



31 South Duke Street | Lancaster, PA | 17602
TRINITYLANCASTER.ORG

JULY 2026

**Sunday, July 5
Communion**

First Reading: Zechariah 9:9-12
Psalm 145:8-14
Second Reading: Romans 7:15-25a
Gospel: Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30
Pastor Joel Petruschke preaching

Sunday, July 12

First Reading: Isaiah 55:10-13
Psalm 65: 1-13
Second Reading: Romans 8:1-11
Gospel: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23
Pastor Joel Petruschke preaching

Sunday, July 19

First Reading: Isaiah 44:6-8
Psalm 86:11-17
Second Reading: Romans 8:12-25
Gospel: Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43
Rev. Newell Embly preaching

Sunday, July 26

First Reading: 1 Kings 3:5-12
Psalm 119:129-136
Second Reading: Romans 8:26-39
Gospel: Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52
Loren Good preaching

Letter from Senior Pastor Petruschke



As we know, this month our country is celebrating the 250th anniversary of the signing of *The Declaration of Independence*. It is quite a milestone. And at the time of this milestone, we think of that phrase George Washington used to describe the country in its infancy. In a letter dated January 9, 1790, written from New York City to the British historian and author Catharine Sawbridge Macaulay Graham, George Washington called the United States the "great experiment." Specifically, he wrote: "The establishment of our Government seemed to be the last great experiment, for promoting human happiness, by reasonable compact, in civil Society." Washington often used some variation of this phrase in his writings to speak of the Enlightenment-era understanding that the U.S. was the world's first large-scale liberal democracy, testing whether a society could successfully govern itself without a monarch.

Now, when we think of an experiment, we think of trying something out to see if it works. Like trying out a new fertilizer on our lawn to see if it works. Does this brand of fertilizer make our grass grow? Like trying out a new shampoo to see if it works. Does the shampoo make our hair healthy and shiny? But with respect to our topic at hand, what we are trying out is a "democratic republic" to see if it works.

And so, the question we have to ask ourselves as a country on the occasion of this milestone in our nation's history is this: "Is it working?" Is the democratic republic working?

Mission Statement

We are by God's Grace a Community Connecting with Christ's Love for the World.

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church

31 South Duke Street
Lancaster, PA 17602
717-397-2734

church@trinitylanaster.org

M-THUR 8:00 - 4:30

FRI 8:00-3:00

Of course, the follow-up question is this: What do you mean by “working?” Working for “whom?” Working to do “what?” And to those questions, we would answer, “Working to fulfill the vision of *The Declaration of Independence* wherein all people are seen as created equal and endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” I will let you then answer that question for yourself: “Is the democratic republic working in this regard?” Hold that thought.

For with respect to the phrase “the great experiment,” I want us to consider more deeply that notion of “experiment” from the perspective of the scientific method. If we remember from school, the scientific method involved 1) creating a hypothesis, 2) developing an experiment to test that hypothesis, 3) conducting the experiment, 4) making observations and collecting and analyzing data, and 5) summing up the conclusions. But here is the thing: when it comes to the scientific method, it doesn’t stop. The scientific method goes on with follow-up hypotheses. And this is what I want us to consider with respect to the great American experiment.

In a wonderful book entitled *Think Again*, the author Adam Grant lifts up the scientific method for approaching life.

“Intelligence is usually seen as the ability to think and learn, but in a rapidly changing world, there’s another set of cognitive skills that might matter more: the ability to rethink and unlearn. In our daily lives, too many of us favor the comfort of conviction over the discomfort of doubt. We listen to opinions that make us feel good, instead of ideas that make us think hard. We see disagreement as a threat to our egos, rather than an opportunity to learn. We surround ourselves with people who agree with our conclusions, when we should be gravitating toward those who challenge our thought process. The result is that our beliefs get brittle long before our bones” (on the book’s cover).

In short, thinking again helps us re-imagine our understanding of the world. I think of the example of gravity. Newton developed his mathematical equation for gravity, and it works pretty well, except in cases of extreme mass, high velocity, and vast cosmic distances. And so what happened is that Einstein comes along and re-thinks gravity giving us spacetime. Einstein’s theory works significantly better than Newton’s laws because it makes highly accurate predictions in extreme environments where Newton’s formulas fail completely. This is the power of “thinking again,” of continuing to use the scientific method, to develop subsequent hypotheses, to better understand reality.

And so, Grant proposes that it is exactly this kind of re-thinking that we need to embrace, even as a nation, I would dare say, with respect to the great American experiment. Not that we change our form of government, but that we seek to make it work better. Science does not go backwards. Science progresses by testing hypotheses and developing new hypotheses. Progress is not about going backward, like making America great again. No, progress is about continuing to think again about how we fulfill that vision: “all (people) are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, among these is life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” We can’t make America great again, because nowhere in the past did we ever fully achieve that original vision. We still haven’t. And so, my prayer for our country on this 250th is that those who are in power would think again, and think again, so to continue the process of moving our country ever closer to that original vision.

May God bless us and all the nations and peoples of the world as we celebrate this semi-quintcentennial of *The Declaration of Independence*.

In Christ,
Pastor Joel Petruschke



Sunday Worship

Sunday morning worship begins at 9:30 a.m. and is held in the sanctuary.

Just for Kids

Every Sunday there are children's activity bags in the narthex. Please feel free to ask an usher where to find them.

FROM THE WORSHIP AND MUSIC SMALL GROUP, a Continuing Story

by Loren Good:

In June, Pastor Joel and Loren Good offered an adult forum presentation on what we do in worship, how and why. We shared the importance of order in worship, akin to God's Declaration of order for the World via His Creation. We shared many Lutheran practices, the reason for the minimally three parts to the worship experience...gather (invocation/confession/Kyrie or Gloria), The Word (Readings, Sermon, Creed, Prayers), and The Sending (Benediction, call to go and do God's work). We shared that on Communion Sundays, there is a fourth part to the service...an additional Liturgy, in fact. Meaning that when we commune, we enjoy two distinct Liturgies in worship.

We talked about the practice of kneeling, and while not as common at Trinity as in the past, feel free to do so; kneeling benches are in the pews. And, the importance of music. As Luther said, "singing is second only to the Gospel in uplifting the soul."

As we turned to Q and A there were many fine questions asked, including, but in no way limited to:

Why don't we have Bibles in our pews? While it is not in Trinity's plans to add that to the pew rack, please feel free to bring one of your Bibles from home as a reference during worship. In the event you do not have one, please let Pastor Joel or Loren know, we'll get one for you.

Do Lutherans use incense in worship? While it is not our practice, many Lutheran churches do so. Why? It serves as an extra sensory engagement for congregants with the sweet smell and the smoke rising to the Divine.

Which culture and in what language was the first Bible recorded? In Hebrew. When were additional translations recorded? In or around the late 2nd century, beginning of the third century of the Current Era, the Greek translation came into being...known as the Septuagint. (A great history to be learned here if you're interested in researching further.) Then, about 100 years later, St. Jerome translated the Bible into Latin, known as the Vulgate. So, these three translations...Hebrew (what we would call Old Testament), The Septuagint (both Old and New,) and The Vulgate (both Old and New) were the predominant translations until...Martin Luther's 1530s complete translation of both the Hebrew and Greek texts into German. WOW, about 1,000 years. During that millennium there were partial translations in various languages, (Wessex, Hexateuch, Tyndale to name a few). Then, in 1534, the complete English translation was completed at the behest of King James (The KJV). We could go on, but that's for another time.

ADDITIONAL WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

Some of you have asked and, in our Worship and Music Small Group meetings, we've been considering what we may be able to offer. Some ideas include: adding an early or mid-afternoon Lenten and Advent series of services. Many are not comfortable driving at night and this may be a means to serve that need. We at Holy Trinity are open to ideas. Our mission is to connect with Christ's Love for the World. This may be another way we can live our mission.

COMMUNION ASSISTANT TRAINING ON JULY 12 FOLLOWING WORSHIP



SENIOR COMMUNITY WORSHIP

Communion at Willow Valley – Wednesday, July 15
at 3 p.m., *Manor North Auditorium*

BREAKFAST FELLOWSHIP

Breaking Barriers. Building Community.

Our Breakfast Fellowship continues to be a marvelous Holy Trinity Ministry. Food acquisition, preparation, and serving is led by Cathy Dobish. Informal worship is led by Doug Frazer, Tim Wentworth, and Loren Good. Pastor Joel Petruschke presides at Holy Communion once a month and Trinity's choir sings once a month. Linda Flick shares her talent on the piano each Sunday. Thank you to all who serve.



Thank You.

I am in the kitchen several times a week. Most days I am pleasantly surprised by the 'gifts' for Breakfast Fellowship that appear. Thank you to the generous Trinity members and friends who leave donations for the hot breakfast and lunches we prepare every Sunday morning. We are truly blessed!

Thank you and many blessings,
Cathy Dobish

FROM THE VESTRY PRESIDENT

Dear Siblings in Christ,

This month I would like to report on the surveys that we presented at the Vestry report to the congregation in April and printed in the May newsletter.

I personally want to thank the 40 members who thoughtfully completed the surveys and returned them. Not everyone answered each question and some people chose several answers so we do not have exact numbers on responses that equal those who participated.

Question #1 asked how excited you are about being a member of Trinity (the word excited didn't sit well with some so you may want to replace that with happy or joyful)? The majority circled very excited or excited. Much of this has to do with the leadership of Pastor Joel, some were tempered due to the age of our membership and others were pleased with the involvement of our members in the congregation.

Question # 2 asked what we can do better to insure our future? Many people liked each of the options: put more emphasis on Stewardship and Endowment – 8; Change the worship style – 10; Offer more worship opportunities – 7; Merge with other churches - 7. Along with the numbers came suggestions such as mixing up the worship style; also, don't change the worship style to less communion and less singing of the liturgy. All suggestions will be directed to the appropriate committee to be reviewed and some will likely be acted on in the future.

Question # 3 asked how we can better inspire others? Once again people circled more than one choice: More small groups – 12; Better understanding of the Bible – 7; Better communication - 13. Along with these answers came suggestions. They ranged from marketing ideas to alternative days for worship during the week. One in particular was to focus on outreach and not numbers, which is exactly what we have been doing as we share the gospel. All suggestions will be reviewed by committees.

Question #4 asked are you excited about the future or the past? One thoughtful response was to always look forward but the future should reflect the past. Thirty-five people were looking forward.

Question # 5 asked are we making disciples of our members? An overwhelming majority said yes to this question.

I would like to address the word "change" as it pertains to anything at Trinity and probably all other churches. The committees and vestry do not look at any change lightly. Ideas are studied, tried and sometimes succeed but other times fail. So as they say, back to committee. The way you can be part of the future of Trinity is to say yes to serving on a committee or being part of a group like the choir, ushers, readers, alter guild to name a few. Be involved and have a voice: we are all listening.

I would like to end this with a clarification. One person inquired about tuning the bells in the steeple. The bells are made out of steel unlike others made of bronze so the tone may not be the best. They are oiled on a scheduled basis but they cannot be tuned.

P.S. Our choir was amazing at the Stormers game on June 10. The Star Spangled Banner never sounded better.

Susan Garofola, Vestry President

ROOFS, RATES, RAYS AND RENEWABLES



The slate roof on the Fisher Parish House is more than 70 years old and needs to be replaced because both the slate and the nails securing it are deteriorating. At the same time, the Church's annual electricity costs have risen to more than \$35,000 and continue to increase each year. With electrical capacity in short supply nationwide, these costs are expected to rise significantly in the years ahead.

This is an appropriate time to replace the roof and explore ways to manage our costs. A committee of Dave Wanner, Alan Sutter, Bruce Stauffer, and Barry Huber reviewed roof replacement options and the potential for a solar system to

generate a portion of our electricity. The committee received proposals from several roofing contractors and solar installers.

A proposal will be presented to the Vestry to approve installing a standing-seam metal roof on the Fisher Parish House and adding a solar system to a portion of the roof. The system is expected to generate about 73% of our annual electricity needs. To make the project financially feasible, it is important to move forward before July 4, 2026, so we can take advantage of rebates currently available under federal tax law.

The combination of the two projects is economically significant, but the solar project is projected to have a 10-year payback period based on current usage and anticipated generation.

The total cost of the two projects is anticipated to be approximately \$360,000 after the rebate for the solar installation. This will be paid for through a combination of current funds available in the Endowment Fund and donations from the Congregation.

A July 19, 2026 Adult Forum program will provide details on the project and offer the opportunity for members to ask additional questions.

EDUCATION

SUNDAY FORUM

The Sunday Forum begins at 11:00 a.m. in the Fondersmith Auditorium.

July 5 – Lemonade on the Lawn

July 12 – Pastor Joel - "Let's Listen, Let's Talk"

July 19 – Holy Trinity Going Partially Solar Report

July 26 – Christina Seldomridge – "The Life of the Honey Bee, and Their Importance to Us!"



FAITH TALK: From God's Mercy to Daily Christian Living

During the month of June, Faith Talk continued our study of Romans through chapters 11 and 12. In chapter 11, Paul wrestled with the difficult questions surrounding Israel, God's promises, and the mystery of salvation history. Together we explored Paul's image of the olive tree, where believing Gentiles have been graciously grafted into God's people, not because of their worthiness, but solely because of God's mercy. Along the way, Paul reminded us that there is no room for spiritual pride, since salvation remains God's gift from beginning to end. As we entered chapter 12, Romans began its transition from doctrine to daily Christian living. We discussed Paul's call to present ourselves as "living sacrifices," the importance of humility within the body of Christ, and the various gifts through which Christians serve one another. We also considered how the Christian life flows from the mercies of God already received, rather than becoming a means of earning God's favor.

During the month of July, Faith Talk hopes to complete our journey through Romans. As Paul brings his letter to a close, he turns his attention to practical matters of Christian life, including love for neighbor, life within society, respect for governing authorities, and the importance of bearing with one another in faith and love. These final chapters draw together many of the themes Paul has developed throughout the letter, reminding us that the Gospel not only saves sinners, but also shapes the way Christians live with one another.

Faith Talk remains a discussion-based class where questions and conversation are encouraged. No preparation is necessary, and each week's lesson is structured so that every class stands on its own. Whether you attend every week or only occasionally, you are always welcome to join us whenever you are able.

If you have never attended before, consider this your invitation. Come and explore Romans with us—and bring not only your questions about Romans, but also your questions about the Christian faith in general. Looking forward, just a bit, we plan to start the Gospel of Luke in August.

Previous sessions of Faith Talk may also be viewed anytime on YouTube at: <https://www.spiritusetlogos.com/faith-talk>

Come and join the conversation. Faith Talk meets after Fellowship, about 11:00 a.m. each Sunday, in the Library in the Parish House.

Doug's books are available for free download, visit: <https://www.spiritusetlogos.com>

FELLOWSHIP & EVENTS

SUNDAY FELLOWSHIP 10:30-11:00 a.m. in the Fondersmith Auditorium, prior to Forum.



FIRST FRIDAY

We will continue our First Friday Speaker Series on **July 3**. Everyone is welcome to attend. The speaker is Trinity member Tim Slaugh, presenting "Holy Trinity and the Revolutionary War." The evening will begin with the playing of our church bells at 5 p.m. followed by a short organ demonstration. The speaker's presentation will start at 5:30 p.m. in the sanctuary followed by sanctuary tours and refreshments. We will continue the series focusing on our Church history, local history, social topics, and content from our partners.

UPCOMING FELLOWSHIP EVENTS

Save the date

Join us for Worship in the Park with a picnic to follow on **Sunday, September 20** at 10 a.m. at the Manheim Township Park in Neffsville. Watch for details in the weeks to come.

Please Let Us Know What You're Up To:

You may play in a band, you're on a bocce team, you collect stamps or coins as a hobby. You love fly fishing, or golf, or meeting with friends to review a book or your favorite movie. Please share this so we can support one another and if appropriate, cheer you on and encourage you in your endeavors. Send a note to loren@trinitylanaster.org or let him know when you see him. What YOU do is important to all at Holy Trinity.

July 1 Matthew 11:20-24
July 2 Romans 7:1-6
July 3 Psalm 45:10-17
July 4 Luke 10:21-24
July 5 Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30
July 6 Romans 1:18-25
July 7 Romans 3:1-8
July 8 John 13:1-17
July 9 Romans 2:12-16
July 10 Psalm 119:105-112
July 11 John 12:44-50
July 12 Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23
July 13 Thessalonians 4:1-8
July 14 Ephesians 4:17-5:2
July 15 Matthew 13:10-17
July 16 Hebrews 2:1-9
July 17 Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24
July 18 Matthew 7:15-20
July 19 Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43
July 20 Revelation 14:12-20
July 21 Galatians 4:21-5:1
July 22 Matthew 12:15-21
July 23 1 Corinthians 4:14-20
July 24 Psalm 105:1-11, 45b
July 25 Matthew 12:38-42
July 26 Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52
July 27 James 3:13-18
July 28 Ephesians 6:10-18
July 29 Mark 4:30-34
July 30 Philippians 4:10-15
July 31 Psalm 17:1-7, 15

Ladies' Tea

SATURDAY, JULY 25 AT 2 P.M.

*Featuring Christina Seldomridge discussing
"Honey - from Hive to Jar"*



Ladies, please join our Holy Trinity members and their guests for tea, treats, sweets, and an informative presentation by Trinity member and apiarist, Christina Seldomridge. She will share her knowledge of beekeeping and the production of her delicious honey.

**Tea begins at 2:00 p.m.*

**Guests are welcome*

**Bring your favorite cup and saucer*

**Consider wearing your favorite hat*

**Reservations are required*

In order to prepare for this event, a reservation is required and must be returned to the Church office by July 15. Reservations can be submitted via the weekly offering plate, delivered to the office or mailed.

Name(s) Attending

CHILDREN'S AND FAMILY MINISTRY

Brothers and sisters in Christ, we are in the beginning of the Pentecost season, the longest church season of our church calendar year. Pentecost is a whopping 26 weeks long and ends on Sunday, November 22nd, which is Christ the King Sunday. While Pentecost is often referred to as "Ordinary Time," there is nothing ordinary about Pentecost! Pentecost is the season when we all are given the breath of the Holy Spirit and we are sent out into the world to proclaim God's love to all! So, what's going on this Pentecost?



This is our third year of doing a combined VBS with Grace Lutheran Church, and it seems to work well. Our Vacation Bible School theme this year is called "God's Wonder Lab: Science Mondays." An evening of music, crafts, games, Bible stories, and science experiments await our young disciples this year! The final date for Science Mondays is **July 6, 2026**. If you have not been able to join us for our VBS in June, you are welcome to try it out in July! Science Monday starts at 6:00 p.m. and ends at 8:00 p.m. and takes place at Grace Lutheran Church, 517 North Queen Street.

Also, coming up this Pentecost, Holy Trinity will host another Yard Sale "Fun"-raiser - where we will raise fun not money! The premise is for our members and friends to donate their gently used items to the church. Then Trinity will give away these items for free to the downtown Lancaster Community! Trinity will begin accepting donations on Sunday, August 9th and the final day to donate your items to our "Fun"-raiser will be Wednesday, August 12th. You may drop off your donations directly to Fondersmith Auditorium on **Sunday, August 9th - from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. or Monday, August 10th to Wednesday, August 12th 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

Items we will accept are:

- New & Gently Used Men's, Women's, and Children's Clothing.
- Shoes, Purses/Wallets, Backpacks, Hats, Belts, Scarves, Ties, Jewelry
- Plastic Toys, Board Games, Dolls, Puzzles, Toy Cars
- Pots/Pans, Dishes/Stoneware, Glassware
- Pet Items

The date for our Yard Sale Fundraiser will be **Saturday, August 15**. More details about this will be out in upcoming bulletins, Facebook posts, and on the website. So, keep checking all of Holy Trinity's socials.

I will be looking for volunteers to help out with sorting donated goods, set-up, and clean-up. Plus, I will be looking for volunteers to act as "Personal Shoppers" to help members from our community pick out and bag up items they want to take home. Contact me via email at rachel@trinitylanaster.org or call the church office to volunteer. Thanks all!

Respectfully submitted,

Rachel Kramer



INTERNATIONAL MINISTRY

Lutheran World Relief (LWR) Needs Personal Care Kits!

Each year, LWR ships thousands of Personal Care Kits to people who have been displaced by war and natural disasters. According to LWR (<https://lwr.org/kits/personal-care-kits>):



“When families find their homes destroyed, or must flee for their safety, soap and a towel rarely make the cut for what they can carry. Arriving in a refugee camp or other place of safety, they are scared, vulnerable and dirty from the travel. The simple items included in a Personal Care Kit provide much-needed self-care, critical germ fighting supplies and the chance for our neighbors in need to regain dignity amidst fear and uncertainty.”

PERSONAL CARE KIT IMAGE COURTESY OF LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

During the month of July, the International Ministries Committee invites you to purchase and assemble LWR Personal Care Kits. On Sunday, June 28, we will kick off the Personal Care Kit project with a Mission Moment announcement and a one-page LWR Personal Care Kit instruction sheet inserted in the Sunday bulletin. It is critical to follow the LWR instructions so that each donated kit contains the exact number of specified items – no more and no less.

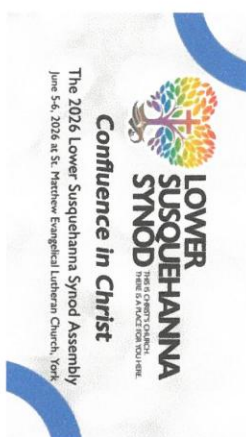
Collection of Personal Care Kits will wrap up on Sunday, August 2. Personal Care Kits can either be dropped off on Sunday mornings in a collection bin that will be in church narthex, or they can be dropped off during normal business hours in the parish house church office.

Your donated kits will be boxed and delivered to LWR’s Ingathering and Kit collection warehouse in Mechanicsburg, PA. This project offers you a tangible way to demonstrate your concern to the individual who receives the Personal Care Kit items you purchase and lovingly assemble on their behalf.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 MFE Vocal Camp	2	3 Office Closed 5 pm First Friday	4
5 <i>Communion</i> 9:30 Worship 10:30 Lemonade on the Lawn Noon – Ringing of the church bells	6 9 am MFE Camp 6 pm VBS	7 9 am MFE Camp	8 9 am MFE Camp 9:30 a.m. Woodward Hill Cleanup Noon- Bell ringing/ reading of Declaration of Independence	9 9 am MFE Camp 10 am Trinity/Chautauqua Book Club 7 pm Prayer Vigil Blossom Hill Mennonite	10 9 am MFE Camp	11
12 9:30 Worship Communion Assistant training 10:30 Fellowship 11:00 Education Noon – Ringing of the church bells 1-4 Holy Trinity Open House	13 9 am MFE Camp 6:30 pm Vestry meeting	14 9 am MFE Camp 2 pm Discipleship meeting	15 9 am MFE Camp 3 pm Willow Valley Service	16 9 am MFE Camp	17 9 am MFE Camp	18
19 9:30 Worship 10:30 Fellowship 11:00 Education	20	21	22 9:30 a.m. Woodward Hill Cleanup	23	24 <i>Pastor Joel out - Continuing Ed.</i>	25 <i>Pastor Joel out - Continuing Ed.</i> 2 p.m. Ladies' Tea
26 <i>Pastor Joel out - Continuing Ed.</i> 9:30 Worship 10:30 Fellowship 11:00 Education 4 pm Prayer Vigil MCC Akron	27 <i>Pastor Joel out - Continuing Ed.</i>	28 <i>Pastor Joel out - Continuing Ed.</i>	29 <i>Pastor Joel out - Continuing Ed.</i>	30 <i>Pastor Joel out - Continuing Ed.</i> 6 pm Heisey student piano recital	31 <i>Pastor Joel out - Continuing Ed.</i>	

July 2026

HOLY TRINITY
LUTHERAN CHURCH



2026 Assembly Highlights

The 39th Lower Susquehanna Synod gathered under the theme, "Confluence in Christ." Volting members poured water from bottles throughout the synod into a basin reminding us of our connection through the living water of Jesus Christ.

- Bishop Stephen R. Herr opened his first assembly as bishop with Service of the Word and installation of newly elected Conference Deans and Secretaries. Those newly elected deans are: The Rev. Shawn M. Berkebile, Hanover Conference; and the Rev. DeAnn R. Books, North York Conference. Those newly elected secretaries are: The Rev. Katherine R.L.B. Brantner, South York Conference; the Rev. Rosalie V. Brunner, Chambersburg Conference; the Rev. Gregory B. Lindsey, Upper Dauphin Conference; the Rev. Deborah A. Mahady, North York Conference; the Rev. Jason P. Northridge, Hanover Conference; the Rev. Althea D. Seidel, Lebanon Conference; and the Rev. Jennifer L. Toburen, Perry Conference.
- Joined in hymn and prayer led by Deacon Kristen Barnes and Pastor Andrew Berdahl, assembly chaplains, and accompanied on piano by Synod Council member, Danielle Erdley.
- Welcomed the Rev. Dr. Eric D. Barreto, Weyerhaeuser Associate Professor of New Testament at Princeton Theological Seminary, as keynote speaker. Dr. Barreto presented on the Imaginations of Acts and the Gospel of Luke. He opened up the Holy Scriptures to the assembly with his inspiring presentations.
- Welcomed Mary B. Campbell, Director for AMMPARO of the ELCA as churchwide representative, and received her greetings and a report on our shared ministry through the ELCA.
- Received ecumenical greetings from Monsignor Edward Quinlan, Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Harrisburg. Received video greetings from Bishop Geoffrey Mwakhaba and Pastor Emmanuel Mchomvu of the Konde Diocese (ELCT); Bishop Stacie Fidler, Northern Illinois Synod (ELCA); and Lieutenant Commander Pastor David Senseng, US Navy Chaplain Corps, ELCA Military Chaplain, aboard the USS Fort Lauderdale.
- Established states of nominees for the Synod Council and Susquehanna University board member.
- Enjoyed learning opportunities through a variety of forums and affinity groups gathering during lunch.
- Recognized rostered ministers celebrating 50 years of ordained ministry in 2026, those new to our synod, those ordained since last assembly, those retired since the last assembly, and the candidates for rostered ministry in our candidacy process.
- Remembered the following rostered ministers who died since the last assembly in 2025: The Rev. Martin J. Carlson; the Rev. Ivan R. Mechtly Jr.; the Rev. Conrad Bomberger Youse; the Rev. Dr. Ellis Gordon Ross; the Rev. Emil J. Engelman; the Rev. Eugene Lamar Shiffer; the Rev. Irene Anna Greta Friberg-Dussaq; the Rev. Dr. Martha Bernice

- Sheaffer, the Rev. Dr. Guy Shannon Edmiston Jr., Bishop Emeritus; the Rev. Kenneth Reid Jetto; the Rev. Albert Edwin Myers; the Rev. Dr. William Q. Stickley; and the Rev. Gale M. Gregor.
- Enjoyed mission videos from a variety of agencies and ministries.
- Ordained Kimberly Rose Todd as a minister of word and sacrament.
- Installed the newly elected members of the Synod Council.
- Received an update on the 2026 Memorial Blanket Initiative, including opportunities to make blankets and participate in a backpack collection for people experiencing homelessness.
- Received Bishop Herr's report emphasizing the important role of rostered ministers, lay leaders, children and youth in the life of our synod; the value of our ecumenical partnerships; the need for increased and accelerated collaboration among congregations; and the significance of advocacy and justice ministries across the synod. Assistants to the Bishop Pastor Beth Martini, Deacon Marsha Roscoe, and Charlie Roberts provided important insights and updates regarding the synod's mobility ministry, stewardship, wellness, campus ministry, and ministry with and for children, youth, and young adults.
- Rejoiced to have finished the work of the synod assembly ahead of schedule.

2026 Assembly Actions

- ❖ Amended and adopted the rules of procedure and agenda as recommended by the Synod Council.
- ❖ Adopted the 2027 minimum salary guidelines for Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ministers of Word and Service.
- ❖ Elected to the Synod Council: The Rev. Christopher J. Suehr, the Rev. Alexis K. Sheppard-Witt, Danielle R. Erdley, Chuck J. Bissell, and Lisa M. Dubay.
- ❖ Elected to the Susquehanna University board: The Rev. Shawn M. Berkebile.
- ❖ Adopted amendments indicated from the Churchwide Assembly to provisions S8.51, S8.52, S1.21, S9.02, S11.04, S7.26, S9.04, S10.05, S13.40, and S13.41.
- ❖ Adopted the addition of provision S10.06, related to the Synod Council and renumbered subsequent provisions.
- ❖ Adopted revision of bylaw S9.08.01, related to restricted ballots.
- ❖ Substituted bylaw S11.01.04, related to the Committee(s) on Candidacy.
- ❖ Adopted the Fiscal Year 2027-28 budget of \$2,321,475.97.

Our synod gives thanks to almighty God for the faithfulness, energy, gifts, insights, and dedication of all who gathered for the assembly. We thank all the people who helped with the assembly this year. Stay tuned for dates and location for the 2027 Synod Assembly.



God bless and have a blessed summer!

Lower Susquehanna Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church
in America

1959 Market Street,
Camp Hill, PA 17011
717.652.1852
www.lsus-church.org

Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity
31 South Duke Street
Lancaster, PA 17602

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Birth

Jack Avery Kitsock, son of John and Jessica Kitsock,
June 15, 2026

Baptism

Adaline Grace Fanelli, daughter of Hannah and David Fanelli,
June 28, 2026

Death

Joan Kahler on June 18, 2026

Rev. Dr. Joel Petruschke, Senior Pastor; Christopher Prestia, Organist and Choirmaster;
Rachel Kramer, Director of Children's and Family Ministry; Loren Good, Lay Associate Minister;
Tanya Kevorkian, Archivist

For centuries, this has been a place of inspiration and courage. We are devoted to breaking barriers between people through social outreach and by providing a nurturing environment that embraces all viewpoints in hearty discussions about faith. We are passionate and unwavering in our pursuit to build a thriving community.

We are Holy Trinity Lutheran Church.

Holy Trinity Church is affiliated with



**LOWER
SUSQUEHANNA
SYNOD**
WHERE THE HUNGRY ARE FED
AS WE HAVE BEEN FED BY CHRIST



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America