



The ACORN

Vol. 8

Trinity United Methodist Church, Sarasota, FL

August 2026



(Sung to tune of "Morning has Broken")



God of all learning, God of all knowing,
We bring these backpacks filled with supplies.
Bless all these tools of learning and growing.
Use them, we pray, to change many lives.



Learning is a gift from God

As we begin this new school year, we give thanks that God has given us the ability to learn many things in many ways.

Loving God, sometimes a new school year seems exciting or scary or both. Help us remember to show our thanks for your gifts of learning by doing our best every day.

We ask that you bless our schools, teachers, classmates and friends. We ask that you bless those who prepare our lunches, those who drive us to school, and those who keep our schools clean and safe. We ask God's blessing on this new school year, that it may be a time when we appreciate and fully use God's gift of learning.

Amen.

UMYF

Youth, children, moms, dads, and grandparents are all invited for a delicious dinner, encouraging devotional, and fun activities on **Sunday, August 30** from 5:30 to 7:00 PM. Dinner starts in **Haley Hall at 5:30 PM** with fellowship and games in the Youth Room and Heritage Hall immediately following. There is no cost to attend *UMYF* including dinner. Speak with Russ if you are interested in serving as a friendly greeter, cook, head chef, or part of the setup crew.

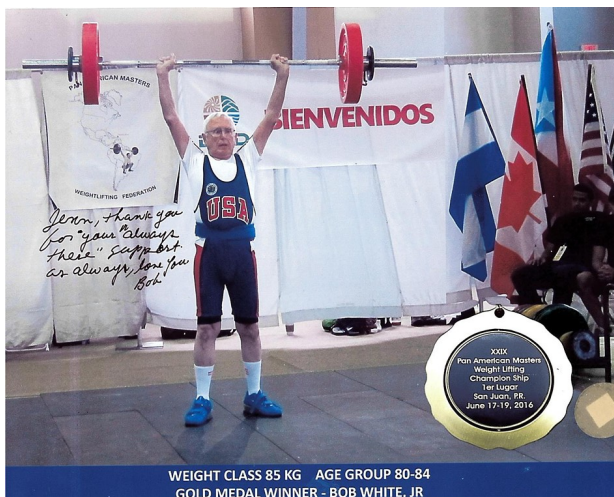
Pastor's Page

I once had a mentor who owned an Olympic Class weightlifting gym in his garage. He equipped the gym when he was diagnosed with prostate cancer. He made a personal commitment to become the healthiest possible version of himself. After he survived cancer, he opened the gym to weightlifters of every age and skill level. His only requirement for admission was that they be engaged in furthering their education.

Wanna know something neat about my mentor? He considered the gym to be his Sunday school classroom. It's where he learned about himself. He also learned about others and he learned about God. They formed remarkable friendships and bonds. They supported one another during life's crises and mountaintops. They pushed one another to see what they could do, physically and mentally. The gym was a classroom where people grew and experienced transformation.

United Methodists aspire to life-long learning. As we move into the start of a new academic year, I'm asking you to do two things: one, pray for our students, their families, the school faculty, staff, and administrators. If you don't know anyone in one of those categories, find someone and get to know them. Two, take part in growth and transformation in your own life. Study something new, learn a new skill, explore an unfamiliar topic. Later on, take time to reflect on what you learn about yourself, about others and about God.

Happy Studying!
Pastor J



Summer Book Exchange

The Summer Book Exchange is back! And we're adding Puzzles!

Bring a book or puzzle or many books and puzzles and take whatever books and puzzles brought by others that you'd like. During the month of August, a table or two will be set aside in Haley Hall for the Book & Puzzle Exchange. Come whenever you are at the church – **except August 17th and 18th, when Haley Hall will be used as a Primary voting location.** At the end of the month, the leftover books and puzzles will be donated.



Update from SPRC

As reported last month, the Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) moved its focus to recruiting a qualified person to take over the Sunday morning technical operations. SPRC members do a lot of praying for God's help with their responsibilities. Once again, our prayer has been answered in a uniquely delightful way!

After Sebastian Girstl's return to college in mid-August, Vander Wilhelm will provide image projection and audio quality in the sanctuary each Sunday morning. He will also be responsible for streaming the 10:30 service on the internet to ensure that folks who can't be in church can still be at church, virtually.

Vander brings to the job a love of, and skill with, technology from computers to "ham radio" and 3D printing. He is a rising Junior at Riverview High School where he excels in academics and participates in a variety of activities.

Now, the part where God winks – Vander is the grandson of our dear friend and long-time Trinity servant, the late, great Mary Raymond! Some of us believe Mary is grinning in Heaven, knowing that her legacy of service to the church she loved will continue in this special way.

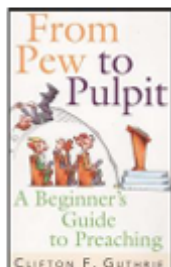
Welcome, Vander! Thank you, Lord! Keep smiling, Mary!

Submitted by,
Ian Bland, SPRC Chair

UPCOMING 2026 SWFL UMC DISTRICT LAY SERVANT MINISTRIES CLASSES



10 hour Classes for EVERY lay person to discover God's will for your life & for certifying Lay Speakers, Servants & Ministers within the LSM program. Completion Certificate is earned by full participation.



PEW TO PULPIT

DATES Sat Aug 1-Aug 29 TIMES Sats, 10am-12pm via: ZOOM COURSE TITLE: From Pew to Pulpit

BOOK TITLE: From Pew to Pulpit A Beginner's Guide to Preaching by Clifton F. Guthrie

INSTRUCTOR: Rev Ken DeWalt, ret. participant to purchase book prior to class COST: \$5 registration

Purchase this book and read and complete before the class begins. Register by mailing a check for the \$5 registration fee made out to Ken DeWalt (instructor), 7 Jute St, Alva, FL, 33920. Kendewalt1@gmail.com

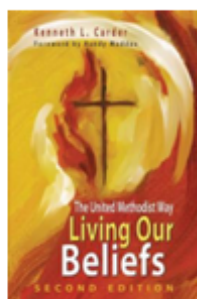
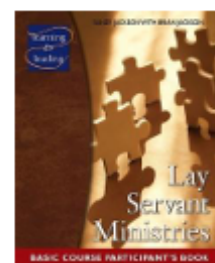
BASIC INTRO TO LAY SERVANT MINISTRIES

DATES: Sat Oct 3 through Sat Oct 31 TIMES: Sats, 10am-12pm via: ZOOM

BOOK TITLE: Lay Servant Ministries Basic Course Participant's Book By Brian Jackson and Sandy Zeigler Jackson

INSTRUCTOR: Rev Ken DeWalt, ret. COST: \$5 registration

Purchase this book and read and complete before the class begins. Register by mailing a check for the \$5 registration fee made out to Ken DeWalt (instructor), 7 Jute St, Alva, FL, 33920. Kendewalt1@gmail.com



Living Our United Methodist Beliefs

DATES: : November 7, 14, 21; December 5, 12 TIMES: Saturdays, 9:00 – 11:00 am VIA: ZOOM

BOOK TITLE: Living our United Methodist Beliefs by Kenneth L. Carder

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Pamela Craig, Certified Lay Servant Minister COST: \$5 registration

This five-week course meets the Heritage Course requirement for Lay Speaker and can be used for renewal requirements for Certified Lay Servant and Certified Lay Speaker. We will focus on the Wesleyan tradition and how it developed. Participants will be required to read from the text each week and participate in the weekly Zoom meetings.

Register before October 31, 2026, by emailing Pamela Craig @ pamelascraig@gmail.com Include your name, email, and telephone/text number, along with any questions you might have.

Or send \$5 registration check made out to Pamela Craig and mailed to 6507 Drewrey's Bluff, Bradenton, FL 34203.

Join the Leadership of Trinity Sarasota

As we explore

MISSION INSITE

To love our neighbor, we must know our neighbor.

Mission Insite offers unique demographic insights that help churches engage with their communities and increase their impact.



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND

**Join us for a special workshop where we will
learn more about our neighbors and
explore how we can build deeper connections to our community!**

When: Tuesday, August 4, 2026

Time: Potluck Dinner will be served at 5:00 pm. Sharp!

Dinner Assignments:

Last name beginning with A-E Desserts

Last name beginning with E-M Main Dishes

Last name beginning with N-Z Side Dishes/Salads

Iced Tea, Lemonade, and Water will be provided

****Programming will begin at 5:30 pm**

Dismissal: 8:30 pm

Everyone is welcome!

August's Monthly Mission

Trinity's Preschool Garden

Last year the preschool garden was funded by a one-time grant from the Florida DKG Educational Foundation. The preschoolers enjoyed their hands-on classroom from October through the end of school. To keep the garden growing this school year, we are asking for your contributions - *in the form of cash, checks, or gift cards* - so the necessary supplies can be purchased by the preschool for the garden.

Look for the Gifts for the Garden display in Haley Hall for the month of August!

Thank you in advance for your generosity!

Gifts for the Garden

Amazon Gift Cards will purchase:

- Hats & Sunglasses for the Preschoolers - the garden is direct sunlight!
- Cloth Bags for growing sweet potatoes

Farm & Garden Gift Cards will purchase:

- Transplants of plants & seeds
- Bags of organic soil & fertilizer for the beds & inside the fence

Wal Mart or Home Depot gift cards will purchase:

- Neem spray to keep pests away safely
- Trellis supplies



Fresh Lettuce!



The preschoolers created Garden Journals.

Submitted by Marsha Mayers

I recently had a chance to check out the new Mote Marine Aquarium. One of my favorite exhibitions was the JellyFish. Big sign: No Brain, No Spine, No Problem! There was another sign explaining that jellyfish were a good food source for other fish.

If you need one more reason NOT TO USE single-use plastic bags... Turtles and other marine animals often mistake discarded plastic bags for jellyfish. Plastic bags start out as fossil fuels and end up as deadly waste in landfills and the ocean. Birds often mistake shredded plastic bags for food, filling their stomachs with toxic debris. Fish eat thousands of tons of plastic a year, transferring it up the food chain to bigger fish and marine mammals. Microplastics are consumed by people through food and in the air.

Some countries and US states have banned plastic bag use. The state of Florida has never banned plastic bags. On the contrary, Florida lawmakers have moved in the opposite direction on multiple occasions.

So... we need to eliminate their use individually. Bring your cloth bags to the grocery store as well as other retailers. Most grocery stores, pharmacies, and retailers (like Target, Walmart, and Publix) have collection bins specifically for plastic bags and clean film (e.g., bread bags, bubble wrap, and dry cleaning bag). If you do end up with plastic bags, reuse them as bathroom trash liners or for pet waste so they get a second life before hitting the landfill.

A few other simple suggestions. It won't completely solve this global problem, but it does help!

- Set your table with cloth napkins and reusable dishes, glasses, and silverware as often as possible.
 - You can rarely recycle plastic utensils. Think about if you need them before picking up your takeout. Ask the restaurant to leave them out of your order. Consider washing and reusing whatever you do need.
- If you bring your lunch, package it in reusable containers instead of disposable ones.
- Bring drinks with you in a water bottle or thermos instead of disposable bottles or cartons.
- Consider putting a filter on your water tap and refilling bottles with the filtered water instead of buying bottled water.
- Instead of buying many small drink bottles, buy drink mixes in bulk and fill your reusable bottles.

If you have other suggestions or ways to eliminate single-use plastics, I'd love to know them.

Submitted by Karen Remfrey

Holy Land Missionaries

THE HOLY LAND CHRISTIANS ARE GOING TO BE OUR GUESTS HEAR THEIR STORY AND SEE THEIR BEAUTIFUL OLIVEWOOD CRAFTS

On August 2, 2026 and during the service, we will be hearing about the Christians of the Holy Land, and after the service we will be hosting at the church a nice display of handmade olive wood religious articles from Bethlehem available for donations. These carvings include olivewood Nativity sets, crosses, Christmas ornaments, candle holders, angels and many other religious crafts that could make a nice wedding, baptism, confirmation, Easter and Christmas gifts. The carvings are handmade by Christian families from Bethlehem who rely on it for their daily bread.

More than 70% of the Christian Community in the Holy Land depend upon tourism as their only source of income. For decades those Christians have been enduring many hardships as tourism in Bethlehem has plummeted and access to other sources of income has been sharply restricted due to the ongoing conflict, the wars, the 12 yard wall built around Bethlehem, the COVID-19 pandemic, and recently the catastrophic war in Gaza for the more than two and a half years, due to this tourists are afraid and unable to visit the Holy Land. This made it very difficult for the Christian families to find their daily bread and forced them to immigrate and flee their homeland since they lost their source of income . The Christian population of the Holy Land was 30% in the last century, today it is less than 1%. If it continues like this, in few years we will find no Christians in the land of Christ, which could cause tragic consequences to our faith and holy sites.

Please help support our Christian brothers and sisters in the town of Bethlehem where Christ was born by making donations for their carvings.

A Christian family from Bethlehem will be telling us the story of the Christians of the Holy Land and they will be presenting these carvings after the services.

It is never too late to help. All donations go to support Christian families from Bethlehem.

**Let us carefully tend to our roots, Christian children of God in the Holy Land.
And let us pray together for peace in the land where our Savior once walked to tell the world the good news of salvation .**

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely in Christ,

Dr. George Ghanem
Holy Land Christian Solidarity Cooperative
www.hlcsc.org
703 745-2604



"Inhabit the Garden" Centering Prayer Group

Last Friday eleven of us met in the Garden of Hope to pray in silence. We gather with the same request the disciples asked Jesus, "Lord, teach us to pray." We are still learning. We learn by letting go. One of our theme Psalms begins, "For God alone my soul waits in silence." Interestingly, that Psalm concludes with the faith statement "For you repay to all according to their work."

We all know what it is to be paid for our work, being compensated for a job well done. But what is the work of praying in silence? Our experience is that this is different from the work of accomplishment or achievement. It is not the same as completing a task or checking off items on a to-do list. Neither is praying in silence the same as relaxing or day dreaming. Our shared work in praying in silence is gently letting go of our thoughts so that God can more clearly speak to us in silence.

One way we experience this is our lectio after our time in silence where we listen to the reading of a brief passage of scripture. We can each respond as we feel led. Much of the time we do, but it is also acceptable for silence to have the first and the last word.

Speaking personally as a retired Pastor, I admit to the temptation of wanting to say something clever or astute. My experience is that the silence is most fruitful for me when I savor what others share. As we gather on Friday mornings in these summer months, it is often true that our shared reward is simply savoring the morning breezes and the beautiful calling of the birds.



There is always room in our circle.

We always have time to talk with you about Centering Prayer.

Much love,
Stephen and Christine Hoffman
(941-773-7008)

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!

Fifth Sunday Offering



Residing Hope, formerly known as the Florida United Methodist Children's Home, has been caring for abused, abandoned, and neglected children since 1908.

The local church is the veritable backbone of everything that happens at Residing Hope beginning in 1906 when local Methodist Churches began collecting Fifth Sunday offerings, leading to the initial founding of the Florida Methodist Orphanage. Those Fifth Sunday offerings have become part of the fabric of support by the local churches here in Florida and continue to bless this ministry.

Thank you for your partnership in bringing this ministry of hope and love to so many children and families!

July Food Drive

On a rainy but cool 3rd Saturday, the food drive team gathered in the courtyard, checked expiration dates, weights and packed 195 pounds of nonperishables for the Food Pantry at Church of the Palms. \$200 cash was received. Mary delivered donated items to Remnant Cafe. Although the amount of donations have been lower the past few months, the team always has a good time with this ministry begun almost six years ago. Join us on Saturday, August 15th.

Canned goods can always be brought in to Church on Sundays or during the week.



Next Community Food Collection will be on Saturday, August 15th, 9—10:30 am, Trinity Parking Lot. Come by to help sort and pack, to drop off nonperishables, or just say Hi!

Stewardship

August is the end of summer and the beginning of a new school year. An end and a beginning. Trinity recently experienced an end and a beginning. Our new beginning is the celebration and welcoming of Pastor Jennifer and family. That celebrating and welcoming is seen and felt in the many ministries found in Trinity.

You show this in prayer and worship, in music and fellowship, in activities on campus and in our community. Stewardship is also showing healthy signs of celebration and welcome. Thank you for the generosity of your time, the sharing of your talents and your financial support to the Gospel Good News through Trinity. Keep it up.

Carroll Hatfield

Stewardship

Thank you

Deb Martin and her family would like to express (rather belatedly) gratitude for the loving support of Trinity UMC church during Jim's illness, for the beautiful service and gathering at Trinity upon his death, and for words of kindness and love during the grieving process. Many names could be specifically mentioned, those who provided food when times were difficult, calls and texts offering kind words, and those who helped in creating a wonderful service in memory of Jim. We (especially Deb) are very grateful and humbled by the outpouring of love by all.

Name Badges



Contact Kate in the Church Office
to order a new name badge.

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

August Birthdays



Margot Stanton 8/1
Rebecca Burke Chinnici 8/5
Sylvia Elam 8/7
Larry McDorman 8/11
Mark Aukland 8/12
Marguerite Hankins 8/12
Maddox Towery 8/12
Barbara Ellsworth 8/14
Brian Kuhn 8/19
Sandy Murphy 8/19
Dan Jackson 8/20
Kristie Compton 8/25
Jason Means 8/27
Dave Hardenburgh 8/28

Anniversaries



Bob & Sherrill Carr 8/1
Sam & Jean Caudle 8/2
Tom & Jan Robertson 8/17
Bill & Lucy M. Athas 8/23
Vickie & Alan Meyers 8/24
Chris & Kristie Compton 8/26
Steve & Rhonda Puhaly 8/26

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, 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, Pat Woodyard.

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

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**



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

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.*