

***Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost***  
**October 22, 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>“O How I Love Jesus”</i>	170
Opening Prayer		
The Lord’s Prayer		895
<b>Proclamation of the Word</b>		
Prayer of Illumination		
“Let the Children Come!”		
<i>(Those 3 years of age through 8 years of age may go to Children’s Church.)</i>		
Old Testament Reading	Exodus 33:12-23	Page 79 (O.T.)
Psalter	Psalm 99	819-820
*Hymn	<i>“Lord of the Dance”</i>	261
Epistle Reading	1 Thessalonians 1:1-10	Page 193 (N.T.)
Anthem	<i>“Crown Him with Many Crowns”</i>	Choir
Gospel Reading	Matthew 22:15-22	Page 28 (N.T.)
Sermon	<i>“Don’t Get Sucked In”</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>“Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing”</i>	400
*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*

**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](mailto:trinityumcwc@sc.rr.com).

**OUR PRESENCE ...**

In-Person Attendance 10/15 SS: 11                      Worship: 37

**OUR GIFTS ...**

General Fund 10/15 \$ 1,362.50

**OUR SERVICE ...**

**OUR WITNESS."**

**Upcoming Events**

**TODAY** Taste of Trinity following Worship

Organizational Meeting for Women's Group following Taste of Trinity

**10/23** Exercise, 10:30 a.m.

GLIA Aritcles Due

**10/25** T.a.G., 7 p.m.

**10/26** Exercise, 10:30 a.m.

**10/27** Office Closed

**Readings for October 29**

Deuteronomy 34:1-12

Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17

1 Thessalonians 2:1-8

Matthew 22:34-46



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

**The Congregation**  
**John D. Jordan**  
**Jonathan Holston**  
**Rev. Fran M. Elrod**

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

***Our vision is to Connect, Nurture, Inspire and Transform***

"GIVE TO CAESAR  
WHAT IS CAESAR'S,  
AND TO GOD  
WHAT IS GOD'S."

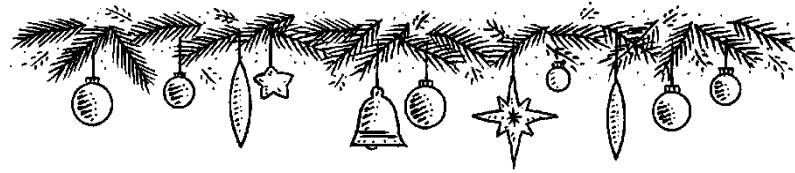
MATTHEW 22:21, NIV



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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. You will enjoy a wonderful meal, a silent auction and entertainment provided by the Palmetto Carolers. Purchased individually, tickets are \$65 per person. A table of eight is \$500 or \$62.50 per person. A sign-up sheet is in the Gathering Area. While we have filled one table, we are hoping to have enough people sign up to fill a second table. 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 Women's Group***  
***Organizational Meeting Today following Taste of Trinity***

If you are interested in being a part of a Women’s Group, please join us as we meet immediately after Taste of Trinity today. We will discuss our options for getting together in the coming months.



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

The Columbia Community Concert Band opens its 43<sup>rd</sup> 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! **Billy Pearson will drive the bus and a signup sheet is on the round table in the Gathering Area.**



The SPRC will meet on Wednesday, November 1, at 6 p.m. in the Conference Room.

Matthew 22: 15-22

This passage is often cited as the argument for the separation of church and state. Jesus says to give Caesar the things that are Caesar's and God the things that are God's. It sounds like Jesus is saying to keep religion and politics separate. However, the message of this passage has nothing to do with the relationship of religion and politics. This story has two major points.

Before we go further, we need a little historical context. In 63 BCE, the Roman general Pompey entered Jerusalem as a "peacekeeping" force. In 6 CE, Judea became a Roman Province. The Jews began having to pay taxes to Rome in Roman currency. This was a major theological issue with the Jews because the Roman coins had an image of the emperor and the inscription, "Tiberius Caesar, august son of the divine Augustus, high priest." The fact that the coin had a human image and inscription declaring Caesar as divine would be blasphemous to the Jews. The Zealot movement rose in opposition to this tax. Romans hung many Zealots on crosses throughout the countryside, a sight young Jesus may have seen.

So, paying taxes to Rome was a real hot-button issue at the time of Jesus. Feelings ran high on the issue and the "wrong" answer would lead to dire consequences. A modern equivalent would be abortion, same-sex marriage, or the ordination of homosexuals.

This passage is the first effort in a series by the religious establishment to entrap Jesus. This story is also found in Mark (12: 13-17) and Luke (20: 20-26). Though there are some slight differences in each Gospel, Jesus' response is the same. Jesus asks for the coin used to pay the tax. He says to give to the emperor what is the emperor's and to God the things that are God's. Jesus does not engage with the Pharisees. He does not get sucked into the Pharisee's trap.

This is not the only time Jesus refused to engage with his adversaries. When the Pharisees question Jesus' authority to teach (Mt. 21: 27-33, Mk. 11: 27-33, Lk. 20:1-8), Jesus does not engage but asks by whose authority did John the Baptist teach? In the story of the woman caught in adultery (John 8: 1-11), Jesus writes in the sand rather than engaging with the Scribes and Pharisees. Jesus did not get sucked into arguments with his adversaries.

Not to engage in spurious debates is the first point of this story. Often rifts are caused in churches because of arguments over everything from the color of the carpet to the present LGBTQ issues. I am not saying the LGBTQ issue is unimportant, but engaging in long arguments only leads to anger and hurt. The UMC stance is the same as it has been for decades and cannot be changed until the 2024 General Conference. If the stance changes local church is affected; long arguments are unproductive. Most people have their minds made up already. They are not going to change. Arguments and debates are only going to lead to increased anger and hurt. Let's get the facts, make a decision, abide by it, and agree to disagree with love.

Enough about that; this brings us to the second point. Why did Jesus not engage with the Pharisees? Why didn't he argue with them and prove them wrong? Why does he say to give the emperor the things that are the emperor's? That sounds like he is saying to give to the world what the world wants.

Jesus is saying, "Don't get distracted by what the world wants." If the world (the emperor) wants you to pay tax with a particular coin; pay it, and get on with giving to God what is God's.

What is God's? We are. We are God's creatures. God created us in the divine image. We all are children of God. We are children of God whether we are Christian, Jew, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, or atheist. We are children of God whatever our race, ethnicity, or nationality. Even if we are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, asexual, or straight, we are children of God. Every person on the face of the earth is a child of God, created in the image of God.

We must remember whose we are. We are God's and therefore we give ourselves to God. We give ourselves to God to do the work God has for each of us to bring about the Kingdom of Heaven. Our ultimate loyalty is to God, not the nation. Jesus is saying, "You may give what is the emperor's, but your ultimate loyalty is to God."

We should not engage in spurious debates because they distract us from giving ourselves to God. We are distracted from doing the work God wants us to do for the Kingdom.

Bishop Holston's frustration with the issue of disaffiliation is that it has distracted churches from doing Kingdom work. Churches have spent so much time, energy, and money debating the issue that they could spend spreading the Gospel to their community. They could have been feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, welcoming the stranger, caring for the sick, and visiting the imprisoned.

We may be United States citizens, but we are God's creatures. We belong to God. We give to our nation what the nation wants, but our ultimate loyalty is to God. We are to work for God's kingdom over any earthly kingdom. The Kingdom of God will defeat the kingdom of the world, not by the conventional means of money, power, and rockets but by God's love and God's power over all kingdoms, even the kingdom of death<sup>1</sup>.

Let us not get sucked into debates and controversies. Let us remember we belong to God and should give ourselves to work for God's kingdom at all times and in all places.

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<sup>1</sup> N. T. Wright, *Matthew for Everyone, Part 2*, (Louisville, KY Westminster John Knox Press, 2004) 88.