

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



Genesis 21:1-3; 22:1-14
September 19, 2021



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



- **Prelude “There Is A Haven; I’ve Been Blessed by the Hand of the Lord;
I’ll Be A Sunbeam; Give of Your Best to the Master”**
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: Creator of all things,

C: We have failed to care for all that you have made. We have squandered resources and oppressed others. Forgive us for what we have done and have failed to do. Teach us how to be steward of your creation with care and nurture. Amen.

L: Our God will always love all that God has made. Although we sin, God forgives. Receive now the entire forgiveness of all your sins, granted as a gift from a loving God. In the name of Jesus we pray.

C: Amen.

* **HYMN OF PRAISE**

“Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me”

LBW 327



1 Rock of A - ges, cleft for me, let me hide my - self in thee;
2 Not the la - bors of my hands can ful - fill thy law's de - mands;
3 Noth - ing in my hand I bring; sim - ply to thy cross I cling.
4 While I draw this fleet - ing breath, when mine eye - lids close in death,



let the wa - ter and the blood, from thy riv - en side which flowed,
could my zeal no res - pite know, could my tears for - ev - er flow,
Na - ked, come to thee for dress; help - less, look to thee for grace;
when I soar to worlds un - known, see thee on thy judg - ment throne,



be of sin the dou - ble cure; cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r.
all for sin could not a - tone; thou must save, and thou a - lone.
foul, I to the foun - tain fly; wash me, Sav - ior, or I die.
Rock of A - ges, cleft for me, let me hide my - self in thee.

* **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 radical love, You prevented Abraham from sacrificing his son for you. You showed him that you don't need sacrifice to love or be loved. Through Jesus, your perfect sacrifice, you remind us you love us that deeply as well...

C: Amen.

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

- **CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

Theme: The Story of Abraham's Near Sacrifice of Isaac is A Sign that Points to Jesus.

Scripture: Genesis 21:1-3; 22:1-14

Items Needed: Pictures of Different Kinds of Signs

Good morning boys and girls. It's so good to see you this morning. Today I have several different kinds of signs to show you. First here's a stop sign. This kind of sign gives us a command to Stop. It protects us from getting into an accident at a busy intersection. Next, I have a different kind of sign. This one points out a hazard. Maybe someone spilled their drink or the cleaning person just finished mopping the floor and it's still wet. What happens if you carelessly walk on a wet floor? That's right you could slip and fall down and get hurt. This kind of sign warns you to slow down and be careful.

There's another kind of sign that points us to things. Here's a sign from the highway down around Cincinnati. It shows the road making three forks and telling us we can get to 7 different places. These are my favorite kinds of signs because they tell me what's coming ahead so I can be prepared to make sure I know which way to go.

So, today we have the very scary story of how God once tested a man named Abraham. God told Abraham to sacrifice his only son, Isaac. At the last moment before Abraham killed Isaac God said STOP! God then provided a Lamb for the sacrifice. Sacrificing is what ancient people did because they thought it made God happy... In the Bible stories can sometimes be signs. This scary story of how Abraham almost killed his son is a sign that points us to Jesus.

Jesus was the sacrifice that takes away all of our sins. Jesus was also God's only son and God did not spare him, but allowed Jesus to die on a cross for you and for me. After three days, God raised Jesus from the dead to give us another sign. The sign of the empty tomb means that just like Jesus we too will be raised from the dead and we will all go to heaven to live forever with God and with all of God's children.

Let's thank God for all the signs in our lives... Dead God, we thank you for giving us signs that warn us when danger is near. We thank you for signs that tell us which way we should go. Mostly we thank you for all the stories in the Bible that are really signs that point us to our Savior Jesus. Help us to live in faith and to trust the signs you give us of your love every day. Amen.

• **SCRIPTURE READING: Genesis 21:1-3; 22:1-14**

P: Our scripture reading is from the Book of Genesis, Chapters 21 & 22.

C: Glory to you O Lord.

21 The Lord dealt with Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did for Sarah as he had promised. ²Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the time of which God had spoken to him. ³Abraham gave the name Isaac to his son whom Sarah bore him.

22 After these things God tested Abraham. He said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” ²He said, “Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains that I shall show you.” ³So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac; he cut the wood for the burnt offering, and set out and went to the place in the distance that God had shown him. ⁴On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place far away. ⁵Then Abraham said to his young men, “Stay here with the donkey; the boy and I will go over there; we will worship, and then we will come back to you.” ⁶Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. So the two of them walked on together. ⁷Isaac said to his father Abraham, “Father!” And he said, “Here I am, my son.” He said, “The fire and the wood are here, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” ⁸Abraham said, “God himself will provide the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.” So the two of them walked on together. ⁹When they came to the place that God had shown him, Abraham built an altar there and laid the wood in order. He bound his son Isaac, and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. ¹⁰Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to kill his son.

¹¹But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven, and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” ¹²He said, “Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.” ¹³And Abraham looked up and saw a ram, caught in a thicket by its horns. Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. ¹⁴So Abraham called that place “The Lord will provide”; as it is said to this day, “On the mount of the Lord it shall be provided.”

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

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

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

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- **SERMON**

Pastor Mel Musser

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the perfect sacrifice, Jesus Christ our Savior and lord, amen.

When I talk to teachers, they almost always say they dislike the standardized tests that are mandated by the Federal Government. I've heard many times the lament that all they have time for is studying for the test. Yet, tests are an important part of learning. Children know when a test is coming. They prepare for it by reading their textbooks and going over their notes from class. When I was in school, I had very mixed feelings about taking tests. When I hadn't studied, I hated them, but when I felt well prepared, I actually likes them. During those times I felt like I was proving or showing my teacher just how much I had learned.

That's exactly what's happening in our story of the near sacrifice of Isaac from today's text. The writer of the story comes right out and tells us plainly that God was testing Abraham. This is the same man who was also called Abram and who was called by God to leave his homeland and his extended family to go to a land that God said he would show him. The amazing thing about Abram was that he did as God asked and packed up his camels and his immediate family and left the land of Ur for a destination unknown, at least it was unknown to Abram.

Along the journey Abram's trust in God waivered and he presented his wife, Sarai

* Please stand if able

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as his sister in order to avoid being killed by some hormone crazed Egyptians. Apparently, Sarai was very beautiful... Anyway, this is the same Abraham who laughed when the Angel of God announced he and Sarai would have a child in their old age. While waiting for this promised offspring, once again Abram's faith faltered and he fathered a child with Sarai's handmaid, Hagar. That child was named Ishmael and went on to be the Father of the Islamic Faith. So, in at least two well known examples, Abraham's faith or trust in God had failed spectacularly.

As our text says, "After all these things..." we come to the present text before us today, where we find Abraham once again facing God's testing of his faith. That's what this whole story is about. Yes, the test could have ended in an extremely gruesome way if Abraham had carried out the original command of God, but he knew all along God would somehow, somehow, still be true to his promise. This time there's no doubt about Abraham's trust in God. We don't have to speculate; the clues are right there in the text itself. After packing up the donkey, taking two of his best servants, and of course Isaac as well, they departed early in the morning on their three-day journey. Once Abraham sees the place God identified as the place for the sacrifice, he tells the servants to stay with the donkey while he and Isaac go on ahead to worship. The exact words recorded from

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Abraham are: “Stay here with the donkey; the boy and I will go over there; we will worship, and then we will come back to you.” Did you notice Abraham said **we will return?** He seemed pretty sure that either God would stop him from making Isaac the sacrifice or that if he did indeed kill Isaac, that God would bring him back to life. One option I’m certain Abraham rejected was that God would allow Abraham to carry out the sacrifice and Isaac would be lost forever. God’s promise had been so emphatic. Abraham’s legacy would begin and go through Isaac and not any other offspring. So, Abraham trusted God to provide. That’s exactly what happened. God did provide. At the last possible moment God intervened and provided the perfect Ram for the sacrifice of worship.

Abraham passed the testing of his faith in God! I’m not certain I would have passed that test. I mean sacrificing my only son just to show God how much I love Him... My family means everything to me, and I would no more think about killing any one of them than I would contemplate killing myself. It would be unthinkable! Yet that’s exactly what God required of Abraham. Jesus put it another way when He was walking around the towns and countryside’s of Judea and the Galilee. I hear the words of Jesus, “WHOEVER LOVES FATHER OR MOTHER, WHOEVER LOVES SON OR DAUGHTER MORE THAN ME IS NOT WORTHY OF ME” (Mt. 10:37), and I stumble. We’re so trained to do

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everything for our kids. We provide for them. We direct and guide them. We save for them. We protect them. We enjoy them. We sign them up for sports teams and other activities. We help them get their first job. Isn't that what parents are supposed to do? Yes, but Abraham's test still tests us too. We have all said on occasion, "God is important to me," but here we are confronted with the truth that God doesn't want to be just "important"; God wants to be most important – more important than job, more important than school, more important than boyfriend or girlfriend, more important than spouse, more important than even the little bundles of joy we bring home from the hospital. We are each tested to see if we can even keep the First Commandment. The bad news is we all fail that test, miserably...

How could Abraham do it? Where did he get this DEEP TRUST in God? Only in one way; by walking closely with the Lord and clinging in faith to, and trusting in, God's promises. God had trained Abraham to trust his Word, and so deep was his trust that in the book of Hebrews the Holy Spirit tells us that Abraham was going to slay his son, fully believing that God was simply going to raise his son back to life (Heb. 11:17-19). In the end, there was no need to kill Isaac. In God's eyes the sacrifice had been made. As dear as Isaac was, in Abraham's heart the LORD was his treasure, and exceeding great reward (Gen. 15:1).

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God may well, in his infinite wisdom, come and test some of you, my dear church family. In fact, some of you are undergoing tests of faith even as we speak. I'm certain God isn't asking anyone today to literally kill their only child, but we all undergo testing of our faith in God in many other ways. Will you stand? Will you walk with humble yet strong faith in your God as did Abraham? Or will you toss in the towel, angry at God and complaining, "This is too hard!" I pray it's the first choice, because that's the path of blessing. To walk the path of Abraham you first have to know God through his Word, Jesus Christ. God doesn't call us to merely have an intellectual relationship with him, but rather, into a deep personal trusting and loving relationship. So, walk with him closely – daily, not occasionally. Come to his HOLY MOUNTAIN, that is, come to his Church to be strengthened with Word and Sacrament. And as you do, it will be provided – a deeper trust that can stand when the day of testing comes. Once again, I'm reminded of the words of Jesus who said, "But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. (Matt. 6:33 NRS)"

God will provide. That's the really good news for today. God will provide the faith and the trust, but it comes through testing. The more your faith is tested the stronger it gets. It's sort of like doing sit ups. When you first start out doing sit

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ups your abs hurt. It's pretty painful to move for a couple of days, but if you keep at it, pretty soon those muscles start to get stronger. Before you know it, your able to do 50 or 100 sit ups without much pain. Our faith works sort of like that. The more it gets tested the more it hurts, but the more it grows stronger, until the day comes when trouble hits and you brush it aside because you know God will provide.

All those earlier stories about Abram in the book of Genesis show us the many times when his faith was tested and he showed glimmers of true faith, but he still failed. In all those previous tests Abraham learned to trust God and God's promises. When I missed some questions on tests in school, I didn't throw in the towel and quit. I learned from my mistakes and tried harder the next time. That's what we're called to do when God tests our faith. When we fall or fail, know you are already forgiven, get up and try again. In the testing you're growing and learning that God can in fact be trusted and God will in fact provide everything you need for today.

May God's testing of your faith make you stronger in your faith and in trusting God for everything. May we place God as the number one thing in our lives so that we do in fact seek first His Kingdom here on earth before and above all things. May God bless our failed attempts with second chances and forgiveness

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and with his biggest surprise of all, Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son whom God did not withhold, but offered Him up as our perfect sacrifice for all that we are unable to accomplish. Thanks be to God for our Savior, Jesus Christ and to Him be Glory and Praise now and forever. AMEN!

Silence may be kept for meditation...

- **SPECIAL MUSIC**

- * **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**

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

A brief silence.

L: We confess that we rarely have any idea what true sacrifice looks like. We give of our surplus, when it's convenient, and hope that it is enough. Teach us to give with wide-open hearts that risk, rather than protective stinginess cloaked in a flimsy assurance of security. Faithful God,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: Loving Creator, you do not ask that we slaughter animals to appease you, but rather that we responsibly steward all the riches and resources of your creation. Forgive our missteps and help show us how we can be part of caring for this beautiful planet. Faithful God,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: Lord, there are many in this world who suffer from the threat of abuse and maltreatment by those more powerful than themselves. Shepherd them with your love, lead them to rescue, and use all of us to bring about a society where such oppression by the rich is neither persistent nor tolerated. Faithful God,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: Lord, your presence is balm to those who suffer illness or long for wholeness. Feed them on your promises and surround them with your healing, especially... Faithful God,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: For all your faithful children who have gone forward to pave the way, so that we might worship without fear of persecution, we give you thanks. Shine their light ever before us as we strive to continually follow you. Faithful God,

C: Hear our prayer.

Here other petitions may be offered.

L: Your word is life and your promises are real, O God. Sustain us and use us as the living answers to our prayers and the prayers of others, strengthening us by your spirit and drawing us close to your Son, Jesus Christ.

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.

* Please stand if able

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*** 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. Faithful Lord, you have given us so much. You have put us first, and have loved us unconditionally. Accept these gifts that we return to you as a sign of our love for you and for your creation. In the name of Jesus 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

*** SENDING BLESSING**

P: People of God, you are Christ's body, bringing new life to a suffering world. The holy Trinity, † one God, bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

* **SENDING HYMN**

“Faith of Our Fathers”

LBW 500



1 Faith of our fa - thers, liv - ing still in spite of dun - geon,
2 The mar - tyrs, chained in pris - ons dark, were still in heart and
3 Faith of our fa - thers! We will love both friend and foe in



fire, and sword. Oh, how our hearts beat high with joy
con - science free; and blest would be their chil - dren's fate
all our strife; pro - claim thee too, as love knows how,

Refrain



when-e'er we hear that glo - rious word.
if they, like them, should die for thee. Faith of our fa - thers,
by sav - ing word and faith - ful life.



ho - ly faith, we will be true to thee till death.

* **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**

“Nothing Is Impossible”

Roxanne Groff

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Scripture readings for next Sunday, September 26th
 Genesis 27:1-4, 15-23; 28:10-17

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 Worship Assistants and Staff

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



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.

SAVE THE DATE!

Trinity Fall Festival: October 24th from 4:00 to 6:30 pm

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

- * Please stand if able
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all prepackaged from the Concordia True Vine company. This is a safe way to stay connected to your brothers and sisters in Christ.

This Week @ Trinity – September 19 thru September 26, 2021

Sun, September 19 10:30 am Worship Service
Tue, September 21 *Newsletter Article Deadline*
Wed, September 22 6:30 pm Confirmation Class
Fri, September 24 3:30 pm FISH Choice Food Pantry
Sun, September 26 10:30 am Worship Service

October Newsletter Deadline: Tuesday, September 21.

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