

# Time Together

## *While We are Apart*

Wednesday, April 15, 2020



Good day, dear church communities,

Our coffee cups today come from Kurt and Anne Muse (SMWC). Anne shared that they sit in the same place each morning and have two cups of espresso each. The cups are from San Salvador, but were purchased in Panama, which is beloved to both Kurt and Anne, and figures in both their life stories. Many thanks, Anne and Kurt!

With these beautiful espresso cups, we have come to the end of coffee mugs sent in for our Newsletter. So now we move to a new possible companion to our “Time Together,” our beloved animals! There have been many articles and stories about how animals have been comforting companions in these stressful times. As you can see at the bottom of the page, a guaranteed day brightener is our first pet. This well-dressed dog, ready for Easter, is Bunsen, a beloved and part-time member of Trinity. Bunsen, and his Mom, Cheri Sheridan, along with Cheri’s husband Joe, split their time between Savannah Georgia and Reedville. Cheri and Bunsen were drawn to Trinity because of our “The Little Church with the Big Heart” sign. Bunsen is a certified therapy dog, and he and Cheri visit nursing homes and hospitals to bring comfort and cheer. With the COVID-19 crisis they cannot make visits, but have instead been doing “window walks” to see

their buddies at the nursing homes in Savannah. Many thanks to Cheri and Bunsen for starting us off so well on beloved animal pictures!

And now it is your turn! Please email or text me pics of the animals that are your companions through the pandemic. We all look forward to meeting them.

Now, onward to a little more, “Time Together.”

Megan



### Prayer Notes:

We will include our prayer lists in each Sunday Newsletter. Please continue to let us know of folks you would like to have on our prayer lists.

Notes for this week:

Chuck McGrath (SMWC) has aspiration pneumonia and is in the hospital in Kilmarnock. These first days of treatment are crucial, and he is responding well to the therapy. Please keep Chuck in your hearts and prayers, and prayers much needed too for Alexa and Malena, and all who love them. Because of COVID-19 they can not be with Chuck at the hospital, but they can call him.

Nancy Brandon has three more radiation treatments this week, and she is close to being done with her treatments. Please continue your prayers for Nancy.

Glenn had a lung scan yesterday. Glenn's new care plan is to regain strength and endurance post-chemo, and do more scans in July and have a colonoscopy. Please continue your prayers for Glenn.

Our healthcare workers are on all our hearts. Please keep them, and their families, in your prayers.

### April Birthdays and Anniversaries

#### St. Mary's Whitechapel

**Birthdays:** Charles Dwight Deale, April 4; Betty Thornton, April 23;  
Sue Ramsey, April 24; Sparky Marsh, April 25

**Anniversary:** Bill and Jannine Pennell, April 5.



#### Trinity

**Birthdays:** Nancy Chilton, April 7th; Madeline Withers, April 11th;  
Catherine Chilton Ford, April 15th; Meredith Brent, April 16th; Bill Hayden, April 20th; Diane Smith, April 21st; Sandra Walker, April 22nd; Emmett Christopher, April 23rd; Alexandra Cornwell, April 23rd; Carter Christopher, April 25th; Melissa Dunaway, April 25th; Elizabeth Anne Kellum, April 25th; Joanna Hyde, April 27th

**Anniversary:** Janet and Michael Christopher, April 12th

## Announcements

In a recent Diocesan meeting on Zoom for clergy, the Treasurer of the Diocese, Ted Smith, cautioned that sadly, there are many scams emerging in this time of pandemic. He urged all churchgoers to be cautious of any emails alleging to be from the Diocese of Virginia that are asking for money, especially asking for credit card numbers or bank account information. If you receive something questionable always feel free to check it with me or one of our church treasurers.

I am going to try a Zoom gathering for a chance to share worries and blessings, and to pray together. If you want to join this group for the first meeting, please email, text or call me to sign up. (My cell number is 804-477-5515) A day and time will be determined by those interested. And if you are interested in trying this, but are not signed up for Zoom, Ellen Tracey from Trinity and Sharon and Richard Gill from SMWC are willing to help anyone get on Zoom. Ellen can be contacted at: 804-436-2371 and The Gills can be reached at: 804-462-9939.

Washington National Cathedral continues to offer beautiful and moving worship daily. They can be found at [cathedral.org](http://cathedral.org)

Trinity is looking for a volunteer to work on caring for and maintaining our gardens. If you are interested, please contact Judy Ripley, 804-761-5007.

Please let me know if you are in need of help with getting groceries or other necessities. Several folks from both churches have volunteered to help do errands for anyone in the churches who cannot get out to shop. Call, text, or email and I'll connect you with a volunteer.

Many thanks for continuing to pay your pledges as you are able in these difficult financial times. And many thanks to those who have been able to donate to the Rector's Discretionary Funds. Those funds are helping many in our community. You can continue to mail pledges and donations to Rector's Discretionary Fund to each church:

Trinity Church  
PO Box 208  
Lancaster, VA 22503

SMWC  
5940 Whitechapel Rd  
Lancaster, VA 22503

## **Reflection**

### **The Life-giving Emptiness of This Easter**

*I am grateful to welcome a “guest” writer today for our reflection. Dr. William Brown is Professor of Old Testament at Columbia (Georgia) Theological Seminary, and an old friend of Bill Arnold’s (SMWC).*

This Easter will be different. With April 12 no longer designated politically as an “American Resurrection” from the novel coronavirus, hopes are dashed for packed churches and large sunrise services. There, of course, will be a few exceptions led by ill-informed pastors who will insist on holding traditional gatherings despite the threat of new outbreaks. The result will only be further suffering and death.

Yes, there is plenty of reason to lament in such a time as this, a time to be brutally honest with God and with each other as we all pass through this gauntlet of grief. But we need not lament that on Easter most of us will not be congregating physically. Instead, we have the opportunity to turn such bane into blessing by retelling the Easter story in a way that is, in fact, most biblical.

Christ’s Resurrection did not begin (or end) with large gatherings of Christians accompanied by choirs and organ blasts. It began with an “empty tomb” and three fearful women—a tomb emptied of death. This is the Easter to ponder such emptiness, to linger over it, indeed, to revel in it. This is the Easter to let our sanctuaries and chancels, our narthexes and choir lofts, remain utterly empty, not in despair but in testimony that lives are being saved in doing so.

Emptiness, in this case, is life-giving. By abandoning our sacred gathering places, we are not abandoning the gospel. Far from it. We are testifying to what the white robed messenger announced at the tomb, “He is not here.” Perhaps these are the words we should proudly display on our church marquee signs during Holy Week: “He is not here.”

Where, then, is he? According to John’s Gospel, the resurrected Jesus made his first public appearance with his disciples in their social isolation, huddled in fear— a locked room. To be sure, their social isolation was for a different reason than ours. But no matter. Christ will surely find us this Easter, wherever we have isolated ourselves. He’s done it before. “Peace be with you.” Amen.