

HOLY TRINITY NEWS



JULY 2026

Volume 61 - #07

HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

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JULY

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 OFFICE HOURS 8am-1pm	2	3	4 Happy 4th of July
5 WORSHIP SERVICE 9am Girl Scouts 1:30pm	6 OFFICE HOURS 8am-1pm Boy Scouts 7pm	7 OFFICE HOURS 8am-1pm Thrift Shop 9-12:30	8 OFFICE HOURS 8am-1pm	9	10	11
12 WORSHIP SERVICE 9am Girl Scouts 1:30pm	13 OFFICE HOURS 8am-1pm Boy Scouts 7pm	14 OFFICE HOURS 8am-1pm Thrift Shop 9-12:30	15 OFFICE HOURS 8am-1pm	16	17	18
19 WORSHIP SERVICE 9am GS 1:30	20 OFFICE HOURS 8am-1pm Boy Scouts 7pm	21 OFFICE HOURS 8am-1pm Thrift Shop 9-12:30	22 OFFICE HOURS 8am-1pm	23	24	25
26 WORSHIP SERVICE 9am Girl Scouts 1:30pm	27 OFFICE HOURS 8am-1pm Boy Scouts 7pm	28 OFFICE HOURS 8am-1pm Thrift Shop 9-12:30	29 OFFICE HOURS 8am-1pm	30	31	

"Only take care, and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things that your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. Make them known to your children and your children's children." - Deuteronomy 4:9



One of the things I've been doing with my Monday evenings is attending a choir rehearsal with the Lehighon Band for a patriotic concert that will be held in early July. This year, we celebrate the 250th anniversary of our country. A joke that the director said more than once has had me thinking. He has joked that things better go well because when the 300th anniversary comes, he won't be around to see it. Even I will be 90 years old in 2076, should the Lord decide to have me stick around that long.

It got me thinking about those who, 250 years ago, decided that this idea of the United States of America would be a blessing from God to their generations and to the generations that followed. As the Preamble of the Constitution states: "We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America." (Thanks, Schoolhouse Rock!)

Posterity means all future generations of people. The founding fathers created a legacy which we now enjoy. It calls to mind the verse from Deuteronomy where the people are called to pass along the love of the Lord to all future generations. Many times people will tell me, "I wouldn't want to raise kids nowadays." I always find that a curious phrase. It implies that the next generations aren't worth investing in. It means we've thrown our hands in the air and send, "Well, we tried. It's all fallen apart. Better pack it up."

In many cases, generation after generation has poured itself out to make a better life for the generations that followed. We don't selfishly use up all the world's resources for ourselves and tell the next generation, "Not my problem. Good luck." We leave behind a better America, a better world, for our children and our children's children. We ensure that they hear the blessings of an Almighty God and enjoy the liberties of being an American.

Let us recommit ourselves in creating a better country and a better world -- not just for us -- but for all those whom God loves.

[Happy birthday](#), America!

Blessings,
Pastor Ken

THE BLESSINGS THRIFT SHOP:

Tuesday 9am-12:30pm



****Check Out Our Summer Finds!***



July Anniversaries

- July 03 Dennis & Gerry Dorshimer 61 years
- July 04 Ray & Karen Talamantes 18 years
- July 05 Robin & Shirley Suarez 51 years
- July 16 David & Veronica Blocker 21 years

BIRTHDAYS IN JULY!

- July 04 Brian Everett
- July 04 Lizzie Reif
- July 06 Sandra Benson
- July 08 Vicky Holland
- July 11 Gordon Walls
- July 14 Garry James
- July 28 Matthew Jahelka
- July 30 Veronica Blocker

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

MONDAY – WEDNESDAY 8AM-1PM



****JULY'S COUNCIL MEETING IS CANCELED****

COUNCIL MEMBERS

- Jon Kistler* **President**
- Steve Berger* **Vice-President**
- Rich Hyer* **Secretary**
- Jim Miller* **Asst. Treasurer**
- Krissy Keblish*
- Ron Keblish*
- Gerry Dorshimer*
- Scott Heinrich*
- Eric Reif*
- Gordon Walls*
- Deb Hansut*
- Don Delich*

FINANCIAL PERSONNEL

- Larry Arner* **Treasurer**
- Jessica Hansen* **Financial Sec.**

APRIL FINANCES & ATTENDANCE

May - Envelope Offering:	\$11,746
May – Additional Income:	\$1,698
May – Expenses:	\$8,812
<i>Attendance:</i>	
May 03	47
May 10	39
May 17	39
May 24	40
May 31	40

SUNDAY WORSHIP – 9:00 AM

JULY 05

Assisting Minister: Rich Hyer

Ushers: Kelly & Scott Heinrich

Altar Guild: **NEEDED**

Flowers: Gerry Dorshimer – IHO 61st Wedding Anniversary

Bulletins: Barb & Joe Herman – IMO Beatrice & Dan

Times News / Website: Fred & Betsy Masenheimer

JULY 12

Assisting Minister: Krissy Keblish

Ushers: Ron Keblish, Terry Holland, Taylor Keblish

Altar Guild: **NEEDED**

Flowers: The Keblish Family – IMO Loved Ones

Bulletins: **NEEDED**

Times News / Website: Fred & Betsy Masenheimer

JULY 19

Assisting Minister: Deb Hansut

Ushers: Carol Heffelfinger & Loren LaRose

Altar Guild: **NEEDED**

Flowers: **NEEDED**

Bulletins: **NEEDED**

Times News / Website: Fred & Betsy Masenheimer

JULY 26

Assisting Minister: Lynn Perone

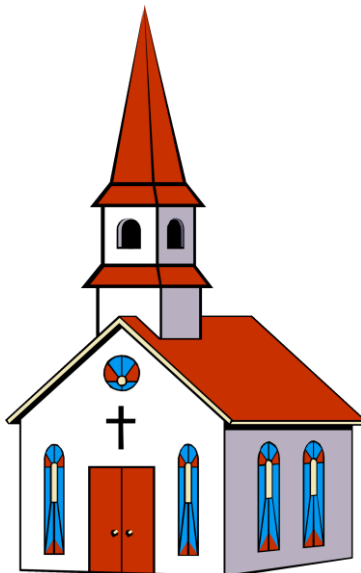
Ushers: Rich & Jeanette Hyer

Altar Guild: **NEEDED**

Flowers: **NEEDED**

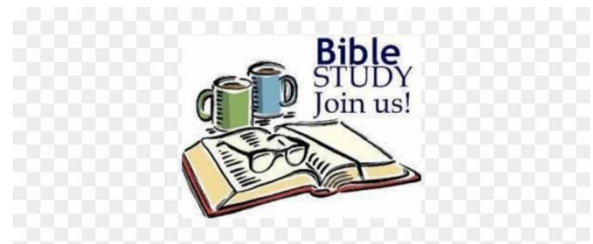
Bulletins: **NEEDED**

Times News / Website: Fred & Betsy Masenheimer



HOME VISITS

Home & shut-in visits are being planned. If anyone would like to receive communion, please contact Pastor Ken or the office.



BIBLE STUDY

Bible Study is held at Holy Trinity on Wednesdays, 10:30am-12:00pm



SPONSORS NEEDED!

We have many openings on the sponsor board. Please help us offset our costs by generously sponsoring flowers or bulletins. Thank You!



The Birth of a Nation

1776 was a pivotal year in history, marking the birth of the United States of America.

This year saw significant events that shaped the future of the nation.

1. The Declaration of Independence was adopted on July 4, 1776. This document announced the thirteen American colonies' separation from British rule.
2. Thomas Jefferson was the principal author of the Declaration of Independence. He was chosen for his eloquent writing style and strong beliefs in liberty.
3. The Continental Congress approved the final text of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. This date is now celebrated annually as Independence Day in the United States.
4. The Declaration of Independence was signed by 56 delegates. These signers represented the thirteen colonies and risked their lives by rebelling against British authority.
5. George Washington was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army in 1775. By 1776, he was leading American forces against the British.
6. Benjamin Franklin, a key diplomat, helped secure French support for the American cause. His efforts were instrumental in gaining international allies.
7. John Adams, a strong advocate for independence, played a significant role in persuading others to support the Declaration of Independence.
8. King George III was the monarch of Great Britain during 1776. His policies and actions were a major catalyst for the American Revolution.
9. The Battle of Bunker Hill, fought in June 1775, set the stage for the conflict in 1776. Although technically a British victory, it showed that American forces could stand up to the British Army.
10. The Siege of Boston ended in March 1776 with the British evacuation. This was a significant early victory for the American forces.
11. The Battle of Long Island, also known as the Battle of Brooklyn, took place in August 1776. It was the largest battle of the war and resulted in a British victory.
12. The Battle of Trenton, fought on December 26, 1776, was a turning point for the American forces. George Washington's surprise attack on the Hessian forces boosted American morale.
13. The Articles of Confederation were drafted in 1776. This document served as the first constitution of the United States, outlining the functions of the national government.
14. The concept of "unalienable rights" was introduced in the Declaration of Independence. These rights, including life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, became fundamental principles of American democracy.
15. The idea of self-governance gained popularity in 1776. The colonies began to establish their own governments, independent of British control.
16. The notion of equality was emphasized in the Declaration of Independence. This idea challenged the existing social hierarchy and inspired future movements for civil rights.
17. Thomas Paine's pamphlet "Common Sense" was published in January 1776. It argued for independence from Britain and was widely read, influencing public opinion.
18. The American economy began to shift in 1776. The colonies started to develop their own industries and trade networks, reducing reliance on British goods.
19. The concept of American identity began to take shape in 1776. People started to see themselves as part of a unified nation rather than separate colonies.
20. The influence of Enlightenment ideas was evident in 1776. Concepts such as liberty, equality, and democracy were central to the American Revolution.
21. The year 1776 inspired future generations. The principles and events of this year continue to shape American society and government.

(Copilot Search)

Key Moments That Shaped America Over the Last 250 Years



1. 1776 – The Declaration of Independence

The signing of the Declaration in 1776 marked the formal beginning of the United States as an independent nation. It gave voice to a belief in self-governance and the right to determine a collective future. Though the fight for independence had already begun, this document helped unify that effort under shared principles.

2. 1863 – The Emancipation Proclamation

When President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation during the Civil War, it changed the course of the conflict. What began as a war to preserve the Union took on a deeper moral purpose. The promise of freedom expanded the meaning of what the United States could represent.

3. 1917 – U.S. Entry Into World War I

When the United States entered World War I, it signaled a shift in national posture. The country moved from internal growth and westward expansion to a larger role on the global stage. For many Americans, it was the first time they had seen the flag associated with international duty and sacrifice.

4. 1920 – Women Gain the Right to Vote

The ratification of the 19th Amendment expanded the definition of who could take part in civic life. It followed decades of organizing, petitioning, and slow gains at the state level. With this change, millions of women gained access to a right that had long shaped public decisions but excluded their voices.

5. 1945 – The End of World War II

World War II left a mark on nearly every part of American life. The end of the war brought both relief and reflection. Families had changed. Cities had changed. And the country's role in the world was no longer the same. The moment demanded something solid to hold onto. The image of the flag raised at Iwo Jima became one of the most recognized photographs in American history. Flags were also returned home with service members, displayed in windows, and lowered in honor of those who did not return. Through those gestures, the flag became closely tied to remembrance and shared responsibility.

6. 1963 – The March on Washington

In the summer of 1963, people gathered in Washington, D.C., to call for civil rights, fair wages, and equal protection under the law. The March on Washington was not the beginning of the movement, nor was it the end. But it became one of its most widely remembered moments.

7. 1969 – The Moon Landing

When American astronauts landed on the moon in 1969, it marked a moment of technological achievement that captured the world's attention. Years of planning, risk, and national investment had led to something that once felt impossible. For many, it represented the kind of ambition that had shaped the country from its earliest days.

A flag was placed on the surface, not as a claim of ownership, but as a sign of who had been there. That single image became part of how people remembered the event. It reflected the spirit of discovery and the belief that effort could reach beyond old limits.

8. 2001 – September 11th

The attacks on September 11th left a deep wound across the country. The loss was immediate and hard to measure. It reshaped daily life, national policy, and the way people understood public space. In those early days, there was confusion, grief, and an urgent need for connection. Flags began to appear in places where nothing else felt appropriate. They were raised at firehouses, tied to balconies, held at vigils. That pattern was not planned. It came from a shared instinct to mark the moment with something familiar. The flag became part of how people expressed both sorrow and strength.

9. 2020 – A Year of Reckoning and Response

The year 2020 brought a series of disruptions that touched nearly every household. A public health crisis changed how people moved through the world. Protests called attention to long-standing inequalities. Everyday life was interrupted in ways that forced new questions about priorities, values, and representation.

10. 2026 – The 250th Anniversary

The upcoming Semiquincentennial invites reflection, but it also offers something more immediate: the chance to take part. For individuals, communities, and businesses, this milestone can be marked in visible and personal ways. It is not only about the past. It is a way to engage with the present and show what the country continues to mean. (*Copilot Search*)

250 YEARS HAVE PASSED: TRANSFORMING SOCIETY, ECONOMY, & DAILY LIFE

Time Span

The period from 1776 to 2026 spans **250 years**, which equals **3,000 months, 13,044 weeks, 91,311 days, 2,191,464 hours, 131,487,840 minutes, or 7,889,270,400 seconds.**

Economic Comparison

In 1776, the U.S. dollar had far greater purchasing power. **\$1 in 1776 is equivalent to about \$37.26 in 2026**, reflecting a cumulative inflation of 3,625.54% and an average annual inflation rate of 1.46%. This means that a dollar today buys only about 2.684% of what it could in 1776. Prices for goods and services have increased dramatically, illustrating the long-term effects of inflation on everyday life.

Population

The U.S. population has grown from roughly 2.8 million in 1776 to over 342 million today, reflecting more than a 120-fold increase. At the time of independence in 1776, the population of the 13 original states was estimated at **about 2.8 million people**. This figure excluded Native Americans and reflects the early colonial population concentrated along the Atlantic coast. By the first federal census in 1790, the population had grown to **approximately 3.9 million**, marking the beginning of systematic demographic tracking.

Religion at the Founding

At the time of the Declaration of Independence, **Protestantism was the dominant religion**, with Congregationalists strong in New England, Presbyterians in the middle colonies, and Anglicans/Episcopalians in the South. Roughly **17% of the population held formal church membership**, though religion deeply influenced society and politics. Minority groups included Baptists, Quakers, Catholics, and about 2,000 Jews. Native American spiritual practices and Islam, primarily among enslaved West Africans, were also present. Many Founding Fathers, including Jefferson, Franklin, and Washington, were active in Protestant churches but held **deist beliefs**, emphasizing reason over organized religion. Religious rhetoric often supported the Revolutionary cause, with Congress proclaiming national days of fasting, prayer, and thanksgiving.

Modern Religious Landscape

By the early 21st century, the United States became more religiously diverse and secular. According to Pew Research, **62% of American adults identified as Christian in 2023-24**, down from 78% in 2007. Protestant affiliation has decreased from over two-thirds in 1948 to less than half by 2012, while Catholic numbers have fluctuated. Other religions, including Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism, have grown modestly, and the number of Americans identifying as **religiously unaffiliated** has increased significantly. Despite these changes, Christianity continues to shape cultural, social, and political life in the United States.

Societal and Political Context

In 1776, America was founded by overthrowing a monarchy to establish individual freedoms and a government accountable to the people. Core principles included **freedom of speech, press, assembly, and religion**, along with checks on state power through Congress and the Constitution. By 2026, society has evolved with complex institutions, technological advancements, and global interconnectivity, but debates about the balance between individual freedoms and government authority continue. The ideals of liberty and due process remain central, though modern challenges have reshaped how these rights are exercised and protected.

Summary

Comparing 1776 to 2026 reveals profound changes: **economically**, the value of money has shifted drastically due to inflation; **temporally**, 250 years encompass countless generations; and **socially and politically**, the United States has grown from a fledgling nation asserting independence to a complex modern society navigating the balance between freedom and governance. This comparison underscores both continuity in foundational ideals and transformation in practical realities. ([Huntington-chamber.com](https://www.huntington-chamber.com), [Library of Congress](https://www.libraryofcongress.gov) & Copilot Search)



We Are Stronger When We Serve Together

Submitted by Stacey Burke, NEPA Synod Director of Communications

When a fire forced St. John's Lutheran Church in Allentown out of its building during Lent, neighboring congregations stepped in to help. Members of St. John's and Christ Lutheran in Allentown worshiped together, shared leadership, and supported one another through the challenge.

Reflecting on the experience during the 6261 Ministry Communities panel, Deacon Michael Krenz shared, "We have a sense of joy and we know that if we have trials and tribulations, the other congregations will say, 'Can I help?'"

Throughout the 2026 Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly, one theme surfaced again and again. Whether discussing ministry communities, new worshipping communities, global partnerships, or emerging ministries, participants shared a common message: we are stronger when we serve together. Mission Support helps create and strengthen those connections.

At assembly, participants heard stories from 6261 Ministry Communities, where congregations are exploring new ways to share leadership, resources, and ministry. Panelists spoke honestly about both the challenges and joys of collaboration. While the work requires patience, communication, and trust, many shared how relationships formed through these partnerships have strengthened congregations and expanded their ability to serve their communities.

The assembly theme, *Imagine*, was reflected in stories shared during the Fresh Expressions panel. Participants heard about ministries reaching people through community meals, recovery ministries, young adult gatherings, video game nights, mobile shower ministries, and other creative efforts designed to meet people where they are. Together, these ministries demonstrate how God is at work beyond traditional church walls. Speaking during the panel, April Mulvey of Hope's Table in Reading shared, "I serve a big God. So I dream big and I believe that God will just make it happen." Her words captured the spirit of ministries that are willing to try new things, build new relationships, and trust God to open new opportunities for sharing the gospel.





The assembly also celebrated the growth of the Indonesian Lutheran Church of Scranton, which was authorized as a Synod Authorized Worshiping Community (SAWC) in 2025. Worshiping in both Indonesian and English and building relationships with neighboring congregations, this ministry is a visible reminder that the church continues to grow in new and life-giving ways.

Beyond Northeastern Pennsylvania, assembly attendees were reminded that we are part of a much larger church. Through companion synod relationships in Tanzania, Saxony, Argentina and Uruguay, Slovenia, and our domestic partnership with the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin, congregations are connected to a global community of faith. These relationships allow us to learn from one another, pray for one another, and discover new ways God is at work throughout the world.

As Bishop Christopher deForest reflected, "We're coming together not just to survive. We're coming together not just to thrive, but we're coming together to do mission of God in the world." Through relationships with congregations, ministry partners, companion synods, pastors, deacons, licensed lay ministers, and church leaders, we are continually discovering new opportunities to participate in God's mission.

Assembly also highlighted how Mission Support helps leverage additional resources for ministry. Through partnerships with the ELCA, seminaries, and grant programs, congregations and ministry leaders have received support for new worshiping communities, outreach ministries, leadership development, Fresh Expressions training, and collaborative ministry initiatives.

Following her election as bishop, Bishop-Elect Jennifer Dee reflected on her excitement for how God is calling the NEPA Synod to serve together, sharing that she is "incredibly excited to see how God calls us to do ministry together." Her words echoed what had already been demonstrated throughout the assembly: ministry is not something we do alone.



Every congregation that shares Mission Support is helping make these ministries possible. Together, through Mission Support, we are not simply sustaining ministry. We are strengthening congregations, raising up leaders, forming new ministries, and joining God's mission in the world. If you would like to learn more about the ministries and stories shared at assembly, recordings of the plenary sessions are available on the synod's YouTube channel, with links and assembly resources available at godslove.org/assembly2026. Together, we are imagining what God can do next.



Help Make Ministry Possible

Through Mission Support, congregations share resources, support leaders, and expand ministry. Thank you for helping strengthen congregations, support leaders, and launch new ministries. Learn more about Mission Support and how your congregation can support at godslove.org/missionsupport.