

First Presbyterian Church of Alvin

Press Bytes



To the Saints at First Presbyterian:

Greetings: As I write this message, I am very much aware of the chaos and violence that is wrecking our nation today. We are fighting a terrible virus that is killing hundreds of thousands of people in this country and around the world. We are seeing terrible violence in our streets and rioting and burning of buildings over the senseless death of George Floyd. We have a possible hurricane beginning to develop in the Gulf and will probably head our way they predict. There is basically no leadership coming from Washington and mixed signals everywhere. It's like no one is in charge. I haven't seen things this bad in my lifetime. As a popular song that came around Woodstock, "It's Been A Long Time Coming". We didn't get here overnight.

Our nation is going through great changes and change is usually very hard to accept. We either want to hold on, go back or resist. We want more comfortable times when everything seemed to be ok. Change is never easy for we usually aren't sure where it will take us and just who is bringing the change?

We have a lot of "new" people in our society today; people who lived somewhere else and had not much of a presence here. We have other religions and places of their worship. We have other languages that are not just left to personal speaking in private but now are public. We have different customs and traditions that are different from what we are use to, as well as different ways to dress. A lot has changed and is still changing. That will not stop. Change will happen as long as there are people on this planet. Jesus was hated and feared by many for the change he was bringing to the faith and the way society treated and visualized people. I don't mind saying I am having somewhat of a problem with a lot of this too. Change is not always good. My problem isn't the difference among people or different traditions, but the segregation and tribalism that is occurring. We seem to want to segregate with just "our" kind and think of just "our" kind. There doesn't seem to be a sense of common unity; of pulling together as a people. We have always been a united states.

Don't fret though, there is hope. I think it will come from the youth of our nation. I saw and heard this possibility at several high school graduations I watched for we knew many of the parents who had kids graduating along with one of my grandsons.

I saw this nation as its becoming. There were young people from many races and backgrounds. There were names I couldn't pronounce; young people from all walks of life. The speeches from the top students were filled with hope and expectation. They had a great vision of what this country could become and be. In spite of the virus, the terrible killing of George Floyd and the chaos and riots that were happening as they were graduating, there was hope and expectation in their speeches. Youth innocence? Naiveté? Maybe somewhat, but they weren't going to let the present situation determine the future. They had a dream! A vision! This is what the prophet Joel spoke about in his book when he said, (God) "I will pour out my spirit on all flesh' your sons and daughters shall prophesy, young men shall see visions. Isaiah said "a Child shall lead them" speaking of the coming of the messiah. Jesus told us unless we become a child we couldn't enter the kingdom of God.

Our faith is being terrible tested during these times. But that's what faith does. Gives us a vision of the future that is always in God's hands. Paul envisioned a world where, "there is neither Jew nor Greek, male now female, slave nor free. These were radical words in Paul's time but still the dream of the reality of the Kingdom of God that was ushered in by Christ. It's relevant today as well.

We are all different, but all the same. We can choose to segregate in our own tribal worlds or open our lives to who we are becoming. Jesus always told his disciples, "don't be afraid". Those are good words for us today. The young graduates didn't seem to fear but was ready to embrace the future. I'm ready to join then. How bout you?

Peace,

June Issue

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by C.O. (on Cover)

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Insert

June Calendar



SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

Session did not meet, but voted to invite congregation members back to church.

Trinity Sunday – edited by Christopher Lo

In our church calendar, on June 7, 2020, we will observe Trinity Sunday, acknowledging that our God is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The term Trinity comes from the Latin *tri*, “three,” and *unitas*, “unity.” The term was devised by Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullian (160–240 A.D.), a prolific early Christian author from Carthage [now Tunis in Tunisia] in the Roman province of Africa, to express the mystery of the unity-in-diversity of God. Trinity means “threefold unity.” The Trinity is a perfect relationship of love in which neither unity nor distinctness of the divine persons is compromised. God's life is understood to be dynamic, loving, and available to be shared in relationship with humanity for salvation.

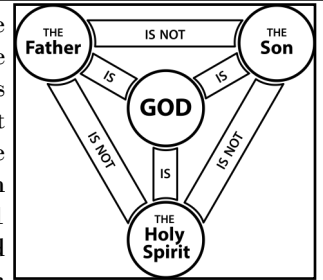
Developing the theology fell to a number of Church leaders, perhaps the most important being Athanasius, the 20th Bishop of Alexandria [in what is now Egypt], (296–373 A.D.) and, while he lived, Athanasius’ mentor, Alexander I (d. 328 A.D.), the 19th Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria. As a way of bolstering their theology, they took up the matter of the Holy Spirit’s divinity, as well. The essential foundation of this doctrine was threefold:

Christ was with God in the beginning and was God (John 1:1); Christ and God the Father are unified (John 10:30); The Spirit of God was also included in the divine life (1 Corinthians 2:10–13).

New Christians are to be baptized in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19).

The church took several centuries to work out a reasonably acceptable way to express the complex relation of Father, Son, and Spirit. The

nearly complete doctrine of the Trinity was announced at Constantinople [now Istanbul in Turkey] in 381 A.D., held that God is one Being – ousia



(οὐσία) in three equal and consubstantial persons or hypostases (ὑπόστασις): the Father uncreated, the Son uncreated but begotten, the Spirit proceeding from the Father (and, in the western version of the Creed, the Son). The Athanasian Creed states that “we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity, neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the Substance.”

In Article One of the Thirty Nine Articles of Religion (the historically defining statements of doctrines and practices of the Church of England in 1563) , affirms that in the unity of God “there be three Persons, of one substance, power, and eternity; the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost” (Book of Common Prayer, p. 867).

The Episcopal Theologian Albert Theodore Mollegen (1906–1984) suggested this helpful analogy: “The light (the Father) shines through the colored slide (the Son) to cast an image (the Holy Spirit) on the screen (the church).”

The Church of Scotland (Presbyterian) Theologian Donald Macpherson Baillie (1887–1954) suggested that “The doctrine of the Trinity sums up the gospel by telling us that the God of grace, who was revealed through the Incarnation and Pentecost as the One who paradoxically works in us what he demands of us, is the same from all eternity and for ever more; so . . . Christians can sing: *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost: as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.*”

“Shout joyfully to God, all the ear; Sing the gloty of His name; Make His praise glorious.”

Psalm 86 1-2





Ongoing Prayers Edith Rockwell, Matt Ober, people suffering from the COVID-19 Corona Virus, Cindy Roberts, Lisa McCalla, Belinda Busscher, Kim Hill, Lorenda Baldwin, Nick Cordero, Patty Costanzo, Billy Steckert Jr., Brian Downs, Brenten Dietrich, Clyde Shepherd, Rachel

Grimmett, Samantha Carroll, Shannon Cosby, Mark Clark, Julie & Evie Loosmore, Tammy Robinson, Hazel Beuloh, and Terry Thacker.

Immediate Concerns : The Families of Lewis Rockwell & Karen Hering .

Elder of the Month - Brandi Bowers



- June 1 Helen Escobedo
- June 2 Janet DeLeon
- June 6 Faye Steckert
- June 9 Chris Pounds
- June 10 Caleb Petty
- June 12 Joann Froberg
- June 20 Marion Rowsey
- June 23 Adrienne Thomas
- June 24 Randy Phipps
- June 25 Rhonda Newell
- June 25 Melissa Pounds
- June 26 Braiden Anderson
- June 27 Ingrid Holdorff
- June 30 Sue Kelso

Vacation Bible School

Unfortunately, in-person VBS has been cancelled for this year. Congregation members can register for virtual VBS on our website. Special **THANK YOU** to Adrienne Thomas & Marisa Whitfield for their dedication to the kids of our congregation.

