



Trinity In Touch

August 2026

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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
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Behind the Worship: Rituals and Relevance

They say the camera adds ten pounds. I don't know about all of that, but I do know the camera definitely makes us think twice about what we share.

I noticed this at my last church when we first started live-streaming worship. Our prayer time, normally a space where people would share aloud what was on their hearts so we could pray over it together, got shorter. A LOT shorter. Fewer and fewer hands went up. It turned out, while people still wanted to share those parts of their lives with their church family, they didn't want those parts of their lives living on the internet where anyone could hear.

For a while, we tried cutting the livestream just before prayer time. That solved one problem, but created another: the people watching from home suddenly felt like they were missing out on something sacred. Not just the prayer time, but the rest of the service itself.

Then COVID hit and streaming became the only option we had. That's when the real solution finally clicked. People would share their prayer concerns with me during the week and I'd fold them into my pastoral prayer as generalizations, close enough to communicate faithfully, careful enough to protect where they came from or who they were about.

I've carried that same instinct with me here at Trinity.

Some of you have noticed that my pastoral prayers rarely name specifics. And a few of you have asked why I don't often announce from the pulpit when someone in our church family has passed away or when a new baby has arrived.

I want you to know it's not because those moments don't matter to me. They matter enormously. Welcoming new life and grieving loss together is part of what it means to journey in faith together, to follow Christ, and walk side by side.

But those same tender moments, the ones that mean the most, are also the ones that can leave people most exposed. So here's the simple rule I try to live by: unless a family specifically gives permission for something to be shared, I hold it in my heart during worship, but don't share it aloud.

We also use that simple rule before a prayer request, birth, or death gets shared to the congregation via any communication channel. We ask the family first. Traditionally that's meant our prayer chain emails. These days it also means asking whether we can share it from the pulpit (which includes the livestream), or on our announcement screens around the building.



Here's how you can help make this work well for everyone:

When you contact us about a prayer request, a birth, or a death, go ahead and tell us which channels you're comfortable with, email, streaming, announcement slides, any combination you'd like. That one extra sentence lets us move quickly instead of playing phone tag trying to track down permission.

Keep an eye on your email. If we have permission to share something, that's usually where it will show up first. And if you don't hear something mentioned from the front on a Sunday morning, assume the best.

It almost always means one of two things: either we don't have the information yet or we don't yet have permission to share it. It's never because we think you shouldn't know. It's because we believe that family deserves to decide what is shared.

The camera may or may not make us look a little puffy, but one thing we know it does, it changes what it observes. A prayer request named openly in private can become dangerous information when shared on camera. Your cooperation and understanding are greatly appreciated. Please feel free to reach out to myself or the staff with any questions you may have.

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.

Church Family

ALTAR FLOWERS

August 2 - Dave & Mary Waskiewicz in memory of Kaileigh Waskiewicz.

August 9 - Joe & Vicki Frost in honor of Chad & Mary-Lyn's 25th anniversary.

August 16 - Jim & Karen Urquhart in honor of their anniversary.

August 23 - Connie Smith in honor of her brother, Mark Hanna.

August 30 - Bonnie Czuhajewski in memory of John Czuhajewski's birthday.

CONDOLENCES

Condolences to the Bosker family. We are saddened to share that Matt's father, Paul Bosker, passed away on July 26th. We pray that God's peace, comfort, and presence surround Matt, Becky, Jade and Cam in the days ahead as they grieve this loss. Please keep the Bosker family in your prayers.

mattbosker@gmail.com (Matt)

beckybosker@gmail.com (Becky)

PRAYER REQUESTS

Join us as we pray for and celebrate the Marks family (Stephanie & David). Their 4th child, Teddy Joseph-Adam Marks, was born 7-16-26. Both mom and baby are doing well. Prayers for continued good health and a smooth transition home as they find a new family rhythm.

david.m.marks@outlook.com

650 East St. #9

Coopersville, MI 49404

Join us as we pray for and celebrate the Walborn-Henry family as they welcomed Lilabelle Amaryllis on July 18th. Prayers for peace and comfort while they settle into a new family routine.

Drhenry367@gmail.com

436 Coldbrook St Ne

Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Ministry Spotlight

The Heart of the Office: Our Wonderful Volunteers

There's a lot that happens behind the scenes at Trinity, and our office volunteers are a big part of making it all happen! From answering phones and welcoming visitors to helping with mailings, organizing, and all the little tasks that keep the office moving, our volunteers bring their time, energy, and welcoming spirit to Trinity each week.

We are especially grateful for Pat French, who has faithfully volunteered in the church office for many years. Pat has been a steady and dependable presence, always willing to lend a hand and help make the office a welcoming place for everyone who walks through our doors. Thank you, Pat, for your years of service, care, and commitment to Trinity! We are so grateful for all you have given.

We're Looking for a Monday Morning Volunteer!

As we look ahead, we have an opening on our office volunteer team for Monday mornings from 9:30–11:30 a.m. This is a great opportunity to spend a couple of hours each week connecting with people, helping our staff, and being part of the everyday life of Trinity.

Could you be our Monday morning office volunteer? If you have a little time to share and would enjoy being a friendly face in the office, we would love to hear from you!

Please reach out to Dani in the church office if you're interested or would like to learn more.



Outreach & Advocacy

Trinity Hope Brigade: Loving Our Neighbors

Over the past several months, members of Trinity have been responding to Christ's call to love our neighbors in a very tangible way. Our outreach ministry, the Trinity Hope Brigade, serves individuals and families affected by ICE deportation. Members of the "Trinity Hope Brigade" have found many different ways to serve. Some travel to Baldwin to visit detained neighbors, offering friendship, compassion, and the assurance that they have not been forgotten. Others reach out to local families whose loved ones have been detained. Several have provided transportation, helping individuals released from detention reconnect with family by driving them home or helping them complete part of their journey. Still others write letters of encouragement, reminding those who are detained that they are remembered, prayed for, and never alone.



TRINITY HOPE BRIGADE: Loving Our Neighbors

**Sunday, August 9th at 11:30am
Discovery Room**

For the past several months, Trinity members with support from the Outreach & Advocacy Team have been responding to Christ's call to love our neighbors by visiting and supporting persons affected by ICE deportations.

Join us we share our experiences and tell the stories of hope and transformation of the people we have met.

We invite the congregation to join us on Sunday, August 9, at 11:30 am in the Discovery Room where members of the Trinity Hope Brigade will share their personal experiences, tell stories of hope and transformation, answer questions, and explain how this ministry has touched both those who are detained and those who have chosen to serve.

Opportunities to Engage



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 for our next two summer walks are below:

Friday, August 14 from 1:00pm-2:00pm

Palmer Park at 1275 52nd St SW, Wyoming, MI 49509.
Enter off of 52nd Street SW. You'll drive through part of the golf course before turning left on the first available park drive and parking in the spots near Picnic Area B1. Laura will share more detailed directions with maps and photos via email.

RSVPs are requested but not required. Contact Laura Johns at l.johns@grtumc.org to RSVP or to get added to the email list for additional details.

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 by David Moinina Sengeh
November 3, 2026 | The Land Is Not Empty by Sarah Augustine
February 2, 2027 | The Sum of Us by Heather McGhee
May 4, 2027 | My Body Is Not a Prayer Request 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

Sacred Justice Book Club
Join us as we dive into a variety of different non-fiction justice titles!
Meetings are every three months on Tuesdays at 7:00pm. Come for deep conversation, meaningful action, and dessert!

August 4, 2026 <u>Radical Inclusion</u> David Moinina Sengeh	November 3, 2026 <u>The Land Is Not Empty</u> Sarah Augustine	February 2, 2027 <u>The Sum of Us</u> Heather McGhee	May 4, 2027 <u>My Body Is Not a Prayer Request</u> Amy Kenny
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Is your child interested in helping to light the candles on Sunday mornings? Attend a 30 minute training together on **Sunday, August 16 from 11:30am-12:00pm!** Kiddos must be at least Pre-K to acolyte. Grown-ups need to attend the training with their children as there are important jobs for them too. Meet Ms. Laura in the Playgrounds after worship to find out more!

Already have a trained acolyte? Sign them up for summer & fall using our SignUpGenius:
<https://tinyurl.com/TUMC-AcolyteFall2026>

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



Acolyte Updates

New Acolyte Training

Sunday, August 16 at 11:30am
Meet in Playgrounds

Sign Up for Summer & Fall 2026

SignUpGenius Now Available at:
<https://tinyurl.com/TUMC-AcolyteFall2026>
or Scan the QR Code Below



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.



Stay connected with your church family this summer as we take you on a journey of reading, practicing, and connecting with the goal of building deeper relationships with each other and with God. Pick a few Summer Camp activities or do them all - the choice is up to you!

Travelin' with Trinity is designed for all ages and for multiple learning styles with the goal of keeping you engaged and inspired all summer long. Get a paper copy in the Narthex or Parlor, print THIS COPY at home, or save THIS DIGITAL COPY for checking off badges virtually. Workbooks are available starting June 7th and are due August 20th.

Finish activities to win prizes! All prizes will be distributed at Party in the Park at Hager Park on Thursday, August 20th. If you cannot attend, select prizes may be available the following Sunday (August 23rd) after worship. See the workbook for more details or contact Laura Johns at l.johns@grtumc.org.



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.

* We still need RSVPs & Volunteers! Sign up today or contact Laura with questions! *

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:

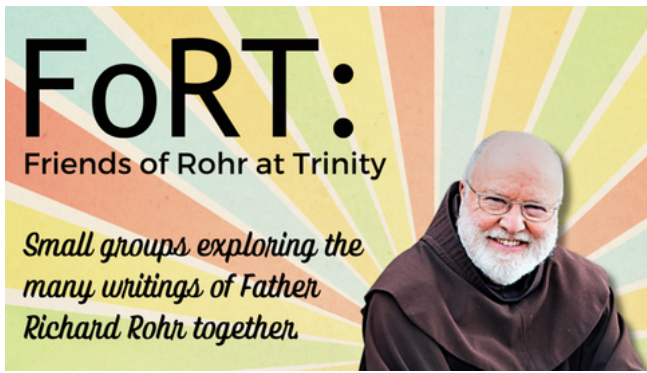
We're looking for a few folks to help out with this event! Bring a baked good for dessert, help with BBQ set-up or clean-up, serve as grill master, or bring a yard game from home.

Check out the SignUpGenius here for info: <https://tinyurl.com/TUMC-PITP2026-Volunteers>

RSVPs & Questions:

Contact Laura Johns at L.johns@grtumc.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>



Perhaps you've heard or seen a reference to FoRT (Friends of Rohr at Trinity). We are folks of Trinity who enjoy studying Father Richard Rohr's writings on Sunday & Thursday evenings during the program year. This summer FoRT is finding fun ways to stay connected while our weekly classes are on hiatus. You're invited to join us!

See our Summer Program Flyer for all the details. A PDF copy is available [HERE](#) and paper copies are in the Narthex. Brief details on our two upcoming events are below:

Thursday, August 27 at 7:00pm - [Annual Ice Cream Social](#)

We will wrap our summer up with the 4th Annual FoRT Ice Cream Social on the Trinity Lawn. Bring friends or family as we enjoy cold treats, share about summer adventures, and prepare ourselves for another amazing year! The church will provide paper goods, water, and the ice cream.

FoRT Friends: Please RSVP as soon as possible for the event above (<http://tinyurl.com/FoRT-IceCream2026>). This helps us with planning for seats & treats and ensures our hosts know what to expect.

If you have questions about upcoming events, FoRT offerings in the summer, or opportunities in the fall, please reach out to the Fort Leadership Team: Laura Johns, Penny Murray, Steve Murray & Merrita Tumonong.

As the summer winds down, we're getting ready for kick off in September and the return of many of our **program year small groups**. Continue attending and start planning ahead for...

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!

Gophers
Tuesdays from 9:15am-10:00am
Most Tuesdays from October 6, 2026 thru May 4, 2027
Join a fun group of older adults for a weekly exercise class featuring tai chi, strength training, balance work, and more. This low impact opportunity is great for all ability levels.
Stick around after class for Coffee & Conversation!



Spiritalk Book Club
United Women in Faith
Join us as we discuss & dissect a new book each month!
Meetings are the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00pm at Trinity.
Contact Joy Murphy for more info at joymurphy@grtunc.org.

September 8	October 13	November 10	December 8
Dictionary of Lost Words Pip Williams	When The Cranes Fly South Lisa Ridzen	The Mitford Affair Marie Benedict	The Mountains Sing Nguyễn Phan Quế Mai

Fall 2026

Coffee & Conversation
Tuesday Mornings 10:00am-11:00am
Need a bit of social time with your Trinity friends and staff?
Join us year-round on Tuesdays at 10:00am for fellowship in the Parlor.
Come at 9:15am if you want to join the Gophers exercise class before Coffee!



Milestone Sundays

SHARING MILESTONE MOMENTS
IN THE LIFE OF OUR CHURCH FAMILY

BACKPACK BLESSING - SUNDAY, AUGUST 23

SHARE MILESTONES AT: [TINYURL.COM/TUMCMILESTONE08-2026](https://tinyurl.com/TUMCMilestone08-2026)

STUDENTS & TEACHERS:

BRING YOUR BACKPACK OR SCHOOL BAG FOR BLESSING!



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. We will be lifting up milestones during worship every few months, but we need your help. Let us know if there's a milestone in your life we can celebrate together!

Our third Milestone Sunday of 2026 is August 23 and we will be celebrating any milestones from June to August 2026. Our Milestone Moment will be Blessing Backpacks & Teachers as our children, youth & educators start another school year so bring your backpack or school bag for blessing. We will also post select honorees on the screen and do a group blessing for all honorees.

Share Your Milestone:

Let us know if there's a milestone in your life we can celebrate together! Fill out our online form at <https://tinyurl.com/TUMCMilestone08-2026>, email Laura at L.johns@grtunc.org, or put a note on your Connection Card.



Trinity continues to update the policies and procedures that protect our children, youth & vulnerable adults! Before our next program year begins in September, we'll be offering a training on all the latest information. We'll discuss everything from Protection Policy (formerly Safe Sanctuary policy) to first aid basics to emergency procedures.

Everyone involved in programming at Trinity is asked to attend...

- Sunday morning Children & Worship, TrinityKids & Youth Fellowship volunteers, this means you!
- Wednesday evening Community Ministry volunteers, you too!
- Folks who help with hospitality or who are part of Congregational Care – you too!

Even if you do not currently volunteer in any of these areas or other related ones, this is a great training to attend as it will give you the latest information on how we as a congregation work together to protect our most vulnerable members.

The training is **Sunday, August 30 from 11:30am-1:30pm**. Please save the date and plan on attending! Lunch and childcare will be provided. If you plan to use the childcare, let us know so we can staff accordingly.

An online version of the training is available for those who cannot attend in-person. A make-up class may also be offered.

Please note, we are entering our fourth year of using Safe Gatherings to run our background checks & online trainings. As such, **anyone who completed their training in the first wave (fall 2023) will be due for a renewal soon**. Laura will be circulating more information on that process via email and sharing it at this training. We appreciate you all taking the time to update your trainings to ensure our compliance with our policies and the safety of our vulnerable populations.

Please RSVP for the training and send any questions to Laura Johns, Director of Discipleship, at L.johns@grtunc.org.



Somehow it has happened. Another summer is flying by and we're into August! As we get ready to mourn the loss of the long days, the warm weather, and the extra freedom summer seems to bring; we are thrilled about what is coming this autumn at Trinity!

Join us for Fall Kick Off on Sunday, September 13 and then throughout the month as many of our programs that take a summer holiday start up again.

Coming soon to your email box will be all the updated information on what to expect! Paper copies will also be available in the Narthex & Parlor. Watch for...

The Trinity Guide

This update to last year's guide will feature all the basic program year (September-May) information you're looking for on worship, faith formation, TNT, and more.

Program Area Flyers

These detailed area-by-area seasonal sheets will provide extra info on what to expect from Children's Ministry, Youth Ministry, Adult Ministry, and TNT (Thursday Nights at Trinity). Plus, we're creating a calendar of events so you know the important dates for all the September to December happenings!

Children & Youth Paperwork

Updated registration paperwork will be shared as well as the latest on expectations, drop-off/pick-up procedures, and more. We really need grown-ups to review everything and complete all the attached forms. It is critical that we are all on the same page going into the fall and that your children's latest health, safety, and personal information is on file. A big part of our job is ensuring the safety of all of our children and we can only do that if we know who is here and what their needs are!



Show Up Fall Kick Off Schedule	
8:45am-9:45am	Applicable Band & Choir Rehearsals
9:00am-12:30pm	Nursery Open (PreK & Under)
9:30am-11:45am	Refreshments in the Parlor
10:00am-11:15am	Worship in the Sanctuary
10:15am-11:15am	Children & Worship (PreK - 2nd Grade) Kids Connect (3rd-5th Grade) Youth Group (6th - 12th Grade)
11:30am-12:30pm	Kinship Quest (PreK - 12th Grade) The Deep End: Adult Faith Formation (Adults)



Many things will be the same as last year, but we cannot wait to share all the details about some new offerings and new opportunities.

One new thing we want to start sharing information about now... this year we're adjusting the Sunday morning faith formation line-up slightly for our middle & high school youth.



TIME CHANGE: Youth Group

Our time of fellowship & faith formation for 6th to 12th grade youth is moving out of the Faith Formation Hour at 11:30am and into the Worship Hour (10:15am-11:15am). Like with the younger kids, youth will now have the choice to go upstairs for Youth Group after the children's moment. Youth Group will meet the 2nd to 5th Sundays of each month. Special during worship opportunities may be available for youth on select 1st Sundays.

Our hope is this will increase youth engagement in Youth Group & worship and make it easier for families to show up in as many ways as possible. Staff and Leadership Teams want to trial this schedule this year and then we will revisit the schedule for future years based on feedback from youth & families, attendance figures, etc.

... but Laura, my whole family typically sticks around for Faith Formation Hour. What will the Youth do during that time if Youth Group takes place during Worship? An excellent question! Youth will have several options...

#1. Kinship Quest

Trinity Kids (PreK-5th Grade) is evolving into Kinship Quest! This new offering will be an opportunity for any interested kids & youth (PreK-12th Grade) to gather with Ms. Laura and/or Ms. Annie and other volunteers for a time of fun and fellowship with the goal of finding commonality & building relationships. We will crank up the volume and the activity level. Get ready for gym time, game time, special snacks, and more! We are excited to have youth join in – gym & game room activities are more fun with more folks after all! Kinship Quest will also occasionally include service & justice opportunities for kids, youth, and families.

#2. Volunteer: Kinship Quest

Any youth ages 14-17 who want to stick around for Kinship Quest but who would prefer to do so in a "helper" capacity may have their grown-up contact Ms. Laura. There will be opportunities for them to assist with leading games & activities for which they can collect volunteer hours for school, scouts, or other extracurriculars.

#3. Volunteer: Nursery

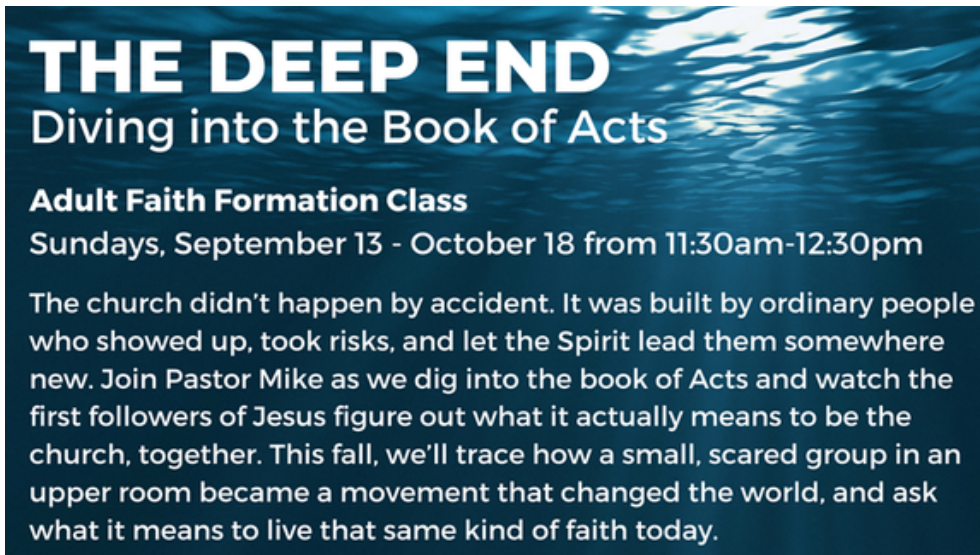
Any youth ages 14-17 may also volunteer to be a "helper" in the Nursery during the Faith Formation Hour (11:30am-12:30pm). Specific guidelines for how volunteering in the Nursery works will be shared soon. Only one youth will be able to sign-up each week and there will be very specific rules about arrival/departure times and what activities helpers can assist with to ensure the comfort & safety of our littlest Trinity friends.

#4. Unsupervised Time

As always, unlike with our younger kiddos, youth can also make a choice not to participate in any of these during Faith Formation Hour opportunities and to instead fellowship in the Parlor or another part of the building. Staff reminds youth grown-ups that during these times your youth are not supervised by Trinity Staff or Protection Policy Certified Volunteers. Their safety is your responsibility and we highly recommend you check-in with them to ensure they're keeping doors open, not being alone with other youth or adults, etc.

Questions about Fall Kick Off? Watch your email for updates or contact Laura Johns, Director of Discipleship, at l.johns@grtunc.org.

More information on 2026-2027 Adult Faith Formation offerings will be coming in August, but in the meantime, save the dates for our first class of the program year! We're thrilled to be welcoming back Pastor Mike for The Deep End: Diving into the Book of Acts.



THE DEEP END

Diving into the Book of Acts

Adult Faith Formation Class
Sundays, September 13 - October 18 from 11:30am-12:30pm

The church didn't happen by accident. It was built by ordinary people who showed up, took risks, and let the Spirit lead them somewhere new. Join Pastor Mike as we dig into the book of Acts and watch the first followers of Jesus figure out what it actually means to be the church, together. This fall, we'll trace how a small, scared group in an upper room became a movement that changed the world, and ask what it means to live that same kind of faith today.

The Youth Connection Corner

YOUTH EVENTS FOR THE MONTH OF



AUGUST

Well hi, Trinity Friends and Family!

It's August which means that our summer programming will be wrapping up this month and we'll be diving head first into kick off & our school year programming very soon. I'm so excited to share with you all our new program series called **Why Church?** We'll be focusing on questions of WHY this year, such as "why is the Bible still important," "why is worship important," and so much more! But in the meantime, we've still got summer fun to focus on. Check it out...

Youth Lemonade Stand TAKEOVER (& popsicles)

We're going to beat the heat and help our Trinity Family do the same! We are taking over the summer Lemonade stand on **Sunday, August 16th** and afterward I will have popsicles for us to munch on while we catch up on what everyone has been up to this summer!

Party in the Park

Our annual Party in the Park will be on **Thursday, August 20th** this year to celebrate the end to an amazing summer! Check out the applicable page in this newsletter for details & signup. I will be there and hope to see you there too! Hope everyone has been working hard on their badges to win awesome prizes!

Youth Group TIME CHANGE!

Heads up all - our time of fellowship & faith formation for 6th to 12th grade youth during the program year is moving out of the **Faith Formation Hour at 11:30am and into the Worship Hour (10:15am-11:15am)**. Like with the younger kids, youth will now have the choice to go upstairs for Youth Group after the children's moment. Special during worship opportunities may be available for youth on select 1st Sundays as well! Please reach out to me with any questions or concerns!

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

Community Ministries

As we enjoy these beautiful summer days, the programming side of me is already thinking to the fall and the start of our Community Ministries Program here at Trinity UMC.

Last year, we welcomed more kids into our program than ever before. The growth was incredibly exciting to see, but it also created a new challenge: for the first time since I started in 2015, we had to create a waitlist because the number of children interested in participating exceeded the number of volunteers we had available. We eventually were able to get the kids into our program, but it did highlight a need for more volunteers to help us serve the growing number of kids. The volunteers are the lifeblood of our program and are a vital small group ministry at the church. The bonds formed not only with the children, but also between the volunteers is a very special thing to witness.

Volunteers spend 3 hours a week on Wednesday nights building relationships by playing games, doing fun arts, science, engineering and sometimes gym activities. We've also done fun activities like taking the kids horse riding too!. During that time we also have a meal and get to engage with kids about their interests, families, and of course their family pets. Throughout the year (Oct-Apr) there are many breaks, holidays, snow days etc. that make this commitment much more approachable than the overall timeframe may suggest.

As a parent of a young child (at the time) I loved volunteering with the kids because it was a great way to see what the kids one or two years above the age of my kid were up to and interested in. I learned what they talked about, how they interacted in groups, what was cool and more importantly, what was not, what captures their attention and how to connect with my own child better as they reached these ages. It honestly was like getting cliff notes on what to prepare for and I feel it was a huge blessing in my parenting.

So, if you are a positive person who loves kids, loves working on projects or activities, wants to get to know a group of other volunteers better, and be part of a dynamic small group ministry, this may be a great opportunity for you. We had three new volunteers join us last year and you can read about their experiences in the Community Ministries Program Spring Newsletter located on the CM Program board or around the church.

Best part is...we have great kids, great families, and a great community we've built. So if you have questions or are interested in volunteering, please reach out to Matt Witkowski (616) 550-2418 or email me at m.witkowski@grtumc.org.

Have a great rest of your summer!

