

# TRINITY TIMES

The Newsletter of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Hampstead, NC  
[www.holytrinityhampstead.com](http://www.holytrinityhampstead.com)

April 2020

**EDITOR'S NOTE: Activities outlined in this newsletter are subject to change due to COVID-19 restrictions.**

## Easter Fits the Size of God's Love

By Father Ron

A few years ago, a parishioner asked me about the white funeral pall we place over caskets or urns as they enter the church. What is a funeral pall? The pall has two symbolic meanings, both derived from the New Testament.

First, the pall recalls our baptismal garment. At baptism we are robed in white as a sign of our resurrection and our inheritance of internal life. The pall recalls Revelation 7:14, which announces *"These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb."*

Second, the pall signifies equality! The letter of James (2:1-9) discourages favoritism in the Christian faith. James says, *"Show no partiality as you hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory."* The funeral pall clothes every deceased Christian with the same garment so that we appear equal before our Creator. The funeral pall is indeed an Easter symbol.

There is no more important time to be reminded of eternity than when we are challenged, sick, in crisis or facing death. One of my favorite things to do each spring is to walk around Oakdale Cemetery in Wilmington. The dichotomy between blooming azaleas and dogwoods and gravestones is palpable!

Yes, in the midst of life there is death. Sometimes death can be physical, and at other times we can experience it emotionally or relationally. This death can even be spiritual.

Like the funeral pall which covers all caskets or urns, so too Easter can transform every kind of death we experience.

Easter fits the size of God's love. Touched by the one who created the heavens and the earth, comes the ultimate miracle which we proclaim by singing *"He is risen, he is risen. Tell it out with joyful voice: he has burst his three-day prison; let the whole world rejoice: death is conquered, we are free, Christ has won the victory."*

With Christ's resurrection comes our resurrection, fulfillment of God's love and our baptismal promise. With Jesus' resurrection comes death's ultimate defeat. Christ's resurrection means love conquers hate, hope over despair, forgiveness over sin, life over death.

The question for you and me is: *"How do we live into this gift of eternity in the present?"* With all the challenges we presently face as a society, our answer will determine whether the Easter promise is fulfilled, and Christ's love is proclaimed.

## ONLINE WORSHIP

<https://cathedral.org/worship/>

**Morning Prayer: Every morning Monday through Saturday @ 7 o'clock**

**Evening Prayer: Every evening Monday through Saturday @ 7 o'clock**

**Holy Eucharist: Each Sunday @ 11:15 o'clock**



# The Episcopal Diocese of East Carolina

The Right Reverend Robert S. Skirving, Bishop

Monday, March 23, 2020

Jesus said to Thomas, 'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.' (John 20:29, NRSV)

Dear Friends in Christ,

As we draw closer to the celebrations of the Easter season and I have contemplated the decisions that we must make, the story of the encounter between Thomas and our risen Lord Jesus has found its way into my heart. Normally shared publicly on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Easter, this passage from John's gospel portrays the challenge faced by Thomas in accepting the word of the other disciples, when they tell him "We have seen the Lord." Thomas needed to see Jesus for himself and to touch his wounds. Too often, we are critical of Thomas, labeling him as doubting. In reality, most of us need to see for ourselves before we can "believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God." (verse 31)

Sadly, our celebrations of Holy Week and Easter Day will not include seeing one another in the usual ways, nor embracing one another in person. With this letter, I am directing that the suspension of public worship continue in every congregation of the Episcopal Diocese of East Carolina through the end of April 2020. There are to be no exceptions. The creativity and collaboration that I am witnessing across our Diocese will need to be taken even further, as we find new ways to worship during Holy Week and the early part of the Easter season. I will collaborate with our clergy and churchwardens to find ways of addressing the challenges ahead, and I will be available to support the leaders of each congregation in making necessary decisions.

Please note that this direction applies only to public worship. Leaders of the congregations of our Diocese are charged with making responsible decisions for all other dimensions of life and ministry in their own communities. In all cases, we are to comply with the requirements of local, civic and federal authorities in order to help slow the spread of infection. Diocesan House staff will work with ministry leaders to modify, reschedule, or cancel all Diocesan events planned to take place during the month of April.

This Holy Week and Easter season, we might look to Thomas for our inspiration, particularly as we can neither see nor embrace one another in person. May God's Holy Spirit lead us to seek not our own needs, but the needs of those who suffer most deeply as a result of the pandemic brought by COVID-19. May our Easter proclamation of God's love be expressed in our love for one another and for all of our neighbors.

Yours in Christ,

*Robert S. Skirving*

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## Stewardship: Care for our One and Only Home-Earth *By Rob Blezard*

*"The good leave an inheritance to their children's children." –Proverbs 13:22a*

Look at the children in your congregation and your circle of friends and family. You want them to grow up in the same kind of beautiful, safe, abundant world you did, right? But that's increasingly in doubt.

Over the next 50 years, climate change and environmental crises will disrupt patterns of nature and civilization that have developed over millennia. Some scientists even wonder whether the planet will be habitable in 2120.

Australia's horrific wildfires may be just a sample of things to come, along with worsening hurricanes, more-frequent tornadoes, rising sea levels, rapid desertification, and melting glaciers and icebergs. It's not that our world did not already have serious problems with such issues as war, refugees, hunger, species extinction, pollution and extreme weather, but climate change is making them all much worse and much more complicated.



Christians trust in the Almighty, while we also recognize that God calls us to love one another and care for the only home God has given us. *"If we truly believe we've been given responsibility for every*

*living thing on this planet (including each other) as it says in Genesis 1, then it isn't only a matter of caring about climate change,"* writes climate scientist Katherine Hayhoe. *"We should be at the front of the line demanding action."*

This month we have much to celebrate in the new life we have through our resurrected Lord. We also celebrate spring, seedtime, and Earth Day on April 22. Let us commit ourselves to renewing and protecting the only home we have, the only home we will leave for our children.

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### PLEASE HELP US MEET OUR FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

by continuing to send in your pledges and weekly contributions. Your understanding is appreciated!

### Economy Money Budget Finance Spending

	Month Ended Feb. 29, 2020	Year to Date Feb. 29, 2020	Annual Budget 2020
Pledged Offerings	\$ 9,041.00	\$ 15,936.00	\$118,000.00
Total Income	\$ 7,869.16*	\$ 15,517.37*	\$131,660.00
Total Expenses	\$ 8,615.70	\$ 18,458.60	\$131,660.00
<b>CASH FLOW</b>	<b>(\$ 746.54)*</b>	<b>(\$ 2,941.23)*</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>
<b>NOTE: Includes Investment Income/(Loss) of:</b> <b>(\$ 2,678.77) (\$ 3,402.09)</b>			

## From the Senior Warden...

We are truly fortunate and grateful that Father Ron is our Priest in Charge, especially during this crisis. He has always been available and is really working to provide ways to continue leading us in our spiritual needs and growth. The vestry had some concerns in having a part-time Priest in Charge as defined in his contract. However, let me state this: Father Ron has not been a part-time priest during this time. He has been a full-time Rector, working daily to address parish needs. Let us pray for Father Ron and his family, as he continues to be available to all of us.

*Thank You, Father Ron!*

In addition, I would add two others, knowing that I will miss many others. The two are Jeanne Rick and Dee Wolfe. Jeanne has continued to keep up with informing the parish of the everchanging landscape we live in as Christians. And Dee's letter was an example of what we do as members of Holy Trinity – we help and care for one another.

*Thank You, Jeanne and Dee!*

Let all us remember to thank God for all our blessings and pray for all those that are on the front lines as the soldiers fighting this battle. Remember all those worldwide that have been inflicted with COVID-19.

Remember to follow social distancing and keep yourself and others safe by following the CDC guidelines. Most importantly, stay in touch with each other, lift each other up, and make sure our parishioners who live alone are cared for.

God Bless,  
*Norm Gopsill*  
Senior Warden

## April Birthdays & Anniversaries



### Birthdays:

2 Don Powell  
17 Donna Smith  
18 Sydney Price  
22 Marge Miller

### Anniversaries:

3 Roy & Christie Hawkins


## News from the Outreach Ministry

Spring is here and the North Carolina farmers are already tilling and planting their fields aided by the hard work and labors of the migrant farmworkers who, later in the season, will also harvest those same crops.

### The Episcopal

**Farmworkers Ministry**, in Newton Grove, is in full swing providing members of the farmworkers and immigrant community assistance while working the fields. A wish list has been sent to us asking for any assistance that we can give to the ministry. (See the Outreach bulletin board for all that the EFwM provides to this community.)



 The Outreach Ministry is collecting new and gently used **baseball caps** and **men's long-sleeved shirts** (sizes S, M, L) to help protect farmworkers from the relentless hot North Carolina sun as they plant and harvest the crops we eat each day and to protect them from the chemicals they are in contact with on a daily basis.

We will collect these items for the coming months. Just place the caps and shirts in the designated bin by the Outreach bulletin board. They will be delivered to Newton Grove the end of April.

We are able to enjoy the abundance of fresh fruits and vegetables provided to us on a daily basis because of the hard work of these farmers and farmworkers. Thank you for your support and generosity!

The **4 C's Food Pantry** can use your help! As might be expected, the need for food has increased. If you can pick up some extra non-perishables and place them in the cart in the Narthex, we will make sure they get to the pantry. Thank you!

## Why Read the Bible?

*Editor's Note: This is the perfect time to dust off your Bible and READ. There is much in scripture to calm your fears and give comfort. God speaks to us through his holy word and gives us hope.*

The material is really old. There are tons in there that is perplexing. There's a lot that offends. Much of it can be used in spiritual malpractice. Too many of us have been clobbered by proof texts ripped out of context, separated from inspiring love.

But we keep on reading it. Every year, at the end of the year, we read a prayer from the Book of Common Prayer about scripture which reminds us why we pay attention to the Bible.

*Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

It says we hear, read, learn, mark, inwardly digest scripture so that we might hold on to hope. And which one of us does not need some hope.

The kind of hope reflected in the story of the Exodus. Freedom happens. The kind of hope reflected in the Exile. There is a way home. The kind of hope that lets Peter walk on water, kept from sinking by Jesus' hand.

The kind of hope reflected in Easter. Dead ends become thresholds. I don't know about you, but I need to hear that old, old story all the time.



Research indicates that engagement with scripture is transformative in the Christian journey. For all that is confusing or annoying or even offensive, it is a story of relationship with God, a story of healing amid brokenness, a story of persistent grace. In other words, it is a story of hope. Are you in need of hope? Where do you go when you need a word of hope? The news? I think not.

Find your way into what Karl Barth called the strange world of the Bible. Make it a part of a daily routine. Persist in parts that are difficult. Ask your irreverent questions. Ask God to speak to you through it. And let it be a source of hope.

*Excerpted from Monday Matters by Jay Sidebotham*

## Defining the Days of HOLY WEEK

As soon as Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, many people are already looking ahead to the most important week of the Church year: **HOLY WEEK**. Since the early days of the Christian Church the week before Easter held a unique position in the life of the Christian community. During this week people gathered from various geographical locations to trace and remember the steps of Jesus from his journey down the Mount of Olives until His resurrection of Easter morning.

It was not until the latter part of the fourth century that we find the vivid liturgies from Palm Sunday to Good Friday in their final form, as we know them today. Beginning about the same time, pilgrims from around the Christian world would come to walk the steps of Jesus visiting the places where these sacred events occurred – something we replicate today as the “Stations of the Cross.” For centuries Holy Week has been a time in which the faithful remember and make final preparations for the celebration of Easter.

The first day of Holy Week is **PALM SUNDAY**. Palm Sunday, or the official name for this day, The Sunday of the Passion, symbolizes two main



events. The first is the Liturgy of the Palms, commemorating Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem where the voices of the faithful cry out “Hosanna!” The second is the solemn reading of the Gospel which

depicts Jesus’ death and resurrection. On this day we depart from church with palms to remind us of these two profound events in Christ’s life.

The title for **MAUNDY THURSDAY** in Holy Week is derived from the old French word, *mande*, and from the Latin *mandatum novum*, meaning “a new commandment” (John 13:34). Maundy refers to the night before Jesus faced His cross, when in the presence of His disciples, He took bread and wine, blessed, broke and gave it to them, instructing them that these gifts were His body and blood of the new covenant, commanding that all His followers partake of this holy meal “in remembrance of me.”



The action surrounding bread and wine communicates to us the life and death in the self-

giving of our Lord. It also recalls the countless generations of the Passover meal and its powerful symbolism. It speaks to our hunger and thirst, both physical and spiritual. It speaks of our needs and human weakness. It reminds us both of our individual existence and of our need for community as we go forward together.



The Friday in Holy Week is known as **GOOD FRIDAY**. Joy in Lent? It’s like a happy funeral. Lenten joy is grounded in the faith that God’s love is below the surface of all our experiences. The symbol of a Christian is not a happy face. It’s the cross. Beginning in the fourth century, Christians gathered to commemorate the three hours Jesus hung on the cross and to recite His “Seven Last Words.”

In the final hours of His earthly time, as Jesus hung on the Cross, He made seven statements – each teaching us more about Jesus and His character. These are from four Gospel accounts and are known as Jesus’ “Seven Last Words:”

- 1 *Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.* (Luke 23:34)
- 2 *Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.* (Luke 23:43)
- 3 *Woman, here is your son...Here is your mother.* (John 19:26-27)
- 4 *My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?* (Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34)
- 5 *I am thirsty.* (John 19:28)
- 6 *It is finished.* (John 19:30)
- 7 *Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.* (Luke 23:46)

On **EASTER** we celebrate the greatest and oldest feast of the Christian year. The Feast of the Resurrection of Christ is the Christian Passover, our Festival of Redemption given to us by the triumphant victory of our Lord over death. Easter is the cornerstone of our faith, a time when all Christians should be present at worship to share the fellowship and meal of the new covenant, a covenant of hope, love and joy.



The days of Holy Week – from Palm Sunday to Easter Day – offer every Christian the opportunity and privilege to journey with our Lord through the struggles of life in order that we may experience the victory, which the world cannot take away.

## Spare Change Sunday

**NOTE:** As we continue to shelter in place, we can help others by sending a check to Holy Trinity with "Spare Change" in the memo line. We will make sure the monies go to the outreach ministry designated for April.

**B**eginning this Lent and continuing each month on the **third Sunday of the month (April 19)** we will have "Spare Change Sunday. Each month a specific outreach ministry will be designated to receive the loose change. These local ministries assist in meeting the needs of people in our community and our diocese.

The ECW Yard Sale fundraiser,  
scheduled for May 9,  
has been **POSTPONED** until fall.  
Please continue to collect and price  
household items for the sale.  
Thank you for your support!

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

### April's Wacky Holiday: Morse Code Day

**April 27<sup>th</sup>**

This holiday centers around Samuel Morse, the Morse code, and the magnetic telegraph machine that was first used to transmit this revolutionary means of communication from one distant location to another. In 1836, Samuel Morse and his compatriots, Alford Vail and Joseph Henry, developed Morse code. On January 11, 1838, Samuel Morse and Alford Vail demonstrated the use of the electric telegraph to transmit a message in Morse code for the first time.

Did You Know? SOS signals were often sent in Morse code. While SOS had no specific translation, it was said to mean "save our souls" or "save our ship".

Morse code uses a unique series of dots and dashes, called "dii and dah", for each letter of the alphabet, and the numbers 0 thru 9. Long before the invention of radios and cell phones, operators used telegraph machines to send messages in Morse code. On the receiving end, the Morse code is translated back into alphabetic characters and numbers to form the message. The message allowed for instant, coast to coast communication of information over telegraph lines. Once radios arrived, Morse code continued to be a major means of communications. Morse code was in use in the military, ham radios and other means of communication for decades.

Morse code is in danger of disappearing as a means of communications. As of 2007, knowledge of Morse code is no longer a requirement for a ham radio license.

Morse Code Day celebrates the invention of Morse code and the electric telegraph machine. This special event was established on this date to honor Samuel Morse, who was born on April 27, 1791.



## A Prayer in the Season of Coronavirus

Almighty and loving God,  
Creator, healer and redeemer of the world.  
In the midst of uncertainty, confusion, fear and distress we pray for wisdom, understanding  
and comfort as we move forward as a people of faith.  
We pray for our broken world, that the common good will triumph over selfish pursuits;  
that the love of Christ will shine through the darkness of this moment, and that  
your healing presence will embody the lives of those who are suffering.  
May your peace be upon those who have died and those who are grieving this day.  
As Jesus showed compassion to both friends and strangers, we pray for those who are striving for the restoration of  
humanity: healthcare professionals, policy makers, first responders and  
all those who are loving, caring and nurturing each other in this challenging time.  
This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ who through his death and resurrection  
reassures us of his love and hope for ever and ever. **Amen**

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### ***Prayer for People Critically Ill or Facing Great Uncertainty***

God of the present moment,  
God who in Jesus stills the storm  
and soothes the frantic heart;  
bring hope and courage to all  
who wait or work in uncertainty.  
Bring hope that you will make them the equal  
of whatever lies ahead.  
Bring them courage to endure what cannot be avoided,  
for your will is health and wholeness;  
you are God, and we need you.

*-Adapted from New Zealand Prayer Book, p. 765*

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*Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty...  
You will not fear the terror of night,  
nor the arrow that flies by day,  
nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness,  
nor the plague that destroys at midday.*

*Ps 91:1, 5 & 6*

The Psalms echo the concerns of our hearts so evocatively. The 91st Psalm has been of comfort and strength to us for thousands of years. It is very apt for those of us praying and serving through the issues with the coronavirus. We do dwell under the shadow of God's protective wings and these words put all of our worries into perspective. As we move through these weeks of prudent care perhaps this psalm will be our prayer; repeated after we listen to the news and if we awake in the middle of the night.

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*Holy and gracious God,  
Give us the strength to meet the health crisis looming around us.  
Enlighten researchers that they may discover the right vaccine against this disease.  
Guide the doctors, nurses and all medical technicians working with those  
who are infected to take correct actions for their care.  
Protect all medical staff and family or friends caring for those who are ill.  
Bring together the governments and governmental agencies around the world to work together to  
eradicate this health threat. All this we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.***



◆◆◆◆◆ **Public Worship has been cancelled through April** ◆◆◆◆◆

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Holy Trinity is a Christ-centered community. We are dedicated to reaching and helping people seeking to know God and to serve God.