

INTERMISSION

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WWW.CHRISTTHESERVANT.NET

ADULT FORUM

In our Adult Forum on Sunday mornings, we recently completed our study of Genesis. We will now be moving into Exodus, again using Robert Alter's translation and commentary, so we will continue to get the original feeling and intent of the Hebrew text and culture that has been lost through our more traditional translations.

The narrative in Exodus has a very different feel when compared to Genesis. As Alter notes in his introduction, our protagonist - 'the man Moses, remains somewhat distanced from us, *that we never get the sense of intimate acquaintance with his inner life and his distinctive traits of personality that we are so memorably afforded in the stories of Jacob and Joseph*'.



Alter also notes a different view on the personality of God - '*God in Genesis, as one detects in a glimpse of Him in the Garden story and as one can see quite clearly in His encounter with Abraham in Genesis 18, walks about the earth looking very much like a man—indeed, being easily mistaken for a man until He chooses to reveal His identity—and at some points engaging a human being in what is clearly represented as face-to-face conversation. God in Exodus has become essentially unseeable, overpowering, and awesomely refulgent (brilliant).*'

As we study these texts, you may ask "Well, how much of this is historically true?". Without a doubt, the stories have been stylized to some extent over time as an oral tradition, to make their theological points, and to establish the origin story of the nation of Israel. In fact, there is actually quite a bit of support outside the Bible for a historical basis. Further to this end, we will take a look at the movie *Patterns of Evidence, Exodus*, which illustrates quite a few interesting points around the historical veracity of the stories of Joseph and the Exodus as told in Pentateuch.

The overall plan is to cover the first dozen or so chapters in Exodus to hear the story of their deliverance. After that, we will move on to our next adventure! Please join us Sunday mornings at 9:30 in conference room year-round for some great conversations!

GOD'S WORK OUR HANDS

Our first project this year for **God's Work Our Hands (GWOH)** is collecting donations of adult wipes for WHAM. These wipes are needed for both their homeless and regular clients and will be an ongoing project.



Please drop off your donations in the bin provided in the Narthex.

We are planning a grow box project in May so watch for signup sheets and more information on the **God's Work Our Hands** table in the Narthex.

As we work on projects throughout the year, you are encouraged to wear your gold shirts! If you don't have one, our shipment is expected soon.

For questions, contact Carolyn Kirk or Karen Carter.

TREASURER'S REPORT

	<u>2/28/2023</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
<u>Total Contributions</u>	\$46,036.00	\$144,644.00
<u>Expenses</u>		
Personnel	\$23,703.00	\$70,335.00
Property Management	\$9,971.00	\$50,420.00
Ministry Programs	\$2,129.00	\$6,687.00
Total Expenses	\$35,803.00	\$127,442.00
Excess	\$10,233.00	\$17,202.00

2023 FLOWER CHART

There are still open Sundays on the 2023 Flower Chart. Sign up for your favorite Sundays! Cost for one bouquet is \$31. The cost for both bouquets will be \$62.



COUNCIL COMMENTARY

The CTS Council met most recently on Thursday, April 13th and had a fairly light agenda. What follows is a summary of the discussions:

General ministry financial contributions totaled \$30,099 for the month of March which was \$3,575 less than the month's expenses of \$33,674. Accordingly, the deficit was funded from our savings. Year-to-date, CTS still maintains a surplus of \$9,976 overall.

Average attendance at both in-person worship services totaled about 91 worshipers per Sunday. This is in line with the 2022 average of 87 worshipers per Sunday. Streaming of both the 8 and 11 AM continue and remain available online. Mid-week Lenten service attendance was comparable to 2022 with 51 worshipers per Wednesday mid-day service.

The council unanimously approved moving the CTS bank accounts from Wells Fargo to PNC bank. The reason for the change is to improve our customer service support and facilitate execution of transactions. Mickey Walters (CTS Treasurer) will effect the transfer of all funds over the next few weeks. The council had approved the opening of a 12-month certificate of deposit (CD) with Wells Fargo bank during the March council meeting. However, the council unanimously approved opening the CD with PNC bank, or another FDIC-insured financial institution offering the best return.

Mickey Walters also arranged to have the CTS financial statements audited. Richard Carlson will perform and complete the audit by the close of the summer.

Council members will meet with Kristy Elmore of The Friends of Westchase to determine how the CTS congregation might work with the group on new initiatives. Please look for future communications regarding this initiative.

Finally, please note that Pastor Jim will be away from May 24th – June 5th. All Sunday worship services will be led by DJ Blockus during that time.

As always, please feel free to contact me, Pastor Jim or any member of council with any questions, thoughts, or concerns you might have.

Prayerfully submitted,

Karen Carter
CTS Council President

CHRIST THE SERVANT NEEDS YOU!

Can you spare a couple of hours once a month on the first Thursday of the month?

1st - We are soliciting volunteers to complete an unexpired term (9 months) on the Church Council.

2nd - We are also soliciting volunteers to serve a term (usually 3 years) on the Council beginning in January 2024.

The only requirements for either position are (1) common sense, and (2) a willingness to give of your time and talents to serve the congregation.

If you can spare 2 hours a month, call or email Dale Dickman at:
(936) 581-3347
ddickman@earthlink.net
mailto:ddickman@earthlink.net
or leave a message with Betsy Riggs in the CTS office.



A few photos from the Egg Hunt on Easter Sunday.



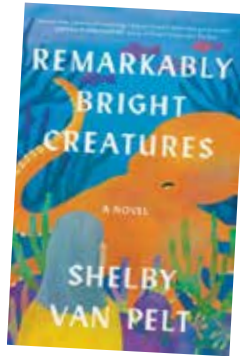
CTS BOOK CLUB

The CTS Book Club is open to anyone with an interest in reading and discussion. Please feel free to pick up any of the following books, read them and join us!



At 10:00 on May 13, 2023, the CTS Bookclub will tackle Harper Lee's **Go Set a Watchman**. The setting is over 20 years after *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and Scout is visiting an aging Atticus in New York City while racial tensions are building in the South. It is an "unforgettable novel of wisdom, humanity, passion, humor..." and adds context and new meaning to Lee's first novel.

June 24, 2023, at 10:00 the CTS bookclub is going to enjoy talking about **Remarkably Bright Creatures**, by Shelby Van Pelt. It's a story of "friendship, reckoning, and hope" between Tova, a 70-year-old widow, and a large Pacific Coast Octopus named Marcellus. He just happens to be the only one who knows how her son disappeared years ago, and he shares interesting observations about the humans who come to view him every day at the aquarium where Tova cleans at night.



LADIES DINNER GROUP

Please join us!
Wednesday, May 10
6:00 pm
Cafe Caspian
12126 Westheimer Rd



A sign-up sheet is in the narthex
or contact Mickey Walters at waltersmic@aol.com

MEN WHO LOVE SPAGHETTI

Come join Men Who Love Spaghetti!
May 10 at 7:00 p.m.
George's Pastaria
1722 S Dairy Ashford Rd.



Please join us for good friends, good conversation and good food! Sign-up sheet is in the narthex.
Contact: Roger Cutler at rogercutler@gmail.com

FROM PASTOR JIM

Tertullian (Latin name: Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus) was probably born in Carthage between 145 and 155 A.D. and died in 220 A.D. He was an early Christian apologist, educated in Rome, who wrote prolifically against heresy. He has been called "the father of Latin Christianity." In his *Apology*, chapter 39, Tertullian provides a rather interesting window into the second century church in Rome.

"I shall at once go on, then, to exhibit the peculiarities of the Christian society, that, as I have refuted the evil charged against it, I may point out its positive good. We are a body knit together as such by a common religious profession, by unity of discipline, and by the bond of a common hope. We meet together as an assembly and congregation that, offering up prayer to God as with united force, we may wrestle with Him in our supplications. This violence God delights in. We pray, too, for the emperors, for their ministers and for all in authority, for the welfare of the world, for the prevalence of peace, for the delay of the final consummation. We assemble to read our sacred writings, if any peculiarity of the times makes either forewarning or reminiscence needful. However it be in that respect, with the sacred words we nourish our faith, we animate our hope, we make our confidence more steadfast; and no less by inculcations of God's precepts we confirm good habits. In the same place also exhortations are made, rebukes and sacred censures are administered. For with a great gravity is the work of judging carried on among us, as befits those who feel assured that they are in the sight of God; and you have the most notable example of judgment to come when any one has sinned so grievously as to require his severance from us in prayer, in the congregation and in all sacred intercourse. The tried men of our elders preside over us, obtaining that honour not by purchase, but by established character. There is no buying and selling of any sort in the things of God. Though we have our treasure-chest, it is not made up of purchase-money, as of a religion that has its price. On the monthly day, if he likes, each puts in a small donation; but only if it be his pleasure, and only if he be able: for there is no compulsion; all is voluntary. These gifts are, as it were, piety's deposit fund. For they are not taken thence and spent on feasts, and drinking-bouts, and eating houses, but to support and bury poor people, to supply the wants of boys and girls destitute of means and parents, and of old persons confined now to the house; such, too, as have suffered shipwreck; and if there happen to be any in the mines, or banished to the islands, or shut up in the prisons, for nothing but their fidelity to the cause of God's Church, they become the nurslings of their confession. But it is mainly the deed of a love so noble that lead many to put a brand upon us. See, they say, *how they love one another.*"

How do we compare today to this early model of the Church?

WOMEN'S MINISTRY

Wonder Full World was some kind of wonderful!

I'm happy to share that our 7th retreat at Trinity Pines Conference Center on April 14th was awesome!

Our attendees were Linda Iverson, Tina Blockhus, Melissa Russell, Carolyn Kirk, Natalie Jones, Pam Mobley, Ann Wasp, Rosemarie Salazar, Nancie Blair, Michele Brynes, Renee McGah, Edna Lwekamwa, Gail Rosas, Phylis Karas, Karen Welborn, Anne Marie Cook and yours truly.

Here are some memorable moments:

- The beautiful scenery and solitude at Trinity Pines which included a waterfall, tons of deer, a miniature golf course, lagoon, Lake Livingston and a Chapel in the Woods which included a natural stone altar and a stained glass cross which was a perfect setting for us to partake in our Communion Service.
- Listening and learning from our dynamic facilitator Renee McGah.
- Our own CTS member Edna Lwekamwa sharing wonderful stories about her country Tanzania.
- Praying and being inspired by thoughtful and powerful music videos.
- Learning how to make baby blankets to be presented to WHAM.
- Amazed how ingenious and efficient our women were in starting our evening fire and then enjoying s'mores!!
- Encouragement Cards written to our own member Anna Wilhelm Menon, who is part of the space program.
- Sharing and Caring.
- Women stepping up to the plate which not only includes ALL the Women's committee but our attendees, also!
- Our traditional "Dance Party" on Saturday Night!

These retreats are always so incredibly worthwhile because they allow us to grow closer to God and to one another!

I'd like to thank the Women's Ministry Committee who are most definitely the wind beneath my wings: Karen Welborn, Linda Iverson, Carolyn Kirk, Melissa Russell, Phylis Karas, Tina Blockhus

Also, thank you to Renee McGah for sharing her heartfelt messages and experiences to continually remind us how much God loves us! We are always so very blessed to have her serve as our retreat facilitator!

Marsha Bower





Photos from the Women's Retreat at Trinity Pines on April 14.

MAY BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Eilyn Vincent
- 7 Russell Farmer
- 8 Karen Murawski
- 9 Teresa Dickman
- 10 Marilee Dittrich
- 11 Michael Cummings
- 14 Jonathan Mfungo
- 20 Susan Kramer
- 21 Jodi Davis
- 23 Joanne Dumler
- 24 Ann Marie Fritz
- Emily Saunders
- 25 William Cable
- 26 Gloria Carmouche
- 28 Braille Ndanshau
- 29 Judie Deeds
- 31 Deb Lehoski



MAY ANNIVERSARIES

- 9 David and Carrie Stallwitz
- 12 Mike and Phylis Karas
- 16 Steve and Marilee Dittrich
- 17 Pat and Karen Welborn
- 21 Adam and Natalie Jones
- Kevin and Lynn Petterson



PRAYER REQUESTS

- Karen and LeRoy Bauer
- Sharon Cotta, mother of Christy Iversen
- Judie Deeds
- Marina Farmer
- Jane Fontenot, grandma of Miley Rose
- Christy Iversen
- Billijo Kern
- Cathy Roberson and Debby Weaver, daughters of Jodi Davis
- Ruby Sadler
- Frank Welsh, friend of Mike and Phylis Karas
- Zachary, grandson of Bitsy Muse

CHURCH STAFF

PASTOR

The Rev. James Giannantonio
jrgiannan@gmail.com

OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR

Betsy Riggs
ctsoffice1@comcast.net

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Dr. Christopher Teel

NURSERY CAREGIVER

Sandra Ani

SUNDAY CUSTODIAN

Sulma E. Cruz

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713-784-4742

This newsletter and a calendar of church activities are available on the CTS website at:
www.christtheservant.net

June-July newsletter information deadline is:

May 15

Please submit information and articles in **MSWord documents** to Laura Wilhelm at

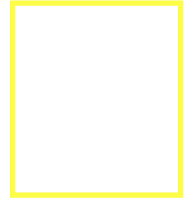
lvwilhelm@comcast.net

Information may be edited to available space.

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MAY 2023

Christ the Servant Lutheran Church
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Houston, Texas 77042

Phone 713-784-6620
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2023 COUNCIL

President: Karen Carter

President Elect :	Barry Rava	At Large:	Russell Farmer
Secretary:	Rosalie Fontenot	At Large:	Barbara Kaminska
Treasurer:	Mickey Walters	At Large:	Julie Heil
At Large:	Neema Makia		

COMMITTEE CHAIRS, GROUP LEADERS, CONTACT PEOPLE

Acolytes	Inga Carlson, Michele Byrnes	Memorial Service Coordinator	Linda Iversen
Adult Christian Ed	DJ Blockhus, Richard Carlson	Men Who Love Spaghetti	Roger Cutler
Altar Guild	Lori Wood	Nursery Attendant	Sandra Ani
CanCare Representative	Susan Kramer	Opportunity Endowment Fund	Ron Herbanek
Care Team	Karen Welborn	Personnel	Ken Smith, Shirley Downing
College Ministry	Tina Blockhus	Prayer Chain	Marti Hatcher
Disaster Response Team	Ron Herbanek	Property	Brent Brown, Ron Herbanek
Family Aid Ministry	Carolyn Giannantonio	Sound Team	TBA 8:00 Service
Fellowship Committee	Rosalie Fontenot		Brent Brown-11:00 Service
Greeters	Denise Carlson	Stewardship	Chandler Wilhelm
Homeless Ministry	Carolyn Giannantonio, Rosalie Fontenot	Ushers	8:00 Russell Farmer
			11:00 Pat Welborn
Ladies Dinner Group	Mickey Walters	WHAM Representatives	Ken Smith
Lawn Care	Russell Farmer, Kevin Petterson	Women's Ministry	Marsha Bower
Lectors	Chandler Wilhelm	Worship and Music	Lori Wood
Liturgical Assistants	Chandler Wilhelm		