

TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH, TOWANDA, PA

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2019

God's Work Our Hands




**WORK
Together
AND
HELP
Each other**

TAMMY LOCKHART HELPING AT CHOP

On Sunday, September 8, 2019 Trinity Lutheran Church participated in "God's Work Our Hands. After a "short service with Holy Communion" several members stayed and trimmed hedges & branches around the church. Some helped sort school supplies and others went to the building which houses CHOP (Child Hunger Outreach Partners). There they sorted and bagged food items for school age children to be distributed the following week.

Fall Bazaar- Bake Sale Quilt & Basket Raffle



Friday, October 25, 2019 from 10:00 am—2:00 pm is our annual fall bazaar. Several baskets will be raffled off. Tickets are \$1.00 each or 6/\$5.00. There will also be a quilt made by Peggy Cranmer that will be raffled for \$5.00/ticket. Tickets can be purchased from a Vesper Guild member. Lunch will also be served offering chili and vegetable and chicken noodle soups. Our famous variety of homemade pies will be available and there will also be a BAKE SALE. Takeout's are available too. Come out & enjoy our great Lutheran cooks!!!

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Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

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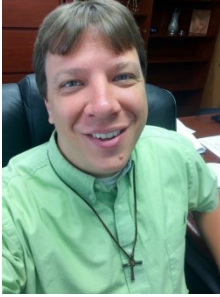
**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**
God's work. Our hands.



Pastor's Message



The Church As "Sanctuary"



**A Message From
Pastor Jira
Albers**

*"Come to
me, all you
that are
weary and
are carry-
ing heavy
burdens,
and I will
give you
rest."*

Matthew 11:28

As we hear a lot in the news about "sanctuary cities" and hear of churches offering "sanctuary" to immigrants, I would like to take a moment to reclaim the notion of sanctuary (which is a Christian notion) and define what it might mean for Christians still today as we seek to faithfully be the church.

First, I would like to define what Christian "sanctuary" is not. It is not an act that seeks to "break the law." When you hear of churches offering "sanctuary," they are not ignoring or working against law enforcement as some claim that "sanctuary cities" do. "Sanctuary" is an act that was defined by the churches well before it was ever an act defined by our modern cities.

So, what is "sanctuary?" In its original meaning, it is a sacred space; a sacred haven; a sacred place of safety. All of our churches have a "sanctuary" which is a sacred and safe space to gather and worship the Lord. Naturally, this developed into the idea that the church is a sacred, safe space in which people could take shelter and be with the Lord.

Theologically, it is a space where people are free to seek the forgiveness, grace, and protection of the Lord. It is a space ruled by the mercy of Christ and is a

space where the kingdom values of Jesus Christ rule the day.

Historically, people have retreated to churches for "human sanctuary" in order to seek forgiveness and make amends with God, to take refuge from injustice, and to find shelter from strife. Many Christians seek that very sanctuary away from the world each and every Sunday. But, extending back into classical times, sanctuaries have readily provided a refuge for criminals, fugitives, and slaves. This was not an act that was over and against the civil authority. In fact, English Law explicitly recognized the immunity of those who had claimed sanctuary in churches from the fourth to the seventeenth century. Still today, though law enforcement has no legal restriction from entering churches in an official capacity, most law enforcement officials still honor the tradition of "sanctuary" and respects the autonomy of the church as a sacred space set apart.

The modern sanctuary movement in churches seeks to do what churches have always done: to provide a safe place where people are free to seek the forgiveness, grace, and protection of the Lord. Some churches offer this refuge to immigrants who have struggled to get shelter, love, and guidance elsewhere.

The Question Box

(Questions About Our Christian Life)

Could pastors who harbor those who break the law be charged with harboring criminals?"

Yes. A pastor who knowingly harbors a criminal can be charged as such. "Sanctuary" is not a blanket form of immunity and is not intended as a final solution to any problem. The church is there to serve as a mediator, providing safety, guidance, peace, and reconciliation. Traditionally, pastors who encounter violent criminals will always inform police. In the cases of those who seek shelter in other ways, law enforcement has graciously allowed the tradition of "sanctuary" to continue and has not brought charges. – Pastor Jira Albers



Parish News



Sunday, October 6– We will recognize our faithful volunteers, lectors, communion and worship assistants!



Sunday, October 27! This day, the Sunday closest to October 31-the date Martin Luther posted his 95 Theses in Wittenberg In 1517, it is celebrated in honor of the Beginning of the reformation of the church. An ethnic luncheon with a dish to pass will be held following service. Bring your favorite dish!



ALL SAINTS SUNDAY, November 3! We will honor all saints, known and unknown. We will be remembering all saints who have died in the past year (since 11/01/2018). Please call or email the church office with the names of people you want remembered.



November 10– CONSECRATION SUNDAY &
We will honor all veterans!



November 17– Child's Faith Service
Let's worship like we were kids again!
Bring a friend & enjoy music and Bible readings !

Worship Highlights

**Volunteer
Recognition
October 6**

**Reformation
Sunday
October 27**

**November 3
All Saints Sunday**

**November 10
Honor Veterans
Clean-up property**

**Child's Faith
Sunday
November 17**

**Christ the King
Sunday
November 24**

**First Sunday in Advent
Sunday
December 1**

Adult Education Opportunities



Morning Fellowship
Studying the Book of Acts while enjoying each other's companionship

**Every Tuesday at 9:00 AM
In The Hart Center
(unless stated /cancellation)**



Sunday Afternoon Book Club
Reading : "The Year of
Living Biblically"
By A. J. Jacobs

**Meeting October 13 at 1:00 pm
At Pat & Sven Thomason's home**



**Facebook-
Bible Study at Trinity Towanda**
Bible Readings, Topics, Tips & Video

Join and add your comments



Parish News Continued



On Sunday, October 13, there will be a baptism of “Kandin Knox Runner” during worship service. Grandparents are Terri and Butch Brion.



OCTOBER 20- Doreen Secor will be giving “Temple Talks” before the service. Please try to attend this important update.



Willing Workers are busy preparing for our Annual Fall Bazaar on October 25th from 10-2:00 PM. We will be in need of homemade pies and any other baked goods. Vegetables are also need for the soups.

ENGELHARD COMPASSION FUND 2019



© wondercliparts.com

ONCE AGAIN IT IS ALMOST TIME FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF ***THE ENGELHARD COMPASSION FUND***. THIS YEAR WE WILL BE USING THE MONEY TO HELP **DWIGHT AND SHARON ALBERS**, PASTOR JIRA'S PARENTS. AS MOST OF YOU KNOW DWIGHT HAS SUFFERED MAJOR MEDICAL ISSUES THE LAST COUPLE OF YEARS AND IS NOW UNDERGOING DIALYSIS THREE TIMES A WEEK. THEY HAVE TO TRAVEL QUITE A DISTANCE EACH TIME AND COULD CERTAINLY USE SOME HELP PAYING FOR GAS, ETC. YOU CAN HELP THEM WITH A CONTRIBUTION TO ***THE ENGELHARD COMPASSION FUND*** THAT WILL BE DISTRIBUTED AT THE END OF OCTOBER. CONTRIBUTIONS SHOULD BE GIVEN TO TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH WITH THE NOTATION THAT IT IS FOR THE ENGELHARD COMPASSION FUND. THANK YOU ALL FOR THE SUPPORT YOU ARE GIVING THEM AND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS. PLEASE CONTINUE TO KEEP THEM IN YOUR PRAYERS.

PEACE BE WITH YOU,
MAUREEN ENGELHARD



DON'T FORGET TO TURN IN YOUR VITALITY SURVEY QUESTIONS!!!

Columbarium Space Available

As you make your end of life arrangements do not forget that the church has columbarium space available.

Thank You Members Of Christ!

- *Thank you to Doreen Secor for giving the Temple Talks.
- *Thank you to Joe Snyder for heading up “God’s Works Our Hands” projects.
- *Thank you to Peggy Cranmer for making the quilts for our bazaar & for the newly baptized. Your talents are amazing!
- *Thank you to Maureen Engelhard for her support and “compassion” for the Engelhard fund.



Parish News Continued

MORE "GOD'S WORK OUR HANDS" PICTURES



A Closer Look at the Bible – Pastor Jira Albers

Luke 15:1-32

(This is the parable about the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost sons. Yes, I intended to say “parable” in the singular. Take note.)

Go ahead and grab your Bibles and read through Luke 15:1-32. The text of the Bible stories would take up over half of this page, so I am having you crack open your Bibles the old fashioned way. Since our culture is focused in various ways on basic issues of sin, law breaking, and forgiveness I thought that these parables might be instructive as we think through issues such as asylum seeking, immigration, sexual impropriety of public figures, white collar crime, petty crime, and other issues that have to do with sin, forgiveness, and mercy.

Did you read the Bible stories yet? If you did you would see that there seem to be three parables about lost things right in a row. You will also notice that the first two stories are almost the same in structure, but the third is different. This has caused many people to separate out the first two stories from the third, but this would be a mistake. They are intended to be read together because Jesus appears to think they are all part of the same parable. We know this because Luke (an evangelist who did not know Jesus but tries his best to put together the stories of Jesus and his apostles) introduces the entire set of stories with this introduction, “*Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. ²And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, ‘This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.’ ³So he told them this parable:*” Not only does this introduction tell us that all of the following stories are one parable and are to be considered together (“*So he told them this parable:*”), but the very start of the parable itself tells us how we are to read it. In Luke 15:4 Jesus says, “*Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it.*” Did you notice that Jesus tells you who you are when you consider the parable? Look again. Jesus says that you are the one who has the sheep. Likewise then, you are the woman who lost the coin, and you are also the guy who lost his sons. “Lost his sons?” you say. In the plural? Yes, we will get to that in a minute. Most preachers will say that the shepherd, the woman, and the father are like God. I suppose that is an OK interpretation for the first two parables (I have preached in that way many times), after-all we know from other places in scripture that God does not lose us (John 10:28). However, in the third parable the gracious father, who remembers the son who wanders off, forgets the other son who is at home. Does that mean that God sometimes forgets us? Do you see the problem with the interpretation that the father is God? But, if we read closely, we see that Jesus explicitly states that it is “we” who are the shepherd, the woman, and the father. This is a story about discipleship.

When the shepherd goes and looks for the sheep that has wandered, Jesus asks which of us would not leave the 99 sheep in order to go find the one. Since we know the end of the story already, we assume the answer is “everyone would go look for the lost sheep.” However, that is not the obvious response. Actually, most people probably would not put the 99 at risk for just one. Finding the one lost sheep is a surprising amount of grace that the shepherd shows. Maybe, we should have that sort of grace as one of Jesus’ disciples? I think that is the correct takeaway. Just to confirm our suspicions though we have a story of a woman who searches and searches for a drachma (the coin that the woman lost). It is worth a day’s wage (about \$58 in today’s minimum wage), and certainly we would search for that and celebrate when found. Few would drop a \$50 bill and say, “Oh, well.” And, most certainly, we would yearn for and keep our eyes to the horizon to find a wayward son who suddenly left the family. In this way, all three stories are parallel (they are the same structure). Something considered valuable is lost, then it is found, and then there is a celebration (there is even celebration in heaven when the lost is found). The stories would appear to have the structure: same, same, and same. But, the third story, unexpectedly, continues to tell about another son who we have not yet heard about. This structure of same, same, different is a conventional way to tell stories. The main point is always in the third story where the unexpected twist unfolds. The unexpected twist here is that there was a son who was forgotten. The shepherd remembered everyone, the woman remembered everyone, but the father forgets one. Did you notice that the father throws a party for the wayward son who returns and the servants are even invited to the party? So, why was the older son not invited? Why was he still out in the field? The fact is that the older son was forgotten. And, what happens when someone is forgotten...when someone is lost but not found? Anger. Hatred. Resentment. Trouble. The father tries to make amends, as he should, and explains that the lost must be welcomed back, but the lesson is as much for him as it is for the eldest son. Losing a wayward son to sin is not the only way to lose someone. Sometimes people are lost because of the hardness of their hearts (like the Pharisees?). The lesson is clear. Neither is to be forgotten. Both deserve attention, mercy, and forgiveness. And, if we forget, trouble will start.

October 2019 Birthdays and Anniversaries

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1 Eric Thomason Lanny & Kim God	2	3 Korrie Kunkle	4 Donald Feusner Alan Seaberg, Jr.	5 Allie Champluvier Miranda Wulff Kristen Zukerman
6	7	8	9 .l	10 Ron & Ruth Russell	11 Ed Grant	12 Marian Feathers Merlin Horn Merlin & Barbara Horn
13 Elizabeth Benninger Matthew & Brianna Brimmer	14	15 Nathan Chilson Carol Cunfer	16 Kristy Feusner	17	18 Anita Bennett	19 Ed & Joyce Grant
20 Bryan Champluvier	21 Bella Grace Clark	22	23	24	25	26
27 Rose Renninger David & Sharon Weed	28	29	30	31 Jessamine Manchester		

November 2019 Birthdays and Anniversaries

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2 Larry & Maurine Gehring
3	4 Bonnie Stoudt Johnson	5 Elisha Troup	6 Sven Thomason	7 Landyn Brimmer	8	9
10	11 Ron Allis	12	13	14 Cindy Estelle	15 Carol Zukerman	16 Paul & Agnes Cook Harold & Rose Renninger
17 Thomas Lineberry	18 Peter Hart	19 Larry Gehring	20 Aaron Albers Nichole Albers	21	22	23 Duane Carrington Jasmine K. Brown
24 Jan & Laurie Kapson	25 Pastor Jira Albers	26	27 Michael Dunn Maureen Engelhard	28 Trinity Pugh	29 Bob Fleck Jim Smith Skylar Yoder	30

October 2019 Meetings and Events

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1 No Bible Study	2	3	4	5 Hall Reserved 12-5:30 pm
6 Recognition Day 1:00 pm Book Club	7	8 No Bible Study 10:00 am V. Guild	9	10	11	12
13 Baptism	14	15 9:00 am Bible Study	16	17	18	19
20 Temple Talks	21	22 9:00 am Bible Study	23	24	25 FALL BAZAAR 10:00- 2:00 pm	26 Wysox Church Gospel
27 REFORMATION -Ethnic dish to pass	28 6:30 pm Council Meeting	29 9:00 am Bible Study	30	31 		

November 2019 Meetings and Events

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3 ALL SAINTS DAY	4	5 ELECTION DAY No Bible Study	6	7	8	9
10 Consecration Sunday Honor Veterans	11	12 No Bible Study 10:00 am V. Guild	13	14	15	16
17 CHILD'S FAITH	18	19 9:00 am Bible Study 11:00 am W/P meeting	20	21 	22	23
24 CHRIST THE KING	25 6:30 pm Council	26 9:00 am Bible Study	27	28	29	30

SYNOD NEWS

Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA

Bishop Zeiser Visits Germany



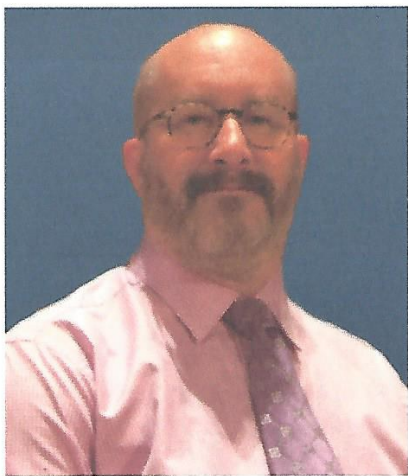
For eight days in August, Bishop Samuel Zeiser visited our companion synod, the Löbau-Zittau district of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Saxony. After his arrival in Dresden and before his visit to the church district, Bishop Zeiser preached in Kreuzkirche (Holy Cross Lutheran Church) as part of a sermon series "Europe and the churches." He was preceded by preachers from the Czech Republic and Russia. Bishop Zeiser spoke about ecumenical relationships in our Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod. After the service he answered questions from members of the congregation.

Bishop Zeiser then spent several days visiting with pastors and congregations from our companion synod. He valued this opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of their history, ministries, and challenges. A special treat was meeting with Bishop Carsten Rentzing and Friedemann Oehme, the adviser for ecumenical relations in the Landeskirchenamt, Oberkirchenrat. During their trip on a Saxon steamship they not only enjoyed the beauties of the Elbe Valley, but also engaged in meaningful discussions about ecumenical cooperation and the current situation in the United States.



Another highlight was a visit to Herrenhut, the home of Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf and the Moravian church, where Bishop Zeiser toured the brand new Zinzendorf School (similar to our middle schools). The people there (in the former East Germany) were extremely proud both of this new school and an older one for developmentally challenged children located across the street.

Eric Gombert Joins Synod Support Staff



Eric Gombert has joined the team at the Synod Office as Finance Administrator/Bookkeeper having spent many years processing payroll, accounts payable, and accounts receivable while working for companies, churches, and even for his Homeowner's Association.

Eric was born and raised in the Lehigh Valley, graduated from Whitehall High School, and attended St. John's Lutheran in Whitehall. He is currently also the Cantor (music director) at St. John's Lutheran in Allentown, and a member of the board and the finance committee of the Lehigh Valley Chapter of the American Guild of Organists.

Eric and his husband, Matthew, enjoy spending time with their Great Dane, organic gardening, and roasting their own coffee.

Outdoor Contemporary Worship



On Sunday, August 18, five Lutheran churches (St. Paul, Mountaintop; St. John, Nanticoke; St. Mark Pond Hill; St. John, St. John's; and St. Luke, Freeland) gathered for an Outdoor Contemporary worship service, followed by a church picnic with all the trimmings.

The event was hosted by St. Paul's in Mountaintop. Steve Perillo and the Followers Band provided the music, and Pastor Michele Kaufman led the worship.

Last year the Nanticoke parish invited St. Paul to join them for an outdoor worship event. This year the invitation was

extended to St. Luke and St. John, and was tagged as "Lutheran Day." Even with 90+ degree temperatures, about 135 people came together for the worship, food, and fellowship. The band continued to entertain throughout the afternoon.

Pr. Kaufman concluded the sermon by saying: "If there is an alternative reason for our gathering today, it is to build bridges that we might work together and support one another in the future. We need to be less defensive and more cooperative. The forces in this world may be working to tear us apart, but Christ is the thread that binds us together; he calls us to be one. Working together, consider what we can accomplish."

A fall event is currently being discussed.



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View the full color edition online at <http://nepasynod.org>.

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Serving us in worship:

The Rev. Jira A. Albers, presiding minister

Altar Guild–

October—Thelma Allis

November-Maureen Engelhard

October 6—The Seventeenth Sunday After Pentecost

Acolyte– Emily Chilson
Lector– Dave Estelle
Communion Assistant– Dave Estelle
Ushers– Ron & Ruth Russell
Children’s Church– Maureen Engelhard
Counters–

October 13—The Eighteenth Sunday After Pentecost

Acolyte– Kynlee Kunkle
Lector– Bill Serfass
Communion Assistant– Bill Serfass
Ushers– Paul & Aggi Cook
Children’s Church-Rebecca Hodgdon
Counters– Maureen Engelhard

October 20—The Nineteenth Sunday After Pentecost

Acolyte– Abby O’Connor
Lector– Joe Snyder
Communion Assistant– Cindy Estelle
Ushers–Janet Seaberg and Thelma Allis
Children’s Church– Cindy Estelle
Counters– Maureen Engelhard

October 27—Reformation Sunday

Acolyte– Delaney Carrington
Lector– Ron Cunfer
Communion Assistant– Maureen Engelhard
Ushers– Lois & Duane Carrington
Children’s Church– Chris Griffith
Counters– Doreen Secor

November 3– All Saints Sunday

Acolyte– Emily Chilson
Lector– Cindy Estelle
Communion Assistant– Cindy Estelle
Ushers– Ron and Ruth Russell
Children’s Church– Maureen Engelhard
Counters-Doreen Secor

November 10—Twenty-second Sunday After Pentecost

Acolyte– Jennifer Kaniuka
Lector– Bill Serfass
Communion Assistant– Bill Serfass
Ushers– Paul and Aggi Cook
Children’s Church– Rebecca Hodgdon
Counters– Maureen Engelhard

November 17—Twenty-third Sunday After Pentecost

Acolyte– Delaney Carrington
Lector– Bree Carrington
Communion Assistant– Dave Estelle
Ushers– Sue Alexander and Joyce Detharidge
Children’s Church– Cindy Estelle
Counters-

November 24-Christ the King Sunday

Acolyte– Kynlee Kunkle
Lector– Ron Cunfer
Communion Assistant– Maureen Engelhard
Ushers– Lois and Duane Carrington
Children’s Church- Chris Griffith
Counters– Lois Carrington

Trinity Lutheran Church
908 South Main Street
Towanda PA 18848

TRINITY TRUMPETER

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER

“Challenged to witness and share Christ’s love with all”

Sunday Morning Schedule
Service of Holy Communion at 9:30 AM

Spreading Christ’s word of peace to all through service.

