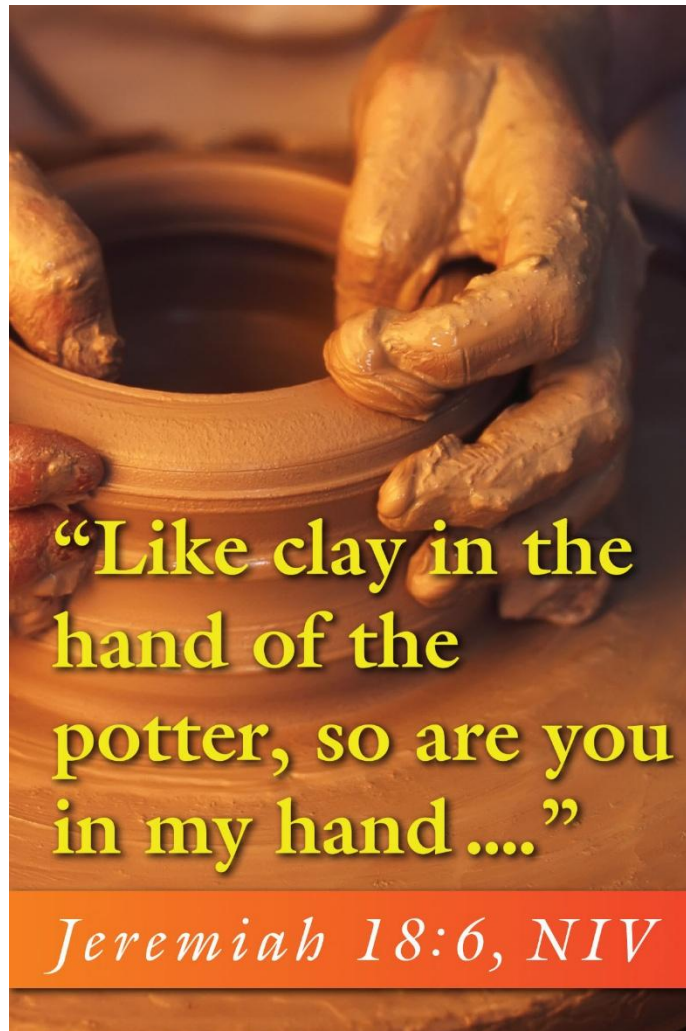


A Mission Congregation of the ELCA
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
P. O. Box 64 - 8520 Oakes Rd - Pittsburg, Ohio 45358



Jeremiah 18:1-11
June 22, 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**

*** 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



1 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, source of life and truth and grace,
 2 As you, Lord, have lived for oth - ers, so may we for oth - ers live.
 3 Come, O Christ, and reign a - mong us, King of love and Prince of peace;
 4 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, source of life and truth and grace,



Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us hal - lows all our hu - man race,
 Free - ly have your gifts been grant - ed; free - ly may your ser - vants give.
 hush the storm of strife and pas - sion, bid its cru - el dis - cords cease.
 Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us hal - lows all our hu - man race:



you our head, who, throned in glo - ry, for your own will ev - er plead:
 Yours the gold and yours the sil - ver, yours the wealth of land and sea;
 By your pa - tient years of toil - ing, by your si - lent hours of pain,
 by your pray - ing, by your will - ing that your peo - ple should be one,



fill us with your love and pit - y, heal our wrong, and help our need.
 we but stew - ards of your boun - ty held in sol - emn trust will be.
 quench our fe - vered thirst of plea - sure, stem our self - ish greed of gain.
 grant, oh, grant our hope's fru - i - tion: here on earth your will be done.

* 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... Creator God, you have formed us out of the dust of the earth itself. Help us to love these earthly forms, and to care for them and for one another as you do. Mold our hearts and our spirits that we might live in love and service to our neighbors out of gratitude for the gift of life you have given us. In Jesus' name we pray.

C: Amen.

• CHILDREN'S MESSAGE



Theme: : God is like a potter who shapes our lives with love

Materials: A Lump Play-Doh and a piece of Pottery

Scripture: Jeremiah 18:1-11

Good morning, boys and girls! I'm so glad you're here today.

Do any of you like playing with Play-Doh? *(Pause for responses.)* Me too! It's fun because you can squish it, stretch it, roll it, and make almost anything out of it—a snake, a pancake, a little bowl—even a silly face! *(Take out your lump of clay and show it.)* A person who works with clay to make stuff is called a Potter. God told the prophet Jeremiah to go to a potter's shop and watch the potter working with clay, just like this play doh.

So, Jeremiah went to a real pottery shop and saw a man making something on a potter's wheel. That's a flat wheel that spins so that the Potter can make things like bowls and clay pots and many other things. When Jeremiah watched the Potter, the clay didn't turn out quite right, but the potter didn't throw it away. What do you think he did? *(Wait for answers.)* That's right! He **shaped it again**. He squished it down and started over, making something even better the next time. God told Jeremiah, "I can do the same thing with people and with the whole Church. I can reshape them and help them be who I made them to be."

You and I are like this clay. God is the Potter. That means God is shaping us every day. When we mess up—when we say something mean, or don't listen, or forget to pray—God doesn't throw us away. He says, "I still love you. Let's try again." And the best part is: God shapes us with **gentle, loving hands**. He wants to make us into something beautiful—someone who loves others, helps people, and most important, someone who follows Jesus.

Our daughter Niki, used to love to take pottery classes. She made this beautiful bowl. *(Hold up the finished bowl)* It started out as a squishy lump, just like the play doh in my hand. After working with it for a long time and with lots of love and care, it became something useful and beautiful. You are like that too. God is still shaping you and me and all of us with love every single day.

Let's pray together... Dear God, Thank You for loving us and shaping us, even when we mess up. Help us to trust You and let You mold our hearts to be more like Jesus. In His name we pray, **Amen**.

- **A READING OF SCRIPTURE: Jeremiah 18:1-11**

R: Our scripture reading is from Jeremiah, Chapter 18.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

18 The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: ²‘Come, go down to the potter’s house, and there I will let you hear my words.’ ³So I went down to the potter’s house, and there he was working at his wheel. ⁴The vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter’s hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as seemed good to him.

⁵Then the word of the Lord came to me: ⁶‘Can I not do with you, O house of Israel, just as this potter has done?’ says the Lord. Just like the clay in the potter’s hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel. ⁷At one moment I may declare concerning a nation or a kingdom, that I will pluck up and break down and destroy it, ⁸but if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turns from its evil, I will change my mind about the disaster that I intended to bring on it. ⁹And at another moment I may declare concerning a nation or a kingdom that I will build and plant it, ¹⁰but if it does evil in my sight, not listening to my voice, then I will change my mind about the good that I had intended to do to it. ¹¹Now, therefore, say to the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: Thus says the Lord: Look, I am a potter shaping evil against you and devising a plan against you. Turn now, all of you from your evil way, and amend your ways and your doings.

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 into whose shape God is still working to form us, Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, Amen.

When I was a kid, my mother used to love to make things out of pottery.

(SLIDE) Most of the time she wouldn’t make the items from scratch with a potter’s wheel, but she would purchase the already formed items and clean them up, paint them and then fire them in a kiln and finally glaze them. She made

various things like Christmas trees and yule logs. She made figurines and other knick-knacks. I remember visiting a pottery with her many times.. I can still remember the smell of the damp earth and clay, and in the middle of the room was a man at a potter's wheel. (SLIDE) His hands were covered in wet clay, shaping a lump into something beautiful. I remember him shaking his head and mumbling sometimes when the clay didn't cooperate. When that happened, he didn't throw it out, he just pressed it back down and started again. That's the image God gives Jeremiah to deliver to His people, and to us. God says, "Go down to the potter's house, and there I will let you hear my words." Jeremiah sees the potter shaping the clay. He watches as the potter reshapes the clay over and over until he gets it just right. Molds it and then starts again until he has it just the way he wants it to be. If we focus on the smashing down of the mis-shaped clay and think about God's wrath, we miss the point of this scripture. This is a message about hope, repentance, and trusting the hands of our loving God who is shaping us.

God's people in Jeremiah's day had lost their shape. (SLIDE) They were chasing other gods, ignoring the poor, and living as if they had made themselves instead of being made by a holy and loving Creator. Now, that may sound like ancient history, but we know something about that too, don't we? We may not worship Baal or build golden calves, but we put a lot of trust in the gods of money,

politics, success, children and family, and way too much trust in our own self-reliance. (SLIDE) I remember an old saying, “You can’t grow good corn if you ignore the soil.” And the same is true of our lives. If we ignore the voice of God, if we stop listening, we’ll grow misshapen, just like bad pottery.

Here’s the hard truth... We like to think we’re in control. Especially us guys... We can fix everything on our own. This passage from Jeremiah reminds us we’re the clay—not the potter. (SLIDE) Think of a potter’s wheel. The clay doesn’t decide what it’s going to be. It doesn’t hop off the wheel and say, “No thanks, I’m not going to be a pottery bowl, I think I’d rather be a dinner plate today.” The clay is shaped by hands that know what it’s for, why it was created, and what ultimate purpose the creator had in mind. Here’s the good news... Those hands, the ones doing the molding and creating, belong to God. Gentle, strong, faithful hands. Even when the clay goes bad—when we go astray—God doesn’t discard us. God says, “I’ll start again. I’ll remake you. I’m not done yet.”

There’s an old story about a woman who had a beautiful old ceramic pitcher. It was nothing fancy, but it had belonged to her grandmother. One day it slipped off the counter and broke into several pieces. Most of us would’ve tossed it, but she couldn’t bear to throw away something that held so much sentimental value. So, she found a local craftsman who used a Japanese technique called *kintsugi* to

repair her pitcher. (SLIDE) The Japanese technique involves glueing the pieces together as much as possible and then filling in the cracks with gold. The repaired pitcher wasn't the same as it had been, but it was even more beautiful than before. I think that's what God does with us. He doesn't just discard us when we get ourselves all messed up. He reshapes, reforms, even redeems the cracks with the gold of His grace.

God says to Jeremiah, "Can I not do with you, O house of Israel, just as this potter has done?" In other words: I'm not finished with you yet. God asks His people to turn back to Him in humble repentance. Not out of fear of God's wrath, but trusting God will redeem the mess of our lives and make us into something even more beautiful than we were before. It's a call to return to the One who made us—to say, "Lord, I've tried to do things my own way. Shape me again." Think about a cornfield after a storm. (SLIDE) The corn stalks are all bent over and battered by the wind and the storm. With lots of sunshine and care, it stands up nice and tall with its big leaves lifted high like a person lifting his or her arms to praise God. God's grace is like that. Even when we've been knocked down or gone crooked, God lifts us up and says, "Let me shape you again." Then, in gratitude for God's redeeming grace we lift our arms in thanks and in praise.

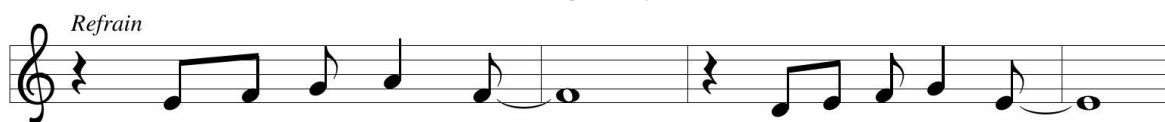
Several years ago PJ and I went to Holmes County with my friend Skip and his sister Peggy. (SLIDE) An Amish man who makes wooden rocking chairs told me, “Every piece of wood is different. Some have knots, some are warped. You have to learn how to work with it. You don’t fight the wood—you understand it, and then you shape it.” That’s how God works with us. He knows our knots and our warps. He knows our wounds, our stubbornness, our sin. Still, He chooses to work with us—not against us.

The message of Jeremiah 18 isn’t judgment—it’s invitation. God says, “I may declare disaster—but if the people turn back, I will change my mind.” That’s incredibly good news! We live in a world that often gives up on people. On the news they call it the “Cancel Culture.” (SLIDE) Mess up once, post something that someone finds offensive and you’re canceled. Fall short, and you’re forgotten. It’s a one mistake world we live in, but God doesn’t give up nearly that easily. Not on nations. Not on people. Not on churches. Not on you. That’s right folks, Trinity Lutheran Church, right here in Darke County, is still on God’s potter’s wheel. So are each of our lives. (SLIDE) That means God still has plans. God still has purpose. God still believes you are worth shaping. When Wernle Home closed, we looked into working with Oesterlein, then they closed too. Since then, we’ve sort lost some of our momentum, our purpose in ministry. The good news

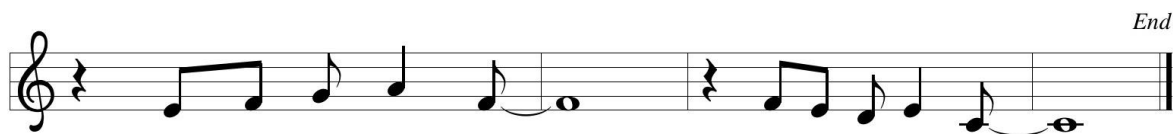
for Trinity is God isn't ready for us to just fade away. God has even more excellent work for us to do. That potter's wheel is still turning and shaping us as a Church. What we'll turn out to be, only God knows...

What I can tell you is this... God will reveal that purpose for us in God's good time. In the meantime, there are a few things we can do. First, humble ourselves before our maker. Remember—we're the clay. (SLIDE) We can pray like we're moving heaven and earth, but then let God work. We are called to trust in God to provide for our daily bread and that includes our meaningful purpose. Second, where needed we get to repent and return to God. Notice I said we get to, not we must or have to... Repenting and returning to God is good news because God doesn't want to destroy you. God wants to redeem you. And finally, we can have hope in God's grace. Even if you feel like your life is misshapen, cracked, or broken beyond repair—God isn't done with you. The potter is still at the wheel. His hands are good and His grace is sufficient. So let us say, "Shape me, O God." May the master potter mold us into who God wants us to be as a person, as a Church, and as a Nation. Amen.

Silence may be kept for meditation...



Change my heart, O God; make it ev - er true.



Change my heart, O God; may I be like you.



You are the pot - ter; I am the clay.



Mold me and make me; this is what I pray.

* 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.*

* QUILT TYING FOR KAITLYN TRIPLET

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

June 22, 2025

Page 11 of 17

*** PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

L: Let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

L: Creator God, you formed us out of the mud of the earth in your own image, beautiful works of divine art. When our actions or inactions mar the perfection you envision for us, make us new by your loving hand. God, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: All of creation is the work of your hands. Renew in us a commitment to your call to care for all that you have made just as you do, that we might preserve, protect, and live in peace with the natural world. God, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: We establish nations not to become gods for us to worship, but to serve the people who live within their borders. Remind our leaders of their responsibility to work for the well-being of everyone they serve. God, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: You have given us bodies that are beautiful and resilient, but sometimes fragile. Help us to care for our bodies, and when they fail us, strengthen us in trust that you are present in our pain. Give hope and healing to all who suffer, *(especially...)* God, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: You do not plot and plan evil against us, O God, even when it might seem we deserve it. Remind us always of your boundless mercy and grace, that we might, in gratitude, change our ways to act in justice and mercy to all those around us. God, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

L: Keep us ever mindful of those who have gone before us in the faith, that we might hold fast to your promise of everlasting life until we see them again face to face. God, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

P: Trusting in your unending grace for all that you have made, we lift these and the prayers of our hearts to your loving care.

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 ...O God, from whom all blessings flow, we return to you now these gifts of ourselves, our varied skills, abilities, and passions, and our material resources. Use these blessings you have first given us for the work of shaping your beautiful world into a place filled with compassion and joy.

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.**

SENDING

- **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- * **SENDING BLESSING**

P: The Spirit of the triune God bless you with joy, anoint you with compassion, and ✠ send you in love.

C: Amen.

* **SENDING HYMN** **“My Faith Looks Up to Thee”**

LBW 479



1 My faith looks up to thee, thou Lamb of Cal - va - ry,
 2 May thy rich grace im - part strength to my faint - ing heart,
 3 While life's dark maze I tread and griefs a - round me spread,
 4 When ends life's tran - sient dream, when death's cold, sul - len stream



Sav - ior di - vine! Now hear me while I pray, take all my
 my zeal in - spire; as thou hast died for me, oh, may my
 be thou my guide; bid dark - ness turn to day, wipe sor - row's
 shall o'er me roll; blest Sav - ior, then, in love fear and dis -



guilt a - way, oh, let me from this day be whol - ly thine!
 love to thee pure, warm, and change - less be, a liv - ing fire!
 tears a - way, nor let me ev - er stray from thee a - side.
 trust re - move; oh, bear me safe a - bove, a ran - somed soul!

* **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

Copyright © 2025 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS023830. New Revised Standard Version Bible, Copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Revised Common Lectionary, Copyright © 1992 Consultation on Common Texts, admin Augsburg Fortress. Used by permission.

* Please stand if able

June 22, 2025

• Please be seated

Page 14 of 17



Scripture readings for next Sunday, June 29th
Jeremiah 36:1-8, 21-23, 27-31

Trinity Worship Assistants and Staff

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

Health Tips for the Week

MIND: Look at a challenge as an opportunity for personal growth.

BODY: Dance around your house.

SPIRIT: Ask someone at church “How may I pray for you?”

This Week @ Trinity – June 22 thru June 29:

DATE	TIME	EVENT	
Sun, June 22	9:00 am	Breakfast and Richard Tuvell, Primerica Financial Planning	
	10:30 am	Worship Service	
	6:00 pm	Video/Book Club “The Chosen”	
Tues, June 24	10:00 am	Prayers & Squares Quilting	
Fri, June 27	3:30 pm	FISH Choice Food Pantry	
Sun, June 29	9:30 am	Christian Conversations (Coffee/Juice and Donuts)	
	10:30 am	Worship Service w/Healing Rite	
	12:00 pm	Trinity Troops @ The Musser’s Home	

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

June 22, 2025

Page 15 of 17

Save The Date!

Tues, July 8 & Thurs, July 10 @ 6:00 pm	Vacation Bible School @ Trinity
Sun, July 13	VBS Celebration during Worship
	Annual Carry-in after Worship

Trinity Trumpet – Please pick up your copy of the July newsletter.



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

Pastor:	Mel Musser
Email:	pastor@pitsburgtlc.org
Cell Phone:	937-626-7100
Secretary:	Sharon Fourman
Email:	secretary@pitsburgtlc.org
Office Hours:	By Appointment
Office Phone:	937-692-5670
Website:	www.pitsburgtlc.org



-
- * Please stand if able
 - Please be seated