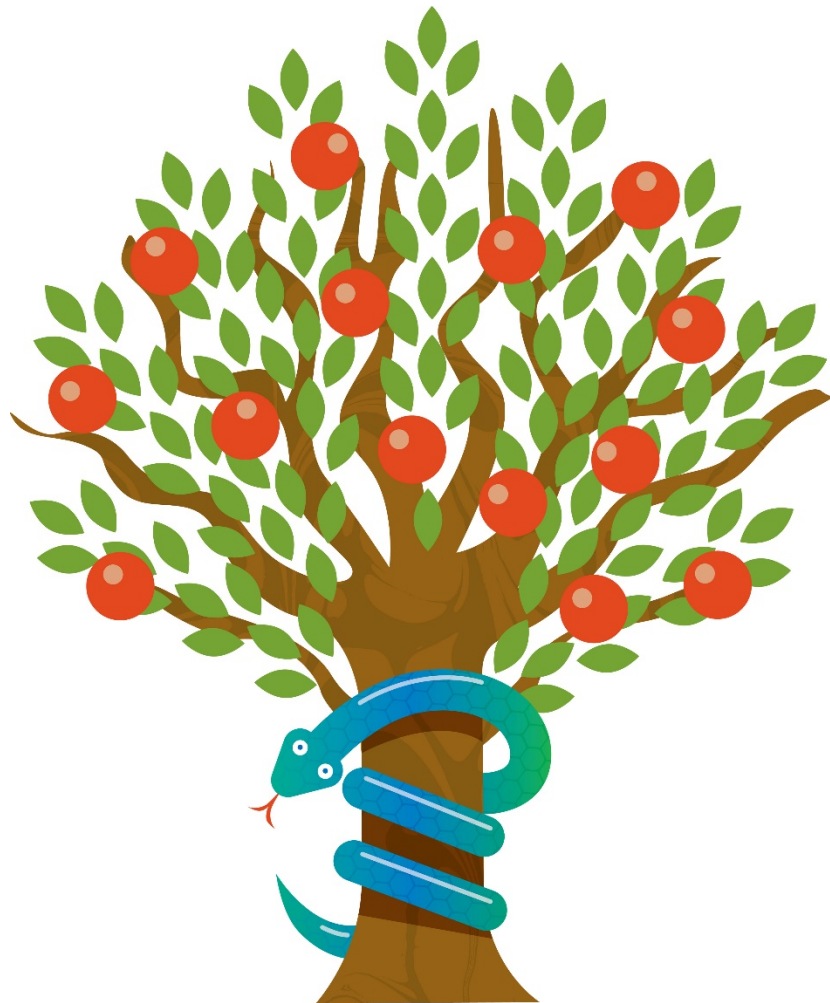


A Mission Congregation of the ELCA
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
P. O. Box 64 - 8520 Oakes Rd - Pittsburg, Ohio 45358



Genesis 2:4b-7, 15-17; 3:1-8
September 8, 2024



Scan with your Smartphone and link to our web page,
our Facebook page, and our YouTube Channel.



GATHERING

- **Prelude** **Roxanne Groff**
- **Office of the Acolyte and Ringing of the Bell**

- **Welcome** **Pr. Mel Musser**

* **THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM**

The assembly stands. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, the fountain of living water, the rock who gave us birth, our light and our salvation.

C: Amen.

The presiding minister addresses the assembly.

P: Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness. Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

Water may be poured into the font as the presiding minister gives thanks.

P: We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight. Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family. Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom. At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By water and your Word you claim us as daughters and sons, making us heirs of your promise and servants of all. We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life, and above all we praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ. Shower us with your Spirit, and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love. To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

C: Amen

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 - Please be seated

* **GATHERING HYMN**

“Morning Has Broken”

ELW 556



1 Morn - ing has bro - ken like the first morn - ing;
2 Sweet the rain's new fall, sun - lit from heav - en,
3 Mine is the sun - light! Mine is the morn - ing,



black-bird has spo - ken like the first bird.
like the first dew - fall on the first grass.
born of the one light E - den saw play!



Praise for the sing - ing! Praise for the morn - ing!
Praise for the sweet - ness of the wet gar - den,
Praise with e - la - tion, praise ev - 'ry morn - ing,



Praise for them, spring - ing fresh from the Word!
sprung in com - plete - ness where God's feet pass.
God's re - cre - a - tion of the new day!

* **APOSTOLIC GREETING**

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

C: And also with you.

* **PRAYER OF THE DAY.**

P: Let us pray... Holy God, guide us with your wisdom. Grant us discerning minds and hearts so that we might more fully walk in your ways and live in truth.

C: Amen.

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

• **CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**



Theme:

Materials:

Scripture: Genesis 2:4b-7, 15-17; 3:1-8

Hello boys and girls! I hope you all had a great week. I was on vacation last week and we were in the state of Idaho. We got to go to the Idaho State Fair and watch the Indian Horse Relay Races. That was really exciting. The young Braves had to run and mount their horses, then race around the track. When they got back to where they started they jumped off their still running horses and jumped onto the next horse as fast as they could. Then they raced around the track again. In some of the relays the Indian riders had to change horses three times. It was very exciting! One of the things about going to a fair is all the food that you can't get anywhere else. Some of the food is really bad for our bodies, but we like it anyways. I like the deep fried cheese curds. They taste delicious, but I know they're not good for you.

In the very first story in the Bible Adam and Eve are tempted to eat from the Tree that God specifically told them to stay away from. The devil came to them in the form of a serpent and talked them both into eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. By listening to the serpent instead of God, Adam and Eve sinned. They disobeyed God by doing exactly what God said not to do.

Sometimes we all disobey God. Every single one of us have sinned against God. It's pretty sad because we can't seem to help ourselves. Because of sin, we are separated from God and can't feel God's love. But there is good news. God won't let our sin stand in the way of God loving us. That's why God sent Jesus to do what we can't do! Jesus lived his life completely without sin and because Jesus was sin free, He paid the price for our sins. We call the free gift of forgiveness we receive from God Grace. Grace stands for God's Riches At Christ's Expense.

(SLIDE) Jesus paid for our sins by dying for us on the cross and then being raised from the dead by the power of God our Father. Because God raised Jesus from the dead we know God will raise us and all those who trust in Jesus from the dead too. That is really good news!

Let's pray... Dear God, thank you for sending Jesus to pay for our sins. Help us to say no to the devil and all his evil temptations. Amen.

• **A READING OF SCRIPTURE: Genesis 2:4b-7, 15-17; 3:1-8**

R: Our scripture reading is from Genesis, Chapters 2 & 3.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

⁴These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created. In the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, ⁵when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground; ⁶but a stream would rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground— ⁷then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being.

¹⁵The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. ¹⁶And the Lord God commanded the man, “You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; ¹⁷but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.”

3 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God say, ‘You shall not eat from any tree in the garden’?” ²The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; ³but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.’” ⁴But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not die; ⁵for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

⁶So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. ⁷Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves. ⁸They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

R: This is the Word of the Lord!

C: Praise to You, O Christ (*Spoken*)

• **SERMON**

Pr. Mel Musser

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the one who frees us from our sin, our Savior, Jesus Christ, amen.

In the spirit of solidarity with any of you who are watching your waistlines, here's a little inspirational story. It's about a man named Sam, who decided he was going on a diet. To make sure he would succeed, he announced his plan to all his friends and co-workers. Sam's co-workers were pretty good about giving him moral support until the morning he walked into the office carrying a box of freshly baked donuts. (SLIDE) "What's with the donuts, Sam?" one of them asked. "I thought you were on a diet." "I am," said Sam. "But I wouldn't have gotten these donuts if it weren't for God." What are you talking about, they asked... "You see, I was driving to work, and I knew I'd have to go right past the bakery. I couldn't get those donuts out of my mind, so I decided to pray to God for help. 'God, if you want me to have a box of delicious donuts, give me a parking place right in front of the bakery.' Sure enough, I found one... On my eighth trip around the block."

Some of us truly can't resist temptation! We're all too susceptible to that classic tagline from the potato-chip commercials: "Bet you can't eat just one!" (SLIDE) Something similar was true of a certain woman named Eve, whose story we think we know well. A garden, a tree, a talking snake and a shiny, red apple. That's the way the story has come down to us. (SLIDE) The problem is, a lot of other things have come down to us along the way, things that have nothing to do

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with the story's meaning to its original Hebrew audience. The story of Eve, the serpent and the garden has become the playground of all manner of creative thinkers, all of whom think they see things that just aren't there. It's worthwhile taking a few moments to examine some of these mistaken ideas.

The first of these mistaken ideas is that it's somehow the woman's fault *because* she's a woman. Unimaginable damage has been done to women over the centuries because some male theologians decided to read this text as proof that women are morally or intellectually inferior to men. For centuries they called women "the weaker sex," implying that, if only Adam had been around to keep a closer watch on his wayward wife — and do a little mansplaining when necessary — the two of them never would have had to leave that prime piece of real estate... This line of thinking is utter nonsense. Women are every bit the equal of men, when it comes to both intellectual attainment and moral sense. Usually, they even do better, like knowing when to stop and ask for directions, or not panicking when the TV remote is nowhere to be found. The truth is, from my reading of this story, Eve was the only one who put up any struggle against the serpent's wily ways. Adam kept his mouth shut and swallowed the devil's bait, hook, line, and sinker...

The second mistake is the idea that as soon as Adam bit into that forbidden fruit, the human race — by some sort of dark magic — experienced a cosmic change of condition known as "the Fall." (SLIDE) Certainly there *is* such a thing

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as sin, no one with any moral sense would deny it. Sin is a terrible curse. It's something we all experience and struggle against, but did God consign the human race to a perpetual *state* of sin purely because some prehistoric ancestor pilfered a piece of prize pomegranate? That explanation makes God into a petty, vindictive ruler, with a stunted sense of justice. The hard truth is, we've all got plenty of sins for which to repent, and they're not Adam and Eve's fault, but our own. We don't need to import sins from our ancestors to establish the fact we need forgiveness, big-time.

What do Adam and Eve do that's so terrible? The answer lies in that little phrase, "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." (SLIDE) Preachers and scholars have debated for centuries over the symbolic significance of that tree and its forbidden fruit. It's not a tree of knowledge in the general sense; it's a tree of knowledge *of good and evil*. What's bad is that this knowledge — defined by the ancient Hebrews in a very particular way — belongs by rights only to the king of Israel, as delegated by God. God's not bent out of shape because Adam and Eve have developed an ethical sense. God's angry because Adam and Eve are daring to put themselves in the judgment-seat of God. It's the kind of knowledge a judge needs to weigh testimony in a courtroom. The Hebrew word *yada*, or knowledge, means more than mere cognitive knowledge. It means an awareness of judgment, of justice. To pursue and claim the knowledge of good and evil means you're

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taking on the role of judge, a role that belongs to God alone — except for those occasions when God delegates it to the kings of Israel. (SLIDE) If Adam and Eve aspire to gorge themselves on the fruit of that tree, it means they want to make themselves into little gods. It means they no longer have any need to revere their Creator. The serpent in the story has it exactly right when he says they “will be like God.” This, of course, is the worst form of idolatry — the desire to assume for oneself the role of God. The first couple take the bait and the rest is ... pre-history...

Isn't that what all of us seek to do, in large ways and small, each day of our lives? We turn from the God who created us. We believe we can go it alone in life. We're like Sam in that little story we started with, driving around the block eight times to snag a divine seal of approval for what we've already decided to do! We rationalize our actions to make them seem acceptable, but we're all circling the donut shop...

That's what Eve does. Listen to what she concludes about the fruit, after talking with the serpent: “So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate.” Examine that verse carefully and you'll see three distinct rationalizations. First, the tree is “good for food,” it's useful. Secondly, it's “a delight to the eyes.” The tree is beautiful. Thirdly, the tree is “to

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be desired to make one wise.” Eve seeks utility, beauty and wisdom from the tree. These are good things, to be sure, but they lead her into sin. Yet isn’t that always the way? It’s not just the bad things that lead us astray; it’s the ‘good’ things, or at least, the things that seem to be good. Let’s take a look at these rationalizations.

The first of is *utility* — practical usefulness. When something tempts us, we’re more likely to give into that temptation if we can convince ourselves there’s something useful about it. (SLIDE) “But honey, we really need that Traeger barbecue grill, or that new car!” This was the same rationale that persuaded the Nazis to exterminate over 5 million Jews. The second thing that tempts the first couple is the tree’s beauty. Our aesthetic sense is a wonderful gift, but it’s a poor guide for ethical decision-making. Each year we’re all treated or subjected to yet another televised Academy Awards ceremony. All the “beautiful people” of Hollywood revel in their few seconds of fame as they parade down the red carpet. (SLIDE) Beauty, or, at least, a certain understanding of beauty will be celebrated *ad nauseum*. Many of these so-called “beautiful people,” with their marital infidelities and conspicuous substance abuse, are in fact anything but beautiful when it comes to their inner lives. Finally, our first couple is led astray by their misjudgment that the fruit of the tree will make them *wise*. (SLIDE) It’s true we can gain wisdom from making all sorts of decisions, both those that are beneficial and those that bring us pain. Sometimes it’s the lessons our bad decisions teach us

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that are the most compelling. Seldom are we tempted by the blatantly bad things of this world. The process by which we turn vice into virtue, is called “rationalization.” It’s the same process Eve goes through as she ponders whether to disobey the Lord and bite into the forbidden fruit. When Eve manages to convince herself that the tree is useful, beautiful and a source of wisdom, she’s able to do the unthinkable. (SLIDE) Think about all those rationalizations and how easy they are to deploy in the service of sin... “I’m not committing adultery; I’m finding the love I need.” “I’m not hurting anybody when I cheat my customers; I’m following the laws of the marketplace.” “I’m not abusing my child; I’m enforcing discipline.” My personal favorite... “I’m not living a greedy lifestyle of over-consumption; I’m pursuing the American dream.” Whatever your favorite rationalization, they all have deadly consequences.

There is some good news in all this. There’s a way out. It’s called grace. (SLIDE) Just when we recognize temptation for what it is and acknowledge we can’t beat it on our own, God enters in and gives us what we need to prevail. It’s all a matter of whom we trust. Trust ourselves alone, and we go down in flames. Trust God — the author of grace — and we find, more often than not, the strength we need to resist temptation and live a godly life.

May the Lord God provide you with the strength you need to overcome the serpent's most tempting fruit. May we trust our very lives to the one who created and redeemed us, Jesus Christ our Savior, amen.

Silence may be kept for meditation...

* **HYMN OF THE DAY** **“For the Beauty of the Earth”** **LBW 561**



1 For the beau - ty of the earth, for the beau - ty of the skies,
2 For the won - der of each hour of the day and of the night,
3 For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's de - light,
4 For the joy of hu - man love, broth - er, sis - ter, par - ent, child,
5 For your - self, best gift di - vine to the world so free - ly giv'n;



for the love which from our birth o - ver and a - round us lies:
hill and vale and tree and flow'r, sun and moon and stars of light:
for the mys - tic har - mo - ny link - ing sense to sound and sight:
friends on earth and friends a - bove; for all gen - tle thoughts and mild:
a - gent of God's grand de - sign, peace on earth and joy in heav'n:



Christ, our Lord, to you we raise this our sac - ri - fice of praise.

* **APOSTLES' CREED**

The Nicene Creed is said on all festivals and on Sundays in the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter. The Apostles' Creed is said at other times. The Creed is omitted here if the service of Holy Baptism or another rite with a creed is used.

C: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

* Please stand if able

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September 8, 2024

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I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

➤ *Or, He descended to the dead.*

*** PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

L: We pray for the church, the world, and all of creation, trusting in your gracious love and care.

A brief silence.

L: For wisdom and discernment, we pray. Enlighten us so that we might follow your will and your ways, and forgive us when we stumble and go astray. Help us to return again and again to you. God, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: For all of creation, we pray. Bring healing and restoration to all the earth, and help us to be good stewards of all that you have made. God, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: For integrity and compassion in all leaders, we pray. Grant vision for the good of all people to those in positions of power. God, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: For those who are suffering, we pray. Draw near to all who call out to you and all who are in need of your comfort and care, (*especially...*) God, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: For open hearts and minds, we pray. Kindle in us curiosity to learn from others and kindle in us a deep appreciation for diverse perspectives and people. God, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

L: For all those who have gone before us, we pray. May their lives be a faithful example to us who seek to care for our neighbors and world. God, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

P: These and all our prayers we lift up to you, O God.

* Please stand if able

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September 8, 2024

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C: Amen.

MEAL

- **OFFERING**

P: As we collect our offering here in person, those worshipping with us through the internet may go to our website located at www.pitsburgtlc.org where you'll find a button labeled "Give to Trinity." You can make your offering to God through our secure website.

- * **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

P: Let us pray for the offerings we receive this day ... Gracious God, all that we are and all that we have belongs to you. Accept these gifts and use them to bless, encourage, and sustain others. In Jesus' name we pray.

C: Amen.

- * **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

P: United into one through Jesus Christ Our Lord, we pray as Jesus taught...

C: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

SENDING

- **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- * **SENDING BLESSING**

P: God all mighty, God most merciful bless you, keep you, and give you peace.

C: Amen.

* Please stand if able

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September 8, 2024

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1 Let all things now liv - ing A song of thanks-giv - ing To
2 His law he en - forc - es, The stars in their cours - es And



God the cre - a - tor tri - um-phant - ly raise, Who fashioned and
sun in its or - bit o - be - dient - ly shine; The hills and the



made us, Pro - tect - ed and stayed us, Who still guides us
moun-tains, The riv - ers and foun - tains, The deeps of the



on to the end of our days. God's ban - ners are o'er us, His
o - cean pro-claim him di - vine. We too should be voic - ing Our



light goes be - fore us, A pil - lar of fire shin - ing forth in the
love and re - joic - ing; With glad ad - o - ra - tion a song let us



night, Till shad - ows have van - ished And dark - ness is
raise Till all things now liv - ing U - nite in thanks -



ban-ished, As for - ward we trav - el from light in - to light.
giv - ing: "To God in the high - est, ho - san - na and praise!"

* **DISMISSAL**

P: Thank you all for joining us to worship our great and gracious God! Thanks also to our Facebook and other social media viewers for joining us as well. We're glad you're with us today. Until the next time we gather together as God's people to offer our worship and praise, depart in Christ's Love.

C: Seeking, welcoming, and serving all. Amen!

* **POSTLUDE**

Roxanne Groff

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Scripture readings for next Sunday, September 15th
Genesis 15:1-6

Trinity Worship Assistants and Staff

Ministers	All the People of Trinity
Organist	Roxanne Groff
Lector	Kathy Kathman
Acolyte	
Parrish Nurse	PJ Musser
Custodian	Mark Groff
Secretary	Sharon Fourman
Facebook Live Recorder	PJ Musser

Health Tips for the Week

BODY: Eat from the food guide pyramid.

MIND: Smell or eat peppermint to increase alertness.

SPIRIT: Celebrate your family, marriage and/or relationships.

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September 8, 2024

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This Week @ Trinity – September 8 thru September 15:

DATE	TIME	EVENT
Sun, Sept. 8	9:30 am	Christian Conversations (Coffee/Juice and Donuts)
	10:30 am	Worship Service
	12:00 pm	Trinity Troops
	6:00 pm	Video/Book Club – “The Chosen”
Mon, Sept. 9	10:00 am	Youth & Family Ministry Meeting
Wed, Sept. 11	11:30 am	WELCA Meeting
Thurs, Sept. 12	10:00 am	Prayers & Squares Quilting
Fri, Sept. 13	3:30 pm	FISH Choice Food Pantry
Sun, Sept. 15	9:30 am	Christian Conversations (Coffee/Juice and Donuts)
	10:30 am	Worship Service

PLEASE NOTE SOME DATE CHANGES:

1. WELCA Meeting is Sept. 11 at 11:30 am, not Sept. 4.
2. Youth & Family Ministry Meeting is Sept. 9 at 10:00 am, not Sept. 5.

Save The Date!

September 18, 2024	GRCC Soup Kitchen
September 19, 2024	Ladies & Gents Luncheon at Firehouse BBQ & Blues, 400 N. 8 th St., Richmond
September 28, 2024	WELCA Biennial Convention



Trinity is on the Air at FM 88.3

If you are near the Church on Sunday morning, you can tune in to FM 88.3 at 10:30 AM and hear the sermon from your car.

Holy Communion Delivery Available to ALL:

If you or anyone you know would like to have Holy Communion delivered to a home or place of business, please call Pastor Mel at 937-626-7100. He will bring a prefilled communion chalice including both sanctified wine and a morsel of bread

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all prepackaged from the Concordia True Vine company. This is a safe way to stay connected to your brothers and sisters in Christ.

Trinity Contact Info

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Email:	pastor@pitsburgtlc.org
Cell Phone:	937-626-7100
Secretary:	Sharon Fourman
Email:	secretary@pitsburgtlc.org
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