Trinotes

May 14, 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.

"An Invaluable Invitation"

From the desk of... The Rev.

"Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God." Romans 15:7

When I was about 11 years old, my mother became the "Debby" of my home church. Her official title was "program secretary," because there were a number of administrative assistants on staff with different areas of expertise and church programming became hers. Before she took the position, we didn't go to church. I didn't really know anything about church.

In the fall of that year, the church had a program called the Elijah Project, where members of the church became secret prayer partners for all the youth on the roster. My brother and I were both on that list, though we were "inactive" members of the church. For a while I remember getting letters in the mail from a total stranger that were kind and conversational. They always ended in a short prayer. Prayer wasn't something foreign to me. We prayed often at my grandparents'. I prayed some at bedtime, even if I didn't really know what I was doing. I remember thinking it was very kind that someone was praying for me.

At the end of a few months, I received an invitation in the mail from my secret prayer partner. The invitation was for a dinner at the church where these strangers (to me, at least) would be unveiled and I could meet the person that had been my pen pal for the last few months. My parents were supportive of me going, if I so chose. I'd been invited. This stranger had taken the time to send me all these letters and, presumably, pray for me. So, I went.

I went, and I met Laticia, who would become a second mother to me and walk with me through all of my faith journey and some very hard moments of my teen years. She was there when I felt a call to ministry — there for me to vent to while my own mother was in rehab. She was there, and she never stopped praying for me (and still does).

It didn't take much — just an invitation. One invitation really pointed me toward becoming the person God was hoping I'd be. One wooing of the Holy Spirit (prevenient grace) through a woman of faith for this (then) pre-teen to find, not only church, but myself, my God, and my calling. What an invaluable invitation.

I've been thinking a lot lately about being invitational. Perhaps I'm starting to sound like a broken record about it, but I cannot help it. *I am a testament to what it does when someone reaches out and offers a simple invitation*. And our invitation isn't to corporate worship or the religious institution that is the Church. At Trinity it's an invitation to 'belonging.' It's an invitation to wholeness. It's an invitation to a place and a community of people who understand what it means to be both broken and healed — where nothing is taboo or off limits — where everyone belongs and no one is alone.

People not only need community, they want it. If it were not so, would we have grown like we have over the last year? People are craving a place to be who they are and receive the love of others and of the God who loves them. People are searching for a place that is safe, that is more than welcome, that is home, and **we are that place**. But how can they know it unless they are invited?

It probably won't take much. An invitation can be as easy as, "Won't you join me?" or, "You belong here." You only have to be willing to stretch out your hand and offer it, believing that God will do the rest.

Won't you join me?

Rev. Sara

Recipe for Love

The title of our current unit of study in the Children's Sunday School Class is **RECIPE FOR LOVE**. In this unit we are learning about Jesus' mandate to love one another. Each of our four lessons in the month of May is focused on one step or "ingredient" in how Jesus shows us to live and love in his name. We are learning that loving others means welcoming them with **empathy**, **kindness**, **compassion**, and **forgiveness** and that doing our best to love well makes us faithful followers of Jesus.

We started out with the ingredient of "one part empathy" on our first Sunday of the month, as we learned the Golden Rule (Luke 6:31). This past Sunday, we focused on "one part kindness" in our study of the story of Jesus blessing the little children (Mark 10:13-16). This Sunday we will add "one part compassion" to the mix, as we look at the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). On the final Sunday in May, we will complete the recipe by adding "one part forgiveness," as we study the Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32).

These four ingredients are so very important in the faith formation of our children, and they are so very hard to put into practice for God's children of all ages! I could say that all we need to do is to look at our current political situation in this country, and we can see our leaders' failure to love God and to love our neighbor. But if I am totally honest, if I'm faithfully examining my own heart and mind, I must confess that I am failing to love as well. I am like the lawyer in the story from Luke 10 who can rattle off the commandments to love God with all your being and to love your neighbor as yourself, but who must **justify himself** by asking, "And who is my neighbor?" When we talk about placing ourselves in scripture, unfortunately that's ME, folks. I'm not proud of it, but that is where I am right now. I'm seriously into justification, and I know our children are, too. I spend too much time in "Grandma care" and Sunday School/Card Factory time not to be aware of that. There are so many sentences – theirs and mine – that begin with the word "but," followed by the pointing of a finger, literally or figuratively. Sometimes during my early-morning prayer walks in the 12th floor hallway outside my apartment, I'm self-righteously ranting and raving about the current assault on civil rights, human rights, women's rights, and other causes dear to my heart. I'm doing it silently, but I'm raging and thinking violent, vengeful thoughts, which are the very things in which I find fault when I consider today's political climate. When I do this, I am no better than those with whom I radically disagree. (They are my neighbors!) It's an ongoing personal struggle that gives me some insight into the children's struggles with the same issue, although their conflicts are usually with their siblings, parents, friends, schoolmates, and teammates.

But praise the Lord for the last ingredient in His **RECIPE FOR LOVE**: forgiveness! When I stray, I know our heavenly Father is always scanning the horizon and waiting for me to return to Him. I come to the point in those prayer walks when I must acknowledge my sins. Sometimes I must ask continually for His forgiveness for random thoughts that invade my prayers. I can't do that without practicing humility and expressing my need for His forgiveness, for only He can "create in me a clean heart and put a new and right spirit within me." I need those prayer walks to help me stir up Jesus' recipe for love in my life and to keep me on track. I want our children to learn that the Lord can help them with their personal struggles, too, whatever forms they take, and I want them to carry that reassuring knowledge with them throughout their lives. I ask for your prayers for them and for all the adults who are in their lives.

Thank you for your prayers,
Irene

2025 VBS - Called by God

We are so excited that this year's **Vacation Bible School** will be held on site at Trinity UMC for the first time since pre-COVID days! We will be meeting on **four Tuesday nights from June 10th to July 1st.** Our theme is "Called by God," and we'll be exploring how God worked through people such as Moses, Anna, Mary Magdalene, the disciples at Pentecost, and Paul on the Damascus Road.

Classes will be offered for preschoolers (4 years and up) and rising kindergarteners; elementary school children (rising 1st through 5th graders), and middle schoolers (rising 6th through 8th graders). Friends are always welcome, so please encourage your children and grandchildren who will be joining us to invite others. We will meet each Tuesday night from 6:00 to 7:45 pm, beginning with a simple dinner, followed by Bible stories, art, and science activities. The Rev. Rebekah Gienapp will be using Godly Play to guide our Bible Storytime. Here are the stories we'll explore each week:

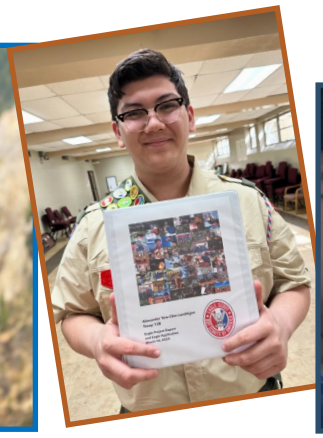
- June 10th - The Story of Moses
- June 17th - Jesus and the Women
- June 24th - The Mystery of Pentecost
- July 1st - Saul Changes

Parents can register their children for any or all weeks by scanning the code on the VBS flyer here:

Many thanks to those who have already offered to help! We still need a few adult helpers. If you are willing to volunteer, either with meal preparation or working directly with our children, please contact Irene Dycus (email her: irenebdycus@hotmail.com; text her: 901-652-1105) or Rebekah Gienapp (email her: rebekah.gienapp@gmail.com; text her: 901-212-6309).

Senior Spotlight

CONGRATULATIONS to Alex Landrigan, son of Rob Landrigan and Lisa Wong and brother to Helena, upon his graduation from East High School! Alex has been a member of TUMC since 2025, but has been a part of this church for many years prior as a member of Pack and Troop 13. Alex is presently an Eagle Scout and the creator of Trinity's Tiny Pantry and full-sized food pantry. We are excited for Alex's future as he prepares to attend MTSU in the fall with the intent to pursue a major and career in aerospace aviation with a commercial pilot specialization. Alex has already taken flight (both literally and proverbially) in many ways, and we have been blessed to watch it all unfold at Trinity. Please be in prayer for Alex and his family in the days to come as he prepares for all that is ahead. May we remember that, in each coming day, the God who loves us is already there.



Trinity to Host Sojourners' Revolving Loan Fund

There are people disappearing from Memphis now. Last week a family of five went to the ICE office for their regular check-in and were immediately deported to Mexico. A team of roofers was taken from their worksite, and no one knows where they are now. Distraught families need legal help, but the nonprofit law firms in our area are overwhelmed and unable to take more cases. Other lawyers are requiring upfront payment.

A group of concerned United Methodists, the Immigrant Relief Task Force, tries to help families of undocumented people deal with emergencies like these and more; you've read about their work in Trinity's weekly E-News under the headline "Immigrant Relief Fund." Maybe you've even made a donation. While this is not a project of Trinity, we help by hosting the fund. That means Debby Marston writes the checks and gets two signers, and Craig Jordan tracks the funds. The money is raised by the Immigrant Relief Task Force.

At our May 4 Church Council meeting, Council members unanimously approved a motion by Kay Jordan "that Trinity UMC Church Council issue a statement of support for the work of the Immigrant Relief Task Force, endorse having our Administrative Officer spend some of her time on the financial work involved, and continue to publicize to our membership the efforts of the group and the need for donations."

Joni Laney, representing that Task Force, explained that families facing detention and/or deportation often need a loan so they can retain a lawyer. The new work is titled Sojourners' Revolving Loan Fund. Families will sign a promissory note, with the name of their lawyer, amount they need to borrow, and amount they can repay each month. The Task Force will raise money, to go into a designated fund at Trinity. A group from the Task Force will receive requests (from individuals vetted by trusted gate-keepers), review them, and approve requests. Debby will write the checks and receive the repayments. Craig will track incoming and outgoing funds. The funds may also be used for other needs of families, with the same review process.

Trinity, let's do more than state our support. **Please donate as you are able.** You can give by check (write Sojourners' Revolving Loan Fund on the "for" line), by Servant Keeper online (go all the way down the list to check Sojourners' Revolving Loan Fund), or by PayPal online (again, be sure to designate Sojourners' Revolving Loan Fund).

—Kay Jordan

May Birthdays

Christy LaFlamme	*May 5*
Bill "Mac" McConnell	*May 10*
Lily Hamric	*May 21*
Mike Dodson	*May 26*
Jenna McClurkin	*May 26*
Josh McClurkin	*May 26*
Chris Glover	*May 28*

Memorials & Honorariums

An honorarium has been received

In honor of Irene Dycus and the Easter Egg Hunt volunteers from

Marc & Sue Taylor

Financial Notes from May 4 Church Council Meeting

There is good news for Trinity's finances through April 30. Our February pledge effort showed a major increase compared to 2024. We went from 10 pledges last year to 18 this year. Our total dollars pledged went from $81,000 to $121,000. Thus far our pledged giving, loose offering, facility use, and extraordinary income are especially good. For the reporting period our expenses were over $10,000 less than anticipated. The net result is that our **total income exceeded our expenses by over $12,000.**

Given the above developments a revised budget was presented to the Council. When the original budget year began in January the projected annual budget **deficit was $14,500**. The revised budget approved by the Council projects a **positive end of year balance of $26,500.**

At the Council meeting new developments will result in further budget revisions. The Staff Parish Committee requested an increase in the Staff Medical Reimbursement line item. For several years Trinity has provided a modest medical reimbursement fund for expenses beyond any staff members' insurance coverage. For several years that total item had been $1,500. The Council approved the request doubling the line item to $3,000. This updated amount will provide up to $1,200 reimbursement for full time staff members and $600 for less than full time staff members.

The second development was the announcement that Living Word Christian Church is closing. We have been blessed in having them be part of Trinity for several years. Financially, the closing will result in a loss of $8,400 in facility use income for the remainder of the year. Together these two developments result in an approximately **$10,000** change in projected net revenue. Thus, the projected end of year balance is now **$16,500** rather than **$26,500**.

There is much for which to be thankful as Trinitarians continue to be generous stewards providing for our mission and ministries.

Craig Jordan, Treasurer

United Women in Faith

UWF for May 2025 *Trinotes*

United Women in Faith met in the Center at 11:30 on 25 April. The ladies heard the report given to the Church Council which included the following: UWF have already met all our unit, district, and national obligations for this fiscal year; have completed our spring (Salvation Army Purdue Center Easter egg hunt and stuffed over 1,000 eggs for Trinity) missions; and we have cash on hand to be able to fund our summer (Golden Cross), fall (Neighbors Feeding Neighbors), and winter (Sista2Sista) missions. We have participated in SendThemAMeal and aided the Shepherds. Our group has active Prayer Warriors. Please send any prayer requests to Irene or Joan S.

Katy shared the lesson of James the Less at our April meeting. Sue will lead the discussion of Judas: The Devil's Disciple at our next meeting. Relevant Scriptures are: Psalm 41:9; 55:12-14; Zachariah 11:12-13; Matthew 6:19-34; 22:11 -14; 23:1-12; 27:3-8; Luke 13:13-21; John 12:1-11, 29-30; 13:8;18-30. This will conclude our study of 12 Ordinary Men by John MacArthur. We will begin our discussions from The Upper Room at our September meeting. The Upper Room can be obtained free of charge in the lobby.

Our next (and last until September) potluck meeting will be at **11:30** in the Center on **23 May**. To celebrate our industry and diligence this year, we will meet in June, July, and August at various locations for our "summer vacation." Of course, the philanthropic work of UWF will continue during this hiatus. Please check with your favorite restaurants for availability of and charges for private meeting rooms and come with ideas for locations for these meetings. Also, if you wish to continue the tradition of Chinese auctions please have auction themes in mind. Last summer's items were jewelry, handbags, and scarves. What fun we had! We will vote on these items at the next meeting. Come all, and be welcome.

Joan Smith, President

Prayer Concerns

Our country and the world - 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; 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:

Sam Goff injured his neck in an auto accident May 12th and was taken to the hospital for a CT scan & x-ray.
Elizabeth Hopper, for healing following surgery for thyroid cancer
Family of Marshall Selvidge (Martha Ostenrude's husband): his mother, **Marjorie Selvidge**, died April 29th.
Continued prayers for **Sally Ramsey**, daughter **Sandi**, and the Ramsey family
Lauren Crews, friend of the Millers, passed away recently. Pray for her family.
Bobby Glover, Chris's brother, in care for early Alzheimer's
Irene Dycus' friend **Susan Todd** and family on the death of her husband **Allen**
Pray for **David Chenault**: serious injuries due to motorcycle accident may require amputation of leg. (from Joan S.)
Kate and **Neil Ostenrude**, as she continues to recover; strength to persevere in life's trials
Joan Foley's daughter, **Olivia Flasdick**, after eye surgery
For Sharman Murley's grandsons **Asa** (improved behavior!) and **Eli** (high performing autism diagnosis)
Chris Glover's sister, **Sherry Carruthers**
The family of **Mac Gardner** and his spouse, **Marty Acree** (friends of Elizabeth Hopper)
Pam Stafford, battling liver disease, and husband **Jim Stafford**, dementia (request from Sandy Guntharp)
Bo Poppelreiter, Debby Marston's step-grandson, doing well following his kidney transplant
Katy Spake's cousin, **Deb Roark**: cancer in right ear, jawbone, gums; Deb's husband **Keith**: stage 4 pancreatic cancer, spots on liver & bile ducts
Seth Norton, Raquel's son, ongoing medical concerns
Gwen Dodson, bladder cancer, COPD, osteoporosis; cancer treatment
Suzanne Thompson of Election Commission, recovering from spinal fusion surgery
Kanyon Glover, heart received as baby checks out okay; receives PT for arm damaged by stroke
Jacob Foreman, for new part time job to go well; nerve damage & back pain continues
Gene Archer, diagnosed with stomach cancer, last test report was good! His wife **Julia** has MS (friends of Millers)
David Harrison, Carol Miller's brother, on dialysis; paralyzed on one side after stroke; asthma; COPD
Val Coates, medical concerns
Jonathan Goff, back injury; **James Goff**, Sam's brother, abdominal issues; **Karen Barker**, Sara's sister, lung issues; **Laura Carruthers**, Sam's friend, has cancer.

(Please contact the church office to make changes to prayer concerns, to add new ones or to remove any.)