

Time Together

While We are Apart

Trinity and St. Mary's Whitechapel Episcopal Churches

Wednesday,
April 14, 2021

Time Together Newsletter
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Good day dear church communities,

After joyful Easter services at the Labyrinth and on Zoom, we move into the 50 days of Easter. During this season of Easter, keeping the hope and comfort of the resurrection close, we move into yet another time of change for our churches. During the past 14 months of the COVID-19 pandemic we have found that change and adaption are our “new normal”, the willingness and ability to reshape our worship and communications, keeping us all as safe as possible, and still connected, as the pandemic has surged and waned and surged again.

As you likely know, the availability and use of the COVID-19 vaccinations has offered significant help in generally lowering our county and Northern Neck numbers for new COVID cases. With lower numbers we are now able to apply to open our churches to in-person, indoors worship! I'll outline upcoming changes below:

In consultation with the Joint Worship Committee, I decided to apply to reopen Trinity's spaces first, as SMWC's sanctuary is closed due to the roof, plastering and painting project set to begin very soon. Trinity has the capacity to broadcast the service in the sanctuary into the parish hall, thus we can accommodate folks attending worship in both spaces. I'll keep you posted as to the status of our application and when we are approved to re-open.

Feedback from our Easter worship at the Labyrinth was overwhelmingly positive! Folks from both churches commented on the beauty of the space for worship and expressed interest in worshipping there again, especially before summer heat sets in! **Thus we will gather at the Labyrinth again for worship this Sunday, April 18th, at 10am.**

PLEASE text or call Megan to make a reservation, or email the office.

Many have found the Zoom worship a gift this year, allowing church attendance and connection from home. We will continue offering a Zoom worship option even as we move towards indoors worship again. **This weekend our Zoom service will be Saturday, April 17th at 5pm.**

Finally, a note on this Newsletter. Fourteen months ago, we started these Time Together Newsletters, as a means to have, yes, as the full named expressed, “Time Together While We are Apart”. As we go into yet another time of change, we will conclude the “Time Together” every-other-week newsletters, with this issue. We will return to our “Good News Newsletter” offered monthly, beginning in mid-May.

Many changes ahead for our church communities, but we can rest in knowing that our Savior, brother, and friend Jesus, walks with us, and that whenever and wherever we gather, He is in our midst.

Alleluia! Christ is Risen!
The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!

And now onward to a little more “Time Together”, Megan



Prayer Notes

We will include our prayer lists in each worship bulletin and monthly in the Good News Newsletter. Please continue to let us know of folks you would like to have on our prayer lists.

Prayer Lists

Trinity: Elsie Cornwell, Carlisle Walters, Fred Ripley, Lella Lee Edwards, Lorraine Jett, Malcolm Jett, R.W. Courtney, Glenn Courtney, Berkeley Kellum, Hilda Courtney, Robert, Karen Woodruff, Michael Dunaway, Brad Quillen, Ian Larmore, Brandon Dunaway.
Armed Forces: Giovanni Elhordoy, Ward Gavin, and Paul Price.

St. Mary's Whitechapel: Donna Brayton, Warren Hottle, Howard Hanchey, Laura Sanseverino, Lora Ingle Smith, Edward Green, Coyle/Clewell Family, Virginia Blackwell, Roberta Blackwell, Ron Okrasinski, Agnes Robbie, Don DeFilippo, R.W. Courtney, Dorsey Ficklin, Glenn Courtney, Lin Greene, Jake Cobb, Dave Petersen, Dan Ficklin, Hilda Courtney, Robert, Karen Woodruff, Brad Quillen, Jessica, Joanne and Michael.

Nursing Home Resident: Lancashire - Mary Sue Courtney

Armed Forces: Jacob Sensenig, Joshua Green, Kathryn McCormack Akacem, Mehdi Akacem, Thomas Mackie, Pia Mackie, Tate Young, Spencer Fortin.

Birthday Lists for April and May

Trinity:

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; Finn Pollard, May 2nd; Allen Cornwell, May 3rd; Karen Woodruff, May 4th; Jonathan Chilton, May 11th; Hope Hayden, May 11th; Milton Kingsbury, May 13th; Owen Christopher, May 22nd; Spencer Cammarata, May 24th; Jenny Dunaway, May 24th

Anniversary – Janet and Michael Christopher, April 12th; -Carter and Cheryl Christopher, May 19th, Janet and Jay Davenport, May 20th

St. Mary's White Chapel:

Sue Ramsey, April 24; Sparky Marsh, April 25; Karen Woodruff, May 4; Jean DeFilippo, May 12; Ernie Greene, May 13; Randy Romaine, May 25

Anniversaries – Lucy and Warren Hottle, May 10

Announcements

Many thanks to all these folks from both churches who have volunteered to deliver for Meals on Wheels in April and May!

April 5th: Fillmore McNeal and Stan James

April 12th: Elizabeth and Cliffe Harris

April 19th: Sally and Allen Cornwell

April 26th: Fred and Judy Ripley

May 3rd: Margaret Anne Fohl and Bill Arnold

May 10th: Connie Horne and Nancy Brandon

May 17th: Becky and Bill Romaine

May 24th: Ellen Tracey and Jane Dunaway

Jane Dunaway now serves as the MOW Coordinator for both churches, recruiting volunteers for our combined months of November, April and May. Many thanks, Jane!

Progress continues on the renovation of the Trinity Pavilion! The new roof and overhang are complete. The new circular driveway down to the Pavilion has been finished. One garage door is being replaced with a pedestrian door. And the plumbing of the new kitchen and bathrooms is underway. We are hopeful for completion of the project and a grand opening for this summer! Stay tuned!

The new edition of Forward Day by Day has arrived and is available for pickup in the parish halls of both churches. If you need help getting a copy, either in regular or large print, please contact the office, stmarys.whitechapel@gmail.com

Are you looking for the video of Sunday's worship? Just a reminder that the video of Sunday worship is available for one week on the Trinity website: trinityva.org

Do you need help getting trash to the dump or picking up prescriptions or an occasional grocery item? Please know that we have folks ready to help in our joint churches community. Contact Megan for connection to a volunteer.

Washington National Cathedral continues to offer beautiful and moving worship daily. They can be found at cathedral.org

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



Easter Blessings!



Thoughts from the Organ Bench
by Glenn Courtney, Organist
SMWC and Trinity

"Our God, Our Help in Ages Past" is a hymn written by Isaac Watts (1674-1748) in 1708 that paraphrases the 90th Psalm of the Book of Psalms. It is considered to be one of the grandest in the whole realm of hymnody. It originally consisted of nine stanzas; however, in present usage the fourth, sixth, and eighth stanzas are commonly omitted to leave a total of six (Methodist books also include the original sixth stanza to leave a total of seven). In 1738, John Wesley in his hymnal, *Psalms and Hymns*, changed the first line of the text from "Our God" to "O God." Both Watts' wording and Wesley's rewording remain in current use.

Watts was frail in health most of his life but he was a scholarly genius in many fields. His writings include essays, discussions of psychology, three volumes of sermons, catechisms, theology treatises, textbooks on logic, hymns, and other various works. When he died in 1748 his monument was placed in Westminster Abbey.

This hymn was originally part of *The Psalms of David Imitated in the Language of the New Testament*, published by Watts in 1719. In this book he paraphrased in Christian verse the entire psalter with the exception of twelve Psalms which he felt were unsuited for Christian usage. Other hymns by Watts include "Jesus Shall Reign," "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross," "Am I a Soldier of the Cross?," and "Joy to the World."

The hymn tune St. Anne (common metre 86.86) to which the text is most often sung was composed by William Croft in 1708 whilst he was the organist of St Anne's Church, Soho: hence the name of the tune. It first appeared anonymously in the Supplement to the New Version of the Psalms, 6th edition in 1708. It was originally intended to be used with a version of Psalm 62. It was not until sometime later when set to Watts' text that the tune gained recognition.

Later composers subsequently incorporated the tune in their own works. For example, George Handel used the tune in an anthem entitled, *O Praise the Lord*. J. S. Bach's Fugue in E-flat major BWV 552 is often called the St. Anne in the English-speaking world, because of the similarity of its subject to the first line of the hymn tune, though there is some debate as to whether Bach used the actual tune after hearing it, or coincidentally created himself the very similar tune used as the fugal theme. Young Bach's inspirator and mentor Dieterich Buxtehude, church administrator and organist of St. Mary's in Lübeck in north Germany, used the same first line of the hymn tune as theme for the (first) fugue of his *Praeludium-pedaliter* in E-major for organ.

Arthur Sullivan used the tune in the first and last sections of his *Festival Te Deum*, first in a relatively standard setting, but eventually pairing it with a military march accompaniment. The American composer Carl Ruggles (1876–1971) used the text in his last composition, *Exaltation* (for Brass, Chorus, and Organ) in 1958, in memory of his wife Charlotte who had died the previous year. The hymn and words are also featured in Vaughan Williams' anthem *Lord, thou hast been our refuge*, using both the Book of Common Prayer's words and those of Watts.

In modern hymnals, here are the six stanzas most often included:

O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home;

Under the shadow of thy throne
Thy saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is thine arm alone,
And our defence is sure.

Bears all its sons away;
They fly forgotten, as a dream
Dies at the opening day.

Before the hills in order stood,
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting thou art God,
To endless years the same.

O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be thou our guard while troubles last,
And our eternal home.

A thousand ages in thy sight
Are like an evening gone,
Short as the watch that ends the night
Before the rising sun.
Time, like an ever-rolling stream,

Notable uses of the hymn include:

14 April 1912 – according to passenger Archibald Gracie IV, it was the last hymn sung at a church service presided over by Captain Edward John Smith on the morning before the RMS Titanic sank.

The hymn is included in "the Traditional Music" of the National Service of Remembrance, whose programme of music was finalised in 1930. The hymn is often sung as part of the Remembrance Day service in Canada and the UK.

1941 – on board HMS Prince of Wales at a religious service attended by Winston Churchill and Franklin Delano Roosevelt as part of the conference creating the Atlantic Charter.[5]

May 1942 – Elizabeth Goudge quotes the line "A thousand ages in Thy sight are as an evening gone" in a vignette of the London Blitz, when a husband and wife, remembering their life together, are killed during an air-raid in her war-time novel *The Castle on the Hill* (Chapter X, Part II, p 207)

H. G. Wells quotes the seventh stanza of the hymn in the first chapter – "The End Closes in upon Mind" – of the last of the 146 books he published during his lifetime, *The Bleak Mind at the End of its Tether* (1945), and adds his own comment: "But hitherto other sons have appeared, and now only does life pass plainly into a phase of complete finality, so that one can apprehend and anticipate its end."

Bing Crosby included the hymn in his album *Beloved Hymns* (1951).

It was sung at the funeral of Winston Churchill.

It is the University Anthem of the University of California, Berkeley.

It is also the School hymn for King Edward VI School, Southampton, which Isaac Watts himself attended, and the peal of the Southampton Civic Centre clock tower.

The hymn tune is employed prominently in John Addison's Academy Award-winning score for the 1963 movie *Tom Jones*.

In Evelyn Waugh's *Decline and Fall* the prisoners communicate the death of Prendergast, bypassing a rule of silence by amending the words of the hymn in chapel.

The stanza beginning "Time, like an ever rolling stream" is quoted word-for-word in the first lines of "Bath" on The Divine Comedy's album *Promenade*.

Here is a link to the Mormon Choir singing this hymn:

O God, Our Help in Ages Past (2019) | The Tabernacle Choir - YouTube

Sources:

Wikipedia.com

Osbeck, Kenneth W., *101 Hymn Stories*. Kregel Publications, 1982.

Reflection

“Being the Body”

For this final addition of our “Time Together Newsletter” I have chosen one more reflection from United Church of Christ minister, the Reverend Talitha Arnold, who serves as Senior Pastor at the United Church Santa Fe (UCC), in Santa Fe, New Mexico. I respect and appreciate her writing and perspective, and note that she is the author of a two-part Bible study on the Gospel of Mark, a possible Bible study for us to explore in the future. This Easter reflection offers a challenge to SMWC and Trinity in these 50 days of Easter, and onward.

“There was not a needy person among them.”

Acts 4:34a (NRSV)

I heard lots of resurrection stories this Lent. Perhaps you did, too. As people got vaccinated, they shared their relief and joy. “It’s a new lease on life,” someone declared. “I can stop being afraid.” “I can see my grandchildren.” “My kids can go back to school.”

How can we not share such good news of new life? The first Christians certainly did. In Acts, whenever they met, “the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.” Surely they included their own stories, like Peter’s transformation from a slow-tongued fisherman into a Pentecostal preacher or Mary Magdalene’s experience as the first witness to the Resurrection, the “apostle to the apostles.”

Yet Acts 4:34 doesn’t include such personal testimonies. Instead it tells a community testimony: How the first Christians gave up their possessions, just as Jesus had given up his life for others. How they made sure no one was in need, just as he ensured 5000 hungry people were fed, sick people healed, troubled people comforted and loved.

The new Christian community wasn’t focused on seeing the Risen Body, but on being the Risen Body, doing what he had done. They didn’t just proclaim God’s resurrection power. They became that power by offering

new life to others.

Our world needs that resurrection power now more than ever. It also needs the church—my church, your church, all churches—to be an Easter people by giving of ourselves and our possessions. The first Christians knew they were living into God’s new life when no one was in need. That was their plumblines for being the Risen Body of the Risen Christ.

It’s our plumblines, too.

Prayer

*Help us, God, to be Resurrection people, for the sake of all your people.
Amen.*

