



# The Messenger

Trinity Episcopal Church, Columbus, Georgia

The Rev. Timothy Graham, Rector

The Rev. Kyle Stillings, Associate Rector

Joseph Golden, Organist & Choirmaster

Dr. Aesoon Moon, Associate Organist & Choirmaster

January 2020

## From the Rector

Rev. Timothy H. Graham

Happy New Year!



This is the time of year when many people make resolutions. We want to start the new year on a positive note, and usually our resolutions that we make at the start of a calendar year have something to do with improving our lives. Most of the new year resolutions that I have made in the past are about getting healthier, losing weight, keeping healthy eating and exercise habits.

But like most people, life gets in the way and I find excuses and then I start letting go of my resolutions one by one as the year rolls on. And then I feel really bad that I can't do it. This year I want to try a new approach. Rather than coming up with a list of things that I think best for me, I'm just going to pray about it and be open to what God calls me to do. I want to be open to what God wants for my life, my health, my leisure, my family, my church, my friends, my ambitions, and everything else. Maybe I have failed at my resolutions because they have started with "me" instead of starting with "God". This year will be full of challenges for me and for all of us. I will ask for God's direction in my life and then I'll do my best to follow, even when it gets tough.

I'll share with you an old prayer of St. Basil of Caesarea (4th century) that will be my prayer this new year.

May the Lord bless and keep you in this new year.

Father Tim

"Steer the ship of my life, good Lord, to your quiet harbour, where I can be safe from the storms of sin and conflict. Show me the course I should take. Renew in me the gift of discernment, so that I can always see the right direction in which I should go. And give me the strength and the courage to choose the right course, even when the sea is rough and the waves are high, knowing that through enduring hardship and danger, in your name, we shall find comfort and peace. Amen." (St. Basil of Caesarea)

***Building a Spirit-empowered community that serves and celebrates Christ.***

*“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**

Kathleen Bishop  
Nancy and Don Bloebaum  
Peggy Collins  
Ginger Driver  
Glenn Haskell  
Lloyd Hudson  
Penny Linden  
Bob Miller  
Lucius Morton  
Tracy Mourer  
The Poydasheff Family  
Ann Sturkie  
George Trussell, Sr.  
George Trussell, Jr.  
George Wade  
Trudy Wade  
Judy Wilkinson  
Alma Winn

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.

**Friends**

Jim Buntin  
Gardiner Church  
Cammy Marchetti  
Michael Owen  
Paul Rickard

and if 40 is “over the hill” as novelty T-shirts and coffee mugs proclaim, then I am thankful for the view. I’m old enough that I have enough experience to not sweat all of the small stuff, but still have enough energy to run around and play with my daughters after work.

I was able to travel. I was blessed to be able to see the Virgin Islands for the first time while serving with others from Trinity on a hurricane recovery mission trip. We did good work, and I learned how much fun using a rotary hammer can be. I met new friends, went snorkeling, and have had a few good laughs

telling the story of ordering a hamburger that I learned was \$50 only after the bill arrived. I also traveled with my family to see my mother and grandfather over Thanksgiving break. Papa and Margaret had only previously seen each other via FaceTime, and being present with one another for a week was a major highlight of my year.

I have been present at sacred moments in your lives. There have been births and deaths, welcomes and farewells, baptisms,

marriages, and anointing of the sick. I got to celebrate Easter vigil at the primitive chapel. I have held hands, laughed, wept, and prayed with people in my office, at the hospital, and in your homes. I have joked with parents while also being deeply touched when a child runs up and greets me as “father God” before they remember my name. I have been entrusted with stories and hopes and fears in quiet moments of confidence and vulnerability. I have rejoiced at healings and reconciliations and new beginnings.

I don’t know what new joys and challenges God has in store for me in 2020. But I do know that I am excited to experience them here with all of you. May God bless you and keep you, and may we continue in good fellowship to do good work for Him together.

In Peace,  
Kyle+



**Kyle Stillings**

Merry Christmas to you all, or Happy Epiphany depending on the pace of the postal service at the end of the holiday busy season. It has been a delightful first year doing work in service to the part of God’s kingdom that is Trinity Episcopal Church. Instead of jumping into New Year’s resolutions and things that I would like to change in my life I would rather use this space to reflect upon some of the joys and blessings that I have received over the past year.

Finding a mutual call at Trinity. The search process for clergy in the Episcopal Church (and many other denominations) can be long and frustrating for both clergy and congregations. I have heard it described on several occasions as, “like dating, only worse,” and there is even a book about the process with that title. Yet God’s Spirit is present in the search as well, and done well there is truly a sense of calling. By the grace of God I find myself here, in a place where I enjoy coming to work in the morning, and can go home to my family in the evening feeling as though I have done the work God has given me to do. To the degree that I boast among my colleagues, I boast of my joy in serving God here with all of you.

I quietly turned 40. I am not a big fan of parties, especially ones where I am the center of attention. This year I turned 40 on Good Friday, and it was a day of remembrance of the salvific work of Jesus Christ. I enjoy this stage of life -

## Lauren Blanchard

Happy New Year!! I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and I pray that your 2020 will be filled with many blessings.

This month we'll be taking a group of 20 on our Ski Trip to Mars Hill, NC. We leave January 17th, will spend two days skiing and snowboarding, and will return home on the 20th. We have a mix of seasoned skiers and skiing newbies! It's going to be a blast. If you'd like to make a donation to help support our van rentals and other trip expenses we would greatly appreciate it. We're looking forward to a great time and can't wait to make wonderful memories with our youth!

## Music Notes

Many, many thanks to the Trinity Choir, the Trinity Handbell Choir and the Trinity Brass and Percussion ensemble for providing music during Advent and on Christmas Eve. The handbells played perfectly on Advent IV, accompanied by Dr. Moon, presenting a work by a local composer. The Trinity Choir offered a stirring rendition of Handel's "Unto Us a Child is Born" from MESSIAH on Christmas Eve at the late service. These dedicated and hardworking folks did yeomen service, and we are all the recipients of their labors!

**Choir CDs:** We have sold a little over half of our new choir CD "Great Hymns of the Faith, Vol. 1." Response from those who purchased CDs has been highly complimentary. We still have over 50 CDs that were reserved earlier, but that have not been picked up yet. PLEASE PICK UP YOUR CDs, both those that were reserved and new purchases either in the Church Office during regular office hours or on Sundays, after the 8:00 and 10:30 services.

All CD sales go directly into the Choir Scholarship Fund, on which our student musicians depend for a portion of their school expenses and for which they are all most grateful.

Looking forward to a wonderful new season of Epiphany, everyone in the Music Area wishes all Trinity members a very Happy New Year!

**Joseph Golden, Organist/Choirmaster**  
**Dr. Aesook Moon, Associate Organist/Choirmaster**



### A Little Note About Confirmation

Confirmation this year is going to be a little different. There will be no confirmation group this year. We are going to group together this year's and next year's Confirmands and they all will be confirmed in the Spring of 2021. Fr. Tim and I have discussed this decision and agree that a larger class size will allow our youth to build stronger relationships and create great memories during our retreat. Youth who are now in the 6th grade are still welcomed and encouraged to attend all youth events! If you have any questions, let me know.



Dear Parents,

Happy New Year!

Thank you for making the (great) effort to bring your children to church! I remember when I was home alone on Sunday mornings and had three squirmy little ones to get ready. It was hard. I was tired. (And the girls had to wear tights!) Those mornings were struggles! I don't remember a single Sunday that I served a nutritious breakfast, we didn't always make it with six correct shoes for the three kids, I never made it with all three in the needed outerwear, and usually one was crying. Also, one always had a cold that needed attention before they were to be viewed by friends at church, and I had usually made the observation (on the way into church) that at least one of the precious little ones had grown out of at least one church wear item since the week before.



But we made it! And when we got there, people smiled and held open their arms to me and to my children! It was already worth it! I was home. My children were being loved, and I was being fed the good stuff.

I remember soon after we started having children (populating the Sunday School, one church friend used to say), I began to worry about their noises and their mess. I would often feel embarrassed, or I would leave the worshipful place in my mind and wonder if we were making a nuisance of ourselves.

One such morning, a precious woman named Valerie, turned slowly around in her pew and LOUDLY whispered this speech:

Don't you, for one moment, EVER think that anything your children do during church is a bother of any kind. Children are the church, and children make noise. Children don't follow a script, and they aren't supposed to - they teach us to be in the moment, and their noises remind us what is important. We are PROUD to have each and every child who walks through that door - they are ours, too, and they are so very loved.

After that talking-to, I never again worried about the noises, or the crumbs on the faces, or the wrong shoes, or the times they shouted when the rest of the parish was being silent. I saw Valerie's face, and I remembered her words.

Now, as I watch, play with, teach, love, and savor the moments with your children, I see exactly what she was saying. Children are learning at church - they are building a base for the life ahead of them - for sure . . . BUT, they are a gift to each person they touch, hug, smile at, high five, or fist pump.

They are HERE, and we are proud that they are part of the family. We are just as proud that you are here! There is NOTHING that can happen in the 'back pew' area that is a problem. You have worked hard to get them here, and they are offering what we all need. They are giving us their smiles, asking their questions, and playing peek-a-boo with someone who hasn't played anything in a long time.

I would never suggest that they should come to church because it's helpful to adults, but I'm offering that their very presence is a vital part of what happens here every time the doors open. You are sharing with us your greatest treasures. We are doing all that we can to equip them with the knowledge of God's love, enough to last them their whole life through. And in the midst of those things, we are blessing each other.

Seems to me like something immensely beautiful.



Here's to more of that in 2020!

Much love,  
Mama D

