

# Time Together

## While We are Apart

Wednesday, May 20, 2020



Good day, dear church communities,

Our animal picture today comes from Cheri Sheridan, who brought us the first animal in this series, Bunsen the amazing therapy dog! As you may recall Cheri and her husband Joe, and Bunsen split their time between Georgia and Reedville, Virginia. When they are in Reedville, they attend Trinity. Bunsen has several dog-siblings, other dogs adopted by the Sheridans. Today's dog is Patton.

I'll let Cheri take over now as she has a gift for describing her beloved animals: *"While Bunsen has two sisters, Gadget and Gizmo, he is most devoted to his brother, Patton, who has a vest, Therapy Dog In Training. He says that while Patton chews everything in sight, is notorious for pulling everything out of an open drawer or cabinet, and no shoelaces are safe... at least he doesn't eat the shoes.*

*Patton was found along the side of a highway after a powerful storm, covered in scabs. He was filthy, skinny and exhausted. After a bath and 24 hours of dead sleep, he gazed at us with his deep chocolate eyes and under-bite and immediately defied the "no more dogs!" rule. Just like that, five dogs. Again!*

*The scabs turned out to be buckshot, some of which worked its way out. He will be having surgery to remove several more. How could you aim a gun at that beautiful boy, much less pull the trigger!"*

I then asked how old Patton is, and Cheri replied: *"Judging by the way he chews? Maybe a year? He is an absolute love. Bunsen is the handsome valedictorian destined for greatness. Patton is a rakish fraternity boy who loves a good romp with a squeaky toy and really wishes we had a convertible. But underneath his bon vivant beats a heart of gold. He has been very good for Bunsen. They play and play! Bunsen got his leg fixed and the good Lord supplied him with a playmate. God is good!"*

Many thanks to Cheri for sharing Patton with us too!

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:

- Randy Romaine had rotator cuff surgery and is coming along in the healing process. Please keep Randy, and his wife Gloria, in your prayers.
- Chuck McGrath Please continue your prayers for Chuck and his family.
- Our healthcare workers are on all our hearts. Please keep them, and their families, in your prayers.

## **May and June Birthdays and Anniversaries**

**St. Mary's Whitechapel Birthdays:** Karen Woodruff, May 4; Jean DeFilippo, May 12; Ernie Greene, May 13; Chuck McGrath, May 17; Randy Romaine, May 25; Rita Theisen, June 3; Ursula O'Bryhim, June 16; Ed Ramsey, June 16; Jane Henley, June 17; Jane Fortin, June 22; Warren Hottle, June 29

**Anniversaries:** Lucy & Warren Hottle, May 10; Donna and Pete Ransone, May 26; Ed and Sue Ramsey, June 15



**Trinity Birthdays:** 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; Jamie Hayden, June 12th; Jodie Hayden, June 12th; Alexis Hayden, June 15th; Cole Hayden, June 15th; Dinny Jackson, June 23rd; Julian Cornwell, June 24th; Curtis Walker, June 30th

**Anniversaries:** Carter & Cheryl Christopher, May 19th; Janet & Jay Davenport, May 20th; Gwen & Stan James, June 16th; Diane & Dukie Smith, June 18th

## Announcements

I am on vacation this week through Sunday, May 24<sup>th</sup>. The Time Together Newsletter will still be sent by email. If you receive the Newsletter by my delivery to your door/mailbox, Paula will send your Newsletters this week by US mail. Zoom Coffee Hour will still happen on Sunday, May 24<sup>th</sup>; Ellen Tracey has kindly agreed to send the invitations. I will be in town and available for pastoral emergencies, but if you need other help, you may contact Paula at her email address: [stmarys.whitechapel@gmail.com](mailto:stmarys.whitechapel@gmail.com) and at her cell: 804-221-5562, as the office remains closed. You may also contact your Wardens as needed.

I need a few more animal pictures for our Time Together Newsletter! So, if you have been meaning to send me a photo of your beloved pet, please email or text. We all enjoy meeting them.

The Scholarship Committee at SMWC announces that their deadline for applications has been extended until May 29<sup>th</sup>. More information, including guidelines and forms, is available on the SMWC website: [stmaryswhitechapel.org](http://stmaryswhitechapel.org)

“Zooming Coffee Hour” is held every Sunday, at 3pm; all are welcome! Text, call or email me if you want to join us, and I’ll put you on the list to receive the Zoom invitation each week. Once you sign up you are on the list and can come any Sunday that suits you. (My cell number is 804-477-5515.) And if you would like to join us, 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.

For the season of Easter, I will be posting a video each Sunday, except for May 24<sup>th</sup> when I am on vacation. The videos will be available on the Trinity website and on our Facebook pages.

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

Please let me know if you are in need of help with getting groceries or other necessities. Call, text, or email and I’ll connect you with a volunteer.

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



## ***Thoughts from the Organ Bench***

A song I recently learnt is “A Child’s Prayer” by Janice Kapp Perry. Ms. Perry wrote this song in 1984 and it has become very popular.

During a time of frustration over a seemingly unanswered prayer, Janice Kapp Perry wrote a song called "Lord, Are You There?" She later decided to write a children's version, which she entitled "A Child's Prayer."

"We are all human and occasionally wonder, in difficult times, if the Lord is really there to hear and answer our prayers," she says. Perry has received many touching letters through the years from people who have had personal experiences with this song. One mother related that when her small child needed an MRI, they could not get him to lie still until she promised to entertain him with Primary songs. He said, "Okay, I'll go first," and then started singing "A Child's Prayer," which brought tears to the doctors' eyes.

Perry also had a very personal experience with this song in July 1998. "Just three days after my husband and I returned from the Tabernacle Choir's European tour, we were involved in a serious car accident in which the front of my throat was badly ruptured and was bleeding internally," she recalls. "At a time when I was finding it difficult to speak, swallow, and breathe, I was told by hospital personnel that I needed to lie flat and absolutely still for thirty minutes while a CAT-scan assessed the damage to my neck. I desperately searched for something to calm me emotionally.

I closed my eyes and repeated these words over and over in my mind for the duration of the test: Pray, He is there; speak, He is listening. You are His child, His love now surrounds you. Surgery and rest eventually healed my throat, but the words of the song calmed my spirit at a critical time." She adds, "Over the years, it has become clear that this song is the people's favorite. Of the thirteen hundred songs I've written, this is my favorite, too."

Night time, quiet time,  
Loved ones gather at day's end.  
I hold them close, I help them know  
That God will always be their friend.  
Then just before I say good night,  
My little one kneels by my chair.  
I close my eyes, I dim the lights,  
And listen to this simple prayer:  
Heavenly Father, are you really there?  
And do you hear and answer every child's prayer?

Some say that heaven is far away,  
But I feel it close around me as I pray.  
Heavenly Father, I remember now something that Jesus told disciples long ago:  
"Suffer the children to come to me."  
Father, in prayer I'm coming now to Thee.

Pray, He is there.  
Speak, He is listening.  
You are His Child, His love now surrounds you.  
He hears your prayer, He loves the children.  
Of such is the Kingdom, the Kingdom of Heaven.

Heavenly Father, are you really there?  
And do you hear and answer every child's prayer?  
Some say that heaven is far away,  
But I feel it close around me as I pray.

Heavenly Father, I remember now something that Jesus told disciples long ago:  
"Suffer the children to come to me."  
Father, in prayer I'm coming now to Thee.  
He hears and answers every child's prayer.  
Please hear my prayer.

*Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 19: 13-14 KJV*

Here is the Temple Square Choir singing "A Child's Prayer:"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bse5TtEuaGk>

Source: bing.com

## Reflection

I subscribe to a daily devotional offered by the United Church of Christ (UCC) called *Still Speaking*, referring to God still speaking in our lives today. The authors are a wide variety of clergy and laity in the UCC. Our reflection today comes from The Rev. Lillian Daniel, who serves as the Senior Minister at First Congregational Church in Dubuque, Iowa. She also is one of my favorite authors. Her book with Martin Copenhaver, “This Odd and Wondrous Calling” is one of the best, in my opinion, at describing the life and work of a pastor. And her book “When ‘Spiritual But Not Religious’ is not Enough: Seeing God in Surprising Places Even the Church” sits on my “To Read Soon!” shelf. And yes, her church is in Iowa, so some day Tim and I hope to stop in on a Sunday and hear her preach.

Her reflection is entitled, “Mud Lake”, and reflects on Matthew 6:28: “Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin...”

As the evening wind picks up on the Mississippi, I am trying to clean the water lily roots off my kayak and the river muck off myself, while I check my trusty inflatable kayak for a possible leak. As I try to read the minuscule instructions on a dried-up tube of adhesive, I force myself to stop and give thanks that at least I made it to shore.

Then I catch the reflection of the setting sun on Mud Lake, and it is so beautiful I feel like a blasphemer for ever having complained at all. Before me is a stunning Monet painting of water lilies, where bright wildflowers pose against the limestone bluffs. Turtle families let you paddle within feet of them before diving into the water.

Mud Lake is a back channel of the Mississippi, but it could be mistaken for a clear lake when conditions are perfect. Conditions are rarely perfect, which may be why they named it Mud Lake. With such a name, there are low expectations. No one will ever sue you for false advertising or want their money back. No one would even want to go. Maybe that is the point. Keep it to ourselves. *(continued next page)*

A lot of our churches could be named Mud Lake. Nothing special. Nothing to get excited about. Play it safe. Keep it to ourselves. Why not?

When I was new to kayaking, I would never have discovered Mud Lake unless someone had told me what it felt like, smelled like, and what the water lilies looked like. Even then, I would have argued that I had seen Monet's paintings. Unless someone had brought me there in person, I would never have seen the lilies, as they are here, rather than in a painting. The only way to discover them was upon arrival.

So now I am telling you about Mud Lake. Spread the word.

Prayer

Spread the word. Amen.