



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

# Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Dear People of Trinity,

As we enter the Season after Epiphany, it is good to remember that this is a season of light. Drawn to this light, we will continue to worship each Sunday via Zoom or using the at-home materials provided throughout January. We will use Zoom in response to the high levels of Covid in our county at the moment; we will worship in response to God's selfless love for us and for all people.

In these past few days, we've seen and heard many things that contradict what we witness in Christ. In our lives, we can feel like an action in any direction is sure to spark a fire, burning relationships, trust, respect, and the hope of forgiveness in its path. Without underplaying this experience, I'd like to encourage each of us, and ourselves as a congregation, to move carefully and purposefully toward the life of Christ. With both an insistence on justice and the grace to remain calm, Jesus went from town to town and home to home healing the sick, casting out demons, and teaching about the Kingdom of God – specifically of good news to the poor, freedom the captive, recovery of sight to the blind, and release to the oppressed<sup>1</sup> – so that we might know where our efforts should be spent in our daily work. We too, by God's grace, can walk into each day, each encounter, with both an insistence on justice and the grace to remain calm. We too, by God's grace, can reshape our lives to serve the Christ-like work of healing the sick, casting out demons (remember, by our own scripture, many are removed by prayer<sup>2</sup> and faith<sup>3</sup>), and remembering the Kingdom of God so that we might know again where our efforts should be spent in our daily work.

I cannot promise there will be no strong or misplaced reactions to such work, after all, even Jesus was called a servant of the devil for his efforts. I can anticipate, however, a small sense of clarity and purpose in a life so very far from simple.

It seems like a fool's errand doesn't it? Why would we respond to the heights of violence and the depths of selfishness with the same old walk and talk we've been talking about our whole lives long? Shouldn't this day require something greater of us? Something different than every other day?

Jesus responded to the wedding party at Cana by doing what was selfless, performing a small miracle for the sake of community and love.<sup>4</sup> Jesus responded to the blind man with the same selflessness, the same communal concern, the same love.<sup>5</sup> Jesus responded to the mob that came for him, the sham of a trial, the abuse of power, the threat of life to his loved ones, and the taking of his own life with selflessness, communal concern, and love.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 4:18-19

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 17:14-20

<sup>3</sup> Mark 9:17-29

<sup>4</sup> John 2:1-12

<sup>5</sup> Luke 18:35-43

<sup>6</sup> Luke 22:1-23:56

Meeting today's world with the things we have been learning and singing and praying about for generations may feel like David being sent out with a few small stones, but I pray we go with these stones nonetheless. There is nothing greater in the whole world.

It would be good for me to do some housekeeping as well. As a reminder, we will hold our Annual Congregational Meeting on January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021 at 11am. This will take place via Zoom. Any person who has a phone – including a landline – is able to access this meeting. Information about accessing the meeting can be found below. This same information can be used to join the worship service each Sunday morning at 9am while we still worship via Zoom. Should you want help learning how to use Zoom, whether by computer, tablet, smartphone, cellphone, or landline, feel free to contact the office. Many members of our congregation are willing to help each other out so that we might gather together more fully for worship and ministry.

In these days of remembering the light of Christ, I pray that the light shines more brightly and more fully in each of our lives. I pray too that the light may draw us closer to selflessness, communal concern, and love. I pray this for Trinity, and for the whole world.

Peace,



Pastor Ben Siebert

#### **Zoom Instructions:**

To join Sunday Morning Worship, or to join for our Congregational Meeting, you can join with any computer, tablet, or smartphone with the link provided on our homepage at [trinityarendtsville.org](http://trinityarendtsville.org).

OR

Use the following steps for any type of phone (landline included):

1. Dial: 1 301 715 8592
2. When asked, enter the Meeting ID: 868 3849 4181
3. If asked, enter the passcode: 271040
4. To be able to speak, press \*6.
5. To stop speaking, press \*6 again.