

**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.**



## State of the United Methodist Church



*Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can.* — John Wesley

If you're hoping for something inspiring in this submission to the newsletter, this isn't that kind of article, unless it inspires you to recall your United Methodist roots, what drew you to the Church to begin with, and what has continued to draw you to it. Either way, I find it important to let

you know where the church "is" right now, as best I can describe.

A few articles ago, I used the word 'liminal,' and that was intentional. It's been a word our Bishop has thrown around for the last couple of years and it describes where we are (perhaps where we always are) in many ways. A liminal place is an in-between. In the context with which it is almost always used, a liminal place is an in-between place without a definite destination. We are in-between what has clearly been and what isn't so clearly next. That is the United Methodist Church right now.

For as long as I can remember (and, for context, you may recall that I'm 37 years old) the UMC has been on the cusp of what is next. We've moved from worship style to worship style, like any other protestant church. It's not about that, though. We've maintained our bold stances on social issues — the bold issues that, through time, have really made us who we are. We were among the first Christian sects to denounce racism and join in the fight for equality. We were among the first sects of Christendom to ordain women. Our Social Principles are staggeringly progressive both for the time they were written and (since they are still being written and amended today) for the time we are in. UM's have been at the forefront of social change since Methodism's inception, and that is how John Wesley would've had it. Doing all the good we can, while almost never the popular choice, has always been the way of the Methodist.

And, just as it has been for every protestant denomination, change has taken time and has been a fight. That is where we are now — amidst the fight for inclusion. Our talks about equality stretch far beyond our home at 1738 Galloway and, as these things go no matter where you are, it has caused both social and theological division.

I have said it for a while and will continue to do so; the Church is in schism and it will not be a split down the middle (as American politics would indicate). It will be a splinter and the 'United' in United Methodism may not withstand the force that is disagreement.

At the beginning of May, the Global Methodist Church launched. The Global Methodist Church mirrors other protestant denominations more closely than it does Wesleyan Methodism. That church will hold fast to values, principles, and belief systems that stretch backward in time to something that hasn't been for quite a while. Beyond the labels that are conservative and liberal or progressive and traditional, this sect of Methodism (if they are that) is one that will value Biblical literalism and inerrancy above and over all else, prioritizing that literalism and inerrancy over doing no harm, doing good, and attending to the ordinances (loving) God. We will soon find that this is where the heart of some of our churches truly lies.

At this year's Annual Conference — a historic one, for it is the first gathering of the Tennessee/West Kentucky Annual Conference — some 60 of our churches will disaffiliate from United Methodism. Some of

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those churches will be leaving to join the Global Methodist Church. Others will leave to become some form of independent church (whether Methodist or something else). The path to disaffiliation is lengthy and strenuous, and we will find that this has been in the works for many of these congregations for some time. In many ways this will leave an open and painful wound in our conference. In some other ways it will feel freeing and liberating both for those who leave and us who will stay within the United Methodist connection. It will mean a shift in how we operate that, in some ways, is yet to be discovered. It will make smaller the pool of clergy willing and available to serve, as some will retire, some will take early retirement, and some will leave the UMC with those churches who disaffiliate.

It will effect Trinity, in time — at least, I think it will. Remember, liminal spaces don't always allow for a clear vision of what is next. But, one thing I know for sure is this: in this liminal space, we may not know where we are going, but we know that we are not alone. We are in the season of Pentecost and there is no better time to recall that the Spirit of God is with us. The Spirit of God is also in whatever is next and, as Methodists, we might should expect to feel our hearts strangely warmed again, as they were some time ago.

If you have questions about what's happening in the greater Church, I may or may not have answers, but I can promise that, if I don't have the answer, I can find it. Please don't hesitate to ask. Know that in the days to come, as I recall and reclaim all the reasons why I became a United Methodist, that I pray you can as well. Remember what brought you here, embrace what keeps you here, and pray about all the ways God is preparing us for what's coming. The Kingdom isn't yet and there is still 'good' to be accomplished.

Midtown for 'Good,'  
Rev. Sara

## Learning from the Past

By Kay Jordan

When we look back at the history of enslaved people in the United States, of the ways church-going folks justified the enslavement of other human beings, we are ashamed and repentant. Today we understand that those church-going folks were wrong. We almost can't believe they thought "owning" other human beings was justified, right, necessary. When we look back at the attempts to erase the culture of the children of many Native tribes in church-sponsored boarding schools in the 18<sup>th</sup> through the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, we flinch. Today we understand that those churchgoers who supported beating "the Indian" out of children were wrong. When we read the history of the internment of U.S. citizens of Japanese descent during World War II being accepted as necessary by so many church-going folks, we almost can't believe it. We can't believe they thought imprisonment of these fellow citizens was right and necessary; we are ashamed and repentant.

Who are we, good church-going folks, treating wrongly today? Who will our children or grandchildren see us as having mistreated? What are we doing that will make them ashamed of us, and repentant? I am becoming increasingly sure that it is our marginalizing and maligning of our LGBTQ+ neighbors for which we will be judged.



## Learn by **DOING**.



My 5-year-old granddaughter Nora has a wonderful preschool teacher. Close to Easter, when I was visiting my family in their home, Nora surprised us by telling us the Easter story. She did not learn this in Sunday School because she has not been attending while we have held our class sessions on Zoom. She learned it in the Owl Class at Lindenwood Daycare. During the Easter service, my Memphis family's first time to attend Trinity

Church in over two years, Nora, although she did not know any of the hymns, sang along. She was one beat behind the whole time, like a mini echo.

One day, soon after my first cataract surgery, I took Nora to school because her mom was out of town for work. When we came into the classroom, Ms. Margaret Ann, her teacher, said to me, "We prayed for you the other day in our class. Nora told us you were having eye surgery, and we prayed for your healing." The following Sunday after that was Trinity's outdoor worship event, in preparation for which several of our Sunday School children, including Nora and big sis Lila, had painted prayer rocks. The next time that I took Nora to her preschool class, she proudly gave Ms. Margaret Ann one of the prayer rocks that she had painted. Ms. Margaret Ann promptly showed the children in the classroom the prayer rock and showed them how you held it in your hand as you prayed. It was what's known as a "teachable moment," and that wonderful teacher, who knows how children best learn, took advantage of it to encourage the children of her class to learn something valuable.

Nora and Lila have been coming to church since the Sunday that the children began painting the prayer rocks. Pastor Sara pressed them into service to help with communion on that first Sunday. They proudly assumed their responsibilities and later told me they liked being a part of the service. During the outdoor worship, Nora participated in the discussion with Pastor Sara. Of course, she was ready to go home about twenty minutes before the service was over (and let me know that several times), but she hung in there. She and Lila were tapped to take up the offering during that service. She trudged along behind her big sister that time, as if she were in hopes of gleaning the fields, until I redirected her to the other side of the assembled group.

Last Sunday was Pentecost Sunday. Lila and Nora and I sat at the back of the Worship Center at the big round table designated for children. Nora once again sang along, one beat behind and occasionally humming when there was no music being played or sung. She also did a little bit of dancing, which was visible, I'm sure, to Pastor Sara and the choir, with some lovely pirouettes (or maybe it was slow-motion Taekwondo). I was finally successful in getting her to sit in my lap. Once again, it was Communion Sunday. Lila and Nora and I were the last in line, and both girls soberly opened their communion elements by themselves. Then Nora made hers last as if it were a full-course dinner. (I remembered her father's taking communion on the first Sunday he sat in worship with his father, big brother, and me. The memorable thing about this was the following Sunday, when he turned to me and said very seriously, "Aren't we going to have snack today?") Now...back to the future of the church...Nora wanted to go downstairs to play with the toys, but she knew she and Lila were to help me hand out ice cream cups to the congregation after the conclusion of the worship service because we wanted to celebrate the church's birthday in a special way. So, once again, she hung in there.

Nora's learning by doing. That's how children learn best. That's also how adults learn best, believe it or not, most especially when it comes to faith matters. No one gets it right immediately. It's something that takes a lifetime of practice. We just have to hang in there.

Peace and love,  
Irene

*(See page 5 for some special artwork by Cooper & Aiden.)*



## TRINOTES MAILING LIST

We are in the process of updating our mailing list for our print newsletter, *Trinotes*. If you are currently receiving the ENews via your e-mail address, you will have online access to *Trinotes* by means of a link to this publication on our website. Please call or e-mail the church office at 901-274-6895 or [office@trinityumcmemphis.org](mailto:office@trinityumcmemphis.org) with instructions as to which publication you wish to receive. If you want the ENews and *Trinotes*, we will be happy to send you both.

## TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

WE ENVISION A  
RADICALLY LOVING COMMUNITY  
WHERE EVERYONE BELONGS,  
EVERYONE IS SUPPORTED,  
AND NO ONE IS ALONE.

TRINITY UMC MEMPHIS



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.

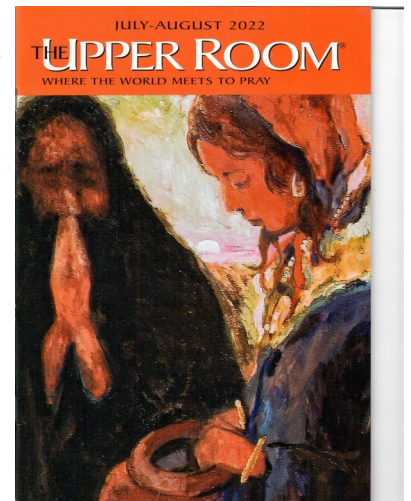
TRINITY UMC MEMPHIS



June 8	Nancy Maddox
June 9	Gene Opel
June 12	Marc Taylor
June 18	Audrey Webster
June 18	James Webster
June 19	Sam Comes
June 21	Sandy Guntharp
June 30	Eddie Ramsey

## THE UPPER ROOM

The July/August *Upper Room* is on display at the reception desk just outside the Worship Center. Feel free to pick up a copy when you come for worship on Sunday. If you need to have one mailed to you and aren't on the regular *Upper Room* mailing list, call the church office at 901-274-6895 or send an e-mail to [office@trinityumcmemphis.org](mailto:office@trinityumcmemphis.org) with your request. Be sure to specify the font size: regular or large print.



## FAITH CHALLENGES

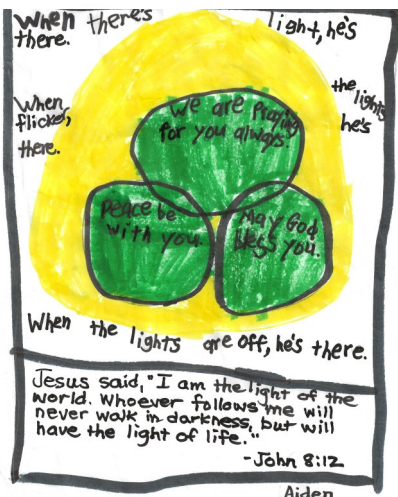


Beginning Wednesday, July 6, a small group discussion experience on Faith Challenges will be offered at Trinity. Given the national and international issues of violence, war, the Covid Pandemic, polarization, financial constraints, and personal and corporate mental health difficulties, faith questions and resources are important for us.

We will explore faith challenges in six sessions. The group will meet each Wednesday from July 6 through August 10 in the 2nd floor Youth Room from 10:00– 11:15 a.m.

Faith challenges will be examined through the following session topics: “Beliefs and Trust,” “Division and Unity,” “Brokenness and Forgiveness,” “Violence and Peace,” “Despair and Hope,” and “Time and Eternity.”

Please join us as you are able. Call or email Craig Jordan with your questions about the group experience (662-429-0158 or [jordanck2@gmail.com](mailto:jordanck2@gmail.com)).



## Welcome to The Lab School

Trinity UMC is now providing classroom and office space to a new, innovative school founded by Coi Morrison, who, with two other guides, Sarah Hooker and Mohogany Guinn, will help students explore what may seem to those of

us raised in a conventional public school environment as, well, an unconventional approach to learning. *“The Lab School of Memphis cultivates community in a mixed-age, learner-driven environment that centers and affirms learner identity, strengths and interests.”*

The school is affiliated with Acton Academy and started by enrolling young people between ages 3 and 9 years for the 2021-2022 school year. As the founding group matures, they will grow to studios serving elementary, middle, and high school.

You can learn more about their philosophy and approach to education by going to their website at:

<https://thelabschoolofmemphis.com/>.

Welcome to Trinity, Coi, Sarah, and Mohogany!



## PRAYER CONCERNS

**Our country and the world** - 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 still struggle 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 in person and 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

**Kanyon Glover**, pray for his speech therapy and the use of his left arm (due to a stroke)

Chris Glover's sister, **Carol**, still in physical therapy following a fall in her yard

**Bobby Glover**, experiencing difficulties with housing

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

**Gene & Irene Opel**, for their continued enjoyment of their life together and for their general health

**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 back problem, receiving therapy in preparation for extended treatment; grieving loss of family members

**George Marston**, still undergoing dialysis; congestive heart failure, but heart function improved

For **Living Word Christian Church** and their pastor, **Rev. Kyle Dearen**, as they worship and do ministry here on the campus of Trinity UMC.

**Rev. Dr. Brittany Meeks**, as she recovers from surgery.

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