



Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
www.trinitylutheran.ca

CHURCH AT HOME

Announcements:

Welcome to Trinity's worship resource for September 25, 2022, celebrating the Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost.

Welcome Back Pastor Jack Dressler!!!!

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:

October 9 (Thanksgiving), October 30 (with Bishop Pryse), November 6 (All Saints), December 11 and potentially December 24

Father Brian Wearne will be leading the following services:

October 2 and October 16

**** 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

Consideration of and care for those in need (especially those "at our gate," visible to us, of whom we are aware) is an essential component of good stewardship. It is in the sharing of wealth that we avoid the snare of wealth. It is the one whom death could not hold—who comes to us risen from the dead—who can free us from the death grip of greed.

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, who is eager to forgive and who loves us beyond our days. **Amen.**

Dear friends, together let us acknowledge our failure to love this world as Jesus does.

God of mercy and forgiveness,

we confess that sin still has a hold on us. We have harmed your good creation. We have failed to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with you. Turn us in a new direction. Show us the path that leads to life. Be our refuge and strength on the journey, through Jesus Christ, our redeemer and friend. Amen.

Beloved of God: your sins are forgiven † and you are made whole. God points the way to new life in Christ, who meets us on the road. Journey now in God's abiding love through the power of the Holy Spirit. **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 God, rich in mercy, you look with compassion on this troubled world. Feed us with your grace, and grant us the treasure that comes only from you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia. You know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich. *Alleluia.*

First Reading: Amos 6:1a, 4-7

The prophet Amos announces that Israel's great wealth is a cause not for rejoicing but rather sorrow, because God's people have forgotten how to share their wealth with the poor. The wealthy will be the first to go into exile when judgment comes.

^{1a}Alas for those who are at ease in Zion,

and for those who feel secure on Mount Samaria,

⁴Alas for those who lie on beds of ivory, and lounge on their couches,

and eat lambs from the flock, and calves from the stall;
⁵who sing idle songs to the sound of the harp,
and like David improvise on instruments of music;
⁶who drink wine from bowls, and anoint themselves with the finest oils,
but are not grieved over the ruin of Joseph!
⁷Therefore they shall now be the first to go into exile,
and the revelry of the loungers shall pass away.

Psalm: Psalm 146

The LORD gives justice to those who are oppressed.

¹Hallelujah! Praise the LORD, O my soul!
²**I will praise the LORD as long as I live;
I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.**
³Put not your trust in rulers, in mortals in whom there is no help.
⁴**When they breathe their last, they return to earth,
and in that day their thoughts perish.**
⁵Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help,
whose hope is in the LORD their God;
⁶**who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them;
who keeps promises forever;**
⁷who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to those who hunger.
The LORD sets the captive free.
⁸**The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;
the LORD loves the righteous.**
⁹The LORD cares for the stranger;
the LORD sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.
¹⁰**The LORD shall reign forever,
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!**

Second Reading: 1 Timothy 6:6-19

Timothy is reminded of the confession he made at his baptism and of its implications for daily life. His priorities will be different from those of people who merely want to be rich.

⁶Of course, there is great gain in godliness combined with contentment; ⁷for we brought nothing into the world, so that we can take nothing out of it; ⁸but if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these. ⁹But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ru-

in and destruction. ¹⁰For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains.

¹¹But as for you, man of God, shun all this; pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness. ¹²Fight the good fight of the faith; take hold of the eternal life, to which you were called and for which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. ¹³In the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you ¹⁴to keep the commandment without spot or blame until the manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵which he will bring about at the right time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords. ¹⁶It is he alone who has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see; to him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

¹⁷As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to be haughty, or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. ¹⁸They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share, ¹⁹thus storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life that really is life.

Gospel Reading: Luke 16:19-31

Jesus tells a parable in which the poor one is “lifted up” and the rich one is “sent away empty.” Jesus makes it clear that this ethic of merciful reversal is not new but is as old as Moses and the prophets.

[Jesus said:] ¹⁹“There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. ²⁰And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, ²¹who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man’s table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores. ²²The poor man died and was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³In Hades, where he was being tormented, he looked up and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side. ²⁴He called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in agony in these flames.’ ²⁵But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony. ²⁶Besides all this, between you and us a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who might want to pass from here to you cannot do so, and no one

can cross from there to us.’²⁷ He said, ‘Then, father, I beg you to send him to my father’s house—²⁸for I have five brothers—that he may warn them, so that they will not also come into this place of torment.’²⁹ Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the prophets; they should listen to them.’³⁰ He said, ‘No, father Abraham; but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’³¹ He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’”

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

The Sermon: Blessings Flowing Through (preached by Pastor Jack Dressler at Trinity on September 25, 2022)

There was a beautiful lake that lost its zesty freshness. The water formerly had been clear. It was alluring to animals and people alike. But it became covered with a green scum. The farm animals became ill from drinking the water. Finally someone came by the lake who understood the problem. Debris collecting from the hard spring rains had stopped up the dam and prevented the free flow of water, not into the lake, but out of the lake. The spillway was cleared out, and soon the lake was fresh and clean again. The flow in and the flow out was necessary to keep the water pure, alive and fresh.

Doesn’t the same principle apply to you and me as human beings? The blessings of life flow to you and to me, but we fail to realize that most of these blessings are not meant just to flow to us, but through us, for the good of others around us, especially for those in need.

In our Gospel reading this morning, we have one of those sad stories – even a somber story – about a person who didn’t keep things flowing in his life, with the result that his life became clogged and ended in tragedy.

We don’t know the man’s name as Jesus told this story. Jesus simply called him “the rich man.” We may take that to mean that the man was richly blessed. A lot of life’s blessings had flowed to this man. But it seems that very few of those blessings ever flowed through him, reaching other people.

Jesus gives us this sparse description, “There was once a rich man who dressed in the most expensive clothes and lived in great luxury every day.” Jesus doesn’t say he was happy because he “dressed in the most expensive clothes.” He doesn’t say the man was joyful because “he lived in great luxury every day.” Jesus simply says that a lot of life’s blessings flowed into this man’s life. Hardly anything, it seems, flowed through this man – to other people.

In fact Jesus makes it clear that most of the man's blessings got clogged in his own hand and rarely flowed through his life to others, except by accident. Jesus describes it: "There was also a poor man, named Lazarus, covered with sores, who used to be brought to the rich man's door, hoping to eat the bits of food that fell from the rich man's table."

Surely part of the reason Jesus tells this story is to appeal to us to keep things flowing in our lives. Today Christ wants every Christian to pray, "Lord as your blessings flow to me, may they continue to flow through me, for the good and encouragement of others!"

Life in general suggests flowing rather than stagnation. We want the blood and air to travel through our bodies; we try to avoid those things that cause a buildup of plaque and clogged arteries. In these past years we've come to appreciate the cycling and recycling that go on in nature. There seems to be a constant flow, the flow of life that cleanses, enriches and makes things new. The leaves of autumn will gradually flow into the soil of a future springtime. We are learning that unless our throwaway culture begins to effectively recycle what it discards, we will clog the flow of our waters and atmosphere until we're literally choked to death.

You and I don't have to be financially rich people to apply the force of what Jesus is saying in this story. There are many levels and dimensions of life at which you and I have been greatly blessed. Many blessings have come to us; they are meant in large measure to travel through us to others.

Take the primary matter of our own faith and trust in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour. This is the greatest blessing we have! We know of salvation in Jesus Christ and we believe it. Think of it: In his mercy and love God has chosen us to be God's own. God's Son has died upon the cross for our sins and our forgiveness. Christ has risen from the grave so that you and I don't need any longer to fear the grave. In this saving work of Christ we are spiritually blessed beyond belief and measure.

This is what this baptism of Amelia this morning is all about, as well for those of us who are already baptized. The receiving of multiple blessings: of faith, forgiveness, salvation, kinship, family, the gift of the Holy Spirit, grace; the gift of unconditional love.

But as this love of Christ has flowed to us, it doesn't always flow through us, into the hearts and lives of other people. People around us, like Lazarus around the rich man's table, are spiritually hungry and thirsty for the gospel message that we can give. The plain question involves how the story of the cross and resurrection will ever come to anyone else if it doesn't flow through our lives and our lips and hearts. Are we forcing the

spiritually hungry Lazaruses around us to scrape for a few gospel crumbs, while the feast of the gospel message remains clogged in our own hearts?

We could start remedying this situation during our Sunday worship services. Let Christ flow through us when we worship with others. Let the hospitality of Christ we have in our hearts flow through us to other worshippers as we greet one another before and after the service. Let the joy of Christ that we have in our hearts flow through us in the hymns and music, as we sing with enthusiasm – even loudly. Let the conviction of faith in Christ that we have in our hearts flow through us as we speak the words of the Creed, not timidly, but firmly and in a spirit of testimony. So much of our worship is lifeless because our faith is clogged within our hearts and needs to be freed up in vigorous expression and flow.

Equally importantly, you and I need to allow God's loving care and healing to flow through us, to others. Then we will refresh the lives of others, and our own lives will be constantly refreshed at the same time. That's what happened in Jesus' own life – all the way through his ministry. The Bible tells us that when Jesus began his ministry, he was filled with the Holy Spirit. That means that all of God's power and blessing were with Jesus, were in Jesus. Imagine if all of that divine power had gotten clogged within Jesus, if he would not have allowed that power that came to him to flow through him for the good and blessing of others.

Everywhere in Jesus' ministry we see God's power for good flowing through him. People were healed; people were brought to life; people received new hope for the future; people had their sins forgiven; storms were calmed and bread was multiplied – because Christ was not a bottleneck for God's saving power but was the very instrument through which God's blessings flowed to others. Jesus once observed that after a certain woman had touched his robe for healing, he felt the power of God going out from him to her. Jesus kept things flowing. God's power flowed through him to others.

Jesus never once faulted the man in our story today for being rich. That wasn't the point at all. The man's tragedy was that all his blessings got clogged. They never moved beyond his own heart or table. Blessings to him never became blessings *through* him. There was no recycling, To put it in biblical terms, the man wasn't practicing good stewardship. What was loaned to him only for a temporary time, he thought he owned. He stopped the flow, the exhilaration, the fulfillment, the purpose, and the joy of life when he became a container instead of an instrument of God's blessings.

So in what area of life can you and I become instruments of God's loving care and healing? The answer is very simple: in those areas of life where we see human beings in

need. Sometimes we see what we want to see and don't see what we don't want to see. But most of the time, I dare say, we see it all. It is just that in our sinful selfishness, we tell ourselves we cannot be bothered by the needs of other human beings. In the lengthy verses of this story that remain, Jesus makes it clear that if we have our minds and hearts made up not to hear and see, we probably won't. Jesus suggests the radical nature of the situation when he concludes saying, "If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead".

But assuming we have eyes to see, in what areas of life can we notice human beings in need? In every area. Look around you in the places where we spend our day. We will notice people in need. I can assure you, some of the people we work with have broken hearts and need our love, compassion, support. People in our neighbourhood are depressed and lonely, despite their cheerful greetings in passing, they too need our love, presence, care and support. People in our church are going through crises as well as anyone else, they also need our care, love and support. So look around us, we will see these people. They need a ministry that we could give. Let God's care for them flow through us.

I know some of us might say, I might be able to give a buck to someone down and out, like Lazarus, but I don't know how to talk with people about their problems or help them. And what we say may be true. But isn't there the possibility that we could learn some of the skills necessary in listening to other people and ministering to them. We are always asking for volunteers to help in our ministry here at Trinity and I have been delighted as some of you have stepped out of your comfort zone and let God help you to offer your blessings flow through you. Outside of our church there are a multitude of needs for volunteers to help in our community, who offer training as well. Our friends and others need more than the crumbs of our quick smiles and a pat on the back. In today's story Christ is talking about an in-depth ministry that needs our attention and needs it to be done now. God is blessing us richly each day. Don't become the place where God's blessings become clogged and stop. Keep things flowing and we will be invigorated, come alive, and so will the persons who receive God's blessings flowing through us. **Amen.**

Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

The Prayers of Intercession

As scattered grains of wheat are gathered together into one bread, so let us gather our prayers for the church, those in need, and all of God's good creation.

O God, rich in mercy, fill your church with righteousness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness. Empower the baptized by your Spirit to be rich in good works and ready to share. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Protect the earth and its creatures. Provide water, food, shelter, and favorable habitats, especially for endangered species. Preserve threatened ice caps, glaciers, parks, and beaches. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Increase justice in nations, local governments, and courtrooms. Guide lawyers and those who hold public office to act with compassion and discernment. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Give food to the hungry. Set the captives free. Lift up those who are bowed down. Watch over the stranger. Tend to those who are ill. Stir us to act in the best interest of our neighbors. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Enliven our praise. Inspire musicians, artists, poets, and all who create beauty in this place. 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.**

Enfold the saints who have died in the arms of your loving care. Grant that the holy angels accompany us and bring us to eternal life with them in the light of your presence. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Gathered together in the sweet communion of the Holy Spirit, gracious God, we offer these and all our prayers to you; through Jesus Christ, our Savior. **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.

Blessing

God, who gives life to all things and frees us from despair, bless you with truth and peace. And may the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, guide you always in faith, hope, and love.
Amen.

Dismissal

Go in peace, with Christ beside you. **Thanks be to God.**