



Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
www.trinitylutheran.ca

September 15, 2024
17th 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 recommences on October 9. The noontime study sessions will look at the coming Sunday's readings. Bring your lunch and we'll supply the coffee, tea or water. Join us for a deep and lively discussion.

Coming Up

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.

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

Three weeks ago we heard Peter's confession of faith as told in John's gospel. This week we hear Mark's version, when Peter says, "You are the Messiah." In John, the stumbling block is Jesus' invitation to eat his flesh, given for the life of the world. In Mark too the scandal has to do with Jesus' words about his own coming death, and here Peter himself stumbles over Jesus' words. But Jesus is anointed (the meaning of messiah) in Mark only on the way to the cross (14:3); so we are anointed in baptism with the sign of the cross.

Inshallah # 40 God welcomes all
WOV # 718 Here in this place
ELW # 660 Lift high the cross
ACS # 987 Guide my feet

Prayer of the day

O God our strength, without you we are weak and wayward creatures. Protect us from all dangers that attack us from the outside, and cleanse us from all evil that arises from within ourselves, that we may be preserved through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord.

AMEN

First reading: Isaiah 50: 4-9a

⁴The Lord God has given me
the tongue of a teacher,
that I may know how to sustain
the weary with a word.
Morning by morning he awakens—
wakens my ear
to listen as those who are taught.
⁵The Lord God has opened my ear,
and I was not rebellious,
I did not turn backward.
⁶I gave my back to those who struck
me,
and my cheeks to those who pulled
out the beard;
I did not hide my face
from insult and spitting.
⁷The Lord God helps me;
therefore I have not been
disgraced;

therefore I have set my face like flint,
and I know that I shall not be put to
shame;

⁸he who vindicates me is near.

Who will contend with me?

Let us stand up together.

Who are my adversaries?

Let them confront me.

^{9a}It is the Lord God who helps me;
who will declare me guilty?

Psalm 116:1-9

¹I love the Lord, who has ¹heard my
voice,

and listened to my ¹supplication,

²**for the Lord has given ¹ear to me
whenever ¹er I called.**

³The cords of death entangled me; the
anguish of the grave ¹came upon me;
I came to ¹grief and sorrow.

⁴**Then I called upon the name ¹of
the Lord:**

**“O Lord, I pray you, ¹save my
life.”**

⁵Gracious is the ¹Lord and righteous;
our God is full ¹of compassion.

⁶**The Lord watches o- ¹ver the
innocent;**

**I was brought low, ¹and God
saved me.**

⁷Turn again to your rest, ¹O my soul.
for the Lord has dealt ¹well with
you.

⁸**For you have rescued my ¹life
from death,
my eyes from tears, and my ¹feet
from stumbling;**

⁹I will walk in the presence ¹of

the Lord
in the land ^l of the living.

Second reading: James 3:1-12

¹Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers and sisters, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. ²For all of us make many mistakes. Anyone who makes no mistakes in speaking is perfect, able to keep the whole body in check with a bridle. ³If we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we guide their whole bodies. ⁴Or look at ships: though they are so large that it takes strong winds to drive them, yet they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. ⁵So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great exploits.

How great a forest is set ablaze by a small fire! ⁶And the tongue is a fire. The tongue is placed among our members as a world of iniquity; it stains the whole body, sets on fire the cycle of nature, and is itself set on fire by hell. ⁷For every species of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by the human species, ⁸but no one can tame the tongue—a restless evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse those who are made in the likeness of God. ¹⁰From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this ought not to be so. ¹¹Does a spring pour

forth from the same opening both fresh and brackish water? ¹²Can a fig tree, my brothers and sisters, yield olives, or a grapevine figs? No more can salt water yield fresh.

Gospel: Mark 8: 27-38

²⁷Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?” ²⁸And they answered him, “John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.” ²⁹He asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered him, “You are the Messiah.” ³⁰And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him.

³¹Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³²He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”

³⁴He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. ³⁶For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and

forfeit their life? ³⁷Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? ³⁸Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

Sermon

Are we known?

It has been a little over ten years since I stood next to one of the sources of the Jordan River at Caesarea Philippi.

A hundred metres or so to the east were cliffs, which at a different time were also home to ritual and sacrificial sites for the god Baal.

There were remnants of buildings from centuries past all around the site ... a pillar here ... a wall there ... thanks to all the streams, it was lush and green.

Caesarea Philippi is in the northeastern portion of Galilee. During Jesus' time, it was part of the province of Syria and ... in fact ... generations of Syrian families lived there until just a few decades ago. They were chased out by war.

As the group of us stood there ... with just the sound of the rushing water filling the air and surrounded by trees and other greenery ... some of us leaning against a stone wall ... we read Matthew's version of this morning's story.

Then, as a group we prayed and reflected on the exchange between Jesus and the disciples and Peter.

Some thought about Peter's rebuke of Jesus ... others pondered Jesus' declaration that the church will be built on this rock.

I was among those who were considering Jesus' questions ... questions that appear in both Mark's and Matthew's gospels ... the questions focus on who knows Jesus ... and how well.

Before this morning's story, Jesus and the group had been ministering in towns and villages along the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee and had even traveled into what we know as Lebanon.

We have heard about Jesus' ministering for more than seven chapters in Mark.

Jesus had just restored a man's sight through spit and the laying of hands upon him. Now, we find the group heading toward Caesarea Philippi.

After they minister in the town, the group will pivot and begin the long journey toward Jerusalem and the cross.

This morning ... as Jesus and the disciples are making the 50-kilometre trek from Bethsaida to Philippi ... he uses the time to instruct the disciples and to gauge if they and the people are truly comprehending what it is happening around them and what it means for them as his followers.

Insight and learning ... it seems ... come during the journey.

Jesus first asks the group:

“Who do people say that I am?”

Jesus has spent months in gentile communities. He and the disciples have

gone from one community to the next ... teaching ... removing unclean spirits throughout the region ... and through his calls to repentance, healings, and meals served in the wilderness.

Jesus' ministry has ignored the barriers between people. Jews and gentiles all came to Jesus.

Jesus' question was intended to see if those whose life was outside of the temple or the synagogue understood what they had experienced or witnessed.

Jesus wants to see if people understood what his presence in their lives meant.

Jesus keeps people to keep it a secret ... and they keep proclaiming what he has done. So, the ground is fertile for misunderstanding.

The group tosses out some answers ... naming John ... Elijah ... and other prophets ...

Then, Jesus asks the disciples: "But who do you say I am?"

Before the others can answer, Peter proclaims:

"You are the Messiah."

Peter gives the right answer ... but it soon becomes clear that he doesn't understand what being the Messiah means for Jesus and the world.

Peter believes that the Messiah will free Israel from its oppressors and bring an era of renewed holiness and peace.

Now, this morning's passage moves away from knowing who Jesus is ... to what knowing Jesus means for a person and for the world. It becomes a lesson on discipleship.

Jesus redefines the idea of a messiah when he calls himself the Son of Man ... and then tells the disciples that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes and be killed and after three days rise again.

Jesus will free the people, just not in the way Peter and others expect.

Peter gets the title right, but the meaning wrong. His confession uses technically accurate language, but he cannot yet see what this language entails.

Not only does Jesus' identity include his eventual death and resurrection; it will be defined by those things.

Jesus redefines the expectations for his followers ... telling the disciples that any followers will have to deny themselves and take up the cross.

Being a disciple carries responsibilities that they have not considered. They need to know Jesus ... and know they are to bear the cross for others.

If someone asks, who do we say Jesus is?

Would we be like Peter ... giving the right answer, but not comprehending what the answer means? Do we know what it means to take up the cross? That the cross calls us to look outward to the world rather than inward to ourselves.

The cross calls us to put love in action.

It is through the cross that we show the world who Jesus is. It is what marks

us as people of faith and as a faith community.

A couple of weeks back, in the midst of the afterglow of Trinity doing fantastic ministry at PrideFest, one of our members told me that ... if we keep up such efforts ...

“We’re going to become known as the ‘gay church.’ “

I’m still not sure how exactly the comment was meant ... but I am taking it as a compliment of our congregational aspirations. I think it would be wonderful to be known as an affirming church ... a place where people feel safe and secure and can grow in their faith.

... a place ... because we are looking outward ... where all can know and feel Jesus’ presence through our words and actions rippling out from this place.

But the comment also got me wondering.

In light of this morning’s story, maybe we can rephrase Jesus’ question. Maybe we can ask ourselves:

“Who do people say Trinity is?”

After all, if we are true to our call to discipleship and live into the commandments Jesus shared with the disciples, then people would know Jesus through our words and service to the world.

They would know love and belonging. They would know our hearts.

Taking up the cross as Jesus call us toward ... means taking up the burden and the pain from others ... comforting and easing their suffering and standing

with them in the face of injustice and the inequities of the world.

Discipleship ... as Jesus instructs us through Mark this morning ... calls us to recognize that we are to love intently and to work for justice for others.

While it might seem so, this is not an individual action ... needs to be a congregational one.

Theologian Courtney Buggs wrote about the lesson of Mark’s passage:

“Modern readers tend to read this call to discipleship as an individual call, but perhaps, the call is to deny self for the well-being of the community, to take up one’s cross on behalf of the beloved community, to follow God with the community.”

Taking up the cross ... then ... is a communal exercise ... which means we are to serve others together.

Discipleship ... then ... orders our lives ... and moves us toward the realm of God ... by making God’s love known through our words and actions.

We are known through our ministry and by the grace we continually seek to share with the world.

When Jesus rebuked Peter ... telling him to get out of the way of the efforts to minister ... to heal ... and to make God’s presence in the world known, it was because he was redefining and directing faith outward rather than inward ... solely focused on personal piety.

And it is through such outward efforts ... through service rather than self-service ... that we make God’s love known in the world.

The gift of grace comes through the cross and it is not dependent upon how well we know Jesus.

But it is through grace that God's presence is felt ... healing ... comforting ... advocating ... welcoming ... and how we share this grace is how a faith community is truly known.

May we be known...

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 for more information.

October 6 – As followers of Christ, we are called to be wise stewards of creation. Pets are important parts of our families and, in honour of St. Francis, our regular Sunday service will include a blessing of animals and our pets. You are welcome to bring your well-mannered, socialized pet to the service, but owners are responsible for their behaviour and are expected to prevent and/or clean up any messes.

**TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
PRE-AUTHORIZED REMITTANCE PROGRAM**

AUTHORIZATION

I hereby authorize *Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church*, 1215 Parent Avenue, Windsor, ON N8X 4J1, to cause a cheque to be drawn on my account, each month as a contribution by me to Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, as follows:

Total *monthly* contributions to Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of:

_____ (\$ _____,00) per month
Distributed as follows:

Current Giving/Benevolence	\$ _____	per month
Global Hunger and Development Agency (GHDA)	\$ _____	per month
Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR)	\$ _____	per month
ELCIC World Missions/Volunteers in Mission	\$ _____	per month
Specify _____	\$ _____	per month
Specify _____	\$ _____	per month
Specify _____	\$ _____	per month
Total Monthly Giving:	\$ _____	per month

Contributor's name _____ Envelope # _____

Bank/Trust/Credit Union Name _____

Branch Address: _____

Account Number _____ Type of Account _____

Date: _____ Signature: _____

This authority may be changed or cancelled by the contributor at any time.

To ensure accuracy, a sample cheque marked "VOID" must accompany this form.

The transfer of contributions to the ministry of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church will begin in the month *following* receipt of this authorization.