

***Baptism of the Lord***  
**January 7, 2024**

Welcome and Announcements		
Prelude		Laurie Knapp
Call To Worship	<i>"We Three Kings"</i>	Choir
Greeting		
*Hymn	<i>"The First Noel"</i>	245
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	Isaiah 60:1-6	Page 654 (O.T.)
Psalter	Psalms 29	761
*Hymn	<i>"Baptized in Water"</i>	TFWS 2248
Gospel Reading	Matthew 2:1-12	Pages 7-8 (N.T.)
Anthem	<i>"Just as I Am"</i>	Laurie Knapp
Gospel Reading	Mark 1:4-11	Page 37 (N.T.)
Sermon	<i>"Two Signs"</i>	Rev. John Jordan
Pastoral Prayer		
Presentation of Tithes & Offerings		
Offertory		Laurie Knapp
*Doxology	<i>"Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow"</i>	95
Reaffirmation of the Baptismal Covenant		
		50-52
*Hymn	<i>"Shall We Gather at the River"</i>	723
*Dismissal With Benediction		
*Benediction Response	<i>"May the Lord, Mighty God, Bless and Keep You"</i>	Choir

\*The Congregation May Stand

***Leading in Worship Today***

Pastor:	<i>John D. Jordan</i>	AV Director:	<i>Marie Stiles</i>
Pianist:	<i>Laurie Knapp</i>	AV Assistant:	<i>Chris Derrick</i>
		Time Together:	<i>Jack Stevens; Pam Turner</i>

**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** in loving memory of **George L. Hardee** by his family.

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

Patsy Zeigler    Jim Stiles    Kaye Floyd    Larry Butler    Patsy Shuler    Christopher McCroskey  
Charlie Hooker    Latson Lewis    John Ballentine    Mary Kamoroff    Steve White    Jimmy Grahl  
Taylor Linholm    Becky Derrick

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

**Family and Friends:** **Bryan Collard** (brother-in-law of Mary Sue Lewis); **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); **Sweat Family** ( friends 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 12/31    SS: 11    Worship: 31**

**OUR GIFTS ...**

**General Fund 12/31    \$ 3,480.00**

**OUR SERVICE ...**

**OUR WITNESS."**

**Upcoming Events**

**01/08** Exercise Class, 10:30 a.m.

**01/09** Grieving with God Support Group, 11 a.m.

**(Change of Date)**

**01/10** Wednesday's Words, 11:30 a.m.

T.a.G., 7 p.m.

**01/11** Exercise Class, 10:30 a.m.

**01/12** Office Closed

**11/13** Take Down Christmas Decorations, 10 a.m.

**Readings for January 14**

1 Samuel 3:1-20

Psalm 139

1 Corinthians 6:12-20

John 1:43-51



<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***

And a voice came  
from heaven,  
“You are my Son,  
the Beloved;  
with you I am  
well pleased.”

Mark 1:11, NRSV



1201 Mohawk Drive  
West Columbia, SC 29169

Telephone: 803.794.7777

E-mail: [trinityumcwc@sc.rr.com](mailto:trinityumcwc@sc.rr.com)

Website: [www.trinityumcwc.org](http://www.trinityumcwc.org)



**Grieving with God  
Tuesday, January 9  
(Change of Date)  
11 a.m.**

The Grief Support Group will now meet on the **second Tuesday of every month** at 11 a.m. in the Conference Room. This group is open to everyone.



**Mondays & Thursdays  
10:30 a.m.**

The Exercise Class meets every Monday and Thursday at 10:30 a.m. Everyone is invited to join the class at any time. It's a great way to start the year!



**Help Needed  
to Take Down  
Christmas  
Decorations**

Help is needed to take down the Christmas Decorations on Saturday, January 13<sup>th</sup>, at 10 a.m. Your help will be greatly appreciated.



**Wednesday's Words  
Every Wednesday at 11:30 a.m.**

This month I will continue the series Finding and Keeping Joy based on the *Book of Joy* by Bishop Desmond Tutu and the Dali Lama. You may participate in person in the sanctuary or on our YouTube channel. After this series, I will begin a series on United Methodist beliefs. This will be ongoing and open to any topics you might like to discuss. Come or tune in on Wednesdays at 11:30 am.



**Sunday, January 28**

Taste of Trinity, our church-wide covered dish luncheon, resumes this month and will be held on Sunday, January 28. It will continue on the fourth Sunday of every month. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to share great food and great fellowship!



Church Council will meet on Sunday, January 28, immediately following Taste of Trinity.

Matthew 2: 1-12 Mark 1:4-11

This Sunday is unusual because two significant events in the Christian Calendar fall on the same weekend. Yesterday, January 6, was Epiphany, the final day of the Christmas Season marked by the coming of the Magi. Today is the Baptism of the Lord Sunday when we focus on Jesus' baptism and the beginning of his ministry.

I confess I could not decide which to focus on this Sunday. The two events are important because both represent signs of God's grace and working in the world. Today, we will explore the two signs in these events.

Before we go further, let's define the meaning and purpose of signs. A sign suggests the presence or existence of a fact. A sign may provide direction or information. In a theological sense, a sign is an action that makes the invisible visible. A sign points to or points out something. An arrow is a sign that tells which direction to go to get somewhere. A stop sign tells us where to stop.

The sign of Epiphany is the star. The star pointed the Magi to the child born to be king of the Jews. They saw the star rising in the East. From their studies, they knew what the star meant. The star pointed to the newborn king of the Jews.

The Magi followed the star as it made its way across the heavens. They made the long arduous trek to Jerusalem, then on to Bethlehem. The star gave the Magi directions to the Child. They followed the sign of the star to the place where Jesus lay. The star was a sign of guidance, leading the Magi to the child.

Baptism is a sign. It is a sign of God's grace at work in our lives. Baptism is a means of grace. It is a way we experience God's grace.

Baptism is a sign of God's prevenient grace that surrounds us from birth. It is a sign of God's action in removing the taint of sin from us through the cleansing water of baptism.

Baptism is a sign of justifying grace. Through the water of baptism, we are cleansed from the guilt of our sins. We are justified, and our lives are realigned to God's will.

Baptism is a sign of sanctifying grace. We are cleansed by the water of baptism and made new. We more clearly reflect the image of God in which we are created. By grace, we are drawn closer to God and come to know the perfect love of God and for others.

I know some may argue that an infant cannot be justified and cleansed of sins they have not committed. Therefore, infants and children should not be baptized. Remember baptism is a sign of God's grace. It is an action, the pouring of water which makes visible the invisible working of God's grace throughout one's life. While we are baptized once with water, we are continually baptized in God's grace. Baptism is the sign of the continuing action of God in our lives.

Since baptism points to the continuing action of God's grace in our lives, Methodists do not rebaptize. Rebaptism is basically saying that God did not work the first time. This is not true, for God is always working in our lives.

Baptism is a sign of identification. As Jesus came up from the waters of the Jordan, a voice said to him, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased." We are identified as a child of God. We are beloved, and God is well pleased with us. Baptism is a sign of God's claim on us as God's children.

Thus, baptism is a sign of our initiation into the family of God, the church. We are members of the church universal. This is why Methodists do not rebaptize someone who joins from another denomination if they have been baptized. They are already members of the church; they just need to make the vows to join the Methodist church.

The star of the Magi and baptism are signs. They are signs of God working in history and God working today. They are signs we need to be on the lookout for as we go through life.

We may not think that God gives signs to us. Often we may long for a sign but we do not see any. But as the old song by the Five Man Electrical Band, goes, "Signs, signs, everywhere are signs..." There are signs of God's working everywhere.

We see God working in doctors going into areas of infectious outbreaks to curtail the spread of the diseases. We see God working through aid workers in refugee camps of people displaced by war. We see God working through the hands of CNAs in nursing homes, caring for the elderly. We see God working in teachers. We see God working every day through us, children of God who reflect the image of God.

We receive signs of God's guidance like the star that led the Magi to the manger. The Magi saw the star and knew what it meant. Others saw the star but did not know what it meant. Often, we may not recognize the signs of God's guidance at the time.

In the movie *Up In the Air*, George Clooney plays a corporate downsizer. He told people their jobs were terminated and explained the termination package. At one point he was working with a man who was distraught about losing his job. Clooney asked the man if there was something he always wanted to do. The man replied that he wanted to run a restaurant. Clooney pointed out that he now had the time and, with the termination package, the resources to start a restaurant. Losing the job gave the man the opportunity to do something he always wanted.

God's signs are not always bright stars. But God gives us signs. We just need to look for them and know what they mean.