

# The ACORN

**Vol 2 Trinity United Methodist Church, Sarasota, FL February 2026**

Dear Trinity Family,

In worship on January 25<sup>th</sup> I announced that I have made the decision to retire this year at Annual Conference. I have had blessed careers first as a psychotherapist for 16 years and 25 years as a United Methodist minister, but it is time to move into the next chapter of my life called retired! I want to reassure you that your Staff Parish Committee has already had a meeting with the District Superintendent, Rev. Dr. Debbie Allen, to discuss a future clergy appointment. In addition, Ian Bland (SPRC chair) and I have met with her to continue this conversation. I am confident that Rev. Allen will be a strong advocate for Trinity and the needs of the church moving forward.

In case you aren't familiar with the United Methodist appointment process let me share how new clergy are selected. After consultation with the SPRC committee (this has happened), the Cabinet (all DS's in conference and the Bishop) will meet to discuss the churches and clergy that will be changing this year. The first of these meetings will happen the first week of February. I can tell you this is a time of much prayer and listening for the guidance of the Holy Spirit as they work to match the best minister's gifts with the needs of a church. This is a process that will continue through February and March.

Announcement Sunday will be April 19<sup>th</sup> in which Trinity will find out who their new pastor will be. This pastor will start the first Sunday in July. There will be conversations to assist in the transition.

My last Sunday will be June 7<sup>th</sup> and I will move to Orlando soon after so the trustees can work to get the parsonage ready for your new minister. I am currently remodeling my family home so it will be ready to move in! I will be traveling back to Kenya 6/16-26 to see the Zoe family groups with my last official day being June 30<sup>th</sup>.

On other news, Karen Remfrey our church administrator has also decided to retire. Her last Sunday will be March 1<sup>st</sup>. The good news is Karen will still be a member of Trinity and you will continue to see her often! The SPRC committee will begin the hiring process in the near future. Margie Aukland who has been volunteering in the office, has agreed to help out until our new administrator is hired.

Friends, change can be hard, but it can also be transforming. I am excited for the plans God has for Trinity in the future and sometimes change although hard, opens the doors to opportunities we can't even see now. Faith and trust go hand in hand my friends!! I am still here for 4 more months so we will continue to worship, praise God and grow together.

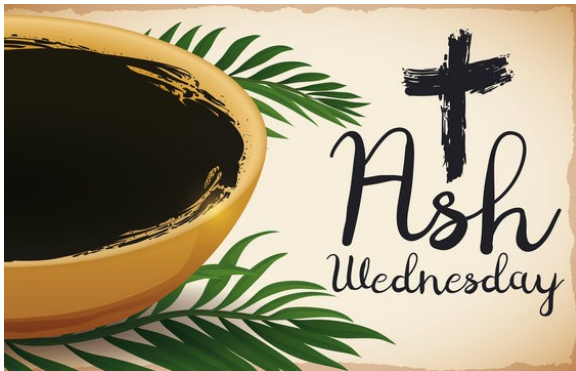
Blessings,  
Linda

# Ash Wednesday

## Lent is Coming!

Lent is the 40 days (plus Sundays) before Easter in which we are called to a season of reflection and renewal. Lent leading up to Easter is one of the most significant times in which we truly seek to understand who Jesus is for us and the importance of the celebration of Christ's resurrection.

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on February 18<sup>th</sup> and ends with Easter Sunday (April 5<sup>th</sup>).



## **Ash Wednesday**

- Drive thru Prayer and Ashes: 8:00 – 10:00 a.m. Pastor Linda will be in the church parking lot for those who would like to start the day with prayer and receive ashes.
- Worship: Ash Wednesday worship at 6:00 in the sanctuary. Music, prayer, communion and a message – Hold On! (I Am the Vine)

## **Lenten Worship**

Who is Jesus? Who is Jesus for you? The Lenten sermons will center around understanding these questions through the I Am statements of Jesus.

2/22 – I Am The Bread of Life

3/1 – I Am The Light Of the World

3/8 – I am the Door of the Sheep

3/15 – I Am The Good Shepherd

3/22 – I Am The Resurrection and Life

3/29 – I Am The Way, the Truth, and the Life

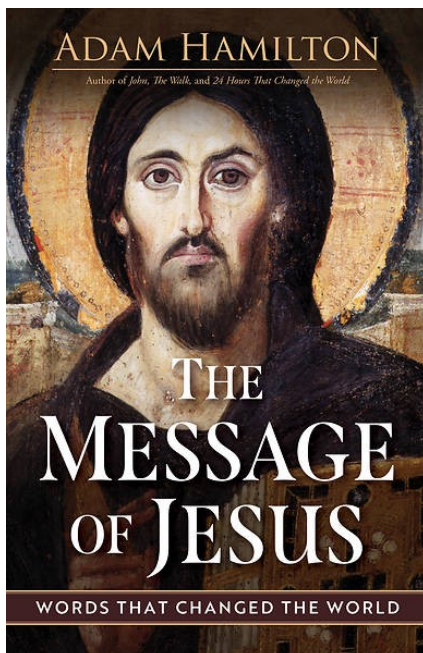
4/5 – He Is!

## **Study Book for Lent**

The Message of Jesus, Words that Changed the World by Adam Hamilton. This book will explore Jesus' teaching on the Kingdom of God, the Sermon on the Mount, the parables, the I Am sayings of Jesus and more.

Pastor Linda will lead a group on Wednesdays at 6:00 beginning Feb 25<sup>th</sup>.

The Wednesday group will also use this group as their study and invite anyone to join on Wednesdays 11-12. Sign up after church or call the church office.



## United Women in Faith

UWF News:

Executive Board Meeting Monday Feb. 2 at 1 pm in Haley Hall

Hannah Circle meets Monday Feb. 9 at 1 pm at Liz Mercer's home. For info contact Jan Robertson 941-922-7152.

Ruth Circle meets Tuesday Feb. 10 at 10:30 am in Haley Hall. For info contact Lynne Henry 941-321-4551

Persis Circle is preparing Valentine gifts for all staff at Phillippi Shores Elementary. For info contact Marsha Mayers 941-356-8276

Our Photographer, Joy Jones will take a professional picture of you on Sunday Feb. 8 between/after services in Haley Hall or in the Garden of Hope. \$10 for an 8x10 or any size you wish. For info contact her at 317-736-7465.



*Sandwiches &  
Strawberry Shortcake Sundaes*  
Sunday, February 22nd

10 am to 12:30 pm

Haley Hall

Hosted by United Women in Faith

Donations accepted to benefit Residing Hope  
(Florida United Methodist Children's Home)



# Trinity Preschool Fundraiser



**4PM-  
6PM**



**SATURDAY  
7TH FEB**

**SILENT AUCTION ITEMS TO BID ON INCLUDE:**

ASOLO REPERTORY THEATRE TICKETS  
BISHOP MUSEUM TICKETS  
GREAT EXPLORATION CHILDRENS MUSEUM  
TICKETS  
FLEMINGS GIFTCARD  
SELBY GARDEN TICKETS  
MOLLY'S! GIFTCARD  
SARASOTA OPERA HOUSE TICKETS  
SMUGGLERS COVE GIFTCARD  
SPA HOLLYWOOD GIFT CERTIFICATE  
SUNKEN GARDENS PASSES  
AND SO MUCH MORE!



**4150 S SHADE AVE  
SARASOTA, FL**



## Inhabit the Garden



Every Friday morning, our Centering Prayer Group gathers at 8:30 AM with the shared purpose “to consent to God’s presence and action within” by praying in silence, which is God’s original language. Following the shared silence we reverence the “priesthood of all believers” through shared leadership by listening together to a passage of scripture with the opportunity to share how the Spirit is being revealed among and within us. Together we hold this space with open hearts by affirming that it is ok for silence to have the first and the last word. The Spirit often shows up in surprising ways, sometimes with a jolt, often with much tenderness. We usually depart with a “word” for the week. We also learn not to take ourselves too seriously!

Once a month we also convene an “Expand the Cell” Centering Prayer Group using portions from Julian of Norwich a medieval mystic who has much to teach us about the love of God. This group is in a Zoom environment. We gather on the second Wednesday

monthly at 2 PM. This past month I embarrassed myself. We were holding the silence together. I keep the time, but Christine noticed that on my screen I was slumped over, having nodded off. She came upstairs to waken me so we could continue. Our little group was very tolerant of my foibles. The little incident reminded me of one of my mentors in Centering Prayer. His name was Tom, and he was like a Johnny Appleseed of Centering Prayer, planting many groups many of which are still flourishing. The last several years of his life, I attended a group he led. On occasion our twenty minutes of silence would be extended for a while. When Tom roused to ring the concluding bell he would just say, “I think we got some bonus time with God.” That is still a word of encouragement to me. Silence is Bonus Time with God.—Rev. Stephen Hoffman

## Volume two of Awakened to Grace is available

The second volume of *Awakened to Grace*—**Lent & Eastertide Daily Devotional (February 22–May 23)**—is now available.

From ashes to alleluia, this season invites you to move through Lent’s obstacles to grace—fear, anger, injustice, and greed—and into the transforming hope of the Resurrection. As Easter unfolds, the Fruits of the Spirit bloom, calling us to lives rooted in love, joy, and faithfulness.

You can [order a printed copy online](#), [download the PDF for free](#), or [journey daily through the \*Awakened to Grace\* app](#). Wherever you are, there’s a path to prayer, reflection, and renewed freedom in Christ.

## THE DANGER OF SILENCE

When we pray for others we are encouraged to be as specific as possible. We all are grateful when Karen sends us a Prayer Request with the name of a beloved church member in special need of prayer. We pray for them by name.

We have learned the names of **Renee Nicole Good and Alex Pretti**, both of whom have been killed by being shot by Agents for US Immigration and Customs Enforcement in Minneapolis. We mourn their death and grieve with their loved ones and family by praying for them by name.

January 19 was our observation of the Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. Bishop Berlin used this occasion to write a piece titled "The Danger of Silence." He began by asking us the question, "When does our silence equal complicity?" Bishop Berlin recalled the words of Dr King on the occasion of the murder of four girls when a bomb was detonated on a Sunday morning at the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Baptist Church.

Bishop Berlin writes, "King observed the silence of citizens at the time who did not want to be involved in the struggle for civil rights. He condemned those who tolerated segregation and violence in exchange for civil order." This is very similar to the narrative being used to justify the fracturing of families and traumatizing of neighbors happening now under the guise of immigration enforcement to supposedly ensure public safety.

Bishop Berlin recalls recent events, "Last week lives were lost in Minnesota, and some have said they deserved it. **Think about who we are becoming when people see the death of a citizen of the United States who was stopped by ICE Agents as collateral damage and an acceptable loss for some greater good.**"



Here in Florida the violence against our immigrant neighbors is less obvious but no less fracturing and traumatic. Our neighbors are being detained, disappeared, and deported all with full cooperation of local sheriffs and FHP. It is every bit as dehumanizing and unjust as what is happening in Minnesota. Our laws are being perverted to deny due process. This is being done in secret not allowing family visits for those detained and access to legal advice is held to a minimum.

Bishop Berlin offers specific suggestions. "Rather than share with a few friends who agree with us, it is time to write repetitively to those who claim to lead us. We can show up at rallies (or prayer vigils, I might add). Those who have

the capacity to assemble peaceably must do so. We are called to move from observing to doing, to organize ourselves to speak to politicians and offer legal support." He observes that "Congress and the courts sit largely on the sidelines. The people of our nation must not."

I read what our Bishop writes. I read our Social Principles. I read actions our General Board of Church and Society endorse. What is heard locally is mostly silence. What I see locally is much tolerance for complicity.

I was grateful to attend the Church Council meeting on 20 January to represent Social Justice. I asked the question, "What are you willing to do?" I wait for a response.

There are local efforts underway to pray publicly. Every week some folks attend using walkers with limited mobility. There are efforts to provide food for families who have been fractured or are living in justifiable fear. My experience is that when I am with these neighbors is when I feel most Wesleyan. After all, John Wesley learned to embrace worshipping outside among all people.

Rev Stephen Hoffman

## From Bishop Tom Berlin

We are in a difficult season. Reports of harm, loss of life, and aggressive enforcement actions against immigrants and those who seek to accompany them have shaken many of us and raised deep questions about how we as Christians respond to fear and suffering. In the midst of this, I've felt called, as so many of you have, to do more.

That is why I want to personally invite you to join me on **Wednesday, February 25, 2026**, in **Washington, D.C.**, for **Faithful Resistance: A Public Witness for Immigrant Justice**.

This will be a day of worship, prayer, and peaceful witness together with United Methodists and our ecumenical and inter-faith partners, lifting a faithful call for the humane and compassionate treatment of immigrants.

For those able to attend in person, we will gather together as a conference at **9 a.m. in front of Capitol Hill United Methodist Church**, prior to the start of the event, to walk together.

I recognize that not everyone will be able to travel. You are encouraged to participate in whatever way is possible for you—by attending in person, by following the day online through the livestream (details forthcoming), or by organizing prayerful, simultaneous events in your local communities on the same day. Wherever you are, your faithful presence matters.

**If you plan to attend in person, please contact the church office for the Registration Link.**

**In Christ,  
Tom**

Bishop Tom Berlin  
Resident Bishop, Florida Conference  
The United Methodist Church

<https://faithful-resistance.squarespace.com/>

## Stewardship

February holds the day we call Valentine's Day. A number of us are motivated to do what we ought to do every day; which is to demonstrate an expression of love to another. On Valentine's Day, we give a gift or a card—Hearts and flowers and candy are popular gifts.

Churches especially use "love offerings" to collect money to offer as appreciation for a service or performance.

That being understood, you are invited to act on your love of God by sacrificing something important to you as a "love offering" to God our Creator and Redeemer. You can designate your extra offering to the general fund.

God will appreciate it and you will feel good about it. An attitude of gratitude on Valentines.

Blessings,

Carroll Hatfield, Stewardship

## Residing Hope

Formerly Florida United Methodist Children's Home

*Happy Valentine's Day*

Three things will last forever

**Faith, Hope, and Love**



Valentine's Day cards will be in the Sanctuary on Sunday for you to sign and we'll send to kids at Residing Hope

## Community Food Drive



Saturday,  
February 21  
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.

## Community Connections

### What is Community Connection?

Being a church sharing Jesus with our neighbors is key to answering the call to serve others. If you have a heart for outreach and service to others you are invited to meet on Saturday, Feb 21<sup>st</sup> at 10:30 (following food drive) to plan the service steps for the next six months. What are your ideas and passions for sharing the love of Christ? Everyone needed!!

## Volunteers Needed

To prepare for communion in the 9:00 service weekly which involves putting out the elements that morning.

Prepare the communion elements before the first Sunday worship each month. This can be done at the end of the week before.

Someone to set up and clean up communion station for worship on the first Sunday morning each month.

Contact Pastor Linda for more information.

## February Birthdays



Cindy Jorgensen	2/2
Melody Fitzsimmons	2/2
Jordan Means	2/4
Rebecca Hicks	2/5
Anne Riviere	2/5
Amanda Wagler	2/5
Kayla Wagler	2/5
Joan Zickel	2/5
Sherrill Carr	2/9
Maren Schwied	2/13
Mary Weaver	2/13
Curt Eskew Jr.	2/15
Bill Elam	2/17
Colleen Logan	2/17
Bev Packer	2/17
Gunnar Kral	2/21
Zachariah Liller	2/21
Marla Wagler	2/22
Diane Freestone	2/22
Marg MacLaughlan	2/24

## Anniversaries

Henry & Marla Wagler 2/1

George & Gail Thornton 2/7





## 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, Roy Cowles, Becki Creighton, Barb Ellsworth, Karyn Eubanks, Diane Free-stone, Jean Henry, Jim Henry, Brenda Lee Hickman, Revella Lee, 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, Marcia Wireman, 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.

### ***Our Prayers are with:***

Janet Waldron on the death of her husband of 72 years, Don Waldron on December 13, 2025

Deb Martin and family on the death of her husband, Jim Martin on January 6, 2026. A service was at Trinity on January 18th.

The family and friends of Barb Hohl who died on January 9, 2026

Mary Catherine Scott and family on the death of her husband, Harry on January 25, 2026

Dave Dirmeyer and family on the death of his wife, Chris on January 28, 2026

### **10:10 Prayers**

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!

## Fellowship Dinners

### **Middlers Dinner**

In January we had our first Middlers dinner for everyone in their 40's – 60's. Fun was had by all! The next gathering will be Sunday, March 1<sup>st</sup> at 6:00 at Grillsmith. Call the church office to let us know you will be there so we know how big a table to re-serve.

Pastor Linda invites all snowbirds to lunch on Thursday, Feb. 19<sup>th</sup> at Der Dutchman. Let's all catch up and share stories! Sign up after church or by calling the church office. See you then!

**Trinity  
United Methodist Church**



4150 S. Shade Avenue  
Sarasota, FL 34231

Tel: 941-924-7756

Email: [trinity@iTrinity.org](mailto:trinity@iTrinity.org)

[www.iTrinity.org](http://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.*