

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 5, 2021

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude Christopher A. McCroskey
(As the Prelude begins, prayerfully prepare your hearts and minds for worship.)

Greeting 6

*Hymn of Praise “O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing” 57

Opening Prayer 6
(Please register your attendance on the pew pads provided.)

Proclamation and Response

Prayer for Illumination 6

Old Testament Reading Proverbs 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23 Page 578 (O.T.)

Psalter Psalm 124 846

Gospel Reading Mark 7:24-37 Page 44 (N.T.)

*Hymn “Open My Eyes, That I May See” 454

New Testament Reading James 2:1-17 218-219 (N.T.)

Sermon *Show No Partiality* Rev. John D. Jordan

Response to the Word 7

Invitation 7

Confession and Pardon 8

Presentation of Tithes & Offerings

Offertory Christopher A. McCroskey

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

Thanksgiving and Communion 9-11

Sending Forth

*Hymn “Sent Forth by God’s Blessing” 664

*Dismissal With Blessing

*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

Time Together: Mary Louise Robinson

Choir Director: Christopher A. McCroskey

Soloist: Dan Greshel

Church Musician

AV Assistant: K. C. Warble

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	Irvin Wells
Ted Frady	Oren Edwards	Latson Lewis	George Taylor	Steve Aiello

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: **Wessli-Ann Hardee Singleton** (*niece of Lynn Martin*); **Addie Kinard** (*cousin of coworker of Edwa Meek*); **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*); **George Rentz** (*father of Marty Johnson*); **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.

OUR PRESENCE ...

Attendance 08/29 SS: 9 In-Person Worship: 29

OUR GIFTS ...

General Fund 08/29 \$ 3,834.00

OUR SERVICE...

OUR WITNESS.”

Church Calendar

TODAY Lunch Bunch
09/06 Labor Day
Office Closed
09/08 Choir Practice, 6:30 p.m.
09/09 Exercise Class, 10:30 a.m.

The Epworth Children's Home Work Day Offering will be received on **Sunday, September 12.**

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



Ministers
Pastor
Resident Bishop
District Superintendent

The Congregation
John D. Jordan
Jonathan Holston
Rev. Dr. Cathy Jamieson

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

Our vision is to Connect, Nurture, Inspire and Transform



Holy Communion

1201 Mohawk Drive
West Columbia, SC 29169
Telephone: 803.794.7777
E-mail: trinityumcwc@sc.rr.com
Website: www.trinityumcwc.org

The *Letter of James* is one of the most straightforward in the New Testament. We don't know with certainty who wrote it. Tradition says it was written by James, the brother of Jesus. We don't know the audience to whom it was being sent. The salutation is rather vague. It was probably a circular letter sent to several congregations in James' sphere of ministry.

The importance of James is that it is a treatise on practical Christian ethics. This book is a guidebook for living in a Christian community. His emphasis is less on the individual but more on living as a community under the Kingdom of God in the world. By community, I don't mean a group of unrelated people living under one roof, but a group of people gathering to worship and serve the Lord, in other words, a church. James can be seen as a treatise on ethical living as a church.

The issues that James addresses in this letter are not much different from those in most churches today. These problems are not archaic problems where we may have to figure out the historical and cultural context then fit them into our context. These are issues faced by any church, of any size, at any time or place.

The issue addressed in today's reading is partiality. James admonished the congregation(s) for showing partiality to the rich. They welcomed the one who came in wearing rings and fine clothes. The rich were given a place of honor. They were shown deference. But the poor person, who came in wearing tattered clothes, was told to stand in the back or sit on the floor. They were shown contempt. The welcome a person received by the community was based on their appearance.

We can all admit that the same is true in the church today. We are all over the person who drives up in a Mercedes and wearing a designer suit or dress. They receive an effusive welcome. They are escorted to the best pew in the house. They are introduced to the pastor(s). We make sure they are given a visitor's card and get all their contact information. We get their names and try to remember them for when they come back. But the person who walks up wearing old faded jeans with holes and an old T-shirt, we may ignore. We may suggest they sit in the balcony. We pay no attention to them. We may hope they don't come back.

Even with people of different races, we may be more likely to welcome them if they are dressed in a nice suit or dress. But to one that comes in wearing some sort of native dress like a dashiki or sari, we may not be so welcoming. We especially aren't welcoming to one who is sagging and bagging or wearing clothes with "gang" slogans. We may be more welcoming to the rich regardless of their race or ethnicity.

We may wonder what is so wrong with showing partiality toward the rich. They can help us get the new sign, building, or renovations we want. They would help us be able to meet our budget. If we get them involved in the life of the church, they may invite their rich friends. But that poor person, what can they contribute? They will probably start asking for handouts like clothes, school supplies, or to pay rent or utilities. If they wander back, OK, but we are not going to invite them back.

Showing partiality was and is the way of the world. In the ancient world, one showed deference to the rich and those of higher status. It was an honor to the assembly if they came. The rich were really blessed by God. But the poor, well who needs them. Besides, they must be some really bad sinner since they are so poor. The world says the rich are blessed and the poor are cursed.

Let's be honest, our attitudes are not much different today. The whole prosperity gospel is built on the premise that God will bless you with wealth. We consider poor people to be somehow morally corrupt, or they wouldn't be poor.

This is not the way in the Kingdom of God. James reminds the congregations, then and now, that God has chosen the poor to inherit the Kingdom. Jesus says, "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God" (Luke: 6:20, NRSV). Then he says, "woe to you who are rich for you have received your consolation" (Luke 6: 24, NRSV). Wait a minute! The poor will inherit the Kingdom of God and the rich won't? According to the Son of God that is correct. It is the poor that will be honored in God's Kingdom, the rule by which the Church is governed.

The Kingdom of God has not changed in 2000 years. We are still governed by the rule that the poor will inherit the Kingdom of God. It is the poor that shows how to live in God's rule.

A few years ago I saw a video on the internet of an informal study by two college students. One of them gave a homeless man \$100 while the other filmed it. They surreptitiously followed the man to see what he would do with the money. They were disappointed when the man went into a liquor/grocery store. They assumed that the man was going to spend the money on booze. When the man came out of the store the students followed him to a park. The man went up to another homeless person and opened the sack. Instead of the bottle of booze, he pulled out a sandwich and a bottle of water. The man went around the park giving all the homeless food and water. Instead of spending the money on himself, the man spent the money on others. That is the way of the Kingdom of God.

This is why the poor will inherit the Kingdom of God. They understand needing basic necessities, such as food and water. They understand that they have to share with those in the same boat. They are loved by God for they recognize their dependence on God more readily than the rich.

James then reminds the congregations what the law of the Kingdom of God is. The law of the Kingdom is to 'love your neighbor as yourself.' If you show partiality you are not showing love for your neighbor. Therefore you are breaking God's law, and sin. You are judging others according to the rule of the world, not the rule of God. The Christian is to act according to the law of liberty, the Law of God.

These laws of love and not showing partiality are not new laws instituted by James or even Jesus. These laws go all the way back to the Law given to Moses in Leviticus. Leviticus 19: 18b says, "you shall love your neighbor as yourself." Leviticus 19: 15 states "You shall not render an unjust judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great: with justice you shall judge your neighbor." (NRSV) In other words, you shall judge all people as equals. You do not favor the rich over the poor or the poor over the rich.

This does not mean that we get all over the person that comes in wearing old jeans and a T-shirt and ignore the person who drives up in a Mercedes. It means we welcome all people equally. We are just as effusive in welcoming the person with old jeans and a T-shirt as we are with the person driving a Mercedes. We show both the love of Christ. We invite them fully into the life of the church. We never know which one may be the angel the church may need. The poor person may have a wonderful voice that the choir needs. The rich person may be able to give funding for a new project. The poor person may have the skills to make repairs on the building and are willing to do them at no cost. The rich person may have contacts for getting a major project done.

So as we are in the gathering area and a new person comes in let us welcome them warmly and with love whether they are in an Armani Suit or old jeans. No matter how well or badly they dress or smell, they are still God's children, made in God's image. They are our neighbors we are commanded to love.