



The Mustard Seed
To Know Christ, to Share Christ
October 1, 2021

Matthew 17:20

If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, nothing will be impossible to you.”

*Pastors
Message*

I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. (Isaiah 43:19)

We have been on this journey for some time now. I am sure that some of you must feel like you have been in the Israelites wandering through the desert. Not only are you all experiencing this time of pastoral transition, but you are doing so during a global pandemic. I think many of us are feeling unsettled with what we knew disrupted. This time of transition as well as this time of pandemic is a time in between. It really does feel like we are wandering in the wilderness and that is a very disconcerting feeling. But this time that the Israelites spent wandering was valuable to them in many ways. Through this experience they better learned to trust God and to see that God will lead them to the place intended for them. They learned a great deal about themselves and the connections that they had with one another. And throughout this journey no matter how long it was, God was with them always.

Here we are having our own wilderness experience. And it really isn't an easy time for anyone. We all long to have things be back to "normal". Even as we long for things to return to what they were, we can find meaning. And I think that comes more clearly when we slow down, when we pause. I know that isn't an easy thing to do. But when we slow down, when we pause, we can better hear the voice of God calling to us.

We participated in some of this listening this summer as we gathered in small groups for the cottage meetings. I thank each of you who attended one of these meetings. I compiled all of the information from the meetings and shared it with the council and with the call committee.

The call committee will continue to listen deeply to where God is calling and to better understand the congregation's identity today. Through this listening they will complete the Ministry Site Profile which is a document helps paint a picture of the congregation for prospective pastors helping them to learn and discern about the possibility of serving here at Trinity.

Through this time of transition, God is at work through us bringing us together to create a new thing in our midst.

Pastor Jodi Golden-Lund

Bibles, Books, and Beyond

Update on Trinity's Ministry of Books

You may have noticed that our Little Library is still standing outside Trinity's sanctuary. We hope to move it to the Welcome Center this month, once the city council has approved the placement of the Little Library's cement foundation on the city property currently occupied by the Welcome Center. That request and approval is in process. (Thanks to Doug McIntosh for volunteering to lay the cement foundation.) Once we have a date for the "ribbon-cutting", you will all be invited.

Although our Little Library has not yet been moved to the Welcome Center, the ministry of books for the homeless has been active this month. In response to book requests that we received from persons living without housing in Porterville, a number of Trinity members (and others) have donated books. A selection of these books was made available to folks living down by the river when blessings bags and solar lights were distributed as part of Trinity's "God's Work, Our Hands" project. Essentially, we set up a tailgate "free bookstore." Persons receiving a blessing bag could also select one or more books—and many people did just that, and thanked us for the opportunity.

If you have books that you would like to donate, we are currently looking for the following: novels (particularly thrillers, westerns, mysteries, and historical fiction), history, devotional books, and past issues of Popular Mechanics. We could also use some poetry anthologies, books about science, and some biographies. To donate books, leave them on the table in the entryway, and I will pick them up.

Finally, we will be using money that has been donated to the Ministry of Books to purchase Bibles for any homeless person who requests one. Thank you for all your support.

Ann Marie Wagstaff

Book Review

Elizabeth Johnson, *Ask the Beasts: Darwin and the God of Love*. Bloomsbury, 2014.

In *Ask the Beasts* Elizabeth Johnson, a well-respected Catholic theologian, takes on a deeply important task. She sets out to reconcile the theory of evolution with Christian theology—and particularly, with a biblical and theological understanding of God's creation that includes the all the species of the natural world.

Following her thought in this book does take some time and attention, but it's worth the effort for two important reasons: First, in the 21st century God's creation is in peril; and second, the conflict some experience between religion and science has become an obstacle to responding to that peril. In fact, from Johnson's perspective, that very conflict often blocks the experience of wonder and awe that opens in humans the willingness to change in ways that honor and serve God's good creation.

The focus of her book is certainly timely and important, but it is the strategy Johnson uses to make her case that I find more compelling than other books I have read on the topic. In *Ask the Beasts* Johnson conducts “a dialogue between Charles Darwin’s account of the origin of the species and the Christian story of the ineffable God’s mercy and love recounted in the Nicene Creed” (“Preface”). Now, if that does not sound like a page-turner, this book may not be for you. On the other hand, I promise that after reading this book you will never see Darwin, his theory, or the Nicene Creed in the same way. And that is Johnson’s purpose. She believes that if we really look at these documents with the attention they deserve (given the impact that Darwin has had on science and that the Nicene Creed has had on Christianity) we will discover things in each, and in their relationship to each, that can help transform our understanding of both science and religion—**and**, even more important, help us to widen and keep open one of the doors through which God pours out His love for us and all creation.

If there is interest, I would love to read this book with a group.

Ann Marie Wagstaff

Announcements and Prayer Requests

Annual Holiday Bazaar

The date is set for the Annual Bazaar. It will be on November 13th fro 9-2.

We are looking for items or gift baskets from local merchants for drawings..

The kitchen will be busy with the popular Soup and Pie Lunch. Dave Hensley is the chairman this year and if you would like to help in any way, please let him know. Look for updates in Trinity Today.!



Visitation

If you would like to participate in visitation to church members who are unable to attend services. Please let us know. We are receiving many requests for visitation and would love to provide this to those who need it. Please call or email the office if you are able to help out.

Blessing Bags!

Here are some candid pictures taken at the luncheon on September 11th. Thank you to all who donated to participated in putting together the blessing bags that were distributed to the unhoused on September 12th.



October Birthdays

Ernie Rodriguez October 1, Debra Rodriguez October 2, Richard Zenz October 6, Doug McIntosh October 13, Alice Christianson October 30

New Prayer Concerns

Prayers for Gloria and Vern Miller - Vern is suffering from dementia and Gloria has health concerns and is his caretaker. Gloria is lonely and misses her church, would love phone calls or visits

Prayers for all the farmworkers and everyone who works outside - Juanita Baldwin

Prayer for her daughter, Colleen Wickershom, who suffers from Amblidosis, a cancer-like condition and is under treatment using cancer drugs. - Carol Baggett

Continuing Prayer Concerns

For John and Barbara Horn, Barbara is in constant pain (in hospice care) and John is her caregiver and he is exhausted. - June Mowles

For Rita Early for healing from complications of Covid. - Jan Gibson

Peggy Holt - for healing and comfort due to health problems

Julie Elston - for continued health concerns

Muriel Josten - for continued healing after knee replacement

Brian Nelson (Scott Nelson) - for continuing health concerns

La Vida Nueva UMC - for God to prosper our partnership in the gospel

The Sierra-Pacific Synod - for wisdom and a spirit of true fellowship in our shared ministries

Foothill Presbyterian - for God's blessing on our partnership with their community

Those unable to worship with us

June Mowles - Sierra Hills Phyllis Rengstorf - Kaweah Manor, Visalia

Avis Lindroos - North Dakota Rose Johnson - Sierra Hills

Marga Schaefer- Sierra Valley Rehab Peggy Holt - Sierra View Hospital