



Trinity United Methodist Church Newsletter



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December 24, 2014

House of Bread

⁴ Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. Luke 2:4-7

Work with your imaginations for a minute. Imagine that all the food in the world came from just one town. Assume that distributing the food is not a problem. Everyone has enough of the food they need to live on, no matter where they live. What would you call this place that is the source for all food? What name would fit? You might name such a town, a town that was the source of all the world's food, the House of Bread or Bethlehem, as it would be said in Hebrew.

Without question, hunger is a problem in the world today even in this country where almost 25% of our children are unsure when they will get their next meal. But hunger is just one problem of many facing the world. Poverty is increasing everywhere. Medical care is unavailable in many parts of the world and available but unaffordable for many in this nation. In the United States, over half a million people, men, women and children are homeless on any given night and over 50,000 of those are veterans; men and women who have placed their lives on the line for this nation but, for whatever reason, have been unable to adjust to the return to civilian life. We continue to wage war on one another and the strong continue to prey on the weak. In short, there is very little in the world today from the standpoint of human relations that would not have been familiar to any person living in First Century Palestine.

So where is the Gospel, the Good News on this 2014th Anniversary of the birth of Christ? If the world is so unchanged after all these years, where is the Good News?

The Good News is still found in that event 2000 years ago. You see, God entered Bethlehem, the House of Bread, at a time when it was under siege. 2000 years ago, Bethlehem lay in the iron grip of an empire that spanned Europe and Northern Africa. Nothing moved across the Roman Empire except at the will of the Romans and their armies. People were dying of disease and hunger, were oppressed by crushing poverty and the strong preyed upon the weak. The Gospel is found in the profession that God came into the midst of that broken world. God did not become flesh and walk among us because of our basic goodness. God did not become flesh because we were so faithful. God became flesh and lived among us because God loves us and because we need that love. Christ walked among us and showed us a way to live, loving God and loving each

other. After 2014 years of poverty, of warfare, of murder and despair, maybe we are just starting to see that the Way of Christ, The Prince of Peace, is the only way we have a hope of living in peace.

Two thousand years ago, in a town called Bethlehem, God created a Living Bethlehem; a living House of Bread. A Bethlehem capable of feeding the whole world; a Bethlehem capable of providing the bread that we need to live. That living house of bread is Jesus Christ who gave his life for the sins of this broken world and who still offers a light that can banish the darkness. As we share in the Great Thanksgiving, the Lord's Supper, this week on Christmas Eve, remember the first gift of Christmas. As we gather around Christ's holy table, let your prayer be for the day when all people will gather around the table of the Lord and know the Peace of God.

Christmas Eve

The Christmas Eve service will begin at 4:30 PM. The shopping and preparations should be largely complete. It is time to stop and remind ourselves why we celebrate this night and season. The service will focus on the Christmas Story and will include a closing with lighted candles symbolizing the light of Christ that entered the world 2000 years ago. I hope to see you all here on Christmas Eve.

Year-End Giving Reminder

From Rodger Klein, Chair of Finance

As the year comes to an end next week it is time to consider any year-end giving that you may want to do. Trinity UMC appreciates the generosity of all of our members and visitors and we are thankful for the contributions that we have received throughout 2014. Please remember, however, that for your year-end gifts to be counted as charitable giving for this year, we must receive your contribution not later than December 31st. Because our last Sunday service of the year falls on December 28th, that is your best opportunity to contribute to our Church and its mission during this year. Again, as Chairman of the Finance Committee, I want to thank everyone for their generous giving this year. We need everyone's participation and giving in order for us to be financially sound.

The Poverty and Justice Bible

The Poverty & Justice Bible is a bible that highlights each passage of scripture that deals with the issues of poverty and justice. There are more than 2000 references in scripture to poverty and justice, as opposed to four or five on such controversial subjects as homosexual acts or marriage. Yet many Christians seem to think that helping the poor is a pointless and even harmful act. As an on-going part of this newsletter, I will be providing citations to passages from the Old and New Testaments each week that deal with what scripture tells us about poverty and justice. If you are interested in learning more about *The Poverty & Justice Bible* you can check on Amazon.com or go to www.Justicebible.org.

You people are in for trouble! You have made cruel and unfair laws² that let you cheat the poor and needy and rob widows and orphans. Isaiah 10:1 CEV

There are many places in scripture that speak of God's desire that business be conducted honestly and fairly. There are also many places in scripture that make it clear that God cares about the laws we impose upon the nation. They too should be fair and not to benefit the rich over the poor.

¹⁵ Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap him in what he said. ¹⁶ So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. ¹⁷ Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?" ¹⁸ But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? ¹⁹ Show me the coin used for the tax." And they brought him a denarius. ²⁰ Then he said to them, "Whose head is this, and whose title?" ²¹ They answered, "The emperor's." Then he said to them, "Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's." Matthew 22:15-21 NRSV

Jesus would remind us that, although we are subject to the laws of the world, those laws do not relieve us from following the Gospel. We are still to do those things that God requires.

*⁸ He has told you, O mortal, what is good;
and what does the Lord require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God? Micah 6:8 NRSV*

Prayer Ministry

The following persons have agreed to be part of the prayer ministry at Trinity UMC:

Elva Beard	Sarah Jordan	Kenneth Stevens	Judy Richardson
Larry Eastwood	Mac McAfee	Patricia Stevens	Charles Wilson
Leslie Eastwood	Rachel Newman	Sam Richardson	

The members of the prayer ministry of Trinity United Methodist church covenant with one another to pray daily for:

- Those concerns on the prayer list of the Church and for healing of body and spirit for all persons listed;
- For each ministry of the church that each ministry would work to bring the Gospel to those within our community and most especially to bring the Gospel to those who have not yet accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior;
- For all the members of the Trinity UMC community that they be led and enabled to live as the Body of Christ;
- For our local community and all its needs, especially for those who are struggling with the burden of poverty;

- For our nation and our world that God help lead the people of the world to live in peace with God's Kingdom.

If you would like to be a part of this ministry (or if you have already spoken to me about it and were inadvertently left off the list) please let me know and I will see that you are added.

Up-Coming Sermons

December 28th: When God Tore Open the Heavens: We Must Not Be Silent: We have been given the Gospel, the Good News of Jesus Christ. We must not be silent. My texts are Galatians 4:4–7 and Isaiah 61:10–62:3.

January 4th: Limiting God. How can we possibly place limits on God? Yet, we still try. My texts are Isaiah 60:1-6 and Matthew 2:1-12.

Worship Leader's Schedule

December 28

Rodger Klein, **Liturgist**

Cherry & Rodger Klein, **Greeters**

Tommy Cotton & Mike Rohrig, **Ushers**

January 4

Rachel Newman, **Liturgist**

Dawn & Richard Stevens, **Greeters**

Maurice & Joyce Edwards, **Ushers**

Announcements

Please plan to attend our **Christmas Eve service December 24 at 4:30 PM**. Friends and family members are most welcome.

The "Companions in Christ" Sunday School class will be starting a new study the first Sunday in January. The study will explore John Wesley's influence on the development of Methodism. Because we will be learning more about John Wesley, we will also learn about the basis of Methodist beliefs, traditions and practices. All are welcome to participate in this study. Both adult Sunday school classes meet at 9:45 AM.

December Birthdays

Jake Fetting, Pam Jones, Dorise LeCates, Hal Newman, Lindsey Aldred, Rachel Newman,

Wayne Harper

Happy Birthday to each of you!