



The ACORN

Vol. 7

Trinity United Methodist Church, Sarasota, FL

July 2026



Welcome Luncheon for Pastor Jennifer & Family See page 7



ZOE Update
See page 3

Highlights from the 2026
FLUMC Conference
See page 4



The Florida Conference
OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Pastor's Page

And their faces turned toward Sarasota...

As I am writing this to you, Trinity United Methodist, we are traveling between Orange Park, FL and Fruitland Park, to Warren Willis Camp, to deliver three youth campers to Creative Spirit summer camp. This is the fourth year Jaeden will attend. She loves it very much and looks forward to it every year.

It comes on the back of five emotional weeks. First there was the last week of school, celebrating graduations and completion of another school year with dear friends and teachers.

Second week was Annual Conference, which in our family is a spiritual 'high' to be reunited with so many beloved families and colleagues. The third week we prepared to pack and to celebrate Eli's summer birthday (he's now 10!).

The fourth week we packed home and office. That Friday in Middleburg, a truck loaded our things. Saturday afternoon the truck arrived in Sarasota and we spend the afternoon unloading. By your generosity and graciousness, we spent the fifth week unpacking and a day trip to Middleburg to retrieve some additional things that didn't fit on the truck.

This past weekend we returned to Orange Park for my final Sunday under appointment at Asbury UMC. The children were able to connect with friends and we participated in beautiful farewell worship and a reception.

I have enjoyed reading your notes and cards. I have enjoyed being in the parsonage. And we have enjoyed the days spent in Sarasota. Now, with our faces turned toward Sarasota, we are ready to jump into this appointment with both feet, looking forward to getting to know you and to worship and serve together.

See you on July 5!



ZOE Update

For the past three years Trinity made the commitment to be part of the Southwest District support of a family group for ZOE Empowers in the Maua Kenya area. We committed \$400 a year which came from the proceeds of the pecan sales and special events designated for ZOE such as buying items made by ZOE participants brought back from trips. The Blessed group whom you have prayed for will be graduating and finishing soon. This group has been amazing in their accomplishments as business owners who many are now employing others in the community. Almost all the siblings are back in school and will never know the cycle of poverty for their own families which has now been broken.

The Southwest district has now committed to a new family group – Winner's Kimeyu. They are in the first 6 months of their commitment time. Trinity leadership also committed to continue their support of this new district group as well.

During a recent visit, the Southwest delegation was privileged to attend a gathering of youth that had applied to join new ZOE groups. From the hundreds that applied, 6 new groups were selected awaiting sponsors to support their efforts. Here is the story one girl shared with several people so you have an understanding of the impact ZOE has. Her name is Melody and she is 19. Her mother suddenly got sick several years ago, went to the hospital and never came back. Her father was a tree worker and several months later he fell from the top of a tree, went to the hospital and never came back she said. The death of her parents left her to raise 3 children at age 16 which was a struggle and they often didn't have food. She began dating a man who would come into town on occasion. At one point when he found out she was pregnant, he threatened her, poured kerosene on her head and set her on fire. Neighbors put out the fire and she spent months in the hospital recovering. Upon returning and having her baby, work was hard to come by and she did whatever labor she could in fields to try to provide a meal for the children. She applied to ZOE and has been accepted. She now goes forward with the support of her ZOE family unit and is not alone anymore. Her life of uncertainty and trauma will change and her siblings and child will face a different future.

Thank you Trinity for your support of youth like Melody. YOU are making a difference!!



2026 FLUMC Annual Conference: Faith Rising

1. As usual, the Conference was filled with prayer, music, business, inspiration, and information. A few notable images below:

An Expo on the Experience of Dismantling Racism Bishop Berlin



Bright: Share Your Faith Joyfully
Brave: Persist in Compassion and Justice
Rooted: Deepen Wesleyan Discipleship



Linda Tice
Full Elder, 25 Years of Service



FAITH RISING | FLUMC 26

Pastor Linda's retirement celebration

<https://vimeo.com/1198613119/13bbb9f758?fl=pl&fe=cm>

2. Rev. Matt Miofsky, Lead Pastor of The Gathering Church in St Louis, spoke of his book 'Eight Virtues of Rapidly Growing Churches' based on a study of practices that lead to growth in churches including the following: **This book would make a great study.**

Virtue #1: Rapidly growing churches believe in miracles and act accordingly.

It's about GOD

Virtue #2: Rapidly growing churches integrate new people quickly.

It's about DISCIPLESHIP

Virtue #5: Rapidly growing churches elevate the practice of giving.

It's about GENEROSITY

Trustee Report

It's hard to believe almost half of the "New Year" has come and gone. Our focus has recently centered on the parsonage transition work that is winding down to conclusion. (Please refer to a companion article in this edition on that subject for more details).

Most of the first part of this year has been spent attending to the every day business most older church complexes experience: inspections and recertification of various county and state regulated services, maintaining the 17 A/C units on campus, repairing and replacing anything and everything that needs attention, painting what requires painting, and making sure our beautiful outside property looks "squared away" and welcoming. The future presents some challenges for us. We have been working on irrigation problems associated with the Garden of Hope as well as cracks appearing in the sanctuary courtyard. We will continue to seek resolutions to these problems. Additionally, a number of electrical issues have developed that need attention as soon as possible. These are being diagnosed and plans of action will be initiated.

Obviously, some of the work that needs to be done must be facilitated by paid professionals. However, I wish to point out that our Trustees and many other volunteers do a lot of the labor required for most of the jobs around our facility. This is a true blessing that we all should be grateful for. Thanks to all who serve Christ so very faithfully with their time and expertise. All in all, our future is a bright one. We have a campus that reflects a vibrant, active, welcoming church where the spirit of Christ is alive!

Serving Christ with you,
Dave Masterson, Chair of Trustees

Update from SPRC

The Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) continues to keep multiple balls in the air! The transition from Pastor Linda to Pastor Jennifer has been the first priority since April. During that time, however, another transition has also been underway. Lou Towery had been serving as the sanctuary audio/visual technician for both Sunday services and streaming manager for the 10:30 service. His departure in May meant that we were without projection and sound and on-line presence for several difficult weeks. We were very grateful that Trinity member Larry McDorman volunteered to fill in as we search for a qualified candidate to fill the position. Larry was willing, but unfamiliar with the very unique systems in place in the sanctuary. We were even more grateful when Sebastian Girstl, the former Tech, came home from FSU for the summer and agreed to return to the role and to train Larry as his back-up!

God is good! All the time! Our short-term prayer has been answered and we thank Larry and Sebastian for serving in such an important way.

Our longer-term need remains, though. SPR is seeking to permanently employ a person with appropriate experience for this position. Details for this Sunday morning, four-hour, paid position are available. If you know someone who you think would be a good candidate, please contact an SPRC member.

In the meantime, on Sunday mornings this summer, thank Sebastian and Larry for helping our worship shine and sing, in the sanctuary and on Facebook Live!

Submitted by Ian Bland, SPRC Chair

Trustee Parsonage Transition Report

Our parsonage was originally built in 1958, with a Florida room, master bedroom and master bathroom added on sometime in the 1960's. Over the years the Trustees have tried to be diligent in maintaining this private residence so that it remains a comfortable and safe home for our pastor and family to live.

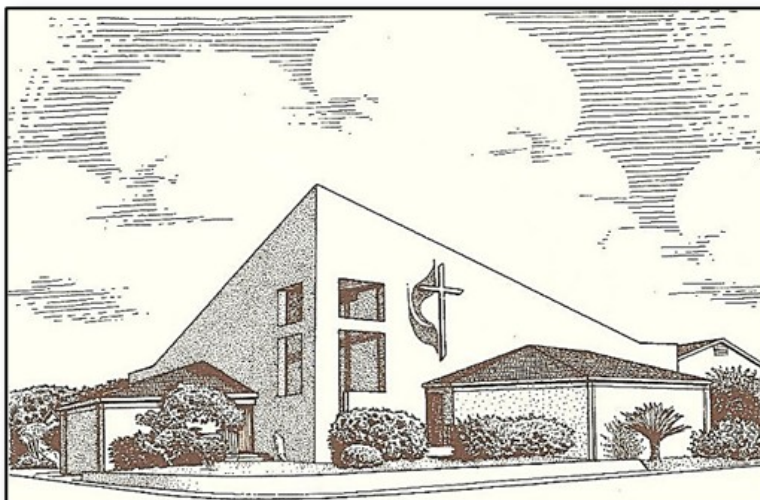
A pastoral change requires extra work to be done by Trustees and Staff Parish teams. Trustees are responsible for the "physical plant" which includes painting, plumbing, electrical, A/C, flooring, general repairs and outside maintenance of the grounds. In addition to maintaining these areas, a major bathroom conversion/remodeling had to be done and additional plumbing work that was long overdue. A deep cleaning was also done as a matter of protocol.

Trustee Vice Chair Mark Aukland was Project Manager of the parsonage transition. Mark and wife Margie teamed up to provide the planning, acquisition of supplies/equipment, preparation and groundwork that helped all of our volunteers to accomplish their tasks at utmost efficiency. No one worked harder than they did. Thanks to you both. We were blessed by your leadership.

The work began on March 9th and continued until the day before Pastor Jennifer and family arrived on June 20th . A total of 230 hours of labor were spent by 16 volunteers during that time frame. Some put in more time than others but all of us shared a spirit that made our efforts and accomplishments so rewarding.

We wish to recognize and extend our thanks, once again, to Mark and Margie Aukland, as well as Steve and Marsha Mayers, Rev. Steve Hoffman, Dave Hammel, Sarah Davis, George Cook, Dave Liller, Ann Erwin, Ian and Becki Bland, Diane Freestone, Pam Pierce and Nancy Masterson. And my sincere apologies to anyone who helped but is not mentioned here. It was an honor to serve Christ and Trinity with all of these folks!

Blessings,
Dave Masterson
Chair of Trustees



**WELCOME LUNCHEON
FOR PASTOR JENNIFER
AND FAMILY**

Haley Hall

Sunday, July 5, 2026

**Following Traditional
Service (about 11:45 a.m.)**

Hot Dogs, Condiments and Beverages will be provided. Please sign up to attend by Friday, July 3rd (so there will be enough hot dogs and condiments).

**You are being asked to bring
a side dish or dessert!**

Come welcome our new pastoral family!

"Inhabit the Garden" Centering Prayer Group

This month our "Inhabit the Garden" Centering Prayer Group observes the Sixth Anniversary of our weekly gathering in the Garden of Hope. We are grateful that, during pandemic related lockdown, the Trinity Trustees graciously agreed to accept this ministry of contemplative prayer here at Trinity. It was a creative way to gather in person observing all health related guidelines.

Centering Prayer is a Christ centered method of praying in silence that is ecumenical and inter-faith friendly with other ways of meditation and other expressions of prayer. Our shared intention is to consent to God's presence and action within. The source of Centering Prayer is the indwelling Trinity. Our focus is the self-emptying love of Christ. The fruit of this prayer is realizing the Unity of the Holy Spirit.

Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion, so we are grateful that over the last six years our circle of prayer has doubled in membership. Currently our circle includes folks from Covenant Mennonite, First Congregational UCC, Roman Catholic, St Boniface and Redeemer Episcopal, Presbyterian, and non-denominational traditions as well as Trinity. We have observed that the shade of the oak tree also continues to expand.

We meet Fridays from 8:30 to 9:30 AM. We each bring a chair, and we practice shared leadership. After our time of praying in silence we practice a simple form of lectio divina, listening to the Spirit in scripture. There is always room in our circle for one more. Stephen and Christine Hoffman are always eager to talk about how we pray together. We can be reached at 941-773-7008 (call/text).



United Women in Faith

We have been busy helping a lot during the month of June!

Decorating with Retirement decor and helping Staff Parish with a Farewell Reception for Pastor Linda June 7.

Several UWF members, as well as other church members, helped paint and prepare the Parsonage and the church offices for the arrival of Pastor Jennifer & family.



UWF Board gave Evelyn Miller Unit \$\$ to prepare a Welcome Basket for our new Pastor Jennifer and family arriving soon.

The Circles individually have prepared for Pastor Jennifer gift cards to Publix and an arrangement of Gerber Flowers.

Joy Voyles, Joy Jones, Sandy Thayer and Sherrill Carr decorated Haley for the rest of June with summer decor with "Bee" theme.



UWF will decorate Haley festively for the 4th of July weekend celebrating USA's 250th birthday and welcoming Pastor Jennifer on her first Sunday July 5.

Some of our UWF sisters need extra prayers

Sympathy to UWF members:

Christy Eubanks on death of her mother.
Nancy Smith on death of her husband Ken.

Health

Margot Stanton
Brenda Lee Hickman
Becki Creighton

**There are no regular UWF Board or Circle meetings in July or August.
We wish everyone a relaxing and safe summer!!**

July's Community Mission

School starts in August! So let's contribute again to Philippii Shores Elementary School with items from their teachers' wish lists (2026-27):

Package(s) of Printer/Copier Paper - White, 8.5in x 11in, Ream/500 Sheets
Composition Notebook Wide Ruled, Bound, Black, Black Marble, 100ct, 9.75x7.5
Wide Ruled Spiral Bound Notebooks
Crayons, 24 Count
#2 Yellow/Wood Pencils Sharpened with Erasers, 12 Pack
Crayola Colored Pencils, 12 Count, Full-Length, Pre-sharpened
Pack of Highlighters
Dry Erase Markers, Low Odor, Thick/Chisel Tip, Black
Elmer's Glue Bottle, 4 oz, Washable School Glue White
Bottle(s) of Hand Sanitizer
Box(es) of Tissues
Box(es) of Glad Storage Bags, Gallon Size

Donations can be placed on the Community Connections table in Haley Hall through June 30th.

June Food Drive

We had a full crew on June 20th to collect, sort, and deliver 179 pounds of nonperishables to Church of the Palms. We'll meet again on the 3rd Saturday in July. As we all know, the cost of food has dramatically increased. Children are out of school for summer break and families in need rely on Food Pantries to supplement their groceries. You can bring your donations of nonperishables to the church on Sundays or during the weekdays, if you cannot attend the next drive thru on July 18th, 9am – 10:30am.

Most requested items: Cereal, juice (not glass bottles), fruit cups, crackers, peanut butter, shelf-stable milk, canned tuna or chicken.

During the month of June We delivered women's panties, bras, pants, shoes, hair products, tops, jewelry, toiletries for hygiene etc. including shampoo, deodorant, soap, tampons and menstrual pads and pantyliners from the Community Mission Collection during the month of May.

Stewardship

Some companies and people create a Christmas in July theme for the month of July. Keep that in mind. Also focus your mind on three positive things.

- 1) Trinity has been a generous congregation for over 77 years.
- 2) We are welcoming Pastor Jennifer and her family into our church family.
- 3) You can give without loving but you cannot love without giving.

Those of us that love the Lord...July is a very good month to show it.

Blessings, Carroll.

Happy 250th America



Community Connections



Items collected for June Mission Moment for the men of Remnant Cafe

New Church Office Hours

Monday 9:00 am— 2:00 pm
Tuesday 9:00 am—2:00 pm
Wednesday 9:00 am—2:00 pm
Thursday 9:00 am—2:00 pm
Friday Closed

July Birthdays



JoAnn Rall	7/2
Bill Athas	7/3
Ian Bland	7/12
Mathias Liller	7/15
Russell Towery	7/15
Gail Thornton	7/17
Amy Towery	7/18
Sally Wood	7/18
Ruby Cook	7/20
Pat Norton	7/24
Joshua Rose Jr.	7/31

Anniversaries



Phil & Carol Harris 7/1
Tom & Sandy Thayer 7/6
Henry & Revella Lee 7/15
Bill & Sylvia Elam 7/19
Diane Freestone & Thomas Surprise 7/28

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. Send Prayer Requests to Brenda Moore or the Church Office

Please lift extra prayers for:

Kay Anthofer, Bob Carr, Roy Cowles, Becki Creighton, Barb Ellsworth, Curt Eskew, Karyn Eubanks, Jean Henry, Jim Henry, Brenda Lee Hickman, Revella Lee, Dottie Morris, Bev Packer, Marie Piraino, Troy Poulin, Phyllis Pritchett, Steve Puhaly, Rhonda Puhaly, Ann Riviere, Jan Robertson, Tom Robertson, Jerry Ralston, Jim Schindler, Margot Stanton, Carol Swart, Chuck Swart, Tom Thayer, Debbie Utter, Kara Voyles, Miriam Williams, Marcia Wireman, Owen Woodyard, Pat Woodyard.

(Please notify church office to take your name off.)

Our prayers are with Nancy Smith and family on the death of her husband, Ken Smith on June 20, 2026.

Our prayers are with the family and friends of Marie Piraino who died on April 21, 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!

Prayer Keepers / Trinity Caring Partners



Trinity's Caring Partners.

Trinity's Caring Partners (formerly named Prayer Keepers) are available to offer prayerful and confidential visits with Communion, specific assistance during transitions, or on-going support as needed. Brenda Moore is now leading the group and you can contact her at 941-388-7679 for more information or assistance.

**Trinity
United Methodist Church**



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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. Jennifer Ahrens-Sims
Traditional Worship Director: LaTerry Butler
Director of Children/Youth Ministry: Russell Towery
Sound/Projections Board:

Business Administration: Jack Hundley
Secretary: Kate Setear
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.*