

- **Prelude** **Roxanne Groff**
- **Office of the Acolyte and Ringing of the Bell**
- **Welcome** **Pr 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.

L: Merciful Lord,

C: Christ came into the world and showed us how to live, but we have failed to live by what he taught. We have not loved you with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, we have not done to others as we would have done to ourselves. Shine a light on our hearts, that we might turn from the shadows of our sin and walk in your ways.

P: Jesus came not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. By his abundant love, all your sins are forgiven, that you might walk in the light of Christ.

C: Amen.

* **HYMN OF PRAISE “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing” LBW 499**



1 Come, thou Fount of ev - 'ry bless-ing, tune my heart to sing thy grace;
 2 Here I raise my Eb - en - e - zer: "Hith-er by thy help I've come";
 3 Oh, to grace how great a debt - or dai - ly I'm con-strained to be;



streams of mer - cy, nev - er ceas - ing, call for songs of loud - est praise.
 and I hope, by thy good plea - sure, safe - ly to ar - rive at home.
 let that grace now like a fet - ter bind my wan-d'ring heart to thee.



While the hope of end-less glo - ry fills my heart with joy and love,
 Je - sus sought me when a strang - er, wan-d'ring from the fold of God;
 Prone to wan - der, Lord, I feel it; prone to leave the God I love.



teach me ev - er to a - dore thee; may I still thy good-ness prove.
 he, to res - cue me from dan - ger, in - ter - posed his pre - cious blood.
 Here's my heart, oh, take and seal it; seal it for thy courts a - bove.

* **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... Loving God, in Jesus you proclaim a blessing for those in deprivation, a promise of your transforming love. Make us instruments of your justice, that all might have life abundantly.

C: Amen.

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

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• CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Theme: Happiness is not brought about by what happens to us, it is brought about by what happens within us.

Scripture: Matthew 5:1-20

Object: Song "If You're Happy and You Know It"

Probably every one here this morning has sung the song, "If You're Happy." You know the one I'm talking about -- "If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands. If you're happy and you know it clap your hands. If you're happy an you know it, then your face will surely show it. If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands."

I wonder how that song would go if it were sung by a bunch of birds? Maybe it would go like this, "If you're happy and you know it, flap your wings. (flap, flap) " What do you think a dog would do to show that he was happy? Wag his tail? "If you're happy and you know it, wag your tail. (swish-swish) If you're happy and you know it wag your tail. (swish-swish) If you're happy and you know it, then your tail will surely show it. If you're happy and you know it, wag your tail. (swish-swish)"

I heard a story about a little puppy that noticed that whenever he was happy, his tail wagged, so the thought he had found the secret to happiness. One day he shared the secret of happiness with an older dog. He said, "I have learned that the best thing for a dog is happiness, and that happiness is in my tail. So I am going to chase my tail; and when I catch it, I shall have happiness!" The old dog replied, "I too, believe that happiness is a marvelous thing for a dog, and that happiness is in my tail. But I have noticed that when I chase it, my tail keeps running away from me; but when I go about my business, it follows me wherever I go."

The Bible has a lot to say about being happy. It doesn't say, "Happy are they who have a lot of money" or "Happy are they who live in big houses and drive fancy cars." It doesn't even say, "Happy are they who only have good things happen to them." What the Bible does say is, "Happy are the merciful, happy are the peacemakers, and happy are the pure in heart." The Bible also says, Happy is he who trusts in the Lord. Many of us are like that little puppy chasing his tail -- trying to find true happiness that is always just out of our reach. What we need to do is learn that if we will just go about our business and trust in the Lord, happiness will follow us wherever we go.

Let's pray... Dear Lord, help us to place our trust in you so that we may experience the happiness that only you can bring. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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• **SCRIPTURE READING: Matthew 5:1-20**

R: Our scripture reading for this day is from the Gospel according to Matthew, the 5th chapter.

C: Glory to you O Lord.

5 When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. ²Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

³“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ⁴“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. ⁵“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. ⁶“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. ⁷“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

⁸“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. ⁹“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. ¹⁰“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ¹¹“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹²Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

¹³“You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled underfoot. ¹⁴“You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid.

¹⁵No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven. ¹⁷“Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. ¹⁸For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. ¹⁹Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

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

- **SERMON**

Pr Mel Musser

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the one through whom all blessings flow, Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord, amen.

Today's Scripture reading from the fifth chapter of Matthew is commonly known as the Beatitudes. These Beatitudes are so well known, most of us stop listening when they are being read. We already think we know what they mean and have already made up our minds how relevant they are to our lives...

Before we dig into the specifics of the Beatitudes, let's focus for a minute on the context of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Verse one says, "When Jesus saw the crowds he went up on the mountain, sat down, and began to teach." So, my first question is who are these crowds that came to hear Jesus speak? By this time in Matthew's Gospel, Jesus had already been on the religious circuit. Back in chapter four, Matthew tells us, "²³ Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people. ²⁴ So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought to him all the sick, those who were afflicted with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, and paralytics, and he cured them. ²⁵ And great crowds followed him from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and from beyond the Jordan." Before the crowds hear the Messiah's great Sermon

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on the Mount, they are the objects of his compassion and his healing. Having done nothing, nothing at all, people from throughout the entire region have already benefited from the great mercy and grace of God. So, grace comes before task, mercy before demand, healing before command. The first act of the Messiah is not the imposition of his commandments, but the giving of himself. Today's Beatitudes presupposes yesterday's gifts of healing and forgiveness. We're still in that same mode of receiving God's Grace and Mercy before we even hear anything about the Law or the Commands of Christ...

Did you know that The Beatitudes are an entire literary category all by themselves? At least one of the commentaries I studied this week said so. I did a search on the entire Bible and found 47 times where a verse or sentence uses the words Blessed are... I'm not so sure 47 times would rank it as it's own separate literary genre, but I did find these "Blessed are..." statements in several places besides these verses in Matthew and the ones in Luke. They're in the Old Testament, the Psalms, and also sprinkled throughout the New Testament as well. The most famous Beatitudes are the ones listed here in Matthew's Gospel and the ones listed in the 6th chapter of Luke's Gospel. These two lists have been compared and contrasted since scholars first began critically studying the scriptures. Most of us know or pretty quickly recognize the similarities and

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differences between the two. For example, Matthew is known for spiritualizing the list. Here's what I mean. In Luke's Gospel, Jesus says, "Blessed are the poor." Matthew adds the words, "in spirit." I always thought Matthew meant people who have a lack of spirit, such as those who suffer from depression. While that might be the case, I think it's more likely he is referring to people who are "spiritually poor." These are people who feel their spiritual need. These are people who know their need for God and for a savior. They are poor "in the realm of their spirit," but happy because they know they can rely on and trust God for their daily bread. They may be poor financially, but Matthew wants us to know they are happy because they're in a position to receive good things from God. The poor in spirit don't recognize their spiritual need for God as a separate need, but rather they stand before God and recognize their need for God is absolute and all encompassing.

The other thing that I found really interesting is this phrase "The Kingdom of Heaven." When we think of a kingdom we usually think about a specific land or territory. That territory has boundaries and is located in time and in space in a certain locale. For example, the United Kingdom is located across the Atlantic Ocean. It's been in existence in some form or other since 1707. Our usual understanding of a Kingdom is tied to the territory of the king. When Matthew, or

Jesus uses the term Kingdom it has a totally different meaning and connotation. In the Greek language the phrase translated as Kingdom of Heaven is the phrase “*ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ*.” Basileia is the noun form of the verb Basilaous. It means the act of ruling or reigning as a King would do. This reigning or ruling isn’t tied to any specific place or time, but rather happens where ever and when ever the King happens to be. So, the Kingdom of Heaven isn’t tied to a galaxy far far away or to a time at the end of all things when Christ comes again, but rather is present where ever and when ever The King of Kings and Lord of Lords is present and reigning in people’s lives.

Another way to look at it... If the benefits of God’s reign only happen after you get to heaven or at the end of time when Jesus finally comes again, then I wouldn’t be a part of this thing called Christianity. There has to be more to it than we must suffer here, but wait until you die, then things will be better and you too will be blessed. Under this assumption Karl Marx would have been correct to say religion is the opiate of the people. It bids us to put up with oppression, injustice, and immorality *now* for the sake of the life to come in heaven. Jesus didn’t buy that interpretation, and neither should we! Jesus said, “Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.” The Kingdom or the reign of God happens where ever and when ever God rules in the lives of God’s people. Every time we repent and return

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to the Lord our God with all our heart, Soul, Strength, and Mind we are living under God's rule and the Kingdom of Heaven is ours right here and right now. That's a religion and a faith I can understand and get behind 100 percent! Isn't that exactly what we pray for in the Lord's Prayer when we pray, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven?" We're really praying for God's rule or God's reign to come for us. We get to help make that happen in both big and small ways every day. It's not about earning our grace, but living into God's promise.

I wish we had the time to go in depth into each one of these Beatitudes. Maybe someday I'll put together a Sunday School class on them... For now I did want to take a minute to look at the second half of our scripture reading. These verses explain how to live under God's reign and what that might be like... When Jesus says we're to be salt, he means under God's reign the people of God add flavor to their world. Because they are noticed in the greater society outside of their religious circles. So, how you live your life matters because people who are not Christian are watching. They see what we do in all circumstances. Jesus never intended for his followers to be a secret organization nor a inward looking bunch of people unconcerned about their world. He tells us to be a lamp on a hill. He says we should shine our lights before others so they see our good works and in

turn glorify our father in heaven. That's what brings the Kingdom of Heaven to earth...

May our lights shine even more brightly as we live more and more under the graceful and merciful rule of our Father in Heaven. May the Kingdom of God reign in our lives every day so others see the spirit of Jesus shining in us. Amen!

Silence may be kept for meditation...

*** APOSTLE'S 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: Confident that our savior, Jesus Christ, hears us when we pray, we lift up the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

L: God of abundant mercy, pour your blessings upon all whose needs are visible and whose needs are not visible to our eyes. Make us instruments of blessing for others, and help us receive blessing from others. Merciful God,

C: You hear our prayer.

L: Heal the harms we have done to your creation. Keep us from inflicting further distress on what you have made, and make us good stewards of this earth. Merciful God,

C: You hear our prayer.

* Please stand if able

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L: Keep our elected leaders mindful of the needs of those they serve, that they might work for the blessing of all people. Merciful God,

C: You hear our prayer.

L: Your blessing is for all who suffer, O God. Grant healing and wholeness to those who are sick in body, mind, or spirit, (*especially*). Merciful God,

C: You hear our prayer.

L: Walk with all peoples of the earth, both those who follow you, and those who do not. Remind us we are all your children, even when others' ways are unfamiliar to us. Merciful God,

C: You hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

L: We remember with joy all the saints whose lives have been a source of incredible blessing. May we, in gratitude, bless others until we are all together in your eternal presence. Merciful God,

C: You hear our prayer.

L: Receive our prayers and hold all for whom we pray in your loving arms, in the name of 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.

• OFFERING

*** OFFERTORY PRAYER**

While the congregation is standing the offering is raised up and the following prayer is said:

P: You have planted us by streams of water, O God, that we might bear good fruit. We offer now these gifts that they would be that good fruit, given for the sake of your children throughout the world, in the name of Jesus Christ, our savior.

C: Amen.

* **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

P: United into one Body, 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.

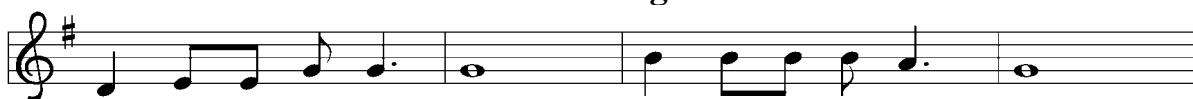
• **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

* **SENDING BLESSING**

P: The God who faithfully brings forth justice and breaks the oppressor's rod bless, strengthen, and uphold you, today and always.

C: Amen.

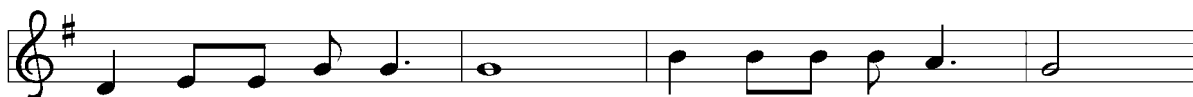
* **SENDING HYMN "This Little Light of Mine" ELW 677**



1 This lit - tle light of mine, I'm goin' - a let it shine;
2 Ev - 'ry - where I go, I'm goin' - a let it shine;
3 Je - sus gave it to me, I'm goin' - a let it shine;



this lit - tle light of mine, I'm goin' - a let it shine;
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let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.
let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.
let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

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* **DISMISSAL**

P: Thank you all for joining us to worship our great and gracious God! Thanks also to our Facebook and other social media viewers for joining us as well. We're glad you're with us today. In a world where you can be anything, be kind! Until the next time we gather together as God's people to offer our worship and praise, depart in Christ's Love.

C: **Seeking, welcoming, and serving all. Amen!**

* **POSTLUDE**

Roxanne Groff

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Trinity Worship Assistants and Staff

Ministers	All the People of Trinity
Organist	Roxanne Groff
Lector	Jennifer Arling
Parrish Nurse	PJ Musser
Custodian	Mark Groff
Secretary	Sharon Fourman
Facebook Live Recorder	PJ Musser
Altar Flowers	Given to the Glory of God by Dean & Donna Thompson in honor of their anniversary.

Health Tips for the Week

Mind: Read an autobiography book

Body: Visit a Dermatologist for a total skin exam

Spirit: Ask others "How may I pray for you?"



Scripture readings for next Sunday, January 29th
Matthew 6:7-21, [25-34]

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Trinity is on the Air at FM 88.3

If you are near the Church on Sunday morning, you can tune in to FM 88.3 at 10:30 AM and hear the sermon from your car.

Holy Communion Delivery Available to ALL:

If you or anyone you know would like to have Holy Communion delivered to a home or place of business, please call Pastor Mel at 937-626-7100. He will bring a prefilled communion chalice including both sanctified wine and a morsel of bread all prepackaged from the Concordia True Vine company. This is a safe way to stay connected to your brothers and sisters in Christ.

This Week @ Trinity – January 22 thru January 29, 2023

DATE	TIME	EVENT
Sun, January 22	9:15 am	Christian Conversations (Coffee/Juice and Donuts)
	10:30 am	Worship Service
	After Worship	New Member Class
Tues, January 24	<i>Newsletter Deadline</i>	
Wed, January 25	6:30 pm	Confirmation Class
Fri, January 27	3:30 pm	FISH Choice Food Pantry
Sun, January 29	9:15 am	Christian Conversations (Coffee/Juice and Donuts)
	10:30 am	Worship Service
	After Worship	New Member Class

AROUND THE PARISH

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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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