

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



Raising the Widow's Son/Roman Centurion
February 7, 2021

* **HYMN OF PRAISE**

“Lord of All Hopefulness”

LBW 469

1 Lord of all hope - ful - ness, Lord of all joy,
2 Lord of all ea - ger - ness, Lord of all faith,
whose trust, ev - er child - like, no cares could de - stroy:
whose strong hands were skilled at the plane and the lathe:
be there at our wak - ing, and give us, we pray,
be there at our la - bors, and give us, we pray,
your bliss in our hearts, Lord, at the break of the day.
your strength in our hearts, Lord, at the noon of the day.

* **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.**

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

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*** PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: Holy God, You rewarded the faith of a Roman centurion who feared and trusted you. May we have the same unshakable faith in your mercy and ability to heal all that prevents us from serving you, for the sake of Jesus.

C: Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 7:1-17

P: Our scripture reading for this morning is from Luke, Chapter 7.

C: Glory to you O Lord.

7 After Jesus had finished all his sayings in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum. ²A centurion there had a slave whom he valued highly, and who was ill and close to death. ³When he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders to him, asking him to come and heal his slave. ⁴When they came to Jesus, they appealed to him earnestly, saying, “He is worthy of having you do this for him, ⁵for he loves our people, and it is he who built our synagogue for us.” ⁶And Jesus went with them, but when he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to say to him, “Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; ⁷therefore I did not presume to come to you. But only speak the word, and let my servant be healed. ⁸For I also am a man set under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, ‘Go,’ and he goes, and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes, and to my slave, ‘Do this,’ and the slave does it.” ⁹When Jesus heard this he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd that followed him, he said, “I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith.” ¹⁰When those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave in good health.

¹¹Soon afterwards he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went with him. ¹²As he approached the gate of the town, a man who had died was being carried out. He was his mother’s only son, and she was a widow; and with her was a large crowd from the town. ¹³When the Lord saw her, he had compassion for her and said to her, “Do not weep.” ¹⁴Then he came forward and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, “Young man, I say to you, rise!” ¹⁵The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. ¹⁶Fear seized all of them; and they glorified God, saying, “A great prophet has risen among us!” and “God has looked favorably on his people!” ¹⁷This word about him spread throughout Judea and all the surrounding country.

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

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

* Please stand if able

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- **SERMON**

Pr Mel Musser

Grace and peace from God our Father and from Jesus Christ our Savior,
amen.

Take a close look at these two pictures. They're from a grave in Hanover, Germany. This grave is very unusual because on top of the grave site are these huge slabs of granite and marble cemented together and fastened with heavy steel clasps. This grave belongs to a woman by the name of Henriette Juliane Caroline von Ruling (1756 – 1782). Henriette did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. Yet strangely, she directed in her will that her grave be made so secure that if there were a resurrection, it wouldn't affect her. On the marker are inscribed these words: "This burial place must never be opened."

Well... I think you can see, it didn't work that way... In the dirt beneath those slabs of marble and granite was a tiny seed. And in time – even though it was covered with those huge blocks of stone, the seed began to grow, and it slowly pushed its way through the dirt and out from the slabs. As it forced its way up, the marble and granite were gradually shifted so that the steel clasps that held them were wrenched from their sockets. This grave site has been used in several horror movies and it looks quite eerie. More on this later...

The story in our Gospel text for today about Jesus raising the widow's son outside the gate of the town of Nane is quite a strange tale. I mean, imagine this sort of thing happening today. I've just completed a beautiful Funeral service here at Trinity and the coffin is loaded into the Hearst and the funeral procession is headed to the cemetery where we'll commit our loved one to the ground, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust. It's the finale of a life well lived. As we proceed down the road cars stop to pay their respect and the motorcade proceeds straight through all the stop signs and traffic lights. Then, about halfway there, a man steps out from the sidewalk and stops the procession. He comes over to the Hearst and calls to the dead person to come out. At this point I'm pretty irate at this man for interrupting our Funeral. Jesus has a way of ruining a good funeral...

Of course, funerals were very different back in the ancient days of Jesus. We put our dead inside steel coffins with locking bolts to make sure the lid doesn't come open. Then we put the coffin inside a cement vault with a heavy cement lid that is also glued and bolted shut. Not much getting in or out of one of these... This was much different in ancient Israel. The bodies were spiced and wrapped in linen cloths. The coffin would be not much more than a flat board where they would lay the body. At most it might have side walls to prevent the body from slipping off the board as it was being carried from the person's place of death to

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the tombs, which were located outside of the town gate, where no water flowed nearby. This was because the dead were considered unclean and had to be buried outside of town where heavy rains wouldn't cause the bodies to contaminate their source of water.

I guess if Jesus were to raise a person today, he would need some tools to open the coffin. We have perfected the art of the Funeral Service so that once we've said our goodbyes, that lid is closed and nobody need be troubled by seeing the corpse again. This too was so different back in the ancient days of Israel. Once the person was placed into the tomb they were laid out on a slab of stone and the family was able to continue taking care of the body with additional spices and oils. After a period of time the body would decay and the bones would be scraped off into a small cement box, called a sarcophagus. These boxes were stored in the closest thing to what we would call a cemetery. That process might take three or more years. After the bones were removed, the tomb could be reused for another body. That's why the Gospel's tell us the tomb Jesus was laid into was never used before, most tombs were used over and over again.

There are three things this story shows us about God's sovereignty. First, death and sorrow are coming out the gate of the town. Death was literally coming out the gate like a roast on a silver platter. In this case more like a wooden

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platter... Second, life and hope were just arriving on the scene. Along came Jesus the light of the world, the Son of God, our savior, and redeemer. Third, these two powerful forces collide and the result is great celebration and joy. For one who was lost has now been found, one who was dead is now alive...

Of all funerals, this would have been the most heart wrenching. This was most likely a young man who had not yet married. He was the sole support of his mother. He had so much of life yet to live. His mother, a widow, now has lost her only son. She is now a ward of the state, destined to a life of abject poverty. She had no one to support her and her life was just about worthless. People at most funerals have a tendency to be pre-occupied with the one who died when they first arrive; and then they think about those who are left behind, but eventually we all begin think about ourselves and we ask questions like, "I wonder when it's going to be my turn?" "I wonder if I'll be next?" "I wonder what's going to happen to me when I die?" "And I wonder what's going to happen to my family when I'm gone?" As much as we ask ourselves these questions; as soon as the service is over, most of us put thoughts of our death behind us and as far out of our conscious as we are able. We seal those thoughts of our own mortality in compartments in our brains that we hope will never be opened. Here's the dirty truth of it all.

Whether we face it or not; we're all part of the procession that's headed for the

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graveyard. Regardless of how we've lived our lives, all of us are going to either see Jesus come back or we're going to face Him in death. Death is one of the consequences of sin and it comes hand in hand with a whole lot of misery. Yet, even in the face of death we can have hope. This raising of the Widow's Son shows us what happens when death and sorrow collide with life and hope; everything changes. Even the bonds of death itself are broken and the dead are set free. That's why I always quote Saint Paul at funerals where he said that we do not grieve as those who have no hope. Our hope, our trust, our confidence in the face of death is that death does not get the last word. The last word will be spoken by our loving and gracious redeemer who will interrupt your beautiful funeral service and shout your name and command you to rise and be loved by your God and your Savior.

What a joyful rising that will be for everyone. There will be no more pain, no more sorrow, because Jesus has wiped out the reason for our pain and grief. Death itself will be destroyed and we will rise again along with that widow's son, Lazarus, and all of our loved ones too.

So, death and sorrow were coming out the gate while life and hope were going in and when they clashed; victory and celebration went everywhere. Only God knows the number of our days. As for me, I want to start the celebrating now.

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But wait a minute... That widow's son wasn't raised just to spent the rest of his days partying like it's 1999. He waws raised and given back to his mother. He was raised to go back to his life of taking care of his mother who was also a widow. Taking care of orphans and widows and all the less fortunate was part and parcel of how Jesus was and why he came to earth.

You were all raised from the dead. Yes, you heard me correctly. In your Baptism you died and were raised to new life, just like that widow's son. My question to you is this; now that you have already inherited eternal life, what is your calling. Not all of us are called to take care of a widow, but we are all raised up into God's Kingdom on earth with a calling and a purpose...

Let's go back to the grave in Hanover Germany. The one that Henriette wanted to stay shut forever. Just think about this for a moment. If a tiny Birch Tree seed has the power to open a grave sealed with that much stone, cement, and steel, how much more is the power of the one who created the seed in the first place! Our Awesome God certainly has the power to open the graves of all people when the resurrection finally comes. A tiny seed had become a tree and this tree pushed aside the stones and the grave was opened. Listen, when Jesus comes back, all the dead are going to rise – even those who will be quite surprised by it!

May you trust in the capability and the willingness of Jesus to meet your darkness and collide with such a force that it turns even your darkest day into a bright new dawn with love and joy to share. I say, why wait, let the celebration begin! Thanks be to our awesome God! Amen.

Silence for reflection may follow

- **SPECIAL MUSIC** **Jake and Lexi Angles & Helena Proffitt**
OUR GOD IS AND AWESOME GOD

* **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**

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

A brief silence.

L: A Roman officer recognized the power of words to create and bring about results. May we take responsibility for the words we utter and the worlds we create with them, choosing to speak love, mercy and redemption for all. Healing God,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: We live in a competitive and often ruthless world, where few prosper wildly and too many go without basic needs. Help us to even the balance and work for

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fair compensation of workers and distribution of resources so that all may thrive. Healing God,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: Our selfish ways have hurt this this beautiful planet we call home. Inspire us through your powers of innovation and creation so we can learn to be better stewards of the entire natural world. Healing God,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: You need only to say the word and we are healed. Cure our ills, whatever their cause, and strengthen us to continue serving you. We thank you for the creation of the vaccines that are beginning to be distributed. Help us see the most equitable way to get this life saving vaccine to those who need it the most. Bless all of those whose names we bring before you today, especially... Healing God,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: Be with all who grieve the loss of loved ones, and hold them all in your comforting arms until the day when we will all be reunited in your eternal glory. Healing God,

C: Hear our prayer.

Here other petitions may be offered.

L: Receive our prayers and shed light on our path as we seek to walk in your ways and bring glory to you through your son Jesus, our Lord.

C: Amen.

*** 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 a ceramic flower pot located near the back door of the church.

P: When we put our trust in you, we find that we have everything we need. Accept these gifts; bless them and use them for the advancement of your earthly kingdom and the spread of your heavenly gospel of good news.

C: Amen.

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

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. Sharing our life, he lived among us to reveal your glory and love, that our darkness should give way to his own brilliant light. 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: 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.

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.

Remembering, therefore, his life, death, and resurrection, we await his coming again in righteousness and peace. Send your Spirit on us and on this bread and wine we share: strengthen our faith, increase our hope, and bring to birth the justice and joy of your Son.

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

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* **THE LORD’S PRAYER**

P: We are united into one Body of Christ by this heavenly food, 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: You have poured out your spirit upon all flesh, and gathered your children from the ends of the earth to proclaim your salvation. Let us come now to celebrate our deliverance in this bread and cup of mercy.

• **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 CANTICLE**



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



Let all who seek the Lord re - joice 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 BLESSING**

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

C: Amen.

* **POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

P: Let us pray... Gracious and abundant God, you have done great things for us, and we rejoice. In this bread and cup you give us life forever. In your boundless mercy, strengthen us and open our hearts to the world's needs, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C: Amen

• **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

* **SENDING BLESSING**

P: God the creator strengthen you; Jesus the beloved fill you; and the Holy Spirit the comforter ✝ keep you in peace.

C: Amen.

* **SENDING HYMN**

“Amazing Grace”

LBW 448

1 A - maz - ing grace, how sweet the sound, that
 2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and
 saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but
 grace my fears re - lieved; how pre - cious did that
 now am - found; was blind, but now I see.
 grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!

* **DISMISSAL**

P: Thank you for worshipping with us either in person or through the internet.

Until we gather to Worship our great God next week, depart in Christ’s Love,

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

Postlude

“Let A Little Sunshine In”

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

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Health Tips for the Week
BODY: Try a new hair style
MIND: Get a yearly physical
SPIRIT: Listen to a Christian radio station



Scripture readings for next Sunday, February 14th
Luke 9:28-45

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.

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This Week @ Trinity – February 7 through February 17, 2021

Sun, February 7

10:30 am Worship Service

Wed, February 10

6:30 pm Confirmation Class

6:30 pm Christian Education Team Meeting

Fri, February 12

3:30 pm FISH Choice Food Pantry

Sun, February 14 **Valentines Day**

10:30 am Worship Service

Wed, February 17

7:00 pm Ash Wednesday Worship Service

Trinity Contact Info

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