

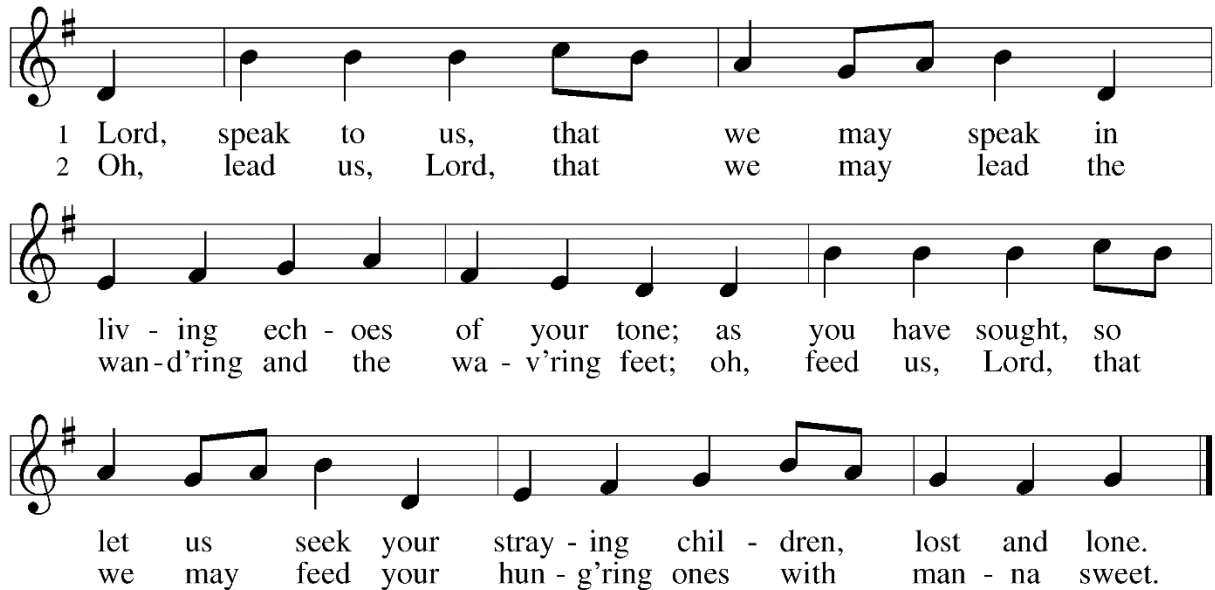
A Mission Congregation of the ELCA  
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church  
P. O. Box 64 - 8520 Oakes Rd - Pittsburg, Ohio 45358



Good Samaritan  
February 21, 2021



\* **HYMN OF PRAISE “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

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

let us seek your stray - ing chil - dren, lost and lone.  
we may feed your hun - g'ring ones with man - na sweet.

\* **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: God of wisdom... You challenge us to expand our minds to your inclusive view of the world. Teach us to welcome the stranger whoever they may be, and to open ourselves to having our minds changed and our hearts transformed, for the sake of Jesus our Lord.

C: **Amen.**

**SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 10:25-42**

P: Our scripture reading for this morning is from Luke, Chapter 10.

C: **Glory to you O Lord.**

<sup>25</sup>Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he said, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” <sup>26</sup>He said to him, “What is written in the law? What do you read there?” <sup>27</sup>He answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your

neighbor as yourself.”<sup>28</sup> And he said to him, “You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.”<sup>29</sup> But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”<sup>30</sup> Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead.<sup>31</sup> Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.<sup>32</sup> So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.<sup>33</sup> But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity.<sup>34</sup> He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him.<sup>35</sup> The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, ‘Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.’<sup>36</sup> Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?”<sup>37</sup> He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”

<sup>38</sup> Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home.<sup>39</sup> She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet and listened to what he was saying.<sup>40</sup> But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, “Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me.”<sup>41</sup> But the Lord answered her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; <sup>42</sup>there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her.”

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

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

• **SERMON**

**Pr Mel Musser**

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Word of God,  
Jesus Christ, Our Lord, amen.

Over the years, PJ and I have taken vacations to some of our Country’s largest cities. We’ve been to New York City, Chicago, Washington DC and others over the years. I’ll never forget the view from our high-rise Hotel in New York.

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\* Please stand if able

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As I looked out our window straining to see the beautiful skyline of the city, I



looked downward only to see this man. (SLIDE) I presumed him to be homeless, laying on the sidewalk every day we were there. Was that man my neighbor? (SLIDE) When you go to a Reds Baseball game in Cincinnati the panhandlers line the streets. Some even have handmade signs stating the obvious, “I just want beer money”. Are they my neighbors? We’ve all seen the orphans on our TV screens begging for our money. Are they our neighbors? What about that rundown house in Greenville that has those banners hanging from the front porch and the front yard full of junk. You can even hear the raucous noises coming from inside as you’re handing out food at the Soup Kitchen... Are they our neighbors?

“And who is my neighbor?”, the expert in the law asked. Jesus responded by telling the parable of the Good Samaritan. You all know it well, yet so many times we miss the point Jesus wants to make. Many imagine Jesus told it to show us how to be good, Christian people or they think that if we try to live up to the example of the Good Samaritan, then we’re on our way to heaven. How contrary to the Gospel that is! Jesus isn’t speaking these words to show the law expert how to be a good person. He already knows that. Jesus has a very different purpose in

mind. He accomplishes this purpose in our hearts today as we rightly listen to his words and ask ourselves: Have I loved my neighbor as myself?

The first thing Jesus wants us to understand is we are unable to justify ourselves under the law. That was one of Jesus's aims as he spoke to this law expert. Consider the situation--the law expert wants to test Jesus. Does he have some new laws to add to what God gave Moses at Mt. Sinai, some new life hack to gain eternal life? "What must I do to inherit eternal life?", he asks. Now if anyone insists on focusing on what they themselves must do, then Jesus has nothing new. God has already revealed through Moses what must be done. So, Jesus directs the expert to the Old Testament law. Our expert lawyer gives us an excellent summary of the law. "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind; and, Love your neighbor as yourself". Jesus answers, "Do this and you will live". How true that is! If you keep the law perfectly all the time loving God above all and loving your neighbor as yourself, God promises you eternal life -- as long as you never fail, not even once. If we could do that, then Jesus didn't need to come. If we could keep the law, then it was foolish for Jesus to suffer as he did. Those brief words from Jesus, "Do this and you will live", must have tweaked the man's beak. "Have I really kept the law? Have I loved my neighbor as myself?" Guilt started

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- \* Please stand if able
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to accuse him. He needed to justify himself. He needed to prove that he really had kept the law. It all depended on what that one not so little word, neighbor, meant. So, he asks, “And who is my neighbor?”

When you hear Jesus describe what it means to be a neighbor, ask yourself, “Have I loved my neighbor as myself?” A Jewish man falls to robbers and is left half dead. Two Jewish religious leaders pass by on the other side, but then the Samaritan comes. Samaritans and Jews hated each other, but that doesn’t stop him from acting. He puts aside all his bias and Samaritan privilege as his heart goes out to this stranger. According to Jesus, to love your neighbor as yourself means not only your friends, but also your enemies because they both are our neighbors. Think of what that means in our day-to-day lives. When something bad happens to that annoying coworker or that person who insults you or that classmate that calls you names or that individual who hurt you... Do you find yourself even for a short moment, relishing the passing pleasure of them getting what they deserve?

I regularly visit the ELCA Clergy FaceBook Group for many reasons. I like to see what other Pastors do when presented with common questions or problems. I’ve visited that page often over the past year trying to see how other Churches were dealing with the pandemic. This week I was appalled with the hatred that flowed against Mr. Limbaugh on this and many other FaceBook pages. No matter

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if you agreed with his politics or not, was he our neighbor? Does his family deserve our sympathy as our neighbor? So, have you loved your neighbor as yourself? In case you're thinking Jesus can't really be including our enemies with our neighbors, remember what he said back in Luke 6, "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you".

Have you loved your neighbor, yes, even your enemy, as yourself? Has anyone done that? Not the law expert, not you, not me. Jesus did! He loved even his betrayer, serving him Holy Communion at the Last Supper just before the betrayal. Jesus prayed for those who nailed him to the cross, "Father, forgive them." Jesus came into this dark, sin-infested world to seek and to save his enemies, lost sinners, including you and me. Only Jesus has perfectly loved even his enemies, giving up his very self for them, for you and for me.

We have more to learn from Jesus' parable. Many imagine they have loved their neighbor as they point to their works of charity. It's often easy to justify ourselves in the eyes of humanity by pointing out how much more we're doing than others might be doing. At least we're not like the priest or the Levite who passed by on the other side, doing nothing. Especially living in a rich country as we do, it's easy to give from the overflow of our surplus or figure we're doing our

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share through the taxes we pay for government programs. But is this loving our neighbor as ourselves? Look at the Samaritan. He didn't figure, "If those religious leaders didn't help at all as long as I help just a little bit, I'm doing better than they are." He didn't think, "I'm tired from my journey. I need to ride my donkey." He didn't think, "This is a dangerous place. I'll just report it to the authorities in the next town. Hopefully he won't die in the meantime." Instead, he reasoned, "If I were lying there half dead, I would want someone to dress my wounds and carry me to safety right away." He loved his neighbor as himself. He was willing to make the sacrifice. He used his own wine and oil to dress the wound at his expense. He gave up his comfort so that the donkey could carry the wounded man. He sacrificed his time caring for him. Yes, he even risked his life lingering in that dangerous place to help, before it was too late. He knew God's Law and he lived it. Do we really love our neighbor as ourselves, not rating our efforts against others who have done less, but rather ready to sacrifice whatever is necessary to bring the needed help? I won't point my finger at you because I already know I have failed! Only Jesus gave up all in order to bring the help we so desperately needed. He left the riches of heaven and became poor for our sake, lowering himself even to death on a cross so that we may become rich through his poverty. Only Jesus loved his neighbor as himself, giving up himself for you and for me.

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I know how badly I've failed to give tireless love, but Jesus never failed. The Samaritan didn't just dump the man off at the inn. He took care of him throughout the night and paid for additional care. He promised to pick up the tab for whatever more charges there might be. How easily our hearts grow cold and jaded over time when we're helping our neighbors, especially when they seem to need our help over and over again... Our patience wears out. We so easily tire of loving our neighbor as ourselves! Not so with Jesus. He loved us to the very end. Through the mocking and insults, through the beatings and even through the darkness of his god-forsaken cry, he never grew tired of loving you.

Then Jesus closes his lesson, "Go and do likewise". The problem is that I can't! I know I don't love my enemies as I should. My selfishness holds back how much I'm willing to sacrifice for others. I so easily tire even of loving my friends sometimes, let alone my enemies! And that, dear friends, is why Jesus came: To pay for our lovelessness. To atone for our failures. To credit us with his perfect love that never tires, but gives its all even for his enemies. That is why Jesus told this parable. He didn't tell it to show us how to be good people, but to show the expert in the law and to show you and me, how badly we have failed to be good people. How much we need Jesus! Our love toward others cannot and will not save us, because our love fails.

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O God, thank you for your agape love that never fails and never tires. Break us of our habit of thinking we are good enough. Strengthen us with your love so we can love all our neighbors as we love ourselves. Amen.

*Silence for reflection may follow*

• **SPECIAL MUSIC**

**Larry Harter**

\* **NICENE CREED**

*The Nicene Creed is said on all festivals and on Sundays in the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter. The Apostles' Creed is said at other times. The Creed is omitted here if the service of Holy Baptism or another rite with a creed is used.*

**C: We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

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➤ *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: You made your followers uncomfortable, O Lord, when you invited them to look beyond their closest circles of friends and serve all your children. In the same way shake up our restricted views and open us to a bigger life where anything is possible with you. Compassionate God,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: There is need of only one thing: you and your unbounded love. Show us clearly the power of accepting others and seeing ourselves in each person we encounter. Compassionate God,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: You invite us to walk gently upon the earth, treating creation as our home. Give us vision in how we live on this planet and strengthen our efforts to protect and preserve all that you have made. Compassionate God,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: Make us present to those who need our help and show us a world beyond the confines of our comfort zone. Use us as healing ambassadors to all whom we encounter. We ask you to send your blessing to those whom we name today...  
Compassionate God,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: Make us one with all the saints of every time and place, and inspire the deeds of our lives with their example of passion and faithfulness. Compassionate God,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

*Here other petitions may be offered.*

P: You hear all your children's prayers and gather the lost into your loving arms. Teach us to put our trust in you, and in our Lord and savior 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 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: We please you when we serve your children in need. Use these offerings to provide for the lack of others, and to carry out your justice upon the earth.

**C: Amen.**

\* **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

P: Jesus is the "tie that Binds us together", 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: You are what God made you to be: created in Christ Jesus for good works, chosen as holy and beloved, freed to serve your neighbor. God bless you that you may be a blessing, in the name of the holy and life-giving Trinity.

**C: Amen.**

\* **SENDING HYMN**

**“Blest Be the Tie That Binds”**

**LBW 370**



1 Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Chris - tian love;  
 2 Be - fore our Fa - ther's throne we pour our ar - dent prayers;



the u - ni - ty of heart and mind is like to that a - bove.  
 our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our com - forts and our cares.

\* **DISMISSAL**

**P:** Depart in Christ's Love.

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

\* **POSTLUDE “Let There Be Honor and Glory and Praises” Roxanne Groff**

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**Trinity Worship Assistants and Staff**

Ministers	All the People of Trinity
Organist	Roxanne Groff
Lector	Kathy Kathman
Parrish Nurse	PJ Musser
Custodian	Mark Groff
Secretary	Sharon Fourman
Facebook Live Recorder	PJ Musser
Altar Flowers	<i>There are no altar flowers during Lent.</i>

\* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

February 21, 2021

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**Health Tips for the Week**  
**BODY:** Take a long bath  
**MIND:** Reorganize your book shelves  
**SPIRIT:** Say 'I Love You' from the heart



Scripture readings for next Sunday, February 28<sup>th</sup>  
Luke 13:1-9, 31-35

### **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.



### **This Week @ Trinity –February 21 thru February 28, 2021**

**Sun, February 21**  
10:30 am      Worship Service

**Tues, February 23**      **Newsletter Deadline**

**Wed, February 24**  
6:30 pm      Confirmation Class

**Fri, February 26**  
3:30 pm      FISH Choice Food Pantry

**Sun, February 28**  
10:30 am      Worship Service

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**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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Cell Phone:	937-626-7100
Secretary:	Sharon Fourman
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