Dear Sisters and Brothers,

In the book of Hebrews (11:1) we read, “Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things unseen.” Faith is a central part of the spiritual life. It is the way in which despite the limitations of our senses and of space and time, we are able to commune with God. And yet what faith is itself is very often misunderstood.

Many times, we imagine that faith and belief are thinking the right things—knowing about something or knowing something to be true. That is certainly part of it, but only the beginning in fact. Saint James in his letter (2:19) commends his reader for knowing about God, but points out that even demons know that God is real and who He is. To know about God is not enough. James concludes that “faith without works is dead.” By this he means that if your faith doesn’t change the way you live or shape your actions, then it’s not really faith. Faith is a living thing, and it brings people to life.

The author of Hebrews spends all of chapter eleven (40 verses!) giving examples of what the Old Testament saints were able to do because they had faith. He describes the great adventures they were able to set out on, the miracles they performed and witnessed, and the hardships they were able
to endure. Yet we are told that though they were commended for their faith, “none of them received what had been promised, since God planned something better for us so that only together with us they would be made perfect.”

Jesus is of course God’s plan for us. He is the fulfillment of every promise of God—the essence of what humanity has hoped for and the very embodiment of God unseen. It is in Him and because of Him that the saints of old and we are made perfect. In the book of Hebrews, the heroes of the faith are shown to be those who persevered because they trusted in God’s plan for them. When they were blessed and prosperous, they trusted that God had an even greater purpose for them; When they suffered, they trusted that God was still good and would make the world right.

Luther defines faith with this in mind. He wrote, “Faith is a living, daring confidence in God’s grace, so sure and certain that a person would stake their life on it a thousand times.” To have faith in God means to trust in God’s goodness—and rely on God’s grace. When we say, “I believe in God,” we are signifying that we are putting our trust in God and depending on His goodness. This is something that none of us do perfectly, but we make it our goal to grow in trust, and to be reproved and encouraged in faithful living, so that we can pray “I believe. Lord help my unbelief” (Mark 9:24).

If then having faith means that our trust is in God, and our confidence in God’s goodness is what propels us, that means not putting our trust in ourselves or our works. If faith is the conviction of things unseen, then when we cling to things we do see we risk missing out on the benefits of faith. The things of this world, my good works, other people and their efforts or accomplishments can be blessings, but putting our trust in them is not faith. God invites us to hope for something greater than we can do ourselves—something greater than we can even see! In Jesus we know that there is no height or depth or distance that God will not go to bring us close. He calls us to, as Luther says, trust daringly in God’s grace and not be dependent on the things we can see, but to stake our life and our way of living on God’s goodness alone.

Peace and joy,

Pastor Tom

This mosaic marks the traditional place where Jesus fed the 5,000.
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 tsd33@cam.ac.uk

Members of the Council are:
Rev. Thomas S. Drobena
President – Andrew Fisher
Vice-President – Walter Kovaciny
Treasurer – Sheila Welch
Secretary – Amelia Hinchliffe
Melissa Fisher
Leonard Lichanec
Michael Marvonek
Patricia Marvonek
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
✝ Learning & Youth Group Team:
Rev. Thomas Drobena, Melissa Fisher, Cathy & Leonard Lichanec

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

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: Mrs. Tonia Marvonek
Evergreen Health Care Center
201 Chestnut Hill Rd., Rm. # 2107
Stafford Springs, CT 06076-4005

September Birthdays
07 – Patricia Kovaciny
11 – Nan Hayden
12 – Pauline Valery
13 – Caleb Tremblay
15 – George Pallanck
19 – Shirley Pufahl
30 – Donna Palacko

Anniversaries
01 – James & Diane Bulick
09 – Gary & Cynthia Brown
19 – Tim Mercier & Amelia Hinchliffe
28 – Bryan & Leigh Maxa

Bible Study
Bible Study continues to be led by Pastor Tom.
For September, the bible study will be held September 2 and 16 at church in the social hall.
We’ll be taking a fresh look at some well-known Bible stories from the Old Testament. Each Bible Study takes about 2 sessions with questions and answers. All are welcome.

Share Recipes
Perhaps someone has a simple recipe to make goodies for the social hour or a potluck meal. You can give the recipe to Pastor Tom or Walter Kovaciny. With having Social Hour weekly, new pastry or snacks are always welcome. Thanks.

Social Hour
We’ve decided to offer refreshments after church each Sunday. Volunteers are needed to bake or purchase food to share. The social hours have been split with store purchased and home baked. There have also been some Sundays, with just a beverage being offered. There aren’t any hard and fast rules on what food to bring to share. Also, someone to setup the coffee pots, put a cold drink in a pitcher, put out cold and hot cups, napkins, paper supplies as needed. There will be a signup sheet posted to write your name and date interested in helping. As of this writing, an ideal place for the signup sheet has to be determined. Are there any suggestions?
Church Picnic
This year’s picnic held on Sunday, August 1st was a success. While the attendance was similar to the amount attending the weekly church service, plenty of food was available. There was plenty of time to visit and the weather cooperated. The picnic started at 1:00 p.m. and ended 4:30ish.

Ziti and Meatball takeout dinner
Join us for a Ziti and Meatball take-out dinner on Sunday, September 19, 2021. Ziti and sauce, hand-made meatballs, garden salad, and Italian rainbow cake for dessert make a complete meal. The cost is $10 per individual meal or $40 for a large family meal (feeds 4-6). Gluten-free meals are available on request. Pick up will be between 5 and 6 pm on the 19th. Spread the word! Place your orders by September 16 by calling or texting 860-806-2440.
September – October Service Schedule

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

Tellers: Amelia Hinchliffe, Walter Kovaciny
Worship Assistants: Leigh Maxa
Reader: Daniel Lichanec

September 5, 2021 – 10:00 a.m. – The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost – Green

September 12, 2021 – 10:00 a.m. – The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost – Green
Isaiah 50: 4 – 9a; Psalm 116; 1 – 9; James 3: 1 – 12; Mark 8: 27 – 38

September 19, 2021 – 10:00 a.m. – The Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost – Green
Jeremiah 11: 18 – 20; Psalm 54; James 3: 13 to 4: 3, 7 – 8 a; Mark 9: 30 – 37

September 26, 2021 – 10:00 a.m. – The Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost – Green
Numbers 11: 4 – 6, 10 – 16, 24 – 29; Psalm 19: 7 – 14; James 5: 13 – 20; Mark 9: 38 – 50

October 3, 2021 – 10:00 a.m. – The Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost – Green
Genesis 2: 18 – 24; Psalm 8; Hebrews 1: 1 – 4; 2: 5 – 12; Mark 10: 2 – 16

Attn: Tellers. Please mark your calendar when you’re scheduled to serve. Lately, there hasn’t been enough to count the offering per policy. The policy states the Financial Secretary and two (2) helpers to count the offering. If you’re not available to serve on the Sunday you’re scheduled, please find a replacement. Thanks.
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Ziti and Meatball

Dinner

Take-out only
Sunday,
September 19, 2021

Pickup 5-6pm

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church
104 W. Main Street
Stafford Springs

Ziti and Sauce • Meatballs • Garden Salad • Italian Rainbow Cake

$10 each or
$40 for a family pack (feeds 4-6 people)

To order call or text: 860-806-2440 by Thursday, September 16