



Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
www.trinitylutheran.ca

CHURCH AT HOME

Announcements:

Welcome to Trinity's worship resource for November 13, 2022, celebrating the Twenty-Third Sunday After Pentecost.

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

Upcoming Services:

Date	Comment	Pastor / Lay Leader	Reader
November 20		Greg Peifer	Dagmar
November 27	First Day of Advent - Communion	Father Brian	Brenda
December 4		Greg Peifer	Matthew
December 11	Communion	Pastor Jack	Dagmar
December 18		Father Brian	
December 24	Christmas Eve - Communion	Pastor Jack	Kathy
December 25	NO SERVICE	NO SERVICE	NO SERVICE
January 1, 2023	NO SERVICE	NO SERVICE	NO SERVICE

We have started coffee hour after church. There is a sign-up sheet near the office if you would like to bring in a treat!!

**** REMINDER ** There will be having a Financial Update after service on Sunday December 4**

Introduction

The end is near. There is no doubt about it. The warnings are dire. The tone of today's texts is ominous. But the baptized know how to live in the meantime. The baptized are strengthened for the living of these days in word and sacrament. The baptized rally around the invitation of the apostle: "Do not be weary in doing what is right."

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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 redeems us in Christ Jesus, whose steadfast love endures forever. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Most merciful God,

we confess that we have sinned against you and our neighbors. We have ignored voices that call for your justice. We have neglected actions that witness to your righteousness. We have spoken and acted in ways that disrupt your beloved community. We truly repent of things we have done and left undone. For the sake of Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Restore our troubled spirits, so that we may live in newness, follow the way of the Spirit, and build up the body of Christ. Amen.

Rejoice and be glad! God hears the prayers of all who cry out, and restores us to life through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Therefore, I declare to you the forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and 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, the protector of all who trust in you, without you nothing is strong, nothing is holy. Embrace us with your mercy, that with you as our ruler and guide, we may live through what is temporary without losing what is eternal, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia. Stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near. *Alleluia.*

First Reading: Isaiah 65:17-25

Addressing the exiles who had returned to Jerusalem from Babylon, the prophet proclaims a vision of a future time of peace and prosperity. Though the returned exiles are experiencing hard times, God is about to do a new thing.

¹⁷For I am about to create new heavens and a new earth;
the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind.
¹⁸But be glad and rejoice forever in what I am creating;
for I am about to create Jerusalem as a joy, and its people as a delight.
¹⁹I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and delight in my people;
no more shall the sound of weeping be heard in it, or the cry of distress.
²⁰No more shall there be in it an infant that lives but a few days,
or an old person who does not live out a lifetime;
for one who dies at a hundred years will be considered a youth,
and one who falls short of a hundred will be considered accursed.
²¹They shall build houses and inhabit them;
they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.
²²They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat;
for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be,
and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands.
²³They shall not labor in vain, or bear children for calamity;
for they shall be offspring blessed by the LORD—and their descendants as well.
²⁴Before they call I will answer, while they are yet speaking I will hear.
²⁵The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox;
but the serpent—its food shall be dust!
They shall not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, says the LORD.

Psalm: Psalm 98

In righteousness will the LORD judge the world.

¹Sing a new song to the LORD, who has done marvelous things,
whose right hand and holy arm have won the victory.
²**O LORD, you have made known your victory,
you have revealed your righteousness in the sight of the nations.**
³You remember your steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel;
all the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.
⁴**Shout with joy to the LORD, all you lands;
lift up your voice, rejoice, and sing.**
⁵Sing to the LORD with the harp, with the harp and the voice of song.
⁶**With trumpets and the sound of the horn
shout with joy before the king, the LORD.**

⁷Let the sea roar, and all that fills it, the world and those who dwell therein.

⁸**Let the rivers clap their hands,**

and let the hills ring out with joy before the LORD, who comes to judge the earth.

⁹The LORD will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with equity.

Second Reading: 2 Thessalonians 3:6-13

Some members of the Thessalonian community, because of their belief in the nearness of Christ's return, had ceased to work, living off the generosity of other members of the community. The writer of this letter warns them bluntly that if they want to eat, they need to work.

⁶Now we command you, beloved, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to keep away from believers who are living in idleness and not according to the tradition that they received from us. ⁷For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us; we were not idle when we were with you, ⁸and we did not eat anyone's bread without paying for it; but with toil and labor we worked night and day, so that we might not burden any of you. ⁹This was not because we do not have that right, but in order to give you an example to imitate. ¹⁰For even when we were with you, we gave you this command: Anyone unwilling to work should not eat. ¹¹For we hear that some of you are living in idleness, mere busybodies, not doing any work. ¹²Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living. ¹³Brothers and sisters, do not be weary in doing what is right.

Gospel Reading: Luke 21:5-19

As history moves toward God's fulfillment there will be frightening signs and events. Before the end, believers will draw strength from their relationship to God and will be given the words they need to testify and to endure without fear.

⁵When some were speaking about the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and gifts dedicated to God, [Jesus] said, ⁶"As for these things that you see, the days will come when not one stone will be left upon another; all will be thrown down."

⁷They asked him, "Teacher, when will this be, and what will be the sign that this is about to take place?" ⁸And he said, "Beware that you are not led astray; for many will come in my name and say, 'I am he!' and, 'The time is near!' Do not go after them.

⁹"When you hear of wars and insurrections, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end will not follow immediately." ¹⁰Then he said to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; ¹¹there will be great earth-

quakes, and in various places famines and plagues; and there will be dreadful portents and great signs from heaven.

¹²“But before all this occurs, they will arrest you and persecute you; they will hand you over to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors because of my name. ¹³This will give you an opportunity to testify. ¹⁴So make up your minds not to prepare your defense in advance; ¹⁵for I will give you words and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to withstand or contradict. ¹⁶You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, by relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death. ¹⁷You will be hated by all because of my name. ¹⁸But not a hair of your head will perish. ¹⁹By your endurance you will gain your souls.”

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

The Sermon: Live Today, Wonder About Tomorrow (preached by Pastor Jack Dressler at Trinity on November 13, 2022)

The bright sun stunned the disciples as they strolled out from the majestic temple onto the bleached limestone. Hand-chiseled, these giant stone blocks measured eight feet on a side. A grown woman could walk two or three paces per stone, and watch hundreds of people milling in the courtyards and patios outside the temple. Rising far above the streets, these massive boulders were hewn from limestone cliffs. THEY WERE HUGE.

The stones were here to stay, and the delicate, gorgeous temple made you gasp. As this was the holiest place in all Israel, the disciples were surely in a state of awe. Someone said, “Look, what large stones and what large buildings!” Everyone marveled at the grandeur.

So you can imagine the disciple’s dismay when Jesus asked, “Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down.”

All will be thrown down? Really? Who invited Apocalyptic Jesus?

All will be thrown down? What happened to “Come to me, you who are weak and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest”?

Well, buckle your seat belts, good people of God, because Advent is just around the corner, and Apocalyptic Jesus is at the wheel.

What’s he doing, talking about the temple’s demise when he’s at the temple?

Can we relate to the disciples' frustration? We love our houses, cars and clothes, our health, our wealth, our church. We like the occasional shiny building, the thriving city, the military and police, our worshipping here, they make us feel safe, these things.

We'd rather not hear that moths destroy and rust consumes, that our possessions are short-lived, temporary like mist. We don't want to lose our material status. This economic system works – for some – and we move mountains to prevent its crumble. We have a dark fear: Eventually we will die, and we'll go back to God with nothing. Everything we've built on earth will stay here, and we'll be gone.

Mortality is a scary thing, and talk of the end makes most people fidget. But the bulk of the gospels come from messianic and apocalyptic Jews who spent their days waiting for the end.

That's why the upcoming Advent readings are full of end-times prognostication. Our spiritual ancestors expected the end within months, and they were anxious to know when all of this would go down.

For example, the Essene community that followed John's gospel and wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls moved as far away from civilization as possible. They were camped in desert caves by the Dead Sea, literally training for a cosmic battle. And like it or not, these people are part of our spiritual story. They asked with pained anxiety: How do we live in the present when we do not know the future?

It's the same questions we've been asking this past year and 3 months? How do we live in the present when we don't know what's ahead for us and our church. Will we get a full time pastor? Will we be able to forge ahead with a clear path in front of us?

As Jesus forecasts the temple's destruction, the disciples also wonder: How do we live today when we do not know tomorrow?

The gospel writers must have agreed on the temple story's importance because Luke tells it in today's gospel. Mark tells a similar tale in Chapter 13 of his gospel, Matthew in chapter 24, and John alludes to the temple destruction in Chapter 2.

As Matthew and Mark tell the tale, the disciples must have been nervous. They catch Jesus at the lunch break. Sitting at the Mount of Olives, they stare across the valley at the temple. They're probably munching on bread and olives. Peter, Andrew, James and John ask Jesus, "Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished?" And Jesus' response is less than helpful. He tells them, "When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed; this must take place."

Thanks, Jesus. We ask you when, and you tell us bad stuff will happen. How do we live today when we do not know tomorrow? I mean really we want to know. We've got plans to make! How do we live in the present when we do not know the future?

Consider what Jesus offers all of us: the profound truth that God is still in charge. God calls us to love with radical abandon. This is less of a dream, more of a concrete movement. We don't know what comes tomorrow, but we know God calls us to love neighbour as self and to work indefatigably toward a just society and a loving community. So how do we live in the present when we don't know the future? We partner with God, giving all that we have. God has work for us to do, and Sunday mornings are just the start.

Jesus tried to start a revolution in which the last are first, the proud get scattered, the lowly are lifted up. God fills the hungry with good things and sends the rich away empty. Jesus tried to start a revolution in which the sick get healed, the poor are blessed, and we are all beloved children of God. Jesus tried to start a revolution. But it depends, in part, on us. Are we in?

When we read today's story in the context of Luke's full gospel, Jesus drops the temple bomb right before setting his face toward Jerusalem. "All will be thrown down," he says, perhaps referring to his own death. And it was so. The Roman army would plunder Jerusalem in the year 70. Soldiers would pillage the temple, murder women and children, and destroy everything Israel held dear.

Yet death never gets the last word. Jerusalem rises from the Roman ashes. Jesus dies a brutal death at the hands of the military state, but that's just Friday. Sunday rolls around and takes the stone with it. Resurrection strolls out of the empty tomb, and God is still in charge.

Remember though, that Jesus doesn't promise easy living. Jesus does not say that the temple remains, that we avoid death, or that pain goes away. But Jesus does promise that God is with us to the end of the age. That is the greatest promise given to Amelia today in her baptism and us who are baptized, that God will always be with her and us through everything, right to the end. And that God is still in charge, and we can trust in God when we can no longer trust anything else.

So what do we do today when we don't know tomorrow? We try to figure out what God is up to in the world, and seek, humbly, to get on board with that project. That's not a simple answer, but it's a posture we can strive to adopt. Martin Luther adopted this posture when asked what to do if he thought the end was coming tomorrow. His advice? "Plant a tree." In other words: invest hopefully in the future.

Have you ever prayed in a time of uncertainty, in a time of waiting? Consider mothers waiting to give birth, with a baby growing inside. When will she deliver? What will happen to the child? Consider parents waiting to hear back from a job application. How will he pay the mortgage? When will she know? Consider a teen applying for university. Where will she spend the next four years of her life? Where will her friends go? How will her family cope with her empty chair? Consider the cancer patient, dying from the inside out. When will he die? Will it hurt? What will he say to his kids on the last day? Have you ever prayed in a time of uncertainty, in a time of waiting? That's what we need to do in these times as we wait for a new pastor, as we seek new direction and future.

Consider the poetic beauty of today's reading from Isaiah. To the people who knew exactly what it meant to lose a temple, God says, "See, I am about to create new heavens and a new earth; the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind. So be glad and rejoice forever in what I am creating."

How do we live today when we don't know tomorrow? We draw strength from God, who invites our participation and endures long after the cities and buildings and stones have crumbled. We adopt a posture that asks not what God can do for us, but calls us to bring the kingdom of God just a bit closer. We love neighbour as self and we strive for just societies and a stable planet – new heavens and a new earth. We pray without ceasing, and we trust in a mighty God from whom all blessings flow. This is the revolutionary Good News of Jesus Christ. Are we in? **AMEN.**

Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

The Prayers of Intercession

United with your saints across time and place, we pray for our shared world.

Reviving God, keep your church active in its mission and ministry. Encourage bishops, deacons, pastors, and lay leaders to risk boldly in their proclamation and fill them with wisdom and endurance for challenging times. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Renewing God, as the northern hemisphere prepares for winter, make us mindful of the ordered beauty of your creation. Teach us to treasure cycles of rest and new life. Help us care for what you have made. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Loving God, accompany all who make sacrifices for the sake of others. Safeguard first responders and active duty military personnel. Grant peace to veterans and heal any wounds in body, mind, or spirit. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Healing God, your people cry out to you. Sustain doctors, nurses, and hospital personnel in their tireless work. Uphold mental health professionals and those in their care. May the sun of righteousness rise on all who are sick. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Uniting God, unite this assembly in its shared mission and ministry for the sake of the gospel. Highlight ways we can better work together and give us patience to work through disagreement. Lord, in your mercy, **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; Jeffrey; Art; Joan

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...

Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Consoling God, abide with all who grieve for loved ones who have died. Comfort us with the promise of resurrection and new life with you. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Accept these prayers, gracious God, and those known only to you; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **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

The God of peace, who creates all things and calls them good, who makes us alive in Jesus, and who breathes on us the Spirit of hope, ☩ bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

Dismissal

Go in peace. Be a blessing in the world. **Thanks be to God.**