

Announcements

-Worship: Outdoor worship continues, alternating with fully-online worship. Outdoor worship is scheduled for Sept. 6 & 22. Safety guidelines include social distancing, wearing masks, and modified worship. Full details at trinitytipton.org/outdoor-worship/.

-2nd Annual Back-to-School Party

Even though this year is different, we're finding safe and creative ways to connect with each other. This year, on September 2, we're doing a come-and-go event in our church yard from 6:30-7:30pm. This event is for all ages and stages of Trinity members and friends. We'll have sidewalk chalk, ice cream sandwiches/popsicles, and a cake-walk style game with yummy individually-wrapped prizes. The treat walk will start at 6:45. We'll also have take-home Faith Boxes for PreK-4th Graders to pick up. Please remember your mask. See you then! (In case of rain, Sept 9 is the back-up date.)

-High Schoolers: First Ever Lutheran-Methodist Church Olympics! Featuring a water balloon toss, wacky relay, and other challenges to determine the winner of the gold medal! We'll also have a devotion: "Training for Life," talking about how we prepare for the challenges of faith like an athlete prepares for a game or a race.

When? Sept. 2, 7:15-8:15 (In case of rain, Sept 9 is the back-up date.)

Who? You! Bring a friend, too!

What? Physically-distant, socially-connected games, challenges, popsicles!

Please wear your mask for safety. See you there!

-The Women's Circle is collecting supplies for Lutheran World Relief's annual school kits drive. You can contribute any or all of the supplies needed for each kit: 4 70-sheet notebooks (wide- or college-ruled), 1 30-centimeter ruler, 1 pencil sharpener, 1 pair safety scissors, 5 unsharpened #2 pencils with erasers, 5 black or blue ballpoint pens, 1 box of crayons (16- or 24-count), 1 2.5" eraser; you can drop off these items at outdoor worship or by appointment

-Discussion group for *Dear Church* by Rev. Lenny Duncan: online, 9/9 & 9/16, 7:30-8:30 at <https://tinyurl.com/y39h9rye>

Curious about *Dear Church*? "Lenny Duncan is the unlikeliest of pastors. Formerly incarcerated, he is now a black preacher in the whitest denomination in the United States: the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Shifting demographics and shrinking congregations make all the headlines, but Duncan sees something else at work--drawing a direct line between the church's lack of diversity and the church's lack of vitality. The problems the ELCA faces are theological, not sociological. But so are the answers.

Part manifesto, part confession, and all love letter, *Dear Church* offers a bold new vision for the future of Duncan's denomination and the broader mainline Christian community of faith. *Dear*

Church rejects the narrative of church decline and calls everyone--leaders and laity alike--to the front lines of the church's renewal through racial equality and justice.

It is time for the church to rise up, dust itself off, and take on forces of this world that act against God: whiteness, misogyny, nationalism, homophobia, and economic injustice. Duncan gives a blueprint for the way forward and urges us to follow in the revolutionary path of Jesus."

-Zoom Fellowship today at 11am

(<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/601353237?pwd=YjhXSE5rZ2hPaUg1SIIzMUNMNVI2dz09>)

-Worship today includes Communion. You can prepare by grabbing yourself some bread or crackers and wine or juice.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who forgives all our sin,
whose mercy endures forever.

Amen.

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Gracious God,

have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy



1 There's a wide-ness in God's mer - cy, like the wide - ness of the sea;
 2 There is wel - come for the sin - ner, and a prom - ised grace made good;
 3 For the love of God is broad - er than the mea - sures of our mind;
 4 'Tis not all we owe to Je - sus; it is some - thing more than all:



there's a kind - ness in God's jus - tice which is more than lib - er - ty.
 there is mer - cy with the Sav - ior; there is heal - ing in his blood.
 and the heart of the E - ter - nal is most won - der - ful - ly kind.
 great - er good be - cause of e - vil, larg - er mer - cy through the fall.



There is no place where earth's sor - rows are more felt than up in heav'n.
 There is grace e - nough for thou - sands of new worlds as great as this;
 But we make this love too nar - row by false lim - its of our own;
 Make our love, O God, more faith - ful; let us take you at your word,



There is no place where earth's fail - ings have such kind - ly judg - ment giv'n.
 there is room for fresh cre - a - tions in that up - per home of bliss.
 and we mag - ni - fy its strict - ness with a zeal God will not own.
 and our lives will be thanks - giv - ing for the good - ness of the Lord.

Text: Frederick W. Faber, 1814–1863, alt.
 Music: LORD, REVIVE US, North American, 19th cent.

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
 and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

God, our lives are too often full of competing priorities. Help us to turn our focus on you, to let go of the idols that tempt us, and to follow you with our whole lives. Help us trust in the inheritance of your riches we receive through faith. We pray this through Jesus Christ, our savior and lord. **Amen.**

Hymn of Praise

Refrain



This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



1 Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose
2 Sing . . with all the peo - ple of God, and



blood set us free to be peo - ple of God.
join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion:



Pow - er and rich - es, wis - dom and strength, and
Bless - ing and hon - or, glo - ry and might be to



hon - or and bless - ing and glo - ry are his.
God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.

3 For the Lamb who was slain has be -

gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia. *Refrain*

WORD

Acts 19:23-41

Paul visits Ephesus, another Greek city on the coast of modern Turkey. He began with visits to the synagogue for three months, then spent the next two years preaching about Jesus to other Ephesians. The Christian community grew in numbers and in faith. Ephesus was home to a great temple of the goddess Artemis, Greek goddess of hunting, young women, and the moon. There was a great deal of money to be made in trinkets and idols associated with Artemis, an income that was threatened by the proclamation of Jesus Christ as the only God.

At that time a great disturbance erupted about the Way. There was a silversmith named Demetrius. He made silver models of Artemis' temple, and his business generated a lot of profit for the craftspeople. He called a meeting with these craftspeople and others working in related trades and said, "Friends, you know that we make an easy living from this business. And you can see and hear that this Paul has convinced and misled a lot of people, not only in Ephesus but also throughout most of the province of Asia. He says that gods made by human hands aren't really gods. This poses a danger not only by discrediting our trade but also by completely dishonoring the great goddess Artemis. The whole province of Asia—indeed, the entire civilized world—worships her, but her splendor will soon be extinguished."

Once they heard this, they were beside themselves with anger and began to shout, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"

The city was thrown into turmoil. They rushed as one into the theater. They seized Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's traveling companions from the province of Macedonia. Paul wanted to appear before the assembly, but the disciples wouldn't allow him. Even some officials of the province of Asia, who were Paul's friends, sent word to him, urging him not to risk going into the theater. Meanwhile, the assembly was in a state of confusion. Some shouted one thing, others shouted something else, and most of the crowd didn't know why they had gathered. The Jews sent Alexander to the front, and some of the crowd directed their words toward him. He gestured that he wanted to offer a defense before the assembly, but when they realized he was a Jew, they all shouted in unison, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" This continued for about two hours.

The city manager brought order to the crowd and said, "People of Ephesus, doesn't everyone know that the city of Ephesus is guardian of the temple of the great Artemis and of her image, which fell from heaven? Therefore, since these facts are undeniable, you must calm down. Don't be reckless. The men you brought here have neither robbed the temple nor slandered our goddess. Therefore, if Demetrius and the craftspeople with him have a charge against anyone, the courts are in session and governors are available. They can press charges against each other there. Additional disputes can be resolved in a legal assembly. As for us, we are in danger of being charged with rioting today, since we can't justify this unruly gathering." After he said this, he dismissed the assembly.

Ephesians 1:3-14

Some years after his time in Ephesus, Paul wrote back to the believers there. Remembering the concern about wealth from the silversmith crisis, he reminds the believers that in Jesus Christ, they have a great inheritance given freely because of God's love.

Bless the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! He has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing that comes from heaven. God chose us in Christ to be holy and blameless in God's presence before the creation of the world. God destined us to be his adopted children through Jesus Christ because of his love. This was according to his goodwill and plan and to honor his glorious grace that he has given to us freely through the Son whom he loves. We have been ransomed through his Son's blood, and we have forgiveness for our failures based on his overflowing grace, which he poured over us with wisdom and understanding. God revealed his hidden design to us, which is according to his goodwill and the plan that he intended to accomplish through his Son. This is what God planned for the climax of all times: to bring all things together in Christ, the things in heaven along with the things on earth. We have also received an inheritance in Christ. We were destined by the plan of God, who accomplishes everything according to his design. We are called to be an honor to God's glory because we were the first to hope in Christ. You too heard the word of truth in Christ, which is the good news of your salvation. You were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit because you believed in Christ. The Holy Spirit is the down payment on our inheritance, which is applied toward our redemption as God's own people, resulting in the honor of God's glory.

SERMON

What are your priorities and values? What's most important to you? Actually, take a minute and a piece of paper to jot down a list of your values, at least five of them. Got it? Now, make a list of the top five things you spend your time on. Skip sleeping, but otherwise list work, screen time, hobbies, whatever takes up the most of your time. Got it? Set those lists aside. We'll come back to them.

Paul spent over two years in Ephesus and the surrounding countryside. As always, he had mixed results to his evangelism. Some people heard the good news with glad hearts. However, the message of the gospel wasn't welcomed by the silversmiths of Ephesus. It was outright rejected instead. Why? Simple. It would have forced them to change their way

of life. If gods made by human hands aren't really gods, then there's no reason to pay silversmiths to make household idols or items for the temple. Since the silversmiths stood to lose both income and any meaning from their work, it's no wonder that they resisted a message that would have forced them to change.

People can't stand change. If you doubt it, just think of the last time your grocery store rearranged its aisles, your favorite website changed its format, or your show started airing at a different time. I guarantee you have complained about change, even inconsequential change. Even the go-with-the-flow people don't like to have unexpected change forced on them.

Significant, big change is even harder, especially if it comes with a value shift. If somebody came along telling you that something you'd devoted your life to was wrong, that you'd been lied to and misled all along, you probably wouldn't take it very well. You might prefer to reject ideas that threaten your way of life. And it isn't just you. We all do it. Our brains react to intellectual "threats" just like we react to physical threats. Seriously, our brains send the same response to a tiger as to information that challenges our worldview. No wonder the silversmiths rejected Jesus! Paul's message wasn't rejected because it was different. It was rejected because no way were the Ephesians going to calmly accept a threat to their way of life.

Back to your list of priorities and the ways you spend your time. Do the things you spend time on match the things you say you value? Do they both match with God's priorities? Don't answer right now! Remember, that quick judgment reaction like to a threat? Just take some time and sit with your values, the way you spend your time, and with God's values. If you're not exactly sure how to define God's values, I suggest: "Love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and love your neighbor as yourself" along with the Ten Commandments. Take some time to compare them. Pray over them. Listen to hear if God is calling you to change. Will you react like the silversmiths?

Paul knew he was asking a lot of the Ephesians. Give up their pride in the great Temple of Artemis? Give up their wealth? Their status? So when he wrote to them years later, he reminded them that the inheritance of eternal life is greater than any earthly wealth. Whatever God may be asking you to let go of or change, what God has in store for you is far greater. Are you willing to follow Jesus instead of following your own ways?

HYMN OF THE DAY

Drawn to the Light



1 Peo - ple who walk in dark - ness have sought a light in the
 2 How can we tell a heav - en from hell if ev - 'ry - one
 3 Where is the sun? Oh, there will be none! The Lamb is the



heart of the dark - est night. Just when we thought all would be
 dwells in the dark of night? Morn - ing dis - pels, gent - ly com -
 one who is shin - ing bright, bids us to come! Life has be -



lost, we were drawn to the light of God.
 pels, and we're drawn to the light of God.
 gun when we're drawn to the light of God.

Refrain

Dawn is in sight! Gone is the night, drawn to the



light and the morn - ing. Glo - rious and bright, oh, what a



sight to be drawn to the light of God.

Text: John C. Ylvisaker, b. 1937
 Music: LA CROSSE, John C. Ylvisaker
 Text and music © 1990 John C. Ylvisaker.

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

PRAYERS

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

We pray for the church. Let your word grow and spread among and through us. May we trust and live each day in the certainty that you are Lord. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We pray for the well-being of creation. Protect those in the line of hurricanes and wildfires from harm. Deliver creation from the harm of natural disaster. Relieve the drought affecting Iowa. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We pray for our leaders, local, state-wide, and national. Grant them wisdom, refreshment, justice, and compassion for all they lead. Let us live in peace with one another, protecting the lives of those in any danger. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We pray for all in need. For those who lack employment, clothing, shelter, or food. For those who long for healing of body and spirit. For all who are tired, feeling despair, sick, or oppressed, especially those we name aloud or in our hearts. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We pray for this congregation. Let us set aside what keeps us from following you, trusting that you have called us for a purpose, and that you will not fail us. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We give thanks for those who have died in faith. Welcome them into your eternal rest and comfort us in our grief until we are joined with them in new life. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Receive these prayers, O God, and those too deep for words; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Let us join together in the prayer Jesus taught us:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

**Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

This week, share the peace of Christ by texting or calling someone and reminding them that they are inheritors of eternal life in God's kingdom.

OFFERING

God has given to each of us- our selves, our time, and our possessions. God gives the warmth of summer sun, the comfort of a phone call from a loved one, the reassurance of prayer. What God has given to us, God expects us to share. If you are in a position to make a contribution to support our congregation's ministry, you can mail your check to the church; the mail is being checked regularly.

Thank you for your support.

OFFERING PRAYER

Merciful God, our ordinary gifts seem small, but you make of them an abundance, just as you do with our lives. Let all that we offer be in service to you to the glory of the risen Christ.

Amen.

HOLY COMMUNION

Gathered in a home, the disciples received Jesus' promise that the bread and cup was his presence with them. In our homes, we gather around smaller tables, trusting that Jesus Christ is with us and the grace of this meal reaches us here.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when he was betrayed, took the bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples and said: Take; eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way he also took the cup after the supper, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them saying, Take and drink. This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me.

BLESSING

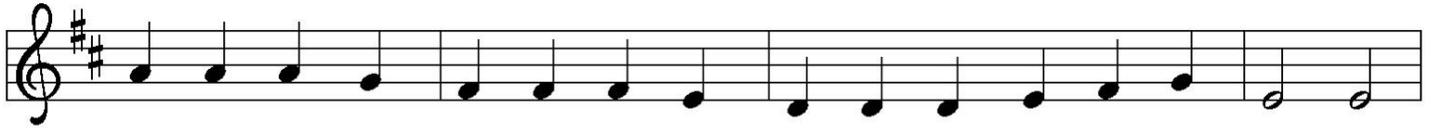
The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace. **Amen.**

DISMISSAL

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SENDING HYMN

In the Singing



1 In the sing - ing, in the si - lence, in the hands ex - pect - ant, o - pen,
 2 In the ques - tion, in the an - swer, in the mo - ment of ac - cept - ance,



in the bless - ing, in the break - ing, in your pres - ence at this ta - ble,
 in the heart's cry, in the heal - ing, in the cir - cle of your peo - ple,



Je - sus Christ, Je - sus Christ, be the wine of grace;



Je - sus Christ, Je - sus Christ, be the bread of peace.

Text: Shirley Erena Murray, b. 1931

Music: BREAD OF PEACE, Carlton R. Young, b. 1926

Text and music © 1996 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

In our prayers this week:

Millie Mracek (Sally Kruse's great-niece, cancer treatment)

Friends & Family who have COVID-19

Our members in nursing homes or assisted living: Ron & Carolyn Belitz, Marge Seebeck,
 Delores Werling

Reproduced and distributed with Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License number SAS027026 and OneLicense A-732405.