A Mission Congregation of the ELCA Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church P. O. Box 64 - 8520 Oakes Rd - Pitsburg, Ohio 45358



Genesis 32:[9-13] 22-30 September 24, 2023



Scan with your Smartphone and link to our web page, our Facebook page, and our YouTube Channel.

GATHERING

• Prelude Roxanne Groff

- Office of the Acolyte and Ringing of the Bell
- Welcome Pr Mel Musser

* THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

The assembly stands. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, the fountain of living water, the rock who gave us birth, our light and our salvation.

C: Amen.

The presiding minister addresses the assembly.

P: Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness. Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

Water may be poured into the font as the presiding minister gives thanks.

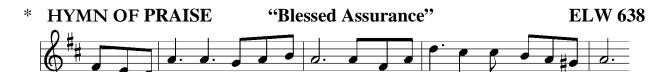
P: We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight. Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family. Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom. At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By water and your Word you claim us as daughters and sons, making us heirs of your promise and servants of all. We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life, and above all we praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ. Shower us with your Spirit, and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love. To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

C: Amen.

* Please stand if able

September 24, 2023 Page 2 of 20

Please be seated



- 1 Bless-ed as-sur-ance, Je-sus is mine! Oh, what a fore-taste of glo-ry di-vine!
- 2 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, per-fect de-light, vi-sions of rap-ture now burst on my sight;
- 3 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, all is at rest; I in my Sav-ior am hap-py and blest,



Heir of sal-va-tion, pur-chase of God, born of his Spir-it, washed in his blood. an - gels de-scend-ing bring from a-bove ech-oes of mer-cy, whis-pers of love. watch-ing and wait-ing, look-ing a-bove, filled with his good-ness, lost in his love.



This is my sto - ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav - ior all the day long:



this is my sto - ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav-ior all the day long.

* APOSTOLIC GREETING

- P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- C: And also with you.

* PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray... God of blessing, we often find ourselves wrestling with ourselves, with others, and with you. Give us peace in our hearts and call us back to what you would have us be.

C: Amen.

WORD

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

KORNER

Theme: Jacob Wrestles with God

Materials: None

Scripture: Genesis 32:[9-13] 22-30

Hello girls and boys! Did you have a great week? I sure hope so! Today we're going to talk about a man named Jacob who wrestled with God. Have you ever watched a wrestling match? Wrestling isn't a modern invention, though. It's one of the oldest sports in the world, and it dates back thousands of years. Show me your best wrestling face and pose...

In today's Bible lesson, Jacob and his entire family were moving to a new city. He had 12 sons and who knows how many daughters. They also had a lot of stuff since Jacob was very rich. Many years before Jacob had stolen his older brother's inheritance and his brother, Esau, was very angry. The last thing he said to Jacob before Jacob ran away from home was, 'I'm going to kill you!" As they were traveling, Jacob's caravan had to pass right by Esau's territory. When Esau heard Jacob was nearby, he started out to meet him with 400 men. Jacob thought Esau was going to kill him and was very afraid. He sent his family ahead and camped alone overnight. An angel came and wrestled with Jacob all night.

Have you ever wrestled all night long? I don't think I could last that long! After an entire night of wrestling, God's angel told Jacob to let him go. Jacob refused and the man touched Jacob's hip and it went out of the socket. Jacob was in a lot of pain and had to walk with a limp. Then the angel changed Jacob's name to Israel. That name means Fights with God. Then the man blessed Jacob and said you have fought with Gob and with men and have won. Jacob left the wrestling match with a new name and a limp from his hurt hip. He left with something even more important. He left that morning knowing he could trust God no matter what. So, he went right away to his brother and kissed him and told him how sorry he was for tricking him all those years ago.

What do you think his brother said? He forgave Jacob and the two were brothers again. We sometimes struggle with God, too. We may want to do things our way instead of God's way. It must have been very hard for Jacob to go to his brother and admit his sin and ask for forgiveness. Everyone, even your parents, even me have struggles with obeying God. Because of Jesus we know God will always love us and bless us. You can count on that too!

Let's pray... Dear God, please help us remember You are the One who knows what's best for us. We can trust You. In Jesus' name, amen!

Please stand if able

September 24, 2023

Please be seated

• SCRIPTURE READING: Genesis 32:[9-13] 22-30

P: Our scripture reading for this day is from Genesis, Chapter 32.

C: Glory to you O Lord.

⁹ And Jacob said, "O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O Lord who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your kindred, and I will do you good,' ¹⁰ I am not worthy of the least of all the steadfast love and all the faithfulness that you have shown to your servant, for with only my staff I crossed this Jordan; and now I have become two companies. ¹¹ Deliver me, please, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I am afraid of him; he may come and kill us all, the mothers with the children. ¹² Yet you have said, 'I will surely do you good, and make your offspring as the sand of the sea, which cannot be counted because of their number.'"

¹³ So he spent that night there, and from what he had with him he took a present for his brother Esau.

²² The same night he got up and took his two wives, his two maids, and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. ²³ He took them and sent them across the stream, and likewise everything that he had. ²⁴ Jacob was left alone; and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. ²⁵ When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he struck him on the hip socket; and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. ²⁶ Then he said, "Let me go, for the day is breaking." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go, unless you bless me." ²⁷ So he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." ²⁸ Then the man said, "You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with humans, and have prevailed." ²⁹ Then Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And there he blessed him. ³⁰ So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved."

L: This is the Word of God.

C: Praise to You, O Christ (Spoken)

• SERMON Pr Mel Musser

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from Jesus Christ our Savior and our Lord, amen.

I've always known professional wrestling as we see it on Monday night TV was fake. (SLIDE) I mean it's not as fake as fake news, but it's pretty close. Professional wrestling isn't considered by many to be a real sport because it's well known that the outcome is predetermined. That doesn't mean the struggle isn't real, just that the eventual winner of the match is determined in advance. Why is that you might ask...

Well, I did the research this week and discovered professional wrestling in America got it's start shortly after the Civil War. (SLIDE) At first the matches were actual wrestling, but the sport struggled to find an audience because they considered the sport too boring. So, the wrestlers quietly began to fake the outcomes of the matches to make it more entertaining for the audiences. Kayfabe is the practice of pretending that professional wrestling is a true sport. Wrestlers would at all times flatly deny allegations they fixed their matches, and they often remained in-character in public even when not performing. When in public, wrestlers would sometimes say the word kayfabe (SLIDE) to each other as a coded signal that there were fans present and they needed to be in

^{*} Please stand if able

September 24, 2023 Page 6 of 20

character. Professional wrestlers in the past strongly believed that if they admitted the truth, their audiences would desert them.

(SLIDE) In today's scripture a "Man" wrestled with Jacob by the ford of the Jabbok. Let's review Jacob's story so far... He was the second born fraternal twin. His brother who was older by a minute or two was named Esau. From their birth, Jacob tried to better his older brother. At birth he grabbed Esau's heal trying to pull Esau back into their mother Rachel's womb so he could be first born. As a young man Jacob tricked Esau into giving him his birthright for a bowl of lentil stew. Even when their father, Isaac, was near death and blind, Jacob, again the trickster, fooled Isaac into giving him his final blessing instead of Esau. All this family drama led Jacob to flee back to their father's homeland, Haran where he enslaved himself to his uncle for 7 years in order to earn the hand of Laben's younger daughter Rachel. After the 7 years, Laben tricked the trickster by giving his older daughter Leah instead of Rachel. Jacob agreed to work for Laben another 7 years to earn the hand of Rachel as well. After that time, God spoke to Jacob and told him to return to the land of Caanan. The last words Jacob had heard from Esau before moving to Haran were, "I'm going to kill you!" That brings us up to speed with today's reading...

^{*} Please stand if able

(SLIDE) This story of Jacob wrestling with God begs more

questions than it answers. Who was the man? Was it God? At the end of this episode, the man tells Jacob, now renamed Israel, he has wrestled with God, so, I guess the answer to that question is yes. I noticed Jacob wasn't picking this fight with God, it was God or the "Man" who initiated this wrestling bout. God wanted to wrestle with Jacob. I wonder what the issue was. My speculation is they were fighting over Jacob returning to face the music with Esau. God apparently wanted Jacob back in the promised land. We who have read all the way through the book of Genesis know the answer. Jacob would father 12 sons, who would become the 12 tribes of Israel. One of those sons was Joseph who became the administrator over Egypt when the famine hit Caanan. Joseph, who had forgiven his brothers eventually brought the whole family, including Jacob/Israel to live in Egypt. Long after Jacob and Joseph went to sleep with their ancestors, God rescued their descendants, now known as the Israelites, after their father, Israel, from their bondage to slavery.

Getting back to today's reading... Jacob was afraid of Esau and was certain he would be killed by his estranged brother. Jacob didn't want any part of that scene. So, he fought all night long with the God of his father Isaac and his grandfather Abraham. Like the world of professional wrestling, the outcome of

^{*} Please stand if able

September 24, 2023

this bout was also predetermined. In the end, Jacob, now dubbed Israel, fought God to a draw. Both of them got what they wanted. Jacob would return to face Esau and God would give his blessing to Jacob. You see, for all his cheating, conniving, and trickery, God's plan was to give Jacob many children and for his descendants to be as numerous as the grains of sand on the seashore all along. If Jacob had trusted that promise, he would have known Esau wasn't going to kill him. There was no need for Jacob to fear his brother. God had already placed the spirit of forgiveness into Esau's heart. If only Jacob had trusted in God's promise, maybe he wouldn't have needed that hip replacement...

Have you ever wrestled with God? I have, many times in my life... I knew of God's call for me to serve him from a pretty young age. After the early deaths of both my dad and my sister Marilyn, who died just 11 months after my dad at the young age of only 25, when I was only 13 years old, I seriously wrestled with God and ran away from that calling as far and as fast as I could. That was only round one in a multi-round, main event. Later I wrestled again with God over God's seeming indifference to the cause of innocent babies being born with what we call birth defects. God and I wrestled over that issue for about 25 years, before God finally gave me the blessing of peace. Part of that wrestling match led me to enter the seminary where a whole new level of wrestling began. I thought the wrestling

^{*} Please stand if able

September 24, 2023

was finally over and I could rest in the loving arms of my Savior, but God wasn't finished wrestling with me. All through my seminary years I fought the process. I couldn't bring myself to believe we could financially handle the expense of me in graduate school, at the same time as Trevor and Niki both being in college. PJ finally said to either stop worrying about it or pick another career. I used my GI Bill benefits and received several scholarships to help us through those years. It was nothing short of miraculous how God provided for us when the money was in short supply. Today, I still wrestle with God over His vision for our ministry. You'd think I would have learned to trust in God's abundant provisions by now... That's my story of the wrestling match I have had and still have with God on a pretty regular basis.

I'll bet each of you has a story or two of how you wrestled with God. One day I'd like to put together a book of our stories. I'm certain some of you have much more trust in the leading of God through the Holy Spirit than I do! I tend to get a little stubborn and want my way. That's when God laughs and the wrestling starts all over again. One thing I have learned through all this is that wrestling with God is pretty futile. The outcome is just as predetermined as the outcome of those fake wrestling matches on TV. God always wins in the end. When I say God wins in the end, I don't mean everything in our lives is predetermined. What I mean is

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September 24, 2023

God wants to bless us even when we want to go our own way, God still wants to bless us. God's purpose is to bless us. Why can't we trust in the promise that God will bless us? In Jacob's case it was fear that caused him to lose faith. He was afraid of Esau. In my case it was anger at God for losing my dad and my sister whom I loved greatly and later anger at all the heartbreak of watching my precious baby girl have to undergo so much pain and suffering. Fear and anger are only two of the sins that cause God to come and wrestle with us. I can name several more off the top of my head. Another top contender is greed. Greed comes between families and between us and God more often than my puppy licks my face. Today, I believe many people fall into another sin category when it comes to their relationship with God. It's called sloth, but really it comes down to laziness. Too many folks would rather just stay home in bed or lounging around the house instead of coming to God's house and Worshiping Him. I hope that last statement doesn't cause you to tune me out, but the truth is you can tune me out all day long, but you can't tune God out forever. You might get away with it for years or even decades, but eventually we all come to the ford of the Jabbok. We all come face to face with "The Man." When that time comes for you, I pray you'll grab ahold of God and refuse to let go until you receive God's Blessing and that you can still walk away with your hip intact.

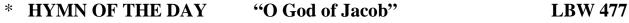
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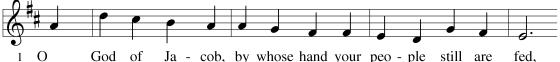
September 24, 2023

May the Lord bless you and keep you... May your wrestling matches with the Lord bring you closer to God and better able to trust in God's promises for you to have life and have it in abundance. May your striving with God strengthen your faith to overcome your doubts, fears, anger, greed, guilt or whatever it is that is keeping you from loving the Lord your God with all your strength, all your mind, and all your soul. Amen.

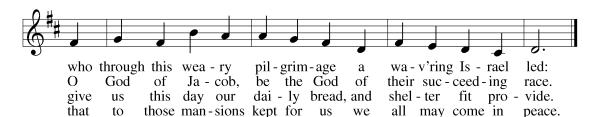
Silence may be kept for meditation...

^{*} Please stand if able





- Our vows, our prayers, we now pre sent be fore your throne of grace.
- 3 Through each per-plex ing path of life our wan-d'ring foot-steps guide;
- 4 Oh, grant us your pro-tect-ing care till all our wan-d'rings cease,



* APOSTLES' CREED

The Nicene Creed is said on all festivals and on Sundays in the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter. The Apostles' Creed is said at other times. The Creed is omitted here if the service of Holy Baptism or another rite with a creed is used.

C: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

> Or, He descended to the dead.

BLESSING OF QUILTS AND CARE KITS

- L: O God, our neighbors around the world are in need of hope. Your Spirit is a mighty force, your whispers of hope bring light into the world. Open our hearts and hands to see your presence in our neighborhoods and across the world.
- C: Jesus, help us reach out in hope to our neighbors.

* Please stand if able

L: God, we give you thanks for the pieces of fabric, thread, sewing machines, and the items collected for the kits. May their presence be a sign of hope, may these quilts wrap our neighbors in unending love, and may these kits offer dignity and healing.

C: Jesus, help us reach out in hope to our neighbors.

L: God, we give thanks for all the hands that fashioned hope into a quilt, for the hands that collected and sorted, for the hands that continually open wider so that no one feels left out.

C: Jesus, help us see hope in our neighbors.

L: God, we ask you to guide the staff and partners at LWR. May their voices and hands be a beacon of hope. Keep them safe. Keep them filled with your strength and perseverance.

C: Jesus, help us share a taste of hope with our neighbors.

L: God, be with our neighbors who will receive these gifts. May they be wrapped in love, may they taste your goodness, may they touch signs of your hope. Whether or not we know their names or where they live, they are our neighbors, all children of our heavenly Father. We pray all this in the name of Jesus, the One who is our hope.

C: Amen.

Sending

L: I sprinkle these kits and quilts with the water of hope from our Baptismal font to carry the gift of God's Holy Spirit to people in desperate need. May these kits and quilts be a sign of that hope to our neighbors near and far: offering a sweet scent of justice, and a feast of God's goodness. In the name of the Father, + the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

* PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

P: With gratitude for our whole selves, created in your image and made new in Christ, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

L: God of blessing, you gave Jacob and new name and a new purpose, bringing reconciliation with his brother and a renewal of your covenant promise. Help us in our struggles, heal our relationships, and inspire us to new ways to be of love

* Please stand if able

September 24, 2023

• Please be seated

and service to you and our neighbors. Eternal God,

C: In mercy, hear our prayer.

L: You separated the oceans, carved out lakes and rivers and established the network of wetlands and watersheds across the world. Make us ever mindful of our dependence on this life-giving water, and inspire us to work diligently to ensure all people have access to it. Eternal God,

C: In mercy, hear our prayer.

L: Give all who lead the humility to accept the challenges that we face, and the persistence to address those challenges, however long it takes. Eternal God,

C: In mercy, hear our prayer.

L: We uplift those whose difficulties have left them wounded in body or mind, (*especially...*) Hold and comfort them that they might find strength to walk through their difficulties. Eternal God,

C: In mercy, hear our prayer.

L: Spur us to stand with those who are victims of systemic racism, and whose lives and communities are torn apart by both internal and state violence. Teach us how to take action to bring change to our deeply flawed society. Eternal God,

C: In mercy, hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

L: We remember the saints who by their example showed us how to persist in the face of struggles, always trusting in you to give them strength. May we, too, persevere as they modeled for us, until we see them again at the end of all things. Eternal God,

C: In mercy, hear our prayer.

P: We place in your loving arms these, our prayers, spoken and unspoken, trusting in your boundless mercy, though Jesus Christ our Savior.

C: Amen.

* SHARING OF THE PEACE

(The Sharing of the Peace that began when the congregation arrived is now shared with the Pastor at this time...)

* Please stand if able

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

MEAL

* OFFERING PRAYER

While the congregation is still standing say:

- P: As we collect our offering here in person, those worshipping with us through the internet, may you go to our website located at www.pitsburgtlc.org where you'll find a button labeled "Give to Trinity." You can make your offering to God through our secure website.
- P: Let us pray for the offerings we receive this day....Generous God, you bless us with riches beyond measure. Accept now these gifts that we offer, returning to you what you have first given us. Use them as a blessing to others in our communities and around the world.

C: Amen.

* THE LORD'S PRAYER

- P: We are united together by this heavenly food, which is the Body and Blood of our Savior Jesus Christ. So, let us pray as Jesus taught...
- C: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

SENDING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

* SENDING BLESSING

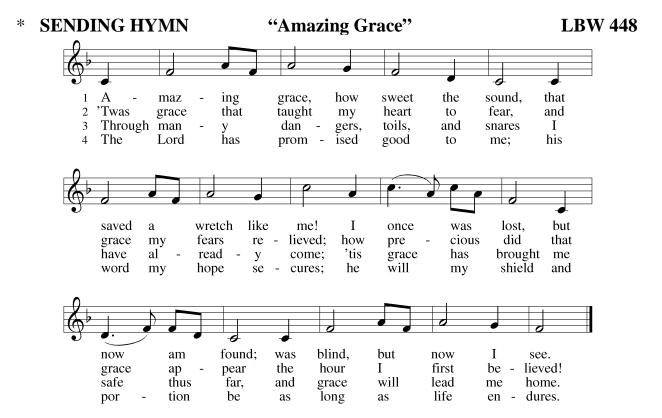
P: The God of glory, Jesus Christ, name above all names, and the Spirit who lives in you, bless you now and forever.

* Please stand if able

September 24, 2023

• Please be seated

C: Amen.



* DISMISSAL

- P: Until the next time we gather together as God's people to offer our worship and praise, depart in Christ's Love.
- C: Seeking, welcoming, and serving all. Amen!

* POSTLUDE Roxanne Groff

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Scripture reading for next Sunday, October 1st Exodus 1:8-14 [15-20]; 3:1-15

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September 24, 2023

· Please be seated

Health Tips for the Week

MIND: Find out the meaning and origin of your name.

BODY: Dance to your favorite song. **SPIRIT:** Pray for our farmers.

Trinity Worship Assistants and Staff

Ministers	All the People of Trinity
Organist	Roxanne Groff
Lector	Mark Oswalt
Parrish Nurse	PJ Musser
Custodian	Mark Groff
Secretary	Sharon Fourman
Facebook Live Recorder	PJ Musser
Altar Flowers	Given to the Glory of God by Pastor Mel and PJ Musser in celebration of their anniversary.

This Week @ Trinity - September 24 thru October 1, 2023

DATE	TIME	EVENT
Sun, Sept. 24	9:30 am	Christian Conversations (Coffee/Juice and Donuts)
	10:30 am	Worship Service
Fri, Sept. 29	3:30 pm	FISH Choice Food Pantry
Sun, Oct. 1	9:30 am	Christian Conversations (Coffee/Juice and Donuts)
	10:30 am	Worship Service w/Communion

PRAYERS & SQUARES QUILTING will <u>NOT</u> meet this Tuesday, the 26th. But <u>WILL</u> meet on Tuesday, October 3rd to complete packing the quilts for Lutheran World Relief.

SAVE THE DATE!

• October 8 - Church Security and Safety oSpecial Guest Speaker-Eric Hanes

* Please stand if able

September 24, 2023

• Please be seated

OAdult Christian Conversations starts at 9:00am this day only...

- October 22 Trinity Fall Festival 2:00 pm 5:30 pm
- October 29 Reformation/Confirmation Sunday o Reception following Service
- November 5 All Saints Sunday Annual Congregational Meeting
- November 5 Trinity Annual Christmas Auction
 oStarts at 3:00 pm @ Bev & Eldon Erdmann's Home
- November 12 Women's Thankoffering Sunday
- December 3 First Sunday of Advent

TRINITY TRUMPET – Please pick up your copy of the October Trinity Trumpet.



Trinity is on the Air at FM 88.3

If you are near the Church on Sunday morning, you can tune in to FM 88.3 at 10:30 AM and hear the sermon from your car.

Holy Communion Delivery Available to ALL:

If you or anyone you know would like to have Holy Communion delivered to a home or place of business, please call Pastor Mel at 937-626-7100. He will bring a prefilled communion chalice including both sanctified wine and a morsel of bread all prepackaged from the Concordia True Vine company. This is a safe way to stay connected to your brothers and sisters in Christ.

Trinity Contact Info

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Secretary:	Sharon Fourman
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* Please stand if able

