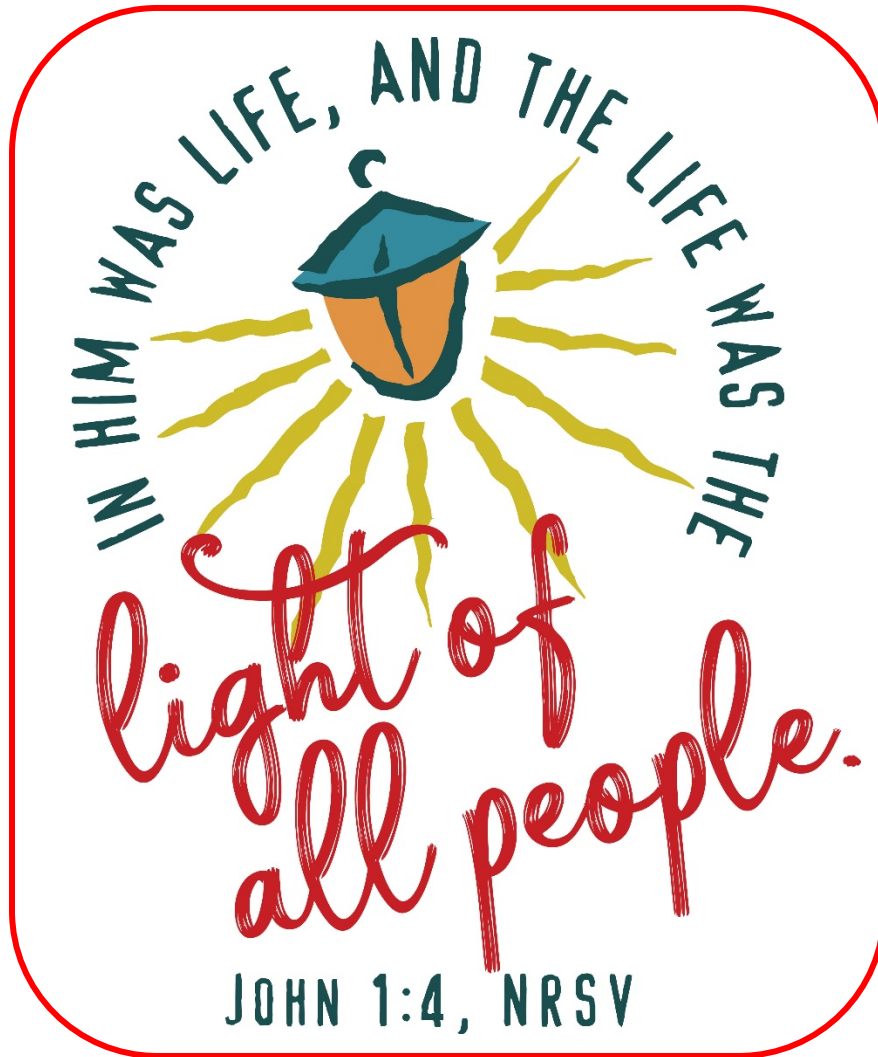


A Mission Congregation of the ELCA
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
P. O. Box 64 - 8520 Oakes Rd - Pittsburg, Ohio 45358



John 1:1-18
August 27, 2023



SCAN ME

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

GATHERING

- **Prelude** **Pam Sherman**
- **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.

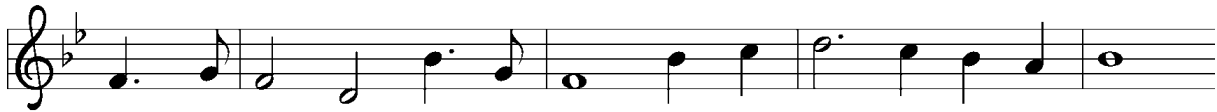
P: We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight. Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family. Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom. 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.

* **HYMN OF PRAISE**

“Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me”

LBW 327



1 Rock of A - ges, cleft for me, let me hide my - self in thee;
2 Not the la - bors of my hands can ful - fill thy law's de - mands;
3 Noth - ing in my hand I bring; sim - ply to thy cross I cling.
4 While I draw this fleet - ing breath, when mine eye - lids close in death,



let the wa - ter and the blood, from thy riv - en side which flowed,
could my zeal no res - pite know, could my tears for - ev - er flow,
Na - ked, come to thee for dress; help - less, look to thee for grace;
when I soar to worlds un - known, see thee on thy judg - ment throne,



be of sin the dou - ble cure; cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r.
all for sin could not a - tone; thou must save, and thou a - lone.
foul, I to the foun - tain fly; wash me, Sav - ior, or I die.
Rock of A - ges, cleft for me, let me hide my - self in thee.

* **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, your care for us knows no bounds; you even went as far as to become one of us. Live through us still as we strive to embody the presence of your love on earth, through the grace of Jesus Christ.

C: **Amen.**

P: Please be seated...

WORD

- **PRESENTATION OF BIBLES**

P: At this time we will present age appropriate Bibles to our Children. We have three age levels to present today. The 3–5-year-olds will be receiving The Life of Jesus story Bible. Our 6–8-year-olds will receive the Spark Story Bible and our 8 year olds and up will receive the Spark Gift Edition Bible. We also have The Lutheran Study Bibles for our new confirmation students Micah Angles and Kally Schmitmeyer, but they will receive their Bible and Student Workbooks at their first Confirmation Class in October.

PJ is our Youth and Family Ministry Coordinator. PJ please come forward to present these Bibles to our youth. As PJ calls your name please come forward to receive your Bible. After you receive your Bible please have a seat in the front pew. After all the Bibles are distributed we will have the blessing of the school year and your backpacks.

Life of Jesus Bible Recipients:

Crew Baker
Sophia Boston
Scarlett Kemper
Emery Musser
Dawson Schmitmeyer
Emerson Schmitmeyer

Spark Story Bible Recipients:

Ruby Baker
Sylvia Boston
Russell Daniels
Carter Kemp
Beckett Schmitmeyer

Spark Gift Edition Bible Recipients:

Miles Maker
Rhyan Cool
Crew Diceanu
Carlee Kemp
Finley Schmitmeyer

Presentation of the Bible

These or similar words may be spoken:

P: Receive this Bible. Hear God’s word with us. Learn and tell its stories. Discover its mysteries. Honor its commandments. Rejoice in its good news. May God’s life-giving word inspire you and make you wise.

- **BLESSING FOR THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR**

Pr Mel

P: Now, as we begin a new school year, I ask all teachers and students to stand if able. I also ask all parents and grandparents of students to stand as well. I ask all people who are associated with our education system in any way to stand.

* Please stand if able

August 27, 2023

• Please be seated

Page 4 of 19

This includes school board members, bus drivers cafeteria workers, volunteers, PTA members, anyone who has anything to do with our schools, our Sunday Schools, our Confirmation program, and our Adult Sunday School program. If you think you don't play a part in any educational system, but if you are willing to commit to praying for our schools over this coming year, then please stand as well. I think that covers just about everyone... Thank you for all you do to help educate children and adults alike! Please be seated...

P: A reading from First Corinthians: Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. (1 Cor. 12:4-7)

P: Let us pray... O God, we ask your blessing upon for all who are beginning a new school year. We lift up both students and teachers in their academic endeavors. Almighty God, you give wisdom and knowledge. Grant teachers the gift of joy and insight, and students the gift of diligence and openness, that all may grow in what is good and honest and true. Support all who teach and all who learn, and all who support in any way the institutions of Education. Bless all who use their gifts in administration, meal preparation, transportation, custodial care, as well as those who are directly involved in the learning process, teachers and their students. Make all of us role models and mentors for those people in our lives who look up to us so that by the way we live and by our actions we may demonstrate our love for you. In all we do, may we know and follow your ways; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: **Amen.**

• **BLESSING OF BACKPACKS**

P: At this time will all the children who have brought their backpacks and anyone else who brought in the tools of your trade please come forward and gather around the Baptismal Font.

As they gather read:

P: A reading from Mark 10:13–16

¹³People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. ¹⁴But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. ¹⁵Truly I tell you,

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." ¹⁶*And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.*

P: Let us pray for our children and the backpacks they will carry this school year... Dear God, as we begin another year in school, we ask your blessing on these backpacks, and especially on these children who will use them. As they do the very important work of being students, bless them with: eagerness to learn, that their world may grow large; respect for teachers and students, that they may form healthy relationships; love for nature, that they may become caretakers of your creation; happiness when learning is easy and persistence when it is hard; faith in Jesus as their best teacher and closest friend.

P: We ask that you would protect these, your own children. Watch over them and keep them safe as they travel to and from school. As they learn, help them also to discover the different gifts that you have given each one of them to be used in your work in the world. As they hear the many voices that will fill their days, help them to listen most carefully for your voice, the one that tells them you will love them always, no matter what. We ask this in Jesus' name.

C: Amen.

P: Children you may go to Sunday School with Miss Kami. For the rest of us, our service continues with the reading of God's Word.

• **SCRIPTURE READING: John 1:1-18**

P: Our scripture reading for this day is from the Gospel of John, Chapter 1.

C: Glory to you O Lord.

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹² But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵ (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") ¹⁶ From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷ The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

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, from the Word Made Flesh, and from the Holy Spirit, One God Now and Forever, amen.

What a great day to have a rally! It's hard to believe that summer is over and we're this close to fall and cooler temperatures already. Also, what a great Gospel reading to kick start our rally day events. The prologue to the Gospel of John is an ancient hymn that provides us with key insights into who this God-Man Jesus truly is. John's Gospel is quite different from the other three, Matthew, Mark and Luke. I mean all four Gospels share some information and stories in common, but John has some stories that aren't in the other three and leaves out some that are in all three of the others. For example, John has the miracle of changing water into

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wine at the wedding in Cana. He has the appearance of Jesus on the shore of the Sea of Galilee after his resurrection where he directs the disciples where to fish for a great catch and then Jesus reinstates Peter into ministry after the embarrassment of his trifold denials. Most notably, John has no institution of the Lord's Supper. Instead, on the night of his betrayal Jesus washes the feet of his disciples.

John's Gospel is also different in his proclamation of when Jesus and his reign began. In Mark Jesus begins his reign at his Baptism, when God spoke from Heaven. According to Matthew it began with God calling Abraham. Matthew starts out tracing the genealogy of Jesus and he begins with Abraham. Luke it begins with the miraculous births of both John the Baptist, who recognized Jesus even while still in his mother's womb and with the immaculate conception of Jesus himself. The author of the Gospel according to John takes us all the way back to the beginning as does the first chapter of Genesis, but I would argue John goes even farther to the time before time. John's Gospel is far more concerned with who this Jesus is from an eternal and a spiritual perspective. Therefore, John traces Jesus all the way back to God. In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. It's in John's Gospel where the disciple Phillip asks Jesus if they can see The Father. Jesus famously answers, "Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has

seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? ¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹ Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves.”

This is our second week focusing on the creeds as our confession of our faith. Last week I said if I wrote the creeds or was the final editor of the Bible, I would have started with Jesus and worked from there. Well folks, this is it. The highest form of theology I know. I fell in love with Jesus partly because of this beautiful ancient hymn. In this opening prologue John sets out his theme for his book. Jesus is God in the flesh. Jesus is the one who did the grunt work of creation and continues to exercise that same creative power. Jesus is the one who suffered under Pontius Pilate, died, and was buried. Jesus is the one who was raised from the dead and is seated at God’s right hand. Jesus is the one who will come again, just as he promised. Jesus is the one we can look to and see our Heavenly Father.

Today as we give our children their new Bibles we’re really placing in their hands the living Word of God. Actually, when Lutherans think about God’s Word we usually mean one of three things. First and foremost Jesus Christ, the Messiah

* Please stand if able
• Please be seated

is the living Word of God. It is in and through Jesus that we're drawn into a relationship of love with God. Secondly, Lutherans think about the Bible as containing God's Word. The Bible is and was inspired by the Holy Spirit. A lot of folks today question if the Bible is really God's Word. They say it's not relevant to modern society and our culture. We believe the Bible we have today is exactly in the form God intended for us to receive. Some of the stories may be in languages we don't completely understand and some parts may contain myths and legends, but the form we have today is just what God created for us in order to know God and His Son Jesus. The third way Lutherans understand God's Word is through other Christians. We hear God's Word in our hymns and most importantly, in words of love and forgiveness offered from other Christ followers.

Today we have fulfilled one of the promises we made when these children were Baptized, that we would place in their hands God's Holy Word. I hope you feel a sense of excitement to see how these young people are going to discover, wrestle with, and finally come to understand for themselves the incredible love God has for them as revealed through our Savior Jesus Christ.

It may be true that for Mark the truth of Jesus only began at his Baptism and for Luke it began at his conception and birth, for Matthew it began all the way back with the calling of Abraham, but John reveals to us that there never was a

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- * Please stand if able
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time when Jesus wasn't. Jesus was in the beginning with God and was God. This has big implications for how we see and understand God, especially the God revealed in the Old Testament. Jesus was always with God and Jesus was and is always going to be God. God didn't change plans when the first plan fell through because of our rebellion and sin. Jesus was always with God and was the one and only plan for the creation and for the salvation of all creation.

In the early days of Christianity controversy erupted over the interpretation of the prologue to John's Gospel. Some folks thought it was meant to be taken in a metaphorical sense rather than literally. That always seems to be the debate in several of the more controversial scripture texts. The winners in this particular debate were the ones who said it was meant literally. The technical term you might remember from your catechism days is *homoousios*. It was a fairly common word in ancient Greek and literally means made of the same stuff. The losers in the debate argues that Jesus was certainly God-like and when you look at Jesus and the way he lived and his teachings you were looking through a window into what God is like, but they are not the same stuff and Jesus was really just a man. A man named Arius was the proponent to the not of the same stuff crowd and Athanasius was the leader of the 'Oh, yes they are the same stuff' crowd. I made a few copies of the Athanasian Creed if any of you are interested in reading it. They're back on

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- * Please stand if able
 - Please be seated

the Communications Table across from the Church Office. It's pretty long and contains a lot of repetition. That's why we hardly ever use it in Worship. The end result of that controversy was the adoption of the literal interpretation of the prologue to John's Gospel. The Orthodox position of nearly every Church denomination is that Jesus is in fact God and God the Father is also Jesus. They are truly made out of the same stuff.

May the eternal and living Word of God be with you always. May you hear God's Word in the words of Holy Scripture, in the songs we sing, and in the Words of forgiveness in our Confession. May you come to know God our Father because you have met His son, Jesus. May the love of God made known to you in Christ Jesus sustain you through every up and down this world throws your way. And may the Lord God hold you tight until the day when Jesus returns to bring His Kingdom to earth. Amen.

Silence may be kept for meditation...

* **HYMN OF THE DAY “Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word” LBW 230**



1 Lord, keep us stead - fast in your word; curb those who
 2 Lord Je - sus Christ, your pow'r make known, for you are
 3 O Com - fort - er of price - less worth, send peace and



by de - ceit or sword would wrest the king - dom from your Son
 Lord of lords a - lone; de - fend your ho - ly church, that we
 u - ni - ty on earth; sup - port us in our fi - nal strife



and bring to naught all he has done.
 may sing your praise e - ter - nal - ly.
 and lead us out of death to life.

• **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.*

*** PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

P: With all who proclaim the reign of God, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need .

A brief silence.

L: We do not understand your love for us, O God, but we are endlessly grateful for it. Inspire us to meet others where they are, even when it means going far beyond the places where we are comfortable. God, Three-in-One,

C: In mercy, hear our prayer.

L: It wasn't enough for you to create us, loving God. You wanted to know us, live among us, become one of us. Your mark is everywhere throughout the cosmos, and your compassion shapes who we are meant to be as crowns of your creation. Teach us to love as you do. God, Three-in-One,

C: In mercy, hear our prayer.

L: Cradle in your loving arms all children who don't receive what they need to thrive: warmth, nourishment, safety, and loving caregivers. Forgive us for neglecting your most vulnerable ones, and empower those who are working to change lives for the helpless and abandoned. God, Three-in-One,

C: In mercy, hear our prayer.

L: You know our needs and you know our every pain, O Jesus. Surround those who need you with your care, comfort, and healing, (*especially...*). God, Three-in-One,

C: In mercy, hear our prayer.

L: John the Baptist proclaimed a message that many found difficult to hear. Empower our words of proclamation, that your reign of love might be known in all the world. God, Three-in-One,

C: In mercy, hear our prayer.

Here other petitions may be offered.

P: By the power of the Holy Spirit, we lift these prayers into your arms, loving God, through 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...)

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

C: And also with you.

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

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.... From your fullness we have all received grace upon grace, generous God. Our hearts and lives overflow with your love, and we present these gifts to you in gratitude for your unsurpassed grace to us. Receive them for the sake of this world which you so love. In Jesus' name.

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 who calls across the cosmos and speaks in the smallest seed bless, keep, and sustain you now and to the end of the age.

C: Amen.

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

August 27, 2023

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* **SENDING HYMN**

“In the Cross of Christ I Glory”

LBW 104



1 In the cross of Christ I glo - ry, tow'r - ing
2 When the woes of life o'er - take me, hopes de -
3 When the sun of bliss is beam - ing light and
4 Bane and bless - ing, pain and plea - sure, by the



o'er the wrecks of time. All the light of
ceive, and fears an - noy, nev - er shall the
love up - on my way, from the cross the
cross are sanc - ti - fied; peace is there that



sa - cred sto - ry gath - ers round its head sub - lime.
cross for - sake me; lo, it glows with peace and joy.
ra - diance stream - ing adds more lus - ter to the day.
knows no mea - sure, joys that through all time a - bide.

* **DISMISSAL**

P: Before we are dismissed, let us offer a word of Grace for the food we are about to receive... Loving Father God, we give you thanks a praise for all your creation and for the gift of your son, Jesus Christ. We ask you to bless the food we are about to receive that it may nourish and strengthen our bodies so we can serve you in the mission of Jesus Christ to make You known to all the world. Amen... 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**

Pam Sherman

- * Please stand if able
- Please be seated



Scripture reading for next Sunday, September 3rd
Acts 2:1-18

Trinity Worship Assistants and Staff

| | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Ministers | All the People of Trinity |
| Organist | Roxanne Groff |
| Lector | Linda Baker |
| Parrish Nurse | PJ Musser |
| Custodian | Mark Groff |
| Secretary | Sharon Fourman |
| Facebook Live Recorder | PJ Musser |
| Altar Flowers | |

Health Tips for the Week

MIND: Visit a nature preserve.

BODY: Walk in the park.

SPIRIT: Pray for teachers.

This Week @ Trinity – August 27 thru September 3, 2023

| DATE | TIME | EVENT |
|---|----------|---|
| Sun, Aug 27 <i>Rally Day!</i> | 9:30 am | Christian Conversations (Coffee/Juice and Donuts) |
| | 10:30 am | Worship Service |
| | 11:30 am | Carry-in Luncheon w/“Sundaes on Sunday” |
| Tues, Aug 29 | 10:00 am | Prayers & Squares Quilting |
| Fri, Sept 1 | 3:30 pm | FISH Choice Food Pantry |
| Sun, Sept 3 | 9:30 am | Christian Conversations (Coffee/Juice and Donuts) |
| | 10:30 am | Worship Service w/Communion |

SAVE THE DATE!

- **August 27 – Rally Day!**
 - Sundaes on Sunday!
 - Blessing of the School Year and the Backpacks
 - Bible Gifting
- **October 8 - Church Security and Safety**
 - Special Guest Speaker-Eric Hanes
 - Adult 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**
 - Reception following Service
- **November 5 – All Saints Sunday – Annual Congregational Meeting**
- **November 5 – Trinity Annual Christmas Auction**
 - Starts at 3:00 pm @ Bev & Eldon Erdmann’s Home
- **November 12 – Women’s Thankoffering Sunday**
- **December 3 – First Sunday of Advent**



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.

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- * Please stand if able
 - Please be seated

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 |

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