

By faith



TRINITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
2340 State Street, East Petersburg, PA 17520
717-569-1632

Website: www.trinityeastpete.org E-Mail: secretary@trinityeastpete.org

The Rev. Dr. Christopher M. Rankin, Pastor

The Rev. Harry G. Royer, Pastor Emeritus

The Rev. Dr. Carolynne Call, Covenanted Minister of Mission

Mr. Michael Slechta, Director of Music/ Sounds of Trinity Choir Director

Mrs. Christine Oetama, Organist

Mrs. Carmen Richards, Pianist

Mrs. Carol Kratz, Administrative Assistant

Mr. Sean McKelvey, Preschool Director

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
7:45 A.M. SERVICE

Today's Theme: Jesus says, "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." It is God's promise from the beginning-to Abraham, to the early church, and to the "little flock" of which we are a part in today's assembly. Faith, God's baptismal gift, trusts the promises of God. Have no fear.

Welcome all visitors! We welcome all who worship with us. May the joy of Christ's presence and the power of the Holy Spirit fill you with peace and hope! We are honored by your presence and trust that you will join us in the praise and worship of God. Please sign our guest book in the narthex. If you are interested in church membership, please give your name and telephone number to Pastor Rankin.

Welcome to the Eucharist! All who seek to follow Jesus and who seek the gifts Jesus offers us are invited to share in this sacrament of Holy Communion. *Children are invited to receive communion at the discretion of their parents/guardians. If a child wants to receive a blessing, they are asked to fold their hands.*

Prayer As You Enter: *Almighty God, you sent your Holy Spirit to be the life and light of your church. Open our hearts to the riches of your grace, that we may be ready to receive you wherever you appear, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.*

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

CALL TO WORSHIP

AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM AND INVITATION TO THE TABLE

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Gather before God, people of the covenant. Listen for God's Word, O faithful ones.

God has summoned us to this place. We believe God will speak to us here.

Come to honor God and give thanks. Seek to learn and follow in God's ways.

We come as willing and obedient servants. Let your steadfast love, O God, be upon us.

In the Acts of the Apostles we read that as the church was gathered, often in the homes of believers, Christians devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and community, to the breaking of bread, and to prayers.

Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life, we gather at your table to know you in the breaking of the bread.

In Christ's presence there is fullness of joy. Come to the banquet.

CONFESSION OF SINS

CALL TO CONFESSION

We are called to examine our faithfulness to God's covenant with us.

God, in whose presence we gather, promises us grace and pardon when we acknowledge our weakness and shame.

Let us silently confess our sin before God.

(SEATED OR KNEELING)

SILENT CONFESSION OF SINS

CONFESSION OF SIN

Seeking reconciliation with God and neighbor, let us remember the gift of baptism and confess our sin.

Gracious God, we come to you for healing and life. Our sins hurt others and diminish us; we confess them to you. Our lives bear the scars of sin; we bring these also to you. Show us your mercy, O God. Bind up our wounds, forgive us our sins, and free us to love, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

KYRIE

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

ACT OF PRAISE

O God, open my lips.

And my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Praise to the holy and undivided Trinity, one God:

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end.

Amen.

COLLECT FOR THE NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Let us pray the collect together.

God of Light and Love, who delights in all of creation, ignite our spirits to worship with sincerity; illumine our minds with the truth of your Word; inspire our hearts to seek only your treasure, that we might be moved to action and share your love. Through Jesus Christ, our hope and promise, we pray. Amen.

(PLEASE BE SEATED)

TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

THE WORD OF GOD

THE FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 1:1, 10-20

Isaiah announces God's displeasure with the offerings and sacrifices of a people who are without compassion. He urges them instead to do justice and defend the oppressed. Indeed, if they repent, the Lord promises, they will be made as clean as new-fallen snow.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

THE PSALTER

Psalm 50:1-8, 22-23

The Almighty God, the Lord, speaks; God calls to the whole earth from east to west. **God shines from Zion, the city perfect in its beauty.**

Our God is coming, but not in silence; a raging fire is in front of God, a furious storm around God. **God calls heaven and earth as witnesses to see God judge the Lord's people.**

God says, "Gather my faithful people to me, those who made a covenant with me by offering a sacrifice." **The heavens proclaim that God is righteous, that God is judge.**

"Listen, my people, and I will speak; I will testify against you Israel. I am God, your God. **I do not reprimand you because of your sacrifices and the burnt offerings you always bring me.**"

"Listen to this, you that ignore me, or I will destroy you, and there will be no one to save you. **Giving thanks is the sacrifice that honors me, and I will surely save all who obey me.**"

THE SECOND LESSON

Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16

Abraham and Sarah exemplify the vision of faith that people of God enact in every age. Their hope and trust in God's promise allowed them to face an unknown future and to receive the promise of God.

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God!

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

THE HOLY GOSPEL

St. Luke 12:32-40

Jesus encourages disciples to invest their hearts and live fully into God's reign. Instead of facing life with fear, those who know God's generosity are always ready to receive from God and to give to others.

Glory be to You, O Lord.

THE GOSPEL OF OUR LORD

Praise be to You, O Christ.

(PLEASE BE SEATED)

SERMON

"Passed On!"

Pastor Rankin

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became fully human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, and has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PEOPLE'S OFFERING

OFFERING DEDICATION

Thank you, God, for welcoming us into your caring realm, where we claim the needs of others as our concern. We are finding a homeland in your service and we are grateful. Above all, may our offerings be an outpouring of thanksgiving for a God who does not forget us. Your promises are sure and your faithfulness is to all generations. We pray in the name of Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord!

Let us give thanks to God Most High.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks, Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth. From everlasting to everlasting, you have revealed your mighty presence to us. Have we not heard? Have we not known? In the beginning, you swept across

the earth with your Spirit of life and renewal. When we forgot or neglected your truth, you redeemed us and renewed us. From the earth's first gardens to the mountaintop storms, you have spoken to us, and entrusted us to be your people. From laws on tablets to warnings from prophets, you have spoken your truth and renewed your covenant with us, reviving us and reclaiming us through your grace and love. And so, with your people on earth, with all of creation, and with all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn of praise:

Holy, holy, holy God of love and majesty, the whole universe speaks of your glory, O God, Most High. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!

Holy are you and blessed is your holy name. In the fullness of time, you sent your son, Jesus Christ to reveal your powerful love for the world. Healing and teaching, proclaiming and prophesying, welcoming any and all, Christ continues to reveal your presence, renewing our souls even now. Through Christ's powerful love and endless grace, we are invited into your presence, rescued from our sins, and led onto your path of justice and righteousness. In Christ's grace, you renew and reclaim us as your holy people, children of mercy and truth. As children of your covenant of love, sealed by water and the Spirit, welcome now with joy and gratitude, remembering how Jesus shared bread and wine, renewing and reviving the lives of his closest friends, his most faithful disciples, even as they faced their deepest fears and their greatest sins.

(PLEASE BE SEATED)

WORDS OF INSTITUTION AND PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

THE PRAYER OF OUR LORD

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

BREAKING OF THE HOST & POURING OF THE CUP

As this grain was once scattered in the fields, and has come together in one bread, so we, with different needs and hopes, come together as one, for we share one bread.

The Bread of Life, broken for us.

The cup which we share is the cup of the New Covenant written in our hearts and witnessed by Jesus.

The Cup of Blessing, poured out for us and for the many.

*(Those who wish to come forward will be invited by the pastor. The pastor will serve you the host, saying, "The Body of Christ." You reply, "Amen!" The assistant will present you with the cup, saying, "The Blood of Christ." You reply, "Amen!" Grape juice is in the chalice with the cross and wine is in the other chalice. If you need the pastor and assistant to come to you, please indicate that to someone near you or the pastor. If you do not wish to come forward, you are invited to use the packaged elements in the narthex and commune in your pew. The pastor will offer a blessing everyone has communed. **Children are invited to receive communion at the discretion of their parents/guardians. If a child wants to receive a blessing, they are asked to fold their hands.**)*

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

POST COMMUNION PRAYERS

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Trusting in God's extraordinary love, let us come near to the Holy One in prayer.

Let your lovingkindness be upon your church. Fill all who proclaim the gospel with your Spirit. Equip your flock to speak your word of promise and hope in the midst of fear and uncertainty. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Let your lovingkindness be upon your creation. Dwell among us and sustain our earthly home. In places of famine, provide nourishment. In places of plenty, fashion us to be good stewards of your bounty. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Let your lovingkindness be upon your world. Be our helper and our shield in places torn by strife and violence. Raise up courageous leaders to govern with compassion and justice. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Let your lovingkindness be upon your children. Look upon all who wait for your steadfast love. Console those who grieve and embrace those who cry out to you. Help us to trust your promise and not be afraid. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Let your lovingkindness be upon this community. Fashion our hearts to strive for the way of peace. Strengthen the outreach ministries of this congregation and all who care for those in need. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

SILENT PRAYER

Let us pray together.

Loving God, in this Holy Communion you have welcomed us into your presence, nourished us with words of mercy, and fed us at your table. Amid the cares of this life, strengthen us to love you with all our heart, serve our neighbors with a willing spirit, and honor the earth you have made; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

CLOSE OF WORSHIP

BENEDICTION



CATCH THE VISION & SHARE THE JOY



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chancel Flowers are given by **Anita Rohrer** in honor of Pete Rohrer and his upcoming birthday.

The Worship Aids are given by **Ken & Janice Jenkins** in memory of our parents, Walter & Bertha Jenkins and Melvin & Ellen Miller.

Money Counters: Bud & Kathy McCarty, Scott Owens, Jeff Hackenberger, John Shelsky

Building Trustee: Hank Fox

Lector: Jeff Hackenberger

Altar Guild: Nancy Enders

Happy Birthday!

Tuesday – Kathy Cooley, Dr. Parry Miller

Saturday – Jack Keller, Jamy Shelly

Attendance for Sun., July 31 8:00–15 10:30–48 **TOTAL – 63**

This Week at Trinity Church

(Church Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m.-2 p.m.)

Wednesday	7:00 PM – Finance Committee
Thursday	Pastor at Clergy Retreat
Saturday	7:00 PM – Alanon/8:00 PM - AA
Sunday	7:45 AM – Eucharist
	9:30 AM – Worship

THE JULY-AUGUST PARISH POST is available on both floors of the church building. The deadline for the September Parish Post is Monday, August 15th.

THIS WEEK'S CAMPERS: Rachel Baynard will be attending church camp this week. Please keep all the campers and staff in prayer. You can send notes to Rachel at the following address:

Rachel Baynard---Hartman Center Spirit Week
Camp Mount Luther
355 Mt. Luther Rd.
Mifflinburg, PA 17844

VBS MISSION PROJECT : This year's VBS mission project is the Navajo Water Project Through DigDeep Right to Water Project. You can donate to the offering by marking the special designation box on your offering envelope with "VBS Mission".

THE INTERIM COMPARATIVE (6 MONTH) FINANCIALS for Trinity Church are available on both levels of the church building. For more information, speak to Scott Owens (church treasurer) or a member of the Finance Committee.

NEW MEMBERS: Are you interested in joining Trinity U.C.C.? Do you know of someone looking for a church home? Please speak to Pastor Chris about joining our congregation.

DEVOTIONALS: The July-September edition of *These Days* are available on the table across from the church office or on the lower level by the portico entrance.

PRAYER CONCERNS: Carmen Richards, Donna Zirkel, Pat Seachrist, Don & Pat Miller, Brian Barr (son of John & Dolly Barr), Sam Minder III, Marlin “Moe” Weaver (brother of Dottie Schadt), Betty Cox (Preschool Teacher), Jane Portser, Carole Connor, Rev. Bob & Nancy Musser, Rylan Brent (relative of Chuck & Sue Husted), Hank Fox, Rev. Jere & Judy Chapman, Tom & Elaine Lichtenwalner (parents of Mike Lichtenwalner), Dick & Sheryl Bell (friends of Pat & Stan Seachrist), Don Pfeifer (husband of Denise Pfeifer), Bob Kilgore, the Lehman family, Judy Barr (friend of Mike & Shelley Wagner), Sheldon Paulus (son-in-law of Chuck & Sue Husted), Joann Garvin, Herb Charles, Rev. Phyllis Baum, Jake & Jean Otthofer (parents of Dan Otthofer), Rev. Paul Eyer (former pastor of St. Luke’s), Danielle Huggins Holbein, Gina McCarty (daughter-in-law of Bud & Kathy McCarty), Mary Witmer, Mark & Mary Anne Ritter (friends of the Paulukows), Patrick & Mel (nephew of Marianne Gibble & his wife), the Martin family, Robert Richards (brother of Jerry Richards), Hillary Brennan (mother of John Brennan), Jim Newcomer (cousin of Sandy DeLong), David & Ann Potts (friends of Brenda & Harry Himelwright), Pete & Nora Petrosky (friends of Dr. Cathy Hoshauer), Lynn Dull, Hilma Slechta (mother of Mike Slechta), Chad Zirkel (son of Donna Zirkel), Ronald Himelwright (grandson of Brenda & Harry Himelwright), Barry Richards (son of Jerry & Carmen Richards), Tyler Miller (grandson of Iris DeMaio), Joan Kalbach (mother of Dr. Cathy Hoshauer), Nancy Patton, Gary Reynolds (friend of Mike & Shelley Wagner), Phyllis Zimmerman, Chris Rice (nephew of Diane Rice & Karen Olley), Jaimie & Aurora Commero (friends of Sarah Paulukow), Jim & Kathy Long (friends of Jerry & Carmen Richards), John Siebern (Bob Siever’s brother-in-law), Carl Roth (Gretchen Leinbach’s brother), Rev. Frank Lantz, Lainie Christensen, Sandra Englert (niece of Betty Tyndall), Charles & Betty Booraem, Betty Tyndall and family, Dorothy Fasnacht, Jo Jo Richards & family (Carmen & Jerry’s granddaughter-in-law), Bob & Marlyn Wible, Barry Moore (Donna & Ron Denlinger’s brother-in-law), Jordan Sensenig (grandson of Pat & Joan Sensenig), Judy Wisniewski (sister of Chuck Husted), Doris Leaman, Judie Bistline, and the Bonilla-Rodriguez family (friends of Trinity Church).

2022 CHANCEL FLOWERS AND WORSHIP AID SPONSORS

Contact Carol in the church office to sign-up for chancel flowers and worship aids for 2022. The price for flowers is \$60. The price for worship aids is \$26. Upcoming dates for chancel flowers are: August 28 & September 11, 18 & 25. Upcoming dates for worship aids are: September 4, 11, 18 & 25.

PRESCHOOL SUB FUNDRAISER: There are still 11 Sub Coupons for S. Clyde Weavers available at \$8.00 each. Please contact the church secretary to purchase them.

LUNCH WITH THE PASTOR: Bring your lunch and enjoy the fellowship on August 18 from noon-1 p.m. in Isenberg Hall!

Trinity Sunday School is Calling You!

Teacher Positions are available at ALL Levels starting in the Fall 2022

Elementary, Middle/High School, and Adult

Join the team. Be a part of Christian Education.

No experience necessary. Training and mentors are available, if desired.

The only real qualification is to like learning and sharing of the Bible with others.



Proverbs 22:6

English Standard Version

⁶Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it

WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS: We are looking for worship volunteers on Sunday mornings. Contact the church office to sign-up!

Greeters: To welcome worshippers at the door for the second service.

Ushers: Beginning in June, we will return to passing the offering plate during the second service. We are in need of a few more ushers to complete our teams.

Lectors: Assist with the worship service or to just read the scripture lessons at the 8:00 a.m. and/or 10:30 a.m. services.

PICNIC SCHEDULE

2:00 Set up by Picnic Committee

3:00 Welcome Table- Pick up your Name tag and handout for the Hymn Sing; Examine the guessing games and the schedule for the day; Pick up your Icebreaker Bingo Card and a Pen; Place your Food items on the appropriate tables.

3:30 Hymn Sing - Gretchen Leinbach

4:00 Announcements, Prayer and Enjoy the food!

4:45 Icebreaker Bingo - completion/award prizes

5:00 Cake Walk. Announcement of Guessing Games winners - Anne.
Desserts become available.

5:30 Games begin: Brain Teaser Trivia - Cathy Bingo - Cherie/Denise, Face the Cookie Game - Cathy, Water balloon Toss - Kayla, Dress Up Relay - Cherie/Denise. Prizes for game winners awarded.

Bocce Ball; Corn hole; Ladder Ball; Word Puzzles - all available throughout the picnic.

7:00 Clean-Up

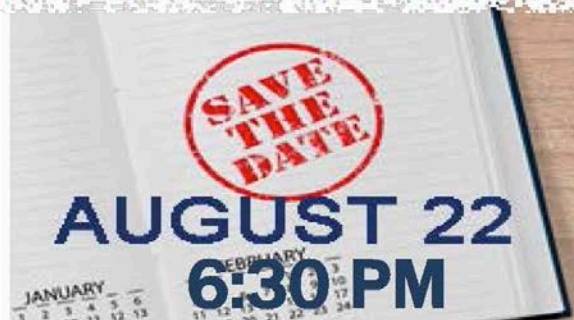
Look for the sign-up sheet on the table across from the church office.
There is also a sign-up sheet for the cake walk at the church picnic.



**It's time to get ready for the
2022 East Petersburg Day
Parade!**



We will be decorating the float on September 16th around 6 PM.
If you have any questions, please contact either Pastor Rankin or Anne Rankin.



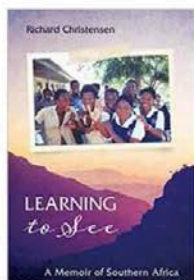
Come and hear a special presentation sponsored by T.W.O.
(Trinity Women's Organization)



Rev. Dr. Rich Christensen, author of *"Learning to See: A Memoir of Southern Africa"*, shares the highlights of his experiences teaching in the African nation of Botswana. Experience new freedom as he shares how his time in Africa opened his eyes to what God is

doing in His church despite difficult circumstances. He saw that relationships are what save us, that the salvation of God in Christ is not merely personal and individual, but communal, and that we are thus more dependent upon one another than we realize. Don't miss out, come and join us!

Trinity United Church of Christ
2340 State St.
East Petersburg, PA
717-569-1632



**Learning to See: A Memoir of
Southern Africa by Rev. Dr. Rich
Christensen**

You can purchase book at either [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)
or [wipfandstock.com](https://www.wipfandstock.com)

Dr. Christensen will have books to sell at this event!!



Mt. Gretna Tabernacle

MT. GRETTNA BIBLE FESTIVAL 2022

All Programs are in the Historic Tabernacle • 3rd St. & Glossbrenner Ave.

Parking GPS Address: 41 Boulevard St, Mt. Gretna PA 17064

Please visit MtGretnaTabernacle.org for any program cancellations.

A freewill offering will be received at each program.

Summer at the Tabernacle | Worship, Speakers and Concerts

ALL PROGRAMS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE Updates will be posted on our website and Facebook page

August 7 Sunday 7 p.m. Concert

Michael Faircloth recording artist, Christian concert pianist and pianist/accompanist for The National Christian Choir will present a piano concert



August 10 Wednesday 7 p.m. Concert

Brothers in Grace Gospel Quartet

Music Group presentation with a unique Southern Gospel style. Sponsored by JoAnn Thomas Show



August 14 Sunday 7 p.m. Concert

Men in Harmony

directed by Nathan Minnich. An all volunteer men's chorus of 20+ voices. Their musical repertoire includes sacred, classical, gospel, spirituals, hymn tunes, and patriotic songs.



August 21 Sunday 7 p.m. Concert

The Susquehanna Chorale One of the premier choral groups in the nation, directed by Linda Tedford, makes its traditional late summer appearance. Sponsored by University Music Service of Hershey



August 28 Sunday 7 p.m. Concert

QuintEssentially Brass

A quintet with engaging personalities and sparkling instrumental performances ends another season.



NURSERY COORDINATOR NEEDED: We are hoping to revitalize our nursery care during the second service. The Board of Elders is looking for someone to contact volunteers and create a schedule. If you are interested, contact Pastor Rankin, Tim Geiger, Jeff Hackenberger, Donna Denlinger, Karen Olley, Kathy McCarty, or George DeLong.

FIRST LESSON. Isaiah 1:1, 10-20

The vision of Isaiah son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. Hear the word of the LORD, you rulers of Sodom! Listen to the teaching of our God, you people of Gomorrah! What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices? says the LORD; I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fed beasts; I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs, or of goats. When you come to appear before me, who asked this from your hand? Trample my courts no more; bringing offerings is futile; incense is an abomination to me. New moon and sabbath and calling of convocation—I cannot endure solemn assemblies with iniquity. Your new moons and your appointed festivals my soul hates; they have become a burden to me, I am weary of bearing them. When you stretch out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood. Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your doings from before my eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow. Come now, let us argue it out, says the LORD: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be like snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool. If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land; but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured by the sword; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

SECOND LESSON. Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. Indeed, by faith our ancestors received approval. By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible. By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance; and he set out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he stayed for a time in the land he had been promised, as in a foreign land, living in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. By faith he received power of procreation, even though he was too old—and Sarah herself was barren—because he considered him faithful who had promised. Therefore from one person, and this one as good as dead, descendants were born, “as many as the stars of heaven and as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.” All of these died in faith without having received the promises, but from a distance they saw and greeted them. They confessed that they were strangers and foreigners on the earth, for people who speak in this way make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. If they had been thinking of the land that they had left behind, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; indeed, he has prepared a city for them.

GOSPEL. Luke 12:32-40

“Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. “Be dressed for action and have your lamps lit; be like those who are waiting for their master to return from the wedding banquet, so that they may open the door for him as soon as he comes and knocks. Blessed are those slaves whom the master finds alert when he comes; truly I tell you, he will fasten his belt and have them sit down to eat, and he will come and serve them. If he comes during the middle of the night, or near dawn, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves. “But know this: if the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.”