



TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

# The Spire

Volume 19, Issue 2

February 2018

## The Mind of Christ in Lent

By James C. Sprouse, Senior Pastor

**Trinity's annual Pancake Supper is Tuesday, February 13. Join us for a celebration of Fat Tuesday, the day that precedes Ash Wednesday, the first of the 40 days of Lent.** Lent is probably the most widely observed season in the Christian year. Remember that Easter Day was originally the focus of the Christian year! The early Christians met weekly on the first day of the week to pray, break bread, and share in the apostles' reminiscences of Jesus' earthly ministry (Acts 2:42). Their meetings were characterized by an expectation of their Lord's immediate, sudden return. In this ecstatic atmosphere, one did not do long-range planning and goal setting. Within the pages of the New Testament, we have indications that time is fast becoming a threat to Christian faith. Time, if it were not to be an enemy, had to be made a friend. It was through this domestication of time that the Christian year evolved.

Although the precise details of the evolution are impossible to know, the general outline is rather easy to discern. First, there was the weekly celebration of the Resurrection. This celebration was of the entire Paschal mystery: the Incarnation, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection and Ascension, the gift of the Spirit, and the promise of the Lord's return. There next emerged a special emphasis in the spring on the celebration of the Paschal feast in relation to the actual time of the historical event. This celebration extended itself back through the Crucifixion on Friday and the Last Supper on Thursday, thus creating the Paschal Triduum of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter. We know that in Jerusalem the custom began having the bishop ride a donkey into the city on the Sunday before the Passion and so inaugurate that period of observance that we call Holy Week.

Penitential discipline came to be attached to Lent as the Church increasingly understood itself as the field where the wheat and the weeds grew together. A major disagreement in the second century had to do with how to deal with those who denied or betrayed the faith. Those who had sinned were expected to perform appropriate penance. It soon became customary for all Christians to use the Lenten period as a time for repentance of past sins and self-denial (hence, "giving things up" for Lent), even if their sins had not been of a major or notorious kind.

*(Continued on page 6)*

## Discover Trinity

By Eileen Gilmer, Associate Pastor

Did you make any New Year's resolutions? If you are like most Americans, the most common resolutions are to eat more healthfully, exercise more or save more money. (I looked up the most popular resolutions and these are, year after year, usually the top three.) Those are all noble ideals. But, what about making a commitment to church?

Not surprisingly, this didn't make the list!

I'd like to invite you to consider making this a focus for you in 2018. How? I'm so glad you asked! There are many ways to get involved at Trinity. Some are long-term and others are one-time events.

Do you like to speak in public? We would love to have you be a reader during worship. Do you have a passion for feeding the hungry? Help us with Martha's Table Sunday by buying the bread, making sandwiches and snack bags, or delivering them. Do you have an interest in finance, administration, children or adult education, worship, or social justice? We have a place for you! God has placed a call on your heart. Trinity would love to have you live out that call with your church family.

Where do you get started? If you are thinking about joining Trinity or are interested in finding ways to get involved with the church, we invite you to join us for our Discover Trinity classes. See graphic for details:

A graphic with a green border. At the top, the text "Discover Trinity" is written in green. Below this, a hand holds a magnifying glass over the text "Learn about Trinity, The United Methodist Church and how to get involved". To the right of the magnifying glass, the text "Sundays February 11 & 18" is written in black, followed by "9:30 a.m." and "Chapel" on separate lines. At the bottom of the graphic, the text "Contact Eileen Gilmer at egilmer@umtrinity.org" is written in black.

**Discover Trinity**

Learn about Trinity, The United Methodist Church and how to get involved

Sundays  
February 11 & 18

9:30 a.m.

Chapel

Contact Eileen Gilmer at [egilmer@umtrinity.org](mailto:egilmer@umtrinity.org)

Childcare is available during this time. The nursery (also located in the Fellowship Building) is open for infants and toddlers. We also have Sunday School available for children Pre-Kindergarten through fifth grade.

During our Discover Trinity classes you will have a chance to meet with church leaders, as well as find out about what it means to be a United Methodist and member of Trinity Church. Plus, you'll have a chance to ask questions about Trinity or the greater United Methodist Church. We would love to have you join us for both classes but welcome you, even if only for one.

Please let me know if you have any questions. You can always reach me at the church or through my email: [egilmer@umtrinity.org](mailto:egilmer@umtrinity.org).

## As Living Bibles

By Keith Lee, Associate Pastor

On Jan 14, eight students and their parents visited the Museum of the Bible. The museum measures 430,000 square feet over eight stories with four major exhibits trying to convey the impact of the Bible on society and history. We planned to cover it in three hours but needless to say, we only saw a fraction of its contents. Hopefully, we can revisit and explore in-depth this \$500 million project to promote the Bible's importance in our society. During the trip, I could not help thinking, "Does the Bible have a similar influence today?" And the follow-up question is "If not, then how can it become relevant again?"

One of the main reasons why the Bible might have lost its importance in society (and in some cases in the church) is that the approach to interpreting it has changed dramatically. Ancient interpreters for the first 1,500 years held these four assumptions about the Bible:

1. They assumed that the Bible was fundamentally a cryptic text: that is, when it said A, often it might have meant B. They didn't read it literally, but tried to discern deeper spiritual interpretations.
2. Interpreters also assumed that it was a book of lessons directed to readers in their own day. The book is not about the past, but an instruction book to tell us how to live today.
3. They assumed that the Bible contained no contradictions or mistakes. It is perfectly harmonious to the interpreters' own religious beliefs and practices.
4. They believed that it is essentially a divinely given text in which God spoke directly to the authors and prophets.

These assumptions still hold true for some Christian traditions today!

However, due to enlightenment and academic approach to biblical interpretation another set of assumptions developed.

1. Scripture is to be understood by Scripture alone. Absurd and allegorical interpretations that early church interpreters and rabbinic midrash made were rejected.
2. In order to understand Scripture, we must understand the original languages used.
3. Even though the Scripture disagrees with our conceptions, it means what is written.
4. Someone who wishes to inquire into Scripture's meaning must likewise investigate how the books themselves were put together and the process of transmission.
5. Finally, there are parts of the Bible that contradict each other.

These two sets of assumptions quoted from James Kugel's *How to Read the Bible*.

(Continued on page 4)  
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# CHAT n' CHEW 2.0

## A LISTENING SESSION WITH BISHOP LEWIS

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Bishop Lewis will host a listening session, *Chat n' Chew 2.0*, on **Saturday, February 24, 2018**, at Ebenezer UMC in Stafford VA. This event is for both laity and clergy from the Alexandria, Arlington, Rappahannock River, and Richmond Districts. It will focus on the work of The Commission on the Way Forward regarding unity and human sexuality, allowing lay and clergy voices across the conference to engage directly in this important conversation.



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**WHO:** Laity & Clergy from the Alexandria, Arlington, Rappahannock River, and Richmond Districts.

**WHAT:** A listening session with Bishop Lewis focused on the work of the Commission on the Way Forward.

**WHEN:** Saturday, February 24, 2018  
8:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

**WHERE:** Ebenezer UMC: 161 Embrey Mill Rd.,  
Stafford, VA 22554

**COST:** \$10/person. Lunch is included.

**REGISTER:** [EISEVERYWHERE.COM/CHATNCHEW2](http://EISEVERYWHERE.COM/CHATNCHEW2)

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**CONTACTS:** Alexandria/Arlington: [NoVaDistricts@vaumc.org](mailto:NoVaDistricts@vaumc.org)  
Rappahannock River:  
[RappahannockRiverDistrict@vaumc.org](mailto:RappahannockRiverDistrict@vaumc.org)  
Richmond District: [RichmondDistrict@vaumc.org](mailto:RichmondDistrict@vaumc.org)

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*(Lee, continued from page 3)*

The problem with modern interpretative assumptions is that they reduce the authority that earlier assumptions held about the Bible to its readers. However, as believers who also affirm modern scientific worldview, we cannot fully embrace assumptions of ancient interpreters. My suggestion is that as parents, teachers and models of faith to our children, we keep in mind these two sets of assumptions and live out the Bible so that they observe how relevant, reasonable and vibrant its teachings are in our lives.

## Schedule of Events

Feb. 5	Crafts for a Cause 7 - 8:30 p.m.	Continuing our mission through pillows, dresses & more: <a href="https://wp.me/p3ZFFv-mJ">https://wp.me/p3ZFFv-mJ</a>
Feb. 11	Martha's Table Sandwich Making	Volunteer at <a href="http://bit.ly/MTVol">bit.ly/MTVol</a>
Feb. 11	Discover Trinity class 9:30 a.m.	See article on page 2.
Feb. 13	Book Chat 7 p.m.	<i>Hero of the Empire</i> , by Candice Millard
Feb. 13	Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, 5 - 7 p.m.	Details in graphic below.
Feb. 14	Ash Wednesday worship at noon and 7:30 p.m.	
Feb. 18	Discover Trinity class, 9:30 a.m.	
Feb. 19	Office Closed	
Feb. 19	Crafts for a Cause 7-8:30 p.m.	See Feb. 5 listing above.
Feb. 24	Chat n' Chew with Bishop Lewis: see information on page 4	
March 7	Easter flower orders due	Get the form in the pews or at <a href="http://bit.ly/TUMCEasterFlowers">bit.ly/TUMCEasterFlowers</a>



**Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper**

February 13, 5 - 7 p.m.  
Langley Hall

Homemade Buttermilk Pancakes (plain and blueberry), Sausage, Homemade Applesauce, Juice, Coffee and Tea.  
Cost: \$5 per person, \$15 per family.  
Proceeds benefit Trinity missions.  
Sign up in the Fellowship Lobby to help with this event.

Contact Molly Sprouse, 703-356-4896, [mollysprouse@gmail.com](mailto:mollysprouse@gmail.com).

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## Membership Update

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### New Member

Zachary Pope

### Transfer

John Conlon

### Deaths

Gene Leake

Doug Swanson

### Address Changes

Alice Sinks

adsinks1@gmail.com

Judy Smith

9600 San Vincente Ave NE #146

Albuquerque, NM 87109

### Are you moving?

Please send your new address to the church office (703-356-3312 or info@umtrinity.org). Thank you. This will ensure that we have all the correct information to send news and contribution statements to the correct address. Thank you.

If you are interested in **joining the church** or learning more about our ministries, please contact a pastor or the church office.

A new **Membership Directory** was produced in early October. It can be found as a button attachment to the E-News each Friday. If you do not receive the E-News, please send your email address to info@umtrinity.org to be added.

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## What's New on Our Blog

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tumcthespire.wordpress.com

### Ask Duke

- Be kind to others

### Crafts for a Cause

- Upcoming work sessions
- Our charities

### Music

- Seasonal music
- Children's & Youth Choirs Sing

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*(Sprouse, continued from page 1)*

Lent, then, is not a prolonged meditation upon the Passion and death of Christ, a pre-extended Good Friday. The clue to the meaning of Lent can be found by looking at the two days that frame it, Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. On Ash Wednesday, it is customary in many congregations for persons to have ashes placed upon their heads while they are being told, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return." In other words, we are confronted by the fact of our mortality in a vivid physical encounter. On Good Friday, we witness the death of another human being, and we are told that in this death we all have died. Lent is intended to end at the cross, but it begins with the human condition that we all share, and it takes on the character of a pilgrimage. We're on a pilgrimage. Keep an account of what you observe along the way.

***The Mission of Trinity United Methodist Church*** is to be a vibrant, growing church home for all who seek companionship, direction and inspiration in their lives as they develop a personal, relevant relationship with God through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

We are anchored in Scripture and energized by congregational commitment. Trinity Church fosters the Christian values of joy, faith, service, hope and love.

Trinity extends the opportunity to experience the Grace of God through worship, discipleship, study and fellowship in the traditions of the United Methodist Church.

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**Trinity United Methodist Church**

Sunday Morning Worship Services  
at 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

Sunday School (all ages) – 9:30 a.m. (Sept–June)  
Children's Education –10:30 a.m.

Wednesday Communion and Healing – 12 noon  
Celtic Evensong & Communion—5 p.m. (last Sun. of month)

Here to serve Christ and you:

James C. Sprouse — Senior Pastor

Eileen Gilmer — Associate Pastor

Keith Lee — Associate Pastor

Jerry Rich — Director of Music

Catherine Wethington—Dir. of Children's & Youth Choirs

Harriet Latta — Office Manager

Jose Luis Nuñez-Ruiz—Sexton

Janine Whitfield — Director of Parents Day Out Preschool

Office Hours:

Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Phone: 703-356-3312

Fax: 703-356-9119

E-mail: [info@umtrinity.org](mailto:info@umtrinity.org)

Web Site: [umtrinity.org](http://umtrinity.org)

Instagram: [trinityumc\\_mclean](https://www.instagram.com/trinityumc_mclean)

Facebook: Trinity UMC, McLean

Twitter: [UMTrinity](https://twitter.com/UMTrinity)

Blog: [tumcthespire.wordpress.com](http://tumcthespire.wordpress.com)

Youtube: [UMTrinity](https://www.youtube.com/UMTrinity)

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*The Spire* deadline is the 15th of the month.

Spire Editor: Harriet Latta.

Submit items to [info@umtrinity.org](mailto:info@umtrinity.org).



**Trinity**

**The Spire**  
A Monthly Publication of  
Trinity United Methodist Church  
1205 Dolley Madison Boulevard  
McLean, VA 22101-3099

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

mailed January 26, 2018

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
McLean, VA  
PERMIT NO. 13

Sent in Prayer to:

**?? Bible Quiz ??**

Paul declares that nothing "will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Which of the following does Paul specify as unable to block God's love?

A. death; life  
B. angels; demons  
C. present; future  
D. heights; depths  
E. all of the above

**ANGELS**  
**LIFE**  
**HEIGHT**  
**FUTURE**

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