



HOLY TRINITY NEWS

October 2020



Father Rob's Reflections Stewardship 2021

*Like good stewards of the manifold grace of
God, serve one another with whatever gift
each of you has received. – 1 Peter 4:10*

October 2020

Dear Holy Trinity Family,

“Faith-Filled Generosity” is the theme for this year’s stewardship time. And I want to say THANK YOU for your faithfulness of generosity in your continuing the financial support of our mutual ministry during this odd pandemic time. None of us could have known what this year would be like. I need not remind you of the disruptions, losses, and anxieties that this year has brought to our communities, for we are all still living with the impacts. I can say, however, that although the coronavirus pandemic has tested our resolve, it has not tested our faith. In many ways I believe we will be stronger, more resilient, and more connected than we have ever been as a Church and as a community of neighbors. Thank you. Thanks to each one of you for doing your part in your homes, workplaces, schools, neighborhoods, families, and here in our church, the people. It is so heartwarming to see that you grasp what many do not, and that is that the church is not a building, but a people. Thank you for living that.

Our stewardship and our mission are always focused on service. As we experience months of not being able to gather in person, the usual focus on weekly worship was reimagined as we found ways to gather virtually, taking more time to pray for each other’s needs and serve our communities in different ways. You used this time to discover, hone, and put to use the gifts you have received from our Creator God and to serve one another.

I have witnessed the countless ways that you have used your resources for the mission of the Church and to help each other. The Vestry almost immediately gave extra money to buy Hannaford food cards for the Food Shelf. These service ministries included: Helen Short (and team) and masks; Mary Wood birthday supplies to the Food shelf; the phone tree from Linda Wirts and Mary Hartman to keep us connected; gift bags to newcomers and those who

were alone or having experienced loss organized by Linda Wirts and Mary Wood; the new gathering meetings outside, etc.--just to name a few. I have found it inspiring and hopeful. And do not forget the powerful work, from your generosity, that comes thru the Rector’s discretionary fund. I know you will not find it surprising that the number of folks in need after the initial burst of federal money has been steadily increasing. We are one of the only Churches able to help CVOEO when they run out of funds or are limited. You are helping to meet deep hurts and needs.

This fall, thru our weekly worship bulletin additions, we will explore the way that our generosity is inspired by our faith, how we are formed and led into relationship with each other as we share our gifts with the world. This is what we mean by “Faith-Filled Generosity.” This bulletin material will help to answer such things as how we will discover and use the gifts we have been given to help our church this year? How we will hear the Gospel call to seek and serve Christ in all people, and respond with generosity? As I look at each family, each individual, in our community, I realize that we are the stewards of God’s manifold grace because we give to the world from what we have received.

This year, we will be sending you materials with your pledge card, and I invite you to receive this with grace and prayer as you consider how you will share with God and God’s people, the Church, from what you have received.

This year’s stewardship Ingathering will take place on November 22nd, Christ the King Sunday. I hope by that time we will be able to gather in person. Wouldn't that be great?! That is my prayer, but we will do what shows the greatest love for each other. Of this I know we all agree. And like the faithful Christians and tough Vermonters we represent, we will make the best of whatever comes our way. Of this, I am most sure.

In the spirit of generosity and love,

Fr. Rob Spainhour+



Vestry at a Glance
Sept 14, 2020

1. Please continue to check Facebook and HTC page for updates and information on Holy Trinity's services and steps towards transitions.
2. Special thanks to Adam Fournier for cleaning vines/growth in front of church and parish hall.
3. Expression of added need to care for each other during Covid Pandemic.
4. Special appreciation to all those doing calls to parishioners.
5. Sunday School Bible Study lead by Mike Ellis will continue. Please see weekly updates for schedule.
6. Linda has organized small group gatherings for fellowship connections. This is a beginning program and will hope to expand to reach out to parishioners.
7. Don will explore the future of the Finance Committee and report back to next vestry meeting.
8. Dangerous trees will be removed from St. John's sometimes during October.
9. Sheldon House sheds has been cleaned of items and committee is exploring work with Vermont Preservation Trust for possible next steps.
10. Vestry began discussion about the future planning for church treasurer when Steve looks to have someone take his place in 2022.
11. Kiley is back in office full time.
12. Parishioners are encouraged to keep up with pledges for 2020.



The 188th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont will be held Saturday, October 31 as an online gathering. Pray for the deliberations of our delegates.

October Events

Sun, Oct 4 – 1 pm Blessing of the Animals on St Francis Day, bring your pets to the outdoor steps of Holy Trinity

Mon, Oct 12 – 5:30 Vestry on Zoom

Saturday, Oct 31 – Diocesan Convention on Zoom

Updated Reopening Guidelines Released

The Diocesan Restart Team has released the following update:

We hope that you and your congregation are staying safe and healthy as we move into fall. The Restart Team is busy reviewing plans for re-opening our parish offices and for outdoor, in-person worship. All the members of the team are grateful for the thoughtful and careful efforts you are making in this regard. Our highest priority is to ensure that we embody the love of Christ in taking care of each other, especially the most vulnerable, and we thank you for joining us in this mission.

Because of the good work that has gone on throughout the diocese, the Restart Team has made a change in our Phase 3 guidelines, and there are now guidelines for **Holy Baptism** included in the **updated reopening guidelines**. The Phase 3 changes include:

Phase 3, outdoor, in-person worship: up to 50 participants can attend, as long as space allows for appropriate 8 to 10 feet of physical distance between individuals or family groups. There should be at least one health officer for every 15 people in attendance, with 3 for up to 50 attendees. Also, if available, worshippers can attend in cars parked near the outdoor space as long as they remain in the vehicle. Also, please remember to keep a good list with dates, times, names and phone numbers for all those attending each service so that contact tracing can be carried out by the Department of Health if needed.

MONDAY MATTERS

Reflections to start the week

As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, "Follow me." Matthew 9:9-13

Follow me

My, it was a fine sermon, a clear call to discipleship, based on the gospel chosen for the Feast of St. Matthew. My compelling preaching was based on the two words Jesus said to Matthew: Follow me. With unbridled homiletic prowess, I made the point that we each are called to a deeper discipleship that goes to our heart and changes our lives. And because I'm such an able communicator, I included in the Sunday bulletin a rather large, unavoidable bookmark with the phrase: Follow Me, printed in bold but elegant font. It was a takeaway that would keep the message of discipleship in front of parishioners, perhaps for the rest of their lives. It was a good morning.

That same evening, my wife and I were invited to a dinner party. We were greeted at the door by the host, a parishioner, who immediately asked if we'd like a drink from the bar. When I said yes, he pulled out the aforementioned bookmark: Follow me. He led me to libation.

I realized that what I had said and what had been heard from the pulpit may not have been the same.

We may have a clear idea of what it means to affiliate with a denomination, or to be a church member. But that is not necessarily the same as thinking about what it means to be a disciple, a follower of Jesus. Whether it was my host's appropriation of Jesus' phrase, or the ways we talk about following someone on social media, we may need to reclaim this word "follow." Use this feast day to think about what it means for you to follow Jesus, however you are choosing to do that. And let me

First, it suggests movement. We can't stay where we are. As Pope Francis said, there's no such thing as a stationary Christian. In that suggestion, there's an indication of another way, perhaps even hope. Matthew didn't need to continue to be a tax-collector, despised by his own people. Peter didn't need to continue to be a mediocre fisherman (Note: There is no indication that the disciples who were professional fishermen ever caught a fish without Jesus' help.) While we may not know where the following will lead, it involves the hope of something better, a more abundant life, a life marked by healing and reconciliation, loving kindness and forgiveness.

Second, it suggests intentionality and purpose. One of my mentors suggests that we could substitute the word intentionality for discipleship. It may seem impulsive, but Matthew got up from his table, perhaps in the middle of tax consultation with a rich client. Other disciples dropped nets, left their businesses and leapt into a new life with Jesus. They made a decision, the road taken. We are faced on a daily basis with choices. Will we choose the way of love, with all that entails? Will we choose that way, even if we're not sure what it entails?

Finally, it suggests relationship. We don't follow a creed, a set of rules or guidelines. We follow a person. As Easter people we believe in the mystery that he is very much alive, met in the practice of prayer. He is met in worship, bread and wine conveying his presence. He is met in service to those in need. (As you have done it to the least of these, you have done it unto me. Matthew 25.) That relationship is marked by love and grace, a commitment to showing mercy as mercy has been shown to us. That relationship calls us to learn from him, to imitate him in word and action. We learn as we go, putting faith into practice, becoming more proficient, becoming more Christ-like in the process.

So what does it look like for you to be a follower of Jesus this week?

For an Election

Almighty God, to whom we must account for all our powers and privileges: Guide the people of the United States in the election of officials and representatives; that, by faithful administration and wise laws, the rights of all may be protected and our nation enabled to fulfill your purposes; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen

For the Human Family

O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son: Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts and our nation; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth; that, in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.



Holy Trinity Episcopal Church
38 Grand Ave, Swanton, VT 05488
Office 868-7185

Office: holytrinityepi@myfairpoint.net

Website: holytrinityswanton.org

Holy Trinity Staff:

The Rev. J. Robert Spainhour

holytrinityrector@holytrinityswanton.org

Cell 843 343-6871 Rectory 868-6757

Fri. is ordinarily Fr. Rob's Sabbath

Kiley Boutah, Admin Asst

holytrinityepi@holytrinityswanton.org

Bookkeeper: Shelley Robtoy

holytrinitybk@holytrinityswanton.org

Facilities Manager: George Plante

868-7185

Sexton: James McDonald

802 582-5596



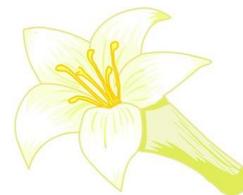
OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Doreen LaFlam, Carol Moulton
- 3 Michael Ellis
- 9 Evan Anderson, Eric Hadd
- 14 Kendra Garrison
- 23 Kay Benedict, Kalan Kenyon
- 26 Martha Casavant-Ries, Natalie Good, Aimee Hawkins
- 27 Cantey Spainhour
- 31 Cameron Nielsen, Paeton Taylor



OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 2 Helen & Frank Short
John & Deanna Edwards
- 4 Jessica & Mike Dittmar
- 16 Natalie & Wally Good (1976)
- 19 John & Tammy Farr (2007)



In New Life

3 Sept The Ven J. Wallace Sparling

May he rest in peace and rise in glory