

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.



The Time of Singing

For behold, the winter is past; the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land. Song of Solomon 2:11-12

Around this time last year, I think we all started to see the writing on the wall. Toilet paper was becoming a scarcity. In our house, we couldn't find a lot of kid-friendly staples at the store — cheese-sticks, mini-pizzas, chicken nuggets, etc. Things were looking a little bleak. We had to change our immediate practices with little knowledge of how long it would last. I remember the moment I realized that the news from the W.H.O., that covid-19 had been labeled a "global pandemic," was actually a big deal and not something that happened with any frequency. The planner in me started to wonder what we could do to prepare for what was ahead, with little-to-no concrete answers. It started, though, with changing the way we'd always done **everything**.

We laid down a lot of things; we also picked up **new things**. In the first two weeks of near isolation, we took more neighborhood walks than we ever had before. We smiled and waved at people a block or two over whom we'd never met. Our dog was absolutely delighted! We were home ALL. THE. TIME. and she got to join us on the walks. Both boys finally learned how to ride their bikes. Everyone around us was home and the world seemed to slow down a bit, which was odd and confusing at first, but also surprisingly.....nice. We could find little sparks — little moments — of hidden joy between the cracks of the impending doom story the morning news wrote everyday.

But things dragged on. By month three, we really began to miss "the way things were." We missed hugs. We missed traveling. We missed our friends and family so, so much. Fall came and as the leaves began to change and we braced ourselves for colder winds, little else changed. There were days that I realized I didn't even step outside — weeks where the only place I drove all week was to the church. I'd run out of ideas to keep the kids entertained, and it began to hurt my heart that they were so sad and so bored. It was a very help-less feeling.

Winter came, and we celebrated the hope of all creation with a new sense of longing — a new sense of crying out for rescue and deliverance. Come, Lord Jesus. Come. The presence of "God with us," meant something different than it ever had before. When no one else was with us, because we weren't gathering with family and friends as we normally would, there was still some sense of that peace that surpasses all understanding in knowing that, nevertheless, we were not alone.

And we still aren't.

Last week marked the first day of spring — a full year from when this all began. It's a delight to take walks, again, because there is a newness of life all around. It reminded me of the last verse to an old Nicole Nordeman song, "Every Season." Each verse takes you through the ways we see God in the changing world around us. I want to share those lyrics with you with special attention to Spring.

(continued on page 2)

(continued from page 1)

Every Season

*Every evening sky, an invitation
To trace the patterned stars.
And early in July, a celebration
For freedom that is ours.
And I notice You
In children's games,
In those who watch them from the shade.
Every drop of sun is full of fun and wonder
You are Summer.*

*And even when the trees have just surrendered
To the harvest time,
Forfeiting their leaves in late September
And sending us inside,
Still I notice You when change begins,
And I am braced for colder winds.
I will offer thanks for what has been and what's to come
You are Autumn.*

*And everything in time and under heaven
Finally falls asleep.
Wrapped in blankets white, all creation
Shivers underneath.
And still I notice you
When branches crack,
And in my breath on frosted glass.
Even now in death, You open doors for life to enter
You are Winter.*

*And everything that's new has bravely surfaced
Teaching us to breathe.
What was frozen through is newly purposed
Turning all things green.
So it is with You
And how You make me new
With every season's change;
And so it will be,
As You are re-creating me,
Summer, Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

It's really a beautiful expression of God's working at all times, and I am drawn to that, as I have been for the last year. We've spent much time in worship, in this newsletter, in Coffee in Community, and even in committee meetings, talking about where we've seen God at work. We have to. This is what keeps us pressing forward through the pandemic. It's what keeps us pushing through the season of Lent. It's what reminds us that hope is viable — it's true and real, and will persevere until things are very really made new again.

Here, a year later, there are still little sparks of joy bursting forth in creation — all around us, and in us as God is pressing through our despair to offer us hope. There is a proverbial light at the end of the tunnel. More and more people are exclaiming joyfully that things are close — close to ending. Thanks be to God. But, I want to invite you to join me in exclaiming joyfully that things are close — close to beginning, instead.

Something new is on the horizon. It may look a little like what was. It may look a little bit like what's been this year. It may look a little bit like something new.....bursting forth with a hope, and joy, and promise that can only come from our Creator. Are you ready? It's almost time. The time of singing has come.

In the Wilderness,
Rev. Sara



TENTATIVELY, Easter Sunday worship will be at 11:00 am, April 4th, on the Trinity lawn. RSVP's are **required**, as is mask-wearing and social distancing. The **deadline to RSVP is Thursday, April 1st**. Please start making your Easter reservations today with Debby in the church office. [Call 901-274-6895 and leave a message or send an e-mail to office@trinityumcmemphis.org.] The service will **also** be live-streamed.

We will celebrate Holy Communion during worship on Easter Sunday. There will be no Drive-By Communion that afternoon.



Easter Lilies

If you are interested in purchasing an Easter lily in honor or memory of someone, please call or email the [church office](#). If we have enough interest, we will order or purchase plants locally. Closer to Easter, we will post a time-window for you to pick up your plant on

the Galloway side of the church so we can keep everyone safe. A Memorial/Honorarium list will be published in both Trinotes and ENews.

A purple banner with white and green text and icons. At the top, there are four white icons: a palm frond, a crown of thorns, a cross, and a stone being rolled away from a tomb. Below these icons, the text "A LOT CAN HAPPEN IN SEVEN DAYS" is written in white, with "SEVEN" in green. The main text of the banner, in white, reads: "Maundy Thursday: 7:00 p.m., April 1st. on Facebook Live" and "Good Friday: 7:00 p.m., April 2nd. on Facebook Live".



April 10	Rita Almon
April 22	Mark Hudson
April 24	Karen Willard
April 25	Rachel Adkins
April 27	Jeff Potter

[If anyone's birthday has been overlooked, please contact us at 901-274-6895 (leave a message) or send an email to office@trinityumcmemphis.org.]

[Editor's Note: If you wish to receive Trinity's ENews electronic newsletter, please send your request to 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 the *Trinotes* is included in the ENews the week the print newsletter is mailed out.]



We Remember Your Love

This past Sunday's lesson in our Children's Sunday School Class was "Praying in the Garden," based on Luke 22:39-46. We talked about how Jesus showed us by his example of praying in the Garden of Gethsemane that we can pray to God anytime we are scared, sad, or upset. God is in the midst of our big emotions to guide us and to comfort us.

Our art project focused on our FAITH WORD for this month, which is **REMEMBER: to think about and not forget our faith.** As usual, everyone started out with the same basic framework (in this case, the word REMEMBER, with or without the definition). We had examples of various Christian symbols which the children could draw to decorate their pages: the Roman cross (the empty cross representing Jesus' resurrection), the fish symbol (used by early Christians to identify themselves as followers of Jesus Christ), the dove (the Holy Spirit), the crown of thorns (representing Jesus as the suffering King of Christianity), the triquetra (a three-part interlocking fish symbol for the Christian Trinity), the flame (Jesus Christ, the light of the world), the chalice and the loaf (Holy Communion), the Bible (God's word), and the interwoven circles (another symbol for the Holy Trinity). We also thought of the star (Jesus' birth), the butterfly (Easter and resurrection), and the rainbow (God's promise that He would never destroy the world through flood again). We talked about the meanings of these symbols and did a lot of remembering about things we have learned in past lessons. As usual, the children's finished art projects were all unique and wonderfully creative, just as each child is a uniquely gifted child of God.

Each month-long unit of study in our Sunday School lessons has a theme song. This month's song is "Remember Your Love." The different stanzas center on the important weekly lessons, but the refrain focuses on the overall message. Here is that refrain:

So, there's power in these things we do.

We do them to remember you -

How we called out, and you came through for us.

Oh, we remember your love...Oh, we remember your love.

(written by Derek Webb & Abbie Parker)

These are extremely difficult times for our children and their families, difficult times for all of us, no matter what our ages might be. May we all remember God's love for us as we face each new day, and may we call on Him for guidance and sustenance as we struggle with what seem at times to be overwhelming emotions. I do believe that He will show us the way through.

Peace and love,

Irene

[Editor's Note...]

It's always frustrating when technology fails to perform as it is designed to perform. When the internet connection goes down and the landline loses dial tone, life screeches to a halt. That was my Friday last week. I sat down in front of my laptop bright and early (9:00 a.m. or thereabouts), ready to begin my workday, but all I saw was an elaborate AT&T error message giving me instructions on how to address the problem. Normally, I just reboot, but I dutifully went into my husband's office to check the modem. Power light, green; broadband light, red; phone light, red. All lights steady, no flickering or blinking going on. Hmm. So I unplugged the modem from its power source, gave it a minute, then plugged it back in. Power light, green; broadband light, red; phone light, red. No flickering or blinking of said lights. Again, hmm.

Back at my own desk, I studied the elaborate AT&T error message, noting that there were a couple of links to websites purporting to offer help. I wasted about 30 minutes trying to access the websites on my cell phone, then resorted to the toll free number buried in the fine print. An artificially intelligent robot (or maybe cyborg) talked to me for a bit, asking questions, to which I responded by punching the requested buttons. "He" (male voice) then instructed me to do exactly what I had already done and wait ten minutes for the modem to reboot. After ten minutes, I called back, as instructed, and it didn't take long for "him" to decide that I needed to talk to a live tech support person, in this case, Ferds. (I had him spell it for me, so I'm not making up the name.) Ferds eventually said that the line is out of sync, and that he would dispatch a technician to make the repair. On Monday. Arrival time between 11:00 and 1:00. The service call shouldn't take over four hours. Oh, and they're going to upgrade us from copper to fiber cable. No extra charge. Oh, joy.

All of this means that, in addition to being unable to check my Trinity email from home, we wouldn't have access to the television programming via Sling, the streaming service we use. That's not a huge big deal, since there are always books to read. (You know, books: made out of paper, with both hard and soft covers. We have somewhere in the neighborhood of 2,500 books. No technology required, other than a reading lamp.) But we wouldn't be able to access Zoom, which is how George teaches Sunday School and how we participate in worship nowadays.

All of this experience reminds me of how dependent we are on our gadgets. A typical person—of any age, it seems—has a minimum of one electronic communications device, usually a cell phone. In addition, anyone who enjoys social networking has a tablet in order to access Facebook, YouTube videos, Dropbox, e-mail, etc. School age children and teens have to have tablets for virtual learning, at least until everyone's back at school in-person. Office jobs require desktop computers or laptops. Fast food franchises will shut down if their computers stop functioning.

George pointed out a young adolescent neighbor, walking in front of our house, who was in danger of falling with every step because he kept his eyes glued to his cell phone's screen. What if we paid that much attention to each other, live and in person? What if we paid that much attention to God?

In my congregation's Wednesday night Bible study, we've been studying Psalm 119, one stanza at a time, on a weekly basis. In last week's study, the psalmist wrote, *"I cry to you; save me, that I may observe your decrees. I rise before dawn and cry for help; I put my hope in your words. My eyes are awake before each watch of the night, that I may meditate on your promise."* (Psalm 119:146-148) He chooses to reach out to God in his need. He is wide awake at all hours of the night, reaching out for God's promise to save, to help, and to preserve his life.

I didn't make any specific plan for sacrificial living during Lent this year. But I have made an effort to prepare more diligently for Bible study with my Colonial Church friends, and I have spent more time in reflection on the psalmist's cry for God's intervention. It occurs to me that, in order to get God's attention, we need to be present, not distracted by all the hype on the internet. God always listens to us when we cry out. But do we hear—really hear—God's voice in response to our cries for help?

Ever seeking,
Debby Marston

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 Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris in their early weeks in office—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. Dr. Deborah Smith

Trinity UMC - for members of the congregation homebound due to chronic illness or age; for children and youth as they attend 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:

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

Bryce Sellers, fighting Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy

Paige Warmath, Alyson Foreman's cousin, died January 11th after a long illness. Pray for her husband and two sons and her mother and two brothers.

Kanyon Glover, now 2 years old and doing well: a happy, valiant fighter, according to Chris

Donnie Glover, Chris's brother, bone marrow test showed his cancer has returned

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

A Praise!! **Gene and Irene Opel**, while still medically fragile, are now able to visit with Irene's daughter, **Anita Bunn**.

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.

Joan Smith's cousin/mom, **Gigi**, aka **Kathryn Ellis**, returning home March 12th on home health care for four weeks, then on hospice care.

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

Charles Abraham moved to a skilled nursing facility on March 2nd, where he will receive rehab.

The family of the **Rev. Richard Hackleman**, who died recently

Val Coates, who has significant physical problems

Leanne Wilson, as she and her family grieve the death of her brother, **Danny Summers**

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.)*