

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.



Reckless Abandon

From
the desk
of...
The Rev.

When I was a teenager, I recall feeling repressed by my church — yes, the same church that poured into me as I felt a call to ministry. Still, repressed. It almost always had to do with the music. If the _____ (insert denomination other than United Methodist) church down the road could have a band in worship and sing contemporary Christian music, why couldn't we? Why couldn't our, well, 'seasoned' folks bend a little for the upcoming generation of worship goers? Weren't we Important, too? I get points for being a teenager who cared about worship style, right?

I don't think it was until seminary and my call to ministry evolved from a call to youth work to a pastoral calling, that I began to examine my love for the tradition of my church. My home church sang, "Surely the Presence" every single week to lead them into the Pastoral Prayer and Lord's Prayer. The offering was always early in the service. Rarely did things change which gave me a sense of peace, unrealized until I was far from it. Consequently, when worship DID change (if there was a Youth Sunday or Children's Sabbath), it was exciting because it WAS different and surprising.

Hindsight is 20/20, and being away from home and the experiences and traditions of my home congregation helped me to both see and appreciate what was (and is, still, in many ways).

And where the tradition seems to make home "Home," there is a sense of reckless abandon that accompanies faith. When Jesus called Peter and Andrew to drop their nets, and then James and John to leave their father, Zebedee, it was not accompanied by the assurance of what the next thing would look or be like. For all intents and purposes, it was a call to recklessly abandon what they knew to pursue the Holy. The commission to "Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all nations," does not come with instructions, a 5-year plan, or a 401k offer. All we get is "go." And thus our calling may or may not be to hold on tightly to what has been — our traditions which are important pieces of our identity that bring us comfort and peace. It may be to recklessly abandon what is comfortable to pursue, well, Jesus.

Jesus was rarely in the places of comfort. I do not imagine standing beside the condemned woman at the well, facing the rest of the world, was comfortable. I do not imagine having dinner at Zaccheaus' place was comfortable. I tend to believe places like the synagogues weren't very comfortable either, especially when Jesus entered them to challenge the religious authority figures of his time. And thus to be called to follow this reckless man, with reckless abandon...I wonder (with excitement and nervous-but-joyful anticipation) what it means for us.

It certainly means faith. If faith is, as Hebrews 11:1 tells us, "the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen," then as reckless as it might seem to drop our nets and go into whatever season is ahead, maybe things are not as they appear. If what is ahead is our hope and conviction, very really, surely the presence of the Lord is in this place of going. Surely God is already there, wherever we find 'there' to be.

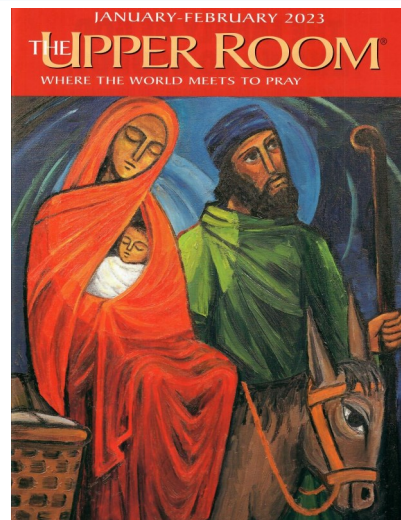
Unintended change, followed by very intended leaps of faith, are not reckless. They are hopeful and that hope is leading us, even if we cannot see it. Maybe where it is leading us is uncomfortable, but we can be assured, and reassured, that it is in those places where the Prince of Peace dwells.

Having an Epiphany,
Rev. Sara



Upcoming Youth Activities

- ♦ On Sunday, January 29 at 3:00 p.m., the youth group will be going to support Kaylee Bauer at the Tipton-Rosemark Academy of Fine Arts' production of "Willie Wonka."



The January/February *Upper Room* is on display at the reception desk just outside the Worship Center. Feel free to pick up a copy when you come for worship on Sunday. If you need to have one mailed to you and aren't on the regular *Upper Room* mailing list, send an email to office@trinityumcmemphis.org or call the church office at 901-274-6895 with your request. Be sure to specify the font size: large or regular.

Tiny Pantry

Don't forget to help stock the Tiny Pantry with non-perishable food items.



LAKESHORE
united methodist camp & retreat center

Support the Lakeshore Scholarship Fund

Lakeshore is a camp and retreat center located on the shores of the Tennessee River, providing Christian hospitality, rest, and reflection for guests of all ages and backgrounds since 1948. Programming at Lakeshore includes summer camps, parent/child weekends, special needs camps, retreats, work weekends, banquets, and a variety of other events.

Historically, Trinity has maintained a scholarship fund for our children and youth, allowing kids to attend camps who otherwise would not be able to afford the experience. That fund has been seriously diminished over the past few years. We invite you to contribute to the Lakeshore Scholarship Fund in order to allow our children to enjoy the camping experience offered by Lakeshore. Simply write a check to Trinity UMC and note "Lakeshore" on the memo line.



God's Dream for the World

This Sunday, following Trinity's Fifth Sunday Breakfast, our Children's Sunday School Class will help fill lunch bags for needy neighbors. Like our bringing cans of food for our food pantries, it will be a way that we will "live into" our recent lesson about "Jesus' Feeds the Five Thousand."

When we return to Sunday School on the first Sunday in February, we will begin a new unit of study. Our **FAITH WORD** for this study will be **KINGDOM: God's dream for the world, where all people are loved and included**. The first lesson in this unit will be the familiar story of "Jesus and the Children," which is found in Mark 10:13-16. Why were the people bringing their little children to Jesus? The parents wanted Jesus to touch their children and to place God's blessing upon them. They knew that Jesus came from God and that His touch brought healing and blessing from God. However, the disciples thought that children were insignificant, and that Jesus had more important things to do, such as spending time with those in power and devout people to improve his status in the community. But those things were unimportant to Jesus. As God, He wanted to speak to those who needed Him most, both children and adults. In fact, Jesus reminds us in this scripture that to enter the kingdom of God, we must all have the trust and dependence that little children show toward the adults in their lives. That means a total trust and dependence upon Christ. As a footnote in my **Life Application Study Bible** says: "Children do not feel supremely powerful, perfectly righteous, or totally autonomous. These are adult fantasies. Coming to Jesus means accepting his goodness on your behalf, confessing your need for him, and committing your life to his tender guidance."

This is one of my favorite Bible stories. I can easily visualize Jesus gently holding and blessing each child. Whenever I sing "Jesus Loves Me," it is this beautiful image that comes to mind each time. As a teacher, I love the King James Version of this scripture, in particular these words of Jesus: "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God." I have at times used this version in training teachers and leaders of children and focused on the word "suffer" in terms of what we can sometimes expect in working with children. Of course, the word "suffer" in the time of King James meant "allow," but I also read these words with the awareness that teachers of children DO sometimes suffer, even when we know in our hearts that we are called to teach. Working with children is not always easy. Parents (and grandparents), our children's first teachers, also suffer at times. It comes with the territory. But we also must be aware that children suffer frequently. Through the Safe Sanctuary Policies of Trinity Church, we make sure that children do not suffer abuse of any kind at the hands of those who work with them in our church. We are renewing our efforts in this regard, as we encourage those of you who are workers with children, youth, and vulnerable adults to go through the screening process that is required to ensure the safety of all. Please see Debby in the church office to pick up the necessary forms to begin this process as soon as possible.

As always, Ms. Alyson and I appreciate your prayers for our children and their families and for us as their teachers in Sunday School.

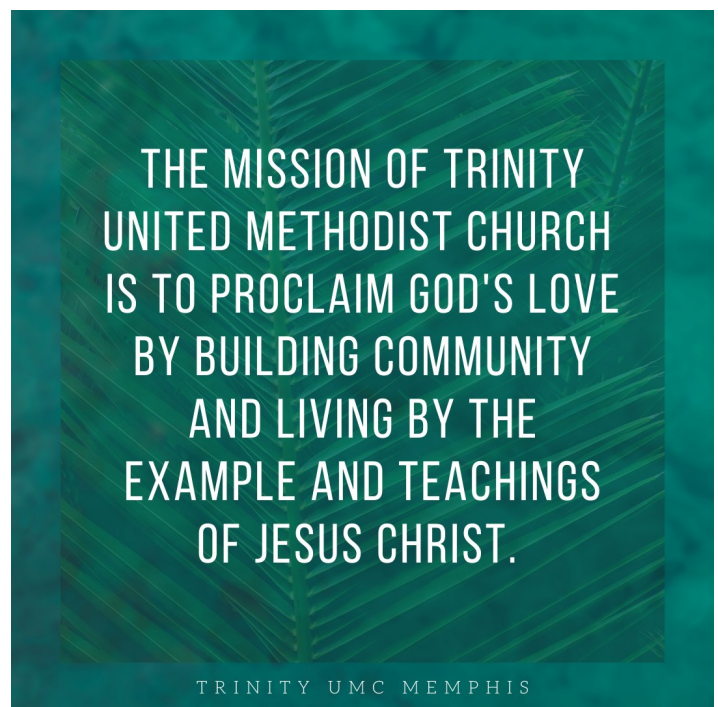
Peace and love to all,
Irene

Safe Sanctuaries



After a long hiatus due to the COVID pandemic, we find ourselves ready to resume stricter observance of Safe Sanctuaries. In-person children's Sunday school is back in full swing, our youth group is again active, and we are able to visit our homebound members and friends once more. All Trinity UMC members and attenders who are involved with children or vulnerable adults are required to adhere to the guidelines detailed in our Safe Sanctuaries Policies and Procedures Manual. A copy of the most recent version of those policies and procedures can be found on our website under the "ABOUT" tab. Scroll down to the bottom of the page (which includes our Mission and Vision Statements) to the button marked "SAFE SANCTUARY POLICY." That link will take you to the full document.

In order to be in full compliance with Safe Sanctuaries, all volunteers working with children or vulnerable adults must be fingerprinted and have online background checks run. The church will cover the cost of the fingerprinting. Our administrative officer, Debby Marston, will run the online checks. All you will need to do is sign appropriate release forms and register for fingerprinting by an approved Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI) contractor. Fingerprinting is digital and results will be sent to the church office electronically once your clearance goes through. We know that, in rare cases, an individual's fingerprints do not register on the digital scanner. In those cases, the TBI can provide a clearance by a name search. All background checks are completely confidential and results are kept locked in the church safe. In order to obtain release forms and for assistance in registering, contact Debby Marston in the church office: call 901-274-6895 or e-mail office@trinityumcmemphis.org. If you work with children, youth, or vulnerable adults, don't delay. Contact the office to start the process.



“Feed my sheep”

Peace Lutheran Church has put Christ’s words into action in their lunch program for disadvantaged persons in the community. We have been offered the opportunity to contribute to this work by providing lunches. The current need is for 24 lunches, to be delivered to Peace Lutheran on specific dates. This will be a team effort and the first “assembly line” to put lunches together will be after the Fifth Sunday Breakfast on January 29th. Call Sue Taylor at 901-491-2113 for further details. Gather your forces, jump in & volunteer!

Each lunch will need to include the following:

- Peanut butter & jelly sandwich
- Meat & cheese sandwich
- Bottled water
- Juice
- Fruit (1 apple/orange/pear & applesauce or fruit cup)
- Chips
- Dessert
- Napkin

(Peace Lutheran will provide condiments.)



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

(Please let us know if we left off a birthday or if a date is incorrect. We will make that correction in our next issue of Trinotes and in our records.)



January 1	John Curry
January 3	Kay Jordan
January 5	Eleanor Brooks
January 5	Roscoe Dodson
January 10	Tom Wilson
January 10	Joan Foley
January 15	Jeff Corbett
January 16	James Keller
January 16	Jay Keller
January 19	Lisa Wong
January 23	Doris Porter
January 25	Irene Dycus
January 25	Lila Ruth Dycus
January 29	Caley Forman
January 30	Carol Miller

PRAYER CONCERNS

Our country and the world - 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 violence; for President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris—pray for their wisdom and that of all political leaders.

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 interim District Superintendent, the Rev. Dr. David Weatherly

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. Wisdom for our Trustees and Church Council. Also, specific prayer requests by and for:

Myra Finch's brother, **Tim Beasley**, as he struggles with cognitive problems

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

Kanyon Glover, pray for his speech therapy and the use of his left arm (due to a stroke)

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

For the family and friends of **Irene and Gene Opel** as we mourn their passing

David Harrison, Carol Miller's brother, on dialysis, paralyzed on one side after stroke, asthma & COPD

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' 97 year old cousin, now residing permanently in a rehab center

Val Coates, in constant pain and undergoing testing to discover the cause; grieving the loss of her mother, sister, and father last year

George Marston, still undergoing dialysis; congestive heart failure

Lori Brown has aggressive HER2 breast cancer and is receiving gene therapy.

Eddie Ramsey, multiple health concerns, and for **Sally**, who had heart issues and was taken to the ER, now back home and doing better

Edward Thigpen, radiation re-started due to spot found on kidney; will continue chemo through March

For **Charlotte Comes**, as she recovers from her January 24th surgery

Pray for Joan Foley's daughter-in-law, **Marilyn Hawkins**.

Debby Marston's sister, **Katie Edge**, completed radiation therapy and will receive infusions for 8 weeks.

Lyle Klein, family member of Amelia Strickland, diagnosed with Parkinson's, cancer, and heart disease

For **Living Word Christian Church** and their pastor, **Rev. Kyle Dearen**, as they worship and do ministry here on the campus of Trinity UMC.

For **The Lab School**, as their students learn, grow, and develop, and for their adult Guides

For **Pathway to Dignity** as they work towards starting classes in the near future

For all our Scouts in **Pack 13**, **Troop 13G**, and **Troop 13B**, and for all their leaders

For those in the **NA** groups who meet at Trinity and for their continued determination to succeed

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