

May 2020

# Together in Christ



Quarterly publication of **Trinity Ecumenical Parish**



Anxiety

Isolation

Uncertainty

Fear

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June 2019

# Loving, Serving, Learning, and Growing Together in Christ

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### Trinity Ecumenical Parish What's in a name?

#### Trinity

*There is one God; three persons - Father, Son and Holy Spirit.*

We are one church; three expressions, Episcopal, Lutheran, and Presbyterian.

One God + One church = One joyous life together!

#### Ecumenical

*Promoting or relating to unity among the world's Christian churches.*

We are what our name implies; a church that seeks unity among various traditions – not division.

#### Parish

*Denotes a church that serves a large area.*

People drive to Trinity from all over the region; some from over an hour away, all who desire to worship and serve together in this unique Christian setting.

### We are Loving, Serving, Learning, and Growing Together in Christ!

#### Loving

*I give you a new commandment, 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

#### Serving

*Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.*

1 Peter 4:10

#### Learning

*"Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.*

Matthew 11:28-29

#### Growing

*We must always give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing.*

2 Thessalonians 1: 2-3

# Worship Weekly

By Pastor Philip Bouknight



In 2020 we are committing to the following disciplines of faith:

- Pray Daily
- Worship Weekly
- Read the Bible and engage in study
- Develop faith filled relationships
- Serve within and outside the church
- Support the mission of the church through spiritual and financial gifts

-Michael Foss

## The second discipline of faith encourages us to worship weekly.

The current health crises has challenged our ability to physically gather together for worship. However, since we moved our services online, we are engaging with people from Trinity who have moved away, extended family and friends, and even those who might not enter our physical space for worship. Still, we miss gathering together! God has made us for connection, and we are not whole unless we are together in Christ. Perhaps this gives us the perfect opportunity to talk about why we worship and what worship means to us.

Worship as a tradition for the Christian Church grew out of the disciples' experience of the Resurrection.

### Luke records in chapter 24:

*But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in, they did not find the body. While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third*

*day rise again." Then they remembered his words, and returning from the tomb, they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest.*

Jesus appears to Peter and John on that same day on the road to Emmaus.

John records Jesus' appearance to the disciples in this way.

*When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."*

*But Thomas, who was called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So, the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."*

*A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."*

When we put these resurrection accounts together, we find that on the first day of the week (Sunday) Jesus enacted a gathering of disciples. That gathering would ultimately form a pattern for worship. In these appearances we begin to perceive that worship is primarily a celebration of the resurrection.

(Continued on page 4)



In that celebration, the disciples

- Gather
- Receive the Holy Spirit
- Receive the Peace of Christ
- Receive encouragement to believe in the promise of a risen Christ
- Are given a ministry of forgiveness
- And are sent into the world to proclaim Christ's promise for the world.

These marks continue to form what we do on Sunday or any worship service that is held. Over time, the Church has added other meaningful aspects to worship; prayer, the reading of scripture, Holy Communion, the incorporation of music and congregational singing, a sermon and the gathering of offerings to support the mission and ministry of the Church in the world.

## So, why do we worship?

I remember asking myself this as a child. Why do we have to get up on Sunday morning and go to church? Over time I learned that we went to worship, not out of obligation, but out of our need to experience God in a community of believers.

As an individual, our experience of God's activity is limited. Our understanding as to how God is moving and working in our lives is limited. Over time, our faith is formed by encountering God's activity in other people and, at the same time, encountering other people's experience of God.

- We learn to pray by hearing others pray.
- We learn to serve by watching others serve.
- We learn to give by seeing others give.
- In times of doubt and trouble, we learn from others what it means to hope and trust.

- In times of joy and celebration, we learn from others that these moments are gifts from God.
- We learn to forgive.
- We learn compassion.
- We learn about grace.
- We learn that in Jesus we have value and meaning and purpose.

I wonder how long it would take us to learn these things on our own if we were not involved in a community of faith that practiced faith.

## The gathered body of believers is not perfect!

As a youth I struggled with the presence of sin in the church. My best friend's grandfather said that he was born with his degenerative disease because of his parent's sin. He told my friend's mother that her cancer was the result of her sin. I wondered how he reconciled this theology when he himself was diagnosed with cancer.

I sat in congregational meetings where members argued uncharitably with one another. I experienced them leveraging family unity for power and watched as individual agendas were presented as "for the good of the church."

I saw my minister mistreated and then saw his behavior in return. I wondered why he, a man of God, was not above the pettiness of others and why he himself used his power in an attempt to get what he wanted.

I saw people within the community of faith cheat on their spouses, lie to their friends, get indicted for crimes. I experienced rumors and slander, bigotry and hatred.

I saw people leave the church because of the actions of others and saw others refuse to take ownership of the

hurt they had caused. Why was it that people of God said mean things, were rude to one another and behaved in ways that were no better than others in society?

Over time I realized that the people of God are not immune to the harsher natures of humanity. I began to realize that God understood this and perhaps “forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing” applied to us. Why would we begin our worship with a call for forgiveness if we had nothing that needed forgiven? Why would we share the peace unless we needed to be reconciled with one another before we went to the altar to be reconciled before God?

The truth is that we people who gather together for worship are all in need of a savior. We are all broken and battered, beleaguered and badgered. We are saved by God and in need of salvation. If the church existed only for perfect people, then no one would be present. We are all on a journey of becoming; becoming the person God wants us to be.

The disciples are wonderful examples of this. They had their faults, their doubts, their inability to understand. They ran away when they should have stayed. They had trouble believing Jesus and they couldn't quite understand why Jesus did what he did or even why that mattered. It is for these people (and we people) that Jesus came, died and was raised. It is for us that there is a gathering on the first day of the week because we need to be forgiven, restored, strengthened and healed. We need to be reminded every week that Jesus sends us out (imperfect and impetuous people) to be the body of Christ for the sake of the world. Would the world believe that Jesus has the power to change lives if we ourselves didn't experience that power in facing our own imperfections?

It is in the gathered community that we experience forgiveness, reconciliation, life altering change and fellow Christians becoming the people God wants them to be. We would not experience this power at work so fully if we stayed in our homes and studied only our lives for proof of God at work. We need to gather so that we can understand who we are becoming, together.

We should worship in nature, on our back porches, and on our docks. We should worship with our family at home and in private devotion. We should worship with our lives, but nothing can replace the inexpressible power of God at work in the gathered community. Perhaps this time away from one another will reinforce our understanding that we need to be together for worship. Perhaps this sequestered time apart will remind

us that God created us for connection and that we need one another in our walk of faith. Perhaps our time apart will draw us closer together.

## Why do we have the different parts of a worship service?

A few years ago, I began including introductory statements about parts of worship because each piece is there for a reason. A person new to the faith would want to know this about our worship and those of us who have worshiped our entire lives should be reminded “this is why we do what we do.”

### GATHER IN THE LORD'S NAME

The Holy Spirit gathers people around the means of grace—the Word of God and the sacraments. The heart of worship is not found in what we do, the words we speak, or the songs we sing. The heart of worship is what God does and what God gives. In the presence of all of us together, in baptism, in the word sung and preached and prayed, in the gift of holy communion, we participate in God's mission to the world.

### WORD

All Christian worship is biblical. In scripture reading, preaching, and song, the church hears the good news of God acting in this and every time and place.

### THE CREED

The creed is both response to the word and proclamation of the word. A creed is a statement of faith of the whole church. The Apostles' Creed (1<sup>st</sup> century) is anchored in holy baptism. The Nicene Creed (325 AD) explores the wonder of the incarnation. Each creed is a confession of faith that unites us with the church around the world.

### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

The assembly prays for the wideness of God's mercy to be known throughout the world. Prayers for the church, for the well-being of creation, for peace among nations, for the poor and all in need, for local people and special concerns, and for the faithful departed take up the apostle Paul's invitation that supplications, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone. (1 Timothy 2:1)

*(Continued on page 6)*

## SHARING THE PEACE

This greeting is more than a “good morning” or “hello.” It is the very peace by which Jesus greets his disciples following the resurrection. The peace we share is a sign of God’s mission of reconciliation among us and the reconciliation we have with one another in Christ Jesus.

## HOLY COMMUNION

The proclamation of the Word of God and the celebration of the Lord’s Supper are connected. In the meal of Holy Communion, the grace of God’s gift for us is proclaimed in Jesus’ own words of command and promise. A full thanksgiving also includes praise to God for creation and salvation, remembrance of the crucified and risen Christ, and prayer for the Holy Spirit in this meal.



## SENDING

The Sending brings our worship full circle. We have been gathered, in all our diversity, and shaped into a community, one body in Christ. With the blessing of God, we go out to live as Christ’s body in the world. We are sent, always to gather again around the means of grace—God’s Word and sacraments.

## Worship with fresh eyes

I invite you to look at worship each time with fresh eyes, to say the words as though you are saying them for the first time. Every time you hear scripture something new can be learned. Every time you sing a hymn something new could touch your heart. Every time you say the Lord’s Prayer or the creeds, think about what these words mean to you.

Liturgy wasn’t purposed for rote learning. These are powerful words passed down through the centuries, yet they are brand new every time they are spoken.

As you worship, think about the words and why they were chosen. Ponder the cross and what it means for you. Stare into the intricacies of the stained glass. Listen to the beauty of the music. All your senses should be involved in your worship experience. Touch the water in the font. Taste the bread. Smell the wine. Hear the Word. See the people. Let the experience of worship envelop your senses so that you are wholly involved.

## How does worship impact the rest of my week?

In worship

- We are gathered so that we can be sent.
- We are forgiven so that we can forgive.
- We are fed so that we can feed the hungry.
- We are strengthened so that we can serve.

Worship isn’t an end to itself. It is the beginning from which all faith flows. Worship grounds us, guides us, and gives us the tools we need so that we can walk the road of becoming the disciples God wants us to be.

If you had a family gathering and someone was missing, the family’s time together would not be the same. So it is with worship. I often begin my announcements by saying “Out of all of the places that you could have been this morning, you have chosen to be here.” Thank you for making that choice. It not only benefits you, it benefits the whole family of faith. I hope to see you in worship on Sunday albeit for a short time, online.

Pastor Philip

# Engaging Ministry During the Pandemic

Pastor Philip Bouknight  
Pastor Bea Miller

## Creating a Virtual Community of Faith

Since our ministry teams are giving updates, your pastors would like to share how our church staff is creating a virtual community of faith during this pandemic.

While it was difficult to cancel worship as a proactive measure to protect our faith family from the possible transmission of COVID-19, ministry has flourished online, on the phone, and through email. We are connecting through digital worship opportunities while deepening our phone and email contact. Together, all these technologies are helping us provide support and care as we continue to grow in faith, strengthening our love for God and our love for each other.

## Discover all that we are doing

- We are offering live services every Sunday. Those who cannot join us in real-time, can view worship on our YouTube channel and Facebook page. As a result, more people are worshipping virtually than we normally have in our sanctuary on Sunday.
- We offered special worship services every day of Holy Week on YouTube. Those services are still available to view. The statistics show that this was our highest attended Holy Week ever!
- We are sending a daily prayer every morning by email. The prayer is also posted on Facebook.
- We have shared online devotional tools and mailed copies of print devotionals, normally found in the narthex.
- Parents are receiving emails containing family activities to incorporate faith into time at home.
- We have a virtual coffee hour via Zoom prior to Sunday Worship.
- Educational classes, Confirmation, Youth Group and Bible studies are all continuing via Zoom.
- Executive Committee, Council, and many committees are continuing to meet via Zoom.
- Our email prayer chain continues as members submit requests for prayer. Prayer Partners are developing, too. This ministry is connecting people with prayer.
- Uplifting photos and stories are shared via an email.
- Special music offerings are available on YouTube.
- Stephen Ministers and visitation teams continue their ministries by phone. New phone ministries developed to connect those desiring more conversation.
- Pastoral care continues by phone and electronic media.
- Members of the parish have been called to make sure they are healthy and have all they need.
- Our backpack program for food insecure families continues at Dudley Elementary.
- We are joining together to make masks.
- Ministry of Service granted additional funds to area agencies who care for the emergency needs of those who are affected by the virus.
- The Pastor's discretionary fund is helping additional families in need.
- A new ministry called "Faith Moments" is designed to help members share moments when they have experienced God.
- We are beginning a virtual Dine for 9.

Everything we do is about connecting to God and to each other. We are blessed with a wonderful church staff that has designed and implemented new programs and new ways of meeting our needs while serving God.

This virus may have changed **how** we are connecting, but it will not stop us from **being** God's church!



## Director of Music Ministry Search

Trinity's Search Committee has been fortunate to have attracted a very strong pool of candidates for our vacant Director of Music Ministry position. The team is beginning to conduct Zoom video interviews with the most promising of those who have completed the initial application process. If not for the current health crisis shutdown, finalists would have been invited for onsite interviews early in May and the position filled soon thereafter. Since the Governor's directive is in effect until June 10, it won't be possible to follow our original plan. The Psalmist admonishes us to be still before the Lord and wait patiently for Him. The call will happen not in our time, but in His. We appreciate the prayers of the parish as we continue the discernment process.

## Adult Education

While the Adult Education Team is not meeting during this time of stay at home policy, we continue to look at offering distance learning opportunities for the growth of parishioners' faith. As advertised in the weekly e-letters, two options are currently ongoing

- Terry Hershey's e-course, "How to Harness the Power of Pause" is a self-paced course. Visit [terryhershey.com](http://terryhershey.com) and look under the e-course tab.
- A Zoom-based class looking at Richard Rohr's book, "The Universal Christ" is being led by Christopher Girardeau on Wednesdays at 1:00 p.m.

Other topics for distance learning are being investigated, and topics have been chosen once we resume regular face-to-face classes.

## The Graces Bible Study

You are invited to join The Graces women's Bible study group as they begin a study of the book of James, using the book "**James: A Biblical Study**" by Joyce Meyers. The paperback edition can be ordered through Amazon. The study will be held via Zoom. Please contact Susan Sowers at [susanmsowers@gmail.com](mailto:susanmsowers@gmail.com) or Gail Meltzer [gailsml@yahoo.com](mailto:gailsml@yahoo.com) for more information or questions.

**May 5 at 1:00** - will be the first of seven weekly sessions, all on Tuesdays at 1:00 p.m.

## Stephen Ministry

As with so many of our church's ministries, Stephen Ministry is a face-to-face, in-person, caring relationship between Stephen Ministers and care receivers. Additionally, the Stephen Ministers meet as a group every other week for continuing education and peer supervision. We have adapted to maintain social distancing to keep everyone as safe as possible while staying in contact with our care receivers through phone calls, cards or letters. This ensures that each care-receiver knows they are in our thoughts and prayers.

In addition, the Stephen Leadership team has been in touch with our Stephen Ministers as a group or individually through Zoom meetings or phone calls to offer support, prayers, and to share each other's concerns. We are thankful for this group of dedicated Stephen Ministers, for our pastors, for our fellow parishioners, and for God in supporting our ministry.

## Visiting Ministry Team

Since personal visits are not possible at this time, the team is staying in touch with members of our church family in ways not requiring close contact. Compassion and caring are being shown through calls, e-mails, texts, Facetime, and hand-written notes. We all look forward to the time when visits and hugs can re-enter our lives.

## Companions for the Journey

The planning team for this spiritual formation ministry had to cancel the April event, “The Spirit of Music,” with Vicar Christopher. We hope to reschedule another Saturday Day Apart when gathering is permitted again.

In the meantime, Companions are still receiving a Companions TGIF blog on Fridays, from Fr. Stephen Stanley, with suggested resources for personal reflection, meditation, and contemplation. If you wish to be added, please email Stephen at [srstanley@cox.net](mailto:srstanley@cox.net).

Another readily accessible daily prayer resource is [prayasyougo.org](http://prayasyougo.org). This is a remarkable online daily devotional calendar, with an app for digital devices, from the Jesuit Community in the United Kingdom. It encompasses meditative music and scripture and open questions for self examination. This is a wonderful way to address the stress of these times, and is entirely portable, hence the name Pray-As-You-Go. The Trinity Prayer Ministry has invited Prayer Partnerships and Gail Meltzer can be contacted to sign up for that. Our Companions are invited to share other resources that may be edifying for the whole congregation as we seek, not just to survive, but to deepen our lives in the Spirit and service of Jesus Christ our Lord.

May His peace be with us, for healing and renewal of life. Peace, Health and Easter Blessings, *Stephen Stanley*

## Small Group Ministry

The Small Group Ministry Team has been communicating by e-mail to prepare for an eventual “Growing Together, Part II” workshop for leaders of ministry teams, small groups, Parish Council members, and pastors. The workshop was scheduled for May 9 but has been postponed with a new date to be determined. The team has been preparing a PowerPoint presentation for the workshop based on a white paper the team prepared over the past year titled “Suggestions for Getting Involved in or Leading Ministry Teams or Other Small Groups at Trinity Ecumenical Parish.”

## The Parish Office

It is a blessing to still be able to do our work, both from home and in short periods of time in the office to perform those tasks that can't be done at home. We are in the office a few times a week to check mail, water plants, etc. Many thanks to Dave and Joan Leffas for bringing the mail in daily and checking on the building during this time. We continue to do our best to stay in touch and let you know what is happening in and around Trinity. We are both practicing social distancing while in the office, but deeply appreciate the human interaction that we get with each other a few times a week. Our prayers are with you daily as we go through this time together, but separately! Hopefully in the next couple of months we will get to see your smiling faces again at Trinity Ecumenical Parish. *Debbie and Linda.*

## Youth Group

Our Youth Leadership Team has applied ingenuity and a sense of humor to provide a way to “be there” for our wonderful youth during this time of extreme change and loss in their lives. We have a consistent group of youth gathering for weekly ZOOM Youth Nights where we enjoy fellowship, a new twist on games, and times of devotion and prayer together. We even put together a birthday parade for one of our own who was to celebrate her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday in isolation! This heart-warming event led to ideas for several creative Covid-compliant service endeavors that will bless our local hospital, Kroger, and neighborhoods. Watch for an encouragement parade coming your way soon!

## Children's Ministries

The multiple teams that serve children will have the opportunity to find a way into their hearts digitally! We will be creating video story-times featuring Bible and Christian character stories embellished with the creativity of each presenter. Children will be able to tune in live or go to our YouTube channel to engage with the story-time and see some of their Trinity friends up close. Contact Linda or Sharon at the office if you would like to create a story-time for children!

Additionally, if there are any families with children that would like to enhance faith formation at home with our Children's worship lessons, please contact Sharon Sicher. These multisensory lessons are teacher friendly and brimming with activities. One of our parents is already applying them at home.



# Faith Stories

Introducing a new ministry born of a new time. We welcome this Covid compliant opportunity to continue our vision of Focus on Faith 2020 as we share our lives.

## Faith Stories at Trinity

*I want to see you and share with you the same blessings that God's Spirit has given me. Then you will grow stronger in your faith.*

*What I am saying is that we can encourage each other by the faith that is ours.*

Romans 1:11-12

Stories of faith are as old as those recorded in Genesis and as recent as those that record today's experiences. Faith Stories ministry provides a way to share a time, an occurrence, or a chain of events when God was at work in your life. Sharing these stories with others affirms our collective faith and enriches the faith of others.

If you are willing to participate as a storyteller, a member of our team will walk you through a very easy process. Details are explained below.

## What do we mean by faith stories, God moments, God whispers?

Have you had moments when it seemed as if God were more incredibly present at that moment than at other times?

Perhaps it was...

- the call of a friend when you needed it, a song that expressed your innermost need, a kindness given to you by others, a beautiful scene that seemed to have been painted by God, the birth of a child, the kind hands of an elder, someone guiding you through a difficult time.
- when you were grieving; experiencing a loss; fearful; surrounded by loneliness; in the midst of "the valley of the shadow of death" and God reached out and calmed your fear and comforted you. Have you seen God's powerful presence in your life in times of challenge?

- a period of time in your life when you reflect on it and literally say to yourself, "That's why that happened!" You now understand that God placed you into a situation in order to prepare you for the challenges you are now facing. Had He not given you prior experiences, you would not be secure with your own ability to be successful in your new challenge.

All of these whisper, "I am with you, just open your eyes and look." When have you seen God at work in your life? When has he "whispered" to you?

## How might you share your Faith Story?

We invite you to meet with a Faith Stories Team Member for a casual conversation that will help you share with others in the congregation your unique experience. Members of the Faith Stories Team include: Rich Cairns, Les Deanzer, LeeAnne DeMonbreum, Laura Kelly, Sharon Sicher, and Philip Bouknight.

## Video or Audio Recording

- A video or audio recording of the interview may be made. If you agree, the video might be placed on Trinity's YouTube channel or otherwise linked on our website. There will be an opportunity to review your story before recording so that questions can be organized for smooth delivery.
- A video of your story might also be shown on the fellowship hall television or used with your permission during special celebrations of our life together at Trinity.

## Article for "Together in Christ" Magazine

You may want to write about your faith story explaining how it has impacted you. After writing your story it will be included in Trinity's Quarterly magazine. Due to space constraints, longer submissions may need to be

*(Continued on facing page)*



## Missed Opportunities

It was with heavy hearts that the preschool year had to end before we were ready. All classes had to miss fun springtime units, Easter parties with families, spring field trips, Pre-K graduation, and most of all, goodbye hugs! The teachers miss the children and their families so much!

## Making the Most of Possibilities

We are grateful that the school is in a financial situation that allows teachers to receive their pay throughout the school year. The teachers continue to send families suggested activities, art projects, and links to videos related to the topics they would have been learning about each week, along with questions that would lead to higher thinking. We have enjoyed seeing photos of the children carrying out some of the activities that were recommended.

Ms. Doreen Campbell, who offers a monthly Story Time with each of the classes, is now providing them online for all the children to enjoy. They are excellent!

We are hopeful that sometime this summer we can bring the Pre-K children back for a graduation ceremony and celebratory party with their families. They miss each other, too!

The preschool teachers have been taking advantage of this time to participate in professional development via webinars and online reading. Each teacher is required to accrue a specified number of training hours each year.

Families and staff are encouraged to keep up their support of Helena, our Door of Hope child, whom the preschool sponsors.

The Preschool Leadership Team, which convenes bi-monthly throughout the year, is currently meeting via Zoom, to continue making decisions and plans regarding the school. The team members include Pastor Bea, Pastor Philip, Vicar Christopher, Sharon Sicher, Dot Tipton, Carol Hoglund, and this year's parent member, Katie Waters. Katie is also a teacher this year, so is able to offer two different and valuable perspectives.

Please pray for the preschool, as plans go forward for the upcoming school year, that all families stay safe and healthy, that the school is able to open in the fall, and that families from the community feel comfortable and confident bringing their children to Trinity.

*(Faith Stories continued.)*

edited. Of course, you would have the opportunity to read the story and approve it for publication.

### Artistic Reflection

Perhaps you have experienced God through art — a painting, photo, drawing or some other medium. You may use this artwork to guide your submission of either a recording or an article.

God reveals Himself to us in many ways. We look forward to hearing you share your faith story as we discover together how God's Story is our story.

*...we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord,*

*His power, and the wonders He has done.*

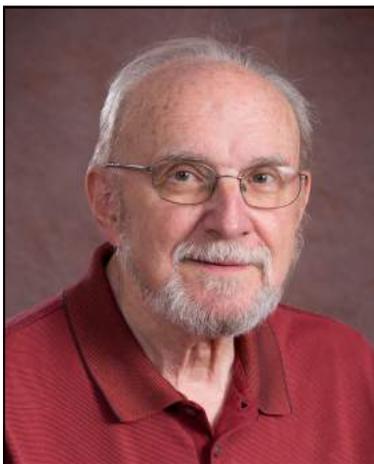
*Psalms 78:4b*

# Hunger Poverty Action Group

By Cindy Decker



The Hunger Poverty Action Group (HPAG) has been keeping in touch via e-mail sharing the many things we have been doing the past few months. One of our members, George Berndt, passed away on February 17<sup>th</sup>. He had been involved with the HPAG for a number of years and was a dedicated member of our weekend backpack team. We will miss his quiet, steady presence.



## Gleaning

Members of the HPAG continue to be busy with various community projects. Geoff Orth, Trinity's gleaning coordinator, is working closely with the Society of St. Andrew to provide a link to Sysco food supply in Harrisonburg for excess institutional food, including milk and yogurt. The food would be provided to Lake Christian Ministries.

## Backpack Program

Pidge Morgan continues to manage the weekend backpack program, which supplies food to 14 children at Dudley Elementary School. The school is grateful for Trinity's participation. It has been a challenge to obtain some food items, but she recently "scored" 28 jars of peanut butter. We will be providing the backpacks for several more weeks.

## Tanzania

Pidge reports that the situation in Tanzania is not good. All of the schools are closed and the tourist industry is completely shut down. There has been no enforcement

of social distancing and churches are still well attended. She asks that we add the people of Tanzania to our prayers.

## Giving Gardens

De English and a core group of Giving Gardens volunteers (following CDC guidelines for social distancing) have been harvesting overwintering crops such as collards, spinach, carrots, beets, turnips, and onions on Sundays for Monday distribution to LCM. Early spring crops have now been planted in both gardens. Volunteers will be needed in July and August to help with the harvest.

## A Simple Gesture

Linda Strup, HPAG Parish Council Liaison, has been busy with her grandchildren and LCM's "A Simple Gesture." Please see page 13 for full details.

Members of HPAG have been participating in many Trinity online opportunities such as the Sunday morning services and the Richard Rohr book study with Christopher. At our last in-person meeting on February 11, we did some brainstorming about our 2020 direction. A number of possibilities were discussed and we will be providing the program at the October Wednesday night supper. New members are always welcome!

Stay safe,  
*Cindy Decker*

## A Simple Gesture SML

# Responding to Covid-19 Crisis

By Linda Strup, Program Coordinator



The coronavirus pandemic has drastically altered most of our lives, but the vulnerable have been impacted the most. **A Simple Gesture SML**, a Pantry Pickup Program that helps Lake Christian Ministries (LCM) serve Neighbors in need, is now more important than ever.

### Changes to Meet the Current Needs

Many Trinity parishioners are already registered donors and their generosity is been very much appreciated! The article on page 10 of the February issue of “Together in Christ” explained how this program *usually* works. During the pandemic, **A Simple Gesture** has instituted the following changes to meet the needs of others while keeping volunteers safe:

- An additional *Emergency Collection Day* has been added for May 1 due to unprecedented requests for food assistance. We will be collecting canned tuna, canned potatoes, and canned chicken.
- We are using disposable bags to avoid possible contamination of our cloth tote bags.
- Bags can be dropped off at LCM (13157 S. Old Moneta Road) on May 1 between 8:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. or they can be dropped off at Capps Building Supply during business hours from April 27 through May 1. Please note that Trinity **does not** have a

secure location for collection so please do not bring bags to our church.

- To find out if your neighborhood has a driver who can pick up your bag on May 1, please email [asimplegesturesml@gmail.com](mailto:asimplegesturesml@gmail.com).
- Because of new Health Department requirements, **only canned food** should be donated so that items can be sprayed with bleach solution before distribution.

A Simple Gesture has become vital to maintaining LCM’s food supply since donations from grocery stores and vendors have dwindled. Please consider registering or continuing to donate!

Monetary donations can be made at the following web address: <https://co.clickandpledge.com/advanced/default.aspx?wid=63137>

Lake Christian Ministries is *not* accepting donations of clothing or household items at this time.

Visit our website, [asimplegesturesml.org](http://asimplegesturesml.org), for updates on policies and Wish Lists. Our next regularly-scheduled collection day is June 12.

Thank you again for sharing and caring for Neighbors in need.



# Earth Day Celebrates 50 Years!

By Sharon Pafford

As the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Earth Day approached on April 22, 2020, I consulted my April 21, 1970 copy of **LOOK** magazine that had the following article “April 22: How you can join the ecology crusade to clean up America”. I was interested in a “fired-up” group of college students that coordinated the first “teach-in.”

“Denis Hayes was a 25-year-old student at Harvard Kennedy School in 1969 but dropped out after a semester to become a principal organizer of a grass-roots nonprofit that planned a nationwide rally on April 22, 1970, an event they would call “**Earth Day**.” That one-day gathering to raise awareness of threats to the environment, held in hundreds of cities and towns across the country, attracted a reported 20 million people. Now CEO of the Bullitt Foundation, a Seattle nonprofit that promotes and supports environmental and climate protection efforts in the Pacific Northwest, Hayes recently spoke with the Harvard Gazette about the birth of the event, how he stumbled into a leadership role, and Earth Day’s lasting influence on environmental policy. For further information, please

read his interview with The Harvard Gazette at <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2020/04/denis-hayes-one-of-earth-days-founders-50-years-ago-reflects/>.

Stewards of the Earth at Trinity Ecumenical Parish have celebrated Earth Day since 2006 with various programs. We created a nature trail and a butterfly garden, we recycle, glean, and purchase recyclable coffee cups and wooden stirrers for church with the goal of keeping things out of the landfill.

Our Earth Day program was held on Sunday, April 26 with Vicar Christopher Girardeau leading the service.

We issued a Lenten challenge to the congregation to “Use Less Plastic” by having a Minute for Ministry and creating a bulletin board showing various substitutions. We would like to hear from the congregation if anyone has permanently found ways to use less plastic.

Since the Coronavirus has cancelled all church activities, we want to encourage everyone to continue to save their pill bottles, aluminum cans, and batteries.

## Milestones February—April 2020

### Births

James Powers – son of Mike and Jenn Powers

### Deaths

Kenneth Burdzy – husband of Barbara Burdzy

George Berndt – parishioner

Dr. Charles Marshall – father of Gael Chaney

Rich Allsbrook – nephew of Sharon Johnston

Tom Purdie – brother of Wes Purdie

Bobby Puleo – family of John & Kay Anderson

Betty Matthews – parishioner

Donald Kopp – son-in-law of Fred & Bev Waddell

### Parishioners who have moved

Joe & Barb Sciacca  
18 Evelyn Drive  
Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania 17022

Nancy & Tom Robbins  
502 Wingspan Drive

Ormond Beach, Florida 32174

Brenda & Chuck Rowell  
1485 Turnberry Lane  
Riner, Virginia 24149

Ellen & Mark White  
P.O. Box 1686  
Eagle, Colorado 81631

Annette Loschert  
501 VES Road  
Apt C218  
Lynchburg, Virginia 24503



By Tami Akin, Parish Nurse

We are all feeling fear, anxiety, and stress over the COVID 19 pandemic. Fear for ourselves, our family, fellow parishioners, and friends is foremost in our minds. This can lower our immune system's ability to fight off infections. So, try not to stress over things you have no control over. As your Parish Nurse, I focus on how I might be able to help my fellow parishioners keep healthy and safe, so here is what I have done with my ministries:

### Stay informed

I have sent out information on the Coronavirus —what it is, guidance, resources, and how to protect yourself. Some of this information was given in my Tip of the Month. If you are not receiving the Tip of the Month, please email [Tami@trinityecumenical.org](mailto:Tami@trinityecumenical.org) if you wish to be added to the list.

CDC.gov is also a great resource for COVID 19. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html> Another good website is Virginia Department of Health: <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/> You can see the data for our area. It is important to stay informed because guidelines are changing frequently, as they learn more about it.

### Ministry of Caring

Ministry of Caring is there for you in a time of need. However, many of the MOC leaders and volunteers are at-risk individuals, so I have created some guidelines and directions for them if there is a MOC request. I also created a list of individuals who offered their services during this pandemic to get groceries or provide rides. Also, Kroger, at times, may deliver groceries, or you can order your groceries online for pick up. However, there is a 6-day delay for pick up. Food Lion does not offer these services.

### Pastoral Care

I have been calling and checking on a group of parishioners. I have answered parishioners phone calls or emails with their questions and concerns, since I have been working from home. What if your loved one becomes ill? If it is an emergency call 911. Let dispatch know if they have COVID 19 symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, chest tightness, fever, blueish lips, sudden confusion, red eyes, lack of smell, extreme fatigue, muscle aches, GI-diarrhea), or explain the emergency. If non-emergency, call your Primary Care Physician (PCP), or go to Velocity care. Wear mask when out in public. If you are ill or there is a COVID 19 concern, relay your symptoms to your PCP, and they will set you up with a telemedicine appointment/ask you to come to the office. Based on your symptoms the PCP may refer you for testing. Please note visitors are not allowed in hospitals, or rehab facilities. Home health care is still available, and some physical therapies are open with limited number of clients, masks and strict guidelines in cleaning.

### Stay Healthy

Frequent handwashing and maintaining social distancing. Stay connected (calling, emailing, texting) with family, friends, and parishioners. Call and check on your neighbors. Reflect on the beauty that surrounds you. Read daily prayers. Begin a new project or work on your favorite hobby. Learn how to use Zoom. (Zoom.com) I had an Easter meeting with my family. Not only did we get to talk but got to see each other as well. You can use Zoom for Bible studies, programs and meetings.

# What is Your Wilderness?

**By Sharon Sicher**

This is the question the VBS Leadership Team has been pondering for the past few months as they prepared to launch a larger than life experience of the Israelite's wilderness journey with Moses. However, as so many awesome ministries are discovering, the corona virus is interfering with our traditional plans. We are finding ourselves in a new sort of wilderness with the current pandemic; can you relate?

We all experience times of wilderness in our lives. With wilderness journeys come times of disappointment, refinement, reflection and deliverance. **For our folks served by VBS, Kidz Club, and Youth Mission Trip, disappointment has been real as we have come to accept the need to cancel these ministries as a unique way of serving others.** As we receive this time of waiting and trusting God's hand in all that is happening, we look with hope to the Way God is calling us now and in the year ahead.



As we all leave lives of social distancing and are reunited again, we expect there will be many stories of wilderness journeys emerging from these trying times! Will there be new means of sharing those stories between the generations from which we might all receive encouragement and growth? Folks from the VBS and GIFT ministry teams are catching a glimpse of such possibilities on the horizon. We ask that you prayerfully join us in anticipating what good and perfect things God will accomplish as we fix our eyes and hearts on Him throughout this wilderness journey.

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