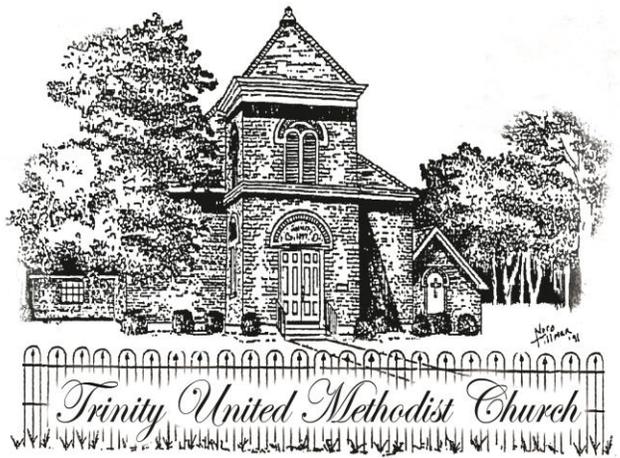




# Trinity United Methodist Church Newsletter

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## The Saints

<sup>23</sup> *The same day some Sadducees came to him, saying there is no resurrection; and they asked him a question...  
Matthew 22:23*

We usually celebrate All Saints Sunday on the Sunday following Halloween since the day after Halloween is All Saints Day. However, this year we were wrapping up our commitment campaign on that day. We will celebrate All Saints Day on Sunday November 23<sup>rd</sup>. Still, I wanted to take this opportunity to share some of the United Methodist understanding of the word “Saints.”

I.

A beginning point for this discussion is Matthew 22:23-33. Jesus is confronted by the Sadducees. The Sadducees, we are told, do not believe in the resurrection from the dead. They plan on showing Jesus, by irrefutable logic, that there can be no resurrection from the dead. Their reasoning goes something like this.

1. Israel lives by God’s law.
2. God’s law says that a woman can only be married to one man at a time.
3. God’s law also says that, if a married man dies, without leaving an heir, the man’s brother should marry his widow and have children by her so that the original husband’s property does not pass out of the family.
4. Seven brothers in turn marry the same woman. The brothers all die and then the woman dies. If there is no resurrection, that is not a problem. In this life, the woman only had one husband at a time. But, if there is a resurrection, then God’s law is violated because all the brothers and the woman will be alive. She will be married at the same time to seven men.
5. Since God could never let a situation arise that would violate God’s law, there must be no resurrection from the dead.

Jesus says two things of note here. First, he tells the Sadducees that the law of this world does not govern the life after death. A basic assumption of the Sadducees is flawed, says Jesus. Marriage laws, and presumably other laws, are for this world, not for the Kingdom at the end of time.

More importantly, however, Jesus tells us that, in the eyes of God, these people who have gone before are not dead at all, but living. Those who have died live on in the presence of God. We are surrounded by all who have gone before. This concept is affirmed in the Letter to the Hebrews 12:1. The letter to the Hebrews

describes those who have gone before us as a great cloud of witnesses. Witnesses to the grace of God. Witnesses to the faithfulness of God.

## II.

Jesus and the letter to the Hebrews are describing the nature of eternal life. Not merely existence after death but a life that extends across the world of life as well. Eternal life does not begin at our death. The Christian understanding of eternal life is that eternal life is part of the here and now. What we call living is simply one part of eternal life.

Too often Christians treat the goal of Christianity as eternal life **after we die to this world**. That is one of the most pervasive heresies of Christians. A heresy is a false belief that undermines the Gospel. If we focus only on obtaining eternal life after death, we ignore the world around us. But Christ, and later Paul, emphasized that we are to live in this world. To work in the Kingdom of God in the here and now. What Christ spoke of was eternal life in the here and now. An eternal life that begins today. An eternal life that is wrapped up in this world. And, an eternal life that encompasses all who have gone before. The great cloud of witnesses.

The existence of that cloud of witnesses offers us some perspective this week. For we are surrounded by those who have seen much turmoil in their own times, and have witnessed the turmoil in our own. We are surrounded by those who wandered in the wilderness with Moses. Those who witnessed the grandeur of David's empire. Those who walked with Jesus and who saw him crucified. Those who saw him resurrected. We are surrounded by those who saw the birth of the Church and its many struggles over the centuries. We are surrounded by those who saw the birth of this nation and witnessed its struggles and triumphs. All of these persons live on in the presence of God.

**That** is why we celebrate All Saints day in the Christian year. To remind ourselves that the events of any given day, whether we like them or not, are but a moment in God's time; and that God is still the God over all history. God is constantly working in the world to bring about God's Kingdom, in this world and the next. We remember that each and every day we experience is part of our eternal life.

When United Methodists speak of the Saints we do not refer to individuals who have been recognized as being the center of the divine working of God in particular instances. We speak of all of the faithful who have gone before us but who continue to live on in the presence of God. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> we will remember the Saints of Trinity who passed this last year as well as all the Saints who have touched our lives.

## **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](http://www.Justicebible.org).

<sup>15</sup>“No matter how much you pray,  
I won't listen.  
You are too violent.  
<sup>16</sup>Wash yourselves clean!  
I am disgusted  
with your filthy deeds.  
Stop doing wrong  
<sup>17</sup>and learn to live right.  
See that justice is done.  
Defend widows and orphans  
and help those in need.”Isaiah 1:15-17 CEV

Isaiah has harsh words for the people. He is fulfilling the basic role of the prophet: speaking for the Lord God. The “I” Isaiah refers to is the Lord God. In God’s eyes the people have become too violent and have abandoned justice. God calls them back to living righteous lives and defending those who can’t defend themselves (widows and orphans) and demanding that they help those in need.

*About this same time Jesus was told that Pilate had given orders for some people from Galilee to be killed while they were offering sacrifices. <sup>2</sup> Jesus replied:  
Do you think that these people were worse sinners than everyone else in Galilee just because of what happened to them? <sup>3</sup> Not at all! But you can be sure that if you don't turn back to God, every one of you will also be killed. <sup>4</sup> What about those eighteen people who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them? Do you think they were worse than everyone else in Jerusalem? <sup>5</sup> Not at all! But you can be sure that if you don't turn back to God, every one of you will also die.*

Two things are at work here. Jesus is rejecting the idea that God sends madmen and calamity to punish sinners. But, he also chides the people to not try to avoid responsibility for their own sin by comparing themselves with others. Jesus in effect says that they will pay a price for their sin every bit as high as that paid by the victims of these calamities.

## **Disciple Bible Study Opportunity**

*Thursday Evenings 7:00- 9:00*

Disciple Bible Study is a 32 week study of the bible from Genesis to Revelation. It has guided many people to a deeper understanding of scripture and their faith over the years. Many in the Church have completed this study.

*We have begun our study and currently have seven people in the class . If you have been postponing a serious study of scripture now is a great opportunity to jump in. We can accept new students for the next couple of weeks.*

## 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

**November 9<sup>th</sup>: Sermon: Being Far From Jerusalem:** Rev. Ed Trimmer from Martin Methodist College will be leading worship on this day. His texts are Luke 10:1-12 and Acts 16:1-5.

**November 16<sup>th</sup> : Sermon: "Hands For Troubled Souls":** Rev. Roland Scruggs, retired UM Elder will lead worship this day. His texts are 2 Corinthians 8:7-15 and Mark 5:21-43.

## Worship Leaders Schedule

### November 9

Elaine Rohrig, **Liturgist**

Betty & Herb Haynes, **Greeters**

Sam Richardson & Linda Robinson, **Ushers**

November 16

Renita Hartsock, **Liturgist**

Pat Moran & Rachel Newman, **Greeters**

Tommy & Jo Cotton, **Ushers**

## Announcements

It's not too late to order gifts for yourself or others and at the same time, participate in our fund raiser. You can order online if you want at <http://www.thatsmypan.biz/frtn10177>. Once you click on Begin Shopping, you are taken to a page that shows all that is in the catalog PLUS more. They have lots of new products that aren't in the catalog.

If you need to send it, click on the link at the top of the page that says "not local" - this will enable you to ship the products to an address that's not going to church.

You can click on pay by check (give money to Dana) or you can pay by Credit Card.

So, enjoy your shopping, and know that all proceeds will go to the missions of the Trinity Women's Group.

## November Birthdays

**Cheryl Wilson, Ensley Mason, Betty Haynes, Brooks Crowell, Ross Crutcher**

**Happy Birthday to each of you!**