



September 28, 2026

Houston Trinity News

"There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge your neighbor?"

James 4:12 (ESV)

Friends,

I am scheduled for Jury Duty tomorrow. I find it to be a daunting experience to sit on a jury judging people to determine whether they are innocent or guilty. I also find it interesting how my calling as a Pastor is perceived by the attorneys that are litigating a case. I have sat through many a voir dire and listened to the questions directed toward me from both the prosecutor and the defense attorney. Prosecutors don't necessarily like pastors because they consider us to be overly merciful and forgiving and less likely to convict. Defense attorneys like pastors for those same reasons. I am sure that they have come to those representations through years of questioning potential jurors and witnessing how pastors have voted during the deliberation process.



Yet I feel they are misinformed to an extent. Not only about pastors but Christians as a whole. We are merciful and forgiving. That is how Jesus taught us to live. However, he also taught us to adhere to the laws of the land. Our call to love, mercy and grace does not eliminate our responsibility as citizens of Houston, Texas or the United States. That responsibility includes following the written ordinances of land. Can we uphold our responsibility as citizens and be faithful to the ordinances of God? Of course we can. But how do we sit in a courtroom and judge when Jesus warns us: *"Do not judge, or you too will be judged..."* (Matthew 7:1)

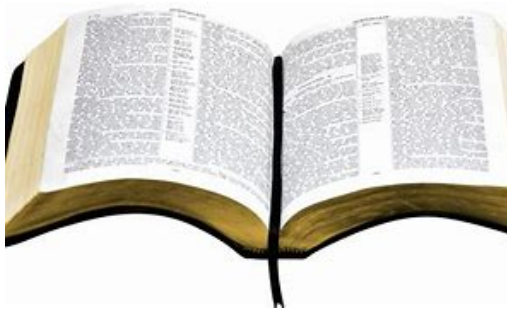
We do that by judging the crime not the individual. We can forgive a person without forgiving their actions. We can judge their actions against the rule of law without judging them as an individual. That is not easy to do but that is how we can live with our responsibilities as citizens while following the ordinances of God.

Jesus' warning carries an admonition. How can you judge someone else when you are not perfect? How many times in the gospels do we hear Jesus make that point? *"Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her"* (John 8:7). *Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment."* (John 7:24)

Jury duty is a microcosm of life. We are placed in a position of judging every day. It is much easier to judge people out in the world than it is in a courtroom. But it shouldn't be. We should

avoid judging until we can look at ourselves and say, "I have no sin". That pretty well says it, doesn't it? We shouldn't judge a person. It should be daunting. When we feel that we are judging it is time to remember there is only one Judge.

God bless you. See you Sunday



Scripture Reading

2 I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. 3 Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion, help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. 5 Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. 6 Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. 9 Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

Philippians 4:1-9 (NRSV)

This Week's Hymns

Opening Hymn

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

The United Methodist Hymnal Number 103

Text: *Walter Chalmers Smith*

Music: *Welsh melody from John Roberts's Canaidau y Cyssegr*

1. Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
in light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise.

2. Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
nor wanting, nor wasting, thou rulest in might;
thy justice like mountains high soaring above
thy clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.

3. To all, life thou givest, to both great and small;

in all life thou livest, the true life of all;
we blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,
and wither and perish, but naught changeth thee.

4. Thou reignest in glory; thou dwellest in light;
thine angels adore thee, all veiling their sight;
all laud we would render: O help us to see
'tis only the splendor of light hideth thee.

listen to the accompaniment here: <https://www.hymnsite.com/midifiles/umh10301.mid>

Hymn of Preparation

Rejoice, the Lord Is King

The United Methodist Hymnal Number 715

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788

Music: John Darwall, 1731-1789; harm. from *The English Hymnal*

1. Rejoice, the Lord is King!
Your Lord and King adore;
mortals, give thanks and sing,
and triumph evermore.
Lift up your heart,
lift up your voice; rejoice;
again I say, rejoice.

2. Jesus the Savior reigns,
the God of truth and love;
when he had purged our stains,
he took his seat above.
Lift up your heart,
lift up your voice; rejoice,
again I say, rejoice.

3. His kingdom cannot fail;
he rules o'er earth and heaven;
the keys of earth and hell
are to our Jesus given.
Lift up your heart,
lift up your voice; rejoice,
again I say, rejoice.

4. Rejoice in glorious hope!
Jesus the Judge shall come,
and take his servants up
to their eternal home.
We soon shall hear
th'archangel's voice; the trump of God
shall sound, rejoice!

listen to the accompaniment here: <https://www.hymnsite.com/midifiles/umh71501.mid>

Calendar Reminders - October

September 28 - Bible Study - ZOOM - 7:30 - Joshua - led by Pastor Manuel

September 30- Confirmation - 5:30

September 30 - Wednesday Night Bible Study - Job- 6:30 - in person and ZOOM

October 4 - Sunday Worship

- Communion

October 5 - Bible Study - ZOOM - 7:30 - Joshua - led by Pastor Manuel

October 7 - Wednesday Night Bible Study - James - 6:30 - in person and ZOOM

October 11 - Sunday Worship

- Anniversary Sunday
- Everybody's Birthday Offering
- Confirmation
- Baptism

October 12 - Bible Study - ZOOM - 7:30 - Joshua - led by Pastor Manuel

October 14 - Wednesday Night Bible Study - James - 6:30 - in person and ZOOM

October 18 - Sunday Worship

- Council Meeting

October 19 - Bible Study - ZOOM - 7:30 - Joshua - led by Pastor Manuel

October 21 - Wednesday Night Bible Study - James - 6:30 - in person and ZOOM

October 25 - Sunday Worship

October 26 - Charge Conference - Ashford UMC - 6:30 PM

October 26 - Bible Study - ZOOM - 7:30 - Joshua - led by Pastor Manuel

October 28 - Wednesday Night Bible Study - James - 6:30 - in person and ZOOM

October 30 - Youth Night - 6:30 - 9:00 PM

October 31 - Women of Faith Prayer Meeting - 2:30



Our September Sermon Series Pressing On

Join us beginning September 20 as we spend four weeks in Paul's letter to the Philippians. The beginning of fall is a busy time for all of us. We sometimes lose our desire to keep coming to church and working in the community. It isn't because we don't feel called but rather that we are overwhelmed with the amount to be done. Paul's Letter to the Philippians can be that stimulation to keep going and a reminder of the joy and fellowship that is part and parcel of being the church. Or as St. Paul reminds us, we are to press on to the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus. Join us in "Pressing On."

September 20 - Striving Side by Side

September 27 -The Heavenly Call

October 4 - Rejoice in the Lord

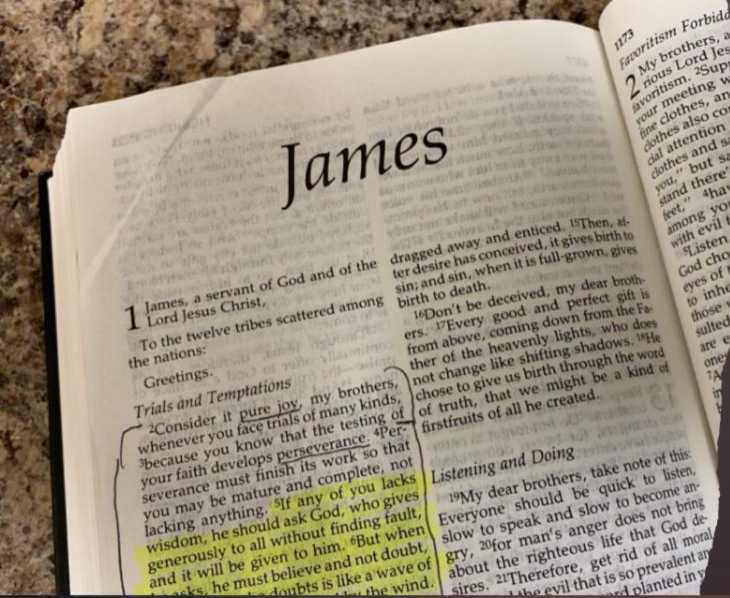


Stewardship Sermon Series - Always Give Thanks

October 18 - November 1

Join us during the end of October and early November as we explore gratitude. Gratitude is more than just another emotion, attitude, or something to be saved for certain times of year. Rather, gratitude is a foundation, a starting point in the journey of being made a disciple. Giving thanks fortifies us for the life of a follower of Jesus Christ, for the glories and the struggles. We aren't promised an easy road in this life of faith, but we are promised presence. We are not alone, and for that we always give thanks.

October 18 - Chosen
October 25 - Tested
November 1 - Witnesses



James

1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,
To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations:
Greetings.

Trials and Temptations
2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. 4 Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. 5 If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. 6 But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.

dragged away and enticed. 15 Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

16 Don't be deceived, my dear brothers. Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. 18 He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.

Listening and Doing
19 My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires. 20 Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and wickedness from your life and pray with a sincere heart, with interest and desire, for the evil that is so prevalent among you.

New Wednesday Night Bible Study

beginning
September 16, 2026

IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL 6:30 PM **Zoom ID: 8915561845, Password 101998**

Youth Night

Youth night was a great success. Our next Youth Night will be August 25th at the Church. Join us for fun and fellowship as we take a quick break from our back to school activities.

Make sure to RSVP to the email you received. If you didn't receive an invitation, please contact Blessings Ignacio to be added to the email list.



October is our Anniversary Month



We will be celebrating our 28th anniversary in the month of October. The highlight of our celebration will take place in Worship on October 11. Make sure you attend as our youth lead us in Worship to celebrate 28 years of doing God's work but also as we celebrate the next generation of church leaders. Worship is currently being planned but the preliminary plans are full of excitement for our God, our congregation, our community and the future of the church (our youth). Mark your calendars! You do not want to miss this Sunday.

Photos anyone?

We are looking for digital photos and videos of our youth taken since 1998 for use during our Anniversary Celebration. If you have either, please send them to Corbin Abril. You can email them to the church (info@houstontrinity.org) or directly to Corbin (corbinabril@gmail.com).

Anniversary Sunday will also be a day of Baptism, Confirmation and new member recognition.

Our Anniversary Worship Service will include an opportunity for Baptism, Confirmation and a time for becoming a member of Houston Trinity. We have three Baptisms and Confirmation scheduled for that Sunday. Please attend to celebrate and recognize our newest members of the body of Christ.

We will also have a special invitation to join our congregation to those in attendance in addition to our new Baptized and Confirmed.

Everybody's Birthday Offering

We will celebrate our Anniversary by having our annual Everybody's Birthday offering. During the closing song we will make our birthday offering. There will be twelve baskets along the altar rail. Birthday offerings will be placed in your birthday month basket.



Community Outreach/Missions

We are nearing the first actions of our Missional Community program. Stay tuned for exciting information of the first effort we are taking in our community.

If you are interested in helping, please contact Velma Bailey, Mei Mei, Angela Leslie or any member of our Outreach committee.



Samaritans Purse - Operations Christmas Child

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who participated in our outreach to Samaritans Purse. We have distributed all of our Christmas boxes and they are slowly returning. When they are all received we will take them to FFAUMC for distribution.

Your generosity will touch the lives of many young boys and girls. God bless you.

Prayer

October Prayer Focus - Romans 15:13 (NLT)

"I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit."

Our prayer focus for October is a prayer of trust. Trust in God the source of all our hope. We are often faced with moments when we feel there is no hope. If we haven't we know someone who has. Our prayer this month reminds us that God is the source of all our hope. Paul writes: *If we trust in God we will be filled with joy and peace.* The power of hope will be given through the power of the Holy Spirit.

As we continue to walk our prayer journey this year pray daily to understand where our faith lies. Pray daily to understand that the power of men is nothing compared to the power of God. pray daily that we, the body, the church are beholden only to Christ, not to men.

If you are interested in being a part of the planning for our monthly prayer focus, please contact Mel Bernardo or any member of the Prayer Team.



Awaiting our next news!

Regards to all and please keep us in your prayers.

Prayer Corner

Please let Nini or me know if you would like to have your prayer request added to the newsletter.

This weeks' prayer requests.

Prayers for Healing

Jose Liwanag
Saffa Gabba
Christopher Hilton
Bruce Jocz
Pam Custer
Anita Solas
Louise Mosley
Michael Bhola
Jared Davis
Rev. Steven Newcombe - FUMC
Bill Robinson
Josh Bridges
Florante Paz
Fawn Cumby
Christian Mirasol
Leticia Abenojar
Juanita Miller
Ruben Paz
Shellie Robertson
Teddy Ellison
Mel Bousley
Ben Bailon
Zandy Aquino
Ed Roethlein
Linda Litt

Prayers for the World

The peace of God to reign.
For the Marvin Rader School

Open Hearts and Minds; Eyes that See and Ears that Hear

Houston Trinity United Methodist Church

Prayers for Comfort

The Rillo family as they grieve the passing of Rod this week.

October Prayer Focus - Romans 15:13

"I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will



Gracious God, as we embark on this new journey to cast our vision, we seek Your wisdom. Help us to put aside our understanding and trust fully in the direction that You will send us.

Open our minds to think beyond what we can imagine. Open our hearts to feel the Spirit working here. Open our eyes and ears to see and hear the direction you wish us to travel.

We hear your call Lord, upon the life of Houston Trinity and we want to answer. Yet we are not sure how. We pray Lord, that You bless us, bless our visioning exercises, bless our decisions so that we may go into your world and bless everyone we meet.

Guide our thoughts and actions so our choices will reflect Your will. May we participate in this effort not swayed by the past but grounded in your divine truth.

Give us peace of spirit and confirmation that we are proceeding on the right path. We surrender our plans to Your and pray that You lead us in Your perfect way.

We pray all this in the name of your son, our Redeemer, our Savior, Jesus Christ,

AMEN

*overflow with confident hope through
the power of the Holy Spirit.”*



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