

***Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost***  
**November 19, 2023**

***Leading in Worship Today***

Welcome and Announcements		
Prelude		Christopher A. McCroskey
Call To Worship	<i>“Majesty”</i>	Choir
Greeting		
*Hymn	<i>“Lead On, O King Eternal”</i>	580
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	Judges 4:1-7	Page 216 (O.T.)
Psalter	Psalm 76	797
*Hymn	<i>“Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross”</i>	301
Gospel Reading	Matthew 25:14-30	Pages 31-32 (N.T.)
Anthem	<i>“For the Bread Which You Have Broken”</i>	Choir
	<i>Duet by Dan Greshel and Laurie Knapp</i>	
Epistle Reading	1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11	Pages 194-195 (N.T.)
Sermon	<i>“Why-What-How-When”</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>“Soon and Very Soon”</i>	706
*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	

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 printhymnals** 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*** in loving memory of their son, ***Altie Hooker***, by ***Wayne and Charlie Hooker***.

“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    Steve White

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

**Family and Friends:** Charlyn McNeill (*sister of Mary Sue Lewis*); 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 Gleaton*); Ron & Janet Walker (*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*); 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 11/12    SS: 11    Worship: 22

**OUR GIFTS ...**

General Fund 11/12    \$ 3,076.24

**OUR SERVICE ...**

**OUR WITNESS.”**

**Upcoming Events**

11/21 Grief Support, 11:00 a.m.

11/22 GLIA Articles Due

No Choir

No T.a.G.

11/23 Thanksgiving Day

Office Closed

11/24 Office Closed

**Readings for November 26**

Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24

Psalm 100

Ephesians 1:15-23

Matthew 25:31-46



<b>Ministers</b>	<b>The Congregation</b>
<b>Pastor</b>	<b>John D. Jordan</b>
<b>Resident Bishop</b>	<b>Jonathan Holston</b>
<b>District Superintendent</b>	<b>Rev. Fran M. Elrod</b>

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

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



PSALM 136:1, KJV

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# ÄÖÛ Exercise class

The Exercise Class is taking a break for the remainder of the year. The class will resume on Thursday, January 4.



**Tuesday, November 21  
11 a.m.**

The Grief Support Group will meet on Tuesday, November 21, at 11 a.m. in the Conference Room. This group is open to everyone.



**Sunday, November 26**

Taste of Trinity, our church-wide covered dish luncheon, will be held on Sunday, November 26. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to share great food and great fellowship!



Church Council will meet on Sunday, November 26, immediately following Taste of Trinity.



**12/02** Decorate for Advent and Christmas, 9 a.m.

**12/17** Christmas Cantata

**12/24** Lessons and Carols, 11 a.m.  
Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service, 6 p.m.

**12/25** Christmas Day  
Office Closed

## 1 Thessalonians 4:13- 5:11

A few weeks ago, we noted that most scholars think 1 Thessalonians is one of the first, if not the first, of the New Testament writings. Paul wrote the letter in about 50 CE in response to concerns expressed by Timothy. Timothy returned to Thessalonica when Paul could not. Timothy gave a generally positive report but expressed some concerns. The passage we read addressed one of the main concerns.

Paul preached a gospel of eternal life and resurrection. He also preached that Christ will come again. Many in the first generation of Christians, including those in Thessalonica, believed Jesus would return during their lifetime. No believers would die before Jesus returned. This belief led to a crisis in Thessalonica because believers were dying.

What does this mean that people are dying and Jesus has not come back? Does it mean that people who have died miss out on eternal life? Are the living going to miss out on the resurrection? Is all Paul taught us a lie, a trick to get us to believe?

Paul begins this passage by saying that he does not want the Thessalonians to be uninformed, indicating that he is giving them new information, which he is not. A better rendering might be we do not want you to misunderstand about those who have died. Paul might be tweaking his theology a bit here. His words are theological and pastoral. He is providing comfort and hope while refining the theology of the second coming.

Paul begins describing the second coming of Jesus in verse 15. The word he uses to describe the coming of the Lord is parousia. Parousia has become a theological term to mean the second coming. The word means coming, arrival, or presence, but it is not an ordinary coming.

The Thessalonians would understand parousia as a king and victorious army coming into the town. The townspeople would go out and meet the army before it arrived, and then escort it into the town. Jesus' entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday was a parousia. The people went out and escorted him into Jerusalem, waving palm branches and celebrating.

Paul describes the Parousia in verses 16-17. Jesus gives a cry of command. The archangels call and sound God's trumpet. Jesus descends from heaven. The dead in Christ will rise and come with him. Then, those still alive will be caught up in the clouds to meet him. By using the term parousia, Paul implies Jesus will be escorted to earth to complete the restoration of creation that began with the incarnation. Jesus does not come to carry us away but to restore creation to God's rule.

Of course, the Thessalonians would want to know when this would happen. When would this parousia take place? Paul's answer to them is the same one I give you now. I don't know.

But it will come unexpectedly, like a thief in the night or as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. Thieves generally do not let one know when they will break in. Labor pains are the baby saying, "I'm ready to come into the world," and they don't let mom know their timetable.

In 5:3 Paul states, “When they say, ‘There is peace and security,’ then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape.” “They” are the empires of the world. Paul wrote during the Pax Romana, a time of peace and prosperity for Rome. The “peace” was maintained by oppression and violence, particularly in Judea. When the empires of the world think they have peace and security, sudden destruction will come upon them. Worldly kingdoms will be destroyed and the Kingdom of God will reign.

Like the Thessalonians, we wait for the day of the Lord. On that day of the Lord, the kingdoms of the world will be caught unawares. But we will not. We will not because we live in the light. We are children of light, not darkness. Even if the Lord comes at midnight, the darkness time, we will not be surprised. We live in the light of Christ that overcomes even the darkness of midnight.

We have the protection of faith and love. We have God’s love and the promises of a faithful, trustworthy God. We have hope because God promises salvation, not death or destruction. We have Jesus, who died for us, so we are saved and restored to a relationship with God.

As we wait, we continue to work for God. We continue to do what God calls us to do. We use our talents, gifts, and resources to further God’s kingdom on earth. We keep our lamps lit and fuel our faith.

Paul ends both sections of this passage, 4:18 and 5:11, by saying to encourage each other. We are to encourage each other with words of hope. When we see a brother or sister struggling and in despair, we are to give words of encouragement. We may encourage verbally, but our encouragement is more effective by being compassionate.

We are to build each other up, not tear each other down. Our task is not to condemn or reject but to bring each other closer to Christ. We may criticize and point out shortcomings, but we do so with love and compassion. Likewise, we accept criticism with an open mind. We strengthen each other and support each other through times of struggle and doubt.

I cannot speak for anyone else, but two of my favorite times are my monthly meeting with the West Metro pastors and the weekly T.a.G. group. In the pastor’s meeting, we share our joys and struggles in ministry. We provide each other a safe place to vent our frustrations.

In the T.a.G. group, we share the state of our souls. We celebrate when our souls are good. We encourage when someone’s soul may be in a dark place. We share what has helped us to grow. Most of all, we encourage and build each other up. I cannot adequately describe how the support of fellow Christians has fueled my faith.

We await the Parousia. We long to hear the cry of command, the archangel’s call, and the blasting of God’s trumpet. In the meantime, let us encourage and support each other in doing God’s will. Let us build each other up and fuel our faith as we have been doing and even more.