



My Dear Fellow Travelers,

Corrie ten Boom once said: *Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God.* In the light of that statement, read the following history of this amazing Christian woman. For her efforts to hide Jews from arrest and deportation during the German occupation of the Netherlands, Corrie ten Boom (1892-1983) received recognition from the Yad Vashem Remembrance Authority as one of the "Righteous Among the Nations" on December 12, 1967. In resisting Nazi persecution, ten Boom acted in concert with her Christian beliefs, her family experience, and the Dutch resistance. Her defiance led to imprisonment, internment in a concentration camp, and loss of family members who died from maltreatment while in German custody.

None of us can relate to our family and friends dying in concentration camps. But we have all had journeys that have taken us through rough times as well as times of great meaning and joy. For us Christians, Corrie's advice could never have been so timely: *Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God.*

I wrote the first half of my article on Wednesday, March 20. I am completing this article the afternoon of Palm Sunday, March 24. We not only began Holy Week, we also called Rev. Ryan Henkel to be our new Lead Pastor. Now, we wait. Pastor Henkel has 2 weeks to accept or reject the call. The great majority of the church is praying he will answer in the affirmative! Corrie ten Boom's advice is so very relevant. *Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God.*

As I conclude my last Herald article I do so with a grateful heart and hopeful spirit. My last Sunday with you will be April 28. I am so very grateful for your love and support. Anne and I have felt this from the first day I started our interim time with you. We now look forward to my retirement period. We pray for continued good health as we enter this new phase of our lives.

My prayer is that the Lord will bless Holy Trinity with vision, ministry focus and a deep desire to serve Jesus in and through our church. Please allow St. Paul's words to become my words of encouragement as you face a new future. Philippians 1:6 (ESV) ***And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.***

The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make his face to shine upon you and give you peace.  
**Pastor Tom**

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**PS** - On April 21, I will be preaching at the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our home congregation, Holy Trinity Lutheran in Troutman, NC. Cody Carpenter will be preaching in my stead.

## *Let's Celebrate Pastor Tom!*

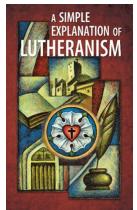
*We have been truly blessed by Pastor Tom's leadership and ministry over the past (almost) two years. Since his last Sunday as our Intentional Interim Pastor is April 28, let's come together for dinner and fellowship to enjoy an evening celebrating him.*

*Please mark off the evening of Saturday, April 27 for this special event. More details to come.*

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## **NEW MEMBER AND REFRESHER COURSE CONTINUES IN APRIL**

During the Sunday School hour, Pastor Tom will continue to offer a basic New Member and Refresher course. The topics will be the following: Who are Lutherans and what is the Lutheran Church?, A complete study of Lutheran liturgy, basic Lutheran Theology, a short history of the Reformer Martin Luther, and The Seasons of the Church Year.



*All are welcome to come to the PLC for this learning experience.*




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## **SONSHINERS TO TOUR THE SCHIELE MUSEUM** *Tuesday, April 9 - 10:30 a.m.*

Each year hundreds of North and South Carolinians come to Gastonia to tour the Schiele Museum of Natural History, a local museum whose artistry, scientific displays, and planetarium shows get rave reviews. Although it will not be a first time visit for most, the SONshiners will meet at and tour the museum at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, April 9. Former Holy Trinity disciple Hugh Sherrill, with the assistance of James Green, will be guiding the group. Lunch will follow at Jackson's Cafeteria.

Please come and bring a guest. You are reminded that SONshiners is intergenerational and is open to all. No physical is required.

## A WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT

These are strange times at Holy Trinity. They have been for a while now. We're tired, and maybe even in a bit of a rut. We see dwindling numbers, it's getting harder to find volunteers, and the people who *do* volunteer are worn out. We've had transition after transition in staffing. I could go on.

But, lest we forget to see the joy in all this...

Lives are still being changed. Every few days, it seems, I speak with different people from the church who share with me how God is at work in their lives. We have young people coming to youth group who have expressed interest in learning more about the faith, and even opening conversations about Baptism. We are partnering with more and more ministry organizations that serve the community around us. Our youth are becoming more and more outgoing in articulating the faith, even leading Bible studies with their peers. Our Pub Theology has yielded lots of positive interaction with the community at-large, and people are starting to ask questions about the faith.

Friends, the Lord God is at work among us. This parish has had its share of challenges. We don't have the numbers we once did, and maybe we never will. But the Lord isn't after numbers. He's after faithfulness. Let's not lose sight of the main things: here among us, the Word is preached, the Sacraments are rightly administered, and the good Lord is still calling people to Him. Let us rejoice this Eastertide and be glad in what the Lord is doing and will continue to do here.

I invite your continued prayers for those who are asking questions about the faith, for the baptized who are growing in the faith, and for our parish to remain a faithful signpost, pointing people to the Kingdom of God.

**Your fellow laborer in the Lord's vineyard,**  
*Cody Carpenter*



**VETERANS' LUNCH ON THE 4TH TUESDAY**  
*April 23*

**Soup and Sandwich**  
**11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.**  
**PLC**

**All Veterans are welcome!**



## APRIL IS CAM MONTH AT HOLY TRINITY

Holy Trinity Disciples,

April is our Crisis Assistance Ministry supply month focused mostly on collecting food for distribution at their facility in Gastonia. Holy Trinity has always delivered generously to this collection effort. Most of you are probably aware of their service, but for those who are not, this is their Mission Statement:

Crisis Assistance Ministry is a cooperative ministry of the greater Gastonia faith community. By providing direct emergency assistance through collaboration with other community resources, CAM assists those facing financial crisis or struggling with the burden of poverty. Established in 1976, CAM provides emergency assistance with food, necessary utilities, and rent/mortgage to low-income households in the greater Gastonia community. CAM serves about one-half of Gaston County, including those residing inside Gastonia city limits and rural areas surrounding the city limits. At this time, CAM does not provide assistance to residents in other cities/towns in Gaston County.

Holy Trinity will be collecting **pre-packaged, “shelf stable” food, and hygiene products** that we will deliver to their facility to be distributed in the community throughout the month of April. They will certainly, happily accept any donations, but we are including a list of some “much needed items” that they have requested.

### The biggest needs are:

Toilet paper	Paper towels
Dish detergent	Toothbrushes
Laundry detergent	Toothpaste
Soap	Deodorant
Shampoo	

**Thank you all in advance for your generous spirit and continued blessings to you all!**

**Bill & Charlotte Eaker**  
**Holy Trinity CAM Coordinators**



**YORK CHESTER MIDDLE SCHOOL NEEDS**  
*Collection in April 2024*

Many of you may remember that HTLC Disciples used to donate 2-3 items a month for the ongoing needs of our neighbors at York Chester Middle School. York Chester has reached out to us with quite a list of needs.

**The exhaustive list is posted by the YC Collection box in the PLC hallway.** For the **Month of April**, we would like to collect:

**Expo Markers and Pencils**  
**Deodorant**  
**Women's sanitary napkins**

ANY ITEM from the list can be donated at any time. With a student population of 458, 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> graders, it is unlikely Holy Trinity can ever out give on any of the requested items. But boy, let's try! Pick a favorite thing you would like to give.

Please remember that any clothing item is for Youth. Ages 11-14 years old . Youth sizes XXS to XL .

Thank you again for your loving spirit and generous support.

**In Christ,**  
**Diane George**  
**Holy Trinity York Chester Contact**



**UPDATE ON FEBRUARY "GIVE FROM THE HEART" BLOOD DRIVE**

At our February blood drive we asked you to "Give from the heart." Well, you did that, because we **provided 46 pints of blood to the American Red Cross.**

Giving blood helps ensure that blood is there when it's needed. Most of us don't think that we will ever need blood, but you never know. "Blood is something money can't buy. It's something that only one person can give another." So, please join us for our **next blood drive on Monday, June 24 from 2:00 - 6:30 p.m.**



Our ministry partner, Displaced Roses, serves the entire Gaston County homeless population and works with other community organizations to meet their needs. Services include meal distribution, crisis response, furnishing "Forever" homes, dignity in death and street outreach.

Each of these services requires donated supplies that we as individuals and a congregation can provide. Your donations will be collected at Holy Trinity in the donation corner. **The donation corner is located at the red double doors adjacent to the connector hallway and PLC.** Labeled baskets on shelves are provided for your convenience for "**recurring**" (R)items. "**One-time**"(O) items should be placed in the larger receptacles. A list of supplies will be updated as needed each month in the Herald and weekly in the bulletin.

#### **Immediate needs (listed in priority order)**

- Nail Clippers (R)
- Men's Deodorant (R)
- Men's Underwear - Boxer Briefs only (Medium to Large) (R)
- Laundry Detergent (R)
- Women's Sports Bras (assorted sizes) (R)
- Casual Men's Clothing (Medium to X-Large in tops and sweatpants) (R)
- Men's Jeans (28" waist to 34" waist) (R)
- Women's underwear (sizes 4,5, and 6) (R)
- Single Serve Snacks (salty and sweet) (R)
- Can Sodas (R)
- Travel Size **Alcohol Free** mouthwash (R)
- Men's Tennis Shoes (R)
- Men's disposable razors (R)
- Batteries (AAA, AA) (R)
- Chapstick (R)
- Hangers (O)
- #4 rolling wardrobe racks (O)
- #12 Flexible laundry baskets (O)
- Computer Desk and Chair (O)
- Tote bags (R)

Displaced Roses needs volunteers on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday each week. Please contact Danielle Webb (828-773-2815) for volunteer opportunities. Visit <http://www.DisplacedRoses.com> for more information and like their Facebook page.



## YORK CHESTER MIDDLE SCHOOL MENTORING PROGRAM

*This article appeared in March's Herald, but is running again in case anyone has not had an opportunity to read and consider.*

Gaston County School System's mentoring program began in 1994 and has had many success stories over the years. York Chester has voiced gratitude many times over for all the disciples of Holy Trinity have done and continue to do for the school and its students. In addition to the tangible needs they have voiced a need for mentors.

**What does a mentor do?** A mentor is someone who has good listening skills and is willing to invest 40 minutes a week with a student. Sharing time together, reading a book together, doing a fun activity together, talking, and building a relationship with the student. The time spent is not focused on academia, yet the result of having a positive and encouraging relationship with the student has a direct impact on students' success in the classroom, graduation, secondary education, and life in general. You make a difference. How wonderful is that?

**What is involved in making a mentoring commitment?** The program asks that a mentor commit to one year of mentoring with a student. This typically is a weekly visit of 40 minutes and takes place during the school day on the school grounds. Applications can be made online [gastonschool-volunteers.com](http://gastonschool-volunteers.com). A background check and a one-hour training and orientation class are required.

**Before I commit how can I learn more?** Please visit the website , watch a very short video ( Our Mentoring Program) by Valerie Yatko, Director of Business and Community Partnerships [business-partnerships@gaston.k12.nc.us](mailto:business-partnerships@gaston.k12.nc.us) You may also call Valerie at 704-866-6329. You also are invited to join an orientation meeting just to see if it is a perfect fit for you.

**You may possibly be the missing piece to a future success story!**

**Knowing, Loving and Sharing Christ together with you,  
Diane George**



## NALC DISASTER RESPONSE

### *Mary Bates With The Latest (NALC Disaster Response Coordinator)*

“March 24, 2024 - It was a festive beginning to Holy Week this morning at Zion. All generations came together today to assemble 100 flood buckets for NALC Disaster Response at Zion Lutheran Church, Pittsburgh, PA. These will be sent to flood and tornado victims.”

“March 4, 2024 - Delivery number 3 is happening today for the Texas wildfires, 60 counties are declared for the largest wildfire in Texas history, over 1 million acres, over 1700 square miles. Your help and support is needed and so very appreciated by the communities that we are now serving in Texas and Oklahoma. Our Savior Lutheran, Three Rivers Texas is getting kitchen kits and flood buckets ready to go to the warehouse at Rosenberg, plus Tractor Supply gift cards. Tractor trailers of hay are also being sent to the panhandle.”

“February, 2024 - NALC Disaster Response is deploying to Clarksville, TN next week to coordinate the repair/rebuilding efforts of our first volunteer team in 2024: River’s Edge Ministries - thank you Jesus for awesome volunteers! Your help is needed: please take part in NALC Disaster Response efforts by collecting and donating gift cards to purchase building supplies: mail to NALC Disaster Response, 16500 Noble Avenue, Caldwell, Ohio 43724. God bless.”

“Prayers for those flooding in California. Your help is needed when we send a truck of emergency relief supplies, see our website for more information. Relief workers and supplies were also sent to Ohio.”

**As you can see, NALC Disaster Response has already been very busy in 2024.**

**Judy Zander  
Council Rep. Outreach**

Zion Lutheran Church, Pittsburgh, PA







## WOMEN'S MINISTRY NEWS FOR APRIL

The **Donation Corner** is being revamped thanks to Barbara Kies and others. The purple and white baskets are there to be filled with items from the Displaced Roses wish list. Also, containers are still available for used eyeglasses and aluminum pop tabs. The tabs are easily acquired by saving them as they are removed from aluminum cans. The tabs are taken to the Ronald McDonald House that receives a check when the tabs are sold. The DeFreitas family knows first hand the benefits of a Ronald McDonald House as they stayed at one during Ryan's first brain surgery.




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**Mark your calendars for these two upcoming dates:**

**April 16 at 6:30 for Girls Night Out at Cheddars** in Gastonia, no reservations needed for an evening of food and fellowship with other Holy Trinity disciples and friends.

**October 19 - Holy Trinity will be hosting the Carolinas Lutheran Women's convocation.** More information will be shared as the time gets closer. All Holy Trinity women will be encouraged to attend, and many will be needed to assist in preparation.

**The HT Women's Ministry Team**

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### April Circle Meetings

This is a time of fellowship, snacks, a program led by a Circle member and service projects that are for Holy Trinity Disciples and people in the community. These groups are always open to new members. **Please join us!**

**Circle of Patience:**      **Sunday, April 7**      **After 11:00 Worship Walker Lounge**  
**Bring your lunch. Dessert and drinks will be provided.**  
 Program:            Harriett Lethermon  
 Hostesses:        Pepie Jones, Barb Kies, Frankie Lewis

**Circle of Goodness:**    **Thursday, April 11**      **10:00 a.m.**      **PLC Room 25**  
 Program:            Pepie Jones  
 Hostess:            Anna Currie  
 Card Ministry:    Barb Kies

## FAMILY MINISTRIES

### Youth Ministry Schedule for April



- April 7:** Easter cookout and bonfire 4:45 - 7:30 p.m.  
Please send a side dish and/or a drink to share. Meat and dessert will be provided.
- April 14:** Youth Group 5:00 - 7:30 p.m.
- April 21:** Youth Group 5:00 - 7:30 p.m.  
Family trip to Tony's Ice Cream at 7:00 p.m.
- April 26:** Spring Lock-in 6:00 p.m. - 10:00 a.m. the following day.  
Special activities TBA  
Please plan to send \$15-20 to cover activities. (Assistance available, if needed.)
- April 28:** Youth Group 5:00 - 7:30 p.m.

### Children's Ministry Schedule for March



- April 14:** Family trip to George Poston Park 1:00 p.m. - ?  
Either meet at the park itself or caravan after 11:00 service.  
Bring a bagged lunch!
- April 20:** Parents Morning Out 8:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

### Youth Group Art Show

We have a good number of artists in our youth group! Sometime during the month of May, we will host an art show where our youth can show off their artwork. Look for more information soon!



*Artwork by  
Katie Radermacher*

## SOLID ROCK DAY CAMP

Solid Rock Day Camp is a ministry of the Carolinas Mission Region that provides a high quality, Christian day camp experience for children in rising Kindergarten through rising 6<sup>th</sup> grade.



Camp programs are led by faithful, college-age counselors who come to your church to lead camp activities and build relationships with your campers. Activities include worship and music, games, age-appropriate Bible study, crafts, special activities, onsite field trips, and more!

**WHEN: July 7-12, 2024**

**TIME: 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. M-Th, Friday 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

**AGES: Rising K through Rising 6th**

**COST: \$100/per child**

Registration opened **February 25**. Payment is due by the first day of camp. (Checks can be made payable to the Carolinas Mission Region.) **Scholarships are available!** Speak to your pastor for more information on financial assistance.

**Day Camp will be hosted at Antioch Lutheran Church located at**  
330 Old NC 277 Loop Road  
Dallas, NC 28034

## HOLY TRINITY IS SO BLESSED!

The week of March 3 was a busy week at Holy Trinity. Moving more deeply into the season of Lent, we continued our journey to the cross with worship on Sunday, busy preparations for the Community Lenten Luncheon Monday and Tuesday, and completing and serving lunch to ninety parishioners from the community on Wednesday. We continued with soup and sandwich on Wednesday night with service following.



Not skipping a beat, on Thursday we celebrated the life of one of our oldest and dearest disciples, Bob Frye, and prepared a condolence meal for eighty of his family and close friends. On Saturday from Noon - 4:00 p.m., Holy Trinity hosted a Council and Call Committee luncheon, a tour of our facilities, and a meet and greet with Pastor Ryan, our pastoral candidate from Minnesota while holding a Chrismon workshop with Designer Melonie Rufty Beaver teaching three of her new patterns in another area of the PLC. We did all of this, while anticipating Pastor Ryan's first trial pastoral visit to our services on Sunday. Wow! What a week!

Just how did we do it? Holy Trinity is so blessed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit, loving and helping hands, the use of our spiritual fruits, and especially, our love for our risen Savior and His sheep. There were so many planners, helpers, doers, and supporters. There is no reason to list you by name; God knows you by your knowing, loving, and sharing Him here at Holy Trinity in all that is done in His name.

**Janet Green**

## ENDOWMENT HIGHLIGHT

### *Home of Hope - Estonia*

The Republic of Estonia is a Baltic Sea nation whose history is rich in beautiful culture and Christendom. The Protestant Reformation had a major impact on the country and prior to WWII, 80% of her citizens were Protestant/Lutherans. That all changed with the Soviet occupation and oppression from 1940-1991.

Anti-Christian legislation during this time saw church property confiscated, work with children and youth, and the publication of Christian material banned. The Church lost two thirds of its clergy; some killed, many exiled to Siberia along with the deportation of thousands more Estonians, and 100,000 fleeing during WW2. The country, which is about the size of West Virginia, was reduced not just in numbers but in its belief in Christ. A country whose anchor and compass were once found in Christ was now adrift.

**Luther Monument  
Keila, Estonia**



**Erected 1862 -  
Destroyed 1949**

Today, the 2021 National Census shows Christian affiliation of *any kind* is only 26% of the population. Lutherans make up 11% of that number. **Home of Hope - Tartu Academy** is working to change these statistics and reclaim both their country and beyond its borders for Jesus Christ. Home of Hope ministries in Tartu, Estonia includes a Bible School, Christian Radio which reaches Estonia, Eastern Europe, and portions of Russia, and many other Christ focused, Christ driven missions.

The Endowment Fund approved a 2024 grant to partner with Home of Hope in proclaiming the Gospel of Christ and bringing the Good News once again to its people. We pray for God's continued provision for the ministry work there.

For more information, visit [www.tatest.org](http://www.tatest.org).

**We Are All Brothers and Sisters in Christ,  
The Endowment Committee**



## PROPERTY UPDATE FOR APRIL

Hey there! Just wanted to give you a quick update on the property maintenance and improvements over the past month.

- The PLC Doorbell Chime is all fixed up, so no more silent visitors!
- The church van is running smoothly after its routine maintenance.
- Our church doors are looking fresh with their new coat of paint – bright and welcoming!
- We have had roofing contractors performing work on the PLC roof to fix small water leaks - this work is ongoing and they will be adding some more **flashing** to the **PLC roof** to keep everything watertight.
- The pressure washing crew is wrapping up their initial work, and then we'll chat about any extra spots that might need a good clean.
- We're on the hunt for a trusty contractor to scope and perform work on the playground area – fingers crossed we find one soon!
- Electricians were called and the office air handler is back in action, and we've got a few lights here and there to fix up in the Sanctuary, PLC classrooms, and downstairs.
- We appreciate your patience as we fine tune the HVAC temperature settings. We're getting much closer to having the spaces at temperature settings comfortable for all!
- And lastly, we're eyeing the gas line plumbing to see if we can add another stove in the kitchen – because who doesn't love more cooking space?

**Best regards,**  
**Richard DeFreitas**  
**Council Rep. Property**



## COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

On Sunday, March 24, we voted to call Pastor Ryan Henkel as our next Lead Pastor. You may be asking . . . “Now what?”

In the hours following the congregational vote, I emailed Pastor Ryan the Call Letter and Compensation Package. That evening, Donna Allen, Call Committee Chair, and I had a nice conversation with Pastor Ryan. Because he did not want to detract from the events and importance of Holy Week, he indicated that he would take the full two weeks to make a final decision. Considering this, we should have his answer by Sunday, April 7.

From there, should he accept the Call, we anticipate he will move and assume his role with us in the first week or two of June. And, as you know, Pastor Tom's last Sunday with us is April 28. During the interim period between Pastor Tom leaving and Pastor Ryan arriving, we anticipate Cody Carpenter will assume an even greater role in leading worship and the ministries of Holy Trinity. We are so grateful to be blessed by Cody's gifts and willingness to serve in this way.

Additionally, we may have local pastors and/or our district dean, Pastor Steve King, assist with worship and blessing the bread and wine for communion.

For those who attend the 8:30am worship service, we will also have guest musicians lead the music while we interview for a new Director of Music. Thankfully, Matthew Noonan, our organist, has agreed to lead the 11:00 a.m. choir until someone is hired.

As you can see, we are in a time of transition. Please continue to serve faithfully as you are feel called and be patient with the process and with each other. As we look back, it will only be a blink of time. This is a time to show how good we are at holding each other up and encouraging others to pursue their calling in Christ.

As for me, I am grateful for each of you. When I looked out over the sanctuary on March 24, I was overwhelmed with gratitude for all of you who came to worship and participated in such an important moment in our church life. I am also grateful for our wonderful members who helped lay the groundwork for us but could not be with us in person.

**In His Service,  
Anna Houser  
2024 Council President**



## CHURCH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

### From the March 18, 2024 Regular Meeting

At the March 18 meeting of the Church Council, the following actions were taken:

- Reviewed and approved Benevolence Distributions for Q1 2024.
- Reviewed balloting procedures for upcoming Congregational Meeting and vote and appointed ballot counters.
- Discussed and approved staff hours contingency plans for pastoral transition.
- Discussed and approved hosting Solid Rock Day Camp and use of church van as needed.
- Endorsed request from St. John the Baptist Academy (biblical based homeschool co-op) to use 7 -8 classrooms on Tuesdays and Thursdays beginning August 2024.
- Approved Lead Pastor Compensation Package which falls below budgeted amount approved by Congregation in 11/2023



## SPIRITUAL GIFTS ASSESSMENT

### *Why Complete One*

In the last couple of months, you've been given the opportunity to submit a spiritual gifts assessment. You may be wondering why you should do that and how the information will be used. In answer to that question, your list of gifts is added to a spreadsheet which is available to Staff, Council members, and ministry leaders. When looking for people to serve in specific areas, this list is a good place to start.

If you have not yet submitted a spiritual assessment, please do so. You may email Anna Houser ([annaplus2girls@gmail.com](mailto:annaplus2girls@gmail.com)) with your list. **Or**, you may complete the form available in the Weekly Digest and drop it in the offering plate.

If you are seeking people to serve in a particular capacity and would like to know who might be the right people to call, reach out to Anna for the list.

For easy reference, below is a list of possible spiritual gifts:

Administration  
Service  
Music  
Knowledge

Hospitality  
Teaching  
Artistry  
Exhortation

Faith  
Leadership  
Giving

Discernment  
Evangelism  
Mercy





## HOW DO YOUR FINANCIAL GIFTS GLORIFY GOD?

*For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Matthew 6:21 NIV)*

Our Giving is an act of Worship. In light of what Christ has done for us on the cross and the amazing grace we receive, our giving should be a reflection of what our heart treasures. Our giving should be viewed as a part of our worship to the Lord. If we are just giving to mark off a line on our spiritual checklist, we are merely involved in charity and are missing out on the great joy of being a cheerful giver.

We give because God has given to us. God has given us everything (James 1:17). He gave His Son to provide for our salvation. He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in Christ (Ephesians 1:13). He “richly supplies us with all things to enjoy” (1 Timothy 6:17). Because He has given so abundantly to us, we should respond by giving generously back to Him. What is your response to those blessings God has bestowed on you?

### For those that like numbers...

Noted below we show our February 2024 offerings compared with our monthly budgeted ministry plan. Our staff and leaders continue to manage our expenditures. Our church leadership is doing their best to be good stewards of our financial resources.

	<b>Month of February 2024</b>	<b>YTD through February 2024</b>
Gifts Received:	\$37,226	\$77,960
Budget for Ministries:	\$48,533	\$97,066
Difference:	(\$11,307)	(\$19,106)
Previous Year (2023) Comparison:	\$37,655	\$73,034
Difference between 2024 and 2023:	(\$429)	\$4,926

**Thank you for your continued support of the ministries of Holy Trinity.**

**Lee Stadther  
Church Council Treasurer 2024**

# When is it a Tithe?

REV. TAYLOR RISTER-STEMPNIAK

**D**on's official title at our church was usher, but his mission was to never hand out a bulletin, never pass the plate, and never ring the bell. Not that he was bad at those things. He just preferred that someone else do them. Don rejoiced to watch eight-year-old Garrett greet people with bulletins, when his granddaughter collected the offering, and when ten-year-old Liliana yanked on the rope to ring the church bell. He taught each child old enough to show even an ounce of interest how to go about the tasks with care, faithfulness, and joy.

Don wasn't merely keeping the children busy. He was stewarding their hearts. **The children were not observers; the day they belonged was now.** Don was catechizing and ushering in the next generation of those willing to faithfully serve.

This very thing is the call given in Deuteronomy 11. God calls his people into a covenant of sacrificial love and obedience. He revealed to Israel who he is and delivered his people from slavery, showing he is a God who honors his promises and does not forget his people. In return, we are to love the Lord our God with all our heart, all our soul, and all

our might. Central in this passage is the message to teach our children to do likewise. **We love the God we serve, we rejoice, and we invite the youngest and smallest among us to love, learn, serve, and rejoice.**

It's tempting to cast stewardship as an adult topic, but it is part of worship — part of remembering with all our senses who God is and what he has done. Children who help set the altar for Holy Communion begin to understand that they, too, are gathered to God's table. Children whose voices join the choir not just sometimes but throughout the year begin to understand that they, too, are among the saints who gather around the throne of Christ. Children who welcome friends and strangers at the doors of the church begin to understand the ways baptism equips them for the Great Commission. Children who have the opportunity to give an offering at Sunday School begin to feel God's own generosity and understand what it means to return that to him. Those moments of liturgy and catechesis shape who we are and how we understand God's generosity.

By Don's own admission, it took

fifty years for him to realize the joy of giving to the church. He did give money — more than ten percent! — but it wasn't a tithe: "It might as well have been a membership fee. It hadn't hit my heart yet." Don's tithing began when he began to recognize the lessons he wrote upon the hearts of the next generation. He eventually realized that the same God who freed Israel from slavery and each of us from the bondage of sin and death was freeing him to imperfectly and enthusiastically give everything he had. **His giving became not about a percentage, but about the Lord our God, who brought us into the promised land of grace and forgiveness and invites us to receive and give the joy of participating in the justice, mercy, and faithfulness of our Lord. When that hits your heart, no matter how old you are, that's when you begin to tithe.**

We teach each other to tithe at home and away, in the morning and in the evening, in the rituals and in the life of the church. In this, our God writes his promise upon our hearts and the hearts of our children — a promise that his generosity endures from age to age.





- **The family of Jane McCarter**, mother of Nancy Faulkner and grandmother of Mary Elizabeth Mattox & A.J. Faulkner, at her death on 3/25
- **The family of Ruby “Dell” Guffey**, at her death on 3/18
- **Tess Gibbons**, in thanksgiving for the first round of test results. God is Good.
- **Samantha Bushu**, a young friend of Frankie Lewis, praise for successful heart surgery and thanksgiving for prayer
- **Geoff Schoenberg**, friend of Morayo Orija, in end-stage kidney disease. Prayers for healing or a viable donor.
- **For friends and family dealing with cancer:** Marilyn Lateulade, Lee Allen, Jackie Lybrand, Jim Siedel, Teresa Hartman, Kelly Powell, Octavia Glenn, Margo Schopper, Lauren Bryant, LeaAnn Buckwell, Bob Burluson, Jackson Hall, Tina Heracklis, Artie McGlohon, Braxton Morris, Pastor Bill White
- **Homebound:** Caroline Banker, Pinkney Froneberger, Paul Kaiser, Janie Norton, Kathy Wallace, Iris Work
- **Family and friends actively serving in the military:** Brett Boyd, Logan Cape, Eric Cooper, Mae Dodd, Josh Holland, Andrew Lambert, Luke Saylors, Liam Overby, Ryan Wallace, Jacob Lawing
- **For healthcare workers and first responders:** Chuck and Bridget Niemeyer, Beth Michaels, Melodie Garrison, Kailey Hinds, Cindy Isenhour, Lynn Ledbetter, Anna Murphy, Reggie Parlier, Jennifer Sutley, Jon Michael Brackett
- **Robin Simmons**, for her health
- **Belinda Chrzanowski**, cousin of Elizabeth & Harriet Lethermon, grieving the loss of husband, Alan Chrzanowski
- **That the world would value the dignity of all life**
- **For peace in the world and in our homes**
- **Leah Sharibu, and all the persecuted**
- **The Voice of the Martyrs**
- **The Thorstad family and all missionaries**
- **For those outside the Church**, that they may be brought to faith in Christ Jesus
- **For the youth and children of Holy Trinity, for the Holy Spirit to guide them**
- **For our ministry partner, Displaced Roses**, and for the Holy Spirit to stir us up to serve our neighbors in need
- **For the North American Lutheran Seminary System and for an increase in vocations to the ministry**
- **The Call Committee:** Tia Abernathy, Donna Allen, Sam Black, Leisa Brown, Bill Eaker, Janet Green, Glenn Rupp, Grant Sparks, Grace Young, Bruce Zander
- **For our Bishop, Dan, our dean, Steven, and for all clergy and people of the Carolinas Mission Region**

# Upcoming Birthdays

*With special joy, we recognize and celebrate these birthdays in the months of April & May. We are thankful for the life and spirit of the birthdays we celebrate. May the blessings of God flow in the life of each of you.*



1 Beth Heffner  
 4 Kristie Gornto, Chris Murphy  
 5 Martha Williard  
 6 Amy Godwin  
 9 Cierra Fox  
 12 Garrett Oakes  
 13 Carson Johnson  
 15 Sawyer Norton  
 16 Donna Allen, Kristen Parsons-Rupp  
 17 Les Miller, Bruce Zander  
 18 Robbie Oakes  
 20 Betty Blalock  
 21 Debbie Keller, Ashley King,  
 Bridget Niemeyer  
 24 Reggie Parlier  
 25 Margaret Abernethy  
 28 Johnathan Hawkins  
 29 Marian Clemmer  
 30 Dale Christman



3 Kathryn Peoples  
 4 Robin Clanton  
 8 Karen Leonard  
 9 Sydney Allen, Kasey Barnes  
 10 Susan Barber  
 12 Taylor Johnson  
 13 Danny Hawkins  
 15 Ethan Luksa  
 16 Sarah Waldrop  
 18 Angel Buchanan  
 21 Marsha McLamb  
 23 Amanda Godwin, Clay Mathews,  
 John Niemeyer, Payton Scot  
 29 Marie Ferguson, Katie Peak  
 31 Pepie Jones



***Did we miss your birthday?***

*If your birthday is incorrect, or you have a birthday in April/May and your name is not on this list, please call or email the church office and give us the correct information.*

HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH  
805 SOUTH YORK STREET  
GASTONIA, NC 28052

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## Knowing, Loving and Sharing Christ

Phone: 704-864-0378

Website: [www.holytrinitygastonia.org](http://www.holytrinitygastonia.org)

### MINISTRY STAFF

Intentional Interim Pastor  
Seminary Ministry Assistant  
Organist  
Office Administrator  
Nursery Supervisor  
Custodian

Tom Corbell  
Cody Carpenter  
Matthew Noonan  
Kim Borromeo  
Evelyn Anthony  
David Stephens

[twcorbell@gmail.com](mailto:twcorbell@gmail.com)  
[cody@holytrinitygastonia.org](mailto:cody@holytrinitygastonia.org)  
[matthew@mwnoonan.com](mailto:matthew@mwnoonan.com)  
[kim@holytrinitygastonia.org](mailto:kim@holytrinitygastonia.org)  
[office@holytrinitygastonia.org](mailto:office@holytrinitygastonia.org)