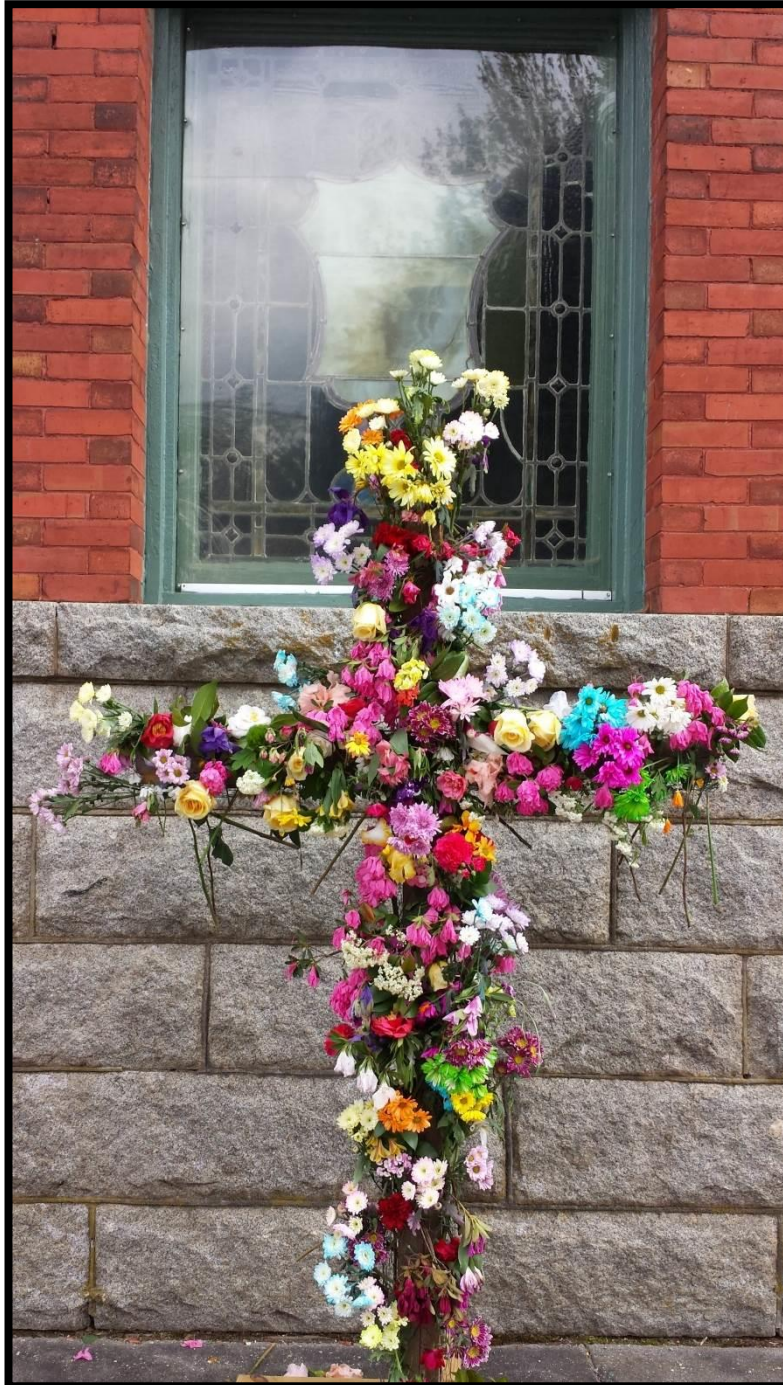


**TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
WRITERS' GROUP
2020 HOLY WEEK BOOKLET**



TRINITY UMC WRITERS' GROUP HOLY WEEK BOOKLET

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FROM THE MANGER TO THE CROSS THROUGH THE EYES OF A SHEPHERD

by Pat Hall

As the years passed the Baby in the manger grew to manhood. And the young shepherd boy who followed his family to that manger to see that Babe also grew. But he never forgot that experience. Now, an old man of nearly 40 years, that shepherd wants to see for himself the Man he has heard so much about, the Man called Christ, who grew from that tiny Baby he saw that strange night long ago.



It was an ordinary night for the shepherds, tending their flocks, drowsing under the few small trees when they could, trying to avoid the damp, cold evening. The sudden light and noise frightened them all. What had overcome them? They couldn't all have a nightmare at once, seeing the same images, hearing the same messages. Truly, it must be some kind of miracle; and, as faithful Jews, they felt they must do as they were told. Trusting God, they

left their flocks and went to the stable, this young fellow among them, to see the newborn Baby. He looked like any other newborn for the most part, but there seemed to be a glow about Him. And His Mother, they called her Mary, was the most beautiful woman the young man had ever seen. She actually glowed with joy as she held the tiny Baby.

When the shepherds returned to their sheep, they found them just as they had left them, safe and secure. God was good. He had sent them on a mission and had taken care of their sheep for them while they were away. The young man felt his faith deepen and his curiosity about that child grow. He went on with his life as a shepherd, growing into maturity himself, marrying, raising his own family and having his own flock of sheep. The years passed.

Our shepherd is now an older man, his sons are tending his flocks most of the time, giving him some time to rest, visit his relatives in the city and try to accomplish a life-long dream. He wants to hear that long-ago Babe speak! He has heard many tales of the sermons he has given, the

miracles he has performed, the crowds that follow him. He has taken the opportunity to visit family in Jerusalem and has heard that Jesus is coming into the city and he plans to be there to hear him.

The crush of the crowd is great. The shepherd pushes forward, someone hands him a palm branch to wave and he, along with the hundreds of other excited people wave it in the air and then throw it to the ground for the donkey to walk on as it passes by, carrying Christ into the city. Little does our shepherd know what is to follow. He is pushed along with the crowd until he can escape and go to his family home, hoping to find news about when the Christ will speak to the people so he can be there. But no news comes. What can be going on?

Suddenly, a neighbor bursts into the room with the news that Jesus has been taken before Pontius Pilate and is being tried and the people are calling for Him to be crucified! How can that be? Yesterday they were glorifying Him and today they want him crucified? Impossible!

The shepherd hurries out to see for himself and is horrified at what has become of the crowd of people. No longer the happy, joyful throng he had seen upon his arrival. Now there was an evil feel about them, anger, fear, hate, and for what reason? No one he asked seemed to know. But everyone just went along with the crowd.

The shepherd went from place to place but found little joy, only fear, anger, resentment, hate. No one knew what was happening. Then came the ruling; Jesus Christ would hang from a cross until dead! WHY? What had he done? No one knew that the shepherd could find. But Pontius Pilate was ruler and his decision was the law.

Not being able to leave, the fascination, horrible though it was, kept the shepherd riveted to the area. He saw Jesus as he was stripped, beaten, forced to carry the cross. He even attempted to get to him, to help, but could not get through the crowd. He was so relieved that another man was able to give aid. The shepherd prayed that God would perform another miracle and stop this terrible deed, but God's answer was, "No, my Son, that is not My plan."

As the story we all know played out, our shepherd was there, seeing for himself what had become of that tiny Baby and wishing he had heard

his sermons for himself. He stood near the Disciples, he saw the Centurions casting lots for Jesus' robe and wishing he could somehow have it to treasure for the rest of his life.

He did not hear Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, or any of his many other great sermons, but our Shepherd Boy did hear Jesus' greatest sermon of all. "FORGIVE THEM, FATHER, FOR THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO."

The Shepherd stood transfixed, hardly believing that Jesus could ask God to forgive those who were causing Him such pain. And the pain in his own heart grew. He felt he must do something to show his Love for this man! He tried to press his way to where the women crowded around Mary, the Mother of Jesus. He wanted to let her know about being there when Jesus was just a baby and how he had tried to find Him these years, to hear His message, and how he mourned with her the loss of her Son. But the crowds would not part to let him through. They shoved him back, nearly knocking him to the ground, so he found his way to shelter at a nearby cluster of bushes and watched. When the sky went dark and the ground shuddered, he thought the world would end, that with Jesus' death, all would die as well. He was ready. Perhaps, at last, he would be with Jesus and hear Him speak.

In a few moments the phenomenon was over, the earth stilled and the skies cleared. People came running by, crying of how the curtains in the Temple were torn and revealed the Holy of Holies, and other strange happenings at the moment of Christ's death. There was just too much for this poor shepherd to take in. He sat and watched.

Later in the afternoon he saw a man, who appeared to be of means, approach the Cross and prepare to take down Jesus' body. Oh, how he wanted to go assist, but he felt he was not worthy to even approach the foot of the Cross, much less touch the body of Christ. So he sat and watched as Joseph of Arimathea took possession of Jesus' body when it was taken down from the Cross. He arose from his perch and followed the procession, anxious to see where they were taking Him for burial.

The women followed, carrying cloths and spices to prepare the body; but, when they reached the Tomb, it was too late in the day for them to proceed with the ritual. Joseph wrapped Jesus' body with fine linen, placed

him in the Tomb and with the help of several men, including our shepherd, rolled the giant stone across the opening. Oh, how the Shepherd wanted to ask to go in and touch The Body, but did not dare. But he did one thing to serve Him, and then stepped back into the crowd.

On the third day, the shepherd decided it was time for him to return to his home. He would never hear Jesus speak, nor have a chance to see Him perform a miracle, nor be able to visit his Mother to tell her how he was there at both His birth and His death. But he would remember, and he would spread the word about this Man, and his messages and His miracles.

As our shepherd left Jerusalem, he considered heading to Emmaus, to visit his daughter and her family. When he reached the fork in the road, he changed his mind and decided to go directly home – he had been away far too long. Little did he know that, had he chosen the road less traveled, he would have encountered the Resurrected Jesus and the Apostles and been there when Christ ascended into Heaven.



LENT

by Pat Hall

Lent was not a part of our church ritual when I was growing up. I don't remember when I first heard it mentioned, but it must have been after I was married and became a member of Trinity. I don't remember any activities or emphasis on Lent when my children were small. We looked forward to Easter with the Easter Lilies and the beautiful music. Only in the past few years has Lent become an integral part of the Easter celebration with the removal of flowers from our Sunday worship services and the encouragement of worshipers to participate in some way.

At first it was suggested that those participating deny themselves in the old traditional way during Lent, to give up a favorite food or activity for that period of time. Now it is suggested and encouraged that we instead do some act of service for Lent, go the extra mile, to give of ourselves above and beyond our comfort zone as a way of showing our Thanks for Christ's Sacrifice on the Cross.

The new way seems a far better way to honor Him. As He gave his Life for us, we should give to those in need, to do what we can to make a difference in the life of someone else, be it the homeless person on the corner, a neighbor going through chemo or the family down the road whose house burned. We can't all go to Haiti or other mission trips, but we can all find a mission in our own Neighborhood, Town or County. I feel this is a much better way to observe Lent and remember that Christ died that I might have Life and have it more abundantly.

MY INTRODCUTION TO HOLY WEEK

by Pat Hall

When I was about eight or ten, I chose Oak Grove Methodist Church as my Church Family, convincing my mother there was a more friendly atmosphere than the Baptist Church we were attending. We had gone to Oak Grove when I was very small but she thought, since her father and grandfather were both Baptist preachers, she should go back to “her roots” and started attending the Surry Baptist Church.

The atmosphere was never quite right for me. It never felt warm and friendly, I never felt welcome and at home. There was no argument when I asked to return to Oak Grove. That was my Home. I think, deep down, Mom felt the same way and immediately she was immersed in every way in our little country church. She was a born leader, always ready to take charge when most of the ladies were timid about voicing an opinion or taking the lead. To their credit, they were willing to work once the project was initiated.

Being Methodist, we always observed Palm Sunday, Good Friday and Easter. But, being a small country church, there were no big events held. Our pastor was also pastor for five other churches. He had to divide his time among them, holding at least 2 services each Sunday so each church could have preaching services twice a month. The church on the charge which paid the most of his salary might have had 3 services if they were lucky. And, being very independent, none of the churches wanted to combine efforts to hold a larger service for special occasions, each wanted its own with the exception of Sunrise Service which was held at the home of some of the members who lived by the James River.

It was after I was married and joined Trinity that I began to learn more of the meaning of and the events connected with Holy Week. Even then it was over a span of years that the many activities and traditions we now observe evolved. In the 1950's the observance was still very simple, not much more than what we did at Oak Grove. We observed Palm Sunday some years by having what appeared to be palm trees placed behind the altar rail, and they were lovely. (Something we might try again?) Then the Easter Lilies were brought on Easter Sunday, some years there were so many the pastor could hardly walk across the pulpit.

One of the traditions introduced at Trinity and beloved by its members is the Flower Cross. A ritual since at least the 1990's, members enjoy bringing their offerings to place upon the cross, honoring our Risen Savior and the return of spring. Of course another of the rituals is the taking of pictures by the cross in our Easter finery. Looking back at those treasured bits of family history, seeing my Mother with my grandchildren by that cross gives me so much pleasure and joy.

The many other traditions we now observe have been added as ideas and information have been introduced, new pastors have arrived and new governing bodies have taken office. Some of the new things, to me, are really good. Some, not quite so, or not to my liking. But all of that is window dressing, to draw people in, to help them find the true meaning of Easter and learn the real message. Perhaps each new activity or program we add teaches us something about ourselves, how we should view the world or how we should treat others, and that is good. But we have to be careful of over-load. Too much information can lead to a clouding of the basic facts and truth. The window dressing is nice, but I learned the real message long ago, and that's all I need.



THE PALMS
by Pat Hall

A DAY to REMEMBER

by Donna Rynasko

I shall remember this day forever! I will hurry home now to tell my mother.....

Oh! My mother is waiting for me. She scolds me for being late and I must explain to her.

“While I was walking along on my way home, I heard voices on the main road. I just stopped a minute to see what it was. I walked back to the road and then I could see some people not far away. They were singing “Hosanna! Blessed is He who cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna! Hosanna!” I just stopped to watch and then I saw they were waving branches as they sang. And they laid their coats on the road for a donkey to walk on. Then I saw Him! A man was riding the donkey and that was who they were singing to and waving branches. I just stopped to watch a minute. I wanted to go with the people, but I had no branch to wave and I didn’t have a coat. I was standing by the edge of the road just to let the man and all those people go by.

I wanted to do something.

Just then I noticed a small pink flower beside the road. I wondered if I could get to it to give to Him and if He would like it. I had to walk over some rocks and through tall grass. Finally I could pick about three of those flowers. I walked back and handed the flowers to Him. When he took them, He smiled ever so slightly and put his hand on my head for barely a minute. I just felt warm and such a peaceful feeling. I knew He was someone special and I would remember Him always. They said He was Jesus—you know, the man your friends told you about. They say He is the son of God and He is coming to Jerusalem for the Passover...Oh, I saw Him and He smiled at me!”

PALM SUNDAY

by Joann Burnham

A great throng of pilgrims was walking and riding into Jerusalem. They were going to the temple for Passover. Someone had seen Jesus traveling with a large group. They were approaching the city from the East, from the Mount of Olives. Word of his arrival had reached Jerusalem and a crowd was gathering. Children were sliding up to the front of the crowd, climbing trees, and being lifted onto the shoulders of their fathers for a better view.

I don't see him yet, father. Be patient, son, I heard he is coming up the hill.

It was a glorious warm sunny day. Jesus was coming into the city in triumph. Many believed he was the long awaited Messiah, the King of Israel. People were laying their garments on the ground to make a path for him to ride on. Children were waving palm branches and some were placing them on the garments. The street was strewn with palm fronds and garments. Many stood holding the palm branches high in the air.

I don't see Jesus. Be patient, son, I heard he is just entering the city.

Surely if he is riding a white horse and wearing a gold crown you will see him from a far distance. He must be getting closer, but I still don't see him. Father let me climb up and sit on your shoulder so that I can see him better. I think I see a man on a donkey. It's a baby donkey, a colt. Could that be Jesus? I thought he would come riding on a white horse.

The crowd began to go wild. They were shouting Hosanna to the son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

It must be Jesus. I see him now. That is Jesus on the colt. He is passing through the city gates. I want to get closer to him, father. Put me down so that I can run out to the street. I want to see him up close. I want him to see me waving my palm. I want him to know that I am here. Yes, son, go closer so that Jesus can see you.

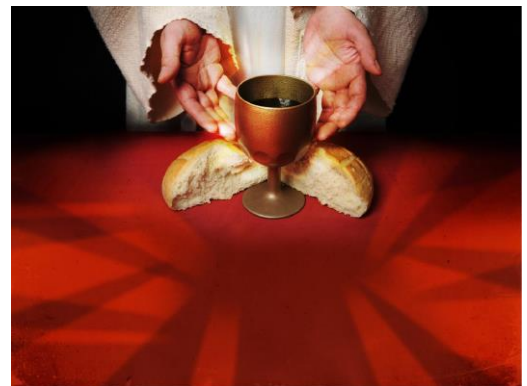
THE LAST SUPPER

by Alice Kornegay Quinn

The sun was slowly fading in the west as the evening hour was drawing near. As the hours turned to darkness, the 11th hour was slowly coming. No one knew what this could possibly mean as Peter had made the arrangement for the Passover supper. This was the day of feast of the unleavened bread. Peter had done just as Jesus had directed him to do. Jesus had already informed his disciples of his betrayal and Crucifixion. This is too much for his disciples to understand. How could they survive without Jesus?

When the disciples entered the building where the supper was to be held, Jesus was already seated, or as in, those days leaning against the table. The disciples were seated as Jesus had instructed. John was seated at the right hand of Jesus and Judas was seated to his left. The right and left side of Jesus. This arrangement was always reserved for the honored guest. The other disciples were leaning around the table, making it easier for Jesus to talk to everyone.

As they ate, Jesus said to them, "I will tell you, one of you here will betray me." They all looked at each and were very sad to hear such news. Then each one began to say, "Surely it is not I Lord?" Then Jesus spoke to them and told them that the one who dipped his hand in the bread will betray me. Jesus then said, it would have been better if he had never been born. Judas looked at Jesus and said, "Surely it is not I Rabbi," and then He looked at Judas and said, "You are the one."



When they had finished their meal, Jesus took the bread, gave thanks, broke it and gave it to his disciples and said, "Eat this is my body." Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to his disciples and told them to drink, that it was his blood of the covenant, which is poured out for forgiveness of sins.

After this, they sang a hymn and went out to the Mount of Olives.

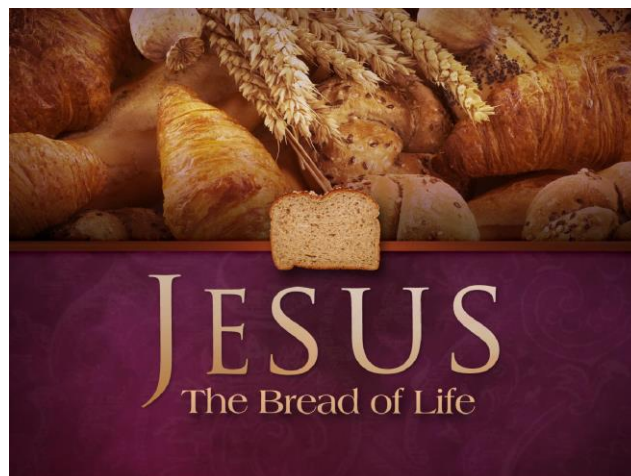
THE LAST SUPPER

by Joann Burnham

It was to be their last supper with Jesus. Jesus wanted to have a final meal with his disciples to prepare them for his departure. They gathered together for supper in the Upper Room. Jesus washed and dried their feet. They talked and laughed and enjoyed the fellowship. The disciples never dreamed it would be the last time all of them would sit around the table together and share a meal.

Suddenly Jesus spoke, "One of you will betray me". The mood changed at once and all became silent and serious. The disciples looked at one another and shook their heads in disbelief. Each declared, "Not me, Lord. I will not betray you". Jesus went on to say, "Before morning Peter will deny knowing me three times". The disciples were confused and shocked, but Jesus had accepted his fate.

He broke the bread and passed the wine. He explained that the bread represented his body which would be broken for them and the wine represented his blood which would be shed for them. He told them to eat and drink in remembrance of him. He also gave them a new commandment. Jesus said, "Love one another as I have loved you".



THE POTTERS FIELD
THIRTY PIECES OF SILVER
by Pat Hall

Have you ever made a donation to your church, trying to assuage a guilty conscience? Did it make you feel better? Did you wonder if anyone else had ever done the same thing? Well, sure enough, the practice started a long time ago, on a hill far away, near an Old Rugged Cross.

Only Matthew tells us about it, just a little tidbit in the larger story, but a big story within itself. What became of the infamous Thirty Pieces of Silver?

According to Matthew, Judas went back to the Chief Priests and recanted his betrayal, told them he had lied, that Jesus was innocent and returned the coins. Of course those evil men had what they wanted. Their use of Judas was complete so they sent him away, and they had their money back! A win-win situation, how great was that.

But the Chief Priest came before them and cut down their joy with one short statement. They could not return the thirty pieces of silver to their coffers. Monies used for the commitment of murder was tainted, and, therefore could not be included in their treasury. They would have to put it to some other use.

A long discussion was held and finally someone came up with the idea of purchasing a plot of land that was of no use to any one, something just to get rid of the tainted coins, to get them out of their hands. The land had once produced fine clay for the local potters, but the supply no longer existed, there was no good soil to raise crops, it was not good for building homes, no one could think of any use for it. Perhaps it could be put to use as a burial ground for strangers from other lands who died in Jerusalem and could not be returned home for burial. Or for the poor who could not afford a proper burial.

This idea seemed to please most of those present so the deal was made. The owner of the land had no idea from where the coins came to purchase his property. He was just happy to be rid of the useless plot. Now

he could find space to build a home for his family with a garden and goat pen.

It seems the idea of “The Potters Field” grew and, even to the modern era, around the world, villages had their versions to serve those in need. I wonder how many really knew the story of the first Potters Field.

THREE CROSSES

by Pat Hall



WERE YOU THERE?

By Patricia Woodbury, Moving Spirit Dancers

THIS WAS THE DAY! The guards were ready...all in a day's work...just doing their job...just following orders, like the Nazi soldiers did so many years later. But somehow this crucifixion seemed different. The guards inspected the site and took their places. They tried to ignore the relentless pleading of the woman who wanted so much to get someone to listen and help her save her son. They had a job to do, and besides, the crowd must have some reason for what they were doing. In fact, it was much easier if you just went along with them and joined in the "mob mentality" by adding a few blows to the already beaten victim. Yes, and remind him that there was no escape by making mock crosses in front of him and behind him. Even his own disciples had denied him so what could you expect of others? As the crowd grew more demanding and chaotic, the guards utilized their military training and tightened the techniques of crowd control. The guards make their choices...but at what price?

But wait, there was definitely something different about this man. He did not resist...he prayed for those who were taunting and torturing him. Still, the guards had a job to do and they followed orders..."did their duty", made their choice. For Jesus, there was no other choice. He knew what He had to do...be obedient unto death...even death on a cross. As the music indicates, this choice was about LOVE for you and me. Mary could have stayed at home, but she made her choice and tried to the last to save her beloved Son.

Then the transition...the transformation...the crowd and the guards realize what they have done...choices have consequences.

WERE YOU THERE WHEN THEY CRUCIFIED MY LORD? We were there...we are there. We always have a choice. What will your choice be? Will you choose for Him, with Him and in Him?

Prayer: Dear God, help us to make choices to stand for the hard right against the easy wrong. Amen

THE VIA DOLOROSA

by Joann Burnham

Crucify Him! Pontius Pilate was confused. Why did they want to crucify Jesus? Pilate was persuaded, the decision was made, the trial was over.

Jesus had to walk the path that weaves through Jerusalem up to the hill called Golgotha or Calvary, where he would be crucified. He had to carry his wooden cross about one half mile. The cross was big and heavy. Simon of Cyrene was in the crowd. The Roman soldiers ordered him to help Jesus of Nazareth carry his cross. It was a painful and sorrowful journey. A crown of thorns was placed on his head. After all, he was charged with claiming to be the King of the Jews.

The path that Jesus had to walk was lined with an angry noisy crowd. Many struck Jesus as he walked past. Sweat and blood began to trickle down his back and arms. There were few friends in the crowd. Veronica was there. When Jesus passed, she held out her veil to him so that he could wipe his brow.



THE ROAD TO CALVARY

by Talmage Gwaltney

His muscles strained, his body sagged,
Beneath the heavy cross he dragged,
Along the road to Calvary's Hill,
Peter lingered against his will.

The ruts and rocks made rough the way,
This was his darkest and bitterest day,
It was a long hard brutal grind,
While Peter rested and fell behind.

He stumbled and fell beneath the load,
Upon the rutty and dusty road,
Stripped of dignity, his cause forsaken,
Peter's faith was sorely shaken.

A jeering, noisy, rowdy throng,
No one to help our Lord along,
Crucify him, they cried aloud,
Peter avoided the angry crowd.

A crown of thorns belittled his grace,
Tears and blood were on his face,
Our Lord was paying the ransomed price,
Peter the bold denied him thrice.

When Peter looked on the bleeding Christ,
And saw he'd paid such painful price,
He felt ashamed, and left the crowd,
And went inside and cried aloud.

ABOUT-FACE

by Samantha Borders-Shoemaker

Turn
hide your face from it
brutality and practicality
do not cover the shame.

In and out
He breathes selah
amid blade wounds.

Turn
tell your neighbor
gas bombs don't matter
as long as you're not late to tea.

In and out
He begs selah
amid blood and sweat.

Turn
see the man
in and on the tree
but protect yourself instead.

In and out
he chokes alle- halle- lujah
while breath crushes chest.

Turn
and look at yourself
in wonder, in horror
you who are just, just.

In and out
once for the last
to finish the conversation divine.

Pause
see the Godflesh that
came before you
for you.

Out from below
to come overhead
He bonded us in liberating affection.

He that died saw
He that conquered disinfected
He that lives extracts
us toward rescue.

THE CRUCIFIXION

by Alice Kornegay Quinn

As darkness slowly descended over the horizon, a group of followers watched as the eleventh hour appeared. In the crowd standing over to one side, stood a group of ladies, among them was the mother of Jesus. She too had come to watch her beloved son as he hung on the cross. She stood silently alone, head bowed, eyes closed as the tears came running down her face, all the while praying. She silently watched her son as he clung to life. The, son whom God had blessed her with, this young girl, barely a teen at the time, who was destined to bear a son who would save the world. As she stood there, unaware of who else was there, she began to ask herself, "Why me Lord, why did you give me a son and then take him away from me, how can I let him go?"

As the sun was going down, Jesus breathed his last breath saying, "Father into your hands I commit my spirit," he closed his eyes and welcomed his heavenly father.

As the crowd silently moved away, Mary was sobbing the words, "My son, my son how can I let you go?"



THE TREE

by Samantha Borders-Shoemaker

Dawn

Looks a lot like evening
Cast in the light of loss.

Who are we in the shadow of The Tree?

Our griefs

Find sanctity, relief
In crucified, loving arms

Who are we in the shadow of The Tree?

Separation wide

Is set far to the side
As the sacrifice takes hold.

Who are we in the shadow of The Tree?

Evening

Looks a lot like dawn
Cast in the light of redemption.

We stand alongside Thee, redeemed
In the shadow of The Sacred Tree.

HOLY MOTHER MARY

by Talmage Gwaltney

Mary was there on Calvary Hill,
She suffered the agony and pain,
For there her Son, the hated one,
The one so brutally slain.

Now it was finished, the day was past,
The night was wet with dew,
The Christ had died, was crucified,
And Mary died there, too.

She looked in grief upon the scene,
There hung the most divine,
And wondered why, like you and I,
The hatred in mankind.

They lowered our Lord from the rugged cross,
In agony he'd paid the price,
Mary in tears, banished her fears,
And cradled the bleeding Christ.

Gently she wiped the Savior's brow,
Caressed the sacred head,
Upon the ground, she laid the crown,
My Son, My Son, she said.

Though all the world reject thy love,
And all the world ignore,
I shall defend, 'til time shall end,
Thy name forever more.

They laid our Lord within the tomb,
The Holy Mother wept,
Her heart was sore, so near the door,
Wherein the Master slept.

And then the stone was rolled away,
All Heaven in full accord,
Then in surprise, she raised her eyes,
There stood the risen Lord.

THE DEATH OF CHRIST

by Doris Gwaltney

Weaving in and out of death
I am God and I am man
I am star blown darkness
I am the formlessness of unreflected light
My breath is incense
Thick in the air as on the day of creation

My hands and feet, twisted tight
Against the olive wood,
Drop blood incessantly, nurturing
The ground below and all
Flowers, grass and foliage
My spirit trapped
For thirty two years
Is flying toward the clouds
A blaze of light
The pain a childish memory

But the Father says it is not time
To leave the evils of the earth
And I come floating back
Trusting with the trees
Tempted to smash these poor and paltry people
Who nailed me to a wooden beam

But once again the fist sized muscle
Which many will call the seat of love
Abruptly stops
Again I am released
And my spirit expands into its maker
Love spurts from my body like hailstones
Anointing those
Who lately hammered my flesh to the tree

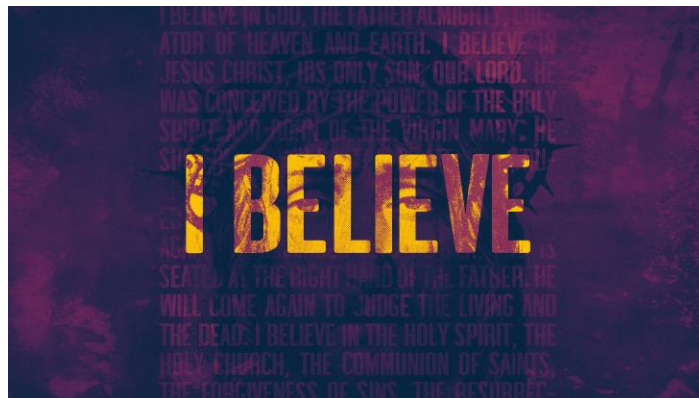
Forgive them, father, for they know not...
Though I will speak again
I need not
It is enough

THE CENTURION
TRULY HE WAS the SON of GOD
by Donna Rynasko

In the first three gospels, after observing the crucifixion and hearing the words of the Lord from the cross, a centurion simply states that “Surely this man was the son of God.”

A centurion was a Roman soldier who, according to law or custom, was at Golgotha that day to witness a crucifixion. The scripture does not give details of the soldiers’ duties or their assignments –just the one comment stated by the centurion that we now remember.

Did that centurion not, at this time, receive a revelation that this man was, who he said he was- -the son of God? He came away with new thoughts on his heart, proud that he had been chosen to observe the happening and would bless God for it from then on. He reflected on all he had heard and seen that day. He changed his way of life and lived as he felt the man on the cross was leading him. He would tell and retell the great thing he had seen to his family who would always be grateful as he led them to a new life. As he walked around the countryside he preached the word as Christ had done to his friends as he met them on the road or in the villages he passed by. He had been there, at the crucifixion, and he told about the event that he had experienced. And he believed!



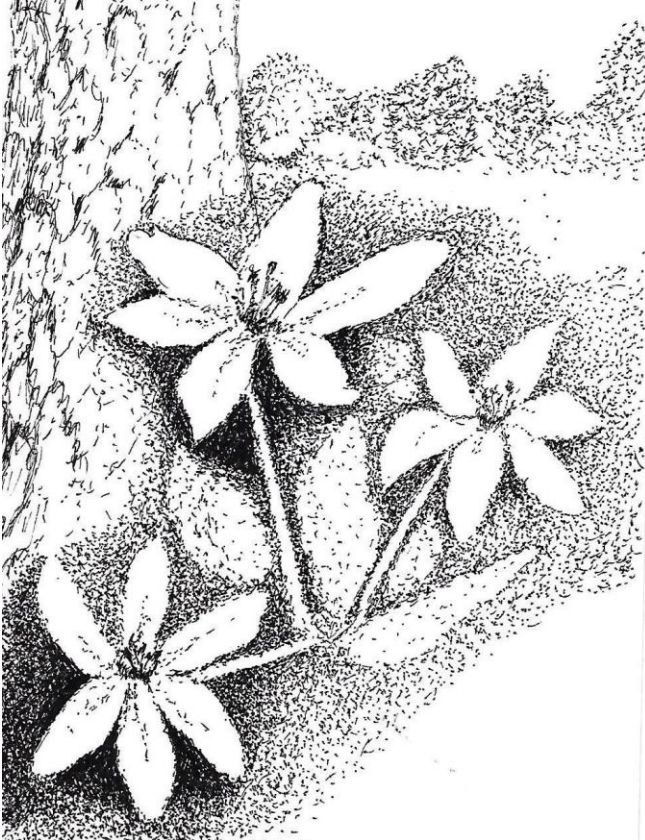
SUNDAY MORNING

by Alice Kornegay Quinn

Early Sunday morning after the crucifixion, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to the tomb. Most likely to check out the place where Jesus was buried. We do not know why they chose to visit that Sunday morning.

Suddenly, there was a great earthquake and an angel appeared before them. The angel was from heaven and clothed in a garment of sparkling white. This angel removed the stone and rolled it away. Then the angel sat on the stone and said, "Do not be afraid for he is not here, he has come back to life just as he promised".

The two women were filled with joy and rushed to tell the disciples the good news. They turned and as they turned Jesus was standing in front of them. He spoke and they fell to the ground before him, holding his feet and worshipping him.



EASTER LILIES
by Pat Hall

EASTER MORNING

by Joann Burnham

There was a chill in the air
Before the break of dawn
On Easter Sunday morn.
At last the sun began to
Creep over the horizon and peep
Onto a new and glorious day.

On that first Easter, the son of
God, Jesus, rose from the dead.
Lighting the world with his love.
His light has spread over the entire
World bringing hope for peace
And the promise of eternal life.

Take time this Easter Sunday to
See all the wonders of God's creation.
The earth will be coming alive with
All the shades of green and new life.
Birds will sing their songs of joy
And baby animals will frolic
In the pasture.

EASTER MORNING

by Alice Kornegay Quinn

Shoe laces have been washed, all shoes shined and polished, corsages for the girls and ladies have been purchased. Everything is almost ready for Easter Sunday. Of course, the new Easter bonnet is just waiting to be attached to that pretty head of hair. All the ladies will be decked out in their new Easter finery. Now ready to begin a glorious new day.

For some people, they will arise early to go to a beautiful sunrise ceremony, others will attend their church of choice. Almost everyone will attend a church service on this day of all days.

This is the day we celebrate Easter. Easter is the day of resurrection of Christ, a rebirth of our Lord and Savior after his crucifixion on Good Friday. This was a day of mourning for the followers and believers of Jesus. Easter is a day of resurrection when God raised Jesus from the dead and began his exalted life as Christ and Lord.

The resurrection of Jesus is the foundation of our Christian faith and is the cornerstone of faith as described in the New Testament.

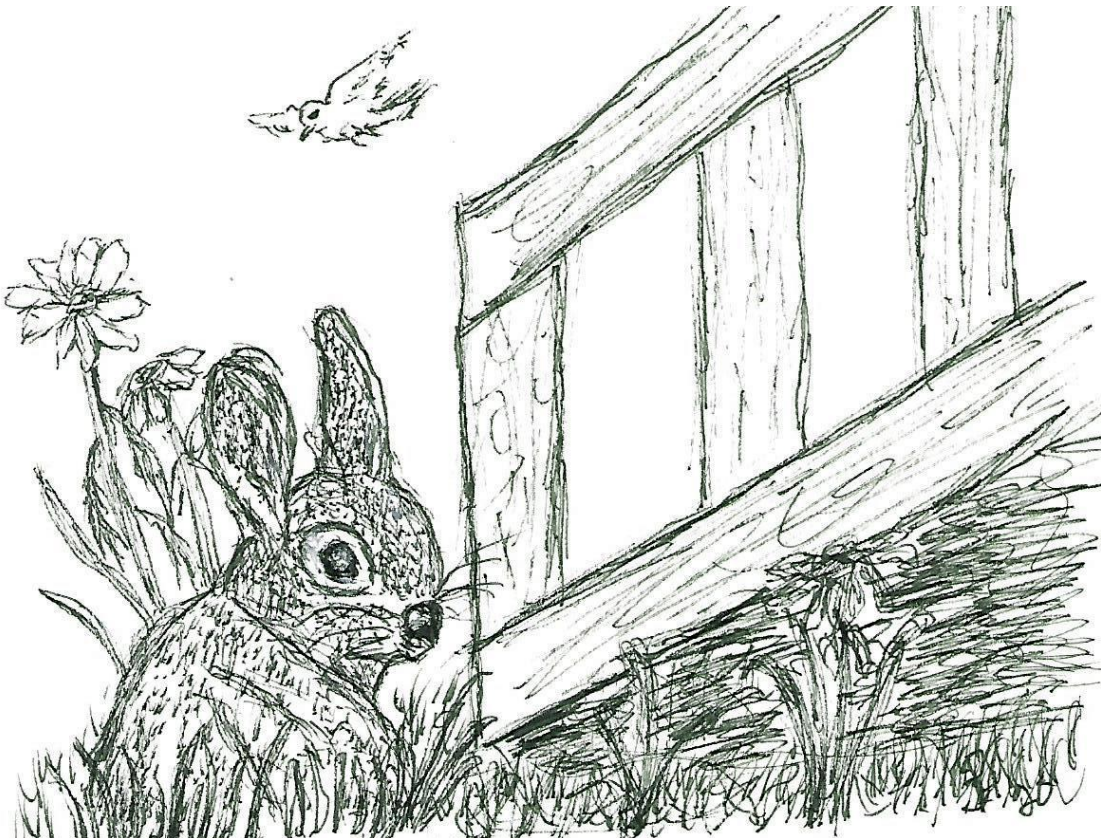
So, as we prepare for Easter Sunday in our Easter finery no matter what religious belief we may have or what church we may attend, let us never forget what Easter represents. It's not about how well dressed we are or that new Easter bonnet. Let us always remember Christ arose from his tomb and ascended into heaven to save us. He gave his life to give the gift of eternal life in heaven for us who believe in his death and resurrection.

SPRINGTIME BIRDS AND BUNNIES

by Pat Hall

Oh, how I have missed sitting on that porch of our former home, near my bird feeders and where I could watch and enjoy the few small wild “critters” which came to call. That porch was like a second den with sofa and chairs, very comfortable for any time of day or evening, where we could enjoy a breeze and see across the fields and woods behind us.

One particular spring there must have been something special in the air. That year produced an abundance of birds which kept me busy buying seed and filling feeders. We could enjoy our Cardinals, Finches, Bluebirds and Wrens there because there was no large open space for the black bird swarms to come in and take over like we have now, living near the marsh. And, the Hummingbirds were there in force. Here on Waterview Circle we are lucky to see more than two. There we would have two or three feeders full with them chasing each other away. I have pictures of Hummingbird feeders full and other feeders full of Goldfinches and Cardinals, my favorites.



We had a ramp built so our good friend Billy could get in easily and that spring it became home to a family of rabbits. Since our dogs were mostly inside, the bunnies didn't seem to be bothered by them and would disappear under the porch when the dogs went out. I could sit on the porch and watch the baby bunnies romp around the yard playing for long periods at a time. Noises didn't seem to bother them and, unless I stood up and moved very close to the screen they were fine. If they were startled they ran under the ramp, back to mama.

Frank had three or four Martin houses which were full and overflowing. In the early evenings the birds would line up on the power lines that ran behind our house and there were far too many to count – probably a hundred or more. Since several neighbors had Martin houses also, there was always competition as to who had the most occupants.

Strangely enough, we rarely saw a squirrel. There were pecan trees in the neighborhood but apparently the squirrel population had not found our little corner of the world. When squirrels would show up one neighbor would trap them and take them to the country and let them go so they didn't have much of a chance to multiply. In our current neighborhood they have taken over and we rarely get a pecan – the squirrels get them all before they hit the ground.

That spring was a very special one. With my camera I spent many happy, peaceful hours on the porch, watching God's creatures and enjoying the peace and beauty they bring to our lives.

FUNNY BUNNY

by Pat Hall

One Easter, when I was in my teens, I received a white rabbit from my parents instead of the usual Easter Basket full of goodies. I don't remember if I asked for it or if it was Mom's idea, but he became the family pet. I named him "Funny Bunny" and he had the run of the house, had a litter box and must have gotten along with other animals because I don't recall a time we didn't have a dog. He grew rather large, about the size of a house cat.

Funny Bunny would hop around the rooms and get into things which had my grandmother waving her hankie and shooing him away, only to find him into something else he had no business bothering. One of his worst habits was to go upstairs to my bedroom and nibble on the spines of books in my bookcases. They were under the windows, near the floor and easy for him to reach both the upper and lower shelves. Before we realized it he had ruined nearly all my books. Someone said it was the glue that attracted him. He was much like a cat in some ways. He would sit in your lap and let you pet him and follow you around and rub against your ankles. I don't remember what we fed him other than carrots, lettuce and other veggies, but he must have had some regular rabbit food.

Daddy had built a cage for him under a tree so he didn't have to stay in the house all the time. None of us liked keeping any animal in a cage and he was so tame that Mom started to let Funny Bunny go outside with her. He would play around in the yard and come to her when she called.

Later on I was finishing high school, then away at secretarial school and got married. Mom still had my Grandmother to care for and had little time for caring for a rabbit. Eventually she let our Funny Bunny go as he wished. For a while he came home in the evening. Then he would show up once in a while and then, not at all. The great thing about the adventure was that, for several years each spring we would see little wild rabbits that were not just brown but mixed brown and white. We knew that our Funny Bunny had found a mate and made a home for himself with his own kind, even though he was born and raised in captivity. I wonder sometimes if there are still little brown and white rabbits in those woods behind Three Pines in Surry.

DIDN'T THE EASTER BUNNY COME?

by Donna Rynasko

It was still very early on Easter morning when I woke up my brother. "It's Easter! It's Easter! Hurry up!" My brother, Glenn, who was four jumped from his bed and dressed hurriedly. We both knew that neither of us could open the Easter surprise until my father came in after finishing his chores outside. But there was no Easter Basket in sight as we expected. Mom was busy cooking breakfast. We asked about an Easter Basket but she said she didn't know anything about Easter Baskets. Neither did Daddy when he came in. But obviously there wasn't anything that the Easter Bunny could have brought to us in sight. My Mom suggested maybe we should look around but we found nothing. We did have a special Easter breakfast with eggs on buttered toast with a face! At least the breakfast was special and we were hungry!

All the time my mind was considering the absence of an Easter Surprise. Also my parents didn't seem too concerned. The Easter Bunny had always come before and left Easter Baskets with candy eggs and a small stuffed toy. At that time, as I was only five, I probably only remembered the previous two Easters. And I still had my stuffed chick he had brought last year. I tried to talk to Glenn about it but he was still looking for his basket as he knew there would be treats. He really didn't think our parents would know where that bunny would leave our baskets. I knew the Easter Bunny only visited children and wondered why he'd overlooked us. I knew he didn't bring anything for my parents and didn't stop at Grandma's house across the road. But what had happened???

We had not finished eating our breakfast when we heard a car drive into our driveway. Glenn and I jumped up to see who it was. "It's Aunt Elma! It's Aunt Elma!" we both shouted. But Daddy told us to finish our breakfast. "She'll come in" he said calmly.

Which she did! After an excited and happy greeting we quickly ate the remainder of our breakfasts. She then took our hands as she said "Let's go outside."

Oh Great! She will play with us! But she just walked across the lawn. Just then I saw a huge basket under the lilac bushes. It had a pink ribbon on it so I assumed it was mine. As I went to investigate, she led Glenn toward the house. There, he found a basket next to a vine by the cellar door. It had a big blue

ribbon. Just as we came back into the back porch to show our baskets to Mom and Daddy, we saw a third basket with a stuffed rabbit. He had come and even remembered one year old, Jean, and hid her basket behind the kitchen door. Oh! What a wonderful morning!

How clever! The Easter Bunny had come, indeed, and left our baskets outside. What a great surprise! We carried them inside to examine the contents of the baskets as Aunt Elma had breakfast with our parents.



WHAT IS JOY?

by Pat Hall

“Joy”. Just what is “Joy?” We usually associate the word with Christmas, “Joy to the World,” or with a name, Joy Ann Black or we “jump with joy” at some wonderful news.

According to Webster’s Dictionary, joy is “ A feeling or state of great delight or happiness, as caused by something exceptionally good or satisfying.” That is very long definition for such a tiny word. But joy comes to us in so many ways and in large and small amounts. I believe we can feel small bits of joy, it doesn’t have to be overwhelming.

As we approach Spring and the Lenten Season, I think of some of the things, both great and small that bring me joy – warm sunshine, budding trees and flowers, puppies, kittens and new babies. But, Easter brings the greatest joy with the knowledge that Christ loved me so much that He gave His Life for me.

Prayer: Father God, Thank you for your Son, Jesus Christ, and for His sacrifice. Thank you for all the joy you provide for those who will take the time to see and hear the miracles you place before us. Please slow me down, Lord, so I will feel the joy of a beautiful sunrise or sunset, the smile on the face of a friend, so I will hear the voice of a loved one long missed. And, most of all, remind me, Father, to pass on that Joy to others. In Thy Precious Name. Amen

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” - John 3:16

THE TRIUNE OFFERING
by Samantha Borders-Shoemaker

First is the reconciliation
here among the scattered stones
and barren 'scapes
enveloped by the starry heavens.

Second is the reconciliation
between sojourner and native
in recognizing the mirror
that creates the walls around them.

Third is the reconciliation
wholly, wholly, wholly
inescapable and vast
presented in Infant Hands.



Talmage Gwaltney
by Joann Burnham

Talmage Gwaltney was born in Isle of Wight County in 1901. His parents were Burton Oakley Gwaltney, "Bud", and Lucille Delk Gwaltney. Talmage attended Smithfield schools and the University of Richmond. He liked to write poetry and play tennis. He wrote about his birthplace and was named Poet Laureate of Smithfield. Some of his poems were about Isle of Wight County, Saint Luke's Church, and the old Courthouse. These poems included the history and lore of Smithfield. He wrote his poems at random over the years. We have included a couple of Talmage's poems about Easter in the booklet. His parents were members of Trinity Church and he probably grew up attending Trinity. When I was in MYF, we visited Mr. and Mrs. Gwaltney. Back in the 60's, the youth group was called the MYF, Methodist Youth Fellowship. At that time the Gwaltneys were elderly and lived on Cary Street. Talmage died in 1988. When he died, he was a member of Smithfield Baptist Church.

Patricia Powell Woodbury, Ed.D., LPC
by Brenda Cox

Patricia Woodbury is a member and co-founder of the Moving Spirit Dancers, a liturgical dance group. In the Via Dolorosa, she dances the part of Mary, the mother of Jesus. The piece she wrote she reads before the performance.