

The ACORN

Vol. 1 Trinity United Methodist Church, Sarasota, FL January 2026



Awakened By Grace

Florida Conference clergy have written a daily devotional for your personal use or group use for the year 2026. It is online at the conference webpage - FLUMC.org. Click on Awaken By Grace.

Magic Show January 31st, 6:30 pm.

See details on page 8



Thank you to all those who have served in leadership roles in this past year here at Trinity. We are grateful for your willingness to serve. We are grateful to: Marla Wagler, Lisa Hatfield, Mary Raymond.

We welcome our new leadership for 2026. Each person is vital to the successful ministries of our church. Your leadership team for this year is listed on page 6

Welcome New Directions!

In January, the group New Directions will begin meeting at the church in Heritage Hall on Friday nights from 8:00 – 9:00. New Directions is a NA/AA group that meets a vital need here in the Sarasota community. The group is approximately 45-65 people who are grateful to be welcomed to Trinity. If you know someone in need of such a 12 step addiction group, New Direction is open to all.

Pastor's Page

Happy New Year to everyone! There is something refreshing about having the chance to start over, reevaluate where we are and where we want to be both as individuals and as a church. Where have we been shaped this past year? Where have we grown weary, or complacent, or surprised by grace? And just as important, where is Christ calling us now—personally and together—to live more faithfully, love more boldly, and follow more courageously? The turning of the calendar page does not demand instant resolutions, but it does invite renewed attention to God's direction for our lives.

As we discern those next steps into the new year I hope that we all remember this is not a journey we can take alone. Jesus came into the world so that we didn't have to negotiate life without guidance. The new year is a good time to remember that there are so many wonderful tools to use to walk closer with God and to listen better. I hope each of you will find a daily devotion of some type. A short reading helps us stay centered on living the life our faith challenges us to live every day. There are devotion books, online devotions, Bible devotions, One year Bible readings, podcasts, and so many other options. If you do not have a daily reading or listening practice and would like to find one that fits your style and needs please let me know and we can work together to find the right material for you to use in your deeper walk with Jesus this year.

Each year I like to reorient with the poem by Howard Thurman that reminds us in this January season, Christmas is not over, but our work has just begun.

Blessings,
Linda

The Work of Christmas

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:
 To find the lost,
 To heal the broken,
 To feed the hungry,
 To release the prisoner,
 To rebuild the nations,
 To bring peace among others,
 To make music in the heart.

January Worship

Please join us in worship at the 9:00 – Relaxed, family style worship with weekly communion.
10:30 – Traditional Worship with choir and other musical blessings

January 4 – We Keep Seeking Mt 2:1-12

A new sermon series begins which will take us up to Lent. The sermons are suggested topics by the conference according to the yearly theme – Awakened By Grace.

January 11 – Awakened by Prayer – Psalm 86:1-7

January 18 – Awakened by Scripture

January 25 – Awakened by Silence

United Women in Faith

Trinity's United Women in Faith want to thank everyone for a wonderful 2025 Mission Year! *(see next page for all we did in 2025)*

Our Unit's 2026 Executive Board is: Beatty Shipley & Evelyn Miller (Co-Presidents), Carol Harris (Secretary/Mission Coordinator), Nancy Masterson (Unit Treasurer), Sherrill Carr (Events Coordinator), Pam Pierce (Spiritual Growth Coordinator), Karyn Eubanks (UWF Reading Coordinator), Liz Mercer (Social Action Coordinator), Ann Golm (Hannah Circle Representative), Lisa Hatfield (Ruth Circle Representative) and Nancy Masterson & Sherrill Carr will oversee Membership records and information.

Circle Leaders are Jan Robertson for Hannah, Becki Creighton for Persis, and Ruth Circle welcomes new leader Lynne Henry.

Circles will resume meeting the second week of January. Circle members will be contacted with exact time and place of their meetings.

All members should have received the annual pledge mailing recently. We ask you prayerfully decide how you will support our UWF Unit in 2026 and return your information to Nancy Masterson by January 31st.

May we begin this new year with prayers of hope and in anticipation of wonderful fellowship with our UWF sisters, ready to be in mission for women, children and youth!

We always welcome women to join UWF!. If interested, call Nancy (941-320-4142) or Sherrill (941-376-0720).

United Women in Faith Christmas Sale



MISSION WORK OF TRINITY UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH FOR 2025

The **Mission Work** of **THE UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH** focuses on the support of Women and Children's projects in the United States and around the world. In 2025, TRINITY UNITED WOMEN OF FAITH supported the projects and mission work listed below.

Our deepest appreciation goes out to ALL of our Trinity UWF Members who have made this mission work possible through their generous contributions and hard work throughout this year. Since our donations to non-profits are relatively small, we try to focus on opportunities where our dollars are matched, such as through the Community Foundation of Sarasota County's Giving Challenge, which is held every two years. This was an off year, so we have set aside approximately \$5000 to donate to various non-profits in April of next year. We are grateful to all who have helped us continue with Faith, Hope, and Love in Action.

NATIONAL UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH PROJECTS:

UWF Pledge to District, State, & National Mission \$1,000
World Thank Program and Offering \$300
Call to Prayer and Self Denial Program and Offering \$300
Gift to Mission/Memory \$20
Special Mission Recognition \$40
UWF Day of Giving \$26

TRINITY UWF CHURCH MISSION & OUTREACH WORK:

Trinity Preschool Christmas Gifts \$279
Trinity Scholarship Fund \$100
Trinity Pastor's Discretionary Fund \$200
Trinity Staff Love Offering \$335
Contribution to Trinity Office Supplies \$200
Haley Hall Decorations \$99
Agape Flights - Thanksgiving Dinner for Missionaries \$88
Agape Flights – Hurricane Melissa Relief \$250
All Faiths Food Bank \$200
Community Foundation Season of Sharing \$300
Education Foundation of Sarasota County \$200
Family Promise of Sarasota-Manatee \$500
Girls Inc \$150
Lighthouse Vision Loss Center \$200
Phillippi Shores Book Fair \$300
Phillippi Shores Book Fair – Ruth Circle \$100
Red Bird Mission (in Kentucky) \$200
Red Bird Mission (in KY)– Ruth Circle \$100
Remnant Café for Renovation \$400
Remote Access Medical \$200
Residing Home (Children's Home) \$858
UMCOR Texas Flooding & Hurricane Melissa Relief \$450

Continued next page

UWF cont'd

VOLUNTEER & COMMUNICATION EFFORTS BY UWF MEMBERS:

Pines of Sarasota Christmas gifts – Members coordinated and provided gifts
Safe Children's Coalition Christmas gifts for foster children –
Coordinated and advertised by Persis Circle
Persis Circle continued their visits and gifts to the residents of Croton Manor,
a small 6-bed ALF with residents of limited financial means
Persis Circle provided Valentines gifts of a rose in a bud vase and chocolate
to all teachers and staff at Phillippi Shores Elementary School
Ruth Circle gift to Phillippi Book Fair bought 65 books for children who couldn't
afford to purchase them.
UWF hosted church-wide Strawberry Shortcake Sunday with donated proceeds
to Residing Hope
UWF sponsored church-wide Easter Brunch
UWF sponsored "Guess who's coming to lunch or dinner?" fundraiser
UWF sponsored Thanks-Giving fundraiser with proceeds to Staff Love Offering
UWF members coordinated and helped at Church Pot Luck Thanksgiving Dinner
UWF organized, coordinated and provided workers for the Christmas Sale which
raised over \$2600 for mission donations in 2026
Leftover Christmas Sale items were donated to Good Will, Sarasota Rehab Center,
Aravilla Assisted Living Center, a sewing group at Bella Vista Mennonite Church
Trinity UWF hosted a SW District UWF meeting and provided refreshments
Fill the Table Food Drive for Church of the Palms Food Ministry, donations to
Remnant Church Homeless Outreach - Coordinated, provided workers
Sent cards throughout the year to Golden Links, homebound, and those who are ill
Organized meal preparation and delivery to recovering church members
UWF Bookcase – Provided spiritual & mission books for UWF Reading
Program and for ALL Trinity members to enjoy
UWF members decorated Haley Hall for all seasons of the year
UWF members serve on many Trinity committees and outreach teams
Each circle's sunshine treasurers send cards to members for birthdays, holidays,
anniversaries, plus get well, thinking of you, and sympathy wishes
Sunshine Funds also support various Unit events and pay honorariums for speakers
Christmas brunch is provided as a thank you to all at Trinity for supporting UWF
functions and fundraisers throughout 2025

The essential work of United Methodism

On Wednesday, November 12, Florida Southern College & The Florida Conference presented a special evening of conversation and inspiration with Rev. Adam Hamilton, founding pastor of Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, Kansas, and Bishop Tom Berlin, as they discussed *The Essential Work of United Methodism Today*.

Rev. Hamilton and Bishop Berlin discussed the vital role of The United Methodist Church in a rapidly changing world. Rev. Hamilton shared insights from his newest book, *Why Did Jesus Have to Die?*, offering a fresh perspective on the heart of the Christian faith and how it shapes the Church's mission today.

If you missed it, you can view the recording: <https://www.flumc.org/the-essential-work-of-united-methodism>

Trinity Leadership Council 2026

Trinity Sarasota 2026 Servant Leaders

Approved at Church Charge Conference October 28, 2025

*Italicized names are staff, *names are chairpersons, (Date) is the year a person took office*

A. CHURCH COUNCIL:

Chairperson Church Council/Lay Leader: *Diane Freestone (2018)*
Church Treasurer: *Deb Martin (2026)*
Financial Secretary/Interpreter of Connectional giving: *Tom Thayer (2013)*
Lay Member to Annual Conference: *Brenda Moore (2024)*
Recording Secretary: *Karen Remfrey (2019)*
Membership Secretary: *Nancy Smith (2017)*
Chairperson SPRC: *Ian Bland (2024)*
Chairperson Finance: *Curt Eskew (2026)*
Chairperson Stewardship: *Carroll Hatfield (2022)*
Chairperson Trustees: *Dave Masterson (2018)*
Community Connections Chair: _____
Preschool Board Chair: *Nancy Masterson*
UWF President: *Evelyn Miller & Beatty Shipley (2023)*
Children's Home Representative: *Jacque Ray (2024)*
Director of Children/Youth/Campus Ministries: *Russ Towery*
Director of Traditional Worship: *LaTerry Butler*
Pastor: *Linda Tice*

B. ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEES:

Staff-Parish (note: * indicates chair)

Class of 2026: *Sally Wood*
Class of 2027: *Margie Aukland Ian Bland* Laurie Ward*
Class of 2028: *Troy Logan Jacque Ray Evelyn Miller*

Nominations (note: chair is the pastor – by Book of Discipline)

Class of 2026: *Margie Aukland*
Class of 2027: *Carol Harris Karyn Eubanks*
Class of 2028: *Phyllis Pritchett Sherrill Carr*

Trustees:

Class of 2026: <i>Mark Aukland</i>	<i>Dave Masterson</i>	
Class of 2027: <i>Steve Mayers</i>	<i>David Liller</i>	<i>Chris Compton</i>
Class of 2028: <i>Vickie Meyers</i>	<i>Dan Jackson</i>	<i>Kevin Wilhelm</i>

Finance

Elected members: *Deb Martin (2022) Curt Eskew* (2024)*
Members as per the *Book of Discipline*: *Pastor (Linda Tice)* Lay Member of the annual conference (*Brenda Moore*), Council Chair (*Diane Freestone*), SPRC representative (*Ian Bland*), Trustee representative (*Dave Masterson*), Stewardship chair (*Carroll Hatfield*), Lay Leader, Financial Secretary (*Tom Thayer*), Treasurer (*Deb Martin*), Business Administrator (nonvoting).

Ministry Leaders

Anti-Racism Representatives: *Evelyn Miller Linda Tice Brenda Moore*
Creation Care Ministry: *Karen Remfrey*
Community Connections: _____
Social Justice Ministry: *Stephen Hoffman*

BOD:
Lay Leader:
Diane Freestone
Lay Member A.C.
Brenda Moore
Pastor *Linda Tice*

BOD:
Lay Leader:
Diane Freestone
Lay Member A.C.
Brenda Moore

Inhabit the Garden



Among friends who practice Centering Prayer we love to celebrate the fullness of the Christmas Season right up to Epiphany on 6 January, and even beyond. One of our faithful members carved tree ornaments as a gift for each of us. This is one of them. It was a labor of love for which we are very grateful. The style of carving is called chip carving. I have enjoyed it on our Christmas Tree.

I admire the precise nature of the cuts that create the depth that radiates the light. It put me in mind of Simeon who is present along with Anna in the Temple when Joseph and Mary present Jesus to be consecrated. Simeon and Anna are modest folks, notable for their devotion. We gather to pray in silence, throughout the seasons, finding joy in our modest, but consistent sharing of devotion.

Luke relates the blessing of Simeon, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of

many will be revealed – and a sword will pierce your own soul too." What a pointed blessing to give young parents!

Yet, when we sit in the silence of Centering Prayer, when we sit long enough and when we sit with a clarity of intention, our inner thoughts will be revealed, and we may very well become aware of deep-seated afflictive emotions. That may be one real yet unacknowledged reason why some choose not to continue with prayer in silence. That may be a very real but difficult to acknowledge reason why some find it easier to just not pray in silence.

The method teaches us to have a friendly disposition toward our thoughts, even afflictive ones, and to rely on our indwelling goodness and after becoming aware of our thoughts, then to let go of them, and return ever so gently to our sacred word. We trust the work of the Holy Spirit for our healing.

Just as the balsa wood must be pierced to portray the reflection of light, neither do we become immune from being pierced in sometimes painful ways. But there is no suffering we experience that cannot also be healed. Scars may remain, but by the grace of God those same scars can be used to reflect the mercy and steadfast goodness of God. Our scars may shine brightly.

We gather each Friday morning in the Garden of Hope from 8:30 to 9:30 AM. We each bring a folding chair, and when chilly we meet in the Wesley Room. There is always more room in our circle. Have questions? Call Rev Stephen Hoffman at 941-773-7008. NOTE: we will not meet on Friday 9 January. (We are having an Epiphany Party!)

Magic Show

**A
MAGICAL
EVENING**

Fun, Laughter and Amazement
Tickets \$10 each. Call the church
941-924-7756
Tickets are also sold at the door.
Children 12 and under are "FREE".

Daniel Welsh
Gary Roberts
Comedian / Entertainer
Dick Stevens
Kids & Adult Magic
Star Newman
AS SEEN ON FOOLUS
COMEDY MAGIC & MENTALISM
Tom Vorjohan
WILL DO TRICKS FOR FOOD

IBM Club Ring 81 Magicians performing
SATURDAY, JANUARY 31ST, 2026
SHOW STARTS AT 6:30PM
Doors open at 6:00PM
TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
4150 SOUTH SHADE AVE
SARASOTA, FLORIDA 34231

Trinity Preschool

Students sang for parents and guests



Santa and helpers came to visit our Preschool



The Division of Early Learning of the Florida Department of Education has recognized Trinity Preschool for earning the designation of **Excellent** for the 2024-2025 Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK). This is the highest distinction a VPK provider can receive.

Youth Group

Youth Group ended the year on a high note with a Charlie Brown Christmas party and an excursion to Livingston's for go-cart racing and games [see pictures]. We continue to have visitors from our neighborhood and throughout the community. All youth are invited to join us for mini-golf and pizza at Evie's (4725 Bee Ridge) on *January 14* starting at 4:30. RSVP to 941-924-7756 (ext. 106).



Board of Trustees

Although there were no hurricanes to deal with in 2025, that's not to say we did not encounter our share of challenges.

Ironically, the lack of rain and clogged irrigation hoses from poor quality well water has caused significant damage to our Garden of Hope (between Haley and Heritage Halls) over the last year. We are installing filters after having the hoses repaired/replaced and hope this investment will fix the problem. We will then replace what we lost in the way of foliage so as to restore the beautiful integrity of our beloved garden.

The re-sealing and painting of all asphalt areas on our property were finally completed in mid-November after considerable delay, perseverance and prayer. It was worth it because our campus now looks neat and squared away.

The sanctuary sound system, camera set-up and streaming capabilities have all been undergoing reconstruction improvements during the last few months. Integration of new equipment into existing electronic configurations is never easy and our situation presents many additional curves and roadblocks created by countless changes to our systems over 42 years. We are nearing completion and ask all of you to have patience if performance is interrupted or the quality is not up to standards. We are trying!

I wanted to give a shout out to all those faithful servants who showed up for the campus beautification work crew on November 15th. We were able to accomplish a lot and give a little boost to our regular grounds volunteers. We are hopeful to catch up further with another work crew sometime soon. Thanks again! It was a blessing serving with you.

Also a big thank you to all who came out to decorate our sanctuary for Christmas and those who came to help us take down the decorations and pack them up for storage. We couldn't have done it without you!

As our new year begins, we must address the cracking and shifting concrete in the sanctuary courtyard. Circumstances prevented us from fixing these problems last year. Now a closer inspection reveals more cracks that call for further evaluation. This is a safety hazard as well

Cont'd next column

as unsightly and a remedy will be forthcoming soon. In the meantime, please be careful when walking in this area!

Your Board of Trustees looks forward to a new year where our campus will shine and represent a place of safety, friendship, and hope to all those who come to Trinity Church.

Dave Masterson
Chair of Trustees

Stewardship

A new year is here. We celebrate the fresh start and new opportunities. We also send 2025 into history with both relief and sadness. As we focus on making 2026 a positive year, let us reconsider our recent Y.E.S.

Yes, we want to make a positive difference in our lives and the lives of others.

Yes, we want to speak and act as followers of Jesus Christ and be an example of faith.

Yes, we want our church, Trinity UMC to be relevant in our lives and in the community.

Yes, we resolve to make these "yeses" true.

In November, we committed our time, our talents, and our money to support the ministries of Trinity United Methodist Church. That Y.E.S. campaign produced over 60 households committing to support our church. Today, this January, we choose to refresh such commitments by thanking all of you and celebrating your resolution to give. We also remind everyone to start 2026 off with a Y.E.S. commitment to the next 76 years of Trinity's ministries.

Thank you. Happy New Year,

Carroll Hatfield, Stewardship

Community Food Drive



Saturday,
January 17
2026, 9—10:30
am, Trinity
Parking Lot.

Come by to help
sort and pack,
donate nonper-
ishables or say
Hi! Donations
can be left in

Haley Hall Kitchen anytime.

January Birthdays

Pam Anthofer 1/1
Jerry Voyles 1/9
Danny Smith 1/14
Henry Schnathmann 1/18
Revella Lee 1/20
Trent Rader 1/21
Diane Nash 1/25
Barb Elder 1/25
Phyllis Landis 1/27
Ruth Jackson 1/27
Vinnie Nash 1/30
Pat Woodyard 1/30



New Notice

The Leadership Council recently voted to be a no gun campus. This is in light of the new Florida law allowing open carry of firearms. As a campus that houses a preschool and other community groups it was felt this was an essential step to take to promote the safety of all on campus. Signs will be posted in the coming year reflecting this policy. If you have questions about this policy please contact Pastor Linda.

Anniversaries

Lee & Joy Moyer 1/5
Dave & Nancy Masterson 1/20



Remnant Cafe

Tammy Burns of the Remnant Café—

Your continued support has allowed us to fulfill our mission of serving the underserved of Sarasota. The donations you provided were used to meet physical needs that are so often taken for granted such as a home-cooked meal, clean clothes, and showers. Additionally, your funds were used to meet emotional and spiritual needs. Through it all, we showed the love of Christ with dignity and respect. Your gifts have helped us continue this mission and it is greatly appreciated.

Thank you!

Just a heartfelt "Thanks" for all of the "Talent, Time and Tokens of Appreciation" that were shared this past Advent & Christmas Season here at Trinity UMC. Someone suggested, "Let's do the Hand-Chime Choir more times than just once a year!".....

That may be something that I may need a "mountain top meditation experience" in order to obtain the answer for!
LTB

Prayers

What an honor it is to lift up our church family in prayer. One of the greatest privileges of Christian life is the opportunity to pray. If you would like to be a part of the Prayer Team, please let the Church office know.

Please lift extra prayers for:

Kay Anthofer, Sherrill Carr, Roy Cowles, Becki Creighton, Barb Ellsworth, Karyn Eubanks, Diane Freestone, Jean Henry, Jim Henry, Brenda Lee Hickman, Barb Hohl, Revella Lee, Jim Martin, Dottie Morris, Bev Packer, Marie Piraino, Troy Poulin, Phyllis Pritchett, Steve Puhaly, Rhonda Puhaly, Mary Raymond, Jan Robertson, Tom Robertson, Jerry Ralston, Jim Schindler, Ken Smith, Carol Swart, Chuck Swart, Debbie Utter, Kara Voyles, Bob Ward, Marilyn Williams, Miriam Williams, Owen Woodyard, Pat Woodyard.

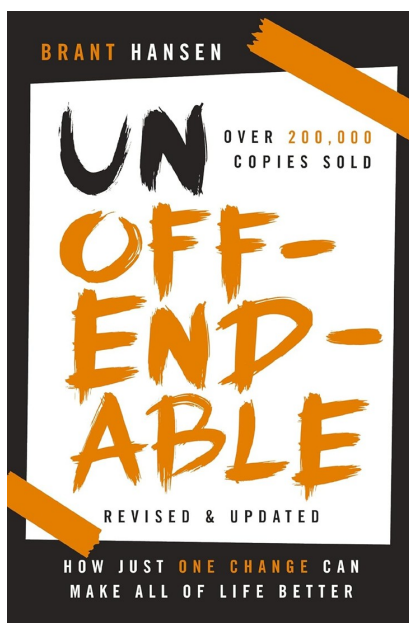
Also please pray for our military family: Gunnar Kral, Joshua Marsh, Dylan Mitchell, Brandon Oberkamp, Audrey Santana, Craig Scott, Devin Voyles, Dylan Youngblood.

Note: please let us know if any of the above are no longer in the military service.

Did you know?

Every Sunday a group meets at 10:10 to pray for prayer requests, for the church, for our country. The 10:10 prayer time is a vital undergirding of all ministry at this church. Anyone can be part of this prayer time on Sunday mornings. If you would like prayer for yourself or a loved one come share in this prayer time. If you feel strongly about God at work in this community through the ministries of Trinity, come pray for God's continued guidance. Meet in the courtyard outside the side sanctuary door. All welcome!

New Study Group



New 6-week small group study

beginning January 15th, led by Dave and Kay Korty. Based on the book *Unoffendable*, by Brant Hansen.

It's easy to get offended today when people don't agree with us. How do we follow Jesus and share grace in a world that offends us? Are we a grumpy witness? Join the book discussion on *How Just One Change Can Make All of Life Better*.

Thursdays, 3:30pm in Haley Hall.

December at Trinity



Caroling and ringing the bell at the Landings Publix



Holiday Light Trolley. Our thanks to Clare Davis for arranging this fun trip.



UWF hosted a Christmas Brunch on December 21

December at Trinity

If you were not able to be with us on the 24th for the Candlelight service, you can see the recording on our YouTube page.



**Trinity
United Methodist Church**



4150 S. Shade Avenue
Sarasota, FL 34231

Tel: 941-924-7756

Email: trinity@iTrinity.org

www.iTrinity.org

Join us Sunday at 9:00am or 10:30am for In-Person Worship or Live-streaming
Worship on Facebook at 10:30am.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TrinityUMCSarasota/>

Or watch the recording anytime on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCu8ri4OChHWMbbJt3rgfRLg>

Church Staff

Pastor: Rev. Linda Tice

Traditional Worship Director: LaTerry Butler

Director of Children/Youth Ministry: Russell Towery

Sound/Projections Board: Lou Towery

Business Administration: Jack Hundley

Secretary: Karen Remfrey

Preschool :Glenna Shrock, Director

Custodian: Ann Erwin

*The United Methodist Church forms disciples of Jesus Christ who, empowered by the Holy Spirit, love boldly,
serve joyfully, and lead courageously in local communities and worldwide connections.*