

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.

You Are Autumn

*"And even when the trees have just surrendered to their harvest time;
forfeiting their leaves in mid-September and sending us inside;
still I notice You when change begins and I am braced for colder winds.
I will offer thanks for what has been and what's to come. You are
Autumn." — Nicole Nordeman*

The above is from one of my very favorite songs for nearly 20 years now. In the song, "Every Season," Nicole Nordeman sings us through the seasons in a calendar year from Summer to Spring — the life-cycle of the earth — and draws our attention to the joyous moments and moments of quiet, as well as the vibrancy of life and the solemnity of death. The end is Spring, which is a time of celebration because that is when all that has died is resurrected. The above verse is Autumn, when the aging of the earth becomes apparent and we, looking around at the vibrant colors of the leaves as they prepare to fall, are reminded just how beautiful death can be.

In each verse, Nordeman points to God's work in the created order — something we often miss. Days tick by in rote repetition and we lose sight of the holiness in the pattern around us that is carefully designed. Each step of the cycle works toward a newness that comes after winter. Every moment of the process is perfectly calculated. Flowers die and wilt in such a way that their seeds fall to the ground. What isn't gobbled up by the birds, promise us new life. The birds gobbling part of it up, too, promises us new life. Every step feeds (literally and proverbially) the next, and so life continues and it is all so well-thought-out that there can be little denial that the Creator has played an important part.

I am preparing to celebrate the life of John Stuart this week, and I feel compelled, as I often do in preparing for a service of death and resurrection, to point us toward Ecclesiastes chapter 3. Normally I'd read the first eight verses of that text and move on. Those eight verses talk about there being a season for every matter under heaven. This text has been so celebrated by all manner of people that in the 1960's the Byrds wrote a song about it called "Turn, Turn, Turn." In like manner with the Byrds, I often stop at verse 8 and move on to reflect about there being a time to be born and a time to die and how those who gather to celebrate, well, it's their time to consider resurrection hope. When I do this, though, I miss something.

Verse 11 says, "He has made everything perfect in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart."

The cycle of the seasons isn't the only thing meticulously ordered. We too were created with such great planning, that Spring and resurrection life, is the season to which we are always pointing. Every moment that leads to the newness we are promised in Christ is a stepping stone to the next. Some are bare and quiet — solemn and cold. Some are joy-filled, bright and sunny. Some look glorious and yet are painful. Each point us toward what is next and an end that is really just a new beginning. We were created in hope that someday we would know that time. Thanks be to God.

This is the season of Autumn. The earth is about to show us how beautiful death can be. I pray in this season that we aren't so distracted by other things that we miss it. I pray that we become so enamored in its beauty that we feel compelled to give thanks to the Great Painter for sharing it with us. I pray that we, too, can give thanks for what has been and what's to come.

You are Autumn.

Giving Thanks,
Rev. Sara

[Editor's note...]

It's my responsibility to keep track of prayer concerns for both Trinity UMC and my own congregation, Colonial Cumberland Presbyterian Church. I receive calls, e-mails, text messages, and, occasionally, a written note or card, all asking for prayers. The request is often for the health and well-being of a loved one: a child, parent, sibling, spouse, or close friend. I find it interesting that few people ask for prayers for themselves and wonder why we are so shy of making requests for our own safety, health, or well-being.

I am just as guilty of this very human trait. Since my husband George has been incapacitated, I receive cards, letters, e-mails, and text messages, all telling me that the sender is praying not only for George, but also for me. I'm not sure why I find that so astonishing. I understand why people pray for George, but I am just doing what I love: taking care of my best friend and the love of my life. Could anything be more fulfilling?

My mother took care of my dad during the last few months of his life. He died of cancer three years after receiving a diagnosis of colon cancer. During those three years, he accepted aggressive chemotherapy, radiation, and surgeries as the means of extending his life. He was never in denial, but rather accepted his impending death as part of the human condition and the natural outcome of that cancer diagnosis. For most of those three years, my dad kept up with all the chores necessary to maintain a small farm, in particular his garden (best tomatoes on the planet), orchard, and a large plot of strawberries. (We all love strawberries.) One Saturday in May of 1988, he had all the grandkids out picking strawberries at the crack of dawn, showing them what to pick and what to leave until the next day. He told them that he might not be able to help them the next year, so they needed to pay attention and learn what he could teach them. He died eight months later on January 15, 1989.

I can draw a parallel between my dad and my husband and how they have handled critical illnesses. I remember walking in on my father while he was reading the book of Job. I chastised him, asking why he was reading such a depressing book. He looked at me in surprise and told me that he found it very comforting. He was right. I was wrong. I later led a Bible study on Job and found (and find) great comfort in Job 19:25-27: *"For I know that my Redeemer lives, and that at the last he will stand upon the earth; and after my skin has been thus destroyed, then in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see on my side, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. My heart faints within me!"*

Back in May of this year, George was hospitalized for a heart catheterization, received two stents, and stayed on to have his first dialysis treatment on May 7th. His diagnoses were end-stage kidney disease and congestive heart failure. He taught Sunday School from his hospital bed on May 9th.

I honor these two men because of my love for them, but also for the Christian example they set for their children and grandchildren (and in George's case, great-grandchildren). Regardless of how ill my father felt, he kept working. I think he took to heart Paul's teaching about work, that it was something he could offer to God, and that work was just a good thing to do. At the end of his life, he was in church whenever the doors were open (sometimes being the guy who unlocked the doors). George is an ordained elder in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and has been for over 60 years. He has served as Stated Clerk of the Session at Colonial CPC for many years. He served breakfast to kids at Colonial's summer day camp for ten or more years, every weekday in June and July. He chaired West Tennessee Presbytery's Judiciary Committee for nine years (supposedly the maximum time allowed), then another nine years because no one else wanted the job. He has been a commissioner to the denomination's General Assembly. He also served a few years with another man as volunteer janitor at Colonial CPC, so he cleaned a lot of toilets. He built outhouses on the Lakota Indian Reservation at Pine Ridge, South Dakota and pews for the Choctaws in Choctaw Presbytery, Oklahoma.

The picture I've painted above started out to be about prayer and ended up as a tribute to two men for whom I have prayed and for whom others have prayed. My prayer for you is that you lift up your own voices and hearts in prayer for those saints who have inspired you with the holiness of their Christian example. We are surrounded by that great cloud of witnesses, those who have dedicated their lives and service to God. Let's honor them while we can.



Forgiveness

Ahh...Joseph, who is both a dreamer of dreams and an interpreter of dreams. In our Children's Sunday School Class, we are following Joseph's progression from a proud youth with these amazing gifts to a wise man who acknowledges that these gifts are God-given ones. Therefore, it is God to whom he gives the glory for the good things his gifts accomplish for so many people. From being cruelly sold into slavery by his brothers to being unfairly

imprisoned in Egypt for something he did not do, Joseph encounters painful and seemingly hopeless situations. Yet his God-given gifts eventually lead to his being second-in-command to Pharaoh, king of Egypt, through which position he ensures that the Egyptian people, as well as many others, are taken care of in years of famine. In this week's study, Joseph does not know that events will soon take place that will give him and his brothers a chance to reconcile.

RECONCILIATION is the faith word for our current study; it means "to bring peace between persons who have disagreed." Forgiveness is an essential ingredient in reconciliation. To **FORGIVE** means "to let go of any bad feelings about another person after that person has hurt you." Forgiveness can take a very long time. It may take years to work through the process of reconciling. In the story of Joseph and his brothers, we find that reconciliation is achieved because both sides finally ask for and give forgiveness.

Joseph is able to speak these words to his brothers and truly mean them: "You meant it for evil; God meant it for good." A study note in *The Wesley Study Bible* tells us that this story "teaches that all things can indeed work together for good for those who love God, that any given moment is not the last moment, that life in God's hands has forward movement and holds the possibility for restoration (resurrection?) on the other side of desperate circumstances."

How do we seek to restore peace when confronted with conflict? Our Children's Class invites you to join us in a spiritual practice that our curriculum recommends for both adults and children. When confronted with conflict this week (and beyond), let's all do our best to practice the three S's:

Stop before you speak.

Speak with words of kindness.

Say you are sorry.

This is reminiscent of James 1:19: "Let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; for your anger does not produce God's righteousness." **God's Word** from both the Old Testament and the New Testament reminds us how we can **LIVE PEACE** through **our words**.

NOTE: Look for some of our children's illustrations of their dreams for God's world in this issue. (see page 4)

Trinity United Methodist Church

CHARGE CONFERENCE 2021

October 3rd, 4:00 via Zoom

Charge Conference 2021

Trinity folks, it's charge conference season again. This year our charge conference is October 3rd at 4:00 in the afternoon via Zoom. This is a cluster charge conference where we will gather with other churches in our close vicinity and discuss the ministry that's taken place the previous year. All of us have spent a year in ministry that has been unlike any other. We will take the time to pray for one another and bless the work that took place to prepare for our conference.

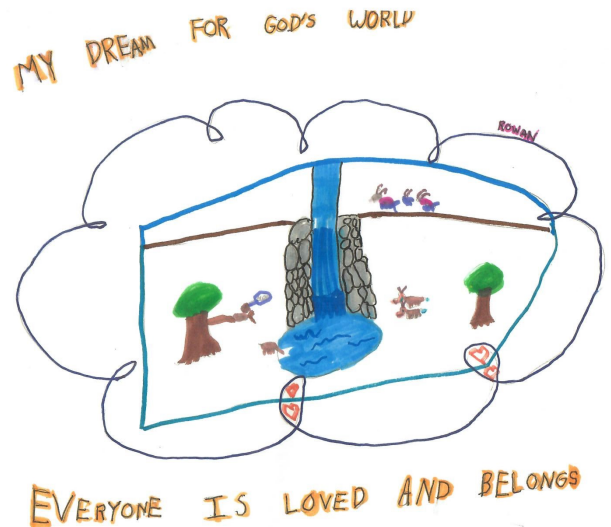
Your lay leadership has been diligently working to have leadership in place for 2022 and those committees

are already complete. Your current committee chairs have faithfully attended to their necessary reports and your pastor is currently dotting i's and crossing t's.

You are invited to attend the charge conference on October 3rd as representatives of Trinity. The link for the meeting will be sent out closer to the meeting date. Please mark your calendar. We hope you make every effort to be present to represent your church family.

Dreams for God's World

(See article on page 3.)



Church Trustees

UPDATE



The Trustees are addressing a number of issues this season. Thanks to Connie Johns for assistance with getting the landscaping around the building and playground in better shape.

Our new sign is up and, as soon as the website listed on it is corrected, it will be a great improvement.

The first part of sidewalk replacement has been completed along Forest Avenue. Next, we will have the sidewalk on North Evergreen replaced. That will be followed by the Galloway side.

To meet District requirements, we will be improving interior and exterior directional and identifying signage. We hope to engage the community in making overdue improvements to the playground. This will include ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) improvements.

Midtown Montessori School will now be leaving in late October. We are considering several ideas for a replacement tenant, including day care.

We will have several new trustees coming on board and will be making that announcement soon.

—Sam Goff, Chairman



September 6	Jamie Windham	September 22	Bennett Brown
September 10	Timothy Taylor	September 22	Craig Jordan
September 13	David Potter	September 22	Virginia Walters
September 13	Marty Rice	September 26	Nancy Rankin
September 14	Kathy Isbell	September 27	Doug Miles
September 16	Kate Taylor	September 28	Kadynce Hemingway
September 17	Harper Keller	September 29	Evelyn Windham
September 17	Jan Bailey Young	September 30	Joe Hatter
September 20	Charlotte Comes		

If any birthdays have been omitted, please send the name and date of birth to office@trinityumcmemphis.org or call the church office at 901-274-6895 and leave a message so we can make that correction.

PRAYER CONCERNS

Our country and the world - for all those in our country and around the world still impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the Delta variant; for Haiti in the aftermath of an earthquake and hurricane; 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 first year 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. 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 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, now 3 years old and doing well: a happy little boy, according to Chris

Donnie Glover, now on oral medication, as well as chemotherapy; needs blood & platelets weekly, but back to driving a truck. (You can't keep a good man down!)

Bobby Glover, Chris' brother, moved to assisted living: pray for his adjustment.

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

Irene Opel is still in a nursing home in Gallaway, TN for rehab, but improving. She has pain in her shoulder due to osteoporosis, so rehab is difficult for her. Her pneumonia is about gone **Gene** is very eager for her to return home. Irene will be 91 years old October 7. Pray that she is home by then. Please pray, as well, for **Anita Bunn**, who is her mother's primary caregiver. (Anita & Gene got to visit Irene Sunday!)

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**, receiving in-home care

Peggy Kinney, Charlotte Comes' 95 year old cousin, now residing permanently in rehab center; had to sell home and store her possessions.

Charles Abraham, now at home and using his new ramp for physical therapy.

Val Coates, serious heart condition; still in pain after shoulder surgery

George Marston, still undergoing dialysis; congestive heart failure; COPD

Nancy Rankin, pancreatic cancer, on chemotherapy; for **Nelda Gray** as she cares for her

The family of **John Stuart**, who passed away peacefully on Thursday, September 16th

Jean Moss, now at Alan Morgan Health Center in Trezevant View Place on Highland, Room 339

Margaret Rucker, Irene Dycus' sister, moved to assisted living

Phil Isbell, fighting Parkinson's Disease, and for **Kathy** as she supports him; Phil to have pacemaker implanted September 22nd

Jim Schaeffer, now at home and having rehab following repair of a broken femur and hip

Kay Jordan, as she recovers from her total knee replacement

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