



THE TRINITY TRUMPET

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SUMMER'S IN FULL BLOOM

FR. KEVIN WITTMAYER

As I write this article on a Tuesday morning sitting in my office, it is difficult to concentrate given the cacophony of little voices coming from the next room. Vacation Bible School is in full swing and the children are having the time of their lives. It is hard not to get excited about the future of Trinity Church when you hear the laughter of seventy-five children in the Parish Hall. I can't begin to thank enough Tisha and the many volunteers who make our Trinity Vacation Bible School a reality.

Of course the presence of the "next generation" is important to any church, and we are blessed at Trinity to see this particular demographic slowly but surely growing. This is due in large part to the wonderful ministries of Tisha Grotemat and Tim Baker. We are truly blessed to have them on staff. We are also blessed in recent years to have a number of Trinity School of Texas families make their way down the hill in order to make Trinity their church home.

Last month we dedicated a significant portion of the Trumpet to include an article about what attracts the "millennial" generation (those born between 1982 - 2000 or

those person reaching adulthood around the year 2000) to the Church. I think it is extremely important to hear the voices of this generation as we are thinking about what Trinity's vision and mission is for the future. This month, beginning on the right hand side of this page, I've included a blog post titled, *The Church Is Not Dying. It's Failing. There's a Difference* by Maggie Nancarrow, herself a "millennial." While I may not agree with everything that the author claims, there is enough substance in the article to make it a worthy read.

There are rich resources in the blogosphere that can help inform our understanding of the world to which the Church is called to minister. Therefore, as articles of interest present themselves, I will include them for your consideration. I will not always agree with everything the authors write, but I will always consider what they write as fodder for thought and conversation. Approach each article with the "watermelon philosophy." As you read, digest what is good and spit out the seeds.

RETHINKING CHURCH

By Maggie Nancarrow

I work in the church, and I am quite devoted to that line of work. And over the past month or so, people of my ilk have been obsessively reacting to this Pew survey that seems to unilaterally say that the Mainline church is dying. [Mainline Protestant churches and Catholics declined 3.4% and 3.1% in just 6 years. This guy goes ahead and says that the Mainline Protestants are "hemorrhaging."] So, please be fore-warned: I am about to be opinionated. And my opinion is not warranted by research or numbers, but rather "just" extensive exposure and dedication to The Church, which is in one moment beautiful and miraculous and at another moment maddening, obnoxious, and hurtful. And with that in mind, I say this: **The Church is not dying. The Church is failing, and there is a difference.**

The word "dying" is passive. It is as if we are sitting around quietly wilting away while the culture around us turns against us and decides that they're not interested in God anymore. It is as if, gradually, nobody wants to play with us on the playground anymore. It suggests that we have done *nothing* to engender this reaction. And friends, let's be honest—we have. But, let's not go on a guilt trip. The point is that I have never noticed or perceived that people were not interested in God anymore. People are incredibly hungry for God. It isn't that people don't want to experience God. It is that The Church of the 1950s is failing to be a place where that happens.

In my life, I have met countless of these "nones" and these Millennials who don't like church.

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TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH

LONGVIEW, TEXAS

STAFF

The Rev. Kevin Wittmayer	Rector
Gary Whitwell	TST Head of School
Bill Bane	Director of Music Ministries
Tim Baker	Director of Student Ministries
Tisha Grotemat	Director of Children's Ministries
Leno Mancilla	Sexton
George Pliker	Endowment
Billie Padgett	Office Volunteers

VESTRY

<u>Class of 2015</u>	<u>Class of 2016</u>	<u>Class of 2017</u>
David Balliett	Harry Barth	Christy Collins
Scott Jones	John Hall	Karen Frith
Elise McClure	Kim Howard	Robert Maly
Ted Skeans	Ava Welge	Bryan Wilks
Senior Warden, John Hall		
Junior Warden, Robert Maly		
Treasurer, Sammy York		
Clerk of the Vestry, Kristin Hoover		

MISSION OF THE MONTH

Episcopal Relief & Development Partners with Texas Dioceses on Flood Response

Episcopal Relief & Development works with more than 3 million people in nearly 40 countries worldwide to overcome poverty, hunger and disease through multi-sector programs that utilize local resources and expertise. An independent 501(c)(3) organization, Episcopal Relief & Development works closely with Anglican Communion and ecumenical partners to help communities rebuild after disasters and develop long-term strategies to create a thriving future. In 2014-15, the organization joins Episcopalians and friends in celebrating 75 Years of Healing a Hurting World.

Episcopal Relief & Development is partnering with the Episcopal dioceses of Texas and West Texas in response to severe flooding caused by weeks of heavy rain across the region. Church teams in both dioceses are providing pastoral care and conducting needs assessments in areas where people lost homes and belongings to the floods, and church facilities are acting as ministry bases for outreach efforts. Episcopal Relief & Development support will assist affected households with gas, groceries and repair supplies, as well as storage for salvaged belongings and temporary housing for evacuees.

JUNE VESTRY REPORT

June's Vestry meeting was very brief as there were a number of Vestry members unable to attend due to vacation plans or work commitments. We did have a majority and were able to approve the minutes from the previous meeting. However due to an anticipated low attendance we postponed a report from the Security Committee until our July meeting.

After our opening prayer we received a financial report from our Treasurer, Sammy York. The financials continue to be in line with expectations for this time of year. Pledge giving is lower than expected however. Sammy encouraged parishioners to remember their pledge commitment, especially during the summer months when giving slackens. Expenses were lower than the budgeted amounts so our net cash position remains strong in spite of decreased giving.

Sammy reported that he had reviewed a draft copy of the audit and the final copy will be submitted shortly. Fr. Kevin reported that the auditor communicated to him that it was a clean audit and the church was in a healthy financial position. The Vestry voted to change the scheduled Mission of the Month for July with the Episcopal Relief and Development Fund. These funds will be directed to assist recent victims of the flooding in the Hill Country of Texas.

After sharing with the Vestry his summer travel plans Fr. Kevin asked the Vestry to complete a questionnaire for his Congregational Study. He will be asking other parishioners to complete the survey as well. Fr. Kevin then spoke frankly with the Vestry about the possible closure of the Trinity Gift Shop. It appears that there is no one who is willing to manage the gift shop so it will necessitate closing the store.

BBQ, BLUE JEANS AND SUNDAE CELEBRATION

Immediately following 10:30 AM Service • Sunday, July 5th • Trinity Outreach Center

Come enjoy awesome bbq and bring a favorite side dish to share!

Afterward, prepare to enjoy the ice cream sundae of your dreams from the incredible sundae bar!



Rethinking Church

Continued from page 1

They are profoundly hungry to talk about God, profoundly in need of spiritual guidance, and profoundly hungry for acceptance, trust, and love. And very rarely are these conversations mature, thoughtful faith dialogues. These things come up at drunken college parties, on awkward first dates, as soon as something about gay people is in the vicinity, or as soon as a fight can be picked. These people did not have religious communities that taught them how to be an adult in faith, never taught them how to go beyond petty religious behavior, never taught them how to safely discuss serious issues. Many of them never had churches who took their childhood religiosity seriously, and then viewed them as dangerous and broken when they went through their (very normal) stage of questioning as a teenager.

Many of them never had churches that did the hard work of serving the poor that they believed the church was about. Many felt excluded by the inappropriate and unloving stances on GLBT issues, or women's issues, or society as a whole. Many are deeply scared by the sex abuse scandals and the abuse of authority in the church. Many just got tired of the petty squabbles between the various old timers in the congregation, or the obsession with "the way it used to be", or the way there always seemed to be insiders and outsiders. Many never saw any point in going to church, because it was not a place that enriched their lives. For some, the concept of God is so tainted by problems that they could not imagine the love of that God—or even did not want the love of that God.

And that's our problem, not theirs. We've failed to be mature and sincere in our faith, not the other way around. If we can't give people a space to meet the God that wants to meet them, than we have failed in our mission. So before you get all bent out of shape by the fact that I'm using the word "failing", I will point out one thing: Even the ministry of Jesus was perceived as a failure until a few crazies began to retell the story. The Messiah of the Israelites was nailed to a tree and killed in the most demeaning way possible, the most epic failure of all religious leaders of all time—that guy who was supposed to restore the kingdom of Israel to its previous glory was a huge failure.

And, in the grand scheme of things—I think it turned out okay. But, it took sincere and authentic believers, who encountered the work of God in that failure, to turn that truck around. They saw God doing new things, and they told that story of resurrection, rather than the depressing and disheartening story that the Messiah was not going to restore the Kingdom of David. They preached about the new work that they saw God do, not how depressing it was that Jesus was not going to ride in on a shiny white horse and make the church the robust place it was in the 1950s when Sunday School classrooms were full, committees abounded, and there was a full time secretary.

Yes, the establishment church is failing. Yes, the establishment church, where people show up out of obligation and listen to the pastor because that's just what you do – yes, that has failed. And that's okay, because the *Establishment Church of Perennial Obligation* was not actually providing spiritual nourishment to all these people. So many are desperate for authentic, real spiritual nourishment without the [trappings] of the establishment church.

The church of the 1950s has failed. It is already gone, and if we try to keep it alive, then we are like the disciples who tried to tell Jesus that he would ride in and restore the Kingdom of David. Then, we will miss the new work God is doing, and we will continue to fail to meet the desperately hungry people in our midst.

Now, I am two things: an Episcopalian and a church professional. So, I rely quite sincerely on the reality of an establishment that is the church in the USA. I people (ought to) get from a life's work in the United States. And, I love the traditional and ancient model of worship in the Episcopal Church. When done authentically, I think it is profound and meaningful. I don't think that we should advocate for the *disbanding* of the mainline protestant church.

What I am saying is that we don't get to rely on the "just because" model anymore. I'm saying that we've failed in our ability to explain why we do what we do in such a way that connects people to God. Now we actually have to—authentically—feed people spiritually, emotionally, and physically to earn our keep in our society. Just like everyone else, we have to justify our existence. We can't expect to hold a position in society if we don't actually do what we say we're about.

The establishment church is failing, but "The Church" is not dying. We are people who tell the new story of God, people who make space for God to work through us, people who listen for God's call. This is who we say we are. If we, as church people, live out the story of resurrection and God's love, as the people 2,000 years ago did, then the new ministry of God will take place, and we can build communities that respond to God's call and spiritually nourish people.

We can practice communion, create just community, and authentically live into our ancient traditions while encountering God's work to create new ones. We are able to do this, but it is hard work. We can transcend the failings of a church that was relying on "just because" for too long. We can fulfill our original purpose and help people know the God who knows them. This is possible. People are hungry for it. We just have to step up and tell the story of resurrection. It's out there. Churches all throughout the country are doing profoundly good work: bread ovens and community gardens, Godly Play, interfaith dialogues, protest marches, and—it goes on and on. God will do new work through a failing establishment church, just like God did new work through a dead Messiah.

So, let's just stop whining and get real. We are not dying, and we do not have to fail.



Maggie Nancarrow is Director of Youth and Family Ministry and Interim Director of Communications at Hamline Church, United Methodist in St. Paul, MN

Trinity Sunday Celebration IN PICTURES



Photos Courtesy of
Gene McWhorter



JULY 2015

Birthdays & Anniversaries



Happy Birthday

7/02	Stephen Beck	7/21	Susie French	7/27	Nathan Collins
7/05	Gary Fowler	7/21	Eleanor Heinz	7/30	Kirsten Phillips
7/10	Lindsay Mraz	7/21	Myra Smith	7/31	Jack Mann
7/13	Betty Horaney	7/21	M.C. Akin	7/31	David Alexander
7/14	Tricia Wilcox	7/22	Wray McCash	7/31	Laura Brice
7/15	Chase Barbe	7/22	Dorothy Conrad	7/31	Christine Prior
7/19	Marilyn Lewis	7/24	Tina Styles		
7/20	William Butter	7/26	Dan Stroup		

Happy Anniversary


7/3	Patsy and Bill Charles
7/7	Margaret and Charles Miller
7/11	Marie and George Plier
7/15	Jan and Harry Barth
7/21	Barbara and James Crittenden
7/22	Kate and Dickens Wilkinson
7/25	Steffani and Scott Jones
7/26	Christy and Nathan Collins
7/30	Kay and Lee Pigeon

Trinity Service Calendar

Month of July – Lectionary Year B

Date	July 5 The Sixth Sunday after Pentecost	July 12 The Seventh Sunday after Pentecost	July 19 The Eighth Sunday after Pentecost	July 26 The Ninth Sunday after Pentecost
First Reading Psalm Second Reading Gospel	2 Samuel 5 :1-5,9-10 Psalm 48 2 Cor. 12:2-10 Mark 6:1-13	2 Samuel 6:1-5,12b-19 Psalm 24 Ephesians 1:3-14 Mark 6:14-29	2 Samuel 7:1-14a Psalm 89:20-37 Ephesians 2:11-22 Mark 6:30-34,53-56	2 Samuel 11:1-15 Psalm 14 Ephesians 3:14-21 John 6:1-21
Altar Team	Baker Team	Collins Team	Campbell Team	Crittenden Team
Verger	C. Collins	M. Wilks	S. Alford	J. Barbe
Parish Security	J. Crittenden	G. Pliier	T. Todd	T. Devon
Coffee Hour	B. Todd	D. Fricks	L. Leath	E. Campbell
Flower Delivery	M. Harkrider L. Leath	M. Arnold D. Fricks	D. Skeans B. Crittenden	C. Wilks J. Barth
Early Service				
Ushers	E. Campbell M. Pliier	E. Campbell M. Pliier	E. Campbell M. Pliier	E. Campbell M. Pliier
Greeters	Charles Team	Maly Team	Charles Team	McWhorter Team
Acolyte	T. Gignilliat	J. Hall	T. Gignilliat	N. Collins
Lay Readers 1st Reader 2nd Reader	G. Rushing G. Hoover	B. Charles J. Hall	G. McWhorter G. Rushing	G. Hoover N. Collins
L. E. M.	G. Rushing G. Hoover	B. Charles J. Hall	G. McWhorter G. Rushing	G. Hoover N. Collins
Late Service				
Ushers	Jones Team	Kirkindoll Team	Thorson Team	Crittenden Team
Greeters	Kirkindoll Team	Gray Team	Skeans Team	Barbe Team
Acolytes	Team 2	Team 3	Team 1	Team 2
Lay Readers 1st Reader 2nd Reader	J. Welge W. Scott	J. Fowler J. Sawyer	N. Collins J. Sloan	S. Thomas C. Prior
L. E. M.	J. Welge S. York	J. Fowler J. Sawyer	N. Collins J. Sloan	J. Welge J. Hall
L. E. V.		B. Charles M. Arnold		J. Mraz N. Collins

JULY 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 12:15 PM Holy Eucharist	2	3 CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED	4 
5 Regular Sunday Schedule Blue Jeans, BBQ & Sundae Celebration - Immediately Following 10 AM Service Trinity Outreach Center	6	7	8 NO NOON EUCHARIST	9	10	11
12 Regular Sunday Schedule	13 5:30 PM Daughters of the King	14 YOUTH Six Flags Trip 6:00 PM Senior Men's Dinner	15 12:15 PM Holy Eucharist	16	17	18
19 Regular Sunday Schedule	20	21 6:00 PM Vestry	22 12:15 PM Holy Eucharist	23	24	25
26 Regular Sunday Schedule	27	28	29 12:15 PM Holy Eucharist	30	31	
				<p>REGULAR SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE</p> <p>8:00 AM Rite I Holy Eucharist 9:00 AM Coffee Hour 9:15 AM Christian Education 10:30 AM Rite II Holy Eucharist</p>		



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906 Padon Street • Longview, TX 75601
Phone (903) 753-3366 • Fax (903) 753-0594
E-Mail: trinity@trinityparish.org
www.trinityparish.org

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July Special Events

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|------|--|
| 5th | Blue Jeans & BBQ Sunday Celebration, Following 10:30 AM Service, TOC |
| 13th | Daughters of the King, 5:30 PM, Coffee Cafe |
| 14th | Senior Men's Dinner, 6:00 PM, Parish Hall |

August Special Events

- | | |
|------|--|
| 2nd | Young Adult Group, 5:30 PM, Coffee Cafe |
| 10th | Daughters of the King, 5:30 PM, Coffee Cafe |
| 11th | Senior Adult Men's Dinner, 6:00 PM, Parish Hall |
| 16th | Blessing of the Backpacks, 10:30 AM Service |
| 18th | TST Back to School Cookout, 4:00 - 6:00 PM, Trinity School |