

Seventh Sunday after the Epiphany
February 20, 2022

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude		Christopher A. McCroskey
Call To Worship	<i>“Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart”</i>	Choir
Opening Prayer		

*Hymn	<i>“My Tribute”</i>	99
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Prayer of the Day		
The Lord’s Prayer		895

Proclamation of the Word

Prayer of Illumination

Old Testament Reading	Genesis 45:3-11, 15	Page 42 (O.T.)
Psalter	Psalm 37:1-11	772

*Hymn	<i>“Precious Lord, Take My Hand”</i>	474
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New Testament Reading	1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50	Page 167 (N.T.)
Gospel Reading	Luke 6:27-38	Page 64 (N.T.)
Sermon	<i>Who Do We Love?</i>	Rev. John D. Jordan

Response to the Word

*Affirmation of Faith	<i>“The Apostles’ Creed”</i>	881
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Presentation of Tithes & Offerings

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

*Hymn	<i>“In Christ There Is No East or West”</i>	548
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*Dismissal With Benediction

*Benediction Response	<i>”Shalom to You”</i>	Choir
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*Postlude		Christopher A. McCroskey
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*The Congregation May Stand

Leading in Worship Today

Pastor:	John D. Jordan	AV Director:	Marie Stiles
Choir Director:	Christopher A. McCroskey	AV Assistant:	Chris Derrick
Church Musician		Time Together:	Linda Maloch

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** and in loving memory of **Paul Robinson, by Dee Senn.**

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

Jackie McNeill	Boots Morgan	Bill Perarson	Patsy Zeigler	Dale Wells	Charles McNeill
Jimmy Grahl	Oren Edwards	Latson Lewis	Irvin Wells	Steve Aiello	Patsy Shuler
George Taylor	Jimmy Grahl	Kay Jordan	Becky Derrick	John Ballentine	

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

Family and Friends: **Stacy Coggins** (daughter of Steve Aiello); **Dan & Leslie White** (brother & sister-in-law of Steve White); **Dolly Orth** (mother-in-law of Allison Frady Orth); **Sydney** (girlfriend of friend of Marty Johnson); **Alva Humphries** (friend of Marty Johnson); **Neal Hart** (uncle of Dee Senn); **Bill Areheart** (friend of Bonnie Ramsey); **Jane & Bob Bryant** (sister and brother-in-law of Patsy Zeigler); **Chal Whitaker** (brother-in-law of Edwa Meek); **Max Nova** (son of friend of Edwa Meek); **Addie Kinard** (cousin of coworker of Edwa Meek); **Stuart & Penny Lloyd** (son & daughter-in-law of Tom & Marilyn Lloyd); **Cindy Ellenberg** (friend of Ray Frady); **Megan Corby** (daughter of Carlis Edwards); **Chip Hooker** (Wayne Hooker's father); **Robert Bradley** (Business Associate of Simon Ross); **Dino & Wanda Moore** (friend 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); **Betty Jean Newton** (sister-in-law of Mary Kamoroff); **Adrin & Linda Hargett** (stepfather and stepmom of Christopher McCroskey); **Alexa Lookingbill** (wife of coworker of Kathy White); **Katelyn Rose** (daughter of co-worker of Kathy White); **Vickie Edwards** (neighbor of Kathy White); **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, Scott & Karen Nelson** (cousins 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); **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 02/13 SS: 13 Worship: 21

OUR GIFTS ...

General Fund 02/13 \$ 3,030.00

OUR SERVICE ...

OUR WITNESS."

Upcoming Events

TODAY Snacks & A Movie, 4 p.m.

02/21 GLIA Articles Due



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

Be merciful,
JUST AS YOUR FATHER
is merciful.
LUKE 6:36

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From the Pastor

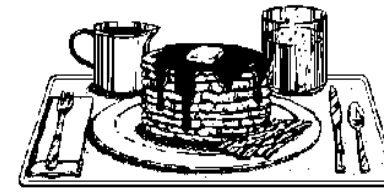
On Sunday, Feb. 13 and 20, Tom and I will meet with those who would be interested in participating in the Wesley Class Meeting. We will set a time and date to begin the Class. We will begin by studying *The Class Meeting* by Kenneth Watson. If you are interested but unable to meet on the 13 or 20, call John or Tom.



**Snacks & a Movie
Today at 4 p.m.**

Join us today at 4 p.m. for Snacks and a Movie. The movie will be *Quo Vadis* from 1951 starring Robert Taylor, Deborah Kerr and Peter Ustinov. A synopsis of the movie appears below:

Returning from a military campaign abroad, General Marcus Vinicius (Robert Taylor) discovers that a new religion has taken hold in Rome: Christianity. When Vinicius encounters Lygia (Deborah Kerr), a follower of the strange religion, he tries to win her affections but she is reluctant due to their differing beliefs. Complicating matters is the crazed Emperor Nero (Peter Ustinov), who blames the Christians for his own burning of Rome, beginning a wave of persecution.



**Fat Tuesday Pancake Supper
Tuesday, March 1
6 p.m.**

Plan now to join us on Tuesday, March 1, at 6 p.m. for a wonderful pancake supper served with sausage prepared by the Men's Club. There is no charge, but donations will be accepted.



**Wednesday, March 2
6 p.m.**

The Ash Wednesday Service will be held on Wednesday, March 2, at 6 p.m. Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent, beginning a period of reflection and penance. In the Christian tradition, Ash Wednesday also marks the beginning of preparation for the understanding of the death and resurrection of Christ.



**Wonderful Wednesday
March 9
5:30 p.m.**

Wonderful Wednesday will be held on March 9. The meal will be served at 5:30 p.m. and a devotional will begin at 6:15 p.m. The meal will be prepared by John and Sue Ballentine:

Homemade Chicken Pot Pie
Pasta Salad
Dessert

Reservations will be in the bulletin on Sunday, March 6, or you can call the Church Office by noon on Monday, March 7.

Luke 6: 27-38

This past Monday we bought Valentine flowers, cards, candy, and perhaps even jewelry for our spouse. We bought flowers, cards, and candy for our children, grandchildren, parents, and grandparents. We may have sent or given cards to special friends. Valentine's Day is a day of spreading love and acknowledging those we love in some special way.

It felt good to give all those things to the ones we love. We all felt closer in love with one another. This day may have been painful for those who have lost loved ones that they have honored in the past. But even that pain is an expression of how much we loved that person. There is a direct correlation between how much we loved someone and how much we grieve for them.

It is easy to love someone who loves us. I love Kay very much. I love Ashton and Charlie. I love my brothers and cousins, nieces and nephews, and all other family members. I love all my friends. I love each of you here at Trinity and those of you participating online. I know and love all of you and I hope you love me. It is so easy to love family and friends.

We want to do good for those that love us. While we may buy flowers, candy, and cards on Valentine's Day, we also do good for them every day. We cook for them. We help clean the house. We do things together. We may even watch some romantic comedy or a football game with them. We give them blessings, good things and work for their good. And I hope we all pray for them, for God to lead, guide, and protect them.

But look at what Jesus says about loving those that love you. He says, "what good is that?" Everyone, even the worst sinner, loves those who love them. I suppose even Hitler loved Eva Braun. You get no credit for loving those who love you.

Jesus says the same thing about doing good to those who do good to us. Even sinners do good to those who do good to them. Even the worst criminals give back to those who do them favors. You get no credit for doing good to those who do good to you.

If it is no credit to love those that love us and do good to those who do good to us, then what would give us credit and show that we are disciples of Jesus?

Remember these are Jesus' instructions to the disciples.

Jesus tells the disciples to love your enemies, do good to those that hate you, bless those that curse you and pray for those who abuse you. Again, just like last week, Jesus turns our natural inclinations and societal norms upside down.

Love your enemy? We are to give to our enemies the love God has for us? We are to have the same attitude toward our enemies as God has toward us? We are to be kind and patient and seek the well-being of our enemies? According to the world, we are supposed to hate our enemies.

We are to do good to those that hate us? Hate is a strong emotion but also an inward disposition to disregard the other. Hate is often unjustifiable and leads to maliciousness. We are to do good to people who disregard us and treat us with malice even when we are innocent? According to the world, we are not supposed to do good to those that hate us.

Bless those who curse us? Bestow a blessing and act graciously toward those who wish evil against us? According to the world, we are supposed to wish evil on those who wish evil on us.

Pray for those that abuse us? Yes, maybe pray for God to smite them. But that is not what Jesus implies. Instead, pray for their best interest.

As disciples of Jesus, we are to have the same attitude toward our enemies that God has for us. We are to give our enemies the love God gives us.

We are to do good to those that disregard us and are malicious towards us without cause.

We are to act graciously and ask God's favor on those who wish evil on us.

We are to pray for the well-being of those that abuse us.

To do these things - love enemies, do good to those who hate, bless those that curse, and pray for abusers - is extremely difficult. It is probably the hardest thing for us as disciples of Jesus to do. It goes against the natural worldly inclinations that sin has played throughout human history. This goes against the kingdom of the world. The kingdom of the world says if someone hurts you, hurt them back. Get revenge and retribution, which only spawns violence and hurt.

We may think that by loving our enemies we are taking the moral high ground. We may win over our enemy with kindness. We may rise above the pettiness that is behind hatred. While these things may ring true, they do not reflect the wholeness of what happens as we love our enemies, do good to those who hate us, bless those who curse us and pray for those who abuse us.

Much of the wholeness that happens is not within them but within us. As we struggle but continue to love our enemies, we begin to feel less animosity toward them. As we continue to do good to those who hate us, we begin to see the good in them. As we continue to pray for those who abuse us, our anger and resentment begin to dissipate. We may begin to understand and see from their perspective. Then they may begin to change because we have changed.

Some of you may have seen the interview on the *Today Show* by Craig Melvin with Reverend David Kennedy who is working on a project to dispel hate at what was the Echo Theater in Laurens SC. The Echo Theater was the movie theater in downtown Laurens, just off the town square.

After the theater closed, the building was bought by the Grand Dragon of the Klu Klux Klan. He opened *The Redneck Shop*, a store that sold Klan accouterments and a museum dedicated to the Klan. Rev. Kennedy, an Afro-American pastor, whose great uncle was lynched by the Klan in Laurens, led protests against the Redneck Shop.

Among the members of the Klan was a young man named Michael Berden. Berden was an avid believer in the Klan rhetoric of racial hatred. His loyalty to the Klan was such that the deed to the Echo Theater was given to him by the Grand Dragon and he lived in an apartment above the shop.

At one protest led by Rev. Kennedy, Michael Berden was sent to the roof of the building with a rifle with orders to shoot Rev. Kennedy. However, he could not pull the trigger.

A short time later, Micheal married a woman who was part Cherokee. She began to gently point out to him that much of the rhetoric he was proclaiming applied to her. Eventually, Michael began to question his Klan beliefs and asked to drop out of the Klan.

As a result, Michael and his wife were evicted from the apartment. They were ostracized by many in the community. Both lost their jobs and were unable to find work anywhere in town. They were hungry and living in their car when Reverend Kennedy noticed them. He approached them and took them into his home, giving them a place to stay.

Michael Berden eventually joined Rev. Kennedy's church. Then he did something that really turned things upside down. He legally turned over the deed to the Echo Theater to Rev. Kennedy. The man who protested against the Redneck Shop now owned the Redneck Shop.

Though it took several years and much legal wrangling, the Echo Theater is now envisioned to be a place where racial reconciliation can take place. The website for the Echo Project is www.rehabhate.com.

As these two men, Rev. Kennedy and Michael Berden, chose to love their enemy, each other, and do good to the one who hated them the hatred and animosity evaporated. The Theater that was a place of hatred and division is becoming a place of love and unity.

That is what happens when we love our enemies, do good to those who hate us, bless those who curse us, and pray for those who abuse. The hatred and animosity we feel towards the other dissipates. We begin to see and focus on the good in the other. We are blessed by the friendship forged on the anvil of love instead of the anvil of hate. When we pray for those who abuse us, we are changed and become agents for the other to change. As we give love to the other, we reflect God's love upon them. We are merciful as God is merciful to us.

So who do we love? We love those who love us, but we also love those who hate us so we may come to love them and they come to love us, as God loves both us and them.