

A Mission Congregation of the ELCA  
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church  
P. O. Box 64 - 8520 Oakes Rd - Pittsburg, Ohio 45358



Scripture Emphasis  
God Calls Isaiah  
November 15, 2020

- **Prelude**      “Sometimes Alleluia; Let’s Just Praise the Lord;  
Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus; For God So Loved the World;  
God Is So Good; Pass It On”      **Roxanne Groff**
- **Office of the Acolyte and Ringing of the Bell**
- **Welcome**      **Pr Mel**
- \* **HYMN OF PRAISE**      “Take My Life That I May Be”      **LBW 406**



1 Take my life, that I may be con - se - crat - ed, Lord, to thee;



take my mo - ments and my days; let them flow in cease - less praise.

\* **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

P: We confess our sins before God and one another.

*Pause for silence and reflection.*

P: God of the covenant,

**C: You have never failed in your promises to us, but we often fail to be your faithful people. We waste our time and resources on things which do not give life. We doubt our abilities and hide our light away from the world. We flee from your call when it doesn’t appeal to us. Forgive us and call us back to your sustaining love.**

P: God hears us when we repent and is quick to pardon our failures. Hear the words of your forgiveness and believe that you have been restored by your creator’s great mercy and compassion. Rejoice!

**C: Amen.**

\* **GREETING**

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C: And also with you.**

\* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

**\* PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: Merciful God, You can make us clean in an instant. Grant us courage to leave the mistakes of our past behind, and to answer your call with willingness, by the power of your Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

**SCRIPTURE READING**

**Isaiah 6:1-8**

P: Our scripture reading for this morning is from Isaiah, Chapter 6.

**C: Glory to you O Lord.**

**6** In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple. <sup>2</sup>Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. <sup>3</sup>And one called to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.” <sup>4</sup>The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke.

<sup>5</sup>And I said: “Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!” <sup>6</sup>Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. <sup>7</sup>The seraph touched my mouth with it and said: “Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out.” <sup>8</sup>Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” And I said, “Here am I; send me!”

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

**C: Praise to You, O Christ (*Spoken*)**

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\* Please stand if able

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- **SERMON**

**Pr Mel Musser**

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the one calling you to follow him, Jesus Christ our Lord, amen.

Have you ever had one of those times or days that changed your life forever? I've had several. Once PJ and I were watching a movie. It was An Officer and A Gentleman. Afterwards I asked her what she thought of me going into the Air Force and learning to fly. Lucky for me, the only thing the Air Force would let me fly was a Big Steel Desk... Another time, I was minding my own business in Alaska when God spoke to me through the sermon of our Pastor. That led me back here to Ohio and Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus. There have been many times when things happened that changed the trajectory of my life. Not all of them were of God, but I know for sure God has used those times to nudge me in the direction that has led me here today.

As I prepared to preach on this text from Isaiah, I realized the prophet Isaiah was telling us about one of those life altering experiences. I always thought, like most Old Testament scholars, this was Isaiah's call story. This week as I began to dig deeper, I noticed the calling of Isaiah didn't happen in chapter 1. We're already into chapter 6 of Isaiah's story. You'd think, if this was Isaiah's call into the vocation of being a prophet of God, it would have been the first, or at least one

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of the first things, in the book. The Bible scholars have done all kinds of interpreting and maneuvering to explain this problem away. The more I dug the more problems I discovered with this being the first calling from God to Isaiah. For example, why doesn't this story fit into the same format as so many of the other callings God made to people in the Bible. The usual way this goes is God speaks a Word inviting the individual to do some task. Then the person objects, usually protesting their unworthiness. This is followed by God's assurance that God's protection and blessing will be upon the person. Then the person reluctantly agrees. That's not the sequence of events here. Isaiah is in Church and God appears, or at least the hem of his robe appears. Without any verbal cues from God, Isaiah blurts out that he is done for. In the presence of even a tiny part of God he knows how unclean he is. God hasn't asked Isaiah to do anything and yet he's already protesting his unworthiness. It's like he's been here before...

That's when it struck me. This isn't the first rodeo for Isaiah. He had indeed been in this same position before. Perhaps many times. I don't know when Isaiah received his first call to be a prophet or if it entailed visions of heavenly beings like the Seraphim who constantly sing praises to God as in our story for today. What I can say for certain is this was one of those life changing moments

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for Isaiah. For some time, he had been speaking for God. When a prophet speaks the Word of God, we call it an oracle. Prior to our text for today, the Book of Isaiah records 8 oracles, all of which detailed how the Hebrew people had lost their way and the future catastrophes that awaited if they do not repent.

It must be hard to continue preaching and prophesying to a people who refuse to accept the authority of the oracles. I imagine Isaiah getting pretty discouraged. In the Book of Isaiah there is no direct evidence of Isaiah wanting to give up, but other major prophets, such as Jeremiah almost constantly wanted to bag it up and call it quits. So much so that we call Jeremiah the “Whining Prophet.” I believe Isaiah was having one of those moments when God appeared and recommissioned him for the hard road ahead. That’s how God works. When we get discouraged from doing what God has called us to do, God doesn’t abandon us to whatever forces are arrayed against us. God is always right by our side. Whatever our objection is, God has the answer. When God places a divine calling on your life, you can be assured you don’t walk the path alone. Isaiah prays to God and confesses his unclean lips. I’m really happy I’ve never used that particular objection. Not sure how pleasant having a burning coal laid on my lips would be... The point is, when we object, which is what we do, God finds a way,

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\* Please stand if able

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even when we think the task is impossible or when the thing God calls you to do is unpleasant. The prophet Jeremiah was once thrown into the sewer because he preached an oracle the people didn't like. Being a prophet can be dangerous or at least smelly business...

God doesn't call everyone to be a prophet. God doesn't call everyone to be a preacher or a pastor, but God does call each and every one of us into some vocation. You probably have several vocations. You might be a mother or a father, a son or daughter. You might be a nurse or a teacher or a farmer. Being a husband or a wife is also a vocation God calls some people into. The question isn't, **has** God called you, but rather, **what** has God called you to do. Just like Isaiah, you might have more than one calling. Most of us have several and most of us object, rebel, and sometimes run the other way from God's call. Remember the story of the prophet Jonah?

When was the last time you had one of those life changing moments? When that happened, did you recognize it as the voice of God speaking directly to you? When it happened did you enthusiastically raise your hand and volunteer or did you throw up every reason in the book for God to pick someone else? As I look around this congregation, I see many shining examples of those who followed

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God's call. You are following Jesus into the world, using the gifts and talents given to you by God serving others and bringing God's word to life.

Back in Martin Luther's time the word vocation applied only to God calling people to serve in some religious capacity. Luther and other reformers argued that serving as a priest, a monk, or a nun was no better than serving God as a carpenter, a farmer, or a housewife. According to Luther, we are called, not to separate ourselves from the world as monks or nuns, but rather to engage the world, especially the needy, the poor, and the oppressed. We're not called out of this world with all of its beauty and all of its suffering, but into the world to bring the Gospel to bear. To notice and point out God's handiwork in the beauty and to serve and be a blessing when we encounter pain and suffering. Your primary vocation might be as a retiree, but that doesn't stop God from calling you into new adventures. When that happens, raise all the objections you can think of, but then, listen for God's answer. You never know how miraculously God will use your gifts. I hope you don't have to be purified with hot burning coals, or thrown to the bottom of a sewer, but I know if that happens or worse, God will be by your side and God will bring you through.



My guess is that every one of you has your own story to tell about that life changing moment when you heard God calling your name. Even more inspiring is your story of how God brought you through the peril or persecution you endured because of following that call. May you be blessed with the faith to see God's hand in all those life changing moments. May God's encouragement inspire you to persistence in the vocation God has called you into. May your discouragements and persecutions be few, but when they happen, remember Jesus said, blessed are you, when people persecute you because of your love of Jesus. You are blessed because God has called you and you chose to follow! Now, may you enjoy the ride! Amen.

*Silence for reflection may follow*

**\* APOSTLES' CREED**

**C: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

➤ *Or, He descended to the dead.*

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**\* SHARING OF THE PEACE**

*(The Sharing of the Peace that began when the congregation arrived is now shared with the Pastor at this time...)*

**P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.**  
**C: And also with you.**

**\* PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

**P:** We pray for the church, the world, and all those in need...  
*A brief silence.*

**L:** As Isaiah did, we often doubt our ability to do what you are calling us to do. Cleanse us in your spirit's fire and ignite our will to follow wherever you may lead us. Righteous God,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

**L:** Empower all those who feel helpless to change their situation. Show them the strength that dwells within them, open new options before them, and send helpers along their way. Righteous God,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

**L:** As the earth yields the fruits of her harvest, remind us who provides us with resources, and task us with fair distribution that enables all to have enough and prevents unnecessary waste. Righteous God,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

**L:** You heal our ills and bring us to wholeness again; we only need to ask. Bring an end to the Covid Pandemic. Keep us safe from this and all diseases. Heal the divisions in our country. Where hatred and discrimination exist open our

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\* Please stand if able

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eyes to a new way of peace and love. Send your loving Spirit's presence to all your children in need, especially those whose names we share before you...  
Righteous God,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: We remember your prophets through the ages, those who are named and those who haven't been recognized by history. Give us their fire for proclamation and spreading your good news. Open our closed minds and hearts to your call to repent of our sin and follow you. Righteous God,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: You hear your children's prayers and respond in ways which serve our highest good. Gather us in your arms and keep us in the love of Jesus our Savior.

**C: Amen.**

**\* OFFERING PRAYER**

*While the congregation is still standing say:*

P: Instead of passing the offering plate, we ask you to please place your offering in the Offering Plates conveniently located on your way out of worship.

For those worshipping with us from their vehicles, there is a ceramic flower pot located near the back door of the church.

For those worshipping with us online we also have a secure donation button on our website at [www.pitsburgtlc.org](http://www.pitsburgtlc.org).

P: Bless the offerings which we bring before your altar, and make them a pleasing sacrifice of gratitude for all you have done for us, and all that you have forgiven us, for the sake of Jesus our Lord,

**C: Amen.**

**\* THE LORD'S PRAYER**

P: Jesus is the "tie that Binds us together", let us pray as Jesus taught... I'll lead the prayer and invite you to pray silently, trusting God hears what is on your heart...

**C: 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.**

**• ANNOUNCEMENTS**

\* Please stand if able

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\* **SENDING BLESSING**

P: May the God of all creation, in whose image we are made, who claims us and calls us beloved, who strengthens us for service, give you reason to rejoice and be glad! The blessing of God, Sovereign, † Savior, and Spirit, be with you today and always.

C: Amen.

\* **SENDING HYMN**

**“Here I Am Lord”**

**ELW 574**

*(Vs. 1 only)*

1 "I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my peo - ple cry.  
All who dwell in dark and sin my hand will save.  
I, who made the stars of night, I will make their dark-ness bright.  
Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?"

*Refrain*  
Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you  
call-ing in the night. I will go, Lord, if you  
lead me. I will hold your peo - ple in my heart.

\* Please stand if able

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**\* DISMISSAL**

**P:** Depart in Christ's Love.

**C:** **Seeking, welcoming, and serving all. Amen!**

**Postlude "There Is Sunshine in My Soul Today" Roxanne Groff**

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**Trinity Worship Assistants and Staff**

Ministers	All the People of Trinity
Lector	Chris Cassel
Organist	Roxanne Groff
Parrish Nurse	PJ Musser
Custodian	Mark Groff
Facebook Live Recorder	PJ Musser

**Health Tips for the Week**  
**BODY:** Eat a variety of fruits  
**MIND:** Visit a library  
**SPIRIT:** Let go of past hurts

**Trinity is on the Air at FM 88.3**

If you are near the Church on Sunday morning, you can tune in to FM 88.3 at 10:30 AM and hear the sermon from your car.



Scripture readings for next Sunday, November 22nd  
Jeremiah 36:1-8, 21-23, 27-28; and 31:31-34

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**This Week @ Trinity – November 15 thru November 22, 2020**

**Sun, November 15**

10:30 am Worship Service

**Wed, November 18**

8:30 am GGMA Meeting

9:30 am GRCC Soup Kitchen

6:00 pm Finance Committee Meeting

7:00 pm Trinity Council Meeting

**Fri, November 20**

3:30 pm FISH Pantry @ 400 Markwith, Greenville OH

**Sun, November 22**

10:30 am Worship Service

*Silent Auction* begins today and continues through Sunday, November 29. Receive a “Bidder #” from Bev Erdmann or Linda Baker and then check out the items on display in the basement and make your bid! Monetary donations will also be accepted. Help us to help others!

**THANKSGIVING EVE SERVICE** will be virtual only. You may view the message on Facebook Live at 7 pm and later on YouTube and our website (pitsburgtlc.org).

***DECEMBER NEWSLETTER ITEMS:***

***From your secretary:*** Due to my scheduled vacation 11/18 thru 11/26, I would appreciate receiving your December news items by tomorrow or Tuesday.

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