

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 Matthew
Week 2
September 6, 2020



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- **Prelude “O What A Beautiful Morning; Somebody Bigger Than You and I; Thee Hands; Bringing in the Sheaves” Roxanne Groff**

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

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

- * **SPECIAL MUSIC** **The Lord’s Prayer** **Mr. Larry Harter**

- * **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: Guiding God,

C: You have shown us how to live a good life, yet we think we can do better on our own. We do not honor you or our neighbors, instead choosing to follow our selfish desires. We long to be free and yet hold others’ wrongs against them. Release us from this endless cycle of guilt and poor choices. Restore us to yourself again, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

P: We are God’s beloved children and we have been forgiven! Now live in the joy which this grace provides, and share the good news with others.

All: 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: Merciful God, You know the frailty of our souls even when we will not admit it. Give us courage to be honest about our faults, so that we can truly receive the forgiveness you have freely offered, for Jesus’ sake,

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C: Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 6:9-15

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

C: Glory to you O Lord.

⁹Pray then in this way: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. ¹⁰Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. ¹¹Give us this day our daily bread. ¹²And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. ¹³And do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one. ¹⁴For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; ¹⁵but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

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 takes away the sins of the world, Our Savior, Jesus Christ, amen.

This is our last week in this series on the Lord's Prayer. I hope you've enjoyed hearing more about this great prayer as I have had reading, learning, and preaching about it. As short and sweet as it is, Jesus sure did pack an awful lot into these few words. Today's topic is the forgiveness petition, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." That's the line we say week after week. Matthew's Jesus also goes on to emphasize the importance of forgiveness by adding, "¹⁴For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; ¹⁵but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." One of my seminary professors used to say

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Matthew was the most Catholic of the Gospels because of those two verses.

Matthew wants us to know we must forgive in order to receive God's forgiveness.

This tidbit is added only in Matthew, so most Lutherans tend to shy away from talking about it. We prefer our forgiveness free of any effort or work on our part, thank you very much... Most of the commentaries just gloss over those two verses without saying much.

This isn't the only place in the Bible where Jesus addresses forgiveness. When Jesus returned to appear before his disciples who were locked inside the upper room on that first Easter, He breathed on them and gave them the Holy Spirit. He told them if they forgave the sins of any, they were forgiven. If they retained the sins of any, they were retained. In Catechism class we call this the Office of the Keys, because the power to forgive or not seems to have influence over what happens when the great judgment day finally arrives.

So, if forgiveness is that important, we should all know exactly what forgiveness is. My guess is many Christians around the world today would be hard pressed to explain forgiveness to someone who had never heard of the word. I could be wrong, but my guess is most people think forgiveness works like this... Someone is offended or hurt in some way by another person. In order for forgiveness to happen the one who perpetrated the offence must apologize to the

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victim. They have to say they're sorry. At which time the victim says something like, "It's ok." That's the common view of forgiveness. The person who is in the wrong must repent and seek forgiveness from the person who was wronged. We place so much emphasis on apologizing I'm afraid we've strayed from the mark. Seeking forgiveness and apologizing aren't all that Biblical.

So, then what can we say about forgiveness? I would say first a couple of things it is not. Forgiveness isn't a feeling. It's not an emotion. God requires us to forgive our sisters and brothers whether we feel like it or not. I've never found anything in the Bible that talks about feeling of forgiveness. I do recall Saint Paul, in his letter to the Ephesian Church saying, "forgive one another just as God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven us." (Eph 4:33) From that verse we know our forgiveness should be modeled after God's forgiveness. There are plenty of examples in the Bible of God's forgiveness. It starts with a declaration of forgiveness. In the Old Testament book of Isaiah God says, "I will not remember your sins." Isn't that great! God doesn't remember our sins...

Wait, isn't that just like my earlier scenario? Isn't that the Godly equivalent of saying it's ok, just forget about it? Well, not exactly... Not remembering is not the same thing as forgetting about it. God is omniscient, which means all knowing. God can't forget... God can however choose to not bring it up. When we choose

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to not remember we relinquish our right to hold the offence against the other person. When God says he will not remember our sins, he has made a promise that our offence will not be brought up again, ever. Period!

To get a better idea of what this thing called forgiveness is all about I looked at other places where Jesus talked about forgiveness. I give you fair warning right here, these teachings of Jesus are hard to take and most of us don't follow what Jesus proscribes. Here's one of the principal teaching of Jesus on forgiveness. "Be on your guard! If another disciple sins, you must rebuke the offender, and if there is repentance, you must forgive. ⁴ And if the same person sins against you seven times a day, and turns back to you seven times and says, 'I repent,' you must forgive." (Luke 17:3-4) First off, notice Jesus says if someone sins against you rebuke him. He doesn't say go off and sulk in your corner and have a pity party. He also doesn't say we should go around telling all our friends what so and so did. If someone comes along and stomps on your toe you go directly to them and say, "Hey, look what you did to my toe." There's no going behind anyone's back or unfriending them on FaceBook. You simply go to that person and let them know they hurt you. I say that's a hard teaching because we normally think the person who was in the wrong is the one who is obligated to return to the offended person to seek forgiveness. That's simply not what Jesus says here. The innocent victim

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is obligated to chase down the offender and talk to them. Show them your trampled toes. There are other places in the Bible that speak about the sinner repenting. I believe God wants us to understand forgiveness from both sides. We often forget about this part of the equation where the one with sore toes is obligated to go to the one who stepped on them and talk it out. In so many cases the offender doesn't even know they offended you. You stay angry and hold a grudge thinking you're hurting them in some way. The truth is the only one you hurt by withholding forgiveness is you. Several of us read the book called Keep It Shut a couple of years ago. In that book Karen Ehman says withholding forgiveness is like drinking a tiny amount of poison every day and expecting the other person to get sick.

So, as if that isn't hard enough, when we go to the one who stomped on our toes and he or she says they are sorry, then we must forgive. Then, to make matters worse, if they come back 5 minutes later and stomp on them again, and repent again, you must forgive. Jesus used a number which in ancient times meant "a lot" when he said you must forgive as many as 7 times in one day for the same thing. With some people you'd spend all day just rebuking, listening to apologies, and forgiving... When the disciples heard Jesus say this they responded, "Lord increase our faith!" I can forgive you stepping on my toes the first time fairly

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easily. Maybe even the second time, but hey, everyone knows three strikes and you're out! After that I just don't feel like I'm in a very forgiving mood...

Imagine how God must feel about us and our constant natural state of sin. Yet God promises He will not remember any of them. Forgiveness isn't about feelings, it's a decision and a promise. You can make a decision and a promise to do something, even if you don't feel like it. Here's what I mean. Let's say I promise PJ I'll take her out to Red Lobster for our Anniversary dinner. I don't like Red Lobster, but I know that's one of her favorite places to eat. See, I made a promise to take her to the restaurant she likes even though I don't care for it. Then suppose on the week of our anniversary I have a really bad week. I really don't feel like going out to eat, much less to a place I don't like. Guess what, I still take her out to Red Lobster and I pretend to like it. Have you ever pretended to like something because you didn't want to hurt the other person's feelings and then they think you really like it? The next thing you know you're always eating at Red Lobster and they think it's your favorite place... Anyway, my point is you can make promises and decisions and even keep them despite the fact that you don't feel like it.

Forgiveness is a broad and deep subject. There are scads of book and commentaries attempting to explain it. I've only scratched the surface.

Forgiveness is hard. I actually believe forgiveness is a supernatural act. That's

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why the first thing the disciples said after Jesus teaching was Lord increase our faith. I think forgiveness is about faith. When Jesus began his earthly ministry, he went around Galilee telling everyone the “Good News”. He said Repent, for the Kingdom of God has come near!” How can the call to repent be “good news?” It’s good news because we already have God’s promise that he will remember our sins no more.

May we all learn to forgive the way God forgives us. If we could only do that one thing, how much better our world could be. Along with Jesus’ disciples we pray, God increase our faith so we can forgive the way you forgive! 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.*

*** PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

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

A brief silence.

L: Admitting our faults is risky, O Lord, and we are not eager to do it. Humble us that we might be open to the blessings which mercy offers and live more fully as your people. Help us to learn to resolve our grievances so that real forgiveness and reconciliation can happen. Forgive God,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: Bless all workers and those who strive to keep employment fair and sustainable. We give you thanks for people who do necessary jobs that make our life easier, and we pray that all would find joy and satisfaction in their daily activities and those with whom they interact. We pray for all those who are still without work due to the pandemic and we give thanks for those who have been able to return to the jobs they love. Forgive God,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: Help us to be better stewards of the bounty of the earth you have given to us. Where we have done harm to the earth's ecosystems, help us to learn better ways to gather the resources we need to survive without doing irreparable damage to our planet. Forgive God,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: Extend the same healing to us which Jesus granted to those whose souls he mended by pardoning their sins, that we might know a renewed and closer relationship with you. Send your Spirit to those who need it this day, especially... Forgive God,

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C: Hear our prayer.

L: Your saints were not perfect people, and neither are we. We thank you for using us in the midst of our shortcomings, to carry out the good work of your kingdom on earth. Forgiving God,

C: Hear our prayer.

Here other petitions may be offered.

L: For these and other things which we need but for which we do not yet know how to pray, we ask you, O Lord, in your infinite wisdom and mercy, in the name of Jesus our savior,

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: Make us ambassadors in your world, O God, and let these gifts we offer speak for us in response to your love and generosity. Join us with our brothers and sisters everywhere on earth, that all may know your mercy and care, in the name of Jesus,

C: Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Communion is by Individual Serving. All the Baptized are welcome to celebrate this Holy Meal. Please open the Communion Elements only when instructed to do so.

*** DIALOGUE**

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

*** EUCHARISTIC PRAYER**

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P: Holy God, our Maker, Redeemer, and Healer, in the harmonious world of your creation, the plants and animals, the seas and stars were whole and well in your praise. When sin had scarred the world, you sent your Son to heal our ills and to form us again into one.

P: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

P: Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

P: Remembering, therefore, his acts of healing, his body given up, and his victory over death, we await that day when all the peoples of the earth will come to the river to enjoy the tree of life. Send your Spirit upon us and this meal: as grains scattered on the hillside become one bread, so let your Church be gathered from the ends of the earth, that all may be fed with the Bread of life, your Son. Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever.

C: Amen

*** THE LORD’S PRAYER**

P: Jesus is the “tie that Binds us together”, since we are united into one through this heavenly food, 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.

*** INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

P: You have built for us a kingdom—not made with hands—which waits for us in the life beyond this one. Until we make our home in that place, we come together as your children to be nourished at your holy table. Unite our spirits in this bread and wine and keep us strong to serve another day. Amen.

P: Please open the Ziplock baggie and take the Body of Christ given for you at this time. ... Now, please remove the lid from the wine cup. We drink from this cup which is the Blood of Christ shed for you.

P: Please dispose of the empty cups and baggies in the trash can on your way out when you’re dismissed after worship.

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* **POST COMMUNION CANTICLE**



☞ Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell ev-'ry-one what he has done.



Let all who seek the Lord re - joice and proud-ly bear his name.



He re-calls his prom-is - es and leads his peo-ple forth in joy with



shouts of thanks-giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

* **POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

P: Let us pray together...

C: We give you thanks, gracious God, that you have once again fed us with food beyond compare, the body and blood of Christ. Lead us from this place, nourished and forgiven, into your beloved vineyard to wipe away the tears of all who hunger and thirst, guided by the example of the same Jesus Christ and led by the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

• **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

* **SENDING BLESSING**

P: May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord's face shine upon you and may the Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

C: Amen.

* **SENDING HYMN**

“Amazing Grace”

ELW 448



1 A - maz - ing grace!— how sweet the sound— that
2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and
3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares I
4 The Lord has prom - ised good to me; his
5 When we've been there ten thou - sand years, bright



saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but
grace my fears re - lieved; how pre - cious did that
have al - read - y come; 'tis grace has brought me
word my hope se - cures; he will my shield and
shin - ing as the sun, we've no less days to



now am found; was blind, but now I see.
grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!
safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
por - tion be as long as life en - dures.
sing God's praise than when we'd first be - gun.

* **DISMISSAL**

P: Depart in Christ's Love.

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

Postlude

“I Will Serve Thee”

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: Reduce red meat in your diet

MIND: Play cards

SPIRIT: Start a notebook of prayer concerns



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.

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This Week @ Trinity – September 6 thru September 13, 2020

Sun, September 6

- 10:30 am Worship Service
- 7:30 pm Confirmation Class on ZOOM

Wed, September 9

- 6:30 pm Christian Education Team Meeting
- 7:00 pm Trinity Bible/Book Club on ZOOM

Fri, September 11

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

Sun, September 13

- 10:30 am Worship Service



Scripture readings for next Sunday, September 13th
Genesis 2:4b-7, 15-17; 3:1-8

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 Barb Deis at 937-662-0119 for more information.

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Starting Wednesday, September 9th I'll be hosting a Bible/Book club Zoom Meeting every Wednesday at 7:00 pm (except September 16th due to Trinity Council Meeting) at 7:00 pm. The first book we'll be reading and discussing will be Lutheran Questions, Lutheran Answers: Exploring Christian Faith by Martin Marty. It's available on Amazon in paperback or Kindle format. Please order the version you prefer and read through chapter 1 before our first Zoom Meeting. We'll spend about 5 or 6 weeks on this Book and then decide where we want to go from there. I'll be sending out email and text invitations with a link if you want to join.

Pr. Mel

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/Erasers
- 1 - Pencil Sharpener
- 1 - 2 1/2" Eraser
- 5 - Blue or Black Ball point Pens (No GEL pens)
- 4 - 70 Sheet College or Wide ruled Notebooks
- 1 - Pair Blunt Scissors



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HOLY COMMUNION TODAY



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