

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



**Habakkuk 1:1-4, 2:1-4; 3:3b-19**  
**November 27, 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**

**Pr Mel Musser**

- **Lighting of the Advent Wreath**

**Reader:** Just as the prophet Habakkuk stood at the watchpost to see what you would say, O God,

**C:**       **So we, too, see the brokenness of the world and long for your message to be made plain.**

**Reader:** (*light candle 1*) We light this first candle as a sign of hope that you have heard your people and will answer us in our distress.

**C:**       **Let this light be a beacon to all who wait, a sure sign that our redemption is coming to us.**

**\* 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:** Radiant God,

**C:** **You have come to live among us, yet we fail time and again to see you in the faces of our neighbors. We look to ourselves instead of those in need. We seek the shallow comforts of things we can buy instead of the deep and lasting comfort of your presence. Forgive our stubborn refusal to see, and open our eyes to the joy and wonder of your incarnation.**

**P:** Do not be afraid, for I bring you good news of great joy. The God of boundless grace forgives you all your sins, renewing your spirit for the sake of Immanuel, God with us.

**C: Amen.**

\* **HYMN OF PRAISE “Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee”**

**LBW 551**



1 Joy - ful, joy - ful we a - dore thee, God of glo - ry, Lord of love!  
 2 All thy works with joy sur-round thee, earth and heav'n re - flect thy rays,  
 3 Thou art giv - ing and for - giv - ing, ev - er bless-ing, ev - er blest,



Hearts un - fold like flow'rs be - fore thee, prais-ing thee, their sun a - bove.  
 stars and an - gels sing a-round thee, cen - ter of un - bro - ken praise.  
 well - spring of the joy of liv - ing, o - cean-depth of hap - py rest!



Melt the clouds of sin and sad - ness, drive the gloom of doubt a - way.  
 Field and for - est, vale and moun-tain, flow-'ry mead-ow, flash-ing sea,  
 Thou our Fa - ther, Christ our broth - er, all who live in love are thine;



Giv - er of im - mor - tal glad-ness, fill us with the light of day.  
 chant-ing bird, and flow-ing foun-tain call us to re - joice in thee.  
 teach us how to love each oth - er, lift us to the joy di-vine!

\* **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 grace and mercy, with Habakkuk we cry out to you in despair at the evil in the world. As we begin our waiting for your promised savior, give us hope that all will be made right in you.

**C:** Amen.

- **CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

Theme: Waiting, Being Patient, and Trusting God

Object: Analog Clock

Scripture: Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4; 3:[3b-6], 17-19

Good morning Boys and Girls. Did you all have a great week? I hope so... Today I brought this clock to show you. I got this on my recent vacation. Look closely at the hands on this clock. Do you know which one is the minute hand? Yep, it's the longest of the three hands on this clock. Can you see it moving? It moves so slowly we can't tell that it's really moving. Sometimes when I'm trying to write the sermon or come up with ideas for this Children's Message I stare at this clock. When I do, that minute hand seems to be stuck. I can't see how it's moving... *(Put the clock face down on the floor.)*

In the Bible there was a wise prophet who looked out on his city and his nation and saw only terrible things. Some people were being mean and taking advantage of others. Some people were doing bad things like stealing and killing other people. This prophet whose name was Habakkuk prayed to God and asked why God wasn't doing anything about all the sin and terrible things in the world. Have you ever wondered why God doesn't just come down here once and for all and fix all the things that have gone wrong since sin came into the world?

To poor Habakkuk it seemed like God just wasn't doing anything about all this evil in the world. In our Bible story for today, God answered Habakkuk's prayer by telling him to wait, to be patient, and to trust God. God still challenges us today to wait, be patient, and to trust in God. When we do we see that God is always working behind the scene to turn all those bad things around. Even when we don't see God's actions we're called to wait, to be patient, and to trust God loves you and will use the bad things that happen in the world for our benefit.

So, who remembers where that minute hand was on the clock when I put it down. Yes, it was right here, but now it did move all the way to here! That's exactly how we can see and understand God working in the world. We can't always see what God is up to in the moment, but over time as we wait with patient expectation, we can see the movement of God in our lives and in the world.

Let's pray, Dear God, help us to be patient as we wait for you to act in our lives and in this world. Give us patience in our longing to see you. In Jesus Name, Amen.

• **SCRIPTURE READING: Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4; 3:[3b-6], 17-19**

P: Our scripture reading for this day is from Habakkuk, Chapters 1, 2, and 3.

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

**Narrator:** The oracle that the prophet Habakkuk saw.

**Habakkuk:** O Lord, how long shall I cry for help, and you will not listen? Or cry to you “Violence!” and you will not save? Why do you make me see wrong-doing and look at trouble? Destruction and violence are before me; strife and contention arise. So the law becomes slack and justice never prevails. The wicked surround the righteous— therefore judgment comes forth perverted. I will stand at my watchpost, and station myself on the rampart; I will keep watch to see what he will say to me, and what he will answer concerning my complaint. Then the Lord answered me and said:

**Lord:** Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so that a runner may read it. For there is still a vision for the appointed time; it speaks of the end, and does not lie. If it seems to tarry, wait for it; it will surely come, it will not delay. Look at the proud! Their spirit is not right in them, but the righteous live by their faith.

**Narrator:** God came from Teman, the Holy One from Mount Paran. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. The brightness was like the sun; rays came forth from his hand, where his power lay hidden. Before him went pestilence, and plague followed close behind. He stopped and shook the earth; he looked and made the nations tremble. The eternal mountains were shattered; along his ancient pathways the everlasting hills sank low.]

**Habakkuk:** Though the fig tree does not blossom, and no fruit is on the vines; though the produce of the olive fails and the fields yield no food; though the flock is cut off from the fold and there is no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will exult in the God of my salvation. God, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, and makes me tread upon the heights. To the choirmaster: with stringed instruments.

R: 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 our Savior and Lord, Jesus Christ, amen.

Last week I struggled to make the scripture reading relevant to our modern lives. This week I was aware of that same struggle... So I wrestled with Habakkuk and discovered an interesting analogy... Imagine for a moment you are a citizen of Ukraine back before anyone had any idea Russia was going to invade your country. As a follower of Jesus, you notice some things in your society that trouble you — some fast dealing and unjust actions by some of your fellow citizens that take advantage of other people, and they seem to be getting away with it. So, you pray, saying, “Lord, how long are you going to let this go on, with bad people making good people suffer?” To your great surprise God answers you: “They aren’t going to get away with it for long. Vladimir Putin’s troops are coming, and they will disrupt everything.” You are thunderstruck! “Wait, what! Oh no, Lord! Why would you allow a country that is worse than ours to invade us?”

Here’s how relevant this is to our lives. Just substitute Judah for Ukraine and Russia for the Chaldeans of Babylon and you basically have the prophet Habakkuk’s circumstances. He knew some of this fellow Judahites were not living up to the covenant with God and were mistreating others, and he wanted God to

---

\* Please stand if able

• Please be seated



intervene, but when God told him the Babylonians were marching against Judah, Habakkuk was overwhelmed with dismay. The prophet had wanted God to turn up the heat a bit on the hometown Judahite wrongdoers, but not to dump them out of the frying pan and into the fire! As Habakkuk put it to God, “Why would you look at the treacherous or keep silent when the wicked swallows one who is more righteous?” Be careful what you pray for... You just might get it. We who are also followers of Jesus right here in the Miami Valley witness all the corruption and evil all around us as well. The authorities had to cancel holiday parades and celebrations in Dayton and Springfield over the Thanksgiving week because of gunfire and fights breaking out. How long O Lord will you put up with such evil in the world?

As interesting as it is to compare the actions of two tyrannical regimes thousands of years apart, to the current events of today, that’s not what makes this reading relevant to our lives. When the prophet Habakkuk described himself as being stationed on a watchpost, he literally was waiting and watching for the Lord to answer his question. He was waiting for God’s answer as to why he would allow the Babylonian bad guys to overrun the Judahite not-quite-as-bad guys... God does get back to him, but not with an answer. God usually doesn’t explain his actions. He didn’t with Habakkuk and he usually doesn’t explain himself with me either... The Lord does give Habakkuk the assurance that he can continue, even in

the face of trouble, and so can we. Once again, that's some really great advice for Habakkuk and for those of us who are struggling with all the bad news we hear every day, but that's not the most relevant part of this reading either.

Are you ready to find out the single most relevant part of this scripture is? The single most important statement is found in God's response to Habakkuk's question is in Chapter 2, verse 4b, where the Lord says: "the righteous live by their faith." God thought this was so important he instructed Habakkuk to write those words down on a tablet. His instructions were to write what God was about to say, "so that a runner may read it." So that a runner could read it??? God wanted his message to be written so plainly and concisely that a person could read the message at a glance — on the run.

In our day and time, actually about 2 months ago, your council voted to form a team to investigate the purchase and installation of an electronic sign. These signs can be really great at broadcasting occasional messages. I've seen studies that show the average driver can only scan road signs for a few seconds. The studies recommend limiting your message to 6 or seven words. There's something to be said for important messages that can be boiled down to just a few words. If nothing else, that makes it possible for more people to remember them and to apply them in the appropriate circumstances in their lives.



Do we have just this exact kind of message here in Chapter 2 verse 4b? I say we certainly do. The answer Habakkuk received from the Lord regarding why God was going to allow a really bad country to invade another not so bad country was this: “the righteous live by their faith.” The most important part of God’s response to Habakkuk’s question was the message that “the righteous live by their faith.” That message is just six words long, right in line with the wisdom of keeping roadside sign messages brief and to the point. At least two well-known “runners” read that sign and changed the course of human history. One is the apostle Paul. For Paul these six words became the foundation for his understanding of justification by faith. Paul quotes God’s message to Habakkuk in both his letters to the Church in Rome and to the Galatians. The other “runner” was Martin Luther, who read Paul’s interpretation of Habakkuk, and used that short message as the foundation for understanding God’s Grace. This understanding of Grace led to the Protestant Reformation.

The words “the righteous live by their faith” are still an expression of the daily walk of every follower of Jesus. In the original Hebrew, the word translated in English as “faith” also carries the meaning of “faithfulness.” In fact, the NRSV Bible marks this word choice with a footnote. Thus, the heart of God’s response to Habakkuk’s question could be translated “the righteous person will live by steadfast endurance” (eight words) or, “the righteous will live by being faithful”

(seven words). In effect, God was telling Habakkuk that during the period when the wicked Babylonians would be in control and God's promise to restore Judah was not yet fulfilled, Habakkuk was to trust God's assurance and rely on God's strength to persevere. This command, shorthand as "the righteous will live by being faithful" and this was *the* main point of the vision God gave to Habakkuk.

In the meantime, while all followers of the Lord God are waiting for God to fix the mess we made of God's Good Creation, God's statements on the matter is "the righteous will live by being faithful." By relying on God's strength, God's people will persevere. Perseverance is not a popular topic in today's culture. We like instant gratification. We want it all and we want it now! Being persistent means, we're willing to postpone gratification until conditions improve. It carries the meaning that we will have to work hard and overcome adversity in order to continue toward the goal. Our goal is to remain faithful to God no matter how hard life may be or how difficult things are to face. We may have questions about the evil we see on the streets and in our own lives for which there are no easy answers. Sometimes evildoers will come out on top. Even in these times of lawlessness and strife, a steady faithfulness to God, an enduring trust in God's promises, a persevering reliance on God's strength is the way to go through the difficulties of life that cannot be avoided.

The good news is that God has come down to each and every one of us with a message of hope. In Jesus Christ, God's plan of salvation for all mankind was finally about to be revealed. As we wait for the completion of that plan, we can be encouraged by these powerful words from God, continue to live by your faithfulness. When troubles seem to overwhelm and the world appears to be headed in the wrong direction, and when our enemies always seem to get the upper hand, the message from our Living God is to remain faithful.

May God give us the faith to see the world as it is and know that we are part of the healing and redeeming of all things. May your Advent waiting be full of awe, mystery, and joy. Amen.

*Silence may be kept for meditation...*

\* **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: Confident that your promises are sure, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

*A brief silence.*

L: Faithful God, Habakkuk spoke wisely when he praised your name, even in the midst of despair. Make us ever mindful of our own despair, and teach us how faith can defeat even the most grievous suffering. We call on our God,

**C: O come, o come Immanuel.**

L: Make us thoughtful caretakers of all that you have made. Remind us that your promises are tangible, often made real and revealed through the people and the things that you have created. We call on our God,

**C: O come, o come Immanuel.**

L: Give wisdom and hope to all who lead, that they might govern with justice and mercy, and in the full knowledge of your presence and guidance. We call on our God,

---

\* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

November 27, 2022

Page 12 of 16

**C: O come, o come Immanuel.**

L: Pour your healing upon all who suffer, who are ill, who grieve, or who need the promise of your presence in their lives, (*especially*). We call on our God,

**C: O come, o come Immanuel.**

L: Let us not forget at this time of hustle and bustle, that there are those in your midst whose need is greater than ours. Help us to provide where we are able. Help us to ask where we have need. We call on our God,

**C: O come, o come Immanuel.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

L: With joy we remember the saints for the blessed ways they have modeled faith. May we follow their example until we feast together in eternity. We call on our God,

**C: O come, o come Immanuel.**

L: In faith, hope, and love, we lift our prayers to you, in the name of your promised savior, Jesus Christ.

**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 an offering basket located near the back door of the church and for those worshipping online if you go to [www.pitsburgtlc.org](http://www.pitsburgtlc.org) you can make your offering online.

P: So, let's pray for the offerings we receive this day.... God we rejoice in you no matter our circumstances. With generous hearts we offer what we can for the life of the world, in Jesus' name.

**C: Amen.**

**\* THE LORD'S PRAYER**

P: Jesus is the tie that binds us together. So, 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

• Please be seated

• **SENDING BLESSING**

P: God the eternal Word, who dwells with us in Jesus, and who holds us in the grace of the Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

• **SENDING HYMN**

**“Here I Am, Lord”**

**ELW 574**



1 “I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my peo - ple cry.  
2 “I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my peo - ple’s pain.  
3 “I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.



All who dwell in dark and sin my hand will save.  
I have wept for love of them. They turn a - way.  
I will set a feast for them. My hand will save.



I, who made the stars of night, I will make their dark-ness bright.  
I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love a - lone.  
Fin-est bread I will pro-vide till their hearts be sat - is - fied.



Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?"  
I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send?"  
I will give my life 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.

- **DISMISSAL**

P: Thank you all for joining us to worship our great and gracious God! Thanks also to our Facebook and other social media viewers for joining us as well. We're glad you're with us today. In a world where you can be anything, be kind! 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**

---

Copyright © 2022 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS023830. New Revised Standard Version Bible, Copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Revised Common Lectionary, Copyright © 1992 Consultation on Common Texts, admin Augsburg Fortress. Used by permission.

**Trinity Worship Assistants and Staff**

Ministers	All the People of Trinity
Organist	Roxanne Groff
Lector	Jennifer Arling
Parrish Nurse	PJ Musser
Custodian	Mark Groff
Secretary	Sharon Fourman
Facebook Live Recorder	PJ Musser
Altar Flowers	

**SPECIAL OFFERING** – There is an additional offering plate in the back for donations that will be sent to a fund for the Florida hurricane victims.

**Health Tips for the Week**

**BODY:** Stretch before bed and before arising

**MIND:** Make an Advent wreath

**SPIRIT:** Start an Advent devotional

---

\* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

November 27, 2022

Page 15 of 16





Scripture readings for next Sunday, December 4<sup>th</sup>  
Esther 4:1-17

**This Week @ Trinity – November 27 thru December 4, 2022**

<b>Sun, Nov. 27</b>	10:30 am	Worship Service
<b>Mon, Nov. 28</b>	7:00 pm	Dartball at Trinity
<b>Tues, Nov. 29</b>	10:00 am	Prayers & Squares Quilting
<b>Fri, Dec. 2</b>	3:30 pm	FISH Choice Food Pantry
<b>Sat, Dec. 3</b>	10:00 am	Children's Christmas Program Practice
<b>Sun, Dec. 4</b>	10:30 am	Worship Service
	11:30 am	Children's Christmas Play Practice (Lunch Served)
	2:00 pm	Santa Claus Visits Trinity (Parents, Please provide a wrapped gift with your child's name on the wrapping. \$15 max...)



**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.

**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**

Pastor:	Mel Musser
Email:	<a href="mailto:pastor@pitsburgtlc.org">pastor@pitsburgtlc.org</a>
Cell Phone:	937-626-7100
Secretary:	Sharon Fourman
Email:	<a href="mailto:secretary@pitsburgtlc.org">secretary@pitsburgtlc.org</a>
Office Hours:	By Appointment
Office Phone:	937-692-5670
Website:	<a href="http://www.pitsburgtlc.org">www.pitsburgtlc.org</a>

\* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

November 27, 2022

Page 16 of 16