

Sunday, February 28, 2021 — Second Sunday in Lent

Trinity's Weekly Connection

You are welcome to join us for live streaming of our "Virtual Worship" service from Centennial Hall on the Second Sunday in Lent, February 28 at 9:15 a.m. If you are unable to join us at that time, be welcome to access the service at your convenience via Trinity's YouTube channel. Instructions for access to the live stream and the recorded video are below.

Trinity is live streaming worship — how do I find it?

We are streaming our 9:15 a.m. "Virtual Worship" service on YouTube. To find it, do the following:

- Follow the home page link to "Virtual Worship" on Trinity's website, select "video" and you will be connected to the stream.
OR
- Go to YouTube, either by opening the app on your phone or by visiting the webpage on your computer.
- Search for 'Trinity Lutheran Church Grand Rapids.' The first option should be one with a picture of our cross tower (that is our channel).
- When you click on it you will be brought to our channel. If the service is live (from about 9:10 to 10:20 a.m. on Sunday morning) there will be a video with 'Live Now' on it.
- Simply click on the video and you will be connected to the stream.
- We also save past services in a play list called 'Rejoice Worship,' so you can view a past worship service at any time. It takes a couple of hours for the video to download on YouTube after worship ends.

If you have a YouTube account please subscribe to the channel. This will allow our videos to show up in your video feed and when we reach enough subscriptions allow us to change our YouTube url.

Prayer of the Day for the Second Sunday in Lent

O God, by the passion of your blessed Son you made an instrument of shameful death to be for us the means of life. Grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ that we may gladly suffer shame and loss for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Prayer for Health Care Providers

Merciful God, your healing power is everywhere about us. Strengthen those who work among the sick; give them courage and confidence in all they do. Encourage them when their efforts seem futile or when death prevails. Increase their trust in your power even to overcome death and pain and crying. May they be thankful for every sign of health you give, and humble before the mystery of your healing grace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Trinity Members in Our Prayers

We pray for Trinity members Emily Albaitis, Fran Anderson, Deb Bambini and family, George Bauer, Janelle Beaudry, Jim and Sue Boyse and family, Bonnie Brandstadt and family, Pat Bruin, Judy Cisler, Barb and Bob Crossman and family, Mike Danielski, Jack Danielson, John Derbin, Renee Fisk and family, Mari Franz and family, Mary Frick, Jack Greiner, Elena Griewahn, Adam Guigue, Craig Gunderson, Mark Hahn, John Hall, Bob and Linda Heine and family, Ruth Helzer, Jerry Hendricks, Bev Heyne and family, Sid and Carrie Hoeksema and family, Callan Hughes, Carol Huttenga, Austin, Meredith and Theodore Johnson, Christopher Keller, Gayl Kessel, Susan Knoll, Jen Knowles, Joni Korb, Chris and Joanna Kutschinski, Roy Lamprich, Marilyn Leese, Jane Leguault, Judy Mallen, Jessica Marks and Patti Patton and their families, Roger Marks, Mark and Rebecca Mattison and family, Brian Mazurek and family, Marcia McClimans and family, Jill McKinney, Marilyn Mellema, Johnny Mielock, John and Karin Moglia and family, Christophe and Benita Muganza, Kenny Muganza, Michael Mulligan, Tim Neilson, Joan Perham and family, Valeriano Ramirez and family, Jacqueline Riegling, Mark and Gayle Rohde and family, Lynn Rose, Petra Rotzell and family, Thiago Saline, Marian Schaible, Chas Schaner, Chris Schomberg, Jim Searfoss, Joan Sellman, Neil and Sue Sendler and family, Matt and Kara Seyffert and family, Kris and Tom Shannon and family, Michael Smith, David and Mary Smoes and family, Courtney Steketee and family, Gary and Pat Stevens and family, Shirley Tedford, Jeremiah (JD) Thamban, Joanna Waite, John Walls, Fred Wilcox, Eric Wollen, Peyton Wollen, Rick and Michelle Wolner, and Kathryn Zielinski.

Second Sunday in Lent

February 28, 2021

The second covenant in this year's Lenten readings is the one made with Abraham and Sarah: God's promise to make them the ancestors of many, with whom God will remain in everlasting covenant. Paul says this promise comes to all who share Abraham's faith in the God who brings life into being where there was no life. We receive this baptismal promise of resurrection life in faith. Sarah and Abraham receive new names as a sign of the covenant, and we too get new identities in baptism, as we put on Christ.

FIRST READING: Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

As with Noah, God makes an everlasting covenant with Abraham and Sarah. God promises this old couple that they will be the ancestors of nations, though they have no child together. God will miraculously bring forth new life from Sarah's womb. The name changes emphasize the firmness of God's promise.

¹When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. ²And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous." ³Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, ⁴"As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁵No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁶I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. ⁷I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you."

¹⁵God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. ¹⁶I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her."

SECOND READING: Romans 4:13-25

Paul presents Abraham as the example for how a person comes into a right relationship with God not through works of the law but through faith. Though Abraham and Sarah were far too old for bearing children, Abraham trusted that God would accomplish what God had promised to accomplish.

¹³The promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

¹⁶For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for

he is the father of all of us, ¹⁷as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations")—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

¹⁸Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become "the father of many nations," according to what was said, "So numerous shall your descendants be." ¹⁹He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. ²⁰No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, ²¹being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. ²²Therefore his faith "was reckoned to him as righteousness." ²³Now the words, "it was reckoned to him," were written not for his sake alone, ²⁴but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, ²⁵who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

GOSPEL: Mark 8:31-38

After Peter confesses his belief that Jesus is the Messiah, Jesus tells his disciples for the first time what is to come. Peter's response indicates that he does not yet understand the way of the cross that Jesus will travel.

³¹[Jesus] began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³²He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

³⁴He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. ³⁶For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life?

³⁷Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? ³⁸Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."



PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Relying on the promises of God, we pray boldly for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

Your gift of grace is for all people. Give confident faith to all the baptized, that they may follow you wholeheartedly. Give new believers joy in your promises; give hope and courage to those who suffer for their faith. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We pray for Pastor Jennifer Michael and the people of St. Peter Lutheran Church in Battle Creek, synod partners with us in mission and ministry. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We pray for a spirit of unity and harmony so that we may come to cherish our commonalities with people of other faiths, including our three “Standing Together” partner congregations here in Grand Rapids, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Temple Emanuel and Masjid At-Tawheed. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

All the ends of the earth worship you. From galaxies to microorganisms, preserve your creation. Teach humanity to wonder at your works and to join you in tending to creation’s well-being. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You rule over the nations. Raise up advocates for peace and justice within and between nations. Give life where hope seems dead; call into existence new realities we cannot even imagine. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

In Jesus you joined humanity in suffering and death. Reveal to all the depth of your love shown on the cross. Accompany all who suffer in body, mind, and spirit. Restore all who are sick or grieving, including those we name now in our hearts (*a brief silence*). Bring vindication for victims of injustice, exploitation, and oppression. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You made Abraham and Sarah the ancestors of a multitude of nations. Bless grandparents, parents, and foster parents, and the children who look to them for care and guidance. Console those who deal with infertility, parents who have entrusted their children to adoption, and children longing to be adopted. Equip ministries and services to families, including the work of Samaritas in our region. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We await the day of Christ’s coming in glory. Lead us by the example of all the saints whom you have called to take up their cross and follow you, that together we may find our lives in you. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We entrust ourselves and all our prayers to you, O faithful God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.



Prayer for this time of pandemic and social upheaval

O God, where hearts are fearful and constricted, grant courage and hope. Where anxiety is infectious and widening, grant peace and reassurance. Where impossibilities close every door and window, grant imagination and resistance. Where distrust twists our thinking, grant healing and illumination. Where spirits are daunted and weakened, grant soaring wings and strengthened dreams. All these things we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

A Prayer for the Power of the Spirit among the People of God

God of all power and love, we give thanks for your unfailing presence and the hope you provide in times of uncertainty and loss. Send your Holy Spirit to enkindle in us your holy fire. Revive us to live as Christ’s body in the world: a people who pray, worship, learn, break bread, share life, heal neighbors, bear good news, seek justice, rest and grow in the Spirit. Wherever and however we gather, unite us in common prayer and send us in common mission, that we and the whole creation might be restored and renewed, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Prayer for our Nation in a Time of Transition

Eternal God, amid all the turmoil and changes of the world your love is steadfast and your strength never fails. In this time of transition in our nation, be to us a sure guardian and rock of defense. Guide the leaders of our nation with your wisdom, comfort those in distress, and grant us courage and hope to face the future; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

FEBRUARY 28, 2021
SECOND SUNDAY
IN LENT



The difficulty and joy of discipleship.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Mark 8:31-38	Jesus predicts his death
Monday	Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16	Sign of the covenant
Tuesday	Romans 4:13-25	God's promise
Wednesday	2 Timothy 2:1-13	A good soldier of Christ
Thursday	2 Timothy 2:14-26	A worker approved by God
Friday	Proverbs 8:32-36	Listen to what you are taught
Saturday	Psalms 22:23-31	Suffering and praise
Sunday	John 2:13-22	Jesus cleanses the temple

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

"For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it."

Mark 8:35 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Almighty God, help us to remember that it is in giving that we receive and in caring for others that we experience the joy of following Jesus, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, as you satisfy us with this food and for all that blesses us this day, we give you thanks. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the God who gives life to the dead and who calls into existence things that do not exist bless you with faith. (Romans 4:17b)



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FEBRUARY 28, 2021

HYMN OF THE WEEK

*Take My Life, That
I May Be*



WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- What is something you didn't want to do because it was too difficult?
- Do you think it is difficult to follow Jesus? Why or why not?
- How would you describe a life of faith that lives for others?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Mark 8:31-38.

These are some of the most difficult words to hear as followers of Jesus. To truly live as people of God, we are to live for the needs of others, just as Jesus did. It is hard for Peter—and us—to hear that Christ must suffer and die a criminal's death before rising to glory. It is hard for us to imagine picking up the cross, the tool of torture and death, and courageously walk with it daily for the sake of the good news of Christ and the needs of others. The Gospel of Mark is not a happy text for disciples. The Gospel ends with Jesus' followers running away and Peter denying his Lord in the courtyard of the high priest. Our challenge is not to run away and deny the needs of others. According to Mark, we don't do this well. The good news is that Jesus never gives up on us. To the disciples who ran away from him and denied him, he says in essence, "meet me in Galilee, where your ministry and life will truly begin" (Mark 16:7). By the end of Mark, there are no great stories of bravery and success of the disciples. What exists is a promise that Jesus will go before them and be with them into the future. The disciples will continue to hear Jesus' words, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me" (v. 34). What have you found to be difficult to do as a follower of Jesus? What have you found to be a joy as a follower?

Pray: **Dear God, thank you for never giving up on us as we seek to lovingly give of ourselves for the needs of others and the sake of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Amen.**

SERVICE

Making pretzels is a Lenten tradition. Pretzels are shaped like arms folded in prayer and can remind us to pray to God for our needs and the needs of others. Choose some people beyond your household to pray for by name this week. Make or buy pretzels to give to them as a sign that you are praying for them.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Jesus tells us that following him means taking up our cross, that is, saying no to ourselves and sometimes suffering for him. This week make a cross from wood, card stock, or other materials. Hold the cross during your devotional time this week while reading the *Daily Bible Readings*. Say the *Prayer for the Week* and add your own prayers. End the time by saying:

Remember that you are God's, and to God you shall return.



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: www.milestonesministry.org