

TRINITY TIMES

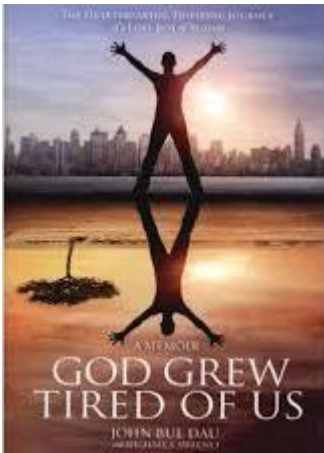
The Newsletter of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Hampstead, NC
www.holytrinityhampstead.com

March 2021

Finding Hope and Redemption

By Father Ron

I believe the season of Lent is a holy time! It is an opportunity to reflect on the brokenness of humanity in order that we may reach the best of Jesus' divinity within us. I have always found reading books, watching movies and listening to music to be a profound way to reconnect with God. I think this is reflective of our Adult Formation theme this year: "Sin and Redemption through Broadway Music."



Several years ago, during the Lenten season, I read the book "God Grew Tired of Us" by John Bul Dau. Since then, it has been made into a powerful documentary. Both the book and the documentary had a great impact on me of what Christ calls us to be as his 21st century disciples. This sobering, inspiring and

poignant story is of three of the 27,000 Lost Boys of the Sudan who took the torturous trek from the Sudan to Ethiopia to Kenya to avoid being slaughtered in the course of Sudan's 20-year civil war simply because they were Christian.

Not only does the book and film detail one of the greatest horrors of our lifetime, but also gives us something very profound to ponder this Lenten season. Of the three men, John Bul Dau is the most spiritual. As a devout Christian, John offers powerful insights about fulfilling our God-given purpose, honoring our responsibilities to others, and celebrating life with simplicity. The title of the

book and film come from comments John makes about why God allowed such atrocities in the Sudan. From John's experiences these may be the "last days" spoken of in the Bible. Maybe God is tired of the bad things humanity does to each other and wants to stop the chaos by ending it all.

Especially at the end of the documentary I was moved by what these young men accomplished, supported by the kindness of strangers (America has resettled over 4,000 of the Lost Boys, more than any other country). Despite unthinkable odds, these Lost Boys find hope and redemption. Their redemption is not utopia, but realistic victories of a renewed faith and hopeful future.

It is a wonderful reminder for all of us this Lenten season that God may very well be tired of us. Tired of our self-centeredness, our inability to help spread the Gospel, our unwillingness to care for and about each other. But if these men's lives are any indication, he certainly isn't finished with us!

May this Lenten season be a time when the God's loving Spirit flows through our words and our actions so that we, along with others who comes into our midst, may find the same redemption and hope the Lost Boys have.





Sunday, March 28, **Palm Sunday**
Liturgy of the Palms and Holy Eucharist 10 am

Tuesday, March 30, **Holy Tuesday**
Holy Eucharist 10 am

Thursday, April 1, **Maundy Thursday**
Holy Eucharist 12 noon and 7 pm

Friday, April 2, **Good Friday**
Good Friday Liturgy 12 noon

Sunday, April 4, **Easter**
Holy Eucharist 10 am

Stewardship: A Good Tree Bears Good Fruit

Hudson Taylor, a 19th Century British missionary to China, is reported to have said, "God's work, done in God's way, will not lack God's supply." To know God's way, we need to know His Holy Word. Or to say it another way: you need to know your Bible.

St. Paul, before he spends two chapters on giving, wrote that every thought is to be taken captive to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor 10:5). Doctrine matters. And doctrine matters because the Scriptures matter. And the Scriptures matter because this is where we learn the teaching of Christ. Our thoughts must be brought into line with the teaching of Scripture so that our work is what God wants done and so that we do this work in His way.

A good tree bears good fruit. A bad tree bears bad fruit. We have been made good trees in holy baptism. We are fertilized and pruned for bearing good fruit by constantly hearing God's Word preached and taught in sermon and Bible Class and in receiving the life-giving, faith-sustaining food of the Lord's Supper. Remember your doctrine, hold on to the Lord's teaching, and your thoughts will be taken captive to the obedience of Christ.

Bringing every thought captive to the obedience of Christ is recognizing that God does provide. The Lord's Prayer teaches us to pray for daily bread. Praying this day in and day out reminds us that the Lord is the giver of our daily bread, and that we are to give thanks for His daily provision of it. God is rarely early and never late in His work, as Abraham learned on the mount of the Lord it will be provided. The Lord's generosity forms our generosity in return.

Thus, we set aside for the work of God a generous, first-fruits, proportion of the daily bread that God has given to us. This act



of trust in the Lord's provision is the working out of our faith in Him. When budgetary discussions pop up our natural reaction is to point fingers. But remember your doctrine, and what your mother taught about pointing fingers. Our first natural reaction is not always right. In fact, when our thoughts are brought into captivity of Christ, our first reaction should be repentance. It should raise questions in our own lives.

As good trees in Christ who are to bear good fruit, we should ask whether our thoughts have been taken captive by obedience to Christ. Have we given generously? Have we given our first-fruits? You know. And God knows. "For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him" (2 Chron 16:9).

God will provide. He always has and He always will. He gives His meat in due season. He has not left you as orphans but has grafted you into His own family. You belong to Him. Remember this, letting this thought dwell in you richly. And you will then be rich toward others.



	Month Ended Jan. 31, 2021	Year to Date Jan. 31, 2021	Annual Budget 2021
Pledged Offerings	\$ 30,946.00	\$30,946.00	\$113,000.00
Total Income	\$33,063.31*	\$33,063.31*	\$121,900.00
Total Expenses	\$ 8,860.88	\$ 8,860.88	\$121,900.00
CASH FLOW	\$ 24,202.43*	\$24,202.43*	\$ 0.00
* NOTE: Includes Investment Income/(Loss) of: (\$ 89.33) (\$ 89.33)			

March Birthdays

- 11 Judy Bradley
- 16 Bob Ronne
- 19 Joanne Muller
- 23 Shannon Hesser



Adult Formation Continues in Lent

Sunday, March 7, 2021

The Theology & Music of *Hamilton*

Considered a creative genius, Lin-Manuel Maranda's Pulitzer and Tony Award winning musical *Hamilton* takes on the turbulent life of one of our nation's founders, Alexander Hamilton, through music. Of our founding fathers, no one illustrates sin and redemption more than Alexander Hamilton. We will look at King George's song, "You'll be Back," Hamilton's "It's Quiet Uptown," and Eliza's "Who Tells your Story."

Sunday, March 14, 2021

The Theology and Music of *Godspell*

Our organist and choirmaster Catherine Charles will lead this week's journey through the musical *Godspell*. The look at the life of Jesus through music first appeared Off-Broadway in 1971. The musical is structured around a series of parables from Matthew's Gospel. The most famous song from the musical, "Day by Day," reached the top 20 of Billboard's pop single chart.

Sunday, March 21, 2021

The Theology and Music of *Les Misérables*

One of the most popular musicals of all time, *Les Misérables* is also one of the most religious. Based on Victor Hugo's 1862 novel, this powerful story of sin and redemption is manifested through the life of Jean Valjean, a prisoner for 19 years because he stole bread. He seeks redemption and forgiveness while being pursued by Javert, an officer of the law. Among the songs we will discuss are "I Dreamed the Dream," "A Heart Full of Love," "One More Day," and so much more. Weaved throughout this musical are specific references to God, sacraments, Calvary and other aspects of the Christian Faith.

Sunday, March 28, 2021

The Theology and Music of *Wicked*, *Rent* and *Carousel*

On this, our last Lenten program, we will look at sin and redemption through the eyes and hearts of friendship. Each of these three musicals tells the story of human interrelationships and how friendships can be both painful and life-giving. Among other music, we will hear "You'll Never Walk Alone" from *Carousel* and "For Good" from *Wicked*. We will also hear the powerful story behind the musical *Rent* involving the Bohemian community during the beginning of the AIDS crisis in the late 1980's.

Join us in the Education Room before service at 9:00 am. No signup is required.

A Word from Your Junior Warden

As the new Junior Warden, I would like your assistance in our effort to care for the upkeep and maintenance of Holy Trinity. If you see something that needs attention, there are forms in my mail slot in the office. Please use these to bring items to my attention. (I can be forgetful.) Let's make our facility one we can be proud to call our own. Thank you!

Roger Kersey, Junior Warden

News and Notes from Outreach



The Outreach Ministry is supporting **Episcopal Research and Development (ER&D)** this month in their efforts worldwide and, especially locally, this month. The disaster in Brunswick County caused by an F3

tornado and the extremely bitter winter storm in Texas are only two of the locations ER&D has had a significant positive impact this past month of February. Our monetary contribution will be used to support recovery and cleanup efforts, as well as emotional support for persons impacted by these recent disasters.

We are meeting **March 2nd (10:30 am)** to discuss plans to create **Easter Baskets** for the children of migrant and seasonal farm workers through **Episcopal Farmworkers Ministry**. This project is in its initial stages as it was questioned last Easter, due to pandemic restrictions, whether baskets could be safely distributed to the children. It has been recently confirmed that baskets are welcome this year.

The Daughters of the King made 20 lovely baskets last year which were given alternately to the 4C's for distribution through the food pantry.

The Outreach Ministry hopes that other groups and individuals at Holy Trinity will join us in the planning and composition of the baskets. Since we are in the early planning stages, we welcome ideas. More news about the baskets will be reported in next month's newsletter.

Please come to our **planning meeting on Tuesday, March 2nd at 10:30 am** or contact any Outreach Ministry member (Christie Hawkins, Janice Fox, Carolyn Beddow, Joy Ball) with your thoughts or ideas.

Christie Hawkins for Outreach Ministry

Notes on Recycling

Please be aware that recycling guidelines have been posted in the kitchen. We ask that all parishioners be aware of these guidelines and follow them when disposing of trash and recycled material. Thanks very much for your help and consideration.

Vaccine Hesitancy

Because of the nature of vaccines and herd immunity, it is critical churches help address vaccine hesitancy, according to the **National Episcopal Church**.

While there is an overwhelming body of evidence supporting the efficacy and safety of vaccines, some are still skeptical of vaccine use. This is problematic as vaccines reach their full potential in combatting diseases when a large percentage of the population is inoculated, creating herd immunity.

In a strong endorsement for stricter government vaccine mandates, the Executive Council of The Episcopal Church reiterated in a pre-COVID-19 2019 resolution, *“That the Episcopal Church has long maintained that we are guided by faith and reason, and that scientific evidence helps us to better understand God’s creation, our place in it, and ways to alleviate suffering and pain...”*

“The proper and responsible use of vaccines is a duty not only to our own selves and families but to our communities. Choosing to not vaccinate, when it is medically safe, threatens the lives of others.

“The Executive Council expresses its grave concern and sorrow for the recent rise in easily preventable diseases due to anti-vaccination movements which have harmed thousands of children and adults.

“The Executive Council condemns the continued and intentional spreading of fraudulent research that suggested vaccines might cause harm. The spread of this misinformation has resulted in significant harm to children and families.

“The Executive Council recognizes no claim of theological or religious exemption from vaccination for our members and reiterates the spirit of General Convention policies that Episcopalians should seek the counsel of experienced medical professionals, scientific research, and epidemiological evidence.”

Finally, Executive Council also urges, *“all religious leaders to support evidence-based measures that ensure the strongest protections for our communities.”* And they instruct all of our congregations and dioceses, *“to partner with medical professionals to counter false information, and to become educated about programs in their communities that can provide vaccinations and immunizations at reduced or no cost to those in need.”*

On misinformation: Some may have bought into misinformation around the vaccine or vaccines in general. Since the beginning of the pandemic, misinformation has been a problem. As the World Health Organization says, misinformation costs lives.

On trust: It is also true that at various points in history the government has violated public trust, especially in communities of color, through abuse of new and sometimes experimental medicine.

Acknowledging that history is important, as is emphasizing that the

COVID-19 vaccine roll out, aimed at the entire global population, is not such an instance, and does have widespread backing of private and public entities ensuring its safety. Building and leveraging trust,

especially through close relationships with your community, is one of the best approaches.



Changes Coming to the Holy Trinity Website

Recognizing that in today’s world most people, especially younger people, use the internet when searching for a church. As Fr. Ron put it, the internet and a church’s website are the single best avenue of advertising that a church can use.

The Vestry at its January retreat set a goal to investigate upgrades to our current website. At its February meeting, the Vestry voted to begin the process of upgrading our current website.

With the help of an outside consultant, we will ultimately move the website to a more user-friendly platform with more visually appealing features and more options. Our consultant is willing to donate his time towards accomplishing our goals. A small committee of the Vestry will meet with the consultant in the near future to discuss next steps.

Stay tuned for future updates.

Dave Mahoney, Sr. Warden

Prayer for Change

Lord forgive me for what I said when I was hungry and all the things I've said after eating a good meal and when eating bad food and between meals and when I've eaten too much.

Lord forgive me for measuring my sins around food. Because I was made in thy image, I know you must love potato chips, ice cream, and chocolate.

Forgive me when I go to Costco knowing that when I buy a pillowcase full of potato chips, I'll eat the whole bag in three days and blame my wife for not stopping me.

Forgive me for what I say when my wife makes me mad. She knew before she married me that I say things I shouldn't say when the facts sometimes interfere with how I thought the world was.

And forgive me for what I say in private when I think no one is listening to all the gleeful mean-spirited words that come out of my mouth, jubilantly celebrating all the times my fellow traveler on the path trips over their own shoestrings. Just glad it wasn't me.

Forgive me for all the hard words I've said in public when someone honks at me for driving in the left passing lane under the speed limit. I was going slow, that's true, but I thought the speed limit applied to both lanes.

And for the times I have pulled in front of someone who should have seen me and for taking more than my fair share of the road.

Forgive me Lord if I can't think of anything and Lord help all the people I see doing and saying foolish things to accept responsibility for things they might need changing.

Amen

From St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Lenten Meditation

Morning

When you wake in the morning, don't open your internet, or read the papers, until you have first said good morning to God. Have a prayer, or a psalm that you say first thing, to greet God, to reaffirm who you are, and why you are. Rediscover joy first thing in the morning: think on what is true, and lovely, and honorable and pure, before you face the world – and Facebook.

*-Br. Geoffrey Tristram
Society of Saint John the Evangelist*

Calling All Women...

The Episcopal Church Women (all women who attend Holy Trinity) will be holding its regular meeting on **Tuesday, March 9th at 10:30 am** following the *Healing Service*. The main topic for discussion will be the upcoming **Yard Sale on May 1st**. Please plan to attend and be part of our ministry.

Agenda:

- ECW Prayer
- Previous Meeting Minutes
- Treasurer's Report
- Prayers for Birthdays and Anniversaries
- Plans for the May 1st Spring Fling (Yard Sale)
- Members' Comments/Concerns
- Closing Prayer

Congratulations!

Two families were joined into one on February 13, 2021 as parishioners Shannon Hesser (Mawson) and son, Hunter, and Jon Pynduss and daughter, Hannah, married in Tampa, Florida.



Give them wisdom and devotion in the ordering of their common life, that each may be to the other a strength in need, a counselor in perplexity, a comfort in sorrow, and a companion in joy. Amen.

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



March's Wacky Holiday: March 3 National Anthem Day

Our National Anthem is The Star-Spangled Banner, written by Francis Scott Key. He wrote the lyrics on the back of an envelope on September 14, 1814, during the Battle of Fort McHenry in the War of 1812. During the attack on Fort McHenry, which guarded the harbor and city of Baltimore, Key watched the bombardment of the fort from the ship. The next morning, he was ecstatic to see that the American flag was still flying over Fort McHenry. This historic event inspired Francis Scott Key to write "The Star-Spangled Banner" the following day.

It was originally called "Defence of Fort McHenry." There were many patriotic songs at the time, but The Star-Spangled Banner struck at the heart of Americans and gained popularity over the years. But it wasn't until over 100 years later that The Star-Spangled Banner became our national anthem. On March 3, 1931, President Herbert Hoover signed a congressional resolution officially making "The Star-Spangled Banner" the national anthem of the United States of America.

On this special day, proudly fly the USA flag at your home and place of business. Take this as an opportunity to sing the National Anthem (if you can!) or listen to it being sung. And look for chances to show your patriotism.



Holy Trinity Episcopal Church
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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.