



# Trinity United Methodist Church Newsletter



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## I Believe that, In the Name of Jesus Christ, You Are Forgiven

<sup>7</sup> Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. <sup>8</sup> But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us.  
*Romans 5:7-8 NRSV*

*Liturgy* literally means what is said in public worship. For our worship services it encompasses the call to worship, the passing of the peace, hymns and anthems, the sermon, prayers and even the joys and concerns offered up from the congregation. However, there are some liturgies that do not change from week to week and I want to focus for a bit on two of those: the Apostles Creed and the granting of pardon following the prayer of confession.

The Historic Creeds of the Christian Church, the Nicene Creed and the Apostles Creed, were originally formulated to encompass what the church leaders of the day believed to be the essentials of the faith. Because we are so far removed from the forces that encouraged the articulation of these creeds we have forgotten what they were meant to express. Yet I believe that there is benefit in understanding why these particular formulations were composed.

### Apostles Creed:

*I believe in God the Father, maker of heaven and earth...* Along with Judaism and Islam, Christians confess that there is but one God who created the universe.

*And in Jesus Christ, his only son our Lord...* Jesus Christ is the one and only son of God who is also our Lord by Confession and in fact.

*Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried;* One of the most powerful early heresies of the church was Gnosticism. Gnosticism proclaimed that spirit was good and that flesh was corrupt; that our spirits were trapped in corrupted flesh and Christ came to earth to impart the secret knowledge, *Gnosis*, to allow us to free our spirits from their fleshly prisons. Since flesh was corrupt Gnosticism taught that there was no incarnation. Gnosticism proclaimed that Christ only appeared human because God would never submit to being corrupt flesh. Since Jesus was never alive he could not be killed and was never really subjected to earthly powers. The “resurrection” was asserted to be nothing more than the manifestation of God’s spirit from the shell created to

make him appear human. In one Gnostic text Christ is featured sitting on a nearby hillside and mocking the crucifixion of his “shell.”

The Apostles and Nicene Creeds deal with the heresy of Gnosticism. They proclaim that Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit of God but was born of the human woman Mary. Thus, Christ was both Human and Divine. As a human, he was subjected to the authority of Rome in the personage of Pontius Pilate, sentenced to death through crucifixion, a common form of Roman punishment, did indeed die and was, in fact, buried. In this brief sentence the Church Fathers proclaimed the incarnation, the human and divine nature of Christ and denied every claim of Gnosticism.

***On the third day he arose from the dead, ascended into heaven and sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; and thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.*** Having been a human being who died a human death, Christ was raised from the dead and ascended into heaven, returning to the God Head. In the fullness of time, Christ will return and judge the world and its people. The “quick” refers to living persons.

***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.*** With the first statement, the Church has completed affirming the Trinity: God, the Son and Holy Spirit. The Nicene Creed goes on to describe the relationship of the Son to God and the Holy Spirit to God and Christ, matters that involved the split between the Eastern and Western church.

The Holy Catholic Church is understood, by Protestants, to be all persons who confess Christ as Lord and Savior, sometimes referred to as the Church Universal, although it originally referred to the Catholic Church.

The Communion of Saints refers to the Christian belief, preserved in Psalm 139 and elsewhere that we are never outside of the presence of God in life or death. We continue to share our lives not only with our living brothers and sisters, but with those who have gone before. These deceased members of the body of Christ are believed to pray for us and to support us in our ministry.

The forgiveness of sins refers to the forgiveness available through the sacrifice of Christ. It is also a reaffirmation of our human nature. Flesh can exist without being corrupt through the power of God.

The resurrection of the body is not dependent upon having an unmarked body at the time we die, but is an affirmation that we remain ourselves, distinct persons, when resurrected. Paul’s words from 1 Corinthians might be helpful in understanding what is meant by resurrection of the Body:

<sup>35</sup> *But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?”* <sup>36</sup> *Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies.* <sup>37</sup> *And as for what you sow, you do not sow the body that is to be, but a bare seed, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain.* <sup>38</sup> *But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to*

each kind of seed its own body. <sup>39</sup> Not all flesh is alike, but there is one flesh for human beings, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish. <sup>40</sup> There are both heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one thing, and that of the earthly is another. <sup>41</sup> There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; indeed, star differs from star in glory.

<sup>42</sup> So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. <sup>43</sup> It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. <sup>44</sup> It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body. 1 Corinthians 15:35-44  
NRSV

Paul believed that it was a mistake to equate the resurrected body with the earthly body. We could not, as persons with physical bodies, understand what our resurrected bodies would be like.

The life everlasting is the eternal life in Christ that begins when we accept Christ as Lord and Savior and continues throughout our lives and ever after.

Each week when we use the Apostles Creed, we affirm all the essential beliefs of the Christian faith before God and one another. As I occasionally point out, speaking these words in public can lead to arrest and persecution in a number of countries in the world. They should never be spoken without conscious thought about their meaning.

## **The Pardon**

The Pardon is a concept that troubles some people. In form it seems that I am somehow, as an agent of the church, conveying God's pardon to you and then you to me. Indeed, based on scripture from the Gospel of John that is how the concept was understood for centuries:

<sup>23</sup> *If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.*” John 20:23

The Catholic Church, at one time, did indeed presume to withhold God's pardon as a means of control. The Protestant Church finds the theology of the Romans passage cited at the beginning of this article to be more persuasive. Christ died for the sins of all persons while we were still sinners and that pardon is available to all who accept it through the sacrifice of Christ. The liturgy that we follow proclaiming the pardon might be more appropriately thought of as the headline of a newspaper than a judgment contained in a judicial decree. I declare to you, who have confessed your sin and your faith, that your sins are forgiven because of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. You make the same declaration to me. It is much like declaring that the sun rises in the morning and sets at night. It is not something that any of us controls, but simply a statement of fact. Indeed, this declaration is a succinct statement of the Gospel, the Good News of Jesus Christ: ***In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.***

## **Pre-Conference District Meeting and Annual conference**

The Pre-conference District meeting for the Columbia District will take place at Franklin First United Methodist Church at 2:30 on Sunday, May 19<sup>th</sup>. Any member of the church is welcome to attend and the

Conference Delegate and Alternate should attend if possible. Annual Conference will take place from June 10<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> at Brentwood United Methodist Church. Again, anyone may attend but only elected delegates may vote. Monday evening, June 10<sup>th</sup>, will be the annual Ordination Service. If you have never attended an Ordination service you might wish to attend.

## **It's Official**

On May 15<sup>th</sup> I received a letter from the Rev. Willie Burchfield confirming that I am reappointed to Trinity UMC for the coming year. The Staff Parish Committee had asked that I be reappointed and I had asked to be reappointed. I am pleased that the Bishop and the Cabinet concurred.

## **Graceworks' Fuel Bag Program**

As I have mentioned a number of times from the pulpit, around 250,000 children go to bed hungry in Tennessee some part of every week. That figure has grown over the years. Their families are what is called "food insecure." There is rarely enough nourishing food in the home to be certain of providing for the needs of the children. Some of those children live right here in Williamson County.

Graceworks ministry has a program to provide food for children in need to take home over the weekends. These "Fuel Bags" provide nutritious food that the child can eat without preparation or with minimal preparation. The Children's Sunday school class is organizing Trinity UMC's support of this program. We need the following contributions:

### Graceworks Fuel Bags

Please pick up a few items when you are at the grocery store to include in the fuel bags:

Boxed Milk  
Raisins/Fruit Snacks  
Peanut  
Butter Crackers  
Cheese Crackers  
Cereal Cups  
Pudding Cups  
Microwaveable Meat Meals  
Easy Mac  
Tuna & Crackers

Thanks for your support of this ministry.

## **Our New Baptismal Font**

On Sunday April 21<sup>st</sup> we consecrated our new Baptismal Font with the Liturgy for Reaffirmation of our Baptismal Vows. Purchase of the Font, utilizing memorial funds, was approved by the Administrative Council

back in January. Rodger Kline shepherded the project as the Font itself was custom built for the Church by the same Amish craftsmen who made our new Altar Table and Lectern.

There are many symbols of our faith in the sanctuary. There is the Cross, representing the sacrifice of Christ. The Lectern represents the written word of God as contained in scriptures. The pulpit is a symbol of the living Word of God proclaimed in the world. The Altar Table reminds us that we are a people of the Table, constantly called back to the Table to receive the grace of God through the Lord's Supper. And the Baptismal font reminds us of our Baptism; reminds us that we have been adopted by God and have committed to live our lives as the Body of Christ. Whenever you look upon the Baptismal Font in the Sanctuary, remember your baptism and be thankful.

## **Thanks to the Trinity UMW for its Support of the Bishop's Cedar Crest Scholarship Fund**

A few weeks ago the Bishop put out a request for support for children who could not afford to attend one of the Cedar Crest Summer Camps. When it last met the Trinity UMW voted to provide two \$300 scholarships for children of the Conference. *"Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs."* Matthew 19:14

## **Worship Leadership**

The Worship Ministry is central to any church because it involves the majority of the members every week. Central to the Worship Ministry is the leadership of the laity. Judy Richardson and I are trying to organize the worship leadership schedule so that it is easier for people to plan in advance when they will be serving as **Greeters, Liturgists, Ushers and Counters**. Those who have been serving in those capacities will soon receive a proposed schedule through the summer months.

I would very much like to see greater participation in worship leadership from the laity. If you would like to make worship leadership part of your ministry in the church, please contact either Judy Richardson or Rev. Meaker.

## **Program Council Meeting In May**

There will be a meeting of the Program Council Wednesday, May 15<sup>th</sup> at 5:30. Light snacks will be provided. Please make every effort to attend.

# Bishop McAlilly Promotes a 40 Day Period of Prayer Leading Up to Annual Conference

## 40 Day Walk



Daily devotionals of **The 40 Day Walk With God** will post each morning on the Bishop's Blog during our season of intentional prayer. If you would like to Follow the Bishop's Blog during this time, posts will be delivered to your INBOX daily – enjoy them each morning on the device of your choice!

**To download a copy to your computer for reading or printing, please follow the instructions below:**

1. [CLICK HERE](#) to download .PDF file (you may “right click” and “save as” to your desktop or destination of choice)

**1a. NEW:** If you're here to download the Children's prayer guide, [CLICK HERE](#) to download (.PDF)

2. The cover image below also provides a link for download

3. NOTE: The .PDF prayer guide is 84 pages, please allow ample time for downloading depending on your connection speed

### The Problem of Personal Information

At one time it was not unusual to distribute lists of birthdays and other personal information within the Church. Such lists can still be created today if people wish to add their names to them. However, despite many requests to the contrary, I have chosen not to put information about birth dates, other than birth month, or other personal information, in the newsletter. Once this information has been posted in an online newsletter it is available to everyone. Our birth dates are an important piece of personal information that can be used as part of an effort to steal someone's identity. For much the same reason we do not post addresses and telephone numbers of members and we do not publish information about who is in the hospital. If a thief knew that someone was in the hospital they might take the opportunity to target that person's home for a break-in. The potential misuse of online information is something that we all need to be careful about.

### Prayer Ministry

The following persons have agreed to be part of the prayer ministry at Trinity UMC:

Elva Beard

Larry Eastwood

Leslie Eastwood

Sarah Jordan

Mac McAfee

Rachel Newman

Kenneth Stevens

Patricia Stevens

Sam Richardson

Judy Richardson

Charles Wilson

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**

**May 19, 2013: Children of the Father:** It is common to say words to the effect, "we are created by God." But Paul seeks to deepen that understanding, insisting that we are Children of the Father. My texts are John 14:8–17 and Romans 8:14–17.

**May 26, 2013: You Cannot Yet Bear Them:** Before he was crucified Christ told the Disciples that they had much more to learn but that Christ was leaving that teaching to the Holy spirit because the Disciples could not yet bear to hear the truth. What about us? My texts are Romans 5:1-5 and John 16:12-15.

### **Worship Leaders Schedule**

**May 19<sup>th</sup>**

**Liturgist: Elaine Rohrig**

**Greeters: Charles Wilson and Ross Crutcher**

**Ushers; Tommy Cotton and Ross Crutcher**

**May 26<sup>th</sup>**

**Liturgist: TBD**

**Greeters: Sam Richardson and Marty Bauguess**

**Ushers: TBD**

### **Announcements**

**Sunday school starts at 9:45am** in the Fellowship Hall.

**Sunday School Adult Classes:** There are two adult Sunday School classes to choose from. One meets at 9:45 in the Fellowship hall and the other meets in the classroom next to the Nursery at 10:00. Faith development is part of our discipleship commitment.

**Wednesday, April 24, 7:00pm** Choir Rehearsal

The **61<sup>st</sup> UMC** is in need of men's clothing. When you clean your closets, please consider donating men's items of clothing to a worthy cause. Bring clothes to the church and they will be taken to 61<sup>st</sup> UMC.

The dates for our church to prepare and serve dinner at **61<sup>st</sup> Street** are as follows: **May 18, August 17, and November 16**. We will also be participating at the Christmas Toy Store, dates TBD.