



Trinity Episcopal Church

Tidings

December 2023

The Reverend Dr. Nicholas N. Síchangí

*My faith Journey:*

*A reflection on my Sabbatical.*

When Jane I decided to take a sabbatical, we had one thing in mind; to spend time reflecting on our faith journey. It is over thirty-one years in the ordained ministry and in those thirty-one years we have served seven parishes of which each parish was special and unique to us. I remember when I was freshly ordained, I was posted to serve in a parish which had thirty-seven congregations and how I managed was just by faith and the grace of God.

This journey began when I was in high school when I committed my life to Christ

and accepted Him as Lord and Savior of my life. It was January 1981 when I met Raymond Bass Dwight then a teacher at Kabarak High school in Nakuru, Kenya. Dwight introduced me to a group of students' fellowship which was led by a team from the Navigators. Having gone through a series of studies I accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior and was Baptized at St. Christopher's Church in Nakuru, Kenya. It was not easy or comfortable life because I had to memorize a scripture each day and as days progressed the number of scriptures increased! Whenever I met Dwight, I had to recite all the verses I had learned that

week and explain how they shade light to my life. That sharpened my mind in scriptures and the love for the bible. This was the beginning of my faith Journey. Former Archbishop Rowan Williams calls it “the new beginning of God’s creative Work.”

The new humanity, “God’s creative work” that I received has not always been easy or I could claim to have control over it. It has been a humanity that has always been at risk hence seeking the hand of God always and seeking Jesus in the suffering world.

Growing out of that need, I needed a community to belong. I needed brothers and sisters of the same mind where I could draw support in this newfound faith “Christian life” so that I can learn what commitment to the Christian life means. This led me to join the Anglican Revival Kenya (Ark ministries) and later joined the East African Revival Movement. This brought joy in my heart because as Archbishop Rowan Williams once wrote, “there is no way of being a Christian without being in the neighborhood of other Christians. Bad news for many, because other Christians can be so difficult! But that is what the New Testament tells us uncompromisingly:

To be with Jesus is to be where human suffering and pain is to be found, and it is also to be with other human beings who are invited to be with Jesus. And that, says the New Testament, is a gift as well as sometimes a struggle and an embarrassment.”

Because we are intertwined with one another in this fellowship, we draw support and love from each other. We become what Paul calls in Philippians 2:2, being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. In this neighborhood, those who are invited to be with Christ Jesus are reminded to have the same mindset as Christ Jesus, meaning putting the interest of others first. (Philippians 2:4,5). This is what drew me into the above movements and became my newfound family. Though I disagreed with some “teachings” of the Ark ministries and East African Revival movements like, “shaving the beards and not wearing jeans,” but in their weaknesses they practiced a life of prayer and lived out the gifts that God had given them. John H. Westerhoff calls this kind of life as being “infused with Christ’s character and empowered to be Christ’s reconciling presence in the world.”

For many, especially like the saints before us, when we reject one way of life and make a faithful attachment of our minds, hearts, and wills to an alternative way of life, as says Westerhoff, is choosing a dangerous path. This path is dangerous because the powers that are unleashed with the newness of life confront the present reality, hence threatening the old arrangement. When Jesus takes control of a person's life, he shuts the functioning of that person's reality. In other words, as Paul puts it, it is no longer that person in control of his/her life, but Christ is. (Galatian 2:20)

When we live according to the purpose and plan of God, we are given power to create life that we would have not imagined. Power to transform and in doing so we cause upheavals. The power of death is set loose. The newness of life that is caused by Christ can be a threat to the existing establishment and so those in power will try to prove the irrelevancy and the danger that this can cause to the existing system.

In 1885-1887, young Christian and Muslims were killed in Uganda because they chose to defend their faith. About 22 Catholics and 23 Anglican were murdered under the order of the king (Kabaka Mwanga). The word Kabaka means King.

Under the rule of Kabaka Mutesa, Christians were tolerated and had the freedom to profess their new found faith. But this was not the case with Kabaka Mwanga who was the son of Kabaka Mutesa. Under Kabaka Mwanga, many Christians were burnt to death because they refused to recant their Christian faith. Some were publicly beheaded before they were burnt. The public execution was meant to curb the spread of Christianity in Buganda kingdom, but this couldn't deter people from this new wave. Despite the fact these inhuman acts were carried out in many parts of Buganda kingdom, Namugongo became a famous site where many Christians in Buganda were murdered. Many believers died horrible deaths. To some, their bodies were speared, cut into pieces and scattered, others were tied with banana leaves and burnt alive while others volunteered to be killed. To those like Mathias Kalemba Mulumba who requested to be executed right away instead of being dragged to the execution grounds at Namugongo permission were granted.

In honor of the Ugandan martyrs, a Shrine was built at Namugongo, now the Catholic Basilica and others were laid to rest at Mengo-Kampala where St. Paul's



Namirembe Anglican Cathedral is situated. In our quest to learn more about our faith journey, Jane and I visited Uganda and had a privilege of visiting the Namirembe graves of Ugandan Anglican martyrs which included the first black martyr recorded- Joseph Balikuddembe Mukasa and Bishop James Hannington. Besides visiting the cemetery, we had the opportunity to worship at Namirembe Cathedral on October 22, 2023. It was a blessing to be at Namirembe and we will always treasure these moments. We will always remember that our journey of faith does not guarantee us a special status but makes us open our hearts to the spirit and Love of God and be ready

for the threat caused by the suffering humanity.

A humble thank you goes to all our shared ministry vestries, and our parishioners who granted us the sabbatical so that we could spend time reflecting on our faith journey and also look at the lives of the great saints in Uganda and all other saints that have gone before us in this life. This gives us an assurance that we are not alone and like the saints before us we shall tread a dangerous path, but this is also the way to eternal life. Upon our return, we were welcomed by the words, "welcome home Fr. Nicholas and Jane." Indeed we are at home. What a joy it is to be home.

Shalom

Father Nicholas

## Christmas Eve Worship Services

Sunday, December 24th

8:00 am Morning Prayer

10:30 am Holy Eucharist & Music

8:00 pm Candlelight Service

Holy Eucharist

Special Music starts at 7:30 pm

## Donation for the Help Center

We are collecting new or gently used winter coats, gloves, hats, and scarves.

There is a Christmas box in the back of the church.

Let's fill it up before December 17.

## Diocesan Convention

Mary Katharine Hitchcock and Carri Birdsall have graciously agreed to attend the 2024 Diocesan Convention as our delegates. It's important that Trinity have representatives at the convention to keep us apprised of what is happening in the diocese.

Thanks, ladies!

## Happy December Birthday

6 Jonathon Wood      11 Dwight Hair

12 Christopher Wafula

14 Mike Polidoro    16 Libby Keefer

16 Joan Marie Parker    25 Leila Saab

## SAVE-A-TAPE-PROGRAM

By using your Redners' card each time you purchase merchandise at Redners your receipt will be designated as save-a-tape. Trinity will receive one percent of the total. Please continue bringing your tapes in and place them in the envelope on the bulletin board in the parish house or in the back of the church. Many thanks.

## Letter

Dear folks at Elkton Trinity,  
We were very grateful for the yummy Thanksgiving basket you gave us. My fiancé, Mark Andrichyn, and I felt blessed by the fact that it existed and the thoughtfulness that went into the ingredients.

The joy shown by those ladies, both on the phone and in person, conveyed to us that they weren't just doing as the Bible teaches; they yearned to serve Jesus! Reminder (to us) again of how abundant God's love for us is.

P.S. I especially like the verse that says Thanksgiving leftovers are great!  
thank you!!

Lisa McHenry

## Crèche set up

Fellow Brothers and Volunteer Parishioners,  
A special thanks to Paul Arbour, Hans Nafzinger, Larry Parker, Bill Smith, Gordon Tozer, Father Nicholas, Janet Franklin, and Mike Polidoro. Your time and effort to assist in the setup of Trinity Church Crèche on Friday, December 1st was greatly appreciated.

The effort was only possible due to your participation and will again serve the community as our seasonal reminder of Advent and the Christmas Holiday.

Regards,  
Bill

## VESTRY MINUTES POSTED

on the Vestry Board in the Parish House. If you have any questions, please ask a Vestry Member.



## New Bulletin Board Photos

You might have noticed that all the photographs of Trinity parishioners have been removed from the bulletin board in the Parish House. Cheryl Lee and Jane Ayers will be creating a new Trinity Family bulletin board with your help. All the old photos will be added to our church's archives and we will be putting up new photos of all our members.

You have two choices for your photo. If you have a favorite, recent photo of yourself and would like us to use it, please give it to Jane or Cheryl. (You also may put it in the Altar Guild mailbox or mail it to the church.) If you are having a photo printed out, the size we are using is 4" by 6". Otherwise, over the next few weeks, we will be taking photos during coffee hours or at other functions. Thanks to everyone for your help with this project!

"Say cheese!"

Cheryl Lee



Larry Parker at coffee hour

### COFFEE TIME

All are welcome after the 10:30 worship service for a time of fellowship with refreshments in the Parish House.

**HOSTING COFFEE HOUR** If you would like to host coffee hour the sign-up sheet is hanging under the bulletin board in the parish house. Pair up with a co-host and split the duties. Hosting is simple! Bring a snack, brew coffee and set up/clean up. Coffee, cups, cutlery, plates and napkins are supplied.


**ADVENT** is a gift of time. It is a season of anticipation, transformation, and simple waiting. If we embrace and dive into that time to slow down and be still, our presence to God deepens. Open yourself up to develop your faith in this time of preparation through spiritual practices, reading the Bible, a book study, or gathering your family around an Advent Wreath. Through the stillness, listen to what's coming and where God is calling you.

### Prayer List

"Our prayers are with all those who are ill, all who are caring for them and all who are striving to hear the voice of God in these challenging times.

May God bless you and keep you, now and always.

Lynn Anstatt, Mary Helen Atwood, Tim Bennett, Cori Campbell, Susie Campbell, Lorris Clay, Donald Comer, Alan Fenson, Shawnda Fenson, Diane Hair, Dwight Hair, Brian Hubis, Jenn, Libby Keefer, Dorothy Kirk, Carol Lee, Paris Mason, Bruce Mayo, Louise McLean, Natalie Northon, David Parker, Larry Parker, Cecelia Polidoro, Robert Powell, Hunter Smith, and Kyle Watson.

Those who have passed: Beverly Tozer 

Bless O Lord your servant Beverly and may perpetual light shine upon her.

May she rest eternally with the Saints of God.

Please continue to keep Gordon in your thoughts and prayers.

# Christmas Flower Donation

If you would like to make a donation to the decoration of the Altar and Church nave for the Christmas Eve Service. Please complete the form and mail or drop it in the offering plate by 12/12.

Enclosed a check/cash for \$\_\_\_\_\_ for flowers in

Memory of \_\_\_\_\_

or

Thank offering \_\_\_\_\_

Given by \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_

We are seeking congregation members who would like to sing and/or ring bells for the pre-service music on Christmas Eve. If interested in singing some Christmas Carols or ringing a bell or two, contact Valerie Reichenbach at 302-275-2256 or reichbv@yahoo.com  
No musical experience necessary.

