

TRINITY Press

A Place to Belong

April 2020

Words from Our Pastor



Jim Rauch
Interim Pastor

We may not be able to go to church these days, but that does not stop us from being the church. The Covid-19 quarantine season has caused churches across our country to stop meeting together. This is, of course, a very serious loss for us because meeting together is such a huge part of what it means to be part of the body of Christ – and it is fulfillment of the biblical call to honor the Sabbath by setting aside time to worship with other followers of Jesus.

I don't want to understate the seriousness of the loss of weekly worship in our beautiful house of worship – the fellowship, music, prayers, teaching, and encouragement we experience on Sunday mornings is vital to our spiritual and even our physical well-being. At the same time, I think it is a great time for us to remember some important truths.

First – church is not a building. Church is not a place you go. Church is the people of God. A pastor I heard speak once said he liked to conclude his worship services by saying “Is church over?” and the congregation would say “No!” and he would say – “That’s right. The worship service is over, but the church isn’t. The church is simply leaving the building to serve God in the world.” I think that’s a good message for us to remember during this time. Our church isn’t closed. Our church hasn’t stopped being the church. Instead, we are on a break from meeting in our building, but we are still the church and we still have a mission and a ministry.



Second – This season of suspension of our worship services helps us to not take our church for granted. You have probably heard the saying that “absence makes the heart grow fonder” – a saying between loved ones – that when we are separated from one another we often miss the other person and appreciate them more. I hope this time of restriction of gathered worship will make worship more important and meaningful when the day comes for us to gather again for worship in our sanctuary.

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REMEMBER! You can see this publication in color. Just go to the Trinity Church website, click on “Ministries” in the navigation bar and go to the last item on the list, “Newsletter.”

Next Press Deadline
April 27, 2020



The Trinity Press is a publication of Trinity Presbyterian Church located in Spring Valley, California.

Words from Our Pastor

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Third – Just because we aren't meeting on Sundays, does not mean that our staff, our elders, our deacons, and our congregation are not doing their part to support the mission and ministry of Trinity Church. We are working to develop online resources to facilitate worship for the households of our membership. The staff and elders have had online meetings using Zoom software that allows us all to see and hear each other even though we are not in the same room – and we are getting things done in this new way. You are hopefully receiving music devotionals on a daily basis from Music Director Bill Coe. You are receiving this Trinity Press newsletter prepared by Communications Director Rebecca DeBreau. Our Financial Director Rebecca Casey continues to manage church finances including the recording of offerings and running payroll. Patty Mason continues to help coordinate various activities and issues as they emerge. The Trinity Christian School principals and staff are coordinating online learning for children and families. The elders and deacons are reaching out to the congregation to see how everyone is doing and to make sure any needs are understood and addressed. And YOU, the members of Trinity Church, are praying for each other,



Rebecca Casey, our Financial Administrator, along with her daughters, Riley and Reese, manned the drive-thru center on Monday, March 30th. We were able to drop off our tithes and offerings, receive a communion packet, and pick up some encouraging materials. Ardis Rowland graciously donated the Easter version of "Our Daily Bread."

contacting each other, contributing your offerings, and helping each other along this uncertain path. As your interim pastor, I want to say that I am really proud of everyone and how you are stepping up during this crisis for our church and our whole nation.

So ... at this time, let's make sure we keep in mind the truth that is expressed in this little song I learned many years ago:

Church is not a building.
Church is not a steeple.
Church is not a place you go.
Church is God's people.
God bless us each and every one.

In Christ,
Interim Pastor Jim Rauch

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE

The Trinity Church campus is closed until further notice. Except for church staff, no one is allowed to enter any buildings including the sanctuary, Williams Hall, the kitchen, and Ward Center. Thank you for your cooperation.

Living Day by Day

I looked back at my article for March. It was filled with activities of both our school and church. This has all ground to a complete halt. No more flurry of the feet of the school children; no more kitchen preparations for a Presbyterian Women's Gathering.

As of March 18th, the staff works from home now. I am helping to keep the communications going, encouraging others, touching base with elders and deacons. Hopefully, as a result of these efforts, you are all feeling the love of Jesus from your fellow church family members.

In addition, I am redesigning the bulletin and the Press newsletter. This April issue is just a beginning of what I hope will be a refreshed look for this publication.

A Time of Change

As an introvert by nature, I love sitting in my room reading or watching Netflix, but I love to communicate the love of Jesus to people also – to laugh with others, listen to hopes and dreams, and to encourage those around me – I love this part of my “communications” job. Physically, I cannot do this any longer, and I find myself unsure of my place, my calling in the world.

Yet we serve a faithful and wonderful God who is not blind to our needs and desires. A few amazing things have happened over the last two weeks.

First, and least important, I did not imbibe any soda for 12 days. Before

possible. I call people (or text) daily, checking up on folks I care about or who might fall through the cracks.

Lastly, and most importantly, I find God in front of me all the time. He is in the simple things – the amazing

blanket of wild flowers in my brother's garden, the verse of encouragement posted by a friend on Facebook, or the joy of cooking my meals at home instead of going out.

God is in the difficult times as well. He and I have plenty of time to talk. It hasn't been easy – not all hearts and roses. He is not letting me get away with doing things the old way. In the words

of the song, “Oceans”, I am learning more about what trusting him “*without borders*” means. Tears of pain and frustration bring me to my knees, and I realize how I still want to control my life in ways I did not realize until now.

Our God's faithfulness stands sure even in the face of uncertain times. My prayer is that we will stand faithful with him, loving our church family and others, even if it is from afar.

May you find joy in this Easter season!

Rebecca DeBreau

Communications Director

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The wild flowers in the front yard.

the virus, I lived on my daily Dr. Peppers – yes, more than one. A day ago, I treated myself to a 12-ounce can of Coca-Cola. It tasted delicious, but I have no more insane craving for another.

Secondly, I have increased my phone activity more than 300 percent during the last two weeks. I dislike talking on the phone. Face-to-face or texting are my preferred forms of communication. I even find emailing easier than talking on the phone. Before March 18th, I only talked on the phone with my daughter who lives out-of-state. Now face-to-face meetings are no longer

Life has Changed Dramatically

The Trinity Christian School (TCS) teachers have been working hard adapting their classrooms from being taught at school to being taught online. We did not lose one day of class time in the process. Please keep our teachers and staff in your prayers as we walk through uncharted territory. We are trying to keep up with constant legal changes through daily contact with ACSI. In addition, we personally called all our families to make sure they are okay and if they need anything that we can help them with, especially related to the Google Classroom technology. These days, everyone is needing to find new protocols for unprecedented situations. Our staff has been very creative and resourceful to keep the flow of learning going for their students.

Please keep our parents in your prayers. Some of our families are very stressed with having to close their businesses resulting in the loss of needed income. Other parents have nonessential jobs and are being sent home without pay. Others are trying to work from home. This can mean that they, as well as their children,

need computer time and there are not enough computers to go around.

Accreditation is Postponed

Our accreditation team will not be coming now until the fall sometime. We do not have a new date yet. They were scheduled to be here from March 27th until April 1st but “No kids ... No team.” The good news is that we will be more than ready for them when they do come!

50th Anniversary Celebration

Because we are not sure how long we will be closed, we are very disappointed to have to postpone our very special event! This is our 50th year and our plans will need to adapt to our circumstances. In a year when we will really need our event to help sustain our school financially, we are not able to host our 50 Years ... 50 More ... 50-K ... reunion event. Again, we hope to reconfigure part of it and host the big gathering in the fall.

Other School Performances and Activities

We have also canceled school events such as St. Patrick's Day, Math

Olympics, Grandparents Chapel, 6th grade camp, the 4th and 5th grade trip to Sacramento and San Francisco. We were especially sorry to not be able to go out into the community to extend service with our annual Serve-a-thon projects. If we reopen later than expected, other events will also need to be canceled. We are thankful that “*the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.*” He has always been true to his word and gracious in his blessings.

Please pray for TCS and its mission here in Spring Valley. We know that the Lord is faithful and has been so for over 50 years. We trust that he knows our concerns and will provide in his time and in his way.

He is good all the time ... All the time he is good.

Sharon Axe
Principal

Jimmie Drummond
Principal

“For I am the Lord, your God, who takes hold of your hand and says to you; Do not fear; I will help you.” Isaiah 41:31



Above far left: Mr Taylor has been recording himself reading stories that teachers are posting online in their Google Classroom.

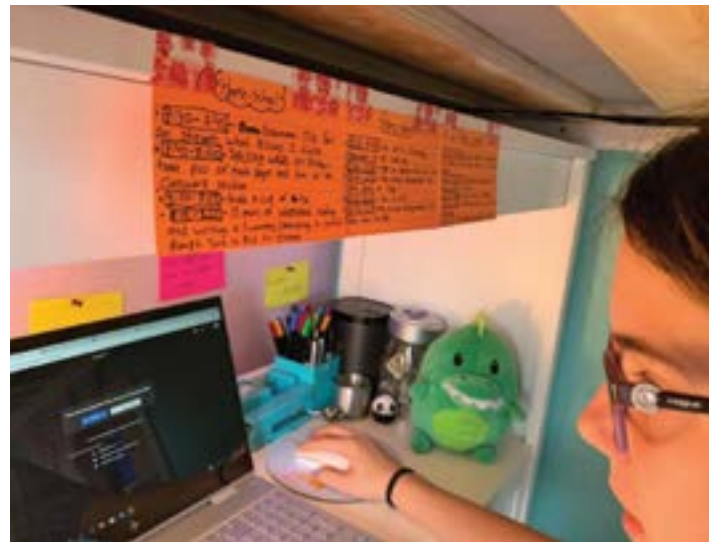
Above: Mr Taylor reading Dr Seuss to TCS students online. We are so thankful for him!

Below: TCS goes online to keep students learning.



Above: 2nd grade teacher Nancy Atterbury on a ZOOM online meeting with her students.

At Right: A 3rd grader meets with his class using ZOOM.



Far Right: First grade students had a live, online meeting with a ranger at Yellowstone National Park.

Presbyterian Women

At the request of our Moderator, Sue Walters I am bringing you this information. At this time Pine Valley Bible Camp is planning to reopen on May 1st. If, in fact, that does happen, we can still have our retreat May 1st, 2nd, and 3rd. We will be the first group to use the facility so it will have been thoroughly cleaned and sanitized. If you are planning to go and have not paid, you can send a check to Pat Palmore or you can pay at the retreat.

If you are like me in this difficult time, you might be getting a little stir-crazy. I know I miss gathering with my church family. So let's be sure to stay in touch.

Think back to when we were all last together. Who did you sit next to or eat lunch with? Reach out and make a phone call to one of these ladies. If you were not at Gathering but were at church, reach out to someone who usually sits near you. You may make someone's day.

Lord willing, we will be back together soon. God bless each of you.

Ardis Rowland

Secretary • Presbyterian Women

Presbyterian Women's Bible Study

Since Presbyterian Women will not be meeting at all in April, there will be no Bible study either. However, at our next Gathering on May 12th, we will explore chapter six, "A Hope-Filled Thought Closet," in the book *Me, Myself & Lies*.

Please bring something from your clothes closet that brings you hope to share with the group. Chapter six is full of wonderful scripture and great encouragement from the Lord, so spend this next month reading and savoring every rich word and thought. It will surely bring your heart, soul, and yes, your "thought closet," the true hope you seek during these difficult times.

All women are graciously invited!

Many blessings and much love,

Linda Hensley
Bible Study Leader

He is Risen!
He is Risen Indeed!



Am I Essential?

You probably wouldn't have guessed, but I ask myself this question all the time with regards to my staff position here at Trinity Church. The thing is, it's hard to know if my job description adds value to the ministry here at the church. Let's be honest, no one is excited to write a check that keeps the lights on, or makes sure we have enough toilet paper and paper towels!

As a faith family, we want to win souls for Christ, minister, serve, feed the homeless, smile at strangers, have a little extra patience when you want to lash out at someone, shine the light of Christ, share the Gospel, and lead by example. THOSE are things to get excited about in ministry. Those are the things you tell your friends.

"Hey our church partnered with Lifewater International and helped build wells for two villages in Uganda, or our church packed shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child".

I am realistic in the ways I am gifted to serve, and paying the bills for our church is one of them. I will work with the Finance Committee to make sure the bills continue to be paid, as I was hired to do. Am I essential? I don't know about being essential to Trinity Church. Any number of people can do what I do.

I DO know that Trinity Church is essential to me. I know that it is essential for me to drive up this hill, and experience it's beautiful 360 degree views. It's essential for me to drive onto God's hill and feel the Holy

Spirit. It is essential for me to see your smiling faces. It is essential for me to hear the prayers that are important to you, and it is essential for me to hear the talented singers and musicians that lead us in worship.

I know I am essential to God. I know YOU are essential to God, and I know that God is in control. This too shall pass, and the body of Christ will be all the stronger for it.

God bless all of you. Call someone in our faith family and tell them you were thinking of them. Connection with one another is essential.

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Hosanna *in the Highest!*

**Blessed is the one who comes
in the name of the Lord**

***Watch for details in your email
about how Trinity Church will
celebrate one of the most important
holy days for Christians,
Easter!***

Your Trinity Church staff are working hard to make this glorious time of year a beautiful celebration in spite of the circumstances around us. As we count the days to this wonderful event, please pray that God will be glorified in us!

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