



Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church  
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August 24, 2025  
*11<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost*

### **Announcements**

**Today's sermon** is provided by Deacon Michelle Collins, assistant to the bishop for the Synod of Manitoba/Northwestern Ontario of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC).

**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**

**Back to Church Sunday.** Summer nearing its conclusion and it is time to think about the fall. Our Back-to-Church Service is scheduled for September 7. Last year, we offered a Dr. Seuss-themed service. This time? Come and see. Invite family and friends to the service and connect or re-connect them to life at Trinity.

### **Also Happening**

**September 13** – 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

### **Introduction to the day**

*Remember the sabbath day. Call the sabbath a delight. This is the Lord's day, and the Lord will do for us what the Lord does: feed us, forgive us, help and heal us. Rejoice at all the wonderful things God is doing.*

## Hymns

This is Call-out Hymns Sunday, so just sing or hum your favourite hymns

## Prayer of the day

O God, mighty and immortal, you know that as fragile creatures surrounded by great dangers, we cannot by ourselves stand upright. Give us strength of mind and body, so that even when we suffer because of human sin, we may rise victorious through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord.

**AMEN**

## First reading Isaiah 58:9b-14

<sup>9b</sup> If you remove the yoke from among you,  
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,

<sup>10</sup> if you offer your food to the hungry  
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,

then your light shall rise in the darkness  
and your gloom be like the noonday.

<sup>11</sup> The Lord will guide you continually  
and satisfy your needs in parched places

and make your bones strong,  
and you shall be like a watered garden,

like a spring of water  
whose waters never fail.

<sup>12</sup> Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;

you shall raise up the foundations  
of many generations;

you shall be called the repairer of  
the breach,

the restorer of streets to live in.

<sup>13</sup> If you refrain from trampling the  
Sabbath,

from pursuing your own interests  
on my holy day;

if you call the Sabbath a delight  
and the holy day of  
the Lord honorable;

if you honor it, not going your own  
ways,

serving your own interests or  
pursuing your own affairs;

<sup>14</sup> then you shall take delight in  
the Lord,

and I will make you ride upon the  
heights of the earth;

I will feed you with the heritage of  
your ancestor Jacob,

for the mouth of the Lord has  
spoken.

## Psalm: 103:1-8

<sup>1</sup> Bless the Lord, <sup>1</sup> O my soul,  
and all that is within me, bless  
God's <sup>1</sup> holy name.

<sup>2</sup> **Bless the Lord, <sup>1</sup> O my soul,  
and forget not <sup>1</sup> all God's  
benefits—**

<sup>3</sup> who forgives <sup>1</sup> all your sins  
and heals all <sup>1</sup> your diseases;

<sup>4</sup> **who redeems your life <sup>1</sup> from  
the grave**

**and crowns you with  
steadfast <sup>1</sup> love and mercy;**

<sup>5</sup> who satisfies your desires <sup>1</sup> with  
good things

so that your youth is renewed <sup>1</sup> like an eagle's.

<sup>6</sup> **O Lord, you provide <sup>1</sup> vindication and justice for all who <sup>1</sup> are oppressed.**

<sup>7</sup> You made known your <sup>1</sup> ways to Moses

and your works to the chil- <sup>1</sup> dren of Israel.

<sup>8</sup> **Lord, you are full of compas- <sup>1</sup> sion and mercy, slow to anger and abounding in <sup>1</sup> steadfast love.**

**Second reading:** Hebrews 12:18-29

<sup>18</sup> You have not come to something that can be touched, a blazing fire, and darkness, and gloom, and a tempest, <sup>19</sup> and the sound of a trumpet, and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that not another word be spoken to them. <sup>20</sup> (For they could not endure the order that was given, "If even an animal touches the mountain, it shall be stoned to death." <sup>21</sup> Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I tremble with fear.") <sup>22</sup> But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, <sup>23</sup> and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, <sup>24</sup> and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the

blood of Abel.

<sup>25</sup> See that you do not refuse the one who is speaking, for if they did not escape when they refused the one who warned them on earth, how much less will we escape if we reject the one who warns from heaven! <sup>26</sup> At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heaven." <sup>27</sup> This phrase, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of what is shaken—that is, created things—so that what cannot be shaken may remain. <sup>28</sup> Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable worship with reverence and awe, <sup>29</sup> for indeed our God is a consuming fire.

**Gospel:** Luke 13:10-17

<sup>10</sup> Now [Jesus] was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. <sup>11</sup> And just then there appeared a woman with a spirit that had crippled her for eighteen years. She was bent over and was quite unable to stand up straight. <sup>12</sup> When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, "Woman, you are set free from your ailment." <sup>13</sup> When he laid his hands on her, immediately she stood up straight and began praising God. <sup>14</sup> But the leader of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had cured on the Sabbath, kept saying to the crowd, "There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be cured and

not on the Sabbath day.”<sup>15</sup> But the Lord answered him and said, “You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger and lead it to water?”<sup>16</sup> And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen long years, be set free from this bondage on the Sabbath day?”<sup>17</sup> When he said this, all his opponents were put to shame, and the entire crowd was rejoicing at all the wonderful

## **Sermon**

### **Guest Preacher: Deacon Michelle Collins**

Grace and peace to you in the name of the one who calls, gathers and sends us into the world for the sake of restoration and redemption.

My name is Deacon Michelle Collins.

I serve as the Assistant to the Bishop in the MNO Synod. I am grateful to be part of this year’s summer sermon series, and I give thanks to the bishops and assistants to the bishops who have shared their reflections and prayers with us this summer.

This sermon series is one way we demonstrate that we are united in our faith and members of the one Body of Christ.

Today, I want to especially give thanks for the pastors, youth leaders,

and adults who are accompanying and shepherding youth to the Canadian Lutheran/Anglican Youth Gathering in Saskatoon, which is wrapping up today.

I hope that you will reach out to youth and adults in your context to hear stories and testimonies of their experience at CLAY.

What is it like to feel bent over and unable to stand up straight? Some of us have experienced spending a few hours in the garden or doing a task that requires us to bend over and then groaning as we stretch into a standing position after a while. Others of us are familiar with the impact and effect of age as we realize that our joints and muscles aren’t working the way they used to. Others just learn to live with the bodies that they have, which may not fit the expected norm in one way or another.

But more significantly, I would imagine that all of us know the limitations of perspectives, feelings or experiences that restrict us from leaning into our full selves. As someone who has been taller than most people around me for as long as I can remember, I know that standing up straight is just as much a matter of confidence in your identity as it is a matter of stature and stability. I can hear my mother’s voice telling me to stand up straight just as easily as I can feel the embarrassment of standing out in ways I wish I didn’t. For me, my tendency to slouch and keep my shoulders bent over in public was a result of embarrassment and

self-consciousness about my body. I didn't feel I could stand up straight because of how I thought my height, hair, skin, clothes and shape compared to the common standard. This embarrassment made me nervous to be in public, to speak up, or to draw any unnecessary attention to myself. You could even say I was bent over by a spirit that had crippled me.

In our gospel reading today, Jesus is teaching in the synagogue on the sabbath and notices a woman who has been bent over for many years. She was unable to stand up straight. Most scholars suspect this woman was suffering from a physical ailment that was affecting her spine. But it's just as likely that the weight that burdened her was a result of direct and indirect messages and experiences that had informed her sense of who she was.

Our virtual and physical spaces are filled with people who cannot stand up straight for a variety of reasons.

Some are bent over from physical disease and disorder.

Some are bent over from trauma they do not know how to process.

Some are bent over from prejudice and bias against various aspects of their identity.

Some are bent over from their age and what the common opinion is about what value they bring to society.

Some are bent over from generations of internalized shame.

Our world is full of people who are bent over and unable to stand up straight.

And Jesus sees these people. Jesus sees the woman in the synagogue, and Jesus sees you and me.

Jesus' first word to the woman is a word of freedom and validation. "Woman," Jesus says, "you are set free from your ailment." Jesus extends a word of invitation and freedom without hesitation. Later in the story he identifies her as a daughter of Abraham, including her in the family of God and connecting her to God's covenant promise.

How might we do this? How might we create spaces where people who cannot stand up straight in other places hear a word of freedom and inclusion from us? Child, you are free from your ailment. Refugee...widow...victim of trauma...gender diverse sibling...in this space you are free to stand up straight because we see you. You are welcome here. You are part of God's covenant community.

That's what Jesus does. He sees and validates the woman. He declares a word of freedom that invites her beyond her previous sense of herself and into full inclusion in the worshipping community.

The woman is not the only one in need of a word of healing and release. There is someone else in the story in need of healing, but this person is less aware of their ailment. A religious leader, who we can assume is faithful and devout, committed to following the traditions and with a desire to please God, sees what Jesus does and is upset.

Ummm... Jesus...that's not how we do it around here. We have rules and processes that dictate how someone like that is to be treated.

In our context, the religious leader's responses might sound like this: We have classes for her age down the hall. We have a support group for her diagnosis that meets on Tuesday morning in the basement. We can direct her to services where she can get the help she needs. But today she's interrupting our worship and learning.

The religious leaders' objection to both the woman and to Jesus' response to her demonstrates that he was just as in need of restoration and release. He had become so burdened with the rules and rituals that he'd lost the ability to enter freely into the invitation and welcome of worship and community.

Does that happen to us? Do we get so focused on our routines and traditions that we respond negatively to people who come into our spaces that make us uncomfortable? Perhaps we point back to the rules and procedures

that have served us—those with privilege and prestige—well. Maybe, if we're honest, we even expect God to abide by our rules and procedures.

But Jesus responds differently. He sees the woman. He initiates connection with her. He speaks to her and declares a word of freedom. He lays his hand on her—a gesture we know as a sign of blessing, anointing, prayer and proclamation.

Today, when an infant, child or adult is presented for baptism, the pastor lays hands on them and offers a word of promise. When someone goes through the rite of confirmation or the affirmation of baptism, we lay hands on them and offer a word of promise and prayer. When we commission someone into a particular role or opportunity, we lay hands and pray for them. When someone is ordained as a pastor or deacon, we lay hands and pray for them.

In these and other times, when we extend a gesture of blessing and a word of promise and prayer, do we realize that we declare a word of healing, freedom and wholeness?

The religious leaders object to what Jesus is saying and doing because it goes against their rules—specifically their commitment to rest on the sabbath. They're not as upset that he healed the woman as that he did it on the sabbath. Jesus uses their argument against them. Today is for rest, you say? This

woman cannot rest because of what is keeping her bent over. It is exactly the day of rest that compels me to heal her.

We cannot say we value a day of rest when a person in our gathering is being excluded from that rest. We cannot say we value rest when those who are bound by disease, prejudice, oppression, inequality or our ignorance are excluded from experiencing rest. We cannot say we value rest when some among us are excluded from experiencing that rest because of something that is limiting their wholeness.

In this, Jesus' words and actions become about more than just physical healing. They also become prophetic—convicting and revealing a system that prohibits and limits a full experience of God's intentions for God's people.

By exposing the ways traditions and teachings have become limiting, Jesus shows that the woman is not the only one who is 'bent over' and 'quite unable to stand up straight.' In fact, the entire system needs restoration so that EVERYONE can experience rest—even the religious elite. Jesus' words and actions call the whole system towards freedom and release.

Our communities are filled with people bent over from a spirit that is crippling them. Our systems are bent over from attitudes and beliefs that are crippling us. Jesus desires and proclaims healing and restoration for

both. We who profess a commitment to rest are both those in need of healing, and those who are called to participate in making that rest possible.

...rest for children and youth burdened by limiting expectations and assumptions.

...rest for marginalized communities exhausted by the burden of systemic injustice and generational trauma.

...rest for housing and food insecure neighbours exhausted by the burden of finding the very basic necessities for life.

...rest for those exhausted by the burden of labels, prejudice, hatred and exclusion.

...rest for those exhausted from working for justice, reconciliation, and equality for the most vulnerable.

...rest for you and me, exhausted by the burden of grief, loneliness, shame, fear, and insecurity.

Jesus saw the woman who was bent over under the burden of disease. He revealed to the religious leaders that they were bent over under the weight of legalism and tradition, and in need of healing and release. We who are bent over in all kinds of ways need transformation, healing and release. By the goodness and grace of God, Jesus sees us, reaches out to us with love, and declares that we are set free.

“Beloved, you are set free from your ailment.”

Through the waters of baptism, we are washed and made clean. We are set free from the ailment of sin. Through the bread and wine of communion we are fed, nourished and forgiven. We are set free and included in God’s promise of eternal life. As we gather with others and invite everybody to stand up straight, claiming all of who they are and hope to be in our midst, we discover the vastness of God’s welcome and the fullness of God’s rest.

Whatever it is that’s keeping you bent over today, you are seen and loved by the One who knows your name and who stays by your side through the darkness of sin and death. You are seen and loved by the one who defeated the power of death so that you might hear the words “beloved, you are set free from your ailment.”

This week, as you encounter neighbours who are bent over from the burden of life, how might you extend a word and gesture of healing and wholeness? As you bend under the realities of your own brokenness, Jesus sees you and invites you fully into the promise of restoration. As we give and receive the offer of divine rest, I pray we reflect on our own systems, attitudes, beliefs and behaviours that have become limiting and need transformation. And I pray that as we live into God’s rest, we hear Christ’s invitation to

stand up straight and experience the incredible gift of healing and wholeness.

**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**

The God of all,  
who raised + Jesus from the dead,  
bless you by the power of the Holy Spirit  
to live in the new creation.

**AMEN**

## **More Announcements**

**In response to requests** from members, Trinity accepts offerings via eTransfer. You must set up the eTransfer information in your bank account. The email address to be used is trinitywlutheran@gmail.com. In the "comment" section, please indicate: “Trinity - General Offering” And remember to put your name and address so we can provide a tax receipt.