



Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
www.trinitylutheran.ca

August 25, 2024
14th 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.

Today's sermon is offered by Rev. Peter Wall, assistant to the National Bishop, worship.

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.

Members: Bunny, Donna, Ed, Joan, Susan. Connie, Lorraine.

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

Introduction to the day

In today's gospel many people take offense at Jesus' invitation to eat his flesh and drink his blood; even many of Jesus' disciples peel off. This is the backdrop in John's gospel for Peter's confession of faith. "To whom can we go?" asks Peter, in words we sometimes sing just before the gospel is read. "You have the words of eternal life." In order to take such a stand, as Peter and Joshua did, Paul tells us to arm ourselves with the word of God. We pray in the Spirit that we might be bold ambassadors of the gospel.

ELW # 819 Come, all you people
ELW # 758 You are the way
ELW # 492 Eat this bread, drink this cup
ELW # 807, come thou font of every
blessing
ELW # 638 Blessed Assurance

Prayer of the day

Holy God, your word feeds your people with life that is eternal. Direct our choices and preserve us in your truth, that, renouncing what is false and evil, we may live in you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord.

AMEN

First reading: Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18

¹Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God. ^{2a}And Joshua said to all the people, ¹⁴“Now therefore revere the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. ¹⁵Now if you are unwilling to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”

¹⁶Then the people answered, “Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods; ¹⁷for it is the Lord our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed; ¹⁸and the Lord drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the Lord, for he is our God.”

Psalm 34:15-22

¹⁵The eyes of the Lord are up- | on the righteous,
and God’s ears are open | to their cry.

¹⁶**The face of the Lord is against those | who do evil,
to erase the remembrance of them | from the earth.**

¹⁷The righteous cry,
and | the Lord hears them
and delivers them from | all their troubles.

¹⁸**The Lord is near to the | brokenhearted
and saves those whose spir- | its are crushed.**

¹⁹Many are the troubles | of the righteous,
but the Lord delivers them from | every one.

²⁰**God will keep safe | all their**

bones;

not one of them | shall be broken.

²¹Evil will bring death | to the wicked
and those who hate the
righteous | will be punished.

²²**O Lord, you redeem the life | of
your servants,
and those who put their trust in
you will | not be punished.**

Second reading: Ephesians 6:10-20

¹⁰Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. ¹¹Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹²For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. ¹⁴Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. ¹⁵As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. ¹⁶With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

¹⁸Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end

keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. ¹⁹Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

Gospel: John 6:56-69

[Jesus said,] ⁵⁶“Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. ⁵⁷Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. ⁵⁸This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever.” ⁵⁹He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

⁶⁰When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?” ⁶¹But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, “Does this offend you? ⁶²Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? ⁶³It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. ⁶⁴But among you there are some who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. ⁶⁵And he said, “For this reason I have told you that no one

can come to me unless it is granted by the Father.”

⁶⁶Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. ⁶⁷So Jesus asked the twelve, “Do you also wish to go away?” ⁶⁸Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.”



Sermon

In the sixth chapter of St John’s Gospel, in which we have been immersed these last weeks, Jesus is speaking extensively about who He is and what he wants his followers to do. He uses the image and metaphor of ‘the bread of life’ and (as only John’s Gospel can do) expands the metaphor and deepens the teaching.

He responds to the disciples’ comment (or perhaps complaint) that this teaching is difficult and that nobody could accept it by reminding them about the things he has repeatedly said and taught about eternal life and their responsibilities. The

images about being ‘food’, about ‘feeding’ (notably in the story of the feeding of the thousands upon the hillside) challenge Jesus’ followers and us. To the point that, at the end of today’s reading, some went away and could no longer stay. And Peter confessed that there was no one else to whom to go — that he and the closest followers of Jesus ‘have come to know and believe’ that Jesus is the Holy One of God.

Like many of those first followers, I think that you and I find some of these teachings difficult, to say the least. Our world in 2024, in these perilous times, is a difficult and disturbing place, and we often find ourselves not knowing what to think, how to react, how to love.

I am writing this from the beautiful province of Saskatchewan, where I have just participated in the 2024 National Worship Conference, a joint ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Anglican Church, which took place at Luther College in Regina.

It was a transformative and deeply moving conference, whose title: ‘Stones Cry Out: Praying with the Land’ challenged us all to look at our colonial past and present, our need to remake ourselves and our churches, and at Creator and creation’s high and difficult expectations acting upon each one of us, tending to the land (place, home, soil...) and the living stones which we become in order to build a realm of inclusion, grace, and peace. It was a

deeply important time for all who attended and, we hope, planted seeds of new growth in dazzling ways in each of us.

Let's face it — the teachings of Jesus — this particular teaching in today's Gospel lesson — to be the heralds and bringers of 'the bread of life' and to carry the words of eternal life to the world in which we live — is challenging indeed. The stones do cry out; God's children suffer in so many ways and in so many places; the history which we share in our country is marked by exclusion, pain, and isolation. The world which we see reflected on our screens and in our news is, at so many levels, an inhuman (and unholy!) display of enmity, violence, and war. Children go unfed; refugees suffer; our indigenous people continue to suffer huge indignities and pain; unkindness and a lack of civility and understanding seem always to hold sway. Into this world, you and I are called to bring light and peace; to be the bearers of the Bread of Life; to be followers and advocates for the One who calls us into new ways of being.

As we gather today — whether here at the Lord's table, at our cottages and camps, in our tents and trailers, in our backyards and our beaches, on the beauty of a late August Sunday, we are reminded that, by being a community of love, a place of inspiration and serenity, a place where word and sacrament, prayer and praise, bread and wine renew and revive us, we are nourished

for the days ahead, and given a glimpse of the new reality that we can build. It takes determination, the confidence of the gift of faith, and the deep joy that comes from knowing that we are deeply loved that empowers and enables us to be the bearers of that good Word and the nourishment for the world that the Bread of Life brings. It is not easy — it will require much from us — it always has. Significant challenges, if seen as eye opening opportunities, always compel us to rise to the occasion. Gathering together — praying together — singing together — being strengthened together is always a joy and a source of inspiration and hope for us all.

As St. Peter says: to whom else, Lord, could we possibly go? We indeed have come to believe and know!

Will you pray with me —

Holy and ever gracious One, you come and stand among us this day. Strengthen and comfort us in our communion with you and with each other. Show us your face in the faces of those around us; give us abundant grace and joy in the work you have given us to do; help us to spread serenity and to those we will meet this week. Nourish us in this sacrament that we, being nourished and fed by Your presence among us, may be bread for the hungry and food for the journey. Give us thankful and joy-filled hearts, in the name of the one whom we follow, your Son, our Saviour and our Friend.

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

EVEN MORE ANNOUNCEMENTS...

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 through the congregation's Facebook page for more information.

The All Saints Service is scheduled for Nov. 3. This is the service in which we remember the saints in our lives who have gone on to the kingdom. The service will include a guest musician and is intended to assist attendees with processing their sense of grief. You are invited to bring a candle (a votive is preferred) to light and place before the altar. If you don't have a candle or forgot to bring one, don't worry. We'll have some available.

