

Don Lowe First Selectman Column 12/22/2025

On Sunday, December 21, Holy Trinity Church reopened at its newly built chapel and it was a spectacular event. The service was primarily a sanctification of the building itself, which is a rare and profoundly special spectacle involving rituals that go back centuries. The service was led by Bishop Frank J. Caggiano of the Diocese of Bridgeport who is a fine speaker, and it was a privilege for Mary Ann and I to be there. The music, led by Sherman's musician extraordinaire Rob Brereton, was splendid and Father Robert Wolfe acclaimed a long list of people responsible for this new chapel in Sherman, which is a fine addition to our town.

The church itself is tastefully designed and was actually built by an Amish construction company. The old-time craftsmanship adds to the entire building's rich ambiance, and I must say the acoustics are perfect. As Father Wolfe went through a list of those he thanked for being responsible for the new church, he ended with a special acknowledgement to Sherman resident, Doug Kastilahn. And rightfully so! Doug volunteered for the last three years managing this remarkable project and every pebble of this project received his apt attention. And as Father Wolfe noted, "Doug didn't ask for a penny."

The gratitude experienced by the people in attendance of having this new church was palpable. And I know that I am going on a bit about this, but I must say that I was deeply moved by this service and the experience of seeing an entire structure being blessed was awesome. Sherman is fortunate to have two churches – the Sherman Church is also flourishing – that serve as gathering places to worship and reflect quietly. Our churches serve as the bedrock to our community and, even though I am not a Roman Catholic, I am grateful that Holy Trinity is back with us.

Mallory Town Hall will be open for only half a day on Wednesday, Christmas Eve, closing at Noon. It will be closed for Thursday, Christmas Day and, because it's a Friday and I'm not a Scrooge and I love this season, it will be closed the day *after* Christmas too. I wish everyone a wonderful holiday season, a Merry Christmas, and a Happy Hannukah. In my eight years of being your First Selectman, this past year featured the most giving, kindness, and benevolence that I have ever seen. So many people gave to those in need; so many people called on the phone or emailed asking where they can donate. "Where can I help others," seemed to be the theme this season as throngs of folks asked that question. Lately this world has seemed pretty hard; but at least here in Sherman, people seem to be countering that with incredible kindness. And this is the season of hope and kindness. Wishing you all safety and good things!