

Sunday, February 7, 2021 — 5th Sunday after Epiphany

Trinity's Weekly Connection

You are welcome to join us for live streaming of our "Virtual Worship" service from Centennial Hall on the Fifth Sunday after Epiphany, February 7 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 5th Sunday after Epiphany

Everlasting God, you give strength to the weak and power to the faint. Make us agents of your healing and wholeness, that your good news may be made known to the ends of your creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. 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, John Derbin, Awilda Diaz, Beth Engstrom, Joe Fisher, Renee Fisk and family, Mari Franz and family, Mary Frick, Richard Gehl and family, 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, Allison Landon, Logan Landon, Marilyn Leese, Jane Legualt, Judy Mallen, 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, Linda Taffs, Shirley Tedford, Jeremiah (JD) Thamban, Chris and Joanna Waite and family, John Walls, Fred Wilcox, Marge Eric Wollen, Peyton Wollen, Rick and Michelle Wolner, Susan Youngren, and Kathryn Zielinski.

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

February 7, 2021

In Isaiah the one God who sits above the earth and numbers the stars also strengthens the powerless. So in Jesus' healing work we see the hand of the creator God, lifting up the sick woman to health and service (diakonia). Like Simon's mother-in-law, we are lifted up and healed to serve. Following Jesus, we strengthen the powerless; like Jesus, we seek to renew our own strength in quiet times of prayer.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 40:21-31

The Judeans in exile have a good reason to be hopeful: the one who will bring them to freedom is the God who created the world, the God who subdues the rulers of the earth and gives strength to those who are weary.

²¹Have you not known? Have you not heard?
Has it not been told you from the beginning?
Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?

²²It is he who sits above the circle of the earth,
and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers;
who stretches out the heavens like a curtain,
and spreads them like a tent to live in;

²³who brings princes to naught,
and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing.

²⁴Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown,
scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth,
when he blows upon them, and they wither,
and the tempest carries them off like stubble.

²⁵To whom then will you compare me,
or who is my equal? says the Holy One.

²⁶Lift up your eyes on high and see:
Who created these?

He who brings out their host and numbers them,
calling them all by name;
because he is great in strength,
mighty in power,
not one is missing.

²⁷Why do you say, O Jacob,
and speak, O Israel,

"My way is hidden from the LORD,
and my right is disregarded by my God"?

²⁸Have you not known? Have you not heard?
The LORD is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.

He does not faint or grow weary;
his understanding is unsearchable.

²⁹He gives power to the faint,
and strengthens the powerless.

³⁰Even youths will faint and be weary,
and the young will fall exhausted;

³¹but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength,
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,
they shall run and not be weary,
they shall walk and not faint.

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 9:16-23

God entrusted Paul with the responsibility of bringing the gospel to diverse people. Hence the focus of Paul's ministry is not his own rights or privileges as an apostle but the privilege of serving God by freely sharing the good news of Christ with others.

¹⁶If I proclaim the gospel, this gives me no ground for boasting, for an obligation is laid on me, and woe to me if I do not proclaim the gospel! ¹⁷For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward; but if not of my own will, I am entrusted with a commission. ¹⁸What then is my reward? Just this: that in my proclamation I may make the gospel free of charge, so as not to make full use of my rights in the gospel.

¹⁹For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win more of them. ²⁰To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so that I might win those under the law. ²¹To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law) so that I might win those outside the law.

²²To the weak I became weak, so that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some. ²³I do it all for the sake of the gospel, so that I may share in its blessings.

GOSPEL: Mark 1:29-39

Everywhere Jesus goes, many people expect him to set them free from oppression. Everywhere he goes, he heals people and sets them free. Disease, devils, and death are running for their lives. The forces that diminish human life are rendered powerless by Jesus.

²⁹As soon as [Jesus and the disciples] left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. ³⁰Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. ³¹He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

³²That evening, at sunset, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. ³³And the whole city was gathered around the door. ³⁴And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

³⁵In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. ³⁶And Simon and his companions hunted for him. ³⁷When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." ³⁸He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do." ³⁹And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Guided by Christ made known to the nations, let us offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all people in need.

A brief silence.

For the church and its many ministries of healing and wholeness, for hospital, hospice, and military chaplains, for those serving in prison ministry, for all who proclaim freedom and release in the name of Christ, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

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

Have mercy, O God.

For creation: for insects in the grass, clouds on the mountaintops, for cattle and the rainwater they drink, for the humility to take our place among all creatures of the earth, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

For the nations: for all who lead in cities and towns, states and countries; for community organizers, school officials, and CEOs; for international health organizations, that in times of trial, fear, or hopelessness, they find freedom in service to those most in need, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

For all wearied by life's burdens: for those who are poor, for those lacking supportive relationships, for those crushed by debt, for those struggling with chronic pain or other sickness, for those exhausted from overwork or stress, and for all who cry out to you, including those we name now in our hearts (*a brief silence*), let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

For this congregation: for outreach and social ministries centered here; for faith community nurses and visitors; for ministries of companionship and support, for the young people in this place who open us to new understandings, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

For the Stephen Ministry of Trinity Lutheran Church. Heavenly Father, you heal our wounds as we care for one another and we thank you for the caregiving that is happening through our Stephen Ministry at Trinity. For those who walk together through these troubled times, comforted by Your presence with us, that we may reach out with confidence in our time of need, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

In thanksgiving for the faithful departed, including Ilene Seadal and Janet Chobanian, who were called by name and now rest from their labors, that their lives serve as witnesses to the goodness of God, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

Merciful God, hear the prayers of your people, spoken or silent, for the sake of the one who dwells among us, your Son, Jesus Christ our Savior.

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 7, 2021
FIFTH SUNDAY
AFTER EPIPHANY



Jesus heals as he preaches and teaches.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

Sunday	Mark 1:29-39	Jesus heals many people
Monday	Isaiah 40:21-31	The Lord gives strength
Tuesday	1 Corinthians 9:16-23	For the sake of the gospel
Wednesday	Psalms 41	A prayer in time of sickness
Thursday	James 5:13-18	Remember to pray
Friday	Proverbs 3:1-8	Trust God
Saturday	Psalms 147:1-11, 20c	Praise the Lord
Sunday	Mark 9:2-9	Transfiguration of Jesus

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

[B]ut those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint. Isaiah 40:31 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Everlasting God, you strengthen the powerless; send us out with your message of love and healing through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (Isaiah 40:29)

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, you feed us with care and put rain upon the earth that your love we may share that gives all a new birth. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the Lord renew your strength with wings like eagles, that you may run and not be weary, that you shall walk and not faint. (Isaiah 40:31)



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FEBRUARY 7, 2021
HYMN OF THE WEEK
*O Christ, Your Heart,
Compassionate*



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:

- Talk or think about a time you have felt sick or weary?
- When you or someone you know has been ill, what has helped the recovery?
- Jesus brings good news that is filled with acts of love that heals lives. What is something in your life that you would like healed?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Mark 1:29-39.

Does Jesus make a difference in this world or is he just a great guy with a sweet message and philosophy for a successful life? The world wants to know and the church needs to be able to answer in the affirmative: Yes, Jesus makes the difference for our world. This story from Mark 1 certainly believes it. The message that Jesus announces is more than words. It comes with actions that change lives. The hurts of the world find themselves at Jesus' feet again and again. Jesus doesn't have to go out and search for people in need. We all have a need for the kingdom that Jesus announces and lives. Demons are cast out, people are healed, Jesus prays, and his march forward into a world of need continues. Faith in Jesus is believing—at least wanting to believe—that Jesus makes the difference we need for hope and healing, peace and love. How does faith in Jesus make a difference in your world and the world of others?

Pray: **God of hope and healing, lead us into the world with good news that serves and loves others through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

SERVICE

Caring for the sick is a special way of showing Jesus' love. Think of someone you know who is in need of healing. Send that person a card to let them know you are thinking of them or call, if possible, and take time to brighten their day through conversation. Bring their needs to Jesus in prayer throughout the week.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Christians are a praying people. There are many traditions we can introduce into our homes to remind us to pray and to help make prayer a routine part of our lives. Jesus gives us a model for a faithful prayer life when he seeks out time to be alone in prayer (Mark 1:35-37). Set aside time to be alone in prayer this week to give God thanks and pray for Jesus' healing for others. Close your prayer time with the Lord's Prayer.



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