

***Third Sunday after Pentecost***  
**June 18, 2023**

Welcome and Announcements		
Prelude		Christopher A. McCroskey
Call To Worship	<i>“Something Beautiful”</i>	Choir
Greeting		
*Hymn	<i>“O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go”</i>	480
Opening Prayer		
The Lord’s Prayer		895
<b>Proclamation of the Word</b>		
Prayer of Illumination		
Epistle Reading	Romans 5:1-8	Page 147 (N.T.)
Psalter	Psalm 116	837-838
*Hymn	<i>“To God Be the Glory”</i>	98
Gospel Reading	Matthew 9:35 – 10:8	Page 15 (N.T.)
Anthem	<i>“Grace Greater than Our Sin”</i>	Choir
Old Testament Reading	Genesis 18:1-15, 21:1-7	Pages 13-14, 16 (O.T.)
Sermon	<i>“Ridiculous!”</i>	Rev. John Jordan
*Affirmation of Faith	<i>“The Apostles’ Creed”</i>	881
*Gloria Patri	<i>“Glory Be to the Father”</i>	70
Pastoral Prayer		
Presentation of Tithes & Offerings		
Offertory		Christopher A. McCroskey
*Doxology	<i>“Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow”</i>	95
*Hymn	<i>“Sent Forth by God’s Blessing”</i>	664
*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    Kaye Floyd    John Ballentine    Dan Greshel    Jack Stevens

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

**Family and Friends:** **Paul Lagatore** (*friend of Laurie Knapp*); **Missy Abrams** (*stepdaughter of Lissa Abrams*); **Mary Davis** (*daughter of Bob Strickland*); **Kathleen Braun** (*sister of Mark Lewis*); **Al Dekle** (*friend of Beverly Shull*); **Lauren & Leah Grace Edwards** (*granddaughter & great-granddaughter of Hilda Edwards*); **Gloria Erd** (*friend of Lynn Martin*); **Pearl Geddens** (*mother of Tom Geddens*); **Beverly Lipscomb** (*sister-in-law of John Jordan*); **Ross Deal** (*grandson of Mary Kamoroff*); **Nancy Wilson** (*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*); **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*); **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, Teddy Derrick** (*uncle of Arvan Derrick*); **Haidee Baehr** (*friends of Ruth Frady*); **Denise Paul, Scott & Karen Nelson** (*cousins of Gale Frady*); **Dan Conner, Max Johnson** (*friends of Gale Frady*); **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](mailto:trinityumcwc@sc.rr.com).**

**OUR PRESENCE ...**

**In-Person Attendance 06/11 SS: 16      Worship: 37**

**OUR GIFTS ...**

**General Fund 06/11 \$ \$8,688.79**

**OUR SERVICE ...**

**OUR WITNESS."**

**Upcoming Events**

**06/19** Exercise, 10:30 a.m.  
**06/20** Grief Support  
**06/21** T.a.G., 7 p.m.  
**06/22** Exercise, 10:30 a.m  
GLIA Articles Due.  
**06/23** Office Closed

**Readings for June 25**

Genesis 21:8-21  
Psalm 17  
Romans 6:1b-11  
Matthew 10:24-39



**Ministers**  
**Pastor**  
**Resident Bishop**  
**District Superintendent**

**The Congregation**  
**John D. Jordan**  
**Jonathan Holston**  
**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***



**1201 Mohawk Drive  
West Columbia, SC 29169**

**Telephone: 803.794.7777**

**E-mail: [trinityumcwc@sc.rr.com](mailto:trinityumcwc@sc.rr.com)**

**Website: [www.trinityumcwc.org](http://www.trinityumcwc.org)**



Please join us following worship today as we celebrate Father's Day with a special Time Together in their honor.



Please join us following worship today as we celebrate Father's Day with a special Time Together in their honor.



**Tuesday, June 20  
11 a.m.**

The Grief Support Group will meet this Tuesday, June 20, at 11 a.m. in the Conference Room.



**Tuesday, June 20  
11 a.m.**

The Grief Support Group will meet this Tuesday, June 20, at 11 a.m. in the Conference Room.



**Sunday, June 25**

Taste of Trinity, our church-wide covered dish luncheon, will be held next Sunday, June 25. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to share great food and great fellowship!



**Sunday, June 25**

Taste of Trinity, our church-wide covered dish luncheon, will be held next Sunday, June 25. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to share great food and great fellowship!

Ridiculous!

6/18/2023

Genesis 18:1-15, 21:1-7

This passage shows that there is humor in the Bible. Abraham sees three men (one of them being the LORD) standing near him. He asks them to stay and rest. Abraham tells Sarah, who is in the tent, probably doing tent work or mending, to make cakes out of the best flour. He picks out a calf and his servant slaughters and prepares it.

The men ask about Sarah. Abraham replies that she is in the tent. One of the men, presumably the LORD, tells Abraham that he will return in due season and Sarah will have a son. Sarah hears this and laughs. That is the most ridiculous statement anyone could make. We don't know how old Sarah was, maybe 99, but we know she was post-menopausal.. Sarah was too old to be running after a toddler. She had given her servant, Hagar, to Abraham to give him a son. For that man to say that Sarah would have a son was the most ridiculous thing she could hear. So Sarah laughed.

The man asks Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh?"

Sarah denied laughing, "I did not laugh."

He said, "Oh yes, you did laugh." I imagine he said this with a knowing smile. Telling Sarah, "You think you are laughing now, wait until that due season."

I can identify with Sarah. This whole thing of an old, post-menopausal woman having a baby is too ridiculous. It is right up there with pigs flying and purple cows. As we read through the Biblical narrative, we encounter many ridiculous incidents. A fugitive murderer led the people to the Promised Land. A shepherd boy killed a giant warrior. A foreign king restored the people after the exile. A group of fishermen, tax collectors, political activists, and other nobodies become disciples of God's Son. Someone who persecuted Christians becomes the one to carry the gospel to the Gentiles. All these are pretty ridiculous.

It is ridiculous to think that a little African from Alexandria, nicknamed the Black Dwarf, would be the one to develop the doctrine of the Incarnation and the Trinity. Who would think that a solitary monk would nail 95 theses on the door of the Church in Wittenberg, starting a reformation? A small group of students at Oxford could not begin a movement that spread across England and the Americas. It is ridiculous to think that a single sermon about a spider dangling over a flame would start a Great Awakening. All these are ridiculous!

All these examples are almost as ridiculous as a post-menopausal woman bearing a child. Yet, they all happened, those from the Biblical narrative and those from history. But how? How could such ridiculous things happen?

In verse 14, the LORD responds to Sarah's laughter by saying. "Is anything too wonderful for the LORD?" Other translations read, "Is anything too marvelous for the LORD?" Some say, "Is anything too difficult, or hard, for the LORD?" None of these English translations fully capture the meaning of the question, "*Ha ye pale me ADONI?*"

*Pala* is a word that does not translate into a single word in English. *Pala* is God's actions beyond the power of human powers or expectations.<sup>1</sup> It is the actions of God's power that humans cannot even conceive. What is impossibly ridiculous for humans is possible for God.

God can do the most ridiculous. Whatever we may conceive as being impossibly ridiculous, such as a 99-year-old woman having a baby, is possible with God.

Whatever we think is the most ridiculous thing in our lives, the life of our church, community, or the world, is possible with God.

Well, if God can do even the most ridiculous, like ending world hunger, why doesn't he do it? Why doesn't God heal my friend with cancer? Why doesn't God just restore us to the Garden of Eden?

One reason is that what we want may conflict with what others want. The ridiculous thing that I want, may conflict with what you want God to do. We have different agendas and visions. One person may want the church to be more missional, while another thinks it should be more spiritual. We have trouble getting on the same

---

<sup>1</sup> 11 James Strong, *The New Strong's Expanded Dictionary of the Words in the Hebrew Bible*. In *The New Expanded Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*. (Nashville, Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2001) 227-228.

page with each other, much less with God.

Another reason is we cannot understand God. As my old theology professor said, “If you can wrap your brain around it, it isn’t God” We cannot understand how God works.

One of the recent devotionals in *The Upper Room* was written by a woman who was the manager of a senior apartment complex. A resident came to the office complaining of water spraying underneath her sink. The manager set off with the woman to check it out. But instead of going to the complainer’s apartment, the manager went to the apartment next door. The woman yelled, “You are going to the wrong apartment. Mine’s next door!” What the woman did not know but the manager did, was that a plumber was in the next-door apartment working on a similar situation. The solution to the woman’s plumbing problem was in the next-door apartment, not the woman’s. The point is that the answers to our problems may not be as we expect. We may think it ridiculous that God goes to the wrong apartment but God knows that is where what we need is. We cannot see or understand how God is working.

Another reason is we get in the way of God’s will. We let our prejudices and preconceived notions blind us to God’s will. Our prejudices and preconceived notions cause us to think God’s desires are ridiculous. Sarah had the preconceived idea that she could not bear children, so she laughed.

God’s desire will always prevail, no matter how ridiculous. Sarah did have a son, even though she was around 100 years old and post-menopausal. God used a fugitive murderer, a shepherd boy, a motley crew, a persecutor, a little African, an unknown monk, a group of college students, and a sermon about a spider to forward the divine will.

What inhibits the divine will? In the words of the great philosopher, Pogo, “We have met the enemy and he is us.” We may not intentionally inhibit God’s will but we often think it is too ridiculous, too impossible. But God’s will is beyond the powers of human understanding, and the ridiculously impossible is possible for God. We need to just get out of the way, let go of our prejudices and preconceived notions, and let God work.