

THE TRINITY TIMES

THE NEWSLETTER OF TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

JANUARY 2020

From the pastor

The writer of the gospel of John just had to be a Southerner. There's evidence to support that conclusion—first, John is a gospel full of strange stories that go in all directions like stories our grandmothers would tell. Second, it's full of long speeches delivered by Jesus to his disciples, just like long speeches delivered at family gatherings by relatives who appear once a year for a holiday occasion. Third, more than any other gospel, the gospel of John gives everyone's hometown, something Southerners always want to know about a new person, as in "Where are you from?" Philip, Andrew and Peter are from Bethsaida; Nathanael is from Cana; Lazarus, Mary and Martha are from Bethany; Joseph is from Arimethea—just to name a few. But finally—and the most compelling reason that the gospel of John must have been written by a Southerner—is that John contains more than its fair share of geographical assumptions. And there are few things a Southerner does better than judge someone by his or her hometown.

Now I'm not saying it's a good thing to do but it is commonly done in the South. Maybe it's done in the North or West, too, but I've never lived there.

Making geographical generalizations can be very disturbing and frustrating to some people. In seminary, we had a friend who absolutely came unglued every time we gathered and discussed people based on their hometowns. For good or for ill, we weren't shy about doing declaring our opinions, such as "well, you know that's how they do things in Spartanburg" (we rarely added the state, by the way, because everyone knew that Spartanburg was in SC), or "her theology may be a little off, but then she's from Florida." One day, our friend Jim had all that he could stand of this kind of conversation and as he stood up to leave the lunch table, he boomed at us, "I hate it when you make assumptions based on where a person grew up," and marched off quite irritated. After a brief silence, someone at the table said, "Well, that's understandable. After all, he's from Pittsburgh." We agreed and went on with our lunch.

So in this first chapter of John, we get that decidedly Southern flavor from Nathanael—who comes from Cana, by the way. After Philip gave Nathanael this great press release about Jesus: "we've found him about whom Moses in the law wrote, about whom the prophets wrote, and his name is Jesus, and

he's from Nazareth. . ." Nathanael cut Philip off right there and said, "Oh, please! You need not continue—can anything good, let alone anyone good, come out of Nazareth?"

Nathanael wasn't too far off in his judgment. Nazareth would not be the city which never sleeps but more than likely, the city one couldn't awaken. Nazareth was not home to kings and queens but field hands and laborers. The economy was agrarian. The people were uneducated. The view was unspectacular.

We can well imagine what Nathanael is saying to Philip, as they trudge along, "Philip, Nazareth has never hatched any great leaders. Can you honestly be telling me that the Messiah, one who is to come, is from the last place anyone would want to be?"

We must give Nathanael his due because even though he was skeptical about anything good coming out of Nazareth, he was willing to walk along with Philip. He was willing to push past his geographical prejudices and consider the possibility that something good could come out of Nazareth. Somewhat reluctantly, he responded to Philip's invitation, "come and see."

Maybe Nathanael was still explaining his doubts to Philip when Jesus himself approached and said, "Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no guile." Nathanael stopped short and asked with a mixture of suspicion and fear, "Where did you get to know me?" Jesus replied, "I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you."

Jesus' strange response could mean that Jesus had actually seen Nathanael sitting under a fig tree. Or, since under a fig tree was where students of the scripture sat and studied God's word, Jesus might have been making the point that he knew Nathanael to be the kind of man who would make a good disciple. A man who would not let his first impression be his last impression, willing to go with Philip in order to see this man from Nazareth who claimed the hearts and lives of Andrew and Philip and Peter and others.

Nathanael's openness and sincerity have important implications for us. We all make judgments about places and people, but this story cautions us about

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The Trinity Times is published monthly. We welcome news items and other contributions from members and friends of Trinity. Bring your articles to the church or e-mail them to the editor, Judy Schomber (schomberstat@aol.com), by the 20th of the month for the following month's newsletter.

TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STAFF
 Sally Hughes, Designated Pastor
 William E. Berger, Minister of Music
 Linda Rogers, Office Manager
 Charlie Bundy, Facilities Manager

SESSION MEMBERS
 Vira Baker (2020) Hank Howerton (2020)
 Lucas Bates (2020) Paul Parker (2021)
 Vera Billington (2021) Linda Rutherford (2022)
 Jackie Brawner (2022) George Ward (2022)
 Aad Zeeuw (2021)

JANUARY WORSHIP SCHEDULE AND LECTIONARY READINGS

**January 5 Second Sunday of Christmas/
 Celebration of the Lord's Supper**
 Jeremiah 31:7-14; Psalm 147:12-20;
 Ephesians 1:3-14; John 1:(1-9) 10-18

January 12 Baptism of the Lord
 Isaiah 42:1-9; Psalm 29; Acts 10:34-43;
 Matthew 3:13-17

January 19 Second Sunday after Epiphany
 Isaiah 49:1-7; Psalm 40:1-11;
 1 Corinthians 1:1-9; John 1:29-42

January 26 Third Sunday after Epiphany
 Isaiah 9:1-4; Psalm 27:1, 4-9;
 1 Corinthians 1:10-18; Matthew 4:12-23

ENJOY A WINTER WARMUP AT THE SOUP AND CHILI POTLUCK ON JANUARY 26

The last Sunday in January marks the deepest part of winter and usually is a time of wishing for something warm to combat the cold outside. Therefore the Fellowship Committee annually invites the congregation to participate in a "warm up" potluck on that Sunday -- the Soup and Chili potluck.



Please bring your favorite soup and/or chili to share with the congregation. The Fellowship Committee will furnish the condiments and accompaniments (cheese, crackers, sauces, chips, etc.), breads, desserts, and drinks.



If you bring your dish already hot, we can keep it hot in the warming oven in the kitchen. If your dish needs to be reheated, we can do so on the stove, the two ovens, or in the microwave. If you prefer to bring a crockpot, we have plugs in various locations in the kitchen and in the Fellowship Hall.

One of the features of the Soup and Chili Potluck is the opportunity to sample various kinds of soups and chilis. Join us for hearty food and good fellowship on January 26 following worship!



JACKIE AND PHIL'S WEDDING ON DECEMBER 28

Trinity was the joyous scene of the wedding of Jackie Brawner and Phil Elbert on December 28, to which the whole congregation was invited. All of the couple's children were members of the wedding party and the reception was held in the East Hall.



photos by Hank Schomber



ADULT EDUCATION IN JANUARY

The Adult Sunday School class invites everyone to attend as it begins a new year of lessons and discussions in 2020. The class is for those who wish to study the Bible more thoroughly through an examination of single books of the Bible, themes such as God's love, passages such as the Ten Commandments, and commentaries from Bible scholars, such as the advent book studied in December, *Not a Silent Night*, by Adam Hamilton.

The class is held in the parlor and begins at 9:30 a.m. every Sunday morning. Pastor Sally Hughes is the leader of the class.

The class reads and discusses the material for each Sunday and anyone can join at any time and "get caught up". The only ongoing text for the class is the Bible. The Presbyterian church uses the Revised Standard Version for study and worship, but any version that you care to bring is fine for the lessons and discussions.

There are Bibles available in the parlor for use in the class should you find yourself without one some Sunday.

If the class is going to study a particular book, Sally will make arrangements to order books for the class.

Come join the Sunday morning group for thoughtful and stimulating study and discussion!



NEW MEMBERS

Pictured are some of the new members of Trinity's congregation. From top to bottom: Katy Wilson, Jane Cooper, Roger Cunningham, and Kate Wilson Turner.



*photos
by Hank
Schomber*



PRAYERS

Please keep Norma DeJarnette and her family in your prayers. She is at St. Thomas Midtown.



From the pastor (continued from page 1)

holding onto those judgments about people, even about our faith. It cautions us about leaving no room for a changed mind or a changed heart. It keeps us from allowing our favorite agenda—whether personal, political, or social—to block the truth which could change our favorite agenda.

As this story continues, Nathanael was completely bowled over by Jesus, and all because Jesus tells Nathanael that he saw him “under the fig tree before Philip called you.” Nathanael was impressed enough to declare, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”

“Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these. Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven and earth opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.” If Nathanael believed in Jesus because Jesus knew a little thing like Nathanael’s identity, how much more will Nathanael believe when he sees great things, the power of God at work in the world? And how much more will he believe when Nathanael sees the power of God working in unlikely and unexpected ways?

Jesus’ words, of course, recall the treasured story of Jacob, who dreamed that there was a ladder on the earth and that the angels of God were going up and down the ladder. Earth was reaching into heaven and heaven was coming down to earth and the Lord stood beside Jacob and repeated the promise that Jacob would be blessed, that the Lord would be with him always, until the Lord’s promise was fulfilled.

Jesus’ words to Nathanael remind us that we cannot let our impressions of God become fixed or rigid. If we fix in our mind that this is how God always is, this is the way God must act, this is what God would or would not do—we run the risk of turning mind and heart away from how God might be, how God could act, what God will do. Jesus tells Nathanael to look at the larger picture so that Nathanael’s faith might grow stronger and deeper.

Which encourages us to look more closely at this passage about the calling of Jesus’ disciples. Really, it’s a bit mind-boggling to see how all these different personalities from various places came to be Jesus’ disciples. Look at them—Andrew and Peter, fishermen with little formal education; Philip and Nathanael, students of scripture who had probably never thrown a fishing net in their lives. Starting with them, Jesus collected unlikely people from unexpected places—a mixture of education and ignorance; a jumble of personal expectations and purer goals; a little bit of heart, a lot of mind; called through word of mouth or a great first impression.

Those who are called by Jesus respond in different ways—some out of duty and devotion; some with reluctance and others with eagerness; those who have inquiring minds and ask many questions versus those with contemplative hearts who listen in awed silence.

A truer picture of Jesus’ disciples has never been painted, then or now. This was what disciples looked like then; this is how disciples are now. There may be a few of us who dropped our nets and followed Jesus at the first sound of his voice, but I’m willing to bet that most of us are an unholy mixture of motives, feelings, actions and reactions. Nevertheless, all of us here—each in our own way—has heard and answered the call of Jesus. Every disciple of Christ is somewhere between wringing his or her hands with anxiety and shaking someone else’s hand with enthusiasm. In every age, the call to follow Christ comes to us whoever we are, in whatever circumstances we find ourselves, on ordinary days, in extraordinary ways, regardless of our geographical origins.

Can anything good come out of Nazareth? It is a question that invites us to open our hearts and minds and let the breath of God blow through our lives, our church, our world in order to create great things and do amazing deeds. But the answer to the question, “can anything good come out of Nazareth?” is that in God’s love, by the grace of Christ, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, from the least likely person from the most unexpected place, wonderful things can come.

NEWS FROM THE SESSION

Session 2019 Class members Phil Elbert, Matt Rutherford and Hank Schomber roll off the Board along with 2020 member Bill Dougherty who resigned for health reasons.

The Congregation has elected new elders Jackie Brawner, Linda Rutherford and George Ward to the Class of 2022 along with Lucas Bates to the Class of 2020, who along with returning elders Vira Baker, Hank Howerton, Vera Billington, Paul Parker and Aad Zeeuw will form the new Session.

The Session and the Congregation have affirmed Trinity would like to continue its relationship with Pastor Sally Hughes and requested the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee to reclassify her status from “Designated Pastor” to “Installed Pastor.” Presbytery is expected to act on the request at its February meeting.

5 The congregation also approved the pastor’s Call for 2020.

DIRECTORY UPDATES

Updated address directories are available in the church office. If you're a member or regular attendee, we would like to include you in our pictorial directory update this year. Aad Zeeuw will be taking photos after church on Sundays in January. Watch the bulletin and Friday e-mail for more details.



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- Sara Anne Berger 3
- Thoma Parker 5
- Peter O'Brien 22
- Ruth Sims 22

Our apologies if we have missed your birthday or if it is incorrect. If we have missed or muffed your special day please call the church office at 297-6513 and let us know.

SPECIAL GROUP ACTIVITY MEETINGS

*****Wandering Presbyterians.** Watch for information on the next outing of the Wandering Presbyterians in the Friday e-mail and the Sunday Bulletin.

*****Presbyterian Women** will meet Tuesday, January 7, in the Trinity Parlor We will cover Lesson 4 "Words of Love: Don't Kill Each Other" from *Love Carved in Stone: A Fresh Look at the Ten Commandments*. Bring a lunch for a Fellowship time following the lesson.

*****Trinity Book Club's** next meeting will be Wednesday, January 8. We will meet at 5:30 p.m. for snacks followed by book club discussion from 6 - 7:00 p.m. in the parlor. The book for January is *Caleb's Crossing* by Geraldine Brooks. If you have questions, contact Katy Wilson (katywilson@gmail.com<) or Carla McDonough (carla_mcdonough@bellsouth.net).

GUEST MUSICIANS IN DECEMBER



Bassoonist Harold Skelton played with the choir on December 15 for the Lessons and Carols service.



Sara Crigger returned to solo for the Christmas Eve service.

THE ONLINE CALENDAR

For a complete list of activities, visit www.trinitypresnashville.org and click on “church calendar”. The calendar is updated regularly as activities are added, deleted, or changed. If your committee or group schedules a meeting using the church’s facilities, please contact Linda (297-6513 or office@trinitypresnashville.org) so your meeting can be placed on the calendar, or if there is a facilities conflict, it can be resolved before scheduling.

TRINITY TRACKINGS

If you have any news or announcements to share with the congregation, please pass them along to Sally via e-mail or word-of-mouth or drop a note in the offering plate on Sunday so they may be shared in the next Trinity Trackings column. Any and all tidbits of news are welcome!



Everyone was glad to see Bill and Joan Dougherty back at worship on December 8th! Bill continues to gain strength as he recovers from his illness.

Ruth Sims and Benita Sims travelled to Cookeville, TN to see Ruth's granddaughter/ Benita's niece Tomi Sims sing in a high school production.

Marieke Georgiadis-Ertel and her horse, Nimmy, received a 4th place ribbon in a recent competition.

Paul Berger has moved to Olympia, WA to work at Artesian Place Assisted Living Home. Paul's new address is 1505 Division St, SW, Olympia, WA 98502.

We are delighted to welcome these folks as new members at Trinity:
Roger Cunningham, Jane Cooper, Katy Wilson, Kate Wilson Turner



The Big Stitch 45

Saturday
January 11, 2020
8:30 am - 2pm

Trinity Presbyterian Church
3201 Hillsboro Pike
Nashville, TN 37215

Bring a sack lunch, or lunch may be purchased.
Drinks are provided.

Door Prizes - FREE Instruction* - FREE Seminars - FREE Patterns
- Boutique with patterns, yarn, needles & hooks -

NEW CLASSES! Big Stitch University

*Instruction is FREE, however BSU classes are by reservation only.

For more details visit KnitAndCrochetTN.org
for questions email deb@knitandcrochettn.org
or call (615) 410-0620

KNIT AND CROCHET WITH THE BIG STITCH ON JANUARY 11

Knit & Crochet TN at Trinity, January 11 - also known as The Big Stitch event: Do you like to knit or crochet OR want to learn more? The quarterly Big Stitch University will be held at Trinity on Saturday, January 11 from 8:30 a.m. - 2 p.m. Instructions are free, but classes are by reservation only. For more details, visit KnitAndCrochetTN.org. For questions, e-mail deb@knitandcrochettn.org or call 615-410-0620.

A 'THANK YOU' FROM FIFTY FORWARD FOR THE CHRISTMAS GIFTS

From: Robin Johnson
Date: Wednesday, December 18, 2019
To: Katy Wilson , Sara Hughes
Subject: A few photos!

Hello Katy & Sally – Yesterday the participants at Adult Day Services opened one of their Christmas gifts and the rest have gone home for them to open on Christmas morning. I wanted to share a few photos of the recipients with their gifts.

And a bit of a disclaimer. This population has a very difficult time “smiling”. So what might appear as a grimace or a look of disinterest does not necessarily reflect how the recipient feels about the gift. I will say that knowing Maureen well, the photo of her with her gift is one of my all-time favorites. That is definitely a smile!

And the shoes for Joanne are especially perfect. In the photo here she is wearing a black velour sweat suit and pink shirt that was given to her as a gift from a donor last year. She wears it almost every day and the shoes match it perfectly!

And sweet Bonnie with those lovely holiday pj's – they match her personality perfectly!

All of these seniors have signed a photo release so you may share their photos with members of the congregation who helped provide the gifts.

When the Victory Over Crime team delivers to Bano and Jabeena I will let you know and have photos and/or their reactions.

Robin

Robin Johnson
Director of Volunteer Engagement
FiftyForward
174 Rains Avenue



photos by FiftyForward

DECEMBER EVENTS



The Crismon Tree decorated for the first Sunday of Advent



Members fully decorated the Sanctuary on the Saturday before the first Sunday of Advent

photos by Hank Schomber



The choir presented Lessons and Carols on December 15



Bill Dougherty returns following his recovery at home and is met with joy and gladness.



Girl Scout Troop 1401 cleaning windows at Trinity on December 13. The troop meets once a month at Trinity.

staff photo

WANDERING PRESBYTERIANS ENJOY A CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON AND CONCERT AT SCARRITT BENNETT



Staff Photos



CHRISTMAS 2019 AT TRINITY



Christmas Breads were offered on December 22 in the East Hall



All the "Josephs" assembled for the Time with Children on December 15



Nativities were displayed in the office entrance and in the East Hall

photos by Hank Schomber



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

January 2020

A calendar that includes all building use, including Linden Waldorf School (LWS), can be found on the church website: www.trinitypresnashville.org

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 <i>Happy New Year!</i>	2	3	4
5 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Choir Rehearsal 11:00 am Worship/Communion After Worship: Fellowship Time	6 8 pm – AA Meeting	7 11 am – Presbyterian Women's Bible Study	8 5:30 pm – Book Club 7 pm – Choir Rehearsal	9 8 pm – AA Meeting	10	11 Session Retreat The Big Stitch 8:30 am – 2 pm Knit & Crochet TN
12 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Choir Rehearsal 11:00 am Worship Installation of Elders After Worship: Fellowship Time 3:00 pm Girl Scouts	13	14	15	16	17	18
19 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Choir Rehearsal 11:00 am Worship After Worship: Fellowship Time	20 Newsletter Articles Due 8 pm – AA Meeting	21 5 pm – Finance Committee Meeting	22 7 pm – Choir Rehearsal	23 8 pm – AA Meeting	24 UKIRK students from Lexington staying overnight 17-20	25 UKIRK students from Lexington staying overnight 17-20
26 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Choir Rehearsal 11:00 am Worship Annual Congregational Meeting After Worship: Soup/Chili Potluck 3:00 pm Girl Scouts	27 8 pm – AA Meeting	28 7 pm – Session	29 7 pm – Choir Rehearsal	30 6 pm – LWS 8 th grade musical 8 pm – AA Meeting	31	

Note: Church office is closed on Mondays