



TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

[trinityatlanta.org](http://trinityatlanta.org)

MARCH 2021

# TRINITY TIMES

## Our DNA

WHAT ELEMENTS OF OUR THEOLOGY, TRADITION,  
MINISTRY PRACTICES, AND ORGANIZATIONAL  
CULTURE ARE ESSENTIAL TO OUR MISSION



# EXPLORING UNCHARTED TERRITORY

By Rev. Dr. Kim Clayton  
Interim Senior Pastor

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very family has a few well-known, defining stories. These are the stories we tell about ourselves over and over again because they are part of our family lore, our family DNA. Some of the stories are poignant and some are humorous...some recall an important family tradition. One story in my family is about the time we all went to my sister's college graduation. It was a hot June day in Atlanta. Distracted and hurried, we exited the car with the engine still running, locked it, and went to a 4-hour graduation ceremony. We returned to the parking deck to find a very hot, locked car with the engine still running. My mother, brother, and I were trying to figure out a solution while my father paced frantically, saying again and again: "It's going to blow up! The car is just going to blow up!!!" He was never any help in an emergency!

Churches, like families, also have particular stories and memories that shape them...a sort of cultural DNA gets set over time. Of course, individuals, families, and congregations are more than a simple "DNA" code—we develop and change over time based on experiences and changes and influences. Still, we tend to develop a 'way of being and doing' life together that shapes our assumptions and practices and reactions and we settle into these patterns no matter what.

*Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory* is a book many church leaders have been reading lately. Tod Bolsinger uses the story of Lewis and Clark as a metaphor for churches trying to navigate their way into a largely uncharted landscape. Lewis and Clark set out on an expedition to explore the newly acquired Louisiana Purchase—but they did so based on a set of false expectations. They believed, as did most everyone else, that the unexplored west was exactly the same geography as the familiar east. They, like explorers before them, were looking for a water route that would connect the Pacific Ocean to the Mississippi River. What they found, of course, that when they reached a certain mountain peak...there were more mountains where an ocean should have been! How do our "family stories" and our cultural DNA set our expectations as a church? And how do we react when we find ourselves in uncharted territory? Bolsinger's book invites church leaders into exploring our unknown way in landscape ahead we do not truly understand or know. He underscores the importance of the ability to keep an open sense of discovery

## PASTOR'S MESSAGE

and curiosity. So, too, the ability to be adaptive when meeting unexpected conditions or events. Bolsinger lifts up three key questions church leaders need to wrestle with together:

1. What DNA is essential and must be preserved? (What must never change? What are key elements of our theology, tradition, ministry practices, and organizational culture that must be maintained at all costs so we don't lose our identity?)
2. What DNA could be discarded? (What elements of our church life, while important to us, are not essential? What can we stop doing to free new resources and energy for new forms of ministry?)
3. What DNA needs to be created through experimentation? (What essential part of the church's identity and mission needs to be adapted to a new day, environment, or opportunity?)

We have been looking at our three past Mission Statements and engaging in conversations about them. What do they tell us about Trinity's DNA as a congregation? What remains essential? What could be discarded? What new needs to be explored for us to adapt to what we are discovering about this unexpected, uncharted territory in which we now find ourselves? This is not a quick problem to solve. It will take time and collective wisdom and perseverance. A sense of discovery and curiosity will be essential. An adaptive, resilient spirit, too.

Blessing as we journey toward Easter,  
Kim

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# INTERIM: THE WAY FORWARD

## **Small Group Conversations - Senior Pastor Search**

Register for an in-person conversation with Rev. Dr. Kim Clayton  
For more information or to register, visit [www.trinityatlanta.org](http://www.trinityatlanta.org)

Interim Senior Pastor Kim Clayton and a team of lay leaders will hold in-person conversations about topics related to the interim process and senior pastor search.

During the month of March small groups will discuss the search for a senior pastor. If you are not in a small group that has discussed the future pastor search and would like to engage in a small group discussion, please register for one of these gatherings. The meeting will be held in Williams Hall Courtyard. (To access the courtyard, walk past the Memorial Garden near the Sanctuary.) We will meet under the tents and have heaters nearby. In case of inclement weather, we will meet in the Sanctuary. **Please remember to wear a mask (required) and to safely distance from each other.**

## YOUR INPUT IS VITAL DURING THE INTERIM PROCESS. ENGAGE IN A SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION.

### Stay Up To Date

Website: [trinityatlanta.org/thewayforward](https://trinityatlanta.org/thewayforward)

#### Small Group Conversations

► **SUNDAY, MARCH 14**

4:00 - 5:30 pm

[Click here to register](#)

► **WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17**

11:00 am - 12:30 pm

[Click here to register](#)

► **SUNDAY, MARCH 21**

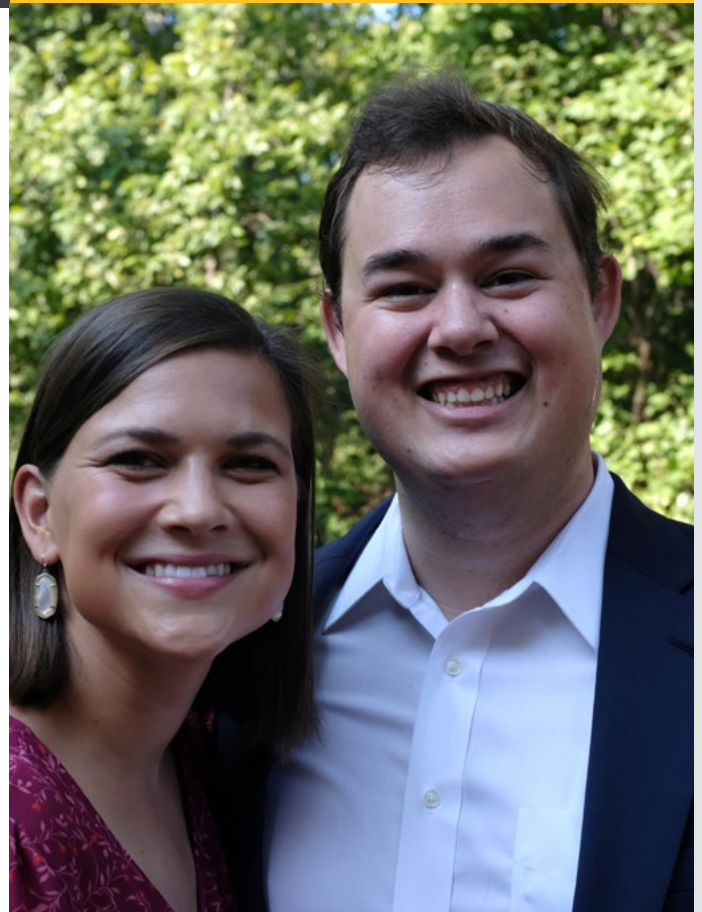
4:00 - 5:30 pm

[Click here to register](#)

► **WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24**

6:00 - 7:30 pm

[Click here to register](#)





# MILESTONES

By Elizabeth Davis  
Director of Children & Family Ministries

Most of us can remember a few special milestones in growing through the church and faith. Take a moment to remember your child's baptism. You might also remember receiving your first Bible. You might even remember the first time you or your child received and understood communion. All of those are milestones in the life of a person of faith, no matter how old.



# learning about church

For more information about children's milestone offerings, visit [trinityatlanta.org/cfm](http://trinityatlanta.org/cfm)

At Trinity we offer special classes, called Milestone classes to guide our children and families in their faith development. There is a baptism class for parents preparing to have their child baptized. This year during Lent, CFM will offer Worship Education as well as Bible Education. With age appropriate development in mind, these have been created for our children Kindergarten through third grade.

Kindergarten and first graders go through our Worship Education curriculum led by myself. This will include an introduction to worship, what worship looks like for Presbyterians and people around the world, and leads to exploring and experiencing Trinity's worship services. Do you remember learning to worship? For these children, this looks like exploring our worship spaces and identifying the differences between a hymnal and the Bible. It also looks like practicing sitting still and recognizing God's special presence, experiencing the differences between laughing with God and being serious with God. It even looks like them leading worship for each other through lighting the Christ candle, reading the call and response and discussing Bible stories.

Second and third graders participate in Bible Education, leading to being presented with their very own study Bible. This class will be led by CFM Committee leaders. Do you remember learning how to read the Bible? Where to look for the Old and New Testament? Why the "big" numbers note the chapters and the "little" numbers note the verses? Do you know where to find the Gospels or Paul's letters? Do you know what the first five books of the Bible are called? I'll give you that answer. They are defined as "Pentateuch." Our second and third graders will learn all about this!

All of these lessons are special in the life of the church. This year, a tool I hope our children and families will not take for granted is the ability to learn within this community. These milestone classes have always been important for learning about the things that make church a church. Worship and the Bible. These classes are also intentional in creating an atmosphere to support the growth and strength of relationships, adding great value to this church family.







# MUSIC





# During a Time of Social Isolation, Trinity Shares the Consoling and Healing Power of Music

**By Norman Mackenzie**  
Director of Music and Fine Arts

**T**he enormous challenges brought on this past year by the worldwide Covid-19 pandemic have been overwhelming for all of us at times. During this intense period of social isolation, people worldwide have been rediscovering the restorative power of the arts, both sacred and secular, through the miracle of digital technology. Our laptops, tablets, and smartphones make possible the instantaneous re-creation of a variety of artistic expressions at any time and any where. As in-person attendance at worship services, concerts, exhibits, and other sources of spiritual and artistic inspiration was virtually eliminated due to health and safety concerns, the universal language of music found new pathways into our lives via the click of a link. Almost immediately, it became obvious that the world was hungry for such experiences. And it almost didn't matter what the music was, as long as it was carefully and authentically rendered. Whether the soft sound of a single voice singing a simple folk song on a balcony in Italy or the complex and intricate sonorities of a Bach Suite for Cello played by Yo-Yo Ma, something magical happened. Music helped us make an immediate, unique, and much-needed spiritual connection with the souls of our fellow human beings. We weren't alone, after all.

During the early days of the pandemic, the music department began looking for ways to contribute to this colorful tapestry of musical technology that would be relevant and share Trinity's artistic heritage with the wider community. And so, in collaboration with our wonderful producer, Kevin Lacson, our online series, Music of Healing and Hope, was born. These short video musical meditations featuring contributions from Trinity's music staff, instrumentalists, and friends, often filmed in the beauty and magnificent acoustical environment of Dobbs Chapel, have had literally thousands of views all over the country. The music is often paired with beautiful visual images. Once again, the arts at Trinity are making a real difference in people's lives.

So—you can imagine how excited I am to tell you that, after a hiatus, an entirely new series of videos is being planned for this coming spring. It will feature organ works, popular instrumentalist friends of Trinity Church from within our congregation and from the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, and, for the first time, contributions from small ensembles from our wonderful Chancel Choir. Episodes are already being recorded and will come online later in March. As usual, they will be shared with you via email first and then will remain available on the [church website](#).

We look forward eagerly to sharing this new and expanded series with you soon, and hope that it will provide some real spiritual sustenance as you continue to navigate the ever more hopeful road ahead.

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## Music of Healing and Hope

Subscribe to our [YouTube](#) channel to watch the entire series.



# FAITH IN ACTION

**A** small group of Trinity members attended the 2018 Women's Conference in Montreat and came away with a plan to become involved at Trinity with social justice work. Faith In Action (FIA) was created; it functions as a sub-committee of Trinity's Mission Council. It is essentially Justice, Advocacy and Public Policy 2.0. Under its new name, FIA has had a social and racial justice overtone which kicked into high gear after the killing of George Floyd in May 2020. The social justice timeline

**3rd Wednesday**  
2:00 - 3:30 pm  
Zoom

As a subcommittee of Trinity's Mission Council, Faith in Action is engaged in social justice and connects Trinity members to the work of healing and reconciliation in our community.

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## Stay Up To Date

**Website:** [trinityatlanta.org/mission](https://trinityatlanta.org/mission)  
**Contact:** Velma Tilley, [vctmom@gmail.com](mailto:vctmom@gmail.com)

of FIA started with our encouragement in early 2020 for Session to approve Trinity as a signatory on the Second Chance for Georgia legislation. We also sponsored a Church School class on Criminal Justice Reform in January 2020. The Second Chance legislation passed in Georgia's General Assembly and became effective January 1, 2021. The not-for-profit, Georgia Justice Project, calculates that over one and a half million citizens of Georgia became eligible to have their records expunged as a result of this legislation. This clears the way for them to obtain jobs, get housing, and go to school. FIA plans to organize training for lawyers and non-lawyers to learn to read records to assist the Georgia Justice Project with Record Expungement events around the state.

As Trinity has studied racism, we recognize the arch reaching from slavery to current day mass incarceration of black and brown people. FIA's chairperson, Velma Tilley, is on the National Strategy Team to End Mass Incarceration (EMI) and also on the Georgia Regional EMI Team. FIA hopes the street banner proclaiming "Trinity Supports of Racial Justice" is a visible witness of Trinity's long standing and ongoing strong commitment to racial justice. Four Recognizing Whiteness and Dismantling Racism small groups met last fall and there are more to come as our own Trinity folks get trained to lead them.

Trinity members have engaged in social justice work in a variety of ways this past year. In the summer of 2020, Paige Keller organized quarantined Trinity families to make hygiene kits which we delivered, multiple times to Ebenezer Baptist Church which has a vibrant and ongoing

ministry to the homeless and incarcerated. Mary Kelly Speed is the hub of a group of Buckhead women collecting snack bags for the homeless, a carload of which are delivered to Ebenezer approximately every two weeks.

FIA connected Trinity members, Sam and Cora Jane Pope, to the not-for-profit, Women on the Rise. A large amount of a family member's business clothing was given for women coming out of jail and prison and needing to dress for re-entry into the workforce.

Carianne Tucker, Ginny Hobbs, and others were active volunteers in the recent election, making sure all votes were counted fairly. Faith in Action wrote a letter to Hawks CEO, Steve Koonin, and expressed our appreciation that State Farm Arena was being used as a voting site.

Margaret Bond and Velma Tilley have attended a collaboration around the film, [Trapped: Cash Bail in America](#), discerning how Trinity members might want to become involved in being "bail disrupters" and even working toward ending cash bail in Georgia for all but the most serious crimes. We recommend this film to all.

Faith In Action wants to be a hub for Trinity members for many mission activities and volunteering. If you would like to join us to make plans and get support, we meet the 3rd Wednesday of each month, via Zoom at 2:00 p.m. Contact Velma at [vctmom@gmail.com](mailto:vctmom@gmail.com) to be added to the email list.



**WORSHIP**  
**SUNDAY @ 9:00 AM, 11:00 AM, & 3:00 PM**  
**IN-PERSON AND LIVESTREAM**

Beginning March 7, worship will be available in-person and online. Registration is required for in-person worship at 9 & 11 am and opens each Tuesday preceding the Sunday. The 9 & 11 am live stream service is available on [Vimeo](#), [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#), and our [website](#).

**PALM SUNDAY - MARCH 28**  
**9:00 AM & 3:00 PM - OUTDOOR**  
**11:00 AM - IN-PERSON AND LIVESTREAM**

Registration is required for in-person worship. Bring a lawn chair for seating at the 9 am & 3 pm service.

**MAUNDY THURSDAY - APRIL 1**  
**7:30 PM ON ZOOM**

**GOOD FRIDAY - APRIL 2**  
**12:00 PM LIVESTREAM**

**EASTER - APRIL 4**  
**7:00 AM - EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE - OUTDOOR**  
**9:00 AM, & 3:00 PM - OUTDOOR**  
**11:00 AM - IN-PERSON AND LIVESTREAM**

Registration required for in-person worship at 11 am. Bring a lawn chair for seating at the outdoor worship services.

In addition, a pre-recorded worship service will be available Easter morning. This service will feature a brass quartet and traditional Easter music.



*Making God's Love Visible*