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Trinotes

January 24, 2018





Keeping the Sabbath Day Holy

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy." — Exodus 20:8-11

If you read last week's newsletter article, you might recall that I wrote from Paris Landing State Park in the midst of a mandatory sabbath retreat for Memphis and Tennessee Conference Residents in Ministry. You might have read my tone. However, if you are kind enough to expect better from me, then you may have missed it. You may have missed the disgruntled undertone.

Mandatory sabbath has never felt like sabbath to me. In fact, I'm excellent at bringing work on these retreats, and I'm excellent at whining all the way there and back because, let's face it, if I spend three days at a sabbath retreat — resting and resting in God — then I have to come back and work twice as hard to get everything finished that has to be finished by Sunday, and I end up twice as exhausted and a bit bitter for having had to go in the first place. There's nothing about that kind of sabbath that, to me, feels holy.

I have been dragged to this retreat four times now, having taken the scenic route to ordination as an elder in the UMC. Admittedly, I've gotten something out of every retreat — often something I didn't expect, but that doesn't mean that I 'liked' it. (You may laugh, now, at my fiery, righteous indignation.) I cannot remember ever feeling like I experienced sabbath.

This time was no different. I left church Sunday afternoon and went home and packed my bag for the retreat — shoving my computer and Trinity leadership list into my suitcase so that I could get some work done — and set out to drive to Paris Landing — two-and-a-half hours in the rain — audibly complaining the whole way (because that's indicative of a joyful heart...). I was at the tail-end of a sinus infection and leaving my children under the care of my very capable fiancée for 3 days, but lamenting losing time with them. My heart was far from being in the right place.

(continued on page 3)

PRAYER CONCERNS

Our country and the world - for the family and friends of those killed or injured in the shooting at Marshall County High School in Kentucky; for people of faith around the world who are experiencing persecution; for refugees seeking asylum from war and social unrest; for safe drinking water for those living in developing countries; prayers for our country, that truth and justice will prevail; for people around the world experiencing terrorist attacks; safety for children going to and from school and while at school; for the poor, homeless, and disenfranchised in our city.

The United Methodist Church - for our Pastor, Rev. Sara Tate and her sons, Cooper and Aiden; for our Bishop, the Rev. Bill McAlilly; and for our District Superintendent, the Rev. Dr. Deborah Smith.

Trinity UMC - For homebound members in the congregation. For children and youth ministries. For new visitors to this congregation. For families who are grieving. For our congregation as we face transitions. Wisdom for our Trustees and Church Council facing difficult decisions.

Also, specific prayer requests by and for:

For the family and friends of **Jeanne Napoli** as we grieve her loss and celebrate her life and memories of her joyful service

Joan Smith's granddaughter **Sean's** vision

Qahtan, Dalia Alnaaman's uncle with metastatic cancer

Melba Abraham, cracked rib; Charles recovering at home—in rehab

The family of **Dale Doty** as they grieve her loss

Mary McConnell's niece Laura Fellin, cancer—pray for her family

Charlotte Comes's friend Carolyn Priori in ICU following surgery, has not regained consciousness

Phil Phillips continues to battle leukemia at home.

Maggi Comes seeing plastic surgeon following dog attack

Sue Taylor—the Howard family, for health reasons

Irene Dycus's friend with cancer: **Rosemary Norris** and husband Noel; Irene and sister-in-law **Jeanne Dycus** in auto accident, both recovering

Les Johnson's brother Frank in hospice care

Chris Glover's friend **Joanne James** with multiple major problems; and Chris' sister **Carol Bruce**

(Please submit your prayer requests to Debby Marston at 901-274-6895 [voicemail available] or email to office@trinityumcmemphis.org. Prayer request cards are available on a table outside the Fellowship Hall.)

Upcoming

EVENTS

Binghampton Food Pantry

Tuesdays & Fridays at 258 Merton 8:00-11:00 am. In case of emergency, food can be obtained by calling Michael Anderson at (901) 503-2748.

Room in the Inn

Tuesdays through March 31st: volunteers gather around 4:00 p.m. in Education Bldg., guests arrive 6:00 p.m. Departure Wednesday a.m. at 7:00 a.m.

Board of Trustees Meeting

The trustees will meet on February 5th at 6:30 p.m. in the Conference Room.

Daytime UMW Meetings

First and third Tuesdays of each month. The next scheduled meeting is February 6th in the Fellowship Hall at 10:30 a.m.

Evening UMW Meetings

The fourth Monday of each month in the Fellowship Hall at 6:30 p.m. The next meeting will be held on February 26th in the Fellowship Hall.

Youth Lasagna Fundraising Luncheon

January 28th following worship (see article page 7)

Church Council

Meets following youth fundraiser luncheon on Sunday, January 28th. Members are welcome to attend.

Covenant Discipleship

Wednesdays at 5:00 p.m. in the Conference Room.

Narcotics Anonymous meets at Trinity UMC five evenings a week: Wednesday through Sunday.

Scouts

Cub Scout pack meetings are held Sunday afternoons at 3:00 p.m. Boy Scouts meet Monday evenings at 7:00 p.m. There are no scout meetings when school is not in session.

Trinotes

The deadline for submissions for the next Trinotes is February 12, 2018. Please email or deliver any articles to Debby Marston, our administrative officer at: office@trinityumcmemphis.org. Trinotes is now available as an electronic file. Call Debby at 901-274-6895 if you prefer to receive the newsletter via e-mail. You may also access it on our website at www.trinityumcmemphis.org.

(continued from page 2)

The retreat was old information for me. It was a repetition of the Clergy Spiritual Life Retreat from last March — a retreat I'd helped plan — which made me even more disgruntled that I was required to be there. In retrospect, I'm really ashamed of myself for the terrible attitude I had about being on this retreat, especially since my assumption was that the Holy Spirit just wasn't going to show up at this place.

And for me it didn't.....until the last hour.

I'm such a good procrastinator that I procrastinated 'till the end of this retreat to allow the Holy Spirit to teach me anything or, in my case, put me in my place and create some holy space in the midst of my righteous indignation.

Yes, the retreat was about sabbath. It was for us just as the sabbath is for man (not man for the sabbath — Mark 2:27), because, of all people, clergy are the worst at taking sabbath time. Two things occurred to me before I packed my bag again and headed south — two things I think are immensely important and will change everything about how I function every single week.

1. Sabbath is a commandment. It's one of the "Big Ten." And, if I'm not keeping it, I can't preach about it. And
2. Sabbath is not a day off. Sabbath is actually work! If we're to set aside time in our busy lives to rest and rest in God and work on our relationships with our families under the umbrella of working on our relationship with God, we have to get a certain number of things accomplished beforehand, teach ourselves how to deal with the temptations that may keep us from keeping that sabbath, and find the strength to stick to it.

So, of course and as I do, I came home pretty conflicted. How am I going to do this? I'm a single mother of two with an amazingly busy-in-ministry church. I'm planning a wedding and have family, other than my children, who need me from time to time. I have my own soul that has to be filled lest I have nothing to give, and this is generally the last thing that gets attention. This is such a busy season of my life. How? How on earth can I give anymore than I am already giving to God? I wasn't sure 'how,' but I was sure that this is required of me. It's required of us. I knew I'd need to figure it out.

And so I did.

I sat down last week since we were out of the office thanks to the crazy weather, and wrote my "Pastoral Sabbath Plan." It's very specific. It reflects what scripture says about the sabbath. It mentions what I'd like to

(continued on page 5)

Spiritual Formation New Covenant Discipleship Study

A reminder from Mike Potter:

Are you interested in deepening your faith and finding others to accompany you on your spiritual journey of discipleship? Have you considered the possibility of becoming part of a covenant discipleship group that will not only hold you lovingly accountable in your walk with Christ, but also help you develop a daily discipline of prayer, searching and being searched by scripture, and finding balance and spiritual integration in your life?

If there is sufficient interest, we will offer an 8-week study of David Lowes Watson's book, "Covenant Discipleship – Christian Formation Through Mutual Accountability."

At the conclusion of the study, one or more covenant discipleship groups of 5-6 members each will be formed. We are asking you commit to this 8-week study and then decide whether you wish to continue after you've learned how a CD group functions and whether it is a good fit for you at this time in your spiritual life. One or more members of the pilot CD group that was formed last year will then mentor the new group(s).

This study will begin during the week of February 11th and we'll meet weekly thereafter. Each session will be limited to one hour. The cost of the book is \$24. The church office will order the books once we know who will participate. **To register for this study, please call the church office at 901-274-6895 before January 29th.**



February Birthdays

February 7 Sally Ramsey
February 11 Alex Allmon
February 12 Jane Collins
February 12 Myra Finch
February 19 Paul Skjoldager
February 20 Laura Gansman
February 22 Tracy Crenshaw
February 27 Wayne Raybuck

Call us at (901) 274-6895 if your birthday is missing!

2018 Trinity Committee Servants

Due to an oversight, the name of **Jinx Winn** was not published in the last issue of Trinotes. Jinx has joined the **Board of Trustees** and will serve in that capacity for a full three year term.

January 18, 2018

To all the folks at
Trinity United Methodist Church



This is a belated thank you to all of you who signed my birthday card and sent it. What a joy to open it and see all those names and well wishers, maybe from one or two that don't know who the heck I am. It was very meaningful. This one I'll always remember.

I've been truly blessed and nurtured by all of you there, and I hold you close in my heart now and always. You are still "family" to me.

I found a home at Trinity my second year at the Memphis Academy of Art back in 1964. I still consider myself a member, even though I've moved away. You are all special to me.

I thank you most sincerely and with deepest appreciation.

Bill Berry



BINGHAMTON FOOD PANTRY

Fishes and Loaves Food Pantry at Binghamton UMM, 258 N. Merton St., is open on Tuesdays and Fridays from 8:00 am to 11:00 am for distribution of fresh fruits and vegetables....people can come as often as they want for these.

Once a month, persons can request an emergency food bag (canned goods, peanut butter, cereal, rice, dried beans, soup, etc). Neither of these options require any proof of residency or need.....you ask, you receive. Individuals and families who need an emergency food bag can call Michael Anderson at (901) 503-2748.

Trinity members: please continue to bring staple items for the food pantry each Sunday—one item per household member—as we partner in this vital ministry to the poor.



Angels among us

By Lois Young

"Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."
Hebrews 13:2

We use this short Bible verse to remind everyone that our Room in the Inn guests might be more than they appear. There are other angels among us at Room in the Inn. Without fanfare or any great recognition, our volunteers work week after week to make sure our guests have clothes, food, a warm night's sleep and a listening ear. One of those very devoted volunteers died this Sunday – Jeanne Napoli.

One of the things that drew Jeanne to Trinity UMC was our ministry to the homeless. She had been involved in other homeless ministries in San Francisco before moving to Memphis to be close to her son and his family.

On our second night of Room in the Inn in 2013, Jeanne made beds and helped serve dinner to our guests. She would sit and share the meal and conversation with them. She quickly understood that our greatest need was for overnight volunteers.

At one point she made the commitment to stay overnight every other week, and then last season it was every Tuesday night. She wanted to do the same this season, but she had many bouts of illness that kept her away most weeks. Even when her back pain was so awful, she would still volunteer to stay the night. I would say, "You don't have to do that; I know you are in a lot of pain." She would say, "Pain here or pain at home, what's the difference?" It gave her great joy to know that she was contributing in this much needed way.

As many of you know, Jeanne was a skilled accountant who helped keep the books for Trinity. When the Room in the Inn-Memphis Board needed a treasurer, Jeanne agreed to take on that role. She did not mind using her work skills to help out, but I think she shined even brighter when she was talking to our unsheltered guests. She cared about each individual and talked to them like friends and neighbors.

To say that Jeanne meant a lot to this program and to me is an understatement. I think there will now be a void that is impossible to fill, but we will keep moving forward. We will take care of our guests with care and compassion. That's what Jeanne would want – Don't leave any angels behind.



Jeanne Napoli with a Room in the Inn guest

Memorials & Honorariums

Memorials have been received:

*In memory of **Ann Laverne Hopper** from
Mac & Mary McConnell*

*In memory of **Clarence Hitt** from an anonymous donor*

*In memory of **Frances Frankland** from
an anonymous donor*

(continued from page 3)

Keeping the Sabbath Holy

do in my sabbath time (both for me and for my family). It describes who'll be effected by my taking sabbath time and what temptations I'll face to break that sabbath. It is a work of art and extremely idealistic.

Sunday afternoon I presented my sabbath plan to the Staff Parish Relations Committee, because any good plan ought to be public, and asked them to hold me accountable to my plan and offer their support. I was a bit nervous, though I cannot define why. The SPRC, as they have always been, was wonderfully supportive and beautifully affirming.

And so I begin this journey and intend to ask you to be a part of it in several ways. My sabbath time is Friday. Sometimes that will involve Cooper and Aiden and sometimes it won't. I'll not be behind a computer or phone, but hope to be behind an easel with a paintbrush, or good book, or perhaps at the Zoo or Botanical Gardens — maybe behind a camera taking pictures — maybe hiding in quiet reflection — doing what feeds my soul, brings me closer to God, and strengthens my relationships. This, perhaps, is a bit holier than I have experienced before.

I hope you'll hold me accountable and offer your support and prayers. Maybe you can, too, be encouraged to "figure out sabbath."

If you want to follow the journey more closely, I'm going to write about it (because if I say this publicly, I'll actually do it), and you can read here: UMpastormom.com.

Blessings,
Rev. Sara



CHOIR NEWS: A Music Note



Spectator or Participant?

By John Holtzman

Super bowl Sunday is almost upon us. Football teams have won and lost games throughout the season and at the end it comes down to two teams battling it out on the playing field. There are the pre-game shows, the commercials, the half-time show, the post-game show, and somewhere in the middle there is a football game that is played. Personally, I could care less about football – it's just not my thing. I usually will watch the half-time show and try to catch the commercials because I always like good entertainment.

People pay thousands of dollars to be in the stadium to witness the game – sometimes in freezing weather - which makes absolutely no sense to me. Nonetheless, they come, they watch, they cheer, and at the end some go away very joyful, and some not so joyful. These are the spectators. They watch, observe, and even make their judgments on how the game should or should not be played, but they are not the players. The players are actually the participants. They are the ones the games are all about. These are the people who have often spent their entire lives playing this game. They start out in pee-wee games, summer camps, and then high school teams. If they are gifted and lucky, they go on to play college ball and then get drafted to become professional athletes. An elite few go on to play on a team that participates in the final game of the year that is viewed by the entire world. They are the ones this game is all about.

So my question to you is this: Do you wish to be a spectator or a participant in this weekly meeting we call “worship”? Do wish to sit on the sidelines or in the stands and watch as the choir, the musician, the pastor all take an active role in worship or do you wish to become a participant? To be a participant does not mean you have to sing in the choir (although I will use this opportunity to make an unashamed plea for you to consider joining the choir), play the piano, or preach, for that matter. Even participants can go through the motions and not be true participants, but that is an article for another time. It means you are engaged in worship. You focus, you listen, you sing the hymns... you participate! Participation is a choice.

So the next time you come into our worship center, which one will you be: a spectator or a participant? The choice is yours. Choose wisely - it will make a huge difference in your life.



LAKE SHORE
united methodist camp & retreat center

Youth Fundraiser

The Trinity UMC Youth are raising money to attend the winter retreat at Lakeshore UMA. On Sunday, January 28th, after worship and preceding the first Church Council meeting of 2018, the youth will host a lasagna lunch. They'll be accepting donations, which will help fund their trip.

Our youth group is new and budding and needs your support, so you are cordially invited to attend and to stay for Church Council (which is always open to the entire congregation).

Come and eat and support our students!

BENEVOLENCE GIVING UPDATE



Once again, “Thank You” for your generosity in donating to the grocery voucher fund so we can continue to help those who lack the basic needs for life. In 2018 so far, we have handed out only eleven vouchers at \$25 each.

Unfortunately, we exhausted our grocery voucher account in early January and had to put that benevolence program on hold temporarily. We have had several donations earmarked for vouchers, but we still need to build up the fund in order to be able to distribute these gifts to our neighbors whose grocery bills have outstripped their ability to pay. Calls come in the church office daily, sometimes several a day, from people needing help to purchase food.

The need for assistance in acquiring the essentials of life is ongoing among the poor in our community. We hope that you will continue your contributions to our grocery voucher fund so we can, in a small way, meet the needs of “the least of these.”