



March 2026

TRINITY CONNECTION



THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF TRINITY UMC



"Love God, Love People!"

WELCOME TO TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

If you are a newcomer to the congregation please make yourself known to one of the clergy or to one of our ushers before worship.

Pastoral Team

Rev. Erica Munoz

Lead Pastor

Rev. Dr. Deb De Vos

Associate Pastor, Spiritual Formation & Discipleship

Rev. Donald Gebhard

Associate Pastor

Church Office Hours

Monday - Thursday - 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Friday - Office closed

Worship Times

Saturday 5:00 pm - Worship in Trinity House

Sunday 10:00 am - Worship in the Sanctuary

All Worship Services are livestreamed at
[Facebook.com/TrinityCatchTheSpirit](https://www.facebook.com/TrinityCatchTheSpirit)

From the Pastor

Dear Friends in Christ,

As we step into March, I find myself reflecting on a simple but powerful truth shared recently at a hospital managers' huddle during "kindness week":

Mother Teresa has said "Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless." There is something sacred about that image — echoes. A word of kindness spoken today may continue to ripple through a person's heart long after the moment has passed. We may never see the full reach of what a gentle word, a patient response, or a compassionate presence can do. But in God's hands, even the smallest act of kindness carries lasting power.

Scripture reminds us again and again that love is not abstract. It is lived. It shows up in how we speak, how we listen, how we treat one another — especially when it's difficult. In a world that often feels hurried, divided, or sharp-edged, kindness becomes a quiet witness to Christ. Each time we choose patience over irritation, understanding over judgment, or encouragement over criticism, we participate in God's work of healing. I see this truth every day in my work as a hospital chaplain. Hospitals are places where people often arrive anxious, hurting, or afraid. Medical care is essential — but so is kindness. A nurse who pauses to listen. A doctor who speaks gently. A family member who holds a hand. A staff member who offers a smile in the hallway.

Time and again, I hear patients and families say, "They were so kind." Not "They were efficient." Not "They were impressive." Kind.

Because kindness brings comfort. Kindness restores dignity. Kindness reminds people they are not alone. And here is the good news for all of us: "Kindness is contagious — and we're the carriers."

Every interaction becomes an opportunity to spread something life-giving. At home. At church. At work. In the grocery store. On the phone. Online. The kindness we offer doesn't stop with the person in front of us — it travels outward, touching others in ways we may never know.

As we journey through this Lenten season together, I invite you to practice intentional kindness; speak one encouraging word each day, offer patience where frustration would be easier, notice someone who might otherwise go unseen, choose grace — especially when it's inconvenient.

May our church be known as a community where kindness lives and grows. May our words echo with grace. And may the love of Christ flow through us in ways that bring comfort, healing, and light to everyone we meet!

Grace and peace,

Pastor Don



Lenten Activities at Trinity

Lent.
A SEASON OF RENEWAL

Lenten Day of Service - 4th Annual Rise Against Hunger - March 7
Search for Flat Jesus - through April 4
Holy Week
March 29th Palm Sunday
April 2nd Maundy Thursday
April 3rd Good Friday
April 5th Easter Sunday

Stay in the Know and Join in the Fun!

Trinity's Friendship Circle

Forty-six people gathered in the main dining room at Heath Village on Monday, February 2nd to hear Bill Mahoney's presentation on his 2-year preparation with F3 Nation and The My Impossible team to help a disabled athlete (and good friend) reach the summit of Africa's Mt. Kilimanjaro (19,341 ft) over a 4-day period. It was an amazing and inspiring story of Fitness, Fellowship, Faith, and collective resilience! (If you were not able to attend this presentation, but would like to hear it, Bill will be presenting it at the June UMM breakfast as well).

Our refreshments for the February meeting included a chocolate fountain and lots of goodies to dip in the flowing deliciousness...along with Heath Village's always-looked-forward-to cookies!

5 Spots Available!



Ladies gather with other women for a simple meal, fellowship and great conversation.

March 13th in Hackettstown
Sign up for more details by emailing ddevos@catchthespirit.org
To host a Savor Supper contact Pastor Deb also!

Golden Gathering



Snacks on a Stick
While
Playing Pick Up Sticks

All Seniors Welcome!
Trinity Connection Cafe
March 10th @ 11:00 a.m.



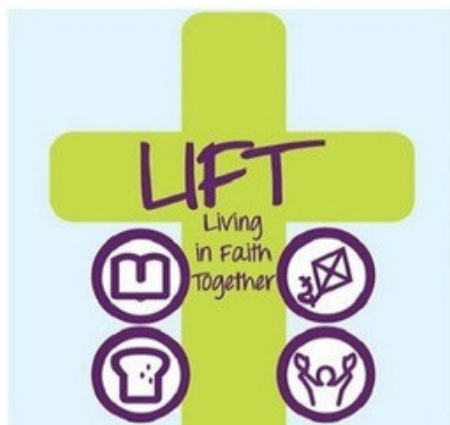
RSVP: Just Say Yes in Bulletin or
jmahoney@catchthespirit.org

Senior Social - Mark your calendars:
March 19th

Let's celebrate National Reading Month with a book exchange! Bring a book or two or three that you have read. And while you're at it, bring a jigsaw puzzle or two that you have done and exchange it for something new to you.

Remember to bring a friend to this fun time of fellowship with other seniors. Coffee and a snack will be provided. Come and enjoy lots of time for conversation, too.

Join us in Trinity House on
Thursday, March 19, 1:15 - 2:45 pm.



gathering to generate
intergenerational community

First Sundays

4:30-6:30 p.m. in Starr Hall
All Ages Welcomed

Bring a Dish to Share
Drinks & Desserts Provided

Stay in the Know and Participate!

United Methodist Men

There was NO UMM breakfast in February as we were working on our 19th Annual Hoagie Sale. The hoagie sale was another success as we raised just over \$1000 and reached our goal of \$2500 for the Rev. Mathias Torgersen Scholarship. The scholarship will be awarded in June along with the other Trinity UMC scholarships.

We would like to thank all who have supported our fund raising efforts during the year.

Our next breakfast will be March 14th. Our speaker is NJ author Phil Coffin. Phil's topic is: "Baseball's Integration and the Influence of the Negro Leagues". This topic is germane because the baseball season is scheduled to start on March 25th.

Our April 11th breakfast will feature author Paul Semendinger. Paul has been here the last two years and is a very inspirational speaker.

The UMM continues collecting new and slightly used clothing for the Midnight Run Mission. They always need NEW underwear and socks, and either new or slightly used jeans and hoodies. Please consider helping us support this mission. Their next trip into NYC is March 7th.

All of our breakfast speakers for the current year are booked. We have started scheduling speakers for our next year, starting in September. If you have a suggestion for a speaker please contact one of the officers of the UMM.

Always remember, UMM is not just for men. Among our goals is to provide: a sense of community, a meaningful presentation, and a fantastic breakfast.



United Women in Faith News

Join us on March 28th in Starr Hall at Trinity United Methodist Church in Hackettstown!

We will begin at 9:00 am with a light breakfast and then we start to move!

Our instructor is Sandy Polsky who has been a Zumba instructor since 2013. She is licensed in Zumba, Zumba Gold/Chair, and Zumba Kids.

The cost of the class is \$5.00 per person.

We'd like everyone to bring a donation of feminine products for the Lord's Pantry.

This event is sponsored by the United Women in Faith

[Sign Up Here](#)



ONE STEP CLOSER TO A WORLD WITHOUT HUNGER

We're on the road to end hunger, aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Goal #2 of Zero Hunger. From the implementation of sustainable community development projects to our meal packaging program that harnesses the passion of local volunteers, we strive to make an impact on hunger by building resilience, self-sufficiency and empowerment in communities worldwide.

Volunteer for Our Meal Packaging Event

Date: March 7, 2026 Time: 9:00 a.m.

Meals Goal: 10,000 Funds Goal: \$4,100.00

Location: Trinity UMC - Hackettstown in Starr Hall (Church building)

Contact: Pat Riegler at patdriegler@gmail.com

Cost: \$20.00 per adult. \$10.00 per child up to the third child.

Participants from Grade 1 and up. **Children must be accompanied by a parent.**



[Sign Up Here](#)

EXPERIENCE

Stay in the Know and Be a Part of the Action!

Finance Ministry Team Update

Praise God for a strong start to our 2026 fiscal year. Thank you for your love of Trinity and for your generous giving. The Church Council approved our 2026 budget on January 9. We received 154 pledges and anticipate a total revenue budget of \$1,101,000. Our current expense projections for the year are \$1,098,000.

As you can see, it is a very tight budget, and we will continue to monitor it closely and will adjust as needed.

REMINDER: If you are giving electronically and have not yet updated your credit card or automatic payment amount, please take a moment to do this right away. If you need help with this process, please call the church office: (908) 852-3020.

Here is a quick summary of our January financials:

- Revenues were \$27,102 higher than our budget.
- Our expenses were \$26,638 below budget.
- Designated Fund balances remain strong.

Malachi 3:10 Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.

Small Group Ministry Team Update

Once again you're invited to go in search of Flat Jesus. If you find one, take a selfie with him, try not to give away the location in your selfie and put him back for someone else to find. You can search up until April 4th. Send your pix to Pastor Deb at ddevos@catchthespirit.org!



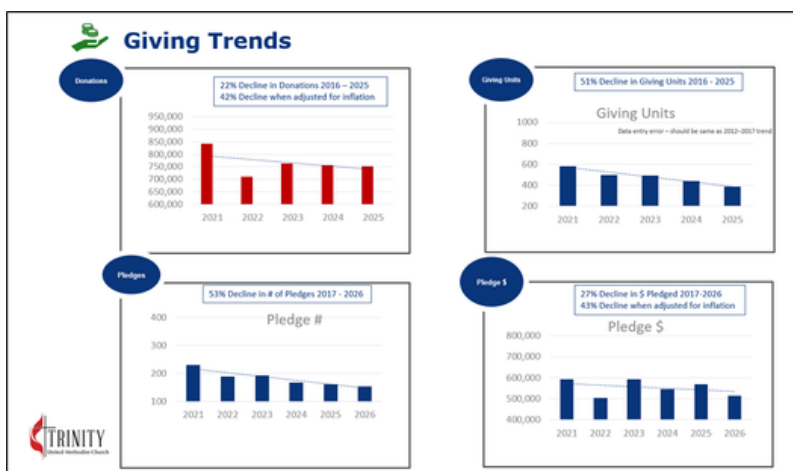
Since Easter is so early this year, we have the opportunity to offer a spring semester of small group offerings.

Here is what we're planning so far:

- Unpacking the Social Principles
- The Message of Jesus book study
- Explore: God's Word and God's Creation (Hiking)
- Savor Suppers

Movie & Discussion

Join us on March 15th in the Rotunda at 12:30 for a movie followed by a discussion. Feel free to bring your lunch and a friend.



Other Ways to Connect and Things to Know!



Birth

Kyra Marie Mnich- Daughter of Chris & Casey Mnich, Granddaughter of Keith & Julie Ryan

Baptisms

Kehlani Marie Concepcion – Daughter of Marquis Concepcion and Kailyn Garcia

Hunter Holden Hazell – Son of Brian and Brittany Hazell

Savannah June Peterson - Daughter of James and Catherine Peterson , Granddaughter of Mike and JoAnn Heembrock

Sympathy to

Dale & Betsy Hart and family on the death of his sister-in-law Carol Hart

Family and friends of Charlie Brown

Fish Fry Friday

MARCH 13, 2026
5:00 - 7:00 P.M.
STARR HALL TRINITY UMC



\$15 ADULT MEAL
\$10 KID'S MEAL

Includes 2 delicious pieces of fish, hot fries, coleslaw, drink & dessert!

[Order Tickets Here](#)



Hackettstown St. Patrick's Day Parade

Sunday, March 8th

To join Pastor Don and the Trinity float,
meet at 3:00pm on Valentine St

Trinity Scholarships Available

Applications for the 2026 Trinity United Methodist Church's student scholarships are available in the foyer, the church office, and on the Trinity website. All completed applications are due by Thursday, April 30th at 12:00 noon. There are ten (10) different scholarships available. The description of each scholarship and their qualifications are included in the application package. Students are encouraged to apply for all the scholarships that they are qualified for. An additional source for scholarships for United Methodist students is the Greater NJ Conference ([Here](#)).

THRIFT SHOP NEEDS YOUR NEWSPAPERS



**DROP OFF-
BASKET IN
ROTUNDA
NEXT TO
PASTOR'S
STUDY**