



"Seeing the Signs"

**"I am about to do a new thing;
now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?"**

Isaiah 43:19

Friends of Jesus,

In my new years sermon on January 3rd, I admitted how much I dislike new year's "resolutions." This is mostly because I can never seem to keep them. I would give up sugar, or resolve to get to the gym for workouts, or sundry other self-improvement projects; but, honestly, I don't find myself all that inspiring, and I don't follow through. But there is something – a feeling or a thought or an indwelling, call it what you will – that motivates me beyond the foibles of my apathy. It is my sense, which I cannot seem to shake, that God is redeeming the universe through Jesus Christ and the Spirit. And this prompting is coupled with the additional, inescapable sense that I am being asked to participate in this cosmic home improvement project. Now... *that* is something that has the power to inspire my resolve: death is overcome, the terrible choices I've made in my life heretofore haven't maimed me into oblivion, and *love* – love is all around and in and over and under us. Praise God!

I made a suggestion at the end of my sermon, however, in which I urged the congregation to adopt a group new year's resolution: to look for the signs of the Spirit's presence and record what is seen and heard and felt. Can you say it with me: **"I resolve to look for the signs of the Spirit's presence and talk about what I experience with others."** Could we do this for an entire year?! Yes... we can. But will we? Will you also say this with me: **"Others can; I will."**






Pray this prayer:

**"God, help me see the signs of your transforming love,
and give me the courage to talk about it. Amen."**

Noticing the reality of God's reign of justice and mercy is a matter of our perspective. Simply, when love triumphs over meanness, addiction, poverty, despair, and grief – in that moment or hour or week or month, we know we are witnessing the very presence of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. Those situations when and where love prevails are the *proof* that God is still Emmanuel

Our Visioning Team has been looking for the Spirit’s presence as the congregation has voiced its insight regarding the improvement of our ongoing ministries and the development of new ministries. While we still have the hard work of praying over the results from our breakfast on January 10th, one thing has become clear: if we pay attention to what God is calling us to do, we will be transformed as God’s grace passes through us into our neighborhoods, city, and world. We cannot carry the flame of God’s love to our neighbors and not be transformed ourselves. My request as that spiritual leader of this community is that everyone associated with this church family will pray for the members of the Visioning Team and for the Church Council in the coming days. And if you want to get involved – get involved! Because God is doing a new thing! Already it springs forth from our dry and dusty hearts, and we are beginning to perceive the shape of the community that is to come. Praise God!











































One particular word of caution and grace must temper our prayers. It is of utmost importance for us to remember that God is the One whom we address in all we do – every breath, each thought, and all our words and deeds. We say in the eucharistic liturgy of the Lord’s Supper, “we offer ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a living sacrifice in union with Christ’s offering of himself.” The Spirit did not call the Church into being for itself, but for the salvation of the world. Our goal in faithfulness is not to save Trinity Church from folding, our singular goal is the revelation of the Jesus Christ and his kingdom of justice and mercy. If the institution turns this centennial corner in a successful way, it will be a side effect of our faithfulness to God’s call – nothing more. So may I beg each one and all to prayerfully give up every anxious and fearful thought, and to cease wondering whether Trinity “will make it.” *That is no concern of ours.* Only, may God be glorified in all we do. And may those who come behind us find us faithful, through Jesus Christ our Lord in the power of the Holy Spirit of Life.



Tis The Season for Winter Weather

If Memphis decides to welcome winter this year and we do get the ever elusive “snow day”, the Trinity UMC church office will follow Shelby County Schools with closures Monday– Friday. The church office will notify all news stations (3,5,13,24 & 30) of weekend closures as soon as we make the decision.

Katie Smith, Church Office



The Nowlin Class

The Nowlin Class extends an open invitation to those interested in a verse by verse study on Ephesians. John MacArthur offers a refresher course in New Testament doctrine and provides a practical blueprint for Christian behavior. Through this letter, Paul shows us our continual need for God's help and demonstrates that everything good we enjoy is an expression of God's great love.

We encourage open discussion of all who participate. We have excellent spiritual leaders.

You are cordially invited to join us at 9:45 am for coffee, tea & study. We are located in the classroom on the second floor of the Sanctuary Building. Elevator is available for those who need it.

Christmas Card Thanks

Richard Hackleman sends many thanks to all who sent him Christmas cards. Out of all those cards he received miraculously there were no two alike. Happy New Year to all.
Richard Hackleman

Confirmation Class

We will begin Confirmation Classes for youth beginning on January 17th during the Sunday School Hour. Contact Pastor Jonathan if you know a youth who would like to participate.

Next Generation Class

“Millennials aren’t looking for a *hipper* Christianity, I said. We’re looking for a *truer* Christianity, a more *authentic* Christianity. Like every generation before ours and every generation after, we’re looking for Jesus...”

- From *Searching for Sunday*

The Next Generation (Young Adults) class is beginning a new study. We will be discussing Rachel Held Evan’s *Searching for Sunday*. We invite you to join us as we discuss loving, leaving, and finding the church.

All are welcome!

For more information, please contact Madison Tallant by phone at (901) 833-4627 or email at madison.tallant@gmail.com

Below is a short description of the book.

“For a generation that has largely said, “count me out,” church represents a complicated relationship of both longing and apathy. There’s a history there - a past full of confusion and hurt, but a past that often is impossible to abandon. In *Searching for Sunday*, Rachel Held Evans exposes her own thorny relationship with the church, articulating the concerns, frustrations, and hopes of many of her peers. Through a series of stories told around the church’s sacraments - baptism, confession, and communion, among others - Evans offers the beginnings of a road map back to church and the resurrection that awaits when we are willing to give up and begin again.”

UMW UPDATE:

DAYTIME UMW MEETING January 19 10:30 AM-Fellowship Hall
We will do all the things we meant to do at the last meeting but postponed because of low attendance.

Also devotional by Gwen Owen, program by Sara Jane Goodman, books and response by Mary McConnell.
Remember to bring Campbell soup labels, A Can! A Box! or a dollar! and a sandwich

UMW Evening Circle January Meeting

Our next meeting will be on Monday, January 18th at 6:30 in the Fellowship Hall. We too, will sign UMW pledges and collect Hospital Auxiliary dues.

Evening Circle meetings will now take place on the 3rd Monday of each month in the TUMC Fellowship Hall.



CHOIR NEWS: A Music Note



After a very short break from our Christmas Holidays, the Chancel Choir is back in full swing now!

This is a perfect time to come join us, as we begin learning new anthems for the upcoming season together.

Our Lenten Cantata rehearsals are coming up soon too: we start on Wednesday, Feb 3rd at 6:30pm

and will present the cantata on Palm Sunday, Mar 20th at 2:30pm.

Hope everyone interested will join us on Wednesdays!

Blessings,

Lisa

✠ *Prayer List* ✠



Pat Lovington	Pam Santirojprapai
Lynda Park Family	Carol Miller
George Guntharp	Shirley Skjoldager
Nancy Scott	Randy Bruce
Frances Lloyd	Jane Waldrip
Gwen Stuart	Nancy Rankin
Carol Raiford	Fred Martin
Peggy Tate	Elaine Amis
Frances Skinner	Mary Jo Hughes
Laura Hartmann	

Upcoming EVENTS

- ◆ January 21st, from 5-8 p.m. the Evergreen Historic District will have their winter Pot Luck in the Trinity UMC Fellowship Hall.
- ◆ Room In The Inn on Tuesday nights in the Education Building. Set up starts at 4:30 p.m. Contact Lois Young if you would like to help.
- ◆ Tuesday mornings Prayer and Communion in Chapel, 8:00 a.m.
- ◆ Wednesday's Bible Study in Conference Room, 12:00 noon Edu Building.
- ◆ The first Monday of each month is reserved for Trustee Meeting in the Conference Room of the Education Building at 6:30 p.m.
- ◆ The second Monday of each month is reserved for SPPRC meeting in the Conference Room of the Education Building at 7:00 p.m.
- ◆ The third Monday of each month is reserved for the Evening Circle to meet in the Fellowship Hall at 6:30p.m.
- ◆ Highland Heights Luncheon is on every 3rd Monday of each month, at Highland Heights UMC. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at HHUMC to help.
- ◆ The fourth Monday of each month is reserved for Church Council Meeting in the fellowship Hall at 7:00 p.m.

Room in the Inn Update: Halfway Through Season

We are halfway through our Room in the Inn season, and we have served an average of 13 guests every Tuesday night. That's 143 people who did not have to sleep out in the cold, sometimes rainy weather. Our guests are very appreciative, and our volunteers are always enthusiastic.

This season we have seen an increase in neighborhood volunteers. These are people who found out about the program through the Evergreen newsletter or from other neighbors. Many have become regular volunteers that we count on every week or every other week.

I wanted to focus your attention on one incredible volunteer group. Just in case, you don't think children and teens care about volunteering these days, I have to tell you about some of our youngest volunteers.

Trinity members Joey and Davis Hopper have come many times in the past three seasons to help set up the dining room and sleeping areas.

Janie Kathryn Skeen is 10, and she comes to set up beds with her mom almost every week for the past three seasons.

Grace Ragsdale is in middle school, and she has come several Wednesday mornings at 5:30 a.m. with her mom to serve breakfast to our guests before going to school.

Nash Bridgman is 12, and he has come every other Wednesday morning at 7 a.m. for three seasons to help clean up the sleeping areas before he goes to school.

One of our newest young volunteers, Nina Crespo, is in grade school, and she has come several Tuesday evenings with her mom and dad to greet guests, serve the evening meal and help clean dinner dishes.

I believe William and Robert Dawkins are only middle school age, but along with volunteering with their family many Tuesday nights, they came back on Wednesday mornings during Christmas break at 7 a.m. to help clean up the sleeping areas. Their younger brother Braxton and sister Lena also help greet guests and serve dinner on Tuesday evenings.

There are several other children and teens who volunteer, but they all have one thing in common – great enthusiasm for helping others. This should give us great hope for the future. I believe the Spirit is working through these children and teens, as well as all our RITI volunteers. If you would like to see God's work in action, please stop by the Trinity Education Building any Tuesday evening or early Wednesday morning.

If you would like more information about how you can help, please email or call Lois Young (loislane.young@comcast.net, 870-559-2228).