let go of that grudge or other negative feeling that is keeping you from loving everyone as Christ wants you to love.

Prayers and Relief for Turkey and Syria

The devastating earthquake this week in Turkey and Syria have left a staggering number of people dead, injured, displaced, homeless and grieving. Please consider giving to Lutheran World Relief's fund set up to assist the victims. Go to www.lwr.org to see how you can help. Just as importantly, keep these hurting people in your prayers: "We pray to you, Almighty God, for the victims of the recent earthquake in Turkey and Syria. You are always our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble. Welcome into your loving arms those who have died, care for the injured and displaced, comfort the grieving, strengthen the aid workers and rescue teams, reassure the confused, weak, and vulnerable, and deliver any who are still in peril. All this we pray in your Son's name, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen." Faithfully, Pastor Luther



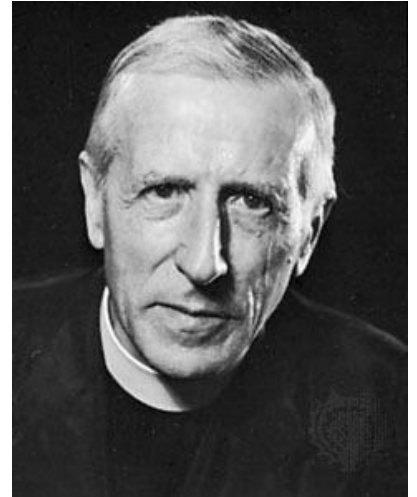
Lord,
Hear Our
Prayer

Pastor's Article: February 19, 2023

It has been well over a year now since Pastor Tim left Holy Trinity. In that time, many of you have been working very hard, in tandem with the New England Synod, to move forward in the process of discerning the call of a new pastor. You dutifully completed the congregational assessment tool (CAT) used by the Synod for transitions, met to discuss the results, assembled a team of writers to author a ministry site profile (MSP), and pulled together a Call Committee, who, in turn, has been interviewing candidates. Even so, and despite everyone's best efforts, things are moving slowly and it feels sometimes as if no progress is being made.

The problem, of course, is that this is a very challenging environment in which to search for a new pastor as so many churches are competing for a smaller and smaller pool of qualified candidates. It is easy, given all this, to become frustrated and despondent.

In times like this, I have found comfort and wisdom in a beautiful prayer by the French Jesuit, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, SJ (*pictured, right*). It is entitled "The Slow Work of God" and it goes like this:



"Above all, trust in the slow work of God. We are all, quite naturally, impatient in everything to reach the end without delay. We should like to skip the intermediate stages. We are impatient of being on the way to something unknown, something new; and yet it is the law of all progress that it is made by passing through some stages of instability -- and that it may take a very long time to get where we are going. And so it is with you. Your future matures gradually - let it grow, let it shape itself, without undue haste. Don't try to force what is to come, as though you could be today what only God's grace will make you tomorrow. Only God can say what this new spirit gradually forming within you will be. Give God the benefit of believing that his hand is leading you, and accept the anxiety of feeling yourself in the wondrous suspense of being incomplete, trusting that God is guiding you where you need to go, guiding you into His Truth."

The fact is that these times of transition, as unsettling as they can be, are also filled with great grace. I know that I have experienced many moments of such grace in the time I have been here with you. I hope you feel the same way. Together, let's trust that God is slowly but surely leading us all to where we need to be. The journey may not always be comfortable or easy, but it wouldn't be called the Way of the Cross if it were.

Indonesian Cooking Class in May

We are planning some opportunities for fellowship between the Holy Trinity 9:30 community and the Imanuel Indonesian 2:00 congregation during 2023. Our first event... do you like cooking? If so, please come to cooking class after 9:30 Worship on May 7 (tentative date)! Open to all ages and cooking skills. We will learn to cook Indonesian nasi goreng (fried rice) and lumpia (springrolls) from our fellow parishoners. We will all help with the chopping, rolling, frying and then sit down to enjoy the lunch we have cooked. Details are under discussion, more information coming soon.

Faith Formation

For Faith Formation, we were very pleased to confirm three of our youth on January 8th and thank Pastor Luther & Glenn Oswald for all of their efforts.

We continue to work weekly at 10:45 am on Sundays in confirmation class and plan to have a retreat at Camp Calumet in the next month. We are working to find regular teachers and substitutes for our children's programs to begin. There will be a class for preschoolers to grade 2 and another for Grades 3 to 6. We would like 2 teachers and 2 assistants per class, so they can alternate. So far we have 1 teacher & 1 assistant for grades 3-6. We also have found a few people who have offered to help us with our adult forum and confirmation. Thank you to all who have volunteered. If you are interested in helping in any way, please reach out to Lara Scammon, Glenn Oswald, or Tom Bernth.



Calumet Women's Retreat

This year's theme will be "Kaleidoscope, the Sacred facets of our lives". Please join us for a lively weekend. The total cost is \$172. Please sign up and grab the paperwork in the gathering area on the kiosk. Please do this, if possible, by the end of February so we can get Calumet our numbers, If you have questions or would like the paperwork sent to you electronically, please contact Leslie Carson at carsonsl@maine.rr.com.

Baptism

Baptized into Christ on Sunday, February 12 is Gabriel Ranto Björn Simamora, son of Joddy Tiratdy Simamora and Hannah Mei.

Prayer Concerns

Health Issues: Franklyn Vosburg, Jerry Schock, Pastor Linn Opderbecke, Alice Peterson, Sarah Meier, Bob & Judy Hollister, Don Gindlesperger, Steve Bush, Joyce Rivoire, Richard Anderson, Yvonne Topping, Dave Smith, Larry Sanders, Hazel Larson, Leo Larson, Jean Klein, Joe Lugalla, Geri Seig, Rani Marcus, Grover Marshall.

Homebound: Carol Saufley, Edith Rowan, Barbara Werdelin, Ron Evers, Dave & Joyce Rivoire, Anita Lindstrom.

Military: Josh Bretz, Matthew Hanrahan, Brendan Podszus, Jacob Schankis, Jessica Chabot.

Friends: Katy and Sherry (Shirley Jackson's daughter and sister), Linda Smith and Bill Hutchins (Jill Larson's friends), Geri Sieg (former member of Holy Trinity), Casey Lavoie (Stephanie Goupil's friend), Danielle Elwanger & family (Bobbie Febbo's granddaughter) Linda Aten (Rich Wilcox's sister), Lynn Geraci (Jill & Jerry Schock's friend), Robert Gjellstad (Jerry Schock's cousin).

Prayers will be listed for 6 weeks unless told otherwise. If you would like a prayer concern listed in the bulletin, please fill out a Prayer Request at the Usher's table or contact the Church Office at office@htelc.com.

Monthly Attendance & Offering

Sunday, January 15:	83 (<i>In-Person</i>) + 23 (<i>Online</i>) = 106	Offering:	\$7,264.85
Sunday, January 22:	91 (<i>In-Person</i>) + 41 (<i>Online</i>) = 132	Offering:	\$3,146.92
Sunday, January 29:	87 (<i>In-Person</i>) + 21 (<i>Online</i>) = 108	Offering:	\$3,204.03
Sunday, February 5:	86 (<i>In-Person</i>) + 35 (<i>Online</i>) = 121	Offering:	\$6,345.45
Sunday, February 12:	85 (<i>In-Person</i>) + 25 (<i>Online</i>) = 110	Offering:	\$12,764.90

Calendar at-a-glance

Wed. February 22: Ash Wednesday (*worship at 12:00 PM & 7:00 PM*)

Sun. April 2: Palm Sunday

Thurs. April 6: Maundy Thursday (*worship times TBD*)

Fri. April 7: Good Friday (*worship times TBD*)

Sat. April 7: Holy Saturday reflection (*online only*)

Sun. April 9: Easter Sunday 9:30 AM. Easter breakfast to follow.

Sunday Worship, Sundays at 9:30 AM

Confirmation Class, Sundays after Worship.

Wednesday Bible Study, Wednesdays at 9:30 AM

Property Team, Thursdays at 8:00 AM until noon.