



Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
www.trinitylutheran.ca

CHURCH AT HOME

Announcements:

Welcome to Trinity's worship resource for June 19, 2022, celebrating the Second Sunday after Pentecost.

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

Pastor Jack will be leading the following services:

July 24, August 21, September 25, October 23, November 13, December 11 and potentially December 24

Father Brian Wearne will be leading the following services:

June 26 (communion), July 10 (communion) and July 31

**** Please Contact Dena Peifer if you wish to be a reader or lead a Sunday service ****

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

This Sunday's texts paint startling pictures of the horrific nature of sin. The church's repeated celebration of holy communion counters that tragic reality in a continued showing forth of the death of Jesus until he comes again. It is a dramatic declaration of "how much God has done for you."

Confession and Forgiveness

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

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, whose steadfast love endures forever. **Amen.**
Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another. Merciful God,
we confess that we have not followed your path but have chosen our own way. Instead of putting others before ourselves, we long to take the best seats at the table. When met by those in need, we have too often passed by on the other side. Set us again on the path of life. Save us from ourselves and free us to love our neighbours. Amen.

Hear the good news! God does not deal with us according to our sins but delights in granting pardon and mercy. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. You are free to love as God loves. **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

O Lord God, we bring before you the cries of a sorrowing world. In your mercy set us free from the chains that bind us, and defend us from everything that is evil, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia. Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you. Alleluia.

First Reading: Isaiah 65:1-9

The prophet announces God's impatience. The people's self-absorption is idolatry, and images of practices that displease God fill this reading. Like a vintner who crushes the grape to release the wine, God will use Israel's exile to establish a new community of the faithful.

¹I was ready to be sought out by those who did not ask,
to be found by those who did not seek me.

I said, "Here I am, here I am," to a nation that did not call on my name.

²I held out my hands all day long to a rebellious people,
who walk in a way that is not good, following their own devices;

³a people who provoke me to my face continually,
sacrificing in gardens and offering incense on bricks;

⁴who sit inside tombs, and spend the night in secret places;
who eat swine's flesh, with broth of abominable things in their vessels;
⁵who say, "Keep to yourself, do not come near me, for I am too holy for you."
These are a smoke in my nostrils, a fire that burns all day long.
⁶See, it is written before me: I will not keep silent, but I will repay;
I will indeed repay into their laps
⁷their iniquities and their ancestors' iniquities together, says the LORD;
because they offered incense on the mountains and reviled me on the hills,
I will measure into their laps full payment for their actions.
⁸Thus says the LORD: As the wine is found in the cluster,
and they say, "Do not destroy it, for there is a blessing in it,"
so I will do for my servants' sake, and not destroy them all.
⁹I will bring forth descendants from Jacob,
and from Judah inheritors of my mountains; my chosen shall inherit it,
and my servants shall settle there.

Psalm: Psalm 22:19-28

In the midst of the assembly I will praise you.

¹⁹But you, O LORD, be not far away; O my help, hasten to my aid.
²⁰**Deliver me from the sword, my life from the power of the dog.**
²¹Save me from the lion's mouth! From the horns of wild bulls you have rescued me.
²²**I will declare your name to my people;**
in the midst of the assembly I will praise you.
²³You who fear the LORD, give praise! All you of Jacob's line, give glory.
Stand in awe of the LORD, all you off-spring of Israel.
²⁴**For the LORD does not despise nor abhor the poor in their poverty; neither is**
the LORD's face hidden from them; but when they cry out, the LORD hears them.
²⁵From you comes my praise in the great assembly;
I will perform my vows in the sight of those who fear the LORD.
²⁶**The poor shall eat and be satisfied,**
Let those who seek the LORD give praise! May your hearts live forever! R
²⁷All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD;
all the families of nations shall bow before God.
²⁸**For dominion belongs to the LORD, who rules over the nations.**

Second Reading: Galatians 3:23-29

For Paul, baptism is a powerful bond that unites people not only with God but with other believers. Those who call themselves children of God experience a transformation that removes prejudices of race, social class, or gender in favor of true unity in Christ.

²³Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. ²⁴Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian, ²⁶for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. ²⁷As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise.

Gospel Reading: Luke 16:19-31

“Now there was a certain rich man who was habitually dressed in expensive purple and fine linen, and celebrated *and* lived joyously in splendor every day. And a poor man named Lazarus, was laid at his gate, covered with sores. He [eagerly] longed to eat the *crumbs* which fell from the rich man's table. Besides, even the dogs were coming and licking his sores. Now it happened that the poor man died and his spirit was carried away by the angels to Abraham's bosom (paradise); and the rich man also died and was buried. In Hades (the realm of the dead), being in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his bosom (paradise). And he cried out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in severe agony in this flame.’ But Abraham said, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things [all the comforts and delights], and Lazarus likewise bad things [all the discomforts and distresses]; but now he is comforted here [in paradise], while you are in severe agony. And besides all this, between us and you [people] a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to come over from here to you will not be able, and none may cross over from there to us.’ So the rich man said, ‘Then, father [Abraham], I beg you to send Lazarus to my father's house—for I have five brothers—in order that he may *solemnly* warn them *and* witness to them, so that they too will not come to this place of torment.’ But Abraham said, ‘They have [the Scriptures given by] Moses and the [writings of the] Prophets; let them listen to them.’ He replied, ‘No, father Abraham, but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent [they will change their old way of thinking

and seek God and His righteousness].’ And he said to him, ‘If they do not listen to [the messages of] Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.’”

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

The Sermon: Reflection on Indigenous People’s Day – June 21, 2022 (read by Matthew Gabrielle – sermon written by Pastor Janaki Bandara formally from St. Peter’s Lutheran Church in Cambridge Ontario; specifically for Indigenous People’s Day – June 21, 2022)

The story Jesus tells in today’s Gospel reading is challenging. The presentation of the Rich Man (who is unnamed) and Lazarus - the story of their earthly lives and their respective lives in heaven and hell after earthly life gives us much to feel uncomfortable about. It speaks to the choices we make in our earthly lives, and even references persuasions that we might be resisting from Jesus, who we know, rises from the dead.

This story is not the appointed Gospel reading in our lectionary for either June 19th or June 26th, the two Sundays which flank this year’s Indigenous Peoples Day on June 21st. But this reading provides a particularly revealing mirror of our own responses to those who live near us, within Canada, who suffer and whom we often choose not to see, choose not to respond to, choose not to help – those on whose lands our homes on Native Land are built.

Indeed, the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus holds up a very compelling mirror. Many of us might choose to wash our faces, brush our hair before we behold our crumpled morning countenance in the mirror 😊 Likewise, it may be more gentle to our souls if we first remember the gift of grace, faith and freedom which God has provided for us: in, with and through Jesus, before we look in the mirror of this Gospel reading.

We can readily access those reassurances from the Galatians readings of the two Sundays flanking June 21st. Galatians reminds us that we lay in a bed of God’s generosity: providing us with faith, liberating us from the disciplinarian of the law, yet inviting us into a voluntary enslavement to love – much like the voluntary enslavement Jesus undertook on our behalf when he was nailed to the cross.

Galatians provides us gospel reassurances, and gets us all dolled up to look in the mirror. So, let’s have that look in the mirror, shall we?

Let us look into the mirror of the Rich Man and Lazarus.

The Rich Man is obviously a believer in God, and very likely is Jewish, as he refers to

Abraham as “Father Abraham” – a recognition of the ancestry that connected people of the Abrahamic covenant with God – the promise that the descendants of Abraham would, eternally, be God’s people.

The Rich Man had an earthly life that was “lived joyously in splendour every day”.

Then there was Lazarus ...

From the description Jesus gives, in his earthly life, a sore-covered poor man, who eagerly longed to eat even the mere crumbs which fell from the Rich Man’s table. His life was so unfortunate that stray dogs would come and lick his sores.

I want us to bracket this story for just a moment, before we go into the after-life discussion of the Rich Man & Lazarus. I want us to bracket this story to absorb a few refugee statistics, and then a few Canadian statistics on the realities placed by First Nations people of this, our home on Native Land ...

According to the UNHCR Canada website (citations in quotes – comments are my own):

- “Yemen remains the worst humanitarian crisis in the world with over 20 MILLION people in need.” – this crisis has been ongoing for over two decades. The people are brown.

- - “Since November 2020, fierce fighting has erupted between regional and federal forces in Ethiopia’s Tigray region, displacing an estimated 1.7 million people in the region ... hunger looms for an additional 5.5 million people” – Crisis in Ethiopia has endured for decades. The people are black.

- “Over 5 million refugees have fled Ukraine as of April 21st to neighbouring countries and that number is continuing to grow exponentially.” – The crisis began this year; the refugees are being accepted into the neighbouring countries. The people are mostly white.

Interestingly, when I go to the UNHCR Canada web page, the first message that comes up is a pop up identifying:

“Emergency in Ukraine”

“Donate today to help people fleeing their homes in Ukraine”

“Send Urgent Aid”

Why is there more urgency for the Ukrainian emergency of a few months, than the other emergencies of decades, affecting, most interestingly predominantly brown and black people?

Ukraine, Yemen and Ethiopia share this in common: they are on other continents. What about here at home, on Native Land? What do our statistics say here?

Well, there are COVID-19 statistics and reports available, and then general reporting ... neither one of these has a good story to tell.

The Government of Canada, Chief Public Health Officer reports from February 2021 identify:

“For many years, Indigenous communities have experienced social and economic inequalities due to colonialism and face health inequities such as a high burden of cardiovascular disease, food insecurity, lack of clean water, etc.” (I found it interesting that the report actually said “etc” like listing the health inequities out was not required because we all know what they are?)

This report accessed data from two remote/virtual consultations, so we must understand that access to technology would have limited those who could even participate in the data gathering for this report. The report itself identifies in most First Nations communities “the bandwidth is inadequate for the heavy demands of video and audio especially when multiple users rely upon the same network according to some participants. Children and youth cannot attend virtual classes when the resources are made inaccessible through language.”

So, if you thought at-home on-line learning was hard, imagine the education gap you would be suffering if you didn't even have access to reasonable internet? That is the legacy faced by most on-reserve learners from the pandemic.

I raise these statistics, just to set some context, so we may understand the story Jesus tells in this Gospel is not just a parable.

Lazarus has been sore-ridden and in need, all around our own tables, in our own homes on Native Land for a very long time. The dogs have been licking the wounds of Lazarus: the brown and black Lazarus refugees, and the First Nations Lazarus within our own national borders. But I know I see more Ukrainian flags all over the place than orange flags and signs to show our support that “Every Child Matters.”

Lazarus is left at the rich one's gate, and it would seem from statistics, that if Lazarus is not white, he is mostly locked out of the rich one's conscience.

When Lazarus and the Rich Man die, they arrive on a scene where heaven is on one side and Lazarus is received there. Lazarus is not identified anywhere in the story as being faithful. Lazarus' heavenly comfort is a product of God's goodness, not his own – and this is good news. Not because it renders meaningless the call to care for the downtrodden, but because it recognizes correctly that God's grace does not rely upon our own faithfulness or our ability to deserve it.

The Rich Man is received in the realm of death when he dies (which we might equate to what we commonly call hell). There he is engulfed in flame and agony, and he calls out to Father Abraham that Lazarus might bear onto him a drop of water. Here he is, never paid a drop of attention to Lazarus in earthly life, but wants Lazarus to minister to him, with water to cool his tongue, in hell ...

How ironic is it, that the Rich Man asks for a drop of water to cool his tongue, yet how many of us have lifted a finger to respond to the severe lack of drinking water in the First Nations communities that surround us?

Water is a basic right, isn't it?

But do we understand it as such for Indigenous communities too??

The Rich Man goes on to demonstrate his sense of entitlement, insisting that his brothers should have special treatment – again through Lazarus' ministry – that Lazarus should go back to earth and tell his brothers they will get what-for if they don't smarten up! Father Abraham responds: they have their teachings from prophets and scriptures to guide them.

The Rich Man comes back with “they will get the message for sure if someone returns from the dead to give it to them”.

Well. We have gotten a message. From someone who returned from the dead. But have we heard it?

Have we heard the message for sure because Jesus has returned from the dead? Or are we, despite resurrection knowledge, also deaf? We are certainly not blind, for we respond to Ukraine's crisis with great compassion. And we are completely free to respond to our local Lazarus, liberated by the gift of faith given us through God's own grace.

The joyousness we experience from receiving these gifts of faith and grace has expression in our witness of faith – in reaching out to Lazarus in generous ways, ways that would provide more than crumbs, ways that would heal sores and express our freedom not in demands of selfishness and entitlement, but rather express our freedom in acts of real love representative of the Kingdom of God.

Such acts, done out of our joyful freedom as believers might serve to instrument the curiosity of those who do not yet believe. This is what it means to witness.

In the story Jesus tells, he has not yet died and come back to life, securing the redemption of humanity, granting freedom to all who receive the gift of faith. The Rich Man in that story at least had that excuse – but what excuse do we have?

Hear what Spirit may be showing us in this mirror. **Amen.**

Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

The Prayers of Intercession

United in Christ and guided by the Spirit, we pray for the church, the creation, and all in need.

Holy God, you hear the cries of those who seek you. Equip your church with evangelists who reveal the continuous call of your outstretched hands and your promises of a home in you. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

You hear the cries of the earth. Restore places where land, air, and waterways have been harmed. Guide us to develop and implement sources of energy and food production that do not destroy the earth. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

You hear the cries of those who are marginalized or cast out. On this Juneteenth observance, guide us continually toward the end of oppression in all its forms, especially white supremacy. Bring true freedom and human flourishing to all your beloved children. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

You hear the cries of those who suffer. Come to the aid of all who are homeless, naked, hungry, and sick. Bring peace to any experiencing mental illness, that they can clearly recognize your loving presence. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

You hear the cries of those who celebrate and those who grieve on this Father's Day. Nurture mutual love and tender care in all relationships. Comfort those for whom this day brings sadness or longing. God of grace, **hear 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; Jeffrey; Art
Friends of our Members Needing our prayers: Audrey; Greg; Paul; Hilda; Mary; Anna

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

And all those we name in our hearts...

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

We give thanks for the faithful departed whose lives proclaimed all you had done for them. At the last, unite us with them as we make our home in you. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God of every time and place, in Jesus' name and filled with your Holy Spirit, we entrust these spoken prayers and those in our hearts into your holy keeping. **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

The God of peace, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you, comfort you, and show you the path of life this day and always. **Amen.**

Dismissal

Go in peace. Love your neighbor. **Thanks be to God.**