

# Trinity Triumph

Trinity United Presbyterian Church Newsletter

Zanesville Ohio 43701

March - April 2023

## Pastor Ponderings

Dear Church,

It's Lent – a time to pause our busyness and focus our hearts on Jesus' journey to Jerusalem and the cross.

As you already know, this Lent, Trinity Church will be seeking to better understand Jesus' action and teaching to the people of Judah by immersing ourselves in psalms. Whether in music or shared reading, we'll engage with the season's psalms each Sunday in worship. There'll also be a prayer station in the parlor where you can spend quiet time pondering the depths of these timeless verses. And on Thursday mornings, the Women's Bible Study will also be considering them through readings and discussions.

These opportunities to grasp God's messages for us are traditional practices for Christians. They are all a continuation of what The Church has done for millennia. What's more, they are what will continue to happen in the centuries ahead. They are good and faithful responses to God's love for us. Participating in such events is part of what it is to be a good and faithful servant.

Of course, there are other things we do to express our love for – and faith in – God. In years past we've offered Sunday school for all ages and youth fellowship trips. We've sponsored a Boy Scout troop, supported mission co-workers and so many other things. And we still do as many of these kinds of things as possible now a days.

And yet we are growing grayer around the edges. Fewer children join us in the sanctuary for worship. We're spending more on the building and on salaries than we take in. We pace ourselves with fewer activities because we simply don't have the energy we once did. And some of our church friends have now joined the Church Triumphant in God's presence.

The times are trying our faith and our strength.

How are we to go on?

What are we to do?



What are our options?

How do we choose the most faithful path for moving forward as church into the future?

One of the psalms this Lent is Psalm 121. It reminds us that others have faced hardships and challenges to their faith. But the first three verses of it express the writer's hope for his future. They say:

"I lift up my eyes to the hills-- from where will my help come? My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth. He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber."

The words are a sure sign of faith. And as Church we are to rely on our faith that in God all will be well. Yet we also know that if we're not listening for God's voice to direct us, or are open to seeing the answers God offers, we'll often miss out on God's help.

Your session is deeply aware of the difficulties we are facing. As you know, last December some of them began a conversation with one another and with Matt Skolnick, General Presbyter of this presbytery to hear about ideas that are breathing life into three congregations around Canton. The full session continued this discussion at their January meeting. They even had a second gathering to talk further about the ideas.

At that time, they agreed that while they are the spiritual leaders of the church, the entire congregation should have a voice in this matter. They also believe the Holy Spirit will inspire everyone's hearts and minds with ideas that could enable us to continue as a good and faithful church.

With this in mind we are asking that throughout Lent all committees, work groups, studies, etc., lay down all but the absolute essentials of their work so they can focus on these vital matters. We will also make efforts to include non-committee members in similar discussions. These opportunities will be publicized so everyone will have an opportunity to participate.

After those conversations are held, the session will regroup to unpack the joys, concerns, hopes, fears, and especially the ideas that were voiced.

They believe God will open their eyes to see patterns and possibilities in those ideas and will then be able to determine next steps based on what they hear. Fear not though! The session will not make decisions about Trinity's future without having additional conversation with the membership.

SO, what will we be doing as smaller groups over Lent?

1. PRAY for the Holy Spirit's guidance. Then LISTEN to one another and for the Spirit's whispers as we discuss items like:
  - a. Ask what do we hope we can be, as Christ's Reformed body in Zanesville, Ohio?
  - b. Discern what the role of Christ's Church is according to Matthew 25 and Matthew 28
  - c. Remember what we, as a church, are truly good at and what excites us about being church
    - i. Determine what resources do we possess now and how deep and extensive each one is.
  - d. Briefly consider our limitations (financial, age, etc.)

2. We'll also list options for going forward as church; how might we structure ourselves, invest in our ministry, the building, etc., for the time ahead.
  - a. Be introduced to the Three-Legged Stool concept of being church and church leadership
3. DISCERN together what interest there is in exploring the concepts and ideas we discuss further.

These conversations will probably not bring about one, single answer then send us back to business as usual in our life together as Trinity United Presbyterian Church. We may try a combination of options. We also may fail and have to reconsider our next steps again. But we aren't the first people to go through this process. And we will not go through it alone.

In their darkest times God spoke to the Israelites through prophets. God gave one, Jeremiah, especially important words for the people to hear:

*“For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me.”*

I fully believe God has plans for TUPC, plans for our welfare that can give us a future with hope. At this point we don't have an inkling of what options might fit into those plans let alone what they'll look and feel like in the end. But I believe God wants The Church to live, thrive even. That doesn't mean the church will be exactly as it was 30 years ago, but even then it wasn't like it was 100 years before that, or 400 years before that. God is ALWAYS creating, always fashioning something new, something that will be bright and beautiful and full of all the love God can give it.

Yet, no matter how bright and beautiful God's gifts to us can be, not being certain of what's to come can be unnerving. This brings me back to one of the psalms we're living with this Lent:



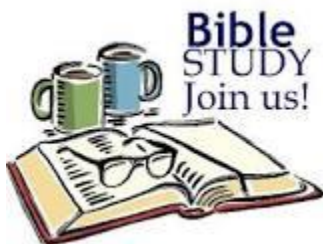
The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.  
 He makes me lie down in green pastures;  
 He leads me besides still waters;  
 He restores my soul...

We are God's children who will dwell in the house of the Lord our whole lives long. Let's go and walk with our Lord, the one who loves us so much, he gave his only son for us...

In Peace,

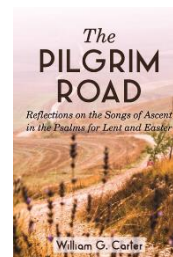
Pastor Deb.

## THERE'S STILL TIME TO JOIN IN!



As we immerse ourselves in the Psalms this Lent, the Thursday morning Women's Bible Study will take time to reflect on the *Psalms of Lent and Psalms of Ascent* throughout the season... and everyone is invited to join in! Each Psalm will speak to the Lenten journey in some way... but since we're looking at different Psalms each week, you can come to any session and fit in.

We'll be reading and reflecting on the Lenten Lectionary Psalms as well as parts of Rev. William G. (Bill) Carter's book, *The Pilgrim Road*, which guides readers into thoughtful discussions about real life situations that echo the ideas put forth in various Psalms. Pastor Deb has seven of the books (\$11 each) if you would like to read along. It is also available on Kindle through Amazon.



Each week through Maundy Thursday, April 6, we'll be gathering on Thursday mornings from 10:30a.m. to noon. So please take some time to reflect on God's word as spoken through the Psalms and join us on this journey! As you have questions (or want a book) please call Pastor Deb.

## LENTEN FOCUS: THE PSALMS

Lent this year will be a time of reflection and discernment - a time when we seek to listen for the Holy Spirit who is leading us to life along unfamiliar paths.



As a way of settling into the practice of "holy listening" (which is one definition of discernment) Trinity Church is focusing our hearts on the Psalms in worship and in study. These poetic songs call out to our hearts reminding us of the challenges of living according to God's desires as well as of our faith in God which supports hope for our life together as a congregation.

The Lectionary for this particular Lent includes wonderfully rich psalms for consideration. As poetry, psalms are full of sights, smells, tastes, touches, and sounds. As such, they'll help us engage all our senses in worship. So, whether

in word or song, each Sunday we'll hear a particular Psalm in worship.

Everyone will also have an opportunity to consider these songs more deeply on an individual basis as the Christian Education team is offering a series of prayer stations throughout the season. These prayer stations will contain a copy of the psalm, a short devotion and some objects that relate to it that will lead you into a deeper understanding of the verses. After reading the words and seeing the items, you may choose to answer the question that's offered and post your response nearby. And

while you are responding privately, if you choose to post your answer, your response will be seen by others who visit the station! In this way the Holy Spirit can draw us into closer relationships with one another and with God. These stations will change weekly on Wednesdays. You are welcome to visit them whenever you are in the building. And if you want to stop by while running errands, if Pastor Deb's car is in the lot you are welcome to ring the office doorbell. She'll let you in.

Pastor Deb is also offering a special Lenten Bible study that will also feature the psalms. For more on that please see *There's Still Time to Join* elsewhere in the Triumph!

### **WHAT'S A KYRIE?**

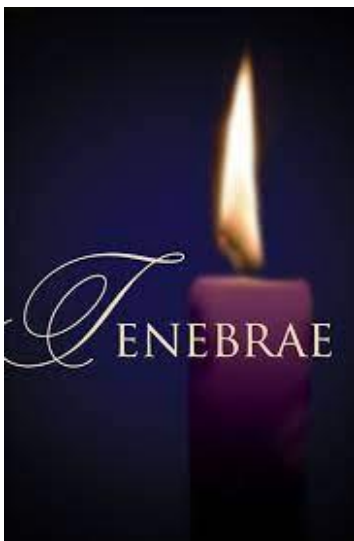
In Matthew 8 we hear what happened when Jesus took a nap while he and his disciples were crossing the Sea of Galilee in a small-ish boat. A windstorm suddenly came up and scared the disciples half to death.... But Jesus remained asleep until they cried out saying "*Kyrios sozo!*"

Translated from the Greek, those two words mean "Lord, save us!" That's something we all might say when we are afraid, or worried, or realizing that we've turned our faces away from God's love by failing to live up to the intent of the Ten Commandments or Jesus' Great Commandment. "Lord, save us!"

Even before Christianity became the official religion of Rome, religious scholars had translated the Greek texts into the language of the empire – Latin. While the words "*Kyrios Sozo*" became "*Kyrie Eleison*", they carried the same meaning "Lord, save us" or "Lord, have mercy."

Throughout Lent Mindy Patterson will lead us as we replace the traditional *Gloria Patri* with a responsive singing of "*Kyrie Eleison*" after we confess who we are before God and one another. It's an extra way for us to ask God's blessing during this somber season and will make our joy even sweeter when Easter dawns and we again "*Glory be to the Father...*"

### **SAVE THE DATE: APRIL 6, 2023**



Maundy Thursday is April 6<sup>th</sup> this year. Trinity will again hold an evening service to celebrate the night Jesus shared the last supper with his followers. While those who attend the service will receive communion and hear the story of Jesus' final hours, this year we'll also symbolically remember how Jesus washed the disciples feet before they ate the meal. More details about this service will be sent out later in March. For now, please save a space on your calendar so you can be with us that night!

## **EASTER FIRE 2023**

Christ's resurrection shows us that the darkness of death cannot overcome God's holy light. TO celebrate this event last year, a good number of Trinity people gathered around an early morning bonfire by the shelter house. After hearing God's good news for us, we proceeded into the sanctuary to sing and praise the Lord. Then we shared a delicious Easter breakfast together. It was an exciting way to remember God's greatest of all gifts to us! So, assuming the weather is reasonably good, we'll begin Easter Sunday, 2023 around a bonfire again. We hope you'll join us on Sunday, April 9.



## **PRAYER IS POWERFUL**

TUPC has a number of people unable to attend physical church on a regular basis. Please remember them, as well as the entire church family, in your thoughts and prayers. Prayer is so often felt by those we lift up, and God always listens to us as we pray.

## *Prayer Works*



The current list includes: Bernie Baldwin, Denise Bunker, Pat Fredrick, Dave & Elva Frick, Dick & Margaret Keyes, Jackie Kolometz, Betty Linn, Kate Saunders, Ken & Gretchen Sayre, Dora & Merle Taylor, and Nancy Thompson.

If you know of any changes that should be made to this list, please let us know. Please also call Pastor Deb if you or a loved one needs prayer. She will pray with you and we'll make sure the congregation is alerted so we can all support him/her in their time of need.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Christian Education – Melissa Cook**

At least 40 attended and enjoyed the Soup Lunch in January. Cookie Coffee will be February 26. A Baked Potato Lunch and conversation time will be March 26. Lenten Bible Study will begin Thursday February 23 with all members and friends invited. Time is 10:30 in the Youth Room. We are coordinating the Prayer Station in the Parlor and encourage everyone to take a few minutes to read. It will be changed on Wednesdays.

### **Deacons – Bev LeMaster**

The Golden Couples/Octogenarian Luncheon will be April 23. More details coming.

### **Missions – Maggie Nussbaum**

Trinity will be collecting the One Great Hour of Sharing offering from Sunday, February 26<sup>th</sup> through Easter Sunday, April 9<sup>th</sup>. This is one of two PC(USA) special offerings in which we

participate. Typically received during the season of Lent, each gift to One Great Hour of Sharing supports efforts to relieve hunger through the Presbyterian Hunger Program, promote development through the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People, and assist in areas of disaster through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.

**Invitation Board** - Remember to check out the Invitation Board by the coat rack in the entry way. Community events are posted there, as well as other newsworthy items.

**Best Choice UPC Labels** - If you use Best Choice brand products, please save the UPC code with the words "Best Choice." Eastside Community Ministry can redeem these for cash, which they use for their different programs. There is a pink envelope on the Invitation Board for the collection of these labels.

**Tri-Giving** - The Tri-Giving offering is a year-round offering to encourage members to donate small amounts of cash on a regular basis. The offering for January-April is designated for The Fellowship of Christ's Community, an outreach program of Central Presbyterian Church. They offer a Sunday evening meal followed by a worship service each week. There are brown envelopes in the pew racks for the Tri-Giving offering.

### **Potato Lunch & Conversation – March 26**

Sunday, March 26 following the morning service you are invited to make your way to Fellowship Hall for a Baked Potato Bar Lunch. We will have baked potatoes and various toppings to create your favorite way to enjoy a baked potato. We need to know how many potatoes to prepare so please sign up on the sheet on the white board. If you would like to provide a dessert, topping to share or a salad please indicate that when you sign up. We will also have some conversation about the future of our church and welcome all ideas and thoughts.

## **Global Connection**

### **NEWS FROM OUR MISSION PARTNER – CHENOA STOCK**

Dear Trinity United Presbyterian Church,

I hope this finds you well and enjoying these winter months of the new year.

We and our partners have been busy these months. In February, I continued with my Interpretation Assignment (IA) of church visits and traveled to western Idaho/eastern Oregon and Phoenix, Arizona. It was a joy to be in new (to me) environments of farm and rural living, as well as the southwestern desert. I feel blessed for this opportunity to meet and share with so many, different congregations throughout the USA, to learn from them and their ministries, and to share about ours. This was most likely my last long-distance travel for IA, as I now begin to turn my principal focus back to our partners and their ministries in Peru.

Our partners of the Evangelical Church of Peru Sicuani Seminary just recently celebrated their end-of-year graduation, scheduled for December, but postponed due to political turmoil and unrest throughout the country. Thankfully, Pastor Condori, the seminary director, shared that on the day of the graduation, the blockades were lifted, the seasonal rains paused, and 21 students graduated on February 12<sup>th</sup>. It was a blessing for all who had been waiting since December for this special day. New students will soon be arriving to the seminary to begin the next academic year.

The Peruvian Joining Hands Network held their General Assembly in mid-February. In this meeting, a new Board was elected, and a Strategic Plan was created and approved. Joining Hands will continue its campaign for environmental justice and health reform, now using the environmental health law, for which they advocated, as a guide to walking with partner communities in Lima affected by the extractive mining industry. The network is looking forward to this new challenge and focus as they transition their work towards these partners, even amidst the ongoing political turmoil.

Unfortunately, the situation in Peru has not improved since I wrote in December. Protests of the rural and indigenous populations have been ongoing since the impeachment of the Ex-President, Pedro Castillo, after his self-coup attempt – declaring Congress dissolved and a rule by decree. When his VP was inaugurated and said she would complete the rest of Castillo’s term, the people who supported Castillo went to the streets to protest the violence used by the military, demanding that she step down, and that new elections be held. To this day, the new President has not stepped down and she and Congress have not approved a proposal to move up elections. Thus, the protests continue, with voices raising up from those who feel they have not been heard for far too long. They are the victims in a country where the government of majority urban elite see the benefits of economic growth from industries that destroy these workers’ and communities’ land, air, and water. There is no sign that the protestors’ demands – 1) that the president resign, 2) that new elections be held immediately (thus dissolving Congress), 3) that a new constitution be written – will be met any time soon. As the turmoil continues, the Peruvian Joining Hands Network continues the Matthew 25 call of outreach in the way of providing food to the hungry through community kitchens, offering housing and clothes to the naked, and offering psychological support for those who are sick and in need. Please keep Peru and our partners in your prayers.

Throughout these months of Lent, as we reflect on behaviors that draw us away and bring us closer to God, I am grateful for our partnership with you all that is an expression of God’s love that calls us to be in relationship with God’s people around the world. Thank you for accompanying our ministry that brings our partners closer to God and the call for justice for God’s Kin-dom each day.

Lenten blessings,  
Chenoa

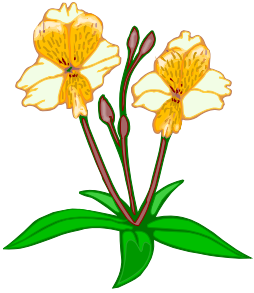


Peru Sicuani Seminary Graduation

Providing food to the hungry through community kitchen



## Birthdays and Anniversaries



### MARCH

- 2: Maria Johnson
- 8: *John & Donna Myers\*\**
- 9: Jack Tysinger
- 11: Liz Grimm
- 14: *Raymond & Danelle Murphy*
- 15: Hinda Ardrey
- 18: Richard Patterson\*
- 20: Kathy Hixson
- 23: *Keith & Lori Meadows*
- 25: Elizabeth Linn\*  
*Herbert and Shirley Hicks\*\**
- 31: Julie Maneely  
Macy Meadows

### APRIL

- 3: Heidi Church
- 8: Bill Cook  
Anna Johnson
- 14: Suzanne Mennega  
Dora Taylor
- 17: *Keith & Patty Van Horn*
- 20: Linda Taylor
- 21: Cathie Jenkins
- 23: *Tim & Susan Thompson*
- 25: *Donald & Charlene Noland*
- 26: Laloni Tysinger
- 27: Katie Cook  
Aaron Johnson
- 29: Margaret Keys\*
- 30: Andrew Cook  
Logan Maneely

\*80 years or older  
\*\*Over 50 Years of Marriage  
\*\*\*Golden Anniversary

**REMINDER: If Muskingum County is on a Level 2 snow emergency at 8 am on Sunday morning, services and all activities at the church are cancelled until we return to level 1 or it is removed.**

Trinity United Presbyterian Church

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