

Holy Trinity Ambassador

October 2024



His Steadfast Love Endures Forever

A Psalm for giving thanks. Psalm 100

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth!

Serve the Lord with gladness!

Come into his presence with singing!

Know that the Lord, he is God!

It is he who made us, and we are his;
we are his people, and the sheep of his
pasture.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving,
and his courts with praise!

Give thanks to him; bless his name!

For the Lord is good;
his steadfast love endures forever,
and his faithfulness to all generations.

Operation Christmas Child

Pack a shoebox to be sent to a child at
Christmas.

Where can I get one?

Back of church (Narthex) or on the stage.

Every gift is an opportunity to share with
children around the world.

**Boxes need to be returned
November 18th.**



Voters Meeting

Voters Meeting will follow the 9 a.m. service on
Sunday, October 20th.

The 2025 budget will be presented.

Preschool Nut Sale

Preschool Nut Sale is nearly over. **Thursday,
October 3rd is the order deadline.** Get your
orders in today! Forms are located in the
church office and on the stage.

Quilting Circle

The Quilting Circle will resume **Thursday,
October 3, 9 -11 am.** Every quilt made is
donated as a blessing to others. Members
and non-members who are interested in
sewing or quilting are welcome.

Final Instructions and Benediction

1 Thessalonians 5:13-18

Be at peace among yourselves. And we urge
you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage
the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with
them all. See that no one repays anyone evil
for evil, but always seek to do good to one
another and to everyone. Rejoice always,
pray without ceasing, give thanks in all
circumstances; for this is the will of God in
Christ Jesus for you.

Ponderings in the Pasture – Pastor Gutz

“The Long Defeat”

J.R.R. Tolkien wrote *The Lord of the Rings*. In his writing he uses a writing tool that he calls, “The Long Defeat.” He said that this tool was not simply a story convention, but a basic belief of his, derived from his Roman Catholic faith. He wrote: Actually I am a Christian, and indeed a Roman Catholic, so that I do not expect ‘history’ to be anything but a ‘long defeat’—though it contains (and in legend may contain more clearly and movingly) some samples or glimpses of final victory. (Letters, 255)

This is a crucial point for us to remember. Talk of a long defeat can bring with it an air of inevitability and, with that, a resignation to failure. If we are doomed to lose, then why put up the fight? But this is to misunderstand the meaning of the term. The “long defeat” refers to our own efforts to remake the world. We will never be able to overcome fallen human nature by any program, system, or force, because those structures themselves will be corrupted by the presence of the fallen human beings at the helm. In a society that attempts to condition all, who conditions the conditioners?

The result is not the perfection of man, but rather, as C.S. Lewis observed, the abolition of man.

But the long defeat is not an ultimate defeat. This was just as true in Tolkien’s imagined world as it is in our own. The realms of the elves would fall in decadence and decay, and the kingdoms of men would begin to crumble, and the dark armies of Sauron would seem to be unstoppable. Yet they would not give up their resistance, and the peoples of the West would march to the Black Gate itself with little hope of success. And indeed the victory was won, but not through the sword of a man or the axe of a dwarf, but through the self-sacrifice of a hobbit, through love and companionship. It was when all seemed hopeless that the sudden and unexpected turn to the good, the “good catastrophe”, took place: the One Ring was destroyed, and Sauron was defeated.

In the great shaking of the earth and the crumbling of the tower, we are reminded of the earthquake that accompanied Christ’s crucifixion and death, and the rending of the Temple veil in two. Surely Jesus’ laborious trudge up the hill of Golgotha seemed to his followers a long walk of defeat, yet in their darkest moment was found the means of their salvation. Good Friday presaged Easter Sunday. And Easter Sunday foretells the day when man indeed will be perfected, when the horns will sound and the king will return, when heaven and earth will be joined and every tear will be wiped away.

For the Christian, then, a man-made utopia is truly “no place,” and the failure to bring it about is to be expected—and even in a sense desired, as any attempt to perfect man by natural means will necessarily be forced, violent, and totalitarian. Only God who has made man can perfect man. It was the desire of our first parents to grasp at that perfection for themselves that put us on this long road. Defeat in this life, far from threatening our faith, is one of its basic assumptions. As is the conviction that God has already won the victory. Christ is Risen! He is Risen indeed! Alleluia!

(This was adapted from an article by Nicholas Senz that appeared on-line July 26, 2018 in *The Catholic World Report*)



Church Council Meeting

August 27, 2024

Present:

J. Zavada, K. Downey, R. Kochis, D. Sass,
B. Barr, V. McCollum

Treasurer Report: June and July financial report from the church as well as the preschool were available.

Church Properties: Budget was discussed with no changes. There was concern regarding possible roof repairs once the chimney was worked on. There are some low hanging branches in Trinity Park that will be addressed. Signs on the outskirts of town - north sign needs replaced due to damage by IDOT. Old #3 tree stumps need to be removed. Price for removal of stumps is good. Bathroom towel dispensers were replaced and will require paint touch up, which the board take care of this project.

Board of Education Report: Preschool has 19 full time tuitions and 25 registered students. Parents Orientation is August 23. First day of school is September 3. Fall festival October 17. Adult Sunday Bible Class and Confirmation begin September 8. Sunday school begins.

Elders Report: Pastor thanked the elders for helping July 27, 28. Pastor services to assist Zion Lutheran, Wenona has ended. Judy (Gotch) Beckman has transferred her membership from Zion Lutheran to Holy Trinity. Summer Bible class has concluded.

Confirmation will be on September 22 with 3 confirmands. Holy Trinity will not participate in the SELC District Convention, which is January 16-19, 2025. Pastor will be attending Lutheran Haven Quarterly meeting in August. Reviewed budget, made the necessary changes. Elders were scheduled for September services.

Pastor reminded everyone every day is a new day and to make Bible reading part of their daily habits.

Parish Activities Report: Birthday and sympathy cards sent. Reviewed budget with no changes. Refreshed activities bags. Discussed the church picnic for September 29.

Old Business: New phones have been installed.

Serving in October

Elders

Sunday – Mike Peters
Saturday – Jack Zavada

Ushers

Bob Barr Jr., David Kochis

Altar Guild

Saturday – Kim Donner
Sunday – Val McCollum

For Your Prayers

Members in Bold (requested by)

Eileen Andree

Gary Brandenburg (Matthew Brandenburg)

Judy Beckman

Abbey Brown (Marilyn Quinn)

Bob Cross

Buddy Crouch (Lauren Pastirik)

Sylvia Held

Laura Johnston (Nancy Hepner)

John Kochis

Sally Libby (Carol Sass)

Rick Mahrt (Denise Burt)

Matt Murray (Karen Downey)

Larry Runyon

Carol Sass

Shirley Zavada (Jack Zavada)

Lutheran Heritage Foundation

Rev. Dr. Quintin Cundiff, Riga Latvia

If you have placed a name on the prayer list please keep the Church Office updated on their status.

The prayer of
the righteous
is powerful
and effective.

-James 5:16 NRSV



For the Record

Transferred in from
Shepherd of Coast Lutheran Church
Palm Coast, FL.

Tim, Lori and Patrick Welch

Confirmed September 22

Olivia Brandenburg
Lily Hill
Grace Longmire

Preschool

September was a delightful month as we acquainted ourselves with each of your children, as they became accustomed to our procedures, routines, and making friends.

October Memory Verse:

Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Isaiah 43:5

Our Bible Stories:

"Noah's Ark"

"Abraham's son, Isaac"

"Joseph & his brothers"

"Moses is born"

"Crossing the Red Sea".

Our Theme for October – the forest, nocturnal animals, and pumpkins. We will have activities aimed at enhancing our fine motor skills and practicing printing our names.

Dates to Remember

October 3rd – Fall Fundraiser Due

October 14th - Columbus Day - No School

October 17th – Fall Festival 5:30 - 7:00

Fall Celebration/Open House: October 17th
from 5:30-7:00. Watch for more information!

Dear friends in Christ,
Let me share three separate stories of God's work that he has done through our work.

The Cundiffs
in Latvia.



The first story, my Latvian friend attended a conference for young people in Europe called Corpus Christi. While there, a young man approached our Latvian friend and excitedly said he had become a Lutheran in Latvia! He was traveling through Riga and went to the English service, and that Sunday, he decided to become a Lutheran and went home dedicated to learning more about the faith. That growing faith led him to attend Corpus Christi this year. In his story, he mentioned that it was through the conversation he had with me that God worked in him.

The second story regards another Latvian with whom I was building a relationship in the first year in Latvia. We recently reconnected, and this last Sunday, we sat down and had a good conversation; I rejoice at this. He was open to hearing the Gospel in the past, and we were slowly building to more of an engagement with the faith. Please pray that the Lord would keep safe that desire in this man's heart and that he would come to faith.

The third story, one of our students at Luther Academy is a pastor in his home country. When I first started teaching him, he was new to the pastoral office. This last summer, at the same Corpus Christi conference I mentioned above, he took a group of young people from his congregation. Additionally, he was invited to lead a plenary session, and he did so over a few days of the conference.

Thank you for being a part of this work.

In Christ's Service,
Pastor Cundiff

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

Our administration, faculty, and students of Lutera Akadēmija as they have begun the fall semester.

Good health and well-being for the family and friends of all missionaries.

PRAISE GOD FOR:

Helping us to see some of the fruits of our labor.

Safe travels all summer for the Cundiffs and their fellow missionary families.