

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER
MAY 2, 2021

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

**ACKNOWLEDGING SHIVON'S CONCLUSION OF CALL AS
MINISTER OF CONGREGATIONAL LIFE:**

Jordan: In August of 2003, we of Trinity Lutheran Church called Shivon to this place to serve as Minister of Congregational Life, to nurture the faith of children and youth and strengthen intergenerational relationships within the community. For 18 years Shivon served alongside Pastor Jerome to jointly lead worship and congregational life.

Over the past year and a half, Trinity has been preparing for a transition in our life together. Under the guidance of the NE MN Synod, Shivon entered the TEEM program through Wartburg Seminary to prepare for a call to ordained ministry within the ELCA. Upon Pastor Jerome's retirement we now shift to maintaining only one full-time leadership and ministry position on staff.

Today Shivon's call as Minister of Congregational Life ends. While we recognize the end of this specific call, our commitment to children, youth and intergenerational ministry continues. As Shivon accepts her new role as Vicar of Trinity Lutheran Church, we recognize our mutual ministry is committed to nurturing the faith of all ages and building intergenerational community. The title of Vicar identifies Shivon as authorized to teach and preach the Gospel, conduct worship services, preside over the Sacraments of the church and provide ministry to members of the congregation while she continues to prepare for ordained ministry as Pastor within the ELCA.

People of God, members of Trinity Lutheran Church, do you release Shivon from service as Minister of Congregational Life and recognize her new role as Vicar?

Congregation: We do, and we give thanks to God for our ministry together.

Jordan: Shivon, do you recognize and accept the completion of your role as Minister of Congregational Life and your new call as Vicar?

Shivon: I do, and I give thanks to God for the ministry we have shared and the ministry we will share moving forward.

ACKNOWLEDGING AND BLESSING THE BEGINNING OF INTERNSHIP:

Heather: Over these next 6 months with the support of the congregation, Shivon will complete the requirements of Internship. At the conclusion of internship, Shivon will enter the ELCA Approval process. If Shivon is approved and the Trinity congregation has completed the necessary preparations for call, Trinity will then be invited to call Shivon as ordained pastor of the congregation.

Over these next 6 months I will be serving as chair of the Internship Committee. Other members include: Gene and Sandy Keyser, Kathy Myers, Dennis Mitchell, Annelise Salmela, Per Johnson, and Sophia Consie. Pastor Doug Paulson from Seafarer's and UMD Campus Ministry will be serving as Shivon's Supervising Pastor and Pastor Tim Berdahl, Interim Pastor for the NE MN Synod will serve as her Mentor Pastor. We give thanks for these individuals supporting this time of internship.

Let us pray:

O God, who through the Holy Spirit illumines the mind and sanctifies the lives of those who are called to rostered leadership in your church - look with favor upon the seminaries of our church in their efforts to instruct and form those who are to serve in the Sacred Ministry of the Gospel.

Bless your people in this congregation who by word and example aid your servant, Shivon, in learning to grow into a pastoral identity, develop a pastoral imagination, and grow in the competencies of ministry. Grant as we continue to serve together, submitting ourselves in obedience to your Son and guided by your Spirit, that our lives may be enriched and our ministries fulfilled with joy -- to the glory of your Name. Amen.

The Apostle Paul writes, "People have different gifts, but it is the same Spirit who gives them. There are different ways of serving God, but it is the same Lord who is served. God works through different people in different ways, but it is the same God who achieves God's purpose through them all." (1 Cor. 12:4-6) It is the task of the student under the direction of the supervising pastor and in mutuality with the congregation to learn by doing and become by being.

Heather: I ask you, Shivon, are you willing to embrace this time of intentional teaching and learning in your ministry here, and will you seek God's guidance to be challenged and grow for the sake of the Gospel and to the Glory of God?

Shivon: I am ready. May God help me, empower me, and form me in this ministry.

Heather: It is (y)our opportunity as members of this congregation to serve as a teaching and learning congregation for a student in formation for Rostered Ministry in the ELCA. It is (y)our opportunity to serve as a place of learning and growth for Shivon who now begins her internship. It is (y)our opportunity to accompany Shivon as she seeks to grow toward competence in the essential practices of ministry, to deepen her pastoral identity, and to embrace the call that God has placed upon her life.

Heather: Now I ask you, will you accompany and support this servant of God during internship? Will you uphold her in prayer? Will you help her grow into God's call for her/his/their life? If so, **please unmute** and answer, "Yes, with God's help."

Congregation: Yes, with God's help.

Heather: Almighty God, by whose call we are at work, bless and empower us in our ministry that what we do together will be pleasing in your sight and bring honor to your holy name.

Let us pray: Almighty God, we ask you to bless Shivon and this congregation. May this time of internship be rich with opportunities for growth. May we accompany Shivon with grace. May we guide Shivon with love. May we nurture Shivon with compassion. Offer your continual help to all who labor in your love and service. Grant us your spirit, power and wisdom, steadfastness of faith, and hope for all good things; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Alleluia! Christ is risen.

P: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

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

P: Amen.

GATHERING SONG: *"We are Called"*

ELW #720

Come! Live in the light! Shine with the joy and the love of the Lord!
We are called to be light for the kingdom to live in the freedom of the city of God.
We are called to act with justice, we are called to love tenderly;
We are called to serve one another, to walk humbly with God.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS (Taken from the NE MN Synod Assembly Sunday Worship)

Leader: As we come to God in prayer,
let us open ourselves to the presence of the Holy Spirit,
to bring to our souls the freshness of mercy and grace.

Silence for reflection

Let us pray together:

**All: Holy Breath, Wind, Flame and Spirit:
Ignite our hearts with your fire.
Burn off all that is dry and lifeless,
And grow us anew.**

Forgive us...

**For those times we stifle your Spirit, O God;
For those times we ignore your whispers and shouts,
For those times when we turn away from your wonders and miracles:
Forgive us.**

**Let your spirit dance within our spirits,
Uprooting us when we have been unmoved
and refresh all that is stale in our lives.
Breathe into us your peace,
that we would be a breath of peace to all we meet.
Hear us, Holy Spirit. Amen.**

Leader: People of God, the Spirit always moves among us,
empowering us to know mercy and grace,
forgiveness and service.
In this Spirit, through Christ, we proclaim the Good news.

All: We are forgiven. Alleluia! Amen.

Adapted from the liturgies of Beth Merrill Neel

PRAYER OF THE DAY (Taken from the NE MN Synod Assembly Sunday Worship)

L: O God, you have prepared joys beyond understanding for all people. Ignite our hearts with your unconditional love, that we may receive and share your promises, which go beyond our deepest desires and wildest imaginations. Urge us on to live for the one who died for us, Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

All: Amen.

CHILDREN’S TIME

SONG: *“Everywhere I Go”* Group VBS

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hfmCgy4X0dw>

FIRST READING: Acts 8:26-40

²⁶An angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” (This is a wilderness road.) ²⁷So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship ²⁸and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. ²⁹Then the Spirit said to Philip, “Go over to this chariot and join it.” ³⁰So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?” ³¹He replied, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. ³²Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this:

“Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter,
and like a lamb silent before its shearer,
so he does not open his mouth.

³³In his humiliation justice was denied him.

Who can describe his generation?

For his life is taken away from the earth.”

³⁴The eunuch asked Philip, “About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?” ³⁵Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. ³⁶As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?” ³⁸He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. ³⁹When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

PSALM OF THE DAY: Psalm 22:25-31

²⁵From you comes my praise in the great assembly;

I will perform my vows in the sight of those who fear the LORD.

²⁶**The poor shall eat and be satisfied,**

Let those who seek the LORD give praise! May your hearts live forever!

²⁷All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD;

all the families of nations shall bow before God.

²⁸**For dominion belongs to the LORD,**

who rules over the nations.

(continued on the next page)

²⁹Indeed, all who sleep in the earth shall bow down in worship;
all who go down to the dust, though they be dead, shall kneel before the LORD.
³⁰**Their descendants shall serve the LORD,
whom they shall proclaim to generations to come.**
³¹They shall proclaim God's deliverance to a people yet unborn,
saying to them, "The LORD has acted!"

SECOND READING: 1 JOHN 4:7-21

⁷Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. ¹⁰In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. ¹²No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

¹³By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.

¹⁴And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. ¹⁵God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. ¹⁶So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. ¹⁷Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. ¹⁸There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. ¹⁹We love because he first loved us. ²⁰Those who say, "I love God," and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. ²¹The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

GOSPEL: JOHN 15:1-8

[Jesus said:] ¹"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. ²He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. ³You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. ⁵I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples."



SERMON: Vicar Shivon Miller

SONG: “To Live On”

To live on in grace and wonder, to reach out and to love each other
To live on, to live on, to live on
We don't always know where we're going
We don't always know what to believe
But we stand inside this hope of freedom
Holding to the faith we have received

CONFESSION OF FAITH: The Apostles' Creed

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

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

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.

OFFERING

Looking for a way to give to support Trinity ministry? Simply text the amount you'd like to give to 833-610-0635. Kathy will also continue to check the mail and make deposits weekly. Thank you for your generous giving that enables continued ministries.

OFFERING SONG: “Alleluia! Jesus is Risen” (To the tune of Earth and All Stars)

Jesus the vine, we are the branches;
life in the Spirit the fruit of the tree;
heaven to earth, Christ to the people,
gift of the future now flowing to me.

Refrain

Jesus is risen and we shall arise.
Give God the glory! Alleluia!

OFFERING PRAYER

L: God of love, you call us beloved children and welcome us to your table. Receive our lives and the gifts we offer. Abide with us and send us in service to a suffering world, for the sake of your beloved Child, Jesus Christ.

P: Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Alive in the risen Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, we bring our prayers before God who promises to hear us and answer in steadfast love.

A brief silence.

God of all fruitfulness, you abide in your church and your church abides in you. Cleanse us by your word and give yourself to the whole church on earth so that it bears fruit and witnesses to your love. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You have created the heavens and the earth. As we wonder at the beauty of creation, may we seek vital connections among all that depend on the earth for life. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You rule the nations with justice and love. Give the leaders of the earth assurance of your abiding presence, that they lead not by fear but with love for those they are called to serve. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You have loved us so that we can love others. We pray for all in need of your love: those who are poor, lowly, outcast, weak, or fearful. Provide for the needs of all (*especially the Tomaich family, JoAnn Salmela*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

You gather us with all the saints by the power of your Spirit. With them, may our hearts live forever in your keeping. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

In the hope of new life in Christ, we raise our prayers to you, trusting in your never-ending goodness and mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

BLESSING

May our glorious God grant you a spirit of wisdom to know and to love the risen Lord Jesus.

The God of life,

Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit,

bless you now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING SONG: "Go Make Disciples"

Go make disciples, baptizing them, teaching them

Go make disciples for I am with you 'til the end of time

Go be the salt of the earth, go be the light of the world

Go be a city on a hill

So all can see that you're serving me

Go make disciples, Go make disciples, Go make disciples

DISMISSAL

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

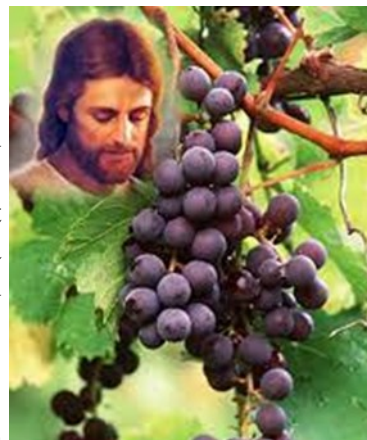
Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

AFTER THOUGHTS

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

We Are the Branches

To encourage flowering and fruit production in vines, trees, and shrubs, most of us know that pruning is necessary. This isn't the easiest of work, nor does it make the pruned plant look all that great for a while afterward. Yet often what results after pruning is a plant that is more abundant, beautiful, and healthy than it would have been otherwise.



In our reading today, Jesus makes it very clear that he is the vine, his Father is the vine grower, and we, his disciples, are the branches on which fruit grows. Without the vine and the vine grower, the branches do not exist. Yet, often in our spiritual lives it seems as though we get these roles mixed up. We are wooed by the sense of accomplishment and value that comes from producing results of one kind or another, and we fail to acknowledge the source that makes that "fruit" possible.

However, in today's gospel, Jesus reminds us that our job isn't to produce results; it's to stay connected. "Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing," Jesus says (John 15:5). Jesus is our source and strength; it is only by our connection to Jesus the vine that we the branches bear fruit that will last, such as love, compassion, forgiveness, hope, service, kindness, and patience.

To grow this kind of fruit, Jesus relates how necessary it is for us to be pruned occasionally. In other words, those things that are not of God in our lives have to be rooted out from time to time. The process of pruning isn't always the most enjoyable and can even include a good deal of pain, but it leads to lives that are whole and abundant. As we abide in Jesus, we are given the strength we need to endure the pruning process. We also experience the peace that comes from knowing that the fruit that will follow is for the glory of God.

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