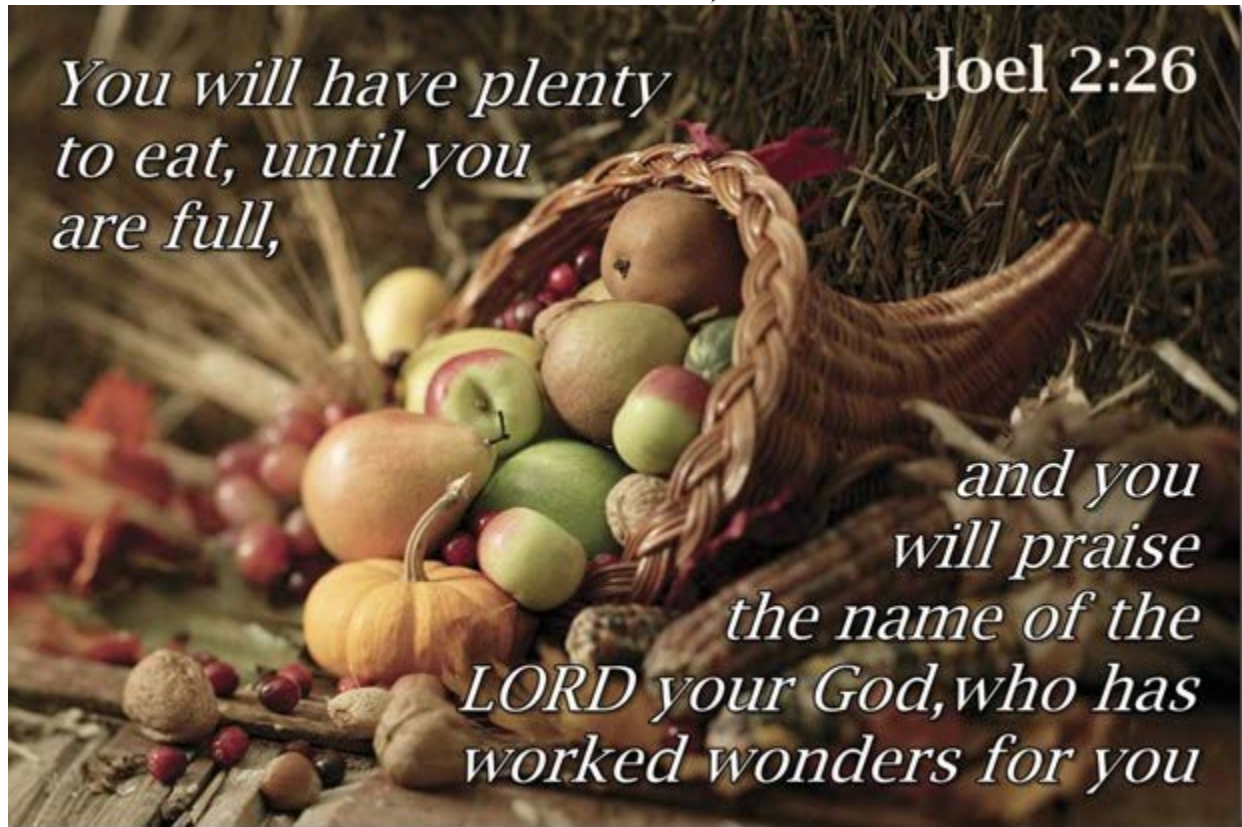


A Mission Congregation of the ELCA
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
P. O. Box 64 - 8520 Oakes Rd - Pittsburg, Ohio 45358

November 24, 2021



Thanksgiving Eve

- **Prelude**

by Roxanne Groff

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

- **Welcome**

- * **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: Faithful God,

C: Your promises have never wavered, and yet we are not always willing to believe them. We descend into our own despair, unable to see past our immediate concerns. We drag others down with us and live to complain and commiserate. We ignore the miracles right in front us. Forgive us for living such small lives, O Lord, and restore in us the wonder of what it is to be your people. Amen.

P: God is faithful; God is merciful; God does not hold our sins against us! For this we give you thanks, O Lord. Receive the assurance of your deliverance by the One who promised from of old to set us free, and who seeks and finds us to this very day. Alleluia! Amen.

* = Please stand if able

• = Please be seated

* **ENTRANCE HYMN “Give Thanks With a Grateful Heart” LBW 245**



Give thanks with a grate - ful heart, give thanks to the Ho - ly One,



give thanks be - cause he's giv - en Je - sus Christ, his Son.



Give thanks with a grate - ful heart, give thanks to the Ho - ly One,



give thanks be - cause he's giv - en Je - sus Christ, his Son.



And now let the weak say, “I am strong,” let the poor say, “I am



rich,” be - cause of what the Lord has done for us. And



now let the weak say, “I am strong,” let the poor say, “I am



rich,” be - cause of what the Lord has done for us. Give thanks!

* **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.

* = Please stand if able

• = Please be seated

*** 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... Almighty God our Father, your generous goodness comes to us new every day. By the work of your Spirit lead us to acknowledge your goodness, give thanks for your benefits, and serve you in willing obedience, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

• SCRIPTURE READING: Joel 2:21-27

P: The Scripture reading is from the Book of Joel, the 2nd chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord (*Spoken*)

²¹Do not fear, O soil;
be glad and rejoice,

for the Lord has done great things!

²²Do not fear, you animals of the field,
for the pastures of the wilderness are green;

the tree bears its fruit,
the fig tree and vine give their full yield.

²³O children of Zion, be glad
and rejoice in the Lord your God;
for he has given the early rain for your vindication,
he has poured down for you abundant rain,
the early and the later rain, as before.

²⁴The threshing floors shall be full of grain,
the vats shall overflow with wine and oil.

²⁵I will repay you for the years
that the swarming locust has eaten,

* = Please stand if able

• = Please be seated

the hopper, the destroyer, and the cutter,
my great army, which I sent against you.

²⁶You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied,
and praise the name of the Lord your God,
who has dealt wondrously with you.

And my people shall never again be put to shame.

²⁷You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel,
and that I, the Lord, am your God and there is no other.

And my people shall never again be put to shame.

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ.** (*Spoken*)

• **SERMON**

Pr Mel Musser

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord of the

Harvest, amen.

I complain about Daylight Savings Time a lot. I mean I used to, but I'll try not to complain about that again. At least not until next spring when we "spring ahead" and I lose an hour of precious sleep once again. I don't like losing that hour, but what if you went to sleep on Saturday, March 13th and when you woke up to the smell of a fresh pot of coffee and it was March 22nd? Something like that actually happened back in the year 1582 when Pope Gregory VIII decided to reform the Julian Calendar. His goal was to make the calendar correspond to the lunar cycle and adjust for the gap that accumulated over the many years since back then they didn't add one extra day every four years as we do now to adjust for "Leap Year." Nobody actually lost any days from their lifespan, but that would have been an incredible adjustment to make. It sort of makes me feel guilty for

* = Please stand if able

• = Please be seated

complaining about the loss of a single hour of sleep that they give me back in the fall each year... Pope Gregory is remembered to this day as we call our modern calendar the Gregorian Calendar. Initially Gregory's calendar only applied to the Catholic Church, but eventually it was adopted universally and is the calendar we use today.

The 10-day gap in 1582 was a paper loss only, but periodically, we feel that we've actually lost time. I personally feel that we've lost valuable time because of the Pandemic. When we were restricted to our homes and couldn't even visit our loved ones no matter how sick they were, that time was lost forever. Then there was that time when I wasn't paying close attention to where I was driving on I 675 coming home after dropping Melanie off at her house in Fairborn. Instead of turning onto I 70 West, I jumped the gun and turned onto I 70 East. That little mistake cost me almost an hour as I had to go all the way to Springfield before I could get turned around. In all of these cases we might feel like we've either lost time or that time was taken from us.

The prophet Joel and his fellow citizens of Judah knew the experience of lost time too. They had seen a massive swarm of locusts sweep across their fields, devouring not only the crops they counted on for their own nourishment, but every shred of grain that might have fed their flocks. While we don't have details of the infestation, we do know that during a similar locust invasion in Palestine in 1915,

* = Please stand if able
● = Please be seated

the insatiable insects plowed across the ground at a rate of 400-600 feet per day, devouring every scrap of vegetation in their path. What's more, the locust infestation had long lasting effects because they even ate the seed crops as well. Joel and his compatriots viewed the plague as divine judgment, and it caused them to turn toward God. Their repentance resulted in the ending of the infestation, along with God's promise to restore the land. Thus, in our text, God says abundant rain will fall and their threshing floors will be full of grain again. Then God says, "I will repay you for the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the hopper, the destroyer, and the cutter, my great army, which I sent against you." How can God repay us for our lost time? That's a pretty hefty promise. Of course, God wasn't saying he would actually give them back the time the locust took; God was not giving them a do-over like in the old Groundhog Day movie where a quirky weatherman is able to relive the same day until he gets the girl. No, the sense of what God is saying is, "I will give you back what you lost in crops and vegetation, in your sense of well-being, and in your relationship with me." The actual time lost, however, was gone for good.

Is lost time actually lost? Can we actually say time has been taken from us when, in fact, we did live those days, even if it was in circumstances we didn't like or that halted or changed the momentum of our lives? John Lennon famously said, "Life is what happens while you're busy making other plans," but it's also what

* = Please stand if able
● = Please be seated

happens when you're enduring forced downtime, as we've all experienced over these past 2 years or when we're stuck in that traffic jam that delays your homecoming or when it's you lying in the bed sick, or when you're contemplating about what the "locusts" have eaten out of your life.

The truth is I don't like down time, but I've learned to use that downtime to learn and to redirect my life so that the "locusts" don't get the last word. During the pandemic I learned how to edit and produce videos for Sunday morning worship and to produce videos for skits and monologs to use during Advent and Lent. These videos have been seen and enjoyed by folks from our local area all the way to Virginia and Florida. Our small church had a great outreach all because of how the Pandemic forced us into a period of downtime, which otherwise might have just been frittered away.

As I approached the writing of this Homily for Thanksgiving Eve the Holy Spirit guided me to be positive and bring you Good News. It's not really "Good News" to stand up here and tell you, "You should be thankful, or more thankful..." that just gives you something more to do and to worry about. "Am I being thankful enough?" How much thanks do I need to show? If I just say, "thanks be to God," and then move on to cooking the turkey and stuffing, is that enough? With all this work to do is my thanks even genuine? No, telling you or reminding you to be thankful is just another law. It's not the Gospel.

* = Please stand if able
● = Please be seated

So, here's your good news for this Thanksgiving. Be not afraid. The longtime of suffering is coming to an end. You have been chosen by God as his beloved child and God will restore you in His good time. Christ is your Savior, and you are included as one of His very own. Jesus will never abandon you nor leave you alone. When you are experiencing periods of being lost or losing time, God is always right by your side, just a prayer away.

This Thanksgiving, I pray you can savor every delicious moment. May you find the time to just be a child of God and soak up every last second. Joel noticed that the soil, the animals, and the trees all rejoice in the Glory of God. That's what Thanksgiving looks like. Every part of creation rejoices at God's love and mercy. This thanksgiving Holiday I'm going to try to be thankful, not just for all the goodies and blessings God sends my way, but to be thankful for God Himself. Why do I deserve a God who takes notice of this poor excuse for a child? The plain truth is I don't deserve such a great and merciful God and neither do you, but the tremendous good news is that we don't have to be worthy of God or God's love. God loves us because that's who God is and what God does.

God's grace to you this Thanksgiving Day! As the prophet Joel says, "You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied!" For that and for so much more I am truly thankful. Amen.

Silence for reflection may follow.

-
- * = Please stand if able
 - = Please be seated

* **SPECIAL MUSIC**

* **NICENE CREED**

The Nicene Creed is said on all festivals and on Sundays in the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter.

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: God whose giving knows no ending, you invite the whole world to your table of mercy. Hear us as we pray for the church, the world, and everyone in need.

A brief silence.

L: God, you give all people a place at the table. Nurture and encourage campus ministries, new congregations, and workplace chaplaincies. Support all parts of the church that meet people where they are and offer accompaniment through daily challenges and joys. God, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

L: You give nourishment to the birds of the air and the lilies of the fields. Sustain all creatures who rely on the earth for sustenance. Water parched ground, dry flooded fields, temper heat waves and frosts, and give sunlight and shade. God, in your mercy,

* = Please stand if able

● = Please be seated

C: hear our prayer.

L: God, you give wisdom to your people. Enlighten all leaders. Inspire and guide our president (*Joe Biden*), our governor (*Mike DeWine*), all our local leaders, and all who represent us in our government. Give them patience and perspective to choose wisely for our common good. God, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

L: God, you give nourishment to those who hunger. Bring poverty and food insecurity to an end. Give dignity and adequate employment to those who are unemployed and underemployed. Sustain us all at your welcoming banquet of love and justice. God, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

L: God, you give community to those who are lonely. Be with our biological families, our chosen families, and our church family as we gather for the Thanksgiving holiday. Send your compassionate presence to those who are lonely, those who are separated or estranged from their families, and those whose loved ones have died. God, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

L: God, you give a feast of endless thanksgiving. We are grateful for the saints gathered at your table who have gone before us. Unite us with them whenever we give thanks to you. God, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: God, your welcome is wider than we can imagine. Receive our prayers for the sake of your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us.

C: Amen.

*** SHARING OF THE PEACE**

The Sharing of Christ's Peace which was started as the people entered the Sanctuary is now shared between the congregation and the Pastor.

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.

* = Please stand if able

• = Please be seated

P: So, let's pray for the offerings we receive this day.... Faithful Lord, you have given us everything we could ever need, even when we have a hard time seeing it or trusting in your promises. Take these gifts we now offer, presented to you in faith, and use them for your mighty work in the world.

C: Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

*** 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; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. 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 God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal: surrounded by evil and bordered by death we appeal to you, our Sovereign, our Wisdom, and our Judge. We praise you for Christ, who proclaimed your reign of peace and promised an end to injustice and harm.

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, the sacrifice of his life and death and the victory of his resurrection, we await with all the saints his loving redemption of our suffering world.

* = Please stand if able

● = Please be seated

P: Send your Spirit on these gifts of bread and wine and on all who share in the body and blood of your Son: teach us your mercy and justice, and make all things new in 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

*** 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: A feast of love is offered here for you and for all the saints.

• 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.

C: Amen.

* = Please stand if able

• = Please be seated

*** POST COMMUNION CANTICLE**



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



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



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



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

*** POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

P: Let us pray... Blessed Jesus, at this table, you have been for us both host and meal. Now send us forth to extend our tables and to share your gifts until that day when all feast together at your heavenly banquet.

C: Amen

• ANNOUNCEMENTS

*** SENDING BLESSING**

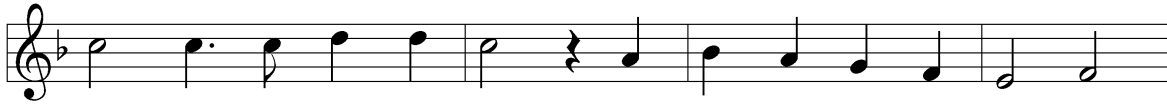
P: God, the beginning and the end, who has written your name in the book of life,
✠ bless and keep you in grace and peace from this time forth and forevermore.

C: Amen.

* **SENDING SONG**

“Now Thank We All Our God”

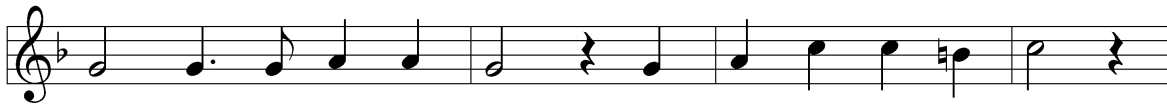
LBW 533



1 Now thank we all our God with hearts and hands and voic - es,
2 Oh, may this boun-teous God through all our life be near us,
3 All praise and thanks to God the Fa - ther now be giv - en,



who won-drous things has done, in whom his world re - joic - es;
with ev - er joy - ful hearts and bless - ed peace to cheer us,
the Son, and him who reigns with them in high - est heav - en,



who, from our moth - ers' arms, has blest us on our way
and keep us in his grace, and guide us when per - plexed,
the one e - ter - nal God, whom earth and heav'n a - dore;



with count-less gifts of love, and still is ours to - day.
and free us from all harm in this world and the next.
for thus it was, is now, and shall be ev - er - more.

* **DISMISSAL**

P: Until we gather again 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

Trinity Worship Assistants and Staff

Ministers	All the People of Trinity
Lector	
Acolyte	
Organist	Roxanne Groff
Parrish Nurse	PJ Musser
Custodian	Mark Groff
Secretary	Sharon Fourman
Flowers	

Pastor:	Mel Musser
Email:	pastor@pitsburgtlc.org
Cell Phone:	937-626-7100
Secretary:	Sharon Fourman
Email:	secretary@pitsburgtlc.org
Office Hours:	By Appointment
Office Phone:	937-692-5670
Website:	www.pitsburgtlc.org