

Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost
October 15, 2023

Leading in Worship Today

Welcome and Announcements		
Prelude		Christopher A. McCroskey
Call To Worship	<i>“Surely the Presence of the Lord”</i>	Choir
Greeting		
*Hymn	<i>“Great Is Thy Faithfulness”</i>	140
“Let the Children Come!”		
	<i>(Those 3 years of age through 8 years of age may go to Children’s Church.)</i>	
Opening Prayer		
The Lord’s Prayer		895
Proclamation of the Word		
Prayer of Illumination		
Epistle Reading	Philippians 4:1-9	Page 189 (N.T.)
Psalter	Psalm 106:1-12, 19-23, 47-48	829-830
*Hymn	<i>“It’s Me, It’s Me, O Lord”</i>	352
Gospel Reading	Matthew 22:1-14	Page 28 (N.T.)
Anthem	<i>“He Hideth My Soul”</i>	Choir
Old Testament Reading	Exodus 32:1-14	Page 77 (O.T.)
Sermon	<i>“Changing Minds”</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>“Now Thank We All Our God”</i>	102
*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

Pastor: *John D. Jordan* AV Director: *Marie Stiles*
 Music Director: *Christopher A. McCroskey* AV Assistant: *Chris Derrick*
 Time Together: *Joyce Robinson; Slone Taylor*

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.**

*The Congregation May Stand

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

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

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

Family and Friends: Alex Courtney (friend of great nephew of Joyce Robinson); Lawrence Gilbert (friend of Becky Derrick); 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); 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); Sweat Family (friends of Marty Johnson); Alva Humphries (friend of Marty Johnson); Bill Areheart (friend of Bonnie Ramsey); David Grandshaw (brother-in-law of Edwa Meek); 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); Bernardo Velasquez, 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 10/08 SS: 11 Worship: 36

OUR GIFTS ...

General Fund 10/08 \$ 2,749.84

OUR SERVICE ...

OUR WITNESS.”

Upcoming Events

10/16 Exercise, 10:30 a.m.
10/17 Grief Support
10/18 Choir, 6 p.m.
 T.a.G., 7 p.m.
10/19 Exercise, 10:30 a.m.
10/20 Office Closed

Readings for October 22

Exodus 33:12-23
Psalm 99
1 Thessalonians 1:1-10
Matthew 22:15-22



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

WHATEVER IS *true,*
WHATEVER IS *honorable,*
WHATEVER IS *just,*
WHATEVER IS *pure...*
IF THERE IS ANYTHING
worthy of praise,
THINK ABOUT THESE THINGS.
P H I L I P P I A N S 4 : 8 , N R S V

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KILLINGSWORTH GALA
Thursday, November 9
6 p.m. – 9 p.m.

The Killingsworth Gala is back! The Gala will be held Thursday, November 9, 2023, at Seawell's Restaurant. If purchased individually, tickets are \$65 per person. A table of eight is \$500 or \$62.50 per person. A sign-up sheet will be in the Gathering Area. We would like to be able to have a table for eight. Once we know how many will attend, your check can be made out to Trinity and given to Marie Stiles.

Killingsworth is a home for women in transition from homelessness, addictions, or incarceration. Killingsworth is an Advance Special Ministry of the South Carolina Conference and does not receive funding from apportionments.



Proposed Trinity Women's Group

Several ladies in the church have expressed interest in forming a Women's Group. This group would get together regularly, perhaps once a month. If you are interested in being a part of such a group, please let Marie Stiles know by texting her at 803.463.9706 or emailing her at marie.stiles@icloud.com. We would plan to have an organizational meeting sometime in October to discuss options.



Tuesday, October 17
11 a.m.

The Grief Support Group will meet on Tuesday, October 17, at 11 a.m. in the Conference Room. This group is open to everyone.



Sunday, October 22

Taste of Trinity, our church-wide covered dish luncheon, will be held on Sunday, October 22. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to share great food and great fellowship!



COLUMBIA COMMUNITY CONCERT BAND
FALL CONCERT
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2023, AT 4 PM

The Columbia Community Concert Band opens its 43rd concert season on Sunday, October 29, at 4 p.m. in the Auditorium at Airport High School. Our former assistant director, B.J. Brazier, is our new director, having graciously accepted the position as Bill Ackerman, our conductor since the band was formed 42 years ago, retired in August. He stepped down from the podium but now sits in the front row as our oboe player, and we are grateful he has joined us in this new chapter of his musical contributions to our group.

Selections for this concert include contemporary pieces, marches, a hymn and a tribute to Tony Bennett. Your support of our group is appreciated so much and we love playing to a crowd, so we hope to see you there!

Exodus 32: 1-14

Changing one's mind has become an anathema in our society today. We see compromise as a sign of weakness. We hold fast to our beliefs. We put on blinders and charge ahead regardless of the consequences, even if we are wrong.

While researching his book *Fall of Giants*, Ken Follet discovered that World War I was a war nobody intended. The powers involved did not intend to go to war, much less want to go to war. What could have been an isolated assassination, led to the greatest conflict the world had known. It happened because each nation followed protocol and entered the conflict with its allies.

This scenario became the basis for Follet's book, *Never*. In this novel, a series of small, seemingly insignificant incidents escalates to nuclear war because all sides follow protocol. No one changes their mind, even though no one wants a nuclear war. Keeping face, maintaining honor, and following protocol were more important than avoiding a nuclear disaster.

But is changing one's mind bad? Are there times when we should change our minds when the consequences may lead to disaster? When should we change our minds? The story from Exodus 32 gives us some scriptural insight about changing our minds.

Moses was on Mt Siani for a long time talking to God, Yahweh. Moses had access to Yahweh. Moses was getting Yahweh's commands and instructions for how the Hebrews should live in the Promised Land.

Since Moses was on the mountain, the people had no access to Yahweh. They became restless and had no idea that Moses was even alive. They wanted some tangible evidence of a god to worship.

Aaron took the gold rings, melted them, and molded the image of a calf. The people proclaimed that these were their gods. Aaron proclaimed a festival. The people brought their offerings and sacrifices to the calf.

Yahweh abruptly halted the conversation with Moses. Yahweh told Moses, "**Your people** have acted perversely, and turned aside from the way I commanded." Notice Yahweh told Moses, "Your people," thus rejecting the Hebrews. Yahweh did not only reject the Hebrews but got rather angry. Yahweh told Moses to leave him alone because he was going to bring down fire and brimstone to consume these stiff-necked people. Yahweh was going to forget them and make a nation from Moses. Yahweh changed his mind because Moses' people turned from his way.

Moses interceded. Moses implored Yahweh not to let divine wrath burn against his people, Yahweh's people.

Before we go any further, we must remember that monotheism had not been developed at this point in the Biblical narrative. Every nation had its own god or gods. Yahweh was the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and their descendants. If we do not keep that in mind, Moses' argument with Yahweh makes little sense.

First, Moses pointed out the possible consequences of Yahweh's action. If Yahweh destroyed these people how is it going to look to the Egyptians? If Yahweh sent Moses back to Egypt to lead another group of slaves out of bondage what would happen?

The Egyptians would say, "Look at what happened to the last people that followed Moses and this Yahweh. He led them out into the wilderness and boom! He destroyed them. You would be much safer here with Ra and Isis as your gods."

Moses was telling Yahweh that if he destroyed his chosen people, he would look bad to others.

Then Moses appealed to Yahweh's nature, which is revealed later in Chapter 34. Yahweh is gracious, merciful, compassionate, filled with loving kindness, and steadfast. Yahweh forgives transgressions, sin, and iniquity. Moses reminded Yahweh that anger and destruction are not part of the divine nature. Moses also appealed to Yahweh's steadfastness and promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Israel. Yahweh had promised the land to these people, the descendants of Abraham.

Moses implored Yahweh to turn from his wrath, change his mind, and remember. A remarkable thing happened; Yahweh changed his mind. Yahweh still punished the people, but he did not destroy them.

This story tells us that God is completely free. God is even free to change his mind and his course of action. And we are free to ask God to change his mind. Even Jesus asked God to change his mind. Thus, we are free to intercede on behalf of others. Our intercessory prayers are not meaningless pleas to an unchanging god but meaningful requests for God to change his mind.

In reality, the whole of the Judeo-Christian religion is changing minds. The refrain of the prophets, including John the Baptist, is repent. Even God repents as the word translated as "changed his mind" is the word that means repent. Even God repents.

We appeal to God's nature and promise so he may change his mind and not punish us. We change our minds and follow God's way rather than the world's. Repentance is not a one-time change in our minds and that's it. Understanding God's will and drawing closer to God may mean frequently changing our minds, way of thinking, and way of living. The Christian life is a life of change.

We may change our minds as God reveals more about himself and creation through scientific research and discovery. The Church began to change its mind about creation and the universe with the discoveries of Copernicus and Galileo. Most Christians today do not believe the universe revolves around the earth.

When Kay went for her first appointment with the oncologist after her diagnosis of breast cancer, the doctor described the treatment protocol. After he finished, he said, "If you had come in last year, we would have followed a different protocol, but the research tells us the new protocol is more effective." Needless to say, we found that very reassuring. The doctor changed his mind because of updated research.

We may change our minds because of new experiences. My mother taught for many years. Living in the South, she accepted the "Separate, but Equal" doctrine and could not understand why Blacks wanted school integration. Mom left the classroom and became a reading consultant for a regional state consultation program. In

this capacity, she had to go into White and Black schools. After her first visit to a Black school, she saw that the schools were separate but certainly not equal. She changed her mind and became a proponent of integration. Mom's experience in that school led her to change her mind.

We may change our minds because the consequences of maintaining a course of action may be too great. In Follet's book, *Never*, there were several points where if one country or leader changed their mind and did not follow protocol, nuclear war could have been avoided. This may have been the case in August 1914. If one country or one leader changed their mind and pushed a diplomatic solution over a military one, the conflagration that was World War One may have been contained.

This story from Exodus clearly shows that God is free and does change his mind. We are free to beg God to change his mind. We do not know how many times God may have changed his mind throughout history.

God gives us the freedom to change our minds. We change our minds to turn to God and live according to God's way. We change our minds when reason and experience challenge our thoughts and beliefs. We change our minds when the consequences of maintaining a particular course lead to disaster.

As Christians, we change our minds as we are led by the Holy Spirit through scripture, tradition, reason, and experience. Changing our minds is not a sign of weakness, but the exercise of a Godlike and God-given freedom.