

# Time Together

## *While We are Apart*

*St. Mary's Whitechapel and Trinity Episcopal Churches*

Wednesday,  
August 26, 2020

Good day, dear church communities,

Today we feature another "Picture from the Past"! Do you recognize this four-year-old, now a member of Trinity? Her parents dressed her up for a New Year's Eve party as the Baby New Year for 1957! She was a cheerful welcome in 1957 and she still is today; you can always count on her to greet newcomers at church. Do you have a guess? Check the first Announcement to find out if you are right!

Please submit your "Picture from the Past," a baby picture, a school picture, a wedding photo, or a pic from some long-ago holiday and join in the fun! You can take a picture of a photo and then text or email it to me. (804-477-5515 [rectorstmtrin@gmail.com](mailto:rectorstmtrin@gmail.com)) If technology is not your thing, you can mail your photo to me (253 Navajo Rd, Kilmarnock 22482) or we can make arrangements for me to come by and take a picture of it.

I wanted to say a heart felt thank you to all who have been able to make an offering to the two Rector's Discretionary Funds. As the pandemic goes on and the economic cost to so many lower income folks deepens, our churches are able to offer help. In our work through The Link, I learn of so many stories of families coping, until one thing tips them into an economic crisis. Over and over I notice the crisis is precipitated by medical problems. A



landscaper needs a knee replacement and can no longer do physical work. A pregnant woman is put on bed rest and cannot work. Strokes, surgeries, caring for an ill family member, so many stories focus on the economic devastation of an illness or injury. The Rector's Discretionary Funds help to fill in a gap and hopefully provide a little more stability to a family in need. Please remember all families struggling financially in your prayers.

And now onward to a little more "Time Together,"  
Megan

## **Prayer Notes:**

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

This prayer is from a website called The Episcopal Café and was written for this so very unusual Back to School Season. Blessings on all the children and adults heading back to school soon!

### **A Back to School Prayer**

Kimberly Knowle-Zeller, Episcopal Cafe

*“And Jesus took the children (and the teachers, school administrators, school staff, cooks, bus drivers, janitors, parents, grandparents) in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them.” (Mark 10:16)*

*Wherever you find yourself this back to school season – at the computer, in a classroom, at home, wearing a mask, keeping distance, gathered in small groups, disinfecting every surface, learning with parents – this prayer is for you.*

Bless the school year ahead –

fill it with compassion for those making difficult decisions, comfort to parents wondering how to manage home, work, and school, and strength to teachers navigating new ways of learning.

Bless the school year ahead –

reminding us to see our neighbors as ourselves and Christ in all that we meet.

Bless the school year ahead –

remembering that God always goes before us and claims us as beloved children of God.

Bless the school year ahead –

trusting your grace in our lives and hope for what is to come.

Be with us this year. Grant us your wisdom, Lord, that we continue to seek it, and look for signs of your love all around us.

**Trinity:** Susan Goff, Janice Shanks, Sherri Carter, Terri, Fran Davis, R. W. Courtney, Frances Bush, Delford Walthall, Glenn Courtney, Walter and Barbara Nunnery, Keith Elswick, Steve, Rick Bateman, Jenny Dunaway, Earline Tomlin Kelley, Ed Borer, Dean Haine, Donna Alexander, Mary and Karen Jackson, Berkeley Kellum, Wendy Boswell, Preston Bryant, 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.

**St. Mary's Whitechapel:** Cynthia Mercado, Agnes Robbie, Chuck McGrath, Don DeFilippo, George Clowser, Susan Goff, Jori Keckman, Nancy Brandon, Ron Okrasinski, 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, 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:** Jacob Sensenig, Joshua Green, Aimee Budzinski, Mark Medina, Kathryn McCormack Akacem, Mehdi Akacem, Thomas Mackie, Pia Mackie, Tate Young, Spencer Fortin.

## August and September Birthdays and Anniversaries

**SMWC Birthdays:** Susan Dameron, August 1; Bill Pennell, August 6; Pat Ficklin, August 13; Betsy Woods, August 21; Anne Hanchey, August 22; Walter Mauro, August 26; Lucy Hottle, August 28; Sherry Mann, August 29; Nancy Brandon, August 31; Raymond Gaddy, August 31; Will Towles, September 1; Frans Kasteel, September 2; Buzz Budzinski, September 4; Fred Olsen, September 4; Linda Stough, September 5; Donna Ransone, September 11; Bob Woods, September 11; Jack Blaine, September 21; Jean Bonnell, September 22; Bo Wright, September 29

**Anniversaries:** Jane and Page Henley, August 6; Richard and Sharon Gill, August 8; Gloria and Randy Romaine, August 12; Ernie and Lin Greene, August 22; Betsy and Bob Woods, August 24; Fred and Mary Ann Olsen, August 28; Dorsey and Pat Ficklin, August 30; Don and Jean DeFilippo, September 11



**Trinity Birthdays:** Cara Christopher, August 6th; Sally Cornwell, August 7th; Judy Ripley, August 7th; Julie H. Barrack, August 9th; Barbara Nunnery, August 13th; Janet Davenport, August 16th; Elizabeth Calder, August 17th; Keegan Kellum, August 21st; Henry Christopher, August 29th; Michelle Giese, August 31st; Kellum Hayden, September 8th; Mears Pollard, September 8th; Gwen James, September 9th; Logan Kellum, September 9th; Joshua James, September 17th; Albert Pollard, Jr., September 18th; Brandon Kellum, September 21st; Michael Brent, September 24th; Madison Giese, September 24th; Tracy Hayden, September 24th; Walter Nunnery, September 24th

## Announcements:

Our "Picture from the Past" was taken in 1957 in Silver Spring, Maryland. That four-year-old's beautiful dark eyes might have given her away as our own Carol Roscher! Carol and JR are so good at welcoming newcomers to Trinity. Not surprised Carol started her welcoming work as a child! Many thanks Carol, for this wonderful Picture from your Past!

My day off has been a challenge in this time of pandemic with required tasks and meetings seeming to fall on every day! But I am going to return to Mondays as my day off, as it seems to have the fewest meetings. Please know I will likely not return texts or emails on Mondays. Please call my cell or home phone if an emergency. Many thanks.

Our Zoom worship service meets 5pm Saturdays with Prayers for the Evening. Paula will send the bulletin and the Zoom invitation to all that day. This service is a lovely, quiet way to enter into the evening, and we have gathered a wonderful community of folks who enjoy worship at this time and by Zoom. Join us!

Our outdoor worship service for both churches meets on Sundays at 10am at the Trinity Pavilion. Please text or email Megan so we can save a seat for you. Masks are required and we maintain six feet of distance. The breezes are fresher than in July; it feels a little like worship on the front porch, with the beautiful accompaniment of music from Glenn and Linda!

Many thanks to the folks from both churches who have cheerfully agreed to read at our Zoom and in-person worship! Are you interested in joining them and being a reader for either service? Please contact Megan to learn more.

If you would like to meet in-person for a visit/pastoral care time with me, we can wear masks and meet outdoors, either at the Pavilion at Trinity, or the Labyrinth at SMWC, or at your home. Feel free to reach out and I'll look forward to connecting! I will, of course, also be continuing phone and Zoom pastoral visits.

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](http://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



## **Thoughts from the Organ Bench**

by Glenn Courtney, Organist

SMWC and Trinity

**Nearer, My God, to Thee** is a 19th-century Christian hymn by Sarah Flower Adams, which retells the story of Jacob's dream. Genesis 28:11–12 can be translated as follows: "So he came to a certain place and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. And he took one of the stones of that place and put it at his head, and he lay down in that place to sleep. Then he dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it..."

Even when we cannot see or feel Him, the Lord never leaves our side. As we walk through each day, let us remember to call upon His name and give thanks. The beautiful lyrics of '**Nearer My God to Thee**' are the perfect call to the Lord. And when you hear the story behind this amazing hymn, you will be reminded exactly why we need him every hour and second."

Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee!  
E'en though it be a cross that raiseth me;  
Still all my song shall be nearer, my God, to Thee,  
**Chorus:** Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee!

Though like the wanderer, the sun gone down,  
Darkness be over me, my rest a stone;  
Yet in my dreams I'd be nearer, my God, to Thee,  
**Chorus:** Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee!

There let the way appear steps unto heav'n;  
All that Thou sendest me in mercy giv'n;  
Angels to beckon me nearer, my God, to Thee,  
**Chorus:** Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee!

Then with my waking thoughts bright with Thy praise,  
Out of my stony griefs Bethel I'll raise;  
So by my woes to be nearer, my God, to Thee,  
**Chorus:** Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee!

Or if on joyful wing, cleaving the sky,  
Sun, moon, and stars forgot, upwards I fly,  
Still all my song shall be, nearer, my God, to Thee,  
**Chorus:** Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee!

**(A sixth verse was later added to the hymn by Edward Henry Bickersteth Jr. as follows)**

There in my Father's home, safe and at rest,  
There in my Saviour's love, perfectly blest;  
Age after age to be, nearer my God to Thee,  
**Chorus:** Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee!

Sarah Flower was born February 22, 1805 in Essex, England, the second daughter of Benjamin and Eliza Flowers. In her brief lifetime, Sarah led a full and productive life. Sarah grew up in a home surrounded  
*(continued next page)*

by poetry and song writing. Sarah married William Bridges Adams and moved to London where she attended the independent church of William Johnson Fox. She was active for a time on the stage, playing the part of Lady Macbeth in London, but her delicate health was always a handicap for her many ambitions.

Rev. Fox asked Sarah and her talented sister, Eliza, a musician, to help him prepare a new hymnal. Together, they contributed 13 hymn texts and 62 tunes to his 1841 *Hymns and Anthems*, one of them being *Nearer, My God to Thee*. This hymn was written at the pastor's request to follow his sermon on Genesis 28:11-19, known as the story of Jacob's ladder, or Jacob's dream. Sarah wrote the hymn in a week and her sister Eliza composed the tune.

Sarah Flower Adams died of tuberculosis in 1848.

Over the years, a number of tunes have been used for the hymn, including *Propior Deo* and *Horbury* (especially in the UK) but today the hymn is usually sung to the tune *Bethany* by Lowell Mason, who wrote this tune especially for *Nearer my God to Thee* around 1853.

Several interesting incidents are associated with this hymn. President William McKinley claimed it was his favorite hymn and he was heard to whisper its words as he drew his last breath. At 3:30 pm, in the afternoon of 14 September 1901, after five minutes of silence across the nation, numerous bands across the United States played the hymn in his memory. It was also played by the Marine Band on Pennsylvania Avenue during the funeral procession through Washington and at the end of the funeral service itself, and at a memorial service for him in Westminster Abbey, London. The hymn was also played as the body of assassinated American President James Garfield was interred at Lakeview Cemetery in Cleveland, Ohio, and at the funerals of former U.S. Presidents Warren G. Harding and Gerald R. Ford, and Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands.

Another interesting story is that *Nearer, My God, to Thee* is associated with the sinking of the RMS Titanic, as some survivors later reported that the ship's string ensemble played the hymn as the vessel sank. However, it is doubtful the tune *Bethany* was used in this instance, but probably another tune. Wallace Hartley, the ship's band leader, who went down with the ship (as did all other musicians on board), liked the hymn and had wished to have it performed at his funeral. As a Methodist Briton, he was familiar with both the *Horbury* and *Propior Deo* versions but would not likely have used *Bethany*. His father, a Methodist choirmaster, used the *Propior Deo* version at church. His family was certain that he would have used the *Propior Deo* version, and it is this tune's opening notes that appear on Hartley's memorial and that were played at his funeral. However, a record slip for a 1913 Edison cylinder recording of *Nearer, My God, to Thee*, featuring the *Bethany* version, states that "When the great steamship RMS Titanic sank in mid-ocean in April 1912, it was being played by the band and sung by the doomed passengers, even as the boat took her final plunge." George Orrell, the bandmaster of the rescue ship, the RMS Carpathia, who spoke with survivors, related: "The ship's band in any emergency is expected to play to calm the passengers. After the RMS Titanic struck the iceberg the band began to play bright music, dance music, comic songs – anything that would prevent the passengers from becoming panic-stricken... various awe-stricken passengers began to think of the death that faced them and asked the bandmaster to play hymns. The one which appealed to all was *Nearer My God to Thee*."

Here is a performance by the Mormon Choir: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xaxrY1rxZKE>

Sources: [faithmusicconnection.com](http://faithmusicconnection.com), [wikipedia.com](http://wikipedia.com)

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

## Reflection

Many years ago, when I lived in the Shenandoah Valley, a group of us would go hiking in the late afternoons in September and October. We all worked at a small college and after our last teaching duties ended for the day, we would head the four miles straight up from Buena Vista to the Blue Ridge Parkway. What a deep blessing to have that beautiful resource right at our doorstep! I doubt I appreciated it enough then, but I did love living among the mountains.

We would hike an hour or two and then head home as the sun began to set. On one of those rides home a friend looked at the sun striking long shadows on the road, and observed: “Look at that low angle light. Fall is really coming on now.” Isn’t it funny how a chance comment can stay with you? It has been more than 30 years since I heard those words said, but I always echo those words in my mind each year as we head into fall and I see, yes, the low angle light. I noticed that particular light recently in our front yard and snapped this picture, as we took the dogs out one more time in the evening, as the sun drew close to setting.



I find myself these days looking with hope for signs of fall. The pandemic has made it difficult to remember what month it is, or even what day it is! But nature is now my clock and calendar more than I have ever known. Without the markers of a gathering a month ago for a family reunion in Iowa, or two weeks until we go to visit the grandchildren, time has gotten a little loose, except when I pay attention to nature. The low angle light, yes, tells me it is late August, and fall is drawing nearer. The crape myrtles are blooming with the last summer color, but more petals show on the ground now, than on the blooms. And I look, like a treasure hunt for hope, for the first leaves of autumn... the first brilliant



colors that are harbingers of cool crisp days ahead. Recently at a Zoom worship service, in our visiting time before worship began, Judy Ripley had to gently remind me that the yellow leaves appearing in late July were not autumn leaves, but a response in the trees to our extreme heat, dropping leaves to help them survive. So now I am not fooled by the early yellows... but I hunt for the oranges and pinks. I saw this tiny orange leaf this morning as I walked just at sunrise. A tiny sign of the hope of the coming beauty and coolness of fall. *(cont'd next page)*

We need tiny signs of hope in these difficult and complex days for our country and our world. Hope in the form of words of reconciliation in these bitter political days, promising words of common ground found, even as we are tempted to use fighting words, as they feel so much more exciting. Hope, too, in remembering that these bizarre days of pandemic will not go on forever, and so how can we live together as God's churches in these long days? How can we offer hope to those far more impacted by the pandemic than us; how can we be vessels of hope in our community?

Look for the low angle light in the evening, watch for the leaves turning... mark time with our God who made them all, and us, to offer hope and healing to all in God's creation.

Amen.