September 24, 2025

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.

Time to Come Home

"I have told you these things, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world." — John 16:33.

As I write this, there's a gentle rumbling of thunder outside. The clouds make the space darker. There is a downpour of rain, and I give thanks. We've needed rain. We've needed rain pretty badly. The rain cleanses the earth. It washes over the pollen from the ragweed that simply will not give in, as my brood walks around the house sniffling. I'll join them. I'm allergic to Fall.

And still, Fall is my favorite. At some point, the summer weather will relinquish her control over the temperature, and it'll drop. I can pull out the cozy sweaters. There's a smell, with the change of seasons, and the Fall smell is the best. I don't know what it is, but I know it's there.

And it WILL rain more. Inevitably, about the time we leave the house to trick-or-treat, it'll start to rain, and we'll trudge through it, with all of the other neighborhood children and their poor parents, to knock on doors and meet our neighbors again. We don't see or speak to each other enough. We'll commiserate over parenthood.

And there will be a shift in the church calendar. Ordinary time will give way to All Saints and then to Advent. We'll celebrate, together, those who've entered the Church Triumphant ahead of us, and we'll reflect on the life lessons they left us with. Then we'll enter the mystery that is the birth of the Christ-child.

All of this will happen, because it always has. It won't change. In some ways it'll get better. It gets better and better the more we build on it. It'll come, no matter what is happening around us. It'll still come. The sun will still rise and set. The seasons will still change. The church calendar will shift. Life will go on. That is the nature of life. It is the design of Creation.

I hope to pay more attention to it, this year. It's comforting, when other things are not. The consistency of the shift is peace-giving. It is predictable and often marked by our histories that have shaped it, both from the small monotonous things, like changing our wardrobe, to the bigger things like the shift of the liturgical calendar. It is comfortable, because we know what's coming. It is tradition.

For weeks, maybe even months, now, many of you have heard me reflect on what is happening in our world. I have intentionally abandoned sugar-coating or white-washing it. I have been transparent and truthful. I have tried my best to leave what might be interpreted as opinion at the door. I have proclaimed the Gospel — one that is for the poor, the disenfranchised, the beaten and worn people of Jesus' time and ours. It has been uncomfortable, because what's happening around us is unpredictable. It has the vast majority of us in a place of unease. Unease begets worry. Worry often begets irrational moves and choices. In the end, what we experience is chaos. I've reflected on that — the unpredictable chaos we have faced and are facing.

Too little have I come home. You know what I mean. At the end of the sermon we "bring it home," — 'it' being the Good News. We haven't come home to the Good News enough. Like the seasons or the church calendar, for disciples, the Good News is home. It is our place of comfort because it is filled with the promises of a good God who is madly in love with their children. That's us! We haven't come home enough, to the arms of a Jesus who grieves with us, who comforts us in our worry, who compels us to compassion and empathy, and who promises grace abundant when we fall short. We haven't come home enough to the promise that the first shall be last, that the weak will be made strong, and that those who weep shall find comfort. We need to come home.

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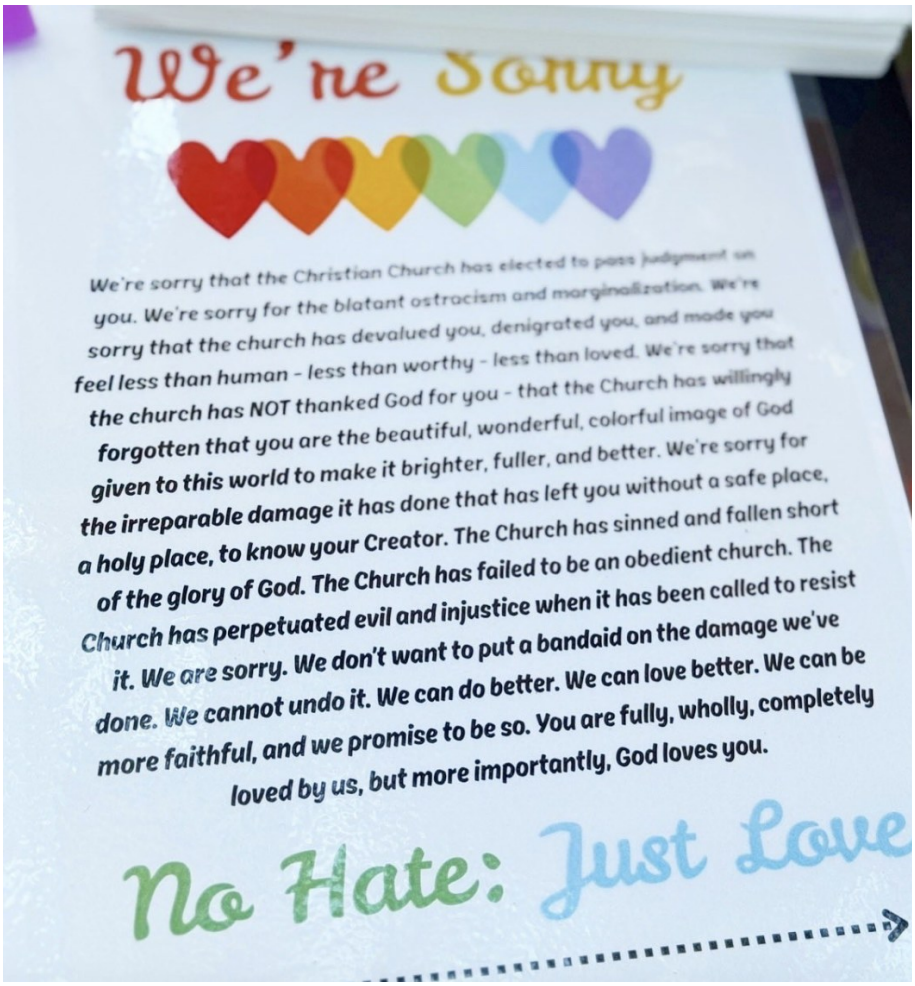
It's raining harder now. I'm still giving thanks. Maybe this rain will wash away more than the pollen. Maybe it'll wash away the worry. Maybe it'll wash away the fear. Maybe it'll wash us clean of all that inhibits our ability to serve fully. Maybe it'll clear a path home.

As the sun sets on one season and rises on another, may you find both the humility and the courage to come home.

Dancing in the rain,

Rev. Sara



We're sorry that the Christian Church has elected to pass judgment on you. We're sorry for the blatant ostracism and marginalization. We're sorry that the church has devalued you, denigrated you, and made you feel less than human - less than worthy - less than loved. We're sorry that the church has NOT thanked God for you - that the Church has willingly forgotten that you are the beautiful, wonderful, colorful image of God given to this world to make it brighter, fuller, and better. We're sorry for the irreparable damage it has done that left you without a safe place, a holy place, to know your Creator. The Church has sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. The Church has failed to be an obedient church. The Church has perpetuated evil and injustice when it has been called to resist it. We are sorry. We don't want to put a bandaid on the damage we've done. We cannot undo it. We can do better. We can love better. We can be more faithful, and we promise to be so. You are fully, wholly, completely loved by us, but, more importantly, God loves you.

Confirmation Class Fall Schedule

October 5: Babylonian Captivity/Prophets

October 19: Rise of Rome/New Testament

November 2: Jesus

November 16: Matthew/Mark

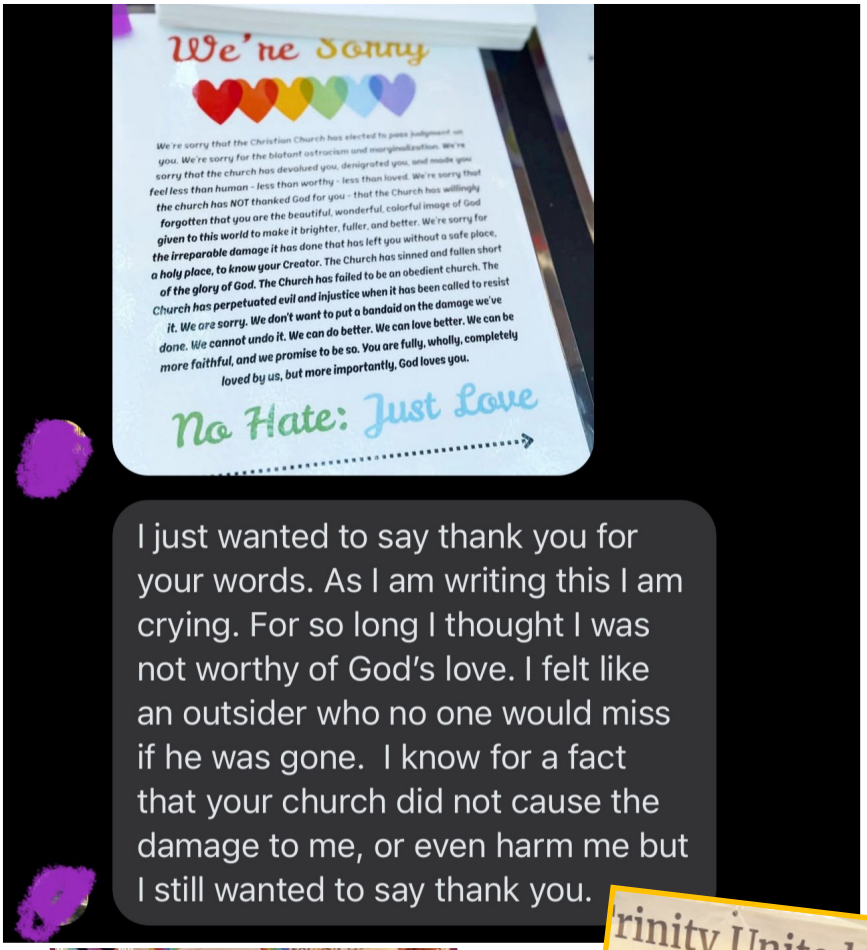
December 14: Luke/John

Why PRIDE?

No one's ever asked me why we go to PRIDE. I've always considered that to be a good thing. You **know** why we go. It is important for us to stretch our arms out as widely as we possibly can to a community of God's children who've historically been hurt by the Christian Church — not OUR church, but the Church, nonetheless. I've always said that we don't have to be the ones who've caused the harm for us to be the ones responsible for helping heal the hurt.

This was our 7th season at Memphis PRIDE-fest. After it being canceled in June due to a torrent of rain and lightning, we were able to participate this year at Overton Park. We had about 10 volunteers from Trinity participate on site. It is my hope in future years that even more of you will join in. Why? Because it is always a blessing to be a part of blessing others.

Take a look at some of the fun we had. Then, take a look at the message the church received via social media. If at any point you think we aren't making a difference, please consider thinking again. Also, it's never too soon to think about NEXT year.



See page 2 for clearer content of "We're Sorry - No Hate: Just Love" flyer pictured above.

Offering Godly Play to our children

by Rebekah Gienapp

In September, we made a significant change in children's Sunday School. We are now following the Godly Play model. Trinity's children (and many of our adults!) already had an introduction to the storytelling of Godly Play through Vacation Bible School and the children's sermons I offered last school year.

It's a joy to see our children get to experience the full depth and breadth of what this Montessori-inspired method has to offer during our Sunday School hour. Finally, they get to touch and work with these materials for more than just a few minutes!

The Godly Play Foundation describes their mission as "making meaning through story, wonder, and play [and] nurturing spiritual lives by honoring the centrality, competency, and capacity of children."

Rather than telling children **what** to think about God, scripture, or the church, Godly Play invites children to **discover** meaning in our sacred stories and traditions. At the same time, the stories we tell, and the language we use to tell them, are carefully chosen so that over time, children become rooted in the language of the Christian faith. We trust that children are able to handle big and sometimes heavy ideas, even death (which a child brought up on their own during our very first session.)

Each Sunday morning, we follow this routine:

- Getting ready with music, deep breathing, or listening to our singing bowl.
- Hearing the story, which is told with beautifully made hands-on material designed for the children to touch. Then we wonder together about what was our favorite part, the most important part, and what part was especially for each of us.
- Choosing our work. Children may choose to explore the day's story with the materials (finally they can touch the desert and walk the People of God through it!) They can also choose from any number of art materials to create something in response to the story. There are not pre-designed crafts as we want the children to explore, discover, and respond to the story's meaning on their own.
- Enjoying our feast and praying. Children take turns serving each other, and as we eat we share our prayer concerns.
- Dismissal to worship with a blessing for each child.

As I write this, we are only two weeks into using Godly Play in Sunday School, but I'm already delighted to see the many ways our children have responded. They have been fascinated by the beautiful gold-edged Bible, and how they can open it "through the front door" (front cover), the "back door" (back cover") or open both doors and "let all the stories out." They have made so many beautiful art expressions of what they are learning and experiencing.

I'm also excited and grateful that in addition to Ms. Irene and Ms. Kathy's continued presence in Sunday School, Adina LaFlamme and Marisa Montgomery have also joined our volunteer team. We can't wait to share more with you about what our children are learning this year.

September Birthdays

Whendy Merriman	September 3
Brad Moritz	September 3
Mike Rice	September 13
Kathy Isbell	September 14
Kate Taylor	September 16
Harper Keller	September 17
Craig Jordan	September 21
Adina LaFlamme	September 23
Louis Hamrick	September 28
Joe Hatter	September 30

October Birthdays

Clara Farabee	October 2
Nora Dycus	October 8
Danielle Wilkerson	October 22
Ellen Weatherly	October 24
Sonnet Booth	October 26
Natalie Stanton	October 27

UWF Update

United Women in Faith

Summer vacation is over, and once again it is time to roll up our sleeves and get back to work. (We've been working steadily with our sleeves rolled down all summer.) UWF will resume our regular monthly potluck meetings in the **Center** on **26 September** at **11:30**. Our program will be from the September-October UPPER ROOM, 24 September "God With Us" entry. Discussion questions can be found on page 75. One dollar for the Tiny Pantry will be much appreciated.

Remember, you need not be a Trinitarian; you need not even be a Methodist; you need only be a woman of faith. Come and be welcome. Bring a friend!

Joan S.

Prayer Concerns

Our country and the world - for resolution of the conflict between our country and Iran; 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, especially for those who lost loved ones in flash flooding in Texas; 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:

Laura Comes Hubbard, incurable multiple myeloma
Betsy Black's friend **Ken Savage**, diagnosed with metastatic cancer
Baby Stella, born 7 weeks early with extra chromosome; developmental problems expected
Sharman Murley & Frank Cantrell's son, **Frank, Jr.**, heart issues
Pam Stafford battling liver disease, surgery postponed after fall & broken hip; husband **Jim Stafford**, dementia; **Whitney**, knee surgery (from Sandy Guntharp)
Elizabeth Hopper, for continued healing following surgery for thyroid cancer
Continued prayers for **Sally Ramsey** and daughter **Sandi**; for Sally's son **Kenny** and his wife **Peggy**'s move to Missouri; for **Seily** as she begins her studies at Austin Peay University
Bobby Glover, Chris's brother, in care for early Alzheimer's
David Chenault: has undergone final skin graft; out of hospital & in rehab
For Sharman Murley's grandsons **Asa** (improved behavior!) and **Eli** (high performing autism diagnosis)
Chris Glover's sister, **Sherry Carruthers**
Seth Norton, Raquel's son, serious ongoing medical concerns; **Raquel**, for her recovery from respiratory issues
Gwen Dodson, bladder cancer, COPD, osteoporosis; cancer treatment
Kanyon Glover, good medical report; no sign of heart rejection
Jacob Foreman, for healing and pain relief
Gene Archer, stomach cancer, surgery did not go as expected; pray for him & his family. His wife **Julia** has MS.
David Harrison, Carol Miller's brother, released by surgeon; wound from amputation is healing well, & he is looking forward to getting his prosthesis. Carey's brother, **Lee Miller**, is recovering from a stroke.
For **Katy Spake**'s recovery from cataract surgery & successful surgery for 2nd eye
Val Coates, for relief of constant pain & healing of serious multiple issues, including depression
Jonathan Goff, back injury; **Karen Barker**, Sara's sister, lung issues
Laura Major Conner, for her physical health and living situation
For our **students, faculty, administrators, & school staff**
For Trinity's new **Youth Group** and **Confirmation Class**, which started September 7th

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