

Fourth Sunday of Easter
May 8, 2022

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude		Christopher A. McCroskey
Call To Worship	<i>“What Child Is This”</i>	Choir
Centering Words		

*Hymn	<i>“Jesus, Lover of My Soul”</i>	479
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Opening Prayer		
The Lord’s Prayer		895

Proclamation of the Word

Prayer of Illumination

New Testament Reading	Acts 9:36-43	Pages 122-123 (N.T.)
Psalter	Psalm 23	754

*Hymn	<i>“Rescue the Perishing”</i>	591
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Gospel Reading	John 10:22-30	Page 100 (N.T.)
New Testament Reading	Revelation 7:9-17	Page 240 (N.T.)

Sermon	<i>All People from All Directions</i>	Rev. John D. Jordan
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*Response to the Word	<i>“The Apostles’ Creed”</i>	881
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Prayer for Mothers

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

*Hymn	<i>“Marching to Zion”</i>	733
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Reception of New Member

*Dismissal With Benediction

*Benediction Response	<i>”What Child Is This”</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: Ruth Frady

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.

We welcome **Mitzie Graff** who joins us today as a member of Trinity.

TODAY’S LOVELY FLOWERS are given to the **Glory of God** and in honor of **Ray, Sean and Hunter Frady**, who celebrated birthdays in April, by **Gale Frady**.

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

Jackie McNeill	Charles McNeill	Becky Derrick	Charlie Hooker	Patsy Zeigler	Christopher McCroskey
Jimmy Grahl	Oren Edwards	Hilda Edwards	Steve Aiello	Patsy Shuler	George Taylor
Kay Jordan	John Ballentine	Boots Morgan	Dale Wells	Marty Johnson	Latson Lewis

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

Family and Friends: **Kevin Horseman** (neighbor of Jeanette Hornsby); **Mary Collard** (daughter of Jackie McNeill); **Howard Stephens** (former church member); **James Boggs** (father of Claire Boggs); **Stacy Coggins** (daughter of Steve Aiello); **Dan & Leslie White** (brother & sister-in-law of Steve White); **Cindy Bassett, Alva Humphries** (friends of Marty Johnson); **Judy Bauer** (cousin 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); **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); **Gary Becton** (friend of Mark Branham); **Wade Albert Payne** (friend of Mary Louise Robinson); **Florence Lee Carter, Monnie Tiller** (friends of Chris Derrick); **Adrin & Linda Hargett** (stepfather and stepmom of Christopher McCroskey); **Alexa Lookingbill** (wife of coworker of Kathy White); **Katelyn Rose** (daughter of coworker of Kathy White); **Vickie Edwards** (neighbor of Kathy White); **Beverly Jordan** (sister-in-law of John 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); **Earle Watson** (father of friend 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 ...

In-Person Attendance 05/01 SS: 9 Worship: 33

OUR GIFTS ...

General Fund 05/01 \$ 7,361.69

OUR SERVICE ...

OUR WITNESS."

Upcoming Events

TODAY Epworth Mother's Day Offering
Birthday/Mother's Day Celebration during Time Together
05/09 Exercise Class, 10:30 a.m.
05/11 Wonderful Wednesday Meal, 5:30 p.m.
Devotion, 6:15 p.m.
Class Meeting, 7 p.m.
05/12 Exercise Class, 10:30 a.m.
05/14 CFK Raft Day, 10 a.m.

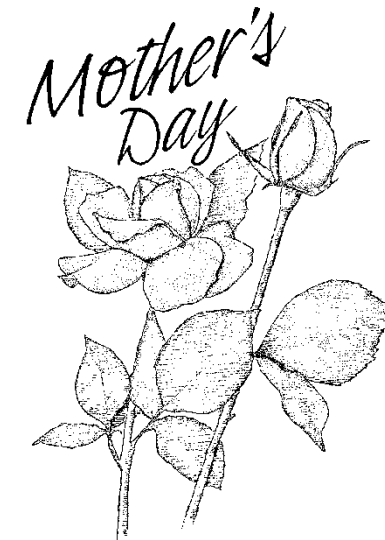


Ministers
Pastor
Resident Bishop
District Superintendent

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



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Through the month of May, we will be receiving a Love Offering for Christopher McCroskey. As many of you know, Christopher was hospitalized for twelve days after having his big toe on the right foot amputated due to an infection. He will be having physical therapy at home and even though he will be able to play for church, he will not be able to return to substitute teaching this school year. He will also be faced with medical bills that his insurance will not cover. If you would like to contribute to this Love Offering, please make the check out to Trinity and write Love Offering in the Memo Line. The Love Offerings will be tax deductible.



Wednesday, May 11

Join us on May 11 for Wonderful Wednesday. The meal will be prepared by *Gale and Ruth Frady*:

Fried Chicken	Yellow Rice
Baked Beans	Baked Apples
Dessert	

The meal will start at 5:30 p.m. and be followed by a devotional at 6:15 p.m. The cost of the meal is \$5.00 for adults, \$3.00 for children 6–12 and \$1.00 for children 2–5. A reservation form will be in the bulletin on Sunday, May 8 or you can call the office by noon on Monday, May 9.



**Graduate Recognition
Sunday, May 15**

On Sunday, May 15, we will celebrate our graduates. We currently show *Ryan Edwards, Kara Howard* and *Dee Hughes* graduating from High School, *Matthew Skipper* graduating from college (in December), and *Slone Taylor* graduating from USC with a Master of Public Health in Epidemiology.

Please contact Ruth Frady or the Church Office if you know anyone else within the church family that is graduating.

Epworth Mother's Day Offering

TODAY WE GIVE TO THE EPWORTH MOTHER'S DAY OFFERING! Today our church will receive the Annual Epworth Mother's Day Offering to provide loving care, safety, and services for the children at Epworth Children's Home. Please find information about Epworth and the Mother's Day Offering on the bulletin insert. Epworth does not receive apportionments from the United Methodist Conference. This offering is our opportunity to support this vital ministry. Give generously by using the envelope provided for you in the bulletin. For more information about Epworth Children's Home, visit them online at www.epworthchildrenshome.org where you can also choose to make a secure credit card donation or enroll for monthly contributions.



Church Council will meet on Sunday, May 22, at 2 p.m.

Revelation 7: 9-17

When you mention the Book of Revelation, most people will conjure up horrific images: images of souls tormented in the fires of hell, the four horsemen wreaking havoc and death over the earth, souls drowning in the lake of fire and sulfur. We imagine the terrifying beast. We think of hellfire and brimstone. We are terrified and repent because we want no part of that image.

While these are images one may have while reading Revelation, they are not the predominant images of Revelation. Revelation is full of many beautiful images. Often these images involve worship and occur just as you may think the scales are tipping toward destruction. Today's lesson is one of those beautiful images. To me, it is one of the most beautiful.

Before we get into the text, a word needs to be said about what the book of Revelation is. Revelation falls into a genre known as apocalyptic literature. Apocalyptic writings were relatively popular during the centuries before and after the time of Jesus. The word apocalypse means unveiling or revelation. They are visions granted to a seer which is interpreted by an angel or other spiritual being. These visions are often concurrent and not consecutive. They offer different depictions of the same event. Most of the language is symbolic, not literal. Therefore, one must understand the symbolism in the writing to fully get the meaning of the visions. Revelation is the vision given to John which shows victory over the evil powers and God's reclamation and restoration of Creation.¹

With these things in mind, let's look at today's passage.

This passage comes after the Lamb who is worthy, Jesus, opens six of the seven seals. From them come the four horsemen, the saints under the altar, then the sky being rolled up and a great earthquake. But before the seventh seal is opened four angels stop the destructive winds. One hundred and forty-four thousand from each of the tribes of Israel are sealed. This is not a literal number but symbolic. Twelve is a complete number, so 144,000 being a multiple of twelve would indicate that the tribes of Israel will be made complete and not destroyed.

After the tribes of Israel are sealed, John sees a great multitude, so large that no one could count, coming. People from every nation, all tribes, peoples, and languages come before the throne and the Lamb.

I envision it like this. When I was a youth I would attend camp at the Dooley Campground in Vienna, GA. The tabernacle where the worship services were held had no walls. This is a picture of the tabernacle on the screen. When the bell would ring for worship services, people would come from all directions: north, south, east, and west. Without walls, they could come straight into the worship area from wherever they were. So just imagine people from all directions coming into the tabernacle.

¹ Mark Allen Powell, *Introducing the New Testament*, (Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker Academic, 2009) 523-524.

John includes four different terms to describe those coming before the throne and Lamb. His use of four different terms indicated not only the magnitude of the multitude but also the inclusivity of the multitude. The word all modifies each of these terms.

One term used is *laon*, meaning people in general. People were coming to stand before the throne and Lamb. Why not leave it at that? Why add all these other terms to describe those coming before the throne? For that, we have to look at the other terms.

Ethnous is translated as “nation”. It is used in the New Testament to designate non-Jews, gentiles, and pagans. It can also refer to race. People outside the “chosen” race are coming before the throne. Those of all nations, races, and creeds coming before the throne and the Lamb. The barriers of political, racial, ethnic, and possibly religious designation are broken down. None of these designations remains a barrier to coming before the throne and Lamb.

The next term used is *phulon* meaning tribe or clan. This designates kinship systems, people who are related together by bloodline. People from all families are coming before the throne and before the Lamb. Not having the proper bloodline is not a barrier to coming before the throne.

The final term is *glosson*, meaning tongue or language. One does not have to speak a certain language to come before the throne. Speech is not a barrier to coming before the throne. Even those unable to speak can come before the throne.

So, if these people were not identified by language, bloodline, race, nation, or religion, how were they identified? What made them able to come before the throne and the Lamb?

They were robed in white and carrying palm branches. Palm branches connect with Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem but are more importantly a sign of victory. They were victorious in the great ordeal. They remained faithful in living according to the way of the Lamb over the way of the beast.

Their robes were white for they had been washed in the blood of the Lamb. Now there is an oxymoron if there ever was one. How can you get robes white by washing them in blood? Not only is that impossible, but it is also rather gross if you ask me.

That phrase, washed in the blood of the Lamb, is only found in this passage. Usually, we think of this being the sacrificial aspect of the atonement. We, or our robes, are washed in the blood of the Lamb as Jesus sacrificed himself for our sin. Jesus took the role of the sacrificial lamb for our sin. Jesus suffered the fate we should suffer by his sacrifice.

There is more to this than having robes washed in the sacrificial blood of the Lamb. In Judaism and much of the ancient world, blood was considered to be the life force. Blood represented life. Therefore there were laws against drinking or eating blood. Meat is not eaten unless all the blood is drained from the animal. We even see this in many cultures as the hunter will smear blood from the kill on the face as a way of honoring the life of the kill. Blood is life.

To that early reader or listener of this passage, washing the robes in the blood of the Lamb would be understood as washing in the life of the Lamb. Their robes have been washed in the life of the Lamb. Thus they have put on the life of the Lamb over the life of the beast.

It is those who have lived according to the life of the Lamb instead of the life of the beast that came before the throne and the Lamb. It is those who have suffered persecution, ostracism, oppression, and even martyrdom but remained faithful to living according to the life of the Lamb. They did not succumb to the life of the beast.

We may not face the persecution, oppression, ostracism, or martyrdom of those in the early church. However, we may still fall prey to the life of the beast. It is the life that lives according to the values of the world, values that place self over others. In many ways, the ways of the beast are stronger than they were at the time Revelation was written. They are stronger in that they are more subtle and not as obvious.

But as we remain faithful to living according to the way of the Lamb over the way of the beast, we will come before the throne and the Lamb wearing robes washed white in the life of the Lamb.

We will join that great multitude of people from all languages, all families, all nations, all races, all creeds, coming before the throne of God and the Lamb, Jesus. We will worship God day and night. God will take away our pain and suffering. Jesus will be our shepherd who will guide us to eternal life. God will give us shelter and comfort for eternity.

Now that is an image I can hold on to. So, let's make it happen. Let's live according to the life of the Lamb.