

# Trinotes

August 24, 2022

**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.**



## TOWN HALL MEETING SEPTEMBER 28th

Following worship August 28th, we will have a brief Town Hall meeting to further discuss what it means for Trinity to become a reconciling church. After worship September 11th, we will gather to take a final vote. Please take a look at the "This-Not-That" found on page 5 before you attend either meeting. We hope you'll make plans to participate.



From  
the desk  
of...  
The Rev.

## Schism, Unity, and Why on Earth Was I at That Retreat?!

*For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Jeremiah 29:11*

I spent much of last week in Nashville at the Opryland Hotel and Convention Center for a retreat I was asked to attend. I am a year three, Residency in Ministry (RIM) leader. What that means is that it's my job to get residents in ministry, in their last year of the program, to their interviews with the Board of Ordained Ministry (affectionately referred to as BoOM for reasons I'll leave you to surmise). It isn't my job to get them ordained. It's simply my job to make sure they are prepared for the interviews.

I wasn't sure why I was at the retreat though. It wasn't about residency, but the residents were there. The cabinet of the Tennessee/Western Kentucky Conference was there. The bishop would've been there, but he had covid. A 'cohort' of other clergy from across the conference was there. To be honest, it confused me. I wasn't sure why I was there, and I wasn't even sure what it was really about, and if I were really honest, I'd say that I still have little clue.

It DID pose the opportunity for us (the Rev. Judi Hoffman, my counterpart in this endeavor, and me) to spend time with our residents. Unlike other residency classes, we haven't been walking with them since their first year. They began this process amid covid. Their story is different and, I think at least, they need us.

Again, though, the retreat wasn't about residency. It wasn't about ordination. There was a lot of contemporary Christian music. We talked a bit about leadership styles. Again, I cannot figure out exactly why I was there. But I was there.

I was there and I tried to sing the contemporary Christian music (which wasn't bad, but was theologically.....challenging). I tried to engage in the contemplative prayer we did, but that is not my forte at all. I tried to be present, but I did tell the office that I would make myself available for needs. I struggled. I sat for three days and I struggled.

But toward the end, we were given one question that seemed to engage everyone there. It wasn't a positive question, but we all wanted to talk about it. Indirectly, the question was about church schism. I was disgruntled as the conversation began, probably because I was frustrated over my confusion as to why I was

*(continued on page 2)*

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present at all, but as the conversation shaped, and I heard reflections that truly affected my perspective, I gave thanks to God.

I'd purposely situated myself awkwardly in the center of a table of clergy about my age (because we so rarely see one-another), all of whom were from the legacy Tennessee Annual Conference and none of whom I previously knew, patting myself on the back for sitting with total strangers with whom I am to be in covenant relationship. I knew this was dangerous, especially if we were going to discuss the splintering of the church. But, dangerous turned to holy, when we, somewhat unconsciously, invited the Holy Spirit to enter the conversation.

Two of the clergy present were a part of a church getting ready to disaffiliate. I ached for them. One is preparing to jump ship from the church to stay in the denomination and the other is still weighing things. Several others are just coming into ministry. I ached for them as well. What a hard time to be committing yourself to something. Here's your calling. Come and grab it. The infrastructure is....precarious at the moment and likely won't settle until you're of retirement age. Another was much like me — diehard United Methodist — will be playing cello on the deck of the sinking United Methodist ship if or whenever it sinks — feet firmly planted.

We all came from very different places, but we all had two things in common. The first was that what's happening hurts each of us. None of us knew, when we said, "Yes!" to God, that we'd be entering such muddy waters. None of us knew that we'd make deep and abiding relationships with others who'd eventually kick the dust from the sandals they were wearing as they moved on to....well, you fill in the blank.

The second is that we each wanted to vision a possibility of what a church might look like filled with people of **differing thoughts** and **still accomplishing the goal of the great commission**, and that day, and in those moments, we did. We helped to envision a church, diverse in thought, in gifts, and in all things — the body of Christ — that didn't and wouldn't deviate from its mission — not a church divided, but a church diverse, where opposing opinions matter but do not define, draw lines, or debilitate the body — the *ecclesia* — stronger together and able to be all things to all people, changing the world.

It should've been a hard conversation. In some ways it was. But it was a necessary reminder, which we needed. It was a reminder that unity is possible when we are people of faith and unity of Spirit and that's what's going to keeps us moving toward a Kingdom and Kingdom ethic. What's the saying? United we stand; divided we fall?

The strength of the United Methodist Church has always been that we are an international, connectional church system that spans the globe — that we are never in this mission alone, and that we are filled with all sorts of people who have been and always will have a seat at, a voice in, and ownership of the table. That is strength. That is perseverance. That is hope.

In the Grip of God's Grace,

## MEMORIALS AND HONORARIUMS

GIFTS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED IN MEMORY OF

**ELAINE AMIS** FROM SUE & MARC TAYLOR

**ELAINE AMIS** FROM BETTY LANDERS

**ELAINE AMIS** FROM ROBERT & SADIE AMIS

**ELAINE AMIS** FROM MIA THOMPSON

A GIFT HAS BEEN RECEIVED IN HONOR OF

**CONNIE JOHNS** FROM SUE AND MARC TAYLOR



## THE GREAT TUNA CHALLENGE, continued...

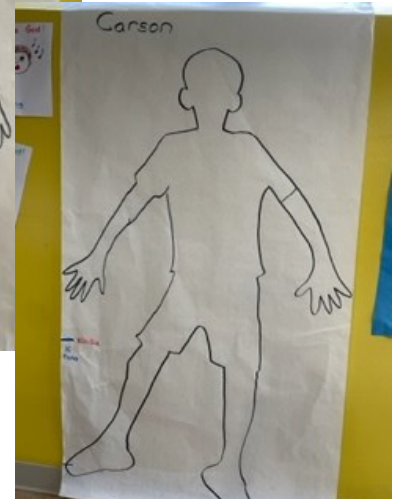
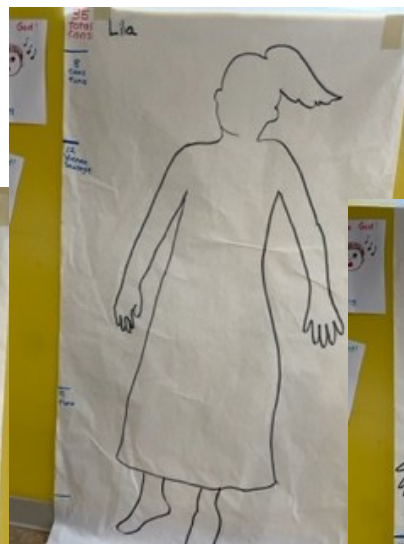
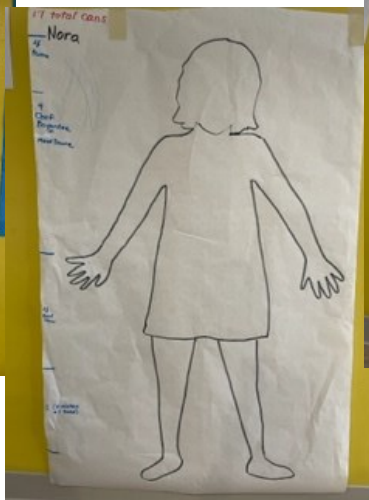
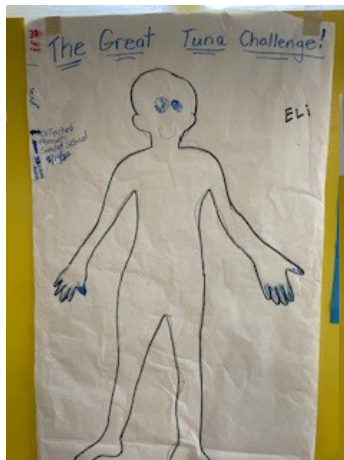
In our article about the Children's Sunday School Class article in the last Trinotes, we issued an invitation to our Trinity Church Family to participate in THE GREAT TUNA CHALLENGE with us. You were asked to bring cans of tuna or other canned meat for the two food pantries that our church supports: our own Tiny Pantry and the Fishes and Loaves Food Pantry operated by our friends at Binghampton United Methodist Mission. We have drawn the outlines of the elementary children in our Sunday School Class and are hoping to collect enough cans to reach all their heights, beginning with Eli, our youngest five-year-old kindergartner, and moving up to the tallest and oldest in our group; that is Cooper, who is our 5th grader. We are off to a wonderful start!

First, we collected cans that, stacked one on another, reached the height of Eli. Then, as we continued to count more cans, we reached Nora's height, and then Lila's. And...we are up to just above knee level on Carson. Are you ready for the number of cans collected so far? Believe it or not, we have a total of 106 cans! We have 82 cans of tuna, 4 cans of chicken, 4 cans of beef stew, 4 cans of Chef Boyardee pasta with meat sauce, and 12 cans of Vienna sausage. Included with this article are pictures of the body outlines of these first four class members, so you can get a good picture of the heights we have achieved (quite literally). Please bring more cans of meat products this week, or if you are ready to move on to something new and different, feel free to bring peanut butter (plastic jars only, no glass please).

The lectionary readings for this week include two scriptures that certainly apply to this current project of our Children's Class. The first is Hebrews 13:2, 16: "Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it...And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased." The second is Luke 14:13-14, where Jesus reminds us, "When you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous." So, come prepared to give, and as you give, we think that you will find that you are also greatly blessed.

Peace and love,

*Irene and Alyson*





## How Bright Is Your Light?

God is the ultimate power source. That having been said, I like to think he has made each of us our own power sources. And how much “power” we apply to his “light” determines the brightness of that internal light.

We are all works in progress. I am, certainly. But my time at Trinity, with you, has been and continues to be reflected in my “light.” There is still much work for me to do to be comfortable with the day I will show my light to the Lord, but with your continued support and help, I know that, when that day comes, my light will be pleasing to God.

Isn't that what we are meant to do? To work with, help each other to be the shining lights he would have us to be? I believe we are meant to be challenged, to hear uncomfortable messages, to deal with heartrending actions of others, to place ourselves in uncomfortable situations. To be sure, if we aren't uncomfortable, at least some of the time, our light will never shine as much as God would have it shine.

Aren't we meant to dig deep into God's word, work hard and diligently in helping others less fortunate, and strive everyday to be worthy of him?

Let us, each and every one, commit to ourselves and each other that we will be “light” that shines as bright as the sun.

May God's will be reflected in that light.

Prayerfully,  
Sam Goff

## 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, folks 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:** The children's Sunday School class is taking the lead in collecting tuna and other sources of protein, See the article on page 3 for details.

You can bring canned goods or other non-perishable items for BUMM's food pantry. A box for donated foodstuffs has been placed in the lobby in front of the reception desk, and you can stack cans in the back of the Worship Center, too. A donation in the form of a check written to Trinity UMC, with “Fishes & Loaves” on the memo line, will help keep the food pantry well stocked and will be very much appreciated. Hunger is an ongoing problem. Let's commit to feeding our neighbors in need!



**IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT**  
**"ALL CHURCH, AFTER CHURCH" MEETING ON**  
**SEPTEMBER 11th TO FINALIZE OUR DECISION ON**  
**BECOMING A RECONCILING CONGREGATION.**

## BECOMING A RECONCILING CHURCH THIS NOT THAT

### The Church Will:

Work to advance justice and inclusion for LGBT+ people in our congregation and community. Make known to our community that we believe LGBT+ persons are of sacred worth to God and our church and that they have a safe place in our space.

### The Church May:

Partner with community organizations that work with the LGBT community. Attend Memphis PRIDE. Adopt signage that makes clear our care and inclusion of LGBT+ persons. Vote on the side of inclusion at Annual Conference.

### The Church Won't:

Work in opposition of the UM Book of Discipline. Marry or ordain those whom the Book of Discipline prohibits us from marrying or ordaining in our church body or building.

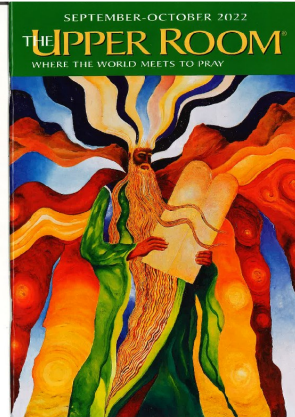
## TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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

TRINITY UMC MEMPHIS



## THE UPPER ROOM



The September/October *Upper Room* is now 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: large or regular. [The July/August *Upper Room* is still available in regular print.]



September 3	Whendy Merryman
September 3	Brad Moritz
September 6	Jamie Windham
September 13	Marty (Mike) Rice
September 14	Kathy Isbell
September 16	Kate Taylor
September 17	Harper Keller
September 20	Charlotte Comes
September 21	Craig Jordan
September 28	Kadynce Hemingway
September 30	Joe Hatter

## 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 and that of all political leaders.

**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 interim District Superintendent, the Rev. Dr. David Weatherly; the family and many friends of the Rev. Dr. Autura Eason-Williams as we grieve

**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; just graduated from high school and making plans for college.

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

**Bobby Glover**, now in permanent housing; sister **Chris** grateful for all your prayers!

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

**Gene Opel**, in Methodist University Hospital with pneumonia, blood clot in lung; for **Irene** while Gene is hospitalized

**David Harrison**, Carol Miller's brother, on dialysis, paralyzed on one side after stroke, asthma & COPD

**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' 97 year old cousin, now residing permanently in rehab center

**Val Coates**, in constant pain and undergoing testing to discover the cause; grieving the loss of her mother, sister, and father this year

**George Marston**, still undergoing dialysis; congestive heart failure, breathing somewhat 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.

**Rosemary Potter**, broken ribs & fractured pelvic bone; in Encompass Rehab until August 30th

**Eddie Ramsey**, seeing doctor for additional health concerns

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