

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 26, 2021

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude		Christopher A. McCroskey
Call To Worship	<i>“Majesty, Worship His Majesty”</i>	Choir
Centering Words		

Opening Prayer		
*Hymn	<i>“Living for Jesus”</i>	TFWS 2149

Prayer of the Day		
The Lord’s Prayer		895

Proclamation of the Word:

Prayer of Illumination		
Old Testament Reading	Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22	441&443 (O.T.)
Psalter	Psalm 124	846

*Hymn	<i>“He Leadeth Me: O Blessed Thought”</i>	128
Gospel Reading	Mark 9:38-50	47 (N.T.)

Epistle Reading	James 5:13-20	220-221 (N.T.)
Sermon	<i>A Community in Solidarity</i>	Rev. John D. Jordan

Response to the Word:

*Affirmation of Faith	<i>“The Apostles’ Creed”</i>	881
-----------------------	------------------------------	-----

Presentation of Tithes & Offerings		
Offertory		Christopher A. McCroskey
*Doxology	<i>“Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow”</i>	95

*Hymn	<i>“What a Friend We Have in Jesus”</i>	526
-------	-----------------------------------------	-----

*Dismissal With Benediction

*Benediction Response	<i>“May the Lord, Mighty God, Bless and Keep You”</i>	Choir
	May the Lord, Mighty God bless and keep you forever, Grant you peace, perfect peace, courage in every endeavor. Lift up your eyes and see God’s face and God’s grace forever, May the Lord, Mighty God, bless and keep you forever.	

*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	Time Together: Wayne & Charlie Hooker
Church Musician		

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.

A Gift to Trinity is given to the Glory of God in honor and celebration of their 53rd Wedding Anniversary on September 28th, by Wayne and Charlie Hooker.

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

Ellen Matthews Jeanette Hornsby Patsy Zeigler Dale Wells Charles McNeill Oren Edwards
Pauline Wenner Dean Nadler Latson Lewis Irvin Wells Steve Aiello Patsy Shuler
George Taylor Peggy Nadler

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

Family and Friends: **Clovis Carpenter** (grandfather of Kelsey Tolliver); **Jane Bryant** (sister of Patsy Zeigler); **Wessli-Ann Hardee Singleton** (niece of Lynn Martin); **Addie Kinard** (cousin of coworker of Edwa Meek); **Matthews McCormick** (brother of Kelsey Tolliver); **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 Cassidy** (sister-in-law of Mary Louise Robinson); **Monnie Tiller** (friend of Chris Derrick); **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); **Jeff DuBrul** (son-in-law of Walt and Janet Beck); **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 ...

In-Person Attendance 09/19 SS: 9 Worship: 17

OUR GIFTS ...

General Fund 09/19 \$ 2,731.00 Epworth Children's Home 09/19 \$ 50.00

OUR SERVICE ...

OUR WITNESS."

Calendar for this Week

TODAY SPRC, immediately following Worship

09/27 Exercise Class, 10:30 a.m.

09/29 Choir, 6:30 p.m.

09/30 Exercise Class, 10:30 a.m.

Upcoming Events

Church Council will meet on **Sunday, October 3**, immediately following Worship.

Charge Conference will be held on **Sunday, October 10**, immediately following Worship.



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



The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective.

James 5:16

1201 Mohawk Drive
West Columbia, SC 29169

Telephone: 803.794.7777

E-mail: trinityumcwc@sc.rr.com

Website: www.trinityumcwc.org

James 5: 13-20

I mentioned a few weeks ago that one could read James as a treatise on ethical living in a community. James tells how the church should be as a community in solidarity. The word used for “church” throughout James, and much of the New Testament, means assembly. The church is not a building or organization but people assembling for a single purpose. In the case of the New Testament, the assembly is people coming together for the Kingdom of God.

Our passage today is the final words of James. These are the final points of what the assembly should be, then and now. This passage describes the character of the Christian community as it cares for its members and others.

The one that is suffering and going through hardships or difficulties should pray to God. It seems obvious that one facing difficulties should pray to God, but how often do we try to figure a way out of difficult times before we go to God? James is telling his congregation and us to pray to God in our difficulties. We pray to God to understand why we are facing difficult times, for God’s guidance through the difficult times so we may have relief from the difficult times. We should remember that God does not spare us from hardships but promises to get us through sufferings. The quicker we pray to God in our suffering, the faster we will get through our suffering.

James then says if you are happy, cheerful, then sing praises. “If you are happy and you know it clap your hands!” Be joyful! God wants us to be happy. Too often, Christians are perceived as these stern, judgemental types far from what God wants. We are to be happy and praise God for all the good things that happen to us, no matter how small. Sometimes we get so wrapped up in our suffering we forget to praise God for good.

The next point is related to the first. James instructs people who are sick to call on the elders to come to pray over them and anoint them. The sick include those who are physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually unwell. Being sick relates to the first point because we may become sick whenever we are going through hard times: physically, mentally, emotionally, or spiritually. Studies have shown better outcomes for patients who receive intercessory prayers, even from strangers. So we pray for the sick.

(From this point on, I will use the term the sick to refer to being physically, mentally, emotionally, or spiritually ill and facing difficulties in life.)

Another point is that if we are sick, we do not isolate ourselves and suffer in silence. We are to let the community know that we are suffering so it may respond to the need. Likewise, the community is to respond to needs and not isolate the sick. The community is to respond with prayer but also in meeting whatever needs the sick may have. The response may include taking food, running errands, mowing the grass, babysitting, and whatever one may need. When I worked in hospice, I would tell caretakers if someone said to them, “if there is anything I can do for you, let me know”, tell them something specific, even if it is just picking up a carton of milk. People tend to respond to specifics.

At this time, many with CoVid are quarantined, and we may not be able to respond with direct contact. But we can call, send a text, or a card to let them know we are praying for them and with them in suffering. The church is to provide support and respond to the needs of people.

James reminds his congregation of the power of prayer by relating the story of Elijah. He noted Elijah was human, but Elijah prayed to God for drought in response to Ahab's apostasy; there was drought. The prayer prayed with faith and trust in God will be answered. We pray, trusting that God knows what is best and will give what is needed.

The church is also to be a safe place where we may confess our sins. We may admit our mistakes and shortcomings. Also, it is a place where we are held accountable. We make each other aware of ways in which we may be straying from being a disciple of Jesus. I had a coworker at the hospice confront me about my language. She pointed out, lovingly, that she was offended by my language. Her comments revealed a habit I needed to change to become a more effective disciple.

The church is a place where we can confess our sins, address other's sins and give and receive forgiveness. The church is the place where we receive forgiveness, not condemnation. The church is where we can share our sorrows. We express to the community our pain, suffering, difficulties, distress, and brokenness to gain support and response to our needs. The church is where we can share our joys and successes. We praise God for all the good happening in our lives and the world. The church, most of all, is a place of healing, not in the sense of being free from sickness, but being whole. The church is the place where we can be our whole authentic selves. We can become and be the person God created us to be. The assembly comes together for a single purpose. The church becomes a community in solidarity.

A community in solidarity is a beautiful concept. Sadly, the church doesn't seem like a community in solidarity. The church looks so fractured in many different denominations with conflict even within denominations. Even in the United Methodist Church, we appear to be ready to split over the issue of homosexuality. The idea of the church as a community in solidarity seems to be a far-off pipe dream, something we can imagine but will never be a reality.

Or can it? Can the church become a community in solidarity today? The answer to that, my friends, is an unequivocal YES! The church can become a community in solidarity when we remember what holds us in solidarity.

According to the world, what holds a group in solidarity is their similarity. We are in solidarity because we are of the same race, political party, or nationality. We think alike, believe alike, and like the same things. We are in solidarity with the people in our group. We compete against those who are not in our group.

In the Gospel reading, John tries to get some kudos for telling someone casting out demons in Jesus' name to stop because he was not one of Jesus' disciples. John saw a competitor and wanted to stop him from winning the game. Instead of kudos, Jesus rebukes John. Jesus tells John it doesn't matter that he was not one of them, he was casting out demons. He was doing the work of God's Kingdom.

It is not our doctrines that hold us together as a Christian Community. It is not our political beliefs. It is not our stance on social issues. It is not our race or nationality. It is not our gender. It is none of the worldly constructs that lead to competitiveness and a US versus THEM mentality.

We can be a far-right Republican or a far-left Democrat and still be in solidarity. We can be in solidarity even as we are of many different races, nationalities, and cultures. We can be in solidarity if we are illiterate or have multiple Ph. D.s We can be in solidarity even if we prefer crunchy over creamy peanut butter. We can even be in solidarity if we are Tigers and Gamecocks.

What holds us in solidarity as Christians is love. We are held together in solidarity as the church by the love of God and love for neighbor. God's love binds us all together, not just us here today, not just other Methodists or even Christians but for all people. As God loves us, we love all people. Instead of competing against each other, we come together to spread God's love to all. We bring all people to know God's love. Thus we bring about God's Kingdom. We all work in solidarity for God's Kingdom.

There is a story from the Seattle Special Olympics from years ago. It was in the 50- meter dash. The gun sounded, and all nine competitors took off. However, one stumbled and fell after a few feet. He lay on the track crying. Two of the competitors heard him crying. They turned around, went to him, helped him up, linked arms, and walked together across the finish line. They chose to cooperate, so everyone crossed the finish line, instead of competing. They came together in solidarity, and all the participants crossed the finish line.

That, my friends, is working for God's Kingdom. The Christian Community, in solidarity, works for God's Kingdom, so all cross the finish line. We bring all people into the Kingdom of God, held together in solidarity by God's love for us and all people. We work in solidarity so all people, including each of us, can be as God created and cross the finish line to eternal life.