



Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
www.trinitylutheran.ca

July 14, 2024
8th Sunday after Pentecost

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.

Brown Bag Bible Study has returned! The noontime study has moved to Tuesdays and will look at passages from 1 John. The studies are set for July 16, July 23 and July 30. Join us for a deep and sometimes lively discussion.

Coming Up

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, Connie.

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

Introduction to the day

When Amos reports his vision of God judging Israel for its mistreatment of the poor, he becomes a threat to the power of the priests and the king. John the Baptist also speaks truth to power, and Herod has him killed. In Herod's fear that Jesus is John returned from the dead, we may hear hope for the oppressed: all the prophets killed through the ages are alive in Jesus. We are called to witness to justice in company with them, and to proclaim God's saving love.

WOV #788 Glory to God
WOV #819 Come, all you people
ELW #725 When the poor ones
ELW #496 One bread, one body
ELW #679 For the fruit of all creation

Prayer of the day

O God, from you come all holy desires,
all good counsels, and all just works.
Give to us, your servants, that peace
which the world cannot give, that our
hearts may be set to obey your
commandments; and also that we, being
defended from the fear of our enemies,
may live in peace and quietness,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and
Lord.

AMEN

First reading: Amos 7: 7-15

⁷ This is what [the Lord God] showed
me: the Lord was standing beside a wall
built with a plumb line, with a plumb line
in his hand. ⁸ And the Lord said to me,
“Amos, what do you see?” And I said, “A
plumb line.” Then the Lord said,
“See, I am setting a plumb line
in the midst of my people Israel;
I will never again pass them by;
⁹ the high places of Isaac shall be
made desolate,
and the sanctuaries of Israel shall
be laid waste,
and I will rise against the house of
Jeroboam with the sword.”

¹⁰ Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel,
sent to King Jeroboam of Israel, saying,
“Amos has conspired against you in the
very center of the house of Israel; the
land is not able to bear all his words. ¹¹
For thus Amos has said,
‘Jeroboam shall die by the sword,
and Israel must go into exile
away from his land.’”

¹² And Amaziah said to Amos, “O seer,
go, flee away to the land of Judah, earn
your bread there, and prophesy there; ¹³
but never again prophesy at Bethel, for it
is the king’s sanctuary, and it is a temple
of the kingdom.”

¹⁴ Then Amos answered Amaziah, “I
am no prophet, nor a prophet’s son; but
I am a herdsman, and a dresser of
sycamore trees, ¹⁵ and the Lord took me
from following the flock, and
the Lord said to me, ‘Go, prophesy to
my people Israel.’”

Psalm 85:8-13

⁸ I will listen to what the Lord ^l God is
saying;
for you speak peace to your faithful
people and to those who turn
their ^l hearts to you.
⁹ **Truly, your salvation is very near
to ^l those who fear you,
that your glory may dwell ^l in our
land.**

¹⁰ Steadfast love and faithfulness
have ^l met together;
righteousness and peace
have ^l kissed each other.

¹¹ **Faithfulness shall spring**

**up¹ from the earth,
and righteousness shall
look¹ down from heaven.**

¹² The Lord will indeed¹ grant
prosperity,
and our land will¹ yield its increase.

¹³ **Righteousness shall go be-¹ fore
the Lord
and shall prepare for¹ God a
pathway.**

Second reading: Ephesians 1: 3-14

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. ⁵ He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace ⁸ that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight ⁹ he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. ¹¹ In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things

according to his counsel and will, ¹² so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. ¹³ In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; ¹⁴ this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

Gospel: Mark 6: 14-29

¹⁴ King Herod heard of [the disciples' preaching,] for Jesus' name had become known. Some were saying,



“John the baptizer has been raised from the dead; and for this reason these powers are at work in him.”¹⁵ But others said, “It is Elijah.” And others said, “It is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old.”¹⁶ But when Herod heard of it, he said, “John, whom I beheaded, has been raised.”

¹⁷ For Herod himself had sent men who arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison on account of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife, because Herod had married her. ¹⁸ For John had been telling Herod, “It is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife.” ¹⁹ And Herodias had a grudge against him, and wanted to kill him. But she could not, ²⁰ for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he protected him. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed; and yet he liked to listen to him. ²¹ But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his courtiers and officers and for the leaders of Galilee. ²² When his daughter Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests; and the king said to the girl, “Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it.” ²³ And he solemnly swore to her, “Whatever you ask me, I will give you, even half of my kingdom.” ²⁴ She went out and said to her mother, “What should I ask for?” She replied, “The head of John the baptizer.” ²⁵ Immediately she rushed back to the king and requested, “I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter.” ²⁶ The king was deeply grieved; yet out of regard for his oaths and for

the guests, he did not want to refuse her. ²⁷ Immediately the king sent a soldier of the guard with orders to bring John’s head. He went and beheaded him in the prison, ²⁸ brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl. Then the girl gave it to her mother. ²⁹ When his disciples heard about it, they came and took his body, and laid it in a tomb.

Sermon

The price we pay

May God peace and grace be in abundance with you this morning and always.

Oscar Romero was a Catholic priest serving in El Salvador.

He was appointed archbishop of San Salvador in 1977. He was 60 at the time and was considered a social conservative. Then, his friend and fellow priest Rutilio Grande was murdered and Romero became a vocal critic of the El Salvador government. Grande had been working among the country’s poor ... helping them become self-reliant.

Romero knew that his words carried a risk for him and for those close to him.

Sometime later Romero said:

"When I looked at Rutilio lying there dead I thought, 'If they have killed him for doing what he did, then I too have to walk the same path.' "

Romero began to speak out out against poverty, social injustice, assassinations and torture. He wasn’t

the social conservative he was a few months earlier.

When war happened in 1979, Romero criticized the United States for its involvement in the conflict and for turning a blind eye to human rights abuses. Romero began preaching and advocating for a social revolution.

In 1980, Romero had just finished his sermon in a small chapel at a San Salvador hospital. He stepped away from the lectern and stood in front of the altar to begin the next portion of the Mass being celebrated with local priests and hospital patients.

A car pulled up in front of the chapel ... a man got out ... raised his gun and fired two shots. A bullet ripped through Romero's heart ... killing the archbishop.

Romero's funeral procession was marked by explosions and gunfire ... as many as 50 people were killed by who some say were government soldiers and snipers.

Even though the United States government continued to fund El Salvador's military government, Romero's death led U.S. unions to refuse to load shipments of military equipment bound for El Salvador.

Romero's killer has been identified, but never prosecuted.

His refusal to remain silent about the injustices and the violence he witnessed led to his death ... and his death led to change and a measure of justice for those who had been oppressed and victimized.

This morning's passage interrupts Jesus' story with a flashback sequence.

Last week, Jesus commissioned and sent the disciples out into the countryside. After this morning's passage, the disciples help with the feeding of the 5,000.

Between those two events we hear of John the Baptizer's fate and the cost that discipleship ... the cost of giving voice to a truth that is contrary to what the world says is the truth and living into that truth ... can exact.

Like Oscar Romero, John the Baptizer paid a steep price. He spoke the truth ... a truth that made people in power uncomfortable ... John's words afflicted the comfortable ... which the words of the gospel can ... and should ... do.

John's is a story of "faithful resistance and courageous hope."

Roman authorities had placed Herod Antipas in charge of Galilee. His father was Herod the Great ... the man who had babies slaughtered in an effort to kill the infant Jesus.

On a trip to Rome, the younger Herod met and fell in love with Herodias ... who happened to be his brother's wife.

So, Herod Antipas divorced his first wife so that he could marry Herodias. Since she was also Herod Antipas' niece, the marriage was contrary to Jewish law.

Making matters even worse was that her first husband was still alive.

This did not sit well with John the Baptizer ... he publicly criticized the marriage as being incestuous ... he called for repentance. This annoyed Herodias no end. She kept pushing her husband to silence the noisy prophet.

John was uncompromising in speaking the word of God's truth about her marriage to Herod. John had to have known that criticizing political authority was no way to get ahead.

To make matters worse, Herod recognized that John's influence was growing among the people. Herod was afraid John could lead a rebellion ... even though he liked to listen to John's preaching, Herod knew he had to stop the prophet. But arresting John was one thing, having him executed was quite another.

But Herodias worked things to her favour.

In front of his generals and the hoi polloi of the palace, her husband promised their daughter anything she desired after she performed a particularly good dance.

Herodias suggested the head of John the Baptizer on a platter was an appropriate gift.

Rather than go back on his word and lose the respect of his officers and the other dignitaries ... Herod ordered the execution.

By having John executed, Herodias might have hoped that the message John proclaimed would fall silent ... Herod might have hoped that the influence John and his message held

over the people would end ... that the threat it held against Herod's and Roman power would end.

Clearly, Herodias and Herod were wrong.

In fact, Herod believes that Jesus is John returned from the dead.

The truth that John proclaimed continued to echo through the world ... Jesus and his disciples also paid the high price of proclaiming ... of testifying to a different more just and merciful existence.

Stephen, Philip, Matthew and others all died for sharing the truth and teachings ... both of which were at odds with the world's values and expectations.

This is a view of discipleship that we are sometimes hard-pressed to embrace ... simply because there is a price to pay.

Last month, Bishop Michael told the assembled members of the synod's clergy and lay leaders that our advocacy matters.

Our advocacy for justice and mercy ... our advocacy for environmental protection ... our advocacy for an end to suffering ... it all matters ... and it can also carry a price.

We might not face the same punishment as John, but there can be costs involved.

Every now and then I see a message saying that churches shouldn't be political. Or course, there are other messages that proclaim that Jesus was political.

After all, preaching and teaching things that go against those things that the world says are important – unrestricted power ... the use of that power to abuse or marginalize people ... and the unbridled accumulation of wealth and goods ... sounds political.

Still, are we willing to proclaim and bear witness to the life and relationship that God calls us toward?

Or do we keep our faith ... and love ... restricted ... do we mute our advocacy for the environment ... for justice ... for compassionate treatment and care for others ... for the inclusion of those who churches have excluded in the past ... because we are afraid of the personal or congregational cost that might be involved by giving voice to our call?

Remain silent ... and offerings won't be held back.

Remain silent ... and people won't stay away.

Remain silent ... and we won't put the congregation at risk.

Remain silent ... and there won't be a price to pay.

Remain silent ... and you won't live into the promise of the gospel, but you'll be safe ... maybe ... better off maybe ... comfortable maybe.

John the Baptist tells the truth, the consequences to truth telling for him were a dungeon and death. So, even while we affirm that Jesus is the way, the truth and the life... we also must recognize that it may get you ostracized,

arrested and killed. Jesus was ... after all ... just rejected in his home town.

So as we go out from this place this morning, let us consider some questions:

What are we willing to lose for speaking the truth to the world's lies?

What are we willing to endure to continue the legacy of grace?

If there is a sign of promise in the story of John the Baptizer, then it lies with his followers.

The passage ends with John's followers coming to Herod and claiming John's body for an honourable burial. This act of faithfulness required a measure of courage.

Such courage will be needed when we live into the promise of the gospel ... when we share the gift of grace we have received ... we live its story and share it with the world and with one another here today.

The grace we have received through Jesus' suffering ... death and resurrection ... should embolden us to speak truth to the unfair and unjust powers of the world ... a truth anchored in love ... and give voice to the realities that we witness around us.

May we be so brave ... may our voices be loud and insistent.

AMEN

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...

PrideFest takes place August 9-11 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 also selling "Trinity Lutheran Church" T-shirts. Sizes S-XL are \$20 and XXL-XXXL are \$23. If you'd like a shirt, contact the church office with the size and colour you'd like. The shirts are

available in green, blue, purple, red, orange, and yellow.

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.