



The Messenger

TRINITY Episcopal Church, Columbus, Georgia

The Rev. Timothy Graham, Rector

The Rev. Kyle Scillings, Associate Rector

Joseph Golden, Organist & Choirmaster

Dr. Aesook Moon, Associate Organist & Choirmaster

May 2020

From the Rector

The Rev. Timothy H. Graham

Dear friends,

The days can seem long when we are sitting at home and unable to go to all of the places that we want to go. Even though the church is trying to stay in touch with you all by broadcasting worship and other programs, it is not the same as all of us being able to be together in person. I long for the day when we can all be back together again to worship in the same place, in our beautiful church building. Some days I get very impatient. On those days I am reminded of the honest emotions that show up in the book of Psalms. In Psalm 13 the author asks God a simple and direct question from the heart, "How long, O Lord"? I love the honesty of that question. We can all get restless and impatient and insist on our own way and feel like our own needs are more important than the needs of others. But I encourage you to pray for patience and exercise patience and think of others. As our state begins to lift some restrictions on our ability to be in public, think about the impact on others before you rush out to go shopping or eating out in restaurants.



How long will it be before we can all worship together and sit in the pews at Trinity Church? I don't have an answer to that question yet, but we are having conversations about it and when we are allowed to come back together there will be changes in the way we worship and interact with each other. I ask you to be patient and trust our bishop and your vestry to make those decisions in the weeks to come. You may be getting very impatient like the psalmist, and there are lots of other examples in scripture of God's people getting impatient and grumbling. This is our human nature. But this current situation will pass, and there will be better days ahead. Here is one of my favorite scriptures about patience. It is simple, short, and easy for you to memorize. "Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer". That is my wish for each of us.

May God bless you all.

Father Tim

"Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer". (Romans 12:12)

“Let my prayer come before thee: incline thine ear unto my cry;” Psalm 88:2

We pray God’s protection for those serving in battle.

In Our Prayers:

Parishioners

Margaret Barber
Jean Berry
Kathleen Bishop
Nancy Bloebaum
Peggy Collins
Johnny Crouch
Bill Harper
Lloyd Hudson
Bob Miller
Lucius Morton
Tracy Mourer
Jean Romeo
George Trussell, Sr.
George Trussell, Jr.
George Wade
Trudy Wade
Judy Wilkinson

Friends

Brandon Arrington
Ava Boisvert
Margaret Brown
Bob Bugh
Jim Buntin
Julie Burrus
Gardiner Church
Billy Cornelius
Sherri Culp
Darlene Hughes
Devon Levy
Cammy Marchetti
Connie Murphy
Michael Owen
Paul Rickard
Bill Scott
Morgan Wynne

If you know of a parishioner who is in the hospital, has had a child, or is facing some crisis, please let the Parish Office know so our Parish family can respond.

Kyle Stillings

“Let’s try something new” is something I enjoy hearing when deciding what restaurant to visit on date night, but not my favorite thing to hear in a professional setting. If I am being completely honest with you after 40+ years of life and 10+ years of being a priest I have some sense of what I am and am not good at doing. I *definitely* have a sense of what I am comfortable doing. Whether you are new to the Episcopal church or have been a member of Trinity since before my parents were born I suspect you also have a sense of what is easy, comfortable, and familiar to you in your life.

I don’t feel like I have to go out on a limb to guess that the last couple of months don’t feel normal and comfortable for you. They definitely don’t feel that way for me. I’ve read the Bible cover to cover multiple times, and I have yet to find a passage that says, “Believe in me and nothing will ever be hard again, and there world will have no more problems to address ever again, and there is no more work to do so enjoy eating ice cream in bed for breakfast.” Just in case I had missed it I have been reading Scripture more carefully recently, but sad to say, I still haven’t found an everything will be easy forever passage.

It turns out that we still have work to do.

Our work as Christians is to share the good news of Jesus Christ, God’s triumph over the power of death, the forgiveness of our sins, and the invitation into a new life and reality as part of Gods family.

That work has remained the same through the rise and fall of empires, through times of feast and famine, war and peace, sickness and health, and through the various developments and evolutions of technology throughout the centuries.

So how do we share the good news in our current context of social distancing? How do we function as the Body of Christ when our members are not able to gather as one body to see each other face to face? We do it by trusting in God, and using all the gifts that God has given us to support one another.

Father Tim and I are continuing to lead worship online each Sunday. If this sometimes feels like a snack when you want a meal I am right there with you. Pray for those who were isolated by illness or distance even before covid-19. Call a friend you haven’t seen for too long, and share the hope that is in you.

I am also working with some of our volunteers to return adult education and formation to Trinity’s schedule in the age of digital programming. Beginning this month we will have 4 prerecorded class options for you to watch at your own pace. I encourage you to share these with your families, and to consider as a conversation starter in any of your digital social gatherings. If there is interest Trinity can also host digital discussion groups to further reflect on any of these topics.

1. Bill Stahl will resume his weekly Bible study class. Week 1 will be “The Bible in a Nutshell” to help introduce any newcomers to the class, and then he will move quickly to catch back up to where the class had been (Josephs story in Genesis) before we stopped gathering in the library each week. In order to help recreate some of the conversational nature of the class, Bill invites you to email any questions from a previous video to him at stahlengrs@gmail.com and he will answer then in the following weeks video.

2. Sara Chambless is rebranding her class on the Christian mysticism and contemplative prayer as, “Christian Mysticism: Healing and Transcendence through Contemplative Practice.” Classes will be divided into two categories: presentation of the materials through lecture style for people to study, and guided exercises for people to learn experientially.

3. Despite all of the extra time we are spending in our homes sometimes it feels harder than ever to carve out an hour alone for reflection and study. To help offer another alternative I will be posting 10 minute Bible study clips each week for an entry point into the texts.

4. In order to help families with young children talk about God together I will also be posting weekly stories from the children’s Bible that we read upstairs during Children’s church - *The Children of God Storybook Bible* by Archbishop Desmond Tutu. If you don’t have a copy at home I encourage you to pick up a copy at your favorite online bookstore in either print or digital format. These will also be shorter videos appropriate for reflection and conversation around story time before bed.

In Peace,
Kyle+

Lauren Blanchard

A Sudden Change

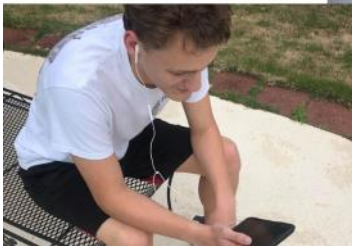
Back in March Trinity Youth began meeting virtually, trying to stay connected the best way we knew how! Technology can be a blessing and a curse but we're all thankful for the role it has played in our lives over the past month. Check out what we've been up to and take note of our Long-Term Virtual Plan, which will remain in place until we resume meeting in person.

Follow the link (<https://conta.cc/39dvB8S>) to read the recap of our first virtual youth night from March 22nd! We discussed a few hot topics regarding the new normal and closed the night reflecting with the Book of Common Prayer. I really encourage you to read the article and hope it refreshes you! We had good, open conversations and even a surprise visit from a snake Carter Morris found in his yard during the call! Never a dull moment!



THE SNAKE THAT
JOINED OUR
ZOOM CALL!

MACKINZEY
PLAYING HER
CLARINET FOR
US!



CARTER ON OUR
ZOOM CALL!

The following Wednesday we had a quick, middle of the week check-in and played Bible Trivia! Surprisingly, the toughest question was "What is the 1st Commandment?" Players were able to name all commandments but had a tough time deciding which was first! Remi Miller took a lucky guess and won the game for her team!

On Sunday, March 29th we began a new series called "10-Minute Talks." This is a great series that condenses a meaningful message into 10 minutes. It's perfect during our virtual meeting times! We begin with the topic for the night, a scripture verse to help us better understand God's perspective, and a story to bring the message to life. At the end we have time for discussion, reflection, and prayer. We have covered the topics of Clean Slate and Friendship. We will continue this series on Sunday nights.

After our first 10-Minute Talk Mackinzey Stephens played her clarinet for us! She shared a little bit of her favorite recital piece from her band concert that was cancelled. She did a great job!

On April 5th we had a devotional for Palm Sunday and focused on being a servant. During Holy Week we had a live Stations of the Cross and met to discuss the messages of Fr. Kyle and Fr. Tim from the Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services. Easter, we spent with our families and enjoyed the beautiful programs Fr. Tim sent in the mail.

Moving forward we will meet Sunday Night's at 5pm through Zoom.



Links are always posted on Facebook and Instagram. If there are any problems connecting just reach out to me! During the week there will be a video posted to Facebook and Instagram digging deeper into the topics covered in our 10-Minute talks. Posting these prerecorded videos will give people time to watch at their leisure.

I know these times are different and we all have adjusted accordingly, but I'm so thankful to have been able to stay connected with our youth! These times won't last forever but I sure am cherishing them while they're here.



Hi friends,
 I sure do miss you all, and I am incredibly grateful for the technologies that allow us to be together from time to time. There is really nothing like prayer time on a ZOOM call with young people! (More info on that at the end of this update.)

I've been thinking a lot lately about Grace. It started when a blogger friend asked a bunch of us to give her our interpretation of grace, what it meant to us, where we saw it, felt it. I enjoyed the exercise. Since then, I find myself constantly considering grace and using the word with my children. "Let's show some grace to each other," as they are about to poke a sibling's eye out with a butter knife because one person stepped an inch too close in the kitchen. You get the point. Honestly, I'm not sure I'm changing the trajectory of the rise of angst in my own home, but I do think my 'grace thinking' has helped me - personally and in my communication with those around me. I'm comforted when I'm reminded about what GRACE is - the freely given, unmerited favor and love of God: the influence or spirit of God operating in humans to regenerate or strengthen them, goodness toward those who have no claim on, nor reason to expect, divine favor. Ahhhhhh.



And, so . . . since my friend got me thinking about GRACE, I've done my best to consider ways to hold onto the gifts we are so freely given, especially when I am about to deal with someone who (quite frankly) is sick of me. I can't do it all of the time; but sometimes I can remember to look at them with the grace God has given me. Sometimes I can look at them the way I believe God looks at all of us - with a goodness they may or may not deserve or expect at that moment. I'm not naive enough to imagine that my children will look back on this time and exclaim, "Oh, the way my mother delivered grace during the quarantine was unforgettable!" I pray, though, that from time to time, they might feel a bit of God's grace pass between us - even for a second - and they might remember that feeling. Maybe they will even deliver some of this unmerited grace to someone else in the house. Who knows? I'm not expecting miracles here folks, but I have no doubt that the GRACE of our God is holding us together, even in those moments when we feel insane.

My hope for us parents, and all of us in the Trinity family, is that we extend this grace to ourselves. We actually don't have to do anything - we just have to step out of the way.

God already has abundant grace flowing towards us - we must only keep watch, stay open, listen, notice. It's a gift - for US!!!! This time, though so sad and scary, has offered us a time to slow down. It is trying, to be sure. But what if we took some of that time - alone or with a child coming towards us with a face covered in the one jar of jelly they weren't supposed to open - to allow God's grace to cover us. What if we allowed the gift to come in? If remembering this unmerited grace helps us for even one second, it is worth the trying.

Look at the clouds, listen to the birds, fathom the face of a friend, study your child's eyelashes, relish the wild laugh of someone you love, listen to the sounds right outside your window, delight in a butterfly that alights on your porch rail, truly listen to the gift of rain. Those aren't mistakes. Those are moments of grace. Let them in. Let them wash over you whenever you are able.

It sounds like most of you would like a regular schedule for our catch up, learning, and fun times. We will use this schedule until it's time to make a change:

Each Tuesday - ZOOM at 2 p.m. (you may use same info to join each Tuesday)
[https://us04web.zoom.us/j/75714545345?](https://us04web.zoom.us/j/75714545345?pwd=L1JlbHZuQkdOSGpCU1lqZTB1R24xZz09)
 pwd=L1JlbHZuQkdOSGpCU1lqZTB1R24xZz09
 Meeting ID: 757 1454 5345
 Password: 9hQKnK

Each Thursday - ZOOM at 4 p.m.
[https://us04web.zoom.us/j/78101617852?](https://us04web.zoom.us/j/78101617852?pwd=UXRMV0UxOHBMEdGdGo3RkNyelgwdz09)
 pwd=UXRMV0UxOHBMEdGdGo3RkNyelgwdz09
 Meeting ID: 781 0161 7852
 Password: 7Xk74a

Each Sunday - Children's Chapel on Facebook Live (on Mama D's Facebook page - Deana Murphy Graham) 11:30

I'll send reminders about these, and I hope you'll pass the word! Please use these meet ups to help you - don't add this to any kind of worry list! I'm here to HELP!!!

I'm praying for all of you - for grace and love and peace - Mama D

