



Trinity United Methodist Church Newsletter



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Baptism Part One: Our Vows

¹⁰ Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in agreement and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same purpose. ¹¹ For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there are quarrels among you, my brothers and sisters. ¹² What I mean is that each of you says, "I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos," or "I belong to Cephas," or "I belong to Christ." ¹³ Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul... 1 Corinthians 1:10-13 NRSV

In last week's newsletter I explained the United Methodist theology of baptism. Like other Christian traditions we view baptism as a rite of initiation into the church. Unlike such traditions as the Baptists and Church of Christ, among others, we also see Baptism as a *sacrament*: as an outward sign of inward work of the Grace of God in our lives. Our Liturgy of Baptism, including our vows, reaffirms this theology.

Brothers and sisters in Christ:

Through the Sacrament of Baptism

We are initiated into Christ's holy church.

We are incorporated into God's mighty acts of salvation

And given new birth through water and the Spirit.

All this is God's gift, offered to us without price.

Through confirmation,

And through the reaffirmation of our faith,

We renew the covenant declared at our baptism,

Acknowledge what God is doing for us,

And affirm our commitment to Christ's holy church.

The liturgy then moves to the vows made at Baptism which have not changed in their essentials for two thousand years:

*On behalf of the whole church, I ask you:
Do you renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness,
Reject the evil powers of this world,
And repent of your sin?*

As early as Genesis 4:7 (NRSV) sin is portrayed as not only the evil that we do but as a force for evil in the world. God speaks to Cain and warns him of the danger:

⁷ If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is lurking at the door; its desire is for you, but you must master it."

See also Ephesians 6:12. Likewise, in Romans 6:20-23 (NRSV), Paul speaks of the power of sin to enslave us. Christ has freed us from slavery to sin and Paul states that, by accepting Christ, we become slaves to righteousness. Nevertheless, we can still choose to once again submit to the power of sin.

²⁰ When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. ²¹ So what advantage did you then get from the things of which you now are ashamed? The end of those things is death. ²² But now that you have been freed from sin and enslaved to God, the advantage you get is sanctification. The end is eternal life. ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Accordingly, our baptismal vows begin with a rejection of the spiritual forces of evil in the world that call us away from Christ and we repent of our sins.

*Do you accept the freedom and power God gives you
To resist evil, injustice, and oppression
In whatever forms they present themselves?*

As Paul notes in Romans 6:20-23 cited above, we have the free will to choose. God, through Christ, has given us the ability to choose evil, injustice and oppression. But we must choose to use that power. Our baptismal vows acknowledge the historical truth that the powers of this world, spiritual and otherwise, focus upon oppression of the vulnerable and the subversion of justice. As is pointed out weekly in the Poverty and Justice Bible articles, the bible speaks of this problem from Genesis to Revelation. So it should be of no surprise that our baptismal vows also emphasize our obligation to care about the oppression of the vulnerable and the subversion of justice.

*Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Savior,
Put your whole trust in his grace,
And promise to serve him as your Lord,
In union with the church which Christ has opened
To people of all ages, nations, and races?*

Many in the contemporary Church speak of the need to have a “personal relationship” with Jesus Christ. Our Baptismal vows define that relationship. Jesus Christ is our **Savior**. We are **wholly dependent** upon the grace God has granted through Christ for our salvation. Our personal relationship with Christ is as **Christ’s servants**. Moreover, we are not alone. Christians always sees themselves **in relation to the Church, the Body of Christ**. Moreover, that Church is not made up only of those we like and who think like we think. It is open to all the people of the world.

*According to the grace given to you,
Will you remain faithful members of Christ's holy church
And serve as Christ's representatives in the world?*

Once baptized, we cannot be “un-baptized.” We can renounce our vows, turn away from God, but that does not invalidate our baptism. To understand this, consider Paul’s words to the people of Corinth. They had, in his view, stopped living as the Church. They were ignoring their baptismal vows. Yet, speaking to this dysfunctional group of backsliding Christians, Paul says:

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. 1 Corinthians 12:27 NRSV

Accordingly, part of our vows is to remain faithful to Christ. These are vows that are made for a lifetime. Moreover, they obligate us to live as the Body of Christ in the world, not isolated in our church buildings.

After reaffirming our faith and usually offering a blessing upon the water of baptism, the actual baptism takes place using this liturgy:

*I baptize you in the name of the Father,
And of the Son,
And of the Holy Spirit.*

Amen.

*The Holy Spirit work within you,
That being born through water and the Spirit,
You may be a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ.*

Christian Baptism is in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Matthew 28:19. Also, as in the baptism of Jesus, we ask the blessing of the Holy Spirit to help us live as the Body of Christ in this world.

THE HOWARD CHRIESMAN STORY

On October 14, 2015 the Estate of Howard Chriesman delivered a check for the Trinity UMC Memorial Fund. For those who do not know who Howard Chriesman was the Executor of the Estate provided the following:

Howard Chriesman passed away March 15, 2015, at age 95. Ten percent of his estate was willed to the Bethesda United Methodist Church and another 10% to Trinity United Methodist Church. Bethesda UMC was his Dad’s childhood church and Trinity was his Mother’s childhood church. Howard was born in Columbia in 1920 and lived in Knoxville from his teen age years until his death. He never married and was a navy veteran of World War II, and spent his career as a machinist with Alcoa Aluminum.

His father, William Chriesman, was born in 1886 in the Bethesda community and attended the Bethesda Methodist Church as a child, and graduated from Branham Hughes at Spring Hill. He was employed at the UT Springhill Experiment Station until he transferred to Knoxville during the late 30's to work for the UT Department of Agriculture. He made and sold brooms as a side line and hobby most of his life. He had a sister named Cora, who married Windal Arnold of Eagleville, and a sister, Lula, who taught school and never married.

His Mother, Mattie Pollard Cotton, was born in 1892 on Lampkin Bridge Road. She attended church at Trinity Methodist during her childhood and graduated from BGA in 1911. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Cotton. Tommy Cotton, who presently attends Trinity church, is a grandson of Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Cotton and a first cousin of Howard Chriesman.

Howard obviously heard countless stories told by his parents about their childhood churches and the influence it had on their lives. The memories were around the late 1800's and early 1900's. The families traveled by horse and buggy in those days. The stories were never forgotten and influenced him enough to will ten percent of his estate (\$37,000.00) to each of the two churches.

Howard W. Hatcher Executor for Estate of William Howard Chriesman

Thursday Morning Bible Study

There will not be a Thursday Morning Bible Study on Thursday, October 22nd. We have begun our Thursday morning Bible Study on Thursday mornings between 10:00 and 11:30. Everyone is welcome to attend. It has been my practice to allow the group to decide what parts of the bible they wish to study. We have concluded our study of Mark and have begun a study of Matthew.

The Poverty and Justice Bible

¹⁰ But the LORD said:

You are concerned about a vine that you did not plant or take care of, a vine that grew up in one night and died the next. ¹¹ In that city of Nineveh there are more than a hundred twenty thousand people who cannot tell right from wrong, and many cattle are also there. Don't you think I should be concerned about that big city? Jonah 4:10-11 CEV

As Jonah was feeling sorry for himself outside of the city of Nineveh, God caused a plant to grow up to give him shade. God then caused the plant to wither, which angered Jonah. But God was making a point. Jonah's heart was only large enough to encompass his own comfort. God's heart was large enough for Jonah, the People of Israel, and even the inhabitants of the City of Nineveh. Too often we Christians act much like Jonah. We seem to take great delight in declaring people outside of God's grace. Yet the Bible reminds us that, thank God, no one is outside of the Grace, i.e. the love and concern, of God.

²⁵ I tell you not to worry about your life. Don't worry about having something to eat, drink, or wear. Isn't life more than food or clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds in the sky! They don't plant or harvest. They don't even store grain in barns. Yet your Father in heaven takes care of them. Aren't you worth more than birds? Matthew 6:25-26 CEV

Jesus reinforces the teaching of Jonah. The God who looks after the flowers and birds will look after us. All of us.

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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.

Prayer Ministry

The following persons are part of the prayer ministry at Trinity UMC:

Elva Beard	Mac McAfee	Kenneth Stevens	Judy Richardson
Larry Eastwood	Rachel Newman	Patricia Stevens	Charles Wilson
Leslie Eastwood	Erin McKibben	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

October 18th: Sermon: Reporting For Duty. Too often we convince ourselves that we know what's best; what needs to be done. We wonder why God hasn't taken care of things our way. My texts are Hebrews 7:23–28 and Mark 10:46–52.

October 25th: Laity Sunday: On one Sunday in October of each year in the United Methodist church the Laity take responsibility for the worship. October 25th the service will be led by the laity of the Church including our Lay leader Brooks Crowell and Certified Lay Servants Elaine Rohrig and Rachel Newman.

Worship Leader's Schedule

October 18

Elaine Rohrig, **Liturgist**

Tommy & Jo Cotton, **Greeters**

Marty & Dana Bauguess, **Ushers**

October 25

Linda Robinson, **Liturgist**

Cherry Klein & Pat Moran, **Greeters**

Sam & Judy Richardson, **Ushers**

Announcements

The "Nanette Crowell Companions in Christ" Sunday School class is studying, "Serving God." We have extra books and extra chairs if you would care to join our class. **The class begins promptly at 9:45.** All are welcome to this time of learning and fellowship.

A Scattering of the Ashes Ceremony for Nanette Noffsinger Crowell will take place at Burke Hollow this **Saturday, October 17 at 3:00 p.m.** Brooks is inviting the Trinity UMC congregation to be a part of this ceremony as we gather to share memories and to carry out Nanette's final request.

Laity Sunday 2015 will be Sunday, October 25. This is the Sunday that calls the Church to celebrate the ministry of Christians of all ages in the home, workplace, congregation, community and in the world. Worship will be led by the "laity". Please plan to attend this special time of worship.

There is an opportunity to serve at **61st St. United Methodist Church Saturday, November 7.** Volunteers are needed to serve the evening meal and to enjoy worship after dinner. Fellowship takes place before and during dinner. Please make Charles Wilson aware if you are available for this opportunity.

Birthdays

Elaine Rohrig Julia Moore, Jan Strait, Reba Collier

Happy Birthday to each of you!