

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.



From
the desk
of...
The Rev.

Awaken

Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.

—Romans 13:11-12

I had a pretty blessed opportunity about 11 years ago, to go to Hawaii. I was there for a week, spending the first half in Maui and then puddle-jumping to the Big Island. Everything was planned just right. I stayed at a local venue instead of a chain hotel. It had, what I was told, was the best luau on the Island. I don't know what other places did, but the luau I attended was unforgettable, complete with the 'pig' I'd watched them place in the imu early that morning.

I was able to snorkel with some of the most beautiful fish I've ever seen, and glide under the clear waters right alongside majestic sea turtles. I drove to the top of the Road to Hana and saw Charles Lindbergh's grave. I swam in the Seven Sacred Pools and got up at 2:00 am to ride a bike from the top of Mt. Haleakala where it was freezing cold above the clouds, to the bottom — through seven different ecosystems and all four seasons.

The hospitality was something I'd never experienced before and have never again since. When I got home I realized I'd been made to feel so at home on the islands that I was homesick for somewhere that wasn't my home. The people were wonderful and lived into a culture defined overwhelmingly by an 'aloha' spirit. I will never forget it — the beauty and majesty of the earth, the care and concern for tending to it and keeping it clean, and the people who at least *seemed* to give newcomers the benefit of the doubt, welcoming them into their culture and way of life.

I didn't see people smoking. There weren't really a lot of places it was allowed. I didn't see many police officers, as crime is very low. There wasn't litter — anywhere. The days ticked on but no one seemed too concerned with the time. It was paradise. It was perfect. Well, almost.

On the last day, before heading to the airport on the Big Island, I was in an open-air shopping center, when I noticed a very aged, gray-headed man across the way. He appeared as though he'd needed a shave for a very long time. He had on shorts, but no shirt (which was completely acceptable for men in Hawaii). His skin was tanned by exposure to the extent that it seemed leathery. He had sandals on and nothing else. No bag of possessions. He sat on a low wall in front of a store, but far enough away from the store that he could be overlooked. He didn't have a cup or a sign. He wasn't asking for anything. He just sat there, staring blankly into space. He had a tired look about him. His image still sits so clearly behind my retinas. I knew then I'd never forget him. He was the only homeless man I'd seen in Hawaii, and he was like no one I'd ever seen before.

It was an odd thing to recall. I'd spent days throwing caution to the wind, living in what I'd thought was an alternate reality where no one goes hungry, everyone has all they need to survive, and no needs go unmet. All of the sudden, and right before I was to return to reality, my sleeping eyes were opened, and all I could think of was Jesus saying that we will always have the poor with us.

(continued on page 2)

(continued from page 1)

About midway through the pandemic parts of last year, Room in the Inn-Memphis went ahead and suspended the rest of its season. Trinity had, had to take a step back from the beginning, realizing that we didn't have enough people who weren't very vulnerable to the virus, to house our homeless community. Virus or not, they would be there though, and we'd committed to, at least, drive them from the Carpenter's House to their overnight housing units. But then it just became too much — things got too dangerous — we were putting too many people at risk. And so we shut the book on that chapter, hoping to pick it up again this year.

But they were still there and the homelessness statistics have done nothing but rise as people lost their jobs thanks to covid, and for awhile, there were no solutions. We shut the book, but that didn't make the need go away. People are still hungry. People still sleep outside at night. Children still go hungry here, in Memphis, outside our backdoors. Covid might've slowed down our ability to meet needs, safely, but it has only exacerbated the need.

I'm calling that to the front of our reality in this article today so that, as we prepare to tip-toe back (slowly) into some sort of normalcy, even if it's a new norm, that we begin to think of how we might respond to needs again. As we think about how we can worship safely, let's don't stop there. Let's begin to pray about how we can tangibly and safely respond to the needs in our community, as we have been called. Let's recall our mission mindset and our call to discipleship — to modeling our lives after that of Jesus — the One who fed the '5000', who pardoned the woman at the well, who advocated for the sojourner, who welcomed the children, and who ate with his enemies. How can we claim his life and living again as we regather? How can we do it safely, responsibly, and faithfully?

I didn't have much cash left before getting on an airplane to fly back from the Big Island to Memphis. It had really been a miracle making the trip happen. I hadn't worked a day, yet, since graduating from seminary. But I had a \$20 bill in my pocket. The man wasn't asking for anything. His head wasn't hung, but he didn't make eye-contact. He just stared, exhausted, into the space in front of him. I walked over and sat next to him. He didn't acknowledge me. Upon closer examination, I saw that he had the most beautiful faint blue eyes. They looked like glass but they, too, were so weathered by life that they seemed broken. I didn't ask him anything. I didn't need his story. I simply, and carefully, reached for his hand and held it in mine, the \$20 bill in my fist, and gave him the money. He didn't look at me. He simply continued to look ahead as though the world had taken everything from him, even his words. I squeezed his hand, just the slightest, and left. As I walked away, there, in paradise, I sobbed. All of a sudden, this perfect, beautiful, holy place was completely broken, and I was awake again, and all the pain of the reality of the world we live in came flooding back.

But we have to be awake. We have to *stay* awake. Like the women with their lamps lit, waiting late into the night for the bridegroom, we have to stay awake. The world, all of it, depends on our being awake.

If you find yourself asleep, wake up. Though Wesley described our time "in the now" as an in-between or liminal space, where we are moving toward perfection in love, we are far from there. The holiest of moments are still laced with the deepest of needs and together, we really can meet them.

With Resurrection Hope,
Rev. Sara



[Editor's Note...]

I lost 10 pounds last week. It's amazing how many steps you put in when walking the halls of Methodist Germantown Hospital. I eventually learned a "short cut" from my husband's room on the third floor to the dining room on the first floor. By that time, I'd already lost the weight. I do not recommend this as a weight loss program.

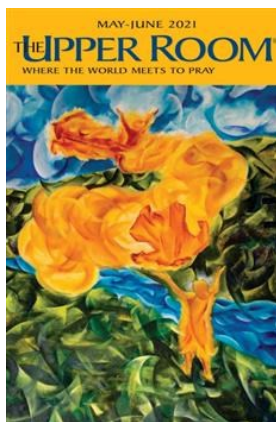
You've heard the expression, "You can't keep a good man down." Well, that definitely applies to George Marston. He had me print off the lectionary texts for Sunday (May 9th, Sixth Sunday of Easter) and bring them to him in the hospital, along with his study Bible. So he taught Sunday School last Sunday, by means of Zoom, from his hospital bed.

I've learned a lot from George over the years: about his tenacity (some would call it stubbornness), his ability to connect with people he's just met (housekeeping ladies, doctors, nurses, etc.), his unfailing courtesy and assumption that everyone he meets has value and is worthy of his appreciation (all the employees of Lowe's and Home Depot used to holler "Hey, George!" whenever he walked in the door), and his natural generosity.

But George isn't well these days. Most of the body parts that keep us going are starting to fail him. He knows that he may not make it to 100. Or 90. Or 85. He accepts the inevitability of life's ending, but feels an obligation to soldier on as long as he reasonably can.

I'm reminded of an imprisoned Apostle Paul, in his letter to the Philippians: *For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you.*

I have had the honor and privilege of being married to this remarkable man for over 32 years. His honest humility prevents him from recognizing the impact he has had on all who know and love him. The students he taught as children and the adults he continues to teach have learned from his vast store of biblical knowledge. He has immersed himself in God's Word most of his adult life. It shows in his daily life and shows now as he approaches the end of that life. He still has much to teach and to share about the love of God. Whatever time is left to him, that's what he will continue to do.



MAY/JUNE

The large and regular print versions of the May/June issue of *Upper Room* can be picked up from the front porch of the church building. We can also mail you a copy if you cannot get out.

E-mail office@trinityumcmemphis.org or call and leave a message on the church office voicemail: 901-274-6895 or . Please be sure to specify the print size: regular or large print. Both can be mailed out right away.



May 10	Bill "Mac" McConnell
May 14	Jeri Ashley
May 27	Mike Dodson
May 27	Jenna McClurkan
May 27	Josh McClurkan
May 28	Chris Glover

[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.]



Love God, Love Others

The Children's Sunday School Class has begun a new unit of study focused on the FAITH WORD of **LOVE: a closeness and connection we feel with God and others**. Our first lesson was about "Choosing the Seven" in Acts 6:1-7, which tells about a situation in the early church in Jerusalem in which a conflict arose over the uneven distribution of food to believers. The disciples solved the problem by having the church choose seven men who were wise and filled with the

Holy Spirit to oversee the food distribution. The Twelve were then able to focus on prayer and speaking God's word, and the number of disciples continued to increase greatly.

We are all called to find ways to unite and act in love for one another. There are so many ways church communities can work together as a way of showing love for others in our community and the world. As we prepare to meet once again on-site for worship services, the children of Trinity Church are inviting our Trinity Church family to participate in a **CANNED FOOD DRIVE** to benefit the **FISHES AND LOAVES FOOD PANTRY** run by our partners in ministry, Binghampton United Methodist Mission (BUMM). During the month of May, we encourage you to fill a large bag with canned or boxed goods to bring to our first on-site worship service, which we hope will take place in early June. **PROTEINS** are especially needed: tuna, canned chicken, Vienna sausages, and peanut butter in plastic containers (no breakable glass, please). They also consistently need boxed macaroni and cheese, canned fruit, and dried or canned beans.



**FEED THE
HUNGRY**

(See page 5 for more.)

*just a
..... note*

From the Trustees

The new stage curtains have finally arrived! We are asking for help hanging them up. First, we need to clear out the wings of the stage and behind the back curtains. Rob and the Scouts will be providing assistance for that effort. If available, please help next Saturday morning, May 15th, at 10am.

We have opted to mow and edge the grounds ourselves to try and save some money for other needs. If you love putting around in a BIG yard, please feel free to assist. The riding mower is working and I will take care of that part. A landscaping renovation of our entry is planned and, hopefully, will be accomplished in June/July.

We have proposals for a new/renovated sign and should be moving forward on that soon. Concepts/designs are being generated for an improved sanctuary. We hope to begin on that project soon. As part of that effort, a leak under the steeple will be fixed.

Sam Goff, Chair
Board of Trustees

We CAN Love!



The CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS invites you to participate in a CANNED FOOD DRIVE. Bring canned and boxed food for the **FISHES AND LOAVES FOOD PANTRY** to our first on-site worship in June!



Remember those in our community who need help

Please donate canned goods, including proteins such as tuna & chicken, beans, beef ravioli, etc., as well as boxed staple items and granola or protein bars. When shopping, think about foods that don't need refrigeration & won't spoil if carried around in a back pack. Canned foods with pop-tops are ideal. Keep our **Tiny Pantry** well-stocked!



INTO THE WOODS JR.
New Spark Performing Arts
DRIVE-IN SHOWING
May 20th @ Malco Summer Drive In
Gate Opens: 7pm
Show Starts: Sundown
Tickets: \$20 per car

NEW SPARK PERFORMING ARTS
SUMMER CAMP 2021
3rd - 8th Grade
Disney **HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL 2 JR.**
July 12th - 16th
NSPA PRESENTS... **MUSIC VIDEO CAMP**
July 19th - 23rd
Monday - Friday / 9 am - 5 pm
www.newspark901.org

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 months 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

Gary Owens, Alyson Foreman's father, completed course of IV antibiotics; experiencing much pain in knees, making it difficult to walk, so will receive injection of steroid to reduce inflammation.

Alyson's aunt, **Judy Chapman**, injured when her car was hit head-on; broken wrist & breaks in her back with major bruising caused by her seatbelt

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.

Irene Opel had some skin cancers removed from her face and is in great pain following that procedure.

Gene Opel, still medically fragile and in need of our prayers

Jeri Ashley, multiple health concerns, moved to Nashville to be near family

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**, on home health care, then on hospice care.

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

Charles Abraham, back in rehab and showing gradual improvement

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

Val Coates, recovering at home from shoulder surgery

George Marston, undergoing dialysis for Stage V kidney disease

The friends and family of **Pat Lovington**, who passed away peacefully in her sleep last week

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.)*