

Third Sunday of Easter

April 19, 2026

Gathering
Welcome
Announcements and Prayer

Prelude Christopher A. McCroskey
(Prayerfully prepare your hearts and minds for worship.)

*Call to Worship
Rise up!
There is joy all around.
Stand tall!
Hope is alive.
Dance a little jig!
Death has lost its sting.
Smile from ear to ear,
Even though you know some pain.
Sing like you're alone in the car,
Sing a resurrection song, and praise God!

*Opening Hymn *"Christ Is Alive"* 318

*Opening Prayer
Risen Lord,
Speak to our hearts this day. Burn your message of life and hope into our souls,
that we might hear your voice and know your promise. Stay with us in this time of
worship and help us stay close to you through our days ahead. Reveal your word,
and feed us with your wisdom. Help us to be ever grateful, and help our words
and actions be ever pleasing to you. Amen.

*Psalter Psalm 34 *Response 2* 769-770

*Affirmation of Faith *"From 1 Corinthians & Colossians"* 888

*Gloria Patri 70
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now and
ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

Passing of the Peace: *Let us greet one another with love and peace.*

"Let the Children Come!"
(Those 3 years of age through 8 years of age may go to Children's Church.)

Anthem *"Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty"* Rhett Hook

Scripture Lessons Isaiah 51:1-6 Page 646 (O.T.)
1 Peter 1:17-23 Page 222 (N.T.)

*Gospel Lesson Luke 24:13-35 Page 87 (N.T.)
Sermon Recognizing Jesus Rev. Darlene L. Kelley

*Hymn of Invitation *"They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love"* TFWS 2223

Pastoral Prayer
The Lord's Prayer
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those
who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the
kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Presentation of Tithes & Offerings
Offertory Christopher A. McCroskey
*Doxology 95
Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him all creatures here below; praise him above ye
heavenly host; praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen

*Closing Hymn *"The Day of Resurrection"* 303

*Benediction
*Benediction Response *"May the Lord, Mighty God, Bless and Keep You"* Choir & Congregation

*Please Stand As You Are Able

Leading in Worship Today

Pastor: Rev. Darlene L. Kelley AV Director: Marie Stiles
Music Director: Christopher A. McCroskey AV Assistants: Chris Derrick; Erin Derrick
Liturgist: Tom Geddens 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.

Today's Lovely Flowers are given to the **Glory of God** in loving memory of her mother, **Janet Knapp,**
by **Laurie Knapp.**

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

Marie Stiles	Marilyn Lloyd	Ruth Frady	Rhett Hook	Raleigh Carter	Christopher McCroskey
John Ballentine	Diane Muszynski	Ray Frady	Latson Lewis	English Pearcy	Jeanette Hornsby
Hannah Glanz	Hilda Edwards	Fran Laska	Kaye Floyd	Libby Strickland	Jan Stamps

Shut-Ins: Gillett Hipp; Linda Maloch

Family and Friends: **Connie Crouch** (*friend of Mary Sue Lewis*); **Kristie Carter** (*niece of Faye Grahl*); **George Hough** (*brother of Mary Louise Robinson*); **Cody Linholm** (*husband of Taylor Linholm*); **Donna Eidson** (*former Trinity pastor*); **Ghent Brewer** (*brother-in-law of Jeanette Hornsby*); **Kim & Sandra Meetze** (*friends of Martha Cooke*); **Matt Imel** (*husband of Holley Gleaton Imel*); **Cayla Watters** (*friend of Karen Carter*); **Tommy Stokes** (*nephew of Joyce Robinson*); **Kati Flowers** (*mother of friend of Blake Kamoroff*); **Christina Lindemuth** (*daughter of Karen Carter*); **Kathleen Varnadore** (*Ted & Ruth Frady's neighbor*); **Paul Frenzel** (*friend of Chris Derrick*); **Sissy Henry** (*former member of Trinity*), **Colby Martin** (*son of Donna Muszynski*); **Lynne Powell** (*friend of the Ballentines and Branhams*); **Bryan Collard** (*brother-in-law of Mary Sue Lewis*); **Mary Davis** (*daughter of Bob & Libby Strickland*); **Connie Mason** (*friend of Lynn Martin*); **Nancy Wilson** (*friend of Jeanette Hornsby*); **David & Kristen Turner** (*brother and sister-in-law of Pam Turner*); **Chip Mixon** (*friend of Tommy Gleaton*); **James Boggs** (*father of Claire Boggs*); **Robert Bradley** (*Business Associate of Simon Ross*); **Monnie Tiller** (*friend of Chris Derrick*); **Adrin & Linda Hargett** (*stepfather and stepmom of Christopher McCroskey*); **Haidee Baehr** (*friends of Ruth Frady*); **Denise Paul, Scott & Karen Nelson** (*cousins of Gale Frady*); **Dan Conner, Max Johnson** (*friends of Gale Frady*); **Janet Beck** (*friend 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 ...

Attendance 04/12 SS: 12 Worship: 41

OUR GIFTS ...

General Fund 04/12 \$ 1,109.00

OUR SERVICE...

OUR WITNESS.”

Upcoming Events

TODAY Columbia Community Concert Band's Spring Concert, 4 p.m.

04/20 Exercise, 10:30 a.m.

04/22 GLIA Articles Due
T.a.G., 7 p.m.

04/23 Exercise, 10:30 a.m.

04/24 Office Closed

04/25 Ladies Breakfast, 9:30 a.m.



Ministers
Pastor
Resident Bishop
District Superintendent

The Congregation
Darlene L. Kelley
Leonard Fairley
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



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EMMAUS**

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**Columbia Community Concert Band's
Spring Concert
April 19, 4:00 p.m.
Airport High School Auditorium**

Please join us as we conclude our 45th season with 'Spring Declarations' as our theme on this Sunday afternoon of music. The varied selections include classical music, marches, music from the Swing era as well as the theme from the movie Beauty and the Beast. The flyer is located on the round table in the Gathering Area. Doors to the auditorium open at 3:30 pm. Thank you for your continued support and we hope to see you there!



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**Saturday, April 25
9:30 a.m.**

The Ladies Group will meet at Lizard's Thicket on Hwy #1 in Lexington, at 9:30 a.m. on April 25 and May 23. Marie Stiles will send out an email each month to obtain your RSVP. If you are not on Marie's group email and wish to be added, contact her at 803.463.9706 or mariebstyles@gmail.com.



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Sunday, April 26**

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Trinity UMC
April 19, 2026
Rev. Darlene L. Kelley

Recognizing Jesus

One of my favorite seminary professors was Dr. Wesley Ariarajah. Dr. Ariarajah taught World Religions and was from Sri Lanka; he's a wonderful example of the successful women's missionary societies, one of whom must have converted his family many decades ago.

Dr. Ariarajah was about five feet tall with a little potbelly and a thick accent. He looked a bit like an exotic penguin. And the first time I ever saw him, he walked into class and said: "Everyone wonders what Jesus looked like, well, Jesus looks like me." Yes. Everyone chuckled. But the more you got to know Dr. Ariarajah, the more you realized that he truly did resemble Jesus. He was brilliant, gentle and full of love.

Today's Scripture Lesson tells us that two disciples, Cleopas and another unnamed disciple (a good indication that it may have been a woman or as some scholars argue the "Simon" later mentioned and thought to be the son of Cleopas) ...the two are walking along on the road to Emmaus when a third person joins them. And at first they don't recognize the stranger. They don't know that it's Jesus.

Indeed, mysteriously, their eyes are kept from recognizing him. Perhaps, they are kept from recognizing Jesus because they need a bit of time to take in the words and the wisdom that Jesus imparts. Like us, they have an opportunity to know Jesus through his words, as he explained not long ago to our doubting friend, Thomas: *Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed* (John 20:29).

For whatever reason, in what is truly a comic moment in the New Testament, the disciples chide "the stranger", "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know what's been going on there in these days?"

But they offer hospitality to the stranger who explains so much to them. He walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over". And when he breaks bread, blesses it and gives it to them, their eyes are opened.

Jesus is recognized through the sacrament...the sacrament of communion. He is recognized through the Word and through fellowship.

Indeed, he is risen and he even shares a meal with his companions. He is made known to them in the breaking of the bread. And this morning we might ask ourselves: How is he made known to us? How do we recognize Jesus? Where do you see the face of God?

“I give you a new commandment” Jesus told his disciples, “that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13: 34-35).

“They will know we are Christians by our love”, the hymn tells us. Jesus said it first.

Everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another. I give you a new commandment. Love one another.

Love. It sounds simple enough. But we have a difficult time with this new commandment. We have a hard time getting along. We get on each other’s nerves. We have or want what the other one has or wants. We cross one another’s boundaries and step on one another’s toes. We disagree over a lot of stuff. We get in each other’s way. We love to judge. We exploit. We take advantage. We are jealous and insecure and driven by fear that sometimes drives us to unspeakable acts.

We’re divided over the issues. We’ve allowed ourselves to be divided by culture and gender and race and economics. We’re petty. We’re emotional and irrational. We bicker. We fight. We let our egos run wild. We get hurt and we bite back.

Once again, we allow ourselves to be divided by our backgrounds, our traditions and experiences, our values and our aspirations. And we’re even divided by our faith in God. Let’s face it: we make a lot of choices that have nothing to do with love.

Love one another, a new commandment for a brand new day. Simple. Love one another. And we try. But, we often fail.

So, how do we obey this new commandment? Just how do we love one another? Like most things, it has to start with prayer. We have to ask for help with this new commandment. Turning our hurts and our fears over to God, will help us to forgive ourselves and one another. This calls for real, prayerful, self-examination. This calls for real honesty and surrender... Not always the easiest choices on the menu.

But it’s incredibly powerful to turn what you are thinking and feeling over to God. It’s essential to relationship. We confess and we are forgiven. And then we have to keep trying.

I may be ashamed of what I’m feeling or worse yet, ashamed of something I’ve done. I may not be proud of the petty jealousies and irritations that pop up in my life, but I can move past them by giving them to God.

In essence, confession is a step toward healing. Confession is a step toward love. If we carry it to the Lord...

(During those early days as a student pastor, I remember the first time someone hurt me, and I had to really bite my tongue to respond instead of react). As John reminds us: *it's the truth that sets us free* (John 8:32).

Indeed, it is liberating to admit your imperfections, and perhaps even more importantly, accepting our own imperfection may allow us to have more compassion and understanding for the frailties and shortcomings of others. We are all walking to Emmaus.

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King said it beautifully from a jail cell in Birmingham: *We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.*

We are all in this together. But if love and salvation are only for a few, if they are exclusive fraternities and sororities...then the kingdom is no better than a country club.

But as Methodists, we know that none are worthy ...but that all are in need of God's grace. It is God's grace that is *sufficient*. When I understand this—I can nurture compassion. I can take another step toward love. When I can confess my own sin and face my own nonsense, I can be a bit more compassionate about other people's nonsense.

I give you a new commandment that you love one another. A new commandment. Love.

Ours is a changing world, and it's getting smaller. Our neighbors are closer and some of them are armed. It is important to listen and understand them.

Ours is a broken world. Ours is a world full of suffering.

And sometimes we can feel overwhelmed by that suffering. Sometimes, we can be tempted to shut it all out rather than take it all in... But as disciples of Jesus, if we don't love the world—who will? If we don't love one another, who will?

But we don't have to handle the woes of the entire world alone. As Dr. King said, we're all in this together. And we have an awesome God of possibilities.

And it's as easy as starting with prayer...making a commitment and surrendering to God's love everyday. O' God, teach us to love. Give us the courage to obey your new commandment. We'll need it. This love stuff can be tough.

After all, it takes courage to go beyond yourself. It takes courage to put yourself out there...to choose love. It's almost always easier... and most of the time it's a lot more fun... to huff and puff and just complain or go on squabbling. It's tempting to play the victim. It's tempting to hold on to righteous indignation. And it's very tempting to see nothing and do nothing, or to view the world through a narrow lens. We've all been there. We all have our days.

Love takes constant vigilance. And sometimes we don't recognize Jesus cuz we're not even looking for him.

The Scriptures tells us: *Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end* (John 13:1). *Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another* (John 13:34).

These are words to engrave on your heart.

These are words for a broken world.

These are words of healing.

And these are words that can stand up to a very troubled, changing world.

It's all going pretty fast, and there's a lot to take in. Some of it's hard to look at—internally and externally. But we don't have to absorb it all... we just have to be aware of our own intentions, of our own words, of our own thoughts and actions.

We have to pray for the courage to love. We have to pray for the courage to know and understand ourselves in order to work toward the confession and surrender that love demands. It's tough work. But it makes all the difference, individually and collectively.

Surrender to the love that *bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things* (1 Corinthians 13:7). Trust in the love that never ends. For our God is an awesome God, a God of love and he has given us a new commandment.

How do you recognize Jesus? You do it with love. Amen.