

Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost

October 29, 2023

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude Christopher A. McCroskey

Call To Worship "Surely the Presence of the Lord" Choir

Greeting

*Hymn "Lord, Speak to Me" 463

Opening Prayer

The Lord's Prayer 895

Proclamation of the Word

Prayer of Illumination

"Let the Children Come!"

(Those 3 years of age through 8 years of age may go to Children's Church.)

Old Testament Reading Deuteronomy 34:1-12 Page 189 (O.T.)

Psalter Psalm 90 809-810

*Hymn *Take My Life, and Let It Be* 399

Gospel Reading Matthew 22:34-46 Pages 28-29 (N.T.)

Anthem "The Lily of the Valley" Choir

Epistle Reading 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8 Page 193 (N.T.)

Sermon "Like a Nurse" 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 Christopher A. McCroskey

*Doxology "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow" 95

*Hymn "Pass It On" 572

*Dismissal With Benediction

*Benediction Response "May the Lord, Mighty God, Bless and Keep You" 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: *John D. Jordan*

AV Director: *Marie Stiles*

Music Director: *Christopher A. McCroskey*

AV Assistant: *Chris Derrick*

Time Together: *Wayne & Charlie Hooker*

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.

A GIFT TO TRINITY is given to the **Glory of God** and in loving memory of his wife, **Jewel Percy**, by **English Percy**.

“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: Esther Carter; Gillett Hipp; Linda Maloch; Jean Raynor; Claudia Sineath; George Taylor

Family and Friends: **Elizabeth Kelsey & Jamie Barnett** (*friends of John & Kay Jordan*); **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*); **Ernie & Betsey Hendrix, Chip Mixon** (*friends 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 10/22 SS: 11 Worship: 40

OUR GIFTS ...

General Fund 10/22 \$ 4,166.84

OUR SERVICE ...

OUR WITNESS."

Upcoming Events

TODAY FH Reserved, 2 p.m. – 5 p.m.

Columbia Community Concert Band, 4 p.m. @ Airport HS

(Bus leaves Gunter Circle Parking Lot at 3:20 p.m.)

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

11/01 T.a.G., 7 p.m.

11/02 Exercise, 10:30 a.m.

11/03 Office Closed

Readings for November 5

Revelation 7:9-17

Psalm 34:1-10, 22

1 John 3:1-3

Matthew 5:1-12

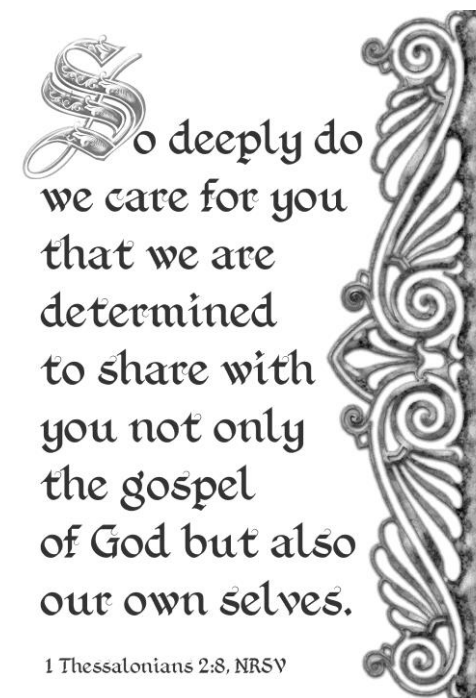


Ministers
Pastor
Resident Bishop
District Superintendent

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



1 Thessalonians 2:8, NRSV

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KILLINGSWORTH GALA
Thursday, November 9

If you have signed up for the Killingsworth Gala, the price for the tickets is \$62.50. Your check should be made out to Trinity and given to Marie Stiles by Sunday, October 29.



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COLUMBIA COMMUNITY CONCERT BAND
FALL CONCERT
TODAY AT 4 PM

The Columbia Community Concert Band opens its 43rd concert season today at 4 p.m. in the Auditorium at Airport High School. 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 bus will leave the Gunter Circle Parking lot at 3:20 p.m.



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The SPRC meeting has been **postponed until Wednesday, November 8**, at 6 p.m. in the Conference Room.

ALL SAINTS SUNDAY
November 5, 2023

If you have a loved one that has died since last November and you would like to have them remembered on All Saints Sunday, please put their name on the sign-up sheet in the Gathering Area or call the Church Office.



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1Thessalonians 2:1-8

Paul and his entourage left Philippi after being imprisoned (Acts: 16). They continued west to Thessalonica. Thessalonica was a key trading city on the main west-to-east highway across the Roman Empire. Thessalonica had a rich cultic life with shrines to the Macedonian, Roman, and Egyptian Gods.

The city benefitted from Rome and was loyal to Rome. Emperor worship was prevalent. The Augustan cult believed Augustus ushered in a new age of peace to the world, and the emperor maintained this peace.

There was much opposition to the Gospel in Thessalonica. The idea of exclusive worship to one God, which Paul taught, was ludicrous to the Thessalonians. He remained in Thessalonica long enough to establish a church but was “painfully separated” from the church (2:17) and moved on to Corinth.

The Church was facing opposition from without and questions from within. The opposition was from the society on the whole. The Gospel ran counter to the Greco-Roman culture. This opposition strained the church to remain true to the new life of the Gospel. Questions regarding the second coming of Christ tested the faith of many.

Though Paul desired to return to Thessalonica, he was unable to. Paul wrote this letter from Corinth, believed to be the earliest New Testament writing. Paul was writing to encourage this beleaguered church to persist in this new way of life.¹

The passage we read today begins the meat of Paul’s letter. Paul noted that he was shamefully mistreated in Phillippi. Despite the possibility of mistreatment in Thessalonica, he and his entourage came to declare the Gospel of God. They were able to proclaim the Gospel because of God’s courage. God gave Paul and the others the courage to spread the Gospel.

God gave Paul the courage to proclaim the Gospel. God approved Paul’s message, for God chose Paul to spread the Gospel to the Gentiles. Paul did not come to Thessalonica to spread the Gospel to please mortals or to flatter himself. Paul spread the Gospel to please God. He knew God would test his heart and know his motivation for spreading the Gospel.

The writer of last Sunday’s devotional in the Upper Room told of meeting her boyfriend’s friends who were atheists, so he advised her to cover her tattoo adorned with “Christ the King.” She covered the tattoo and did not voice her convictions with his friends, even when the discussion turned to God. She was ashamed she lacked the courage to voice her beliefs.

¹ Abraham Smith, “The First Letter to the Thessalonians.” In *The New Interpreter’s Bible, Vol.XI*. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000). 681.i

We often lack the courage to express our beliefs, especially in the face of opposition. That is because we are relying on our courage, our words, and other's approval, not God's. God gives us the courage to speak if God approves our message and it pleases God, not ourselves. God does test our hearts. God looks deep within us and knows our motivations. God knows if our message comes from God or is to please others and stroke our ego.

Paul notes how he spread the Gospel in Thessalonica, which is the way we can successfully spread the Gospel.

Paul did not try to trick people into believing. He did not tell people they would be blessed with riches if they believed in Jesus. He spoke the truth of the Gospel. He did not try to flatter people into believing. He did not say, "You are so blessed because God loves you so much, and you are special." He did not use the Gospel for his gain. He did not say, "Send your money to Paul of Tarsus Ministries, Straight Street, Damascus, and you will get a ticket to heaven signed by Paul himself." Paul did not seek praise from people nor make demands on people. He told the Gospel he received from God.

How did Paul express the Gospel? Paul says, "But we were gentle among you, like a nurse tenderly caring for her own children" (2:7). Paul did not browbeat people. Paul did not guilt or scare people into believing. Paul cared for the people of Thessalonica. Paul cared for them like a nurse.

The nurse Paul describes is not the type of nurse we may think of. A nurse in Paul's time was not someone who worked caring for the sick. A nurse was a woman who cared for the children in the household, more like a nanny or au pair. A good nurse was kind, gentle, patient, loving, forgiving but firm. If the child was hurt, she would hug it, take care of the wound, and then admonish the child if needed. If a nurse would be like that with her master's child, how much more would she be with her own child?

Paul was like a nurse caring for her own child. Paul spread the Gospel through caring. Paul did not just share words with the Thessalonians, he shared himself. He gave himself to the people of Thessalonica. He did not just talk about loving your neighbor, he loved his neighbor. He did not tell them the stories of Jesus. He lived the story of Jesus.

The people of Thessalonica could hold firm to their new faith because Paul showed them the Gospel. They saw Paul remain faithful to the Gospel despite adversity and opposition. They did not hear a Gospel of empty words but saw a Gospel lived. They experienced the new life in Christ through the example of Paul.

That is how we spread the Gospel, by caring for others. We care for the ones who may be ignored. We care for the least and expect nothing in return. We do not love others to receive love from them or warm fuzzies; we love others so they may experience God's love through us. That is how we spread the Gospel to the world today. The Gospel of love can only spread if the messenger gives themselves in love to others.

Many years ago, Kay and I attended a workshop on domestic violence. One of the presenters was discussing the generational cycle of domestic abuse. He noted that studies at the time found one commonality in people who grew up in abusive households but did not become abusers. The commonality was they had at least one person in the formative years who gave them unconditional positive regard. Unconditional positive regard is being warm and accepting of the person regardless of their behavior. In theological terms, this would be agape love, love that gives warmth and acceptance unconditionally as God gives us unconditional love and acceptance. They did not grow up to be abusers because they experienced God's love through someone.

I have heard some great preachers over the years: some well-known, like Billy Graham, and some not. Some have stirred my heart. Some have made me think about my relationship with God. I am not where I am today because of the words of any preacher. I am here today because I experienced God's love through other people. I cannot remember a thing any of those great preachers said, but I remember the love and care of those who gave themselves to others.

The world today needs the Gospel. We see the war in Ukraine. We see the horror of everything going on in Gaza. We see violence, addiction, and exploitation. Conflicts appear everywhere. We have forgotten how to disagree without hate. We seem to forget how to live together.

Many of us may remember the song by Jackie DeShannon, *What the World Needs Now Is Love*. I think that song is appropriate today. We need the Gospel of God's love through Jesus Christ. The world can only know the Gospel if we tell the world. We do not tell the Gospel with empty words and cliches but through being like a nurse. We spread the Gospel through caring for others regardless of who they are. We give to others the unconditional love God gives us.

Let us be like a nurse. Let us bind the wounds of the broken. Let us show kindness and compassion to all people. Let us show the world the Gospel of Jesus Christ by living like Jesus and passing on God's love.