

# 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.**



## In the Bleak Midwinter

*Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.*  
—Hebrews 10:23

No, it's not winter yet -- not technically. Although, if you're like me, when December rolls around it no longer feels like Fall. When the Christmas decorations start popping up all over the place, and "Jingle Bells" is on every radio station, and it's 'beginning to look a lot like Christmas,' the remnants of Fall, and memories of it, begin to fade and we welcome the chilly air, the smell of firewood burning (we have a fire pit we like to enjoy), and the bareness of the branches.

I say enjoy. It can also be a season of gloom and sadness — the days seem shorter — many-a-church will host a Longest Night service or a Blue Christmas service, because this season can feel a little blue. It can feel like the season of death, and for those in my calling, it really is. Death rates are higher in the Winter. I preside over more funerals this time of year. People are sad; they give up. We lament the come-and-go nature of the beautiful leaves on the trees. The earth seems to die and it can be hard to watch all of that. And this year, perhaps that's a little more prevalent — the sadness of the season.

For me, when the weather gets colder, I look outside and stalk the weather app on my phone, hoping (just like a small child) to see that we're going to get snow. Snow brings my house joy. Now, it's only snowed one significant time in the three-and-a-half years that I've lived in Memphis, so my hopes aren't very high. However, I've had two disk-like snow-sleds in an Amazon box in the garage since 2016, waiting for an opportunity to be used.

Maybe there's joy — or the possibility of it — in all things — even the bleak midwinter.

In this season I reclaim, because this is where I can always be sure to find hope, that every resurrection requires death. We've experienced a lot of proverbial death this year and I'd venture to say that we've fought it. The ways that we've always gone about our lives have died — every last bit of them. We've found, perhaps, that the simplicity of coming and going is a reality that we've taken for granted. We've mourned the death of our way of life and maybe we've yet to see the joy in it. Remember, every resurrection requires death.

Just like the leaves on the trees must die for new ones to be born in the Springtime — newness, perhaps even God's hopes, cannot be birthed until there is room for them.

And so, maybe our way of life wasn't edifying — maybe it wasn't holy — maybe it didn't look enough like the Kingdom or properly embrace a Kingdom ethic. Maybe we were fighting too hard to hold onto it. I don't believe for a moment that God brought 2020 on us, but I do think that God can and even is using it to show us that if we let these things die, something beautiful, something true, something just, something holy, something pleasing might just be born.

We also know that God likes to birth the hope of the world. Parallel to our grief in this season is the greatest Hope we know — the One who knows best and has shown us best that every resurrection requires death.

And so, may we find peace in the bleak midwinter, knowing that new life is just up ahead — edifying, sanctifying, glorifying life — and not only the possibility of something good happening outside of us — but these edifying, sanctifying, and glorifying bits of hope and newness in you and in me.

With hope,  
*Rev. Sara*

## Lessons from a Pandemic

Realizing that many of my “out and about” activities are possible opportunities for infection, I am staying home quite a bit. Probably you are, too, so we have more time to reflect. And as I have reflected, I have learned. One lesson is that I have had some wonderful experiences in my 74 years. I have had time to count my blessings, and to appreciate them. The second lesson is that cherishing those moments brings me more peace of mind than fretting over what I do not have now. These memories are not limited to experiences the pandemic has taken from me. For example, rather than lamenting the beautiful “big choir” music our small choir cannot produce now, I find joy in remembering the anthems I most loved. I can hear all four parts, soprano, alto, tenor, and bass, as I sing them again inside my head. And I look forward to the day when our small choir can sing our own special music together. Rather than cry over the trips I know I can no longer take because of safety and the condition of my arthritic knees, I use favorite photos of past trips as the screen saver on my computer, and relive being at that place. A third lesson I have learned is to be aware of the experiences in my life today that I will look back on next year or ten years from now as precious moments, and appreciate them as I live them.

Will you share what lessons the pandemic has taught you?

—Kay Jordan

just a  
..... note .....

## Season's Greetings from the Trustees!

We have accomplished much over the past three years, and have been able to take care of many deferred maintenance items – both large and small – at the Worship Center and the Parsonage. We still have a few things in process that have been delayed by the pandemic (like most everything in 2020), including the installation of new stage curtains and sprucing up the landscaping at the main entryway, and we hope to have these done early in 2021.

It has been a privilege to serve Trinity for the past three years on the Board of Trustees. Although Pastor Sara has asked all the committee heads to maintain their posts for 2021, my work responsibilities in the coming year will no longer allow me to dedicate the time required as Head Trustee. So, I will be stepping down from the Board of Trustees – and Sam Goff has been nominated, approved, and has graciously accepted the post as Head Trustee for 2021. As many of you know, Sam already does so much for Trinity – on the front lines and behind the scenes – and I hope you will join me and the rest of the Board in congratulating and supporting Sam in his new role.

If you are interested in serving as one of the Trustees in the coming year, please contact Pastor Sara or Sam Goff. And If you have any questions/comments/concerns about any Trustee-related items, please contact any Trustee or the church office.

On behalf of all of us on the Board of Trustees, I'd like to wish a Blessed Christmas to All!

Jinx Winn / Head Trustee  
Sam Goff / Head Trustee-Elect  
David Hopper  
Marc Taylor  
Shirley Flint

**[Editor's Note:** If you wish to receive Trinity's ENews electronic newsletter, please send your request to [office@trinityumcmemphis.org](mailto:office@trinityumcmemphis.org) so your e-mail address can be added to the list of ENews subscribers. ENews is published each Thursday, and a link to *TRINOTES* is included in ENews the week the print newsletter is mailed out.]

## [Editor's Note...]

I don't usually write anything for publication in Trinotes unless I'm desperate for copy to fill six pages. However (there's always a "however" when an editor gets going), I noticed something Monday morning I don't often get to see any more: Urban Ministry at work.

First, you have to understand that, despite your pastor's pleas, I go in to the church office every Monday morning in order to pick up the mail, cut checks to pay the bills, and prepare an envelope to drop off on Rosemary Potter's porch. Said envelope usually includes your tithes and offerings to be deposited and checks to be signed. [Editor's Note: Because of the pandemic, we do not have the regular rotation of money counters coming in every Monday to count the offering and make the deposit. Rosemary, Finance Committee chair, now does that from the safety of her home.] Now, back to "Urban Ministry at work...."

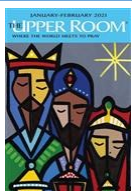


So Monday, leaving Rosemary's porch behind, I circled back toward Trinity on my way home and saw a young man with a backpack gathering some canned goods from the Tiny Pantry. I watched him walk away and wondered about his story. Is he going to have a roof over his head tonight? Will he have enough food to last him through the week? Are we doing enough to help folks like him? Jesus told his disciples that they would always have the poor with them. In saying that, he did not say poverty was a good thing. He simply stated a reality. As long as there are those who won't share their wealth, there will be poor people. It's not fair, but it is a fact of life for those living on the fringes of society.

I admit that I enjoy working from home. I can stop and prepare lunch for my husband, get my work done within flexible hours, and save a lot of gas money not driving back and forth from Trinity everyday. But I miss seeing the friends I've made since joining Trinity's staff. I miss lunch from La Baguette on Tuesdays when Rosemary is at the front desk. I am so ready to create grocery vouchers again for folks in need, ready to cut a check to pay a portion of a utility bill. The pandemic has inconvenienced me somewhat. I miss eating out at a restaurant. I miss people stopping by my office to say "Hi." I miss the ability to go shopping for groceries without a mask and gloves. But I still have a job. I still draw a paycheck. What about those others whose jobs dried up because they don't provide an essential service? And what about the first-line responders: firemen, police, health care workers? I'm sure they're about to drop in their tracks from exhaustion, especially those caring for COVID-19 victims in hospitals.

Hopefully, we are closer to a time when things will be better, if not exactly normal: a time when you can worship safely with your community of faith in person; when you can enjoy a restaurant meal actually in the restaurant; when you can visit our homebound members; when you can once again enjoy a UMW meeting and lunch with your sisters in Christ. Zoom is a great invention, but I think we're all more than ready to see each other face to face rather than in a virtual Sunday School class. In her article on page 2 of this edition of Trinotes, Kay Jordan asked what lessons you have learned during this pandemic. I challenge you to respond by sharing what you've learned about yourself, your community and neighbors, and your church family. I will be happy to publish your responses.

Wishing you enough,  
Debby Marston  
[office@trinityumcmemphis.org](mailto:office@trinityumcmemphis.org)



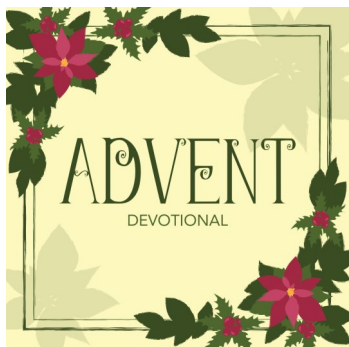
The January/February regular print issue of *Upper Room* has arrived and can be picked up from the front porch of the church building. We can also mail you a copy if you cannot get out. If you need a large print version, call the church office at 901-274-6895 and leave a message. As soon as that version arrives, we can contact you or mail you a copy.



## Christmas Card Project

Every December, historically speaking, Trinity folks have gathered Christmas cards to give to our homebound members and friends. Well, this year, we're all pretty much homebound. That doesn't mean, however, that we forget the folks we would normally be visiting with a stack of bright and festive cards in hand. Please use the next several days to pick out Christmas cards for those who are feeling even more isolated than usual. Our Congregational Care Team hasn't been able to visit our shut-ins lately, but they have made phone calls and sent cards. The children of the church have helped out by creating colorful pictures to be turned into homemade greeting cards. Let's make this Christmas as special for these special friends as we have in the past.

Sign each card and slip it into its blank envelope, but don't seal the envelope. Bundle all the cards together with a big rubber band or twine and bring your bundle to the exterior chapel door and slide it through the mail slot. Your cards will be picked up, sorted, and placed in a big envelope addressed to each of these loved ones. Please deliver your cards by December 16th so we'll have plenty of time to get them ready to mail. Help make Christmas especially merry this year!



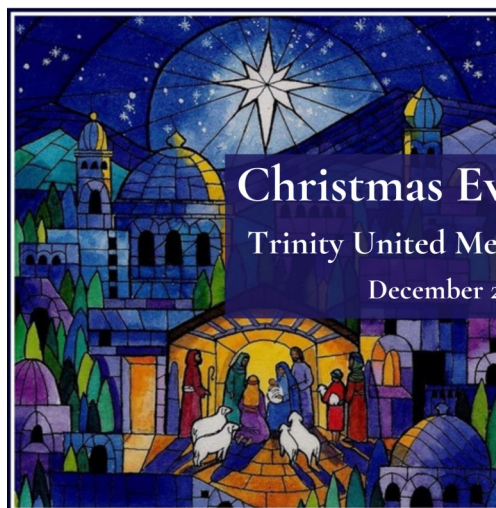
**Rev. Sara will have a brief Advent devotional time every Wednesday in Advent at 8:00 p.m. via Facebook Live. Join on Wednesday or view anytime during the week.**



December 1	Lori Brown
December 3	Libby Street
December 5	Jean Moss
December 9	Rosemary Potter
December 16	Sue Taylor
December 18	Phil Isbell
December 21	Melba Abraham
December 25	Carey Miller

## Christmas Eve Communion

On Christmas Eve, Trinity will have an in-person, come-and-go communion service from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. in the Worship Center, December 24th. Masks are required and entry will be staggered to allow for social distancing. A Christmas Eve service will air via Trinity's Facebook page at 7:00 p.m.



**Christmas Eve Worship**  
Trinity United Methodist Church  
December 24th, 2020



# *Memorials & Honorariums*

## *Honorariums have been received*

*In honor of Mike & Rosemary Potter from Margaret Spain*

*In honor of Irene Dycus from Alyson & Caley Foreman*



## Faith Word: **JOY**

In our Children's Sunday School Class during these weeks leading up to Christmas, we are focusing on our new FAITH WORD of **JOY**. In this Sunday's lesson, we learned about the angel Gabriel's revelation to Mary that she would have a child, who would be God's own Son. Overwhelmed and confused, she could not imagine how this could be possible. But she was reassured by the presence of the Holy Spirit and reminded that nothing is impossible for God. Later, while visiting her cousin Elizabeth, who was also expecting a special child (John the Baptist), Mary sang a beautiful song that was filled with joy, praise, and acceptance: "With all my heart I glorify the Lord! In the depths of who I am I rejoice in God my savior" (Luke 1:46-47).

What a great and reassuring promise – that with God all things are possible. And what a beautiful way of reminding each of us that God is with us in every challenge that comes our way, and that we can face even the most difficult of situations with faith and joy. As we teachers continue to face the challenges of doing Sunday School on Zoom (which sometimes feels as if we are wandering in an e-wilderness), we find ourselves constantly blessed by the resourcefulness and resilience of our children. What joy they bring to us each week!

These children also bring great joy to many others. During the past two weeks, our children have been engaged in designing Christmas messages to send to the homebound and ill members of the Trinity family. They are also continuing to provide birthday and get-well messages for our church members. We know that these messages have special meaning for those who receive them. We greatly appreciate the acknowledgments we have received from church members who have been recipients of messages from our children in times of celebration, such as birthdays, as well as in stressful times, such as illness and loss of loved ones. A special word of thanks goes to Alyson Foreman, who has taken on the responsibility of getting these lovely messages in the mail to members of our church family. We would like to invite others to join in this vital ministry. If you would like to help, please get in touch with Ms. Alyson.

We hope that you are finding reasons to rejoice, even in these difficult times, as we journey through another Advent season. Although we find ourselves at a distance from one another, we are never journeying alone, for God's Holy Spirit is with us to guide and sustain us along the way. "Rejoice in the Lord always," the apostle Paul would remind us, "Again, I will say, Rejoice! ...The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

May God's peace, love, and joy be with us all,  
*Irene Dycus*

## PRAYER CONCERNS

**Our country and the world** - for all those in our country and around the world who are impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic; 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-Elect Joe Biden and Vice President-Elect Kamala Harris as they prepare to take office; and for the outgoing President and Vice President and their families.

**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. Dr. Deborah Smith.

**Trinity UMC** - for members in the congregation homebound due to chronic illness or age; for children and youth as they go back to school, whether virtually or in person; 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:

The family of **Allane Demetrio**, who passed away on November 4th—she reached the great age of 105.

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

**Bryce Sellers**, fighting Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy

**Paige Warmath**, Alyson Foreman's cousin, continuing treatment for brain tumor

**Kanyon Glover**, heart transplant survivor; in and out of hospital

**Donnie Glover**, Chris's brother, still battling leukemia

**Jacob Foreman**, son of **Caley & Alyson**, diagnosis is ENS; please pray for him.

**Gene Opel**, in good spirits despite being confined to their home; **Irene Opel**, physically frail with ongoing health concerns, but strong in her faith; **Anita Bunn** as she cares for them

**Jeri Ashley**, multiple health concerns

**David Harrison**, Carol Miller's brother, is suffering from a broken hip, many other critical health issues.

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

**Sally Ramsey**, out of her back brace and having physical therapy, still using a walker

Joan Smith's cousin/mom, **Gigi**, aka **Kathryn Ellis**, at Encompass for rehab after surgery for a broken hip

**Carol Bruce**, Chris Glover's sister, living alone & grieving the death of her last companion, a talking bird

**Peggy Kinney**, Charlotte Comes' 95 year old cousin in Georgia with broken hip, in rehab, struggling with depression

**Charles Abraham** still hospitalized, but no longer intubated, breathing normally and talking

For all members and friends of **Trinity UMC** as they shelter at home, as they work from home, and as they look forward to a time when they can see — in person — the faces of their church family

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