

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



Revelation 4:1-11
August 8, 2021



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



* HYMN OF PRAISE

“How Firm A Foundation”

LBW 507



1 How firm a foun - da - tion, O saints of the Lord,
2 “Fear not, I am with you, oh, be not dis - mayed,
3 “When through fi - ery tri - als your path - way shall lie,
4 “Through - out all their life - time my peo - ple shall prove



is laid for your faith in his ex - cel - lent word!
for I am your God and will still give you aid;
my grace, all - suf - fi - cient, shall be your sup - ply.
my sov - 'reign, e - ter - nal, un - change - a - ble love;



What more can he say than to you he has said
I'll strength - en you, help you, and cause you to stand,
The flames shall not hurt you; I on - ly de - sign
and then, when gray hairs shall their tem - ples a - dorn,



who un - to the Sav - ior for ref - uge have fled?
up - held by my righ - teous, om - nip - o - tent hand.”
your dress to con - sume and your gold to re - fine.”
like lambs they shall still in my bo - som be borne.”

* 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... Heavenly Creator, We live in a world of increasing confusion and mixed messages. Show us clearly the path that you have set, the way that leads to you alone. In Jesus' name we pray,

C: Amen.

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

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- **CHILDREN’S MESSAGE**

Theme: God Is Awesome

Scripture: Revelation 4:1-11

Items Needed: Pictures of God’s Throne, A Crown, Jewels

Good morning! I’m so happy you are with us today. Do you know why I’m so happy? No, I didn’t win the lottery or miraculously have all my problems disappear... I’m happy because we get to come here and be in God’s presence. Do you know how awesome God is? God is so awesome we’re all included in God’s family and God wants to share his love with all of us. That’s why God invited you to come to Worship today. Did you know that you were personally invited by God to come and worship this morning? It’s true! You might have been drug here by your parents or Grandparents, but it was really God who asked you to come in the first place...

One of the things that makes our Worship so special and important is that when we worship all the angels and other beings in heaven also stop whatever they’re doing and worship too. In the Book of Revelation, that’s the very last book in the Bible, a man named John was invited to witness this heavenly worship. Most of what is written in that book describes the things he saw when he had his vision, that’s like a dream, of what goes on in heaven. Wouldn’t you like to know what heaven is like?

John says he saw the throne of God! I don’t think he actually saw God’s face, but he described a super bright light and the throne was surrounded by a rainbow. Do you remember any other stories from the Bible that talk about rainbows? That’s right, God made the rainbow after Noah and the flood as a sign that God would never again destroy people in that way. The rainbow is a sign of God’s promise to love us no matter how badly we sin. Do you know what else God’s throne room looks like? John says it’s very shiny, like very precious gems. Maybe like these in the picture...

I think John was one lucky man for getting to see inside the throne room of God. I hope I get to see it for myself someday. When we think about God we usually think about an old man, like a Father figure who takes us on his knee and gives the best hugs, but John saw a different kind of God. What he saw was so beautiful he could only use words for the most beautiful things he had ever seen to describe God. So, he wrote down that God looked like a rainbow and was made up of many beautiful jewels. Now that’s an awesome God!

Let’s pray... Awesome God, we love you because you first loved us. Help us to see you for the beautiful and loving God you truly are. Give us a glimpse into your heaven as we come to worship you here on earth. Amen.

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

- **SCRIPTURE READING: Revelation 4:1-11**

P: Our scripture reading for this day is from the Book of Revelation, Chapter 4.

C: Glory to you O Lord.

4 After this I looked, and there in heaven a door stood open! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.” ²At once I was in the spirit, and there in heaven stood a throne, with one seated on the throne! ³And the one seated there looks like jasper and carnelian, and around the throne is a rainbow that looks like an emerald. ⁴Around the throne are twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones are twenty-four elders, dressed in white robes, with golden crowns on their heads. ⁵Coming from the throne are flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and in front of the throne burn seven flaming torches, which are the seven spirits of God; ⁶and in front of the throne there is something like a sea of glass, like crystal. Around the throne, and on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: ⁷the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with a face like a human face, and the fourth living creature like a flying eagle.

⁸And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and inside. Day and night without ceasing they sing, “Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God the Almighty, who was and is and is to come.” ⁹And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to the one who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, ¹⁰the twenty-four elders fall before the one who is seated on the throne and worship the one who lives forever and ever; they cast their crowns before the throne, singing, ¹¹“You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”

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 Lamb who was slain, Jesus Christ, our Savior and our Lord, amen.

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

I really needed to read and study this passage from the Apocalypse of John this week. I mean it's been a pretty frustrating and busy week. I really needed to hear once again this description of Heaven and Heavenly Worship. With Covid on the attack again and my niece in Alabama and her husband both contracting this new Delta variant, as well as some here in our own congregation, this round of the Pandemic seems to be hitting even harder than it did last year, mostly for those who are not vaccinated. Add to that, my frustration with a certain furniture company who has promised us delivery of our new kitchen table and chairs since March and they keep scheduling delivery and then cancelling at the last minute or not even cancelling, just failing to show up. All this has my blood sugars on the rise and my iron levels on the run. Yes, life can get to the best of us and wear us down to the point of breaking...

That's why this reading from the 4th chapter of the book of Revelation came as such a breath of fresh air this week. I really needed to hear and visualize the how stunningly beautiful worshipping our great, almighty, and all knowing God can be. As I read all the commentaries about this chapter of Revelation, I kept hitting a dead end when it came to the Gospel and the Good News of Jesus Christ, until I received the call from Morris Furniture 1 hour before the scheduled delivery time saying they had to cancel yet again and there was no rescheduling because the

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table was damaged. That's when I went back to the text and re-read this wonderful description of heavenly worship. As angry and frustrated as I was, there before me I saw clearly those 24 elders and the four living creatures all worshipping God with their entire being. They weren't distracted by all the commotion of life. They simply cast down their golden crowns around that glassy sea and gave everything they had to the worship of their Lord and God. As I meditated on that amazing scene somehow my anger and frustration diminished, and I was filled with peace. My troubles seemed not so important in comparison to this mighty God with all the thunder, lightning, and rainbows...

I just kept thinking about how lucky John was to be invited into such an intimate gathering of God's inner circle, God's Heavenly Council. This is what the book of Revelation offers us today, a glimpse into heaven. I've had people tell me they can't read Revelation because it's just too scary. All the beasts and monsters, all the disasters that devastate the earth... Add to all this fantastic imagery all the interpretations of what this book means and how they claim it describes or predicts the end times. Pastors like John Haggay from San Antonio literally frightening people with his predictions of forth coming doom and gloom for all Christians, at least for those left behind. It's no wonder this book has been one that's either

shunned out of fear or studied for some piece of evidence that the end times are upon us.

I will tell you right up front; I believe the Book of Revelation was written in the late first or early 2nd century by a man names John who was writing to his Church family from a prison on the island of Patmos off the coast of Greece. John tells us from the beginning he was “In the Spirit” on the Lord’s Day when this revelation was given to him. In other words, Eldon you’ll appreciate this, John was asleep in Church during Worship on a Sunday when he saw this vision. That’s right, the Book of Revelation is the dream John had while he was asleep during the pastor’s sermon. Have you ever tried to describe a dream to your spouse, family or friends? It’s no wonder we have descriptions of seven headed beasts and famines that ravage the earth.

Actually, this book is a little more than just the superficial dream of an old man. If John was in fact exiled to the small island of Patmos and if he was also one of the elders of the Church in Ephesus, he probably wrote this document to his Church family back home. Since he was a prisoner, he knew all his letters would be opened and read by his captors before being allowed to be sent off the island. That’s why John wrote this book in a sort of code language. He was trying to get the letter past his guards so his Church family could read and learn from his

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experience. The codes for things like the beast were meant to be the Roman Empire. The people who originally heard or read this letter would have immediately known who or what the beast represented. John wasn't writing this letter to 21st century Christians, nor was he trying to give us some sort of secret code for how to interpret the signs of the end. We've imposed all of that onto the text.

So, then, let's take a closer look at this Heavenly scene. Before we can understand fully today's glimpse into heaven, let's look at the context of this worship in the throne room of God. So far in Revelation, there have been portions of this letter addressed to the seven churches in Asia. The final church addressed in chapter 3, just before our text for today, has Jesus standing at the door of the lukewarm Church of Laodicea. Jesus says to this congregation that he's standing at their door knocking and if they open the door to him, he will come into their Church and stay with them. (SLIDE) This scene is often misinterpreted as being addressed to each individual person. And if we only open the doors of our hearts and ask Jesus to be our Savior and our Lord, then we will be saved. That's clearly not what Jesus was saying to the Laodicean Church. His words were addressed to the entire congregation not to individuals. Once you understand that fact, then what comes next makes a whole lot more sense. In our text for today, John is

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invited through the open door into heaven to witness this incredible worship scene. The truth is, Christ has already opened the door to heaven, but we keep our earthly doors closed to his presence. How sad is that... How do we keep our doors closed to Jesus today at Trinity? Do we have barriers that keep Jesus out? When our worship practices emphasize our individual practices and piety, where it's just you and God or you and Jesus, we're keeping Jesus from coming into our Worship in a much more meaningful way. That is my earnest desire, for us to worship in such a way that we give up our selves as individuals and become one, even as the grains of wheat, once scattered on the hill become one bread, we are gathered from across this territory to become one people of God. We do that by eating of one loaf of bread and drinking from one cup of salvation which are the body and blood of our Savior, Jesus. In so doing we're removing our crowns, all our selfish, self-centered attitudes and ways and surrendering our entire bodies, minds, and souls to God our Father. Did you notice who was at the center of this worship scene? God is on His throne and everything else is around that throne. Humans are not at the center... You aren't at the center of God's throne, that place is reserved for God alone.

At this point we probably need to lighten things up a bit... Did you hear about the electrician who became a priest? He had a shocking revelation... I think sometimes we take ourselves and our life too seriously. Sometimes we just need to

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forget our troubles and cares and throw our crowns at the feet of the throne of God and abandon ourselves to the worship experience. I don't know about you, but my crown is too heavy and takes up so much of my energy just keeping it in place and protected from all the people who covet it or who try to tell me I'm wearing it incorrectly... Worshipping God rightly. We are finally able to safely remove our crowns and give them back to the one where they belong in the first place.

Thanks be to God for opening the door of heaven so we could get this glimpse of true, pure worship. May we continually examine our own Worship practices to find places where we are keeping our door closed to the presence of Jesus. May God bless you with your own invitation to come and worship even if it means dreaming during the sermon... May we never become lukewarm to the invitation of Jesus, but always stay open to experience His glorious presence right here in our little slide of heaven we call Trinity Lutheran Church. 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: When we are faced with difficulty, our first impulse is to escape. To a fantasy world, a place of denial, a state of anger. Stand firmly by us when we struggle, and give us the wings of your spirit when our faith falters. Gracious God,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: This world is not as you—and we—want it to be. Sadly, sin persists. Cruelty continues. Love does not yet appear to rule supreme. Show us your true and final vision for the universe, where the final word belongs to you, and salvation is the end of suffering. Gracious God,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: A storm is a frightening place to be, especially when we cannot be sure who or what will survive. Bring us through the tempests—both real and symbolic—of our days, sure in the knowledge that we shall be restored. Gracious God,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: We turn to you for healing, Lord. Where else are we to go? Your hand is swift to pardon and your arms to embrace. Surround us and those who need your special care today with mercy, especially... Gracious God,

C: Hear our prayer.

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

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L: Your saints worship you continually around your throne of glory. Incline our ears that we might catch a stray note or two, a promise of the eternal life which awaits us at your side. Forgive us when our Worship is only half hearted and revive us by your glory! Gracious God,

C: Hear our prayer.

Here other petitions may be offered.

L: We thank you, loving God for the gift of marriage. We ask you to sustain and sanctify all marriages, especially the newly married Morgan and Caleb Custer. Bless them with a long and happy married life so they can be witnesses to your glory. Gracious God.

C: Hear our prayer.

P: By your will everything exists—ourselves included. Encourage us to trust you with our prayers, our faith, and our lives, in the name of Jesus.

C: Amen.

*** SHARING OF THE PEACE**

(The Sharing of the Peace that began when the congregation arrived is now shared with the Pastor at this time...)

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

*** OFFERING PRAYER**

While the congregation is still standing say:

P: Instead of passing the offering plate, we ask you to please place your offering in the Offering Plates conveniently located on your way out of worship. For those worshipping with us from their vehicles, there is an offering basket located near the back door of the church and for those worshipping online if you go to www.pitsburgtlc.org you can make your offering online.

P: So, let's pray for the offerings we receive this day. You do not wish, O God, that we would be paralyzed in the presence of your glory. Rather you invite us to come to you and offer ourselves humbly to your service. Receive our gifts and use them to the glory of your holy will.

C: Amen.

*** THE LORD'S PRAYER**

P: Jesus is the "tie that Binds us together", let us pray as Jesus taught...

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

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: The blessing of God, who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us, † be upon you now and forever.

C: Amen.

- * **SENDING HYMN “What A Fellowship, What A Joy Divine” ELW 774**

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

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1 What a fel - low-ship, what a joy di - vine, lean - ing on the ev - er -
 2 Oh, how sweet to walk in this pil - grim way, lean - ing on the ev - er -
 3 What have I to dread, what have I to fear, lean - ing on the ev - er -



last - ing arms; what a bless - ed - ness, what a peace is mine,
 last - ing arms; oh, how bright the path grows from day to day,
 last - ing arms? I have bless - ed peace with my Lord so near,



lean - ing on the ev - er - last - ing arms.
 lean - ing on the ev - er - last - ing arms.
 lean - ing on the ev - er - last - ing arms.

Refrain



Lean - ing, lean - ing, safe and se - cure from all a - larms;



lean - ing, lean - ing, lean - ing on the ev - er - last - ing arms.

*** 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**

“More Like the Master”

Roxanne Groff

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Scripture readings for next Sunday, August 15th
Revelation 5:1-13

Health Tips for the Week

BODY: Take a Hike

MIND: Limit time on Social Media

SPIRIT: Visit a Christian Book Store

Trinity Worship Assistants and Staff

Ministers	All the People of Trinity
Organist	Roxanne Groff
Lector	Rob Arling
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.

- * Please stand if able
- Please be seated

This Week @ Trinity – August 8 thru August 15, 2021

Sun, August 8 10:30 am Worship Service
Wed, August 11 6:30 pm Christian Education Team Meeting
Thurs, August 12 10:00 am Prayers & Squares Quilting
Fri, August 13 3:30 pm FISH Choice Food Pantry
Sun, August 15 10:30 am Worship Service

SAVE THE DATE!

Lutheran Day at the GREAT Darke County Fair: Thursday, August 26th is Lutheran Day. Please let Pr Mel know if you can help serve at the Spirituality Building either from 12 noon to 1:00 pm or from 4:00 to 5:00 pm.

Rally Day at Trinity: Sunday, August 29th. Hot dogs & ice cream after worship.

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 all prepackaged from the Concordia True Vine company. This is a safe way to stay connected to your brothers and sisters in Christ.

Trinity Contact Info

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- Please be seated