



Volume 9, Issue 5
May 2024

The Trinity Times

Welcome to May! A Month for Growth!



For when one says, "I belong to Paul," and another, "I belong to Apollos," are you not merely human? What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you came to believe, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive wages according to the labor of each. For we are God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building.

- 1 Corinthians 3:4-9 (NRSV)

In the United Methodist Church today we have an important conference coming up. One that may change the future of our church denomination. Many Christians have been going to different churches because they don't want certain people in the pulpit.

Many use the words of Paul to tell us that the preacher should be male, blameless, and upstanding. But often when someone is examined closely... we are often disappointed... because the person -- laity or clergy -- is not blameless, is less than upstanding, and is not male. We must recognize that *"all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God"*. We need to guard that we don't throw out the message with the messenger!

The Gospel is true! We serve a risen Savior! Our critique must be focused on the message, not the messenger! We need to be in prayer for all those charged with bringing the message to us. In this season of growth, we need to be reminded who gives the increase:

It is God!

The Corinthian church was home to a diverse community of believers. Each had a different view of what they believed, and who they wanted to hear preach. But unfortunately they let their love for the messenger get in the way of the message! They were so particular about who they followed that they forgot the most important thing. ***We are to follow Christ!***

When we get so caught up in the messenger, we run the risk of placing the preacher above the Word that is preached. The only one above us is ***Almighty God in three persons... Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*** It's time to get Real about what we believe, and who we believe in!

Pastor Jessica

**Welcome
May!**



**Upcoming
Events**



April 29 – Rachel Circle (1:30) – Chapters 3, 6 & 7
May 5 – 6th Sunday of Easter (9:15) – worship and communion. West District Conference (2:00) Ruhl's UMC.

May 8 – *Munchin' Methodists* at *Soprano's* in Campbelltown (12:00).

May 12 – 7th Sunday of Easter & Mother's Day Flowers for all women at the 9:15 service.

May 13 – Rachel Circle (1:30) – Chapters 8 & 9

May 19 – Pentecost Sunday (9:15). Trinity's Worship Service at American House (2:30).

May 21, 22, & 23 - UMC Annual Conference (See article on page 2.)

May 26 – Trinity Sunday (9:15)

May 27 – Memorial Day

June 1 & 2 – Trinity's Spaghetti Sauce Sale. (See article on page 2.)

June 3 – Rachel Circle (1:30) – Chapters 10 & 11

June 5 – Staff Parish (1:00)

June 6 – Worship Team (7:00)

A Mother

{muth-er} noun:



Sees the best in her kids even when they drive her crazy. She is all-accepting, warm, nourishing, nurturing, and safe. She is the champion multitasker, an expert calmer-downer, a lie detector, mediator, & finder of all things. It is the hardest job in the world and does the work of twenty -- for free!

See also: superhuman, therapist, doctor, care-giver, chauffeur, bodyguard, spy.



United Methodist Conferences in the News!



Together we belong to God and to one another. As United Methodists, Romans 12:5 is a cornerstone of our connectionalism. We are interconnected throughout our conference and with congregations around the world. The long-delayed General Conference is now underway in Charlotte, North Carolina (April 23 to May 3). This is our denomination’s highest legislative body and convenes every four years. However, we last met in full session in 2016. The 2020 session was postponed by the Covid pandemic and daunting travel challenges. So that delayed session is finally meeting in 2024. Stay informed and learn more about General Conference at website: www.resourceumc.org.

Our Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of the United Methodist Church is made up of nearly 400 churches, which serve over 80,000 members in 16 counties and is led by Bishop John Schol. This year using the theme of “**Belong**”, the 2024 Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference will meet May 21-23 at the Wildwood Convention Center in Wildwood, NJ. Pastor Jessica, Gloria Clark, and Carol and George Hollich will be our representatives at the Conference. Preparation for this Annual Conference begins with a District meeting on May 5 at Ruhls UMC.

The EPA&GNJ Communications Team is promoting the conference theme of **Belong** with an invitation to Churches to submit ideas on how their congregations help people—members, non-members and guests—feel they **Belong**. Some suggestions being heard...

- *Greet and welcome visitors from the pulpit during worship; *urge (and train) members to talk to visitors, thank them for coming, & invite them to return; *inquire about visitors’ needs & concerns that the church might be able to address; *have ushers or members greet & introduce new folk; *have post-worship receptions with food & fellowship; *send follow-up notes, cards and/or modest gifts; *encourage your members to personally invite others to church events or activities; *take smartphone selfies with visitors & send it to them with a greeting via text or email; hand-out welcome brochures containing a greeting, friendly photos, church ministry events & contact information.



Do any of these sound familiar? Are there any new ideas we could try?

Date

May Liturgists

May 5	Barb Querry
May 12	Dea Kishpaugh
May 19	Betsy Allwein
May 26	Karen Neblock



If you are unable to serve as liturgist, please call... 717-838-2812



May 6	Mary Earle
May 7	Natalina Harrison
May 7	Sue Hinkley
May 14	Mark Fortna
May 20	Luke Earle
May 23	Tiffany DeJesus
May 29	Marilyn Smith

Trinity's Spaghetti Sauce Sale



Although logistics make the preparation and serving of a spaghetti supper impossible, Mary and Keith Earle will be making spaghetti sauce (meat sauce only) on Saturday, June 1st at the church. It would be available for pickup that afternoon by 3:30 or on Sunday morning. The sauce will be available in quart size and can be refrigerated or frozen for folks not planning on using it immediately. The cost is \$9.00 a quart. Please call in your order to the church (717-273-1970) or sign-up in the back hallway by May 25th.

“Happiness is a butterfly, which when pursued, is always just beyond your grasp, but which, if you will sit down quietly, may alight upon you.”



A Prayer for Our Church

Dear Lord,

We thank you for your goodness, mercy, and grace. We sing our praises to you, who made all things. Lord as we marvel at the beauty that is Spring unfolding, we are awestruck by the empty tomb and how you triumphed over death. We praise your Mighty Name! Lord, we humbly ask for your healing blessings upon all those who are ill, and your loving care upon all those suffering, and upon all living in fear and pain. O Lord, wipe away all our tears, in accordance with your goodness, grace and love.

In Jesus Precious Name We Pray. Amen

Bible in A Year - 5 Day Program

As a New Year's Resolution Pastor Jessica suggested reading the Bible in a year and since it is a 5-day program, you have the weekend to make-up any readings missed throughout the week! You can begin at any time, so why not take-up the challenge and read the following scriptures in May!

April 29 - 1 Sam 18-19; 1 Chr 3; Ps 59; Acts 13
 April 30-1 Sa 20; 1 Chr 4; Ps 56, 57, 142; Acts 14
 May 1 - 1 Sam 21-22; 1 Chr 5; Ps 52; Acts 15
 May 2 - 1 Sam 23-24; 1 Chr 6; Ps 54; Acts 16
 May 3 - 1 Sam 25; 1 Chr 7; Acts 17
 May 6 - 1 Sam 26-27; 1 Chr 8; Acts 18
 May 7 - 1 Sam 28-29; 1 Chr 9; Acts 19
 May 8 - 1 Sam 30-31; 1 Chr 10; Acts 20
 May 9 - 2 Sam 1-2; 1 Chr 11; Ps 96, 106; Acts 21
 May 10 - 2 Sam 3-5; 1 Chr 12; Ps 122; Acts 22
 May 13 - 2 Sam 6; 1 Chr 13; Ps 60; Acts 23
 May 14 - 1 Chron 14-16; Acts 24
 May 15 - 2 Sam 7-8; 1 Chr 17; Ps 132; Acts 25
 May 16 - 2 Sam 9-10; 1 Chr 18-19; Ps 89; Acts 26
 May 17 - 2 Sam 11-12; 1 Chr 20; Ps 51, 32; Acts 27
 May 20 - 2 Samuel 13-14; Acts 28
 May 21 - 2 Sam 15-17; Psalms 3, 63; Romans 1
 May 22 - 2 Sam 18-20; Psalm 34; Romans 2
 May 23 - 2 Sam 21-23; Psalm 18; Romans 3
 May 24 - 2 Sam 24; 1 Chr 21; Romans 4
 May 27 - 1 Chron 22-25; Psalm 78; Rom 5
 May 28 - 1 Kings 1; 1 Chr 26-28; Rom 6
 May 29 - 1 Kings 2; 1 Chr 29; Rom 7
 May 30 - 1 Kings 3; 2 Chr 1; Ps 42; Rom 8
 May 31 - 1 Kings 4; Prov 1-2; Ps 43; Rom 9

let's do Munchin' Methodists lunch May 8...

Join us as we journey up the road to Sopranos in Campbelltown at 12:00 on Wednesday, May 8 for an Italian fellowship luncheon. Sign-up sheet is on the hallway bulletin board!

A Prayer For May:

May you be happy.
 May you stay healthy.
 May you feel safe.
 May you find comfort.
 May you sense peace.
 May you give love.
 May you possess courage.
 May you have faith.
 May you spread joy.
 May you be kind.



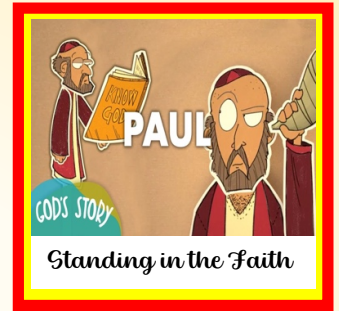
In Our Thoughts & Prayers

Joy Ellen Bastien	Pam Boyer
Jill Brickley	Penny Brown
Rachel Brossman	Rev. Clark & Family
Chris Daubert	Dan Earle
Gail Emrich	Kitty & Elmer Fair
Sue Fitzgibbon	Ted Frey
The Geist family	Joan Groff
Carol & George Hollich	Kim Hollich
Debbie Ludwig	Carol Masemore
Donna Mease	The Neblock family
Beverly Palm	Alissa Plant
Gary Robson	Marilyn Smith
The Snavelly family	The Snyder family
Reba Sterner family	Jack Stouffer
Pat Swartz	Vicki Swartz
Joyce Twigg & family	Dave & Barb Wallett
Erin Walters	Kim Washington
Tina Washington	Erin Walters
Dave Wease & family	Judith Wentzel
George Wilkins family	Maxine Wire
Carol Yeagley	Kathy Zehring & family

Families & recovering victims of violence
 All who are sick & shut in & their caretakers
 All those impacted by disasters around the world
 Our men and women in uniform
 Our children to know, learn, and grow, in the Lord
 Our DS, The Rev. Jenny Freymover, Bishop Schol
 Our Conference and The United Methodist Church
 Dear Lord, we humbly pray for our Church home,
 Our Community, Our Country, and Our World.

Adult Sunday School – May

This month we conclude the theme of the Spring Quarter, **EXAMINING OUR FAITH** with a series of lessons entitled “**Standing in the Faith**”. The quarter’s final unit investigates the spiritual benefits of having faith in Christ. Some of the recipients of Paul’s New Testament letters were of Jewish heritage. For this reason, his writings frequently contrast a person’s keeping the Law of Moses with a person’s faith in Christ.



May 5

Justified by Faith

Romans 3:21–30

May 12

Counted as Righteous

Romans 4:13–25

May 19

Reconciled to God

Romans 5:1–11

May 26

Who Has Believed?

Romans 10:1–17

Although the Greeks and Romans were hostile toward the Jewish people, the Jews enjoyed a privileged position in the empire. Because the Jewish people had offered help to the Roman rulers during the Maccabean period (2nd century BC), they received a pass to practice their religion without worshipping the divinities of Rome. Moreover, they were exempted from military service and allowed to live according to their laws within their communities, including the observance of the Sabbath.

However, “When in Rome” the Jewish people did not “do as the Romans do.” Instead, they remained strictly monotheistic, adhering to the Law of Moses, practicing circumcision, and maintaining other rites of ritual purity. They also continued to offer sacrifices in the temple. To Jewish people, faith was based on the covenantal relationship they had as a people through Abraham.



However, following the conversion of Paul on the road to Damascus, he preached that people did not receive justification through keeping the Law of Moses. Instead, justification and righteousness came through faith. As an example, it was Abraham’s faith, not his actions, that were counted to him as righteousness. A person can have faith after they hear the good news of Christ. Believers enter the community of God’s people by confessing sin and believing that Jesus is Lord. As a result, believers can rejoice! Because of our faith in Christ, we celebrate a relationship of peace with God. We were once adversaries of God, but by our faith, we have received the ultimate benefit: becoming children of God. This new identity which became known as Christianity was good news for all who would believe.

This new way of believing was formed around a set of beliefs about Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection. Initially, it was considered a sect of Judaism and enjoyed the same privileges as Jews in the free exercise of their faith. The appeal of the Christian faith was rational worship, high moral norms, monotheism, strong community, and respect for the Old Testament. This pleased some Gentiles because, unlike Judaism, it did not associate with one nationality or insist on the rite of circumcision or the observance of the Sabbath for inclusion.

These differences quickly established a line between the Christian faith and all other religions, including Judaism. In the Christian community, faith could refer to adherence to an established belief regarding Jesus. Faith was also trusting in the covenantal relationship between God and humanity. The growth of the church in Rome was influenced by an edict, issued by Emperor Claudius in about AD 49, that had forced Jews living in the city to leave. The expulsion of Jews from Rome resulted in Gentile Christians being in the majority in the church there.

In our time together this month we will focus on selected verses from Paul’s letter to the Romans and in the growth of the early church. So, join us in our May Sunday School time as we discuss, “**Standing in the Faith**”.

May 5

1. “For all have sinned and fall short of the _____ of God.”

Romans 3:23

2. A person is justified by faith and the requirements of the law. T/F

Romans 3:28

May 12

1. Where there is no law, there is no what? (transgression, transfiguration, testimony)

Romans 4:15

2. Christ was raised to life for “our _____.”

Romans 4:25

May 19

1. Because of justification by faith, believers have _____ with God.

Romans 5:1

2. At the right time, Christ died for the _____.

Romans 5:6

May 26

1. Christ is the culmination of the _____.

Romans 10:4

2. Paul quoted from an Old Testament passage that declared the beauty of what body part that proclaims good things? (feet, lips, hands)

Romans 10:15

Administrative Council Meeting via Zoom April 8, 2024 – 7:00 pm – Minutes



Facilitator: George Hollich

Minutes: Carol Hollich (*summary to appear in the May newsletter*)

Attendance via Zoom: Gloria Clark, Sally DeJesus, Kitty Fair, Carol Hollich, George Hollich, Dea Kishpaugh, Jack Kishpaugh, Barb Querry, Pastor Jessica Ross.

Excused: Elmer Fair, Keith Earle, Deb Forry, Marilyn Smith, Reba Sterner, Barb Wallet, Dave Wallett.

Housekeeping – Attendance, Approval of Past Minutes & Agenda

Devotions – from the book "Walking in Grace 2024" (the ability to reframe our woes with humor)

Calendar Dates that Reflect our Ministry

Other than the 9:15 In-Person Worship, the 9:15 Streamed Worship Service & Committee meetings will be held via ZOOM, unless other arrangements are announced.



April 7 – Worship & Communion

April 8 – Ad Board (7:00)

April 10 – Munchin' Methodists at Gin Mill (12:00)

April 21 – Worship at American House (2:30)

April 25 – Trinity at Willow Terrace (6-8)

April 29 – Rachel Circle (1:30)

May 5 – Worship & Communion

May 8 – Munchin' Methodists at Sopranos (12:00)

May 12 – Mother's Day

May 13 – Rachel Circle (1:30)

May 19 – Worship at American House (2:30)

May 21-23 – EPAUMC Annual Conference

May 23 – Trinity at Willow Terrace (6-8)

June 1 – Spaghetti Sauce Sale (4-5)

June 2 – Spaghetti Sauce Sale (9-12)

June 2 – Worship & Communion

June 5 – Staff Parish (1:00)

June 6 – Worship Team (7:00)

June 10 – Ad Board (7:00)

June 12 – Munchin' Methodists??

June 16 – Father's Day

June 30 – 5th Sunday Serving (July 4th picnic theme)



Discussion - Current or Emerging Projects that Clarify Our Ministry

Bible Studies – Pastor Jessica will begin her Wednesday night Bible Study on the book of James on April 10 at 6:30. Sunday School is discussing "examining our faith" every Sunday morning at 10:30. Pastor Rick's Bible Study is on hold, and the Rachel Circle is studying Henry Blackaby's book "*Experiencing the Resurrection*".

Communications – Gloria Clark gave an update on Face Book (46 different posts, especially on Easter) and the Website (49 posts with people looking at the home page, worship, history, newsletter, and music ministry. She asked George to supply some of our Easter worship music to our site.

Cleaning Company – Ames Cleaning Team was asked to empty trash cans regularly and check items needed in the women's bathroom. They need the key to open and put hand towels into the dispenser rather than leaving the towels sitting on top.

LINKS – The in-town pastors meet monthly. There was a very nice combined Good Friday service. Bethany's pastor, Andres Torres, is interested in combining with us on some projects. Gloria Clark will join them in discussion on this topic.

Use of Church Spaces – There was a group interested in using our facility but did not have the funds to pay for the utilities needed during their time in the church. One of our member's granddaughters might be doing community service at Trinity, and Pastor Jessica has found some hours where she could be of help. She possibly would need transportation to the church.



Highlights from Reports that Support Our Ministry

Finance – Barb Query – All conference bills are paid. Deposits are still behind expenditures. Mary Gruber asked that people send only one check to Trinity and just list on a separate piece of paper the different bills they are paying.



Missions – Dea Kishpaugh – We donated 454 pounds of food to LCCM (thanks to all of you and Dean Zehring for your donations). Dea took care of delivering 9 birthday gifts to Cornwall Manor after a long search to see who the organizer of the event was (thanks to Phyllis Carter for finding that). The cost of the gifts was \$54. In May we will be asking for monetary donations to the “Blooms” festival at Cornwall Manor.



Special Projects – Sally DeJesus - The crafters are working on 640 gifts for the Lebanon School District employees. They will then begin work on making gifts for the men on Father’s Day. The Willow Terrace crafts in April and May will follow the themes of “April Showers” and “May Flowers”. This will be Sally’s last months leading this ministry. We need someone to continue this ministry next fall.

Staff Parish – Team Members – Our new secretary, Diana Marzari started working at Trinity on April 1st. Thanks to Deb Forry for her years of service and helping Diana to learn the location of files in the office and on the computer, as well as explaining various procedures that are part of the job. As Diana is learning where everything is, she will continue to mark the Bible on Sunday morning for the liturgists and prepare and print the worship bulletin. She will also send the Zoom worship service and Sunday School materials out on Monday morning. We got to meet and greet Diana and her family when they worshipped with us on April 7th.

Trustees – Jack Kishpaugh – The technician from Precision Heating & Cooling was in and will be getting two new circulator pumps for our heating system. They will also order the two valves needed in the women’s bathroom to keep the toilets from clogging.



Worship Team – Carol Hollich – Darrell Woomeer is enjoying playing the organ, although one of the notes isn’t playing. Choir is singing until the middle of June. Carol is looking for soloists for the summer. Worship attendance is pretty good with an average on a Sunday of 25 to 32 and 10-16 on Zoom. It was decided to have the pastor, organist, and liturgist pray at the organ after the gathering music before walking up the aisle during the prelude. We changed communion a little, and it seems to be working well. We had 29 Easter Lily orders and thank those who displayed them so beautifully. Altar flowers are set for April & May. Call Donna Mease if you want to have flowers on the altar during the summer months. We will have flowers for all women on Mother’s Day and Sally DeJesus will have her crafters make gifts for Father’s Day. The 5th Sunday Serving (a hot dog picnic) is coming up on June 30th. We need leaders and cooks for this.

Parish Visitor - Rick Clark – We are praying for Rick’s healing and his ability to visit our folks again. As of now he is making phone calls.



Pastor Jessica – Pastor Jessica’s full report is in the church office. She noted that the conference never got our statistical report, so she is sending it in again. She was pleased with the Easter week services and thanked everyone who helped. She likes the messages George puts up on our outside sign, and even though we still don’t have people flocking to Trinity, it is getting the message out to all who drive by. The new April prayer bulletin has been distributed. Please let her know if you wish to be taken off the list or added to the list. “Reading the Bible in a Year” has members excited. She would like to see a calendar of those offering snacks on a Sunday morning so when we have visitors, there is always something in the parlor for them. She continues to be thankful for having the discretionary fund to assist those who come to the church for help.

Other – We thank Dea Kishpaugh for her beautiful foyer window displays. Sally DeJesus reminded us to be wary of a scam email that is making the rounds asking for gift cards for cancer patients from Pastor Jessica. The email says that she is too busy to get them on her own. George says you know it’s a scam because our Pastor is never too busy to help someone in need! Delete the email immediately.

Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 with a prayer by Pastor Jessica.

Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting: Monday June 10 at 7 pm

(Ad Board Meeting Schedule - February, April, June, August, October, December)

Trinity United Methodist Church

757 Willow Street, Lebanon, Pa. 17046

Where "Faith, Hope and Love abide to encourage all to respond to the call of Christ."

6th Sunday of Easter -- May 5, 2024

(The service begins at 9:15 with the fellowship area opening at 9:00.)

To be a part of worship on the computer go to <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83094346955>

or join by phone by dialing 1-646-876-9923 and entering 830 9434 6955 when prompted.)

The flowers today on the altar are to the glory of God

Gathering Music

Organist: Darrell Woomer

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Liturgist: Barb Query

Call to Worship

Psalm 98

Hymnal #818

L: O sing to the Lord a new song, for the Lord has done marvelous things. God's right hand and holy arm have gotten the victory.

P: The Lord has declared victory, and has revealed his vindication in the sight of the nations.

L: The Lord has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel.

P: All the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.

L: Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth;

P: break forth into joyous song and sing praises.

L: Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre, with the lyre and the sound of melody.

P: With trumpets and the sound of the horn make a joyful noise before the Ruler, the Lord!

L: Let the sea roar and all that fills it, the world and those who dwell in it.

P: Let the floods clap their hands; let the hills sing for joy together before the Lord, who comes to judge the earth. The Lord will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with equity.

Hymn #98

To God Be the Glory

To God be the glory great things He has done! So loved He the world that He gave us His Son Who yielded His life an atonement for sin and opened the life-gate that all may go in.

Refrain: *Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, Let the earth hear His voice*

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, Let the people rejoice

*O Come to the Father Through Jesus the Son and give Him the glory,
Great things He has done!*

O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood, to every believer the promise of God

The vilest offender who truly believes that moment from Jesus a pardon receives. **(Refrain)**

Great things He has taught us, great things He has done,

And great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son

But purer, & higher, & greater will be our wonder, our transport, when Jesus we see. **(Refrain)**

Opening Prayer

The Prayer of St. Francis

Hymnal #481

Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace, where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy. O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood, as to understand; to be loved, as to love; for it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

The Apostle's Creed

Hymnal #881

New Testament

Acts 10: 44-48

N.T. pg. 130

Epistle

1st John 5: 1-6

N.T. pg.241

Gospel

John 15: 9-17

N.T. pg.109

Doxology & Celebration of Gifts**Hymn # 400 *Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing***

Come Thou fount of every blessing tune my heart to sing Thy grace
Streams of mercy never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise
Teach me some melodious sonnet, sung by flaming tongues above
Praise the mount, I'm fixed upon it, mount of Thy redeeming love

Here I raise my Ebenezer, hither by Thy help I'm come
And I hope by Thy good pleasure, safely to arrive at home
Jesus sought me when a stranger, wandering from the fold of God
He to rescue me from danger, interposed His precious blood

Oh, to grace how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be
Let Thy goodness like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to Thee
Prone to wander, Lord I feel it, prone to leave the God I love
Here's my heart, oh take and seal it, seal it for Thy courts above



Pastor Jessica Ross

Sermon***Handpicked by God*****Prayers of the People & the Lord's Prayer****Prayer of Confession**

Hymnal #891

Almighty and most merciful God, we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against thy holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; and we have done those things which we ought not to have done. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us. Spare thou those, O God, who confess their faults. Restore thou those who are penitent; according to thy promises declared in Christ Jesus our Lord. And grant, O most merciful God, for his sake, that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life; to the glory of thy holy name. Amen

Holy Communion

Hymnal #12

Hymn #370***Victory in Jesus***

I heard an old, old story, how a Savior came from glory
How He gave His life on Calvary to save a wretch like me
I heard about His groaning of His precious blood's atoning
Then I repented of my sins And won the victory.

Refrain: Oh, victory in Jesus, my Savior forever
He sought me and bought me with His redeeming blood
He loved me 'ere I knew Him and all my love is due Him
He plunged me to victory beneath the cleansing flood

I heard about His healing of His cleansing power revealing
How He made the lame to walk again and caused the blind to see
And then I cried, "Dear Jesus, come and heal my broken spirit"
And somehow Jesus came and brought to me the victory **(Refrain)**

I heard about a mansion he has built for me in glory,
And I heard about the streets of gold beyond the crystal sea;
About the angels singing and the old redemption story,
And some sweet day I'll sing up there the song of victory. **(Refrain)**

**Benediction****Benediction Response*****He is Lord***

#177

He is Lord, He is Lord! He is risen from the dead and He is Lord!
Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Postlude

Organist: Darrell Woomer

Sunday School Handout – May 5

(Thoughts to consider in the upcoming week.)

Study Text: Romans 3:21–30

KEY VERSE: *This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus*
—Romans 3:22–24



Always Going Downhill

The Greek poet Homer (lived in the ninth or eighth century BC) recorded a myth about a king named Sisyphus. The human king figured out a way to cheat his death: by capturing the god of death, Thanatos, and thereby preventing anyone from being able to die. The consequences of this imprisonment were grisly, and the other gods could not allow the situation to persist. Thanatos did not stay inactive forever. And when Sisyphus did die, he received an interesting punishment. He was to roll a heavy stone up a hill. But, just as he was about to reach the top of the hill, the stone would roll back down again. And this punishment would go on forever. This is the origin of characterizing an unachievable task as Sisyphean. Surely we have all experienced a Sisyphean task, like having the carrot of a raise or promotion dangled just ahead, always out of reach, or family harmony always seeming just beyond the next therapy session or fight. Trying to earn salvation is another Sisyphean task we all know, whether we have struggled with it ourselves or only seen others in the midst of this impossible quest. There must be another way! And Paul teaches that other way in our lesson text today.

Report Cards

Growing up, I never liked school. Starting in kindergarten, I would invent all kinds of excuses to stay home. For instance, I'd run home from my bus stop and tell my mother I needed a hug that inevitably lasted *just* long enough to miss my ride. My mom passed away recently, and I ran into some of my old report cards as we cleaned up her belongings. My struggles and failures were preserved and filed among mom's other essential papers. But something I found in the filing cabinet changed my initial embarrassment. Mom had kept her report cards from elementary school to high school. These papers revealed that my mother struggled in school as I did! Failure can make us feel isolated. But if we were to compare our "report cards" of righteousness, we would see we are all in the same dismal position. How does knowing that we have all sinned and not attained God's glory change your attitude when you speak of Jesus to your friends and neighbors?

Bragging Rights

When is it acceptable to boast? Hiring experts assert that the resume is an appropriate place to talk oneself up and make a big deal out of one's accomplishments. Indeed, what would a potential employer think if candidates did not bring up college degrees, prior work experience and accolades, and other pertinent information that qualified them for the job and made them the best candidates for the position? But, of course, too much zeal in touting one's accomplishments can backfire. For instance, in my hometown, the health director was forced to step down because of his resume: he allegedly oversold his college education. Paul never weighed in on the merits of an effective resume. But on boasting in general, he reminds us that we have nothing to boast about when we stand before God. No matter what good works we could put on a resume documenting our lives, we fall short of what God requires. Bearing that in mind, how will you guard against illicit boasting?

1. **How have you experienced God's patience?**
2. **What evidence can you point to that you are being made new in Christ?**
3. **How do you affirm in thought, word, and deed that God is the God of all?**

Justified by Faith

Lesson 10, Romans 3:21-30, NIV

Coming Up Short

On an index card, write down only the numbers of the statements that apply to you. Fold your card so no one can see what you wrote.

1. I have done something I regret.
2. I have a persistent sin in my life that I've been unable to conquer.
3. I have put something higher than God in my life.
4. I have loved myself more than my neighbor.
5. I have lied, stolen, or coveted.
6. I have secretly hated someone in my heart.

Your leader will collect the cards and redistribute them randomly. As each number on the list is called, raise your hand if that number is on the card you received. Pray silently for the anonymous person whose card you received.

God Of All

In one minute, list as many Old Testament examples as you can of God's care and concern for Gentiles:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

In one minute, list as many New Testament examples as you can of God's care and concern for Jewish people:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Compare your lists with a partner. Then discuss why it's important to know God as the God of all.

