

Fourth Sunday in Lent
March 10, 2024

Leading in Worship Today

Welcome and Announcements
 Birthday Celebration

Pastor: *John D. Jordan* AV Director: *Marie Stiles*
 Music Director: *Christopher A. McCroskey* AV Assistant: *Chris Derrick*
 Time Together: *Ruth Frady*

Prelude Christopher A. McCroskey

Call To Worship Choir
 Greeting "Great Is the Lord"

*Hymn 340
"Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy"

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.)

New Testament Reading Pages 182-183 (N.T.)
 Psalter 830-831
Ephesians 2:1-10
Psalm 107: 1-9, 33-43

*Hymn TFWS 2214
"Lead Me, Guide Me"

Old Testament Reading Page 138 (O.T.)
Numbers 21:4-9

Anthem Choir
"Lord Be With Us On This Day"

Gospel Reading Page 91 (N.T.)
 Sermon Rev. John Jordan
John 3:14-21
"Look to the Cross"

*Affirmation of Faith 881
 *Gloria Patri 70
"The Apostles' Creed"
"Glory Be to the Father"

Pastoral Prayer
 Presentation of Tithes & Offerings

Offertory Christopher A. McCroskey
 *Doxology 95
"Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow"

*Hymn 206
"I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light"

*Dismissal With Benediction
 *Benediction Response Choir
"May the Lord, Mighty God, Bless and Keep You"

*The Congregation May Stand

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*** and in loving memory of her father, ***Hugh Knapp, Sr.***, on his birthday March 4, by ***Laurie Knapp***.

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

English Pearcy Patsy Zeigler Charlie Hooker Kaye Floyd Patsy Shuler Taylor Linholm
Becky Derrick John Ballentine Mary Kamoroff Jimmy Grahl Latson Lewis

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

Family and Friends: Nancy Whitehead (former member); Malcolm Skipper (grandfather of Matthew Skipper); Mildred McQuitty (great-grandmother of Matthew Skipper); Logan Sturkie (granddaughter of Marty Johnson's neighbor); 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); 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.

OUR PRESENCE ...

In-Person Attendance 03/03 SS: 12 Worship: 40

OUR GIFTS ...

General Fund 03/03 \$ 4,993.00

OUR SERVICE ...

OUR WITNESS."

Upcoming Events

TODAY Birthday Celebration

Administrative Team Meeting following Worship

03/11 Exercise Class, 10:30 a.m.

03/12 Grieving with God, 11 a.m.

03/13 Wednesday's Words, 11: 30 a.m.

Choir, 6 p.m.

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

03/14 Exercise Class, 10:30 a.m.

03/15 Office Closed

Readings for March 17

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Psalm 51:1-17

Hebrews 5:5-10

John 12:20-33



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

Fourth Sunday
in
Lent

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Administrative Team
Meeting

The Administrative Team will meet in the Conference Room today following the Worship Service



Grieving with God
Tuesday, March 12

All who are on the journey of grief are invited to join us each second Tuesday in the Conference Room of the church. We have named our grief support group "Grieving with God" for this second year of our meetings. Job, the ancient man who lost so much, has been subject of many of our discussions so far. We are also using as the basis of our movement through the year the book "Good Grief" by Granger E. Westberg. Copies are available each session and in the church office. Ten processes of grief are noted in this classic little book. Retired Hospice and Palliative Care Chaplain from Richland Hospital, Jerry Fonte, facilitates discussion, which is open, free and sympathetic to each other. Our next session is Tuesday, March 12, at 11:00 a.m. Tell someone that you know is grieving, and join them in our discussions.



Sunday, March 24

Taste of Trinity, our church-wide covered dish luncheon, will be held on Sunday, March 24. It will continue on the fourth Sunday of every month. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to share great food and great fellowship!

Please Note: The Ministry Team will meet every month immediately following Taste of Trinity.



Sunday, March 24	Trinity UMC	Debbie Miller preaching
Monday, March 25	Brookland	Morgan Byers preaching
Tuesday, March 26	Shiloh	Mark Payne preaching
Wednesday, March 27	Platt Springs	John Jordan preaching
Thursday, March 28	Trinity UMC	John Jordan preaching

All services start at 6 p.m. Mark your calendars for these times of worship and fellowship with our sister United Methodist churches in the West Metro Area.



Saturday, March 30
10:30 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Join us for a morning of fun as we meet in the Fellowship Hall on Saturday, March 30, at 10:30 a.m. for an Easter Egg Hunt! There will also be crafts and refreshments!

We are in need of small wrapped candy to fill the eggs or donations to purchase the candy. The candy and donations can be dropped off at the Church Office through Thursday, March 28.



Easter Sunday
March 31

(P) Easter is traditionally a time of joy, but in this year's Easter Cantata we will also look at the despair that the followers of Jesus experienced before that first Easter dawned upon them. We will look back with them at the memories and reflections of their life with Jesus. We'll share the impact of his death before coming to the joy of new life through his spirit, which brought them, as it will bring us, from despair to joy, which is the theme of this year's Easter Cantata. Please join us on Easter morning, Sunday March 31st for, "From Despair to Joy".

Edom refused passage through their country, so the Israelites had to go around. The Israelites set out from Mt. Hor and into the wilderness: another detour, another delay, to the Promised Land.

The people became discouraged and spoke against God and Moses. “If God was going to give us the Promised Land, then why all these detours and delays?” “Somebody give Moses a map.” Too bad they didn’t have GPS. “Moses, why did you lead us out of Egypt when you obviously don’t know where you are going?” They did not trust Moses or God.

Since the Israelites did not trust God or Moses, God sent poisonous snakes into the camp as punishment. Of course, the snakes bit people, and they died.

Naturally, with snakes biting and killing people, they went to Moses and admitted they were wrong. They had sinned. “Please Moses, do something about these snakes.”

Moses prayed to God. God told Moses to make a snake and set it on a pole. Moses made a bronze snake and lifted it on a pole. Anyone bitten could look up to the snake on the pole and live.

Jesus alludes to this story in his conversation with his disciples and Nicodemus. He, the Messiah, will be lifted up on a pole. This is the first foretelling of Jesus’ death in the Gospel of John. But the message is not about the means of Jesus’ death, but the mission of Jesus.

The mission of Jesus is spelled out very clearly in verses 15- 17. We see that God sent Jesus to save the world, not condemn it. Jesus came into the world to restore the created order. Everyone who believes in him will receive eternal life.

We need to examine closely, what it means to believe in Jesus before we start shouting, Hallelujah! I believe in Jesus, so I am going to receive eternal life!

To believe in Jesus means more than acknowledging that he existed. It means more than believing everything we say about him: that he is the Messiah, the Son of God, the Savior of the world, divine and human. Belief is not just giving credence to everything said about Jesus in the Bible. My friends, that belief does not even scratch the surface of what it means to believe in Jesus.

According to *Strong’s Greek Dictionary of the New Testament*, the word translated as believe, *pisteuo*, means “not just to believe, but also to be persuaded of; and hence, to place confidence in, to trust, and signifies in this sense of the word, reliance upon, not mere credence, hence it is translated commit unto.”¹

Believing in Jesus means to be totally convinced that Jesus is the Messiah and believing all the things said about Jesus in the Bible. It means to place confidence in Jesus and trust Jesus. It means to rely on Jesus for life. It means all these, but most of all, to believe in Jesus means to commit to Jesus. We commit to live by the will and guidance of God. To believe in Jesus means to live by the way of Jesus.

¹ James Strong, *The New Strong’s Expanded Dictionary of the Words in the Greek New Testament*, In *The New Strong’s Expanded Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2001) 202.

Ok, that seems easy enough. We commit ourselves to Jesus and receive eternal life. However, committing ourselves to Jesus is easier said than done.

Often, we are like the Israelites. Yeh! Moses is leading us out of slavery and into the Promised Land! But when Moses, following God's command, led the Israelites out of Egypt and into the wilderness, they started grumbling. They became discouraged, "Wasn't this supposed to be easy?" "God promised the land to us, so why do we have to go around through the wilderness." "Can't we just go straight there?" "There is no food but manna. I am sick and tired of manna. I want a steak and baked potato."

The Israelites thought the journey to the Promised Land would be easy. God would take them straight there. But going through the wilderness, a place of danger and uncertainty, they didn't bargain for that. They longed to go back to Egypt. It is better to be a safe and secure slave than dead.

They railed against God and Moses. So, God sent poisonous snakes into the camp to punish them. They expected death in the wilderness, so God gave them what they expected, death.

We may think Yeh! Jesus saves! We have eternal life. We commit to follow Jesus but he may lead us into a wilderness. He may call us to a place or situation we do not want to be. He may lead us out of our comfort zone. He may want us to connect with people we don't like. Being committed to Jesus is not a life of safety and security.

We may rail against Jesus. We may cry, Why? Why did you lead me to this place where people don't like me? Why do you want me to work with these people? We may decide that we do not like following Jesus anymore. We want to go back to where our life was safe and predictable.

Looking back to before Jesus, when life was safe and predictable, can only lead to one thing: death. God may not send poisonous snakes into our homes, but we punish ourselves by separating from God. We may be seemingly safe and comfortable, but we separate ourselves from the source of life.

God did not leave the Israelites out in the wilderness to die. Once they recognized their sin, they repented and God provided a means to save them. If bitten, they could look up at the bronze snake on the pole and live.

God does not leave us to die. God gave the Son so we may live. Like the snake was lifted up on a pole to save the Israelites, Jesus was lifted up on the cross to save us and restore creation.

The reason God gave the Son for our salvation is simple. God loved the world so much that it had to be saved.

Like the Israelites looked to the bronze serpent and lived, so may we look to the cross and live. When we feel our commitment to Jesus wavering, look to the cross. When we want to be safe and secure instead of going where God wants us to go, look to the cross. When we want to complain and grumble, look to the cross.

Look to the cross and see how much God loves us. Look to the cross and see the God who died for us. Look to the cross, an instrument of death, and see the one who went through death so we may have life.

Look to the cross and live.