

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



**Rich Man and Lazarus**  
**March 14, 2021**

• **Prelude**      “Remember; Jesus Messiah; At the Cross”      **Darrell Fryman**

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

• **Welcome**      **Pr Mel**

\* **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: God of mercy,

**C: Jesus was faithful even in the face of death, yet we so often fail you in day to day living. Our commitment is shaky, our promises are unreliable, and our actions are questionable. We quit when discipleship becomes difficult and complain that we don't get enough credit. Forgive us our neglect of your mission and our lukewarm devotion and wake us up to the urgency of your gospel.**

P: God is gracious and pardons all our shortcomings. May the giver of life forgive us our sins and restore us to the joy of discipleship and service, for the sake of Jesus our faithful Lord.

**C: Amen.**

\* **HYMN OF PRAISE**

**“When Peace, Like A River”**

**LBW 346**

*Verses 1 & 4 Only*



1 When peace, like a riv - er, at - tend - eth my way; when  
2 Though Sa - tan should buf - fet, though tri - als should come, let  
3 He lives— oh, the bliss of this glo - ri - ous thought; my  
4 And Lord, haste the day when our faith shall be sight, the



sor - rows, like sea bil - lows, roll; what - ev - er my lot, thou hast  
this blest as - sur - ance con - trol, that Christ hath re - gard - ed my  
sin, not in part, but the whole, is nailed to his cross and I  
clouds be rolled back as a scroll, the trum - pet shall sound and the



taught me to say, it is well, it is well with my soul.  
help - less es - tate, and hath shed his own blood for my soul.  
bear it no more. Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O, my soul!  
Lord shall de - scend; e - ven so it is well with my soul.

*Refrain*



It is well with my soul, it is well, it is well with my soul.

\* **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... Merciful God, you care deeply for those who are in need. May we be your hands and heart as we go about your work of serving the poor, hungry and disadvantaged, feeding our souls on kindness and love.

**C:** Amen.

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\* Please stand if able

March 14, 2021

• Please be seated

Page 3 of 15

## SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 16:19-31

P: Our scripture reading for this morning is from Luke, Chapter 16.

### C: Glory to you O Lord.

<sup>19</sup>“There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. <sup>20</sup>And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, <sup>21</sup>who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man’s table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores. <sup>22</sup>The poor man died and was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried. <sup>23</sup>In Hades, where he was being tormented, he looked up and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side. <sup>24</sup>He called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in agony in these flames.’ <sup>25</sup>But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony. <sup>26</sup>Besides all this, between you and us a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who might want to pass from here to you cannot do so, and no one can cross from there to us.’ <sup>27</sup>He said, ‘Then, father, I beg you to send him to my father’s house—<sup>28</sup>for I have five brothers—that he may warn them, so that they will not also come into this place of torment.’ <sup>29</sup>Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the prophets; they should listen to them.’ <sup>30</sup>He said, ‘No, father Abraham; but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’ <sup>31</sup>He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’”

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 Christ our Brother

amen.

On November 25, 1835, little Andrew Carnegie was born into a poor family in Scotland. He grew up in extreme poverty, and often would sleep to “forget the misery of hunger.” To save themselves from starvation, his family came to the

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\* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

United States when was 13, hoping for a better future. While here, Andrew got his first job as a bobbin boy in a Pittsburgh cotton factory, where he would change spools of thread 12 hours a day, 6 days a week. He later became a telegraph messenger boy, and later was promoted to an operator. He then moved onto railroad jobs, where he learned about the industry and business in general. During this time, Andrew began making investments in steel and oil companies that netted him huge returns. Some 65 years later, his Carnegie Steel Corporation became the largest steel company in the world, and he went on to become the richest man in the world, worth over \$450 million at that time... Not bad for a poor little boy from Scotland! Who doesn't love a good rags-to-riches story?

It's neat to see how people who come from nothing can become something. That is the American dream, at least it was when I grew up... We love to see how hard work can pay off. We enjoy these rags to riches stories, whether it is the story of people like Andrew Carnegie, Oprah Winfrey, Steve Jobs, Tom Brady, or Cinderella. Their stories are encouraging, instructive, and inspiring. Equally interesting and instructive, though, can be the opposite: riches to rags stories. It's common to hear stories about celebrities, athletes, and investors who had it all and then lost it all. Their stories often serve as great warnings. This morning, Luke shows us both sides of life in our parable as he builds on his great reversal theme

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- \* Please stand if able
  - Please be seated

that began even before the birth story of Jesus when the angel announced to Mary she would give birth to God's Son. If you remember, Mary sang that beautiful Magnificat where she described God filling the hungry with good things even while sending the rich away empty. Then, later when Jesus gave the Sermon on the Plain He said blessed are the hungry for you will be fed; blessed are the poor for the Kingdom of Heaven is for them. Luke doesn't try to soften Jesus' words by spiritualizing them as Matthew does, saying the poor in spirit and those who thirst for righteousness. No, in Luke we're talking about real poor people and people whose thirst is for water, not righteousness. Jesus didn't stop with the rags to riches either. To make his point perfectly clear, he went on to say, woe to the rich for they have received your reward and woe to those who are full now for you will be hungry. This morning we see a rags-to-riches and riches-to-rags story that gives us a concrete example of the great reversal Luke has been writing about since the beginning of his Gospel. The purpose of this story is to inspire, warn, and instruct us on how to live under the Kingdom of God.

Jesus begins our parable by introducing us to two different and opposite men. The first man we meet is the rich man, who is historically called "Dives." (*Dee – vayz*) "Dives" means "rich" in Latin. The rich man wears purple clothes, which screams, "I have money! I'm rich!" Purple was an expensive color and

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came from snail's blood. Can you imagine how many snails it would take to make something purple?! Purple is an expensive color! Along with that, the man wore fine linen and feasted sumptuously every day. This would be extravagant and unheard of.. I mean even by today's standards, who feasts and parties daily? The man is a picture of excess and self-indulgence.

Just outside his door we find our second character, Lazarus. This is the only time in any parable, where Jesus gives a character a name. The name Lazarus means "one whom God helps" and the fact he has a name tells us he's important to God and precious in his sight. Lazarus finds himself on the other end of the spectrum, though. Lazarus is a poor man who is posted in front of the rich man's gate, just outside of where he lives and feasts in luxury. Unlike the rich man who is dressed in purple and fine linen, Lazarus is dressed in sores that immobilize him. Maybe someone there will help... At least the dogs help, you might be thinking... Not so fast. While the licking of the dogs may have helped Lazarus get some relief from his sores, it humiliated and hurt his reputation in the process. This pitiful aid came at a cost! As he sits outside the gate, he also starves, wishing for just the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. You probably couldn't find a pair of more opposite men!

To no one's surprise, Jesus says that Lazarus died. Instead of being tossed down to hell, he is lifted up by angels to heaven. He receives divine help where human aid was lacking, and he is taken to Abraham's side, perhaps the place of honor at a heavenly banquet! There's your ultimate rags-to-riches story! What about the rich man, Dives? What happened to him? Poor old Lazarus winds up at Abraham's side, but Dives ends up in the opposite side of that coin in H-E-Double Hockey Sticks also known as Hades, where he finds himself in great torment. In his agony, he lifts up his eyes and sees Abraham with Lazarus. He knows those guys, maybe they can help! That formerly rich man, Dives, must have been in such anguish that even a drop, a single drop of water, would help! Now the shoe is on the other foot and we see the ultimate Riches to rags story as only Jesus can tell it. To me this is a frightening story of riches-to-rags—none too comforting for those of us who are used to having our Gospel tailored to our sensitive egos...

Why does Luke tell this tale of the great reversal? Why is Lazarus in heaven, and the rich man in hell? Lazarus isn't simply rewarded for being poor and the rich man punished for being wealthy. If that were the case, we would all be in big trouble. In the US, even the poorest of us is the rich man compared to the rest of the world. Imagine living on less than \$600 per year as they do in the Congo and Mozambique. They'd be more than happy to eat their fill from our

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dumpsters. In 2019 the average US family threw away over \$1,600 of food. If we could just reduce or garbage, we wouldn't need a stimulus check from the government... Maybe some of what we throw away could be used to feed the hungry around the world... Yes, we should all try to do better in stepping up to feed the hungry, but that isn't why the rich man ends up in eternal torment and Lazarus at the Banquet feast of the Lamb. It's because of faith. Lazarus wasn't saved because he was poor, but because of his faith. The rich man wasn't condemned because of his riches, per se. His love of money not only blinded him to the needs of the poor, but also of his truest need, that of the amazing grace of our Amazing God. It wasn't what he did or did not do that condemned him. It was his lack of faith. Even in death the rich man was still depending on his former power and prestige as he asked Abraham to order Lazarus to bring him water and later to return to earth and warn his brothers. He never once trusted God to provide for his or their daily bread. God's Word is enough. No miracle or divine display is needed. Today, in addition to the Word of God provided through Moses and the Prophets we have Jesus, God's Word become flesh; to see, hear, and even taste. Jesus is our Lazarus, returned from the grave to give us faith and someone to trust in for our eternal needs. Now there's a story of rags-to-riches, and riches-to-rags! What a reversal!

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- \* Please stand if able
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To finish my story about Andrew Carnegie. Proclaiming that, “the man who dies rich dies disgraced,” Carnegie spent his later years donating his fortune to charitable causes, eventually giving away some \$350 million. I wonder if he read this story about the rich man and Lazarus... The greatest missionary of all time puts it this way: “though He (Jesus) was in the form of God, He did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” I can’t say it any better than that, so I’ll stop right here...

May we all learn from the rich man that money, status, and power might keep our stomachs full, but our souls will starve until we fill them with faith and trust in Jesus Christ. May God give us the faith to imitate the example of Jesus as we empty ourselves for the poor Lazarus’ at our gates. Amen.

*Silence for reflection may follow*

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• **SPECIAL MUSIC**

**Trudie & Robby Arling**

\* **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**

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

*A brief silence.*

L: If we do not show love, we cannot know the abundant life which you desire for us. Touch our hearts with mercy that we might also be merciful. Compassionate God,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: So much of the world suffers for lack of basic needs. Lead us to demand more equitable systems of resource use and distribution, that none may be in need. Compassionate God,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

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\* Please stand if able

March 14, 2021

• Please be seated

Page 11 of 15

L: O Lord, give us wisdom to deal with the challenges that face us in this world. Help us be better stewards of all that you have made and to find new ways of living and thriving along with your creation. Compassionate God,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: Be with those who suffer from diseases related to malnutrition as well as those with various eating disorders. Feed us on your grace and bring us into wholeness with our bodies and our souls. Speed relief from the Corona Virus to our world. Give wisdom to medical and political leaders so our businesses and our society and resume somewhat normal activity and the vaccines can be administered to everyone who wants and needs it. Send your healing Spirit to... .. Compassionate God,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: Comfort those whose hearts are broken at the loss of those they love. Assure us that you hold all the departed in your eternal love and that we will see them again when our time on earth is done. 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: When we give, we receive a blessing: to know the fruits of love. Bless these offerings and use them, as well as our lives, to prosper the ones who need it most, for the sake of Jesus Christ.

**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.**

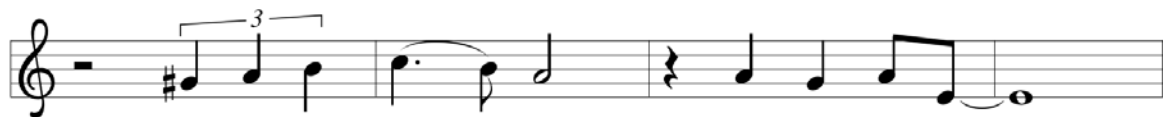
\* **SENDING HYMN**                      **“Change My Heart, O God”**                      **ELW 801**  
*(Sing 2 times through)*



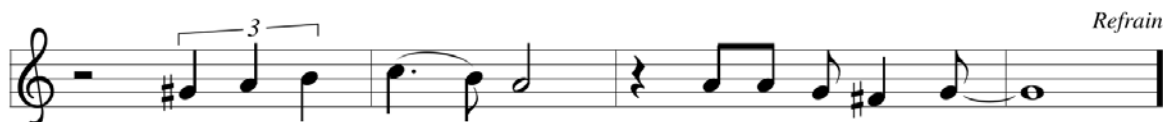
Change my heart, O God;                      make it ev - er true.



Change my heart, O God;                      may I be like you.



You are the pot - ter;                      I am the clay.



Mold me and make me;                      this is what I pray.

\* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

March 14, 2021

Page 13 of 15

\* **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!**

\* **POSTLUDE**

**“Go Ye Into All the World”**

**Darrell Fryman**

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**Trinity Worship Assistants and Staff**

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Ministers              | All the People of Trinity                      |
| Organist               | Roxanne Groff                                  |
| Lector                 | Robby Arling                                   |
| Greeter                | 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> |

**Health Tips for the Week**

**BODY:** Treat yourself to a massage

**MIND:** Share photos with friends

**SPIRIT:** Watch the sunset



Scripture readings for next Sunday, March 21<sup>st</sup>  
Luke 18:31–19:10

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\* Please stand if able

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March 14, 2021

Page 14 of 15

## **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 –March 14 thru March 21, 2021**

#### **Sun, March 14 Daylight Savings Time Begins**

10:30 am Worship Service

#### **Wed, March 17 St. Patrick's Day**

6:00 pm Finance Team Meeting

7:00 pm Trinity Council Meeting

#### **Fri, March 19**

3:30 pm FISH Choice Food Pantry

#### **Sun, March 21**

10:30 am Worship Service



### **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       |

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March 14, 2021

Page 15 of 15