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# Trinity Messenger

October 2022 Issue 2

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*Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. 1  
Thess. 5:18*

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## Pastor's Letter

My understanding of stewardship, and the importance it has had in deepening my relationship with God, began when I was called, prior to attending seminary, to serve as a member of church council at the Lutheran congregation with which I was then associated. While serving on council the role of stewardship team chair fell into my lap, because no one else on council wanted to touch stewardship with a ten foot pole for fear of having to speak about money in the church.

As I shared recently in a sermon, I approached this challenge as a calling to learn what stewardship was and why it is such an important aspect of not only congregational life but our individual spiritual life as well. So, I read several books about stewardship, spoke to my pastor at the time, and attended a workshop the synod was offering regarding a new stewardship program that was being encouraged. Suffice it to say, I came away from that workshop and my research excited about where the Spirit was leading me, and I began leading a one-person committee, which thankfully soon became two people when the council president took pity on me after hearing all that the program entailed.

An integral part of the program was having someone outside the congregation attend worship, on the Sunday when the congregation members would make their financial commitments for the coming year and speak about the nature of his or her stewardship. The gentleman, who was a longtime friend of the council president, shared with us stories about a recent mission trip he took to Africa, during which he experienced the extreme generosity displayed by members of a small congregation in a tiny village in the middle of nowhere. These church members faithfully travelled each Sunday morning to worship, many of them beginning their walk or bike ride to the

village early in the morning before it was even light outside. It was the only church for many miles, and the trip for many was long, but they made the trip each week without complaint. They were grateful they had a community where they could gather with other faithful people and responded with gratitude for how generous God had and continued to be to them and their community. In response to this, they gave abundantly back to God, not because they possessed great material wealth and could afford to so, but rather because they recognized that all they had, very little in comparison to what many of us have, was an ongoing gift from God. They recognized the abundance God had given them, and their faith and trust in God's ability to provide for them moved them to do so.

To say the least, I was moved and inspired in hearing these true stories of faithful stewardship by persons, fellow Christians, who placed their trust entirely in God. They knew without question that God would sustain them if they chose to take a risk and give back abundantly to God's church and its ministries.

The gentleman who spoke in worship that morning shared these stories at the two services we had that day. By the end of the first service, I was inspired to the point where I chose to give 10% of my annual income back to God's church to support and help grow its ministries; and, by the end of the second service, the Spirit had moved me even further, and I ended up committing 12% of my income to the important work God had already put into motion, which was yet unknown to me or the congregation.

Later that day, the reality of the Spirit-filled choice I had made to give 12% of my annual income hit me like a ton of bricks. I began to worry and thought to myself, "Are you crazy! You can't afford that." At the time, I was in my twenties and was not making much money at the position I had with a non-profit organization. But after taking many deep breaths and significant prayer to quell my anxiety, I remembered those stories I had heard that morning about faithful people, who possessed far less than I did, who took a risk on God's goodness and gave back to the God who loved them and who unceasingly sustained them in their life. So, I promised myself as they likely had to remain faithful to God, as God was to me, and to my commitment and gave weekly the 12%. Believe me, throughout that year there were a few moments of concern, but those faithful Christians I had heard about were often on my mind and kept going.

Surprisingly, at the end of that year, I looked back at my life and realized that I had lacked nothing during that year. I still had a roof over my head, food on my table, clothes on my back, a car filled with gas, and all my bills were paid on time. I had everything I needed and did not have to do without. God had responded to my faithfulness with faithfulness because that is what God does. That is the God our God is, if we are willing to trust and walk in faith.

This experience, early in my faith journey, gifted me with the most poignant lesson about the nature of God and my/our relationship with God. The covenant God made with God's people thousands of years ago is true, unfading, and continues in these modern times. God loves us, will always be there to sustain us, and asks only for us to place our trust in him.

I invite each of us to seriously consider all the ways God has and continues to work on our behalf in our daily lives. God continues to abundantly provide us with blessings, as individuals, as members of a family, and as stewards of our faith community. God has

given us much and continues to do so, because God has a plan for each of us and for Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. No doubt, God is already at work making those yet unknown plans on our behalf for us to embrace and make realities of them. For that to happen, Holy Trinity needs our continued financial support and commitment so God's plans can become reality. Please take time during the next few weeks to faithfully consider how you will support the important, life-giving work that lies ahead for us. God has blessed each of us generously, so that we in return would give back generously in His holy name. Let us take seriously how we will determine what our weekly, monthly, or quarterly offering will be and how we will share with God's church and its ministries the many gifts God has made possible in our lives.

Faithfully yours,  
**Pastor Mark**

## This Week At Holy Trinity: Oct. 9-15

<b>Sunday, October 9</b>	
9:00am	Sunday Worship
10:00am	Adult Forum
10:00am	Coffee Hour After Worship
<b>Monday, October 10</b>	
10:00am	Women's Prayer Group
6:30pm	Yoga
<b>Tuesday, October 11</b>	
3:30pm	Trini Mini
7:00pm	Bell Choir
7:00pm	Finance Committee
8:00pm	Executive Council
<b>Wednesday, October 12</b>	
6:00pm	Bell Ensemble
6:30pm	Mazon: Middle & High School
6:45pm	Senior Choir Rehearsal
<b>Thursday, October 13</b>	
3:30pm	Trini Mini
7:00pm	Yoga
7:00pm	Thursday Worship
7:30pm	Council Meeting
<b>Saturday, October 15</b>	
7:30am	Walking Group

[View This Month's Calendar Here](#)

## Office Hours: October 10-14

We recommend you call the office prior to stopping in to ensure hours have not changed.

Day	Sue	Pastor
Monday	OFF	9:00AM- 12:30PM
Tuesday	OFF	9:00AM- 12:30PM
Wednesday	OFF	9AM - 12:30PM
Thursday	OFF	9:30AM- 12:30PM
Friday	OFF	OFF



### Up Up and Away

Check out our Trini Mini volunteers and kids with their completed sticker Hot Air Balloon!

## More Info For You



Flu Vaccine Clinic

### **Facebook/Instagram Help**

Do you use Facebook or Instagram? Would you be willing to assist in creating content for our Church's social media? Please contact Natale Benigno if you are able to help.

### **Donation Statements**

Thank you for your contributions for this year to date for Holy Trinity's ministries. Following Finance Committee policy, a summary of recorded donations through September is made available each year to contributors. Donation Statements have been sent via email to members. For people who do not have email addresses, statements have been printed and placed on a table in the gathering area. Contact the church office if you would like your statement mailed to you or if you have a question about your Donation Statement.

Please join us for fun, food, and fellowship with **Friday Night Dinners**. The next one is planned to be held Friday, October 7 at 6PM.

The sign up will be available in the gathering area. All are welcome, singles, couples, & friends, for this event, with every first Friday of the month thereafter. A sign-up sheet with more information will be available in the back of the church. Please come out and support this fellowship.

### **THE ADULT (all adults are welcome) LUNCH**

**BUNCH** will be going to Bright's Restaurant on October 9. We will meet downstairs after the liturgy. Reservations can be made by calling Cheryl Plummer at 717-625-3187 by October 8.

There will be a flu vaccine clinic at Holy Trinity on Sunday, October 16 after worship. Tom Smith will be administering the vaccine, and you will need to bring your insurance information with you. There is a sign-up sheet in the Gathering Area for you to register. If you have not yet received your vaccine, consider getting it that morning to keep yourself safe during the approaching flu season.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Donna Nace no longer has a land line. Here only phone number is: 717-669-7831

### **Attendance for September:**

September 4: 76  
September 11: 79  
September 18: 71  
September 25: 74

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**EPHRATA AREA SOCIAL SERVICES** is in dire need of men's shoes. Gently used **CASUAL** shoes (sneakers, slip ons---NO dress shoes). If you have any shoes to donate, please put them in the box by the wishing well on the first floor.





## *Notes of* **THANKS**

Dear Holy Trinity,

Thank you for all of your concern...your cards, flowers, prayers after the sudden death of my father. I really appreciate everyone's thoughtfulness.

Sincerely, Sue Johns

The officers and members of the Ephrata Pioneer Fire Co. would like to graciously thank you for your contribution to our 2022 Fund Drive. Your contribution does not go unnoticed and will be used to help provide life saving equipment for our members to ensure the residents of Ephrata Borough and Township are protected 24/7/365 days a year. Again, thank you from all of us at EPFC!

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Looking for more information not included in this week's newsletter?

Be sure to checkout our website!

***Thanks for reading! Have a great week ahead!***

