

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

Sermon Series on the Book of Genesis  
Week 2  
September 20, 2020



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- **Prelude** “Something Beautiful; O How I Love Jesus; Whisper  
A Prayer; Channels Only; Alleluia” **Roxanne Groff**

- **Office of the Acolyte and Ringing of the Bell**

- **Welcome** **Pr Mel**

\* **HYMN OF PRAISE** “Blessed Assurance” **ELW 638**



- 1 Bless-ed as-sur-ance, Je-sus is mine! Oh, what a fore-taste of glo-ry di-vine!
- 2 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, per-fect de-light, vi-sions of rap-ture now burst on my sight;
- 3 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, all is at rest; I in my Sav-ior am hap-py and blest,



Heir of sal - va - tion, pur - chase of God, born of his Spir - it, washed in his blood.  
an - gels de - scend - ing bring from a - bove ech - oes of mer - cy, whis - pers of love.  
watch - ing and wait - ing, look - ing a - bove, filled with his good - ness, lost in his love.

*Refrain*



This is my sto - ry, this is my song, prais - ing my Sav - ior all the day long:



this is my sto - ry, this is my song, prais - ing my Sav - ior all the day long.

\* **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.*

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\* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

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P: God of all ages,

**C: You have chosen us as your own, yet we so often live as if it were not so. We succumb to things which are not good for us. We believe we know better than you. We refuse to put our trust in your promises. Sweep away our foolishness and bring us back into a trusting relationship with the one who has lovingly created us and longs to be our strength and life.**

P: Dear people, hear the joyful words that God has forgiven us! Our misdeeds and folly are forgotten; grace and mercy abound. Let us give thanks that we have a compassionate creator!

**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.**

**\* PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: Almighty God, You long for us to trust that you hold our lives safely in your hands. Reveal the surprises you have for us in your good time, and show us that your mercy never fails us, in Jesus' name,

**C: Amen.**

**SCRIPTURE READING**

**Genesis 15:1-6**

P: Our scripture reading for this morning is from Genesis, Chapter 15.

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

**15** After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, "Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." <sup>2</sup>But Abram said, "O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" <sup>3</sup>And Abram said, "You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir." <sup>4</sup>But the word of the Lord came to him, "This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir." <sup>5</sup>He brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them." Then he said to him, "So shall

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\* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

your descendants be.”<sup>6</sup> And he believed the Lord; and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness.

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

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

• **SERMON**

**Pr Mel Musser**

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the one who is our Blessed Assurance, Jesus Christ our Savior, amen.

We're into our second week of our journey through the great and epic stories of the Bible. This week we take a stop to visit the Abraham saga. It's fitting that we would make Abraham our second stop on our journey. Obviously, the Creation and Fall had to be the first stop, but now we're here, with the man whom God chose to be the father of many nations. Wait, what? Abraham is the one God chose, Why? Well we'll have to ask God that one day when we get to see God face to face. Only God knows why God chooses someone over anyone else. What I can tell you is God chose Abraham, an exceedingly rich man who owned slaves to be blessed. I can also tell you Abraham and all his descendants were blessed in order to be a blessing to all nations. That was God's covenant with Abraham from the beginning and God made that same promise to Abraham on 3 separate occasions. What else do we know about Abraham and this covenant with God?

We know that three of the world's greatest religions call Abraham the Father of their faith. Father Abraham is the father of the Jewish, Christian, and Islamic

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Religions. Through Abraham's son Isaac, all the way through the birth of Jesus, who is called The Christ, both Christianity and Judaism call Abraham father.

Through Abraham's other offspring, Ismael, the Islamic religion traces its roots.

For us, as Lutheran Christians, our ears perk up when we hear the last line in our text for this week, "6And he believed the Lord; and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness." That line is important for us because it leads directly into our doctrine of Salvation by Grace, through Faith. The most quintessential Lutheran understanding and the lens through which we read all of scripture.

Saint Paul also took notice of this verse from Genesis. In his letter to the Roman Church, he wrote that when God reckoned Abraham's belief in the promise of the gift of many descendants as righteousness, it was pure gift. Paul says one doesn't have to work for a gift, you work to receive wages, but God gave Abraham this promise as a gift. Today, we call that gift, grace, and the belief of Abraham, we call that faith. Abraham trusted the promise of God that his offspring would be more numerous than the stars in the night sky even though he died, never having realized that promise. All Abraham had when he died was Isaac, and an illegitimate son called Ishmael.

Here's another thing I can say with confidence about Abraham and his story, Abraham's faith wasn't perfect. Abraham doubted. Abraham tried to do things his

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own way. Abraham was just as human and fallible as you or I. Did you know there were 25 years separating the first time God called to Abraham and promised to make him the father of many nations? He was 75 years old when God made the first promise and Isaac was born when he was 100.

As most of you know about me, I hate waiting. I get annoyed standing in checkout lines at the grocery store and really frustrated when I get behind a slow moving driver on the freeway. I can't imagine how hard it would have been for poor OLD Abraham to wait 25 years for his first born, especially considering his advanced age and the fact that the Bible says Sara was barren and as good as dead... Is it any wonder Sara would force her handmaid, Hagar, into Abraham's bed, thinking the much younger and beautiful Hagar could be the means through which God would give a son to Abraham? That wasn't God's plan for Abraham nor was it God's plan to begin creating the Chosen people.

If such a great man as Abraham can have long periods of doubt and even take matters into his own hands, how much more do we, who are 3500 years removed from Abraham and his belief in God's promises, suffer from doubt and lack of faith in those same promises. I mean it's been almost 2000 years since Jesus promised to return and reconcile all things to God. Where is he and what's taking so long? As I look around the world today, I see a world more than ready

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- \* Please stand if able
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and certainly in need of a Savior to right all the wrongs and lead us into God's way of peace and justice. Considering that impatience is a fairly common human trait, it's no surprise when some people try to take matters into their own hands. The Zionists, for example, believe that sparking an apocalyptic war in the Middle East will cause Jesus to return. There have been other groups like the Branch Davidians who waited for the return of Jesus only to end up dying in the massacre in Waco Texas several years ago. Other cultic groups have gone the same way. If you Google "Second Coming of Jesus," in less than 1 second Google gives you over 141 million hits. Even after all this time there's still great interest in God's promises.

Given our propensity to lose faith and try to do things our own way when the promise takes so long to be fulfilled, what can, and should we be doing in the meantime? God gave Abraham the sign of the covenant so the Jewish people could cling to something as they waited. Circumcision was their sign. We have been given two signs to help us remember God's promises to us. The Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion are what we do in order to remember God's promises to us. We receive God's gift of Baptism once, forever receiving adoption into God's family and given the gifts of forgiveness and eternal life. Yet, we, like Father Abraham, get impatient. We stray, we doubt, and we try to do things our

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own way. We need to be reminded that we belong to God and have been purchased by the precious blood of our Savior, Jesus. That's why Jesus instituted the second Sacrament of Holy Communion, because we need to be reminded, we need to be reassured God's promise is still true and it's still true for you and for me. Now, some of us are a little more patient than others. Some might only need that reassurance once a year, some once a quarter, some once a month. Others of us are less patient. Some might need that reassuring reminder weekly. There are times in my life when I needed to be reminded that I am loved and covered by God's grace every single day. That's one reason why our Roman Catholic brothers and sisters offer the Sacrament of Holy Communion every single day. I can't say who often you might need to be comforted and reassured of God's continued love and care, but I will let you know that when we get over this corona virus, I plan to go back to offering Communion as we did before the pandemic hit. I also give fair warning that I will continue to preach and teach that we all need this great gift of God as often as we gather in His Name and my prayer is that someday, everyone will come to know what great benefit the Sacrament gives and you will all be demanding me to offer it at every worship service. To quote Martin Luther, "If you knew how many darts the devil was shooting at you every day, you would run to the Sacrament of the Altar every chance you got!"

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\* Please stand if able

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For now, we have an opportunity to simply rest in the promise of God even while we can't all receive God's reassuring Sacrament as often as we truly need it. It's hard to live in the "Meantime," where we already have God's promise of forever forgiveness and eternal life, but God's Kingdom hasn't fully arrived. In this meantime, what are we to do? Well, for one, we wait. We wait for Jesus to return as He promised. We also pray. We pray for peace, for justice, and for Jesus to return. In the meantime, we also remember and listen. Hearing God's Word in all its forms helps us to stay the course as we wait for God to fulfill God's promises.

May God's promise to Abraham and God's promise to each of us be fulfilled for us today. Thanks be to God that God reckoned Abraham's faith as righteousness and God still reckons our faith, even if it *is* as tiny as a mustard seed, as righteousness today. May God give us the patience to faithfully wait in this "meanwhile time" for Jesus to come again. When Jesus does come, may you be found already a full citizen of the Kingdom of God on earth, living out the faith you inherited from our father Abraham, amen.

*Silence for reflection may follow*

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**\* 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.**

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➤ *Or, He descended to the dead.*

**\* PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

P: We pray for the church, the world, and all those in need...

*A brief silence.*

L: Often the plans we make look nothing like the amazing future you have in store for us. Keep us open to the unexpected and surprise us with your grace. When we grow impatient with you and with each other, give us your peace and quiet our anxious thoughts. Help us stay on the path that leads to you, Faithful God,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: As the days and nights even out and we reach the midpoint of the season, we pause to thank you for the fruits of the earth, the beauty of nature, and our interdependence with this planet on which we live. We give thanks for the bounty of the earth and ask your help and guidance so that all people are fed with both physical and spiritual bread, Faithful God,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: When we try to count the stars, we fall short; how easily we underestimate the vastness of your creation. Give us respect for our relative size within the cosmos and awe at the splendor of all that you have made. Faithful God,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: Be present with those who have given up hope of anything improving in their lives, and compel us to encourage others by the promises you give to all. Send your healing strength to those whom we name today... Faithful God,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

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\* Please stand if able

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L: We celebrate the Saints and all who have played pioneering roles in your earthly church. Give us courage to walk where you lead, even if no one has ever walked that way before. Faithful God,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

*Here other petitions may be offered.*

L: Our prayers—and our lives—are safe within your hands. In the meanwhile time as we await your coming give us the faith of Abraham so we too can trust in your faithfulness and give thanks that you hear our every prayer, those spoken aloud and those kept in the vault of our hearts. For the sake of Jesus, hear our prayers.

**C: Amen.**

**\* 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.**

**• OFFERING**

**\* OFFERING PRAYER**

P: We offer what we have, O God, trusting that all we need will be provided for us. Use these gifts in your kingdom's work, and make our lives a blessing to others, for the sake of your Spirit,

**C: Amen.**

**\* THE LORD'S PRAYER**

P: Jesus is the "tie that Binds us together", let us pray as Jesus taught...

**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.**

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\* Please stand if able

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• **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

\* **SENDING BLESSING**

P: Mothering God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you and lead you into the way of truth and life.

C: Amen.

\* **SENDING HYMN**      “All People That On Earth Do Dwell”      **LBW 245**



1 All peo - ple that on earth do dwell, sing to the  
2 Know that the Lord is God in - deed; with - out our  
3 Oh, en - ter then his gates with praise; ap - proach with  
4 For why? The Lord our God is good: his mer - cy  
5 To Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost, the God whom



Lord with cheer - ful voice; him serve with mirth, his  
aid he did us make. We are his folk, he  
joy his courts un - to; praise, laud, and bless his  
is for - ev - er sure; his truth at all times  
heav'n and earth a - dore, from us and from the



praise forth tell; come ye be - fore him and re - jice.  
doth us feed, and for his sheep he doth us take.  
name al - ways, for it is seem - ly so to do.  
firm - ly stood, and shall from age to age en - dure.  
an - gel host be praise and glo - ry ev - er - more.

\* **DISMISSAL**

P: Depart in Christ's Love.

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

**Postlude**

**“This Little Light of Mine”**

**Roxanne Groff**

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### Trinity Worship Assistants and Staff

Ministers	All the People of Trinity
Lector	N/A
Acolyte	N/A
Organist	Roxanne Groff
Greeters	Dean Thompson
Parrish Nurse	PJ Musser
Custodian	Mark Groff
Secretary	Sharon Fourman
FaceBook Live Recorder	PJ Musser

#### Health Tips for the Week

**BODY:** Remember to use moisturizer-face and body

**MIND:** Learn basic lifesaving techniques (Heimlich Maneuver, C.P.R.)

**SPIRIT:** Pray and give thanks to teachers

### 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, September 27<sup>th</sup>  
Genesis 37:3-8, 17b-22, 26-34; 50:15-21

- \* Please stand if able
- Please be seated

**This Week @ Trinity – September 20 thru September 27, 2020**

**Sun, September 20**

10:30 am Worship Service

**Tues, September 22**

***NEWSLETTER DEADLINE***

**Wed, September 23**

7:00 pm Trinity ZOOM Bible Study

**Fri, September 25**

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

**Sat, September 26**

12:00 pm Arcanum Prayer Walk

12:00 pm Greenville Community Day of Prayer

**Sun, September 27**

10:30 am Worship Service

**NEEDED FOR LWR PERSONAL CARE KITS:**

Bath size bars of soap (8-9 oz.) in original wrapping and dark color bath towels between 20" X 40" and 27" X 52".

**LWR KIT ASSEMBLY DATE** will be Monday, September 28 between 9 am and 12 noon.

**DEADLINE FOR ITEMS FOR THE OCTOBER TRINITY TRUMPET** is this Tuesday, September 22.

**COMMUNITY PRAYER WALK** – A Community Prayer Gathering and Walk will take place September 26 from noon to 2:00 pm in Arcanum. The event will begin at Veterans Park on George Street. People of all faiths are invited to come together to pray for our families, our schools and our nation. Small groups will form to walk separately in different areas of the Village. Those choosing not to walk may stay to pray and listen to Christian music in Veterans Park. Those using licensed golf carts, motorized scooters and 3-wheel bikes are encouraged to join in this community prayer. Contact Marge Warner if you would like to participate.

**“THE RETURN”**, a National and Global Day of Prayer, will be held Saturday, September 26 starting at noon in downtown Greenville. The event was organized in Washington DC but is for national repentance and revival and will include

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worship, prayer, gospel music and special singing. For more information on this national event, go to <https://thereturn.org>.

### **We're making School Kits for Lutheran World Relief!**

If you don't feel like doing the shopping, Linda Baker says she loves to shop (and Tony affirms how much she loves it 😊). Linda has offered and will be happy to accept any donations. She will purchase what is most needed to make the maximum number of school kits with what donations she receives. If you're like Linda and love to shop, here's the list that goes into a kit:

- 1 - Sturdy drawstring backpack style cloth bag— approximately 14" X 17", w/shoulder straps (handmade)
- 1 - Ruler—30 cm on one side (May have inches on the other side.)
- 1 - Box of Crayons (16 or 24)
- 5 - Unsharpened Pencils w/Eraser
- 1 - Pencil Sharpener
- 1 - 2 1/2" Eraser
- 1 - Pair Blunt Scissors
- 5 - Blue or Black Ball point Pens (No GEL pens)
- 4 - 70 Sheet College or Wide ruled Notebooks



### **COMING EVENTS!!!**

**October 4, 2020** – We're moving indoors for worship. There will be no Communion on that Sunday. Please watch the October Trinity Trumpet for other restrictions and details...

**October 25, 2020** – Come and see our Class of 2020 Confirm their Baptismal promises during our regular Worship service. This year our Confirmands are: Trudy Arling, Isabella Harleman, Aiden Myers, and Layni Ressler.

**October 25, 2020** – Annual Fall Festival, from 3:00 – 5:00 pm (All outside and entertainment from Joseph)

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- \* Please stand if able
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