

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



John 13:1-17
March 13, 2022



Scan with your Smartphone and link to our web page, our Facebook page, and our YouTube Channel.



- **Prelude**

Roxanne Groff

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

- **Welcome**

Pastor Mel Musser

*** 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: Merciful God,

C: These 40 days we reflect on how our sin bleeds into the world, leaving a mark that we cannot remove. Forgive all we have done and failed to do, and cleanse us from the stain of sin.

L: Our God is gracious and forgiving. God does not desire that we wallow in the brokenness, but instead cleanses us and makes us new. Receive the entire forgiveness of all your sin, and walk in newness of life. For the sake of Jesus Christ we pray.

C: Amen.

*** HYMN OF PRAISE “Lord, Speak to Us That We May Speak” LBW 403**



1 Lord, speak to us, that we may speak in
2 Oh, lead us, Lord, that we may lead the
3 Oh, teach us, Lord, that we may teach the
4 Oh, fill us with your full - ness, Lord, un -



liv - ing ech - oes of your tone; as you have sought, so
wan-d'ring and the wa - v'ring feet; oh, feed us, Lord, that
pre - cious truths which you im - part; and wing our words, that
til our ver - y hearts o'er - flow in kin - dling thought and



let us seek your stray - ing chil - dren, lost and lone.
we may feed your hun - g'ring ones with man - na sweet.
they may reach the hid - den depths of man - y a heart.
glow - ing word, your love to tell, your praise to show.

* Please stand if able

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*** APOSTOLIC 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: Let us pray... God of all who serve, when Jesus knelt to wash the feet of his friends, he taught us all a new way of being. Teach us to humble ourselves so that serving is our new normal.

C: Amen.

• CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Theme: Jesus Shows Us How to be Servant Leaders

Materials:

Scripture: John 13: 1-17

Who wants to be a policeman when you grow up? Who wants to be an astronaut? How about a teacher or a lawyer? What else do you want to be someday? (Let the children answer for themselves...)

Does anyone want to be a garbage collector? How about a street sweeper or the person who cleans out the sewer pipes when they get plugged up? Those aren't really the best of the best jobs are they? You know, somebody has to do those jobs. What if we all decided we were too good to do those dirty jobs and nobody picked up the garbage? We would pretty soon live in a terrible place with flies and other disgusting bugs everywhere. The person who collects our trash deserves our thanks and praise for helping to keep our part of the world clean.

Back in Jesus time the dirtiest part of your body was your feet. Since they didn't have any chairs, they sat on the ground when they ate their meals. So, their feet were at the same level as their food. That's pretty disgusting isn't it. No one wants to look at or smell your dirty feet. So, they picked the lowest member of their group to do the foot washing.

One day, just before Jesus was betrayed by Judas, one of his disciples, Jesus got up and washed all of his disciples' feet. He was trying to show them that following Jesus means that you are always doing the work no one else wants to do. You are like a servant or even like a slave. Jesus was our example of how to live

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the way God intends for us. God loves it when we help others without thinking about who gets the credit or who is the best.

Jesus lowered himself to our level so we could see what God is really like. God loves it when we help and serve one another. What are some ways you can be like Jesus this week? (Suggest bringing breakfast in bed to their parents or cleaning up their bedrooms without being asked or helping wash the dishes after supper...)

Let's pray... Dear Jesus, we thank you for giving us the example of how to be a Servant of God. Help us to find the willingness to do all those chores we don't really like and to do them as if we are doing them for you. Amen.

• **SCRIPTURE READING: John 13:1-17**

P: Our scripture reading for this day is from the Gospel according to Saint John, the Seventh Chapter.

C: Glory to you O Lord.

13 Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. ²The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper ³Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, ⁴got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. ⁵Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. ⁶He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" ⁷Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." ⁸Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." ⁹Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" ¹⁰Jesus said to him, "One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you." ¹¹For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, "Not all of you are clean." ¹²After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? ¹³You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. ¹⁴So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵For I have set you an example, that you also should

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do as I have done to you. ¹⁶Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. ¹⁷If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.”

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

- **SERMON**

Pastor Mel Musser

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the one who washes you clean with His precious blood, Jesus Christ our Lord, amen.

I remember attending “Foot Washing” ceremonies at Church when I was a child. I thought it was great fun to have the pastor or a member of the Church Council wash my feet... Then as I grew older it got more and more awkward. When I was in seminary, the university President and the Dean as well as some of the key advisors set up stations and washed the feet of us lowly seminary students... Even more awkward. When I was at my first call I inquired about their practices and was delighted to find they had given up on foot washing many years earlier. I believe it’s the same here. It was easy to avoid this story because under the Revised Common Lectionary this reading was included along with verses 18-34 which includes Jesus issuing a new command to love one another. Because of the new commandment, this reading always fell on Maundy Thursday. Maundy coming from the Latin word Mandatum from which we get the word mandate or command.

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Today, we're only reading the first 17 verses. There's nothing else to focus on besides this act of humble servanthood Jesus demonstrates for us. I can't avoid talking about washing feet because there's no other side story to concentrate on. So, why is this story so almost universally disliked? Why do we shun it like being hit in the face by a cold March rain? Why does Jesus perform this act of servanthood on the very night of his betrayal and what is it Jesus is trying to teach us through this example? These are tough questions for a pastor who has spent the past 14 years trying to avoid this story...

Well, I can avoid it no longer. Jesus took off his tunic and wrapped a towel around his waist. He took on the form of a slave. From the research I did this week washing your guest's feet was a job reserved for your slave or servant. In a group like Jesus and the disciples, that foul task would fall to the junior member of the group. Can you imagine the awkward silence as they looked around the room, each one looking at the next trying to decide which one was the junior member? At the beginning of each seminary class, the professor would ask the students who wants to pray for us this day? We would all look down at our books. If you made eye contact you lost... If that were the case on this night, that awkward silence was finally broken by the Master himself. Jesus took the initiative and stripped down to his skivvies and became the slave of all.

I think if I had been there I would have felt ashamed that I didn't jump up and volunteer for the task. To see our teacher and our Rabbi dressed like a slave and doing the one task none of us wanted to do. How embarrassing and humiliating! When I stop to think that the one who took off his clothing, poured the water into the basin and washed the dirty, stinky, feet of his students is one and the same as the Word of God who was with God and who was God in the beginning, that same one who became flesh and blood is now the servant of all. How astonishing is that?! It's scandalous, really...

Before we get all sanctimonious and judgy of the disciples, I have to ask myself, self, what tasks do I run away from because they are beneath my stature and status? Saint Paul begins two of his letters with the phrase "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ..." The Greek word "*Dulos*" we have translated as "servant" really means "slave." Martin Luther, in his essay the Freedom of the Christian, says, "*A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject of all, subject to all.*" When you're subject to all, I think that means you are slave to all. That's the basic lesson Jesus wants his disciples to learn from his washing of their feet. I think that's also why most Christians don't particularly care for this story. Who wants to be slave of all?

It's funny how Christians choose which parts of the Bible we take literally and which parts everyone knows are metaphors... For example, we often hear that Jesus lives in our hearts. Does anyone here really think you have a tiny Jesus living inside your heart. I've seen images of the human heart and I've never seen any little man hiding in there... When we say we have Jesus in our hearts we mean he is in our thoughts, and we hold to his teachings. It means we try to act as Jesus acted. Jesus says, "So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet." For many years the Church decided to take this verse very literally. The Church began a foot washing ceremony all the way back to the 12th century when the Pope washed the feet of 12 sub-deacons and 12 poor men. That ceremony has that lasted all the way up to modern times. If the people hadn't objected, the Church would still be forcing this upon its members. Foot washing was necessary for people in the time of Jesus because they walked everywhere and had only open toe sandals to wear on their feet. Those feet were extremely filthy from the dirt roads and from those times when you couldn't avoid stepping into the donkey or sheep manure scattered which was scattered everywhere. Also, when they ate their meals they sat on the floor with their feet at the same level as their food. Dirty feet made eating a meal... disgusting. So, everyone got their feet washed before dinner. Jesus used the most common task

reserved for the lowest member of their social club to demonstrate how the Kingdom of God works.

Remember the story about how the disciples argued over who would sit at the right and left hands of Jesus when he came into his kingdom? They were all still thinking in terms of how earthly kingdoms work. There was prestige and power to being associated with the king. At the very least they thought they would be members of the royal court and have cushy jobs all the while making lots of money for themselves. After three years of study under this Rabbi, they still didn't know how God's Kingdom operates. So, Jesus gets up from the table, takes off his outer garments and takes on the form of a slave. Then tells them, "For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you." Jesus is saying, in everything you do, seek not the positions of power and might, but rather the lowest position and from there you can become servants of all people.

I love our Vision Statement that states, In Christ's love we Seek, Welcome and Serve all. I wonder how many of us take that vision of Jesus into our hearts. Jesus plainly says a servant can not be greater than the master. When a pastor or the Seminary President takes off their outer garments and washes the feet of those around them it comes off as hypocritical. No one for a second believes the Seminary President is lower than the student... Yet when Jesus does it there isn't a

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false ring at all, because Jesus lived his entire life as a servant. That is what he came to be and to do. He was the servant or slave of God. His obedience to God was what brought him into direct conflict with the powers of this world.

So, after Jesus had finished washing all their feet and put his clothing back on, he took his place once again at the table. Then he asked them, “Do you know what I have done to you?” While Peter knew what Jesus had done, neither he nor the other disciples — nor subsequent believers — really know what he had “done to them.” On the contrary, they needed to realize that if they were to be his disciples, they were to imitate him and not the world. They were to follow his example, to do as he had done and to see themselves as servants and as messengers of good news rather than as masters who are in charge of many things. Here’s the scary part for those who want to follow Jesus, although knowing Jesus’ commands is useful, to receive God’s full blessing, his followers must do them.

How do we imitate Jesus today? When we give of our time, our talents, and our treasures to serve others in need, we are doing the equivalent of washing their feet. I’ll bet some of those refugees pouring into Poland, Romania, and other European countries have smelly feet and probably other smelly body parts as well. One person I saw being interviewed said it had been several weeks since they had a bath. Even more importantly, how long since they had a good hot meal, or a drink

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of clean cold water. How long since they have slept in a warm bed without fear of bombs dropping on their homes. I know we all can't go over there to take in these refugees, but we do know someone who is doing exactly that right now. Jodi Hesler is our Jesus washing the feet of the Ukrainian refugees. We can assist her today with our special offering. It's not much, but we all do what we can.

May God help us to learn from Jesus how to serve as an authentic servant and not to just make ourselves feel better about ourselves. May our feet bring Good news to all the people we know and to so many we have never even met. May God save and bless the people of Ukraine and all the world and may we be used as God's servant to bring about God's Kingdom here on earth. Amen.

Silence may be kept for meditation...

• **SPECIAL MUSIC**

Larry Harter

* **NICENE CREED**

The Nicene Creed is said on all festivals and on Sundays in the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter. The Apostles' Creed is said at other times. The Creed is omitted here if the service of Holy Baptism or another rite with a creed is used.

C: We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen

➤ *Or, He descended to the dead.*

*** PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

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

A brief silence.

L: Lord, you have truly shown what it means to offer ourselves for the sake of another. Strip us of our pretention, hesitation, and resistance to following your example. Servant leader,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: You have always protected the vulnerable and stood for the voiceless. May we follow your law in a right spirit, so that all may justly benefit from your blessings, and no one presume themselves to be better than another. Servant leader,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: During this contemplative season, we ponder how much you gave up on our behalf. Sometimes we are moved, awed, or shocked by what you were willing to do for those whom you love. Keep our eyes on you throughout these forty days and uplift us when the journey becomes difficult. Servant leader,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: We turn to you still in our lowest moments, in times of need, and when we long to be made whole. Pour out the full measure of your healing upon each of us, and especially upon... Servant leader,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: The life of a saint is a life of humility. May our path follow those who have gone before us to serve you truly and faithfully. Servant leader,

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C: Hear our prayer.

Here other petitions may be offered.

P: Lord, accept our prayers for all that we do not yet understand, and hold us in your steadfast embrace whenever we stumble. Hear us for the sake of Jesus, our servant and Lord.

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 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 an offering basket located near the back door of the church and for those worshipping online if you go to www.pitsburgtlc.org you can make your offering online.

P: So, let's pray for the offerings we receive this day.... You call us to serve, God, and so we humble ourselves so that others might be lifted up. The gifts we offer here today are expressions of the servanthood to which you have called us. Receive them with the spirit that give them, for the greater good of all. For the sake of Jesus Christ we pray.

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.

• ANNOUNCEMENTS

* Please stand if able

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*** SENDING BLESSING**

P: You are children of God, anointed with the oil of gladness and strengthened for the journey. Almighty God, majestic, and mighty, bless you this day and always.

C: Amen.

*** SENDING HYMN “O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee” LBW 492**



1 O Mas - ter, let me walk with you in low - ly
2 Help me the slow of heart to move by some clear,
3 Teach me your pa - tience; share with me a clos - er,
4 In hope that sends a shin - ing ray far down the



paths of ser - vice true; tell me your se - cret;
win - ning word of love; teach me the way - ward
dear - er com - pa - ny, in work that keeps faith
fu - ture's broad - 'ning way, in peace that on - ly



help me bear the strain of toil, the fret of care.
feet to stay, and guide them in the home - ward way.
sweet and strong, in trust that tri - umphs o - ver wrong,
you can give; with you, O Mas - ter, let me live.

*** DISMISSAL**

P: Until the next time we gather together as God's people to offer our worship and praise, depart in Christ's Love.

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

*** POSTLUDE**

Roxanne Groff

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Scripture readings for next Sunday, March 20th
John 18:12-27

Trinity Worship Assistants and Staff

Ministers	All the People of Trinity
Organist	Roxanne Groff
Lector	Larry Harter
Acolyte	Devyn Thobe
Parrish Nurse	PJ Musser
Custodian	Mark Groff
Secretary	Sharon Fourman
Facebook Live Recorder	PJ Musser
Altar Flowers	<i>No flowers during Lent</i>

Health Tips for the Week

BODY: Try balance exercises

MIND: Revisit your short- and long-term goals

SPIRIT: spend time listening to Christian music



Envelopes are out in the narthex waiting to be filled by all of you with cash or a check. This money will go to help out Trinity member, Carolyn Blocher, with her very expensive dental work. Checks are to be written to Trinity Lutheran. Put money or check inside the envelope, then deposit in the collection plate or return to Tony Baker or Marge Warner. Your help with this project will be greatly appreciated. If you have questions, please contact Marge at 937-623-2544.

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SPECIAL MUSIC, READINGS, ETC. needed for our worship services. A sign up sheet is on the table near the office or contact Marge Warner (937-623-2544).



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.

This Week @ Trinity – March 13 thru March 20, 2022

Sun, Mar. 13	10:30 am	Worship Service
Tues, Mar. 15	Newsletter Deadline	
Wed, Mar. 16	8:30 am	GGMA Meeting
	6:00 pm	Finance Team Meeting
	7:00 pm	Trinity Council Meeting
Thurs, Mar. 17	11:30 am	Ladies Luncheon @ Thirsty Turtle, 6545 St. Rt. 36, Greenville
		
Fri, Mar. 18	3:30 pm	FISH Choice Food Pantry
Sun, Mar. 20	10:30 am	Worship Service w/Holy Communion

AROUND THE PARISH

Holy Communion Delivery Available to ALL:

If you or anyone you know would like to have Holy Communion delivered to a home or place of business, please call Pastor Mel at 937-626-7100. He will bring a prefilled communion chalice including both sanctified wine and a morsel of bread all prepackaged from the Concordia True Vine company. This is a safe way to stay connected to your brothers and sisters in Christ.

Trinity Contact Info

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