TRINITY MERRILL
LUTHERAN CHURCH
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Reverend Scott Gustafson
Reverend Jonathan Chapa

November 8, 2026 - 10:30 AM
Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

Sharing the message with us today is Pastor Jon Chapa with Pastor Scott Gustafson as our Liturgist.

AS WE GATHER: The Lord is grieved by the empty worship of His people. Their songs and their offerings mean nothing when their hearts are far from Him, and He will not accept them any longer (Amos 5:21–23). And the day of the Lord will actually catch them off guard and unprepared. Jesus offers the same warning in the parable of the ten virgins, calling His disciples to watch for a bridegroom who will come at an unknown day and hour (Matthew 25:13). Jesus' warning calls us to attention as we reflect on our own position of waiting for His return. His warning is followed by Paul's further description of what our waiting looks like. Since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, our waiting is also filled with hope (1 Thessalonians 4:13–14).

PRE-SERVICE: ***"Christ Our Hope in Life and Death"*** (Praise Team) #49 Key of E
"God of All My Days" (Praise Team) #24 Key of G

WELCOME & GREETING

OPENING SONG ***"God Bless Our Native Land"*** LSB 965

1. *God bless our native land;*
Firm may she ever stand
Through storm and night.
When the wild tempests rave,
Ruler of wind and wave,
Do Thou our country save
By Thy great might.

2. *So shall our prayers arise*
To God above the skies;
On Him we wait.
Thou who art ever nigh,
Guarding with watchful eye,
To Thee aloud we cry:
God save the state!

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INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ✝ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
People: Amen.

CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION **Psalm 70:1**

Pastor: Make haste, O God, to deliver me!
People: O LORD, make haste to help me!

Silent reflection on God's Word and for self-examination

Pastor: Let us then confess our sins to God, who is our help and our deliverer.
People: Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We confess the ways that our worship has fallen into empty words, disconnected from the life to which You have called us. We confess that we have been inattentive in our waiting for Christ's return. Forgive us, renew us, and call us back to You, that we may wait with hope and joy, to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

Pastor: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. He does not delay! His righteousness flows like an ever-flowing stream. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✝ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
People: Amen.

SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Lord God, heavenly Father, send forth Your Son to lead home His bride, the Church, that with all the company of the redeemed we may finally enter into His eternal wedding feast; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
People: Amen.

MONTHLY VERSE (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18) Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

SONG *"America the Beautiful"* #113 Key of A

Vs.1 *O beautiful for spacious skies*
For amber waves of grain
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain
America America God shed His grace on thee
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea

Vs.2 *O beautiful for pilgrim feet*
Whose stern impassioned stress
A thoroughfare for freedom beat
Across the wilderness
America America God mend thine ev'ry flaw
Confirm thy soul in self control
Thy liberty in law

Vs.3 *O beautiful for heroes proved in liberating strife*
Who more than self their country loved
And mercy more than life
America America may God thy gold refine
Till all success be nobleness
And ev'ry gain divine

Vs.4 *O beautiful for patriot dream*
That sees beyond the years
Thine alabaster cities gleam
Undimmed by human tears
America America God shed His grace on thee
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea

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FIRST READING Amos 5:18-24

18 Woe to you who desire the day of the Lord! Why would you have the day of the Lord? It is
darkness, and not light, 19 as if a man fled from a lion, and a bear met him, or went into the
house and leaned his hand against the wall, and a serpent bit him. 20 Is not the day of the
Lord darkness, and not light, and gloom with no brightness in it? 21 "I hate, I despise your
feasts, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. 22 Even though you offer me your
burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them; and the peace offerings of your
fattened animals, I will not look upon them. 23 Take away from me the noise of your songs; to
the melody of your harps I will not listen. 24 But let justice roll down like waters, and
righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

SECOND READING 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you
may not grieve as others do who have no hope. 14 For since we believe that Jesus died and
rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep.
15 For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until
the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord himself
will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the
sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive,
who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and
so we will always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore encourage one another with these words.

GOSPEL READING **Matthew 25:1-13**

[1][Jesus said:] “Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and
went to meet the bridegroom. [2] Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. [3] For when the
foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, [4] but the wise took flasks of oil with their
lamps. [5] As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept. [6] But at midnight
there was a cry, ‘Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’ [7] Then all those virgins rose
and trimmed their lamps. [8] And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our
lamps are going out.’ [9] But the wise answered, saying, ‘Since there will not be enough for us
and for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.’ [10] And while they were going to
buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast,
and the door was shut. [11] Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open to
us.’ [12] But he answered, ‘Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.’ [13] Watch therefore, for you
know neither the day nor the hour.

SONG OF THE DAY ***“My Country ‘Tis Of Thee (America)”*** #18 Key of F

Vs.1 *My country 'tis of thee*
Sweet land of liberty
Of thee I sing
Land where my fathers die
Land of the pilgrims' pride
From every mountain side
Let freedom ring

Vs.2 *My native country thee*
Land of the noble free
Thy name I love
I love thy rocks and rills
Thy woods and templed hills
My heart with rapture thrills
Like that above

Vs.3 *Let music swell the breeze*
And ring from all the trees
Sweet freedom's song
Let mortal tongues awake
Let all that breathe partake
Let rocks their silence break
The sound prolong

Vs.4 *Our fathers' God to Thee*
Author of liberty
To Thee we sing
Long may our land be bright
With freedom's holy light
Protect us by Thy might
Great God our King

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MESSAGE

NICENE CREED

People: I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

ATTENDANCE / CONNECT TIME / OFFERING (Instrumental)

During this time, please sign the attendance book found in the pew or use your mobile device to fill out the Connect Card or submit prayer requests on our app or online at www.trinitymerrill.com/live. You can also visit our app or www.trinitymerrill.com/give to learn more about other ways to support the ministries at Trinity. ***(When filling out the attendance book, please include your last names and list the names of everyone in attendance in your family.) If you are a visitor and you are interested in membership, please add your email and phone number to the attendance pad.***

PRAYERS OF GOD'S PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

✞ WELCOME TO THE LORD'S TABLE ✞

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

COMMUNION SONGS ***"Come As You Are"*** #77 Key of D

Vs.1 *Come out of sadness from wherever you've been*
Come broken-hearted let rescue begin
Come find your mercy O sinner come kneel
Earth has no sorrow that Heaven can't heal
Earth has no sorrow that Heaven can't heal

Chorus ***(So) Lay down your burdens lay down your shame***
All who are broken lift up your face
O wanderer come home
You're not too far
So lay down your hurt lay down your heart
Come as you are

Vs.2 *There's hope for the hopeless*
And all those who've strayed
Come sit at the table come taste the grace
There's rest for the weary
Rest that endures
Earth has no sorrow that Heaven can't cure

(Chorus)

Bridge *Come as you are*
Fall in His arms
Come as you are

Vs.3 *There's joy for the morning O sinner be still*
Earth has no sorrow that Heaven can't heal
Earth has no sorrow that Heaven can't heal

(Chorus)

Ending *Come as you are*
Come as you are
Come as you are

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"Nothing But the Blood" (Instrumental) #101 Key of A

COMMUNION BLESSING

BENEDICTION

CLOSING SONG ***"Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory (Battle Hymn) "*** #104 Key of A

Vs.1 *Mine eyes have seen the glory*
Of the coming of the Lord
He is trampling out the vintage
Where the grapes of wrath are stored
He hath loosed the fateful lightning
Of His terrible swift sword
His truth is marching on

Chorus ***Glory glory hallelujah***
Glory glory hallelujah
Glory glory hallelujah
His truth is marching on

Vs.2 *I have seen Him in the watchfires*
Of a hundred circling camps
They have builded Him an altar
In the evening dews and damps
I can read His righteous sentence
By the dim and flaring lamps
His day is marching on

(Chorus)

Vs.3 *He has sounded forth the trumpet*
That shall never call retreat
He is sifting out the hearts of men
Before His judgment seat
O be swift my soul to answer Him
Be jubilant my feet
Our God is marching on

(Chorus)

Vs.4 *In the beauty of the lilies*
Christ was born across the sea
With a glory in His bosom
That transfigures you and me
As He died to make men holy
Let us live to make men free
While God is marching on

(Chorus-Sing 2x)

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The radio broadcast today is sponsored in loving memory of the birthday of Lyle Whiting (Dec. 26) and in celebration of his heavenly birthday on November 7, by his wife Fern and his family.
The flowers on the altar are sponsored in loving memory of brothers Robert & Duane Bonke by their sister Barbara Bonke

TRINITY KIDS (Sunday School) Children will enjoy learning about Jesus and His love for them at Sunday School. Sundays from 9:15-10:15 at Trinity School.

NEED A RIDE TO CHURCH? WE'RE HERE TO HELP! Trinity is pleased to offer **free taxi rides to and from worship services** through Blue Jay Taxi. If you or someone you know could benefit from transportation assistance, simply call **715-921-4110** by **Wednesday** before the weekend service you plan to attend. When leaving your message, please include: which worship service you will attend, your pick-up address, and how many people need transportation to Trinity.

"Holiday Parade" Help us share the gift of Christmas with Merrill. **Help us put together our Christmas float for the Merrill Holiday Parade on December 5**. Reach out to one of the Pastors or to Steph for more information.

Trinity is getting ready for the Advent Season. Our kick-off is on Nov. 29th. The Café' will be set up with coffee, hot cocoa and cookies for the children to decorate. **Cookie decorating will be from 9:15-10:00 and 11:15-12:00.**

ANGEL Giving Tree - The ANGEL Giving Tree will be available in the Narthex beginning November 29th. Please take a tag from the tree to purchase a Christmas gift for someone staying at the HAVEN and/or MAC Home. Gift tags will be numbered by family and will include details such as adult and child ages, clothing sizes, and wish list items. Please wrap your gift, attach the tag to the top of the present, and place it under the tree no later than December 22nd.

CHURCH OFFICE HELP NEEDED! Trinity Church is looking for someone who would be willing to **fill in at the church office when staff is on vacation or takes time off.** If you enjoy helping others and would like to serve Trinity in this way, we would love to hear from you! **Please contact Robin if you are interested or would like more information. 715-536-5482.**

OPEN HEARTS FOOD SHELF — VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! Our Open Hearts Food Shelf is open every Wednesday and Friday from 2:00–4:00 PM, providing food to individuals and families in our community. We are looking for a few volunteers who can help pick up food on Thursday or Friday mornings and bring it to Trinity. The food will already be packaged and ready to go—no shopping required! Some muscle is helpful, as there will be boxes and food packages to load and unload. If you can help on a regular or occasional basis, please contact the church office or speak with Pastor G. Your helping hands can be an Open Heart to someone in need!

Women are invited to gather for a special day for women at Trinity Church on Saturday, November 14 from 9:00-1:00. We will celebrate how to "Fan the Flame" of our faith. The day will include worship with uplifting sessions, music, a craft service project, fellowship, lunch and much more. A $5 registration fee includes morning refreshments, soup and salad lunch and conference materials. Childcare is available. However, you must sign up in advance for childcare, so we can arrange staffing. Bring a bible and a friend. Register online or call the church office to sign up. 715-536-5482.

