



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

---

June 22, 2025  
*2<sup>nd</sup> 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.

**New socks** are being collected for the Downtown Mission on an on-going basis. Bring them to a Sunday service or call the office to arrange a drop-off.

### **Coming Up**

**Wednesday Café** continues on Wednesdays. Come have coffee with the pastor and anyone else who happens by. Coffee, tea and juice will be available during these times of fellowship and conversation. The Café takes place from 10-11:30 a.m. in front of the main entrance (or in the Narthex if it's raining). The café is planned to run for the summer, but if successful it could be offered year-round. Come, have a chat and a nosh.

### **Also Happening**

**June 29** – Loafing in the sanctuary

**July 12** – Clothing Giveaway, 10 a.m – 2 p.m.

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

**In Residence:** Cordelle

**Members:** Bunny, Donna, Ed, Joan, Susan, Connie, Brenda

**Friends & Family:** Anna, Asdis, Dot, Jean, Ken, Randy, Roger, Rose, Jeff

**Thames Area Clergy:** Pastor Nadine Schroeder-Kranz, St. Peter's, Zurich

### **Introduction to the day**

*This Sunday's texts paint startling pictures of the horrific nature of sin. The church's repeated celebration of holy communion counters that tragic reality in a continued showing forth of the death of Jesus until he comes again. It is a dramatic declaration of "how much God has done for you."*

## Hymns

ELW #875 Praise, praise, praise the  
Lord

ELW # 641, all are welcome

ELW # 728, blest are they

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 2SpiritLGBTQIA+ siblings in  
Christ.

**AMEN**

**First reading** A Genesis 37: 2-11, 19-  
24, 29-36

<sup>2</sup>This is the story of the family of Jacob.  
Joseph, being seventeen years old, was  
shepherding the flock with his brothers;  
he was a helper to the sons of Bilhah  
and Zilpah, his father's wives; and  
Joseph brought a bad report of them to  
their father. <sup>3</sup>Now Israel loved Joseph  
more than any other of his children,  
because he was the son of his old age;  
and he had made him a long robe with  
sleeves. <sup>4</sup>But when his brothers saw that  
their father loved him more than all his  
brothers, they hated him, and could not

speak peaceably to him.

<sup>5</sup>Once Joseph had a dream, and when  
he told it to his brothers, they hated him  
even more. <sup>6</sup>He said to them, "Listen to  
this dream that I dreamed. <sup>7</sup>There we  
were, binding sheaves in the field.  
Suddenly my sheaf rose and stood  
upright; then your sheaves gathered  
around it, and bowed down to my  
sheaf." <sup>8</sup>His brothers said to him, "Are  
you indeed to reign over us? Are you  
indeed to have dominion over us?" So  
they hated him even more because of  
his dreams and his words.

<sup>9</sup>He had another dream, and told it to his  
brothers, saying, "Look, I have had  
another dream: the sun, the moon, and  
eleven stars were bowing down to  
me." <sup>10</sup>But when he told it to his father  
and to his brothers, his father rebuked  
him, and said to him, "What kind of  
dream is this that you have had? Shall  
we indeed come, I and your mother and  
your brothers, and bow to the ground  
before you?" <sup>11</sup>So his brothers were  
jealous of him, but his father kept the  
matter in mind.

<sup>19</sup>They said to one another, "Here comes  
this dreamer. <sup>20</sup>Come now, let us kill him  
and throw him into one of the pits; then  
we shall say that a wild animal has  
devoured him, and we shall see what  
will become of his dreams." <sup>21</sup>But when  
Reuben heard it, he delivered him out of  
their hands, saying, "Let us not take his  
life." <sup>22</sup>Reuben said to them, "Shed no  
blood; throw him into this pit here in the

wilderness, but lay no hand on him" — that he might rescue him out of their hand and restore him to his father. <sup>23</sup>So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the long robe with sleeves that he wore; <sup>24</sup>and they took him and threw him into a pit. The pit was empty; there was no water in it.

<sup>29</sup>When Reuben returned to the pit and saw that Joseph was not in the pit, he tore his clothes. <sup>30</sup>He returned to his brothers, and said, "The boy is gone; and I, where can I turn?" <sup>31</sup>Then they took Joseph's robe, slaughtered a goat, and dipped the robe in the blood. <sup>32</sup>They had the long robe with sleeves taken to their father, and they said, "This we have found; see now whether it is your son's robe or not." <sup>33</sup>He recognized it, and said, "It is my son's robe! A wild animal has devoured him; Joseph is without doubt torn to pieces."

<sup>34</sup>Then Jacob tore his garments, and put sackcloth on his loins, and mourned for his son many days. <sup>35</sup>All his sons and all his daughters sought to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted, and said, "No, I shall go down to Sheol to my son, mourning."

Thus his father bewailed him. <sup>36</sup>Meanwhile the Midianites had sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's officials, the captain of the guard.

## Psalm: 19

<sup>1</sup> The heavens declare the glo-<sup>1</sup>ry of God,

and the sky proclaims its<sup>1</sup> maker's handiwork.

**<sup>2</sup> One day tells its tale<sup>1</sup> to another, and one night imparts knowledge<sup>1</sup> to another.**

<sup>3</sup> Although they have no<sup>1</sup> words or language,

and their voices<sup>1</sup> are not heard,

**<sup>4</sup> their sound has gone out into all lands, and their message to the ends<sup>1</sup> of the world,**

**where God has pitched a tent<sup>1</sup> for the sun.**

<sup>5</sup> It comes forth like a bridegroom out<sup>1</sup> of his chamber;

it rejoices like a champion to<sup>1</sup> run its course.

**<sup>6</sup> It goes forth from the uttermost edge of the heavens and runs about to the end of<sup>1</sup> it again;**

**nothing is hidden from its<sup>1</sup> burning heat.**

<sup>7</sup> The teaching of the Lord is perfect and re-<sup>1</sup>vives the soul;

the testimony of the Lord is sure and gives wisdom to<sup>1</sup> the simple.

**<sup>8</sup> The statutes of the Lord are just and re-<sup>1</sup>joice the heart;**

**the commandment of the Lord is clear and gives light<sup>1</sup> to the eyes.**

<sup>9</sup> The fear of the Lord is clean and en-<sup>1</sup>dures forever;

the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous<sup>1</sup> altogether.

**<sup>10</sup> More to be desired are they than gold, more than<sup>1</sup> much fine gold, sweeter far than honey, than honey<sup>1</sup> in the comb.**

<sup>11</sup> By them also is your ser-<sup>1</sup>vant enlightened,

and in keeping them there is <sup>1</sup> great reward.

**<sup>12</sup> Who can detect one's <sup>1</sup> own offenses?**

**Cleanse me from my <sup>1</sup> secret faults.**

<sup>13</sup> Above all, keep your servant from presumptuous sins; let them not get dominion <sup>1</sup> over me;

then shall I be whole and sound, and innocent of a <sup>1</sup> great offense.

**<sup>14</sup> Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable <sup>1</sup> in your sight,**

**O Lord, my strength and <sup>1</sup> my redeemer.**

**Second reading:** 1 Corinthians 1: 18-31

<sup>18</sup>For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. <sup>19</sup>For it is written,

"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."

<sup>20</sup>Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? <sup>21</sup>For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. <sup>22</sup>For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, <sup>23</sup>but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, <sup>24</sup>but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the

power of God and the wisdom of God. <sup>25</sup>For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

<sup>26</sup>Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. <sup>27</sup>But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; <sup>28</sup>God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, <sup>29</sup>so that no one might boast in the presence of God. <sup>30</sup>He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, <sup>31</sup>in order that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."



**Gospel:** Luke 8:26-39

<sup>26</sup> Then [Jesus and his disciples] arrived at the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee. <sup>27</sup> As he stepped out on land, a man of the city who had

demons met him. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he did not live in a house but in the tombs. <sup>28</sup> When he saw Jesus, he fell down before him and shouted at the top of his voice, “What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me”—<sup>29</sup> for Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For many times it had seized him; he was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the wilds.) <sup>30</sup> Jesus then asked him, “What is your name?” He said, “Legion”; for many demons had entered him. <sup>31</sup> They begged him not to order them to go back into the abyss.

<sup>32</sup> Now there on the hillside a large herd of swine was feeding; and the demons begged Jesus to let them enter these. So he gave them permission. <sup>33</sup> Then the demons came out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned.

<sup>34</sup> When the swineherds saw what had happened, they ran off and told it in the city and in the country. <sup>35</sup> Then people came out to see what had happened, and when they came to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. <sup>36</sup> Those who had seen it told them how the one who had been possessed by demons had been healed. <sup>37</sup> Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to leave them; for they

were seized with great fear. So he got into the boat and returned. <sup>38</sup> The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him; but Jesus sent him away, saying, <sup>39</sup> “Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you.” So he went away, proclaiming throughout the city how much Jesus had done for him.

## Sermon

### Love heals

May God’s peace fill your hearts this day and always.

I would like to share a story with you this morning. I share this story as an ally to the 2SLGBTQIA+ community ... of someone whose call is to foster an affirming congregation where all are welcome ... where all have a voice ... and where all are loved.

This not a pleasant story ... it won’t warm your hearts ... or give you a sense of hope for the future. It might make you angry or sad.

But it is an honest story ... a story that sadly mirrors events that have happened elsewhere over the years. It is one that I have shared a few times since I began a life in ministry. It is a story that shapes my ministry.

I was in my first year of undergraduate life at a Lutheran college in the United States in the late ‘70s.

It was a small school ... barely more than 400 students ... so everyone knew

everyone. It was a very conservative school at a time and place that was not conservative.

Gary was a fourth-year student who lived on my floor in the dorm.

Compared to the rest of the guys on the floor, Gary was quiet and kept to himself. He didn't spend a lot of time in the dorm ... he always seemed to be off the floor practising music or studying.

It happened after dinner one November night.

Four of us were returning from the dining hall ... complaining about the quality and after-effects of the evening's meatloaf as we walked up the bare cement stairs to our rooms on the second floor.

When we reached the landing and pulled open the fire doors ... we saw two upper-classmen ... one holding Gary's arms and the other punching Gary in the doorway of his room.

One of them spotted us and realized there were suddenly witnesses ... they stopped and left our floor by the stairway at the far end of the hallway without a word.

We sat him down ... cleaned him up ... notified the head of the dorm and waited for justice. Well... we might still be waiting.

After the members of our group gave our accounts to the residence counsellor ... identified the two students who did the assault ... they were brought before the dean for punishment.

The dean made them apologize to Gary ... and ... because the dean didn't want to ruin their chance of entering

seminary and becoming pastors ... the pair was allowed to go on their way once the apologies were accepted.

They graduated the following spring. They both went off to seminary the next fall.

Gary ... you see ... is gay ... and even a suspicion of such back then changed everything.

I never had the stomach to see if the two had become ministers ... however, Gary did and serves in Texas of all places.

Some might dismiss the actions of these two and of the dean as the attitude of the time ... after all ... it was almost 50 years ago.

Advocacy and determination may have eased the bias over the years, but church doctrine and cherry-picked biblical interpretation in some denominations against the 2SLGBTQIA+ community remains ... in fact ... it has even have hardened in the current climate.

There are a lot of churches with copies of "Pray the Gay Away," tucked away on their shelves. Some still advocate conversion therapy as a means for ridding a person of what they believe are their sinful leanings.

Churches and congregations still inflict a lot of wounds and pain on members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. That much is clear.

When churches should be proclaiming love ... the message is decidedly darker ... exclusionary and oppressive. In fact, this morning's

passage from Luke is one of those used by cherry-picking interpreters to coerce listeners into conformity so they can belong to the faith community.

Luke tells us about Jesus' visit to the region of the Gerasenes.

He and the disciples had crossed the Sea of Galilee and ... just before this morning's story ... Jesus calms the storm.

As soon as Jesus sets foot on the shore, a naked man comes running up to him.

The man ... who is possessed by demons and living in the tombs ... falls down before Jesus and cries out to him.

"What have you to do with me?"

Jesus asks the demons for its name and "Legion" is the answer he receives.

The name "Legion" would hold special meaning for those first listeners of Luke's story.

A legion was roughly 5,000 roman soldiers and cavalry members. Around 20 years before Luke's gospel was composed, roman soldiers of the 10<sup>th</sup> Legion retook Gerasa during the Jewish revolt.

The Romans burned the city ... killed 1,000 young men ... imprisoned families ... and attacked and burned villages across the region. The 10<sup>th</sup> also took part in the siege of Jerusalem and took the lead in reconquering Palestine during the revolt.

One of the banners that the 10<sup>th</sup> Legion marched under was a boar ... a pig.

The demons beg Jesus not to expel them into the abyss. Instead, they enter a nearby herd of pigs. The herd stampedes down a hill and drowns.

People who first heard this gospel story may see the ruins in the countryside of eastern Galilee and would have looked at those tombs as the resting place for the victims of roman violence and oppression.

The mention of the pig would have stirred thoughts of a violent and unclean animal ... an animal to be avoided.

The demons who plagued the man were equally violent ... so much so that he continually broke the shackles placed on him and ran out into the wild. The demons oppressed the man and kept him isolated.

Word spread over what had happened and people rushed to see for themselves.

When people from across the region arrived, they found the man calmly sitting at Jesus' feet ... fully clothed and in a right mind.

Some see this man as someone plagued by sin and who becomes just like everyone else once Jesus exorcises the demons ... the sins. They see an outsider who ... through Jesus' healing ... can be welcomed into the community by making him just like everyone else.

That is the message some churches ... even some Lutheran congregations ... share ... "All are welcome ... as long as you're like us."

They mistake conformity with unity.

But what if we looked at the man from the tombs from a different angle this morning?

What if we viewed the possessed man from an institutional rather than a personal perspective?

Then, we could see the man and Legion as symbolizing a church that oppresses and that can act violently over doctrine and questionable interpretation.

What if we consider how we mute the call to love ... or limit it to the point that people actually guard their hearts against the promise of the gospel because that promise rings false to them by what they have experienced?

If we are to truly heal and fully love, we must recognize the harm we have done ... even if unintentional.

The man's literal come-to-Jesus moment results in those violent and oppressive aspects being shed and removed from existence ... and it results in a call from Jesus to bear witness to the community.

Jesus shows us the full effect of compassion and love ... of caring for one another ... of embracing differences ... to see and bear witness to the holy in each of us.

Through the Spirit, Jesus is an abiding presence within our hearts ... a presence that emboldens us to love more joyously ... more deeply ... more fully ... more expansively.

When we do that as individuals ... and as a church ... we move from the ruinous life we may have created and perpetuated into one that is affirming ...

reconciling ... and one that emboldens us to lend our voice to advocacy ... to stand together as witnesses ... it is one that calls us to heal.

To live a life that calls us to hold all in love just as Jesus holds us in that same love ... a love that raises others and where all are made whole.

... a love where all belong.

Thanks be to God,

**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 God who has called us forth from the dust of the earth, and claimed us as children of the light, strengthen you on your journey into life renewed.

The Lord bless you and keep you,  
The Lord's face shine upon you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favour and give you + peace.

**AMEN**