

Daydream Believers: Writing the Next Chapter for Trinity UMC

Stay after Church—**Sunday, January 22**—for pizza and **Daydreaming** about how God wants us to write the next chapters for Trinity.

Our Mission is clear, our hopes are high for sharing God's love.

Now we just have to figure out: How and what to do going forward so that we can be both faithful to God and financially responsible.

Come and help!

Remember: The dreamers are not necessarily the doers. But...before anything gets done...there first has to be a concept, an idea, and a plan.

And maybe even more than one! Pray for guidance, then let's come together and

Dream Big, God-sized Dreams!

Dear Friends in Mission: Thank you! The dear people you just helped with your gift may never have the opportunity to meet you, but if they did, I am certain their response would be *—thank you!* And through your financial support, *you* are serving within a vital web of interactive relationships, partnering to engage globally in direct ministry to people in need. (UMCOR International)

Together, may we continue to reveal the love of God for men, women, and children of all ethnic, racial, cultural, and national backgrounds and to demonstrate the healing power of the gospel with those who suffer. — *Grace and peace, Roland Fernandes, General Secretary, Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church*

Appreciation: Many thanks to Trinity UMC for allowing the Sanctuary and Gathering Room to be used for the 'Strings & Sings' concert on Saturday, December 17. The quartet/trio music was beautiful, and the solo singing of Jeremiah was a gift to us all. The refreshments were delightful, too. I hope you make room for this every year!

— Blessings and Merry Christmas from an avid music lover

(Funding for this event came from the Marie Bleecker distribution for 2022. Thanks, Marie!)

Taking down the Greens: Sunday, January 8 after church. This year, the group of folks that gathered to put up the Christmas decorations noticed that many of them are wearing out and getting old and not as fresh as they once were. The consensus of the group as we move forward with the next chapter of Trinity thought it is great to have some new fresh décor. First is to retire the engraved gold ornaments that have been used on the sanctuary tree. When the Christmas decorations come down, the ornaments will be organized alphabetically as best as can be for families to claim them. Second is to ask the congregation for ideas for 2023 Hanging of the Greens décor. Ideas can be emailed or written down and left in the office. — Lea Varda, lducharme9569@charter .net

Trinity Times

Sharing God's love with those who hunger.

imtrinityumc@gmail.com

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www.imtrinity.org



Facebook Live Worship at 10:30 a.m.

Go to <https://www.facebook.com/imtrinityumc>

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Facebook: facebook.com/imtrinityumc **Pastor Geri Hamlen** **Secretary: Sally Verley**

Pastor's Ponderings

A new year, 2023, is coming up quickly! Sometimes, a new year can mean new beginnings and new understandings. In 2022, we at Trinity faced some challenging issues—denominational difficulties, financial worries. In the process of wrestling with those things, the leadership at Trinity found themselves turning to the Trinity Unique Values as guideposts for next steps. The times and circumstances around us change, while values create a consistent foundation, a safe place to land.

In reading this January Trinity Times, you will see section headings that remind us of those values: Financial Stability, Engaging Worship, Meaningful Service, and Nurturing Community. There may be more in this issue than you care to read in one sitting, so let me give you a rundown:

- **Meaningful Service** describes our Mission of the Month (Community Meal), PJ's for People, a year-end report for all the various Trinity service areas (on a separate page), opportunities and appreciation from the Northern Skies District and the Michigan Conference and UMCOR, through UM Global Ministries.
- **Financial Stability** includes a thoughtful letter from your Finance Committee and year-end opportunities and appreciation for generosity and offerings. An Advent letter from Bishop Bard helps us to keep some perspective about our situation within the denominational challenges that could affect us going forward.
- **Nurturing Community** has our traditional birthday and anniversary listing along with a reminder of our college students and Luke Ruble, serving in the Marine Corp. In addition, you will see that Trinity is nurturing our neighbors with community activities, including a Christmas concert.
- **Engaging Worship** gives you a preview of Worship Scriptures and themes for the month of January. Coming up on Jan. 15, Trinity will also be hosting a Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Worship Service in our Sanctuary—See the back of the Calendar. Taking down the Greens on Jan. 8 after church will give us a chance to remember and move forward all at the same time...see the Odds & Ends section.
- **Odds & Ends:** You will see that we are also looking ahead in a variety of ways: To Camp Michigamme next summer AND... We are daring to dream (with pizza) after Church on Jan. 22 about writing the next chapters for our Church. The Council minutes from Nov. and Dec. will give you some idea of the solutions and ideas being considered to help all of us to grow as Disciples of Jesus. AND: How about VBS 2023! Contact Lea Varda to hear more: (906)774-9569 or lducharme9569@charter.net

It's hard to believe that another year has flown by here at Trinity UMC, but you can see that 2023 will provide us with more wonderful opportunities to Share God's Love with Those Who Hunger. Happy New Year, everybody, in the name of Jesus.

Pastor Geri

Engaging Worship

Christmas seems so quick to get here sometimes and even quicker to go by! My neighbors up the street keep their outside Christmas lights on for a day or two after December 25 and then, all gone. Back to the darkness of Woodward Ave. in between the streetlights. Darkness disrupted occasionally by the deer leaping through the snow drifts and looking for handouts.

That's not to say that the Spirit of Christmas disappears. The amazement, awe, and joy of God with Us, Emmanuel, is something we can hang on to all year long, if we set our minds to it.

This year, there is only one Sunday after Christmas (January 1) before we move into the Season of Epiphany. On that first Sunday of 2023, I will reflect on the passage of time in God's beautiful world. To everything there IS a season! And each season leads us on to the next season, the next chapter, the next adventure in living. That's a big part of what marks us as Christians, followers of Jesus.

I will use the seven Sundays of Epiphany to reflect on how the themes of Christmas foretold a change in how the followers of Jesus would live in the world going forward. There isn't one set pattern for our life together in the Church, but there are definite teachings and instructions that can guide us to greater Unity in Community with each other. Jesus gives us words of wisdom that help us carry Christmas with us always.

Jesus came to proclaim that **in** him, **with** him, and **through** him, we can live on earth, as they do in heaven...at least to some extent. We can live in Church, with each other, just as the Bible describes the life of Jesus and his disciples and followers. We can transform our communities of faith from the old-fashioned idea of top-down Kingdoms to the Jesus-fashioned idea of siblings together in Kin-dom relationships of love and care for each other, for our neighbors, and for all of creation. Let the light shine on us all!

Please do come and hear the Words of God for the People of God. Thanks be to God. By the power and the glory of Jesus Christ. *Pastor Geri*

Unity in Community

January 1	First Sunday after Christmas	Ecclesiastes 3: 1 – 13	'Next Chapters'
January 8	Epiphany Sunday	Matthew 2: 1 – 12, Ephesians 3: 7- 12	'Light in the Darkness'
January 15	Baptism of the Lord Sunday	Matthew 3: 13 – 17, 1 Cor. 1: 1- 9	'More Than Enough?'
January 22	Third Sunday after Epiphany	Matthew 4: 12 – 23, 1 Cor. 1: 10 – 18	'Make Up Your Mind'
January 29	Fourth Sunday after Epiphany	Matthew 5:1 – 12, 1 Cor. :26 – 31	'God's Dreams, Our Challenges'

Financial Stability (continued)

Thank you for continuing to turn in cash register tapes from Tadych's Market Place and Super One Foods. Money that we receive for the tapes goes to the General Fund. Collection boxes are on the bulletin board by the west door to the Sanctuary, and in the Narthex, by the Carpenter Ave. entrance.

If you'd like your offering listed on your 2022 statement, please be sure it's at the church by Wednesday, December 28.

2023 offering envelopes are in the Gathering Room. Please take yours. If there are none for you, and you'd like some, please write your name on the list near the envelopes.

Odds & Ends—Looking ahead

COMMITTEE INFORMATION

Trustees, Monday, January 9, 6:00 p.m., in person

Engaged Ministry Team, Tuesday January 10, 5:00 p.m., ZOOM

Finance Committee, Thursday, January 12, 6:30 p.m., ZOOM

Church Council, Monday, January 16, 6:30 p.m., ZOOM

Staff Pastor Parish, Tuesday, January 17, 4:00 p.m., ZOOM and in person.

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Camp Michigamme Youth Camp Schedule for 2023

June 14-17	Elementary Camp, 3 rd -6 th grade
June 18-24	Senior High Camp, 10 th -12 th grade
June 25-July 1	Junior High Camp, 6 th -9 th grade
July 7-8	Teddy Bear Camp, age 4-2 nd grade
July 9-15	Games Camp, 3 rd -9 th grade
July 16-22	Disneyverse, 3 rd -9 th grade
July 23-29	Science and Music Camp, 6 th -12 th grade
July 30-Aug. 5	Water Games, 3 rd -9 th grade



Register by visiting CampMichigamme.org/Register. They have a discounted rate good until the new year. Trinity also offers Scholarships! Call the office for information.

Nurturing Community

College Student Outreach—We would like to let our college students know we continue to think about them and encourage them! We send small packages of treats a few times during the school year. It can be a lonely time, and knowing their church family is thinking of them can be a blessing. You can call the office to get an up-dated list of College Youth who would appreciate knowing that they are being prayed for and cared about. Moira Cowling

In the Marine Corp: Luke Ruble (May 9), N2057 Lahaie Dr., Vulcan, MI 49892

January Birthdays & Anniversaries *(Please pray for them on their special day.)*

- Jan. 1 Dale Shampo
- 2 Todd Varda
- 3 Lisa Piatti
- 4 Blair Daugherty
- 5 Cameron Mulka
- 7 Henry & Ruth Ann Badini
- 9 Jack Noyce
- 10 Carolyn Harry
- 11 Kristin Fortner, Sarah Powell, Robert Waldbillig
- 12 Sierra Fortner, Gary & Kay Carlson
- 15 Michael & Charlene Hunt
- 16 Michael Laydon, Tim Yuhasey
- 22 Ken Saul
- 23 Jade Driscoll
- 24 Barbara Vaughn
- 26 Rev. Sandra Clark, Glenn Winters
- 27 Mary Ryan
- 28 Melissa Reddinger
- 29 Ella Fortner
- 30 Annette Cram
- 31 Henry Ruble



Hospitalized since our last issue: Mike Bruns, Sandy Mutsch

Our condolences to the family of Dolly Richards, who died November 28.

Our condolences to Pastor Sandra Clark, whose husband Mike died December 9.

“Thank you for the get-well cards.”—Virginia West

A new leaf is on the Living Tree in the Gathering Room in memory of James and LaVerne Barnes, from her family.

Meaningful Service

PJ's for People formed one year ago. It expanded from one person's idea, growing into a viable sewing ministry. We have distributed 235 PJ pants to our local community. Praise the Lord!

Engage MI encourages us to learn, act, and give. We are mastering acting and giving. Now we are exploring learning, or more accurately, teaching others to learn to sew. We have distributed invitation flyers to middle school students. Ilah Bancroft is eager, and Celeste Bancroft will be the second teacher. We request prayers for this next adventure.

Bruce and Beth Clark are stepping down as chairpeople of the Engaged Ministry Team. Thank you! Melanie Mendini is a faithful attendant at Tuesday's PJ's for People work bee and is a Community Meal team member. She has accepted the vacant position on the Engaged Ministry Team. Thank you! – Mary Yeadon

Dear Pastor Geri Hamlen and the Trinity Methodist Family: I wanted to say thank you for allowing me to volunteer in the soup kitchen for my Multicultural Education Class. This experience helped me understand the need for serving in the community and the benefit of meeting people that come from diverse backgrounds. This experience will help me as a teacher be familiar with students who have diverse backgrounds and to know how to properly serve their education needs in the classroom. Thank you so much. – Gino Mariucci

January's Mission of the Month is our Community Meal program. For many years, our church family has provided a free meal for those who hunger for food and community. Each week a different group of volunteers prepares a hot, delicious meal.

Even with COVID restrictions, the meals have continued to be provided. While we are not able to provide in-house, sit-down church meals, meals are available for pick up in our parking lot.

The Community Meal has become a very important part of our church community. A big round of thanks goes out to those involved. Please consider giving generously to support this wonderful program.



Noisy Offerings are collected the second Sunday of each month. Your coins are welcome and go toward the Mission of the Month. Thanks for your generosity!

Annual Conference Service Opportunity: You can apply to attend 2023 Annual Conference as a Northern Skies District Lay Equalization Member. The Northern Skies District has eight open Lay Equalization spots, which include one youth (age 12-17), and one young adult (age 18-30). The deadline to apply is January 9, and completed applications may be emailed or mailed to the District Office. Ask in the church office, (906)774-2545, for an application.

Financial Stability

Goal: Current congregational giving provides offerings sufficient to meet current costs/expenses.

Reflections on Finances, December 2022

The good news at the December 19 Council meeting was that the Generosity of Trinity people just MIGHT be sufficient for us to end the year without borrowing money (line of credit) or dipping into our reserves. It's a little bit early to say for sure—we'll know by the 2nd week in January where we stand—but it's never a bad time to say, 'Many thanks for your continued devotion to Generosity.' In spite of grave concerns this past summer, we are doing reasonably well, and we know that is because of your giving and caring about what happens next at Trinity.

The leadership of the church had to make some very difficult decisions in the last year. In a letter earlier this year, we indicated that we would be looking at ways to save money and that we would be looking at staffing for the church. Fortunately, the Church Council has decided that no changes to the staff of the church are necessary for 2023, and we are happy to announce that the entire staff will be back at full assignments next year.

Not all of the other decisions regarding the finances of the church for 2023 were popular, but we feel that because of those decisions, we will face the financial future of Trinity United Methodist Church with renewed optimism and eagerness to help the church grow and prosper. Your support in this renewed optimism and eagerness is vitally important to keep Trinity United Methodist Church the inviting and giving community it has always been.

As we end 2022 and head into 2023, the Church Council and the Finance Committee request that everyone at Trinity United Methodist help us prepare for taking care of our 2023 financial obligations. We ask that all who have not yet notified the church about your planned giving for 2023 fill out the Giving Goal card—you can call the office if you need one. Having a fairly accurate idea of what can be expected as far as offerings are concerned is important to the planning of our spending in the next year.

If you have not done so already, we also ask that you consider giving to the special offering campaigns before the end of the year: the Paper Poinsettias and Lights of Love Luminaries fundraisers and the 13th Month Campaign. These fundraisers have annually been significant in providing funds for closing the books at the end of the year. Please consider giving to these fundraisers to complete your 2022 offerings. It's never a bad time to give to God's work through this Trinity UM Church!

Happy New Year to all...

Frank Trumbell, Finance Committee Chairperson