

Fourth Sunday in Lent
March 19, 2023

Welcome and Announcements		
Prelude Call To Worship	<i>“On Eagle’s Wings”</i>	Christopher A. McCroskey Choir
Greeting *Hymn	<i>“Be Thou My Vision”</i>	451
Opening Prayer The Lord’s Prayer		895
Proclamation of the Word		
Prayer of Illumination		
Old Testament Reading Psalter	1 Samuel 16:1-13 Psalms 23	Pages 254-255 (O.T.) 137
*Hymn	<i>“Open Our Eyes”</i>	TFWS 2086
New Testament Reading	Ephesians 5:8-14	Pages 184-185 (N.T.)
Anthem	<i>“Beneath the Cross of Jesus”</i>	Choir Dan Greshel, Soloist
Gospel Reading Sermon	John 9:1-41 <i>“Blind Spots”</i>	Pages 99-100 (O.T.) Rev. John Jordan
Affirmation of Faith Pastoral Prayer	<i>“The Apostles’ Creed”</i>	881
Presentation of Tithes & Offerings		
Offertory *Doxology	<i>“Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow”</i>	Christopher A. McCroskey 95
*Hymn	<i>“I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light”</i>	206
*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:	<i>John D. Jordan</i>	AV Director:	<i>Marie Stiles</i>
Choir Director:	<i>Christopher A. McCroskey</i>	AV Assistant:	<i>Chris Derrick</i>
Church Musician		Time Together:	<i>Joyce Robinson Slone Taylor</i>

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...

Patsy Zeigler	Becky Derrick	Cristen Hipp	Dale Wells	Patsy Shuler	Christopher McCroskey
Jimmy Grahl	Latson Lewis	Steve Aiello	Kaye Floyd	John Ballentine	Hilda Edwards
Jack Stevens	Dan Greshel				

Shut-Ins: Shirley Butler; Esther Carter; Gillett Hipp; Linda Maloch; Georgeann Pace; Jean Raynor; Claudia Sineath; George Taylor

Family and Friends: **Andrea Johnson, Gary Spence** (former members); **Gloria Erd** (friend of Lynn Martin); **Pearl Geddens** (mother of Tom Geddens); **Andrew Jordan** (nephew of John Jordan); **Beverly Lipscomb** (sister-in-law of John Jordan); **Ross Deal** (grandson of Mary Kamoroff); **David Williamson, Nancy Wilson, Jimmy Dawkins** (friends of Jeanette Hornsby); **David Turner** (brother of Pam Turner); **Chip Mixon** (friend of Tommy Gleaton); **Ron Walker** (friend of Tommy & Chris Gleaton); **Merit Takach** (friend of Joyce and Brent Robinson); **Frankie Hendrix** (cousin of Billy Pearson); **James Boggs** (father of Claire Boggs); **Stacy Coggins** (daughter of Steve Aiello); **Dan & Leslie White** (brother & sister-in-law of Steve White); **Mary Ann Rentz** (stepmother of Marty Johnson); **Alva Humphries** (friend of Marty Johnson); **Bill Areheart** (friend of Bonnie Ramsey); **Hayley Beaudoin** (niece of Edwa Meek); **Addie Kinard** (cousin of coworker of Edwa Meek); **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); **Florence Lee Carter, Monnie Tiller** (friends of Chris Derrick); **Adrin & Linda Hargett** (stepfather and stepmom of Christopher McCroskey); **Alexa Lookingbill, Lynn Presley** (wives of coworkers of Kathy White); **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); **Wayne Blair** (son of Dot Johnson); **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 ...

In-Person Attendance 03/12 SS: 15 Worship: 25

OUR GIFTS ...

General Fund 03/12 \$ 904.10

OUR SERVICE ...

OUR WITNESS."

Upcoming Events

03/20 Exercise Class, 10:30 a.m.
03/21 Grief Support Group, 11 a.m.
03/22 Choir, 6 p.m.
T.a.G., 7 p.m.
03/23 Exercise, 10:30 a.m.
GLIA Articles Due

Readings for March 26

Ezekiel 37:1-14
Psalm 130
Romans 8:6-11
John 11:1-45



Ministers	The Congregation
Pastor	John D. Jordan
Resident Bishop	Jonathan Holston
District Superintendent	Rev. Fran M. Elrod

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

Our vision is to Connect, Nurture, Inspire and Transform

Fourth Sunday
in
Lent

1201 Mohawk Drive
West Columbia, SC 29169

Telephone: 803.794.7777

E-mail: trinityumcwc@sc.rr.com

Website: www.trinityumcwc.org



Instead of purchasing lilies this year, we ask that you give an honorarium or memorial for a loved one. All money given in lieu of lilies will go to *United Methodist Committee on Relief Advance # 982450 Turkey/Syria*. It will provide assistance to those in Turkey and Syria recovering from the earthquakes. **We would like to have all donations in by Monday, April 3.** A special insert listing memorials and honorariums will be in the bulletin on Easter Sunday. The lily forms will be on the table in the Gathering Area starting this week. We will have them as inserts in the bulletin for the last two Sundays before the deadline.



**Tuesday, March 21
11 a.m.**

The Grief Support Group will now meet on the third Tuesday of every month. For March, it will be on Tuesday, March 21, at 11 a.m. in the Conference Room.



Sunday, March 26

Taste of Trinity, our church-wide covered dish luncheon, will be held on Sunday, March 26. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to share great food and great fellowship!



Sunday, March 26

Church Council will meet on Sunday, March 26, immediately following Taste of Trinity.

John 9: 1-41

Driving on the interstate, I often see a tractor-trailer with a sign on the back reading, "If you can't see my mirrors, I can't see you." This sign is a reminder that the tractor-trailer has blind spots. You want to move out of these blind spots as quickly as possible. It would not be pretty if the driver cannot see you and decided to change lanes.

I also notice these tractor-trailers have many mirrors. Some mirrors are convex, which provides a wider field of vision. The driver points the mirrors to different angles. The driver is aware of the blind spots and tries to eliminate them. However, there are always blind spots.

Many of the characters in the Gospel reading today had blind spots. Blindness in the Gospel of John was not about physical blindness but spiritual blindness. In John, sight was not about physical seeing but seeing the revelation of God working through Jesus. Therefore, blindness is the inability to see God working through Jesus. The characters in the reading had blind spots that kept them from seeing God working through Jesus.

We may have similar blind spots as the characters in the reading. We may have blind spots that keep us from seeing God working in the world today. Let's look at the blind spots in the characters in the reading and see how they may relate to some of our blind spots.

Jesus saw a man who had been blind from birth. The disciples asked if the man was blind because of his sin or his parents. Since the belief at the time was that sin caused infirmity, this was a logical question. The disciples focused on the cause of the man's blindness. They did not see this as an opportunity to reveal God's work. Their blind spot was focusing on the wrong thing.

Our blind spot may be focusing on the wrong thing. Sometimes we may focus on whether or not someone deserves our assistance. We fail to see an opportunity to possibly better someone's life.

While Mom was still working in the schools, a man in our church gave Mom \$500. He told Mom he wanted her to use the money to buy Christmas presents for an underprivileged child. He admitted to Mom that he started to tell her not to use it on a child whose parents were alcoholic, drug abusers, or just plain sorry. Then God told him it was not the child's fault that the parents were the way they were. So, he gave the money unconditionally.

We miss opportunities for ministry because we focus on the extraneous, not what we are to do.

The neighbors and those who knew the man were blinded by history. They knew the man had been blind since birth. This person who can now see must be someone who looks like him. The man they knew could not see. Their blind spot was they saw the man they knew before he encountered Jesus, not the one they saw afterward.

Many times, a person's history may be our blind spot. I knew a father whose son was so into drugs, he could not believe his son had gone straight. He could only see his son as an addict, not the redeeming work Jesus had done in his son's life. We experience the person the way they were before Jesus, not the way they are after Jesus.

The Pharisees were blinded by the fact that Jesus worked on the Sabbath. Jesus broke the law! A prophet, a man of God, could not be a law-breaker! Their strict adherence to the law was their blind spot. They could not see this being God's work since it went against their perception of how and when God would work.

Our blind spot may be whom we think God can use. I would never have thought God would use a man with schizophrenia to teach me a lesson in humility. I was playing chess with him. He beat me in two moves because I played the fool's gambit. God can and does use all people. If God didn't use sinners, then our pulpits would be empty. We may be blinded by the way we think God works.

Being put out of the synagogue was the blind spot for the man's parents. They did not acknowledge Jesus's healing of their son because they feared losing status. They feared they would lose their status in the community. They were more concerned about what others would think of them than the truth.

What others think may be a blind spot for us. What will others think if we confront them about an offensive, off-color joke? What will others think if I bring my friend who lives on Central Ave to church? What will my friends think if I tell them I would rather be in church than sleep in on Sunday Morning? Our fear of what others think may keep us from acknowledging God's work.

The Jews were blinded because the blind man's perception of Jesus did not agree with their perception. (A quick aside, the Jews in John's Gospel refers to the leaders in the synagogues, not Jews as a whole.) The Jews' view of Jesus as a sinner did not match the man's proclaiming Jesus as a prophet. Since the man's thoughts did not agree with the Jews, they drove him out of the synagogue. The Jews' blind spot was the exclusivity of opinion. They told the man, "You can only be in our synagogue if you think like us."

Exclusivity may be one of our blind spots. We want people who think like us, look like us, dress like us, and act like us to be part of our community. We want our opinions affirmed, not challenged. We believe our opinions are true, but we may not know if our opinions are true. As Wesley says in his sermon, *The Catholic Spirit*, "although every man necessarily believes that every particular opinion which he holds is true yet can no man be assured that all his own opinions taken together are true."¹ Our opinions may be blind spots.

The trucker tries to eliminate as many blind spots as possible. If blind spots cannot be eliminated, the trucker is aware of them and warns other drivers of them.

We have our blind spots. We have experiences, opinions, fears, attitudes, and other things which keep us from seeing God working in the world. Our blind spots may keep us from doing what God is calling us. Our blind spots may keep us from loving others. Our blind spots may keep us from loving ourselves. Most of all, our blind spots may keep us from fully knowing God's love.

So we seek to eliminate our blind spots. But how do we eliminate our blind spots, especially those so deeply ingrained we are not aware of them?

¹ John Wesley, "The Catholic Spirit." In *The Sermons of John Wesley: a Collection for the Christian Journey*, Eds. Kenneth J. Collins and Jason E. Vickers (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2013) 423.

We ask God to reveal our blind spots to us. We ask God to show us those deeply ingrained beliefs. We keep open to the Holy Spirit's revelation of our blind spots, even when that revelation may be painful. We ask the Spirit to remove our blind spots. We remember that this removal may be a process that does not happen overnight. Therefore, we must be patient with ourselves and not guilt ourselves. We let the Spirit remove our blind spots so we may see the revelation of God in us, our church, our community, and the world.