Mission Congregation of the ELCA Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

P. O. Box 64 - 8520 Oakes Rd - Pitsburg, Ohio 45358



Luke 18:31 – 19:10 April 6, 2025



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

* CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

P: We confess our sins before God and one another.

Pause for silence and reflection.

P: God of the journey,

C: We do not want to follow where you lead. Instead, we turn inward, focusing on satisfying our own wants, even at the expense of our neighbors. We do not see their suffering; we do not act for their justice. We are motivated by the fear of not getting what we want, or of losing what we have. We ignore the example of your sacrificial love, which has the power to heal and make whole. Forgive us for refusing to heed your call. Change our hearts, our minds, and our actions, so that we might return to following you, no matter where your journey leads.

P: Our God is a God of abundant grace and mercy, and never lets us go. For the sake of Jesus, God With Us, who gave all for the redemption of creation, your sins are forgiven. Follow in Christ's loving footsteps.

C: Amen.

* Please stand if able April 6, 2025

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Please be seated

* GATHERING HYMN "Just As I Am, Without One Plea" LBW 296



- 1 Just as I am, with out one plea, but that thy blood was shed for me,
- 2 Just as I am, and wait ing not to rid my soul of one dark blot,
- 3 Just as I am, though tossed a-bout with man-y a con-flict, man-y a doubt,
- 4 Just as I am, poor, wretch-ed, blind; sight, rich es, heal ing of the mind,



and that thou bidd'st me come to thee, to thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot, fight-ings and fears with - in, with-out, yea, all I need in thee to find,

O Lamb of God, I come, I come

- 5 Just as I am, thou wilt receive, wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve; because thy promise I believe, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.
- 6 Just as I am; thy love unknown has broken ev'ry barrier down; now to be thine, yea, thine alone, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

* 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.

* Please stand if able April 6, 2025

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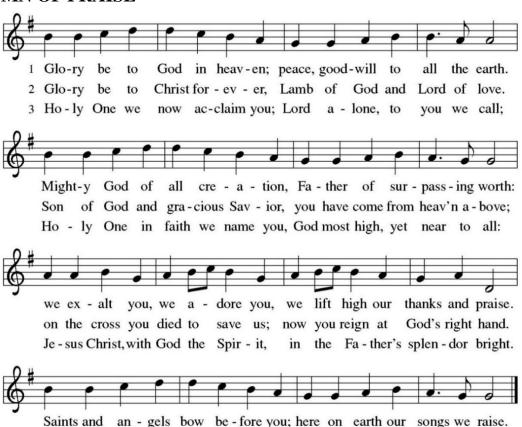
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* HYMN OF PRAISE



* PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray... Holy God, you know the longing of our hearts to be in relationship with you, despite living as though we do not need you. Have mercy on us. Call us into your presence. Heal us, renew us, and lead us in the new life that only you can provide. In Jesus' name we pray.

Hear our prayer; re - store, for - give us; in your prom-ise firm we stand.

to

God on high!

the peace that we in - her - it, glo - ry be

C: Amen.

WORD

* Please stand if able

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CHILDREN'S MESSAGE



Hello boys and girls! I hope you all had a great week! Do you like parades? Have you ever been to a really exciting parade, maybe at Disneyworld or the Horse Parade in Greenville? You wanted to see everything that was happening, but maybe there were just too many bigger people in front of you and you had trouble seeing? Maybe your Dad lifted you up on his shoulders so you could see? I have a story today that happened when Jesus was living on earth. He was going from place to place telling everyone about our God, healing the sick and sharing the good news of God's love. Everyone in town was rushing to see him as he walked through their town, just like a parade.

Luke 18:31-19:10

One man couldn't see a thing! His name was Zacchaeus, but, I'm sure his mother and friends would have called him Zach, only, well, he didn't have any friends! No friends! You see, everyone thought ol' Zach was a cheater. They assumed he must have cheated people and took more of their money than he should have because he was very rich. Zach was a tax collector. People didn't like that, and they didn't like Zacchaeus. When he couldn't see what was happening in the street, no one moved over to let him get to the front. No one offered to boost him up on their shoulders. Zacchaeus had an idea. He ran down the street and climbed up into a big tree right above the street. "Now," he thought, "I've got a better view than anybody!"

Jesus came down the street with everyone in town calling out to him with great excitement. Suddenly, Jesus stopped... He looked straight up into the tree where Zacchaeus sat, and looked at him and said, "Zack! Hurry Down! Today I'd like to stay at your house." Zacchaeus wondered, "How does Jesus know my name? And, why did he call me Zach, like he was my friend?" Some of the people from the town said, "What!! We have other people in town with nice houses! That guy is a cheater! Jesus, you don't want to stay at his house!"

Suddenly Zach knew that more than anything in the world, he wanted Jesus to come to his house! He wanted to hear Jesus call him Zach! He wanted to know Jesus as his friend. Zacchaeus scrambled down out of the tree. He said, "Lord Jesus, I give away half of all I have to the poor, and to all those I might have cheated, I pay them back – four times each!" Jesus knew that Zacchaeus meant what he said. Jesus did go to Zach's house and cleaned his heart from the sin of cheating and being selfish. Jesus knows your name and has cleaned your heart too!

Let's pray... Dear Jesus, thank you for calling my name and making me your friend. Amen.

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A READING OF SCRIPTURE: Luke 18:31-19:10

R: Our scripture reading is from Luke, Chapters 18 and 19.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

³¹Then he took the twelve aside and said to them, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished. ³²For he will be handed over to the Gentiles; and he will be mocked and insulted and spat upon. ³³After they have flogged him, they will kill him, and on the third day he will rise again." ³⁴But they understood nothing about all these things; in fact, what he said was hidden from them, and they did not grasp what was said.

³⁵As he approached Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging.

³⁶When he heard a crowd going by, he asked what was happening. ³⁷They told him, "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by." ³⁸Then he shouted, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" ³⁹Those who were in front sternly ordered him to be quiet; but he shouted even more loudly, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" ⁴⁰Jesus stood still and ordered the man to be brought to him; and when he came near, he asked him, ⁴¹"What do you want me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, let me see again." ⁴²Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has saved you." ⁴³Immediately he regained his sight and followed him, glorifying God; and all the people, when they saw it, praised God.

He entered Jericho and was passing through it. ²A man was there named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was rich. ³He was trying to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was short in stature. ⁴So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to see him, because he was going to pass that way. ⁵When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today." ⁶So he hurried down and was happy to welcome him. ⁷All who saw it began to grumble and said, "He has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner." ⁸Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, "Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much." ⁹Then Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. ¹⁰For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost."

R: This is the Word of the Lord!

C: Praise to You, O Christ (Spoken)

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• SERMON Pr. Mel Musser

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the one who eats with tax collectors and even sinners like you and me, Jesus Christ, our Lord, amen.

The old joke asks the question, Who is the shortest man in the Bible?

(SLIDE) Answer: Not, as we might suspect, Zacchaeus; not Nehemiah (say it out loud); but Bildad the Shuhite. (My apologies, Bible humor is often hard to take...)

Our scripture reading for today has three distinct sections. Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem. Along that journey, He encounters people—some who are physically blind, some who are spiritually blind. Some see, and some do not. Along the way, Jesus opens their eyes to the true nature of God's Kingdom. Today, we get to focus on all three encounters (SLIDE): Jesus' announcement of His passion, the healing of the blind man, and His dinner with Zacchaeus. All of them involve a kind of sight—physical, spiritual, and relational—that is key to understanding the message of the Gospel.

Most of the time we skip right to the story of Zacchaeus, but before we get there let's unpack the first two sections to see what we might find. Our text begins with what most people say is Jesus making his third prediction of his death and resurrection. (SLIDE) For me, calling this a prediction, sort of put Jesus into the category of a clairvoyant or some kind of a psychic. I've never liked that vision of our Lord. I much prefer to think of these three times in Luke's Gospel where Jesus

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tell the disciples what is going to happen when they arrive in Jerusalem as his Passion Announcements. I mean, Jesus who is of one being with God, has no need to try to predict the future events. He simply announces what will happen and it happens. So, on their way to Jerico, Jesus calls his 12 closest friends and disciples aside and announces, for the third time, exactly what will happen when they finally get to Jerusalem. Jesus' passion shows the ultimate act of sacrificial love and revels God's Kingdom. His death will "open the eyes" of the world to the nature of God's Kingdom. It will not be a Kingdom of power, control, and violence, but of grace, mercy, and salvation. The disciples' inability to fully comprehend Jesus' words shows a kind of spiritual blindness. (SLIDE) They can't see the significance of what Jesus is saying about His death. Yet, Jesus is calling them (and us) to see in a new way. We see the Kingdom of God through the lens of the cross and that's the whole key to understanding God's plan for our salvation.

(SLIDE) Along the way they encounter a blind man on the side the road.

After Jesus restores the man's sight, he follows Jesus. This healing is both physical and spiritual. The blind man's persistence in calling out for mercy represents a deep longing for sight—not just physical sight but a deeper, spiritual sight. His faith in Jesus as the Messiah opens his eyes, not only to the world around him, but also to the truth about Jesus. Many people are physically blind,

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but until Jesus opens our eyes we are all spiritually blind to the nature of God's Kingdom.

Then Jesus arrives at Jerico. (SLIDE) We have no back story on Zacchaeus. We don't know how he heard about Jesus. Only that he was trying to see Jesus as he passed by. Since his neighbors in Jerico knew his profession and our text tells us no one in the crowd would let him get close enough to see Him, it's fair to think *they* certainly didn't tell Zaccheaus about Jesus. My suspicion is the formerly blind man was so excited about receiving his sight he not only followed Jesus, he shouted his miracle story to everyone and anyone who would listen. My guess is Zaccheaus was one who heard about Jesus because of the formerly blind man's story.

That brings us to Zaccheaus himself. Fron my Sunday School days I always thought I knew he was a very short person in stature. He literally couldn't see over the heads of the normal height people in the crowd. So, he had to climb the sycamore tree in order to catch a glimpse of this miracle healer. This is where it really gets interesting. Our English translation says Zaccheaus was short in stature, but that's not exactly what the Greek says. In the Greek, the meaning contains a slightly different nuance. It can mean short in stature, but it can also mean a lack of maturity or a person with feminine qualities. It also means unimportant and insignificant. It seems to me Zaccheaus had a lot more going against him than

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simply being short. As a tax collector, he was most likely very wealthy and perhaps this wording is meant to tell us the people thought he was too young to have amassed such a large fortune through legitimate means. Maybe the people of Jerico disliked him for lots reasons, besides the fact that he took their hard-earned money and gave it to the hated Romans... So, for whatever reason, the townspeople didn't think he deserved a front row seat or any seat for that matter, to see the Messiah. If, like me, you were always taught to think of Zaccheaus as just another short guy, I say he was short in many ways, but the real problem was that he was short on reputation.

The thing about reputation is sometimes it's earned and sometimes it's the product of people wanting something to gossip about. In the case of Zaccheaus, my guess is his reputation was more gossip than reality. Here's why I say that... After Jesus calls him out by name, Zaccheaus offers up his confession and repentance. Again, the English translation doesn't help us understand who Zaccheaus is or what his true motivations were. We just read that Zaccheaus will give half of his fortune to the poor and to those he has defrauded, he'll repay four times the amount. I noticed right off the bat he's taking a vow of poverty. By the time he gives all that money away, he'll be penniless. When I read the story in the Greek text, I discovered Zaccheaus wasn't speaking about what he will do in the future. Everything he says is in the present tense. His confession should be more

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like: "I already give half my income to the poor and if I ever defraud anyone, I already repay them four times the amount." Now I've heard of some companies who are so confident their product will perform as advertised and expected, they offer a double your money back guarantee, but Zaccheaus gives quadruple your money back if he makes a mistake in your taxes. That's even better than Turbo Tax! Despite his honesty in dealing with his wealth, his reputation is one of being unworthy to even be close enough to Jesus to catch a fleeting glimpse. In one single statement Jesus reverses all the negativity and restores Zaccheaus into a right relationship with God as he announces for all to hear that today salvation has come to the house of this child of Abraham. Zacchaeus' encounter with Jesus is a moment of spiritual sight. Though he was physically able to see Jesus from the tree, his true sight comes when he receives the grace of Jesus. He sees who Jesus truly is, the one who seeks and saves the lost. Jesus brings salvation, not through judgment, but through mercy and grace.

Zacchaeus, like the blind man, and all of us who suffer from spiritual blindness were and are lost in a way that only Jesus can heal. Zacchaeus' story reflects the broader truth that Jesus came to open the eyes of all people, even those who were seen as the worst sinners in society. (SLIDE) Through the cross, Jesus offers forgiveness and the opportunity for transformation, which is ultimately the

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deepest kind of sight. Through Jesus and His death and resurrection we can see the world as God sees it, and live in accordance with that vision.

I know many Christians who think following Jesus means following a list of rules that make you justified before God and earn your ticket to heaven. (SLIDE)

I used to think that myself. I used to think God's Kingdom was mechanical. You behave yourself, follow the rules and if you're good enough you get your pass into heaven. My thinking kept me spiritually blind. It took a lot of time and many sermons from my pastors over those years to change my thinking. It was Jesus, speaking through all those sermons by all those pastors who finally opened my eyes and restored my spiritual sight. Not that I see the Kingdom of God in all clarity, I still see as though I'm looking through cataracts that cloud my vision, but in faith I see anything I might do that is good in the eyes of the Lord doesn't come from my desire to keep the rules, but to show my gratitude and love for all Jesus has done for me. (SLIDE)

May Jesus open our eyes to see the great depth and breadth of God's love.

May you know that by God's grace and through God's mercy salvation has come to your house today. Amen.

Silence may be kept for meditation...

* Please stand if able

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* NICENE 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: We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen

Or, He descended to the dead.

* PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

L: With trust and hope, we pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

L: God, you answer us when we cry to you. Transform our hearts and lives just as you caused the blind man to see, and moved Zacchaeus to make amends for all his dishonesty. Merciful God,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: Even the sparrow and the swallow find care in you, as Psalm 84 proclaims. Help us to cherish all creatures of the earth, and seek for their flourishing. Merciful God,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: Lift up leaders throughout the world who truly understand their people and communities. Empower communities to recognize and affirm those who would be faithful leaders in their midst. Merciful God,

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C: Hear our prayer.

L: Just as you heard the cries of the blind man, you know the needs of our hearts, minds, and bodies. Draw near to all who are in need of your care, (*especially*...) and grant them courage, comfort, and healing. Merciful God,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: Tend to those who are grieving the loss of a beloved family member or friend, the loss of a relationship, or the loss of some aspect of their lives they previously took for granted. May all find your compassion and peace as they journey through their pain. Merciful God,

C: Hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

L: Teach us the stories of those gone before us, and inspire us by their faithful commitments, which are impacting us still today. Merciful God,

C: Hear our prayer.

P: We entrust all these prayers and those of our hearts to you, O God. In Jesus name we pray.

C: Amen.

MEAL

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 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 abundance, in love you have given us all that we need to flourish. In love we return to you a portion of these gifts, so that your love might be seen and known and experienced in all the world. Bless these things we offer, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our savior and friend.

C: Amen.

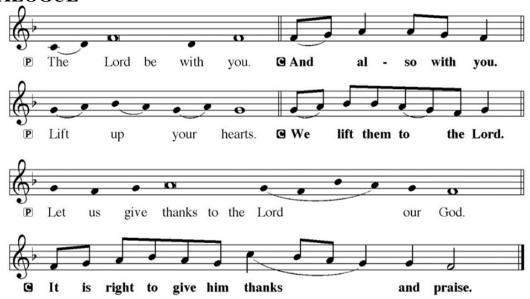
THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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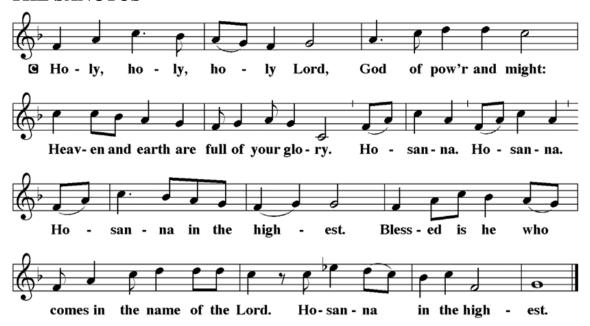
* DIALOGUE



* THE PREFACE

P: It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord. You bid your people cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast. Renew our zeal in faith and life, and bring us to the fullness of grace that belongs to the children of God. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

* THE SANCTUS



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* EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

- P: Holy God, our living Water and our merciful Guide, together with rivers and seas, wells and springs we bless and magnify you. You led your people Israel through the dessert, and provided them water from the rock. We praise you for Christ, our Rock and our Water, who joined us in our desert, pouring out his life for the world.
- In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks: broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.
- Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.
- Remembering, therefore, his life, death, and resurrection, we await your salvation for all this thirsty world. Pour out your Spirit on this holy food and on the baptized gathered for this feast: wash away our sin, that we may be revived for our journey by the love of Christ.
- Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever.

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.

* INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: We do not have to cry out or climb a tree to see Jesus—he is present here with us in this holy meal. All are invited to dine with him today. Come and be fed!

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

Communion is at the rail. As the ministers give the bread and wine, they may say these words to each communicant:

The body of Christ, given for you.

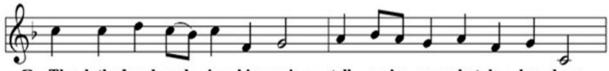
The blood of Christ, shed for you.

The communicant may say: Amen.

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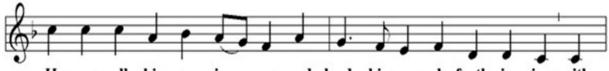
* POST COMMUNION CANTICLE



Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell ev-'ry-one what he has done.



Let all who seek the Lord re - joice and proud-ly bear his name.



He re-calls his prom-is - es and leads his peo-ple forth in joy with



* POST COMMUNION PRAYER

P: Let us pray... Generous Host, you have shared your feast with us and made us new. Send us now to set tables of love and grace in our communities, that your liberating love might nourish the world into freedom, in the name of the crucified one, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen

* SENDING OF HOMEBOUND COMMUNION

P: Gracious God, whose mercy endures from generation to generation: bless those who go forth to share your word and sacrament with our sisters and brothers who are sick or homebound. In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those to whom we bring this communion, that through the body and blood of your Son we may all know the hope of your promised coming in Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

SENDING

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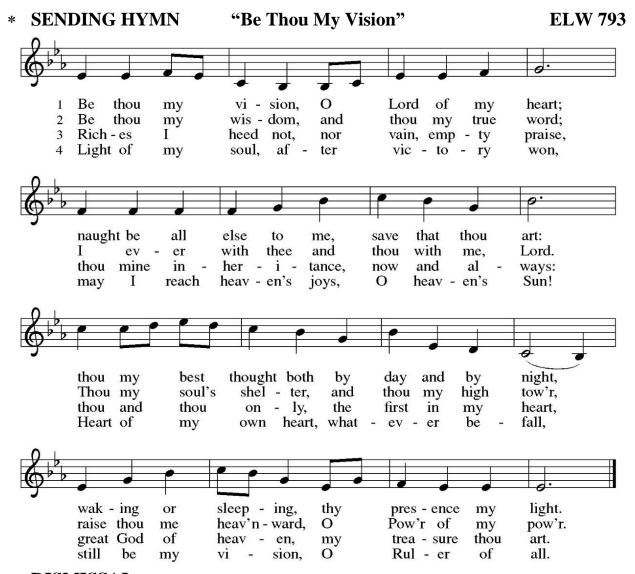
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

* SENDING BLESSING

P: God our tender parent, God the crucified one, God the reconciling Spirit, bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.



* 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!

* Please stand if able

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* POSTLUDE Roxanne Groff

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Trinity Worship Assistants and Staff

Ministers	All the People of Trinity
Organist	Roxanne Groff
Lector	Dean Thompson
Acolyte	
Parrish Nurse	PJ Musser
Custodian	Mark Groff
Secretary	Sharon Fourman
Facebook Live Recorder	PJ Musser



Scripture readings for next Sunday, April 13th Luke 19:29-44

This Week @ Trinity - April 6 thru April 13, 2025:

Health Tips for the Week

MIND: Send a card to one of the youth in our church.

BODY: Try chair yoga.

SPIRIT: Write 5 things you are grateful for (no people) in your gratitude journal.

DATE	TIME	EVENT
Sun, April 6	9:00 am	Confirmation Class
	9:30 am	Christian Conversations (Coffee/Juice and Donuts)
	10:30 am	Worship Service
Wed, April 9	6:30 pm	Lenten Soup Supper/Devotion
Thurs, April 10	10:00 am	Prayers & Squares Quilting
Fri, April 11	3:30 pm	FISH Choice Food Pantry
Sat, April 12	Trash Bash Youth Fundraiser	
Sun, April 13	9:00 am	Confirmation Class
	9:30 am	Christian Conversations (Coffee/Juice and Donuts)
	10:30 am	Worship Service w/Communion

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Save The Date!

Wednesdays – April 9 & 16	Lenten Soup Supper and Video Bible Study
@ 6:30 pm	Discussion
Saturday, April 12	Trash Bash Youth Fundraiser
April 17 @ 7:00 pm	Maundy Thursday Worship Service
April 18 @ 7:00 pm	Good Friday Worship Service
April 19 @ 9:00 am - Noon	1 st Communion Class
April 20 @ 8:00 am	Early Worship Service
9:15 am	Easter Breakfast
9:45 am	Easter Egg Hunt
10:30 am	Late Worship Service



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.





Pastor:	Mel Musser
Email:	pastor@pitsburgtlc.org
Cell Phone:	937-626-7100
Secretary:	Sharon Fourman
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