

Time Together While We are Apart

Easter Sunday, April 12, 2020



Good morning, dear church communities,

Alleluia! The Lord is risen! The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!

What a joy to greet you on Easter morning, and though we are apart physically, we are deeply connected in spirit. And we are sharing our Easter morning coffee with Barb Fasig. Barb has only been at SMWC for a few months but has jumped into many activities with gusto and good cheer! Barb grew up in a farming community in Ohio, and much of her family still lives there. Barb maintains a second home there, and she explains her mugs thus: The Pine Tree Barn is a favorite restaurant in Ohio, so she keeps that mug at her home in Urbanna to remind her of Ohio. And she keeps the SMWC 350th anniversary mug at her home in Ohio to remind her of her church in Virginia. Many thanks, Barb!

This week I had the joy and honor of helping with the River Road Food Pantry at SMWC, a ministry of SMWC, Trinity, Queen Esther Baptist, Hartswell Baptist, Corrotoman Baptist, and Bethel Methodist. As I mentioned in the prayer notes last week, Jannine Pennell, Director of the pantry, had consulted with the Healthy Harvest Food Bank in Warsaw and considered a variety of possibilities for making the pantry work as safely as possible in this time of COVID-19. Balancing the safety and health of volunteers and clients versus the great need for food to get to folks, a drive-in pantry was planned. A much smaller than usual team of volunteers bagged and prepared the food (A special shout out to SMWC volunteers Theresa Kanuck, Will Towles, and Bill Pennell, and Trinity volunteers Aaron and Taryn Rowland!), and clients drove up and food



was loaded into cars. The pantry turned out to be the largest the pantry had ever done, and by far the highest number of new families signing up, 23 families. Many pantries have had to cancel, and we were so grateful that Jannine's amazing planning made us able to be open and provide food. Though the churches were empty, the parking lot was full of God's ministry and love. A joyous reason to shout Alleluia, Alleluia on this Easter morning!!!!

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:

- 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 saw his oncologist this week and the decision has been made to end his chemo. The scans this week were in part to check Glenn's heart. He has had pain in his heart while wearing the chemo pump and the doctors were concerned. Scans showed the left atrium of his heart is enlarged from the chemo. Other scans showed no signs of cancer in his pelvis and abdomen. He has a lung scan next week. The new plan is for Glenn to now regain strength and endurance post-chemo, and do more scans in July and have a colonoscopy. Please continue your prayers for Glenn.
- Omid, on the Trinity Prayer list, was added by Cheri Sheridan. Omid is an ER doctor in Pennsylvania who is COVID-19 positive and very sick. Cheri knows of him through a friend. Please keep Omid in your prayers.
- Our healthcare workers are on all our hearts. Please keep them, and their families, in your prayers.

Prayer Lists:

St. Mary's Whitechapel: Don DeFilippo, George Clowser, Sherry Mann, Susan Goff, Jori Keckman, Nancy Brandon, Ron Okrasinski, Sally Flanigan, Alexa Frisbee, R. W. Courtney, Tammy, Dorsey Ficklin, Glenn Courtney, Terry Thompson, Wendy Burnett, Nora Pennell, Lin Greene, Jake Cobb, Dave Petersen, Dan Ficklin, Marie Beringer, Donna Alexander, Rose, Cecil Courtney, Mimi Chace, Donna Brayton, Hilda Courtney, Robert, Howard Hanchey, Jennifer Cassell Cole, Karen Woodruff, Roger Fortin, Wier Harman, Gina Adams, Brad Quillen, Jessica, Joanne and Michael.

Nursing Home Resident: Lancashire - Mary Sue Courtney

Armed Forces: Joshua Green, Aimee Budzinski, Mark Medina, Kathryn McCormack Akacem, Mehdi Akacem, Anderson Sale, Thomas Mackie, Pia Mackie, Tate Young, Spencer Fortin.

Trinity: Omid, Nancy Clark, Vicki Simmons Watson, Jerry Gregor, Susan Goff, Janice Shanks, Sherri Carter, Terri, Nick Slaughter, Fran and Dick Davis, Sally Flanigan, R. W. Courtney, Frances Bush, Delford Walthall, Glenn Courtney, Barbara Nunnery, Keith Elswick, Fred Eddowes, Steve, Rick Bateman, Jenny Dunaway, Earline Tomlin Kelley, Ed Borer, Dean Haine, Donna Alexander, Mary and Karen Jackson, Cecil Courtney, Berkeley Kellum, Wendy Boswell, Preston Bryant, Craig Smith, Michael, Mel and Frances Ercelino, Hilda Courtney, Robert, Karen Woodruff, Joey Coker, Michael Dunaway, J.W. Boone, Brad Quillen, Ian Larmore, Brandon Dunaway.

Armed Forces: Giovanni Elhordoy, Ward Gavin, Paul Price and Michael Stout.

Diocesan Cycle of Prayer: Pray for Altar Guilds, Flower Guilds, Ushers, Lectors, Lay Eucharistic Ministers, Acolytes, and Choirs.

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem and the People of the Land of the Holy One.

Announcements:

Technical difficulties led to my Maundy Thursday video appearing on Trinity's website, but only with visual, no sound! Ahhh....the joys of technology! The version with visual and sound is still available on the Facebook pages. I have also made a brief Easter morning video, hopefully available at trinityva.org and on both churches' Facebook pages.

For other worship options, Washington National Cathedral continues to offer beautiful and moving worship daily, including today, Easter Sunday! They can be found at cathedral.org

After Easter 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.

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

“Now the green blade riseth from the buried grain, wheat that in the dark earth many days has lain; love lives again, that with the dead has been: Love is come again like wheat that springeth green.”

-Hymn #204, verse 1

I thought about starting this Reflection with the triumphant and joyous “Jesus Christ is Risen today, Alleluia!” But in these oh, so strange and ongoing days of pandemic, I found myself more introspective and less shouting alleluias.

I have seen a number of posts and meditations on how this Easter is much closer to the first one, than our usual Easter traditions of banks of lilies on the altar, children in new clothes, rousing and beautiful hymns, and a full breakfast buffet after the service, followed by perhaps a nap and watching the Masters on television.

As much as we love our Easter traditions, and they can be full of the bursting joy of the resurrection, they are far from the first Easter. That early Sunday morning, before sunrise, the women who had followed Jesus, made their way to the tomb. Their hearts were grief-filled, and their expectations for the day were limited, only to finish the burial of their dear brother and friend Jesus, the one on whom all their hopes had been set, and who had died a torturous and cruel death on a cross.

Our mood today, our anxieties and fears, is far closer to that of the first Easter, than our often almost routine joy in “normal” times at again celebrating the resurrection of our Savior, Jesus. Though this time of pandemic is difficult and for many in our country, heartbreaking and deadly, we can hope and pray this Easter, that after the virus wanes and

we can begin to resume our “normal” lives, that we do not simply return without thought to our old routines. God did not cause this pandemic, but I believe that God is moving within it, within each of our lives, with hope and resurrection not coming AFTER all is better, but NOW within the crisis, within the suffering, within the fears. Our God is close at hand.....alleluia, indeed.

Amen.

When our hearts are wintry, grieving, or in pain, thy touch can call us back to life again, fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been: Love is come again like wheat that springeth green.” -Hymn #204, verse 4

