



Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
www.trinitylutheran.ca

CHURCH AT HOME

Announcements:

Welcome to Trinity's worship resource for April 3, 2022, celebrating the Fifth Sunday in Lent.

Pastor Jack Dressler (519-250-7210) is our interim Pastor. Please contact him for any pastoral needs.

**** No Wednesday Lenten Service ** and
** There will be NO Maundy Thursday service ****

Pastor Jack will be leading the following services:

Palm Sunday April 10

**** There will be NO Maundy Thursday service ****

Good Friday April 15

Easter April 17

The University Food Bank is struggling to keep their shelves full for their students. During our Lenten journey, let us reach out in love. For the season of Lent, please bring canned food items (beans, fruit, tuna, soup), granola/energy bars, crackers, juice boxes, any other nonperishable food items to church with you. They need our help. We can show God's love to them through our actions.

Thank you again for your support for Trinity. Please continue to mail in cheques, or drop them off in the church's mailbox or make your donation either through PAR or through the Donate button on the church's website, at "www.trinitylutheran.ca".

Introduction

Our God makes all things new. In the first reading God promises it. In the gospel Mary anticipates it, anointing Jesus' feet with costly perfume in preparation for the day of his burial. In the second reading Paul recalls his transformation from the persecutor Saul into an apostle. In baptism, God's new person (you!) rises daily from the deadly mire of trespasses and sins.

Confession and Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism.

In the name of God, who makes a way in the wilderness, walks with us, and guides us in our pilgrimage. **Amen.**

Silence is kept for reflection.

Holy One,

we confess that we have wandered far from you, we have not trusted your promises, we have ignored your prophets in our own day, we have squandered our inheritance of grace, we have failed to recognize you in our midst.

Have mercy on us! Forgive us and turn us again to you. Teach us to follow in your ways, assure us again of your love, and help us to love our neighbor. Amen.

Beloved in Christ, the Word draws near to you, and all who call out to God shall be saved. In Jesus, God comes to you again and again and gathers you under wings of love.

In ✝ Jesus' name, your sins are forgiven. God journeys with you and teaches you how to live in love. **Amen.**

Worship

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all! **And also with you!**

Prayer of the Day

Creator God, you prepare a new way in the wilderness, and your grace waters our desert. Open our hearts to be transformed by the new thing you are doing, that our lives may proclaim the extravagance of your love given to all through your Son, Jesus Christ,

our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Gospel Acclamation

Forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

First Reading: Isaiah 43:16-21

The prophet declares that long ago God performed mighty deeds and delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage through the waters of the sea. Now, God is about to do a new thing, bringing the exiles out of Babylon and through the wilderness in a new Exodus.

¹⁶Thus says the LORD, who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters,
¹⁷who brings out chariot and horse, army and warrior;
they lie down, they cannot rise, they are extinguished, quenched like a wick:
¹⁸Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old.
¹⁹I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.
²⁰The wild animals will honor me, the jackals and the ostriches;
for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert,
to give drink to my chosen people,
²¹the people whom I formed for myself so that they might declare my praise.

Psalm: Psalm 126

Those who sowed with tears will reap with songs of joy.

¹When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, then were we like those who dream.
²**Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy.**
Then they said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them."
³The LORD has done great things for us, and we are glad indeed.
⁴**Restore our fortunes, O LORD,**
like the watercourses of the Negeb.
⁵Those who sowed with tears will reap with songs of joy.
⁶**Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed,**
will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

Second Reading: Philippians 3:4b-14

Writing to Christians in Philippi, Paul admits that his heritage and reputation could give him more reason than most people to place confidence in his spiritual pedigree. But the overwhelming grace of God in Jesus calls Paul to a new set of values.

[Paul writes:] ^{4b}If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: ⁵circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

⁷Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. ⁸More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. ¹⁰I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, ¹¹if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

¹²Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. ¹³Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

Gospel Reading: John 12:1-8

Judas willfully misinterprets as waste Mary's extravagant act of anointing Jesus' feet with costly perfume. Jesus recognizes that her lavish gift is both an expression of love and an anticipation of his burial.

¹Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. ²There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. ³Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. ⁴But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, ⁵"Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?" ⁶(He said this not because he cared about the

poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.)⁷ Jesus said, “Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial.⁸ You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me.”

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

The Sermon: The Perfume of Grace – John 12:1-8 (Greg Peifer – written by Martin Ellgar, Pastor at Grace Lutheran Church, Bridgewater, Australia)

A perspective on John 12: 1-8. What happens at this evening meal is extraordinary. The perfume was worth a years salary, and Mary gave it freely and willingly to anoint the feet of Jesus. How will you respond to salvation, to the perfume of grace?

Past events can be re-called, remembered through the help of pictures, stories and even pleasant aromas. Toast reminds me of breakfast as its aroma fills the house and beckons me to have more. For some Jewish people the aroma of BBQ lamb contributes to remind them of the grace of God. It would be wonderful to share in that experience and have this house of God filled with the beckoning aroma of BBQ lamb. Christians also share in the Passover experience with the Israelites in which our Lord Jesus Christ was given as the Passover Lamb for our salvation.

Standing next to a BBQ, one can easily become covered with the smoke and aromas of the cooking. It can cover you completely in no time at all. It can permeate the clothes through to the skin and the hair is saturated with the aromas of the BBQ. If there are any windows open nearby the house will fill with the same cooking aromas. Like the BBQ cooking aromas there are many other aromas, scents and perfumes that can cover a person, fill a house, and stay with them for quite awhile. God likes the aromas of a good BBQ.

Our Gospel text today, in a sense, meets at a junction of aromas. There, it reminds people of the first Passover feast, the coming Passover Festival, and for some, the anticipation of the cross with its ultimate Passover sacrifice.

God instituted the first Passover meal as a means of salvation. While the people of Israel lived in the land of Egypt they suffered as slaves under Pharaoh. God heard their cry for help and set about to work their salvation. Finally, God instructed the people of Israel to prepare unleavened bread and a perfect lamb for sacrifice. The blood of the lamb was painted on the doorpost. That evening they ate the BBQ lamb while the angel of the Lord passed over their houses and brought death to the first born of the Egyptians, and deliverance for Israel from slavery. During this event the blood of the lamb protected

the Israelites. It is possible to imagine that as they hurriedly ate the Passover lamb the aroma of the BBQ, the perfume of grace filled the house. Soon afterwards Pharaoh let Israel go to worship their God. In time to come the Passover proved to be inadequate. It was sufficient to release them from the slavery under Pharaoh, but inadequate to release people from slavery to sin and death. The continued reality of sin showed that a new Passover, a new sacrifice was required to fulfil the deliverance from the slavery of sin and death.

When the Temple was built at Jerusalem pilgrims came from everywhere to celebrate the Passover on the 14th day of the month of Nisan being the first month of the year. Hosts of families came to offer a sacrifice of a perfect lamb in the Temple. The fat of the lamb was burnt on the altar and its aroma, the perfume of grace filled the house of God and beyond. Each host would take home the carcass of the lamb wrapped in its own skin. There he would BBQ the whole lamb and shares it with family and friends as they remember the grace of God and their deliverance from Egypt.

During this week of Passover preparations Jesus and some followers are staying at Bethany with his friends Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. They are there to celebrate God's grace through Jesus in restoring Lazarus from the grave to life again. They are there also to celebrate God's grace in the coming Passover a few days away.

What happens at this evening meal is extraordinary. Jesus who is God is with his people as he was with his people, Israel in the land of Egypt. God's word created freedom for the Israelites from Egypt, it created freedom for Lazarus from the grave and it also creates a new freedom here at Bethany. This evening meal displays and foretells a freedom through the coming Passover meal in which Jesus is the worthy sacrificial lamb. He will be crucified on the cross on Friday, a few days away.

The authorities are seeking to arrest Jesus as they plan to kill him. They fear that more and more people are leaving the Temple to follow him. In the meantime Jesus is staying at Bethany and his hosts respond with gratitude to having a saviour in their midst. Martha quietly serves the meal at the table while Mary opens a costly bottle of perfume to anoint the feet of Jesus.

The perfume was worth a years salary, and Mary gave it freely and willingly to anoint the feet of Jesus. Indeed, there in the room with Jesus is a costly sacrifice. Jesus who is God is this costly sacrifice. Through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross God will forgive our sins and give us eternal life now and forever. There in the room the aroma of the sacrifice, the perfume of grace has filled the house and covered all that are with Jesus.

Lazarus is sitting at the table with Jesus. He is the reminder of salvation to all those who are anxious and fearful of the coming next few days. His presence reminds and encourages us that God's power through Jesus raised Lazarus from the grave to life. The same power will raise Jesus from the grave to life, and again the same power will raise us from death to life. Mary's perfume permeates the house and clings to all in the house. It is a reminder of the costly sacrifice about to happen, the sacrifice of Jesus as the Passover lamb. It is a reminder of how the grace of Jesus will permeate all places and cling to us as a pleasant aroma. Jesus is the perfume of grace.

How will you respond to salvation, to the perfume of grace? People respond in different ways. For example, Lazarus' life is a silent testimony of how God changed a man. Is your life a testimony of hope to others? Martha, as Martha can be freely and willingly serves Jesus at every opportunity. Do you serve Jesus without complaint? Mary gave herself and gave what she had to please Jesus. We usually give of our excess. Are we willing to give all for Jesus like Mary? Lazarus, Martha, and Mary were able to live that life of peace and graciousness because they have seen, heard, and experienced salvation in their life.

Judas is another sitting at the table with Jesus. He is also covered by the perfume of grace but his response to it can only leave the reader to think, "How can this be possible?" Graciousness and the signs of salvation surround Judas, but he complains. Judas has been with Jesus for quite awhile, he has seen him heal the sick, feed the hungry, raise the dead, and eat with him as a friend. After all this time Judas still does not understand who Jesus is and what he is about. At times we can all behave like Judas too. The very thing that makes Judas and all of us blind to the graciousness of God is our self centred nature. We want our own way and are stubborn about it. It is difficult through selfishness to consider others, who they are, what they are about, and what they might need.

It is Judas selfishness, seeking to satisfy his own desires that threatens God's plan to work salvation for all. He complains about Mary and what she is doing. His complaint threatens to make Mary feel guilty and change her actions from anointing Jesus as the coming Passover sacrifice. Without this sacrifice, without this perfume of grace we would have lost our hope for eternal salvation. At times we can behave like Judas and threaten God's plan to bring about peace and hope to each other.

God will not allow our selfishness to ruin his plans for salvation. Jesus spoke to Judas. He said, "Let her alone, let her keep it for the day of my burial." The word of God silenced

the complainer, and gave Mary permission to continue to anoint his feet. Through this creative word, Jesus established himself as the worthy Passover sacrifice for all times. Like Judas, despite our complaining, our selfishness we too are covered by the perfume of grace. Let the word of God continue to speak to us again, and again, and again that we may finally hear like Lazarus, Martha and Mary and be changed from death to life now and forever. **Amen.**

Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

The Prayers of Intercession

Drawn close to the heart of God, we offer these prayers for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

Do a new thing in the church. Free us from paradigms that no longer serve the gospel and bring forward leaders who imagine fresh ways of doing ministry. Give us courage in the face of change. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Do a new thing for creation. Reverse the trajectory of climate change and environmental catastrophe. Revive habitats already impaired by human disregard. Amplify the voices of climate scientists and researchers working to chart a new course. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Do a new thing in our world. Break barriers that prevent political enemies from working together for the well-being of all. Make a way for peace and collaboration among the nations. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Do a new thing for those who suffer. Reveal a path for any who are unemployed or underemployed, for those experiencing homelessness, and for all who struggle with money. Comfort those who grieve and restore those who are sick. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Do a new thing within us. Direct us into encounters that broaden our understanding of the human experience. Amplify voices that are ignored or devalued. Deliver us especially from the scourge of racism. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

God of presence, bless those of this community who cannot be with us this morning, and those who walk with them, especially:

In Residence: Margaret; Maria; Stan; Katie; Katherine; Cordelle; Dorothy

Needing our prayers: Ed; Pastor Mike & Patti, Donna; Sharon B

Friends of our Members Needing our prayers: Audrey; Greg; Paul; Hilda; Mary

...and all members who may have needs unknown to us

And all those we name in our hearts...

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Do a new thing in our death. Fill us with the knowledge of Christ and the power of his resurrection as we give thanks for all the saints who have attained the prize of their heavenly call. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Accept the prayers we bring, O God, on behalf of a world in need, for the sake of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

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.

Benediction

You are children of God, anointed with the oil of gladness and strengthened for the journey. Almighty God, motherly, majestic, and mighty, bless you this day and always.

Amen.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Jesus meets you on the way. **Thanks be to God.**