

TRINITY TIMES

The Newsletter of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Hampstead, NC
www.holytrinityhampstead.com

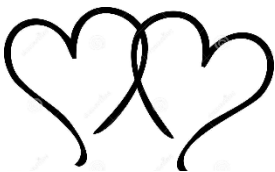
February 2020

Open Hearts

By Father Ron

Have you ever done or said something so many times that you can do or say something without thinking? Some people go into automatic gear when they wake up in the morning. Others drive to work and the store like a robot! And from time to time all of us do things because they are habit or simply our nature. If, though, we are willing to examine the very actions and words that are routine to our lives, we can discover deep spiritual truths about God and ourselves.

Recently someone asked me about the *Collect for Purity*. What is the *Collect for Purity*? It is the prayer said at the beginning of every Eucharist. "Almighty God, to you all hearts are open..." Although the words are familiar and somewhat routine, they can be jewels for spiritual strength and growth.



What does it mean when we proclaim, "...to you all hearts are open?" I believe these words have their root in the book of Proverbs which says, "As a man thinketh in his

heart, so he is." (Proverbs 23:7 KJV). The things that come from our hearts say much about our faith and are manifested in the life we lead.

Recently I came across a poem that put the "open heart" into perspective.

*If you dwell on your problems, they will soon
overwhelm you.
If you feel like a victim, soon you will become one.
If you think angry thoughts, angry words
are sure to follow.
If you focus on how others misunderstood you,*

*you will become bitter and misunderstood.
What goes in must come out! Sooner or later our hearts
translate into reality. But grace abounds:
If you focus on the truth, the truth will set you free.
If you look for noble things, nobility will mark your life.
If you seek out lovely things, your life will be
lovely to others.
If you search for higher things, you will
reach the heavens.
And there your heart will be at one with God!*

During this month of February as we celebrate Valentine's Day, strive to have an open heart. By doing so, no prayer, no day will be routine. Every day will be a day of abundant joy and abounding grace.



Bring your cold, hard cash, your check-book, your greenbacks, your dough, your moolah on **SUNDAY, FEB. 2nd**, to fill up the soup pots and raise money for the **4 C's Food Pantry**, right here in Hampstead.

This is the 30th anniversary Campaign for Souper Bowl of Caring, whose vision is to transform the "Big Game" into a nationwide movement inspiring people to give locally and make a collective impact on hunger. **Do your part and give generously!**

Book Club and Dominoes!

The meeting dates for the Holy Trinity Book Club have changed! The Club will now meet on the second Monday of each month beginning at 12 Noon. Readers can bring a snack or light lunch and discuss the book of the month.

Meetings normally last just a half hour and are followed at 12:30 by the Holy Trinity Domino Players. Book Club members are not required to play dominoes; and Domino Players are not required to participate in the Book Club... but it is certainly a lot of fun!

All church members and their friends, neighbors, and families are invited – even encouraged – to attend. If you can't attend the meetings, the books being read are posted on the Parish Life bulletin board. Feel free to read along with us!

Faithfulness Breeds Good Stewards

Of the three things a person is not to talk about in polite company – religion, politics, and money – the church is called, in one way or another, to talk about all three. Perhaps this is the reason why teaching about stewardship often seems to be an afterthought. It's something that happens only out of necessity when financial constraints are already nipping at the heels.

There is a more excellent way. Stewardship shouldn't be the kind of teaching that comes up only when there is a financial crunch. It should be part and parcel of the ongoing instruction of Christians as they live out their faith in their vocations – members of their family, their society, and their church. This teaching touches upon every facet of our lives; it stakes a claim upon our time, our presence, our prayers, and our possessions.

Stewardship begins with the acknowledgment that we are stewards. A steward is a manager of someone else's possessions. In Christian stewardship, we recognize that God is the owner of all things as the Creator and Redeemer. And in that divine goodness and mercy, God gives us what we are to manage here below.

The principal virtue for stewards is faithfulness. As St. Paul wrote to the Christians in Corinth: **“Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.” (1 Cor. 4:2)**

Stewards must manage that which belongs to the owner according to the owner's wishes. That is what it means to be faithful in stewardship. And the Lord commands us to support the work of the ministry of the church with the gifts God endowed us – our time, our presence, our prayers, and our possessions.

Throughout the Old and New Testaments, God gives us the pattern of proportional giving. If you look at Leviticus 12, you'll see that the sacrifice for purification is either a lamb or a pair of birds if the family had no means to buy a lamb. God calls us to give in proportion to how God has blessed us, and, of course, Jesus sets the pattern by giving not only a portion, but His all.

St. Paul expounds upon this further in his letters to the church at Corinth. He instructs them to give regularly, proportionally, and generously of their first fruits with a spirit of eagerness, earnestness, cheerfulness, and love.



	Month Ended Dec. 31, 2019	Year to Date Dec. 31, 2019	Annual Budget 2019
Pledged Offerings	\$15,429.00	\$115,747.00	\$112,000.00
Total Income	\$19,135.55	\$141,054.20*	\$131,710.00
Total Expenses	\$ 9,945.94	\$136,056.70	\$129,092.00
CASH FLOW	\$ 9,189.61	\$ 4,997.50*	\$ 2,618.00

***NOTE: Includes Investment Income: \$7,956.47**

“So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.” (1 Cor. 3:7) Isn't that the truth! It's not just true about preachers like Paul; it's true about all of us in the Christian life. God can do such wonderful things with our feeble efforts. This is so very true of our gifts to the Lord's work in the church. From God's generous giving to us, we learn to give generously. Then the Lord blesses this response to this grace in turn, and God uses our very giving to continue to bless us in the church where we hear of God's gracious generosity to us. The cycle repeats, and the Lord gives growth!

It is always appropriate for the church to speak because it instructs God's people in how they are to live out their faith as God's stewards.

February Birthdays & Anniversaries



Birthdays:

4	Beth Ronne	19	Dave Mahoney
7	Caitlin Wiggins	22	Sharon Seago
10	Ryan Ketner		
13	Dale Ray		
14	Roger Kersey	25	Jack & Carole Solak

Anniversaries:

From the Junior Warden...

We are now in a new year, so the planning begins. Our main goals for the coming year will concentrate on **lighting** and **painting**.

As many of you know, we have a very poor **lighting** system in the Sanctuary so, after several bids, we have settled on replacing the lights above the altar and around the choir area. These are two of the most grievous areas. Upon completion we will then assess the other areas that present problems and decide what, if any, corrections need to be taken.

If you look at the outside of our church you will see why we have put **re-staining** as a top priority. The building needs major work and, as you might suspect, it does not come cheap; but the Vestry is taking a leap of faith and proceeding with this project.

As in the past, your help is needed for tasks in and around our church. I will be putting up a sign-up sheet for **yard work** to start taking place around April. I hope you will be as forthcoming as you were last year.

We have in place a **Building and Grounds Committee** which consists of Bruce Pennington, Roger Kersey, Lou Elias, and myself. If you see something that needs our attention, please let one of us know and we will take care of the issue.

As I have said in the past, I cannot do this alone. I need your help and I thank you in advance for stepping up in taking care of God's church. God Bless.

Jackie Redington, Junior Warden

Parish Life

Wow! February will be a busy month for Parish Life activities sponsored by various parish members and groups. Be sure to sign up for one or more of these events:

137th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of East Carolina

Invite • Welcome • Connect
February 6-8 • Wilmington, NC

The Convention will be held locally at The Hotel Ballast in Wilmington. Lynn Ruhnke and Jeanne Rick are Holy Trinity's Delegates. Dave Mahoney and Roger Rick are our Alternates.

- Sun., February 16, 3 pm: *Guys and Dolls***
 Hailed as the perfect musical comedy, this famous classic play gambles with luck and love under the bright lights of Broadway. Frank Loesser's brassy, immortal score makes this Tony Award-winning musical a crowd pleaser. Presented by Thalian Association at UNCW's Kenan Auditorium, tickets are \$29.66. Sign up on the bulletin board. See Sharon Seago for more information.
- Sat., February 22, 5 pm: *C-H-I-N-G-O!***
 A family-friendly, entertaining evening of chili, bingo, and fun prizes! Just \$5 per person.
- Tues., February 25, 6-7:15 pm: *Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper***
 This popular event, also known as Fat Tuesday, is the day preceding Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, and is celebrated by consuming great quantities of pancakes. Tickets are available at the door. The supper is hosted by the Holy Trinity Men's Group.

If you have any suggestions or ideas for Parish Life activities, let the Parish Life Ministry know. We are always looking for fun and exciting things to do!

Pat Gopsill, Parish Life Ministry

Come join us on Sat., Feb. 22, at 5 pm, for one or two bowls of chili with *all* the fixings and play a few rounds of bingo to win some "awesome" prizes. Cost is just \$5 per person. The ECW has spared no expense in procuring the most efficient professional Bingo callers. You won't want to miss this event!

SHROVE TUESDAY Pancake SUPPER



The men of Holy Trinity are once again sponsoring a Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper on the 25th of February. The dinner starts in the Narthex at 6PM and runs until 7:15. The Men's Group has been able to hold the line on prices again this year, so it remains the "best deal this side of Lent:"

Adults 18 and over = \$4
Children under 18 = \$2
Family Cap. = \$10

For this, you get A stack of buttermilk pancakes; Jimmy Dean sausage patties; applesauce; and a soft drink or coffee

Please mark your calendars today and plan to join us for a delicious dinner and good fellowship. Tickets are available at the door. 6pm, Tuesday, February 25

Goals of the Vestry

On January 11, 2020 the Vestry of Holy Trinity met and developed Goals for 2020. These Goals are listed below:

1. **Goal:** Mission Statement to be completed.
2. **Goal:** Recruit pastoral care coordinator.
3. **Goal:** Investigate opportunities for the Bell Choir to be more visible to parishioners during worship services.
4. **Goal:** Recruit members of the parish to expand the membership in the Vocal Choir.
5. **Goal:** Prelude to Sunday service ending at 10am.
6. **Goal:** Create a Security Committee to investigate and provide suggestions to the Vestry on how to implement a Security Policy and Program for HTEC.
7. **Goal:** Schedule training, conducted by Father Abrams, for lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, ushers and greeters. This will include emergency procedures.
8. **Goal:** Standardize coffee hour after services.
9. **Goal:** Develop a Worship Committee to assist staff and volunteers regarding worship desires and concerns received from members of Holy Trinity.
10. **Goal:** Expand Men's/Women's small groups to talk about challenges in life.
11. **Goal:** Expand and formalize a lunch group for social and spiritual interaction among parishioners and visitors.
12. **Goal:** As we grow, expand services that may include Evening Prayer during week (maybe in conjunction with small groups).
13. **Goal:** Suggestion Box /have vehicle for communication to vestry and parish.
14. **Goal:** Develop and complete parish survey/cottage meetings during 2020.
15. **Goal:** Continue and expand Adult Sunday School and Bible Study Programs.
16. **Goal:** Continue to Support organizations, such as AA, Al-Anon and the Brigade, as part of our ministry to the community.
17. **Goal:** Continue to improve and provide signage indicating our location.
18. **Goal:** Coordinate with the Youth Brigade's activities in renovating the playground.
19. **Goal:** Create an exploratory committee to investigate the layout, design and facilities involved in a proposed Parish Hall, including the costs and means for funding its construction.
20. **Goal:** Increase the size of the HTEC congregation as the Hampstead population continues to grow.
21. **Goal:** Explore means for donors to make donations by electronic means.

What's Up with the Church Women

The ECW has planned lots of fundraising activities for 2020. Mark your calendars:

2/22 – Chingo (Chili and Bingo), beginning at 5pm. A bowl of chili and some bingo fun – all for just \$5 per person.

5/9 – ECW Yardsale. We're looking for donations for an indoor, church-wide yard sale. No electronics or clothing, but please price your donations before bringing them to church. If you need assistance, check with Vivian or Gretchen.



11/6 – Harvest Game Day. Tickets will be \$15 per person and will include a potluck lunch again. We had lots of compliments from last year, so I am sure we will have an even bigger crowd this year.

Date TBA – Shell Tree Seminar. George Ball will host a class on how to make a shell tree. Only 5 seats available so sign up early. George has plenty of shells!

All these events require lots of prayers, support, and volunteers, so keep an eye out for sign-up sheets on the bulletin board in the Narthex.

Remember, ECW doesn't just stand for Episcopal Church Women. It also stands for Every Church Woman!

Vivian Kersey, ECW President

Leap Day: February 29, 2020

A Leap Day, February 29, is added to the calendar during leap years. This extra day, also called Leap Year Day, makes the year 366 days long – not 365 days, like a common year.

When Is the Next Leap Day?

The next leap day is **Saturday, February 29, 2020.**

The last Leap Day was on **Monday, February 29, 2016.**

Leap days are needed to keep our calendar in alignment with the Earth's revolutions around the Sun. It takes the Earth approximately 365.242189 days – or 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, and 45 seconds – to circle once around the Sun. This is called a tropical year.

Without an extra, or intercalary, day on February 29 nearly every four years, we would lose almost six hours every year. After only 100 years, a calendar without leap years would be off by approximately 24 days in relation to fixed seasonal days such as the vernal equinox or the winter solstice.

Roman general Julius Caesar implemented the first leap day in his **Julian Calendar**, which he introduced in 45 BCE. A leap day was added **every** four years. At the time, leap day was February 24, and February was the last month of the year.

However, adding a leap day every four years was too often and eventually, in 1582, Pope Gregory XIII introduced the **Gregorian Calendar**. This calendar, which we still use today, has a more precise formula for calculation of leap years, also known as bissextile years.

Leap day as a concept has existed for more than 2000 years and it is still associated with age-old customs, folklore, and superstition. One of the most well-known traditions is that women propose to their boyfriends, instead of the other way around.

Vestry Liaisons

Buildings & Grounds:	Sharon Seago
Episcopal Church Women:	Bob Ronne
Finance:	Bob Muller
Men's Group:	Norm Gopsill
Outreach:	Kris Kirwin
Parish Life:	Jackie Redington
Stewardship:	Dave Mahoney
Youth:	Ron Abrams

Each month, we will highlight one of the wild and crazy holidays our nation (and the world) celebrates...just for the fun of it!



February's Wacky Holiday:

February 6th – National Chopsticks Day

Put away the forks and spoons, for today is *National Chopsticks Day*. They may or may not be new to you. But, for about 1/4 of the world's population, chopsticks are the eating utensils of choice for every meal. Like western children, Asian children quickly learn to use chopsticks and quickly become adept at using it. To them, forks are an odd utensil.

Chopsticks can be made of wood, bamboo, plastic, bone, fine china or metal. In China they are called "Kuaizi", which means "quick little bamboo fellows". Chopsticks have been in use for over 5,000 years. They originated in China and are used in virtually all Asian cultures. How their use spread to other countries is not known.

To participate in *National Chopsticks Day*, use chopsticks for all of your meals. Chances are, you will eat Chinese or other Asian food with your chopsticks. But, you can eat any foods with chopsticks today.

Chopsticks Etiquette: Improper use of chopsticks are in poor taste and can even be impolite or insulting.

- Don't insert chopsticks upright into your food, it's an insult.
- It's okay to stab a piece of food with a chopstick.
- Don't point at people with them.
- Don't suck or chew on the ends of your chopsticks.
- Chopsticks are not drumsticks. Don't drum with them.

Holy Trinity Episcopal Church
107 Deerfield Road
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"Leading, Loving, Listening, and Sharing through Christ"