

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



Jeremiah 29:1, 4-14
November 28, 2021



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



- **Prelude**

Roxanne Groff

- **Office of the Acolyte and Ringing of the Bell**

- **Welcome**

Pastor Mel Musser

- **First Week of Advent: Hope Candle**

Reader One: Just as Jeremiah spoke to a nation in despair, we see a world suffering, and struggle with our own challenges, wondering ‘How long, O Lord?’

Reader Two: But Jeremiah speaks a word of hope, proclaiming God’s promise of restoration, even if we must wait patiently for it.

Reader One: (*light candle 1*) We light this candle as a sign of that expectant hope.

Reader Two: A flame of anticipation that points to God’s mighty deeds in a dark world desperate for God’s radiant love.

*** 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.

P: Healing God,

C: We come into this house broken and lost. We bring our worries and our fears. We bring the weight of having acted out in ways that hurt others, you, and ourselves. We wonder if there will ever be a time when light will find us. Forgive what we have done and heal us, for the sake of the one who gave everything for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

L: God offers light and healing. God invites us into a new way of being. Despite our sin, God forgives. Receive and welcome God’s forgiveness, for you are made clean and whole again. In Jesus’ name we pray.

C: Amen.

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated



Spir - it, Spir - it of gen - tle - ness, blow through the wil - der - ness



call - ing and free; Spir - it, Spir - it of rest - less - ness,



stir me from plac - id - ness, wind, wind on the sea.



- 1 You moved on the wa - ters, you called to the deep,
- 2 You swept through the des - ert, you stung with the sand,
- 3 You sang in a sta - ble, you cried from a hill,
- 4 You call from to - mor - row, you break an - cient schemes.



then you coaxed up the moun - tains from the val - leys of sleep;
and you goad - ed your peo - ple with a law and a land;
then you whis - pered in si - lence when the whole world was still;
From the bond - age of sor - row all the cap - tives dream dreams;



and o - ver the e - ons you called to each thing:
and when they were blind - ed with i - dols and lies,
and down in the cit - y you called once a - gain,
our wom - en see vi - sions, our men clear their eyes.



“A - wake from your slum - bers and rise on your wings.”
then you spoke through your proph - ets to o - pen their eyes.
when you blew through your peo - ple on the rush of the wind.
With . . . bold new de - ci - sions your peo - ple a - rise.

Refrain

*** 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... God of restoration, when the Israelites were exiled, you invited them to accept a new normal. Show us how to move forward when it seems all is lost.

C: **Amen.**

- **CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

Theme: How to Face Changes

Scripture: Jeremiah 29:1, 4-14

Items Needed: Cardboard Moving Box

Good morning girls and boys! I hope you had a great Thanksgiving this past week. We just finally got to celebrate our Thanksgiving yesterday and it was really a great time for family.

Have any of you ever moved into a new house? When people move, what kinds of things do they pack in their moving boxes? That's right, we pack our dishes from the kitchen. We pack our clothes from our bedrooms. We pack our books and our favorite toys in boxes like this one I have here.

Can you pack up your church and take it with you when you move? I don't think so! How about your church family? Your friends from your school? Nope. We can't take them with us either, can we?

You know the people who lived in Jerusalem a long time before Jesus was born had to move too. All the children had to leave their church and all their friends behind. It must have been very sad for them, don't you think? Would you be sad if you had to move really far away? I sure would because I would miss all of you!

Back then God sent his messenger, the Prophet Jeremiah to let all the children who were very far away from their home that they should live their lives as fully as they were able right where they were. God doesn't want us to worry over what happened yesterday and those things we might have left behind. God wants us to always look to the future and make the place where we are a better place for everyone around us. If we do that we'll soon leave our sadness and feelings over the things and people we've left behind.

God also promised those ancient people Hope for a return to their homeland and their church. God didn't say exactly when but he said it would be a long time. When Jesus came he also said we would come home some day. You see we're all just travelers here on earth. Our real home is in heaven with God and with Jesus. So, someday we will all be reunited together with all the ones we've loved. On that day there will be a party! It'll be even bigger and better than Thanksgiving and Christmas and Easter and all the other holidays combined.!

Let's take a minute to pray and thank God for the hope we have in Jesus... Dear God, thank you for speaking to us through the prophets like Jeremiah. Thank you also for the hope we have in our Savior Jesus. Help us live in hope and while we're busy living, help us make this place better for all people. Amen.

* Please stand if able

● Please be seated

• **SCRIPTURE READING: Jeremiah 29:1, 4-14**

P: Our scripture reading is from the Book of Jeremiah, the 29th Chapter.

C: Glory to you O Lord.

29These are the words of the letter that the prophet Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to the remaining elders among the exiles, and to the priests, the prophets, and all the people, whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon.

⁴Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: ⁵Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat what they produce. ⁶Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. ⁷But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

⁸For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Do not let the prophets and the diviners who are among you deceive you, and do not listen to the dreams that they dream, ⁹for it is a lie that they are prophesying to you in my name; I did not send them, says the Lord. ¹⁰For thus says the Lord: Only when Babylon's seventy years are completed will I visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place. ¹¹For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. ¹²Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. ¹³When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, ¹⁴I will let you find me, says the Lord, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, says the Lord, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

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

- **SERMON**

Pastor Mel Musser

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the one who restored us to God and gave us hope for the future, Jesus Christ, our Lord, amen.

We begin this new Church year with a wonderful letter of hope from the prophet Jeremiah to the people of Judah who had been defeated by the Babylonians and taken into exile 1500 miles away from their precious homeland and their beautiful city of Jerusalem. The year was 594 BC and Jerusalem had been utterly destroyed. Their beautiful temple lay in ruins. The crem dela crem of Judean society had been carried off to a foreign land and now found themselves in the same exiled territory as their fellow countrymen from the larger, northern tribe of Israel, who had been conquered by the Assyrian army and taken into exile 200 years before. Many of them, longing for their former ways, wept by the rivers of Babylon and wailed the anguished question, “How could we sing the LORD’S song in a foreign land?” (Psalm 137:1-4). They were in total despair. Into this context Jeremiah writes this letter from God promising these beleaguered people they still have a prosperous future because their God still reigns and will rescue them in God’s time, not their time...

Jeremiah for some reason was left behind in the devastated city of Jerusalem with the poorest of the poor. It was from his vantage point, living in the ruined

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remains of the once great city that he wrote this letter to his fellow Jewish brothers and sisters. They wanted to wallow in their sadness and give up, but Jeremiah gives them a reason to hope. He tells them while you're in exile, work for the improvement of the place where you live. Back in my days as an Assignment Officer for the Air Force, we had a saying we would tell our fellow officers when they would call us at the Air Force Personnel Center. They would complain that their current assignment wasn't to their liking. The location wasn't anywhere near where they wanted to be, or the job itself wasn't challenging enough. The first piece of advice we were instructed to give them was to bloom where you're planted. The most important job you will ever have in the Air Force is the one you currently have. Unless you excel where you are right now, there's little chance we can find a better position for you.

I think that's essentially what Jeremiah was saying to the Jews in exile. Bloom where you're planted. God wasn't defeated by the Babylonian god Marduk, rather Jeremiah tells them God allowed them to be exiled because of their disobedience to God's commands. The Word of God given through Jeremiah lets those desperate, depressed, and despondent exiles know their term of exile won't be forever and that one-day God will allow them to return to rebuild their

wonderful city and temple. In the meantime, Jeremiah says bloom where you're planted. Don't give up. Carry on with your lives your religious traditions.

By way of comforting those who are stranded in a foreign land, Jeremiah writes words that will become some of the most misinterpreted words in scripture. “¹¹For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. ¹²Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. ¹³When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart...” Have you ever noticed this verse from Jeremiah is inscribed on numerous graduation gifts? It's widely interpreted to apply directly to each and every graduate from high school or college all over the United States. I'm pretty certain Jeremiah wasn't thinking about his words being used to encourage 18 year old's that God has their future all planned out ahead of them. It was meant to encourage the remnant of God's chosen people not to give up in the face of humiliating defeat. Don't get me wrong, there's nothing wrong with allowing God's Word to come alive when you read the Bible for your personal devotion, the trouble comes when a single verse or a couple of verses are taken out of context and then applied to all of us individually. In the case of these verser every verb and pronoun is plural. Every you in this passage should be read in my Texas accent and pronounced y'all. If we never hear the plurals in this

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passage we would conclude this applies to me myself, and I. The reality is Jeremiah addressed this letter to all the exiles together. He is relaying God's promise that He will always be with the people when they as a group pray and call on His Name. We're in danger of missing that point when we read all the yous and the verbs as singular...

So, with that in mind, what might Jeremiah, aka, God have wanted us to understand from this letter of encouragement. If we're trying to be even a little more faithful in how this might apply today we should at least acknowledge it's addressed to all of us and not to just any single one of us. Then we might ask ourselves if we're facing a time when we're in danger of losing our faith as those exiles so long ago. If we face tough times as a congregation what is the Word of God that speaks to us in that kind of situation? I know we're not faced with exile from our homeland and our loved ones, but as a congregation we have been facing some pretty difficult times over the past couple of years. When the Pandemic hit we were all afraid of what would happen to our small family Church. As the weeks went by I wondered if we would survive as a viable congregation and if we did, what would that look like. Even after all these months, wearing masks for a long time, trying our best to stay socially distanced, and sanitizing everything we look at, we're still not back to our pre-pandemic norm. Are some people staying

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away from Worship because they feel we're being too restrictive or are some staying away because we're not restrictive enough and they are still too afraid to return. Your Church Council and I have done everything we can think of to make this a safe place without adding unnecessary burdens. In the end, I still wonder if we can get back to our former normal.

If I'm listening to the words from Jeremiah, maybe we should stop agonizing over the former things and remember to bloom where we're planted. When I think in this way, I'm reminded that last year we couldn't gather together as we've done so many years at Bev and Eldon's home for the Annual Christmas Auction. Instead, we brought in items for a silent auction and made the best of our situation. While we may not have had nearly as much fun, we did raise more money in that silent auction than we had raised in previous years and many local folks enjoyed a nice Christmas because we bloomed where we were planted and made the best of our situation. This year we're hoping to do the same. Today we're tying this beautiful Quilt. Lovingly created by our Quilting Ladies. That group has surely bloomed where they were planted. All during this pandemic they continued to work to provide quilts and school kit and personal care kits to refugees and exiles all over the world. These gifts of love extend the same promise of hope to these modern day refugees and exiles that Jeremiah's letter from God

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made all those years ago. Thank you ladies for doing God's work even when times are tough!

I don't know when, or if we'll ever get back to the way it was before the Covid hit. At this point I'm not sure we should go back. We've discovered so many new and exciting ways to worship and even added to those who we can reach with the Good News of the Gospel that to go back would mean losing those gains. Either way, I believe our challenge for the post pandemic church is to figure out how to continue to bloom right here in spite of all the things the devil and this world continue to throw at us to slow us down or stop us in our tracks all together... I think the message from Jeremiah to us is this: do not get discouraged. Continue to live your lives as God's Children. Continue the mission we inherited from our forefathers and mothers until the day we leave this earth for the next or until Jesus returns with the hosts of heaven to make this place the new heaven and the new earth and God himself comes to live among us. Luther once said when asked what he would do if he knew Jesus was returning tomorrow that he would go outside and plant an apple tree. I guess he was the original Johnny Appleseed... The point is that until our sentence is served on this planet, the best thing we can do is to try to make this place a little better after we're gone for the next generation and for those who are in need now.

May God's voice speak to us through these ancient prophecies. May the voice of Jeremiah help us understand what God is calling us to do in our present situation and culture. May this congregation continue to be an instrument God uses to make the Gospel known to those who have not heard and to those who need a second or third chance to hear it again. As we prepare for the coming of our savior, may we listen to the voice of our savior as He calls us to live out the hope we have in Christ Jesus by blooming right here where God planted us. Amen.

Silence may be kept for meditation...

*** NICENE CREED**

The Nicene Creed is said on all festivals and on Sundays in the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter.

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

Or, He descended to the dead.

* Please stand if able

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* **QUILT TYING FOR BRYCELIN TROUTWINE**

* **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

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

A brief silence.

L: We do not always like what we are being asked to do, O Lord. Life is one way and we would like it to be another. We're not in the right place, doing the right thing at the time we would prefer. Show us, Lord, that where we are now is exactly where you need us to be, and assure us of the blessings which you have promised. Comforting God,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: You give us a peace which the world cannot, O Lord. Discourage us from seeking after temporary assurances or flimsy hopes. Instill generosity within us during a season that can often become a frantic scramble to take care of our own concerns. Open us to the unfolding mystery of your presence among us. Comforting God,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: We give you thanks for a time to pause in gratitude for all the blessings of our lives. We thank you for family, for food and shelter, for friends and neighbors and our church community. Bless all those who find themselves alone on holidays, whether by choice or otherwise, and make of us one great human family. Comforting God,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: There is more suffering in the world than we can sometimes comprehend, and yet you hold us all in the palm of your hand. Pour out your healing spirit on all who cry to you. Send a special blessing this day to... Comforting God,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: Like saints before us who waited on the fulfillment of your word, we find our peace in your faithfulness to all generations. Uphold us with your promises still, and assure us of our place among the heavenly throngs who adore you eternally. Comforting God,

C: Hear our prayer.

Here other petitions may be offered.

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

P: We have asked, and you have heard. Surround all those for whom we pray with your mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

*** SHARING OF THE PEACE**

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

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

C: And also with you.

*** OFFERING PRAYER**

While the congregation is still standing say:

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

P: So, let's pray for the offerings we receive this day. Even when we are lost or broken, we know that healing comes when we reach out, rather than isolate, give, rather than withhold. So, we bring our offerings to you in the hope that abundant blessings come not only for us, but for those who benefit from these gifts that we offer. In Jesus' name we pray.

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

* Please stand if able

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* **SENDING BLESSING**

P: People of God, you are Christ's body, bringing new life to a suffering world.
The holy Trinity, † one God, bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

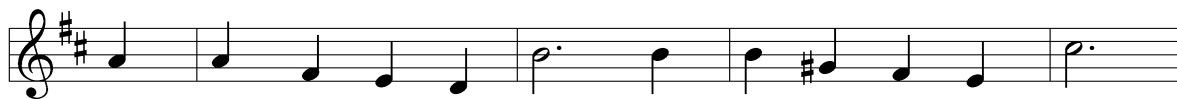
* **SENDING HYMN "Crown Him with Many Crowns" LBW 170**
Verses 1-3 Only



1 Crown him with man - y crowns, the Lamb up - on his throne;
2 Crown him the vir - gin's Son, the God in - car - nate born,
3 Crown him the Lord of love— be - hold his hands and side,
4 Crown him the Lord of life, who tri - umphed o'er the grave



hark, how the heav'n-ly an - them drowns all mu - sic but its own.
whose arm those crim-son tro-phies won which now his brow a - dorn;
rich wounds, yet vis - i - ble a - bove, in beau - ty glo - ri - fied.
and rose vic - to - rious in the strife for those he came to save.



A - wake, my soul, and sing of him who died for thee,
fruit of the mys - tic rose, yet of that rose the stem,
No an - gels in the sky can ful - ly bear that sight,
His glo - ries now we sing, who died and rose on high,



and hail him as thy match-less king through all e - ter - ni - ty.
the root whence mer - cy ev - er flows, the babe of Beth - le - hem.
but down - ward bend their burn - ing eyes at mys - ter - ies so bright.
who died, e - ter - nal life to bring, and lives that death may die.

* **DISMISSAL**

P: Until the next time we gather together as God's people to offer our worship and praise, depart in Christ's Love.

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

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

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Scripture readings for next Sunday, December 5th
Ezekiel 37:1-14

Health Tips for the Week

BODY: Take time for yourself

MIND: Read a book about history of the church

SPIRIT: Start an Advent Devotional

Trinity Worship Assistants and Staff

Ministers	All the People of Trinity
Organist	Roxanne Groff
Lector	Larry Harter
Acolyte	
Parrish Nurse	PJ Musser
Custodian	Mark Groff
Secretary	Sharon Fourman
Facebook Live Recorder	PJ Musser
Altar Flowers	



Trinity is on the Air at FM 88.3

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

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.

This Week @ Trinity – November 28 thru December 5, 2021

Sun, November 28	10:30 am	Worship Service
Wed, December 1	6:30 pm	WELCA Meeting – Christmas Celebration
Fri, December 3	3:30 pm	FISH Choice Food Pantry
Sat, December 4	10:00 am	Children’s Christmas Program Practice
Sun, December 5	10:30 am	Worship Service
	11:30 am	Children’s Christmas Program Practice

Trinity Contact Info

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