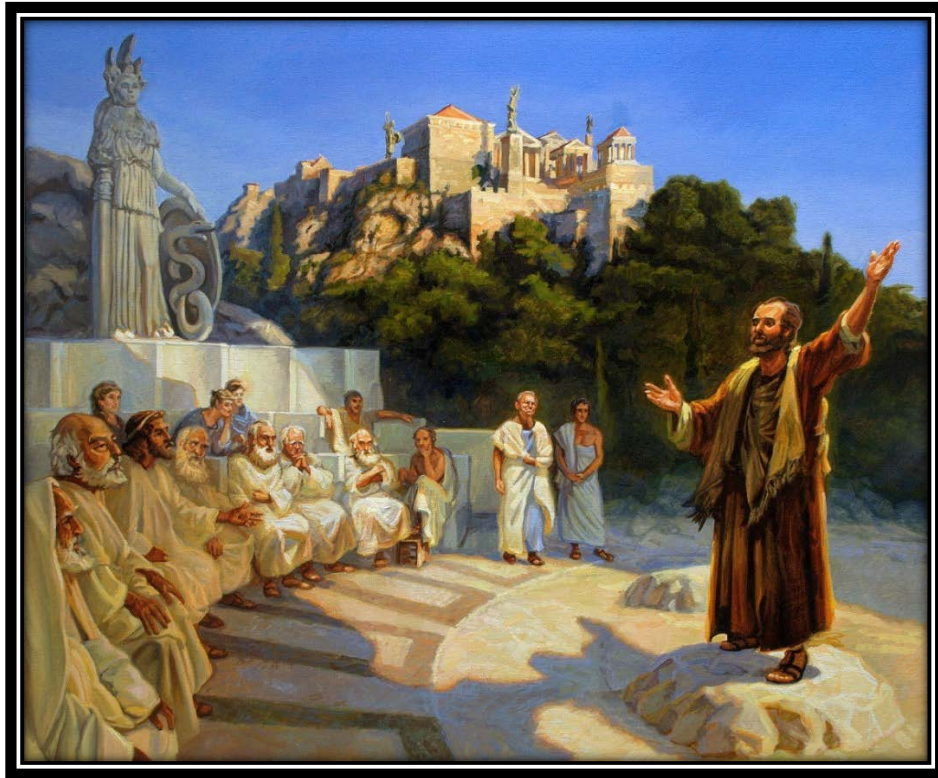


A Mission Congregation of the ELCA
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
P. O. Box 64 - 8520 Oakes Rd - Pittsburg, Ohio 45358



Acts 17:16-31
May 15, 2022



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



- **Prelude**

Darrell Fryman

- **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: Forgiving God,

C: We spend so much of our time doubting you, doubting ourselves, failing to place our trust in you. Our lack of faith causes us to stumble, and when we fall we fall far. Forgive us our sin and lift us so that we can rise to the challenge of carrying out your mission. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

P: God is merciful and just. God offers forgiveness for all who ask it. Receive now the entire forgiveness of all your sins and walk with the power of the Holy Spirit, for the sake of Jesus.

C: Amen.

- * **HYMN OF PRAISE**

“Blessed Assurance”

ELW 638



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



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

Refrain



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



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

* Please stand if able

- Please be seated

May 15, 2022

Page 2 of 17

*** 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.**

*** KYRIE**

A: In peace let us pray to the Lord.

C: **Lord have mercy.**

A: For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

C: **Lord have mercy.**

A: For the peace of the whole world, for the well being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

C: **Lord have mercy.**

A: For this Holy House, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

C: **Lord have mercy.**

A: Help, save, and defend us, gracious Lord.

C: **Amen.**

*** PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: Let us pray... God of all wisdom, Paul knew how to sit with people in their own reality before bringing them along the journey of the story of Christ. Teach us to honor people's journeys with grace and respect.

C: **Amen.**

- **CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

Theme: Knowing God

Materials: foil-wrapped chocolate Easter eggs

Scripture: Acts 17:22-31

Good morning girls and boys! It's really great to see you again after my vacation... We had a wonderful time, but it's really good to be back here and see all of you. It seems like we should celebrate... I know let's put out some Christmas decorations... "Is this the time of year we put out Santa Claus? Frosty the Snowman?" No! It's May, and everyone knows we put out those decorations in December! "When do we eat chocolate eggs? Is now the time?" No! We ate those at Easter, which we celebrated a few weeks ago. I have to admit that I'm a little confused... Is Easter about chocolate eggs? Is there more to the meaning of Easter than finding and eating chocolate eggs? Yes, of course there is! What is Easter all about? Easter is the story of Jesus dying and then rising from the dead, which we sing about in Easter hymns like, "Christ the Lord is Risen Today."

And what about Christmas? That's confusing, too. Is Christmas celebrating winter with Frosty the Snowman? Is Christmas about this jolly fellow we call Santa Claus? No, it is about the birth of a baby, the baby Jesus. What was so special about this baby? What did this baby teach us? Jesus taught us to love one another and treat others as we would like to be treated. And that's something to celebrate because that is what following Jesus is all about.

In our Bible story for today Saint Paul shows the people of the ancient city of Athens that their worship of other man-made gods was false and that the living God of heaven and earth is the one true God who gives us all life. The people were worshipping things like Santa Clause and the Easter Bunny, but didn't know about Jesus or our Father in heaven. I'm sure happy that we all know the difference between those false gods and our real Father in Heaven and His Son, Jesus Christ, our savior.

I wanted to give all of you an Easter Egg, but they were all gone. I have one of my favorite candies for you though. Here's a Werther's caramel. Have a great week.

Let's pray... Dear God, thank you for Saint Paul and his wisdom in sharing his insights and wisdom. Thank you for all the saints who have shared the faith all the way from Saint Paul to our own families. Thank you for our Church family who remind us every day about your love for us and helping us to know you. Amen.

• **SCRIPTURE READING: Acts 17:16-31**

P: Our scripture reading for this day is from the book of Acts, the 17th chapter.

C: Glory to you O Lord.

¹⁶While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was deeply distressed to see that the city was full of idols. ¹⁷So he argued in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and also in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there. ¹⁸Also some Epicurean and Stoic philosophers debated with him. Some said, “What does this babbler want to say?” Others said, “He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign divinities.” (This was because he was telling the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.) ¹⁹So they took him and brought him to the Areopagus and asked him, “May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? ²⁰It sounds rather strange to us, so we would like to know what it means.” ²¹Now all the Athenians and the foreigners living there would spend their time in nothing but telling or hearing something new.

²²Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, “Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. ²³For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, ‘To an unknown god.’ What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. ²⁴The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, ²⁵nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. ²⁶From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, ²⁷so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. ²⁸For ‘In him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we too are his offspring.’ ²⁹Since we are God’s offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. ³⁰While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, ³¹because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”

P: This is the Word 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 Son of God, our risen Savior, Jesus the Christ, amen.

It's good to be back home after taking a long overdue vacation. We went on a cruise and stopped at Jamaica, the Grand Cayman Island, and in Cozumel Mexico. We did some sight seeing and had a great time relaxing onboard the biggest ship I've ever been on. We took a lot of pictures and made a lot of memories we will never forget.

In our scripture reading for this morning Saint Paul has some free time while in the Greek city of Athens. He was in Athens waiting for his missionary colleagues, Timothy and Silas, to arrive . Athens was the home of Plato, Aristotle, and Socrates, as well as many other philosophers. It had formerly been the cradle of Western civilization and the birthplace of democracy. By the time Paul visited the city, Athens was 400 years past its prime. Paul did what anyone visiting such a historic city might do if they had a few days to spare before continuing his missionary journey, he became a tourist. Paul visited all the historical places and noticed all the altars that had been built to honor and worship their Greek and now increasingly Roman gods. As the apostle walked around the city he saw the gods of Athens, the idols that were being worshipped. One of the ancient writers tells us

that at this time there were 30,000 gods in Athens! Many of these statues have survived. With a simple Google search you can see copies of them as samples of ancient art. Paul recognized these weren't merely objects of art, but were actually gods being worshipped by the people of Athens.

I can't even imagine having 30,000 gods. How in the world did they keep them all straight? That's like having almost 100 separate religious holiday celebrations every day! If you tried to appease each and every god, there would simply be no time to fit them all in. I know some people don't like it if we even go longer than one hour on a Sunday. Imagine the time it would take just to thank each and every god for their blessings. I'm pretty sure it would take over an hour every day... In one single temple, the Pantheon, the Greeks had statues to 12 of the most popular Greek gods.

I wonder how many gods we worship on a daily basis today. I know people who have developed a permanent curvature of their spine as a result of praying to their cell phone, tablet, or computer screens all day and half the night long. I've had times in my life when I put my career and my job, ahead of everything else. Lots of people fall into that trap of worshipping their jobs and careers. I've also been guilty of putting my family, my wife, my children, and grandchildren first in my life. I know I'm not alone in that particular idol worship either... I could go

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

on and on, but I'm pretty sure you get my point. We might not build temples and erect statues to our gods, but we worship them just the same.

Polls have shown the fastest growing and now the largest demographic when asked about their religion or faith is Spiritual But Not Religious (SBNRs). SBNRs now comprise over 24 percent of the population. That's slightly larger than the Catholic Church in America! I've been thinking about our friends and neighbors who identify as SBNRs a lot lately. At first I felt a sense of outrage that so many were falling away from my beloved Church. Now, as I've listened to Saint Paul, I noticed his approach. He too started out with a sense of "deep distress" Luke tells us. What Paul did in response to that distress is what we can all learn from. I might have gone out in front of those folks and tried to convince them how wrong they were for worshipping false gods. That's not how Paul approached the issue. Instead of pointing out the error of their ways, he compliments them on their religious fervor. He tells them he's noticed all the wonderful tributes they have to all their gods and so he knows they must be very religious people. He then begins to talk about this one statue to an "Unknown God." He uses one of their own religious symbols to include them into the living almighty God's story. It seems totally appropriate to me that Paul would be able to use one of the most, if not the most, insignificant of all the 30,000 Greek and Roman gods in vogue at that time to

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

make his point and to include so many people into God's Story.. God always chooses the least and the least likely to use in miraculous and mighty ways. So, this "Unknown God" becomes known through the preaching of this man Paul.

If I and all of us can learn something from Paul, it's this. Let's not be quite so quick to judge others, but to listen to them and then tell our story or rather God's Story through us. For example, in the case of all those Spiritual But Not Religious folks, perhaps instead of seeing them as fleeing our beloved Church, maybe we can reach them by complimenting them on their search for meaning and purpose in life. Then you can open a conversation about how the living God became a real life flesh and blood human being to guide us, to be an example for us, and most importantly, to give his life for us out of love and out of God's great and amazing grace. We can tell them how God has given us a purpose and meaning for life. That we might worship Him and serve Him by serving our neighbors and the least of these our brothers and sisters. You see if someone admits to being spiritual then we share something in common with them. We're all seeking life's meaning and a purpose that makes us want to get up out of bed yet another day... We can build on that foundation and possibly convince them that our God does in fact fill that emptiness they feel in their lives. Spiritual But Not Religious people are in really seekers. They know there's more to life than what

meets the eye, but they haven't made the commitment to any one specific set of doctrines or beliefs. On face value alone I would say these folks are ripe for the picking. They're probably even in your own family. I'm not asking you to stand up on the Mars Hill in Athens, that site named in honor of the Greek god Ares, the god of war, to discuss religious doctrine, but we can all build up someone we already know and love who also admits or by their actions show us they're Spiritual, But Not Religious. It might even be your own children... If any of you have already had this kind of discussion with someone in your family or circle of friends, I'd like to hear how it went. If you aren't too embarrassed, please talk to me about your experience. Maybe I'll learn from what you're doing and maybe we can both do better at talking about our marvelous God in the future.

May the spirit of our God, who may be unknown to so many, stir us up to boldly talk about our faith and our love of the one creator God without shame and without worrying about what others will think of us. O God of Israel and God over all the universe, help us know you and love you enough to talk about where your story and my story come together. Help us to make Christ Known in every thought word and deed. 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: We pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

L: Your servant, Paul, is a model for approaching the other and sharing the gospel in a spirit of generosity and openness. May we follow his lead and respectfully accompany those whom we serve, rather than preaching without listening or insisting that others agree with us. Risen Lord,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: We too are your offspring, O Lord, created in your very image to give glory to you. Forgive us when we try to re-create you in an image of our own choosing, for reasons which do not honor you, and return us to our true identity as your children. Risen Lord,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: There are fewer and fewer places like the Areopagus, where each may share their own experience and have their views heard and accepted. We are quick to judge, disqualify, and justify rather than opening ourselves to being transformed in the presence of one another. Expand our horizons to include more than just those who agree with us, and whom we consider part of us. Risen Lord,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: When assumptions and self-righteousness are released, healing can begin. Free us of all that holds us prisoner without our realizing it, and make us agents of your renewal. Bless today those whom we bring before you, especially... Risen Lord,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: We are a motley and diverse group, your saints. Thank you for making us different from one another, yet united in your love and redeemed by your salvation. Risen Lord,

C: Hear our prayer.

Here other petitions may be offered.

P: We have indeed received grace upon grace from you, loving God. Accept these our prayers and use them to transform hearts and lives. In Jesus' name we pray.

C: Amen.

*** OFFERING PRAYER**

While the congregation is still standing say:

P: You may place your offerings in the Offering plates provided at the back of the Sanctuary. For those worshipping with us from their vehicles, there is an offering basket located near the back door of the church. For those worshipping online if you go to our website, www.pitsburgtlc.org you can make your offering online.

P: So, let's pray for the offerings we receive this day.... In you we live and move and have our being, holy God. We can nothing apart from you. Even these gifts we offer were first granted to us through your grace and generosity. Accept these gifts teach us to continue your work as we meet people where they are. In Jesus' name we pray.

C: Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

*** 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.

*** THE PREFACE**

P: It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord. You bid your people cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast. Renew our zeal in faith and life, and bring us to the fullness of grace that belongs to the children of God. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

*** THE SANCTUS**

C: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might: Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

*** EUCHARISTIC PRAYER**

P: Holy, living, and loving God, we praise you for creating the heavens and the earth. We bless you for bringing Noah and his family through the waters of the flood, for freeing your people Israel from the bonds of slavery, and for sending your Son to be our Redeemer. We give you thanks for Jesus who, living among us, healed the sick, fed the hungry, and with a love stronger than death, gave his life for others.

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 life-giving death and glorious resurrection, we await your promised life for all this dying world. Breathe your Spirit on us and on this bread and cup: carry us in your arms from death to life, that we may live as your chosen ones, clothed in the righteousness of Christ. Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever.

C: Amen

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

*** THE LORD'S PRAYER**

P: We are united together by this heavenly food, which is the Body and Blood of our Savior Jesus Christ. 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.

*** INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

P: Too often we sit down to eat only with those that are like us. Jesus offers an extraordinary chance to participate in a meal that is shared by people of rich diversity. Come to the table, and as you receive the body and blood of Christ, recognize that you are part of the family of humanity.

• COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

During the distribution the minister says these words to each communicant:

P: At this time you may open the communion bread and partake of The Body of Christ, Given For You.

Now please open the wine and you may now partake of The Blood of Christ, Shed For You.

The communicant may say: Amen.

*** POST COMMUNION BLESSING**

P: May this Body and Blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, strengthen, keep, and unite us, now and forever,

C: Amen.

*** POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

P: Let us pray... We give you thanks, gracious God, for we have feasted on the abundance of your house. Send us to bring good news and to proclaim your favor to all, strengthened with the richness of your grace in your Son, Jesus Christ.

C: Amen

• ANNOUNCEMENTS

*** SENDING BLESSING**

P: God, the Author of life, Christ, the living Cornerstone, and the life-giving Spirit of adoption, bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

*** SENDING HYMN “In Christ There Is No East or West” LBW 359**



1 In Christ there is no east or west, in him no south or north,
2 In Christ shall true hearts ev - 'ry-where their high com - mu - nion find;
3 Join hands, dis - ci - ples of the faith, what-e'er your race may be.
4 In Christ now meet both east and west, in him meet south and north;



but one com-mu - ni - ty of love through-out the whole wide earth.
his ser-vice is the gold-en cord close - bind - ing hu - man - kind.
All chil-dren of the liv - ing God are sure - ly kin to me.
all Christ-ly souls are one in him through-out the whole wide earth.

*** 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**

Darrell Fryman

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Scripture readings for next Sunday, May 22nd
Philippians 1:1-18a

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

May 15, 2022

Page 15 of 17

Trinity Worship Assistants and Staff

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

Health Tips for the Week
BODY: Stand up straight
MIND: Learn the history of your family
SPIRIT: Try writing a short poem

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.



-
- * Please stand if able
 - Please be seated

This Week @ Trinity –May 15 thru May 22 2022

Sun, May 15	10:30 am	Worship Service
	2:00 pm	Mother/Daughter/Friend Tea Party
Wed, May 18	8:30 am	GGMA Meeting
	6:00 pm	Finance Team Meeting
	7:00 pm	Trinity Council Meeting
Thurs, May 19	11:30 am	Ladies Luncheon at Whistle Stop, Ansonia
Fri, May 20	3:30 pm	FISH Choice Food Pantry
Sun, May 22	10:30 am	Worship Service

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.

NewsLetter
DEADLine Tuesday, May 24th

Trinity Contact Info

Pastor:	Mel Musser
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• Please be seated

May 15, 2022

Page 17 of 17