



# Trinity Tidings

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September 2023

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## In Ordinary Time

by the Rev. Jess Reeves

It's the time for normal, regular, run-of-the-mill things to happen, and it's the longest season of the Christian year. From around the first of summer until November we are in "ordinary" time.

So, what's "ordinary" about the long season after Pentecost and before Advent? The first Pentecost certainly started with a bang, after all. Three thousand people added to the Church in one day is amazing, and people hearing the Gospel in their own language – even more so! In various parts of the world today, this continues to happen again as the Holy Spirit allows. While Christianity is diluted and shrinks in the West, it is exploding in Africa and amazingly in various tyrannous regimes.

What's ordinary about the season after Pentecost is its availability. Simply put, the gifts of the Holy Spirit are available to everyone, everywhere, in every time. And so, this long season of growth comes after Easter to subtly remind us of what should be normal and ongoing: the growth of the Kingdom of God.

This season may be better stated as an unraveling of the curse and a taste of heaven. Back in Genesis, the Bible says of humanity, "every inclination of their heart was always evil." And so, at the Tower of Babel, God confused their languages because all their accomplishment was more and more evil. They had grown so efficient at hurting each other that God wanted to slow their communication down. (Just imagine not being able to get a Wi-Fi signal, with the whole internet going down. It might be the healthiest thing to happen: a beautiful pause in the hurt that so easily gets disseminated online in the mud-slinging now prevalent.) The people scattered, it slowed the damage. But it didn't end it.

Luke was using some historical code when he keyed his readers in to the 16 language groups that could suddenly hear and understand the Good News of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. The 16 languages represented a list of all the people groups who were separated after the Babel incident. At Pentecost, God was unraveling the curse with a beautiful taste of heaven. Where people at Babel had determined to build a monument to themselves, God decided to build at Pentecost a monument of people for himself – a trophy of His grace:

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## Happening This Month

### Worship on Sundays

Holy Communion at **10:30 a.m.**

**Wednesday Healing Service** — Holy Communion at 12:05 p.m. in the Chapel followed by a potluck lunch. **Sept. 6 and 20.**

**Labor Day** — The parish office will be closed **Monday, Sept. 4** in observance of Labor Day.

**The Vestry will meet Sunday, Sept. 17** after the service.

**The second annual “Trinity Treasures”** online auction will soon be open for bidding. We are seeking donations of outdoor and household items, artwork, antiques, kitchen items, etc. (Please, no clothes or broken items). Hunting gear and camo will be accepted. Please bring your items to the church the week of **Sept. 11-15**, between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., marked with a pre-sale price. Trinity parishioners may purchase items in person during the pre-sale period, through Friday, the 15th. Please contact Karen Berry for details. If you need help moving items, notify Karen by Wednesday, Sept. 13. After the pre-sale period, items will be photographed, catalogued, and posted online for bidding. Tracy Robinson, professional auctioneer, will again be conducting the sale. For details,

please check the website, [Robinsonauctionco.com](http://Robinsonauctionco.com) You may also register to bid on the items online once the auction begins. At the conclusion of the auction, items will be picked up and paid for during a specific timeframe under the supervision of auction staff.

## News and Notices

**Neighbor to Neighbor** has an urgent need for canned goods and other non-perishable food items for its pantry. This need has more than doubled in the last two years. Donations may be delivered directly to the agency at 1419 Pine Street. If you prefer to make a monetary donation instead, please make your check payable to Trinity Church, note “Neighbor to Neighbor” on the memo line, and drop in the offering plate.

**A friendly reminder** as we come to the end of summer that Trinity’s financial obligations continue year-round. Our monthly utility bills didn’t take a break this summer with all the extreme heat we’ve endured. We depend on your pledges and offerings to maintain church operations and I encourage everyone to make an effort to keep their pledge current. We will be sending out quarterly statements in early October. Your attention to keeping your annual pledge current is appreciated.

— JOHN WELLENBERGER, treasurer

## September Ministries

	3	10	17	24
1st Reading	Jessi Owyong	Lucy McNew	Donna Coker	Karen Berry
2nd Reading/ Prayers/Chalice	Jeff Carraway	Charlie McNew	Phil McBee	Charlotte Wilson
Crucifer/Server	Jeff Carraway	Charlie McNew	TBA	TBA
Usher	Jay Cromwell	J Wellenberger	Trey Davis	Martin Johnson
Security	Mike Grisham	Jim Danaher	Jay Cromwell	John Owen
Altar Guild	Alyce Carraway	Alyce Carraway	Carol Davis	Merry Tom Dorris
Lock-Up	Jeff Carraway	J. Wellenberger	Jack Davis	Doug Dorris

# Pastor's reflections

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3,000 people coming together and exhibiting the fruits, power, and vision of the Living God.

And after that great moment: the rest of the story - the mission of going out and living an "ordinary" life in extraordinary ways. This Spirit-filled life is what's supposed to be ordinary. The Holy Spirit is available to anyone who calls on the name of the Lord in any situation, no matter how mundane a life, how busy a schedule, or how much has to be done. Through the power of the Holy Spirit given at Pentecost, the ordinary becomes extraordinary, and not only are people saved when they call upon His name, but their lives will be transformed.

So, what do we do if we don't see the Lord working and bringing in a harvest in our "ordinary" time? What do we do if we feel our lives are dull, we aren't doing enough, there's too much of the mundane around us? We remember that, by the Spirit, His power to transform, and comfort, and direct is found in every little ordinary moment, as well as every big task and mission He calls us to. And even more simply, we just begin praying. We ask for the faith to believe this. We ask for God's empowering presence, the Holy Spirit given at Pentecost, who is with you even now and inviting you to step into the normal, everyday, ordinary time of His presence, power, and work. And know: He is at work there.

## Before You Assume

by the Rev. Jess Reeves

**"Before you assume, learn. Before you judge, understand.  
Before you hurt, feel. Before you say, think." -Unknown**

**I**n our sinful nature, we see people's flaws and make assumptions without knowing the whole story. Mind-reading, one manifestation of this in relationships, leads to confusion, resentment, frustration, and failure of charity. I'm not talking about psychic mind-reading but something more innocuous and mundane. I'm referring to the kind of mind-reading that you and I likely do often, perhaps frequently, mostly without even realizing it. But it amounts to the same thing: you know half the story and assume you know the whole story, which regularly misjudges another's actions or motives. While we are called by Christ to make judgments, [just read Matthew 5-7], we are to start with charity in doing so.

Another demonstration is assuming the worst of someone before we know the facts – knowing some facts and assuming the rest. That says much more about us more often than it does about the person we are smearing. Sure, some people habitually lie or prove unreliable, for example; you would be silly to ignore that. But we do this uncharitable assuming first most often out of self-centered pride and or self-justification. Simply, avoid the default, *they are badly motivated, whereas I am mostly well motivated.*

Mind-reading is when you assume you know what another person is thinking or feeling without direct evidence. In other words, you're assuming their thoughts, beliefs, and intentions (and you're usually assuming the worst). For example, I have heard people called liars when they are in fact not so, AND such slander presumes to infallibly know motives. Only God can do that all the time; we, only occasionally. Such a universal temptation is one into which you will fall without care and humility. You may be right [*they are a stinker*], but start with charity and you seldom go wrong. Be wary when you hear, *well, she is just doing that because.....* and then ensues some malign attribution. Those words seldom emanate from a true prophet.

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## Celebrations

### Birthdays

- 9/01 Jane Bettison  
Sandra Harmon  
Madison Lampkin
- 9/03 Heather Berry  
Marshal Francis
- 9/04 George Makris IV  
Charles Makris  
Selena Trice
- 9/05 Fred Davis
- 9/06 Lara McBryde
- 9/07 Stella Yeung-Shi
- 9/08 Lee McIntyre
- 9/09 Lynda Williams  
Edmond Joe
- 9/10 Katie Stayton
- 9/11 Ronnie Stayton
- 9/12 George Makris III
- 9/13 Lucas Davis
- 9/15 Ellen Courtney  
William Deen
- 9/20 Bubba Davis
- 9/21 Gay Davis
- 9/22 Brooke Stayton
- 9/23 Brandy Yates
- 9/24 Madison Stuckey
- 9/25 Mandy Byers
- 9/26 Brenda Rump
- 9/28 Tommy Palmer
- 9/29 Kennedy Carter

### Anniversaries

- 9/16 Melissa & Leon Trice
- 9/17 Lindsay & Jon Coker
- 9/20 Ruthie & Kenny Carey
- 9/28 Patti & Ron Heffington

## In Memoriam



**Anne Mullock Dady**  
August 7, 2023

## Trinity Episcopal Church

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### Address Service Requested

## Before you assume

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Fortunately, our loving God sees us through Christ's sacrifice as it were a purifying lens and thus promotes us to be heirs of his kingdom despite our sin. Additionally, because God is love (*Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God.* [1 John 4:7](#)), He commands us to love others and live in harmony, and even shows and tells us how. Therefore, we can prevent misunderstanding by taking time to investigate the whole story, assuming positive intentions, extending grace, and finding opportunities to see the best in others. Approach others with a question for clarification until you have an airtight case to accuse with certainty. Then, you will not tarnish your soul, as you might have only demeaned yourself, not them, whoever your "they" may be.

Much of this fault common to most of us would be precluded were we to take to heart and apply the Golden Rule we find in Matthew 7:

<sup>12</sup> "So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

<sup>13</sup> "Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. <sup>14</sup> For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few."