Trinotes

January 15, 2025

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.

From the desk of... The Rev.

"Leaving on a Jet Plane"

"Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart". Proverbs 3:3-4

In about a week and a half, Kay Jordan and I are heading to Austin, Texas. Trinity was nominated to participate in a study on successful small church ministry with the Texas Methodist Foundation, of which Trinity's new Church Council Chair, Allen Stanton, is a part. Since we were nominated — and I applied for the spot in the cohort that will meet virtually for the next year, in person this month in Austin, and will finish up at the end of the year in Nashville — I've been processing what it means to be the pastor of a small church.

You'd think after 8 years of being at Trinity, I would've already considered this. It's interesting, then, that I haven't. It's never occurred to me that I pastor a small church. Small churches are rural, right? They are focused, primarily, on institutional preservation, often to their detriment. There are rarely the voices of children. They're one big family — literally. Isn't that a small church?

I know small churches. Sometimes they are what I just described. I've served them. They obsess over numbers, often having little energy left for the mission of the church — to make disciples, to share the Gospel, to love our neighbors. It isn't their plan to die, but because they're working overtime to fill the pews and the plates, often death catches them off guard. If that's a small church, I do not serve one.

These are blanket statements. Not every small membership church falls under that umbrella, and I think that's the point of the cohort. There are small membership churches that are giving God "acceptable worship," (Hebrews 12), meeting the needs of their community, and being faithful, and because they are, at the heart, seeking faithfulness, death doesn't catch them off guard. In fact, what ends up happening when faithfulness is the focal point, is that what catches them off guard is full pews and budgets in the black.

That's Trinity. That's the small membership church I serve and what will be the most wonderful thing for this pastor will be heading to Austin with years of faithful stories to share, like the time you unanimously voted to right-size your physical plant and sell the sanctuary building, and did so without losing sight of who you were as a people of faith. Or, like that first time you set up a table at Memphis Pridefest (2017), just so you could tell people who didn't otherwise hear it, that God loves them. There were countless times you went to a neighboring UMC to feed a meal ("manna") to hungry folks in the neighborhood, and every Fall you help purchase and fill 50+ backpacks for immigrant children. At no point have any of these choices been about filling seats or institutional growth. It's been only about doing "good" things, in the name of Christ, to make the world a better place.

I am your biggest cheerleader. I really, really am, and I cannot wait to go and share your story of faithfulness with others who are with us on this journey of faith.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Sara

2025 Financial Pledging

This year Trinity will have financial pledging in February. With this change from our usual fall pledging effort we hope to give everyone a better idea of Trinity's financial needs for 2025. We also anticipate contributors will have a better idea of their financial resources in February than we would have had in November 2024.

As we make this change, please be thinking whether you will choose to make a pledge in February. Doing so gives the Church Council a better idea of what our resources will be as the year unfolds. **If you think you will be making a February pledge please mark any of your contributions in the weeks ahead with "Pledge."** Doing so will make our accounting much better. The Stewardship-Finance Committee appreciates your support of Trinity's life and ministries.

Craig Jordan, Treasurer

2024 ~ A Banner Year

Trinity experienced remarkable changes in 2024. We have welcomed new members and participants enriching our worshiping congregation, grown in the diverse ages and life experiences of participants, and are involving a wider range of persons in our life and ministries. 2024 was also the year we began our Food Pantry ministry, providing food assistance in a monthly distribution that uses food boxes purchased from Catholic Charities and food bags of donated items. We have assisted approximately 20 families per month since beginning in May. We have continued our efforts in inclusion and support of persons who identify as LGBTQ + and are enriched by those persons' participation in our life. There are other examples of our growth in discipleship and outreach such as our Thursday morning Neighborhood Coffee. The point is that we are in ministry with our congregants, community, and world.

Financially, Trinity has also had a gifted year. We ended the year with income exceeding expenses. For the first time in a long time we have had 2 consecutive years of income meeting or exceeding expenses. The generosity of Trinitarians has been crucial to this outcome. We also greatly benefited from receiving Employee Retention Tax Credit funds, which netted approximately $29,000 after paying consultant fees. In January the generosity and commitment of Rosemary Potter flowed once more with the establishment of the Rosemary W. Potter Endowment. Mike Potter was instrumental in establishing the fund in Rosemary's memory. This fund will serve as a large backstop to our long standing Endowment Fund, providing greater financial stability for the years to come and freeing us for greater ministry efforts.

May we all give thanks for the gift of this year and the challenges and possibilities of ministry that lie ahead.

Craig Jordan

Light

Early each morning I read devotionals from ***The Upper Room Disciplines***. The author of this past week's devotionals, Whitney R. Simpson, suggested that one way we can nurture our souls at the beginning of the new year is to ask God for a word upon which to focus during the year. The purpose of this prayerfully selected word is to help bring spiritual clarity and new personal learnings as the year progresses. The word I felt led to choose was "light."

During my years living in my apartment on the northwest corner of the 12th floor of the Parkway House, my eyes have been opened to the amazing wonders of God's firmament. God has spoken so often to me through the light that occurs in his creation - the brilliant masterpieces that adorn the skies at the rising and setting of the sun, the glowing full moons observed in their descent to the western horizon, the powerful lightshows of electrical storms, the crystallized frozen jewels as sunlight has shone through icy branches after ice storms in the past, the dazzling white of the sunshine on the thick, cold white blanket left by the recent snowstorm. I now more fully understand the words of the psalmist in Psalm 19:1, "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands."

This past Sunday was a wonderful day for me for several reasons. When we approached the worship hour, it seemed as if we might not have any children or youth that morning. Then, within a matter of just a few minutes, our young families started coming in, and, lo and behold, we suddenly had a healthy number of kids ranging from age 4 to 7th grade. I had been feeling nostalgic that morning because I had been reminiscing with my son Andrew (who had picked me up to get me to church) about the first Sunday we attended Trinity worship as a young family. It was a cold January day with snow on the ground, just like last Sunday. Our sons were not yet 4 and 2 years old. That was a day of new beginnings for me, the day my heart was "strangely warmed," the day that I came home to God.

During this Sunday's Children's Time in Worship, Rev. Rebekah shared a wonderful session on remembering our baptism. As she lit a candle for each additional child, the glow of the lights grew and grew. As that happened, I remembered the infant baptisms of my own two sons in two different churches, one United Methodist and one Cumberland Presbyterian; I was also baptized as an infant in one of those churches. I remembered the baptisms of my two granddaughters in the old sanctuary of Trinity United Methodist Church. And I felt the light growing once again within me.

After Children's Time, we went downstairs to Card Factory, where the kids worked on messages of love and hope to send to our homebound members. We read a message from the caregiver for one of our home-bound friends, who expressed her appreciation for the cards and pictures from the children and the church family. She said she really enjoys them and goes back to look at them often. Through this card ministry, our children — and you — shine light into the darkness of isolation and loneliness for our homebound friends, who reach in age up to 102 years.

There is a pervasive darkness that seems to hang over our society right now. I believe we have the antidote for it here at this church. I know it is the light of Christ. May you and I find hope in the coming days as we allow Him to shine His light on our paths. As we reflect the light of His love, may He lead others to join us.

Peace, light, and love to you,
Irene

Medical Equipment Available to Lend

Here's a reminder about the availability of used, but still functional, medical equipment at hand, thanks to those who want to share.

Shower stool, two bedside commodes, shower chair, three standard walkers, two Rollator walkers, portable oxygen machine, portable nebulizer, bathtub grab bar that affixes securely to the side of the tub, two hand grab bars that affix to a wall by suction (must be very careful with these), and an unopened box of nasal cannula tubing.

Two transport chairs, a wheelchair, a grabber, knee-to-hip immobilizer, three orthopedic boots, (one ankle-high and one knee-high); three pairs of crutches, one tall and two medium; an adjustable cane; two flexible knee braces.

If you are in need of any medical equipment from that listed above, or if you have your own accumulation of medical "stuff," you can contact the church office with your requests to borrow or offers to lend what you have on hand.

—Debby Marston

Memorials & Honorariums

donations have been received

In memory of

Shirley Flint
from Christine Glover

Nelda Gray
from Christine Glover

Charlotte Comes
From Christine Glover

Virginia Blanton
From Christine Glover

Catherine Harmon
From Christine Glover

Roscoe Dodson
from Christine Glover

Shirley Flint from Irene Dycus

Roscoe Dodson from Irene Dycus

Shirley Flint from Joann Duncan

In honor of

Irene Dycus from
Jim & Jane Crum

Alyson & Caley Foreman
From Irene Dycus

January Birthdays

John Curry	January 2
Kay Jordan	January 4
Tom Wilson	January 10
Jan Young	January 14
Jay Keller	January 16
Joan Foley	January 18
Doris Porter	January 23
Irene Dycus	January 25
Lila Dycus	January 25
Jeff Corbett	January 27
Caley Foreman	January 29
Carol Miller	January 30
Sharman Murley	January 30

February Birthdays

Alex Landrigan	February 6
Sally Ramsey	February 7
Myra Finch	February 12
Eli Witt	February 22
Jacobi Hemingway	February 23
Sara Corum	February 27
Amy Moritz	February 27
David Hopper	February 27

UWF 2024 Year in Review

Trinity's United Women in Faith began the new year with support for our local UMC mission organizations, Methodist Healthcare Auxiliary and United Methodist Neighborhood Centers, both in Cordova. To come into alignment with our District framework, Trinity UWF adopted fiscal year accounting; and also to comply with UWF by-laws, Trinity UWF has established our separate bank account, under the umbrella of Trinity UMC, with Cadence. Signators on this account are Sandy, Treasurer; Sue, Benevolence Chair; and Joan S., President. Our steering committee for this year also includes: Librarian and District Liaison Mary; Missions Coordinator Kathy; Pantry Coordinator Kay; Prayer Warriors, Bake Sale, and VBS Irene.

With administrative matters concluded, we turned to our service projects. Our spring mission project was to stuff eggs to provide Easter baskets to the children served by Salvation Army Purdue Center.

In June we provided a move-in kit to Golden Cross Senior Ministries. We have collected books for their small library, calendars, and linens. We continue to support them by providing a box in the lobby. On their wish list are paper products, tissues, microwave oatmeal and popcorn, short combs, Emory boards, hard candy, and coffee cups/mugs with instant coffee. A particularly prized item is toilet paper, which is used as bingo prizes. When the box is full, Golden Cross will pick up the items. Also in June, we started our June-August "summer vacation" with meetings held at different restaurants and including Chinese auctions to share jewelry, scarves, and handbags.

Kathy, Sue, & Raquel working on Sista2Sista project (Joan was photographer)

In July we honored our recent members who have recently joined the Church Triumphant: Jeri Ashley, Jane Waldrip, Jo Hughes, and Elaine Amis. Also in July, several of our members worked in partnership with St John's UMC and under Irene's guidance to sponsor Vacation Bible School.

Returning from summer vacation, we turned our efforts to Neighbors Feeding Neighbors through our election day bake sales. This year we had two opportunities to earn funds, with the two election days netting over $3,300.00 to support Trinity's food pantries. The Election Commission credits our bake sales with inspiring the largest voter turnout in the city. Also, we extended gracious hospitality to Evergreen Garden Club by catering their workshop with Wes Hopper, Arborist. We politely, but firmly, declined the suggestion to continue catering for other organizations.

Our winter mission project was to provide Christmas gifts for the ladies served by Sista2Sista. Almost a dozen of our members packed 24 Christmas bags containing ear warmers, chocolates, hard candies, Starbucks gift cards, eyelashes, nail polish, body spray, lip gloss, lotion, socks, and even a stuffed reindeer. These gifts were shared at their Christmas party, and these so-often marginalized ladies were touched that someone remembered them.

Mary has updated our library (in the rolly cart in the office) and provided the approved reading list. We are also reading and discussing 12 Ordinary Men.

Other organizations benefitting from our support include: Reelfoot Rural Ministries, Trinity nursery, UMCOR, and Room in the Inn Family Center.

Going forward into 2025, our next meeting is a potluck in the Worship Center at noon on 24 January. Because this is a new beginning, when you come to worship at Trinity, please completely and legibly print your name, address, phone, and email on the attendance pad. If you do not attend Trinity, please email smith.joan@hotmail.com. We plan to provide an updated contact list in February. Remember, you do not have to belong to Trinity; you need not even be a Methodist; you need only be a woman of faith. Join us and be welcome.

Joan Smith, UWF President

Prayer Concerns

Our country and the world - for all those endangered by the war between Israel and Hamas and for families on both sides who have lost loved ones; for victims of natural disasters; for those families and communities who have fallen victim to the horror of gun violence in our country; for the people of Ukraine who are imperiled by the invasion of Russian troops, shelling of residential areas, and the terror being experienced by the civilian population; for all those in our country and around the world still impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and variants; 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 still struggle 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 race related violence; for incoming President Donald Trump and Vice President J.D. Vance—pray for their wisdom and that of all political leaders; pray for civility during the transition to the new administration.

The United Methodist Church - for our Pastor, Rev. Sara Corum, her husband, Rev. Josh McClurkan, and their five children; for our Bishop, the Rev. David Graves; for our interim District Superintendent, the Rev. Dr. Deborah Smith

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

Eddie Ramsey, at the end of his life and "close to glory!" **Sally**, as she is supported by their family
Don Culpepper, Carol Miller's brother-in-law, passed away peacefully Tuesday, January 14th.
Venoma Newhart, age 102, is now in hospice care.
Kate Ostenrude, in rehab at Kings Daughters and Sons
Pam Stafford, battling liver disease, and husband **Jim Stafford**, dementia (request from Sandy Guntharp)
Bo Poppelreiter, step-grandson of Debby Marston, waiting on second kidney transplant; on dialysis for now
Sharman's brother, **Chuck Murley**, is cancer free! Brother **Rick**'s stents are working, and he's regained mobility.
Katy Spake's friends **Janet Dennison** (breast cancer) and husband **Brent**
Family of **Gene Williams**, who died recently (request from the Millers)
Seth Norton, Raquel's son, biopsy revealed gastroparesis; benign liver mass requires meds; nausea treatment
Nicole Salisbury Nelson, Joan Smith's cousin, in late 30s, stroke, no oxygen 15 minutes: blind, partial paralysis
Adam Hill, serious vein ruptures in legs, much pain (friend of Joan Smith)
From Heather Jacoby-Keller: friend's husband **Eddie** diagnosed with cancer. Heather's sister **Faith** also fighting cancer (for the past year). Please pray for healing!
Joan Foley's daughter-in-law, **Marilynn Hawkins**
Gwen Dodson, bladder cancer, COPD, osteoporosis; cancer treatment
Joan Smith's cousin, **Doug Robbins**, aggressive kidney cancer, facing 5th surgery; high medical bills
Kaelyn Wright, wife and mother of two young children, has aggressive thyroid cancer. (Friend of Joan Smith)
Maggi Comes' niece, **Katie Pendleton**, diagnosed with Tumefactive MS
Kanyon Glover, heart received as baby checks out okay; plays ball; receives PT for arm damaged by stroke
Jacob Foreman, for new part time job to go well; nerve damage & back pain continues
Gene Archer, diagnosed with stomach cancer; his wife **Julia** has MS; **Lauren Crews**, diagnosed with ALS
David Harrison, Carol Miller's brother, on dialysis; paralyzed on one side after stroke; asthma; COPD
Val Coates, medical concerns
Jonathan Goff, back injury; **James Goff**, Sam's brother, abdominal issues; **Karen Barker**, Sara's sister, lung issues
Living Word Christian Church; The Lab School guides & students; Scouts in **Pack 13 & Troops 13B & 13G**; and the **NA** groups meeting at Trinity as they work towards their goals of wholeness and recovery

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