

Trinity Times

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I struggle every time I sit down to write a note for the newsletter or announcements — “What should I write about?” Today it came to me from a couple of different sources. I think God was giving me a gentle nudge.

First, at the Livonia Cares meeting I attended, each attendee was asked to give three words that describe their outlook for 2022. The three words that came to mind for me were “EXCITING NEW BEGINNINGS.” Later that same afternoon, as I was preparing dinner and listening to music, the lyrics of *Peace Train* by Cat Stevens struck a chord with me.

*Now I've been smiling lately,
Thinkin' about the good things to come
And I believe it could be,
Something good has begun*

*From the
Council
President*

Holy Trinity has so much to be excited about in 2022 — and it makes me smile! We finally have all of our staff positions filled. We've welcomed Dan Mikat as our new Director of Music Ministries. Dan is excited to meet each of you and put your musical talents and gifts to use praising our awesome God. Pastor, Alysia and Patti are working with Dan to continue creating a strong ministry team at Holy Trinity.

Our Council Restructure Team (Pastor, myself, Michelle Spunar, Bill Deacon, and Karen Hisson) met this past week to lay out plans for our upcoming retreat for Church Council members and Staff. The desired outcomes of this retreat will be three or four ministry goals for the upcoming year. The air was full of excitement as we dreamed about what is in the future for Holy Trinity. The retreat is scheduled for February 18-19. Please pray for God's guidance in this visioning process.

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From the Pastor's Study

It's a new year at Holy Trinity, and there is a lot to be excited about! The pages of this quarter's newsletter are filled with all kinds of opportunity for us welcome others by sharing the good news of Jesus; serve others by offering our hearts, hands, and voices to our neighbors; pray to and praise our good and gracious God; and live generously together by offering ourselves and all that we have to one another and to our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer.

As I enter my first full year as your senior pastor, allow me once again to say thank you for the privilege of serving among you. I'm grateful for your welcome, for your trust in me, for your enthusiasm for the ministry we share, and for the joy of learning and growing with you as a disciple of Jesus. God has much in store for us, and I invite your continued prayers, generosity, service, and participation in this welcoming community of believers.

Wishing you peace and everything good in 2022.

Pastor Andrew Chavanak.
n/OLF



FIRST COMMUNION INSTRUCTION

First Communion instruction will take place in February in preparation for Transfiguration Sunday, February 27, when we will welcome our first communicants to the Lord's Table during our 10 a.m. service. Pastor Andrew, in consultation with the Congregation Council, is offering instruction to those who are in sixth grade or above, as well as to younger members who express a desire to receive the sacrament.

Those younger members will be allowed to attend instruction after conversation with their parents and with Pastor Andrew.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Pastor Andrew.



From the Music Department

For those who haven't met me officially yet, I'm Dan Mikat, the new director of music ministries here at Holy Trinity. It's been many years since I've served in a Lutheran Church and I'm thrilled to be back. My first church job was as organist at St. Timothy's in Kendall, Florida. It was several decades ago, while I was an undergraduate student at University of Miami, when I was offered the job as organist. I informed the pastor and director of music that I was a pianist, not an organist. Their response was "That's OK, if you can play piano, you can play organ." (That's not true!) So I spent a few months figuring out how to play organ without the benefit of lessons or guidance of any kind.

Fast forward to 2010, I started doctoral work on organ performance at University of Michigan, and was gently informed that I was doing everything wrong and we had to start at the beginning. So once again, I had to figure out how to play a pipe organ, but this time, it was with the benefit of a master teacher. As a result, I finally (after several years of hard work) became competent at playing complicated counterpoint music, which was always elusive to me in the decades prior.

The lesson for me here is that my progress and capacity is closely linked to the availability of a teacher that not only understands a perfect process, but knows how I can overcome my weaknesses and mistakes. Our Savior, Jesus Christ, is the ultimate master teacher and provides a path for overcoming whatever weaknesses or errors we have. Hebrews 2:11 "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one."

I hope that everyone feels welcome to participate in the music ministry here at Holy Trinity. There are many ways to be part of worship: choir, handbells, instrumentalists, etc. It matters little how refined and trained you may feel today. As long as you are willing to bring whatever you have, and want to make a joyful noise to the Lord, that's enough.

Dan Mikat

Director of Music Ministries

Tiny Tots Update



Tiny Tots has been very busy the last few months! We have learned about pets, Thanksgiving and being thankful, and Christmas! In November, we collected more than 300 items for St. Christine's food pantry. Mrs. Maikowski's three year old morning class alone donated more than 100 items. Before Thanksgiving we also had pizza day and pancake day where we make pizza and pancakes for our snacks. It is always a lot of fun! In December we had a few spirit days including Rudolph Day and Christmas Pajama Day.

Rudolph even made an appearance to visit the kids. This year we welcomed Rocket Ryan back for our science program. He has been visiting our school for over 10 years and we are the only preschool that has this program. So far we have learned about rocks and minerals, germs, and this month — snakes. He even brought his friend Slithers to visit us and be able to touch.

Mrs. Wayne was brave and held the snake!

Stacy Kraus

Tiny Tots Preschool Director

Letter from the Council President Continued ...

There is renewed excitement in our various committees to do God's work at Holy Trinity. Our Outreach Team has been busy adapting ministries to best reach people given the constraints of living in a COVID world. The Education Team is working on new ideas to connect with families and youth, as well as finding ways to keep existing programs vibrant and active. Our Bible Study groups have been meeting regularly and are well attended. Support of Missions has continued strong. Whenever there is a need, God provides whether it be in the form of funding or volunteers.

I hope you too are excited about the future for Holy Trinity. There are opportunities to get involved in many different ways. Just ask me, Pastor or someone on one of our committees. Do you have an idea for something you would like to try? Don't be afraid to share it. God is making all things new! Let's welcome 2022 with openness and a sense of awe as God works through each one of us. I thank God each day for each one of you and the gifts you have to offer.

Debbie LaFontaine

Council President

OUTREACH UPDATE

We look ahead with hopeful anticipation about where is God going to lead us in 2022. How can we be better ambassadors to be His hands and feet in this world? Since a fundamental element of Outreach is relationships, let's start there. As I sat down to write this article in early January 2022, we have just wrapped up the WELCA-sponsored **Share the Bounty** and the **Families in Need Christmas Project**. These two projects have a common thread — relationships! Over the past 10 years we have built strong relationships with Salem Lutheran Church in Flint and Randolph Elementary School in Livonia. This year we sponsored seven families from Salem and six families from Randolph. Although Share the Bounty was held virtually again this year, thanks to the generous support of Holy Trinity members, these projects were successfully completed. We extend our sincere thanks to everyone who donated money, shopped for our families, helped to wrap the gifts and to the "Reindeer Team" who delivered the gifts to Salem and Randolph.

Below are a few comments from the families we sponsored:

From Randolph Elementary School:

"Thank you for giving my family a Christmas we couldn't afford to give our children."

"Thank you for blessing us with all these gifts for our children."

"Oh my, I have no words. I am so thankful."

"Thank you for helping us."

From Salem Lutheran Church:

"I want to thank you for all the gifts you gave to Nolan and baby girl (who is due in April). My stepdaughter Lindsey is a single mom. Nolan is 4 years old with autism. He was born at five months — too early. His face just lit up when he opened the gifts. Lindsey said he is sleeping with the Batman toy. Lindsey said she is so grateful for your kindness. I would like to thank you for your kindness too. Merry Christmas and have a blessed New Year."

This is why we do what we do. We are blessed to be a blessing.

Holy Trinity has been working on establishing relationships in the community,

Our Tiny Tots Preschool — Kids Hope — The NOAH Bag Lunch Program — CROP Walk — Livonia Cares — St. Christine's Food Pantry — Independence Village — The Livonia Youth Choir — Boy Scout Troop 782 — Cub Scout Pack 790



COUPLE'S REFRESH



One of the results of the work of Holy Trinity's Listening Team, which spent over two years digging into Scripture, HTLC's history, and our community's needs, was the calling to develop "intentional relationships" with God, one another, and the community beyond our walls. To that end, Holy Trinity will be offering the opportunities for couples at any and all stages of their relationships to spend some time reflecting on and refreshing their relationships with one another. Pastor Andrew and Amy Morse will be facilitating a four-week program focusing on topics of interest to couples based on their responses to the popular and proven Prepare/Enrich inventory. Each couple who registers will be invited to take this inventory as individuals, and the results will be compiled in a report that will be shared with each couple. The results will be aggregated to determine what topics are most relevant to the whole group, and there will be time for large group, small group, and couples' conversations about each topic.

If you are interested in this "couples' refresh" program, sign up in the welcome center or contact Pastor Andrew at (734) 464-9115 or prchavanak@holytrinitylivonia.org.

Full to the Brim

Lent at Holy Trinity

This Lent we are engaging a worship series entitled "Full to the Brim," which offers a look at the expansive and abundant grace of God that comes to us in our need. We'll explore the theme on Sunday mornings (10 a.m.) and during our Midweek Lenten Services (Wednesday, 7 p.m.). Here are this year's topics:

Lent

With all that you are - 3/2 at 7 p.m.

Even in the desert - 3/6 & 3/9

Under God's wing - 3/13 & 3/16

You are worthy - 3/20 & 3/23

Prodigal grace - 3/27 & 3/30

Brazen acts of beauty - 4/3 & 4/6

Holy Week

Palm/Passion Sunday - 4/10

Even the stones cry out

Maundy Thursday - 4/14 at 7 p.m.

Take off your shoes

Good Friday - 4/15 at 7 p.m.

A cup of sorrow

Resurrection of Our Lord - 4/17

An expansive life

Midweek Worship will be a hybrid experience, with opportunity to gather both in-person and online. Look for more details in upcoming announcements!

WHY WE GIVE

Sometimes it seems that we talk about giving money to the church too much. Here are some reasons that our people say they financially support Holy Trinity.

MINISTRY: It's about the ministry. Nobody is getting rich working for the church. We are supporting doing God's work, building God's kingdom on earth. If I want a new ministry, I know money will be needed for staff, materials, etc. and I can help.

GRATITUDE: God has been good to me during my life. While I'm not wealthy, I have what I need and there have been times when things could have turned out worse. Often I say, "there by the grace of God go I." I thank God by financially supporting God's work.

GENERATIONS: If we do not teach our children and grandchildren about God and Jesus, who will? I feel that my faith gives me a moral compass. It helps me make decisions and I want that for the next generation. I do not want them to make decisions simply based on what gives them pleasure. And I do not want our culture to be so disorderly that the government has to control people with police, laws, and prisons. Our faith should be able to help us control our own behavior.

COMMUNITY: Holy Trinity helps needy people in the community with food, Christmas gifts, safe water, etc. I know that my donations will be well spent, like a good investment.

FAMILY: We have attended Holy Trinity for many years. We have relationships and care for other people who care about us. We help each other when we have special needs. We pray for one another. We forgive one another more than we would someone we do not know. When I cannot attend church, I feel "off," somehow incomplete. Just being with my church family picks me up.

ENJOYMENT: I enjoy being at church, with the music, the singing and camaraderie. We do stuff that I enjoy. Sometimes it is just pulling weeds or a Christmas cantata.

RESPONSIBILITY: My father taught me, "if it is to be, it must be me." That has worked in my business and family. I feel that responsibility at church as well. If I do not like how the ceiling tiles are stained from a leaky roof, I feel that if I want that changed, I have to do it. Most often we work together as a group, and I feel responsible for contributing as a leader, being a cheerleader or contributing money to help cover the costs.

MORE THAN HABIT: I was raised to put something in the offering plate each week. As a child they gave me coins to put in and as I got older I put in part of my allowance or what I earned mowing lawns. Now as an adult it seems that giving an offering is a natural part of what I do at worship.

GOD TOLD ME TO GIVE: God told Adam and Eve to be good stewards of creation. That means taking care of our planet and all that live on it. Jesus taught us to care for people who are needy, less fortunate, or disabled. God loves a cheerful giver.

Thank you for you supporting the work of Holy Trinity.

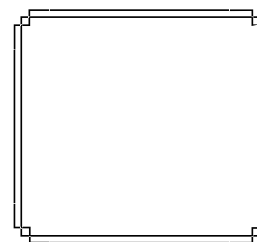
Paul Stratton.
Chair, Stewardship Board



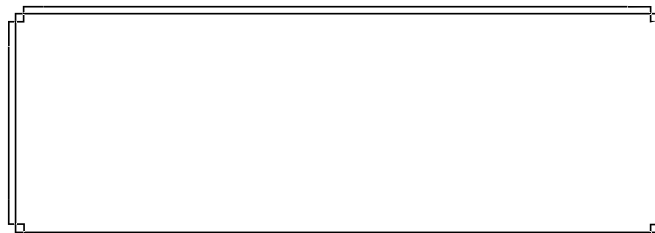
Holy Trinity Lutheran Church
39020 5 Mile Road
Livonia, MI 48154



A congregation of
THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN
CHURCH IN AMERICA
God's work. Our hands.



Return Service Requested



Ministers: **All Baptized People of Holy Trinity**

Senior Pastor: **Andrew Chavanak** prchavanak@holytrinitylivonia.org

Parish Administrator: **Patti Harhold** htlc@holytrinitylivonia.org

Communications Minister: **Alysa Zavala-Offman** communications@holytrinitylivonia.org

Director of Music Ministries: Dan Mikat musicdirector@holytrinitylivonia.org

Kids Hope USA: kidshope@holytrinitylivonia.org

Tiny Tots Preschool Director: **Stacy Kraus** tinytots@holytrinitylivonia.org

Custodian: **Don MacRae** dmacrae@holytrinitylivonia.org

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