



Trinity In Touch

June 2026

Pastor Mike.....1-2
Ministry Spotlight.....3
Outreach & Advocacy.....4
Church Family5
Engage.....6-11
Community Ministries.....12

Mission

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

Vision

We strive to be an inclusive faith community that extends 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
1100 Lake Drive SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49506
616.456.7168
office@grtumc.org

Behind the Worship: Rituals and Relevance

"If anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile." Matthew 5:41

In Jesus' day, Roman soldiers could compel a civilian to carry their pack for one mile. That was the law. One mile. You had no choice in the matter. But Jesus shocked his listeners when he told them to go two miles. The first mile is obligation. The second mile is intention. It is choosing to give more than the moment demands because you believe something better is possible on the other side of it.

That passage in Matthew goes on to say that we should give freely to anyone who asks us for something.

Before we go any further I want to say that Jesus was not wrong. But he also didn't live in a time with the complexity of scams that occur as well as the amount of individuals who perpetually abuse the limits systems and resources for those in need.

At least once a month it seems we are sending out emails and making social media posts reminding you that neither I nor the staff will ever email you and ask you to pick up gift cards and send us the codes via email or to wire us money. Unfortunately the reason those scams keep happening is because they work.

Recently we have seen people starting to show up on Sunday mornings asking for help. This is no coincidence. You are compassionate and generous people and want to help if you can. The trouble is some of those folks have already come into the office for help or have been back several times without seeking other, more sustainable resources that are available in the community.

The need is there, and it is real, and my motto is "I'd rather be a fool than cruel". But with the world the way it is we want to make sure, to the best of our ability, that we are helping people in the ways that are transformative and not merely a couple of dollars to get them to Tuesday.

We have staff who are well versed in how to help those in need and to spot the scams and abuses and redirect people with kindness and dignity to other resources.



As the needs increase we have two practical ways that you can help these people who are in need. First, if you are approached on a Sunday morning (or any time you are at the building) do not give directly to the person who is asking. I know that it might feel counter intuitive but the best thing you can do is connect them with Matt or Dani. They are both well trained in these kinds of situations. If they are not available we have postcards in the narthex and near the office (see a sample card below) that explain the process we have for helping and also direct people to other agencies and organizations that are better equipped to help in the long term. You can grab one of those postcards and give it to the person in need. It also includes ways for them to contact staff during the week.

The second thing you can do is some second mile giving. We have a fund at trinity that is called the "Altar Fund". This is a fund that comes from the generous donations of this congregation and are used entirely for the purpose of helping those in need both in the congregation and out in the community. Currently this fund is rather depleted and that lessens what we are able to do for people.

Your regular giving covers the costs associated with the building, our staff, and our programming. Second-mile giving is something extra, above and beyond, designated specifically to the altar fund. It is not your pledge. It is your response to a neighbor in need. Whatever the second mile looks like for you right now, five dollars or five hundred, it is a tremendous help. You are generous people. I see it every week. This is simply another way to put that generosity to work where it is needed most right now. The second mile is never convenient. That is kind of the point. Thank you for walking it anyway.

Grace and peace,



Pastor Mike



Thank you for stopping by Trinity—we're glad you connected with us.

While we do have a fund available to support members of the community, it is sustained entirely through donations. At this time, we do not currently have funding available to assist. We encourage you to reach out to our community partners, who may be able to provide the support you're seeking.

Additionally, our Director of Community Ministries' contact information is listed on the back of this card if you would like to follow up or explore other options.

We wish you the very best.

Front

Back

- | | |
|--|---|
| <u>United Way</u>
211 | <u>Access of West Michigan</u>
616-774-2175 |
| <u>In the Image</u>
4255 Kalamazoo Ave SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49508
616-456-6150 | <u>Baxter Community Center</u>
935 Baxter St. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49506
616-456-8593 |
| <u>ICCF</u>
415 Martin Luther King Jr St SE
Suite 100
Grand Rapids, MI 49507
616-336-9333 | <u>Community Rebuilders</u>
1120 Monroe Ave NW
Suite 220
Grand Rapids, MI 49503
616-458-5102 |

Matt Witkowski
Director of Community Ministries
m.witkowski@grtumc.org
616-456-7168 ext 102



Ministry Spotlight

The Lemonade Stand Returns!

A beloved summer tradition is making its return to Trinity! Beginning Sunday, June 14, we invite everyone to head out the Calkins door after worship and gather on the lawn for cold beverages, warm hospitality, and meaningful conversation through the return of The Lemonade Stand.

More than just a refreshing treat on a summer Sunday, The Lemonade Stand is an opportunity for our church family to slow down, connect, and build community together. It creates space for conversations between longtime members, new visitors, friends, neighbors, and anyone passing by who may want to stop and say hello. In a busy world, these simple moments of connection can become powerful expressions of welcome and belonging.

As part of Trinity's ongoing commitment to hospitality and outreach, The Lemonade Stand helps us extend the spirit of our worship beyond the sanctuary walls and into the neighborhood around us. Whether you stay for a few minutes or an hour, we hope you'll join us this summer on the lawn.

A Call to Ministry

We are currently finalizing our volunteer crew for the summer and would love additional helping hands! Volunteers assist with setup, serving beverages, welcoming guests, and cleanup. It's a simple but meaningful way to serve and connect with others in our community.

If you would like to volunteer for a Sunday this summer, keep an eye out for the paper signup sheet in the Parlor kitchen, or reach out directly to Suzy Gill (lsogill@comcast.net or text 616-446-9853) for more information.

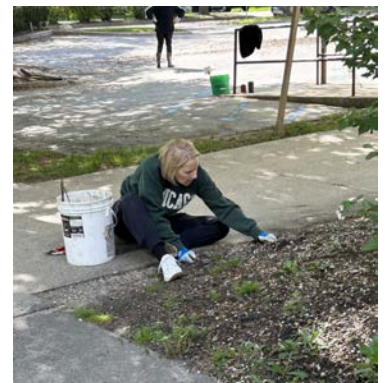
We can't wait to gather together again this summer — lemonade in hand!



A huge "Thank You" to the Trinity Kids' Food Basket (KFB) team who volunteered over 200 hours this school year. This group of amazing volunteers helped fight food insecurity for elementary school students in Kent County. Kids' Food Basket provides over 8,000 daily nutritious sack supers to these students. Kids' Food Basket doesn't receive Government funding.

The Trinity KFB team will be volunteering again for the 2026/2027 school year. We volunteer on the 3rd Monday of the month from 9:30-11:30. During our shift, we breakdown large quantities of food or vegetables into individual servings. If you are interested in joining our team next fall, please contact Rick Nelson at 616-485-5058 or at RNelson2@comcast.net. Stools can be provided if you need a sitting accommodation. The more volunteers the better, so please consider joining our team next fall.

"Thank you to all of the Trinity Members who showed up for the Trinity Saturday Spring Clean Up event to help clean up the grounds around our beloved church!"



Outreach & Advocacy

Inner City Christian Federation Volunteer Work Day

Saturday June 13, 2026 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Support a ministry -- [ICCF Community Homes](#) -- that is succeeding in growing affordable housing and moving families toward home ownership. We will do light work such as painting, cleaning, and yardwork on one of their 800 properties. There will be carpooling from Trinity. Contact [Kip Smalligan](#) to join.

Trinity member, Ruth Stevens, worked with a very large immigrant family who were challenged by family size and rent increases. Eventually they had no home and the children had to be split up between the houses of relatives. Through ICCF, they are now all together in a safe home that is theirs. Most importantly, the home is giving the family a level of stability they have never had before. Having a home has been life-changing for them.

Together West Michigan

[Together West Michigan](#) is a community organizing group of local churches & non-profits building power to influence and hold accountable local and state decision-makers on select public policy issues. Outreach & Advocacy members are participating on two of TWM's issues groups: Housing & Transportation and Immigration. We are excited about the quality collaboration work we have seen so far. If you would like to learn more about TWM, contact Natalie Wiersma, Ruth Stevens, Clarice McKenzie, or Kip Smalligan.

Visiting ICE Detainees at North Lake

Outreach & Advocacy is coordinating visits to ICE Detainees at North Lake Processing Center in Baldwin Michigan to provide hope and caring. If you would like to visit with others at Trinity, contact [Jim Quinlan](#).

As Pride Month approaches, we wanted to share a quick update with our Trinity community. While we will not have a booth at Grand Rapids Pride this year, we encourage those who are able to attend, celebrate, and even volunteer in support of the LGBTQ+ community throughout the month.

As part of our Pride Month engagement, Trinity will be hosting the "Queer & Christian" event featuring Brandon Robertson on June 9 from 6:30pm–8:30pm. This evening will include conversation, reflection, and opportunities to connect with several community partners, including the Grand Rapids Pride Center, Grand Rapids Trans Foundation, Protest for Progress, and Gays in Faith Together (GIFT).

We hope you will join us for this meaningful evening of dialogue, community, and support.



Help spread the word!

Postcard invitations are available in the Parlor and the Narthex.

Share with a friend or leave at your local coffee shop!



VOLUNTEER WITH GR PRIDE

[HTTPS://GRPRIDE.ORG/PRIDE-FESTIVAL/PRIDE-FEST-VOLUNTEER-REGISTRATION/](https://grpride.org/pride-festival/pride-fest-volunteer-registration/)



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.



Our intention word for June is Reset. Not sure what an intention word is? Pastor Mike wrote an introduction to this concept in September 2022's Newsletter. Check it out online at: <https://bit.ly/Sep2022Newsletter>

Church Family

ALTAR FLOWERS

June 7 - OPEN

June 14 - *The Chisholm family in memory of June Querback.*

June 21 - OPEN

June 28 - *The Goodman family in memory of Pat Durrant & Joan Kasinsky.*

Reach out to the office at office@grtumc.org if you would like any of the open June dates.

CONDOLENCES

Hold the Longworth family in prayer as Greg Longworth's mother, Bertie Longworth, passed away on May 5, 2026. Surround her family and her husband, Gary, in love during this difficult time.

greglongworth88@gmail.com (Greg)

kimlongworth88@gmail.com (Kim)

PRAYERS AND CARE

Prayers for Ric Wiltse as he recovers from multiple falls early this month. May he experience comfort and healing in the coming days.

rawiltse@gmail.com



Opportunities to Engage

The 2025-2026 Program Year is winding down. Have no fear though; we're jumping right into Summer 2026!

Key dates to keep in mind:



Sunday, June 7 | Milestone Sunday: Books & Bibles and Graduation Celebration

We will be celebrating graduates and having a special Books & Bibles opportunity for all our kids & youth as well as highlighting congregational milestones from February to May 2026. Join us in worship and then for a cupcake reception afterwards!

Tuesday, June 9 | Queer & Christian Author Discussion & Book Signing

Join us for a FREE event featuring Brandon Robertson, queer scholar and pastor, and author of Queer and Christian. The night will include a discussion with Brandon, a Q&A session, access to community resources, and a book signing! RSVP and get more info at tinyurl.com/QueerChristian2026.

Friday, June 12 | God's Naturehood: Adult Edition (1:00pm-2:00pm) at Cascade Peace Park

Designed for Trinity families & friends ages 18 & up, our Cascade Peace Park meet-up will be a great opportunity to visit a new park, get to know members of your Trinity family better, and get your daily steps in.

Saturday, June 13 | God's Naturehood: Family Edition (10:00am-11:00am) at Millennium Park

Designed for Trinity families & friends with kiddos ages 12 and under, our Millennium Park meet-up will feature a chance to play on the amazing Millennium Park playgrounds and then a short walk on the paved & boardwalk trails nearby.

Sunday, June 14 | First God's Naturehood: Sunday Kids Edition (10:15am-11:15am) Class

Back for six select Sundays this summer, this during worship class gives kiddos ages Pre-K to 5th grade an opportunity learn about what God has made by examining different parts of creation, digging into amazing science facts, and (when weather permits) spending time outside exploring the Naturehood right around our building!

Sunday, June 21 | Whitecaps Game

Join your Trinity family at LMCU Ballpark on Sunday, June 21 as the West Michigan Whitecaps take on the Lansing Lugnuts.

Sunday, June 28 | Blessing of the Pets/Music on the Lawn

Bring your lawn chair and your furry friend for live music and a blessing of the pets on the Trinity lawn. Cold beverages will be provided. Pack your own snacks or a picnic dinner. In case of rain, the party will move into the Fellowship Hall.

... and this is only a taste of what's coming this summer! Resources for growing your faith while traveling, dates for Party in the Park, and so much more are coming soon. Questions about any of these endings or beginnings? Contact your Trinity Staff!

FAMILY CAMP 2026 Friday-Monday | May 22-25



"The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed... the smallest of all seeds." (Matthew 13:31-32)

Our "small things" Family Camp may be over but we made some **big memories!** Thanks to everyone who joined us, for all the helping hands with cooking, cleaning, packing & prep, and for the community we created! Family camp is FAMILY camp because of all of you. Photos and follow-up coming soon!

Let's the countdown to next Memorial Day Weekend commence...

God's Naturehood continues in May & June for both adults and families with kiddos!



Designed for Trinity families & friends ages 18 & up, **God's Naturehood: Adult Edition** is a great opportunity to visit a new park, get to know members of your Trinity family better, and get your daily steps in. The details of our spring meet-ups are below:



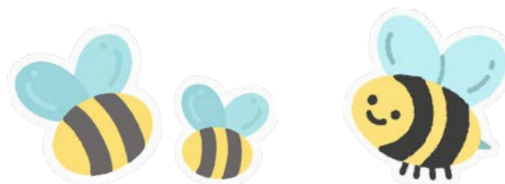
Friday, June 12 from 1:00pm-2:00pm

Cascade Peace Park at 8900 Grand River Dr SE, Ada, MI 49301.

Park in the main lot off of Grand River Dr SE and meet at the trailhead.

Note: The trails at Cascade Peace Park have some uneven surfaces & elevation change per requests from some of our regular walkers.

RSVPs are requested but not required. Contact Laura Johns at l.johns@grtunc.org.



Designed for Trinity families & friends with kiddos ages 12 and under, **God's Naturehood: Family Edition** is a time of fellowship & fun at a local park! All kids must be accompanied by an adult.

Saturday, June 13 from 10:00am-11:00am

Millennium Park, 1415 Maynard Ave SW, Walker, MI 49534

Meet near the large playground on the west side of Maynard.

Our meet-up will feature a chance to play on the amazing Millennium Park playgrounds and then a short walk on the paved & boardwalk trails nearby. Allergy friendly snacks will be available, but make sure to pack your own beverages! Great for those young families and those school age kiddos with lots of extra summer-time energy. The trails are stroller & wagon accessible and there are restrooms on-site.

Calling all Pre-K to 5th Grade kiddos! Come upstairs to the TrinityKids Room after Children's Moment on select Sundays this summer for a class with Ms. Laura, Ms. Annie, and other Protection Policy certified leaders.

We'll learn about what God has made by examining different parts of creation, digging into amazing science facts, and (when weather permits) spending time outside exploring the Naturehood right around our building! There will be crafts, games, science, stories, and more.



Grown-ups: Pick-up will be in the TrinityKids Room upstairs at 11:15am. If service ends early, please come check-out your kiddo before heading outside for Lemonade Stand.

Sunday Kids Edition will be offered June 14 & 21, July 12 & 19, August 9 & 16. Weekly programming will return in September.

Questions? Contact Laura Johns at l.johns@grtumc.org.

Call to Ministry! We still need grown-ups to help facilitate this class. It's a great opportunity to get to know our Trinity kiddos better without a long term commitment. Help out one week this summer or one week a month – it's up to you! Contact Laura for more information.



A milestone is a meaningful, memorable moment in the life of an individual, family or community. Here at Trinity, we want to recognize those moments, share them together, and find God's presence in the everyday.

Our second Milestone Sunday of 2026 is June 7 and we will be celebrating any milestones from February to May 2026. Our Milestone Moment will be the honoring of graduates and a special Books & Bibles opportunity for all kids & youth. We will also post select honorees on the screen and do a group blessing for all honorees.

Have a milestone to share? Fill out our online form at <https://tinyurl.com/TUMCMilestone06-2026>, email Laura at l.johns@grtumc.org, or put a note on your Connection Card.

Families with High School Grads: Please let Laura & Annie know if your student will be in attendance and what size sweatshirt they prefer. We cannot wait to celebrate with them!

Family with ANY Kids & Youth: Find out more about the Books & Bibles available this year and what to expect by checking out our flyer available [HERE](#). It includes the list of names of folks that will be receiving inscribed NRSV Bibles this year.

A cupcake reception will follow the worship service.



Come on out for a Party in the Park on Thursday, August 20 from 5:30pm-8:30pm at Hager Park in Georgetown Township.

Yes... you read that right! We're heading to a new park this year but the PARTY will be much the same.

Come celebrate all things summer with a delicious BBQ dinner, jamming out with the praise band, and then doing all those fun park things. At Hager Park you can find a smaller playground and a huge all-ages zipline near our site, a lovely walk in the woods, and (across the park) one of the largest wooden playgrounds around.

Trinity has rented the picnic building at Hager so we have an indoor space for music & our BBQ dinner. We will not have access to the inside of the building before 5:00pm so plan to arrive between 5:30pm-6:00pm unless you just want to check out the various trails & playgrounds on your own. The approximate schedule is as follows:

5:00pm-5:45pm:
Setup Crew Arrives & Prepares Building

5:30pm-6:00pm:
Park Activities & Gathering Time

6:00pm-7:00pm:
BBQ Dinner in Picnic Building

7:00pm-7:45pm:
Worship with Praise Band

7:45pm-8:30pm:
Park Activities & Clean-Up

The BBQ dinner will feature hot dogs, brats, and sides. Beverages and tableware will also be provided. Suggested donation of \$8 per person. Pay online ahead of time or bring cash/check to the park.

Haven't been to Hager Park before?

The park is located about 25 minutes southwest of Trinity. The address is: 8212 28th Ave, Georgetown Township, MI 49428.

We have reserved the picnic building which can be found near where the main park drive dead ends. Upon entering the park, continue down the drive past the DeVries & VanderLaan Rooms, the wooden "Age of Discovery Playground," and into the more wooded section of the park. A park map can be found here: <https://miottawa.org/wp-content/uploads/HagerParkMap.pdf>

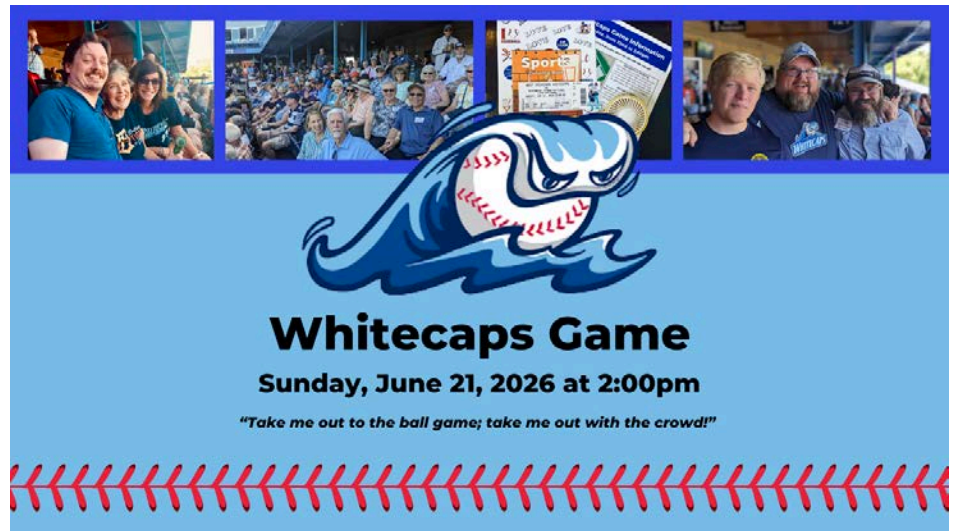
The building does not have air conditioning, so plan to dress for the weather. There will be seating available inside & outside the picnic building. Modern restrooms including barrier-free stalls are connected to the building and the building is fully accessible.

Lend a Hand:

We're looking for a few folks to help out with this event! Bring a baked good for dessert, help with BBQ set-up or clean-up, serve as grill master, or bring a yard game from home. Check out the SignUpGenius here for info: <https://tinyurl.com/TUMC-PITP2026-Volunteers>

RSVPs & Questions:

Contact Laura Johns at L.johns@grtunc.org with questions and to RSVP for dinner. An online registration form is also available that allows you to RSVP, communicate any dietary restrictions, and pay for your dinner(s). Find it here: <https://tinyurl.com/TUMC-PITP2026>

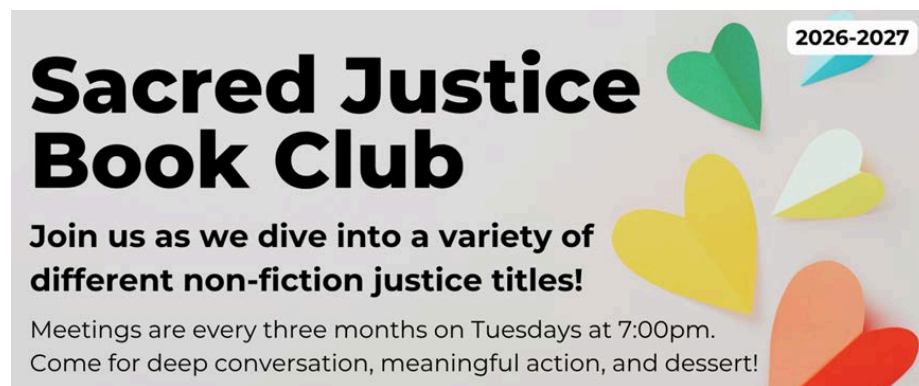


The reservations are in and almost fifty Trinity & St. Paul's friends are heading to the LMCU Ballpark on Sunday, June 21 at 2:00pm to see the West Michigan Whitecaps take on the Lansing Lugnuts.

If you missed the opportunity to get tickets and are still interested, contact Laura Johns, Director of Discipleship, as soon as possible as she may be able to arrange for a few extra seats.

For those who already RSVPed for tickets, watch your email for a message from Laura in early June about how and when to get your tickets & meal vouchers.

See you at the ball game!



The Sacred Justice Book Club is thrilled to be back again this year for great conversation, deep discussion about activism, and fun fellowship. Our 2026-2027 book list is as follows:

August 4, 2026 | Radical Inclusion: Seven Steps to Help You Create a More Just Workplace, Home, and World by David Moinina Sengeh

November 3, 2026 | The Land Is Not Empty: Following Jesus in Dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery by Sarah Augustine

February 2, 2027 | The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together by Heather McGhee
This is a longer book but there is a shorter version adapted to youth readers that could be read instead if you wish. The Library Team hopes that by putting this in the winter, we can all use the colder months to work through this important study of the economic impacts of racism.

May 4, 2027 | My Body Is Not a Prayer Request: Disability Justice in the Church by Amy Kenny

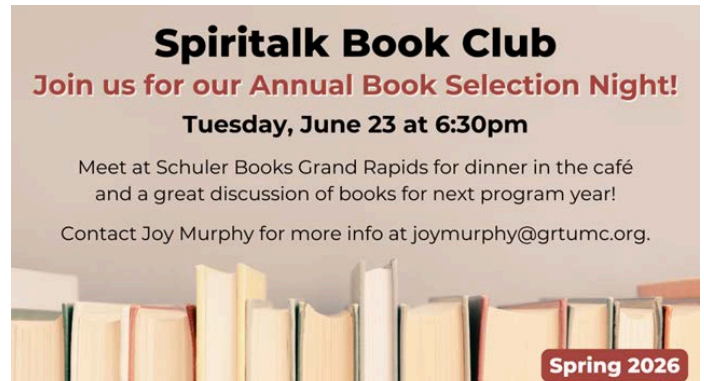
Join us in the Library at 7:00pm on select Tuesdays. Questions about Sacred Justice Book Club? Contact the Library Team: Laura Johns, Hannah Marshall & Dani Patrick

Adult Small Groups

Looking to find new ways to engage this summer? Check out one of our adult small groups...



Monthly Mahjong
First & Third Wednesday of Each Month at 1:00pm
Gather in Fireside on the first & third Wednesday of each month for an opportunity to practice your mahjong skills or learn new ones.
All ages & abilities are welcome - beginner to expert!
Contact the Office for more information.
Now Twice a Month!



Spiritalk Book Club
Join us for our Annual Book Selection Night!
Tuesday, June 23 at 6:30pm
Meet at Schuler Books Grand Rapids for dinner in the café and a great discussion of books for next program year!
Contact Joy Murphy for more info at joymurphy@grtunc.org.
Spring 2026



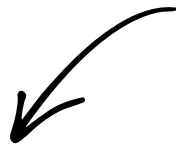
Summer 2026 Update
Join a small group exploring the many writings of Father Richard Rohr together!
Our weekly FoRT gatherings will resume in September.
In the meantime, watch your email for updates about fellowship and spiritual practice events during the summer months.
Save the Date: FoRT Ice Cream Social on Thursday, August 27 at 7:00pm



Additional small groups meet during the program year (September – May) so watch future newsletters for opportunities to get involved!



The Youth Connection Corner
YOUTH EVENTS FOR THE MONTH OF
JUNE



Well hi, Trinity Friends and Family!

We're starting our summer programming here at Trinity and while we have lots of exciting things to come this summer, I just wanted to take a quick moment to thank everyone who was involved in *What's YOUR Story?* this program year from the Youth themselves, but also to our amazing Guest Speakers and 2nd Adults. Without all of you, this curriculum would not have come to fruition. It was amazing to watch the Youth make connections with other adults in the church and also see that the things they are wondering about and the things we talk about in church matter and go beyond our walls here at Trinity. It is this impact that will help them grow into the amazing individuals that God is forming them to be!

As said earlier, we've got some fun summer plans! Check it out...

End of the Year Surveys

At the end of the program year I sent out End of the Year surveys for both youth and their grown-ups alike. These are due on **Saturday, June 20th at 11:59PM**. Feedback from the survey will allow me to see what worked this year, what didn't, and help me shape programming for the upcoming year so that we can continue to grow and wonder together!

Other Youth Summer Programming to Come – Details COMING SOON to a newsletter or email near you!

Youth Beach Party Adventure – **Saturday, July 18th**

Youth Lemonade Stand Takeover! – **Sunday, August 16th**

Annie Slabaugh, Youth Director - a.slabaugh@grtunc.org

Community Ministries

During the Spring we celebrate growth and renewal as the world wakes up slowly to new possibilities and shapes a new environment to be shared by everyone. In the programming world it often has a different look as we are closing down most of our school year programming and get to reflect on the year that has been. We do this through our annual Community Ministries Program Spring Newsletter that lets you know what we've been up to with a few glimpses of what might be to come.

Programming never stops but instead shifts to dreaming about our next school years' possibilities and Faith on the Fly gets more attention as more opportunities to fish present themselves.

So take some time looking through our newsletter as it's our best way to tell our story and it even has the "Save the Date" for our fall "A night to Remember" Dinner which is a unique opportunity to truly celebrate ministry with those outside the church who benefit from it. Other ways to stay connected is to like our Community Ministries Program and Faith on the Fly Facebook Page, even if you do nothing else on Facebook, this is the next best way to stay informed about ministry and volunteer opportunities that come up with limited time to share. It's a great resource to get to know about what this church is doing in our community and where you can fit in.

Lastly, after reading the Spring Newsletter, please consider supporting this ministry by making a financial donation that is always appreciated or by volunteering your time. In the newsletter there is an article about three new volunteers who share their experience and we hope it stirs something inside of you so that you want to join our team and give back to kids in our community. We know you won't regret that decision. This year we've had more kids in our CM Program and Faith on the Fly Programs so additional resources and volunteers are needed to keep pace and allow us to provide the quality programming we always have for children and families in our church and community. Now let's enjoy the summer!



Spring Newsletter!

