



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

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June 16, 2024  
4th Sunday after Pentecost  
Healing & Belonging Service

### **Announcements**

**Juice boxes** are still needed at Street Help Shelter. The Welcome Centre Shelter for Women needs granola bars, fruit rollup-type items and another snack item for snack packs for children at the centre. Please leave donated items on the table in the Narthex.

### **Coming Up**

**July 12** – Our first community dinner since COVID is planned. Doors will open at 4:30 p.m, and the buffet dinner will be served at 5:30 p.m. The meal will be catered by Cramdons and will include chicken, pasta, vegetables, buns and salad. Adult tickets are \$24 each and children tickets are \$12.

**September 8** – Back to Church Sunday. After a summer filled with activities, it's time to reset for the Fall and all that it offers. This is a fun family-friendly service based on the writings of Dr. Seuss (there will be a lot of rhyming this morning). As well, there will be a BBQ fellowship after the service. What a great way to start the Fall.

### **We Remember in our Prayers**

**In Residence:** Cordelle, Dorothy, Katie, Sharon, Vern.

**Members:** Bunny, Donna, Ed, Joan, Susan, Evelyn, Connie.

**Friends & Family:** Anna, Asdis, Audrey, Dot, Jean, Mary, Michelle, Randy, Roger, Rose, Frank, Tanya, Jeremy, Rachel, Nash

### **Introduction to the day**

*Who are the blessed ones of God? For Micah, they are those who do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. For Paul, they are the ones who find wisdom in the weakness of the cross. For Jesus, they are the poor, the meek, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, those who mourn, and those who hunger for righteousness. In baptism we find our blessed identity and calling in this countercultural way of living and serving*

WOV #788 Glory to God  
ELW # 641 All are welcome  
ELW # 728 Blest are they  
ELW # 496 One bread, one body  
WOV #749 When love is found

### Prayer of the day

Gracious and liberating God,  
whom in Jesus knows what it's like to be  
an oppressed person, knows what it's  
like to live in a world as a rejected soul,  
cut off from the community, and to  
experience violence just for being  
yourself, guide us to be fierce advocates  
for our 2SLGBTQIA+ siblings in Christ.

**AMEN**

- *From the Reconciling in Christ Sunday 2020:  
Faith & Advocacy Service*

### First reading: Micah 6: 1-8

<sup>1</sup>Hear what the Lord says:

Rise, plead your case before the  
mountains,  
and let the hills hear your voice.

<sup>2</sup>Hear, you mountains, the controversy  
of the Lord,  
and you enduring foundations of the  
earth;  
for the Lord has a controversy with his  
people,  
and he will contend with Israel.

<sup>3</sup>"O my people, what have I done to  
you?  
In what have I wearied you?



Answer me!

<sup>4</sup>For I brought you up from the land of  
Egypt,

and redeemed you from the house  
of slavery;  
and I sent before you Moses,  
Aaron, and Miriam.

<sup>5</sup>O my people, remember now what  
King Balak of Moab devised,  
what Balaam son of Beor answered  
him,  
and what happened from Shittim to  
Gilgal,  
that you may know the saving acts  
of the Lord."

<sup>6</sup>"With what shall I come before  
the Lord,  
and bow myself before God on  
high?  
Shall I come before him with burnt  
offerings,

with calves a year old?  
<sup>7</sup>Will the Lord be pleased with  
thousands of rams,  
with ten thousands of rivers of oil?  
Shall I give my firstborn for my  
transgression,  
the fruit of my body for the sin of my  
soul?"

<sup>8</sup>He has told you, O mortal, what is  
good;  
and what does the Lord require of  
you  
but to do justice, and to love kindness,  
and to walk humbly with your God?

### **Psalm 139: 1-18**

<sup>1</sup>Lord, you have <sup>l</sup> searched me out;  
O Lord, you <sup>l</sup> have known me.  
<sup>2</sup>**You know my sitting down and  
my <sup>l</sup> rising up;  
you discern my thoughts <sup>l</sup> from  
afar.**

<sup>3</sup>You trace my journeys and  
my <sup>l</sup> resting-places  
and are acquainted with <sup>l</sup> all my  
ways.

<sup>4</sup>**Indeed, there is not a word <sup>l</sup> on my  
lips,  
but you, O Lord, know  
it <sup>l</sup> altogether.**

<sup>5</sup>You encompass me, behind <sup>l</sup> and  
before,  
and lay your <sup>l</sup> hand upon me.

<sup>6</sup>**Such knowledge is too  
wonder- <sup>l</sup> ful for me;  
it is so high that I cannot at- <sup>l</sup> tain  
to it.**

<sup>7</sup>Where can I go then <sup>l</sup> from your  
Spirit?

Where can I flee <sup>l</sup> from your  
presence?

<sup>8</sup>**If I climb up to heaven, <sup>l</sup> you are  
there;  
if I make the grave my bed,  
you <sup>l</sup> are there also.**

<sup>9</sup>If I take the wings <sup>l</sup> of the morning  
and dwell in the uttermost parts <sup>l</sup> of  
the sea,

<sup>10</sup>**even there your <sup>l</sup> hand will lead  
me  
and your right hand <sup>l</sup> hold me  
fast.**

<sup>11</sup>If I say, "Surely the darkness  
will <sup>l</sup> cover me,  
and the light around me <sup>l</sup> turn to  
night,"

<sup>12</sup>**darkness is not dark to you; the  
night is as bright <sup>l</sup> as the day;  
darkness and light to you  
are <sup>l</sup> both alike.**

<sup>13</sup>For you yourself created my <sup>l</sup> inmost  
parts;

you knit me together in  
my <sup>l</sup> mother's womb.

<sup>14</sup>**I will thank you because I am  
mar- <sup>l</sup> velously made;  
your works are wonderful, and  
I <sup>l</sup> know it well.**

<sup>15</sup>My body was not hid- <sup>l</sup> den from you,  
while I was being made in secret  
and woven in the depths <sup>l</sup> of the earth.

<sup>16</sup>Your eyes beheld my limbs, yet  
unfinished in the womb; all of them were  
**written <sup>l</sup> in your book;  
my days were fashioned before  
they <sup>l</sup> came to be.**

<sup>17</sup>How deep I find your <sup>l</sup> thoughts, O  
God!

How great is the <sup>l</sup> sum of them!

<sup>18</sup>If I were to count them, they would be more in number <sup>l</sup> than the sand;

to count them all, my life span would need to <sup>l</sup> be like yours.

### Second reading: 1 John 4: 7-8, 12

<sup>7</sup> Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup>Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love.

<sup>12</sup>No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.



### Gospel: Matthew 5: 1-12

<sup>1</sup>When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. <sup>2</sup>Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

<sup>3</sup>“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>4</sup>“Blessed are those who mourn, for

they will be comforted.

<sup>5</sup>“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

<sup>6</sup>“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

<sup>7</sup>“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

<sup>8</sup>“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

<sup>9</sup>“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

<sup>10</sup>“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>11</sup>“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. <sup>12</sup>Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

### Sermon

#### Tell a love story

Grace to you and peace in the name of the God who loves us one and all!

As always, it is my absolute privilege to bring you greetings on behalf of your Bishop, Bishop Michael Pryse; my colleagues in the Office Pastors Christie and Doug; as well as all your Eastern Synod siblings in ministry (all 50,000 of them) who are gathered in 174 communities of faith this morning from Sault Ste Marie ON to Halifax NS...and

all those wonderful places in between – just like this one.

Moreso – it's a profound experience (and a bit surreal) for me to stand here today and wish you a blessed, celebratory, advocacy-filled and meaningful Pride Month! In 2011 our church took long-overdue action to change policies and practices which prevented an entire segment of God's children from living, serving, and feeling at home in God's church. And while we have certainly come a long way since then (truly, there is much to celebrate) – we still have a lot of work left to do!

Which is why affirming worship services such as this one matter so much to our collective life as the Body of Christ.

And so please hear me when I say this – on behalf of Bishop Michael, your siblings in Christ (queer, ally, and otherwise), and me personally...thank you for your profound witness! Thank you for your persistent and ever-evolving outreach in your community. Thank you for loving ALL YOUR neighbours...as they are, where they are, for who they are...and for being a faithful expression of God's grace in the midst of it all! But most of all – thank you, simply, for being precisely who you are: beautifully blessed and beloved children of God. Thank you!

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I have a question for you:

If I were to invite you to tell me a story – a story that represents your ministry in this context – what kind of story would you share with me?

It's a proverbial question – but I still want you to think about it.

One of my favourite things about travelling – whether it be around the corner or across the globe – is that traveling affords the traveller with an opportunity to listen to some really fantastic stories.

For example:

In Barcelona, Spain I drank wine with a guy who had been roaming the globe for four months in search of a new direction in his life after losing his job due to corporate downsizing. His was a story of adventure.

In Milan, Italy I listened to a couple share with me the story of their heritage that reached way back to the building of the great Duomo Cathedral. Theirs was a story of history.

In Krakow, Poland Bishop Susan and I met with a group of young 2SLGBTQIA+ college students who shared tearfully with us their struggle to gather safely and without fear of violence or discrimination. They told a story of tragedy

And in New York City I heard the most wonderful tale of trying to make it in the Big Apple, from a person who worked five jobs and slept joyfully on a friend's couch. Theirs was a thriller of a story.

The old adage is certainly true...we all have a story to tell.

Which leads me then to wonder – what story do we tell as the church? As people of faith? As congregations and communities of believers in today's world?

If some weary traveller were to stumble into our buildings this morning...would they find themselves in the Adventure section...or the Historic section? Would it be a tale of Tragedy or a thrilling Epic which would regale them?

To put it another way – what kind of story is God calling us to share with the world? How is God calling us to be the church? What does the Good News sound like here...now...today...amidst our ears?

Dear beloved children of God – as people of faith, as the body of Christ, and as workers in God’s vineyard – I believe that we are being called to tell a *love* story. Certainly, parts may be adventurous, or historic in nature. Even tragic or thrilling at times. But a love story nonetheless.

For at its core, ours is a story about God’s love – as it’s poured out for all God’s people!

A story about a people called to love their neighbour, (unequivocally and without reservation) as themselves

And a story...a calling...that turns fear to courage, sorrow to joy, death to life, and hate to love.

Such a calling ought to freely embolden us to respond to the needs of the world in such a way as to tell the story of God’s life-giving grace not only through our words...but also by our actions. Not simply with our lips...but also with our hands, and feet, and hearts, and lives.

Love is our story!

But dear church – we need to keep telling it. Keep showing it. Keep living it. More deeply and more authentically with each passing day! We simply cannot lose sight of that!

For in doing so...we will proclaim that all truly are welcome...that there really is a place at the table for all God’s children...that there will surely be enough bread to go around...and that the wine will never run out.

We need to love in such a way as to make space for those who have time and time again had their voices silenced, space to welcome home those who have previously been turned away, space to ask difficult questions and engage in important learning, and space to proclaim a gospel that invites God’s people into a more authentic way of living and serving.

Love has always been the church’s story – messy, imperfect, beautiful, challenging, adventurous and surprising as love can so often be! But, oh what a story it is!

When I began this morning – I shared with you some stories from people I’ve encountered along life’s path – but there is one final story which I’d like to share with you this morning.

- And that’s the story of a young child, who from a very early age felt that he needed to hide who he knew himself truly to be.
- It’s the story of a child who was told by booming voices proclaiming out-of-context scripture from imposing

pulpits - that God could never love someone like him.

- It's the story of a teenager who sat through church-wide debates about who was good enough (and who wasn't) to serve in God's church.
- But it's also the story of a young adult who heard from different pulpits that God's love had intentionally knit him together in the womb...and that he really had been wonderfully made.
- It's also the story of a young man who learned what it really means when we proclaim that *all are welcome*...and that...*to love is to know God*, because there were people along the way ready to show him the depth of such promises.
- It's also the story of a 37 year old pastor, who in this church finally found a place of welcome, acceptance, and love outpoured – and was freed to say the words...I am gay – and God really does love for who God created me to be.

This story isn't from one of my travels. Rather, this story...is my story. And its holy ground to share a small piece of it with you.

Friends, thank you for your partnership in the work of sharing God's love story with the world. Your labours have not been in vain, and the ministry to which you have been called and equipped matters more than you realize.

As someone who, for many years, wondered whether I could be welcomed or loved in God's church for who I truly

am...I am forever grateful for those places, people and communities where the love of God is so profoundly embodied that I can't help but to feel God's arms wrap around me, holding me, and claiming me as God's own! You are one of those places. You are those people.

May you know more profoundly, with each passing day, the depth of God's love for you...and for all!

And may you continue to tell the story of God's love, acceptance, inclusion and welcome – shout it...sing it...dance it – for in doing so you will continue to touch hearts...changes lives...and invite others to love themselves just as God already does!

Happy Pride!

Thanks be to God.

**AMEN**

*Guest preacher, Adam Snook, assistant to the Eastern Synod bishop*

### **Lord's Prayer**

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**

May the Holy Parent ignite the fires of advocacy in your heart

May the Spirit place the scroll of knowledge on your tongue in tough conversations

May the Son + walk with you as you march with your queer siblings.

**AMEN**

### **OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS...**

**Brown Bag Bible Study** returns in July!

The noontime study is set for Thursdays and will look at passages from 1 John.

The studies are set for July 11, July 18, July 25 and August 1. Join us for a deep and sometimes lively discussion in the Fellowship Hall.

**PrideFest** takes place in August and Trinity will be there. Thanks to a synodical grant, Trinity members will be walking in the August 11 parade and manning a table welcoming people to all Trinity has to offer as an affirming community. We're looking for walkers and people to represent the congregation at the table. Contact Pastor Chris or Dagmar to volunteer.

**We are in the process** of reviewing and updating our membership records. If you would like a visit from Pastor Chris, please call the church office and leave a message. Pastor Chris would be happy to visit and bring you communion, if you have difficulty attending church services.



**Trinity's Confirmation classes** are planned to restart in the Fall. The Confirmation program is two-years long. The classes are an hour in length once a week. Each year runs from the end of September to early December and from mid-January to Easter. If your child has been baptized Lutheran, please consider enrolling them in the program. Email the church office or DM for more information.