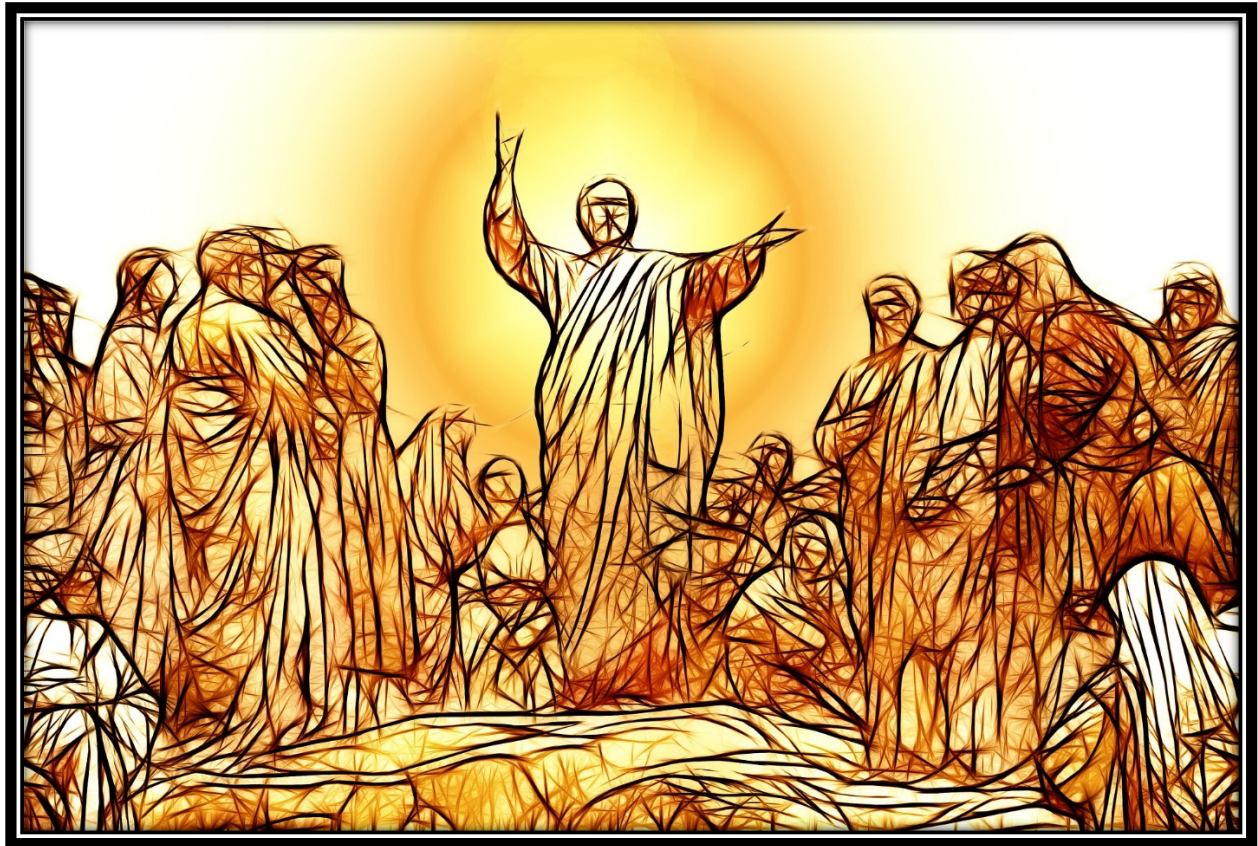


A Mission Congregation of the ELCA
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
P. O. Box 64 - 8520 Oakes Rd - Pittsburg, Ohio 45358



Matthew 13:24-43
February 12, 2023



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



GATHERING

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

*** THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM**

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, the fountain of living water, the rock who gave us birth, our light and our salvation.

C: Amen.

The presiding minister addresses the assembly.

P: Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness. Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

Water may be poured into the font as the presiding minister gives thanks.

P: We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight. Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family. Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom. At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By water and your Word you claim us as daughters and sons, making us heirs of your promise and servants of all. We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life, and above all we praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ. Shower us with your Spirit, and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love. To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

C: Amen.

The service continues with gathering song. As a reminder of the gift of baptism, the assembly may be sprinkled with water during the singing.

* **Gathering Song**

“Gather Us In”

ELW 532

1 Here in this place the new light is stream-ing, now is the dark - ness
 2 We are the young, our lives are a mys - t'ry, we are the old who
 3 Here we will take the wine and the wa - ter, here we will take the
 4 Not in the dark of build-ings con - fin - ing, not in some heav - en,
 van - ished a - way; see in this space our fears and our dream-ings
 yearn for your face; we have been sung through - out all of his - t'ry,
 bread of new birth, here you shall call your sons and your daugh-ters,
 light years a - way— here in this place the new light is shin - ing,
 brought here to you in the light of this day.
 called to be light to the whole hu - man race.
 call us a - new to be salt for the earth.
 now is the king - dom, and now is the day.
 Gath-er us in, the lost and for - sak - en, gath-er us in, the
 Gath-er us in, the rich and the haugh-ty, gath-er us in, the
 Give us to drink the wine of com-pas - sion, give us to eat the
 Gath-er us in and hold us for - ev - er, gath-er us in and
 blind and the lame; call to us now, and we shall a - wak - en,
 proud and the strong; give us a heart, so meek and so low - ly,
 bread that is you; nour-ish us well, and teach us to fash - ion
 make us your own; gath-er us in, all peo - ples to - geth - er,
 we shall a - rise at the sound of our name.
 give us the cour - age to en - ter the song.
 lives that are ho - ly and hearts that are true.
 fire . . of love in our flesh and our bone.

* **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.**

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

February 12, 2023

Page 3 of 18

*** PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: Let us pray... Gracious God, your Son spoke to us in parables about the nature of your reign. Give us ears to hear and hearts to understand that we might be instruments of your peace and justice.

C: Amen.

WORD

• CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Theme: We find our treasure at the cross.

Object: Pirate Eye Patch, a Treasure Map, and a wooden Cross

Scripture: Matthew 13:44

Hello boys and girls! It's so good to see you today. I hope you had a great week!

I'll bet you're wondering why I'm wearing this eye patch... RRRRRgh... I found this treasure map and I think it's to a pirate treasure. Look! It even has a place marked with an X. X marks the spot where the pirate buried his treasure. I'm trying to put myself in the mind of a pirate so I can follow this treasure map and find the lost treasure. I'm not very good at reading maps so even with this highly detailed map, I still might get lost.

Finding a lost treasure is hard and dangerous, but I can tell you about a treasure that's much better than a whole treasure chest full of gold and jewels. I can even tell you exactly how to find this extremely valuable treasure. Jesus once said, "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and then hid again; in his joy he went and sold all that he had and bought that field." If you would like to find the treasure Jesus was talking about, maybe the Bible could be the map that leads us to that treasure. The Bible has a lot of information in it, but it is sometimes hard for us to understand, so how do you know exactly where the treasure is? That's easy, because "X marks the spot." (Hold up the cross at an angle so that it looks like the letter x.) Jesus died on the cross so that you and I could enter into the kingdom of heaven. When you look to the cross and put your trust in Jesus, the treasure will be yours.

To enter the kingdom of heaven is the greatest treasure one could ever desire. It's more precious than silver, gold, or jewels. That's why Jesus calls us to give up all that we have and follow him.

Dear Jesus, nothing we have can compare to life in the kingdom of heaven. Help us to place our trust in you, so that we may find that priceless treasure. In your name we pray. Amen.

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

February 12, 2023

Page 4 of 18

• **SCRIPTURE READING: Matthew 13:24-43**

R: Our scripture reading for this day is from the Gospel according to Matthew, the 13th chapter.

C: Glory to you O Lord.

²⁴He put before them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; ²⁵but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. ²⁶So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. ²⁷And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?’ ²⁸He answered, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The slaves said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ ²⁹But he replied, ‘No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. ³⁰Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’”

³¹He put before them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; ³²it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.” ³³He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.” ³⁴Jesus told the crowds all these things in parables; without a parable he told them nothing. ³⁵This was to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet: “I will open my mouth to speak in parables; I will proclaim what has been hidden from the foundation of the world.”

³⁶Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.” ³⁷He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; ³⁸the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, ³⁹and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. ⁴⁰Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. ⁴¹The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, ⁴²and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!

⁴⁴“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.”

⁴⁵“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.”

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 who teaches us about the Kingdom of Heaven, our Savior and our Lord, Jesus Christ, amen.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like... Jesus teaches us about the Kingdom with stories we call Parables. If you can remember all the way back to your Catechism days you might recall a Parable is an “Earthly Story With A Heavenly Meaning.” In this section of Matthew Jesus actually tells 7 different parables. In story form or Parables, Jesus reveals things hidden from the foundation of the world, but now being made known. This is how I think of Parables...

Every day, somewhere, something happens that warrants an immediate response in the media. Programming stops or a news flash runs across the bottom of our screens informing us of something important. These days they happen so frequently we’ve almost become numb to the biggest breaking news stories of our time. When some Breaking News does actually break through the noise and other distractions we know these are the truly big news items. I mean, who can forget where you were and what you were doing when the news broke of the 911 terrorist

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

attacks on New York and the Pentagon? Most of us know exactly where we were and what we were doing... Jesus had world- and kingdom-shattering news to share, too. He began his earthly ministry by declaring the Kingdom of Heaven has come near, so we should repent and return to the Lord our God. That's some pretty earth-shattering news! Now, in Parables, Jesus explains what that means for his followers and for those who reject his invitation to follow Him.

“Breaking News” seems to happen several times every day since the introduction of CNN back in June of 1980. The Media networks want to catch our attention. When we see the words, “Breaking News,” we know something BIG has occurred. We also know we're about to learn more. Perhaps you couldn't care less, but the way in which the networks present these two words is meant to catch our attention and invite our curiosity. We want to know more... Now, the question looms: Just what is this news that's breaking?

Think back to the events of the morning of September 11, 2001. Where were you at the time? What were you doing when the news broke about the airplanes that flew into the Twin Towers in lower Manhattan and the one that crashed into the Pentagon? This news, like all “breaking news,” broke into our consciousness. It broke into history. It ripped through our communities, shredding conventional ideas, traditional assumptions and long-held beliefs. It was news that

altered, modified, shattered and forever changed — us. The John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy assassinations in the 1960s. The moon landing in 1969. Reality, life and human experience would never be the same. These events were indeed “breaking news,” or news that broke in upon our consciousness and awareness.

This is the meaning conveyed by our gospel reading for today, although certainly not in the negative sense of 9/11. Rather, the news that Jesus breaks is astonishing and incredibly good news. In fact, this is the way the announcement is framed in the gospels. Breaking news: Good news! The kingdom of God is upon us! The kingdom of God is within you! Or, as John the Baptist would thunder, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near”. Jesus himself, after his baptism and temptation in the wilderness, began his ministry by announcing the same exciting, incredible and utterly novel news: “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.”

It’s fair to say that most people — after hearing breaking news — want details. Many have an insatiable thirst for more details, more information, more background or more understanding. If we’re like this, we will stay tuned to our TV, or consult online news sites regularly. We want to know more. As I write this sermon, breaking news is being broadcast about a variety of issues:

-
- * Please stand if able
 - Please be seated

- The Navy has located the payload of the Chinese Spy Balloon...
- The IRS is going after waiters and waitresses for tips..
- More than 15,000 dead in Earthquake that rocked Turkey and Syria...
- FBI conducting search of former Vice President Mike Pence's home...
- The United States has now shot down 3 Objects in our Air Space

The stories that accompany these headlines put the story in context and explain what they mean for our lives. This is what Jesus does in our text. He provides context, understanding and insight into his claim that the kingdom of God has broken into history. It shatters everything! What does this incredible, amazing and daring action mean? Jesus explains with parables and metaphors. Okay, he says, the kingdom of God is like:

- A mustard seed.
- Or, try this: It's like yeast.
- Or, here's another way of looking at it: It like treasure in a field.
- It's also like an expensive pearl.

When we look at each of these parables we can draw some conclusions. The mustard seed is so small it's almost invisible. Yet from this tiny seed, a huge shrub develops, large enough for birds such as the little sparrows Jesus spoke of as having much value to our Heavenly Father, to flit about, nest and rest. This is an image of the Kingdom of God whose power is so great no matter how small the work, no matter how small the seed that's sown, it results in something great and amazing. The Kingdom of God is not a thorny shrub where little birds are pierced,

uncomfortable, judged and unwelcome. It's such a hospitable place all people, even the meek and hopeless can find shelter and rest. This Parable also reminds us we can't do everything. All we can do is plant seeds. Some "seeds" might be virtually invisible to the eyes of others — insignificant, meaningless, unimportant. We may never even get to see the shrub, but still these tiny seeds grow and develop into a work that's important and meaningful.

The meaning of the parable of the leaven or yeast is similar to the previous one the Mustard Seed. Something very small, virtually invisible, yields an astounding outcome much larger than itself. In this case, the emphasis is not on external growth, but something that is happening inwardly. The leaven works within the dough. It penetrates, permeates and pervades the neighborhood, the culture, and the world wherever it's introduced. Dough without yeast is heavy, thick, inert, and pretty tasteless. With yeast the dough becomes something completely different. The Kingdom of God is a change agent. It causes expansion, development, and movement. So, what is our image of the Kingdom of God? Are we more like a leavened loaf of bread, or an unleavened piece of flatbread?

The images of both the treasure in a field and an expensive pearl were not uncommon in the first century. Since banks didn't really exist yet, for someone who had something quite valuable, it was common for them to bury the precious

item in his backyard or field. Even today some people hide their treasure under their mattresses. Jesus' parable supposes that someone has found a treasure in a field accidentally. What is he going to do? He buys the field so he can legally claim the treasure in the field. The purchase of a priceless pearl is a different matter. The pearl is discovered by someone who is shopping for precious gems, or something similar. Breaking news! The Kingdom of God is more precious than anything in this world. In either case, the wise person gives up everything to possess the kingdom! Jesus also seems to imply a sort of "hidden" quality to the Kingdom of God. The treasure is buried; the pearl is isolated inside the shell. Still, some people stumble upon the kingdom of God accidentally while others find it after a long and exhausting search. In any case, once discovered, you divest yourself of anything that would separate you from this great treasure, the Kingdom of Heaven...

This is such good news for people of all times and in all places! The times we live in are dangerous, confusing and can crush our spirits. The Good News of Jesus Christ reminds us God is on our side and we need not give in to our fear. Breaking news! We can leave all our trouble and despair in God's hands. Breaking news! Jesus says we don't have to bury our treasure. We do not, and should not, hide our light under a bushel basket. We are agents of the new

kingdom! We are heralds and messengers, breaking the best possible news upon a world eager to hear some good news!

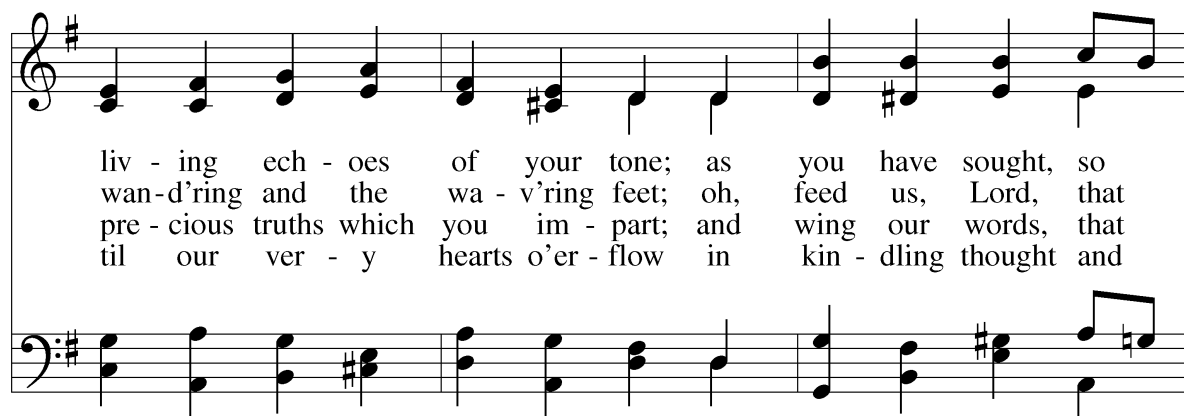
May you who have ears hear the voice of our Savior and know the true value of the Kingdom of Heaven that you now possess. May you never bury that treasure in your backyard, but rather share it with everyone who will listen to you. May the yeast of God's Word fill you with God's peace and the joy of serving Jesus. Breaking News! God loves you now and forever! Amen!

Silence may be kept for meditation...

* **HYMN OF THE DAY Lord, Speak to Us That We May Speak LBW 403**



1 Lord, speak to us, that we may speak in
 2 Oh, lead us, Lord, that we may lead the
 3 Oh, teach us, Lord, that we may teach the
 4 Oh, fill us with your full - ness, Lord, un -



liv - ing ech - oes of your tone; as you have sought, so
 wan-d'ring and the wa - v'ring feet; oh, feed us, Lord, that
 pre - cious truths which you im - part; and wing our words, that
 til our ver - y hearts o'er - flow in kin - dling thought and



let us seek your stray - ing chil - dren, lost and lone.
 we may feed your hun - g'ring ones with man - na sweet.
 they may reach the hid - den depths of man - y a heart.
 glow - ing word, your love to tell, your praise to show.

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

February 12, 2023

Page 13 of 18

*** 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: Gracious God, your son, Jesus, spoke of your reign in terms of the littlest things—yeast, mustard seeds—that utterly transform all they touch. Help us to sow your love and justice in the world, that all might see you in all things.
Merciful God,

C: You hear our prayer.

L: You have called us to be stewards of your creation. Teach us to protect all green and growing things, from mustard seeds to giant sequoias, and the ecosystems that sustain them and us. Merciful God,

C: You hear our prayer.

L: Give leaders throughout the world the humility not to assume that their people are the wheat and other peoples are the weeds. Commit them to the nurture of all people without judgment. Merciful God,

C: You hear our prayer.

L: Dear Jesus, we know you are among us now and always. As you healed the sick and infirm during your ministry on earth, we ask that you would bring healing and wholeness to all who suffer in body, mind, or spirit, (*especially*). Merciful God,

C: You hear our prayer.

L: Keep us ever mindful of the victims of state violence, oppression, and injustice in our nation and the world. Kindle in us a passion to work for your justice for all people. Merciful God,

C: You hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

L: We remember with thanksgiving all the saints who planted their faith in our hearts like the tiniest of seeds, and watched it grow into strong, fruit-bearing trees. 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.

MEAL

• OFFERING

*** OFFERTORY PRAYER**

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

P: O God, your reign is like a treasure in a field or a pearl of great value. May we joyfully offer all that we have and all that we are in gratitude for receiving your salvation. Accept these, our gifts, for your work in the world, that all might know your priceless love.

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.

SENDING

• ANNOUNCEMENTS

* Please stand if able

February 12, 2023

• Please be seated

Page 15 of 18

*** 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 "My Faith Looks Up to Thee" LBW 479**



1 My faith looks up to thee, thou Lamb of Cal - va - ry,
2 May thy rich grace im - part strength to my faint - ing heart,
3 While life's dark maze I tread and griefs a - round me spread,
4 When ends life's tran - sient dream, when death's cold, sul - len stream



Sav - ior di - vine! Now hear me while I pray, take all my
my zeal in - spire; as thou hast died for me, oh, may my
be thou my guide; bid dark-ness turn to day, wipe sor-row's
shall o'er me roll; blest Sav - ior, then, in love fear and dis -



guilt a - way, oh, let me from this day be whol - ly thine!
love to thee pure, warm, and change-less be, a liv - ing fire!
tears a - way, nor let me ev - er stray from thee a - side.
trust re-move; oh, bear me safe a - bove, a ran - somed soul!

*** 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

Copyright © 2023 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS023830. New Revised Standard Version Bible, Copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Revised Common Lectionary, Copyright © 1992 Consultation on Common Texts, admin Augsburg Fortress. Used by permission.

* Please stand if able

February 12, 2023

• Please be seated

Page 16 of 18

Trinity Worship Assistants and Staff

Ministers	All the People of Trinity
Organist	Roxanne Groff
Lector	Lexie Angles
Parrish Nurse	PJ Musser
Custodian	Mark Groff
Secretary	Sharon Fourman
Facebook Live Recorder	PJ Musser
Altar Flowers	Given to the Glory of God by Brad and Miranda Harleman in celebration of Belle's birthday.

Health Tips for the Week
Mind: Visit a Planetarium
Body: Wear the correct shoe size
Spirit: Attend Sunday School



Scripture readings for next Sunday, February 19th
Matthew 16:24 – 17:8



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.

-
- * Please stand if able
 - Please be seated

This Week @ Trinity – February 12 thru February 19, 2023

DATE	TIME	EVENT
Sun, February 12	9:15 am	Christian Conversations (Coffee/Juice and Donuts)
	10:30 am	Worship Service
	After Worship	The Lutheran Course Continues...
Tues, February 14	<i>Happy Valentine's Day</i>	
Wed, February 15		
	7:00 pm	Trinity Council Meeting
Thurs, February 16	11:30 am	Ladies & Gents Luncheon, Pearson House, 28 N. Miami St., West Milton
Fri, February 17	3:30 pm	FISH Choice Food Pantry
Sun, February 19	9:15 am	Christian Conversations (Coffee/Juice and Donuts)
	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.

Trinity Contact Info

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

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

February 12, 2023

Page 18 of 18