

We are a growing multicultural congregation where everybody is somebody.

We worship at 10am on Sundays.

- Interim Pastor *Rev. Lindsey Carnes*
- Clerk of Session *Elder Georgia McCall*
- Treasurer *Janet Hartzell*
- Secretary *Alysha Fleming*
- Editor *Alysha Fleming and Ryan Wier*

VISION STATEMENT

We are a diverse community of disciples of Jesus Christ **GROWING** together. With the always present power of the Holy Spirit, we share our lives, care for one another, worship, pray, study God's word, and serve both inside and outside the walls of the church.

We invite you to come and **GROW** with us.

TRINITY TIMES – A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF TRINITY UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF FLINT

TRINITY UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)

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810-720-5152 Sundays @ 10am

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COME TOGETHER DURING THE CRISIS

Many Trinity members are finding ways to help our neighbors and community during this health crisis. Some are checking in on neighbors by phone once a week. Others are sending cards. Another is calling through the church directory to get to know people she doesn't know as well. One family is helping pick up groceries and prescriptions for people.

I've found a way to use social media and being online on Facebook to help make nearly 1,000 masks for medical personnel in our area hospitals so far, by encouraging people to dust off their sewing machines. Several sewers from Trinity and FPC Fenton and even Girl Scouts have joined this area wide effort.

These designs have been approved for use by Genesys, McLaren, Hurley and other groups. Those who can sew, those who can't sew can cut, pick up donations of fabric, pick up masks from doorsteps to deliver to the hospitals. Others keep everyone organized and answer questions.

TESTIMONY from a nurse this week:

I brought masks to my unit for the nurses and staff, and it directly led to me being able to share the Gospel and hope of Jesus with so many coworkers! The fear, change, unity, and community support is tearing down the walls of people's heart, and so many people are willing to receive prayer, hear about Jesus, and focus on what really matters in this life. Having masks to pass out has opened up many doors for me and connected me with my coworkers in a brand new way.

Just yesterday, in one day alone, we shared 3 Gospel conversations, prayed over each other as a unit, prayed over our patients at the bedside and as hospital codes were being announced overhead, laughed, cried, sang songs, and worked with strong teamwork. Masks are boosting morale, COVID-19 is bringing fear, Jesus is using it as a time to bring hope.

Thank you for partnering us in all you do! Also, thanks for making masks. If anyone has another pile ready to distribute, I can bring them with me to McLaren Flint!

Just imagine together the ways we can each help share the love of Christ. I'd love to hear your stories and share them to inspire others to do the same where the Lord has placed them. Call or email me to let me know your story or just to chat and pray.

810-445-6780 pastorLcarnes@gmail.com

Blessings, Pastor Lindsey

HOW TO PRAY WHEN WE DON'T KNOW HOW TO PRAY

Lately, when I sit down to pray, I am almost overwhelmed by everything that comes to mind. Other times, I feel that I can't put my prayers into words that fully express what I'm feeling. During times like these, I'll open my Bible, and first open to the Psalms, which are in the middle of my Bible.

In my head, I've always known that they express the whole range of human emotion from elation, joy, security, confidence, lament, grief, and even anger. I keep coming back to book I read a number of years ago, *Praying the Psalms*, by Old Testament scholar Walter Bruggeman. He suggests that the Psalms reflect two very basic movements in everyone's life. The "pit" and the "welcome place" out of the pit.

The "pit" happens when our world collapses around us and we feel that there is no way out of the deep hole into which we have sunk. The second is the move out of the pit into a "welcome place." We suddenly understand what has happened and who has brought us up out of the pit. In order to move out of the pit, we find ourselves moving through a cycle of orientation, disorientation and new/re-orientation.

A place of orientation, in which everything makes sense in our lives

A place of disorientation, in which we feel we have sunk into the pit

A place of new orientation, in which we realize that God has lifted us out of the pit and we are in a new place full of gratitude and awareness about our lives and our God.

He has an intriguing way of categorizing the Psalms and bringing them into our own personal lives. He thinks that the many of the Psalms match those places and the surprisingly painful and joyful moves we make. There are Psalms of orientation (Ps. 8), disorientation (Ps. 13), and new orientation (Ps.29). And some Psalms go through this entire cycle.

We can read Psalms that match which place of orientation we're in and they give voice to what we're feeling and experiencing. And then we can read on to Psalms that remind us of where we have been and how God has brought us through that. And other Psalms give us a hopeful glance to where we might be headed. The Psalms become another prayer resource for us that express a faith robust enough in the face of any situation. The movement from orientation to disorientation to new orientation is not only evident in the Psalms, but it is fundamental to the Christian life. "Our own use of the Psalms will then have more depth and significance in our prayer and devotional life. They have power for us because we know life to be like that," writes Bruggeman. The Psalms give us the words to pray when we don't know what to pray and give voice to concerns that are too deep sometimes for words.



DAYS OF THE HOLY WEEK

Palm Sunday—The Sunday before Easter, when the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem is celebrated. Originated in the late 3rd or 4th Century in the Jerusalem Church, as they read scriptures or sang hymns as they stopped at numerous holy sites. In the 6th and 7th Century, a ritual blessing of the palms was added, and in the 8th Century a morning procession was celebrated in the Western Church. Many Palm Sunday traditions remain the same as those celebrated in the 10th Century, where many people take palms home and place them in their houses or make palm crosses.

Maundy Thursday--Commemorates the foot washing and Last Supper of Jesus with the Apostles. Jesus gathered to eat the Passover feast in the evening, so this service is typically held in the evening with Communion. The English word "maundy" come from the Latin "mandatum" or mandate/commandment from Jesus' words "A new commandment I give to you: that you love one another as I have loved you."

Tenebrae Service--Some Protestant denominations have picked up the Catholic tradition of holding a Tenebrae service on Maundy Thursday or Good Friday in the evening after dark. There is a gradual extinguishing of lights and candles as the service and readings progresses. The readings often come from the Gospels and trace Jesus' final week between the Palm Sunday and Jesus' crucifixion. Our church does a reader's

theater version of a Tenebrae service, where Jesus' followers share their thoughts on Jesus' final week with them.

Good Friday--It may seem odd that people celebrate the day Jesus was crucified as "good." What Jesus went through being whipped, beaten, mocked and killed in a violent way were not good. What Christ accomplished for us is victory over death, by demonstrating God's love for us by dying in our place. Good Friday commemorates Jesus' crucifixion and three days in the grave before his resurrection. The sanctuary is stripped of all ornamentation and colored banners or often replaced with black.

Easter Sunday--Commemorates the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, and God's victory over death! Easter Sunday is something we should celebrate every day of our lives, not just once a year, but we take this special day to recognize God's great gift of eternal life for us. Traditions vary in each denomination and culture, but they call attention to new life in Christ and the death of our old selves and rebirth into new life.



WHERE DO OUR PALMS COME FROM

Did You Know?

-Approximately 308 million palm fronds were consumed in the United States in 1998.

-At least 1/2 of the farmers in Central Guatemala earn additional income from harvesting palm fronds, and more than 1.4 of household heads support themselves exclusively by collecting fronds.

-Palms are sustainably harvested and managed, protecting the palms and the forests they need for shade.

-Each palm plant produced 2 to 5 harvestable leaves over a 2 to 4 month period.

-Palm fronds only remain supple for 2 weeks before drying out.

Few Christians even consider how palms land in the pews on Palm Sunday. Minnesota is an unlikely hub for a product rooted in tropical sunshine. The project came about through a university forestry professor, a retired florist, and the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation put their heads together about sourcing and marketing fair-trade palms to churches.

The Eco-Palms partnership currently works with four communities in Guatemala and Southern Mexico, where workers tend palm fronds using

"sustainable" practices, that protect the "biosphere reserves" and forests, create local jobs, preserve vital communities, and provide sustainable livelihoods in harvesting communities.

Currently, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A), the Episcopalian, Lutheran, Methodist, and Disciples of Christ denominations encourage their churches to buy their palms through Eco-Palms. Communities receive 5-6 times the normal payment per frond. In Guatemala, the money has paid for student scholarship, teachers, and a community kitchen. In Mexico, projects have included a retirement fund for palm cutters and cold storage units. The goal is to put the project on solid footing for the future so that the communities can independently "pick this up and run with it" and repeat this 100 times, in other locations. (www.ecopalms.org)



UPCOMING BIBLE STUDIES

Tues Morning at 11am

The Twelve Disciples

This study of the twelve disciples can transform your life as you see how the Master can take the most fear-filled and faithless among us and empower us to be confident witnesses of his grace and forgiveness. We'll study Jesus' disciples and three of the lesser known disciples.

Each week we'll explore Scripture or one event that is central to understanding that particular disciple, their unique gifts and abilities, as well as the struggles that they may have had to deal with.

Wed Evening at 6:30pm

Praying at the Crossroads:

Learning from the Prayers of Old Testament

Prayer is essential to our spiritual growth, yet few of us pray as often or as fervently as we would like. We turn to God only in moments of desperation and crisis. God wants us to turn to Him at every moment of our lives.

The Bible is filled with the prayers of God's people. Many of the prayers come at critical junctures of faith—at crossroads of decision. Scripture shows us multiple examples of people turning to God when there is nowhere else to turn for peace, comfort, guidance, and strength. Looking to these prayers of biblical leaders, we can learn to pray with new commitment and passion.

We will learn that the ancient prayers of Old Testament saints (Moses, Joshua, Deborah, Hannah, Solomon, Joel, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, Habakkuk, Jonah, Daniel, Nehemiah) have much to teach us in our present circumstances, whether at a crossroads or on our daily path. Grow in your ability to pray. Together we will learn to call on God not only at crossroads but also in our daily lives.

WORSHIP BAGS FOR HOLY WEEK

To help you prepare for worship during Holy Week, volunteers from the church will deliver a worship bag with items, including a palm branch, olive wood cross, Easter egg, and a worship booklet with the prayers and bulletins for each worship service. I hope you enjoy this addition to worshipping with us from your home. Blessings, Pastor Lindsey

WORSHIP SERIES

April 5

"A Different Kind of King"

Psalm 118:1-2, 21-29, Matt. 21:1-10

April 12

"Easter Sunday"

Acts 10:34-43, John 20:1-18, Matt. 28:1-10

April 19

"Living Unafraid--Responding in Faith and Love"

John 3:16-21

April 26

"Relief for the Uncertain"

Deut 31:1-8, Luke 12:4-7

May 3

"Why Worry?"

Matt. 6:25-34

May 10

"How to Live When You Aren't a Super Hero"

Psalm 62

May 17

"Faith in the Storm"

Mark 4:35-41

May 24

"In Any and Every Circumstance"

Phil.4:4-13

May 31

"Kingdom Perspective"

Romans 8:38-39, Matthew 25

TRINITY UNITED PC FACILITIES ARE CLOSED

The Session has decided that church building and office is closed until May 15 due to the recommendation and advice of our Governor, health and medical experts and our Presbytery.

We hope that you have been a part of the online worship services offered the last 2 Sundays. Your pastor, elders, deacons, staff and volunteers are "working from home" to keep the lines of communication open, continuing to work and doing things we didn't expect we would do in ways that we didn't think we could do. May the Lord give us great opportunities to serve Him by serving others.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

Hunger * Disaster * Development

Join with Presbyterians worldwide in sharing God's love with our neighbors-in-need around the world by providing relief from natural disasters, health pandemic, food for the hungry, and support for the poor and oppressed.

Each gift to this offering helps to improve the lives of people in challenging situations through three impactful programs:

PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE: Works alongside communities as they recover and find hope after the devastation of natural or human-caused disasters

PRESBYTERIAN HUNGER PROGRAM: Takes action to alleviate hunger and the systemic causes of poverty so all may be fed

SELF-DEVELOPMENT OF PEOPLE: Invests in communities responding to their experiences of racism, oppression, poverty and injustice and educates Presbyterians about the impact of these societal ills.

You can mail your offering to Trinity by cash or check or donate by credit card at www.presbyterianmission.org/give-oghs

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED

Your giving continues to be an important act of worship and witness. You can continue to faithfully give financially online at www.trinityunitedpc.org.

If you prefer to give by mail you can send checks to: Trinity United PC, 5151 Lennon Rd, Flint, MI 48507. Now is the time for our church family to serve others and reach out in love. Please continue to give so that the ministry of Trinity United may continue to thrive even in the midst of difficult days.

LINKS

Here are the links to stay connected with us online.

Website: <http://trinityunitedpc.org/>

Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/TrinityUnitedPC.USA/>

YouTube:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjF2cBNiB8tQnV-pjsLEgGQ>

Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/488551049>
Meeting ID: 488 551 049 or
call (312-626-6799) Meeting ID: 488 551 049

HOLY WEEK WORSHIP SERVICES

Even though we can't meet AT Trinity, we will continue to worship and connect and care for each other AS Trinity.

Palm Sunday, April 5, 10am
Maundy Thursday, April 9, 6:30pm
Good Friday, April 10, 6:30pm
Easter Sunday, April 12, 10am

BIRTHDAYS

2 Asher and Eleanor Smith
4 Shawntera. Fischer
6 Barbara Wesley
10 Maxine Storey
14 Nancy Dunlap
18 Loraine Clark
23 Lisa Graham
24 Gay Grover
30 Alice Shirley

ANNIVERSARIES

6 Jackie and Herb McClellan
30 Denise and Jim Dixon



PRAYERS NEEDED

- For all members and friends of TUPC
- For all of us who are quarantined and all who are sick or have a loved one who is sick
- For caregivers and those who lend support and presence
- For the bereaved and their families and for all those experiencing sadness and depression during the holidays
- Travelling mercies for all who are visiting family and friends during the holidays
- For mission workers locally, nationally and globally
- For our nation, representatives, and all government leaders
- For our military and veterans
- For Flint water and infrastructure
- For the Body of Christ and solidarity among Christian denominations
- For racial Peace and peace among nations

Send a card, give a call say a prayer, or make a meal and let us continue to offer care and love to those who are grieving and struggling in one form or another.

If you have a submission for the May *Trinity Times*, please send your article or information to Alysha Fleming at office@trinityunitedpc.org by no later than April 24th. Thank you.