

SEPT 2025

Sunday, September 7

Communion

First Reading: Deuteronomy 30:15-20

Psalm 1

Second Reading: Philemon 1-21

Gospel: Luke 14:25-33

Preaching Pastor Petruschke

Sunday, September 14

Holy Cross Sunday, Communion

First Reading: Numbers 21:4b-9

Psalm 98:1-4

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:18-24

Gospel: John 3:13-17

Preaching Pastor Petruschke

Sunday, September 21

First Reading: Amos 8:4-7

Psalm 113

Second Reading: 1 Timothy 2:1-7

Gospel: Luke 16:1-13

Preaching Pastor Petruschke

September 28

First Reading: Amos 6:1a, 4-7

Psalm 146

Second Reading: 1 Timothy 6:6-19

Gospel: Luke 16:19-31

Preaching Pastor Petruschke

Report from Senior Pastor Petruschke



Dear Siblings in Christ,

So, we are entering into that special season of the Church Year when we think about, dare I say it, stewardship. Hopefully, your eyes aren't glazing over as you read that word, because stewardship is so foundational to our Christian lives.

And, in truth, stewardship should not be relegated to just a portion of the year. God is good all the time. And thus, as people of God we are always grateful for God's goodness, and we respond in constant gratitude with faithful stewardship of our time, our possessions, and ourselves. Stewarding our lives for the sake of God's kingdom is ongoing. However, we do designate a particular time in the Church Year to be intentional about returning our thanks to God in the concrete way of pledging.

In this Stewardship Season, starting in this month of September, we will be having a series of Temple Talks given by church members, so as to prepare us for the time when we will make our "financial" as well as "service" pledges to the church. Indeed, a pledge letter will go out in October whereby each member will be asked to make their financial commitment to the church for the upcoming year, as well as to consider serving in various ministries in the life of Holy Trinity. My hope then is that each one of us will prayerfully and with great thanksgiving discern our calling to support the mission and ministry of Holy Trinity.

(cont.)

Mission Statement

Under constraint of the Gospel, guided and empowered by the Holy Spirit, the mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity is to bear witness to the crucified and risen Christ as his disciples.

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church

31 South Duke Street

Lancaster, PA 17602

717-397-2734

church@trinitylanaster.org

M-F 8:00 - 4:30

Let me get down to the question at hand. Why? Why do we pledge? Why do we make a commitment to give from our financial resources to Holy Trinity? Why do we devote our time to being members at Holy Trinity such that we give of our time and energy toward the work of the Gospel here in this place? Why? It is the same question we ask ourselves with respect to other organizations that we support.

The answer, at least for me, is that I give to specific organizations because a) a particular organization has been a blessing to my life, and/or b) I see an organization making a difference through the work they do. Aside from the congregations we serve, my wife and I support a number of other organizations through our giving including United Lutheran Seminary, The Lutheran Camping Corporation, and The Lutheran Campus Ministry at Penn State. These organizations have been instrumental in shaping us for ministry and so we support them in thanksgiving as well as recognizing their value for forming future leaders in the Church.

We also give to the Chautauqua Institute, WITF, and the New Cumberland Public Library, because we value the mission and work of these organizations. They make a difference. We support a number of other organizations, like Family Promise and the MLK Scholarship Fund, because we volunteer and participate in their work, and that participation leads us to want to support these organizations financially.

Yes, people give to specific organizations where they see an organization making a difference in their own life or in the lives of others. And, there is a definite link between participation in an organization and giving financially toward that organization. And, so again, the pledge letter would have us all consider that connection, such that we might not only make a financial commitment but also a commitment of time and talent. Maybe another way to say this is "If you act enthusiastic, you will be enthusiastic." If we engage the Church deeply, giving of our time and energy, we will become all the more enthusiastic about the Church, and will want also to commit our dollars to the work of the Church.

Now, granted, sometimes it is hard to see the difference that the Church makes, because the Church doesn't make a "product" per se. What do we do as a Church? We produce hope. We peddle the love of God. We strive to change lives. And yet, as difficult as it is to see the end result of the work of the Church, it is visible, for instance, in the faces of those who come through our doors for Breakfast Fellowship. It is visible also in the students we support through the MLK Scholarship Fund. It is visible in the lives we touch through the outreach of our Visitation Team. To name just a few instances where we are making a difference. But the Church's work of hope and love is also visible in each of your faces because YOU are being that message of hope and love for others. And in serving, we ourselves are changed. So, let me say "thank you" for all that you already do. By the goodness of God, we are making a difference with your help. God is good all the time.

In Christ,
Pastor Joel Petruschke

NEWS FROM CHURCHWIDE AND FROM THE SYNOD

Yehiel Curry elected presiding bishop of the ELCA

Speaking to the assembly after his election, Curry reflected on his membership at Shekinah Chapel in Riverdale, Ill., where he eventually became a lay mission developer. During that time he participated in the Theological Education for Emerging Ministries program, which prepares individuals for ordained ministry in the ELCA, with a focus on emerging ministry contexts like ethnic-specific, multicultural, and both rural and urban settings. He spoke to the assembly about his initial hesitation in accepting that first ministry role.

"I'm what a return on your investment looks like," he said. "Perhaps I'm out there in one of you. I never saw myself as good enough, so for two years, I said no. I finally said yes. When I said yes, your support, this church's support, of that ministry meant everything. So if you want to know what your benevolence dollars look like, it looks like me. And I want to say thank you. Thank you for your investment."

Lucille "CeCee" Mills elected secretary of the ELCA

"I do believe it's a new season for our church," Mills said. "I do believe that the reason why I, an African American woman, [can stand] before you with no degrees in a church that loves to have people who are educated, is because you saw the gifts and potential in me. I celebrate with you that we listen to God's call and that we will become God's beloved community."

The elections took place during the 2025 ELCA Churchwide Assembly held July 28–August 2 at the Phoenix Convention Center, Arizona.

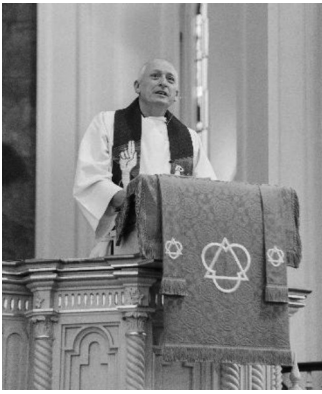
The Rev. Stephen R. Herr Called as Bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod

On June 7, 2025, the Rev. Stephen Robert Herr was called to serve a six-year term as bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Rev. Herr currently serves as pastor of Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Ordained on July 2, 1994, Pastor Herr has served in parish, campus, and synodical leadership for more than three decades.

His service includes roles on the ELCA Church Council, Executive Committee, and multiple synod councils, as well as leadership in outdoor ministry, ecumenical engagement, the arts, and historical preservation in the Gettysburg area.

Please join us in giving thanks for Bishop-elect Herr and holding him in prayer as he prepares to lead our synod into the future. And, please pray also for Presiding Bishop-elect Curry and for Secretary-elect Mills as they prepare to lead the ELCA.





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 bulletins and activity bags in the narthex. Please feel free to ask an usher where to find them.

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 and Tim Wentworth. Pastor Joel Petruschke presides at Holy Communion once a month. Linda Flick shares her talent on the piano each Sunday.

Breakfast Fellowship Report

Breakfast Fellowship would like to thank Holy Trinity members and their friends for their generous donations. The number of breakfast meals and lunches served each Sunday has increased 20% to 30% from 2024. Eggs have not been available on a regular basis. We have seen an increase in meals for children. We have been able to keep a "Kid's Box" in the kitchen containing extras such as ramen, cup of soup, fruit cups, pancake mix (ready mix with water), tuna, small boxes of cereal, instant oatmeal, etc. We have a supply of hygiene products and diapers (size 1 – pull-ups).

In September we plan to have hygiene necessities available. In October, we plan to share gently used clothing with our Breakfast friends. The last time we had jeans, shirts, etc. to give away, several people were able to get a clean, "new" outfit for their job interviews. In December, we plan to have socks, gloves, hats, etc. for colder weather.



Our coffee is a big hit! On a recent Sunday, we served over 200 cups. I am always amazed how a hot cup of coffee can be an act of love and caring!

Last, but not least, I want to thank all our GREAT volunteers. We have the 'Guys' that cook and serve the hot meals. We have the 'Cereal Guy', the kind lady who pours drinks, the 'Fruit People', those who prepare lunches (they start at 5:30 a.m.), and all who run and fetch items needed throughout the morning. Thank you to all who are willing to help when needed. We also have volunteers from Breakfast who take out the trash and clean the tables.

Once again, thank you for your donations and prayers. In the book of Acts, Paul reminded us that it is more blessed to give than to receive. Holy Trinity is an example of great giving!

Blessings,

Cathy Dobish

SEPT SCRIPTURE READINGS

Sept. 1 Hebrews 13:7-21
Sept. 2 Titus 1:1-9
Sept. 3 Luke 14:15-24
Sept. 4 Philippians 2:25-30
Sept 5 Psalm 1
Sept 6 Matthew 10:34-42
Sept 7 Luke 14:25-33
Sept 8 1 Timothy 3:14—4:5
Sept 9 1 Timothy 4:6-16
Sept 10 Luke 18:18-30
Sept 11 1 Timothy 1:1-11
Sept 12 Psalm 51:1-10
Sept 13 John 10:11-21
Sept 14 John 3:13-17
Sept 15 1 Timothy 1:18-20
Sept 16 2 Peter 3:8-13
Sept 17 Luke 22:31-33, 54-62
Sept 18 Romans 3:1-8
Sept 19 Psalm 113
Sept 20 Mark 12:41-44
Sept 21 Luke 16:1-13
Sept 22 Acts 4:1-12
Sept 23 1 Corinthians 9:19-23
Sept 24 Luke 20:45—21:4
Sept 25 2 Corinthians 8:8-15
Sept 26 Psalm 146
Sept 27 Luke 9:43b-48
Sept 28 Luke 16:19-31
Sept 29 Revelation 3:14-22
Sept 30 James 5:1-6

REPORT FROM THE VESTRY PRESIDENT

September at Trinity: Back to Life, Back to Purpose

September is a season of return — back to school, back to church, back to committees, and back to the rhythm of life together. Here at Trinity, we are blessed to have over 32 committees, led by 22 (some chair several committees) dedicated chairs, and supported by many more members who serve on the committees and give their time and talents.

Are you part of one of these committees? If not, we'd love to welcome you into this vital part of our church's life and breath. Committees are where ideas grow, friendships form, and faith is put into action.

As we look ahead to the exciting milestones of 2026 — the 250th anniversary of our nation — and 2030 — the 300th anniversary of our beloved church — your participation matters more than ever. Come, be part of the legacy we are building together.

When, in the fall, you receive this year's Time and Talent Survey, please say Yes to the future of God's Church. I'd love to talk with you about committee opportunities and how you might serve; please reach out anytime.

Susan Garofola
sgarofola@comcast.net
717 314 8455



SENIOR COMMUNITY WORSHIP

Communion at Willow Valley – Wednesday, Sept. 17
at 3 p.m., *Manor North Auditorium*
Communion at Woodcrest – Thursday, Sept. 18 at 1 p.m.
Eagle Commons Chapel

FROM THE WORSHIP AND MUSIC SMALL GROUP

An ongoing series on why we do what we do in worship, by Loren Good.



SUNDAY
WORSHIP
AT TRINITY

Should Holy Trinity Offer More Than One Service Each Sunday?

The easy answer which is no answer at all would be, "Well That Depends." Many who worship at Holy Trinity remember a time when there were two standard worship services at 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. (early or late service). Interestingly enough, for those that did not attend the education hour which at the time started at 9:45 a.m. in many instances did not know the "other worship group." Additionally, on Communion Sundays, a third service was added, known as the Folk Service. At the time, Trinity only communed three-four times per year. And, a brief Communion Service was offered most Sundays in the chapel beginning at 8:00 a.m.

The ELCA acknowledges the research that offering multiple services in general leads to more total worshippers on a given Sunday, in particular if one of the services is distinct from the other in its approach and style. Makes sense, be more things to more people.

At the same time, the ELCA also cautions using this approach given the challenges in most congregations. Were we to return to an 8:30 and 11:00 service, we must recognize that we'd be splitting our assembly into smaller groups. A congregation's worship is a powerful expression of the common faith of the Christian community. Even more so when critical mass is gathered: singing, praising, worshipping in unison.

Hearken back to those multiple service days at Trinity. Circumstances were just different. Staffs were exponentially larger as was the passion and discipline in society to attend church. During the summer months in 2025, Trinity averaged 80 or so worshippers at the 9:30 service. That number will grow as we get into September and through the winter and spring months. But imagine splitting that attendance in half inside our spacious Sanctuary. Imagine the energy lost by just 40 voices in song.

Several years ago, Holy Trinity leadership made the decision to go with one service, 9:30 a.m. followed by an education hour. Yes, there are worshippers who would prefer to have a later start time. And, there are worshippers who would prefer an earlier start time so they could get on with their day. I'd like to think we can agree that, for the time being at least, our current worship day schedule will work for most.



Holy Trinity's
300th Anniversary

DID YOU KNOW?

If you take a walk from the church to 33 North Duke Street you will see the parsonage Trinity once owned. It was the home of Gotthilf Henry Ernest Muhlenberg, Pastor of Trinity, eminent botanist and first President of Franklin and Marshall College. He lived there from 1780 to 1815. It is now the law offices of Apple and Yost.

WINE TASTING

Holy Trinity hosted a wine tasting event Saturday, August 16. Fifty-five people registered to attend and all who registered showed up, and no one who did not register came – much appreciated as an accurate count was needed to ensure proper food and wine was on hand. Holy Trinity member Ale Sgro did a masterful job in describing the three wine choices and how they paired with each of the three food offerings. Stay tuned for more events to come.



EDUCATION

FAITH TALK – God's Word of Fire and Rest, God's Gift of Baptism

In August, our Faith Talk class completed Luther's teaching on the Lord's Prayer from the Small Catechism, reflecting on how Christ invites us to pray with confidence that God meets our needs and the needs of our neighbors through His mercy. We also continued our study of the lectionary texts. From Luke 12, Hebrews 11–12, Jeremiah 23, and Psalm 82, we saw how God's Word is fire and hammer, bringing division, burning away illusions, and calling for justice—yet also assuring us that Christ has borne judgment and perfected our faith. The following week, from Luke 13, Hebrews 12, Psalm 103, and Isaiah 58, we rejoiced in Christ's healing and the true Sabbath rest He brings: release from bondage, restoration of life, and joy in God's promises. These scriptures taught us that God's Word unsettles but also restores, exposing false confidence and then granting true freedom and hope in Christ.

FAITH TALK:In September, we continue with Luther's Small Catechism, turning to his teaching on Baptism, where water joined with God's Word becomes a gracious washing of rebirth. Our lectionary reflections will move forward into the fall readings, guiding us to see the life of humility, trust, and endurance that God works in us through His promises.

Schedule for September

Sept. 7 – Small Catechism: Baptism

Sept. 14 – Lectionary Texts for September 21

First Reading: Amos 6:1a, 4-7; Psalm 146; Second Reading: 1 Timothy 6:6-19;

Gospel: Luke 16:19-31

Sept. 21 – Lectionary Texts for September 28: First Reading: Amos 6:1a, 4-7; Psalm 146; Second Reading: 1 Timothy 6:6-19; Gospel: Luke 16:19-31

Sept. 28 – No Class (attending Forum)

Thanks be to God, His Word continues to reveal Christ's work for our salvation and calls us into deeper faith and life in Him. We welcome all who wish to grow together in the treasures of God's Word. Each class is independent, so please come when you can.

Faith Talk meets after Fellowship, or about 11:00 a.m. each Sunday in the Library in the Parish House. A Zoom link is available—contact the church office or Doug Frazer for access.

Find all previous Faith Talk series at

<https://www.youtube.com/@FaithTalk-HolyTrinity>

SUNDAY FELLOWSHIP 10:30-10:45 a.m. in the Fondersmith Auditorium, prior to Forum.

SUNDAY FORUM

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

Adult Forum Schedule:

Sept. 7 – We will celebrate Back to School with a Talent Show.

Sept. 14 – Worship and Music Committee– "The Prophets"

Sept. 21 – Corporal Drew Snyder, Columbia PD, Your Safety and Knowing your Surroundings

Sept. 28 – Pastor Joel – Another in a series of "Let's Listen and Let's Talk."

FORUM SERIES

Each month, Pastor Joel is leading a series of conversations called "Let's Listen and Let's Talk". If you have a topic that you'd like Pastor Joel to provide context from his perspective as our resident theologian, please let us know. You can email your request to church@trinitylanaster.org or put the request in the offering plate. The purpose of this series is to open our minds to new ideas, even if the perspective does not match our own. Civil discourse is sadly missing today; we believe that at Holy Trinity we are still willing to talk...as well as listen.

CHILDREN, FAMILY AND YOUTH MINISTRY



Fall is approaching and the kids are back in school. On Sunday, August 17th, Pastor Joel gave a Back to School Blessing to our children, youth, and teachers. A special blessing was also given to our Christian Education leaders as we begin our 2025/2026 program year.

Sunday School and Confirmation start up on **Sunday, September 7th, 2025** with a Congregational Talent Show! Anyone of any age is invited to share their talents with us.

You can sing, play an instrument, tell jokes, do a demonstration of a skill, do magic tricks, etc. A sign up sheet is in the Narthex or you can email rachel@trinitylancaster.org to sign up your act. You can perform alone or with a group of friends. The Talent Show will happen following worship during the Forum hour in Fondersmith Auditorium. Everyone is invited to attend the show!

Going forward every Sunday morning, Children's Sunday School and Confirmation youth will meet in the choir room around 10:45 a.m. for music time. During music time we will be learning the hymn for our Annual Christmas Program!

Then at 11:00 a.m. the children go to classroom 202 (located on the second floor of the Parish House behind the choir room) for a Bible story, craft, and/or game.

The 6, 7, and 8 grade youth go to classroom 205 (located across the hall from the choir room) for a Bible lesson after music time. Visitors and new faces are always welcome to join us in Children's Sunday School and Confirmation.

Mark your calendars for a Holy Trinity Fall Bonfire! It will be held on **Sunday, October 12th in the evening at the Petka household**. We will have a pot luck dinner so please bring a dish to share and if you have a spare lawn chair bring that as well! We will have corn hole games set up and the pumpkin decorating competition! More information about this fellowship event will be out shortly.

Keep checking Trinity's Facebook page, website, and keep reading your bulletins for more information on our children's and family ministry.



*Rachel Kramer,
Director of Children's and Family Ministry*

COMMUNITY

QUEST FOR LEARNING

The Quest for Learning program returns to Holy Trinity for its Fall 2025 sessions from **September 25** until **October 30**. Register online at www.questlanaster.org.

COMMUNITY FORUM ON CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM

"Exploring Christian Nationalism Across Communities and Continents"

Date: Friday, September 26, 2025 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Location: Elizabethtown College in the Gible Auditorium.

Register at - info coming

Featured Speakers: Dr. Andrew Ward and Dr. Greg Carey

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT



Salem-Kissel Hill Lutheran & Bergstrasse Lutheran congregations invite you to "Weave Together" Community Service Project & Retreat! First, invite your friends and neighbors to crochet or knit 12" X 12" single squares using any washable & dryable worsted (4) weight yarn. Any stitch, any color! Drop off completed squares at Salem-Kissel Hill (26 Owl Hill Rd., Lititz) or Bergstrasse (9 Hahnstown Road, Ephrata) before **September 21**. Be sure to call first to make sure someone is available to

receive your squares! Next - register for the "Weave Together Retreat" on **Saturday, October 3**, 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. when we will 'weave together' the gathered squares into blankets that will then be distributed to the Lancaster County unhoused populations between Thanksgiving and Christmas. The retreat includes a Bible study and lunch. Congregations 'Weaving Together' with our neighbors is our hope to know each other more fully. We are offering this free opportunity as a way to give back from our abundance!

Contacts: Pr. Traci Glover pastortri1016@gmail.com or

Pr. Jim Goodyear revchef@gmail.com

NEW FEATURE

Coming soon to the Trinity Newsletter we will feature a new focus... "Get to know more about your fellow Trinity worshippers." We will highlight one - two disciples each month, sharing some things about those persons that you may not know. If you have someone that you want to nominate, please write to loren@trinitylanaster.org or see him in person.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Office Closed	2	3 6 pm Endowment Committee 6 pm Cemetery Clean-up	4 7 pm Choir rehearsal	5 4 pm Wedding rehearsal	6 4 pm Wedding
7 Communion 9:30 Worship 10:30 Fellowship 11:00 Talent Show	8 6:30 pm Vestry meeting	9	10 1 pm Executive Committee meeting	11 2 pm Visitation team meeting 7 pm Choir rehearsal	12	13
14 Holy Cross Communion 9:30 Worship Temple Talk - <i>Stewardship</i> 10:30 Fellowship 11:00 Education	15	16 2 pm Discipleship	17 3 pm Willow Valley Worship	18 1 pm Woodcrest worship 4:30 MLK Scholarship 7 pm Choir rehearsal	19	20
21 9:30 Worship Temple Talk - <i>Stewardship</i> 10:30 Fellowship 11:00 Education	22	23	24	25 9 am Quest 7 pm Choir rehearsal	26 4 pm Wedding rehearsal	27 2 pm Wedding
28 9:30 Worship Temple Talk - <i>Stewardship</i> 10:30 Fellowship 11:00 Education	29	30 3:30 Fellowship Committee				

Sept 2025

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

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Rev. Dr. Joel Petruschke, Senior Pastor; Christopher Prestia, Organist and Choirmaster;
Rachel Kramer, Director of Children's and Family Ministry; Loren Good, Director of Marketing;
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