



Trinity Tidings

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March 2024

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Judge With Right Judgment

(Luke 6:27f.)

by the Rev. Jess Reeves

Jesus said,
"Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you."

People taking convenient snippets out of Scripture and parading them is the stuff which makes genuine, Bible-devoted Christians shudder. This teaching of Jesus on judgment is widely misunderstood and grossly misapplied. A common reduction we often hear is, *"Don't judge me....or anyone, for that matter."* What's maddening is that this reduction is the inverse application of Jesus's lesson. Jesus is not telling others **not** to judge us; He's **not** eliminating judgment from his recommendation. Just read through Matthew 5-7, for Pete's sake. However, what others do is not our primary concern; what we do is our primary concern. Our biggest problem is not how others judge us, but **how** we judge others.

Caution: Judge at Your Own Risk

Actually, when Jesus says, *"Judge not,"* he's not really issuing a prohibition on judging others; he's issuing a serious warning to take great care how we judge others. We know this because Jesus immediately goes on to say,

³⁹ *He also told them a parable: "Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit?"* ⁴⁰ *A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher.* ⁴¹ *Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?"* ⁴² *How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother's eye.*

How we judge others says far more about us than how we are judged by others. Notice we are to judge ourselves so that we can call our brother to repent-

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Happening This Month

Sunday Worship

Holy Communion at **10:30 a.m.**

Wednesday Service and Lunch

March 6 and 20— Join us for Holy Communion, prayer, thanksgiving and fellowship, starting at **12:05 p.m.** in the chapel. A potluck lunch will follow.

ECW Meeting

The Episcopal Church Women will meet **Sunday, March 10** after the service. Refreshments will be provided.

Vestry Meeting

The Vestry is scheduled to meet **Sunday, March 17** after the service.



Holy Week / Easter Services

March 24-31

Palm Sunday 10:30 a.m.

Procession of the Palms
Holy Communion. (The service will begin in the church; the procession will be around the perimeter of the nave.)

Monday 5:00 p.m.

Stations of the Cross

Tuesday 5:00 p.m.

Stations of the Cross

Wednesday 5:00 p.m.

Stations of the Cross

Maundy Thursday 7:00 p.m.

Service of Holy Communion
Stripping of the Altar

Good Friday (two services) 12:00 p.m.

5:00 p.m.

Easter Day Festival Eucharist 10:30 a.m.

*If you look at the world, you'll be distressed.
If you look within, you'll be depressed.
But if you look at Christ, you'll be at rest.*

— Corrie Ten Boom

March Ministries

	3	10	17	24 Palm Sunday	31 Easter
1st Reading	Lucy McNew	Carol Davis	Charlotte W.	Jessi Owyong	Karen Berry
2nd Reading/ Prayers/Chalice	Charlie McNew	Julie Bridgforth	Phil McBee	Charlie McNew	Jeff Carraway
Crucifer	Charlie McNew	Julie Bridgforth	Phil McBee	Charlie McNew	Jeff Carraway
Usher	Doug Dorris	Trey Davis	Jay Cromwell	Martin Johnson	Smokey W. Trey Davis
Security	Mike Grisham	Jim Danaher	Mike Grisham	John Owen	Larry Wasson
Altar Guild	Merry Tom D.	Carol Davis	Alyce Carraway	Jamie Green	All
Lock-Up	Doug Dorris	Jack Davis	Jeff Carraway	Jay Cromwell	Jeff Carraway

Maundy Thursday, March 28: Jeff Carraway, reader/server/chalice bearer

Judge not

(Continued from page 1)

ance! It's not wrong to lovingly help our brother remove a harmful speck from his eye. Actually, it's cowardly or careless not to offer a word of caution. But it is wrong to self-righteously point out a speck in our brother's eye when we ignore, as no big deal, or deny the real log, (aka "sin,") protruding from our own eye. Repent for yourself; then call them, as you are charged to do, to repent, as well.

So, Jesus is placing, as it were, a neon-red-blinking sign over others that tells us, "**Caution: judge at your own risk.**" It is meant to give us serious pause to examine ourselves before saying anything. Our fallen nature is profoundly selfish, deluded, proud, and often hypocritical, judging ourselves indulgently (we even refuse to judge our children which is even more cruel to them than it is weak on our part). Then, we tend to prematurely, without sufficient information judge others, often assessing their motives with a callous facility. We are quick to strain gnats and swallow camels (Mt. 23:24), quick to take tweezers to another's eye when we need a forklift for our own. It is better to "judge not" than to ignorantly or insensitively judge like this, since we will be judged in the same way we judge others.

Jesus takes judgment very seriously. He is the righteous judge (2 Tim. 4:8), who is full of grace and truth (John 1:14). He does not judge by appearances, but judges with right judgment (John 7:24). Every judgment He pronounces issues from his perfectly loving nature (1 John 4:8). Therefore, when we judge, and Scripture does call for us to judge at times (1 Cor. 5:12), we must take great care that our judgment be Christ-like, always charitable.

Be Quick to Believe the Best

The first way to take great care how we judge is to be slow to pronounce guilt when evidence is scant or hearsay or ambiguous. Be most ready to assume the best but not be being blind to what is patently obvious. This runs counter not only to fallen human nature, but also our media-saturated culture that encourages hair-trigger judgments. Even our legal system is built on common sense caution here. In the United States, when a person is accused of a legal transgression, but the evidence against him is inconclusive, our jurisprudence demands we **presume his innocence until sufficient evidence can demonstrate his guilt beyond a reasonable doubt**. Such demonstration is typically not quick or easy.

(Part 2 next month)

News and Notices

Congratulations to Julia Means, who, to the best of our knowledge, is our longest living local parishioner. Julia turned 106 on February 24.

Prayer list reminder — On Palm Sunday, we will clear the current prayer list and begin a new one. You are most welcome to resubmit a name. Please call the church office to share prayer concerns you wish to have published in the service sheet. If you have previously asked for prayers for yourself or someone else and the situation/need has been alleviated, please let us know.

There are many open dates for altar flowers, starting April 14 and continuing throughout the year. Please help yourself and write in your name on one of the dates on the flower chart, which is posted on the right as you head into the parish hall.

In Memoriam



**George Hudson
Campbell**

February 20, 2024

Celebrations

Birthdays

- 3/03 Erin Mabry
Harlee Stayton
- 3/09 Patrick Rushing
Jessi Owyong
- 3/10 Jacquelyn Stuart
Nicole Berry
- 3/11 Burnie Ezell
Winston Sizemore
- 3/12 Sarah Stratton
- 3/13 Desiree Mahaffy
Aaron Stratton
- 3/14 Chris Norton
- 3/16 Ellen Nichol
- 3/22 Drake Palmer
- 3/23 Abigail Bivens
- 3/25 Beverly Wasson
Kathy Campbell
Thomas Deen
Andrea Carey Deboer
- 3/28 Martin Johnson
Johnna Courtney

Anniversaries

- 3/08 Desiree & Zack Mahaffy
- 3/19 Cindy & Lee Forestiere
- 3/24 Ruth & Charles Mabry

Trinity Episcopal Church

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Address Service Requested

Easter flower donations

You are invited to contribute to the Altar Guild fund in the form of memorial or thank offerings. These gifts will be used to purchase lilies to adorn the church on Easter Sunday, March 31. To contribute, please complete this form and return to the church along with your contribution no later than **Monday, March 25**. Your remembrance will be listed in the Easter service sheet.

In Memory of _____

In Thanksgiving for: _____

Given by: _____

Flower donations/forms may be mailed to: P.O. Box 8069, Pine Bluff, AR 71611 or placed in the offering plate on Sundays through March 24.