



Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church  
[www.trinitylutheran.ca](http://www.trinitylutheran.ca)

## CHURCH AT HOME

### **Announcements:**

Welcome to Trinity's worship resource for November 20, 2022, celebrating Christ the King (the Twenty-Fourth 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 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**

**\*\* JUST ANNOUNCED \*\* Our Christmas Bazaar will be on Saturday December 3**

### **Introduction**

Jeremiah's promise of the execution of "justice and righteousness in the land" finds ironic fulfillment in the execution of Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews. It appears utterly contradictory that a king should be crucified with a criminal. This victory appears

for all the world as humiliating defeat. Yet through the gate of death Jesus opens the door to paradise.

### **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, our true life, to serve you is freedom, and to know you is unending joy. We worship you, we glorify you, we give thanks to you for your great glory. Abide with us, reign in us, and make this world into a fit habitation for your divine majesty, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

### **Gospel Acclamation**

*Alleluia.* Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David. *Alleluia.*

### **First Reading: Jeremiah 23:1-6**

*Today's reading builds on the common, ancient Near Eastern metaphor of the king as shepherd. Judah's unjust rulers have caused their people, their "flock," to be scattered. Nevertheless, God will raise up a new and righteous shepherd who will rule a restored Judah.*

<sup>1</sup>Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! says the LORD. <sup>2</sup>Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who shepherd my people: It is you who have scattered my flock, and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. So I will attend to you for your evil doings, says the LORD. <sup>3</sup>Then I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the lands where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. <sup>4</sup>I will raise up shepherds over them who will shepherd them, and they shall not fear any longer, or be dismayed, nor shall any be missing, says the LORD.

<sup>5</sup>The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. <sup>6</sup>In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. And this is the name by which he will be called: "The LORD is our righteousness."

### **Psalm: Psalm 46**

*I will be exalted among the nations.*

<sup>1</sup>God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

<sup>2</sup>**Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be moved,  
and though the mountains shake in the depths of the sea;**

<sup>3</sup>though its waters rage and foam,  
and though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

<sup>4</sup>**There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,  
the holy habitation of the Most High.**

<sup>5</sup>God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be shaken;  
God shall help it at the break of day.

<sup>6</sup>**The nations rage, and the kingdoms shake; God speaks, and the earth melts away.**

<sup>7</sup>The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

<sup>8</sup>**Come now, regard the works of the LORD,  
what desolations God has brought upon the earth;**

<sup>9</sup>behold the one who makes war to cease in all the world;  
who breaks the bow, and shatters the spear, and burns the shields with fire.

<sup>10</sup>**“Be still, then, and know that I am God;  
I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted in the earth.”**

<sup>11</sup>The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

**Second Reading: Colossians 1:11-20**

*An early Christian hymn praises the mystery of the political, personal, and mystical Christ, the one who was present at creation and is eternally reigning with God.*

<sup>11</sup>May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully <sup>12</sup>giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. <sup>13</sup>He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, <sup>14</sup>in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

<sup>15</sup>He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; <sup>16</sup>for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. <sup>17</sup>He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. <sup>18</sup>He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. <sup>19</sup>For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, <sup>20</sup>and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

**Gospel Reading: Luke 23:33-43**

*Amid scoffing and slander from those who sarcastically call him Messiah and king, Jesus reveals that to be Messiah and king is to give one’s life for others. Here he uses his power to welcome a despised sinner to paradise but puts his own death into God’s hands.*

<sup>33</sup>When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. <sup>34</sup>[[Then Jesus said, “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.”]] And they cast lots to divide his clothing. <sup>35</sup>And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, “He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!” <sup>36</sup>The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, <sup>37</sup>and saying, “If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!” <sup>38</sup>There was also an inscription over him, “This is the King of the Jews.”

<sup>39</sup>One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, “Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!” <sup>40</sup>But the other rebuked him, saying, “Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?” <sup>41</sup>And we in-

deed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong.”<sup>42</sup> Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”<sup>43</sup> He replied, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.”

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

***The Sermon: God’s Gracious Grip (read by Greg Peifer, written by Maz Lucado, from his book “3:16: The Numbers of Hope”)***

Team Hoyt consists of a father-son squad: Dick and Rick. They race. They race a lot. Sixty-four marathons. Two hundred and six triathlons. Six triathlons at Ironman distance. Two hundred and four 10K runs. Since 1975, they've crossed nearly a thousand finish lines. They've even crossed the USA. It took them forty-five days to run and pedal 3,735 miles, but they did it.

Team Hoyt loves races. But only half of Team Hoyt can run. Dick, the dad, can. But Rick's legs don't work; nor does his speech. At his birth in 1962, the umbilical cord wrapped around his neck, starving oxygen from his brain, stealing coordination from his body. Doctors gave no hope for his development.

Dick and his wife, Judy, disagreed with the prognosis. Rick couldn't bathe, dress, or feed himself, but he could think. They knew he was bright. So they enrolled him in public school. He graduated. He entered college and graduated again.

But Rick wanted to run. At age fifteen, he asked his dad if they could enter a five-mile benefit race. Dick was not a runner, but he was a father, so he loaded his son in a three-wheeled wheelchair, and off they went. They haven't stopped since.

Young Rick Hoyt relies on his dad to do it all: lift him, push him, pedal him, and tow him. Other than a willing heart, he makes no contribution to the effort. Rick depends entirely on the strength of his dad.

God wants you to do the same. "Whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

The phrase "believes in him" doesn't digest well in our day of self-sufficient spiritual food. "Believe in yourself" is the common menu selection of our day. Try harder. Work longer. Dig deeper. Self-reliance is our goal.

And tolerance is our virtue. "In him" smacks of exclusion. Don't all paths lead to heaven? Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and humanism? Salvation comes in many forms,

right? Christ walks upriver on this topic. Salvation is found, not in self or in them, but in him.

We bring to the spiritual race what Rick Hoyt brings to the physical one. Our spiritual legs have no strength. Our morality has no muscle. Our good deeds cannot carry us across the finish line, but Christ can. "To the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness" (Romans 4:5).

Paul assures salvation to the most unlikely folks: not to the worker, but to the trust-er; not to the able-bodied, but to the unable; not to the affluent saint, but to the bankrupt and unemployable—the child who will trust with Rick Hoyt reliance. "Trusting-him-to-do-it is what gets you set right with if God, by God. Sheer gift" (Romans 4:5).

We bring what Rick brings. And God does what Dick does. He takes start-to-finish-line responsibility for his children. "I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand" (John 10:28).

Jesus fortified this language with the strongest possible negation, leading the Amplified Bible translators to translate: "And I give them eternal life, and they shall never lose it or perish throughout the ages. [To all eternity they shall never by any means be destroyed.] And no one is able to snatch them lay out of My hand" (John 10:28).

We parents understand God's resolve. When our children stumble; we do not disown them. When they fall we do not dismiss them. We may punish or reprimand, but cast them out of the family? We cannot. They are biologically connected to us. Those born with our DNA will die with it.

God, our Father, engenders the same relationship with us. Upon salvation we "become children of God" (John 1:12 ESV). He alters our lineage, redefines our spiritual parenthood, and, in doing so, secures our salvation. To accomplish the mission, he seals us with his Spirit. "Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit" (Eph. 1:13). A soul sealed by God is safe.

For a short time in college, I worked at a vacuum-cleaner plant. We assembled the appliance from plug to hose. The last step on the assembly line was "sealing and shipping." By this point, the company had invested hours and dollars in the machine. So they took extra care to protect their product. They mummified it in bubble wrap, secured it with Styrofoam, wrapped the box with tough-to-tear tape, stamped the destination on the box, and belted it inside the truck. That machine was secure. But compared to God's care of his saints, workers dumped bare machines into the back of a pickup truck. God vacuum-seals us with his strongest force: his Spirit. He sheathes his children in a suit of

spiritual armor, encircles us with angels, and indwells us himself. The queen of England should enjoy such security.

Christ paid too high a price to leave us unguarded. "Remember, he has identified you as his own, guaranteeing that you will be saved on the day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30 NLT).

What a difference this assurance makes.

An air force pilot told me of the day he forgot to secure himself into the seat of his high-powered jet. He completed every other preliminary act. He satisfied his checklist from beginning to end. Yet he forgot to buckle his seat belt. His jet was configured in such a way that once the plane was airborne, the belt could not be secured. Ejection from the plane meant separation from his seat, and separation from his seat meant separation from his parachute and a face-plant at 120 mph. That'll suck the joy out of the journey. Can you imagine flying a jet without a parachute?

Many do. Eternal insecurity extracts joy from many people. Only Christ guarantees a safe landing. Parallel his offer with that of other religions. Judaism sees salvation as a Judgment Day decision based on morality. Hindus anticipate multiple reincarnations in the soul's journey through the cosmos. Buddhism grades your life according to the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path. Muslims earn their way to Allah by performing the duties of the Five Pillars of Faith. Many philosophers deem life after the grave as hidden and unknown. One called death a step into "the great Perhaps", another, "a great leap in the dark."

No one but Jesus "buckles you in." You may slip—indeed you will—but you will not fall. Hence the invitation to believe "in him." Don't believe in you; you can't save you. And don't believe in others; they can't save you.

Some historians clump Christ with Moses, Muhammad, Confucius, and other spiritual leaders. But Jesus refuses to share the page. He declares, "I am the way; and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me" (John 14:6 RSV). He could have scored more points in political correctness had he said, "I know the way," or "I show the way." Yet he speaks not of what he does but of who he is: I am the way.

His followers refused to soften or shift the spotlight. Peter announced: "There is salvation in no one else! God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved?" (Acts 4:12 NLT).

Many recoil at such definitiveness. John 14:6 and Acts 4:12 sound primitive in this era of broadbands and broad minds. The world is shrinking, cultures are blending, borders are bending; this is the day of inclusion. All roads lead to heaven, right?

But can they? The sentence makes good talk-show fodder, but is it accurate? Can all approaches to God be correct?

Islam says Jesus was not crucified. Christians say he was. Both can't be right.

Judaism refuses the claim of Christ as the Messiah. Christians accept it. Someone's making a mistake.

Buddhists look toward Nirvana, achieved after no less than 547 reincarnations. Christians believe in one life, one death, and an eternity of enjoying God. Doesn't one view exclude the other?

Humanists do not acknowledge a creator of life. Jesus claims to be the source of life. One of the two speaks folly.

Spiritists read your palms. Christians consult the Bible.

Hindus perceive a plural and impersonal God. Christ followers believe "there is only one God" (1 Cor. 8:4 NLT). Somebody is wrong.

And, most supremely, every non-Christian religion says, "You can save you." Jesus says, "My death on the cross saves you."

How can all religions lead to God when they are so different? We don't tolerate such illogic in other matters. We don't pretend that all roads lead to London or all ships sail to Australia. All flights don't land in Rome. Imagine your response to a travel agent who claims they do. You tell him you need a flight to Rome, Italy, so he looks on his screen.

"Well, there is a flight to Sydney, Australia, departing at 6300 a.m."

"Does it go to Rome?"

"No, but it offers wonderful in-flight dining and movies."

"But I need to go to Rome."

"Then let me suggest Southwest Airlines."

"Southwest Airlines flies to Rome?"

"No, but they have consistently won awards for on-time arrivals."

You're growing frustrated. "I need one airline to carry me to one place: Rome."

The agent appears offended. "Sir, all flights go to Rome."

You know better. Different flights have different destinations. That's not a thick-headed conclusion but an honest one. Every flight does not go to Rome. Every path does not lead to God. Jesus blazed a stand-alone trail void of self-salvation. He cleared a one-of-a-kind passageway uncluttered by human effort. Christ came, not for the strong, but for the weak; not for the righteous, but for the sinner. We enter his way upon confession of our need, not completion of our deeds. He offers a unique-to-him invitation in which he works and we trust, he dies and we live, he invites and we believe.



We believe in him. "The work God wants you to do is this: Believe the One he sent" (John 6:29 NCV).

Believe in yourself? No. Believe in him.

Believe in them? No. Believe in him.

And those who do, those who "believe in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

How do we begin to believe? We do what young Rick Hoyt did. We turn to our Father for help.

When Dick and Rick Hoyt cross finish lines, both receive finisher medals. Post-race listings include both names. The dad does the work, but the son shares in the victory. Why? Because he believes. And because he believes, both celebrate the finish.

May you and your Father do the same.

### **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.*

We pray for your church. Embolden denominations and faith-based organizations in creative and collaborative ministries and increase our work for the sake of the gospel. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for the earth. Protect waterways from pollution and animal habitats from destruction. Guide us in careful stewardship of waters, plant life, and animals. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for the nations of the world. Instill in every leader's heart a desire for justice and peace. Support the work of international collaborations that seek the goals of health and joy for all people. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for all who are undermined or oppressed. Amplify the voices of the unheard and break open stubborn systems of injustice. Bring about your righteousness and fill us all with your redeeming light. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for this assembly. Guide our pastor/s, deacon/s, and council members in discernment, and nurture new leaders with fresh ideas. Give this congregation a spirit of discipleship and service. 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.**

We give thanks for all who have died in the faith. Console us who mourn and comfort us with the beautiful promise of life in your kingdom. 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.**