

Trinity Times

A newsletter for the members and friends of Trinity Episcopal Church

Trinity Episcopal Church
The Episcopal Church in Athens since 1842
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Early Pentecost - June, 2021

Rumination: June, 2021 Pentecost: Preaching the Light!

The Rev. Benjamin Lee Lentz

This month my rumination begins with a qualification of a prior rumination. It seems no matter how much I research, when I type something that seems to be simply me being my usual charming and witty self, I end up making corrections. I didn't realize that I was perhaps treading into copyright territory when I subtitled last month's rumination the "Armchair Theologian Series".

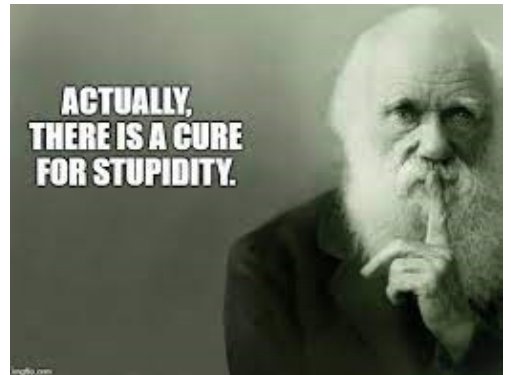
I have since found that there are a series of books, authored by various theologians, entitled the "Armchair Theologian Series." I also found an apparently abandoned blog (2017) entitled "Armchair Theologian" as well as a current blog (by a different author) entitled "Armchair Theologian."

I am not a part of any of those enterprises. I simply believe that whether we know it or not, we are all theologians. Or at least, we all operate by a theology we profess with our lips, but more often by our actions. My call is for people to acknowledge the existence of their theological perspective and to attempt to live consistently by that perspective – not just when it is convenient. Perhaps more importantly, that we ought not to beat others over their heads with the banner of our theological perspective.

I suppose that we are all in the ranks of (lower case) armchair theologians.

Moving on: I have been challenged (again, meant to be an off-handed charming and witty comment) to address where, if anywhere, in the

scriptures Jesus performs a healing for stupidity. Aha! A biblically based challenge!



All of the Gospel authors report many instances of Jesus performing all sorts of healings. Matthew says that Jesus went about "*healing every disease and every infirmity among the people.*" (Mt. 4:23) Luke affirms that Jesus cured those who had need of healing. (Lk. 9:11). Matthew even specifies "*all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, and paralytics, and he healed them.*" (Mt. 4:24).

No specific mention of stupidity in any of these listings of healings, although, I suppose in a generic way, the condition might be included in '*all the sick*' or '*various diseases*'.

Luke recorded in the book of Acts that "*Peter opened his mouth and said...he (Jesus) went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed by the devil.*" (Acts 10:34, 38). However, at this juncture, Peter, via Luke is most likely referring to demonic possession, which many people today would consider a psychiatric issue (*caveat: I am NOT saying people with mental illnesses are stupid!*). I don't really believe that stupidity is a disease.

Still, this Lukan passage led me to thinking about how we define stupidity and if there are any Biblical equivalencies based on a

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re-evaluation of the word 'stupidity'. A rudimentary definition of stupidity is the *lack* of intelligence, common sense or *perception*. Lack of perception caught my attention: a euphemism for the inability to see the light.

Oh, oh. Watch out for the rabbit hole (remember the rabbit hole series of ruminations, which preceded the very short-lived armchair theologian series?). When in the rabbit hole, the stream of consciousness flows freely.

Failure to see the light (pun intended), led Saul of Tarsus to Damascus where on the road, he was blinded by the light. In Damascus, Anani'as was directed by Jesus to heal Saul's blindness. (Acts 9:1-30). Jesus effectively heals Saul of Tarsus (a.k.a. Saint Paul) of his imperceptibility.

(Stream of Consciousness pathway: stupidity is a lack of perception, Saul is healed of his imperceptions, Q.E.D. Jesus heals even stupidity!)

By this understanding, perhaps there is a cure for stupidity. However, when we resume in-person worship, please do not bring people to me for laying-on-of-hands in order to heal stupidity. I'm only here to try to preach the Light.

In the infamous words of Micah Leggat: "*ergo ipso facto columbo oreo!*" (I'll leave you to translate that yourself.) That being said, the appropriate ending for a rumination:

Fini!

Fr. Ben

Worshipping together again begins Sunday, June 6 at 10 a.m.

The diocese has issued new guidelines for gathering for churches in counties where the case numbers are 25 or lower per 100,000 for two weeks. Bradford County finally reached that threshold on May 20 (the last county in the diocese to do so). The full document can be read at <https://diobeth.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/COVID19-Protocols-052021.pdf>

Here are the guidelines that will affect us:

Masking Fully vaccinated people are not required to wear a mask while gathering. In gatherings that include both fully vaccinated and not yet fully vaccinated people, masks that fully cover the nose and mouth are recommended for all people.

Physical Distancing Fully vaccinated people are not required to physically distance while gathering. In gatherings that include both fully vaccinated and not yet fully vaccinated people, all people are recommended to stay six feet apart from others who do not live with them.

Singing Congregational or choir singing among fully vaccinated and not yet fully vaccinated people should follow the "Masking" and "Physical Distancing" guidelines above. Our organist, Joe Barber, is battling some non-Covid health issues and will not be able to play for us for a time; please keep him in your prayers. In the meantime, Paula Bacorn has graciously agreed to play the 2nd and 4th Sundays, and we'll have guitar for the other two.

Holy Eucharist At Trinity we will all be able to receive communion in one kind (bread). Fr. Ben will wear a mask during the consecration and distribution. We'll approach the communion rail in a single line. Each person will remain standing in front of Fr. Ben, receive the host in their hands, move to the side, consume the host, and then return to their pew.

If there is a rise in cases, we will not be required to close immediately. As this newsletter goes to press, the vestry is holding a special meeting to formalize our re-opening and will send a letter to the Bishop, as required, to inform him.



If there is any change in our plans, the vestry will let you know by email or phone call if you don't have email. However, that is likely not going to happen, so plan on being at Trinity on Sunday, June 6, at 10 a.m. for a joyful reunion!





Trinity Episcopal Church - June 2021

Pentecost

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><i>Trinity Cycle of Prayer:</i> 6/6 Jill and Steve Kormanik. 6/13 Nelson and Sue Kopatz. 6/20 Patricia Martin, Steve & Heather Martin Lake. 6/27 Fr. Ben, Andrea, and Theo Lentz.</p>		<p>Bradford County's Covid-19 numbers have fallen enough so that Trinity can reopen for worship. Join us on June 6, and every Sunday, for Holy Eucharist II with music and singing. More details in the June Newsletter.</p>			<p><i>Diocese of Bethlehem:</i> 6/6 St. Mark's and St. John's, Jim Thorpe. Kirby House. 6/13 Grace Church, Kingston, The Rev. John Hartman, Rector. Clergy of the Diocese. 6/20 Trinity, West Pittston. Commission on Ministry. 6/27 Christ Church, Susquehanna.</p>	
 <p><i>Our Partner Diocese of Kajo Kejo:</i> 6/6 St. Peter Kinyiba. 6/13 Gurube and Mangaloti Parishes. 6/20 Sonder Parish. 6/27 St. Paul Kasurak Parish.</p>		<p>1</p>	<p>2 AA Intergroup 5 pm AA 7:30 pm <i>Barbara Bean</i></p>	<p>3 AA 5:30 pm <i>Helen & Larry McNeal</i></p>	<p>4 <i>John Strange</i></p>	<p>5</p>
<p>6 Pentecost 2 - Proper 5 10 a.m. Holy Eucharist II</p>	<p>7 AA 7 and 8:00 pm</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9 AA 7:30 pm <i>Laura Cama Chris Bailey</i></p>	<p>10 AA 5:30 pm</p>	<p>11 St. Barnabas</p>	<p>12 <i>Malcolm Forbes</i></p>
<p>13 Pentecost 3 - Proper 6 10 a.m. Holy Eucharist II **Vestry meets**</p>	<p>14 AA 7 and 8:00 pm</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>16 AA 7:30 pm <i>Kate Murray</i></p>	<p>17 AA 5:30 pm</p>	<p>18 <i>David Caum</i></p>	<p>19 <i>Bruce & Colleen Barton</i></p>
<p>20 Pentecost 4 - Proper 7 10 a.m. Holy Eucharist II</p>  <p>Summer Begins</p>	<p>21 AA 7 and 8:00 pm <i>Hildegard Mohr Greg & Ginny Caum-Lake Jill & Steve Kormanik</i></p>	<p>22 <i>Jeremy Forbes</i></p>	<p>23 AA 7:30 pm <i>Jessica Cameron</i></p>	<p>24 Nativity of St. John the Baptist AA 5:30 pm <i>Charles Ford</i></p>	<p>25 <i>Tom Bubniak Shannon Bubniak</i></p>	<p>26</p>
<p>27 Pentecost 5 - Proper 8 10 a.m. Holy Eucharist II</p>	<p>28 AA 7 and 8:00 pm</p>	<p>29 St. Peter and St. Paul, Apostles <i>Karen Nichols</i></p>	<p>30 AA 7:30 pm</p>	<p><i>Anglicans around the World:</i> 6/6 The Church of the Province of Myanmar (Burma) Archbishop Stephen Than Myint Oo. 6/13 The Church of Nigeria, Archbishop Henry Ndukuba. 6/20 The United Church of North India, The Most Rev. Dr. Prem Chand Singh. 6/27 The Church of Pakistan (United), Bishop Azad Marshall.</p>		

June at Trinity



Worshipping together begins again on June 6!

Sundays in June - Holy Eucharist II at 10 a.m.

Check page 2 for diocesan guidelines as well as how worship will be at Trinity.

June 13 - Vestry meets

What about coffee hour?

There are no issues for fully vaccinated people, of course, but there may be some of us who are not. The vestry will be discussing this and will

likely leave it up to you as to how we will conduct that important unofficial Episcopal sacrament.

Around the buildings -

The **large sign** in the church garden is in the midst of being redone - it's been 12 years and the letters are nearly gone. Hopefully, by the time we all get back to Trinity on June 6, I will have finished it. It will be repainted and new letters will be applied. And, of course, this is the time of year for lots of work on the gardens. They're coming along, although I'm moving a bit more slowly these days. If you love to garden and would like to help or have suggestions, please let me know. *Barbara*

Sacristy porch update. Our Junior Warden has made great progress, with a little help from Alan. This new entry to the sacristy is Nate's gift to the parish. He is also handling the contracts for the new rectory roof and the partial re-pointing of the church building. We're grateful for his expertise!



Color!



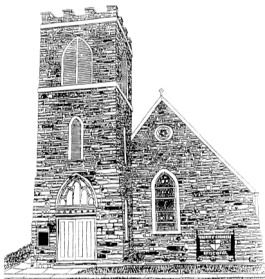
If you receive your newsletter by regular mail, you are seeing it as it is actually designed - in color - for the first time. That is because we were able to replace our 13 year old work-horse copier with a color laser one.

The email version has always been in color, so please send in your email if you have one.

Birthdays/Anniversaries

There will be a new list in church - please add or update as necessary.

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Early Pentecost

June, 2021

Welcome Back June 6!

To seek and serve Christ in all people