



# Trinity In Touch

July 2022

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### Mission

*Our Mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.*

### Vision

*Striving to be an inclusive faith community that compels us to extend God's love in our neighborhood and world.*

### Core Values

#### **Diversity & Inclusiveness:**

*Seeking to affirm every person as a child of God.*

#### **Scripture, Tradition, Experience and Reason:**

*Searching for truth in our faith community.*

#### **Peace & Justice:**

*Striving for positive social change in our neighborhood and world.*

### Trinity UMC

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Hello Friends,

Can you feel it? The sunshine on your face. The humidity in your bones. Can you hear it? The sound of the lake calling our names. That hunger-inducing sizzling coming from grills all around us as if they were recorded in high definition stereo. I sure can. It is the change from spring to summer, and summer is now in full swing.

With each new season comes change. I know for many of us, "change" can be a four letter word. I know that just last month in the newsletter I wrote about change concerning the future of printed bulletins. But the fact of the matter is that life is change. I feel it with each new year and new aching muscle. I see it as my kids continue to grow up and mature despite my impassioned pleas for them to stay young just a little longer. And it can be a little easier to accept if we talk about it.

It was a year ago this month that I officially became your pastor. That was a big change. Nichea retiring is a big change. Acclimating to our new Director of Discipleship, Laura Johns, is a change.

For those of you who find great comfort in the familiar, all of that change is daunting. I wish I could tell you that change is taking a vacation, but that just isn't the case. So take a deep breath, steady your nerves, because the changes that are coming, while different (and perhaps more ambitious), are good changes - changes that, in time, you will grow to appreciate.

The first change you already know about. **On July 3, our worship time will change from 9:30am to 10am**, and it will stay this way for the foreseeable future. This change has already been applauded by many, and will take some getting used to for others. Ultimately it will allow for young families and adults to be able to participate in worship and Faith Formation more easily.

The next big change in the works is the addition of a new bathroom on the main floor (sanctuary level) of the church building. This new ADA compliant bathroom will occupy the space currently occupied by the large storage closet in the discovery room and it will be accessed from the hallway.

The other big change taking effect sometime this summer will be the expansion of our Pray-ground, the area set aside for children in the back of the sanctuary during worship. Read more about the expansion in Laura's newsletter article.

It is this change, the expansion of the Prayground, that will likely be the MOST noticeable. But I assure you that it is necessary.

The pandemic has changed so many things in our world, and it is changing how we have to go about being the church. The expansion we are making will send a clear signal to every young family, every grandparent, and anyone who even knows any children at all, that Trinity cares about kids.

If you have any questions about any of these changes, please feel free to call or email me. I would love to have the opportunity to sit down with any of you and discuss the vision and mission of Trinity. Your input is appreciated.

In this continuing season of change, let us take the time to pray for each other. Whether you are having to live through the change others are making or you, yourself, are the one making the change, it can be scary. We all need all the support we can get in order to move into the future with boldness, knowing that we are moving, working, and growing in the ways that God has called us to.

Grace and Peace, Pastor Mike





## HOSPITALITY STATEMENT

Trinity UMC celebrates the beautiful diversity of the human community. We affirm the sacred worth of each person as a recipient of God's love and grace. As followers of Christ, we are an open and inclusive congregation. We live this out by welcoming into full participation all persons regardless of gender, race, national origin, physical or mental abilities, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, marital status or economic condition.

### PRAYGROUNDS EXPANSION

Every week we sing the words of song #2233 in *The Faith We Sing*. Aside from the Doxology, it is the only song we sing at every worship service.

*"This, this is where children belong, welcomed as part of the worshipping throng. Water, God's Word, bread and cup, prayer, and song: This is where children belong."*

Our children belong here. They belong in our faith community. They belong in the sanctuary, worshipping side-by-side with their grown-ups and everyone else. To best accommodate our children and families who remain in worship- to truly welcome them and celebrate their presence in our space- we will be making some changes this summer in preparation for the upcoming program year. As Pastor Mike mentioned in his introductory letter, the most visible physical change will be an expansion to our current Prayground space.

#### OUR CURRENT PRAYGROUNDS



Infant Side (West)



Toddler Side (East)



Toddler Side (East)

#### WHY IS AN EXPANSION NECESSARY?

We are in a moment of opportunity for Trinity! After over 2 years of COVID protocols, closures, and quarantines, the last of our children are finally able to be vaccinated. Families are potentially looking to come back to worship on Sunday mornings. New families may be church shopping. We need to have a robust suite of options available for them, both spaces and programs. An expanded Prayground that can accommodate multiple families is one piece of those offerings!

More importantly, children of all ages may have difficult moments during a worship service, but it is their birthright as Christians to worship in our church. At a child's baptism, we vow to "support and encourage them in their Christian life." Every week we sing to them of their belonging; of their welcome. Being truly welcomed into the church helps establish lifelong habits that allow children to develop a strong faith of their own.

If we really want to be welcoming to families with children, we need to create comfortable spaces for those kiddos and adults to be their true authentic selves. Fully welcoming children in worship, with their wiggles and super loud whispers, can also be a starting point for welcoming other folks who do not look, sound, smell, or act like the stereotypical congregation. (continued on next page)

## PRAYGROUNDS EXPANSION- CONTINUED

### WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT?

The Trustees approved the Playground expansion project this past June 21. Planning work has already begun with the goal of completing the project by the end of the summer.

We will be removing the west (infant) Playground and installing one or two comfortable chairs in that space to provide for Trinity members of all ages who need the accommodation of a non-pew seat.

The current east (toddler) Playground will be expanded to create a multi-family and intergenerational space. The three back pews and the associated floor vent covers will be removed and stored in the basement to create an approximately 12' x 19' open space. A subfloor will be installed with a foam floor on top. Comfortable furniture will create a "back row" of seating for grown-ups. Updated kids furniture and toys will be available. The goal will be to have interactive items that engage all ages in worship. Picture a baby in arms, toddlers, elementary kids, youth, parents, and grandparents all worshipping together. That's our new Playground!

Most of the work will take place over the course of one to-be-determined week. We are looking for able-bodied volunteers willing to help move pews after worship one Sunday and to lay flooring under the supervision of our amazing Trustees one day/evening the following week. If you're interested in helping out, please contact me at [L.Johns@grtunc.org](mailto:L.Johns@grtunc.org).

This may seem like a big change, but none of the work being done is irreversible. No pews are being destroyed or thrown away. We will not be permanently changing the floor. If, a few years down the road, our needs in the Sanctuary change, the Playground space could always be re-envisioned.

### FINAL NOTE

This Playground expansion project is part of several larger plans that staff and committees are working on. As Pastor Mike mentioned, change can be hard but we are confident that these changes will bring amazing opportunities to Trinity. Please watch your email for further updates on the fall programming schedule and new chances to be in fellowship together.

If you have questions about the Playground expansion or other upcoming opportunities, please do not hesitate to email or call me. I am happy to hear your thoughts!



Blessings,  
Laura

Laura R. Johns  
[She | Her | Hers](#)  
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## WORSHIP TIME CHANGES TO 10AM SUNDAY, JULY 3

Even though it's summer, Trinity has much to offer!

[Click here](#) for a full calendar view.

For questions or clarification on programming, or if you'd like a printed hard copy, contact Betsy at [office@grtunc.org](mailto:office@grtunc.org).

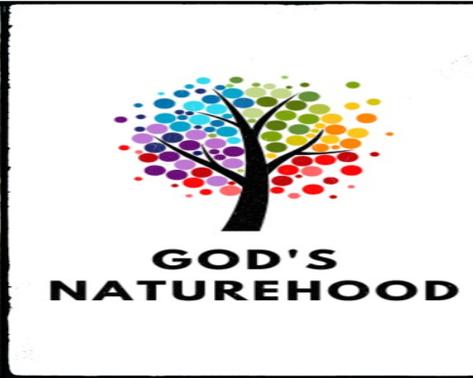


## SUMMER HAPPENINGS



### MUSIC ON THE LAWN SUNDAY, JULY 10- 5PM SNYDER HOME

Join your Trinity family for a festive time of music and fellowship at the Snyder home, located at 2280 Grand River Dr. NE, Ada, 49301. Bring a lawn chair and join us for live music. Cold beverages will be provided. Pack your own snacks or a picnic dinner.



### GOD'S NATUREHOOD.... AND MORE!

Check out the *Hello Summer* brochure for information about this new opportunity. The links below take you directly to the applicable registration pages. *Hello Summer* also includes everything from volunteering to education events, music on the lawn to meet-ups in the park. The summer culminates in a church-wide end of summer celebration and BBQ at Fallasburg Park. Please review *Hello Summer* in it's entirety and participate as you are able!

[Hello Summer](#)

[God's NatureHood- Family Edition](#)

[God's NatureHood- Adult Edition](#)

[End of Summer Celebration & BBQ at Fallasburg Park](#)



Questions regarding any of the above content may be sent to Laura Johns at [L.Johns@grtumc.org](mailto:L.Johns@grtumc.org).

## POLICY GOVERNANCE BOARD

Happy Summer Trinity!

I'm happy to say that unmasking has worked out well! Though Covid is still going around, it appears to be much less dangerous overall. Things to be thankful for!



And now to dedicate this segment to our staff. We have an incredible staff at Trinity, and I don't believe we say thank you enough for all they do, so I would like to say a **big thank you** to Nichea for all her guidance in discipleship, and congratulations on her retirement. She built a wonderful program, and now it's time to welcome Laura into Nichea's shoes!

PGB has met with Laura several times, and we are excited to continue this partnership and watch discipleship grow as Covid dissipates. Her organizational skills seem unprecedented, and I expect that the ideas she has already will be in place soon.

Randy, the man of many hats (literally), is the master of music, sound, and audio! He has gone above and beyond to get us through Covid. We still need to find some lay person volunteers to help him, so we don't burn him out!

Mr. Matt, the ring leader of all things community, is superb at his job. He has managed to make our Congress Elementary volunteer program successful, and manages all the other community contacts around the church. He can work Trinity into any conversation with a stranger and not make it awkward, but intriguing. Truly a gift!!

Jane, our Phantom of the organ, and master of so many other instruments, somehow always has a smile on her face, even after a week of teaching kids, when she comes in early to warm up the organ, corral the chancel choir and set up for all things music. Keep smiling Jane, it's beautiful!

Andrea manages to corral all things kids and music together and make it sound amazing. Then switches hats to the praise band. Can't take the music out of her!

And as Covid dissipates, it's still questionable whether we can put Kristen Gifford back to work in the nursery in the fall, but her smile and humor tell me she is still ready for any challenge upon her.

Which brings us to Joey. A man of integrity, with a tender heart of gold that can connect to kids like no other. You are a great role model for our growing young congregation!

Now for the behind the scenes staff members often forgotten. Joy Murphy, the treasurer who keeps us on track financially and does it with great knowledge and humor.

And were it not for Richard's dedication, the building would not be clean, stocked, and smelling so wonderful.

But the duo that brings this Church to the top, is Pastor Mike and Betsy Weems. We are so fortunate as a congregation to have such a competent office administrator, and such a passionate pastor.

We are blessed at Trinity beyond words and need to cherish every minute of it.

But wait, there's more! This leadership and staff has brought out amazing lay hands to help in so many directions that many may not know, so allow me to say thanks to Larry Gill for all the building maintenance projects, Suzy Gill for making Trinity bloom outside, Judy Ryan and Jann Myers for always picking up the hospitality/coffee gig on Sundays and helping in the office during the week. Pat French, for always leading the congregation to their seats on Sunday morning and counting our heads appropriately!

For the guys in the audio/visual booth, you rock (literally) through the service, and online!

For all those that serve on committees (Trustees, SPRC, Finance, etc), and those that serve on multiple committees, a deep gratitude for your service.

For anyone else who wants to join this wonderful crew of people, please reach out to the office, Pastor Mike, or myself. We will gladly find a comfortable place for you!

Love and Peace, Sue Clare- PGB Chair

## COMMUNITY MINISTRIES



### ENJOY THE NEW SEASON AND APPRECIATE THE SPRING!

As we enjoy the wonderful season of summer in Michigan, we have time to reflect on all the great things we've been up to this spring and say *Thank You* to the volunteers who make it happen. We appreciate an excited and engaged congregation that continues to explore and learn about its community and find ways to help others. Keep an eye out on our Community Ministries Program Facebook page to see new updated, fun activities to get involved with this summer and stay informed on all the work the CM Program does throughout the year.

### THANKING COMMUNITY MINISTRIES PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS

Over the past few weeks, we have been thanking some of our Community Ministries Program volunteers who give so selflessly throughout the year on our Community Ministries Program and Trinity UMC Facebook pages. We realize not everyone has access to these social media platforms, so we will print out the recognitions so all people can see the amazing work our volunteers do and can join us in saying *Thank You* for representing Trinity in our community. Check out the Community Ministries Program bulletin board area outside our CM office to see all the amazing work happening by our volunteers.



### END OF THE YEAR CLEAN UP AT CONGRESS

A huge *Thank You* to all who volunteered to help clean up classrooms at Congress Elementary School and assist teachers with packing up for the summer. This is a great ministry we provide for Congress teachers and staff.

### IS YOUR ANSWER YES TO ANY OF THE BELOW?

Interested in volunteering for the Community Ministries Program this Fall? Have good connections to staff or mission teams at other United Methodist Churches around Michigan? Want to learn more about the Community Ministries Program and ways to get involved? Contact Matt Witkowski, Community Ministries Program Director, at [m.witkowski@grtumc.org](mailto:m.witkowski@grtumc.org); 616.550.2418.



## CHURCH FAMILY

### APPRECIATION

*Thank you to everyone for the emails, prayers, and cards in the death of my sister, Margaret Faller. Judy Conner*

*From the bugler playing "Taps" in Birmingham to everyone who gave of time, energy and love here at Trinity, we are so very blessed. It was Bob's music, cookies, and laughter. Love, Sharon White*

### CONDOLENCES

*To the family of Dorothy French who died June 14.*

### MEMORIAL SERVICES

*Saturday, July 9, 11am- Ron Bond*

*Wednesday, July 20, 11am- Dorothy French*

*Join us as we celebrate the lives of these Trinity saints. Visitation for both will be held from 10-11am prior to the service.*



### PRAYER & CARE

*Dick Barber- Hospice Care*

*Dick Carlson- Pilgrim Manor*

*Marge Sytsma- Hospice Care*