

Holy Trinity Ambassador

January 2017

Good Samaritan Fund Donations

Thank You to all who helped support the Good Samaritan Fund this past year. This past year we provided \$2,000 in assistance by providing 80 Aldi's gift certificates to those in need. Those requesting assistance must present picture identification and demonstrate need. Thank you to all those who give donations to the Good Samaritan fund. The recipients of the gift cards greatly appreciate the help they receive.

2017 Mission Projects

In addition to our support of our District and Synod we continue support of our 2 mission projects: TIM and LHF.

TIM stands for "Together In Mission." This program is set up through our Synod to directly sponsor a particular missionary. We are currently helping to fund a missionary Rev. Jacob Gaugert who is a teaching pastor in Togo, West Africa. LHF - stands for "Lutheran Heritage Foundation." This group works to translate specifically Lutheran materials - such as the Small Catechism - into other languages for use by missionaries and Lutherans in foreign countries. They work with materials designed for both children and adults.

We are hoping to contribute \$7,500 to each of these mission projects during 2017.

Altar Guild Meeting

Saturday, January 14th at noon.

Please join us. New volunteers are welcome, both men and women. We will work on the schedule for 2017.

2017 Flower, Candle & Radio Broadcast Sign-up Sheet

To provide the flowers, candles and radio broadcast for our Divine Service please sign up on the list located on the bulletin board outside the church office.

Preschool Nut Sale

We have some extra nuts and candy available for sale after services in the fellowship hall or church office Mon. – Fri., 8 a.m. – noon.

Thank you.

Thursday Quilting

The Thursday morning quilting circle will resume January 5th from 9-11 a.m.
More hands are always welcome.

Ponderings in the Pasture - Pastor Gutz

The following article is taken from To Live With Christ devotions by Bo Giertz, CPH, 2008, p.81-82.

"Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts." Hebrews 3:7

You can harden your heart, the author of Hebrews says. He must have seen frightening examples of that kind of hardening. He comes back to this several times and emphasizes that it can go on for so long that you will no longer be able to return and receive forgiveness. God comes to meet us. He longs after His children. He sends invitations to us and prays we will feel welcomed at His house. He never did it so consciously and with so much affection as when He sent His Son into the world. It's not easy to say no to Him, but it's possible. There is something called "an evil unbelieving heart" (Hebrews 3:12). Even if you've been able to see and experience all God has to give in the way of forgiveness and mercy, you can still tear yourself away and "fall away from the living God" (Hebrews 3:12). But this doesn't happen unless you harden your heart. You can make your heart so hard that it is frozen solid. Then you have become hardened and nothing more can help you. Hebrews says about men like these that it's impossible to come back to repentance. Jesus warned people like this about the sin against the Holy Spirit. They were people who had been allowed to see all of His good deeds. They couldn't deny His miracles, but they said; "He is possessed by Beelzebul" (Mark 3:22).

This was clear to the original Christians. God had done His best. After sacrificing His own Son, He could do no more. If they still didn't want to receive, it was hopeless. We find that there was an example of this in old Israel too. The generation that was brought out of Egypt and saw God's enormous deeds but still fell to temptation in the desert was not allowed into the Promised Land.

The reason was obvious - they were unable to enter because of unbelief: "In spite of this word you did not believe the LORD your God" (Deuteronomy 1:32). It's the same way with us. If we can't enter heaven, it's because of our unbelief. There isn't any great sin that can't be forgiven. Jesus made it possible. But no one enters without forgiveness.

Help us Lord, never to harden our hearts when You speak. If we try, let Your voice speak even louder. Let there be a fire therein that burns us. Give us no peace and no tranquility. Let us know that we are wandering in the dark and soon will no longer be with You. Have mercy on us all, on our parish, and on our people. You have every reason to be tired of us. You Yourself have said that You will chop down a tree that does not bear fruit. But You also prayed often for the tree that bears no fruit. Therefore, we ask You for another year and for the understanding to cherish it. For that, we need Your grace and Your help, Lord. Give it to us for Your mercy's sake.

Private Confession and Absolution

Confessional Hours are held quarterly or by appointment. The next scheduled date is Saturday, January 14th, from 8 - 9 a.m. in the church sanctuary. Pastor is available for those who desire to make private confession and hear the promise of God's forgiveness personally. This is a voluntary and historic practice of the Lutheran Church. If you have any questions or concerns please call Pastor Gutz. You can check out the format on page 292 of Lutheran Service Book.

Church Council Meeting

November 29, 2016

Present: M. Peters, J. Zavada, V. McCollum, D. Gotch, H. Drysdale, M. Johnston, R. Kochis J. Christensen and Pastor Gutz.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Church Properties: The church lighting has been completed. Members of Church Properties took down the fans. LED emergency lighting to be installed. Tony Miles will replace damaged ceiling tiles. Tree removal and furnace repair were paid out of Old #3 fund.

Board of Education: Nuts had arrived and they were sorted for pickup. The Staff Handbook has been updated.

Parish Activities: One cradle roll prepared. Thanksgiving cards were sent to shut ins. The Committee will be serving soup prior to Advent Services.

Elders: December Elder duties were assigned. Pastoral activities were reviewed. Directories are available and being distributed. Holy Trinity hosted the Western Circuit Pastors Conference Oct. 18th & 19th. Lighting project was completed. Commercial Fast Print is preparing business cards for distribution to members.

Serving in January

Elders

Saturday – Randy Kochis, Jeff McMullen
Sunday – Eric Harcharik, Dave Gotch

Ushers

Bob Barr Jr.,
David Kochis, Pete Pastirik

Greeters

Delayne & Brittany Durdle

Altar Guild

Saturday – Greg & Barb Lentman
Sunday – John & Denise Burt

Preschool

This month we will learn about animals in the cold and how they adapt to the winter weather. We will take a trip later this month to Alaska to see the animals, ski and have snack at the Lodge.

Our January Bible stories will be -“A star leads the way”, “Jesus in the temple”, “The Baptism of Jesus”, “Jesus calls the Disciples”.

Bible memory verse - January - “I am the way, the truth and the life.” John 14:6

Dates to remember

School resumes - January 4th for M/W/F and
Five day classes
- January 5th for T/Th

No School – Jan. 16th Martin Luther King Day

Some websites to check out:

Lutheran Ch. - Missouri Synod www.lcms.org
Concordia Pub. House - www.cph.org
Pirate Christian Radio

www.piratechristianradio.com

For singles, widowed, divorced:

www.inspiration-for-singles.com

Issues Etc. - www.issuesetc.org

For Youth: www.worldvieweverlasting.com

Our Preschool has a Facebook page. Stop by and like us. Check out our church's web page www.holytrinitystreator.org

HOLY TRINITY HEALTH MINISTRIES

Jacqueline Girard, RN, MSN, PN

Dear Friends in Christ,

1 Timothy 4:14-16, "Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you. Practice these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress. Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers." (ESV) Paul, in his letters, provided encouragement to Timothy. January is Cervical Health Awareness Month, and I would provide encouragement to the women in our congregation. Encouragement to "keep a close watch on yourself."

We have an innate predisposition to care for others; but, in doing so, tend to neglect ourselves. "Cervical Health Awareness Month is a chance to raise awareness about how women can protect themselves from HPV (human papillomavirus) and cervical cancer. HPV is...also a major cause of cervical cancer...Cervical cancer screenings can help detect abnormal (changed) cells early, before they turn into cancer. Most deaths from cervical cancer could be prevented by Pap tests and follow-up care" (The National Cervical Cancer Coalition). "Cervical cancer is the easiest gynecological cancer to prevent with regular screening tests and vaccination. It is also very curable when found and treated early" (Womenshealth.gov). Please make and keep regular appointments with your health providers. In many cases, an ounce of prevention really is worth a pound of cure.

Also, please know that you are noticed, appreciated, and loved. While you care for others, others (including our Father) care about you. Proverbs 3:15-18 "She is more precious than jewels, and nothing you desire can compare with her. Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her; those who hold her fast are called blessed." (ESV)

Blood pressure clinics for January will be the 8th and 22nd (keeping in mind the weather and how crummy Hwy 17 from Wenona to Streator can be!). As always, I look forward to seeing you there.

Blessings and good thoughts,
Jackie

**A Christian's life is
a window through which
others can see Jesus.**

Remember to pray for our shut-in members, those sick & hospitalized:

Bill Andree	Alan Post
Bryan Donner	Betty Proksa
Ruth Harlow	John Repko
Jim Kerestes	Charles Rinkenberger
Helen Kruger	Ruth Rinkenberger
Ruth Lehman	Mary Lou Rubis
Donna Murphy	George Tibbles
Louise Novotney	Anne Yednock

+ Shelley A. Beardsley +

Our Savior Jesus Christ has destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. Let us remember with thanksgiving what God has done through His servant Shelley Beardsley.

Shelley was born November 21, 1967, in Streator. She was the daughter of William and Sandy (Harms) Gray. Shelley was made a child of God through the waters of Holy Baptism on December 24, 1967. She was confirmed on April 4, 1982. Shelley married Edward Beardsley on October 22, 2005 in Ottawa. On Wednesday, December 7, Shelley at the age of 49 years fell asleep in Jesus.

Shelley is survived by her husband, Ed, of Streator, a daughter, Bella of Streator; her parents, Sandy (Steve) Burrell, of Bloomington; and siblings, Tom (Bonnie) Gray, of Granville, Mike Gray, of Bloomington, Jennifer (Roger) Gaspardo, of Minonk, Jeff (Sheena) Gray, of Washburn, and Chris (Wendy) Gray of Washburn. She also is survived by sister- and brothers-in-law, Debra (Mark) Kovach, of Streator, Wayne Yuhas, of New York, and Bob (Lourdes) Beardsley of Streator; and several nieces and nephews.

Shelley was preceded in death by her father, William Gray; her grandparents; and sister-in-law, Linda Gray.

Shelley attended Toluca grade schools and graduated from Toluca High School in 1986. She worked as an associate at Ottawa Walmart. Shelley was a member of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Streator.

The Lord gives and the Lord takes away; blessed be the name of the Lord. We give thanks to God our Father through Jesus Christ, our Lord for our sister Shelley.

+ Patrick H. Dougherty +

Our Savior Jesus Christ has destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. Let us remember with thanksgiving what God has done through His servant Patrick Dougherty.

Patrick was born April 23, 1946 in Streator. He was the son of Harold and Anna (Klima) Dougherty. Patrick was made a child of God through the waters of Holy Baptism on May 9, 1946. He was confirmed on March 22, 1959. On Friday, December 16, Patrick at the age of 70 years fell asleep in Jesus.

Patrick is survived by a son, Edward Patrick (Lanny) Dougherty, of Boston, Mass.; a granddaughter, Christina Dougherty; a grandson, Harry Dougherty; a brother, Daniel (Judy) Dougherty, of Rushville; sisters, Patsy Hughart, of Morris, Dorothy Leaming, of San Antonio, Texas, Mary Lou (Max) Heinz, of Streator, Donna Loebach of Treasure Island, Fla. and Cheryl Metcalf, of Aurora; many nieces, nephews and great nieces and nephews also survive.

He was preceded in death by his parents; a sister Judith in infancy; brother in laws, Harold Leaming, Donald Loebach and Lester Metcalf; and a nephew Jeffery Heinz.

Patrick attended Wilson Grade School and Woodland High School. He served in the United States Air Force during the Viet Nam War. He worked Security for the LaSalle County Nuclear Station and also part-time at the American Legion as a bartender. He repaired bicycles in his spare time. He also served as the primary caretaker for his parents for many years. He was a member of Leslie G. Woods American Legion Post 1492 and the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 217. Patrick was a member of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Streator.

The Lord gives and the Lord takes away; blessed be the name of the Lord. We give thanks to God our Father through Jesus Christ, our Lord for our brother, Patrick.

5 Resolutions Every Lutheran Should Keep

Today is not for reminiscing about what would/could/should have been. It is, after all, a new year, full of hopes, dreams and new beginnings.

So in the Spirit of the New Year, let's look at five resolutions every Lutheran should keep in 2016 (and beyond):

1) Remember Your Baptism.

It makes sense to start at the very foundation of our new life in Christ. Take this new year to remember that you're a new you on account of your Baptism into Christ. It was done at God's command and with His Word. You now have forgiveness life and salvation! Rejoice in this "washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior" (Titus 3:5-6).

Do you still regret something from the past year or from long ago? Baptism now saves you! So drown and bury that guilt along with all your sins and evil desires and look "to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith" (Heb. 12:2).

2) Go to church regularly and receive Christ's body and blood.

This seems obvious so why mention it? Attending church. Hearing God's Word and receiving Christ's body and blood. We know it's good for us, and yet we're quick to make excuses and do other things that either serve to starve our faith or feed it such rubbish that it suffers instead of strengthens. Jesus gives His very body and blood, given and shed for you as a testament. To look for Jesus outside these means of grace is foolish. But isn't the Church just full of sinners? Of course it is! That's the point. We shouldn't be surprised when sinners gather in the place where forgiveness is promised.

3) Support your pastor and the work of your congregation.

It's true: Your pastor's a sinner too. It's also true that he's the sinner whom God called to publicly proclaim His Word and

administer His Sacraments in that place. There's an obvious financial obligation that Christians have to support the under-shepherd whom God has given for "The laborer deserves his wages" (1 Tim. 5:18).

There are other ways to support your pastor. Cards and notes are appreciated. Pray for him. We all have God-given skills and talents that can be exercised as we care and love each other.

4) Encourage the families of your church.

Families here mean everyone from singles to single parents, from the widowed and orphaned to the traditional family. No one is left out. We should live in a constant state of forgiving one another and directing each other to Word and Sacrament, "not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near" (Heb. 10:25).

5) Make a bold confession.

Of all the resolutions on this list, this one might scare you the most. Yet it is also a privilege to confess Christ in our various callings in life. To be clear, this doesn't mean that you should stand on the street corner and thump your Bible. It does mean, however that there are many opportunities to share the hope that lies within us on a daily basis.

Perhaps your waitress expresses a burden that she's bearing. Jesus says, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28). Or your spouse feels like he or she has been cut off from God's (or your) love. St. Paul says, "For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers... nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (2 Cor. 12:10). The confession, however weak, is bold on account of Christ.

There will be times when we slip and fall short in keeping these resolutions or neglect them, yet do not lose heart. Jesus loves you and forgives you!

Lutheran Witness – January 2016