



Trinity United Methodist Church Newsletter



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Worship. Do We Get it?

Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. Luke 17:15

“Thank-you, Jesus. Thank-you, God.” In the story from Luke referenced above, Jesus healed ten lepers, but only one began praising God. Only one began to worship. What is worship and why do we do it?

Over the last fifteen years or so I’ve worked formally as a mentor for the Tennessee Conference, and informally as a friend, to prepare prospective Elders being examined by the Board of Ordained Ministry. Before a person can be ordained they must submit a detailed paper, usually thirty to fifty pages in length, outlining their theological beliefs and experiences and then submit to an interview before 15 to 20 members of the Board of Ordained Ministry. The Board is made up of laity and clergy members. The interview usually lasts about three hours. During the interview the prospective Elder will be asked to explain their theological beliefs, answer hypothetical questions and elaborate on their personal history. Every year some number of applicants are passed over for ordination. Sometimes these persons come back the next year to try again and sometimes they withdraw from ministry.

Whenever I am working with someone I always ask them why we worship. These candidates have almost always been serving in Churches as local pastors or probationary Elders for several years. They have led worship every week. Yet many seem a little fuzzy on why we gather to worship expect to reflect that, “That’s what the Church does.” In answer, some will opine that we worship to praise God which is true as far as it goes. Some will state that God wishes us to gather for worship which is a proposition that is contradicted by a number of scripture passages. Consider for instance this passage from Micah:

*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)*

Or look at Isaiah 58:1-11 where God says that God does not want acts of worship but acts of charity. True worship, says God, is feeding the hungry and housing the homeless. Or Matthew 25:31-46. *What you do for least of these you do for me.* See also James 2:12-18.

Still others seem to think that God needs our worship. Nothing could be plainer than that God does not need our worship. There is nothing we can give to God that God needs. To put that last in perspective, ask

yourself if you would need a group of toddlers to offer you worship. God does not need our worship and, I submit, takes no interest in acts of worship for their own sake. So, why do we gather, week after week, to worship?

We gather for worship to remind ourselves who we are and whose we are. We are the Body of Christ and we belong to God. Worship in the gathered community is also a “means of Grace.” John Wesley believed that, in worship as well as in other activities, we receive the Grace of God to enable us to live as the Body of Christ and to grow as Disciples of Christ.

In the final analysis, worship is not something we do for God, it is something we do for ourselves. Worship is a public acknowledgement that we ‘get it.’ We come together in the presence of the community around us, and in the presence of one another, and we acknowledge that we are a people who have received the grace of God, that we live in constant need of that healing grace of God in our lives and that we belong to God. Our worship expresses openly, for all to see, who we are and whose we are. Our worship reminds us that we are the Body of Christ called to live as the presence of Christ in this world.

Forms of worship vary, and we all have our preferences. But whether the worship takes place in a Gothic Cathedral, in an historic sanctuary, in a modern auditorium or in a field under a tent, it is worship acceptable to God if it is offered as an expression of who we are and whose we are; an expression that we understand; an expression that we get it.

The next time you come to worship, take a moment to look at the order of worship and each element of worship. They all have a purpose. We gather together as an act of worship, publically declaring to the community that we are people of God. We offer prayers and praise to God. We listen for God’s Word in the scriptures and in the Word proclaimed. We respond to God’s Word with a public declaration of our faith beliefs, with confession, with prayers of intercession, and with an offering of our tithes and gifts. We gather at the Table of the Lord. And we depart into the world to be the presence of Christ.

Worship is a vital part of our faith journey, one that we should never neglect.

Wesley’s Advice on Voting

The English Parliamentary election in the Fall of 1773 was one of the most significant in British history. Among the candidates was the eminent Edmund Burke who was running in his first election and who would become one of the most famous legislators in British history. Another of the candidates was an American born Englishman named Henry Cruger. Among the issues being debated was how best to deal with the unrest in the American Colonies. Wesley told his Methodists to approach the exercise of their sovereign franchise thoughtfully and without rancor.

Thur. October 6, 1773.—I met those of our society who had votes in the ensuing election, and advised them (1) to vote, without fee or reward, for the person they judged most worthy; (2) to speak no evil of the person they voted against; and (3) to take care their spirits were not sharpened against those that voted on the other side.

Although not explicitly biblical advice, Wesley is speaking about how Christians should approach any duty and how they should deal with those with whom they disagree. It is advice that we should take seriously today, especially point (3).

Thursday Morning Bible Study

Our Thursday morning Bible Study meets 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 just begun a study of the Gospel of John.

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		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

April 3rd: Sermon: Peace, Purpose and Power. The Risen Christ gave the Disciples three gifts: Peace, Purpose and Power. They are ours as well. My texts are Acts 5:27–32 and John 20:19–31.

April 10th: Sermon: If You Love Me. All the Gospels recount that Peter denied Jesus three times. Only the gospel of John recounts this encounter between Jesus and Peter in which Jesus asks Peter three times, “Do you love me?” But, Jesus is also asking the same of us. My texts are Acts 9:1–6 and John 21:1–19.

Worship Leader's Schedule

April 3

Linda Robinson, **Liturgist**
Maurice & Joyce Edwards, **Greeters**
Sam & Judy Richardson, **Ushers**

April 10

Rachel Newman, **Liturgist**
Tommy & Jo Cotton, **Greeters**
Mike & Elaine Rohrig, **Ushers**

Announcements

Vacation Bible School

Dawn Stevens will be the leader for VBS this year. This promises to be an exciting and wonderful experience for the children. Dawn will need all of us to help in preparation for this great event. More information will be forthcoming as the time draws near.

Please plan to attend the **Administrative Council Meeting** planned for **Saturday, April 9 at 9:00 AM**. There will be important information for discussion.

The **2016** dates for providing and serving food at **61st UMC** are as follows:
April 9, May 28, July 16, September 3, October 29. These dates are for Saturdays. In addition, we will be providing and serving food for the volunteers who work at the Christmas Toy Store in December. The exact date for this is yet to be determined. Volunteers are needed to serve food for each of these dates. Please add this information to your calendars.

Seeking Volunteers for Ministry Outreach Opportunities

Seeking one or more volunteers to take on the responsibility of the following communications activities: Maintain the church calendar on our website, facebook pages, and bulletin board. Ongoing maintenance of this task will allow us to reach out to those who find our sites but need more information. We need some to provide and update:

Website content for our various programs and Sunday School classes and

Community promotion/announcements.

Training is available. Please talk with Dennis if you have an interest in this opportunity.

Children's Ministries

Our church is in a period of discernment with respect to our children's ministries. The Nelsons gave us such a fantastic gift in honor of our beloved Nanette. Please continue to pray for us as we determine how best to use it in her honor and to continue Trinity's legacy of "Living as, and leading others to become, Disciples of Jesus Christ."

The **Nanette Crowell Companions in Christ Sunday School class is currently studying**, “Fire On The Mountain” by Ray Vander Laan.

We enjoy fellowship beginning at 9:45 with our study beginning at 10:00. All are welcome to join us as we pursue Biblical truths and the application for our lives.

Birthdays in March

Pat Moran, Marty Bauguess, Tom Moore, Lilly Otto, Herb Haynes, Ava Fetting

Happy Birthday to each of you!