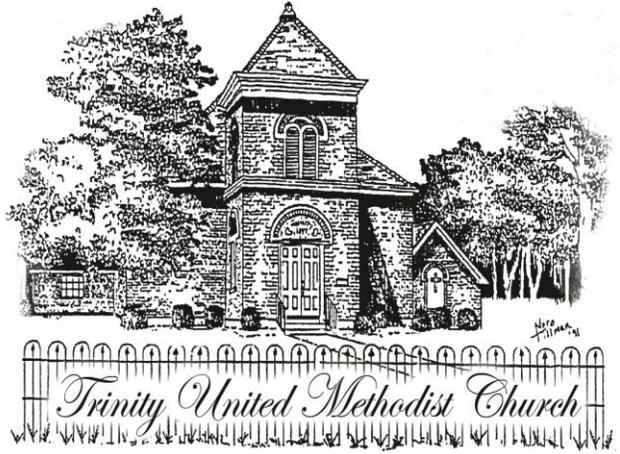




# Trinity United Methodist Church Newsletter



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## The Apostles' Creed

*The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Mark 1:1 NRSV*

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup> in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. John 1:1-5 NRSV*

I have been reciting the Apostles Creed all my life. But for decades I did not give much thought to why we use it in worship.

The Apostles Creed is one of the so-called “Historic Creeds” of the Church. Along with the Nicene Creed it dates back to around 390 C.E. The creeds were developed to address theological disputes within Christianity following the adoption of Christianity by Emperor Constantine as the Religion of the Roman Empire. Constantine called for the Council of Nicaea in 325 C.E. The result of that Council was the Nicene Creed which is very similar to the Apostles Creed. Scholars believe that the Apostles Creed actually predates Nicaea and that it was later adapted to follow the agreements reached at Nicaea. Each phrase of the Creed was chosen to proclaim a fundamental Christian belief and sometimes to dispel existing heresies.

### **I Believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of Heaven and Earth.**

Before anything existed, there was God. God created everything that exists in Heaven and Earth. There are no other Gods since any heavenly being was created by God.

**And in Jesus Christ his only Son who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified dead and buried, the third day he arose from the dead, ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the God, the Father Almighty. From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.**

There is a lot happening in these few sentences but, to appreciate their meaning, some background needs to be explained. One of the heresies of early Christianity was Gnosticism. Gnosticism proclaimed that everything in the world was corrupt, especially human flesh. For the Gnostics the only pure “matter” in the universe was Spirit. It was therefore unthinkable that God, a being of pure Spirit, would become corrupt flesh. In the Gnostic view, Christ **seemingly** became flesh to impart to some the secret knowledge (*Gnosis*) to allow his followers to shed their corrupt flesh and become pure spirit. In the theology of the Gnostics there was no need for the Son of God, the incarnation or for the Holy Spirit since God was Spirit.<sup>1</sup>

Accordingly, the creeds begin by proclaiming that *Jesus Christ* was the Son of God, thereby establishing Jesus as Divine and part of the Trinity. It also, by using the word Christ, affirms the claim that Jesus was “God’s Anointed” or Messiah. ‘*Christos*’ means “the anointed one” in Greek just as *Messiah* means the anointed one in Hebrew. That Jesus was “conceived by the Holy Spirit” again affirms the Trinity and Jesus’ divine nature.

Being “born of the Virgin Mary” affirms the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ. The Gnostics denied that Jesus was fully human and fully divine. Being born to a human woman affirms Jesus’ humanity. Likewise, suffering under Pontius Pilate places Jesus in a time and place historically. Being crucified dead and buried affirms Jesus’ humanity (one must be alive to die) and addresses claims made by some over the centuries that Jesus was not killed on the cross.

The resurrection is not only an affirmation of eternal life but also an affirmation of Jesus’ divine and human nature. That he now sits in judgment on the world demonstrates God’s concern about the world and human kind. This is in contrast to the Gnostic view that God has already given up on the world and humankind.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting.**

This last portion of the Creed again affirms the Holy Spirit as part of the Trinity. When it was written, the Holy Catholic Church was indeed one Church. It then split into Catholic and Orthodox and later, of course, into Protestant as well. As we use it today it is an affirmation of Christ’s Universal Church: all Christian traditions considered together. The communion of saints similarly refers to all Christians, living and dead, who worship Christ. Belief in the forgiveness of sins affirms God’s on-going love for the world and the efficacy of Christ’s sacrifice for the sins of Humanity. Finally, belief in the resurrection and the life everlasting is an affirmation of God’s act of salvation for creation. None of these concepts would have been affirmed by the Gnostics.

Finally, as I occasionally point out in worship, there is power in the gathered community affirming its faith aloud in the presence of one another. Stating in a public assembly that you believe in God and Jesus Christ can result in imprisonment or worse in some parts of the world. Some object to using the creeds as meaningless

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<sup>1</sup> *Gnosticism, although not called that, still surfaces today. Some years ago the Heaven’s Gate cult in California committed suicide. They believed that they had to shed their corrupt “human shells” so that their pure “spiritual selves” could ascend to an alien mother craft trailing a comet then passing through the solar system. Any religious movement that rejects the world as evil and corrupt in favor of pure spirituality has Gnostic elements. Dispensationalism, “Left Behind”, theology has Gnostic elements. It contends that most Christians are not understanding the message that they see in scripture about “End Times.” Only they perceive the “secret knowledge” of what God intends for the world and how to escape the coming destruction.*

liturgy. However, it is only meaningless if we make it meaningless. As a form of prayer in gathered worship it is a powerful affirmation of what we believe about God, ourselves and the world.

## Charge Conference

It's that time of the year again. For those of you new to the United Methodist Church, a 'Charge' is a Church or group of Churches under the leadership of an appointed pastor. All members of a Charge are responsible for its governance. To appreciate how deeply the concept touches Methodist polity and practice, turn to UMH 413, *A Charge to Keep I Have*. This hymn was written by Charles Wesley in 1762. The Charge Conference, made up of the pastor, lay leadership and members, is to meet at least once a year in a meeting chaired by the District Superintendent. It is at this meeting that the Pastor's compensation is set and the leadership for the coming year is approved.

In years past the District Superintendent has come to each Charge to hold this conference. This year the Columbia District will be meeting in clusters. Our cluster is made up of ten Charges. There will be separate sessions for each Church and a joint worship service for all the churches in the cluster. The cluster that includes Trinity will meet at Epworth UMC on October 4<sup>th</sup>. Our business meeting is scheduled from 5:15 to 5:30. There will be a joint worship service from 4:00 to 5:00. I encourage everyone who is available to attend the worship service and the separate business meeting.

## Thursday Morning Bible Study

We have begun our Thursday morning Bible Study on Thursday mornings between 10:00 and 11:30. Anyone 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 will begin a study of Matthew.**

## The Poverty and Justice Bible

*<sup>10</sup>You were cruel to your relatives,  
the descendants of Jacob.  
Now you will be destroyed,  
disgraced forever.*

*<sup>11</sup>You stood there and watched  
as foreigners entered Jerusalem  
and took what they wanted.  
In fact, you were no better  
than those foreigners.*

*Obadiah 10-11*

Little is known about the prophet Obadiah. He name means "worshipper of the Lord." The "Book" of Obadiah contains only 21 verses so it is not divided into chapters. Obadiah preached to Edom, one of Israel's neighbors. According Genesis, the Edomites were descended from Esau, brother to Jacob and son of Isaac. Obadiah is an example of God speaking to a whole nation. Not only did the Edom not help Judah when the Babylonians attacked, they also joined in the looting. God's condemnation as proclaimed by Obadiah can be compared to times when our nation has stood by and allowed acts of genocide or failed to assist people in trouble.

<sup>27</sup> *Together you are the body of Christ. Each one of you is part of his body. 1 Corinthians 12:27*

The same theology is at work in the writings of Paul. Paul is not addressing individuals. He is addressing a ‘nation.’ A nation of people who have accepted Christ as Lord and Savior. That ‘nation’ will be judge for how it interacts with the world.

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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](http://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 4<sup>th</sup>: Sermon: The Best Meal You Ever Ate.** What was the best meal you ever ate? It's World Communion Sunday. My texts are Mark 14:22-26 and 1 Corinthians 11:17-34.

**October 11<sup>th</sup>: Sermon: The Scariest Words in Scripture.** Although we don't like to admit it, these words of Jesus haunt us. Can Jesus be serious? My texts are Psalm 22:1-15 and Mark 10:17-31.

## Worship Leader's Schedule

### October 4

Hal Newman, **Liturgist**

Maurice & Joyce Edwards, **Greeters**

Rodger & Cherry Klein, **Ushers**

October 11

Renita Hartsock, **Liturgist**

Mike & Renee Fetting, **Greeters**

Maurice & Joyce Edwards, **Ushers**

## Announcements

We have the opportunity to serve dinner this week at **61<sup>st</sup> St. United Methodist Church**. We will serve dinner and then participate in the worship service. We would appreciate volunteers to help serve as well as worship with the congregation of this church. Please make Charles Wilson aware of your availability this **Saturday, October 3. Please plan to be at the 61<sup>st</sup> St. church at 3:30 PM.**

**Charge Conference October 4<sup>th</sup>, Epworth UMC.** Worship from 4:00 to 5:00 celebrating the ministries of several UM Churches in the immediate vicinity. Trinity's Charge Conference will be at 5:15.

The "**Nanette Crowell Companions in Christ**" Sunday School class has concluded it's study of "**Loving God.**" We have begun a study of "**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 be held at Burke Hollow on Saturday, October 17 at 3:00 p.m. The family 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 on 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.

**October Birthdays**

**Elaine Rohrig, Julia Moore, Jan Strait, Reba Collier**

**Happy Birthday to each of you!**