

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost
August 27, 2023

Leading in Worship Today

Welcome and Announcements

Pastor: *John D. Jordan* AV Director: *Marie Stiles*
Pianist: *Laurie Knapp* AV Assistant: *Chris Derrick*

Prelude
Call To Worship *“Come! Come! Everybody Worship”* Laurie Knapp
Choir

Greeting
*Hymn *“Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah”* 127

Opening Prayer
The Lord’s Prayer 895

Proclamation of the Word
Prayer of Illumination

Epistle Reading Romans 12:1-8 Pages 152-153 (N.T.)
Psalter Psalm 124 846
*Hymn *“A Charge to Keep I Have”* 413

Gospel Reading Matthew 16:13-20 Page 22 (N.T.)

Anthem *“We Worship As One”* Choir

Old Testament Reading Exodus 1:8-2:10 Pages 48-49 (O.T.)
Sermon *“Fear Pharaoh or Fear God”* Rev. John Jordan

*Affirmation of Faith *“The Apostles’ Creed”* 881
*Gloria Patri *“Glory Be to the Father”* 70

Pastoral Prayer

Presentation of Tithes & Offerings
Offertory Laurie Knapp
*Doxology *“Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow”* 95

*Hymn *“God Will Take Care of You”* 130

Reception of New Members

*Dismissal With Benediction

*Benediction Response *“Go Now in Peace”* Choir

*Postlude Laurie Knapp

*The Congregation May Stand

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 ***Betty Cantrell*** and her son, ***Arthur (Artie) Joyner***, as they join Trinity today. Her address is 924 Natchez Trail, West Columbia, SC 29169 and her phone number is (803) 603-0812. His address is 331 Edgewater Lane, West Columbia, SC 29169.

The Book of Discipline allows the local church to modify organizational plans according to the size, resources, and other circumstances of the church. During this past year, the Church Council has been working, with the assistance of our Congregational Specialist, to reorganize our structure at Trinity so we may minister more effectively. The Church Council has passed a new simplified structure to be approved by the District Superintendent. John will present this new organizational plan after the Taste of Trinity today. This is for information only.

TODAY’S LOVELY FLOWERS are given to the Glory of God in memory of ***Carrie Tate Jumper*** and in honor of her daughter, ***Nell Jumper Cooke***, with much love by ***Mary Kamoroff***.

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

Patsy Zeigler Becky Derrick Carlis Edwards Dale Wells Patsy Shuler Christopher McCroskey
Jimmy Grahl Latson Lewis Kaye Floyd John Ballentine Jack Stevens

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

Family and Friends: **Jeff Kososki** (son-in-law of cousin of Ray & Ted Frady); **Bob Bohnstengel** (spouse of Jo Ann Heiting's cousin); **Judy Spence** (former member); **Anne Piercy** (former member); **Missy Abrams** (stepdaughter of Lissa Abrams); **Mary Davis** (daughter of Bob & Libby Strickland); **Kathleen Braun** (sister of Mark Lewis); **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** (friend 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); **Paula Milhouse** (friend of Marty Johnson); **Mary Ann Rentz** (stepmother of Marty Johnson); **Suzy Sweat** (daughter of friend 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.

OUR PRESENCE ...

In-Person Attendance 08/20 SS: 13 Worship: 40

OUR GIFTS ...

General Fund 08/20 \$ 2,294.00

OUR SERVICE ...

OUR WITNESS.”

Upcoming Events

Today Taste of Trinity following Worship

08/28 Exercise, 10:30 a.m.

08/30 T.a.G., 7 p.m.

08/31 Exercise, 10:30 a.m.

09/01 Office Closed

Readings for September 3

Exodus 3:1-15

Psalm 105:1-11

Romans 12:9-21

Matthew 16:21-28



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

Website: www.trinityumcwc.org



Today following Worship

Join us for Taste of Trinity, our church-wide covered dish luncheon, following the service today. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to share great food and great fellowship!



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CHANGE OF DATE
Sunday, September 3
During the Worship Service

Blessing of the Backpacks **has been moved** to next Sunday, September 3. We will pray over the children and all current and past school workers. We want to send our pupils back to school with the blessings of the Lord to watch over them and help them have an amazing school year.

EPWORTH WORK DAY OFFERING
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

EPWORTH IS OUR MINISTRY! Where do children go when DSS has taken them from their families because of abuse or neglect? Epworth is currently serving over 350 children and families through their Residential and Independent Living programs, statewide Foster Care program, the Epworth Center for Counseling, the Early Intervention Center, and prevention services. Each of these children have found refuge in the ministry we share in SC. Epworth Children's Home has been welcoming children in Christ's name for 127 years through the generous support of churches like ours! We will participate in the annual Work Day Offering on Sunday, September 10th, to benefit the children who are served by Epworth. Please be in prayerful consideration of what God is calling you to give to this valuable and life changing ministry. For more information about Epworth Children's Home, visit www.epworthchildrenshome.org or find them on social media.



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Exodus 1:8-2:10

We often overlook the story of the Hebrew midwives. We tend to want to jump into the story of Moses. After all, he was one of the greatest heroes in the Bible. We put Deborah, Esther, Sarah, and, of course, Mary on our list of Biblical heroines. The midwives do not have a chapter in John McAuthur's book *Twelve Extraordinary Women*. We know their names, Shiprah and Puah, but we do not know the name of the king of Egypt.

Shiprah and Puah were midwives to the Hebrews. Here we notice a change in terminology. Verses 8-14 used the term Israelite, now the term Hebrews is used. The term Hebrews is found mostly in the book of Exodus. While Israelite denotes a specific ethnic group, Hebrews is a more social or class term. They were a recognizable, subservient, and marginalized social class. The Hebrews may have included other marginalized ethnic groups absorbed into the Israelite culture and religion. The significance of this change in terminology is that God recognizes and hears the cries of the marginalized and oppressed. Now back to Shiprah and Puah.

They were the midwives to the Hebrews, these "other" people. I am sure this did not put them high in social status. I don't know where midwives fell in the social ladder but to be a midwife to the Hebrews? Midwifery is not the most glamorous of jobs. Most likely, Shiprah and Puah were widows, and this was their sole means of support.

The king gave Shiprah and Puah orders to kill the Hebrew boys but let the girls live to control the burgeoning Hebrew population that the king feared was becoming too numerous and strong.

Being mere midwives to a lower class of folk, one would think Shiprah and Puah would fear the king and obey his orders. They did not obey the king's orders. They let the boys as well as the girls live.

The king confronted the midwives. Instead of shaking in their boots, their explanation was the very thing the king feared. Unlike the Egyptian women, they said, the Hebrew women were vigorous and gave birth before the midwife arrived.

Ashton's friend, Jordan, was doing her OB/GYN rotation during residency. One night when Jordan was on call, the call light in the room furthest from the nurse's station came on. On her previous check not too long before, the woman had not shown any signs of imminent delivery. When Jordan and the nurses arrived in the room, the woman was there by herself holding the baby. The baby came without the benefit of a doctor or nurse.

This is what Shiprah and Puah said was happening as their explanation for disobeying the king. The babies came before the midwives arrived; therefore they could not kill the boys. The very thing the king feared, that the Hebrews were too strong, was the reason the midwives could not kill the boys.

Shiprah and Puah were ordinary women doing an ordinary job. Birthing babies is something that happens every day. But their act of disobedience saved many lives and set the stage for the Exodus.

Often ordinary people can save lives and possibly set the stage for greater things. Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on the bus after a long day of work. This act of disobedience led to the Montgomery bus boycott and lit the flames of the civil rights movement.

It is not only by disobeying unjust laws but disobeying the norms of society that may save lives.

My Uncle Tom lived in Dawson, Terrell County, Georgia. Terrell County was known as Terrible Terrell during the movement. It was known for lynchings and the killing of Black men by police. It was not a good place to be a Black person.

My uncle had a Black man, W. B. Brown, working with him. W. B. was accused of stealing from a white man. He was arrested and thrown in jail. Word got out that a mob was being formed to get W.B. out of jail to lynch him. Uncle Tom went to the sheriff who told him to get W. B. out of the county by sundown.

Uncle Tom called Granddaddy. There happened to be a vacant sharecropper shack on the farm. Uncle Tom got W.B., his sick, pregnant wife, and two children, Donald and Sharon, along with a few possessions, and made a beeline out of Terrell County.

W. B.'s wife, Ethel, was desperately sick because she could not get prenatal care in Terrell County. Mom went to check on the family the day after they moved. Finding Ethel with an extremely high fever, Mom bundled her in the car and took her to our family doctor. Fortunately, Ethel could be treated with antibiotics and a few months later delivered a baby boy, Timothy.

W.B. worked on the farm until my brother Thomas was able to take over the work on the farm. Donald joined the Army and was a guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Sharon became a teacher. I forget exactly what Timothy did but he became a productive citizen, all because my uncle disobeyed the cultural norm of Terrible Terrell.

We may ask ourselves what led Shiprah and Puah, Rosa Parks, and Uncle Tom to disobey the law and cultural norms. None of them were anybody special. None had hidden superpowers or extraordinary courage.

Shiprah and Puah should have feared the king of Egypt and obeyed his command. Rosa Parks should have feared the white man who wanted her seat and obeyed the law to give up her seat. Uncle Tom should have obeyed the cultural norms and let another Black man get lynched. They did not fear the king, the white man, or what others thought. They feared God.

The midwives feared God. Rosa Parks feared God. Uncle Tom feared God. The fear of God motivated them.

Fear of God does not mean Shiprah and Puah were afraid of God, but almost the opposite. Fear of God is a phrase associated with ethical behavior. “‘ Fear of God’ connotes a conception of God as One who makes moral demands on humankind; it functions as the ultimate restraint on evil and the supreme stimulus for good.”¹ Shiprah and Puah feared God meaning that God was their moral compass, not the king.

¹ Nahum M. Sarna, *The JPS Torah Commentary, Exodus*. (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1991) 7.

With God as their moral compass, Shiprah and Puah could not follow the edict of the king. Killing babies was evil, saving babies was good. The edict of the king was not in line with their moral compass. God was the ruler they obeyed, not the king.

Laws that say a person has to give up their seat on a bus, or cannot exercise their rights because of their race or ethnicity are evil. Cultural norms that say it is OK to torture and kill without a trial because of their race are evil. Therefore Rosa Parks and Uncle Tom disobeyed because God was their moral compass.

If we have the fear of God in us, God is our moral compass. God shows us what is evil and what is good, not the government or cultural norms. God gives us the courage to defy and speak out against that which is evil, particularly laws and norms that oppress and limit the rights of others. Remember, God is the God of the Hebrews, the subservient lower class.

May we have the “Fear of God” in us. May we fear God and not the king, the government, or cultural norms. Let God be our moral compass. Let God restrain us from evil and motivate us for good. As Shiprah and Puah gave life when the king wanted death, may we give life, full abundant life, to those oppressed and marginalized.