

Sunday November 25 through Sunday December 2

- ◆ Pastor Robert finished up his Fall Sermon Series and prepares us for Advent.
- ◆ Hanging of the Greens at 2 pm today.
- ◆ The parsonage group will be meeting at 6:30 pm on Monday. This will be the last meeting until the new year.
- ◆ Study group will be meeting at the Ugly Mug. Next week will be the last session until the new year.
- ◆ Prayer Team and Choir will be meeting Wednesday evening.
- ◆ Next Sunday is the First Sunday of Advent. Pastor Robert will begin a new sermon series (outlines on the table in the narthex). Also, the Cantata will follow Communion during this worship service.



This WEEK at Trinity

OFFICE: (276) 523-0789

trinityumc.bsg@gmail.com

Sunday November 25

Christ the King Sunday

10:00 am—10:45 am Sunday School

11:00 am—12:00 pm Morning Worship

2:00 pm—Decorating of the Church

Monday November 26

6:30 pm—Parsonage group

7:00 pm—Boy Scouts

Tuesday November 27

11:00 am—Study Group at Ugly Mug

7:00 pm—Girl Scouts

Wednesday November 28

6:00 pm—Prayer Team

7:00 pm—Choir Practice

Thursday November 29

No Scheduled Activities

Friday November 30

9:00 am—MEOC in Fellowship Hall

Saturday December 1

No Scheduled Activities

Sunday December 2

First Sunday of Advent

10:00 am—10:45 am Sunday School

11:00 am—12:00 pm Morning Worship/
Cantata

5:00 pm—UMYF

Genesis 15: 12-23

Abraham is known as the Father of Faith. Abraham's faith was in God's Promise. God promised to make him a Great Nation. In today's reading, God meets Abram in his fear. Abram fears that he will not receive the son God promised. Like us, Abram has questions about God's promises, God's timing, God's will, and his role in God fulfilling the promise through him.

Does your fear often convince you that you are unworthy of God's Promises? Have you received God's Promised Son, Jesus Christ? Why are you afraid?

This is not the first time God has met Abram in his fear. Abram feared a famine. He feared the Egyptian people. He feared that the stress and strains of great wealth would destroy his relationship with Lot and his neighbors. He feared he and Sarai would never have a son. His fear often blinded him from being the blessing God called him to be to the Egyptians, Lot, Sarai, and all the families of the earth. Yes, you are included too!

How does your fear blind you from making disciples of all the nations of the earth? (Matthew 28: 19) This is God's will! This is how to be a blessing to one another. Name the persons you have blessed by helping lead them to Christ.

Today, we hear that Abram fell into a deep sleep and went into a deep and terrifying darkness. It is important to remember that Isaac has not been conceived or born at the time of this dream. Yet, God shows Abram the Nation of Israel. Israel is in slavery in Egypt. God tells Abram his people will remain there some 400 years, but then God will bless them and return them to the promised land. The Exodus! Please do not miss that God is with Abram in the dream speaking to him amid this terrifying darkness.

What do you hear in the news of wars and rumors of war? Listen to the fear surrounding the California fires. Listen to the politicians shame, blame, and evoke fear. It is almost like living in Abrams deep terrifying darkness. Hear the Good News. God is with us. Even the darkest dark is light to God. (John 1: 1-5)

The following is a study of the Light of Christ that shines in the darkness of our deepest fears!

Through Jesus Christ, God promised our sins would NOT be counted against us! (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Luke 22:34; Romans 8:1-4) Each of us must ask: "Do I place my faith in the power of Jesus Christ or in the power of my fear of sin and death?"

Why do we count our neighbor's sin against them? Why do Church people spend more time talking about sin than God's Grace? Why do we load our neighbors down with burdens that drive them deeper into their fear? Through Grace God says, "Come to me all you who are weary..." (Matthew 11:28) Grace invites us to deny our fear. Grace invites us to deny the evil spirits of shame, guilt, and blame that holds our hearts and minds in slavery to sin and death. Grace invites us to deny the old self who says, "I am unworthy." (Matthew 16:24) Grace invites us to rise from our fear of sin and death to praise Him with a Spirit of Thankfulness. Grace invites us to receive a new heart, a new mind, and a holy spirit.

At the cross, God took our fear of sin and death, buried it in an empty tomb, and on the third day showed all of humanity His truth. God's mercy and Grace show us the Way to Truth. The truth reveals God's unconditional love.

God's mercy, grace and love do NOT take away the human spirit or will! The human spirit operates on fear. You were saved by grace through faith, not by the works required to keep the Law. (Ephesians 2:8; Matthew 5:19-20) The Law merely convicted us of sin and death. Do we not understand that the works-righteous deeds- required to keep the Law bind us in chains of fear of God, and fear of sin, and death? (Galatians 3:19-23)

In place of sin and death, God gives us grace. Grace offers us new-life. This New-Life flows with a Spirit of Peace and unconditional – unmerited-- love of God. We cannot earn God's Grace and Love.

A relationship with God is nothing like the relationships we have with one another. Friendships, Marriage, Colleagues, and raising a Family are conditional. I expect push back on many of my points and especially this one: Human relationships are based on a simple principle: "I will do this for you and I expect you to do this or that for me. Thus, our relationships are conditional. God's ways are not our ways!!! God's way is Grace. God's way is unconditional love. We cannot earn Grace.

Yet, the human must deny its old sinful ways; yes, its fearful nature. This, my friends, is the broken and deceptive human will. Paul calls it flesh. Psychology calls it ego. It is the trick and temptation of Satan. We must deny the power of fear that controls and holds our hearts and minds in slavery to various evil spirits. (See Galatians 5:19-21)

The promise of Grace accessed through Faith in Christ alone leads us not into the temptations of the human will, trapped in fear, but delivers us to New-Life. The New-Life flows with thanksgiving, praise, and worship. It flows with mercy, grace, and love. The new life we receive anew each day is filled with the Fruit of Life in Christ. The New-Life in Christ flows with joy, peace, patience, kindness... (Galatians 5:22) The New-Life we are given is for NOW. Now is the time. Now is the time of salvation. The New-Life brings heaven to earth just as Jesus taught us to pray. Now is the time to experience the eternal nature of God's grace.

Jesus didn't wait to celebrate His risen newness of life. He rose from the dead. He ministered to the Disciples for 40 days. What are church people waiting on?