

# Time Together

## While We are Apart



Wednesday, April 8, 2020

Good day, dear church communities,

Our coffee mugs today come from Dorsey and Pat Ficklin (SMWC). Pat noted in sending their mugs that they both like their coffee HOT, hence the Yeti mugs, even for morning coffee in the kitchen! Pat also noted the handled mug is, of course, as they are a family of Hokies, Virginia Tech maroon! Many thanks, Pat and Dorsey!

As we are now in our fourth week of suspended worship, of social distancing and face masks, quarantines and lots of worry and anxiety, I have to admit that I have days when...well, it really all gets to me. We watch the news and the updates from the White House Task Force, and we see the pain and sadness of our country, of our world, and it all can seem overwhelming. These times occur more often for me, as with all of us, when I am over tired. So, I know rest will help, but sometimes we just need a word of hope, a word of encouragement. I receive that word in my prayer walks, in the devotional many of us have been reading for Lent from Episcopal Relief and Development, but a few nights ago that much needed word of hope came from a surprising source.

Tim and I were watching the evening news, when a story came on about Queen Elizabeth addressing England about the COVID-19 crisis. (My disclaimer: I am not a huge royals fan; I might even have occasionally done a fairly good imitation of Queen Elizabeth's distinctive voice. But God uses everything in our lives to break through to us. And that meant for me, even the Queen!). This address last week by the Queen was unusual (she has only made five in her long reign), as she usually only makes a national address for Christmas each year. The Queen's message on COVID-19 came from a long lifetime (she is 93 years old) and living through past crises. She recalled the first address she made, in 1940 at age 14, with her sister, a radio address to the children of England as they were being evacuated from England to escape German Luftwaffe bombing.



But it was the Queen's concluding words that gave me the comfort and hope I needed that evening. She said, "We should take comfort that while we may have more still to endure, better days will return...." Better days will return.... just the words I needed on a dark evening. And I've found myself repeating them to myself....better days will return....And though we are still in Holy Week, I can add, in perhaps a British accent, a quiet, Alleluia.

Now, onward to a little more, "Time Together."  
-Megan

### Announcements:

Paula has posted my video for the start of Holy Week on both churches' Facebook pages. The video is also available on Trinity's website: [trinityva.org](http://trinityva.org). Short videos for tomorrow, Maundy Thursday evening (see today's reflection), as well as for Easter Sunday morning, will also be available on Facebook and the Trinity website. I hope you will join me, as technology allows.

For other worship options, Washington National Cathedral continues to offer beautiful and moving worship daily, including during Holy Week and on Easter Day. They can be found at [cathedral.org](http://cathedral.org).

Maybe you have found yourself wondering: "Now where did I put that Book of Common Prayer?" Or maybe you have yearned to look at the full liturgy of the Holy Week services, or browse through the Prayers and Thanksgivings in the back of the Prayer Book. Well, I wanted to alert you to a wonderful available resource, the Book of Common Prayer online! You can find it at [bcponline.org](http://bcponline.org).

After Easter I am going to try a Zoom gathering for a chance to share worries and blessings, and to pray together. More details to follow, but if you are interested in trying this, and 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.

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

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.

### 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:

- Nancy Brandon is on her chemo pump this week, as well as radiation each day. Next week she has three more radiation treatments, and then she is done! Please continue your prayers for Nancy.
- Glenn has an appointment with his oncologist today to review his scans. Please continue your prayers for Glenn.
- Please keep all involved in the River Road Food Pantry tomorrow, April 9th, in your prayers.
- I received a nice email from Karen Woodruff, sharing her news; she is doing well at her retirement community in Silver Spring, Maryland. The community is under stay-at-home measures that include no meals together; Karen reports that she misses dinner with friends, but that Ollie, her cat, is pretty good company! Karen sends Holy Week blessings and greetings to all. Please keep her in your prayers.
- 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



## Reflection

Tomorrow, Thursday, is Maundy Thursday, the day, or rather the evening, of Holy Week when we remember the Last Supper. I say evening as the events remembered this day begin as the sun is setting. Jesus and his friends are staying outside the city of Jerusalem, and the tension in the city is growing by the hour. The city is crowded, as thousands of Jews have come to Jerusalem, including Jesus and his friends, to observe the holy time of Passover. The crowded city, along with news of Jesus in the city, his triumphant entry into the city with shouts of hosanna fit for a king, and his visit to the Temple and his overturning the moneychangers' tables, crying out, "You have taken my Father's house and turned it into a hideout for thieves!" All of these events, along with Jesus's preaching in the Temple, have raised the tension in the city to a breaking point. The Roman and Temple authorities, their power threatened, are scheming to arrest Jesus and put him to death.

With the rising threat to Jesus, his friends go into the city to prepare the Passover meal at the home of a friend, who lends them his upstairs room, a safe place for Jesus and his friends to gather. So as the sun sets and dusk falls, Jesus and his friends enter the city, under cover of the gathering darkness and come together in that upper room to eat the Passover meal together, as devout Jews were doing all over the city that night.

This is a holy night for us, as Jesus gave us the ritual of our communion with him, that night, saying, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you..... Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me." This night allows us, to this very day, to have that beautiful thread of connection to him, every time we receive, or right now, virtually receive.

This night too we remember Jesus washing his friends' feet, a job for the lowest, taken on by the king, the savior, our brother. As the disciples argue at the table about who among will be the greatest, the prince when Jesus is crowned king, puffed up with their own egos and power, as they argue, Jesus slips away and takes up the basin and towel by the door. Jesus takes on the servant's job, washing the dusty, tired feet of each of his friends, a task all ignored as they entered, sure of their higher importance and greater power. After Jesus washes each of their feet, their angry, arguing voices fall silent one at a time, as his hands slowly wash and care for their feet.

When he is done, Jesus says to them, "Do you know what I, your Lord and Master, have done to you? I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done." On this night, we

remember Jesus's words to his friends, and to us, to serve, to take not the place of power, but to be ready to serve, to take the lowest job, to help, to care.

As the shadows deepen and darkness falls, Jesus and his friends go back outside the city to the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus yearns for one more quiet moment to pray, before his arrest, and the cross ahead....

I invite you tomorrow, to join me at about 7:30pm. Find a candle, real or electric will do, just to allow you to light that candle as dusk falls, and to read this meditation for Maundy Thursday. Each of us separate but together in spirit, remembering this night together.

When we strip the altar at the end of Maundy Thursday service, removing all that designates our church as a space of worship of our Lord and Savior Jesus, we finish that sad work by bringing into the dark church, one candle, just one, to burn on in the darkness enveloping the space.

So, I hope you will join me in spirit or on video tomorrow night, as dusk falls.

Amen.

