

# 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.**



## Good News

From  
the desk  
of...  
The Rev.

*Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot would say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear would say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? — 1 Cor. 12:14-19*

Sometimes newsletters confound me. I know that, ideally, our newsletter would be filled with information about all that's happening, and now, it IS! It's been nearly two years in survival mode at Trinity, and we're moving toward welcoming in desk volunteers again (with extra safety measures at our front desk)! We've started a Friday walking group that ANYBODY can join (and you should)! We are, soon, bidding farewell to Midtown Montessori and welcoming the Lab School who's eager to partner with us to do amazing things like a community garden! We might even be partnering soon with another local congregation! The trustees are working overtime to address needs at the parsonage, but they are also making plans to do a full make-over of our Worship Center. Have you seen the new sign yet? The community is working with us to fully re-design our playground, making it more accessible to children with accessibility needs. Our Scouts are trekking forward and welcoming new members. Narcotics Anonymous meets faithfully every week. There are new conversations budding about identity, authenticity, mission, and faith. There's so much good news — so many glimpses of God's Spirit pressing its way into our existence, reminding us that God is far from finished with us.

And yet, I am confounded. What can I say except that I pray for your excitement. I pray for your activity. I pray for your heart as you begin to emerge again, changed by the pandemic, still reminded that our faith community needs you, and, quite possibly, you still need it. We need volunteers! We need a welcome committee for our new school! We need to continue to brainstorm creative ways to gather safely together and maybe not just for worship. We need your voices, even if you haven't offered them in a long time. Prayers. Presence. Gifts. Service. Witness. We need all of those things and not just from a few people, but from the entire body of faith, because what can we do if a hand is missing and the hand is you? What can we do without the eye? You are the eye! What can we do without each of your hearts? We need each of them.

There. I'm not confounded anymore. There is very, very good news — Gospel news — at Trinity. Be excited. Pray. Join.

Blessings,  
Rev. Sara

## What is a Reconciling Church?

As Trinity enters into our discussion of how we can live out our mission to proclaim God's word by building community and by living by the example and teachings of Jesus Christ, some of us will propose that Trinity become a Reconciling Church. The Nowlin Class has already become a Reconciling Group, as have our partners at Binghampton United Methodist Mission. Perhaps it will be helpful to say here what a Reconciling Church is.

The Reconciling movement grew up in 1984 in the United Methodist Church. This is their statement of who they are: "We work to advance justice and inclusion for all LGBTQ people in The United Methodist Church and beyond. Reconciling ministries are churches, Sunday school classes, youth groups, regional groups, campus ministries, colleges, and more that have made the Reconciling commitment to intersectional LGBTQ justice."

My little home church in Raleigh, NC is Avent Ferry UMC. They became a Reconciling Church several years ago. Here's their statement, featured on their website: Avent Ferry United Methodist Church is a Christ centered community of faith that is committed to reaching out to and embracing all individuals. With open hearts, open minds, and open doors, we are making intentional efforts toward celebrating diversity and being genuinely welcoming and inclusive of all individuals. As a Reconciling United Methodist Church, we follow Jesus Christ by loving and accepting: All Ages, All Races, All Abilities, All Cultures, All Ethnicities, All National Origins, All Education Levels, All Gender Identities, All Sexual Orientations, All Socio-Economic Statuses, All Family or Marital Statuses.

To me, the above statements are in line with Trinity's Mission Statement. I hope that as we approach our discussions, this information will help other members consider what our next steps will be.

*Kay Jordan*



Our Ash Wednesday service will be March 2nd at 6:30, live-streamed and in person.



## God's Power Made Perfect in Our Weakness

In less than a month, my devotions from both *The Upper Room* and *The Upper Room Disciplines* have focused multiple times on God's call. These have included Jeremiah's call and commission, Samuel's call, Isaiah's call, Jesus' calling of his first disciples, and, of course, the many ways God calls each of us and the multiple ministries to which He may call us.

During this same time, I have been experiencing loss. Specifically, I'm referring to one of the greatest losses in my life, the death of my sister. Before her death, there was an eight-month-long decline in which her beautiful mind and wonderful memory wasted away along with her physical health.

I have been unable to go through this painful experience without thinking about my own life and the continuing losses of strengths and abilities that I once took for granted. My hearing loss is obvious to all who know me. I retired from teaching preschool at age 62 because, even with hearing aids, I could no longer hear the children without their having to repeat things over and over again.

However, I always remember the beautiful thing that happened after this. While I was grieving the loss of an ability that I considered essential to my teaching children in any capacity, Elizabeth Hopper invited me to be the Storyteller at Vacation Bible School. A delightful new area of ministry with children opened to me, one that I loved doing for several years. I felt that God had closed a door but opened a window for me. During that time, I also became assistant to Ms. Alyson in Sunday School. The few times she had to be absent during the years we taught together in the Children's Sunday School Class, I was able to sub, provided another hearing adult was present who could "translate" for me.

During the pandemic, as Ms. Alyson and I have continued our teaching partnership on Zoom, I have faced a new challenge in that I often lose my voice. I never know when it's going to happen. It may be for the whole Sunday school time or just a part of it; it can happen right in the middle of a sentence. I have discovered that as difficult as hearing loss may be, the challenge of not having a voice is an even greater one for a teacher. But our children, thank goodness, are very patient with me. It does mean, however, that subbing for Alyson is something I can no longer do.

Over the years, a fragment of memorized schoolwork from my high school years has come repeatedly to my mind: "They also serve who only stand and wait." These words came from the seventeenth century English poet John Milton's sonnet, "On His Blindness," in which he reflected that he had a place in God's world despite his losing his sight. Milton is best known for *Paradise Lost*, the epic work he dictated after he was blind. Those words have ever greater meaning for me as I age and as I lose ground in terms of my general health. In fact, I feel that God has also used those words to call me into an entirely different area of ministry.

Having been a caregiver to more than one loved one as their lives have drawn to a close, I know how lonely and painful this role can be. One of the things I have started doing in the last several years is to text scriptures and prayers to friends and family who are facing major health issues or who are caregivers to loved ones who are battling those problems.

I usually do this during my devotion time in the morning. I find that this also helps me focus on God and to express my appreciation to Him for all that is good in my life. I don't have to hear and don't have to talk to do this. I just need to be quiet and pray as I go through this process. It's another window that God has opened for me.

There will most probably come a time when, like my sister, I can only lie in my bed and wait. We would all probably hope to die in our sleep. That's what happened to my Uncle Fred. However, for most of us, death involves loss and pain. But once God opens that final door of death for us, we will walk through it to a new and eternal life. That's what my sister has done, and I look forward to doing that someday, too. In the meantime, I hope to remain open to what He calls me to do, knowing that His power is made perfect in my weakness and that He is with me through it all.

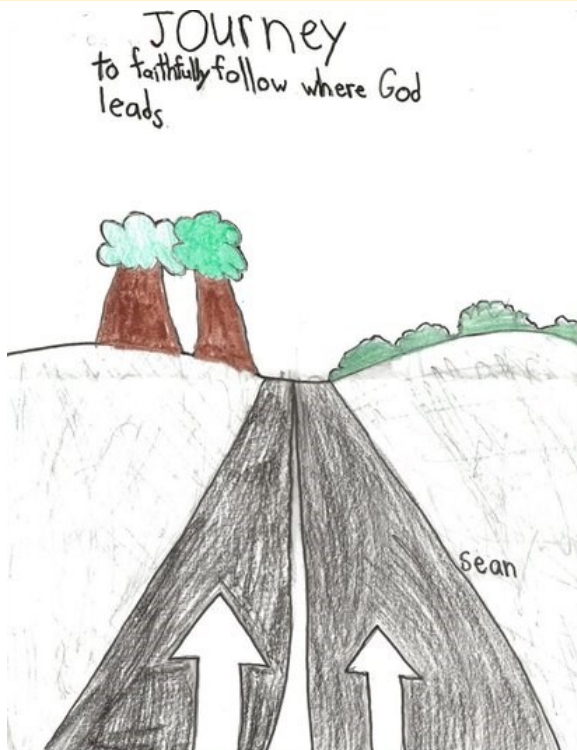
Peace and love,  
*Irene*

## House Keeping

On behalf of the church Trustees, there are a couple of reminders we'd like everyone to read.

Please do not touch any of the thermostats in the church building. Please let a trustee make adjustments. A thermostat was handled recently and closed improperly, causing damage to the system and requiring repairs. Please let someone familiar with the system make any needed adjustments.

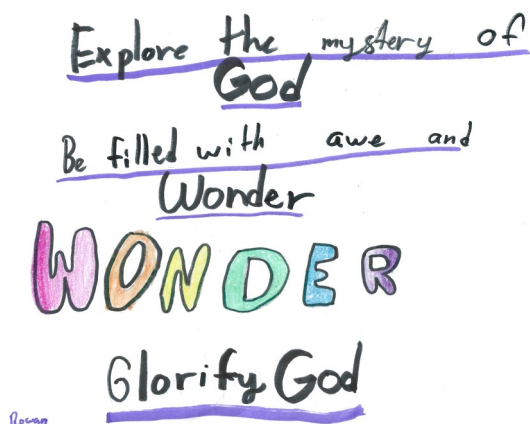
If you have a key to the church that you do not regularly need and use, please make sure to turn that in to Debby in the church office. You may turn that in Sunday morning as well.



More artistic expressions of Trinity's talented kids

Above: "Journey" by Sean

Below: "Wonder" by Rowen



March 1	Nelda Gray
March 3	Kaylee Bauer
March 3	Heather Jacoby-Keller
March 6	Becky Waldon
March 6	Joe Spake
March 13	Leanne Wilson
March 14	Anne Steinaway
March 16	Jane Waldrip
March 19	Alyson Foreman
March 19	Charles Abraham
March 23	Amy Webster
March 31	Hadley Keller

*(Let us know of any errors or omissions on this birthday list.)*



February 16	Jonas Pflaumer
February 19	Paul Skjoldager
February 20	Laura Gansman
February 22	Eli Reeves Whit
February 27	Sara Corum
February 27	Amy Moritz

*(Let us know of any errors or omissions on this birthday list.)*

## Trinity Church Council Begins 2022

With our first-ever hybrid meeting, the Church Council held a “practical visioning” session on January 9th after the Morning Worship service. There were 13 members present in person and 6 present on Zoom. In spite of some glitches with technology, we rejoiced to be together in such good number to look at the important question, “What’s next for Trinity?”

We recalled our earlier visioning work, led by Amy Moritz, in which we assessed the personal and community resources available for doing God’s work in this part of God’s world. We looked again at our church’s Vision Statement and Mission Statement. We asked ourselves what we need to do now. Here are some of the points that were raised:

- We have physical space inside and outside on our property. How can we better use these spaces to carry out our mission?
- How can we use our connections with other groups such as Binghampton United Methodist Mission, Evergreen Presbyterian Church, Room in the Inn, Evergreen Historic District, and the incoming Lab School of Memphis (soon to be renting the school space in our building) to carry out our mission?
- What are the next steps in working toward becoming a Reconciling Church? How does that fit with our Vision and Mission statements?

There was a rich discussion, with many other points made, but in the end we decided that it is important to take some concrete steps, do a few things well right away, as we move along the path to letting God do a new thing here at Trinity UMC. Here are the things we will do now:

- Start a walking group, for fellowship, exercise, and community visibility. Point person: Sara Goff. (fyi, this group began 5 days after the Council meeting, on Friday, Jan. 14 at 9 am!)
- Renew our focus on Spiritual Formation with an online time of Centering Prayer led by Mike Potter. (This group also began the very next Sunday, and will meet each Sunday morning at 8:30. Use the Adult Sunday School link in your weekly E-News to join.)
- Some Trinity members will participate in Binghampton UMM’s weekly Thursday night Bible Study, on Zoom. Mike Potter will distribute information on how to log on.
- Designate a committee to plan next steps for becoming a Reconciling Church. Volunteers were Sara Corum, Sara Goff, Myra Finch, Kay Jordan, Tom Wilson. Pastor Corum will convene a meeting as soon as possible.

The energy and hope alive in the room and on the Zoom screen was real. The follow-up that is already happening is real. God is at work!

We concluded with thanks to God for all of it, and with specific thanks to Josh McClurken and Pastor Sara for setting up the technology that made it possible for all of us to be together, and to Sam Goff for the lunch that kept us going.

Our next meeting will be on February 20 after Morning Worship. Remember, Church Council meetings are open to all. Come!

### MEMORIALS & HONORARIUMS

MEMORIALS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED

IN MEMORY OF **DONNIE GLOVER** FROM AN ANONYMOUS DONOR

IN MEMORY OF **NANCY RANKIN** FROM DONNA D. HENDRIX

IN MEMORY OF **DONNIE GLOVER** FROM CHARLES & MELBA ABRAHAM

IN MEMORY OF **MARGARET RUCKER** FROM CHARLES & MELBA ABRAHAM

IN MEMORY OF **GARY OWEN** FROM CHARLES & MELBA ABRAHAM



## PRAYER CONCERNS

**Our country and the world** - for all those in our country and around the world still impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and now the omicron variant; for families, churches, and communities impacted by the recent tornados in West Tennessee and Kentucky, especially for those who lost loved ones in those violent storms; for Haiti in the aftermath of an earthquake and hurricane; 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 Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris—pray for their wisdom.

**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. Autura Eason-Williams

**Trinity UMC** - for members of the congregation homebound due to chronic illness or age; 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:

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

**Bryce Sellers**, fighting Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy

**Michelle Goza's** husband, **Sam**, died December 15th, just 3 days before their son's wedding. (Michelle is Chris Glover's niece.)

**Kanyon Glover**, now 3 years old, can lift his left arm and giggles at his daddy when he gives him a high five.

**Donnie Glover**, Chris's brother, passed away recently. Please pray for his wife, **Sandra**, and all the rest of the Glover family as they grieve.

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

**Gene & Irene Opel**, ongoing health concerns

**David Harrison**, Carol Miller's brother, recovered from broken hip; dialysis going well

**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' 95 year old cousin, now residing permanently in rehab center

**Val Coates**, serious heart condition; still in constant pain and undergoing testing to discover the cause; grieving the loss of her mother, sister, and father this year

**George Marston**, still undergoing dialysis; congestive heart failure; COPD; back pain and mobility improved

**Jean Moss**, in hospice care

**Margaret Rucker**, Irene Dycus' sister, passed away on Monday, January 31st. Please pray for her children, **Bo** and **Lena**, and for Irene as they grieve.

Pray for the family of **Gary Owen**, Alyson Foreman's father, who died recently.

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