

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 Things Invisible

I was meditating this morning on a short text from the letter of Hebrews, the first few verses of chapter 11. I want to share those with you today. I'm curious what thoughts come to your mind.

*Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.
Indeed, by faith our ancestors received approval.
By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God,
so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.*

My thoughts? What an incredible vision! What an amazing testament! What a beautiful stone in the foundation of our spiritual lives. Well, at least we hope.

When I first found God, or began to realize that God found me and created me, the foundation of my spiritual life was built sturdily on these stones that made a strong and immovable foundation. I rode out my days on that sort of dogmatic faith that children and youth have — faith that comes so easily and is immovable and without doubt. Of course, life happened and, as it is for most, there were hard moments that affected that dogmatic faith. The waves came down hard and suddenly it felt like my spiritual house was built on sand rather than those strong stones.

At times, the church can feel like that. In what we used to call Trinity's "heyday," attendance was amazing. Bills were paid without concern. Apportionments were an easy-to-attend-to priority. That was a time when, Sunday morning, it was a "given" for you to be in church no matter who you were. Society was different. There weren't a lot of choices and religious practice wasn't separated from a more secular part of people's lives. Without thought, attending church was something that just happened every week.

There are a lot of reasons for the heyday, and it was much easier to feel as though the spiritual life and makeup of the church was built of something strong and reliable. It was much simpler to lean heavily upon an "invisible faith," because there was much less to be afraid of. Declining numbers. Empty offering plates. And during a surprise global pandemic, empty worship spaces and online attendance and giving. Well, these are things that in the heyday we could never have imagined would be part of our story. And so I know we cannot see it. I know that the possibilities are only something we can imagine. I know that assurance of the presence of something that is invisible seems ludicrous. But we are in a time where embracing the dogma that God is still with us no matter what it feels like, in the invisible and unknown, is life-giving.

For those who are first reasonable — those who have never experienced this kind of faith — it's laughable to embrace what we cannot see as 'real.' But we who have come to know who our Creator is

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-- we know. We know that placing our faith, our hopes, our dreams, and our plans in the arms of the One who assures us, just as our ancestors were assured, will truly make all things possible -- even the creation of something brand new and beautiful from things invisible.

Maybe it's time, then, to look ahead at things we cannot see, and know that God is doing something — creating, stirring, moving, and welcoming us into what is known to God and unknown to us, in the faith and with the assurance that God is with us.

Be blessed and stay well,
Rev. Sara

Immigrant Relief Fund Update

by Joni Laney



Thanks to Trinity UMC, the Immigrant Relief Fund has been able to raise over \$20,000 for families who are struggling during this pandemic. We disbursed all of the funds to over 100 families, hoping to help them with rent and utility payments and medical bills. A number of the families have been stricken with COVID-19, so the cash gifts have helped them weather this difficult time. Trinity made it possible to get the money to families quickly, thanks particularly to the hard work of Rosemary Potter and the folks at Cadence Bank.

We are continuing to raise money for the 40 families still waiting for financial relief. None of them have received stimulus checks and many have lost their jobs. Please keep the undocumented families in your prayers. Many of them attend El Redentor Church, which is a Spanish-speaking United Methodist congregation. They are our brothers and sisters in Christ.

BINGHAMPTON FOOD PANTRY



**FEED THE
HUNGRY**

Fishes and Loaves Food Pantry at Binghampton UMM, 258 N. Merton St., is open on Tuesdays and Fridays from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. for distribution of fresh fruits and vegetables....people can come as often as they want for these.

Once a month, persons can request an emergency food bag (canned goods, peanut butter, cereal, rice, dried beans, soup, etc). Neither of these options require any proof of residency or need.....you ask, you receive. Individuals and families who need an emergency food bag can call Michael Anderson at (901) 503-2748.

Trinity members: please contact Debby Marston at (901) 274-6895 or office@trinityumcmemphis.org to ask about the next opportunity to

bring staple items for Binghampton UMM's food pantry. We can wear masks and practice social distancing while still partnering in this vital ministry to the poor. A donation in the form of a check written to Trinity UMC, with "Fishes & Loaves" on the memo line, will also help keep the food pantry well stocked and will be very much appreciated.

Teaching Scripture via Zoom

This morning, as I was reading this week's lectionary text from Genesis 22:1-14, the story of God's testing of Abraham with the command to sacrifice his son Isaac, I remembered with a smile an incident from years ago. I had been asked to do the Children's Time in worship, specifically to dramatize this Genesis passage. I had recruited a father and son to play the parts of Abraham and Isaac. I had written a script for them, and in conversations with the dad, I had been assured that they had everything well in hand. The big day came, and we were in the middle of our play, when all of a sudden things quite literally came to a standstill. The child had very diligently memorized his part and knew it word-for-word, movement-by-movement, and was doing a fine job. Dad, however, had been adlibbing his part all along. The son, A+ student that he was, was waiting for the correct words to prompt his next move in the play, which was to go willingly with his father to the altar upon which he was to be sacrificed. When those words did not come from his dad as expected, he refused to budge. He stared at his dad in silence for a few seconds and then very disapprovingly said (not in a stage whisper, but very clearly in the hearing of all assembled), "You were supposed to say 'God himself will provide the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.'" After a brief tug of war, the two finally moved on to the other moment of truth - the real one, when the angel of the Lord released Abraham from his obligation and God did indeed provide the lamb for the sacrifice. The play was eventually completed (to everyone's immense relief), and my heartbeat returned to normal.

This is a real-life parable that relates to times in which things just don't seem to follow the script. I realize that this applies to all of us in our current situation with the Coronavirus, but it is very much a part of the faith lives of those of us who are attempting to do children's ministries in a very new and different way. I'm supposed to be the "host" for our Zoom meetings, but more than once, I have found myself in a "meeting room" by myself, wondering where everyone else is, while they are in a "room" somewhere else, "waiting" to be let in to the correct "meeting room." Eventually, I get in the right place, and so do they, but it's a challenge, to say the least. For our Zoom meetings, we have quite literally been scripting our sessions, including times that everyone's mic (formally known as a mike) is to be on or off, times that one or two mics are on, etc. We can't sing a song together because everyone's internet speed is different, and we sound like a gaggle of geese. We're constantly working on ways that we can overcome challenges such as these. We spend hours planning for a 40-45 minute session with the kids, and afterwards we're saying to one another "What just happened here?" because things just don't seem to turn out the way we expected. So back to the drawing board we go.

I must tell you, though, that despite our limitations, God does indeed provide. Our children have been remarkably patient with us; most of them know far more than we adult leaders do about the internet. And we are learning, slowly but surely, what works and doesn't work. We miss being up close and personal with our kids. We miss being able to use our hands-on materials and activities that have been such a big part of our Sunday school lessons. But we have had more children in attendance at the online sessions than we usually had at a regular Sunday school session. We have been greatly blessed with parents and grandparents who make sure that their kids get on the computer for our meetings, and some have volunteered to help coordinate art projects and other things.

We have so very much for which to be thankful and so much more to learn. That, my friends, is nothing new. In fact, that is the "normal" for those of us who are teachers of children. Thanks be to God!

—Irene Dycus

. . . from Bishop McAlilly's blog

May 29, 2020

In January I was privileged to visit the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, Alabama. It is the nation's first memorial dedicated to the legacy of enslaved black people, people terrorized by lynching, African Americans humiliated by racial segregation and Jim Crow, and people of color burdened with contemporary presumptions of guilt and police violence. The memorial structure is constructed with over 800 steel monuments, one for each county in the United States where a racial terror lynching took place. The names of the lynching victims are engraved on the columns.

Among the first names that I saw were Calvin McDowell, Thomas Moss, and Henry Stewart, three men who were lynched in Shelby County, Tennessee. As I made my way through the memorial, I found — Davis and Harvey Mayberry who were lynched in Lee County, Mississippi, the county of my birth. Historical records did not include the first name for — Davis, but a child of God, nonetheless.

County after county, state after state, name after name after name. **Four thousand and seventy-five lynchings** are documented in twelve states between 1877 and 1950. There was a spiritual and moral crisis in our land.

There **IS STILL** a spiritual and moral crisis in our land.

As a white man of privilege, I have no idea what it is like for my black brothers and sisters to daily worry about their children, who, simply because of the color of their skin, live in fear that one of their children could die a senseless death. I listen. I seek understanding. But the truth is: I do not have to live with the trauma and fear, the emotional and psychological impacts of racism.

If you are a white person think about what it would be like to have that fear, that stress every day of your life. Alisha Moreland-Capua, executive director of Oregon Health & Science University's Avel Gordly Center for Healing, which focuses on culturally sensitive care for the African American community said: "The emotional and psychological impact of racism means acutely, every day, being reminded that you are not enough, being reminded that you are not seen, being reminded that you are not valued, being reminded that you are not a citizen, being reminded that humanity is not something that applies to you."

When Covid-19 came on our radar three months ago, we had no idea it would include a racial disparity in those who would become ill and bear the most deaths.

Some have suggested that another pandemic we face is the sin of racism. On that cold January day, I read name after name of just some of the **four thousand and seventy-five** lynching victims.

Today, we have our own tragic list. George Floyd. Ahmaud Arbery. Breonna Taylor. Eric Garner. Philando Castile. Trayvon Martin. And so many more. There is grief among us because of the sin of racism.

I ask myself, I ask you, what is the response for people of faith? In particular, what do the people called Methodist, followers of Jesus, do in the face of the rise of the pandemic of racism. My colleague Bishop Bruce Ough suggests that "we are compelled to address this pandemic with the same intensity and intentionality with which we are addressing COVID-19." With Bishop Ough, here is one beginning response:

- First, we name the sin: racism.
- Second, we confess our own participation in perpetuating this sin and our complicity in it.
- Third, we stand against any and all expressions of racism and white supremacy, beginning with the racial, cultural, and class disparities in our state and country that are highlighted by the coronavirus pandemic.
- Fourth, we sound the clarion call for the eradication of racism. We challenge governmental leaders who fan the flames of racial division for political gain.
- Fifth, we examine our own attitudes and actions; all change begins with transformed hearts continually yielding to the
- righteousness and love of God.

Bishop Ough concludes: "Let us not turn away or ignore the disease that has been tearing our country apart and destroying lives for centuries. This disease—the sin of racism and white supremacy—denies the teachings of Jesus and our common, created humanity. Let us renew our efforts to eradicate the disease that truly threatens our ideals and the lives, livelihoods, and dignity of so many of our neighbors."

We are a long way away from the vision of the Beloved Community about which Martin Luther King taught. In this particular part of God's kingdom, may our hearts and minds be united as we seek to create a more just, human and Christ embodied world. If it is to be so, it begins with you and me. Now.

In the midst of this strange season of Covid-19, this is our moral imperative.

May Christ show us the way.

Bishop McAlilly

Memorials & Honorariums

Memorials have been received

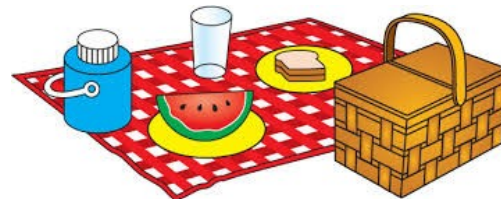
In memory of Mary Ellen Koehler from an anonymous donor

In memory of Bill Brown from an anonymous donor

In memory of Eddie Walton from Wilma Bickers

In memory of Bill Brown from Carey & Carol Miller

In memory of Eddie Walton from Terre & Hardy Harris



July 1	Lois Young
July 2	Jamie Skjoldager
July 6	Sara Goff
July 7	Julie McMahan
July 10	Joey Hopper
July 11	Laura Finch
July 12	Elizabeth Hopper
July 13	Maggi Comes
July 15	Aiden Tate
July 16	Ron Raybuck

July 18	Elaine Amis
July 20	Connie Johns
July 22	Dorothy Sue Smith
July 22	Krissi Moore
July 23	Rod Maddox
July 25	Richard Ashley
July 26	Madeleine Edwards
July 26	Steve Humbert
July 27	Mike Potter
July 28	Sam Goff

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; prayers for our country, that truth and justice will prevail; 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.

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 adjust to being home schooled and for their peace of mind during the current crisis; 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, continuing treatment for brain tumor

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

Katie, young mother of an infant & toddler, in abusive relationship and suffering from major depression
(concern shared by **Chris Glover**)

Jacob Foreman, son of **Caley & Alyson**, diagnosed with ENS & undergoing treatment; prayers still appreciated

Gene Opel, weak, but in good spirits; **Irene Opel**, physically frail with ongoing health concerns; **Anita Bunn** as she cares for them

Nancy Rankin and her sister, **Betty Bell**, as they grieve the loss of their sister **Mary Ellen Koehler**.

Albert Seals, on dialysis and being treated for colon cancer (our custodian **Lisa Seal's** father)

A praise! As of June 10th, **Chris Glover** is off her walker and able to drive.

Maggi Comes, diagnosed with pneumonia earlier this month

Elwood Oliver, husband of one of Maggi Comes' co-workers, still in ICU, but now off ventilator and sedation after two weeks. He is responsive to physical & speech therapy following 3 strokes.

For the family of **Rev. Eddie Walton**, who died on June 6th.

Valerie Coats, scheduled for shoulder replacement surgery on July 2nd

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.)*