

# HTLC

July, 2025 Newsletter

## Holy Tender Loving Care



### Dear Sisters and Brothers,

As summer comes into full swing, we journey through the Gospels together and in the weeks after Pentecost think about what life as a Christian means for us, much as the disciples did in the weeks and month after Jesus ascended into Heaven and they received the gift of the Holy Spirit. Like they, we joyfully declare that Jesus has made everything new! And yet we struggle with our day-to-day activities, sometimes wondering, how do we go about our lives in a Christian way? Is there anything different about the way that I live because of Jesus? Is there anything in the way I act that makes people stop and think that whatever I do is for God's glory and not for myself? With Independence Day approaching, it gives a good opportunity to reflect on how it is that a Christian—someone who knows that she is freed from sin, death, and the devil—lives out their freedom. And how that is different than the way many around us understand freedom.

We often hear about freedom of speech, and freedom of the press. People talk about free markets and free trade, as in efforts to de-regulate businesses, for example. There's also freedom of religion, of course, as in the right to practice one's faith without the state interfering. It all quickly becomes very complicated with lots of strong feelings and opinions on one side or the other. One person's exercise of freedom may seem to infringe on the freedoms of others. We often hear the phrase, "It's a free country," which usually means that "I can do anything I please." That's how people most-often think of freedom: as self-governance, being able to decide for yourself what is best for you and not having anyone infringe on your autonomy as long as you're not hurting anybody else.

That type of freedom is fine and dandy in terms of civic life. In fact, that's why government exists: to maintain order and to punish evildoers. Beyond that, it's very much up for debate how much role the government should play in our lives, with some wanting more involvement, and some wanting as little as possible. But what if the tyranny and the chains that you need to be freed from aren't of some oppressive power. What if they're inside your heart? Luther describes the way most people think of freedom like an addict being free to feed an addiction. "We do whatever we want! That is our bondage!"

This is where Christianity offers something more than a civic understanding of freedom does. God desires the physical liberty and well-being of every creature. In fact, in Scripture, God reveals Himself again and again as precisely the God of liberated slaves! But it is not enough for God that we should be free from physical bonds just to be enslaved to sin, to self, and to devil's empty promises. In Jesus we see that God is intent on freeing us from so much more. In Him we have a clean conscience before God and are able to be perfectly content with all we have. We don't need to chase after fame or fortune or worry about making a name for ourselves or impressing others. We don't have to worry about impressing God or buying our way out of Hell.

Luther's treatise "The Freedom of a Christian" is a commentary on a paradox. He writes, "**A Christian person is a free sovereign, above all things, subject to no one; A Christian is a dutiful servant in all things, subject to everyone.**" That is to say, because we are saved and made right with God by grace, we do not need to be anxious, striving in life when it comes to trying to work out our salvation. Our salvation is completely ours and we don't have to prove ourselves to the devil or any person to claim it. Of course, Luther does not stop with the first statement in his paradox – though many in our society might wish he did. No, Luther continues, "**A Christian is a dutiful servant in all things, subject to everyone.**" That is to say, because we are free from the rat-race of life, from impressing by making a name for ourselves or lording over others, we are *freed-up* to devote all our attention to God's service and our neighbor's well-being.

While civil freedom is freedom *from* something, Christian freedom is freedom *for* something. When countries and peoples celebrate their independence days, they celebrate freedom *from* other people. We, the baptized, are freed *for* other people.

Because we are saved by God's grace, we are free to love the neighbor without any strings attached. The Christian way of living short-circuits self-centered living. It short-circuits this perpetual adolescence we're so used to, where we're always trying to be independent and assert ourselves and justify our views. Our horizons open up for us to embrace and love our neighbors, just because God loves them and that's good enough a reason for me to love them too, undistracted the mindless pursuit of stuff or pathological need to be right.

For the early Church, this new way of living meant leaving everything behind or sharing everything in common. For many throughout history, they've accepted to challenge to live simple lives of service too. But whether we have much or little, whether we have a lot of leisure time or have to work all the time, as Christians we are able to not be preoccupied with a shallow freedom that's just autonomy, but are freed to use our lives to love and live the way Jesus does.

Peace and Joy,

Pastor Tom

### **Pastoral Care**

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church  
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Rev. Dr. Thomas Drobena

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

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

### **Members of the Council are:**

Rev. Thomas S. Drobena  
President – Walter Kovaciny  
Vice-President – Michael Marvonek  
Treasurer – Sheila Welch  
Secretary – Amelia Hinchliffe  
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: 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**

Mrs. Anne Mandak  
116 Crystal Lake Rd.  
Stafford Springs, CT 06076-3343

### **Electronic Giving**

For those who are not able to attend in person regularly, we have an online giving page that can be used for recurring giving or for one-time Donations. The cost of the service is 2.75% for using a credit card and only 1% for direct debit. You will have the option to add the fee to your donation.

We would much prefer to see you in person.

We have social hour after church on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays. Join us for fellowship.

To donate copy this link <https://secure.myvanco.com/YJ24> The website is very easy to navigate.

### **July**

#### **Birthdays**

20 – Carl John “Jack” Mercier  
23 – Melanie Mordasky

#### **Anniversaries**

28 – Michael & Patricia Marvonek  
Happy 63<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary

# July *Holy Trinity Lutheran Church* 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<b>1</b> Pastor's day off	<b>2</b> 5:30 – 7 p.m. Safe Net Distribution	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6 The Fourth Sunday after Pentecost</b> 10:00 a.m. Holy Communion 11:15 a.m. Social Hour	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> 7:00 p.m. Bible Study	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Safe Net Distribution
<b>13 The Fifth Sunday after Pentecost</b> 10:00 a.m. Holy Communion 11:15 a.m. Council meeting	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> Pastor's day off	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>20 The Sixth Sunday after Pentecost</b> 10:00 a.m. Holy Communion 11:15 a.m. Social Hour	<b>21</b> Deadline for articles for the August & September Newsletters	<b>22</b> 7:00 p.m. Bible Study	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Safe Net Distribution
<b>27 The Seventh Sunday after Pentecost</b> 10:00 a.m. Holy Communion	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> Pastor's day off	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>		

## July Service Schedule

These readings are from Series C and can be found in the front of the ELCA hymnal.

### Tellers

### Worship Assistant

### Reader

#### **July 6 – Pentecost 4 (Lectionary 14) – Green**

Amelia Hinchliffe

Leigh Maxa

The Lichanec Family

Walter Kovaciny

Readings: Isaiah 66: 10-14  
Psalm 66 verses 1-9  
Galatians 6: 1-16  
Luke 10: 1-11, 16-20

Hymns: #576 Opening  
#656 Hymn of Day  
#468 Communion  
#547 Closing

#### **July 13 – Pentecost 5 (Lectionary 15) - Green**

Jennifer Welch

Sheila Welch

The Hinchliffe Family

Michael Welch

Readings: Deuteronomy 30: 9-14  
Psalm 25: 1-10  
Colossians 1: 1-14  
Luke 10: 25-37

Hymns: #729 Opening  
#522 Hymn of Day  
#715 Communion  
#679 Closing

#### **July 20 – Pentecost 6 (Lectionary 16) - Green**

Cathy Lichanec

Leigh Maxa

The Lichanec Family

Lenny Lichanec

Readings: Genesis 18: 1-10a  
Psalm 15  
Colossians 1: 15-28  
Luke 10: 38-42

Hymns: #520 Opening  
#769 Hymn of Day  
#779 Communion  
#754 Closing

#### **July 27 – Pentecost 7 (Lectionary 17) - Green**

Walter Kovaciny

Sheila Welch

The Welch Family

Volunteer

Readings: Genesis 18: 20-32  
Psalm 138  
Colossians 2: 6-15  
Luke 11: 1-13

Hymns: #533 Opening  
#790 Hymn of Day  
#487 Communion  
#886 Closing

#### **August 3 – Pentecost 8 (Lectionary 18) – Green**

Walter Kovaciny

Leigh Maxa

The Lichanec Family

Volunteer

Readings: Ecclesiastes 1: 2, 12-14; 2:18-23  
Psalm 49 verses 1-12  
Colossians 3: 1-11  
Luke 12: 13-21

Hymns: #705 Opening  
#542 Hymn of Day  
#496 Communion  
#655 Closing

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[www.holytrinitystafford.Slovak Zion Synod –](http://www.holytrinitystafford.SlovakZionSynod-)

ELCA Address Correction Requested

