



Trinity Trawler

May 2022

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Have I told you lately how much I love serving Southport Trinity UMC? Teresa and I love it here! We love being part of the amazing staff and working and worshipping with so many amazing Jesus-followers! I am so blessed!

One of the things which I truly cherish about Trinity is our diversity. While we are not as ethnically diverse as I would like for us to be, we are very diverse theologically and politically. We are all from different places and that brings a rich diversity. I often watch Trinity people and am amazed. I see people who have very different political opinion hugging each other. I look out and see people who I know will be voting for different people in the next election laughing with each other. I hear people in leadership agree on new ministry and know that there are some very different opinions on important matters of belief and practice. I look out on the congregation and smile because I know that is the way our Lord would want it. I also know that it is not the case in many churches. Jesus said, ***“I pray that they may be One just as you and I Father, are One.”*** The early followers of Jesus didn’t always agree and that is also true in our day. Yet, Jesus prayed that they would understand unity without unanimity on all beliefs.

If you haven’t heard, the denomination to which we belong, the United Methodist Church, has been experiencing significant conflict. This conflict will lead some to form a new denomination this month. The new denomination will be called The Global Methodist Church. The primary point of conflict is around LGBTQIA+ inclusion, but there are other deeper issues as well. I don’t have the space in this article to share all of the details and, truth is, I don’t know what the future holds. Yet, regardless of what happens in the denomination, I believe that Trinity is something special and we can stay together under the Lordship of Christ.

Trinity is a strong family of faith and, no, we will not always agree with each other. We will disagree in many ways and on many topics. However, God has called us to live in community. So, we listen to each other’s stories and learn from each other. We are all in a different place on our faith journey. None of us have it “all together”. I believe Trinity can be a place where God draws people together, allows them to share their burdens and concerns and stories and find acceptance. We journey together and always invite others to join us on the journey.

Ultimately, wherever we are on our journey, we LOVE! It is OK, and good, to know and feel we are right on important issues. However, the older I get, the more I realize that while I like to be right, what is more important is to love. The apostle John wrote, “If anyone says, “I love God,” yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother.” (I John 4:21-22)

Trinity is an amazing church! In the midst of the changing landscape in front of us, my prayer is that we will continue to hug and laugh and work with those with whom we differ. My prayer is, to paraphrase St. Francis, “that we will be persons who seek not so much to be right, as we seek to love as we have been loved unconditionally.”

I continue to be blessed to be your pastor and am here should you need to discuss the changes in the United Methodist Church.

*Be blessed,
Pastor Stuart*



Tribute to the Landscape Volunteers

For years, the members of Trinity United Methodist Church, as well as the entire population of Southport and all the vacationing visitors, have enjoyed the overall appearance of our TUMC properties. These properties consist of two campuses. The Main Campus is a nearly two-acre parcel, located at 209 E. Nash St., which includes our sanctuary, Murrow Hall, Welcome Center, several class rooms and a nursery suite. The other campus (also known as the Annex) is about a one-acre parcel located at 300 N. Howe St.

Both campus sites are adorned with very mature Live Oak trees that perpetually provide falling leaves, beautiful flowering and non-flowering hedges, shrubs that need occasional styling and several flowerbeds requiring periodic weeding and annual mulching.

On the Main Campus, we have about 500 feet of sidewalk & curbing that need periodic edging, flower beds that also need to be periodically edged and an ample lawn that needs bi-weekly cutting and applications of fertilizer, weed control, etc. We have an open-air atrium Prayer Garden (also known as a Bible Garden) located in the center of our Main Campus that provides a space for serene, reverent and contemplative prayer.

In recent years, all of these efforts have been undertaken and maintained by church member volunteers. The leadership of these efforts has been provided by **Judy Doe** for many, many years. Judy also was the chair of the TUMC Garden Guild, which unfortunately no longer exists. Judy's "go to tag-team", and the only reliable volunteers that she had working with her regularly, were Bill and Gail Bartlett. Although not currently attending Trinity, they continue to volunteer at Trinity for yard work. Rick and Joy Mitchell are also very helpful workers, especially on Great Day of Service. Judy's best volunteer and supporter has always been her husband, Dave!

Since 2008, the lawn has been maintained by Joe Laughlin who also works at keeping the grass and sidewalks free of the Live Oak leaves. When Joe needs a break or an extended vacation, he has always been able to count on the TUMC United Methodist Men to fill in as needed.

And, the edging of over 500 feet of sidewalks and curbs has been performed by Charles Christianson. Charles has also been the master of trimming the trees and manicuring all the hedges and shrubs.

It is with great sadness that I announce the retirement of many of our TUMC Landscape Volunteers including **Judy Doe, David Doe** and **Charles Christianson** after MANY years of service

I give my wholehearted appreciation for the time and talent these individuals have provided over the past several years and for their consistent dedication to the beautification of our Southport TUMC campuses.

Thank you all for your service to our church and community.
Len Surniak, Trustees Chair



"Bursting Forth with Christ's Love"

For many years the TUMC Mission Committee has supported students and teachers in our local schools in a variety of ways including teacher recognition activities and support for students in need. As the impact of COVID on the mental health of our students has become apparent, we are searching for additional ways to minister directly to students.

As a first step, a group of volunteers along with church clergy and staff recently provided a cookout to around 70 members of the South Brunswick Middle and High School Bands during a break from practice for the All-County Band Concert. With Laura Hicks' guidance, we are working on other ways to minister to students and will keep you posted about opportunities in the future.

The Creation Care Committee continues to work in our church and community to educate folks about ways to positively impact our environment. A major emphasis is on reducing single use plastic and we have purchased water in boxes (as an alternative to plastic bottles) for church and community activities to spread the word. The committee will have a table at the April 30th NatureFest to share ways to care for our environment and we have made contributions to four statewide advocacy groups and will work with these groups to support environmental justice efforts in NC.

We recently completed the second series of Social Justice Forum meetings and had informative and lively discussions about the following topics: Criminal Justice reform; Mankind's history of disinformation, lying and exploitation; Homelessness and affordable housing; U.S. Immigration Policy; Business, political and environmental issues surrounding Global Climate Change; and Gun Control. The forums will be held each fall and spring and we encourage you to attend. The Hayes house has been completed and you are invited to join us for a celebration on Wednesday, May 4th. This will be our final Wonderful Wednesday for the

spring and the program will include a photo montage of the house construction process from start to finish.

Becky Felton, Mission Committee Co-Chair



Stewardship Moment

You should have received your 2022 first quarter giving statement during April. You can also go to Trinity's Church Center web page and see your pledge and the giving amounts under your profile.

Thanks to the generosity of our Trinity membership, our year-to-date pledged donations are at budgeted amounts. But, our non-pledged offerings are still not back to pre-covid levels, primarily due to the lack of church attendance. However, with the prudent control of expenditures by our church staff, our financial position is still good.

Please make every effort to maintain your pledge or even increase it during this critical time of need.

Luke 21:1-4 shows the way that Jesus defined generosity – not by the size of the gift, but by the condition of the heart from which it is given. (“A Disciples Path” by James A. Harnish”)

Kent Wood, Stewardship Chair



Caretakers of God's Earth

Are you taking care of Mother Earth? Earth Day is observed annually to raise awareness about the need for environmental protection. The first Earth Day in 1970 led to the creation of the US Environmental Protection Agency and the passage of the Clean Air, Clean Water, and Endangered Species Act.

If you are looking to live more sustainably and reduce your environmental impact, what better time to start than on Earth Day. How can you help?

- Conserve energy by turning off lights and electronics when not in use.
- Adjust the thermostat when you're not home.
- Replace incandescent light bulbs with high-efficiency LED bulbs.
- Reuse and recycle. Don't just throw things away. Find ways to reuse them. Look for clothes made using recycled plastic bottles. Even some suitcases are now being made using recycled plastic bottles.
- Eat local and organic. Locally grown foods reduce transportation related issues such as carbon emissions. Look for locally grown foods

in the supermarket. Shop at a Farmer's Market or grow some vegetables yourself.

- Use water wisely. Clean water isn't an infinite resource. Take shorter showers... low flow shower heads are available. Run the dishwasher and washing machine only on full loads.
- Water your lawn on assigned days.
- Use car wash businesses that recycle their water.

A few simple changes and you'll be doing your part to help take care of God's creation. Let us be people who care for this wonderful world God created and not like the people that the prophet Jeremiah spoke of when he said in Jer. 12:18, “*It will be made a wasteland, parched and desolate before me; the whole land will be laid waste because there is no one who cares.*”

Make it be Earth Day everyday!

To be a part of the Creation Care Team, email

Peggy@yahoo.com.

Carol Grosbier, Creation Care Team Member

A Boy Scout Needs Your Help with His Eagle Project

Jackson Enis of Troop 238 of Trinity United Methodist Church is looking for help with his Eagle project. He is working with the Jack Helbig Memorial Foundation to create 16 water safety stations that will include a beach warning flag sign and a lifeguard ring/can. These will be located in Southport and on Caswell Beach. The goal is to see a decrease in drownings on our beaches. We will have the project completed before Memorial Day 2022, with your help, to have these measures in place before the busy summer season on the beach.

What your donation will go towards purchasing:



Due to the specific nature of the project, we are only able to accept cash or check donations to the Jack Helbig Memorial Foundation. All donations are tax-deductible.

Any leftover funds will be used by the Jack Helbig Memorial Foundation toward other projects aimed at drowning prevention.

Please make checks payable to: “Jack Helbig Memorial Foundation” and include “Water Safety Station Project” in the memo line. **Donations may be sent to:**

Jack Helbig Memorial Foundation
3181 George 11 Highway Unit #E,

Southport, NC 28461

Thank you for supporting my cause of the prevention of drowning on our beaches.



has, unfortunately, dwindled to near zero. The Trustees have these efforts taken over by professional organizations.

We are requesting others within the TUMC family to step-up and volunteer to carry-on our TUMC Campus Landscape Maintenance. We are looking for someone to take a Leadership Role and others who are able to support this leadership in the periodic efforts to keep our campuses landscape appearance up to the high standards set by the previous Garden Guild Volunteers.

All those who are interested, please contact **Len Surniak** at 910-712-0128 or at 268surniak@gmail.com.

Len Surniak, Trustees Chair

Call for New Volunteers to Carry-On the Care of TUMC's Landscape Areas

This year, the current state of reliance of this steadfast and very small group of church members and friends



May Birthdays

1. Marty Loughlin
Fran MacCallum

2. Cassidy Oldham

3. Kim berly Marks

4. Jim Noonan
Cambria Oldham
Charly Oldham

5. Bill Sloup
Charlie Walker

6. Draven Richardson

7. Cara Oathout
Ernie Pollard
Dick Sloan

8. Shirley Johnston

9. Pat Riccie

10. Piper Geddings
Ruth Ann Petzinger
Kathie Stucy

11. Jim Lysaght
Jane Phipps

12. Ford Disbrow
Patty Ross

14. Conrad Naef
Dennis Roupe

15. Rachel Lysaght

17. Jane Carter

18. Barbara Thornton

19. Kate Harrington
Kimberly Jones

20. Mary Nay
Olivia Smutko

21. Jinny Connelly

22. Tony Jaschke

23. Pattie Caban
Ron Simmons

24. Sheryl Burnett
Keith Keller
Dallas Williams

25. Darren Harrington
Rebecca Felton

26. Bill Edwards

27. Ann Patterson

28. Bob Plassman
Faith Sexton
Billy Sherrod

29. Linda Johnson

31. Julie Jordan
Rick Mitchel
James Wright

First Quarter 2022 Financial Update

Most of you have noticed that there have been ongoing repairs around our church buildings for many months. The Trustees have been diligently addressing the issues, getting quotes, and arranging for the necessary work to be completed. All of this, of course, has a cost. The Finance Committee has also been diligent in seeking ways to pay for these repairs while maintaining a balanced budget. The measures previously employed include eliminating certain expenses from our 2022 operating budget (the General Fund) to ease pressure on our cash flow. Our mortgage payments are being funded entirely by our Building Fund, and up to \$50,000 of repair-related expenses were to be funded by our Contingency and Capital Funds, with a partial replenishment of these Funds built into our budget.

However, the cost of these repairs has reached approximately \$120,000, with unquantified expenses still lurking, which will certainly increase the total. This amount would deplete both our Contingency and Capital Funds, which currently total about \$126,000, putting Trinity in a precarious financial position to deal with known and unknown capital needs, as well as any deductibles we may incur during hurricane season. We evaluated three options:

- debt financing, tapping into the equity in our buildings
- a capital campaign, seeking donations from the Trinity congregation
- withdrawing funds from our Endowment Fund

The Finance Committee and Church Council agreed to use up to \$150,000 of our Endowment Fund to pay for the repairs and to return our Contingency and Capital Funds to healthy balances. We had previously reinvested all earnings to grow the Endowment Fund, and we are thankful that the Fund has grown to a level where we can access it to meet our current financial challenges. I also want to assure the congregation that all donations made for a specific purpose are held in Temporary Restricted Funds and may not be utilized for general operating expenses.

A summary of our Financial Position (balance sheet) and our Summary Budget Performance (profit & loss) are below. It should be noted that less than \$20,000 of the church repair project had been billed and paid as of March 31, 2022, so the effects of this situation are not yet reflected in our current financial statements.

Assets

Checking and MM	\$295,400
UM Endowment Fund	378,465
Restricted Funds	346,542
Total Current Assets	1,020,407
Fixed Assets	<u>4,151,334</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	\$5,171,741

Liabilities and Equity

Current Liabilities	\$348,248
LT liabilities- church loan	161,652
Total Liabilities	509,900
Equity	<u>4,661,841</u>
TOTAL LIABILITES & EQUITY	\$5,171,741

SUMMARY BUDGET PERFORMANCE

	YTD	BUDGET
Ordinary income	\$244,744	220,683
Ordinary expense	206,793	220,677
Other expense	6,203	6,246
Profit (loss)	\$32,798	\$(6,246)

In our Temporary Restricted Accounts YTD, we have received \$36,335 and spent \$55,221 in support of our missions. If you would like to receive detailed financial reports or have any questions, please email at kestucy@gmail.com.

Thank you for your generous support of Trinity, its missions, and its ministries, which allows us to continue to Burst Forth with Christ's Love for All.

In service to Christ and His church, Kathie Stucy, Finance Committee Chair