



# Trinity United Methodist Church Newsletter



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## Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations

*[In the coming weeks I will be discussing the Tennessee Conference's initiative called 72+U that emphasizes the importance of the local Church reaching into the community to spread the Gospel. As an introduction to that material I am reprinting some articles that I first published over two years ago.]*

The call to Discipleship is not to grow in numbers but to be fruitful. Some years ago Bishop Robert Schnase wrote a book titled *Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations*. Regardless of the shape that ministry takes at Trinity UMC, there are practices that are followed by healthy, fruitful congregations that Trinity should seek to emulate. These Churches practice:

1. Radical Hospitality
2. Passionate Worship
3. Intentional Faith Development
4. Risk-taking Mission and Service and
5. Extravagant Generosity

Copies of this book will be available for those members who wish to read it. Over the coming weeks I will discuss each of these practices. If there is interest, I would be happy to lead a study group looking at this book.

### Radical Hospitality

*...I was a stranger and you welcomed me,... Matthew 25:35 NRSV*

When people speak of welcoming new people to the church we generally think about greeters on Sunday morning who make it a point to welcome visitors and help them find a seat. However, that doesn't begin to cover what is meant by **radical** hospitality.

Think about it this way. If you invited someone into your home, would you be content to simply show them where they can sit and then have nothing more to do with them? Would you carry on conversations with other guests you know well while ignoring the new comers? If they had to attend to the needs of children or infants would you let them fend for themselves or would you seek to assist them? If they had other special needs would you ignore those needs or seek to help?

Radical hospitality means offering a welcome that is unequivocal and active. It includes an effort to anticipate the needs of your guests and a profound desire to make them welcome. It is the type of welcome that the church should always extend but that few churches ever master.

Ask yourself how we might practice radical hospitality at Trinity UMC. We are the Body of Christ, called to live in this world as the presence of Christ. Join with your fellow members as we seek to discern where God is calling us into ministry in this community.

**January 28, 2015**

**A Pastoral Letter to the People of The United Methodist Church - Nashville  
Area  
From Bishop William T. McAlilly**

Sisters and Brothers:

Grace to you from Jesus Christ, who calls his Church to care for “even the least of these.” One of the ways we participate in that possibility is to create personal, environmental and social conditions in which each individual can receive good health care. In the Gospel of John 10:10b Jesus says, “I came so that they could have life – indeed, so that they could live life to the fullest.” It is our deep desire that all persons across Tennessee might have the possibility of living the abundant life.

The Social Principles of our church remind us of this truth in its statement on the Right to Health Care. “Health is a condition of physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being. Stewardship of health is the responsibility of each person to whom health has been entrusted.” [Para. 162(v), 2012 Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church]

In caring for our neighbors and allowing more of our fellow citizens to have access to good healthcare, I urge your prayerful support for Insure Tennessee, an initiative that Governor Bill Haslam has recommended to the State Legislature. Its passage will allow 200,000 more Tennesseans to have adequate health coverage. The program will be open to Tennesseans earning less than 138 percent of the federal poverty level (approximately \$16,000 in annual income for an individual or \$33,000 for a family of four).

A special called session of the Tennessee Legislature will be convened on February 2nd to consider the Insure Tennessee plan. I encourage you to do the following four things prior to that date.

1) Become fully informed and educated about the benefits of the Insure Tennessee Plan.

A good website to consult is [www.insuretennesseehow.com](http://www.insuretennesseehow.com).

2) Personally contact your Tennessee legislators and give voice to your opinions. Letters, emails and phone calls can all be effective. If you need contact information for a senator or representative, it is available at [www.capitol.tn.gov/legislators](http://www.capitol.tn.gov/legislators) (Find My Legislator section on right side).

- 3) Share this letter with friends, family members and neighbors as a part of your witness of care for fellow citizens who need better health coverage.
- 4) Pray for our legislators that they might seek God's will as a part of their own discernment process.

The New Testament teachings of Jesus remind us over and over again of his ministry of healing and wholeness. I encourage you to respond promptly and faithfully to this opportunity to join him in this mission.

I invite you to share this with your congregation this Sunday.

Expecting Greater Things,  
Bishop William T. McAlilly

## **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>16</sup>*Honesty and justice  
will prosper there,  
<sup>17</sup>and justice will produce  
lasting peace and security.  
Isaiah 32:16-17 CEV*

The bible sometimes focuses on individual behavior, but it most often focuses on societal behavior. In a society that honors justice and honesty, the behavior of its citizens can be expected to follow that norm. The society will know peace and security. If a society does not concern itself with honesty and justice but rather with expediency and shape dealing, then it will be much more difficult for individuals to oppose such practices.

*Jesus was going through Jericho, <sup>2</sup> where a man named Zacchaeus lived. He was in charge of collecting taxes and was very rich. <sup>3-4</sup> Jesus was heading his way, and Zacchaeus wanted to see what he was like. But Zacchaeus was a short man and could not see over the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree.*

<sup>5</sup> *When Jesus got there, he looked up and said, "Zacchaeus, hurry down! I want to stay with you today." <sup>6</sup> Zacchaeus hurried down and gladly welcomed Jesus.*

<sup>7</sup> *Everyone who saw this started grumbling, "This man Zacchaeus is a sinner! And Jesus is going home to eat with him." <sup>8</sup> Later that day Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "I will give half of my property to the poor. And I will now pay back four times as much to everyone I have ever cheated." <sup>9</sup> Jesus said to Zacchaeus, "Today you and your family have been saved, because you are a true son of Abraham. <sup>10</sup> The Son of Man came to look for and to save people who are lost." Luke 19:1-10 CEV*

Jesus angers the crowd when he reaches out to the tax collector Zacchaeus. Tax Collectors prayed on their own people by contracting with the Romans to collect the Roman tax. The Tax Collector made his money by collecting more than was owed to Rome, often funding his business through threats, intimidation, blackmail and loan sharking. Jesus praises Zacchaeus for putting those practices aside and promising to provide restitution for his dishonest dealings.

## 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

**February 1<sup>st</sup> Sermon: "I Know My Rights."** In this day and time, many in our nation are focused on asserting their rights. I suspect that our emphasis on our rights has more than a bit to do with the proliferation of television crime dramas and the constant repetition of the Fifth Amendment rights. But, what are our rights as Christians? My texts are Mark 1:21-28 and 1 Corinthians 8:1-13.

**February 8<sup>th</sup> Sermon: Spreading the Gospel.** Why should you share your faith and how should you go about it? My texts are Mark 1:29-39 and 1 Corinthians 9:16-23.

## Worship Leader's Schedule

### February 1

Donnie Hartsock, **Liturgist**

Maurice & Joyce Edwards, **Greeters**

Rodger & Cherry Klein, **Ushers**

### February 8

Renita Hartsock, **Liturgist**

Mike & Renee Fetting, **Greeters**

Maurice & Joyce Edwards, **Ushers**

## Announcements

The **Men's** group is planning a pancake breakfast on **Valentine's Day, February 14**. Breakfast will be served between the hours of **8:00 AM and 10:00 AM**. Please add this event to your "Must Attend" calendar.

**Companions in Christ** New Series on **John Wesley, "Revival,"** began Sunday, January 4. If you are looking to deepen your faith in 2015, join us for a video journey following the life of John Wesley and exploring the defining characteristics of a Wesleyan Christian. Wesley's story is our story. It defines our faith and it challenges us to rediscover our spiritual passion.

The DVD features pastor Adam Hamilton guiding us through a Bible study tracing Wesley throughout England. It intends to deepen people's faith by calling them to a devout and holy life while defining what the Christian life looks like through his eyes.

## January Birthdays

**Cherry Klein, Dawn Stevens, Dennis Meaker, Ensley Mason, Rene Fetting, Judy Richardson, Linda**

**McGill, Jessica Moore**

**Happy Birthday to each of you!**