

***Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost***  
**August 22, 2021**

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude Christopher A. McCroskey

Centering Words

Call To Worship *“All I Need Is You” v. 1* Dan Greshel

Opening Prayer  
 The Lord’s Prayer 895

\*Affirmation of Faith *“The Apostles’ Creed”* 881

Presentation of Tithes & Offerings

Offertory Christopher A. McCroskey

\*Doxology *“Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow”* 95

Prayer of Illumination

Old Testament Reading 1 Kings 8: 22-30, 41-43 307-308 (O.T.)

\*Hymn *“Come, Thou Almighty King”* 61

Psalter Psalm 84 804-805

\*Hymn *“Wonderful Words of Life”* 600

Epistle Reading Ephesians 6:10-20 185 (N.T.)

\*Hymn *“Onward, Christian Soldiers”* 575

Gospel Reading John 6:56-69 95-96 (N.T.)

Sermon *It Don’t Come Easy (Apologies to Ringo Star)* Rev. John Jordan

\*Hymn *“Standing on the Promises”* 374

\*Dismissal With Benediction

\*Benediction Response *“God Be with You till We Meet Again”* Dan Greshel

\*Postlude Christopher A. McCroskey

\*The Congregation May Stand

***Leading in Worship Today***

Pastor: *John D. Jordan* AV Assistant: *K. C. Warble*  
 Choir Director: *Christopher A. McCroskey* Soloist: *Dan Greshel*  
 Church Musician Time Together: *Wayne & Charlie Hooker*

***VISITORS ARE WELCOME*** in the service of worship! Please make use of the visitor’s tags (located in the pew backs) to help us better welcome you as a visitor to Trinity this morning. We ask that you also please fill in the pew pad as it passes to register your attendance with us. **Large print hymnals** are available from the ushers.

You may join as a member into the life and work of this congregation by Confession of Faith or by Transfer of Membership from another church. If you would be interested in becoming a member, please speak to the pastor.

***Today’s Lovely Flowers are given to the Glory of God.***

“AS MEMBERS OF THIS CONGREGATION, WE WILL FAITHFULLY PARTICIPATE IN ITS MINISTRIES BY OUR PRAYERS...

Pauline Wenner Patsy Shuler Kathy Aiello Dale Wells Steve Aiello  
Ted Frady Oren Edwards Latson Lewis Cristen Hipp George Taylor

**Shut-Ins:** Shirley Butler; Esther Carter; Carolyn Hardee; Francis & Gillett Hipp; June Hutto; Georgeann Pace; Shirley Padgett; Jean Raynor; Claudia Sineath; Wayne Tallon; Irvin Wells

**Family and Friends:** **Matthews McCormick** (*brother of Kelsey Tolliver*); **Bert & Marie McCrackin** (*friends of Oren & Hilda Edwards*); **Stuart & Penny Lloyd** (*son & daughter-in-law of Tom & Marilyn Lloyd*); **Cindy Ellenberg** (*friend of Ray Frady*); **Mary Collard** (*daughter of Jackie McNeill*); **Megan Corby** (*daughter of Carlis Edwards*); **Mitch Kelly** (*Dale Wells' nephew*); **Chip Hooker** (*Wayne Hooker's father*); **Robert Bradley** (*Business Associate of Simon Ross*); **Dave Burrell** (*Business Associate of Tommy Gleaton*); **Gary Becton** (*friend of Mark Branham*); **Wade Albert Payne** (*friend of Mary Louise Robinson*); **Audrey Cassady** (*sister-in-law of Mary Louise Robinson*); **Monnie Tiller** (*friend of Chris Derrick*); **Ruby Pennington** (*friend of Laurie Knapp*); **Mary Rentz** (*sister of Marty Johnson*); **John Bassett** (*friend of Marty Johnson*); **Shannon Bassett** (*daughter-in-law of John Bassett*); **Betty Jean Newton** (*sister-in-law of Mary Kamoroff*); **Beth Ann Feimster** (*sister of Christopher McCroskey*); **Adrin & Linda Hargett** (*stepfather and stepmom of Christopher McCroskey*); **Katelyn Rose** (*daughter of co-worker of Kathy White*); **Vickie Edwards** (*neighbor of Kathy White*); **Heather Stevens, Ty Moore, George Dorn** (*friends of Kay Jordan*); **Teddy Derrick** (*uncle of Arvan Derrick*); **Haidee Baehr** (*friends of Ruth Frady*); **Dianne Schmotzer** (*sister-in-law of Gale Frady*); **Denise Paul** (*cousin of Gale Frady*); **Dan Conner, Max Johnson** (*friends of Gale Frady*); **Ray Culbreth's Group House**; **Nellie Gantt** (*mother of friend of Ray Culbreth*); **Amelia Zinski** (*great-niece of Linda Maloch*); **Wayne Blair** (*son of Dot Johnson*); **Xavier Crane** (*grandnephew of John Ballentine*); **Vera Von Glahn** (*sister-in-law of Jo Ann Heiting*); **Walt & Janet Beck** (*friends of Jo Ann Heiting*); **Adam Lavender** (*son of Phil Lavender*)

If you have a friend or family member on the Prayer List, we ask you to please keep us updated. If no word is received, we will trust that our prayers have been answered and remove the name. To update us, please call the office or e-mail us at [trinityumcwc@sc.rr.com](mailto:trinityumcwc@sc.rr.com).

**OUR PRESENCE ...**

In-Person Attendance 08/15 SS: 11 Worship: 24

**OUR GIFTS ...**

General Fund 08/15 \$ 8,410.00

**OUR SERVICE ...**

**OUR WITNESS."**

**Upcoming Events**

8/23 Exercise, 10:30 a.m.

GLIA Articles Due

8/26 Exercise, 10:30 a.m.

**Please Note:** If you test positive for COVID-19 within five days of attending a church service or activity, please notify the church.

**Upcoming Meetings**

The **SPRC** will meet in the Fellowship Hall next **Sunday, August 29**, immediately following the service.

The **Finance Committee** will meet in the Fellowship Hall on **Sunday, September 12**, immediately following the service.



<b>Ministers</b>	<b>The Congregation</b>
<b>Pastor</b>	<b>John D. Jordan</b>
<b>Resident Bishop</b>	<b>Jonathan Holston</b>
<b>District Superintendent</b>	<b>Rev. Dr. Cathy Jamieson</b>

**Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.**

**Our vision is to Connect, Nurture, Inspire and Transform**



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John 6: 56-69

Ringo Starr's first solo hit after the break up of the Beatles was a little song entitled "It Don't Come Easy" which I stole, obviously, as the title for this sermon. So my apologies to Ringo.

The lyrics go:

It don't come easy,  
It don't come easy,

Got to pay your dues if you want to sing the blues,  
You don't have to shout or leap about,

you know it don't come easy.  
you know it don't come easy.

and you know it don't come easy.  
You can even play them easy.

The song continues to speak of wanting trust, love, and peace. It is not easy to sing the blues unless one has experienced the blues. Trust has to be earned. Real love takes work. Peace is something we are still trying to find. These things don't come easy.

We mentioned last week that by eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Jesus, we abide in Jesus. We eat the bread representing Christ's flesh and drink the wine representing Christ's blood as a sign of God's love for us as we remember the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. We receive God's grace by eating the bread and drinking the wine. We live forever.

But that doesn't sound that hard. So why do the disciples grumble? Why do so many of them turn back and no longer follow him? Perhaps because it is not as easy as it may seem to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Remember from last week we learned that the flesh was used in the text to represent the whole life of Christ. We learned that the blood represented the life-giving effects of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. We learned that by eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Jesus we take in the life of Jesus and Jesus remains in us. This means we participate in the life and mission of Jesus. Jesus' life becomes our life. That is where it becomes difficult.

God's grace saves us from sin. That is something we all want. We want God to forgive our sins. We want God to take us out of the muck and mire of sin. We want to be justified, as in having our sins forgiven. God's grace does that, so we can sit back in our Lazy Boys and relax knowing that our sins are forgiven and we can wait for eternal life.

If that is what we want my friends, then we are settling for what Dietrich Bonhoeffer called cheap grace. Bonhoeffer defined cheap grace in many ways. It means the justification of sin without the justification of the sinner. Grace does everything so everything can remain as it was before. Cheap grace is justification as the forgiveness of sins without the alignment of our lives with the life of Christ. Cheap grace is readily accepting what we are saved from, without accepting what we are

saved for. Cheap grace may cover our sins but denies the desire to be delivered from sin. Cheap grace denies the life-changing incarnation of Jesus Christ. Cheap grace does not lead one to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup>

Real grace is costly. Real grace is aligning one's life with Jesus, living life in accordance with the life of Jesus. Real grace is living out what we are saved for. We are saved for God's purpose of reclaiming and restoring God's creation that began with the incarnation.

Jesus came into the world to save the world (John 3:17). Jesus' work of saving the world was played out in his life, death, and resurrection. In his life, Jesus healed the sick. He opened the eyes of the blind, literally and figuratively. He forgave sinners. He raised the dead. He challenged the religious and political systems of his time. He gave himself as food and water to sustain and nourish life. He gave himself over completely to the will of the Father.

This is where, as Ringo says, "it don't come easy". It don't come easy to be a disciple, a follower of Jesus Christ. Because that means we live as Jesus lived.

It means we work for healing. Physical healing by preventing and curing diseases. Healing broken relationships, individual and societal. Healing those broken by sin, both sins one commits and sins committed against one. Healing broken systems by challenging those that oppress and exploit others. Healing by bringing wholeness to our lives and the lives of others.

We work to open the eyes of the blind and reveal Jesus to the world. We become the image of God so people see God in us and we see God in them.

We forgive as forgiveness is the first step in reconciling broken relationships.

We do all we can to sustain and nourish life, not just human life, but all life on this beautiful planet God created.

We may not be able to raise the dead, but we can give hope to those who are suffering. We can be the hand that picks up one who has been knocked down and lost hope.

We give our lives over completely to the will of the Father as Jesus did. As Jesus remains in us we do the will of the Father. We live not by our will but by God's will.

All this goes so much against what our culture says, particularly American culture. We place our value on the individual. We seek what is best for me as an individual. We want to get "all I can for myself without regard to those around me."

An American missionary working with children in an African village placed a basket of fruit at one end of the village and told the children that they were to race and whoever reached the basket first would get all the fruit. The children grasped hands and all ran together, sat around the basket, and shared the fruit. The missionary ran up saying, "No, no, whoever gets there first keeps all the fruit." One of the children replied, "Why should one of us get all the fruit when there is enough for all of us." Guess who was living according to the life of Jesus, the children.

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<sup>1</sup> Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*, (New York: Macmillan, 1959, reprint New York: Touchstone, 1995) 43-45.

It don't come easy being a disciple of Jesus. You may well be saying, "I can't do this." And you are right. We can't do this. We can't align our lives with the life of Jesus and live as a follower of Jesus, but the Spirit can.

Jesus says the Spirit gives life. Jesus gives the words of life through his flesh and blood, then the Spirit breathes new life into us. We are changed. We are transformed. We begin the process of sanctification and becoming the clear image of God, untainted by sin.

But it still don't come easy. Eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the eucharist is not a magical rite that changes us overnight. It is a means by which we experience God's grace and grow in grace.

But we also grow in grace by being spiritually disciplined, by daily studying the Bible to understand the scriptures, and receiving the message the scripture is giving us that day.

We grow in grace by daily prayer time. Praying for ourselves, praying for others, praying for the sick, praying for social and political structures, praying for our enemies, and praying that all may become aligned with God.

We grow in grace by corporate worship, gathering to praise and hear God's word.

We grow in grace by our service to others.

It don't come easy. It takes our response to God's grace for the Spirit to breath new life into us. It takes being disciplined to stay in and grow in grace. It takes listening for God's call and God's direction, which is not always loud and clear but often soft and subtle. It takes giving up our life and receiving Jesus' life.

We receive Jesus' life and each day as we maintain our spiritual discipline, the Spirit draws us closer and deeper toward knowing the complete, perfect love of God, for God, and neighbor. We participate in the mission of Jesus to restore and reclaim creation. Our eternal life begins now! Today! And continues to draw us closer to God every day! That is the reward. Eternal life with Jesus and participating in Jesus' mission now. That is what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

We can be satisfied with cheap grace, watching the game of life from our Lazy Boys, waiting for the day when we will see Jesus. Or we can respond to God's grace, get up out of the Lazy Boy, be filled with the Spirit, be given new life in Christ, and participate in the restoration of Creation. We will not just see Jesus but we will live with Jesus today and forever.