

# Trinotes

**The Mission of Trinity United Methodist Church is to proclaim God's love by building community and living by the example and teachings of Jesus Christ.**



## Authentic Reflection

Seven years after my mother's death, I'm finding more and more of what I appreciate about who she was: my mother never minced words. She told it like it was, sometimes to her detriment. In good Southern lady fashion, she could insult you in such a sweet way that it was days later before you realized it. But, more importantly, my mother was the most authentic and honest person I've ever known. You knew where you stood. I think even greater, though, was that you knew what she believed and if she cared deeply about something.

Being politely quiet, so as not to stir the waters of a perceived 'peace,' was not her way.

I've come to be a lot like my mother (words, at one point in my life, I'd hoped I'd never write), and I am glad.

Fresh out of seminary it was to my detriment, as well. I learned early on that there's a way—a process—where I might understand something theologically and see the world through that lens and want to act accordingly, but it didn't mean that my brand new family of faith was ready to see it that way, too. There's no possible way to trust someone, or their motives, immediately. Relationship takes time and, in the United Methodist Church, we don't always have time. Itineracy isn't a perfect practice. Planting deep roots, investing your heart in families and relationships with others, isn't always easy to do when you have little concept of how long you'll be somewhere.

Sometimes, it seems, the more honorable move is to sit on our ideas or passions until the right time, but as the days go on, and the 'right' time is no more clear than it was in the beginning, one thing or another persists or it doesn't and where we end up is further from whatever idea or passion it was that we had.

Yesterday, Trinity's church council met for the first time in 2022. Attendance was the best it's been in the pandemic, with a strong number of folks in person, spread out carefully in the worship center, and a number of folks also joining us, projected, on the screen. It wasn't perfect. Sound was an issue. Sitting around tables, as we normally would, didn't take place. Yes, it was different, but we met — a number of voices — to ponder. Who are we now? Where is God leading us, not post-pandemic (because we're still stuck in the mire), but today? Are we still fulfilling our mission and vision statements?

We looked at those things. We talked about them. They're printed here in today's newsletter and will be from here on out. We pushed ourselves in a different way, though. We pushed ourselves outside of what's comfortable. It's easy to suggest things we can do — things that sound good and edifying to the church and even the mission. It's harder to raise our hands and commit to being the ones who do them. We pressed past the ethereal and ideal to the real and concrete. We called the ducks, ducks and challenged comfortable generalizations, replacing those things with authentic reflections. Some of us did not mince words, but offered honest realities faithfully in ways that did no harm.

It was honestly exhausting, but in this beautiful sort of way. Talking about *possibilities* is much easier. It's non-committal. Putting times, volunteers, and dollar amounts to plans — that's different. Asking the hard questions like, "Are we actually loving our neighbors in this or is this about us?" and then answering that question honestly — that takes a lot of emotional energy. It was hard and I went home worn out.

But...(you know I like 'buts.')

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Flipping through the prophets this morning, and thinking about Trinity's mission and vision, and praying over all that transpired yesterday, I came across this from Isaiah 58:6-9.

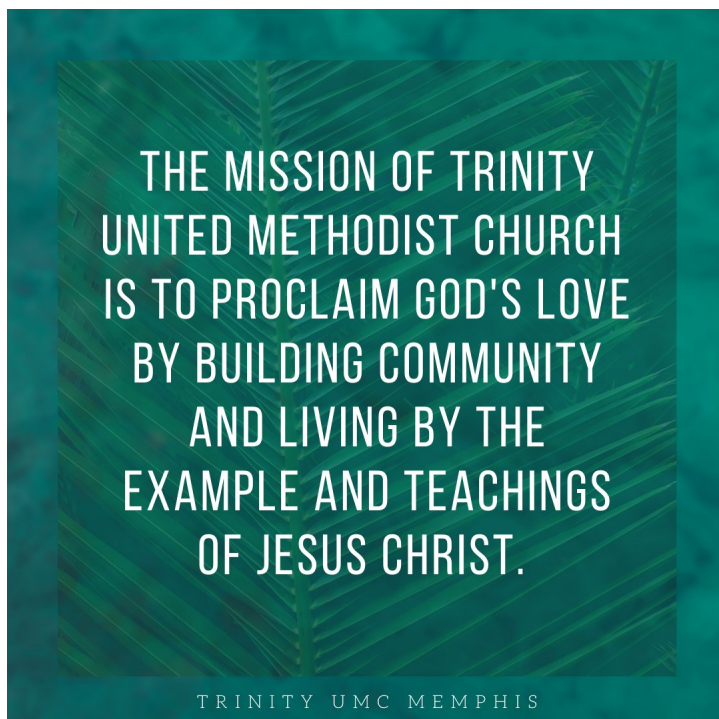
*Is not this the fast that I choose:  
to loose the bonds of injustice,  
to undo the thongs of the yoke,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
and to break every yoke?  
Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,  
and bring the homeless poor into your house;  
when you see the naked, to cover them,  
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?  
Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,  
and your healing shall spring up quickly;  
your vindicator shall go before you,  
the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.  
Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;  
you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am*

These are powerful and bold words from Isaiah. They throw caution to the wind. There is no political correctness, no explanations for why these works of liberation could not or should not happen, no hesitation and, in the end, glory to God who is with them.

These words turn my own Monday morning exhaustion into passionate readiness — a readiness to do the next right thing, stir up 'good trouble,' love our neighbors better, love each other better, and not only see what God has in store for us, but be a part of what God has in store for us.

I welcome 2022 and pray for what's ahead, for you each, and for the mission and now, more than ever, I hope you'll pray with me.

For the Sake of Righteousness,  
*Rev. Sara*





## JOURNEY: to faithfully follow where God leads

The **FAITH WORD** for our current unit of study in our Children's Sunday School Class is **JOURNEY: to faithfully follow where God leads**. What an excellent way to start this new year! In our first lesson on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, we studied about "Jesus in the Temple," based on Luke 2:41-52. Our children learned that even as a child of twelve, Jesus was a participant in the teaching and learning occurring at the temple. As teachers, we want to encourage our Trinity children to remember that no matter their ages, they are

important in our church family. We hope they will listen and ask questions. Even though they are young, they can also teach and be an example for others.

On January 9<sup>th</sup> we learned about "Jesus' Baptism," with our lesson based on Luke 3:1-22. Though each of the four Gospels tells of Jesus' baptism, each Gospel writer treats it differently. In Luke, the actual baptism of Jesus is only referred to, not described. The first twenty verses of this chapter are spent talking about John the Baptist and his ministry. Only after mentioning John's arrest does Luke make note of Jesus' baptism. He does it in just two verses (21 & 22): "When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: 'You are my Son, whom I dearly love; in you I find happiness.'"

This is one of the few times that our children's curriculum coincides with our lectionary readings. On the Monday that we began preparing for the lesson on January 9<sup>th</sup>, the lectionary reading for the devotion in **The Upper Room Disciplines** was this very same scripture. In the devotion, the Rev. Jennifer E. Copeland writes, "The dove names the royalty of Jesus. It's not what we expected, but it is, after all, what we were told. The whole salvation history reveals a God who works upside down and backward. The evidence is clear and consistent."

But Rev. Copeland warns us, "In spite of the evidence, we remain impressed by might and money...Selfish power...Greedy power."

She concludes: "Contrary evidence kneels before us in prayer, the embodiment of all that the prophets have promised. Beginning with this coronation, the powerful One will demonstrate with the remainder of his life how very misguided we are. Follow him, listen to his stories, watch his actions, know the truth. Power made perfect in love is the only power worth having. Real power." These are words that we most certainly need to hear and to put into practice in these contentious times!

Remembering Jesus' baptism, remembering our own baptism, remembering that water is the symbol of life and God's divine power, we share this prayer, adapted from our teacher's manual: "Dear Creator of Life, you parted the waters from the land when you created the world. You parted the water for Moses and the Israelites. You came to us in the waters of a womb. You declare your love for us in the sprinkling of water. We thank you for your love and for your empowering presence. May we faithfully love you and love our neighbor. Amen."

Peace and love to you from Irene and Alyson.

(see page 5 for related artwork)



## Experiencing God's Presence

Centering Prayer is a receptive method of Christian silent prayer which deepens our relationship with God, the Indwelling Presence . . . a prayer in which we can experience God's presence within us, closer than breathing, closer than thinking, closer than consciousness itself.

Beginning Sunday, January 16, Mike Potter will host a time on Zoom for silent, non-verbal prayer from 8:30 to 9:00 AM. Mike will give brief instructions for those who need it. All are welcome. We will begin promptly at 8:30, so please plan to log in by 8:25 AM using the regular Sunday morning link you will find in the ENews.



January 1	John Curry
January 3	Kay Jordan
January 5	Eleanor Brooks
January 5	Roscoe Dodson
January 10	Tom Wilson
January 12	Doris Porter
January 15	Jeff Corbett
January 16	Joan Foley
January 18	Philip Brooks
January 25	Irene Dycus
January 25	Lila Ruth Dycus
January 29	Caley Foreman
January 30	Carol Miller

*(Let us know of any errors or omissions on this birthday list.)*



**FEED THE HUNGRY**

## BINGHAMPTON FOOD PANTRY

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

Once a month, folks 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:** You can bring canned goods or other non-perishable items for BUMM's food pantry. A box for donated foodstuffs has been placed in the lobby in front of the reception desk. A donation in the form of a check written to Trinity UMC, with "Fishes & Loaves" on the memo line, will help keep the food pantry well stocked and will be very much appreciated. Hunger is an ongoing problem. Let's commit to feeding our neighbors in need!



## MEMORIALS & HONORARIUMS

MEMORIALS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED

IN MEMORY OF **PHIL ISBELL** FROM TOM & LEANNE WILSON

IN MEMORY OF **PHIL ISBELL** FROM ANONYMOUS

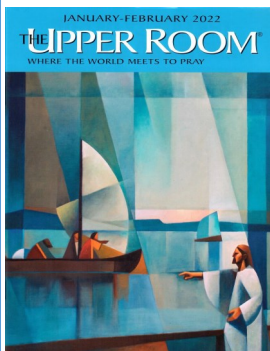
IN MEMORY OF **PHIL ISBELL** FROM JOHN & DEBORAH MOORE

IN MEMORY OF **NANCY RANKIN** FROM NELDA GRAY

IN MEMORY OF **PHIL ISBELL** FROM MIKE & ROSEMARY POTTER

"You are my Son, whom I dearly love; in you I find happiness," Luke 3:22

-Sean



### January/February Upper Room

The latest issue of *The Upper Room* can be picked up from the front desk of the Worship Center. Both large & regular print copies are available. We can also mail you a copy if you cannot get out.

E-mail [office@trinityumcmemphis.org](mailto:office@trinityumcmemphis.org) or leave a message on the church office voicemail (901-274-6895). Please be sure to specify the print size: regular or large

## PRAYER CONCERNS

**Our country and the world** - for all those in our country and around the world still impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and now the omicron variant; for families, churches, and communities impacted by the recent tornados in West Tennessee and Kentucky, especially for those who lost loved ones in those violent storms; for Haiti in the aftermath of an earthquake and hurricane; 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; for people around the world experiencing terrorist attacks; for the poor, homeless, and disenfranchised in our city; for immigrants who are struggling due to lost jobs and lack of resources; for persons of color who are speaking out against racial profiling and injustice, and for families who have lost loved ones due to violence; for President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris—pray for their wisdom.

**The United Methodist Church** - for our Pastor, Rev. Sara Corum, her husband Josh McClurkan, and their five children; for our Bishop, the Rev. Bill McAlilly; and for our District Superintendent, the Rev. Autura Eason-Williams

**Trinity UMC** - for members of the congregation homebound due to chronic illness or age; for new visitors joining us as we worship online; for all families who are grieving; for our congregation as we deal with transitions. Wisdom for our Trustees and Church Council. Also, specific prayer requests by and for:

**Maggi Comes'** niece, **Katie Pendleton**, diagnosed with Tumefactive MS

**Bryce Sellers**, fighting Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy

**Michelle Goza's** husband, **Sam**, died December 15th, just 3 days before their son's wedding. (Michelle is Chris Glover's niece.)

**Kanyon Glover**, now 3 years old, can lift his left arm and giggles at his daddy when he gives him a high five.

**Donnie Glover**, now on oral medication, as well as chemotherapy; needs blood & platelets weekly, but back to driving a truck. (You can't keep a good man down!)

**Sandra Glover**, Donnie's wife, has three crumbling vertebrae, causing much pain; she's primary caregiver for her elderly mother, as well as Donnie and Bobby

**Bobby Glover**, Chris' brother, who had moved to assisted living, is now back home in his tiny house!

**Jacob Foreman**, son of **Caley & Alyson**, hip/leg/back and nerve damage issues, doing PT & showing some slow improvement

**Gene & Irene Opel**, ongoing health concerns

**David Harrison**, Carol Miller's brother, recovered from broken hip; dialysis going well

**Don Culpepper**, Carol Miller's brother-in-law, has lung cancer, but doing better.

Joan Smith's cousin/mom, **Gigi**, aka **Kathryn Ellis**, receiving in-home care

**Peggy Kinney**, Charlotte Comes' 95 year old cousin, now residing permanently in rehab center

**Val Coates**, serious heart condition; still in constant pain and undergoing testing to discover the cause; grieving the loss of her mother, sister, and father this year

**George Marston**, still undergoing dialysis; congestive heart failure; COPD; improved mobility

**Jean Moss**, now in hospice care

**Margaret Rucker**, Irene Dycus' sister, has moved to nursing home care.

The family of **Phil Isbell**, who passed away December 14th

The family of **Hugh Stuart**, who died December 14th at the age of 101

**Melba & Charles Abraham**, positive for COVID-19, at home recovering

**Tilman Corum**, Rev. Sara's father, recovering from surgery and doing well after experiencing much pain

*(Please contact the church office if you have additional prayer concerns, need a concern removed, or need to make a change or correction.)*