

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

*And this is the testimony,  
that God gave us eternal life,  
and this life is in his Son.*

1 John 5:11, ESV

1 John 5:9-13  
July 28, 2024



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

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## GATHERING

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- **Prelude** **Roxanne Groff**
- **Office of the Acolyte and Ringing of the Bell**

- **Welcome** **Pr Mel Musser**  
*--Facebook Live Viewers*

**\* 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**

\* **GATHERING HYMN**      **“Shall We Gather At the River”**      **ELW 423**



1 Shall we gath - er at the riv - er, where bright an - gel feet have trod,  
 2 On the mar - gin of the riv - er, wash - ing up its sil - ver spray,  
 3 Ere we reach the shin-ing riv - er, lay we ev - 'ry bur - den down;  
 4 Soon we'll reach the shin-ing riv - er, soon our pil-grim-age will cease;



with its crys - tal tide for - ev - er flow-ing by the throne of God?  
 we will walk and wor - ship ev - er, all the hap - py gold - en day.  
 grace our spir - its will de - liv - er, and pro-vide a robe and crown.  
 soon our hap - py hearts will quiv - er with the mel - o - dy of peace.



Yes, we'll gath - er at the riv - er, the beau-ti-ful, the beau-ti-ful riv - er;



gath - er with the saints at the riv - er that flows by the throne of God.

\* **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... Loving God, you proclaim to us the promise of eternal life through Jesus Christ, your son, our brother. Help us to respond to this gift with an outpouring of faithfulness and joy, and live lives of gratitude for all that you have done for us. Raise us anew each morning into the presence of your Holy Spirit, until that day when we rise again into eternal life with you. In Jesus' name we pray.

C: Amen.

- **CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**



**Theme:** The Power of Believing

**Materials:** None

**Scripture:** 1 John 5:9-13

Hello boys and girls! I hope you all had a great week. Today I want to talk about the power of believing. Do you believe in something, anything? Do you know there's great power in believing in something? About 26 years ago I heard the call of Jesus to become a pastor in His Church. At first I didn't believe Jesus would be calling me. I was at a very low point in my life. I felt like I had wasted most of the years God had given me. Yet, I heard this tiny voice in my head that wouldn't go away. So, I asked the person whose opinion I valued the most, PJ. She said she thought I should believe the voice was really Jesus calling me. Eventually, I did come to believe and I started to act like I believed it.

I became even more active in my Church and involved in Bible studies. I continued to ask other people whose opinion I valued if they could envision me as a Pastor. Eventually, I applied to Trinity Lutheran Seminary and was accepted. I still had 4 years of study and hard work before I would become a Pastor, but here I am today. It all started because I believed Jesus was calling my name.

Jesus is calling your name too. It might not be to become a Pastor, but God has given each of you very special gifts and talents and is calling you to use them to help and to serve. One of you might be called to become a teacher or a doctor or a nurse. Someone might be called to be a factory worker or a chef. The power of believing is that it gives you the confidence and the courage to take one step at a time until, before you know it, POW! You have become what you believed you could. Believing is the most powerful force we have to help us become what Jesus is calling us to be. The best part of my job as your Pastor is getting to watch and to help each of you develop into the kind and merciful person God created you to be.

Let's Pray... Dear God, thank you for calling my name and giving me the ability to believe in you and to believe I can become exactly the person you want me to be. Amen.

- **A READING OF SCRIPTURE: 1 John 5:9-13**

R: Our scripture reading is from 1 John, Chapter 5.

**C: Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>9</sup>If we receive human testimony, the testimony of God is greater; for this is the testimony of God that he has testified to his Son. <sup>10</sup>Those who believe in the Son of God have the testimony in their hearts. Those who do not believe in God have made him a liar by not believing in the testimony that God has given concerning his Son. <sup>11</sup>And this is the testimony: God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. <sup>12</sup>Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. <sup>13</sup>I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.

R: This is the Word of the Lord!

**C: Praise to You, O Christ** (*Spoken*)

- **SERMON**

**Pr Mel Musser**

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the one in whom we have eternal life, Jesus Christ our Savior and our Lord, amen.

Today our topic is the power of believing. Belief propels us to accomplish things otherwise impossible. Here are several examples of what I mean...

(SLIDE) The famous inventor, Thomas Alva Edison, discouraged his friend, Henry Ford, from pursuing his fledgling idea of a motorcar. Convinced of the worthlessness of the project, Edison invited Ford to come and work for him. Thankfully, Ford remained committed to his idea and tirelessly pursued his dream. Although his first attempt resulted in a vehicle without a reverse gear, Ford knew he could make it happen. And, eventually he did... (SLIDE) “Forget it,” the experts all told Madame Marie Curie. They agreed radium could not exist.

However, Marie insisted, “I know radium is a real element. I can make it happen.”

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\* Please stand if able

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• Please be seated

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And she did... (SLIDE) Let's not forget the Wright Brothers. Journalists, friends, specialists, and even their father laughed at the folly of their idea for an airplane. "What a silly insane way to waste money," Orville and Wilbur were told. Others jeered, "Leave flying to the birds." "Sorry," the brothers replied, "We can make it happen." As a result, a place called Kitty Hawk, North Carolina became the setting for the launching of their "ridiculous" idea... Finally, consider the plight of Benjamin Franklin. (SLIDE) The next time you marvel at the modern conveniences we take for granted — television, computers, air-conditioning, stereos, kitchen blenders, and so on, all of which work by simply plugging them into an electrical wall outlet, remember Franklin and his experiments with electricity. Franklin was admonished to stop his foolish experiments with lightning. What an absurd waste of time! Why, nothing could outdo the oil lamp. Thank goodness, Franklin knew he could make electricity happen. And he did!

(SLIDE) What do all these stories from the pages of our history books have in common? In each case, Ford, Curry, Orville and Wilbur, and Franklin all believed in themselves and their ideas. They were convinced if they moved forward, disregarded the many naysayers, and had sufficient confidence and courage to go along with their hard work, they could achieve their goal. They didn't allow conventional wisdom, peer pressure, or even the fear of failure to stop them from pursuing their dreams. In a similar way, Saint John closes his first letter



to the Christian community, and we close our summer sermon series on First John, by hearing the message of our need for believing, confident if we hold fast — we can live into the salvation God has promised to all who believe. (SLIDE)

The author of First John uses the vocabulary of testimony. We Lutherans aren't too comfortable with that kind of language. It gets perilously close to the language of evangelism and we all shy away from that sort of thing. Yet, our scripture says Jesus was God's testimony and God has written it on our hearts. God the Father has spoken to his son Jesus, who in turn has presented His Word to the world during his public ministry. More than just talk, Jesus testified through his actions, the example of His sacrificial life. Christ stood tall against the forces of evil in his day. He never backed down from the challenges his opponents put before him. (SLIDE) When he was challenged concerning his association with the poor, the lowly, and outcasts of society, he responded, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners" That's from Matthew chapter 9, verses 12 and 13. Believers are given this great privilege of not only possessing the testimony, but equally if not greater, the responsibility to witness, to share the message of that testimony in the environment where we live, work, and play. Christ's message is universal, meaning all people are invited into his promise of eternal life.

The power and privilege of believing provides another very special and important gift, the rationale for our presence in the world itself. Our belief gives us meaning and purpose for our lives. (SLIDE) John says we have been given eternal life through the teaching and mission of his son, Jesus. All who believe and profess Jesus as Savior and Lord have this life in Jesus Christ. It's not a question of gaining eternal life after you die, in the great by and by. It begins the moment you place your trust in the promises of Jesus Christ and profess Jesus as your Lord. If eternal life were only something you get after you die, what good is that for a world battered and bruised, a world lost and separated from God. What good does it do to believe in the promise of a better life only after death. That's one of the most misunderstood aspects of our faith. When Jesus proclaimed the Kingdom of God is at hand, he meant here and now, not somewhere over the rainbow.

This message of the power of belief provides both comfort and challenge for all who follow Jesus. In a world filled with uncertainty, so many impossible problems, full of injustice, and a rising level of secularism, skepticism, and schism, it's certainly comforting to know our belief in Christ and faith in his mission and message can be at least partially realized right now, here today. The guarantee of the coming Kingdom of God can relieve much heartache and calm our beleaguered and weary souls. Battered and bruised by the world in which we live, Christians



need this great message of hope, the assurance that our belief leads us directly into God's Kingdom.

When I talk about the battered and bruised world we live in I'm certain you all have a pretty good idea what I'm talking about. I do have some pretty good news to share. I looked up the statistics of deaths among children age 5 and below. (SLIDE) In 1990 the global death toll was 12.6 million deaths per year. The most recent numbers I could find are from 2022 and the total deaths in that same age group declined to 5.2 million. That's still about 5.2 million too many, but a global drop of 59 percent is something we can be encouraged by. I only hope and pray other issues in our world showed such improvement. (SLIDE) Wars in the Ukraine and in Isarel rage on with seemingly no end in sight. One party's candidate for president of the United States was nearly assassinated. Crime is running wild in the streets of our major cities while protestors destroy and deface monuments and burn the flag of the US. The gap between the rich and the poor is either growing or remaining like the chasm created by the Colorado River we call the Grand Canyon. I saw a map of where wildfires are currently burning out of control across our country. It seemed like the entire west coast and major portions of the south and northeast are completely on fire. Add to all of that the fact we live in a time when competing news companies tell completely different news, drawing completely opposite conclusions from the same incident or situation. I don't know

about you, but as for me, I don't know who or what to believe when it comes to current events anymore. It's enough to make a person become a cynic. On top of all that, Christianity seems to be in retreat almost everywhere you look... Yes, there's no doubt, we still live in a world that is battered and bruised...

The great challenge, of course, is for believers to maintain and actually profess their belief despite this environment which seeks to negate the ideas and teachings, and yes, the testimony, of Jesus Christ. To truly walk in the footsteps of Jesus, to be a true follower and believer, a contemporary disciple, necessitates we live in a manner contrary to the prevailing "wisdom" of society. We must be, in other words, counter cultural. (SLIDE) When society suggests we must follow a certain manner of life and profess the "truths" the majority hails as normative, we must have the courage of our convictions to stand against the tide. When we encounter those who question or even ridicule basic Christian values, which have stood the test of time for 2000 years how do we respond? Do you bury your head in the sand or do you speak out and proclaim Jesus Christ is still Lord and ruler of the universe? If Henry Ford, Madam Curry, Orville and Wilbur Wright, and Benjamin Franklin had given in to the loudest voices of their times we might still be living in the dark, walking or riding a bike everywhere we need to go. It takes confidence and courage to be a Christian in this or in any age.

(SLIDE) May you find your voice and proclaim your belief in Christ Jesus as your Savior and Lord. May our actions continue to make strides in lowering the global child death rates. May we be peacemakers and mercy givers! May we live right here and right now as if the Kingdom of God were fully present and may the love and peace of Jesus Christ rule in our hearts and in our world because that's the power of believing. Amen.

*Silence may be kept for meditation...*

\* **HYMN OF THE DAY**                      **“Blessed Assurance”**                      **ELW 638**



- 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.

*Refrain*



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.

**\* 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.**

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➤ *Or, He descended to the dead.*

**\* PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

**L:** Confident in the breadth and depth of God's love and grace, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

*A brief silence.*

**L:** Faithful God, there are times when we all lose our faith, when our fears overwhelm, when our doubts about you and the state of the world make our hearts desolate. Renew our faith, that we might be filled with the assurance of your love and our life eternal with you. God of love,

**C: We lift our prayers to you.**

**L:** Renew our commitment to your beautiful creation, with which we are fully interdependent. Spur us to make changes in our lives and our laws that will protect and preserve the beauty and vibrance of our natural home. God of love,

**C: We lift our prayers to you.**

**L:** Renew our trust in our leaders but also spur us to hold them accountable to act in accordance with your call to love, justice, and peace, that they might act in ways worthy of trust. God of love,

**C: We lift our prayers to you.**

**L:** Renew our bodies, minds, and spirits when they are diminished by physical or mental illness, addiction or injury, (*especially...*) God of love,

**C: We lift our prayers to you.**

L: Renew our energy in the seemingly endless work of caring for those in need. Help us to see where our work is having a positive impact, and inspire us to continue to act in love and service to our neighbors. God of love,

**C: We lift our prayers to you.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

L: Renew our memory of those departed saints whose actions, big and small, have drawn us closer to you, and who, by their example, led us to lives of love and faith. God of love,

**C: We lift our prayers to you.**

L: With all our siblings in Christ here and around the world, we lift all our prayers to you, through Jesus Christ our savior and friend.

**C: Amen.**

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## MEAL

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### • OFFERING

P: As we collect our offering here in person, those worshipping with us through the internet may go to our website located at [www.pitsburgtlc.org](http://www.pitsburgtlc.org) where you'll find a button labeled "Give to Trinity." You can make your offering to God through our secure website.

### \* OFFERTORY PRAYER

P: Let us pray for the offerings we receive this day ...God of promise, you have given us all good things, and fulfill our needs with grace and generosity. We offer these gifts as our grateful response, a portion of your abundance, that you might use them for the good of the world, to the glory of your holy name. Receive them for the sake of Jesus Christ, our savior and friend.

**C: Amen.**

### \* THE LORD'S PRAYER

P: United into one through Jesus Christ Our Lord, we 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.**

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## SENDING

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### • ANNOUNCEMENTS

### \* SENDING BLESSING

P: The blessing of God, who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us, be upon you now and forever.

C: Amen.

### \* SENDING HYMN

### “Praise and Thanksgiving”

LBW 409



1 Praise and thanks-giv - ing, God, we would of - fer for all things  
2 God, bless the la - bor we bring to serve you, that with our  
3 Fa - ther, pro - vid - ing food for your chil - dren, by Wis - dom's  
4 Then will your bless - ing reach ev - 'ry peo - ple, free - ly con -



liv - ing, you have made good: har - vest of sown fields, fruits of the  
neigh - bor we may be fed. Sow - ing or till - ing, we would work  
guid - ing teach us to share one with an - oth - er, so that, re -  
fess - ing your gra - cious hand. Where you are reign - ing, no one will



or - chard, hay from the mown fields, blos - som and wood.  
with you, har - vest - ing, mill - ing for dai - ly bread.  
joic - ing with us, all oth - ers may know your care.  
hun - ger; your love sus - tain - ing show - ers the land.

### \* DISMISSAL

P: Thank you all for joining us to worship our great and gracious God! Thanks also to our Facebook and other social media viewers for joining us as well. We're glad you're with us today. 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

\* Please stand if able

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• Please be seated

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Scripture readings for next Sunday, August 4<sup>th</sup>  
Daniel 2:24-49

### Health Tips for the Week

**Body:** Wear sunblock when in the sun to protect your skin from the sun's rays.

**Mind:** Use your brain to do calculations.

**Spirit:** Make peace with a loved one.

### Trinity Worship Assistants and Staff

|                        |                           |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Ministers              | All the People of Trinity |
| Organist               | Roxanne Groff             |
| Lector                 | Peggy Didier              |
| Parrish Nurse          | PJ Musser                 |
| Acolyte                | Jackson Baker             |
| Custodian              | Mark Groff                |
| Secretary              | Sharon Fourman            |
| Facebook Live Recorder | PJ Musser                 |

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



**This Week @ Trinity – July 28 thru August 4:**

| DATE          | TIME     | EVENT   |
|---------------|----------|---|
| Sun, July 28  | 9:30 am  | Christian Conversations (Coffee/Juice and Donuts) |
|               | 10:30 am | Worship Service                                   |
| Tues, July 30 | 10:00 am | Prayers & Squares Quilting                        |
| Thurs, Aug 1  | 10:00 am | Youth & Family Ministry Team Meeting              |
| Fri, Aug 2    | 3:30 pm  | FISH Choice Food Pantry                           |
| Sun, Aug 4    | 9:30 am  | Christian Conversations (Coffee/Juice and Donuts) |
|               | 10:30 am | Worship Service                                   |

**Save The Date!**

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| August 5, 2024     | WELCA Planning Meeting   |
| August 16-24, 2024 | The Great Darke County Fair<br><i>Lutheran Day is Thursday, August 22<sup>nd</sup></i> |
| August 25, 2024    | Rally Day – <i>Sundaes on Sunday!</i>  |



**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.

**AROUND THE PARISH - 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.

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\* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

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### Trinity Contact Info

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Pastor:       | Mel Musser   |
| Email:        | <a href="mailto:pastor@pitsburgtlc.org">pastor@pitsburgtlc.org</a>       |
| Cell Phone:   | 937-626-7100   |
| Secretary:    | Sharon Fourman   |
| Email:        | <a href="mailto:secretary@pitsburgtlc.org">secretary@pitsburgtlc.org</a> |
| Office Hours: | By Appointment   |
| Office Phone: | 937-692-5670   |
| Website:      | <a href="http://www.pitsburgtlc.org">www.pitsburgtlc.org</a>             |



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- \* Please stand if able
  - Please be seated