

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church

December 2022 Newsletter



Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Christmas represents an in-breaking of the Kingdom of God into the world.

I say it “re-presents” rather than “remembers” because what Christmas means—what God did at Christmas—was not a one-and-done event. Rather Christmas started a new thing, where God took on flesh and dwelt among His people as promised. In Jesus we see Emmanuel: “God who is with us.” But when we celebrate Christmas, it is as a people who know the whole story of Jesus. That God chose to become one of us, and in a wonderful mystery remains with us “even to the end of the age.” And while now we recognize Him among us through faith, we confess that He will come again as victorious Lord of all.

So, at Christmas we consider the Lord’s three-fold coming (the word “Advent,” our season of preparation for Christmas, means “arrival” in Latin). He came to us in Bethlehem; He comes to us today, in the Word and Sacraments and in the “least of these” our brothers and sisters; And he will come again at the end of the world to make all things new.

These three things are related. And recognizing how they’re related is something that helps us live our lives abundantly. Each of these arrivals of Jesus into the world is something unexpected. Despite all the prophecies and forewarning, the Bible tells us that Jesus “came to his own, but his own did not recognize him.” This doesn’t just refer to the wise men who expected to find the King born in a palace instead of a stable, but it refers to the whole human race. The world was not expecting this kind of

Savior. Instead, we expected (and often still want) one made in our own image. Likewise, Jesus tells his disciples something unexpected where to find him after his ascension. He tells us to receive him in the Word and in the Sacraments, and to serve him by serving the needy and our neighbor.

We spend so much time trying to worship God in our own way, according to our preferences, but God sends us flesh and blood humans and says that he will meet us in those encounters—often encounters that make us uncomfortable and force us to grow. And lastly Jesus says that his return at the end of time will be unexpected “like a thief in the night.” He tells us that no one knows the hour of his return. This is said not to scare us or make us wonder, but to encourage us to live the kind of lives that don’t need to scramble to prepare. We are to be always ready for our judgment and our end, whether our end comes unexpectedly or the whole world ends unexpectedly. We should always have confidence in God’s goodness and a clean conscience. “Ready to go.”

We don’t merely commemorate something that happened a long time ago, as if Jesus came once and has left us on our own. No! He is with us always, even to the end of time, he promises. And this is important because if we believe that Jesus IS with us, even now, then we should be living different lives. We don’t act as if Jesus was once with us and isn’t now. Instead, we believe that we are filled with his life and should strive to live like him. Loving all people, serving one another, glorifying God the Father with our every action.

We don’t act as if Jesus has left us puzzling how to serve him. Instead, we recognize that he has given us to each other and told us to love our neighbor and our enemy and the stranger as if they were the Lord himself. This is hard at times but in loving all people, we not only fulfill the Lord’s command, but learn something about ourselves. After all, as Dorothy Day put it paraphrasing the Apostle John, “I only really love God as much as I love the person whom I love the least.”

And lastly, we don’t act as if Jesus has promised us a Kingdom that is somewhere far away and in a distant future. Instead, we recognize that Jesus is already King, and that his Kingdom has already begun. That all the things described above are part of living in God’s Kingdom and as citizens of God’s Kingdom already now. Someday, when Jesus returns, everyone will experience this way of living. But already now, we are supposed to be living as citizens of the Kingdom of God. That means that we don’t put our trust in earthly rulers to establish God’s Kingdom on earth. We don’t elect politicians to enforce what we think is God’s will through coercion. But we live in a Kingdom of the heart, where we love our enemies until they become our siblings and where we care less for our rights and exercising our privileges and more about using what we have to imitate Jesus and persuade people of his goodness with lives of humility and holiness.

God is in our midst. He is now and will be forever. Let us encourage one another to live lives convinced that Jesus is strengthening us, Jesus is challenging us, Jesus is showing us what truly matters, and that Jesus is with us in our joys and in our sorrows, making all things new.

Peace and Joy,

Pastor Tom

Pastoral Care

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church
7 Green St. Stafford Springs, CT 06076-1334
Office Phone-860-684-7571
Church – htlc-church@att.net
Website – htlcstafford.org
Pastor Tom (860-806-2440)
Email t.s.drobena@gmail.com
Rev. Dr. Thomas Drobena

Members of the Council are:

Rev. Thomas S. Drobena
President – Walter Kovaciny
Vice-President – Michael Marvonek
Treasurer – Sheila Welch
Secretary – Amelia Hinchliffe
Andrew Fisher
Leonard Lichanec
Patricia Marvonek

(Non-Council position)
Financial Secretary – Leigh Maxa

Service Teams

† Worship & Music Team: Leigh Maxa
† Hospitality Committee: Amelia Hinchliffe and Jennifer Welch
† Property Team: Andrew Fisher, Michael Marvonek, Adam Tremblay and Michael Welch
† Learning & Youth Group Team: Rev. Thomas Drobena, Cathy & Leonard Lichanec

Shut-in Members of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church

Attn: Barbara Bulick
The Ivy at Ellington
123 West Road Apt 115
Ellington. CT 06029-5730

Mrs. Anna Mae Hockla
38 Park St.
Stafford Springs, CT 06076

Attn: Ms. Shirley Kaba

Douglas Manor
103 North Rd.
Windham, CT 06280

Ms. Anna Mandak
21 Old Monson Rd.
Stafford Springs, CT 06076-3343

Attn: Vera Marko Room #219
The Buckland Court
432 Buckland Rd.
South Windsor, CT 06074

Mr. George Pallanck
8 Park St.
Stafford Springs, CT 06076

Mrs. Olga Panciera
10 Franklin Woods Dr.
Somers, CT 06071

Mrs. Pauline Valery
24 Holburn Ave.
Cranston, RI 02910

December

Birthdays

05 – Rev. Thomas S. Drobena
08 – Danny Lichanec
09 – Jennifer Welch
19 – Carl “Tim” Mercier
20 – Melissa Fisher

Anniversaries

10 – Richard & Nan Hayden

Happy 42nd Anniversary

There are many activities during the month of December.

Please take note of the activities listed in the December calendar. Perhaps you can help celebrate Christmas by taking part in some of the activities listed on the calendar.

**See! Christmas Bake sale Info Page 8
Poinsettias Order Forms Page 7**

December – January Service Schedule

These readings are from Series A and can be found in the front of the Evangelical Lutheran Worship hymnal.

Tellers

Worship Assistants

Reader

December 4, 2022 – 10:00 a.m. – The Second Sunday of Advent – Blue

Isaiah 11: 1 – 10; Psalm 72: 1 – 7, 18 – 19; Romans 15: 4 – 13; Matthew 3: 1 – 12

Amelia Hinchliffe

Leigh Maxa

Daniel Lichanec

Walter Kovaciny

Hymns – Entrance: 264, Hymn of the Day: 249 Communion: 240 Closing: 254

December 11, 2022 – 10:00 a.m. – The Third Sunday of Advent – Blue

Isaiah 35: 1 – 10; Psalm 146: 5 – 10; James 5: 7 – 10; Matthew 11: 2 – 11

Jennifer Welch

Sheila Welch

Daniel Lichanec

Michael Welch

Hymns – Entrance: 246 Hymn of the Day: 311 Communion: 737, Closing: 260

December 18, 2022 – 10:00 a.m. – The Fourth Sunday of Advent – Blue

Isaiah 7: 10 – 16; Psalm 80: 1 – 7, 17 – 19; Romans 1: 1 – 7; Matthew 1: 18 – 25

Walter Kovaciny

Leigh Maxa

Daniel Lichanec

Leonard Lichanec

Hymns – Entrance: 631, Hymn of the Day: 256 Communion: 295 Closing: 267

December 24, 2022 – 8:00 p.m. – Christmas Eve – White

Isaiah 9: 2 – 7; Psalm 96; Titus 2: 11 – 14; Luke 2: 11 – 14 [15 – 20]

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A Volunteer

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A Volunteer

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There are too many hymns to list.

#### **December 25, 2022 – 10:00 a.m. – Christmas Day – White**

Isaiah 62: 6 – 12; Psalm 97; Titus 3: 4 – 7; Luke 2: [1 – 17] 8 – 20

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A Volunteer

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A Volunteer

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There are too many hymns to list.

January 1, 2023 – 10:00 a.m. – The First Sunday after Christmas – White

Isaiah 63: 7 – 9; Psalm 148; Hebrews 2: 10 – 18; Matthew 2: 13 – 23

Amelia Hinchliffe

Leigh Maxa

Daniel Lichanec

Walter Kovaciny

Hymns – Entrance: 269, Hymn of the Day: 282 Communion: 290 Closing: 288

December *Holy Trinity Lutheran Church* 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4 The Second Sunday of Advent 10:00 a.m. Holy Communion 11:15 a.m. Social Hour	5 Pastor Tom's day off	6 Nicholas, Bishop	7 Ambrose, Bishop	8	9	10 8:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. Safe Net Distribution
11 The Third Sunday of Advent 10:00 a.m. Holy Communion 11:15 a.m. Council meeting 5:00 p.m. Christmas Party and Tree Trimming Deadline to Order Poinsettias	12 Pastor Tom's day off	13 Lucy, Martyr Slovak	14 Zion Synod	15 Assembly	16 Dec. 13-18	17 8:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. Safe Net Distribution
18 The Fourth Sunday of Advent 10:00 a.m. Worship Service 11:15 a.m. Social Hour 3 p.m. Christmas Caroling Arriving home from the Assembly today.	19	20 Pastor Tom's day off Deadline for placing orders for Cookies and Kolach	21	22	23 Christmas Cookie & Kolach 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Pickup	24 Christmas Eve Holy Communion 8:00 p.m.
25 Christmas Day 10:00 a.m. Holy Communion This is the last day to make contributions for credit in 2022.	26 Stephen, Deacon & First Martyr	27 John, Evangelist Pastor Tom's day off	28 Holy Innocents of Bethlehem, Martyrs Vespers 7:30p.m.	29 Thomas Becket, Martyr	30	31

Christmas Bake Sale

Cookies and Kolach

Friday, December 23, 2022

Order with attached form

All orders need to be placed by Tuesday December 20th

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church
104 W Main St Stafford Springs
Green St Entrance



Name: _____

Phone: _____

Check One:

Check Enclosed Payment at Pick Up

Mail Orders to: HTLC
104 Main St
Stafford Springs CT 06076

Or Drop in Mail Slot at the Converse St Entrance

Cookie Platters

An Assortment of Cookies
Chocolate, Molasses, Oatmeal, Fudge, Lemon,
Spritz, Pizzelles, Double Chocolate, Sugar,
Gingersnap, Peanut Butter

Kolach

Sweet Raised Bread Roll filled with walnuts,
cranberry-nut, poppy seed, or apricot

Orders must be received by Tues., Dec. 20

Item	Quantity	Price Each	Total Price
Sm Cookie (24)		\$10.00	
Med Cookie (36)		\$15.00	
Lg Cookie (60)		\$25.00	
Full Nut Kolach		\$15.00	
Half Nut Kolach		\$7.50	
Full Cran Nut Kolach		\$15.00	
Half Cran Nut Kolach		\$7.50	
Full Poppy Kolach		\$15.00	
Half Poppy Kolach		\$7.50	
Full Apricot Kolach		\$15.00	
Half Apricot Kolach		\$7.50	
		Grand Total	

Jam Gift Sets

Also Available - The perfect hostess gift, holiday wrapped

The members and friends of Holy Trinity are encouraged to donate poinsettias each Christmas in order to give Glory to God and beautify our sanctuary during the Nativity liturgies. Those who donate the poinsettias may take them after the 10:00 a.m. liturgy or Christmas Day, December 25th or the following Sundays. The cost of each poinsettia is \$10.00.

Your Name: _____

Given in honor of (for the living) _____

OR

Given in loving memory of (for the deceased) _____

Please return this form to Walter Kovaciny with the correct payment, by Sunday, December 11th. If paying by check, it should be payable to the: Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. We are only getting Red Poinsettias this year. Thank you.

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Holy Trinity Lutheran Church 104 West Main St. Stafford Springs, CT 06076
Website address www.holytrinitystafford.org Slovak Zion Synod –

ELCA Address Correction Requested

