

# TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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(A member of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod)

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**Pentecost 18**

**September 26, 2021**

When Jesus' disciples once debated as to what greatness meant for the kingdom of God, Jesus taught them true greatness. True greatness comes by sincerely and thankfully serving Jesus because of what He has done for us. Our serving God is a reflection of our faith created by the Holy Spirit in His grace and strengthened by God's word and sacrament.

Interestingly, on several occasions Jesus pointed to a child as an example of greatness in the kingdom of God. Although the apostle Paul chided a sinfully spoiled "has-to-have-it his way childlike demeanor" in the great love chapter of Scripture (**1 Corinthians 13:11**), Jesus commends a childlike faith in God (of any age) from the person who believes, serves and trusts God above all things (**Mark 10:13-16; Matthew 18:2-4**).

As God's people, redeemed by Jesus, brought to faith by the working of the Holy Spirit and made God's holy temple (**1 Corinthians 6:19-20**), we live out of love for Jesus. We live to His glory, to witness and share His word. We follow Paul's principle: "*So whether you eat or drink, or do anything else, do everything to the glory of God*" (**1 Corinthians 10:31**).

All our readings this morning focus on greatness in the kingdom of God. They show us that greatness grows out of trust in the Lord. This greatness has its center in love: God's great love for us in Jesus and our reciprocating love for Him and for others. Such love of Jesus leads to genuine service to Him and to His glory. We see this "greatness" reflected in the love Jeremiah had for the LORD's word; He remained bound to it personally and proclaimed it faithfully despite the hostile opposition he faced as the LORD's prophet.

Order of Worship: ELH Page 109, "Matins."

Hymns: 82, 424 (1-5), 362, 596

## THE SERVICE OF THE WORD

*Old Testament: Jeremiah 11:18-20.* Jeremiah faithfully followed the LORD's word in his preaching of woe to those who abandoned God. The LORD's prophet did so out of love for the people and to save them from destruction. Certainly, Jeremiah lamented about the hatred received by those he served. Nevertheless, he faithful persevered in the proclamation of the LORD's word trusting some would turn from sin and live eternally.

*Psalms of the Day: Psalm 31.* The psalmist prays that God would deliver His own and strengthen them to bear the cross associated with faithfulness to God and proclaiming the truth of the LORD. (*Supplement*).

*Epistle: James 3:13-18.* Gentleness and unselfish service are virtues that imitate Christ's own perfect gentleness and unselfish service to us. Selfish ambition and jealousy are from the devil; they not only add to the suffering of our fellow man, but also hinder the proclamation of the gospel. For where those virtues are not, the peace that comes from the gospel is crowded out by disorder and strife. Where those virtues are found among God's people, there the gospel of righteousness from Him is sown in peace for the everlasting peace of those who hear it.

*Verse of the Day:* Alleluia. My grace is sufficient for you, because my power is made perfect in weakness. Alleluia. (2 Corinthians 12:9a, EHV)

*Gospel: Mark 9:30-37.* Just when Jesus wants most to shun popularity and outward success, the disciples want most to pursue it. They want the crown, not for Him but for themselves. Sadly, all too often we are more like the disciples and not like Jesus. Seeing the greatness of His love for us in His single-minded embracing of His cross, may we engage in gentle, humble service which imitates His saving service to us.

*Sermon: Jeremiah 11:18-20*

*Theme - "Find Refuge In The LORD's Revelation"*

Points to ponder from the day's Scripture readings:

- Old Testament: Jeremiah faithfully followed the word of the LORD in preaching "woe" to those who abandoned that word. How did the people react to such "tough love?"
- Epistle: James reminds God's people that gentleness and unselfish service imitate our Savior's loving character. What are the blessings associated with such Christian virtues?
- Gospel: How does Jesus define greatness in the kingdom of God?

## Announcements:

+ Please join us for Bible class on Sunday mornings at 8:00 a.m. We are studying the Book of Psalms.

+ Confirmation class: every Monday from 3:15-5:00 pm at the church.

+ Sunday school on Sunday mornings from 8-8:30 a.m.

**Jeremiah 11:18-20** – The LORD revealed their plot to me so I became aware of it. He showed me what they were doing. I was like a gentle lamb led to the slaughter. I had not realized that they had plotted against me. They were saying: "Let us destroy the tree along with its fruit. Let us cut him off from the land of the living, so that his name will no longer be remembered." But, LORD of Armies, you judge righteously. You test the heart and mind. Let me see your vengeance on them, for I have presented my case to you. (EHV<sup>TM</sup>)

**James 3:13-18** – Who among you is wise and intelligent? Let him by his good way of living show that he does things in wise humility. But if you

have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not boast and lie, contrary to the truth. This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but it is worldly, unspiritual, and demonic. In fact, where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and every bad practice. But the wisdom that comes from above is first pure, then also peaceful, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial, and sincere. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who practice peace. (EHV™)

**Mark 8:30-37** – They went on from there and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know this, because he was teaching his disciples. He told them, “The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill him. But three days after he is killed, he will rise.” But they did not understand the statement and were afraid to ask him about it. They came to Capernaum. When he was in the house, he asked them, “What were you arguing about on the way?” But they remained silent, because on the way they had argued with one another about who was the greatest. Jesus sat down, called the Twelve, and said to them, “If anyone wants to be first, he will be the last of all and the servant of all.” Then he took a little child and placed him in their midst. Taking the child in his arms, he said to them, “Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me. And whoever welcomes me, welcomes not just me but also him who sent me.” (EHV™)