Trinotes

October 8, 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.

Brilliant, Opinionated, Young People

For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. — Jeremiah 29:11

Yesterday (October 5th) I had the privilege of teaching the 3rd installment of our confirmation curriculum to our confirmation class. I choose the word "privilege" with much confidence, as it is a definite blessing to be with these young people, many of whom I have known since they were very small children (noting that one of them is my youngest son). I have watched them grow into the absolutely brilliant young people they are, over the last 8 years, and I count that a privilege not many itinerate United Methodist pastors receive. I do not, for a moment, take that blessing for granted.

I didn't choose an easy week. I chose to teach on the rise of the prophets and Babylonian captivity in the Old Testament. I was prepared for glazed over expressions and clear desires for Sunday afternoon vegging as opposed to being in class. But our young people were exceptionally engaged. They had answers when even I didn't brave a guess. They had MANY opinions, none of which they were afraid to share. They were prophetic, themselves, in that I could see clearly our future in them — in their insight, in their unafraid, educated guessing, in their correctly pronouncing many of the names that came up in the Jeremiah and Ezekiel readings (find me a grown person who can successfully do that). They are really incredible.

And I'm not entirely sure why I'm surprised. They've been raised at Trinity, under the thoughtfully and carefully crafted Sunday School and Bible School teachings of our wonderful children's ministry team, with decades of experience with children and biblical teaching. I'm not at all sure why it surprises me that they would have thought-provoking opinions about the world they are living in, given that their families have raised them to think deeply and critically and share willingly. I'm not sure why they surprised me so much, but they did. After preaching my faith-filled convictions about what we are being called to be a part of with mustard seed sized faith, I was privileged to see that whatever the church is planting now, will grow with assurance, because the ground we have already tilled in these young people is fertile and healthy.

This year is very special. These five young people are very special. They are light in times that can otherwise feel dark. They are hope for a future. But do not mistake; they are very much the Church of today. They already feel compassion and empathy about a hurting world. They already want to make a difference. They want more than Sunday morning pew-sitting. They want to make things better and if we let them lead us, maybe, together, we will.

Please continue to be in prayer for these youth by name: Hadley, Daniel, Alexis, Carson, and Aiden. Ask them about confirmation, about school, about their passions, interests, and lives. Be prepared to be surprised by how they respond, what they know, and how they feel. They will challenge you, but also motivate you to remember your own calling in Christ — to make disciples of all nations, to love your neighbor as yourself, and to do 'good' things for the sake of the Kingdom.

Surprised by Hope,
Rev. Sara

Confirmation Class Fall Schedule

October 19: Rise of Rome/New Testament

November 2: Jesus

November 16: Matthew/Mark

December 14: Luke/John

The Youth Room

Friends, maybe you've noticed. Maybe you haven't yet. We no longer have a Conference Room. What was once the Conference Room is now the **Youth Room**. This is exciting for us, because we haven't had a need for a Youth Room in several years, and we do right now. The budding confirmation class, and several other teenagers, will hopefully make up a thriving youth group at TUMC.

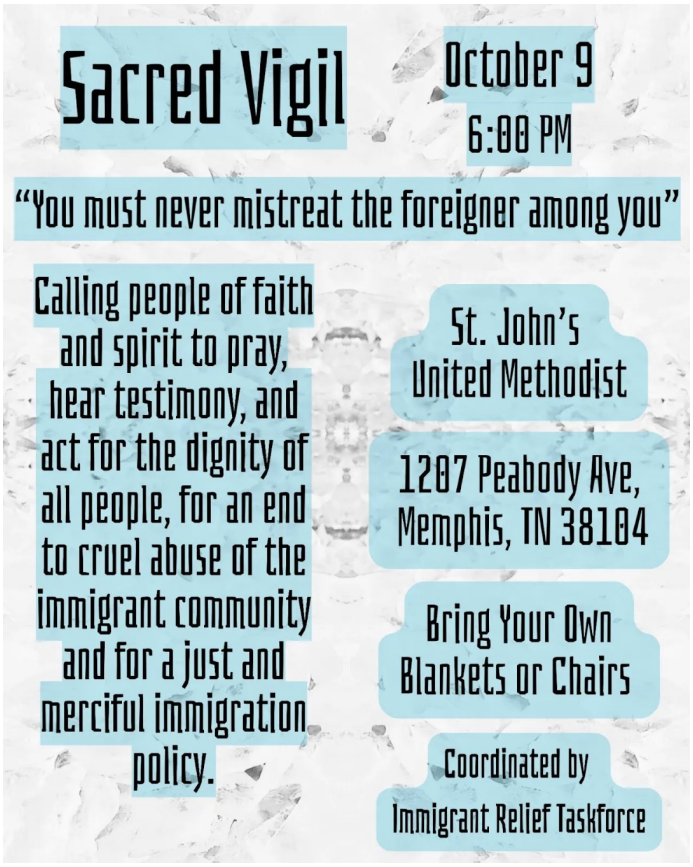
As such, please consider this new-to-them space theirs. There is no real need to be in the Youth Room unless you are part of the youth group, leading it, or are the appointed second adult for Safe Sanctuaries. We want to let this space be something that belongs to them and expect in the coming days to add paint color, lights, and other additions that distinguish the small room as theirs. For the sake of their claiming it as their own, please do not gather or plan a meeting in that space.

Prayer Vigil for the Disappeared

As many of us know, people are now being detained on the streets of Memphis, or at their Immigration Court hearings, or at their job sites. These people are often without the "proper documents" and are referred to as the Disappeared because their families often don't know where they are taken after detention or when, if ever, they will see their loved ones again. One of the ways we can speak out against this injustice is by participating in the monthly Prayer Vigil for the Disappeared. This event takes place at various churches in the Metro area, on the second Thursday of each month, at 6 pm. The October prayer vigil will take place on October 9 at 6 pm on the front steps of St. John's UMC. (In case of rain, we will move inside, but our aim is to be outdoors, visible to the community.) This is right after our Charge Conference at Trinity (4:00). The Vigil lasts around 45 minutes, featuring prayers, songs, testimony by persons who have had loved ones detained, and opportunities to sign up for other actions. The testimonies have been especially moving and help us to see the need to speak up and to take action. Will you join me?

This Prayer Vigil is organized and sponsored by the Immigration Relief Task Force, a group of concerned persons of faith in our city and nearby.

Kay Jordan



Early Memories of Sunday School

A memory cropped up this past week of my early days in Sunday School at Hays Avenue Methodist Church in Jackson, Tennessee. It happened as I was trying to focus on preparing for the first lesson in which I will be the storyteller in our Godly Play sessions in the Children's Sunday School Class.

Specifically, the memory has to do with the hands of the first Sunday School teacher of whom I have any memory. I was preschool age, I think, and the hands belonged to Mrs. Johnsey, whom I considered to be ancient. (She was probably the age I am now or perhaps a little younger). Mrs. Johnsey was the matriarch of the Johnsey family, one of the solid, faithful families who had been strong leaders and workers at Hays Avenue Church over many years. She wore her white hair in a bun. Her face was very wrinkled, but kind in expression, and her hands were gnarled with age. She used her hands a lot when she told the action stories of the Bible, especially those familiar Old Testament stories such as "David and Goliath" and "Joshua and the Battle of Jericho." Her hands and fingers "played all the parts," as we children then visualized the action unfolding in our minds. I have shared before that I went reluctantly to Sunday School as a child. But Mrs. Johnsey was one of the "things" I most liked about Sunday School; the other was the yummy petit fours we enjoyed whenever we celebrated any child's birthday.

I realize now that Mrs. Johnsey was an excellent model for me to consider as I learn the Godly Play way of teaching, mainly because she used no books to tell these stories from the Bible. The details of each story had been embedded in her heart and mind over many years, for she was told these stories as a child, read and studied these stories in the Bible as she matured, and then told them time and again to the children of her family and her church. In essence, she had learned these stories "by heart," which is a basic expectation of the adult storyteller in the Godly Play model. As Rev. Jerome Berryman, the founder of Godly Play, says, "When a story sinks into your heart, it also comes from your heart in the telling. Children know the difference." And that, I suppose, is one reason I was so fond of Mrs. Johnsey. She had not just memorized these stories. She had quite literally learned them by heart. It was because these stories were very real and alive in her mind and heart that she was able to share them effectively with young children, including the most reluctant learner in the class, namely me.

I am beginning a new chapter in my teaching career as I experience the Godly Play approach to learning in Sunday School. As I prepare for my role as storyteller, I will be learning each story by heart. As I tell the story, I will be focusing my visual attention on the two or three-dimensional materials that physically depict it in some way. This helps me remember the details of the story and models for the children what they are to be doing with their own eyes.

We are thankful that the Rev. Rebekah Gienapp has had a lot of experience with the Godly Play method. As for the rest of us, both our children and our teachers are learning as we go along. At some point, that which is new to us now will become a natural part of the rhythm of each lesson for all of us. After all, God is in it all, including and especially in Godly Play.

God's peace be with you,

Irene

UWF Update

Sixteen ladies in faith met for potluck in the Center to resume business after summer "vacation." Officers were elected by acclamation: President Joan; Treasurer Sandy; Librarian Mary; Benevolence Sue; Missions Kathy; and Prayer Coordinator Irene.

Having completed three of our four missions this year, our discussion turned to Christmas mission. We voted to purchase 50 boxes of food for our Food Pantry.

Trinity is blessed to have a growing number of younger, working members. If you would like to start an evening Circle, please see me. We would be delighted to help you get started.

Former Trinitarians presented us with beautiful and priceless needlepoint kneeling cushions that were at the front of our former Sanctuary. They have been gathering dust since our move. Sam has tasked our Circle to find a way to display them, probably in the Center. Please brainstorm how we can use/display these treasures and get back to me.

Our next meeting will be potluck 24 October at 11:30 in the Center. Come and be welcome.

Joan S.

Moving Pains

By Debby Marston

You've heard of growing pains? Well, I'm experiencing moving pains. Most of you have heard that I'm retiring soon, and I thought I'd share some of my experiences with the whole…..experience.

My son Scott lives in Madison, Alabama with his wife and nine year old son. Scott works in Huntsville for NASA, where he is employed now as a "general engineer." That's a step up from an aerospace engineer in the sense that he gets to supervise the actual aerospace people. After George, my husband of 36 years and best friend for over 50, died in January, I wasn't sure what I wanted to do, but I didn't want to live in a house too big for one person and was ready to downsize. The kids started bugging me to move closer to them so they can "take care of me" and so I can watch grandson Mason grow up. Daughter Kathryn lives in Atlanta, and Huntsville is almost four hours closer to her than Memphis.

I called a meeting with George's sons and grandchildren, and, after consuming quantities of taco soup (we can't just have a meeting, we have to have food handy), we sat down for a serious discussion of what the future holds for Grandma Debby. They all supported a move to Alabama, knowing I need to be closer to family. We also talked about how important the Marston family is to me and how bittersweet moving away from them felt. I am pulled in three different directions: my love for the Marstons, my love for my children and grandson, and my love for the people of Trinity UMC.

So there it is, out in the open. I love you Trinitarians as if you are family. In a very deep sense, you ARE family. You embraced me nine years ago when I came to work for your church and welcomed me with open arms. You pray for me, encourage me, listen when I complain, laugh at my lame attempts at humor, and do all those things family is supposed to do for loved ones. You grieved with me when George died and were patient with me when I was recovering from surgery and not in peak form. Thank you.

And now for a plot twist: I'm having my Memphis house renovated so I can sell it and pay off the loan my sister advanced me to buy a house in Huntsville. Enter Stage Left: a crew of five Hispanic workers, led by Felipe, arrived at 8:00 a.m. on Monday and worked furiously (yet hilariously, since they sing and laugh a lot) until 6:00 p.m., then were back at the same time on Tuesday and Wednesday to repeat the whole act. UNTIL I got a call from the contractor (grandson-in-law Randle), who tells me there's a situation. Now no one wants to hear that when investing a lot of money remodeling a house. Anyway, Randle tells me they found a POSSUM living in a bedroom wall. No one can tell me when or how the possum gained entry. It does explain the mysterious noises heard at odd times in the night. (Possums are nocturnal, you know.) I thought it was the wind whipping the awnings around or, at worst, a squirrel in the attic. Who knew I was hosting wildlife in the bedroom wall? For $250.00, the possum is being re-located to Shelby Forest, I'm told. Life's an adventure, isn't it? For people AND for possums. Stay tuned.

Orville the Opossum

Coming Soon...

There has been work going on in the basement over recent months, and as this is being written, Barry of Bluff City Plumbing is hooking up a water heater and installing a shower head and handle in, respectively, the former mop closet and the men's room on the east end of the building. The water heater and a clothes washer and dryer are part of an Eagle Scout project by Elliott Carrillo, Life Scout with Troop 13B. The project's purpose is to benefit Room in the Inn-Memphis guests staying at Trinity UMC overnight during the colder months of the year. Trinity has not hosted RITI since the pandemic, and we look forward to the opportunity to once more serve this underserved population of unsheltered guests. Watch for future updates on the progress of this work and prayerfully consider how you can support this important ministry.

ROOM IN THE INN MEMPHIS

Benevolence Ministries

Trinity UMC supports a variety of ministries that help meet the needs of folks in our community experiencing homelessness, food insecurity, and financial instability. Here's a list of organizations and ministries to which you can contribute:

- The Food Pantry
- The Tiny Food Pantry
- Food Voucher Assistance (Kroger cards)
- Emergency Utilities and/ or Rent assistance through the Communion Offering Fund
- Room in the Inn-Memphis
- Golden Cross Seniors Ministries
- United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR)
- Immigrant Relief Fund and Sojourner's Loan Fund

October Birthdays

Clara Farabee	October 2
Nora Dycus	October 8
Danielle Wilkerson	October 22
Ellen Weatherly	October 24
Sonnet Booth	October 26
Natalie Stanton	October 27

Prayer Concerns

Our country and the world - for resolution of the conflict between our country and Iran; 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, especially for those who lost loved ones in flash flooding in Texas; 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 struggle due to lost jobs, threatened deportation, 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 President Donald Trump and Vice President J.D. Vance—pray for their wisdom and that of all political leaders.

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:

Laura Comes Hubbard, incurable multiple myeloma
Carol Miller, at home recovering from knee replacement surgery
Jimmy Rast, Melba Abraham's brother, diagnosed with genetic Alzheimer's
Millie, 8 month old infant with tumor on her liver (request from Myra Finch)
Betsy Black's friend **Ken Savage**, diagnosed with metastatic cancer
Baby Stella, born 7 weeks early with extra chromosome; developmental problems expected
Sharman Murley & Frank Cantrell's son, **Frank, Jr.**, heart issues
Pam Stafford battling liver disease, surgery postponed after fall & broken hip; husband **Jim Stafford**, dementia; **Whitney**, knee surgery (from Sandy Guntharp)
Neil Ostenrude, for his safety & well-being as he goes to North Dakota; Martha Ostenrude's close friend **Ashley**, diagnosed with leukemia
Continued prayers for **Sally Ramsey** and daughter **Sandi**; for Sally's son **Kenny** and his wife **Peggy**'s move to Missouri; for **Seily** as she begins her studies at Austin Peay University; pray for Sally's caregiver **Darcel Christen**, that her blood issues be resolved and health restored.
Bobby Glover, Chris's brother, in care for early Alzheimer's
For Sharman Murley's grandson **Eli**, for well-being, making friends, and a better school year
Chris Glover's sister, **Sherry Carruthers**
Seth Norton, Raquel's son, serious ongoing medical concerns
Gwen Dodson, bladder cancer, COPD, osteoporosis; cancer treatment
Kanyon Glover, good medical report; no sign of heart rejection
Jacob Foreman, for healing and pain relief; praise that basal cell carcinoma on his lower back was removed
Gene Archer, now in hospice; his wife **Julia** has MS. (Friends of the Millers)
Carol Miller's brothers: **David Harrison** moved to new nursing home after recovering from infection at amputation site; **Jerry Harrison**, now in rehab. Carey's brother, **Lee Miller**, is in long-term rehab in Mountain Home, AR, recovering from a stroke.
Val Coates, for relief of constant pain & healing of serious multiple issues, including depression
Karen Barker, Sara Goff's sister, lung issues; **Jonathan Goff**
Laura Major Conner, for her physical health and living situation
For Trinity's new **Youth Group** and **Confirmation Class**
For Trinity's **Children's SS Class** & upcoming **Trunk or Treat** on October 26th

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